

Llano Independent School District

2011-2012 GOALS

Background:

In the 06-07 fiscal year, the Llano Independent School District adopted a set of goals to drive its decision making process. These goals have been updated each subsequent year. The adopted goals serve to guide budget preparation, hiring decisions and evaluation of personnel. Some of the goals were and are very aggressive. During the past four years, progress has been made in reaching the goals and some goals have been reached and thus eliminated. Others require additional work, and new goals have been added.

The Board of Trustees and Administrative Team of the Llano Independent School District once again have spent considerable time and effort on a collaborative effort to set forth the goals for the District for 11-12 and beyond. These goals will be the basis for future actions of the District.

The District might well have chosen different goals if it had free choice over all its activities. However, school districts in Texas operate under a myriad of federal and state laws and regulations, which limit or prohibit the District from choosing all options. For example, the State of Texas mandates standardized testing (the STAAR test) for all students in a standard academic program. Students must pass this test for graduation, and the test is used as the primary basis for evaluating schools under the State's academic rating system. As a result, the District must consider the implications of this test on all its actions, whether or not the District or the community at large believes in the test.

Academic accomplishments for Llano ISD for 10-11 include:

- Llano ISD was rated "Recognized"
- Llano High School was rated "Academically Acceptable"
- Llano Junior High School was rated "Recognized"
- Llano Elementary was rated "Recognized"
- Packsaddle Elementary was rated "Recognized"

The "Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) Report" is available on the school district website (www.llanoisd.org). This report has a wealth of information about the District and readers are encouraged to use the report when evaluating the District and these goals.

Over the past few years, funding for the District has been severely restricted. Most of these problems have been the result of legislative mandates, particularly Chapter 41 of the Texas Education Code, popularly known as "Robin Hood". Over half of the District's local taxes have been remitted to the State under Robin Hood, and funds that may be retained have been virtually frozen.

Goals may be accomplished only if all constituent parties – School Board, Administration, staff, parents, students, and the community at large – support them and work to see that they are accomplished.

The Board of Trustees and Administration

GOAL 1

INCREASE STUDENTS' PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

Discussion:

Over the last four years, the District has placed particular emphasis on improving student performance in math and science. Last year, our emphasis was on improving our instructional program in the area of social studies. We now believe it is time to turn out attention to improvement of instruction in English/Language Arts. We have chosen to wait to place emphasis on English/Language Arts not because we believe this core subject is less important than the others, but because this has traditionally been our area of highest academic performance as a district.

The measurement of passing rates in this subject is one of the benchmarks used for rating schools in the Texas School Accountability System. Under this system, a school campus or district is rated "recognized" if all defined subgroups (White, African American, Hispanic and Native American) have a pass rate of at least 80% (11-12) on the TAKS test. A score of 90% for all subgroups is required for Exemplary. The District goal is for all its campuses to be rated "Exemplary".

The chart below shows the most recent scores for Llano I.S.D. on the state Language Arts assessment instrument.

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

Sum of All Grades 3-11	2011-2012
All Students	93%
AA	100%
Hispanic	89%
White	94%
Econ. Dis.	91%

In 2011, Llano ISD received a "Recognized" Accountability Rating.

Although our performance in this area is generally strong, the increasing rigor of state assessments coupled with changing state standards requires the district to remain vigilant with respect to its English/Language Arts Program. Additionally, our efforts to improve student performance in math and science have resulted in a more equitable distribution of academic learning time between the four core courses. Therefore, to increase student performance in English/Language Arts, it is imperative that the District review our instructional practices in this area for increased efficiency.

The District will continue the process of aligning curriculum in the area of English/Language Arts during the 2010-2011 school year. The expectation is that staff will implement the District's adopted curriculum to the exemplar lesson level.

Fiscal Note: The District will spend approximately \$14,000 for assistance from the Regional Service Center (this figure includes purchase of curriculum for all four core subject areas), \$10,000 in materials and supplies, and \$4000 for Professional Development Training to accomplish this goal.

GOAL 2

SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PROFICIENCY BY RECRUITING AND RETAINING HIGH QUALITY TEACHERS

Discussion:

This has been a goal for the last four years and is being retained due to its importance.

The District is proud of the accomplishments of its teachers. The District historically attracts teachers with several years of experience as opposed to newer teachers. This is not a problem as long as a large percentage of teachers don't retire in any given year. This is an issue that has to be continually monitored and tracked.

The right teachers are the greatest assets of the District. Many experienced teachers will retire over the next few years and will have to be replaced. Under the current compensation arrangements, new teachers are harder to attract and retain because our compensation package for teachers with less than 10 years of service is under the average of the surrounding area and other cities. However, recent changes in the labor market may increase the number and quality of applicants.

The District has currently approved salary increases of \$1000 for the 11-12 year which insures the District is competitive with competing districts for teachers with more than 10 years of service.

The District will continue to monitor the salary relationships so that it does not slip behind other districts and will continue to evaluate our position for teachers with less than 10 years of service and those nearing retirement.

