Texas Public School Attrition Study 2020-21

Annual attrition study, with...

- Forecast analysis
- How the Pandemic May Impact the Six School Policies and Practices that Lead to Higher Dropout Rates
- Timeline for the class of 2021
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Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2020-21

Texas Reaches All-Time Low Attrition Rate but Still Loses Over 80,000 Students from its High Schools

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

The overall high school attrition rate in Texas public schools continued its decline for the 2020-21 school year. Following a 20% attrition rate for the 2019-20 school year, the attrition in the 2020-21 school year was 19% – the lowest rate ever recorded since the initial attrition study released by IDRA in 1986. This year's study provides an additional perspective of the COVID-19 impact on attrition and dropout rates in Texas.

IDRA's latest attrition study found that 19% of the freshman class of 2017-18 left school prior to graduating in the 2020-21 school year. This year's figure represents a 14-percentage point drop from the initial study in 1986 that found a 33% attrition rate in 1985-86.

While attrition trends look like school holding power in Texas is slowly improving, concerns remain about the persistent gaps among major racial and ethnic student groups. In 2020-21, the attrition rates of Latino students and Black students are about double the rate of white students: 23% compared to 10%.

Finding Highlights

Key findings of the latest study include the following.

- Texas public schools are failing to graduate one out of every five students. Nineteen percent of the freshman class of 2017-18 left school prior to graduating with a high school diploma.

- A total of 82,215 students from the 2017-18 freshman class were lost from public high school enrollment in 2020-21.

- Texas schools have lost a cumulative total of more than 4.1 million students from public high school enrollment since 1986.

> **The statewide attrition rate was the lowest it has ever been, but Texas was still losing more than one in five students during COVID-19.**

In 2020-21…
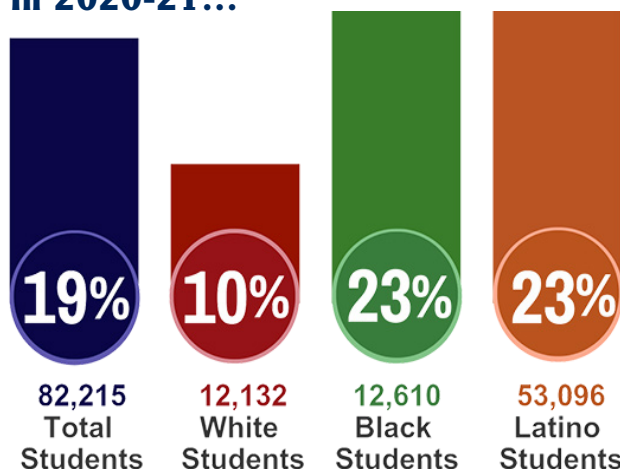
19%	10%	23%	23%
82,215 Total Students	12,132 White Students	12,610 Black Students	53,096 Latino Students

Schools are <u>twice</u> as likely to lose Latino students and Black students as white students before they graduate.

Schools are still losing 1 in 4 Black students and Latino students.

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Texas public schools are losing 1 out of 5 students

It has taken three and a half decades to improve by 14 percentage points: from 33% to 19%

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Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools by Year, 1985-86 to 2020-21

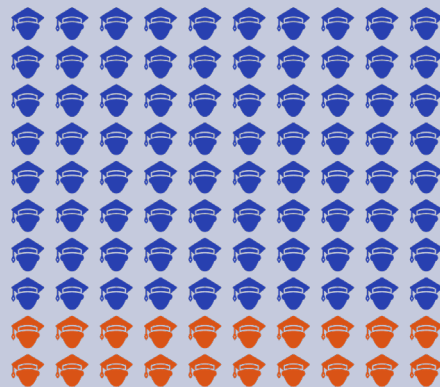| Year	Black	White	Latino	Total
1985-86	34	27	45	33
1986-87	38	26	46	34
1987-88	39	24	49	33
1988-89	37	20	48	31
1989-90	38	19	48	31
1990-91	37	19	47	31
1991-92	39	22	48	34
1992-93	43	25	49	36
1993-94	47	28	50	39
1994-95	50	30	51	40
1995-96	51	31	53	42
1996-97	51	32	54	43
1997-98	49	31	53	42
1998-99	48	31	53	42
1999-00	47	28	52	40
2000-01	46	27	52	40
2001-02	46	26	51	39
2002-03	45	24	50	38
2003-04	44	22	49	36
2004-05	43	22	48	36
2005-06	40	21	47	35
2006-07	40	20	45	34
2007-08	38	18	44	33
2008-09	35	17	42	31
2009-10	33	15	39	29
2010-11	30	14	37	27
2011-12	28	14	35	26
2012-13	26	14	33	25
2013-14	25	13	31	24
2014-15	26	14	31	24
2015-16	27	15	31	25
2016-17	26	14	29	24
2017-18	24	13	27	22
2018-19	24	12	25	21
2019-20	23	12	25	20
2020-21	23	10	23	19

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- For the class of 2021, Latino students and Black students were two times more likely to leave school without graduating than white students.

- From the initial study to the present, the attrition gap between Black students and white students has grown from 7 percentage points to 11 percentage points, a 57% increase.

- The attrition gap between Latino students and white students has narrowed from 18 percentage points to 13 percentage points, a 28% reduction.

- Males were 1.3 times more likely to leave school before graduation than females.

- Conclusive evidence is not yet available to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on attrition and dropout rates, though researchers expect instructional disruptions could lead to higher dropout rates in the future.

Study History

This year's study is the 36th in a series of annual reports on trends in dropout and attrition rates in Texas public schools. The 2020-21 study builds on a series of studies by IDRA that track the number and percent of students in Texas who are lost from public school enrollment prior to graduation.

In 1984 the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 72 that authorized the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to develop a statewide program to reduce the longitudinal dropout rate (TEC §11.205, 1986) and directed the then Texas Department of Community Affairs (TDCA) to assess the effect of the state's dropout problem on the Texas economy. Under contract with TDCA and TEA, IDRA conducted the 1986 study entitled, *Texas School Dropout Survey Project*. This first comprehensive study of school dropouts in Texas was published in October 1986 (Cárdenas, et al., 1986). That study found that one-third of the students in the class of 1986 dropped out of school without graduating totalling 86,276 students lost.

The economic costs to the state were estimated at $17 billion in foregone income, lost tax revenues, and increased job training, welfare, unemployment, and criminal justice costs (Cárdenas, et al., 1986). In 1987 the Texas Legislature responded to the study findings by passing HB 1010 through which state and local responsibilities for collecting and monitoring dropout data were substantially increased (TEC §§11.205-11.207, 1988).

Data Collection

IDRA uses data on public school enrollment from the Texas Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) Fall Membership Survey. During the fall of each year, school districts are required to report information to TEA via the PEIMS for all public school students by grade levels. TEA masks some data in order to comply with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA). Where data were masked, it was necessary to exclude some district- and/or county-level data from the total student enrollment counts.

2017-18 and 2020-21 Enrollment and 2020-21 Attrition in Texas

Race-Ethnicity and Gender	2017-18 9th Grade Enrollment	2020-21 12th Grade Enrollment	2017-18 9-12th Grade Enrollment	2020-21 9-12th Grade Enrollment	2020-21 Expected 12th Grade Enrollment	Students Lost to Attrition	Attrition Rate %
Native American	1,548	1,192	5,512	5,232	1,469	277	19
Asian/Pacific Islander	17,810	18,404	67,502	75,303	19,868	1,464	7
Black	52,746	43,431	184,860	196,408	56,041	12,610	23
White	116,749	103,770	439,612	436,421	115,902	12,132	10
Latino	214,011	181,701	746,965	891,515	234,797	53,096	23
Multiracial	8,237	7,755	28,688	36,191	10,391	2,636	25
All Groups	**411,101**	**356,253**	**1,473,139**	**1,569,070**	**438,468**	**82,215**	**19**
Male	214,004	179,106	755,119	800,036	227,104	47,998	21
Female	197,097	177,147	718,020	769,034	211,364	34,217	16

Notes: Figures calculated by IDRA from Texas Education Agency Fall Membership Survey data. IDRA's 2020-21 attrition study involved the analysis of enrollment figures for public high school students in the ninth grade during 2017-18 school year and enrollment figures for 12th grade students in 2020-21. This period represents the time span when ninth grade students would be enrolled in school prior to graduation. The enrollment data for special school districts (military schools, state schools and charter schools) were excluded from the analyses since they are likely to have unstable enrollments and/or lack a tax base to support school programs. School districts with masked student enrollment data were also excluded from the analysis. Since the 2014-15 school year, TEA has collected enrollment data for race and ethnicity separately in compliance with new federal standards. For the purposes of analysis, IDRA continued to combine the Asian and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander categories. Attrition rates were not calculated for students classified as having two or more races (multiracial).

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Beginning in 2010-11, TEA reported student enrollment data on race and ethnicity based on new federal standards that require this data to be collected separately using a specific two-part question: (1) Is the person Hispanic/Latino? and (2) What is the person's race? Prior to the new standard, TEA allowed school districts to report a student's race or ethnicity in one of five categories: American Indian or Alaska Native (Native American); Asian or Pacific Islander; Black or African American (not of Hispanic origin); Hispanic/Latino; or white (not of Hispanic origin). Under the new standards, TEA now requires school districts to report a student's race or ethnicity in one of seven categories: American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Black or African American; Hispanic/Latino; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; white; or Multiracial (two or more races).

Student enrollment in grades 9-12 increased from 1,587,686 in 2019-20 to 1,610,215 in 2020-21 (see box on Page 7). The percentage of the ninth through 12th grade population reported as Hispanic increased from 52.1% to 52.5% in the one-year period. The percentage of the ninth through 12th grade population reported as Black or African American increased from 12.5% to 12.6%, and the percentage reported as white declined from 28.1% to 27.5% (see box on Page 8).

Methods

Attrition rates are an indicator of a school's holding power or ability to keep students enrolled in school and learning until they graduate. Along with other dropout measures, attrition rates are useful in studying the magnitude of the dropout problem and the success of schools in keeping students in school. Though each measure has a different

meaning and calculation method, each provides unique information that is important for assessing schools' quality of education and school holding power (see Page 47-48 for analysis methodologies).

Spanning a period from 1985-86 through 2020-21, IDRA's attrition studies have provided time series data, using a consistent methodology, on the number and percent of Texas public school students who leave school prior to graduation. They provide information on the effectiveness and success of Texas public high schools in keeping students engaged in school until they graduate with a high school diploma.

IDRA's attrition studies involve an analysis of ninth-grade enrollment figures and 12th-grade enrollment figures three years later. IDRA adjusts the expected grade 12 enrollment based on increasing or declining enrollment in grades 9-12. This period represents the time span during which a student would be enrolled in high school.

IDRA collects and uses high school enrollment data from the TEA Fall Membership Survey to compute countywide and statewide attrition rates by race-ethnicity (see Pages 14-15) and rates by gender (see box on Page 12). Enrollment data from special school districts (military schools, state schools, charter schools) are excluded from the analyses because they are likely to have unstable enrollments or lack a tax base for school programs.

For the purposes of its attrition reporting, IDRA continued to use the term Native American in place of American Indian or Alaska Native. Additionally, IDRA combined the categories of Asian and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander and continued to use the term Asian/Pacific Islander in place of the separate terms of Asian and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

Enrollment data for the relatively new multiracial category were provided, but the calculation of an attrition rate could not be achieved without corresponding first-year categories, which only became available in recent years.

For sex/gender, TEA reports only male and female.

The adjusted attrition rate is calculated by: (1) dividing the high school enrollment (grades 9-12) in the end year by the high school enrollment in the base year; (2) multiplying the results from Calculation 1 by the ninth grade enrollment in the base year; (3) subtracting the results from Calculation 2 from the 12th grade enrollment in the end year; and (4) dividing the results of Calculation 3 by the result of Calculation 2. The attrition rate results (percentages) were rounded to the nearest whole number.

Latest Study Results

One of every five students (19%) from the freshman class of 2017-18 left school prior to graduating with a high school diploma. For

Proportion of Student Population Lost to Attrition
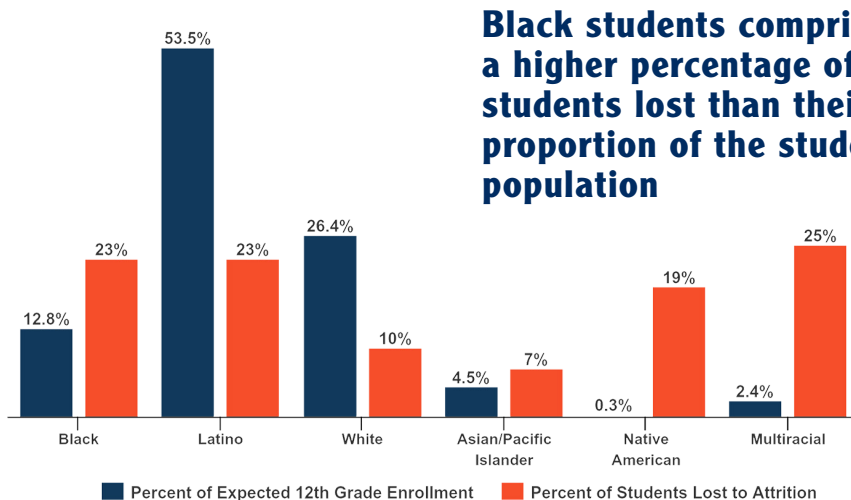
Black students comprise a higher percentage of students lost than their proportion of the student population

Bar chart data:
- Black: 12.8% (Percent of Expected 12th Grade Enrollment), 23% (Percent of Students Lost to Attrition)
- Latino: 53.5%, 23%
- White: 26.4%, 10%
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 4.5%, 7%
- Native American: 0.3%, 19%
- Multiracial: 2.4%, 25%

■ Percent of Expected 12th Grade Enrollment ■ Percent of Students Lost to Attrition

