

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

In 2021-22, the Dallas ISD created Reset Centers at 52 comprehensive middle schools and high schools as an alternative to suspensions. The goals of the Reset Centers are to (a) maintain instructional practices in academic lessons for the student, (b) provide help with self-awareness and offer de-escalation techniques, and (c) provide referrals to Mental Health Services (MHS) to address the root causes of problem behaviors.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Program Components

If a student violates the Student Code of Conduct,¹ they can receive a Reset Center referral. Reset Center Coordinators (RCCs) can help resolve issues for which students may have previously received a suspension. By keeping the students at school, RCCs can engage in academic instruction and providing other services. When student returns to class, RCCs follow up with students and teachers to determine if further support is needed.

Program Staff

The Dallas ISD Reset Centers are overseen by the Office of Student Engagement and Support (SEAS), which includes an Executive director and a group of managers. RCCs managed 52 Reset Centers at comprehensive middle and high school campuses.

Budget

As of July 2023, the total expenditures for the 2022-23 Reset Centers program were \$8,042,674, which was funded through an Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) grant.

Program Goals

Reset Center Program staff members aimed to reach four primary goals for 2022-23:²

1. Reset Centers will attain a 12 percent recidivism rate during the 2022-23 school year (Goal met for middle school and high school students).

2. Thirty-five percent of the RCCs will achieve Tier I status as evaluated by the Reset Center Observation Rubric by July 2023 (Goal was met).
3. 100 percent of the RCCs will receive the Behavior Endorsement Certification by July 2023 (Goal was not met).
4. RCC, principal, and assistant principal perceptions about Reset Center impacts on (a) conflict resolution and social-emotional skills, (b) reducing referrals for fighting, and (c) classroom disruptions will increase by at least 10 percentage points from the middle-of-year to end-of-year surveys (Goal was not met).

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/OUTCOMES

How were Reset Centers Implemented in 2022-23?

Students Served

- At the middle school (MS) and high school (HS) level, the rate of African American students served by Reset Centers (MS: 35%; HS: 32%) was higher than the district overall (MS: 20%; HS: 19%).
- While the rate of Hispanic (MS: 59%; HS: 61%) and EB (MS: 39%; HS: 42%) students served by Reset Centers was lower than the district, the rate of other student groups (e.g., economically disadvantaged, special education, and homeless) were similar to the district.

Reset Coordinators (RCCs)

- On average, each RCC received 6.1 hours of professional development through Region 10 Educational Service Center in 2022-23.
- The number of attendees per session ranged from 46 to 55.
- In addition, 41 RCCs (79 percent) earned the Behavioral Endorsement Certification in 2022-23, which did not meet the goal of 100 percent.³

¹ The Dallas ISD Student Code of Conduct can be found at <https://www.dallasisd.org/Page/128>.

² These goals represent the 2022-23 ESSER performance objectives for Reset Centers.

³ In 2022-23, 52 RCCs were employed by the district; however, some RCCs did not remain in the district for the entire school year.

Reset Center Walkthroughs⁴

- At the end of the 2022-23 school year, 53 percent of Reset Center campuses were rated as Tier 1, which met the goal of 35 percent by July 2023.

What were the staff perceptions of the Reset Centers?⁵

Reset Center Coordinator Focus Groups⁶

- 2022-23, most RCCs in the focus group reported that campus administrators (a) supported them better and (b) had a better understanding about the purpose of reset centers than 2021-22.
- RCCs who participated in the focus group appreciated opportunities to collaborate with other RCCs at professional development (PD) sessions. RCCs also indicated that campus staff would benefit from receiving the same training they received (e.g., Region 10).
- Some RCCs who participated in the focus group reported that changes in how data were tracked in 2022-23 created inconsistencies, and all RCCs felt that data tracking was a work in progress.

Reset Center Coordinator and Campus Administrator Survey

Program Efficacy

RCCs

- Regarding program efficacy, most RCCs had positive ratings about the impact of Reset Centers in 2022-23.
- From Fall 2022 to Spring 2023, there was an increase in the rate of RCCs who reported that (a) Reset Centers successfully improved the social and emotional skills of students, (b) students received additional services in a timely manner, and (c) Reset Centers had enough space and supplies.
- Another positive change was the decrease in the rate of RCCs who reported that (a) students used the Reset Center to avoid regular classes and (b) some students should not remain on campus due to safety concerns.
- However, there was a decrease in the rate of RCCs who reported that Reset Centers successfully (a) improved how staff members resolved conflicts with students and

(b) reduced referrals, fighting, classroom disruptions, and racial inequalities in discipline referrals.

