

Lamar High School
Houston Independent School District (HISD)
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Mirabeau B. Lamar High School is an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School located in Houston, Texas, serving grades 9 through 12. The school was built in 1936 and opened in 1937. Lamar became an IB school in 1982 and the Business Administration Magnet Program was established in 1989. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) first recognized Lamar High School in 2008 as the first HISD comprehensive high school to achieve “TEA Recognized Status” for the state’s accountability system. Lamar continued its “Recognized” status in 2010.

The International Baccalaureate Programme at Lamar High School promotes responsible global citizenship, provides intercultural awareness to all members of the school community, and focuses on academic excellence while stressing the importance of synthesizing knowledge gained in and out of the classroom. In the *State of the School* publication for 2009-2010, the following quotes provide insight into Lamar High School’s philosophy and culture:

“The IB experience is not just a way to learn, it is a way of life, and the way to a better world.”

“Every student, parent, and teacher at Lamar High School is a participant in the IB – it defines who we are, what we do, and who we want to be. From the moment a stakeholder steps foot onto this campus they are a member of the IB family. As we like to say, we are not just a school with an IB Programme, we are an IB World School.”

Lamar High School consistently has the greatest number of students who graduate with the IB Diploma in Texas. In 2006, 86 students were awarded the IB Diploma, and one-third of the school population consisted of candidates for the IB Diploma. Lamar has one of the largest IB Diploma programs in North America.

The school also has a business magnet program that offers a wide array of business management courses, as well as cooperation with the Houston business community to provide internships and university scholarships.

Lamar High School Students

The student enrollment at Lamar High School is approximately 3000 students with a diverse ethnic background. The following is a breakdown of the student ethnicity at Lamar High School:

Hispanic – 34%
African-American – 27%
White – 34%
Asian – 5%

Lamar High School also services students residing at seven different homeless shelters within the Lamar attendance zone.

Lamar High School Staff

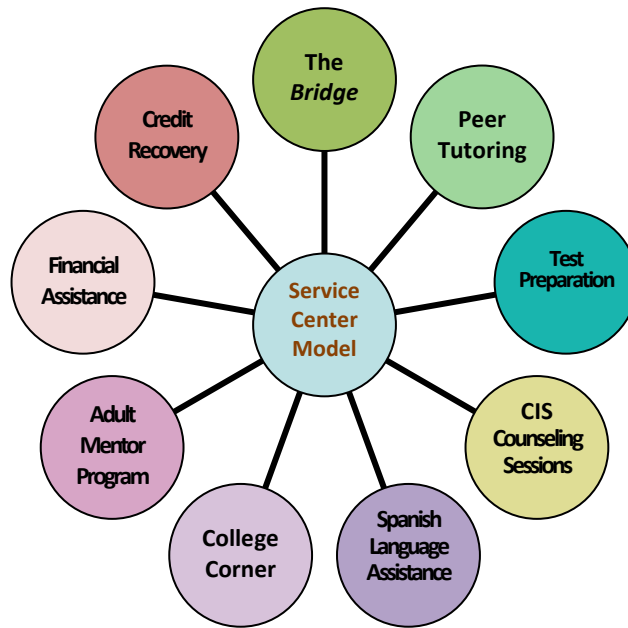
The faculty of Lamar High School has a varied educational background and a broad range of teaching experience. Of the total faculty, 29% have obtained a Masters degree, while 6% have obtained a Doctorate. 49% of the faculty have been teaching for 11 years or more and 18% have been teaching for eight to ten years.

The goal of Lamar High School is to develop internationally-minded people who, recognizing our common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

So how does Lamar High School do this? Through a well-developed and comprehensive system of student learning supports. What follows are some of the highlights of what is happening at Lamar High School.

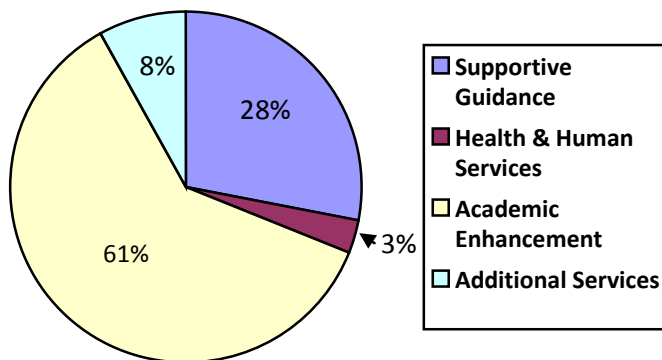
Addressing Barriers to Student Learning and Achievement

