

Abilene Independent School District

Community Assessment
2024-2025



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History of Taylor County & Abilene, Texas

The geographical area now known as Taylor County was created in 1858. It was named for Edward, James and George Taylor, defenders of the Alamo. Dozens of families settled in the southern part of the county in a cut or gap in the Callahan Divide. This settlement was named Buffalo Gap. It became the county seat in 1878.

In the years between 1878 and 1880, the Texas and Pacific Railroad considered two possible routes through West Central Texas. One route was by way of Buffalo Gap and the other was by way of Fort Phantom Hill. When it looked probable that the route would be developed through Buffalo Gap, land values around the settlement began to increase. People fought over land ownership which resulted in litigation and caused a delay in the construction of the railroad.



The Railroad met with landowners and civic leaders in the summer of 1880. The Railroad negotiated with property owners to the north of Buffalo Gap. When the dust settled, the thriving community of Buffalo Gap was bypassed.

One of the landowners, Caleb Merchant, chose the name for the new community. He named the area "Abilene" in honor of the Kansas town to which ranchers had been driving their cattle. The name means "grassy plain" and originally came from a Biblical reference in Luke 3 to a Middle East tetrarchy (empire ruled by 4 rulers).

The area was advertised in newspapers across the state as the "Future Great Town of West Texas." People came in trains and by wagons to buy lots. Over a two day period of time 319 lots were sold for a total of \$51,310. The profits were split between the railroad and the landowners.

On October 31, 1883, the county seat was moved to Abilene from Buffalo Gap. The Railroad gave the city a solid foundation from which to grow.

In 1891, the beginnings of the educational community began with Simmons College. Over the years, the school grew into Hardin-Simmons University. It was followed by Abilene Christian University and McMurry University. In recent years, Abilene leaders were successful in bringing branches of Cisco College, Texas State Technical Institute, and Texas Tech University to the town. The educational community meets educational needs of citizens of Abilene, surrounding communities and international students. The student population adds to the economic growth in Abilene and holds a wealth of volunteers for various community groups and activities within the school system.

In the 1950's community members began working to get an Air Force base in Abilene. Residents raised \$839,261 (an equivalent of \$7 million today) to buy 3,400 acres for the base. Today, Dyess Air Force Base holds the distinguished honor of being the city's largest employer. The Base is home to the C-130s, B-1 Bombers and the training grounds for all B-1 air crews. Also, during the 1950's, oil was discovered within a 75-mile radius of Abilene. Many were drawn to the area due to oil related jobs. Abilene became the headquarters for independent operators and major oil companies. Refining plants were also established in the area.

Since its beginnings in 1858, Taylor County and Abilene have grown to populations of 143,326 and 128,207 respectively. Agriculture, the military, and the oil industry set a solid economic foundation. The most common occupations are educational services, health care and social assistance; arts, entertainment, recreation and accommodation and food services; professional, scientific, management and administrative waste management, public administration, retail trade, construction, manufacturing, and other service-oriented occupations. Civic leaders continue to encourage business growth in the area.

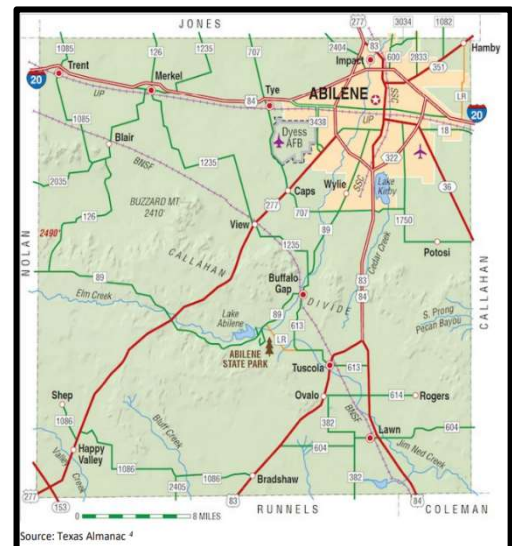
History of Head Start Grant in Taylor County & Abilene Independent School District

In 1965, the community Head Start grant was awarded to the Taylor County Community Action Program (CAP). That same year, Taylor County CAP delegated full operation of the local Head Start program to Abilene Independent School District (AISD) and the “pass-through” relationship established continued for 45 years.

In 1999, the Taylor County CAP released the service area outside of the AISD attendance boundaries to the Region 14 Service Center. The rural areas were released because 90% of Taylor County’s population was located within the AISD boundaries and a long waiting list of eligible children was maintained with students within the AISD attendance zone. As well as the limited funds resulted in the service area being redefined in grant applications as those areas of the county that were “within the AISD attendance boundaries.” However, any parent wanting to enroll a child residing outside of AISD’s attendance boundaries may fill out an application for possible enrollment and be placed on the waiting list, with the understanding that students living in AISD boundaries will be served first.

In 2010, the Taylor County CAP relinquished the Head Start Grant. Abilene ISD applied to be the grantee and was awarded the grant to serve the AISD boundaries within the city of Abilene, Texas. The partnership/Local Education Agency (LEA), with AISD, was already established making this transition seamless.

As of today 89.4%, of the population still resides within the AISD boundaries. Although there are now two grantees in the county, Head Start services are not currently available for all eligible students in Taylor County. In the Taylor County area that Region 14 serves, two of the school districts have Head Start programs. Three do not have Head Start, but they have ECSE and Pre-K programs in place for students.



Profiles of the Head Start Campuses

There are two sites in Abilene that serve Head Start (HS) eligible children. In total, the two sites are funded to serve 521 students and pregnant teens. Long Early Learning Center (Long ELC) is located in Northwest Abilene (3600 Sherry Lane). The original building was built in 1959. In 2017, Long ELC was renovated, to meet the needs of small children, as well as a new wing built so all the early childhood programs/classrooms would be in one site.



