OPERATIONS MANUAL

Texas Academic Innovation and Mentoring (AIM) Program

is a timely effort to confront the student achievement gap for at risk students in Texas, one student at a time with a comprehensive and holistic strategy. With cumulative minority drop out rates throughout Texas averaging about 50%, such innovative collaboration with proven results is critical. Texas AIM utilizes the historic strengths of the Boys & Girls Club organizations and Sylvan Learning Centers, along with cooperation of local education agencies (school districts), to assist students in making pronounced gains in targeted academic areas. For more than 105 years, Boys & Girls Clubs have provided youth development services to the youth most in need of services through mentoring and intensive case management when needed. For more than 40 years, Sylvan Learning Centers use research based tutoring strategies building on individual students learning styles to target skills gaps in language arts, mathematics and/or college preparation. The Partnership literally provides mentors that tutor (BGC staff) and tutors that mentor (Sylvan teachers). The results from these personal wrap around services yield outstanding results in skills mastery, credit recovery and academic promotion.

Texas AIM Operations

WHO?

The Texas Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs, in partnership with Sylvan Learning Centers, provides academic services to Boys & Girls Club (BGC) youth and teens at select sites throughout the state. The program itself benefits all Club members with a special emphasis on “those who need us most” which typically means low income, minority youth and teens, particularly those in academic risk.

WHAT?

Project Description – The Texas Academic Innovation and Mentoring Program (Texas AIM) enables at-risk, minority, low-income and limited English proficiency students in low performing schools across Texas to participate in after-school and summer day programs that effectively address student achievement gaps through a combination of skills gap remediation, intensive academic support, homework assistance and at-risk prevention services.
WHERE?

Communities are selected based on a broad range of socio-economic data including but not limited to factors such as poverty, school success, limited English Speaking families, etc. Number of youth to be served at each site is determined by the average daily attendance of Club Members at that site, i.e. the pool of potential participants and will range from 28-72. The 59 sites for FY17 are located in these communities:

Amarillo  Greenville  Mission
Anleton  Hallsville  Pharr
Arlington  Huntsville  Plano
Austin  Irving  Port Isabel
Bandera  Kilgore  Robstown
Corpus Christi  Killeen  Rockwall
Dallas  Laredo  San Antonio
Edinburg  Liberty Hill  San Marcos
El Campo  Los Fresnos  Smithville
El Paso  Lufkin  Victoria
Frisco  Marshall  Wichita Falls
Harlingen  McAllen
Houston  McKinney

WHY?

**Concept Introduction – Partnership Works: Wrap Around Services Work**

“Wrap around” is a term used to describe a process by which service providers agree to collaborate to improve the lives of children and their families by creating, enhancing and accessing a coordinated system of support through a strengths-based, client driven model. An emphasis is placed on identifying and enhancing the client’s natural and informal supports, or to assist them in informal supports.

HOW?

**Framework of BGCA Graduation Matrix – Every year, every member**

The partnership between the Texas Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs and Sylvan Learning Centers has an added benefit to youth services in the areas of academic skills gap remediation, dropout prevention and ultimate college success. Key success factors include small group instruction that allows for more individual attention, as well as program placement and delivery based on instructional gaps and student learning styles. Boys & Girls Clubs’ trained youth development professionals will conduct critical Boys & Girls Club of America (BGCA) curriculums, Power Hour and other current academic success programs that equip students to achieve the national BGCA goal of on time high school graduation." Every 29 seconds another student drops out of high school. BGCA’s *Every Member, Every Year:*
A High School Graduation Strategy is designed so that all Clubs, no matter their size or resources, can partner with youth, parents, schools and other community stakeholders to implement at least one of three approaches: academic enrichment and school engagement; targeted dropout prevention; and intensive intervention and case management. Our aim is to ensure that all Club members graduate on time, ready for a post-secondary education and a 21st century career.

Texas AIM Goal – To improve academic success by providing academic tutoring and mentoring services targeting graduation success for youth 6 – 17 years of age at risk of dropping out of school.

