



GOVERNANCE

The original Cornerstone Plan called for consideration of the addition of other area schools after three years. Representatives from the Steering Committee and Cornerstone Management visited with administrators from Dickson, Lone Grove and Springer and all three districts declined participation due to the technology requirements for the program.

The Program continues to operate under the guidance of the Cornerstone Steering Committee. The Bylaws of the Committee were amended in 2009 to allow for the expiration of terms for the original committee. Kim Benedict, Allen Dubea and Phil McAnally were selected to replace retiring members Tommy Craighead, Garland Clay and John Snodgrass.

The Cornerstone Program remains committed to increased student achievement in the Ardmore City and Plainview Public Schools. The evaluation report allowed adjustments to be made in the components to ensure improvement in student performance. Implementation has already started on the changes and they will be monitored carefully and reviewed on a regular basis.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The total funds pledged for the Cornerstone Program were \$3,309,300.00 and funds collected through August 31, 2010 totaled \$3,102,188.24. Expenses have been significantly less than anticipated resulting in a balance as of August 31, 2010 of \$1,473,682.24. These funds, under the direction of an investment committee, are in multiple instruments with varying maturities. The additional funds and prudent use of resources will allow the program to extend two years beyond its original five-year period. A recap of the expenses by year is provided at the end of this report.

CONCLUSION

The OTAC Evaluation concluded that all of the components of the Cornerstone Program have been implemented as designed. Findings in the Evaluation Report include that student achievement scores in both districts parallel or exceed state averages. The scores of students in the Plainview school district were well above state averages before the program began. Given the challenges and changing demographics of the Ardmore school district, attaining the state average may be a more realistic goal.

- The teacher survey focused heavily on the Recognition and Rewards component of Cornerstone. Teachers believed the benchmark-testing program was beneficial. The survey noted two issues on the rewards process:
 - (1) The difficulty of the application process.
 - (2) The eligibility of all teachers to participate on an equal footing.

The survey concluded that the teachers overwhelmingly felt the teachers receiving the recognition were deserving of the rewards. The majority of the teachers surveyed thought that the Cornerstone Program had a positive effect on student achievement.

The Cornerstone Steering Committee has spent hours reviewing the program evaluation. In response to the findings, several changes have been made to ensure the program continues to emphasize student achievement and provide the best strategies to ensure this outcome. The benchmark testing is being better aligned to the state standards and objectives, the summer school offerings will be enhanced to involve more students, the Recognition and Rewards component has been refined and the AVID program will expand to include all grade levels 6 – 12.

Cornerstone will continue to provide the opportunity for all students in the Ardmore City and Plainview Schools to achieve their greatest potential.

CORNERSTONE EXPENSES	
2005	\$182,285.75
2006	\$238,213.18
2007	\$309,445.47
2008	\$457,500.41
2009	\$513,794.62
2010 YTD	\$217,662.96

Dear Cornerstone Investor:

This issue of the Cornerstone Report to investors is different from previous editions. It contains the Executive Summary of the Five Year Program Review of the Cornerstone Program. The original Cornerstone program was designed to be a five-year plan with an evaluation proposed at the end of that period.

The Cornerstone Steering Committee contracted with the Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center (OTAC) to perform an evaluation of the program. The evaluation was completed this summer and the findings are included in this Executive Summary. According to the OTAC evaluation, "The Cornerstone program has been implemented as designed."

Following a thorough review of the evaluation report, refinements to the original plan have been proposed and are being made to the program. Every effort will be made to ensure that the program continues to emphasize student achievement and provides the best scenario for student success. The current Cornerstone Program balance of \$1.4 million will allow the program to continue for another two years.

Ardmore and Plainview Schools have both started their benchmark testing for the year using redesigned tests which are better aligned with state standards. Teachers who received recognition at the October 11, 2010 event are sharing their "winning" strategies in the classroom and AVID continues to grow with additional classes added at both Ardmore Middle and High School.

Thank you for your continued support of education and the Cornerstone Program. A copy of the complete OTAC Evaluation Report is available upon request.

STEERING COMMITTEE:

- Mary Kate Wilson, Chairman
- Dave Brenner, Vice-Chairman
- Wes Stucky, Secretary and Treasurer
- Larry Pulliam
- Dr. Sarah Clay
- Allen Dubea
- Phil McAnally
- Patti McGuire
- John Moore
- Bill Owen
- Kim Benedict
- Dr. Ruth Ann Carr
- Karl Stricker

CORNERSTONE – PROGRAM REVIEW

The Ardmore Tomorrow Community Visioning Process held in 1996-1997, recognizing the importance of quality education to economic growth and quality of life, developed a process to raise academic standards in the Ardmore City and Plainview Public Schools. During early 2000, educators from both districts worked to develop and implement the rigorous standards. The challenging economic conditions of the early part of the decade and recognition of the need to measure and introduce accountability into the standards process resulted in the development of the Cornerstone Program. Community leaders in conjunction with the superintendents of Plainview and Ardmore created the components of Cornerstone and fundraising began in 2005. The original Cornerstone Plan was designed to be a five-year program. An evaluation was planned at the end of this period and a determination made for the direction and funding needs of the program.

