

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: Mrs. Twilet Alexander

Official School Name: The Varnett School - East Campus

School Mailing Address:
804A Maxey Road
Houston, TX 77013-6022

County: Harris State School Code Number*: 101-814

Telephone: (713) 637-6574 Fax: (713) 637-8319

Web site/URL: www.varnett.org E-mail: talexander@varnett.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*: Mrs. Annette Cluff

District Name: The Varnett Public School Tel: (713) 667-4051

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. James Rhone

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)
- | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| 3 | Elementary schools (includes K-8) |
| 0 | Middle/Junior high schools |
| 0 | High schools |
| 0 | K-12 schools |
| 3 | TOTAL |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 6476

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. 3 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	68	60	128	6			0
K	48	32	80	7			0
1	26	22	48	8			0
2	17	20	37	9			0
3	15	9	24	10			0
4	8	14	22	11			0
5	15	9	24	12			0
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							363

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
0 % Asian
23 % Black or African American
77 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
0 % 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: 17 %

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.	34
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	29
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	63
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	363
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.174
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	17.355

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 52 %

Total number limited English proficient 189

Number of languages represented: 1

Specify languages:

Spanish

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 94 %

Total number students who qualify: 342

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: 11

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>1</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>8</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</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>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>16</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>27</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 20 :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	98%	98%	96%	96%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	98%	98%	98%	97%	96%
Teacher turnover rate	2%	4%	5%	8%	10%
Student dropout rate	0%	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	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0 %
Enrolled in a community college	0 %
Enrolled in vocational training	0 %
Found employment	0 %
Military service	0 %
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	0 %
Unknown	0 %
Total	0 %

PART III - SUMMARY

What began as a private school 25 years ago has now become a public charter school with more than ten years of charter school experience.

Our mission statement is concise, yet direct: “Your I will is more important than your IQ”. The staff and the community at the Varnett Public School in Houston, Texas, believe that every child is a unique and special individual who achieves academic success. We believe that it is our duty to nurture every Varnett scholar. Our goal is to ensure that each Varnett scholar reaches his/her maximum potential academically, physically, socially and emotionally. The Varnett School is committed to providing opportunities that assist students in becoming self-directed and responsible citizens who can contribute to the 21st century. Varnett scholars will excel when solving problems that may confront them in our multi-cultural, ever-changing world.

The beginnings of the Varnett School System are humble, yet poignant. In 1984, Mrs. Annette Cluff was searching for a school that would enhance the education of her son, Alsie Cluff III, who was preparing for his preschool year. His parents were looking for an institution where their child would embrace his culture and would provide the fundamentals to prepare him for kindergarten as well as begin a solid foundation for his education beyond. When Mrs. Cluff could not find a place to meet her criteria, she created her own school. This first campus was called, " The Varnett School." The school would facilitate her child’s unique learning style and the learning styles of others. Mrs. Cluff served as Superintendent of this school and began her mission to recruit educators who shared her mission. Thirteen years later, under the leadership of then - superintendent Rod Paige, Mrs. Cluff was asked to alleviate the overcrowding in the Houston Independent School District. The year 1998 would herald the beginning of Varnett’s Charter School System.

As the demand to enter the Varnett Public School System increased, the need for another campus was evident. In August of 2003 the charter would expand to include the East Campus. The East Campus opened its doors in September of 2003 to students and parents who were very eager to begin the school year. The previous charter had just closed its doors and parents and students had nowhere to go. They had grown to like the charter school environment and wished for their children to remain in a charter school system. With lack of student records, and no prior knowledge of these new students’ academic levels, the Varnett school system began to educate 120 new students in pre-kindergarten through 5th grade. In spite of these challenges, the Varnett School System was able to elevate the now East Campus to Varnett School standards.

Establishing a relationship with our Education Service Center/Region 4, we enrolled in a program called BISI (Building Inclusive School Initiative). This program helped us to include all our students, those with special needs, those who needed interventions and those who struggle with a second language to reach their academic potential. We learned to include and accommodate those students who learn differently and how to address their needs for them to become successful. We continue to participate in this program.

Varnett East Campus faces many challenges to student academic success. One challenge is student mobility. The East Campus has a highly transient population that limits students' opportunities to receive consistent, high quality instruction. A second challenge involves language. For many East Campus students, English is not the primary language spoken in the home and so communication between home and school can be difficult.

Despite these challenges, the East Campus has experienced much academic success. For example, the campus has increased parent awareness of curriculum and assessments and instituted ESL classes for them as well. The ESL program helps make parents more employable in the workforce and empowers them to better help their children with assignments.

