

Chamberlain Elementary School
300 Crosby Drive
Henderson, Texas 75652
Principal: Kelly Teems
903-657-6559

Chamberlain Elementary School is a single-grade campus that serves all third graders in the Henderson Independent School District in Henderson, Texas. The current enrollment of 248 students includes the following ethnic percentages: African American – 19.76%; Hispanic – 21.77%; White – 58.06%; Other - .4%. The low-income percentage of students is 56.7%.

Chamberlain Elementary is a very unique campus in that it came from a rating of “Low Performing” to “Exemplary” in a period of three years. The basis of the “Low Performing” rating in 2001-02 was a sub-group which scored 48.4% passing on the math portion of the Third Grade TAAS Test in the spring of 2001. Within one year’s time, however, that same sub-group improved their math scores by 39.1 percentage points to an overall passing rate of 87.5%! On the 2003 TAKS test 80% of all subgroups passed all tests. In October of 2004, Chamberlain Elementary celebrated being named a Texas Education Agency “Exemplary” Campus when 97% of all students met the state standard on the 2004 TAKS reading and math tests; this included 90%, or better, of every sub-group. In addition, 39% of all students received a “Commended Performance” rating on their tests.

When district and campus personnel began to disaggregate data and identify significant factors that were impacting the condition of performance at Chamberlain Elementary, a common factor emerged -- the low socioeconomic status of so many students. During 2001, 80% of the African American students, 100% of the Hispanic students, and 67% of the White students who did not meet minimum expectations on the TAAS math test were categorized as economically disadvantaged. This led the campus to the logical conclusion that the students that made up the economically disadvantaged population of our campus (regardless of ethnicity) were the students upon which initiatives were primarily focused. It was determined that targeted areas which would ensure that all children at Chamberlain Elementary would be academically successful included new curriculum and instruction initiatives, coordination with other state and federal programs, professional development for academics and cultural diversity, and partnerships with parents, community and businesses. Successful school districts were visited and impacting initiatives were adapted to specifically meet the needs of Chamberlain students.

It is difficult to identify a single contributing factor to the success of Chamberlain Elementary. The implementation of initiatives, effective staff development, and campus-wide programs, etc. cannot be effective unless the faculty, staff and all support personnel are totally committed to success. All of Chamberlain “owned” the problem of being “low performing,” and pulled together as a cohesive unit to overcome this set-back. The entire campus was committed to ensuring that all students of Chamberlain Elementary would be successful. Time constraints and obstacles were simply not accepted! A concerted effort to improve began immediately and without reservations. New ideas were readily accepted, eight-hour days were rare, and “monitoring and adjusting” took on a whole new meaning! Becoming an “Exemplary Campus” was not the end goal; maintaining an “Exemplary Campus” is the on-going challenge of Chamberlain Elementary for future generations of Chamberlain students.