2021-22 DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT Evaluation of the College Access Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The College Access Program (CAP) was created in 2010 by Dallas Independent School District (ISD) to increase student college applications, scholarship applications, participation in college entrance exams, and parental involvement in the college admissions and financial aid processes. The program has been managed by a college access coordinator within the Dallas ISD Postsecondary Partnerships and Programs department. The three CAP vendors selected for the 2021-22 school year were Academic Success Program (ASP), Education is Freedom (EIF), and Southern Methodist University (SMU). In 2021-22, the CAP program served 37 high school campuses. CAP vendors provided supplemental assistance to students and parents. This assistance included: 1) completing college applications; 2) completing financial aid applications; 3) registering and preparing for the *SAT*, *ACT*, and *TSIA/TSIA2* tests; 4) completing Dallas County Promise Pledges; and 5) completing student profiles, conducting college searches, and taking aptitude tests. CAP received $2,448,000 through Title IV funds in 2021-22. This was an increase from 2,350,000 in 2020-21 and 2019-20, respectively.

PURPOSE AND METHOD

The purpose of this evaluation was to examine the effectiveness of the CAP program based on the outlined program goals. This evaluation examined: 1) characteristics of students who participated in the CAP program, 2) the extent to which the CAP participation changed from 2019-20 to 2021-22, 3) the extent to which CAP vendors met outlined program goals, and 4) the relationship between CAP participation and college enrollment for 2018-19 through 2020-21 seniors.

During the 2019-20 school year, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Dallas ISD transitioned students to at-home learning on March 23 until the end of the school year. In 2020-21, Dallas ISD delayed the start of the school year until September 8, 2020 and implemented at home learning districtwide for the first four weeks and modified the school calendar from a six-week schedule to a nine-week schedule. To help district students and families access the internet during at-home learning, the district provided 23,000 hotspots to families by October 2020 and announced that parents could choose in-person or virtual learning for the rest of the school year. Both options included both synchronous and asynchronous learning activities.

In 2021-22, the district returned to in-person instruction for all students, with minimal exceptions. The district was able to offer virtual learning to a small subset of students who met district eligibility requirements. To help mitigate learning loss and further support students, the district offered three different school calendars in 2021-22 (School Day Redesign, Intersession, and Base/Traditional) and other supports.[1]

Data on sources of program funding and budget, number of CAP students, number of CAP schools served, Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA), student profile completion, college search, and aptitude test taking information and CAP staff meetings with counselors were obtained from program staff. College application information was obtained from program staff and the ApplyTexas website.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) was obtained from Department of Education website. Dallas County Promise Pledge information was obtained from a website shared between Dallas ISD and the Dallas County Community College District. CAP student characteristics and *SAT/ACT/TSIA* results were obtained from district data files. The 2020-21 senior college enrollment information was obtained from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) data file. Frequency and crosstab analyses were computed.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/OUTCOMES

To what extent did CAP participation change from 2019-20 to 2021-22 school years?

The total number of students served by CAP vendors decreased from 13,290 in 2019-20 to 10,659 in 2020-21 and increased to 11,577 in 2021-22 (Table 1).

[1] Additional information can be found at https://www.dallasisd.org/timetolearn and https://www.dallasisd.org/esser

Table 1: 2019-20 through 2021-22 Students Served by CAP Vendor

	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
ASP	2,418	18	872	8	2,419	21
EIF	10,080	76	9,153	86	9,044	78
SMU	792	6	559	5	114	1
TPR			75	1		
Total	**13,290**	**100**	**10,659**	**100**	**11,577**	**100**

Source: 2019-20 and 2020-21 CAP information taken from Zhang (2020 & 2021). 2021-22 CAP participation data on 07/11/22.
Note: *N*=11,577, including 970 students not found in the district demographic file dated 05/23/22.

- On average, students receiving CAP services were served 3.4 times by CAP vendors in 2021-22. The average number of times students were served by vendor ranged from 3.1 to 5.6. This was a decrease from 4.7 times in 2019-20 and 3.8 times in 2020-21.

- During the 2021-22 school year, students visited CAP vendors most commonly one visit (37%), followed by two visits (19%) and five to nine visits (16%). In previous years, students most often visited CAP vendors either once (2019-20, 34%; 2020-21, 36%) or up to five to nine times (2019-20, 20%; 2020-21, 19%).

To what extent did CAP vendors meet 2021-22 program goals?

College Application

- The program goal of 97 percent of participants submitting a college application was not met. Overall, 94 percent of 2021-22 seniors completed at least one college application (84% in 2020-21 and 92% in 2019-20). College application rates by campus ranged between 55 percent and 100 percent. Four of the 10 (40%) eligible campuses served by ASP, 12 of the 25 (48%) campuses served by EIF, none of the campus served by SMU met this CAP goal.

- Seniors' self-reported data indicated 31,466 college applications were submitted during the 2021-22 school year. Of those, 10,504 applications (33%) were accepted by colleges or universities, while 38% were accepted in 2020-21 and 2019-20 each.

