

MEMORANDUM

August 18, 2022

TO: Margarita Gardea
Officer, Curriculum and Instruction

FROM: Allison E. Matney, Ed.D.
Executive Officer, Research and Accountability

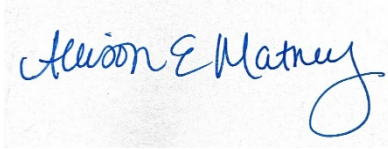
SUBJECT: **HOUSTON ISD AND HEAD START COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS DATA REPORT, 2020–2021**

The purpose of the HISD and Head Start Pre-K collaborative programs is to share the responsibility for closing the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged children and their more affluent peers. It is important to understand how students enrolled in a Head Start program perform academically, both as compared to students who were not enrolled in a Head Start program and as compared to different student groups. Due to data quality concerns, while this report does not analyze the academic outcomes of HISD Pre-K and kindergarten students by their Head Start program affiliation, it provides recommendations to improve data quality for future analyses and presents HISD Head Start program participation results by Head Start Agency and students' economic disadvantage, race/ethnicity, Students with Disabilities, Emergent Bilingual/English Learner, and homeless statuses.

Key findings include:

- A total of 1,697 HISD Head Start students were listed on the 2020–2021 HISD Head Start student rosters from the Head Start agencies. Of those, the largest group of students attended Baker Ripley (706 or 42 percent), followed by Gulf Coast Community Services Association (GCCSA) (696 or 41 percent), the Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) (185 or 11 percent), and AVANCE-Houston, Inc. (AVANCE) (110 or six percent)
- A total of 11,274 students were enrolled in kindergarten in the 2020–2021 school year. Of those, 1,368 (15 percent) were among the 1,697 listed on HISD Head Start student rosters.
- HISD had larger proportions of African American/Black, economically disadvantaged, Emergent Bilingual/English Learners, and homeless students to participate in an HISD Head Start program than the proportions of these student groups among HISD non-Head Start students. This may serve to help improve opportunities for greater equity and better learning experiences and outcomes for the students with these characteristics who participated in HISD Head Start programs.

Further distribution of this report is at your discretion. Should you have any further questions, please contact me at 713-556-6700.



AEM

Attachment

cc: Millard L. House II
Rick Cruz, Ed.D.
Shawn Bird, Ed.D.
Rahshene Davis, Ed.D.
Marisol Castruita
Assistant Superintendents
School Support Officers



RESEARCH

Educational Program Report

HOUSTON ISD AND HEAD START COLLABORATIVE
PROGRAMS DATA REPORT, 2020-2021



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Houston ISD and Head Start Collaborative Programs Data Report, 2020–2021

Executive Summary

Background

To meet the needs of eligible young children and parents, state and local Head Start (HS) agencies collaborate and coordinate with other entities such as public schools to provide early childhood education opportunities. The purpose of the HISD and HS prekindergarten (Pre-K) collaborative programs is to share the responsibility for closing the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged children and their more affluent peers. Previously, this report primarily addressed student academic outcomes for kindergarten students who had previously attended HISD and HS Pre-K programs. Due to data quality issues, this report is limited to describing the demographic characteristics of HISD HS and non-HS Pre-K students by HS program affiliation, gender and race/ethnicity, and economic disadvantage, students with disabilities receiving special services (SWD), Emergent Bilingual/English Learners, and homelessness statuses. It also addresses HS data limitations and recommendations to improve the data management practices for both HISD and HISD HS collaborative programs.

