U.S. Department of Education
2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I   [ ] Charter   [ ] Magnet   [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Paul Kimbrough
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Canyon Intermediate School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 506 8th Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Canyon   State TX   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 79015-3606

County   Randall County   State School Code Number* 191-901-111

Telephone 806-677-2800   Fax 806-677-2829

Web site/URL   http://www.canyonisd.net   E-mail paulk@canyonisd.net

Twitter Handle
@CanyonIntSch   Facebook Page   Google+

YouTube/URL   Blog   Other Social Media Link

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

_____Date_____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Michael Wartes   E-mail: wartes@canyonisd.ne
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Canyon Independent School District   Tel.   806-677-2800
I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

_____Date_____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mrs. Linda Hinders
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

_____Date_____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Include this page in the school's application as page 2.

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2014-2015 school year and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2009 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.

6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, or 2014.

7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.

8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district   <u>10</u> Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   <u>2</u> Middle/Junior high schools
                                         <u>3</u> High schools
                                         <u>0</u> K-12 schools

                                         <u>15</u> TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

   [ ] Urban or large central city
   [ ] Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
   [ ] Suburban
   [X] Small city or town in a rural area
   [ ] Rural

3. <u>11</u> Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

4. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	166	142	308
6	142	149	291
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
Total Students	308	291	599

5. Racial/ethnic composition of   1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
   the school: 0 % Asian
                                      1 % Black or African American
                                      22 % Hispanic or Latino
                                      0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                      74 % White
                                      2 % Two or more races
                                      100 % Total

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2013 - 2014 year: 13%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	**Answer**
(1) Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2013 until the end of the school year	37
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2013 until the end of the school year	36
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	73
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	558
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.131
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
                                                        3 Total number ELL

   Number of non-English languages represented: 1
   Specify non-English languages: Spanish

8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 32 %

   Total number students who qualify: 179

Information for Public Schools Only - Data Provided by the State

The state has reported that 32 % of the students enrolled in this school are from low income or disadvantaged families based on the following subgroup(s): Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals

9. Students receiving special education services: <u>11</u> %

    <u>63</u> Total number of students served

    Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

    <u>2</u> Autism   <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
    <u>0</u> Deafness   <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired
    <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness   <u>31</u> Specific Learning Disability
    <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance   <u>9</u> Speech or Language Impairment
    <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment   <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
    <u>0</u> Mental Retardation   <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
    <u>6</u> Multiple Disabilities   <u>1</u> Developmentally Delayed

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of personnel in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	24
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	13
Paraprofessionals	9
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1   <u>25:1</u>

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**
    Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2014

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
    Yes _   No X

    If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. Please summarize your school mission in 25 words or less: Mission Statement: The purpose of Canyon Intermediate School is to educate and support students in preparation for a productive future. Vision: A campus that instills the desire to be life-long learners and productive citizens.

PART III – SUMMARY

Canyon, Texas lies in the heart of the panhandle of Texas approximately ten miles south of Amarillo. Canyon was founded in an area rich in cattle and ranching. Colonel Charles Goodnight started the JA Ranch in 1876 which has now become part of the National Forest of Palo Duro Canyon, the second largest canyon in the nation. This well-renowned tourist attraction is also home to the outdoor musical drama, "TEXAS," depicting the settling of the area. Canyon is a thriving small town with a population of approximately 15,000. Canyon is a community that primarily employs jobs in agriculture and education. Tex Randall, the 47 foot cowboy on Highway 60, welcomes visitors and those wishing to make Canyon their home.

Canyon Intermediate School is one of 15 campuses in Canyon Independent School District. This is the eleventh year of the school's existence located on a facility the district purchased in 1890 making it the most historic land in the school district. The building was constructed in 1970 as a junior high campus and is now home to Canyon Intermediate School which consistently serves 600 fifth and sixth grade students. Through an upper-elementary setting, a transition is provided between elementary and junior high school with a block time schedule and a three-teacher team. Students feed into Canyon Intermediate from three campuses serving kindergarten through fourth grade. In its third year of existence, Canyon Intermediate went through a pivotal year of change. Due to district growth, Canyon Intermediate increased from 400 to 650 students with a dramatic incline in economically disadvantaged students. The wide-range of backgrounds representing both ends of the economic spectrum and an increase in non-traditional family structure changed the dynamics of Canyon Intermediate. Instructional practices and mindset had to shift to address these unique challenges for the school. As a result, the school implemented research based professional development and established a school-wide classroom management system that focused on positive relationships with students and maximized instructional time. Classroom interventions shifted from a reactive response to a proactive approach. Teacher collaboration through DuFour's Professional Learning Communities promoted student success with an atmosphere of concerted effort in all aspects of their work. A cohesive curriculum foundation ensured that all standards encompassed a consistent scope and sequence for each subject area. The better utilization of time to effectively intervene with students' academic needs allowed for the development of interventions within the school day without a loss of instructional time. These initiatives and others support the mission and vision of the campus and are still effective today.

