



READY, SET, GOAL!

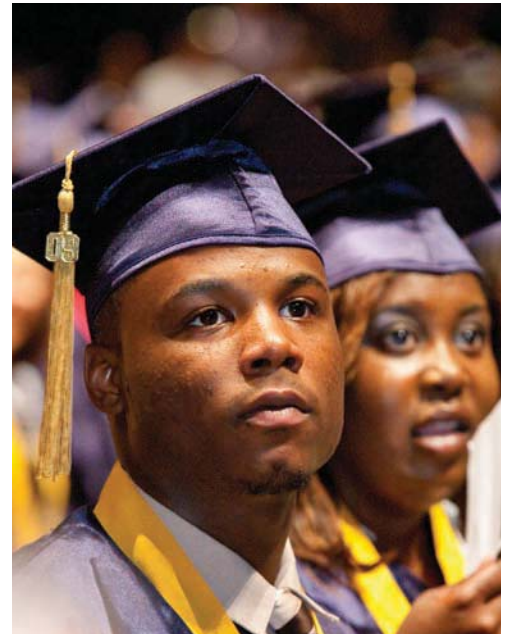
AUSTIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENTS

2009 Austin ISD Education Progress Report



PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to assist the Metro Austin region in participating in the global economy by monitoring key indicators associated with preparing students for higher education and employment. The Education Progress Report examines Austin ISD's progress on these indicators in order to support strategic planning and identify where more rapid gains may be necessary to achieve our goals.



ABOUT AUSTIN ISD*

Since 1881, Austin ISD has been committed to meeting the educational needs and unique interests and talents of its students. Austin ISD serves more than 83,000 students at 120 campuses, offering them a comprehensive curriculum aligned with state standards.

In December 2009, the Austin ISD Board of Trustees adopted a visionary document, the Strategic Plan 2010-2015, which is the district's road map for continued improvement. The Strategic Plan outlines what the district needs to do to meet the goals established by the Trustees: all students will perform at or above grade level; achievement gaps will be eliminated; all students will graduate ready for college, career, and life in a globally competitive economy; all schools will meet or exceed state accountability standards, and the district will meet federal standards and exceed state standards. The Strategic Plan will guide budgeting and instructional programming, ensuring that taxpayer funds are used effectively and efficiently.

Fifty-four Austin ISD campuses are rated Exemplary or Recognized by the Texas Education Agency. Austin eighth grade students outperformed the nation, large central cities, and other urban school districts in the National Assessment of Educational Progress' Mathematics Test. Austin ISD has seven of Newsweek's top high schools in the nation for 2009, and led the nation with more National Board Certified Teachers than any other Texas school district for seven years in a row.

Austin ISD believes in the POWER OF US – the collective power of educators, parents, students and the community to turn challenges into opportunities and to realize high academic achievement for all students.

* Provided by Austin ISD.

AUSTIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S INVESTMENTS IN EDUCATION

Through the \$19 million, five-year economic development strategy called Opportunity Austin 2.0, the Austin Chamber works to increase Metro Austin's home-grown college enrollment rate from approximately 67,000 or 4.4 percent of the local population in 2005 to 100,000 or 6 percent in 2015. The Chamber funds and coordinates regional efforts to ensure 80% Apply Texas application submission rates; tutoring at Metro Austin high schools to increase college-ready graduates by 15% annually and events to increase 7 percent annually submission of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

Chamber volunteers support Austin ISD in its strategic planning and aligned strategies. The Austin Chamber also provides significant annual financial support to Austin Partners in Education.

GOAL

This report focuses on communicating the school district's progress towards achieving its specific performance goals and on tracking progress towards two of the Austin Chamber's main goals as outlined in Opportunity Austin and the Austin Chamber-led 20,010 by 2010 initiative:

- Increase Metro Austin higher education student enrollment by 20,010 students by 2010.
- Close achievement gaps among economic, ethnic and racial groups.

AUSTIN ISD 2008-09 SNAPSHOT

Enrollment	83,033	2009-10 Tax Rate (\$ per \$100 valuation)	\$1.20
Percent Non-white	74%	2008-09 Operations Budget without State Recapture	\$692,799,490
Percent Economically Disadvantaged	63%	2008-09 Operations Budget with State Recapture	\$865,235,785
Percent English Language Learners	29%	Average Percent Daily Attendance for Grades 6 - 12	92%
2009 Graduates	3,903	Percent of Graduates who took SAT or ACT Exam*	75%
Number of Campuses	120	Average Teacher Salary	\$44,243
Number of Employees	11,322	Average Teacher Years of Experience	11
Business/Community Involvement:			
• Number of Registered Volunteers	5,112		
• Donations from Austin-based Corporations	\$3.2 million (cash) \$8.6 million (in-kind)		

Sources: Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), Local budget data
*Indicator lags one year.

