



## Mission Statements and Values

### The Mission of Texas School District is:

To create and sustain public schools of excellence that empower students to reach their highest potential in college and the global marketplace and that inspire a lifelong love of learning, achievement, and service to positively change their world.

### The Vision of Texas Middle School is:

We are a community of lifelong learners that seeks to inspire our students to make a positive impact in the world through ***empowered, critical thinking and advocacy*** and ***personal integrity and responsibility*** as they work towards big dreams for themselves and our greater community.

At our middle school, we are focused on every teacher and student embodying five core values referred to as REACH. Our goal is for staff and students to appreciate and internalize our core values so that they may guide our daily actions:

**Respect:** To admire and appreciate how special and important another person is and treat them as such.

**Empathy:** The ability to understand and share another person's feelings.

**Attitude:** Every person can control their feelings and emotions toward something, and we encourage students to approach challenging and enjoyable moments with a positive attitude.

**Concentration:** The ability to focus your attention and thinking on that task at hand, specifically learning tasks.

**Hard Work:** The energy and effort that you put into something will make you better at it and working hard at school will make you a smarter person who is ready for college and a future career.

**Our mottos are:** "REACH for 100%" and "Excellence Not Excuses"

**Excuses** deny responsibility. **Explanations** allow for responsibility to be acknowledged, and the situation to be explored and understood. **Excuses** come from feelings of defensiveness that pop up when someone is feeling attacked. **Explanations** occur when someone wants to be understood.



## Texas Middle School Staff Core Values

We demonstrate <b>radical candor</b> in communicating with one another and root rationale in scholar impact
We are <b>continuous learners</b> constantly striving to improve our craft and scholar growth and achievement
We take <b>collective ownership</b> in daily staff expectations, campus initiatives and outcomes
We operate with <b>clear and transparent communication</b> structures and protocols
We <b>individualize development</b> based on factual observations, data, and individual staff development goals
We <b>celebrate our unique strengths and outcomes</b> as they connect to our big goals and core values

Equity in education requires a commitment to ensuring that every scholar is successful regardless of their external or internal, social, or cultural contexts.

Our students deserve the best opportunities and that will require only excellence from our faculty and staff.

To ensure that we honor this commitment, we will strive to:

1. **Create spaces where difference is acknowledged and embraced.** Providing students with the appropriate context knowledge. Our students have varied perspectives and experiences which will be honored in school culture and within classrooms.
2. **Amplify scholar voices in our spaces and center all decisions made (culturally and instructionally) on their success.** We choose to advocate for our students by ensuring that they are heard through involving them in targeted initiatives that directly impact scholar culture.
3. **Cultivate an understanding of humanity and intentional kindness.** We will equip our students with the language and context about various communities and experiences so that they may engage their peers in an intentional and kind manner.

We wholeheartedly believe that education is a pivotal tool in changing the trajectory of scholar lives. Equity in education ensures that students receive the appropriate support within their learning community while equipping students with the necessary tools to advocate for themselves as they transition into other spaces in their lives.



### **Texas Middle School Pledge**

I pledge to do my best this day  
To honor myself and others  
In everything I do

To accept responsibility for my own learning  
And to encourage others  
As I embrace my own opportunities to grow

To exercise leadership  
And prepare myself for college at every opportunity! For me, mediocrity is not an option;

**Only excellence will do.**

Who I am has value.  
What I think has value - "Sapere aude". [Dare to know or think for yourself]  
Who I will become is invaluable to the world.