If the District maintains this course, it believes it will be able to retain enough quality teachers over the next few years to insure our students are receiving a quality education.

Fiscal Note: The salary increases for 11-12 are anticipated to cost \$167,000.

Note – The highlighted area should be revised but these figures will not be available until the release of the next AEIS report. I suggest we use these same numbers and revise the document when the updated figures are available.

GOAL 3

PLANNING FOR ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AND RETIREMENT OF I&S BONDS

For several years we have had a goal for long range planning. This included developing a long range plan and trying to use it to plan for the future. The plan was developed and presented to the Board in August, 2009. However, due to the uncertain economic and funding environment we operate in, it is difficult to plan 5-10 years in the future.

Therefore, this year we have modified the goal to focus on two specific items for the near future. Those two items are the possible building renovation and relocation of the superintendent, assistant superintendent and business office, and the retirement of the debt associated with the past bonds.

First, regarding the central office relocation, preliminary analysis of renovating the old Jr. High School building and moving the offices to that space has been performed. There is some bond money remaining from the 2007 bonds which could be used for that purpose and also some excess funds which may be available. The project could be done in stages or as a complete job. During the 11-12 school year, the construction sub-committee will review the pros and cons of proceeding with the project and to what extent - including determining the financial impact of doing the renovation and moving the offices. In October, 2011, the sub-committee will report to the Board with a recommendation regarding the project and the Board will consider action at that time.

Second, the retirement of bond debt needs to be evaluated and a specific plan developed. Retiring bond debt early can have a significant positive effect on the amount of interest paid during the bond period. The '05, '07 and '09 bonds all have dates in the near future (2 - 3 years) when they will become callable and it is important to have planned for the financial impact of paying those off as soon as reasonable. This will also impact the tax rate and it is critical that that is managed to the maximum benefit of our taxpayers. During the school year, the Finance Sub-committee will work with the Business office to determine a plan for the coming years to retire this debt in the most economic and reasonable manner - considering both the taxpayers and the well being of the district. This plan will be presented to the board for possible approval prior to the May board meeting.

Fiscal Note: No immediate additional expense will be associated with the planning for these two projects.

Goal 4

IMPLEMENT THE PLAN DEVELOPED TO CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN THE HISPANIC SUB-GROUP AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND THE REST OF THE STUDENT BODY IN REGARDS TO TEST SCORES, PARENT PARTICIPATION, EXTRA-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION, ETC.

Discussion:

It is imperative that the district implement programs that help teachers and administration understand the culture and needs of the Hispanic sub-group and English Language Learners. We all must work together to help this group succeed academically.

Over the years, the district has experienced growth in the number of Hispanic students and those who are not fluent in English. It is anticipated that this number will continue to grow in the future. If we are to be academically successful, it is imperative that we effectively service the educational needs of these students. In addition, we have a responsibility to help these students thrive in society after their education is completed and we must help them achieve that goal as well.

This is not an issue unique to LISD. Many other districts throughout Texas and the US have similar issues. Therefore, it is to our benefit to look to districts that have already addressed the issue and have implemented successful programs.

Consultants from the Region XIII Service Center have agreed to work with us to assist in monitoring the implementation of the plan we have developed. Additionally, many staff members attended training to assist them in adding state certification in the area of English as a Second Language.

The district has spent considerable time and resources training all staff members in the English Language Proficiency Standards. Additional training will be provided to all instructional staff as a part of the regularly scheduled staff development conducted prior to the start of the 2011-2012 academic year.

We will measure progress on this goal by using student scores on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS).

TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS (TAKS) RESULTS FOR HISPANIC POPULATION

SUBJECT	2008 PERCENT PASSING	2009 PERCENT PASSING	2010 PERCENT PASSING	2011 PERCENT PASSING
READING/ELA	90	84	88	89
WRITING	91	90	93	90
SOCIAL STUDIES	92	92	98	91
MATH	78	80	85	81
SCIENCE	62	77	88	76

Additionally for 2011-12, each campus principal as developed a plan tailored to the unique needs of this population on their campus. Resources have been allocated as requested by campus administrators. Although scores for the Hispanic sub-population are down slightly, TELPAS scores for identified English Language Learners have increased.

**TEXAS ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT SYSTEM
[TELPAS]**

MAY 2011

GRADE	# TESTED	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	ADVANCED HIGH
PES K	5	1	1	1	1
1	6		2		4
2	7		1	3	3
3	4			2	2
4	4	1	2		1
5	1				1
LES K	3	1	1		1
1	1		1		
2	4	1	1	1	1
3	3				3
4	5		1		4
5	2				2
6	3		1		2
7	5				5
8	2			1	1
9	6			1	5
10	3			1	2
11	1		1		
12	0				
TOTAL	65	4	12	11	38

- 24 students [37%] moved up on the ranking scale. [e.g. Advanced to Advanced High]
- 17 students [26%] maintained their Advanced High rating.
- 49 students [75%] ranked Advanced or Advanced High.