Texas Charter School Start-Up Grant (2011–2015) Evaluation First Comprehensive Report

December 2017

Submitted to:
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Tables

Figures

Acronyms and Abbreviations

APP	Annual Performance Report
CCR	College and Career Readiness
CSP	Charter School Program
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
ICF	ICF International
ISD	Independent School District
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act
NSD	Student Assessment Division
OEC	Office of Early Childhood Education
RFA	Request for Application
SEA	State Education Agency
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
STAAR®	State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness
TEA	Texas Education Agency
TEC	Texas Education Code
UCS	Urban Charter School

Highlights

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Introduction

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Evaluation Approach and Data Sources

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Data Sources

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Public Charter School Start-Up Grant Applications. A C I g
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Public Charter School Start-Up Grantee Expenditure Data (Expenditure Data).
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Surveys of Public Charter School Start-Up Grantee Administrators, Teachers, and Charter Holder Board Members. [illegible] 2012 [illegible] 2013 [illegible] [illegible]

Site Visit Interviews and Focus Groups. [illegible] May 2014. [illegible]

Structure of the Report

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- **Chapter 2** [illegible] R[illegible] Q[illegible] 2, [illegible]
- **Chapter 3** [illegible] R[illegible] Q[illegible] 1 [illegible] 2 [illegible] R[illegible] Q[illegible] 3, 4, [illegible] 5.

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- **Appendix A** [illegible]
- **Appendix B** [illegible]

- Appendix C

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Chapter 1: Grantee Use of Charter School Funds

Introduction

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Profile of Grant Expenditures Through September 30, 2014

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Table 1.2. Percentage of Grant Funds Spent by Cohort I and Cohort II Public Charter School Start-Up Grantees

	Charter Type	Percentage of Charter School Start-Up Grant Funds Spent
All Schools in Cohort I and Cohort II Average		97%
Cohort I (n = 11) Average		96%
Av Ay	OEC	100%
Cp Ay	OEC	100%
Hg Pk Ca Tg Cp	CC	85%
Iy Pg MS	NSD	100%
Lg Pp Sb	OEC	100%
Nd Ay Ag	OEC	100%
Pa Pg Ay	NSD	100%
Pn Ag Ay	OEC	100%
Rv Tg Ma Ca Sb	CC	92%
Ta Ey Cg Hg Sb	CC	80%
W Pg	A. L P	99%
Cohort II (n = 14) Average		99%
Ab Av	OEC	100%
Eb Ag	NSD	100%
Fk Cg Pg Ay	OEC	100%
Fd Ca Ag	NSD	95%
Ia Hy T Ty	UCS	100%
KIPP Ca Vg MS	CC	100%
Lg Pg Ay	OEC	100%
Le Pg Sd	NSD	100%
Mi As Ag	NSD	83%
Pn Pg Ay	OEC	100%

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Figure 1.1. Public Charter School Start-Up Grantee Expenditures Between Planning and Implementation by Cohort

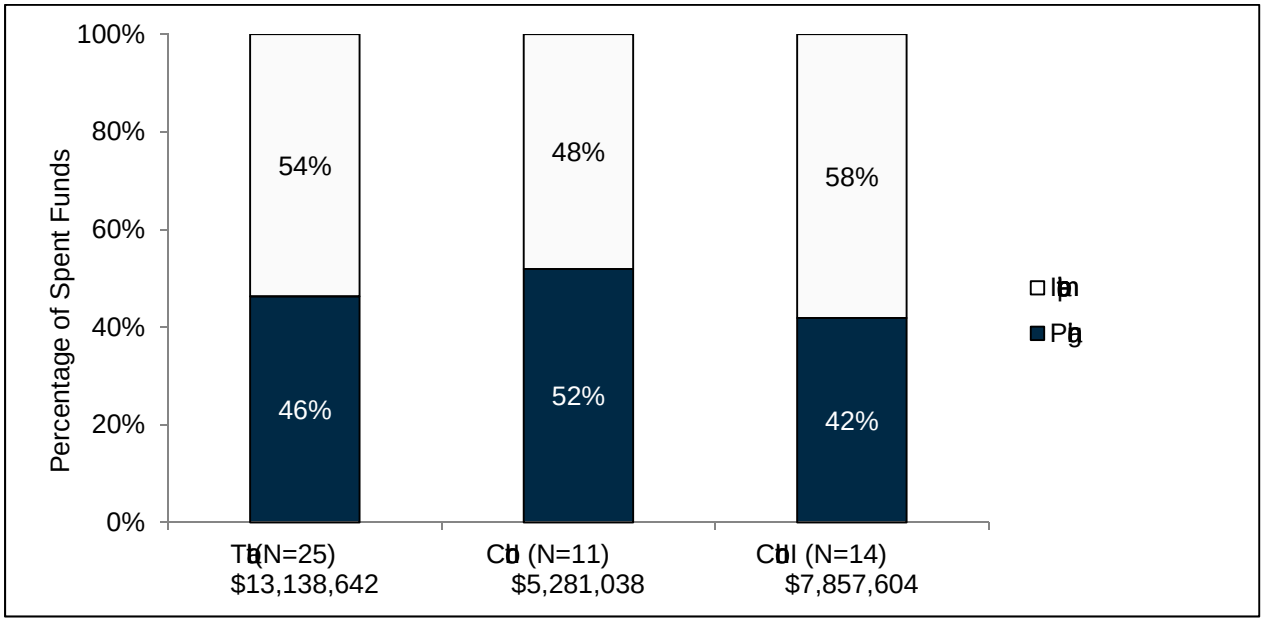

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Figure 1.2. Public Charter School Start-Up Grantee Expenditures by Expense Category, Overall and by Cohort

