



VANGUARD ACADEMY

Pharr, Texas - Vanguard Academy leads the Region and the State in academics, recognized as 1 out of 7 high performing South Texas school districts according to Educational Results Partnership's (ERP) Honor Roll. Educational Results Partnership's Honor Roll also shows Vanguard Academy represents the Rio Grande Valley as 1 out of 89 high performing school districts out of 1,200 Texas school districts.

The annual Honor Roll is part of the national Campaign for Business and Education Excellence. The Campaign engages business leaders in recognizing successful schools and educational systems that are preparing students with the fundamental skills needed to be successful in the workforce and in life.

This is the 9th year that ERP has presented the Honor Roll--the only school recognition program presented in partnership with state and local business leaders, using solely objective student achievement data as the criteria for recognition.



The goal of the Honor Roll is to find and highlight successful schools and districts and encourage collaboration among educators on best practices for raising student achievement.

Educational Results Partnership Honor Roll places Vanguard Academy in the top 7% of high performing Texas school districts. This rating means Vanguard Academy is in the 93rd percentile of Texas high performing districts, which aligns with Texas Education Agency A-F Accountability 2023-2024 score of 93% up from 92% in 2022-2023.

Even more, 100% of students taking the STAAR ALT exam passed with Meets or Masters, reflecting quality education in our special education program. Vanguard Academy will once again be rated an A district for the 5th year. This accomplishment is possible because we approach goals collectively and collaboratively.

At the core of Dr. Narciso Garcia's leadership was establishing a strong foundation for Vanguard Academy to grow from five to 10 campuses with quality education

# Vanguard Academy Recognized as a High Performing District

and a safe learning environment. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Vanguard Academy was already making great strides in strengthening the district's capacity to serve its students with excellence in education, proving beneficial as the country's educational infrastructure faced unprecedented challenges.

Vanguard Academy was able to provide technology accessibility to students with Chromebooks, laptops, iPads and Hotspots covered by the Emergency Connectivity Fund from the Federal Communication Commission and laptops through the One-to-One Initiative as part of the Technology Lending Grant that offered 100% of students a device in advance to the COVID pandemic, which made Vanguard Academy the only district in Region One prepared with enough devices for every student in its schools.

The district had also revamped its Bilingual Program with resources and manipulatives and invested resources into creating libraries and classrooms with many Spanish books and textbooks to supplement our Dual Language Program, timely as teachers

were prepared to implement response to intervention strategies with these resources.

Vanguard Academy's forward thinking has maintained its success one step ahead, boosting enrollment from 2,700 to 7,450 students. With a budget reserve increase from \$6 million to \$14 million to sustain Vanguard Academy mission and vision in good times and hard times.

Vanguard Academy recognizes all who make this success possible and extends its deepest gratitude to teachers, students, parents, leaders, and community partners for their unwavering support and contributions. Together, they have played a pivotal role in shaping the next generation, empowering youth with the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to succeed in the ever-evolving global workforce.

As the 2023-2024 academic year ends, Vanguard Academy celebrates the achievements of its students and looks forward to continuing its dedication to providing outstanding educational opportunities that prepare students for lifelong success.

## Fostering Excellence in Education from Pre-Kinder to Career

The State recognizes Vanguard Academy as number one in Kinder Readiness results in the Rio Grande Valley. Our Early Childhood and Kinder teachers have created such a great learning culture for our children that their hard work paid off.

Because our teachers chose to do the right thing during the pandemic, we are where we are at today, says Superintendent Dr. Garcia. His vision to hire teacher aides in lower elementary grades ensured that our students close learning gaps caused by online instruction. Dr. Garcia had the foresight to use ESSER funds to support incoming Kinder, First, and Second grader students.

While the 2023-2024 data has not yet been desegregated, for the 2022-2023 school year, nearly 70% of Vanguard Academy students were on grade level and met Kinder Readiness, compared to the state average of 49% and to the regional average of 42%. Vanguard Academy is the frontrunner across the Rio Grande Valley for Kinder Readiness performance and participation.

M-CLS is a rigorous instrument that has propelled our students to get on grade level with interventions provided. It is the firm foundation set at the early grades that ensures our students are ready for college, career and military readiness. Kinder Readiness is a huge predictor of student success at 3rd Grade, 8th Grade, 9th and 10th grade and ultimately in college.

This year, Vanguard Academy's commitment to fostering work-based learning opportunities and industry-based certifications yielded remarkable successes with 40% of its 2024 senior graduates receiving an associate degree from South Texas College and 100% of its senior graduates receiving an IBC certification or college certification.

Vanguard Academy is among the best schools in the areas of TSI completion and College, Career, & Military Readiness. Earlier this year, Texas Education Agency (TEA) data highlighted Vanguard Academy leading the Rio Grande Valley in important areas of education, which are academics, early childhood and College & Career readiness for all

campuses. The district as a whole and all Vanguard Academy campuses received an A rating for their overall letter and an A+ Postsecondary Readiness Distinction Designation, the only one available at the district level.

