# Interim Report

# THE EVALUATION OF THE TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION AND SUCCESS GRANT INITIATIVE

## CYCLE 2

for the

**Texas Education Agency**

**February 16, 2007**


The Evaluation Team of:

GIBSON CONSULTING GROUP

SOUTHWEST EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LABORATORY

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# A. Executive Summary

### *Introduction*

Over the last several years, Texas has instituted a number of initiatives designed to improve the quality of high school programs and increase graduation rates and success of high school students. According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) 2004-05 Academic Information Excellence System (AEIS) report, approximately 85 percent of Texas high school seniors graduated in the class of 2004. However, certain groups of Texas students fare better than others, with almost 90 percent of White students graduating, compared to 78 percent of Hispanic and 83 percent of African American students completing high school and graduating.

During the 78th session of the Texas Legislature in 2003, Article III, Rider 67 of the General Appropriations Act authorized the Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS) Program. The THSCS Program was designed to target under-performing high school campuses through campus- and student-level interventions. In 2003, THSCS Cycle 1 grants were awarded to 129 school districts and charter schools. A separate evaluation report for Cycle 1 was prepared for TEA by Texas A&M University.

In 2004, Cycle 2 grants were awarded to 106 school districts and open enrollment charter schools. Cycle 2 programs, or interventions, were implemented at 173 campuses within these districts. The grant period was originally scheduled for October 2004 to August 2006. However, TEA extended the end date of the Cycle 2 Grant to February 2007. This Interim Report presents findings on the progress and impact of THSCS Cycle 2 as of the fall of 2006

TEA identified eight guiding principles for applicants to use in designing THSCS Program strategies and activities: high expectations and performance-based accountability; personalized learning environment; common focus and shared values; staff development and time to collaborate; learning partnerships with parents and the community; support and networking; technology as a tool; and coordinated resources. Schools were free to design and select their own interventions based on these principles. The evaluation team grouped the interventions into 26 categories. Eight of the categories were campus-level interventions that affect the entire school, and 18 of the categories were student-level interventions that directly affect targeted students in the school. A complete list of intervention categories, along with descriptions, is provided as *Appendix A*.

### *Implementation of THSCS, Cycle 2 Interventions*

Of the 173 campuses participating in the THSCS Program, 102 campuses, or approximately 60 percent, submitted student participation data as part of this study. A total of 17,884 students participated in THSCS interventions at these 102 campuses during the 2005-06 school year. Participating students represented approximately 14 percent of the total enrollment of the campuses reporting.

Campuses reported the number of contact hours each student received for a particular intervention, such as tutoring or *accelerated instruction in mathematics*. The interventions with

the highest number of contact hours per student were *credit accrual in mathematics* (32.3), *credit accrual* in ELA and *accelerated instruction in mathematics* (27.8 each), and *accelerated instruction in ELA* (24.7). Thirty-seven percent of students who took part in THSCS, participated in two or more interventions funded through this grant program.

The implementation of specific interventions varied from campus to campus. Of all of the possible student-level interventions, grant funds were used most frequently for *tutoring, credit accrual, accelerated instruction, early interventions,* and *programs for the academically at-risk.* More students participated in math-focused interventions than ELA-related interventions. A larger proportion of students participated in *accelerated instruction* (21.6 percent) and *credit accrual* (13.2 percent) in mathematics than *accelerated instruction* (11 percent) and *credit accrual* (5.8 percent) in English language arts.

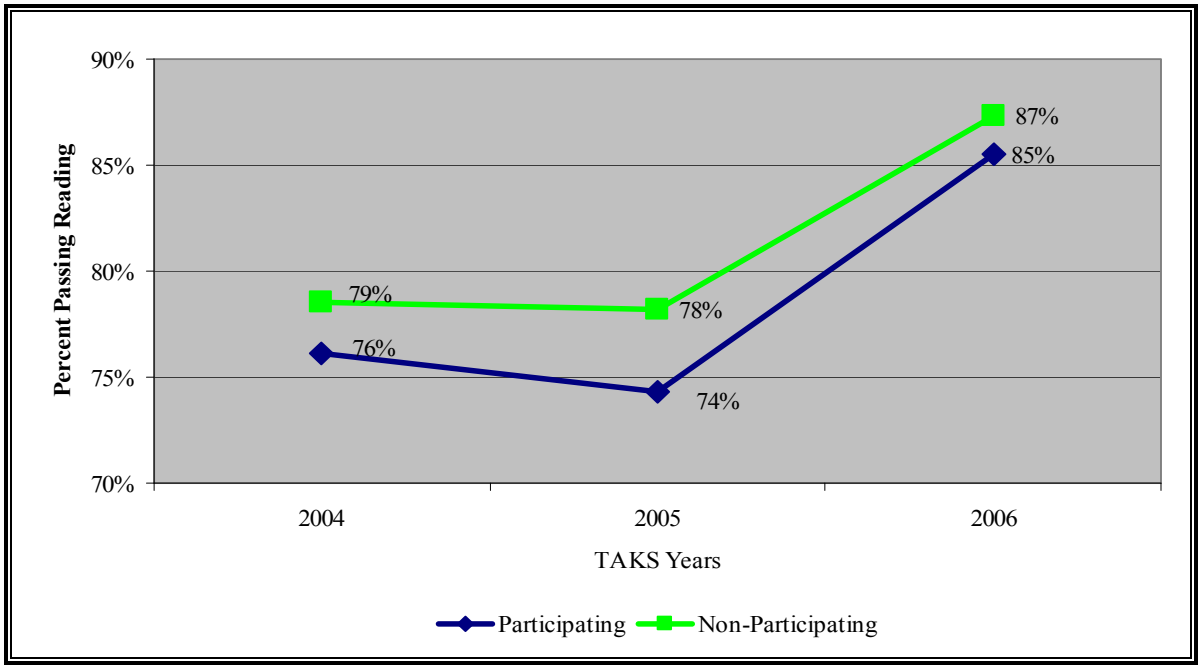
A total of 114 campuses reported information regarding campus-level interventions as of spring 2006. Of the campus-level interventions, the most common were increasing *parental involvement*, *developing partnerships with colleges*, offering *teacher professional development*, and hiring *additional instructional support staff*.

***Impact of THSCS Cycle 2 on TAKS Performance***

Because the THSCS Grant Program was not established as an experimental or quasi-experimental design, it cannot be determined whether the interventions directly caused an increase in student performance. However, it is possible in some cases to show that participation in the program is correlated with certain student outcomes. While there are some exceptions, students who participated in THSCS interventions showed improved Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) performance to a degree that was statistically significant. This is a major finding of this Interim Report.

**Exhibit A-1** shows the change in TAKS Reading performance between 2004 and 2006 for students at THSCS campuses who participated in interventions and those who did not. Since the interventions were implemented in 2004-05, 2003-04 is considered to be the baseline year; 2004-05 is considered to be the first year of the program; and 2005-06 is considered to be the second year of the program. Only students who had valid TAKS scores in each of the three years were included in this analysis, so that change over time could be tracked for each student.

**Exhibit A-1**
**TAKS Reading Performance over Three Years**

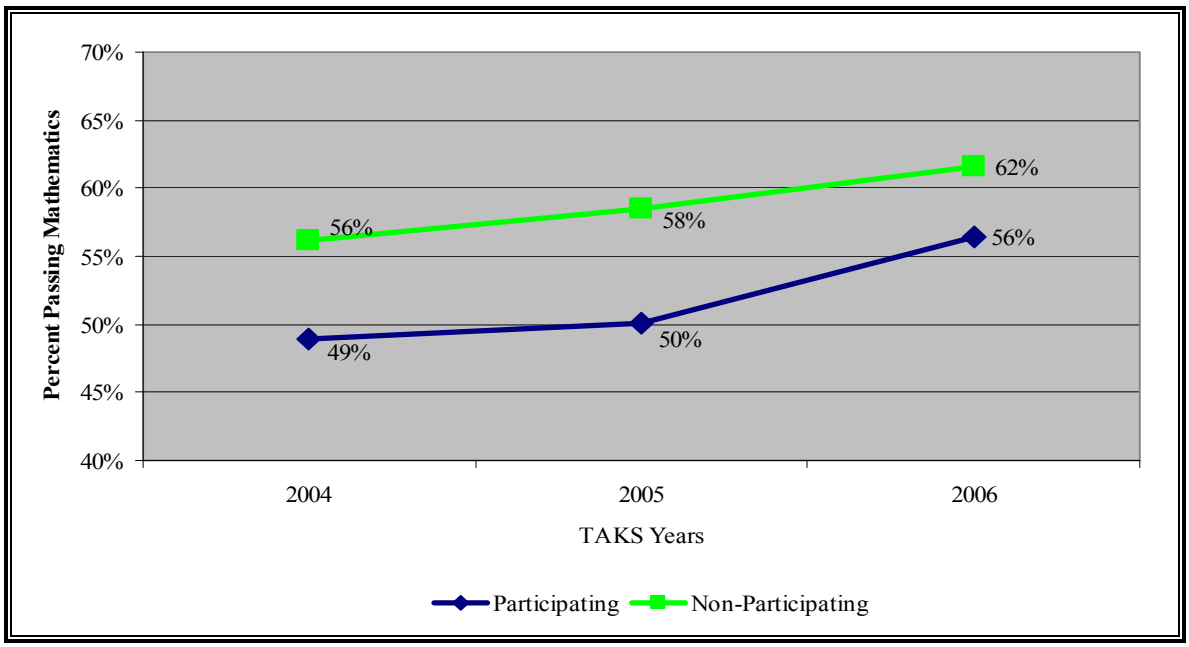



*Source: SEDL database (participation), TEA Student Assessment*
**Note: N for participants = 8,996*
**Note: N for non-participants = 84.469*

Those students who would eventually be included in one of the student level interventions initially showed a 3-percentage point deficit to the other students at their schools in 2004. This increased to a 4-percentage point deficit in 2005. In 2006, the second year of THSCS Cycle 2 implementation, the gap in TAKS Reading decreased to 2-percentage points. While passing rates for participants did not reach the level of non-participants, the smaller gap indicates that participation in the THSCS Program may have led to improved TAKS performance.

The results are similar for TAKS Mathematics. **Exhibit A-2** presents the same trend of TAKS passing rates for participating and non-participating students.

**Exhibit A-2**
**TAKS Mathematics Performance over Three Years**

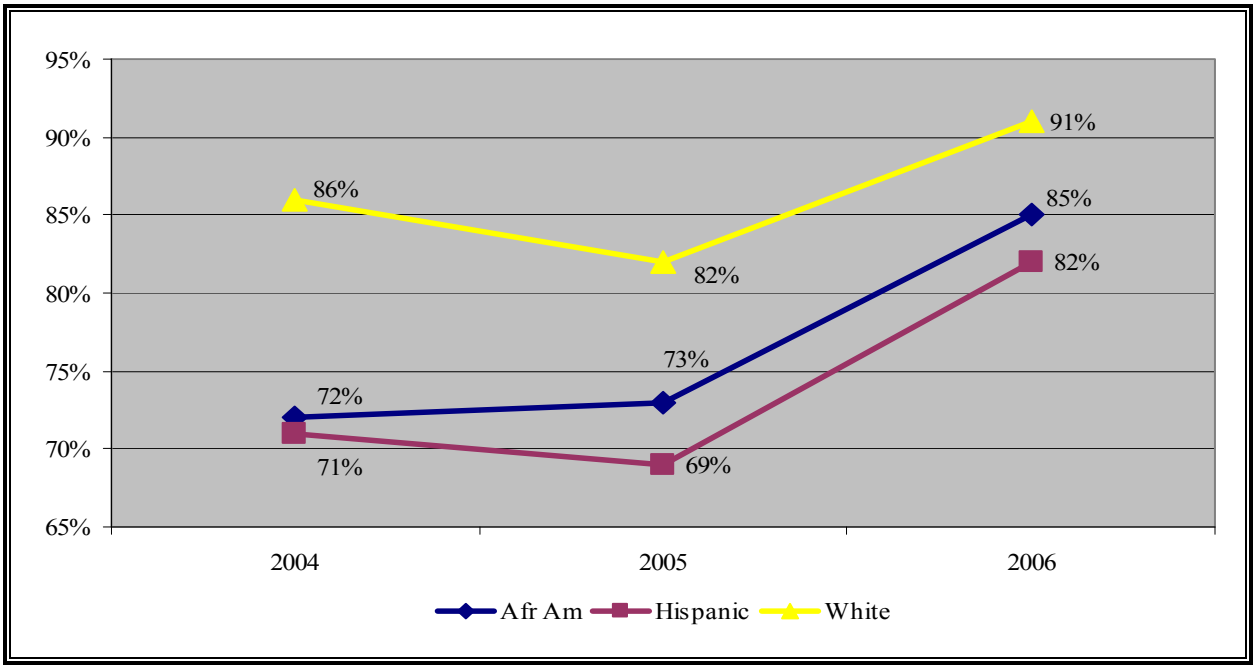



*Source: SEDL database (participation), TEA Student Assessment*
**Note: N for participants = 8.913*
**Note: N for non-participants = 83,469*

In 2004, the students who later participated in one of the student-level THSCS interventions initially had a TAKS passing rate that was approximately 7-percentage points behind non-participating students. This increased to an 8-percentage point deficit in 2005. In 2006, the deficit decreased to 6-percentage points. Although the performance gap was not closed to the extent seen in reading, the initial differences were greater. This data suggest that the interventions had a positive impact on student performance in mathematics.

TAKS performance of participating students was also analyzed by student ethnicity for reading and mathematics. **Exhibit A-3** presents TAKS Reading passing rates for African-American, Hispanic, and White students in the THSCS program from 2004 through 2006.

**Exhibit A-3**
**TAKS Reading Performance by Ethnicity for Three Years**




*Source: SEDL database (participation), TEA Student Assessment*
**Note: Number of participants = 8,996*

These results show a closing gap between African-American and Hispanic student passing rates and TAKS Reading passing rates for White students in 2006. In 2004, the TAKS Reading passing rates for White students (86 percent) was 14-percentage points higher than African-African students (72 percent), and 15-percentage points higher than Hispanic students (71 percent). By 2006, the gap had closed to 6-percentage points for African American students and 9-percentage points for Hispanic students. White students participating in the THSCS Program also showed gains in 2006. Unlike TAKS Reading, TAKS Mathematics passing rates did not show any discernible closing of performance gaps among student ethnicity groups.

Additional statistical analyses show that participation in THSCS interventions appears to relate to improved TAKS performance in both reading and mathematics.

***Program Implementation***

Through a combination of on-site visits and a survey to Cycle 2 grantees, the evaluation team assessed the degree to which interventions were implemented, the factors that contributed to or hindered implementation, and the degree to which the implementation affected school environment and culture.

Overall, these findings tend to show that the most successfully implemented Cycle 2 grant interventions were created or designed to address immediate student needs related to high school retention and graduation. Programs aimed at college readiness and later enrollment in college were either not addressed or not successfully implemented in these schools.

The data indicated that the frequently implemented programs (*tutoring, credit accrual, accelerated instruction, early interventions, and programs for the academically at-risk)* were mostly to fully implemented, and that they were being effectively implemented. Programs experiencing more difficulty in implementation included *dual credit courses*, *advanced placement programs*, *work study*, *mentoring*, and *parental involvement activities*. A review of interview responses from grantees that were highly successful in implementing their interventions indicated that their success was in large part due to the fact that they proposed and implemented relatively small and manageable scopes of work directed at addressing existing needs of the schools. Inappropriate staffing and/or resources, as well as lack of time were frequently reported as reasons for failing to implement program activities.

Factors that facilitated the successful implementation of program activities included district support, strong school leadership, and school staff support and buy-in. Site visit data confirmed that strong leadership and a coordination between the district and staff responsible for implementing the interventions were characteristics of successfully implemented interventions.

From survey data, the factor most frequently identified as hindering program implementation was a lack of time. However, in addition to the time factor, site visit participants noted that hindering factors were also associated with poor planning, over-commitments, lack of staff buy-in, insufficient resources, and inadequate staff development and training. Further discussions with site visit participants revealed the importance of planning and having program staff contribute to the planning process.

With respect to outcomes of the grantee interventions, survey data focused primarily on school environment and culture. Findings indicated that students received more personalized learning opportunities and access to technology/instructional resources, and that school staff had increased levels of common values for high expectations in their students than prior to the grant interventions. Interview and focus group participants reported an increased ability to identify and address student weaknesses and instructional needs, primarily due to grant activities such as developing and using *Individual Graduation Plans* (IGPs), *targeted counseling services*, and *early intervention programs*. Across the sites, interviewees commented on how the grant program had positively impacted students in a number of ways including improved attendance, recovery of course credits, increased graduation rates, and higher TAKS performance. Students themselves spoke of higher levels of motivation to complete high school and confidence that they could attain that goal.

Many of the THSCS grant interventions, such as *credit recovery, accelerated instruction,* and *tutoring*, enhanced the ways schools addressed the needs of students in at-risk situations (dropping out of school, failing courses, or failing TAKS). This was exemplified by school staff working together to provide students with individualized learning opportunities that addressed their particular needs and by holding high expectations for achievement. These changes occurred largely as a result of strong leadership, careful planning, and an organized, committed staff who held a common vision for student achievement in the school.

*Cost Analysis of THSCS Cycle 2*

Amounts awarded to school districts through THSCS Cycle 2 ranged from $15,000 to $600,000. Overall, school districts spent approximately 78 percent of the total Cycle 2 grant funds that were awarded as of May 31, 2006. TEA extended the grant period from August 31, 2006 to February 28, 2007. The largest percentage of expenditures to date is salaries and benefits at 48 percent followed by supplies and materials at 32 percent.

Expenditures at the intervention level are not available because the program did not require expenditures to be tracked at this level. The evaluation team plans to reconstruct intervention level costs of selected Top 20 High Performing Schools on site visits in early 2007 and will report findings in the Final Report in the summer of 2007.

## B. Introduction

In February 2005, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a third-party consultant to evaluate the second cycle of the Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS) grant, in accordance with the requirements of Rider 67, High School Completion and Success, of Article III of the General Appropriations Act, 78th Legislature. The evaluation was to include:

- A comprehensive analysis of THSCS, Cycle 2 Grant Programs, which shall include a qualitative evaluation of THSCS, Cycle 2 Grant Programs and a quantitative campus-level analysis of THSCS, Cycle 2 Grant Programs.
- A sustainability analysis of THSCS, Cycle 1 grantees to determine the degree to which activities and strategies implemented during the grant period continued after funding concluded on August 31, 2005.

In March 2005, TEA selected the proposal submitted by Gibson Consulting Group, Inc. (Gibson) and the Southwest Educational Development Laboratories (SEDL). Gibson and SEDL partnered with a third firm, Academic Information Management, Inc. (AIM), to conduct the study. Each firm was responsible for different elements of the study, with Gibson providing overall project management for the study. Actions included in the study were then divided among the primary proposers and a subcontractor.

- SEDL conducted surveys, participated in site visits, and provided qualitative analyses.
- AIM participated in the site visits and was responsible for student and campus-level quantitative analyses.
- Gibson participated in the site visits, conducted the cost analysis, and provided project management.

This report is the Interim Report on the comprehensive analysis of THSCS, Cycle 2 grants. The THSCS, Cycle 1 sustainability report will be delivered separately. Additional analyses will be conducted based on data collected by TEA during the 2006-07 school year, and the results will be included in a final report which will be completed in the summer of 2007.

### Background of the Texas High School Completion and Success Grant

#### *National Statistics on Dropout and School Completion*

According to a 2002 report by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), hundreds of thousands of students in the United States leave school early each year without a diploma (NCES, 2002). This report provided some discouraging statistics:

- Approximately one in eight children in the United States never graduate high school.
- Based on calculations per school day (180 days of seven hours each), one high school student drops out every nine seconds.

- Hispanic students are more likely to have dropped out of school than Black or White students.
- On average, students from low-income families are at an increased risk of not completing school. The dropout rate is 10 percent for low-income, 5.2 percent for middle-income, and 1.6 percent for high income.
- The dropout rate for students with emotional disturbance is approximately twice that of general education students.

Recent legislation has focused national attention on increasing the rate of school completion. The No Child Left Behind Act holds schools accountable for student progress using indicators of adequate yearly progress that include measures of academic performance and rates of school completion. Schools are identified as needing improvement if their overall performance does not annually increase or if identified subgroups do not meet specified criteria.

***Who Drops Out of School and Why?***

Predictors and variables associated with high school dropouts have been identified. Some of these variables are status variables (e.g., socioeconomic standing, disability or ability level, family structure). These are beyond the ability of the schools to change, but they do appear to have relationships with dropout rates. For instance[1]:

- **Age**. Students who drop out are more likely to be older than their grade-level peers.
- **Gender**. Male students are more likely to drop out than female students. Females who drop out often do so due to reasons associated with pregnancy.
- **Socioeconomic background**. Dropouts are more likely to come from low-income families.
- **Ethnicity**. The rate of dropout is higher on average for Black, Hispanic, and Native American youth than for White youth.
- **Native language**. Students who come from non-English speaking backgrounds are more likely to have higher rates of dropout.
- **Family structure.** Students who come from single-parent families are at a greater risk of dropping out.

Other variables (e.g., attendance, identification with school) are possible to change and can often be influenced by students, parents, educators, and community members. Some examples of these variables are[2]:

[1] Macmillan, 1991; Rosenthal, 1998; Rumberger, 1995, 2001
[2] Macmillian, 1991; Rosenthal, 1998; Rumberger, 1995, 2001

- **Grades.** Students with poor grades are at greater risk of dropping out.
- **Disruptive behavior.** Students who drop out are more likely to have had disciplinary problems in school.
- **Absenteeism.** Low attendance rates are a strong predictor of dropping out.
- **School climate.** Positive school climate is associated with lower dropout rates.
- **Stressful life events.** Increased levels of stress and the presence of stressors (e.g., financial difficulty, health problems, and early parenthood) are associated with increased dropout rates.

If schools can implement programs to address these variables by increasing attendance rates or improving student performance, they should be able to reduce, at least to some extent, their dropout rates.

### *Preventing Dropout or Enhancing School Completion*

In recent literature on issues related to student dropout, there has been a notable shift in focus from preventing dropout to promoting school completion. Although dropout and school completion can be viewed as two sides of a single issue, there are differences in meaning, orientation, and implications for intervention and research practices. According to Christenson, Sinclair, Lehr, and Hurley (2000), school completion encompasses more than preventing dropout.

> *School completion is oriented toward a longitudinal focus, whereby interventions aim to promote a "good" outcome, not simply prevent a "bad" outcome for students and society. (p. 472)*

Instead of using approaches designed to increase attendance that temporarily mask the dropout rates, interventions to enhance school completion address core issues associated with student alienation and disengagement from school. In addition, more attention is being given to understanding the complex interplay between student, family, school, and community variables (Lehr, Hansen, Sinclair, & Christenson, 2003). The extent to which interventions are based on current understanding of dropout and school completion is critical to the development of effective interventions.

### *Key Components of Dropout Prevention*

Components of educational interventions designed to address dropout and school completion are routinely practiced in schools across the United States. These interventions vary widely and can include counseling services, tutoring, attendance monitoring, after-school programs, alternative school placements, and pregnancy prevention interventions. Reviews of prevention and intervention studies addressing dropout or school completion have identified a wide range of strategies for retaining students in schools. These strategies include[3]:

[3] Martin, Tobin, & Sugai, 2002; Rumberger, 2001; Lehr, et al., 2003

- Creating small schools with smaller class sizes and more personalized environments.
- Allowing teachers to know students better (e.g., building relationships, enhanced communication).
- Monitoring and targeting the occurrence of risk behaviors (e.g., regularly collect data and measure effects of timely interventions).
- Providing early interventions including comprehensive family involvement, early childhood education, and strong reading and writing programs.
- Using community relationships to take a broader approach to dropout prevention (e.g., career education, school-to-work programs, and conflict resolution and violence prevention programs to enhance effective personal skills).
- Providing individual assistance (academic and behavioral).
- Helping students address personal and family issues through counseling and access to social services.
- Assisting students to obtain GED certificates.
- Recognizing the importance of families in their children's achievement and school completion.
- Providing opportunities for success in schoolwork (e.g., intensive reading instruction in early grades, tutoring, and curriculum modification to increase relevance).
- Creating caring and supportive environments (mentoring, organizing extracurricular environments).
- Helping students with personal problems (e.g., on-site health care, counseling, child care).

### *Texas Statistics on Dropout and School Completion*

Over the last several years, Texas has instituted a number of interventions and initiatives designed to improve the quality of high school programs and increase graduation rates and success of high school students. According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) 2004-05 Academic Information Excellence System (AEIS) report, approximately 85 percent of Texas high school seniors graduated (class of 2004). However, certain groups of Texas students fare better than others, with almost 90 percent of White students graduating compared to only 78 percent of Hispanic and 83 percent of African American students completing high school and graduating (TEA, 2004-05). While the graduation rate for Hispanic students in Texas is slightly higher than the national average of 77 percent, the graduation rates for White students and Black students are lower than the national averages of 94 and 89 percent, respectively.[4]

Given this historical performance pattern, during the regular session in 2003, the 78th Texas Legislature, through Rider 67 of Article III of the General Appropriations Act, authorized the Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS) Grants to establish comprehensive high

[4] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics, 2004*.

school completion and success initiatives. The THSCS grant program was designed to target under-performing high schools and high schools with low high school completion rates through student-focused competitive grants that provide support services to students in grades 9 through 12. The Cycle 1 THSCS grants were awarded to 244 campuses located in 129 school districts and charter schools. Award periods began in February 2004 with funding through February 2006. In February 2005, an evaluation report covering Cycle 1 was prepared for TEA by the College of Education and Human Development, Texas A&M University. Cycle 2 of the THSCS grants included awards to 106 school districts and open enrollment charter schools; programs were implemented at 173 campuses within these districts. Funding was originally scheduled during the period of October 2004 to August 2006. Amounts awarded to school districts ranged from $15,000 to $600,000. This Interim Report presents our findings on the progress and impact of Cycle 2.

TEA lists eight guiding principles for applicants to use in designing the THSCS Grant Program strategies and activities:

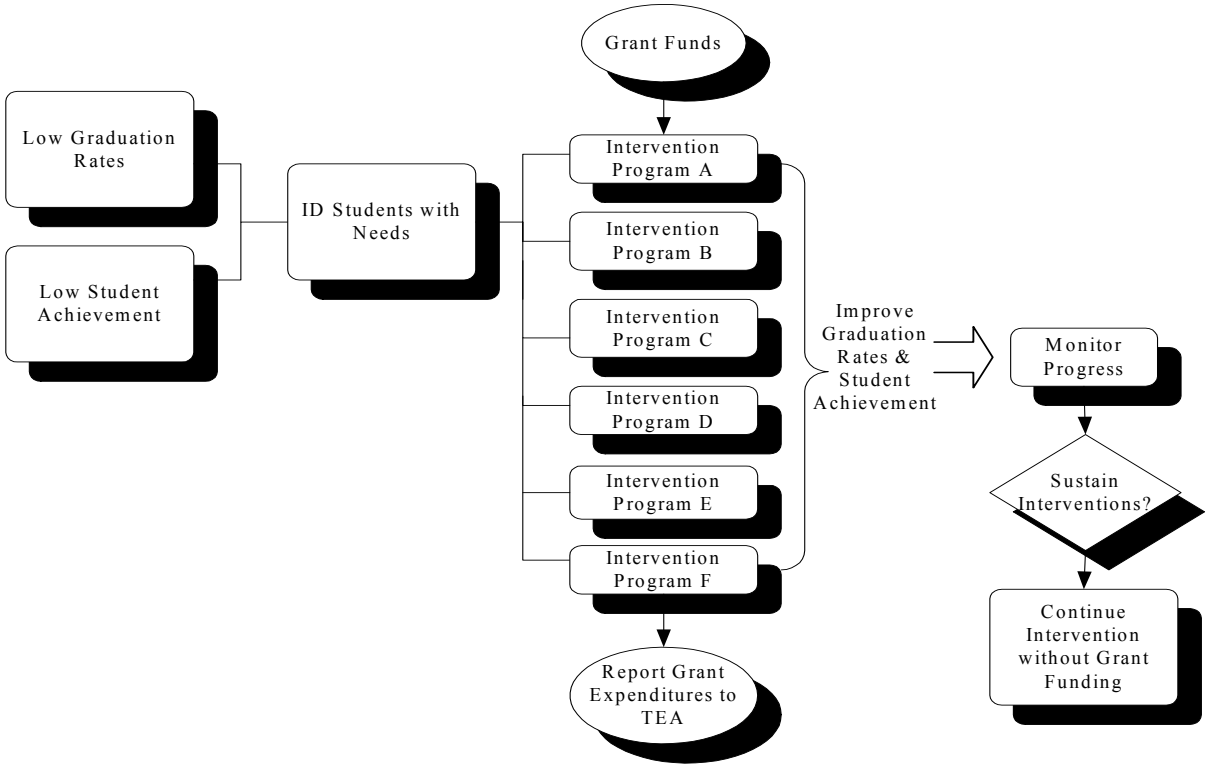
1. **High expectations and performance-based accountability**: THSCS schools will adhere to the Texas accountability system while also monitoring college-readiness indicators, such as Advanced Placement participation and enrollment in dual credit courses, and clearly stated benchmarks for improved student achievement and attainment, including graduation rates.
2. **Personalized learning environment**: Each student will have a meaningful relationship with a least one adult in the high school.
3. **Common focus and shared values**: The school and its community will share the values of high academic expectations, accountability, and a focus on students.
4. **Staff development and time to collaborate**: As part of the district and campus integrated improvement process, schools will establish clear benchmarks that measure links between teacher training and student achievement.
5. **Learning partnerships with parents and the community**: Parents and the community will be meaningfully engaged in the daily lives of students and the school. Through internships and mentorships, students will be involved in the community.
6. **Support and networking**: Schools have clearly-defined support systems for innovative interventions, strategies, and models, and will seek out networking opportunities for staff and teachers.
7. **Technology as a tool**: Schools will incorporate sufficient access to technology and support, and provide appropriate access to computers, graphing calculators, four-function scientific calculators, the Internet, and digital and Web-based instructional resources.
8. **Coordinated resources**: Schools will eliminate duplication of resources and ensure coordination of federal, state, and local programs.

## General Approach and Analytical Framework

One of the challenges of this study is the wide variation that exists among interventions across the different schools. Each THSCS, Cycle 2 funded campus has a variety of student needs and has consequently designed a variety of approaches and interventions to address these needs. Furthermore, each campus has received various levels of funding and is expected to implement different interventions. Each campus, however, is working toward the same goal to improve student outcomes, such as student achievement and graduation rates.

**Exhibit B-1** presents an overview of the grant program. School districts and campuses identify and seek to act on indicators of low performance, such as low graduation rates and low student performance on standardized tests. The data is "decomposed" to identify specific students and specific needs. These needs may be addressed through one or more interventions. The THSCS grant funds are used to provide resources for these interventions, and the campuses report their grant expenditures to TEA periodically. Schools and school districts are responsible for monitoring the progress of these students based on specific interventions by analyzing student performance data. At the end of the grant period, if it is determined that one or more interventions were successful, then the school may choose to continue supporting the interventions by allocating its own local maintenance funds to support them. This is a classic example of how grant funding is to be used in public education – to experiment with new ideas to see what works in addressing specific student needs.

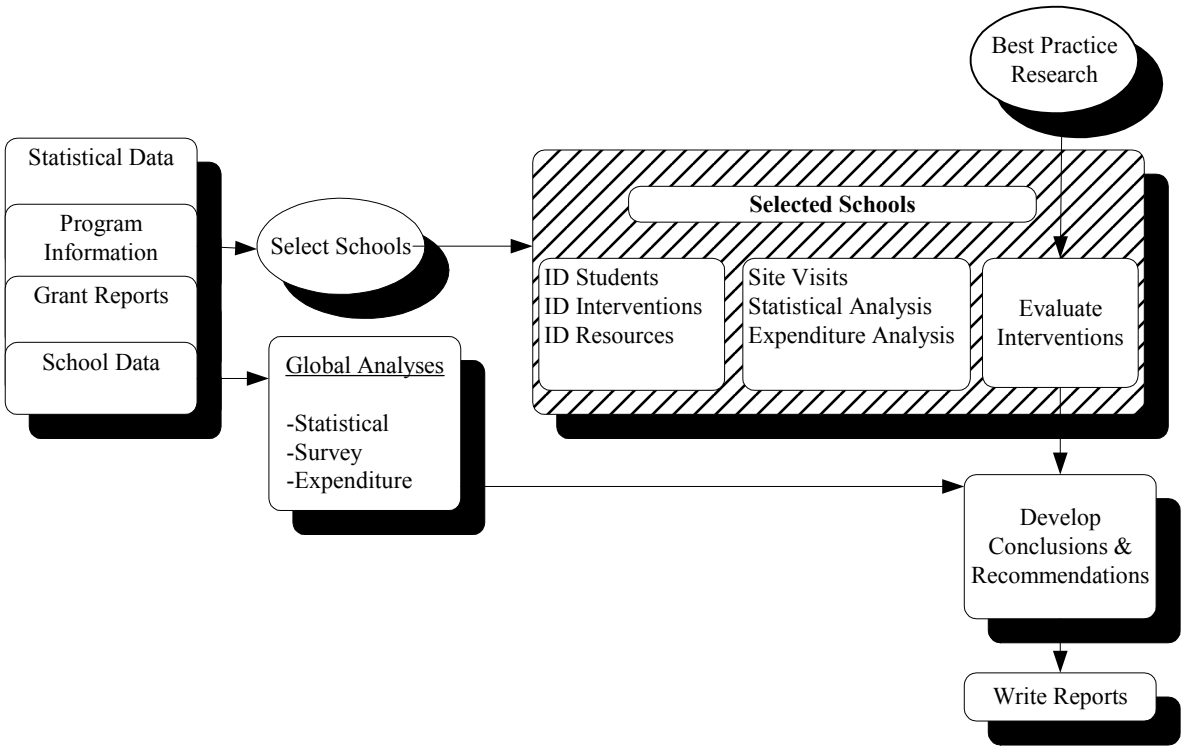
**Exhibit B-1**
**Overview of the THSCS Grant Program**



Our evaluation accommodated the diversity of interventions and approaches by addressing the common aspects of the THSCS grants and by collecting additional contextual information that may be unique to each school but is supportive of their THSCS intervention implementation.

To perform the analysis required by the RFP, data were collected and analyzed, surveys were conducted, and schools were selected for site visits. The work also involved the identification and analysis of campus-level and student-level interventions and their impact on student performance. The scope of work was expanded to include an analysis of program expenditures. Cost is an important factor in program decisions, as school districts and charter schools must consider the cost of specific interventions in deciding to continue or sustain them. **Exhibit B-2** represents our conceptual approach to this work.

**Exhibit B-2**
**Conceptual Overview of Approach**




## Key Objectives and Evaluation Questions

The following objectives for this project were defined in the RFP:

- To assess the quality of the THSCS, Cycle 2 Grant Programs implemented at grantee campuses and their impact on student achievement results.
- To document observed changes at THSCS, Cycle 2 grantee campuses between the spring 2005 and spring 2006 site visits, and complete a cross-site analysis of programmatic successes (activities that were successful in improving student achievement) and failures (activities that failed to significantly affect graduation rates and student achievement).

- To determine how the grant program has affected the attitudes and culture of the campuses where the project was implemented.
- To determine best practices for improving student achievement and increasing graduation rates observed at sampled THSCS Cycle 2 grantee campuses and create case studies of each of the sampled campuses.
- To determine if participation in the THSCS, Cycle 2 Grant Program resulted in better student achievement outcomes (e.g., graduation rates, grade retention rates, and TAKS passing rates) for Cycle 2 grantees than for similar unfunded campuses.
- To determine which activities and strategies, or combinations of activities and strategies, seemed to have the most profound impact on the various student achievement outcomes.

To address these objectives, the evaluation questions were grouped into four areas of analysis:

| Area of Analysis | Evaluation Questions |
|---|---|
| Quality and Progress of the THSCS, Cycle 2 Grant Interventions | ▪ How were grant funds used by THSCS, Cycle 2 grantees and what types of interventions were implemented?<br>▪ To what degree and quality were grant interventions implemented during the grant period?<br>▪ What factors contributed to or hindered implementation of various interventions at THSCS, Cycle 2 campuses?<br>▪ To what degree was the implementation of THSCS, Cycle 2 interventions perceived to be associated with improved school environment and culture? |
| Relationship between THSCS, Cycle 2 Grants and Student Outcomes | ▪ Are student outcomes levels higher for certain groups of students in THSCS, Cycle 2 schools (e.g., student groups included in TEA's accountability analyses)?<br>▪ How do THSCS, Cycle 2 student outcomes compare to those of other unfunded schools with similar characteristics and student demographics? |
| Cost Effectiveness of THSCS, Cycle 2 Campus Support Services | ▪ How are schools allocating their resources?<br>▪ What do the interventions cost? |
| Identification of Best Practices Supporting High School Graduation and Post-Secondary Enrollment | ▪ Across the Cycle 2 schools, what intervention strategies were associated with higher levels of student outcomes?<br>▪ Of the Cycle 2 schools identified as having higher than average increases in student achievement and graduation rates, what intervention features were reported as most essential?<br>▪ To what degree do interventions identified by cross-site analyses align with the literature on dropout prevention and high school completion? |

This Interim Report provides our findings in the first three areas with the exception of comparing the THSCS participants with comparable students at unfunded schools. The Final Report, to be

issued in the summer of 2007, will include statistical comparisons of student performance results for THSCS participants and students at unfunded campuses, as well as the identification of best practices supporting high school graduation and post-secondary enrollment.

## Report Format

**Section C** of this Interim Report describes the methods used by the evaluation team, including the data sources used and types of analysis conducted.

**Section D** provides findings on the quality and progress of the THSCS, Cycle 2 implementation, including: how the funds are being used and what types of interventions have been implemented; to what degree and quality of the interventions that have been implemented; what factors contributed to or hindered the implementation; and to what degree the implementation of THSCS is associated with improved school environment and culture so far.

**Section E** addresses the relationship between THSCS, Cycle 2 grants and student outcomes. This section presents information on the types of students that participated in the program, as well as the impact of the program and specific interventions on TAKS performance. The program impact on other outcomes, such as credits earned, attendance rates, dropout rates, and graduation rates, will be presented in the Final Report in the summer of 2007.