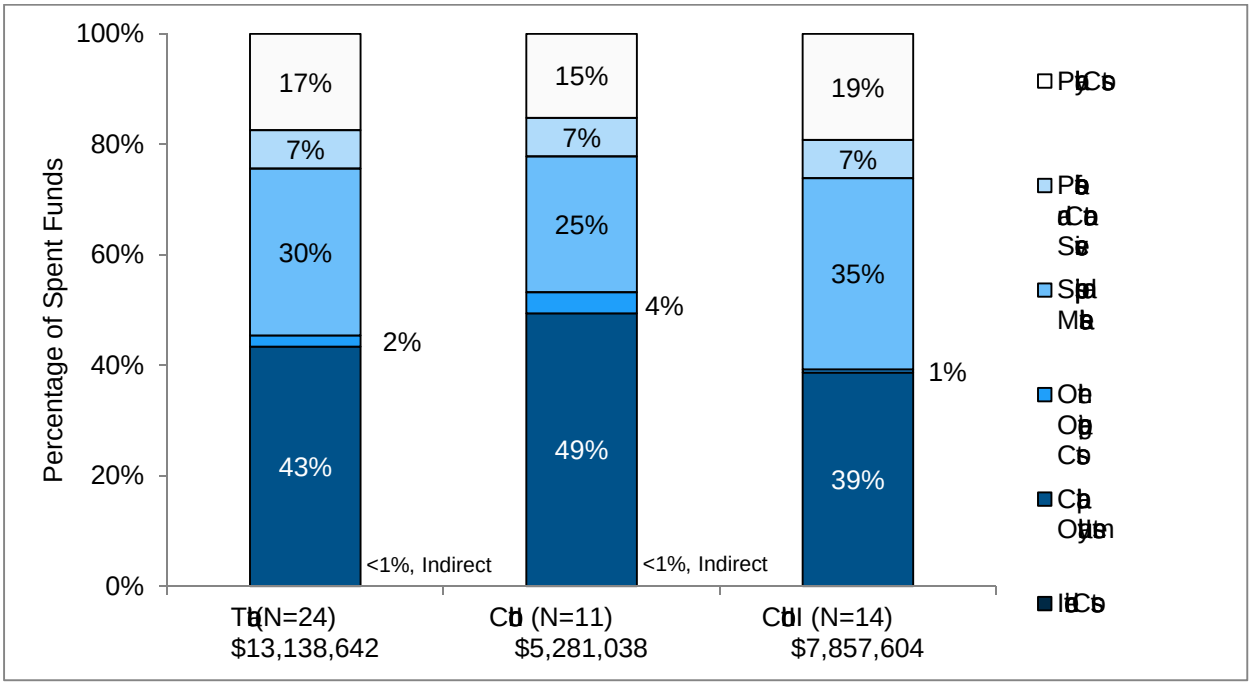

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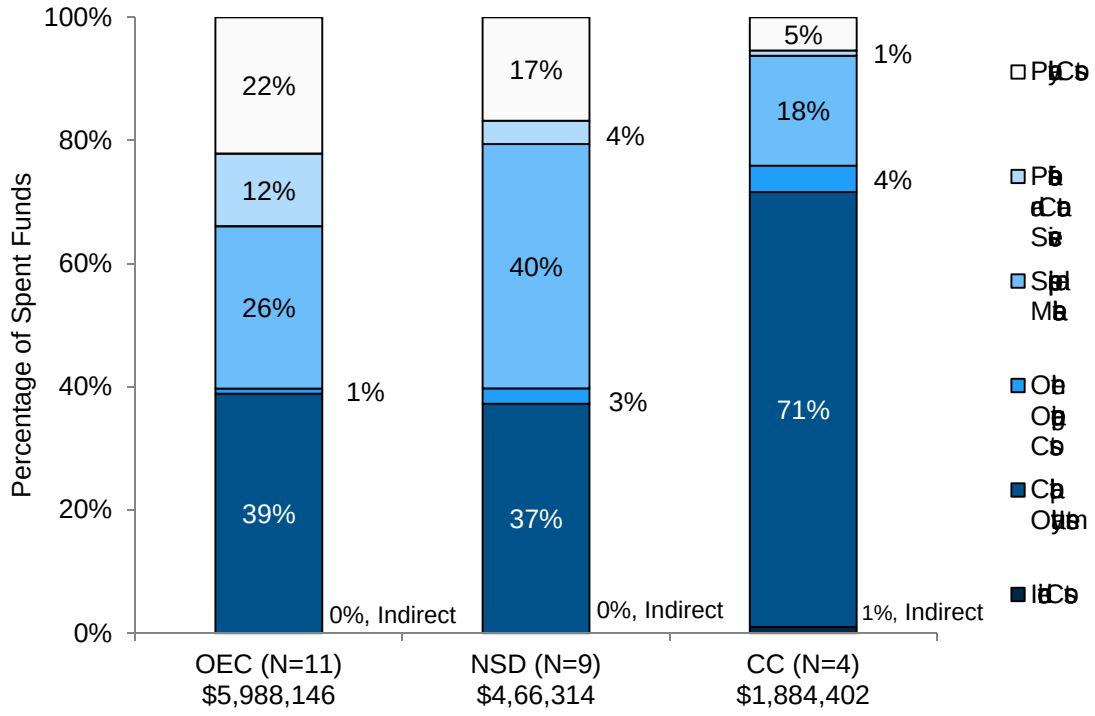
Figure 1.3. Public Charter School Start-Up Grantee Expenditure Categories by School Type (Cohorts I and II Combined)



