

The 2002 - 2003 High Challenge Grant Program

The High Challenge Grant Program is funded to provide Oklahoma school districts with a means to develop and refine innovative programs that addressed the needs of at-risk students. These programs, if validated as effective, are designed to serve as models for other schools. The five-year funding cycle provides the programs with enough time to fully implement effective interventions. Effective programs are validated in their fourth year of funding; the focus of the fifth year is on replication of the model in other settings. The goal of the High Challenge Grant Program is to develop a pool of effective models for serving at-risk students in rural and urban Oklahoma schools.

The High Challenge Grant Program has been markedly curtailed over the last two years. Due to budget cuts, the amount available through the High Challenge Grant Programs has been reduced from \$1,274,772 in 2001-2002 to \$697,895 in 2002-2003. The grants that were awarded were reduced by 7.85 percent during the year.

In 2002-2003, the State Department of Education funded 14 continuing programs and did not hold a new grant competition. Three of the programs were in their second year of implementation, eight in their third year, three programs in their fourth year of operation. These 14 programs provided services for **1,594** students. Figure 1 shows the geographic distribution of High Challenge programs across the state. All of the programs were located east of Oklahoma City. The programs have traditionally been concentrated in the eastern and central parts of Oklahoma. This report includes descriptions and individual evaluations of each of the 14 programs.

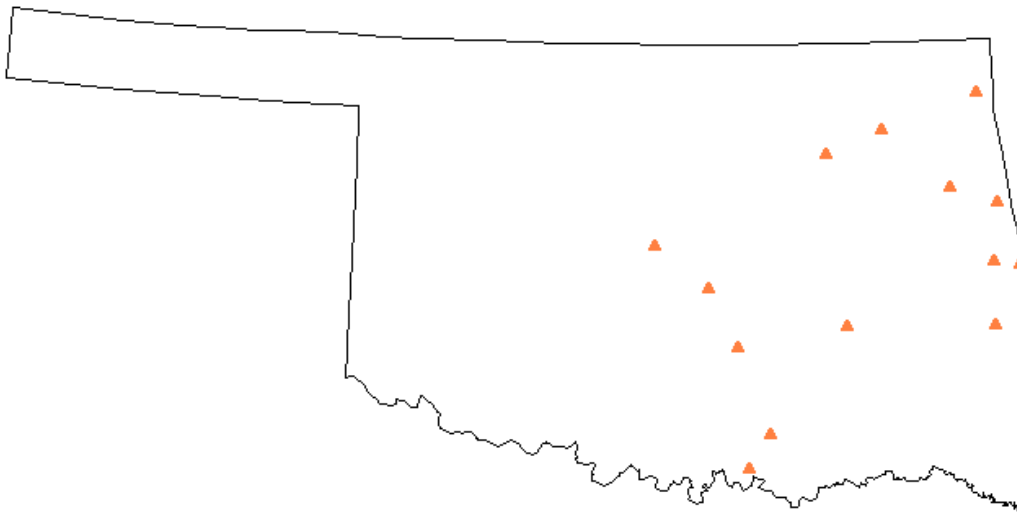


Figure 1. High Challenge Grants - Geographic Distribution.

OTAC's mission of providing technical assistance as well as evaluation services requires that Field Coordinators make multiple on-site visits to the programs during the year. The Field Coordinators assisted grantees with the many implementation difficulties that often plague innovative programs. They worked with the project staff to refine the models and respond to feedback from faculty, parents, students, and evaluation results. Programs in their first or second year of implementation traditionally required more contacts than those in the refinement or replication stages of their project. Project sites have traditionally been visited by the Field Coordinators a minimum of four times during the year; however, due to OTAC's reduced funding during the 2002-2003, a minimum of three site visits was required per site, with follow-up telephone, e-mail, and telefax contacts. OTAC staff made a total of 60 on-site visits to the 14 programs in 2002-2003, an average of 4.29 site-visits per project.

All of the programs provided services to identified groups of at-risk students. The grade levels served by the High Challenge programs ranged from three-year-olds to seniors in high school. Two of the programs focused their intervention on a specific grade level, the fourth grade. Four of the programs developed projects that served students in the elementary, middle school, and high school grades. Six programs provided services to elementary students. Two focused only on middle school/junior high students. In accordance with the authorizing legislation, which requires a focus on younger children, no models were developed solely for high school students.

Table 1 presents the number of years each program has been in operation, the grade levels served, the number of students served, staffing requirements, and amount of the 2002-03 grant award. The 14 programs were in their second, third, or fourth years of funding. None of the three fourth-year programs has been validated as effective. One program showed promise and has been recommended for a fourth year so that additional data could be collected and analyzed. The other two fourth-year projects were not recommended by OTAC but were funded by the State Board of Education. One of these projects, Muldrow, received its full initial award amount even though the law requires funding to be cut in half once programs reach the fourth year.

Table 1. Program information					
School	Year	Grades	Students Served	Staff	State Funding
Ada	3	4	9	1 teacher, 1 assistant	\$54,276
Arkoma	3	PK-6	51	1 teacher, 1 assistant	\$59,436
Cherokee County Interlocal Cooperative	3	7-8	73	1 counselor, 1 director	\$76,945
Claremore	2	4	350	1 director, 1 teacher	\$43,403
Greasy	3	K-8	56	1 lab teacher, 4 teachers	\$72,061
Grove	4	6-8	0	1 teacher, .5 assistant	\$13,938
Howe	3	K-12	101	Full K-12 faculty (33)	\$33,312
Kingston	3	K-5	83	1 art teacher	\$15,693
McAlester	4	4-5	18	1 teacher	\$30,640
Milburn	3	K-12	33	5 teachers, 1 program director, 1 bus driver	\$52,878
Muldrow	4	K-12	106	1 director, 11 teachers	\$20,830
OKC SeeWorth Academy	2	3-12	652	29 teachers, 5 mentors, 8 counselors, 4 administrators	\$63,123
Tecumseh	3	5-6	40	1 teacher, 1 counselor	\$79,433
Tulsa	3	1-5	22	2 teachers, 2 assistants, 1 counselor	\$81,927
Total			1,594	93 teachers, 4 directors, 4.5 assistants, 11 counselors, 4 administrators, 5 mentors, 1 bus driver	\$697,895

The number of students served varied greatly from program to program. For example, Ada's model consisted of providing intensive behavioral intervention services to elementary-level students in a self-contained classroom setting. Due to the severity of these children's issues, a low professional staff-to-student ratio was appropriate. The districts that served the most students were rural cooperatives and whole-school projects, such as Claremore's multicultural awareness model and Oklahoma City's charter school. The average number of students served per program was 113.86, the highest average number of students ever recorded for the High Challenge program. This was due to the increased membership at Oklahoma City's SeeWorth Academy this year. When this program and the program that did not serve any

students this year (Grove) were removed, the average number of students per program was 78.50. The number of participants ranged from 9 to 652.

Table 1 also lists the professional staff required to implement each of the programs. The 14 models required a total of 122.5 staff members, an average of 8.75 staff per project. Many of the staff members were part-time and a few were volunteers. The project with the greatest number of staff was Oklahoma City's SeeWorth Academy that served 652 students. In total, 93 teachers, 4 directors, 4.5 teaching assistants, 11 counselors, 4 administrators, 5 mentors, and one bus driver were needed to implement the programs. Volunteers, such as peer tutors or community members, usually assisted in the programs that emphasized tutoring or mentoring.

The numbers listed in the *State Funding* column of Table 1 represent the amount of money the projects received after the 7.85 percent reduction in funding. The awards ranged from \$15,693 for a grade-specific visual art integration program to \$81,927 for Tulsa's elementary behavioral intervention classrooms. The mean funding per program in 2002-2003 was \$49,850. The average cost of the second-year programs was \$53,263. The nine third-year programs averaged \$58,440 in funding. The fourth-year programs operated on an average of \$21,803 per program. (Programs in their fourth year, with the exception of Muldrow, received 50 percent of their original grant amounts and programs in their fifth-year received 25 percent. The purpose of this funding structure was to encourage school districts to gradually assume financial responsibility for their programs.)

Student demographics. The majority of the programs collected demographic information for the students that were served. Of the 1,594 students served in 2002-2003, this information was available for approximately 80 percent of the program participants. Figures 2-7 present the demographic information for the students served in the High Challenge program this year. Relevant information from the demographic data may be summarized as follows:

Figure 2. Grade level information was provided for 96 percent of the students served. Students in the elementary grades (K-8) accounted for 58.8 percent of the participants. The largest elementary grade represented was the fourth grade (24.6 percent). Two of the programs focused their intervention on all students in the fourth grade. Almost twice as many high school students participated this year compared to previous years (41.2 percent). The doubling of the student population at the Oklahoma City SeeWorth program accounted for most of this increase.

Figure 3. Gender distribution is presented in Figure 3. More males (57.4 percent) than females (42.6 percent) were served in the High Challenge programs. This information was recorded for 76 percent of the students in the sample.

Figure 4. Racial/ethnic information was recorded for 76 percent of the High Challenge population. The largest percentage of students served were African American students (47.4 percent). This is a higher proportion than expected when compared to Oklahoma school children. The state data show that 11 percent of Oklahoma school children are African Americans (*Profiles 2002*, State Office of Accountability). The increase in the number of African American students served is primarily due to one large, urban project in which 83 percent of the students were African American. Caucasian students (32.6 percent) accounted for the second largest group of participants. The percentages of Native American students (15

percent), Hispanics (4.5 percent) and Asians (0.5 percent) were similar to the state averages and previous program evaluations.

Figure 5. Depending on the model adopted by the site, students could be eligible to participate in the programs for more than one year. This information was recorded for 95 percent of the students in the distribution. First-year students were the largest group (70.9 percent). Second-year students accounted for 19.4 percent, 9.3 percent were in their third year, and 0.4 percent in their fourth year of participation in a High Challenge program.

Figure 6. At program entry, one reason for referral was recorded for students. This information was collected for less than half (46.5 percent) of the students in the High Challenge program. This data was not recorded for those students who participated in whole school or whole grade interventions such as Claremore's Spanish culture program. For this reason, the proportion of students for whom the data was reported was low. Program directors had several preset categories of referral reasons from which to select when recording the data. The most frequently recorded reason for referral was "other" (31.5 percent), which was frequently used by the large, urban project. OTAC will investigate more thoroughly the reason for referral at this site to determine if revisions in the data collection instruments are needed. Of the traditional reasons for referral, academic deficiency (21.2 percent) continued to be the most frequently recorded reason for referral. This was a reflection of the many enrichment models funded. Behavioral difficulty was the reason recorded for 18.1 percent of the students, followed by recovered dropout (12.7 percent), excessive absences (9.2 percent), emotional/social adjustment problems (6.6 percent), pregnant/parenting teens (0.7 percent), and direct juvenile justice referrals (0.1 percent).

Figure 7. End-of-year status was recorded for 90 percent of students served in the High Challenge program. 82 percent of the students were reported to have completed the year with a positive status. 39.9 percent were reported to have been promoted to the next grade. (This was exit status almost universally selected for students in elementary tutoring programs). *Continuing in the program* was the status recorded for 31.5 percent of the students. The more intensive programs allowed for participation for multiple years. 6.5 percent of the students were reported to have graduated during the year. Of the 132 seniors served during 2002-2003, only 67 (50.8 percent) graduated.

Of the 18 percent of the students who ended the year with a negative exit status, 14.1 percent were reported to have dropped out of school. This is a high rate for a High Challenge program and can be attributed primarily to the large, urban alternative school. Other negative exits included retained in grade (0.4 percent) and suspended until the end of the year (0.1 percent).

Program characteristics and outcomes. No two programs were the same in their scope, target population, or activities. Each program's goals and objectives were reviewed and categorized by their most defining components. The defining components and the number of programs offering each are presented in Table 2. Models that provided self-contained classrooms or resource rooms were most frequently implemented, accounting for 29 percent of the High Challenge programs. These programs tended to serve students in the elementary grades and focused on behavioral interventions and academic achievement. Two of the programs (14 percent) provided tutoring models that concentrated on reading skill development. Both of these

programs served students in the elementary grades and provided an alternative type of instructional delivery.

In addition to the major program components, each of the models included a number of ancillary services. These services and the number of sites that provided each service are listed in Figure 8. These ancillary components were intended to complement and support the primary intervention. The ancillary model component most frequently included by the projects was parent involvement. This has traditionally been a very popular support component for High Challenge programs. Nine of the 14 programs made efforts to increase parent participation or knowledge. The second most frequently included ancillary component was professional development, which was included in six models. Transition services were provided by four of the programs. Transition services provided some type of support once a student was returned to the traditional program after attending a self-contained class. Computer-assisted instruction was also included by four programs. This resource usually accompanied the tutoring programs and self-contained programs.

Primary component	Number of programs	Percent	Primary component	Number of programs	Percent
Art	1	7%	Professional Development	1	7%
Distance Learning Lab	1	7%	Summer School	1	7%
Drug/Alcohol Prevention	1	7%	Transitional	1	7%
Multicultural Awareness	1	7%	Tutoring/Homework Assistance/Basic Skills	1	7%
Self-Contained /Resource Classroom	4	29%	Tutoring/Reading Remediation	2	14%

Academic and behavioral information was provided by the majority of the programs. The type of data collected varied, depending on the program model and the grade levels involved. For example, grade point averages were used for the middle and high school grades while Priority Academic Skills Checklists were often developed to assess the achievement levels of younger students. Statistical tests of significance were conducted on each grantee's data to determine the reliability of the observed effects of the interventions. Grade point averages were collected most often by the programs; 56 percent of the students served reported both pre and post grade point averages. Pre-post grade point averages for students served in High Challenge programs are presented in Figure 9. A statistically significant and substantial increase was noted in students' grade point averages ($t(889) = 8.87, p = .000$). Students' pre-program GPA averaged 2.15 compared to 2.70 at the end of the spring semester of 2003.

The only behavioral indicator available for the majority of students was absences. Pre-post program absences were available for 65 percent of the students. Figure 10 presents the pre and post averages for the students. Prior to the program intervention, students averaged 38.40

days absent from school. During the spring semester of 2003, student absences averaged 11.53. The pre-post difference was statistically significant ($t(1029) = 26.22, p = .000$). This average included the number of absences recorded for those students who had been serving long-term suspensions to entering the programs. Analyses of the absentee data when the suspended students were removed from the sample also indicated a statistically significant decrease. The pre-program average for this group was 14.03 compared to 8.94 during the spring semester.

The academic and behavioral data collected from each project took different forms depending on the grade level, program type, and resources available. In order to compare the programs, each was coded as having positive behavioral and academic outcomes, negative outcomes, or no change. In order to be coded as having a positive outcome, the participating students needed to demonstrate positive results on at least two of the variables measured. One grantee, Grove, did not serve students this year was not included in the analysis. A total of five of the 13 programs had positive outcomes on the behavioral and academic variables. Seven of the projects did not produce any reliable changes in the behavioral or academic variables and one program, Cherokee County Interlocal Cooperative, resulted in negative outcomes for students.

Three of the five programs that reported positive outcomes were self-contained/resource room programs that focused on both academics and behavioral improvement. All three served elementary students. Of these, Tulsa's Project ACCEPT students demonstrated the greatest degree of success. In addition to the self-contained programs, positive results were also noted for Oklahoma City's SeeWorth Academy, an alternative school that implemented a drug/alcohol awareness program and Muldrow's voluntary after-school tutorial program. In these two cases, students were also exposed to a number of interventions besides the High Challenge program model, making attribution of results difficult.

Neither of the elementary tutorials that focused on reading remediation produced the hoped-for increases in reading skills. Other models developed by single districts that were not demonstrated to be effective included a school-wide art program, a high-school distance learning lab for advanced placement courses, an eighth-grade transitional program, a school-wide multicultural program, a professional development model, and a K-12 summer school.

Cost analysis. The State Department of Education awarded funds to 14 programs that served 1,594 students at a total cost of \$697,895. For the third year in a row, the amount of funds awarded through the High Challenge Grant program has been reduced. Funds available for schools this year were only 55 percent of those available in 2001-2002. The average cost per program was \$49,850. This year, the average cost per students continued to decline, falling to an all time low of \$437.83 compared to \$541.28 in 2001-2002 and \$608.10 in 2000-2001. When the programs who received partial funding (fourth-year programs) were removed from the analysis, the average amount per program was \$57,499 and the average cost per student was \$430.26.

