

SUPPORTING QUALITY EDUCATION

Q4 Update FY2013



Volume I, Issue 4

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EARLY EDUCATION MATTERS

In fiscal year 2013, the Library received a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Committed to early learning, this planning grant allowed the Library to complete an assessment of the community's capacity to promote early learning and school readiness.



Sep. 20, 2013 – The Library presented information about the study on early education made possible by the National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services at a Berry Elementary School parent meeting.

The goals of the grant were to assess available resources in the community, identify areas of need in early education, and develop a plan

to address gaps in early learning to better prepare children when they enter kindergarten. The study focused on parents, caregivers and key community organizations providing early learning services to children ages birth to five.

During a six-month period, researchers gathered data through a number of activities including an educator inventory, a community scan, phone interviews with fundamental stakeholders, focus groups with parents and child care providers, an educator online survey and a parent survey. The data showed the following major findings related to early education:

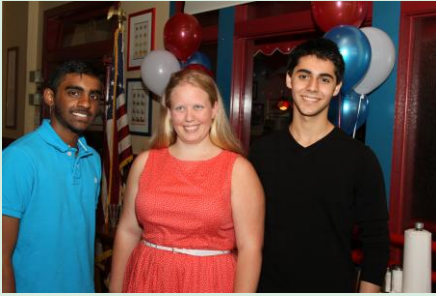
- Parents need support to help their child learn.
- Educators want parents to be more engaged.
- Parents need free or low-cost educational resources & programs.
- Both parents & child care centers need books & access to technology.
- Caregivers want more education & training.

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ADVISORY BOARD



School Year 2012-13 – Pictured above are Teen Court Advisory Board members George Thomas (Bowie High School), Peyton Alvey (Summit Mansfield) and Zain Butt (Martin High School). The Board is responsible for: recommendations to the City Manager's Office on policies regulating the Teen Court Program; reports and recommendations that require City Council action; developing and providing community support/resources in addition to funding provided through the City's budget process; and, recommendations to the Teen Court Coordinator regarding the recruitment, selection and training of adult and teen volunteers. There are nine adult members, who previously demonstrated an interest in working with youth, and eight youth representatives, who are juniors in good standing in AISD, MISD and private schools located within the City of Arlington. Holly Mangold is the City's Teen Court Coordinator. For more information about Teen Court, e-mail arlingtonteencourt@arlingtontx.gov.

ECO-EDUCATION



Sep. 2013 – This fall, Eco-Man leapt onto the scene to increase awareness for environmental issues. He's the latest edition to a long list of eco-education efforts to engage the community. Sep. 21 was the 4th Annual Ecofest, which is held at

Founders Plaza. This is an all-day, free, family oriented event where local businesses showcase green products, and attendees learn practical do-it-yourself solutions for maintaining and improving their environments. Arlington Master Composter classes teach ways to enrich the soil naturally. The \$10 Make-A-Rain-Barrel class for citizens with residential Arlington Water Utilities accounts is always popular.

Last spring, the City's educational efforts reached into a preschool classroom. Water Utilities donated a rain barrel (\$50 retail value) to a First Presbyterian Preschool two-year-olds class that was learning ways to reuse/recycle materials and all about animals or bugs they might encounter on camp-outs. The teacher custom-designed the artwork for the barrel, and the students added fingerprint insects and animals. It sold for \$600 at the school's auction, and the winning bidder donated it back to the school for its community garden.

HIGHLIGHTS

TEEN COURT

In 2007, Arlington re-established its Teen Court program with the help of the City Council, Municipal Court judges and the community. Since then, approximately 300 defendants per year either request or have been assigned to complete the Teen Court program. Once the assigned community service and jury terms are completed, the citation is dismissed. At a cost of only \$20, Teen Court is the least expensive option to have offenses removed from records.

The Arlington Teen Court is a voluntary or court-ordered deferred option which allows juvenile Class C misdemeanor offenders to "pay" for their citations through Community Service and involvement in the judicial process. The program strives to help juvenile offenders take responsibility for their actions, increase awareness of the law, teach teens to make better decisions in the future, and promote community involvement by providing volunteer opportunities to youth and adults.

