

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

11TX11

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 2010-2011 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 2005.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010.
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

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All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district: 5 Elementary schools
 (per district designation) 5 Middle/Junior high schools
2 High schools
0 K-12 schools
12 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 30564

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2010 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	61	57	118
K	0	0	0		7	69	56	125
1	0	0	0		8	65	60	125
2	0	0	0		9	0	0	0
3	0	0	0		10	0	0	0
4	0	0	0		11	0	0	0
5	53	70	123		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								491

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
3 % Asian
9 % Black or African American
42 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
45 % 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 2009-2010 school year: 3%

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, 2009 until the end of the school year.	2
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	15
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	17
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	491
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.03
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	3

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 5%
Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 25
Number of languages represented, not including English: 3
Specify languages:

At this time, Spanish, Japanese and Arabic are the non-English languages represented at Austin.

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 50%
 Total number of students who qualify: 246

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-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 4%
 Total number of students served: 20

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>5</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>4</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>13</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>16</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>21</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>19</u>	<u>7</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>53</u>	<u>7</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: 24:1

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

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	94%	95%	94%
Daily teacher attendance	99%	98%	98%	96%	97%
Teacher turnover rate	7%	5%	15%	11%	5%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

If these data are not available, explain and provide reasonable estimates.

Teacher Turnover Rate over 12% in 2007-2008--GISD experienced a Reduction in Force.

Student Attendance under 95% in 2006-2006--Austin Middle School was under reconstruction. Students were relocated to another location out of the neighbor school zone.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools): Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2010 are doing as of Fall 2010.

Graduating class size:	_____
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____ %
Enrolled in a community college	_____ %
Enrolled in vocational training	_____ %
Found employment	_____ %
Military service	_____ %
Other	_____ %
Total	_____ 0%

Austin Middle School, located at 1514 Ave N ½ on Galveston Island, Texas, was constructed in 1939. After 69 years as a traditional middle school, Austin Middle School shifted its focus to a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) magnet program for 5th – 8th grade students in 2008 as result of community wishes. Austin Middle School reflects a diverse student population (approximately 42% Hispanic, 9% African American, 45% White, and 3% Asian students and 50 % Economically Disadvantaged).

The mission of Austin Middle School is to create a first-rate innovative middle school where 100% of our students are prepared to pursue a career pathway into science, technology, engineering, and/or math. Every student is immersed in a community of learners which promotes character and a sense of civic and global responsibility. The students are prepared to assume leadership positions in an increasingly scientific and technological based society.

At Austin Middle School, teachers and staff focus on strategies that challenge students to innovate and invent ideas which model real world learning and work environments. By integrating science, technology, engineering, and math and the habits of the 21st century learners into other subject areas, it is our goal to promote problem-solvers, innovators, self-reliant and logical thinkers. In order to compete in the 21st century, our staff incorporates project-based learning to prepare our students with skills and strategies necessary to pursue future coursework in the STEM field. Our students' learning experiences are enhanced by participating in robotics, web design, video technology, graphic design, Project Lead the Way-Gateways to Technology-flight and space, environmental science, and a biology course with an emphasis on health science as well as traditional foundation courses.

Our teaching staff includes a broad range of highly motivated and well-trained professionals. Our faculty is committed to serving as role models for our students. Continuing education is a priority for adults and students at Austin Middle School. To expose students to the colleges/universities the staff members attended, each classroom is adorned with a "college wall" with memorabilia, serving as a reminder of the importance of a higher education. Our staff also models 21st Century skills and habits such as collaboration and communication. Grade level teams meet regularly to ensure that cross-curricular themes are included in the project-based learning environment. Discussions at grade level meetings may include monitoring student success, integration of technology, interdisciplinary units, effective instructional strategies, and celebration activities. Subject area departments also meet to ensure that the curriculum is vertically aligned from one grade level to the next. Upon entering high school, our students have been given the opportunity to earn up to 6 high school credits.

Austin Middle School believes that a strong Parent-Teacher-Community partnership is crucial to the success of our students. Parents are encouraged to spend a minimum of ten hours a school year volunteering at the school in order to become involved in their child's educational experience and academic success. The administration, faculty, and PTO work together closely to provide opportunities for parental involvement. Parents are encouraged to ask questions and provide input in order to provide support for academic achievement of our students. Our faculty encourages activities which include community partnerships, such as the Community Garden, Jr. Naturalists, Adopt-a-Pilot program, and Salvation Army bell-ringers. We believe community partnerships enhance the quality of education received by the students.

