

*Honey gets more flies to it, than doth vinegar.*  
[1666 G. Torriano Italian Proverbs 149]

by Kelli Moulton – HISD Superintendent

Hereford ISD has long enjoyed the tradition and success of its public school system. Our partnerships with private elementary schools and neighboring ISD's nurture student success and fill our community with productive citizens. We are rightly proud of our students, teachers and staff.

This week the federal government released the 2008 Adequate Yearly Progress report. Under the accountability provisions in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, all public schools are evaluated for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Districts, campuses, and the state are required to meet AYP criteria on three measures: Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, and either Graduation Rate (for high schools and districts) or Attendance Rate (for elementary and middle/junior high schools).

If a campus, district, or state receiving federal funds fails to meet AYP for two consecutive years, that campus, district, or state is subject to certain requirements such as offering supplemental education services, offering school choice, and/or taking corrective actions.

Unfortunately, even the name Adequate Yearly Progress is misleading. AYP is not a measure of progress; it is a simple PASS/FAIL report that measures and grades the weakest area of performance, regardless of the overall strength of the school.

AYP measures 30 areas; Hereford ISD qualifies for measurement in 25. In the 2008 report, 24 of the 25 areas improved or made progress beyond the 2007 report. Only one indicator, representing 2.5% of our students, did not show progress. The label assigned to HISD- "Missed AYP" - does not measure our progress.

The saying that you can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar means that by recognizing and capitalizing on the good things going on in Hereford ISD, more progress and success will follow. Unfortunately, the accountability systems developed in Washington D.C. and Austin can be demoralizing to students and teachers that work hard every day and in every classroom. I am here to stand up for the progress we make and to celebrate our successes without regard to the label.

Accountability and assessment when used correctly can direct our instruction and fortify our learning. But to whom or to what should we be accountable? I take the accountability to our students and community very seriously. Each child counts! Yours...and yours...and yours!

As a district, we are working to meet the needs and interests of our students so that we customize an educational experience for each child in Hereford. Join me and take the very next opportunity to tell a child, a teacher, or a school district employee that you value their progress and success; and it's not just adequate...It's AWESOME.