U.S. Department of Education
2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 12TX9

School Type (Public Schools): (Check all that apply, if any) ☐ Charter ☑ Title 1 ☐ Magnet ☐ Choice

Name of Principal: Mr. Patrick James

Official School Name: George West Primary School
School Mailing Address: 405 Travis Street
George West, TX 78022-3416

County: Live Oak County State School Code Number*: 149901102

Telephone: (361) 449-1914 E-mail: tsparks@gwisd.esc2.net

Fax: (361) 449-1426 Web site/URL: www.gwisd.esc2.net

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

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Ty Sparks Superintendent e-mail: tsparks@gwisd.esc2.net

District Name: George West ISD District Phone: (361) 449-1914

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: Mrs. Cheri Moore

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)

**Non-Public 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 2011-2012 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 foreign language courses.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.

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

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

12TX9

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
   - 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
   - 1 High schools
   - 0 K-12 schools
   - 4 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 7194

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Small city or town in a rural area

4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 12

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 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	8	5	13		6	0	0	0
K	40	30	70		7	0	0	0
1	46	31	77		8	0	0	0
2	38	34	72		9	0	0	0
3	36	38	74		10	0	0	0
4	0	0	0		11	0	0	0
5	0	0	0		12	0	0	0
					Total in Applying School:			306

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
0 %	Asian
1 %	Black or African American
61 %	Hispanic or Latino
0 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
36 %	White
2 %	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 2010-2011 school year: 0%

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	2
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	1
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	3
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	336
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.00
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	0

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 3%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 12

Number of non-English languages represented: 1

Specify non-English languages:

Spanish

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 64%

Total number of students who qualify: 218

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: 12%

Total number of students served: 27

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

2	Autism	2	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	0	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	3	Specific Learning Disability
1	Emotional Disturbance	24	Speech or Language Impairment
1	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
1	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
1	Multiple Disabilities	0	Developmentally Delayed

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

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	1	0
Classroom teachers	22	0
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	3	0
Paraprofessionals	15	0
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	8	0
Total number	49	0

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: 15:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**
Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

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**%

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

☐ No

☉ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award? Before 2007

PART III - SUMMARY

George West Primary is a small school in George West, Texas, a rural town of approximately 2,500 people located about halfway between San Antonio and Corpus Christi. The demographic makeup of our school consists of 62% Hispanic, 37% White, and 2% two or more races. Additionally 64% of our students come from economically disadvantaged homes.

The mission of our school is very simple. We expect all children to reach their academic potential, regardless of who they are or from where they come. We expect them to acquire the knowledge base, the character traits, and the work ethic they will need to be successful adults.

We strive to accomplish our mission by plain, simple hard work. Our staff takes a personal interest in the life of every child. Our staff goes above and beyond the call of duty as they work with our children. It is not uncommon to see teachers working at lunch, during conference periods, and after school with students who need extra help. Many schools express the belief that "all children can learn." At our school we make that a reality.

We have learned that, when provided the necessary assistance, all students can and do learn. Much of our success can be attributed to the additional opportunities we provide for our students who are at risk of failing to perform on grade level. Ten years ago, we started a summer reading program we call Jump Start. We bring in our at risk students at every grade level for four weeks preceding the start of school. We have found this "jump start" readies students for the new year by reviewing skills taught the previous year. We also provide after school tutorials four days a week for students who need extra help. During after school tutorials teachers and aides work with students in small groups. Activities are designed to be fun and different from the regular structured daily lessons.

We have a highly qualified staff of professionals and paraprofessionals. Our professional staff is very experienced due to a low turnover rate. We are fortunate to have highly qualified teachers in our community and in the surrounding areas eager to work at this campus. We believe our paraprofessionals are the best in the state, and have contributed a great deal to the improvement of student performance at this campus. Primarily, they work with students rather than perform clerical duties. They are very knowledgeable in the areas of curriculum and instruction as a result of the training provided by our staff. Many of our paraprofessionals have a bachelor's or master's degree, or have attended Treasuring Our Professionals training, a rigorous professional development that teaches reading and mathematics through research-based practices.

