

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Dr. Rosalba De Hoyos

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

Official School Name Achieve Early College High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3201 W. Pecan Boulevard

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City McAllen                      State TX                      Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 78502-6661

County Hidalgo County                      State School Code Number\* 108906011

Telephone 956-872-1653                      Fax 956-872-1650

Web site/URL  
http://aechs.mcallenisd.org/pages/AchieveECHS                      E-mail rosalba.dehoyos@mcallenisd.net

Twitter Handle  
AECHS@Rose77623139                      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\*Dr. James Ponce                      E-mail: james.ponce@mcallenisd.net  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name McAllen Independent School District                      Tel. 956-872-1653

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. Erika De La Garza-Lopez  
(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**

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**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

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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 (per district designation):
- 20 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 7 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 4 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 31 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
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
3. 3 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	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	39	71	110
10	49	56	105
11	41	59	100
12	31	61	92
<b>Total Students</b>	160	247	407

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 95 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 2 % White
  - 1 % 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: 7%

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2013 until the end of the school year	7
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2013 until the end of the school year	21
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	28
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	407
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.069
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5 %  
20 Total number ELL  
 Number of non-English languages represented: 2  
 Specify non-English languages: Spanish, Chinese
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 76 %  
 Total number students who qualify: 310

**Information for Public Schools Only - Data Provided by the State**

The state has reported that 76 % 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: 1 %  
4 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>1</u> Autism                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness              | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness        | <u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>2</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment    | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation    | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</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:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	19
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	1
Paraprofessionals	1
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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 21:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	98%	97%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	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

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	95
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	68%
Enrolled in a community college	20%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	2%
Found employment	2%
Joined the military or other public service	2%
Other	6%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes  No

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

15. Please summarize your school mission in 25 words or less: Achieve Early College High School is diligently bridging the gap in education to provide a successful transition from high school to college and university achievement.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Achieve Early College High School, is a state designated Rewards (Exemplary) high school, in partnership with South Texas College (STC), helps students graduate with both a Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP) diploma and a College Academic Associate degree. The school's philosophy is to use student centered learning to cultivate life-long learners who think critically, problem solve, communicate effectively, function independently, use technology, and work cooperatively. It is committed to providing a positive atmosphere, rigorous academic standards, measurable goals, and personalized learning for each student. Through application of research based practices, Achieve staff supports students' academic, social, physical, and emotional development as they become life-long learners prepared to continue higher education and able to adapt to a rapidly changing world. Therefore, the mission at Achieve is to work diligently to bridge the gap in access to education and to provide a successful transition from high school to post-secondary study.

The campus is in the Rio Grande Valley of deep south Texas in McAllen, the largest city in Hidalgo County, approximately ten miles from the Texas-Mexico border. Hidalgo County is consistently ranked among the poorest in the nation by per capita income. The growing population is over eighty percent Hispanic, and the primary language of most residents is Spanish. Though McAllen's attainment of high school and college degrees is on par with the nation's, the county lags behind with only fifteen percent of the population earning a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Part of McAllen's educational success is due to the leadership and vision of McAllen Independent School District (MISD). The district recognizes the need to be proactive in addressing the regional challenges of high poverty rates, language barriers, and increased immigration. In response to these obstacles, MISD partnered with STC to receive the Early College High School designation from the state of Texas. The seed of Achieve Early College High School was planted.

Achieve actively recruits first generation college attendees, economically disadvantaged, at-risk, and/or educationally underrepresented minorities. Interested eighth grade students submit an application, and with their parents, attend an interview. Grades, behavior, and test scores are not a factor in admissions; a committee selects students based only on commitment to academics and willingness to accomplish their academic goals.

Achieve's first year, 2008, the student population was approximately one hundred, all selected from six middle schools, especially those with high numbers of at-risk students. The staff included five teachers and one administrator who served as a counselor, nurse, parental involvement specialist, test coordinator, and principal. STC allotted the school five classrooms. The following year, the school sprouted to nine teachers and six portables in an empty lot on STC grounds. In 2012, one hundred percent graduated with over thirty college hours.

Today Achieve has branched out to twelve portables and twenty staff members including office and custodial staff. With no gym or library, Achieve students attend P.E. classes in neighboring fields and walk a quarter mile to STC's library for books. Though still awaiting a permanent building and unpredictable weather is always a challenge, attendance and students' commitment remains high due to the positive environment.

