

# STAR/CSF-Ft. Worth Times



Fall



Helping students achieve a choice in education!

1993

2012



VOL 13 ISSUE 3



FALL 2012

## Vision Statement

The Board of Trustees of the STAR Sponsorship Program, Inc./CSF FW is dedicated to increasing educational options for children in Tarrant County whose parents do not have the financial means to provide an education best suited to their children's unique needs.

We believe the well-being of the entire community is enhanced when children are given a quality education that allows them to achieve to their utmost ability. Therefore, we intend wherever possible, to encourage partnerships with schools, parents, community organizations and concerned citizens in supporting its children to achieve the American Dream.



If you are interested in sponsoring a student or would like more information about the S.T.A.R. Program for you or someone you know, please contact us at:

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## Our Education Crisis:

Did you know?\*

By 4th grade, **83%** of low-income students are **not reading proficiently**.

**6.6 million** low-income children born between 2002-2010 will be at increased **risk of failing to graduate** from high school because of lack of reading proficiency by the end of 3rd grade.

**1 out of 4**

high school students will drop out this year.



Closer to

**1 in 2**

Black and Latino students will drop out.



## The Big 3 for High School Dropouts:

**3 Xs** more likely to be unemployed

**3 Xs** as likely to live in poverty

**3 Xs** less in earnings than B.A. degree holders

**10%** male high school dropouts are in jail or juvenile detention, compared to:  
**Less than 3%** of high school graduates  
**Less than .2%** of college graduates

## A Current Solution

Private school students are more likely than public schools students to complete a bachelor's or advanced degree by their mid-20's.

\*Children's Scholarship Fund Annual Report 2011-2012

## Dreams = Opportunities + Hope

**Giving Parents a Choice  
Giving Children a Chance  
Making a Difference One Student at a time**

STAR Sponsorship Program, Inc.  
2012/2013

**100** Scholarship Recipients  
**\$1,617** Average Scholarship Amount  
**\$4,800** Average Tuition  
**\$23,242** Average Family Income  
**11** Schools in Tarrant County

**THE GIFT:** Due to a generous matching grant opportunity from the Amon Carter Foundation, STAR increased the number of scholarships by 22%.

**THE DREAM:** To increase the educational opportunity in Tarrant County by providing more scholarships for the 2012 school year and beyond. This partnership is in tandem with the donor, the schools, and the parents who are sacrificing to provide an education that better suits their children. Parents agree to adhere to program expectations in motivating their children to excel. Students are expected to be on time, complete homework assignments in a timely manner, behave in an exemplary manner, and strive for the A/B Honor Roll. Donors receive students' report cards (from the schools) and correspondence from the students as they learn the value of the opportunity they are being provided. Donors see firsthand their return on investment in the lives of these children. Children learn the value and importance of education. They are motivated to achieve excellence in spite of life's obstacles. They learn that hard work and dedication are keys to success.

**SPONSORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE** in the lives of the families they help by providing hope and opportunity.

## S.T.A.R./Children's Scholarship Fund Fort Worth Board of Directors

Paul Greenwell, President, Co-Chair CSF FW, David Porter, Co-chair CSF-FW, Janet Carter, Co-founder - Brian Crumley - Bryan King - Ralph McCloud - Patty Myers, Executive Director - John Pergande - Peter Philpott - Frost Prioleau - Aaron Scow - Michael Williams (Former TX RR Commissioner)

## S.T.A.R. Sponsorship featured in the following article in Heartland Magazine:

“Texas Families Exhibit ‘Overwhelming’ School Choice Demand” by Rachel Sheffield

**Texas parents’** demand for school choice is “overwhelming” and continues to grow even as their options expand, says Matthew Barnes. As executive director of the Houston-based Families Empowered, Barnes spends his days helping thousands of individual families find the best school fit for their children among private, charter, and district options. “It’s really a function of every parent wanting to have the best opportunity for their child,” he says, though Families Empowered surveys indicate many parents don’t know about their options.

At the same time, many more families want options than have them: The waiting list for Texas charter schools tops 101,000 students, according to David Dunn, executive director of the Texas Charter Schools Association. Two years ago, that number was approximately 56,000.

Texas currently offers no private school choice, but Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst announced in August he would work with state legislators to introduce voucher legislation.

In August, the state’s Senate Education Committee held a hearing that discussed Taxpayer Savings Grants—a voucher that would grant families up to 60 percent of state per-pupil education funding, or \$5,400.