We are very proud of student achievement at this campus and the accolades we have received. Being named a 2005 NCLB Blue Ribbon School is one of the most prestigious awards we have won. In 2007 we were named a National Title I Distinguished School, one of only two in the state. For the last ten years in a row we have been named a TBEC (Texas Business and Education Coalition) Honor Roll School. We are one of only two schools in the state to be recognized ten years in a row. This recognition is important to us since the TBEC evaluates a school's data against a higher standard than does the Texas Education Agency. This is a great accomplishment since we work very hard at motivating all our students to perform at a higher level than the minimum standard required by the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), the State's assessment.

We have also been named a Texas Distinguished Title I campus for the last ten years and have been identified as an Exemplary campus by the Texas Education Agency. We feel great about the things we are doing for our children at this school because the assessment data shows that the hard work of our school community has resulted in student success for all!

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Our school administers the state-mandated Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). Texas public schools are required to administer the TAKS test, beginning in 3rd grade and continuing through the 11 grade at which time students take the exit level TAKS, which is a graduation requirement for all Texas students. At some grade levels, such as 3rd grade, passing the TAKS is a requirement for grade advancement. The TAKS test measures students' understanding of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), our state-mandated curriculum. Students not only have to know the TEKS, they have to be able to apply that knowledge using higher level thinking skills.

The State has defined different levels of performance on the TAKS – one level for meeting the standard requirements and the other for performing at the "commended" level. To pass the TAKS reading test in 2011, a student needed a scale score of 491. To meet minimum requirements, or pass the TAKS math test, a student needed a scale score of 490. To achieve commended performance in reading, a student needed a scale score of 640 or 94% correct. To achieve commended performance in math, a student needed a scale score of 640, or 93% correct. We have only had one student fail the TAKS Reading and one Student fail the TAKS Math test in the last four years. Scores show no disparities among ethnic or economically-disadvantaged subgroups.

We are proud of our scores over the last several years. In 2011 100% passed both subjects while 72% achieved commended performance in Reading and 71% achieved commended in Math. In 2010 100% passed Reading with 78% commended while 99% passed Math with 52% commended. In 2009 100% passed both subjects with 73% commended in Reading and 52% commended in Math. These scores prove that our students are not just meeting the performance standard; rather, they are consistently performing at higher levels. We attribute our outstanding assessment results to:

Effective instruction – The teacher presents each skill using a variety of methods in order to reach all learning styles. The teacher provides many examples for modeling and explaining the skill. The students are given multiple opportunities to practice with guidance and ultimately experience success. The skill is taught using problem-solving situations. Skills are continually reviewed, assessed, and re-taught, if necessary.

Collaborative planning – Collaborative planning is essential in our school. Our district releases students 25 minutes early one day each week to allow time for additional grade-level planning. We also have staff development days to disaggregate scores and test data. During these times our staff plans and aligns instruction both horizontally and vertically.

Instructional leadership – Instructional leadership has played a major role in our success. The principal is actively involved with the learning and success of our children. He conferences with each student after every benchmark test, and spends time in classrooms every day working with the children. The students know he cares about them and expects them to do their best. He is an excellent role model. He supports, encourages, and praises the teachers, and expects them, also, to do their best. He "rolls up his sleeves" and becomes actively involved in planning instruction such as writing math benchmark tests. He works with students throughout the day, including after school tutorials and summer school.

Benchmark tests – To insure that we monitor the student's progress in math and reading; we administer benchmark tests each six weeks. We disaggregate this data to form our skills groups for re-teaching. We also assess our skills weekly to give more immediate feedback to individual classroom teachers and students.

Math strategies – Our students know we expect them to do their best. We will not accept papers without strategies for problem-solving clearly defined. The students soon learn that the strategies help them solve the problems correctly, and math becomes fun. As they begin to experience success and feel good about themselves, their achievement soars.

Our school's performance data can be found on the Texas Education Agency website at www.tea.state.tx.us/. For a complete list of TBEC Honor Roll Schools go to www.tbec.org.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Our school uses the data from various types of assessments to identify students who are at risk of failing to perform on grade level and to identify objectives or skill areas that students have not mastered.

In kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade, we administer the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI). The TPRI is a state-developed reading inventory we are required to give twice a year to kindergarten students and three times per year to first and second grade students. The TPRI measures phonemic awareness, graphophonemic knowledge, reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.

Teachers utilize this data for early identification of struggling readers and to provide intervention for them. We use these results to set instructional objectives, to form teaching groups, and to determine the need for targeted assistance for particular students. We provide early intervention regularly through the use of flexible, skill-based groups that are identified according to skill deficits. In these small groups we are able to provide struggling readers more intense instruction than their more successful classmates. TPRI data, along with progress reports and report card grades, is also used to identify students who need after school tutorials and our summer reading program.

At second grade, we administer a comprehensive TAKS benchmark assessment at mid-year to identify students and skill areas that need to be emphasized for the remainder of the year. As in 1st grade, this data is used to form skill groups for remediation activities during an in-school tutorial period as well as in after school tutorials. Students are assessed again at the end of the year to determine summer reading program placement and to provide detailed progress information to their future 3rd grade teachers.

At third grade, we administer a comprehensive benchmark assessment every six weeks with the first one given the second week of school. Data from the first assessment is used to form the instructional calendar for the year. Teachers also assess students on a weekly basis to identify those who have not mastered the skill or objective taught that week. Students who have not yet mastered the objective for the week are re-taught and provided with targeted assistance in small groups. Previously taught objectives are continued throughout the year to prevent any learning regression.

Student performance data is communicated to parents in the following ways:

- Daily notes are sent home in student homework folders.
- Weekly papers are sent home for parent review and signatures.
- Progress reports are sent home every three weeks.
- Mandatory parent conferences are held after the first six weeks to review student progress.
- Additional parent conferences are scheduled as needed.
- Report cards are sent home for parent review and signature every six weeks.
- TPRI reports are sent home after every administration.
- Benchmark results are sent home every six weeks.

Performance data is shared with students in the following ways:

- Individual student/teacher conferences.

- Individual conferences with the campus principal. Students are sent to the campus principal to receive positive reinforcement for doing good work, as well as to discuss areas where improvement is needed.
- Principal/student conferences. The campus principal conferences individually with every student after every benchmark assessment to review the student's progress and to set goals for them to accomplish.
- Group conferences. The principal meets with grade level groups after every benchmark to discuss their progress as a grade level and to motivate future performance.

Performance data is shared with the community in the following ways:

- School Board meetings.
- District newsletter.
- Articles in the local newspaper.
- Articles on the district and campus website.
- Region 2, Education Service Center (ESC) Newsletter, as data warrants.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

We have shared our success with other schools in many ways.

We have participated in the TBEC Honor Roll Schools "Sharing the Success Seminar" for the last several years. Information compiled from this seminar, along with data collected by TBEC/JFTK personnel during their visit to our campus and other high performing campuses, is published in the Texas Best Practice Framework.

We have participated in the Region 2, Education Service Center's Distinguished Title I Schools Ceremony the last ten years. At this ceremony, we share our tenets of success with other successful schools, as well as with those schools identified as "needs improvement". The ESC compiles a booklet of information collected from the distinguished schools and disseminates it at this seminar. The ESC also sends the booklet to all schools in the region, and specifically to those schools needing improvement.

We have participated in a Special Education/Reading Interface Study conducted by faculty and graduate students at Texas A&M University. Researchers visited our campus and interviewed faculty to find out what we are doing to successfully teach diverse populations and struggling readers to read. Results of this study were forwarded to school districts across the state and to the Texas Education Agency.

Administrators and teachers from schools in our area visit our campus to observe our teachers in action, to review our curriculum, to review instructional practices, and to ask questions about what we do to consistently drive high student performance. The ESC coordinates many of these visits by sharing our successes with schools in the ESC region.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Parent involvement plays a big part in our success. We have many parents and community members who volunteer at our school on a daily basis. These volunteers help teachers with routine clerical duties. This assistance allows the teachers more time for working with students and for planning instruction. Many of our volunteers also work in the classroom, under the supervision of the classroom teacher, providing assistance such as listening to students read, helping students take Accelerated Reader tests, etc.. Even the parents who are not able to come to school support our efforts by encouraging their children to work hard and expecting them to succeed. It's a great feeling to have parents who appreciate the time and effort we put forth for their children.