Canyon Intermediate believes in educating and supporting students in preparation for a productive future by instilling the desire to be life-long learners and productive citizens. All students are exposed to a variety of fine arts programs including theater arts, choir, art, and band. Unique school-day supports include Eagle Time, in which teachers facilitate small group intervention; Wings, a tutorial period for intervention with specialists and enrichment based on students' needs; ZAP (Zeros Aren't Permitted) to provide students an additional opportunity to gain credit and show understanding without missing instructional time; Physical Education; and school-wide celebrations. Leadership opportunities are provided through student council; Eagle Select Choir; True Eagle to recognize students exhibiting outstanding character and initiate a positive parent contact; and Soaring Eagle lunches to honor students setting positive behavioral examples for others. Extra-curricular activities allow students to become involved through a variety of student interests. Participation in sports, PTA Reflections art program, and the Gifted and Talented program are just a few of the activities students enjoy. Parent partnerships are fostered through beginning of the year parent conferences and ongoing volunteer opportunities such as PTA Fun Day, BINGO for Books, school carnival, and Snack-Pak for Kids to supplement resources and minimize hunger over the weekend for families in need. The emotional and social aspects are addressed with the help of Emotional Literacy partners including Care Net; Hope and Healing; STAR Counseling; All Stars Program, providing education for healthy decision making in class and resources sent home to partner with families; and Canyon High Super Team, a group of seniors committed to making positive choices to encourage others to do likewise. The school counselors provide emotional and social activities on campus through Red Ribbon Week, Character Counts, and regularly scheduled counseling guidance lessons.

Canyon Intermediate continues to strive toward excellence for all. Staff members work together to create a safe learning environment that promotes meaningful and positive relationships. Student achievement is measured throughout the year and individual growth is valued and celebrated. Because of this, state

assessment continues to show marked improvement as students thrive in a nurturing culture. Learning is purposeful and high-achieving. Canyon ISD has long enjoyed a reputation of a history of excellence, and Canyon Intermediate exemplifies this high standard. Kids are worth whatever it takes!

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Core Curriculum:**

Canyon Independent School District utilizes a core curriculum resource for English language arts/reading, math, science, and social studies. All content in the curriculum specifically aligns to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), embodying all required components, written by Texas classroom educators currently instructing, and adopted by the State Board of Education. Canyon Intermediate utilizes the provided scope and sequence as a roadmap for pacing instruction and a framework of skills. The curriculum provides elements of vertical alignment ensuring expectations are taught to the rigor and complexity required for student mastery in each grade level and subject area. An instrumental tool for planning each unit is the Instructional Focus Document (IFD), providing targeted and specific focus for teachers to create high-yielding, engaging lessons. Through an outlined curriculum and teacher collaboration, the "educational lottery" is eliminated. All students receive a consistent, guaranteed, and viable curriculum. A system of interventions improves skills for students performing above or below grade level. Core subjects embrace Professional Learning Communities and meet weekly, collaborating on four critical questions from DuFour's work: What do we expect students to learn? How do we know when students have learned? How do we respond when students do not learn? How do we respond when they have already learned?

Science planning begins with dissecting each unit of instruction. The IFD provides key understandings for science concepts relating to earth, physical, and life sciences delivered through the 5E Model. Teachers focus on key understandings to plan hands-on activities, such as labs, so students can experience applications of key vocabulary. Prior explicit academic vocabulary instruction is essential for struggling students. Students record and extend understandings in science journals using high yield instructional strategies such as Frayer Models, non-linguistic representations, and critical writing. Utilizing scientific tools authentically enriches the curriculum. Additionally, an annual Science Extravaganza reinforces student learning. Community experts lead this event, providing students experiences to apply science concepts to real world career applications. To extend and enhance learning, students are given opportunities to create products through research using iPads and Chromebooks. Formative assessments allow teachers to determine the level of mastery of skills taught. Students not showing mastery are provided individualized, prescriptive small group instruction during built-in intervention times targeting identified areas and monitoring improvements.