**Our Mascot is: The Falcon**

## Vision and Strategic Priorities

Academic Achievement	Student Culture	Adult Culture	Community Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ We want to push our middle school to sustain our A-rated status, be the #1 middle school in our district, and be one of the top 10 middle schools in our city</li> <li>□ We want to ensure that our curriculum and pedagogy is 1. Rigorous 2. Conceptual and Inquiry-Based 3. 100% focused on scholar outputs and 4. Culturally responsive and reflective of our students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ We want our students to feel loved and valued by our teachers and staff</li> <li>□ We want our students to learn how to manage and reflect on their emotions and choices</li> <li>□ We want our students to fiercely advocate for their learning and track quantitative goals and metrics as a gateway of opportunity</li> <li>□ We want to facilitate an academic culture of productive struggle, deliberate practice, and specific feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ We want to intentionally support and coach teachers based on their developmental needs and leverage veteran expertise into distributed campus ownership</li> <li>□ We want to unapologetically push teacher learning and growth through routine observation and targeted feedback</li> <li>□ We want to sustain a culture of radical candor, organization, cooperation, kindness, recognition, and consistency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ We want to provide parents with streamlined, organized communication</li> <li>□ We want to invite the community into our campus and engage participation through service projects and events</li> </ul>

STAAR Goals	MAP Goal	Scholar/Parent Community	Staff Engagement
<p>90% Approaches 75% Meets, 40% Masters</p>	<p>100% of students will meet or exceed their individual growth goal by Spring 2022 [targeting 85% but communicating 100% to stakeholders]</p>	<p>Above 80% on core parent and student surveys at BOY, MOY, and EOY points.</p>	<p>4.8+ on Gallup Survey by EOY</p>

<p><b>Culture and Community</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Positive Teacher-Student Relationship Building</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Least-invasive redirection</li> <li>● Praise and celebration [5:1 ratio]</li> <li>● Mood Meter and Meta Moment</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ <b>Choice Management and Self-to-Community Reflection and Service</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Weekly and daily goal-setting using impact cycles</li> <li>● Reflection and education to restore positive choices</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ <b>Student Voice and Advocacy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Service Starts at Home Initiative [scholar-generated community service proposals for campus community in the fall and neighborhood community in the spring/summer 2021]</li> <li>● Student Council Grade Level Governance</li> <li>● Increased clubs and adult mentorship structures to increase sense of belonging</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ <b>Parent Community</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Monthly Town Halls</li> <li>● Streamlined communication with Spanish-translated, Smore newsletters</li> <li>● Parent University 2.0</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Core Instruction</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Real-World Conceptual Understanding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Top 3” Essential Questions in Units</li> <li>● ELAR, Spanish, Humanities: Culturally Responsive and Complex Texts. Close-Reading Structure</li> <li>● Science: Visual Modeling and Analysis</li> <li>● Math: Task-Driven Instruction</li> <li>● Technology: Project-Based STEM outcomes</li> <li>● PE: Mind→ Body/Self → Team and Community [The physicality of emotional regulation and healthy peer relationships]</li> <li>● Band and Music: Practice and portfolios</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ <b>Cross-Curricular Connections</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Horizontal and vertical unit planning alignment, bi-weekly calibration and joint planning to norm on semantics and co-plan conceptual experiences</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ <b>Exemplar Oral and Written Communication 2.0</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increasing Discussion Ratio and Debatable Questions</li> <li>● Rigorous vertical writing scope of skills and outputs in all contents</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p><b>Data Analysis and Intervention</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spiraled review of foundational skills within pace of on-grade level units</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Purposeful Aggressive Monitoring             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scholar data profiles to use during prescriptive rounds</li> <li>● Quality Feedback to Students</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Scholar Investment in Data Tracking</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leadership and Development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tier 2 Leadership Team             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leveraging team leads for observation/feedback protocol</li> <li>● Expanded capacities in roles and responsibilities</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transparent Goals and Outcomes Tracked By Teacher Each Week             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Developing skill strength inventory with paired peer observation protocol and tool</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



*The following sections of the artifact focus more on instructional vision at the level of unit and lesson planning.*

## **Instructional Execution**

Our goal is to maximize the learning and development of 100% of students by planning and delivering rigorous, student-centered lessons that challenge each child to learn how to problem-solve and think critically and defend their thinking confidently. Our goal is for 100% of students to develop a deep understanding of the content while mastering skills that can be applied throughout their daily lives. Below you will find the expectations for items pertaining to instruction and are campus non-negotiables. Every content in this school is guided by a specific vision of non-negotiables and evidence-based practices.