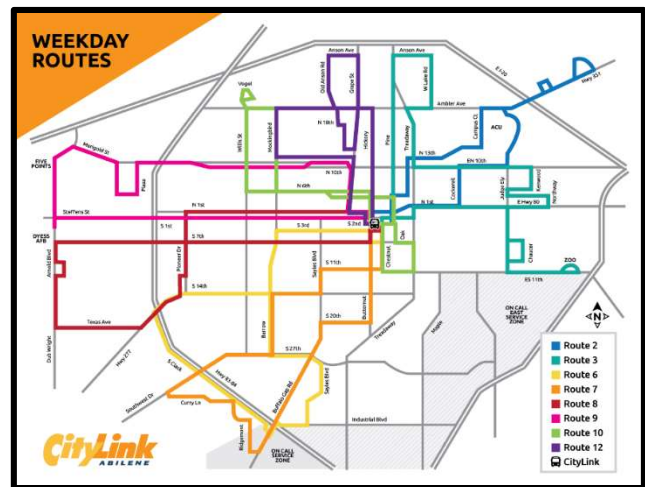
Long ELC encompasses the Head Start funded program (380 three and four-year-old children) and multiple other programs: Pre-Kindergarten, Dual Language One-Way, Early Childhood Special Education and the Regional School for the Deaf.

Crockett Head Start located in South Abilene (3282 S 13th), was built in 1950 and a second wing was added in 1953. It was fully renovated in 2001 and 2015. The 2001 renovations were funded by federal funds and local foundation monies. The 2015 renovation were funded by a local bond election. Crockett is funded to serve 132 infants and toddlers as well as up to 9 pregnant teens.



These sites are in lower income neighborhoods making them more readily accessible to the families being served. Both sites are within walking distance of the City Link bus routes. Additional transportation services are provided for students through our LEA, AISD.

Head Start teen parents and their infants/toddlers can ride buses together from their homes to Crockett HS. Parents sign their infant/toddlers in with the campus staff and then ride the school buses to a middle or high school campus where they attend classes.



According to the 2023-2024 PIR HS provided transportation for 179 families. The HS families continue to see a need for transportation to be provided for our families. Due to this need the LEA assists by providing children in the Head Start program transportation services from elementary schools to the Long Early Learning Center (Long ELC).

AISS Early Childhood Mission Statement

Long and Crockett promotes and advances the school readiness skills needed by young children. This is accomplished through enhancing students' cognitive, social, and emotional development while also supporting and strengthening parent-child relationships.

AISS Mission Statement

AISS will equip learners to make a positive impact in the world through relevant, innovative, and challenging learning experiences.

AISS Board Goals

- AISS will develop a strong literacy and numeracy foundation for every student.
- AISS will advance character development by nurturing habits of mind and ethical, principal-based leadership.
- AISS will prepare all students for success in college and the workforce.
- AISS will fully integrate student-led technology and development innovative learning environments and facilities for the purpose of high student engagement, safety, and academic success.
- AISS will secure high quality, effective staff who embrace diversity, are reflective of and responsive to the district's student body, utilize best practices and understand the importance of student engagement, rigorous and relevant learning environment, and the significance of connecting with students to foster a desire to learn.

AISS Strategic Priorities

- Establish a culture of collaboration between students, teachers, administrators and the AISS community.
- Learners will be actively engaged in classrooms.
- AISS will develop intentional strategic partnerships which capitalize on the strengths, resources, and talents of all stakeholders.
- Tell the AISS story of being a school district of choice that provides unparalleled opportunities for all students, staff, and parents.

1302.11 Determining community strengths, needs and resources & 1302.11 (3)(4)(5) Program Strategic Approach

The Head Start Community Needs Assessment (CNA) is conducted to help the leadership and decision-makers better understand the needs of the community, as they seek to provide quality comprehensive child and family development services.

The CNA includes research designed to evaluate the perspectives and opinions of community stakeholders especially those from underserved populations. It is used in planning and developing philosophy statements for the Head Start Programs, as well as determining short- and long-term goals for the programs. Below is the process for conducting the Early Childhood Head Start Community Needs Assessment.

- **Define the community:** Abilene ISD boundaries
- **Engage the community:** Families, community agencies who work with our population, LEA, staff, Policy Council, LEA School Board, Parent Committees
- **Collect data:** Community agencies CNA, interviews, and Program Information Report (PIR), LEA data, Community Agencies data, US Census, and other data as show in Sources
- **Analyze the data:** Analyze the data you've collected.
- **Report and share your findings:** Health/Mental Health & Community Advisory Committee, Policy Council, Parent Committees, LEA School Board, Early Childhood Website
- **Develop an action plan:** development of the program short and long term goals, as well as design in services
- **Periodically assess:** Annual review, 5-year comprehensive assessment

1302.11 (a)(1) Service Area for Head Start

The current service area for the AISD Head Start program are the portions of the city of Abilene, Texas that fall within the AISD attendance boundaries.

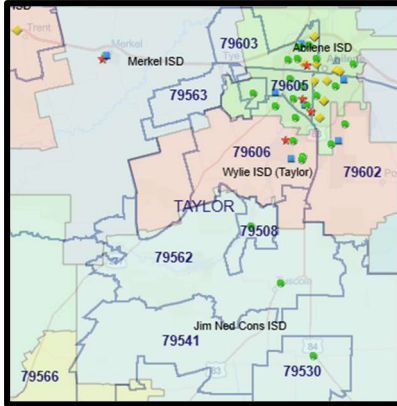
Abilene, Texas is located within Taylor County. United States Census shows a July 2023 projection of growth for the following information. Taylor County ranks 35th in population among counties within the State of Texas, with an approximate population of 146,836. Last year Taylor County ranked 34th in county population. Abilene is the largest city within the county with a population of approximately 129,043, which is an increase from the previous Census projection of 2020. Taylor County is growing in population however not at the rate of the larger metropolitan areas causing the decrease in population rank from the previous Census projection in 2020. ([U.S. Census Bureau](#)) ([Texas Demographics](#))

The state percentage for Texas residents living in poverty is 13.7%. The percentage of residents in Abilene, TX living in poverty is 15.9%, making it above the state's poverty average. ([U.S. Census Bureau](#)).