A balanced literacy approach for English/Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) successfully addresses curriculum standards using a framework of mini-lessons, learning applications, and closures in reading, writing, and word study. Connections in reading and writing focus on critical thinking and higher level analysis for all students. Exposure to various genre-based literary units promotes cross-curricular and cultural understandings compiled from students' background experiences. Mini-lessons include engagement pieces that establish purposes for learning. Teachers scaffold and differentiate lessons to meet all learning needs, allowing students to encounter a variety of materials and learning applications. This flexibility facilitates progress and strengthens students at every level. Anchor charts, student journals, and real world examples are just a few tools that lay the groundwork. Modeling a variety of instructional strategies guides student responses. Closures reinforce learning standards. From information gathered teachers address misconceptions and confirm mastery to guide future instruction, intervention, and enrichment.

The social studies curriculum is delivered through the 5E model of instruction. Fifth grade focuses on U.S. History, allowing students to develop a principle-based timeline beginning with the colonial period and extending through the 21st century, including geographical regions within the continental USA. Sixth grade world history focuses on culture, governments, economy, and geography. Technology is a key component, providing experiences to extend student learning. Research, journaling, Venn diagrams, and Thinking Maps produced electronically by students develop and strengthen understanding. Students not showing mastery receive small group intervention, encountering content in different ways, promoting improvement and understanding while projects allow advanced learners to enrich and apply their learning to help others.

As Texas math standards become increasingly rigorous, teachers are keenly aware of the importance of a balanced math framework. Computational skills, problem solving, and conceptual understandings help

students receive a full range of mathematical understanding and skills. The focal standard categories include: numerical representation and relationships, computation and algebraic relationships, geometry and measurement, data analysis, and personal financial literacy. Manipulatives, models, and numerous hands-on activities boost engagement and understanding. Technology-rich instruction ensures concrete and abstract understanding of mathematical standards matches the skill level with room for continued growth. Small group instruction to reteach, close gaps, and work toward goals assures all student needs are met while enrichment and targeted technology use extend learning applications for advanced students.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Canyon Intermediate School's leadership and staff place value on providing students a well-rounded education, introducing students to areas of art, theater arts, music, choir, band, and physical education. Students at Canyon Intermediate partake in 135 minutes of physical education activity weekly. Fifth graders complete three, twelve-week rotations, consisting of art, choir, and theater arts. Sixth graders select band or choir as their elective. Approximately half choose band and half select choir. Extra-curricular areas are valued and supported with space, resources, and ample staffing. The foundation students build promotes award-winning programs at secondary campuses.

Art provides avenues for students to identify areas of interest. Students engage in creative, right-brain learning, enhancing learning capacities in academic environments. As defined by TEKS, students follow specific directions for creative outcomes, use symmetry, strategize for end results, use elements of art to create in different modalities, and study historical periods connecting to social studies. Students express themselves using various media and communicate through art itself by compiling a portfolio.

Theater Arts complements areas in language arts and social studies classrooms. Students relate theater to history, society, and culture with TEKS guiding instruction. Students develop and understand characterization using sensory details and expressing emotions through dialogue. Interpretations of plays and stories expose students to wide spectra of dramatic adaptations. Public speaking skills manifest through auditions and productions. Communication and teambuilding develop through activities involving peers and parent involvement programs. Theater Arts promotes self-awareness and builds upon life experiences.

Fifth grade music transitions from Kodaly rhythmic counting to the Eastman counting system students are expected to know in sixth grade band and choir. Moveable scales with altered pitches are introduced from other cultures in history in accordance with TEKS. Students begin learning to read music and playing an instrument using a Yamaha keyboard. Proper voice training is practiced daily.

Fine arts programs combine, presenting three musicals per year allowing students to see all aspects of productions. Theater students perform main roles and all speaking parts, music students sing solos and musical numbers with choreography, and art students create set designs and props. Perceptions, use of voice on a stage, and character portrayals expand students' worldly knowledge.

Sixth grade band and choir programs teach fundamentals of musicianship. Through choir and band students learn teamwork, musicality, sight reading skills, and the thrill of being in large ensembles as well as a solo. Sectionals decrease student-teacher ratios, allowing students to have personal relationships with directors. To better meet the needs of students, a plethora of differentiated tools are used, including SMARTBoards, metronomes, and internet access showcasing performers from around the world. Secondary music directors often observe and assist instruction and strengthen programs through vertical teaming. Band and choir classes inspire a lifelong love of music.

Physical activity plays key roles in students' abilities to engage and process information. Students collaborate, strategizing how to complete tasks within competitive formats. Competition encourages students to modify and adjust for success of the team. Sportsmanship and character building are at the forefront of activities; athleticism is not the only determining factor. Participation in the physical education classroom focuses on developing healthy lifestyles. Teachers facilitate learning by modeling proper techniques. Specific skills from TEKS are monitored and assessed through a comprehensive tool, FitnessGram. Students understand relationships between physical activity and health throughout a lifespan.