We encourage students and faculty to always give their best effort as individuals and as team members. Our students and campus have been recognized for exhibiting award-winning attitudes and behaviors. Significant recognitions include:

- Against All Odds Award—First Lego League Robotics Team
- VEX Robotics participant and winners in Tokyo, Japan
- Superior Ratings in UIL Solo and Ensemble competitions
- “Do the Write Thing” and Veteran’s Day essay contests winners
- Exemplary Rating in 2009 and 2010
- National Title I Distinguished School Award 2010

We will continue this path of academic excellence where students learn how to be successful in a global economy while at the same time embracing community involvement and caring for their fellow students and neighbors. We are committed to empowering the minds and engineering a successful future for our students.

Austin Middle School embraces the qualities that exemplify the recognition of a Blue Ribbon Achievement. We have shown drastic improvements in TAKS Scores, Achieved National Title I status, and laid the foundation for becoming a cornerstone for the community.

1. Assessment Results:

Austin Middle School has experienced extraordinary gains in all tested subject areas over the past five years. This is partly due to district reconfiguration in 2008-2009 where Austin Middle School changed to a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) magnet school. The change in the school's mission led to an application process that encouraged students interested in STEM subjects to apply. The application process created a slight shift in demographics, and the minority population decreased from approximately 84% to approximately 58%. The number of Hispanic students remained largely unchanged, but there was a decrease in the African-American subpopulation. The number of economically disadvantaged students also decreased from 84% to 47%.

The new mission, an expectation of student success, and a required student and parent contract attracted students driven with a desire to learn and expand their horizons. The percentage of students meeting the passing standard increased by approximately 28 points from 2005-2010. Scores increased every year from 2007 to 2010.

The percentage of fifth graders meeting the reading standard has been very high from 2008-2010, but there is no data for the years prior because fifth grade was added to the campus after the reconfiguration. Fifth grade reading scores dropped slightly in 2009-2010 from the previous year, but 96% of students still met the standard.

Fifth grade math tells a similar story. With no fifth grade at Austin from 2005-2007, we can only examine data from the past two years. Both years over 99% of students met the TAKS standard in mathematics.

Despite a slight dip in the 2006-2007 school year, reading scores have progressively improved. The last two years scores were particularly satisfactory, and in 2010, 99% of our sixth graders passed the TAKS reading test. Sixth grade math scores have shown an even more dramatic improvement. The pass rate jumped from a low of 54% in 2006-2007 to an impressive 99% in 2009-2010.

Seventh grade scores show improvement very similar to the sixth grade. Scores remained disappointing and relatively flat from 2005-2008, but experienced a dramatic turn upward from 2008-2010. The reading scores increased from 71% in 2005 to 95% in 2010. Steady increases were realized every year since 2008. Similar to sixth grade, seventh grade math scores have realized sizable gains. There has been a 42 point increase since 2008.

Eighth grade scores are not much different. Reading scores show a more modest improvement, gaining 22% from 2005 to 2010. Eighth grade math have experienced strong gains, similar to the improvements displayed by sixth and seventh grades. There has been a 41 point increase since 2007.

Since our school's staff and student makeup completely changed in 2008, we find it more helpful to analyze data for the past two years. Looking at data over the most recent two years, we see that passing scores are still showing modest increases, demonstrating continuous improvement even with an exemplary status. Our main area of concern that we are currently addressing is raising the percentage of commended students we have on campus. From 2009 to 2010, we experienced a slight decrease in our number of commended students, despite an increase in overall pass rate.

In 2009-2010, there were no notable achievement gaps between our subpopulations and our overall scores. Since there are no achievement gaps and no subpopulations failing to meet the standard, we are shifting resources and aggressively targeting our high achieving students capable of even stronger gains. We are implementing interventions and strategies aimed at increasing the performance of students with scores nearing commended.

In order to meet the minimum standard on TAKS, all students must meet the following standards for each of the tests:

- Reading/ELA 70%
- Writing 70%
- Social Studies 70%
- Mathematics 65%
- Science 60%

Note that each subpopulation of African Americans, Hispanics, Whites, and economically disadvantaged students must also achieve the same standards listed above. A school may also meet the minimum standard by meeting a required improvement goal, meeting the standard with Texas Projection Measure (TPM), or meeting criteria for use of an exception provision.

