

Together We Educate Lockhart



Celebrate. Innovate. Redefine Possible.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dawn Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "J" and "S".

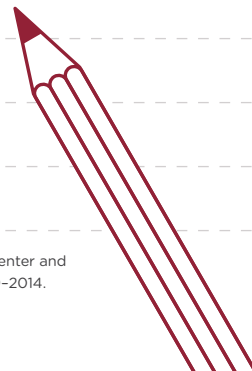
Dawn Jones

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 Texas Academic Performance Reports and Academic Excellence Indicator System 2007-2013



A Snapshot of Lockhart ISD

Lockhart Independent School District (Lockhart ISD) is a rapidly growing district located southeast of Austin in Caldwell County. From 2002 until October 2013, LISD student enrollment increased by 13%, and low-income student enrollment increased from 46% to 70%.⁴

5,113

Students

70%

Economically
Disadvantaged

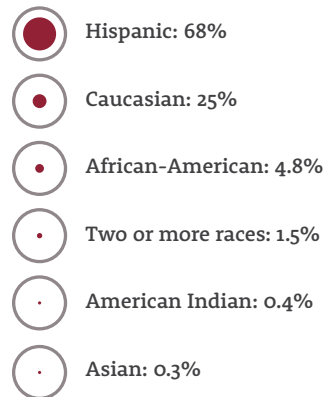


14%

English Language
Learners



Demographic summary



⁴ Texas Academic Performance Reports and Academic Excellence Indicator System 2003–2014



629

Employees



\$1.43

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

\$47.7K

Average Teacher Annual
Salary

\$36.7M

Operations Budget

10.5

Average Teacher Years of
Experience

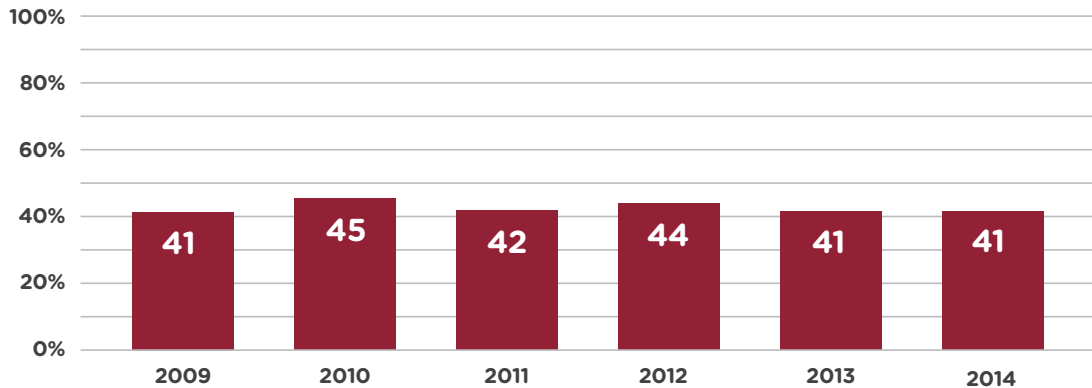
Lockhart ISD has received multiple awards for fiscal responsibility and carries a large budget surplus. In tight budget times, Lockhart ISD has targeted spending decisions toward a “student-first” culture. Currently the district budget priorities include providing quality education in times of rapid growth and improving instructional technology as a necessity for 21st century classrooms.

What Share of LISD Students Directly Enroll in Higher Education?

While Lockhart ISD's high school graduation rate exceeds both the regional and state average, the district's direct-to-college enrollment has leveled off around 42% since 2009. Recognizing that higher education is the key vehicle for economic mobility, Lockhart is committed to supporting students on their path to college. To increase the number of students directly attending college, a former MIT admissions counselor works with high school seniors to ensure they are applying to top tier universities and seeking financial aid and scholarships. Texas State University representatives also work two days a week to assist students with FASFA and Apply Texas applications. In addition, Lockhart High School has a full time college and career counselor, an innovative course targeting SAT and ACT preparation and provides student support on the college application process.

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.

