



Striving for Academic Excellence

A Profile of Seven Economically Disadvantaged School Districts

**Conducted by
McConnell Jones Lanier & Murphy, LLP
for the
Legislative Budget Board**

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**INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL
DISTRICT PROFILE**

O'DONNELL

O'DONNELL ISD

BACKGROUND

O'Donnell Independent School District (OISD) is located about 45 miles south of Lubbock in West Texas. OISD is in Lynn County and extends into parts of Dawson and Terry counties. According to the 2000 census, O'Donnell has a population of 1,011 residents. About one-quarter, or 24.4 percent, of the families and 24.8 percent of the population are below the poverty line.

In 2006–07, OISD had 344 students. OISD has three schools. In 2006–07, O'Donnell Elementary had 176 students, O'Donnell Junior High had 58 students, and O'Donnell High School had 110 students. O'Donnell Junior High and O'Donnell High School are located on the same campus and share a principal. The district's student population has been declining. It declined 9.5 percent from 2004–05 and 3.4 percent in the last five years (2002–03).

As shown in **Exhibit 78**, nearly 60 percent of the students were Hispanic in 2006–07. The percentage of Hispanic students has increased from 56.3 percent in 2004–05 to 59.9 percent in 2006–07. The percentage of Hispanic students in OISD was higher than Region 17 and the statewide rates. OISD also had a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students, 82.3 percent in 2006–07. Its

percentage of economically disadvantaged students was more than 25 percentage points higher than the state average and more than 20 percentage points higher than the Region 17 average.

In 2006–07, nearly one-half of OISD students, 169 out of 344, were classified as at-risk as shown in **Exhibit 79**. OISD had a higher percentage of at-risk students (49.1 percent) than Region 17 (42.6 percent) or the state (48.3 percent).

During 2006–07, OISD had 76.7 full-time-equivalent (FTE) staff of which 39.6 or 51.6 percent were teachers, slightly higher than the state rate as shown in **Exhibit 80**. OISD teachers had, on average, 2.3 years less experience than the state average (9.0 versus 11.3 years).

As shown in **Exhibit 81**, the distribution of teachers in OISD, by years of experience, is different than the distribution in Region 17 or statewide. OISD had a larger percentage of beginning teachers (7.6 percent) than Region 17 (5.7 percent). OISD also had a larger percentage of teachers with 20 or more years of experience (35.2 percent) than Region 17 (24.8 percent) or the state (19.7 percent). More than 34 percent of OISD teachers had five or fewer years of experience

EXHIBIT 78
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS
OISD, REGION 17, AND STATE
2004–05 THROUGH 2006–07

ENTITY	STUDENT ENROLLMENT	RACIAL/ETHNIC PERCENTAGE				PERCENTAGE ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
		AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	ANGLO	OTHER	
2004–05						
O'Donnell	380	0.5%	56.3%	42.9%	0.3%	80.0%
Region 17	77,494	8.1%	50.4%	40.3%	1.2%	58.0%
State	4,383,871	14.2%	44.7%	37.7%	3.3%	54.6%
2005–06						
O'Donnell	373	0.5%	58.2%	41.3%	0.0%	81.0%
Region 17	77,717	8.4%	50.8%	39.5%	12%	58.4%
State	4,505,572	14.7%	45.3%	36.5%	3.4%	55.6%
2006–07						
O'Donnell	344	0.6%	59.9%	39.0%	0.6%	82.3%
Region 17	77,589	8.3%	51.6%	38.8%	1.3%	59.1%
State	4,576,933	14.4%	46.3%	35.7%	3.6%	55.5%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2004–05 through 2006–07.

**EXHIBIT 79
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF AT-RISK STUDENTS
OISD, REGION 17, AND STATE
2006-07**

ENTITY	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	NUMBER OF AT-RISK STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF AT-RISK STUDENTS
O'Donnell	344	169	49.1%
Region 17	77,589	33,024	42.6%
State	4,576,933	2,209,538	48.3%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2006-07.

compared with 30.9 percent in Region 17 and 37.2 percent statewide.

