

# 2008 No Child Left Behind–Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Public  Private

**Cover Sheet**

Type of School  
(Check all that apply)

Elementary  Middle  High  K-12  
 Charter  Title I  Magnet  Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Tom Panger

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Bivins Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1500 S. Fannin

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Amarillo

Texas

79102-2498

City

State

Zip Code+4(9 digits total)

County Potter

State School Code Number\* 188901103

Telephone (806) 326-4100

Fax (806) 371-6133

Web site/URL www.amaisd.org

E-mail tom.panger@amaisd.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Superintendent Mr. Rod Schrodernone

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Amarillo Independent School District

Tel. (806) 326-1015

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mrs. Linda Pitner

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Mail by commercial carrier (FedEx, UPS) or courier original signed cover sheet to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 5E103, Washington DC 20202-8173.

## PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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Include this page in the school's application as page 2.

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2007-2008 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2002 and has not received the No Child Left Behind–Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district wide compliance review.
6. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available. Throughout the document, round numbers to the nearest whole number to avoid decimals, except for numbers below 1, which should be rounded to the nearest tenth.

### DISTRICT (Question 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district: \_\_\_\_\_ 37 Elementary schools  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 10 Middle schools  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 0 Junior High Schools  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 High schools  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 1 Other  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 53 TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \_\_\_\_\_ 8707  
 Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \_\_\_\_\_ 9269

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located  
 [ X ] Urban or large central city  
 [ ] Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban are  
 [ ] Suburban  
 [ ] Small city or town in a rural are  
 [ ] Rural
4. \_\_\_\_\_ 10 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?
5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
Pre K	32	26	58	7			0
K	40	35	75	8			0
1	36	35	71	9			0
2	39	47	86	10			0
3	35	28	63	11			0
4	34	32	66	12			0
5	28	33	61	Other			0
6			0				
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL</b>							<b>480</b>

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- |    |                                    |
|----|------------------------------------|
| 0  | % American Indian or Alaska Native |
| 1  | % Asian or Pacific Islander        |
| 6  | % Black or African American        |
| 36 | % Hispanic or Latino               |
| 57 | % White                            |

**100 % TOTAL**

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year 32 %

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>( 1 )</b>	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1 until the end of the year	70
<b>( 2 )</b>	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1 until the end of the year	74
<b>( 3 )</b>	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	144
<b>( 4 )</b>	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	453
<b>( 5 )</b>	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.32
<b>( 6 )</b>	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	32

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 2 %
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 9 | Total Number Limited English Proficient |
|---|---|

Number of languages represented 1

Specify languages: Spanish

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals 70 %

Total number students who qualify: 334

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low income families, or the school does not participate in the federally supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services:  $\frac{9}{43}$  %  
 Total Number of Students Serve

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

Autism	1	Orthopedic Impairment
Deafness	11	Other Health Impairment
Deaf-Blindnes	5	Specific Learning Disabilit
Emotional Disturbanc	14	Speech or Language Impairment
Hearing Impairment		Traumatic Brain Injury
3 Mental Retardation		Visual Impairment Including Blindness
9 Multiple Disabilities		

11. Indicate number of full time and part time staff members in each of the categories below:

**Number of Staff**

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-time</u>
Administrator(s)	2	
Classroom teachers	26	1
Special resource teachers/specialist	3	1
Paraprofessionals	10	2
Support Staff	2	2
Total number	43	6

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1  $\frac{18}{1}$  : 1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Please explain a high teacher turnover rate. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy in attendance, dropout or the drop-off rates. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates, and only high schools need to supply drop-off

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Daily student attendance	96 %	96 %	97 %	96 %	96 %
Daily teacher attendance	95 %	94 %	95 %	95 %	95 %
Teacher turnover rate	10 %	6 %	4 %	17 %	7 %
Student drop out rate (middle/high	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Student drop-off rate (high school	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %

Please provide all explanations below

## PART III - SUMMARY

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With a rich history of educating the students of Amarillo, Texas since 1931, Bivins Elementary is a campus of contradictions. The classic building architecture, kept intact through five renovations, provides a stark contrast to the classrooms inside, each wired with a state-of-the-art audio enhancement system and presentation projector-camera. The campus is located in one of the oldest neighborhoods in the center of the city, surrounded by affluent homes and two exclusive private schools. However, with the largest attendance area in the School District, Bivins' boundaries also encompass five homeless, abuse, youth, and transitional shelters whose children are included in the school's diverse population of approximately 480 pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students. Visitors to the campus are often surprised to learn that the demographics of the school are vastly different from their initial impression.

Bivins' mission of 'Creating a school that knows no limit to the academic success of all students' has earned the campus prestigious awards and recognitions. For the 2006-07 school year Bivins was granted an Exemplary rating, the highest possible rating given by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), as well as Gold Performance acknowledgements for the past three years in the areas of Reading, Math, Writing, and Science. In December, 2006 Bivins was listed in Texas Monthly's much anticipated annual issue, 'Best Public Schools in Texas.' The coveted Texas Business and Education Coalition (TBEC) Honor Roll award was bestowed upon the school in 2007. These awards chronicle a history of high levels of academic achievement made possible by a dedicated faculty that embraces the spirit of No Child Left Behind as they focus daily on each individual learner.

With a high mobility rate of 32%, students from diverse backgrounds, and 70% identified as economically disadvantaged, the teachers at Bivins face unique challenges as they encounter the barriers that can obstruct student success. Bivins might be described as a school with 'swinging doors;' yet teachers overcome the frustrating circumstances that accompany a highly mobile population by focusing on the power of relationships and providing a nurturing environment. Meeting the needs of the whole child includes teachers addressing social and emotional issues in order to obtain individual and collective academic success. Bivins' practice of looping students with the same teacher in second and third grades and then again in fourth and fifth grades strengthens the relationship building process between teachers and their students. Looping fosters a feeling of community and gives students a sense of trust, stability, and intimacy. Students exhibit less anxiety, more confidence, and are more willing risk-takers. Looping provides teachers with additional instructional time as there is no time lost to organizational issues and identifying strengths and weaknesses for students taught the previous year. The deep bond between teachers and their students that is established through looping allows for the necessary individualization needed to achieve limitless academic success for all students.

Bivins is a campus with an unrivaled commitment to building a culture of collaboration through Professional Learning Communities. For the past five years, teachers have been working in teams to develop common assessments, analyze assessment data, refine the instructional process, and develop ways to improve student engagement and learning. They set specific, result-oriented goals and hold themselves mutually responsible. Student failure is not an option, and teachers rely on the power of their collaborative group's interaction to develop action plans and differentiated lessons that meet the needs of all learners, from those that struggle to the gifted and talented. Teachers feel empowered as they make the decisions that impact student achievement and have discovered through their experiences with District supported Professional Learning Communities that the answers do indeed reside with them.

Achieving success for Bivins is not about what textbooks, software, or other materials are being used; but more about how dedicated and masterful teachers work cooperatively to make a difference in the lives of every student. Bivins Elementary is not a school dependent on programs. It is, instead, a school of effective practices in which there is no limit to the success students achieve.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. **Assessment Results:**

The accountability system used by the State of Texas to assess the academic performance of students is the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test. The State of Texas aligns the criterion-referenced TAKS tests with the state-mandated curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), which is developed and distributed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Students are tested at multiple grade levels beginning in the third grade. The core curriculum areas of reading and math are tested in third, fourth, and fifth grades. Fourth graders are also assessed in writing, and fifth grade students are tested in science. Individual, grade level, and school wide results are analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively by the highly qualified faculty. By utilizing the data from the results, grade level teams collaborate through Professional Learning Communities to identify the students' strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to develop appropriate interventions and modify instructional strategies for the students' performance levels. The TAKS reports are available online on the TEA website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2007/index.html>.