**Section F** of this Interim Report provides the findings of the cost analysis of the THSCS, Cycle 2 Grant Program. This section also presents an overview on how the schools and school districts allocated the grant funds overall, and includes an expenditure comparison between the Top 20 high performing schools with other selected schools.

## C. Methodological and Analytical Approach

This section presents the various methodologies used for this THSCS, Cycle 2 Grant Program Interim Report including the document review, the Cycle 2 survey, site visits, student performance analysis, and cost analysis.

### Document Review

The evaluation began with a review of funded THSCS, Cycle 2 grant applications, which included summaries of grantee interventions, their stated goals, the types of students they serve, and the amount of funds devoted to the interventions at each grant-supported campus. Evaluators used the information from the grant applications to identify and categorize the variety of grant-supported interventions planned by the Cycle 2 grantees. . Descriptions of the intervention types were developed and shared with grant administrators at a Cycle 1 campus who provided feedback regarding the applicability and accuracy of the potential program categories. A refined list of interventions and their descriptions was submitted and approved by TEA (*Appendix A*). This list of interventions and their descriptions were used in items across the various evaluation instruments (surveys, site-visit protocols, and student participation database) to help classify the types of interventions being implemented at each grant-supported campus. In addition, the grant applications included grantee contact information, which was used to develop survey and site-visit contact databases for the study.

### Cycle 2 Survey

The evaluation team developed and administered a survey to all Cycle 2 grantee schools to gather information from a sample of school staff regarding their perceptions of the THSCS, Cycle 2 grant initiative. Survey respondents were asked to report the grant-supported interventions at their school, the degree of program implementation, and factors influencing implementation and sustainability.

#### *Survey Development*

The surveys were created based on the evaluation team's understanding of the THSCS, Cycle 2 interventions gained through document reviews of the funded grant applications; a review of relevant research and existing surveys; and feedback provided by site evaluators who had completed THSCS, Cycle 2 site visits in the summer and fall of 2005.

The Cycle 2 Survey was designed to collect school staff's perceptions regarding the following elements:

- Background and experiences
- Types of grant-supported interventions that existed at the schools
- Quality of planning the interventions
- Degree of implementation
- Factors that facilitated and impeded implementation
- Types of staff supported by grant funds
- Interaction of interventions with existing programs

- Support from central office, campus administration
- Best aspects or least productive aspects of interventions
- Changes planned for next year and reasons for such changes

The survey underwent a series of reviews to check for item clarity, including an internal review among evaluation partners and a review by TEA staff and external content advisors. The Cycle 2 survey (*Appendix B*) was submitted to TEA's Data and Information Review Committee (DIRC) and approved on November 3, 2005 for use in the study.

***Survey Administration***

Surveys were administered by mail to the principal at each Cycle 2 campus. The cover letters requested that the campus principals complete one of the surveys and identify three to five key staff to also complete the surveys (*Appendix D*). Web versions of the surveys were also made available. Each survey respondent was given the option to return the paper survey using an enclosed, pre-paid return envelope or to complete an online version of the survey using a unique identification number. The identification number allowed the evaluation team to track the school response rates and identify non-respondents. To ensure a reasonable response rate, the evaluation team conducted follow-up activities (e.g., phone calls and e-mails) to Cycle 2 principals to encourage survey completion.

***Survey Sample***

The survey sample consisted of school staff working closely with the grant-supported interventions. Examples of appropriate school staff to complete the survey included:

- Campus Principals
- Assistant Principals
- Project Directors/Grant Coordinators
- Teachers/Curriculum Specialists
- Counselors/Technical Staff/Support Staff
- Tutors/Mentors

With approximately 173 high schools receiving Cycle 2 grant funds and three to six surveys for every school, the total survey sample was expected to be 519 to 1038 potential respondents. **Exhibits C-1** and **C-2** show the response rates for the survey administered in fall 2005 by number of campuses returning surveys and by total number of survey respondents.

**Exhibit C-1**
**Cycle 2 Survey Response Rate by Campus**

| Number of Campuses Surveyed | Number of Campuses Removed from Sample* | Total Number of Campuses in Sample | Number of Campuses Responding | Number of Campuses NOT Responding | Campus Response Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 178 | 5 | 173 | 142 | 31 | 82% |

*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
**Indicated they were not receiving THSCS funds.*

**Exhibit C-2**
**Cycle 2 Survey Response Rate by Respondents on Campus**

| Total Number of Surveys Distributed | Total Number Surveys Returned Mail | Total Number Surveys Returned Online | Total Number Surveys Returned | Survey Response Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1038 (173 campuses X 6 surveys) | 393 | 153 | 546 | 53%* |

*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
**Most conservative response rate given option to complete 3-6 surveys for each campus.*

### *Background Characteristics of Survey Respondents*

Respondents were asked to report their role in the THSCS Program at their campus, the funding sources for their positions, and the percentage of time that they were involved in both the planning and the day-to-day operations of program activities. As shown in **Exhibit C-3**, the majority of survey respondents said that they were campus principals or teachers. The remaining respondents said they held other administrative positions such as assistant principals, grant coordinators, tutors, coordinators, assistants, or paraprofessionals.

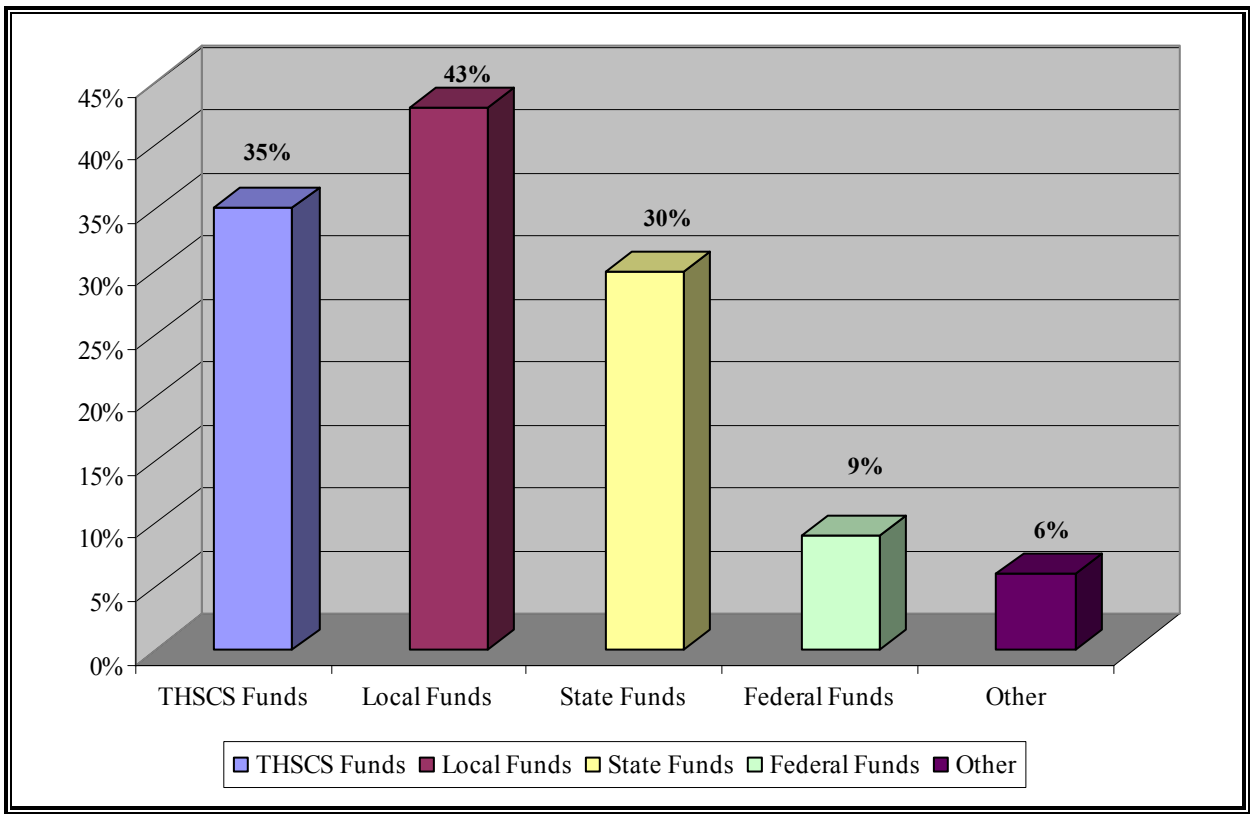
**Exhibit C-3**
**Staff Positions in the THSCS Grant Funded Program**

| Position* | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Project Director/Grant Coordinator | 65 | 11 % |
| Campus Principal | 121 | 21 % |
| Other Administrator (e.g., Asst. Principal, Dean) | 28 | 5 % |
| Teacher | 208 | 36 % |
| Counselor | 72 | 13 % |
| Other:<br>▪ Academic/School Program Coordinator<br>▪ Program Specialist/Facilitator/Paraprofessional<br>▪ Tutor/Mentor<br>▪ Assistant/Aide/Volunteer/Liaison | 79 | 14 % |
| Total | 573 | 100 % |

*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
** Survey respondents had the option to mark more than one position.*

Respondents said that their positions in the THSCS Program were primarily funded through a combination of the THSCS grant, local, and state funding sources. Approximately 6 percent of respondents reported other sources such as Title I funds or state foundation grants as supporting THSCS program activities. **Exhibit C-4** shows these findings.

**Exhibit C-4**
**THSCS Program Funding Sources**

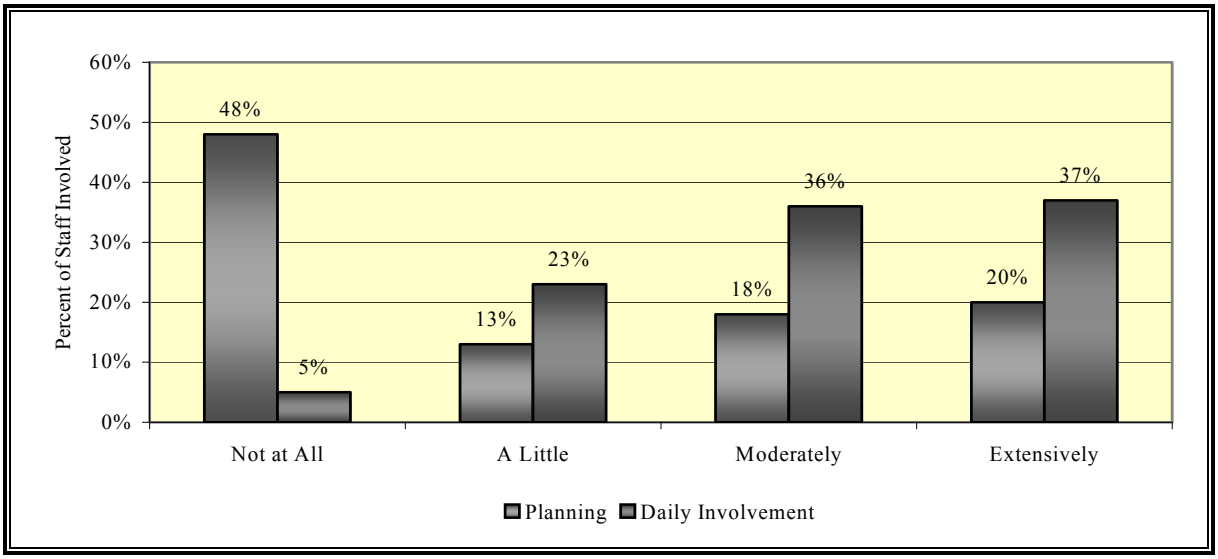



*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
*Note: Respondents could mark more than one source of intervention funding leading to greater than 100 percent.*

Approximately 50 percent of survey respondents reported that they were not involved at all in the planning of THSCS program activities or strategies at their school, and 20 percent indicated that they were extensively involved (n = 530). With respect to the day-to-day operations, 73 percent reported being either moderately or extensively involved, and only 5 percent said they were not at all involved (n = 536)[5]. **Exhibit C-5** shows these results.

[5] Differences between the total number of respondents to items occur when respondents leave some items blank.

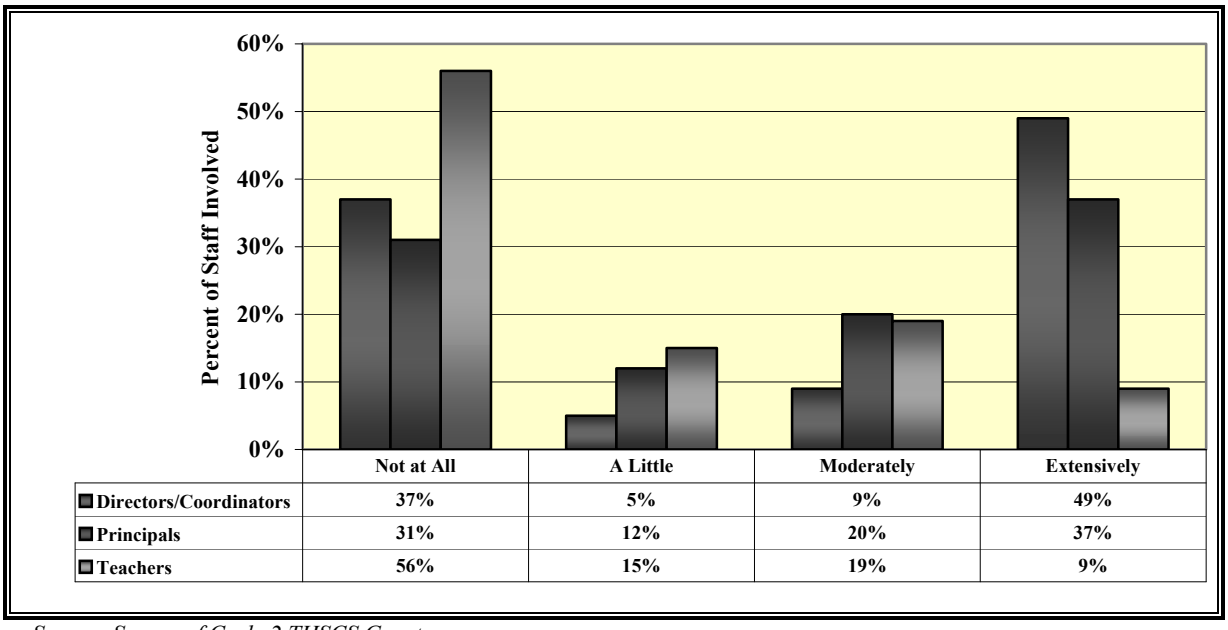
**Exhibit C-5**
**Planning and Day-to-Day Program Activities**




*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*

Viewing responses by program position, approximately 50 percent of project directors/coordinators and 37 percent of school administrators reported being extensively involved with the planning of program activities, while only 9 percent of teachers reported involvement. In fact, 56 percent of the teachers indicated that they had not been involved in the planning stages of the THSCS program activities. **Exhibit C-6** illustrates these results.

**Exhibit C-6**
**Staff Involvement in Program Planning**

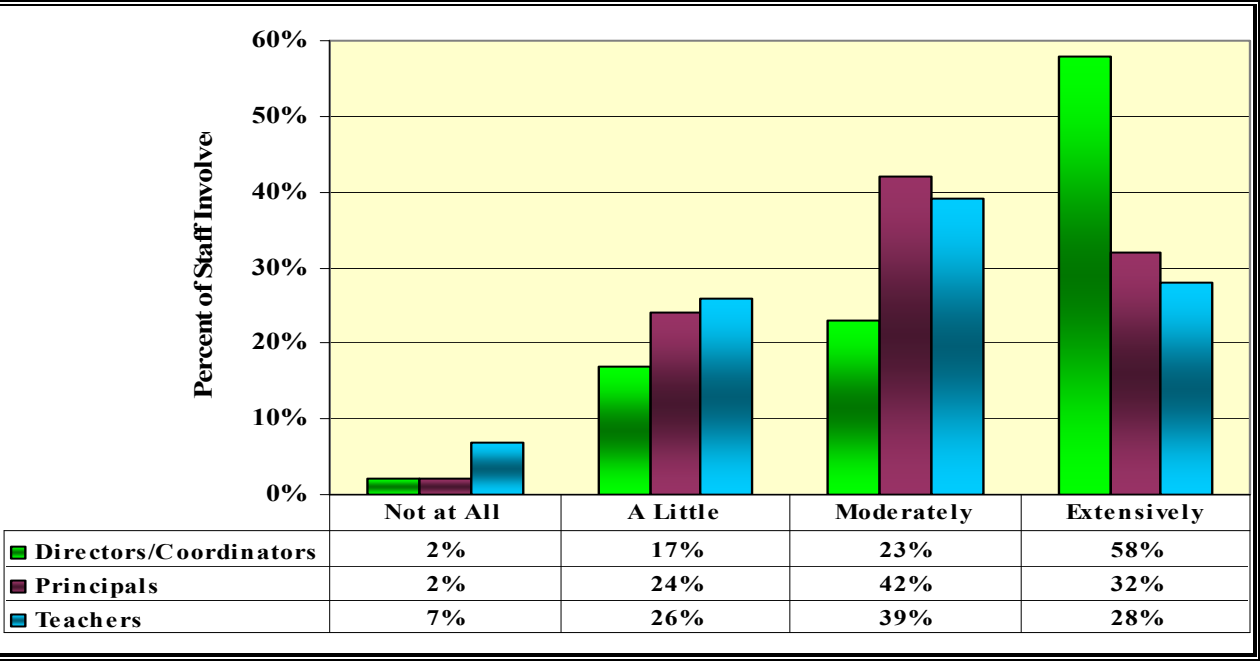



| | Not at All | A Little | Moderately | Extensively |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Directors/Coordinators | 37% | 5% | 9% | 49% |
| Principals | 31% | 12% | 20% | 37% |
| Teachers | 56% | 15% | 19% | 9% |

*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*

In the day-to-day program, however, 67 percent of the teachers reported being moderately to extensively involved. Project directors/coordinators and campus principals also reported high involvement in the daily operation of the program. **Exhibit C-7** shows these results.

**Exhibit C-7**
**Staff Involvement in Day-to-Day Program Implementation**

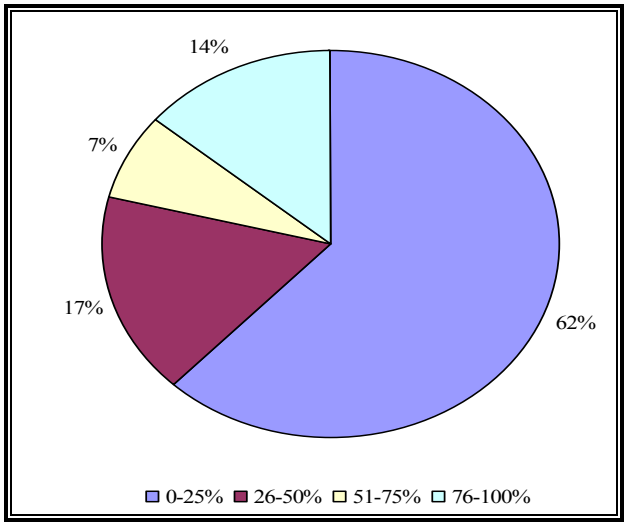



| | Not at All | A Little | Moderately | Extensively |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Directors/Coordinators | 2% | 17% | 23% | 58% |
| Principals | 2% | 24% | 42% | 32% |
| Teachers | 7% | 26% | 39% | 28% |

*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*

Respondents were also asked about the percent of their time that they dedicated to THSCS program activities. As shown in **Exhibit C-8** below, nearly two-thirds of the respondents reported spending less than 25 percent of their time on THSCS program activities. Principals spent the least amount of time directly involved in program activities (86 percent spent between 0-25 percent and less than 1 percent spent between 76-100 percent. This finding suggests that their daily involvement (noted as relatively high in **Exhibit C-7** above) may be in more of a supportive/administrative role rather than direct involvement in daily activities. Teachers (15 percent), program directors/coordinators (20 percent), and other program staff (20 percent) spent more of their time working directly with program activities (between 76-100 percent).

**Exhibit C-8**
**Percent of Time Dedicated to THSCS Program Activities**




*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
*Note:* N = 540.

### *Survey Analyses*

Survey data were entered into a standard database and analyzed and summarized using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics were used to compile responses to survey items across the entire survey sample as well as for each of the Cycle 2 campuses. To determine levels of implementation for each grantee campus, an average of survey responses on implementation for a minimum of three respondents was computed and reported for a total mean campus score. Campuses with fewer than three respondents were dropped from this analysis.

## Site Visits

An important element of the evaluation design was to collect data from on-site visits to validate the data collected by the Cycle 2 surveys. The site visit data captured a richer understanding of the factors that contributed to or detracted from the implementation of various THSCS grant interventions and perceptions regarding related student outcomes. Two rounds of site visits were completed. The first round of site visits occurred in the summer and fall of 2005. Follow-up site visits occurred spring and summer of 2006. Results from these site visits will be incorporated into cross-site summaries and will contribute to the identification of best practices. A team of eight evaluators (six SEDL staff and two AIM staff) conducted the site visits.

### *Site-Visit Sample*

TEA supplied the evaluation team with the Cycle 2 awardees' grant applications from which the team created a list of schools receiving Cycle 2 funds. With the target of obtaining approximately 20 sites for the study, the evaluation team selected a stratified sample of 45 Cycle 2 schools representing a variety of program interventions, geographic areas, and student demographics. This sample size allowed for non-response and scheduling conflicts that might eliminate potential sites. The evaluation team reviewed the sample and discussed the benefits and

challenges related to certain schools on the list. The list of suggested schools for the sample was submitted to TEA for review and approval. Letters and postcards were mailed to the principals at the 45 Cycle 2 schools, explaining the site-visit schedules and asking them to indicate preferred dates for the visits on a postage-paid postcard. A total of 34 schools responded with site-visit preferences (75 percent response rate). A draft site-visit schedule was prepared and site visits were arranged for a total of 26 Cycle 2 schools. Inclusion as a site occurred when site preferences aligned with the travel schedules of evaluators and when travel arrangements were possible. One site, Paul Brown Alternative school in Beaumont, was removed from the sample in September 2005 as a result of the damage sustained from Hurricane Rita, reducing the sample size to 25 schools. **Exhibit C-9** presents the schools that received site visits, their region, and school characteristics.

**Exhibit C-9**
**Characteristics of Participating Schools**
**2005 and 2006 On-Site Visits**

| Site | High School Name | District Name | ESC | Student Enrollment | Percent Economically Disadvantaged | Percent African American | Percent Hispanic | Percent White | Percent Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Cooper [1] | Abilene | 14 | 1,898 | 38.1% | 13.7% | 20.4% | 63.6% | 2.3% |
| | EXCEL [1] | Abilene | 14 | 238 | 66.0% | 10.5% | 55.5% | 32.8% | 1.2% |
| 2 | Caprock | Amarillo | 16 | 1,732 | 57.4% | 3.9% | 61.3% | 34.4% | .4% |
| 3 | James Bowie | Arlington | 10 | 2,767 | 44.7% | 38.1% | 23.6% | 26.5% | 11.8% |
| 4 | GRAD | Bryan | 6 | 78 | 69.2% | 30.8% | 51.3% | 17.9% | 0.0% |
| 5 | Burnet [2] | Burnet | 13 | 961 | 34.3% | 1.8% | 16.0% | 81.1% | 1.1% |
| | Quest [2] | Burnet | 13 | 40 | 45.0% | 0.0% | 32.5% | 67.5% | 0.0% |
| 6 | Carrizo Springs | Carrizo Springs | 20 | 704 | 78.0% | 2.0% | 86.8% | 10.8% | 0.4% |
| 7 | Bowie | El Paso | 19 | 1,284 | 93.1% | 0.2% | 99.3% | 0.5% | 0.0% |
| 8 | Bush | Fort Bend | 4 | 2,532 | 39.1% | 36.2% | 33.8% | 12.8% | 17.2% |
| 9 | Lee | Goose Creek | 4 | 2,602 | 63.8% | 22.1% | 48.8% | 27.9% | 1.2% |
| 10 | Ross Sterling | Goose Creek | 4 | 2,839 | 37.1% | 21.1% | 32.3% | 45.1% | 1.5% |
| 11 | Groesbeck | Groesbeck | 12 | 472 | 40.9% | 10.8% | 13.3% | 75.0% | 0.9% |
| 12 | Keys Academy | Harlingen | 1 | 159 | 66.7% | 0.6% | 88.7% | 10.7% | 0.0% |
| 13 | Barbara Jordan | Houston | 4 | 1,175 | 78.9% | 56.7% | 41.8% | 1.3% | 0.2% |
| 14 | Huntsville | Huntsville | 6 | 1,810 | 48.5% | 27.1% | 18.8% | 52.5% | 1.6% |
| 15 | Mercedes | Mercedes | 1 | 1,288 | 92.5% | 0.2% | 98.8% | 1.0% | 0.0% |
| 16 | Mesquite Academy[3] | Mesquite | 10 | 111 | 26.1% | 12.6% | 25.2% | 59.5% | 2.7% |
| | North Mesquite[3] | Mesquite | 10 | 2,469 | 33.7% | 19.6% | 32.6% | 4.5% | 43.5% |
| 17 | Coleman [4] | Midland | 18 | 154 | 45.5% | 13.6% | 57.1% | 27.9% | 1.4% |
| | Midland Freshman[4] | Midland | 18 | 862 | 48.6% | 9.6% | 49.2% | 39.9% | 1.3% |
| | Midland [4] | Midland | 18 | 2,010 | 30.9% | 8.7% | 41.1% | 48.8% | 1.4% |
| 18 | Pittsburg | Pittsburg | 8 | 673 | 57.1% | 22.3% | 23.8% | 52.7% | 1.2% |
| 19 | Montwood | Socorro | 19 | 2,939 | 86.7% | 0.2% | 98.0% | 1.2% | 0.6% |
| 20 | Wichita Falls | Wichita Falls | 9 | 1,512 | 52.3% | 15.5% | 35.1% | 46.4% | 3.0% |

*Source: 2005-2006 Campus AEIS Reports, Texas Education Agency.*
*[1-4] Combined high schools into one site.*

Some Cycle 2 high schools within a district partnered with each other in implementing their THSCS grant interventions. Schools in Abilene, Burnet, Mesquite, and Midland ISDs requested that the evaluation team combine site-visit evaluation activities for two or more schools. For example, Burnet High School and Quest, an alternative school for the district, submitted applications for grant money together and requested that interviews and focus groups occur with both schools' staff present. In cases like this, one site-visit summary was prepared for multiple schools involved in the partnership. A total of 20 site-visit summaries were written for each site visit of the 25 schools in the sample.

***Development of the Site-Visit Protocols***

The purpose of the site-visit interview and focus group protocols was to gather information from a sample of teachers, students, ancillary staff, parents, and community members to determine if grant activities, processes, and structures occurred as planned. They were also used to gather information about the progress made toward the schools' larger goals and performance targets. The instruments used to assist the evaluation team in conducting site-visit interviews and focus groups included the following:

- **District/School Administrator Interview Guide.** This protocol guide assisted site evaluators in conducting interviews with district or school administrators responsible for activities relevant to the grant. Protocol questions inquired about local initiatives for improving educational services to at-risk students, support for the grant interventions, factors associated with the interventions' implementations, and plans for the continuation of the interventions following the grant period.

- **Teacher, Parent, Community Member Focus-Group Guide.** This protocol guide provided focus-group questions to teachers, ancillary staff (counselors, social workers), parents, and community members involved in the grant-funded interventions. The questions probed for perceptions concerning staff roles in the interventions, the tailoring of services to individual students, provisions for mentors and internships, and the efficacy of the interventions, as well as issues that may have arisen over time during the implementation of the interventions.

- **Student Focus-Group Guide.** This protocol guide provided focus-group questions for students involved in the THSCS interventions. The questions asked students to explain what they did in the grant-supported program, identify materials and resources they used, describe what they liked and disliked about the high school program, and describe their academic and/or career plans for the future.

- **Site-Visit Summary Template.** This template aided evaluators in summarizing the site-visit findings by reporting specific information about the site-visit activities (agendas, names of interview and focus-group participants) and in presenting information across all the data sources to describe the grant-funded programs at the school, implementation issues, and perceived outcomes.

Questions for these protocols were selected based on the overarching evaluation questions. The resulting protocols were shared with the team's site evaluators who discussed their design and

further modified questions to best achieve the objectives of the study. SEDL evaluation staff also reviewed the protocols internally. Drafts of the protocols were submitted to TEA for review and approval. The final site-visit protocols are included in *Appendix E*. Two staff members from AIM, who have extensive experience conducting site visits in schools around Texas, conducted training on the protocols. All site evaluators attended the training.

***Process for Conducting the Site Visits***

Letters and postcards were mailed to the principals at the 25 site-visit schools, explaining the site-visit schedules and, as mentioned above, asking them to indicate preferred dates for the visits and to identify school contacts to arrange the site visits. All letters were approved by TEA, printed on TEA letterhead, and mailed in TEA envelopes (see *Appendix F*). The postcards were filled out by the principals and returned with the preferred dates for the site visit (see *Appendix C*).

Using these schedules and the campus principals' preferences for the site-visit dates, a schedule for site visits was developed. Two rounds of site visits were scheduled and completed. The first round of site visits occurred in the summer and fall of 2005. Follow-up site visits occurred in the spring and summer of 2006. Evaluators were assigned sites that fit their schedules and, when possible, Spanish-speaking evaluators were given schools with large Hispanic student populations.

Daily schedules for site visits varied depending on the type of THSCS Cycle 2 programs at the campus and the availability of school staff and students. Exact schedules for each site visit were recorded in the site-visit summaries. **Exhibit C-10** presents an example of a schedule for a program including after school activities.

**Exhibit C-10**
**Sample Schedule for Site Visit at a School with After School Grant-Supported Activities**

| Time | Activity |
|---|---|
| 1:00 – 2:00 | Interviews (45 minutes)- Campus Principal and/or Grant Coordinator |
| 2:15 – 3:15 | Focus Group (1 hour)- Key program staff, teachers, tutors, counselors, parents, involved community members |
| 3:30 – 4:00 | Focus Group (30 minutes)- Students participating in after school program |
| 4:00 – 5:30 | Observation (1.5 hours) of after school activities |

*Source: Gibson Consulting Group & Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, May 2005.*

The length of the site visits ranged between 1 and 1.5 days. With the exception of a few visits, two evaluators conducted the site visits, partnering to complete the interviews and focus groups. Typically, one evaluator led the interviews and focus groups while the other audio-taped the sessions and took notes.

### *Site-Visit Interview and Focus-Group Participants*

Interviews and focus groups were arranged and conducted with administrators, school staff, students, and in a few cases, parents. **Exhibit C-11** describes the number of schools in which each evaluation activity occurred and total number of participants for each method.

**Exhibit C-11**
**Number of Schools and Participants to Evaluation Activities**

| Evaluation Activity | Summer/Fall 05 Visits | | Spring/Summer 06 Visits | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of Schools | Number of Participants | Number of Schools | Number of Participants |
| Administrator Interviews/ Focus Groups | 24 | 43 | 23 | 36 |
| Staff Interviews/ Focus Groups | 24 | 129 | 22 | 106 |
| Student Interview/ Focus Groups | 22 | 132 | 21 | 115 |
| Parent Interviews/ Focus Groups | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

*Source: 2005 & 2006 Site-Visit Summaries*

### *Site-Visit Summary Analyses*

For each site visit, evaluators completed site summaries that provided specific information about the site-visit activities (agendas, names of interview and focus-group participants) and combined data from interviews, focus groups, and observations. The evaluation team reviewed the site-visit summaries to describe characteristics of the campuses and identify common themes around implementation that were shared by the campuses.

### *Coding of Interviews and Focus Groups*

The coding process began with a review of the site summaries and the development of an initial code set that reflected salient concepts and common responses across grantees and interviewees. In the end, a total of seven categories of codes and over 70 sub-codes were identified to capture data targeted by the interview and focus group protocols used in the study. Example codes include the following:

- Intervention Type
- Stage of Implementation
- Types of Interventions Not Implemented
- Factors that Hindered Implementation
- Factors that Facilitated Implementation
- School Outcomes
- Student Outcomes

Information reported in the site-visit summaries were organized by the seven categories and sub-codes. Frequency tables with data output identified the number of sites that contained coded text for each category and sub-code.

### *Cross-Case Analyses*

The goal of the cross-case analysis was to summarize and interpret the data gathered across all the grantees through interviews, focus groups, surveys, and annual performance reports. After reviewing the amount, quality, and reliability of the various data sources, SEDL developed a data analysis plan that identified the primary and secondary sources of data organized by the 23 code categories (see *Appendix B*). Common characteristics were first identified through analyses of the primary sources. Secondary sources of data served to either confirm or contradict findings identified by the primary sources. For example, findings related to program structure and processes were identified through analyses of project director and site coordinator interviews and confirmed by staff responses to survey items. Findings related to teaching practices were identified through analyses of instructor responses to items about teaching practices on the staff survey and confirmed by coded comments from instructor interviews and focus groups.

## Student Performance Analysis

A variety of data acquisition strategies and sources were used to obtain information suitable for analyses directed to answering the project's research questions. The data were integrated across these sources to form a research database, and the performance of students reported as receiving interventions were compared to other students within the reporting campuses. This database was examined using a variety of statistical tools including both proprietary and commercially available software. A brief description of each data source, collection methodology, and analysis conducted is presented below.

A subsequent analysis will be contained within the final report that contrasts performance of students receiving interventions to a sample of students with like characteristics from campuses that did not receive funding under THSCS. These comparison campuses will be selected from TEA's identified peer groups for the participating campuses.

### *Sources of Information*

*Texas Education Agency*

Through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), TEA collects a variety of information regarding students, teachers, and expenditures from districts. These data can be accessed in a variety of forms. For this study, data at the individual student level with personally identifiable information were provided to the research team by TEA. These data were used in two ways, to populate the participation database and to build a student-level database for analysis purposes. Data were provided to AIM on CD-ROM with password protected "zipped" files. These data are only retained for the course of the study and subsequently destroyed (physical media) and triple-overwritten (electronic files).

The following PEIMS data elements were deemed to be appropriate for analysis in this study:

- Student Name
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Economic Disadvantaged
- Grade Level
- Campus
- Course Completion
- Discipline Records (PEIMS 425)
- Leaver Code
- Graduation Code

In addition to these data, student-level information was also obtained regarding performance on the state assessment, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). These data were extracted from the TEA Student Assessment Division data files. Information included a score code (used to indicate valid scores) and a passing indicator for reading / English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. TAKS also assesses social studies, science, and writing in selected grade levels. These later assessments are not in contiguous grade levels for the most part and, therefore, limited in applicability to this study. Data were also obtained for the State Developed Alternative Assessment, Version II (SDAA II). An initial analysis of the SDAA II data indicated that there were insufficient numbers of students with these data to be further considered in this context.

Campus-level demographics, performance, and other information were obtained from the TEA AEIS reports through 2004-05. More information will be published in fall 2006 and incorporated into the final analyses. The AEIS data are located on the TEA web site and downloaded into appropriate electronic files. These files were separate from the student-level research databases.

*Online Student-level Database*

The evaluation team designed and launched an online student level database system to track individual student participation in interventions implemented with the THSCS grant funds. The database was designed to collect two types of data: (a) campus-level information regarding the number and types of THSCS-supported interventions at a Cycle 2 school, and (b) student-level information regarding the extent to which students participated in the interventions.

To reduce the burden of data entry, the THSCS was pre-populated with PEIMS student data for the Cycle 2 schools including student name, grade level, and the last four digits of each student's social security number. Because of the confidential student information, the Cycle 2 district superintendents were asked to identify and authorize school staff at each of the Cycle 2 campuses to assist with data entry. **Exhibit C-12** shows that 86 percent of superintendents receiving THSCS, Cycle 2 grant funds responded to the request for designating data entry staff. Once district permission forms were submitted, unique ID numbers and passwords were distributed to individuals authorized to enter the secure database.

**Exhibit C-12**
**District Response Rate to Student Participation Database**

| Number of School District Superintendent Permission Forms Mailed | Number of Superintendent Forms Received | Number of Superintendents NOT Responding | District Response Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| 106 | 91 | 15 | 86% |

*Source: Gibson Consulting Group & Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, February 2006.*

Guidelines for navigating the online database and submitting data were developed (see *Appendix G*). In addition, THSCS, Cycle 2 administrators participated in a Texas Education Telecommunications Network (TETN) session, which presented an overview of the online database system and the process for collecting school and student-level information. Finally, the evaluation team provided ongoing technical assistance during the data-collection periods to assist designated school staff with entering data into the online database.

The database consisted of several screens organized by data collection steps. In the first two steps, school staff reported whether certain campus-level and student-level interventions existed at their schools by checking "yes" or "no" from a list of possible grantee-supported activities. Data entry staff at each campus recorded the student name and related contact hours for each student-level intervention. The database allowed data entry staff to search for students by name, grade level, and the last four digits of their social security number or add student records when needed. The final step was to mark a data submission button, which indicated that data entry was complete for the campus.

Data entry occurred during two collection periods: 1) Information for the fall 2005 semester was collected during January and February of 2006; and 2) Information for the spring 2006 semester was collected during May and June of 2006. **Exhibit C-13** below describes the campus response rate for completing data entry into the evaluation student-level database. In spring 2006, approximately 74 percent of the campuses submitted campus-level information and 66 percent of the campuses submitted student-level data.

**Exhibit C-13**
**Campus Response Rate to Student-Level Database by Data Collection Period**

| Data Collection Period | Number of Campuses in Database (with Access Permission) | Number of Campuses NOT Responding | Number of Campuses Reporting Campus-level Interventions | Number of Campuses Reporting Student-level Interventions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fall 2005 | 156 | 17 | 113 (72%) | 103 (66%) |
| Spring 2006 | 154 | 19 | 114 (74%) | 102 (66%) |

*Source: 2005 & 2006 Site-Visit Summaries*

### *Research and Analysis Approach*

*Statistical*

A series of statistical analyses were conducted to determine any relationships between THSCS program interventions and student achievement. The analysis contained in this Interim Report focuses primarily on the impact of student-level interventions on TAKS performance. In the Final Report to be issued in the summer of 2007, additional analysis will be conducted to determine the impact of campus-level interventions, as well as possible relationships between student-level interventions and other outcomes such as credits earned, discipline referrals, attendance rates, graduation rates, and dropout rates.

Because the THSCS grant program was not established as an experimental or quasi-experimental design, it cannot be determined whether the interventions directly caused an increase in student performance. However, it is possible in some cases to show that participation in the program is correlated with certain student outcomes.