The program also provides teens interested in a law career the opportunity to learn and try real cases filed in the City of Arlington. Teen volunteers serve as prosecuting attorneys, defense attorneys, bailiffs and jurors. Participation in the program helps develop skills in public speaking, mediation and pro-social leadership through hands-on learning provided by area attorneys. It takes the combined efforts of about 40 teen volunteers and 20 adult volunteers to make this program a success.

"Now as a senior at Martin [High School], I can reflect on my experience at Teen Court, and say with absolute conviction that it has been a tremendous positive influence in not only my life, but those who go through the program," said Advisory Board member Zain Butt. "For me, going through this process countless times, seeing defendants get a second chance, many of which I personally know, watching our great attorney judges take the time to allow Teen Court to be as effective as it is, has been something which I've been proud to be a part of."

A Teen Court volunteer since his freshman year, he went on to say the experience helped shape his idea of the career path he'd like to pursue. Overall, he feels it has made him "a more confident, better person" because it is "a unique, invaluable program" that he hopes will continue to benefit the community long after he graduates from high school.

HIGHLIGHTS

ARLINGTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

On August 20, Superintendent Marcelo Cavazos made a presentation to the City Council on the Arlington Independent School District. The framework for success includes inspired learners, effective leadership and an engaged community. With a vision to be globally acknowledged as a premier school district, the AISD's 2012-2015 Strategic Plan set five objectives that 100% of its students will:

- graduate on time and excel at their school or career of choice
- reach their full academic potential
- be actively involved in extracurricular and co-curricular activities
- graduate as lifelong learners
- graduate with a commitment to their community

The recently released state accountability results for 2013 include four indexes. On Index 1, all of the campuses and the district met the standards in student achievements.

Distinctions can be earned in three areas: academic achievement in reading/ELA; academic achievement in math; and, top 25% student progress.

- 39 schools received at least one distinction (3 of 6 high schools; all 12 of the 12 junior high schools; 24 of 50 elementary schools)
- 7 schools received all three (6 junior high schools: Bailey, Carter, Gunn, Hutcheson, Ousley, Shackelford; 1 elementary school: Pearcy)

The newest elementary school opens August 26 in east Arlington, which is part of the comprehensive plan to address east Arlington overcrowding. Next fall, classrooms will be added at 3 elementary schools (Blanton, Knox, Rankin). Fall 2015, a new elementary school will open east of 360, and a new elementary school will open on the Workman Junior High School property the fall of 2016. Currently, a facilities assessment is under way, and the committee will include representation from the City.

The AISD's early childhood learning efforts include strong partnerships with United Way and the City of Arlington, "It's important for the adults – all of us – to partner in the interests of the kids," Dr. Cavazos said. "The more we can partner, the better the results for the kids."

Mayor Robert Cluck proposed the AISD do this presentation annually, if not bi-annually, saying, "If we don't have good schools, we don't have a good community."

SUPERINTENDENT MARCELO CAVAZOS



Council members and others were encouraged to visit the school's website (www.aisd.net) for details about the Strategic Plan because all of the information and results are available as part of the district's transparency policy.

STATE ACCOUNTABILITY RESULTS



State Accountability Results

- **Index 1 – Student Achievement**
 - Percent of all tests passed
 - District and all campuses met standard
- **Index 2 – Student Progress**
 - Combination of year-to-year student score gains for all student groups
 - District and all campuses met standards



State Accountability Results

- **Index 3 – Closing Performance Gaps**
 - Combination of 2013 student achievement for economically disadvantaged and last year's two lowest performing ethnic groups
 - District and all campuses except Ellis, Speer and Thornton elementaries met standard
- **Index 4 – Postsecondary Readiness**
 - Four-year or five-year graduation rates
 - District and all high schools met standard

AISD PARTNERSHIPS

City of Arlington

- Fire Academy
- Internships with Water Utilities
- Communications
- Early childhood literacy
- Capital Needs Steering Committee
- Police Academy

Tarrant County College

- Early College High School
- CTE program expansion

UT Arlington

- Early admission for juniors
- Dual-credit courses in science, technology, engineering and mathematics