### **Student-Centered Classroom:**

Learning is doing. Our goal in every lesson is to shift the cognitive load and the thinking from the teacher to the students. This is achieved when teachers have planned lessons that focus on pushing students' thinking by continuously questioning students, focusing students' attention and efforts on practicing skills, promoting analysis, reflection, and synthesis of concepts and ideas, and by pushing students to engage with content in multiple ways.

### **College Readiness Rigor:**

Learning and growth occur when a student is challenged. Our goal is to challenge students to develop the knowledge and skills that will make them successful in college and in their adult lives. Backwards planning our instruction from a college-readiness level of rigor ensures that students are being challenged to develop those essential college-ready knowledge and skills. We recognize that every scholar is at a different place on their path to college which requires us to identify the level of rigor that is appropriate for each child and challenge him/her at that level to maximize each individual's learning and growth.

### **Urgency & Maximizing Every Minute:**

We have a limited amount of time with each of our students and each minute is a small but vital moment to further develop their understanding of content and mastery of skills. Each minute that we spend with students is precious and requires us as educators to be thoughtful and intentional in how we plan and execute our lessons. Every minute wasted is a missed opportunity to promote and develop a good habit, and a moment that further develops a bad habit.

We must therefore pay attention to every minute of every day to maximize our students' academic and behavioral growth. We too must be careful of dismissing this attention to detail because minutes lost grow into hours, days, and weeks of lost instructional time. We maximize



instructional time with our students by planning engaging lessons down to the minute and by consistently executing tight routines and procedures.

### **Use of Technology**

As of the 2021 - 2022 academic school year, 100% of our students will be 1-to-1 (all students will have, keep, and maintain a Chromebook distributed by the campus). Additionally, the campus will have 1 - 3 carts of additional Chromebooks in the event that students do not have their technology on a given day.

The primary use for Chromebooks will be for use in Advisory and Intervention. Some technology may be used during traditional core content lessons. However, this must be verified first with your admin coach. Additionally, during all of Quarter 1, lessons should not include the use of Chromebooks. This is to help support students in their transition back to campus. Once Quarter 2 begins, the implementation of technology can be included within lessons in a limited manner and must still be verified with your admin coach.

### **Instructional Planning**

Planning rigorous and engaging lessons and scholar materials drives scholar learning and achievement in the classroom. We have dedicated time during the school day as well as professional learning to focus on planning rigorous, engaging units and lessons that meets the needs of and pushes all students. Lessons should be centered on scholar thinking and working, and that learning should be evident in the scholar's responses and deliverables. Unit plans, lesson plans and scholar materials should be prepared in advance in order to receive feedback before executing the lesson. Teachers should always bring unit plans, lesson plans, and scholar materials to Content Team Common Planning and to 1on1 coaching meetings.

We seek to create rigorous student-centered classrooms that challenge students to do all of the cognitive work in a lesson. Our lessons are designed to develop students' critical thinking skills by engaging them in guided inquiry, sustained problem solving, analysis of texts, and practice of skills. To further develop students' thinking skills we require students to create written and oral products that articulate ideas and arguments that are supported with evidence and reasoning.

Questions drive thinking, and therefore it is our priority to challenge students' thinking by planning scaffolded questions that guide students' thinking to a place of deeper understanding of a concept, and/or through a critical thinking process that students can replicate and practice on their own.

### **Unit Planning:**

The purpose of unit planning is to guide teachers through a backwards planning process that





establishes the learning goals of the unit. Teachers first determine the key concepts, knowledge, and skills that students will need to master by the end of a unit, then identify how mastery will be assessed, and design lessons in a specific sequence that will yield a deep understanding of content and mastery of skills.

The unit planning process requires teachers to clarify what students are expected to learn and encourages teachers to develop a deep understanding of the concepts, knowledge, and skills that students will need to master by the end of each unit. With this deeper understanding teachers are able organize, plan, and design meaningful and coherent lessons.

