Netzaberg Middle School

School Profile Addendum
SY 09-10

I. School's Vision/Mission Statement

A*s stated by Dr. Miles at the DoDEA-Europe Administrators' Conference, all DoDEA schools will have the DoDEA mission statement as their mission statement, but the vision statement will be unique to each school. Therefore,* we revised our mission from:

"Netzaberg Middle School promotes highest student achievement by encouraging children to develop, practice and apply the life-long skills needed in today's global society."

to the following to align with the DoDEA mission statement:

"*Netzaberg Middle School provides an exemplary education that inspires and prepares all DoDEA students for success in a dynamic, global environment.* "

This year, it was decided that the previous mission statement was a good vision statement. Once again, the stakeholders of our school reflected upon the Vision Statement. We checked to see if a more succinct statement can be devised and/or created that better describes how we (as a community of learners) interact with one another, while keeping in mind the importance of choosing a statement that community members can remember. This year, it was decided that the Vision Statement was adequate. Thus, the Vision Statement of Netzaberg Middle School is:

Netzaberg Middle School promotes highest student achievement by encouraging children to develop, practice and apply the life-long skills needed in today's global society.

II. Current Goals:

Student Performance SMART Goal #1:
By 2011, all students will increase their reading comprehension by recognizing statements of fact and opinion in written texts across the curriculum as measured by TerraNova 3rd edition, Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), and the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS, Spring 2001).

- **Indicators of success:** We are looking to see if the grade level average on our assessments is increasing. Our 6th grade fall test is compared to the 6th grade spring test. For grades 7 & 8, the previous Spring assessment is compared to the current Spring assessment. We continue to monitor the progress of decreasing the number of students in the lowest two quartiles and increasing the number of students in the upper two quartiles.
- **Intervention:** FOWM (Fact & Opinion Word Maps)

As we reach the end of this school year and review our data, it becomes important to note that our intervention next school year may change. The data shows that students can recognize key words and are ready for the next skill but a graphic organizer may not be the best tool for this. Many teachers are still not convinced that this skill can be taught in every class. We had the same difficulty with the 4

Step Method and it will simply take time. Our Staff Development co-chairs will be planning our next steps and working to find ways that this skill fits in across the curriculum.

Student Performance SMART Goal #2:

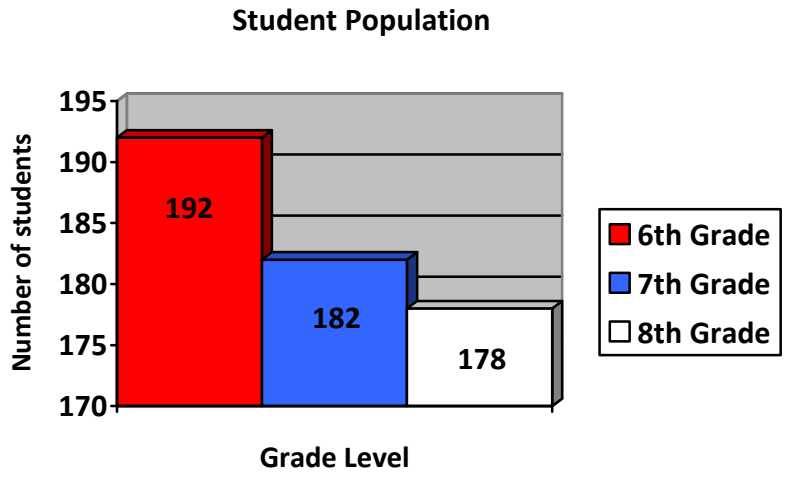
By 2011, all students will increase their problem solving skills by evaluating reasonableness of a solution to problems across the curriculum as measured by TerraNova 3rd edition, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS, Spring 2001), and the local assessment ProblemSolver.

- **Indicators of success:** We are looking to see if the grade level average on our assessments is increasing. Our 6th grade fall test is compared to the 6th grade spring test. For grades 7 & 8, the previous Spring assessment is compared to the current Spring assessment. We continue to monitor the progress of decreasing the number of students in the lowest two quartiles and increasing the number of students in the upper two quartiles.
- **Intervention:** Polya's 4 Step Method (1 – Understand the Problem; 2 – Make a plan; 3 – Carry out the plan; 4 – Look back).

