

U.S. Department of Education
2010 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Type of School: (Check all that apply) Charter Title I Magnet Choice

Name of Principal: Ms. Karen Jackson

Official School Name: J. P. Cornelius Elementary

School Mailing Address:
7475 Westover ST
Houston, TX 77087-6113

County: Harris State School Code Number*: 101912133

Telephone: (713) 845-7405 Fax: (713) 845-7448

Web site/URL: <http://es.houstonisd.org/CorneliusES/Frames-Version/Cornelius-ES-Frames-7MAY2009/Home.html> E-mail: kjackson@houstonisd.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Terry Grier

District Name: Houston Tel: (713) 556-6000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Greg Myers

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it 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.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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 one or more of 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.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2009-2010 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2004.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 or 2009.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.

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

1. Number of schools in the district: (per district designation)	178	Elementary schools (includes K-8)
	<u>39</u>	Middle/Junior high schools
	<u>37</u>	High schools
	<u>2</u>	K-12 schools
	<u>256</u>	TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 10405

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 area
- Suburban
- Small city or town in a rural area
- Rural

4. 10 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position 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
PreK	47	57	104	6			0
K	70	68	138	7			0
1	78	89	167	8			0
2	76	74	150	9			0
3	67	71	138	10			0
4	75	57	132	11			0
5	61	64	125	12			0
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							954

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
1 % Asian
21 % Black or African American
77 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
1 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % **Total**

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 12 %

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	49
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	68
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	117
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	949
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.123
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	12.329

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 46 %

Total number limited English proficient 438

Number of languages represented: 2

Specify languages:

Spanish and Vietnamese

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 86 %

Total number students who qualify: 824

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 free and reduced-price school meals 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: 3 %

Total Number of Students Served: 29

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>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>15</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>13</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

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>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>52</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>18</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>61</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>136</u>	<u>0</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18 :1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	96%	95%	96%	97%	96%
Teacher turnover rate	9%	8%	9%	8%	9%
Student dropout rate	%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2009 are doing as of the Fall 2009.

Graduating class size	<u>0</u>	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>0</u>	%
Enrolled in a community college	<u>0</u>	%
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>0</u>	%
Found employment	<u>0</u>	%
Military service	<u>0</u>	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	<u>0</u>	%
Unknown	<u>0</u>	%
Total	<u> </u>	%

PART III - SUMMARY

“Making Tracks for the Future”, our motto, is the fundamental belief at J. P. Cornelius Elementary. Our mission is to make a strong, positive contribution to the socioeconomic foundation of Houston. Our innovative, hardworking staff embraces these values by continuing to grow professionally towards what is best for individual children everyday rather than falling back on “what we have always done”. We incorporate Houston Independent School District (HISD) core values and strategic management principles into practice, thereby ensuring all students are empowered with knowledge, attitudes, skills, and habits to become lifelong learners and successful productive workers.

Cornelius has a strong tradition of excellence. Transforming students from good to great is at the heart of our existence. The essence of teaching and learning is to create generations of students who overcome the constraints of poverty. Our collective belief is that all children can and will perform in an exemplary manner.

Performing in the top two percent in the state in reading, math, and science has made our academic program revered locally, statewide, and nationally. We want our students to be so well prepared that excellence is woven into the very fabric of who they are. Cornelius pride and quality work have propelled our students to focus not on possessions but on their potential for the future. Together, we are building a foundation so strong that success becomes inevitable.

Our school is nestled in a diverse, low income, multicultural neighborhood in southeast Houston, Texas. The community is a mixture of English/non-English speakers represented by Hispanics, African-Americans, Anglos, and Asians. Of our 961 students, 89% qualify for free/reduced lunch, 43% are classified LEP, and 17% are labeled Gifted and Talented.

Our campus includes numerous science labs where students conduct experiments and research, math labs to reinforce and enrich math skills, and a library rich with literature and media to cultivate a love of reading. Ninety-nine percent of our third grade students performed at or above state standards on the 2009 Math TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills). In fourth grade, 90% of the students passed TAKS Writing and 100% of fifth graders passed TAKS Science and Math. Based on our methodology of science instruction, Cornelius’ commended rate in science increased over the last six years from 17% to an astounding 83%. Due to our thirst for excellence, Cornelius has been the recipient of the following accolades: Texas Business Education Coalition Honor Roll, National Exemplar Award for Excellence in Science Education, TEA Exemplary, and Title I Distinguished School.