Expenditure Category	Product or Service	Percentage of Grantees Reporting Having Spent Public Charter School Start-Up Grant Funds		
		Cohort I (n = 11)	Cohort II (n = 14)	All (n = 25)
[illegible]	[illegible]	27%	29%	28%
[illegible]	[illegible]	100%	86%	92%
[illegible]	[illegible]	36%	43%	40%
[illegible]	[illegible]	73%	36%	52%
[illegible]	[illegible]	64%	36%	48%
[illegible]	[illegible]	45%	21%	32%
[illegible]	[illegible]	0%	7%	4%
[illegible]	[illegible]	91%	79%	84%
[illegible]	[illegible]	91%	86%	88%

Table 1.6. Public Charter School Start-Up Grante es' Use of Charter School Start-Up Grant Funds, by Product or Service and Charter Type

Expenditure Category	Product or Service	Percentage of Grantees That Spent Public Charter School Start-Up Grant Funds		
		OEC (n = 11)	NSD (n = 9)	CC (n = 4)
Ite Pro Ma	Ass	36%	22%	25%
Ite Pro Ma	Cla Tig Ha W	82%	100%	100%
Ite Pro Ma	Cu Co	64%	22%	25%
Ite Pro Ma	Cu Do	73%	0%	100%
Ite Pro Ma	Ite Sof W	91%	0%	50%
Ite Pro Ma	La Ma Equ	45%	11%	50%
Ite Pro Ma	Sec Sch	9%	0%	0%
Ite Pro Ma	Sp Ma	100%	67%	100%
Ite Pro Ma	Th Dis Ma Sp	91%	89%	100%
Oth Ser (eg Leg Sup Ope	Ad (ex fo	18%	22%	0%
Oth Ser (eg Leg Sup Ope	Cy Dis Ex	45%	11%	50%
Oth Ser (eg Leg Sup Ope	Fo dis fo W [a]	18%	22%	0%
Oth Ser (eg Leg Sup Ope	Sp Leg Ser Re Ch Sch Sta Up	36%	0%	0%
Oth Ser (eg Leg Sup Ope	Tig Sto fo Gr Ass	9%	0%	0%
Pla Dev	Ch Pla Dis Ser (eg pro)	55%	11%	75%
Pla Dev	Rig Fa Sta Ass Ch W	45%	11%	25%
Pla Dev	Th Re Sch fo Ass Pla Dev	45%	0%	25%
Sch Fac Enh	Bu Re & Re [b]	9%	0%	0%
Sch Fac Enh	Ch Fix	100%	67%	100%
Sch Fac Enh	Fa Mg Sta Tig	64%	0%	0%

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Data Sources

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Expenditure Data

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Stakeholder Surveys

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Potential Best Practice 3: Demonstrating fl exibility in planning and use of funds throughout the grant period helped grantees with implementation.
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Potential Best Practice 5: Integrating technology with the curriculum and instructional approaches helped grantees address gaps and reinforce their school models.

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Spending by Cohort I grantees exhibited a pattern of being distributed more widely across expenditure categories, both for general funds from other sources and for Public Charter School Start-Up Grant funds, compared to that of Cohort II. Figu

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Analysis of Expenditure Data suggested that a pattern in spending differences across expenditure categories existed based on charter school type. W

Patterns in spending on individual products and services may be more attributable to charter type, rather than cohort, adding evidence to the conclusion that grantees with different charter types spent grant funds differently. A

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High-performing start-up grantees used evidence to inform practice, particularly in making decisions about policies, activities, and purchases. Re

Integrating technology with curriculum and instructional approaches helped grantees address gaps and reinforce their school models. Th

Creating a collaborative relationship among stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, and parents helped improve the school culture. In

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Next Steps

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Research Question 3: Within high-performing charter schools, to what extent do student outcomes differ by charter school type, mission, or focus?

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Research Question 4: To what extent do student and school outcomes differ between high-performing charter schools and traditional neighborhood schools?

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Research Question 5: To what extent do student and school outcomes differ between charter schools approved and funded through the 2010–2015 competitive grant process and those approved for noncompetitive funding in 2010–2011 and prior to that time?

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Appendix B:
Public Charter School Start-Up Grant Evaluation Methodology

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Charter School Campus Site Visits

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Teachers.

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Leadership Prep School (LPS)

2011–12 and 2012–13 School Years

Year Opened: 2011–12 school year

Current Grades: K–5

Geographic Area(s) Served: Frisco area

Charter Type: Open-enrollment Charter

Charter Holder: Leadership Prep School

Relationship with Charter Holder: LPS is its own Local Education Agency.

Summary of School Mission/Vision: To focus on five key areas: parent partnership, leadership development, academics, creativity, and excellence.

