

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 [X] Choice

Name of Principal Dr. Janice Lombardi

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

Official School Name Trinidad Garza Early College High School at Mountain View

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 4849 Illinois Avenue STE W53A

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

City Dallas State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 75211-6599

County Dallas County State School Code Number* 057905088

Telephone 214-860-3680 Fax 214-860-3689

Web site/URL http://www.dallasisd.org/garza E-mail jlombard@dallasisd.org

Twitter Handle @GarzaECHSnews Facebook Page www.facebook.com/garzaechs 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. Mike Miles E-mail: milesfm@dallasisd.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Dallas Independent School District Tel. 972-925-3700

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 Mr. Miguel Solis
(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 (per district designation):
- 154 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 41 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 37 High schools
 - 1 K-12 schools
- 233 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. 5 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	58	49	107
10	45	60	105
11	46	60	106
12	45	56	101
Total Students	194	225	419

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 11 % Black or African American
 - 87 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 1 % 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: 0%

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 <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2013 until the end of the school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2013 until the end of the school year	1
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	1
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	419
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.002
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	0

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5 %
21 Total number ELL
 Number of non-English languages represented: 1
 Specify non-English languages: Spanish
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 86 %
 Total number students who qualify: 362

Information for Public Schools Only - Data Provided by the State

The state has reported that 84 % 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: 0 %
0 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>0</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</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:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	22
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	1
Paraprofessionals	2
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 19:1

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	98%	98%	99%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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	95
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	50%
Enrolled in a community college	26%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	1%
Found employment	13%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	0%

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: Garza ECHS's mission is to challenge students to excel academically and graduate college-ready with a high school diploma and up to 60 college hours.

PART III – SUMMARY

Garza Early College High School is a public school of choice located in the southwest quadrant of the Dallas Independent School District, the second largest urban school district in Texas. The school opened in 2006 and successively built cohorts of 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade classes in the following years. The school demographics include 86% economically disadvantaged as identified by Free/Reduced Lunch applications and 21% identified as at-risk. Eighty-six percent of the student population are Hispanic and 12% are African American. The entire school is comprised primarily of students who are the first in their families to attend college. In the Census Tract (108.01), where Garza ECHS is located, 59.75% of adults have no high school diploma, and only 10.8% have any form of a college degree.

Garza ECHS is embedded on the campus of Mountain View College (MVC), a community college annually serving over 13,000 students. The Garza ECHS collaborative partnership with MVC, in the Dallas Community College District, is a higher education partnership that ensures that the goal of college entry for all students is attained. Jobs for the Future, Texas Education Agency, and Educate Texas have also been important partners in the school's success. Garza ECHS students attend both high school and on-site college classes with the goal of graduating with high school diplomas and courses toward an associate's degree.

Garza ECHS has met and exceeded expectations on the state accountability systems with all subpopulations; this led to five state distinctions. These distinctions are for: Academic Achievement in Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Top 25% in Closing Performance Gaps, and Post-secondary Readiness.

Additionally, Garza ECHS is 100% met on System Safeguards for federal accountability. In 2012, the National Center for Urban School Transformation (NCUST) awarded the school a winning designation as a "transformational school" with a \$5000 monetary award (one of three high schools nationally in 2012). Edutopia, the non-profit organization founded by George Lucas, has also filmed Garza ECHS to showcase the "systems" that Garza ECHS has in place to elevate under-served students to high academic achievement.

Other awards that the school has earned over the past six years include Top 25 "Changemakers" in the nation as identified by Newsweek/Daily Beast. "Changemakers" are those schools identified as "doing the most with the least" – "least" in terms of budget. The Texas Honors Circle, awarded by the State Comptroller, is also an award that recognizes academic and financial effectiveness (received by Garza ECHS in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014).

Since the school's inception, Garza ECHS has focused on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) coursework and completion. Initially, most students attained an Associate of Arts degree; in 2013-14, more students graduated with an Associate of Science than in any previous year.