*Limitations*

As with any study of education programs and impact, there are certain limitations that must be accepted. PEIMS data are generally reliable; however, the information must be entered into the system at the campus. Various errors are possible, including misinterpretation of information and errors in data entry. Inappropriate data (such as TAKS scores for certain students receiving special education services who might be assessed more appropriately with SDAA II) may be included. Errors have been noted for multiple students with the same identification number.

The THSCS, Cycle 2 Grant Program was in place for a limited period of time. The degree of implementation varied, as did the administrative and instructional staff support. In the long-term, some schools may choose to leave certain aspects in place while replacing, modifying or completely removing others.

Another limiting factor of the statistical analysis is the multiplicity of support programs that are implemented in many schools. Activities that might be duplicative of THSCS interventions may occur; other activities might even work against THSCS goals. This limitation cannot be addressed through analytical approaches without more detailed information that cannot be reasonably obtained in this study.

## Cost Analysis

A cost analysis was also conducted for the Cycle 2 grant intervention services. The review team was limited in the depth of analysis performed due to the lack of expenditure data available at the intervention level. School districts and charter schools were not required to track expenditures at the intervention level. Some school systems assign a sub-object code or otherwise track expenditures at a greater level of detail than that required by TEA. Other school districts track expenditures at the grant level only, which limited the evaluators' ability to determine the cost of specific interventions. To address this situation in the final report, the evaluation team plans to

contact the financial officers of selected top performing schools to determine the level of expenditure tracking, and will conduct site visits to reconstruct expenditures at the grant level. Costs will be reconstructed by identifying resources, such as full-time-equivalent (FTE) staff counts, associated with specific interventions. By applying estimated salaries and benefits or other unit prices, the evaluation team will estimate expenditures at the intervention level. For some interventions, this may not possible because of inability to distinguish one intervention from other activities or programs.

Based on the identification of students served by each intervention, the evaluation team will calculate expenditures per student headcount for specific interventions, and to the extent possible will calculate expenditures per student FTE and per contact hour. For some interventions, such as additional counseling services, student FTE data will not be applicable. But for other interventions, such as tutoring, the average amount of time the student used the intervention in a given week will directly affect the level of cost. The cost per student FTE in this instance may be much higher on an FTE basis, as one teacher could tutor 30 students a week for one hour each, representing approximately one student FTE.

## D. Implementation of Texas High School Completion Success, Cycle 2 Grant Interventions

To evaluate the effectiveness of THSCS, Cycle 2 grant programs, the evaluation team studied the conditions under which interventions are successfully implemented. The approach included: (a) identifying the types of interventions that were designed and implemented by the grantees to meet the goals of the grant initiative; (b) understanding the degree and quality to which grant interventions were implemented during the grant period; (c) understanding the factors that influenced the quality, intensity, and duration of the intervention; and, (d) identifying the degree to which implementation of the grant interventions was perceived to be associated with improvements in school environment and culture. As a result, this section is organized into the following evaluation questions:

A. How were grant funds used by Cycle 2 grantees and what types of interventions were implemented?

B. To what degree and quality were grant interventions implemented during the grant period?

C. What factors contributed to or hindered implementation of various interventions at THSCS, Cycle 2 campuses?

D. To what degree was the implementation of THSCS, Cycle 2 interventions perceived to be associated with improved school environment and culture?

### How were grant funds used by Cycle 2 Grantees and what types of interventions were implemented?

To meet the goals and objectives of the grant program, Cycle 2 grantees designed their programs around allowable strategies and activities including *Individual Graduation Plan (IGP)-related activities, credit accrual,* instructional strategies, expanded learning opportunities*, early interventions, mentoring,* and community engagement. In this section, the evaluation team examines how the THSCS, Cycle 2 grant funds were used by the grantee schools and the types of interventions they implemented. These were assessed using data collected through the Cycle 2 survey, interviews and focus groups conducted during site visits to a sample of grant-funded schools. The findings from these data sources are presented below.

#### *Survey Results*

The survey contained questions addressing how grant funds were used and asked respondents to indicate a) the types of interventions funded by the grant, b) the staff positions that were supported using grant funds, c) whether the campus principal and program director/coordinator were the same individuals who originally began when the grant funds were awarded, and d) the degree of similarity between how their program is currently implemented with respect to its original plan.

Survey respondents indicated that grant funds were used to initiate a number of high school interventions. **Exhibit D-1** shows the types of interventions funded. While a variety of interventions received funding, a majority of respondents indicated that THSCS Program funds

were used in *tutoring*, *credit accrual activities*, *accelerated instruction*, and *programs for the academically at risk*. Grantees reported using THSCS Program funds less frequently to implement college-readiness interventions such as *test preparation*, *dual credit*, and *Advanced Placement* or *International Baccalaureate* courses.

**Exhibit D-1**
**Percent of Survey Respondents Reporting Grant Funded Interventions**

| Intervention | # of Responses | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| *Tutoring* | 343 | 63 % |
| *Programs for Academically At-Risk Students (e.g., LEP, Migrant)* | 317 | 58 % |
| *Credit Accrual Activities* | 300 | 55 % |
| *Accelerated Instruction* | 275 | 50 % |
| *Teacher Professional Development* | 239 | 44 % |
| *Mentoring* | 234 | 43 % |
| *Early Interventions (e.g., 9th Grade Transition)* | 214 | 39 % |
| *Parental Involvement* | 208 | 38 % |
| *Test Preparation (e.g., PSAT, SAT, ACT)* | 204 | 37 % |
| *Dual Credit* | 139 | 26 % |
| *Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate* | 102 | 19 % |
| *Work Study* | 84 | 15 % |
| *Child Care* | 72 | 13 % |

*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
*Note: Survey respondents had the option to mark more than one intervention. N=546*

When asked whether the campus principal who originally put the grant intervention in place was still employed at their school or in their district, 82 percent of survey respondents replied "yes." Similarly, 78 percent of the respondents also indicated that the original project director/coordinator who worked with the intervention since its inception was still at their school or in their district.

The majority of the respondents to the survey (54 percent) reported that THSCS, Cycle 2 grant funds were used to pay for additional staff for their intervention(s). **Exhibit D-2** shows the estimated percent of time that various THSCS-funded positions supported the grant program. For instance, according to respondents, one half (52 percent) of the teaching positions funded through THSCS Cycle 2 had 76 percent – 100 percent of their time (salary) paid for through grant funds.

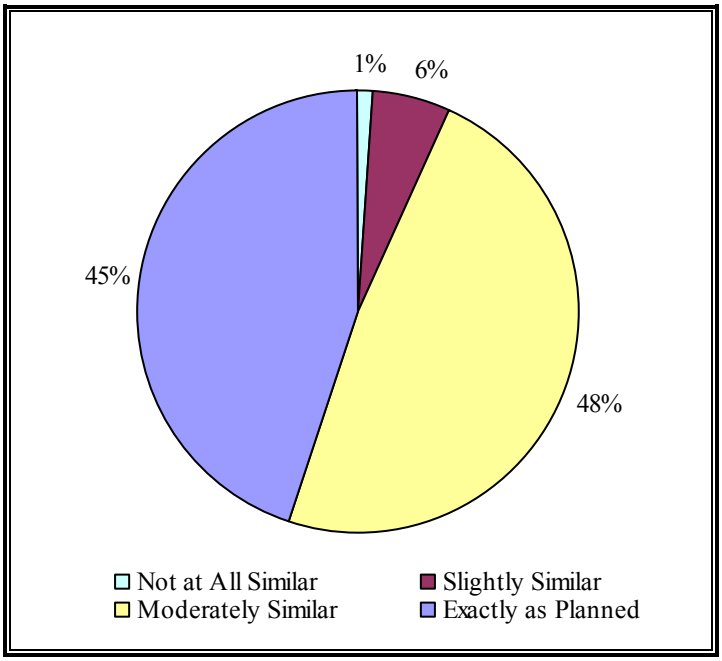
**Exhibit D-2**
**THSCS Grant Supported Intervention Staff Positions**

| Position | Percent of Time Supported by Grant Funds | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0-25% | 26-50% | 51-75% | 76-100% |
| Project Director/Grant Coordinator | 38 % | 6 % | 4 % | 52 % |
| Teacher | 37 % | 6 % | 5 % | 52 % |
| Instructional Aid | 36 % | 11 % | 6 % | 47 % |
| Tutor | 43 % | 7 % | 13 % | 37 % |
| Mentor | 64 % | 3 % | 9 % | 24 % |
| Counselor | 25 % | 7 % | 12 % | 56 % |
| Lab Technician | 70 % | 19 % | 3 % | 8 % |

*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
*Note: Percent of respondents indicating each option.*

Regarding the similarity in grantees' school interventions with their original program plans, 93 percent of the respondents reported that they were "exactly as planned" or "moderately similar." **Exhibit D-3** shows these findings.

**Exhibit D-3**
**Similarity of Intervention with Original Plans**




*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
*Note: N = 472.*

### *Interviews and Focus Groups*

During site visits, evaluators asked interviewees and focus-group participants to identify the types of programs and interventions supported by the THSCS, Cycle 2 grant on their campus. Using a checklist, the site evaluators marked and described the various programs that were

implemented at their schools. **Exhibit D-4** presents the number of schools that reported implementing each intervention.

**Exhibit D-4**
**Types of Grant-Supported Interventions Identified at the Sites**

| Types of THSCS Interventions | Descriptions of the Interventions | Number of Sites N=20 |
|---|---|---|
| *Credit Accrual* | Credit recovery courses in English language arts, mathematics, science, and/or social studies to assist students who are behind in credits stay on track for graduation. These may include after school activities, summer courses, online courses and computer software programs (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and supplemental activities. | 20 |
| *Tutoring* | Programs that provide high quality tutoring services to students. Tutoring services may include individualized instruction of specific subjects by highly qualified teachers, peers, community volunteers, parents, etc. | 9 |
| *Accelerated Instruction* | Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass or are at risk of failing TAKS and/or other types of assessments. Programs may include remedial courses, credit accrual, TAKS tutoring, and out-of-school activities. | 7 |
| *Early Interventions* | Programs targeting freshmen or sophomore level students such as transitional programs, summer orientations, freshmen seminars, and four-year planning. | 7 |
| *Mentoring* | Programs that provide trained mentors to at-risk students (students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled, students identified as academically at-risk, limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, and migrant students) to support them socially and academically in order to succeed in school. Programs may include mentors from business and community organizations. | 4 |
| *Test Preparation* | Programs designed to prepare students to take college entrance exams for admission, placement, and scholarships into post-secondary institutions. | 3 |
| *Dual Credit* | Programs that provide students opportunities to earn college credit while in high school through articulated agreements with post-secondary institutions. | 2 |
| *AP/IB* | Programs that prepare students to successfully pass Advance Placement and/or International Baccalaureate exams. | 1 |

*Source: THSCS, Cycle 2 – Site Visits Summaries 2006.*

## Program Types

Descriptions of the various types of programs observed at the sites are presented below.

### *Credit Accrual*

According to information obtained during site visits, all 20 sites used grant awards to implement *credit accrual* programs designed to assist students who were behind in credits stay on track for graduation. For these purposes, schools typically used grant funds to purchase commercial credit recovery software and the necessary hardware to run the programs. The credit recovery software allows for individualized instruction in the areas of English, mathematics, science, and social studies and is often aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) state

standards. Students recover credits by taking assessments that place them into an individualized learning path that teaches and tests to the specific objectives they need to master in order to receive credit. In some cases, grant funds supported teacher trainings in the use of the software program or supported staff time to supervise students in lab settings as they completed their courses. Credit recovery software used by the sites included NovaNet, Plato, ASKME, A+, Cambridge Knowledge System, Carnegie Learning Systems, and Creative Education Institute. In some schools, students worked on their own time either before or after school, at lunch, or during study hall to complete the required course components usually in open-lab environments. In other schools, students used the credit recovery software during regular class periods under the supervision of classroom teachers.

### *Tutoring*

Nine of the 20 sites used grant funds to implement one-on-one *tutoring services* for students in specific subjects led by qualified teachers, peers, and/or community volunteers. At one site, the THSCS grant supported tutoring services targeted to students who were failing one or more of their courses at the six-week reporting period. Tutorials were held after school and students were encouraged to attend by their regular classroom teachers. In another site, tutoring services were provided to academically at-risk students in the context of a regular class period (referred to as "study skills" class) and in after-school sessions. One site offered peer tutoring for the students in mathematics. Students who passed Algebra and Geometry in 10th and 11th grades tutored freshmen in mathematics. In exchange, the peer tutors received community hours and were able to list the work experience on their resumes or college applications. Finally, TAKS tutoring was frequently provided by certified teachers whose positions were partially or entirely supported by the THSCS grant funds.

### *Accelerated Instruction*

Seven of the 20 sites used the THSCS grant funds to support accelerated instruction programs designed to provide additional support to students who failed, or were at risk of failing, TAKS. The majority of sites that implemented accelerated instruction were alternative high schools (or were a multi-campus site that included an alternative high school) in which the entire student population was at risk of failing or dropping out of high school. In these alternative settings, many of the *credit recovery* programs described above were used to accelerate students' instruction by diagnosing academic strengths and weaknesses and generating a prescriptive curriculum that could be completed on faster schedules than courses held in traditional high school settings.

### *Early Interventions*

Programs identified as "*early interventions*" targeted freshman or sophomore-level students in preventative ways to avoid future academic problems. Seven of the 20 sites implemented *early interventions* including transitional programs, summer orientations, freshman seminars, and four-year planning activities. In several cases, funds supported counselors who were responsible for creating IGPs and monitoring freshman students' progress. Several sites implemented summer programs for entering freshmen to give them opportunities to gain academic content and become familiar with high school facilities, staff, procedures, and fellow students. A few schools implemented freshman seminars or centers where attending students discussed personal and academic issues, received tutoring, and explored careers and other extra-curricular programs.

### *Mentoring*

Four of the 20 sites implemented *mentoring* programs designed to support at-risk students both socially and academically. Grant funds were primarily used to provide trainings to mentors and support staff who were responsible for coordinating the *mentoring* programs at the school. The mentors were primarily volunteers from a pool of community members, parents, teachers, university students, and peers from the schools. One site implemented a community *mentoring* program that invited local business members to share information with students about community job opportunities and the types of education needed to pursue these options. At another site, university students came to the high school to mentor students as well as host the high school students in shadowing experiences on the college campus. At a third, teachers and/or counselors mentored students with major academic difficulties due to personal or family issues. Finally, one campus assigned academically at-risk students to peer mentors who met regularly with them during and after school.

### *Test Preparation*

Three of the 20 sites used the THSCS grant funds to implement *test preparation* courses designed to prepare students to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). The grant fund paid for course materials, practice tests, and fees associated with the test.

### *Dual Credit and Advanced Placement (AP)/ International Baccalaureate (IB) Courses*

One of the primary goals of the grant program is to increase the number of students who graduate from high school ready to attend college. Examples of school programs designed to help students accomplish this goal include the *Advanced Placement (AP)/ International Baccalaureate (IB) courses* and *dual credit* programs that allow students to earn college-level credit while in high school. According to data collected during site visits, few grantees implemented programs aimed at increasing student enrollment and performance in post-secondary education. The two schools that implemented *dual credit* programs used grant funds to create articulated agreements with nearby community and junior colleges, set prerequisites for enrollment, and pay for students' college text books and materials. Only one of the sites used the THSCS grant funds to provide students with *Advanced Placement (AP)/ International Baccalaureate (IB) courses*.

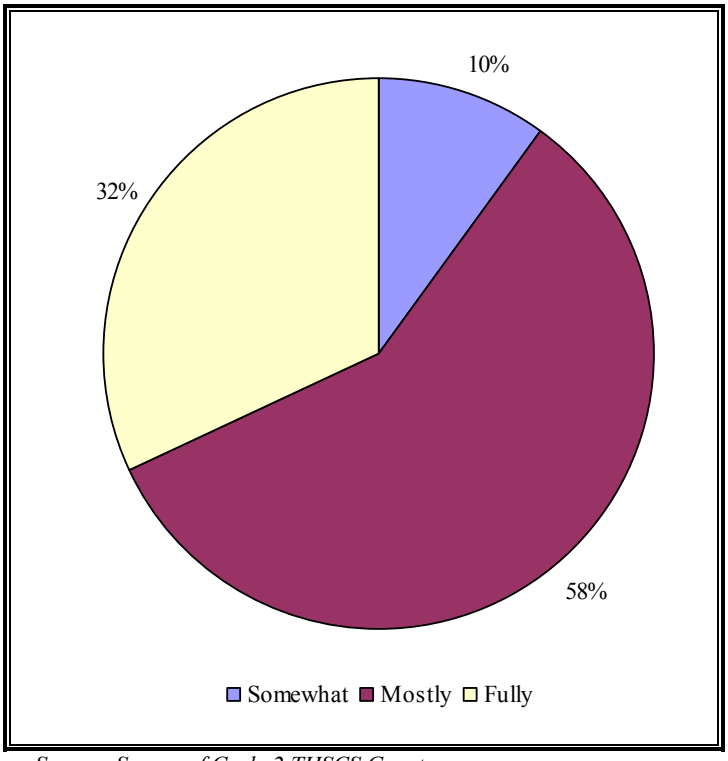
## To what degree and quality were grant interventions implemented during the grant period?

In this section, the evaluation team examines the degree and quality to which the THSCS, Cycle 2 interventions were implemented. This was assessed using data collected through the Cycle 2 survey, interviews and focus groups conducted during site visits to a sample of grant-funded schools. Survey respondents, interviewees, and focus-group participants were asked to provide perceptions about the extent to which the interventions were fully implemented, how well they were implemented, the extent to which modifications were made throughout the grant period, the effectiveness of the interventions in achieving desired results, and the degree of training and support provided for the interventions. The findings from these data sources are presented below.

### *Survey Results*

Almost all of the survey respondents perceived that their interventions were either mostly or fully implemented in an overall analysis of respondent perceptions. The extent of intervention implementation was also looked at by school campus. Campuses with two or fewer survey respondents were not included (n = 22), resulting in a total of 120 schools for this analysis. On a scale of 1 (Not at all Implemented) to 4 (Fully Implemented), 38 schools (32 percent) reported full intervention implementation, 70 of the schools (58 percent) reported that their interventions were mostly implemented, and 12 of the schools (10 percent) said that their interventions were only somewhat implemented. No schools reported that their interventions were not at all implemented. Further, in comparing campus principals' perceptions of intervention implementation to those of program staff, mean ratings were almost identical (Means: Principal = 3.4, Program Staff = 3.5). **Exhibit D-5** shows these findings.

**Exhibit D-5**
**Degree of Intervention Implementation**




*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
*Note: N = 120.*

For each of the specific interventions that were implemented at their schools, survey respondents were asked to provide their perceptions of how well each was implemented. As shown in **Exhibit D-6** below, *tutoring programs*, *credit accrual activities*, and *programs for the academically at risk* received the highest mean ratings and *child care, work study, and parental involvement programs* received the lowest mean ratings. Using a 3-point scale on implementation (1=poor to 3= well) and a similar scale for effectiveness (1=not effective to

3=very effective), respondents indicated that interventions rated highest in being well-implemented also received highest ratings in perceived effectiveness.

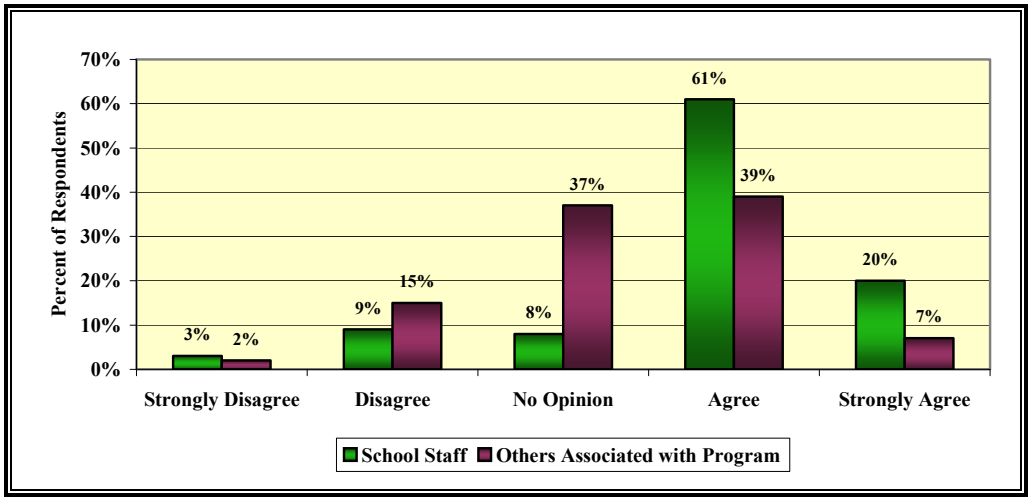
**Exhibit D-6**
**Implementation and Effectiveness of the THSCS Grant Interventions**

| Intervention | Implementation | | Perceived Effectiveness | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | N | Mean | N |
| *Programs for Academically At-Risk Students (e.g., LEP, Migrant)* | 2.68 | 369 | 2.54 | 368 |
| *Credit Accrual Activities* | 2.66 | 352 | 2.58 | 349 |
| *Tutoring* | 2.66 | 401 | 2.53 | 397 |
| *Accelerated Instruction* | 2.63 | 323 | 2.56 | 319 |
| *Teacher Professional Development* | 2.60 | 292 | 2.49 | 284 |
| *Early Interventions (e.g., 9th Grade Transition)* | 2.51 | 265 | 2.38 | 263 |
| *Test Preparation (e.g., PSAT, SAT, ACT)* | 2.45 | 256 | 2.34 | 255 |
| *Dual Credit* | 2.32 | 184 | 2.20 | 182 |
| *Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate* | 2.31 | 145 | 2.23 | 147 |
| *Mentoring* | 2.28 | 279 | 2.18 | 279 |
| *Parental Involvement* | 2.27 | 262 | 2.20 | 257 |
| *Work Study* | 2.22 | 127 | 2.19 | 124 |
| *Child Care* | 1.85 | 117 | 1.90 | 114 |

*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
*Note: Scale options – Implementation: 1 = Poor, 2 = Fairly Well, 3 = Well; Effectiveness: 1 =Not Effective, 2 = Somewhat Effective, 3 = Very Effective.*

To gain a sense of whether program staff, as well as those associated with the program (e.g., volunteers, community mentors, parents), had received sufficient training to lead or facilitate program activities, survey respondents were asked their perceptions of the extent that training was provided. As shown in **Exhibit D-7**, 81 percent of the school staff agreed or strongly agreed that sufficient training had been offered for school staff. Forty-six percent of others associated with the program agreed or strongly agreed that they had received sufficient training.

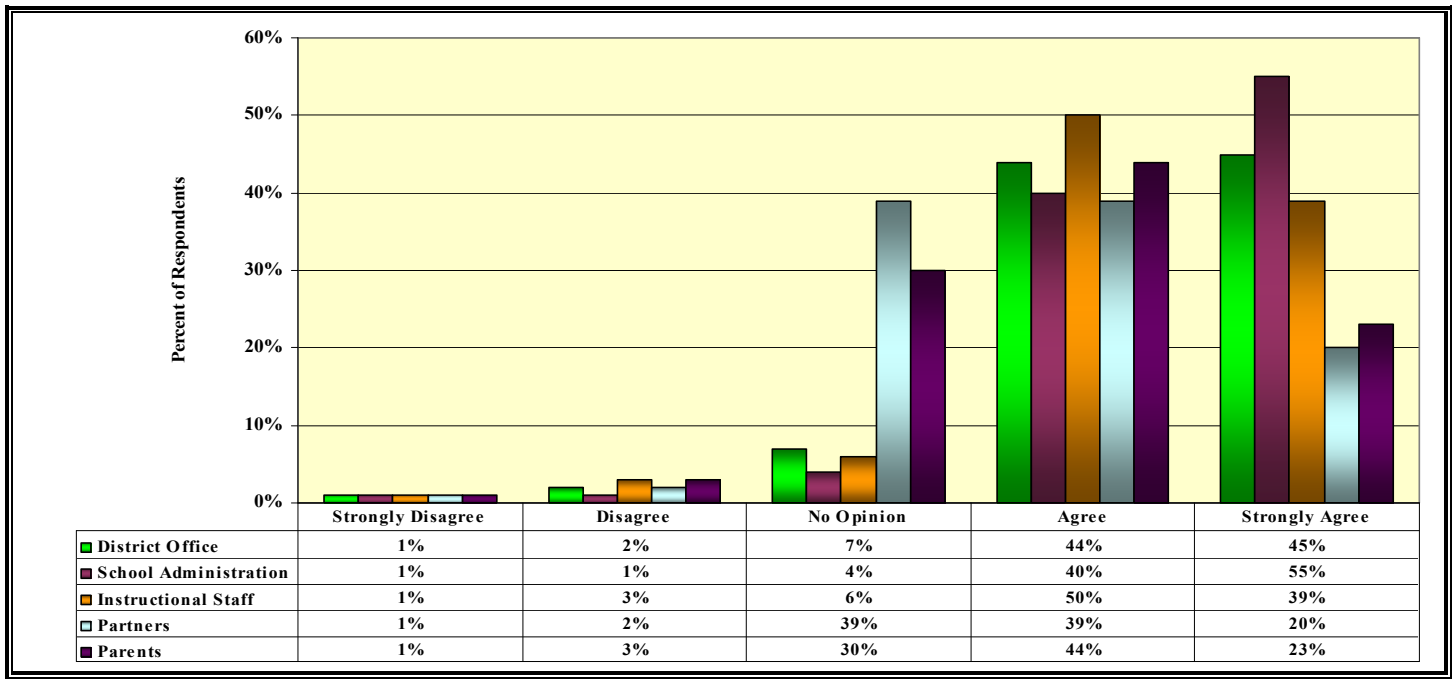
**Exhibit D-7**
**Extent of Sufficient Training for Staff Involved in THSCS, Cycle 2 Interventions**




*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*

Respondents were also asked the degree to which they perceived support for their THSCS, Cycle 2 interventions from their districts, school administrations, instructional staff, program partners, and parents of students participating in their programs. As shown in **Exhibit D-8,** respondents perceived strong support from their districts, school administration, and instructional staff. While a few disagreed about whether parents and program partners were supportive, many selected the "no opinion" option, suggesting they were unsure as to the support provided by these two groups.

**Exhibit D-8**
**Perceived Support for THSCS, Cycle 2 Interventions**

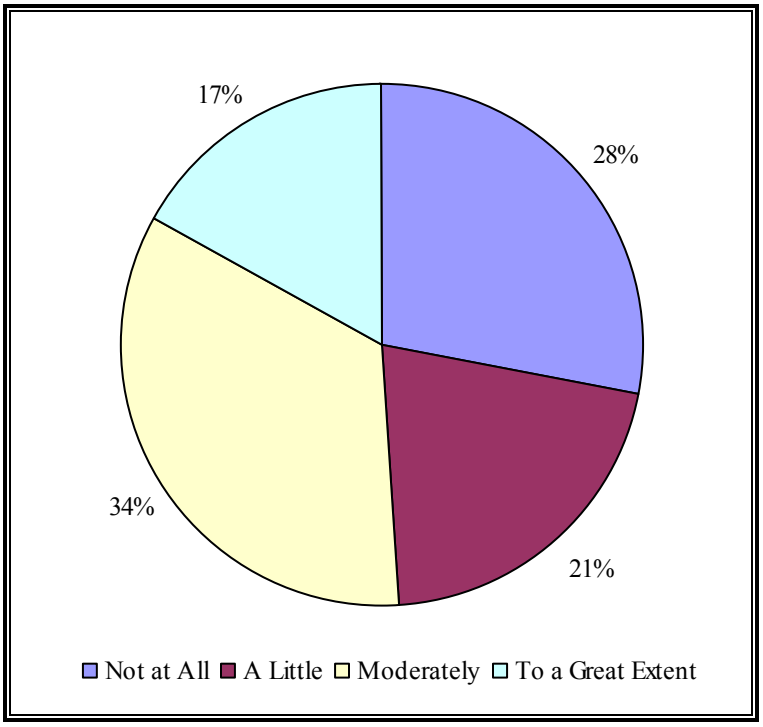



| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | No Opinion | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| District Office | 1% | 2% | 7% | 44% | 45% |
| School Administration | 1% | 1% | 4% | 40% | 55% |
| Instructional Staff | 1% | 3% | 6% | 50% | 39% |
| Partners | 1% | 2% | 39% | 39% | 20% |
| Parents | 1% | 3% | 30% | 44% | 23% |

*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*

Survey respondents were asked to provide their perceptions as to whether grant program strategies were being modified from the previous year. As can be seen in **Exhibit D-9**, over three-fourths of the respondents reported planned modifications ranging from "a little" to "a great extent." Principals' mean ratings on intervention modifications were slightly higher than those of staff (Means: Principals = 2.51, Staff = 2.37), with both reporting small to moderate modifications for the following intervention year.

**Exhibit D-9**
**Planned Modifications to THSCS, Cycle 2 Intervention Strategies**




*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
*Note:* N = 340.

The types of modifications reported by respondents as being planned by grantee programs included promoting more parent and community involvement, implementing activities that were originally planned but had not yet occurred, creating planning time for teachers, expanding the program to include students at different grade levels, emphasizing the mentor program, and fine-tuning the intervention activities already in place. Approximately 3 percent of the respondents reported that planning meetings had not yet occurred or that their evaluation of the program would drive their modifications. Another 6 percent indicated that since the grant funding period would be ending, some or all of their program activities would be discontinued unless they secured alternate funding.

### *Interviews and Focus Groups*

Site evaluators compiled data collected through site interviews, focus groups, and observations to assess the degree to which each site implemented their proposed interventions. In their site

summaries, members of the site visit team rated the stage of implementation achieved by each site, identified any interventions not implemented as planned, and noted barriers to implementation. As **Exhibit D-10** illustrates, all of the sites initiated at least some aspects of their planned interventions and with the exception of one site, all of the grantees began implementing at least some of their proposed grant interventions. One of the 20 sites began initiating the proposed grant intervention without sufficient resources and never reached the stage of active implementation. At the time of the 2006 site visits, five grantees had reached full implementation of all grant activities and the majority of the others were well on their way to institutionalizing the grant-supported interventions.

**Exhibit D-10**
**Stages of Implementation at Sites in 2006**

| Stage of Implementation | Indicators | Is this stage completed? (N=20) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Not at all | Partially (Some programs) | Entirely (All Programs) |
| Initialization/ Mobilization | ▪ Started the process<br>▪ Assessing needs<br>▪ Developing commitments<br>▪ Setting intended outcomes<br>▪ Designing action plans | 0 | 11 | 9 |
| Implementation | ▪ Implementing plans<br>▪ Training staff<br>▪ Incorporating routines<br>▪ Evaluating | 1 | 11 | 8 |
| Institutionalization | ▪ Making organizational changes<br>▪ Tracking student outcomes<br>▪ Planning for sustainability | 4 | 11 | 5 |

*Source: THSCS, Cycle 2 – Site Visits Summaries 2006.*

### *Full and partial implementation*

The grantees that were successful in implementing all of their planned interventions were notably different from the other sites in that they proposed relatively small and manageable scopes of work directed at addressing existing needs of the schools. These sites were also characterized by strong leadership and coordination between the district and the staff responsible for implementing the interventions. The majority of grantees were only successful in implementing a portion of what they intended to do with the THSCS grant. Of the planned interventions that were never implemented, the majority were designed to address the *mentoring* and *dual credit* components of the grant. Inappropriate staffing and lack of time were frequently reported as reasons for failing to implement these programs. Grantees also reported that they found *dual credit* programs to be challenging to put into practice because of the lengthy processes required to initiate and solidify partnerships with institutions of higher education. In addition to over-committing themselves, these sites were frequently beset by staff turnover. When turnover occurred at the administrative level, it generally resulted in significant delays or elimination of certain intervention programs. During site interviews, many newly-hired administrators confessed to being unaware of the grant initiative and the planned interventions at the school.

### *Modifications to Planned Interventions*

Interview and focus group participants at each of the observed sites indicated that modifications of the planned programs were made each semester based on the perceived success of the intervention approach. Subtle changes to their programs were frequently reported for all the grantees. Examples included changing attendance policies in certain interventions (i.e., *tutoring* or *mentoring*) to be voluntary instead of required, altering the hours of a credit recovery lab, or turning an after-school intervention into a regular class period for THSCS participating students.

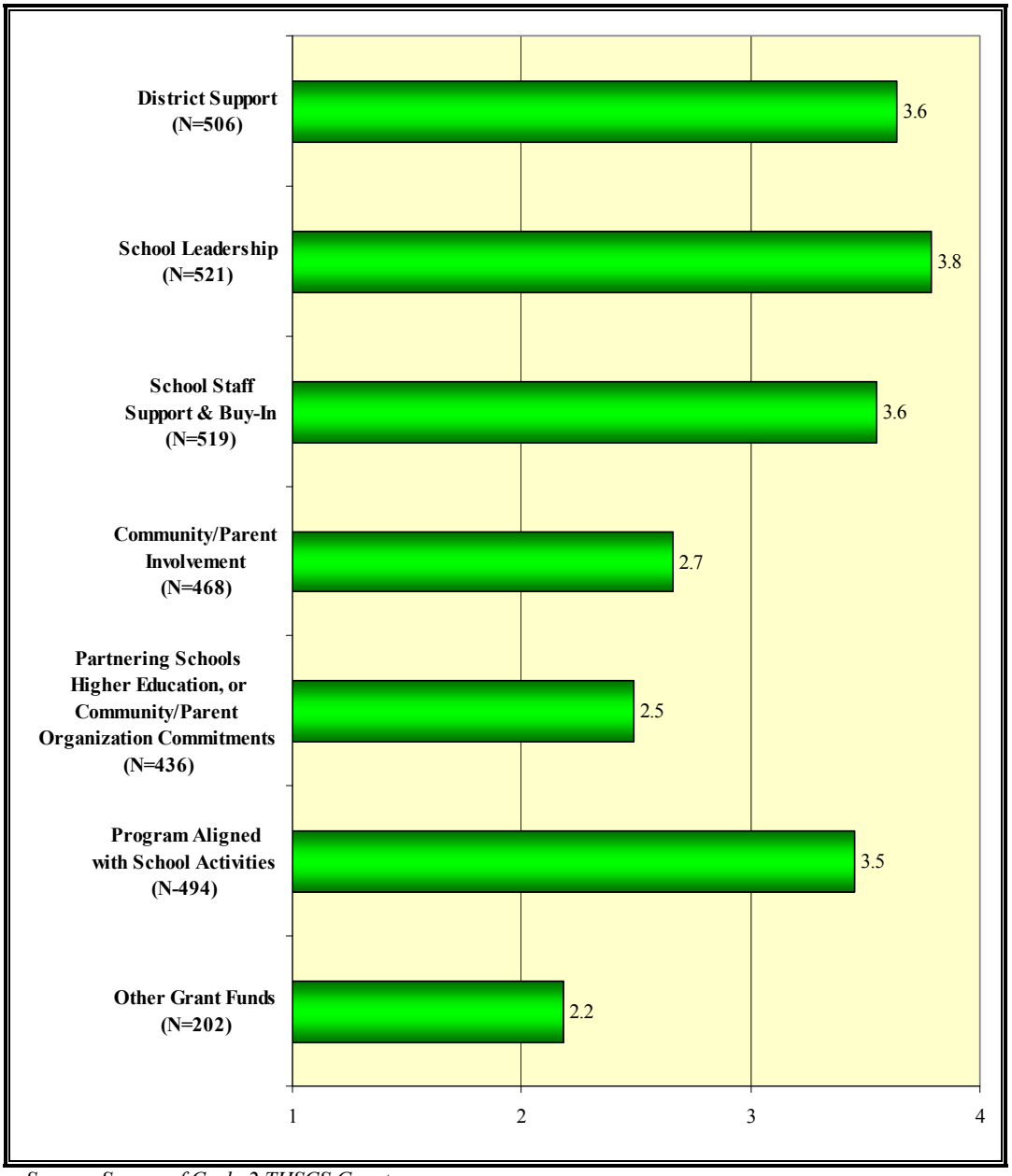
At several sites, specific interventions were entirely abandoned based on difficulties associated with implementing them. In perhaps the most extreme case, one alternative school discontinued attempts to implement a newly designed online mathematics curriculum intended to provide self-paced, accelerated instruction to students. Poor technological infrastructure and insufficient numbers of computers at the school prevented the online course from being well-implemented. In addition, school staff reported that the reading level of the online course was not appropriate for the students at the school. Students who attempted to complete the course required significant teacher assistance to navigate the system and complete the required assignments. In the first grant year, only 8 students completed the course, and by the second site visit in spring 2006, the course was discontinued as an intervention at the school. The school staff viewed the attempts to implement the online course as a pilot test for the curriculum developers who were receptive to modifying the course. In another site, a credit recovery software program was discontinued and replaced with human instruction. Reasons given for the shift in this program included perceptions that the program did not align closely with TEKS mathematics objectives and that students were not getting the instruction they needed for them to succeed in mathematics.

## What factors contributed to or hindered implementation of various interventions at THSCS Cycle 2 campuses?

### *Survey Results*

Survey respondents were asked to provide their perceptions of factors that facilitated the implementation of their THSCS, Cycle 2 interventions since they received their grant awards in October of 2004. As seen in **Exhibit D-11**, respondents reported that strong factors contributing to a successful intervention implementation included district support, school leadership, and school staff support and buy-in. Slightly more than half also identified the alignment of programs with school activities as a factor. Approximately half of the respondents who selected "other grant funds" as an option perceived that their intervention implementation had been positively impacted a little, somewhat, or a great deal by such funds. They reported that these included 21st Century, A+, Comprehensive School Reform, Small Learning Communities, and Title I funds. Survey responses were also compared between campus principals and staff. Findings from this analysis showed similar ratings on all facilitating factors.