Further information on Austin Middle School state assessments may be found at:

<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2010/campus.srch.html>

2. Using Assessment Results:

Student academic performance is constantly monitored by teachers and administrators. Student classroom performance is evaluated every three weeks. Students are formally assessed with benchmarks in major core subjects twice a year and are also given curriculum based assessments (CBAs) every nine weeks. Our LEP/ESL students are given the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) exam to monitor their progress in mastering the English language. 8th grade students are given the EXPLORE and READISTEP exams in order to monitor their college readiness. Algebra readiness is also monitored by giving the MSTAR test. 5th and 7th grade students are also given the ITBS to gage their academic achievement in comparison to other students across the nation. All of this data is used to track each individual student's progress.

AWARE computer software is used to disaggregate this data in order to provide immediate feedback to teachers and administrators regarding student performance. This data is used to monitor individual students as well as sub-populations to ensure that all student groups are receiving a fair and equitable education. Teachers meet in subject departments monthly and grade level teams three times per week to assess this data, identify students who are struggling academically, and discuss ways to help individual students improve their academic performance. Students who need assistance are placed in tutoring groups where they can receive individualized instruction on the specific TEKS or objectives in which they have demonstrated a need for improvement. Teachers also use this information to determine which research based academic materials will be used to provide tutoring as well as which differentiated models are to be used in the classroom. If a student's performance does not improve then the student is referred to the Intervention Assistance Team where a formal intervention plan is devised to help the student improve academically. Student success is closely monitored and the intervention plan is tweaked as needed to ensure student success. Parental involvement is key to student success; therefore, parents are included in each step of the decision making process regarding their child's academic development.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

We believe that we must be willing to be transparent in order to build trust with parents and community members, and we also want prospective students and parents to have easy access to information regarding our campus performance. We communicate assessment results in several meaningful ways. On our website, viewers can access our Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports and school report cards on our homepage. Student performance is also shared annually at an open PTO meeting allowing parents the opportunity to ask questions about the curriculum and instructional expectations.

Additionally, students take several benchmark assessments throughout the year. Benchmark data is used internally to shape instruction, but we also share this data with our parents. After each benchmark, data is recorded and shared amongst our grade level teams. Each team then proceeds to formulate letters for each of their students. The letters contain scores for each subject taken, whether or not the scores met the minimum standard, and whether or not the child will be required to attend tutoring. After students take the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test late in the school year, results are mailed home to parents and guardians.

We also believe that classroom performance be communicated with parents in a timely manner. We accomplish this in three ways. First, our teachers are required to contact parents anytime a grade falls below a 70. Teachers communicate this information by phone or e-mail. Secondly, we were the first campus in our district to offer our parents online access to our grade books. Parents are able to log in to our website and see all of their child's grades, monitor attendance, and even receive notifications from teachers. Third, we send out progress reports every three weeks and report cards every nine weeks.

We also provide data on other standardized assessments including the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) test and college readiness tests. This data helps students and parents to understand individual strengths and weaknesses and helps to prepare students for higher education.

4. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Austin Middle School shares successful strategies with other schools in the district and state by having open enrollment for many of our staff developments and workshops, by sharing presentations, and by creating partnerships.

Many of our most creative and unique staff developments have been open to teachers across the district. "Writing Across the Curriculum" is a recent example. Teachers from various schools on the island learned about new strategies to integrate writing activities in all subjects and grade levels. We also offered "Habits of Mind" and "No Place for Hate" workshops to all teachers in the district. "Habits of Mind" taught teachers how to enhance and organize students' thoughts and routines, and "No Place for Hate" presented ways to reduce bullying.

We also share information through presentations to other schools in the district. Locally, each year we host a presentation about our program to other administrators, teachers, parents and children across the district. We stress the importance of our contract, our strategies for parent volunteerism, and how we designed a magnet program that appeals to high achieving students.

We have also had the honor of hosting workshops for schools across the state. This year we attended the Learning for a "Change" Summit V in Austin, Texas. Our principal hosted two sessions about the formation of our STEM school. We shared lessons learned by detailing aspects of our program including the student/parent contract, the implementation of project-based learning, and how to establish a new culture while breaking old habits.

Partnerships have been our most effective means of sharing knowledge. Our First Lego League Robotics team sponsor partners with the other elementary schools in the district and outside the district to share experiences and opportunities. Our VEX Robotics sponsor hosts robotics events bringing teams from south Texas to our campus to compete. At our "Robotics Fall Festival", we support the community by offering other school and community clubs a platform to fundraise and share information about their organizations. Our broadcasting team has formed a partnership with Central Middle School, another school in the district. Students will share stories and reports, as well as lessons learned. Their sponsor toured our building, and discussed with our sponsor the technical requirements for starting a program from scratch. Similarly, our Project Lead the Way (PLTW) sponsor formed a partnership with the PLTW sponsor from Central Middle School. These partnerships allow our students to expand their horizons and foster a sense of community.

