



Literacy programs offered through the Windham School District to eligible TDCJ offenders provide adult basic education for eligible students functioning below the sixth grade level and secondary level adult education for offenders working toward a GED. Despite a history of academic failure in public schools, Windham students succeed in

State budget cuts impact Windham School District

As a result of the 82nd Texas Legislature, the budgeted figures for the Windham School District for 2012 under the regular programs are substantially lower than the estimated expenses for fiscal year 2011. Funding appropriated to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the Windham School District was reduced by approximately 27 percent or \$17.8 million per year of the biennium.

In order to address these reductions, Windham developed the following plan:

- Elimination of 271 FTEs (full time employees)*, including both teachers (157) and administrative and support staff.

Instructional staff reductions were accomplished primarily by eliminating educational programs at six substance abuse treatment facilities (Glossbrenner, Halbert, Havins, Johnston, Leblanc and Sayle) and at the Duncan Unit, and also by the closing of the Central Unit. In addition, schools in 19 units were significantly reduced where the average age of Windham students was 40 and above. ***(WSD focuses programs on younger offenders because studies show that educational programs have a greater impact on reducing recidivism for offenders under the age of 40.)***

WSD eliminated 21 principal positions. There are now 46 Windham School District principals, and 28 of them supervise two or more campuses. In addition, WSD reduced the number of regional offices from four to three.

Overall, WSD predicts staff reductions to result in 16,750 fewer offenders being able to take classes in the 2011-12 school year.

College programs within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice were also significantly affected by reductions in budget. State reimbursable funds (assistance funds that must be paid back by the offender as a condition of parole) were reduced in the recent legislative session by approximately 42 percent (approximately \$1 million).

In addition, Texas asked all state agencies to reduce their FY/2011 operating budget during the course of the year, and some colleges were subsequently impacted. These factors and reductions all played a considerable role in post secondary programming within the TDCJ.

A comprehensive review of post secondary contracts and the post

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secondary programming was initiated.

Many students and many institutions were affected by these reductions. In fiscal year 2011, WSD contracted with 19 colleges and universities. In fiscal year 2012, WSD will be contracting with 11 colleges and universities.

“Despite substantial budget reductions, WSD remains committed to providing the best possible programming with allocated funding,” said WSD Superintendent Debbie Roberts. “Windham will continue to help offenders develop the tools needed to make a successful life after release from prison.”