



**HOUSTON INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**NATIONAL ASSESSMENT
OF EDUCATIONAL
PROGRESS**

Trial Urban District Assessment

MEMORANDUM

April 3, 2008

TO: Board Members

FROM: Abelardo Saavedra
Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: **NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP) TRIAL
URBAN DISTRICT ASSESSMENT: WRITING 2007 RESULTS**

CONTACT: Carla Stevens, 713-556-6700

The 2007 NAEP writing assessment has been released for the districts that participated in the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) program. NAEP, also known as the Nation's Report Card, is the nation's only federally authorized survey of student achievement in various subject areas. NAEP is administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), an agency within the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. The Houston Independent School District (HISD) is one of 11 large urban districts that voluntarily participated in the TUDA.

Student performance on the 2007 NAEP writing assessment is reported by using scale scores, which represent equal units on a continuous scale, using numbers that range from 0 to 300. Also, student performance is reported by using the percentage of students who attained the achievement levels, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. The National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) defines the achievement levels as follows:

- *Basic*: denotes partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at each grade. The scale scores 114-172 correspond to the Basic level.
- *Proficient*: represents solid academic performance for each grade assessed. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter. The scale scores 173-223 correspond to the Proficient level.
- *Advanced*: signifies superior performance. The scale scores 224-300 correspond to the Advanced level.

The NAEP assesses writing by having students write for three main purposes: narrative, informative, and persuasive. Persuasive writing focuses on exerting an impact on the reader. Narrative discourse emphasizes the writer's experiences, perceptions, and imagination. Writing for informative purposes stresses the subject matter that is being explained.

Results of the 2007 NAEP writing assessment are presented in the following tables and graphs. Due to sampling methods used by NCES, results are only available at the district level and not at the school level. Comparisons were made between ten of the eleven participating districts—Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Cleveland, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, and San Diego—as well as Texas, the nation, and large central cities. The District of Columbia did not meet the minimum sample size; therefore, results were not available. These results present the second administration of the writing assessment for eighth-grade students for the TUDA. Fourth grade students did not participate in 2007.

NAEP Results for Writing: (Table 1)

- **Houston eighth-grade students' average scale score for writing increased from 138 in 2002 to 143 in 2007.**
- Houston's eighth-grade students outperformed Cleveland and Los Angeles.
- The percent of Houston eighth-grade students who scored at or above the basic level increased from 74 percent in 2002 to 81 percent in 2007.
- The average writing scale score for Houston's White eighth-grade students decreased from 176 to 171. **However, white eighth-grade students exceeded the scores for the nation, Texas, Large Central Cities and five of the participating districts.**
- **The average writing scale score for Houston's Hispanic eighth-grade students increased from 132 in 2002 to 138 in 2007, exceeding the scores for Large Central Cities and six of the participating districts.** Houston and Boston had the same scale score (See Appendix).
- **Scores for African American eighth-grade students increased from 136 in 2002 to 140 in 2007. This was the same as the score nationwide and in New York City and exceeded the scores of Large Central Cities and four of the participating districts.** (See Appendix).
- **From 2002 to 2007, Houston's Hispanic students increased by 6 scale score points while the state increased by 5 scale score points. Houston decreased the White-Hispanic gap by 11 scale score points going from 44 scale score points in 2002 to 33 scale score points in 2007 (See Appendix). The state decreased its White-Hispanic gap by 8 points during the same time.**
- **From 2002 to 2007 Houston's African American students increased by 4 scale score points while the state increased by 2 scale score points. During that same time period, Houston decreased the White-Black gap by 9 scale score points while Texas' gap decreased by 5 scale score points (see Appendix).**

NAEP Sample/Exclusions: (Table 2)

- For 2007, 1,889 eighth-grade students were tested in writing compared to 1,109 in 2002.
- The district's exclusion rate for eighth graders with disabilities (SD) or English language learners (ELL) on the writing test remained the same at 8 percent from 2002 to 2007.



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Attachments

- c: Superintendent's Direct Reports
Regional Superintendents
Kelly Trlica

NAEP Writing: 2002 and 2007

Table 1: NAEP Eighth-Grade Writing Assessment Results by Scale Scores and Percentage of Students At or Above Basic and Proficient Levels: 2002 and 2007

	<u>Scale Scores</u> <u>(0-300)</u>		<u>At or Above Basic</u> <u>(Percentage of Students)</u>		<u>At or Above Proficient</u> <u>(Percentage of Students)</u>	
	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>
Nation	152	154	84	88	30	31
Texas	152	151	83	85	31	26
Large Central City	139	145	73	81	19	22
Houston	138	143	74	81	19	18
Atlanta	130	145	68	83	9	19
Austin	+	146	+	78	+	26
Boston	+	149	+	83	+	25
Charlotte	+	155	+	88	+	31
Chicago	136	146	72	83	15	23
Cleveland	+	133	+	77	+	9
District of Columbia	128	–	66	–	10	–
Los Angeles	128	137	64	77	10	13
New York City	–	146	–	80	–	25
San Diego	+	147	+	79	+	27

+Did not participate

–Not Available

"Large Central City" includes nationally representative public schools located in large central cities (population 250,000 or more) within metropolitan statistical areas.

