

**HISD schools using new resource for student interventions**

*Universal screener allows teachers to identify struggling students and provide targeted plan of action*

*Nov. 14, 2017* – All HISD schools are using a new resource to ensure students who need interventions in reading and/or math receive the support they need.

The resource, called universal screener, allows teachers to measure the current skillset of a student using a brief assessment that is conducted three times per school year. The data gathered from those assessments allows teachers to identify students who need interventions, plan a course of action to target their academic needs, and monitor their progress throughout the school year.

“By using the universal screener and the immediate data it provided, we were able to start interventions week one, we didn’t have to wait,” said Lysette Cooper, principal of Cook Elementary.  Cook is one of 45 schools that are part of Achieve 180, a research-based action plan to support the district’s most historically underserved and academically challenged schools.

HISD decided to implement a universal screener, provided by Renaissance 360, districtwide for the 2017-2018 school year.  It is the first time a K-12, common universal screener for both math and reading has been implemented across all schools in the district.

At the Nov. 9 Board of Education meeting, Cooper, along with several other principals and school support officers, lauded the new resource and elaborated on how schools are using data to drive instruction and implement interventions.

“Forty-nine percent of our students at our Achieve 180 campuses are sitting in the urgent category of reading interventions,” Schools Support Officer Dana Arreola told the board. ”To us this is a very serious charge that we have before us. We are working with our A180 teachers and principals on identifying literacy strategies to make sure our students are getting the right interventions.”

“In an effort to support our English teachers who have students in their classrooms with elementary grade equivalent reading levels, we are pairing them with exemplar teachers who implement Literacy by Three with success,” she said.  “So reading teachers from our elementary schools are even being paired with teachers at the secondary level, who are not used to conducting reading interventions, to share best practices.”

All HISD teachers and principals have trained on Renaissance 360, and all schools have conducted their first assessment of students. Teachers are now using the data to drive instruction in their classroom and plan a targeted a course of intervention for each student based on their skill level and need. Achieve 180 campuses will also be using data from the universal screener to empower parents.

“I am really excited that are Family and Community Department will be sharing the universal screener data with our parents- what it means, how it works-under a new program they have developed,” Superintendent Richard  Carranza told board members. “This will allow our parents to have better conversations with their child’s teachers and know what areas they are struggling in.”