Through collaborative grants from the University of North Texas and University of Texas at Dallas, students have participated in internships at UT Southwestern Medical School and Engineering and Allied Health projects. Garza ECHS teachers have written, received, and implemented \$6000 in grants from the Junior League to projects in fitness/health and environmental science including one entitled "Investigating Agriculture Practices and Alternate Energy".

Another innovation grant was awarded to Garza ECHS to create two sustainable "aquaponics" chambers/gardens (integrating agriculture with hydroponics) on campus. They are maintained by high school students who learn to cultivate fish and recycle waste to fertilize plants through hands-on experiences. One of the students became a NASA high school aerospace scholar in 2013-14 and attended classes at the Johnson Space Center in Houston in summer 2014.

Giving back – community service – has also become a hallmark of the campus. One such example is student leadership in blood drives to the Carter Blood Bank. Garza ECHS received the Community Gold Award for the high number of pints of blood donated to the community. The blood drives are student-led and demonstrate a commitment back to the community.

Garza ECHS has a proactive, supportive environment and has added an additional counselor to support students emotionally, socially, and culturally. This counselor conducts individual counseling, assigns mentors, and organizes support groups for first-time college-goers who experience anxiety at taking high school and college classes concurrently.

School of Choice ~ The Garza ECHS application process is designed to give choice to under-served students who may not qualify to attend a magnet school but who want alternative options to a comprehensive high school. Students submit an application for entry and are accepted based on a weighted lottery. More weighted points are given to students who are at-risk, economically disadvantaged, and/or identified as under-served. In each of the past three years, Garza ECHS has received 500+ applications for 100 incoming freshmen spots indicating the community response to the school.

Garza ECHS students learn essential critical thinking skills for their future education and career while under the guidance and protection of a public high school. The school motto, “College-ready, Career-ready, and Life-ready” mirrors the commitment to lifelong learning and community empowerment. The tenacity of Garza ECHS’s students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community has developed the school into one of outstanding student achievement.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Garza ECHS curriculum aligns to the state standards, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Students follow a Personal Graduation Plan encouraging them to meet requirements for Texas Distinguished Achievement (four years of mathematics, science, social studies, language arts, three years in a foreign language, four “advanced measures” of College Readiness, and electives -26 total credits). The curriculum includes dual enrollment classes and Advanced Placement courses. Dual enrollment courses adhere to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) standards; Advanced Placement Courses adhere to the College Board’s Advanced Placement standards. Teachers utilize the district-developed curriculum which is based on the state standards. To promote student success in meeting the College Readiness requirements, dual enrollment classes and Advanced Placement courses (available in all four core subjects) are incorporated with the state standards for graduation as part of the required curriculum.

Since Garza ECHS is a school of choice (non-magnet) and selects incoming ninth grade students by weighted lottery, freshmen are chosen from a wide variety of middle schools including those designated as “improvement-required” and all types of charters. In response to identified student need, Garza ECHS partners with MVC in a College Readiness Boot Camp that features intensive instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics. The Camp culminates with the TSI (Texas Success Initiative) Assessment that evaluates college readiness. With the use of Garza ECHS purposeful instruction, by the end of the ninth grade: 83% of students are college-ready in reading; 81% in writing; and 76% in mathematics.

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS/READING (ELAR): College level literacy is the goal for Garza ECHS students. The curriculum not only includes Pre-AP English I, Pre-AP English II, AP English III, Dual-enrollment English IV but also Sheltered classes for English Language Learners (ELL). ELAR teachers use the “reader’s-writer’s workshop” model to provide individual attention to identified student’s literacy needs. The workshop allows teachers to differentiate literacy instruction and provide immediate feedback through individual conferences with students. The focus is on the writing process. Reflecting the Garza ECHS commitment to academic rigor, a majority of our juniors are enrolled in AP English Language. As seniors, 86% of those students enrolled in English 1301/1302 at MVC, earning critical college credit. The goals Garza ECHS sets for each student are high and instruction is supported with individualized intervention to help at-risk students (21%) achieve at the same level as their peers.

