



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Recognized, again! Goose Creek CISD wins rating appeal

It's official: Goose Creek CISD is a recognized district after the school district won its appeal of the state's initial rating of academically acceptable.

Dr. Toby York, Goose Creek CISD superintendent credited a hard-working staff and dedicated students for the district's success.

"This is a wonderful affirmation of the hard work of our teachers, students, and parents," said Dr. York. "We are very proud of everyone who played a part in this achievement. The rating shows the commitment that each stakeholder has in making Goose Creek CISD one of the finest school districts in the state."

When the state's school district grades came out in July, Goose Creek CISD attained all the marks to be recognized except for its 84.9 percent completion rate in the African-American subgroup.

Completion rate measures the percentage of students from a class of beginning ninth-graders who graduate or are continuing their education four years later.

School district officials immediately filed an appeal based on the state's inclusion of Hurricane Katrina evacuees as dropouts that should have been excluded from the completion rate calculation.

In an Oct. 27 letter to Dr. York, TEA Commissioner of Education Robert Scott said the district was right, the students should not have counted as dropouts, and "the accountability rating for Goose Creek CISD is changed from academically acceptable to recognized."

The TEA rates districts as exemplary, recognized, academically acceptable or academically unacceptable. Last year, Goose Creek CISD was rated recognized for the first time in seven years.

And in Texas Education Agency terms, recognized is a pretty big deal.

It is the second-highest rating a district can receive and is based partly on how students perform on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills.

In addition, nine Goose Creek CISD schools have earned exemplary status — the most in district history — in state accountability ratings.

Of the district's 13 other schools, 12 were recognized.

Having 95 percent of schools in the school district being exemplary or recognized is a great accomplishment.

Perhaps even more important are the significant gains behind these ratings.

Areas of improvement in student achievement include:

- In English language arts/reading, scores improved between 2 and 4 percent;
- in writing, scores improved from 1 to 5 percentage points;
- in math, scores improved 2 to 4 percentage points;
- in science, scores are up from 4 to 8 percentage points;
- and in social studies, scores improved between 2 and 4 percentage points.

The TAKS is given to students in third to 11th grade.

Ratings consider not only TAKS scores, but also how subgroups of students (African-American, Hispanic, white, economically disadvantaged) did on those tests, broken down in every possible way.

In addition, many academic and non-academic factors are also included in the calculations, items that can include graduation and completion rates.

Looking at the campus-by-campus breakdown, nine schools — Highlands Junior, Ashbel Smith Elementary, Stephen F. Austin Elementary, Crockett Elementary, De Zavala Elementary, Harlem Elementary, Highlands Elementary, Hopper Primary, and Lamar Elementary — earned the exemplary rating, which means 90 percent or more of students in those schools passed TAKS.

Last year, five schools earned exemplary status: Ashbel Smith, Austin, Harlem, Lamar, and Pumphrey. Austin has earned the exemplary rating for three straight years.

Schools earning recognized status are Sterling High, Memorial High, Baytown Junior, Cedar Bayou Junior, Gentry Junior, Horace Mann Junior, Alamo Elementary, Bowie Elementary, Carver Elementary, San Jacinto Elementary, Travis Elementary, and Walker Elementary.

To earn a recognized rating, at least 80 percent of all Goose Creek students in five demographic groups had to pass the TAKS test.

Robert E. Lee High School was rated academically acceptable.

Of the 1,237 districts in Texas, 239 districts (19.3 percent) are rated exemplary and 597 (48.3 percent) are rated recognized in 2010.

The districts rated exemplary comprise 8.5 percent of the total student enrollment, while the districts rated recognized comprise 52.1 percent of total students enrolled.

Goose Creek CISD, the 57th largest school district in Texas, encompasses 128 square miles and over two counties.

The district serves more than 21,000 students at its 26 campuses, and employs nearly 3,000 folks, making Goose Creek CISD one of the largest employers in the greater Baytown area.

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