POPULATION, HOUSING UNITS, AREA AND DENSITY: 2020

Geographic area	Population	Housing units
Taylor County	143,326	60,817
COUNTY SUBDIVISION AND PLACE		
Abilene CCD	128,207	54,375
Potosi CDP	3,947	1,372
Tye city (part)	1,176	543
Remainder of Abilene CCD	123,084	52,460
Jim Ned CCD	9,421	3,840
Buffalo Gap town	543	265
Lawn town	311	158
Tuscola city	850	339
Remainder of Jim Ned CCD	7,717	3,078
Merkel CCD	5,580	2,602
Merkel town	2,471	1,176
Trent town	295	159
Remainder of Merkel CCD	2,814	1,267

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census



Taylor county has 5 Independent School Districts within the boundaries. There is also a charter school in Abilene however they do not offer any Early Childhood Programs.

The city also has 2 Private Christian Schools who offer Early Childhood Programs at a cost of \$6,000-\$9,000 annually.

School Districts within the Taylor County, Texas					
Independent School District	Early Childhood Programs Available	Early Childhood Students Served 2023-2024	Student Population 2023-2024	Early Childhood Students Served 2024-2025	Student Population 2024-2025
AISD	PK, ECSE, Early Head Start & Head Start	887	14,637	874	14,559
Merkel ISD including Tye	PK, ECSE & Head Start	67	1,121	74	1118
Trent ISD	PK, ECSE, no Head Start	11	148	11	144
Jim Ned ISD including Buffalo Gap and Tuscola	PK, ECSE, no Head Start	36	1856	23	1633
Wylie including Potosi	PK, ECSE, no Head Start	179	5,502	178	5506

Source: ISD Administrative Offices: Enrollment Information November 1, 2023, and November 1, 2024.

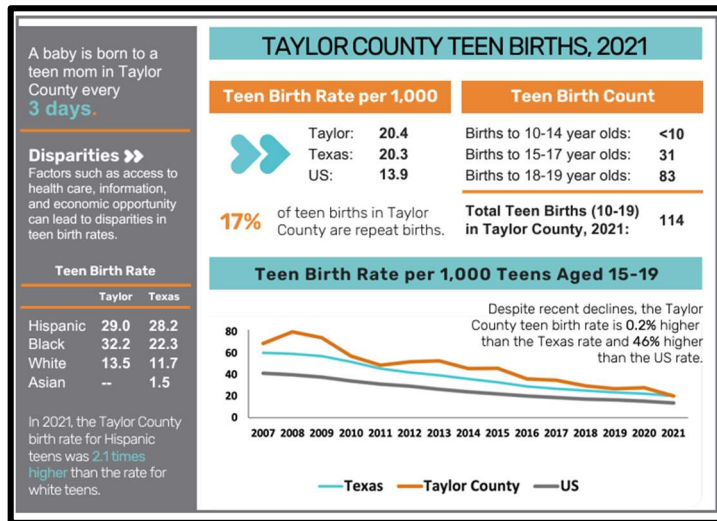
1302.11 (2)(i) Expectant Mothers

According to Center for Disease Control (CDC), Texas is a top ten state with highest teen birth rates in the nation at 20.4 births per 1,000 girls for 2022. This has decreased by 2% since 2020. The total number of pregnant/parenting students in AISD last year was 25, 23 of those were serviced through the Head Start program. [\(CDC\)](#)

Teen Pregnancy/Parenting Numbers

School Year	Crockett HS	AISD
2023-2024	23	25
2022-2023	25	38
2021-2022	22	41
2020-2021	23	25
2019-2020	COVID	33
2018-2019	26	45
2017-2018	27	55

Source: AISD



Healthy Futures of Texas, shows that the United States, Texas, and Taylor County have all seen a decline in Teen Birth Rates, however Taylor County is still higher than the National and State rate.

The Abilene community is making a focused effort to reach teen women before pregnancy and are serving pregnant teens with medical care, parenting classes and postnatal care. The LEA has a School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC),

whose goal is to strengthen the connections between health and learning. Currently the SHAC is reviewing the Sex Education Curriculum within the LEA. [\(Healthy Futures of Texas\)](#)

1302.11 (2)(i)(A) Race & Ethnicity

The Abilene Community is diverse in race, ethnicity, and cultures. The diversity within the community continues to grow. Within the past 15 years there has been an influx of refugees into Abilene because the community has been designated as a “resettlement city” for the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Refugees may be placed in a city where they have relatives or friends, or where there’s an established community that shares their language or culture. Other considerations include the cost of living and a community’s ability to provide medical services. This agency assists and helps refugees navigate their new surroundings and connect with the LEA. Abilene is a community with many churches, business and medical centers willing to support the incoming refugees, as well as a robust community for jobs, making it have all the resources needed for a resettlement city. The ethnicity and race of the HS enrollment is reflective of the communities according to the Census.

