



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
SAN ANTONIO

ASPIRE

A&M-SA & SOUTH BEXAR COUNTY ISDs PARTNERSHIP TO IMPACT REGIONAL EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE (ASPIRE)

The **ASPIRE** Partnership is creating a dynamic network of collective impact to build a brighter future for South Bexar County from enhancing the school-to-college pipeline to teacher preparedness to educational programs and support to accessible programs and services for teachers, students and families.

Overview:

A first-of-its-kind collaborative effort between a public university and seven South Bexar County ISDs (East Central, Edgewood, Harlandale, Somerset, South San Antonio, Southside and Southwest), the **ASPIRE** partnership focuses on developing educational programs and services to support existing programs to develop teachers with an affirmation for the community where they live, work and learn; curriculum development for a dynamically-changing world; and accessible programs that offer specialized services for children with special needs across south Bexar County and south San Antonio.

This collaboration, known as **ASPIRE**, focuses on:

- Designing customized solutions for the needs of each of the seven ISDs.
- Inspiring innovation by developing the first-known public university and independent school district SB1882 lab schools in Texas.

ASPIRE priorities

- Creating opportunities for a collective impact.
- Filling teacher shortages in STEM areas.
- Educating students and families on the benefits of a four-year degree.
- Expanding accessible programs for specialized services for children with special needs across south Bexar County and south San Antonio.
- Advancing the school-to-college pipeline – four-year degree at A&M-San Antonio.

Why **ASPIRE** matters*:

- Texas is failing to graduate **one out of every five students**, which translates to losing 11 students per hour. The statewide attrition rate is 22 percent.
- Texas high schools **lost 94,767 students** in 2017-18.
- At this rate, Texas will not reach universal high school education until **2038**.
- Black and Hispanic students are about **twice as likely** to leave school without graduating with a diploma than White students.
- In the last 33 years, Texas schools have lost a **cumulative total of more than 3.8 million students** from public high school enrollment prior to graduation.

*Source: IDRA Texas Public School Attrition Study 2017-18



"The timing is right for this first-of-its-kind partnership between us. Together, we are primed to share knowledge about our regional socio-demographic similarities - and to leverage our assets to improve academic advancement, career readiness and social mobility."

Dr. Cynthia Teniente-Matson, A&M-San Antonio president



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
SAN ANTONIO

tamusa.edu/challenge-to-aspire

ASPIRE

A&M-SA & SOUTH BEXAR COUNTY ISDs
PARTNERSHIP TO IMPACT REGIONAL
EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE (ASPIRE)

ASPIRE Milestones

November 2019

ASPIRE launches with the following partner ISDs: East Central, Edgewood, Harlandale, Somerset, South San Antonio, Southside and Southwest.

The Charles C. Butt Foundation gifts \$1M to fund the A&M-San Antonio College of Education and Human Development's creation of SB 1882 charter schools and services to support efforts to address the needs of children with autism in south Bexar County. Gift also supports the development of an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) degree program focused on south Bexar County school district needs. This program will launch in Spring 2022.

January 2020

ASPIRE partners establish school-to-college pipeline strategy integrating A&M-San Antonio and ISD messaging and communications to raise awareness.

Spring 2020

Garcia University School (GUS) and the Burleson Center for Innovation and Education are approved as in-district charter schools within Edgewood ISD. GUS, a middle school powered by Texas A&M-San Antonio, aims to provide students with a quality education in a safe, supportive environment. The Burleson Center is a school for students (ages 18-22) who have special needs and are working toward transition to the workforce.

Fall 2020

A \$2.1 million grant from the Department of Education to Texas A&M University-San Antonio's College of Education and Human Development (COEHD) will fund a unique program to help bridge the equity gap for students with intellectual disabilities and boost their ability to either earn a college degree or to complete a college experience. The grant will support the creation and launch of the Transition University for Career Advancement and Successful Adulthood (TU CASA) post-secondary program. Currently, out of 170 institutions of higher education in the state of Texas, only three universities offer post-secondary education opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities. In addition to the \$2,107,335.00 (68% of funding) from the Department of Education governmental funding, the University will match with \$680,414.00 (32%) in funding.

Dr. Henrietta (Henri) Muñoz is appointed as the inaugural executive director of the Texas A&M-San Antonio Institute for School and Community Partnerships (ISCP). The ISCP forms groundbreaking partnerships focused on strengthening the school-to-college educational pipeline in south Bexar County. In her new role, Muñoz is leading partnerships and solutions to persistent challenges affecting South Bexar County school districts through SB-1882 initiatives. The ISCP is currently working with the College of Education and Human Development to launch the first Educare early childhood center in Texas.

A&M-San Antonio introduces the Jaguar Excellence Guarantee and Achiever Promise, both designed to help students who qualify graduate with little to no debt while extending access to the services and experiences that impact a student's ability to graduate on time with the essential skills employers rely on. The two programs were launched Sept. 22 at East Central High School, one of the Institution's ASPIRE partner ISDs.

For more information on ASPIRE, contact:

Dr. Carl Sheperis

College of Education and Human Development
(210) 784-2585 • csheperis@tamusa.edu

Brandy McLelland

Enrollment Management
(210) 784-1613 • brandy.mclelland@tamusa.edu

Dr. Jeanette DeDiemar

University Advancement
(210) 784-1109 • jdediemar@tamusa.edu