OVERVIEW

In December 2009, the Austin ISD board of trustees adopted a five-year strategic plan. The plan sets out the district's performance goals year-by-year and identifies the steps necessary to achieve annual and long-term goals.

These goals include having 77 percent of the class of 2014 enroll in higher education, 90 percent of the class of 2014 graduate in four years, and 73 percent of the class of 2014 college/career-ready in English language arts and 81 percent college/career-ready in math.

Other goals include raising TAKS passing rates for students who have been in Austin ISD for at least three consecutive years to 98 percent for reading and 90 percent or above for math by 2015.

This is a commendable change in direction for the district which had previously operated without specific, quantifiable annual academic performance goals.

In early 2010, the board and administration took the first steps towards embracing the strategic plan as the foundation for decisions about how to allocate resources. Austin ISD will need to continue to rely on its strategic plan for guidance as makes tough decisions about changing its operations in order to achieve these goals.

For the class of 2008, the most current data available, half of all graduates were college/career ready, a greater proportion than two years earlier. However, Austin ISD's direct-to-college enrollment and graduation rates are on a downward trajectory. Less than three-fourths of the class of 2008 graduated in four years and just 58 percent of those graduates enrolled in post-secondary education in the fall after high school graduation.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Trustees and administration should continue to use their strategic plan to guide decisions about allocating resources, using performance-based budgeting models to eliminate programs that lack clear evidence that they improve students' outcomes and to expand programs that have been shown to be effective and replicable.
- Existing strategies are not sufficiently focused on improving direct-to-college enrollment and college readiness rates. Trustees and administration should determine the most effective ways to improve in these areas and allocate resources accordingly.
- Trustees and administration should quickly determine what the most effective way is to address low graduation rates and direct sufficient resources to the task.
- English language learners are not reaching classroom English language proficiency at an appropriate pace. Trustees and administration should support efforts to improve performance in this area.
- Trustees and administration should align the strategic compensation program with the district's strategic plan and use strategic compensation methods to accelerate performance gains in areas including high school graduation, college readiness and direct-to-college enrollment.
- Trustees and administration should target human resources spending on recruiting experienced, effective teachers, particularly in math and science, for academically underperforming schools.

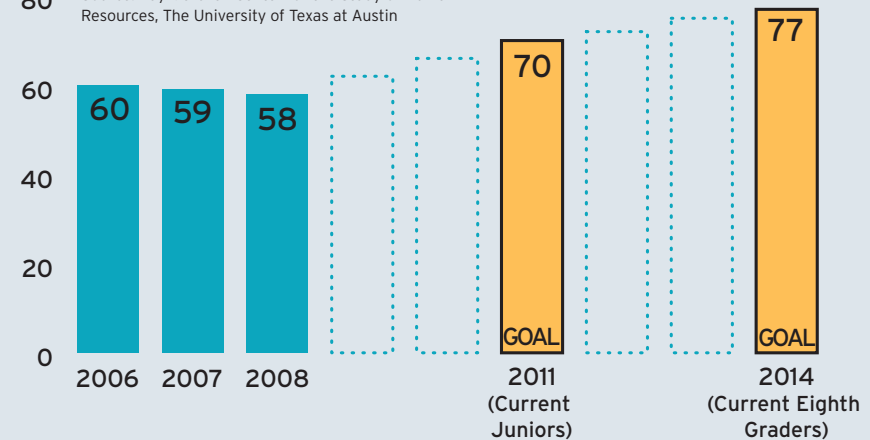
HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATION FOR COLLEGE/CAREER TASK FORCE FINDINGS:

- Austin ISD's direct-to-college Fall enrollment rate fell slightly over the past three years, reaching 58 percent for the class of 2008. However, Austin ISD researchers find that the college enrollment rate within one year of high school has remained stable over the same period because a larger share of Austin students enrolls in college for the first time in either the Winter or Spring term following high school graduation.
- The proportion of all Austin ISD graduates who were college/career-ready rose six percentage points from the class of 2006 to the class of 2008, reaching 50 percent.
- The percentage of all Austin ISD students graduating in four years continued a four-year slide, with the graduation rate for economically disadvantaged students reaching 61 percent for the class of 2008. However, trend data are difficult to interpret due to changes in the graduation rate calculation each year since 2005-06.
- The percentage of all students passing all four graduation TAKS has held steady at about 84 percent over the past five years.
- The proportion of all students scoring at the higher Commended Performance level on the graduation TAKS rose for all subjects after a one-year dip for English language arts and social studies.

