Little Longhorns Big Dreams

The University of Texas
Elementary School

2010–2011

Annual Report

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Letter from the Executive Director

My first full year as executive director of The University of Texas Elementary School has come to a close, and I am immensely proud of the accomplishments made in 2010–11. Throughout this year and since the birth of the school and its grand mission eight years ago, I have enjoyed seeing our students' lives changed by the school's cutting-edge curriculum and stellar teachers.

UT Elementary School continues to find that our Response to Intervention approach, which allows us to assess the individual needs of each child, is a large part of our success. We strive to demonstrate best practices in education from the research produced by our faculty friends at The University of Texas at Austin. In addition, our programs, like Social and Emotional Learning, which teaches children empathy to help them become better citizens, and the Healthy Families Initiative, which helps tackle the growing childhood obesity epidemic, show our sincerity to serve as a true model for others. This model and these programs would not be possible without donor support.

In addition to serving 260 students and numerous UT Austin students studying to be educators, our faculty and staff also share best practices with other urban schools. For instance, we administer the Urban Education Project, along with UT Austin's College of Education and several East Austin elementary schools, to train pre-service learning teachers and present our proven models for academic and social and emotional learning at national conferences. Earlier this spring our teachers also published a book, *Teaching to the Spirit of Every Child*, to be used as an urban educator resource state-wide. Our entire school is working to spread our effective teaching methods and programs both locally and nationally.

In this annual report you will find just a few examples of how we are achieving our mission: (1) to develop students into lifelong learners through rigorous, research-based curricula, individualized instruction, high expectations, and a nurturing environment that includes parental and community involvement; (2) to provide opportunities for professional development and outreach for The University of Texas at Austin's academic units; and (3) to serve as a model of an exemplary educational program for diverse learners.

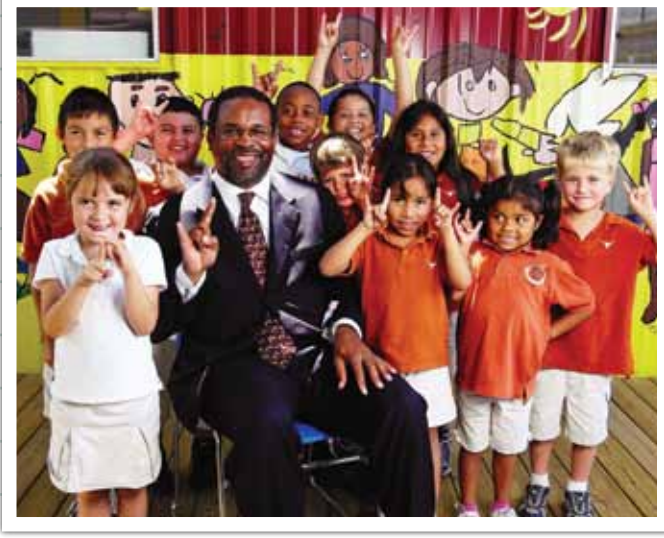
Thank you for sharing our goal to guide students from Pre-K to Ph.D. — we could not do our work without your dedication and support.

Melissa M. Chavez

Melissa Chavez, Executive Director

Letter from the Vice President

The University of Texas at Austin is proud of the many accomplishments that UT Elementary School has achieved. The progress the school has made since 2003 is outstanding and largely due to our committed and talented teachers and staff and the many contributions of members of our campus community and the greater Austin community—many of these individuals and groups are listed as community partners in this report. The partnerships established by UT Elementary School's dedicated teachers, staff and volunteers allow the school to offer results-driven programming, a nurturing and technology-enhanced learning environment, and an education for East Austin families about healthy living outcomes. At a time when a college education is more important than ever, it is wonderful to witness our youngest students getting the best start in life. Starting at age four, students are learning how to be model citizens, and each year they see first-hand University of Texas staff and community partners invest time, energy and resources into their school. The students receive two important lessons: that they matter and that it is important to give back to the community.

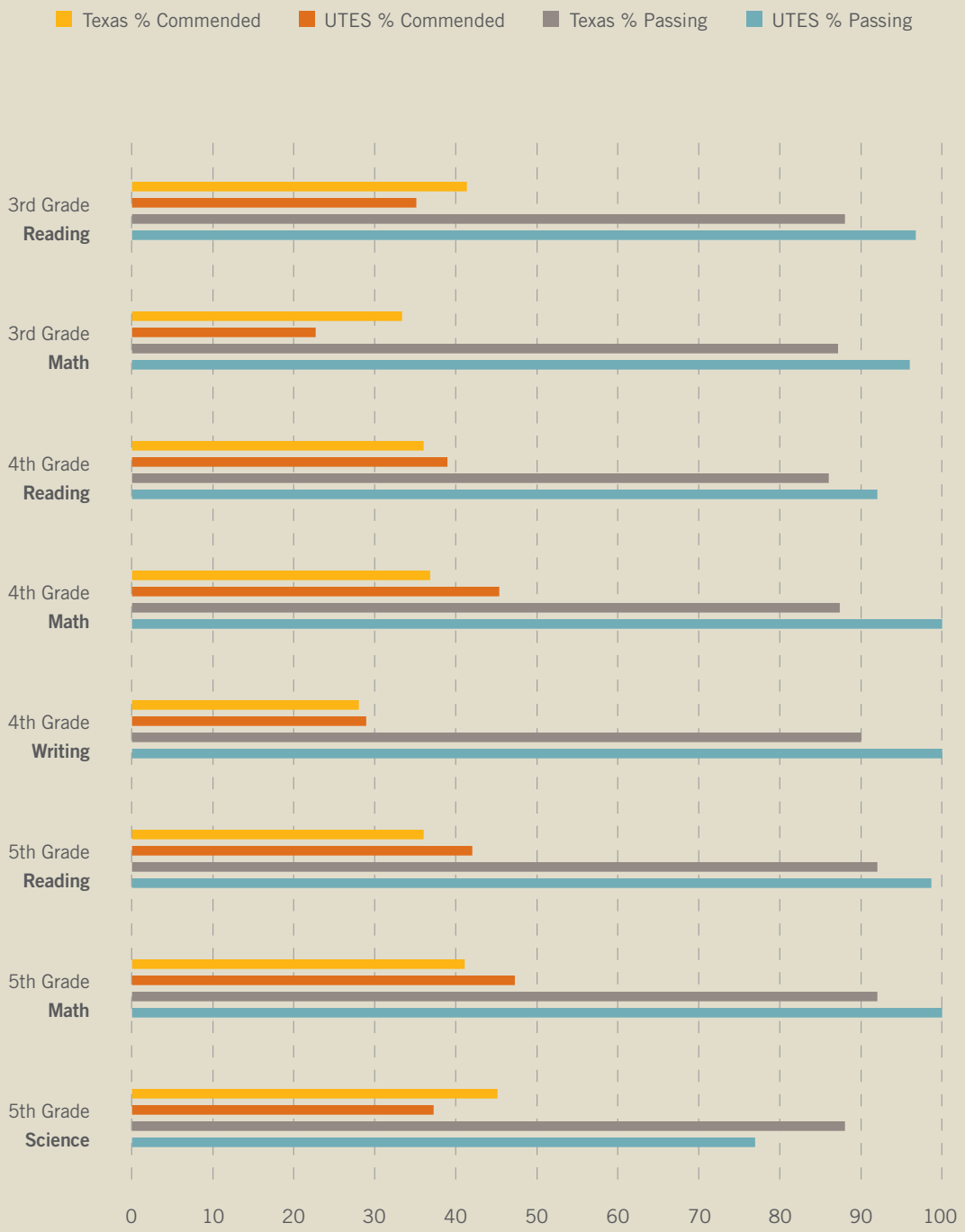


As part of the university's **Division of Diversity and Community Engagement**, the elementary school is a wonderful example of how engaging community benefits us all.

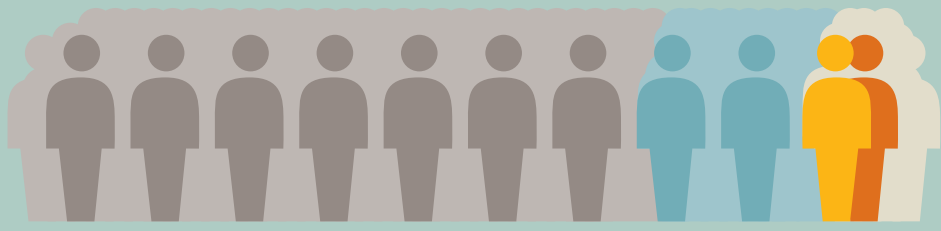
Dr. Gregory J. Vincent
Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement
W.K. Kellogg Professor in Community College Leadership
Professor of Law

2011 TAKS Passing Rates

UT Elementary Compared to Statewide Scores



UT Elementary School Demographics

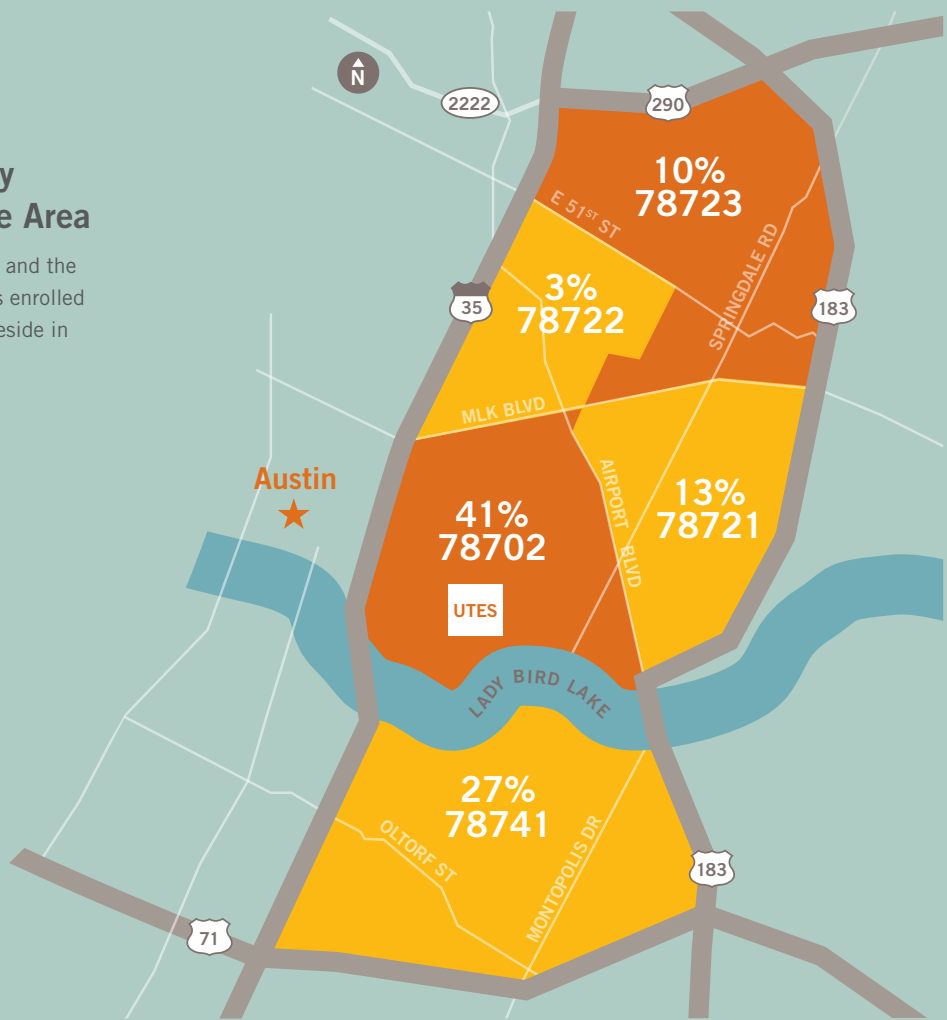


72% Hispanic 16% African American 11% White 1% Asian

48% Male 52% Female

UT Elementary School Service Area

Map depicts zip codes and the percentage of students enrolled as of May 2011 who reside in each zip code.



Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff

UT Elementary School: A Leader in Early Childhood Education

UT Elementary School teachers know they have a quality early childhood education program, and they have the national stamp of approval to prove it. Since 2006, the school is the only elementary school in Central Texas to have the prestigious National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation.

Our early childhood teachers are glad that the school's administrators support the accreditation process, and believe that it gives parents the confidence to know their child is receiving a quality education.

This year pre-kindergarten teacher Marcia Molinar and kindergarten teachers Ellen Mangelsdorf and Eunice Tanco went through the rigorous process of renewing the school's accreditation for another six years.

"Going through the accreditation process helps us to not only be better teachers, but to be conscious about what we are doing and how we are impacting our students' growth by helping them develop their cognitive and academic skills, and also their independence, leadership and social emotional skills," said Tanco.

The four-step application process begins by aligning the school with the ten NAEYC early childhood program standards, including promoting positive relationships between children and adults, offering a curriculum that promotes language and physical development, and utilizing teaching methods that are developmentally appropriate and effective. Other standards that must be met include building relationships with families and providing ongoing assessment of children's progress. Teachers must demonstrate that they are meeting these standards by providing evidence such as photographs or other documentation, and finally an auditor makes a site visit to observe each classroom.

The pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers, who implement the early childhood program, developed two new projects to showcase this year. One was a partnership with A Community for Education (ACE), an early literacy intervention program, to teach parents about early literacy; and second Tanco and Kerri Fisher, UT Elementary School social worker, co-taught monthly parenting coaching meetings. Both activities are examples of how the school is meeting the NAEYC standards.

Early childhood students

Our early childhood teachers are glad that the school's administrators support the accreditation process, and believe that it gives parents the confidence to know their child is receiving a quality education. The process also lets teachers educate their parents about what NAEYC means so that they can inform friends. "I do believe that if parents are involved in learning then they can ask for better programs for their kids," said Tanco.

Training Future Professionals to Serve their Communities

As a research demonstration school, UT Elementary School is a training site for future teachers, nurses, social workers and psychologists. UT Austin students are selected annually to intern at the school to assist staff in the classroom, manage caseloads, conduct student assessments and gain valuable professional development that they can apply to their careers.

Student teacher helps student with reading skills.

"We get a group of students who provide support for our teachers in many different ways from being able to do small reading groups with kids, having more eyes on the playground, having more eyes in the cafeteria," said Melissa Chavez, executive director. "We might have a student intern who has an expertise that we may not have so the relationship is mutually beneficial."

In addition to opportunities to work with elementary students directly, interns also get to experience the school's best practice model, Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). The SEL curriculum helps students recognize and manage their emotions, conflicts and relationships in positive ways by developing five skills—self-knowledge, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

Interns and pre-service teachers who train at the school say they notice a difference when they meet students who have developed these skills and those who have not. The SEL students are able to label their feelings, are confident, and willing to address injustices.

Heather Hart, who interned for a full year as part of her master's degree requirement in social work, says much of her work entailed helping students develop an SEL skill, but she also points out that another part of case management involves making outside referrals that address a student's basic needs such as helping their family find an apartment and pay for utilities.

She credits the UT Elementary School social worker Kerri Fisher for providing her excellent supervisory experience to manage a small caseload of clients, to eventually working with students in the after-school program, the WellNest to provide a weekly social and emotional lesson to complement the program's other components.

> "These are skills that people no matter where they come from or their age can use so that they can lead happier lives. I definitely will be taking the SEL model with me throughout my career."—Heather Hart

"It is excellent that students this young are gaining SEL competency," Hart said. "I'm sure I will encounter other settings where older people don't have those five skills. These are skills that people no matter where they come from or their age can use so that they can lead happier lives. I definitely will be taking the SEL model with me throughout my career."

Healthy Habits Lead to Wellness

Nearly one in three children in America is overweight or obese. It is a nationwide problem that hit home with UT Elementary School faculty and staff following an observational study conducted in 2007–2008, revealing a large proportion of students in grades three through five that were inactive and unfit. As a result, the school's physical education instructor, Brian Dauenhauer, in collaboration with UT faculty, developed the highly touted Healthy Families Initiative (HFI). The initiative aims to show students and their families that they can make individual lifestyle choices to improve their overall health and wellbeing. HFI is a coordinated school wellness approach, intended to promote physical activity and healthy nutritional choices. It incorporates the same three-tier model, Response to Intervention, which has successfully raised academic scores in reading and math. In just three years, HFI has lowered the prevalence of student obesity rates from 63 percent to 47 percent.

HFI has been successful by building resourceful community partnerships and working with students according to their level of need. For example, last fall, the initiative added the WellNest, an after-school program where 20 students learn basic cooking skills and introductory gardening through Garden to Table lessons, led by chef Toni Tipton-Martin and several UT Austin nutrition majors. Two days a week Coach Bob Knipe leads physical education lessons for the participating students, and on Mondays coaches from Ignite a Dream lead a team sports practice.

Another important factor of the program is that it involves the entire family. Families engage in WellNest Together Everyone Achieves More (TEAM) Nights where they participate in fitness activities, cooking demos, take nutrition classes and leave with a bag of farm fresh organic vegetables. "It is our belief that with this support the whole family will work together to enjoy a healthy and active lifestyle," said Knipe, the WellNest director.

To date the program has received wide local media coverage and became part of the first anniversary celebration of Michelle Obama's Let's Move campaign. WellNest students and their families had the unique opportunity of cooking with White House Executive Pastry Chef Bill Yosses and other chefs from around the world. Additionally, Dauenhauer and Knipe are further disseminating the proven research model by presenting at major conferences. This year they presented at the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD); American Educational Research Association (AERA); Texas State School Social Workers Conference; and ACTIVE Life It's Time School Summit. As a result of their presentations, health leaders from Connecticut and Maine are taking steps to incorporate the model into their schools.

White House chef Bill Yosses harvesting in the UTES gardens.

To learn more about the school's wellness efforts, visit the UTES Wellness blog at http://blogs.utexas.edu/utes_wellness/.

Bob Knipe: A Master Teacher Who is Changing Lives

His work in helping students and their families live healthy lives, taking on leadership roles in several school-wide activities and continuously seeking feedback and knowledge to develop his practice are just a few reasons why UT Elementary School teachers selected Bob "Coach K" Knipe as the 2010–11 Teacher of the Year.

Knipe is in his second year at UT Elementary School and directs the WellNest, an after-school program aimed at teaching students to adopt life-long healthy behaviors of personal fitness and nutritious eating habits to greatly enhance their physical and mental well-being. The program, one component of the larger Healthy Families Initiative (HFI), is helping students and their families take charge of their own wellness.

Through HFI, Knipe has established crucial community partnerships and has set students on a path to make better decisions about their physical activity level and their food choices. Ever the team player, Knipe explained that it's the program that deserves recognition. "I really give the program the credit," he said. "I'm successful as a teacher here because of the programming and support and relationships established by others to improve the lives of children I serve."

Volunteer Spotlight: Attorneys Teach the Art of Argument

Last spring after touring UT Elementary School, Austin attorney Libby Jacobson knew she wanted to get involved with the students. She enlisted the help of colleagues Mike Gagne and Nicole Pape to teach eight students the art of making a persuasive argument. The group formed the Little Longhorn Youth Advocacy Program, or Li'l Yappers.

During the semester the students learned how to introduce an argument, signpost and give a counter argument. Their goal was to present a case for why footballs should be allowed at recess. Librarian Jan Evans said the students effectively presented their case, which resulted in a new playground game for small group football play with alternative rules and conflict resolution strategies. "The lessons of teamwork, respecting one another, objectively considering all sides of an issue, and expressing themselves in a mature and effective matter, have set these students up for a successful and productive transition to middle school," said Evans.

Li'l Yappers at fifth-grade completion ceremony.

Jacobson and Pape enjoyed working with the students so much that they will return to UT Elementary School this fall to work with all the fifth-grade, and have recruited other lawyers to volunteer as well. "I know how beneficial my law training was for my confidence and communication skills, and look forward to helping these younger students to step outside of their own personal experiences and see things from other perspectives, and ultimately to have the confidence to stand up for themselves and others," said Jacobson.

A+ Stars of Texas: Courtney Houston and Pat Oles

Courtney Houston

Each year, the Star of Texas Award is given to individuals who greatly support the mission of UT Elementary School and whose gift of time and resources has significantly enhanced the programmatic efforts and goals of the school. This year, Mrs. Courtney Houston, executive director of the West Austin Youth Authority (WAYA), and Mr. Pat Oles, UT Elementary School development council chair, received the award during the annual fifth-grade graduation ceremony.

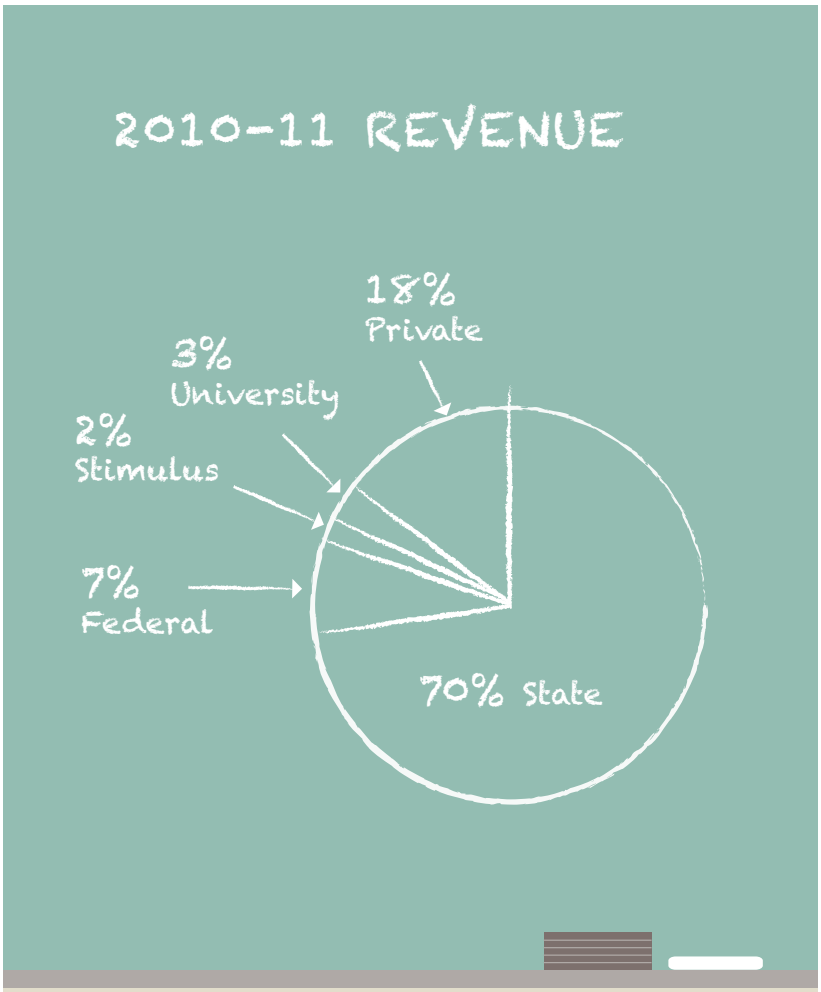
Both Houston and Oles' contributions have allowed UT Elementary School to gain wider support and exposure, and created new opportunities for current and future students to experience a first-class education.

Houston has supported UT Elementary School for a number of years through WAYA, by making its recreational facilities available for major school events, including class field trips, teacher appreciation days, and the school's annual fundraiser. As a former East Austin teacher, she understands the value of public education and has made significant personal contributions as well. She serves on the school's annual giving committee, hosts tours of the school, recruits other volunteers, and most recently, tirelessly worked out detailed logistics for the school's first fundraising event.

Pat Oles, who also serves as chair of the Chancellor's Council for The University of Texas System, and his wife Julie, have over six years of involvement with the school's development council. In leading the council, comprised of 15 enterprising community leaders, Oles brings considerable expertise in real estate development to UT Elementary School's capital campaign for a permanent school building. During his council involvement he helped raise significant funding for phase one of a permanent school building project and recruited other talented individuals to serve on the council to contribute their knowledge and skills. UT Elementary School is fortunate to have such a dedicated individual in its circle of friends.

Pat and Julie Oles

Both Houston and Oles' contributions have allowed UT Elementary School to gain wider support and exposure, and created new opportunities for current and future students to experience a first-class education.



2010–11 Expenses*

- 83% Salaries and Benefits
- 9% Maintenance and Operations
- 4.5% Instructional Supplies
- 3.5% School Programs

*full audited financial statements available online at www.tea.state.tx.us

2010–2011 UT Elementary Donors

Contributions received September 1, 2010 through August 31, 2011

Visualize Graduation Society

The Visualize Graduation Society is a multi-year giving society for those who have pledged to invest at least $1,000 per year of unrestricted funds for a period of five years or more. Our Visualize Graduation Society members play a critical role in our ability to fulfill our mission, and are invited to join our fifth-grade graduation ceremony each year.

Anonymous
Laura and Steve Beuerlein
Brooke Anne Broesche
Mack and Sally Brown
Dr. Diane Pedrotty Bryant
Buena Vista Foundation
Penny and Dan Burck
Prof. Norma Cantu
Dr. Ruy and Dionne Carrasco
Preston and Robiaun Charles
Melissa Chavez and Charles Soto
Graciela and Chancellor Francisco Cigarroa
Lisa and Sandy Gottesman
Vaughn Gross
Julia and Randy Howry
Suzon and Bill Kemp Family
Michael and Jeanne Klein
Christine Mattsson and John McHale
Jan and Dick McMillan
Karen Nelson
Howard and Amy W. Nirken
Pat and Julie Oles
Tess and Greg Peters
Randy Ramirez and Lisa Henken-Ramirez
Don and Gina Reese
Drs. Paul and Virginia Resta
Mallory and James Shaddix
Dr. Ed and Molly Sharpe
The Stahl Family Foundation
Dr. Gregory J. Vincent
Barbara Wallace
Sandra Sweeney Wilson

Friends of the Little Longhorns *one-time gifts*

Executive Director Level

Anonymous
Janet M. Bates
Barrett and Nikol Blackmon
Ann Cox Bomer
Buena Vista Foundation*
Gene and Ruthie Burrus
Committee for Children
Gareth and Janie Cook
Adam and Mary Frain Criaco Endowment
The Dell Foundation
Dell, Inc.
Cissie Ferguson
Sandy and Bill Fivecoat
Ryan and Leslie Gauna
Diana George
Seth Hasenour
Kim Heilbrun and Bill Powers
Treva Horowitz
KDK-Harman Foundation
Marsha Kelman
Michael and Jeanne Klein*
Carolyn Lupton
Lupton Jr. Family Foundation, T.C.
Ginni Mithoff
Pat and Julie Oles*
Ade Oni
Gay and Shannon Ratliff
Region XIII Education Service Center
Oscar and Nancy Robinson
Run-Tex Sportswear
St. David's Foundation*
University Co-operative Society
University Federal Credit Union
WeAreTeachers.com
West Austin Youth Association
Gary Whisenhunt

Exemplary Level

3 Point Partners
Erin and Boone Almanza
Betty Bird
Isaac Carrasco
Sofia Carrasco
East Texas Communities Foundation Inc. and Mr. Donald Chase, P.E.
Alida T. Gallardo
Jennifer Harris
Daniel K. Herman
Joan and David Hilgers
Lill Klein

Quincy J. Lee
Lynda Macleod
Randy and Jenna McEachern
Alison and Jeff Meador
Mueller Foundation
Milam Newby
One Skye Foundation Inc.
Lisa Petiniot
Becky Lee Powell
Sheri Schember Quick
State Farm Auto
Dr. Marlene H. Weitzel
Dorothy and Sam Winters
Buzzy Woodworth
Y.M.C.A.

Principal Level

Wick Alexander
Jack Cardwell
Jerry and Barbara Carlson
Elaine Cavazos
Jan Demetri and Jim Davis
Jim and Kakky Dyer
Jennifer Esterline and Horacio Gallegos
The Cari and Monte Ezell Family
John W. Hancock III
Patrice J. Hochstetler
Libby Jacobson and Mike Gagne
Jackee and Tony Kayser
Bob Knipe
Dorothy D. Lambdin, Ed.D.
Bill Lasher, Ph.D.
Norma Leben
Longhorn Alumni Band
Albert Lundstedt
LaVonne P. Mason
Norman L. Mason, D.D.S.
Joan McFarland
Carlotta and Bill McLean
Ranjana Natarajan
Lynda J. Robb
Roxan S. Staff
Kris Swift
Sharon R. Vaughn, Ph.D. and James Dammann
Dr. Marina Walne
Jessica and Greg Weaver
Anthony Webb
Wes and Lisa Youngblood
Angie Pete Yowell and Curt Yowell
Ashley and Marc Zimmermann

Longhorn Leaders Level

John and Sany Abraham
Lissa Adams
Theresa and Jaime Aguirre
Anonymous
Kathy and Gaylord Armstrong
Alan and Jennifer Barnette
Bennu Coffee LLC
Ryan Bohls
Beth Ann Bryan
Brian and Karen Burgess
Dr. and Mrs. Thomas P. Burns
Antoinette Cangelosi
Judy Cassorla
Barbie Coleman
Julie Cowan
Jessica and Paul D'Arcy
Ben de Leon
Andy de Waal
Roosevelt C. Easley
Charles Ekwurzel
Dr. Chiquita W. Eugene
Jan Evans
Tina and Frank Fernandez
Tracy and Drew Fielder
Dr. Steven J. Friesen
Frost National Bank
Christina Garcia
Lucila A. Garza
Rich and Elaine Garza
Gail Giebink
Dr. Mark F. Goldberg
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Jill Griffin
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Wilmeter Anerson Haynes
Al and Marian Heilbrun*
Ann-Marie Helling
Chris Hertzberg
Gloria Horner
Hot Mama's Expresso LLC
Aynsley and Gerardo Interiano
Mary Ellen Isaacs

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Emily Anne Knight
Suzanne Kossow
Dr. Benjamin Kramer and Claudia Santamaria*
Sandy Kress
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Lynn and Louis Renaud
Jennifer Ransom Rice
Marshall and Sandy Sack
Stephen Saunders
EmilyAnne Skinner
LeAnne C. Skinner and Austin Nutrition Consultants
Jan Slagter
Leonette Slay
Josie and Paul Soto
Bob and Shirley Steer
Lydia Steinman
H. Grant Thomas, Jr.
Frances and Robin Thompson
Susan Vincent
B.J. and Mary Warren
Elena Anne Wealty
Sibyl and Ken Wells
Louis and Nila Williams
Stephen and John Wright