Achieve's budding success is due to students' unique access to STC facilities, including the library, tutorial services, computer labs, and state of the art science labs. Though students earn dual enrollment credits in high school, most of their college credits are earned on-site in STC courses with STC instructors. This also provides them the opportunity for a variety of degree plans and college majors not readily available to students at other early college high schools. Another factor in Achieve's success is teachers' dedication to supporting student performance in both high school and college classes through tutoring and communication with college instructors. For example, Achieve's Spanish and Technology teachers are in constant communication via email with the STC Spanish and Technology instructors monitoring students' progress.

Students taking STC college algebra, trigonometry, and calculus seek out tutoring with the high school Algebra II and Pre-Cal teacher.

Last May, Achieve continued to blossom, celebrating its third graduating class. Since its inception, over two hundred students have graduated with high school diplomas and Associate degrees. Successes include being named TEA Rewards School, over three million dollars in scholarships, a Bill Gates Millennium Scholar, a National Hispanic Merit Scholar, AP Scholars, and students accepted into prestigious universities including MIT, Princeton, and Baylor.

For a family in poverty or a parent unfamiliar with the college process, roots of a higher education may seem impossible to establish, but with the support of teachers and administrators, Achieve students get half way there. Partnering with parents through parent/teacher meetings is the key for addressing needs of our culturally diverse population.

Achieve targets the students' emotional and social development through prom, morp, flag football games, pep rallies, clubs, celebration walks, team building activities, and field days.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

Achieve’s curriculum is rigorous yet attainable for all students. Achieve only offers Pre-AP and AP courses aligned with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) state standards. Every student in this learning community is expected to graduate under the challenging DAP graduation plan. Besides the usual high school graduation requirements, every student is expected to pass the state reading, writing, and math college readiness exam or Texas Success Initiative (TSI) by their sophomore year in order to stay on track with their college degree plan. These requirements are for all students including those who are limited English proficient, special education, or at-risk. Every classroom uses a Common Instructional Framework (CIF) which includes six key strategies—classroom talk, collaborative group work, questioning, writing to learn, scaffolding, literacy groups. These dovetail seamlessly with advanced academic instruction, ELL strategies, technology, and college readiness skills teachers incorporate in their classrooms.

Teachers and administrators meet weekly to plan student support. In these meetings, staff discuss attendance, test results, student feedback, and parent input to make instructional decisions. This proactive approach has prompted several opportunities for targeted interventions on Fridays and during eighth period Enrichment-and-Reteach period allowing all students equitable access to the curriculum. These targeted interventions allow the advanced student to go beyond the required objectives and the below-level student to master the required objectives.

#### **Reading/English:**

The English department at Achieve follows Texas state standards and district curriculum which is supplemented with Pre-AP and AP strategies. Pre-AP English I and II classes require critical reading, analysis of literature, and expression of ideas through speaking and writing to seamlessly transition to college level English 1301, 1302, and English IV AP. Because of students’ diverse learning abilities, the English teachers also develop their own internal curriculum. Students who are not TSI ready attend weekend tutoring sessions to bridge the gap in skills. Students who are academically advanced are challenged with college readiness curriculum, projects, and opportunities to tutor peers.

#### **Mathematics**

All math classes are Pre-AP or dual credit level. The math teachers adhere to the TEKS through critical thinking skills, problem-solving practice, real world connections, and hands on learning throughout the school year. To make mathematics relevant to students’ lives, Algebra I, geometry, and Algebra II students are required to produce individual and group projects that relate to real world situations. Teachers hold math remediation classes and academies during the day and on weekends for struggling students. Besides TSI preparation, math classes regularly address SAT and ACT level math proficiency in daily lessons and assessments. Students who do not require remediation, are encouraged to aim high by taking advanced college level math classes like pre-calculus, college algebra, and trigonometry at STC.

#### **Science**

The science courses offered are Pre-AP Biology, Pre-AP Chemistry, and AP Physics all of which follow Texas state standards. Students are required to pass the state Biology End of Course exam. The science department works to engage struggling students by creating hands on learning opportunities in STC science facilities every Friday. Science teachers are able to simulate a more authentic environment for experimentation because of access to the high quality equipment. To challenge high ability students, teachers assign discovery experimentation in which students take the lead in learning. They are also encouraged to participate in science competitions through STC. This ensures all levels of learners can be engaged in applying the scientific method.