DIRECT-TO-COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

Percent of high school graduates enrolled in community colleges, technical colleges or universities in Texas or outside the state in the fall following graduation.

Source: Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources, The University of Texas at Austin



COLLEGE/CAREER READINESS

Percent of students academically prepared for higher education or the high-performance workplace. The task force considers students ready for success in higher education or the high-performance workplace if they meet or exceed the following performance standards based on state college readiness indicators. Students who do not reach these standards must take remedial classes if they enroll in Texas public colleges or universities.

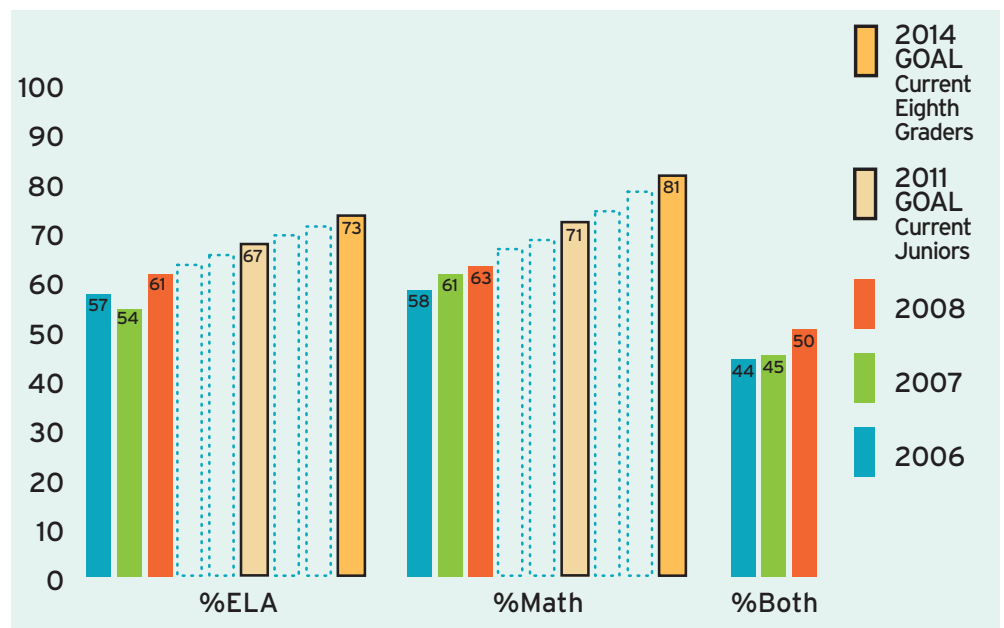
English Language Arts (ELA):

- Scale score of at least 2200 on the English language arts exit-level TAKS with a three or higher on the essay; OR
- SAT composite score of at least 1070 with a minimum of 500 on the critical reading component; OR
- ACT composite score of at least 23 with a minimum of 19 on the English component

Math:

- Scale score of at least 2200 on the math exit-level TAKS; OR
- SAT composite score of at least 1070 with a minimum of 500 on the math component; OR
- ACT composite score of at least 23 with a minimum of 19 on the math component