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Texas Student Enrollment, Grades 9-12, 2017-18 to 2020-21 (number)

| Race-Ethnicity | Enrollment by Grade | | | | |
	9	10	11	12	9-12
2017-18					
Black or African American	55,975	50,148	46,329	42,746	195,198
Hispanic or Latino	227,319	204,935	188,795	171,047	792,096
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1,646	1,460	1,444	1,256	5,806
White	120,753	115,234	110,795	106,999	453,781
Asian	17,923	17,163	16,791	15,842	67,719
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	656	608	571	519	2,354
Multiracial	8,679	7,661	7,146	6,605	30,091
Total	**432,951**	**397,209**	**371,871**	**345,014**	**1,547,045**
2018-19					
Black or African American	56,163	50,152	46,658	43,362	196,335
Hispanic or Latino	231,346	207,791	190,435	178,632	808,204
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1,513	1,489	1,286	1,312	5,600
White	119,103	114,433	109,590	105,504	448,630
Asian	18,550	18,003	17,215	16,829	70,597
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	608	604	610	529	2,351
Multiracial	9,403	8,364	7,419	6,871	32,057
Total	**436,686**	**400,836**	**373,213**	**353,039**	**1,563,774**
2019-20					
Black or African American	57,558	50,885	46,424	43,540	198,407
Hispanic or Latino	240,979	212,865	193,453	180,076	827,373
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1,546	1,380	1,358	1,191	5,475
White	119,308	113,434	109,267	104,464	446,473
Asian	19,007	18,831	18,111	17,290	73,239
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	690	589	576	558	2,413
Multiracial	10,034	9,060	8,019	7,193	34,306
Total	**449,122**	**407,044**	**377,208**	**354,312**	**1,587,686**
2020-21					
Black or African American	56,409	53,340	48,180	44,619	202,548
Hispanic or Latino	232,762	222,695	202,406	186,766	844,631
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1,509	1,386	1,255	1,214	5,364
White	115,764	113,785	108,424	105,120	443,094
Asian	18,902	19,053	18,672	18,345	74,972
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	650	650	571	565	2,436
Multiracial	10,467	9,796	8,935	7,971	37,169
Total	**436,463**	**420,705**	**388,443**	**364,600**	**1,610,215**

Data source: Texas Education Agency, Standard Reports, Enrollment Reports, 2015-16 to 2019-20, https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/adhocrpt/adste.html
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Texas Student Enrollment, Grades 9, 12 and 9-12,
2017-18 to 2020-21 (percent)

Race-Ethnicity	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
9th Grade Enrollment				
Black or African American	13.0	12.9	12.8	12.9
Hispanic or Latino	52.6	53.0	53.7	53.3
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3
White	28.1	27.3	26.6	26.5
Asian	3.9	4.2	4.2	4.3
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
Multiracial	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.4
Total All Ethnicities	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
12th Grade Enrollment				
Black or African American	12.4	12.3	12.3	12.2
Hispanic or Latino	49.1	50.6	50.8	51.2
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3
White	31.7	29.9	29.5	28.8
Asian	4.3	4.8	4.9	5.0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2
Multiracial	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.2
Total All Ethnicities	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
9-12th Grade Enrollment				
Black or African American	12.7	12.6	12.5	12.6
Hispanic or Latino	50.9	51.7	52.1	52.5
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3
White	29.9	28.7	28.1	27.5
Asian	4.2	4.5	4.6	4.7
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2
Multiracial	1.9	2.0	2.2	2.3
Total All Ethnicities	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Data source: Texas Education Agency, Standard Reports, Enrollment Reports, 2015-16 to 2019-20
Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

the Class of 2021, 82,215 students were lost from public school enrollment between the 2017-18 and 2020-21 school years. (See box on Page 13.)

The overall attrition rate declined from 33% in 1985-86 to 19% in 2020-21, a 42% improvement. Over the past three decades, attrition rates have fluctuated between a low of 19% in 2020-21 to a high of 43% in 1996-97. (See boxes on Page 10 and Page 12.)

A total of 82,215 students from the 2017-18 freshman class were lost from public high school enrollment in 2020-21 compared to 86,789 students in 2019-20, 88,070 students in 2018-19 and 86,276 in the initial study in 1985-86. Since 1986, Texas schools have lost a cumulative total of more than 4.1 million students from public high school enrollment.

Racial-Ethnic Student Data. The attrition rates of Latino students and Black students are much higher than those of white students (see box on Page 8). From 1985-86 to 2020-21, attrition rates of Latino students declined by 49% (from 45% to 23%). During this same period, the attrition rates of Black students declined by 32% (from 34% to 23%). Attrition rates of white students declined by 63% (from 27% to 10%). Native American students had a decline of 58% in their attrition rates (from 45% to 19%), and Asian/ Pacific Islander students had a decline of 79% (from 33% to 7%).

Latino students have higher attrition rates than either white students or Black students. The attrition rate of Asian/Pacific Islander students was the lowest among the racial/ethnic groups. For the class of 2020-21, Black students and Latino students were about two times more likely to leave school without graduating with a diploma than white students.

Gap Over Time. The gap between the attrition rates of white students and of Black students

and Latino students is nearly as high as or higher than 36 years ago. The gap between the attrition rates of white students and Black students has increased from 7 percentage points in 1985-86 to 13 percentage points in 2020-21, an 86% increase. The gap between the attrition rates of white students and Latino students decreased from the 18 percentage points in 1985-86 to 13 percentage points in 2020-21, a 28% decline. (See boxes on Page 10.)

The gap between the attrition rates of white students and Native American students has declined from 18 percentage points in 1985-86 to nine percentage points in 2020-21, a 50% decline. Asian/Pacific Islander students exhibited the greatest positive trend in the reduction of the gap in attrition rates compared to white students. The gap between the attrition rates of white students and Asian/Pacific Islander students has declined from six percentage points deficit in 1985-86 to an advantage of three percentage points over the attrition of white students in 2020-21, a 150% gap reduction.

Historically, Latino students and Black students have comprised a large proportion of students lost by schools. For the period of 1985-86 to 2020-21, students from ethnic minority groups account for nearly three-fourths (74.6%) of the estimated 4.1 million students lost from public high school enrollment.

Latino students account for 55.9% of the students lost to attrition. Black students account for 16.4% of all students lost from enrollment due to attrition over the years. White students account for 25.4% of students lost from high school enrollment over time. Attrition rates for white students and Asian/Pacific Islander students have been typically lower than the overall attrition rates.

Male-Female Student Data. The attrition rates for males have been higher than those of females. From 1985-86 to 2020-21, attrition rates of male students declined by 40% (from 35% to 21%). Attrition rates for females declined by 50% from 32% in 1985-86 to 16% in 2020-21.

A total of 82,215 students from the 2017-18 freshman class were lost from public high school enrollment in 2020-21.

Longitudinal Attrition Rates by Race-Ethnicity in Texas Public Schools, 1985-86 to 2020-21
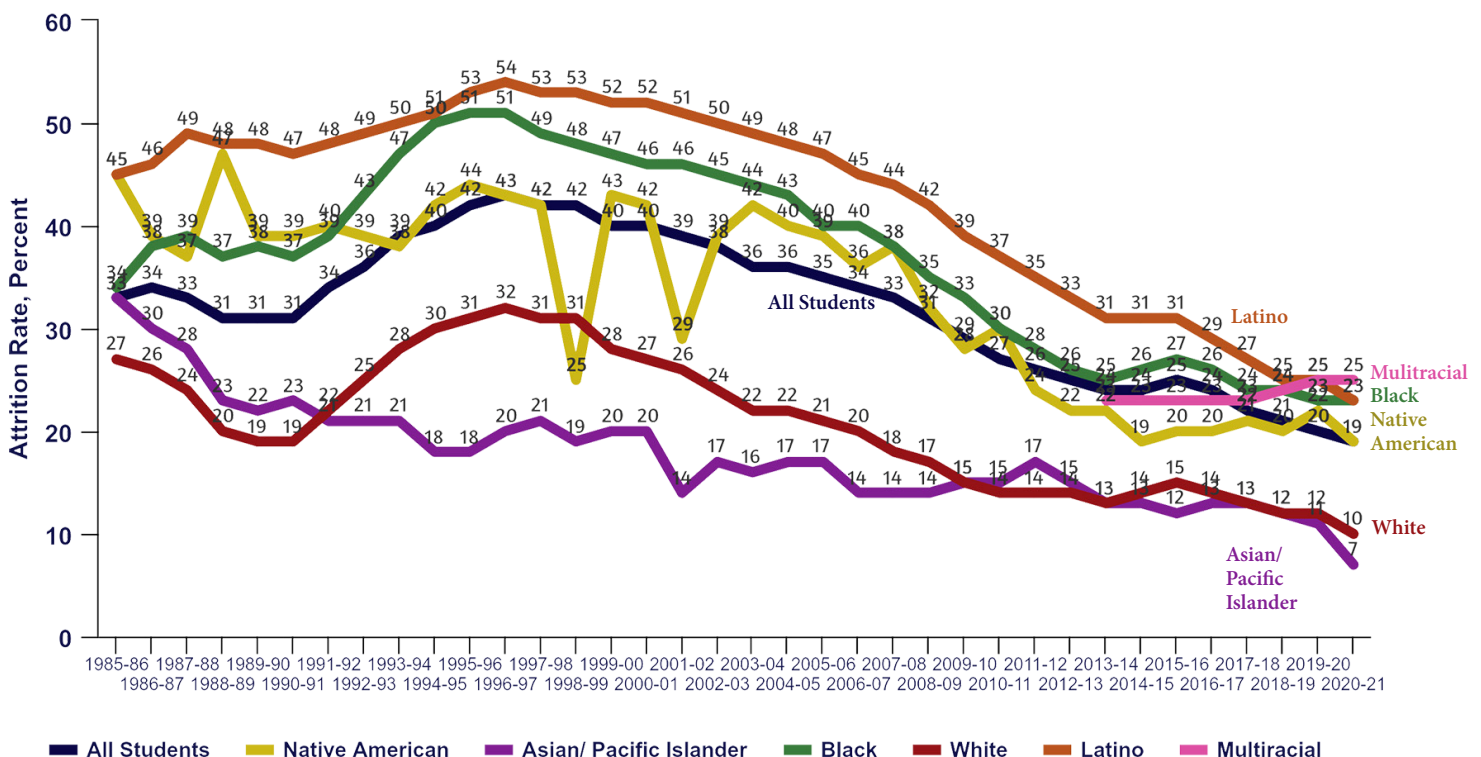
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Trend in Black-White Attrition Rates

The attrition gap between Black students and white students is almost double what it was 36 years ago

Black

Initial Gap 7 points

White

Current Gap 13 points

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Trend in Latino-White Attrition Rates

The attrition gap between Latino students and white students is just 5 percentage points less than 36 years ago

Latino

Initial Gap 18 points

White

Current Gap 13 points

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Longitudinally, males have accounted for 57.3% of students lost from school enrollment, while females have accounted for 42.7%. In the Class of 2021, males were 1.3 times more likely to leave school without graduating with a diploma than females.

Additional Data. County-level data are provided on Pages 14-15. In addition, dashboard trend data by county are available on IDRA's website at www.idra.org (see box on Page 11). The box at right shows attrition and dropout rates in Texas over time as reported in 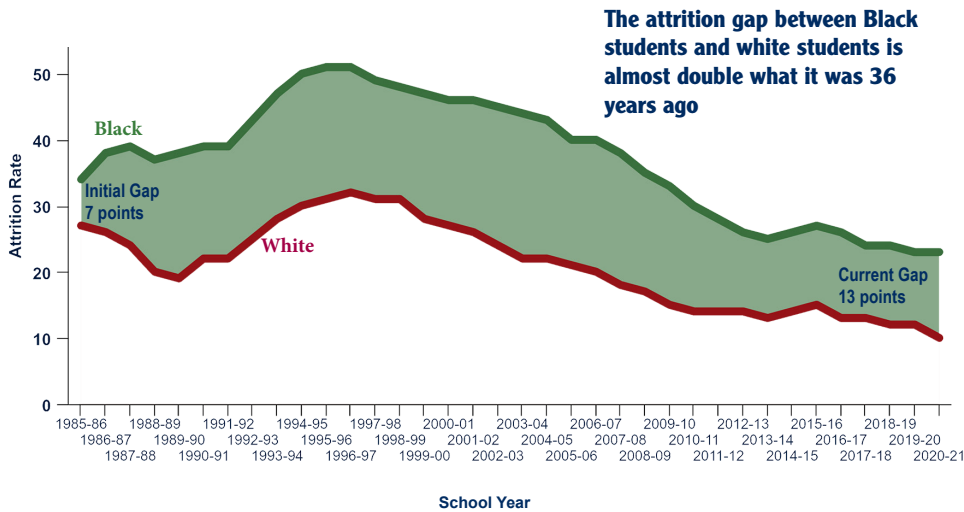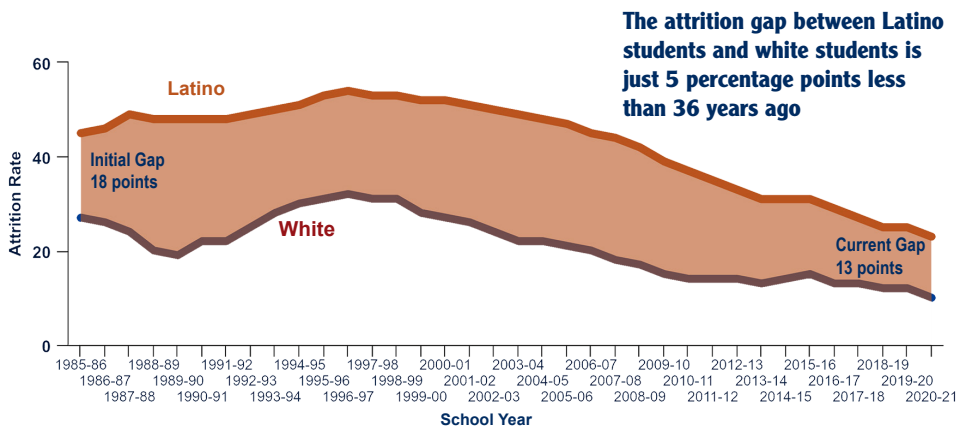IDRA's attrition studies and TEA dropout reports. Descriptions of different dropout counting and reporting methodologies are outlined on Page 47-48.