Children Characteristics

Subject	Abilene city, Texas	
	Total	
	Estimate	Margin of Error
Children under 18 years in households	28,734	+433
AGE		
Under 6 years	36.5%	+1.4
RACE & HISPANIC/LATINO ORIGIN		
One race	91.7%	+2.0
White	65.6%	+2.3
Black or African American	10.2%	+1.5
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.0%	+0.6
Asian	2.3%	+0.6
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	+0.2
Some other race	12.6%	+2.1
Two or more races	8.3%	+2.0
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	36.4%	+1.2
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	47.0%	+1.2

[Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#)

RACE & ETHNICITY OF AISD HS CHILDREN SERVED 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR

Subject	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
RACE & HISPANIC/LATINO ORIGIN		
One race		
White	284	98
Black or African American	58	102
American Indian and Alaska Native	2	2
Asian	1	5
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	1
Other	0	0
Two or more races	27	19

Source: AISD PIR 2023-2024

1302.11 (2)(i)(B) Eligible Children

POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS BY SEX BY AGE

	Abilene city, Texas	
	Estimate	Margin of Error
Children under 18 years in households	17,025	±1,461
Male:		
Under 5 years	776	±225
5 years	219	±100
Female:		
Under 5 years	869	±231
5 years	105	±61
TOTAL	1,969	± 617

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVICED IN AISD IN 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR (birth-4)

Crockett HS site (0-3 & pregnant teens)	175
0-3	155
Pregnant teens	20
Long HS site	421
2-year-olds	6
3-year-olds	127
4-year-olds	288
Long LEA	502
4-year-olds	371
ECSE	107
Total Served in Community	1,098

Source: AISD PIR 2023-2024, AISD data

The total number of children, within our service area, who are eligible for services is approximately 1,969 according to the 2020 Census. In the 2023-2024 school year HS served 576 students, which is 29.2% of the eligible children. In collaboration with the LEA another 502 eligible students received services through the State funded Pre-K program, Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), and/or Regional School for the Deaf. Within our community HS and the LEA serve 55.7% of the eligible children under five. It is impossible to serve all eligible children since monies and availability of space hinder the expansion of services to these ages. Since the HS and the LEA are only able to serve 55.7% of the eligible children within the service area, HS maintain a wait list.

1302.11 (6) Diverse Economic Backgrounds

There are typically not any over income families being served within the HS programs, unless there is a significant family need noticed on the application. Families who are over income in HS, but within the guidelines for the State funded prekindergarten program are placed with the LEA. If someone applies and they are over income for both programs, the application is kept and could be reviewed if opening occur and there is no waitlist.

302.11 (2)(i)(C) Homelessness & 1302.11 (2)(i)(D) Foster Care

In the last year, the total number of homeless, and foster care children within AISD has declined. In the fall of 2017, the Abilene community started a chapter of Safe Families for Children. It’s a preemptive alternative to foster care that is designed to keep families together. Families partner with churches to provide stable care for the child while supporting the parents through the issues they are facing. The organization states 95% of the children return to their home. We believe this program has been beneficial to the numbers of families experiencing separation.

HS also have a partnership with the LEA Title 1 and Homeless liaison which provides services for the growing number of students who are considered homeless and unaccompanied. They support by providing school supplies, clothing, and training on the resources available within the community.

AISD Homeless & Foster Care	2023-2024
Children serviced experiencing homelessness	
• Crockett HS	29
• Long HS	53
• Unaccompanied Youth (AISD)	376
• Homeless in other AISD programs	1190
Total in AISD	1,648
Service Children in Foster Care	
• Crockett HS	6
• Long HS	33
• LEA (less HS)	178
Total in AISD	187

Historical patterns within the HS Program suggest that families move frequently within the AISD boundaries. The Program Information Report (PIR) data indicates the HS programs provided cumulative services for 616 students and pregnant teens from a funded enrollment of 521 children and pregnant teens. The 15.4% turnover in the student population matches the community’s mobility rate. The HS because of the lengthy waitlist, do not have a problem with filling the open position.

Mobility rate in Taylor County	16%
Source: Census Reporter	
Mobility rate in HS Program 2022-2023	15.4%

1302.11 (2)(i)(E) Children with Disabilities

Number of Children with Disabilities

	2023-2024
0-2 (Crockett HS)	22
3-4 (Long HS)	43
Total served by HS Grant	65
3-18 years (less the HS Grant students)	2,614
Total served in AISD	2,679

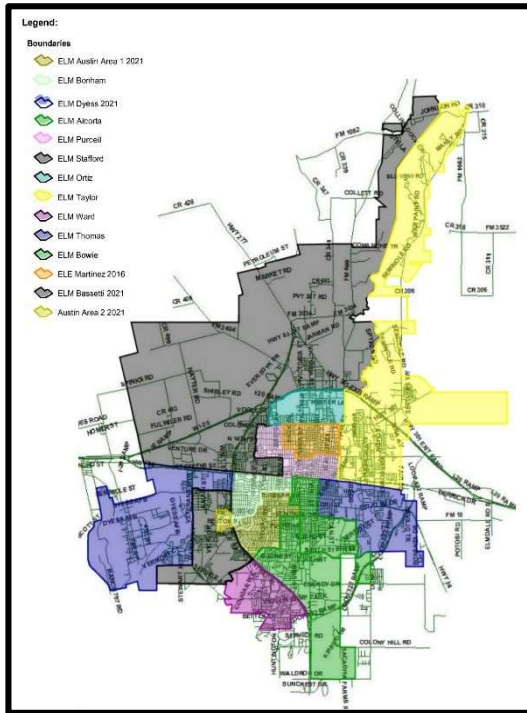
Source: AISD PIR 2022-2023 & AISD

AISD Early Childhood Programs are experiencing an increase in the number of students with disabilities. The PIR indicates 596 students were serviced by HS, of those students 65 were served under IDEA, which is 10.9% of the year's cumulative enrollment. Child Find is a component of IDEA that requires states and LEA to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities residing in Texas, regardless of the severity of their disabilities and who need special education and a related service. AISD continues to see an increase in students with disabilities and due to this increase another ECSE classroom was added to Long ELC 2023-2024 school year with the need another potential class this 2024-2025 school year.

Some of the disabilities in the Abilene area include, but are not limited to: autism, deaf or hard of hearing, deaf-blindness, emotional disturbance, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, noncategorical early childhood (ages three through five), orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury or visual impairment.

The Abilene community is sensitive to children with special needs and their parents. Available services within the Abilene community include early intervention services, diagnostic services, educational services, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, music therapy, vision and mobility training, audiology services, respite care, orthotic services, prosthetics, adaptive equipment, diagnostic testing, childcare, advocacy, support groups, parent training, and case management.