The campus also has created "P.E.E.P." (Preparing Elementary Excellence Program), which promotes student awareness of different cultures, career choices and educational opportunities. In line with this program, our educators continuously disaggregate data and struggling students are exposed to early interventions and prevention measures. Our special education program uses the inclusive model and we have seen tremendous gain in student academic performance as well. The program also boosts our students' confidence in what they can achieve. We also introduced a speech-based language semantics class for our pre-K through Kindergarten students that reinforces phonological awareness skills. By introducing this program at the pre-K stage we have seen fewer referrals to our special education program.

Last, but just as important is our after school and Saturday program. Our after school program is designed for students struggling with early phonemic awareness skills. Saturday tutorials for 3rd-5th grade are designed to prepare students for the rigorous state assessment. Parent commitment and dedication have been the greatest assets for all our program success.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

The Varnett Public School-East Campus assessment results have made significant improvements over a five-year period in math and reading. In 2004 the East Campus did not receive a rating because it had fewer than 10 students testing. The following school year, 2005, the East Campus received an "academically unacceptable" rating. This meant our students were performing below standards in reading and math compared to other students across the state. In the sum of all grades tested in reading, African Americans had a passing percentage of 17% and Hispanic Americans 50%. The state average for all students was 83% in reading. In math, African Americans averaged 27% and Hispanic Americans were 72% compared to the state average of 72%.

For the 2006 school year, the school received an academically acceptable rating. We saw a significant increase in our reading and math scores in all subgroups. Compared to the previous school year, our reading scores increased by 69% for African Americans and 42% for Hispanic Americans. We also saw an increase of 55% for African Americans and 51% for Hispanic Americans in math. In 2007 we had a significant loss in test scores for our Hispanic American population and growth for our African American students.

In 2008 and 2009, the East Campus had increases in all subgroups. In math more than 90% of our students were successful, while in reading 80% of our students were successful in 2008 and 90% in 2009.

The state of Texas performance levels are monitored by the state accountability system and information can be accessed at www.tea.state.tx.us under the Student Assessment Division. The state uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures that yield valid and reliable results. This system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning. It evaluates the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to school leaders, teachers and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school effectiveness and the results of improvement efforts for individual students and group and subgroups of students.

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills [TEKS] are the basis for the state accountability system. The TEKS are the learning standards by which schools implement their curriculum. The state assessment [TAKS] measures students' knowledge and skills in core subjects. The TAKS scale determines if a student met the standards. It also determines if a student exceeds the standard or is below the passing standards.

The Varnett Public School-East Campus was nominated for demonstrating dramatic gains in student achievement. In the state of Texas, students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the state's curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). All students in grades 3 through 11 are assessed annually with the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) instrument in reading and math. In addition, students in grade 4 are tested in the area of writing and students in grade 5 are tested in science. Student promotion is connected to individual performance on the mastery of particular grade level content. The TAKS was developed as a means of evaluating a student's ability in problem solving, critical thinking, and application of content knowledge and skills. Schools earn an overall performance rating of Exemplary ($\geq 90\%$), Recognized ($\geq 75\%$), Acceptable ($< 75\%$) or Unacceptable ($< 65\%$) based on the overall performance of the campus in each content area tested, as well as the performance of select student groups. Students may also receive individual commended recognition with a passing rate of 90% or greater.

In 2005-2006, The Varnett Public School-East Campus received the Gold Performance Acknowledgements for comparable improvement in reading and math. They were also awarded commended performance in

reading in 2006-2007 and in 2007-2008 for comparable improvement in math. [Varnett has met AYP since its inception in 2003].

The data tables confirm that Varnett is continually improving. In Spring 2009, students in 3rd through 5th grade were administered the state math and reading test. In math and reading 100% of our students in grade 3 through 5 passed. This included all subgroups [free and reduced lunch/socio-economic disadvantaged students, African American, and Hispanic].

2. Using Assessment Results:

The East Campus uses a variety of assessment data from various sources. Specifically, state assessments and benchmark tests are used to improve the quality and success of Varnett's instruction by tracking patterns of academic success and areas of concern (i.e. trend data analysis). These assessments serve as springboards for rich, data-driven decision-making discussions among staff members. The assessments allow the staff to address any areas of concerns. Any areas of concern can be further addressed in afterschool tutoring, morning warm-up and one-on-one instruction. Areas of deficient performance may require additional emphasis during the day.