NAEP Sample/Exclusions: 2002 and 2007

Table 2: Percentage of Identified and Excluded Students with Disabilities (SD) and English Language Learners (ELL): 2002 and 2007 Writing Assessment

	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>
TUDA Sample	1,109	1,889
SD/ ELL Identified	27%	22%
SD/ ELL Excluded	8%	8%
SD Identified	15%	12%
SD Excluded	5%	5%
ELL Identified	18%	13%
ELL Excluded	5%	4%

**Appendix
Grade 8 Writing**

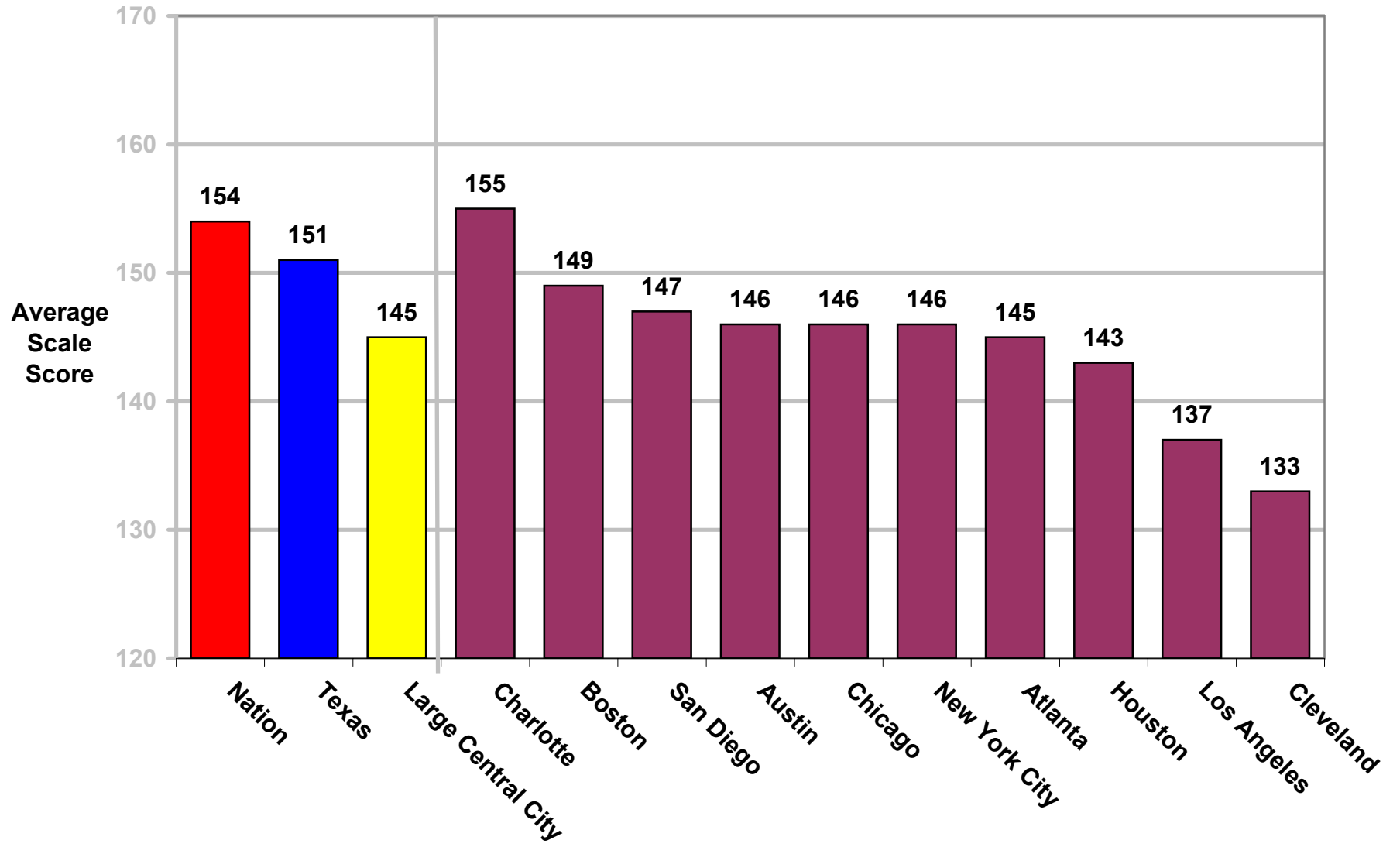


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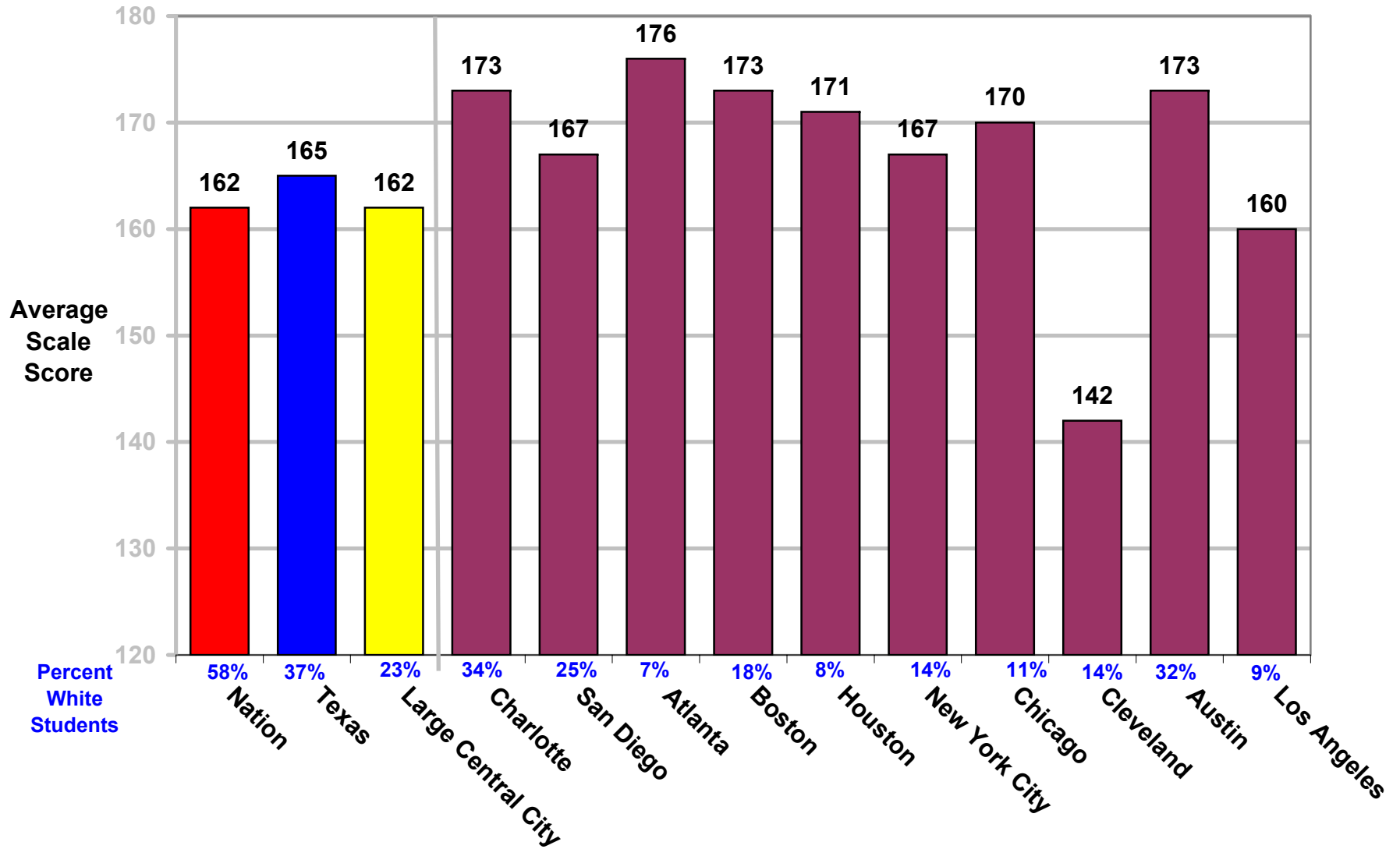
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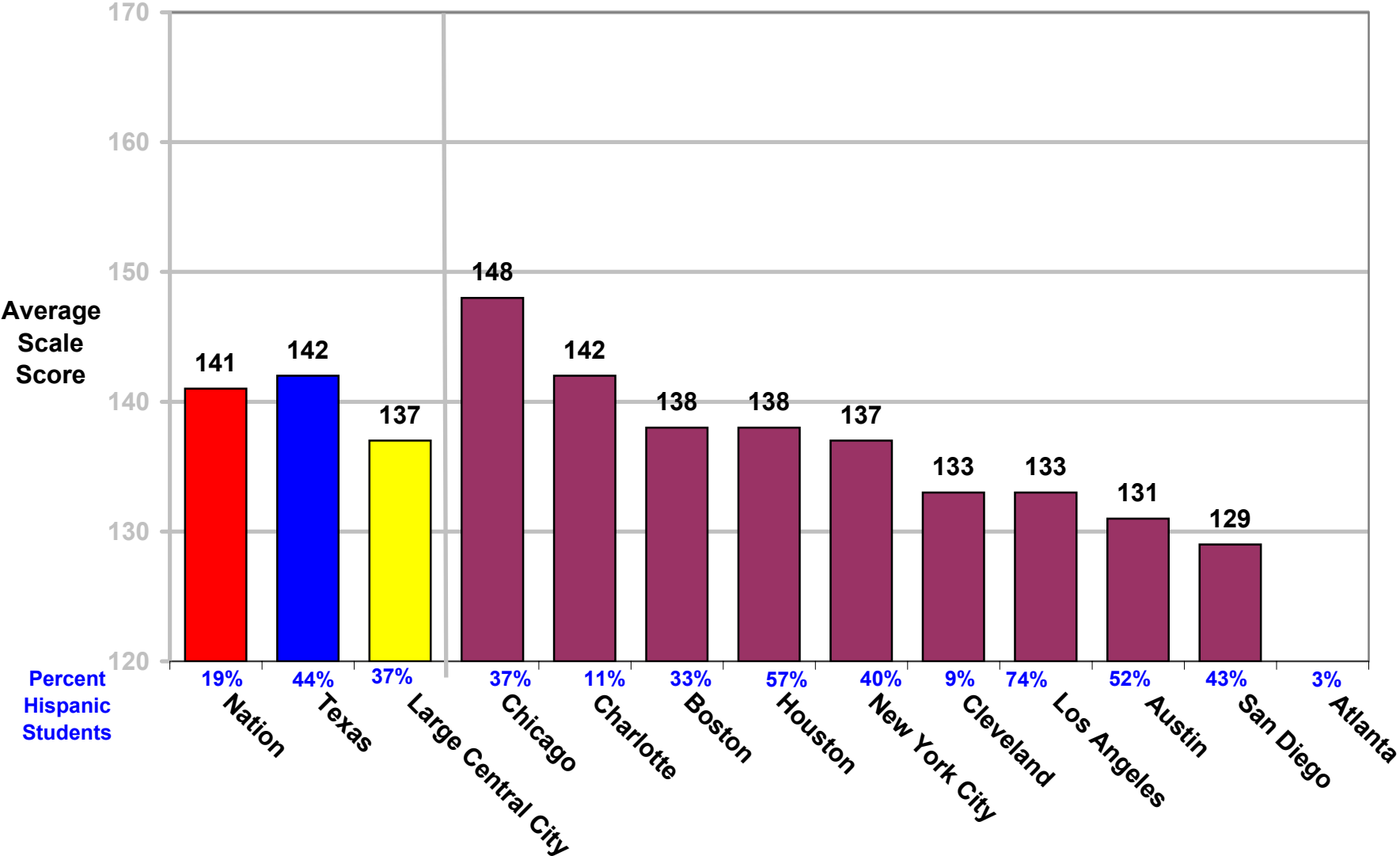
Overall – Writing 2007 – Grade 8