As depicted in **Exhibit 82**, OISD had a higher share of teachers with a bachelor's degree in 2006-07 (96.5 percent) than Region 17 (80.6 percent) or the state (77.6 percent) and a lower share of teachers with advanced degrees: 3.5 percent compared with 18.7 percent for Region 17 and 21.1 percent statewide.

**EXHIBIT 80
OISD AND STATE STAFF
2006-07**

CATEGORY	DISTRICT TOTAL	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL STAFF	STATE TOTAL	STATE PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL STAFF
Teachers	39.6	51.6%	311,466.3	50.7%
Professional Support	4.6	6.0%	50,333.9	8.2%
Campus Administration	2.4	3.1%	17,098.1	2.8%
Central Administration	1.0	1.3%	6,202.1	1.0%
Educational Aides	3.5	4.5%	61,344.6	10.0%
Auxiliary Staff	25.7	33.5%	167,469.2	27.3%
Total	76.7	100.0%	613,914.2	100.0%
Total minority staff	21.2	27.7%	259,842.5	42.3%
Race/ethnicity of teachers:				
African American	0.0	0.0%	29,062.2	9.3%
Hispanic	2.0	5.1%	64,759.7	20.8%
Anglo	35.6	89.9%	213,201.3	68.5%
Other	2.0	5.1%	4,443.1	1.5%
Total*	39.6	100.0%	311,466.3	100.0%
Average years of experience	9.0		11.3	
Number of students per teacher	8.7		14.7	

*Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2006-07.

**EXHIBIT 81
PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS BY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
OISD, REGION 17, AND STATE
2006-07**

ENTITY	BEGINNING	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
O'Donnell	7.6%	26.7%	5.2%	25.3%	35.2%
Region 17	5.7%	25.2%	18.0%	26.4%	24.8%
State	8.1%	29.1%	19.6%	23.6%	19.7%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2006-07.

**EXHIBIT 82
DEGREE STATUS OF TEACHERS
OISD, REGION 17, AND STATE
2006-07**

ENTITY	PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS WITH DEGREE				TOTAL*
	NO DEGREE	BACHELORS	MASTERS	DOCTORATE	
O'Donnell	0.0%	96.5%	3.5%	0.0%	100.0%
Region 17	0.5%	80.6%	18.7%	0.3%	100.0%
State	0.8%	77.6%	21.1%	0.5%	100.0%

*Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2006-07.

As presented in **Exhibit 83**, in 2006–07, OISD had a higher percentage of bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) students than Region 17 (6.7 percent compared to 4.3 percent), but lower than the state (14.8 percent). OISD had a higher percentage of students in Career and Technology Education (CATE) than the Region 17 and state averages (29.7 percent compared to 23.8 percent and 20.6 percent, respectively). OISD had a lower percentage of students in the Gifted and Talented (G/T) program and in special education than both Region 17 and the state.

Exhibit 84 shows OISD had lower annual and longitudinal dropout rates than Region 17 and the state in 2003–04 through 2005–06. OISD did not have any annual dropouts in grades 7 and 8 during this three-year period. It did not have any annual dropouts in grades 7 to 12 in 2003–04 and 2004–05; in 2005–06 it had a 1.6 percent dropout rate. Its annual and longitudinal dropout rates for grades 9 to 12 were lower than Region 17 and the state.

Exhibit 85 shows that OISD exceeded the graduation rates of both Region 17 and the state in 2004–05 through 2006–07.

COMMENDABLE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES

OISD is using its small class size, consistent curriculum, and tutorials to implement effective instructional programs. OISD has small class sizes at all grade levels. As reflected in **Exhibit 86**, OISD's class sizes were smaller compared to both Region 17 and the state. OISD's classes at the secondary

level are half the size of average classes statewide. At the elementary level, class size is between 10 to 17 students. Elementary school teachers consult at the beginning of the year with lower grade teachers about the abilities of each student and are able to use this information, because of their small class sizes, to adapt their instructional strategies. Similarly, at the secondary level, the small class sizes allow teachers to customize their teaching strategies to the learning styles of different students. According to the secondary principal, "teachers do not teach to the middle."