Analysis of data is a continuous process at the East Campus. A variety of assessments are used throughout the year to determine academic growth. Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI), an assessment tool that provides a comprehensive picture of a student's reading/language arts development, is administered 3 times a year. This data is used to determine how much progress a student has made by a certain point within the school year. Teachers then use this information to effectively teach what skills a child needs to be successful at his/her grade level. The Stanford 10 assessment is administered twice a year. At the beginning of the school year, the data is used to determine what the student has retained from the previous school year. The data is then used to re-teach skills that are necessary for the current school year. At the end of the school year when the Stanford 10 is administered, the data is used to determine a student's progress and current grade level against the norm. The TAKS test, which measures a student's mastery of the state-mandated curriculum, is administered to all 3rd -5th grade students. Prior to the administration of the state assessment at the end of the school year, benchmarks are administered to the students to analyze their current progress and to check for comprehension or mastery of objectives. Benchmark assessments provide immediate feedback for teachers in planning interventions for after-school and Saturday tutorials.

The Texas English Language Proficient Assessment System (TELPAS) is used to assess the progress that limited English proficient (LEP) students make in learning English. TELPAS reading is a written assessment that measures annual growth in English language proficiency of LEP students in grades 2-12. TELPAS reading (K-1st), listening, speaking, and writing assessments enable teachers to holistically rate LEP students' English language proficiency based on daily interactions and observations of the students during classroom instruction.

The East Campus data assessment examination is a thorough process. First, the curriculum coordinator analyzes state TPRI K-2nd and state TAKS 3rd -5th data to monitor progress and modify instruction based on a student's annual growth. She works closely with the special education coordinator and ESL coordinator to determine if required modifications and instructions are successful for our students. The data gathered is shared with designated personnel.

Once assessment data is reviewed, there are options that are considered based on individual needs. An East Campus team identifies the strengths and weaknesses of struggling students. Those needing interventions are placed in a specialized program called Response to Intervention (RTI). This process includes working with students in a smaller group setting for at least an hour each day with a reading specialist. The team meets every six weeks to review student progress. If a student shows little or no improvement after 3-6 months, then he or she may be referred for special education.

In conclusion, the administrator of the East Campus use all of the aforementioned data and teacher expertise to guide decision regarding designing intervention programs and supplemental materials.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

The school communicates assessment results as well as daily/weekly reports to parents, students and the community through a variety of channels. The East Campus has a parent meeting at the beginning of the school year to provide the official TAKS results in a “School Report Card”. Student reports are also sent home to every parent with information on how his or her child performed in the tested academic areas. Formal and informal parent-teacher conferences are held throughout the year. During these conferences teachers discuss student work, progress/report card grades, benchmark results, behavior and overall student performance. A key part of the discussion is whether a student is meeting the grade level expectations. The academic expectations of the East Campus and of the Texas Department of Education are presented and discussed with the parents. Teachers also provide student updates through student contact sheets and phone conferences.

The East Campus open house provides parents with information on curriculum standards for achievement, behavior and opportunities to ask questions. Student academic progress is also shared with students via teacher-student conferences and parent-teacher-student conferences. Behavior concerns are addressed by posting rules and expectations in every classroom and reviewing the policy as needed. RTI and Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) meetings are a formal means of communicating with parents of at-risk students. Finally, at the end of the year, preliminary TAKS results for individual students are sent home with the final report card. Parent conferences are scheduled to discuss individual results as needed.

On the community level, the East Campus TAKS results are posted on the Texas Education Agency website, The Varnett Public School's website and in the local newspaper. Furthermore, the Campus provides overall student assessment results to its School Board as preliminary and final data become available. A press release is sent to the local newspaper by TEA for dissemination with the area school results. The campus displays a sign designating its campus rating for the community to view.

4. Sharing Success:

The East Campus is propelled by its commitment to educational excellence and equity and recognizes that it takes a community of administrators, teachers, parents, students and support staff to accomplish such goals. The school can share its success with other schools by sharing its expertise and materials. Since its inception, The Varnett Public School-East Campus has strived to share its challenges and successes with the community and fellow schools. The sharing of knowledge among schools has made Varnett not only a “sharer” of knowledge but a recipient as well.

If awarded the prestigious Blue Ribbon School status, Varnett will adopt an open-door policy to serve as a model school. Varnett will share the school’s philosophy of education and accomplishments. Challenges will also be shared so that other schools can know that challenges can be overcome. Specifically, Varnett will encourage other schools to set high expectations for all students, regardless of socio-economic status, culture, family demographics and academic capabilities. Varnett will welcome educators from other schools to observe our teachers in the classroom and provide time when Varnett educators can share strategies and instructional resources that are used to teach our scholars.

