WRITING IMMERSION

CAMPUS
H. V. Helbing Elementary School
Exemplary 2005–06

DISTRICT
Fort Worth ISD

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION
2002–03

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The **goal** of Helbing Elementary's program is to continue high student performance in writing.

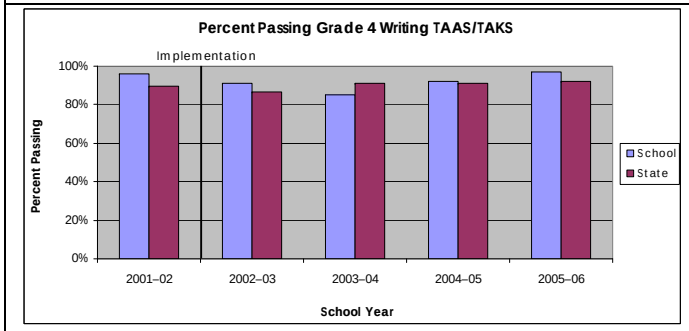
Key strategies include daily writing assignments, in-class workshops, and a Saturday Writing Club.

Outcomes include high percentages of students passing writing TAKS.

EFFECTIVENESS

Before
Prior to program implementation, in 2001–02, the percentage of students passing grade 4 writing TAAS was 96%, compared to the state average of 90%.

After
After implementation, grade 4 writing performance remained high overall. In 2005–06, 97% of students passed writing TAKS, compared to the state average of 92%.



Source: AEIS

CONTEXT/IMPLEMENTATION

Demographics (2005–06)

Grade Levels Served	PK–5		Campus Enrollment	579	
Ethnic Distribution			**Economically Disadvantaged**	535	92.4%
Hispanic	561	96.9%	**Limited English Proficient (LEP)**	372	64.2%
White	13	2.2%	**At-risk**	434	75.0%
			Mobility (2004–05)	80	16.3%

Source: AEIS

Background

- In 2005–06, Helbing's student population was 92% economically disadvantaged and 64% LEP.
- Since bilingual instruction is provided through grade 3, and students in grade 4 are taught solely in English, the school anticipated that students transitioning from bilingual to ESL instruction would struggle, particularly in English writing, with the increased difficulty of the new TAKS introduced in 2002–03.

Procedures

- Several writing intensive experiences for grade 4 students were put into place at the school, including in-class, in-school, and outside-of-school offerings.
- In class, teachers focused on specific compositional skills, such as voice, introductions, or paragraphs and assigned daily writing.
- A weekly "writing camp" for grade 4 students was established in which students broke up into groups in the school auditorium to practice writing skills.
- On Saturdays, students identified by teachers as needing extra support participated in Saturday Writing Club, which offered individualized, one-on-one instruction and incentives and rewards for attendance.
- Student writing assignments were often focused on shared experiences, such as school field trips or books read by the class.

CAMPUS/DISTRICT STAFF

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The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is seeking feedback about the best practice summaries.

Please take one minute to answer the feedback survey (six questions).

Best Practices Feedback Survey