Scale scores are reported for every student in each subject tested. Students meet the grade standard with a scale score of 2100 and are considered to have a sufficient understanding of the knowledge and skills measured at their grade level. The data tables included in this application reflect high achievement in reading and math by all grades. In 2005 and 2006, 100% of third graders met minimum standards on the reading TAKS, with 94% in 2007. The fourth graders had 100% that met minimum standards on the writing TAKS in 2006 and 2007, with 97% in 2005. 2007 scores reflect that 100% of fifth grade students met minimum standards on reading, math, and science TAKS assessments.

Bivins Elementary strives to help every student achieve the commended performance level on the TAKS test each year. A commended score is considered well above the state passing standard and is given to students who answer 90% of test questions correctly. In 2007, 46% of third graders met the commended performance level in reading with 33% commended in math. From 2005 to 2007, the percentage of fourth grade students achieving a commended ranking increased from 26% to 38% in math and 15% to 42% in reading. Fourth grade students had a 73% commended ranking on the 2007 writing TAKS assessment which exceeded the state average by 43%. From 2005 to 2007, the percentage of fifth grade students achieving a commended ranking increased from 29% to 77% in math, exceeding the state average by 53%. Fifth grade students exceeded the state average by 41% with a 71% commended rate on the 2007 science TAKS assessment.

In every grade level there is little or no disparity among the passing rates of subgroups in all subject areas with each being within two or three percentage points and none consistently scoring higher. Many times the subpopulations have a greater passing rate than the majority student population. For the last two years, 100% of economically disadvantaged and Hispanic students in fifth grade passed the reading and math TAKS.

As the Texas assessment program has evolved over time, passing standards and the criteria for annual accountability ratings have become more rigorous, making it increasingly difficult to perform at high levels. Bivins has met this challenge and has been awarded an Exemplary rating for 2007 TAKS scores 90% or above in every subject tested and with every subgroup. An indication of Bivins' commitment to ensuring limitless academic success for all students is evident in the TAKS 'met standard' and 'commended performance' rates that exceed those of the District and state.

### 2. **Using Assessment Results:**

Analyzing assessment data and planning instruction accordingly are essential components of what teachers at Bivins do to enable every student to achieve limitless success. It begins with vital TAKS data made available to schools in May of each year which teachers, grade level teams, and administrators immediately disaggregate in order to identify and target learning objectives that need reinforcement during summer school and the upcoming school year. Teachers are able to identify gaps in the curriculum and determine if changes are needed with current instructional practices. In addition, they not only evaluate their own teaching strategies, but also identify strengths and weaknesses of each student. Primary grade teachers also utilize TAKS data as they help prepare their students for future TAKS testing. This shared responsibility is yet another reason why students at Bivins achieve high academic levels.

Throughout the school year, teachers rely heavily on frequent monitoring of student learning through the use of on-going formal and informal assessments. Common formative assessments created by

collaborative teams are a critical attribute of Professional Learning Communities. The results are analyzed to identify individual students who need additional time and support for learning, the teaching strategies most effective in helping students acquire the intended knowledge and skills, areas in which students generally are having difficulty achieving the intended standard, and improvement goals for the individual teachers and team. Teachers at Bivins realize that testing itself does not improve learning unless the data is compiled, analyzed and actively utilized to modify instruction.

### **3. Communicating Assessment Results:**

Developing a cooperative partnership to support student learning is a goal Bivins strives to accomplish by communicating assessment results with students, parents, and the community. Continuous formative assessments, teacher observations, student conferences, and TAKS data provide ample and varied opportunities for all students to demonstrate learning. This ongoing assessment is systematically used to provide prompt and useful feedback to students and parents.

