



Austin Independent School District

HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH

Testimony of
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David Crockett High School in Austin, Texas was rated Academically Unacceptable in 2006 and 2008. In 2008, the Crockett federal graduation rate was 72.6 percent, the annual dropout rate was at 4.7%, the school-wide attendance rate was at 88.9 percent and there were 749 home suspensions. Based on both the testing data and these key school statistics, changes need to be made to improve student performance outcomes.

During the next three years, many changes were made in systems, curriculum delivery and supports. In the first year of reforms, the school was removed from the Academically Unacceptable list. Although there were marked improvements in all data points, the school still struggled.

In 2011, Crockett High School was asked to develop a pilot program which would introduce a mental health center on campus. Over the next few months, the Austin Independent School District and Lone Star Circle of Care developed a process to identify students who needed assistance and another system for students and parents to consent and register for services. With the clinic open for a few months, students who were seen by the clinic increased by 4 percent. Since the data showed promise, the program continued in 2012 and beyond.

The school now has three tiers of support. The most serious cases, including undiagnosed severe mental health issues were referred to the clinic. As the number of students who voluntarily began receiving services, the school data demonstrated a positive shift. Teachers reported the school culture climate greatly improved both in the classrooms and in the school in general. Teachers have reported in a yearly survey they are able to teach with fewer disruptions while the school saw a decrease in student suspensions. Crockett implemented academic reforms including standards-based grading, a school-wide AVID program, revamped the social, emotional instruction and expanded career and technical courses and options. All of these programs have received local, state and national recognition as models for others to emulate.

Members of the Select Committee on Mental Health, students who are not “head ready” for class will not be receptive to quality instruction. Without the mental health clinic, the reforms

implemented by Crockett High School most likely would not have worked as well as they have. We spend millions of dollars across the state in academic interventions for struggling students. Without ensuring students' mental health needs are met, these economic outlays may not have an effect on improving student performance outcomes, no matter how much we attempt to implement these strategies in our classrooms. Having the mental health clinic on the high school campus set the foundation for the other academic reforms to be successful.

Today, Crockett High School has enjoyed great success. Graduation rates have increased 14 percent (and are predicted to reach increases of over 22 percent next year), attendance has risen over 5.5 percent, the annual dropout rate has plummeted by 3.8 percent and home suspensions which used to number 749 have been reduced to 166 in 2014-15. I have submitted data charts to the Committee that show the reforms were started in 2008 but were able to take hold after the opening of the mental health clinic on campus in 2011 and all student groups have benefitted greatly. The information provided reflect outcomes for Crockett High School.

In conclusion, addressing the mental health needs of a school population can have a profound effect on both the students who are receiving mental health services and those students who are not receiving services. Academic reforms can only work when the school culture and climate are conducive to teaching and learning. Funding such centers on school campuses will not only head off serious incidents on and off campuses, it will improve student performance outcomes of all students.

Graduation Rates

Year	All Students	African American	Hispanic	White	SpEd	LEP
2014	86.8%	91.3%	85.8%	86.8%	65.0%	67.4%
2013	83.3%	80.6%	81.6%	91.2%	69.5%	76.6%
2012	80.8%	83.9%	80.2%	77.0%	59.3%	73.9%
2011	76.6%	74.4%	74.0%	86.8%	54.8%	64.2%
2010	77.8%	80.0%	73.9%	88.5%	56.6%	67.2%
2009	74.1%	80.3%	69.8%	79.6%	63.0%	49.2%
2008	72.7%	63.6%	72.9%	73.7%	61.4%	51

Attendance

School Year	All Students	African American	Hispanic	White	SpEd	LEP	ECD	District Students (All)
2014-2015	94.2%	92.6%	94.3%	94.4%	91.9%	94.7%	93.9%	95.2%
2013-2014	92.7%	93.2%	92.7%	92.5%	90.4%	92.6%	92.4%	95.3%
2012-2013	91.8%	91.7%	91.7%	91.8%	89.6%	90.9%	91.4%	95.2%
2011-2012	91.2%	91.7%	91.4%	89.8%	89.2%	91.2%	90.8%	95.1%
2010-2011	89.9%	91.0%	89.4%	90.8%	88.3%	87.8%	89.5%	94.9%
2009-2010	89.2%	90.0%	88.8%	90.3%	85.4%	87.7%	*	94.4%
2008-2009	88.7%	89.7%	87.9%	90.4%	86.4%	88.4%	*	94.4%
2007-2008	89.7%	90.1%	89.1%	90.5%	87.8%	88.5%	*	94.3%

Annual Dropout Rates

School Year	All Students	African American	Hispanic	White	SpEd	LEP
2013-2014	1.3%	0.0%	1.3%	2.0%	2.6%	1.8%
2012-2013	2.9%	1.4%	3.1%	2.6%	4.4%	5.7%
2011-2012	3.8%	4.7%	4.1%	2.2%	5.5%	5.6%
2010-2011	5.1%	5.7%	5.4%	4.1%	9.5%	7.5%
2009-2010	4.4%	5.0%	4.9%	2.4%	6.3%	3.6%
2008-2009	3.7%	4.7%	3.7%	3.4%	4.9%	2.7%
2007-2008	4.3%	5.7%	4.5%	3.3%	4.4%	5.1%
Source: TEA Data Tables			Prepared by Accountability and Assessment			

Home Suspensions

Count of Incidents by Student Group							
School Year	All Students	African American	Hispanic	White	SpEd	LEP	ECD
2014-2015	166	30	107	25	47	9	139
2013-2014	186	21	134	28	45	19	152
2012-2013	307	39	206	49	82	26	247
2011-2012	257	47	159	46	67	34	203
2010-2011	502	91	333	64	149	76	396
2009-2010	557	98	377	63	197	98	*
2008-2009	749	121	551	75	232	116	*
2007-2008	555	84	403	66	155	69	*
Source: PEIMS Submission Files							