MATHEMATICS: The Garza ECHS mathematics curriculum ensures mastery of essential skills need to success in the college-level courses needed for the associate’s degree. Garza ECHS math teachers utilize an integrated math curriculum based on state standards to prepare students for high levels of reasoning and logic. The math curriculum emphasizes collaborative group work and pushes students to read, write, think, compute and speak in every math class. “Mathspace” is the math interactive notebook required in all math classes. It requires students to write their conceptual summaries of the math and to compose “tweets” that summarize in 140 characters what each page of the notebook is about.

Approximately 60% of new freshmen come to Garza ECHS with only eighth grade mathematics credit and limited exposure to Algebra. To assist them to quickly transform into college-ready students, Garza ECHS uses a double-teach model for ninth- and tenth-grade math. Math Applications supports the Algebra I curriculum, taught by a different teacher. Similarly, Math Models supports the Geometry curriculum. This purposeful scheduling exposes students to diverse teaching pedagogies. The payoff of the double-teach model is increased confidence and empowerment in mathematical thinking, quicker acquisition of academic vocabulary, and improved problem-solving skills at applied levels and higher. Individualizing the mathematics learning plans of students ensures that they do not lag behind. Students performing below standards are required to attend tutorials, Saturday Academies.

The mathematics curriculum implemented by Garza teachers goes beyond the content skills of the state-required TEKS and incorporates at every level the process skills necessary for enduring understanding and college-career readiness. Garza pedagogy and tutorials are a key to success for both the under-achieving and

advanced students. Students are simultaneously held to high standards of independent progress and self-monitoring. The Algebra I program results in marked progress in closing the achievement gap for identified sub-populations; Geometry and Algebra II program results in 98% of juniors and seniors qualified for college-level mathematics.

SCIENCE: The science curriculum at Garza centers upon laboratory learning, the acquisition and interpretation of data, and hands-on activities in science classrooms at each grade level. Garza students are exposed to the use of technology for the advancement of science and the real-world application of scientific principles. Students participate in fieldwork at the Dallas Audubon Center, community gardens on campus, and the application of "aquaponics" to study the bio-geochemical cycles. Garza ECHS students participated in science research at the University of Texas-Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas Water Utilities, and the University of North Texas Environmental Initiative. The connection of classroom learning to the real world is emphasized in the core curriculum and all students benefit from the seventeen STEM labs available through the MVC partnership.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Students are encouraged to take college courses in US History, Government, and Economics taught by MVC faculty. For example, 88% of juniors enrolled in History 1301/1302 instead of high school US History; 83% of seniors enrolled in dual enrollment Government and Economics to secure college credit rather than the high school alternative. The relationships built with Garza ECHS students from their first days on campus become all-important. Relationships are what give Garza students the confidence (socially and emotionally) to seek help and advice from a faculty that they trust to always treat them with respect, without judgment, and ready to provide assistance whenever needed.

1B College Readiness: Every component of the Garza ECHS implemented curriculum is purposefully chosen, strategically designed and intentionally taught to promote the goal of graduating students with both a high school diploma and associate's degree or career certificate. Students engage in rigorous coursework from their first day. Within the Garza ECHS framework of outstanding instructional and emotional supports grow into autonomous students who are ready to enter, and succeed in further academic and professional pursuits.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Fine Arts ~ Garza ECHS students (freshmen) have the unique opportunity to self-select dual enrollment fine arts through Mountain View College. The arts courses are aligned to the requirements of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The courses offered are for a full year term (2 semesters) and include visual arts (2-D Art and Art Appreciation); music (Introduction to Music and Music Appreciation); and drama (Introduction to Theatre, Film Appreciation). Students are eligible to perform with the MVC Drama Department and many audition to participate in the college performances. By the end of the freshmen year, almost all of the students have completed and passed the dual enrollment fine arts courses.

