

School Improvement: What really WORKS?



Jo Ann Simmons, Ed.D.

13 Years ISD Experience

4 Years Charter Experience

3 Years Superintendent

Teacher, Coach, Assistant Principal, Principal, Director of Student Services, Professional Service Provided (PSP), Charter School Superintendent Mentor, Adjunct Professor

The University of Texas at Tyler Innovation Academy

- * The UT Tyler Innovation Academy (UTTIA) is a **university charter public school**. The charter was approved by the **State Board of Education in 2012**. The UTTIA opened locations at each of the UT Tyler Campuses in the same year:
- * University of Texas **Tyler**
- * University of Texas Tyler-**Longview**
- * University of Texas Tyler-**Palestine**
- * 2012 Served 3rd – 5th **2017-2018 Serve Grades K -11th**
- * District Enrollment **730 Students**

The University of Texas at Tyler Innovation Academy

The UTTIA utilizes **Project and Problem-based Instruction (PBL)**, incorporating blended learning and technology enhanced teaching methods.

The UTTIA is designed to develop **STEM College and Career Ready students**.

The UTTIA is data-driven. The **curriculum is aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEA) as well as the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (THECB)**.

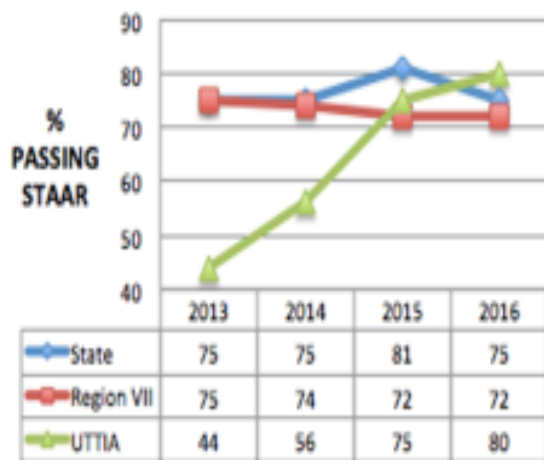
The UTTIA utilizes **assessments that objectively measure achievement, student growth, college readiness, and 21st Century Skills needed in the work-place**.

The University of Texas at Tyler Innovation Academy

Where we were...

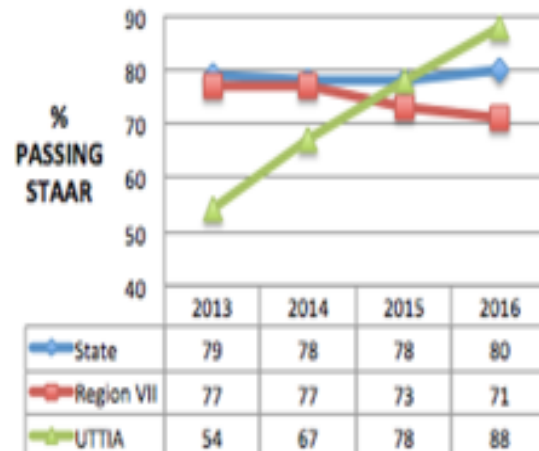
- District Did Not “Meet Standard”
- All 3 Campuses Did Not “Meet Standard”
- District Failed “First Report”
- 2 Strikes in 3 Years
- High Student Mobility Rate, Effective Overall Budget
- High Teacher Turnover
- **Instruction not Aligned to Standards**
- **Systems were not in Place**
- Lack of Communication
- **Ineffective Leadership**
- **Decisions were not Driven by Data**

