

# A BRIGHT FUTURE AHEAD

INCREASE COLLEGE READINESS  
CLOSE ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

AUSTIN  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
PRESENTS

2008  
Round Rock ISD  
Community Education  
Progress Report



**Round Rock, Texas**  
**Chamber of Commerce**





## PURPOSE

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

## ABOUT ROUND ROCK ISD\*

The Round Rock Independent School District is regarded as one of the top school districts in the state and a number one attraction for families and businesses considering relocation. Seventeen Round Rock ISD schools were named Higher Performing Schools in 2008 by Just for the Kids, and 98% of the district's 40 traditional campuses were honored with one or more Gold Performance Acknowledgments for improved performance in math, science, social studies, reading and/or writing. The district was recognized for its AP/IB results and received Commended Performance recognition in social studies, as well as reading and English language arts.

Together, we continue to work on improving student performance, narrowing the achievement gap and increasing the number of underrepresented minority students enrolled in advanced and college level courses. We are committed to increasing the time guidance counselors spend with students to better prepare them for college/career success. A strong focus has also been placed on increasing the high school completion rate. Round Rock ISD is fiscally responsible and has recently received bond rating upgrades from both agencies used by the district. We believe ALL children will learn... whatever it takes!

\* Provided by Round Rock ISD

## GOAL

The report focuses on tracking progress toward two of the Chamber's main goals as outlined in Opportunity Austin and the Chamber-led initiative 20,010 by 2010:

- Increase higher education student enrollment in the Austin region by 20,010 by 2010.
- Close the achievement gaps between different demographic, economic and ethnic groups.

## OVERVIEW

Round Rock ISD student performance improved significantly in 2008. College and career readiness, direct to college enrollment, graduation TAKS and eighth grade TAKS math, reading and science passing rates are up, in some cases significantly. Student performance gaps narrowed in nearly all performance categories.

The biggest cause for concern is the high school graduation rate, which fell for a second year from a high of 90% in 2005. This decline, which was experienced by districts across the state, is partly attributable to the change in dropout definition which is being phased in over a four-year period. However, Round Rock ISD expects to see an increase in its 2008 high school graduation rate due to targeted improvement efforts and increased emphasis on college and career readiness rates.

## ROUND ROCK ISD SNAPSHOT

Enrollment	41,740	2007-08 Operations Budget without State Recapture	\$300,130,408
2008 Graduates	2,405	2007-08 Operations Budget with State Recapture	\$312,335,619
Percent Non-White	48%	Average Percent Daily Attendance for Grades 6 - 12	96%
Percent Economically-Disadvantaged	25%	Percent of Graduates who took SAT or ACT Exam*	86%
Percent English Language Learners	8%	Percent of 12th Grade Students Enrolled in a Tech-Prep 2 <sup>†</sup> and/or 3 <sup>††</sup> Sequential Course of Study	92%
Number of Campuses	45	Average Teacher Salary	\$47,409
Number of Employees	5,267	Average Teacher Years of Experience	10
2008-09 Tax Rate (\$ per \$100 valuation)	\$1.332		

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

<sup>†</sup>Percent of 12th grade students enrolled in a sequential course of study, which develops occupational knowledge, skill, and competencies relating to a career concentration. The student should have a four-year plan of study to take two or more career and technology education courses for three or more credits.

<sup>††</sup>Percent of 12th grade students who follow an approved Tech-prep high school plan of study leading to postsecondary education and training. The student should have a four-year secondary plan of study that includes two or more career and technology education courses for three or more credits. The plan must also provide at least one option for articulated and/or concurrent credit at the postsecondary level.

As in 2007, Round Rock ISD's higher performing student segment accelerated high school gains, while lower performing students lost a little ground. Round Rock's journey to the state's highest rating of exemplary will require a stronger high school exit level finish for more of its seniors.