We have also been fortunate to become involved with the local Kids Hope USA program. Kids Hope volunteers are trained mentors who spend at least one hour per week reading, talking, playing, and listening to a child at school. By helping that child feel loved and valued, they help that child to learn, grow and succeed. These volunteers are all recruited by the local churches and have participated in Kids Hope USA mentor training.

Other ways we are involved with parents and the community include:

- Parent Orientation is provided for parents the second week of school. Teachers utilize this opportunity to review with parents topics such as class schedules, rules, curriculum, homework policies, grading policies, and tips for enhancing their child's education at home.
- Teachers provide parent training sessions to review reading and math strategies so parents can help their children at home.
- Our music teacher prepares students for a community Christmas concert that is very well attended by parents and community members.
- Students visit the local nursing home at Halloween and Easter for a Halloween carnival and Easter egg hunt. This event is always highly anticipated by the residents as they get to visit with our students.
- We have numerous fundraisers throughout the year so our students can learn the importance of giving to others.
- Our PE coach organizes Jump Rope for Heart.
- We have food drives at Thanksgiving and Christmas to support the needy of our community.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The curriculum at George West Primary focuses on the students' demonstrating exemplary performance in reading and writing the English language, as well as in understanding mathematical concepts. Units in Science and Social Studies are integrated into and correlated with the English/Language Arts Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state's mandated curriculum.

Reading is central to learning, and success in reading provides the foundation for success in all core areas; thus, much emphasis is given to teaching Language Arts. Students are instructed in and tested over the dimensions that are considered the most important research-based aspects of teaching reading: phonological awareness, graphophonemic knowledge, listening comprehension, reading accuracy, and reading comprehension. Using information gained from the testing, explicit and systematic instruction is provided in the context of many and varied opportunities in reading and writing. Instruction targeting specific concepts is designed and carefully sequenced, building on what the students know, and structuring what they don't know, as they work towards mastery. Support is given as the students need it, and is gradually withdrawn as they become more proficient with new concepts and skills. Our primary goal is to help all of our students read and comprehend proficiently while using higher level thinking skills.

The core of the math curriculum is built around the use of manipulatives and strategies to teach the content through problem solving, reasonableness, terminology, and cooperative learning relating to the TEKS. Educational research offers compelling evidence that students learn mathematics well only when they construct their own mathematical understanding. Students are given the opportunity to work in groups, to engage in discussion, to make presentations, and to take charge of their own learning by "examining," "applying," and "proving" concepts in their lessons. We strive to produce students who can successfully and confidently apply math principles in problem-solving situations.

Science and Social Studies objectives are aligned with the TEKS and are integrated and correlated with units in Language Arts. Students are provided the opportunity to investigate and learn science concepts and experience success in science as they develop the knowledge of and the ability to use the tools and processes of scientific inquiry. Our emphasis is for the students to experience success in science as they develop age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of the life, earth, and physical sciences. The social studies curriculum teaches good citizenship skills, map and globe skills, as well as history, through biographies, and current events. Reading strategies are integrated with a multimedia approach to teach citizenship, cultures, economics, geography, government, and history. Students are taught to build on their background by accessing prior knowledge and to extend language by using word banks and activity ideas. We expect all of our students to be respectful, responsible, good citizens.

Our fine arts curriculum is largely integrated into our reading, science and social studies curricula. Theatre Arts is integrated into our language arts curriculum through charades, plays, and acting out stories. Art is integrated into every core curriculum and aligned with the TEKS. Many different types of media are used and freedom of expression is encouraged.

Our school utilizes Easy Tech online scope and sequence and curriculum to address the technology TEKS. This program is excellent for teaching technology skills with a connection to curriculum rather than in isolation. The curriculum provides comprehensive, scoped and sequenced lessons that incorporate 21st century skills and technology skills into the teacher's own curriculum. The same skills are then reinforced in the curriculum using other technology tools such as Kidspiration, Word, Excel,

MovieMaker, or Photostory. The curriculum is accessed through a lab setting, however, students are allowed to practice newly acquired technology skills in computer centers in the classroom.