Active individuals promote success in all academic areas.

Canyon Intermediate embraces and implements technology, addressing the elements of TEKS in many settings. Students and teachers are encouraged to use technology responsibly and effectively, providing knowledge and skills necessary for the 21st century. The library computer lab area contains 14 computers for small group intervention and individual use. Additionally, the campus computer lab adjacent to the library provides 30 computers for classroom use. Teachers and students have access to 130 iPads, 90 Chromebooks and 45 laptops to support, extend, and enhance learning. Classrooms utilize SMARTBoards for interactive student learning experiences and forums for technology applications, giving fifth and sixth graders foundations prior to technology-based electives at the secondary level.

The library provides equal access to a learning climate fueling the spirit of inquiry and directing problem solving and creativity. The library collection contains over 13,000 items, equaling 22 copies per student. Students and teachers have access to print and digital formats. Circulation statistics average 4,500 monthly checkouts. All classes attend weekly literary and technology related lessons. The library partners with the school, home and community, promoting a love of reading and life-long learning. Users have opportunities to become educated, informed, engaged citizens through resources and services provided.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Intervention for all ability levels proves to be a key to success for Canyon Intermediate's high achievement. "Real-time" data allows teachers to adjust instructional approaches and plan interventions. Quality Tier I instruction is a critical component of overall learning and is vital to determining students needing intervention. Formative assessments provide insight into intervention needs met through Eagle Time.

For students with individualized instructional plans through Tier II and III intervention, including dyslexic students and English Language Learners (ELL), consistent and systematic times to remediate targeted skills are provided through Wings and Eagle Time. Dyslexic students receive a prescriptive program with strategies to support classroom learning. ELLs are served through content-based English as a Second Language (ESL) program in the regular classroom with teachers certified in strategies to support academic vocabulary. Campus interventionists work proactively, targeting skills and monitoring progress regularly to determine if interventions are working. Successful intervention ultimately results in students demonstrating mastery of grade level skills. When interventions prove unsuccessful, the Student Intervention Team (SIT) meets with parents, devising a new plan by changing and/or adjusting the frequency and duration of interventions. When all interventions prove ineffective, the SIT may consider a special education referral.

Special education students are mainstreamed to the fullest extent possible. Additional support strategies include co-teach, inclusion, and The Learning Classroom (TLC). Inclusion support is a minimal level of support provided for students needing individualized instruction within regular education classrooms. Support in co-teach classrooms provides additional support in mainstream environments utilizing strengths of a general education teacher and a special education teacher, sharing responsibilities of delivering instruction and progress monitoring for all students. Instructional approaches include parallel teaching, station teaching, team teaching, one teach/one assist, alternate teaching, and a resource environment. These approaches alter the delivery of regular classroom instruction but do not change the level of standards, rather accommodations and modifications are implemented according to the Student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Along with modified academic curriculum, students in TLC receive the highest level of support, including assistance with daily living, functional skills, and social skills addressed in a community-based environment. Instruction is based on TEKS Essence Statement. The individual needs of each student are considered when making various classroom placement decisions.

Enrichment and extension activities are provided to meet and ascertain the individual needs of high achieving and gifted learners. The depth of instruction allows students to perform at higher levels and create products with technology applications. Classroom teachers differentiate performance assessments for high-achieving learners. In addition, students identified as gifted learners participate in activities including the stock market, science experiment judges, Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) simulation with FBI personnel project, and summer camp opportunities.

PART V – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results Narrative Summary:

The assessment program in Texas consists of annual assessments administered each spring semester. Fifth grade students are administered tests in reading, math and science while sixth grade students are administered tests for reading and math. Over the past five years, Texas administered two different types of assessments. Prior to 2012, students took the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and then transitioned to the current assessment known as the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR). Within TAKS, Canyon Intermediate's results remained consistent in the mid-90 percentile for all areas tested and were solidly above the state average. Rarely has a gap of ten or more percentage points existed between all students and any subgroup on state assessments; however, closing the achievement gap is always a priority. When Texas transitioned to STAAR, rigor and complexity were factors contributing to slight losses in reading and math scores for Canyon Intermediate, but outcomes remained significantly above the state average.

During the 2011-12 transition, the focus changed from overall passing standards with TAKS to the addition of individual progress growth measures with STAAR. The importance of student growth for all ability levels created a need for campus change. Not only were students in Response to Intervention (RtI) receiving targeted instruction for math and reading, teachers used additional resources, identifying students performing just below grade level and also enriching high performing students to continue closing gaps and increasing achievement. Campus support personnel began attending weekly PLC meetings to ensure common language, academic support, and alignment across the campus, ultimately contributing to academic gains for students. With the addition of state funded resources, all levels of intervention proved to be highly effective and provided the ability to track student progress and close the achievement gap.