OISD has implemented a consistent reading program for pre-kindergarten, elementary, and middle school grades. It has adopted textbooks from the same publisher for junior high and high school, facilitating curricular continuity and a smooth transition of students from junior high to high school. Student transition from junior high to high school is also eased by having some of OISD secondary teachers teach both junior high and high school classes. To get elementary students ready for and comfortable in junior high, OISD's four teachers in grades 4 and 5 each teach a different core subject area: one teacher teaches English language arts, one teaches math, one teaches social studies, and one teaches science. This strategy also allows the district to maintain small classes.

OISD has put a strong emphasis on reading across all grade levels. OISD has implemented two research-based reading programs. One reading program, Success For All, is implemented in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. The program is consistent across grades and provides annual training to teachers. At the elementary level, 90 minutes a

EXHIBIT 83
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND TEACHERS BY PROGRAM
OISD, REGION 17, AND STATE
2006–07

ENTITY	BILINGUAL/ ESL	CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY	GIFTED AND TALENTED	SPECIAL EDUCATION	REGULAR EDUCATION
O'Donnell					
Students	6.7%	29.7%	4.9%	9.0%	*
Teachers	0.0%	5.9%	0.0%	5.9%	77.0%
Region 17					
Students	4.3%	23.8%	5.5%	12.8%	*
Teachers	2.6%	5.3%	0.5%	8.4%	75.4%
State					
Students	14.8%	20.6%	7.5%	10.6%	*
Teachers	7.6%	3.9%	2.0%	10.0%	70.6%

* AEIS does not provide number of students in regular education.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2006–07.

**EXHIBIT 84
ANNUAL AND LONGITUDINAL DROPOUT RATES
OISD, REGION 17, AND STATE
2003–04 THROUGH 2005–06**

ENTITY	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
ANNUAL DROPOUT RATE GRADES 7–8			
O'Donnell	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Region 17	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%
State	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%
ANNUAL DROPOUT RATE GRADES 7–12			
O'Donnell	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%
Region 17	0.7%	0.9%	2.5%
State	0.9%	0.9%	2.6%
ANNUAL DROPOUT RATE GRADES 9–12			
O'Donnell	0.0%	*	2.3%
Region 17	3.5%	*	3.6%
State	3.9%	*	3.7%
LONGITUDINAL DROPOUT RATE (GRADES 9–12)			
O'Donnell	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%
Region 17	3.5%	4.5%	7.9%
State	3.9%	4.3%	8.8%

*Information not available on AEIS.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004–05 through 2006–07.

**EXHIBIT 85
PERCENT OF STUDENTS GRADUATING, RECEIVING A GED,
CONTINUING HIGH SCHOOL, OR DROPPING OUT
OISD, REGION 17, AND STATE
CLASS OF 2004 THROUGH CLASS OF 2006**

GRADUATING CLASS	OISD	REGION 17	STATE
Class of 2006			
Graduated	91.7%	85.9%	80.4%
Received GED	0.0%	1.7%	2.3%
Continued HS	5.6%	4.5%	8.6%
Dropped Out (4-year)	2.8%	7.9%	8.8%
Class of 2005			
Graduated	100.0%	87.5%	84.0%
Received GED	0.0%	2.8%	3.8%
Continued HS	0.0%	5.1%	7.9%
Dropped Out	0.0%	4.5%	4.3%
Class of 2004			
Graduated	92.3%	89.6%	84.6%
Received GED	7.7%	2.6%	4.2%
Continued HS	0.0%	4.3%	7.3%
Dropped Out	0.0%	3.5%	3.9%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004–05 through 2006–07.

**EXHIBIT 86
AVERAGE CLASS SIZE BY GRADE LEVEL
OISD, REGION 17, AND STATE
2006–07**

GRADE	O'DONNELL	REGION 17	STATE
Elementary			
Kindergarten	13.0	17.9	19.5
Grade 1	17.0	17.8	19.5
Grade 2	11.0	18.3	19.6
Grade 3	*	19.5	19.5
Grade 4	14.0	24.4	20.2
Grade 5	10.0	24.6	22.3
Grade 6	14.2	16.8	21.8
Secondary			
English Language Arts	10.0	16.2	20.0
Math	7.3	15.6	20.0
Science	10.1	16.9	21.0
Social Studies	9.3	17.6	22.0

