

Houston Independent School District 168 Hartsfield Elementary School

2023-2024 Campus Improvement Plan

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Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Introduction This Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) aims to identify the strengths and areas for improvement at Hartsfield Elementary School in Houston, TX. The CNA is a critical tool for guiding the development of effective strategies to enhance student learning and overall school performance.

1. Demographic Overview

In the heart of 77021 stands Hartsfield Elementary - an unassuming façade that houses not just the promising bright young minds of tomorrow but a unique opportunity to promote an ecosystem that breathes life into the educational experience. It's not uncommon for Pre K - 5th graders to recite their lessons beside an alligator or understand the value of biodiversity while observing a tarantula up close.

As you step onto the campus, you are greeted by a symphony of life - from drones in the sky maneuvered by students to snakes and baby chicks, a vivid testament to the status as HISD's only Animal and Environmental Science magnet elementary school. But this is more than just an interactive animal or STEM exhibit; it's a living representation of the belief system. At Hartsfield Elementary, the students learn that challenges and fears are mere steppingstones.

Challenge Accepted – these two words echo throughout the corridors, resonating with the spirit of every Hartsfield student. It's not just a motto, but the dominating thread in the fabric of the school's developing culture. The commitment to confronting challenges head-on and persevering, regardless of the odds, is what sets the community apart. At Hartsfield, we preach that every child has the potential to be a beacon of hope and change. With a history of academic excellence, students are taught to push boundaries, question norms, and prepare to lead in a globalized society. The Animal and Environmental Sciences Magnet exists to weave a tapestry of knowledge, nurturing scholars through robust academics, passionate educators, intentional actions, and a foundation of unshakeable ethics.

HISD has the lowest property tax rate of the 20-plus school districts in Harris County. Hartsfield Elementary, like most of the 159 other elementary schools' students are 100% free and reduce lunch. Our Students by Ethnicity include:

- __ Black
- __ Latinx
- __ White
- __ Other

Other Student populations data include:

- 100% English speakers
- ___ Special Education
- ___ Enrolled in after school programs
- 0 suspensions

Our 15 teachers, 3 administrative staff, 3 professionals, and 4 executive leadership team, travel from throughout Harris County and offers a diversity of experiences, resources and talents including:

- _ Ph.D.
- _ Masters
- _ Special Certifications
- _ 10 years of education experience
- _ Other unique qualifications

However, while the spirit is indomitable, The 77021community presents real-world challenges. From air and noise pollution to traffic concerns, high unemployment, food deserts, and the vulnerabilities of flooding and crime, Hartsfield isn't isolated from the struggles of urban life. But it's in facing these adversities that we teach our students invaluable life lessons about resilience, adaptation, and community support.

2. Student Achievement

At Hartsfield Elementary, our commitment to academic excellence is reflected in the daily use of high-quality instructional materials and adherence to grade-level teaching standards. Our instructional approach is designed to maximize student engagement and learning outcomes.

Instructional Practices and Strategies

- **Daily Use of Quality Materials:** Our classrooms are equipped with state-of-the-art instructional materials that are utilized daily to provide a robust learning experience.
- **Effective Classroom Routines:** We emphasize effective classroom routines focused on quality instruction, ensuring a consistent and conducive learning environment.
- **MRS Strategies for Engagement:** Motivate, Reflect, and Scaffold (MRS) strategies are integral to our teaching methods, aimed at increasing student engagement and understanding.
- **Data-Driven Instruction:** Utilizing multiple sources of data, including Daily Oral Language (DOL) assessments, we tailor instruction and acceleration based on individual student needs. This approach allows us to adapt our teaching methods to meet students at their level of understanding.
- **Incentives:** Incorporating incentives such as field trips, gifts, and other rewards into instructional practices is a powerful strategy that enhances student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes. These incentives significantly contribute to a positive and effective learning environment.

Strengths in Student Achievement

Based on the review of the 2022-2023 data, we have identified several key strengths:

- **Improvement in STAAR ALT Data:** There has been a significant increase in STAAR ALT data compared to the previous year, indicating progress in standardized assessments.
- **Balanced Achievement Levels:** Students' performance across the STAAR assessment categories shows a distribution with 51.3% at Approaches, 20.3% at Meets, and 5.9% at Masters levels. This distribution highlights areas where students are excelling and where there is room for improvement.