Cornelius is recognized as a premiere educational institution with a multifaceted curriculum that creates a unique environment that ignites learning. Highly qualified teachers are willing to work with a student beyond the standard instructional day to guarantee that every child maximizes his/her abilities. Partnerships with the community assist us in achieving these high levels of commitment. For example, we have a relationship with the “Houston Real Men Read” program that brings together male members of the community to mentor students and promote literacy. We believe that a strong school-home connection is essential to our success. Finally, our commitment to education does not stop with the student, because we extend our facility and teachers to teach GED, ESL, and computer classes to parents while providing free child care.

Our relentless pursuit of student success, high expectations for every child and teacher, collaboration of all stakeholders, and a common vision are the keys to our success. Cornelius' dedication to the stellar education of tomorrow's leaders is derived from the shared belief that every child has unique gifts to contribute to society, and each child is worthy of the finest foundation.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

The Texas Education Agency Accountability System is based on an improvement model in which districts and campuses must meet an absolute standard or an improvement standard for each accountability measure. All public school students in grades 3-11 in the state of Texas must take the TAKS test. This criterion referenced exam based on the state curriculum known as Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) is designed to gauge the overall campus performance in reading, math, writing, and science. The state ranks schools into four categories: Exemplary (90-100% passing), Recognized (75-89% passing), Academically Acceptable (70% passing in reading, writing, & social studies; 55% passing in math, and 50% passing in science), and Academically Unacceptable. Many schools strive to meet these standards, but at Cornelius our mission is that every child surpasses these standards. What is truly outstanding about our data is our sustained excellence over the past five years. Cornelius earned the exemplary status in 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009. This stellar performance is a manifestation of teacher dedication and student devotion to excellence.

Data driven instructional planning is responsible for the improvement Cornelius has experienced over the last five years. In reviewing our commended rate from 2004 to 2009, a steady trend of improvement is evident. Similarly, growth trends are apparent in reading and math. From 2004 to 2009, the Reading commended rate moved from 31% to 49%. In math, growth began at 31% and increased to 57% with the exception of 2005 where we experienced a two percent decline. Across the board in all subject areas and grade levels, we have shown a steady increase in commended performance rates. A collective view of the commended students at Cornelius reveals a significant disparity among subgroups (economic/ethnicity). The difference is more pronounced when looking at commended rates versus passing standards. The causal factor for this can be attributed to a school wide lack of focus on commended performance rather than the passing rate.

Third grade students have performed at a 99% passing on TAKS Reading from 2005 to 2009. We are very proud of the fact that all subgroups in the third grade are within three percent of this standard. Fourth grade students performed at a 90% average on this assessment over the past five years. However, disparities among subgroups in the fourth grade have fluctuated over the years, the most recent data indicates our interventions are proving successful. Our fifth grade students began in 2005 with a passing rate of 72% making significant improvement to a passing rate of 94% in 2008. There were no underlining variances between subgroups in the fifth grade. Hard work and dedication of the teachers has closed the achievement gap.

Based on TAKS Math results from 2005 to 2009, third graders have averaged a 98% passing rate. Achievement among the subgroups has shown to be balanced. The overall performance average for fourth graders for the past five years is 92%. A major concern in fourth grade is the downward trend of the African American students. Currently, we are implementing the Reasoning Mind Math Program coupled with strenuous strategies to overcome this obstacle. Fifth grade students have met state standards at a rate of 95% with little or no deviance between subgroups.

If we are to make children's education our highest priority, regardless of socioeconomic status or ethnic background, we must provide equal access to a high quality education that is evidenced by continual student growth, as measured by our accountability system. Additional information may be found by accessing the Texas Education Agency website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us>.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Data is used systematically at Cornelius to guide instruction and plan professional development for teachers. Continually analyzing and disaggregating data helps facilitate effective instruction. Monthly benchmarks are given to assess student learning. Teachers at Cornelius know that when they evaluate students, they are assessing themselves. Student performance is merely a reflection of teacher efficacy.

We utilize data to determine what has been mastered and what must be re-taught or reviewed. Using assessment data allows us to see similarities and differences in student performances so we can then group students for differentiated instruction. Grouping students together with similar educational needs creates a more productive learning environment. Teachers having the greatest percentage of student mastery on assessments share teaching strategies. Student deficiencies often indicate that additional training is needed to promote teacher and student success. Using campus data, teachers get a clear picture of their instructional strengths and weaknesses, ultimately increasing their expertise as teachers. This process is used to promote teacher effectiveness. Additionally, administrators use data to provide teachers with adequate instructional support including professional development and mentoring in an effort to enhance student achievement.