COVID-19 Implications

Conclusive data of the extent of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on attrition and dropout rates is still scant. Stakeholders from every segment of society (legislators, educators, researchers, families, community members and students) express concerns about how closures and learning disruptions were exacerbated by inequities in access to digital and remote learning.

There is no doubt that the pandemic negatively impacted students' school attendance, engagement, participation and learning. In March 2020, most schools in Texas moved from in-person instruction to remote learning for the 2019-20 school year. The shift to

Attrition and Dropout Rates in Texas Over Time

	IDRA Attrition Rates[1]	TEA Attrition Rates[1]	TEA Long. Dropout Rates	TEA Annual Dropout Rates
1985-86	33		--	--
1986-87	34		--	--
1987-88	33		34.0	6.7
1988-89	31		31.3	6.1
1989-90	31		27.2	5.1
1990-91	31		21.4	3.9
1991-92	34		20.7	3.8
1992-93	36		15.8	2.8
1993-94	39		14.4	2.6
1994-95	40		10.6	1.8
1995-96	42		10.1	1.8
1996-97	43		9.1	1.6
1997-98	42	36	14.7	1.6
1998-99	42	37	9.0*	1.6
1999-00	40	37	7.7*	1.3
2000-01	40	37	6.8*	1.0
2001-02	39	36	5.6*	0.9
2002-03	38	34	4.9*	0.9
2003-04	36	33	4.2*	0.9
2004-05	36	32	4.6*	0.9
2005-06	35	31	9.1***	2.6**
2006-07	34	30	11.6***	2.7**
2007-08	33	29	10.7***	2.2**
2008-09	31	29	9.5***	2.0**
2009-10	29	27	7.6***	1.7**
2010-11	27	25	7.1***	1.6**
2011-12	26	23	6.6***	1.7**
2012-13	25	22	6.7***	1.6**
2013-14	24	21	6.7***	1.6**
2014-15	24	20.3	6.3***	2.1**
2015-16	25	19.6	6.2***	2.0**
2016-17	24	18.5	5.9***	1.9**
2017-18	22	18	5.7***	1.9**
2018-19	21	17.6	5.9***	1.9**
2019-20	20	18	5.4***	1.6**
2020-21	19	n/a	n/a	n/a

[1]Attrition rates for grades 9-12
* Longitudinal completion rate (Grades 7-12)
** Annual dropout rate using NCES definition (Grades 7-12)
*** Longitudinal dropout rate using NCES definition (Grades 7-12)

Look Up Your Texas County

IDRA is providing dropout trend data at your fingertips.

Go to the IDRA website to see a graph of high school attrition in your county over the last 10 years.

https://idra.news/Txlook
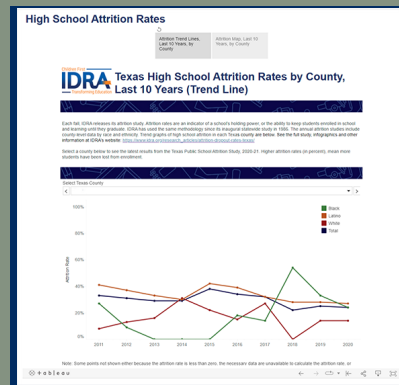
remote learning in its variety of forms brought attention to digital divide and access to education technologies (i.e., home Internet access) particularly for economically-disadvantaged, special education and emergent bilingual populations. Debates on school reopening continued the next school year as the virus surged and receded.

Strong evidence is not yet available to assess the full impact of COVID-19 on attrition and school dropout rates, particularly since the crisis is still not over. Some researchers anticipate that the school closures and instruction disruptions caused by the pandemic may have some serious implications for school dropout rates (Klein, 2020; Margolius, et al., 2020; De La Rosa, 2020).

In a national study for America's Promise Alliance, Margolius, et al., found that the pandemic had a negative impact on learning time, emotional health and social connection. The study found that over one quarter of student respondents reported that they felt disconnected to school adults (29%), classmates (23%) and their school community (22%).

During the summer and fall of 2020, IDRA worked with four high school and college students as they led a participatory action research project. The study showed that three out of four students reported struggling with mental wellness issues (Campos, et al., 2021).

IDRA released a study in 2021 by Christina Quintanilla-Muñoz, M.Ed., finding that, in many parts of Texas, student disengagement during the pandemic was a direct result of limited broadband access. TEA reported that more than 600,000 Texas public school students – over one in 10 students – did not complete assignments or respond to teacher outreach in spring 2020. Schools lost touch with Black students and Latino students at over twice the rate of white students.

The TEA has conducted intermediatory data collection to better understand the COVID-19 impact on student enrollment trends. In March 2021, TEA released summary data of school enrollment by grade for October 2019 (pre-COVID-19), October 2020 and January 2021 (during COVID-19). These summaries show that overall enrollment was lower in January 2021 than in October 2019, but enrollment increased between October 2020 and January 2021.

The grades with the highest decreases from October 2019 to October 2020 were at the early grades. At the high school grade levels, only ninth grade had a decline in enrollment across the three periods. Enrollments in 10th through 12th grades increased from October 2019 to October 2020 and January 2021.

Conclusion

The results of the current attrition study show that attrition rates today are lower than ever. Trend data show that evidence is mounting that attrition rates are indeed declining, but persistent gaps in the attrition rates of white and non-white students continue to exist. The gaps between the attrition rates of white students and Latino students and of white students and Black students continue to be about the same or higher than they were 36 years ago. Additional research is needed to address why these persistent gaps remain, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on attrition and dropout rates.

A supplemental analysis using linear regression models predicts that Texas will not reach an attrition rate of zero until 2039, over two decades from this year. (See analysis on Page 17.)

Resources

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Roy L. Johnson, M.S., was IDRA's director of research and evaluation and retired in February 2022. Charles Cavazos, an IDRA education data analyst, provided assistance with data analysis (charles.cavazos@idra.org).

Longitudinal Attrition Rates in Texas Public High Schools,
1985-86 to 2020-21

Group	Race-Ethnicity						Gender		Total
	Native American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	White	Latino	Multiracial	Male	Female	
1985-86	45	33	34	27	45		35	32	33
1986-87	39	30	38	26	46		35	32	34
1987-88	37	28	39	24	49		35	31	33
1988-89	47	23	37	20	48		34	29	31
1989-90	39	22	38	19	48		34	29	31
1990-91	39	23	37	19	47		34	28	31
1991-92	40	21	39	22	48		37	30	34
1992-93	39	21	43	25	49		39	33	36
1993-94	38	21	47	28	50		41	36	39
1994-95	42	18	50	30	51		43	37	40
1995-96	44	18	51	31	53		45	39	42
1996-97	43	20	51	32	54		46	40	43
1997-98	42	21	49	31	53		45	38	42
1998-99	25	19	48	31	53		45	38	42
1999-00	43	20	47	28	52		44	36	40
2000-01	42	20	46	27	52		43	36	40
2001-02	29	14	46	26	51		43	35	39
2002-03	39	17	45	24	50		41	34	38
2003-04	42	16	44	22	49		40	33	36
2004-05	40	17	43	22	48		39	32	36
2005-06	39	17	40	21	47		38	31	35
2006-07	36	14	40	20	45		37	30	34
2007-08	38	14	38	18	44		36	29	33
2008-09	32	14	35	17	42		35	27	31
2009-10	28	15	33	15	39		33	25	29
2010-11	30	15	30	14	37		31	23	27
2011-12	24	17	28	14	35		29	22	26
2012-13	22	15	26	14	33		28	22	25
2013-14	22	13	25	13	31	23	26	21	24
2014-15	19	13	26	14	31	23	27	22	24
2015-16	20	12	27	15	31	23	27	22	25
2016-17	20	13	26	14	29	23	26	21	24
2017-18	21	13	24	13	27	23	25	19	22
2018-19	20	12	24	12	25	24	23	18	21
2019-20	22	11	23	12	25	25	23	17	20
2020-21	19	7	23	10	23	25	21	16	19
Percent Change* From 1985-86 to 2020-21	-58	-79	-32	-63	-49	N/A	-40	-50	-42

* Rounded to nearest whole number.

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Figures calculated by IDRA from Texas Education Agency Fall Membership Survey data.

Numbers of Students Lost to Attrition in Texas,
1985-86 to 2020-21

School Year	Total	Race-Ethnicity						Gender	
		Native American	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Black	White	Latino	Multiracial	Male	Female
1985-86	86,276	185	1,523	12,268	38,717	33,583		46,603	39,673
1986-87	90,317	152	1,406	14,416	38,848	35,495		48,912	41,405
1987-88	92,213	159	1,447	15,273	34,889	40,435		50,595	41,618
1988-89	88,538	252	1,189	15,474	28,309	43,314		49,049	39,489
1989-90	86,160	196	1,214	15,423	24,510	44,817		48,665	37,495
1990-91	83,718	207	1,324	14,133	23,229	44,825		47,723	35,995
1991-92	91,424	215	1,196	15,016	27,055	47,942		51,937	39,487
1992-93	101,358	248	1,307	17,032	32,611	50,160		57,332	44,026
1993-94	113,061	245	1,472	19,735	37,377	54,232		63,557	49,504
1994-95	123,200	296	1,226	22,856	41,648	57,174		68,725	54,475
1995-96	135,438	350	1,303	25,078	45,302	63,405		75,854	59,584
1996-97	147,313	327	1,486	27,004	48,586	69,910		82,442	64,871
1997-98	150,965	352	1,730	26,938	49,135	72,810		85,585	65,380
1998-99	151,779	299	1,680	25,526	48,178	76,096		86,438	65,341
1999-00	146,714	406	1,771	25,097	44,275	75,165		83,976	62,738
2000-01	144,241	413	1,794	24,515	41,734	75,785		82,845	61,396
2001-02	143,175	237	1,244	25,017	39,953	76,724		82,762	60,413
2002-03	143,280	436	1,611	25,066	36,948	79,219		82,621	60,659
2003-04	139,413	495	1,575	24,728	33,104	79,511		80,485	58,928
2004-05	137,424	490	1,789	24,373	31,378	79,394		78,858	58,566
2005-06	137,162	512	1,876	24,366	29,903	80,505		78,298	58,864
2006-07	134,676	500	1,547	23,845	28,339	80,445		76,965	57,711
2007-08	132,815	581	1,635	23,036	25,923	81,640		76,532	56,283
2008-09	125,508	450	1,685	21,019	22,476	79,878		73,572	51,936
2009-10	119,836	427	1,951	20,051	20,416	76,991		70,606	49,230
2010-11	110,804	601	1,951	16,880	16,771	74,601		65,983	44,821
2011-12	103,140	432	2,353	14,675	16,615	69,065		61,165	41,975
2012-13	99,575	412	2,171	13,437	16,390	67,165		58,758	40,817
2013-14	94,711	363	2,015	12,324	15,437	62,990	1,582	55,094	39,617
2014-15	99,297	313	2,017	13,525	17,047	64,825	1,570	57,626	41,671
2015-16	102,610	320	1,852	14,423	17,441	66,863	1,711	59,365	43,245
2016-17	99,960	305	2,124	13,802	17,107	64,849	1,773	57,874	42,086
2017-18	94,767	314	2,444	12,986	15,467	61,660	1,896	55,266	39,501
2018-19	88,070	301	2,322	12,524	13,887	56,990	2,046	51,342	36,728
2018-19	86,789	327	2,109	12,585	13,347	56,087	2,334	51,524	35,265
2020-21	82,215	277	1,464	12,610	12,132	53,096	2,636	47,998	34,217
All Years	**4,025,727**	**12,118**	**59,339**	**664,446**	**1,032,362**	**2,244,550**	**12,912**	**2,304,934**	**1,720,793**

Figures calculated by IDRA from Texas Education Agency Fall Membership Survey data.