*Information not available in AEIS.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2006–07.

day are devoted to reading. In first through fifth grade, students are divided into smaller groups by reading ability. This strategy, according to elementary school teachers, promotes reading leaders and allows students to feel more comfortable reading with other students at their level. Under this strategy, students advance to higher reading levels faster. Students are also required to read at least 20 minutes at night and parents have to sign a form indicating that their children did so. This not only gets students in the habit of reading at home but also involves parents and increases accountability. According to teachers, this program has decreased the number of students in first grade who are struggling readers. OISD also uses this program with its ESL students.

The Reading First grant that OISD received in 2004–05 for kindergarten to grade 3 added to its instructional staff. The district was able to employ a reading facilitator/coach who works with teachers, especially new teachers, and two interventionist staff members to work with struggling readers and tutor them. The reading coach goes into classrooms, models teachings, and observes teachers.

OISD teachers prepare progress reports for students every three weeks. Students not making satisfactory progress are referred to tutoring. OISD has a comprehensive tutorial program. It has a pull-out tutorial program for kindergarten to grade 3. In 2007–08, OISD added technology to its tutorial program and implemented a comprehensive Internet-

based and self-paced reading program that has continuous progress monitoring and works well with the Reading First tiered reading program (Imagination Station). The program's immediate feedback helps teachers with accountability and allows them to select appropriate developmental materials for skill reinforcement. OISD uses the program daily for 30 minutes with all pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and first grade students and with struggling readers in grades 2 through 5. It also offers tutoring in math. In grades 3 and 4, the tutorial program involves individual sessions after school with the respective student's homeroom teacher. In junior high, OISD incorporated a period for tutorials during the school day. OISD implemented in 2007–08 an online math tutorial program for the junior high school. Forty O'Donnell Junior High students are participating in it.

OISD promotes and celebrates student achievement. During every monthly board meeting, there is a Celebration of Excellence, recognizing students for their achievements. The superintendent sends e-mails to all teachers recognizing both teachers and students for their achievements. The elementary counselor sends notes home to parents when their children do well.

Exhibit 87 shows that overall OISD's TAKS performance exceeded or met the state averages in all subject areas and in all tests from 2004–05 through 2006–07, except for one percentage point behind the state average in science in 2006–07.

In 2006–07, O'Donnell Junior High was ranked *Recognized* and its students' TAKS performance exceeded or met the performance of its comparison campus group in all subject areas and grade levels. O'Donnell High School's TAKS performance met or exceeded the performance of its campus group in all grade levels and subject areas with the exception

of grade 10 science and social studies and grade 11 social studies, as demonstrated in **Exhibit 88**.

AVAILABILITY AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY

OISD has a wide-range of technology, including laptops for each junior high student. OISD uses technology for administrative and instructional purposes across all grade levels and subject areas. The technology coordinator manages the OISD technology.

OISD has more than 400 computers and laptops. OISD's technology includes:

- The elementary school has six administrative and staff computers; a computer lab with 20 computers; and a writing (Language Lab) lab with 12 computers. It has 17 teacher and 30 student computers; the library has two staff and three student computers, two counselor computers; and the special education classroom has one teacher and four student computers. Typically, classrooms have one teacher and two student computers.
- The junior high has 16 teacher computers and laptops and 80 student laptops as part of the Technology Immersion Pilot (TIP) grant. The combined junior high and high school special education classrooms have two teacher and two student computers. Each classroom has a mounted projector.
- The high school has four administrative and staff computers and 18 teacher desktops and laptops. The school has three labs: a business education lab with 23 computers, a credit recovery (Plato) lab with 14 computers, and a mobile cart with 28 laptops that OISD added in 2007–08. The business education

EXHIBIT 87
OISD PASSING RATES ON TAKS BY SUBJECT AREA
2004–05 THROUGH 2006–07*

TAKS	2004–05		2005–06		2006–07	
	OISD	STATE	OISD	STATE	OISD	STATE
Reading/ELA	89%	83%	90%	87%	91%	89%
Math	79%	72%	77%	75%	78%	77%
Writing	98%	90%	97%	91%	99%	92%
Science	77%	66%	72%	70%	70%	71%
Social Studies	95%	88%	94%	87%	89%	89%
All Tests	71%	62%	69%	67%	71%	70%

*Sum of all grades; Standard Accountability indicator.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004–05 through 2006–07.

