

Ericka Austin named new principal of Sugar Grove Middle School



Ericka Austin has been selected as the new principal of Sugar Grove Middle School. Ericka Austin spent her early career as a leader in the non-profit sector, supporting school improvement for students and teachers in Haiti and designing outreach programs for children living in group homes. Garnering national recognition for her philanthropic work and success in the supplemental and enrichment education industry, Austin brought her talents to the public education sector in 2009. Serving as a 5th-grade math and science teacher and later,

grade-level chair, Austin introduced several new initiatives to her Title I school in Arlington ISD including the implementation of Professional Learning Communities and data protocols while supporting young learners to achieve consistently high TAKS/STAAR results for five years.

Austin joined HISD in 2014 as a Teacher Specialist at Thurgood Marshall Elementary and was instrumental in the turnaround work there. While serving as a Teacher Specialist at High School Ahead Academy from 2015-2018, she was the administrator charged with overseeing curriculum, instruction, and assessment for the campus. During the 2018-2019 school year, Austin served in the role of Data Driven Instructional Specialist supporting students, teachers, and leadership teams of several campuses with a prioritized focus on Booker T. Washington High School and its efforts to meet state accountability standards.

Austin was named principal at High School Ahead Academy in the summer of 2019. She is most proud of the work transforming the culture and restructuring the academic program at the district's specialty campus for over-age middle school students. Her committed leadership at High School Ahead Academy yielded a significant improvement in campus safety, considerable increases in student achievement, and impactful professional development for the Tier II leaders and instructional staff. She was named Achieve 180 New Secondary Principal of the Year.

Austin earned her Bachelor's of Science degree at the University of Central Arkansas and a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Arkansas.