Student Enrollment

Year	# of Students	Grades
2011–12:	250	K–4
2012–13:	350	K–5

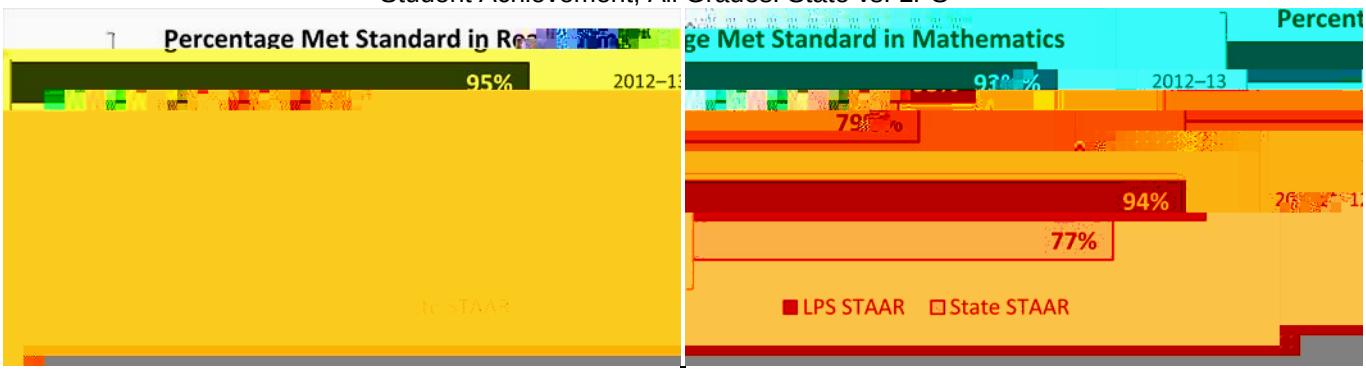
Special Categories

Economically Disadvantaged: 5%

Race/Ethnicity*

Asian:	45%	White:	34%
Black:	7%	Other:	4%
Hispanic:	10%		

Student Achievement, All Grades: State vs. LPS



Original Grant Budget vs. Final Grant Expenditures**

Premier Learning Academy (PLA)

2011–12 and 2012–13 School Years

Year Opened: 2011–12 school year

Charter Type: New School Designated Under an Existing Charter

Current Grades: K–12

Charter Holder: Premier Learning Academy, Inc.

Geographic Area(s) Served: Dallas area

Relationship with Charter Holder: PLA, Inc. is its own Local Education Agency.

Summary of School Mission/Vision: To provide a nurturing educational experience with a strong emphasis on technology-based learning, real world experiences, and character development.

Rhodes Technology and Media Charter School (RTM) 2011–12 and 2012–13 School Years

Year Opened: 2011–12 school year
Current Grades: 6–8
Geographic Area(s) Served: San Antonio area
Charter Type: Campus Charter
Charter Holder: San Antonio ISD (SAISD)
Relationship with Charter Holder: SAISD has overall policy-setting and enforcing authority. The Campus Leadership Team makes day-to-day decisions.

Summary of School Mission/Vision: To provide a technology-based, interdisciplinary learning experience that prepares students with the essential knowledge and skills necessary to further their education and succeed in future careers.

Student Enrollment

Year	# of Students	Grades
2011–12:	778	6–8
2012–13:	808	6–8

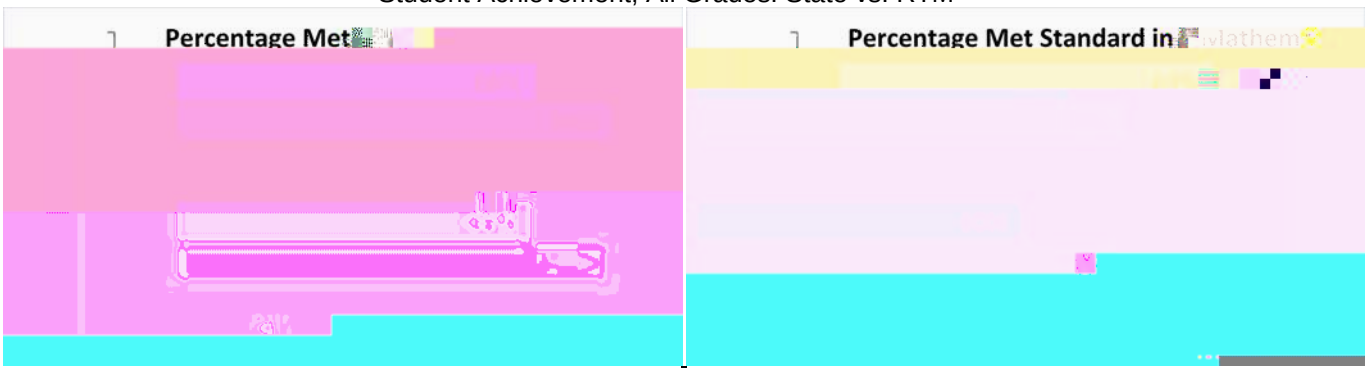
Special Categories

Economically Disadvantaged:	93%
English Language Learners:	10%
Special Education:	9%