Round Rock ISD student enrollment grew 3% in 2008, necessitating bond issues and significant management focus to stay ahead of organizational structure, hiring and facilities needs. Nearly one quarter of its students receive free or reduced-price lunch, and one in 12 are learning English. These trends make for more challenges, while community and employer expectations for student performance are rising

### TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Trustees and Administration should direct sufficient resources to begin to make gains in the high school graduation rate, particularly for economically disadvantaged, African American and Hispanic students, and continue to provide the resources necessary to support the districts' ongoing improvement.
- As Trustees and Administration contemplate their 2009-10 budget, they should establish performance targets, particularly for graduation TAKS passing rates and high school graduation rates, to ensure they support the path to an exemplary rating next year.
- Trustees should develop timelines and metrics which specifically define what closing the achievement gap means and should report results of initial efforts to measure parent and community involvement.
- Trustees should weigh the benefit of increasing the tax rate in order to provide necessary resources for students such as additional attendance officers, instructional coaches and lead curriculum specialists.





# HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATION FOR COLLEGE/CAREER

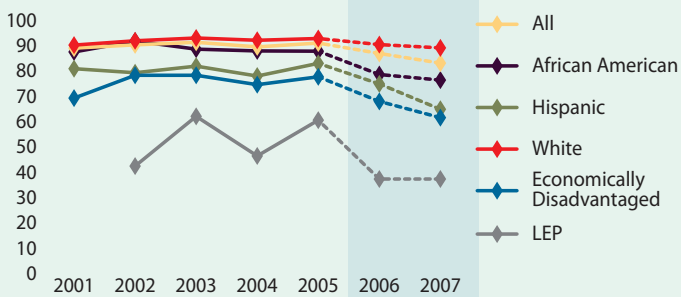
## TASK FORCE FINDINGS:

- Round Rock ISD's high school completion rate had improved until 2005, then dropped dramatically among the fast-growing economically disadvantaged student segment. Although the calculation of high school graduation rate has changed to a more rigorous definition, it remains an area of great concern.
- After Round Rock ISD hit a 96% graduation TAKS test passing rate in 2005, the district's graduation rate dropped—particularly for African American students—as the passing standard became more rigorous. The passing rate is now recovering for all student groups.

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

High school graduation is achieved when a student earns a high school diploma and passes all relevant exit assessments within four years after entering high school. GED recipients and students who need longer than four years 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 coming in under a uniform methodology. As such, graduation rates for the Classes of 2006 and 2007 are not directly comparable to those of prior years.**

Source: AEIS



	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
All	88	90	91	89	90	86	83
African American	87	91	88	87	87	78	76
Hispanic	80	79	81	77	82	74	64
White	90	91	92	92	92	90	89
Economically Disadvantaged	69	78	78	74	77	67	61
LEP*	n/a	42	62	46	60	37	37

\*Limited English Proficient

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION TAKS PASSAGE

This measure represents the percent of students in each cohort who passed all four Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) graduation tests before the end of their 12th grade year. 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 2005-2007. Thereafter, the passing standard remains the same.

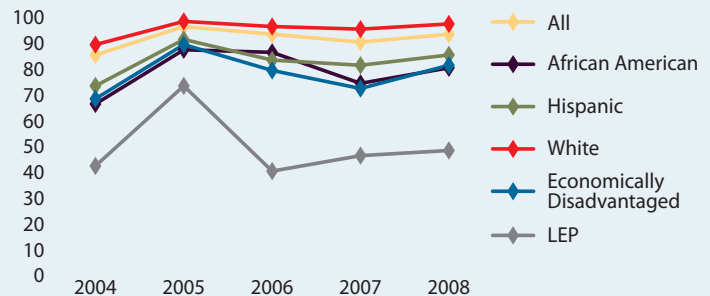
Source: AEIS

### CUMULATIVE PASSING RATE ON EXIT-LEVEL TAKS (ALL SECTIONS)

	2004*	2005	2006	2007	2008
All	85	96	93	90	93
African American	66	87	86	74	80
Hispanic	73	91	83	81	85
White	89	98	96	95	97
Economically Disadvantaged	68	89	79	72	81
LEP**	42	73	40	46	48

\*TAAS Scores; data represents 11th grade met standards on all tests on TAAS.