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

* Calculation of attrition could not be achieved without corresponding first-year data.
N/A = Not applicable

Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools, by Texas County,
by Race-Ethnicity, 2020-21

County Name	Attrition Rates[1]				County Name	Attrition Rates[1]			
	Black	White	Latino	Total		Black	White	Latino	Total
Anderson	26	19	28	22	Dewitt	15	**	27	13
Andrews	0	22	25	24	Dickens	**	30	11	21
Angelina	23	12	12	13	Dimmit	.	29	35	35
Aransas	44	24	31	27	Donley	83	15	5	22
Archer	.	13	**	12	Duval	.	23	26	26
Armstrong	**	**	44	3	Eastland	**	10	7	10
Atascosa	27	17	19	19	Ector	45	24	39	36
Austin	**	10	21	15	Edwards	.	4	9	7
Bailey	.	23	6	10	Ellis	7	13	19	15
Bandera	100	8	31	18	El Paso	17	14	22	18
Bastrop	**	7	30	22	Erath	56	13	28	24
Baylor	.	20	31	21	Falls	18	21	27	24
Bee	24	14	27	24	Fannin	22	8	19	11
Bell	28	17	27	24	Fayette	27	**	25	13
Bexar	22	7	25	21	Fisher	100	**	40	21
Blanco	.	12	21	16	Floyd	13	**	29	22
Borden	.	**	11	**	Foard	.	**	49	16
Bosque	**	4	6	4	Fort Bend	15	7	23	14
Bowie	23	7	23	16	Franklin	**	21	13	14
Brazoria	15	21	40	28	Freestone	3	2	24	8
Brazos	35	2	26	18	Frio	67	31	8	10
Brewster	100	9	26	23	Gaines	**	1	28	17
Briscoe	.	19	10	11	Galveston	21	12	26	18
Brooks	.	**	29	27	Garza	**	12	11	7
Brown	44	6	29	16	Gillespie	.	6	25	15
Burleson	16	15	23	17	Glasscock	.	**	**	**
Burnet	**	16	22	18	Goliad	0	**	13	6
Caldwell	19	18	38	33	Gonzales	34	21	16	18
Calhoun	**	8	15	14	Gray	15	9	20	14
Callahan	62	21	45	26	Grayson	28	14	28	19
Cameron	23	15	13	13	Gregg	16	13	23	18
Camp	28	29	19	25	Grimes	25	16	32	24
Carson	**	**	38	**	Guadalupe	**	9	27	17
Cass	4	3	15	6	Hale	**	8	19	16
Castro	**	**	21	16	Hall	**	29	6	11
Chambers	0	15	25	18	Hamilton	.	10	5	8
Cherokee	11	19	26	21	Hansford	.	0	9	6
Childress	44	13	**	8	Hardeman	63	14	2	15
Clay	**	7	36	11	Hardin	25	14	21	16
Cochran	.	32	9	14	Harris	25	7	21	18
Coke	.	**	**	**	Harrison	39	12	31	25
Coleman	**	16	1	12	Hartley	.	26	61	45
Collin	15	4	18	12	Haskell	.	8	15	6
Collingsworth	25	7	24	14	Hays	24	19	35	29
Colorado	10	0	17	10	Hemphill	.	**	15	0
Comal	15	14	24	19	Henderson	3	18	19	17
Comanche	25	21	19	21	Hidalgo	51	29	24	24
Concho	.	21	21	17	Hill	9	7	18	10
Cooke	17	7	33	18	Hockley	35	4	14	11
Coryell	10	4	21	10	Hood	61	23	31	25
Cottle	0	**	**	**	Hopkins	16	10	23	15
Crane	.	**	14	11	Houston	17	12	34	17
Crockett	0	43	18	24	Howard	29	10	30	22
Crosby	**	30	9	11	Hudspeth	.	**	7	3
Culberson	.	59	**	**	Hunt	25	6	17	11
Dallam	100	**	20	10	Hutchinson	**	15	15	15
Dallas	22	8	25	22	Irion	.	24	28	18
Dawson	**	**	18	11	Jack	100	8	25	13
Deaf Smith	30	**	31	26	Jackson	**	5	25	13
Delta	54	**	**	4	Jasper	22	19	18	20
Denton	14	7	18	11	Jeff Davis	.	**	50	26

[1]Calculated by: (1) dividing the high school enrollment in the end year by the high school enrollment in the base year; (2) multiplying the results from Calculation 1 by the ninth grade enrollment in the base year; (3) subtracting the results from Calculation 2 from the 12th grade enrollment in the end year; and (4) dividing the results of Calculation 3 by the result of Calculation 2. The attrition rate results (percentages) were rounded to the nearest whole number.

** = Attrition rate is less than zero (0).

*** = No high school.

• = The necessary data are unavailable to calculate the attrition rate.

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools, By Texas County,
by Race-Ethnicity, 2020-21 (continued)

County Name	Attrition Rates[1]				County Name	Attrition Rates[1]			
	Black	White	Latino	Total		Black	White	Latino	Total
Jefferson	28	11	27	22	Randall	12	4	20	9
Jim Hogg	.	.	17	16	Reagan	.	9	19	16
Jim Wells	41	18	32	30	Real	.	**	22	3
Johnson	25	22	25	23	Red River	**	**	**	**
Jones	20	8	21	13	Reeves	**	12	20	19
Karnes	39	12	17	16	Refugio	**	4	6	0
Kaufman	34	12	28	21	Roberts	.	31	8	29
Kendall	**	7	24	13	Robertson	2	18	17	15
Kent	.	**	**	**	Rockwall	22	14	25	18
Kerr	35	2	21	11	Runnels	100	2	29	17
Kimble	.	11	0	6	Rusk	1	12	21	14
King	.	11	.	6	Sabine	36	17	31	20
Kinney	**	**	4	**	San Augustine	0	2	11	1
Kleberg	13	**	24	21	San Jacinto	**	21	24	19
Knox	**	**	12	**	San Patricio	4	12	26	22
Lamar	27	12	39	19	San Saba	0	7	**	1
Lamb	**	8	10	9	Schleicher	.	**	25	17
Lampasas	**	5	14	7	Scurry	73	13	38	30
La Salle	.	69	16	20	Shackelford	100	**	**	**
Lavaca	5	**	19	5	Shelby	9	14	16	14
Lee	28	23	27	25	Sherman	.	**	13	7
Leon	**	4	3	4	Smith	23	16	19	19
Liberty	27	25	34	30	Somervell	.	10	24	16
Limestone	3	**	17	5	Starr	.	71	25	25
Lipscomb	.	24	26	26	Stephens	**	26	27	24
Live Oak	33	**	6	1	Sterling	.	35	**	16
Llano	**	36	35	35	Stonewall	.	9	4	7
Lubbock	17	9	22	16	Sutton	.	**	8	**
Lynn	67	21	23	24	Swisher	14	17	17	17
Madison	**	13	**	4	Tarrant	28	8	25	19
Marion	7	30	40	22	Taylor	42	27	37	33
Martin	100	36	28	31	Terrell	.	11	15	19
Mason	.	4	18	12	Terry	**	19	14	16
Matagorda	**	7	12	9	Throckmorton	.	19	**	11
Maverick	.	16	24	25	Titus	26	14	21	20
McCulloch	.	18	16	16	Tom Green	46	12	29	23
McClennan	31	10	26	20	Travis	15	11	23	18
McMullen	.	0	52	24	Trinity	3	20	22	19
Medina	6	0	21	14	Tyler	7	13	39	15
Menard	.	36	**	18	Upshur	**	14	25	14
Midland	44	21	39	34	Upton	**	**	28	18
Milam	**	8	19	11	Uvalde	0	1	26	23
Mills	50	29	56	45	Val Verde	0	3	0	0
Mitchell	14	26	10	18	Van Zandt	31	13	27	17
Montague	0	18	20	16	Victoria	38	21	40	35
Montgomery	20	14	22	17	Walker	39	27	33	31
Moore	33	14	21	21	Waller	19	17	20	19
Morris	11	10	9	10	Ward	18	19	22	21
Motley	.	3	25	10	Washington	32	**	28	16
Nacogdoches	16	6	32	17	Webb	**	21	11	11
Navarro	19	13	25	20	Wharton	28	6	31	23
Newton	**	17	**	8	Wheeler	17	**	22	8
Nolan	65	19	34	28	Wichita	7	1	13	6
Nueces	3	13	18	17	Wilbarger	22	14	32	21
Ochiltree	.	22	21	21	Willacy	.	4	12	11
Oldham	44	**	**	**	Williamson	14	6	14	11
Orange	24	16	32	19	Wilson	33	0	18	10
Palo Pinto	43	20	34	26	Winkler	33	**	28	20
Panola	12	**	16	5	Wise	0	5	12	8
Parker	**	16	20	16	Wood	3	18	25	18
Parmer	.	24	**	4	Yoakum	25	**	17	13
Pecos	100	16	21	20	Young	32	6	16	12
Polk	5	29	35	28	Zapata	.	8	13	13
Potter	31	18	26	22	Zavala	**	0	19	19
Presidio	.	52	20	22					
Rains	15	15	8	14	**Total**	**23**	**10**	**23**	**19**

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Changes in High School Attrition Rates in Texas Counties

125 Counties Where High School Attrition Rates Improved Since Last Year

Andrews	Cochran	Fayette	Houston	Maverick	Rains	Travis
Armstrong	Coleman	Fort Bend	Howard	McClennan	Randall	Upshur
Austin	Collin	Frio	Hudspeth	Medina	Reagan	Uvalde
Bailey	Concho	Garza	Hunt	Menard	Real	Val Verde
Bastrop	Coryell	Gonzales	Hutchinson	Milam	Reeves	Waller
Bee	Crosby	Gray	Irion	Montague	Robertson	Ward
Bell	Dallas	Grayson	Jackson	Montgomery	Rockwall	Washington
Bexar	Dawson	Grimes	Jones	Morris	San Augustine	Webb
Bosque	Delta	Guadalupe	Karnes	Nacogdoches	San Jacinto	Wheeler
Bowie	Denton	Hamilton	Kendall	Navarro	San Saba	Wichita
Brazos	Dewitt	Hardeman	Kimble	Newton	Shelby	Wilbarger
Burnet	Dickens	Hardin	La Salle	Nolan	Sherman	Willacy
Cameron	Eastland	Harris	Lampasas	Orange	Smith	Williamson
Cass	Ector	Harrison	Leon	Panola	Stephens	Winkler
Castro	Edwards	Haskell	Limestone	Parker	Stonewall	Wise
Cherokee	Ellis	Hemphill	Live Oak	Parmer	Tarrant	Wood
Childress	Falls	Hill	Lubbock	Potter	Titus	Young
Clay	Fannin	Hopkins	Matagorda	Presidio	Tom Green	

85 Counties Where High School Attrition Rates Worsened Since Last Year

Anderson	Colorado	Foard	Jack	Liberty	Ochiltree	Taylor
Aransas	Comanche	Franklin	Jasper	Lipscomb	Palo Pinto	Terry
Archer	Cooke	Freestone	Jeff Davis	Llano	Pecos	Throckmorton
Atascosa	Crane	Gaines	Jefferson	Lynn	Runnels	Trinity
Bandera	Crockett	Gillespie	Jim Hogg	Marion	Rusk	Tyler
Blanco	Deaf Smith	Gregg	Jim Wells	Martin	Sabine	Van Zandt
Brazoria	Dimmit	Hale	Johnson	Mason	San Patricio	Victoria
Brewster	Donley	Hall	Kaufman	McCulloch	Schleicher	Walker
Burleson	Duval	Hays	Kerr	McMullen	Scurry	Wilson
Caldwell	Erath	Henderson	Lamar	Mills	Somervell	Yoakum
Calhoun	Fisher	Hockley	Lavaca	Mitchell	Sterling	Zapata
Callahan	Floyd	Hood	Lee	Motley	Swisher	Zavala
Camp						

19 Counties Where High School Attrition Rates Are the Same as Last Year

Angelina	Chambers	El Paso	Kleberg	Midland	Polk	Upton
Brooks	Comal	Galveston	Lamb	Moore	Starr	Wharton
Brown	Dallam	Hidalgo	Madison	Nueces		

23 Counties Where High School Attrition Rates Cannot be Compared with Last Year*

Baylor	Collingsworth	Hansford	Knox	Shackelford
Borden	Cottle	Hartley	Oldham	Sutton
Briscoe	Culberson	Kent	Red River	Terrell
Carson	Glasscock	King	Refugio	
Coke	Goliad	Kinney	Roberts	

Look up your county to see 10-year trends
https://idra.news/Txlook

* County rates cannot be compared from one year to the next when for either year (or both) the attrition rate is less than zero, there is no high school or the necessary data are unavailable to calculate the attrition rate.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Attrition Rate Forecast Predicts Loss of Almost 2 Million More Students

by Bricio Vasquez, Ph.D.

IDRA conducts the forecast analysis to predict the year the attrition rate will reach zero. Based on IDRA's forecast model, Texas will not reach a zero-attrition rate until 2039. This article reflects this year's update to IDRA's series of forecasting analyses.

The annual attrition rate decreased by one point to 19% this year. Since 1986, when IDRA started calculating the attrition rate annually, there have been only three uninterrupted downward trends.

First, from 1987 to 1989, the attrition rate decreased from 34% to 31% in two years. From 1997 to 2014, the rate nearly halved to 24% from 43% in 17 years. Third, the current

trend, in the period of 2016 to 2021, the rate moved from 25% to 19% – the lowest value ever calculated by the IDRA annual study.

Forecasting Summary

The attrition forecast in the graph below shows a zero-attrition rate in 2039. This year's forecast adds one year to our previous forecast despite a 1 percent decline in the annual attrition rate. Forecast models are sensitive to fluctuations from one year to the next. Therefore, the forecasted zero-attrition year will oscillate higher or lower. Oscillations in the zero-attrition year matter less than a consistent, downward pattern over several years. Two points on a graph do not illustrate a pattern, but several points do.

Nevertheless, without significant intervention and investment, Texas must still wait at least 18 years before reaching an attrition rate of zero.

This year's attrition rate of 19% was within the range predicted last year, between 18% and 25%. Furthermore, the predictions for the current year have been within the forecast ranges since 2010. In 2010, IDRA researchers predicted the attrition rate in 2021 would be between 19% and 37%. The agreement between the historical forecasts and actual attrition rates validates IDRA's forecast model performance.

The predictions for next year (2021-22), shown below, are between 17% and 24 %. The graph first plots the historic attrition values (green

Historic Attrition Rates and Next Year Forecasted Attrition Rates
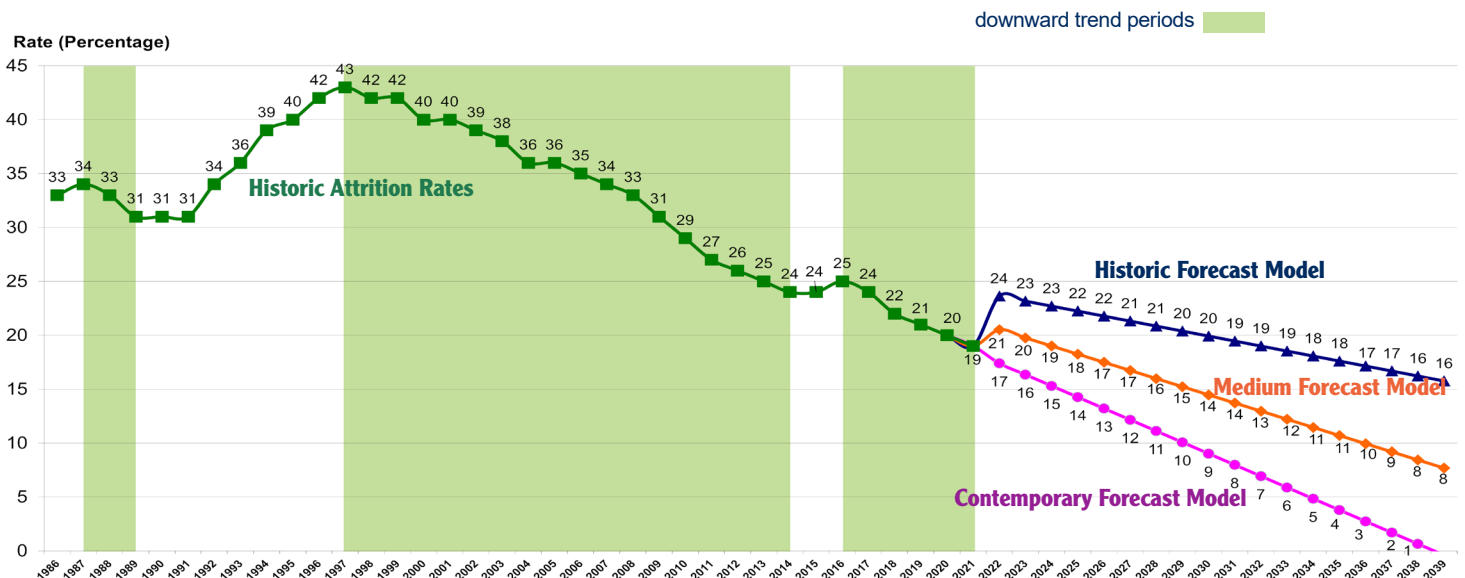
Intercultural Development Research Association, 2021

Universal high school graduation is two decades away

Texas has lost over 4.1 million students since 1986. We stand to lose another 2 million students.