1. Curriculum:

Austin Middle School is a magnet program focusing on science, technology, engineering, and math. High standards are in place ensuring student success. We focus on critical thinking, problem solving, and study and research skills which are applied to each of the core and elective courses. Austin Middle School offers four core subjects (Math, English/Language Arts, Science and Social Studies) and one magnet elective course related to the grade level theme (Robotics-5th grade; Project Lead the Way/Environmental Science-6th grade; Project Lead the Way/Space and Flight; and Project Lead the Way/Health Science).

Math courses (5th-7th) grade are taught at an advanced level culminating in all students taking Algebra I during their 8th grade year for high school credit. The math department integrates hands-on activities, cooperative learning, and technology infused lessons to prepare our student for a rigorous high school curriculum.

English/language arts curricula provide a study of various forms of literature, poetry, and a proficiency in various modes of writing. Students read and discuss literary selections from multiple sources. Students read approximately four major works throughout the year and compose at least one formal essay each six weeks. In addition, students create various forms of narrative writing, expository writing, persuasive writing, and analytical writing.

The science program is designed to develop scientific literacy, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The goal of science education is to stimulate student curiosity about their immediate surroundings and the world they live in. The curriculum is TEKS driven using researched-based resources and instructional strategies. We believe this will prepare students to pursue career paths in science and encourage students to assume leadership positions in an increasingly scientific and technologically-based society.

In grades 5 through 8, students study the history of the United States from the exploration period through the 21st century. In each course study, students are asked to problem solve, perform critical thinking skills and submit a project that will further their knowledge of history, geography, economics, government, citizenship, culture, science and technology. The goal is for students to become responsible and take ownership of their learning as it relates to the 21st century global society.

All students participate in a magnet elective course which incorporates our STEM theme into the curriculum. 5th grade students take robotics during the school day and extend their learning by participating in competitions. 6th-8th graders take a hands-on Project Lead the Way course which incorporates basic engineering design principles.

Instrumental music at Austin Middle School involves both wind and stringed instruments. This is a Fine Arts elective that is open to all students from grades five through eight and free of an auditioned entry. Instruction, heavily integrated with technology, includes teacher modeling, music theory culminating with practical application, performance, and composition. Proficiency of these skills provides an easy transition into high school band and orchestra classes.

Theatre at Austin Middle School is open to all students. Using the theatre TEKS as a guideline, the students integrate theatre, art & design, writing, social studies and science through daily warm-ups, games, activities and specialized units of study arranged to support concepts currently being learned in core classes.

The art department at Austin Middle School consists of four levels of art instruction correlating with years of previous student experience: Beginning, Art I, Art II, and Pre-Advanced Placement Art. Core subjects are interwoven seamlessly into daily work and cross-curricular projects.

The Spanish language program focuses both on the novice speaker and the native language learner. Novice speakers and native learners are exposed to four years of Spanish curriculum, culminating in high school credit for the final year. The bilingual trajectory is distinct in both character and purpose, guiding our native speakers to stronger fluency, correct syntactical structure, and a formal language training that is often neglected in the home and school.

The physical education classes focus on all aspects of health, fitness and nutrition through the introduction of team and lifetime recreational sports. The students are also given a brief exposure to social dancing. To assess the effectiveness of the curriculum, the students are tested twice a year using Fitness Gram which measures cardiovascular endurance with the pacer, upper body strength with push-ups, abdominal strength with sit ups, and lower and upper back flexibility using the sit-n-reach.

2. Reading/English:

The English/language arts (ELA) department of the Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) program uses various research-based strategies to ensure that our students not only learn to read, but also *read to learn*. Each grade level uses thematic instruction to integrate the disciplines of each subject within the context of STEM. Students in each grade produce projects each nine weeks related to their grade level's theme. Not only are our ELA students expected to acquire the basic Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), but they are also expected to judge the credibility of sources using Big 6 strategies, evaluate arguments, and convey complex information in terms used by an increasingly technical workforce.