Under the TAKS system, Canyon Intermediate's Gold Performance Acknowledgements consistently included commended ratings in reading, math, and science with comparable improvements in mathematics. Under STAAR, Distinction Designations were awarded for academic achievement in math, reading, and science along with a top 25% rating for closing performance gaps and a distinction for postsecondary readiness.

2. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Canyon Intermediate uses a variety of ongoing assessments to analyze and improve student performance. Data includes STAAR assessments, local benchmarks, unit assessments, and formative classroom teacher assessments.

A professional development overview is provided to staff at the beginning of each school year based on the prior year's performance. PLCs use quintile reports from previous and current assessments, systematically reviewing skills for mastery, planning for intervention, and adjusting instruction. Methods of delivery for certain TEKS are altered based upon implications from data. Teachers disaggregate data to make informed instructional decisions. Targeted areas focus on objectives where intervention is needed to increase student learning. One specific improvement is the use of PLC-designed formative assessments for targeted objectives, giving students more opportunities for success. When analyzing data, decisions are based on needs for professional development, ineffective instruction, or individual student performance. This gives teachers a measure of personal and professional growth while also focusing on improving student learning. Once identified, a plan of action is executed to improve student learning. Training is provided for targeted areas, giving teachers a deeper understanding of standards. Tools and high-yield instructional strategies are incorporated in the lessons to propel student success. Differentiation and small group intervention address individual student needs and overall learning styles.

Canyon Intermediate understands the importance of communication between all stakeholders. Students set goals and graph assessment data throughout the year. PLCs set data-driven goals focusing on specific areas for needed improvement. Individual student data reports are shared with parents and students throughout

the year on all assessments. The campus report card reflects the overall performance of the school on state assessment through a letter to parents. Additionally, the principal communicates an overview of the results with parents at general PTA meetings, and teachers discuss the specificity of individual student performance during parent conferences. The performance of campus data is also shared with the District School Board of Trustees. Community stakeholders are informed of the school's overall progress through press releases and multiple online platforms.

Part VI School Support

1. School Climate/Culture

Canyon Intermediate celebrates successes throughout the school year. Each six weeks grading period, the school body comes together to celebrate student achievement, growth, and success. The events focus on individual students and their achievements, including exceptional character, achieving all As on the report card, Bringing Up Grades (BUG), team attendance, and reading and math competitions, all of which contribute to the overall success of the campus. Each PLC collaborates to create a theme and hosts a celebration through a pep rally-style atmosphere appropriate for the elementary level. Students are motivated throughout the six weeks to be part of the celebrations. Students are invited to participate by dressing up and promoting school spirit. Celebrations include themes like the 50s, the Wild West, Back to the Future, and the Olympics. A variety of community members and high school students provide presentations to motivate and encourage ongoing positive character and high academics. Emotional literacy programs are presented throughout the year in partnership with community resource providers. Campus motivational opportunities include sponsored BUG award drawings, basketball and bicycle giveaways, recognition for achievements on morning announcements, Soaring Eagle luncheons with the counselors and administrators, and Bluebonnet drawings for Kindle Fire tablets. These opportunities and events establish a sense of pride to be a Rocky Eagle at Canyon Intermediate.

While motivation is a key to the school culture, engaging students is also held in high regard. Teachers plan highly engaging lessons and utilize technology to increase student motivation. As technology continues to evolve, Canyon Intermediate has been sensitive to embrace this form of learning. Twitter, Chromebooks, iPads, and a variety of instructional apps are used to motivate and foster student achievement. Top Chef and Amazing Race are both examples of competitions implemented on the campus that involve activities to promote high-yielding instructional strategies and student-led technology use in the classroom.

In the day-to-day work that focuses on the individual child, goal setting provides opportunities for ownership and motivation to work toward high student achievement. Teachers set the stage for students to maintain high standards through individual goal setting with both short and long-term goals. Goals focus on student growth rather than a passing standard.

Canyon Intermediate promotes a family atmosphere with the staff. The campus hospitality committee works to provide many opportunities to network and share. These include monthly faculty birthday luncheons, showers for staff experiencing major life events, and honoring staff members' graduating seniors. The quarterly hamburger cookouts prepared by the campus principal show appreciation for the staff for their hard work and diligence to the school. As new staff members join the CIS family, they are embraced by campus mentors for both professional growth and emotional well-being. The climate is one where the students feel nurtured and safe, staff is supported, and families feel welcome.