Each of the model types and the original amount of funding requested to implement the program is presented in Table 3. Although it was not the most expensive program funded this year, the ten-school transition model was the most expensive *type* of model to implement, followed by the remedial reading tutorial model and the professional development model. The least expensive program implemented was the grade-specific, visual arts program at Kingston.

Primary component	Number of programs	Average cost	Range of cost
Art	1	\$17,030	
Distance Learning Lab	1	\$36,150	
Drug and Alcohol Prevention	1	\$68,500	
Multicultural Awareness	1	\$47,100	
Self-contained/ Resource Classroom	4	\$66,064	\$30,249 - \$88,906
Professional Development	1	\$69,497	
Summer School	1	\$57,382	
Transitional	1	\$83,500	
Tutoring/Homework Assistance/Basic Skills	1	\$30,140	
Tutoring/Reading Remediation	2	\$71,350	\$64,499 - \$78,200

Ten uniquely different models for at-risk children were implemented in 2002-2003. Only two of those, the self-contained/resource classroom and reading tutorial had more than one district utilizing the model. The two districts that implemented the reading tutorials were somewhat similar in their request for funds; Arkoma requested \$64,499 and Greasy requested \$78,200. A disparity was noted in the amount of funds requested by the four districts that operated self-contained classrooms or resource rooms. The cost of these programs ranged from \$30,249 at Grove to \$88,906 for Tulsa's Project ACCEPT. The two most expensive programs to implement were the self-contained classrooms that served younger students and provided intensive ancillary services (e.g., Tulsa and Tecumseh). The least expensive model in the group was Kingston's Art on a Cart project.

The programs that had positive student outcomes at the end of the year had an average cost of \$66,529 which is substantially higher than last year's average of \$39,167. The average cost per student for the successful programs was \$401.26. The average cost of the programs that did not have positive outcomes was \$48,026, much less than the successful programs. However, the mean cost per student for these programs was much higher, averaging \$663.14. Although the cost for the programs producing neutral or negative results was still relatively expensive, there were fewer students being served in those programs.

Conclusions. After evaluating student outcome data for the fourth-year programs that were funded this year, none could be validated as effective interventions for at-risk students, so none were recommended for continued funding. These programs consisted of an after-school tutoring program, a professional development model, and a middle-school alternative education program. Of the third-year programs that were eligible for validation, none were validated. These included an elementary resource room, a reading tutorial program, a cooperative transitional program for 8th grade students, a distance learning lab, and a visual arts program. Three of the third-year programs did show promising results and thus were recommended for an

additional year of study. These included a self-contained classroom, a reading tutorial, and a summer school program. For the sixth year in a row, none of the eligible programs were validated or recommended for replication based on their effectiveness with at-risk students.

For the last six years, the High Challenge Grant program has failed to meet its purpose of developing innovative programs for at-risk students. Higher standards for the selection of High Challenge programs were developed two years ago; however, funding cuts have not permitted many innovative programs to be funded on the basis of the new criteria. Three of the most recently funded programs did show promise and may be able to demonstrate results worthy of validation. This indicates that, if new awards are funded in future years, the revised criteria may make it possible for the High Challenge Grant Program to return to its original purpose of supporting the development of effective interventions that can be replicated in other Oklahoma schools.

**Ada Public Schools
2002-2003**

Program name: (S.T.A.R.) Students Taking Another Route	Contact person: Nita Fowler
Hours of operation: 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.	State funding: \$54,276
Number of students served: 9	Number of available slots: 10
Grades served: 4 th	Staffing: 1 full-time teacher and 1 full-time aide

Description

The S.T.A.R. project was held at the Washington Grade Center in Ada. The program was designed to help high-risk fourth-grade students improve academic skills and behavior. The students received instruction in all core subjects in the STAR classroom; they were mainstreamed for elective subjects. The project required home visits and on-site parent participation every nine weeks. The program had six components: a behavior contract, individualized instruction, adult mentors, daily behavior reports, character education, and daily group counseling. After the program's initial year, the mentoring and counseling services were to continue for participating students who were promoted to grades five and six.

GOAL 1: To improve the educational skills in core subjects and thereby influence the future success of identified as high challenge students by providing the type of appropriate educational environment to enable students to be academically and behaviorally successful. Activities that were used to address this goal included the following:

Academic Assistance:

The low student-teacher ratio allowed for additional one-on-one academic assistance. The teacher, teacher's aide, and weekly mentors provided individual assistance and immediate feedback. Individualized instruction strategies included one-on-one direct teaching, computer-assisted instruction, and implementation of the Reading Renaissance curriculum. The program also included field trips.

The teacher sent home daily reports on student behavior and academic achievement. The teacher reported that the daily notes improved communication and made a positive impact on parental involvement. The teacher reported that the ability to address issues "on the spot" was one of the greatest features of the program.

GOAL 2 : To improve services in social relationships and personal adjustment that will enhance the ability of the student to demonstrate increased honesty, compliance with rules, sensitivity to the feelings and rights of others, control over impulses, and acceptance of responsibility for his/her behavior. Activities that addressed this goal were:

Mentoring:

The mentors provided individual attention, guidance, encouragement, and support to their STAR students. Primary sources of volunteers were the Ada Fire Department, Ada Police Department, and East Central University. The mentors gave one or more hours per week to talk to students, work on academics, play a game, or teach them a hobby. The boys reported that basketball with their mentors was the thing they enjoyed the most. The girls enjoyed baton lessons lead by the East Central mentors who were majorettes.

Individual and Group Counseling:

Daily group therapy sessions were provided by the Multi-County Counseling service and addressed issues in the areas of academics, behavior, problem resolution, character education, and social skills. The students were involved in role playing about anger management, conflict resolution, social skills, honesty and courage. In conjunction with the counseling program, a behavioral reinforcement program was initiated. Participants earned money for good behavior that could be used to purchase items that they wanted or needed.

Special Activities for the year included:

- “Bully Free” classroom activities.
- Multicultural units on Mexico including its language, music, food, and culture.
- Field trips to a fish farm and several Koi ponds.
- Volunteer activities each Friday where students sorted and organized box tops collected by the school.
- Nature walk at the Ponotoc Ridge Reserve to identify birds and trees.

Student outcome analysis. Ada’s STAR program provided academic and behavioral information for nine students who participated in the program during the 2002-2003 school year. Twice as many males as females were assigned to the class and a higher percentage of racial/ethnic minority students (44.4 percent) was served than in prior years. The students were enrolled in the class for the majority of the school year. Due to the small size of the group, tests of statistical significance were not conducted on the outcome data. Descriptions of the participants’ key characteristics and their progress toward meeting program objectives are summarized below.

- Six of the nine students were referred to the program because of behavioral difficulties. Two students were referred for excessive truancy and one for academic deficiency.
- Mentoring and counseling sessions were required as part of the program. The number of mentoring sessions in which any individual student participated ranged from four to sixteen. Students met with their mentors an average of 9.22 times during the year. The average number of group counseling sessions reported for the students was 115.78 – the equivalent of 4.21 sessions per week. No family counseling or home visits were reported this year.

- Students' grade point averages increased from the mid-C level to the mid-B level while in the program. Five of the nine students had GPAs above the "B" level when they entered the program, suggesting that behavior (rather than academic achievement) was the focus of the intervention for this subgroup. All of the students successfully completed the four core courses.
- All but one of the students reported substantial gains on the Reading and Math subtests of the Stanford Nine Achievement Test.
- Student absences were high to begin with and remained high, averaging 10.44 days per semester for the group.
- Three of the students were assigned to in-school-suspension (ISS) in the semester prior to their enrollment in the class. Six of the students were assigned to ISS while in the class. One student was suspended out of school during the year.
- Student scores on the Emotional Behavior Disorder Scale-School Rating suggested a substantial positive change in school-related behaviors.
- Requested longitudinal data was not provided for the four students who exited the program in 2001 nor the seven who exited in 2002. Requested data regarding the support and transitional service provided for these students was not provided. Therefore, we have no evidence of the long-term effects of the STAR program nor of the implementation or effectiveness of the follow-up program.

Recommendations

The outcomes for fourth-grade students in the STAR program have been consistent during the three years in which the program operated. This program appeared to be effective in improving academic achievement levels of most participating fourth-grade students. The fourth-grade classroom director reported many positive behavior changes; however, no improvement was noted in students' behavior as measured by in-school and out-of-school suspension. No documentation was available to show that follow-up services, scheduled for fifth- and sixth-grade "graduates" of the program, were provided. Home visits were discontinued this year because of state agency budget cuts – DHS was no longer available to partner in the on-site visitation program. (Home visits were not encouraged by the district unless two people could be present.)

The truest indicator of the program's success is the performance of participants after exiting the program. In other words, did the class give them the academic and behavioral skills that were needed to succeed in the regular classroom? OTAC staff met with the Ada staff in the fall of 2002 to outline data collection and evaluation plans for a study of the program's long-term effectiveness; however, the longitudinal information was not collected. This was due, in part, to budget cuts in the Ada school district. Without the longitudinal information, the project cannot be validated as an effective strategy for improving the education of high-risk children and youth. Since only validated programs are eligible for fifth-year funding, it is recommended that the funding be discontinued. It should be emphasized, however, that the program demonstrated some promising results.

**Arkoma Public Schools
2002-2003**

Program name: Project Help	Contact person: Sherry King
Days/Hours of operation: Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.	State funding: \$59,436
Number of students served: 51	Number of available slots: 50
Grades served: 3-year-olds through 6 th grade	Staffing: 1 full-time teacher; 1 full-time teacher's aide
Funding year: 3 ^d	

Description

Arkoma's Project HELP was implemented to address its students' low reading achievement scores. Approximately half of the students in kindergarten through sixth grade scored below the 50th percentile on the FY 2000 ITBS test. The school's 2001-02 API baseline score was 860, well below the state mean API of 1000. The grant program was designed to serve high challenge children from both Singleton Elementary School and the community Head Start program. Participants received small-group and one-on-one instruction in reading readiness and basic reading skill development. The program also included a parental involvement and support component. The five identified goals of the program and the activities conducted to meet each goal are reviewed below:

GOAL 1: To develop the necessary components for Project HELP at Arkoma Elementary School.

- Both Sherry King, the teacher, and Beverly Weatherton, the teacher's aide, returned to the program this year. The continuity of staff appeared to have a positive impact on the program.
- Classroom resources included *FastForWord*, an auditory computer-assisted package from Scientific LearningTM.
- Computer Curriculum Corporation's *Success Maker* software was added to the reading resource room.
- Ms. King participated in a one-day training provided through the Payne Center for Reading Readiness. She received materials to assist in teaching letter recognition skills, phonetic awareness, and handwriting to facilitate early reading.

GOAL 2: To effectively identify and enroll children to be served by Project HELP.

- Coordination with the district's Head Start program facilitated the identification of Project HELP's preschool participants. All participants in the Head Start program were screened using the Oral and Written Language Scales (OWLS), a measure of receptive and expressive language for children and young adults published by American Guidance Service, Inc. The parents of children who were

identified on the assessment as low or moderately low were notified of the availability of Project HELP services. All but one of the children identified through the screening process participated in the program.

- To locate younger children who might benefit from reading readiness activities, letters were sent to Oklahoma Parents As Teachers (OPAT) participants and to the parents of elementary-school students. Paper flyers that highlighted the program were posted in the U.S. Post Office and in the community convenience store in an attempt to notify parents of children who were not involved in Head Start or school-sponsored programs or activities.
- As school resumed in August, elementary teachers were asked to review the achievement of each of their students. Indicators for referral to the HELP program included low ITBS reading scores and poor classroom performance. The faculty viewed students' daily work as a more reliable indicator than standardized achievement test scores. These students, as well as the kindergarten students who had participated in Project HELP during the previous year, were screened using the PIAT-R. Students whose scores were below the 45th percentile on the Total Reading or in Reading Comprehension subtests of the PIAT-R comprised the group targeted for intervention; their parents were informed about Project HELP. Additional students were served, upon teacher recommendation, as space allowed.
- Participation was voluntary.

GOAL 3: To provide instruction (via small group classes) for targeted high challenge students ages three and four in order to improve their school readiness.

- Project HELP began daily sessions after the Labor Day holiday.
- In general, services for four-year-old pre-school children were provided during forty-five-minute sessions conducted daily. Three-year-old pre-school children participated in sessions three times each week. However, the determination of individual schedules was based on the developmental age and readiness of the young learners rather than on chronological age alone. The student to teacher ratio was maintained at 7:2.
- Instruction included reading readiness and language development activities appropriate for young children as well as computer-assisted instructional resources including *Reading Readiness* materials from the Payne Reading Center, *Readers' Workshop*, *Success Maker* and *FastForWord*.

GOAL 4: To provide small group instruction and tutoring for high challenge students in kindergarten through grade six in order to improve their academic skills.

- Project HELP began daily sessions after the Labor Day holiday.
- Services for kindergarten through 6th grade students were conducted daily. Groups of three to five students were taught in thirty-minute sessions that offered one-on-one interaction. These short sessions also served to limit the time students were absent from regular class activities.
- After reflecting on the goals and outcomes from the previous year, it was decided to focus all instruction on reading this year. However, one student did receive instruction in remedial mathematics. The project teacher incorporated oral

reading and phonics instruction using manipulative materials as well as computer software to individualize each student's plan for improvement. *Reading Readiness* materials were incorporated when warranted. Intermediate students also received assistance with classroom and homework assignments as time allowed. Ms. King made a tremendous effort to maintain the focus of the program on improving reading skills while addressing the concerns of the regular classroom teachers.

- Tutorial assistance using the *FastForWord* program was made available to all Singleton Elementary students during after-school sessions. Participation was strictly voluntary. Eighteen Project HELP students participated in the six-week sessions, which were conducted during each nine-week grading period. Participants remained after school from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Transportation was the responsibility of the parents.

GOAL 5: To provide evening instruction for parents of targeted high challenge children in order to improve their skills in parenting, to ready their children for school, and to support their children's academic growth.

- Monthly Parent Information Meetings were conducted throughout the year. The attendance at these sessions was vastly improved over the attendance during the previous school year. Although it was reported that "it was really a different group of parents than last year," the continuity of Ms. King's presence throughout the year was, no doubt, a factor in this change. Meetings were designed and scheduled around topics of interest. Efforts to communicate with the parents of participants were maintained through appointments coinciding with the regular parent-teacher conferences. In addition, letters and phone conversations were utilized to keep parents informed as to the progress of their student.
- A Parent Survey was developed for the parents of Project HELP pre-school participants. Six surveys were distributed for the children who remained in the program at the end of the school year. Only two completed surveys were returned. The survey asked parents to rate six items, observable at home: attention span, attitude toward school, interest in books at home, interaction with friends, asks adults to read, holds conversations with adults. Responses were scored by the parents on a scale from 1-3; 1 as Great Improvement, 2 as Some Improvement and 3 as No Improvement. The two parents who responded rated their children as showing "great improvement" on most items.
- Teachers from Head Start were asked to complete a survey which rated seven observable school readiness skills for the eight children who participated in both programs. The mean rating was 1.6. The ratings were distributed between a rating of 2 - "Some Improvement" (3 responses) and 1 - "Great Improvement" (4 responses). No ratings of 3 - "No Improvement" appeared on any of the responses.
- A Parent Survey was also developed for the parents of Project HELP students in kindergarten through 6th grade. Twenty-five surveys were distributed for the students who remained in the program at the end of the school year. Eleven

completed surveys were returned. This number represents 44%, or fewer than one-half, of the participants. The responses may not, therefore, be representative of all participants. The survey asked parents to rate five items that were observable at home. Responses were scored by the parents on a scale from 1-3; 1 as Great Improvement, 2 as Some Improvement and 3 as No Improvement. The overall program rating was 1.9, indicating that these parents noted “some improvement” in their children’s reading skills and habits. The average rating of each item is summarized in the chart below.

