128 exemplar or recognized schools!
FOUR YEARS AGO, THE DALLAS ISD established bold and ambitious academic achievement goals and embarked on a substantial transformation to reach them. Every year we have moved closer to these goals, and this past year’s accomplishments have put us closer than ever.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of students and school personnel and the support of parents and the community, Dallas ISD schools and students have made substantial gains on many fronts.

This year, 128 schools—more than ever—are rated exemplary or recognized. In addition, the number of Dallas students passing the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills increased in every subject. Even better, the number of students scoring at commended levels went up in every subject.

In addition to these achievements, the U.S. Department of Education announced that four district schools are among only 264 public schools and 50 private schools in the country to be named 2009 National Blue Ribbon Schools: Victor H. Hexter Elementary School, George Peabody Elementary School, George Bannerman Dealey International Academy, and the School of Health Professions at Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Center.

The award honors public and private elementary, middle, and high schools that either are academically superior or have made dramatic gains in student achievement and helped close gaps in achievement among minority and disadvantaged students. In addition, public schools must meet Adequate Yearly Progress, or AYP, in reading (language arts) and mathematics.

The improvements experienced by the district also are reflected in the number of empowered campuses. An empowered campus is one where the principal has autonomy in making decisions over certain aspects of operations and instruction such as hiring of staff and selecting consultants to contribute to the growth of their campus. Empowered campuses have met or exceeded student performance targets, school effectiveness measures, and organizational health measures. The number of campuses with this level of autonomy has increased from 35 in the 2007–2008 school year to 83 in the 2009–2010 school year.

Everyone at the district is proud of the accomplishments of our students and schools and grateful for the support that parents and the community have given us in our work to continue to graduate students college and workforce ready.

Michael Hinojosa, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
NEW INITIATIVE WELCOMES VISITORS BUT PUTS SAFETY FIRST

WHEN PARENTS AND VISITORS arrive at Dallas ISD campuses, they will receive a new welcome at the schools. Each campus will display bright green signs welcoming visitors and directing them to sign in at the office.

The posters and signs are perhaps the most visible part of a districtwide initiative that has brought together several departments that had previously worked on their own to make all schools safe and welcoming for everyone, said Rachel Moon, Student Advocacy and Mentoring coordinator.

“The purpose is to create a safe and welcoming environment so that parents and visitors feel engaged and that they can participate in the schools,” she said. “We hope that parents will feel less intimidated about visiting the schools and approaching teachers about their child’s grades and performance.”

Using the motto “Safety is the key in Dallas ISD,” the initiative also seeks to ensure that safety measures, such as making sure that all visitors register in the school’s office, are followed in every campus, Moon said.

“We wanted to have a standard of what the district’s message is when parents and visitors come to the schools,” she said. And once they get to the office to sign in, “that they will be received in a courteous manner with the four Fs in mind: fast, flexible, focused, and friendly. Everyone knowing the expectations when they arrive on a campus improves safety.”

Other aspects of the Safe and Welcoming Schools initiative that parents, visitors, and students will see this school year are comment cards and surveys that measure customer service, the overall condition of the building, whether student work is visible, and whether they feel safe in the school.

This information is included in each school’s annual scorecard, Moon said.

In order to help schools ensure they are meeting safe and welcoming standards, the departments working on the initiative have developed a manual and a checklist for safe and welcoming “walks” that can be performed by the principal or by members of the school’s Site-Based Decision Making committee.

The initiative, which resulted from one of the recommendations of the Dallas Achieves! Commission, brought together representatives from the Risk Management, Emergency Operations and Compliance, Safe and Civil Schools, Safe and Drug Free Schools, Police and Security Services, and Parent Services and School Choice departments to come up with standards for safe and welcoming schools.

“There’s strength in unity,” Moon said. “When all departments are working together, we’re all emphasizing the same message, and we are sharing what are some of the safety issues we need to address.”
THAT MORE THAN HALF OF DALLAS ISD SCHOOLS have been ranked recognized or exemplary is probably the most exciting news I have heard in quite a while. It is heartening to see that the work students, teachers, parents, administrators, and the community have done together has paid off.

But even more exciting is the news about the schools in District 7. Out of our 31 schools, 23 are exemplary or recognized, and the rest are academically acceptable. All four high schools are either exemplary or recognized.

I am proud of the accomplishments of Oak Cliff schools, and I am looking forward to the work that will be done this school year to get even better results in next spring’s Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills.

