

2008 No Child Left Behind–Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Public Private

Cover Sheet

Type of School (Check all that apply) Elementary Middle High K-12
 Charter Title I Magnet Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Anna Lisa Galvan

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Ben Milam Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 4200 McKinney Avenue

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Dallas

Texas

75205-4526

City

State

Zip Code+4(9 digits total)

County Dallas

State School Code Number* 057905184

Telephone (972) 749-5600

Fax (972) 749-5601

Web site/URL www.dallasisd.org

E-mail agalvan@dallasisd.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date _____

Principal's Signature

Name of Superintendent Dr. Michael Hinojosa

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Dallas Independent School District

Tel. (972) 925-3700

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Jack Lowe Jr.

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Mail by commercial carrier (FedEx, UPS) or courier original signed cover sheet to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 5E103, Washington DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Include this page in the school's application as page 2.

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2007-2008 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2002 and has not received the No Child Left Behind–Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district wide compliance review.
6. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available. Throughout the document, round numbers to the nearest whole number to avoid decimals, except for numbers below 1, which should be rounded to the nearest tenth.

DISTRICT (Question 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district: 156 Elementary schools
 31 Middle schools
 0 Junior High Schools
 32 High schools
 7 Other
 226 TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 7357
 Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 9269

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located
 Urban or large central city
 Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban are
 Suburban
 Small city or town in a rural are
 Rural
4. 3 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
 _____ If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?
5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
Pre K	22	22	44	7			0
K	25	15	40	8			0
1	12	18	30	9			0
2	20	16	36	10			0
3	14	19	33	11			0
4	16	15	31	12			0
5	12	15	27	Other			0
6			0				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							241

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- | | |
|----|------------------------------------|
| 0 | % American Indian or Alaska Native |
| 2 | % Asian or Pacific Islander |
| 3 | % Black or African American |
| 91 | % Hispanic or Latino |
| 4 | % White |

100 % TOTAL

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year 9 %

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1 until the end of the year	7
(2)	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year	17
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	24
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	254
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.09
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 53 %
- | | |
|-----|---|
| 128 | Total Number Limited English Proficient |
|-----|---|

Number of languages represented 3

Specify languages: Spanish, Vietnamese and German

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals 88 %

Total number students who qualify: 213

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low income families, or the school does not participate in the federally supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: $\frac{9}{22}$ % Total Number of Students Serve

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>13</u>	Autism	<u>0</u>	Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u>	Deafness	<u>0</u>	Other Health Impairment
<u>0</u>	Deaf-Blindnes	<u>4</u>	Specific Learning Disabilit
<u>0</u>	Emotional Disturbanc	<u>5</u>	Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u>	Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u>	Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u>	Mental Retardation	<u>0</u>	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u>	Multiple Disabilities		

11. Indicate number of full time and part time staff members in each of the categories below:

Number of Staff

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>19</u>	<u>1</u>
Special resource teachers/specialist	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>10</u>	<u>1</u>
Support Staff	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>40</u>	<u>3</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of 13 : 1 students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Please explain a high teacher turnover rate. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy in attendance, dropout or the drop-off rates. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates, and only high schools need to supply drop-off

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Daily student attendance	98 %	98 %	98 %	98 %	98 %
Daily teacher attendance	96 %	95 %	96 %	97 %	97 %
Teacher turnover rate	1 %	1 %	9 %	0 %	0 %
Student drop out rate (middle/hig	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Student drop-off rate (high school	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %

Please provide all explanations below

PART III - SUMMARY

Ben Milam Elementary School has served Dallas children for nearly one hundred years. Originally called the Fairland School and built in 1909-1910 with an eye toward the city's northward growth, the school is now just beyond the edge of Downtown Dallas. The building's high ceilings, wide halls, and generous windows have for many years welcomed neighborhood children whose older cousins, parents, and grandparents also began their formal education here. Although the neighborhood has recently been transformed by new construction and many of our families have had to move out of our area, a great number of them travel considerable distances each day, year after year, to keep their children at Ben Milam. These transfer students now account for forty-eight percent of our total enrollment, making Ben Milam a 'school of choice.' This continuity in the student population as well as the consistency in faculty and staff creates an unusual opportunity for success at our school. Each child is known by name to dozens of adults in the building, giving students a strong sense of belonging and little opportunity to lose focus.