Teachers inform parents about student performance through numerous procedures on an ongoing and timely basis throughout the school year. Frequent, informal chats between teachers and parents are commonplace along with more formal lines of communication that include emails, phone calls, scheduled conferences, and home visits. Academic requirements and assessment data are outlined for parents during evening 'Parent Information Night' meetings held the first month of school. One day is set aside in the fall of each year for parent conferences, and it is the goal of the teacher to meet with a parent of every student. Communication continues throughout the year with several Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings. Individual student academic performance in the classroom is conveyed to parents through six weeks report cards supplemented by progress reports every three weeks. Results of benchmark tests and other interim assessments are communicated with parents through direct communication, and individual TAKS testing results are provided for each child with an explanation of how to interpret the scores. These TAKS results are also widely reported by the local media through a standardized District process. The State of Texas requires each school to send home the state's accountability report for the campus based on the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), which outlines specifics about topics ranging from testing results to demographics.

A valuable communication tool between the school and home are Wednesday Folders that are sent home weekly with work samples, graded papers, and other important correspondence. The highly acclaimed school newspaper, Bulldog Bulletin, distributed to parents and community members each six weeks, often publicizes school-wide assessment results and celebrates achievements. The school's Exemplary rating is proudly featured on both a marquee outside the school and the school's website. Bivins believes that with these processes in place to bridge the gap between the school and home, the parents and community have become welcome partners in the learning of all students at Bivins.

### **4. Sharing Success:**

Bivins has experienced the benefits of working collaboratively as a campus and this genuine collegiality has expanded to other campuses and with other teachers across Amarillo Independent School District. Not only do groups of teachers meet regularly at Bivins to explore effective teaching strategies and align resources with learning objectives, they also routinely attend specific content area meetings with teachers from different schools to expand this collaborative process. Teachers no longer work in isolation in their classrooms, hoarding their ideas, materials, and strategies; they are eager to share their successes with co-teachers on the campus and District level.

Many Bivins' teachers serve as members of District core curriculum teams where there is an ongoing exchange of ideas. These staff members share new instructional methods and ideas with the faculty as 'teachers teaching teachers.' Teachers from Bivins have been presenters at regional conferences such as the Panhandle Literacy Conference and the Panhandle Math and Science Conference, as well as numerous District sponsored staff development sessions that are attended by many schools outside of Amarillo ISD.

Teachers welcome university students from West Texas A & M University and Amarillo College into their classrooms, mentoring student teachers and education majors needing to observe best practices to augment their coursework. In addition to observations from university students, teachers from around the District are frequent visitors in classrooms. Bivins teachers are never reluctant to share their ideas. A popular request received from educators around the District is a tour of Bivins to see the unique audio enhancement systems found in each classroom. The faculty embraces the responsibility of sharing practices that have made Bivins an Exemplary campus, with the goal that no student in any school is left behind.

## PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Curriculum:

All public schools in the State of Texas are required to provide instruction based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for each grade level. The TEKS can be found online at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/index.html>. In addition, the Amarillo Independent School District provides a set of benchmark standards which groups each set of grade level TEKS into six-week scope and sequence units. This vertical and horizontal alignment establishes curriculum stability for the students of AISD, and is especially important to the students at Bivins Elementary because of the high mobility rate. Curriculum is data driven and instruction is adjusted according to the analysis of the data described previously.

The language arts curriculum is based on the principles of the Balanced Literacy Model which acknowledges that reading and writing are closely related and reading is the basis for all learning. Guided Reading is the heart of reading instruction at Bivins. This small group approach that utilizes books on the student's reading level, strengthens skills in comprehension, fluency, and phonics. Bivins boasts a huge collection of guided reading books and big books in a Literacy Closet that teachers pull from for reading instruction. Teachers employ a Writing Workshop approach to deliver writing curriculum using literature to serve as models for outstanding writing. Students are actively engaged in the writing process throughout the year by prewriting, writing, revising, editing, and publishing.

Fundamentally, math instruction is anchored in problem solving connected to real life applications. Vertical teaming provides teachers with consistent math terminology and problem solving strategies that demonstrate to students that there is more than one way to solve problems. Teachers model and encourage students to construct mathematical meaning by using vocabulary in conversations and reflective journals. All of Bivins' teachers have access to a centrally located Math Closet which contains an extensive collection of manipulatives and resources organized by the six strands of math.