Physical Education (PE)/Health/Nutrition ~ Garza ECHS students engage in a program of physical education with a focus on their health and fitness. This is accomplished through a rigorous regimen of activities designed to keep students physically active and health conscious. All freshmen and sophomores take the required 2 semesters of high school PE. Students develop lifelong habits such as yoga and jogging. They measure and report their own progress in stamina and strength as demonstrated by keeping a "running" time log. Faculty and administration model a campus-wide commitment to fitness for students by including in every faculty meeting a coach-led "Jammin" Minute" exercise. Garza ECHS (faculty and students) participates annually in the Molina Feeder Pattern 5K and the Dallas Mayor's Race. Garza ECHS also has a STEP Team Program that enriches the physical activities as well as the cultural understanding of the participants and the student body. Student engagement in these activities, as well as staff engagement, creates physically active and health-conscious students.

Languages Other Than English (LOTE) ~ The Garza ECHS Action Plan includes elements necessary to become a bi-literate campus. Recognizing that speaking Spanish is only one aspect of bi-literacy, reading, writing, and speaking academic Spanish are part of all students graduation plans. All students currently take 2 years of academic Spanish and a third year of dual enrollment Spanish. AP Spanish has a pass rate of

87.5%. Additionally, students lead and participate in cultural programs in the community including: Bishop Arts District for Día de los Muertos, MVC Kiva Gallery Día de los Muertos Altares, and Cinco de Mayo.

Technology/Career and Technology Education (CATE) ~ The Garza ECHS CATE includes sports entertainment marketing, entrepreneurship, and business information management. These courses are offered to the few students who may not be college-ready by the end of 12th grade. Robotics, in partnership with MVC, is offered to students who want to obtain a career-ready certificate in Computer Information Technology.

Debate I, II and III ~ Garza ECHS students have the opportunity to participate in critical thinking and reading, writing, listening and speaking (foundational state standards in ELAR) through rigorous academic policy debate. Students learn to engage in research and analysis to create logical, fact-based opinions on social and policy issues in America. Students learn to formulate these opinions into written reports and speeches that they deliver with confidence and clarity to a variety of audiences. In this process, students develop presentation skills, analytic ability, and the ability to work as a team toward a common goal. In 2013 and 2014, Garza ECHS won First Place School in the annual district Debate competition with the Dallas Urban Debate Alliance.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Because it uniquely reflects the Garza ECHS vision and campus culture, Garza ECHS adopted Jobs for the Future's Common Instructional Framework, a core component in Early College Designs for schools. It contains six powerful teaching and learning strategies: Collaborative Group Work, Writing to Learn, Scaffolding, Questioning, Classroom Talk, and Literacy Groups. Garza faculty has adapted these strategies to create classrooms in which students are both teachers and learners. The traditional model of the "talking heads" has been replaced with student-led investigation and inquiry. Teachers deliver new material via "think-alouds" rather than lecture. Students in every core classroom utilize interactive notebooks for both scaffolding and thinking forward. Timers ensure that learning stays focused and outcome-based. Technology integration is frequently discussed and shared by faculty as they discover new ways to engage the z-generation in its educational purposes. In addition to the Common Instructional Framework, Garza ECHS has developed, implemented and maintained strategic campus "systems" that students' success. Several important are listed below.

The Garza ECHS master schedule is individualized and considered the first intervention. Master schedule development is a coordinated effort of both dual enrollment class offerings and high school graduation requirements. The master schedule is not a static document; it changes every semester to accommodate the differentiated needs of students. For example, as a result of students' Lexile results, Garza ECHS has built "reading and writing workshops" for freshmen who struggle with college readiness. ELL students are scheduled into "sheltered" instruction to bridge any language gaps they may have. The schedule is designed around student needs; and each student is scheduled individually. Finally, the daily bell schedule matches the college schedule; it is deliberately aligned.