Data is disseminated to students and parents so they are aware of the growth targets we are trying to reach. Tracking student success allows us to monitor and plan for academic advancement. Teachers use data as a guide in making decisions about instruction. Students are provided with feedback and benchmark profiles are sent home so that parents can assist with weaknesses. Looking critically at assessment data is essential to the consistent growth of our students and teachers.

Teachers use item analysis to discover trends in student responses. These trends are reviewed to decide what resources and strategies should be used for intervention. Using data effectively provides us with a road map to student success.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Communicating assessment results is an integral part of the process used to promote student growth at Cornelius. Feedback is crucial for improved learning. Our campus provides both students and their parents with the results of most summative assessments taken each school year. Such feedback is intended to inform parents by providing an overall picture of students' performance and also identify particular strengths and weaknesses. This identification allows parents an opportunity to have a part in the intervention process by assisting students in remediating existing deficiencies.

During the annual Open House meeting, parents, students and community members receive information on campus scores and general information about our rating, AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress), Title I Distinguished schools awards, Texas Honor Roll, Just for the Kids ranking and other campus accolades. The principal reviews our targets for the coming year and shares with students, teachers, and the community what they can do to contribute to our campus-wide success.

Parents and students must review benchmark data monthly to guarantee that student targets are met. Each student is aware of what they are learning and what they need to learn in order to hit their target. The campus also keeps parents informed by requiring teachers to send home a weekly update with objectives parents can use to assist students at home.

Our campus web-site also provides information to our stakeholders regarding test results and grading. "Parent Student Connect" allows parents online feedback on student grades and work habits. Another mode of communication is the monthly school newsletter which includes testing results by grade level and teacher. Individualized student profiles prepared by the test developers go home to parents. These reports explain test

performance for students in detail. School–home communication is paramount to the ongoing success of our students.

4. **Sharing Success:**

Our numerous awards such as the Texas Honor Roll (six years), Distinguished Title I (nine years), and TEA Exemplary, have inspired educators to come from as far as Scotland and Australia to visit our campus to inquire about our strategies for success in reading, math, and science. The majority of visitors are from other HISD schools who are interested in replicating our academic success. With the awesome teaching and learning that occurs on our campus daily, anyone is welcome to visit.

Our Magnet Coordinator, who specializes in science, holds weekly meetings with science teachers from other campuses. She shares strategies to help them improve science instruction; thus improving their test scores. This forum allows teachers to share ideas and plan together for student success.

During district-wide principal meetings, we share ideas about how to build more speaking and writing into the reading block. Ideas of how daily opportunities for student engagement in formal and informal classroom discussions are also provided.

Our master teachers are on loan to struggling campuses to help improve teaching and learning. This has been extremely effective in showing teachers how our strategies can be implemented effectively. We routinely support the District’s professional development efforts by assigning highly effective teachers to mentor novice teachers. Approximately 30% of our educators have functioned in a leadership role in training and promoting teacher effectiveness. Furthermore, our campus participates in Teach for America, Teach Houston, and numerous Alternative Certification Programs by accepting interns to observe and be mentored by master teachers.

If awarded, the open door policy at Cornelius will continue to exemplify our willingness to share our success with others. What we have found to be true is that whenever we “pay it forward,” it is not only others that gain knowledge, but we too become beneficiaries.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Principles of guided reading are incorporated into our reading/ELA curriculum to ensure that each child receives small group instruction at their appropriate reading level. Print rich classrooms, interactive word walls, basal readers and literacy libraries are a few resources used to engage students. Language arts instruction, both whole and small group, implements “Best Practices” such as think-pair-share, a discussion strategy that partners students in small groups, encouraging them to become active learners. Our reading/ELA instruction provides key components to ensure student engagement through purposeful reading, critical thinking, mechanics in grammar, and nurtures creative writing abilities to promote life-long learners. Writing instruction consists of Daily Oral Language (DOL) activities, vocabulary development, implementation of the writing process and Language Experience Approach (LEA), and oral presentations. This writing approach provides our students with the necessary skills to be effective writers and speakers which, in turn, helps them to fully develop the four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Social Studies is seamlessly integrated with other core content areas. This method of instruction allows Cornelius teachers to teach cross-curricularly by embedding reading comprehension, math, and science skills into the Social Studies content. We follow the Madeline Hunter Lesson Cycle and often incorporate virtual field trips and video streaming into the lesson focus. Graphic organizers are utilized to take the content from the knowledge to analysis level of thinking. Projects are designed to give opportunities to students for evaluation and synthesis of content specific objectives.