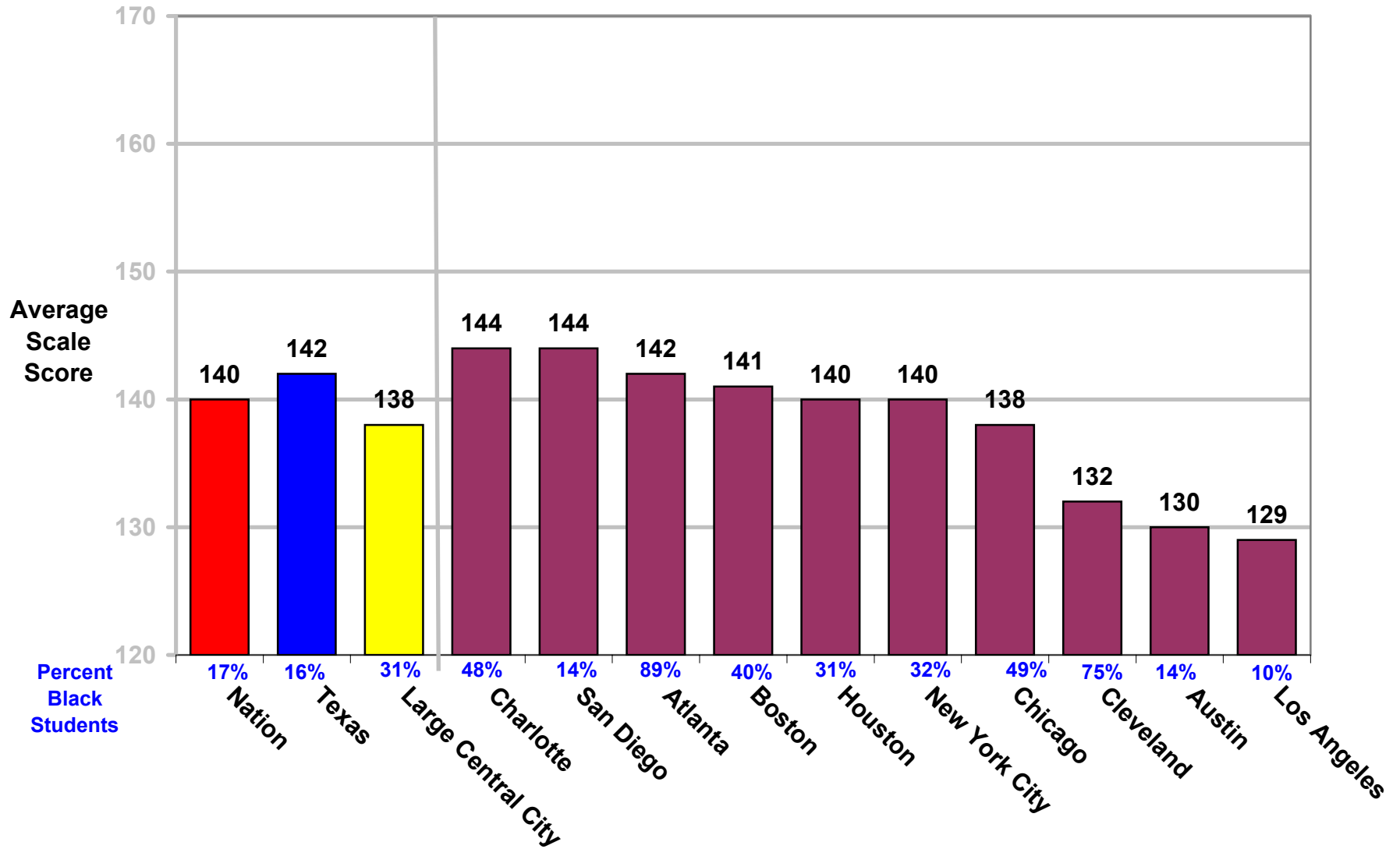
White Students – Writing 2007 – Grade 8



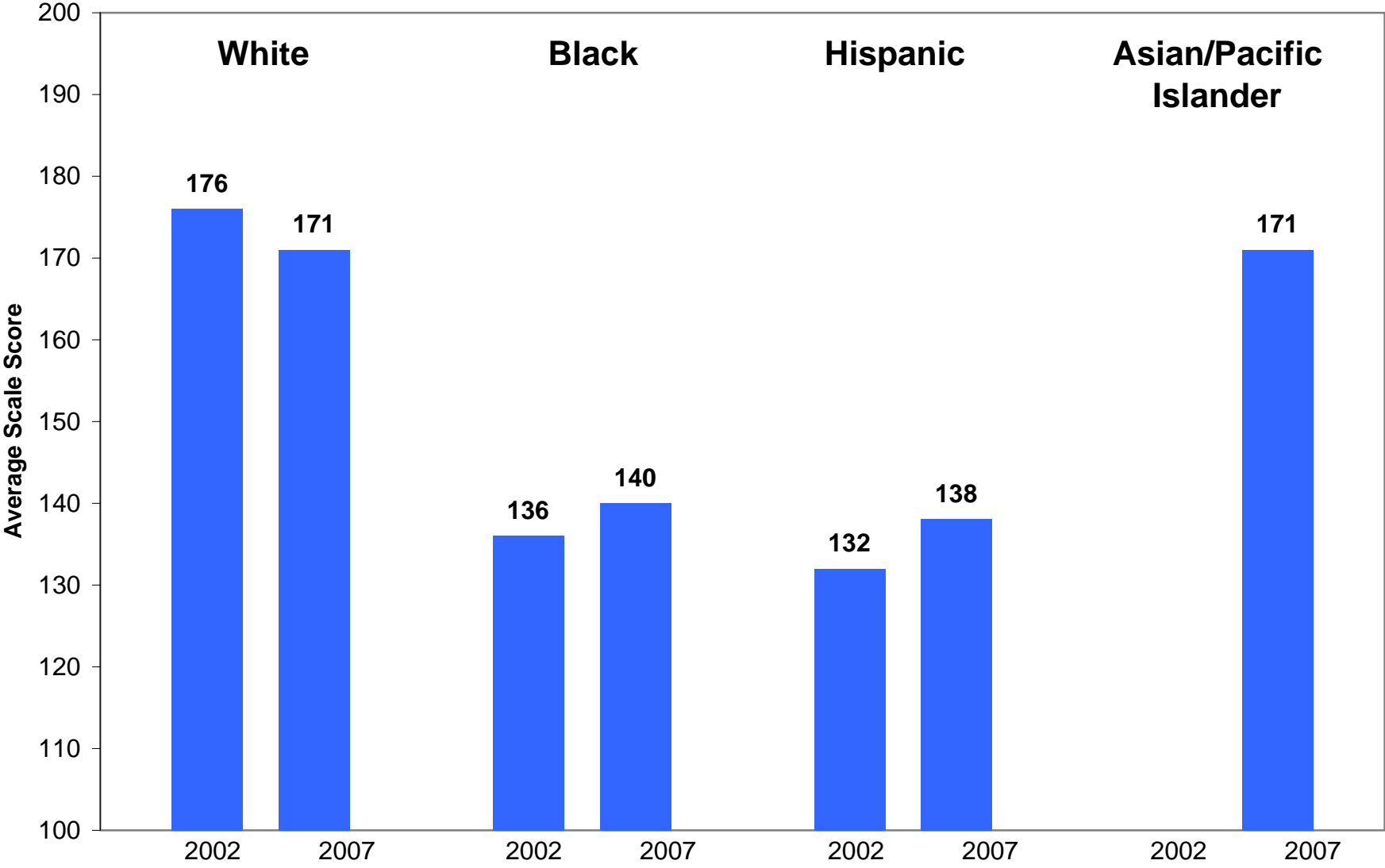
Hispanic Students – Writing 2007 – Grade 8



