

Together We Educate Elgin



Letter to the Community

Central Texas is at a critical juncture. Despite our booming economy, a wide gap exists between available jobs and local workforce talent. Approximately 50% of our current job openings require a bachelor's degree, 12% require an associate degree and 85% of our unemployed lack either.¹ Over the last decade, nearly 100,000 Central Texas students, a majority of our high school graduates, directly enrolled in college. Our direct-to-college enrollment rates increased by ten percentage points between 2003 and 2008, but leveled off at 60% over the last five years and now sits below the national average.²

When Central Texans lack the skills and education to participate in the economy, the health and prosperity of our community is threatened.

As Chair of the Chamber's 2015 Education Progress Report Taskforce, I believe we can work together as a community to close this opportunity gap. Our progress reports now unite 11 school districts, 11 regional chambers and dozens of business leaders to track regional challenges, successes and identify ways to improve student educational and

¹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, College Enrollment and Work Activity of 2013 High School Graduates, April 2014

career opportunities. These school districts and partners have worked to improve college readiness rates from 47% in 2007, to 64% in 2013.³ In partnership with Central Texas school districts, the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce has also set a 70% regional direct-to-college enrollment goal for 2015, to ensure our students are prepared for college and 21st century careers.

So, to all of you who are engaged in this collective work—whether as educators, business and non-profit leaders or activists, thank you. Educating a child takes a community, and I am so proud to live in a community that comes together to put kids first.

Thank you,



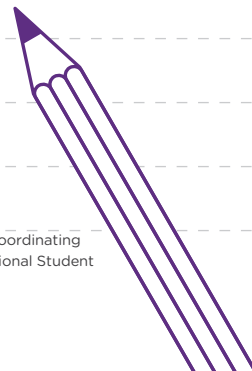
Dawn Jones

External Affairs Manager, Intel

Education Progress Report Taskforce Chair

² The Conference Board Help Wanted OnLine® (HWOL) and Travis County Workforce Board. Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, High School to College Linkages 2002-2013, and The University of Texas at Austin, Ray Marshall Center and National Student Clearinghouse Higher Education Enrollment Outcomes for Central Texas High School Graduates 2009-2014.

³ Academic Excellence Indicator 2007 and Texas Academic Performance Reports 2013



A Snapshot of Elgin ISD

Elgin Independent School District (EISD) is a fast-growth district located in Bastrop County. Since 2002, EISD student enrollment increased by 42%, and low-income student enrollment swelled from 53% to 72% in 2014.⁴

4,178

Students

72%

Economically
Disadvantaged

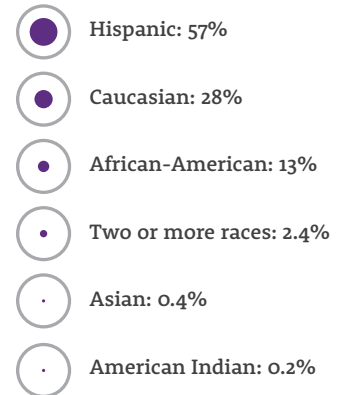


19%

English Language
Learners



Demographic summary





526

Employees



\$1.54

2013–2014 Tax Rate
(\$ per \$100 valuation)

\$47.5K

Average Teacher Annual
Salary

\$32M

Operations Budget

9.9

Average Teacher Years of
Experience

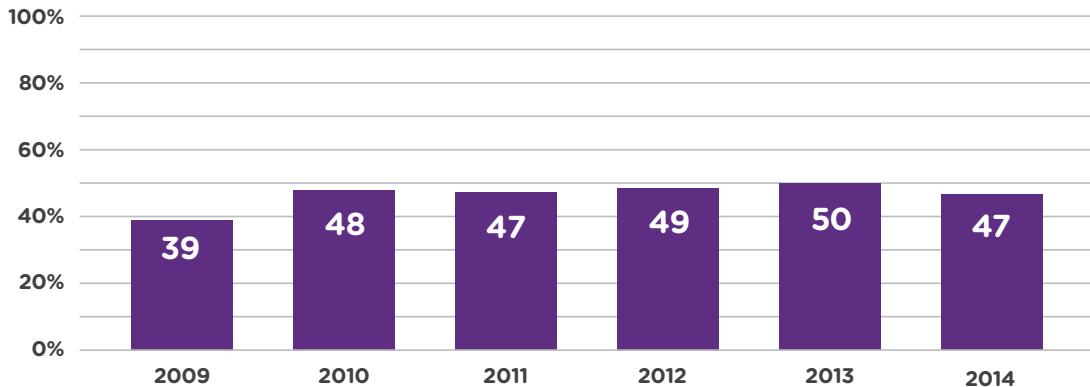
The 2014-15 budget increased by 3% between 2013-14, mainly due to growth in student enrollment. EISD is committed to growing with integrity by keeping the needs of students front and center in the budgeting process.

What Share of EISD Students Directly Enroll in Higher Education?