It is the mission of Ben Milam Elementary School to prepare students with the knowledge, skills, discipline and confidence required for success in middle school. Ben Milam families were among the first in the District to elect to wear uniforms, and the disciplinary advantages of that decision have been evident for over a decade. Our students are highly successful in their applications for acceptance to competitive middle school academies. Middle school administrators frequently comment that Ben Milam students are welcomed and appreciated for their habits of respectful behavior and their eagerness to learn.

Our three school-wide goals for this year are to prepare every student to improve or sustain their previous successful levels of achievement on standardized tests; to provide special opportunities for our students' families to participate in their children's learning; and to design community service experiences for all of our students. Ben Milam's small class sizes, averaging thirteen students to one teacher, facilitate individualized instruction and monitoring, and the faculty's close collaboration and vertical planning sessions afford opportunities to share concerns and strategies. Additionally, nearly half of our students attend our daily after-school program where their learning experiences are expanded in creative math, science, literature, sports, and fine arts programs. New initiatives this year designed to welcome families as our educational partners have included Family Science Night in October, computer lab assistance for parents on Science Fair project presentation, Family Reading Night in February, an evening computer skills class for parents, and the securing of a grant to create a workroom for our parent volunteers.

Ben Milam students, faculty, and staff have benefited enormously in recent years from the generous contributions of our community volunteers. The children enjoy new playground equipment purchased with funds raised by our PTA parents at weekly canteens as well as donations from a neighborhood church, several community businesses, and individual donors. The school grounds are seasonally planted by friends of the school, and many hours of individual tutoring time are provided by volunteers each week. Our third school goal was conceived both to increase the children's awareness and appreciation of these gifts and to encourage them to develop habits of service. Third grade students recently completed a series of large paintings to brighten the hallways of a nearby low-income retirement community; a successful food drive was conducted in December to assist school families in crisis; and our upper-grade students have expanded and now manage the school-wide recycling program.

The students of Ben Milam Elementary School are successful despite substantial obstacles in their path: eighty-eight percent of our children are considered at-risk due to low socio-economic status and many are struggling to learn in a new language. While we know that continuity and stability, small classes, and community support are invaluable, our students' success ultimately must be credited in great measure to the dedication of their teachers. Ben Milam teachers provide outstanding instruction daily, tutor before and after school, and provide a Saturday School program as well, to ensure that each student has every possible opportunity to be successful.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1 Assessment Results:

The Ben Milam Elementary School community is establishing a tradition of academic excellence. Students are evaluated using numerous assessments. The early grades use Dial 3, an early childhood assessment; reading assessments, the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) and the Tejas Lee; and norm-referenced tests, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and Logramos. Each assessment reveals valuable academic information on each child.

Each year, third through fifth grade students are asked to demonstrate their mastery of certain core subject areas such as reading, math, and writing with the state standardized assessment, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). Overall, Ben Milam students perform very well on the TAKS, achieving 100% passing rates in multiple subjects at various grade levels.

The Texas Education Agency annually determines ratings for schools based on their TAKS performance. The accountability ratings are Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Acceptable, and Academically Unacceptable. A TAKS performance of greater than or equal to 90% mastery is rated as Exemplary, and greater than or equal to 75% is designated Recognized. Performances of 65% to 74% in Reading and 45% to 74% in Mathematics are considered Academically Acceptable. A performance of < 65% in Reading or < 45% in Mathematics is classified Academically Unacceptable. While the schools are rated as a whole, students can be individually recognized for their exceptional academic achievement on the TAKS with a designation of Commended Performance. Students with commended performance greatly exceeded the state's passing standards. The number of Ben Milam students who have achieved commended performance has steadily increased throughout the years. The 2007 TAKS scores and ratings for Ben Milam Elementary as well as all Texas public schools are available at www.tea.state.tx.us. Comprehensive accountability data for Ben Milam Elementary and all Dallas ISD schools may be found at www.dallasisd.org.