1302.11 (2)(i)(F) Geographic location



At the end of each year, Long HS students who will be 5 on or before September first, transition into one of the AISD’s 13 elementary schools. There are only 3 elementary campuses located on the east side of the city and 10 located on the west side. A majority of HS eligible students reside in the northwest part of the city where Long ELC is located as well as 4 elementary schools. Also, in the northwest part of the city, there are 3 federally subsidized housing complexes which provide housing to many of the HS families and a large number of the refugee population. Additionally, Abilene has numerous low-income properties and apartments dispersed throughout the community, therefore eligible children are located across the city. AISD has been attentive and intentional in supporting and meeting the needs of our families in the determination of the placement of Crockett and Long Early Learning Center

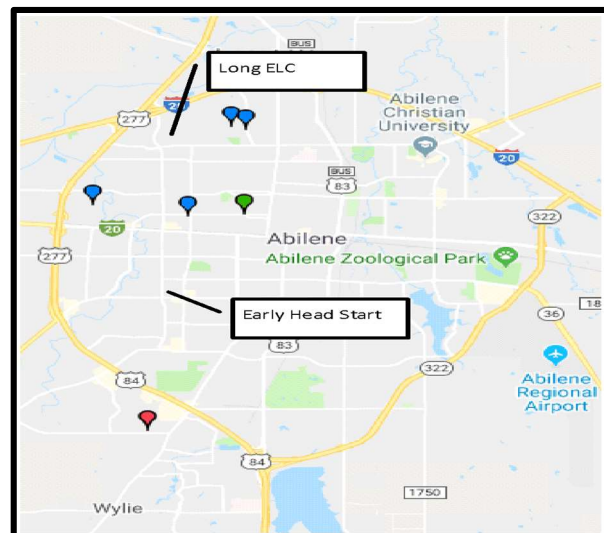
2023-2024 Long ELC & Crockett HS Geographical Enrollment according to household zip codes

	AISD Long ELC	Crocket HS
79601	86	22
79602	62	17
79603- Long ELC zip code	166	48
79605- Crockett HS zip code	151	59
79606	64	11
79607	32	0
Out of District due to Foster-previously enrolled in district	0	0

Source: AISD PIR 2023-2024

The Abilene community has 3 Multi-Family Public Housing complexes. All of them are located on the Northwest side of Abilene, TX around Long ELC. All the multi-family public housing complexes are in the geographical location of the 79603-zip code.

<http://www.abileneha.org/properties/map>



1302.11 (2)(i)(F) Languages

Currently, there are at least 40 identified non-English languages spoken by students enrolled in the AISD Early Childhood programs. The LEA maintains a Bilingual/ESL (English as a Second Language) Department to assure that the educational and language needs of these students and their families are met. Due to the growing Emergent Bilingual population, HS recognized the need for more ESL teachers. This 2023-24 school year the HS program has 16 certified ESL teachers, while the Early Childhood Program has 27 certified ESL teachers. The teachers who are not ESL certified have been given one year to obtain the certification, with the support of the LEA.

Languages spoken by children enrolled in AISD Head Start Programs	
	Number of Students
English	556
Spanish	24
Native Central America, South American and Mexican Languages	0
Caribbean Languages (e.g. Haitian-Creole, Patois)	0
Middle Eastern & South Asian Languages (e.g. Arabic, Hebrew Hindi, Urdu, Bengali)	1
East Asian Languages (e.g. Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog)	1
Native North American/Alaska Native Languages	0
Pacific Island Languages (e.g. Palauan, Fijian)	0
European & Slavic Languages (e.g. German, French, Italian, Croatian, Yiddish, Portuguese, Russian)	1
African Languages (e.g. Swahili, Wolof)	13
Other (e.g. American Sign Language)	0

Source: AISD PIR 2023-2024

Emergent Bilingual

Crockett HS	21
Long HS	19

Source: AISD PIR 2023-2024

With the increasing number of Emergent Bilinguals, AISD has worked to provide interpreters. The Early Childhood programs can provide staff interpreters for Spanish, Swahili, Kirundi, French, Amharic and American Sign Language. Interpreters for families who speak Spanish, Swahili, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Pashto, Dari and other African Languages are provided through the LEA. For all other languages the HS Programs can contact the International Rescue Committee for support, who sometimes reach out to the local universities for interpreting needs for families.

1302.11 (2)(ii) Education

The family education levels for HS are similar to the numbers within the community. AISD worked hard during the pandemic to help students graduate. The pandemic helped the Abilene community see education in a non-traditional setting, allowing students to complete their education in a manner that suited their individual needs. AISD saw the benefits of the non-traditional education by having less than a 1% dropout rate (58 students) for the 2022-2023 school year.

POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

	Abilene city, Texas	
	Estimate	Margin of Error
Income in the past 12 months below poverty level:	12,863	+2,504
Less than high school graduate	(31.9%) 4,108	+1,421
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	(40.5%) 5,215	+1,358
Some college, associate degree	(21.7%) 2,799	+993
Bachelor's degree or higher	(5.7%) 741	+589

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 ACS 1-Year Estimates](#)

Head Start Family Education

Highest level of education obtained by the child's parent or guardian	# of families at enrollment
Advanced degree or Baccalaureate degree	26
Associate degree, Vocational school, or some college	117
High School Graduate or GED	274
Less than High School Graduate	102

Source: AISD PIR 2023-2024

Abilene ISD is sensitive to the learning needs and career aspirations of all students. An increase in the number of students entering trade schools and/or universities was observed. A career tech high school opened the fall of 2021. Leadership & Innovation in the Future Technologies (LIFT) and Academy for Technology, Engineering, Math and Science (A.T.E.M.S.) is a state-of-the-art Career and Center for Technical Education (CTE) offering a variety of career and technical trade classes. The LEA also offers "dual credit" classes on the secondary campuses making two-year colleges, and four-year universities more affordable. The LEA also has Holland Medical School which is designed for students pursuing careers in the healthcare field.