\*\*Limited English Proficient



- Among Round Rock ISD high school graduates, college and career readiness performance posted an impressive seven percentage point gain for the second straight year, to 62% overall.
- College enrollment directly from high school again increased to 80% for the Class of 2007, validating the significant administrative focus on this area.
- Exit-level writing TAKS performance has improved dramatically at both the passing level as well as the more important college-readiness level over the past several years.

## COLLEGE/CAREER READINESS

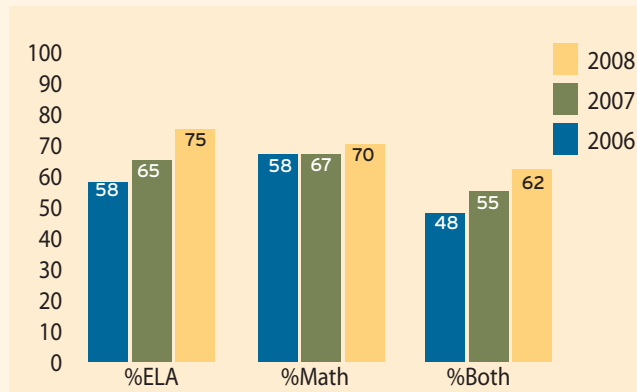
The task force considers students ready for success in higher education or the high-performance workplace if they meet or exceed the following performance standard(s):

**English/Language Arts (ELA), meet at least one of the following:** Scale score of at least 2200 on the ELA exit-level TAKS with a 3 or more on the essay, **OR** composite score of at least 1070 on the SAT with a minimum score of 500 on Critical Reading component **OR** composite score of at least 23 on the ACT with a minimum score of 19 on the English component.

**Math, meet at least one of the following:** Scale score of at least 2200 on the math exit-level TAKS, **OR** composite score of at least 1070 on the SAT with a minimum score of 500 on the math component **OR** composite score of at least 23 on the ACT with a minimum score of 19 on the math component.

**Both:** Students who have achieved college readiness in both ELA and math through any of the above formulas.

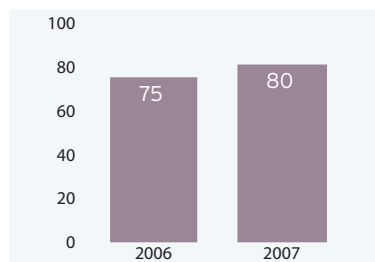
Source: Round Rock ISD calculations



## DIRECT TO COLLEGE ENROLLMENT RATE

Percent of high school graduates enrolled in community colleges or four-year degree-granting institutions in Texas or outside the state by the fall following graduation. The figure presented here is probably an under estimate of actual college enrollment in the semester following high school graduation because constraints on state data collection systems limit the ability to locate each student who does not have a Social Security number.

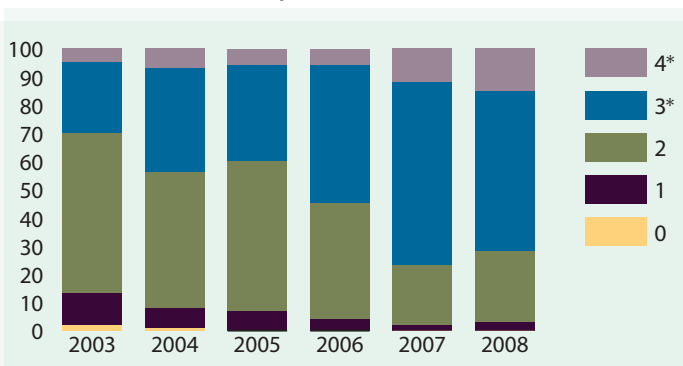
Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), National Student Clearinghouse and Ray Marshall Center Student Futures Project reports



## HIGH SCHOOL EXIT-LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TAKS (WRITING)

Percent of students who score a 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 on the written composition component of the TAKS exit-level ELA exam. A student passes the writing section of TAKS with a score of 2 or above. **A student demonstrates college readiness in writing with a score of 3 or higher.\***

Source: TAKS Reports



	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
4*	5	7	6	6	11	15
3*	25	37	34	49	65	57
2	57	48	53	41	21	25
1	11	7	7	4	2	3
0	2	1	0	0	0	0



## MIDDLE SCHOOL PREPARATION FOR HIGH SCHOOL TASK FORCE FINDINGS:

For the 2007-08 school year, eighth grade students needed to pass TAKS in reading and math to ensure promotion to ninth grade. Although eighth graders who fail the TAKS may still be promoted if their parents and school staff agree they can succeed at the higher grade, bypassing the TAKS passing requirement generally does not prepare students for success.