The 2007 TAKS Reading scores for Ben Milam Elementary were outstanding and demonstrate a commitment to the tradition of academic excellence and pride. Our passing rate was 94% for all students. When disaggregated, our performance in Reading remains impressive: 93% of economically-disadvantaged passed, 90% of the Limited English Population (LEP) passed, and 90% of the at-risk population passed. All groups performed above the District averages, and both third and fifth grade had 100% passing rates. One-third of our students, 33%, received commended performance designations in Reading.

Mathematics TAKS scores in 2007 at Ben Milam were remarkable as well. Our passing rate was 89% for all students. Our subgroups' passing rates were 89% for economically-disadvantaged, 81% for LEP students and 81% for those students considered at-risk. Ben Milam's fifth grade had a 100% passing rate. Again, one-third of our students, 33%, achieved a commended performance rating in mathematics.

As our results demonstrate, there is a negligible difference between the performances of all students at Ben Milam and our subgroups. This indicates the entire staff's commitment to excellence, ensuring that academic success is within the grasp of each and every child who enters the portals of our care and instruction. Most importantly, the students recognize this commitment and match effort with effort.

We have, however, noted that there is a slight disparity in the commended performance percentages between girls and boys in both reading and math. This disparity is stereotypical: boys achieved commended performance at a higher rate in math and girls achieved commended performance more often in reading. Our teachers discovered these differences upon reviewing the 2006-2007 data and immediately implemented new strategies to meet the boys' and girls' unique interests.

2. Using Assessment Results:

The Ben Milam Elementary staff continually reflects on what we have accomplished, looks ahead to where we need to go, and determines the best path to get there. This process consistently commences, remains with, and concludes with data analysis. Our primary goal is to ascertain student progress towards mastering state standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Data from the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), from the other aforementioned assessments, and from District assessments are analyzed by teachers and used to tailor their instruction to assure that prescriptive learning is occurring in every classroom. Flexible, small group instruction provides the best

opportunity for all students to succeed.

Teachers meet informally daily and formally on a weekly basis within grade levels to plan and to share short-term instructional strategies. Teachers also meet vertically on a monthly basis to discuss instructional strategies necessary for seamless coverage of skills in preparation for future academic endeavors. Rich and informative discussions take place to maintain progress toward school-wide goals. A carefully designed schedule allows time for continual instructional collaboration. The District calendar also provides two half days when teachers analyze District benchmark data for a reflective look at the effectiveness of previous instruction and to plan for future instruction.

Ben Milam Elementary is a Reading First campus. Therefore, we are granted the benefits of a reading coach for both professional support and instructional advisement and technological materials for scheduled progress monitoring of reading fluency. Aided by technology, teachers have instantaneous assessment results identifying any necessity for alteration of instruction as well as the expertise of the reading coach, with whom they may confer regarding appropriate, research-based interventions.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Parental and community support are invaluable in accomplishing goals in an educational environment. Ben Milam Elementary parents and other community stakeholders are actively involved and highly informed. In addition to attending the formal, District-scheduled parent-teacher conferences, parents may request a conference at any time and are encouraged to visit and volunteer in the classroom. Parents are provided with the school's overall performance data, as well as their own child's, as soon as it is made available to us. Our faculty and administrative staff are readily available for explanations and assistance with assessment information. Parents are provided hard copies of the various assessment results at parent conferences, in the weekly parent communication folder, at PTA meetings, and at community meetings.

Ben Milam Family Education Nights have proven to be valuable both in relaying information concerning assessments and by highlighting the role of the home in supporting our students' efforts to attain academic excellence. By welcoming parents into the school for these special events, we have enabled them to participate in their children's educational experience while increasing their understanding of the paramount importance of their role as our educational partners.

Our community's representative in the Texas Legislature is a frequent visitor to our campus, where he is a familiar face in our classrooms. He stays apprised of our students' academic achievements and displays our students' paintings in his offices at the State Capitol, prompting opportunities to champion Ben Milam Elementary as a model of inner-city public school success in his capacity as a member of the Texas Public Education Committee and Chairman of the Select Committee on Higher and Public Education Finance. This extension of our school community beyond the local level has forged an alliance with the potential to benefit all Texas school children.

