



**SAVVAS**

Students in special education make significant gains to reach grade-level objectives for math and language arts after using a digital educational program.

Killeen Independent  
School District  
**CASE STUDY**

SuccessMaker for Students  
in Special Education

## District Profile

City/State:  
Killeen, Texas

District Enrollment:  
41,402 students

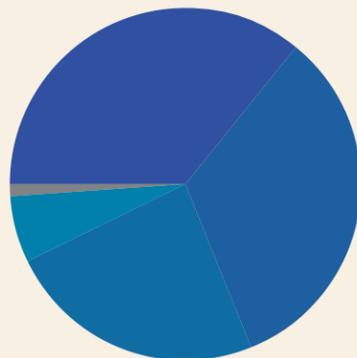
Special Education:  
4,325 students

Number of sites:  
47

Free/Reduced Price Lunch:  
59.3%

### Special Education Ethnicity:

- 36% African American
- 33% Caucasian
- 24% Hispanic
- 6% Multi-racial/Other
- 1% Asian



## » Killeen Independent School District Overview

Killeen Independent School District developed a highly successful special education program that has become a model other schools emulate. Approximately 11% of the district's students have been identified as students with disabilities. Teachers use an array of resources to meet the different needs of these students including supplemental digital educational technology. Using computers, students in special education receive personalized guided practice building math and reading skills at their own pace, helping many to reach grade-level objectives.

## » Challenge

Killeen Independent School District (Killeen ISD) administrators have a unique situation brought about by being adjacent to one of the largest military installations in the world. Controlled by the U.S. Army, Fort Hood currently has more than 54,000 stationed soldiers and civilian employees. Due to the frequency of military post changes, the mobility rate within Killeen ISD is roughly 30%. Disruptions in education can be difficult for any student and they are especially challenging to those who have been identified as needing special education. Approximately 11% of the total student population has been identified as needing specially designed instruction due to learning disabilities, developmental challenges, physical or emotional disorders and communication issues. These students are provided special education services to receive the extra support needed to help build reading and math skills.

Killeen ISD teachers and administrators have worked for many years to build an effective special education program. Based on student needs, specially trained teachers have customized the programs at each elementary, middle, and high school, incorporating curricula that utilize computer technology to accommodate the individual needs of the learners, and help them reach grade-level objectives.

## » Solution

During the 2010-2011 school year, Killeen ISD administrators added a new tool into their special education program. Savvas' digital, supplemental, guided math and language arts practice program, SuccessMaker® was implemented at one elementary school, all eleven middle schools and all four high schools. The program, which is designed to build math and reading language arts skills of K-8 students, personalizes learning as it guides each student to master grade-level objectives and skills.

Seeing positive results, Killeen continued to implement SuccessMaker into nine more elementary schools by the end of the 2013-2014 school year. The remaining 22 elementary schools will implement SuccessMaker for the 2014-2015 school year. By partnering with Savvas during the implementation, Killeen ISD was able to incorporate SuccessMaker into its existing special education programs with fidelity. Teachers learned how to use the many features, build customized lessons, and utilize progress reports to inform instruction.

Students in special education have an individual education plan based upon their unique strengths and weakness. They benefit from whole class instruction, small group activities and tailored curricula. They also receive personalized learning through SuccessMaker three to five times per week for 15-20 minutes per session. Each student works at their own pace mastering concepts and practicing what they learned in class.

## » Results

Teachers and staff are dedicated to helping their special needs students succeed and it shows in the results across the school district. Even during the first year of the implementation in 2010, students reached impressive gains. At Clear Creek Elementary, all seven 3rd grade students in special education receiving support in language arts passed the reading portion of the TAKS state test and two of them earned the highest rating possible. Thirteen out of twenty 8th grade students in special education who needed help with math at Live Oak Ridge Middle School passed the math portion of TAKS, seven of whom had never passed a math TAKS test before. At Harker Heights High School, after only five months, students in special education were showing 1.13 years of growth in reading and 1.43 years in math.

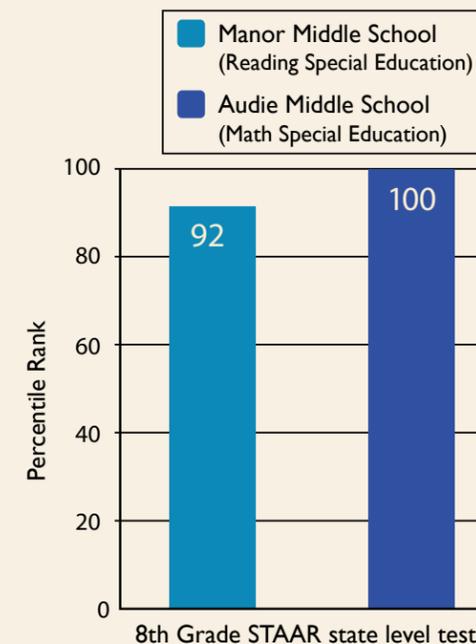
*"SuccessMaker really worked me hard. So, that helped me in class. It made me feel better about myself. Now math makes me happy."*

— Jorell, 6th Grade Student

*"SuccessMaker helps students see learning objectives in a different way. As a result, I can see a new way that works for them and add that into my lessons for whole group instruction."*

— Corwin Jenkins,  
Resource Math Teacher

FIGURE 1: Manor Middle School Reading and Audie Middle School Math 8th grade STAAR state level test scores.



## » Results (continued)

Throughout the years, students in special education have continued to make tremendous gains, and the district has become a model other schools and districts emulate. Some of the achievements during the 2013-14 school year include:

1. Palo Alto Middle School: One month prior to the end of the school year, sixteen 6th and 7th grade students in special education earned more than one year's growth in math and two of the sixteen made two years' growth. By the end of the school year, these same 7th grade students, on average, made 1.5 years growth in math.
2. Manor Middle School: By the end of the year 92% of 8th grade students in special education working on reading skills passed the STAAR Reading test on their first attempt. "SuccessMaker helped me see which skills students were not mastering and reteach those during instruction. I have seen all my students grow, which has also carried to other core classes. One student came to me in the 6th grade and was basically a beginning reader. He is now leaving for high school and has made almost four years of growth and has developed the skills he needs to function in high school," said Ruth Roberts, ELA and reading special education resource teacher.
3. Audie Murphy Middle School: All of the 8th grade students in special education using SuccessMaker to build math skills passed the STAAR state level test on their first attempt. "SuccessMaker has been great helping us fill-in the gaps on our students' prior learning. It also gives us great documentation for deciding admissions, reviews, and dismissals, as well as to help us make decisions regarding the level of service a student receives," said Dennis Kamber, resource math teacher.
4. Killeen High School: Because of one teacher's unique use of SuccessMaker and motivation techniques, approximately 30% of her high school students in special education earned more than one year's growth in reading. In four years, one student grew from 3.25 to 8.11 in reading skills, which was tracked in SuccessMaker. One 9th grade student gained 1.9 years of growth in one year and another earned 1.46 years' worth of growth.

For more information, please contact your local  
Savvas representative or visit  
[Savvas.com/SuccessMaker](https://www.savvas.com/SuccessMaker)



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