Areas of Opportunity

- **Enhancing Higher Achievement Levels:** There is a notable opportunity to improve the 'Meets' and 'Masters' levels in all content areas. Strategies to address this include differentiated instruction, targeted interventions, and enrichment programs.
- **Enhancing Higher Achievement Levels:** Investing in supplemental pay for qualified teachers to participate in after school programs is a strategic approach to enhancing student achievement. It provides additional academic support, fosters a positive learning environment, and offers numerous benefits that extend beyond the classroom.

Problems of Practice and Root Causes

1. **Gap in First Instruction Delivery:** A primary challenge is the gap in the effectiveness of initial instruction delivery. This gap contributes to disparities in student performance and hinders the closing of achievement gaps.
 - **Root Cause Analysis:** The gaps observed in early grades have not been adequately addressed, leading to a cycle of underperformance as students progress through grades. This issue may stem from a lack of targeted early interventions, inconsistencies in teaching quality, or insufficient support for students with diverse learning needs.

Proposed Solutions

- **Professional Development:** Enhancing teacher training to focus on early intervention strategies and differentiated instruction.
- **Early Intervention Programs:** Implementing programs in lower grades to address learning gaps at an early stage.
- **Consistent Monitoring and Support:** Regularly assessing student progress and providing additional support where necessary.

3. School Culture and Climate

In the wake of the state takeover of HISD, where 40% of schools have been rated F, Hartsfield Elementary stands out not just for its challenges, but for its unique potential. As the only Elementary Animal and Environment Magnet school in the state, Hartsfield has the opportunity to become a beacon of innovative education in a district striving for transformation. The culture and climate are foundational to our educational success. We pride ourselves on creating an environment where learning thrives, and students grow. Our culture is deeply rooted in positive engagement, fostering a sense of belonging and success for each child.

Current State of School Culture and Climate

- **Unique Magnet Program:** Despite the lack of dedicated funding, our magnet programs in animal and environmental studies offer a unique educational experience. These programs have the potential to inspire and engage students in ways that traditional curricula cannot.
- **Community Challenges:** Located in a distressed community, Hartsfield faces challenges such as minimal parental engagement and internal theft issues. The inactive PTO and absence of a full-time parent engagement coordinator further exacerbate these challenges.

- **Positive Developments:** Amidst these challenges, there are bright spots. Our wraparound specialist has successfully secured community partners, indicating a growing interest and investment in our school’s potential.
- **Positive Learning Environment:** The school atmosphere at Hartsfield ES significantly fosters successful learning. With zero suspensions, minimal behavioral issues, and limited absences and tardies, our students are primarily focused on their academic growth.
- **Data-Driven Student Focus:** The effective use of data has guided students to concentrate more on their learning progress rather than disruptive behaviors. This approach has been bolstered by the commitment of our teachers in diligently working to improve student data and facilitate growth.
- **Improved Classroom Management:** Compared to previous years, classroom management has seen substantial improvement, contributing positively to the overall school climate. This improvement is a result of careful planning and the implementation of quality management systems.

School Culture and Climate Strengths

- **Urgency in Closing Achievement Gaps:** Staff collaboration and positive attitudes have been crucial in creating a beneficial atmosphere. The collective sense of urgency to close achievement gaps has resulted in effective teamwork, particularly between teachers and teacher apprentices.

Extracurricular Activities and Student Engagement

- **Diverse Extracurricular Opportunities:** The school offers a range of extracurricular activities, including dance, basketball, and football. We are working towards revitalizing the Junior Master Gardener and Animal Ambassador program before the end of the year. These activities play a significant role in enhancing student engagement and providing holistic educational experiences.
- **Impact on Engagement:** Participation in these programs has been linked to increased student engagement, contributing to a positive school culture and providing students with opportunities to develop new skills and interests.

Addressing Safety and Community Concerns

(A) Concerns Regarding Safety and Community Behavior: There are concerns about safety after dark and the presence of male adults from the community engaging in toxic behaviors near the campus.

Proposed Solution: Increasing security presence, particularly around dismissal of afterschool program, could be an effective deterrent to such behaviors, thereby enhancing the safety and well-being of our students. Community partners like HPD, Constable Office and Sheriff Department offer no cost solutions.

(B) Concerns Regarding Unapproved Use of School Assets: Over time a culture of impunity or a lack of oversight or inadequate security create opportunities for theft to increase. This behavior requires a nuanced understanding of the underlying causes. It's important to note that theft by employees is a complex issue and can be influenced by various factors.

Proposed Solutions: Enhancing Security Measures: Improving physical security and surveillance can act as a deterrent against theft.