Project HELP Parent Survey (K-6)

1) Attitude toward School	2.1
2) Reading at Home	1.6
3) Communication Skills	1.8*
4) Grades in Reading	2*
5) Attention Span	1.9**

N=11

* Responses to this item were unreadable on two surveys

** One response to this item was unreadable

- Teachers from kindergarten through 6th grade were asked to complete a survey to rate eight observable school behaviors for students who participated in Project HELP. Completed surveys were returned by eight teachers. Teachers responded with ratings for the overall program, rather than for individual students. The average rating given for the program was 1.8, with responses distributed as; (1) “Great Improvement” – 42 percent, (2) “Some Improvement” – 41 percent and (3) “No Improvement” – 17 percent.

Student outcome analyses. Data were provided for 51 participants in Arkoma’s Project HELP. The children ranged from preschool (3-year-olds) to sixth grade. Most of the children served were Caucasian (96.1 percent); this proportion is similar to the district’s population according to *Profiles 2002* (State Office of Accountability). The number of lab sessions the students participated in ranged from 3 to 134 and averaged 82.35 sessions. The median number of sessions for the group was 77. Twenty-four of the parents attended the parenting sessions. The number of parent sessions attended ranged from one to four.

For the purpose of data analysis, the student data was separated into two groups. Children in the three- and-four year-old programs formed one group; the elementary students formed the other. The pre-school group consisted of eight students. These students were assessed with the Oral and Written Language Scales (OWLS) on a pre-post basis. The preschool participants did not demonstrate increases in language skills beyond that which is expected to occur without intervention. In other words, the children’s relative standing, in comparison to the test’s norm group, did not change appreciably.

The elementary group was made up of 43 students in grades 1-6. Reading grades were collected for this group. No statistically significant difference was noted in student grades. Sixty percent of these students earned grades below the “C” level both before and after their participation in the program. The elementary students were also assessed with the Peabody Individual Achievement Test - Revised. The results of that analysis did indicate a small but reliable improvement in reading skills. Mean NCE scores increased from 39.30 to 44.15. The size of the increase – less than 1/4 of a standard deviation – was smaller than the amount of change traditionally needed to claim that an educational intervention is effective (which is 1/3 of a standard deviation). Ten of the elementary students participated in the additional FastForWord activities. No reliable improvement was noted in reading by this group of students.

Recommendations

Each of the recommendations made in the 2001-02 OTAC evaluation was successfully addressed. The teacher’s aide, Mrs. Weatherton, showed a tremendous commitment to the continuation of the program during Mrs. King’s maternity leave during the previous year. Although her efforts are to be commended, Mrs. King’s presence in the class during the entire 2002-03 school year undoubtedly gave the program more continuity.

High Challenge programs are traditionally validated or not refunded after their third year of implementation, based on their outcomes. The results from the Arkoma program were not as robust as they had been in years past. Whether this is due to a change in programming or instrumentation is not certain. It is recommended that the programs’ validation study be extended to a fourth year to allow for more detailed examination of data collection activities. OTAC will work with the program staff to review and clarify the data requirements and make the necessary revisions for the validation study.

Recommendations to improve the program, and the project’s progress in implementing the recommendations, are listed below.

- *Efforts should be made to expand the number of students served, while providing effective instruction.*

The original grant application identified a targeted population of 100 students; however, half of that number may be a more realistic number to effectively meet the goals and objectives of the project.

The parental involvement component of the program appears integral to the goals and success of Project HELP. Higher parent participation levels may prove helpful in improving test scores.

- *Instructional sessions targeted toward all parents of identified high challenge children should be planned, arranged and presented during regular intervals throughout the school year. Project staff are encouraged to enlist the help and resources of other staff members to identify appropriate topics, to suggest potential speakers and to collaborate the dissemination of information on these sessions.*

- *Every effort should be made to encourage participation in parental instructional sessions. Project staff should consider alternating the time such sessions are presented, as well as the use of incentives and child care opportunities.*

The end-of-year self evaluation indicated this area was notably improved over the previous year.

Mrs. King collaborated with Head Start and elementary staff to assess the needs of the students and to coordinate the presentation of concepts and skills. She monitored and adjusted the schedule to provide effective services while not disrupting the traditional classroom program. The opportunity to provide services to other students outside of the parameter of the grant indicates a continued commitment to meet the needs of the students in Arkoma.

**Cherokee County Interlocal Cooperative
2002-2003**

Program name: Project PREP	Contact person: Sheryl Rountree
Days/Hours of operation: Monday - Friday/ 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	State funding: High Challenge: \$76,945
Number of students served: 73	Funding Year: 3
Grades served: 7 and 8	Staffing: 1 Counselor, 1 Program Director

Cherokee County has a large number of K-8 school districts; most of the students in these districts enter a larger high school in the 9th grade. The need for the project was based on a relatively high proportion of students who either dropped out of school after their 8th-grade year or did not perform well once they transferred into the larger, more diverse high school. The Cherokee Interlocal's High Challenge program was designed to facilitate the transition of students from nine area schools to high school. The primary intervention was a set of activities implemented by the project counselor.

Objective 1: To significantly increase target school student's, parent's, and staff's positive attitudes toward the change of schools from the 8th to 9th grade level.

The activities related to this objective were scaled back for the 2002-03 school year. At the beginning of the year, changes were made to accommodate budget reductions. Students in three of the districts (Briggs, Lost City, and Lowrey) continued to participate in the full program. Students in the remaining six districts continued to receive some transition services, but the number of services and the intensity of participation was markedly reduced.

Ms. Robbie Smith, the program counselor, resigned from the program at the end of November. Mr. Lou Baker was hired and Ms. Smith assisted him with the transition. Mr. Baker worked with students at Briggs each Monday and Wednesday, students at Lost City each Tuesday, and students at Lowrey each Thursday. Friday was used for additional tutorial sessions at Briggs or for planning time.

Students in all nine districts toured the schools into which they would transition, learned about high school activities and clubs, and ate lunch at the high school.

Objective 2: To assist target students with the completion of an academically successful transition from 8th to 9th grade.

Mr. Baker provided tutorial services to the targeted school students. The tutorial services were added to the program and took the place of counseling activities conducted in prior years.

Objective 3: To develop an involved and supportive relationship with target students' parents and families.

Activities were planned to increase parent involvement. A learning styles training session was held and was followed by a dinner and a dance for students and parents. Participation was light as only 20 parents attended (200 were expected). An anger management session was held for parents; 30 participated. The counselor notified parents of education funding, reviewed student enrollment packets, and made a telephone contact with each parent of 8th-graders in the three targeted districts.

Objective 4: To implement a developmentally appropriate guidance program which successfully serves the target students.

Group counseling sessions were conducted to provide academic and career advice. Six-year Academic and Career Planners were completed for each student by the program counselor.

Student data analyses. Academic and behavioral data from three sites were recorded. Briggs reported data for 57 students, Lowrey reported for nine students, and Lost City reported for seven students who participated in the program. All of the students were in the eighth grade. All of the students were reported to have been promoted at the end of the year. Counseling and tutoring services were the primary intervention for the students. The project counselors recorded the number of individual counseling sessions, group counseling sessions, and tutoring sessions that each students participated in during the year. These are summarized, by school, in the table below.

SITE		Eligible students	Minimum sessions	Maximum sessions	Mean sessions	Std. Deviation
Briggs	Individual	56	1	3	1.82	.431
	Group	56	2	13	11.61	2.813
	Tutoring	56	1	4	3.25	.879
Lost City	Individual	7	2	2	2.00	.000
	Group	7	12	13	12.86	.378
	Tutoring	7	5	6	5.86	.378
Lowrey	Individual	9	2	2	2.00	.000
	Group	9	13	14	13.78	.441
	Tutoring	9	8	9	8.89	.333

The intervention would not be characterized as “intensive.” As a group, the 72 students averaged 12 group counseling sessions, 4.21 tutoring sessions, and 1.86 individual counseling sessions during the year. The typical student, then, participated in one project activity every other week during the school year. The students at Lowrey averaged the highest participation rates, an average of 24.67sessions during the year. Lost City students participated in 20.72 sessions while Briggs students participated in 16.67 sessions.

The table also shows that participation in group counseling was fairly consistent at Lost City and Lowrey – the minimum number of sessions in which students participated was 12. This was not the case at Briggs – at least one student participated in only two sessions. Note that the

standard deviation for Briggs was also quite large, showing much greater variability in the number of sessions across students.

Grade point averages and absences were available for the majority of the students. The following table lists student averages for the semester prior to their participation in the program (pre) as well as for their most recent semester (post). A review of the pre-program data suggested that the groups differed in their level of academic and behavioral risk. On the basis of these variables alone, the Lost City students were the most “at risk.”

Site	Variable	Number of students	Pre-program	Post-program	Statistically Significant*
Briggs	GPA	48	2.82	2.62	Significant <i>decrease</i>
	Absences	47	6.32	13.94	Significant <i>increase</i>
Lost City	GPA	5	2.57	2.14	Significant <i>decrease</i>
	Absences	7	11.29	13.93	Not significant
Lowrey	GPA	9	3.33	3.44	Not significant
	Absences	9	10.33	4.00	Not significant

* = $p < .05$.

The statistical tests conducted were *t*-tests for related samples (for analyses with 30 or more with pre-post values) and Wilcoxon Matched- Pairs Signed-Ranks Test (for analyses with smaller sample sizes). The purpose of statistical significance testing is to determine whether changes in students are reliable – if we should expect similar results with other students.

No reliable positive academic or behavioral changes were noted for the students at any of the sites. In addition to the pre-post data summarized in the table, scores on standardized achievement tests were collected. Eighth-grade students took the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Tests in reading, writing, mathematics, science, history and government, geography, and fine arts. The number of subtests on which each student scored below the Satisfactory level was reported. Of the 58 students at Briggs, 42 had at least two or more areas below the Satisfactory level. Of the nine students at Lowrey, four had two or more areas in need of remediation. Lost City did not report test scores.

Recommendations

- The parental involvement component of the program remains weak. The program director and counselor(s) have attempted to provide a variety of activities to encourage participation. It is recommended that some type of interest checklist be presented to parents during enrollment to determine topics in which they are interested.
- The counselor should develop off-campus enrichment experiences other than prison visits.

- The first year of the project showed positive trends; however, these trends have not continued. The most likely reason for the lack of results is a lack of intensity. A program in which students participate in some activity once or twice a month is unlikely to produce dramatic results. The results for the students in the last two years have been poor and support from the participating districts has varied. Many students in need of intensive intervention have continued to fall further behind. Although the staff has implemented the program in good faith, it does not appear to be producing the desired intent.
- In order to be recommended for fourth-year funding, High Challenge grant projects must produce results that warrant validation. Validation of the project means that it reliably produces positive outcomes for high-risk children and is thus recommended to other Oklahoma schools. The Cherokee Interlocal program has not demonstrated the consistent, positive results and cannot be validated as effective. The project has also not shown results that would warrant a recommendation for the program as “promising.” Because the program cannot be validated as effective, the law requires that funding be discontinued.

**Claremore Public Schools
2002-2003**

Program Name: Language in Residence	Contact Person: Lynelle Burrows
Program Type: Supplemental	State Funding: High Challenge - \$43,403
Grade Served: 4 th	Funding Year: 2
Number of students served: 350	Staff: 1 full-time teacher, 1 director (in-kind)

The *Language in Residence* program was modeled after the State Arts Council's Artist in Residence program. A language specialist was hired to spend nine weeks at each of the three elementary schools within the Claremore district as well as the elementary school at nearby Justus-Tiawah. The program was designed to emphasize the Spanish culture and language in fourth-grade classrooms. Both the program director and the Spanish resource teacher were new to the program this year.

Three Spanish workshops were presented during the school year to introduce a new Spanish program through the use of videos. It was hoped that after the Spanish resource teacher finished her nine-week instruction, the videos would help the students continue to focus on the foreign language and culture.

An ESL Open House was held in October to showcase school and community resources. Among the groups represented were the American Red Cross, the Claremore Fire Department, Rogers County Human Services, and the ESL Department from Rogers State University. The Claremore City Manager was the guest speaker. Important information was given to the parents and students in both English and Spanish. Students from the different schools provided a variety of entertainment.

Another special activity during the year was the performances of the Norahua Mexican Folkloric Dancers of Oklahoma, sponsored by the Oklahoma Arts Council. Fourteen states in Mexico were represented by the dances and each was accompanied by its history and culture.

The culmination of the project was the Multicultural Celebration held in the spring. Thirteen different countries were represented at booths run by community members, parents and students. Information on history, culture, geography and clothing were shared with the participants along with samples of specialty foods.

Surveys

Fifteen teachers (thirteen from Claremore elementary schools and two from Justus-Tiawah) completed the eight-question survey. It asked for their reactions to and opinions of the Spanish curriculum which was brought to each of their schools for a 9-week period during the school year.

All related that Mrs. Galindez, the Spanish teacher, introduced the Spanish words for colors, numbers, days of the week, body parts, family members and basic sight words. All but two teachers were enormously enthusiastic about the program and their students' reactions to the instruction and the teacher.

Most teachers reported positive classroom changes as a result of the Spanish unit and even continued to incorporate some of the Spanish words into the other subjects. All stated that their students had a greater appreciation of a different culture and were motivated to learn the new language.

Student Survey Form	YES	SOMEWHAT	NO
I enjoyed the Spanish classes	37	14	6
I learned Spanish	38	19	1
I will like to have Spanish classes next year	33	12	12

Comments:

- I really enjoyed the class and I liked the game.
- I am sorry I don't like Spanish. But thank you for taking your time and teaching me.
- Spanish class is fun.
- I really wish I know the kids in my Spanish class.
- I wish I could go all year.
- You hardly called on me.
- It was cool speaking a different language.
- I really liked the Spanish classes. I hope you come back next year.
- I liked Spanish a lot it was fun.
- I liked Spanish classes and I learned a lot of Spanish.
- Spanish is ok.
- Spanish is very fun.
- I had the best time ever.

Parent Survey Form	YES	SOMEWHAT	NO
My child learned Spanish during the time they had Spanish.	51	25	2
My child enjoyed the Spanish classes.	59	16	3
	YES	NO	MAYBE
As a parent, I will be supportive of a full time Spanish program at the Elementary Schools.	64	6	8

Comments:

- I think it would benefit my son to learn Spanish. I know the basic works but not fluently, and he does say few words such as numbers, etc.
- She didn't come home with anything new. Not sure she retained much, but she enjoyed it.
- I love the Spanish program and I am very impressed with our Spanish teacher! I just wish it lasted long than 9 weeks.
- I think children must start early to learn a foreign language....elementary school is the best time for that! Thank you for the classes you provided!
- Katelyn is very excited about learning Spanish.
- I feel Spanish is very important. It is taking over.
- Second language is so important at this level, they can build and build.
- I think pre-K might be a little early but I do think a second language should be introduced in elementary school.
- It would help me evaluate his learning if I knew the program's objectives. (Count to 10, body parts, polite greetings...etc.) His sister "taught" him some also and we sporadically learn new Spanish words at home when the kids show interest. We also have Spanish computer games. It is hard to tell when and where he actually learned the Spanish he knows. Generally speaking he knows how to count to 10, his colors, and a few greetings.
- Mrs. G. is Great! Wish Spanish lasted all year long!
- I think it is a wonderful idea - long overdo!
- Meredith enjoyed it very much and would like to do it all year.
- Isaac said he really liked it.
- Sorry, but I believe Oklahoma should be English and Indian language only. No disrespect meant towards anyone.

Teacher Survey Form	NOT ENOUGH	ADEQUATE	TOO MUCH
The Spanish time spent in the classroom was...	6	12	0
	YES	SOMEWHAT	NO
My students enjoyed the Spanish classes	18	0	0
The Spanish curriculum tied in with other subjects according to the grade level of the students (counting, etc.)	16	2	0

Comments:

- Mrs. G. spoke a little to fast for some of the students.
- We enjoyed this program very much! It was the perfect length of time. We could not surrender any more time away from our 4th grade curriculum to devote a full-year schedule for this enrichment class.