Another "systems" example is the Garza Intervention Team (GIT). This team of teachers, counselors, and administrator includes representatives from each grade level. The team works to ensure that all students who struggle with any of these four issues: attendance, behavior, academics, or health issues are addressed individually. The GIT articulates the problem and begins the process of problem solution. For example, a mentor may be assigned to the student, and/or a counselor may conduct one-on-one guidance with a student. A "roundtable" may also be recommended where the student, the parent(s), all teachers, and the principal meet to discuss the problem and find solutions (the student is part of this discussion).

PART V – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results Narrative Summary:

Garza ECHS has 100% passing for all subpopulations including all ethnicities, at-risk, economically disadvantaged on all state STAAR (State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness) exams (English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, U. S. History). However, English I state assessment data shows a disparity between female Advanced (20.7) and male Advanced (7.3). English II data shows a similar pattern [female (11.9), male (4.2) and also shows a gap in Advanced Achievement for at-risk (0/24 students)].

Initially, deep diagnostic data analysis determined where interventions were needed. Garza ECHS faculty triangulated data for each grade cohort using state/district assessments, reading inventory results, and teacher recommendations. The Campus Action Plan was then developed and implemented. It outlined a cross-curriculum Literacy Initiative which includes: a campus-wide literacy article each week in Advisory for advanced vocabulary development; reading and writing workshops; strategic student placement in debate, practical writing or reading classes; and/or supplemental SAT tutoring.

Additionally, Garza ECHS set up a male mentoring program to address issues of flagging academic zeal by the male population. A program designed specifically for minority males, Brother-to-Brother (a national organization whose mission is to build character and high academic standards for minority youth) has provided students with adult mentors. Twenty-eight at-risk minority males are held accountable by the counselor/sponsor for mentoring/tutoring expectations, academic performance monitoring, and attendance checks.

The Garza Intervention Team (GIT) meets weekly for progress monitoring of at-risk students to check progress of the students in attendance, behavior, and academics. Each student has a personal intervention plan that is monitored weekly.

Gaps in mathematics are less evident. Algebra I scores demonstrate 100% passing for all subpopulations. Tutoring plans were individualized for identified students in all math classes, before school after school; “double-teach” scheduling of math classes in Algebra I/Geometry; and Saturday Academies for struggling students. An Instructional Coach certified in mathematics supported teachers with lesson planning and instructional feedback.

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

Garza ECHS is a data-driven school which bases all learning decisions on student data from a variety of assessment tools. These include district-developed semester finals, statewide end-of-course exams, national tests including the SAT, and classroom tests - all of which guide teachers to make informed decisions to best serve students.

Teachers begin by examining content-specific performance on assessment data for both past and current students. Using this information, and state standards, teachers design their end-of-grading-period assessments. This assists teachers in delivering specific material students need to master, rather than developing assessments based on what was taught.

After the interim assessment, teachers take a first look for mastery of learning standards. Results of the assessments are reviewed in weekly departmental and grade-level meetings. In department meetings, mastery of standards is first reviewed, then suggestions for content-specific teaching strategies are discussed. In grade level meetings, mastery is reviewed again and grade level teachers share ideas regarding teaching across content areas. For specific remediation, plans are made for students to receive tutoring outside of class without interfering with other remediation the students may receive. Secondly, students are able to de-construct progress on learning standards and chart improvement in mastery over time. For areas in which students struggle, teachers choose to either reteach the class or individual students during after-school tutorials, class interventions, or in more targeted Saturday Academies.

Formative assessments are key at Garza. Teachers constantly check for student understanding through questioning, journaling, and exit tickets. At the end of each class period, teachers administer a final demonstration of learning, checking for mastery of the day's objective. This provides teachers and students immediate feedback - whether the objective was mastered, which students need remediation, or if the objective needs to be retaught.