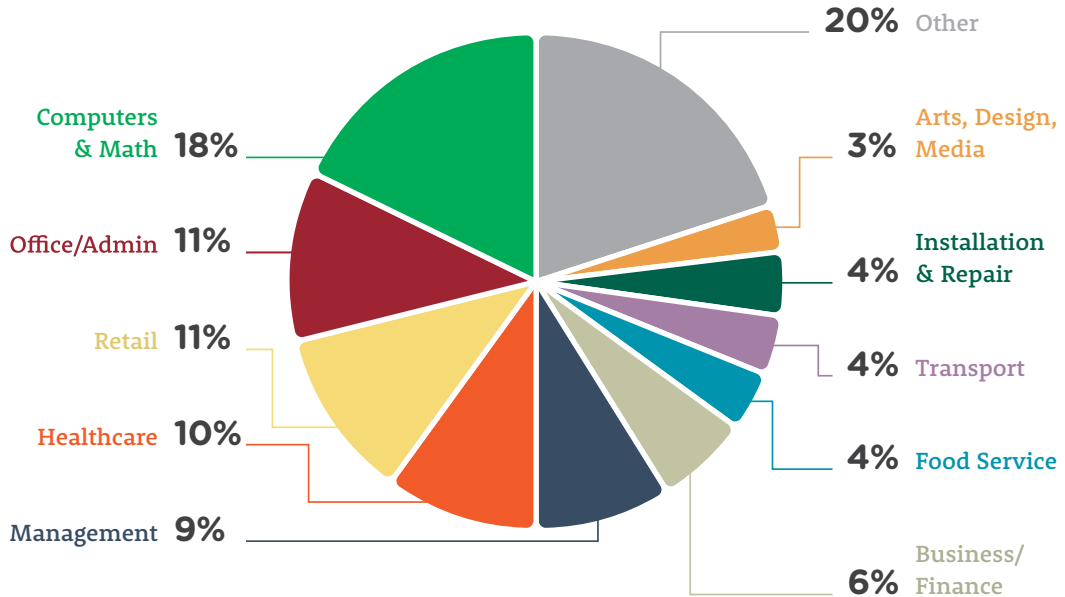



 College enrollment rates have remained largely flat since 2009.

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

While Lockhart ISD's high school graduation rate is several percentage points above both the region and the state, the district is also working to ensure their graduates have the skills required to pursue 21st century careers. Starting in middle school, 8th graders take career assessment tests to guide them as they identify endorsement pathways and develop their personal graduation plans. Lockhart ISD students in grades 6–12 utilize Campus2Careers, a cloud-based tool to assist students and parents in decision-making processes and opportunities for both college and careers. Currently the district is focused on strengthening the STEM pathway and increasing advanced placement course offerings. Lockhart High School offers all 5 state endorsement pathways, 15 programs of study and numerous creative technology courses including programming and software development.

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.

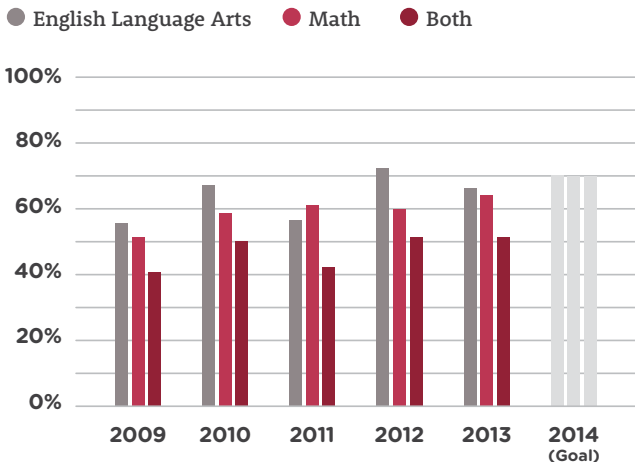
In order to reach LISD's goal of enrolling 70% of our students in higher education, we are focusing on

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:

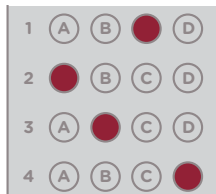


- Beginning 2014–2015, SAT school day is district funded for all 11th and 12th graders.
- Lockhart ISD offers Saturday SAT/ACT Preparation Academies serving 120 students.
- 30% of students completed College Board Advanced Placement courses earning college hours.
- Lockhart ISD completely funds a school day administered PSAT for all 9th through 11th graders.