- I would like to see the students have Spanish maybe once a week (30 minutes) for the entire year. They get so much out of it and love it! Thank you, Mrs. G!
- Mrs. Galindez did a great job and we were fortunate to have her. We wish we could have kept her all year!
- Wonderful! Thank you so much for your time. I'd like to see you have more time w/the pre-K classes. They were always eager for me. Thank you!
- My students always enjoyed having Spanish class. They were always asking if it was Spanish Day.
- Thank you for coming prepared! You did a super job getting on the kids' levels. Your voice is very soft and I appreciate that! :-)
- Mrs. G. did a very good job. The children in my class enjoyed her greatly.
- Spanish teacher did a great job. We need her next year.
- Excellent teacher!
- The kids really enjoyed the class.

Student data analyses. The Language in Residence program reported partial data for 307 fourth-grade students from four elementary sites. The database consisted of 105 students from Claremont Elementary, 56 from Roosa Elementary, 102 from Westside Elementary, and 44 from Justus-Tiawah. The only information provided for the Justus-Tiawah students was pre-post SRA-Hola! scores. Gender data indicated that 43 percent of the students were female and 57 were male. Student ethnic data indicated that the students served were representative of the district as a whole according to *Profiles 2002* (State Office of Accountability). Caucasian students accounted for 64 percent of the population and minority students accounted for 36 percent; Native American students were the largest minority group represented (27.8 percent). Only three of the students were considered to be Limited English Proficient. All of the students were reported to have been promoted at the end of the school year.

No pre-post difference was noted in students' grade point averages that remained at 3.23 for the group. Eighty percent of the students had GPAs above the 3.00 point prior to the intervention. Students scores on the SRA-Hola! increased significantly from a mean NCE of 9.82 to 21.67 indicating an increase in students' knowledge of Spanish language and culture. Sizable, statistically significant increases in the SRA-Hola! scores were reported for each of the sites.

Data was also provided 329 fifth-grade students who participated in the program during their fourth-grade year. 46.2 percent of the students were female and 53.8 percent were male. Minority students accounted for 36.2 percent of the population, Native American students were the largest minority group represented (29.2 percent). The ethnic distribution of the population was similar to that of the district according to *Profiles 2002* (State Office of Accountability). Three of the students in the group were designated as Limited English Proficient. At the end of the year, 98.8 percent of the students were promoted to the next grade. While in the fourth-grade, students SRA-Hola! scores increased substantially. Students were assessed again at the end of their fifth-grade year to determine if they continued their interest in the Spanish culture or if slippage occurred. (Data was not available for the Justus-Tiawah site.) The results did not indicate any reliable change between the end of their fourth and fifth grade years. Prior to exposure to the program, students' average SRA-Hola! score was 13.93 compared to 22.84 at the end of the fourth-grade year. Students' average score at the end of the fifth grade was 24.09 suggesting that little slippage occurred.

Recommendations

- The same personnel should be assigned to this project so that the continuity of services is not interrupted.
- Data could be analyzed much more efficiently if a database were used to track grades, scores, gender, etc.
- The program is recommended for continued funding.

**Greasy Public Schools
2002-2003**

Program name: Project READ (Reading Early, Academic Development)	Contact person: Ronnie Denny/David Eads
Days/Hours of operation: Monday - Friday/ 8:20 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	State funding: High Challenge: \$72,061
Number of students served: 57	Funding Year: 3
Grades served: K-8	Staffing: 1 Lab Teacher, 4 Teachers

The process evaluation was focused upon the project's objectives, which are stated below. The outcome evaluation was focused upon student achievement as measured by grades and achievement test scores.

Objective 1: Kindergarten through third grade students receiving instruction for 80% of the school year will show significant gains of .05 as measured by t-tests on the ITBS.

Kindergarten through third grade students who had deficits in reading were referred to the program by their teachers. The program's instruction was based on the Companion Reading Curriculum. Students participated five days per week. Students in fifth through eighth grades were used as peer tutors to provide additional assistance to this group.

Objective 2: Parents of participating students will be active in the education process of their child (home and school).

Two individuals, Lucy Ketcher and Elizabeth Proctor, conducted regular home visits. Fluency in the Cherokee language allowed Ms. Ketcher to communicate effectively with many Native American families. Ms. Proctor worked with the district's 21st Century Community Learning Center grant and was also used to conduct home visits. Mr. Eads reported that he felt that both women conducted at least one visit per month per family. During the initial visit, Ms. Ketcher and Ms. Proctor reviewed a packet that was left with each family which included a booklet called *Teach Your Children to Read*.

The district invited parents to Thanksgiving dinner. On that day, the district collaborated with the Cherokee Nation to provide health-related information for the participants and their families. This was repeated during the Christmas season and individuals from the Cherokee Nation provided information about education, funding, testing, and some health-related topics.

Objective 3: To prepare teachers in grades K-3 in the Companion Reading Program, including a two-day training with two one-day follow-ups, 3-hour instruction in learning differences, and one-day instruction in "systems approach" via attendance and participation.

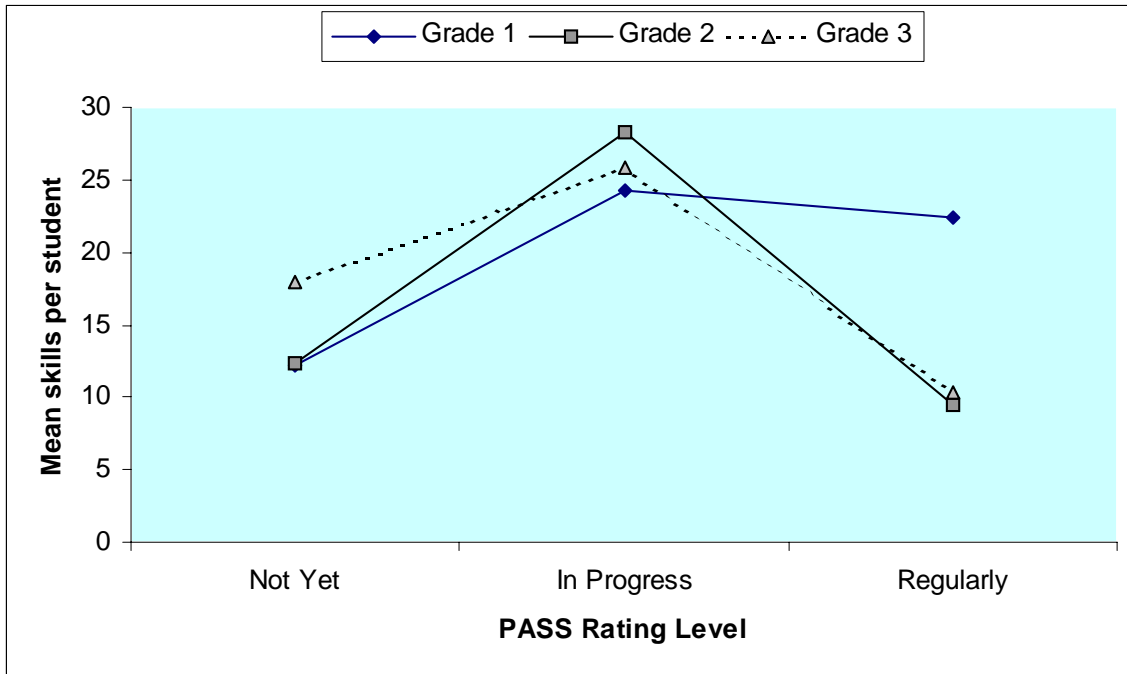
The faculty participated in two Saturday workshops: Bullying in the Classroom and Computer Learning. It was reported that those who participated received a \$500 Christmas bonus. They also attended a curriculum and assessment workshop and “Power Teacher/Power Grade” workshops. Mr. Eads indicated that teachers received some training in the Companion Reading Program curriculum; however, no records were available.

Student outcome analyses. Academic data was provided for 57 students in grades K-8 who participated in Greasy’s Project READ. The majority of the students in the program were Native Americans (86 percent). This is similar to the district’s population according to *Profiles 2002* (State Office of Accountability). Due to differences in instructional delivery, the data was separated into two groups, K-3 and 5-8.

Grades K-3

Data for 28 students were provided. The students participated in an average of 16.54 tutoring sessions during the year. The students were also reported to have had an average of 26.07 family visits. No reliable pre-post difference was noted in student GPA, which averaged 3.30 at the end of the year. Although the students were referred to the program because they had reading deficits, sixty percent of the students had an “A” average prior to intervention. This made it difficult to use changes in student grades as an evaluation measure – more than half the students could not improve their grades. Thus, it was not surprising that the average GPA did not change during the year. Examination of students’ pre-post Iowa Test of Basic skills assessment scores indicated a statistically significant improvement on the Vocabulary subtest. Their pre-test mean Vocabulary subtest NCE score was 44.76 compared to 53.06 at for the post-test; however, only 16 of the students had pre-post scores. No difference was noted in the pre-post NCE score on the Total Reading (50.47) or Language Arts (51.81) subtests.

At the end of the school year, teachers completed a PASS reading skill checklist for each student. The instrument listed each PASS skill in the area of reading (for the appropriate grade level) and asked teachers to rate the student as mastered (“Regularly employing skill”), in progress, or not yet learned. The first-grade checklist listed 55 PASS skills; the second-grade listed 50; the third-grade 55. The chart displays the average number of skills per student in each of these three categories, by grade level. The accompanying table shows these values as a percentage of the number of skills in each grade level.



Percentage of PASS skill ratings			
	<i>Not Yet Learned</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Regularly</i>
<i>Grade</i>	20.78%	41.15%	38.08%
<i>Grade</i>	24.57%	56.57%	18.86%
<i>Grade</i>	33.21%	47.60%	19.19%
<i>Total</i>	26.07%	48.02%	25.91%

Overall, the students had mastered 26% of the PASS skills for their grade level. They were rated as In Progress on 48% of skills and as Not Yet having learned 26% of the skills. The first-graders had mastered 38% of the skills, double the percentage mastered by children in the other grade levels. Clearly, the third-graders were the furthest behind their peers.

Grades 5-8

A total of 29 students enrolled in the peer tutor program. The students participated in an average of 12.17 tutoring sessions during the year. The number of sessions ranged from 0 to 24. Home visits were also recorded for this group. The number of visits ranged from zero to 22; the average number of visits was 5.45. Academically, the peer tutoring students appeared to make

improvement during the year. Their grade point average increased substantially from a mean of 2.54 to 3.22 and they passed all of their classes. Students' scores on the ITBS indicated an increase in vocabulary skills. Their mean NCE on the Vocabulary subtest increased from 32.48 to 37.56. No statistically significant difference was found in the Total Reading that averaged 33.81 prior to the intervention compared to 35.04 at the end of the year or on the Language Arts subtest (33.85 vs. 36.48).

Recommendations

- Teachers were to receive continuous training for the Companion Reading Program. While they participated in a few professional development activities, none were linked to the reading program. If the teachers had completed the Companion Reading training and follow-up, grant funds should have been expended on programming to improve teachers' skills in teaching reading – the focus of the grant application – rather than on ancillary topics (bullying and computer use).
- The pre-program GPAs of students referred to the program indicated that many were not in need of remedial reading instruction. Over the three-year period, no substantial increase has been reported in reading or language arts. Although the district made appropriate efforts to implement the program, the results did not appear to have its intended impact on student progress. Typically, fourth-year High Challenge funding is reserved for programs that have produced exemplary results. The program has not demonstrated these results and thus cannot be recommended for continued funding.

**Grove Public Schools
2002-2003**

Program name: Grove Alternative Academy	Contact person: Renae Dozier
Program type: Full day alternative class	State funding: High Challenge - \$13,938
Grades served: 6-8	Funding year: 4th
Number of students served: 0	Number of available slots: 10
Staff: 1 full-time teacher, half-time secretary/aide	

Description

The program was designed to serve middle school students who were too old for the middle school, but had yet to meet the requirements to advance to high school. The anticipated age range was 13 to 16. The program goals were to (1) increase learning by using computer software and AGS textbooks for instruction; (2) stop truancy by providing incentives and positive reinforcement for attendance; (3) establish an avenue to promote students to ninth grade; (4) enable non-traditional students an avenue to graduate; (5) provide counseling to reduce drug abuse and disciplinary referrals; and (6) provide job training and help students find employment.

Year 1

The middle school program for Grove Public Schools had a life span of one semester. The High Challenge grant was to have paid the salary of the newly-hired middle school alternative teacher, but he took another teaching position in December. The six middle-level students being served at that time were absorbed into the high school alternative education program. The money that was to have been spent on the middle school instructor's salary for the second semester was instead used (with the approval of the State Department of Education) to support the curriculum and technology needs of the six middle school youth in their new secondary setting.

The director of the secondary programs attempted to find a new middle level teacher, but none of the candidates interviewed met the qualifications for the position. At the end of the 1999-2000 school year, it was undecided whether Grove would re-apply for a new High Challenge grant (as suggested by the SDE), or simply continue serving the middle schools students at the secondary alternative program site.

The implementation of this program was also negatively influenced by intra-district philosophical differences regarding the definition of alternative education, and how and where the identified students should be served. Ideally, the middle school students would be located close enough to the secondary program that both could be monitored and overseen easily, rather than the director/teacher having to drive across town to "troubleshoot." This situation was compounded by the fact that there was no space available for program expansion; portable buildings or trailers would have to be placed on the parking lot behind the high-school alternative program.

Year 2

More changes were seen during the second year of High Challenge funding. The middle school students continued to be served at the high school location. To accommodate these students, the alternative program was moved several buildings east to a location that doubled the square footage available. Additionally, the program director left to take another administrative position within the district, leaving the alternative program in the hands of two teachers overseen by the high school principal. Five middle-grade students were served this year; they received the counseling, arts, and life skills benefits afforded to the secondary students. No substantial pre-post changes were noted in their academic achievement levels, absences, or disciplinary referrals.

Year 3

Eleven students were served this year in the middle school program, double the number that was served in the past. Few changes were made. The middle-level group continued to be a part of the high school alternative education program. Counseling, arts and life skills were all a part of these students' curriculum.

Year 4

No middle school students were served this year. The High Challenge funding was spent on four additional computers and the A+ Learning System, all of which supported the high school alternative program. It should be noted that the district did not replace a second teacher who moved out of district; that left the sole teacher/director to oversee and provide instruction for both programs.

Student data analyses. The Grove staff researched the status of students who had formerly been served in the program. Of the 23 students served, eleven were reported to no longer be in the district. It is not known if these students moved or dropped out. Four of the students were reported to have been removed from school due to truancy issues and two students were in the custody of the Office of Juvenile Affairs. One student was report to have been home schooled and one student earned a GED. Only two students were still in the district being served in the regular classroom. Academic and behavioral information indicated that both of these students were functioning at an appropriate level.

Recommendations

No High Challenge program was conducted this year. The results of the longitudinal study did not indicate that the program had the long-term effects that were intended. The program is not recommended for continuation of funding.

**Howe Public Schools
2002 - 2003**

Program name: Howe Distance Learning Lab	Contact person: Scott Parks
Hours of operation: 8:00 - 3:00	State funding: \$33,312.00
Number of students served: 101	Funding year: 3rd
Grades served: K-12	Staffing: K-12 Faculty

Description

The goal of this High Challenge project was to design and implement a distance learning program that would enhance the academic curriculum of Howe and Wister High Schools by broadening course offerings and providing a more challenging advance curriculum for those who needed it. Howe schools could “extend the walls of the classroom,” to broaden course offerings and to provide a more challenging curriculum for those who needed it. This grant was to provide funds to purchase distance learning equipment and to train teachers to incorporate technology into core curriculum.

The identified goals of the program and the activities conducted to meet each goal are listed below:

GOAL 1: All program teachers will have the training and support they need to help students learn through Voice Over IP Technologies.

- The professional development strategy was to have all of Howe’s teachers trained in the Technology Training Competencies outlined in Oklahoma HB 1815. This technology course has three levels of training which become progressively more sophisticated and complex. (See Appendix for list of each level’s competencies)
- Lance Ford continued to conduct training opportunities, as well as to serve as the district’s on-site technology director. Eighty percent of the staff had completed at least level two of the training by the end of the spring semester, 2003. These teachers are presumed to be competent to incorporate technology into the core subjects.

GOAL 2: All teachers and students will have access to the Distance Learning Classroom.