Cross-curricular connections are made by teaching writing across the subject areas. All teachers receive training enabling them to incorporate writing strategies in each subject area. Science teachers collaborate with Language Arts teachers and the librarian to teach Big 6 research principles to students beginning in the 5th grade. Additionally, Language Arts teachers select complex informational novels and texts, which help to create a more technical 21st century vocabulary.

Our students learn creative writing and expression, but we also encourage our students to present information through diverse media and formats both visually and orally. Students are expected to present information, findings and evidence in ways such that listeners and readers can follow their line of reasoning, organizational development, and style. Student work is evaluated on language and usage, appropriateness to task, purpose, and audience.

Our ELA department meets monthly to review vertical curriculum alignment, the incorporation of C-SCOPE and English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS), and student data using AWARE and walkthrough data. During the meetings the department incorporates a data analysis supplemental called "Sticky Situation," where teachers analyze benchmark test scores and disaggregate data such as ethnicity, English language proficiency, and economic status to clearly identify struggling learners. Each Language Arts teacher then meets with an intervention specialist to implement a Response to Intervention (RTI) plan for each learner. These students are offered individualized morning and after school tutoring, in-school tutoring, TAKS Reading tutoring, after school reading clubs, individualized online tutoring through Study Island, and access to Compass Odyssey and Thinkfinity.

3. Mathematics:

The goal of the Math department at Austin Middle School is to provide a rigorous curriculum that prepares learners for the highly technical 21st century workforce. Every student in our STEM program enters high school having already taken Algebra I. The rigor of the curriculum is enhanced by thematic instruction, project-based learning, and cross-curricular planning.

Our math curriculum foundation is based on C-Scope, which is a comprehensive curriculum management system built on current research based practices. This system includes professional development and authentic lessons which encourage higher order thinking skills. Our teachers are uniquely able to build on this curriculum due to a schedule that permits grade level teachers to meet for over four hours each week. This planning time allows teams to create cross-curricular projects related to the grade level's theme. Research has shown that students acquire knowledge of mathematics best when learning in the context of a comprehensive project. This practical application of math ties essential knowledge and skills to real world applications.

Teachers use a plethora of resources which include our district adopted text books, Closing the Gap, Agile Minds, and innovative technology including Smart Boards and Airliner tablets. Each math class is taught as a pre-AP class, and teachers incorporate AP strategies from Laying the Foundation. Each teacher also attends the Rice University School Mathematics Project summer program which helps teachers better understand the nature of mathematics as well as effective teaching and assessment practices.

District benchmark data is disaggregated and used to evaluate student progress and determine individualized growth plans. To improve the mathematic skills of students who are performing below grade level, teachers offer daily flex tutoring before and after school. Individualized TAKS tutoring is also offered, focusing on learning gaps of struggling students. This tutoring utilizes a lower student to teacher ratio. Further interventions are determined by a Response to Intervention (RTI) specialist.

The math department hosts a school wide monthly estimation activity to promote and highlight the relevance of math in everyday life. There are also school wide math enrichment days where each grade level may work on a specific objective using hands-on activities and projects. These activities are also cross-curricular and help create vertical alignment between grade levels.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Incorporating engineering into the curriculum provides a rigorous avenue for supporting the acquisition of essential knowledge and skills and the mission of our school. At Austin Middle School, we have chosen to incorporate First Lego League Robotics at the 5th grade level and VEX Robotics along with Project Lead the Way-Gateways to Technology for grades 6-8. In these courses, students have the opportunity to experience real world project-based lessons which incorporate core instructional standards and higher level thinking skills. Students are required to work collaboratively to solve problems and find solutions to real life situations that may be found in any of the STEM fields as well as engineering. For example, the students are required to build simulated structures/components found in everyday life such as elevators, store signs and traffic lights. Students use computer software, such as Robot C to build and program robots and troubleshoot programming while working collaboratively to complete missions/tasks, such as, Climate Connections, Smart Move-Earth Friendly Travel through use of robots and experimenting with biomedicine in order to find cleaner, cheaper efficient ways to make medicines. Each of these varied tasks is an attempt to make our students aware of a plethora of STEM careers and opportunities to make an impact on our world. Through the design process in our engineering courses, students use math, science, reading, and writing skills to communicate learning.

Not only do the students hone essential traditional skills, they also develop 21st Century learner characteristics. Emphasis is placed on the learning which occurs outside of the classroom. Students participate in teleconferences with NASA, and community members provide feedback to students about their projects and their learning. At Austin Middle School global and civic responsibility are key components to student education. Through our engineering courses, students are encouraged to plan and carry out community service projects.