The Cornerstone Steering Committee contracted with the Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center (OTAC) to perform an evaluation of the program at the end of the five-year mark. The evaluation included an analysis of each of the components of the program and a survey of teachers in both districts to obtain input on their thoughts on the components and their effectiveness. Each of the components of the program is identified and the synopsis of the OTAC evaluation included below:

IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Student achievement was the primary and most comprehensive component of the Cornerstone Program. The employment of Philip Black as the Director of Student Achievement was the initial step, followed by the implementation of benchmark testing and a data warehouse system. The Director of Student Achievement worked with administrators and educators in both systems to develop the benchmark tests and provide the data from the tests back to staff in both districts. The Cornerstone Evaluation Analysis found benchmark testing was utilized on a consistent basis throughout the primary and elementary levels in both districts, however, the frequency of testing and design varied by district with the Plainview educators creating their own tests, and the Ardmore tests being constructed by administrative staff. The evaluation indicated that the benchmarks, as currently designed, were not good predictors of state test outcomes. OTAC suggested that test design and selection of questions be refined to better align with the test standards. The utilization of tests at the high school level is minimal, however, Ardmore did implement testing in the English Department in the 2009-2010 year. OTAC recommended that the tests be better aligned with state standards. Both districts are in the process of redesigning the instruments. Ardmore teachers at each grade level are developing new benchmark tests for use in the core subject areas for the 2010-2011 academic year. Plainview's high performance demonstrates that their approach, coupled with Cornerstone funded data and analysis, is working well.

The AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program was introduced in the 2008-2009 academic year in the Ardmore District. This program is designed to select a group of students that are "in the middle," typically the student was the first in a family to attend college but in need of additional academic support. Cornerstone has funded the program that incorporates AVID class into the academic schedule. AVID students receive additional academic support via utilization of "Cornell Notes," tutoring and group study. The program, now in its third year, includes 107 students at Ardmore Middle School and 131 participants at Ardmore High School. Sixty students have been in AVID since its inception three years ago. The effect of the program, while too early to measure in statistically significant terms, can be seen in a comparison of the student test scores on the State End of Instruction Tests at Ardmore High School. AVID students 2009-2010 out-performed their AHS peer groups scoring 85% advanced or proficient versus 73% for the entire student body.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Summer School was included in the Student Achievement component in recognition of the importance for students that require the additional educational support. Since 2006, the Cornerstone Program has financially supported summer school and in 2010, due to budgetary constraints, underwrote all costs not covered by federal money. Summer school served students in both the Plainview and Ardmore systems with a 4-week elementary program and two 4-week high school sessions. Students from surrounding districts were allowed to attend the high school summer school sessions. In the five years the summer school program has been held, 1,017 elementary and 655 high school students have taken advantage of this opportunity. The OTAC Evaluation reported the Summer School Program was successful in demonstrating gains for students who attended at least 14 days and these gains continued into the following school year, especially in reading.

SIGNING BONUS

Research continues to support the importance of top-quality teachers to foster high student achievement. One of the goals of the Cornerstone Program was to attract and hire the best possible teaching candidates. At the inception of the Program in 2005, Plainview and Ardmore Schools faced a difficult task in recruiting teachers. Other districts, located only a few miles away, but in a different state, were able to offer financial incentives that could not be matched locally. To assist in the recruitment of highly qualified teachers, Cornerstone offered one time salary supplements in the form of signing bonuses for teachers in high demand subject areas. In addition to the receipt of the bonuses, the teachers agreed to remain for three years, and if they voluntarily left, repayment on a pro-rated basis would be made back to Cornerstone. Since 2006, 34 bonuses have been utilized by the two districts totaling \$150,582.75.

RECOGNITION AND REWARDS

There is increasing pressure for teachers and administrators to perform at high levels of competence and it is critical that we retain the best educators in our systems. Cornerstone developed a plan to reward and provide recognition to our outstanding educators. The implementation of this component of Cornerstone was phased in during the second year of the program due to the complexity of determining indicators and establishment of the goals for receipt of the awards. Under the oversight of Philip Black, Director of Student Achievement, a committee of educators, administrators, and investors developed the application and process to recognize and reward excellence in the classroom. The rewards component includes team awards in addition to rewards for individual teachers. A teacher can earn additional reward bonuses by meeting both team and individual goals. By creating a two-tier reward structure, Cornerstone will not only encourage teachers to share their expertise; it will also encourage them to require fellow teachers to raise their expectations as well. A five member Evaluation Committee was created in order to ensure applications were evaluated without bias. The members of this committee represented veteran educators with a passion for excellence from across the State of Oklahoma. The names on the applications were removed and assigned a number. In 2008, 58 educators received awards totaling \$111,000.00; in 2009, 79 educators and 4 administrators were awarded \$153,440.00. The awards for 2009-2010 totaled \$108,000.00 honoring 67 educators and were presented at the Annual Investors Reception in October.