Providing Support for Employees in Need: Offering assistance programs for employees facing financial or personal difficulties can help mitigate some of the pressures that might lead to theft.

Innovative Attendance and Engagement Strategies

- **Everyday Labs Platform:** The wrap-around specialist has access to the Everyday Labs platform, a powerful tool supporting attendance outreach initiatives. This platform excels in:
 - **Efficient Tracking:** Streamlining attendance monitoring.
 - **Data Analysis:** Providing insightful data for informed decision-making.
 - **Automated Tasks:** Reducing manual workload.
 - **Communication Tools:** Facilitating effective communication with families.
 - **Resource Planning:** Aiding in strategic planning and resource allocation.

Problems of Practice: School Culture and Climate Needs

- **Adjustment to New Educational Systems:** The transition to new teaching methodologies has required significant adjustments among educators and staff.
- **Concerns with Comprehensive Planning:** There is a noted lack of expressed dedication to comprehensive planning and curriculum alignment among some staff members.
- **Campus Improvement Engagement:** Certain staff members have shown a lack of concern for campus improvement, indicating a need for further engagement and motivation strategies.

Proposed Solutions:

- Addressing the problems of practice requires time and further research. The executive team will work to develop solutions in the next 30 days.

Hartsfield Elementary is committed to maintaining a positive and safe learning environment. While we celebrate our strengths in creating a nurturing and effective educational atmosphere, we are also actively addressing the challenges. Through continuous improvement, engagement strategies, and community collaboration, we aim to enhance our school culture and climate, ensuring every student has the opportunity to thrive.

5. Parent and Community Engagement

Parental and community engagement at Hartsfield Elementary requires a multifaceted approach that not only builds on existing strengths but also addresses the unique challenges of our community. Our goal is to foster a more inclusive, interactive, and resourceful engagement environment. Engaging parents can be challenging due to a variety of factors. Assessing these challenges is an ongoing requirement as our enrollment changes. Although current levels of parental involvement are low our priority is to improve with the support of the district.

Current Engagement Initiatives and Strengths

- **Interactive Family Events:** Hartsfield currently hosts annual Math, Literacy, and STEM Nights with hands-on activities. These events have proven successful in engaging both parents and scholars.

- **Strong Community Partnerships:** Partnerships with Houston Public Library, Unity National Bank, the University of Houston, and One More Child provide a range of services from after-school programs to family support.
- **Communication and Involvement Efforts:** The school engages parents through Class Dojo, flyers, and phone calls. Initiatives like Coffee with the Principal and PTO meetings, though currently low in attendance, are valuable platforms for engagement.
- **Community Garden Program:** This program not only educates families about ecology and biology but also supports them with fresh food, demonstrating a practical impact on the community.

Identified Challenges and Proposed Solutions

- **Barrier to Parental Involvement:** A key challenge is the inability to provide hot meals during events, which is believed to be a deterrent to higher participation. Providing meals could significantly increase attendance and engagement.
- **Consistent Daily Communication:** The need for more effective daily communication with parents is evident. Using platforms predominantly used by parents and ensuring all have access to and understand how to use these platforms, such as Class Dojo, is crucial.

Strategies for Enhanced Parental Engagement

1. **Student Data Conferences:** Hosting quarterly Student Data Conferences per year allows students to present their progress and goals to their parents, fostering ownership of their learning. Accompanying these conferences with engaging activities, like a Mad Science-themed event, adds an element of fun and interactive learning.
2. **Structured Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Conducting regular Parent-Teacher Conferences, starting from Pre-K, would provide opportunities to discuss students' academic and social-emotional progress. Offering these conferences virtually and in-person enhances accessibility for all parents.
3. **Expanding Community Partnership Programs:** Strengthening relationships with existing partners and exploring new partnerships can provide more diverse resources and support to families. This includes extending the range of educational, financial, and wellness services available to the community.
4. **Incorporating Feedback Mechanisms:** Regular surveys and feedback sessions can help understand the evolving needs of parents and the community, allowing the school to adapt its engagement strategies effectively.
5. **Dedicated Parent/Community Engagement Staff:** Hiring a full-time parent/community engagement coordinator would centralize efforts, provide consistent support for initiatives, and serve as a direct liaison between the school and its community.
6. **Promoting Parental Skills Development:** Offering workshops and resources for parents to develop skills to support their children's learning at home, including literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Data Documentation

The following data were used to verify the comprehensive needs assessment analysis:

Improvement Planning Data

District goals

Campus goals

HB3 Reading and math goals for PreK-3

Campus/District improvement plans (current and prior years)

Planning and decision making committee(s) meeting data

State and federal planning requirements

Accountability Data

Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) data

Student Achievement Domain

Student Progress Domain

Effective Schools Framework data

Comprehensive, Targeted, and/or Additional Targeted Support Identification data

Accountability Distinction Designations

Student Data: Assessments

State and federally required assessment information

STAAR current and longitudinal results, including all versions

STAAR released test questions

Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) and TELPAS Alternate results

Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI), Tejas LEE, or other alternate early reading assessment results

Think Through Math assessment data for Grades 3-8 and Algebra I (TEA approved statewide license)

Local diagnostic reading assessment data

Local benchmark or common assessments data

Running Records results

Observation Survey results

Student Data: Student Groups

Race and ethnicity data, including number of students, academic achievement, discipline, attendance, and rates of progress between groups

Special programs data, including number of students, academic achievement, discipline, attendance, and rates of progress for each student group

Male / Female performance, progress, and participation data

Special education/non-special education population including discipline, progress and participation data

At-risk/non-at-risk population including performance, progress, discipline, attendance, and mobility data

Emergent Bilingual (EB) /non-EB data, including academic achievement, progress, support and accommodation needs, race, ethnicity, gender etc.

Section 504 data

Homeless data

Gifted and talented data

Key Actions

Key Action 1: The percentage of 3rd-5th grade students performing at or above grade level in reading as measured by the Meets Grade Level Standard on STAAR will increase from 17% to 40% by the end of the 2024 school year.

Strategic Priorities:

Expanding Educational Opportunities

Indicator of Success 1:

The percentage of 3rd-5th grade students performing at or above grade level in reading as measured by the Meets Grade Level

Standard on STAAR will increase from 17% to 40% by the end of the 2024 school year.

Key Action 2: The percentage of 3rd-5th grade students performing at or above grade level in math as measured by the Meets Grade Level Standard on STAAR will increase from 28% to 40% by the end of the 2024 school year.

Indicator of Success 1:

The percentage of 3rd-5th grade students performing at or above grade level in math as measured by the Meets Grade Level Standard

on STAAR will increase from 28% to 40% by the end of the 2024 school year.

Key Action 3: The percentage of 5th grade students performing at or above grade level in science as measured by the Meets Grade Level Standard on STAAR will increase from 3% to 25% by the end of the 2024 school year.

Indicator of Success 1:

The percentage of 5th grade students performing at or above grade level in science as measured by the Meets Grade Level Standard on

STAAR will increase from 3% to 25% by the end of the 2024 school year.

As we conclude the comprehensive campus improvement plan for Hartsfield Elementary, it is important to reflect on the journey we have embarked upon and the path that lies ahead. This plan, crafted with meticulous care and deep commitment, lays the groundwork for a transformative educational experience for all our students and their families. Our collective effort as educators, parents, community members, and stakeholders reflects our unwavering dedication to the success and well-being of each child who walks through the doors of Hartsfield Elementary.

In this plan, we have outlined strategic actions and innovative approaches to address the unique challenges and harness the distinct opportunities our school community presents. From enhancing academic achievement and improving school culture and climate to fostering robust parent and community engagement, our goals are ambitious yet achievable. We recognize the importance of adapting to changing needs and continuously evaluating our progress, always keeping the best interests of our students at the forefront.

As we move forward, it is crucial that we maintain the momentum generated by this plan. The implementation of our strategies requires persistence, collaboration, and a shared vision. We are committed to regular and transparent communication with all stakeholders, ensuring that our community is informed and involved every step of the way.

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the development of this plan. Your insights, expertise, and passion are the driving forces behind our pursuit of excellence. Together, we are not just addressing immediate needs but also laying the foundation for a future where every student at Hartsfield Elementary has the opportunity to thrive, grow, and succeed.

Our journey does not end here. It evolves and continues with each day, each challenge, and each triumph. With our collective efforts, resilience, and commitment, we are confident that Hartsfield Elementary will reach new heights of educational excellence and become a model of success within our community and beyond.

Let us move forward with hope, determination, and the unwavering belief that every child has the potential to achieve greatness. Our work continues, and our resolve remains stronger than ever. Together, we will make a difference in the lives of our students and shape a brighter future for all.

Hartsfield Elementary – #ChallengeAccepted.