5. Instructional Methods:

At Austin Middle School, teachers and staff focus on strategies that challenge students to innovate and invent ideas which model real-world learning and work. All students are immersed in a rich culture of

learning. By integrating Science, Technology, Engineering and Math and the habits of 21st Century learners into other subject areas, it is our goal to produce problem-solvers, innovators, self-reliant and logical thinkers. In order to compete in the 21st century, our staff incorporates project-based learning to prepare our students with skills and strategies necessary to pursue future coursework in STEM fields.

As a campus, teachers and administrators have determined the “classroom culture” which will provide an avenue for delivering the curriculum effectively. The expectation for classrooms at Austin Middle School includes relevant and current content, thematic units, evidence of critical, creative, and independent thinking, cooperative learning, project-based learning, authentic engagement, high-quality work displays, student/teacher use of technology, and positive social interactions.

Close attention is given to the individual needs of the students. During team meetings, teachers discuss student progress and strategies that work for individual students. In certain circumstances, teachers may need assistance in determining the individual needs of a student. When teachers need assistance in determining the individual needs of a student, an Intervention Assistance Team meeting is called to discuss interventions with the Intervention Specialist, the parent, an administrator, and teachers. During this meeting, the contributing factors (instructional, social/emotional, health, or other environmental factors) are determined, and interventions are put in place. Supports for child or parent, community or school services, and/or instructional plans are provided to the child if needed. Student progress is monitored every three weeks and modified as needed.

In order to provide additional instructional time for students during the school day, a Leadership course is scheduled for every student. During this time, students are provided time for additional instruction and taught to incorporate successful Habits of Mind in study groups or individually. Additionally, extra instructional time is provided before and after school for students in need.

6. Professional Development:

Austin Middle School uses multiple measures to determine professional development. Staff/student surveys, the mission of the school, individual teacher needs, and student assessment data assist in determining professional development for staff members that meet the needs of our students. After analyzing the data and keeping the mission of the school in mind, professional development activities which are based on best practices are chosen either for or by our staff. Primary consideration includes academic standards and immersion of 21st Century skills.

Choosing interdisciplinary staff development activities provides a foundation for professional communication between teachers. For example, strategies and concepts learned during professional development opportunities such as Master Technology training and Habits of Mind training are used in all disciplines.

In addition to including staff members in staff development, parents at Austin are invited to participate in conferences. Last year, two parents attended the National Magnet Conference and two parents attended the National Parental Involvement Conference using campus funds. PTO board members were invited to be involved in the Habits of Mind book study. When parents understand the initiatives, they help hold us accountable for implementing best practices.

Multiple measures are used to determine the effectiveness of professional development. Teacher feedback, parent feedback, and student success (report card grades/test scores and student behavior) are used to determine effectiveness. REEL Classroom Walk-through data collected by administration and teachers is also analyzed to determine assess staff development needs.

Structuring opportunities for staff to share ideas and plan for instruction supports the sustainability of knowledge and skills learned from professional development. Each team of teachers is allotted sufficient planning time and an agenda that encourages discussion about curriculum and instruction. During faculty meetings and department meetings, teachers are asked to share what new instructional methods that have

proven to be successful in the classroom. Teachers provide staff development (technology, college and career readiness, writing, etc.) for staff members during faculty meetings. Expectations for teaching and learning are included in the weekly updates from the principal.

7. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy and structure of Austin Middle School is developed around the concept of “servant leadership”. We approach each day secure in our belief that we are ultimately here to serve the needs of students and staff. Through this service our aim is to bring out the maximum potential in everyone at our campus which in turn maximizes opportunities for us to influence the culture of our community. Our aim is to build relationships; our aim is to empower others to lead. The adoption of this philosophy allows us to structure an academic environment focused on collaboration. The role of the principal is to follow the model of the servant leader, to impart their vision, and to provide opportunities for others to lead as well.

The collaborative nature of servant leadership allows for the input of all stakeholders which is an essential component for improving and maintaining student achievement. Our Campus Improvement Committee (CIC) members are comprised from staff, administrators, parents, and community members who provide direct input to the principal. The group meets monthly to monitor the implementation of the Campus Improvement Plan.

The Principal’s council, a multi-grade level student advisory group, discusses pertinent student concerns with the principal every month. This group is integral in providing feedback from the students’ point of view about the daily operation of our campus. Because our leadership philosophy is developed around the concept of service, the information gathered at these meetings is used to assess the various policies and programs that directly impact our students. An additional benefit of our Principal’s Council is that we are able to model servant leadership by showing students that their beliefs and concerns can positively influence the school environment for all students.

