

TEXAS
Schools to Watch
Readiness Checklist

Your school may be a high performing, high impact middle school, but is it ready to be designated as a model for others? Making an application is not an easy process, so before you begin, here are some items to consider. If you have some **Not Yets**, you may want to rethink or postpone making application at this time, or make sure that you explain in your application narrative how you are addressing the **Not Yets**.

	The Texas Schools to Watch Readiness Checklist	We're There	Not Yet
1	Our school met the AEIS and AYP academic performance standards for this past school year.		
2	Our school is not in program improvement, is not being state monitored, and does not have any unanswered or ongoing civil rights violations.		
3	Our school's programs are replicable by schools with challenging and diverse populations.		
4	Our school has an operational, school-wide progressive discipline plan. All students consistently receive fair and equitable treatment. The suspension data reflects that no subgroup is being unreasonably suspended.		
5	Our school actively supports the physical, emotional, and social health, welfare and safety of our students with counseling, health services, adult advocacy, developmentally responsive activities, and positive incentives. Cognitive and non-cognitive programs are designed and implemented to encourage, motivate, resolve conflict, build character, resiliency, attendance, and achievement for all students.		
6	The district (superintendent and school board) provides strong support for its middle schools to meet the needs of young adolescents with financial resources, highly qualified teachers, administrators, and counselors, curriculum and instructional materials, and professional development for its teachers.		
7	<p>The school has an operational and formalized structure of distributed leadership that embraces a clear and current vision and mission for the school. Groups meet independently and regularly with a clearly articulated system of norms, collaborative purpose, communication, and ability to make meaningful decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision statement serves as the driving force for decisions in the school • School-wide leadership team with representation from key individuals • Department curriculum-instruction-assessment-data groups work regularly throughout the year to disaggregate data and adapt instruction as dictated by that data • Grade level department groupings • Grade level interdisciplinary teams of teachers with a common set of students and mutual accountability for student behavioral and academic success • Special programs for at-risk students • Parent or parent-teacher association • Student council 		
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		There	Yet
8	Our school is an integral part of the community. It seeks support from the community (university, colleges, businesses, non-profits) and provides support to the community in terms of student volunteer services, facilities, and joint projects.		
9	The master schedule of our school is a reflection of students' needs and the school mission. It is flexible and innovative in providing time and opportunity for coherent, rigorous, standards-based instruction for all students within the school day. It provides students with curricular opportunities in core subjects, fine arts, and physical education. It also provides opportunities for targeted interventions. In addition, it contains common planning time for teacher teams in the school to work collaboratively for the benefit of their students. It creates small, close communities of learners and allows for professional learning communities amongst colleagues.		
10	Students are heterogeneously placed on teams and in classrooms to the fullest possible extent. Instruction is differentiated for interventions and enrichment opportunities. Resource specialists collaborate or co-teach. Additional intervention or content specific classes are provided for students with special needs that cannot be met in the regular classroom (i.e. math intervention, remedial reading). Enrichment and leadership opportunities are accessible by all and not determined on the basis of IQ and/or test scores. All classes have high expectations and high levels of student engagement. Classrooms exhibit active learning and multiple teaching and learning strategies.		
11	Curriculum, instruction, school-wide strategies, pacing, assignments, homework, assessment, grading and reporting, enrichment projects and activities (Science Fair, Academic Bowl, field trips, etc.) in each subject area are consistent and coherent across the school. (Every classroom and every student has equal access, opportunity, and challenge in any classroom to which they are assigned.)		
12	By the time this STW application is submitted, the entire administrative and teaching staff will have participated in an extensive, ongoing discussion of the Texas Schools to Watch Self-Rating Rubric and will have a school average for each indicator. If selected, we will be prepared to honorably fulfill the obligation of sharing with others statewide and nationally what it takes to be a high performing middle school that is on its own continuous journey of improvement.		

Whether you plan to apply or not, download the Texas Schools to Watch Self-Rating Rubric© (www.tmsanet.org) and get started on the road to continuous improvement.

If you have any questions, call (512) 462-1105 or email:

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