Highlights

- A total of 11,274 students were identified as HISD Pre-K program students in 2020–2021.
- Based on HS program data for HISD Pre-K, 1,697 students were enrolled in one of four federally-funded HS programs that served regional sectors of Harris County within HISD’s boundaries in 2020–2021—AVANCE-Houston, Inc. (AVANCE), Baker Ripley, Gulf Coast Community Services Association (GCCSA), and the Harris County Department of Education (HCDE).
- The largest group of HS HISD Pre-K students attended Baker Ripley (42 percent), followed by GCCSA (41 percent), the HCDE (11 percent), and AVANCE (six percent).
- Of the 1,697 HISD HS Pre-K students in the 2020–2021 school year, demographic data were identified for 1,594 of the students (96 percent).
- The typical pre-kindergarten HISD HS student in 2020–2021 was identified as Hispanic and economically-disadvantaged. Larger proportions of African American/Black, economically disadvantaged, Emergent Bilingual/English Learners, and homeless students participated in HISD HS programs than the proportions of these student groups among the non-HS students.
- Recommendations to improve data quality in upcoming years include:
 - Track all HISD HS Pre-K students in the HISD Student Information System.
 - The Early Childhood Education department should consider communicating to the HS agencies HISD’s data quality needs and expectations, prior to the beginning of the HS program school year and request enrollment data at the beginning, middle, and six weeks prior to the end of the school year to confirm HISD’s enrollment of all HISD HS students.
 - Conduct an exploration of student to instructor ratios in HISD Pre-K classrooms, as it relates to the goal of Constraint Progress Measure (CPM) 5.2, which requires the district to decrease the student to instructor ratio in Pre-K from 15:1 in 2019–2020 to 11:1 or less in 2023–2024 CPM 5.2.

Introduction

Head Start (HS) is a “comprehensive child development program...[to] help communities meet the needs of disadvantaged preschool children. The program was created as a part of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s 1964 initiation of the “war on poverty” in response to research that “indicated an obligation to help disadvantaged groups, compensating for inequality in social or economic conditions” (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start [OHS], 2022). To “help break the cycle of poverty,” HS programs were designed to meet the mental, social, and emotional development needs of preschool children from families with low-income. Since 1965, more than 36 million preschool children have been served in HS programs, which have expanded from eight-week demonstration projects to full-year, multifaceted programs. Annually, one million children and their families have been served by HS programs in urban, suburban, and rural communities “in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and U.S. territories, including American Indian and Alaska Native and Migrant and Seasonal communities” (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start [OHS], 2022). HS programs provide a comprehensive approach to early childhood education that includes education, health, parent involvement, and social services (National Head Start Association [NHSA], 2022).

Since the 1985–1986 school year, in compliance with the Texas Education Code §29.153, the Houston Independent School District (HISD) has provided free prekindergarten (Pre-K) classes for eligible Houston area four-year old students. To be eligible for enrollment in the district’s free Pre-K program, a child must be four years of age on or before September 1 of the given school year, live within HISD boundaries, and meet one or more of the following criteria (Houston Independent School District, 2020):

- child is homeless,
- child is unable to speak or understand English as determined by the Home Language Survey,
- child is economically disadvantaged,
- child of an active-duty member of the U.S. military or one who has been killed, injured, or missing in action while on active duty,
- child is or has been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services,
- child meets any eligibility criteria for HS; and
- child of a person eligible for the Star of Texas Award as a peace officer, firefighter, or emergency medical first responder.

Eligible children are enrolled into one of four HISD Pre-K program models:

- an early childhood center (ECC),
- a school-based program,
- an HISD and HS (combined) program, and
- a Montessori program.

The district used the Frog Street Pre-K curriculum during the 2020–2021 school year, which focused on the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development of preschool-age children (Schiller, n.d.). HISD operated 155 school based and ECC campuses that provided Pre-K instruction, including 145 elementary campuses, seven magnet Pre-K schools, and three Pre-K charter schools.

To meet the needs of eligible young children and their families, state and local HS agencies collaborate and coordinate with other entities such as public schools to provide early childhood education opportunities. Currently, HISD collaborates with four federally-funded HS agencies that serve regional sectors of Harris

County within the district's boundaries—AVANCE-Houston, Inc. (AVANCE), Baker Ripley, Gulf Coast Community Services Association (GCCSA), and the Harris County Department of Education (HCDE). The purpose of the HISD and HS Pre-kindergarten collaborative programs is to share the responsibility for closing the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged children and their more affluent peers. To support their respective HISD partner schools, HS agencies provided classrooms with appropriate furniture, materials, supplies, and playground equipment, as needed. Additional resources the agencies provided included teachers or teacher aides, coverage of indirect costs with in-kind funds, and comprehensive services to eligible children at the designated schools.