2. Engaging Families and Community

Canyon Intermediate takes many opportunities to partner with families and community. Partnerships with these stakeholders enhance an environment where all CIS students feel supported and valued. During the spring semester, future students from the three feeder campuses attend an orientation outlining "the day in the life of a Rocky Eagle". At registration in August, students attend meet the teacher and discover their future classroom schedule. After Labor Day, parents are invited to a teacher open house and parent orientation during the evening hours. Open house provides parents an opportunity to meet with their student's team of teachers and learn more about daily expectations. Within the first 12 weeks of school, each team of teachers conducts a personal conference with parents. Conferences focus more on learning about each student's strength and area of growth, building a working relationship with the school and home environment to promote student success. This early conferencing period continually proves to be a critical component of ensuring the well-being of the school/home connection as well as gaining feedback for continued school improvement.

In addition to the partnership with parents, Canyon Intermediate values the support it receives from its community. Programs and assemblies, such as Grandparent's Appreciation Day and Veteran's Day, give today's generation a connection to those that laid the foundation of the community, modeling real-world success for students. The campus student council hosts a canned food drive for people in need and sponsors community Angel Trees during the winter holidays. Campus events are hosted by student council in the form of Education Foundation week, Pastries for Parents, Red Ribbon week, Character Counts week, and spirit dress up days. The student council also provides a hospitality room for teachers during a variety of times throughout the school year.

A fifth grade Science Extravaganza is held annually involving community members showcasing concepts learned in the classroom in connection with jobs in the community. The sixth grade stock market project works in partnership with the local university. The project spans a six week period in which students learn about financial literacy. Other campus community events include sixth grade water conservation, Scholastic book fairs, CSI at CIS, Holiday Wrap-Up, and Track and Field Day. By engaging in these community partnerships, Canyon Intermediate has created relationships that benefit student success and overall campus culture. Events of this nature leave lasting student memories and model meaningful networking. The ties connecting families, the community, and the campus create a foundation and a platform for student success and excellence.

3. Professional Development

Canyon Intermediate School supports the implementation of the campus improvement plan and drives the focus of professional development. Teacher retention and growth is critical for the overall health of the campus. New faculty members are matched immediately with mentors throughout the building for support and encouragement. Mentors provide insight on policies, procedures, and unspoken culture. The campus and district collaborate to expound upon and polish all teachers' skills including classroom management, partnering with parents, establishing and maintaining rapport with students, stress management, curriculum, and instructional strategies.

Teacher leaders participate in PLC Leader U which builds upon the four critical questions of a PLC. Leaders meet weekly to guide their colleagues on critical components and supportive instructional documents. Teachers utilize a system of interventions at all levels and enhance the meaning of data, creating valuable interventions for students. Data analysis tools provide the school with reports, instructional trends, and specific student needs. Instructional staff delivers quality Tier I instruction, maximizing student engagement and learning. The campus administrators participate in continued district professional development through webinars and principal PLC meetings. Information is shared with instructional staff to target the needs of the students. Campus administrators use prior performance data to identify professional development needs, ensuring vertical and horizontal alignment of TEKS. Challenges such as new math standards created needs for ongoing support and resources through professional development. Campus competitions inspire teacher learning using high-yield instructional strategies and encourage technology in the classroom. Teachers continue to focus on instruction incorporating the Fundamental Five instructional strategies, higher order thinking skills, and effective questioning techniques using the revised Bloom's taxonomy to foster learning at all levels and increase student achievement.

Prior to the beginning of each school year, the district hosts a two-day Fall Conference event in which teachers attend, facilitate, and lead breakout sessions in relation to the TEKS and current best practices. Canyon Intermediate staff has a history of leading a variety of learning topics by sharing what works effectively on the campus and proves successful, allowing school improvements to benefit others willing to adopt similar professional development activities. A small sampling of session topics include meeting the needs of special education students, using academic vocabulary, assessment for learning, introduction to SMARTBoard, and technology in the classroom. Through a pilot program on the campus, an approach for a school-wide behavior management system was shared with other campuses in the district and is currently piloting a positive behavior intervention system. Canyon Intermediate is a leader in RtI and the special education co-teach model in both Canyon ISD and the region. Teachers willingly share best practices and

are confident in the shared philosophy of Canyon Intermediate. Teachers embrace the journey of life-long learning for continued growth.