To further expand the access to DL:

- The band width was expanded to 768k to enhance capability. The Tandberg Video Conferencing system requires a band width equal to two T1 lines, roughly twice the band width of most school servers.
- Four additional projectors were purchased

- Three additional computers were purchased for Level II and III trained instructors
- Internet was made available in every classroom
- Additional computers were purchased to further lower the ratio of students to computer to 4:1.
- Spanish I and II classes were offered. Thirty-six students from Howe and 34 students from Wister participated.
- A class in the Choctaw Language was offered through the Choctaw Nation in Durant. Three students participated.
- An information technology class was conducted in cooperation with the McAlester Career Tech center. Mr. Ford, the technology director, assisted students with a variety of projects.
- An introduction to Spanish and culture class was conducted in cooperation with Hodgen school
- Howe recruited Jim Askew, a science instructor from Frontier Public Schools. Mr. Askew had developed a broad-scope science curriculum which is uses current on-line research extensively. Ninety-five students participated in science classes under this new format. Howe DL reported that the number of students enrolled in upper level science courses increased to 24 students, compared to 2 students in 2001-2002.
- Howe's K-8 grades were also able to participate in virtual field trips through the installation of the distance learning equipment. Examples of such opportunities included:
 - National Archives in Washington DC
 - Florida Mote Marine Institute
 - Indianapolis Zoo

Howe DLL reported that at least 70% of the staff had made a solid commitment to the inclusion of new electronic methodologies within their instructional strategies. Class observations and staff reports indicated varying degrees of technology integration in the classroom. Teachers who had completed Level II or III training had home pages for their classes. The class syllabus was posted along with daily and weekly assignments. Howe personnel also mentioned that teachers made better use of Passport II this year.

Direct interaction with the DL equipment was limited to the teachers; however, students used the classroom technology to conduct research, visit educational web sites, and learn how to use the keyboard. Students with home computers who missed school because of illness or other circumstances could check for their course work assignments. Howe personnel estimated that approximately 60% of the students have Internet access at home.

Major Program Changes

The original DL consortium consisted of Howe and five other LeFlore County schools – Wister, Cameron, Bokoshe, Arkoma, and Heavener. Each school site was to have been able to both send and receive the electronic feed. However, as was reported last year, equipment incompatibility with the partner sites often disrupted Video Conferencing and precluded consistent quality. Classroom management became an issue, as did the effectiveness of the

project. The poor ratings and negative responses from the end-of-the-year surveys conducted last year were often directly attributable to this logistical problem. During the 2002-2003 school year, access was offered only to those partners with compatible equipment; the consortium hoped to obtain funds to upgrade the equipment for each of the other partner schools. Scott Parks, superintendent, reported that it was his opinion that three schools were probably the maximum number to manage effectively.

The program was primarily limited to Howe and Wister during the 2002-03 year. One benefit of this adjustment was the better use of the instructor's time because she was no longer required to travel between schools.

Impact

In late spring, the OTAC field coordinator met with twelve students who were currently enrolled or had been enrolled in DL classes. The purpose of this focus group was to ascertain their perception of the classes. Listed below are the positive perceptions of these students

When asked why they had enrolled, they responded with comments including:

- *the technology was new and different*
- *wanted to learn Spanish*
- *could see friends from other schools that I know*
- *able to meet new people*

When asked what was good about DL, the comments included:

- *last year, we had to share the instructor, but this year she was just here*
- *we are treated more like grown-ups*
- *classes seemed larger, which I like, because Howe is so little*
- *DL was good experience*
- *We're known as the technology school*

When asked what was difficult or needed to change, the comments included:

- *the other class needed someone in there. They were goofing off too much*
- *sometimes, there needs to be more one-on-one*
- *need to get the times together*
- *sometimes the equipment was down*
- *you have to get used to it, but then it is good*

The group unanimously agreed that they would take other DL classes and would recommend DL classes to other students. One student commented that she would take other DL classes but did not like Spanish.

The OTAC field coordinator also met with the DL instructors. For the most part, their comments paralleled those of the students. Additional comments indicated that the coordination of the participating schools' calendars and daily schedules would be a great assistance to the program. Disruptions in routine interfered with successful instruction. Consortium DL

participants suggested that the monitors for the off-site programs need to meet together on a regular basis.

Anticipated Program Changes

The Howe DL Consortium planned to continue to monitor the program implementation and to expand the curricular offerings during the 2003-04 school year. Scott Parks, superintendent, indicated that access to the technology has still been restricted primarily to the instructors. He reported that the emphasis will be extended to have more direct student interaction with the technology.

A new building is under construction that will provide additional classroom space. Current plans for use of this additional space include extending the interactive science curriculum to students in the middle school and offering an Algebra I class through the Vision Project.

Plans to join with Thackerville Public Schools to offer Spanish classes are being explored for the 2003-04 school year.

Student outcome analyses. Although 101 students were enrolled in the Howe Consortium Distance Learning Lab, the number of students with paired pre-post data was limited. Effective evaluation of the impact of the project was restricted accordingly.

- The program design included all grades K-12; data were available only for students in grades 9-12.
- 34.7% of the students were from grade 9, 27.7% from grade 10, 25.7% from grade 11 and 11.9% from grade 12.
- Sixty-seven percent of the students were Caucasian, 32% Native American, and one student was Hispanic.
- Fifty-nine students were female and forty-two were male.
- All twelve of the participating seniors graduated; all other students were reported as “continuing in the program.” None of the other end-of-year status categories (e.g., moved, dropped out of school, changed to another program) were used, which is extremely unusual.
- Limited pre-post achievement test data were reported. The reasons for this were not apparent since all of the students were reported as having participated in the program until the last day of school, and 94 of the students entered the program on the first or second day of the school year. Students were available for pre and post achievement testing, and there was adequate time to obtain their pre-program information (GPA, absences, etc.).

Data analyses were limited to the 94 students who participated in two semesters of the program. These students had the most exposure to the intervention. The statistical tests conducted were *t*-tests for related samples. The purpose of statistical significance testing is to determine whether changes in students are reliable – if we should count on similar results with other students.

Interpretation of the data yielded the following conclusions:

- *Days absent* - paired (pre-post) data was available for only 43 students. These students averaged 2.33 absences during the year, compared with 10.33 during the previous year. This was statistically significant decrease and represented a substantial improvement for this group of students. A decrease in absences cannot be claimed as an effect of the program; however, because of the large amount of missing data.
- *GPA* - paired data was available for 43 students. There was no significant change in the GPAs for students after two semesters in the program. (Average GPA was 2.83 post-program and 2.86 pre-program). Student GPAs this year were lower than students enrolled last year both before and after participation in the DL program. In 2001-2002, students who enrolled in the DL program had an average GPA of 3.50 before admittance and an average GPA of 3.39 after two semesters in the program (*significant decrease*); in 2002-2003, students who enrolled had an average GPA of 2.83 before admittance and 2.86 after two semesters in the program (*No Change*).
- *Science Pre/Post Test Scores* - paired data was available for 37 students. There was no significant change in the students' scores.

Conclusions from data analysis

1. Data was reported for less than half of the students; the reason for this is not apparent since more than 90% of the students were enrolled for the full school year. The degree to which the results from these students are representative of all participants is unknown.
2. Last year, 30% of the students dropped out of the program, usually between semesters. This year no student dropped out, moved, transferred, or left the program for any reason. All students in grades 9, 10, and 11 were reported as continuing in the program next year; all of the seniors (12) graduated. The possibility of data entry errors should be investigated.
3. This year's enrollees this year could be characterized as C+ or B- students; last year's enrollees were A or B+ students. Neither group made an improvement in their GPA following their participation in two semesters of the DL program.
4. The Professional Development Goal was apparently reached, with eighty percent of the teachers attaining the skills for Levels 2 or 3 in their technology training.

Recommendations

The administration at Howe has made a concerted effort to address each of the technical issues presented in the initial year of the program's implementation. The campus has gone through extensive renovations during the year. Internet access was finally available in each classroom. The logistical issues which confronted the project last year would appear to have been present due to an overly enthusiastic expectation of the ability to coordinate numerous districts' ability to obtain and implement the equipment.

As expected, problems did arise for both students and administrators. The resolution to back-up and regroup seems to have been appropriate. Areas of concern to be addressed would be the coordination of scheduling and the coordination of the monitoring efforts among participating schools. These issues need to be addressed by project personnel to assure that instructional time is not compromised.

After three years of High Challenge grant funding, the Howe program has not demonstrated that it is an exemplary intervention with high-risk students. It cannot be validated and thus is not recommended for continued High Challenge grant funds. However, the program shows promise of effectiveness with other groups of students and teachers, and the district is encouraged to pursue technology grants to continue its distance learning experiment.

Appendix A

HB 1815 Technology Training Competencies

Level I

- Turn on and shut down computer properly
- Double click and use click and drag
- Use the find utility to search for folders and files on the computer
- Use control panels to change system settings
- Resize windows on the desktop
- Start a program, open a file and then exit out of a program
- Rename files
- Work within documents using copy, paste, delete, save, and other editing file commands
- Get help from help menu
- Print documents and other files from within applications
- Create folders and shortcuts and place them on the desktop
- View and organize files and folders
- Develop a presentation using presentation software (Not necessary but information useful)
- Utilize the internet, use a browser (Netscape/Internet Explorer), access www. sites, access search engines
- Use the internet to send and receive e-mail
- Generally use office suite applications or at least some form of word processing software.

Level II

- Develop techniques for integrating technology and Internet usage into existing curriculum
- Develop an interactive web page for instructional purposes for students to access on their own time and location, and also for administrative or management functions
- Convert learning modules to multimedia format which may be used in classroom presentations, Internet, and other distance education media
- Adapt content from existing courses to design an effective instructional format for distance delivery
- Integrate multimedia and visual tools into curriculum delivery, including video, presentation graphics, and the Internet
- Teach search skills and evaluation of on-line material to identify information for use in the classroom
- Provide hands-on training in the effective use of technology being deployed in OneNet and other IETV interactive video classrooms, including an overview of distance learning and design, planning, and management of distance learning courses
- Develop a basic understanding of the distance education environment, specifically OneNet and other IETV classroom environments, and its capabilities and limitations
- Use multiple delivery strategies effectively
- Provide experiences that emphasize collaboration among peers, teams, or cadres
- Produce multimedia components for integration into instruction
- Promote learning processes that engage learners in the use of technology
- Include models for active, cooperative, and collaborative learning among students and faculty into instruction

Discuss ethical and legal issues involving technology
Recognize and understand the roles and responsibilities of facilitators
Assist other teachers in teaching at a distance, preparing them to be comfortable, confident and capable in using new skills in the distance teaching environment
Model highly effective and innovative teaching enabled by information technology

Level III

Identify and evaluate on-line teaching resources.
Enhance presentations.
Utilize appropriate mentoring and coaching skills when and where appropriate to enhance peer teachers' abilities to incorporate technology into their classrooms.
Create technology infused learner-centered units of practice based upon the model provided.
Integrate specific technologies into teacher-centered classroom instruction when and where appropriate.
Describe the current situation of you and your school with respect to integrating technology into instruction, to provide a basis for more detailed personal and organization (school) planning and implementation.
Share the philosophy and progress of the HB1815 Telecommunications and Distance Learning Technology teacher training project.

**Kingston Public Schools
2002-2003**

Program name: Art on a Cart	Contact person: Kathy Cherry
Hours of operation: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 a.m.	State funding: \$15,693
Number of students served: 83	Funding year: 3
Grades served: K-5	Staffing: 1 full-time art teacher

The process evaluation was focused upon the project’s objectives, which are stated below. The outcome evaluation was focused upon student achievement as measured by grades and achievement test scores.

Goal 1: To employ a certified art teacher or one with an art endorsement to instruct students in grades K-5 in the Visual Arts as part of *Project: Art on a Cart!*

Kathy Cherry, the art teacher, continued to provide art classes to students in grades kindergarten through fourth one time per week, forty-five minutes each session. The fifth graders attended two times per week to work on art theory and special art projects.

Goal 2: To use *Project: Art on a Cart!* to motivate all students to achieve challenging academic standards and to strengthen the traditional core.

Ms. Cherry worked with teachers to incorporate themes emphasizing elements of art rather than craft type activities. Portfolios were set up with the students and a rubric was utilized with the fifth grade students . The instructor and each student then reviewed the completed work and discussed progress toward objectives.

Goal 3: To encourage at-risk students to fully participate in their education.

Ms. Cherry was provided her own classroom rather than having to travel to different classrooms. This allowed students the opportunity to participate in more creative or more in depth art projects. The OTAC Field Coordinator observed students who were actively engaged in the art class, excited to share information about their projects, and worked cooperatively with one another.

The instructor worked with the fifth grade students on test preparation for the CRT. Students indicated that they felt more comfortable with the art questions after taking the test this year. The fifth graders also completed a poetry book and participated in activities that incorporated reading themes throughout the year.

Goal 4: To serve the Kingston School and Community by incorporating *Project: Art on a Cart!*

Student art work was proudly displayed year-round throughout the school building. Students studied an artist each month and then learned techniques utilized by each artist. As an outreach program valentines were made and sent to soldiers and decorations were made for school plays and programs.

Student outcome analyses. For sampling purposes, teachers at each grade level were asked to select students who they felt were the most at risk of school failure. The Kingston program provided data for 83 at-risk students who participated in the program. For the purpose of data analyses, grade levels were groups according to their instructional similarities. This allowed for similar types of data to be compared. Key information derived from the data set included the following:

Fifth grade:

- Data for 13 fifth-grade students were provided. All of the fifth graders were promoted at the end of the year.
- No reliable difference was noted in students' grade point averages this year. The students had an average grade point of 2.58.
- No statistically significant differences were noted on the reading or math subtests of the STAR, a computer-assisted placement test that accompanies the Accelerated Reader program.
- Pre-post absences were provided for the fifth grade students. No significant difference was noted. Students averaged 7.85 absences during the spring semester.
- Oklahoma Performance Index scale scores were reported for 12 of the fifth-grade students. Examination of the scores indicated that 25 percent of the students satisfactorily passed the reading subtest, fifty percent passed the math, and 25 percent passed the art subtest of the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Test.

Third and Fourth grades:

- Data was reported for 19 third- and 21 fourth-grade students. All of the students were promoted at the end of the year.
- A statistically significant *decrease* was noted in the pre and post grade point averages of this group. Students' grades decreased from a mean of 2.91 to 2.60.
- No reliable difference was noted on the STAR reading or math test.
- No difference was noted in the number of student absences. The students were absent an average of 10.32 days during the spring semester.

First and Second grades:

- Information was reported for 16 first-grade and 13 second-grade students. All but one were promoted at the end of the year.
- Pre and post absences were provided for these students. No reliable pre-post difference was noted. Students were absent an average of 10.09 days during the spring semester.

- Student scores on the Early Literacy Test indicated a statistically significant and sizable increase in reading skills.

Recommendations

The program's outcomes over the last three years have been mixed; no consistent trend in achievement has been noted. The passing rate of participating students on the OCCT Arts subtest has been low. Although the staff viewed the art program as a valuable addition to the school, the program cannot be validated as an effective educational intervention for at-risk students. Since the program has completed its third year without being validated or demonstrating substantial potential for validation, it is not eligible for fourth-year High Challenge grant funding.

**McAlester Public Schools
2002-2003**

Program name: Structures for Success	Contact person: Mary Shannon
Hours of operation: 8:00 a.m.-3:15 p.m.	State funding: \$30,640
Number of students served: 18	Funding year: 4
Grades served: 4 th and 5 th	Staffing: 1 full-time teacher

Description

Structures for Success was originally targeted for two of the McAlester district schools. The program was a school-wide staff development program designed to give teachers strategies to improve academic success of high-risk students and to increase the involvement of parents. Two program goals were identified:

Goal 1: Increase social, emotional and academic growth of targeted high challenge students in grades 4th 5th and 6th in McAlester Public Schools.

Goal 2: Parents of targeted high challenge students will strengthen home environments that support children as students.

Instead of continuing to provide services to the school identified last year, the district decided to provide some services at four elementary sites. The four sites were William Gay, Edmond Doyle, Emerson, and Eugene Field Elementary Schools. The district reasoned that the original participants in the project moved to different schools within the district.