MATH

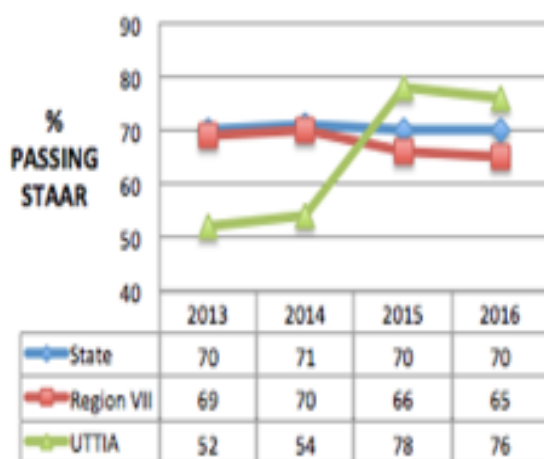


GROWTH 2013-2016

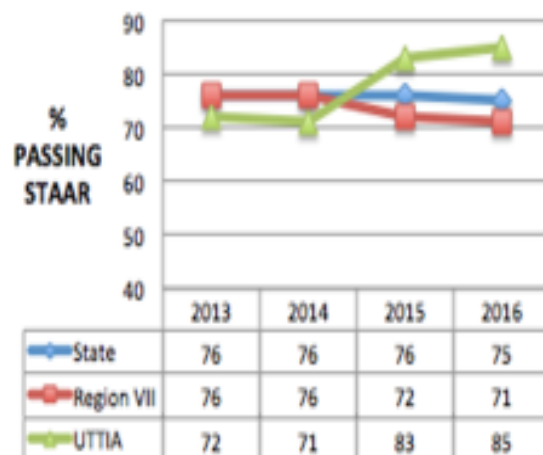
SCIENCE



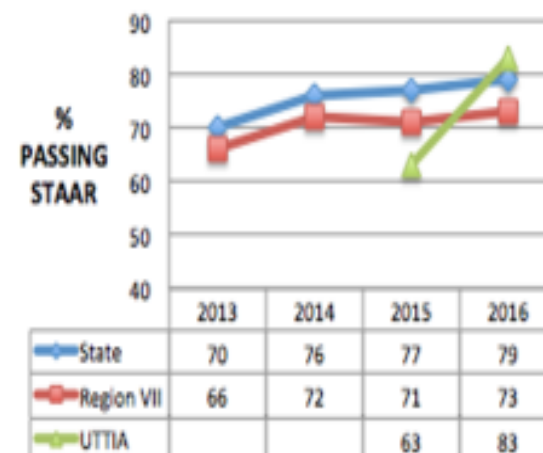
WRITING



READING



SOCIAL STUDIES



The University of Texas at Tyler Innovation Academy

Where we are now...

- District has “Met Standard” Last 4 Years
- All 3 Campuses have “Met Standard” Last 4 Years, Earning Distinctions
- District Received “Superior Rating” Last 4 Years on “First Report”
- Going Into Year 6, Only 2 Strikes
- Low Student Mobility Rate
- Low Teacher Turnover
- **Instruction is Aligned to Standards and Engages Students**
- **Systems are in Place**
- Effective Communication: District Level/Parents/Students
- **Effective Leadership**
- **Decisions Are Data Driven**

Innovation Academy Campus Ratings

DISTINCTIONS			ACHIEVEMENT			PROGRESS			CLOSING GAPS			COLLEGE READINESS		
Campus	Distinction	Rating	Index 1	Target	Met Standard	Index 2	Target	Met Standard	Index 3	Target	Met Standard	Index 4	Target	Met Standard
PAL	4	MS	90	60	Y	45	17	Y	50	30	Y	54	21	Y
LGV	2	MS	86	60	Y	43	17	Y	51	30	Y	56	21	Y
TYL	0	MS	82	60	Y	38	17	Y	38	30	Y	44	21	Y

Accountability System Shift from 4 indices to 5 Domains

Districts and campuses will be rated on five domains:

Domain I: Student Achievement

Domain II: Student Progress

Domain III: Closing Performance Gaps

Domain IV: Postsecondary Readiness

Domain V: Community and Student Engagement

Should the accountability system
be the main driver of school
systems?

Should your school systems
change when accountability
systems change?

7 Critical Success Factors

- * **Improve Academic Performance**
- * **Increase the Use of Quality Data to Drive Instruction**
- * Increase Leadership Effectiveness
- * **Increased Learning Time**
- * Increase Family and Community Engagement
- * Improve School Climate
- * **Increase Teacher Quality**

Action Planning Purpose

If schools are to change, it must first be understood that it is not enough to change the behavior of individuals – **what must be changed as well are the systems** that encourage, support, and maintain present behavior patterns and discourage new patterns from emerging.

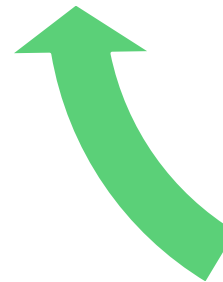
~ Phillip Schlecty (1997)

Implement

Evaluate



**School
Improvement
Process**



Plan



Improved Academic Performance

Academic performance is the foundational CSF. By ensuring the CSFs of teacher quality, effective leadership, data driven instructional decisions, productive community and parent involvement, efficient use of learning time and maintaining a positive school climate, campuses can increase performance for ALL students.