Attrition Rate = 33%
Actual 1985-86

Attrition Rate = 19%
Actual 2020-21

Attrition Rate = 0%
Projected at Current Pace, 2038-39

| 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2010 | 2020 | 2030 | 2040 |

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

line, 1986 to 2021), followed by the forecasted values (2020 to 2039) created by three forecasting models. These prediction values extended the zero-attrition year to 2039.

Forecasting Models

The graph on Page 17 shows the forecasting analysis using three models. The **Historic Forecast Model** includes all known attrition values from 1986 to the present, as determined by the annual IDRA attrition studies. Higher past attrition rates skew the Historic Forecast

Model's predictions upwards. In this approach, the attrition rate will increase to 24% in 2022. After that, it will decline, initiating another downward trend. In this model, after 18 years, the attrition rate will be 16%. The graph depicts this model in blue.

The **Contemporary Forecast Model** constructs the forecasts using historical attrition values starting in 1997, which is an inflection point where attrition rates shifted from increasing to decreasing. This model predicts a 17%

At the current pace, we will not reach a zero attrition rate until 2039.

Forecasted Model Values and Residuals

School Year	Attrition Rate	Historic Model		Medium Model		Contemporary Model		Years to Zero Rate	
		Values	Residuals	Values	Residuals	Values	Residuals	Year	N
2008-09	31	39	8	35	4	32	1	2044	36
2009-10	29	36	7	33	4	31	2	2042	33
2010-11	27	34	7	32	5	29	2	2040	30
2011-12	26	33	7	30	4	27	1	2037	26
2012-13	25	32	7	29	4	26	1	2037	25
2013-14	24	31	7	28	4	25	1	2036	23
2014-15	24	31	7	27	3	24	0	2035	21
2015-16	25	30	5	26	1	22	-3	2035	20
2016-17	24	29	5	25	1	22	-2	2036	20
2017-18	22	28	6	24	2	21	-1	2037	20
2018-19	21	27	6	24	3	20	-1	2038	20
2019-20	20	26	6	23	3	19	-1	2038	19
2020-21	19	25	6	22	3	18	-1	2039	18
2021-22	N/A	24	7	21	3	17	0		

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Forecasted Numbers of Students Lost to Attrition

Period	Statistical Models		
	Historic	Medium	Contemporary
2019-24	496,932	449,529	402,125
2025-29	515,420	404,466	293,512
2030-34	484,418	330,199	175,980
2035-38	361,121	204,014	46,907
Total	1,857,890	1,388,207	918,524

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

> "It has become 'normal' to have students disappear from schools. But it shouldn't be considered normal. It is very real for every family it touches and for our communities. We must expect our schools to prepare and graduate every student. And we must ensure schools have what they need to reach an attrition rate of zero soon."
> – *Celina Moreno, J.D., IDRA President & CEO*

attrition rate for 2022, two points below the current rate. Subsequently, the attrition rate decreases by one or two points annually until it reaches zero in 2039. The graph on Page 17 depicts this model in pink.

The third model takes a centrist approach between the historic and contemporary models. This **Medium Forecast Model** averages the Historic and Contemporary Forecast models. The medium model predicts the attrition rate will revert to 21% in 2022, then resume the downward trend. In 2039, the Medium Forecast Model predicts the attrition rate will be 8%. The graph on Page 17 depicts this model in orange.

Best Fit

The table on Page 18 shows the performance of the three models through the 12-year application. It lists the forecasted value and residual (i.e., the difference between the forecasted and the actual values) for each model annually. The smallest residuals correspond to models that best fit the data.

The last row, the year 2022, shows the three models' current predicted values and the long-term absolute mean residual for each model. Initially, the contemporary model, with residuals between zero and two, was the best fit for the data, suggesting a continuous downward trend. Furthermore, the current attrition rate reinstated the contemporary model as the best fit. As a result, the contemporary model has a residual of -1 in the last four years.

Because the contemporary model is the best fit overall, we used it to forecast the year when the attrition rate will reach zero and the number of years that will happen listed in the last two columns of the table. The contemporary model puts the attrition rate in single digits in 2030. After that, the rate continues to decrease and reaches zero in 2039.

Texas is still at least 18 years away from achieving zero attrition at the current pace.
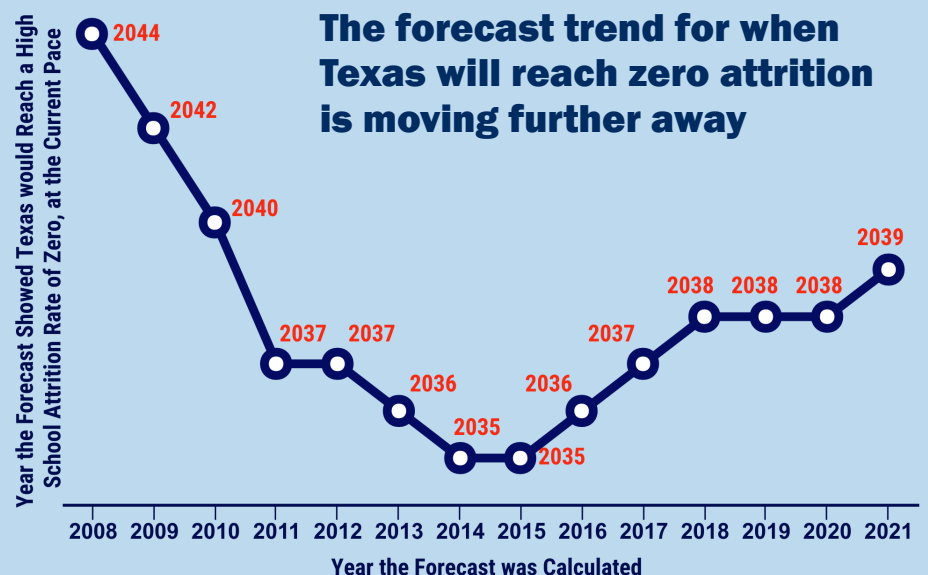
Zero-Attrition Year

The last column in the table on Page 18 shows the contemporary model predicting zero attrition for 13 forecasts. The graph below plots these forecasted zero-attrition years to gain further insight into the most likely year Texas achieves zero attrition.

In previous attrition forecasts (2008 to 2011), the attrition rate dropped relatively fast, from 31% to 26% in three years. As a result, the predicted zero-attrition year also dropped relatively quickly, from 2044 to 2042 to 2040 to 2038. However, the attrition rate's downward movement slowed after that period, occasionally stopping or reverting.

The forecast trend for when Texas will reach zero attrition is moving further away

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Celebrating Retirement of Roy Johnson, IDRA Research and Evaluation Director

Roy L. Johnson, M.S., retired in January 2022 after 43 years of service with IDRA. During that time, he led the last 31 of IDRA's annual attrition studies.

Roy first came to IDRA as a race desegregation consultant and became IDRA's director of research and evaluation in 2014, managing the organization's research and evaluation activities, ranging from federal- to corporate-funded projects, international to national, and state to local in scope.

"Organizations thrive because of commitment to mission, visionary leadership and a deep abiding compassion; Roy brought all of these to IDRA," said Celina Moreno, J.D., IDRA President & CEO. "His dedication to the research of everything from attrition to education program effectiveness helped earn IDRA's reputation as a fierce truth teller, and we honor his incredible legacy."

Roy oversaw a wide range of local, state and federal education programs. He conducted quantitative and qualitative analyses to assess program implementation and impact. He holds a bachelor's degree in social science from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and a master's degree in urban studies from Trinity University.

Through his work at IDRA, Mr. Johnson provided accurate, reliable and useful information so that program managers and funding sources could make quality decisions that affect students. He also served as an expert witness in *GI Forum & LULAC v. State of Texas*, a 2006 case brought before the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division involving equity in education for emergent bilingual students.

Consequently, the zero-attrition year also slowed (2038 to 2037 to 2036 to 2035) and eventually reverted (2035 to 2036 to 2037 to 2038). Currently, the zero attrition year increased to 2039. This prediction is consistent with prior years.

Forecasted Student Losses

The table on Page 19 shows the number of students lost to attrition over the years. To understand the severity of the situation, we used the updated three forecast models to estimate numbers of students Texas schools stand to lose to attrition before the contemporary model prediction reaches 0% attrition.

The historic forecast model predicts a loss of 1.9 million students for the next 18 years. The contemporary model yielded 918,524 students lost, and the medium forecast model more than 1.4 million students.

Conclusions

The historical forecast model predicts that the student attrition rate will be 24% next year. Under this scenario, nearly 2 million additional students will be lost to attrition by 2039.

If we assume that the current downward trend is accurate as shown in the contemporary model, the result of systemic changes will drop two additional points to 17% next year. After that, the attrition rate will continue to decline, reaching single-digit values in 2030. By 2033, the attrition rate will be about 6%, and it will reach zero in 2039. However, we would have lost 0.9 million students to attrition from now to that point.

The medium model suggests that the current attrition rate will increase to 21% before resuming its downward trend over the medium term. In this scenario, by 2039, attrition will be 4%, and during these 18 years, Texas will have lost more than 1.4 million students.

The attrition rate has decreased from 40% in the 1990s; however, the decline needs to accelerate for Texas students to compete in an increasingly global and technological economy. Suppose the attrition rate continues to decrease by one or two points with occasional reversals. In that case, the zero-attrition rate year will continue to be pushed into the future by one or two years annually, as was the case this year, and the nearly 20-year barrier to achieving zero attrition will persist.

Projections show Texas will lose between 0.9 million and 1.9 million additional students to attrition before we reach a zero attrition, unless this issue is considered seriously by policymakers and systemic changes implemented to ameliorate the problem.
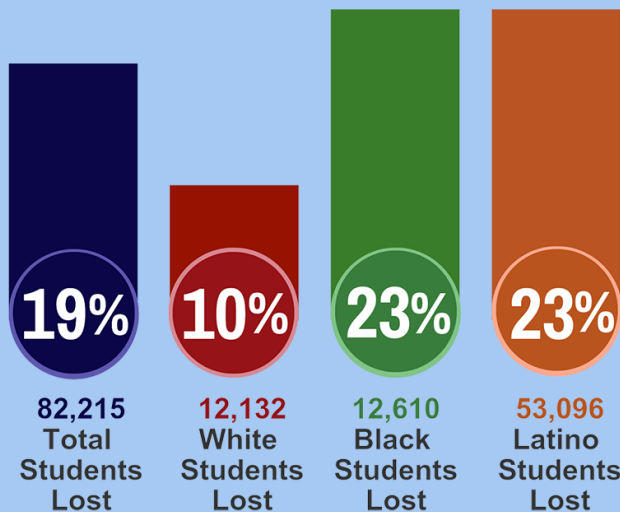
We expect attrition rates in the range of 18% to 25% for the next few years. Texas can also expect to lose between 0.9 million and 1.9 million additional students to attrition before reaching zero attrition, forecasted under the most optimistic scenario unless policymakers consider this issue seriously and systemic changes implemented to ease the problem.

Bricio Vasquez, Ph.D., is IDRA's former education data scientist.

IDRA – Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2020-21

Texas public schools are losing 1 out of 5 students
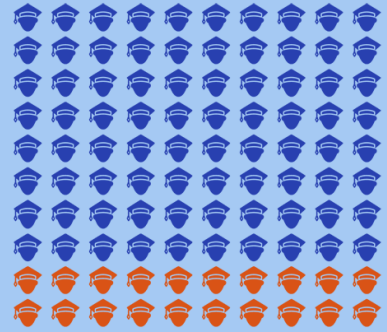
It has taken Texas over 36 years to improve by 13 percentage points: from 33% to 19%.

19%
82,215 Total Students Lost

10%
12,132 White Students Lost

23%
12,610 Black Students Lost

23%
53,096 Latino Students Lost

We're losing 10 students per hour

Schools are about twice as likely to lose Latino students and Black students as white students before they graduate.

Schools are still losing 1 in 4 Black students and more than 1 in 4 Hispanic students.

Universal high school graduation is two decades away

Texas has lost over 4.1 million students since 1986. We stand to lose another 2 million students.

Attrition Rate = 33%
Actual 1985-86

Attrition Rate = 19%
Actual 2020-21

Attrition Rate = 0%
Projected at Current Pace, 2038-39

| 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2010 | 2020 | 2030 | 2040 |

It doesn't have to be this way

www.idra.org • www.facebook.com/IDRAed

All children are valuable. None is expendable

Intercultural Development Research Association • www.idra.org • www.facebook.com/IDRAed • @IDRAedu

IDRA
Children First
Transforming Education

See this infographic online and share! https://idra.news/Attrition21

Life and Times of the Class of 2021

What happened as the Texas Class of 2021 progressed through school?