#### **Social Studies**

Social studies teachers approach the curriculum as a collaborative effort to abide by the TEKS infused with Pre-AP and AP standards so that students exhibit sustained growth in historical skills. The Pre-AP World Geography teacher, makes meaningful connections to lay a foundation for future study. The AP World

History teacher, focuses on developing strong writing skills as students are exposed to analyzing primary source documents. AP U.S. History students earn college credit through dual enrollment where the district adjunct professor prepares them for the end of course exam and challenges them to pass the U.S. History AP test. Struggling students attend weekly tutorial sessions while advanced students attend AP review workshops. Seniors are encouraged to take college sections of government and economics. With a strong foundation set, students are expected to routinely demonstrate refined critical and analytical thinking skills.

### College and Career Readiness

Focus on college readiness is at the root of Achieve's success. At Achieve, entering freshmen participate in a three week Summer Bridge program where teachers prepare them for TSI testing. Entering freshmen take a district mandated transition class where they research careers and universities. As sophomores, students take a PLAN test that provides them a career interest inventory. Juniors take the PSAT and select their Associate degree plan. During their first semester, seniors take the ACT and SAT exams. Students meet every Friday for presentations by college advisors and counselors for college planning.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Non-core classes at Achieve are specifically designed to support college and career readiness and provide essential life skills. They also support learning in the core curriculum areas.

Because Achieve does not have a fine arts program, all students meet their fine arts graduation requirement by taking college level arts classes such as art or music appreciation starting their tenth grade year. Achieve teachers foster appreciation of the arts through visits to STC art galleries, incorporating art and music into classroom activities, and encouraging attendance at theater productions. In addition, students are able to participate in band and drama at traditional high schools in the district.

To address college readiness standards, MISD has developed a class called high school college transition which is part of every student's graduation requirement. Ninth graders are not only transitioning from middle school to high school and college, but they are also transitioning from childhood to adolescence, and that can bring new struggles that require extra support. In this transition class, teachers tailor the class to fit the specific needs of individual students. Students learn skills that not only help them succeed in high school, but college as well. Ninth graders learn note taking strategies, study skills, and assignment organization. They practice scheduling time effectively, forming successful study groups, and submitting assignments in a timely manner.

Most Achieve students take Spanish to meet their three year foreign language graduation requirement. They take two semesters of Spanish dual credit courses during their freshmen year at STC earning both college and high school credit for Spanish I and II. Freshmen are supported by the high school Spanish teacher every Friday. During sophomore or junior year students take TEKS based Spanish III for their high school credit and prepare for the AP Spanish Language exam.

State graduation requirements call for one credit of physical education for all students, most often completed their ninth or tenth grade year. MISD is the first school district in the nation to reach 100% recognition in the Let's Move! Active Schools campaign. Achieve is an eager participant in the move toward encouraging a healthier lifestyle. This campaign which supports the implementation of the physical education TEKS, is spearheaded by the P.E. department on campus. Just as students need to be academically fit, they need to be physically fit as well. At Achieve, teachers are encouraged to do learning activities which require movement to continue promoting an active lifestyle. Coaches encourage student participation in intramural sports, field day, and the fitness club.

In the area of technology, all ninth graders at Achieve take Principals of Information Technology with a high school teacher who addresses the state standards. Computer Operating Systems Course is taken at STC during their tenth grade year as a dual enrollment course. To promote technological literacy, MISD has been on the cutting edge of technology in education with the implementation of Transforming Learning in the Classroom, Campus, and Community (TLC3). The district issued an iPad to each student during the 2011-2012 school year. In addition it outfitted each campus with wireless internet capability. Achieve's students,

many of whom would not have access to these devices, are now able to use various educational apps for learning. This unprecedented access to the latest technology allows immediate access to information, e-books, on-line databases, university websites, on-line museum exhibits and art galleries. Though students' technology skills are targeted in their technology classes, technology is used to engage students and enrich learning in all classrooms at Achieve.

Achieve does not have all the electives found at traditional high schools; however, through its partnership with STC, students can take sign language classes, advanced technology classes, and an array of humanities classes not offered at other schools.