Objectives and Outcomes - Each site will seek to achieve the following:

1. Provide the “Boys & Girls Club Experience” to all Texas AIM youth as measured by daily attendance at the Club
2. Serve 28-72 students per Club (dependent on site size) according to their individual academic needs
3. Provide staff development for BGC staff and at least one Parent Workshop for families of Club members
4. Satisfactory or better performance on the STAAR test for those students whose attendance rate is 90% or greater (Assuming that the data is available)
5. For students participating in the Ace it! Tutoring program at least 90% of the time, the mean growth scale value will meet or exceed one grade equivalent from pre to post testing on the GRADE and GMADE

HOW IT WORKS – Integration of Sylvan and BGC Programs

Academic Mentoring Defined and Refined
The magic of Boys & Girls Clubs and the change agent for many youth is the positive interaction they have with caring adults who take the time to get to know them, share their lives and values with them in a natural mentoring process. Children need adults to guide them and are eager for positive interaction. Texas AIM, like all BGC programming, capitalizes on the point of change for Club members because Club staff already know the life circumstances and personalities of the targeted at risk youth. Academic mentoring not only provides tutoring for positive academic outcomes but also builds life changing relationships with student members. Texas AIM is literally tutors that mentor and mentors that tutor.

Program Activities include but are not limited to: Sylvan Ace It Reading or Math, Academic Camps comprised of ELA and STEM subjects, BGC Power Hour and various academic success programs and parent support workshops. The number of students participating in Sylvan
programming will vary by site. “Senior” Club sites will serve 72 youth, “Junior” Club sites will serve 44 youth and “Freshman” Club sites will serve 28 youth. Each site will assess a larger pool of students and select a level of intervention for them based on assessment results and other academic indicators. Sylvan proposed services are as follows:

- **LEVEL ONE “CATCH UP”** – Select students (48 for Senior, 32 for Junior, 16 for Freshman sites) will participate in Ace it! Tutoring in Math or Reading. Ace it! is aTEKS aligned evidence based program for skills gap remediation. Students that are performing below grade level will receive remediation support in the basic areas of math or reading. Each term will last approximately 30 hours of instruction and will involve a pre and post assessment for measuring growth.
  - Delivered in addition to Power Hour
  - Monday through Thursday for 1 hour per day (4 hours per week); or other as based on Club schedules/needs
  - Utilizing Sylvan trained and state certified teachers
  - BGC Staff serves as Program Aide in the classroom at all times

- **LEVEL TWO “KEEP UP”** – Select students (24 for Senior and 12 for Junior & Freshman sites) will participate in Sylvan Academic Camps that will be selected based on need. English Literary Arts (ELA) Camps include Writing for two different skill levels. Science, Technology and Math (STEM) Camps include Fit4Algebra, Engineering and Coding. In addition, students are placed as needed in Homework Help/ BGC Power Hour in core subjects: Students that are performing at grade level would receive support on daily homework assignments in core subjects. Students would be scheduled according to need and monitored for growth.
  - 12- hours of small group instruction (12 students each)
  - Utilizing Sylvan trained and state certified teachers
  - BGC Staff serves as Program Aide in the classroom at all times

- **LEVEL THREE “GET AHEAD”** – “Seasons of Texas AIM” is a tool created to implement in kind resources, such as parent workshops, Book Adventure and Sylvan Math Prep, provided by Sylvan Partners to the “youth who need us most” being served through Texas AIM. These services are in addition to Ace it! Sessions and Camps. Family involvement is crucial to the development of a child’s academic success. Parent workshops are bilingual and provide the opportunity to help equip parents with resources to support their children at home.
  - Parent Workshops – each site is required to host 1 workshop per year.
    - Parent Workshop topics include but are not limited to the following: Avoiding the Report Card Surprise, Confidence with Computation, Reading and Your Child, What makes learning Feel Good for Your Child, The Write Stuff, Survival Tips for School Success, Learning Styles, Motivating Students, etc.
  - Book Adventure – 1 per year
    - January – promotion of Book Adventure program in clubs
- February – Launch reading contest for club for Book Adventure
  - March – Read Across America Celebration encouraged by possible events at your BGC.

**Sylvan’s Role in Texas AIM**

1. Sylvan will assess as many student members as needed to serve, about 2x. These assessments, along with relevant student academic data, will tell them what academic skills gaps exist in the student members.

2. Sylvan will group youth according to the skills that need academic improvement. For example, there may be a group of Club members that missed phonetic blends of vowels in beginning reading, then no matter what hard work they do on their mathematical operations, they will still struggle with word problems and its interpretations. So, by working on the reading phonetic vowel blends, it is likely that math scores will also improve. The assessment is the key to successful academic intervention. Other groupings take into account the student’s instructional needs, and accommodates for varied learning styles. Club staff should collaborate on final student selection based on knowledge on the needs and group dynamics of the youth selected. Sylvan State Certified Teachers will conduct their Ace It program in small groups of 8 in either math or reading and will conduct Camps in groups of 12. You will be dazzled to see Sylvan tutors employ the same strategies that BGCs do in that learning activities are varied, meaning they change the channel by varying the learning activities frequently so as not to lose student’s attention. Students are motivated and rewarded for effort and participation.