Financial Assistance

- Overall, 2021-22 seniors met the program goal of 70 percent completing a FAFSA and TASFA. The overall combined completion rate of FAFSA or TASFA increased from 70 percent in 2019-20, 67% in 2020-21 to 92 percent in 2021-22. By campus, Rangel, Carter, Lincoln, Madison, New Tech, Pinkston, Roosevelt, and Townview: Ed & Soc had the highest percentage of seniors completing FAFSA and TASFA application (100%) in 2021-22, followed by Townview: TAG (98%), Townview: Pub Svc (97%), Jefferson, CityLab, Gilliam, IDEA, Molina, and Wilmer-Hutchins (96%), respectively.

- The percentage of all seniors assisted by a CAP vendor who self-reported that they were offered at least one scholarship decreased from 10 percent in 2019-20 to eight percent in 2020-21 and increased to 13 percent in 2021-22. When reviewed by campus, Townview: Ed & Soc reported the highest percent of seniors with a scholarship (75%) in 2021-22, followed by Townview: Pub Svc (68%), Townview: TAG (64%) and Townview: SEM (57%).[2]

SAT/ACT/TSIA

The program goal of 95 percent of 2021-22 seniors taking the *SAT, ACT or TSIA* was not met. Overall, 87 percent of 2021-22 seniors took either the *SAT, ACT or TSIA*. The percentage of seniors taking one of the above-mentioned assessments remained largely stable over the past three years, with 93 percent in 2019-20 and 90 percent in 2020-21. In 2021-22, four of the 10 (40%) eligible campuses served by ASP, ten of the 25 (40%) campuses served by EIF, and one campus (100%) served by SMU met this CAP goal.

Dallas County Promise Pledges

The CAP goal that 98 percent of seniors would complete the Dallas County's Promise Pledge was not met. In 2019-20 school year, 99 percent of CAP students completed their Dallas County Promise Pledges. In 2020-21 school year, 89 percent of CAP students completed their Dallas County Promise Pledges. In 2021-22, 92 percent of CAP students completed the Dallas County Promise Pledge.

Student Profile, College Search, and Aptitude Testing

The program goal of 60 percent of 2021-22 juniors completing the student profile, college search, and aptitude test utilizing the SCOIR platform was not met. Overall, 55 percent of juniors met the goal of completing the student profiles, 18 percent conducted college searches, and 29 percent took the aptitude test. The 2021-22 school year was the first year to report the student profile completion, college search, and aptitude test taking utilizing the SCOIR platform.

CAP Staff Meetings with Counselors

The program goal of CAP staff meeting with counselors at least three times a year was met. The CAP staff visited 20 campuses from September 2021 through June 2022. Meetings covered a range of topics including college placement exam updates, college readiness goals, graduation requirements, and financial aid information.

[2] Because these data were self-reported, results should be viewed with caution.

What was the relationship between CAP participation and college enrollment for 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 seniors?

The number of Dallas ISD seniors who participated in the CAP program has decreased from 2018-19 to 2020-21. The percentage of seniors who participated in the program has decreased from 2018-19 (89%) to 2019-20 (88%) and 2020-21 (79%) over the same timeframe.

- After decreasing from 2018-19 (51%) to 2019-20 (33%), college enrollment increased to 44 percent for CAP participants and 38 percent for Non-CAP students in 2020-21.
- The 2020-21 seniors who participated in CAP were as likely to enroll in four-year (28% vs. 27%) and two-year colleges (16% vs. 11%) as non-participants. The percentage of CAP participants enrolled in 4-year colleges has remained mostly unchanged (25%, respectively) from 2018-19 to 2019-20 and increased to 28 percent in 2020-21.
- The two-year college enrollment for CAP students and non-CAP participants dropped dramatically from 2018-19 (26% vs. 15%), to 2019-20 (8% vs. 6%) and increased in 2020-21 (16% vs.11%).
- In 2020-21, seniors who visited CAP vendors 10 or more times were more likely to enroll in a 4-yr college than those who visited less frequently or non-CAP participants (49% vs. 27%). There was a slightly higher percentage of CAP participants with one to nine visits enrolled in 2-yr colleges than non-CAP participants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to identify ways to increase *SAT/ACT/TSIA* participation rates. Overall, 87 percent of 2021-22 seniors took either the *SAT, ACT or TSIA,* below the program goal of 95 percent. The overall percentage of seniors taking one of the college entrance tests decreased from 93 percent each in 2019-20 to 90 percent in 2020-21. Program staff should coordinate with CAP vendors to ensure students take advantage of district resources, provide adequate support as possible, assist seniors with registration, and help prepare students for the tests.

Identify ways to increase junior's completion of student profiles, college searches, and aptitude test taking rates. The program goal of 60 percent of 2021-22 juniors completing the student profile, college search, and aptitude test was not met. Overall, 55 percent of 2021-22 juniors completed the student profiles, 18 percent conducted college searches, and 29 percent took the aptitude tests. Program staff should coordinate with CAP vendors to find ways to encourage students to complete these steps.

Identify ways to improve data efficiency. CAP vendors recorded when a student visited a school counselor and coded the reason for the visit using specific categories. By the end of the year, vendors reported the number and a maximum of five categories of visits. However, some student service data was not categorized in a correct format. It is critical for CAP staff members to train vendors on how to input service data into a requested format accurately.

REFERENCES

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Jin Zhang, Ph.D., Evaluation Analyst II

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