

Alief Independent School District

Kerr High School

2018-2019 Comprehensive Needs Assessment



Mission Statement

Kerr High School gives students the freedom and responsibility to take control of their learning and develop the critical thinking, social, and academic skills necessary for success in their post secondary education and beyond.

Core Beliefs

- **Relationship building** between students and teachers through respectful communication, acceptance, and proximity.
- **Student-centered instruction** through flexibility and differentiation.
- **Achievement** through responsibility, integrity, and independent learning.
- **Uniqueness** is embraced and encouraged to flourish.

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Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Revised/Approved: September 10, 2018

Demographics

Demographics Summary

Kerr High School's enrollment for the 2017-18 school year is 806 students with 193 students in the senior class. Admission into Kerr is based on a variety of factors, including grades, behavior, and test scores. The academic structure at Kerr is center-based, functions on accelerated block and students are given independent study materials for each course. Students are required to work through the material on their own, consulting the instructors as necessary. This independent learning style leads to high levels of success in the collegiate environment, leading to a 96% retention rate from freshman to sophomore year in college.

Successful Kerr students have strong initiative, personal motivation, and self discipline. As a part of the diverse Alief community, 65% of current Kerr students qualify for free or reduced lunch programs and 63% of current students have been identified as limited English proficient at some point in their educational careers. Kerr students place a great deal of importance on community service and extracurricular involvement as evident through a variety of awards in fine and performing arts, speech and debate, and academics.

- Asian: 64%
- Black/African American: 13%
- Hispanic: 13%
- White: 10%
- At Risk: 26%
- Gifted and Talented: 33%
- Special Education: 1%
- Economically Disadvantaged: 65%

Demographics Strengths

- Students from all parts of the district are allowed to apply.
- Counselors work with middle school counselors to provide complete information on Kerr and its offerings.
- Prospective student meetings are open to all eighth grade parents.
- Transportation is provided from all parts of the district, so all students residing within the district have opportunities to attend

Problem Statements Identifying Demographics Needs

Problem Statement 1: Representation is not proportional from middle schools across the district. **Root Cause:** Recruiting/communication with prospective students from all campuses; perception of school.

Student Academic Achievement

Student Academic Achievement Summary

Student Achievement is measured in a variety of ways, including state assessments and Advanced Placement tests; also College Board data on college enrollment after graduation; statistics on college acceptance and application; awards and honors in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities; and student surveys. The goal is to prepare students for success after graduation; while for the vast majority of students that means college enrollment and completion, for others it means vocational training, the military, or immediate jobs.

Data shows that 87 percent of graduates enroll in college the fall after graduation, and that 97 percent continue into their sophomore year of college, far above the state and national averages.

Student Academic Achievement Strengths

- Students are generally motivated to attend Kerr and be successful here.
- Students usually have a plan for their future that develops as they attend high school.
- College is seen as the destination for most students.
- Students are encouraged to develop their individual interests and talents.
- Teachers and staff share information about scholarships, colleges and specific programs based on their knowledge of student interests and needs.
- Assistance is always available for struggling students.
- Participation is generally high in advanced classes.

Problem Statements Identifying Student Academic Achievement Needs

Problem Statement 1: AP, SAT, PSAT scores have room for improvement. **Root Cause:** Preparation time; emphasis

Problem Statement 2: Passing rates have room for improvement, particularly in the C-D range. **Root Cause:** Student motivation for higher achievement; student utilization of resources.

Problem Statement 3: **AP Exam scores are below desired levels. **Root Cause:** **Students have not been in AP courses in the past and need more guidance; students need more engaging review and resource materials

Problem Statement 4: **Students pass the STAAR for math and science, but many do not reach mastery level. **Root Cause:** **Students need more

engaging review and resource materials.

Problem Statement 5: **Technology integration must be appropriate and relevant throughout departments. **Root Cause:** **Departments and teachers have inconsistent application of technology resources.

School Processes & Programs

School Processes & Programs Summary

Kerr teachers develop their own curriculum based on a variety of standards, including Texas TEKS, AISD pacing guides, and AP standards. Curriculum is developed in collaboration within the departments, often during PLC time or during the summer. Most departments have a lead teacher for each course who is responsible for preparing the curriculum used by the department as a whole.

One hundred percent of faculty is rated highly qualified. Annual retention is between 92 and 95 percent; most teacher turnover is attributed to retirement, promotion or family moves. New teachers are supported by colleagues within their departments. Faculty are surveyed for suggested professional development; the leadership team also considers campus needs and goals in creating professional development, which is offered face-to-face on and off-campus, through professional learning communities, through online courses, and through a variety of self-chosen conventions within the area and the state. PLC groups meet regularly, but the campus structure also allows teachers to share effective techniques through observation and collaboration.

Our campus focuses on the powerful engagement and motivation strategy of student ownership of learning. Students come to Kerr already successful in the traditional learning environment. To further challenge our students, we take them out of their comfort zone and put them in an environment where there is little teacher-led learning. This fosters an environment of leadership and maturity because our students quickly realize that they must take ownership of their learning in order to succeed at Kerr. Students develop the academic behavioral skills that will successfully transition them into college such as organization, time management, and locating resources and information. They must learn to meet deadlines, check course calendars and syllabi online, and communicate with teachers and staff both electronically and face-to-face.

School Processes & Programs Strengths

- 100% of staff are highly qualified
- High retention rate of staff members.
- 100% of staff rates the overall quality of Kerr as good or excellent.
- Kerr's graduation rate is 100%.
- 84% of our graduates attend college within one year of graduation.
- 97% of students who attend college return for their sophomore year.

Problem Statements Identifying School Processes & Programs Needs

Problem Statement 1: Formatting of PAKs and procedures vary by department. **Root Cause:** Individual/departmental choices

Problem Statement 2: New students require aid in making the transition to this campus environment; they need to be familiarized with the procedures. **Root Cause:** Unique learning environment.

Perceptions

Perceptions Summary

Past data indicates that students, parents and faculty generally feel the campus is safe and that there is positive communication in the campus community. Efforts are made to transition new students to the campus community, such as Cub Camp, first-day advisory, and new student breakfast. Students who are not successful in the first term, or even before, are referred for academic intervention. Discipline referrals are almost non-existent for violent or serious discipline infractions. Many students are involved in activities such as fine arts or after school clubs that increase their investment in the school community.

Parents are very supportive of Kerr and care about their child's success. When called by staff members, parents come to school and participate in conferences/meetings. The community has a positive perception of Kerr and our students as indicated by the requests from other schools and organizations asking for Kerr student volunteers.

Perceptions Strengths

- Few referrals each year for fighting and/or violence.
- Few referrals for bullying; policies and interventions are employed when it is reported.
- High involvement in after school activities, including academic and extracurricular programs and organizations.
- Parents are motivated to have their students at Kerr.
- Participation in performances, school events, Naviance accounts, and parent conferences.
- 84% of parent responses to K12 survey indicate Kerr's Quality is good or excellent.

Problem Statements Identifying Perceptions Needs

Problem Statement 1: Parent participation in on-campus activities is low. **Root Cause:** Availability of parents; communicating opportunities.