Trinity Charter Schools

(TCS)

Since 2003 Trinity Charter Schools has been dedicated to Educating and Empowering Students to Transform and Reclaim Their Lives.

Introduction

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Who is Trinity Charter School

- Trinity Charter Schools (TCS), a 501C3 and TEA approved Charter School operator in the state of Texas

- In 2003, TCS began serving foster care children in residential treatment centers (RTC)

- TCS operates 10 school campuses across Texas and an additional 6 campuses are currently dormant due to DFPS residential treatment center placement holds

- Yearly enrollment has ranged between 1,000 to 2,000 students based upon the number of children within state care.

Current System Challenges

- 35,000 children across Texas are currently in foster care & Texas Juvenile Justice (TJJD) and 50% of these children are currently attending an ISD or Charter School in Texas.

- According to the Hechinger Report, on average 1 in 3 foster care children will have switched schools at least 5 times by Junior Year of High School.

- TEA's 2019 Education & Students In Foster Care resource guide states, that roughly 40% of foster care children fail to graduate high school or equivalent degree (for context, in the same report TEA states roughly 20% of homeless students fail to graduate high school or equivalent degree).

- Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services reports roughly 66% of children are emancipated from the Texas foster care system upon their 18th birthday.
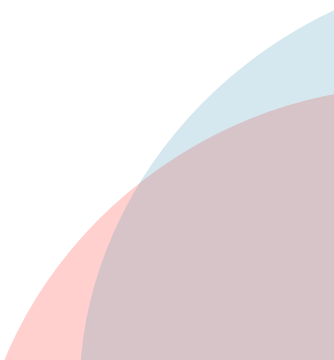
Student Video/TCS Impact

Family Video/TCS Impact

The TCS Education Approach

- Held accountable through Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) standards

- All TCS staff are highly qualified and receive specific training and certifications

- Curriculum is based upon Texas Essential Knowledge & Skills

- Students are assessed every 9 weeks using Renaissance Learning, and individual education plans are created and adjusted to document progress on educational goals

The TCS Education Approach Continued

- Individual face-to-face tutorials at all TCS campuses across Texas

- A continuum of services is provided for students who receive support from special programs

- STAAR tutoring via Edgenuity and in-person face-to-face tutoring available

- Post Secondary planning-college/career

- Vocational exploration via Focus2Careers

The Vision

With Legislative assistance, we believe Texas schools can drastically improve the 40% high school dropout rate through expanded remote programming by adding a Transitional / Drop-Out Recovery Program.

The TCS Model:
- Continuity of care / virtual student support system.
- Comprehensive remote learning that provides academic recovery, certification, and vocational training.
- Schedule flexibility that allows students to alternate full-day education with full-day vocational training
- Community partnerships (employment, continued education, or other)

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Three Legislative Requests

1. Ensure future virtual education legislation does not include a 10% enrollment cap/calculation for children within state care.

   SB15 establishes a 10% enrollment cap which TEA measures against the quarterly snapshot data. This 10% cap limited TCS to 35 virtual learning seats this school year (we expect TCS to have a similar number of seats available in 2022-23).

Three Legislative Requests Continued

2. Align in-person and virtual learning academic accountability requirements for schools currently operating under Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) standards.

   AEA provides an academic accommodation for schools that serve a high number of at-risk students. Over 75% of TCS enrollment is identified as at-risk. For this reason, TCS is held accountable under the AEA standards. SB15 requires virtual learning programs to be held accountable through the A-F Academic Accountability Ratings and does not currently allow for AEA.

3. Periodic funding of virtual learning programs throughout the academic year. TCS serves a highly mobile student population residing in foster care, residential, and juvenile justice facilities.

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Extra Slides

Citation

https://www.childrensrights.org/unemployment-rampant-among-former-foster-youth/
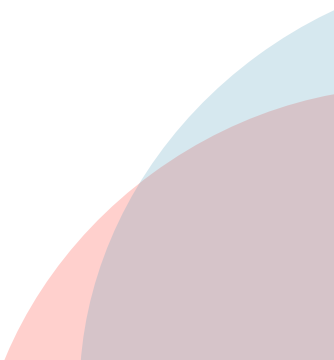
https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/News/2020/2020-08-03-Housing_Help_for_Former_Foster_Youth.asp

AEA 2022 Accountability Manual

- Texas has been providing alternative accountability standards since 1995/1996 and gave the Education Commissioner the ability to provide alternative accountability for schools serving at-risk children. Virtual learning provides another opportunity for these students to receive those academic services. (Texas Education Code Sec 12.1181 & 19 Texas Administrative Code Rule 97.1001).

- Pursuant to Texas Education Code (TEC) Sections 39 (Accountability) and Section 12 (Charter Schools) and Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Title 19, the Commissioner has the authority to utilize alternative accountability procedures to measure the performance of schools serving high populations of at-risk students, which includes foster, residential, TJJD, etc. This authority is codified annually through the Accountability Manual published through the Texas Education Agency.

AEA 2022 Accountability Qualification

In accordance with TEC Sec. 39.0545, TEC Sec 12.1181 and 19 TAC Rule 97.1001, the AEA Academic Standard includes indicators for charter schools evaluated under AEA provisions of the Texas Accountability Rating System. Alternative performance measures for campuses serving at-risk students (as defined in TEC Sec. 29.081(d)) were first implemented in the 1995-1996 school year. These measures include campuses with large populations of at-risk students (at least 75%) to ensure unique campus settings are appropriately evaluated for state accountability.

Per Chapter 1 of the 2022 Accountability Manual, Not Rated indicates that a district or campus does not receive a rating for one or more of the following reasons:

- The district or campus has no data in the accountability subset.
- The district or campus has insufficient data to assign a rating.
- The district operates only residential facilities.
- The campus is a juvenile justice alternative education program (JJAEP).
- The campus is a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP).
- The campus is a residential facility.
- The commissioner otherwise determines that the district or campus will not be rated. (through AEA)