Black Students – Writing 2007 – Grade 8

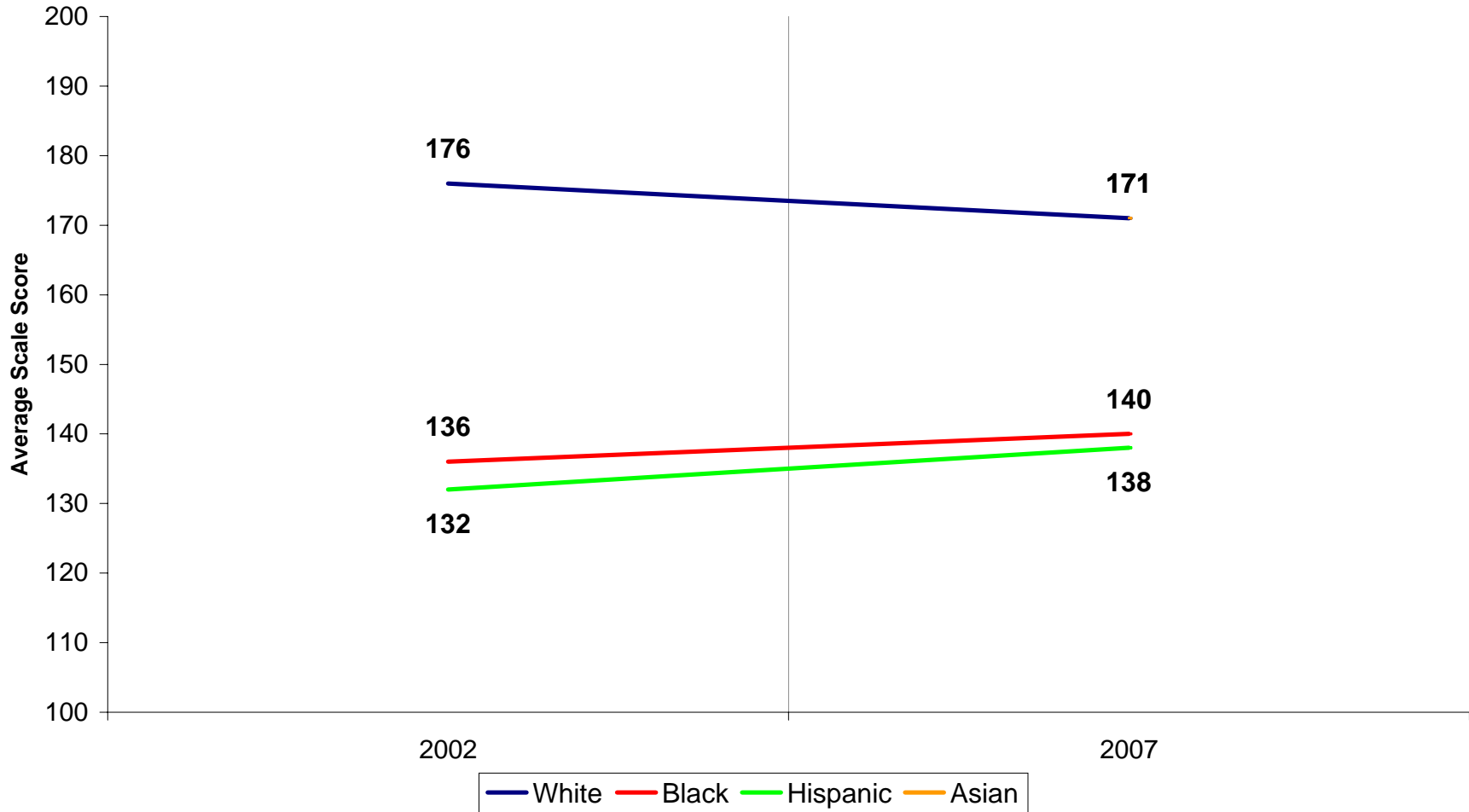


Houston NAEP Writing - Grade 8 - 2007



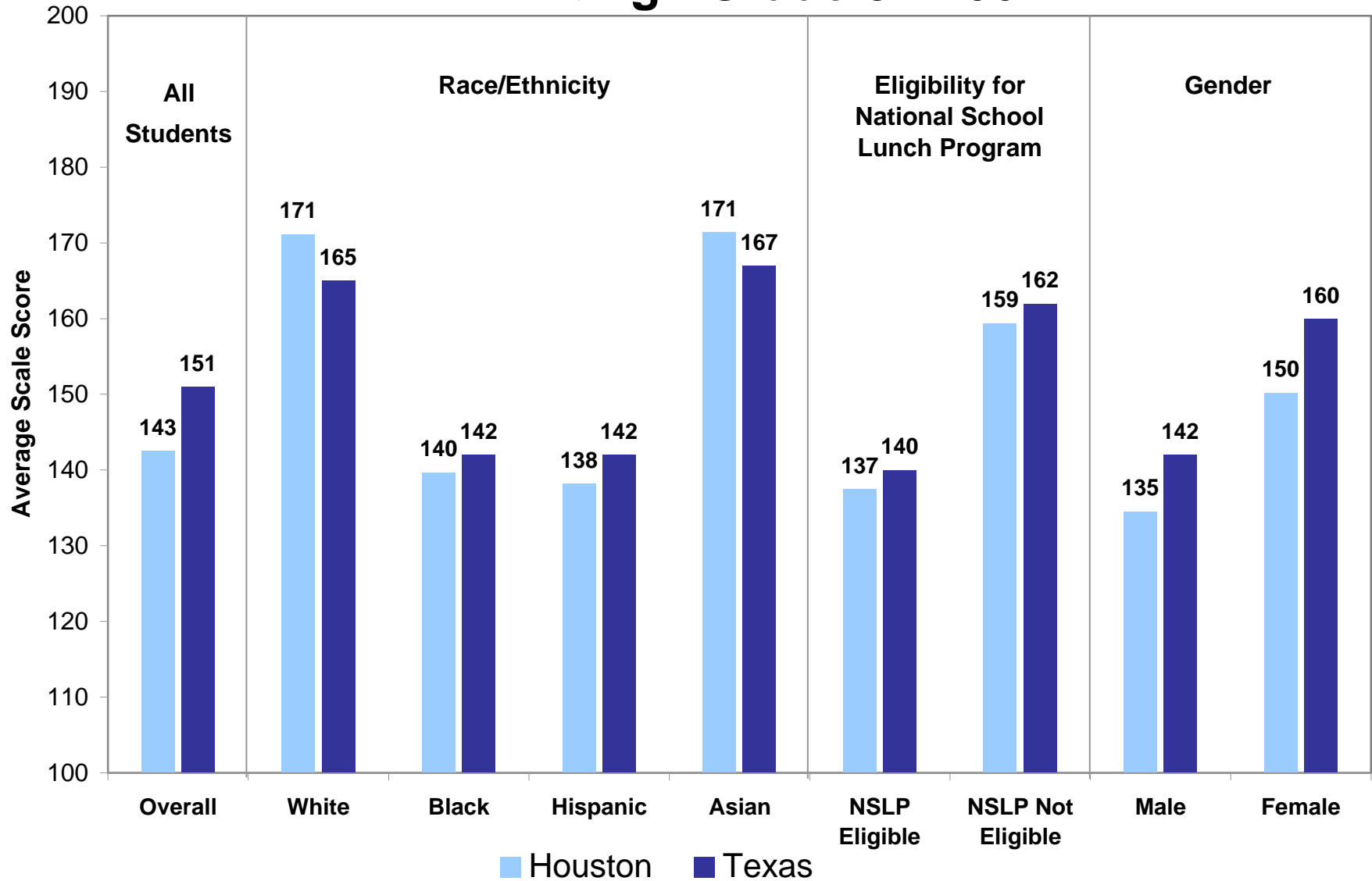
Houston NAEP Writing Grade 8 - Race/Ethnicity

