



*Mission Statement:* Building a learning community that meets the individual needs and passions of the students we serve.

*Why do we exist?*

Relationships & Mentoring  
Progress & Growth  
Responsibility & Leadership  
Impact & Inspire

*Vision:* Each child possesses individual needs and passions. Therefore, learning is a personal journey for each student. Atascocita Middle School is a **COMMUNITY** of educators and scholars focused on the learning and social development of each individual. AMS will design structures and practices that support the diverse, **INDIVIDUAL LEARNING NEEDS AND PASSIONS** of students by **VARYING TIME, GROUPING, SPACE, EDUCATOR SUPPORT, AND PRODUCTS** (demonstration of learning). The primary role of educators is to create a community of scholars that is safe, welcoming, and supportive. A key secondary role of educators is to coach students through regular **PERSONALIZED FEEDBACK AROUND THEIR LEARNING**, but also around short- and long-term goals around their academic and social needs. Instruction will be aligned with the best practices and research within each content area. Further, instruction concentrates learning time on the skill or concept being learned (“time on-task learning”). Measures of learning will give all stakeholders -- students, parents, and educators -- useful, timely, and actionable information to address their academic needs. Therefore, AMS will put a strong emphasis on standards-based evidence of learning to more closely target a child’s strengths and weaknesses. All stakeholders will have **UNHINDERED ACCESS TO LEARNING**, meaning they have access to learning opportunities -- primarily to “filling gaps” and weaknesses -- without going through the teacher. This requires **STRATEGIC USE OF TECHNOLOGY**. As necessary, AMS will support students who are ready to push forward at a faster pace of learning than their peers. Educators will **EXPLICITLY TEACH, COACH, AND SUPPORT LEARNER HABITS** that undergird rigorous instruction. As a member of the greater Atascocita/Humble/Kingwood area, **AMS WILL APPLY ITS LEARNING TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO THE NEEDS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, BUT ALSO THE STATE, NATIONAL, AND GLOBAL COMMUNITY.**

*Values/Collective Commitments:*

**I CREATE THE CULTURE OF MY CLASSROOM.** I believe what I say and do has a lifelong influence on my students. Positive adult-student relationships precede high student achievement. My words and actions foster the culture I hear and see in “my classroom” (through student behaviors). I commit to being a supportive, courteous, respectful, and encouraging adult on this campus. My commitment and consistency towards the campus culture drives my behavior to lead students to meet our expectations.

**I AM THE SINGLE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON A CHILD’S LEARNING.** I believe that every child has a desire to learn and to succeed, or did at one time. I will strive to cultivate a growth mindset in every child. I believe that children prefer to think, be creative, and innovate, thus I scaffold units requiring students to use fundamental knowledge and skills to do higher-level tasks. I commit to designing units and systems that lead students to demonstrate understanding (transfer) at the application or higher level.

**I AM THE LEAD LEARNER.** I continually improve my content and pedagogical knowledge to better educate and lead my students. I engage in professional development that aligns with the district and campus vision. I seek out and apply best practices in my area of expertise. I am a risk-taker. I experiment with new or innovative ideas in “my classroom.” As a campus, we are relentless in questioning the status quo, seeking new methods, testing those methods, and then reflecting on the results. I commit to growing as an educator through professional development and experimentation.

**I AM A CURRICULUM EXPERT IN MY CONTENT AREA.** I know my grade-level standards and how they vertically align with other grade levels. The target is for students to demonstrate the articulated rigor in the TEKS to mastery. I commit to writing assessments that align with the level of rigor (or higher) in the TEKS and instructional materials. I commit to writing assessments prior to the start of the unit.

**I CREATE CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS.** I clarify learning targets for each unit. My learning targets are clear for students, measurable, and standards-based. I commit to providing clear grading criteria of how the assessments are measured and examples of strong and weak work prior to the assessment. As students progress toward the summative assessment I provide feedback and systems for tracking progress to close the gap.

**I FORM PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS IN THEIR CHILD'S EDUCATION.** I routinely communicate with parents about their child's academic progress and behavior if it interferes with instruction. I remain professional when a parent is less than respectful. I understand parent frustrations can be symptomatic of wanting their child to do well.

**I AM RESULTS-ORIENTED.** I use data to inform my future instructional decisions. My initial interpretation of data is about instructional practices, not students. When data is positive I celebrate and reflect upon the instructional practices that contributed to its success. When data indicates a weakness, I reflect on and modify instructional practices. I align & design instruction and assessment to measure understanding of standards. I don't accept results that are status quo. Campus interventions focus on standards, not grades. I commit to organizing instruction, assessment, and interventions around standards. In order to accomplish this, I work collaboratively with my department & grade level team to develop common formative assessments and performance based assessments.

**I AM A PROFESSIONAL.** I am passionate and self-motivated. My words and actions with colleagues, parents, and students demonstrate honor and respect. I act with integrity, meaning I do not need supervision to fulfill the district and campus expectations. My dress, communication, and punctuality meet or exceed district standards. I commit to doing what is necessary to improve in my craft.

#### *Personalized Pathway Guiding Principles:*

1. We believe meaningful, relevant learning is based on individual student need and choice. Individual coaching conferences are conducted regularly to determine student progress/mastery
2. We believe in building a community of learners among all scholars and educators.
3. We believe students should experience a variety of learning experiences and tasks.
4. We believe the learning environment -- instructional time, space, and grouping -- should allow for flexibility to meet the individual needs of learners.
5. We believe interdisciplinary teaming and units are necessary to provide project-based learning resulting in sustained inquiry. Authentic products should be designed utilizing best practices.
6. We believe that learner habits (study skills, time management, organization, etc.), as seen through AVID principles, should be explicitly taught and purposefully integrated into content & curriculum.
7. We believe grades are a measure of a student's understanding & mastery of each grade level standard. We believe in measuring and communicating the progress & growth towards mastery for each child. Grades should be timely, useful, and actionable for all stakeholders.

*Beliefs about Measurement and Communication of Learning:*

**BELIEF STATEMENT #1:** Academic performance reflects achievement of intended learning outcomes (TEKS) based on individual student needs. Supports are in place through special programs (i.e. accommodations, modification, language) for students to access grade level curriculum.

**BELIEF STATEMENT #2:** Grading practices should aim to give all stakeholders useful, timely, and actionable information.

- Teachers use grades to assess (evaluate) knowledge level of students and classes.
- Students use grades to answer the question “what do I know?” and “what do I need to work on?”.
- Parents use grades to keep a child accountable for knowledge of the material AND learner habits.
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**BELIEF STATEMENT #3:** Grades should reflect a student’s individual achievement. Learner habits are measured separately.

**BELIEF STATEMENT #4:** Grading practices and classroom processes will be set up to support student motivation to learn. Students are expected to achieve mastery of the intended learning outcomes (TEKS). The campus system will support opportunities for students to continually demonstrate academic growth to achieve mastery.

**BELIEF STATEMENT #5:** Formative assessments should be used to show progress and growth. Summative grades should be based on mastery of the learning outcome.