4. Sharing Success:

The Dallas Independent School District has reconfigured its divisions this year and our elementary schools are now grouped into four learning communities. Ben Milam is in the Northwest Elementary Learning Community (NWELC), which has further grouped its schools into collaborative Quads. With this new alignment, an exciting change in professional learning and peer collaboration within and among schools is underway. Campus Instructional Leadership Team members periodically meet with the other Quad teams to exchange strategies, techniques, and successes, and then disseminate departmental information to their own campus faculties. Principals also meet frequently with their Quad peers to further refine the instructional focus.

Dallas ISD instructional leaders have introduced the concept of Learning Walks to our campuses. Through Learning Walks, principals and teachers have the opportunity to view education in action by visiting and observing classrooms with a singleness of purpose. Ben Milam has been fortunate to host several Learning Walks this year and our staff has received valuable feedback on the dynamic instruction that takes place on our campus. Similarly, we have been honored by having principals from other schools request that we allow novice teachers to visit our school and be informally mentored by our veteran teachers. Ben Milam is in its fifth year of a student teacher training program with the University of Texas at Arlington, which in 2003 identified us as a model teacher-training school. Consequently, our master teachers' methods and strategies are now echoed in dozens of Ben Milam-trained teachers' classrooms.

The academic astuteness and dedicated scholarship of our principal has been evident to our staff from day one. Her successful instructional leadership has been noted by her peers and administrative superiors, as well, and she has been selected to serve as a NWELC Quad leader as well as a high school feeder pattern leader. In these roles, she facilitates meetings with other principals where instructional challenges and successful strategies are shared to advance academic achievement in all participating schools. The Dallas ISD Superintendent has named our principal a Key Connector, a select group charged with sharing the mission of the District with the greater Dallas community.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

An interdisciplinary approach to education is wholly embraced by the Ben Milam teachers and staff. The faculty and staff of our school are dedicated to ensuring that each student's needs are met regardless of any individual challenges that may exist. The curriculum for each content area at our school, grounded in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and shaped by our district's Curriculum Planning Guides and individual teacher creativity, allows us to address the academic individuality of each student. Instructional delivery is substantially guided by our District's adoption of the Principles of Learning, as delineated by the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh.

Reading/Language Arts instruction is based on the five components of reading. Instructional strategies and materials are research-based. Students receive customized instruction based on regular diagnostic evaluations through daily small group instruction. Students demonstrate their reading mastery in a variety of ways, such as drama, art, graphic organizers, displays, and compositions. Students participate in robust discussion and encounter a variety of print materials and presentation methods, resulting in an ever-increasing vocabulary, strong comprehension skills, and a deep appreciation for literature.

Numerical fluency, the key to building an understanding of all aspects of Mathematics, is at the core of the District's Curriculum Planning Guides and drives mathematics instruction throughout the grade levels. Conceptual learning, dependent upon that numerical fluency, is continually being built through a rich variety of instructional approaches and a methodical review of mathematical elements. Problem solving and logic are put into practice daily to allow the student to experience math in everyday contexts.

The Science curriculum places an emphasis on systems. It is our goal for each child to view the world as a set of systems, each reliant upon the other. The development of scientific method procedural skills is integral to the discipline. A Ben Milam science student learns to observe the properties, patterns, and models of the world and discovers through hands-on exploration that constancy and change can co-exist.

Through the Social Studies curriculum, students develop an understanding that the present has been shaped by past events, often dictated by geography and economics. Our students have a wealth of opportunities to acquire an understanding of civic responsibility through field trips and special in-school presentations by community experts. Because our school is a polling site, students have frequent opportunities to witness the democratic process. Our students have become aware of their own value to the community by participation in service projects, contributing gifts of their time, labor, and talents.

The Visual Arts curriculum at Ben Milam is based on the National Standards, weaving together the building of skills for creative visual expression and the study of cultural heritage with experiences in art criticism and self-assessment. The development of a vocabulary that enables students to form, express, and defend opinions about art and design in the world around them is central to the program.

Ben Milam was selected in 2006 as a pilot school for the Dallas Independent School District's Two-Way Dual Language Program. Beginning at the Pre-Kindergarten level, this program first builds a student's native language skills, making the subsequent acquisition of a second language easier for the student to accomplish. Bilingual pairings of students are used to facilitate this process.