Garza ECHS regularly shares student progress and assessment results with families through web-based programs, information sessions, progress reports, and student and teacher-led conferences. One example of communicating with parents about assessments are Garza ECHS Parent Academies where parents learn how to check student progress through the district-wide parent portal program using their cell phone. All community stakeholders have access to summative assessment information on the Garza ECHS website.

Part VI School Support

1. School Climate/Culture

The culture of Garza ECHS provides non-threatening conditions where students, parents, and faculty become life-long learners; the outcome is that each individual's learning curve is exponential. There is no punishment for taking risks, no systemic anxiety about failure.

Student "ownership" of learning is an impetus at the campus beginning in the summer before the freshmen enter. Students attend a week long summer bridge program setting the tone for the four years at Garza ECHS. The summer bridge focuses on the social and emotional aspects of learning – what it is like to attend a high school embedded on a college campus; how to read a college syllabus; who to contact if they are having issues with content; what to do if they feel overwhelmed; what the implications of responsible choices are.

Additionally, relationship-building among all stakeholders is the thread in the fabric of the school culture. In terms of student behavior, the practice of relationship-building between classroom teachers and students manifests itself through student engagement. Teachers plan and prepare for students to be successful. Administrative referrals are few and when they occur they become opportunities for students to reflect and learn.

Teachers' and administrators' learning is enhanced through professional development which may include professional learning community discussions, visiting classrooms for problems of practice (inter-visitations), or instructional coaching. Risk-taking and experimentation for innovation are encouraged; if the first problem solution does not work, the team finds another.

The emphasis is on problem articulation and problem solution not evaluation of the individual student or teacher. Ultimately, success is the goal. This culture of collegiality, experimentation, and high expectations builds trust and confidence. The results of a university-developed district-wide climate survey administered anonymously to the entire faculty (including cafeteria workers) revealed 95% (District scale score) of Garza ECHS staff scored the culture as a positive one.

Parents are welcomed and have a unique trust to be equal partners with the school in the decision-making process for their students. Parents' input is solicited, respected, and valued. One example is the "roundtables" for struggling students. These roundtables include a collaborative team of parents, teachers, administrators, and the student with the focus on success/outcomes rather than punishment.

Another example is Parent Academies (topics co-developed by parents) tailored to their specific needs. Because 80% of Garza ECHS students are first time college-goers in the family, the parents are interested in attaining information about their students' requirements for associate's degrees.

2. Engaging Families and Community

At Garza ECHS, programs and practices to encourage family and community engagement are created based on community and school need. Garza ECHS has initiated Parent Academy sessions to empower parents to be advocates for their student's success. In January 2015, Garza ECHS had over 200 parents attend a Parent Academy meeting. They represented approximately half of the student population attending the gathering. Because Garza ECHS is a small high school with 400+ students, this shows significant involvement among parents.

The Parent Academy workshops have been purposefully and intentionally developed to meet the needs of the parents and students. Parent interest leads to the development of agendas for the Parent Academies. For example, one speaker was a psychology instructor from Mountain View College. He gave insight to all stakeholders regarding the mind of a teenager and helping the adolescent de-stress. Another workshop was the FAFSA and Financial Planning session. This provided valuable information to students and parents.

Garza ECHS has a committed Parent-Teacher-Student-Association and a Site-Based Decision Making Team. Students and parents are involved and provide decision-making advice to leadership. This empowers students and parents to have a genuine voice at the school.

When scheduling Parent Conferences regarding student behavior, academics, or attendance, we hold “roundtables”. Everyone is a co-participant in resolving whatever issues have arisen. Each student has an opportunity to own his/her educational plan and voice what he/she needs in the classroom in order to be successful.

Also, parents are assured that Garza ECHS will continue to provide solutions until any problem is solved – tenacity in finding solutions is a roundtable hallmark. Parents feel comfortable coming to the school because it is solution-oriented and not judgmental. They know that the school supports their student and intentionally want to create opportunities to help their student be successful at the school.