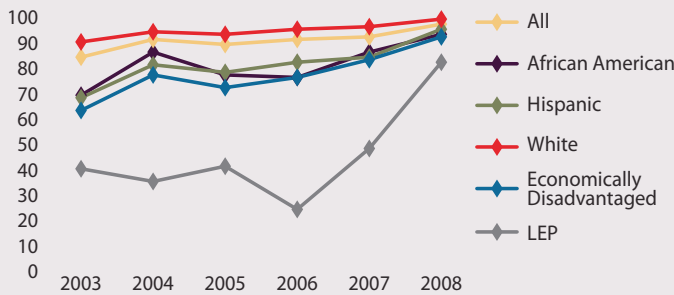
- Nearly all eighth grade students—97%—passed the reading TAKS test, up from 92% in 2007 including a doubling in the LEP passing rate.

### 8TH GRADE TAKS

This measure displays the percentage of eighth grade students who met or exceeded the State Board of Education panel's recommended standard on the eighth grade TAKS tests. This measure determines the percentage of eighth grade students on track or prepared for high school-level course work. Eighth grade students were required to meet the panel-recommended standard by the end of the 2007-08 school year in math and reading in order to ensure promotion to ninth grade. However a student who fails 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 for spring 2008 – for science each year.

Source: TAKS reports

#### PERCENT OF 8TH GRADERS WHO MET PANEL RECOMMENDATION READING TAKS (CUMULATIVE)



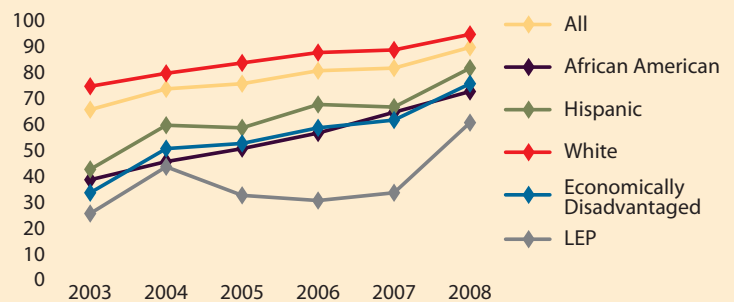
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
All	84	91	89	91	92	97
African American	69	86	77	76	86	93
Hispanic	68	81	78	82	84	95
White	90	94	93	95	96	99
Economically Disadvantaged	63	77	72	76	83	92
LEP*	40	35	41	24	48	82

\*Limited English Proficient

#### PERCENT OF 8TH GRADERS WHO MET PANEL RECOMMENDATION MATH TAKS (CUMULATIVE)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
All	65	73	75	80	81	89
African American	38	45	50	56	64	72
Hispanic	42	59	58	67	66	81
White	74	79	83	87	88	94
Economically Disadvantaged	33	50	52	58	61	75
LEP*	25	43	32	30	33	60

