

ELEMENTARY WRITING

CAMPUS

C. M. Macdonell
Elementary School
Recognized 2006-07

DISTRICT

Laredo ISD

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION

2006-07

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The **goal** of Macdonell Elementary’s program is to improve student performance in writing.

Key strategies include use of engaging writing practices, cross-grade and interdisciplinary collaboration, and peer tutoring.

Outcomes include improved performance on writing TAKS.

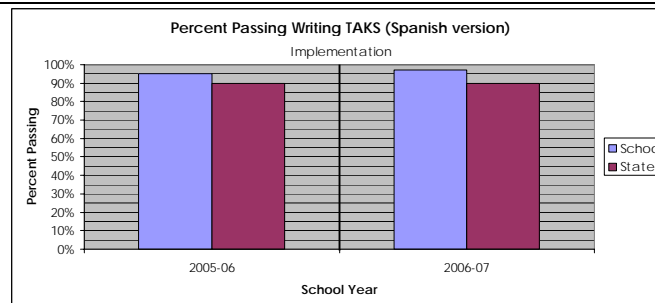
EFFECTIVENESS

Before

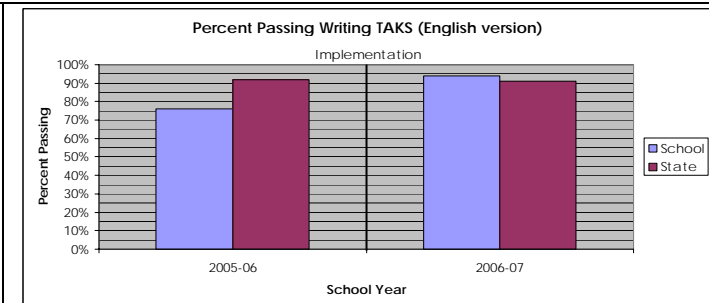
Prior to program implementation, in 2005-06, the percentage of students passing the Spanish version of the grade 4 writing TAKS was 95%, compared to the state average of 90%. The percentage of students passing the English version of grade 4 writing TAKS was 76%, compared to the state average of 92%.

After

After implementation, the percentage of grade 4 students passing the Spanish version of the writing TAKS was 97%, compared to the state average of 90%. The percentage of students passing the English version of the grade 4 writing TAKS was 94%, compared to the state average of 91%.



Source: AEIS



Source: AEIS

CONTEXT/IMPLEMENTATION

Demographics (2006–07)

Grade Levels Served		K–5	Campus Enrollment		679
Ethnic Distribution			Economically Disadvantaged	678	99.9%
Hispanic	678	99.9%	Limited English Proficient (LEP)	660	97.2%
			At-risk	666	98.1%
			Mobility (2005–06)	173	29.6%

Source: AEIS

Background

- In 2006–07, Macdonell Elementary’s student population was 99.9% economically disadvantaged and 97% LEP.
- Passing rates on TAKS writing had declined from 2004–05 passing rates.

Procedures

- The campus initiated a school-wide writing initiative based on use of innovative student engagement strategies employed by the campus’s grade 4 writing teacher.
- Strategies included extensive use of music and visual cues in classroom instruction. For example, the writing teacher used popular song lyrics to help students identify grammatical mistakes and frequently used music and musical instruments to engage students. In addition, classroom displays were changed on a regular basis and used to support classroom activities.
- Additional strategies included reading non-punctuated compositions (the “pointless essay”) aloud to help students identify the need for punctuation. Poetry and current events were also incorporated into instruction to engage students emotionally and personally.
- The writing class included a peer tutoring component that paired LEP and bilingual students.
- The writing teacher grouped students for in-class instruction and provided after-school and Saturday tutoring for small groups of students based on benchmark assessments conducted every six weeks.
- The writing teacher provided campus-wide professional development, modeling writing strategies and techniques, which other teachers integrated into classroom writing activities.
- To promote student enthusiasm for writing, the campus conducted a school-wide, day-long “writing fair” for grades 1–5, with games and activities in Spanish and English.

CAMPUS/DISTRICT STAFF**Cynthia Conchas, Principal**

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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](#)