It is important to understand how students who enrolled in an HISD HS program performed academically, as compared to students who were not enrolled in a HS program, as a whole and by demographic group, as well as to assess performance difference between the different HS programs. However, due to inconsistencies in assessment administration during COVID-19 asynchronous learning in 2020–2021 (Circle assessment) and other data quality issues (as delineated below), analyses of academic outcomes were not conducted for this report.

Methodology

Through dialogue with the Early Childhood Education department (ECE) regarding data quality for the annual HS analyses, the Research and Accountability Department provided relevant information regarding the data limitations and recommendations for the improvement of data management practices for both HISD and HISD HS collaborative programs. The recommendations that were implemented for this current report included:

- Limit the HS annual Board presentation and data report to descriptive statistics of HISD Pre-K students by HS program affiliation and demographic subgroups. (Approved by ECE)
- Expand current HS annual report to include recommendations for improvement of data management practices for both HISD and HS agencies. (Approved by ECE)
- Exclude reporting Circle results (by test subsets) for 2020–2021 HS Pre-K students due to: (1) data quality issues from the HS programs and (2) inconsistencies in assessment administration during the school year. (Approved by ECE)
- Exclude Iowa/Logramos results for 2021–2022 kindergarten students who were enrolled in HS in 2020–2021 school year due to: (1) data quality issues from the HS agencies and (2) methodological concerns with comparing HS participants to non-HS students in the school year after their enrollment in the HS program. (Approved by ECE)

Therefore, this report addresses current data limitations and recommendations for future improvement of the quality of HISD and HS program data and describes the demographic characteristics of HISD Pre-K students who did and students who did not participate in HS programs by gender and race/ethnicity, and economic disadvantage, students with disabilities receiving special services, Emergent Bilingual/English Learner, and homeless statuses.

Methods

In 2020–2021, an HISD pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) student (n=11,274) was defined as an HISD Pre-K (n=10,991), an HISD Early Childhood Education (EE) (n=277), or an HISD HS student who was confirmed as an HISD student via a district student ID number (n=6), using 2021 Fall Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) file.

A 2020–2021 HISD HS student participant was defined as a student who was listed on one of the HS program rosters (AVANCE, Baker Ripley, GCCSA, or HCDE) and for whom an HISD student ID number was found using students' names and date of birth (n=1,662). HISD student IDs could not be identified for 35 of the 1,697 students on the HISD HS program student roster for the 2020–2021 school year. A total of 1,368 HS students were found in the Fall PEIMS 2021. A non-HISD HS student (n=9,906) was defined as a Pre-K or Early Childhood Education (EE) HISD student in the Fall PEIMS 2021, who was not among the 1,697 students listed on the 2020–2021 HS roster.

Of the 1,662 HISD HS students in 2020–2021 who had HISD student IDs, demographic characteristics were found for 1,594 (96 percent) of them using 2021 and 2022 Fall PEIMS files. Basic descriptive statistics were employed to analyze the demographic data. The number of students within each group can be found in the tables that accompany figures in the **Appendix** (Table 1, p. 11). Totals may not equal 100 percent, due to rounding.

Data Quality

- Currently, there is no way to identify HS students in the HISD Student Information System (SIS) without data being obtained from an HISD HS agency program. HISD depends exclusively on data from HISD HS collaborative programs to track HISD HS Pre-K participants.
 - Each year, the data received by HISD from the HS agencies has had notable data quality issues that have resulted in many extra hours in step one of the multi-step process of data cleaning for student identification (ID) recovery necessary for the annual data report.
 - The issues with data reliability in using HISD HS program student rosters have included misspelled or incorrect first and/or last student names, incorrect student date of birth, and incorrect parent's or related person's name. Therefore, HISD cannot recover a valid HISD student ID number to access the students' enrollment and performance records.
 - For students listed as HISD Pre-K program participants on HISD HS program student rosters but have had no record of enrollment in HISD's Student Information System (SIS), some explanations are:
 - The students attended the HISD school in the HS Pre-K program but did not enroll officially in HISD or
 - The HS program's record could not be matched on HISD's records for student's name, date of birth, or parent's name.
- The unidentified status of HISD HS Pre-K students creates challenges for conducting student achievement analyses of those who later enroll in HISD's kindergarten classes, because when kindergarten student outcomes are missing, it cannot be determined whether the cause is an unidentified student or that the student did not enroll in HISD for kindergarten. Unidentified HISD HS Pre-K participants may be excluded from the analysis or erroneously included as non-HS students. Consequently, it is a challenge to run valid and reliable comparisons between the HISD HS Pre-K participants and non-HS Pre-K students, as well as comparisons between the different HISD HS programs due to missing data and grouping errors.
- The Iowa/Logramos assessment is administrated in November, three months after students enter kindergarten and five months after kindergarten students who attended HS Pre-K ended Pre-K classes in the previous school year. This methodological concern is compounded by the data quality issues associated with using HISD HS program student rosters.