Another engagement outreach is with the community. Garza ECHS has a partnership with LULAC, a non-profit organization with the mission to advance the economic condition, educational attainment, and civil rights of the Hispanic population in the United States. Currently, LULAC is in the process of establishing a chapter with Garza ECHS. This will be another academic partnership for students and their families.

Garza ECHS intentionally develops programs and practices to engage parents and the community. These partnerships enhance success for the student. As a result of parental involvement, student success has steadily risen to 100% mastery on all state assessments in 2013-14.

3. Professional Development

Professional development (PD) plays a vital role in forging Garza ECHS students into exceptional learners. Commitment to continuous improvement is infectious and drives students to become lifelong learners. As a school faculty and student team, high expectations for mastery of all learning standards are evident in the actions towards students and mutual accountability for excellence/growth.

PD begins with the “systems” data analysis – formative and summative. It includes feedback from the principal as the instructional leader who visits every classroom frequently to observe “practice”. Internal coaching, both teacher-led and instructional coach/principal-led, follow and are tied directly to data - what is currently observed in classrooms as well as student assessments. Coaching takes place through individual conferences and after-school sessions. The recent coaching focus has been to improve students’ understanding of the lesson objective (focus on mastery) and specifically how they will demonstrate what they learned (demonstrations of learning).

Inter-visitations between classrooms are also a “system” of PD at Garza ECHS. Teachers visit other teachers using a “problem of practice” as the focus. In some cases, other high schools are invited to walk on these classroom visitations.

Faculty also routinely engage in teacher-led professional development days. These are driven by student performance and the Campus Action Plan. Teacher-leaders present how to: a) analyze student data by subpopulation to inform instructional practice; b) model student engagement strategies; c) demonstrate how to use interactive notebooks effectively (interactive notebooks are required in all core subjects); and d) utilize the campus-wide writing rubric in the unified literacy initiative. All faculty have participated as both presenters and learners. There are frequent presentations on the topics above – they are not one-shot topics, they are continuously revisited. One example is the continuing PD on the transformation from a “grade-centered” school to one focused on “learning”. This PD has had a profound influence on the culture of the school from a “deficit” model to a value-added model.

Another “system” of PD is developing teachers beyond that required for continued state teacher certification. All are certified in Talented and Gifted (TAG) instruction to serve TAG students and to

increase the rigor for all. Recent additional training has been provided by Educate Texas (Texas High School Project), Region 10 Educational Service Center, and Dallas ISD.

Faculty book studies are evidence of campus' commitment to lifelong learning. The focus relates to the student population needs. Recent books include: *Driven by Data*, *Teach Like a Champion*, *On Your Mark*, *Leverage Leadership*.

All campus subpopulations have improved, as judged by all state and federal accountability measures, and most importantly by the success of changed lives at Garza ECHS.

4. School Leadership

The philosophy of Garza ECHS is one of collaborative, inclusive leadership. A collective, shared vision of high expectations and leadership empowerment defines the principal's progressive leadership style. Although the ultimate decision-making is made by the principal, she elicits input from the various stakeholders – the community, the teachers, the parents, and the students. The principal has enacted this leadership style since her arrival in 2009; she is an eager listener, passionate educator, and an optimistic leader of the students' future. The Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) team meets at least four times per year and advises her on issues such as budget, professional development, dress code, and student activities.

Secondly, the Garza Instructional Leadership Team (GILT), a group of teacher-leaders, meets weekly to discuss instructional issues such as the master schedule, graduation plans, the budget (as it relates to instruction), dual enrollment issues, etc. Their role as teacher-leaders is an important part of the collaborative model and demonstrates the principal's ability as a risk-taker to share power.

One particular example of empowerment is professional development. Teacher-leaders facilitate book studies, data discussions, and they review common instructional strategies in professional learning communities. The effectiveness of the faculty is due to the input of all stakeholders in decision-making. The achievement of the students at 100% mastery on five state assessments and 100% system safeguards for federal accountability is a testament to collaborative leadership.

