



Board Monitoring System: Indicator D

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) exists to strengthen the social and economic foundation of Houston by assuring its youth the highest-quality elementary and secondary education available anywhere. In fulfilling this goal, HISD's Board of Education has designed a program to systematically monitor the district's goals and core values. The Board Monitoring System will report on each goal and core value on a routine basis. The goal currently under review is to meet the Texas Education Agency's criteria for Recognized status in the state accountability system (Goal 1, Section D).

Findings

State Criteria for Achieving Recognized Status

- HISD did not meet the conditions for Recognized status for 2009 on the following criteria: TAKS passing rate greater than or equal to 75 percent for all students and each student group, completion rates of 85 percent or greater, and no Academically Unacceptable campuses (see Table 1).

Factors Hindering HISD's Achievement of Recognized Status

- The passing rates for the African-American group did not meet the Recognized criteria of 75 percent passing on the TAKS science test (see Figure 1).
- With the exception of the completion rate for white students, no other student group had a completion rate greater than 85 percent, which is the lowest criterion for Recognized status (see Figure 3).
- A district in which any campus is rated Academically Unacceptable under the Standard Accountability System cannot achieve Recognized or Exemplary status. In HISD, there were 12 Academically Unacceptable campuses rated under the Standard Accountability System (see Table 1).
- Under the 2009 accountability system, HISD had 346, or 0.46 percent, underreported students not listed as enrolled or as leavers in grades 7–12 (see Table 1).

Administrative Response

Principals, regional leadership teams, and representatives from the Academic Services Department continue to work closely together to provide customized assistance and support for each academically unacceptable campus. This planning for collaborative intervention will positively influence student learning and growth. Support will focus on tiered authority based on the capacity of the principal and staff. As part of this assessment, executive principals and regional superintendents evaluate the leadership capacity for achievement and growth potential at each campus. Regional superintendents and executive principals will provide greater levels of structured decisions until a school has demonstrated performance at a level where increased instructional freedom is merited.

As the first step in the process, regional and school leadership teams will meet with representatives from key departments in Academic Services (Curriculum, Professional Development Services, Multilingual Programs, or Special Education). The specific Academic Services department involved is based on the plan that has been designed by the principal, the regional superintendent, and his or her leadership team. Academic Services then collaborates with the team to provide customized support aligned to the region's plan for campus intervention.

Following alignment of support, customized training will be provided by regional and central-office content experts to address content-specific instructional gaps that exist at each academically unacceptable campus. Executive principals and the Curriculum Department will partner to monitor implementation of research-based best practices to ensure that teacher effectiveness and student gains are on target. Requirements for academically unacceptable campuses include monitoring the following:

- TAKS and completion rate and/or dropout rates
- fidelity of implementation of the district curriculum
- assessment results – weekly and six- or nine-week Curriculum Benchmark Assessment results
- review of and planning based on value-added data
- research-based best teaching practices used in classrooms
- review, restructuring, and creation of systems that contribute to student achievement
- use of the three-tiered intervention model and other methods necessary to promote and graduate students

Maximizing the role of parents as partners who are connected to a school and who know how to navigate its systems to fully support their children must be a goal for all HISD schools. As a first step in identifying concerns that can be identified through qualitative data, all academically unacceptable schools will administer climate surveys, which will be conducted by Professional Development Services. The results of the climate survey will be shared with the school leadership team and the regional leadership team. The executive principal will monitor the implementation of the academically unacceptable school's specific goals that will build a positive school culture with a consistent and committed focus on academic growth for all student groups. Planning will also take place to ensure that stakeholders such as parents and the business community understand the campus goals to increase achievement and how they can support the process of shaping change positively on each campus. Qualitative data provided by students as a result of the audit will receive specific and targeted attention so that student perceptions about the school can be reshaped through setting and monitoring meaningful goals.

Specific strategies to resolve the issue of dropouts in HISD:

- adoption of the National Dropout Prevention Center Network's 15 Strategies for Dropout Prevention
- implementation of PEER Review Committee recommendations
- training in data quality and data analysis
- training in Best Practices in
 - Intervention Assistance Teams
 - Dropout Recovery, Intervention, and Prevention (DRIP) committees
 - Truancy interventions and managements

In order to improve the performance levels of African-American students in science, the following strategies are recommended.

Elementary Science

- Systemic use and monitoring of all available district and regional resources: Pre-K through grade 5 standards-based curriculum with scope and sequence; science notebooking to support student data collection; 10 best-practice literacy standards specific to science academic language; formative assessment; Science Learning and Leadership Collaborative with an added leadership focus; Science Materials Resource Center (Hollingsworth Center); and district-supported field experiences and partnerships.

- Use of formative assessment to inform instruction—especially to address differentiation and rigor in classrooms districtwide. Professional development provided by regional offices and Academic Services will emphasize alignment of data to instructional classroom practices.

Secondary Science

- Establish a bridge between grades 5 and 6. A pre-assessment will be developed for teacher use that can be administered to identify students' strengths and deficits in secondary science. Differentiation of instruction will be implemented for all students, with specific support for struggling African-American students.
- For grade-8 students, continue to build teacher capacity for the delivery of hands-on, inquiry-based learning. Earth and Space Science must be a point of focus due to low scores in this specific science strand.
- For high-school students, a virtual chemistry-labs program will be piloted. The results of this pilot will be used to supplement secondary science documents. Chemistry represents the lowest objective for both male and female African-American students. The results of the pilot will inform next steps for addressing this concern.

