

DEVELOPING SUCCESSFUL THINKERS

CAMPUS

Anna Mae 'Mas' Nichols
Elementary School
Exemplary 2005-06

DISTRICT

Northside ISD

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION

2003-04

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The **goal** of Nichols Elementary's program is to improve student performance in science.

Key strategies include staff development in critical thinking, team and interdisciplinary teaching, and a focus on hands-on activities.

Outcomes include an increase in the percentage of students passing science TAKS.

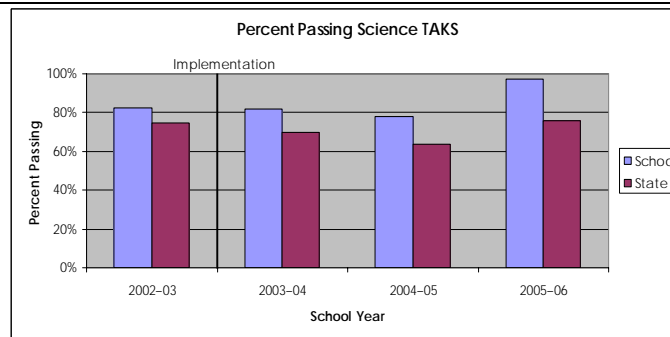
EFFECTIVENESS

Before

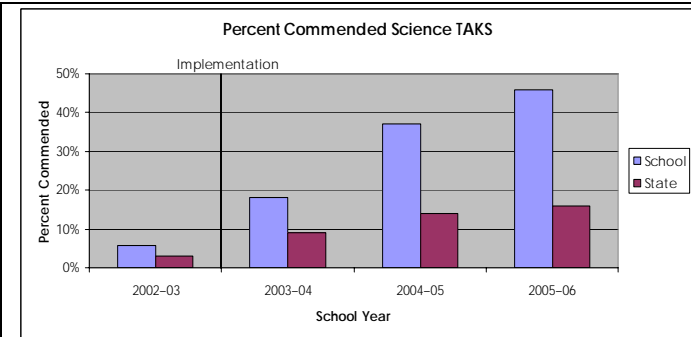
Prior to program implementation, in 2002-03, the percentage of grade 5 students passing science TAKS was 82%, compared to the state average of 75%, and 6% performed at the Commended level, compared to the state average* of 3%.

After

After implementation, the percentage of grade 5 students passing science TAKS fluctuated, with 78% passing in 2004-05 and 97% passing in 2005-06. The percentage of student performing at the Commended level, however, steadily increased with 46% of students performing at the Commended level in 2005-06, compared to the state average of 16%.



Source: AEIS



Source: AEIS

* State averages of Commended-level performance reflect all grades tested (3-11).

CONTEXT/IMPLEMENTATION

Demographics (2005-06)

Grade Levels Served		EE-5	Campus Enrollment		742
Ethnic Distribution			Economically Disadvantaged	220	29.6%
African American	67	9.0%	Limited English Proficient (LEP)	31	4.2%
Hispanic	374	50.4%	At-risk	191	25.7%
White	281	37.9%	Mobility (2004-05)	90	11.5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	17	2.3%			

Source: AEIS

Background

- Nichols Elementary opened in 2002-03.
- Staff reported that science TAKS performance prevented the campus from receiving an Exemplary rating.

Procedures

- Teachers took the grade 5 science TAKS release test and determined that students had to be critical thinkers to perform well.
- Gifted and talented teachers and the reading specialist provided professional development for science teachers focused on techniques for using Bloom’s Taxonomy to develop critical thinking.
- Using the district’s curriculum system and benchmark tests, administrators and teachers disaggregated data and met to collectively discuss areas of strength and weakness for individual students and groups of students.
- Teachers volunteered to reteach concepts or TEKS they were most confident with in a teammate’s class.
- A science lab was created on the school stage and work stations and centers were utilized in classrooms to provide opportunities for hands-on activities.
- Science journals were used at every grade level and were evaluated using science rubrics.
- Science vocabulary was aligned with the TEKS and taught at every grade level.
- The campus purchased expository texts tied to every grade level’s science units. Science concepts were integrated into guided reading.

- A two-week science review was conducted prior to TAKS. Grade 5 teachers rotated through each other's classrooms teaching their strongest TEKS concept.

CAMPUS/DISTRICT STAFF**Sylvia Swayne, 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](#)