



Nominee Campus' Name: Heritage Middle School

Grapevine-Colleyville ISD

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Principal

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Overview and Background

Heritage Middle School opened in 1992 and currently serves 685 students in grades six through eight. The campus was certified as an AVID National Demonstration School shortly before the COVID-19 shutdown in 2020 and successfully recertified in 2023, earning recognition as an AVID Site of Distinction. While the school's demographics have continued to evolve, student success has remained consistent. This sustained achievement is attributed to teachers' commitment to implementing high-yield, effective instructional strategies during Tier 1 instruction. AVID WICOR strategies—writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading—are embedded across classrooms to promote rigorous instruction and continuous student growth.

Focus Areas

- Article V: Organizational Transformation

Work

At Heritage Middle School, transformational growth has been driven by intentional, high-impact instructional strategies that ensure every student engages in rigorous learning experiences in every classroom, every day. Since 2020, our educators have embraced research-based practices that prioritize critical thinking, collaboration, meaningful discourse, and purposeful writing, creating classrooms where students actively construct knowledge and take ownership of their learning. These strategies are consistently implemented across content areas, providing equitable access to grade-level rigor and fostering the academic confidence students need for future success. Grounded in a shared commitment to excellence, Heritage Middle School continues to refine instructional practices that cultivate college- and career-ready skills, ensuring that all students learn in an environment strategically designed for growth.

Daily implementation of WICOR strategies—writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading—promotes 21st-century skills, student leadership, goal-setting, and ongoing progress monitoring, ensuring that rigor is accessible to every learner. The routine and purposeful use of WICOR, paired with a steadfast commitment to high expectations, results in increased student engagement and achievement. Inquiry-based, collaborative learning experiences challenge students to think critically, articulate their reasoning, and deepen their understanding, leading to increasingly complex levels of learning across all content areas. During content-area PLCs, teachers regularly share newly implemented instructional strategies and encourage their colleagues to incorporate these practices into their own classrooms. In addition, WICOR Instructional Walks are scheduled to provide teachers with opportunities to observe effective strategies in action and learn from one another's instructional practices. Through these practices, Heritage Middle School cultivates a culture where rigor is the norm and all students are empowered to succeed.

Our staff consistently establishes campus-wide goals each year to strengthen instructional practices and support student learning. Last year, our campus goal focused on implementing Collaborative Study Groups, with all teachers incorporating this strategy into their instruction. Building on that foundation, this year we aim to continue the effective use of Collaborative Study Groups while also increasing the implementation of Socratic Seminars and Philosophical Chairs during Tier 1 instruction across all content areas. Together, these strategies empower students to take ownership of their learning, think critically, and communicate effectively. They also help create a classroom culture where diverse perspectives are valued, respectful dialogue is expected, and students learn that their voices matter. These goals reflect our ongoing commitment to purposeful collaboration, rigorous academic discourse, and high-quality instruction for all students.

During our advisory period, known as Bronco Time, we focus on providing personalized learning and supporting student accountability through a system called Bronco Time Systems. During this time, students engage in a variety of academic and organizational tasks, including checking their binders, updating their planners, reviewing Skyward for missing assignments or failing grades, and monitoring email for academic purposes. Bronco Time also provides targeted support through Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, House Bill hours, and tutorials as needed. Occurring every day, Bronco Time promotes school-wide organization, ensures students' academic needs are addressed, and fosters a culture of responsibility and self-management.

The culture of Heritage Middle School is grounded in collaboration, professionalism, and a shared commitment to excellence. Teachers work in a supportive environment where colleagues share ideas, encourage one another, and problem-solve together, fostering a strong sense of collective responsibility. High expectations guide instructional practices, classroom environments, and decision-making, with educators holding themselves and their students to rigorous standards. Accountability is balanced with encouragement, creating a climate where continuous growth is expected and supported. As a result, Heritage Middle School functions as a cohesive learning community that empowers teachers and inspires students to reach their highest potential.

Although Heritage Middle School continues to change, the dedication and work of the staff ensure that high expectations and strong supports remain consistent during Tier 1 instruction. This commitment results in sustained student growth and success, as reflected in the school's continued A rating and the recognition it has received through multiple designation distinctions. By maintaining rigorous instruction, supportive learning environments, and a culture of excellence, the staff ensures that all students have the opportunity to achieve at high levels, regardless of changing circumstances.