The Board of Trustees has taken some steps toward ensuring that our children receive a quality education. In August, we voted to establish beginning salaries for new teachers with a bachelor’s degree at more than $45,000 a year. This competitive salary will help the district attract the best and the brightest teachers. We also gave all teachers and support personnel a much-deserved raise for the current school year. When the budget permits, raises and other monetary incentives allow the district to retain good teachers.

As a trustee, one of my favorite tasks is to attend ground-breaking and dedication ceremonies for new schools. I’m looking forward to doing this when work begins soon on W.H. Adamson High School’s new facility—one of the first projects of the 2008 bond program. The students deserve a state-of-the-art school that is a tribute to the level of achievement they have reached.

As always, I encourage you to get involved in our schools as a volunteer or as a mentor, working one-on-one with a student. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing students learn and reach new goals.

Jerome Garza
District 7 Trustee
Oak Cliff high school raises the academic stakes

At Sunset High School when the bells ring, students fill the hallways, resolutely moving to their next period. Few of them stand around talking. There’s a sense of purpose and determination as they maneuver columns, corners, and fellow students.

Once the second bell rings, only one or two stragglers can be seen in the hallways, and they are quickly ushered to their classroom. Learning is serious business at Sunset—it is what earned this Oak Cliff school the title of recognized from the Texas Education Agency.

Teachers, school employees, and principal Tony Tovar (below, left) know that learning is a collaborative process that starts even before students set foot in the classroom. Sunset High School has embraced changes implemented districtwide in the way teachers teach and students learn. Collaboration periods for teachers are one of the biggest reasons why student achievement has improved, said Tovar.

“For so many years, teachers got their degree, got a job, went to their classroom, and worked in isolation,” he said. “Now they work together, they share, they get the training they need, and they continue to get better and better.”

Students also collaborate because they are set up in small learning communities, which allow the same groups of students in each grade to have the same teachers. These teachers then talk to other grade-level and subject-matter teachers to share strategies. There are seven ninth-grade “houses,” or groups of students, who will be in the same groups in 10th grade.

“This way, we can better keep an eye on the kids, see how they are doing, and if they need extra help, we give it to them right away,” Tovar said.

Because studies have shown that how well students do in ninth grade determines whether they will complete high school, Tovar and his staff have made sure the freshmen not only receive academic help but also get mentors from among the school’s juniors and seniors. More than 85 percent of last year’s ninth-graders are in 10th grade this year.

Increased participation from parents and the community also has contributed to the school’s academic gains. PTA meetings at the high school often have more than 130 parents in attendance. And the school’s parenting classes also are well attended.

“What got us here was hard work and collaboration,” Tovar said. “We are going in the right direction. Now, we have to make sure that we continue moving forward.”

CONTACT INFORMATION
Jerome Garza
District 7: North Central Oak Cliff and parts of West Dallas
Dallas ISD Constituent Services:
(972) 925-5555

DISTRICT 7 SCHOOLS
HIGH SCHOOLS
• W.H. Adamson (R)
• Trinidad “Trini” Garza Early College (E)
• Moisés E. Molina (R)
• Sunset (R)

MIDDLE SCHOOLS
• Hector P. Garcia
• W.E. Greiner (R)
• Raúl Quintanilla Sr.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
• Gabe P. Allen (R)
• Arcadia Park (R)
• Mary McLeod Bethune (R)
• Felix G. Botello (R)
• James Bowie (E)
• Nancy J. Cochran
• Lorenzo DeZavala
• L.O. Donald
• Lenore Kirk Hall
• Margaret B. Henderson (R)
• James S. Hogg (R)
• Lida Hooe (R)
• Anson Jones (E)
• Louise Wolff Kahn (R)
• Sidney Lanier (E)
• George Peabody (E)
• John F. Peeler (R)
• John H. Reagan
• Rosemont (R)
• Rosemont Primary School – Chris V. Semos Campus (R)
• Arturo Salazar (R)
• Celestino Mauricio Soto Jr. (R)
• Stevens Park
• Winnetka (R)

E: Exemplary • R: Recognized
2009–2010 school year
Distance classes enrich student learning

Instruction in less commonly taught languages—Russian, Japanese, and Chinese—is now available to students in several Dallas ISD schools thanks to the district’s distance learning program.

Through a U.S. Department of Education Foreign Language Assistance Program grant, students at several secondary schools have the opportunity to study these languages through video instruction.

W.H. Adamson and Skyline high schools offer all three courses to interested students for the 2009–2010 school year. Approximately 26 students at Adamson High School are continuing their study of these three languages for the second year.

For the first time in eight years, a Japanese distance learning course, Irasshai, is being offered to students at Skyline, and more than 60 students have signed up to take the course. Another 45 students study Chinese I and II: A Journey to China, and 55 are enrolled in Russian World I–III classes.

