

Ralph Waldo Emerson Elementary School West Region

Frances Godwin, Principal

2007 – 2008

Continuous School Improvement Planning Goals Houston Independent School District

Executive Summary

Information

Emerson Elementary School, built in 1963 and located in the Tanglewilde neighborhood, serves a multicultural population of approximately 725 students. Two new buildings and renovations to the existing building were completed in January of 2007. Almost all of Emerson's students reside in neighboring apartment buildings.

The student body consists of approximately 70% Hispanic students, 23% African American students, 5% Anglo students, and 2% Asian and other students for a total of approximately 725 students. The majority of Hispanic students are English Language Learners (476) with approximately 50% of the student body in bilingual classes. One two-way class is available on each grade level for English and Spanish speakers.

Emerson is a Title 1 school with approximately 93% of the students qualifying for free/reduced lunch and breakfast. The attendance rate is 95.6% and the mobility rate is 23%. Our goal is to improve attendance by 2%

An inclusion model for special needs students exists for students in grades one through five. The inclusion model will be expanded this year using a regular kindergarten teacher and a PPCD teacher in a co-teaching classroom. Content Mastery is available to special needs students on an "as needed" basis. The inclusion team monitors student progress toward IEP goals.

Emerson's mission is to promote positive attitudes for the highest possible learning levels. We value honesty, the diversity of our student population, and collaboration. We know that shared efforts are greater than the outcomes of working alone. We value hard work every day in spite of many challenges.

Academic achievement has improved dramatically since the

2005-2006 school year. We attribute present progress to work as a Professional Learning Community. All student groups have shown growth in all subjects, and students have improved “commended” rates on TAKS tests. Approximately 30% of students achieve commended status in reading and math. They improved their “commended on all tests” 11% in 2007.

Through Value-Added analysis, however, it was discovered that the Gifted and Talented students, although passing, have not made the expected progress in all subject areas. Teachers will examine their practice and adjust their instruction so that students whose progress is consistently high, year after year, will compound their achievement and be ready for a college education. Teachers will use Scholars and Knowledge techniques and Marzano strategies to assure academic success for all students.

In 2007 reading and writing passing scores were in the nineties (reading 93%, writing 95%). Math scores were very close to exemplary (89.4%). Science remains our weakest area with 71% passing. We attribute the low scores mainly to language difficulties of fifth grade students testing for the first time in English.

All teachers, grades PK through fifth will teach Science in English to develop the students’ academic vocabulary to achieve success in Science in fifth grade. Fifth grade teachers will co-teach gender-specific classes in Science. We believe that our Academically Acceptable rating is not indicative of the overall achievement of our students and that the rating will be “Recognized” in 2008.

Stanford and Aprenda scores in 2007 showed improvement from 2006; however more work is needed in first, second and third grade reading and math. The results indicate that students compare better the longer they receive instruction at Emerson. TELPAS scores show a slight deficiency in first and third grades, but generally, students make a year’s growth in English every academic year.

Specific programs that have proven to get results will be continued. These include Success for All for PK through second grades, Sharon Wells Math, Mad Science, and Fast ForWord, Kathy Richardson Assessments, and Reading First. Students in grades 3 through 5 will be taught the Project Clear Reading curriculum instead of Success for All this year. Professional development activities will follow the comprehensive Bernhardt model of Improving Student Learning through Professional Learning Communities.

Teachers will use “power objectives” in reading/language

arts and science. Campus Online will be our main benchmarking tool. Teachers will determine who needs intervention, what needs to be implemented, and then collaboratively work toward differentiating instruction for those in need. We will track both achievement and progress and continue to celebrate both progress and achievement in all grades throughout the school year.

The goal for passing TAKS reading is 94%, Math 91%, Writing 95%, and Science 75% for all students. The SMART Goals deal with Science, Math, and Gifted/Talented improved performance.

Our vision is for Emerson to become an exemplary school. Through ASPIRE we hope to achieve HISD's overall mission of providing high-quality and relevant educational experiences resulting in all students' being college and career-ready.