Recommendations for Upcoming Years

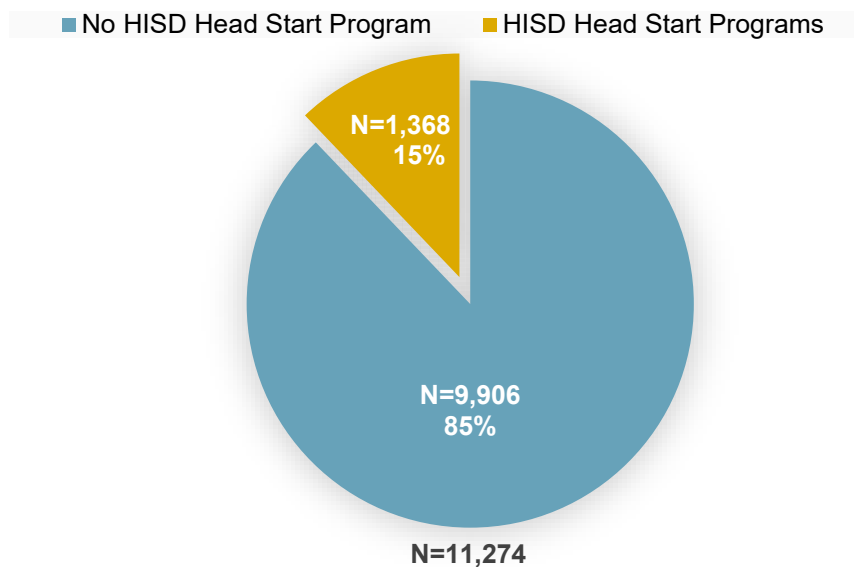
- Track all HISD HS Pre-K participants by HS program affiliation in the HISD SIS and delineate data quality expectations with checks for accuracy and omissions.
- Prior to the beginning of the HS program school year, ECE should communicate to the HS agencies HISD’s data quality needs and expectations, including checks for data accuracy and omissions.
- Each year, ECE should consider requesting HS student enrollment data from the HS agencies at the beginning of the school year and middle of the school year (to begin a verification process to ensure HISD HS student enrollment in HISD) and six weeks prior to the end of the school year (to allow time to confirm the HISD enrollment of all current year HISD HS students).
- Future program evaluations may consider whether the HS Collaborative is correlated with positive student achievement. If such an evaluation is requested, Early Childhood and Research and Accountability Departments should identify assessments that may be used in the evaluation, including but not limited to Iowa/Logramos and Circle. Researchers will need to consider potential limitations in data analysis such as small comparison groups and confounding variables, especially those that may help clarify and respond to issues of equity (i.e., parents’ level of education, non-HISD HS or other pre-school participation).