Furthermore, Varnett will be receptive to provide professional development trainings to help other schools achieve academic success. Varnett will utilize its own educators as presenters at these in-service trainings. If warranted, educators from other schools, institutions of higher learning and educational consultants will be included in the professional development to emphasize the importance of collaboration. They will also

promote visions of high standards of excellence for students and share methods to create exemplary learning environments for every student so that no child is left behind.

The school can model its curriculum to other visiting schools. It can show its curriculum as an effective and responsive instruction in the classroom. Having created a culture of high expectations, the school can also share how its students are being prepared for the assessments.

The school's website will outline the history of the school, its guiding principles and its academic progress. The East Campus will interact with other schools through short talks, fellowship, field trips and organized school tours.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The Varnett Public School believes that the best education for our students occurs through the cooperative efforts of teachers, directors and parents. The interaction and involvement of the parents in the educational process is vital to a child's success. The school's curriculum is designed to integrate skills and disciplines to make learning more meaningful, holistic and engaging. Mathematical and technology skills are applied as students estimate and compute reading, writing and study skills. Students also search for information through traditional methods and the internet in order to develop reports.

The Varnett Public School is governed by the state to teach the curriculum core courses for reading, math, language arts, science, social studies and physical education. Within each core curriculum area the instruction is delivered with a plan of focus covering all the components of the objectives.

The district's language arts program provides the framework for learning in key areas. Using these competencies and our reading program as a foundation for skill development, teachers enrich the reading program with the most valuable aspect of whole language approach. This approach accommodates the individual learning needs of each student and stimulates teachers' creativity while providing a strong, consistent level of reading instruction across the district.

Writing begins with the student's initial school experience. The use of the writing and reflecting process continues throughout the grades. Writing is not an isolated experience but is integrated throughout the school day in various curriculum areas. Teachers introduce and reinforce the components of good writing at each grade level. Students and teachers use portfolios as a vehicle for the development of skills in composing, revising and reflecting on writing throughout the grades.

Beginning in kindergarten, students experiment with letters and sounds and learn how those letters build words. Emergent writers may have difficulty spelling words within their oral vocabularies. As students progress in their writing abilities, the purpose of the spelling curriculum is to help the learner's master conventional spelling. The formal spelling program focuses on spelling patterns and words students frequently misspell. Students also learn to use tools such as a dictionary, collaboration with peers and technological devices.

Science is best learned when students are engaged in practicing science. Hands-on activities encourage students to experience for themselves, through direct observation and experimentation, the process, joy and fascination of science. Through scientific experimentation, students answer their own questions and develop patience, persistence and confidence. The Social Studies curriculum is designed to help children understand cultural diversity and their place in the global community.

Physical education contributes to the well being of students through participation in activities designed to meet their physical, social and emotional needs. The program is designed to provide equal opportunities for all students to participate in physical activities that promote self confidence and the ability to work in co-educational groups.

The East Campus Visual and Performing Arts students succeed academically, artistically and socially while making lasting and diverse friendships. The arts are integrated into the classroom as teaching and learning tools in support of the core curriculum. In our early childhood program, the creative arts provides students with opportunities to experience music, dance, and art and to engage in storytelling and role playing. At the K

-5th grade level, students must participate in standard-based instruction in three art forms - dance, music and visual arts. The students get to display and showcase their talents at school activities and local performances.

The library is the nucleus of our schools. It is a warm, friendly, and inviting place where we encourage children to become lifelong readers. Children of all grade levels come to the library to enjoy rich literature and to receive direct instructions in the workings of the library and its many resources. We encourage families to take advantage of the resources of our library and share the joys of reading together.

2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

(This question is for elementary schools only)

The Varnett Public School reading program is consistent with sound theory, research and practice. The reading program facilitates students' learning and students have access to a wide variety of reading materials.

In addition to the state's reading program, The Varnett Public School uses an additional supplemental reading program. The Rowland Reading Program was implemented 3 years ago for pre-kindergarten through first grade. The program known as "The Super Kids" is a comprehensive core reading program designed specifically for those primary grades. There are six levels that contain sequential lessons that are taught during the three-year period from kindergarten through second grade. The program teaches children to read and write at the same time. Handwriting, spelling, and simple grammar and mechanics are seamlessly integrated into the reading instruction so children see from the beginning that they can read what they write.

