



Board Monitoring System: Indicator K

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 achievement of the district's goals and adherence to core values. The Board Monitoring System requires the administration to report on each goal and core value on a routine basis. The indicator currently under review is ENGLISH ACQUISITION FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS. The objective of this indicator states: "Limited English Proficient (LEP) students shall make the transition into English courses as rapidly as individually possible" (Goal 1, Section K).

Findings

English Acquisition for LEP Students

- In Figure 1, the total number of exited students increased by 5 percent, going from 5,185 in 2008–2009 to 5,442 in 2009–2010.
- During the 2009–2010 school year, the largest number of exited students was in the fourth grade with 1,444, followed by fifth grade with 780.
- In Figure 2, the total number of first- or second-year exited LEP students (i.e., "monitored" students) increased from 5,541 in 2008–2009 to 10,912 in 2009–2010, an increase of 97 percent.
- During the 2009–2010 school year, the largest number of monitored students was in the fifth grade with 1,950, followed by the seventh grade with 1,707.

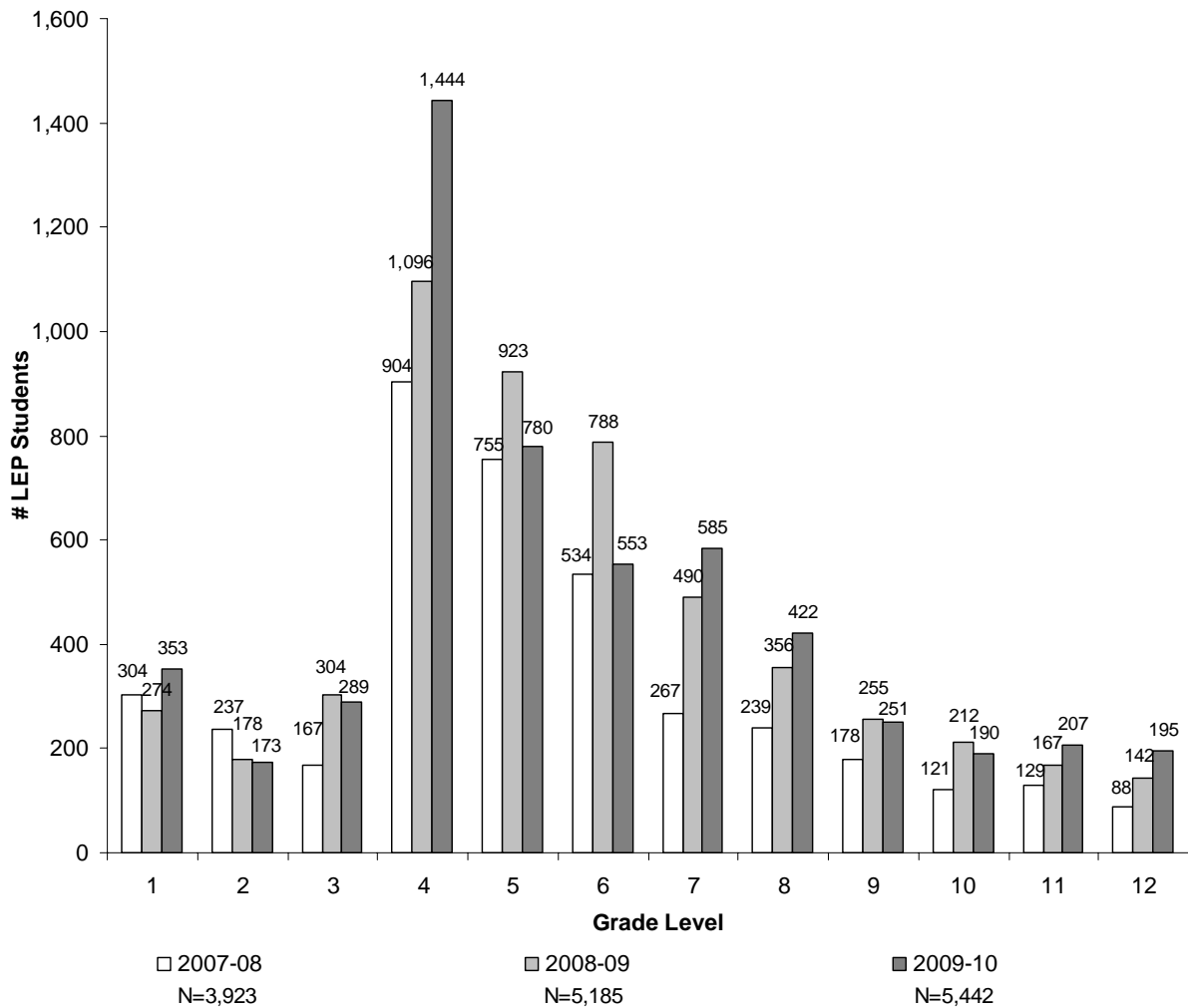
Analysis/Administrative Response

- LEP exits declined two years ago in large part due to new exit criteria mandated by Texas Education Agency (TEA), specifically those requiring evidence of oral and written English proficiency. The Multilingual Programs Department subsequently introduced, and continues to emphasize, an increased focus on productive (i.e., oral and written English) language for English Language

Learner’s (ELLs) in professional development activities for the district’s bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers.

- Since these initiatives, the number of LEP exits has increased and now is close to that reported historically.
- As the number of LEP exits has rebounded over the past two school years, the number of monitored (first- and second-year exited) ELLs has also increased, and is close to levels seen previously.