EXHIBIT 88
PERCENTAGE OF OISD JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL, CAMPUS COMPARISON GROUP,
OISD AND STATE STUDENTS MET 2007 TAKS STANDARD (IN ENGLISH) BY SUB-TEST AND GRADE
2006–07

GRADE	DISTRICT/STATE	PERCENTAGE OF OISD AND STATE STUDENTS TESTED MEETING TAKS STANDARD						
		READING	MATH	WRITING	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES	ALL TESTS
O'Donnell Junior High								
Grade 6	Campus	94%	75%					75%
	Campus Group	88%	72%					68%
	State	92%	80%					78%
Grade 7	Campus	82%	86%	99%				82%
	Campus Group	82%	66%	92%				60%
	State	85%	77%	93%				71%
Grade 8	Campus	92%	69%			77%	99%	69%
	Campus Group	87%	67%			63%	82%	54%
	State	89%	73%			71%	87%	61%
O'Donnell High School								
Grade 9	Campus	91%	57%					61%
	Campus Group	84%	56%					54%
	State	87%	61%					60%
Grade 10	Campus		57%		99%	43%	85%	43%
	Campus Group		56%		85%	47%	85%	39%
	State		65%		85%	59%	87%	51%
Grade 11	Campus		77%		97%	77%	87%	68%
	Campus Group		74%		90%	70%	94%	58%
	State		81%		91%	78%	94%	70%

*English first administration only.

**Blank cells indicate that test not given at that grade level.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2006–07.

classroom has five computers. The high school library has one librarian and five student computers.

- Each school also has a smart board that teachers can check out.
- The district has a distance learning lab that is used for dual credit. It upgraded the equipment in February 2008.

OISD has a wide range of instructional software programs in all subject areas, including tutorial programs and TAKS and ACT preparation programs. Teachers use multiple technology resources ranging from eChalk, Write to Learn, Teacher Corner, Education Helper, ETAP, Study Island, online databases such as EBSCO and different web sites (e.g., citationhelp.com). Teachers also use CDs that come with the textbooks and Discovery channel videos.

In 2006–07, OISD started to implement a rotational schedule for equipment upgrades. It purchased new computers for the elementary school and new computers for the high school teachers. In summer 2008, the district will add another T1 line to increase connectivity speed. OISD

will also upgrade in fall 2008 its office operating system because colleges require students to be familiar with the most current version.

The extensive use of technology at OISD is well represented in its participation in the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Technology Immersion Pilot (TIP). Being part of this grant provided a laptop for each O'Donnell Junior High student. The students have the opportunity to take the laptops home. The TIP project also provided intensive technology-related professional development for teachers. O'Donnell Junior High teachers and students have become path blazers for both the elementary and the high school teachers and students. OISD is planning to submit a 20/20 grant to TEA to extend the technology immersion project to the high school, funding individual laptops for high school students.

Junior high school students use technology in different subject areas. For example, in an English language arts class, students used the laptops daily to write papers, take notes, and do research on modern oratory (e.g., Charlie Brown). Students also made a movie related to their research project using MovieMaker. In science, students prepared PowerPoint

presentations on every unit studied. The students also prepared a PowerPoint presentation on the solar system that included graphics and images and did a virtual dissection of a shark. In math, students used the laptops once or twice a month with a review program, took online math tutorials and online tests. In social studies, students used the laptops daily to take notes, to prepare a research project on the Civil War, to research different historical persons, and to conduct a scavenger hunt.