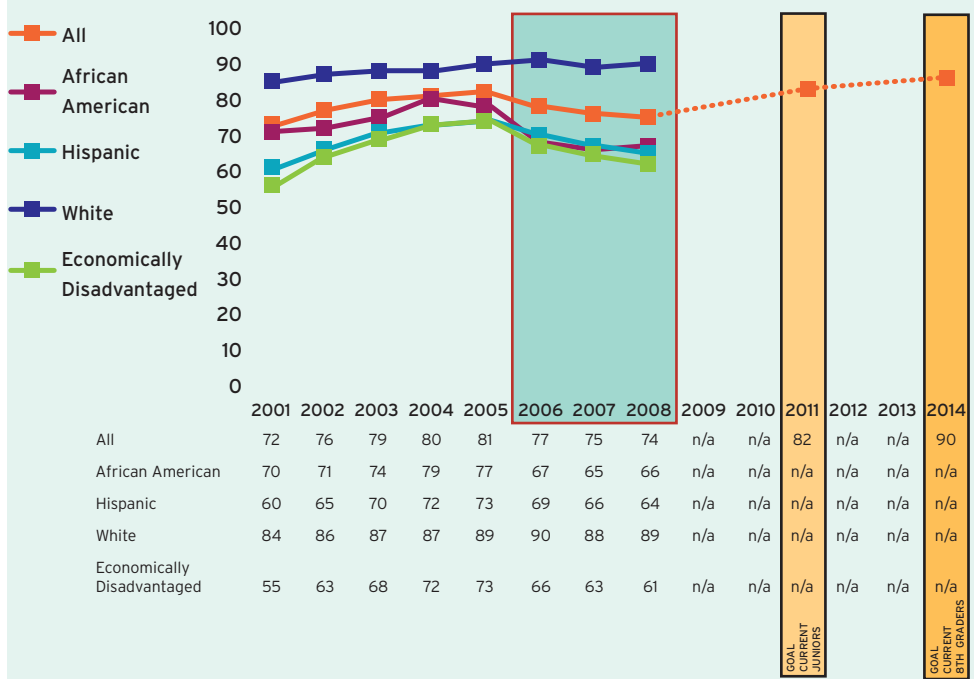
Source: AEIS



HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Percent of students who earned high school diplomas and passed all relevant exit assessments within four years of entering high school. GED recipients and students who need longer than four years to graduate are not counted as graduates under this definition. The methodology for calculating this rate changed in the 2005-06 school year, and the impact of that change will continue to be evident until all the data used to prepare the graduation rate are calculated under a uniform methodology. As such, 2006-08 rates are not directly comparable to those of prior years or to each other.

Source: AEIS



AUSTIN ISD DISTRICT-WIDE PERFORMANCE GOALS

- By 2015, raise TAKS passing rates for students who have been in Austin ISD for at least three consecutive years in
 - Reading and writing to 98 percent;
 - Social studies to ≥ 95 percent;
 - Math to ≥ 90 percent; and
 - Science to ≥ 85 percent.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION TAKS

Percent of all students in each cohort who passed all four TAKS graduation tests before the end of 12th grade. The number of items that needed to be answered correctly for a student to have met the passing standard increased each year for the classes of 2005-07. Thereafter, the passing standard remained the same.

Source: AEIS





HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TAKS (WRITING)

Percent of high school juniors who scored a zero, one, two, three or four on the written composition component of the graduation English language arts TAKS. A student passes with a score of two or higher and demonstrates college/career readiness in writing with a score of three or higher.

Source: TAKS Reports. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

SCORE DISTRIBUTION ON EXIT-LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TAKS (WRITING)



COMMENDED PERFORMANCE: GRADUATION TAKS

Percent of high school juniors meeting Commended Performance standard on the graduation TAKS. Students who score at or above the Commended Performance level have shown a thorough understanding of grade-level knowledge and skills, beyond the college/career readiness threshold level. The State Board of Education has determined that individual scale scores of at least 2400 indicate Commended Performance.

Source: TAKS Reports



English Language Arts	3	14	26	21	27	21	30
Math	9	21	22	23	24	30	31
Science	3	8	8	13	16	17	22
Social Studies	15	25	29	34	42	38	49

EIGHTH GRADE TAKS

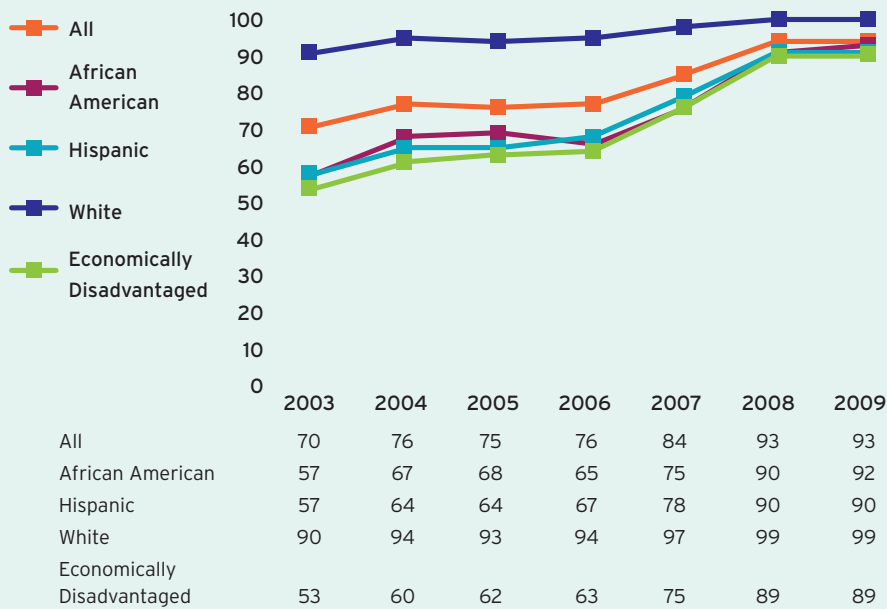
This measure shows the proportion of eighth grade students prepared for high school-level course work. It shows the percent of students who met or exceeded the State Board of Education panel's recommended standard on the eighth grade TAKS tests.