To encourage future enrollment in these languages at the high school level, students in three middle schools also are learning about the culture, customs, history, and languages of Russia and Japan. During the school year, the classes will take field trips to an Asian museum and participate in a Russian festival. Approximately 160 students at the William B. Travis Academy/Vanguard for the Academically Talented and Gifted and the Alex W. Spence Talented/Gifted Academy alternate semesters studying Japanese and Russian. Another 50 students at Harry Stone Montessori study Russian.

Elementary students are not left out. In prekindergarten through third grade, students have the opportunity to learn Spanish this year. Nuevos Amigos is designed to bring Spanish language instruction to students through a fun and interactive format. This program targets English-speaking students who want to learn Spanish as a second language. It also benefits Spanish-speaking students who want to maintain or improve their native language. Enrollment brochures are mailed to the schools in early September.

For more information about any of these distance learning programs, contact Vicky Mitcham Probeck at (972) 925-3117 or vmitcham@dallasisd.org.

Students get head start on high school

This fall’s ninth-graders got help this summer to strengthen their math, science, and language arts skills as they prepared to enter high school.

A new, two-week High School Early Start Academy was held at each of the district’s 22 comprehensive high schools Aug. 3–13.

H. Grady Spruce High School began its program on July 27.

Each academy offered a variety of fun enrichment activities that allowed students to explore specific areas of interest.

Transportation and meals were provided to students during the program. The High School Early Start program was supported by funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act stimulus package.
THE DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT has more exemplary and recognized schools than at any time in the district’s history, according to ratings released by the Texas Education Agency.

Forty-six Dallas ISD campuses have been rated exemplary, while 82 more have been rated recognized. The number of exemplary campuses has more than tripled from two years ago, while the number of recognized campuses has more than doubled during the same period. The total number has risen from 47 exemplary and recognized campuses two years ago to 128, meaning that more than 56 percent of Dallas schools earned the state’s top two ratings.

## EXEMPLARY SCHOOLS

- Nathan Adams Elementary School
- James B. Bonham Elementary School
- James Bowie Elementary School
- Jimmie Tyler Brashear Elementary School
- John Neely Bryan Elementary School
- Dallas Environmental Science Academy
- George B. Dealey Montessori School (PK–5)
- George B. Dealey International Academy (6–8)
- Julius Dorsey Elementary School
- James W. Fannin Elementary School
- Julia C. Frazier Elementary School
- Trinidad “Trini” Garza Early College High School
- Kathryn Joy Gilliam Collegiate Academy
- Victor H. Esterly Elementary School
- Stonewall Jackson Elementary School
- Anson Jones Elementary School
- Arthur Kramer Elementary School
- Lakewood Elementary School
- Sidney Lanier Expressive Arts Vanguard
- William Lipscumb Elementary School
- Ronald E. McNair Elementary School
- Middle College High School
- William Brown Miller Elementary School
- Mount Auburn Elementary School
- George Peabody Elementary School
- Elisha M. Pease Elementary School
- Irma Lerma Rangel Young Women’s Leadership School
- Charles Rice Learning Center
- Oran M. Roberts Elementary School
- Judge Barefoot Sanders Magnet Center for Public Service; Government, Law and Law Enforcement at Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Center
- School for the Talented and Gifted at Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Center
- School of Business and Management at Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Center
- School of Education and Social Services at Yvonne Ewell Townview Center

## RECOGNIZED SCHOOLS

- John Quincy Adams Elementary School
- W.H. Adamson High School
- Birdie Alexander Elementary School
- Gabe P. Allen Charter School
- William M. Anderson Elementary School
- Arcadia Park Elementary School
- Arlington Park Community Learning Center
- Bayles Elementary School
- Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School
- Felix G. Botello Elementary School
- Rufus C. Burleson Elementary School
- William L. Cabell Elementary School
- E.P. Caillot Elementary School
- Casa View Elementary School
- César Chávez Learning Center
- City Park Elementary School
- Leila P. Cowart Elementary School
- B.F. Darrell Math, Science, and Technology Vanguard
- Everette Lee DeGolyer Elementary School
- Paul L. Dunbar Learning Center
- Stephen C. Foster Elementary School
- Anne Frank Elementary School
- Charles A. Gill Elementary School
- Henry B. Gonzalez Elementary School
- Tom C. Gooch Elementary School
- W.E. Greiner Exploratory Arts Academy
- Margaret B. Henderson Elementary School
- Onesimo Hernandez Elementary School
- Highland Meadows Elementary School
- James S. Hogg Elementary School
- Lida Hooe Elementary School
- L.L. Hotchkiss Elementary School
- Sam Houston Elementary School
- Albert Sidney Johnston Elementary School
- Jerry R. Junkins Elementary School
- Louise Wolff Kahn Elementary School
- John F. Kennedy Learning Center
- Edwin J. Kiest Elementary School
- Martin Luther King Jr. Learning Center
- Kleberg Elementary School
- Obadiah Knight Elementary School
- Richard Lagow Elementary School
- Robert E. Lee Elementary School
- Lisbon Elementary School
- Harry C. Withers Elementary School
- William B. Travis Academy/Vanguard for the Academically Talented and Gifted (6–8)
- Adelle Turner Elementary School
- Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts
- Phillis Wheatley Elementary School
- Harry C. Withers Elementary School

