

Galena Park Independent School District
Cunningham Middle School
2025-2026 Comprehensive Needs Assessment



Board Approval Date: August 11, 2025

Mission Statement

“To provide students with a safe, student-centered instructional environment, characterized by rigorous, college/career-focused experiences that support life-long learning, critical thinking, and empowered leadership.”

Vision

W. C. Cunningham will be an academic center that strives to develop students with the skills, knowledge, and core values to lead and influence their communities.

Value Statement

We value the diverse strengths, cultures, and voices of every learner and are committed to fostering an inclusive, supportive environment for all. With unwavering dedication to excellence, we hold high expectations for academic achievement, personal growth, and collective success.

History of Campus and Important Changes

Located in the heart of the North Channel area in Greater East Harris County, along the magnificent Houston Ship Channel, and just 15 minutes away from downtown Houston, Texas, is W.C. Cunningham Middle School. In 1979, G.P.I.S.D. formulated plans for a new middle school, and construction began. W. C. Cunningham Middle School opened on the 29th of August 1982.

The school was named after a former G.P.I.S.D. superintendent, Mr. W. C. Cunningham, with pride. Mr. Cunningham was known not only in the field of education but also as an oilman. His relationship with the oil fields of West Texas and Oklahoma earned him the nickname of Wildcatter. When the school was looking for an appropriate mascot, there was only one animal of choice—the Wildcat. Thus, we became the Cunningham-winning Wildcats.

In 1992, a new gym and 28 classrooms were added. In 2012, a major renovation project was completed.

Cunningham enjoys a strong tradition of academic excellence. In 1998, CMS was the first secondary school in Galena Park ISD to earn the “Exemplary” rating from TEA.” The school repeated this honor in 2001 and 2009. Additionally, it achieved a “Recognized” rating in 1999, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2009, and 2011. The campus met Adequate Yearly Progress in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011. From 2015 to 2019, the campus achieved a "Met Standard" rating on the TEA Accountability Index. Our student teams and organizations frequently achieve top honors in competition and are known for their quality programs.

The Cunningham Title I program provides for parent involvement activities, extended day tutorials in core subject areas, a supplemental Saturday School Program, Saturday School Tutorials, supplemental retired-teacher social studies support, and a supplemental social studies teacher. Title I provides 3 Secondary Instructional Specialists for our campus: Math, ELAR, and Science.

Our State Compensatory Program (SCE) consists of STAAR preparation Saturdays, weekly tutorials, and Saturday School sessions for content areas, a Technology Instructional Specialist, and an intervention Math/ELAR teacher. ESL teachers and classroom support are provided. Through CTE, CMS offers our students classes in Career Portals – Humanities, Data Entry, and Digital Design.

Over the past several years, the school has worked hard to improve in every content area by developing relationships with all stakeholders and providing more rigorous instruction that is reflected in our student activities and testing results.

We believe in building relationships with students, staff, and parents. We also believe that our continued success can be attributed to our increasing parental involvement.

To address the needs of special education students, our campus incorporates a collaborative teaching model (co-teaching), which allows a certified Special Education teacher to work collaboratively and side-by-side with a general education teacher. Co-teachers work exclusively with one specific content area. This teaching model has helped students close academic gaps and make adequate academic gains.

Intervention classes, known as Reading Plus, Math Plus, and Writing Plus, were added to each grade level for students who failed one or both portions of the math or reading state assessments the previous year. The purpose of these classes is to help students receive accelerated instruction in the areas of need, resulting in academic success on the 8th-grade Student Success Initiative requirements and 7th-grade STAAR Exams.

We provide Saturday Credit Recovery School throughout the school year as remediation for students who failed or were at risk of failing a core subject during the previous nine weeks. Saturday Credit Recovery was created to help At-Risk students receive additional instruction throughout the year and obtain a passing grade in the core subject area(s) failed. We provided specialized pull-outs for each content area as well and collaborated with district specialists to help create engaging lessons. This resulted in innovative small-group instruction.

Implemented in the 2018 - 2019 school year, all 8th-grade students are required to take a college and career readiness course (CCR).

Implemented in the 2019-2020 school year, all 7th-grade students are required to take a class supplemental to ELAR called ThinkTank.

Where We Are Now:

Current Principal - Ashleigh Barrett

WC Cunningham Middle School (CMS) is one of twenty-six Galena Park Independent School District campuses. CMS opened its doors in 1982 and serves predominantly African American and Hispanic, low socioeconomic families. CMS currently serves 992 students in grades 7 and 8. Our projected scheduling plan for the 2024-2025 academic year will be built around a traditional schedule (Eight 45-minute classes daily, except for 7th-grade math, which will be 90 minutes daily). Students in each grade level will be divided into three “core-area” teams. Each team includes core teachers who work together to ensure the success of the students on their teams.

We look forward to a year focused on leading our students to success as we prepare them to become lifelong learners and influential leaders.