A review of the data shows that while problem solving in mathematics is still weak, problem solving across the curriculum is improving. The creation of our "Problem Solver" has shown us the kind of problems we want students to be able to answer and has shown teachers that the process of problem solving is something used in each and every classroom. We also continue to focus on the "marriage" of AVID's WICR to our current research-based method for problem solving.

III. Current Student Population for this year:

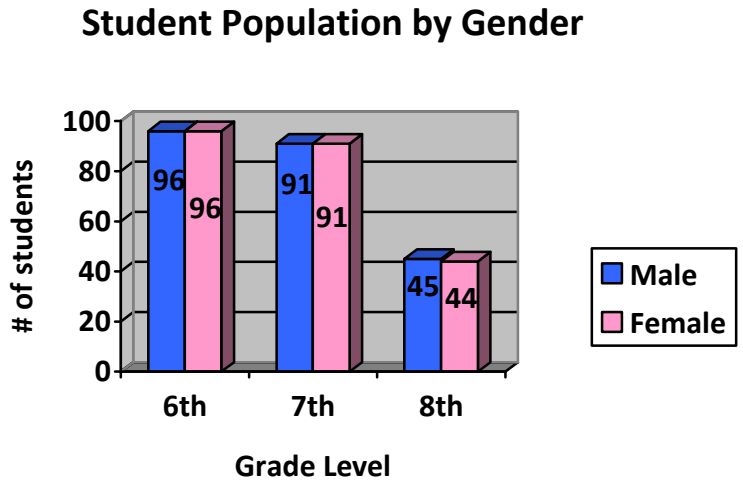
- Grade levels and number of student (as of January 6, 2010)



The data used above was chosen because it best represented the school population after most students have actually transferred in and before the massive departure of students as another deployment began in late May.

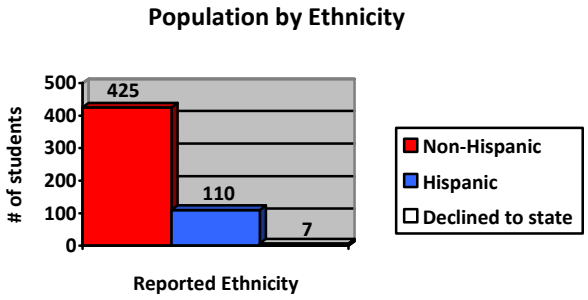
Once again, our 6th grade was the largest group of students. However, we noticed a decrease in students as we moved to the next grade level. While the decrease is not a large one, the pattern is obvious in the above graph. It is also important to note that the number of 6th graders continues to grow while the number of students continuing in the 7th grade remains consistent with expectations from the previous year. This trend of increasingly large 6th grade enrollment has continued since the opening of Netzaberg Middle School in 2008 and has caused us to look more closely at the age of our military parents as a factor in other areas.

- Gender



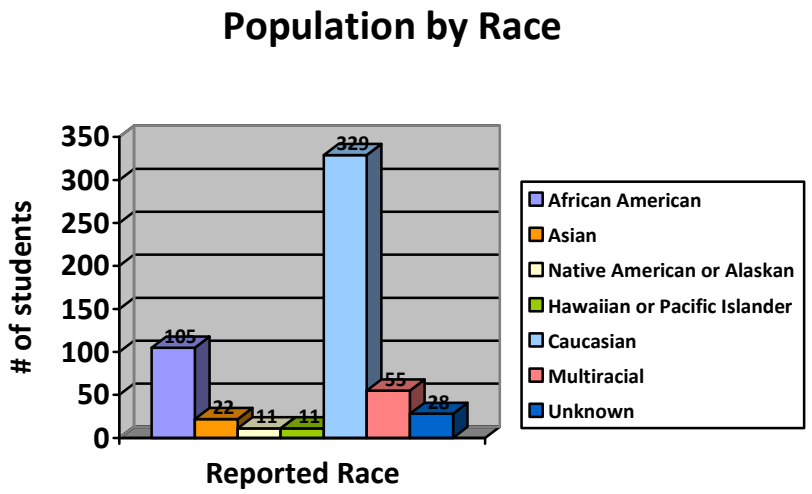
This year our numbers are evenly split between genders except in 8th grade where we have slightly more males than females.