Beginning in Pre-K, manipulatives and story boards are used in the daily math program to develop problem solving skills. By allowing students to investigate math concepts using tactile objects, we are able to solidify a strong foundation in mathematics. Students not only come up with the solution, but are given opportunities to write about their experiences in journals and partake in reciprocal teaching. We have Math Mondays campus wide to ensure that students learn basic facts with efficiency. Reasoning Mind (RM), a computer based math program, is also utilized to differentiate and individualize student learning.

Science curriculum focuses on conceptual understanding, using process skills and applying knowledge. Concepts are based on state objectives and address the skills that students in grades PreK-5th must learn. Emphasis is placed on students becoming active learners.

Instruction is delivered using “Inquiry Science,” namely the 5-E Instructional Teaching Model, which represents the five stage sequence for teaching and learning: Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate. Scientific Method and Experimental Design are delivery methods for teaching science which include testing, hypothesizing, analyzing, and reporting data that help students to explore the natural world.

Students are engaged with significant content through various methods. Teachers align instruction with the required curriculum, and analyze instructional results to ensure that students understand concepts. Monthly science projects are assigned to extend and reinforce content and concepts. Weekly and monthly assessments are administered to ensure content mastery. The content is very engaging which allows students to see, feel, touch, and experience things they have never encountered before, making them lifelong learners.

Physical education classes develop fundamental motor skills, team and individual sports, exercise techniques, and cooperation. The fine arts curriculum stresses the advancement of students’ ability to function in both performing ensembles and the regular classroom. These unique opportunities challenge students cognitively, affectively, and physically, impacting individuals, families, communities, and cultures positively. The music curriculum increases musical literacy through vocabulary and musical notation. Experiences through

performing and visual arts fuel students' academic performance in the core content areas. Students need physical activity in order to stimulate their minds; we incorporate movement throughout our curriculum to keep students actively engaged.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

(This question is for elementary schools only)

Cornelius Elementary uses a balanced approach to reading. We chose this approach to reading because it combines language and literature-rich activities with explicit teaching skills needed to develop fluent and proficient readers. Reading comprehension is a fundamental building block to success in all content areas. Our program enhances proficiency by embedding comprehension strategies throughout the curriculum addressing the various reading objectives such as: summarization, main idea, inferences, predicting, generalizations, and many others. School-wide daily instruction begins with shared reading leading into the ninety minute ELA/reading block. Teachers utilize the guided reading model to provide daily small group instruction focusing on spelling, phonics, fluency, and phonemic awareness. Interactive word walls are used to enrich, reinforce, and link vocabulary throughout content areas resulting in increased comprehension. Instructional activities in the ELA/reading block include: whole group instruction, graphic organizers, rotation through literacy centers, silent reading, read aloud, grammar, and creative writing. In the upper grades, AR (Accelerated Reader) and literature circles are used to promote cooperative learning, comprehension, and reading for pleasure.

Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)/Tejas Lee is one of the major assessment instruments in our reading program used to identify student gains. This data, compiled with campus benchmarks and common assessments, is used to design appropriate interventions and guide instruction to increase student achievement in reading. Based on data, struggling readers are identified as tier-three and receive an additional 45 minutes of targeted intervention instruction daily. Extended instruction after school is provided to accelerate learning, ensuring that struggling readers avoid failure and receive extra time to practice skills. The reading program at Cornelius has proven not only to be rigorous for students, but also rewarding, teaching them the fundamental necessities that provide for success while balancing a love for reading and learning.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

Cornelius has a mission to mold our youth into productive citizens that believe in making their dreams reality through hard work and high expectations. Our math program prepares every student for success in a technologically advanced society. Reasoning Mind (RM) is a computerized based math program derived from a sound methodology of math instruction. Utilization of the RM program provides an integration of technology and mathematics. The RM program provides differentiated instruction for all academic groups and each student is channeled through an individualized learning path. The RM program is data driven, providing impeccable access to student strengths and weaknesses. Teachers are able to look at trends in student learning at the push of a button; thus allowing instruction in the classroom to be modified to meet the students' needs. Not only do we strive to meet state mandates, but we strive to propel each student to their highest potential. In order to prepare our students for interaction with the real world, we also participate in the "Math Circle" with other Reasoning Mind schools. This allows students from all over the Houston area to work on advanced problems and talk about math in a new arena. Our "Math Club" competes in various competitions throughout the city. We are able to meet such high standards through the use of technology in and out of the classroom. Classrooms in grades 2-5 are equipped for active student engagement via advanced technology. Students are able to manipulate content in every area of learning through the use of SMART technology. We promote technology so that students will be able to compete in an innovative society. Students are fluent in creating PowerPoint presentations, brochures, word documents, and emails so they not only learn content objectives, but also gain priceless life skills.