Starting in the 2007-08 school year, eighth graders were required to meet the panel-recommended standard in math and reading to ensure promotion to ninth grade. However, a student who fails the TAKS may still be promoted if a grade placement committee composed of a student's parent and school staff agree he or she can succeed at the higher grade.

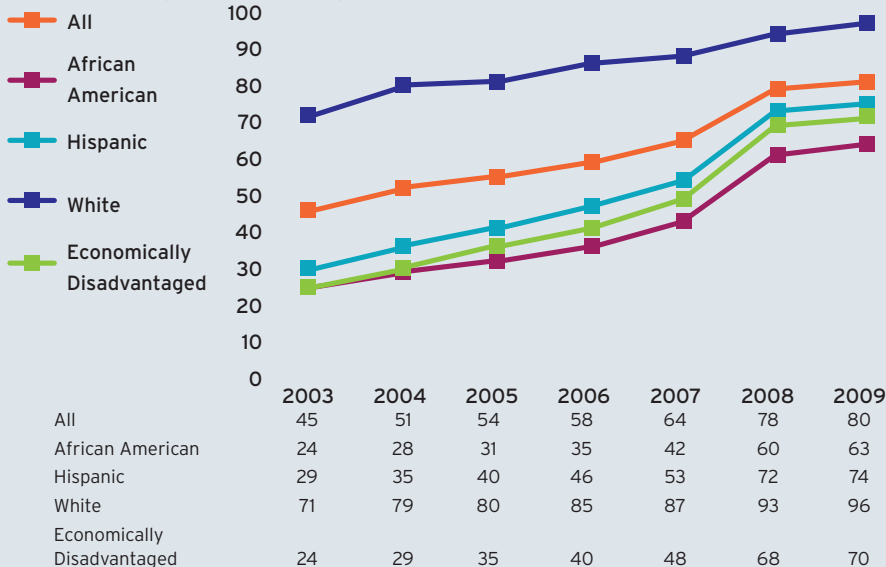
The eighth grade science test was first administered in 2006. While the passing standard has been phased in over time, results reported here reflect the panel-recommended standard—in effect starting in spring 2008—for science each year.

Source: TAKS Reports

PERCENT OF EIGHTH GRADERS MEETING PANEL RECOMMENDATION READING TAKS (CUMULATIVE)



PERCENT OF EIGHTH GRADERS MEETING PANEL RECOMMENDATION MATH TAKS (CUMULATIVE)



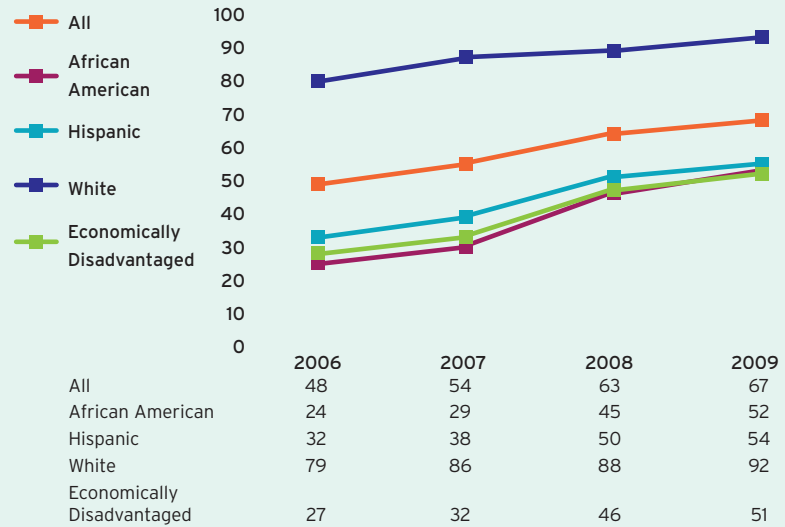
MIDDLE SCHOOL PREPARATION FOR HIGH SCHOOL TASK FORCE FINDINGS:

- The proportion of all students prepared for high school-level reading held steady at 93 percent while the proportion of all students prepared for high school math rose slightly to 80 percent. However, achievement gaps between racial, ethnic and economic groups remained largely unchanged.
- The proportion of all students prepared for high school science rose slightly, reaching 67 percent. But significant achievement gaps remained, with 51 percent of economically disadvantaged students prepared for high school science.
- The proportion of all eighth graders scoring at the higher Commended Performance level rose for most subjects.
- Thirty-nine percent of all eighth graders were on or above-grade level in math in 2009, compared to 33 percent in 2005, according to National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) data. However, 19 percent of economically disadvantaged eighth graders were on or above-grade level in math by federal standards.