Junior high school teachers indicated that the technology immersion project has had a positive effect on students' behavior, personal responsibility, and engagement in learning. Students complained less about writing and made more effort in writing when the project was completed on their laptops rather than on paper. The laptop has been a motivational tool and taught students more responsibility (i.e., taking care of their laptop, charging the laptops daily). The use of technology motivates students. Students enjoy learning more and are more involved in the process. Students confirmed these effects by indicating that the laptops give them more access to different web sites and hence to more information which also results in higher quality and more creative projects. Having more information increases their comprehension of concepts and subjects. Students are doing better projects because of the range of information available to them. Students also benefit from working in groups and sharing ideas and from working faster because they can type faster than they can write.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

OISD reduced the percentage of students in special education by implementing effective screening and modification procedures.

OISD is a member of the Four County Shared Services Arrangement (FCSSA) with eight other districts. Brownfield ISD serves as the fiscal agent. The FCSSA provides administrative and supportive services and specialist staff to member districts' special education programs. The FCSSA also offers cooperative programs for students who have more severe disabilities. OISD has a full-time special education director who is also a diagnostician and speech therapist; two full-time special education teachers, one on the elementary campus and one on the secondary campus; and a teacher's aide on the elementary campus. OISD has a resource room at the elementary and secondary campuses. In 2006–07, OISD had a lower special education teacher-student ratio than both Region 17 and the state (**Exhibit 89**). In 2007–08,

as in 2006–07, OISD has 31 students enrolled in special education. Students with more severe disabilities attend programs in Brownfield ISD.

EXHIBIT 89 SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OISD, REGION 17, AND STATE 2006–07

ENTITY	NUMBER OF TEACHERS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED	TEACHER TO STUDENT RATIO
O'Donnell	2.3	31	13.5:1
Region 17	518.7	9,965	19.2:1
State	31,252.7	486,887	15.6:1

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2006–07.

OISD reduced the percentage of students receiving special education services by half from 18.9 percent in 2004–05 to 9.0 percent in 2006–07 (**Exhibit 90**). OISD's percentage of students enrolled in special education in 2004–05 was higher than Region 17 and the state average. In 2005–06, OISD's percentage of students enrolled in special education was lower than the Region 17 average but higher than the state average. In 2006–07, OISD had a lower percentage of special education students than both Region 17 and the state. OISD also spent less per special education student than Region 17 and the state.

OISD works diligently to reduce the number of students it enrolls in special education. This is accomplished by working closely with regular education teachers and advising them on interventions and accommodations that can be implemented with students before referring them to special education. Prior to referral to special education, teachers are asked to use the full range of tutorial, remediation, academic, and behavior support services. The special education director has also trained teachers in Response To Intervention (RTI) and in classroom differentiation strategies. Instructional programs that OISD is using, like Reading First, coupled with its small classes, and therefore low teacher-student ratio, have also been effective in helping students whom teachers wanted to refer to special education. The special education director goes into classrooms continuously and helps teachers work with students with unique needs. OISD has also made a wide range of materials and supports, including technology, available for teachers to work with special education students. Teachers put a lot of effort working with special education students at the elementary level to make them successful as early as possible.

**EXHIBIT 90
SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLLMENT AND BUDGETED INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES
OISD, REGION 17, AND STATE
2004–05 THROUGH 2006–07**

ENTITY	TOTAL STUDENTS ENROLLED	NUMBER OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL STUDENTS ENROLLED	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ACTUAL ALL FUNDS EXPENDITURES	SPECIAL EDUCATION EXPENDITURE PER STUDENT
2004–05					
O'Donnell	380	72	18.9%	10.0%	\$785
Region 17	77,494	10,915	14.1%	16.0%	\$964
State	4,383,871	506,391	11.6%	16.3%	\$865
2005–06					
O'Donnell	373	47	12.6%	7.9%	\$689
Region 17	77,717	10,530	13.5%	15.6%	\$960
State	4,505,572	500,037	11.1%	16.3%	\$886
2006–07					
O'Donnell	344	31	9.0%	9.0%	\$857
Region 17	77,589	9,965	12.8%	15.5%	\$983
State	4,576,933	486,887	10.6%	16.3%	\$910

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004–05 through 2006–07.

COLLEGE READINESS

OISD administrators, teachers and counselors emphasize the importance of college education and college readiness throughout all grade levels. OISD prepares its students for post-secondary education by stressing the importance of college education and encouraging students to participate in Advanced Placement (AP) and dual credit courses, take the ACT, and apply to college. The teachers and counselors steer students to go to four-year colleges. Teachers talk about going to college to students “all the time.”