Grade level parent meetings with the principal are regularly held to provide important information to assist our parents with academic planning for their student, in addition to addressing other parent concerns. We believe that this input is vital to student achievement, and we cannot adequately serve our student population without parental involvement. Our belief is that parents support schools when they feel that their voices are heard and their concerns addressed.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)
Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr			
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	97			
Commended	60	64			
Number of students tested	111	108			
Percent of total students tested	94	89			
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	5			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	4			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	100	97			
Commended	55	64			
Number of students tested	58	102			
2. African American Students					
Met Standard		100			
Commended		64			
Number of students tested		13			
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	100	96			
Commended	58	72			
Number of students tested	45	46			
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Met Standard	100	98			
Commended	63	61			
Number of students tested	51	41			
NOTES: From 2005-2008, Austin Middle School served 6th-8th grade students. Beginning in August 2008, Austin Middle School served 5th-8th grade students.					

11TX11

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr			
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	96	98			
Commended	49	53			
Number of students tested	111	109			
Percent of total students tested	94	89			
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	5			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	4			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	95	98			
Commended	41	53			
Number of students tested	58	103			
2. African American Students					
Met Standard		100			
Commended		23			
Number of students tested		13			
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	96	96			
Commended	44	47			
Number of students tested	45	47			
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Met Standard	96	100			
Commended	53	63			
Number of students tested	51	41			
NOTES: From 2005-2008, Austin Middle School served 6th-8th grade students. Beginning in August 2008, Austin Middle School served 5th-8th grade students.					

11TX11

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 6 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)
Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	99	96	68	54	69
Commended	41	50	21	14	23
Number of students tested	111	113	99	100	13
Percent of total students tested	91	94	80	83	72
Number of students alternatively assessed	6	3	16	14	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	5	3	13	12	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	98	96	67	54	75
Commended	43	49	22	12	25
Number of students tested	44	112	78	82	12
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100		56	32	67
Commended	23		13	8	22
Number of students tested	13		39	37	9
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	98	91	76	59	
Commended	41	36	24	15	
Number of students tested	46	47	46	46	
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Met Standard	100	98	70	85	
Commended	45	62	20	23	
Number of students tested	49	53	10	13	
NOTES:					

11TX11

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	99	99	87	66	92
Commended	50	67	28	18	23
Number of students tested	111	113	97	95	13
Percent of total students tested	91	94	79	79	72
Number of students alternatively assessed	6	3	17	17	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	5	3	14	14	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	98	99	88	62	92
Commended	48	67	28	17	25
Number of students tested	44	112	76	78	12
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100		77	47	
Commended	31		18	8	
Number of students tested	13		39	36	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	98	98	95	70	
Commended	43	45	34	14	
Number of students tested	46	47	44	44	
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Met Standard	100	100	90	100	
Commended	59	85	40	50	
Number of students tested	49	53	10	12	
NOTES:					

11TX11

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 7 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)
Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	97	96	48	56	57
Commended	34	43	10	12	6
Number of students tested	117	100	94	113	115
Percent of total students tested	94	93	80	86	80
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	2	18	13	21
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	2	15	10	15
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	93	96	51	48	58
Commended	24	43	7	5	7
Number of students tested	54	100	70	82	85
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	83	91	34	37	42
Commended	17	36	2	2	2
Number of students tested	12	11	41	46	48
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	98	96	57	51	64
Commended	23	30	11	8	5
Number of students tested	48	46	37	37	42
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard			64	30	
Commended			0	0	
Number of students tested			11	10	
6. White					
Met Standard	98	97	57	88	65
Commended	48	55	14	27	10
Number of students tested	54	38	14	26	20
NOTES:					

11TX11

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 7 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	98	96	62	68	67
Commended	41	47	16	15	9
Number of students tested	117	101	89	114	117
Percent of total students tested	94	94	76	87	81
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	2	19	13	20
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	2	16	10	14
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	96	96	55	61	69
Commended	28	47	18	7	9
Number of students tested	54	101	65	83	86
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	92	100	55	59	65
Commended	33	36	5	0	8
Number of students tested	10	11	42	46	49
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	98	93	66	54	63
Commended	31	35	16	8	5
Number of students tested	48	46	32	37	43
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard				20	
Commended				0	
Number of students tested				10	
6. White					
Met Standard	100	97	69	96	70
Commended	50	59	38	44	15
Number of students tested	54	39	13	27	20
NOTES:					