The model propagated by Ruby Payne called A Framework of Understanding Poverty continued to be the focus of staff development. A consulting teacher, trained in the model, served all four sites. She assisted teachers in implementing teaching strategies demonstrated in staff training sessions. A school-based services worker from DHS also visited the sites to assist in meeting families' needs and in helping to solve attendance problems. Project activities this year included the following:

Professional Development

- Three Ruby Payne trainings were held in the fall and two in the spring.
- 20 staff members attended three trainings during the year.
- On-site assistance was provided by a master teacher at each site.

DHS Service Worker

The service worker worked with the families in four different schools in the district. She checked on students who were not in attendance and helped families access resources such as medical services and food stamps. The project administrator reported that the service worker was

very active in making the school-to-home connection. The Choctaw Nation and Indian Education helped to fund this service.

Parent Involvement

Parent participation increased. The school held monthly parent events. Some of the activities included.

- Open house
- Family nights
- District Parent Teacher Conference Days
- Family Counseling Sessions

Extended Learning Activities

- “Beyond the Bell” tutoring and recreational activities four days a week

Teacher Evaluation

- Teacher evaluations of the project were not available

The transiency rate of the student population in the targeted schools remained high and was identified as the greatest challenge for the staff and administrators.

Student data analyses. Data for 18 students who attended Eugene Field Elementary were analyzed. Sixteen of the students were male and two were female. The students ranged in grade level from second to sixth with sixth grade accounting for the largest group (38.9 percent). Students had been enrolled in the program between one and four years. Only one new student was added to the program this year. 38.9 percent of the students served were minority students. This proportion is similar to the district’s population according to *Profiles 2002* (State Office of Accountability). Most of the students (72.2 percent) were identified as program participants because of academic deficiency. All of the students were expected to continue in the program next year.

The students participated in a number of ancillary services. Tutoring sessions were recorded for all of the students. They averaged 90.06 reading and math tutoring sessions. The number of sessions ranged from 35 to 175. The median number of sessions attended was 70. Individual counseling was also offered. The students averaged 10.11 individual sessions during the year, approximately one session per month. An extraordinary number of parent contacts were recorded. The contacts ranged from 45 to 263 and averaged 136 per student. The social worker reported contacts with all of the students’ families. Her contacts ranged from five to 45 and averaged 35.89.

The following table presents the pre- and post-program averages for the students in the McAlester program.

Variable	N	Pre-program	Post-program	Statistically Significant*
GPA	12	1.91	2.46	No
Absences	18	6.50	4.72	No
Courses Failed	15	0.73	0.20	No
WRAT Reading Standard Score	18	96.17	98.39	No
WRAT Math Standard Score	18	91.56	103.27	Yes

* = $p < .05$. A significant difference is determined by the use of specific statistical techniques which take into account the number of students and the direction and size of the change. In some cases, a difference that appears large may not be statistically significant. Generally, such results suggest that certain characteristics of the data, such as extreme scores or number of students in the analysis, make the observed change unreliable.

The results did not indicate substantial academic or behavioral changes during the year. A reliable increase in arithmetic computation skills was noted on the Wide Range Achievement Test-III, a screening instrument. The majority of the students appeared to continue functioning at pre-program levels.

Recommendations

The focus of the project was again redirected this year. Lack of continuity in intervention strategies made it difficult to identify any program components as effective interventions. It appeared that student achievement and parent involvement improved this year; however, the overall impact on student learning remained negligible. The service worker was an important component in this project as evidenced by an improvement in attendance that was attributed to the home visits.

Changes in focus from the original plan over the life of this program have made evaluation difficult. Eugene Field Elementary School was the only school with teachers who had the original training. In addition, the school administrator at Eugene Field was new to the school and the goals of the program, so many changes occurred. Because no components can be validated as effective interventions for at-risk children, the program is not recommended for replication or continued grant funding.

**Milburn Public Schools
2002-2003**

Program name: Second Chance Academic Program	Contact person: Kathy Hays
Hours of operation: Six-week Summer School Session: 8:00 - 1:30, Monday through Thursday	State funding: \$52,878
Number of students served: 33	Funding Year: 3
Grades served: K-12	Staffing: 5 full-time teachers, 1 program director, 1 bus driver

The process evaluation was focused upon the project's objectives as they were stated in Milburn's proposal. The outcome evaluation was focused upon student achievement as measured by grades and achievement test scores.

Goal 1: To increase the number of students whose scores show Advanced Knowledge and Satisfactory Knowledge on the state mandated Criterion Reference Tests.

The Second Chance Academic Program offered summer school for students who were in need of remediation of basic skills or were behind in credits. The program was held at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels and provided instruction appropriate for the specific grade levels. A variety of instructional methods was used including computer-assisted curriculum programs for the high school level.

Goal 2: To increase the number of students who have mastered the core curriculum PASS Objectives.

Students used textbooks and ALS or PassKey software to aid in course remediation or credit recovery. Each instructor chose the curriculum that they felt best covered PASS objectives for their grade or course. Students participated in group and individual instructional activities.

Goal 3: To decrease the number of high school students who will not be able to graduate on time because of failing one or more courses.

Nine students in grades 9-12 participated in the program and each student earned at least .5 credit. Students were required to pass course work and not be absent more than two days. The summer grade was then averaged with the failing grade and posted to his/her transcript.

Student outcome analysis. The Second Chance Academic Program (SCAP) at Milburn Public Schools provided partial information for 33 students who attended the summer program during the summer of 2002. Enrollment in the program was lower this year. Forty-four percent fewer student participated in the summer program compared to the first year of implementation. The emphasis of the program was different for the elementary and high school grade levels. Elementary instruction focused on basic skill remediation while the high school program focused

on credit accrual. For this reason, the two groups were analyzed and described separately. Key information is included below.

Students in grades K-8

- Students in grades 1-8 participated in the program. Seventh- and eighth-grade students made up 50 percent of the participants.
- All of the students passed the classes that they enrolled in during the summer session and all were promoted to the next grade level.
- An attendance policy limited students to two absences during the summer. Of the 24 students in grades K-8 who participated, five had two absences and five had one absence.
- Grade point averages were available for the twelve students in the seventh and eighth grades. A reliable increase in grade point was noted for these students. Prior to the summer intervention, the students had a mean GPA of 2.03 compared to 2.25 after the intervention. No achievement information was provided for the students in grades K-6.

Students in grades 9-12

- Five freshmen and four sophomores attended the summer program. Three of the students were absent two days during the summer session, and four of the students were absent one day.
- Students attempted either one-half or a full credit during the summer. The students all passed the courses they attempted and were promoted to the next grade.
- No reliable change was noted in students grade point averages. Prior to the intervention, the students' mean GPA was 1.81 compared to 1.95 after participation in the program. More than 50 percent of the students had GPAs at the "D" level after the intervention.

Recommendations

Milburn's SCAP is recommended with reservations for continued funding. In order to determine the effectiveness of the program, adequate student data will be needed. This should include academic and achievement data for *all* students, computer-assisted-instruction usage data, and performance data collected during the school year following the summer program. Additionally, the high school students' grade point averages suggested that they are in need of a more comprehensive intervention.

**Muldrow Public Schools
2002-2003**

Program name: Muldrow Schools High Challenge	Contact person: Mickey Campbell
Days/Hours of operation: Tuesday & Thursday/ 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	State funding: High Challenge: \$20,830.00
Number of students served: 107	Funding year: 4
Grades served: K - 12	

The process evaluation was focused upon the project's objectives as they were stated in Muldrow's proposal. The outcome evaluation was focused upon student achievement as measured by grades and achievement test scores.

Objective 1: Increase achievement and/or readiness test scores

- Participating elementary students were provided with one hour of extended day activities each Tuesday and Thursday. Students alternated these days between tutorial and LightSpan activities. All enrolled students were required to attend both days. It was reported that the student attendance was much improved during this school year.
- Participating middle school students and high school students were provided with one hour of extended day activities each Tuesday and Thursday at their respective sites. The focus of the program dealt with homework assistance. It was reported that approximately 15 students were enrolled per site. It was also reported that the high school attendance was much improved because students had more knowledge about the program. However, all students appeared to use the program on an as-needed basis.

Objective 2: Increase parental involvement in school related activities

- Parents were invited to parent conferences. Parents were also invited to the monthly Oklahoma Parents As Teachers meetings. Attendance from these meetings was not reported.

Objective 3: Increase communication between the students' home, school, and community as measured by survey forms

- Information about conferences and other events was mailed to parents. This communication was also followed with reminder letters. A monthly newsletter was also distributed to parents. Mickey Campbell distributed survey forms to parents, teachers, and students.

Student outcome analyses. Information was provided for 107 students who attended the Muldrow extended day program. 64 of the students were from the elementary site and 43 from

the secondary grades. Due to differences in programing, the two groups were analyzed separately.

Elementary students:

Analyses indicated that the children served were academically at-risk of school failure prior to the intervention. Seventy-five percent of the students had a grade point average at the “C” level or below suggesting that the program was successful in identifying the students most in need. The elementary students attended the extended day program an average of 18.66 days during the year. The median number of days attended for the group was 15. Student grade point averages increased significantly during the year from an average of 2.12 to 2.63. A statistically significant increase was also noted in students standardized assessment scores. However, regression analysis did not indicate a relationship between students’ grade point averages or assessment scores and the number of extended day sessions a student attended. At the end of the year, 85.9 percent of the elementary students who attended the program were promoted, 4.7 percent moved, and 9.4 percent were retained. Data regarding parent involvement indicated that parents attended an average of 2.28 meetings. The number of meetings ranged from one to six.

Secondary students:

The secondary student (grades 5-12) attended the extended day program an average of 15.72 days during the year. The median number of days attended was ten. No reliable difference was noted in students’ pre and post grade point averages. The average student GPA was at the mid-“C” level (both pre and post). A statistically significant increase was noted in students standardized achievement test scores; however, data were available for only half of the students. Parent participation data was available for the middle school students. The parents of these students attended an average of 1.96 meetings. Student exit data indicated that 81.4 percent of the students were promoted or graduated, 4.7 percent of the students moved during the year, and 13.9 were reported to have dropped out.

Recommendations

The efforts made by the district over the last four years did not result in improved parental involvement, an integral part of their program. Moreover, a history of positive outcomes has not been evident during the four years the district has attempted to implement the program. Lack of program intensity was probably a factor in the program’s lack of impact – few programs make a measurable impact when the students participate an average of only 15-20 sessions. Longitudinal data was requested to determine whether a long-term impact on students could be detected. Those data were not provided. On the basis of student outcomes over the four-year funding period, the Muldrow program cannot be validated as effective and is therefore not eligible for a fifth year of state funding.

**Oklahoma City Public Schools
2002 – 2003**

Program name: SeeWorth Academy	Contact person: Janet Grigg
Days/hours of operation: Monday through Friday, 7:15 a.m.-5:30 p.m.	State funding: \$63,123
Number of students served: 652	Funding year: 2
Grdes served: 3 rd - 12 th	Staffing: 29 Instructors, 8 Counselors, 5 Mentors, 4 Administrators

Description

SeeWorth Academy, a charter school, continued to collaborate with Oklahoma City Public Schools as part of the district’s Statewide Alternative Education programming. The academy was housed in the educational wings of two churches. The high school was housed separately from the elementary and middle school. The director’s office and the new Total Life Center (TLC) were housed in leased spaces approximately three blocks from the school sites.

The academy served students in grades three through twelve who exhibited such high risk behaviors as chronic disciplinary conflicts, habitual truancy, substance abuse, and gang activity. The school requested a High Challenge Grant to add primary prevention components to its overall program. These funds were used to develop a comprehensive health and wellness program targeted at the students and their families. The implementation of the program components is reviewed below.

Goal 1: Provide a health/wellness program.

Goal 2: Provide appropriate educational programs for juvenile offenders, long-term suspended youth, troubled youth, and dropouts.

Goal 3: Provide students and parents with educational training, support, and therapy.

COMPONENT: Collaboration

Activity: Expansion of support network

Target population: Community leaders, service agencies, individuals

Approach: The SeeWorth Academy enjoys a well-established rapport with a broad base of participants. Janet Grigg, SeeWorth Director, continued to seek out opportunities to promote the program. She distributed packets of material which highlighted the mission and the accomplishments of many of the students from the SeeWorth Academy. She spoke at civic meetings, church groups, and to business leaders about the mission of the academy.

The foster grandparent program was an important public relations effort as well as a valuable addition to the program services.

Impact:

As a result of these efforts, many organizations stepped forward to volunteer time and resources for the academy. The school's services were enhanced by volunteer mentors and tutors. Several individuals presented workshops for staff, students and parents. Many of these individuals had received previous training in working with at-risk youth. The individuals from this cadre of volunteers also provided contacts for additional counseling services, potential speakers and a range of other resources. Many organizations enhanced the school's curriculum, some of which included:

- STARS (drug and alcohol awareness)
- FACES (student and family counseling and resource center)
- Eagle Outreach Program for families and students
- Urban Leagues of Greater Oklahoma City (STD and aids awareness)
- Feed the Children
- Tanglewood Research (Student and family needs, surveys and counseling)
- Oklahoma Food Bank

COMPONENT: Staff Involvement

Activity: Staff development

Target population: Academy staff

Approach: Formal in-service opportunities were required of all staff. Sessions were conducted by qualified individuals from well-respected organizations. Topics included:

- anger management
- drug awareness
- gang awareness/ violence prevention
- service learning
- Love and Logic™

Impact:

The OTAC field coordinator surveyed SeeWorth staff to review the effectiveness of the staff development opportunities. A summary of the responses follows:

The Gang Awareness workshop presented by Mark Clanton of the Mid-Del Public Schools was repeatedly identified as a "highly beneficial" offering. Staff were informed of what signs to look for that would indicate gang involvement or potential gang activity. Changes were made to the student dress code to ensure that students were not able to identify themselves as gang members. More attention was paid to student

language. Speech that was known to be gang-related was not accepted nor tolerated.

The Anger Management workshop, which had been requested by staff during the evaluation focus group last year, was identified as having a strong impact on the staff and the way they worked with students.

Responses indicated that classroom management techniques were presented that could help de-escalate disruptive behaviors in the classroom or during school activities. This session had such an impact that the presentation was adjusted and presented to students during Total Life Center (TLC) sessions.

An elementary counselor was able to attend a Safe Schools workshop in which bullying was presented as a key factor in situations such as Columbine. The need for consistent discipline and reinforcement of positive behaviors was identified as an immediate change that could have a positive impact on the learning environment.

The following needs were identified as possible workshop offerings for next year:

- Character Education
- Ways to building positive self-esteem
- More on parental involvement

ACTIVITY:	Drug, gang and violence awareness and prevention curriculum development and implementation
Target population:	Academy staff
Approach:	The curriculum which was developed and implemented during the previous year to address the issues of drug and alcohol abuse, gang involvement and consequences, and ways to prevent behaviors which may escalate into violence continued to be utilized. Materials were adapted for each grade level. The material was presented as both an elective class and as a component infused throughout the school curriculum. The opportunity to present drug, gang and violence awareness and prevention sessions was expanded and enhanced through the development of the Total Life Center (TLC.)
Impact:	Responses from the surveys indicated that staff appreciated that the Total Life Center (TLC) provided the main forum for the drug and violence awareness and prevention curriculum. Although the curriculum remained a part of the curriculum, it was more apparent in elective classes, such as psychology or cultural awareness, and as follow-up sessions to TLC. Respondents did note learning more about the specific “signals” of the

gang culture. Although they had reported a better understanding during interviews conducted during the previous year, they indicated that they were “just beginning to get the whole picture.”

ACTIVITY: Mentoring and tutoring

Target Population: Academy staff

Approach: Community volunteers served as mentors and tutors to students. The Gear-Up program provided mentors from Oklahoma City Community College, the University of Central Oklahoma and Oklahoma City University. The STARS program and Eagle Ridge provided mentors and tutors as well. Academy staff members worked beyond the classroom as mentors and tutors for students. Each staff member was encouraged to make a commitment to assist each student with academic skills and with behavior modification efforts. They also worked with parents in parenting workshops or in GED classes.