4. Instructional Methods:

In order to effectively meet the diverse needs of our students and sub groups, we differentiate instruction on a daily basis. We have students in our classrooms who struggle academically and others who learn at an advanced level and accelerated pace. Our school goal is to maximize each student's growth and individual success by providing a variety of research- based experiences that allow them to explore the curriculum content successfully.

Instruction is data driven and aligned with student needs, then differentiated in various ways. We meet the needs of our English Language Learners by providing instruction through visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modalities. Modeling, graphic organizers, choral reading, interactive journals and other strategies of Marzano are implemented. Cooperative learning and the 5-E Instructional Teaching Model are used to improve science instruction. Bilingual teachers use flexible grouping for delivering instruction (whole class, small group, peer tutoring and working with partners) and team teaching to address their students' needs. All teachers address various learning styles, create learning stations (such as language, science, reading or, phonics), and use Bloom's Taxonomy questioning techniques to increase higher level thinking skills.

Instruction is also modified by the integration of Renzulli Learning, a computer based curriculum, for gifted and talented students as well as general education students. The Special Education population utilizes the computer based reading program Voyager, which focuses on repetitive practice. This program is ideal for students who require remediation. Project based learning exists throughout all academics focusing on students creating graphs, narrative writing and PowerPoint presentations. The use of an individualized computer based math program (Reasoning Mind) helps students with problem solving skills. These methods of teaching are effective and promote high expectations for all students. It is responsive teaching rather than "one size fits all teaching."

5. Professional Development:

The goal of Cornelius Elementary School is to maintain highly effective teachers and improve student learning. Our professional development program uses research based instructional strategies that are designed to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards. Our school supports teachers as they encounter the challenges of meeting the needs of diverse students in a low socioeconomic environment. We know that teacher expertise is the primary indicator of student success; therefore, professional development at Cornelius Elementary School is crucial to improving student achievement.

School wide professional development for teachers is continuous and data driven. Once the data is reviewed, we train the teachers based on student deficiencies. Teachers who excel at particular objectives are asked to share their expertise with their peers during collaborative planning and on professional development days. Teachers requiring additional support receive classroom support from campus administrators, content specialists, master teachers, and grade chairs. By aligning student deficiencies to professional development needs, we have steadily maintained high student achievement.

Our in-services are aligned to state mandated objectives and assessments. They are designed to raise student achievement once it is determined what is needed to improve instruction. In grades 1st-5th, the grade level chairperson manages and guides teachers through the curriculum during the Professional Learning Communities meetings. The Literacy Coach provides training for teachers, helps them plan to improve reading instruction, demonstrates lessons for new and experienced teachers based on needs, and models how to teach the lesson cycle. Bilingual training is provided by the Assistant Principal, who discusses ESL strategies and best practices. Our Magnet Coordinator provides training on curriculum alignment, teaching strategies, effective vocabulary development, science assessment and data analysis. Together, our school and the district offer outstanding professional development that has enabled our school to soar, achieve and maintain an exemplary status for numerous years.

6. **School Leadership:**

At Cornelius, all stakeholders are encouraged to take an active role in fulfilling the leader's established vision. Crafting a common language and culture of high expectations and excellence is a must in this exemplary school. The role of the principal is to hold all parties accountable for the effective implementation of the curriculum. This philosophy is evident in how she exhausts all resources to fulfill the promise of educating children.

The leadership team at Cornelius consists of the principal, two assistant principals, an instructional coordinator, a magnet coordinator, and a counselor. Each team member is responsible for conducting walkthroughs in classrooms to obtain firsthand knowledge of teaching practices taking place at Cornelius. This support team is an integral part of our campus-wide success.

The principal's passion for preparing students to excel beyond basic standards is at the helm of all campus decisions. Along with campus leaders, the principal continually evaluates programs, policies, and resources to promote student success.

The principal chairs the Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC) which serves as a leadership entity on the campus. The committee establishes, monitors, and evaluates goals for budgeting, curriculum, planning, school organization, and staff development. The SDMC consists of grade chairs, teachers, support staff, administrators, parents and community members. Cultivating these relationships creates a cohort of leaders.