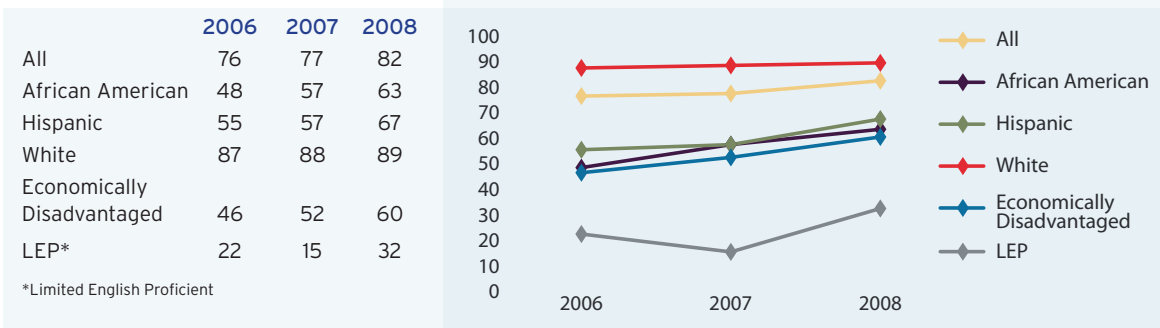
\*Limited English Proficient



- Eighth grade math TAKS passing rates increased to 89% in 2008, with achievement gaps narrowing among all student groups examined.
- Although economically disadvantaged students' passing rates on both the math and science TAKS rose by approximately 15 percentage points over the past three years, their math and science passing rates are still at 75% and 60%, respectively.
- Students learning English nearly doubled their passing rates in reading, math and science this year.