Participation in College Prep Activities

- The Austin Chamber and Lockhart ISD launched the Financial Aid Saturdays program in 2014-15 to provide financial aid completion assistance to students and families.
- Lockhart ISD offers SAT, ACT and college and career readiness classes to ensure all graduating students have the opportunity to meet state college/career readiness standards.

Participation in College Prep Activities



51%

Took SAT/ACT
Prep Course(s)



73%

Applied via
ApplyTexas

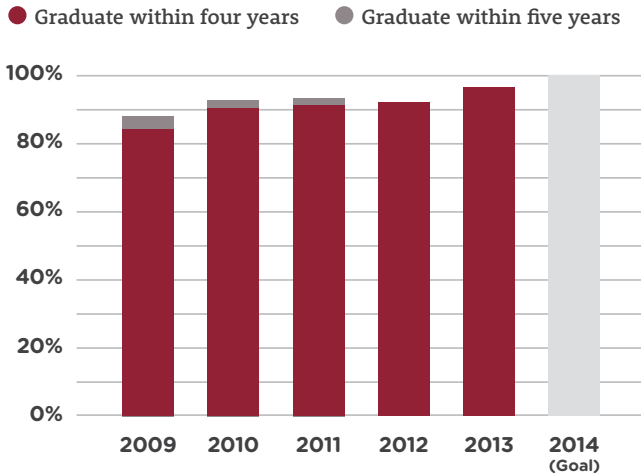


46%

Completed FAFSA

Continue to Improve High School Graduation Rates

Percentage of students who graduate within four or five years:



- Lockhart ISD will continue their partnership with Communities in Schools to provide a campus-based social worker at Lockhart High School and Lockhart Junior High School to keep students on track to high school graduation.
- Lockhart ISD helps each of its students prepare and manage an individual four-year graduation plan.

A grayscale background image of a graduation ceremony. Numerous graduates in black gowns and caps are visible, with many of their caps tossed into the air. The graduates are looking upwards with expressions of joy and excitement. The overall scene is celebratory and bright.

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

**21st-century
careers.**

Recommendations

Direct to College Enrollment

Provide year-round support to college-bound seniors

- Extend senior counselor contracts between June and August to target college transition support to low-income and first-generation college intending students.
- Congratulate LISD for bringing on an additional college coach in addition to the full-time college and career counselor and utilizing a technology platform, Campus2Careers, to help students, parents, and teachers in their

planning, communication, and decision-making processes for college and career.

Job Market/Career Aspirations

Expose students to high-demand careers

- Support activities to raise awareness and engagement in high-demand careers like computer science where student interest remains low.

College or Career Ready

Expand access to & affordability of college readiness exams

- Assess non-college and career ready juniors/seniors and enroll them in a

course which prepares them to graduate college and career ready.

- Congratulate LISD for expanding on-site testing within ISDs for school day SAT.
- Praise LISD for offering Saturday SAT/ACT Preparation Academies for 120 students.
- Applaud LISD initiatives to completely fund the PSAT for all 9th through 11th graders.

College Prep Activities

Ensure that cost is less of a barrier to college enrollment

- Make it an administrative priority to ensure half of seniors submit the FAFSA before end of March to maximize student chances to receive aid.

Make college enrollment a core district priority

- Actively promote student participation in influential college prep activities (see page 10, 11).

4/5 Year Graduation

Set high expectations for all students

- Make the Distinguished Graduation Plan the default. This graduation plan is better aligned to postsecondary admissions requirements and is better preparation for students to succeed in higher education and the high performance workplace.

Acknowledgments

Taskforce Chair

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Lockhart Business Volunteers

Angela Rawlinson
Lockhart Chamber

Rebecca Pulliam
State Farm

How to Get Involved in Lockhart ISD

Get to Know Lockhart ISD

lockhartisd.org

Volunteer

Campus PTAs/PTOs

Campus2Careers

Watchdog Dads

Donate

Contribute to:

The Education Foundation
for Lockhart ISD

lockhartisd.org

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