- Ethnicity



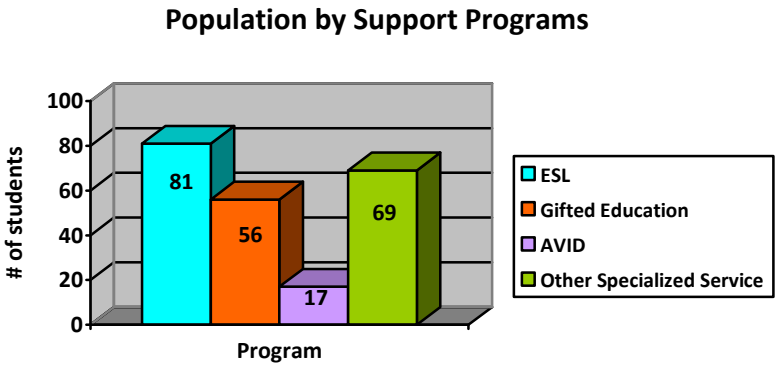
As our population continues to increase, the ratio of ethnicity within our population continues to remain roughly the same. Once again the stakeholders who “decline to state” their ethnicity remained low.

- Race



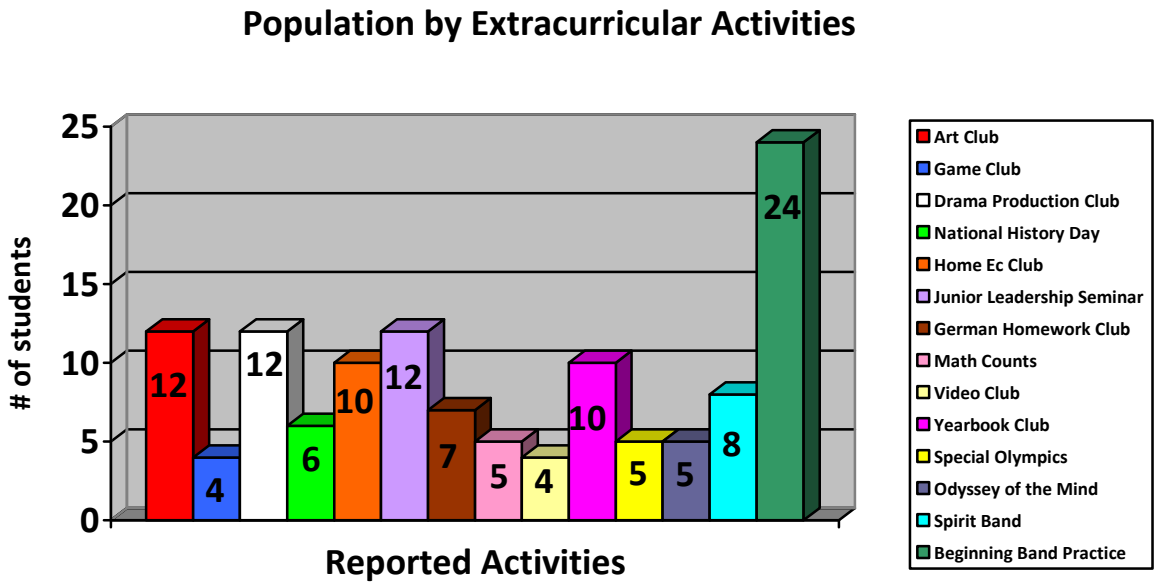
The racial makeup remained consistent with previous years. There was a noticeable increase this year in the number of students reporting "no race" or who "decline(d) to state" race.

- Participation in Support Programs



The number of students in special programs this year saw no significant change except in the AVID program. There was a drastic decrease in our number of student participating in AVID. This is mostly due to the fact that the program was collapsed and 6th grade AVID was no longer offered. It is also important to note that the number of students receiving services was greatly impacted by the conflict with PE/Health requirements, various scheduling issues and parents who decided to decline services. It was also noted that the information on Gifted Education students had not been updated and that many records were incomplete. During this review it was further noted that there seems to be an increase in students who are taking advanced classes (e.g. classes above their current grade level). We plan to pay further attention to this possible trend and more information should be expected in the "Support Programs" data for SY 2010-2011.

- Participation in other school opportunities



Not all activities are paid extra duty contract (EDC) activities so not all opportunities for students are officially recorded herein. Most of the activities offered last year were also offered this year with little change. Activities were added and deleted to meet student requests. Number of participants in each program varied: some saw an increase in participation (e.g. Art Club, National History Day) while others saw a decrease (e.g. Video Club, Yearbook Club). Of particular note was formation of the lunch intramurals which took the place of the intramural club and after-school volleyball. This activity was unable to provide exact numbers as the number of students participating fluctuated constantly. An average estimate was not available since students were neither required to have a permission to participate form on file nor were they required to sign in. Several other activities (e.g. after-school tutoring and the International Club) were offered but did not provide statistics. Students for these activities were required to have a permission to participate form on file and were they required to sign in so records are available. The National Junior Honor Society and Student Council were both offered this year but did not report statistics for this report. Once again we find that more students are participating but transportation is still an issue for many of our families. The School Advisory Council (SAC) is pursuing a partnership with a community organization that may provide be able to provide an activity bus if we provide a place for their activities. Anne Bruennig, our School Liason Officer (SLO), is still working with the military command to possibly revise the shuttle schedule and/or stops to better serve persons wishing to come to the Netzaberg post from other areas of the garrison.

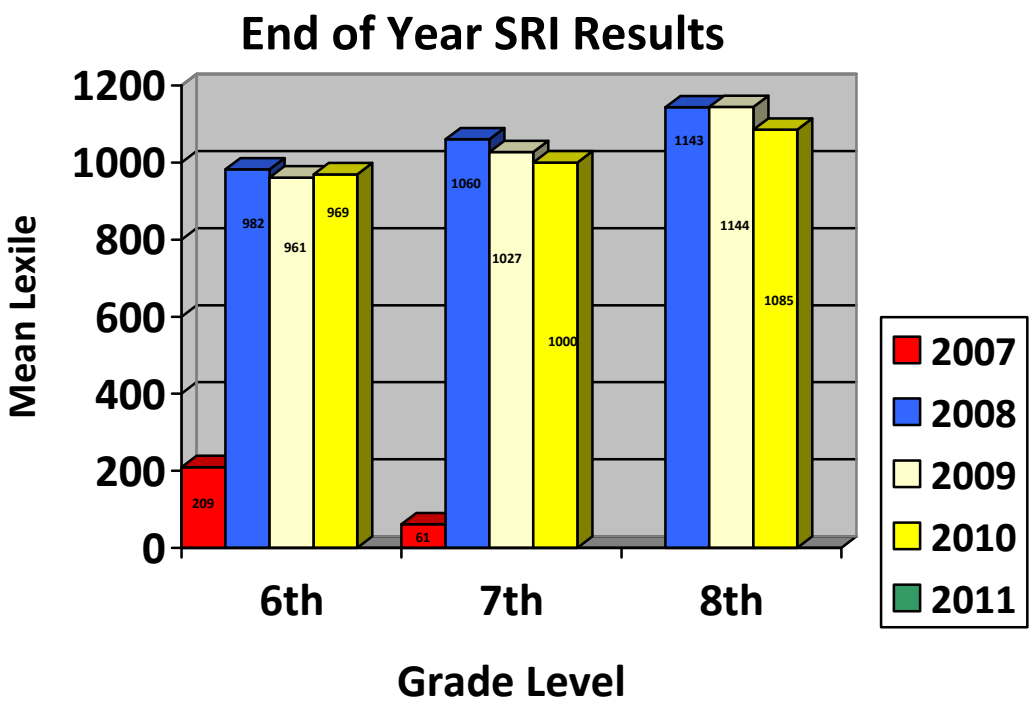
IV. Student Performance Data and Analysis:

Data has not been disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, or Special Programs. Data is also available disaggregated in quartiles. This document can be found on our common drive. Data is not gathered at any time other than annually.

Goal 1 Assessments:

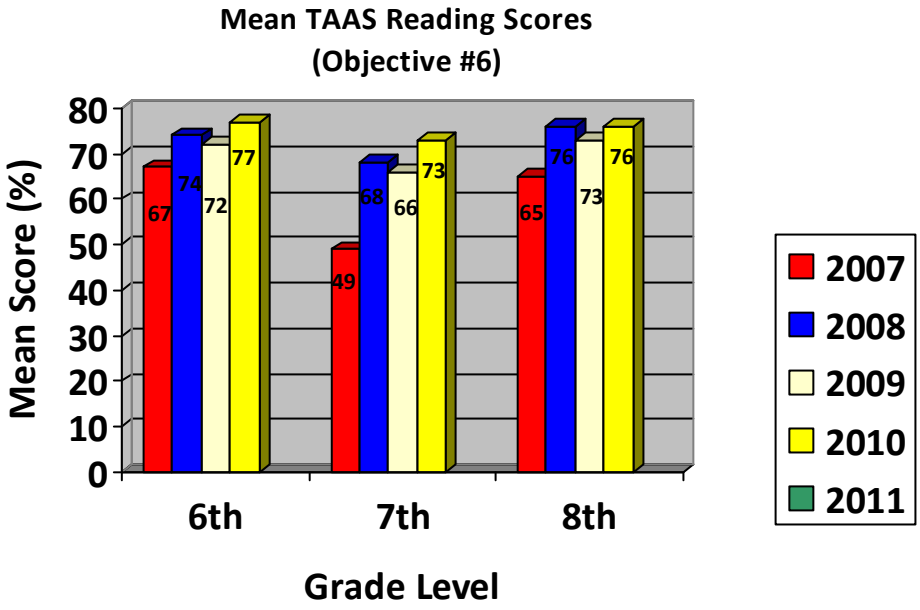
1. Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) (Grades 6-8)

Data tracks students from their arrival at Netzaberg Middle School (year at top of column) through their entire time here (flows down the column). Teachers believed that this format is most useful when determining if we are making progress in reading comprehension. The most important change to this data set is the continued growth in mean Lexile scores at all grade levels as students advance through grade levels.



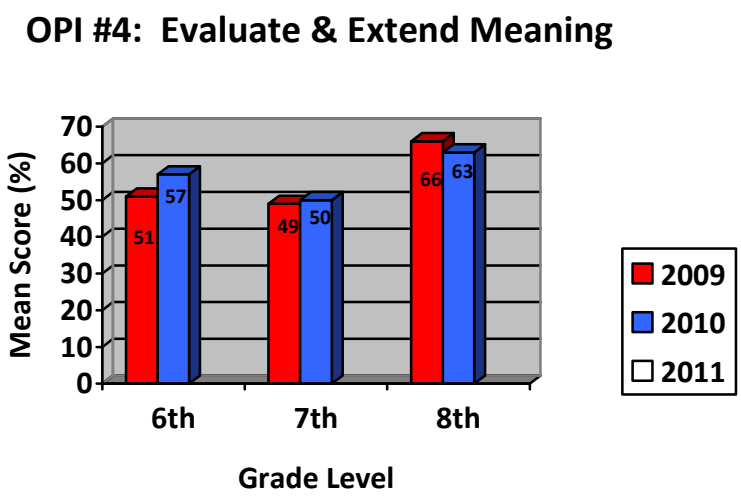
A review is of the Intervention Grouping Report shows that the current 6th grade continued to improve from the previous year while all other grade levels saw a decline in scores. When students are tracked through their middle school years (from 6th to 7th to 8th) we can see that they continue to improve. For example, the 6th grade in 2008 improved as 7th grade in 2009 and improved again as 8th grade in 2010.

2. Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), *Spring 2001 Release* (Grades 6-8)



All grade levels show improvement since the previous year. When students are tracked through their middle school years (from 6th to 7th to 8th) we can see an interesting trend. Scores always fall during the 7th grade year and improve in the 8th. For example, the 6th grade in 2008 fell eight percentage points as 7th grade in 2009 and improved again by seven percentage points as 8th grade in 2010.

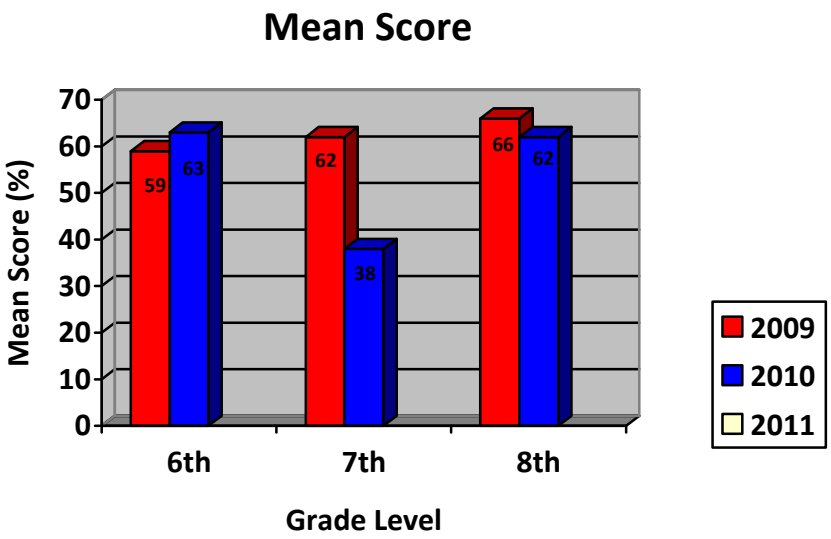
2. TerraNova Multiple Assessments *3rd edition* (Grades 6-8)



Grades 6 and 7 show improvement from the previous year. Grade 8 shows a small decline in scores. When students are tracked through their middle school years (from 6th to 7th to 8th) we continue to see the same trend: scores always fall during the 7th grade year and improve in the 8th.

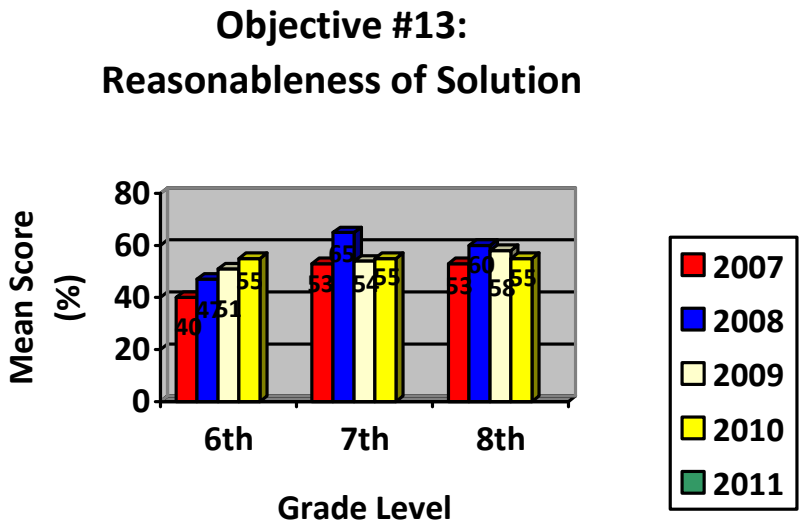
Goal 2 Assessments:

1. Problem Solver (Grades 6-8)



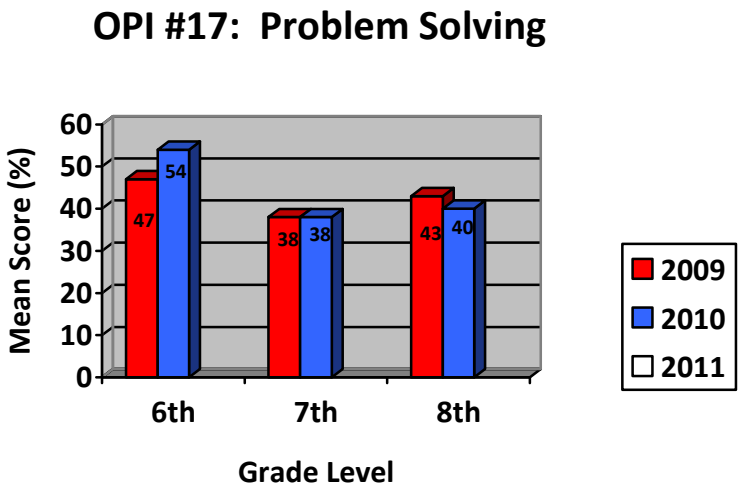
The local *Problem* Solver assessment presents students with a series of "reasonable answer" story problems for the five categories of classes: mathematics, science, social studies, language arts, and electives. The scores recorded above show that our 6th grade continues to improve while all other grade levels saw a decline in scores. Again we note that when students are tracked through their middle school years (from 6th to 7th to 8th) we are beginning to see the trend: scores fall during the 7th grade year and improve in the 8th.

2. Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), *Spring 2001 Release* (Grades 6-8)



Our 6th grade classes continue to show steady improvement as does our 7th grade after their decline in 2009. The 8th grade seems to be in a steady decline since 2008. This assessment does not seem to support the trend mentioned previously.

3. TerraNova Multiple Assessments *3rd edition* (Grades 6-8)



Grades 6 shows marked improvement from the previous year. Grade 7 remains steady while Grade 8 shows a definite decline in scores from the previous year. When students are tracked through their middle school years (from 6th to 7th to 8th) we can see that the same trend mentioned previously (scores fall during the 7th grade year and improve in the 8th) may be forming here as well.

V. School Effectiveness

Without our end of the year data, we cannot quantify how effective our practices at Netzaberg Middle School have been this year. Once this data has become available and is analyzed, Netzaberg Middle School will make the results available to all stakeholders and further address this portion of the Addendum.

An important consideration in the effectiveness of Netzaberg Middle School is the results of the 2008-09 Customer Satisfaction Survey. 31% of our parents and 73% of our students responded to this survey. More than half of those respondents (63%) graded Netzaberg Middle as an "A-B" school. When asked what the top three things NMS should focus on improving, the response (in order of importance) was 1) raising academic standards, 2) reducing class size, and 3) improving teacher qualifications and competence. When asked if students were being adequately prepared in various fields, respondents rated NMS above average in science, social studies and use of technology. They also rated NMS as below average in reading, writing, mathematics, health, and physical education. Items described as *major problems* at NMS (receiving > 10% of the responses) were bullying, obesity, racial/ethnic understanding, inappropriate discipline, timely communication, financial support, low curriculum standards, overcrowded school and classrooms, transportation, and the lunch program. The complete 2009 Customer Satisfaction Survey Report can be found as Attachment A to this document.

We felt it was also important to survey the faculty to gauge the climate. Staff requested a second Saphier Climate Survey that would separate multi-topic questions into their individual components. Both surveys can be found as Attachments B and C to this document.

The results of the combined Saphier Climate Survey are found below:

ACCOMPLISHMENTS – we are right on target: A majority of survey respondents AGREE/STRONGLY AGREE with the following survey questions:

1) "School leaders consistently involve staff in discussing and making decisions about most school issues."
2) "This school's culture values caring, celebration, and humor."
3) "Teachers and leaders in this school reach out to a knowledge base to inform their work."
4) "This school has high expectations for teachers and administration."
5) "The professional staff in this school use their talents and knowledge to help each other with challenges and needs."
6) "This school encourages and supports experimentation with new ideas and techniques."
7) "Good teaching is recognized and appreciated by the school."
8) "Students in this school trust and have confidence in each other."
9) "Staff in this school trust and have confidence in the students"

10)"Students in this school trust and have confidence in the staff"

ALMOST THERE – we need a tiny push to get us into the affirmative: A majority of survey respondents were NEUTRAL about the following survey question:

1) "Good teaching is recognized and appreciated by the community."