OISD offers dual credit courses through its distance learning lab with South Plains College. The dual credit program has been offered for four years. Both junior and senior students participate. OISD students pay \$30 for a dual credit course. Courses offered include trigonometry, pre-calculus, history, and English. South Plains College does not offer science courses. Student enrollment varies and is higher in the fall than in the spring because the dual credit course schedule conflicts with extra-curricular activities (stock shows) in which students participate in the spring. According to the technology coordinator, between three and ten students take dual credit courses.

OISD increased student participation in advanced/dual credit classes from 2003–04 to 2005–06. In 2003–04, 16.8 percent of OISD students participated in such classes compared with 23.1 percent in 2005–06. OISD participation

rates in 2005–06 were higher than Region 17 and state rates (**Exhibit 91**).

**EXHIBIT 91
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS COMPLETING ADVANCED/DUAL ENROLLMENT COURSES AND EXAMINATIONS
OISD, REGION 17, AND STATE
2004–05 THROUGH 2006–07**

ENTITY	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
O'Donnell	16.8%	11.2%	23.1%
Region 17	21.0%	21.0%	20.3%
State	19.9%	20.5%	21.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004–05 through 2006–07.

The high school counselor urges all high school students to take the ACT even if they do not plan to attend a four-year college immediately after graduating from high school. The counselor also meets with students individually and encourages them to take the test. OISD is an ACT test site. In 2006–07, 92.6 percent of OISD students took the ACT (**Exhibit 92**). OISD pays for the first administration of the pre-ACT and the ACT test. OISD also administers the Accuplacer, a college placement test for incoming college students.

OISD increased its higher education readiness in English language arts and in math from 2004–05 to 2006–07, as

EXHIBIT 92
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING ACT/SAT EXAMS,
MEETING CRITERIA
2004–05 THROUGH 2006–07

ENTITY	STUDENTS TAKING SAT/ ACT EXAMS	STUDENTS MEETING SAT/ ACT CRITERIA	MEAN ACT SCORE
2004–05			
O'Donnell	91.3%	9.5%	18.1
Region 17	56.7%	25.1%	19.9
State	61.9%	27.0%	20.1
2005–06			
O'Donnell	73.3%	9.1%	19.4
Region 17	61.3%	25.9%	20.0
State	65.5%	27.4%	20.0
2006–07			
O'Donnell	92.6%	8.0%	18.3
Region 17	59.3%	25.3%	20.0
State	65.8%	27.1%	20.1

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004–05 through 2006–07.

shown in **Exhibit 93**. There was a higher percentage of OISD students, compared to Region 17 or statewide, that was college ready in math in 2006–07.

EXHIBIT 93
HIGHER EDUCATION READINESS—TEXAS SUCCESS INITIATIVE
OISD, REGION 17, AND STATE
2004–05 THROUGH 2006–07

ENTITY	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	MATH
2004–05		
O'Donnell	44%	41%
Region 17	38%	46%
State	39%	48%
2005–06		
O'Donnell	24%	52%
Region 17	40%	51%
State	40%	51%
2006–07		
O'Donnell	52%	55%
Region 17	50%	53%
State	53%	54%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004–05 through 2006–07.

OISD has created a strong college going atmosphere at all grade levels. College attendance is a given. At the elementary level, the counselor and the teachers talk to students about

“when you go to college,” not “if you go to college.” The elementary school library has books on different careers and classes have displays about various careers. At the secondary level, the counselor provides information to students on earnings associated with different occupations showing that college education results in higher pay. Students also investigate different careers and do interest inventories. At the end of eighth grade, the counselor helps each student develop a four-year plan with the objective of getting ready for college.