**Exhibit D-11**
**Respondents' Mean Ratings of Factors Facilitating Intervention Implementation**



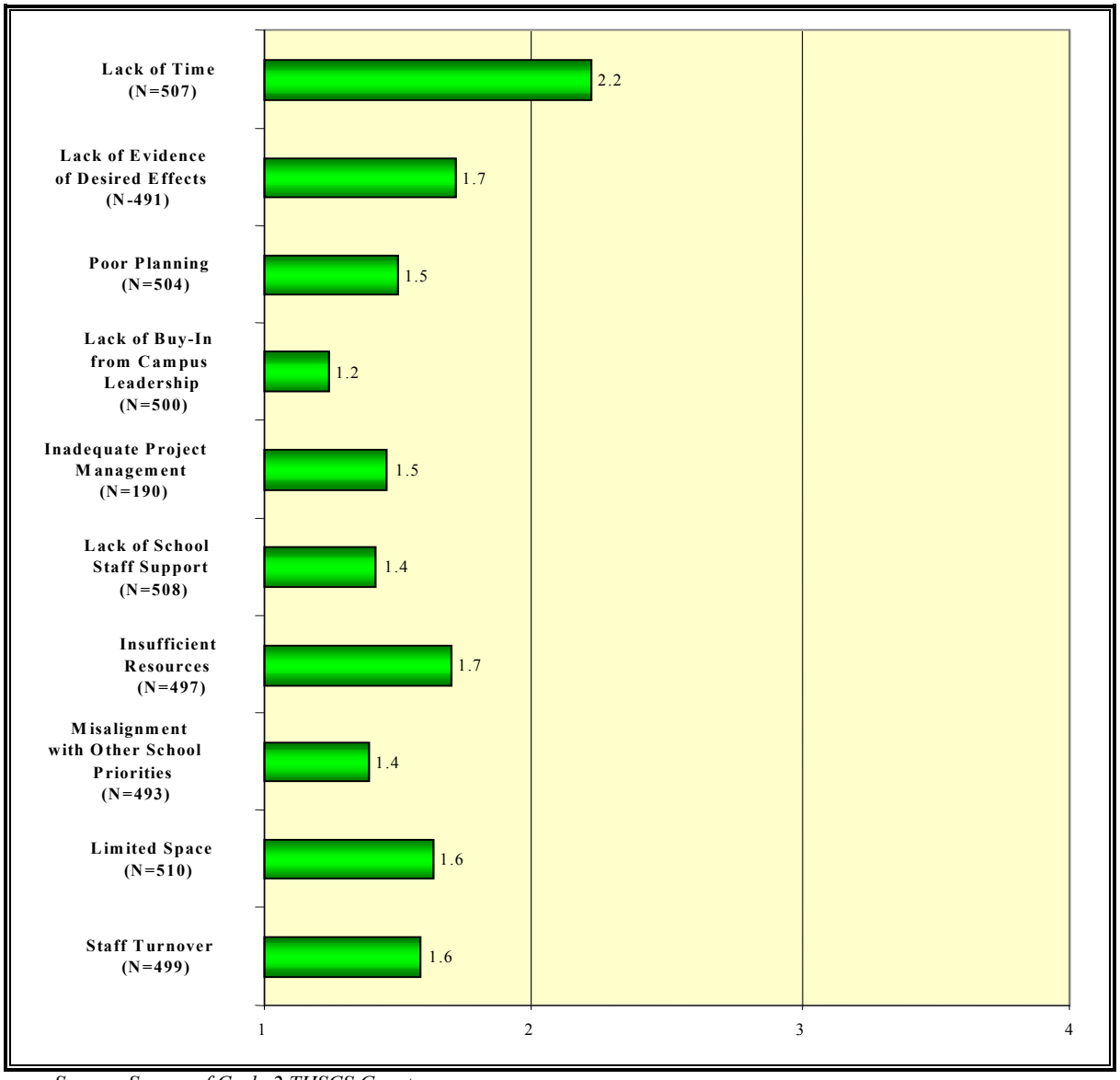

*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
*Note: N = Number of respondents. Scale Options – 1 = Not at All, 2 = A Little, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = A Great Deal.*

In addition to facilitating factors, respondents also identified factors that tended to hinder the implementation of their interventions. **Exhibit D-12** shows that most of the respondents generally perceived strong buy-in from campus leadership and school staff, effective project management, and alignment of their program with other school priorities as only slight barriers.

Of the factors, the one most perceived as hindering program implementation a little, somewhat, or a great deal was lack of time. Approximately 20 percent of survey respondents also identified

other factors that they perceived as hindering program implementation a little, somewhat, or a great deal. These included the lack of community involvement, parental support, student commitment and interest, rapid student turnover, and lack of technology needed for full program implementation. A comparison between principal and staff responses to factors perceived as hindering program implementation show very similar ratings across all factors.

**Exhibit D-12**
**Respondents' Mean Ratings of Factors Hindering Program Implementation**




*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
*Note: N = Number of respondents. Scale Options – 1 = Not at All, 2 = A Little, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = A Great Deal.*

### *Interviews and Focus Groups*

Evaluators asked interviewees and focus group participants to identify factors that influenced the implementation of the various grant-funded interventions. The factors most perceived as

facilitating implementation of the interventions were strong leadership, staff buy-in, and clearly defined goals and roles. Successful implementation of grant-funded interventions was frequently attributed to the concerted efforts of dedicated staff. Skillful leadership was notable among many successful programs and included dedicated grant administrators, principals, and assistant principals that organized the different grant activities and resources in ways that addressed specific needs of the school. Direction was also provided by key staff who focused efforts of the grant initiative in meaningful ways. For example, several grantees hired counselors who made sure students targeted by the grant did not "fall through the cracks." Many grantees reportedly achieved strong staff buy-in by involving key staff in the planning and writing of the grant proposal resulting in clear vision, ambitious learning goals, and clearly defined roles that were agreed upon by all of the participating staff. The commitment to implementing the grant interventions was often sustained by holding regular meetings between staff to discuss issues related to the interventions and the grant program.

The factors most frequently perceived as hindering implementation of the grant interventions were associated with poor planning, insufficient time or over commitments, lack of staff buy-in, insufficient resources, and inadequate staff development or training on using the interventions. In sites where implementation problems arose, interviewees and focus group participants frequently commented on the failure to plan grant interventions well. In many cases, school staff reported that the proposed plans were developed by outside grant writers without school staff input and these plans committed the schools to implementing too many activities. Consequently at theses schools, staff buy-in was perceived to be low. This was also exacerbated by staff turnover during the grant period which required additional time to familiarize new staff with the grant goals and proposed work before implementation could proceed.

In addition, many grantees reported that they did not anticipate the full costs and resources needed to successfully implement certain aspects of their grant program. For example, many sites reported a need for more hardware and technology support to adequately implement new credit recovery software at the campuses. Finally, many interviewees and focus group participants at the sites reported a need for more staff development and training to implement the various grant interventions successfully. This was a particular concern related to the purchase and implementation of new credit recovery software. Without adequate training to use the software, teachers were less capable and interested in making the interventions available to students.

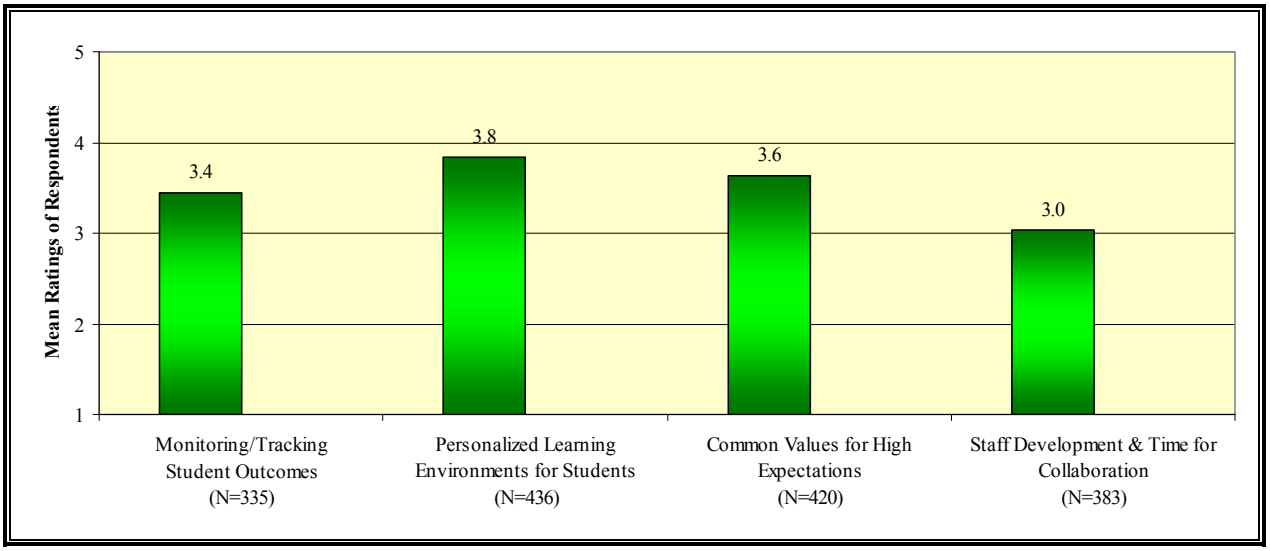
**To what degree was the implementation of THSCS, Cycle 2 interventions perceived to be associated with improved school environment and culture?**

The evaluation team examined the degree to which the THSCS, Cycle 2 interventions were perceived to improve school environment and culture. This was assessed using data collected through the Cycle 2 survey, interviews and focus groups conducted during site visits to a sample of grant-funded schools. Survey respondents, interviewees, and focus group participants were asked to provide perceptions about school and student outcomes that occurred as a result of implementing the grant interventions. The findings from these data sources are presented below.

***Survey Results***

To examine changes in the school environment and culture that may have occurred due to the implementation of the THSCS, Cycle 2 intervention, survey respondents rated a number of statements representing desired program outcomes. As shown in **Exhibit D-13**, respondents' highest ratings were for providing students with personalized learning environments that included developing a meaningful relationship with at least one adult in high school and creating common values of high expectations for students. Less attention, overall, appears to have been focused on staff development and staff collaboration.

**Exhibit D-13**
**Mean Ratings of Respondents on School Environment/Culture Outcomes**




*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
*Note: Scale anchored by 1 = Not at All Changed and 5 = Changed to a Great Extent.*

For each of these items, respondents could choose the options of "don't know" or "change occurred but not because of grant" instead of a rating. A review of these responses supports the previous finding. Respondents perceived that creating a personalized learning environment (76 percent) and developing common values for high expectations (73 percent) were impacted more by the THSCS program than the other two items measured. **(Exhibit D-14)**

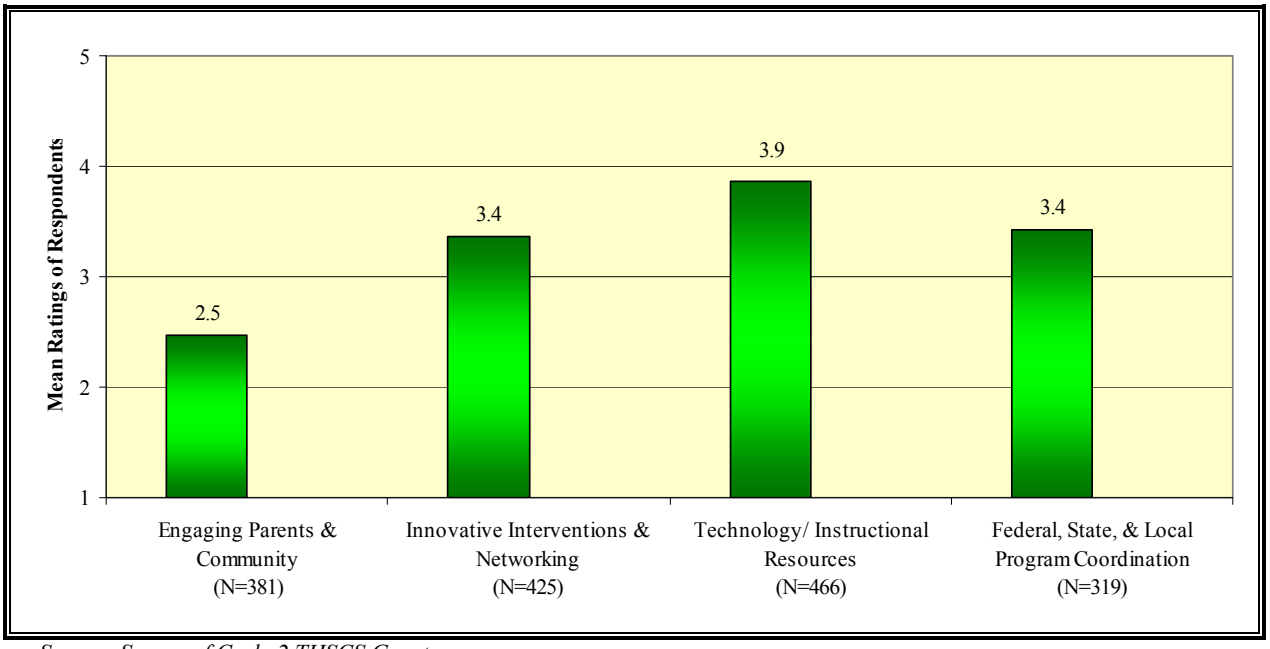
**Exhibit D-14**
**Percent of Respondents Reporting Change or No Change as a Result of the Program**

| Item: | Change Occurred Due to Program | No Change Occurred Due to Program | Change Occurred but Not Because of Grant | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Monitoring/Tracking Student Outcomes | 55% | 7% | 18% | 20% |
| Personalized Learning Environment for Students | 76% | 5% | 11% | 8% |
| Common Values for High Expectations | 73% | 5% | 12% | 10% |
| Staff Development and Time for Collaboration | 60% | 12% | 14% | 14% |

*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*

Four additional items rated by respondents related to school environment/culture outcomes are shown in **Exhibit D-15**. Respondents believed that the greatest impact occurred with respect to incorporating access to technology and instructional resources. They felt the area that was least affected was engaging parents and community members in the schools.

**Exhibit D-15**
**Mean Ratings of Respondents on School Environment/Culture Outcomes**




*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*
*Note: Scale anchored by 1 = Not at All Changed and 5 = Changed to a Great Extent.*

As **Exhibit D-16** shows, the vast majority of survey respondents indicated that the THSCS grant program had an impact on access to technology and instructional resources (82 percent) and supporting innovative interventions and networking (69 percent). Less than half of the respondents felt that the program impacted engagement among parents and the community in the school (48 percent).

**Exhibit D-16**
**Percent of Respondents Reporting Change or No Change as a Result of the Program**

| Item: | Change Occurred Due to Program | No Change Occurred Due to Program | Change Occurred but Not Because of Grant | Do Not Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Engaging Parents and Community in Schools | 48% | 23% | 11% | 18% |
| Supporting Innovative Interventions and Networking | 69% | 10% | 11% | 10% |
| Access to Technology & Instructional Resources | 82% | 5% | 6% | 7% |
| Federal, State, & Local Program Coordination | 54% | 7% | 14% | 25% |

*Source: Survey of Cycle 2 THSCS Grantees.*

### *Interviews and Focus Groups*

During site visits, evaluators asked interviewees and focus group participants to identify school and student outcomes they perceived as resulting from the various grant-funded interventions. Site evaluators summarized these perceptions in their site-visit summaries. It should be noted that the following perceptions were *not* confirmed by collecting other evaluative information obtained during the site visits. The evaluation team did not require documentation to be provided by staff at the sites.

The most frequently identified school outcome reported was an increased ability to identify and assess students' weaknesses and provide targeted instruction. This was due to the successful implementation of the credit recovery software programs implemented, as well as increased use of IGPs, targeted counseling services, and early interventions. In addition, interviewees and focus group participants frequently reported an increase in teacher and staff collaboration. In many cases, staff commented that they met regularly to discuss the grant-supported interventions and plan for future work. In other cases, teachers reported an increase in collaborative approaches between teachers, and in some cases between teachers and counselors. Teachers said that this collaboration helped them to more easily handle student discipline problems, as well as work together to help the at-risk students.

Interviewees and focus group participants also identified several student-level outcomes that resulted from the THSCS, Cycle 2 grant initiative. These included increased numbers of students recovering or accruing course credits, improved attendance, increased graduation rates, and improved performance on TAKS. In addition, students in focus group interview sessions frequently reported increased motivation to complete high school and greater self esteem after participating in the grant supported interventions. Because many of the students targeted with these interventions had a history of academic problems, their exposure to and use of the credit recovery software programs was viewed as one of their first opportunities to have a successful academic experience. Many students who participated in the software program reported an appreciation for the self-paced nature of the software and said they gained a sense of empowerment, confidence, and competency that frequently transferred back to the classroom. Students also reported that when they recovered credit, they felt less intimidated by TAKS and more confident about going to college.

Students who participated in early interventions were described as being better prepared for the high school environment. At one school, teachers of freshman mathematics and English classes said that incoming freshmen who participated in the grant-supported summer orientations were more prepared to start the semester with academic instruction and did not have the "deer in the headlights" expressions that characterized the usual freshman student. The high school students who participated in *mentoring* and college readiness programs reported similar increases in confidence and the majority of the students interviewed were confident they would graduate and described plans to go to college in the future.

Finally, student focus group participants frequently described an appreciation for the one-on-one attention they received as a result of the grant-funded interventions. This was achieved through the self-paced *credit recovery*, *targeted counseling services*, individualized *tutoring*, *mentoring*, and/or *small teacher/student ratios* that were implemented by the grant program.

## E. Relationship between Texas High School Completion and Success, Cycle 2 Grants Program and Student Outcomes

The findings in this section address two research questions related to the Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS) Grant Program, Cycle 2.

- How do THSCS, Cycle 2 student outcomes compare to those of students not directly served by the grant at the same school?[6]

- Are student outcomes levels higher for certain groups of students in THSCS, Cycle 2 schools (e.g., student groups included in TEA's accountability analyses)?

A series of statistical analyses were conducted to examine if any relationships exist between THSCS program interventions and student achievement. The analysis contained in this Interim Report focuses primarily on the impact of student-level interventions on Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) performance. In the final report to be issued in the summer of 2007, additional analysis will be conducted to determine the impact of campus-level interventions, as well as possible relationships between student-level interventions and other outcomes such as credits earned, discipline referrals, attendance rates, graduation rates, and dropout rates.

Below is a summary of the major findings from the statistical analysis.

- Overall, there was a generally positive and statistically-significant relationship between participation in THSCS Program interventions and TAKS performance.

- The impact of program participation on target student populations was generally positive, and was statistically significant for 8th and 9th grade students participating in early interventions.

- Schools used THSCS Program funds to support a wide range of campus level and student level interventions. Student level interventions appear to have been appropriately matched with individual student needs.

- Schools chose to use THSCS Program funds to support specific subject interventions targeted toward mathematics to a larger degree than any other subject area, by a ratio of two to one.

The statistical analysis was conducted using program intervention data provided by the schools. Schools reported information on campus-level and student-level interventions. Campus-level interventions are intended to treat groups of students, directly or indirectly, but not in a classroom or instructional setting. Examples of campus-level interventions include *additional*

[6] An analysis to compare THSCS, Cycle 2 students to similar students at non-program schools with similar characteristics and student demographics will be reported in the final report.

*counseling staff* and *parental involvement*. Student-level interventions involve direct services to students, such as *tutorials* and *dual credit courses*.

While data were collected for the fall 2005 and spring 2006 semesters, most of the analyses presented in this section focus on the spring collection because the data were of higher quality. Fall semester data were not obtained until several months after the end of the semester, and they were collected using a method that was new to the school districts. Further, intervention implementation was similar between fall 2005 and spring 2006.

This section contains several statistical terms that may not be common to the general public. Their inclusion in this report is important to demonstrate the statistical validity of the results. One of the terms is a "p-value" or probability value. Small p-values suggest that there is a statistically-significant relationship between an independent variable, such as whether or not a student participates in tutoring, and a potential outcome, such as a test score. For the purposes of this report, results are generally considered to be statistically significant if the p value is $< .01$. A "Chi-square test" is another term used in this section. This test can determine whether actual results are systematically related to interventions based on expected and observed values.

The remainder of this section is organized into the following sub-sections:

E.1 Implementation of Campus-Level Interventions

E.2 Student Participation in Student-Level Interventions

E.3 Impact of Program on TAKS Performance

## E.1 Implementation of Campus-Level Interventions

A total of 114 campuses reported information regarding campus-level participation as of spring 2006. **Exhibit E-1** includes the eight categories of campus-level interventions with the number and percentage of campuses reporting to have implemented each. The percentages are based on the number of reporting campuses, not on the total number of campuses receiving THSCS Cycle 2 funds.

**Exhibit E-1**
**Spring 2006 Campus-Level Interventions**

| Intervention | Number Reporting Intervention | Percent Reporting Intervention |
|---|---|---|
| *Additional counselors* | 36 | 32% |
| *Partnerships with feeder schools and other districts* | 37 | 32% |
| *Highly qualified teachers* | 37 | 32% |
| *Partnerships with local businesses and/or Community Relations* | 48 | 42% |
| *Additional instructional support staff* | 66 | 58% |
| *Teacher professional development* | 68 | 60% |
| *Partnerships with colleges and universities* | 71 | 62% |
| *Parental involvement* | 76 | 67% |

*Source: Analysis of campus-level reported information, TEA AEIS 2004-05 report*
** Full explanation of Interventions located in Appendix A*

Certain interventions were implemented more frequently than others. Four interventions were reportedly implemented at 32 percent to 42 percent of the THSCS campuses and the other four interventions were reportedly implemented at 58 percent to 67 percent of the campuses. The most commonly reported intervention among all schools is *parental involvement*. Almost 60 percent of campuses reported increasing *teacher professional development* and hiring *additional instructional support staff*. The least commonly reported intervention is hiring *additional counselors*, representing 32 percent of all reporting campuses in the spring 2006 data set. Developing *partnerships with feeder schools / other districts* and hiring *highly qualified teachers* were other interventions that were implemented by less than one-third of the campuses.

## E.2 Student Participation in Student-Level Interventions

Student-level interventions involve direct services to students. Below is a list of the student level interventions that could be applied by the campuses through the THSCS Cycle 2 Grant Program. Descriptions of these interventions are provided in *Appendix A*.

- *Tutoring*
- *Accelerated instruction in Mathematics*
- *Early interventions*
- *Credit accrual in Mathematics*
- *Programs for academically at-risk students*
- *Mentoring*
- *Accelerated ELA instruction*
- *Other interventions*
- *Accelerated instruction in Science*
- *Advanced placement/ IB*
- *Credit accrual in ELA*
- *Accelerated instruction in Social Studies*
- *Credit accrual in Social Studies*
- *Credit accrual in Science*
- *Dual credit*
- *Test preparation (PSAT, SAT, ACT)*
- *Child care*
- *Work study*

Of the 173 campuses participating in the THSCS program, 102, or approximately 60 percent, submitted student participation data. A total of 17,884 students participated in 29,539 THSCS interventions at these 102 campuses during the 2005-06 school year. Participating students represented approximately 14 percent of the total enrollment at the 102 campuses reporting.[7] Students at THSCS-funded campuses, who were not identified as participating in student-level interventions, served as the non-participating comparison group for the following analysis.

As **Exhibit E-2** shows, almost 63 percent of students participated in one type of intervention. Twenty-four percent participated in two, and approximately14 percent participated in three or more types of interventions funded through the THSCS grant program.

[7] This 14 percent is calculated by dividing the 17,884 by the total enrollment at these campuses based on 2004 AEIS enrollment data.

**Exhibit E-2**
**Frequency of Student Participation in Interventions**

| Number of Interventions | Number of Students | Percent of Students |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 11,204 | 62.6% |
| 2 | 4,282 | 23.9% |
| 3 | 1,229 | 6.9% |
| 4 | 531 | 3.0% |
| 5 | 390 | 2.2% |
| 6 | 118 | 0.7% |
| 7 or more | 130 | 0.7% |
| Total | 17,884 | 100% |

*Source: Analysis of student-level interventions reported by campuses through SEDL database*

**Exhibit E-3** presents the distribution of these student-level interventions used by schools. The second column presents the percentage of students who participated in each type of intervention. The third column shows the total number of students who participated in each intervention, and the fourth column presents the average amount of time (as measured by contact hours) students participated in each type of intervention during the spring 2006 semester.

**Exhibit E-3**
**Percentage of Students Served by a Particular Intervention**

| Intervention | Percentage of Students* | Number of Students Served (duplicated count) | Average Contact Hours per Semester |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Tutoring* | 31.1% | 5,555 | 7.2 |
| *Accelerated instruction in Mathematics* | 21.6% | 3,861 | 27.8 |
| *Early interventions* | 15.1% | 2,704 | 5.8 |
| *Credit accrual in Mathematics* | 13.0% | 2,321 | 32.3 |
| *Programs for academically at-risk students* | 12.1% | 2,172 | 16.5 |
| *Mentoring* | 12.0% | 2,147 | 12.7 |
| *Accelerated ELA instruction* | 11.0% | 1,976 | 24.7 |
| *Other interventions* | 10.6% | 1,892 | 3.0 |
| *Accelerated instruction in Science* | 7.9% | 1,420 | 27.9 |
| *Advanced Placement /International Baccalaureate(IB)* | 6.8% | 1,213 | 64.5 |
| *Credit accrual in ELA* | 5.8% | 1,032 | 27.8 |
| *Accelerated instruction in Social Studies* | 5.8% | 984 | 15.2 |
| *Credit accrual in Social Studies* | 4.4% | 790 | 15.2 |
| *Credit accrual in Science* | 3.6% | 641 | 27.9 |
| *Dual credit* | 2.1% | 380 | 62.0 |
| *Test preparation (PSAT, SAT, ACT)* | 1.5% | 271 | 27.8 |
| *Child care* | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0 |
| *Work study* | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0 |

*Source: Analysis of student-level interventions reported by campuses through SEDL database*
*Notes: See description of interventions located in Appendix A; Unduplicated student count = 17,884*
** Students can participate in more than one intervention.*

In terms of the number of students served, *tutoring* (31.1 percent), *accelerated Instruction in mathematics* (21.6 percent), and *early interventions* (15.1 percent) were the most commonly used student-level interventions. However, when contact hours are considered, the interventions with the highest average contact hours (i.e., the most intensive interventions) included *Advanced Placement/IB*, *dual credit, credit accrual (mathematics, science, ELA)*, and *accelerated instruction (mathematics, science, ELA)*.[8]

While *tutoring* represented the most frequently used intervention by students, the average contact hours per student for tutoring (7.2 hours) were less than the average contact hours of most other interventions. College-entry *test preparation* and *dual credit* interventions represented the most infrequently used interventions. Of the 18 possible student-level interventions, there was no student participation recorded for two of the interventions - *child care* and *work study*. Accordingly, the non-reported interventions will not be included in the remainder of the tables and analysis in this section. Seventy-one campuses did not report data, so it is possible that these two strategies may have been implemented at one of those campuses.

The student-level intervention data above illustrates an emphasis by schools on mathematics. *Accelerated instruction in mathematics* was provided to almost 22 percent of the students reported by THSCS campuses (compared to 11 percent for *accelerated instruction in* ELA). A total of 13 percent of the students participated in *credit accrual in* mathematics programs compared to 5.8 percent for *credit accrual in* ELA. TAKS passing rates in mathematics are generally lower than reading scores, which may explain the emphasis on interventions relating specifically to mathematics.

Campus use of interventions was also analyzed by grade level**. Exhibit E-4** illustrates the frequency with which interventions were implemented across grades 9 through 12 based on duplicated student counts. Unduplicated counts for overall grade level participation were presented earlier in this section.

With the exception of Grade 12, participation in student-level interventions was evenly distributed across grade levels. Grade 9 and Grade 11 showed the highest participation levels at 29.9 percent and 28.5 percent, respectively. Participation at grade 12 was the lowest among all grade levels at 17.6 percent. For some interventions, such as *programs for academically at-risk students,* there is relatively little difference across grade levels. For other interventions, such as *credit accrual in ELA* and *dual credit*, there is a much greater emphasis in grades 11 and 12, as dual credit is generally targeted towards students in upper grade levels. For *early interventions*, the largest percentage naturally occurs at Grade 9. These results reinforce the accuracy of data reported by campuses.

[8] Average hours for specific interventions appear reasonable based on the relative intensity of the intervention.

## Exhibit E-4
## Spring 2006 Student Level Interventions

| Intervention* | Students Participating (duplicated count) | Percentage Distribution by Grade Level | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 9th | 10th | 11th | 12th |
| *Credit accrual in ELA* | 1,032 | 14.4% | 16.2% | 23.7% | 45.7% |
| *Credit accrual in Mathematics* | 2,321 | 32.1% | 22.7% | 29.0% | 16.2% |
| *Credit accrual in Science* | 641 | 19.0% | 31.4% | 25.0% | 24.6% |
| *Credit accrual in Social studies* | 790 | 14.4% | 16.2% | 22.9% | 46.5% |
| *Accelerated ELA instruction* | 1,976 | 15.8% | 20.4% | 42.4% | 21.4% |
| *Accelerated instruction in Mathematics* | 3,861 | 26.0% | 24.0% | 36.9% | 13.1% |
| *Accelerated instruction in Science* | 1,420 | 12.5% | 24.9% | 37.8% | 24.8% |
| *Accelerated instruction in Social studies* | 984 | 16.3% | 18.9% | 44.9% | 19.9% |
| *Mentoring* | 2,147 | 30.7% | 25.6% | 24.5% | 19.2% |
| *Tutoring* | 5,555 | 30.0% | 37.3% | 22.3% | 10.4% |
| *Other interventions* | 1,892 | 38.6% | 32.2% | 26.3% | 2.9% |
| *Early interventions* | 2,704 | 74.6% | 9.4% | 10.1% | 5.9% |
| *Programs for academically at-risk students* | 2,172 | 24.2% | 21.9% | 30.2% | 23.7% |
| *Test preparation (PSAT, SAT, ACT)* | 271 | 0.0% | 31.4% | 46.5% | 22.1% |
| *Advanced placement/ IB* | 1,213 | 33.8% | 3.8% | 32.8% | 29.6% |
| *Dual credit* | 380 | 0.3% | 8.2% | 39.7% | 51.8% |
| *Work study programs* | 0 | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| *Child care* | 0 | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| **Total duplicated count / Average Percentage** | **29,359** | **29.9%** | **24.0%** | **28.5%** | **17.6%** |

*Source: Analysis of student-level interventions reported by campuses through SEDL database*
** See descriptions of interventions located in Appendix A*

The THSCS Grant Program was designed to provide extra services to those students who most need academic assistance to complete high school and prepare for post-secondary education. One way campuses identify these students is through prior performance on TAKS, because students who fail TAKS can be assumed to need more academic help. Statistical analyses were conducted to see if prior TAKS performance affected student participation or number of interventions provided to participating students.

For the purposes of this analysis, four interventions were selected that appeared to be reasonable activities for students who previously failed TAKS. These are *accelerated instruction* (*mathematics or reading*), *mentoring, tutoring,* and *credit accrual* (*mathematics or reading*). **Exhibit E-5** shows the number and percentage of students participating in these four interventions that passed or failed TAKS Reading and TAKS Mathematics.

**Exhibit E-5**
**TAKS Passing Rates for Students Participating in Selected Interventions**
**Number of Students and Percentage Pass/Fail**

| Intervention | Reading | | Mathematics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Failed 2005 | Passed 2005 | Failed 2005 | Passed 2005 |
| *Tutoring* | 1,341 | 3,729 | 2,716 | 2,349 |
| | 26.4% | 73.6% | 53.6% | 46.4% |
| | | | | |
| *Mentoring* | 506 | 1,419 | 956 | 939 |
| | 26.3% | 73.7% | 50.4% | 49.6% |
| | | | | |
| *Credit Accrual* | 363 | 533 | 1,252 | 846 |
| | 40.5% | 59.5% | 59.7% | 40.3% |
| | | | | |
| *Accelerated Instruction* | 813 | 930 | 2,188 | 1,352 |
| | 46.6% | 53.4% | 61.8% | 38.2% |

*Source: Analysis of student-level interventions reported by campuses through SEDL database and TEA student assessment data*
** See descriptions of interventions located in Appendix A*

The interventions listed in **Exhibit E-5** are organized from less intensive to more intensive in terms of contact hours. **Exhibit E-3** shows that *tutoring* averaged 7.2 contact hours per student, while the average number of contact hours per student for *accelerated instruction* exceeded 24 hours in mathematics *or* reading. **Exhibit E-5** illustrates that the more intensive interventions were targeted more towards the students who failed TAKS Reading and Mathematics. A significant proportion of students who participated in the *credit accrual* (40.5 percent) or *accelerated instruction* (46.6 percent) for reading interventions in 2006 failed the 2005 TAKS Reading exam. Similarly, well over half of students who participated in the *credit accrual* (59.7 percent) or *accelerated instruction* (61.8 percent) for mathematics interventions in 2006 failed the mathematics portion of the 2005 TAKS exam. These percentages of students failing TAKS are higher than the respective participation rates for less intensive interventions such as *tutoring* and *mentoring*.

Prior TAKS Mathematics performance appears to be a minor factor with respect to the number of different interventions students received. This was not the case for prior TAKS Reading

results. For those who previously failed TAKS Mathematics in 2005, the average number of interventions received by students was 1.69; for those who previously passed TAKS, the average number of different types of interventions received was 1.56.[9] Students identified as having previously failed TAKS Mathematics in 2005 generally received more services through the THSCS program than those who passed the TAKS exam. For participating students who failed TAKS Reading in 2005, the average number of THSCS interventions was 1.74. For those who had previously passed TAKS, the average number of different THSCS interventions was 1.73.

In addition to prior performance on TAKS, a student's promotion history and the related attainment of credits may have been a contributing factor to participation in the THSCS Program. The total number of credits relates to the student's grade level, and it is not uncommon to have a five credit ladder. A student with less than five credits is a freshman, less than ten credits a sophomore. The number of credits earned in one year, however, does not necessarily relate to grade level. For example, a student with nine credits who earns three in one year is promoted (or reclassified) as a junior even though the number of credits earned in that year is below the average level of credits needed to graduate within four years.

**Exhibit E-6** shows the prior promotion history (2003-04 to 2004-05) of students who participated in *credit recovery in reading*, *credit recovery in mathematics*, and *any intervention*.[10] It also shows the promotion history of students who did not subsequently participate in THSCS interventions. To ensure that the non-participating comparison group students were similar to those participating in student-level interventions, a number of different analyses were performed. These analyses, which are included in *Appendix H*, reveal that there is little difference between the participant and non-participant student groups in terms of demographic, socioeconomic, and grade level distributions. The percentages for students who participated in interventions are duplicative in that a student may have received *credit recovery in reading* and/or *credit recovery in mathematics*.

**Exhibit E-6**
**Prior Grade Promotion History**
**Percent of Students Retained, 2003-04 to 2004-05**

| | Participants in credit recovery in Reading / ELA (963 students) | Participants in credit recovery in Mathematics (2,232 students) | Participants in any intervention (13,202 students) | Non-participants (139,466 students) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Percent retained | 12.6% | 10.1% | 6.5% | 7.0% |
| Percent promoted | 87.4% | 89.9% | 93.5% | 93.0% |

*Source: TEA PEIMS (Grade Level) and SEDL database (participation)*

While only seven percent of non-participants were retained prior to THSCS interventions, 12.6 percent of those who subsequently received *credit accrual in reading/ELA* and 10.1 percent of those who went on to participate in *credit recovery in mathematics* were retained in grade.

[9] In this case there was a small, but statistically-significant difference ($t=6.35$; $p<.01$).
[10] The "any intervention" category for this analysis covers all 18 student-level interventions.

Retained students made up a larger percentage of students receiving these two interventions than they did of the non-participant group. It is likely that these higher retention rates led to recommendations that these students participate in credit recovery interventions in later years.

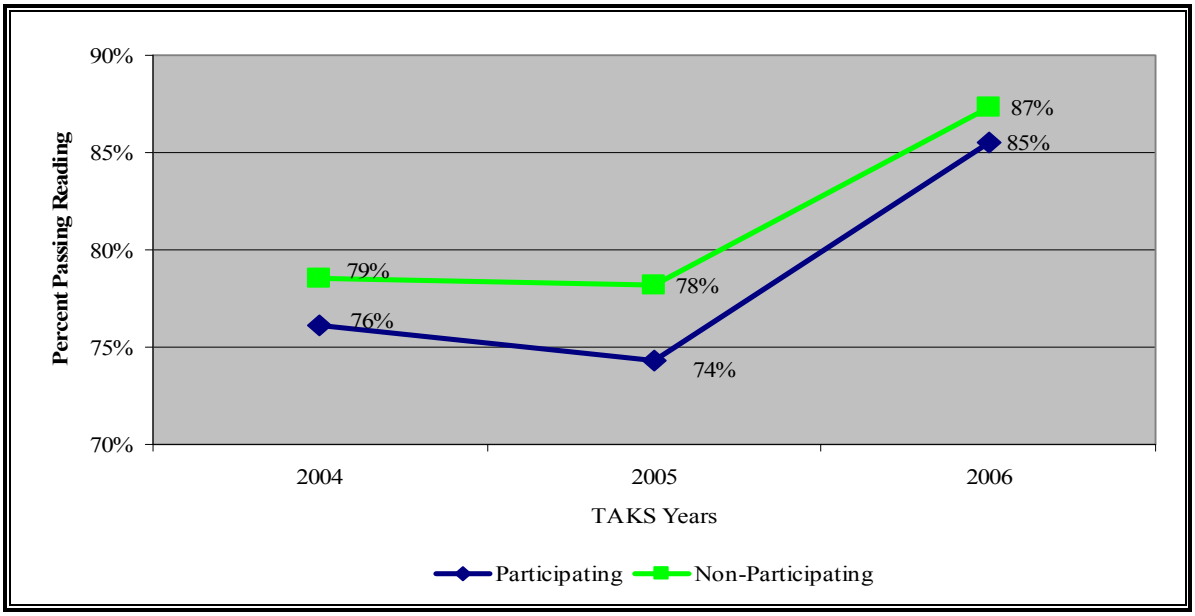
## E.3 Impact of Program on TAKS Performance

This section analyzes the relationship between student-level interventions and student performance as measured by TAKS passing rates. Because the THSCS Grant Program was not established as an experimental or quasi-experimental design, it cannot be determined whether the interventions directly caused an increase in student performance. However, it is possible in some cases to show that participation in the program is correlated with certain student outcomes. While there are some exceptions, students who participated in THSCS interventions showed improved TAKS performance to a degree that was statistically significant. This is a major finding of this Interim Report.

### *Overall Impact of Program Participation*

**Exhibit E-7** shows the differences in the change in TAKS Reading performance between 2004 and 2006 for students at THSCS campuses who participated in interventions versus non-participating students. Only students who had valid TAKS scores in each of the three years were included in this analysis, so that change over time could be tracked for each student. The data presented in this graph (and subsequent presentations) represents results from both an eighth and ninth grade cohort. The relative percentage of participants to non-participants is equal in both cohorts as are performance patterns.

