Moving the Needle:
Creating Better Career Opportunities and Workforce Readiness

Hutto ISD Progress Report 2013
A Letter to the Community

More than 150 people move to the Austin area each day because of its dynamic economy, low crime, healthy housing market and quality school options, not to mention the overall great quality of life. That quality of life is reflected in the businesses that grow here, from Whole Foods and Seton Family of Hospitals to Samsung and Hanger Orthopedics to a slew of new entrepreneurial ventures.

But our workforce opportunities can be no stronger than our existing pool of talent. For almost a decade, the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce has partnered with business groups and school districts to encourage more Central Texas graduates to directly enroll in post-secondary education.

Our region has had years of improving scores and higher graduation rates, but direct-to-college enrollment has stalled. That’s a challenge we must address.

Now we’re taking that discussion one step further. Even as we see gains in college readiness in Central Texas, we also see the number of high-demand, high-pay jobs rise in the region. As of mid-January, we had 33,000 Central Texas job openings, in areas like IT and healthcare. One in five jobs were in computer science, even though few students indicate an interest in the field.

The time has come to talk to our students not only about pursuing post-secondary education, but also about choosing fields that can give them life-long careers.

We’ve included two charts in our report that capture the mismatch: One chart shows our regional job openings. The other shows graduating senior aspirations. Our job is to minimize the gap between openings and aspirations.

Catherine Morse
General Counsel and Director of Public Affairs, Samsung
Education Progress Report Task Force Chair
The Hutto ISD Path to College

100% applied via Apply Texas

85% of ISD seniors say they’re going to college

64% took the SAT or ACT

58% of students are college ready

49% completed financial aid

54% of the students in the class of 2012 directly enrolled in college by the fall after graduation

Sources: Available at http://austinchamber.com/edureports
**The Road to High School**

Initial passing standards on the new State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, STAAR, were set to “meet the students where they were” three years ago but will continue to rise to a final passing standard aligned with a path to career and college readiness.

After two years under a new state test, Hutto ISD’s performance is strongest in fifth and eighth grade reading, as well as eighth grade science. Passing rates ranged from 63 percent on eighth grade social studies to 86 percent on eighth grade reading.

The final STAAR passing standard, which will not arrive before 2016, is considered aligned to post-secondary readiness. The Austin Chamber’s goal with its business partners, however, is to look to the top Advanced performance level on STAAR, which is a standard considered best prepared for college and career. This performance bar is beyond both current and final STAAR passing standards, but it is best aligned to Central Texas workforce needs.

STAAR is the most comprehensive annual test the state has administered, more so than any of its predecessors. Hutto ISD has seen growth on its passing rates on the eighth grade STAAR, but test scores showed little change at the fifth grade level. Those passing at the “career and college ready” standard was strongest on reading, but the district still has much ground to gain.

Hutto ISD is aware of challenges that lie ahead, especially as passing standards rise. To impact scores, instructional strategies have focused on reading ability as early as rising second grade students. The same can be said for middle school students headed into high school. Hutto ISD recognizes it cannot wait until the ninth grade to make up earlier years of academic content and mastery.

The district’s philosophy, which we laud, is that support for students does not begin in high school with dual-credit or Advanced Placement courses. Instead, interventions must start early and continue throughout the student’s education in Hutto.

In elementary schools, Hutto ISD continues to focus on literacy, STEM and hands-on rigorous learning, ensuring students are prepared to move to the challenge of middle school.

Two elementary schools created outdoor gardens used by students in all subject areas. The district has shifted its bilingual program to a two-way dual language immersion model, expanding it across two campuses to promote learning a second language beginning in kindergarten. Future plans include adding Mandarin Chinese.

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**2009**

**Committed to expand dual credit**

Enrollment has grown from 25 to 267 students in 2014

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**2011**

**Expanded pre-K to full day**

Enrollment quadrupled in 2 years, to 200 students in 2014

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**2012**

**Added robotics to curriculum**

More than 150 students now enrolled district-wide
Were 8th Grade Students on the Path to Being Career and College Ready?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Passed the Test</th>
<th>Met Final Passing Standard (College &amp; Career Ready)</th>
<th>Met Advanced Level (Well Prepared for College &amp; Career)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Students were allowed two opportunities to take math and reading assessments for passing rate. All other levels based on first administration. 31% of 8th grade students took the Algebra I end of course test, which is not included on this chart.