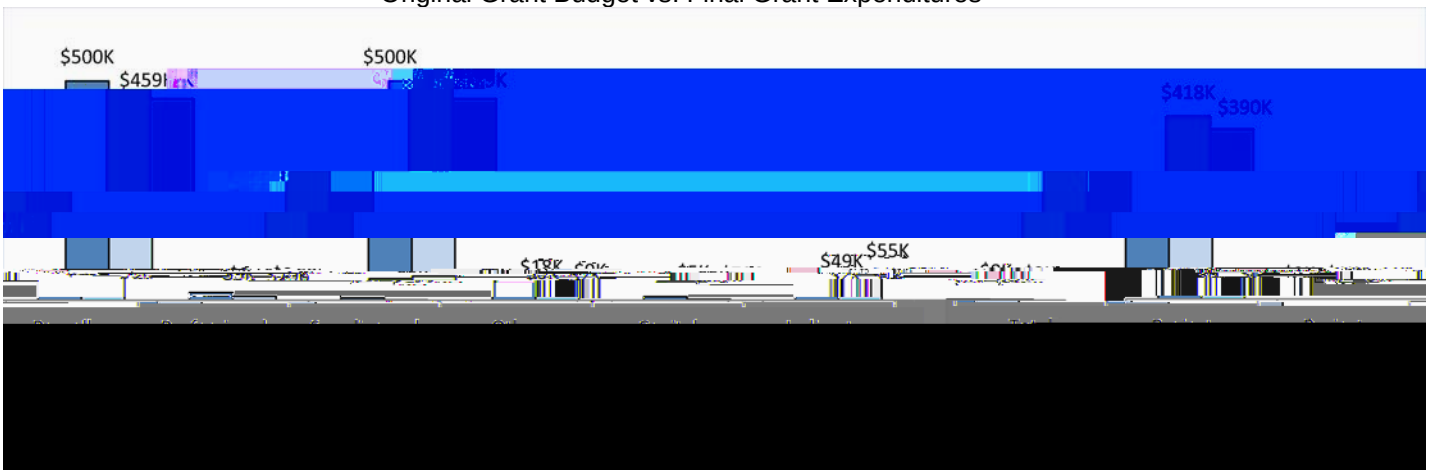
Race/Ethnicity*

Asian:	0%	White:	2%
Black:	2%	Other:	0%
Hispanic:	97%		

Student Achievement, All Grades: State vs. RTM



Original Grant Budget vs. Final Grant Expenditures**



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Travis Early College High School (TECHS) 2011–12 and 2012–13 School Years

Year Opened: 2011–12 school year

Current Grades: 9–12

Geographic Area(s) Served: San Antonio area

Charter Type: Campus Charter

Charter Holder: San Antonio ISD (SAISD)

Relationship with Charter Holder: SAISD has overall policy-setting and enforcing authority. The Campus Leadership Team makes day-to-day decisions.

Summary of School Mission/Vision: To graduate all students and improve their lives through a quality education that prepares students for success in higher education.

Student Enrollment

Year	# of Students	Grades
2011–12:	351	9–12
2012–13:	335	9–12

Race/Ethnicity*

Asian:	<1%	White:	3%
Black:	1%	Other:	1%
Hispanic:	95%		

William A. Lawson Institute for Peace and Prosperity Preparatory Academy (WALIPP)

2011–12 and 2012–13 School Years

Year Opened: 2011–12 school year

Current Grades: 6–9

Geographic Area(s) Served: Houston area

Charter Type: Open-enrollment Charter

Charter Holder: WALIPP

Relationship with Charter Holder: The campus reports to the charter holder, but retains day-to-day decision-making authority.

Summary of School Mission/Vision: To provide a rigorous, energy-infused curriculum incorporating project-based learning, technology, and social development. Students will have the tools needed to succeed in college and society. Each student is recognized as an individual with unique abilities, needs, and interests.

Student Enrollment

Year	# of Students	Grades
2011–12:	276	6–8
2012–13:	229	6–8

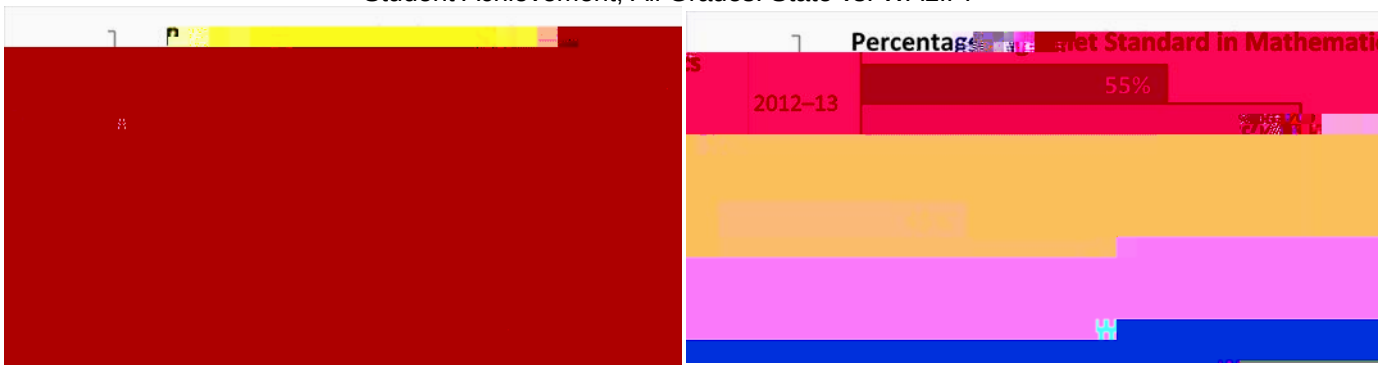
Special Categories

Economically Disadvantaged:	64%
English Language Learners:	4%
Special Education:	6%