Impact: The philosophy of the SeeWorth Academy includes a dedication to the “entire” student. The staff knew the students well beyond the classroom. They established a strong rapport with students and, often, with the student’s parent(s). This relationship was evident during visits to the school during the school day and during activities involving parents.

The community volunteers and organizations were more actively involved with the students. It was reported that a group of volunteers has developed a baseball summer league for interested students and that another group of volunteers was developing a summer program for the elementary and middle school students.

COMPONENT: Student Involvement

ACTIVITY: Drug, gang, and violence awareness and prevention education

Target population: Academy students; grades 3 through 12

Approach: Perhaps the most notable change at SeeWorth Academy was TLC. The center, which opened in mid-September, was created to provide an environment conducive to individual and group counseling opportunities. In addition to counseling, the program provided guest speakers and art therapy projects, as well as sessions in critical thinking skills, anger management, and violence prevention. TLC was located approximately three blocks from the school sites. Students were shuttled over for sessions at least once weekly. In addition to topics such as drug and violence awareness and prevention and anger management, the students were surveyed as to current issues that they would like to explore. Topics which were identified include:

- sexually transmitted diseases and HIV prevention
- coping with grief and loss
- parenting skills
- family issues

A continuum of counseling services was available. General group sessions were conducted. During these sessions, students who would benefit from additional small group sessions were identified. It was during these smaller group sessions that individuals were identified for more intensified one-on-one counseling sessions. Referrals for more therapeutic services were made available when warranted. Service Learning projects were required of all students through TLC.

Impact: The end-of-the year self-evaluation, as well as comments from the staff surveys, indicated that participation in TLC and the anger management skills had been credited with a significant decrease in the number of conflicts during the year and that the overall school atmosphere had notably improved. Students, reportedly, were more likely to verbalize their feelings and concerns during TLC sessions and seek assistance with issues than they had been during previous school years. Teachers reported that students often returned from TLC eager to continue discussions and began using the skills and terminologies presented during sessions. Students requested the opportunity to make up TLC sessions. Furthermore, teachers reported being able to tell when a student had not participated in TLC by their classroom behaviors and poor coping skills. It was reported that parents had requested additional time spent in TLC.

ACTIVITY: Tutoring and mentoring:

Target Population: Voluntary participation by students

Approach: Tutoring sessions were offered throughout the school day and extended to sessions after school, Monday through Thursday. Instruction with certified teachers in English, math, history, science and reading was available to meet the specific needs of individual students. In addition to the certified staff, tutors, volunteers and representatives from Gear-Up, Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City Community College and University of Central Oklahoma also assisted students during after school sessions.

Impact: 378 students participated in the tutorial and mentoring efforts.

ACTIVITY: Parenting classes

Target Population: Teen-age parents

Approach: Classes were conducted for pregnant or parenting teens and their partners, when possible. Several staff members, as well as several community service providers, worked with students on a range of pertinent issues. They conducted workshops and classroom presentations in addition to

support services for individuals, their babies and their families. Area agencies included:

- Community Action Agency
- Urban League
- Eagle Ridge Institute
- Boys and Girls Club
- FACES
- STARS

Impact: Responses from the survey indicated that students were very involved in discussions about fetal and child development, especially as it applied to drug and alcohol abuse. It was during a follow-up session that a student shared her personal story about her daughter who was born prematurely and later died due to fetal alcohol syndrome. Another accomplishment of this program was that staff was able to link students with support services and the Food Bank.

ACTIVITY: Counseling

Target Population: All students

Approach: Due to the fact that many of the academy students return to school each morning from disruptive environments, the first period of the morning was scheduled to help students refocus their attention on school goals. Each staff member received training to recognize student behaviors which may need further attention before the student could focus on academic goals. Each academy staff member served as a coach-teacher during the morning refocus period. Counselors were ready to work with individuals and groups as students were identified.

As was previously noted, the Total Life Center was an integral component of SeeWorth Academy this year. The daily sessions provided a forum for students to be able to discuss the many conflicts that they must deal with on a daily basis. In addition to the ongoing format of the counseling curriculum, the counseling staff was available and ready to deal with issues and crises as they occurred. Students participated in general group sessions, but could be further directed to more thorough small group discussions or individual counseling sessions. Referrals for more intensive therapeutic counseling, day treatment, rehabilitation services or admission for residential care were made when warranted. The Department of Human Services was contacted when necessary. Families joined students in arranged counseling sessions.

Impact: As previously noted, the end-of-the year self-evaluation, as well as comments from the staff surveys, indicated that participation in TLC and the anger management skills had been credited with a significant decrease in the number of conflicts during the year and that the overall school

atmosphere had notably improved. The director of counseling worked with parents or guardians to arrange assistance for treatment.

ACTIVITY: Drug testing

Target Population: Those students whose behaviors indicated the possibility of substance abuse.

Approach: The continued focus on drug, gang and violence prevention was imperative for an early intervention philosophy. Efforts were made to work with the students and their parents (and probation officers when applicable) first on a prevention basis, then as an intervention plan. The staff's knowledge of the indicators of such made referrals for suspicion notably accurate. When there were incidents of students noticeably "under the influence" while at school, the following protocol was followed:

1. Notification of the authorities and of the parents/guardian (and probation officer when applicable) of any student referred for potential testing.
2. Conferences with the parent/guardian (and probation officer when applicable)
3. Referral for testing.

If the test results returned "positive," the administrative staff or counselors worked with the parent/guardian (or probation officer) to provide a list of agencies and support services for treatment options. The end-of-the-year self-evaluation reported that most of the students freely cooperated with the staff's attempt to offer help.

COMPONENT: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

ACTIVITY: GED, computer literacy and reading

Target Population: Parents of academy students

Approach: GED preparatory assistance was offered throughout the year. The computer lab remained open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings. The GED preparatory course was computer-based. SeeWorth staff served as the instructors.

Impact: According to the director's end-of-the-year self-evaluation, fifty parents participated, yet none of the participants reported successful completion of the GED test. (Note: the test is administered through Oklahoma City Public Schools, and SeeWorth is not notified of those taking the test or of those successfully passing the test.)

ACTIVITY: Workshops & Presentations

Target Population: Parents and guests of academy students

Approach: Monthly Parent University programs were conducted at the academy. Relevant topics were presented by guest speakers and academy staff and through video presentations. Topics included:

- Effective parenting techniques
- Coping skills
- Drugs and alcohol
- Gangs

Impact: The end-of-the-year self-evaluation indicated that an average of 100 parents attended each of the Parent University sessions. In addition, more than 400 parents attended the *Christmas to Remember* dinner held in December.

ACTIVITY: Counseling

Target Population: Parents of academy students (and their student for family counseling sessions)

Approach: All of the SeeWorth staff was encouraged to develop strong working relationships with parents. It was reported that all teachers as well as the eight certified counselors on staff at the academy were involved in family advisement efforts. The Total Life Center (TLC) provided additional opportunities for counseling sessions for individual parents, parents with their student, parent groups, and parent and student group sessions. Total Life Counseling (which was also known as TLC) and Eagle Ridge provided licensed professional counselors to assist in the parent and family counseling component of the academy. Intensive counseling needs were referred to collaborating agencies for follow-up services.

Impact: The director indicated that the inclusion of the Total Life Center (TLC) had a positive impact on the parental component, especially as evidenced in parental support.

ACTIVITY: Food Bank

Target Population: Families of academy students

Approach: Staff from the academy worked with area service providers and local churches to operate a weekly food bank. The school served as the distribution center each Tuesday. Parents could receive food for their entire family. Academy staff and students worked to sack up food brought in from Feed the Children, Empowerment Zone, and several other providers.

Impact: Many of the SeeWorth students' families were able to participate in the Food Bank effort.

Student outcome analyses. Data on 652 students who were served at the SeeWorth Academy were reported. The data sample consisted of 35 elementary students, 111 middle school students, and 506 high school students. 90.5 percent of the student population at SeeWorth were minority students; African-Americans accounted for 82.8 percent of the students served. Slightly more males (58.4 percent) than females (41.6 percent) participated in the program. Of the total population, 12.3 percent of the students self-reported previous contact with juvenile justice authorities. Students had been enrolled in the program between one and five years. First-year students made up nearly two thirds (65.3 percent) of the group. Students averaged 23.10 weeks of enrollment in the school this year. The reason for referral was recorded for all students; however, one-third of students (34 percent) were recorded in the nonspecific "Other Reason for Referral" category. Students referred for academic deficiencies accounted for 19.2 percent and students referred because of behavioral difficulties accounted for 16.7 percent. More than two thirds (69.6 percent) of the students ended the year with a positive status. Of the 30.4 percent of the students who exited with a negative status, 30.2 percent (197 students) of this high-risk population dropped out of school.

Examination of the student data for those who dropped out did not suggest any difference in dropout rate across genders, racial/ethnic groups, or reason for referral. Elementary students accounted for 5.5 percent of the dropouts and the middle school for 16.3%, but the majority were in high school. Freshmen accounted for 28.4 percent of the dropouts of the program. More than half (63.5 percent) of the dropouts were in the program for their first year, although 16 third-year students dropped out of the program. Examination of the achievement and behavioral data indicated that the students who dropped out of the program did not appear to differ greatly in pre-program status from those who stayed in school.

Counseling services were available for all students. The records provided by SeeWorth staff indicated that 97 percent of the students participated in at least one individual, group, or family counseling sessions. The students averaged 6.11 individual sessions, 13.17 group, and 7.08 family sessions during the year. This resulted in an average of slightly more than one counseling session per week (1.42). Psycho-social assessment scores, originally a part of the evaluation plan, were not provided.

Data for the elementary, middle school, and high school students were analyzed separately due to the differences in instructional focus. The statistical tests conducted were *t*-tests for related samples (for variables with 30 or more students with pre-post pairs) and Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks Tests (for variables with smaller sample sizes). The purpose of statistical testing is to determine whether changes in students are reliable – if we should count on similar results with other students. The following table lists the results for elementary students prior to and following their participation in the program.

SeeWorth Elementary Students				
Variable	N	Pre-program	Post-program	Statistically Significant*
GPA	17	1.85	2.69	No
Absences	35	35.37	9.60	Yes
Courses Failed	18	1.78	2.14	No
Reading NCE Score	24	24.71	33.63	Yes
Math NCE Score	23	23.87	32.30	Yes

* $p < .05$. A significant difference is determined by the use of specific statistical techniques which take into account the number of students and the direction and size of the change. In some cases, a difference that appears large may not be statistically significant. Generally, such results suggest that certain characteristics of the data, such as extreme scores or number of students in the analysis, make the observed change unreliable.

Interpretation of the data for the elementary students yielded the following conclusions:

- The difference between the pre and post grade point averages was not statistically significant. Seventy percent of the students had GPAs above 3.00 at the end of the year.
- A noteworthy decrease in student absences was recorded.
- Reliable increases were noted on the reading and math subtests of the standardized achievement test administered.
- No difference was noted in the number of courses failed. Half of the students failed at least one course during their most recent semester in the program.

The following table lists the results for middle school students prior to and after their participation in the program.

SeeWorth Middle School Students				
Variable	N	Pre-program	Post-program	Statistically Significant*
GPA	55	1.31	2.34	Yes
Absences	109	46.95	9.46	Yes
Courses Failed	55	2.25	3.12	No
In-school Suspension	56	1.32	4.39	Yes
Reading NCE Score	80	28.94	41.91	Yes
Math NCE Score	80	29.23	40.68	Yes

* $=p < .05$. A significant difference is determined by the use of specific statistical techniques which take into account the number of students and the direction and size of the change. In some cases, a difference that appears large may not be statistically significant. Generally, such results suggest that certain characteristics of the data, such as extreme scores or number of students in the analysis, make the observed change unreliable.

Interpretation of the data for the middle school students yielded the following results:

- Statically significant academic improvement was noted for the students. Their grade point averages increased from a low “D” to a low “C.” Standardized achievement test scores indicated an increase in reading and math skills.
- A dramatic decrease was noted in student absences. Clearly, a great number of students who had been out of school were successfully encouraged to attend. The absence rate remained relatively high, however, and 40 percent of the students were absent ten days or more during their most recent semester at SeeWorth.
- An *increase* in in-school suspension assignments was noted. (This could be related to the fact that the attendance was much higher and thus the students were eligible to be suspended.) Approximately half of the students were suspended for at least one day. The number of days suspended per semester ranged from two to 19.

The following table lists the results for high school students in their first year at SeeWorth.

SeeWorth First-Year High School Students.				
Variable	N	Pre-program	Post-program	Statistically Significant*
GPA	157	0.94	2.30	Yes
Absences	309	59.53	14.43	Yes
Courses Attempted	199	5.52	9.65	Yes
Courses Completed	156	2.39	6.07	Yes
In-school Suspension	106	0.66	2.43	Yes
Reading NCE Score	179	30.17	43.36	Yes
Math NCE Score	182	28.98	41.76	Yes

* = $p < .05$. A significant difference is determined by the use of specific statistical techniques which take into account the number of students and the direction and size of the change. In some cases, a difference that appears large may not be statistically significant. Generally, such results suggest that certain characteristics of the data, such as extreme scores or number of students in the analysis, make the observed change unreliable.

Interpretation of the data for the high school students yielded the following results:

- The first-year students increased their grade point average from the “D” to the “C” level.
- Students completed significantly more courses while in the program. They made good progress toward graduation, averaging six courses successfully completed per semester.
- Student scores on the standardized achievement test indicated sizable increases in reading and math skills.
- The number of student absences decreased dramatically. Although the trend was positive, the staff should continue to work on reducing absences. More than one third (35 percent) of the students were absent more than 15 days during the spring semester.
- A statistically significant increase was noted in the number of in-school suspensions while at the program. This may be due, in part, to the large increase in attendance.

The following table lists the results for high school students in the program for two or more years.

SeeWorth High School Students (two or more years)				
Variable	N	Per program	Past program	Statistically Significant*
GPA	85	0.68	1.88	Yes
Absences	191	62.06	17.84	Yes
Courses Attempted	107	5.59	9.76	Yes
Courses Completed	84	2.13	5.77	Yes
In-school Suspension	49	3.18	4.55	No
Reading NCE Score	159	27.26	43.86	Yes
Math NCE Score	159	26.07	43.23	Yes

* = $p < .05$. A significant difference is determined by the use of specific statistical techniques which take into account the number of students and the direction and size of the change. In some cases, a difference that appears large may not be statistically significant. Generally, such results suggest that certain characteristics of the data, such as extreme scores or number of students in the analysis, make the observed change unreliable.

Interpretation of the data for these high school students yielded the following results:

- Statistically significant gains were made academically; however, the students appeared to still be functioning at a very low level. Their mean grade point average fell in the “D” range and they completed only 53 percent of the courses they attempted.
- Although the trend was in the positive direction, the students still appeared to be greatly at-risk. Fifty percent of the students were absent 15 days or more during the spring semester and half of the students were assigned to in-school suspension at least once.

Recommendations

The range of services available as part of the SeeWorth Academy is impressive. The OTAC field coordinator noted that, upon each visit, the atmosphere at the SeeWorth Academy was warm and supportive. The staff was dedicated and determined to provide an atmosphere conducive to success for the students.

However, the immense population of the SeeWorth Academy is rarely seen in alternative setting. Successful alternative programs have generally maintained a small population in an effort to provide individualized attention to students. In fact, the small number of students in successful alternative education models has been credited as a key variable related to success. The number of student slots available at the SeeWorth Academy continued to escalate this year, and nearly one third of the students dropped out of school. The rapid expansion of the program may interfere with the academy’s success. It is recommended that Ms. Grigg and the staff carefully evaluate the costs and benefits of the large population program in comparison to programs with similar high-risk populations but lower dropout rates. The OTAC field

coordinator will meet with the academy staff, as well as district staff, to review strategies for reducing dropouts and improving attendance during 2003-04.

It is further recommended that the quality of the program be monitored carefully if the population continues to increase. The OTAC field coordinator will work closely with Ms. Grigg and the staff to review such indicators of success as attendance, academic performance, and exit status.

It is recommended that staff acquire software to ascertain the success of GED test participants and submit data to OTAC for analysis to accurately evaluate and make a recommendation on the impact of the GED component.