For Physical Education and nutrition, our school uses the CATCH go for health series. The CATCH series is a curriculum for grades K-5 which teaches children to identify, practice, and adopt healthy eating and physical activity habits, as well as tobacco avoidance. Children also develop skills necessary to make wise food choices through the GO, SLOW, and WHOA concept. This concept is an easy way for children to identify healthy foods. Children not only learn the facts about healthy living, they are also encouraged to make changes in behavior so they become healthy for a lifetime.

2. Reading/English:

George West Primary believes in a phonetic approach to teaching reading because research demonstrates that successful readers rely on letter-sound correspondences in sounding out words, have reliable strategies to decode words, and read words a sufficient number of times to ensure that words become quickly and automatically recognized. Our reading program adheres to an explicit and systematic approach to teaching and reviewing sounds which include: blending letter sound correspondences in words, letter combinations, spelling and syllabic patterns, recognizing high frequency words as whole units, and using structural clues, word order, and context clues.

Instructional texts used in the classrooms for early readers include books that are predictable, transitional, and decodable, as well as authentic literature. The students' reading levels are calculated and considered as students are placed in reading groups. Students are given multiple opportunities to read, to practice decoding strategies, and to read decodable texts. Students are grouped according to needs and taught from instructional-level texts that reflect what the student is learning. As the students become more fluent readers, they are taught strategies to improve their comprehension. The students are required to use these strategies consistently on all reading passages in all subject areas. We teach skills in isolation, and then learn to apply the skills in reading stories. We use extra resources to focus on these skills. We use a variety of research-based and teacher-made games and activities. We assess regularly and re-teach, as needed, using a variety of learning styles approaches. We teach heterogeneously, however, we reinforce skills homogeneously as data warrants. We read orally to students daily to reinforce comprehension skills, listening skills, and visual imaging. We use higher level comprehension questioning in all subject areas. Accelerated Reader is also used to enhance the regular reading program. This program assists us in determining students' ability levels and in monitoring their progress. The students are continually challenged as they work to meet their monthly goals. We have an outstanding incentive program that rewards and motivates students as they progress from struggling, to emergent, to fluent readers.

3. Mathematics:

George West Primary School is committed to nurturing successful, lifelong learners in Math. In order to succeed at our goal of achieving mathematical literacy, we encourage our students to take risks and communicate using higher-level thinking as they work to solve problems. Our teachers are committed to teaching the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills to achieve success on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills.

At George West Primary, various resources are used to teach the math essential skills and knowledge. Harcourt is our state adopted textbook, but it is not our only resource. Some grade levels supplement with Touch Math, Saxon Math, Kamico, Measuring Up, and materials gathered from workshops. Other grade levels have written their own curricula using various adoptions, as well as privately written math programs by mathematicians such as Joshua Horton and Michael Eaton that were purchased by the school district.

Our teachers continually provide maintenance and re-teach. We feel these are the most important aspects of our math program. It is very important to maintain previously taught objectives throughout the year. Teachers continually teach a new objective while also reviewing previously taught objectives to ensure students are retaining important concepts. Another vital component of our Math program is having students work through corrections on a daily basis. The teachers provide assistance and re-teach as needed. It is important to provide immediate feedback with each child on all lessons to ensure they are learning and are successful before moving on to a new lesson. Our curriculum has the spiraling component built in.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The Science adoptions chosen by the teachers in our school district correlates the TEKS to each unit and all the TEKS for each grade level are covered. We believe effective science instruction integrates science content and experiences with all areas of the curriculum, i.e., reading, writing, and math.

The first unit in Life Science, Living and Nonliving Things, begins with instruction about the senses as well as living and nonliving things, Before the class goes on a nature walk with their magnifying glasses to a near-by park, they dictate and the teacher writes on chart paper what they know about living and nonliving things, what they hope to learn from the walk in the park and what they expect to see and hear. Back in the classroom the students add to the chart and they write in their science experience journals.