At Achieve, non-core teachers are expected to do more than teach their elective classes. As part of Achieve's faculty team concept, they assist core teachers with tutoring and support classes for SAT, ACT, and TSI test preparation, vocabulary enrichment, study skills, and research skills. This provides students an extra layer of encouragement and preparation from a non-core teacher, reinforcing the importance of student success.

Due to this approach, almost all students end their junior year TSI complete and score above the state average in SAT and ACT Mathematics.

### **3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:**

In addition to the instructional approaches and methods previously mentioned, Achieve strives to provide each student with appropriate interventions to meet the diverse and individual needs in order to achieve instructional goals.

The school offers extended day classes, extended week tutorials, extended year academies, weekly in-school support, and technology to aid students in achieving success. Both extended days and extended weeks consist of well attended well focused groups, which provide support in all content areas. This strengthens necessary skills students are expected to demonstrate on various state and national standardized tests. Weekly in-school support is offered through Enrichment-and-Reteach Classes during eighth period. The students rotate among eight classes in a two week cycle getting support for core subject areas and reviewing for TSI, EOC, SAT, and ACT exams.

Instructional strategies include scaffolding, peer modeling, peer tutoring, small group collaboration, and study groups. The spectrum of communication skills among all students requires extensive vocabulary and literacy enrichment through use of Marzano's six steps, Freyer model, vocabulary games, literature circles, and technology applications. Students with strong verbal skills assist lower ability peers while developing problem solving and leadership skills.

Another resource tool used is iPads, which the district has provided through the TLC3 campaign. Currently, Achieve uses technology for communication, intervention, and instruction using educational apps and websites. With this technology, students are able to apply their learning by creating original products. They are also able to keep in close communication with teachers and classmates through use of educational apps.

Grade level intervention plans are another important method of addressing student needs. Grade level teachers meet weekly to discuss student performance and hold parent conferences to create a plan of action suitable for the individual student. Students participate in the intervention process by voicing their own needs and making suggestions to the committee. Students are expected to attend parent conferences and attend follow up meetings. In addition, students who fall behind in high school credits are given opportunities for credit recovery. An MISD program allows struggling students to work at their own pace to recover lost credits and individual teachers offer credit by exam and mini-mesters.

High performing students at Achieve have an array of opportunities to advance their academic progress by taking higher level college courses, SAT/ACT test prep courses, and challenging multiple AP exams.

## **PART V – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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### **1. Assessment Results Narrative Summary:**

Achieve students consistently perform well on state exams. In 2010, students took the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). For 9th grade Mathematics, 98% met state standard. For 9th grade Reading, 100% met standard while for 10th grade Reading, 97% met standard. All special population sub-groups were within two points of “All Students.”

The 2011 results were similar: 9th grade Mathematics 96%, 9th and 10th grade Reading 100%. Likewise, all special population sub-groups scored within two percentage points of “All Students.”

Texas introduced a new assessment, State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) End of Course (EOC) in 2012. This assessment tested more essential knowledge and skills than TAKS, was timed, assessed students enrolled in the course rather than in a grade-level, and combined reading and writing into one exam. These changes resulted in lower performance on English tests. Algebra I had 96%, but on the English I test, 79% met standard. English II students tested on TAKS and 100% met standard. All sub-group results remained within two percentage points of “All Students.”

In 2013, despite additional changes to the English test, scores were high. Algebra I had 96% and English I had 92% meet standard. English II, assessed with STAAR, had 100% meet standard. All sub-groups were within three points of “All Students.”

Last year there was another change to the English exam requirements and format, yet the English scores did not decrease. Algebra I had 98%, English I had 95%, and English II had 99% meet standard. All sub-groups were within three points of the “All Students” performance except for English I Special Education group which had two out of three students, 67%, meet standard. Test changes and unavailability of modified exams contributed to the performance gap. For 2015, Achieve will utilize newly designed modified exams for special education students.

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

Each year, staff assesses previous years’ performance on TSI, EOC, Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS), PSAT, AP tests, college credits earned, and graduation rate to set campus goals for the coming year. Teachers review their student data and create individual instructional goals.

Teachers use software provided by MISD enabling them to disaggregate students’ test results and run reports targeting special populations, highlighting particular state objectives, and tracking student improvement. Schedule recommendations are made to meet students’ academic needs. For example, students who demonstrate weakness in writing or math are assigned to a writing support class or math lab. Students needing help with college entrance exams are scheduled in an SAT/ACT preparation class.

