

2016-17 Evaluation of The Neglected and Delinquent Children Program (Promise House and Cottrell House)

Monique C. Mejan, M.A.

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At-a-Glance

Title I, in addition to providing supplemental funding to state and local education agencies which serve a high population of students from low-income families, also establishes prevention and intervention programs for children and youth who are neglected, delinquent, or at risk. This is part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA).¹

The immediate goal of the Neglected and Delinquent Children Program is to enable participants to meet the same student performance standards that all children in the state are expected to meet. The intention for the longer term is that improved academic performance will facilitate the transition of students from these intervention or correctional programs into further education or employment.

The Neglected and Delinquent Children Program in the Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) is comprised of two external agencies: Promise House and Cottrell House. Data in this report are based on program-provided files delivered in June of 2017 as well as the workscope that each institution submitted for the approval of Title 1 funding for the 2016-17 school year.

Program Characteristics and Funding

Promise House

Promise House services to Dallas ISD students focus on the unique needs of the neglected and delinquent student population, which may include homeless, runaway, and other at-risk children and youth, ensuring that these students have a fair, equal and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education. Students in the program live as residents in Promise House facilities for some portion of the school year while they pursue a more permanent solution for living arrangements.

Title 1, Part A funding for Promise House services to Dallas ISD students is intended to provide educational intervention necessary for academic success, particularly for students identified as at-risk for reading, writing, and mathematics failure.

For the 2016-17 school year, Promise House requested Title 1 Part A funding in the amount of \$29,280 to help pay for program costs including contracted tutoring services, supplies and materials, employee travel, and capital purchases.

Cottrell House

Cottrell House services focus on the needs of youths transitioning from the Juvenile Justice System. The stated purpose of Title 1 funding for this program is to provide “research-based learning to enhance the education, employment skills, and further education of the youth in the facility.”²

In addition to providing these youths with academic support – including guiding them through an academic credit recovery program, program activities at Cottrell House include providing training to staff on classroom behavior management, vocational resources, and technology-based learning.

For the 2016-17 school year, Cottrell House requested Title 1 Part D funding in the amount of \$45,000 to help pay for program costs including personnel, undisclosed contracted services, supplies and materials, employee travel, and capital purchases. The amount awarded was \$32,400.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants.

Number of Students Served by Grade Level

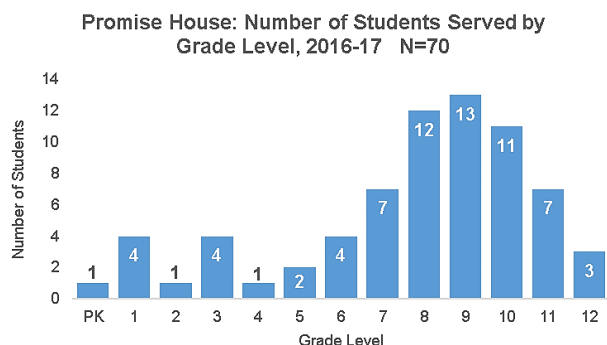
Promise House

Promise House served a total of 75 students during the 2016-17 school year. Of these, 70 student identification (ID) numbers matched the district’s demographic database data. Figure 1 shows the number of students served by the institution by grade level. More students at the middle and high school levels were served by the program compared to elementary level students, with ninth graders constituting the largest group at 13 students.

¹Source: <https://goo.gl/ZYW6Ri>

² Source: 2016-17 Title 1 Workscope for Promise House.

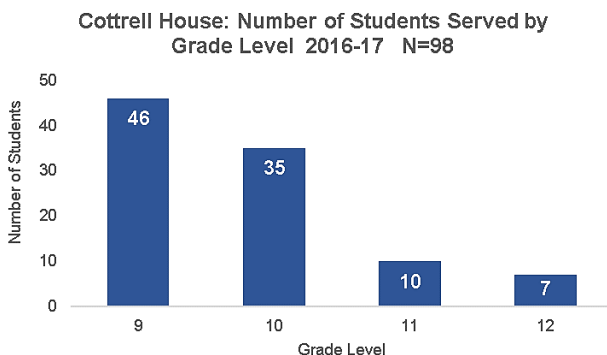
Figure 1: Promise House: Number of Students Served, by Grade Level



Cottrell House

Only approximately one quarter of program-provided data from Cottrell House could be validated within the district demographic database using student ID numbers. Raw program data was used in this report instead of district-validated data and as such should be read with caution. Cottrell House program records showed that a total of 98 students were served by the program during the 2016-17 school year (Figure 2). The majority of these students were in the ninth and tenth grades (N=46 and N=35, respectively).

