

Current limitations with the State Compensatory Education (SCE) funding

LEA students (TEC Section 29.081). State compensatory education funds were authorized by the legislature to provide financial support for programs and/or services designed by LEAs to increase the achievement of students at risk of dropping out of school. The LEA must design the SCE program based on the identified needs of students at risk of dropping out of school. In determining the appropriate accelerated, intensive compensatory programs and/or services, LEAs must use student performance data from the TAKS and other appropriate assessment instruments and achievement tests administered under Subchapter B, Chapter 39 TEC. In addition, the LEA must annually evaluate the outcomes and the plan's implementation to determine whether the academic achievement of all at risk students improved; whether the goals and objectives contained in the plan were achieved; and if the plan is still appropriate as written.

Currently the State requires 55% of the funds to be used specifically and exclusively for at-risk students. This exclusivity has a significant impact for non-Title campuses with at-risk populations because they must ensure that any service, program, technology etc. is used only for at-risk students and cannot in any way benefit other students. Title campuses enjoy more flexibility.

For example, if a non-Title campus has an at-risk population and wants to lower class size ratios they must ensure that only at-risk students are served in that section. Creating student schedules for this purpose is very difficult at secondary campuses. Campuses tend to create pull-out programs that actually enhance a "tracking effect" for those at-risk students.

Likewise, if a non-Title campus wants to use its money to purchase a computer lab, only at-risk students can use it and the staff member assigned to the class can only serve those students.

In other words, a beneficial program for at risk and non-at risk students cannot be funded with compensatory money. Non-Title campuses have real difficulty finding appropriate instructional arrangements that lend themselves to a segregated environment as required by the use of this money.

In the current environment where resources are tight it only makes sense to provide flexibility for campuses to use their limited resources to continue services to at risk populations even though non-at risk students also benefit in various instructional arrangements.

Proposal for the use of Compensatory Funds for All Students

We would ask that provisions be made in the law so that all students could benefit, especially when resources are tight.

Proposed:

The goal of state compensatory education is to reduce any disparity in performance on assessment instruments administered under Subchapter B, Chapter 39 TEC, or disparity in the rates of high school completion between students at risk of dropping out of school and all other students.

SCE funds may be used on a campus to upgrade the educational program to meet the needs of all students as well as at risk students. The program will meet the needs of all students in the school, as determined by the comprehensive needs assessment. All school staff is expected to direct their efforts toward upgrading the entire educational program and improving the achievement of all students, particularly those who are low achieving.

Alternative:

SCE funds may be used on a campus to upgrade the educational program to meet the needs of at risk students as well as the incidental inclusion of non-at risk students.

Comments:

This keeps the vocabulary of SCE in the first paragraph but the second paragraph expands the use of the funds from only at risk students but to all students.

The alternative provides some flexibility but still retains some exclusivity.

DAEP

Staff Development

Examples: New Jersey Writing, Reading Recovery, Kagan

Technology

Examples: Computers, printers, projectors, white boards

Pregnancy Related Services

Home instruction

Compensatory Interventions:

Summer School

Grade Recovery/Credit Recovery

Grade recovery occurs during the school year after each grading period. Credit recovery occurs after a semester is complete.

Saturday School

Extended Day

Programs:

Achieve 3000 – Reading interventions

Study Island – Assessments K-12 in all core subjects

Odyssey Ware – Credit recovery in all subjects

Math Recovery – Advantage Math, personnel, teacher training

Reading Recovery – personnel, materials, teacher training

Personnel:

DAEP

CSR teachers – Class Size Reduction

Instructional Coaches – personnel who work with curriculum, instruction and assessments at the classroom level or lead teacher groups.

Social Workers

Tutors

TAKS Teachers

Compensatory Teachers (for pull-out programs on non-Title campuses)