Throughout the year, assessment continues using benchmarks, TSI results, report cards, and attendance records. Grade level teams meet with students and parents to advise them of available interventions. The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) meets at the end of each grading period to monitor the performance of limited English proficient (LEP) students. The LPAC committee makes instructional recommendations to encourage the implementation of the state English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) and the use of best practices. In addition, LEP students are assessed at the end of every year for improvement in writing, listening and speaking skills. This monitoring results in improved test scores and academic achievement for all students.

School data is made available to the community in both English and Spanish through school report cards, district meetings explaining test data, and parental involvement information sessions.

Achieve's dedication to making data driven decisions for student success is apparent in the consistent improvement of student performance, especially that of at-risk populations.

Even though state and college entrance exams have undergone changes in the past five years, Achieve students' test scores remain high in comparison with neighboring high schools.

## **Part VI School Support**

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### **1. School Climate/Culture**

Achieve is a close knit community.

The small staff includes award winning teachers, military veterans, two staff members pursuing their doctoral degrees, a teacher currently earning his Master's degree through Harvard distance learning who is also a published children's author, several licensed counselors, a world traveler, and many teachers with extensive experience working with at-risk students. The staff builds camaraderie through monthly birthday celebrations before staff meetings, writing and discussing gratitude journals, an annual Thanksgiving potluck luncheon, and a yearly weight loss challenge. They celebrate personal and professional milestones and comfort one another in times of need.

Achieve staff works after school, Saturdays, summer to improve student performance. They care about more than academics though. Even when the school had a population of only one hundred, the staff realized that students needed an outlet for their affective needs to be met. The school now has dozens of organizations where students are afforded opportunities to become leaders, voice their opinions, and develop strong ethics. Student Council, National Honor Society, Masterminds, and yearbook were among the first organizations on campus. Other clubs include anime, community service, glee, drama, religious organizations, newspaper, literary magazine, animal rights, physical fitness, and couponing. In addition, Achieve administrators collaborate with other district high schools to schedule students in their fine arts and athletic courses during the day, enabling students to continue to take advantage of MISD extracurricular activities unavailable on campus.

At Achieve, students know their success is valued. The school holds monthly assemblies in which academic success is celebrated and team building activities take place. Students bond every first Friday of the month while participating in toilet paper dodge ball, playing win, lose, or draw, or inspirational presentations.

The few staff members cannot perform all the planning required for these events. Instead, they cultivate competent student leaders who oversee those responsibilities. Field day, team building activities, student government elections, parade floats, zombie survival games, and prom are all student planned and student run. Achieve relies on students to meet their obligations, and they flourish when given the opportunity to use their skills to serve the school and community.

Teacher-student rapport is such, that students feel comfortable calling teachers after school about homework or texting them questions about grades. Teachers and students at Achieve do not have a typical high school experience, but together, they work to make it a positive one.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community**

Achieve understands that community and parent involvement is key to a child's education. Every fall, the parental involvement program coordinates an annual back to school kick-off which addresses student needs. Local businesses donate goods and services including school supplies, clothing, immunizations, and health services.

MISD's Family Engagement Conference offers sessions on education, social services, mental and physical health, community awareness, health seminars on cancer and diabetes. Additionally, MISD has evening learning centers with sessions on technology, financial aid, and English as a Second Language. MISD began a "Let's Move" initiative in order to promote healthier living, reduce student obesity and prevent diabetes. The kick-off began with a City-District Pep Rally where everyone was invited to walk a mile as a beginning to a healthier lifestyle.

Achieve participates in a pioneer program called Parent University which exposes the parent of a first generation college student to the expectations of college. Two parent representatives from the campus are selected to join this educational awareness program and share their understanding with other parents. Achieve also invites parents and community members to Journey Day: “A Walk in Your Student’s Shoes,” intended to introduce parents to the 21st Century learner. It also holds Meet the Teacher Night, Open House, and Report Card Night. Local law enforcement, federal agents, health professionals, financial advisors, and social services personnel make career presentations for students and parents.

STC is Achieve’s most important community partner. Not only is Achieve housed on the STC campus, but an early college high school liaison works with administrators to make sure students are on track to earn Associate degrees. STC staff also make presentations on career pathways and majors to encourage students to further their education. During the year, universities visit the campus to recruit and give career preparation advice.