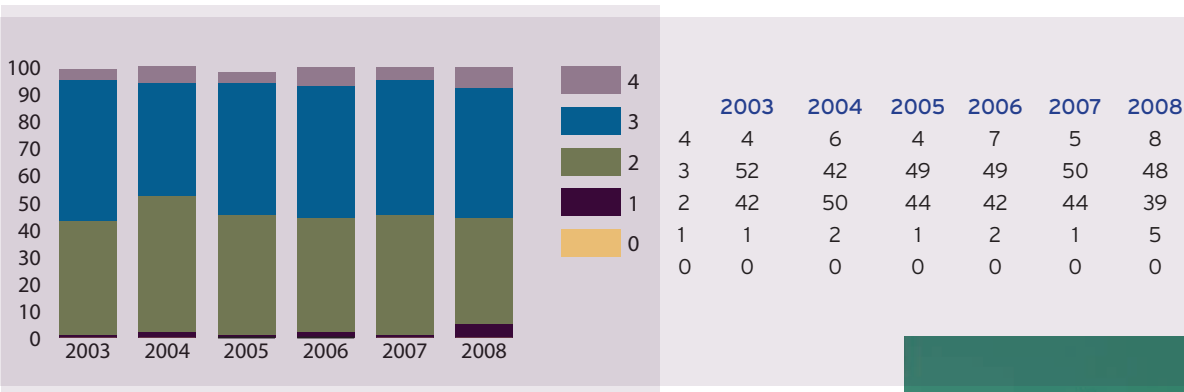
PERCENT OF 8TH GRADERS WHO MET PANEL RECOMMENDATION SCIENCE TAKS

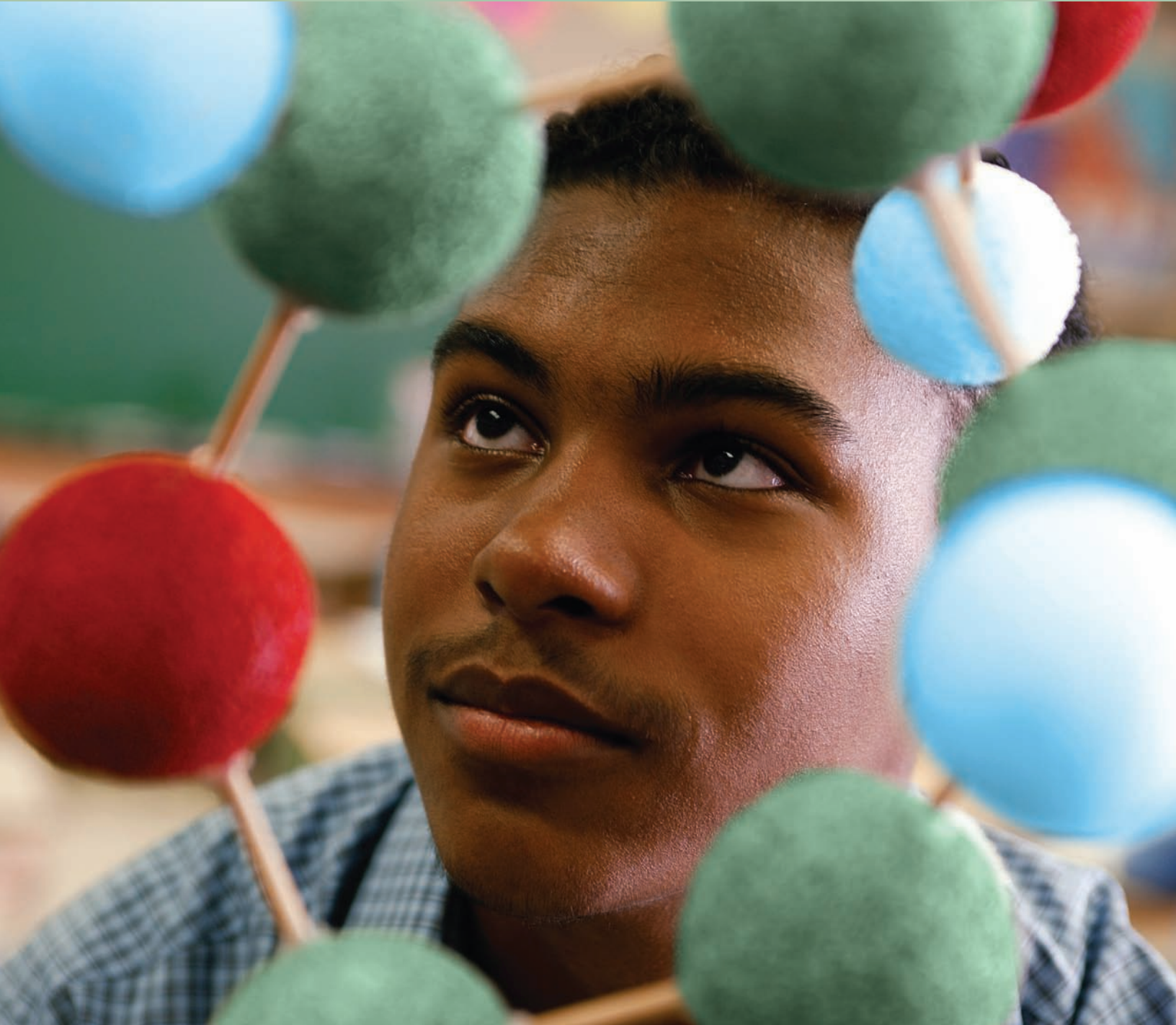


7TH GRADE WRITING TAKS

Percent of students who score a 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 on the seventh grade writing TAKS. A student passes the writing section of TAKS with a score of 2 or higher and earns a Commended Performance award with a score of 3 or higher.

Source: TAKS reports





# ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PREPARATION FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

## TASK FORCE FINDINGS:

Elementary school performance is the strongest of Round Rock ISD's three levels. In the past three years, overall passing rates for third and fifth grade reading and math TAKS were more than 90%.

### 5TH GRADE TAKS

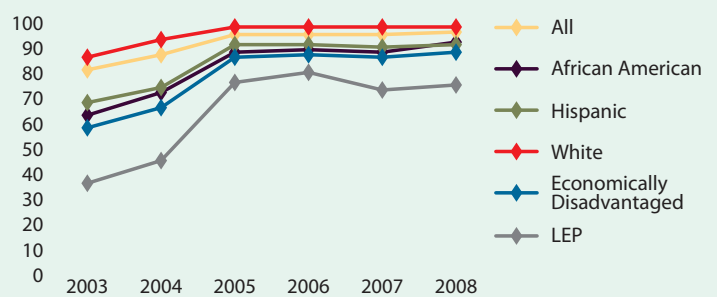
This measure shows the percent of fifth grade students prepared for middle school reading and math by meeting or exceeding the State Board of Education panel's recommended standards on the fifth grade reading and math TAKS. Beginning with the 2004-05 school year, fifth grade students were required to meet panel recommendation for promotion to middle school, although a student can bypass this requirement with approval of a grade placement committee.