Due to changes in instrumentation and programming, revision of the evaluation plan will be necessary for the 2003-2004 school year. OTAC staff will work with the SeeWorth staff to make the appropriate revisions.

These recommendations are intended to assist program staff in improving the Academy. They should not distract the reader from the remarkable success that SeeWorth has demonstrated with a number of students. The Oklahoma City SeeWorth Academy is recommended for continued High Challenge Grant funding.

**Tecumseh Public Schools
2002-2003**

Program name: REACH	Contact person: Kelli Huhn
Days/Hours of operation: M-F 12:30 - 3:30	State funding: \$79,433
Number of students served: 40	Funding year: 2
Grades served: 5 - 6	Staffing: 1 instructor & 1 counselor

Description

The Tecumseh High Challenge Program (REACH) served students that were identified as at risk from grades 5 - 6. There were two components for the REACH Program this year. The first component was a one hour program held during the first hour of the day. Referrals were made due to absences, low grades, family/home problems, behavior problems, discipline referrals and retention. The purpose of the class was to assist students with homework and encourage academic success, while incorporating group counseling and life skills into the class. The second component was an afternoon class targeting students who were at risk of retention or were having significant trouble with behavior. The students did homework, worked on problem areas such as reading and math, and did group activities that taught life skills and self esteem.

Goal 1: The REACH Program will provide identified high challenge students with alternative methods of learning that are matched with their preferred learning modalities and functional learning levels.

Students coming into the program were given three tests to determine their needs. Learning styles inventories were used to identify student strengths and the best ways to provide information. Pre and post achievement tests were administered to assess academic needs along with the Multidimensional Self Concept Scale (MSCS). The staff then took into consideration each child's learning style, background, self-concept, and educational needs in order to provide each student with an individualized plan for success.

Goal 2: Counseling and support will be made available to students and their parents.

Counseling support was provided to each student on a daily basis and life skills were a routine part of the day. Some of the topics incorporated included: anger management, verbal and nonverbal communication, teamwork, respect, self-esteem, responsibility, decision making, goal setting, critical thinking, family value, and self-discipline. The staff felt that many of the students served this year had more emotional needs than last year. The staff communicated with the teachers from their regular school settings daily through a homework/behavior slip in order to reinforce positive behavior and if the behavior was inappropriate, discuss how to handle future situations.

Homework assistance was one of the most beneficial aspects of the program. This year the staff asked the homeroom teachers to work in all core subjects in the classroom before the students come to REACH. The students then have an easier time being able to transition back to

classrooms easily without missing vital material. While at REACH, the students worked on PASS objectives with the teacher on problem areas. Oklahoma Blast Off was used to touch on subjects important to the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Tests. After homework/skill-building time, the students participated in group activities such as group counseling/life skills.

Parents were encouraged to visit the program at any time in addition to specific nine week appointments. Communication between home and school increased and several parents seemed pleased with knowing more about what their child does daily in class. Additional district parent/teacher conference days were observed and two open house activities were held. REACH students received end of year awards at their home school and parents were encouraged to attend.

Goal 3: Intervention strategies will help meet the high challenge student's curricular needs.

Activities used by the program to accomplish this goal included:

- Encouraging completion of work by giving tickets for completion that were put into a drawing to win a prize at the end of the day
- Setting up a consistent environment so that the students were comfortable and able to work in a more relaxed state
- Providing one-on-one instruction, taking stresses off students that made them feel less intelligent than other children because they required more help
- Empowering students to use their strengths to their benefit such as being mentors to the younger students in the program
- Receiving immediate feedback on work they completed during REACH that allowed them to make corrections quickly
- Students were assisted in setting personal and academic goals that they wanted to achieve by the end of the school year

Goal 4: Transition strategies will be in place to help elementary students transition to the next grade level.

During this school year the program took great concern with getting the 5th grade students ready for their transition to Middle School. Students were given a tour of the middle school and introduced to the counselor. Sessions were also held emphasizing time management, organizational skills, importance of passing classes and the behavior in the middle school.

Student outcome analysis. The REACH program at Tecumseh served 38 students during the 2002-2003 school year. Seventeen of the students participated in the morning program (one hour per day) while twenty students attended the afternoon program (two hours per day). Since the two programs had different goals, data for the two groups were analyzed separately.

One-hour morning students:

- All of the students in the morning program were in the sixth grade. The students were reported to be either Native American (58.8 percent) or Caucasian (41.2 percent).
- Academic deficiency was the primary reason for referral (82.4 percent), although three of the students were referred because of social/emotional adjustment issues. All but one of the students were returned to the traditional school program at the end of the year.
- Although the majority of the students were referred due to academic issues, they participated in the program’s individual and group counseling services. The students averaged 39.19 counseling sessions during the year; a mean of 2.31 sessions per week.

The following table presents the pre and post-program averages for the students in the one-hour morning program.

Variable	N	Pre-program	Post-program	Statistically Significant*
GPA	16	2.12	2.27	No
Absences	16	5.31	3.69	No
Days ISS	16	0.00	0.38	No
Courses Failed	16	0.38	0.31	No
WRAT Reading	16	97.13	98.69	No
WRAT Math	16	95.75	97.25	No
WRAT Spelling	16	98.88	98.13	No

* = $p < .05$.

No statistically significant changes were noted between the students’ pre and post intervention status on the set of academic and behavioral variables.

Two-hour afternoon students.

- Of the nineteen students in the afternoon program, 14 were in the program for their first year. The afternoon students were either in the fifth (61.9 percent) or the sixth (38.1 percent) grades. More males than females were served as were more Caucasian (71.4 percent) than minority students (28.6 percent).
- The primary reason for referral to the afternoon program was social/emotional adjustment issues than academic difficulties. At the end of the year, 57.1 percent of the students were returned to the traditional program. 14.3 percent were expected to continue in the program next year, 19 percent moved, 4.8 percent were suspended until the end of the year, and one student’s reason for exit was reported as “other.”
- Individual, group, and family counseling service were available for the students. They averaged 34.4 individual, 43.1 group, and 2.35 family counseling sessions during the year. Students participated in an average of 3.87 counseling sessions per week of enrollment.

The following table presents the pre and post-program averages for the students in the afternoon program.

Variable	N	Pre-program	Post-program	Statistically Significant*
GPA	17	2.37	2.91	Yes
Absences	16	3.56	2.38	No
Days ISS	16	0.38	0.44	No
Courses Failed	15	0.27	0.13	No
WRAT Reading	16	90.69	94.69	Yes
WRAT Math	16	94.06	99.06	No
WRAT Spelling	16	91.06	91.50	No

* = $p < .05$.

The results of the analyses indicated that the afternoon students made reliable academic gains during the year. Their total grade point average increased from a mid to a high “C” and they showed an increase on the Reading subtest of the Wide Range Achievement Test-III, a screening instrument. No reliable change was noted on the behavioral variables (absences and suspensions); however, the students’ pre-program levels did not indicate that these were an area of concern. Three of the twenty students were referred to in-school-suspension.

The site principal, counselor, teachers, parents, and students were surveyed by the REACH project regarding the students in the program. The principal and counselor agreed that the program had an effect on students attendance, behavior and self-esteem and that it had been a beneficial experience for the students.

Surveys were returned by six of the teachers. (Twenty surveys were returned in 2001-2002; therefore, the results should be interpreted with caution.) The six teachers agreed that the attendance of the REACH students had improved and that the program was responsible for impacting student behavior and self-esteem. The teachers did not give as strong responses to the question that asked if the students’ academic performance had improved. Most answered with a response of “some.” All of the teachers agreed that the program was beneficial to the students. Suggestions for changes from the teachers included:

- Presence of a positive male role model.
- Special events, such as field trips, that only the REACH students could attend.
- Giving students flexibility of attending in the morning or the afternoon.

A total of 12 parent surveys was returned. Parent responses regarding behavior and academic achievement tended to be more critical of the program and the students than those of the school personnel. However, when asked if they would want their child to continue in the program or if they would recommend the program or other parents, all but one responded “Yes.”

Sixteen student surveys were analyzed, less than half of those who attended the program. Two-thirds of the students indicated that their behavior, self-esteem, and academic progress had improved while attending the class. When asked what they like best about REACH, more than half of the students mentioned the games that they played. The teacher(s) was also mentioned by several students. When asked in what ways did REACH help the most, most of the comments were about finishing homework or assistance with school work. Few of the students had suggestions for changes to the programs. Those with suggestions included:

- *I think we should get our own partners and I think we should play more games.*
- *I think we should get to pick our own partners.*
- *More free days.*
- *I would change AR till the end of REACH.*

Recommendation

The program staff worked hard this year to generate more parental involvement. Links were also made with many community resources. The instructors believed that their students displayed remarkable transformations and grew in self-confidence, self-control, and teamwork. The one-hour program was not as successful as the two-hour program. The district may want to examine factors other than the intervention duration that differentiate the two programs in an effort to give students in both groups the same opportunities. This program is recommended for a third year of funding.

**Tulsa Public Schools
2002-2003**

Program name: Project A.C.C.E.P.T.	Contact person: Rick Palazzo
Days/Hours of operation: Monday - Friday/8:45 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	State funding: High Challenge: \$81,927.00
Number of students served: 23	Funding Year: 3
Grades served: 1 - 5	Staffing: 2 FT Teachers, 2 FT Aides, 1 Counselor

The process evaluation was focused upon the project’s objectives, which are stated below. The outcome evaluation was focused upon student achievement as measured by class grades and achievement test scores.

Objective 1: Academic Instructional Component

The program remained comprised of students below grade level. The educative focus was in the areas of math, reading, and language. While each teacher continued to implement numerous hands-on activities that actively engaged students in the learning process, reading was emphasized. Each teacher involved students in the reading process by reading aloud, by acting out the story, and by discussing the story using higher order thinking skills. Students were excited to share their activities with the OTAC field coordinator during site visits.

Objective 2: Positive Behavior Component

A counselor from The Brown Schools continued to provide counseling services through a contract with Tulsa Public Schools. Shannon Hillier, the fifth counselor in two and one-half years was hired. She brought continuity to the program and developed a successful incentive program using a token economy, consequences for choices, and behavior plans. Students received popsicle sticks for appropriate behavior. Each stick represented a dollar amount and at the end of each day they could purchase items such as candy, toys, music, etc. with their sticks. The OTAC field coordinator observed many students saving their sticks for larger purchases. The incentive was two-fold in that students earned each stick for good behavior, but also learned the meaning of saving and delayed gratification. It was reported that appropriate student behavior increased as a result of the program.

A more structured “time-out” was implemented. When necessary, a five-minute time-out was used for younger students and a ten-minute session was used for older students. Staff worked with the students using a “Think Sheet” to review behavior, other choices, and positive and negative consequences to behavior choices.

Objective 3: Parental Involvement Component

Ms. Hillier met with parents regarding behavior plans, student contracts, and ways to help their student on an individual basis. A “Parenting Family Night” was planned so that

parents could attend a variety of sessions. Ms. Hillier discovered that many parents would not attend group sessions; she had more success meeting individually with parents. She has also communicated with parents through notes sent home and through surveys.

The district provided data from a 26-item parent survey administered this year. Data was reported from seven parents of Project A.C.C.E.P.T. students. In general, the parents expressed satisfaction with the school, especially information on their child's activities and progress, their child's safety, and the academic programs and materials. The only item that generated a majority of negative responses was an item concerning a shorter winter holiday break. All seven parents rated the school as either Good (6 parents) or Excellent (1 parent). As in most school surveys, the ratings for the district were lower than the ratings for the school.

Objective 4: Professional Development Component

The staff attended numerous professional development activities. These included Functional Behavior Assessment, Attention Deficit Disorder, Classroom Management, Discipline Procedures, and Reading Methods. It was reported that the activities were worthwhile, good information was gained, and new ideas were implemented into the classroom.

Objective 5: Program Transition

It was reported to the OTAC field coordinator that the program staff assisted five students in the successful transition back to their home schools. The success was due to the intense communication the Project A.C.C.E.P.T. staff developed with the traditional teachers at each site.

Student data analyses. Behavioral and academic information was provided for 23 students served in the Tulsa A.C.C.E.P.T. project. The students ranged in grade level from one to five with the fifth grade representing the largest group (34.8 percent). 82.6% of the students served were minority students. African-Americans accounted for 78.3% of the students in the program.

The following table presents the pre- and post-program averages for the students in the Tulsa program. Students showed significant improvement on both academic and behavioral measures. The increase in class grades, however, were not substantiated by increases in scores on achievement tests.

Variable	N	Pre-program	Post-program	Statistically Significant*
GPA	17	1.99	3.15	Significant Improvement
Absences	19	14.53	6.16	Significant Improvement
In-school Suspension	18	13.17	5.08	No
Suspended Days	20	10.55	2.95	No
Courses Failed	20	1.15	0.65	No
W-J Reading NCE Score	16	38.00	32.94	No
W-J Math NCE Score	16	46.06	42.75	No
Conner's Opposition	17	83.35	75.53	Significant improvement
Conner's Cognitive	17	69.88	58.88	Significant Improvement
Conner's Hyperactivity	17	73.82	64.41	Significant Improvement
Conner's ADHD	17	75.53	59.88	Significant Improvement

* = $p < .05$. A significant difference is determined by the use of specific statistical techniques which take into account the number of students and the direction and size of the change. In some cases, a difference that appears large may not be statistically significant. Generally, such results suggest that certain characteristics of the data, such as extreme scores or number of students in the analysis, make the observed change unreliable.

All of the students were male and had been referred to the program because of behavioral difficulties. All of the students participated in behavior management and counseling services. The students averaged 5.96 individual, 82.65 group, and 8.96 family counseling sessions during the year. The behavioral data summarized above showed substantial progress on a number of behavioral variables. Absences were markedly reduced and scores on all of the subtests of the Conner's Teacher Rating Scale (Revised) showed improvement. The chart below illustrates the degree of improvement. Prior to program entry, the participants' average Conner's score on all four scales was in the highest category – Markedly Atypical. Statistically significant improvement was noted on all four subscales; more importantly, two of the subscale averages had been reduced to the Slightly Atypical range.

It should be noted that no change was noted in the number of days that students were suspended from school. The apparent difference is misleading because a few students' pre-program suspension numbers were greater than 30 days which inflated the overall average. While participating in the project, all but one student was assigned to ISS at least once during the semester. In addition, 45 percent of the students were suspended out-of-school for three days or more while enrolled in the program. This is a marked change from prior years in which the staff managed student behavior without resorting to suspension.

Interpretive Guidelines for Conner's Scale T-Scores and Percentiles*		
T-Score	Percentile	Guideline
70+	98+	Markedly Atypical (Indicates Significant Problem)
66-70	95-98	Moderately Atypical (Indicates Significant Problem)
61-65	86-94	Mildly Atypical (Possible Significant Problem)
56-60	74-85	Slightly Atypical (Borderline: Should raise concern)
45-55	27-73	Average (Typical Score: Should not raise concern)
40-44	16-26	Slightly Atypical (Low scores are good: Not a concern)
35-39	6-15	Mildly Atypical (Low scores are good: Not a concern)
30-34	2-5	Moderately Atypical (Low scores are good: Not a concern)
<30	<2	Markedly Atypical (Low scores are good: Not a concern)

*Reprinted from the test manual

Student status at the end of the year indicated that 56.5 of the students were expected to continue in the program next year, 30.4 percent were returned to the traditional program, and 13.0 percent moved from the district.

Recommendations

- The Project A.C.C.E.P.T. staff is encouraged to continue professional development activities geared to improving their ability to meet the needs of their students. They are also encouraged to continue to be involved in the successful transition of their students back to the traditional schools.
- Student behavior improved due to the intensive reinforcement system put into place during the school year. The staff is encouraged to continue the “token economy.”
- Students and staff have experienced five counselors in two and one-half years. It is recommended that every effort be given to retain the current counselor to sustain continuity.
- Parental participation has been problematic. Efforts must be made to develop parent training sessions with incentives for participation.

The program has demonstrated positive change in the young students served, and Oklahoma needs effective intervention models for high-risk elementary-level children. Because of the number of students suspended from school this year, OTAC recommends an additional year of study before determining whether to validate Project ACCEPT as effective. At this point, the program would qualify as a “promising practice,” and is thus recommended for continued funding in 2003-04.