Despite efforts to move the needle, direct-to-college enrollment has leveled-off near 47% since 2010. Recognizing that higher education is the key vehicle for economic mobility, EISD is focused on promoting programs that support students on their path to college. Elgin ISD has designated a full-time College and Career Coordinator, extended counselor contract days and received an Early College High School Designation as a College for All Model from TEA. This program allows students to get a jumpstart on college by earning up to 60 credit hours and/or an associate's degree while earning a high school diploma. With Austin Community College's (ACC) Elgin campus in close proximity, EISD easily coordinates class schedules with ACC, transports students to the college and utilizes campus resources on a daily basis.

Percentage of Graduates Who Directly Enroll in Higher Education

Percentage of high school graduates who enrolled in community college or four-year, degree-granting institutions, in Texas or outside of the state, for the first time no later than the fall following graduation.

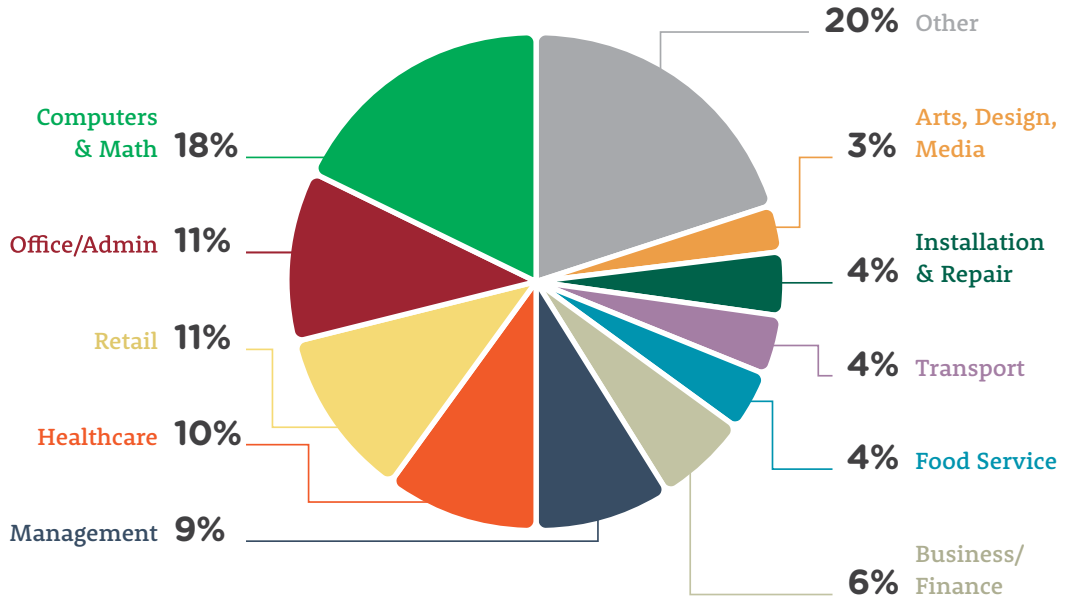



 College enrollment rates have remained largely flat since 2009.

How Do EISD Student Career Interests Align with Job Market Demand?

EISD is working to ensure that its graduates have the skills required to pursue the postsecondary training they need to compete for 21st century jobs. In Central Texas alone, there are 44,000 open jobs and 41,000 unemployed.⁵ EISD is working to solve this mismatch in skills, interests and job market demand by continuously monitoring employment trends and encouraging coursework that excites and engages students in high-need fields such as computer science. EISD offers opportunities for students to work toward or complete workforce certifications, associate degrees and programs of study in various areas, including Veterinary Sciences, Human Services, Education, Biotech Engineering and Horticulture.

Top 10 Current Job Openings in Central Texas



A background image showing three students in a chemistry laboratory. They are wearing safety goggles and are focused on their work with various glassware like flasks and beakers on a lab bench. The image is semi-transparent, allowing the text to be overlaid clearly.

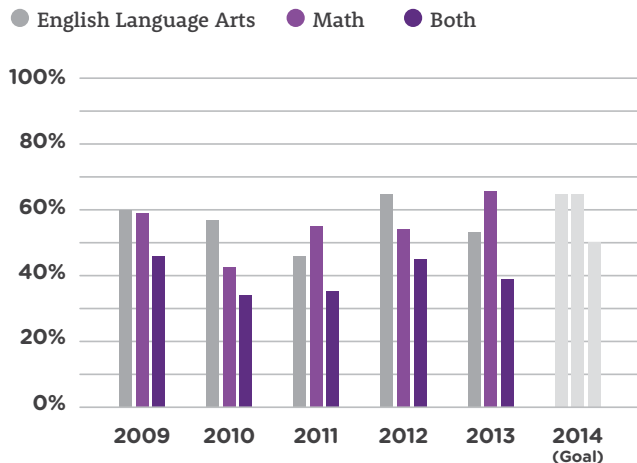
In order to reach EISD's goal of enrolling 70% of our students in higher education, we are focusing on

3 primary goals.