Source: TAKS reports

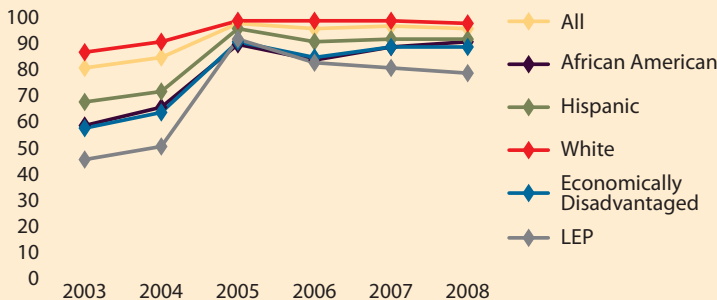
#### PERCENT OF 5TH GRADERS WHO MET PANEL RECOMMENDATION READING TAKS (CUMULATIVE)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
All	81	87	95	95	95	96
African American	63	72	88	89	88	92
Hispanic	68	74	91	91	90	91
White	86	93	98	98	98	98
Economically Disadvantaged	58	66	86	87	86	88
LEP*	36	45	76	80	73	75

\*Limited English Proficient



#### PERCENT OF 5TH GRADERS WHO MET PANEL RECOMMENDATION MATH TAKS (CUMULATIVE)



	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
All	80	84	97	95	96	95
African American	58	65	89	83	88	90
Hispanic	67	71	95	90	91	91
White	86	90	98	98	98	97
Economically Disadvantaged	57	63	90	84	88	88
LEP*	45	50	91	82	80	78

\*Limited English Proficient

# ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PREPARATION FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

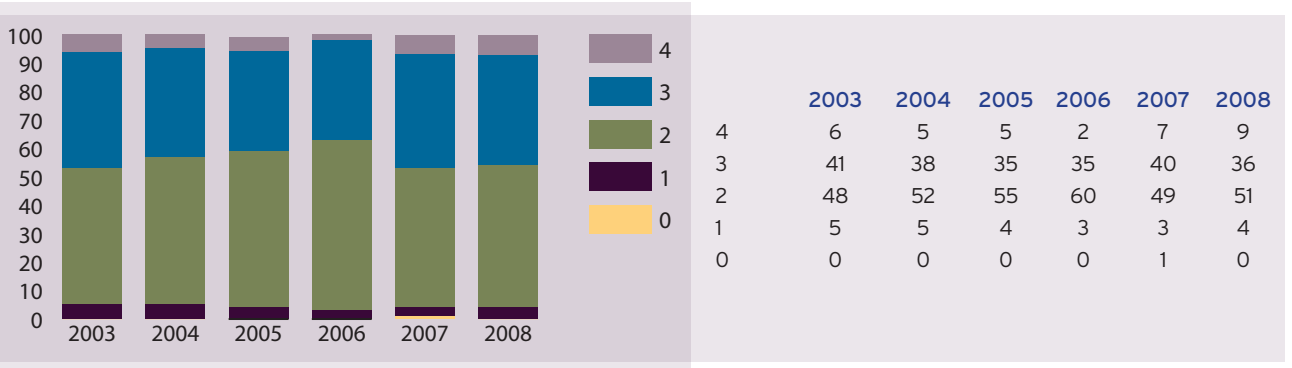


## 4TH GRADE WRITING TAKS

Percent of students who score a 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 on the fourth grade writing TAKS. A student passes the writing TAKS with a score of 2 or higher and earns a Commended Performance award with a score of 3 or higher.