The students make a Senses booklet and are encouraged to be creative and imaginative. Students also make a Living and Nonliving booklet using magazines and art supplies provided. A center with magnifying glasses, rocks, and plants, etc. allows students to observe, discuss and report in their journals, and/or compare characteristics on graph paper provided:

Our emphasis is for students to experience success in science as they develop age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of the life, earth, and physical sciences.

5. Instructional Methods:

At our school, teachers employ many and varied techniques as they teach the students. Initial instruction is whole class/direct teach with the teacher presenting the material to the class using classroom textbooks, the dry erase board, the overhead projector, and other appropriate teaching tools. Teachers also utilize homogeneously-grouped, small group instruction, as well as one-on-one instruction. Data from scheduled benchmark tests is utilized to form skill groups to re-teach skills students have not mastered. We also assess weekly the skills taught so that we are able to give students immediate reinforcement in areas in which they are weak. We have a scheduled TEKS enrichment period during the school day. During this time we have instructional aides who work in the classrooms daily to assist the students in learning. This extra help allows us to work with students in small groups and use activities designed to meet individual learning styles of the students. Our school provides teachers with many different programs and manipulatives to use with the children. Some of these programs include the following: Lexia, Kamico computer math, Accelerated Reader, Hooked on Phonics, Accelerated Math, and Voyager Reading. These programs and manipulatives help us challenge all of our students. We have also made numerous learning games and activities that the students use in cooperative learning groups and centers. All students are taught strategies in problem solving to help them throughout life. Students are required to use these strategies daily. Teachers are constantly observing and assessing student achievement. We expect all students to complete work using the strategies we have taught, and if they do not, we require them to do the work again.

In order to achieve all curricular and instructional goals, we feel it is important to maintain a positive school climate by greeting each student at the door when he or she enters our classroom. We also do group affirmations. We acknowledge all students who succeed, no matter how small the

accomplishment. Each six weeks “On a Roll” awards are given to at-risk students to recognize those who have worked extremely hard. Our counselor has provided us with “kindness strips” which are given to students who exhibit good character, manners, and behavior. Students also learn valuable lessons by working hard to earn and accumulate Accelerated Reader points, and learn about choices as they decide how and when to spend their points.

6. Professional Development:

Our professional development program is more of a process than a plan. The process includes identifying weaknesses or gaps in our school program by studying data, by listening to teacher input, and by investigating new programs. Then we search for methods or programs to improve upon those weaknesses.

The most significant professional development we participated in occurred several years ago when we worked with Brazosport ISD to learn their 8-step process for improving student achievement. At the time we had a need to become more focused in our efforts to improve student achievement. We experienced immediate results as we became familiar with and perfected Brazosport’s **plan – do – check – act** instructional cycle.

Another important aspect of our professional development process was participating in training required by the State of Texas. The Texas Teacher Reading Academies for first through third grade were instrumental in improving reading instruction at our campus. Our teachers learned about research-based reading strategies. They came back with effective techniques to use in the classroom to teach reading. Since one of our teachers was an instructor for the Texas Reading Academies, we have utilized her strengths to provide the same training for our para-professionals who work directly with students in the classroom.

Another significant staff development in which our teachers have participated has been Capturing Kids Hearts, which is presented by the Flippen Group(www.flippengroup.com). It focuses on the importance of teachers having a positive, personal relationship with students and a positive classroom management system in place. We have learned that no higher level learning can take place until students’ basic needs of safety and security are met. Since many of our students don’t have these basic needs met at home, we felt it was important for us to focus on this issue. When this program was implemented, our entire school climate changed to a warm, safe, loving, positive place to learn.

Attending this training also has provided our staff with a renewed enthusiasm for teaching. Many of the principles focused on in Capturing Kids Hearts training also directly correlate with the teachings of Ruby Payne in Dealing With Students From Poverty. We have had several follow up sessions with the Flippen Group as a refresher and for new employees.

We regularly take advantage of our own experts to provide training in areas identified as needing improvement. Several years ago we identified problem solving as a weak area in our math department. The data indicated we had a staff member whose students performed well on that objective. We took advantage of that expertise and had her train the rest of our staff. Since that time we have had remarkable improvement in the area of problem solving. That training now takes place annually to review any updates. Our campus experts are also utilized to work with staff members from other campuses to improve vertical alignment.

