



Klein ISD News

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We're More Than a Rating: Krahn Elementary

KLEIN, TX – His staff. That's what Krahn Elementary principal Frank Ward says makes his campus so successful.

"Staff plays a powerful role in making sure our school moves forward, making sure that everyone is on the same page," said Ward.

Under Ward's leadership, the school has taken an active role in Professional Learning Communities (PLC). PLCs offer staff the opportunity to collaborate with each other and learn from each other's experiences. They also take part in vertical learning teams where staff plan on how they can make students stronger in the upcoming school year.

Beginning last year, Krahn took reading to the next level by creating programs and spaces to solely focus on the love of reading.

"We were trying to instill the love of reading," said Ward. "We received a grant from Lowe's that funded our Reading Garden. There are no huge expectations, other than for students to go in the garden and read and enjoy."

With the help of the Lowe's Toolbox 4 Education Grant, the Reading Garden was created as a brightly colored outdoor space that includes a walking path, flowers, and wooden teepees for students to sit in. The staff at Krahn hopes that the whimsical garden will serve as a place where students, teachers, and faculty can immerse themselves in their books.

In addition to promoting the love of reading among students, Krahn also stepped up its Nurtured Heart program to help staff better understand student's disciplinary needs. The program helped staff decipher between behavioral problems that required allowing a student time to cool down and think about their actions instead of an office referral. This led to more classroom time for the students who did not need full disciplinary action.

When asked about the upcoming A-F rating system, Ward admits he does not like the stereotype that schools may potentially receive based on this one letter grade.

"We have 750 kids that have different needs and wants and different backgrounds," said Ward. "To assign one letter grade to identify everything done across our campus all year, may appear to the community as though our campus isn't working as hard."

The new rating system passed by the 84th Texas Legislature in 2015, has the potential to appear to diminish this current success. House Bill 2804 made significant changes to the state public school accountability system, moving the ratings from either Met Standard or Improvement Required to the creation of an A-F rating system for district and campus performance. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) Commissioner must submit a report to the Legislature by Jan. 1, 2017, exhibiting the grade each district and campus would have received for the 2016 testing period.

The ratings assigned to each district and campus will include five domains:

- Domain I Meeting standards at satisfactory and college readiness levels on State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR).
- Domain II STAAR annual improvement at satisfactory and college readiness levels.
- Domain III Reducing "academic achievement gaps among students with different racial and ethnic groups or

The Klein Independent School District (ISD) is located in north Harris County and has more than 50,600 students in its 31 elementary, one early childhood/pre-K center, nine intermediate, and four high schools. Visit the district online at www.kleinisd.net, and follow Klein ISD on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or through [KleINTOUCH](#).



socioeconomic backgrounds.”

Domain IV

Academic attainments (other than STAAR)

- High School: including dropout and graduation rates, Career and Technical Education (CTE) sequence completion, Advanced Placement (AP) course completion, Texas Success Initiative (TSI) benchmarks and more for high schools;
- Middle School: chronic absenteeism rate, dropout rates, and college and career preparatory instruction for middle schools;
- Elementary schools: chronic absenteeism rate

Domain V

Three self-selected categories of the Community and Student Engagement (CASE) ratings.

The overall grade of A-F will be calculated using the following percentages: Domains I-III equals 55 percent of the grade, Domain IV equals 35 percent, and Domain V equals 10 percent. The new rating system will be formally applied to campuses and districts starting in the 2017-2018 school year.

For more information about the A-F rating system and a complete list of all indicators, please visit, http://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/News_and_Multimedia/Correspondence/TAA_Letters/Indicators_for_A-F_Academic_Accountability_System/.

At Krahn, the staff has taken a new direction in their PLCs that has led to some great discussion times. The staff is able to open up with one another, talk about instruction, student progress, the things that are not working at the campus, and more. Ward refers to PLCs as truth time and he believes that through the collaboration taking place during PLCs, the staff is learning how to become a better campus.

“Krahn is a learning community above everything else,” said Ward. Just as a child could never be defined by a single letter grade, no school or district should be labeled by a single letter grade.

IMG: Krahn Reading Garden.jpg

Caption: The Krahn Reading Garden was made possible by a grant from Lowe’s Toolbox 4 Education to help students enjoy the love of reading.

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