The strength of our curriculum and instruction lies in their invaluable ability to prepare students to seek opportunities to expand and take ownership of their learning. We know that when students depart Ben Milam for middle school they are prepared for new academic challenges and are not only excited about but also confident in their ability to be successful. Our goal is to make each child a learner for life.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

Fostering the development of an abiding love of reading is a priority at Ben Milam Elementary. It is essential that our students master reading as a skill if they are to achieve academic success across the content areas and personal success throughout life. At Ben Milam we want them to experience the pleasures of reading, as well. Ben Milam Elementary reading instruction is concrete in its research-based strategies yet flexible when addressing the needs of the child.

Ben Milam Elementary is a Reading First campus and therefore there is an intensive focus on reading

instruction. The teachers are recipients of reading professional development by a campus reading coach to enhance their own craft. The five components of reading ' phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension ' are addressed in an appropriate and systematic manner. Research-based strategies and materials are the sole tools utilized by teachers for reading instruction. Teachers follow our District's Curriculum Planning Guides, based on the standards of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, to guide and pace instruction. Dallas ISD has adopted the SRA Open Court reading program.

Combined with careful planning, consistent progress monitoring, and small group instruction, teachers take a prescriptive approach to reading instruction. Students receive a minimum of ninety minutes of inspired and effective reading instruction daily. Those ninety minutes encompass multiple instructional strategies such as whole group, small group, and independent work time. Whole group instruction features teacher-guided lessons. During small group instruction, students who are not on track to meet grade level expectations are instructed in the areas of need. Students either at or above grade level expectations are provided instruction to challenge and extend their reading ability. Independent work time allows students to strengthen their reading skills through independent exploration. Additional minutes of instruction are afforded to struggling students to expedite reading advancement both during and after the formal instructional day. Following the best practices known in reading instruction, our teachers challenge and inspire Ben Milam students to become self-motivated readers and prepare them to excel.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

Ben Milam Elementary boasts a highly successful writing program that equips students with the tools to be competent writers. The effectiveness of our program is due to an approach that encourages vertical alignment and the development of skills in the writing lab and in other content areas. A highly structured curriculum emphasizes the core writing principles set forth by federal, state, and district agencies and is based on the objectives outlined in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). The District's writing program, The Write Direction II, provides an abundance of resources to promote effective planning of exquisite writing lessons. Small, flexible grouping of students allows for tailored instruction. Students become familiar with diverse forms of writing through teacher modeling, the analysis of a variety of literary genres, and the study of exemplary writing samples. Regular writing conferencing sessions with both teachers and peers provide valuable feedback for students to improve and refine their compositions.

Student ownership is developed through self-assessment based on the standard writing rubric. Collaboration across grade levels and the use of intensive small group instruction for third through fifth grades ensure successful vertical alignment within our campus and feeder pattern schools. Additional writing instruction is offered for students in need of intervention, and a writing lab is available for all fourth grade students requiring extended guidance on TAKS-based writing assignments. Our students are constantly striving to develop their writing skills and are gaining the confidence required to further master this form of self expression.

4. Instructional Methods:

The teachers at Ben Milam Elementary understand that every child's learning style is unique. Our teachers differentiate instruction based on periodic assessment results to meet the learning needs of each student, using flexible, tiered grouping methods in all subjects. Our teachers conduct individual tutoring for struggling students and utilize trained volunteers, many of them former teachers.

Strategies presented in our campus professional development sessions, such as those learned during a study of Robert Marzano's Classroom Instruction that Works, are readily implemented in Ben Milam's classrooms. Most recently, our teachers have adopted the use of a relatively new graphic organizer designed to assist students in discovering and moving beyond their misconceptions about a topic. The Reading and Analyzing Non-Fiction chart, or RAN chart, facilitates this process of self evaluation of understanding and is documented to have been influential in raising reading comprehension scores in several school districts.

We are fortunate to have a science lab teacher who provides hands-on science labs in a small group setting as well as a writing coach who provides small group writing instruction. These specialized environments generate authentic, project-based learning experiences. In addition to these methods, upper grade level classes collaborate with lower grade level classes to facilitate peer learning. At Ben Milam

Elementary, we understand that all children may not succeed in the same way, but all children can be successful.