Results

Enrollment and Demographics

- A total of 11,274 students were identified as HISD Pre-kindergarten (HISD Pre-K) students in the 2020–2021 school year. Of them, 1,368 (15 percent) were identified as HISD HS students based on the 2020–2021 HS program student rosters (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1. HISD Pre-Kindergarten Students by Head Start Program Affiliation, 2020–2021

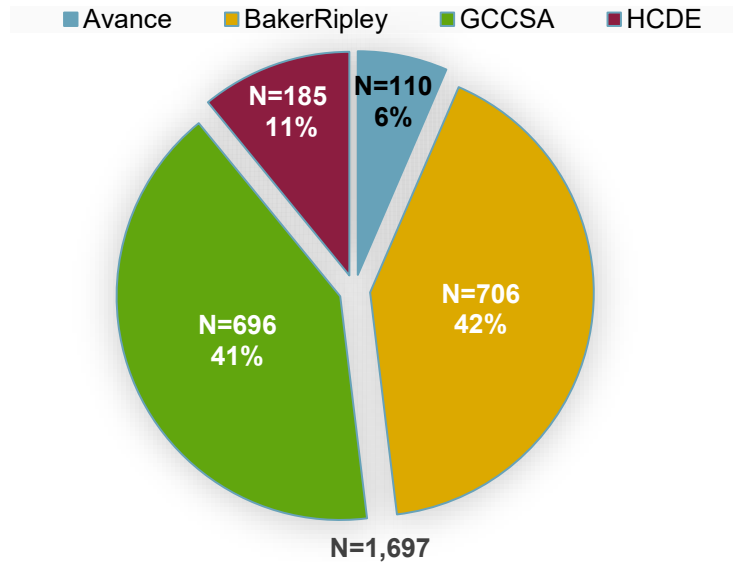


Sources: Head Start Pre-K program student rosters, 2020–2021; Fall PEIMS 2021

Head Start Collaborating Agencies

- A total of 1,697 HISD HS students were listed on the 2020–2021 HISD HS student rosters. Of them, the largest group attended Baker Ripley (42 percent), followed by GCCSA (41 percent), the HCDE (11 percent), and AVANCE (six percent) (Figure 2).

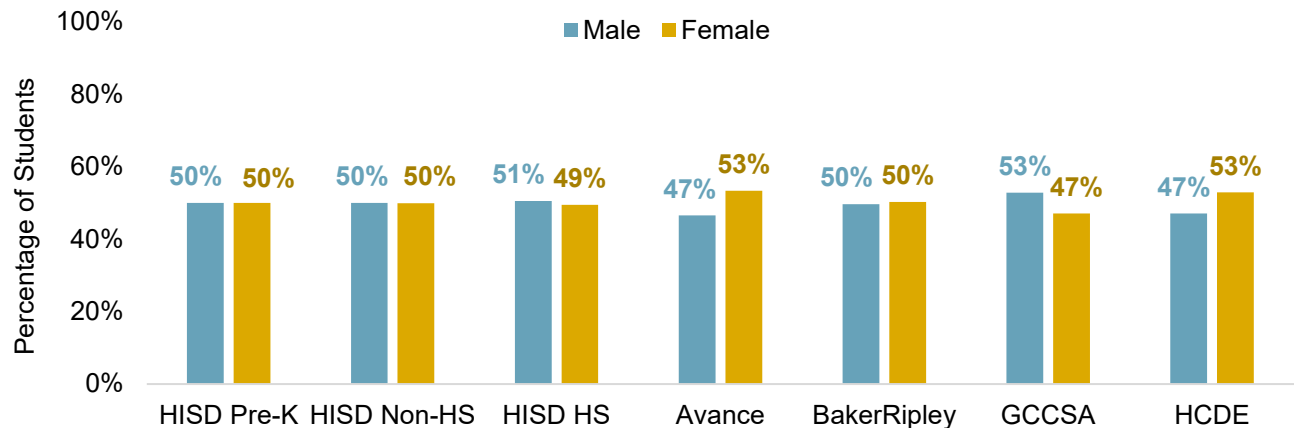
Figure 2. HISD Head Start Students by Program Affiliation, 2020–2021



Source: Head Start Pre-K program student rosters, 2020–2021

- HISD student identification numbers could not be located for 35 (two percent) of the 1,697 students listed on the 2020–2021 HS student rosters who, therefore, could not be verified as district students. In addition, demographic data could not be located for another 68 students (four percent), totaling 103 students (six percent) for whom no HISD demographic data were located. This report includes the demographic characteristics of the remaining 1,594 students (94 percent). Of them, most HS students' demographic characteristics are available on the 2021 Fall PEIMS (n=1,368) and some are on the 2022 Fall PEIMS (n=226).