### Guiding questions at each stage of the unit planning process:

**Stage 1:** What should students know, understand, and be able to do? What skills do we want students to practice throughout this unit? What enduring understandings are desired? What essential questions will be explored in-depth and provide focus to all learning?

**Stage 2:** How will we know if students have mastered the skills that they practiced throughout the unit? What will we accept as evidence of scholar understanding and their ability to use (transfer) their learning in new situations?

**Stage 3:** How will we design lessons that promote a deep understanding of important ideas and processes? What skills students are expected to practice and master in each lesson? Transfer their learning? What sequence, and resources are best suited to accomplish our goals?

### Lesson Planning / Student Deliverables:

For any general lesson structure, a majority of a teacher's talk time should occur during the Introduction to New Material. Even during this time, the teacher should ask intermittent Checks for Understanding, offer opportunities for peer and whole class discussion, and practice applying the new concepts at a basic level. The rest of the time should intentionally be devoted towards independent student practice and application. In a traditional lesson structure, the golden ratio is 80:20 (scholar: teacher). **For a given 90-minute period, no more than 18 cumulative minutes should be devoted towards teacher talking.** Following this guidance will help ensure that a vast majority of thinking is pushed back onto the students.

The purpose of the lesson deliverable is to focus our attention on what students will be expected to do during a lesson. Our goal is to create lesson material that will challenge students' thinking, guide inquiry, facilitate practice of reading, writing, problem-solving, and

logical thinking skills.

***Design of Student Deliverable:***

1. Heading (Lesson Objective, SOI, TEKS, Unit Question, Vocab...)
2. Chunked sections (Inquiry, Any Mini-Lesson/Direct Teach, Practice, and Exit Ticket/Mastery Element)
3. Scripted Questions at all 3 levels of rigor (support will be given in this area)
4. Clear instructions with expectations for quality of students' work (i.e. Respond to this question with 3 complete sentences, specifically at least one underlined compound sentence.)

***Annotated Student Deliverable:***

1. Annotate the objective to explain what you just covered and how this lesson will lead into what you are covering next
2. Answer Key with Exemplar Scholar Responses
3. Notes that reflect your planning process
4. Time notes off to the side-how you plan on chunking your time through the various sections and activities

**General Planning Process**

**Note:** Each content at Texas Middle School has a unique **content vision** that specifies a more exact structure and non-negotiables. However the framework below is a general thought process for how we expect teachers to approach planning and design.

***When planning for a lesson, teachers should engage in the same thinking that students are expected to engage in throughout a lesson so that they can plan questions and design activities that will cognitively challenge 100% of students.***

- 1. Examine Scope and Sequence and TEKS and determine the topic / theme of each unit**
  - What topics do I need to teach this year and in what order?
  - How will content, questions, and material be made rigorous enough to challenge students' thinking?
- 2. Analyze and take STAAR Assessment**
  - How will TEKS be assessed, and what will final mastery look like?
  - What thinking process do students need to engage in to succeed on

assessment?

- How complex are the problems, experiments, texts, passages, etc., and what concepts and skills do students need to know to understand, dissect, and solve correctly?

