



2005 Award Winner

Jenks Public Schools

The 11th-largest school district in Oklahoma, Jenks Public Schools (JPS) serve 9,400 students, pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. The district has an annual budget of \$48 million and operates nine schools on five campuses, as well as its own transportation, maintenance, print shop, warehouse, food service, and technology operations. The staff includes 665 educators (teachers and certified staff) and 575 noneducational professionals.

A Passion for Improvement

At JPS, continuous improvement is not just a goal—it is a passion. And no one is permitted to rest on the laurels of previous improvements. Senior leaders, teachers, staff, students, and parents are constantly striving to build on and exceed the organization's all-time best. Continuous improvement is expected not only in key areas such as academic achievement, staff and teacher training, and student safety, but also in areas such as collecting, tracking, and analyzing data. Continuous Improvement is one of the four "pillars" that serve as the model for the school district; the other three are Strong Quality Leadership, Customer Focus, and Systems/Process Focus.

As a central part of its improvement efforts, JPS uses a Plan, Do, Study, Act process to plan, implement, analyze, review, and revise practices and procedures related to its key measures such as increasing the district's fund balance and improving test scores. All district level administrators and

Highlights

- For 2003 and 2004, the turnover rate for teaching staff was 11 percent and 6 percent; the national level for both years was 20 percent.
- The Academic Performance Index scores exceed both state and national levels; the district's Southeast Elementary School was one of only four in the state to achieve an API perfect score.
- Thirty-seven percent of the district's class of 2004 earned an AP test score of three or better, compared to 13 percent nationally and 21.2 percent in the state.
- JPS innovative programs include exchange programs with schools in Chengdu and Shenyang, China, and a program that partners pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children with the residents of Grace Living Center, a state-of-the-art long-term care facility.

principals develop department or site goals and action plans that support the district's goals, strategic objectives, four pillars, core values, mission, and motto, "A Tradition of Excellence with a Vision for Tomorrow." The goals and key measures are prominently displayed on posters in all of the district's buildings.

Excellence Leads to Results

The district's dedication to excellence has led to academic success and local and national recognition. Overall, JPS is in the top 1 percent of schools in the state of Oklahoma. The 2004 educational report by the state of Oklahoma shows that the average scores of JPS students are significantly higher than both the state's and the nation's in all subject areas in all grade levels tested. In the past seven years, the district has produced 65 National Merit semifinalists, 48 National Merit finalists, and two Presidential Scholars.

The district's Academic Performance Index (API) (based on test scores, attendance, dropout rate, and graduation rate) scores lead the state for K-12 schools of comparable size; the district's Southeast Elementary School was one of only four elementary schools in the state to achieve an API perfect score of 1,500 points.



At the high school level, JPS's graduation rates for 2003 to 2005 are 93, 94, and 95 percent, respectively. JPS students consistently outperform other students statewide and nationwide in their ACT and SAT (college entrance exams) scores. And, 37 percent of the JPS class of 2004 demonstrated mastery of at least one Advanced Placement course during their high school years, compared to 13 percent nationally. Eighty-five percent of the 2004 JPS graduating class enrolled in colleges and universities, an increase of 1 percent over 2003. In 2004, seniors were offered more than \$10 million in scholarships, an increase from the \$8 million offered to the 2003 graduating class.

Drop-out rates, a measure of student satisfaction, have decreased steadily from 6.3 percent in 1999, to 1.2 percent at the end of the 2004 school year.

Educated Educators

Excellence in academic performance could not happen without a well-trained, motivated, and involved faculty and staff. Forty-two percent of the teaching staff have master's degrees, 2 percent have doctorates, and 98.5 percent are highly qualified, according to No Child Left Behind standards. In the past five years, two JPS classroom teachers were selected as Oklahoma Teachers of the Year; both received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. In 2004, a JPS teacher received the Milken Family Foundation Educator Award, which honors outstanding educators. Four JPS coaches have been named "National Coach of the Year" by their respective associations.

JPS puts a premium on continuing education for its staff. The district regularly contracts with nationally recognized professionals to conduct seminars and workshops. However, because the knowledge among its staff is so substantial, members of its own workforce provide most of the professional development. In 2004-2005, staff members conducted more than 274 training sessions for employees.

In addition, JPS considers itself a leader in using technology tools for teaching and communicating, including fully equipped computer labs and video production studios. JPS teachers receive approximately 300 hours of technology training per year, primarily from The Eighth Floor, a consortium of Oklahoma schools that provides training and professional development for educators.

Compared to a national average of 20 percent, faculty turnover rate has declined from 15 percent in 2000 to 6 percent in 2004. The staff retention rate is 91 percent; the non-teaching staff retention rate is 85 percent. On a satisfaction scale of one to five, staff enthusiasm for work has increased from 3.64 in 1998 to 4.62 in 2005.

Teamwork and Partnerships

Teamwork is among the district's core values and is apparent throughout JPS. At school sites and within departments, various committees are in place to ensure that all stakeholders can share in discussions and decisions. For example, the PK-12 Curriculum Development Committee is made up of more than 50 teachers, administrators and parents who work together to develop standards and objectives for the upcoming year. The Career Action Planning Program (CAPS) was established in 1997 to improve communication at high school parent-teacher conferences. As a result, parent involvement in these conferences has increased from below 20 percent to more than 90 percent.

Parents also volunteer much of their time and energy to make improvements both inside and outside of JPS schools. In 2004-2005, 1,079 parents and other volunteers contributed a total of 62,904 hours. For example, the East Elementary Dynamic Dads volunteer group and school administrators worked with community organizations and local businesses to transform a section of land between two JPS school sites into a park-like setting complete with markers providing information on the trees and plants along a 2,800-foot walking trail.

Teaming and partnering extends not only into the community but also into the world through student and teacher exchange programs with schools in Chengdu and Shenyang, China. JPS has received much acclaim for its innovative community partnership with the Grace Living Center long-term care facility. More than 25 of the home's residents interact daily with the young children who attend pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes held in the home. Over the past 19 years, the Jenks Public Schools Foundation, made up of business, community, and school leaders, has built an endowment fund of almost \$960,000. In another example, a local Home Depot provides guest speakers, mentors, and supplies to the Jenks Alternative Center. The center identifies and supports at-risk high school students in an effort to maximize their chances of completing high school.

For more information:
Jenks Public Schools
205 East B Street
Jenks, OK 74037
Telephone: (918) 299-4415 ext. 2211
Fax: (918) 299-9197
Email: dana.ezell@jenksps.org
Web site: www.jenksps.org