2013
Added Air Force JROTC to curriculum
More than 70 students enroll in the first year

2014
Committed $50,000 to cover tuition for dual credit
Expect a 50% gain in dual credit course enrollment

2014
District introduces Choose2Matter, a project-based learning approach
More than 300 teachers have new relevant tools for instruction
Were 5th Grade Students on the Path to Being Career and College Ready?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Passed the Test</th>
<th>Met Final Passing</th>
<th>Standard (College &amp; Career Ready)</th>
<th>Met Advanced Level (Well Prepared for College &amp; Career)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Texas Academic Performance Report and Pearson Assessment

Note: Students were allowed two opportunities to take math and reading assessment for passing rate. All other levels are based on first administration.

The Hutto ISD Task Force

- Supports Hutto ISD’s continued efforts to boost college- and career-readiness rates among graduating seniors. Rates have risen 20 percentage points over the last 6 years in English, math and both subjects, thus providing a stronger talent pool.
- Praises the school district’s goal to make sure every Hutto ISD senior graduates with at least 12 hours of college credit, an effort that increases interest in college enrollment and defrays the cost of a degree or certification.
- Supports expanded opportunities for high-quality post-secondary options for Hutto ISD students, including the Texas State Technical College courses being provided in Williamson County through a partnership with Temple College.
- Encourages the expansion of both dual credit and Advanced Placement courses as options for high school students to gain college credit.
- Urges the school district to develop a human capital strategy that can increase the retention of teachers, while recognizing the constraints Hutto ISD faces with the re-opening of Veterans Hill Elementary School.
- Applauds recent Hutto ISD budget decisions aimed for results: expanding to full-day pre-kindergarten; adding robotics to the curriculum; committing additional professional development to project based learning; adding a JROTC program on campus last year; and committing $50,000 from the budget to defray the cost of dual-credit courses this year.
- Supports academic strategies in the early grades that keep students on course for not only passing the STAAR tests but also meeting the standards that would indicate the students were best prepared for entering middle school and high school.
- Supports additional dialogue between the school district and its business partners to provide more input on regional workforce needs and potential partnerships that expose students to the job opportunities of the region.
**College, Career, and Beyond**

Hutto ISD, like a number of school districts in our region, is in the unusual position of having more students ready to go to college than those who actually choose to directly enroll.

College readiness in Hutto ISD has increased by about 20 percentage points across all categories since 2007. A growing number of graduates are ready to tackle the high-demand workforce needs in the region. Statistics, however, indicate only 54 percent of the Class of 2012 enrolled in a post-secondary option by the fall after graduation.

When Hutto High School’s Class of 2013 was surveyed, 78 percent indicated they intended to pursue higher education. That points to a gap that needs to be filled with post-secondary options, and we laud Hutto ISD for its continuing partnership with Temple College, which has brought a branch of Texas State Technical College to Eastern Williamson County.

Feedback with the school district and its partners, however, indicates high school students may not be fully aware of their education options in the region, which includes multiple providers and course opportunities. Twice as many students travel to branches of Austin Community College in Travis County rather than avail themselves of options closer to home in Williamson County.

Over the last five years, direct-to-college enrollment has remained flat for Hutto ISD. And even though 100 percent of the Hutto High School Class of 2012 seniors filled out a state common college application form, less than half chose to complete the federal financial aid form for college. Only 54 percent chose college.

One highlight in Hutto ISD’s data is that a third of high school juniors and seniors take courses that result in both high school and college credit. The district’s goal is 12 hours college credit for each graduate of Hutto High School. The school district also has a broad array of Advanced Placement courses and has made a district-wide push to improve writing skills across the curriculum.

Challenges in the district continue to be high teacher turnover due to the competitive pay in the region. The district did provide a recent targeted pay raise, but has had to prioritize budget expenditures this spring to reopen Veterans Hill Elementary, which was being used by TSTC but now will reopen with new residential development.

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**How Many Graduates Went Directly to College Upon Graduation?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Clearinghouse Data, UT Ray Marshall Center

Percentages indicate students who have enrolled in at least one credit-bearing course at a community college or degree-granting institution for the first time in the fall following graduation, in Texas or out of state.
How Many Graduates Were Ready for College or a Career?