Bivins' science curriculum fosters exploration, inquiry, and critical thinking by utilizing a hands-on discovery approach. Teachers in first through third grades enrich learning opportunities using FOSS (Field Option Science Systems) kits. As in math, science terminology is consistently used across grade levels and AISD. The use of United Streaming, an online digital video-based learning resource, enables teachers to have the latest educational videos at their disposal to enhance the science curriculum.

The social studies curriculum seeks to empower students to participate productively in their community and the world. Social studies knowledge is exhibited by students through various activities and projects covering geography, history, culture, and citizenship. Citizenship is reinforced by Bivins' full-time counselor as she teaches the six pillars of character which include respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship, and trustworthiness. Students demonstrate citizenship with campus-wide service learning opportunities such as canned food and disaster relief drives, United Way fundraising, and volunteering at a local foundation that provides coats and Christmas gifts for needy students around the city.

The learning experiences students derive from art, music, and physical education support Bivins' commitment to educating the whole child. Teachers integrate art into all subjects and display students' products throughout the building. Students choose between vocal or instrumental music, and participate daily in physical education. The Bivins Honor Choir is comprised of fourth and fifth grade students who practice with the music teacher after school and perform at various civic organizations. Bivins was one of the founding pilot campuses for Window on a Wider World (WOWW), a unique and nationally-recognized collaborative partnership of educators, arts, science, and cultural organizations in the Texas Panhandle. Based on research showing that the cultural arts are a vital and indispensable element of education success, WOWW's primary goal is to integrate the arts into the core curriculum areas.

The curriculum is strengthened by a committed and nurturing staff that supports the TEKS and promotes student engagement by providing differentiated tasks that meet the varied learning styles and needs of students, allowing each to achieve high levels of success.

### 2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:

Reading is central to learning, and success in reading provides the foundation for success in all subject areas. The basis of the reading curriculum is the TEKS, which is implemented through a comprehensive balanced literacy approach that is research based and includes strategies for phonemic awareness along with literacy instruction. Teachers offer varied levels of support as students participate in Guided Reading,

## Read Aloud, Shared Reading, and Independent Reading.

At the core of Bivins' reading instruction is Guided Reading where the teacher works with small, flexible groups who have similar reading skills. Reading strategies are taught within the context of literature at the reading level of each individual student. Ongoing monitoring and assessment provides teachers with necessary information about the learning of each student in order to assist the teacher in planning instruction. As students progress in reading ability and grade levels, Bivins' teachers use a novel-based curriculum that exposes students to a wide variety of literature and promotes lifelong reading. Students form book clubs where, through student-led discussions, they predict, summarize, analyze, and draw conclusions. During both Read Aloud and Shared Reading, teachers promote story enjoyment to guide students to a deeper understanding of the text. During Independent Reading, students are given the opportunity to self-select texts and apply previously learned skills with little or no guidance from the teacher. Students are engaged in literacy workstations that provide opportunities for independent or small group practice by allowing choices based on learning styles and individual reading levels.

Various interventions have been implemented to ensure that all children become capable readers. For students in first grade who are experiencing difficulties, a Reading Recovery teacher provides intensive interventions. Content Mastery reinforces and supports classroom instruction, and non-classroom, certified teachers work with students during the day. Students are mentored weekly by high school students and by volunteers from Bivins' Partner in Education, Atmos Energy, through the America's Promise program. Classroom teachers extend and enrich the curriculum both before and after school. The goal of reading instruction at Bivins is that all students are on grade level, moving from dependent to independent readers, thus laying the foundation for lifelong success that has no limit.

### **3. Additional Curriculum Area:**

In the comprehensive literacy approach used at Bivins, reading and writing components are interconnected and taught across subject areas. High levels of thinking are achieved when meaning is actively constructed through the use of reading and writing. While writing instruction is a core component of the language arts curriculum, it also becomes a learning tool in math, science, and social studies as students participate in a wide range of writing activities that include frequent journaling.