5. Professional Development:

Ben Milam faculty and staff participate in year-round professional development programs to ensure that best practices are in place for delivering instruction to our students. In addition to several days of campus-based staff development each term, classroom teachers attend a minimum of twenty-one hours of district-directed professional development courses each year. The members of each school's Campus Instructional Leadership Team (CILT) participate in several additional days of training throughout the year for the purpose of subsequently conducting professional development at their own campuses. The current task of CILT is to assist in the implementation of the Principles of Learning, as delineated by the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh. Dallas ISD has selected four of the eight Principles as this year's focus: creating academically rigorous lessons, setting clear expectations, socializing intelligence among students, and fostering accountable talk.

Learning through observation and apprenticeship is a priority for our students as well as our staff at Ben Milam. Our teachers are able to observe and learn from our on-campus reading coach as she models the best practices in reading instruction. That same strategy of learning first-hand from successful colleagues has been implemented in Dallas ISD through Learning Walks. In addition to welcoming teams of visiting teachers into their own classrooms for observation, our teachers now have opportunities to visit classrooms at our own campus and at schools throughout the District to witness the implementation of the Principles of Learning.

Continuous education on our campus also includes our engagement in faculty book and article studies. Each month our faculty meets to participate in a literary discussion led by a CILT member, using educational resources such as *Teaching with the Brain in Mind* by Eric Jansen and *'Making America Smarter'* by Susan Resnick. Staff members are also active in professional organizations such as the International Reading Association and the National Association for Bilingual Education, enabling them to establish lines of communication with other teaching professionals throughout the world. In 2007, four teachers attended the International Reading Association Conference in Toronto, where one staff member shared her own unique reading strategy as a Conference Presenter. Professional development is a continuous process at Ben Milam as we model for our students that education is a life-long journey.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	Feb/Mar	Feb/Mar	Feb/Mar	Feb/Mar	Feb/Mar
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Meeting Standard	100	100	96	100	97
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	45	32	27	22	
Number of students tested	31	28	22	32	33
Percent of total students tested	89	80	92	91	70
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	7	2	3	14
Percent of students alternatively assessed	11	20	8	9	30
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Limited English Proficient (LEP)					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Meeting Standard	100	100	92	100	96
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	38	10	15	10	
Number of students tested	22	10	19	17	27
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Meeting Standard	85	64	81	90	63
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	30	8	9	21	
Number of students tested	27	25	32	38	30
Percent of total students tested	84	93	89	84	77
Number of students alternatively assessed	5	2	4	7	9
Percent of students alternatively assessed	16	7	11	16	23
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Limited English Proficient (LEP)					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Meeting Standard				85	40
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance				15	
Number of students tested				14	12
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	Feb/Mar	Feb/Mar	Feb/Mar	Feb/Mar	Feb/Mar
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Meeting Standard	100	96	93	66	74
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	6	23	14	14	
Number of students tested	18	26	28	29	27
Percent of total students tested	90	79	72	78	68
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	7	11	8	13
Percent of students alternatively assessed	10	21	28	22	32
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Meeting Standard	91	86	78	97	97
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	28	38	22	28	
Number of students tested	32	29	23	32	33
Percent of total students tested	91	83	96	91	70
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	6	1	3	14
Percent of students alternatively assessed	9	17	4	9	30
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Limited English Proficient (LEP)					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Meeting Standard	86		71	100	100
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	14		21	20	
Number of students tested	22		19	17	27
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Meeting Standard	82	77	79	87	73
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	14	12	30	8	
Number of students tested	28	26	33	38	30
Percent of total students tested	88	96	92	84	77
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	1	3	7	9
Percent of students alternatively assessed	12	4	8	16	23
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Limited English Proficient (LEP)					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
Meeting Standard				82	60
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance				7	
Number of students tested				14	12
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
Meeting Standard	100	100	90	79	77
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Commended Performance	44	58	28	17	
Number of students tested	18	26	29	29	26
Percent of total students tested	90	79	74	78	65
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	7	10	8	14
Percent of students alternatively assessed	10	21	26	22	35
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
2.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
3.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					
4.					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
Number of students tested					