- **English Language Arts**
  - 2007: 51%
  - 2008: 53%
  - 2009: 71%
  - 2010: 73%
  - 2011: 74%
  - 2012: 80%

- **Math**
  - 2007: 60%
  - 2008: 63%
  - 2009: 67%
  - 2010: 75%
  - 2011: 75%
  - 2012: 80%

- **Both**
  - 2007: 36%
  - 2008: 40%
  - 2009: 51%
  - 2010: 56%
  - 2011: 58%
  - 2012: 80%
  - 2013: 75%
  - 2014: 80%

**Goal**: 90%

**Source**: Texas Academic Performance Report

Career- and college-readiness is measured by the SAT, ACT or the exit-level Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills. Students who fail to meet set standards must enter college taking remedial classes.
How Many Graduated in Four Years?

How Many Completed All Graduation Tests on Time?

20% 40% 60% 80%

All Students African American Hispanic White Econ. Disadvantaged

2007 2008 2009 2010

Source: Texas Academic Performance Report

How Many Graduated in Five Years?

How Did Students Perform on EOC Tests?

Source: Texas Academic Performance Report

ELA II Writing 2% 31% 52%
ELA II Reading 19% 66% 78%
ELA I Writing 1% 26% 48%
ELA I Reading 9% 47% 68%
Biology 9% 40% 85%
Algebra I 3% 15% 72%

Source: Texas Academic Performance Report

How Many Graduated in Five Years?

2009 2010 2011

Graduated in 4 yrs Add'l graduates in 5 yrs

Source: Texas Academic Performance Report
**About Hutto ISD**

Hutto ISD is a proud district that builds community involvement and support through strong relationships with community partners and a personal commitment to all kids. We achieve success for all students by creating world-class problem solvers and 21st century learners.

In Hutto, teachers serve as guides and facilitators in assisting students to reach their goals, addressing individual learning styles and ensuring students receive instruction appropriate for their current academic level. Instruction is targeted to meet the needs of each student, including cultural, language and special needs. Equally important to academic success is a goal of servant leadership, which Hutto ISD believes supports graduates who are well-rounded, productive citizens beyond high school.

Our students are rich in character and focused on people and personal development. They contribute to the well-being of others and their community. Through the ideal of servant leadership, our students learn the power of engagement: engagement in their academics, extra-curricular pursuits and community involvement.

Hutto ISD’s vision of service and excellence can be seen in the acts of our students, but it is not done without a spirit of collaboration. Hutto ISD partners with many like-minded organizations in and around Hutto. This service-minded philosophy makes Hutto not only an excellent place to learn, but also a wonderful place to live.

Hutto ISD’s mission is to inspire our students to be bold, innovative thinkers who demonstrate character and are academically prepared for an unlimited future through engaged learning and exceptional activities that involve all members of the Hippo Nation.

Supporting our community first is crucial to ownership in the education of our students. From that sprang our vision: Inspiring excellence in academics, character and community. Together, our mission and vision encompass a philosophy that involves our parents, community and all members of the Hutto family.

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**“Best Odds” for Direct College Enrollment**

In addition to the actions on the Road to College, the UT-Austin Ray Marshall Center has identified a combination of six student actions which, if completed, indicate that a high school senior has the “best odds” for direct enrollment in some form of postsecondary education. This is not a multiple choice exercise. To ensure the vast majority of Hutto graduates directly enroll, we encourage completion of all six actions by seniors before graduation.

The higher the percentage on these activities, the more likely we will move the needle on college enrollment.

- **Visited college or technical school** 61%
- **Discussed college plans with staff** 25%
- **Took SAT/ACT prep class** 32%
- **Parents filled out FAFSA**
- **Plans to pay with loans** 60%
- **Thought process was easy** 23%

*Source: Hutto ISD Senior Survey, Class of 2013*
This is the ninth year the Austin Chamber of Commerce has produced the education progress reports. The chair of this year’s task force effort is Catherine Morse, General Counsel and Director of Public Affairs at Samsung. Dawn L Jones, external affairs manager, Intel-Texas, serves as vice chair of the task force and chair of the launch event.

**Hutto ISD**
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Melissa Haney, Coordinator of Accountability & Advanced Academics  
Emily Parks, Public Information Officer  

**Hutto Chamber of Commerce/EDC Task Force**
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For more about the Hutto Independent School District: www.hipponation.org  
The Hutto EDC can be reached at www.huttoedc.com  
For more information about the Austin chamber’s progress reports and electronic versions of each report, go to www.austinchamber.com/edureports or call Senior Vice President of Federal/State Advocacy and Education/Talent Development Drew Scheberle at 512.322.5628.