In language arts classrooms, a Writing Workshop approach allows students to develop writing strategies, learn about the writer's craft, and use writing as a tool for learning and communicating. Writing in different genres and applying conventions to communicate information clearly to a variety of audiences is emphasized. Modeled Writing, Shared Writing, Interactive Writing, and Independent Writing are methods used to help students acquire writing knowledge and skills, along with fluency and a desire to see themselves as writers. Student confidence is built through individual conferences with the teacher and sharing with the class so that all benefit from the suggestions offered by peers. Mini-lessons are taught daily in response to individual needs of students, rather than relying on a series of sequential textbook lessons, with concepts reinforced in students' current writing projects.

Teachers in primary and intermediate grades teach a five step writing process and develop common strategies and vocabulary during Professional Learning Community meetings. Strategies learned by teachers during professional development opportunities are shared with one another through collaboration and implemented in classrooms. A much anticipated annual event for first and second grade students is the Author's Tea where they share an illustrated, published story with family and friends. It is apparent that teachers at Bivins strive to provide a print-rich environment for their students with published works displayed proudly in classrooms and hallways. Skilled, expressive writers who think critically in all areas of the curriculum are a goal of Bivins' teachers as they help students improve their writing skills to enhance learning.

### **4. Instructional Methods:**

A description of the instructional methods used at Bivins will not include a list of programs purchased by the school, but will instead offer a description of teachers who are passionate about engaging all students in learning and who continually seek unique ways to deliver the curriculum. Rather than adopting a blanket of instructional programs, Bivins' teachers create their own mix of strategies comprised of the most useful elements of varied ideas and best practices learned through staff development and collaboration.

There is a campus-wide focus on these four questions as teachers plan instruction:

1. What do we expect our students to learn?
2. How will we know when the students have learned?
3. How will we respond when students don't learn?
4. What will we do when students master the targeted objective?

Using these questions as a foundation, teachers are experts at setting goals and objectives that are differentiated based on the developmental levels of their students. They use research based instructional strategies that are grounded in higher order thinking, problem solving, and real world connections for all students. These strategies include direct instruction, cooperative learning, flexible grouping, Guided Math, Reading and Writing Workshop, cross-curricular activities, small group and individual instruction, hands-on manipulative activities, field trips, peer tutoring, and varied uses of technology.

Based on contemporary research, Bivins is transforming into an inclusion campus where instruction for special education students is delivered in the regular education classroom in order to maximize instructional time and exposure to grade level curriculum. Special education teachers co-teach alongside regular education teachers to provide the least restrictive environment for special needs students. Content Mastery is used by both regular and special education students for individualized assistance after receiving direct instruction from the classroom teacher. Teachers at Bivins rely on the freedom to create and adapt instructional strategies that cognitively engage students to ensure academic success for all students.

#### **5. Professional Development:**

As a continually developing Professional Learning Community, Bivins believes that the most powerful staff development occurs when teachers engage in professional conversations about research based instructional strategies. These conversations are the cornerstones of the weekly collaborative team meetings where teachers discuss student learning and performance. By creating a collaborative culture, staff development is shifting from the traditional external training to more job-embedded learning. The staff development that once occurred infrequently on those few days devoted to training sessions is transitioning to more ongoing learning that occurs as part of the routine work practice. Bivins is a campus with a wealth of knowledge and expertise. In addition to the vast years of combined experiences of classroom teachers, Bivins also relies on literacy and math lead teachers, a full-time curriculum specialist, and a full-time learning facilitator who serve as resources for the campus. In addition, an instructional technologist provides ongoing, campus level training enabling teachers to remain current on technological advancements as well as how to integrate technology into classrooms. Teachers now rely heavily on the wisdom of the field as they learn from one another.