The district's Government Relations Department is working with the state to address the standard for underreported students.

| | Criteria for TEA Recognized Status | HISD Districtwide Outcomes | Met/Not Met Recognized Criteria |
|---|--|---|--|
| Lowest TAKS passing rate for all students and each student group | ≥ 75.0% | Lowest TAKS passing rates: science for African-American was 74 percent passing rating. | Not Met |
| Highest annual dropout rate for all students and each student group grades 7 and 8 | 2.0% | Highest dropout rate: for all students and each student group dropout rates ranged from 0.0 percent to 0.6 percent. | Met |
| Lowest 4-year completion rate includes graduates and continuers | ≥ 85.0% | Lowest completion rates: 80.6 percent for all students, 79.6 percent for African-American students, 78.1 percent for Hispanic students, and 79.5 percent for economically disadvantaged students. | Not Met |
| Number of Academically Unacceptable campuses under standard accountability system | 0 | 12 | Not Met |
| Number of students in grades 7–12 <i>underreported</i> as enrolled or as leavers in the 2007–2008 PEIMS enrollment or leaver record | Less than or equal to 200, or less than or equal to 5 percent of 2007–2008 students in grades 7–12 | 346 (0.46%) | Not Met |

Figure 1: TEA Accountability Data Standards for HISD 2009

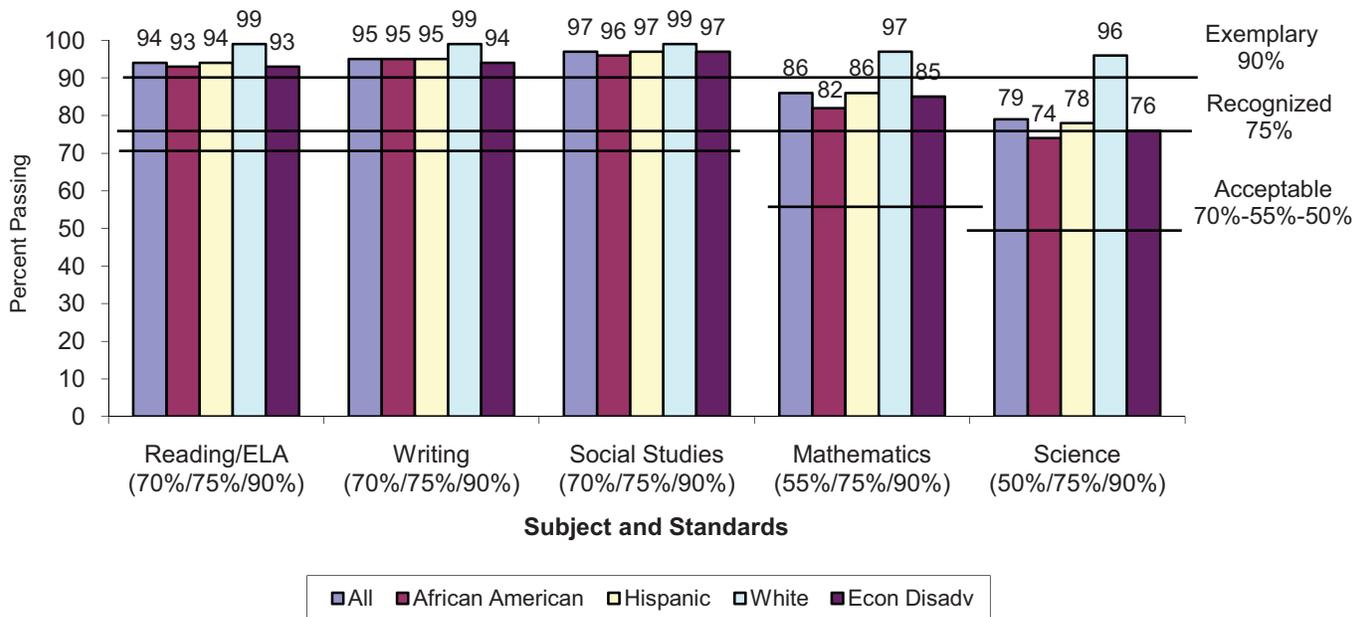


Figure 2: TEA Requirements on 2007–2008 Dropout Rates Grades 7 and 8 for Each Rating Category and HISD Results (Used to Rate Middle Schools)

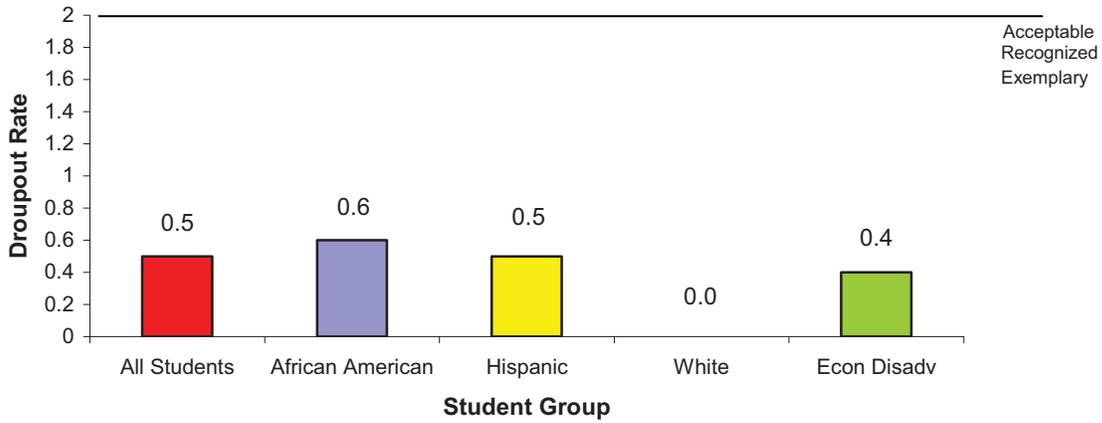


Figure 3: TEA Requirements on Completion Status for Each Rating Category and HISD Results for the Class of 2008