**3. Create / revise unit plan**

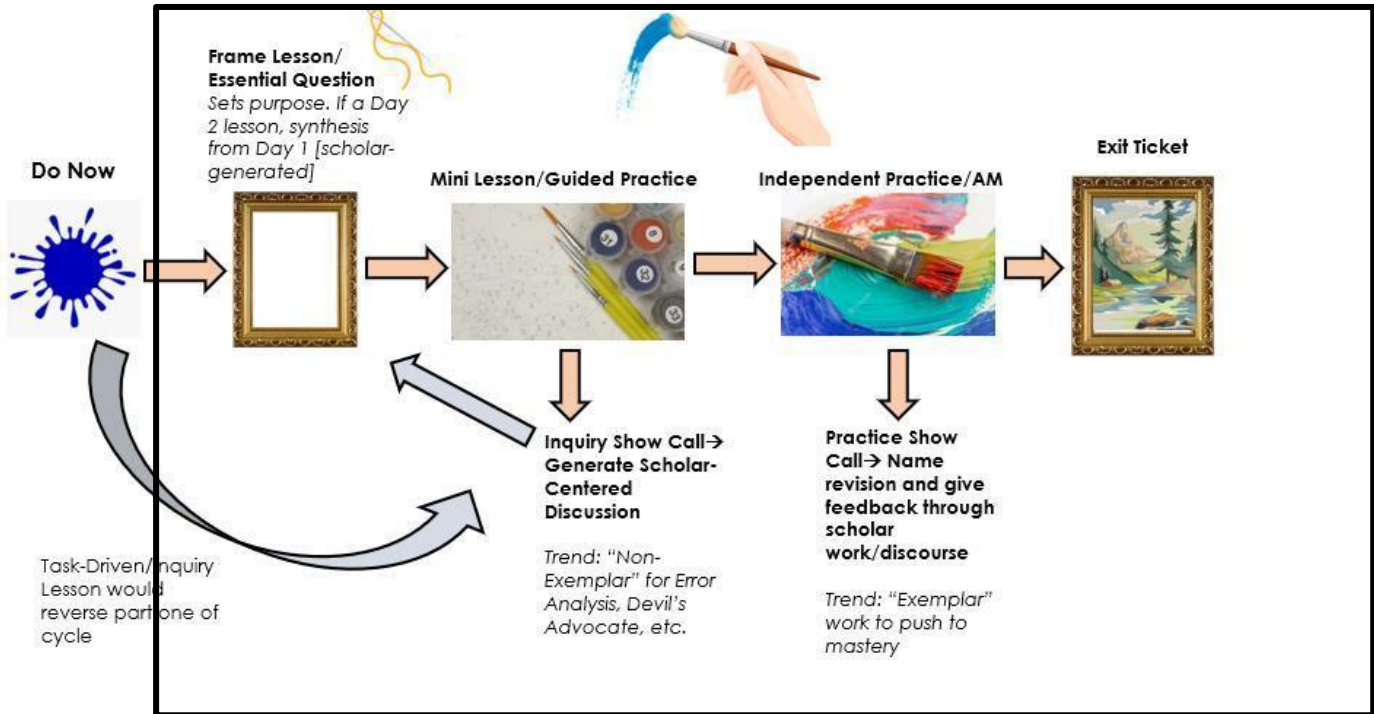
- Identify the key themes or interdisciplinary concepts
- Determine what skills students will practice and master while investigating larger concepts
- Map out objectives on calendar