Our plan is very simple. If the data indicates a deficiency in any area, we will find a way to address the problem. Our philosophy has proven to be successful as our student

7. School Leadership:

Instructional leadership has played a major role in our success. The principal is actively involved with the learning and success of our children. He conferences with each student after every benchmark test, and spends time in classrooms every day working with the children. The students know he cares about them and expects them to do their best. He is an excellent role model. He supports, encourages, and praises the teachers, and expects them, also, to do their best. He "rolls up his sleeves" and becomes actively involved in planning instruction such as writing math benchmark tests. He works with students throughout the day, including after school tutorials and summer school. You will not find him in the office throughout the day, but rather pulling up a chair in classrooms, sitting by students, monitoring their understanding. He encourages teachers to send students to the office to receive praise for academic work and good behavior. He is actively involved in evaluating assessment data and consults regularly with students, teachers, and parents on assessment results.

Teachers at George West Primary School step up and become instructional leaders at our campus. Teachers willingly share their expertise. They willingly help by leading workshops for the teachers on our campus, and by sharing instructional practices at grade level meetings. One teacher who worked with the Education Service Center had special training in teaching phonics, process writing, and in teaching effective, research - based reading strategies. She became and instructional leader and an enabler in those areas in particular for the entire staff.

After years of teaching various math programs that did not meet the needs of the students, two outstanding teachers strived to improve the existing program. They spent hours working together after school, writing a spiraling program, filling in gaps and developing strategies to teach skills the students weren't able to master. As they continued to teach and revise their new program, the teachers witnessed marked improvement in the students' ability to problem solve and understand math concepts. Even more importantly the students became excited about math! Math was fun! The teachers then horizontally aligned the strategies for all math teachers on campus. Now all teachers feel confident that the strategies they teach are the same strategies that are being taught year after year ensuring all students receive a strong foundation in math.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: 20010-2011 Publisher: Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	100	98	100	100	99
Commended Performance	70	49	62	47	57
Number of students tested	90	81	63	72	79
Percent of total students tested	100	93	90	95	93
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	6	7	4	5
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	7	10	5	6
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	95	100	100	97
Commended Performance	62	34	53	40	41
Number of students tested	52	44	36	35	37
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1		1	1	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	95	100	100	97
Commended Performance	62	40	50	39	35
Number of students tested	53	42	28	33	34
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	3	4	5	6	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	3	4	2	5	2
6. White					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100	100	100
Commended Performance	81	59	72	54	73
Number of students tested	36	39	32	37	41
NOTES:					

12TX9

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: 2010-2011 Publisher: Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	100	99	100	99	99
Commended Performance	71	75	72	65	55
Number of students tested	90	81	65	71	78
Percent of total students tested	100	93	93	93	91
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	6	5	5	4
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	7	7	7	5
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	98	100	100	100
Commended Performance	63	66	69	62	43
Number of students tested	52	44	36	34	35
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1		1	1	3
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	98	100	97	100
Commended Performance	66	62	62	55	52
Number of students tested	53	42	29	33	31
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	3	4	4	5	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	3	4	3	5	2
6. White					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100	100	100
Commended Performance	78	90	82	75	62
Number of students tested	36	39	33	36	42
NOTES:					

12TX9

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	98	100	100	99
Commended Performance	70	49	62	47	57
Number of students tested	90	81	63	72	79
Percent of total students tested	100	93	90	95	93
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	6	7	4	5
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	7	10	5	6
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	100	95	100	100	97
Commended Performance	62	34	53	40	41
Number of students tested	52	44	36	35	37
2. African American Students					
Met Standard					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1	0	1	1	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	100	95	100	100	97
Commended Performance	62	40	50	39	35
Number of students tested	53	42	28	33	34
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	3	4	5	6	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	3	4	2	5	2
6. White					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	100
Commended Performance	81	59	72	54	73
Number of students tested	36	39	32	37	41
NOTES:					

12TX9

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	100	99	100	99	99
Commended Performance	71	75	72	65	55
Number of students tested	90	81	65	71	78
Percent of total students tested	100	93	93	93	91
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	6	5	5	4
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