Figure 2: Cottrell House: Number of Students Served, by Grade Level

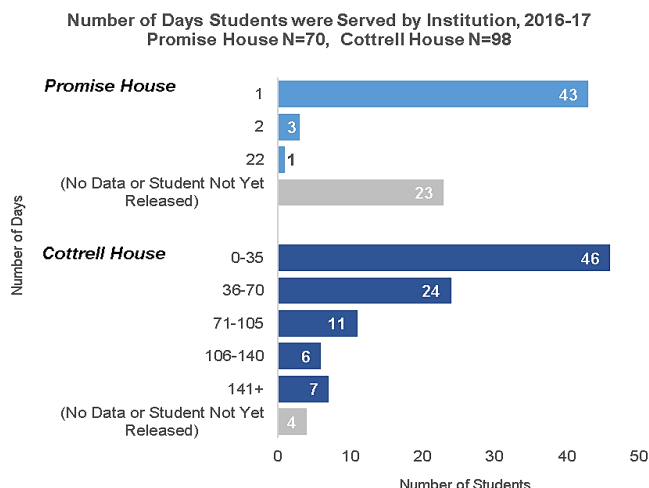


Length of Stay

The majority of students served by Promise House were served for one day (N=43 or 61.4% served for one day, Figure 3). One student at Promise House was served for a total of 22 days. Twenty-three students at Promise House had incomplete length-of-stay data; some of these instances may be attributed to the fact that students were still being served by the institution at the time of the June 2017 delivery of program data.

At Cottrell House, approximately half (47%, N=43) of students served stayed for zero to 35 days (Figure 3). Seven students (7%) at Cottrell were served for 141 or more days.

Figure 3: Days Served



Gender and Ethnicity

Promise House

By gender, the 70 students served by Promise House were divided evenly at 50 percent. By ethnicity, Hispanic students constituted the largest group served at 38.6 percent (Table 1); Black or African American and White students constituted 28.6 percent and 27.1 percent, respectively.

Table 1: Promise House: Gender and Ethnicity of Students Served

Promise House, 2016-17 N=70		
Subcategory	N	%
Gender		
Male	35	50.0%
Female	35	50.0%
Total	70	100.0%
Ethnicity		
African American	20	28.6%
Hispanic/Latino	27	38.6%
Other	4	5.7%
White	19	27.1%
Total	70	100.0%

Cottrell House

Cottrell House program records showed that by gender, males made up 100 percent of students served in 2016-17 (Table 2). By ethnicity, African American students made up more than half (52%) of those served and Hispanic students comprised 27.6 percent.

Table 2: Cottrell House: Gender and Ethnicity of Students Served

Cottrell House, 2016-17 N=98		
Subcategory	N	%
Gender		
Male	98	100%
Ethnicity		
African American	51	52.0%
Hispanic/Latino	27	27.6%
White	20	20.4%
Total	98	100.0%

Special Education, Limited English Proficient

At Promise House, Special Education students constituted approximately 13 percent of those served; students identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) comprised approximately 3 percent of served students.

Program records from Cottrell House showed that Special Education students constituted 15 percent of those served by the program in 2016-17 while LEP students comprised 1 percent of served students.

Program Outcomes

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement scores for both Promise House and Cottrell House students were based on the institutions' respective in-house assessment tools. Data for both reading and mathematics entry grades at Promise House were provided for only one student and are therefore not disclosed. The average exit grade in reading at Promise House was 75.2 out of a possible 100 points (N=24); the average exit grade in mathematics at Promise House was 79.7 out of a possible 100 points (N=50). The name of the assessment used was not indicated.