A. Ewell Townview Center
- School of Health Professions at Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Center
- School of Science and Engineering at Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Center
- Erasmo Seguin Community Learning Center
- J.P. Starks Elementary School
- Harry Stone Montessori School (PK–5)
- Harry Stone Montessori Academy (6–8)
- H.S. Thompson Learning Center
- William B. Travis Academy/Vanguard for the Academically Talented and Gifted (4–5)
- William B. Travis Academy/Vanguard for the Academically Talented and Gifted (6–8)
- K.B. Polk Center for Academatically Talented and Gifted
- Preston Hollow Elementary School
- J.W. Ray Elementary School
- Martha Turner Reilly Elementary School
- Reinhardt Elementary School
- Rosemont Elementary School
- Rosemont Primary School-Cris V. Semos Campus
- Clinton P. Russell Elementary School
- Arturo Salazar Elementary School
- San Jacinto Elementary School
- Alex Sanger Elementary School
- Ascher Silverstein Elementary School
- Mauricio Celestino Soto Jr. Elementary School
- Leslie A. Stemmons Elementary School
- Jill Stone Elementary School at Vickery Meadow
- Sunset High School
- T.G. Terry Elementary School
- Thomas Tolbert Elementary School
- Mark Twain Leadership Vanguard
- Urban Park Elementary School
- Ewell D. Walker Middle School
- Walnut Hill Elementary School
- Martin Weiss Elementary School
- Winnetka Elementary School
- Ignacio Zaragoza Elementary School
2008 BOND PROGRAM UPDATE

The 2008 bond program is progressing as expected, and the first group of construction contracts have begun the bidding phase. Actual construction will begin in earnest in the spring.

Property acquisition for the new schools is making good progress. Architects, engineers, and program managers are actively involved in design work for new school and renovation projects involving almost 100 schools.

Town hall presentations have been held to inform the community about the designs for three schools in Wilmer-Hutchins—a new elementary school and renovations to Wilmer Hutchins High School and Kennedy-Curry Middle School; W.H. Adamson High School replacement; and the new George Herbert Walker Bush Elementary School.

The Construction Services (Bond) Department has moved to the Stephen J. Hay Building, 3801 Herschel Ave. The building is centrally located in the Oak Lawn area and will not only save the program more than $1 million but make good use of a vacant district building.

DISTRICT LEADERS RECOGNIZE PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

Generosity, concern, and consistency are characteristics shared by the individuals, organizations, and businesses recognized by the Board of Trustees and Superintendent of Schools Michael Hinojosa as 2009 Dallas ISD Partners in Education award winners. Trustees and the superintendent presented seven awards to top donors and supporters and district staff who coordinate volunteer programs in recognition of their contributions to schools and the district as a whole.

- **Superintendent’s Award**
  North Dallas Chamber of Commerce

- **Emmett J. Conrad Extra Mile Award**
  Central Market

- **Outstanding School Partnership Coordinator**
  Linda Cano, Harry C. Withers Elementary School

- **Outstanding Partner**
  Church of the Incarnation
  (North Dallas High School, J.W. Ray Learning Center, and Ben Milam Elementary School)

- **Outstanding Business Partner**
  Metro Graphics
  (Harry C. Withers Elementary School)

- **Outstanding Elementary School Volunteer Award**
  Adriana Zuñiga, Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School

- **Outstanding Secondary School Volunteer Award**
  Isabel Aguilar, John B. Hood Middle School

HAVE A CONCERN ABOUT THE DALLAS ISD?

To register concerns about the Dallas ISD, call Constituent Services at (972) 925-5555 between 7:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays or send an e-mail to constituentservices@dallasisd.org. Constituent Services uses an automated call/concern tracking system to provide prompt and efficient solutions to concerns raised by parents or guardians and members of the community.

To offer opinions or comments to district leadership, e-mail comments@dallasisd.org.