The Abilene community has several options of post-secondary education. There are several 4-year universities, Abilene Christian University, McMurry University, and Hardin Simmons University and Texas Tech Nursing School, one two-year college, Cisco College. Texas State Technical School, Texas Cosmetology School, Cisco College, and Neecee's Cosmetology are some of the local trade schools.

For families who have less than a high school diploma, the LEA offers Adult Education. There they can work towards Adult Secondary Education (GED), English language instruction and Career Services at no cost for instruction and/or materials.

1302.11 (2)(ii) Health Conditions/Nutrition

Collaborating with families to assure that children are healthy physically, socially, and emotionally is important. HS health staff screen monitor and document children's status in the above areas and help families obtain resources when needed.

	HS enrolled children	
	# of children at enrollment	# of children at end of enrollment year
Dental Homes	510	538
Medical Homes	550	569
Up to date on EPSDT	557	433
Up to date on Immunizations	530	541
Immunizations on a Catch-up Schedule	30	20
Immunization Exemption	6	6
	Diagnosed as Needed Treatment and/or Services	Of Diagnosed- Received Treatment and/or Services
Dental	39	26
Chronic Health Condition	137	124

Source: AISD PIR 2023-2024

Nutritional Conditions of Head Start

Number of HS children obese	64
Number of HS children overweight	54
Number of HS children healthy	288
Number of HS children underweight	15

Source: AISD PIR 2023-2024

AISD participates in a program called Care Packs, which helps to combat food insecurities by sending home supplemental snacks over the weekends. During the 2023-2024 school year, Long ELC had 135 students receiving a Care Pack. This is 15% of the early childhood program. This rate is comparable to the Insecurity Rate from Feed America, for Taylor County.

	2021		2022	
	Texas	Taylor County	Texas	Taylor County
Child Insecurity Rate (under 18)	18.1%	17.3%	22.8%	23.5%

Source: Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap

The HS programs are diligent in their efforts to promote good eating habits and are committed to introducing healthy foods to infants, toddlers, and children. The HS programs participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Crockett HS provides reimbursable breakfast, lunch and snack and Long HS provides reimbursable snacks. The program ensures children receive nutritious foods that contribute to their health and wellness.

1302.11 (2)(ii) Social Service Needs

There has been an increase in the number of services/needs provided to our families. Unemployment, cost of living and the inflation on necessities have caused many families to need more support from community agencies. Many families are either unaware of the community resources available or the community agencies they are familiar with are underfunded. According to the HS PIR a minimum of 1,858 services were provided to 518 families, this is an increase compared to the previous PIR. It should also be noted that many families were on a reoccurring Care Pack, which on the PIR is only counted as 1 service. The goal of the HS Family Service is to teach families of the resources the Abilene Community has available, while assisting in emergency needs if necessary.

According to Texas Human Services Programs (2022) there are 2,042 SNAP eligible children for the HS program. Within the HS program we are funded to serve 521 of these potential children. As an Early Childhood program, we approximately serve 1,000 throughout the course of a school year.

Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) Enrollment

	Texas	Taylor County
Total Cases	1,510,709	7,377
Eligible Individuals	3,402,068	15,932
Age Groups		
Under 5	484,468	2,042
Average Payment / Case	\$333	\$295

Source: [Hendrick Health Systems Community Health Assessment](#) 2022

	Crockett Head Start	Long Head Start
TANF	1	6
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)	59	234
WIC (birth-4 years)	86	124
Medicaid/CHIP	151	400
Children receiving SSI	5	30
State only funded, private or other	2	15
Children with no insurance	2	6

Source: AISD PIR 2023-2024

According to the Census children under the age of 6 with no health insurance is at 9.9%. When children are uninsured, they are more likely to have unmet health needs and lack a usual source of care, diminishing in their chances to grow into healthy and productive adults. This suggests that many families in Texas are in greater need than in the past.

The HS uninsured rate is less than 3% compared to the Census. This shows the Early Childhood program is reaching out to families, making them aware of resources available within our community and state.

Selected Characteristics of Health Insurance Coverage in the United States

	Total		Percent Insured		Percent Uninsured	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Civilian noninstitutionalized population	138,415	±1,713	83.0%	±2.9	17.0%	±2.9
AGE						
Under 6 years	11,868	±1,177	90.1%	±6.4	9.9%	±6.4

[Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates](#)

Parents working minimum wage jobs often have difficulty making ends meet, so they rely on government programs to bridge the gap between what they can provide and what their families need. HS Programs have a partnership with the AISD Title 1 and Homeless liaison to provide services for the growing number of students who are considered homeless or economically disadvantaged. They help to provide the families with clothes, food, and education on community agencies.

The 2023-2024 PIR data indicates that 67% of the HS children lived in a single parent household. Dynamics within what has been known as the “traditional family” have changed. The data indicate that homes with single mothers are more prevalent than homes with two parents and significantly higher than single fathers.

Living Arrangements of HS Served Children

	Long HS Families	Crockett HS Families
Total Number of Families	390	135
Two Parents	97	29
Single Parent	293	106
Mother (biological, adoptive, stepparent, etc.)	262	133
Father (biological, adoptive, stepparent, etc.)	17	2
Non-Parents		
Grandparents	11	1
Relative other than grandparents	4	0
Foster parents not relatives	3	0
Other	2	1

Source: AISD PIR 2023-2024

1302.11 (2)(ii) Economic Factors

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) developed the Living Wage Calculator to estimate the cost of living in communities or regions based on typical expenses. This tool helps individuals, communities and employers determine a local wage rate that allows residents to meet minimum standards of living.

According to Comptroller.Texas.Gov the consumer price index has increased 6% since January of 2022, while minimum wage, \$7.25 per hour, has remained the same since 2009. This inflation has hurt the families of Taylor County and the families of Head Start.