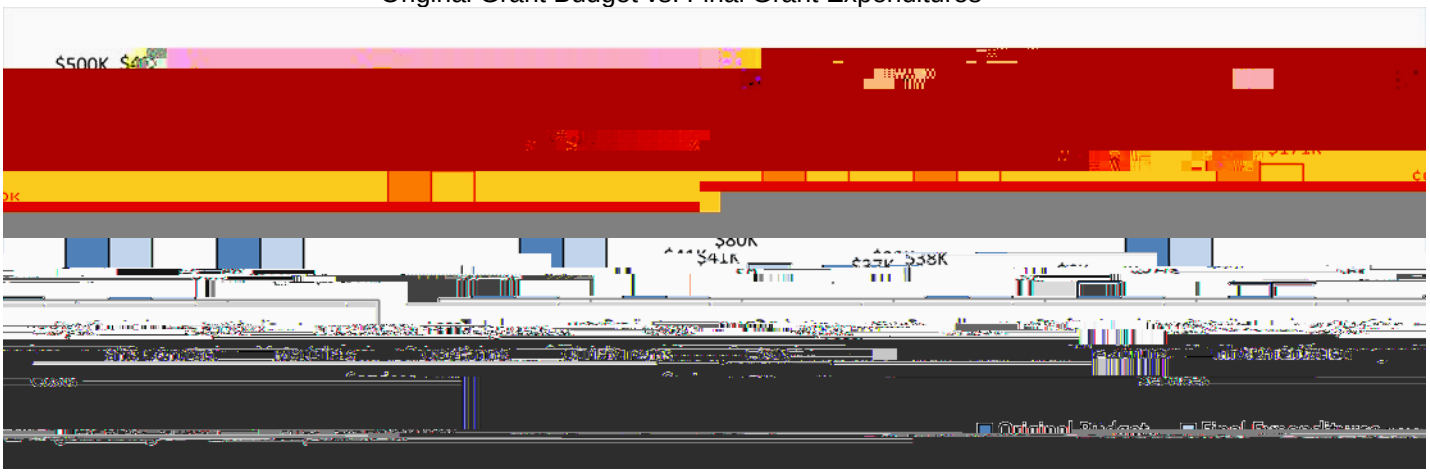
Race/Ethnicity*

Asian:	0%	White:	<1%
Black:	92%	Other:	1%
Hispanic:	7%		

Student Achievement, All Grades: State vs. WALIPP



Original Grant Budget vs. Final Grant Expenditures**



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Cohort II

Austin Achieve Public Schools (AAPS)

2012–13 and 2013–14 School Years

Year Opened: 2012–13 school year

Grade(s) at Opening: 6

Geographic Area(s) Served: Austin area

Charter Type: Open-enrollment Charter

Charter Holder: Austin Achieve Public Schools Inc.

Relationship with Charter Holder: Austin Achieve Pubic Schools is its own LEA.

Summary of School Mission/Vision: To set high standards of achievement; to provide a rigorous academic curriculum, interventions, and supports; to prepare students to attend and excel at the nation's top colleges; and to become a model for reform by leveraging success and innovation.

Student Enrollment

Year	# of Students	Grades
2012–13:	118	6
2013–14:	278	6–7

Race/Ethnicity*

Fallbrook College Preparatory Academy (FCPA)

2012–13 and 2013–14 School Years

Year Opened: 2012–13 school year Charter Type: Open-enrollment Charter

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Student Enrollment

Year	# of Students	Grades
2012–13:	352	Kr5Typ
2013–14:	642	Kr5Ty8

Special Categories

Economically Disadvantaged:	57%
English Language Learners:	0%
Special Education:	4%

Race/Ethnicity*

Asian:	1%	White:	4%
Black:	93%	Other:	1%
Hispanic:	<1%		

Student Achievement, All Grades: State vs. FCPA

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Original Grant Budget vs. Final Grant Expenditures**

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Legacy Preparatory Academy (LPA)

2012–13 and 2013–14 School Years

Year Opened: 2012–13 school year
Grade(s) at Opening: K–7
Geographic Area(s) Served: Dallas, Mesquite, and Richardson areas
Charter Type: Open-enrollment Charter
Charter Holder: Legacy Preparatory Academy
Relationship with Charter Holder: Legacy Preparatory Academy is its own LEA.

Summary of School Mission/Vision: To serve as a model school of excellence, address the needs of all school community stakeholders, and prepare all students to be college- and career-ready by giving them ownership of their learning and instilling the values needed to become successful 21st century leaders.

