



Klein ISD News

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We're More Than a Rating: Wunderlich Intermediate

KLEIN, TX – “We’re not just a building that kids come to every day,” said Wunderlich Intermediate principal Chris Ruggiero. “There’s hands-on experiences, there’s technology.”

Wunderlich Intermediate has experienced a lot of positive changes over the past few years. New programs have been implemented for curriculum, behavior, and character development. All students, staff, and the community have been affected in a positive way.

“In addition to our O.S.C.A.R. (Our Students Care About Reading) program, we were able to purchase a Discovery Dome with the help of Klein ISD Education Foundation (KEF) grants,” said Ruggiero. “This gives our students a visual learning experience that they may not get to have outside of school.”

Wunderlich has also worked to improve the relationships with the community, and with the help from another grant, the campus will receive an aquaponics garden where students from feeder campuses may also come to learn about fish and water plants.

“We have found that reaching out to the community has been a huge part of our success,” he said.

This is also the second year for a record turnout at Wunderlich’s Community Engagement events. Feeder campuses and the local community are invited to an evening featuring curriculum-based demonstrations and activities as well as other experiences from local agencies and business partners.

Wunderlich has also focused on building character with students through programs and processes. One of the programs that has seen the most impact is the behavioral program. Through mentorships, teachers, secretaries, and other personnel, Wunderlich has seen huge decreases in the number of students being placed in In-School Suspension and Off-School Suspension, and students are getting more time in the classroom.

“We have supported those students to ensure they are able to get their education opportunities,” said Ruggiero. “That program has been a tremendous success for us.”

The new rating system passed by the 84th Texas Legislature in 2015, has the potential to diminish Wunderlich’s 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:

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| 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 socioeconomic backgrounds.” |
| Domain IV | Academic attainments (other than STAAR) |

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](#).



- 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/.

There are many concerns about the new rating system and how it may affect campuses.

“One of my biggest concerns is that it predominantly looks at student performance based on a standardized test,” Ruggerio said. “It is a one-time snapshot on that given day.”

Ruggerio states that he finds the new rating system takes away the celebration and exciting steps that are taking place within a campus. The program does not take into consideration what a campus has done to evolve student growth and what has happened that school year.

“There’s so much more than just one letter that defines what Wunderlich is to this community and to this district,” said Ruggerio. “Wunderlich is defined by our students and what our community sees in us, not just a letter.”

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