

# Research Brief

## HISD CLASS OF 2009 COMPLETION/STUDENT STATUS RATES and 2008–2009 Annual Dropout Rates

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 require detailed explanation to be fully understood. The purpose of this research brief is to familiarize the reader with the following AEIS indicators: Completion/Student Status Rate and Annual Dropout Rate and to provide an explanation of the formulas employed to calculate each.

### Completion/Student Status Rate

The AEIS report includes a Completion/Student Status Rate, which shows the status of a cohort of high school students identified as first-time ninth graders and tracked longitudinally for four years. The rate includes four outcomes: percent graduated, percent received General Educational Development (GED), percent continued high school, and percent dropped out. The four outcome percentages sum to 100 percent 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. The indicators are calculated as follows for the Class of 2009, who began as 9<sup>th</sup> graders in 2005–2006.

1. Percent Graduated (Grad.): The percentage that received a high school diploma by August 31, 2009.
2. Percent Received GED (GED): The percentage that received a General Educational Development certificate by August 31, 2009.
3. Percent Continued High School (Cont.): The percentage still enrolled as students in the fall after their anticipated graduation.
4. Percent Dropped Out (Drop): The percentage that dropped out and did not return to school by the fall of the 2009–2010 school year.

To determine completion rates, the number of students in each category is divided by the number of students in the class. All four calculations use the number of first time ninth graders in 2005–2006, plus transfers in, minus transfers out as the denominator.

**Table 1** shows HISD data for the Classes of 2007, 2008, and 2009. **Table 2** shows the state data for comparison purposes. The HISD Class of 2009 rates for graduation increased for all groups, except the Asian student group, and dropout rates decreased for all groups, except the Asian/Pacific Islander student groups, compared to the previous year.

	Class of 2007				Class of 2008				Class of 2009			
	Grad.	GED	Cont.	Drop	Grad.	GED	Cont.	Drop	Grad.	GED	Cont.	Drop
All Students	64.3	1.1	12.5	22.1	68.2	0.7	12.4	18.7	70.0	0.9	13.2	15.8
African Am.	66.7	1.1	9.6	22.6	68.0	0.5	11.6	20.0	68.4	1.0	12.8	17.8
Asian/Pac. Is.	87.8	0.6	6.4	5.1	88.0	0.5	5.3	6.2	87.9	0.6	4.3	7.2
Hispanic	55.6	0.8	16.8	26.8	62.8	0.6	15.3	21.2	65.9	0.8	15.9	17.4
White	86.9	2.5	3.8	6.7	84.7	1.7	4.7	8.9	87.4	1.4	5.2	6.0
Eco. Disadv.	59.9	1.0	13.2	25.9	65.0	0.6	14.5	19.9	74.6	0.6	11.2	13.6

**Table 2: Texas Comparison of Four-Year Completion Status by Student Demographics**

	<u>Class of 2007</u>				<u>Class of 2008</u>				<u>Class of 2009</u>			
	<u>Grad.</u>	<u>GED</u>	<u>Cont.</u>	<u>Drop</u>	<u>Grad.</u>	<u>GED</u>	<u>Cont.</u>	<u>Drop</u>	<u>Grad.</u>	<u>GED</u>	<u>Cont.</u>	<u>Drop</u>
All Students	78.0	2.0	8.7	11.4	79.1	1.5	8.9	10.5	80.6	1.4	8.6	9.4
African Am.	70.7	1.6	10.5	17.2	71.8	1.1	11.0	16.1	73.8	1.1	10.3	14.8
Asian/Pac. Is.	91.5	0.5	4.2	3.8	91.2	0.3	4.8	3.6	92.4	0.3	4.3	3.0
Hispanic	68.5	1.8	13.3	16.4	70.8	1.5	13.3	14.4	73.5	1.4	12.7	12.4
White	88.2	2.4	4.1	5.3	88.8	1.8	4.2	5.1	89.7	1.7	4.1	4.5
Eco. Disadv.	68.8	2.1	11.7	17.3	70.4	1.7	12.2	15.7	78.3	1.2	9.7	10.9

### Annual Dropout Rate

Beginning with the 2002–2003 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 1987–1988), and 2) a 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 three school years. Overall, the 2008–2009 dropout rates at the district and state levels for all students and student groups were higher or stayed constant from the previous year in grades 7–8. The dropout rates during 2008–2009 school year for grades 7–12 for all students and each subgroup decreased from the previous year for both Texas and HISD. *Note: The Annual Dropout Rate Accountability Standard for Grades 7–8 decreased from 2.0% in 2009 to 1.8% in 2010.*

**Table 3: Annual Dropout Rate as Calculated by TEA for HISD and the State by Student Demographics, 2006–2007 to 2008–2009**

	<u>2006–2007</u>				<u>2007–2008</u>				<u>2008–2009</u>			
	<u>Grades 7–8</u>		<u>Grades 7–12</u>		<u>Grades 7–8</u>		<u>Grades 7–12</u>		<u>Grades 7–8</u>		<u>Grades 7–12</u>	
	<u>HISD</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>HISD</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>HISD</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>HISD</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>HISD</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>HISD</u>	<u>State</u>
All Students	1.2	0.4	5.0	2.7	0.5	0.3	3.2	2.2	0.6	0.3	2.3	2.0
African Am.	1.4	0.7	5.3	4.1	0.6	0.5	3.1	3.5	0.7	0.5	2.9	3.1
Asian/Pac. Is.	0.7	0.2	1.7	1.0	0.0	0.2	0.8	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.7	0.7
Hispanic	1.2	0.5	5.6	3.7	0.5	0.4	3.8	3.0	0.5	0.4	2.4	2.6
White	0.7	0.2	2.0	1.3	0.0	0.1	1.4	1.1	0.2	0.1	0.9	0.9
Eco. Disadv.	1.0	0.5	3.9	2.8	0.4	0.3	2.6	2.3	0.4	0.3	1.8	1.7

### Longitudinal Dropout Rate vs. Annual Dropout Rate

Both the four-year longitudinal dropout rate (Tables 1 and 2) and the annual dropout rate (Table 3) 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 ninth 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, the event would be counted in the annual dropout rate of the year it occurred. If the student returns to school before the end of the four years, the student would still be counted in the earlier reported annual dropout rate but would not be counted in the longitudinal dropout rate.

### Conclusion

It is important to note that a single indicator, such as completion rate, graduation rate, or annual dropout rate, impacts outcomes on the state and federal accountability systems. The TEA standard accountability system uses the grades 7–8 annual dropout rate indicator, along with student performance at the middle school level. In grades 9–12, the *Completion I Rate*, which combines the cohorts of students who graduated and continued high school, is used with student performance in the standard system at the high school level. The TEA alternative accountability system includes grades 7–12 annual dropout measure and *Completion II Rate*, combining the cohorts of students who graduated, received a GED, and continued high school with student performance. At the federal level, the completion status graduation rate is used as part of the determination of adequate yearly progress, in addition to student performance and test participation for high schools.

In 2005–2006, Texas began identifying dropouts based on the definition used by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The new criteria included earlier cut-off dates for students in grades 7–12 to return to school or to earn a GED and more stringent definitions of who is counted as a dropout.