Thirdly, there is a Garza Principal's Council comprised of students who also advise the principal (student voice is an important piece of the school's collaborative leadership model). This group meets monthly. Students who have concerns or challenges are welcome to bring forth those issues to the principal. She has an open door to talk and listen, but more importantly, she asks students to write formal proposals and present them to her with a rationale for a new/revisited decision. In many cases (over the course of the years since she has been principal), student proposals which were "sound" have been enacted. For example, the uniform policy for twelfth grade was modified based on a well-reasoned and well-articulated senior proposal presented to Principal's Council and approved. Garza ECHS has 100% graduation rate – this is directly related to inclusive leadership decisions. Including students in the leadership of the school is directly related to students' ability to be heard and their ability to become eager listeners too.

PART VIII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: <u>Math</u>	Test: <u>State of Texas Assessment of Academic Performance/End of Course Exam</u>
All Students Tested/Grade: <u>9</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>2014</u>
Publisher: <u>Pearson</u>	

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	100	98	100	95	90
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014	53	42	0	57	31
Number of students tested	43	43	38	101	112
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	99
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	100	96	91
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014	56	48	0	58	33
Number of students tested	32	31	28	85	103
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
3. English Language Learner Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013,					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
2014					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	97	100	99	93
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014	51	39	0	60	33
Number of students tested	35	36	27	84	86
5. African- American Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	100	71	83
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014	57	57	0	36	17
Number of students tested	7	7	10	14	23
6. Asian Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: Advanced Academic Performance in 2011-12 ~ Explanation of differences between Commended performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and Advanced performance on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR)/End of Course (EOC): The 2009-10 and 2010-11 TAKS tests in high-school covered multiple subjects and was the predecessor of the STAAR/EOC tests which are more rigorous than the TAKS high-school tests. The STAAR/EOC also places a greater emphasis on assessing a student's college-and career-readiness in the tested subject.

In TAKS, performance standards were set relative to the judgment of educators about the tested content and the expected relationship with other tests within the TAKS program. Although the performance standards on STAAR represent a significant increase in expectations from the performance standards on TAKS, they are, for the first time, set relative to other state and national assessments in addition to educator judgment about the tested content and expected relationship with other tests within the STAAR program.

In sum, the state of Texas transitioned from the TAKS assessment to the STAAR/EOC during a 5 year period. The standards moved from Commended to Advanced requirements (which were set at a more rigorous standard).

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: <u>Reading/ELA</u>	Test: <u>State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) English II 2014, 2013, 2012; Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) 2011, 2010</u>
All Students Tested/Grade: <u>10</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>2014</u>
Publisher: <u>Pearson</u>	

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES*					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	99	100	99	99
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014	9	38	49	27	26
Number of students tested	114	104	99	105	96
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
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	99	100	99	99
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014	10	36	48	27	24
Number of students tested	93	83	83	94	82
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
3. English Language Learner Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	99	100	99	99
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014	9	32	48	27	25
Number of students tested	99	82	82	83	87
5. African- American Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	100	100	100
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014	8	88	57	32	20
Number of students tested	13	16	14	19	5
6. Asian Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					

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STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: <u>Reading/ELA</u>	Test: <u>State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) English I 2014, 2013, 2012; Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), 2011, 2010</u>
All Students Tested/Grade: <u>9</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>2014</u>
Publisher: <u>Pearson</u>	

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	99	98	92	99	100
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014	15	14	0	22	30
Number of students tested	99	113	109	101	113
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	99	91	99	100
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014	19	15	0	21	31
Number of students tested	75	85	90	85	104
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
3. English Language Learner Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	98	91	99	100
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014	15	11	0	20	29
Number of students tested	86	98	86	84	87
5. African- American Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above	100	100	94	100	100
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014	8	31	0	36	26
Number of students tested	12	13	18	14	23
6. Asian Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Satisfactory Academic Performance and above					
Commended in 2010 and 2011~Advanced Academic Performance in 2012, 2013, 2014					
Number of students tested					

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