The Schools Reading Mastery program by McGraw Hill is proven to help students decode and comprehend the meaning of print effortlessly, even students who are seriously at risk of failure. The Reading Mastery program is used in grades 1-5. It is a strategy-based instruction that allows students to learn more efficiently. Its carefully scaffold lessons build confidence and independence with our students. The McGraw Hill program addresses all five essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, and word analysis, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. It provides spelling instructions to help students make the connection between decoding and spelling patterns.

SRA McGraw Hill not only looks at learning to read, but how the students could excel in their daily life. We incorporated lesson and activities based upon all students' assessment and knowledge in reading. The teachers developed repetition lessons and activities that help bring about creative and excitement in reading. Although this curriculum may change yearly based on the students needs and performance, we will continue to embrace each student until he or she reaches his or her full reading potential.

The teachers at Varnett Public School-East Campus take pride in all our students. Sound instructional practices include daily review, statement of instructional objectives, teacher presentations of new materials, guided practice, independent practice and formative evaluation. These practices are the heart of any good reading program and they are reflected in our teacher's daily commitment to our students.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

Varnett's mathematics curriculum is based on the Texas Education Agency standards and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills [TEKS]. All students receive 90 minutes of math instruction daily. All grade level lessons provide opportunities for direct instruction, guided practice and independent practices. The "I do. We do. You do" process is evident throughout the campus. Students are monitored weekly by using formative assessments as well as benchmark tests to determine mastery of specific skills. Teachers analyze all test data to determine if interventions or instructional adjustments are needed.

An instructional focus area includes numbers and operation, geometry, measurement, patterns, and algebraic thinking, probability and statistic and problem solving. Teachers and students have access to textbooks [Saxon

Math], math resource books [Mental Math and Motivational Math], a variety of computer games and online programs and manipulative.

Differentiated instruction is used for students who need a variety of resources to accommodate their learning styles. Specific materials available for differentiation instructions are: Motivational Math, Mental Math and Quarter Mile Math. The students are put in small groups with the same areas of concerns. These concerns are addressed in these small groups through direct instructions, guided practice and independent practice. Students are assessed regularly to monitor progress and skilled mastery. Additional interventions include math resources, after-school tutoring and Saturday tutorials.

Opportunities for teachers to enhance their math instruction are provided. Math professional development for all faculty and staff emphasizes real world math, using manipulative, word problems and math vocabulary. These professional development opportunities allow teachers to share “what works” in their classroom and obtain new strategies to provide lessons that maximize instructional time and benefit all students.

4. Instructional Methods:

There are three major avenues in which the East Campus commitment to differentiated instruction is evident. The East Campus differentiates instruction to meet the diverse needs of student subgroups. Staffing, scheduling, professional development and resource acquisition are provided to meet the needs of students. Specifically, resource time and pull-out schedules are used to further student’s academic needs when scheduling supplemental tutoring during instructional day.

Teachers continuously measure and assess student mastery through observation, small group instruction and interaction. Each student has a portfolio with evidence of their work. Formative assessments are used for all instructional methods implemented at the Varnett Public School. The formative assessments used by the Varnett teachers are used to help guide in identifying students who need academic intervention. Evidence is collected and monitored as progress towards grade-level and individualized learning goals are achieved.

Also, summative assessments such as the state TAKS test continue to assist teachers in making decisions about instructional needs of the whole class or individual students. Specifically, teachers analyze data collected from such assessments to effectively differentiate instruction and from intervention and enrichment groups. General education students receive instruction through core curriculum based on state frameworks and grade-level standards.

Students with disabilities, English learners, at risk, gifted and talented students are supported with differentiated instruction, intervention and enrichment programs. For example, students who need additional academic challenges are referred for gifted and talented education services. Extra language learning support is provided for students whose primary language is not English. This program provides students with opportunities to use creative thinking and problem-solving strategies. Likewise, if a student needs intervention, he or she is referred for RTI [Response to Intervention]. During this process, students are provided with services in various settings and are monitored frequently for progress. Collaboration with parents and teachers, informed decisions are made about how to best serve students..

5. Professional Development:

As student learning progresses throughout the school year, reflections on professional development targets are ongoing. Varnett provides on-going professional development for its teachers to ensure that they are able to meet the diverse needs of their students. These opportunities include grade-level meetings, whole faculty study groups and district-provided in-services. Grade level teachers participate in weekly planning throughout the year to ensure vertical lesson planning, review data and share effective strategies.