Principals

- Regarding program efficacy, at least half of principals who completed the survey had positive ratings about the impact of Reset Centers in Fall 2022.

Assistant Principals

- Regarding program efficacy, assistant principals who completed the survey had low or mixed ratings about the impact of Reset Centers in Fall 2022.
- For example, approximately half of respondents had positive ratings about the impact of Reset Centers on conflict resolution and social emotional skills, and only a quarter had positive ratings about Reset Centers reducing referrals, fighting, classroom disruptions, and racial inequalities in discipline referrals.

Staff Efficacy

RCCs

- Regarding staff member efficacy, RCCs generally had positive ratings about campus teachers, administrators, and themselves in 2022-23.
- For example, there was an increase in the rate of RCCs who reported that campus teachers agreed with the philosophy of the Reset Center from Fall 2022 to Spring 2023.
- Most RCCs agreed that SEAS provided adequate support to campus administrations. They also agreed that most campus administrators (a) provided adequate support to the Reset Centers and (b) agreed with the philosophy behind Reset Center.
- All RCC respondents agreed with the philosophy behind Reset Centers. Almost all RCCs also agreed that campus administrators provided adequate support to the Reset Centers and that SEAS provides adequate support to campus administrators.

Principals

- Regarding staff member efficacy, principals who completed the survey generally had positive or mixed ratings about campus teachers, RCCs, and themselves in Fall 2022.

⁴ In 2022-23, Reset Center walkthroughs were conducted using the Reset Coordinator Observation Rubric. Schools were tiered based on several indicators in the rubric related to Reset Center effectiveness, which allowed SEAS managers to customize support for Reset Center campuses during each nine-week quarter. More information can be found in the full report (Mickelson & Barton, 2023).

⁵ Spring 2023 survey results for campus administrators (principals and assistant principals) in the full report should be viewed with caution because fewer respondents completed the survey than Fall 2022.

⁶ The evaluator developed focus group protocols and conducted four focus groups – two for middle school RCCs ($N = 3$) and two for high school RCCs ($N = 12$) – to solicit feedback on Center activities, barriers to implementation, and successes during the school year. The focus groups were recorded and transcribed. The evaluator used an open coding process to identify prominent themes in the data, summarize, and supplement with direct quotations to illustrate examples as appropriate.

- For example, all principals who completed the survey reported that they and RCCs agreed with the philosophy behind Reset Centers, and most respondents said they and RCCs had adequate support to implement Reset Centers as intended.
- While more than half of respondents indicated that teachers agreed with the philosophy of the Reset Center in Fall 2022, almost all respondents felt that teachers needed more training, and more than half reported that teachers preferred to administer consequences (e.g., detentions and suspensions).

Assistant Principals

- Regarding staff member efficacy, assistant principals who completed the survey generally had positive ratings about campus teachers, RCCs, and themselves in Fall 2022.
- For example, most assistant principals who completed the survey reported that they and RCCs agreed with the philosophy behind Reset Centers, and they and RCCs had adequate support to implement the Reset Center. However, most respondents believed that teachers needed more training to be more effective.

What were the outcomes for students served by the Reset Centers?

Disciplinary Actions and Recidivism

Middle School

- The total number of Reset Center referrals and Positive Intervention Support Referrals (PISR) for middle school students in 2022-23 ($N = 2,510$) was slightly higher than 2021-22 ($N = 2,185$).
- The recidivism rate for all middle school students in the Dallas ISD continued a downward trend from 2018-19 (26%) to 2022-23 (12%).
- However, the number of removals to the DAEP for middle school students at Reset Center campuses increased by 28 percent from 2021-22 ($n = 1,071$) to 2022-23 ($n = 1,372$).
- The proportion of African American students at middle schools who committed disciplinary offenses trended downward by six percentage points from 2018-19 (40%) to 2022-23 (34%).

High School

- The total number of Reset Center referrals and Positive Intervention Support Referrals (PISR) for high school students in 2022-23 ($N = 1,545$) was slightly higher than 2021-22 ($N = 1,545$).