PERCENT OF EIGHTH GRADERS MEETING PANEL RECOMMENDATION SCIENCE TAKS



COMMENDED PERFORMANCE: EIGHTH GRADE TAKS

Percent of students meeting Commended Performance standard on the eighth grade TAKS.

According to the State Board of Education, students who score at or above the Commended Performance level have shown a thorough understanding of grade-level knowledge and skills, beyond the passing level.

The State Board of Education has determined that individual TAKS scale scores of at least 2400 indicate Commended Performance.

Source: TAKS Reports



*The eighth grade science TAKS was instituted in the 2005-06 school year.

MATH KNOWLEDGE

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a continuing assessment of what American students know and can do in various subject areas. Because the assessment stays essentially the same from year to year, it can provide a clear picture of academic performance over time.

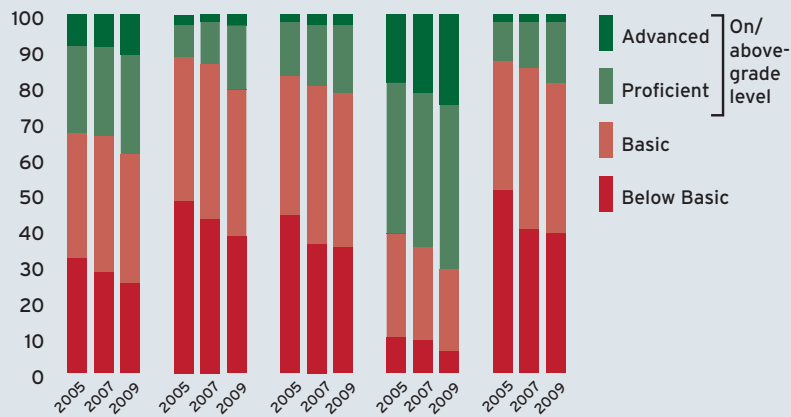
Students who achieved the proficient or advanced level on the NAEP demonstrated an on-grade level or above-grade level competency in the subject area tested.

The NAEP was provided to representative samples of Austin ISD eighth and fourth grade students for the first time in spring 2005. The selected students were tested then in reading, math and science. As this report went to press, 2009 results from the math NAEP only were available.

Source: NAEP Data Explorer

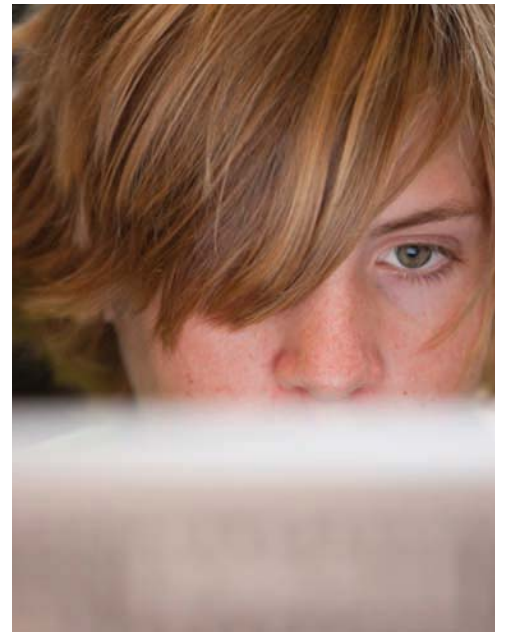


EIGHTH GRADE NAEP MATH

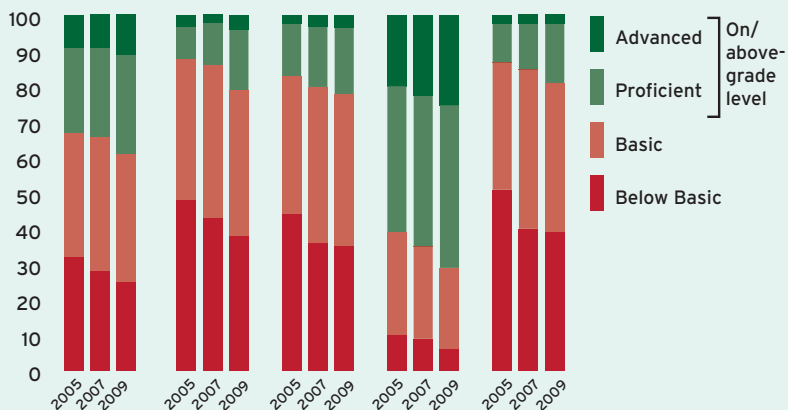


2009

2009	All	AfAm	Hisp	White	EcoDis
Advanced	11	4	3	24	2
Proficient	28	18	19	46	17
Basic	36	41	43	23	42
Below Basic	25	38	35	6	39