**Exhibit E-7**
**TAKS Reading Performance over Three Years**

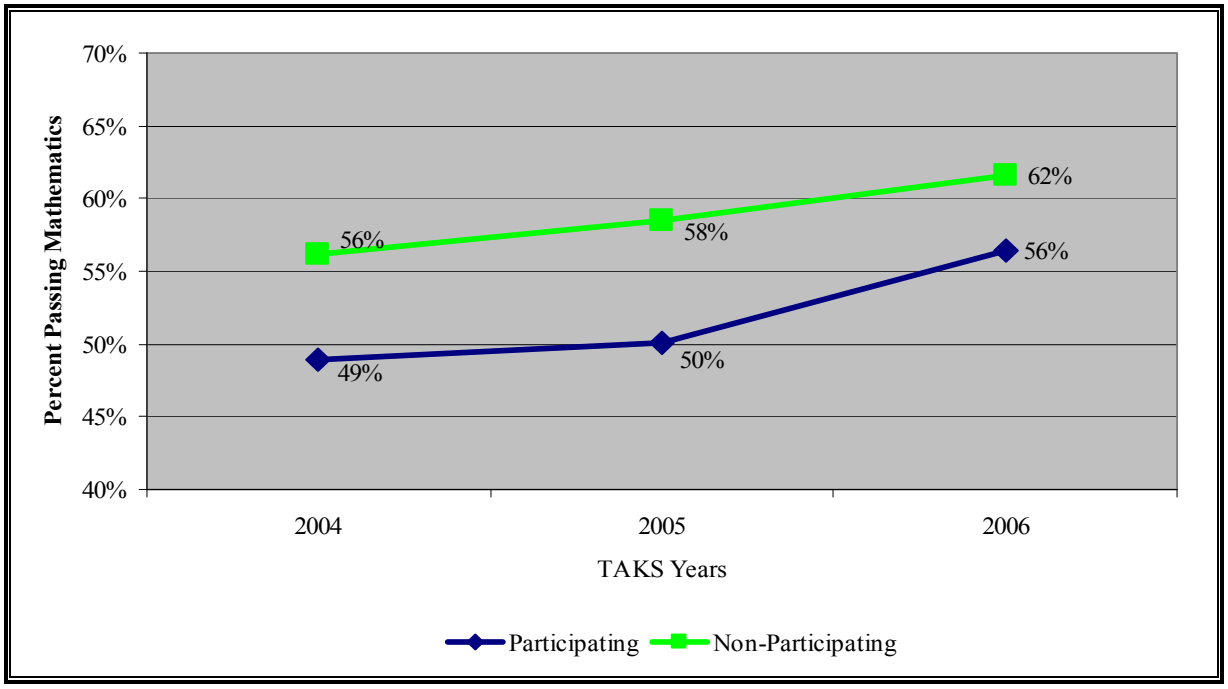



*Source: SEDL database (participation), TEA Student Assessment*
**Note: Number of participants = 8,996*
**Note: Number of non-participants = 84.469*

Those students who would eventually be included in one of the student-level interventions initially showed a 3-percentage point deficit to the other students at their schools in 2004. This increased to a 4-percentage point deficit in 2005. In 2006, the gap in TAKS Reading decreased to 2-percentage points. While passing rates for participants did not reach the level of non-participants, the smaller gap indicates that participation in the THSCS Grant Program may have led to improved TAKS performance.

The results are similar for TAKS Mathematics. **Exhibit E-8** presents the same trend of TAKS passing rates for participating and non-participating students.

**Exhibit E-8**
**TAKS Mathematics Performance over Three Years**

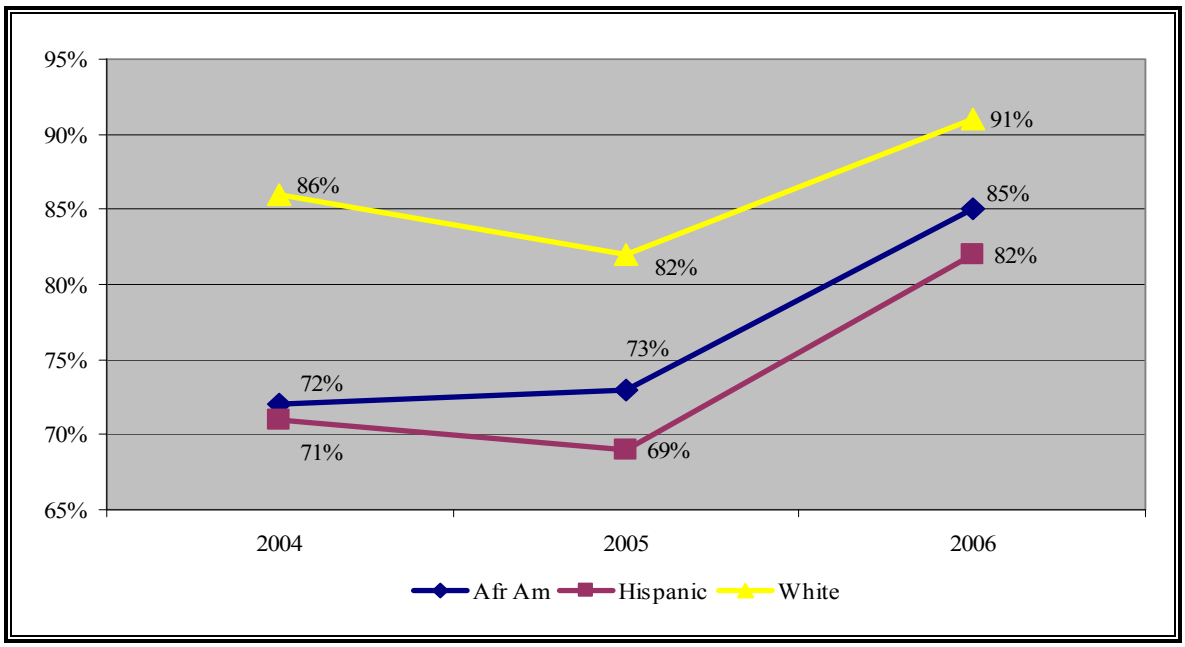



*Source: SEDL database (participation), TEA Student Assessment*
**Note: Number of participants = 8.913*
**Note: Number of non-participants = 83,469*

In 2004, the students who later participated in one of the student-level THSCS interventions initially had a TAKS passing rate that was approximately 7-percentage points behind students who did not participate. This increased to an 8-percentage point deficit in 2005. In 2006, the deficit decreased to 6-percentage points. The performance gap was not closed to the extent seen in reading because the initial differences were greater. This data suggest that the interventions had a positive impact on student performance in mathematics.

TAKS performance of participating students was also analyzed by student ethnicity for reading and mathematics. **Exhibit E-9** presents TAKS Reading passing rates for African-American, Hispanic, and White students in the THSCS program from 2004 through 2006.

**Exhibit E-9**
**TAKS Reading Performance by Ethnicity over Three Years**

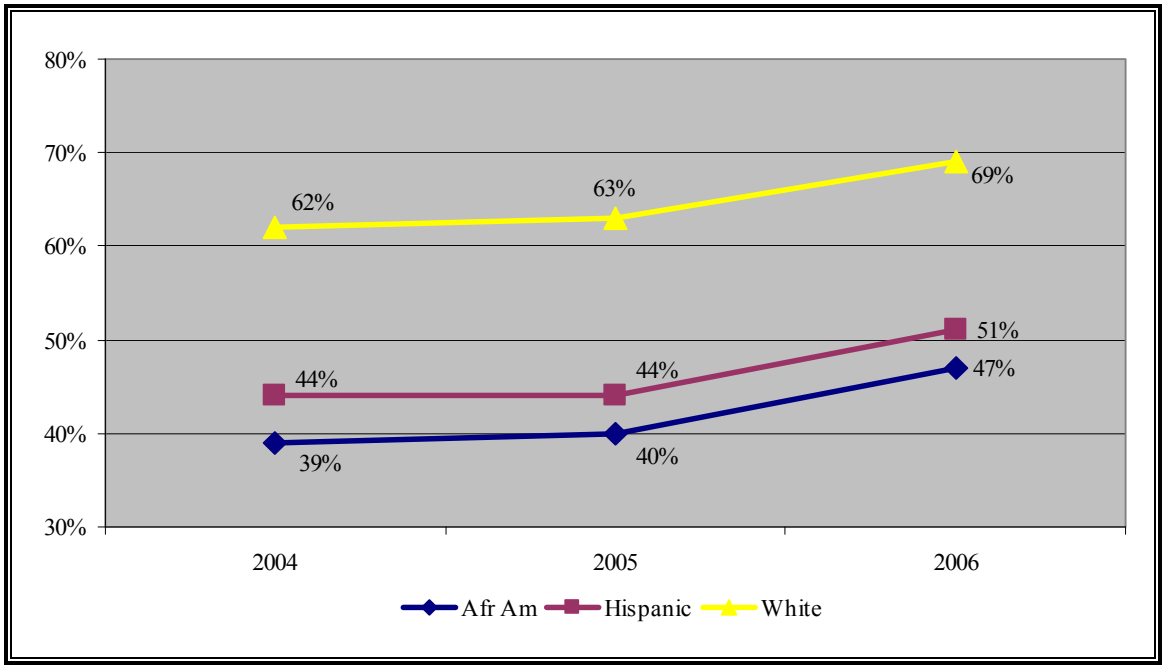



*Source: SEDL database (participation), TEA Student Assessment*
**Note: Number of participants = 8,996*

These results show a closing gap between African-American and Hispanic student passing rates and TAKS Reading passing rates for White students in 2006. In 2004, the TAKS Reading passing rates for White students (86 percent) was 14-percentage points higher than African-African students (72 percent), and 15-percentage points higher than Hispanic students (71 percent). By 2006 that gap had closed to 6- and 9-percentage points for African American and Hispanic students, respectively.

Unlike TAKS Reading, TAKS Mathematics passing rates did not show any discernible closing of performance gaps among student ethnicity groups. **Exhibit E-10** presents TAKS Mathematics passing rates from 2004 to 2006 for African-American, Hispanic, and White students served through the THSCS grant program.

**Exhibit E-10**
**TAKS Mathematics Performance by Ethnicity over Three Years**




*Source: SEDL database (participation), TEA Student Assessment*
**Note: Number of participants = 8,913*

The student performance results are interesting in light of the program emphasis by THSCS campuses. The focus of campus interventions – at least for those subject area interventions – was on mathematics, but student performance gains were slightly greater in reading.

## Impact of Specific Interventions on Student Performance

This section analyzes the relationship between specific interventions and performance on TAKS Reading, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. A statistical method known as a chi-square test was used to determine whether current year passing rates are systematically related to participation in specific student-level interventions.

### *TAKS Reading*

Reading performance was analyzed for participating and non-participating students who were considered in need of services based on several academic indicators. A subset of students with the following characteristics was included in the analysis:

- The student failed the TAKS Reading/ELA in 2004-05.
- The student was in Grade 9 or Grade 10 in 2004-05.
- The student was in Grade 10 or Grade 11 in 2005-06 (in other words, they had been promoted from the previous year).

There were 31,923 students who met these criteria. **Exhibit E-11** presents the student counts for participating and non-participating students in the *tutoring* intervention. Of the 1,341 students who participated in *tutoring,* 650 students (48.5 percent) passed the reading portion of the TAKS test in 2006 and 691 students (51.5 percent) failed the test. This compares favorably to the 30,582 students who did not receive *tutoring*. Of the students who did not receive tutoring, a lower proportion (43.3 percent) passed the reading portion of the TAKS test in 2006 and a larger proportion (56.7 percent) failed the TAKS exam in 2006. These results suggest that tutoring interventions may be related to improved TAKS passing rates.

**Exhibit E-11**
**Relationship Between 2006 TAKS Reading Results and Tutoring Intervention Participation**

| TAKS Results | Participants | Non-participants | Row total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pass in 2006 | 650 (48.5%) | 13,245 (43.3%) | 13,895 |
| Fail in 2006 | 691 (51.5%) | 17,337 (56.7%) | 18,028 |
| Column Total | 1,341 | 30,582 | 31,923 |

*Source: TEA Student Assessment TAKS scores and SEDL database tutoring intervention in 2005-06*
*Note: Only students who failed the 2004-05 TAKS Reading exam were included in this analysis.*

A chi-square analysis was used to determine whether the observed rates of passing among previously failing students were related to participation in the *tutoring* intervention. In other words, the evaluation team used the proportions from the above table as a means for establishing an expected rate of passing for each subgroup (e.g. tutored student/passing, non-tutored student/failing). By comparing the observed rate with the expected rate, it was possible to determine whether students who participated in the *tutoring* intervention passed at a higher rate than expected. **Exhibit E-12** displays the expected rates of passing for each subgroup of students, along with the actual, or observed, number of students who passed.

**Exhibit E-12**
**Observed and Estimated Values for Tutoring Intervention and TAKS Reading Scores**

| TAKS Results | Observed | Expected |
|---|---|---|
| Participant Pass in 2006 | 650 | 584 |
| Participant Fail in 2006 | 691 | 757 |
| Non-participant Pass in 2006 | 13,245 | 13,311 |
| Non-participant Fail in 2006 | 17,337 | 17,270 |

*Source: TEA Student Assessment TAKS scores and SEDL database tutoring intervention in 2005-06*

More students receiving *tutoring* interventions passed and fewer tutored students failed than was expected, while fewer non-tutored students passed and more non-tutored students failed than was expected.[11] This finding supports the conclusion that TAKS Reading passing rates in 2006 were positively related to students who received *tutoring* interventions through the THSCS Program.

Similar analyses were conducted for three other student-level interventions - *mentoring*, *accelerated reading instruction*, and *credit accrual in reading/ELA*. The 2006 TAKS Reading

[11] The chi-square statistic was statistically significant ($X^2 = 13.9$; $p<.01$)

performance was not related with any statistical significance to student participation in *mentoring* or in *accelerated reading instruction*. For *credit accrual in reading/ELA*, the relationship was significant ($X^2$ = 40.8; p<.01) but negative, suggesting that student participation in *credit accrual* is not positively related to improving scores on standardized tests, but could be related to other outcomes that were not tested (i.e., grade promotion or graduation).

An additional chi-square test was conducted for students participating in any one of the 18 interventions. This analysis was statistically significant ($X^2$ = 1,175.7; p<.01), indicating that students who participated in any one of the interventions also saw improvement in their TAKS performance, and suggests a generally positive advantage for participants in the program even if certain outcome relationships with individual interventions are not significant.

While the previous analysis focused on students who previously failed TAKS Reading, the following analysis evaluates the program impact on students who previously passed TAKS Reading. A similar chi-square analysis was applied for students who had passed TAKS Reading in 2004-05. The analysis showed that those students who previously passed TAKS Reading and who participated in *tutoring* ($X^2$ = 395.1; p<.01), *accelerated reading instruction* ($X^2$ = 15.7; p<.01), and *credit accrual in reading* ($X^2$ = 261.5; p<.01) also had higher than expected TAKS passing rates. There was no difference seen among the students who participated in *mentoring*. The significance of these results is noteworthy. For students who passed TAKS Reading in 2004-05 and who did not receive *tutoring,* only 67 percent continued to pass in 2005-06 (perhaps due in part to a more difficult standard). However, for those students who received *tutoring*, 82 percent passed in 2005-06. As with students who previously failed TAKS Reading, there was an advantage for students who participated in any intervention ($X^2$ = 143.4; p<.01) and had previously passed TAKS Reading.

**Exhibit E-13** summarizes the relationships between student participation in specific student-level interventions and TAKS Reading. If the relationship between the intervention and TAKS performance was statistically significant, the table shows the direction of the relationship.

**Exhibit E-13**
**Impact of Interventions on**
**Passing TAKS Reading in 2006**

| | Previously Failed TAKS Reading | Previously Passed TAKS Reading |
|---|---|---|
| *Tutoring* | Positive | Positive |
| *Credit Accrual in Reading* | Negative | Positive |
| *Accelerated Instruction in Reading* | Not statistically significant | Positive |
| *Mentoring* | Not statistically significant | Not statistically significant |
| Any of 18 interventions | Positive | Positive |

*Source: TEA Student Assessment (TAKS) and SEDL database (participation)*

Out of the 10 impact results in **Exhibit E-13**, six showed positive, statistically significant relationships between the intervention and 2006 TAKS Reading results. One result (*credit accrual in reading* for students who failed TAKS in 2004-05) had a negative statistical relationship, and three other results showed no statistically significant relationship.

### *TAKS Mathematics*

These same analyses for TAKS Reading were conducted for TAKS Mathematics. In this case, a subset of students with the following characteristics was included in the analyses:

- The student failed TAKS Mathematics in 2004-05.
- The student was in Grade 9 or Grade 10 in 2004-05.
- The student was in Grade 10 or Grade 11 in 2005-06 (in other words, they had been promoted from the previous year).

This analysis indicates that students who participated in *tutoring* ($X^2$ = 57.2; p<.01) and *accelerated mathematics instruction* ($X^2$ = 70.8; p<.01) experienced a higher than expected performance on 2006 TAKS Mathematics at a level that is statistically significant. Students who participated in *credit accrual in mathematics* also passed the mathematics portion of the 2006 TAKS at a higher rate than expected ($X^2$ = 7.2; p<.05). Students who previously failed the mathematics portion of the 2004-05 TAKS and who participated in *credit accrual in mathematics* improved their TAKS Mathematics performance in 2006,[12] but not to the degree experienced by those students participating in *accelerated instruction in mathematics* and *tutoring*. As expected, there was a significant chi square value for students participating in any of the 18 interventions ($X^2$ = 49.1; p<.01). This indicates that participation in THSCS interventions in general is associated with improved TAKS performance for these students.

For the students who previously passed TAKS Mathematics, the relationships between participation and TAKS performance were statistically significant in all cases except *mentoring*, and in each case, participation yielded positive results.

**Exhibit E-14** summarizes the relationships between student participation in specific student-level interventions and TAKS Mathematics. If the relationship between the intervention and TAKS performance was statistically significant, the table shows the direction of the relationship.

**Exhibit E-14**
**Impact of Interventions on**
**Passing 2006 TAKS Mathematics**

| | Previously Failed TAKS Mathematics | Previously Passed TAKS Mathematics |
|---|---|---|
| *Tutoring* | Positive | Positive |
| *Accelerated Instruction in Mathematics* | Positive | Positive |
| *Credit Accrual in Mathematics* | Positive | Positive |
| *Mentoring* | Not statistically significant | Not statistically significant |
| Any of 18 interventions | Positive | Positive |

*Source: TEA Student Assessment (TAKS) and SEDL database (participation*

[12] This is contrary to the results for reading where we observed that students who previously failed the reading portion of TAKS in 2004-05 and who participated in *credit accrual in reading/ELA* experienced a decrease in TAKS Reading passing rates.

Students who participated in *tutoring* ($X^2$ = 206.1; p<.01), *accelerated mathematics instruction* ($X^2$ = 86.1; p<.01), and *credit accrual in mathematics* ($X^2$ = 19.5; p<.01) appear to have improved their TAKS performance more than similar students who did not participate in these interventions. Similar to the comparison for reading, there was a large chi-square statistic for *tutoring* ($X^2$ = 206.2; p<.01). For students who passed TAKS in 2004-05, only 61 percent continued to pass in 2005-06 (perhaps due in part to a more difficult standard). However, for those students who received *tutoring*, 75 percent passed in 2005-06. As with students who previously failed TAKS Mathematics, there is an advantage for students who participate in any intervention, versus those who do not ($X^2$ = 52.2; p<.01).

### *TAKS Science*

Since participation levels for each individual intervention were small and the TAKS Science exam is not given in every grade, the four interventions (c*redit accrual in science*, *accelerated instruction in science*, *tutoring* and *mentoring*) were combined to form an "*any intervention*" category. In addition, the student group evaluated included both those who had previously failed as well as those who had previously passed TAKS Science. For *any intervention* ($X^2$ = 73.7; p<.01) and for *accelerated instruction in science* ($X^2$ = 60.3; p<.01), there was a positive and statistically significant relationship between participation in the intervention and 2006 TAKS Science results. In each case, students who participated in these interventions passed the TAKS at a higher rate than expected.

### *TAKS Social Studies*

The analysis for social studies was conducted in the similar fashion as science, and for the same reasons. *Credit accrual in social studies*, *accelerated instruction in social studies*, *tutoring* and *mentoring* were included in the "*any intervention*" category for social studies. Students who participated in *any intervention* ($X^2$ = 63.2; p<.01) experienced higher than expected passing rates on TAKS Social Studies, and the relationship was statistically significant. Students who participated in *accelerated instruction in social studies* experienced higher than expected passing rates, but the relationship was not statistically significant.

## Impact of Program on Targeted Student Populations

This section presents analyses of program impact on targeted student populations, including students subject to early intervention, students who were previously retained in 9th grade, and those students taking the Exit-Level TAKS exam for the first time.

### *Students Subject to Early Intervention*

During the summer of 2005, several campuses offered *early intervention* for incoming Grade 9 students (see *Appendix A* for description of this offering). *Early intervention* occurred during summer 2005 for a relatively brief period of time. To analyze the effects of this intervention, TAKS passing rates in 2005 and 2006 were analyzed for a group of students from participating campuses who were in Grade 8 in 2004-05 and who were in Grade 9 in 2005-06. **Exhibit E-15**

presents a summary of the relationships between early intervention students with varying 2005 TAKS results and 2006 TAKS passing rates for reading and mathematics.

**Exhibit E-15**
**Summary of Statistical Relationships Between Early Intervention Students and 2006 TAKS Performance in Reading and Mathematics**

| Subject Area | Prior TAKS | Impact |
|---|---|---|
| Reading | Failed in 2005 | Not statistically significant |
| Reading | Passed in 2005 | Positive |
| Mathematics | Failed in 2005 | Not statistically significant |
| Mathematics | Passed in 2005 | Not statistically significant |

*Source: TEA Student Assessment (TAKS) and SEDL database (participation)*

Students who passed TAKS reading and who participated in the *early intervention* passed TAKS at rates that were higher than expected at a level that was statistically significant ($X^2$ = 13.9; p<.01). In the other three groups, those who participated in the early intervention passed at a higher rate than expected, but not to a level that was statistically significant. According to the data reported, every student included in the *early interventions* who had failed TAKS received at least some other form of support through the THSCS Program during 2005-06.

***Impact of Interventions on TAKS Performance for students who repeated Grade 9***

Traditionally, retention occurs most frequently in Grade 9, and, therefore, these students represent a target population for this program. *Tutoring* and *mentoring* interventions were used to determine if participation would lead to higher than expected TAKS Reading performance. For students who failed TAKS Reading in 2005 and were retained in grade, the relationships between *tutoring* and *mentoring* interventions and 2006 TAKS Reading results were positive but not statistically significant.

For TAKS Mathematics, no statistically-significant relationships were observed. Of those students who repeated Grade 9 and failed TAKS Mathematics in 2005, the passing rate was 7 percent while 8 percent of the non-participants passed.

***Impact of Interventions on First Time Takers of the Exit Level TAKS***

Analysis of the impact of the program on the Exit Level TAKS is important since students must pass the exit level TAKS to graduate. For this analysis, the subset of students included:

- Students who were in Grade 10 in 2005,
- Students who were in Grade 11 in 2006, and
- Students who failed TAKS Mathematics or Reading in 2005.

The results for Exit Level TAKS Reading were not statistically significant. In fact, students who participated in any of the THSCS interventions passed the Exit Level TAKS Reading at a slightly lower rate than expected. The findings for TAKS Mathematics were statistically significant ($X^2$ = 14.2; p<.01) but, in this case, far fewer participants passed than expected.

The analyses contained in this Interim Report focused primarily on the impact of student-level interventions on TAKS performance. In the Final Report to be issued in the summer of 2007, additional analyses will be conducted to determine the impact of campus-level interventions, as well as possible relationships between student-level interventions and other outcomes such as credits earned, discipline referrals, attendance rates, graduation rates, and dropout rates. Analyses will include statistical comparisons of student performance results for THSCS participants and comparable students at unfunded campuses.

## F. Cost Analysis of the Texas High School Completion and Success, Cycle 2

In order to collect financial information regarding the cost effectiveness of the Texas High School Completion and Success Grant, Cycle 2, the evaluation team requested financial data from all the grantees. School districts were asked to submit budgeted and actual expenditures of grant funds for the fiscal years 2004-05 and 2005-06 as of May 31, 2006.

The review team was limited in the depth of analysis it could perform due to the lack of expenditure data available at the intervention level. The evaluation team selected three grantee school districts to visit to pilot the viability of the financial data detail to be requested from all grantees. A small, a medium, and a large school district were selected to determine if school districts of all sizes would be able to respond to the data request. The evaluation team found that the three school districts visited differ in their reporting of grant expenditures. Some districts assign a sub-object, or otherwise track expenditures at a greater level of detail than that required by TEA. Other school districts report expenditures at the grant level only. Based on this pilot review, the evaluation team was unable to analyze the cost of specific interventions without further detailed information from each district.

To address this limitation, the evaluation team will work with financial officers of selected top performing schools to determine the expenditure tracking levels for those schools, and will conduct site visits to extract cost data based on full-time equivalent staff participation in intervention activities and estimated costs of salaries and benefits. However, we might find in districts that initiated multiple interventions at the campus and student levels that this estimated cost allocation method may not support our analytical objective. Additional analyses resulting from these site visits will be included in the Final Report to be issued in the summer of 2007.

The evaluation team requested financial data from 111 school districts; 99 districts (89 percent) responded. Follow-up phone calls were made to maximize response rates.

Listed below are observations based on the data that school districts reported internally and to TEA via PEIMS:

***Data Issues – TEA Level***

- TEA does not require schools to develop budgets and track costs at the grant or intervention level. Grants are tracked by Fund Code; however, schools may report expenditures of multiple grants with the same Fund Code. As a result, comparative analysis of grant expenditures by school cannot be performed.

- Current financial information is not available through PEIMS. TEA requires districts to submit final or audited financial data; however submission of this data does not occur immediately after the fiscal year ends. For example, districts will be reporting their audited 2005-06 fiscal year information to TEA in February 2007.

### *Data Issues - District Level*

- School districts use various types of accounting software. The evaluation team requested that school districts submit their financial data electronically either in Excel or ASCII format to reduce the time necessary to compile all school districts' data into one database to support this analysis. Many school districts' software did not have the capability to download this information or the staff did not know how to download the data. These school districts mailed, faxed, or emailed a PDF format report to the evaluation team.

- Based on the data reviewed to date, it does not appear that any districts tracked costs at the intervention level. This limits our ability to determine which intervention(s) were the most cost effective without cost reconstruction. This exercise will be performed this fall at selected sites.

- Fiscal year periods differ among school districts. Most district fiscal years are from September 1 through August 31; however several have July 1 through June 30 fiscal years.

- Different types of arrangements were made for grants shared by more than one school. Some grants allowed the school district appointed as the fiscal agent to pay and receive reimbursement for services that were provided by third-party contractors to all districts named in the contract. In other instances shared services arrangements required the fiscal agent to pass through the moneys attributable to the school districts in the arrangement.

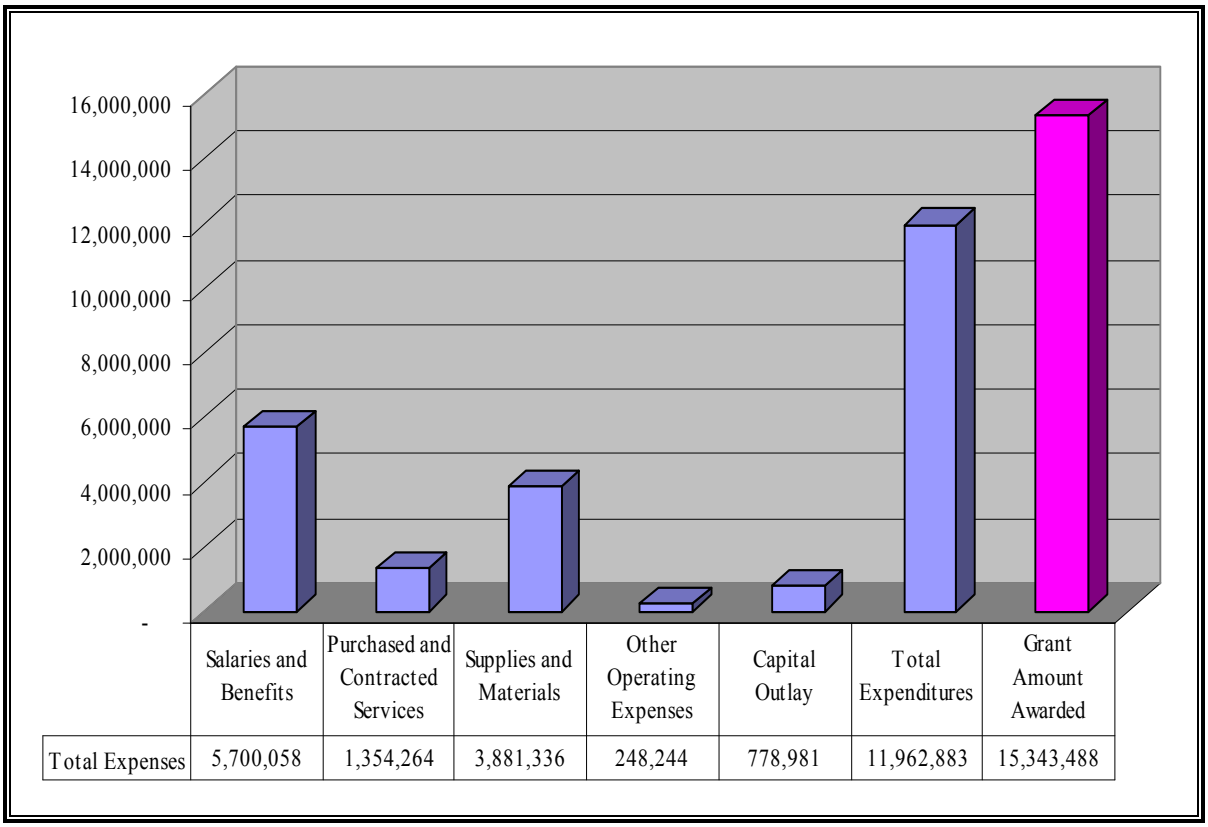
- School districts report expenditure types using different accounting codes, especially operating expenditures. For example, one school district may report software and computer hardware over $5,000 per unit as object code 6300, Supplies and Materials, while another district will properly record the same item as object code 6600, Capital Outlay.

## Allocation of Financial Resources under the Grant Program

### *Overall Expenditures for School Districts that Reported Financial Information*

**Exhibit F-1** represents the grant amount awarded to the 99 school districts that responded to the data request and the actual expenses by object code from inception of the grant award through May 31, 2006. School districts have spent 78 percent of the THSCS, Cycle 2 total grant award. The percentages of expenses to the budget amounts by each school district ranged from zero percent to 100 percent. One school district has not spent any of its money while 25 (25 percent) school districts have expended 100 percent. TEA has extended the date of the grant to February 2007.

**Exhibit F-1**
**Grant Amount Awarded Compared to Expenditures by Object Code**
**2004-05 through 2005-06 (as of May 31, 2006)**

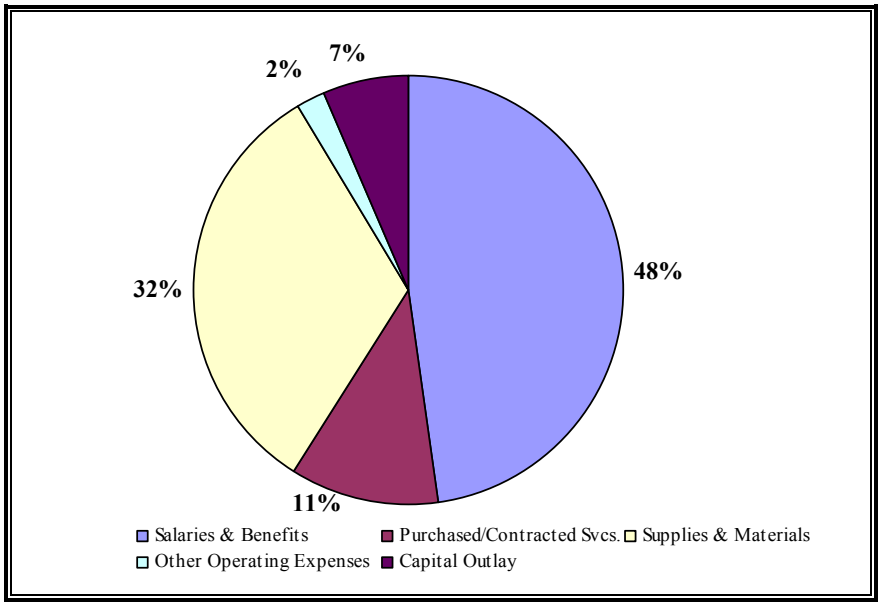



| | Salaries and Benefits | Purchased and Contracted Services | Supplies and Materials | Other Operating Expenses | Capital Outlay | Total Expenditures | Grant Amount Awarded |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Expenses | 5,700,058 | 1,354,264 | 3,881,336 | 248,244 | 778,981 | 11,962,883 | 15,343,488 |

*Source: Grantee School Districts Financial Budget and Actual Expenditures by Fund, Function, Object, Program, and Organization, 2004-05 and 2005-06 (as of May 31, 2006).*

**Exhibit F-2** presents the percentage of actual expenditures by object type. The largest percentage of expenditures is related to salaries and benefits at 48 percent followed by supplies and materials at 32 percent.

**Exhibit F-2**
**Expenditures by Object Code**
**2004-05 through 2005-06 (as of May 31, 2006)**




*Source: Grantee School Districts Financial Budget and Actual Expenditures by Fund, Function, Object, Program, and Organization, 2004-05 and 2005-06 (as of May 31, 2006).*

**Exhibit F-3** compares budgeted expenditures to actual expenditures by object code for the 99 school districts that responded to the financial data request. The largest variances between budget and actual expenditures exist on salaries and benefits, and supplies and materials. To date, school districts spent less on salaries and benefits than budgeted and more on supplies and materials.

**Exhibit F-3**
**Comparison of Budget and Actual Expenditures by Object Code**
**2004-05 through 2005-06 (as of May 31, 2006)**

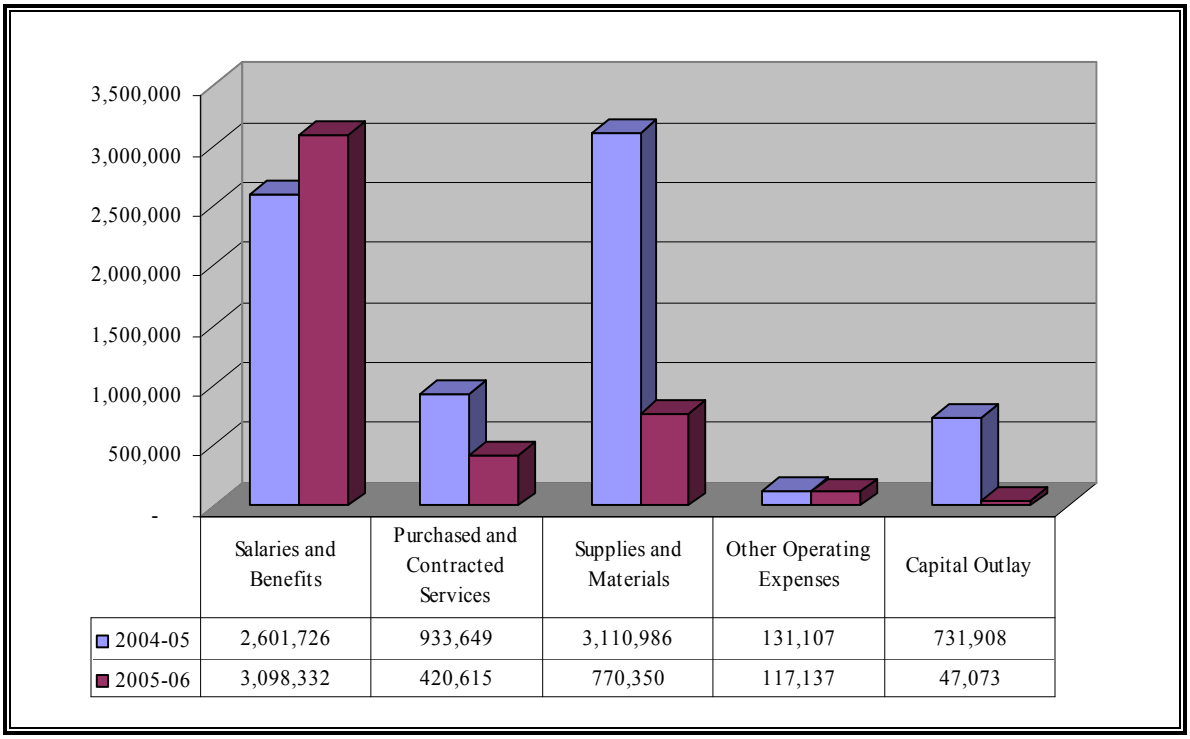
| Expenditure by Object Type | Budget | Actual | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| Salaries and Benefits | 54% | 48% | 6% |
| Purchased and Contracted Services | 11% | 11% | 0% |
| Supplies and Materials | 25% | 32% | (7%) |
| Other Operating Expenses | 4% | 2% | 2% |
| Capital Outlay | 5% | 7% | (2%) |

*Source: Grantee School Districts Financial Budget and Actual Expenditures by Fund, Function, Object, Program, and Organization, 2004-05 and 2005-06 (as of May 31, 2006).*

**Exhibit F-4** shows total expenditures by fiscal year. Fiscal year 2005-06 is presented as of May 31, 2006 since the data was requested prior to August 31. The majority of expenditures occurred in 2004-05 for all object codes with the exception of salaries and benefits. As noted earlier, school districts reported software and computer acquisitions in both Supplies & Materials and Capital Outlay categories. It is reasonable to assume that purchases for software and technology

equipment as well as other supplies took place immediately while salaries were spread over the life of the grant.