WORK IN PROGRESS – we need some suggestions on how to get on the right path: A majority of survey respondents DISAGREE/STRONGLY DISAGREE with the following survey questions:

1) "The school has traditions in both curriculum and recurrent events that are significant and known by all."
2) "School administrators keep meetings and paperwork to a minimum in order to protect teachers' instruction and planning time."
3) "Honest communications exist between staff members."
4) "Open communications exist between staff members."
5) "Time is available to support teachers to do their best work."
6) "Resources are available to support teachers to do their best work."
7) "Staff in this school trust and have confidence in each other"

The survey results verified for us areas in which we are on target, as well as areas in which we need to improve. These worrisome areas were anticipated as our staff doubled in size this year and is still cohering as a group with over 50% new staff. We have already planned and implemented activities to improve staff cohesion. For example, we work on both vertical and horizontal alignment of our standards through grade level meetings during joint planning time (horizontal) and department meetings after school (vertical), as well as through professional development opportunities provided through our Educational Technologist, CSP and others. We have not neglected the social aspect of cohesion either, surprising students with a staff follies April Fools' Assembly and installing a Wii in the Staff Lounge, for example.

VI. School and Community Context

While we did bring some staff and students from Grafenwoehr Middle School, it is important to remember that Netzaberg Middle School is a new school, with many new staff members and students. Additionally, our principal is not only new to our school, she is also new to both the area and the district. There are, in essence, no past practices for us as a school. Netzaberg Middle School is pleased to have teachers from many walks of life and the experience that comes with such a mix of professionals. Some teachers are new to DoDDS, while others have been in the system for 30+ years; some teachers come from this area, while others come from other Bavarian schools, DoDDSE, Gitmo, and even the Pacific schools. The task of melding these experiences is huge and requires time to create the personality and practices that will be called Netzaberg Middle School.

Further stresses placed on our stakeholders must be taken into account as well. Out of 70+ staff members, 30+ had to find new housing in an extremely limited market when they arrived in August of 2008, leaving some staff living in hotels until well into the second quarter of the school year. This lack of a place to call home made settling in difficult on both the personal and professional fronts for some staff. Many families in our community are also dealing with repeat deployments, causing much stress to families already spread thin living overseas. This stress is exacerbated by the fact that many of those families are living in the Netzaberg housing complex which also opened in 2008, meaning that community ties and community cohesion have not been well established yet either. The effect this has on our community has been noted not only by the school but by community organizations such as the PTSA, SAC, CYS and the Boy/Girl Scouts.

While the school was operational on its opening day, minor construction tasks were needed for the first half of the school year and other non-essential tasks are ongoing. For example, pencil sharpeners were not installed in classrooms until March 2009. The mounting of the infocus machines and SmartBoards began in our second semester and is expected to be complete for opening day 2009 even though room changes will occur at the end of this school year. The Netzaberg Complex also continues to grow and change. Construction that created new crosswalks and gates into the Complex as well as the creation of a light-regulated crosswalk on the main road into the complex did not take place until well into the second half of the school year. Construction on the Netzaberg Shoppette began during our second semester and is expected to reach completion in the summer of 2009. This construction is taking place directly across the street from the school.

Although Netzaberg Middle School is a functioning institution, it is important to note that we are a new school that is in the midst of ongoing improvement. Changes in the directorate of DoDEA as well as upcoming changes in the administration of Netzaberg Middle School continue to keep us from forming the practices that help create a sense of family within the school. Uncertainties about staffing and scheduling create a sense of panic in all stakeholders. As our year draws to a close, our community has made great progress in forming the bonds that will help create a culture and climate that will form the heart of our school. Even though much change is anticipated in the coming year, Netzaberg Middle School is a place where it is all about the learning…period.