Average Scale Score: 2002-2007

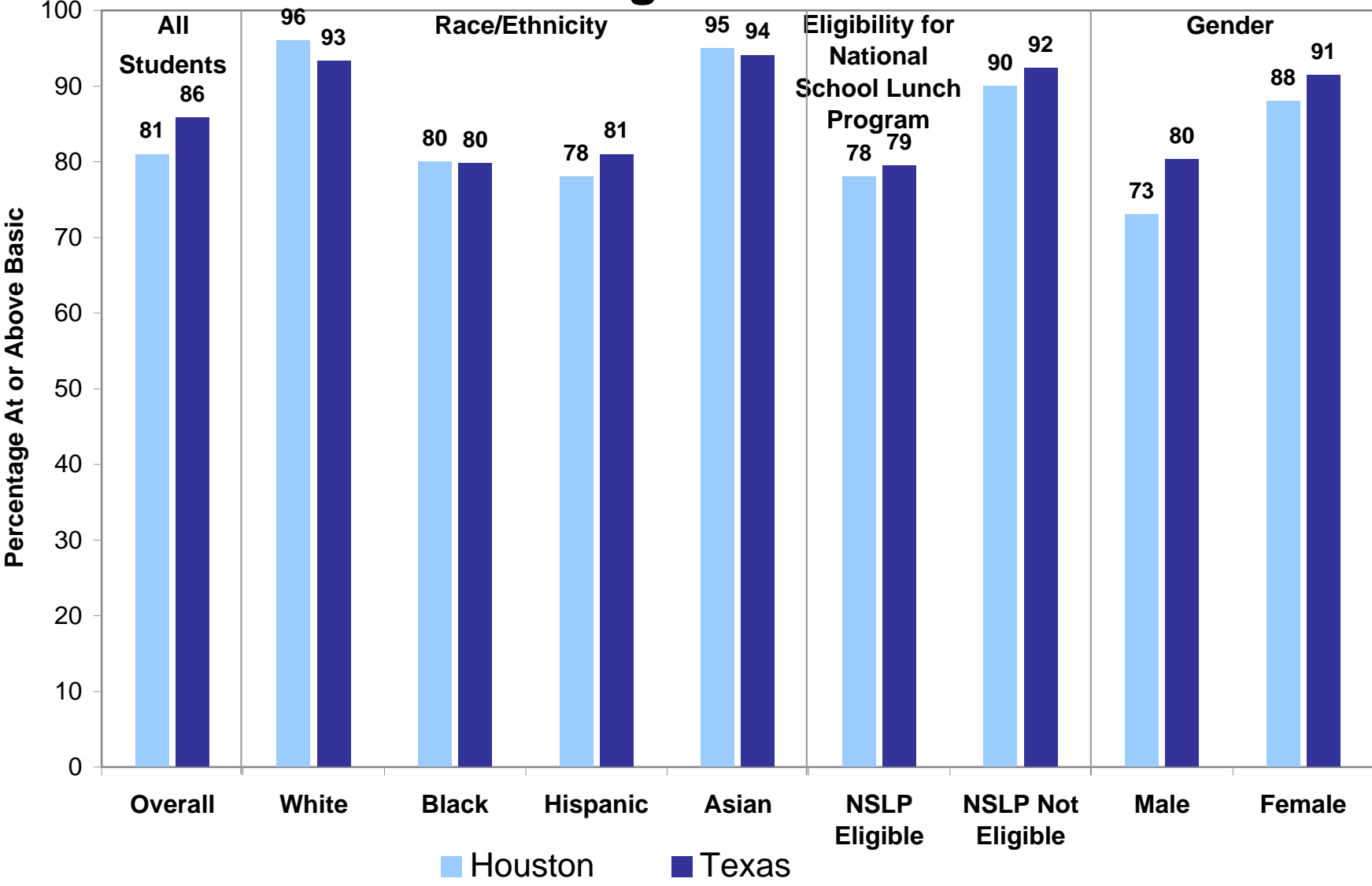


NOTE: The NAEP Writing scale ranges from 0 to 300. Observed differences are not necessarily statistically significant.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2002 and 2007 Writing Assessments.

