



## Nomination for Schools Transforming Learning

**Nominee Campus:** *Barksdale Elementary*

**Nominee District:** *Plano Independent School District*

Address: 2424 Midway Road, Plano, TX 75093

**Principal:** *Jennifer Caplinger*

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Phone Number: 469-752-0110

Interim Superintendent: Sara Bonser

Nominated by: Saul Laredo, Executive Director, Elementary Campus Services

Barksdale Elementary has been on a unique journey to transform learning for both teachers and students. Under the leadership of Jennifer Caplinger, the school's leadership team has proactively sought out new learning opportunities for a staff that takes pride in finding innovative and creative ways to reach and meet the diverse needs of students. Their efforts have focused on, and have been successful in, promoting student ownership behind the learning, as presented in Article V of the Visioning Document sharing in the vision that *a learning organization can create the conditions and capacities most conducive for leaders, teachers, and students to perform at high levels and meet the expectations of new learning standards.*

Barksdale Elementary has a diverse population of learners. Six hundred thirty seven students are proud "Barksdale Broncos". The diversity of the student body, reflected throughout the building, serves as the foundation for a warm and welcoming environment that embraces you as you enter the campus. For the past 2 years, the Barksdale Staff embarked on the work to transform the learning culture of this campus. The desire by teachers to grow professionally mirrored their desire to provide students with voice, and innovative learning opportunities. School leadership responded by encouraging staff to build their human capacity, as well as by providing resources for teachers to design experiences for students that supports 21st century learning. To encourage more dialogue between teachers, systems and structures to promote collaboration between teachers became the norm. These opportunities include professional learning for teachers centered on Professional Learning Communities with a focus on the integration of technology, innovative approaches to interventions, and promoting student voice.

With a vision clearly grounded on the belief that- "Transformation is not about implementing a completely new program; it is about changing what the learning looks like"- classrooms, and learning, began to transform. Walking into classrooms, you will see students actively learning, collaborating with their peers, using student led questioning. As you listen to the students, you recognize that their engagement comes from the level of questioning, as well as from the careful design of the tasks designed by teachers. The students are asking the questions and the students are the ones facilitating those conversations. In Grades 3-5 the implementation of Literature Circles and Socratic Seminars are cultivating curiosity in the students by facilitating a forum where they can engage in deep questioning of high interest topics. As the design of lessons changed, so did the role of teachers. Teachers are now the facilitators of the learning. They take pride in finding innovative ways to reach students, but most importantly for students to take ownership of their own learning.