**Exhibit F-4**
**Expenditures by Object by Fiscal Years**
**2004-05 and 2005-06 (as of May 31, 2006)**




| | Salaries and Benefits | Purchased and Contracted Services | Supplies and Materials | Other Operating Expenses | Capital Outlay |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2004-05 | 2,601,726 | 933,649 | 3,110,986 | 131,107 | 731,908 |
| 2005-06 | 3,098,332 | 420,615 | 770,350 | 117,137 | 47,073 |

*Source: Grantee School Districts Financial Budget and Actual Expenditures by Fund, Function, Object, Program, and Organization, 2004-05 and 2005-06 (as of May 31, 2006).*

### *Comparison between the Top 20 High Performing Schools and Other Selected Schools*

This section of the financial data analysis compares the 20 highest performing grantee campuses[13] with selected schools that reported financial and intervention data to the evaluation team. As noted in the introduction of this section, the evaluation team requested financial data from all 111 of the grantees and received 99 responses. **Section E** of this report presents the student performance outcomes for the 2006 TAKS results in reading and mathematics. The data for campus-level and student-level interventions is taken from the database used in **Section E** of this report. The student performance outcomes and intervention information were analyzed against the cost data to make observations.

Fifty-nine of the 173 schools had information for all three categories: financial data, student performance outcomes and interventions. The Top 20 school districts are included in the 59 selected schools.

[13] The 20 highest performing grantee campuses were selected based on improvement in 2005 and 2006 Reading and Mathematics TAKS results for those students who received services through the THSCS grant program

**Exhibit F-5** shows the number of schools, average daily attendance, and actual expenditures by all selected reporting schools, schools not included in the Top 20, and Top 20 Schools. **Exhibit F-5** also displays the percentages of totals for the Non-Top 20 Schools and the Top 20 Schools. Although the Non-Top 20 Schools make up 66 percent of the total schools selected in the analysis, this group has spent 53 percent of the total grant compared to 47 percent for the Top 20 Schools.

**Exhibit F-5**
**Comparison Between All Selected Reporting Schools, Non-Top 20 Schools and the Top 20 Schools**

| | All Selected Schools | Non-Top 20 Schools | Top 20 Schools |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total Number of Schools | 59 | 39 | 20 |
| Percent of Total | | 66% | 34% |
| Average Daily Attendance | 85,116 | 47,804 | 37,312 |
| Percent of Total | | 56% | 44% |
| Actual Expenditures | $5,198,392 | $ 2,766,130 | $ 2,432,260 |
| Percent of Total | | 53% | 47% |

*Source: Grantee School Districts Financial Budget and Actual Expenditures by Fund, Function, Object, Program, and Organization, 2004-05 and 2005-06 (as of May 31, 2006) and TEA Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).*

**Exhibit F-6** compares actual expenditures between the Top 20 Schools and the Non-Top 20 schools. The Top 20 schools spent 9 percent more on salaries and benefits than the Non-Top 20 Schools. Hiring more counselors and possibly providing more tutoring services in the *accelerated instruction* interventions may explain the higher salary and benefit costs of the Top 20 Schools.

**Exhibit F-6**
**Comparison of Percent Actual Expenditure Allocation between All Selected Reporting Schools, Non-Top 20 Schools and the Top 20 Schools**

| Object Code Description | All Selected Schools | Non-Top 20 Schools | Top 20 Schools | Difference Between Top 20 and All Selected Schools | Difference Between Top 20 and Non-Top 20 Schools |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Salaries and Benefits | 58% | 54% | 63% | 5% | 9% |
| Purchased and Contracted Services | 7% | 8% | 5% | (2%) | (3%) |
| Supplies and Materials | 31% | 33% | 29% | (2%) | (4%) |
| Other Operating Expenses | 2% | 2% | 3% | 1% | 1% |
| Capital Outlay | 2% | 3% | 0% | (2%) | (3%) |

*Source: Grantee School Districts Financial Budget and Actual Expenditures by Fund, Function, Object, Program, and Organization, 2004-05 and 2005-06 (as of May 31, 2006).*

## Cost of Specific Interventions

As noted earlier in this section, schools and districts were not required to track expenditures at the intervention level. The evaluation team will select eight of the top-performing schools to visit, beginning March 2007, and recode and reconstruct expenditure data at the intervention level. The evaluation team will also emphasize the importance of instructing districts to collect financial information at the appropriate intervention level when grants are awarded to support this type of cost effectiveness analysis.

# Appendix A
# THSCS Intervention Descriptions

## THSCS grant-supported programs that affect the whole school

1. **Additional counselors**
   Additional counseling services to assist students in the development of their individualized plan. Counseling services may include academic, awareness of advance-level courses, post-secondary, personal and crisis intervention, career, and advocacy programs.

2. **Additional instructional support staff**
   Part-time or full-time school staffs that are supported by grant funds such as instructional aides and/or lab technicians.

3. **Highly qualified teachers**
   Additional qualified teachers to teach specialized core areas, accelerated instruction, advanced courses, and college preparation.

4. **Parental involvement**
   May include programs that provide parent or guardian volunteers and mentors and/or training for parents.

5. **Partnerships with colleges and universities**
   May include partnerships that provide dual credit, college visits, software or online courses, and/or college mentors and tutors for core curriculum, advanced courses, and ACT/SAT preparation.

6. **Partnerships with feeder schools and other school districts**
   May include partnerships that align curriculum, provide mentors and tutors, share special-purpose teachers, and purchase materials and/or equipment.

7. **Partnerships with local businesses and/or community relations**
   May include partnerships that provide business and community mentors, equipment and supplies, training and work study, donations, and sponsored events.

8. **Teacher professional development**
   May include professional development programs through district trainers, Education Service Centers, private providers, and online courses.

# Appendix A
# THSCS Intervention Descriptions

**Programs that affect targeted students in the school**

9. **Accelerated instruction in English language arts**
   Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS English. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and out-of-school activities.

10. **Accelerated instruction in Mathematics**
    Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS Mathematics. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and out-of-school activities.

11. **Accelerated instruction in Science**
    Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS Science. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and out-of-school activities.

12. **Accelerated instruction in Social Studies**
    Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS Social Studies. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and out-of-school activities.

13. **Advanced Placement/ International Baccalaureate**
    Programs that prepare students to pass Advance Placement and/or International Baccalaureate exams.

14. **Child care**
    Programs that provide on-site licensed child-care facilities and/or financial support for students to have licensed professional care and supervision of their children while they complete high school courses.

15. **Credit accrual activities in English language arts (credit recovery, online courses and software, flexible entry or exit courses)**
    Credit recovery courses in English language arts to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after-school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and supplemental activities.

16. **Credit accrual activities in Mathematics (credit recovery, online courses and software, flexible entry or exit courses)**
    Credit recovery courses in mathematics to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after-school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and supplemental activities.

# Appendix A
# THSCS Intervention Descriptions

17. **Credit accrual activities in Science (credit recovery, online courses and software, flexible entry or exit courses)**
    Credit recovery courses in science to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after-school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and supplemental activities.

18. **Credit accrual activities in Social Studies (credit recovery, online courses and software, flexible entry or exit courses)**
    Credit recovery courses in social studies to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after-school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and supplemental activities.

19. **Dual credit**
    Programs that provide students opportunities to earn college credit while in high school through articulated agreements with post-secondary institutions.

20. **Early interventions**
    Programs targeting at-risk students such as eighth-grade transitional programs, summer orientations, freshmen seminars, and four-year planning.

21. **Mentoring**
    Programs that provide trained mentors to at-risk students (students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled, students identified as academically at-risk, limited English-proficient students, students with disabilities, and migrant students) to support them socially and academically to succeed in school. Programs may include mentors from business and community organizations.

22. **Programs for academically at-risk students**
    Programs designed for students identified as academically at-risk such as students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled, migrant students, limited English-proficient, and/or economically disadvantaged students.

23. **Test preparation (PSAT, SAT, ACT)**
    Programs designed to prepare students to take college entrance exams for admission, placement, and scholarships into post-secondary education.

24. **Tutoring**
    Programs that provide high-quality tutoring services to students. Tutoring services may include individualized instruction of specific subjects by highly qualified teachers, peers, community volunteers, and parents.

# Appendix A
# THSCS Intervention Descriptions

25. **Work study programs**
    Programs that enable students to gain work experience and earn income while continuing their studies. May also include internships and career path courses.

26. **Other interventions**
    Other THSCS grant-supported programs not listed above. Schools that mark this option will receive follow-up calls for clarification about other THSCS programs.

DRAFT 11/01/05

# Evaluation of the Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS) Grant Initiative, Cycle 2

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. The primary purpose of this survey is to identify the status of the high school programs that are currently receiving THSCS, Cycle 2 funds. THSCS programs refer to any activities, interventions, or strategies implemented or put into place with funds from the THSCS grant since October 2004 when grant funds were awarded. We specifically want to know the nature of and status of the program at your school and how it is working. For more information or clarification regarding this survey please contact Melissa Dodson, SEDL Evaluation Associate, mdodson@sedl.org, (800) 476-6861 or Sonia Castaneda, TEA, Sonia.Castaneda@tea.state.tx.us, (512) 936-2282.

**Background Information**

1. What is your role in the THSCS grant funded program at your school? (Mark all that apply)

| | |
|---|---|
| O | Project Director/Grant Coordinator |
| O | Campus Principal |
| O | Teacher |
| O | Counselor |
| O | Other? (Please specify) _____ |

2. What percentage of your time is currently dedicated to the THSCS grant program? (Mark one response only)

| | |
|---|---|
| O | 0-25% |
| O | 26-50% |
| O | 51-75% |
| O | 76-100% |

3. What funding sources pay for your position/role in the THSCS program? (Mark all that apply)

| | |
|---|---|
| O | THSCS grant funds |
| O | Local funds |
| O | State funds |
| O | Federal funds |
| O | Other funds (Please specify) _____ |

4. Is the campus principal who originally put the THSCS grant program in place still employed in this school or district? (Mark one response only)

| | |
|---|---|
| O | Yes |
| O | No |
| O | Don't know |

5. Is the project manager who originally put the THSCS grant program in place still employed in this school or district? (Mark one response only)

| | |
|---|---|
| O | Yes |
| O | No |
| O | Don't know |

Please respond to the following items. (Please mark one oval on each line)

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. Prior to receiving the grant awards, to what extent were you involved with planning the THSCS program strategies for your school? | Not at all | A little | Moderately | Extensively | Not Sure |
| | O | O | O | O | O |
| 7. Currently, to what extent are you involved in the daily operation of the THSCS program strategies at your school? | Not at all | A little | Moderately | Extensively | Not Sure |
| | O | O | O | O | O |
| 8. At this point in time, to what degree would you say the THSCS program has been implemented at your school? | Not at all implemented | Somewhat implemented | Mostly Implemented | Fully implemented | Not Sure |
| | O | O | O | O | O |
| 9. How similar would you say the program has been implemented as it was originally planned and proposed in the application? | Not at all similar | Slightly similar | Moderately similar | Exactly as planned | Not Sure |
| | O | O | O | O | O |



**<Insert CDC# and unique identifier here>**

**THSCS Programs at Your School (See attached list for description of each program)**

10. Which of the following kinds of THSCS grant-funded programs currently exist at your school? (Mark to the left all that apply and for those marked, respond to the items to the right.)

| | Types of THSCS Grant-Funded Programs at your school | a. How well was each marked program planned for the needs of the students in your school? | | | b. How well was each marked program implemented or put into place at your school? | | | c. To date, how effective has this program been in producing the desired results? | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Poor | Fairly well | Well | Poor | Fairly well | Well | Not effective | Somewhat effective | Very effective |
| O | a. Parental involvement programs | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | b Teacher professional development | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | c. Accelerated instruction | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | d. Advanced Placement /International Baccalaureate | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | e. Child care programs | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | f. Credit accrual activities | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | g. Dual credit | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | h. Early interventions (9th grade transition) | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | i. Mentoring programs | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | j Programs for academically at-risk students (LEP, migrant) | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | k. Test preparation (PSAT, SAT, ACT) | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | l. Tutoring | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | m. Work study programs | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | n. Other (please specify): | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |

**Factors that Facilitate Implementation of THSCS Programs**

11. From October 2004 until today, to what extent did the following factors ***facilitate*** implementation of THSCS programs at your school. (Please mark one oval on each line)

| To what extent did the factor facilitate implementation of THSCS programs? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Factor:** | Not at all | A little | Somewhat | A great deal | Don't Know |
| District support | O | O | O | O | O |
| School leadership | O | O | O | O | O |
| School staff support and buy-in | O | O | O | O | O |
| Community/parent involvement | O | O | O | O | O |
| Commitments by partnering schools, higher education, or community/ parent organizations | O | O | O | O | O |
| Alignment of programs with school activities | O | O | O | O | O |
| Other grant funds (Please specify): | O | O | O | O | O |
| Other? (Please specify): | O | O | O | O | O |

**Barriers to Implementation**

12. Please rate to what extent the following factors ***impeded*** implementation of THSCS funded programs at your school ***from October 2004 until today***. (Please mark one oval on each line)

| To what extent is the factor a barrier? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Factor:** | Not at all | A little | Somewhat | A great deal | Don't Know |
| a. Lack of time | O | O | O | O | O |
| b. Lack of evidence of desired effects | O | O | O | O | O |
| c. Poor planning | O | O | O | O | O |
| d. Lack of buy-in from campus leadership | O | O | O | O | O |
| e. Inadequate project management | | | | | |
| f. Lack of school staff support | O | O | O | O | O |
| g. Insufficient resources | O | O | O | O | O |
| h. Misalignment with other school priorities | O | O | O | O | O |
| i. Limited space | O | O | O | O | O |
| j. Staff turnover | O | O | O | O | O |
| k. Other? (Please specify): | O | O | O | O | O |

13. Please describe specific steps you think can be taken to help your school overcome the factors you perceive as barriers to the implementation of THSCS grant funded programs (indicate with the item letter (a-j) which factor you are referring to from Question 11 above).

14. Since October 2004 when grant funds were awarded, were THSCS funds used to pay for additional staff at your school?

O Yes O No (Skip to Question 14)

If yes, what positions and approximately what percentage of their time do grant funds currently support? (Please mark one oval on each line)

| Grant-supported school staff positions during contract period | | % of time supported by THSCS funds during the grant period | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 0-25% | 26-50% | 51-75% | 76-100% | Not Sure |
| O | Project Director/Grant Coordinator | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | Teacher | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | Instructional Aide | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | Tutor | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | Mentor | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | Counselor | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | Lab technician | O | O | O | O | O |
| O | Other? (Please specify) | O | O | O | O | O |

| 15. To what extent do THSCS grant-supported strategies align with and compliment other major existing school interventions and programs? (Please mark one oval on each line) | Not at all | A little | Moderately | To a great extent | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | O | O | O | O | O |

Please explain.

| 17. To what extent are modifications planned for THSCS grant supported strategies next year? (Please mark one oval on each line) | Not at all | A little | Moderately | To a great extent | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | O | O | O | O | O |

18. Please explain any modifications that will be made in the future.

| 19. Please provide your opinion about each of the following statements: (Mark one oval on each line.) | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | No Opinion | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. The school staff (e.g., teachers, tutors, counselors) associated with the THSCS grant supported program have received sufficient training. | O | O | O | O | O |
| b. Others associated with the THSCS grant supported program (e.g., community mentors, parents) have received sufficient training. | O | O | O | O | O |
| c. The district office is supportive of the THSCS program at our school. | O | O | O | O | O |
| d. The school administration is supportive of the THSCS program at our school. | O | O | O | O | O |
| e. The instructional staff is supportive of the THSCS program at our school. | O | O | O | O | O |
| f. Involved partners are supportive of the THSCS program at our school | O | O | O | O | O |
| g. The parents are supportive of the THSCS program at our school. | O | O | O | O | O |

**Outcomes of THSCS Grant Programs**

20. TEA lists eight guiding principles for THSCS grant program strategies and activities. Please fill in the responses that best reflect your school's progress in achieving these principles. **Did this change occur at your school because of THSCS grant-funded programs? If so, rate how much change occurred. If not, darken the oval beneath "Change occurred but not because of grant" and then skip to the next row.** (darken only one oval per row)

| At this point in time, to what extent has the THSCS program influenced change in your school related to: | Change occurred but not because of grant | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Monitoring and tracking student outcomes such as college readiness, AP participation, dual credit, student achievement, graduation rates. | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| b. Providing students with personalized learning environments and a meaningful relationship with at least one adult in high school. | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| c. Creating common values for high expectations, accountability, and a shared student focus. | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| d. Providing staff development and time for collaboration. | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| e. Engaging parents and the community in the daily lives of students and the school through internships and mentoring. | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| f. Supporting innovative interventions, strategies and models, and seek out networking activities for staff and teachers. | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| g. Incorporating sufficient access to technology and instructional resources. | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |
| h. Ensuring coordination of federal, state, and local programs. | O | O | O | O | O | O | O |

21. If changes have occurred because of THSCS grant-funded programs, please use this space to give one or two specific examples of how THSCS grant funds have influenced your students, your school, and/or your community.

## THSCS Program Names and Descriptions

**Parental involvement**
May include programs that provide parent or guardian volunteers and mentors and/or training for parents.

**Teacher professional development**
May include professional development programs from district trainers, Education Service Centers, private providers, online courses.

**Accelerated instruction**
Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and out-of-school activities.

**Advanced Placement/ International Baccalaureate**
Programs that prepare students to successfully pass Advance Placement and/or International Baccalaureate exams.

**Child care**
Programs that provide on-site licensed child care facilities and/or financial support for students to have licensed professional care and supervise their children while they complete high school courses.

**Credit accrual activities (credit recovery, online courses and software, flexible entry or exit courses)**
Credit recovery courses in English language arts, mathematics, science, and/or social studies to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after school activities, summer courses, online courses and sofware (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and supplemental activities.

**Dual credit**
Programs that provide students opportunities to earn college credit while in high school through articulated agreements with post-secondary institutions.

**Early interventions**
Programs targeting at-risk students such as eighth grade transitional programs, summer orientations, freshmen seminars, and four-year planning.

**Mentoring**
Programs that provide trained mentors to at-risk students (students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled, students identified as academically at-risk, limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, and migrant students) to support them socially and academically to succeed in school. Programs may include mentors from business and community organizations.

**Programs for academically at-risk students**
Programs designed for students identified as academically at-risk such as students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled, migrant students, limited English proficient, and/or economically disadvantaged students.

**Test preparation (PSAT, SAT, ACT)**
Programs designed to prepare students to take college entrance exams for admission, placement, and scholarships into post-secondary education.

**Tutoring**
Programs that provide high quality tutoring services to students. Tutoring services may include individualized instruction of specific subjects by highly qualified teachers, peers, community volunteers, parents, etc.

**Work study programs**
Programs that enable students to gain work experience and earn an income while continuing their studies. May also include internships and career path courses.

**Other interventions**
Other THSCS grant-supported programs not listed above. Schools that mark this option will receive follow-up calls for clarification about other THSCS programs.

## THSCS Cycle 2 Study

Name of School _____

*Please check one of the site visit options. Please check all that apply.*

☐ THSCS grant summer program.
☐ Week of June 6th ☐ Week of June 13th
☐ Week of June 20th ☐ Week of June 27th

☐ THSCS grant regular school year program.
☐ Week of Sept 5th ☐ Week of Sept 12th
☐ Week of Sept 19th ☐ Week of Sept 26th

**Study Contact Name** _____
**Position** _____
**Phone Number** _____
**E-mail** _____

**PLEASE RETURN POSTCARD BY MAY 27, 2005**


## THSCS Cycle 2 Study

Name of School _____

*Please check one of the site visit options. Please check all that apply.*

☐ THSCS grant summer program.
☐ Week of June 6th ☐ Week of June 13th
☐ Week of June 20th ☐ Week of June 27th

☐ THSCS grant regular school year program.
☐ Week of Sept 5th ☐ Week of Sept 12th
☐ Week of Sept 19th ☐ Week of Sept 26th

**Study Contact Name** _____
**Position** _____
**Phone Number** _____
**E-mail** _____

**PLEASE RETURN POSTCARD BY MAY 27, 2005**



Name of School _____

*Please check one of the site visit options. Please check all that apply.*

☐ THSCS grant summer program.
☐ Week of June 6th ☐ Week of June 13th
☐ Week of June 20th ☐ Week of June 27th

☐ THSCS grant regular school year program.
☐ Week of Sept 5th ☐ Week of Sept 12th
☐ Week of Sept 19th ☐ Week of Sept 26th

**Study Contact Name** _____
**Position** _____
**Phone Number** _____
**E-mail** _____

**PLEASE RETURN POSTCARD BY MAY 27, 2005**



## THSCS Cycle 2 Study

Name of School _____

*Please check one of the site visit options. Please check all that apply.*

☐ THSCS grant summer program.
☐ Week of June 6th ☐ Week of June 13th
☐ Week of June 20th ☐ Week of June 27th

☐ THSCS grant regular school year program.
☐ Week of Sept 5th ☐ Week of Sept 12th
☐ Week of Sept 19th ☐ Week of Sept 26th

**Study Contact Name** _____
**Position** _____
**Phone Number** _____
**E-mail** _____

**PLEASE RETURN POSTCARD BY MAY 27, 2005**

<TEA Letterhead>
To the Campus Principal Addressed:

Thank you for your continued leadership and support for the Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS), Cycle 2 grant program in which your school is currently receiving funding. In order to examine the impact of activities funded through this grant program, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with a highly-experienced external evaluator, Gibson Consulting Group and Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (Gibson/SEDL), to conduct a third-party evaluation of this grant program. The Gibson/SEDL team are administering surveys to all THSCS, Cycle 2 grant recipients to gather information from the schools about their THSCS grant-funded programs and how they are working. As the Campus Principal, we ask that you complete the survey and distribute the remaining surveys to campus staff that work closely with the THSCS grant-funded program at your school.

**For every Cycle 2 campus, surveys should be completed by the Campus Principal and 3-5 campus staff that serve the THSCS grant-funded program.**

Appropriate school staff to complete the survey include ***staff working directly with the grant program and/or implementing grant-funded interventions***. These may include:

- Campus Principal (required completion)
- Assistant Principal
- Project Director/ Grant Coordinator
- Teachers
- Counselors
- Tutors

Please distribute the surveys to the appropriate staff no later than **December 6, 2005.** Please do not distribute the surveys to others who do not meet the above criteria. As you distribute the survey packets, please stress to your staff the importance of returning the surveys by **December 13, 2005**. A self-addressed, pre-paid reply envelope is provided for your convenience. If you prefer, the survey may be accessed online by going to the following Website: http://www.sedl.org/es/thscs.

For those who choose to complete the survey on-line, a code must be entered to access the Web site. These codes can be found on the cover sheet to the survey and in the upper left-hand corner of the paper survey. Your campus principal code is: **cag51m1234.**

The entire survey should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. Please read each item carefully and answer all of the questions. Your identity and responses to this survey are confidential and we appreciate candid responses.

For more information or clarification regarding this survey please contact Melissa Dodson, SEDL Evaluation Associate, mdodson@sedl.org, (800) 476-6861 or Sonia Castaneda, TEA, Sonia.Castaneda@tea.state.tx.us, (512) 936-2282. Thank you for your continued dedication, leadership, and support for Texas students.

Sincerely,

Nora Hancock

Nora Ibáñez Hancock, Ed.D.
Associate Commissioner
Office for Planning, Grants and Evaluation

<TEA Letterhead>
To the Survey Recipient:

Your school is currently receiving TEA funds under the Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS), Cycle 2 grant program. In order to examine the impact of activities funded through this grant program, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with experienced external evaluators from Gibson Consulting Group and Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (Gibson/SEDL) to conduct a third-party evaluation of this grant program.

The Gibson/SEDL team are administering surveys to all THSCS, Cycle 2 grant recipients to gather information from Cycle 2 schools about their THSCS grant-funded programs, their status, and how they are working.

**For every Cycle 2 campus, surveys should be completed by the Campus Principal and 3-5 campus staff that serve the THSCS grant-funded program.**

Appropriate school staff to complete the survey include ***staff working directly with the grant program and/or implementing grant-funded interventions***. These may include:

- Campus Principal (required completion)
- Assistant Principal
- Project Director/ Grant Coordinator
- Teachers
- Counselors
- Tutors

The Campus Principal at your school has identified you as among the appropriate school staff to complete the survey. The entire survey should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. Please read each item carefully and answer all of the questions. Your identity and responses to this survey are confidential and we appreciate candid responses.

If you prefer, you may access and complete the survey on-line by going to the following Website: http://www.sedl.org/es/thscs The on-line survey will require a survey ID #.

**Please use the following code to enter the Online Survey:**
**[INSERT ID# HERE cag51m1234]**

If you choose to complete the paper survey, please return it to the address listed below using the pre-paid return envelope by **December 13, 2005**. We ask that online surveys be completed by **December 13, 2005**. as well. For more information or clarification regarding this survey please contact Melissa Dodson, SEDL Evaluation Associate, mdodson@sedl.org, (800) 476-6861 or Sonia Castaneda, TEA, Sonia.Castaneda@tea.state.tx.us, (512) 936-2282. Thank you for your continued dedication, leadership, and support for Texas students. Thank you for your continued dedication and support for Texas students.

Sincerely,

Nora Hancock

Nora Ibáñez Hancock, Ed.D.
Associate Commissioner
Office for Planning, Grants and Evaluation

**Return Surveys to: SEDL Evaluation Services, 211 East 7th Street, Austin, TX 78701**
**DUE: DECEMBER 7, 2005**

3. Please tell us a little bit more about yourself and the other program staff. As a (PRINCIPAL/ ADMINISTRATOR/ COORDINATOR, ETC.) what is your role regarding the high school completion program? How long have your been involved with the program? Who else is involved in the program? [*Program staff description*]

4. Have there been, or are there now, similar programs at this school that support activities related to or aligned with the high school completion program activities? Can you describe them? Is there an overlap of activities for these programs? [*Interaction of interventions with existing programs*]

**Implementation of the high school completion program**

5. To prepare for this interview, I read the proposal that was submitted to TEA for this THSCS program. Would you say the program has been implemented as it was originally proposed? To what degree would you say the program has been implemented at this point? [*Implementation status*]

6. What challenges, if any, arose that influenced the program's implementation? What adjustment were made and why? [*Implementation status and conditions*]

**Overall program effectiveness/Impact**

7. In your opinion, how effective is your school's high school completion program so far? What is working? What is not? What needs to be changed? [*Best and least productive aspects of intervention*]

8. How do staff members perceive the program? What do they like? What do they dislike? [*Best and least productive aspects of intervention*]

9. What kinds of impacts, if any, do you see taking place in this school as a result of high school completion program? What do you consider to be the one best outcome of the high school completion program so far? [*Impact on outcome*]

10. What types of students does the program most positively impact? Can you give some examples? [*Staff awareness of who is at-risk*]

11. What measures are you taking to assess the effectiveness of your school's program? If no measures are being taken, why not?

**Future Plan**

12. What level or amount of training is required to maintain the high school completion program? Are you able to meet the current training needs to effectively implement the program? [*Teacher training needs*]

13. For how long is the program funded? What plans do you have to ensure that the program will continue after TEA finds run out? Do you predict that certain aspects of the program will be continued and others discontinued? Which ones? [*Plans for sustainability*]

Any other comments?

## THSCS Eight Guiding Principles

TEA lists eight guiding principles for applicants to use in designing THSCS grant program strategies and activities:

1. **High expectations and performance-based accountability**: THSCS schools will adhere to the Texas accountability system while also monitoring college-readiness indicators, such as Advanced Placement participation and enrollment in dual credit courses, and clearly stated benchmarks for improved student achievement and attainment, including graduation rates.

2. **Personalized learning environment**: Each student will have a meaningful relationship with a least one adult in the high school.

3. **Common focus and shared values**: The school and its community will share the values of high academic expectations, accountability, and a student focus.

4. **Staff development and time to collaborate**: As part of the district and campus integrated improvement process, schools will establish clear benchmarks that measure links between teacher training and student achievement.

5. **Learning partnerships with parents and the community**: Parents and the community will be meaningfully engaged in the daily lives of students and the school. Through internships and mentorships, students will be involved in the community.

6. **Support and networking**: Schools have clearly-defined support systems for innovative interventions, strategies, and models, and will seek out networking opportunities for staff and teachers.

7. **Technology as a tool**: Schools will incorporate sufficient access to technology and support, and provide appropriate access to computers, graphing calculators, four-function scientific calculators, the Internet, and digital and Web-based instructional resources.

8. **Coordinated resources**: Schools will eliminate duplication of resources and ensure coordination of federal, state, and local programs.

# Staff Focus Group
# and Write-Up Guide
# (1 hour)

NOTES TO SITE VISIT EVALUATOR.

- Review the NOGA for the site prior to the interview. Be familiar with the proposed THSCS activities, staff, and student targets. Anticipate responses, particularly those describing the program and be prepared to ask about activities mentioned in the NOGA but not brought up by the interviewee.

- Ask permission to tape record and explain the purpose of recording interviews. Provide a business card, phone, e-mail, so that interviewees can contact you later if needed.

- The interview will take approximately 1-hour to complete. Focus primarily on the specific questions. Because there will be several of us conducting interviews, we need to make sure that, at a minimum, the basic interview questions are answered. Interviews should emphasize the highlighted questions, but should also leave some room for interviewees to provide additional important information about the program that is not identified in the evaluation questions. Italicized words in brackets describe the "bottom line" that we need to know for each item.

- Briefly explain purpose of visit to the interviewee group and thank them for participating in the focus group. Make sure they understand that there are no "trick" questions and all identifying characteristics will be removed. Have a list of the eight guiding principles and definitions handy.

During the questions, be sure to collect responses from everyone in the focus group. Call on specific people to share their comments so that we retrieve a variety of perspectives across the different roles and participants and to be certain everyone is sharing. When consensus seems to occur, verify that everyone shares that opinion before moving on. Consensus need not occur for every question and when participants disagree it should be noted.

- The evaluator will write an interview summary upon the completion of each interview capturing main ideas from the interview and field notes. We anticipate 3 to 4 pages for each site (these will be included in an appendix to the report with extracts used in the main report). The tapes can be reviewed by the interviewer to recall or confirm key points.

DO NOT SEND THIS PAGE TO SITES

**Focus Group: THSCS program staff, teachers, tutors, counselors, parents, involved community members, mentors**

School Name:_____

Location:_____

Date:_____

Focus Group Participants:

| Name | Role | Start Date with program | Yrs. At this school |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
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*Evaluator: Introduce yourself and the purpose of the visit to the school by saying:*

My name is _____ and I work for _____. I am working with several other evaluators in the Gibson/SEDL evaluation study of the Texas High School Completion Success Initiative. The purpose of this study is to examine the implementation and impact of the high school completion grant programs. Your school is currently receiving funds from the Texas Education Agency to implement interventions and strategies to improve student outcomes related to retention, graduation, and post-secondary enrollment. This study is not an evaluation of your school. Rather, it is meant to provide an overall evaluation of TEA's high school completion grant program.

Comments made by individual's will not be attributed to them and will be kept confidential.

I would like to tape-record the session to ensure that I do not miss any important information. The tape will be used to take notes from the interview and then will be erased or discarded. Does anyone object to the tape-recording?

**Introduction**

1. Let's go around the room, introduce ourselves, and if you will, please describe each of your roles regarding the high school completion program. How long have you been part of the program? How long have you been at this school? (Fill in above table)

**Program Description**

2. Tell us about the Texas high school completion program at your school. [*Program description*]

**Program Implementation**

3. To prepare for this interview, I read the proposal that was submitted to TEA for this THSCS program. Would you say the program has been implemented as it was originally proposed? To what degree would you say the program has been implemented at this point? [*Implementation status*]

4. What challenges, if any, arose that influenced the program's implementation? What adjustment were made and why? [*Implementation status and conditions*]

5. Would you say that you get the support that you need to effectively implement the program on this school? Do you get district-level support? What do you need to successfully implement the program?

**Program Staff and Staff Perception**

6. Do you feel that you and others involved in the high school completion program have sufficient experience? If not, have you received adequate training? What kind of support have you received?

7. How do others or your colleagues perceive the program? What do they like? What do they dislike?

8. How do community members or parents of the students perceive the program?

**Impact**

9. In your opinion, how effective is your school's high school completion program so far? What is working? What is not? What needs to be changed? [*Best and least productive aspects of intervention*]

10. What kinds of impacts, if any, do you see taking place in this school as a result of high school completion program? What do you consider to be the one best outcome of the high school completion program so far? [*Impact on outcome*]

11. What types of students does the program most positively impact? Can you give some examples? [*Staff awareness of who is at-risk*]

**Future Plans**

12. How long do you think this school will keep this program? Why? What do administrators planning to do to maintain the program?

**Miscellaneous**

13. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us regarding this program, its funding or its effectiveness?

# Student Focus Group and Write-Up Guide (30 Minutes)

NOTES TO SITE VISIT EVALUATOR.

- Review the NOGA for the site prior to the interview. Be familiar with the proposed THSCS activities, staff, and student targets. Anticipate responses, particularly those describing the program and be prepared to ask about activities mentioned in the NOGA but not brought up by the interviewee.

- Ask permission to tape record and explain the purpose of recording interviews. Provide a business card, phone, e-mail, so that interviewees can contact you later if needed.

- The interview will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Focus primarily on the specific questions. Because there will be several of us conducting interviews, we need to make sure that, at a minimum, the basic interview questions are answered. Interviews should emphasize the highlighted questions, but should also leave some room for interviewees to provide additional important information about the program that is not identified in the evaluation questions. Italicized words in brackets describe the "bottom line" that we need to know for each item.

- Briefly explain purpose of visit to the interviewee group and thank them for participating in the focus group. Make sure they understand that there are no "trick" questions and all identifying characteristics will be removed. Have a list of the eight guiding principles and definitions handy.

During the questions, be sure to collect responses from everyone in the focus group. Call on specific people to share their comments so that we retrieve a variety of perspectives across the different students and to be certain everyone is sharing. When consensus seems to occur, verify that everyone shares that opinion before moving on. Consensus need not occur for every question and when participants disagree it should be noted.

- The evaluator will write an interview summary upon the completion of each interview capturing main ideas from the interview and field notes. We anticipate 3 to 4 pages for each site (these will be included in an appendix to the report with extracts used in the main report). The tapes can be reviewed by the interviewer to recall or confirm key points.

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**Student Focus Groups**

School Name:_____

Location:_____

Date:_____

Focus Group Participants: Get this information from school administrator or pass around to students to fill in name and grade.

| Name | Grade | Program name | Start date with program | Reason of the program involvement |
|---|---|---|---|---|
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*Evaluator: Introduce yourself and the purpose of the visit to the school by saying:*

Hi everyone! Welcome to a student focus group session. Who knows what a focus group is? It's a group that focuses on a particular subject to talk about. Today we are going to focus on the topic of "graduating high school."

My name is _____and I work for _____. Several schools in Texas received money this year to increase the number of students who are graduating from school on time. I am visiting some of these schools to talk with the principal and teachers about what kind of changes they have been working on. I am also interested in the opinions of students in this school and the other schools. You have been selected by your principal to be part of this discussion. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. When I ask each question, anyone who wants to can give an answer. You don't have to answer a question if you have no opinion about it.

And please do not worry! I'm not going to tell your principal what each of you say in this group. When I'm finished, I'll write down a summary of all the ideas from all the groups into one report. But your responses will be kept confidential. In other words, no one will know what you personally have said.

I would like to tape-record our discussion so that I can concentrate on talking with you instead of taking notes. Later, I'll use the tape to help me remember what was said and then I'll erase it or throw it away. Does anyone mind me turning on the tape-recorder now?

Great! Well, let's begin.

**Introduction**

14. Tell me about yourself. Are you graduating this year? What are your plans/ goals for next year? Are you interested in going to college, finding a job?

**Learning Activities**

15. Let's talk about the kinds of things you do in the _____ program. What do you do on a typical day in this program? (Probe for frequency and length of certain activities)

**Learning Materials/ Support Services**

16. What kinds of materials do you use? (Textbooks, computer software) How do you use them? Who do you use them with? What other services do you receive? (probe for support services such as counseling, mentoring, bus transportation)

**Overall Effectiveness/ Student Performance**

17. So, how would you say the _____ program is going so far? What do you like or dislike about the program?

18. How has this program helped you? Is this program going to help you graduate? Why or why not?

19. Do you have friends who might benefit from participating in this program? Why are they not in the program? Why or why not?

**Miscellaneous**

20. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us regarding this program?

[SCHOOL LETTER HEAD]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our school is participating in a evaluation study of the Texas Education Agency's (TEA's) Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS), Cycle 2 grant program. As a part of that study, we would like for your child to participate in a student focus group, facilitated by a an external evaluator from the Southwest Regional Education Laboratory (SEDL). The classroom teacher has selected your child to participate in the focus group and it should take no more than 30 minutes to complete.

Focus groups have been scheduled to occur at our school June 15th and 16th. Each day, the SEDL evaluator will meet with a group of six to eight students to discuss the summer classes and their plans for the future. Questions will probe for descriptions of the kinds of things they do in the summer classes such as activities, types of assignments, and methods for assessing their learning. The evaluator will use an audio tape-recorder to capture comments from the participating students. The information gathered through the focus groups is strictly confidential—your child's name **will not** be connected to the results of the focus group.

This information from the student focus groups will be valuable in helping our staff understand how we can better meet the students' educational needs and how TEA can further support student programs in the future. Should you have any questions or desire further information, please call me at XXX-XXXX. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME HERE]
Principal, [INSERT SCHOOL NAME HERE]

Please indicate whether or not you wish your child to participate in the Student Focus Group by checking the box beside a statement below.

☐ I **do** grant permission for my child _____, to participate in the Student Focus Group.

☐ I **do not** grant permission for my child _____, to participate in the Student Focus Group.

_____
Parent/Guardian Signature

Please **return this form** to your child's **teacher** by **June 14, 2005.**

# Site Visit Summary

9 Digit CDC #: _____

District Name: _____

Campus Name: _____

Evaluator Name: _____

Date of Visit: _____

Site Visits Schedule:

| Interview/Focus group | Contact Name | Room/location | Time/length |
|---|---|---|---|
| Administrator Interview | | | |
| Staff Focus Group | | | |
| Student Focus Group | | | |
| Student Activity Observation | | | |

Site Visit Interviewee List:

| Method | Interviewee Name | Title/Role |
|---|---|---|
| Administrator Interview | | |
| | | |
| Staff Focus Group | | |
| | | |
| | | |
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| | | |
| Student Focus Group | | |
| | | |
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# THSCS Program Checklist

From your site visit data collection: Check all that apply.