High school teachers post college information and employment projections and update it on an ongoing basis. The librarian helps students do online research about different colleges. Students also use an online program (Career Cruising) that can be accessed through South Plains College. High school teachers require students to follow a college format on their papers. Teachers also give more open-ended and essay questions on tests to get students familiar and comfortable with college-type tests. The counselor takes high school students on field trips to Texas Tech University in Lubbock and to South Plains College. The students attend career fairs at the Region 17 education service center in Lubbock. Students get a free day out of school when visiting colleges, but have to bring back documentation showing which colleges were visited. In addition, the high school brings representatives from different colleges to talk to the students. The school also brings a local financial expert to talk to parents and students about the cost of college education and financial aid, and reviews financial aid forms with the parents.

The high school counselor sends a letter to parents about college and what students have to do to get ready. The counselor has a Senior/Parent Night for all parents of the senior class at the start of the year. The meeting covers a range of topics from taking the ACT, financial aid, college search, scholarships, to visiting and selecting a college. The counselor distributes a Senior/Parent Handbook that informs students and their parents about college-related issues such as college admission tests and steps in applying to college. The counselor also helps students with their college selection, applications, and college visits. Students are given a booklet that demonstrates how to complete a scholarship application form. The scholarship booklet also provides information to parents and students on how to search for and apply for scholarships. In 2007, OISD's 17 graduates received scholarships totaling more than \$200,000. From 2006 to 2008, OISD students received science-related scholarships

and monetary awards totaling \$22,460 from organizations and higher education institutions, as shown in **Exhibit 94**.

EXHIBIT 94
SCIENCE-RELATED SCHOLARSHIPS
2006 THROUGH 2008

YEAR	ORGANIZATION/INSTITUTION
2006	American Chemical Society
	American Physical Society
	Environmental and Human Health Award
	Texas Tech College of Engineering
	Texas Tech Natural Resources Scholarships
2007	American Physical Society
	eCybermission Scholarships from the Army
	Texas Tech High Individual Scholarship
	Texas Tech College of Engineering
2008	American Physical Society
	American Water Works Association
	Engineering Institute for Girls Scholarships
	Science: It's a Girls' Thing Summer Camp Scholarships
	Texas Tech National Resources Management Award Scholarships
	Texas Tech College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resource Scholarships
Texas Tech Department of Plant & Soil Science Scholarship Outstanding Achievement Award	

SOURCE: O'Donnell ISD, May 2008.

The counselor meets with seniors several times and promotes the self-worth and self-confidence students will gain from going to college. To female students, the counselor stresses the economic independence that will be gained with a college degree. The counselor also helps students after being accepted to college with scheduling their college classes. According to the counselor, 75 percent of OISD students attend a post-secondary institution.

KEY FINDINGS AND KEY FACTORS

OISD has created an environment that facilitates and enhances academic success and is tailored to its small size and strong community ties.

The district has created expectations of excellence and student success. The administration expects teachers and staff to do a good job. Teachers, in turn, expect students to perform well. Teachers and staff are vested in student success. "Failing is not an option. Success is the norm." Every teacher is ready to

help any student. Both students and parents know that students will get help when it is needed. The board, district administrators and school administrators, and teachers and staff celebrate excellence, making it a norm.

Teachers know one another and also know each student. There is a strong sense of camaraderie and collaboration among teachers across all grade levels. Teachers care about each student. Teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of each student and can adapt their instructional strategies to meet the learning style of individual students. The small class size allows teachers to give individual attention to students during class and after school, if needed. The district also has good parental involvement and strong support of parents.

The district has a supportive board. Academics are the board's priority. Administrators and teachers work well together. The superintendent seeks principal and teacher input and includes teachers in decision-making on issues, such as the school calendar. He also meets with the schools' site-based committees. The superintendent does walkthroughs, visiting three to five classrooms a day. The superintendent gives principals a lot of autonomy. Principals have regular staff meetings. Principals work with their teachers and staff collaboratively. The district encourages teachers to participate in professional development and is responsive to their request for training.

There is a close relationship between the schools and the community. Many of the teachers and staff grew up in O'Donnell. Teachers know their students' families. OISD employees are part of the community; students see them in the area and at neighborhood events. OISD teachers and staff volunteer in the community. OISD has a free breakfast and lunch program for all students that continues in the summer. Community members, in turn, even those without children in school, attend school events. Community members and local businesses fund and support the schools and provide scholarships to students. According to the principals, "If it is school supported or for the kids, everyone pulls together."