Cottrell House provided both entry and exit grade data on all served students for both reading and mathematics. The assessment tool used was the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) which indicates grade-level equivalent performance (where a score of 9 in reading indicates reading skills at the ninth grade level; a score of 11 in math indicates math skills at the 11th grade level, etc.).

Cottrell House records showed that average student scores increased slightly in both subjects (N=98 for all scores). The average entry reading grade for Cottrell House students was 8.4; the average exit reading grade was 8.5 out of 12. For mathematics, entry grades averaged 7.4; mathematics exit grades averaged 7.5. It should be noted that 13 percent of these students were recorded as having escaped from the institution, which

may call into question the validity of the grade data provided, particularly exit grade data.

Year-End Student Promotion Status and Destination Upon Release from Institution

Promise House did not provide end-of-year student promotion status on any of the students they served. Cottrell House provided data on all 98 students served in 2016-17. According to program records, nine Cottrell House students were promoted by the end of the school year (or upon release); 37.8 percent received a General Education Diploma (GED), and two students (2%) received a (non-GED) high school (HS) diploma by the end of their stay (Table 3).

Table 3: Year-End Student Promotion Status

Cottrell House: Year-End Student Promotion Status 2016-17, N=98		
	N	%
No	50	51.0%
GED	37	37.8%
Promoted	9	9.2%
HS Diploma	2	2.0%
Total	98	100.0%

Both institutions provided data regarding served students' destination once released by the program. The majority (85.7%) of students at Promise House moved to foster care (Table 4).

Cottrell House program records showed that approximately one-fifth (19.4%) of served students went to Tarrant County after having been served by the program; others went to Dallas County or Harris County, and 13.3 percent of students escaped from the institution during the 2016-17 school year (Table 4).

Table 4: Destination Upon Release

Destination	N	%
Promise House		
Home	1	1.4%
Foster Care	60	85.7%
Other	7	10.0%
N/A or No Data	2	2.9%
Total	70	100.0%
Cottrell House		
Tarrant Co.	19	19.4%
Dallas Co.	13	13.3%
Escaped	13	13.3%
Harris Co.	12	12.2%
Smith Co.	5	5.1%
Grayson Co.	4	4.1%
Jail	3	3.1%
Other Counties	29	29.5%
Total	98	100.0%

*Note: The remaining N of 29 (30%) of students at Cottrell House were recorded by the program as having gone to other local counties.

Recommendations

Recommendations for the Neglected and Delinquent Children Program based on 2016-17 school year data focus on data quality, as high-quality data is needed in order to make recommendations of value. Promise House data appeared to be relatively complete, and 93 percent of student identification numbers matched with the district's database. Because of this, more data could be validated and expanded upon using district records rather than relying purely on program-provided information. Recommendations for Promise House record-keeping practices follow.

- **If a student is still being served at the time of data delivery, include a comment in the "Release Date" column stating that this is so (e.g., "Student still being served").** Alternatively, program record keepers could create an additional column on the data collection form indicating (Yes or No) whether by the time of program data delivery to Dallas ISD each student has been released from the program.

For Cottrell House record-keeping practices, the following recommendations are offered.

- **Ensure that Dallas ISD student identification numbers are obtained and submitted to the district, for all students served.** This allows program evaluators not only to validate these numbers but also to expand upon the data provided by the program using additional data found within district databases, which in turn allows program evaluators and program administrators to better understand the nature and needs of the students being served.
- **Include notes at the time of program data delivery (to Dallas ISD) explaining seeming discrepancies in data where they appear, such as with exit grade data.** As noted previously, 13 percent of students served by Cottrell House were recorded as having escaped from the institution during the 2016-17 school year. This calls into question the quality of the data provided, as all 98 students were recorded as also having academic exit grades.

For more information, please contact Program Evaluation at evaluation@dallasisd.org.

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Dallas ISD
Department of Evaluation and Assessment
H. B. Bell School Support Service Center
2909 N. Buckner Blvd.
Box 10
Dallas, TX 75228