Teachers at Varnett have completed Response to Intervention and Differentiated Instruction training which included whole, small group and one-on-one instruction. In-services provided to staff are based on campus needs. Additionally, Varnett has a regional service center that provides professional development throughout the year. All professional development trainings are aligned to meet the needs of our students as required by state-mandated curriculum and assessments.

The Varnett Public School professional development meetings and in-services are all-inclusive. The superintendent, directors, curriculum coordinator, ESL coordinator and the special education coordinator regularly attend all professional developments. In this way, collaboration among colleagues, regardless of position, is fostered and all personnel grow as educators.

6. School Leadership:

The Varnett Public School System functions under the leadership of superintendent Annette Cluff. Each campus had a director who manages the daily activities of the campus. The campus director is assigned an assistant director who assists the campus director with daily activities. With the approval of the superintendent, the campus director is involved in the hiring of personnel, managing the budget, overseeing curriculum implementation and ensures instruction and materials are aligned with Texas Education Agency standards.

The primary purpose of the leadership of the East Campus is to direct and manage the instructional program and supervise operations on campus. In providing leadership one must ensure that high standards of instructional services are being incorporated into the curriculum. Every Tuesday, the school's superintendent meets with campus directors, curriculum coordinator, ESL coordinator and the special education/504 coordinator. At these weekly meetings, each representative must report on accomplishments from the previous week and share information on upcoming projects or any issues that need to be clarified. The superintendent then solicits input for issues that directly impact students and their achievement and how those issues can be addressed. Issues and concerns discussed at the meeting are shared with staff and they have the opportunity to ask for clarity of information or inputs.

The campus director is also responsible for implementing district, local and federal laws and policies for compliance. Leadership must observe employee performance, conduct conferences with parents, students, and teachers concerning school and student issues, meet the identified need of the students and promote professional growth with teachers who may have difficulties in certain areas.

In accordance with the No Child Left Behind Act, we made dramatic improvement to ensure the success of all students. Leadership has involvement in the design of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices. Leadership must have quality contact and interaction with teachers and students. Recognition and rewards for individual accomplishments establish a strong line of communication with teachers and within students' accomplishments. Classroom visits by the campus director are an essential part of ensuring that teachers continue to focus on improving student performance.

Leadership also monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning. Information gathered through data collection and monitoring is used to address current and potential problems but also to use for school improvement.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 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	100	88	83	90	90
Commended	42	47	13	10	0
Number of students tested	23	26	13	22	9
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	100	85		89	
Commended	38	32		8	
Number of students tested	16	22		13	
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	85		89	
Commended	50	46		9	
Number of students tested	10	13		11	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard		91			
Commended		23			
Number of students tested		13			
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
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: 2004-2009 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	75	77	83	91
Commended	52	30	35	40	20
Number of students tested	23	26	13	22	14
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed		1	1	1	
Percent of students alternatively assessed		100	100	100	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	100	70		82	
Commended	44	27		43	
Number of students tested	18	22		14	
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	85	78	100	
Commended	58	38	30	45	
Number of students tested	12	13	10	11	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard		64			
Commended		23			
Number of students tested		13			
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
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	100	100	83	67	23
Commended	74	5	11	21	0
Number of students tested	26	11	19	16	16
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1			3	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	100			100	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	100				
Commended	78				
Number of students tested	23				
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	100			
Commended	62	10			
Number of students tested	13	10			
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	100				
Commended	100				
Number of students tested	10				
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
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: 2004-2009 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	80	75	67	33
% Advanced	25	0	15	0	0
Number of students tested	26	11	19	16	16
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	100				
Commended	22				
Number of students tested	23				
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	89			
Commended	23	0			
Number of students tested	13	10			
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	100				
Commended	25				
Number of students tested	10				
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
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: Texas Education Agency

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	85	100	73	73
Commended	74	5	11	7	7
Number of students tested	12	15	12	25	11
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1			3	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	100			100	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	100	82			
Commended	80	8			
Number of students tested	10	13		15	
2. African American Students					
Met Standard				78	
Commended				10	
Number of students tested				10	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested				1	

Notes:

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 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	Mar	Mar	Mar	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	80	69	60	69	75
Commended	52	17	11	15	0
Number of students tested	12	15	12	25	11
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1			3	
Percent of students alternatively assessed	100			100	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	78	73		62	
Commended	50	15		0	
Number of students tested	10	13		14	
2. African American Students					
Met Standard				78	
Commended				0	
Number of students tested				10	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					

Notes: