

MEMORANDUM

November 21, 2019

TO: Anna White
Assistant Superintendent, Multilingual Programs

FROM: Carla Stevens
Assistant Superintendent, Research and Accountability

SUBJECT: **2019 IMMIGRANT STUDENT PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT**

Many of the district's students are recent immigrants who have been in the United States for three years or less. "Immigrant" children or youth, as defined under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), and later the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), are "individuals who are aged 3 through 21; were not born in any state; and have not been attending schools in any one or more states for more than 3 full academic years" (P.L. 115-224 Title III, Part B, § 3201(5)). There have been over 10,000 immigrant students enrolled in HISD each of the past five years. This report summarizes data from programs dedicated to serving district immigrant students during the 2018–2019 school year.

Key findings include:

- A total of 15,152 immigrant students were enrolled in the district for at least part of the 2018–2019 school year. About one in ten of district students overall, and at least one in five English learners, were either current or former immigrants in 2018–2019.
- Almost half (48%) of immigrant students came from three Central American countries; Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala.
- Data from the STAAR and STAAR EOC exams showed that immigrant students had lower passing rates than either ELs or the district overall. Passing rates on STAAR 3–8 improved the longer an immigrant student was enrolled in U.S. schools, but this was not true for EOC.
- Immigrant ELs had lower overall English language proficiency than did other ELs but showed more evidence of yearly progress.
- Immigrant students had fewer reported disciplinary incidents but were retained at a higher rate than ELs or the district overall. Immigrant students also had a higher annual (grade 7–12) dropout rate than ELs or the district, but their four-year graduation/dropout data did not differ from that of ELs.
- Finally, immigrant students appear to have deficits regarding their post-secondary preparedness, as they lagged both ELs and the district on four different measures (attendance at non-zoned campus, Career and Technical Education program participation, magnet status, and Advanced Placement course enrollment).

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

 CJS

cc: Grenita Lathan
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RESEARCH

Educational Program Report

IMMIGRANT STUDENT PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT
2018 - 2019



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IMMIGRANT STUDENT PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT 2018–2019

Executive Summary

Program Description

There are approximately 200,000 students in Houston ISD, and many of them are recent immigrants who have been in the United States for three years or less. "Immigrant" children or youth, as defined under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), and later the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), are "individuals who are aged 3 through 21; were not born in any state; and have not been attending schools in any one or more states for more than 3 full academic years" (P.L. 115-224 Title III, Part B, § 3201(5)). In recent years, the number of immigrant students in the district has increased dramatically, with over 10,000 enrolled in each of the past five years. In fact, about one in ten of the district's students in 2018–2019 were either current or former immigrants (i.e., immigrant students whose three-year status had expired). For English learners (ELs), the numbers are even more striking; between one in four and one in five current ELs were either immigrant or former immigrant students in 2018–2019. This report summarizes data from programs dedicated to serving district immigrant students during the 2018–2019 school year.

The report includes the following information:

- enrollment and demographics data for immigrant students;
- a brief review of what immigrant programs and services the district has provided in recent years;
- performance of immigrant students on State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR 3–8) and End of Course (EOC) exams;
- performance of immigrant EL students on the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS);
- Immigrant student data in school attendance, discipline, promotion, graduation/dropout rates, and school mobility; and
- data relating to immigrant student preparedness for post-secondary education.

Highlights

- A total of 15,152 immigrant students were enrolled in the district for at least part of the 2018–2019 school year.
- About one tenth of district students were either current immigrants or had been an immigrant at some point in time. Between a quarter and a fifth of EL students were either current or former immigrants.
- Almost half (48%) of immigrant students came from three Central American countries; Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala.
- Data from the STAAR 3–8 showed that immigrant students had lower passing rates than either ELs or the district overall, in all subjects tested and in both English and Spanish. Passing rates did tend to improve the longer an immigrant student was enrolled in U.S. schools.

- Immigrants also had lower passing rates on the STAAR EOC exams, however there did not appear to be any evidence for improved performance over time.
- Immigrant ELs had lower overall English language proficiency than did other ELs, but showed more evidence of yearly progress.
- Immigrant students had fewer reported disciplinary incidents, but were retained at a higher rate than ELs or the district overall. Attendance rates for immigrants were similar to those for other students.
- Immigrant students had a higher annual (grade 7–12) dropout rate than ELs or the district, but their four-year graduation/dropout data did not differ from that of ELs.
- There was some evidence that school mobility differed for immigrant students, but this seemed to be limited to students in their first year.
- Finally, immigrant students appear to have deficits regarding their post-secondary preparedness, as they lagged behind both ELs and the district on four different measures (attendance at non-zoned campus, Career and Technical Education program participation, magnet status, and Advanced Placement course enrollment).

Recommendations

1. Immigrant students do less well than other district students, including ELs, on a number of performance measures. This is not surprising, but it is notable that some of these measures (e.g. STAAR) show improvement for immigrant students in their second or third year in school. However, persistent performance gaps exist on EOC passing rates, and on a number of the post-secondary readiness indicators. This suggests that secondary-level immigrant students are at particular risk of either not graduating, or of not being sufficiently prepared for post-secondary educational or job opportunities. It is recommended that appropriate steps be taken in order to address immigrant student performance in these two areas.

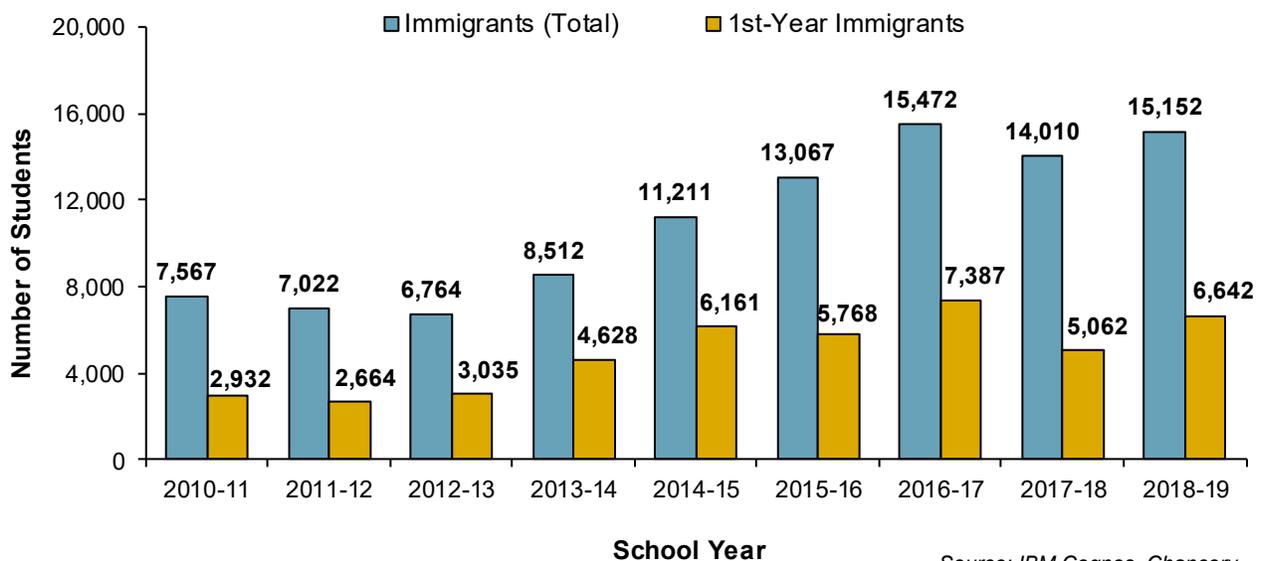
Introduction

There are approximately 200,000 students in Houston ISD, and many of them are recent immigrants who have been in the United States for three years or less. "Immigrant" children or youth, as defined under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), and later the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), are "individuals who are aged 3 through 21; were not born in any state; and have not been attending schools in any one or more states for more than 3 full academic years" (P.L. 115-224 Title III, Part B, § 3201(5)). In recent years, the number of immigrant students in the district has increased dramatically, with over 10,000 enrolled in each of the past five years (see **Figure 1**). In fact, about one in ten of the district's students in 2018–2019 were either current or former immigrants (i.e., immigrant students whose three-year status had expired). For English learners (ELs) the numbers are even more striking; between one in four and one in five current ELs were either immigrant or former immigrant students in 2018–2019 (see **Appendix A**, p. 16)¹ This report summarizes data from programs dedicated to serving district immigrant students during the 2018–2019 school year.

Immigrant & Newcomer Program Background

Immigrant students can have widely varying backgrounds, which offers challenges to educators. They may be ELs, and may also have refugee status. In addition to age differences, immigrants can have disparate experiences in formal educational settings, and some may arrive in school having experienced trauma due to events occurring before or during their move to this country. This may be particularly true with populations of immigrant students from Mexico and Central America (i.e., Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala) due to recent increases in gang and drug-related violence in those home countries. Without proper instructional supports, these students are at risk of falling behind academically. To address the needs of the most challenged of these recent immigrants, the district has specialized programs for immigrant students, particularly for those in their first year in U.S. schools (newcomers). These programs are designed to accommodate and educate immigrant EL students, and assist them in adapting to a new country, language, and school.

Figure 1. Number of immigrants and newcomers (first-year immigrants) by year, 2010–2011 to 2018–2019.



Immigrant & Newcomer Program Details

The district’s program for immigrant students has undergone a number of changes in recent years. In this section we attempt to summarize the trajectory that has been followed since 2015–2016, as well as provide an overview of initiatives that have been occurring for a longer period.

Specialized Schools: The district has for many years had one middle school (Las Americas MS) and one high school (Liberty High School) that are focused on serving immigrant students. Las Americas MS is a newcomer campus that serves recent immigrant and refugee students who are ELs or who have limited experience with formal education. Students acquire English skills while receiving instruction in core academic content areas via English as a second language (ESL), as well as acculturation into the U.S. school system. It is intended to provide a transitional program before students enter the mainstream curriculum at other campuses. Enrollment is limited and on a first-come-first-served basis. Liberty HS has a program that focuses on newly arrived immigrant students who are overage, allowing them to balance full-time work and family responsibilities with earning a high school diploma.

Districtwide Immigrant & Newcomer Program: In 2015–2016, the district began a program at a limited number of campuses for first-year immigrants (newcomers). Prior to this, efforts were focused on the two specialized campuses just mentioned, while newcomers at other campuses received services based on their EL status and/or English-proficiency level, as needed. However, over a four-year span, a series of changes was made to this program, as summarized in **Table 1** below.

Throughout each iteration of the newcomer/immigrant program, certain aspects have remained more or less constant. These three types of interventions have been offered: support services and resources for

Table 1. Summary of Districtwide Newcomer & Immigrant Program Components, 2015–2016 to 2018–2019

	2015-16	2015-17	2017-18	2018-19
Hub Campuses	Three tiers: hub HS campuses accepted zoned students+transfers (3), standalone HS accepted only zoned students (4), MS campuses were all standalone (14). Other campuses not included.	Two tiers: hub MS (5)/HS (4) campuses accepted zoned students+transfers, standalone MS (11)/HS (10) accepted only zoned students. Other campuses not included.	No hub campuses, all campuses in district were standalone (zoned students only).	No hub campuses, all campuses in district are standalone (zoned students only).
Specialized Curriculum	"School-within-a-school"; immigrant students not segregated from other students but received specialized curriculum/schedule (MS/HS only). Intensive English language development via ESL.	No specialized curriculum beyond that offered to other ELs. Program focussed on providing support/resources for students + parents while offering teacher training	No specialized curriculum beyond that offered to other ELs. Program focussed on providing support/resources for students + parents while offering teacher training	New curriculum for immigrants at MS/HS levels in reading & language arts; other content areas use ESL methodology. Elementary campuses offer bilingual or ESL services as needed.
Orientation for new students	Orientation to new school, community, and society	Orientation to new school, community, and society	unknown	3-part video provided for secondary students
Staff Training	QTEL	QTEL	QTEL	data unavailable
Support Services	counseling, tutoring, career education, transportation, health services; parent resources/education; resources/materials for students	counseling, tutoring, career education, transportation, health services; parent resources/education; resources/materials for students	counseling, tutoring, career education, transportation, health services; parent resources/education; resources/materials for students	counseling, tutoring, career education, transportation, health services; parent resources/education; resources/materials for students

students and their parents, staff/teacher training, and some effort to provide newcomers with orientation to their new school/community/society. The specifics may have varied from year to year, e.g., for most of this time period Quality Teaching for English Learners (QTEL) training was emphasized for teachers of newcomers, but that specific training is no longer offered. However, overall, these three elements have been present regardless of what other changes were made to the program.

Two components of the newcomer/immigrant program have changed significantly during this time period. One is the inclusion of “hub” campuses to serve new immigrants. Under this strategy, a small number of campuses served students zoned to that campus as well as newcomers who were zoned to another campus. “Standalone” campuses only accepted immigrants who were zoned to that school. Any specialized services available for those immigrant students would be provided at only these hub and standalone schools and not at others. This protocol is no longer used for newcomers or other immigrant students. Instead, each district campus deals only with their zoned students, and services are expected to be available for immigrant students regardless of which campus they attend.

The second component of the newcomer program to change has been the use of a specialized curriculum for newcomer students. In 2015–2016, there was a specialized curriculum for newcomers at the hub and standalone campuses in the program (“school within a school” concept, see Table 1). For two subsequent years, there was no specialized curriculum for newcomers beyond that offered to other EL students. However, a newly revised curriculum for immigrants in middle and high school was implemented for the 2018–2019 school year. There were specific courses for new immigrants in the area of reading and language arts, with ESL methodology used for other content areas. Note that in the current version of the immigrant/newcomer program, there was no specialized curriculum for immigrants at the elementary level. Immigrant students at those grade levels received bilingual or ESL services as needed.

In conclusion, the immigrant/newcomer program provided during the 2018–2019 school year can be summarized as follows: First, there are no hub campuses, and immigrants attend the schools they are zoned to. Second, there is a set of support services and parent resources/education. Third, professional development is offered for teachers and staff who work with immigrant students, but largely falls within the scope of differentiated or “sheltered instruction” techniques that may be used with immigrant students, but which may be applied to various student populations. Finally, a new curriculum was developed and implemented in 2018–2019 for immigrants and newcomers in middle and high school. This is used for English language arts and reading, with ESL methodology used for other content areas. There is still no specialized curriculum for immigrant students at the elementary level; those students receive either bilingual or ESL services at their campus, but all other services described previously are available.

Immigrant students may be grouped together or may be mixed in with other non-immigrant students, depending on enrollment figures at a particular campus. Instead of isolating immigrants in a small number of specialized campuses, the current emphasis (as far as curriculum and instruction are concerned) is on providing differentiated instruction for immigrant students where appropriate (sheltered instruction). Such a strategy means that so long as staff are adequately trained, immigrant students should receive appropriate instruction regardless of which campus they attend.

Methods

Participants

There were 15,152 immigrant students enrolled in the district in 2018–2019 (note this is cumulative enrollment, and includes withdrawals). Almost half (48%) of newcomer students came from three Central

Table 2. Demographics of Immigrant Students Enrolled During 2018–2019

Home Country	Number	Percent	Home Language	Number	Percent
Honduras	3,381	22%	Spanish	10,644	70%
El Salvador	2,432	16%	English	935	6%
Mexico	1,673	11%	Arabic	602	4%
Guatemala	1,580	10%	Swahili	278	2%
India	570	4%	Pasto	261	2%
Afghanistan	542	4%	Mandarin	201	1%
Venezuela	429	3%	Telugu	157	1%
Nigeria	405	3%	Farsi	147	1%
Other Countries	4,140	27%	Vietnamese	141	1%
	Number	Percent	Hindi	136	1%
English Learner	13,043	86%	Urdu	96	<1%
Econ Disadvantaged	11,457	76%	Portuguese	79	<1%
Special Education	275	2%	French	77	<1%
Gifted/Talented	702	5%	Other	1,398	9%
Male/Female	8,040/7,112	53%/47%	Total	15,152	

Source: IBM Cognos cumulative enrollment, 2018-2019

American countries: Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala (**Table 2**). The majority were English Learners (ELs, 86%), qualified for free or reduced lunch (76%), with more males than females (53% vs. 47%). Two percent qualified for special education, and five percent for gifted and talented programs. Most immigrants had Spanish as their home language (70%), with English and Arabic as the next most common languages.

Data Collection & Analysis

- Immigrant student enrollment figures were obtained from Chancery records via IBM Cognos queries. Enrollment is cumulative for the 2018–2019 school year, and includes all students with immigrant status who were enrolled at any point during the school year. Student performance data (see below) is reported for any of the 15,152 immigrant students for whom data could be found.
- Student performance data were collected on eight types of measures. The first set of data came from immigrant student performance on the statewide STAAR 3–8 and EOC assessments. For STAAR 3–8, only the first administration results were included (no retests), while for EOC only the spring administration was included. Comparison data came from results for district EL students and for the district overall. **Appendix B** (see p. 17) provides further details on each of the assessments analyzed for this report.
- A second set of performance data came from EL immigrant results for TELPAS (Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment). Two measures were included in the report, one being the level of English language proficiency exhibited by immigrant students, the second being the percentage of students showing progress or gains in English proficiency (for those immigrants who have taken the TELPAS at least twice). Comparisons were made to TELPAS performance of all district ELs.
- Other performance measures reported included: school attendance and discipline, a measure of student mobility (number of campuses attended), student retention/promotion results, dropout and

graduation results, and rates of reclassification to non-EL status for immigrant ELs versus all district EL students.

- Finally, a number of data sources were used in an attempt to quantify immigrant students' preparedness for post-secondary education, including: choice of zoned versus non-zoned school, Career and Technical Education (CTE) program enrollment, attendance at a magnet school or program, and enrollment in Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

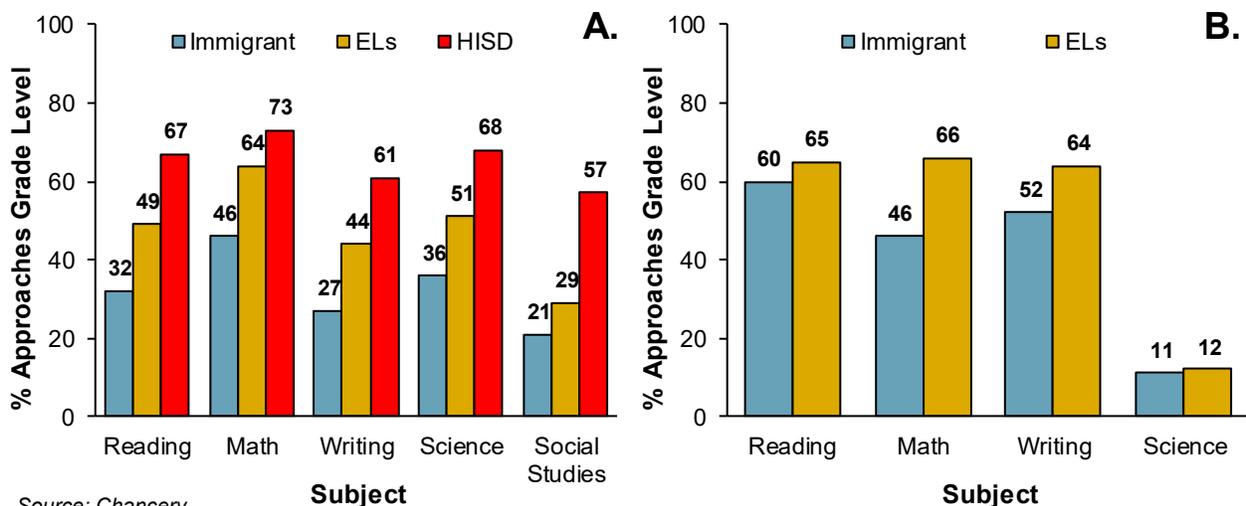
Results

How did immigrant students perform on the STAAR 3–8 and EOC assessments?

Immigrant students were tested on both the STAAR 3–8 and the EOC assessments in the spring of 2019, and this section summarizes their performance in comparison with EL students and all students districtwide. Summary results for STAAR 3–8 are shown in **Figure 2**. Further details are provided in **Appendices C and D** (pp. 18-19).

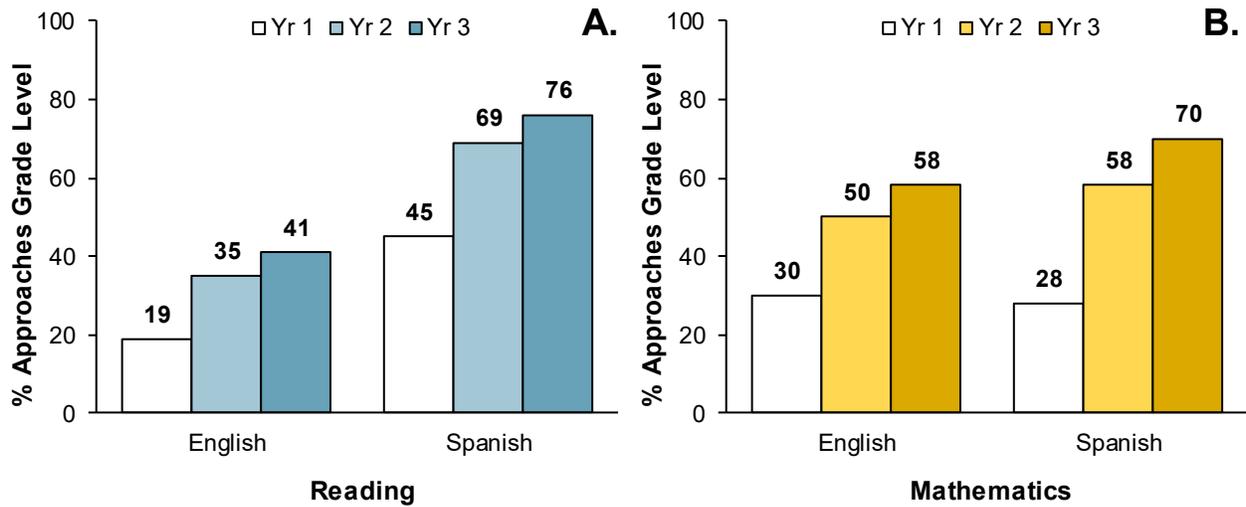
- English STAAR results (Figure 2a) show that immigrant students performed less well than EL students, who in turn did less well than did district students overall. This was true for all subjects tested.
- Spanish STAAR results are shown in Figure 2b. Data for district overall results are excluded, since these are essentially equivalent to those for ELs as a group. Immigrant students also had lower passing rates than ELs on the Spanish STAAR, but on reading and science the gaps were much smaller than was the case for the English STAAR.
- Further analysis of results for immigrant students is shown in **Figure 3** (see p. 8). In these charts, data are shown for immigrants based on year of immigrant status.
- Results for both STAAR reading and mathematics show that performance improved the longer an immigrant student was enrolled. By the time a student was in their third year of immigrant status,

Figure 2. Percentage of immigrant and EL students who met Approaches Grade Level standard on STAAR tests in 2019, first administration only, district data in red (A. English, B. Spanish)



Source: Chancery, COGNOS STAAR extracts 6/12/2019

Figure 3. Percentage of immigrant students who met Approaches Grade Level standard on STAAR reading (A) and mathematics tests (B) in 2019, by year of immigrant status

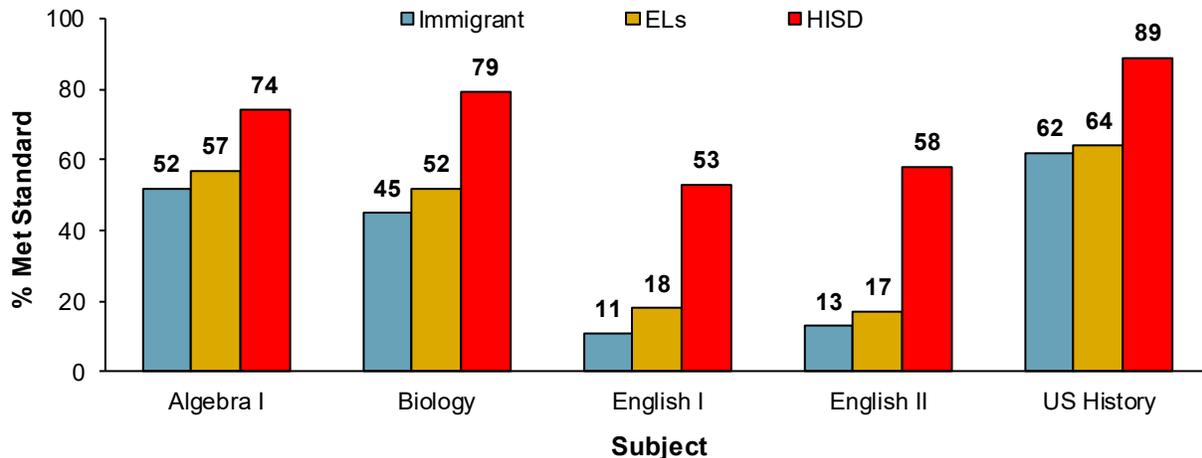


Source: Chancery,

their Spanish STAAR performance was actually better than that of ELs (+11 and +4 percentage points for reading and mathematics, respectively). English STAAR performance still showed gaps (-8 and -6 percentage points, respectively), although these were smaller than they had been for first-year immigrants.

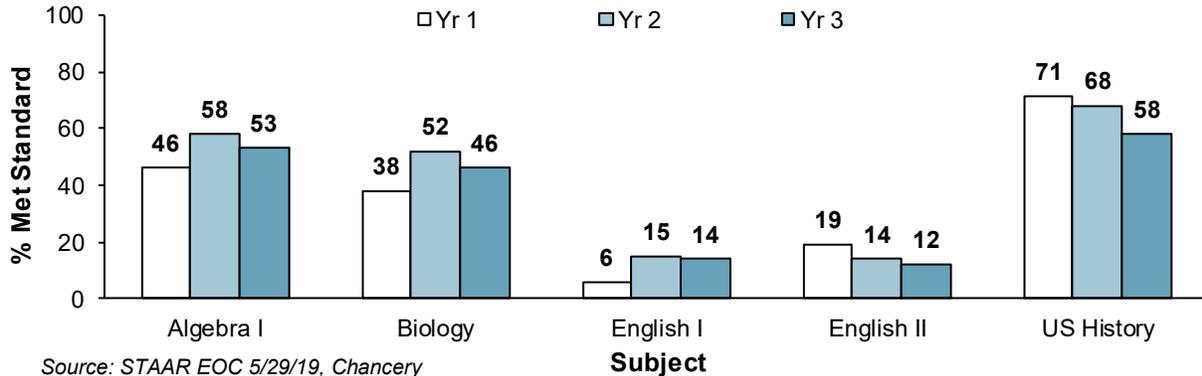
- Results for the STAAR EOC exams are shown in **Figure 4**. The overall pattern is consistent with that seen with the STAAR 3–8 tests. Namely, immigrant students did less well than EL students, who in turn had lower passing rates than district students overall (see **Appendix E**, p. 20).
- However, the gaps for immigrants relative to ELs were smaller on the EOC exams than on the STAAR 3–8. The median gap for English STAAR 3–8 tests was 17 percentage points (see Figure 2), whereas for the EOC tests the median gap size was only 5 percentage points.

Figure 4. Percentage of immigrant and EL students who met Approaches Grade Level standard on STAAR End-of-Course tests, 2019 (spring administration only)



Source: STAAR EOC 5/29/19, Chancery

Figure 5. Percentage of immigrant students who met Approaches Grade Level standard on STAAR EOC tests in 2019, by year of immigrant status



Source: STAAR EOC 5/29/19, Chancery

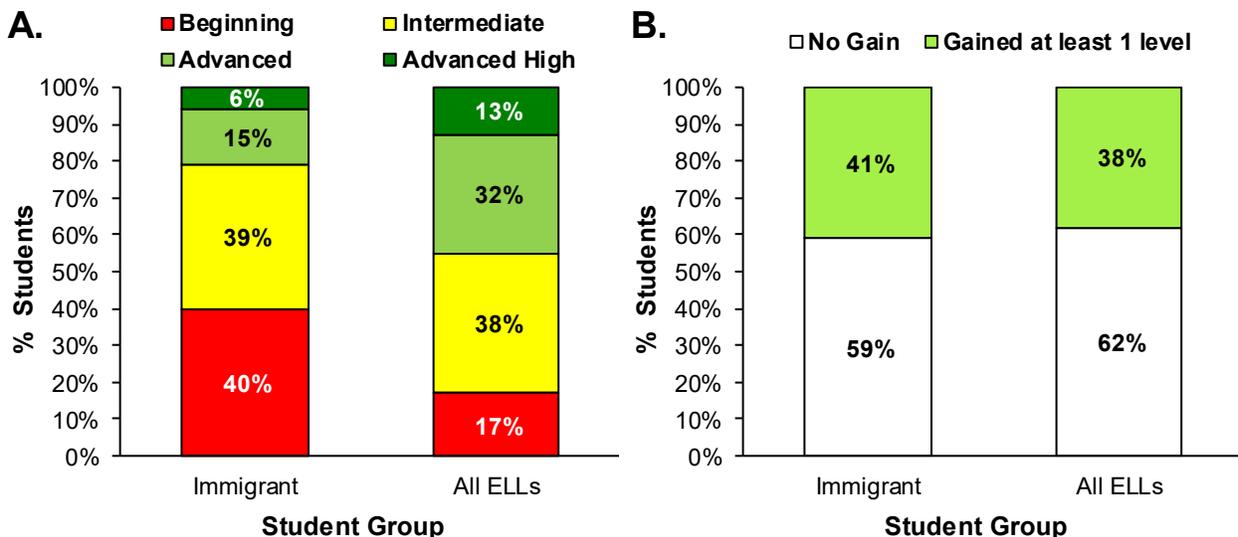
- As was done with the STAAR 3–8 data, the EOC results for immigrant students were further analyzed to see whether year of immigrant status had any influence. These data are shown in **Figure 5**.
- The pattern with the EOC tests was very different from that observed with STAAR 3–8. Recall that those assessments showed consistent improvement in passing rate with each year of school enrollment. With the EOC, however, there is no such pattern of improvement. In fact, 3rd-year immigrants did less well than those in their 2nd year, and this was true for all subjects tested.

What was the TELPAS performance of immigrant students?

Figure 6 shows the data from immigrant students tested on the spring 2019 TELPAS assessment. Overall proficiency is shown in Figure 6a, with yearly progress in Figure 6b (see also **Appendices F and G** (pp. 21-22).

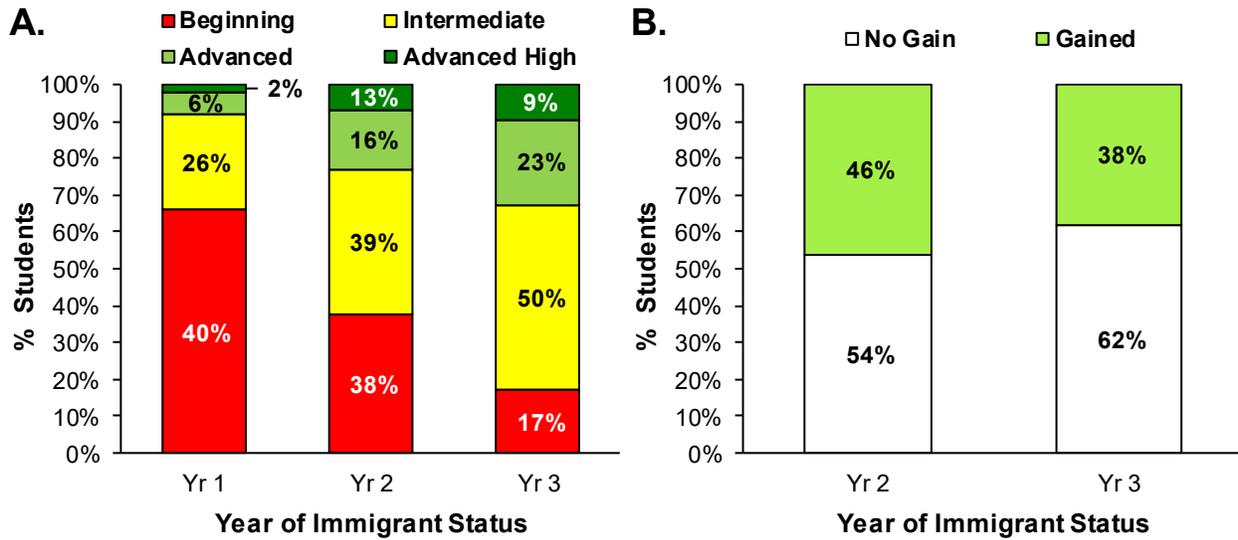
- Immigrant students as a group showed lower English language proficiency than did ELs overall (Figure 6a), but a slightly higher proportion of them showed progress in TELPAS proficiency between 2018 and 2019 (Figure 6b).

Figure 6. TELPAS performance of immigrant students and all ELs districtwide: A. Overall proficiency level in 2019, B. Percent of students making gains in proficiency between 2018 and 2019



Source: Chancery, TELPAS data file 5/23/19

Figure 7. TELPAS performance of immigrant students based on year of immigrant status: A. Overall proficiency level in 2019, B. Percent of students making gains in proficiency between 2018 and 2019



Source: Chancery, TELPAS data file 5/23/19

- Overall English language proficiency for immigrant students improved with each year they spent in U.S. schools (**Figure 7a**). However, yearly progress for 3rd-year immigrants was actually lower than that for 2nd-year immigrants (**Figure 7b**).

Did immigrant students differ from other students in terms of school attendance or discipline?

District student attendance and discipline data from 2018–2019 were analyzed to determine whether there was any difference between the patterns shown by immigrant students and others in the district. Attendance data from all students with a minimum of 30 days enrolled in the district were included (students who withdrew were also included in the analyses).

- Student attendance records for 2018–2019 showed that the average attendance rate for immigrant students was 95.2%, which did not differ from comparable rates for EL students (95.9%) or all students districtwide (95.2%).
- Student discipline data were extracted from district records using the appropriate PEIMS Disciplinary Action Codes (all grades included).
- As **Table 3** shows, a total of 870 immigrant students received some type of disciplinary action in 2018–2019, equivalent to 5.7% of all immigrant students enrolled. Comparable rates for EL students

Table 3. Number and Percent of Student Subject to Disciplinary Actions in 2018–2019

Student Group	Number of Students			Number of Incidents			
	# Enrolled	# Disciplined	% Disciplined	ISS	OSS	DAEP	Total # Incidents
Immigrants	15,152	870	5.7%	1,118	864	89	2,071
ELs	72,565	4,779	6.6%	6,866	6,730	704	14,300
HISD	228,262	20,471	9.0%	27,082	31,410	3,200	61,692

Source: IBM Cognos Discipline Report 7/11/19

Table 4. Retention and Promotion Data for Immigrant Students, English Learners, and All District Students in 2018–2019

Student Group	# Students	# Promoted	# Retained	% Retained	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3
Immigrants	9,485	8,966	519	5.5%	8.2%	3.0%	3.5%
ELs	57,015	54,508	2,507	4.4%			
HISD	149,860	144,147	5,713	3.8%			

Source: Promotion Standards File 2018-2019

and the district overall were higher (6.6% and 9.0% respectively), and both rates were significantly greater than that observed for immigrant students ($p < .0001$).

Did immigrant students differ from other students in terms of grade retention?

Promotion and retention data for 2018–2019 were analyzed to compare outcomes for immigrants, ELs, and all students districtwide. Students were included in the analysis if they were in grades PK through 8 in 2018–2019, and were shown as having a grade level assigned to them for the following school year (2019–2020). Results of the analyses are shown in **Table 4**.

- Only 5.5 percent of immigrant students were retained at the end of the school year. However, this rate was higher than the corresponding retention rates for either ELs (4.4%) or the district overall (3.8%). Both of these differences were statistically significant ($p < .0001$). There was also an effect due to year of immigrant status, with 1st-year immigrants being retained more frequently.

How did the immigrant EL student reclassification rate compare to that of other ELs?

As shown in Table 2 (p. 6), 86 percent of immigrant students in 2018–2019 were classified as ELs. Annually every EL student in the district is evaluated in order to determine whether their English language proficiency meets criteria to permit them to be reclassified as non-EL. **Table 5** summarizes EL reclassification data for the 2018–2019 school year.

- Reclassification rates overall declined significantly in 2018–2019 in comparison with previous years. In total only 3.3 percent of ELs were exited from EL status at the end of the school year ($n = 1,757$).
- Comparing reclassification data for ELs who were immigrants versus those who were not immigrants (**Table 5**), the reclassification rate for immigrant ELs was only half of that for non-immigrant ELs (1.8% versus 3.6%). This difference was statistically significant ($p < .0001$).

Did immigrant students differ from other students in their dropout or graduation rates?

- Annual dropout rate data for 2018 (grades 7–12) showed that the percentage of immigrant students who dropped out was 8.5 percent, which was significantly greater ($p < .0001$) than comparable rates for ELs (5.6 percent) or the district overall (3.5 percent).

Table 5. Number and Percentage of English Learners Who Were Reclassified as Non-ELs in 2018–2019: Immigrant EL Versus Non-Immigrant EL

Student Group	# EL	# Reclassified	% Reclassified
EL Immigrant	9,228	165	1.8%
EL Non-Immigrant	44,799	1,592	3.6%

Source: Chancery

Table 6. Four-Year Completion Rates for Class of 2018: Immigrant Students, ELs, and Overall District Performance

Student Group	Number of Students					Percent of Students			
	# Cohort	# Grad	# Dropout	# Continue	# GED	% Grad	% Dropout	% Continue	% GED
Immigrants	994	479	301	214	0	48.2	30.3	21.5	0.0
ELs	1,624	872	470	278	4	53.7	28.9	17.1	0.2
HISD	13,239	10,463	1,761	926	89	79.0	13.3	7.0	0.7

Source: TEA Completion Rate roster class of 2018, Chancery

- Four-year completion rate data for the class of 2018 are shown in **Table 6**. Both immigrant students and ELs has lower graduation rates, and higher dropout rates, than did the district overall. However, the two groups did not differ from each other statistically on these measures.

Did immigrant students differ from other students in terms of student mobility?

Student mobility was measured in two ways. First, cumulative enrollment records (PEIMS ADA file for 2018–2019) were used to calculate the percentage of students who attended more than one campus during the year. Second, attendance records were used to identify students who missed at least six weeks (30 days) of school throughout the year. Data for both of these measures are shown in **Table 7**.

- Mobility based on number of campuses attended was identical for immigrants and the district overall. However, based on the number of school days missed, there was a significant deficit for immigrant students. Over forty percent of them missed at least six weeks of classes. This is not surprising, as immigrant students may be more likely to first enroll at any point throughout the school year.
- This latter assumption is supported by further analyses of immigrant mobility based on year of immigrant status. When immigrant mobility is analyzed based on this factor, in fact only 1st-year immigrants appear to be affected (see Table 7). Seventy percent of 1st-year immigrants missed at least 30 days of school in 2018–2019, compared to rates of 22.2 and 16.7 percent for immigrants in their 2nd or 3rd year of immigrant status. Both of the latter rates are actually lower than those shown by ELs (24.1%) or the district overall (23.2%).

Did immigrant students differ from other students in terms of post-secondary education preparedness?

An important set of outcomes is related to how well students are being prepared for post-secondary education opportunities. For this, four sources of data were used: enrollment at non-zoned schools, partici-

Table 7. Student Mobility: Number and Percent of Students Attending More Than One Campus, and Number and Percent of Students Who Missed at Least 30 Days of School

Student Group	# Students	Percent of Students Attending > 1 Campus		Percent of Students Missing 30 Days or More School				
		# >1 Campus	% >1 Campus	# Missed 30 Days	% Missed 30 Days	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3
Immigrants	15,108	465	3.1%	6,258	41.4%	70.0%	22.2%	16.7%
ELs	72,465	1,787	2.5%	17,465	24.1%			
HISD	225,721	6,889	3.1%	52,411	23.2%			

Source: Chancery, PEIMS ADA file 2018-2019

Table 8. Student Enrollment at Non-Zoned Campuses During 2019–2020 (Grades 6 to 12 Only, Data As Of 10/11/2019)

Student Group	# Students	# Zoned	# Not Zoned	% Not Zoned	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3
Immigrants	5,120	4,234	886	17.3%	19.7%	13.4%	17.6%
ELs	22,211	16,956	5,255	23.7%			
HISD	95,740	57,403	38,337	40.0%			

Note: Data reported are from 2019-2020 (extracted 10/11/19), since school zone data from the previous year were not available

Source: Chancery, PEIMS ADA file 2018-2019

pation in a CTE program, student magnet status or participation in a magnet program, enrollment in AP courses, and AP test performance. Data from each of these is discussed below.

- **Non-zoned schools:** School choice is an important aspect of enrollment in the district, as students may enroll outside of their zoned campus in various charter, magnet, or alternative schools. A rough measure of the degree to which these options are being utilized is to calculate the percentage of students who are enrolled at a campuses outside the one they are zoned to (see **Table 8**).
- Data in Table 8 show that immigrant students are much less likely to attend a non-zoned school, and this tendency does not seem to be affected by length of time in U.S. schools. Immigrant students are less likely than other students, including ELs, to attend non-zoned campuses whether in their 1st, 2nd, or 3rd-year of immigrant status.
- **CTE program participation:** A growing body of research demonstrates the importance of CTE program participation in preparing students for post-school success, whether that involves more advanced education and training or employment in a field they have studied. **Table 9** summarizes data on CTE program participation of immigrant students during 2018–2019.
- Of all district students enrolled in grades 9–12, 51.3 percent participated in a CTE program during 2018–2019. Corresponding rates for EL and immigrant students were 45.7 and 33.0 percent, respectively.
- For immigrants, CTE participation did increase the longer they were in school. Students in their 3rd year of immigrant status had a participation rate (44.6%) about the same as that for ELs (45.7%).
- **Magnet student status:** **Table 10** (see p. 14) summarizes data on district magnet program participation during 2018–2019. Enrollment and magnet status counts include all students in grades K through 12, and were extracted from a Chancery end-of-year roster (6/3/2019).
- Districtwide, 29.1 percent of students were listed as magnet program participants in 2018–2019. For immigrant students, magnet participation was only 9.6 percent, while for ELs the rate was 16.9.

Table 9. Student Enrollment in CTE Program During 2018–2019 (Grades 9 to 12 Only, Coherent Sequence Participants)

Student Group	# Students	# CTE	% CTE	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3
Immigrants	3,024	998	33.0%	19.4%	33.5%	44.6%
ELs	8,399	3,834	45.7%			
HISD	51,503	26,411	51.3%			

Source: Chancery, IBM Cognos EOY roster 6/3/19

Table 10. Student Magnet Status During 2018–2019 (Grades K to 12 Only)

Student Group	# Students	# Magnet	% Magnet	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3
Immigrants	12,181	1,167	9.6%	6.4%	10.7%	12.4%
ELs	60,804	10,296	16.9%			
HISD	193,083	56,181	29.1%			

Source: Chancery, IBM Cognos EOY roster 6/3/19

- Data showed that immigrant student magnet participation increased with length of time in school. Only 6.4 percent of 1st-year immigrants were listed as magnet, but this rate improved to 12.4 percent for 3rd-year immigrants. Note that this percentage is still below the participation rates for ELs or district students overall.
- Advanced Placement course enrollment: **Table 11** summarizes data on student enrollment in AP courses during 2018–2019. Enrollment counts include all students in grades 8 through 12, and were extracted from a Chancery end-of-year roster (6/3/2019). AP course enrollment was obtained from Chancery records via IBM Cognos.
- Immigrant student AP course enrollment in 2018–2019 was lower than that for ELs or the district overall. By their 3rd year of immigrant status, AP course enrollment had improved to 15.1 percent, exceeding the EL student rate, but this was still well below the district average participation rate.

Table 11. AP Course Enrollment During 2018–2019 (Grades 8 to 12 Only)

Student Group	# Students	# Enrolled AP	% Enrolled AP	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3
Immigrants	3,743	393	10.5%	4.6%	12.2%	15.1%
ELs	11,640	1,358	11.7%			
HISD	65,310	16,924	25.9%			

Source: Chancery, IBM Cognos EOY roster 6/3/19

- Advanced Placement test performance: Finally, **Table 12** shows data on AP test performance during 2018–2019. Results showed that immigrants had a higher proportion of exam results with a score of 3 or higher than either ELs or the district overall.
- However, only 11.4 percent of immigrant students enrolled during the year took an AP test, which was lower than the rate for either ELs (12.1%) or the district (33.5%).

Table 12. AP Test Performance During 2018–2019 (Grades 9 to 12 Only)

Student Group	Student Counts			Test Counts		
	# Students	% 1 or 2	% 3 or Better	# Tests	% 1 or 2	% 3 or Better
Immigrants	430	40.0%	60.0%	507	41.8%	58.2%
ELs	1,213	61.9%	38.1%	1,433	67.5%	32.5%
HISD	19,548	62.3%	37.7%	26,740	61.6%	38.4%

Source: Chancery, IBM Cognos AP data 10/15/19

Discussion

The district has a large and growing population of immigrant students. Programs and services available for these students have varied in recent years, and the present report attempts to provide a snapshot of how immigrant students are doing on a number of performance measures. On most measures of academic performance, immigrant students lag behind both ELs as well as other students districtwide. There is some indication that they do better the longer they have been enrolled. For example, STAAR 3–8 results show clear evidence that students in years two and three do better than students who are in their first year. However, performance gaps still persist on English STAAR after three years, and while TELPAS results show improvement over time, overall English language proficiency still remains lower for 3rd-year immigrant students than for ELs as a group.

A notable set of findings concerns performance of immigrants at the secondary level. STAAR EOC results do not appear to improve over time. In fact, EOC passing rates for 3rd-year immigrants were lower than those for 2nd-year immigrants, and this was true for all subjects tested. Furthermore, a number of measures used to assess post-secondary readiness indicated sizeable and persistent gaps for immigrant students compared to other students, including ELs. These measures include enrollment at non-zoned schools, CTE participation, magnet status, and AP course enrollment. Taken together, these findings suggest that immigrant students at the secondary level may be missing out on opportunities to improve their options post-high school. It is essential that the district increase efforts in these areas to address this issue.

Much of the immigrant student enrollment in the district continues to be come from three Central American countries: Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Roughly half (48%) of the district's immigrant students in 2018–2019 came from those countries. This region has long suffered from instability, beginning with civil wars in the 1980s, and the resulting population displacement and economic problems. Despite peace accords, this instability has continued, leading to a continued surge in migration from that region. Thereafter, natural disasters (hurricanes, earthquakes, drought and crop failure) have added to the problems faced by those countries, which now face an epidemic of violence and gang activity. In FY 2018, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) apprehended more than 38,000 unaccompanied children and 104,000 people travelling as families from these three countries at the U.S.-Mexico border. As of June 2019, CBP had apprehended more than 363,000 migrants from those countries during the first nine months of the fiscal year, more than triple the total apprehended during all of FY 2018. It is highly likely that immigrant student enrollment from this region will continue to be high and even grow in the near future.

Endnotes

1. Figure 1 shows the number of immigrant students in 2018–2019 as 15,152, whereas Appendix A shows an immigrant enrollment of 11,568. The discrepancy between these two figures derives from the fact that two different data sources were used. Figure 1 shows cumulative enrollment over the entire school year (i.e., students who were enrolled at any point, including withdrawals). Appendix A uses the fall PEIMS snapshot, which includes only students enrolled as of October 26, 2018.

References

U.S. Department of Education. (2015). Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. Retrieved from <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1177/text>.

Appendix A

District Immigrant Student Enrollment: Number and Percentage of Students Enrolled in 2018-2019 Who Were Current (Years 1-3) or Former Immigrants

Enrollment Status	# Students	% Students
HISD Enrolled	209,040	
Current Immigrant	11,568	5.53%
Current/Former Immigrant	19,288	9.23%
<hr/>		
EL Enrolled	66,394	
EL Immigrant	9,860	14.85%
EL Current/Former Immigrant	14,310	21.55%

Data were extracted from fall PEIMS records covering the years 2003-2004 through 2018-2019.

Appendix B

Explanation of Assessments Included in Report

The STAAR is a state-mandated, criterion-referenced assessment used to measure student achievement. STAAR measures academic achievement in reading and mathematics in grades 3–8; writing at grades 4 and 7; social studies in grades 8; and science at grades 5 and 8. The STAAR Level II Phase-in 1 Satisfactory standard (used for 2012 to 2015) was increased to the Level II Satisfactory progression standard in 2016, and was to increase each year until 2021–2022. However, by commissioner's rule, that planned annual increase was overruled, and as of 2017 the standards which were in place for 2016 were retained (albeit relabeled as "Approaches Grade Level") in order to provide consistency for districts looking to assess growth in student achievement. However, it does remain true that different passing standards applied for the years 2012–2015 as compared to 2016 or later. Students taking the STAAR grades 3–8 assessments now have to answer more items correctly to “pass” the exams than in 2015 or earlier. For this reason, any charts or tables in the present report that include data from 2015 or previous years should be interpreted with caution.

For high school students, STAAR includes End-of-Course (EOC) exams in English language arts (English I, II), mathematics (Algebra I), science (Biology), and social studies (U.S. History). For EOC exams, the passing standard was also increased in 2016 to the Level II Satisfactory 2016 progression standard and was to increase each year until 2021–2022. This means that students taking an EOC for the first time in 2016 had to answer more items correctly to “pass” STAAR EOC exams than in 2015. As was the case with the STAAR 3–8, the planned annual increase in the EOC passing standards was dropped by commissioner's rule effective with the 2016–2017 school year. Thus, passing standards for 2018–2019 are the same as those used in 2015–2016, and will remain the same for the foreseeable future (relabeled as "Approaches Grade Level").

2015–2016 also saw the introduction of a new "Student Standard" for EOC exams. This measure is what is reported here for the EOC results (“Approaches Grade Level at Student Standard”). Under the Student Standard, all students taking EOC exams are not necessarily held to the same passing standard. Instead, the passing standard applicable is determined by the standard that was in place when a student first took any EOC assessment. This standard is to be maintained throughout the student's school career. Thus, for students who first tested prior to 2015–2016, the Student Standard is the Level II: Satisfactory Phase-in 1 Standard for 2012–2015. For students who first tested in 2015–2016 or later, it is equivalent to the 2016 Progression Standard. For context, in 2017–2018 only 7.7 percent of EOC results were scored using the older standards. For 2018–2019, this number fell to 0.8 percent.

The TELPAS is an English language proficiency assessment which is administered to all EL students in kindergarten through twelfth grade, and which was developed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in response to federal testing requirements. Proficiency scores in the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are used to calculate a composite score. Composite scores are in turn used to indicate where EL students are on a continuum of English language development. This continuum, based on the stages of language development for second language learners, is divided into four proficiency levels: Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Advanced High. In grades K–1, all language domains are scored via holistic ratings of trained observers. In Grades 2–12, only writing is scored by holistic ratings, while listening, speaking, and reading are assessed via online technology.

Appendix C

STAAR 3–8 English Results: Number Tested and Percent Meeting Approaches Grade Level Standard by Student Group, Grade Level and Subject (Spring 2019, First Administration Only)

Immigrants										
Grade	Reading		Mathematics		Writing		Science		Social Studies	
	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met						
3	429	55	450	70						
4	461	48	480	61	463	39				
5	494	45	512	61			511	49		
6	664	21	662	36						
7	647	20	640	29	627	18				
8	666	18	633	34			685	26	679	21
Total	3,361	32	3,377	46	1,090	27	1,196	36	679	21

English Learners										
Grade	Reading		Mathematics		Writing		Science		Social Studies	
	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met
3	3,571	63	3,923	75						
4	4,836	58	5,019	69	4,839	48				
5	5,350	54	5,412	73			5,479	55		
6	3,820	32	3,818	57						
7	3,427	42	3,426	51	3,403	37				
8	3,062	39	3,043	52			3,017	44	3,011	29
Total	24,066	49	24,641	64	8,242	44	8,496	51	3,011	29

HISD										
Grade	Reading		Mathematics		Writing		Science		Social Studies	
	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met						
3	12,736	69	13,134	74						
4	14,906	68	15,072	70	14,899	59				
5	15,933	70	15,986	78			16,076	67		
6	13,638	59	13,544	72						
7	13,009	68	12,417	69	13,022	64				
8	13,303	71	10,592	72			13,081	70	13,200	57
Total	83,525	67	80,745	73	27,921	61	29,157	68	13,200	57

Source: Cognos STAAR data extracts 6/12/19, Chancery

Appendix D

STAAR 3–8 Spanish Results: Number Tested and Percent Meeting Approaches Grade Level Standard by Student Group, Grade Level and Subject (Spring 2019, First Administration Only)

Immigrants								
Grade	Reading		Mathematics		Writing		Science	
	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met
3	525	66	505	54				
4	367	46	348	41	336	52		
5	226	68	208	36			224	11
Total	1,118	60	1,061	46	336	52	224	11

English Learners								
Grade	Reading		Mathematics		Writing		Science	
	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met
3	3,655	68	3,282	70				
4	1,883	56	1,701	62	1,909	64		
5	462	71	401	44			335	12
Total	6,000	65	5,384	66	1,909	64	335	12

Source: Cognos STAAR data extracts 6/12/19, Chancery

Appendix E

STAAR End-of Course Results: Number Tested and Number and Percentage Meeting the Approaches Grade Level Standard (Spring 2019 Data Only, All Students Tested)

Grade	Algebra I		Biology		English I		English II		US History	
	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met	Tested	% Met
Immigrant	1,140	52	1,258	45	1,152	11	1,260	13	651	62
English Learners	3,421	57	3,511	52	4,424	18	4,001	17	2,017	64
HISD	14,739	74	14,725	79	17,056	53	16,595	58	12,134	89

Source: STAAR EOC 5/29/19, Chancery

Appendix F

Composite TELPAS Results: Number and Percent of Students at Each Proficiency Level in 2019, by Grade and Student Group

Immigrants										
Grade	# Tested	Beginning		Intermediate		Advanced		Advanced High		Composite Score
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
K	1,229	857	70	260	21	83	7	29	2	1.8
1	1,319	623	47	382	29	192	15	122	9	2.0
2	1,015	302	30	455	45	198	20	60	6	2.1
3	776	210	27	334	43	162	21	70	9	1.9
4	695	275	40	261	38	114	16	45	6	2.0
5	616	214	35	223	36	121	20	58	9	1.9
6	562	193	34	253	45	92	16	24	4	1.9
7	545	176	32	250	46	97	18	22	4	1.9
8	571	181	32	288	50	73	13	29	5	1.6
9	949	490	52	346	36	89	9	24	3	1.4
10	686	207	30	346	50	99	14	34	5	1.9
11	425	89	21	198	47	97	23	41	10	2.2
12	464	84	18	224	48	105	23	51	11	2.2
Total	9,852	3,901	40	3,820	39	1,522	15	609	6	1.9

English Learners										
Grade	# Tested	Beginning		Intermediate		Advanced		Advanced High		Composite Score
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
K	6,620	4,107	62	1,865	28	471	7	177	3	1.4
1	7,212	2,223	31	3,058	42	1,305	18	626	9	2.0
2	7,180	677	9	3,369	47	2,421	34	713	10	2.4
3	7,330	350	5	2,447	33	2,919	40	1,614	22	2.8
4	6,756	480	7	2,287	34	2,725	40	1,264	19	2.7
5	5,831	318	5	1,587	27	2,373	41	1,553	27	2.8
6	3,858	270	7	1,572	41	1,651	43	365	9	2.6
7	3,448	256	7	1,333	39	1,414	41	445	13	2.6
8	3,074	245	8	1,265	41	1,261	41	303	10	2.6
9	2,991	629	21	1,374	46	758	25	230	8	2.2
10	2,110	271	13	1,036	49	593	28	210	10	2.4
11	1,524	126	8	720	47	476	31	202	13	2.5
12	1,473	134	9	636	43	514	35	189	13	2.5
Total	59,407	10,086	17	22,549	38	8,881	32	7,891	13	2.4

Source: TELPAS data file 5/23/19, Chancery

Appendix G

TELPAS Yearly Progress: Number and Percent of Students Gaining One or More Levels of English Language Proficiency in 2019, by Grade and Student Group

Immigrants									
Grade Level	Cohort Size	Gained 1 Proficiency Level		Gained 2 Proficiency Levels		Gained 3 Proficiency Levels		Gained at Least 1 Proficiency Level	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	916	428	47	83	9	8	1	519	57
2	679	312	46	52	8	3	0	367	54
3	485	212	44	22	5	0	0	234	48
4	440	133	30	9	2	0	0	142	32
5	381	167	44	24	6	0	0	191	50
6	344	116	34	3	1	0	0	119	35
7	324	114	35	6	2	0	0	120	37
8	340	97	29	3	1	0	0	100	29
9	412	109	26	3	1	0	0	112	27
10	500	121	24	2	0	0	0	123	25
11	365	108	30	2	1	0	0	110	30
12	340	111	33	6	2	0	0	117	34
Total	5,526	2,028	37	215	4	11	0	2,254	41

English Learners									
Grade Level	Cohort Size	Gained 1 Proficiency Level		Gained 2 Proficiency Levels		Gained 3 Proficiency Levels		Gained at Least 1 Proficiency Level	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	6,546	2,943	45	573	9	77	1	3,593	55
2	6,640	2,791	42	480	7	26	0	3,297	50
3	6,872	3,136	46	172	3	0	0	3,308	48
4	6,368	1,879	30	47	1	0	0	1,926	30
5	5,449	2,332	43	102	2	0	0	2,434	45
6	3,512	686	20	20	1	0	0	706	20
7	3,062	830	27	33	1	0	0	863	28
8	2,689	645	24	16	1	0	0	661	25
9	2,246	415	18	13	1	0	0	428	19
10	1,813	457	25	14	1	0	0	471	26
11	1,410	359	25	17	1	0	0	376	27
12	1,294	356	28	16	1	0	0	372	29
Total	47,901	16,829	35	1,503	3	103	0	18,435	38

Source: TELPAS data file 5/23/19, Chancery