The principal ensures policies are aligned with the goals of the school. As the instructional leader, the principal selects academic programs based on teacher input and student needs. She oversees implementation of these programs to ensure gains in student achievement. The greatest resource at Cornelius is human capital; however, technology, budgeting, instructional materials are critiqued and selected based on the needs of the students.

Ultimately, the principal inspires the faculty, staff, and community to join together in the molding of young minds to be productive citizens.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: Texas Assessment Of Knowledge and Skills
Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2009 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	97	100	97	97	81
Commended	45	53	48	30	23
Number of students tested	137	115	111	118	126
Percent of total students tested	99	98	98	97	96
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	1	2	4	6
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	2	2	3	4
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	96	81	98	97	83
Commended	41	47	50	33	26
Number of students tested	110	115	97	106	108
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	93	100	96	100	100
Commended	64	53	39	31	37
Number of students tested	28	36	23	26	28
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	97	100	98	95	81
Commended	45	50	51	32	21
Number of students tested	108	106	85	87	94
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard	98	100	98	71	81
Commended	37	47	68	19	12
Number of students tested	60	46	51	45	51
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2009 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
'Met Standard'	98	100	99	94	96
Commended	60	40	46	41	40
Number of students tested	137	144	112	118	126
Percent of total students tested	100	96	99	97	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	6	1	4	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	4	1	3	3
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	98	100	98	100	98
Commended	62	39	51	44	44
Number of students tested	110	112	98	106	108
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	96	100	96	100	96
Commended	89	32	50	46	54
Number of students tested	27	37	24	26	28
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	98	100	100	94	100
Commended	61	45	47	44	19
Number of students tested	109	104	85	87	73
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard	99	99	100	88	90
Commended	50	50	58	24	21
Number of students tested	61	59	52	45	50
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2004-2009 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	91	95	82	86	89
Commended	50	38	24	29	28
Number of students tested	132	115	123	122	118
Percent of total students tested	97	98	96	95	96
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	1	5	6	5
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	2	4	5	4
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	91	81	80	85	87
Commended	50	39	23	29	30
Number of students tested	112	102	101	110	100
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	85	44	90	85	87
Commended	45	16	17	30	29
Number of students tested	33	25	29	27	37
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	94	86	83	84	85
Commended	53	45	22	25	32
Number of students tested	96	87	90	67	73
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard	94	96	73	92	90
Commended	51	47	26	36	35
Number of students tested	51	46	47	49	50
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2009 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	98	75	75	87	79
Commended	37	34	24	25	22
Number of students tested	134	115	123	120	111
Percent of total students tested	97	98	96	97	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	1	5	3	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	2	4	3	2
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	96	77	78	87	85
Commended	36	35	25	26	20
Number of students tested	114	102	51	108	99
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	94	87	90	92	90
Commended	36	24	31	31	53
Number of students tested	33	25	29	26	28
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	97	82	73	87	85
Commended	36	37	22	20	41
Number of students tested	98	87	90	88	94
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard	94	84	60	89	90
Commended	28	44	11	21	20
Number of students tested	51	46	47	48	46
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2004-2009 Publisher: TEA

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	96	97	92	98
Commended	65	49	43	42	41
Number of students tested	106	112	115	106	123
Percent of total students tested	98	93	93	96	93
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	9	8	4	8
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	7	7	4	7
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	100	94	89	94	97
Commended	64	51	40	43	42
Number of students tested	91	90	95	96	107
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	94	96	87	97
Commended	80	41	48	38	36
Number of students tested	20	32	31	39	37
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	100	96	91	95	98
Commended	61	51	35	45	42
Number of students tested	83	77	80	35	82
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard	100	98	85	97	100
Commended	50	48	25	49	47
Number of students tested	36	40	40	35	20
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2005-2009 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standards	94	89	86	92	71
Commended	37	34	24	27	24
Number of students tested	106	111	111	101	119
Percent of total students tested	98	92	95	100	96
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	9	5	0	4
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	8	5	0	3
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standards	93	91	84	92	70
Commended	34	33	23	26	25
Number of students tested	91	89	91	92	102
2. African American Students					
Met Standards	90	94	93	100	98
Commended	55	48	32	34	23
Number of students tested	20	31	28	38	35
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standards	95	87	82	87	78
Commended	30	27	20	21	25
Number of students tested	83	77	79	61	36
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standards					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standards	89	80	66	85	47
Commended	14	20	8	15	5
Number of students tested	36	40	38	33	19
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standards					
Commended					
Number of students tested					

Notes: