

SPECIAL RECOGNITION: TWO SCHOOLS HONORED BY  
NCEA/JUST4KIDS

Congratulations to Woodridge Elementary and the DeSoto Freshman Campus for being named 2009 Higher Performing Schools by the *National Center for Educational Achievement (NCEA)* as part of the 2009 Just 4 the Kids Campaign.

Woodridge was recognized for both math and reading improvement while the Freshman Campus earned math recognition.

The Just for the Kids Higher Performing lists are a more select group of schools. The Texas Education Agency identifies 61 percent of Texas schools as Exemplary or Recognized. In comparison, the National Center for Education Achievement analysis deemed 19 percent of schools to be higher performing.

Texas's accountability ratings are based on the percentage of students meeting the state's passing standard on TAKS. By contrast, the National Center for Educational Achievement analysis for upper elementary, middle, and high school grades examined academic growth—how they performed last year—Did they have above-typical growth based on student and school demographics? For lower elementary grades, the analysis was based on students' actual scale scores on the test, not just on whether they passed. Thus, the analysis took into account the range of performance and improvement of students who were performing well above or below the passing level.

In addition, the second measure used to qualify schools—their percentage of students reaching NCEA's college and career readiness benchmark—also did not rely on the state's passing standard.

Third, the Just for Kids Higher Performing list is based on three years of data—for the 2007, 2008, and 2009 school years. State ratings are based on a single year of data.

Principals Robert Torres and Sheila Brown joined Superintendent Lloyd Treadwell at a regional event in January to recognize the selected schools. The events included a recognition ceremony, keynote speaker

State Representative Diane Patrick, as well as presentations and panels discussing the importance of College and Career Readiness for all Texas students.

Congratulations to these schools, their staff and students.