- The recidivism rate for all high school students in the Dallas ISD continued a downward trend from 2018-19 (15%) to 2022-23 (6%).
- However, the numbers of removals to the DAEP for high school students at Reset Center campuses increased by 38 percent from 2021-22 ($n = 1,346$) to 2022-23 ($n = 1,852$).
- The proportion of African American students who committed disciplinary offenses trended downward by 15 percentage points from 2018-19 (52%) to 2022-23 (37%), which corresponded with a 13-percentage point increase for Hispanic students.

Classroom Climate

- The rate of positive responses on the classroom climate subscale of the Student Experience survey at campuses with a Reset Center trended downward from 78 percent in Spring 2021 to 73 percent in Spring 2023.

Reset Center Exit Surveys

- Overall, students generally felt positively about their experiences at the Reset Center.
- For example, most students reported that they were supported by the RCC (84%), that they had a plan for how to successfully rejoin classes (79%), and that their time at the Reset Center positively affected their emotions (74%).
- After completing a one-to-three-day period in a Reset Center, students more often attributed positive descriptors (e.g., supported, helped) than negative descriptors (e.g., hurt, disrespected) to their first and subsequent visits to the Reset Center.

Attendance Rates

- In 2022-23, the attendance rate of middle school students with a disciplinary referral (91%) was lower than other students at the same campuses (94%) and the district overall (94%).
 - This pattern was relatively consistent with previously reported years (86% to 91%).
- In 2022-23, the attendance rate of high school students with a disciplinary referral (82%) was lower than other students at the same campuses (89%) and the district overall (90%).
 - This pattern was slightly lower than previously reported years (86% to 92%).

On-Track Rates

- For grade nine students, the rate of Reset Center students considered on-track (42%) was lower than other students at the same campuses (74%) and the district overall (76%).
- The rate of Reset Center students who were On-Track was also lower in 2022-23 (42%) than 2021-22 (48%).

Graduation Rates

- For grade 12 students, the graduation rate for Reset Center students (88%) was lower than other students at the same campuses (93%) and district students overall (94%).
- However, the graduation rate for Reset Center students trended slightly upward from 2021-22 (87%) to 2022-23 (88%).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the key findings, the following recommendations are offered for stakeholders.

Extend PD opportunities from SEAS and Region 10 to other campus staff members and differentiate PD opportunities for RCCs. In 2022-23, RCCs who participated in the focus groups reported that they appreciated the quality of PD sessions that they received. They felt that these sessions would be helpful for other campus staff members to better understand their work with students. In addition, RCCs reported that it would be helpful to differentiate PD sessions for new and returning coordinators so the trainings would be more relevant based on their level of experience. Reset Center program staff members should consider how the information from the PD sessions can be shared with other campus staff members and explore how the sessions can include information that is based on an RCC's level of experience.

Improve the documentation process for students who visit the Reset Center. All RCCs who participated in the focus group reported that data tracking was a work in progress because of recent changes in how data were tracked in 2022-23. They felt that the disciplinary referrals record did not always accurately reflect their work with each student. For example, when students checked themselves into a Reset Center (i.e., self-report), it was not always clear

how RCCs should track those visits with the most recent Reset documentation template. Therefore, Reset Center program staff should explore possible solutions for improving the documentation process.

Encourage more principals and assistant principals to complete the Reset Center survey in 2023-24. While most campus administrators who completed the survey in Fall 2022 had generally positive or mixed ratings for Reset Centers, low response rates in Spring 2023 limited the generalizability of the spring survey results to all administrators. For the third year of implementation in 2023-24, Reset Center program staff members should consider whether administering the survey only in Spring 2024 would encourage more campus administrators to complete the survey.

Continue providing PD for teachers and administrators that addresses the disproportionality of Reset Center referrals for African American students. From 2019-19 to 2022-23, the proportion of African American students who received a discipline referral trended downward for middle school (40% to 34%) and high school (52% to 37%) students. However, because African American students only account for 20 percent of the total district population, Reset Center program staff members should continue their efforts to address the disproportionate number of African American students who received a discipline referral in 2022-23.

Investigate the increase in disciplinary referrals that resulted in removal to DAEP or expulsion. While the recidivism rate for all middle school and high school students continued to trend downward from 2018-19, the number of Reset Center referrals and PISR referrals from 2021-22 to 2022-23 trended upward. In addition, the number of removals to the DAEP increased by 28 percent for middle school students and 38 percent for high school students from 2021-22 to 2022-23. Therefore, Reset Center program staff members should investigate why the number of serious consequences has become more frequent.

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