4. Sylvan will provide ongoing assessment and then share the data with BGC staff, families and other relevant school officials.

**BGC’s Role in Texas AIM**

1. Identify an Education Specialist – the TX AIM Project Director. The Club’s regular Power Hour youth development professional is appropriate.

2. Project Director will assist Sylvan tutoring by acting as the para-professional for the Sylvan teacher. Their primary focus is to assist the Sylvan teacher with building student rapport and ensuring youth stay on task. Club staff must ensure adequate recruitment of Club members to be assessed and good attendance of students, at least 90% of sessions.

3. BGC will conduct Power Hour and various academic success programs to targeted Club members receiving TX AIM intervention of any type. It is imperative that BGC Programming be measured together with the Ace it! results for the full wrap around service affect. The goal is to create sustainable academic progress.
4. All Clubs will collect Application for Participation and Consent for Disclosure of Records for every Ace it! Participant.

4. All Clubs will collect the following identifying student data for each Ace it! Participant: Report Cards before and after Sylvan Interventions, STAAR Test Scores, Unique State ID, Social Security Number, LEP Status, etc.

- **Power Hour**
  This highly effective homework assistance program is based on the premise that youngsters need to view homework as an opportunity to learn to work independently, successfully completing a project on time, enabling them to feel positive about their accomplishment. Power Hour is an interactive, after-school homework assistance program for children aged 6 to 18 years. Unlike assignments done in class, Power Hour work is conducted in a non-threatening and fun after-school environment using “Homework Helpers,” adults or older students who supervise completion of a Club member’s homework. In addition to homework help, Club members offer age-appropriate activities to stimulate their interest in learning. By explaining the relevance of learning fractions in order to cook a meal, for example, or by showing how geography can enable us to enjoy reading the newspaper, help Club members learn to value the knowledge homework can bring. The long-term goal of Power Hour is to instill in youth a life-long love of learning.

- **Project Learn**
  Project Learn reinforces the academic enrichment and school engagement of young people during the time they spend at the Club. This strategy is based on research demonstrating that students do much better in school when they spend their non-school hours engaged in fun, but academically beneficial, activities. Through Project Learn, Club staff use all the areas and programs in the Club to create opportunities for these high-yield learning activities, which include leisure reading, writing activities, discussions with knowledgeable adults, helping others, homework help, tutoring and games, that develop young people’s cognitive skills. Project Learn also emphasizes parent involvement and collaboration between Club and school professionals as critical factors in creating the best after-school learning environment for Club members ages 6 to 18.

- **BE GREAT : Graduate**
  This program is designed to enhance each Club member’s engagement with learning by providing consistent support from caring and trusted adults in developing the academic, emotional and social skills needed to achieve academic success. This program uses the early warning signals – attendance, behavior and course failure – to identify youth at risk of dropping out of school.

- **Diplomas 2 Degrees**
  D2D is a college readiness program that provides a range of services to guide Club members as they work toward high school graduation and prepare for post-secondary and career success.
Getting Started: A Simple To-Do List

1. Meet your Sylvan counterpart.

2. Visit your local Sylvan Learning Center and sit in on Sylvan tutoring sessions.

3. Show your local Sylvan partner the Club and its offerings. Invite your Sylvan teacher to spend an afternoon at your BGC.

4. If necessary, go over Site Observation Checklist with your Sylvan teacher and set aside space at the Club for TX AIM services to occur.

5. Together with your Sylvan partner, decide the schedule for assessment and subsequent services.

6. Assign a Texas AIM Project Director for each Club. The Club’s typical Power Hour youth development professional is appropriate to assist with Texas AIM interventions.

7. Have the Project Director visit the local Sylvan Learning Center to observe small group teaching methods.

8. Identify the at risk members for assessment. You may also want to collaborate with feeder schools for strategic decisions on services that meet student’s needs. It is the BGC’s responsibility to ensure that appropriate and adequate Club kids are on site, available and prepared when assessment is scheduled.

9. Provide appropriate Club space for assessment and later Ace it! or camp groupings.

10. Strategize in brief team meetings with the Sylvan teachers about member case management issues. Let the Sylvan teacher know which members have attention issues, which members have health issues or disabilities and discuss strategies for keeping them on task.

11. Collect the Ace it! & Camp attendance and school evaluation measures (Report Cards, STAAR Test Scores, SSN, Unique State ID, etc).