FOURTH GRADE NAEP MATH



2009

2009	All	AfAm	Hisp	White	EcoDis
Advanced	6	0	1	16	1
Proficient	32	13	24	58	21
Basic	45	58	54	23	5
Below Basic	17	29	21	3	24



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PREPARATION FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

TASK FORCE FINDINGS:

- The proportion of all students prepared for middle school-level reading held steady at 87 percent while the proportion of all students prepared for high school math rose slightly to 87 percent. However, achievement gaps between racial, ethnic and economic groups remained largely unchanged.
- The proportion of all students prepared for middle school science rose, reaching 80 percent. But significant achievement gaps remained, with 71 percent of economically disadvantaged students prepared for middle school science.
- The proportion of all fifth graders scoring at the higher Commended Performance level rose for all subjects.
- Thirty-eight percent of all fourth graders were on or above-grade level in math in 2009, compared to 40 percent in 2005, according to National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) data. Twenty-two percent of economically disadvantaged fourth graders were on or above-grade level in math by federal standards.

FIFTH GRADE TAKS

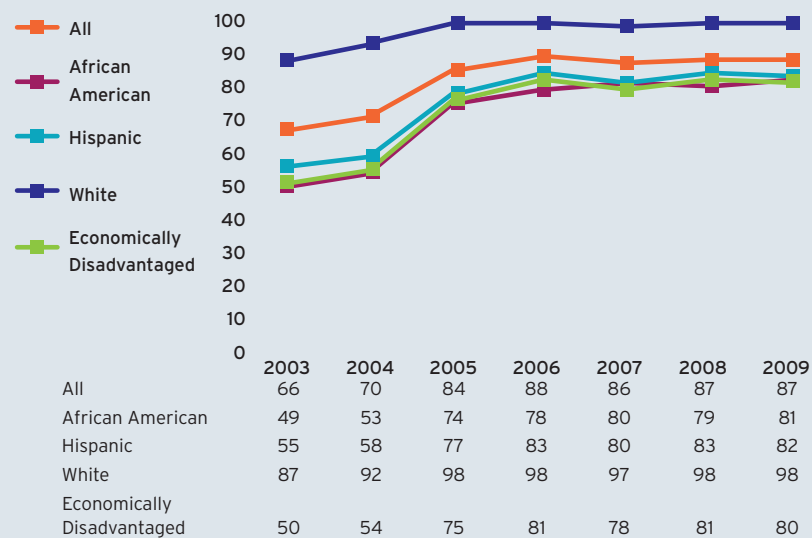
This measure shows the proportion of fifth grade students prepared for middle school-level course work. It shows the percent of students who met or exceeded the State Board of Education panel's recommended standards on the fifth grade TAKS tests.

Starting in the 2004-05 school year, fifth graders were required to meet the panel-recommended standard in math and reading to ensure promotion to sixth grade. However, a student who fails the TAKS may still be promoted if a grade placement committee composed of a student's parent and school staff agree he or she can succeed at the higher grade.

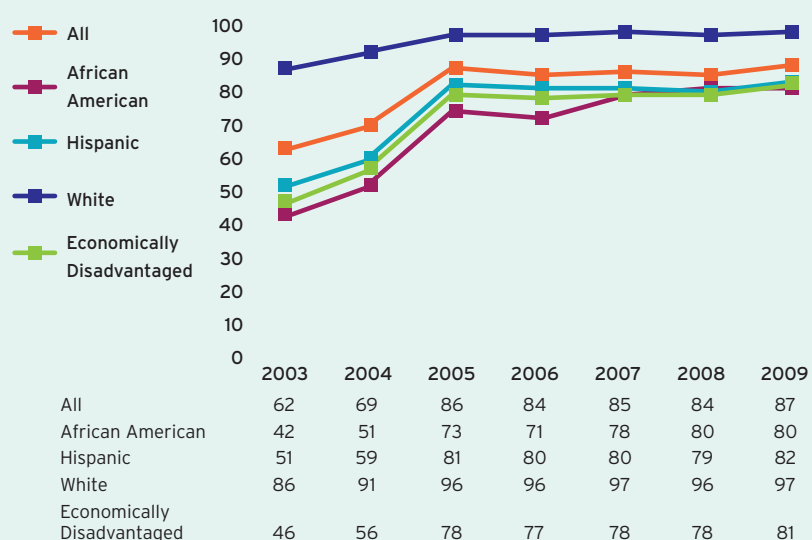
The fifth grade science test was first administered in 2003. While the passing standard has been phased in over time, results reported here reflect the panel-recommended standard-in effect starting in spring 2005—for science each year.