Achieve along with MISD fundraises for March of Dimes, American Cancer Society, and American Heart Association. Student organizations volunteer to serve at local festivals. On campus, NHS collects canned goods and purchases food for Thanksgiving dinners with turkey and trimmings to needy families each year. Students collect toys and canned goods for local charities. Through these activities Achieve’s students obtain quality leadership skills such as empathy, integrity and ethics, which is evident in the campus climate.

Family and community involvement strengthens students’ overall development by providing access to necessities, promoting good health, informing them about career opportunities, and engaging them in community service.

### **3. Professional Development**

At Achieve, there is a supportive community of professional learners who focus on staff development, advanced academic content, and research based strategies that make academic rigor accessible to all students.

Achieve only offers Pre-AP and AP courses. Teachers attend summer training for advanced level academies. However, advanced course work alone is insufficient to ensure students’ success. Teachers also learn and apply strategies for teaching English language learners (ELL) and to scaffold the advanced level instruction necessary for college readiness. Even students who have shed the limited English proficient label may still struggle with comprehending academic vocabulary. Fortunately, Achieve teachers implement many ELL strategies such as collaborative learning and writing across the curriculum for engaging all students. Additionally, teachers undergo yearly state certification in TELPAS rating, which requires they be proficient in rating language skills of limited English proficient students.

Teachers have a significant technology component in staff development including a common framework to ensure the use of technology in the classroom. MISD’s TLC3 initiative provides each student and teacher with an iPad and each teacher with extensive technology training. The campus sees the integration of technology as essential to 21st Century instruction.

Implementation of TEKS, AP, and CIF engagement strategies are a mandatory aspect of all classrooms at Achieve, all of which strengthen college and career readiness for learners of all abilities. Teachers involve all students in hands-on, highly engaging, rigorous lessons to appeal to diverse learning styles.

Achieve staff members actively participate in a community of learners who hold their peers accountable for complying with rigorous campus standards. In Professional Learning Communities, teachers complete instructional rounds, do book studies, and observe “teacher buddies” in order to improve instruction.

This culture of life-long learners is supported by the campus schedule which is structured to maximize teacher participation in and access to research based staff development activities during the work day.

Department members have aligned planning periods during which they meet to plan and share. Every Friday, there is time allotted for campus staff development and grade level meetings.

Just as students at Achieve are expected to be constantly engaged in learning, teachers and administrators are always learning methods to help refine their own practice, in an effort to ensure student mastery of TEKS.

#### **4. School Leadership**

Achieve's leadership philosophy is that every individual is expected to take on a leadership role in some facet of campus life.

This innovative vision is steered by the principal, the educational leader-in-chief. She coordinates all aspects of the campus, researches effective instructional methods, plans for and trains campus staff, and evaluates teacher pedagogy. She is responsible for drafting a complex master schedule accommodating required high school and college courses.

The assistant principal coordinates committee meetings for special populations including LPAC, Section 504, and Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD). Other duties include issuing textbooks, holding parent meetings, addressing student behavior, and monitoring attendance.

The counselor follows students' academic progress by meeting to discuss degree audits and monitor credits earned, ensuring on track graduation. She coordinates university visits to campus and teaches a Friday college readiness class. She issues schedules and modifies them based on student needs.

Because of the small staff, the campus administrators must wear many hats throughout the school year: planning student activities and awards assemblies, chaperoning school dances, monitoring attendance at Saturday tutoring, and representing the school at community events. One of the most important hats the administrators wear is that of confidante for students and teachers. They make themselves available to listen to concerns from students and teachers.

Because the field of education is a dynamic one, teachers at Achieve make a commitment to follow a shared vision for the school by constantly upgrading instructional practices. In order to accomplish this goal, teachers participate in Campus Instructional Leadership Team, made up of department chairs who discuss academic programs and progress and on the Site Based Decision Making Committee, made up of grade level team leaders who discuss campus policies and student expectations. Each department is led by a chair who attends monthly district meetings and disseminates information. Each grade level is led by a team leader who directs parent conferences, student activities, and monitors student intervention plans for the grade level. Teachers model being lifelong learners in the classroom and, as sponsors of one or more clubs, give students opportunities to be leaders in student organizations and run student activities.

