Research Brief

HISD COMPLETION/STUDENT STATUS AND DROPOUT RATE: CLASS OF 2003

The Texas Education Agency produces an annual publication, the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) Report, which presents the condition of education in public school districts throughout Texas. Using a variety of indicators, the AEIS provides much of the demographic and performance data for individual campuses and districts in the state of Texas. While these indicators provide a detailed account of Texas public schools, they often involve formulas that are not easily understood. Due to the complicated nature of formula calculation for many indicators, careful consideration must be employed when interpreting the data from the AEIS. The purpose of this research brief is to familiarize the reader with the following AEIS indicators: Completion/Student Status Rate and Dropout Rate (Annual).

Completion/Student Status Rate

The AEIS report includes a Completion/Student Status Rate. This indicator is reported for districts and high schools that have had continuous enrollment in grades 9 through 12 for the four years prior to the reporting year. Completion/Student Status Rate shows the status of high school students after four years of enrollment. The indicators are calculated as follows for the Class of 2003, who began as 9th graders in 1999–2000.

1. Percent Graduated (Grad.): The percentage that received a high school diploma by the end of the 2002–03 school year.

2. Percent Received GED (GED): The percentage that received a General Educational Development certificate before March 1, 2003.

3. Percent Continued High School (Cont.): The percentage still enrolled as students for the 2003–04 school year.

4. Percent Dropped Out (Drop): The percentage that dropped out and did not return to school by the fall of the 2003–04 school year.

As in last year's report, this latter measure is an actual four-year longitudinal dropout rate. The four outcome percentages sum to 100% and are intended to show the status of students at the end of the year in which they were expected to graduate from high school. All four calculations use the number of 9th graders in 1999–2000, *plus* transfers in, *minus* transfers out as the denominator. Students who completed all high school course work but failed to pass the TAKS by the spring of 2003 were counted as transfers out.

Table 1 shows HISD data for the Classes of 2001, 2002, and 2003. **Table 2** (see next page) shows the state data for comparison purposes. Although the percent of graduates for HISD is lower than the state's graduation rate, the percent of students that remain in school after four years is higher than the state level.

Table 1: Four-Year Completion Status for HISD by Student Demographics											
	Class of 2001				**Class of 2002**				**Class of 2003**		
	Grad.	**GED**	**Cont.**	**Drop**	**Grad.**	**GED**	**Cont.**	**Drop**	**Grad.**	**GED**	**Cont.**	**Drop**
All Students	72.0	4.3	11.0	12.7	75.3	3.2	12.3	9.2	71.3	2.9	11.2	14.6
African Am.	74.2	2.9	9.2	13.7	78.9	2.2	10.8	8.1	74.2	2.3	9.5	14.1
Hispanic	66.0	4.7	14.9	14.5	67.9	3.5	16.4	12.2	64.2	2.8	14.8	18.2
White	83.1	6.9	3.5	6.6	86.3	5.3	4.6	3.8	84.2	5.3	4.7	5.7
Asian/Pac. Is.	86.6	1.7	6.2	5.5	91.1	1.5	4.8	2.5	89.5	1.5	4.4	4.6
Male	66.5	6.2	13.9	13.4	68.7	4.3	16.4	10.6	66.3	3.5	14.7	15.4
Female	77.2	2.4	8.3	12.0	81.3	2.2	8.6	7.9	76.0	2.3	7.9	13.8
Eco. Disadv.	67.7	3.1	15.2	14.0	70.5	2.8	16.0	10.6	70.9	1.7	15.7	11.7