1. How do you ensure the interventions/actions you have identified will improve academic performance?

Increased the Use of Quality Data to Drive Instruction

The key to improving student learning is to identify which data has the **greatest impact and using it to inform decisions**. Developing data literacy and building a culture of collaborative inquiry among teachers are vital. Data becomes meaningful when it is **used on a timely basis, shared** with individual students, and **is sticky**.

1. How can we use data differently to have a greater impact on student achievement?
2. How can we make data sticky at our campus?

Increase Leadership Effectiveness

Research indicates that highly effective principals raise the achievement of a typical student in their schools by between two and seven months of learning in a single school year; ineffective principals lower achievement by the same amount.

1. How does the principal create a culture of “learning for all” on our campus?
2. How does the campus leadership team ensure that the greatest number of students learn the most they can everyday?

Increased Learning Time

Common sense tells us that in learning, time matters. An individual cannot become more proficient in any given area without committing a certain amount of time to grasping new content, practicing and honing skills, and then applying that knowledge. However, adding time only makes a difference if it is used to engage students and teachers in learning aligned to their needs.

1. What data is used to inform decisions about learning time, instructional planning, and enrichment activities?
2. What opportunities do we see for increasing learning time at our school?

Increased Family and Community Engagement

A school will not achieve equity and excellence for all of the students in its care if it does not acknowledge, understand, and include the families and communities of all its students. The six major types of family and community involvement to support students' education and healthy development are: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community.

1. How are we measuring the effectiveness of current family and community engagement?
2. How can we improve family and community engagement?

Improve School Climate

School climate is best evaluated by recognizing student, parent, and school personnel voice, and assessing all the dimensions that color and shape the process of teaching and learning and educators' and students' experiences in the school building. Dimensions include: safety, teaching and learning, interpersonal relationships, institutional environment, and staff.

1. How are we measuring climate to include students, staff, parents, and other stakeholders?
2. Looking through the “dimensions” lens, how can we improve the climate on our campus?

Increase Teacher Quality

The positive influence of effective teachers versus ineffective teachers on student achievement is dramatic. Over three years, Marzano studied the difference between students with most effective teachers and those with the least effective teachers. The most effective teacher resulted in an 83% gain for students while the least effective teacher resulted in a 29% gain.

1. What are our current practices for assessing staff strengths and areas for growth?
2. How will we ensure growth for all teachers at our campus?

7 Critical Success Factors

- * **Improve Academic Performance**
- * **Increase the Use of Quality Data to Drive Instruction**
- * Increase Leadership Effectiveness
- * **Increased Learning Time**
- * Increase Family and Community Engagement
- * Improve School Climate
- * **Increase Teacher Quality**

Improvement Process

Root Cause

Identify Solutions

Set Goals & Measurable Objectives

Planning Action Steps

Monitoring Implementation

Evaluating Action Plan

Identifying the Next Steps

School Improvement Planning

Gather and Organize Data

Review Performance Framework

Describe Performance Trends

Prioritize Performance Concerns

Identify Root Causes

Set Performance Targets

Identify Solutions and Action Steps

Identify Measurable Objectives

Identify Implementation Evidence

Law requires “Improvement Required” schools to work through the TAIS Process.

BIG QUESTION...

How do you make sure your plans to improve are going to support the needed improvements, moving the school from “**Improvement Required**” to “**Met Standard**”.

Guiding Questions for Goals

- * Will achieving the goals impact student performance?
- * Will the goals be adequate and sustainable?
- * Are the goals specifically linked to the performance trends/concerns, root causes, and solutions?
- * Is there a clear rationale for each goal that can be articulated by all members of the staff?

Guiding Questions for Solutions

- * Are the solutions grounded in research?
- * Will implementing the solutions address the identified concern and root cause?
- * Will the solutions, if properly implemented, impact student achievement?
- * Does the school have the control and resources to implement and sustain the solutions?
- * Is everyone who is part of the challenge also part of the solution?

Guiding Questions for Evaluation

- * How will you know your resources or strategies, aligned to the action steps, have been implemented?
- * How do you know what you have committed to doing IS WORKING?
- * Consider your local data sources to monitor progress:
 - What data do you have available that will allow you to track progress toward your action step(s)?
 - When will it be available? How will the data be used?

Guiding Questions

- * What professional development, technical assistance, or ongoing assistance will be needed to support the improvements?
- * Will professional development be job embedded (e.g. action research, case studies, lesson studies, book studies, etc.)?
- * How will you ensure professional development is aligned to the solutions and effectively implemented?

CONTACT INFORMATION

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