



In 2024-25, Dallas Independent School District (ISD) continued its decade-long commitment to student support with the **Student Engagement Coordinator** program (formerly the Urban Community Specialist program). The program was developed to provide support to Dallas ISD middle and high schools. Seven student engagement coordinators (SECs) served 10 campuses (four middle and five high schools, and DAEP), each providing individualized support to at-risk students struggling with academics, attendance, and/or behavioral needs. Student Engagement Coordinators also assisted with campus support.

Key Findings

Implementation

- Seven SECs provided services to 608 unique students across 10 campuses.

Stakeholder Perceptions

- SECs reported high satisfaction with their experience as an SEC.
- All SECs reported high satisfaction with the amount of support provided by their direct supervisor, as well as reported having someone at work that they consider a mentor.
- Additionally, all SECs reported feelings of enjoyment and fulfillment in workplace climate, task engagement, workload management, and leadership & support.
- Barriers to service implementation identified by SECs included lack of parent/guardian support, lack of resources for student needs, and not enough time to serve target population.
- Suggestions for improvement recommended by SECs included additional training, resources, and monthly recognition for staff.

Student Outcomes

- Overall, attendance rates for students who received SEC services decreased by 3.7% in 2024-25 compared to 2023-24.
- For students who received SEC services, high school attendance rates declined sharply in the 2024-25 school year while middle school attendance rates remained relatively stable during the same period.
- Overall, 50.2% of students who received SEC services had a documented disciplinary incident compared to 24.9% in 2023-24.
- Behavior referrals for SEC served high school students decreased by 17% from Fall 2024 to Spring 2025, while middle school behavioral referrals remained relatively stable during the same period.
- SEC students were served by Reset Centers 169 times and received PISR supports 75 times, 97 and 34, respectively in 2023-24.

Recommendations

Implement Staff Recognition and Continue Targeted Professional Development

To sustain and further boost staff morale, capacity, and job satisfaction within the Student Engagement and Support department, the focus should be twofold: first, on **implementing regular staff recognition**. Establishing a consistent program to publicly acknowledge and celebrate SEC staff achievements and contributions is essential for improving team morale, fostering a positive team culture, and demonstrating the department's appreciation; and second, on **continuing targeted professional development** directly applicable to SEC staff roles, thereby enhancing their competence and overall effectiveness.

Assess Barriers to Program Implementation

Based on SEC staff feedback, the program faces obstacles due to limited staff and resources. To address this, the Student Engagement and Support department should facilitate a **focus group with SECs** to be conducted by the Program Evaluation department. The focus group can provide deeper insights into how current resource limitations impact daily work and service delivery. Data can then be used to identify specific strategies for expanding program services to more students while providing targeted support for those with urgent needs.

Improve Data Collection for Actionable Insights

The Student Engagement and Support department should consider **establishing a centralized system** for documenting SEC program activities. The system should capture key information, including students served, date of service, interventions provided, and frequency of services. The new system should **prioritize data quality and efficiency** to ensure data is accurate, reliable, and easy for staff to enter. Data from a centralized system will allow the department to **set SMART goals** and **monitor program implementation** and more accurately analyze the direct effects of SEC services on student outcomes.