Living Wage Calculator for Texas 2024

	1 Adult			2 Adults (1 Working)			2 Adults (Both Working)		
	1 child	2 Children	3 Children	1 child	2 Children	3 Children	1 child	2 Children	3 Children
Food	\$5,630	\$8,444	\$11,224	\$8,715	\$11,225	\$13,686	\$8,715	\$11,225	\$13,686
Child Care	\$7,236	\$13,846	\$20,013	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,236	\$13,846	\$20,013
Medical	\$9,924	\$9,810	\$10,282	\$9,810	\$10,282	\$9,869	\$9,810	\$10,282	\$9,869
Housing	\$13,811	\$13,811	\$18,398	\$13,811	\$13,811	\$18,398	\$13,811	\$13,811	\$18,398
Trans.	\$10,966	\$13,814	\$15,894	\$13,814	\$15,894	\$15,876	\$13,814	\$15,894	\$15,876
Civic	\$3,810	\$4,795	\$5,553	\$4,795	\$5,553	\$5,191	\$4,795	\$5,553	\$5,191
Other	\$6,966	\$7,407	\$1,238	\$7,407	\$10,238	\$9,841	\$7,407	\$10,238	\$9,841
Required Annual Income After Taxes	\$59,729	\$73,313	\$92,987	\$60,317	\$68,968	\$74,827	\$67,554	\$82,814	\$94,839
Living Wage	\$31.77	\$38.33	\$49.47	\$31.94	\$36.35	\$40.48	\$17.91	\$21.67	\$24.65
Poverty Wage	\$9.83	\$12.41	\$15.00	\$12.41	\$15.00	\$17.59	\$6.21	\$7.50	\$8.79
Minimum Wage	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25

Source: MIT, [Living Wage Calculator for Texas, 2024](#)

Within the Abilene community there are a variety of jobs available at all levels of education. Some jobs are manual labor positions and require no specific training (examples: construction laborers, farm workers/laborers, crop and or nursery workers, cooks in institutions and fast-food restaurants, cleaning services in hotels/motels, roustabouts for oil and gas industry). However, many of the available jobs require training beyond a high school diploma (examples: automotive service technicians, mechanics, diesel engine specialist, computer support specialists, computer-controlled machine tool operators, administrative secretaries and assistants, medical lab technicians, licensed vocational nurse, registered nurses, electrical power line installers, and school teachers). The major employers include Dyess Air Force Base, Hendrick Health System, Abilene Independent School District, Abilene State Supported Living System, Texas Department of Criminal Justice, City of Abilene, Abilene Christian University, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Taylor County, Sears Methodist, and numerous fast-food restaurants.

Unemployment Rate

	August 2024	September 2024
<i>Abilene, Texas Unemployment Rate</i>	3.8%	3.4%
Texas Unemployment Rate	4.1%	4.1%
National Unemployment Rate	4.1%	4.1%

[Texas Workforce Commission, Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

1302.11 (2)(iii) Typical Work, School and Training Schedules

Employment Characteristics of Families with own children under 18 years

	Abilene city, Texas	
	Estimate	Margin of Error
Families- below poverty level in the past 12 months	3,041	+847
Married-couple family:	961	+378
No workers	309	+847
1 worker	353	+847
2 workers	264	+847
3 or more workers	35	+847
Other families	2,080	+847
Female householder, no spouse present	1,832	+847
In labor force	1,400	+847
Not in labor force	423	+847
Male householder, no spouse present	248	+847
In labor force	172	+847
Not in labor force	76	+847

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates](https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2020/acs/tables/2020-acs-1-year-estimates.html)

Employment	# of families at enrollment
Total number of families	411
One or more parent is employed	384
One or more in job training	9
One or more parent is in school	53
One is a member of US military or active duty	0
Neither parent is employed, in job training, or in school	114

Source: AISD PIR 2023-2024

The 2023-2024 PIR data shows that 72% of our families were in the workforce, job training or in school. The Census reports 73% of poverty families are also within the workforce. Of the HS families only 24% have education beyond a high school diploma, which indicates most of our families are working in a minimum wage job with an atypical work schedule. The low unemployment rate and HS parent data both suggest that a great majority of parents are working, or are in school, and need full-day educational/childcare services for their children.

1302.11 (2)(iv) Other child development, childcare centers & family childcare programs

According to Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Abilene, TX has 30 licensed daycares and 22 licensed home-based programs. Of those sites, 41 of them meet the criteria for accepting Child Care Services (CCS). However, 29 of those CCS accepted centers provide full-day services. Due to limited number of full day centers, limited availability and/or the cost, HS maintain a waitlist, as do many of the quality centers within the community. [TxDFPS](#)

Long HS has increased the number of 3 year old served within the last few years, yet the waiting list continues to grow.

WAITING LIST FOR HEAD START

	AS OF November 1, 2023	AS OF November 1, 2024
Crockett Head Start	230	257
Long Head Start		
• Three-year-old	72	98
• Four-year-old	10	0
Total	312	355

Source: AISD

Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas administers funding through CCS to help parents pay for childcare while they search for employment, work, go to school or participate in job training to become more self-sufficient. The eligibility requirements for CCS are like the qualifying factors for HS, making many of our families eligible for CCS. During the pandemic HS waitlist numbers declined, due to parents not working and the fear of putting their children in a public-school setting, however the decrease in unemployment since the pandemic is causing parents to need full-day quality childcare. Living Wage Calculations averages the cost of day care in Taylor County to be \$603 a month, which is an increase of \$87 a month since last year and \$149 from 2022. There are no other centers or child developments within our service area who are funded by a Head Start grant. The HS program also does not compete with a pre-kindergarten program because they are affiliated with the Local Education Agency AISD.

1302.11 (2)(v) Community Resources

A [Community Resource Directory](#) has been created, in English and in Spanish, for our families to know the agencies within the community where they can receive help if needed. This Directory serves as a resource guide for families and is available in digital or print.

This directory not only has a list of community partners, it has other agencies with whom Long ELC has long standing relationships. The Family Service department work with families to make sure they are aware of services available to them within the Abilene community.

