



UNITED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT AGENDA ACTION ITEM

TOPIC: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Texas A&M University (TAMU) and United ISD

SUBMITTED BY: Cynthia Rodriguez, Ex. Dir. for Elem. Ed. **OF:** Curriculum & Instruction Department

APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL TO SCHOOL BOARD: _____

DATE ASSIGNED FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION: June 19, 2013

Recommendation:

Texas A&M University, in collaboration with Sam Houston State University (“SHSU”) and Johns Hopkins University (“JHU”), through funding from the United States Department of Education (“DoE”), submits English Language and Literacy Acquisition-Validation (ELLA-V) in Texas elementary schools. Six UISD campuses were randomly selected to participate in the study which will bring focus to instructional methods utilized with the ELL students in the classroom.

Rationale:

Participation in this study will benefit both, the students and the teachers as they consistently evaluate their methodology in addressing the needs of the ELL student in the classroom.

Budgetary Information:

No budgetary impact.

Board Policy Reference and Compliance:

Memorandum of Understanding

between

Texas A&M University and United Independent School District

This is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Texas A&M University (“TAMU”) and United Independent School District (hereafter referred to as “ISD”) and on behalf of ISD’s school sites listed below. Collectively hereinafter the “Parties” or individually “Party.”

Statement of Services to be Performed

Texas A&M University, in collaboration with Sam Houston State University (“SHSU”) and Johns Hopkins University (“JHU”), through funding from the United States Department of Education (“DoE”), submits English Language and Literacy Acquisition-Validation (ELLA-V) in Texas elementary schools. ELLA-V is based on moderate evidence from a prior DoE project, Project ELLA. There are several Priorities in this project that include: Absolute Priority 1, “Improving the Effectiveness of Teachers”, is met by increasing the number of teachers who are effective as measured by data that include, in significant part, student achievement or student growth from state-wide reading English language proficiency assessments and other student measures that are rigorous and comparable across schools, as well as a measure for teacher pedagogical effectiveness in English as second language (ESL) classrooms. Competitive Priority 6 is met by improving the quality of early learning programs (K-3) for high-need students by validating innovative practices and strategies via previously developed interventions that address the limited English proficient (LEP)/English language learners (ELL) students’ cognitive readiness for core academic subjects in English with a standards-aligned curriculum. Competitive Priority 8 is met by including LEP/ELLs as the sample from participating districts with the validation of practices and strategies designed to improve ELLs’ academic outcomes.

The purpose of this MOU is to identify and define the responsibilities of each party to the MOU regarding the ELLA-V program at the United ISD elementary schools identified herein.

Dr. Rafael Lara-Alecio from TAMU and Dr. Beverly Irby from SHSU will serve as the Project Managers for the ELLA-V program.

The parties agree to the following responsibilities during the project:

1. Work collaboratively to develop and implement the ELLA-V programs and services that (a) foster access to English-language education and (b) include all students who wish to participate and who work in good faith to do so.
2. Work collaboratively to (a) outline current school-based efforts to foster access to English-language education; (b) review the ELLA-V programs and services to ensure that they complement and extend these existing efforts; and (c) establish clear and mutually agreeable timelines for the implementation of ELLA-V programs and services.

TAMU agrees to the following terms during the project:

1. All equipment will be installed in the classrooms with assistance from the campus/district technology contact.
2. All materials will be delivered to the campus sites for the delivery of the treatments.
3. Each participating teacher will receive a stipend as stipulated in the grant budget, separate from this MOU.
4. Each campus will retain all equipment upon the completion of the project.
5. Each campus will retain all materials upon the completion of the project.
6. The Grant Team (TAMU and JHU) will provide an independent district report for the targeted campuses upon completion of each academic year grade level intervention and an overall report will also be provided.
7. Professional development webinars will be provided to each of the districts for free to all teachers in the districts.
8. The participating districts will be provided no less than five licenses for webinars for their teachers and administrators to share best practices across the state to other teachers.
9. TK20 (electronic portfolio management web-based software) will be provided to the target treatment campuses for electronic portfolios for the participating teachers.
10. All testing materials and testing administrators for individualized testing will be provided by the grant team.

The United ISD agrees to the following terms during the project:

1. Locate a place for individualized testing of students during the beginning and ending of the academic year on each of the six United ISD elementary campuses included in the project.

2. Assist in obtaining all permissions from parents and students and return those permissions at the designated time to the TAMU team.
3. Communicate any issues with the implementation to the TAMU team.
4. Provide access to two classrooms per each of six targeted elementary campuses for treatments or control and provide access for observations.
5. Assist in locating local testing administrators for individualized testing.
6. Implement the treatments with fidelity.
7. Upon obtaining permission, teachers and administrators shall participate in interviews and/or focus groups.
8. Provide the TAMU team with local test results on students in the project such as that of the TELPAS or TPRI or the STARR tests.
9. Should any alterations in the intervention material be done, obtain permission first from the TAMU team.
10. Assist THERENOW (company for classroom cameras) in moving the cameras from grade level to grade level and immediately indicate to the TAMU team if there is any problem with equipment or materials.