Figure 1: HISD LEP Students Who Exited by Grade

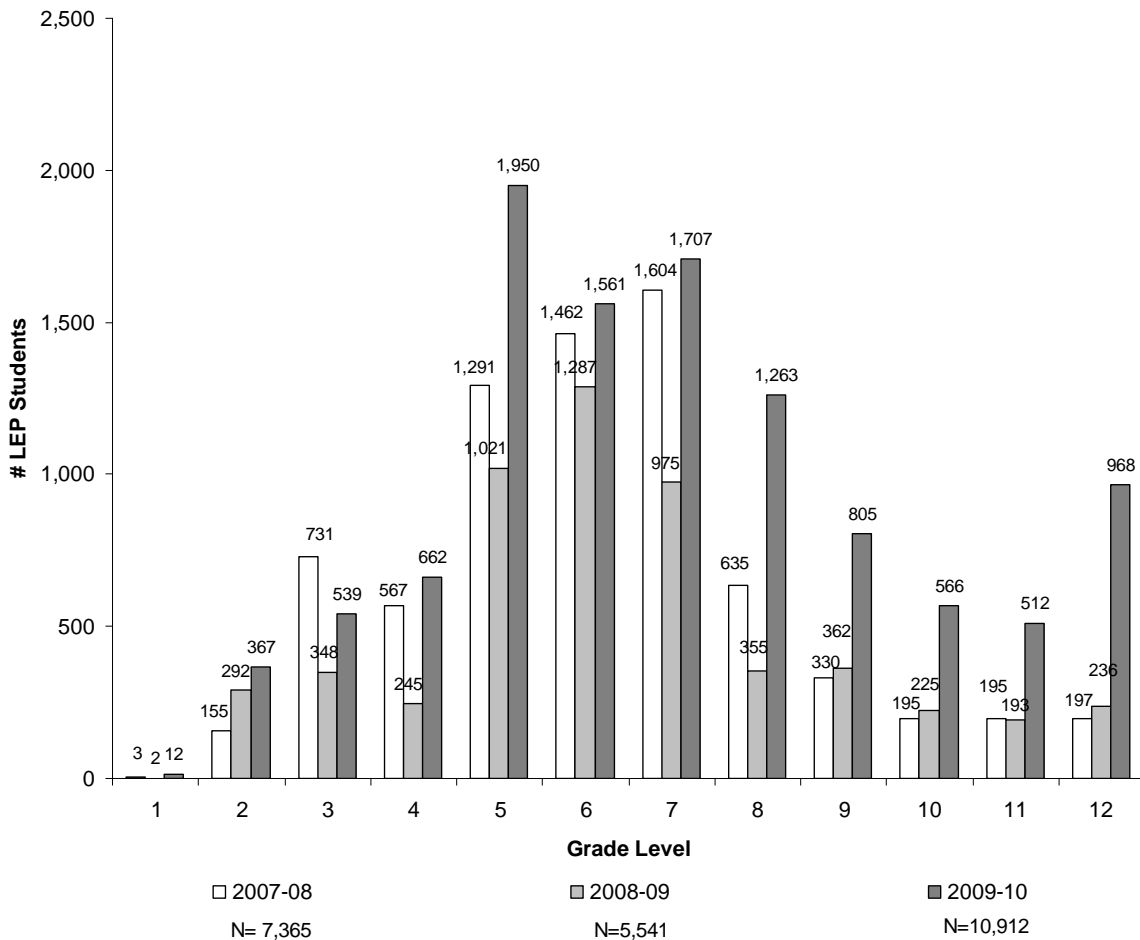


The Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines describe an exited LEP student as a LEP student who was reclassified as a non-LEP student in the last school year. Reclassification is based on state criteria.

This chart (**Figure 1**) shows the number of LEP students who exited at each grade by year between 2007–2008 and 2009–2010. Grade shown is the grade in which they were enrolled at the time they were exited. Most exits in 2009–2010 occurred in the

fourth and fifth grades, as has been the case in prior years. During the past academic year, the number of exits increased by 5 percent, going from 5,185 in 2008–2009 to 5,442. This is almost back to the levels observed in 2006 and prior years, when there were more than 5,500 exits annually. New, more stringent LEP exit criteria were mandated by TEA as of August 2006. These new standards required LEPs at all grade levels to demonstrate proficiency in oral and written English as well as in reading. Subsequently, it was determined that low scores on the IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT) oral and written tests were a contributing factor to the decrease in LEP exits, and the multilingual department focused on increasing the emphasis on productive aspects of English language proficiency (i.e., speaking and writing) in its professional development activities for bilingual and ESL teachers. The initial decline in exits that followed introduction of these rules appears to have been reversed.

Figure 2: HISD Monitored LEP Students by Grade



The Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines describe a monitored LEP student as a LEP student who was reclassified as a non-LEP student sometime during the previous two school years. The total number of monitored students increased from 5,541 in 2008–2009 to 10,912 in 2009–2010, an increase of 97 percent.

This chart (**Figure 2**) shows the number of monitored LEP students at each grade by year between 2007–2008 and 2009–2010. The highest number of monitored students was in the fifth grade, with the next-highest counts in the seventh and sixth grades. The number of monitored LEP students increased markedly in 2009–2010 over values observed in the previous two years. Before the decline in LEP exits discussed previously, the number of monitored LEPs was typically close to 12,000 per year or more. The count of monitored LEPs is presumably increasing as the number of LEP exits returns to more historically observed levels. That is, the relatively low number of monitored LEPs observed in 2008–2009 was a reflection of two consecutive years with low exit numbers. With these apparently approaching more typically observed levels of 5,000+ annually, the number of monitored LEPs has rebounded as well.