1302.11 (2)(vi) Strengths of the Community

- The Abilene Community has a Development Corporation of Abilene, which is the economic development driver of Abilene with the goal to increase job opportunities and capital investment as well as recruit and retain companies for the community.
- 240+ manufacturing operations in Abilene.
- 19 Food Pantries, 6 meal sites
- 2 organizations that prepare Care Packs for children for weekend insecurity food.
- The HS maintains partnerships with 70+ agencies and individuals.
- Hendrick Health is a longstanding not-for-profit healthcare institution, providing quality health care.
- The LEA provides transportation services to Long Head Start students, thereby directing the use of federal funds to other needed services.
- City Link offers busing throughout the community, Crockett and Long are on the available routes.
- Abilene has a strong relationship with Dyess Air Force Base and Long HS is a Purple Star Campus.
- Abilene community has 4 Universities, 2 Junior/Technical Colleges, and 2 Cosmetology Schools.
- There are agencies available for children with disabilities within the community and AISD.
- HS sites, utilities, maintenance, and some personnel costs are provided in-kind from the LEA, AISD.
- The AISD GED program is offered to HS parents, as well as any adult in the service area.
- The AISD Adult Education program has a grant available for GED testing fees.
- The community has a summer feeding program. There were 16 feeding sites for children under the age of 18 the summer of 2023.

1302.11 (2)(vii) Gaps in Community Resources

A community survey was conducted in 2022 for the service area for the AISD Early Childhood Programs. Of the individuals who completed the survey all of them live or work for an agency within Taylor County and directly impact on the programs.

Rank	Community Needs Determined by Eligible Families
1	Community awareness of available services and programs
2	Affordable childcare or an increase funding for HS (birth-3 year olds)
3	After School childcare
4	Secure sources for affordable, nutritious food
5	Affordable Housing
6	Housing Assistance (subsidies, utilities, repairs)
7	Assistance with Career Development: Career planning and testing
8	Access to affordable medical and dental services
9	Parent Education: Asset Building
10	Affordable and reliable internet
11	Financial Assistance for certifications and Licenses
12	Mental Health services/support for children under the age of 5
13	Support services for children with developmental disabilities
14	Parent Education: Employment Services
15	Emergency Medical care
16	Support Group for Single Parents or Grandparents
17	Housing Assistance (furniture, household goods)
18	Parent Education: School Readiness goals
19	Support for Foster Families
20	Public Transportation that is accessible

Rank	Community Needs Determined by Head Start Staff
1	Community awareness of available services and programs.
2	Secure sources for affordable, nutritious food
3	Affordable quality childcare: After-school, Infant & Toddler
4	Certified Early Childhood Special Education Teachers
5	Housing Assistance (subsidies, utilities, repairs)
6	Access to affordable medical and dental services
7	Mental Health services/support for children under the age of 5
8	Support services for children with developmental disabilities
9	Housing Assistance (furniture, household goods)
10	Parent Education: GED, Certifications, Higher Ed
11	Parent Education: Supporting child development
12	Parent Education: Sensory Needs
13	Interpreters for African Languages & ESL Teachers
14	Assistance with Career Development: Career planning and testing
15	Public Transportation that is accessible

Rank	Community Needs Determined by Agencies
-------------	---

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Community awareness of available services and programs |
| 2 | More funding for their agency |
| 3 | Secure sources for affordable, nutritious food |
| 4 | Housing Assistance (subsidies, utilities, repairs) |
| 5 | Affordable Childcare: Infant & Toddler, After-school care, summer care |
| 6 | Access to affordable medical & dental services |
| 7 | Parent Education: Sensory Needs |
| 8 | Parent Education: GED, Certifications, Higher Ed |
| 9 | Parent Education: Asset Building |
| 10 | Mental Health services/support for children under the age of 5 |
| 11 | Assistance with Career Development: Career planning and testing |
| 12 | Information about support groups |
| 13 | Interpreters for African Languages |
| 14 | Support services for children with developmental disabilities |
| 15 | Disability Assistance |

Sources

AIISD Head Start and Early Head Start Program Information Report (PIR)

AIISD Administration Office

241 Pine Street, Abilene, TX 79604

Merkel ISD Administration Office

300 Ash Street, Merkel, TX 79536

Trent ISD Administration Office

12821 Interstate 20, Trent, TX 79561

Jim Ned ISD Administration Office

830 Garza Street, Tuscola, TX 79562

Wylie ISD Administration Office

6251 Buffalo Gap Road, Abilene, TX 79606

United States Census Bureau

www.census.gov

Texas State Historical Association

<https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/taylor-county>

AIISD Elementary School Boundaries

<https://www.abileneisd.org/for-parents/school-boundaries/>

Community Health Needs Assessment: Hendrick Hospital Abilene Market

<https://www.hendrickhealth.org/documents/CHNA/Hendrick-Health-Abilene-Market-CHNA-Report-08-08-22.pdf>

Texas Health Data 2013

www.healthdata.dshs.texas.gov/vitalstatistics/Birth

Kids Count Data Center

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>

Safe Families for Children

<https://safe-families.org/about/impact/>

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child_Care/ppFacilitySearchDayCare.asp

Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas

<https://wfwct.org/125/About-Child-Care-Services-CCS>

Power to Decide

<https://powertodecide.org/what-we-do/information/national-state-data/texas>

Development Corporation of Abilene

<https://developabilene.com/>

The Texas Campaign

<https://txcampaign.org/research-data/data-map/>

International Rescue Committee

www.rescue.org

Abilene Housing Authority

www.Abileneha.org

Census Reporter

<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/06000US4844190010-abilene-ccd-taylor-county-tx/>

Food Bank of West Central Texas

<https://fbwct.org/food-pantry-and-meal-site-schedules/>

Living Wage Calculator

<https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/48441>

Texas Workforce Commissions

<https://www.twc.texas.gov/>

Bureau of Labor Statistics

<https://www.bls.gov/>