4. School Leadership

Canyon Intermediate staff truly believes every student on campus has value and the ability to learn. The focus on student growth for all learners rather than just a passing standard has helped develop this philosophy. Student economic diversity played a big role in the challenges faced in previous years. One strength of the campus is blending all backgrounds, thus high expectations exist for all students. Coherent philosophy is centralized on the best interests of students and exposure to a variety of extra-curricular, academic, and fine arts activities allowing students to find the strengths they possess. A variety of perspectives is valued, and the importance of the central philosophy is pivotal when hiring decisions are determined. Placement of the employees on the campus and the transition of current staff are strategic and carefully considered. Every employee on the campus has an important role, from administration to instructional staff and operations. Administrators, including the principal, assistant principal, and counselors, support teachers through word and deed. Teachers feel empowered and administrators have confidence in the teachers to accomplish goals with the support of the school leadership. Trust and accountability, balanced with high expectations, help achieve the goals for the campus. Campus goals are established around academics and student relationships which lead to students setting goals for their success throughout the year. Parent involvement is important to the success of the student. Trust and rapport are essential when creating a team of individuals partnering together for the overall benefit of the student. Volunteers and PTA board members are significant stakeholders to the campus decision-making initiatives affecting policies, programs, and resources. PLC leaders are selected to accomplish specific tasks for each unique team upholding the vision of the campus and promoting student achievements. Teacher leaders are empowered to create buy-in from other team members. Although there is a respect for the traditions of the campus, the leadership team holds the philosophy and vision at the forefront and encourages change for the better. The principal facilitates district initiatives and collaborates with campus leaders to determine what is appropriate for the campus. When faced with hard decisions, the administration team values all stakeholders' opinions and ideas before making decisions. Sometimes decisions made are unpopular, and the leaders of the campus work hard to take into consideration timing and morale when those decisions are necessary. The foundation and essence of every decision is to do what is best for students!

PART VIII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math	**Test:** STAAR
All Students Tested/Grade: 5	**Edition/Publication Year:** 2014
Publisher: NCS Pearson	

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Mar	Mar	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES*					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	97	94	89	98	98
Advanced Academic Performance	26	26	28	56	56
Number of students tested	270	257	296	292	275
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	17		11		
% of students tested with alternative assessment	6	4	4	3	3
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/ Disadvantaged Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	95	87	81	94	96
Advanced Academic Performance	12	8	15	35	43
Number of students tested	81	90	101	105	99
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	83	74	86	88
Advanced Academic Performance	4	7	4	18	12
Number of students tested	28	30	23	22	17
3. English Language Learner Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	98	92	81	95	98
Advanced Academic Performance	17	23	17	51	45
Number of students tested	60	48	48	57	55

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
5. African- American Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	98	95	90	99	99
Advanced Academic Performance	29	27	31	57	59
Number of students tested	201	200	236	230	207
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: During the past five reporting years, Texas has given two types of assessments for both reading and math. The state initially tested students using the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in the 2010 and 2011 school years. In 2012, the state changed the tests to the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR). The STAAR test evaluates students' understanding of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for the current grade level and for readiness for promotion to the next grade. When compared to the TAKS, the STAAR increased in length and the overall rigor by including more challenging assessment items. The rigor increased by assessing skills at a greater depth and higher level of cognitive complexity. In mathematics, griddable responses were included to allow more opportunities to derive answers independently rather than selecting from multiple choice items. In reading, greater emphasis was given to critical analysis than literal understanding. The STAAR continues to be used as the instrument for evaluating student academic growth and preparedness for the next grade.

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In Texas, two test options were available for special education students qualifying for alternative state assessments. For students receiving special education services, modified and alternate versions were developed. The modified and alternate assessments were aligned with the TEKS as well as to the reporting categories for STAAR. The TAKS also provided modified and alternate versions but not to the same rigor of the STAAR test. The Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee determined the appropriate test based on the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP).

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For both the TAKS and STAAR, there were not reports on six of the ten student groups due to the groups comprising less than 10% of the total campus enrollment. Subpopulations that make up less than 10% of the campus populations include English Language Learner, African-American, Asian, American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Two or More Races Identified Students. The above subpopulations are included in the All Students reporting category.