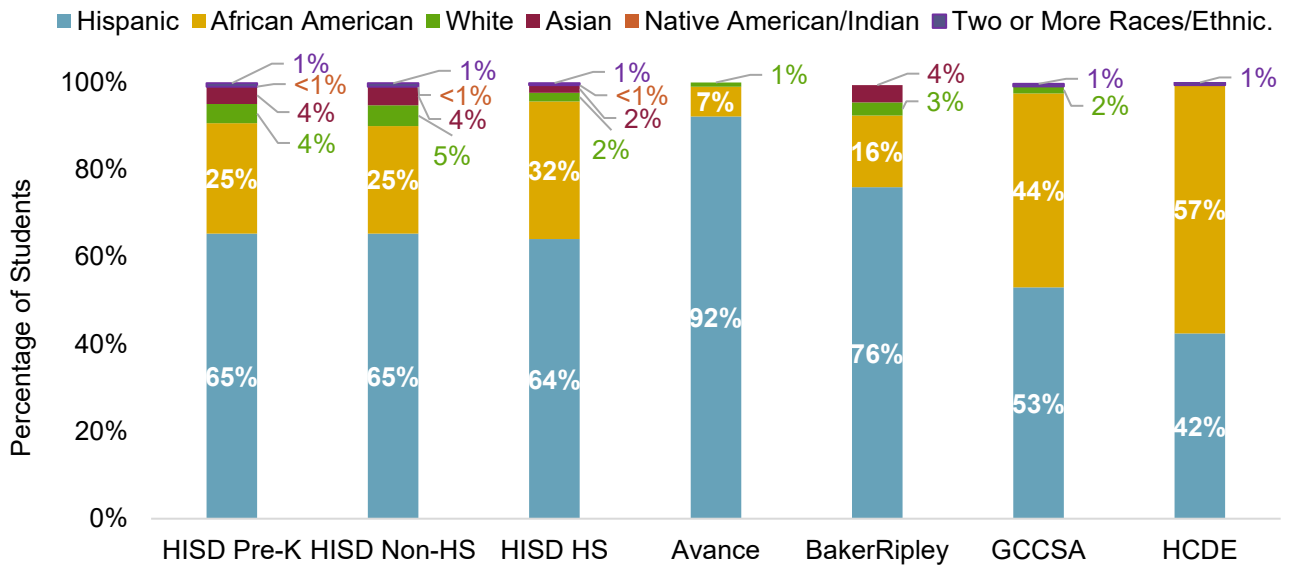
Figure 3. HISD Pre-Kindergarten Students by Gender and Head Start (HS) Students by Program Affiliation and Gender, 2020–2021



Sources: Head Start Pre-K program student rosters, 2020–2021; Fall PEIMS, 2021 and 2022

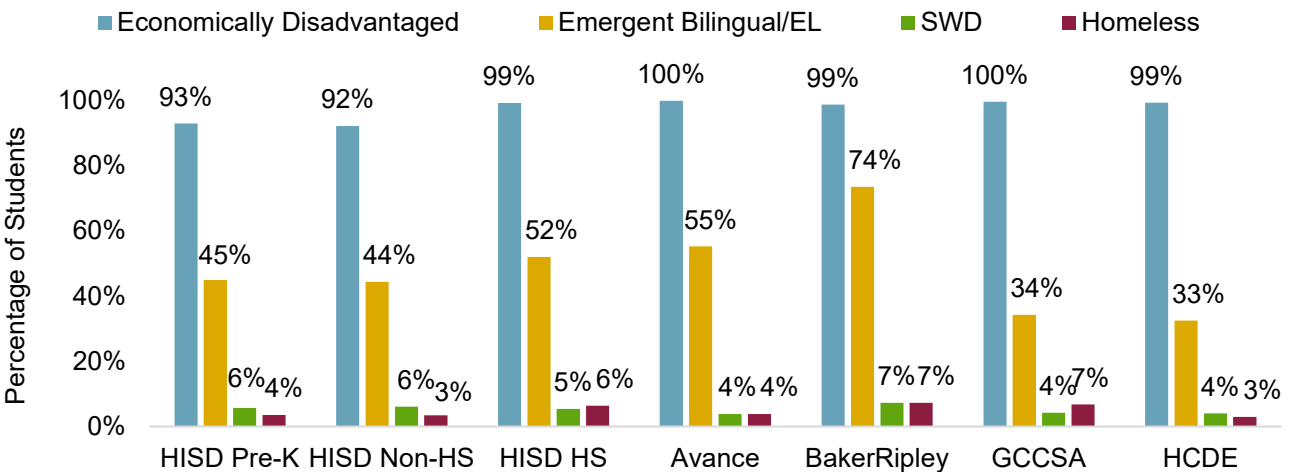
- HISD’s 2020–2021 Pre-K students, regardless of whether they attended an HISD HS program or not, comprised equal or near equal proportions of female and male students, overall. However, for three of the four HS programs there was a six percentage-point difference between the amount of female versus male students, with a larger proportion of females in two of them (**Figure 3**, p. 6).
- The largest group of 2020–2021 HISD Pre-K, non-HS, and HS students were identified as Hispanic students, except for students in the HCDE HS program who were identified primarily as African American students (**Figure 4**).