When children in the Class of 2021 were being welcomed into the world, the No Child Left Behind Act went into effect. As IDRA looks at their high school attrition rates years later by the time they would become high school seniors, we pieced together a sense of the history these young people may have experienced.

For example, during their school years, there was an increase in charter schools, and a number of affluent children never saw a public school classroom. The Class of 2021 was more segregated by income and race/ethnicity than many classes that came before it. As these students entered their last two years of high school, their lives would be upended by a global pandemic that pushed many of students out of the classroom and further exacerbated educational inequities for vulnerable student populations.

No Child Left Behind Act

In 2002, the update to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was officially signed into law as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). It sought to advance U.S. competitiveness and to close the achievement gaps between economically disadvantaged students and students of color and their peers. It increased the federal role in holding schools accountable for the academic progress of all students, with a special focus on traditionally underserved students, including emergent bilingual students, special education students, children in families with low incomes, and students of color. States did not have to comply with the new requirements, but they risked losing federal Title I money. NCLB took effect well before the class of 2021 entered preschool.

0

1

2

3

Homeschooling

Prior to the Class of 2021 entering preschool, homeschooling in Texas began to rise. The number of homeschooled students each year increased from 850,000 (1.7%) in 1999 to 1.1 million (2.2%) in 2003.

2.2%

Hurricane Katrina

In 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck the U.S. Gulf Coast, causing more than $100 billion in damage. Texas took in hundreds of thousands of evacuees who were forced to leave their homes. By October 2005, as many as 40,000 settled in Houston permanently. These storm evacuees turned to Texas public schools to educate their children in the aftermath, expanding the Class of 2021 in the state.
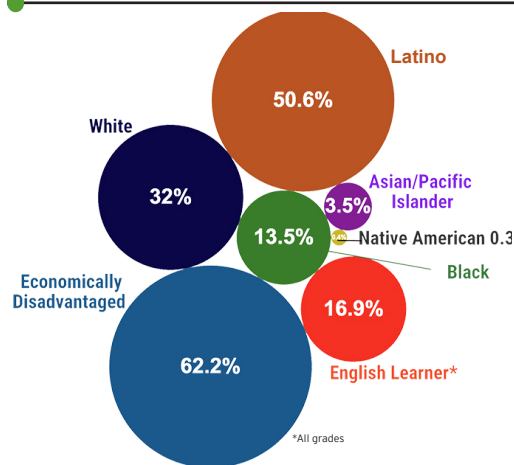
2002-03 **2003-04** **2004-05** **2005-06**

4x4 Rigor

In 2006, Texas established a "4x4" graduation plan, requiring all students to earn four credits each in English, math, science and social studies. Though the Class of 2021 was in preschool during this time, the new rigorous requirements affected educational quality at all levels of the school pipeline, at least until the state's detrimental changes in 2013 that back-tracked and weakened course requirements.

1st Grade Population

Latino
50.6%

White
32%

Asian/Pacific Islander
3.5%

13.5%
Native American 0.3

Black

Economically Disadvantaged

16.9%

62.2%

English Learner*

*All grades

In-Grade Retention

Grade retention, and its link to attrition, is an important factor in charting the Class of 2021's progress in school. K-6 retention rates in 2009-10 were highest in the first grade, at 5.1%. There were significant disparities in retention rates across racial/ethnic groups. The total number of first-grade students retained in Texas in 2009-10 was 19,138.

5.1%

PK

1st

K

PS

iPhone & Social Media

On June 29, 2007, the first-generation iPhone launched, and with it the way adults and children interact with data, media and each other gradually changed. Students in the Class of 2021 were preparing to enter pre-k, and from then on, they grew up with smartphones and ever-changing technology at their fingertips (or at least of those who could afford it). As these children grew, the technology became more refined and, generally, more affordable. With the advent of Web 2.0 and increasingly sophisticated gadgets, education has had to change and adapt. For example, social media and constant connectivity have created an increase in collaboration and instant research. On the other hand, there is greater potential for cheating and insidious bullying. See this infographic from The Atlantic on How the Internet Is Changing the Way We Learn: **https://budurl.me/AtlanticIG11**
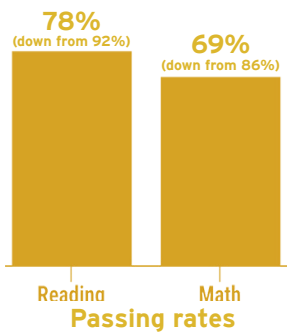
Emergent Bilingual Students

When the Class of 2021 started kindergarten, they joined a school population in Texas where 16% of students were emergent bilingual students. Thirteen years later, that percentage would grow to 21%.

School Funding

It looked like the Class of 2021 was starting off in schools that were reaping the benefits of the state's earlier commitment to equalize education funding for all its children. Student achievement had improved, taxpayers were more equally sharing the cost of paying for public schools, and businesses were seeing the results of better-prepared graduates. But in 2006, the state made changes to the school funding system that eroded equity among Texas schools. Disparities in per student funding increased from $700 to $1,500 per student, depending on the property wealth of a student's school district.

2006-07   **2007-08**   **2008-09**   **2009-10**

STAAR Testing

Texas' accountability system includes the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) standardized exam. In 2011-12 school year, students in the Class of 2021 took their first STAAR test. Their results were significantly lower than the Class of 2020.

78%
(down from 92%)

69%
(down from 86%)

Reading   Math
Passing rates

Enrollment Growth

In 2012, as students in the Class of 2021 entered their later years in elementary school, public school enrollment in Texas continued to rise. Between 2002 and 2012, enrollment increased by 19.3%.

New Anti-Bullying Law

Texans were becoming more aware of the rise of bullying in the digital age. 2012 marked Texas' implementation of HB 1942 that required school districts to set policies against bullying. Policymakers said "expression through electronic means" can be considered bullying if it occurs at school, in a district-operated vehicle or at a school-related activity. The law did not address off-campus behaviors (e.g., videos or social media posts) that impact a student's school life.

3rd

5th

4th

2nd

6th

$6.4 billion cut

School Funding Cuts

In 2011, Texas lawmakers cut $6.4 billion from public education, and 12,000 teachers lost their jobs. Texas was the second richest state in the country (in GDP) but ranked 47th in revenue raised per capita. And the cuts were made in ways that hurt the poorest schools the most. The number of elementary classes exceeding the 22-student cap ballooned to 8,479 from 2,238 the prior year. By the end of that year, Texas would be in the midst of the largest school finance lawsuit in the state's history. Parents, students, the Texas Charter School Association and over 500 school districts enrolling 3 of every 4 Texas school children sued the state for failing to ensure a quality education for all students. About a year later, a state district court judge ruled that the Texas school finance system was "inefficient, inequitable and unsuitable." Despite the judge's findings, students saw no changes in their classrooms because the State appealed the court ruling.

Foster Care

2013 saw 45,159 children ages 0-17 placed in foster care. Children in foster care suffer from PTSD at a higher rate than returning combat veterans.

Unaccompanied Minors

In June of 2014, before the new school year began, more than 10,600 unaccompanied minors crossed the border from Central America, fleeing violence and extreme poverty. The next year, another 10,500 would arrive. These children were victims of a humanitarian crisis, but they would become classmates to children in all levels of education.

2010-11   **2011-12**   **2012-13**   **2013-14**   **2014-15**

STAAR Testing

In 2015-16, seventh graders earned STAAR passing scores ranging from 70% to 72%. The passing rates for all seventh graders were higher than for students in families with low incomes and emergent bilingual students.

Passing rates

	Reading	Math	Writing
All Seventh Graders	72%	71%	70%
Students in Families with Low Incomes	62%	62%	60%
Emergent Bilingual Students	36%	47%	33%

● All Seventh Graders   ● Students in Families with Low Incomes
● Emergent Bilingual Students
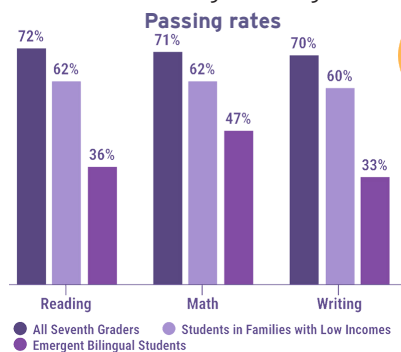
Homeschooling

The homeschooling rate increased from 1.7% in 1999 to 3.3% in 2016. By 2016, there were 1.6 million homeschooled students – most of whom were classified as white (83%) and "nonpoor" (89%).

Internet Access

There were 3.7 million people in Texas without access to high-speed wired Internet, 4 million only had access to one Internet provider, and another 1.6 million had no wired Internet providers available where they lived. With technology and social media's more prevalent role in schooling, especially for fundamental activities, such as research, the fact that there were so many Texans without access to the Internet impacted the Class of 2021 negatively, particularly students from families with limited incomes.

School Funding

When the Class of 2021 was getting ready to enter high school, the Texas Supreme Court had just failed to ensure equal educational opportunity under the Texas Constitution by reversing the trial court ruling that declared the state's school funding system constitutionally "inadequate, unsuitable and inequitable." Texas' richest school districts had roughly $800,000 more per school to spend on teachers, curriculum, books, technology and supplies compared to the poorest districts. While all students were expected to achieve the same standards and graduate college and career ready, funding did not reflect what research shows is needed to achieve those outcomes. The Education Law Center and Rutgers University released a National Report Card reporting that the Texas funding of public education earned the lowest marks in the nation.

Bullying at School

The Class of 2021 headed to high school facing an environment unfamiliar to previous generations. In 2016-17, 20% of U.S. students ages 12-18 reported being bullied at school, including about 25% of eighth graders.

25%

Early College

As students in the Class of 2021 completed middle school, some were able to enroll in public Early College High Schools at 153 campuses in 35 counties to ensure college readiness. These programs served primarily students of color (85%) and students from families with limited incomes (75%). Students of color who attend ECHSs are 10 times more likely to obtain a college degree than students in traditional schools.

Weakened Graduation Rigor

The Texas Legislature overhauled degree requirements for the state in 2013 via House Bill 5, setting a mandatory 22 credits, with four additional credits chosen as part of "endorsements" that students select to represent potential careers or academic interests (STEM, Business and Industry, Public Service, Arts and Humanities, and Multidisciplinary Studies). Algebra 2 and other college prep courses were no longer required. Students in the Class of 2021 entered high school with the law in full effect.

Standard 4X4 Ended

7th   **8th**

2015-16   **2016-17**

Hurricane Harvey

Just as the Class of 2021's freshman year was beginning, Hurricane Harvey caused catastrophic damage to the state's coast and communities inland, particularly in and around Houston. About 112,000 students were displaced by the storm, 22,000 children were made homeless, and more than 300 school districts took in students who had been displaced.

STAAR Testing

In high school, the STAAR takes the form of end-of-course exams with few students excelling, but scores improved in all areas.

	English 1	English 2	Algebra 1	Biology	U.S. History
Mastered	8%	6%	27%	21%	37%
Passed	44%	47%	50%	59%	67%

● Passed ● Mastered

Charter Schools

From the year the Class of 2021 was born to their freshman year of high school, enrollment in Texas charter schools grew from 1.3% to 5.5% of Texas public students. In 2017-18, there were 707 open enrollment charter school campuses with 296,323 students – an increase of 8.6% from the previous year. The freshmen charter class totalled 21,536 (7.3%). IDRA's 2017 study found that Texas charter schools had graduation rates of only 62% compared to 90% in traditional public schools.

Private Schools

About 5.8 million students were enrolled in private schools nationally in the fall of 2017. In Texas, 1,872 private schools serve 310,758 students. Enrollment of students of color was 40%, well short of their proportion in public schools (73%).

10th

Taking the PSAT

In 2018-19, 277,565 students (69%) in the Class of 2021 took the PSAT; 70% of these test-takers were students of color. In total, 51% of Texas 10th graders took the PSAT/NMSQT or PSAT10.

69%

9th

Exclusionary Discipline

Exclusionary discipline rates are disproportionately higher for minority students, students from families with limited incomes and students in special education. From 2005-06 to 2018-19 in Texas, Black students received in-school suspensions nearly two times the rate they comprised in the total population. While numbers of disciplinary actions have been declining in recent years, in 2018-19 there were 538,259 exclusionary discipline actions across the state.

	White	Latino	Black
Percent of Population	27%	53%	13%
Out-of-School Suspensions	14%	50%	32%

■ Percent of Population
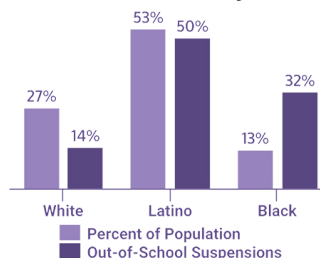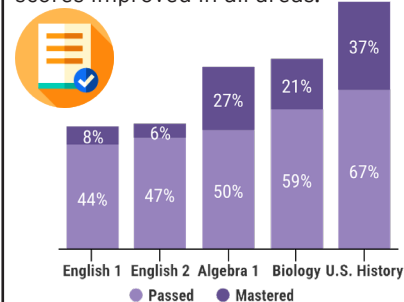■ Out-of-School Suspensions

In-Grade Retention

In 2017-18, ninth graders had the highest in-grade retention rate among 7-12 graders, at almost 8%; 31,968 students were retained in their freshman year. Black and Latino students had higher retention rates than their white counterparts in every grade except kindergarten.

8% retention rate for all 9th graders

10%	15%	8%	15%
Low Income	Emergent Bilingual	Immigrant	Migrant

SAT & ACT Testing

In the Class of 2021's junior and senior years, many struggled to succeed on tests needed for college. In Texas, 59% of the Class of 2021 graduates took the SAT at some point during their high school careers, with an average score of 1003 (out of 1600). Only 35% met SAT college and career readiness benchmarks. Colleges began to waive SAT and ACT requirements due to the pandemic and lack of access to testing spaces.