Amarillo Independent School District values the continuing pursuit of knowledge and offers professional development opportunities based on current research and proven, best practices. District specific training includes Balanced Literacy, New Jersey Writing Project, TexTeams Math, and Inquiry Science. The District supports ongoing professional growth by disbursing staff development days throughout the school year and summer. Teachers are encouraged to attend these trainings selected by the District because of their proven positive influence on student achievement. They also attend regional and national trainings which support campus goals. Educating learners for life requires teachers also to be lifelong learners. Bivins' teachers seek out methods to grow professionally and then put the acquired knowledge into action to help all students reach their potential.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject Reading (E) Grade 3 Test Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)  
 Edition/Publication Year 2006-2007 Publisher Texas Education Agency

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	February	February	February		
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
At or Above Met Standard	94	100	100		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
At Commended Performance	46	65	49		
Number of students tested	70	52	55		
Percent of total students tested	91	90	90		
Number of students alternatively assessed	7	6	6		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	9	10	10		
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
At or Above Met Standard	91	100	100		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
At Commended Performance	40	57	41		
Number of students tested	49	30	34		
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
At or Above Met Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
At Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	7	4	2		
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
At or Above Met Standard	95	100	100		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
At Commended Performance	59	75	51		
Number of students tested	40	36	35		
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
At or Above Met Standard	95	100	100		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
At Commended Performance	33	50	47		
Number of students tested	21	12	17		

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April		
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
At or Above Met Standard	88	94	96		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	33	26	39		
Number of students tested	65	54	59		
Percent of total students tested	90	98	93		
Number of students alternatively assessed	7	7	5		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	10	9	8		
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	82	89	97		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	22	19	34		
Number of students tested	46	31	38		
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	6	4	2		
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	89	94	97		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	44	28	39		
Number of students tested	39	39	38		
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	90	100	94		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	20	27	39		
Number of students tested	20	11	18		

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April		
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At or Above Met Standard	93	96	88		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	42	25	15		
Number of students tested	45	56	59		
Percent of total students tested	92	86	80		
Number of students alternatively assessed	4	9	15		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	6	14	20		
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	89	94	85		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	36	14	5		
Number of students tested	28	35	37		
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	2	4	7		
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	90	100	91		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	47	32	19		
Number of students tested	30	31	36		
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	100	90	80		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	38	20	6		
Number of students tested	16	20	16		

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April		
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At or Above Met Standard	98	100	88		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	57	65	26		
Number of students tested	45	57	62		
Percent of total students tested	90	88	83		
Number of students alternatively assessed	5	8	13		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	10	12	17		
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	96	100	83		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	50	61	23		
Number of students tested	28	36	39		
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	2	4	7		
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	97	100	95		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	60	66	31		
Number of students tested	30	32	39		
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	100	100	73		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	60	65	13		
Number of students tested	15	20	16		

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	February	February	February		
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At or Above Met Standard	100	97	85		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	38	22	25		
Number of students tested	50	67	40		
Percent of total students tested	85	81	85		
Number of students alternatively assessed	9	16	7		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	15	19	15		
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	100	94	80		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	23	15	32		
Number of students tested	26	40	25		
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	3	8	3		
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	100	91	92		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	25	14	13		
Number of students tested	16	14	16		
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	100	91	92		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	25	14	13		
Number of students tested	16	14	16		

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	April	April	April		
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At or Above Met Standard	100	95	91		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	77	45	29		
Number of students tested	48	69	38		
Percent of total students tested	86	81	83		
Number of students alternatively assessed	8	16	8		
Percent of students alternatively assessed	14	19	17		
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Economically Disadvantaged					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	100	91	90		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	68	34	26		
Number of students tested	25	41	23		
2. African American					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard					
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	2	8	2		
3. White					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	100	91	85		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	69	33	7		
Number of students tested	13	15	15		
4. Hispanic					
% "Meeting" plus % "Exceeding" State Standard					
% At or Above Met Standard	100	91	85		
% "Exceeding" State Standards					
% At Commended Performance	69	33	7		
Number of students tested	13	15	15		