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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

For further information,  
contact: Tina Knudsen  
(512) 398-0045

## **Lockhart ISD Earns State's Highest Fiscal Accountability Rating**

Lockhart Independent School District officials announced that the district received a final rating of “Superior Achievement” for the 2007-2008 school year, under Texas’ Schools FIRST financial accountability rating system. Lockhart ISD also earned a “Superior Achievement” for the prior five school years. The Superior Achievement rating is the state’s highest, demonstrating the quality of Lockhart ISD’s financial management and reporting system.

This is the seventh year of Schools FIRST (Financial Accountability Rating System of Texas), a financial accountability system for Texas school districts developed by the Texas Education Agency in response to Senate Bill 875 of the 76<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature in 1999. The primary goal of Schools FIRST is to achieve quality performance in the management of school districts’ financial resources, a goal made more significant due to the complexity of accounting associated with Texas’ school finance system.

“We are very pleased with Lockhart ISD’s Schools FIRST rating,” said Lockhart ISD Superintendent Dr. Jose Parra, “as it shows that our district is an excellent steward of these valuable resources. This rating shows that Lockhart’s schools are accountable not only for student learning, but also for achieving these results cost-effectively and efficiently.”

The Schools FIRST accountability rating system assigns one of four financial accountability ratings to Texas school districts, with the highest being “Superior Achievement,” followed by “Above-Standard Achievement,” “Standard Achievement” and “Substandard Achievement.” Districts with serious data quality problems may receive the additional rating of “Suspended-Data Quality.” Districts that receive the “Substandard Achievement” or “Suspended—Data Quality” ratings under Schools FIRST must file a corrective action plan with the Texas Education Agency.