Figure 4. HISD Pre-Kindergarten Students by Race/Ethnicity and Head Start (HS) Students by Program Affiliation and Race/Ethnicity, 2020–2021



Sources: Head Start Pre-K program student rosters, 2020–2021; Fall PEIMS, 2021 and 2022
 Notes: “Asian” includes Pacific Islander students. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Figure 5. HISD Pre-Kindergarten Students by Race/Ethnicity and Head Start (HS) Students by Program Affiliation and Economic Disadvantage, Emergent Bilingual/English Learners (EL), Students with Disabilities (SWD), and Homeless Status, 2020–2021



Sources: Head Start Pre-K program student rosters, 2020–2021; Fall PEIMS, 2021 and 2022

- In 2020–2021, primarily, Pre-K students were economically disadvantaged, regardless of whether they attended a HS program or not, with more than 92 percent representation in each group, including 99 or 100 percent in each HS programs (**Figure 5**, p. 7).
- Most HISD HS students were identified as Emergent Bilingual/English Learners (52 percent) as well as most of the students who attended the Avance (55 percent) and Baker Ripley (74 percent) HISD HS programs in 2020–2021 (Figure 5).
- Six percent of HISD’s Pre-K and six percent of its non-HS students were identified as students with disabilities receiving special services (SWD), while five percent of the district’s HS students were identified as SWD in 2020–2021 (Figure 5).
- Among the district’s HS programs, the proportion of students with disabilities receiving special services was largest for students attending Baker Ripley HS programs (seven percent) as compared to students in its other HS programs (four percent each) (Figure 5).
- Four percent of the district’s 2020–2021 Pre-K students were identified as homeless. The proportion of HISD’s HS students who were identified as being homeless (six percent) was twice the proportion of homeless students identified among their peers who did not attend an HISD HS program (three percent) (Figure 5).

Conclusion

The integrated partnership between the HS agencies and HISD provides a shared responsibility to prepare preschool students to be school-ready. In the 2020–2021 school year, 11,274 students were enrolled in HISD prekindergarten (Pre-K). Simultaneously, in 2020–2021, the HS agency programs listed 1,697 HISD HS participants on their respective student rosters. Of them, 1,662 (98 percent) were confirmed as district students, with demographic data available for 1,594 (94 percent).

In 2020–2021, most HISD Pre-K students were Hispanic (65%) or African American (25%) students, with similar proportions of Hispanic HS Pre-K students and non-HS Pre-K students. There was seven percent more African American HS Pre-K students (32%) compared to non-HS Pre-K students (25%). In addition, a larger proportion of HS Pre-K students were identified as economically disadvantaged (99%) than the proportion of non-HS Pre-K students (93%). Larger proportions of HS Pre-K students were Emergent Bilingual/English Learners (52%) or Homeless (6%) than their proportions among non-HS Pre-K students (44% and 3%, respectively). Comparable proportions of HS Pre-K students and non-HS Pre-K were students with disabilities receiving special services (5% and 6%, respectively).