11TX11

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 8 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)
Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	95	97	67	52	53
Commended	32	47	16	8	6
Number of students tested	115	100	116	101	126
Percent of total students tested	95	91	82	83	83
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	7	18	14	16
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	6	13	11	11
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	91	97	59	52	50
Commended	34	45	4	6	5
Number of students tested	47	97	68	79	100
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100		51	43	44
Commended	23		5	7	6
Number of students tested	13		41	42	48
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	93	95	61	65	58
Commended	26	35	2	10	4
Number of students tested	54	37	41	40	57
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Met Standard	95	98	93	43	65
Commended	40	50	40	0	15
Number of students tested	43	50	30	14	20
NOTES:					

11TX11

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 8 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)
Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Pearson

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	97	100	83	83	74
Commended	65	76	34	18	14
Number of students tested	114	100	115	101	125
Percent of total students tested	94	92	81	83	83
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	7	18	12	16
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	6	13	10	11
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	96	100	76	85	72
Commended	59	76	24	16	11
Number of students tested	46	97	68	79	99
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100		79	79	77
Commended	69		21	14	15
Number of students tested	13		42	43	48
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	94	100	74	90	67
Commended	55	65	19	21	12
Number of students tested	53	37	42	39	57
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Met Standard	100	100	100	79	89
Commended	74	78	69	14	21
Number of students tested	43	50	29	14	19
NOTES:					

11TX11

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	98	96	61	54	56
Commended	42	51	16	11	7
Number of students tested	454	421	309	314	254
Percent of total students tested	93	92	80	84	81
Number of students alternatively assessed	15	17	52	41	37
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	4	13	11	12
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	96	96	59	51	55
Commended	39	50	12	8	7
Number of students tested	203	411	216	243	197
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	96	97	47	38	45
Commended	26	26	7	6	6
Number of students tested	46	38	121	125	105
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	97	94	65	59	62
Commended	36	44	13	11	5
Number of students tested	193	176	124	123	102
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard			13	31	
Commended			4	0	
Number of students tested			24	13	
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard	100	92	62	46	33
Commended	40	50	19	0	0
Number of students tested	10	12	21	26	15
6. White					
Met Standard	98	98	80	75	63
Commended	49	57	30	19	12
Number of students tested	197	182	54	53	41
<p>NOTES: 96.7% of our population participated in the state assessment. 3.3% of the population was not tested as follows: 3% LEP exempt and 0.2% due to Hurricane Ike. The discrepancy in the testing data is due to the fact that our LEP students are tested using the TELPAS assessment. This information is not reflected in the state data. 2009-2010: 96.9% of our population participated in the state assessment. 3.1% of the population was not tested as follows: 2.9% LEP exempt and 0.2% other. The discrepancy in the testing data is due to the fact that our LEP students are tested using the TELPAS assessment. This information is not reflected in the state data.</p>					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	98	98	78	72	71
Commended	51	61	27	17	13
Number of students tested	453	423	301	310	255
Percent of total students tested	93	92	79	83	81
Number of students alternatively assessed	16	17	54	42	36
Percent of students alternatively assessed	3	4	14	11	12
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	96	98	74	69	72
Commended	43	61	23	13	11
Number of students tested	202	413	209	240	197
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	98	100	70	62	74
Commended	43	47	15	7	13
Number of students tested	46	38	123	125	106
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	96	97	80	72	65
Commended	44	47	24	14	9
Number of students tested	192	177	118	120	103
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard			43	40	
Commended			5	10	
Number of students tested			21	10	
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard	70	75	56	40	27
Commended	0	42	0	0	0
Number of students tested	10	12	16	25	15
6. White					
Met Standard	99	99	90	92	80
Commended	58	73	56	38	18
Number of students tested	197	183	52	53	40
<p>NOTES: 2008-2009: 96.7% of our population participated in the state assessment. 3.3% of the population was not tested as follows: 3% LEP exempt and 0.2% due to Hurricane Ike. The discrepancy in the testing data is due to the fact that our LEP students are testing using TELPAS assessment. This information is not reflected in the state assessment. 2009-2010: 96.9% of our population participated in the state assessment. 3.1% of the population was not tested as follows: 2.9% LEP exempt and 0.2% other. The discrepancy in the testing data is due to the fact that our LEP students are tested using the TELPAS assessment. This information is not reflected in the state data.</p>					