United ISD school sites:

Treatment 1 Schools (two classrooms per site)

B. Garcia
Perez

Treatment 2 Schools (two classrooms per site)

Prada
Ruiz

Control Schools (two classrooms per site)

Nye
Trautmann

Dates in Schools:

The Johns Hopkins University Evaluation Team, including test administrators hired by that University will be in the schools for pre and post testing and interviewing the teachers and administrators during the following time periods. Pre-testing for each grade level will be upon completion of all permissions granted by parents and students and teachers and principals within the first six weeks of school. The Post-testing will be performed at the end of the school year within the last four weeks of school.

The TAMU Team will be observing in the target classrooms at each school via distance video cameras placed in each classroom three to four times per school year. The cameras will be turned on by the teachers. Also some of the professional development will be handled via those cameras for feedback to the teachers (via the interactive cameras). This team may be visiting the target campuses at random to observe fidelity of the treatment or to meet with the district administration, the principals, and the teachers involved in the project.

Term of MOU

This MOU begins August 1, 2013 and shall terminate on July 31, 2017.

Requirements

TAMU shall be responsible for the compliance with all requirements and obligations relating to such services under local, state, or federal law. TAMU shall also be responsible for all licensing requirements of any local, state, or federal jurisdiction to which the performance of its services may be subject.

Sovereign Immunity

Nothing in this MOU shall be deemed to waive the sovereign immunity of the State of Texas or of the staff or employees of TAMU.

Applicable Law

This MOU shall be governed by the laws of the State of Texas.

Dispute Resolution

The Program Manager or his/her designee and the authorized agent of ISD and/or the elementary school shall work together in good faith and in a timely manner to resolve disputes that might develop pursuant to the program under this MOU.

Amendments

Any change to this MOU shall be preceded by a written amendment signed by both parties of this MOU. An amendment is required:

1. Whenever the term of this MOU is extended or reduced without terminating the MOU.
2. Or, for any change in terms and conditions of the MOU.

Termination or option to individually opt out of program participation

Any Party may terminate this MOU or an elementary school may individually choose to opt out of the program without cause or penalty by giving the other Party a written notice of such a termination at least sixty (60) calendar days prior to termination. If not terminated by the above method, this MOU shall be terminated upon the expiration date currently specified.

By signing, I certify that I have read and agree with the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding and officially authorized to sign and execute on behalf of my institution.

United Independent School District

Signature Date

Print Name and Title

Signature Date

Print Name and Title

Signature Date

Print Name and Title

Texas A&M University

Signature Date

Katherine V. Kissmann
Director, Contracts and Grants



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English Language and Literacy Acquisition-Validation (ELLA-V)

Funded by Investing in Innovation Fund (i3) -
U.S. Department of Education

Texas A&M University
Sam Houston State University
Johns Hopkins University (Evaluator)

UISD's gain from participation in ELLA-V



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- Each classroom teacher will be paid a stipend to participate. The Treatment teachers will be paid more for their time in staff development training that they will receive via Webinar.
 - Each treatment school (i.e., Zaffirini, Nye, Trautmann, and Prada) will receive a document camera and a projector.
 - Each school will receive professional development (all related to ELL) and the opportunity to share that development to other districts via their own webinars. (Each school will receive a large number of free slots for free webinar trainings.)
 - Science is a focus of the interventions (it is science infused English literacy treatment), so the science content should be strengthened for these students.
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More gains

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- There will be webcam setups in all the participating classrooms (two classrooms per campus each year, for a total of 48 classrooms) and the treatment teachers will receive mentoring via that camera set up and will be monitored for the lessons.... it is not an invasive camera. It can only be accessed when the teacher turns it on for her/his observation and mentoring session.
 - We will use the only pedagogical theory actualized via a valid observation tool for the observations. Principals will be trained in this instrument also for free in the event they wish to use it.
 - All intervention materials will be left to the district upon completion of this grant
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United ISD:

elementary campuses randomly selected and assigned

Intervention/Treatment
1

Bonnie Garcia

- 2 classrooms/year

Perez

- 2 classrooms/year

Intervention/Treatment
2

Prada

- 2 classrooms/year

Ruiz

- 2 classrooms/year

Control/Typical Practice

Nye

- 2 classrooms/year

Trautmann

- 2 classrooms/year
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Timeline of ELLA-V



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- Year 1-2 (2013-2014): Grade 3
 - Year 2-3 (2014-2015): Grade 2
 - Year 3-4 (2015-2016): Grade 1
 - Year 4-5 (2016-2017): Kindergarten
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