NAEP Writing - Grade 8 - 2007

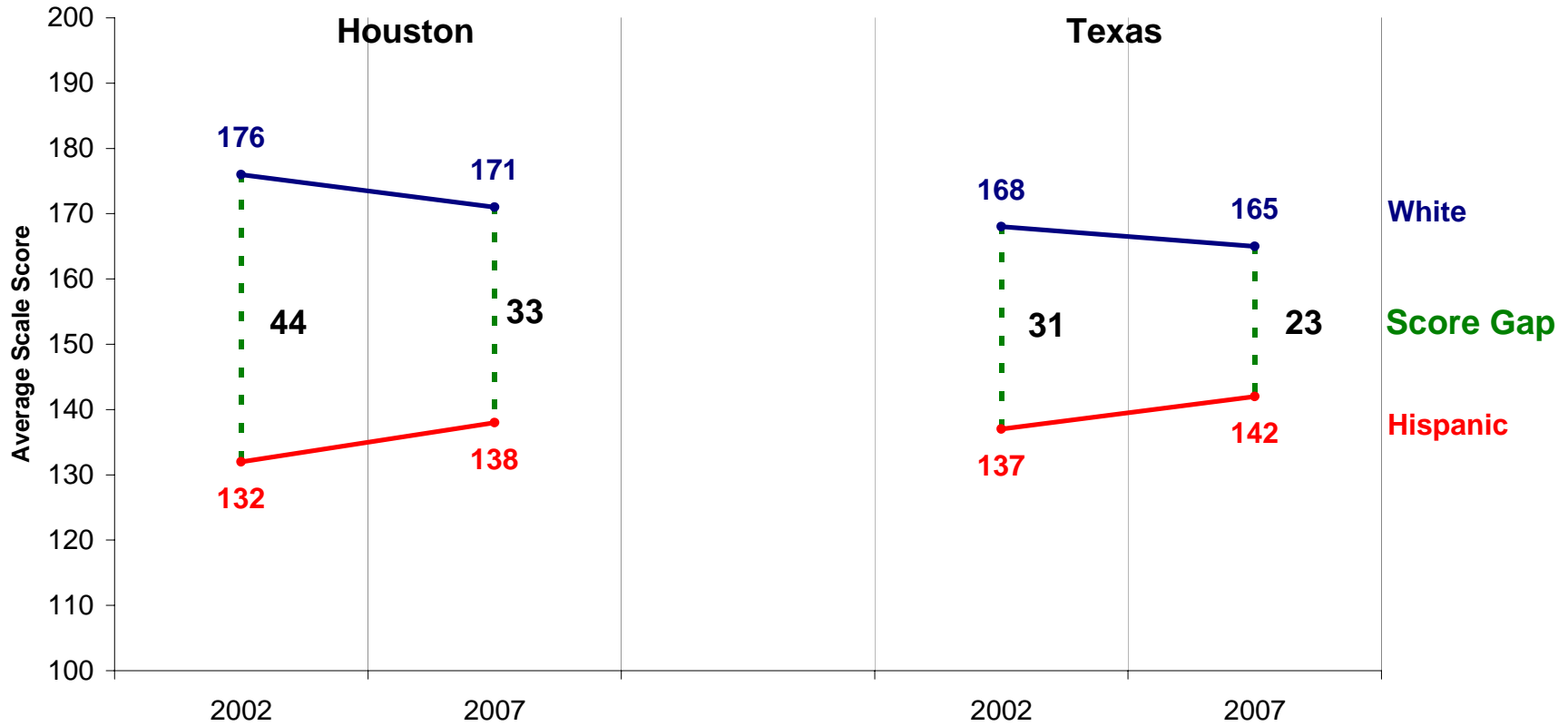


NAEP Writing - Grade 8 - 2007



NAEP Writing Grade 8 White - Hispanic Gaps

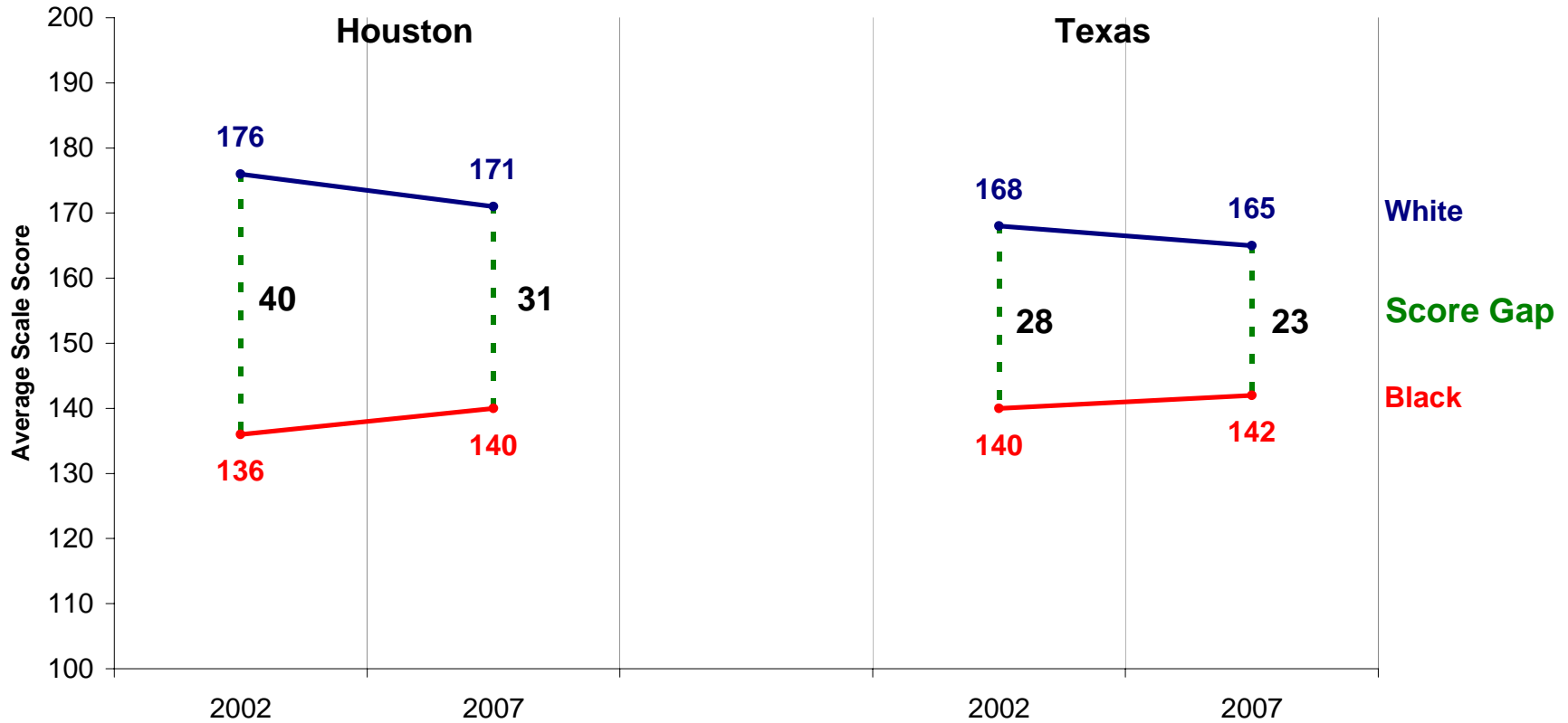
Average writing scale scores and score gaps for White - Hispanic students, grade 8: 2002-2007



NOTE: The NAEP Writing scale ranges from 0 to 300. Observed differences are not necessarily statistically significant.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998, 2002 and 2007 Writing Assessments.

NAEP Writing Grade 8 White - Black Gaps

Average writing scale scores and score gaps for White - Black students, grade 8: 2002-2007



NOTE: The NAEP Writing scale ranges from 0 to 300. Observed differences are not necessarily statistically significant.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998, 2002 and 2007 Writing Assessments.