**4. Design and create lesson deliverables**

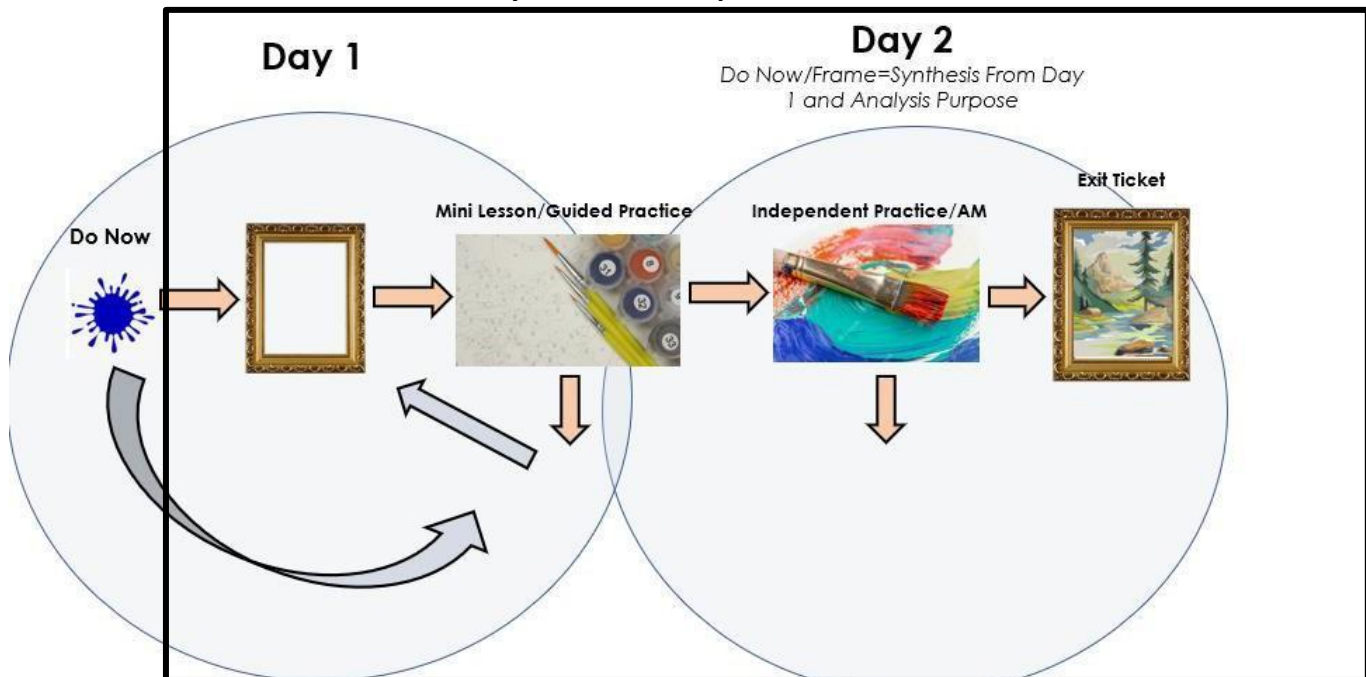
- Plan the engage / explore of the lesson that will introduce the key concept
- Create independent practice (aligned to STAAR)
- Script questions that will guide students' thinking
- Annotate completed deliverable for teacher's use

## General Lesson Framework at Texas Middle School

### Conceptual Painting Analogy



### Day 1 and 2 Conceptual Lesson Framework



### Exit Ticket Policy

Exit Tickets offer an opportunity to gauge scholar mastery and should be included in each lesson. While most lessons should have a multiple-choice Exit Ticket, other lesson structures (science lab and demo days, math tasks, close reading of literature, document analysis, project design, etc.) might require open-ended scholar responses. With the inclusion of technology and the STAAR being an online assessment as of 2021-2022, please follow the timeframe below for the delivery method of Exit Tickets. This will help ensure that we are meeting the new technology needs and alignment for STAAR preparation while building comfortability among the students in a 21st century classroom.

Quarter	Exit Ticket Delivery
Quarter 1	Paper only - scantrons can be used for ease of gathering data.
Quarter 2	Paper delivery but input on Schoology.
Quarter 3	Exit Ticket delivered through paper and Schoology. Encourage students to use the paper version as scratch paper.
Quarter 4	Online Exit Tickets only - scratch paper allowed.

### Data-driven Instruction

All teachers and interventionists should know the data of their students at any given point. Individualized teacher objective trackers can be found in the School Drive. This should be used to guide interventions (tutoring, in-class individualized supports, Saturday School), parent communication, and Scholar Support Team referrals.

Every lesson should have an available data point to assess the level of scholar mastery. This data should then be reviewed prior to the next lesson cycle to guide instruction and rectify any potential misunderstandings. Data should be assessed through the following lenses at a minimum: grade level trends, individual class period trends, individual scholar trends, and commonly missed questions.

### Student Feedback and Revision Standards

Students are able to grow most when they have an opportunity to correct their understanding.



This process is most apparent when teachers provide explicit written feedback to students and then the students are able to adjust their responses accordingly. This action should occur at least once per week for every core content. Teachers should only provide the feedback only on assignments in which students are required to write open-ended responses (i.e., no multiple choice). The feedback should be high leverage while coupling writing skills. For example, for any assignment receiving feedback, teachers should pick 2 - 3 points of feedback such as accurate use of academic vocabulary, inclusion of precise evidence, and varied structure through use of complex sentences.