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math		**Test:** STAAR
All Students Tested/Grade: 6		**Edition/Publication Year:** 2014
Publisher: NCS Pearson		

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES*					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	96	90	93	93	92
Advanced Academic Performance	35	28	36	47	45
Number of students tested	257	300	284	284	292
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	99	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	11	17	12	18	17
% of students tested with alternative assessment	4	6	4	6	6
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/ Disadvantaged Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	90	81	87	90	86
Advanced Academic Performance	15	17	17	30	33
Number of students tested	79	101	90	109	99
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	79	52	74	53	77
Advanced Academic Performance	14	0	11	5	14
Number of students tested	29	29	19	19	22
3. English Language Learner Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	92	85	90	95	85
Advanced Academic Performance	33	21	34	36	39
Number of students tested	49	47	58	58	46
5. African- American Students					
Satisfactory Academic					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	96	89	94	93	93
Advanced Academic Performance	36	30	35	51	47
Number of students tested	196	240	223	214	235
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Satisfactory Academic					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: During the past five reporting years, Texas has given two types of assessments for both reading and math. The state initially tested students using the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in the 2010 and 2011 school years. In 2012, the state changed the tests to the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR). The STAAR test evaluates students' understanding of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for the current grade level and for readiness for promotion to the next grade. When compared to the TAKS, the STAAR increased in length and the overall rigor by including more challenging assessment items. The rigor increased by assessing skills at a greater depth and higher level of cognitive complexity. In mathematics, griddable responses were included to allow more opportunities to derive answers independently rather than selecting from multiple choice items. In reading, greater emphasis was given to critical analysis than literal understanding. The STAAR continues to be used as the instrument for evaluating student academic growth and preparedness for the next grade.

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STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading/ELA			Test: STAAR	
All Students Tested/Grade: 5			Edition/Publication Year: 2014	
Publisher: NCS Pearson				

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Mar	Mar	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES*					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	94	94	86	98	94
Advanced Academic Performance	28	27	23	52	44
Number of students tested	270	257	293	292	275
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	15	16	13	11	
% of students tested with alternative assessment	6	6	4	4	3
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/ Disadvantaged Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	88	88	79	95	89
Advanced Academic Performance	5	13	12	37	30
Number of students tested	81	90	101	105	99
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	86	90	74	90	81
Advanced Academic Performance	4	10	0	10	0
Number of students tested	28	30	23	21	16
3. English Language Learner Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	97	85	79	95	89
Advanced Academic Performance	7	21	15	44	38
Number of students tested	60	48	47	57	55
5. African- American Students					
Satisfactory Academic					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	95	97	89	99	95
Advanced Academic Performance	35	29	25	55	46
Number of students tested	201	200	234	230	207
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Satisfactory Academic					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: During the past five reporting years, Texas has given two types of assessments for both reading and math. The state initially tested students using the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in the 2010 and 2011 school years. In 2012, the state changed the tests to the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR). The STAAR test evaluates students' understanding of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for the current grade level and for readiness for promotion to the next grade. When compared to the TAKS, the STAAR increased in length and the overall rigor by including more challenging assessment items. The rigor increased by assessing skills at a greater depth and higher level of cognitive complexity. In mathematics, griddable responses were included to allow more opportunities to derive answers independently rather than selecting from multiple choice items. In reading, greater emphasis was given to critical analysis than literal understanding. The STAAR continues to be used as the instrument for evaluating student academic growth and preparedness for the next grade.

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STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading/ELA	Test: STAAR
All Students Tested/Grade: 6	Edition/Publication Year: 2014
Publisher: NCS Pearson	

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES*					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	93	88	93	90	94
Advanced Academic Performance	22	28	29	41	44
Number of students tested	258	300	284	285	292
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	20	20	11	17	18
% of students tested with alternative assessment	8	7	4	6	6
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/ Disadvantaged Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	86	83	84	85	88
Advanced Academic Performance	8	15	14	28	31
Number of students tested	80	101	90	109	99
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	90	66	74	37	95
Advanced Academic Performance	10	0	5	11	23
Number of students tested	29	29	19	19	22
3. English Language Learner Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	92	81	86	90	91
Advanced Academic Performance	24	17	24	24	43
Number of students tested	49	47	58	59	46
5. African- American Students					
Satisfactory Academic					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	92	88	94	92	95
Advanced Academic Performance	22	31	30	45	45
Number of students tested	197	240	223	214	235
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Satisfactory Academic					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: During the past five reporting years, Texas has given two types of assessments for both reading and math. The state initially tested students using the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in the 2010 and 2011 school years. In 2012, the state changed the tests to the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR). The STAAR test evaluates students' understanding of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for the current grade level and for readiness for promotion to the next grade. When compared to the TAKS, the STAAR increased in length and the overall rigor by including more challenging assessment items. The rigor increased by assessing skills at a greater depth and higher level of cognitive complexity. In mathematics, griddable responses were included to allow more opportunities to derive answers independently rather than selecting from multiple choice items. In reading, greater emphasis was given to critical analysis than literal understanding. The STAAR continues to be used as the instrument for evaluating student academic growth and preparedness for the next grade.

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