### Why Parents Want Choice

A recent Families Empowered survey found various reasons why families were not satisfied with their current school and wanted another. The most common response was a lack of academic quality, at 37.2 percent. Others cited problems with school personnel (14.8 percent) and security, safety and/or discipline problems (10.4 percent). Nearly 18 percent said they did not necessarily know why they were trying to leave their current school.

“They know there’s something better,” Barnes noted.

Families Empowered aims to help families navigate school options to help kids stay college-bound, using three main strategies, Barnes said: helping families find a good school fit, helping parents learn to advocate for their [children’s] education needs, and teaching families to support their children’s education at home. “Demand continues to far outpace supply,” Dunn said.

### Private Vouchers Available

Independent organizations provide private school scholarships in Texas. The STAR Sponsorship Program (SSP), which began in 1993, is one. They have also seen significant demand for choice. In 1999, the organization awarded approximately 500 scholarships, for which well over 9,000 families applied, said Patty Myers, its executive director. The group has disbursed more than \$4 million in scholarships to more than 3,400 kids since 1993.

To receive SSP scholarships, students must be eligible for federal school lunch subsidies by living in low-income households, she said. “We ask the children to work toward exemplary behavior,” she said; recipients must commit to finishing homework, attending class on time, and maintaining high grades. Myers says people in her organization have been amazed at the high quality of students in the program.

“What has been extremely exciting is to witness the parents that are coming in,” she said. Although she calls SSP a smaller organization, “somehow [parents] seem to find us.”

Texas families are hungry for choice, Barnes said. “If parents learn of their options, there will be a tidal wave of parents pursuing the best option for their child,” he said.

<http://news.heartland.org/newspaper-article/2012/09/14/texas-families->

## STAR Students Keep Learning Through the Summer!

**Several local colleges offer educational classes/programs to elementary and middle school students during the summer. We encourage STAR students to explore these opportunities, apply for scholarships, and we are thrilled to see the results! From Pre-Engineering to Logic, these STAR students filled their summer with enriching classes that expanded their horizons, kept them sharp for the next year and helped prepare them for college!**

I participated in a program called *Tex Prep* at Texas Wesleyan University. *TexPrep* was a great opportunity to have fun and study. I had four classes: Pre-engineering, Writing, Algebra, and Logic. It was an amazing opportunity, and I hope I can get accepted next summer. **– Tania, 8th grade**



I spent most of my summer at *TexPrep*. We learned Pre-engineering, Logic, Algebra 1, and Writing 1. Every Friday, we went on a field lesson. On Thursdays we got the chance to speak to our UNT mentors. They are working and majoring in the medical field. All of the people were nice and respectable. **– Phillip, 8th grade**

I went to *College for Kids* at TCC. It is a summer program for grades 2-8. Next year will be my last year. This summer I took Yoga, Show Choir with Pizzazz, Acting, and Draw, Paint and Sketch. Yoga was relaxing, but all that was over when I entered Show Choir. In Acting, I acted in *Charlotte’s Web*. I played the Anchor Girl. In Draw, Paint and Sketch, I painted a picture.

**– Gabriela, 7th grade**



This summer I went to *Breakthrough*. I had so much fun going there for six weeks. Even though I had to do homework, I got to do a lot of fun activities. For a field trip, I got a chance to spend the night at a ranch/resort. I also got a chance to express myself to other people like me. **– Andrea, 8th grade**

During the summer, I went to *College for Kids*. I met new friends there. I did some cool subjects like TaeKwonDo, Make it and Take it, Work It, and Story Time. **– Breanna, 2nd grade**



This summer I went to *College for Kids*. The classes I took were Cake Decorating, E.R., Theater Arts, and Be a Model. I have over 80 volunteer hours for the summer. I am looking forward to the school year and I am honored to have a sponsor with the *STAR Program*. **– Carmen, 8th grade**

My summer was terrific because of the six weeks I spent at *Breakthrough*! They taught me Literature, Writing, Physics/Forces, and Math. I was so excited to meet new friends. *Breakthrough* really helped me prepare for the new school year. **– Daniela, 8th grade**



I went to a summer program called *Breakthrough*. It’s an enrichment program that prepares you for the next grade and focuses on math, writing, literature and Science. Everyone there is so vibrant! They also have a school-year program, too! Even though I love *Breakthrough*, I am ready to start school again! **– Destinee, 7th grade**

**Receive letters like these by being a STAR Sponsor!**