Achieve is a trailblazer among early college high schools, recognized as the school with the most Associate degrees earned of any in partnership with STC. Because of the passion and vision of administrators, teachers, and students, Achieve doesn't just send the community graduates, it sends leaders.

## PART VIII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

### STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>TAKS/EOC</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>9</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>N/A</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Pearson</u>	

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	98	96	97	96	98
Advanced Academic Performance	26	15	0	55	59
Number of students tested	86	99	93	111	109
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	99	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	1	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	97	95	98	97	97
Advanced Academic Performance	26	19	0	59	59
Number of students tested	68	63	40	92	79
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	100	0	100
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	3	1	1	1	1
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	100	100	100
Advanced Academic Performance	25	50	0	67	25
Number of students tested	8	4	4	3	4
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	98	96	97	97	98
Advanced Academic Performance	25	14	0	56	58
Number of students tested	84	91	90	107	104

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	0	0	100	0	0
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	1	0	0
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	100	0	100
Advanced Academic Performance	100	100	0	0	100
Number of students tested	1	1	1	0	2
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	100	100	100
Advanced Academic Performance	0	17	0	50	67
Number of students tested	1	6	1	4	3
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	0	100	0	0	0
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	1	0	0	0
<b>11. Other 1: Economically Disadvantaged</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	97	95	98	97	97
Advanced Academic Performance	26	19	0	59	59
Number of students tested	68	63	40	92	79
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic					

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

**NOTES:** 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 Students took the TAKS assessment

2011-2012 First year for students to take EOC for Algebra I (9th grade)

2012-2013 and 2013-2014 Students continued taking EOC for Algebra I (9th grade)

**STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>English II</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>10</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>N/A</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Pearson</u>	

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	99	100	100	100	97
Advanced Academic Performance	5	38	29	27	8
Number of students tested	111	108	107	96	92
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	99	100	100	100	98
Advanced Academic Performance	3	28	27	25	7
Number of students tested	87	58	73	71	81
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	0	100	0
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	1	1	0	1	1
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	100	100	100
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	3	5	2	3	1
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	99	100	100	100	97
Advanced Academic Performance	5	37	28	27	8
Number of students tested	103	105	103	92	92
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic	0	100	0	0	0

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance	0	100	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	1	0	0	0
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	0	100	0
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	50	0
Number of students tested	2	1	0	2	0
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	100	100	0
Advanced Academic Performance	17	100	50	0	0
Number of students tested	6	1	4	2	0
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>11. Other 1: Economically Disadvantaged</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	99	100	100	100	97
Advanced Academic Performance	5	38	29	37	8
Number of students tested	111	108	107	96	92
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					

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

**NOTES:** 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 Students took the TAKS ELA assessment

2011-2012 First year for students to take EOC for English II (10th grade)

2012-2013 and 2013-2014 Students continued taking EOC for English II (10th grade)

**STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>TAKS/EOC</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>9</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>N/A</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Pearson</u>	

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	95	92	79	100	100
Advanced Academic Performance	13	14	0	48	48
Number of students tested	104	113	112	112	110
Percent of total students tested	98	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	96	89	78	100	100
Advanced Academic Performance	15	13	0	44	45
Number of students tested	80	71	50	93	80
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	67	100	0	100	100
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	3	1	1	1	1
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	100	100	100
Advanced Academic Performance	13	0	0	67	25
Number of students tested	8	4	4	3	4
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	97	91	79	100	100
Advanced Academic Performance	14	13	0	47	48
Number of students tested	100	104	108	108	105
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic	0	0	100	0	0

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	1	0	0
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	100	0	100
Advanced Academic Performance	100	0	0	0	100
Number of students tested	1	2	1	0	2
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	100	100	100
Advanced Academic Performance	0	33	0	75	33
Number of students tested	3	6	2	4	3
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	0	100	0	0	0
Advanced Academic Performance	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	1	0	0	0
<b>11. Other 1: Economically Disadvantaged</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	92	92	79	100	100
Advanced Academic Performance	13	14	0	48	48
Number of students tested	104	113	112	112	110
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Advanced Academic Performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					

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

**NOTES:** 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 Students took the TAKS ELA assessment

2011-2012 First year for students to take EOC for English I (9th grade)

2012-2013 and 2013-2014 Students continued taking EOC for English I (9th grade)