12. Utilize the data collected for the Club’s annual report and marketing materials in the aggregate. Protect member confidentiality about academic status and progress.

Staff Development Preparation and Service Delivery

1. The Ace it! ratio is 8 students to 1 State Certified Sylvan teacher. Students work at tables with their Sylvan teacher so a room at the Club will need to be provided. Your
Club’s Project Director, or assigned staff/trained volunteer, will need to be present AT ALL TIMES to interact as a teacher aide to help student/members stay on task and be available to the Sylvan teacher if any issues arise. Two Ace It! Groups often use the same room and run simultaneously, in this case one staff/trained volunteer is sufficient IF he/she can handle both groups.

2. It is highly recommended that BGC Staff train at their local Sylvan Learning Center site to learn the model of small group tutorials through individual learning plans. An hour long visit to observe Sylvan tutoring is recommended.

3. Sylvan staff assess and group the student participants according to skill level and prepare lessons accordingly. Ace it! sessions can be offered in either reading or mathematics.

4. Sylvan partners provide a waitlist of students to the Club in case a student drops from the program.

5. Sylvan teachers and Project Directors deliver the tutorials on a daily basis (Monday – Friday); however, some Clubs may choose to conduct Saturday ONLY tutorials for 4 hour sessions or offer only Monday-Thursday or Tuesday-Friday.

6. Ace it! service delivery at stated level lasts approximately one semester (12 weeks) which includes assessments at beginning of program and at the end of the program.

7. Ace It! groups should be scheduled to start and complete ALL sessions, including post assessment before winter break in the Fall semester, or begin in January and be complete before STAAR testing in the Spring semester.

8. Academic Camps are shorter and delivered over a 1-3 week period; ratios are 12:1. Camps are best delivered during the summer.

9. Wrap around education and/or prevention services are provided by trained professional BGC staff that provide the “Boys & Girls Club Experience” – daily activities in five core program areas: Character & Leadership Development; Education & Career Development; Health & Life Skills; The Arts; and Sports, Fitness and Recreation. In this way, the students receiving special tutoring assistance are also receiving group mentoring with structured BGCA programs.

INTAKE

All potential Texas AIM youth must complete a TX AIM registration form (inclusive of at-risk criteria and academic questionnaire) and Parent Consent Form. This form will gain the Club permission to access academic reports from the school for the purpose of assessment and
outcome measurement. Originals of this documentation will be submitted to the Texas Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs office. It is recommended that copies of all TX AIM documentation (Registration Forms, Consent for Disclosure of Records, Report Cards, STAAR Test Scores, Unique State ID, LEP status, etc.) be maintained in file or large binder on-site for easy access.

*** Youth should be selected not only based on need, but also on their ability to complete the program. BGC Staff must ensure parent support and participants’ eagerness to participate.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

All Sylvan staff have passed a background screening that is more rigorous than the standard BGC organizational screening. A Club may request copies of that screening report from the Sylvan partner. If the BGC organization requires that the “vendor” pass the Club’s screening process, then the CEO may request that all potential Sylvan teachers complete the Club’s required paperwork in order to be screened. Any screening will be at the Club’s expense. These procedures vary by Club and are determined by the local Club.

REPORTING FOR BGCs

1. Schedule Form – submitted to The Alliance prior to the start of services, once all programming has been agreed upon with Sylvan

2. Ace it! Registration Forms & Consent Forms – original documents submitted to The Alliance by the 10th hour of instruction

3. Camp Registration Form & Pre/Post Surveys – original documents submitted to The Alliance upon completion of Camp

4. Bimonthly Report – submitted to The Alliance every other month, beginning in November. This report includes all activities that occurred during the given two month period. This report also serves as your payment request.

5. Quarterly Report – submitted to The Alliance to report cumulative data on services provided and participants served

6. Data Collection – submitted to The Alliance upon completion of Ace it! sessions and Camps to report all identifying information for participants. BGCs will also submit report cards and STAAR test results as part of their data collection.

7. Final Report – submitted to The Alliance upon completion of TX AIM programming to report all data on services provided and participants served
REIMBURSEMENT

Clubs will be reimbursed for staff expense only on a bi-monthly basis pending adequate and timely reporting and invoice submission (bimonthly report).

Sylvan will submit invoices to BOTH The Alliance AND the Club for authorization by the TX AIM Project Director. The invoice template is provided by the Alliance. The Project Director will then review the invoice for accuracy of services and email authorization for payment. Invoices received by month’s end shall be paid the following month.