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Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Revised/Approved: June 16, 2025

Demographics

Demographics Summary

Cunningham Middle School opened on the 29th of August 1982 to serve students in grades six through eight; since 2000, the campus has served seventh and eighth-grade students in the Galena Park Independent School district. Our personnel is comprised of certified professionals who serve a diverse student population through a multitude of educational programs. Cunningham Middle School's total student enrollment is 986. Our campus enrollment by race/ ethnicity and groups are as follows:

Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

- African American 32.8%
- Asian 0.2%
- Hispanic 61.4%
- American Indian 0.2%
- Pacific Islander 0.0%
- Two or more races 1.6%
- White 3.8%

Student Enrollment by Group

- Economically Disadvantaged 86.7%
- Emergent Bilingual/ English Learner 26.9%
- Students Receiving Special Education Services 10.3%

Cunningham Middle School staff and Teachers are as follows:

- Number of Full-Time Staff 82.6
- Number of Full-Time Teachers 66

The student mobility rate at Cunningham Middle School is 12.4%. The overall attendance rate is 93.1%

Demographics Strengths

Cunningham Middle School enjoys the following demographic strengths:

- Diverse and culturally competent staff
- Special programs (GT, CTE, SPED, Fine Arts, Athletics, Bilingual/ESL) are in alignment with the philosophy and beliefs of our teachers and administrators
- Active PTA

Problem Statements Identifying Demographics Needs

Problem Statement 1: Social-emotional learning competencies are lacking in students which causes disciplinary and cultural issues.

Root Cause: Students are not buying into the current social-emotional learning practices.

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Student Learning

Student Learning Summary

STAAR Spring 2025

Grade 7 Reading			
Campus	% Approaches	% Meets	% Masters
CMS	68%	42%	16%
Grade 7 Math			
	% Approaches	% Meets	% Masters
CMS	48%	24%	4%
Grade 8 Reading			
	% Approaches	% Meets	% Masters
CMS	82%	52%	26%
Grade 8 Math (with 7th-grade Advanced)			
	% Approaches	% Meets	% Masters
CMS	75%	50%	17%
Grade 8 Science			
	% Approaches	% Meets	% Masters
CMS	79%	49%	14%
Grade 8 Social Studies			
	% Approaches	% Meets	% Masters
CMS	48%	17%	5%
Algebra			
CMS	% Approaches	% Meets	% Masters
	100	100	97

Student Learning Strengths

Teachers use expert instructional delivery, administering ongoing assessments, and providing needed interventions.

Teachers plan interventions for students based on their needs. Interventions are flexible and change based on student needs.

Teachers are employing the DDI process and the use of data to improve lesson planning and instructional delivery.

Problem Statements Identifying Student Learning Needs

Problem Statement 1: There needs to be improved consistency among instructional practices specifically with continuing implementation of Kagan and fundamental five practices, employing cross-curricular strategies to derive at correct responses, and the use of individualized content exemplar will increase the areas of meets and masters scores.

Root Cause: While there is consistency in instructional practices across content areas, there are concerns about the validity and effectiveness of how these practices are being implemented. Teachers are using similar strategies, but not always with the intentionality, fidelity, or impact needed to ensure high-quality learning outcomes for all students.

School Processes & Programs

School Processes & Programs Summary

- Special Education
- ESL
- Pre-AP
- College & Career Readiness
- LOTC
- Extra-Curricular Activities
- Communities In Schools

School Processes & Programs Strengths

Principal advisory with students, getting students' feedback, diverse group of students.

Student organizations as a whole do well with keeping our students grounded and building strong character

F.L.I.T.E. TEAM (Fearless Leaders Impacting Today Education) builds leadership capacity

7th Grade advanced math students are currently taking the Pre-ACT exam before High school

DDI Process has helped to see the weakest TEKS, which has allowed us to work with students and address misconceptions

Problem Statements Identifying School Processes & Programs Needs

Problem Statement 1: Students are not prepared for college and trade or other career opportunities.

Root Cause: 7th & 8th grade college and career curriculum writing does not incorporate opportunities for students to learn more about preparing for college and financial aid.

Problem Statement 2: Students are not showing written evidence of learning

Root Cause: 7th & 8th grade students are not using interactive notebooks or some form of journaling on paper across all content areas

Perceptions

Perceptions Summary

Cunningham Middle School is a diverse campus with a family environment that has over 50% veteran teachers who strive daily to meet the needs of its students in a variety of ways, including extracurricular activities, targeted subject-area tutorials, community outreach, and college and career-focused instruction. CMS is perceived to have strong academics and new teachers feel supported by the New Teacher Mentor Program. Teacher and student attendance incentive programs at CMS are effective. We have a high focus on college and career readiness, and we take pride in utilizing various outreach and inclusion programs to meet students' social, physical, and academic needs.

Perceptions Strengths

- CMS staff build good relationships with students, which causes good student interaction
- CMS hosts events that build relationships between students and staff, which allows students to see us outside of the classroom
- CMS provides food to the community with constant Paw Pantry distributions. (Partnered with Houston Food Bank)
- CMS provides a safe and positive learning environment for all students
- CMS is strongly committed to effective parental communication
- Teachers have the opportunity to be involved in campus-level decision-making
- CMS reaches out to ALL students of every demographic group
- CMS uses various modes of communication with parents

Problem Statements Identifying Perceptions Needs

Problem Statement 1: CMS parents/guardians need continuous training and support in our various technology platforms.

Root Cause: Parents lack of confidence in technology.