Source: TAKS reports

### 4TH GRADE WRITING TAKS

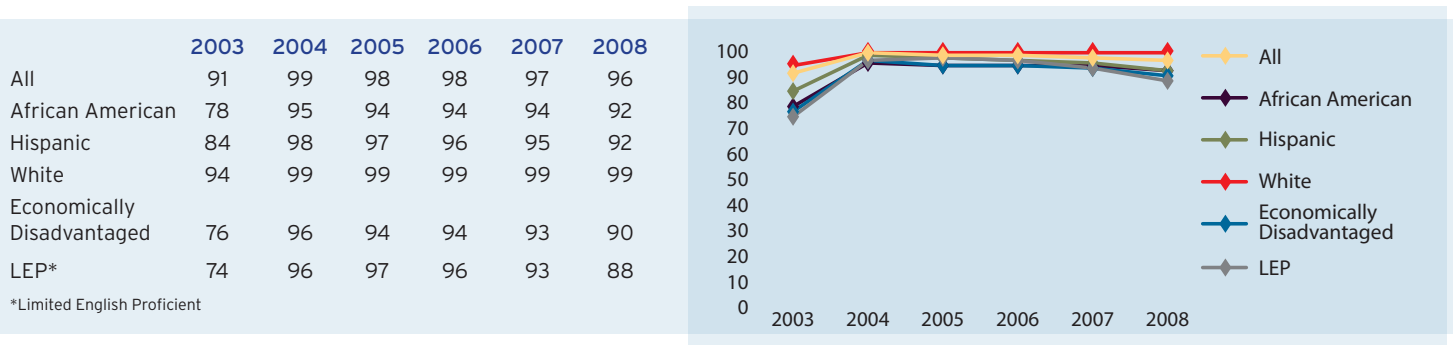


## 3RD GRADE TAKS

Percent of third grade students who demonstrated sufficient reading and math skills to meet the State Board of Education panel's recommended standard on the third grade reading and math TAKS.

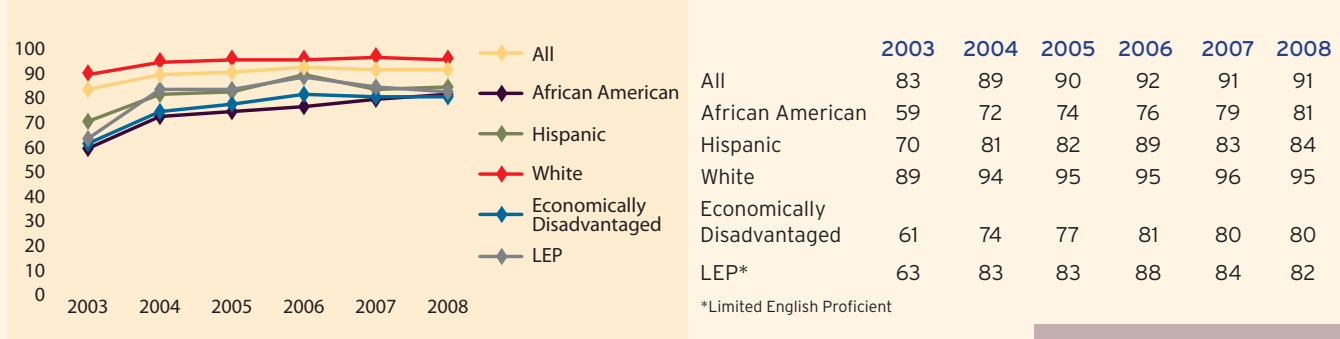
Source: TAKS reports

### PERCENT OF 3RD GRADERS WHO MET PANEL RECOMMENDATION READING TAKS (CUMULATIVE)



\*Limited English Proficient

PERCENT OF 3RD GRADERS WHO MET PANEL RECOMMENDATION MATH TAKS (CUMULATIVE)



## ABOUT THE AUSTIN CHAMBER COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRESS REPORT

This Community Education Progress Report, developed and issued by the Austin Chamber of Commerce Progress Report Task Force, is a tool for the community to track performance trends in area school districts. It is focused on Round Rock ISD's success in high school completion rates and college/career readiness and enrollment, 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 and is expanding to include other area school districts in this and subsequent years. The Progress Report does not compare Round Rock ISD with other area, Texas or U.S. school districts. The intent of this report is to compare Round Rock ISD's performance to our task force expectations, not the relative performance of other communities.

If you have questions, please contact Drew Scheberle, Senior Vice President of Education and Talent Development at the Austin Chamber of Commerce at 512.322.5628 or dscheberle@austinchamber.com.

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