Table 2: Four-Year Completion Status for the State by Student Demographics

	Class of 2001				Class of 2002				Class of 2003			
	Grad.	GED	Cont.	Drop	Grad.	GED	Cont.	Drop	Grad.	GED	Cont.	Drop
All Students	81.1	4.8	7.9	6.2	82.8	4.1	8.0	5.0	84.2	3.3	7.9	4.5
African Am.	77.7	3.3	10.6	8.4	79.8	2.5	11.0	6.6	81.1	2.1	10.6	6.3
Hispanic	73.5	4.3	12.6	9.6	75.7	3.7	12.8	7.8	77.3	2.9	12.6	7.1
White	86.8	5.8	3.9	3.5	88.2	5.1	4.0	2.7	89.8	4.1	3.9	2.2
Asian/Pac. Is.	90.0	2.0	4.9	3.1	90.6	1.8	5.0	2.6	91.5	1.5	5.1	1.9
Male	77.5	6.0	9.7	6.8	79.2	5.3	10.0	5.5	80.9	4.3	9.9	4.9
Female	84.7	3.6	6.0	5.7	86.4	3.0	6.0	4.5	87.7	2.3	5.9	4.1
Eco. Disadv.	73.2	4.6	12.3	9.9	75.8	3.9	12.5	7.7	77.8	3.2	12.4	6.6

Annual Dropout Rate

In the 2002–03 reporting period, TEA began reporting two annual dropout rates: 1) the number of students who dropped out of the district across grades 7–12 divided by the cumulative number of students enrolled in grades 7–12 for the school year (reported since 1987–88), and 2) a new calculation based on the above formula using students in grades 7–8. Both rates convey dropping out as a single event during a given year of analysis. **Table 3** shows the Annual Dropout Rates in HISD and Texas over four school years.

Table 3: Annual Dropout Rate as Calculated by TEA for HISD and the State by Student Demographics, 1999–00 to 2002–03

	1999–00		2000–01		2001–02		2002–03			
	Grades 7–12		Grades 7–12		Grades 7–12		Grades 7–8		Grades 7–12	
	HISD	State	HISD	State	HISD	State	HISD	State	HISD	State
All Students	3.2	1.3	1.5	1.0	1.4	0.9	0.9	0.2	2.4	0.9
African Am.	3.5	1.8	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.5	0.2	2.1	1.2
Hispanic	3.4	1.9	2.0	1.4	1.8	1.3	1.2	0.4	3.0	1.4
White	1.5	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.1	1.1	0.4
As/Pac. Is.	1.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.2	1.2	0.4
Male	3.4	1.4	1.5	1.0	1.4	1.0	0.8	0.2	*	1.0
Female	3.0	1.2	1.5	0.9	1.4	0.8	1.0	0.2	*	0.8
Eco. Disadv.	2.1	1.3	1.4	1.0	1.3	0.9	0.8	0.3	2.1	1.0

* Not available

Longitudinal Dropout Rate vs. Annual Dropout Rate

Both the four-year longitudinal dropout rate and the annual dropout rate provide useful information to districts and schools, but comparisons between the two dropout rates do not yield meaningful results. While the longitudinal dropout rate measures a single group of 9th graders spanning a four-year period, the annual dropout rate measures dropping out of school as a single event during a given year. If a student drops out of school at one point during the four years, he/she will be counted in the annual dropout rate. However, if the student returns to school before the end of the four years, he/she will not be counted as a dropout in the longitudinal rate.

The State Board of Education has recently approved a non-binding resolution that calls for a revision of the TEA computation of dropout data beginning with data from the 2003–2004 school year. The proposed calculation and methodology is identical to that used by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). For details, see the *Dropout Study: A Report to the 77th Texas Legislature, December 2000* (http://www.tea.state.tx.us/research/pdfs/rider71.pdf).

Conclusion

While many of the new indicators used by TEA and HISD involve complicated formulas, they provide a better measure of the condition of Texas public school education. Specifically, the dropout indicators provide a two-pronged approach to the measurement of student data as they capture both event-based and longitudinal matriculation of students within the state and within the district. This increased measurement sensitivity provides a more complete picture of district successes and areas in need of improvement. With continued and increased efforts by schools, parents, communities, and students, HISD is confident that progress will be made and all students will complete a quality education program.