Vanguard Academy Secondary campuses—Beethoven, Mozart, Rembrandt—are among the best schools in the areas of TSI completion and College, Career, & Military Readiness. These campuses are also number one in the region for Associates Degree graduates and Industry Based Certification

completion. Vanguard Academy saves families millions of dollars in college tuition and in certification coursework. Our students not only complete college early, but also enter the workforce with stackable credentials!

In partnership with South Texas College (STC), Vanguard Academy provides invaluable opportunities for students pursuing their certificates, associate degrees, gaining college credit hours, job skills training, and practical hands-on experience in their trade.

**VANGUARD ACADEMY**  
Cradle to Career

- Best in Region Kindergarten Readiness
- A-Rated Elementary Schools
- A-Rated Middle Schools
- A-Rated High Schools
- 100% Complete Adult Secondary Readiness
- Career Readiness & IBCal

**RATED BEST! IN THE REGION & THE STATE!**

**SAFE Schools**

**FOSTERING EXCELLENCE FROM KINDER TO CAREER!**

## Teacher Incentive Allotment Affords Vanguard Academy Quality Education



Twenty-six Vanguard Academy teachers were recognized as recipients of the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). "We are extremely proud of all of our teachers," said Superintendent Dr. Garcia, adding "this is a great testament to the quality of teachers we have at Vanguard Academy." Our teachers show a passion for crafting the art of education, especially notable since we have new teachers getting recognized each year with some of our teachers going from recognized to exemplary or exemplary to master.

HB 3 established the TIA to recognize effective teachers on three levels of designation: Recognized, Exemplary, and Master. These teacher designations generate additional teacher-focused allotment funding for districts to reward their top teacher performers. Vanguard Academy has 14 teachers designated as Recognized, 9 teachers designated as Exemplary, and 3 designated as Master. Allotments for each level of designation area range from: Recognized: \$3,000-\$9,000; Exemplary: \$6,000-\$18,000; Master: \$12,000-\$32,000. A total of 48 teachers from Vanguard Academy are now designated!

## Texas Education Agency Awards \$6 million Safety and Facilities Enhancement Grant to Vanguard Academy

Vanguard Academy's safety protocols yield results, meeting 100% compliance with Zero findings during this year's Intruder Audit conducted by Texas Education Agency's School Safety Center.

- Improvements to our gates and fences
- Improvements to our windows and doors
- Improvements to the first responder two-way radio system
- Improvements to our access control systems

With the award of the \$6 million SAFE Grant, Vanguard Academy will be adding to its existing security measures in different areas as mandated by the State of Texas to include:

Vanguard Academy remains steadfast to fostering a safe learning environment that supports students' academic performance while reassuring parents choosing to entrust their children to our district every day.

## Vanguard Academy's New Welding Lab Supports CCMR Inroads



This spring was particularly exciting for Vanguard Academy, highlighted by the official Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for a state-of-the-art welding lab at its Rembrandt Secondary campus.

Our standout achievement revolves around the recruitment of an exceptionally skilled and committed welding instructor. Alongside this milestone, we're thrilled to have been able to purchase 18 Power Mig 360 multi-process welders, the Torchmate plasma cutting table, and our state-of-the-art welding booths in our newly established facility.

This advanced equipment was made possible through the generous support of the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) Grant (\$365,000). This grant was also possible because of the support of the Texas Public Charter School Association (TPCSA) along with State Representatives like Terry Canales and Sergio Munoz, State Senators Angela Paxton and Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa and retired State Senator Eddie Lucio Jr.

These CHAMPIONS of Education allowed for Charter Schools to qualify for JET Grants after the 2021 Legislative Session. For many years, charter schools did not qualify for JET Grants and with the support TPCSA, Representatives Canales and Munoz and Senators Paxton and Lucio, Vanguard Academy has received over \$2 million of JET Grants the last three years. Vanguard Academy seeks to equip its students with the necessary equipment needed to take on more rigorous welding coursework; provide Work-Based Learning (WBL) experiences with cutting-edge technology; and sharpen hands-on skills required for internships/externships.

During the ceremony, our students proudly demonstrated the capabilities of our beautiful, brand-new, industry-grade welding equipment. Our students' presentations showcased not only the cutting-edge technology we now have at our disposal

but also their skills and enthusiasm for the field, marking a significant milestone in our program's development.

The Vanguard Academy Career & Technical Education department plans to increase student interest in Welding Technology and continue to accommodate the 12% annual growth in student enrollment to achieve our target student deliverable's goal. This strategic approach will help ensure that we meet our enrollment objectives and continue to provide high-quality education and training opportunities to a broader group of students.

In collaboration with the City of Pharr Chamber of Commerce and local businesses, the Welding Lab will provide invaluable opportunities for students to gain practical experience in welding related industries. Under the mentorship of Mr. Arredondo, students will hone their skills and further enriched their knowledge for their welding certification.

The benefits of work-based learning in high school, particularly in a Title I school like the Vanguard Academy Charter School District, cannot be overstated. By providing students with hands-on experiences, internships, and industry collaborations, the CTE Program prepares them for the workforce, fostering a sense of confidence and self-assurance as they navigate their career journeys.

Vanguard Academy students involved in the CTE Program achieve significant industry-based certifications, equipping them with a competitive edge in the job market. The program enables students to explore their career interests, gain practical skills, and make informed decisions about their future pathways.

