

LEARN WELL



United Way
of Tarrant County

THE EDUCATION INITIATIVE

2020 BOLD GOAL:

20% more on-time graduations at United Way selected schools

Dropping out of school is not a single event, but a culmination of events over time. We've identified three pressure points on the path to graduation.

1 EARLY LEARNING is closely linked with school achievement, but studies show that disadvantaged children usually start school two years behind their peers.

- The average four-year-old on public assistance has only heard half the words a child from a working-class family has heard (Hart & Risley, 1995).

2 THIRD GRADE READING SKILLS are particularly vital, because these students are "reading to learn;" if these skills are not mastered in the early years, children will fall further and further behind.

- High school graduation rates can be predicted by 3rd grade reading success (Slavin et al. 1994).

3 MIDDLE SCHOOL TRANSITION is a time of high-risk for future high school dropouts.

- Struggling sixth graders have a less than 10% chance of graduating high school on time (Balfanz and Herzog, 2006).

HOW WE WILL SUCCEED:

INVOLVE PARENTS through instructive programs that will empower them to be advocates for their children's education; increase their access to resources essential to literacy development; and inform them about programs and opportunities for their children.

ENGAGE AND SUPPORT STUDENTS by providing opportunities for involvement in extracurricular activities and challenging course work; offering guidance in goal setting and career planning; and monitoring grades, attendance and behavior to identify struggling students and intervene before they fall further behind.

COLLABORATE WITH SCHOOLS to ensure continuity in goals and strategies; increase child care providers' understanding of what children need to know before starting school; and evaluate current education strategies and activities for effectiveness.

OUR ROLE:

- Champion the Initiative by engaging students, parents and institutions in new ways to improve graduation rates of low-income students in targeted high schools.
- Monitor Progress through regular evaluations and course corrections.



LEARN WELL: THE EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Lead Organizations:

Early Learning/Kindergarten Readiness: Arlington Independent School District and Birdville Independent School District
 Third Grade Reading: Fort Worth Independent School District
 Middle School Readiness: Fort Worth Independent School District

Grantee	Summary
<p>Early Learning/ Kindergarten Readiness: Arlington Independent School District (AISD)</p>	<p>Arlington ISD will provide early literacy activities to 3- and 4-year-olds and their families to ensure these economically disadvantaged children develop the language, literacy, cognitive, social and emotional skills needed to be successful when entering kindergarten. The proposal includes a day program, evening sessions to accommodate working parents, and the Read Every Day with Dad initiative to engage fathers.</p> <p>Partners/Subcontractors: Arlington Public Library, Dental Health for Arlington, JPS Health Network, Lions Club, Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex and the National Association of School Nurses</p>
<p>Birdville Independent School District (BISD)</p>	<p>Birdville ISD will implement the Parents as Teachers model, a nationally recognized, research-based curriculum to prepare economically disadvantaged children birth to age 5 in the 76117 ZIP code area for school by engaging parents in programs that teach about school readiness, offering health screenings, and providing professional development/mentoring opportunities to child care providers serving children in this area.</p> <p>Partners/Subcontractors: Camp Fire USA</p>
<p>Third Grade Reading: Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD)</p>	<p>Fort Worth ISD will provide two hours of tutoring three days a week to students who are not proficient readers in first through third grades at D.K. Sellars, Clifford Davis and William Green Elementary Schools in the 76119 ZIP code area. The goal is to bring the children up to grade level reading ability by focusing on reading, writing, phonics, word study, comprehension and opportunities to write about reading. Parents will be invited to observe the students and learn how they can support their children at home. The Benchmark System will be used to determine which children need the intervention program.</p> <p>Partners/Subcontractors: Fort Worth Public Library</p>
<p>Middle School Readiness: Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD)</p>	<p>Fort Worth ISD will use College and Career Readiness Coaches (CCR) to provide targeted interventions to middle school students most at risk of dropping out of school and engage parents in helping to design their child's path to academic success.</p> <p>Partners/Subcontractors: Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Texas, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Fort Worth, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, Tarrant County Youth Collaboration, Texas Women's University, University of North Texas, University of North Texas Health Science Center and Workforce Solutions</p>
<p>Dolly Parton Imagination Library</p>	<p>Literacy program providing a book a month for registered preschoolers in ZIP codes 76014 (Arlington) and 76117 (Haltom City)</p>
<p>University of Texas at Arlington Community Services Center</p>	<p>Initiative Independent Evaluator</p>

Additional initiative funding provided by:

August 2010

Bank of America
 Colonial Country Club Charitable Fund of the Community Foundation of North Texas
 HealthMarkets
 IBM
 Mid-Cities Pacesetters Rotary Club
 M. J. and Alice S. Neeley Foundation
 Northeast Leadership Forum
 Partners Together for Health
(The foundation for JPS Health Network)
 Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County