Student Enrollment

Year	# of Students	Grades
2012–13:	820	K–7
2013–14:	367	K–8

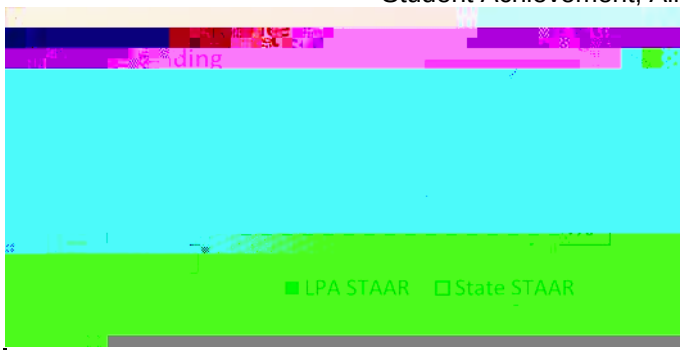
Special Categories

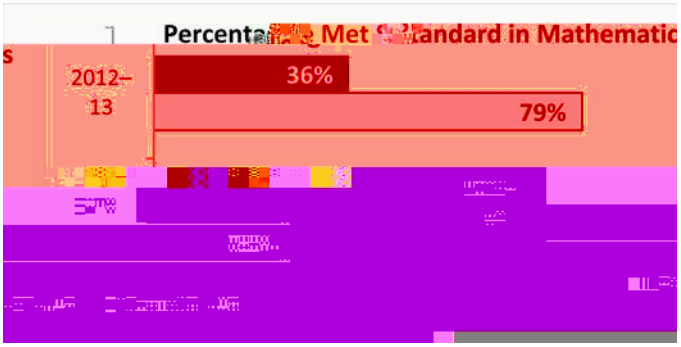
Economically Disadvantaged:	81%
English Language Learners:	24%
Special Education:	0%

Race/Ethnicity*

Asian:	0%	White:	70%
Black:	26%	Other:	1%
Hispanic:	4%		

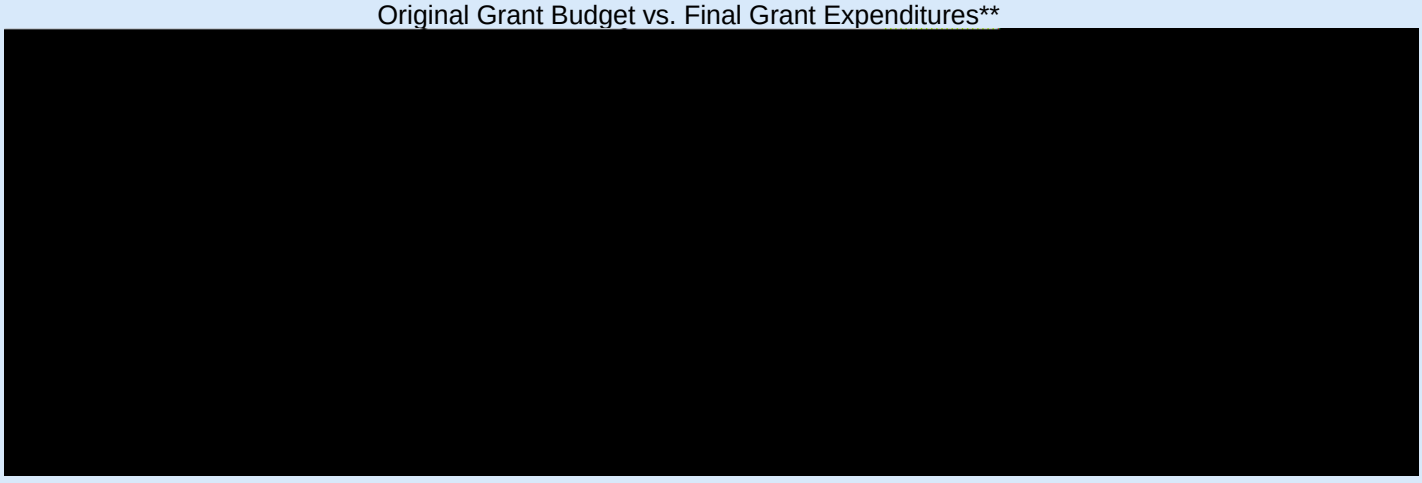
Student Achievement, All Grades: State vs. LPA





NOTE: "Met standard" indicates "At or above the Level II Phase-in 1 standard" on STAAR

Original Grant Budget vs. Final Grant Expenditures**



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Luna Prep. Secondary School (LPSS)

2012–13 and 2013–14 School Years

Year Opened: 2012–13 school year

Charter Type: New School Designated Under an Existing Charter

Grade(s) at Opening: 6–9

Charter Holder: Uplift Education

Geographic Area(s) Served: Dallas area

Relationship with Charter Holder: The charter holder Board of Directors is the governing body with legal responsibility over accountability and performance.

Summary of School Mission/Vision: To prepare scholars, at an early stage, for college and to become respectful independent thinkers and individual leaders. It's all about learning.

Student Enrollment

Year	# of Students	Grades
2012–13:	242	6–9
2013–14:	413	6–10

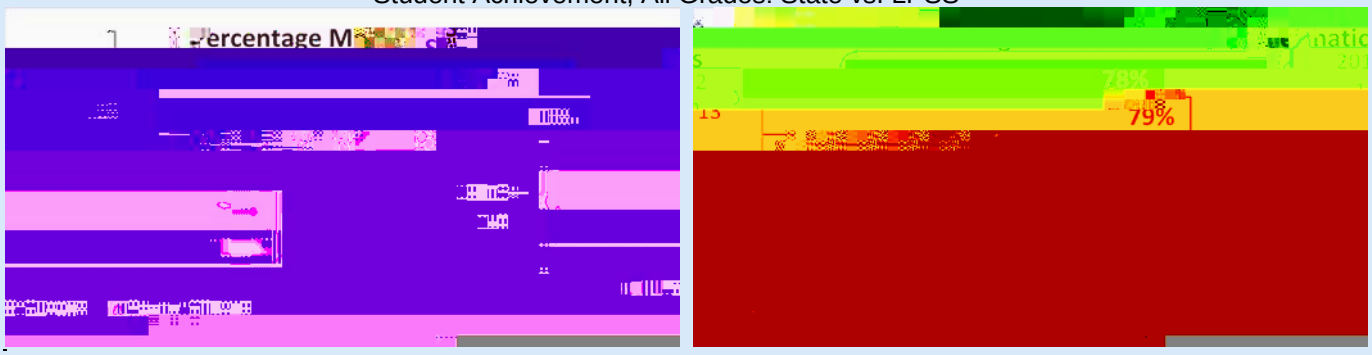
Special Categories

Economically Disadvantaged:	71%
English Language Learners:	26%
Special Education:	11%