35%

2017-18	2018-19

COVID-19 Pandemic

In the spring of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic spread, upending the economy and forcing students from the classroom, irreparably changing their learning and lives. The Class of 2021 was also burdened with additional worries about their future academics and careers in an already complicated and devastating situation. Students were touched in myriad ways, from facing illness or the illness and death of loved ones to experiencing school shutdowns and anxiety as the virus spread. COVID-19 had a disparate impact on students of color, emergent bilingual students, students in families with low incomes, students with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ students. Longstanding digital inequity was dramatically amplified. For the first time, Texas enrollment decreased. Enrollment dropped by 122,354 students (2.2%) from the previous year.

Emergent Bilingual Students

One in five Texas students is an emergent bilingual student, but those in middle and high school – many of whom only get 45-minute ESL classes each day – do poorly. Schools are twice as likely to retain them and fail to graduate them than other students. Texas has continuously reported ESL or bilingual teacher shortages since the 1990s.

College Readiness

Data are not yet available for the Class of 2021, but for the Class of 2019, 53% were considered college-ready graduates, including just 43% of students in families with low incomes and 29% of emergent bilingual students.

Students Lost

IDRA's public school attrition study found that Texas high schools still are failing to graduate one out of every five students; 82,215 students were lost from the Class of 2021; Latino students and Black students were two times more likely to be lost from school than white students.

12th

11th

Black Lives Matter Protests

In the wake of the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery, protests against police violence occurred across the country and beyond in 2020. Tens of thousands of people took to the streets to show their outrage and grief. Students of every age joined their communities in demanding racial justice. Some students turned to their own classrooms to discuss the implications of racism in their education, to include questioning the role of police in schools. The Class of 2021, like the many students before them, have learned in a system where racial inequities persist, and the protests likely caused many youth to consider racial justice in their own lives in new ways. As seniors studied for their final exams, the Texas Legislature passed is first classroom censorship law (HB 3979) targeting lessons and conversations about race.

IGC Graduates

Beginning in 2015, students who complete all requirements but do not pass one or two end-of-course exams may still graduate if approved by an individual graduation committee (IGC). HB 999 in 2021 extended this policy. Data are not available for the Class of 2021, but in 2020, Texas saw 11,505 IGC graduates, with economically-disadvantaged, Latino and Black students benefiting most.

Well-Being

As the Class of 2021 moved toward adulthood, it is helpful to look at the state of childhood in Texas:

- Texas children are diverse: 50% are Latino; 31% white; 12% Black; 4% Asian American; and 4% non-Latino "other."
- Texas has one of the worst rates of childhood food insecurity. Of Texan households with children, one in five did not have enough to eat in the past week. One in three Black families and one in four Latino families experienced hunger.
- One in five children experiences poverty, with families of color and immigrant families far more likely to face these challenges. In 2019, over 1.4 million children in Texas lived in poverty.

2019-20

2020-21

Citations for Timeline for the Class of 2021

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Sarah Bishop contributed to this timeline project.

How the Pandemic May Impact School Policies and Practices that Lead to Higher Dropout Rates

by Christina Quintanilla-Muñoz, M.Ed.

The dropout picture can be confusing. For Texas, specifically, the state could celebrate its high national ranking in its on-time graduation rate. Texas is Number 8 (see Page 38). At the same time, Texas is losing one in five high school students, which is nothing to celebrate.

When a problem is so widespread and persistent, systemic factors are clearly at play. A number of years ago, IDRA identified six school policies and practices that lead to higher dropout rates: exclusionary discipline; in-grade retention; low funding and insufficient support for emergent bilingual students; unfair and insufficient funding; watered-down, non-college prep curricula; and testing that is high-stakes. As the nation reaches its two-year anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic's shutdown of schools, we explored how the pandemic affects those six policies and practices.

The strongest school-related predictor of dropping out is poor academic performance. And we know that students perform better in school if they feel welcome, safe and secure. COVID-19 has dramatically affected both student learning and student engagement.

Exclusionary Discipline
Suspension and other exclusionary discipline practices cause students to lose class time and the instruction they need to succeed academically. Rather than improving behavior, such practices tend to perpetuate interruptive behavior and deter students from developing positive, healthy relationships with campus leaders and teachers.

In Texas, for example, Black students, Latino students and LGBTQ students experience greater rates of school discipline and have higher contact with police in their schools than their peers, even though they are not more likely to misbehave (GLSEN, 2016; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2019). Exclusionary discipline ultimately leads to students disengaging from school altogether.

During the pandemic, across the board, student engagement drastically declined. And as the learning landscape shifted to an almost completely virtual format, students faced new exclusionary discipline practices for reasons such as unmuting their Zoom mics, walking away from their device without permission, eating while on camera, not logging on, or being absent for long periods of time due to health concerns. Punitive policies and practices prevent students from receiving instruction and socializing with peers, which has been linked to poor academic achievement and a higher likelihood of students dropping out or not graduating on time.

As instruction transitioned back to being in person, students and teachers returned with the trauma and stress they and their families experienced during isolation and the impact of the pandemic on their families. This is not the time to "crack down" on student misbehavior. Rather, this is a critical time students require more care than usual.

In-grade Retention
Retained students are 11 times more likely to drop out of school (Andrew, 2014). Despite any good intentions held by staff and educators, the reasoning behind grade retention is inherently discouraging to children. Students

> **Students who are retained are 11 times more likely to drop out of school.**

who are retained do not receive long-term benefits from the practice and usually perform more poorly than low-achieving peers who were not retained (Johnson & Rudolph, 2001; Jimerson & Renshaw, 2012; Anastasiou, et al., 2017). Students of color and students from low-income families are more likely to be held back than their peers (Schwartz, 2020).

Even with students demonstrating a dip in on-grade level proficiency in basic educational skills during the COVID-19 pandemic (NWEA, 2020), current research shows Texas schools did not retain students at significantly higher rates following school shutdowns that began in March of last year. Texas Governor Greg Abbott waived STAAR grade promotion requirements for the 2020-21 school year allowing school districts to promote students to the next grade without retaining them due to poor academic performance during pandemic school closures. As a result, in-grade retention rates in Texas were much lower in 2019-20 dropping to 1.7% from 2.4% the previous year.

As educators prepared for the next school year, they were faced with data showing significant underperformance due to massive instruction disruption. It will take more than one school year to resolve. However, resorting to the high-rates practice of in-grade retention is not the solution. There is no reason to return to the high rates of harmful practice in-grade retention.

Holding students back a year furthers inequities and has insurmountable long-term consequences on students' path to college and career. Effects are compounded by the pandemic's impact on the job market, housing and community health putting students already at an educational disadvantage at an even greater disadvantage compared to peers who had access to education during this time (Korman, et al., 2020).

Low Funding and Insufficient Support for Emergent Bilingual Students

Emergent bilingual students (English learners) are the fastest-growing demographic of Texas students, yet they are one of the lowest academically performing and among the most likely to drop out. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequities in schools, especially for the over 1 million emergent bilingual students in Texas.

6 Policies & Practices that Lead to Higher Dropout Rates

Exclusionary Discipline

There is no research to support that exclusionary discipline makes schools any safer. Suspension and other exclusionary discipline practices have been linked to a higher likelihood of dropping out or not graduating on time. Minority students, particularly Black students, are disproportionately subject to exclusionary discipline practices. Keeping students out of the classroom only halts their learning.

In-grade Retention

Retained students are 11 times more likely to drop out of school. Despite good intentions, the reasoning behind grade retention is inherently discouraging to children. Students who are retained do not receive long-term benefits from the practice and usually perform more poorly than low-achieving peers who were not retained. Students of color and students from low-income families are more likely to be held back than their peers.

Low Funding & Insufficient Support for ELs

Emergent bilingual students (English learners) are among the most likely to drop out and to be unprepared to go to college. They are the fastest-growing segment of students, but they are one of the lowest academically performing, and the achievement gap widens as students progress through school. Emergent bilingual education is typically significantly underfunded, and few teachers of ELs are fully certified.

Unfair & Insufficient Funding

To be effective, schools must have quality teaching and rigorous, up-to-date curricula. Schools depend on fair funding to serve all of their students each school day. Equitable funding makes a difference. In Texas, for example, poor school districts have had attrition rates that were more than double those of high-wealth districts.

Watered-Down, Non-College Prep Curricula

Research shows that expectations of students' abilities to succeed are "vital" to their education. For example, students whose parents had not gone to college were themselves three to six times more likely to enroll in a university if they'd taken rigorous higher math courses in high school. One district took high expectations district-wide by considering all students college-material and teaching them accordingly. They cut dropout rates in half and increased college-going rates.

Testing that is High-Stakes

Testing is a piece of a larger pie to ensure schools are educating all students. Assessment should guide instruction, inform school improvement and identify student support needs. But one test should never be used as a sole criterion for high-stakes decisions about students (in-grade retention, diploma denials or state takeovers). Reliance on a single measure fails to consider multiple factors that impact achievement (the characteristics of the community, such as low-wealth status and students of color, do not excuse schools' poor performance).

It doesn't have to be this way

Get more information in our "pandemic edition" article:
https://idra.news/6Policies

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The significant underfunding of emergent bilingual education in Texas coupled with an already prevalent resource gap between school districts, left districts who serve a higher number of emergent bilingual students struggling to overcome weak technology infrastructure, find appropriate resources and manage the abrupt transition to remote or virtual learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Emergent bilingual students are more likely to experience chronic absenteeism. Before the pandemic, 24% of emergent bilingual students missed three or more days of school (Latham Sikes & Villanueva, 2021). As schools take steps to re-engage students, they will need to set strategies to focus specifically on emergent bilingual students in order to keep them in school and learning at high standards.

Unfair and Insufficient Funding
Schools depend on fair funding to serve all their students each school day. Equitable funding makes a difference. Texas extended the hold harmless period for school districts at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year which guaranteed stable funding until the end of the fall semester, after which school districts' funding is based on daily attendance and enrollment. With many Texas school districts experiencing declined student enrollment during the pandemic, this can mean an underfunding of districts in need of critical support for their students.

Furthermore, school district leaders hoped to cover pandemic-related expenses, such as expanding technology and connectivity access to meet the needs of their students and families and investing in more protective equipment and cleaning supplies for educators with federal COVID-19 relief funds distributed to TEA from the CARES Act. However, this relief was used to supplant state funding. Schools losing students due to scarce resources can have insurmountable long-term consequences on students' path to college and career, and effects will be compounded by the pandemic's impact on the job market, housing, and community health. "Students already at an educational disadvantage will lag even further behind their peers who had access to education during this time" (Korman, et al., 2020).

IDRA released a report highlighting how school districts can use federal funds from the three COVID-19 emergency relief packages to invest in strategies that ensure culturally-sustaining schools for all students (Craven, 2022). The strategies were identified during IDRA's community sessions with young people, families, advocates and other education experts.

Watered-Down, Non-College Prep Curricula
To be effective, schools must provide quality teaching and rigorous, up-to-date curricula that prepares all students to attend and graduate from college. With schools struggling to properly adapt to the realities brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic, including the strain on authentic school-student engagement, students have limited access to college counseling which can connect students to critical resources for college preparation.

Furthermore, as a result of HB 5 (passed in 2013), Texas weakened high school graduation requirements, which led to less rigorous high school curricula and further instituted nefarious student tracking policies that encourage the placement of students in separate educational paths toward graduation. Economically disadvantaged students and students of color are at highest risk of being tracked into non-college prep graduation plans, thus being funneled through watered-down school curricula that ultimately strips them of the opportunity to receive a high-quality education that adequately prepares them for college.

Testing that is High-Stakes
A December 2020 report from the Associated Press found that a disproportionately large number of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and students of color were not in schools for assessments this fall, "complicating efforts to measure the pandemic's effects on some of the most vulnerable students" (Thompson, 2020). High levels of absenteeism experienced by many school districts are concerning and make accurate, valid results from summative assessment nearly impossible in 2020.

Valid data on student learning "provides a crucial metric for how students, educators, and school leadership have navigated learning and instruction during the pandemic, and during any normal school year" (Latham Sikes, 2020). Such data can inform how resources should be allocated to programs that support at-risk learn-

ers, emergent bilingual students, and students with disabilities – groups who are at highest risk of dropping out of school.

Testing systems should not mean that high-stakes decisions in children's lives (e.g., high school graduation) are made on the basis of test results.

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Texas Education Agency Reported Dip in Dropout Rates As the COVID-19 Pandemic Began

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

For the last three school years, the ninth grade four-year annual and longitudinal dropout rates in Texas remained virtually unchanged according to the latest dropout and school completion report by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The high school annual dropout rate was 1.9% in 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19, and went down to 1.6% in 2019-20.

The longitudinal dropout rate improved from 5.9% in 2018-19 to 5.4% in 2019-20, a decrease of 8.5%.

The longitudinal graduation rate improved from 89.7% in 2016-17 to 90.0% in both 2017-18 and 2018-19, and it increased a bit to 90.3% in 2019-20.

TEA released its latest dropout and school completion report in August 2020. The report entitled, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2019-20*, presented information on dropouts, completers and graduates from Texas public schools.

By state law, TEA has used the dropout definition and calculation methods of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) since 2005-06. With the NCES definition, a dropout is defined as a "student who is enrolled in public school in grades 7-12, does not return to public school the following year, is not expelled, and does not graduate, receive a high school equivalency certificate, continue high school outside the public-school system, begin college or die."

Annual Dropout Rate Dips

TEA's report shows a 1.2 % annual dropout rate for grades 7-12 following four consecutive years of a 1.4 % rate. After three consecutive years of a 1.9 % annual dropout rate for grades 9-12, the 2019-20 annual dropout rate declined to 1.6 %. In middle school (grades 7-8), the annual dropout rate was 0.5 % in 2019-20 compared to 0.4 % in 2018-19.

30,921 Students Dropped Out

TEA reported that the number of dropouts in grades 7-12 declined from 34,477 students in 2018-19 to 30,921 students in 2019-20, a decline of 3,556 dropouts or 10.3%. This decline in annual dropouts is the largest since a 10.6% decline between 2007-08 and 2008-09.

Of the 30,921 dropouts in the latest report, 4,295 were in grades 7-8, and 26,626 were in grades 9-12.