Source: TAKS Reports, English and Spanish test results combined

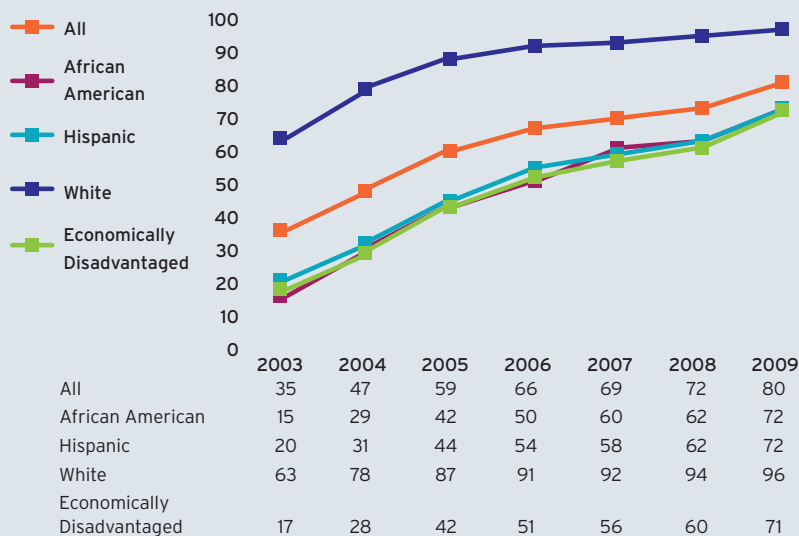
PERCENT OF FIFTH GRADERS MEETING PANEL RECOMMENDATION READING TAKS (CUMULATIVE)



PERCENT OF FIFTH GRADERS MEETING PANEL RECOMMENDATION MATH TAKS (CUMULATIVE)



PERCENT OF FIFTH GRADERS MEETING PANEL RECOMMENDATION SCIENCE TAKS



EDUCATING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

TASK FORCE FINDINGS:

- Twenty-nine percent of Austin ISD's approximately 83,000 students are English language learners, about the same proportion as in the past two years.
- Fifty-nine percent of those students made the expected amount of progress towards English language proficiency.

COMMENDED PERFORMANCE: FIFTH GRADE TAKS

Percent of students meeting Commended Performance standard on the fifth grade TAKS.

According to the State Board of Education, students who score at or above the Commended Performance level have shown a thorough understanding of grade-level knowledge and skills, beyond the passing level.

The State Board of Education has determined that individual TAKS scale scores of at least 2400 indicate Commended Performance.

Source: TAKS Reports



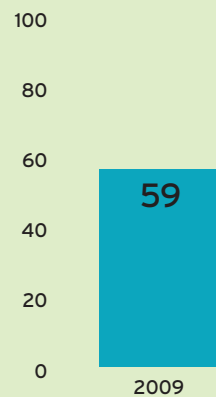
EDUCATING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Texas schools must administer an English language proficiency assessment called the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) in listening, speaking, reading, and writing to English language learners in kindergarten through grade 12.

The TELPAS measures the learning of English according to a second language acquisition continuum that reflects distinct stages of second language proficiency: beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced-high. Students who have reached the advanced-high level are able to use academic English in classroom activities with little English-language support.

Source: TELPAS Reports

PERCENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS PROGRESSING AT LEAST ONE LEVEL IN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION



ABOUT THE AUSTIN CHAMBER EDUCATION PROGRESS REPORT

This Education Progress Report, one of ten Education Progress Reports developed and issued by the Austin Chamber of Commerce Progress Report Task Force, is a tool for the community to track school district performance trends. It focuses on high school graduation, college/career readiness and post-secondary enrollment rates, and monitors additional student performance indicators that predict success leading up to high school. The Task Force is enthusiastic about partnering with additional business organizations to support continued improvement of educational outcomes. The intent of this report is to compare school district performance to community expectations, not to other area, Texas or U.S. school districts.

For more information, contact Drew Scheberle, Austin Chamber of Commerce Senior Vice President of Education and Talent Development, at 512.322.5628 or dscheberle@austinchamber.com.

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