**Partnerships**
___Higher Education
___Community
___Alternative School
___Parents
___Other_____

**Program Time**
___Independent Study
___Before School
___After School
___Weekend
___Summer
___Home visit
___Other_____

**Tutoring/Mentoring**
___Contracted external staff
___Teachers
___Peers
___Community Volunteers
___College students
___Parents
___Other_____

**Curriculum Focus**
___Reading
___Mathematics
___Science
___Social Studies
___Arts/Music
___Other_____

**Targeted Students Served**
___At Risk of Dropout
___LEP
___Disabled
___Migrant
___High Poverty
___9th grade
___10th grade
___11th grade
___12th grade
___Other_____

**Types of programs**
___Accelerated Instruction
___AP/IB
___Credit Accrual/ Course Recovery
___Dual Credit
___Early Intervention (Summer bridge, headstart)
___Mentoring
___Test Prep (PSAT, SAT, ACT)
___Tutoring
___Other_____

**Technology**
___Computers
___Lap Tops
___Computer Lab
___Plato
___NovaNet
___ELLIS
___ASKME
___Other_____

# THSCS Program Implementation

From Evaluator's site visit observations, which of the following stages of implementation has the THSCS program achieved to date? Please refer to the description of each stage below.

| Stage of Implementation | Indicators | Is this stage completed? | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | No, not at all | Partially (Some programs) | Yes, entirely (All programs) |
| Initialization | Started the process<br>Assessing needs<br>Developing commitments<br>Setting intended outcomes<br>Designing action plans | | | |
| Implementation | Implementing plans<br>Training staff<br>Incorporating routines<br>Evaluating | | | |
| Institutionalization | Making organizational changes<br>Tracking student outcomes<br>Planning for sustainability | | | |

**Program Context & Description of THSCS program** (taken from Administrator Interview items 1, 2, 3, and 13; Staff Focus Group item 2)

# Key Findings Administrator Interview

**Implementation** (items 5-6)

**Overall Effectiveness** (items 7-11)

**Sustainability** (items 12-13)

**Other Notes: Issue/Concerns with Interview**

# Key Findings Staff Focus Group

**Program Implementation** (items 3-5)

**Program Staff and Staff Perception of the Program** (items 6-8)

**Overall Effectiveness/ Impact** (items 9-11)

**Sustainability** (items 12-13)

**Other Notes: Issue/Concerns with Interview**

# Key Findings Student Focus Group

**Goals for next year** (item 1)

**Learning Activities** (item2)

**Learning Materials/ Support Services** (item 3)

**Overall Effectiveness/ Student Performance** (items 4-6)

**Other Notes: Issue/Concerns with Interview**

# Key Observational Notes

Describe key observations:

**Staff Activities**

**Student Activities**

# Overall Summary

**Evaluator's Comments of THSCS Program Implementation:**
What interventions have been successfully implemented, what was not implemented? (taken from Administrator Interview items 2 and 5; Staff Focus Group item 3; Student Focus group item 2)

What factors contributed to successful implementation? What factors hindered implementation? (taken from Administrator Interview item 6; Staff Focus Group item 4)

**Evaluator's Comments of THSCS Program Effectiveness:**
To what degree has implementation of THSCS interventions improved the school environment and culture? (taken from Administrator Interview items 2, 8, and 12; Staff Focus Group item 5, 6, 7, and 8; Student Focus group item 4)

What kinds of impacts are taking place in the school as a result of the THSCS grant? (taken from Administrator Interview items 7, 9, and 10; Staff Focus Group item 9, 10, and 11; Student Focus group items 5 and 6)

**Evaluator's Comments of THSCS Program Sustainability:**
To what extent have the THSCS grant intervention strategies remained in place during the grant period? (taken from Administrator Interview items 6 and 13; Staff Focus Group item 3 and 12)

Describe the likelihood that grant interventions will be maintained after grant funds end? What are administrators doing to maintain the program? What issues/concerns do staff have about sustainability? (taken from Administrator Interview items 12 and 13; Staff Focus Group item 12)

## Implications or potential recommendations

Summarize any suggestions for potential recommendations or suggestions for grant program improvements.

Describe what you identified as best practices.

# Attachments:

Administrator Interview Guide Notes

Staff Focus Group Guide Notes

Student Focus Group Guide Notes

Student Activity Observation Notes

# Administrator Interview and Write-Up Guide

NOTES TO SITE VISIT EVALUATOR.

- Review the NOGA for the site prior to the interview. Be familiar with the proposed THSCS activities, staff, and student targets. Anticipate responses, particularly those describing the program and be prepared to ask about activities mentioned in the NOGA but not brought up by the interviewee.

- Ask permission to tape record and explain the purpose of recording interviews. Provide a business card, phone, e-mail, so that interviewee can contact you later if needed.

- The interview will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour. Focus primarily on the specific questions. Because there will be several of us conducting interviews, we need to make sure that, at a minimum, the basic interview questions are answered. Interviews should emphasize the highlighted questions, but should also leave some room for interviewees to provide additional important information about the program that is not identified in the evaluation questions. Italicized words in brackets describe the "bottom line" that we need to know for each item.

- Briefly explain purpose of visit to each individual interviewee and thank participant for taking part in this interview. Make sure they understand that there are no "trick" questions and all identifying characteristics will be removed. Have a list of the eight guiding principles and definitions handy.

- The evaluator will write an interview summary upon the completion of each interview capturing main ideas from the interview and field notes. We anticipate 3 to 4 pages for each site (these will be included in an appendix to the report with extracts used in the main report). The tapes can be reviewed by the interviewer to recall or confirm key points.

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*This interview guide will be used for the THSCS coordinator, school principal, and/or the district contact for the grant. Not all questions are appropriate for each interviewee. Not all sites will have a unique person for each of these roles.*

Name of Interviewee: _____

Position: _____

Contact Information: _____

Thank you for participating in the evaluation study of the Texas High School Completion Success Initiative Grant program conducted by Gibson Consulting and the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (Gibson/SEDL).

The primary purpose of this study is to identify the status of the high school programs that received TEA funds for the Cycle 2, Texas high school completion grant from 2004-2005. We specifically want to know the nature and status of the program, how it is working and how is it funded.

**Description of the Program and Program Context**

1. Tell us about the Texas high school completion program at your school. [*Program description: Fill out table on next page as much as possible*]

2. There are eight guiding principles for designing high school completion program strategies and activities (provide list to interviewee to review). What do these principles mean to you? So far, from your description of the program, I see that you have addressed many/some of these principles. [*Confirm notations you have made in the table to this point*] Can you give an example of how the remaining principles are being implemented in the high school completion program at your school?

| | Principle | Description | Interview Question | Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| i. | **High expectations and performance-based accountability** | THSCS schools will *adhere* to the Texas accountability system while also *monitoring* college-readiness indicators<br>EX.<br>• Advanced Placement participation and enrollment in dual credit courses<br>• clearly stated benchmarks for improved student achievement and attainment, (graduation rates) | What do you do to monitor and track these things? | |
| ii. | **Personalized learning environment** | Each student will have a meaningful relationship with a least one adult in the high school | What elements of your program provide a personalized environmen for the students? | |
| iii. | **Common focus and shared values** | The school and its community will share the values of high academic expectations, accountability, and a student focus. | How is this achieved in your high school completion program? | |
| iv. | **Staff development and time to collaborate** | As part of the district and campus integrated improvement process, schools will establish clear benchmarks that measure links between teacher training and student achievement. | How is this achieved in your high school completion program? | |

| | Principle | Description | Interview Question | Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| v. | **Learning partnerships with parents and the community** | Parents and the community will be meaningfully engaged in the daily lives of students and the school. Through internships and mentorships, students will be involved in the community. | What partnerships exist in this program and what role do they serve? How satisfied are you with their contribution to the project? | |
| vi. | **Support and networking** | Schools have clearly-defined support systems for innovative interventions, strategies, and models, and will seek out networking opportunities for staff and teachers. | What support mechanisms are in place and how do staff and teachers network? | |
| vii | **Technology as a tool** | Schools will incorporate sufficient access to technology and support, and provide appropriate access to computers, graphing calculators, four-function scientific calculators, the Internet, and digital and Web-based instructional resources. | What role does technology play in this program? How effective has it been? | |
| viii | **Coordinated resources** | Schools will eliminate duplication of resources and ensure coordination of federal, state, and local programs. | How is this achieved in your high school completion program? | |

<TEA Letterhead>

To the Superintendent Addressed:

Thank you for your continued leadership and support for the Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS), Cycle 2 grant program in which your district is currently receiving funding. In order to examine the impact of activities funded through this grant program, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with a highly-experienced external evaluator, Gibson Consulting Group and Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (Gibson/SEDL), to conduct a third-party evaluation of this grant program.

As part of the evaluation design, the Gibson/SEDL team will be administering surveys to all THSCS, Cycle 2 grant recipients. In addition, the evaluation team will be collecting student-level data regarding the individual student's participation in various THSCS, Cycle 2 program activities. Site visits to a sample of campuses will also be necessary for a qualitative analysis during Summer or Fall, 2005 with a repeat visit in Spring or Summer, 2006. The visits are not part of TEA's grant monitoring activities; rather, Gibson/SEDL researchers will gather information to be used as part of an overall evaluation of the THSCS, Cycle 2 grant activities.

We ask for your cooperation with the various evaluation activities as the Gibson/SEDL team will need to begin coordinating the site visits, student participation record collection, and the administration and of surveys starting in Summer 2005. Should you require additional information regarding these activities, please do not hesitate to contact Tammy Kreuz at TEA, (512) 936-6060 or Greg Gibson at Gibson Consulting Group, (512) 328-0885. Thank you for your continued dedication, leadership, and support for Texas students.

Sincerely,

Nora Hancock

Nora Ibáñez Hancock, Ed.D.
Associate Commissioner
Office for Planning, Grants and Evaluation

<TEA Letterhead>
To the Campus Principal Addressed:

Thank you for your continued leadership and support for the Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS), Cycle 2 grant program in which your school is currently receiving funding. In order to examine the impact of activities funded through this grant program, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with a highly-experienced external evaluator, Gibson Consulting Group and Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (Gibson/SEDL), to conduct a third-party evaluation of this grant program.

As part of the evaluation design, the Gibson/SEDL team will be administering surveys to all THSCS, Cycle 2 grant recipients. In addition, the evaluation team will be collecting student-level data regarding the individual student's participation in various THSCS, Cycle 2 program activities. Site visits to a sample of campuses will also be necessary for a qualitative analysis during Fall or Summer 2005 with a repeat visit in Spring or Summer 2006. The visits are not part of TEA's grant monitoring activities; rather, Gibson/SEDL researchers will gather information to be used as part of an overall evaluation of the THSCS, Cycle 2 grant activities.

Your school has been selected as one of a sample of schools that may receive a visit this summer or fall and again in Spring 2006. Selection of sites was made to obtain a representation of program activities, geographic areas, and student demographics. These visits will take place on a single day to only selected campuses. Depending on the size and complexity of the campus grant program, one or two Gibson/SEDL staff will be assigned to visit your campus. If your program is a paired program (e.g., a regular high school working with an alternative school), both campuses will receive a site visit from the researchers.

During the site visits, Gibson/SEDL staff will interview selected administrators and teachers, and conduct a focus group with a small number of students being served with THSCS, Cycle 2 grant funds (Please see attached information sheet for a possible site visit schedule). Campus principals will be provided with interview protocols prior to the site visit.

Gibson/SEDL staff will conduct the summer site visits to schools implementing summer programs funded by Cycle 2 grants during the month of June 2005. Fall site visits will occur in September 2005 for the remaining schools. We understand the many obligations that you and your staff have at this time of the year; however, the information obtained in these visits will be critical for policymakers as future decisions are made on developing and sustaining funding for grant programs like THSCS.

Please respond to the attached postcard regarding your preference for summer or fall site visits and your preferred week for visits to your campus. Gibson/SEDL's evaluation staff will contact you in the near future to arrange for these site visits. The primary and secondary contacts for the THSCS Cycle 2 grant will also be notified by copy of this letter. We ask for your cooperation in the scheduling of these visits as the Gibson/SEDL team will need to coordinate regional visits across the state under certain time limitations. Should you require additional information regarding these site visits, please do not hesitate to contact Tammy Kreuz at TEA, (512) 936-6060 or Melissa Dodson at SEDL, (512) 476-6861. Thank you for your continued dedication, leadership, and support for Texas students.

Sincerely,

Nora Hancock

Nora Ibáñez Hancock, Ed.D.
Associate Commissioner
Office for Planning, Grants and Evaluation

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with Gibson Consulting Group and Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (Gibson/SEDL) to examine the implementation and impact of the THSCS grant programs. An important element of the evaluation design is to collect data from on-site visits to a sample of THSCS Cycle 2 campuses. These visits are intended to capture a rich understanding of the implementation of the THSCS programs, perceptions regarding the changes in student outcomes, and the factors that contribute or detract from the implementation of various THSCS grant interventions. This is not an evaluation of your specific program. It is part of the overall evaluation effort.

## Evaluation Site Visits Information

The following school may receive a one-day site visit by TEA staff and Gibson/SEDL evaluators in Summer 2005 or Fall 2005 with follow-up visits in Spring 2006 or Summer 2006:

School District
Campus
CDC#
Campus Addr

Principal

## Site Visits Dates

One-day site visits to Cycle 2 campuses are scheduled to occur during:

- June 2005 for schools with summer programs supported by THSCS grant funds, or
- September 2005 for remaining selected schools.

Please respond to the attached postcard regarding your preference for summer or fall site visits and your preferred week for visits to your campus. The Gibson/SEDL evaluation staff will contact each campus principal to arrange the specific dates and details for the site visits.

## Site Visits Activities

Site visits activities include:

- Interviews with district and campus administrators responsible for the THSCS school programs to help determine whether proposed activities, processes, and structures are occurring as planned and their relationship to the district's goals.
- Focus groups with teachers, ancillary staff, parents, and involved community members concerning their role in the program and identification of implementation issues.
- Focus groups with a sample of students participating in the THSCS school program.

## Tentative Schedule for the Site Visits

Schedules for site visits will vary depending on the type of THSCS programs at the campus. Exact schedules will be negotiated when evaluation staff contact the schools to arrange the visits. Below is an example of a schedule for programs that include after school activities.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1:00 – 2:00 | Interviews (45 minutes)- Campus Principal, Coordinator, other appropriate staff |
| 2:15 – 3:15 | Focus Group (1 hour)- Key program staff, teachers, tutors, counselors, parents, involved community members |
| 3:30 – 5:30 | Focus Group (30-45 minutes)- Students participating in after school program<br>Observation (1 hour) of after school activities |

# TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY'S TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION AND SUCCESS GRANT CYCLE 2

## Student Participation Database Entry Guidelines

Spring 2006 Cycle 2 Programs Data Collection Period:
May 15- June 16, 2006

Welcome to the Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS) Grant Cycle 2 student participation database, an online data entry tool for identifying and logging contact hours for students participating in grant funded interventions at your campus. Data entry will occur via a secure SEDL Web site (shown below). Every Cycle 2 campus will be expected to enter data during the specified data collection period. Data should be reported for students who participated in grant funded interventions the previous semester.

## This document includes information on:



## Overview and Preparing for Data Entry

This database will collect two types of data:

1. Campus level information regarding the number and types of THSCS-supported interventions at a Cycle 2 school.

   School staff will report whether certain campus-level interventions exist at their schools by checking "yes" or "no" from a list of possible grant-supported activities.

2. Student-level information regarding the extent to which populations of students have participated in interventions.

   School staff will report whether certain student-level interventions exist at their schools by checking "yes" or "no" from a list of possible grant-supported activities. For those interventions that do exist, students who have participated in them will be identified and the number of contact hours they participated will be entered. School staff responsible for data entry log into the database that already contains a list of students by grade level for the campus. In order to complete these records, staff can search by student name, grade level, and/or social security and add records of students as needed.

The person responsible for entering the data will need the following kinds of records:

- List of grant supported programs at the campus.
- Participation records for each grant program. These may include tutoring sign-in sheets, counseling records, and/or technology lab attendance records.

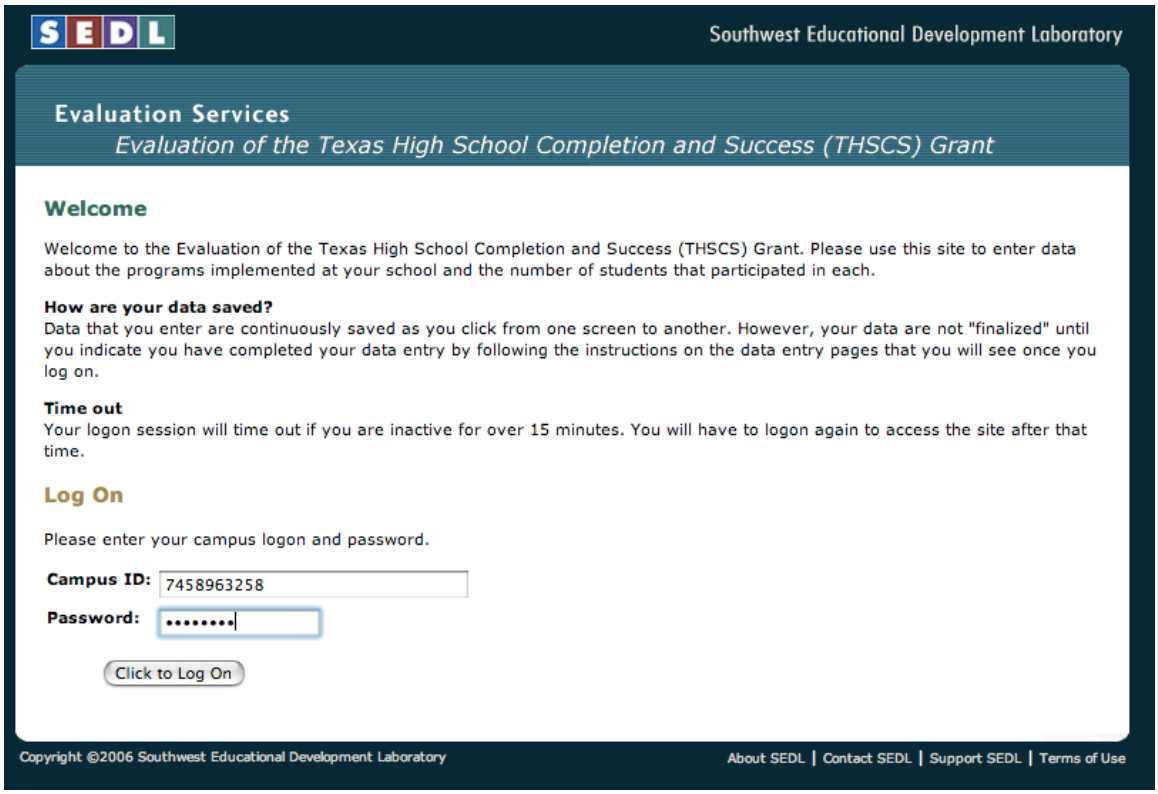
## Getting Started

*Security Passwords*

The THSCS database contains confidential, personal information on students at your campus including names, grade level, and the last four digits of their social security numbers. This information was obtained from the PEIMS 05 fall snapshot and pre-populated into the database to assist with data entry. PLEASE NOTE: Students manually added for the Fall 2005 data entry period are also included in the Spring 06 database. Because of the secure nature of the data, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) directs that each individual authorized to enter the student-level data for their grant-funded campus have a unique password to access the secure database. Superintendents of the Cycle 2 grant recipients will provide SEDL with the names of the employees authorized by the district to access the information on the SEDL Web site. Each person on the list will be assigned a user-ID and password. User-IDs and passwords will be provided via letters and email from SEDL.

*Logging-In to the Database*

1. GO TO: http://www.sedl.org/es/texas




2. ENTER CAMPUS ID: Each Cycle 2 campus has a 9-digit Campus District Code (CDC) number that serves as their user-id.

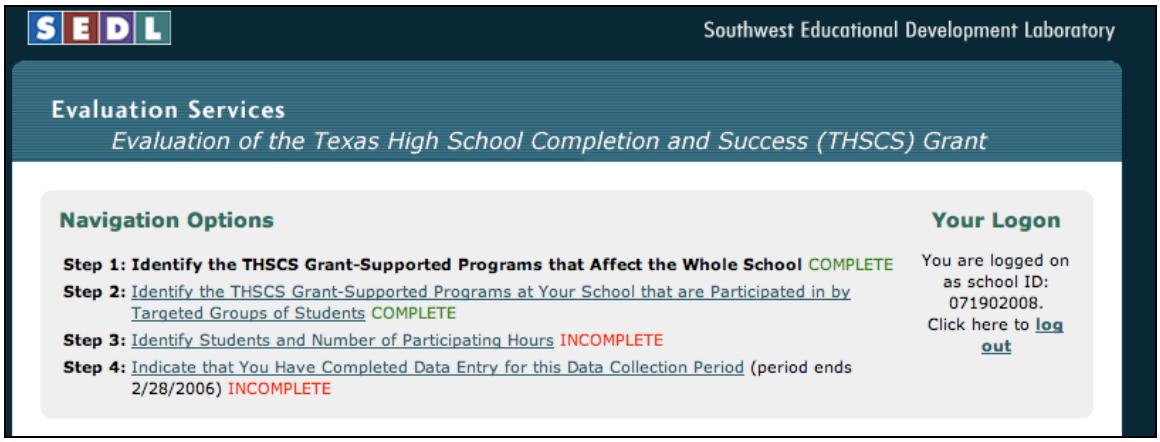
3. ENTER PASSWORD: Each authorized data entry person has been assigned a password that consists of random numbers and letters.

4. CLICK TO LOG ON: Click the button at the bottom of the screen to log on to the database and begin entering data.

## Navigating the THSCS Student Database

Once you are logged on to the SEDL Web site, you can navigate to all areas of the website using the navigation options listed at the top of each screen.

There are four steps of data entry. To move from one step to the next, simply select the next step from the options listed. You may return to a previous screen and edit your data at any time during the data collection period.




Each step is considered INCOMPLETE until data have been saved using the "save edits" button at the bottom of the page. Once a step has been saved, the database will show the step as COMPLETE in the navigation options. Step 3 will be marked complete only after you have pressed the submit button in Step 4 to indicate that data entry is complete.

**Saving data.** Data that you enter are continuously saved as you click from one screen to another by clicking the "save edits" button at the bottom of the page.


Data entry can take place over any amount of time during the data collection period. You can logout at any time and return to log into the database. Saved data entered previously will still remain in the database. After re-entry into the database, you can continue entering data, adding to the saved data. When you are done with your data entry, you will be asked to submit your data. This indicates that data entry is complete. Prior to submitting data for your school, please check with all authorized data entry staff to be certain data entry is complete.

**Time out.** Your logon session will time out if you are inactive for 15 minutes. You will have to logon again to access the site after that time. You may logout at any time using the logout link in the top right-hand corner.

## Identifying Grant Funded Programs at Your Campus

**Step 1:** The first step is to indicate which THSCS grant-supported programs that affect the entire student population have been implemented ***during the specified time period*** (i.e., fall 2005 or spring 2006). For proposed interventions that were planned but not implemented or for interventions that were implemented in previous semesters but dropped for the current time frame, please check "no."

The screen shows a list of possible grant-supported programs with descriptions. You will need to indicate yes or no that such programs are implemented at your school.

Click the "save edits" button to save your responses.

**Step 1 of 4 - Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs that Affect the Whole School**

**Directions:**
The first step is to indicate which THSCS grant-supported programs that affect the entire student population have been implemented since grant funds were awarded. **Please indicate "yes" or "no" for each of the items listed below, then click the "Save your edits to this page" button at the bottom of the page.** For proposed programs that have been planned but not implemented to date, please mark "no."

| PROGRAMS THAT AFFECT THE WHOLE SCHOOL | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Implemented in My School?** | | **Program Name** |
| (•) yes | ( ) no | **Additional counselors**<br>Additional counseling services to assist students in the development of their individualized plans. Counseling services may include academic, awareness of advanced-level courses, post-secondary, personal and crisis intervention, career, and advocacy programs. |
| (•) yes | ( ) no | **Additional instructional support staff**<br>Part-time or full-time school staff who are supported by grant funds such as instructional aides and/or lab technicians. |
| ( ) yes | (•) no | **Highly qualified teachers**<br>Additional qualified teachers to teach specialized core areas, accelerated instruction, advanced courses, college preparation. |
| (•) yes | ( ) no | **Parental involvement**<br>May include programs that provide parent or guardian volunteers and mentors and/or training for parents. |
| (•) yes | ( ) no | **Partnerships with colleges and universities**<br>May include partnerships that provide dual credit, college visits, software or online courses, and/or college mentors and tutors for core curriculum, advanced courses, and/or ACT/SAT preparation. |
| ( ) yes | (•) no | **Partnerships with feeder schools or other school districts**<br>May include partnerships that align curriculum, provide mentors and tutors, share special purpose teachers, purchase materials and/or equipment. |
| ( ) yes | (•) no | **Partnerships with local businesses and/or community relations**<br>May include partnerships that provide business and community mentors, equipment and supplies, training and work study, donations, and/or sponsored events. |
| ( ) yes | (•) no | **Teacher professional development**<br>May include professional development programs from district trainers, Education Service Centers, private providers, and/or online courses. |

Click to save your edits to this page

**Step 2:** The second step is to report whether certain student-level interventions existed at your school for the specified time period (i.e., fall 2005 or spring 2006) by checking "yes" or "no" from a list of possible grant-supported activities.

Click the "save edits" button to save your responses.

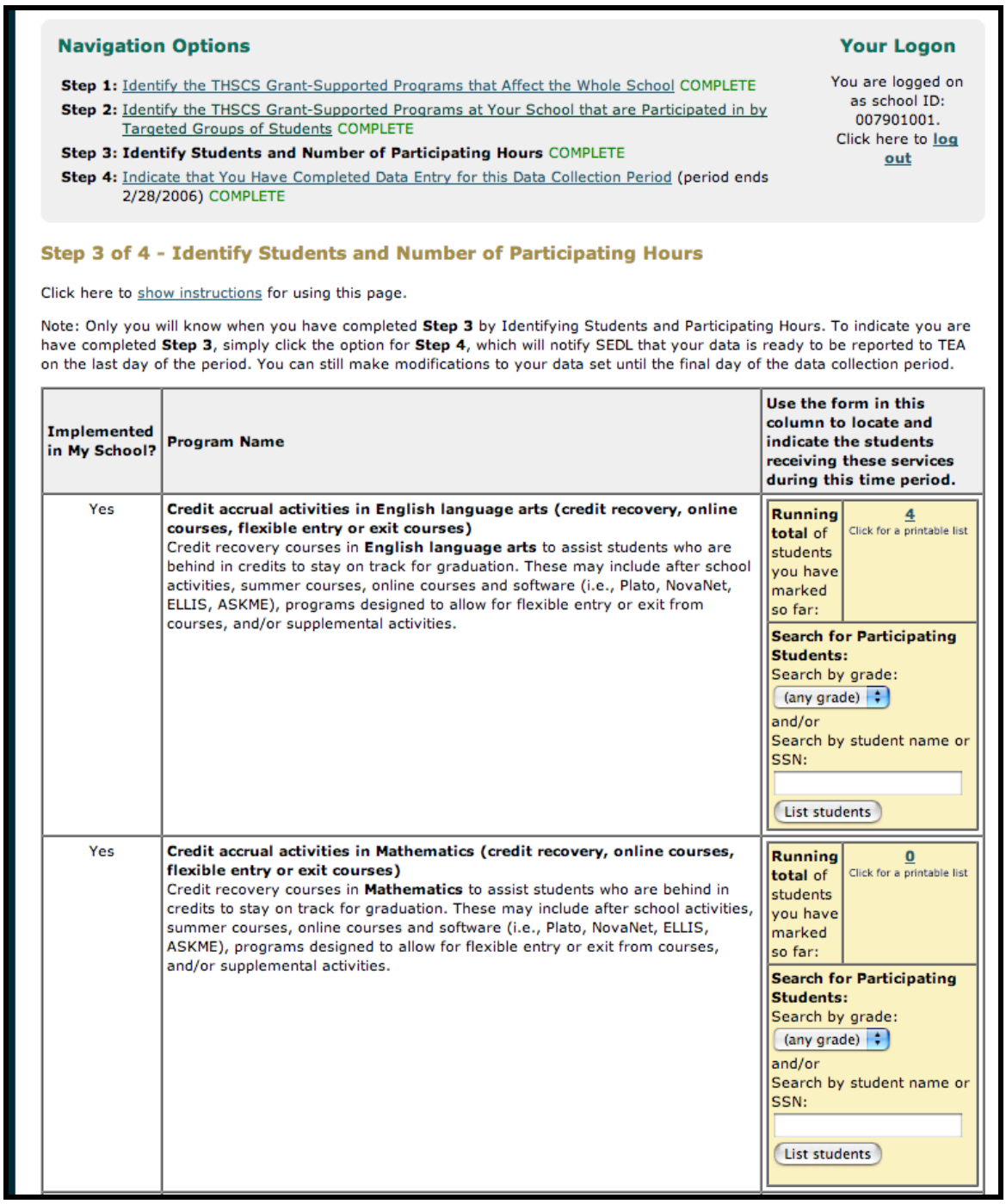
**Step 2 of 4 - Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs at Your School that are Participated in by Targeted Groups of Students**

**Directions for Step 2:**
The second step is to indicate which THSCS grant-supported programs have been implemented since grant funds were awarded that are participated in by only targeted groups of students. **Please indicate "yes" or "no" for each of the items listed below, then click the "Save your edits to this page" at the bottom of the page.** For proposed programs that have been planned but not implemented to date, please mark "no."

| PROGRAMS THAT AFFECT ONLY CERTAIN STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Implemented in My School?** | | **Program Name** |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Accelerated instruction in English language arts**<br>Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and/or out-of-school activities. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Accelerated instruction in Mathematics**<br>Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and/or out-of-school activities. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Accelerated instruction in Science**<br>Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and/or out-of-school activities. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Accelerated instruction in Social studies**<br>Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and/or out-of-school activities. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Advanced placement/ International bacheloreate**<br>Programs that prepare students to successfully pass Advance Placement and/or International Baccalaureate exams. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Child care**<br>Programs that provide on-site licensed child care facilities and/or financial support for students to have licensed professional care to supervise their children while they complete high school courses. |
| ◉ yes | ○ no | **Credit accrual activities in English language arts (credit recovery, online courses, flexible entry or exit courses)**<br>Credit recovery courses in **English language arts** to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and/or supplemental activities. |
| ◉ yes | ○ no | **Credit accrual activities in Mathematics (credit recovery, online courses, flexible entry or exit courses)**<br>Credit recovery courses in **Mathematics** to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and/or supplemental activities. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Credit accrual activities in Science (credit recovery, online courses, flexible entry or exit courses)**<br>Credit recovery courses in **Science** to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and/or supplemental activities. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Credit accrual activities in Social studies (credit recovery, online courses, flexible entry or exit courses)**<br>Credit recovery courses in **Social studies** to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and/or supplemental activities. |
| ◉ yes | ○ no | **Dual credit**<br>Programs that provide students opportunities to earn college credit while in high school through articulated agreements with post-secondary institutions. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Early interventions**<br>Programs targeting at-risk students such as eighth grade transitional programs, summer orientations, freshmen seminars, and four year planning. |
| ◉ yes | ○ no | **Mentoring**<br>Programs that provide trained mentors to at-risk students (students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled, academically at-risk students, limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, and migrant students) to support them socially and academically to succeed in school. Programs may include mentors from business and community organizations. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Programs for academically at-risk students**<br>Programs designed for academically at-risk students such as students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled, migrant students, limited English proficient, and/or economically disadvantaged students. |

## Identifying Participating Students

**Step 3:** The third step is to identify students that have participated in the student-level interventions for the specified time period (i.e., fall 2005 or spring 2006) and report the number of contact hours they participated.



**Navigation Options**

**Step 1:** Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs that Affect the Whole School COMPLETE

**Step 2:** Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs at Your School that are Participated in by Targeted Groups of Students COMPLETE

**Step 3: Identify Students and Number of Participating Hours** COMPLETE

**Step 4:** Indicate that You Have Completed Data Entry for this Data Collection Period (period ends 2/28/2006) COMPLETE

**Your Logon**

You are logged on as school ID: 007901001. Click here to log out

**Step 3 of 4 - Identify Students and Number of Participating Hours**

Click here to show instructions for using this page.

Note: Only you will know when you have completed **Step 3** by Identifying Students and Participating Hours. To indicate you are have completed **Step 3**, simply click the option for **Step 4**, which will notify SEDL that your data is ready to be reported to TEA on the last day of the period. You can still make modifications to your data set until the final day of the data collection period.

| Implemented in My School? | Program Name | Use the form in this column to locate and indicate the students receiving these services during this time period. |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | **Credit accrual activities in English language arts (credit recovery, online courses, flexible entry or exit courses)** Credit recovery courses in **English language arts** to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and/or supplemental activities. | **Running total** of students you have marked so far: 4 Click for a printable list<br>**Search for Participating Students:** Search by grade: (any grade) and/or Search by student name or SSN: List students |
| Yes | **Credit accrual activities in Mathematics (credit recovery, online courses, flexible entry or exit courses)** Credit recovery courses in **Mathematics** to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and/or supplemental activities. | **Running total** of students you have marked so far: 0 Click for a printable list<br>**Search for Participating Students:** Search by grade: (any grade) and/or Search by student name or SSN: List students |

*Searching for students.*

To facilitate your data entry, the THSCS student database has been pre-populated with searchable student data. This student information comes from the 2004 fall PEIMS snap shot collected and released by TEA and includes, when available, grade 8 students from feeder schools who may now be in your school as ninth graders.

For each program, use the search tool to list or search for students in your school to indicate they have participated in the program. There are a variety of ways to search for a student.

- **Browse all students**: You can list all students in the school by simply clicking the "List Students" button.

  **Note: grade-level information provided in this database are from 2004 fall PEIMS.**

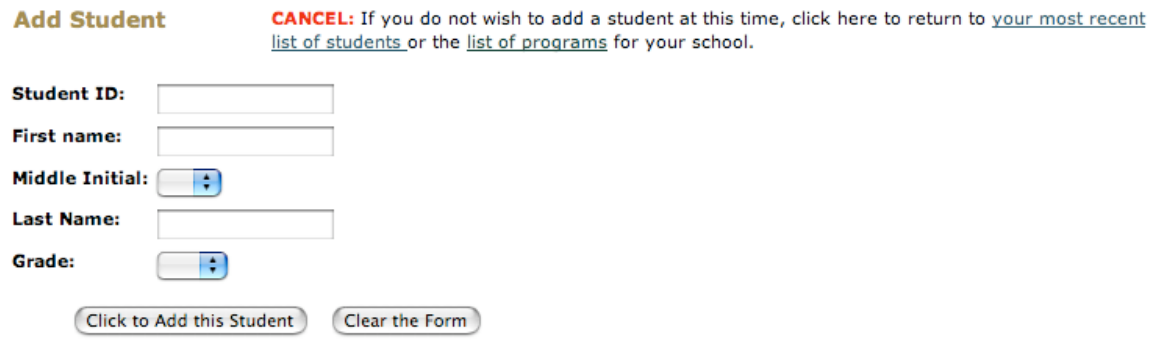
- **Search by grade level:** You may list all students from a specific grade by selecting a grade level and then clicking the "List students" button. This comes in handy when a particular grant funded program targets a group of students in a particular grade such as 10th grade career planning. To list all students who are currently in grade 10, search the records for grade 9.

- **Search by name:** You can search for a student by name by typing in the whole name or part of that name in the box provided. For instance, searching for "Mel" will find students whose first or last name contains the letters "mel" (such as Mel, Melanie, Melon, Hormel, or Rommel.)

- **Search by SSN:** You can search by social security number by entering the last four-digits of a students ID#.

*Adding students.*

It is possible that some students will not be found in the pre-populated dataset from PEIMS. When a student cannot be located by the different search options described above, data will need to be added to the database using the add student feature. Note: Use the full nine-digit social security number or, if not available, the state provided identification number.



*Reporting contact hours.*

For each student identified, the duration that the student participated in the grant-funded program during the time period specified (i.e., fall 2005 or spring 2006) needs to be entered. Indicate the number of contact hours in the field next to the student's name. Your entries will be rounded to the nearest 1/10 hour.

**NOTE:** In some cases, best estimates of the number of contact hours will need to be made. For example, for students who receive email exchanges from mentors, exact contact hours are not known. To adequately understand the potential of such interactions however, an average estimated time would need to be entered. When it is not possible to estimate time, enter 999 to indicate that exact contact hours is unknown.

**Mark Students Who Participated in the program:**
**Mentoring**

Found 34 students matching your school and search criteria.

**Need to add a student not found in the database?**
Click here to add a new student to this campus.

**Running total for this program**
Click here to view a running total of students marked as participating in this program.

**List Students for a different program:** Click here to return to the list of programs for your school

**Search again for students participating in this program:**
Search by grade: 10
and/or
Search by student name or SSN:
List students

| # | Grade | Student Name | Indicate the number of contact hours this student participated. This total is cumulative across the semester. Click the "Update Students" button at the bottom of the page to save your data. NOTE: Entries will be rounded to the nearest tenth of an hour. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 10 | AYALA, GABRIELA , L. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 2 | 10 | BALLESTEROS, KATHERINE , B. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 3 | 10 | CARSON, MONICA , A. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 4 | 10 | CONTRERAS, AMY , R. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 5 | 10 | CRUZ, DONALD , A. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 6 | 10 | DIAZ, FABIAN , J. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 7 | 10 | ESCAMILLA, CRYSTAL , A. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 8 | 10 | ESPINOZA, NICOLAS , R. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 9 | 10 | GALLEGOS, LESLIE , G. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 10 | 10 | GALVAN, MARY , A. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 11 | 10 | GARZA, HILDA , M. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 12 | 10 | GARZA, SAMANTHA , R. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 13 | 10 | GLORIA, PETE | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 14 | 10 | GUERRERO, ROXANE , B. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 15 | 10 | LONGORIA, PAUL , A. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 16 | 10 | LOPEZ, JESUS , F. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 17 | 10 | LUNA, HANNAH , L. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 18 | 10 | MARTINEZ, BRITTANY , R. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 19 | 10 | MARTINEZ, JACQUIE , A. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 20 | 10 | MARTINEZ, JUSTIN | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 21 | 10 | PEREZ, JOSE , R. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 22 | 10 | RICO, MATTHEW , D. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 23 | 10 | RIGGS, BRECK , A. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 24 | 10 | RODRIGUEZ, CARLOS , R. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 25 | 10 | RODRIGUEZ, KARINA , D. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |

Update students

Click here to search again for different students or to search for students related to a different Program.