Race/Ethnicity*

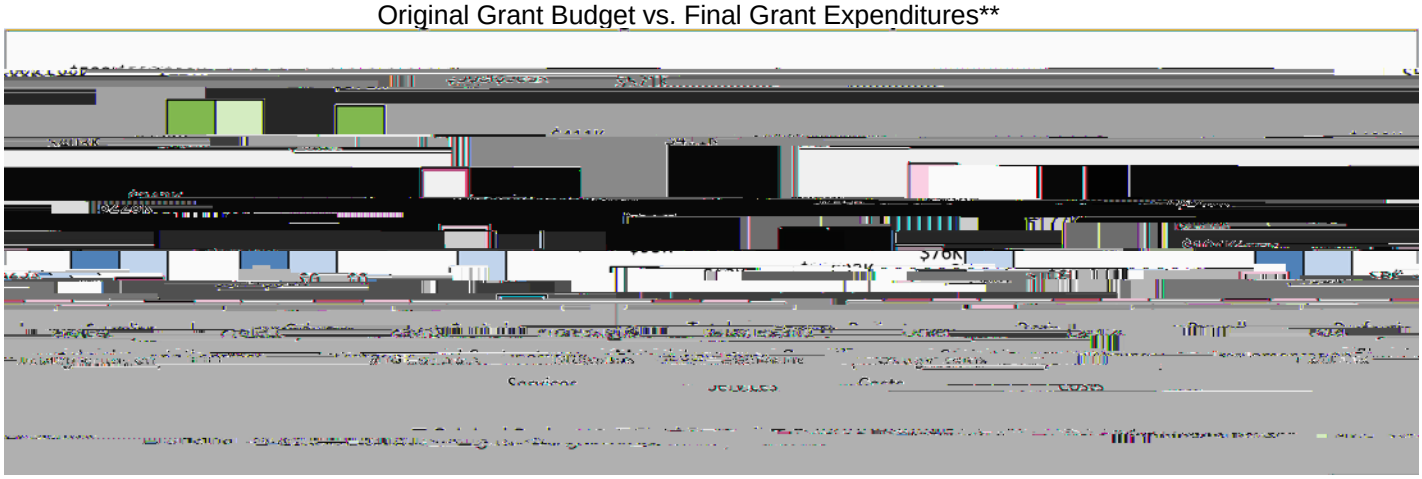
Asian:	1%	White:	71%
Black:	21%	Other:	2%
Hispanic:	5%		

Student Achievement, All Grades: State vs. LPSS



NOTE: "Met standard" indicates "At or above the Level II Phase-in 1 standard" on STAAR

Original Grant Budget vs. Final Grant Expenditures**



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The REAL Learning Academy (REAL)

2012–13 and 2013–14 School Years

Year Opened: 2012–13 school year

Charter Type: New School Designated Under an Existing Charter

Grade(s) at Opening: PK–3

Charter Holder: Eden Park Academy

Geographic Area(s) Served: Austin, Bastrop, and Del Valle areas

Relationship with Charter Holder: The charter holder is its own LEA. The REAL Learning Academy operates as a campus under that charter.

Summary of School Mission/Vision: To develop competent, confident, productive, and responsible young adults who possess the habits, skills, and attitudes needed to succeed; to achieve a balance between the individual and the group, the quality of outcome and the process, and the need for work and play.

Student Enrollment

Year	# of Students	Grades
2012–13:	312	PK–3
2013–14:	368	PK–6

Special Categories

Economically Disadvantaged:	35%
English Language Learners:	5%
Special Education:	6%

Race/Ethnicity*

Asian:	3%	White:	37%
Black:	5%	Other:	7%
Hispanic:	48%		

Student Achievement, All Grades: State vs. REAL

NOTE: "Met standard" indicates "At or above

UME Preparatory Academy (UMEPA)

2012–13 and 2013–14 School Years

Year Opened: 2012–13 school year

Charter Type:

Uplift Mighty Preparatory (UMiP)

2012–13 and 2013–14 School Years

Year Opened: 2012–13 school year

Charter Type: New School Designated Under an Existing Charter

Grade(s) at Opening: K–7

Charter Holder: Uplift Education

Geographic Area(s) Served: Fort Worth area

Relationship with Charter Holder: The charter holder Board of Directors is the governing body with legal responsibility over accountability and performance.

Summary of School Mission/Vision: To prepare scholars for college at an early stage through rigorous academics. Caring and enthusiastic teachers and staff will focus on individualized learning to help the student achieve the advanced mastery of grade level material.

Student Enrollment

Year	# of Students	Grades
2012–13:	348	K–7
2013–14:	553	K–8

Race/Ethnicity*

NOTE: "Met standard" indicates "At or above the Level II Phase-in 1 standard" on STAAR

Uplift Meridian Preparatory (UMP)

Year Opened:

2012–13 and 2013–18chool Years

Original Grant Budget vs. Final Grant Expenditures**