HISD having larger proportions of African American/Black, economically disadvantaged, Emergent Bilingual/English Learners, and homeless students to participate in HISD HS than the proportions of these student groups among non-HS students may serve to help improve opportunities for greater equity and better learning experiences and outcomes for students with these characteristics who participated in HISD HS programs. Potentially, HS participation may help reduce or close the achievement gap between them and their more linguistically acculturated and/or more affluent peers. This possibility could be explored in future analyses.

An analysis to assess the 2020–2021 HISD Pre-K students' 2021–2022 kindergarten performance relative to their HISD HS program affiliation was not advised, due to data quality issues. In short, the Research and Accountability Department's recommendations to improve the data quality for HISD HS student identification and tracking as well as student-teacher classroom ratios and student achievement analyses, in upcoming years, are:

- Track all HISD HS Pre-K participants by HS program affiliation in the HISD SIS.
- Communicate to the HS agencies HISD's data quality needs and expectations.
- The Early Childhood Department should consider requesting HS student enrollment data from the HS agencies at various times throughout of the school year and confirm HISD's enrollment of its HS students.
- If program evaluations of the HS Collaborative's relationship to student achievement are requested, the Early Childhood and Research and Accountability departments should consider collaborating to identify appropriate assessments, potential confounding variables, and limitations of the data.

Finally, it may prove advantageous for future analyses conducted by the Research and Accountability Department to include an exploration of student to instructor ratios in HISD Pre-K classrooms, over time, as it relates to the goal of Constraint Progress Measure (CPM) 5.2, which requires the district to decrease the student to instructor ratio in Pre-K from 15:1 in 2019–2020 to 11:1 or less in 2023–2024 CPM 5.2.

References

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Appendix

HISD Pre-Kindergarten Students by Head Start Program and Demographics, 2020–2021

Table 1. HISD Pre- Kindergarten (Pre-K) Students by Head Start Program Affiliation and Demographic Characteristic, 2020-2021														
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	HISD Pre-K		HISD non-Head Start		HISD Head Start		Avance		Baker Ripley		GCCSA		HCDE	
Sex														
Male	5,639	50%	4,956	50%	805	51%	48	47%	335	50%	341	53%	81	47%
Female	5,635	50%	4,950	50%	789	49%	55	53%	339	50%	304	47%	91	53%
Race														
Hispanic	7,365	65%	6,474	65%	1,022	64%	95	92%	512	76%	342	53%	73	42%
African American/Black	2,855	25%	2,442	25%	503	32%	7	7%	111	16%	287	44%	98	57%
White	501	4%	473	5%	31	2%	1	1%	20	3%	10	2%	0	0%
Asian	445	4%	418	4%	28	2%	0	0%	27	4%	1	<1%	0	0%
Native American/Indian	20	<1%	19	<1%	2	<1%	0	0%	1	<1%	1	<1%	0	0%
Two or More Races/Ethnic.	88	1%	80	1%	8	1%	0	0%	3	<1%	4	1%	1	1%
Other Special Populations														
Economically Disadvantaged	10,491	93%	9,142	92%	1,583	99%	103	100%	666	99%	643	100%	171	99%
Emergent Bilingual/English Learners	5,109	45%	4,396	44%	830	52%	57	55%	496	74%	221	34%	56	33%
Students with Disabilities	643	6%	606	6%	87	5%	4	4%	49	7%	27	4%	7	4%
Homeless	401	4%	337	3%	102	6%	4	4%	49	7%	44	7%	5	3%
Total	11,274	100%	9,906	88%	1,594	-	103	6%	674	42%	645	40%	172	11%

Sources: Head Start program student rosters, 2020–2021; Fall PEIMS, 2021 and 2022; Head Start student roster, 2020–2021

Notes: “Asian” includes students identified as Pacific Islander. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

The number of HS students (1,594) and the number of non-HS students (9,906) do not add up to the total number of Pre-K students (11,274) because 226 of the 1,594 HS students’ demographic data came from the 2022 Fall PEIMS.