Repeat this process until all data are entered. To help you keep track of data entry in progress, a running total of students marked as participating is shown for each program, displaying the total number of students you have marked as participants for the program so far.

| **Running total** of students you have marked so far: | 4<br>Click for a printable list |
|---|---|

## Reports and Submitting Data

After you have begun entering student data, you can access a list of students you have indicated in a particular program by pressing the "click for a printable list" button on the screen. These reports are to assist you in tracking your data entry across the data collection period.

**School: 007901001**
**Students Participating in: *Mentoring***

This list is a running total of all the students you have indicated participated in this program. If you have made additional changes since you first viewed this list, you may need to click the "Reload" button in your browser to refresh the list of students.

| # | Grade | Student Name | Number of hours this student participated. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 11 | CASTILLO, BRIGITTA | 15.0 Hours |
| 2 | 11 | GONZALES, LINDY , M. | 12.0 Hours |
| 3 | 11 | MALDONADO, MICHAEL | 16.0 Hours |
| 4 | 11 | PIEDRA, PAUL | 24.0 Hours |
| 5 | 11 | ROBY, ZACHARY , L. | 19.5 Hours |
| 6 | 11 | VALLEJO, MENCHO , M. | 17.5 Hours |

Step 4: Once all of your data have been entered, Step 4 asks you to submit your data to indicate that your data entry is complete. Prior to submitting data for your school, please check with all authorized data entry staff to be certain data entry is complete. If you do not submit your data, members of the evaluation team may contact you to determine the status of your data entry. Please note: you may return to any screen during the data collection period should you need to make edits.

**Step 4 of 4 - Indicate that You Have Completed Data Entry for this Data Collection Period**

Use the form below to indicate you are complete with Options 1-3. By indicating you are through with data entry, you are notifying SEDL that your data is ready to be reported to TEA on the last day of the period.

SEDL uses this as a check to ensure that each campus has indicated that the data set is complete. If necessary, you can still make modifications to your data set until the final day of the data collection period, because your data will not be tallied until that time.

☐ Select this checkbox, then click the button below to confirm that your data entry is complete.

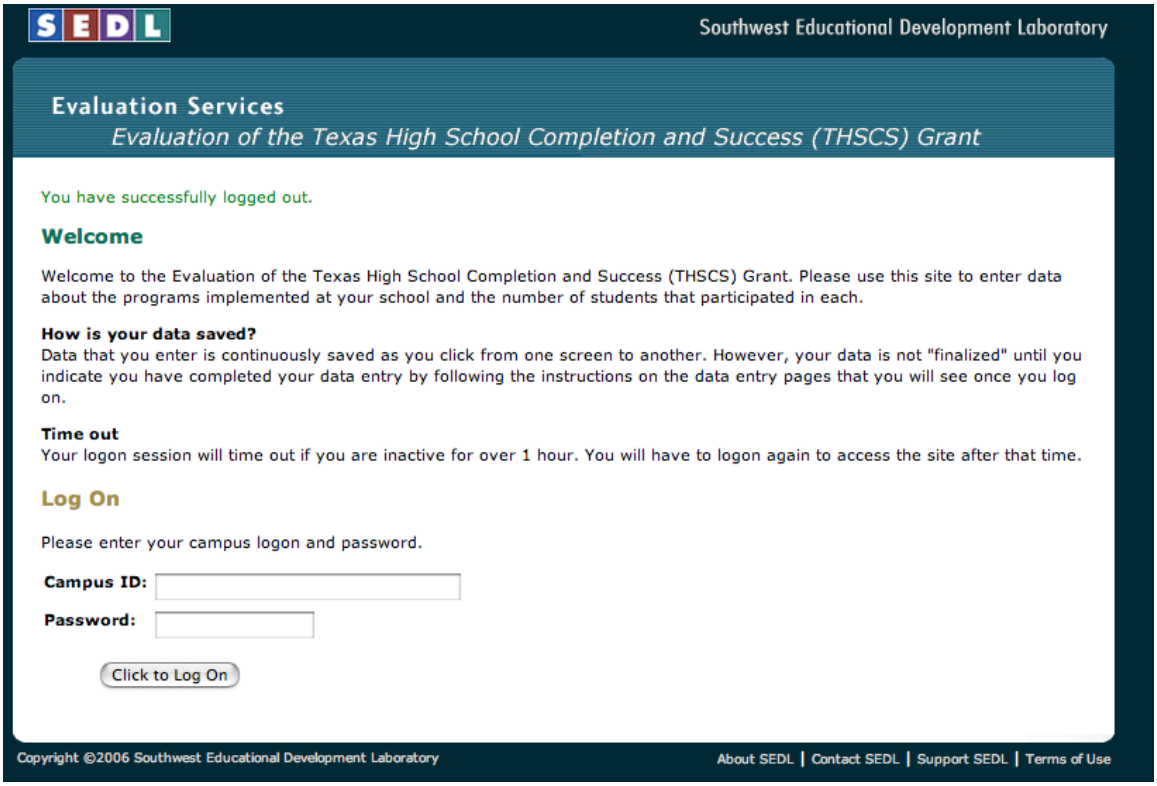
My Data Entry is Complete

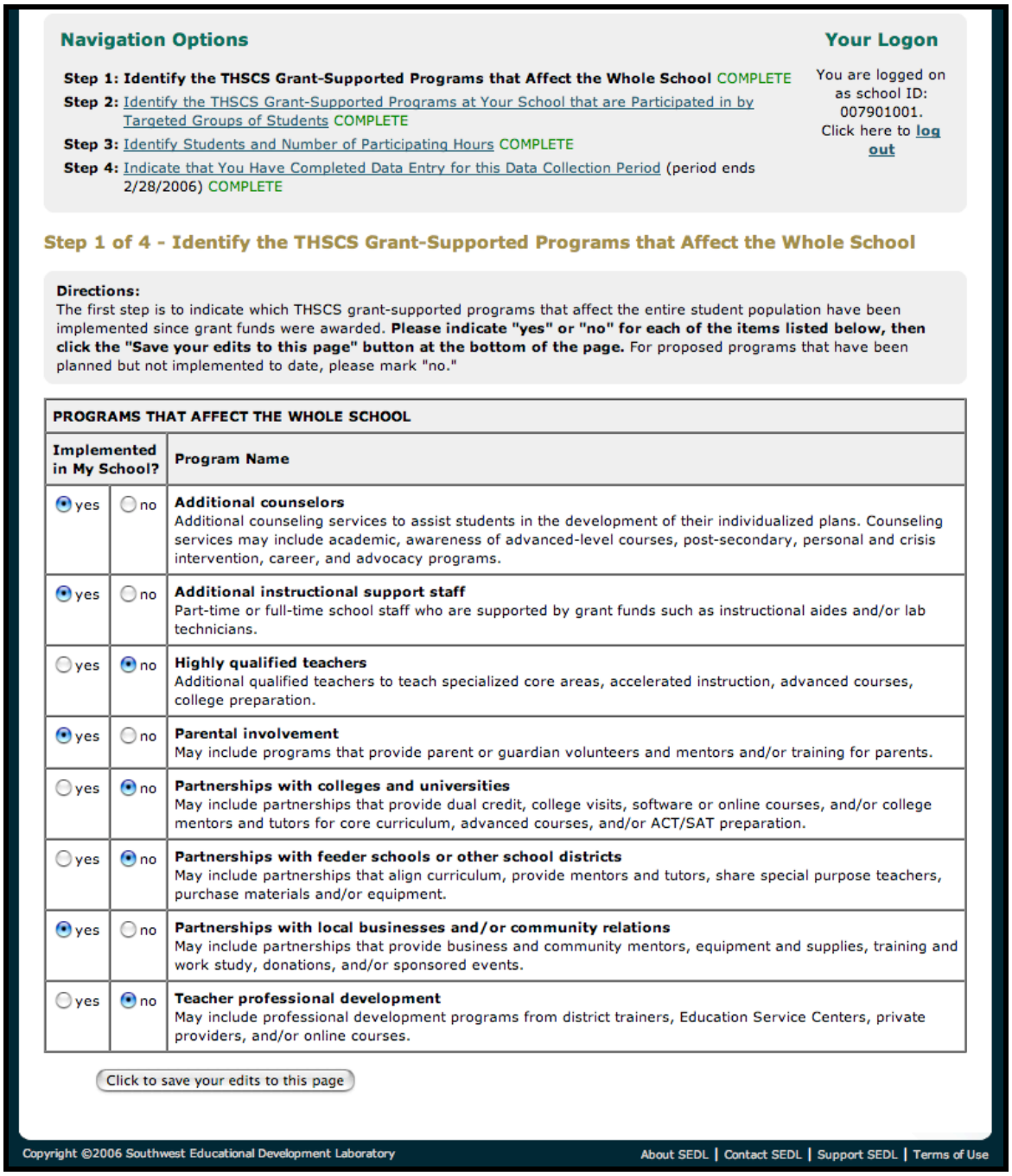
## Reporting Problems

To report problems or seek clarification, please contact:

Melissa Dodson, SEDL Program Associate
1-800-476-6861 mdodson@sedl.org

## Full-Page Views





**Navigation Options**

**Step 1: Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs that Affect the Whole School** COMPLETE

**Step 2:** Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs at Your School that are Participated in by Targeted Groups of Students COMPLETE

**Step 3:** Identify Students and Number of Participating Hours COMPLETE

**Step 4:** Indicate that You Have Completed Data Entry for this Data Collection Period (period ends 2/28/2006) COMPLETE

**Your Logon**

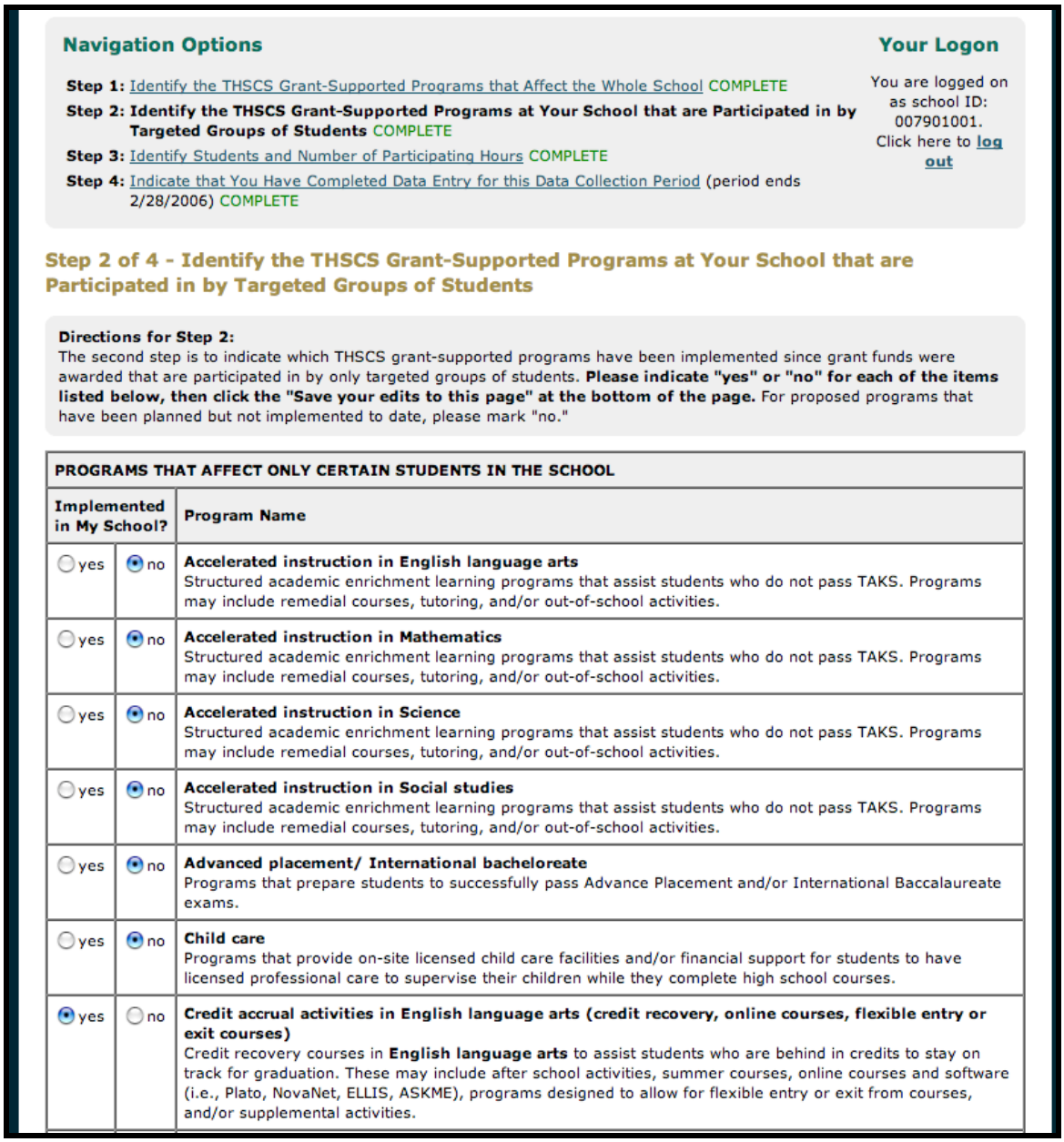
You are logged on as school ID: 007901001.
Click here to **log out**

## Step 1 of 4 - Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs that Affect the Whole School

**Directions:**
The first step is to indicate which THSCS grant-supported programs that affect the entire student population have been implemented since grant funds were awarded. **Please indicate "yes" or "no" for each of the items listed below, then click the "Save your edits to this page" button at the bottom of the page.** For proposed programs that have been planned but not implemented to date, please mark "no."

| PROGRAMS THAT AFFECT THE WHOLE SCHOOL | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Implemented in My School?** | | **Program Name** |
| (•) yes | ( ) no | **Additional counselors**<br>Additional counseling services to assist students in the development of their individualized plans. Counseling services may include academic, awareness of advanced-level courses, post-secondary, personal and crisis intervention, career, and advocacy programs. |
| (•) yes | ( ) no | **Additional instructional support staff**<br>Part-time or full-time school staff who are supported by grant funds such as instructional aides and/or lab technicians. |
| ( ) yes | (•) no | **Highly qualified teachers**<br>Additional qualified teachers to teach specialized core areas, accelerated instruction, advanced courses, college preparation. |
| (•) yes | ( ) no | **Parental involvement**<br>May include programs that provide parent or guardian volunteers and mentors and/or training for parents. |
| ( ) yes | (•) no | **Partnerships with colleges and universities**<br>May include partnerships that provide dual credit, college visits, software or online courses, and/or college mentors and tutors for core curriculum, advanced courses, and/or ACT/SAT preparation. |
| ( ) yes | (•) no | **Partnerships with feeder schools or other school districts**<br>May include partnerships that align curriculum, provide mentors and tutors, share special purpose teachers, purchase materials and/or equipment. |
| (•) yes | ( ) no | **Partnerships with local businesses and/or community relations**<br>May include partnerships that provide business and community mentors, equipment and supplies, training and work study, donations, and/or sponsored events. |
| ( ) yes | (•) no | **Teacher professional development**<br>May include professional development programs from district trainers, Education Service Centers, private providers, and/or online courses. |

Click to save your edits to this page



**Navigation Options**

**Step 1:** Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs that Affect the Whole School COMPLETE

**Step 2: Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs at Your School that are Participated in by Targeted Groups of Students** COMPLETE

**Step 3:** Identify Students and Number of Participating Hours COMPLETE

**Step 4:** Indicate that You Have Completed Data Entry for this Data Collection Period (period ends 2/28/2006) COMPLETE

**Your Logon**

You are logged on as school ID: 007901001. Click here to **log out**

**Step 2 of 4 - Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs at Your School that are Participated in by Targeted Groups of Students**

**Directions for Step 2:**
The second step is to indicate which THSCS grant-supported programs have been implemented since grant funds were awarded that are participated in by only targeted groups of students. **Please indicate "yes" or "no" for each of the items listed below, then click the "Save your edits to this page" at the bottom of the page.** For proposed programs that have been planned but not implemented to date, please mark "no."

| PROGRAMS THAT AFFECT ONLY CERTAIN STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Implemented in My School?** | | **Program Name** |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Accelerated instruction in English language arts**<br>Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and/or out-of-school activities. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Accelerated instruction in Mathematics**<br>Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and/or out-of-school activities. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Accelerated instruction in Science**<br>Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and/or out-of-school activities. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Accelerated instruction in Social studies**<br>Structured academic enrichment learning programs that assist students who do not pass TAKS. Programs may include remedial courses, tutoring, and/or out-of-school activities. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Advanced placement/ International bacheloreate**<br>Programs that prepare students to successfully pass Advance Placement and/or International Baccalaureate exams. |
| ○ yes | ◉ no | **Child care**<br>Programs that provide on-site licensed child care facilities and/or financial support for students to have licensed professional care to supervise their children while they complete high school courses. |
| ◉ yes | ○ no | **Credit accrual activities in English language arts (credit recovery, online courses, flexible entry or exit courses)**<br>Credit recovery courses in **English language arts** to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and/or supplemental activities. |

**Navigation Options**

**Step 1:** Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs that Affect the Whole School COMPLETE

**Step 2:** Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs at Your School that are Participated in by Targeted Groups of Students COMPLETE

**Step 3: Identify Students and Number of Participating Hours** COMPLETE

**Step 4:** Indicate that You Have Completed Data Entry for this Data Collection Period (period ends 2/28/2006) COMPLETE

**Your Logon**

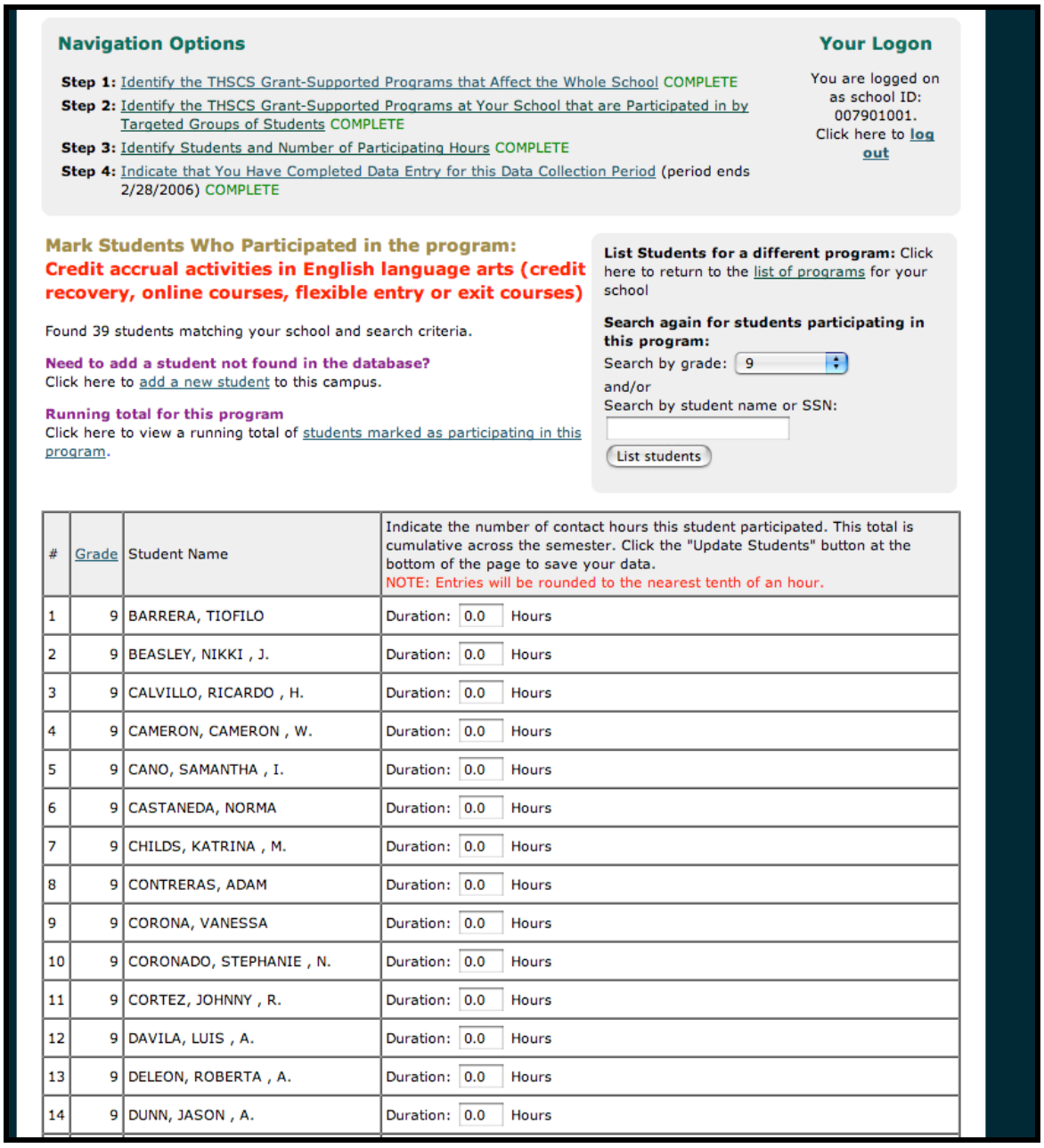
You are logged on as school ID: 007901001.
Click here to **log out**

## Step 3 of 4 - Identify Students and Number of Participating Hours

Click here to show instructions for using this page.

Note: Only you will know when you have completed **Step 3** by Identifying Students and Participating Hours. To indicate you are have completed **Step 3**, simply click the option for **Step 4**, which will notify SEDL that your data is ready to be reported to TEA on the last day of the period. You can still make modifications to your data set until the final day of the data collection period.

| Implemented in My School? | Program Name | Use the form in this column to locate and indicate the students receiving these services during this time period. |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | **Credit accrual activities in English language arts (credit recovery, online courses, flexible entry or exit courses)**<br>Credit recovery courses in **English language arts** to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and/or supplemental activities. | **Running total** of students you have marked so far: **4** Click for a printable list<br>**Search for Participating Students:**<br>Search by grade: (any grade)<br>and/or<br>Search by student name or SSN:<br>List students |
| Yes | **Credit accrual activities in Mathematics (credit recovery, online courses, flexible entry or exit courses)**<br>Credit recovery courses in **Mathematics** to assist students who are behind in credits to stay on track for graduation. These may include after school activities, summer courses, online courses and software (i.e., Plato, NovaNet, ELLIS, ASKME), programs designed to allow for flexible entry or exit from courses, and/or supplemental activities. | **Running total** of students you have marked so far: **0** Click for a printable list<br>**Search for Participating Students:**<br>Search by grade: (any grade)<br>and/or<br>Search by student name or SSN:<br>List students |



**Navigation Options**

**Step 1:** Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs that Affect the Whole School COMPLETE

**Step 2:** Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs at Your School that are Participated in by Targeted Groups of Students COMPLETE

**Step 3:** Identify Students and Number of Participating Hours COMPLETE

**Step 4:** Indicate that You Have Completed Data Entry for this Data Collection Period (period ends 2/28/2006) COMPLETE

**Your Logon**

You are logged on as school ID: 007901001.
Click here to log out

**Mark Students Who Participated in the program:**
**Credit accrual activities in English language arts (credit recovery, online courses, flexible entry or exit courses)**

Found 39 students matching your school and search criteria.

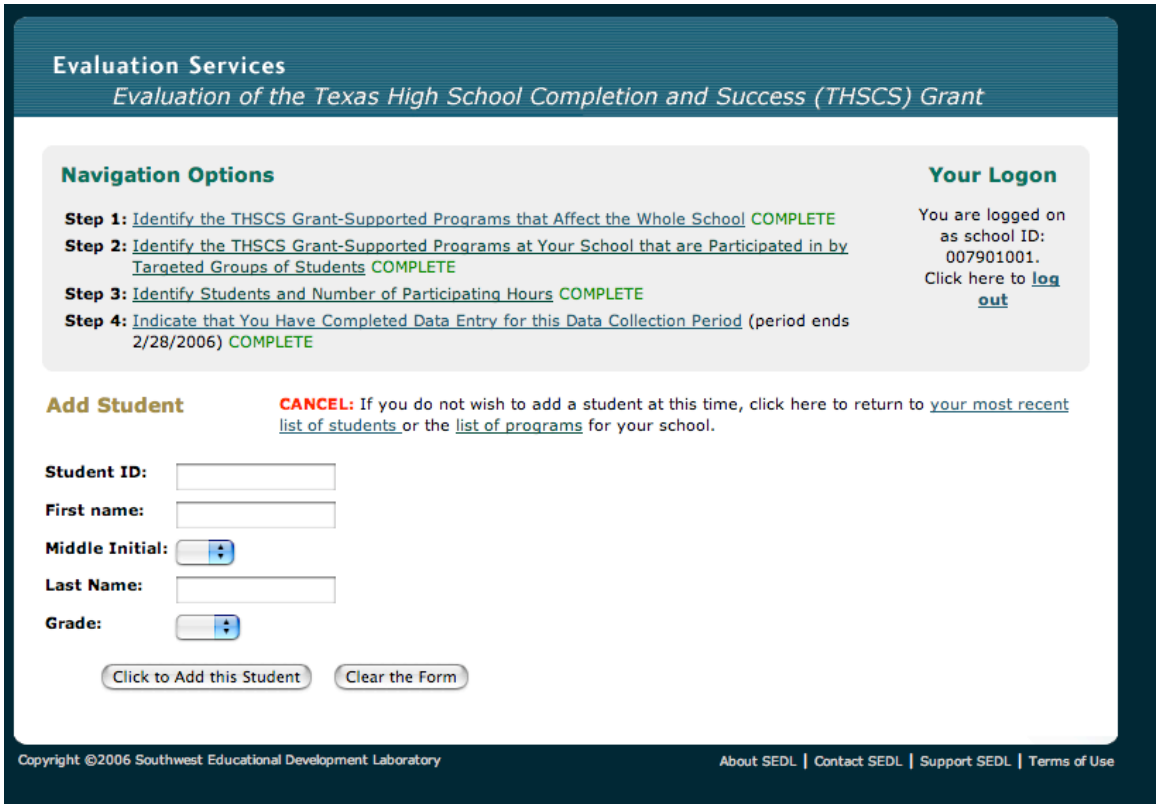
**Need to add a student not found in the database?**
Click here to add a new student to this campus.

**Running total for this program**
Click here to view a running total of students marked as participating in this program.

**List Students for a different program:** Click here to return to the list of programs for your school

**Search again for students participating in this program:**
Search by grade: 9
and/or
Search by student name or SSN:
List students

| # | Grade | Student Name | Indicate the number of contact hours this student participated. This total is cumulative across the semester. Click the "Update Students" button at the bottom of the page to save your data. NOTE: Entries will be rounded to the nearest tenth of an hour. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 9 | BARRERA, TIOFILO | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 2 | 9 | BEASLEY, NIKKI , J. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 3 | 9 | CALVILLO, RICARDO , H. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 4 | 9 | CAMERON, CAMERON , W. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 5 | 9 | CANO, SAMANTHA , I. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 6 | 9 | CASTANEDA, NORMA | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 7 | 9 | CHILDS, KATRINA , M. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 8 | 9 | CONTRERAS, ADAM | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 9 | 9 | CORONA, VANESSA | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 10 | 9 | CORONADO, STEPHANIE , N. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 11 | 9 | CORTEZ, JOHNNY , R. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 12 | 9 | DAVILA, LUIS , A. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 13 | 9 | DELEON, ROBERTA , A. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |
| 14 | 9 | DUNN, JASON , A. | Duration: 0.0 Hours |

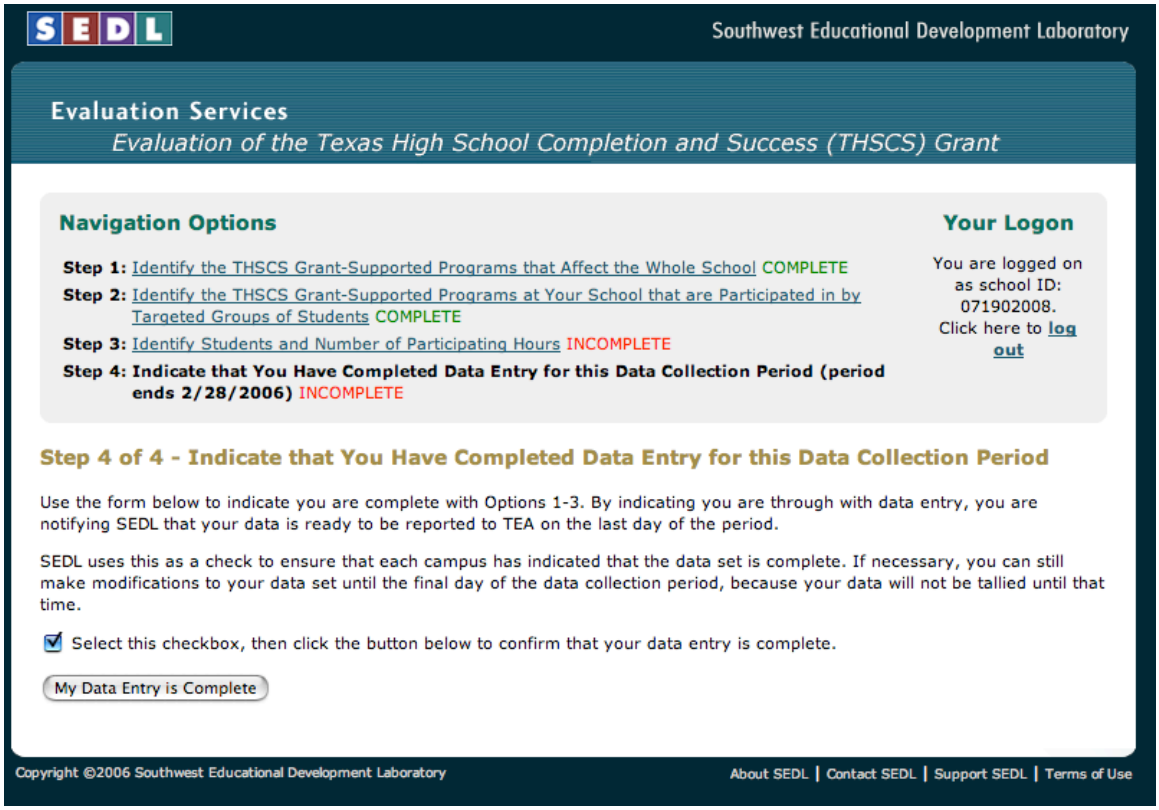



## School: 007901001

## Students Participating in: *Credit accrual activities in English language arts (credit recovery, online courses, flexible entry or exit courses)*

This list is a running total of all the students you have indicated participated in this program. If you have made additional changes since you first viewed this list, you may need to click the "Reload" button in your browser to refresh the list of students.

| # | Grade | Student Name | Number of hours this student participated. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 10 | CARSON, MONICA , A. | 125.0 Hours |
| 2 | 10 | DIAZ, FABIAN , J. | 22.0 Hours |
| 3 | 10 | ESPINOZA, NICOLAS , R. | 13.0 Hours |
| 4 | 10 | GLORIA, PETE | 4.0 Hours |


Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Evaluation Services
Evaluation of the Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS) Grant
Navigation Options
Step 1: Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs that Affect the Whole School COMPLETE
Step 2: Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs at Your School that are Participated in by Targeted Groups of Students COMPLETE
Step 3: Identify Students and Number of Participating Hours INCOMPLETE
Step 4: Indicate that You Have Completed Data Entry for this Data Collection Period (period ends 2/28/2006) INCOMPLETE
Your Logon
You are logged on as school ID: 071902008.
Click here to log out
Step 4 of 4 - Indicate that You Have Completed Data Entry for this Data Collection Period
Use the form below to indicate you are complete with Options 1-3. By indicating you are through with data entry, you are notifying SEDL that your data is ready to be reported to TEA on the last day of the period.
SEDL uses this as a check to ensure that each campus has indicated that the data set is complete. If necessary, you can still make modifications to your data set until the final day of the data collection period, because your data will not be tallied until that time.
Select this checkbox, then click the button below to confirm that your data entry is complete.
My Data Entry is Complete
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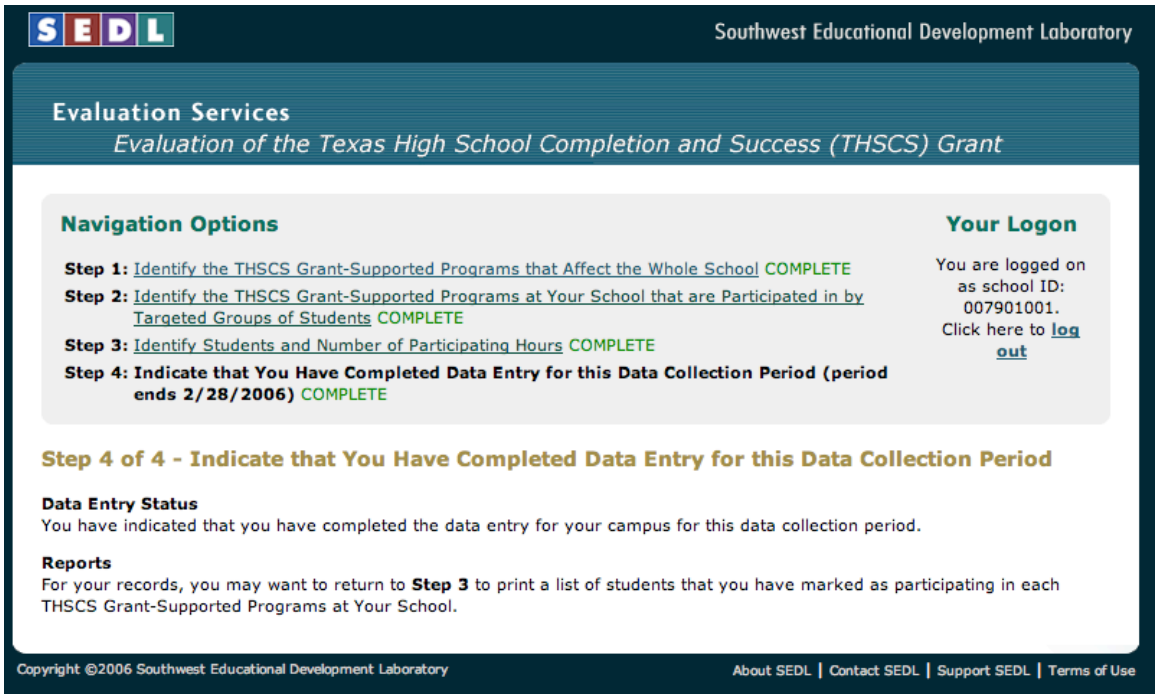
Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Evaluation Services
Evaluation of the Texas High School Completion and Success (THSCS) Grant
Navigation Options
Step 1: Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs that Affect the Whole School COMPLETE
Step 2: Identify the THSCS Grant-Supported Programs at Your School that are Participated in by Targeted Groups of Students COMPLETE
Step 3: Identify Students and Number of Participating Hours COMPLETE
Step 4: Indicate that You Have Completed Data Entry for this Data Collection Period (period ends 2/28/2006) COMPLETE
Your Logon
You are logged on as school ID: 007901001.
Click here to log out
Step 4 of 4 - Indicate that You Have Completed Data Entry for this Data Collection Period
Data Entry Status
You have indicated that you have completed the data entry for your campus for this data collection period.
Reports
For your records, you may want to return to Step 3 to print a list of students that you have marked as participating in each THSCS Grant-Supported Programs at Your School.
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# Appendix H

## Analysis of Participant and Non-Participant Comparison Group Student Data

To ensure that the non-participating comparison group students were similar to those participating in student-level interventions, a number of different analyses were conducted. The tables presented in this appendix reveal that there is little difference between the participant and non-participant student groups in terms of demographic, socioeconomic, and grade level distributions.

**Appendix Exhibit H-1** presents the student ethnicity of program versus non-program participants.

**Appendix Exhibit H-1**
**Ethnic Groups and Economic Disadvantaged Percentages**

| Student Group | Student Group Percentages | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Participants 17,884 students | Non-Part. 138,396 students | Difference |
| African-American | 20.1% | 18.3% | +1.8% |
| Hispanic | 47.2% | 49.8% | -2.6% |
| White | 29.5% | 29.3% | +0.2% |
| Other | 3.1% | 2.6% | +0.5% |
| Economically-Disadvantaged | 57.6% | 55.6% | +2.0% |

*Source: SEDL database (participation), TEA PEIMS*

African-American students accounted for a slightly higher percentage of participants (20.1 percent) than of the non-participants (18.3 percent). Hispanic students, on the other hand, comprise a slightly lower percentage of the participant group (47.2 percent) than of the non-participant group (49.8 percent). White students represent approximately 29 percent of each group. Students who are economically disadvantaged make up a slightly higher percentage of the participant group (57.5 percent) than the non-participant group (55.6 percent).

Ninth graders represented the largest group of high school student participants in the THSCS Program, but at a level consistent with their overall representation in high school. The higher percentage of students overall in Grade 9 is to be expected as this grade is a common holding level for students who do not earn sufficient credits to be classified as Sophomores. **Appendix Exhibit H-2** presents the distribution of participating and non-participating students (unduplicated count) by grade level.

**Appendix Exhibit H-2**
**Grade Level Distribution (Unduplicated Count)**

| Grade Level | Student Group Percentage | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Participants 17,884 Students | Non-Participants 138,396 Students | Difference |
| 9 | 31.7% | 30.6% | +1.1% |
| 10 | 25.0% | 24.9% | +0.1% |
| 11 | 26.0% | 22.5% | +3.5% |
| 12 | 17.3% | 22.1% | -4.8% |

*Source: SEDL database (participation), TEA PEIMS*

There was more participation at Grade 11 and less participation in Grade 12 relative to the distribution of non-participants. These variances at the intervention level are discussed in more detail in Section E of this report.

**Appendix Exhibit H-3** compares the percentage distribution of program participants to the respective non-participant percentages and reveals little difference in terms of gender, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) status, and Special Education status.

**Appendix Exhibit H-3**
**Other Demographic Information**

| | Student Group Percentage | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Participants 17,884 Students | Non-Participants 138,396 Students | Difference |
| Male | 49.0% | 51.0% | -2.0% |
| Female | 51.0% | 49.0% | +2.0% |
| LEP | 8.7% | 8.3% | +0.4% |
| Special Education | 10.3% | 11.9% | -1.6% |

*Source:. SEDL database (participation), TEA PEIMS*