Lamar High School recognizes that many students face challenges, both internal and external, that may create barriers to the learning process. As a result, Lamar has developed a comprehensive set of strategies designed to help all students learn and achieve. These strategies include brain-based learning, *Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognition* combined with authentic assessment, differentiated instruction, and the *Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets for Healthy Communities-Healthy Youth*. Students needing intensive supports and interventions for social, emotional, and behavioral concerns are referred to Lamar's *Student Service Center*. The Service Center Model is illustrated below:



Part of Lamar High School’s vision is to provide a high-quality education in a safe, student-entered learning environment. Leadership, service, and positive character traits are nurtured and taught using strategies such as the *Search Institute’s 40 Developmental Assets*. Students also receive support from one of the school’s collaborative partners, *Communities in Schools of Houston (CIS)*. During the 2009-2010 school year, the CIS program included two full-time staff members and additional partners and community volunteers who provided services on Lamar’s campus. These services included 3, 493 clock hours of services to 335 at-risk students and their families, with 75 of these students receiving intensive case management services.

The following pie chart shows the amount of time spent by CIS on the various service components at Lamar High School:



CIS of Houston also works collaboratively with community partners and multiple volunteers to provide a comprehensive system of learning supports for Lamar High School's students. Below is a list of supports and services provided by CIS and its partners during the past two years:

CIS collaborated with the *Depression Bipolar Support Alliance* to provide students suffering from depression or bipolar symptoms with intensive group counseling.

The *Houston Area Women's Center* partnered with CIS to provide counseling for female students in crisis.

CIS assisted homeless students by providing supportive guidance and a variety of resources.

CIS partnered with the *Montrose Counseling Center* to provide a support group for those students identifying as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered.

A partnership with *Solvay Chemical* provided 25 adult mentors for 25 CIS students attending Lamar High School. Mentors helped these students establish and reach their individual goals.

The CIS staff on the Lamar campus recruited additional community mentors to provide at-risk students with the guidance of a responsible, positive adult.

CIS collaborated with the *Palmer Drug Abuse Program* to address substance abuse issues with Lamar students.

The *Women's Resource of Greater Houston's Project LEAD* met weekly to provide Lamar students with financial literacy education and leadership skills.

CIS coordinated peer tutoring for students falling behind in school.

The CIS *Lamar Emergency Fund* distributed \$550 to homeless Lamar students during the 2009/2010 school year.

CIS coordinated with *Young Lives* to provide a *Pregnant and Parenting* psychoeducational group to learn about healthy pregnancies and positive parenting roles.

CIS partnered with *ESCAPE Family Center* to provide a case manager for pregnant and parenting teens.

CIS supervised and trained a first year graduate student from the *University of Houston's Graduate College of Education*.

The *Lamar High School Alumni Association* is also an active partner with the High School. During the past three school years, the Alumni Association contributed over \$1.5 million toward the conversion of the old auditorium into a 21st century performance hall with new lighting, sound, stage, curtains, video, carpet, and seats. They also contributed fifteen \$1,000 HOPE Scholarships annually for Lamar graduates who attend college.

The Lamar Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) also partners with the school, providing volunteers who supply and staff the school store, which raises over \$45,000 annually for the Student Assistance Fund. This fund provides qualified students with transportation allowances, school supplies, testing fees, and needed expenses.

Continuum of Supports and Services

To identify anticipated outcomes for all students and to develop lesson designs that address the state's standards for academic achievement, Lamar High School uses a horizontally aligned planning process. This process, combined with evidence-based practices, ensures that students are taught what they need to know. Student progress is monitored through criterion-referenced assessment that is not subject to teacher judgment. Struggling students are identified through a systematic, multi-tiered intervention process that focuses not only on academics, but also on the student's social, emotional, and behavioral health. Through this multi-tiered process, students who might need additional interventions or supports are identified by a **Teacher Interdisciplinary Cluster**. These students can then receive targeted and intensive supports through the *Student Service Center*.

To transition incoming ninth grade students and prepare them for life at Lamar High School, a week-long freshman orientation is hosted by the Lamar staff. During this orientation, students are introduced to the student organizations on campus and are encouraged to become involved in campus activities.

Lamar High School's continuum of supports and services isn't just focused on academic development. Many of the supports and services provided by Lamar High School are designed to improve the social and emotional wellness of its students. By providing a safe and caring school environment, students learn to accept diversity, approach problems and challenges logically, and make good decisions. In collaboration with parents and community partners, Lamar High School is able provide its students with a broad range of supports and services that address the needs of the whole child, not just the requirements of the academic curriculum.