

Abstract: San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD)
2016 Educational Opportunity Center Proposal

SAISD proposes the Phillis Wheatley Education Opportunity Center, an EOC project that will serve at least 1,000 majority low-income, first-generation adults each year from within the city of San Antonio's Eastside Promise Zone Neighborhood. On January 9, 2014, San Antonio's Eastside Promise Zone was selected as one of the first five Promise Zones in the nation. In the historically African-American Eastside Promise Zone Neighborhood, job creation, new business starts and retention of existing businesses has been shallow. Nearly one in every three households within the Promise Zone receive food stamps, and 44% of all families meet TRIO low-income guidelines for a family of four. Generational low educational attainment is also pervasive in our target area. There are 128,356 adults aged 25 and older in our target area with education completion levels below the baccalaureate, representing 88% of all those 25 and older who live within the Promise Zone. Nearly one in every three (28%) adults in our target area who are 25 and older did not graduate from high school.

The Phillis Wheatley EOC will be housed and administered from Wheatley Middle School, a Full Service Community School located in the heart of our target area. At least two-thirds of all the individuals we serve will be low-income, potential first-generation college students.

To accomplish our objectives, the Wheatley EOC will tap into the wide array of social services available through the Wheatley Community School and the services of our eight community partners to provide: 1) participant intake and needs assessments; 2) GED preparation; 3) financial aid workshops; 4) college cost planning workshops; 5) scholarship search workshops; 6) workshops on financial literacy; 7) college admissions workshops; 8) career and college readiness training; 9) self-paced academic skills remediation; 10) college admissions fairs; 11) college entrance/placement exam preparation; 12) college enrollment assistance; and 13) college transition workshops.

After their acceptance into the Wheatley EOC, each participant will be assigned to one of two full-time Academic Advisors or the Project Facilitator to establish an Individual Education Plan (IEP), which will address each participant's goals through academic advising and personal and financial assessments. Each IEP will be updated frequently to show participants' progress in accomplishing their goals, and any unanticipated outcomes will be noted.

This project responds to Competitive Preference Priority 1: Improving Parent, Family, and Community Engagement and Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting Military Families and Veterans by locating the project within our target area in SAISD's only Full Service Community School and by partnering with eight community agencies/institutions – including Family Service Association of San Antonio's TexVet Program and the American GI Forum National Veterans Outreach Program – to recruit eligible residents to the Wheatley EOC, especially military-connected individuals.

As a result of the comprehensive system of supportive services that the Wheatley EOC will provide, by the end of each project year, at least 52% of participants who need a high school diploma or GED will have obtained one, at least 75% of participants who are ready to apply for financial aid will have done so, at least 95% of participants who are ready to apply for college admission will have done so, and at least 65% of participants will enroll or be accepted to a postsecondary education program.