Baby Bevo Level

Cassie Alvarado
Anonymous*
Willia Bailey
Suzy Balagia
Lori Bolding
Allan Bonilla
Andria E. Brannon
Edward Burshnick
Shayla Clay
Alice Clayton
Peter Conforti, Jr.
Brian Dauenhauer
Jose Del Valle
Kathy Estes
Valerie Esparza
Daniel L. Estrada, MBA
Risa Ferdman
Kelly Finkel
Kerri Fisher
Terri H. Fletcher
Donna Flippin
Marisol Foster
Lee Anne Gardner-Warrenfells
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Susanna Gonzales
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John R. Guzman
Jennifer Haas
Cathy L. Hagenbaumer
John Paul Hicks
Sara Hilgers
Susan Hutchison
Jeanie's Java
Beatrice Jones
Natacha Jones
Flora Kasmiro
Heather A. Kelly
Molly S. Kelly
Tema Khieu*
Elsa Kleiman
Bryan Kosarek
Mary Ledbetter
Phyllis Martin
Anita Mennucci
Vedia Miles
Linda Millstone
The Missionary Society of San Miguel and Mr. Thomas Bruns
Winifred Mundinger
Maria Nehring
Bruce Odems
Jessica O'Mary
Caroline Newman Phillips
Aja J. Prater
Ernest E. Ramirez
Laura L. Robertson
Suzette Ruedas
Lavinia Ruiz
Courtney Seals
Shelly Ann Smith
Texenza Coffee
Chad Thompson
UTES Parents Forum*
Nefertiti Williams
Danielle Zibilski

**Donors who have contributed to the capital campaign this year*

2010–2011 Community Partners

A Community for Education (ACE)
Action Based Learning
Active Life Movement
Sue Gardner, Austin Community College Child Development Department
Austin Independent School District
Born to Run Foundation
Breakthrough Austin
Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning
Committee for Children
Dell employees
EFNEP Travis County
Green Gate Farms
Ignite A Dream
KDK-Harman Foundation
Keep Austin Beautiful (KAB)
Livestrong Foundation
Lower Colorado River Authority
Polar Electro
Rogue Running Equipment
RunTex
SANDE Youth Project-Graden to Table
St. Andrew's Episcopal School
Sustainable Food Center
University of Texas at Austin
The University of Texas at Houston Health Science Center
WeAreTeachers.com
West Austin Youth Association

2010–2011 Management Board

Dr. Jennifer Adair – 2012
Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education

Dr. Diane Bryant – 2011
(2nd term) Department of Special Education, College of Education

Julien Carter – 2011
(2nd term) Associate Vice President for Human Resources, UT Austin

Penny Burck – 2012
Community Volunteer

Robiaun Charles – 2013
Assistant Vice President for Development and External Relations, DDCE

Jose Del Valle – 2011
AISD Director for ACCESS Grant

Jennifer Esterline – 2012
Executive Director, KDK-Harman Foundation

Dr. Chiquita Watt Eugene – 2014
(2nd term) Capital City African American Chamber of Commerce

Dr. Mark Gooden – 2012
Department of Educational Administration, College of Education

Cathy Hagenbaumer – 2013
Finance Manager, DDCE

Contact:
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facebook.com/utelementary
twitter.com/utelementary

Tonya King – 2011
(2nd term) Principal, Pillow Elementary School

Dr. Dolly Lambdin – 2013
Department of Kinesiology and Health Education, College of Education

Dr. Taylor Martin – 2013
Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education

Dr. Ed Sharpe – 2013
(3rd term) Department of Educational Administration, College of Education

Dr. Gregory J. Vincent – 2011
(2nd term) Vice President, DDCE

2010–2011 Development Council

MEMBERS

Capital Campaign Committee:

Betsy Abell
Buena Vista Foundation

Hughes Abell
Llano Partners, Ltd.

Laura Beuerlein
Heritage Title Company of Austin

Gigi Bryant
GMSA Management Services

Sam Bryant
Bryant Wealth Investment Group

Lisa Gottesman
Community Volunteer

Sandy Gottesman
Live Oak-Gottesman Group

Vaughn Gross
Community Volunteer

Betty Hewell
The University of Texas at Austin

Rusty Kelley
Blackridge, TX

Perry Lorenz

Howard Nirken
DuBois, Bryant, & Campbell, L.L.P.

Julie Oles
Development Council Co-Chair

Pat Oles
Development Council Co-Chair
Barshop & Oles Co.

Michael Klein
The Klein Foundation

Jeanne Klein
The Klein Foundation

Annual Giving Campaign Committee:

Penny Burck
Community Volunteer

Jennifer Esterline
KDK-Harman Foundation

Courtney Houston
West Austin Youth Association

Stephen Wright
Zooven Real Estate

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Melissa Chavez
Executive Director, UT Elementary School

Dr. Sherri Sanders
Associate Vice President, DDCE

Dr. Ed Sharpe
Management Board Vice-Chair, The University of Texas at Austin

Angie Pete Yowell
Development Officer for UT Elementary School, DDCE