Goal 1

Bolster Student College and Career Readiness

Percentage of high school graduates who met the state college and career readiness standard in:



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Academic Excellence Indicator System 2009-2014

EISD provides and funds:

- SAT/ACT test preparation and testing for all juniors through College Board SAT School Day program
- PSAT testing for all sophomores
- On-site TSI college readiness and AP testing for high school students⁶
- TSI prep courses designed to increase participation in the Early College and Career High School

⁶ Passage of the TSI college readiness test allows students to enroll in credit bearing college level courses for dual enrollment and after high school graduation

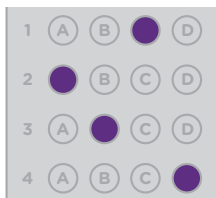
Goal 2

Increase Student Participation in College Prep Activities

Elgin High School offers:

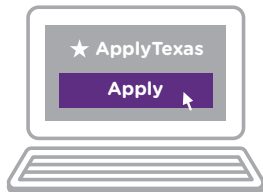
- Transportation to college fairs, career fairs and college site visits throughout the school year for over 40% of high school students
- FAFSA parent nights and ApplyTexas application assistance for Seniors

Participation in College Prep Activities



52%

Took SAT/ACT
Prep Course(s)



67%

Applied via
ApplyTexas

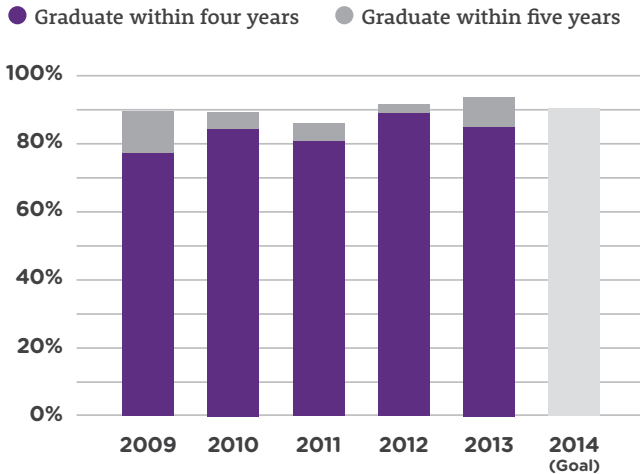


48%

Completed FAFSA

Continue to Improve High School Graduation Rates

Percentage of students who graduate within four or five years:



- Implemented a system to identify and provide struggling students with multiple opportunities to earn a high school diploma.
- Launched the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program in middle school and high school, which provides select students with robust academic support and a supportive college-going culture.

A grayscale background image of a graduation ceremony. Graduates in black gowns and mortarboards are seen from the chest up, looking upwards with expressions of joy and excitement. Many have their arms raised, and several mortarboards are captured in mid-air, falling from the top of the frame. The overall atmosphere is one of celebration and achievement.

**If we accomplish these goals,
EISD will prepare students
for higher education and**

**21st-century
careers.**

Recommendations

Direct to College Enrollment

Provide year-round support to college-bound seniors

- Applaud EISD for extending contracts for the college readiness team to target college transition support to low-income and first-generation college intending students

Job Market/Career Aspirations

Expose students to high-demand careers

- Urge EISD to raise awareness and engagement in high-demand careers, like computer science, where student interest remains low

College or Career Ready

Prepare students for the rigors of higher education

- Assess non-college and career ready juniors/seniors and enroll them in a course which prepares them to graduate college and career ready.

Expand access to & affordability of college readiness exams

- Recognize EISD's efforts to bring TSI & AP testing on-site to increase student access to college readiness tests
- Praise district initiatives to provide test prep and fund the PSAT & SAT/ACT

testing to ensure that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate college readiness regardless of income

ensure that the district has access to actionable data

College Prep Activities

Ensure that cost is less of a barrier to college enrollment

- Ensure that half of the high school seniors submit the FAFSA before the end of March to maximize student chances to receive aid
- Make college enrollment a core district priority
- Encourage EISD to set and achieve an 80% participation rate on the Ray Marshall Center Student Survey to

4/5 Year Graduation

Set high expectations for all students

- Congratulate EISD for making the Distinguished Graduation Plan the defacto guidelines
- Maintain focus on outcomes during assessment transitions
- Urge EISD to carefully monitor student achievement indicators during the transition from TAKS to STARR exit level assessments by closely monitoring student performance on End of Course exams

Acknowledgments

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Austin Community
College

Bryan Bracewell
Southside Market & BBQ

Ed Rivers
Independent Title

Gena Carter
Elgin Chamber President

Kerry Lacy
City of Elgin Manager

How to Get Involved in Elgin ISD

Get to Know Elgin ISD

elginisd.net

Volunteer

Apply to become a Volunteer at an EISD school to support teachers and/or mentor students.

Join WATCH D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) at an EISD campus to become engaged in a variety of campus activities.

Serve on various district and campus committees, such as District Advisory

Council, campus advisory councils, and booster clubs.

For more information, contact The Elgin ISD Department of Human Resources (512)-281-3434.

Donate

- The Elgin ISD Education Foundation
- Project Celebration
- Campus fundraisers



www.austinchamber.com/edureports