HIGHLIGHTS

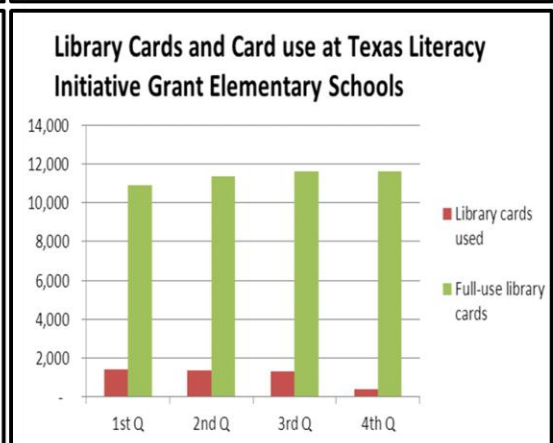
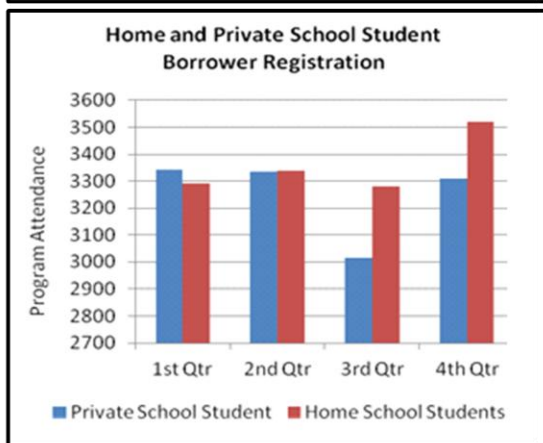
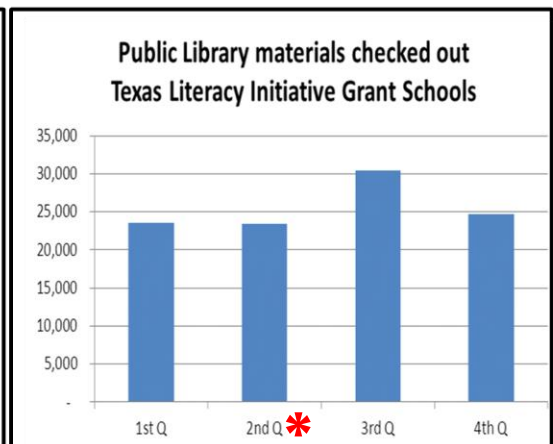
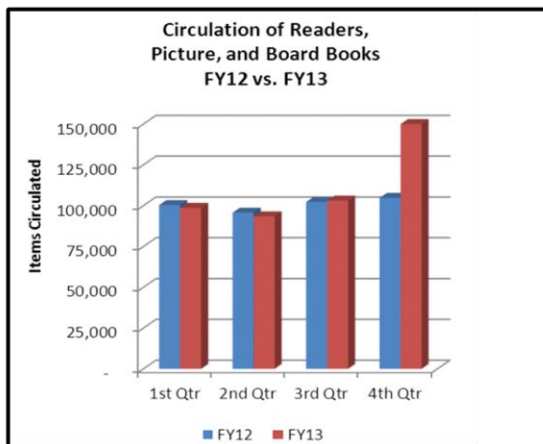
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In response to the major findings of the study, the Library completed three work sessions with early learning partners to establish an implementation plan. The work group suggested Early Learning Resource Centers in libraries, child care and schools. Center services may differ by location, but would support accessibility to information, resources and training opportunities related to early education.

“I was amazed at the energy and the efforts of our community partners for recognizing how early learning is critical to children’s education and success,” said Rita Morris, Child Care Manager at Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County.

This project provided an opportunity for a number of community partners to collaborate and support early education. Many thanks go to Arlington ISD, Camp Fire, Child Care Associates, Children’s Learning Institute, community volunteers interested in early learning, Cornerstone Academy, local child care centers, Mansfield ISD, parent participants, Rainwater Charitable Foundation, Reading Recovery, Tarrant County Public Health Department, United Way of Tarrant County, UT Arlington and Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County.

UPDATES



FY13 4th Quarter: LibraryLiNK school locations were closed during the majority of the 4th quarter while school was not in session, which impacted the checked-out and cards-used data.

* Elementary and junior high schools no longer participating; high school service began 3rd quarter.