At the high school level alone (grades 9-12), TEA reported that the number of school dropouts decreased from 30,898 in 2018-19 to 26,626 in 2019-20, a decline of 13.8%. Across race-ethnicity groups, the annual dropout rate was 2.5% for Black students, 1.9% for Latino students, and 0.9% for white students. The annual dropout rates for each race-ethnicity group declined from 2018-19 to 2019-20.

At the middle school level (grades 7-8), TEA reported that the number of school dropouts increased from 3,579 in 2018-19 to 4,295 in 2019-20, an increase of 20.0%. The annual dropout rate for grades 7-8 was 0.5% in 2019-20 compared to 0.4% in 2018-19. Across race-ethnicity groups, the annual dropout rate was 0.8% for Black students, 0.5% for Latino students and 0.3% for white students.

Longitudinal Dropout Rate Varies by Student Group

TEA reported a grade 9-12 longitudinal dropout rate of 5.4% for the Class of 2020 compared to 5.9% for the Class of 2019. The reported longitudinal dropout rate for Black students was 7.8% in 2019-20 compared to 8.8% in 2018-19. The longitudinal dropout rate of 7.8% for Black students was 2.52 times higher than the 3.1% rate of white students. The rate of 6.5% for Latino students was 2.10 times higher than the 3.1% rate of white students.

The four-year longitudinal dropout rate for economically disadvantaged students decreased from 7.9% for the Class of 2019 to 7.3% for the Class of 2020. For emergent bilingual (English learner) students, the rate remained unchanged at 13.7% in both the Class of 2018 and the Class of 2019 and decreased to 12.9% for the Class of 2020. The four-year longitudinal dropout rate for students in special education remained at 9.4% for the Class of 2018 and the Class of 2019 and decreased to 8.2% for the Class of 2020.

Longitudinal Graduation Rises

TEA reported a grade 9-12 longitudinal graduation rate of 90.0% for the Class of 2018 and Class of 2019 compared to 90.3% for the Class of 2020. The reported longitudinal graduation rate for Black students was 87% in 2020 compared to 86.2% in 2019.

Latino students had a longitudinal graduation rate of 88.2% in 2018 and 2019 compared to 88.6% in 2020. White students had a longitudinal graduation rate of 94.0% in 2020 compared to 93.7% in 2019.

The high school attrition rate for the class of 2020 reported by TEA was 17.9% – up from 17.6% for the class of 2019. Across race-ethnicity groups, the annual dropout rate was 1.9% for Black students, 1.5% for Latino students, and 0.7% for white students.

Leaver Codes

For the 2019-20 school year, TEA tracked school "leaver" reasons in 17 categories (see the table on Page 38). Using these codes, school districts report the reason(s) a student who is not in school is not counted as a dropout.

A total of 458,157 students were reported as school leavers but not as dropouts in 2019-20. Of this number, 360,220 (78.6%) were reported as graduates from Texas public schools. The top five reasons for leaving school in Texas included: (1) unknown reasons (30,024); (2) left school to enroll in a public or private school outside of Texas (27,114); (3) left for home schooling (21,229); (4) left to return to family's home country (10,773); and (5) left to enroll in a private school in Texas (6,074).

Conclusion

The review of 2019-20 annual and longitudinal dropout rates reported by TEA showed improvement despite a partial year of the COVID-19 pandemic. The dropout rates across racial and ethnic groups declined but still showed the persistent gap between the rates of white students and other racial and ethnic groups. Given the nature of dropout rates in the state, coordinated action must continue among stakeholders to address the slow reduction of dropout rates and the slow progress being made to increase graduation rates.

Terms for race-ethnicity, gender and language status in this report reflect TEA designations.

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Roy L. Johnson, M.S., was IDRA's director of research and evaluation and retired in February 2022.

Texas Annual Dropout Rates – High School
Reported by the Texas Education Agency

School Year	Dropouts	Students	Annual Dropout Rate (%) by Group, Grades 9-12				
			Black	Latino	White	Other	Total
1997-98	24,414	1,124,991	2.9	3.1	1.3	1.4	2.2
1998-99	24,886	1,145,910	3.3	3.1	1.2	1.2	2.2
1999-00	21,439	1,163,883	2.6	2.7	1.0	1.0	1.8
2000-01	16,003	1,180,252	1.8	2.0	0.8	0.7	1.4
2001-02	15,117	1,202,108	1.8	1.9	0.6	0.7	1.3
2002-03	15,665	1,230,483	1.7	1.9	0.6	0.6	1.3
2003-04	15,160	1,252,016	1.4	1.9	0.6	0.6	1.2
2004-05	17,056	1,273,950	1.7	2.0	0.7	0.6	1.3
2005-06*	48,803	1,317,993	5.4	5.2	1.8	1.5	3.7
2006-07*	52,418	1,333,837	5.8	5.4	1.9	1.5	3.9
2007-08*	43,808	1,350,921	5.0	4.4	1.5	1.2	3.2
2008-09*	38,720	1,356,249	4.4	3.8	1.3	1.1	2.9
2009-10*	33,235	1,377,330	3.9	3.1	1.1	1.2	2.4
2010-11*	32,833	1,394,523	3.6	3.0	1.1	1.1	2.4
2011-12*	34,285	1,407,697	3.8	3.1	1.2	1.3	2.4
2012-13*	31,509	1,428,819	3.3	2.8	1.1	1.2	2.2
2013-14*	31,384	1,454,842	3.1	2.7	1.1	1.1	2.2
2014-15*	30,853	1,495,294	3.0	2.5	1.1	1.2	2.1
2012-13*	31,509	1,428,819	3.3	2.8	1.1	1.2	2.2
2013-14*	31,384	1,454,842	3.1	2.7	1.1	1.1	2.2
2014-15*	30,853	1,495,294	3.0	2.5	1.1	1.2	2.1
2015-16*	30,683	1,537,216	3.0	2.4	1.1	1.1	2.0
2016-17*	30,296	1,570,360	2.8	2.3	1.1	0.9	1.9
2017-18*	30,273	1,592,485	2.8	2.3	1.0	1.0	1.9
2018-19*	30,898	1,611,202	3.0	2.3	1.0	1.0	1.9
2019-20*	26,626	1,631,776	2.5	1.9	0.9	0.8	1.6

*Beginning in the 2005-06 school year, the dropout rate was calculated using the National Center for Education Statistics dropout definition. Using the NCES definition, a dropout is defined as "a student who is enrolled in public school in grades 7-12, does not return to public school the following fall, is not expelled, and does not graduate, receive a General Education Development (GED) certificate, continue school outside the public school system, begin college, or die." To implement the legislative requirements for the computation of dropout rates, TEA had to make changes in some dates affecting dropout status and some changes in groups of students who had not been considered dropouts previously.

Source: Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2019-20, August 2021

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Texas Annual Dropout Rates – Middle and High School Combined
Reported by the Texas Education Agency

School Year	Dropouts	Students	Annual Dropout Rate (%) By Group, Grades 7-12				
			Black	Latino	White	Other	Total
1987-88	91,307	1,363,198	8.4	8.8	5.1	6.1	6.7
1988-89	82,325	1,360,115	7.5	8.1	4.5	4.9	6.1
1989-90	70,040	1,361,494	6.7	7.2	3.5	4.3	5.1
1990-91	53,965	1,372,738	4.8	5.6	2.7	3.1	3.9
1991-92	53,420	1,406,838	4.8	5.5	2.5	2.9	3.8
1992-93	43,402	1,533,197	3.6	4.2	1.7	2.0	2.8
1993-94	40,211	1,576,015	3.2	3.9	1.5	1.7	2.6
1994-95	29,918	1,617,522	2.3	2.7	1.2	1.1	1.8
1995-96	29,207	1,662,578	2.3	2.5	1.1	1.1	1.8
1996-97	26,901	1,705,972	2.0	2.3	1.0	0.9	1.6
1997-98	27,550	1,743,139	2.1	2.3	0.9	1.1	1.6
1998-99	27,592	1,773,117	2.3	2.3	0.8	0.9	1.6
1999-00	23,457	1,794,521	1.8	1.9	0.7	0.7	1.3
2000-01	17,563	1,818,940	1.3	1.4	0.5	0.5	1.0
2001-02	16,622	1,849,680	1.3	1.3	0.4	0.5	0.9
2002-03	17,151	1,891,361	1.2	1.4	0.4	0.4	0.9
2003-04	16,434	1,924,717	1.0	1.3	0.4	0.4	0.9
2004-05	18,290	1,954,752	1.2	1.4	0.5	0.4	0.9
2005-06*	51,841	2,016,470	3.8	3.5	1.3	1.1	2.6
2006-07*	55,306	2,023,570	4.1	3.7	1.3	1.1	2.7
2007-08*	45,796	2,042,203	3.5	3.0	1.1	0.9	2.2
2008-09*	40,923	2,060,701	3.1	2.6	0.9	0.8	2.0
2009-10*	34,907	2,091,390	2.7	2.1	0.8	0.8	1.7
2010-11*	34,363	2,122,414	2.5	2.1	0.8	0.8	1.6
2011-12*	36,276	2,150,364	2.6	2.1	0.8	0.9	1.7
2012-13*	34,696	2,189,442	2.3	2.0	0.8	0.8	1.6
2013-14*	35,358	2,238,400	2.2	2.0	0.8	0.8	1.6
2014-15*	33,437	2,284,109	2.2	1.8	0.8	0.7	1.5
2015-16*	33,466	2,330,946	2.1	1.7	0.8	0.8	1.4
2016-17*	33,050	2,376,528	2.1	1.7	0.8	0.7	1.4
2017-18*	33,697	2,410,852	2.1	1.7	0.8	0.7	1.4
2018-19*	34,477	2,440,498	2.2	1.6	0.8	0.8	1.4
2019-20*	30,921	2,481,749	1.9	1.5	0.7	0.6	1.2

*Beginning in the 2005-06 school year, the dropout rate was calculated using the National Center for Education Statistics dropout definition. Using the NCES definition, a dropout is defined as "a student who is enrolled in public school in grades 7-12, does not return to public school the following fall, is not expelled, and does not graduate, received a General Education Development (GED) certificate, continue school outside the public school system, begin college, or die."
To implement the legislative requirements for the computation of dropout rates, TEA had to make changes in some dates affecting dropout status and some changes in groups of students who had not been considered dropouts previously.
Sources: Texas Education Agency, Report on Public School Dropouts, 1996-97 and 1997-98. Source: Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2019-20, August 2021.
Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Texas Longitudinal Dropout Rates – High School
Reported by the Texas Education Agency

School Year	Dropouts	Students (cohort)	Longitudinal Dropout Rate (%) By Group, Grades 9-12				
			Black	Latino	White	Other	Total
1997-98	20,226	228,049	11.6	13.4	5.5	4.7	8.9
1998-99	20,231	238,280	11.6	13.1	4.9	4.4	8.5
1999-00	17,729	244,777	9.9	11.2	4.0	3.8	7.2
2000-01	15,551	249,161	8.4	9.6	3.5	3.5	6.2
2001-02	12,719	254,040	6.6	7.8	2.7	2.7	5.0
2002-03	11,869	263,571	6.3	7.1	2.2	2.1	4.5
2003-04	10,507	270,911	4.9	6.3	1.9	1.9	3.9
2004-05	11,650	271,218	5.5	6.9	2.0	2.1	4.3
2005-06*	24,975	283,698	13.3	13.1	3.9	3.4	8.8
2006-07*	33,005	290,662	17.2	16.4	5.3	n/a	11.4
2007-08*	31,437	300,488	16.1	14.4	5.1	n/a	10.5
2008-09*	28,856	308,427	14.8	12.4	4.5	n/a	9.4
2009-10*	22,988	314,079	11.8	9.6	3.5	n/a	7.3
2010-11*	21,813	319,588	10.9	8.7	3.4	2.3	6.8
2011-12*	20,032	316,758	10.1	8.0	3.2	3.0	6.3
2012-13*	21,634	328,584	9.9	8.2	3.5	3.4	6.6
2013-14*	21,977	333,286	9.8	8.2	3.6	3.2	6.6
2014-15*	21,357	339,626	9.5	7.7	3.4	3.4	6.3
2015-16*	21,610	350,684	9.1	7.5	3.4	3.2	6.2
2016-17*	21,171	360,606	8.7	7.2	3.2	2.8	5.9
2017-18*	21,412	372,919	8.3	6.9	3.3	2.9	5.7
2018-19*	22,662	382,451	8.8	7.1	3.3	2.9	5.9
2019-20*	20,888	384,600	7.8	6.5	3.1	2.7	5.4

*The 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 dropout rate was calculated using the NCES dropout definition: A dropout is defined as "a student who is enrolled in public school in grades 7-12, does not return to public school the following fall, is not expelled, and does not graduate, receive a General Education Development (GED) certificate, continue school outside the public school system, begin college, or die." In order to implement the legislative requirements for the computation of dropout rates, TEA had to make changes in some dates affecting dropout status and some changes in groups of students who had not been considered dropouts previously.

Data source: Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2019-20, August 2021.

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Texas Longitudinal Graduation Rates – High School
Reported by the Texas Education Agency

School Year	Graduates	Students (cohort)	Longitudinal Graduation Rate (%) By Group, Grades 9-12				
			Black	Latino	White	Other	Total
1997-98	179,379	228,049	74.2	69.8	85.3	82.8	78.7
1998-99	189,441	238,280	74.7	70.6	86.2	86.8	79.5
1999-00	197,579	244,777	76.9	72.8	86.7	88.0	80.7
2000-01	202,052	249,161	77.7	73.5	86.8	88.9	81.1
2001-02	210,381	254,040	79.8	75.7	88.2	90.1	82.8
2002-03	222,021	263,571	81.1	77.3	89.8	91.0	84.2
2003-04	229,133	270,911	82.8	78.4	89.4	91.9	84.6
2004-05	227,755	271,218	81.7	77.4	89.5	91.9	84.0
2005-06*	227,975	283,698	74.5	71.7	89.0	83.9	80.4
2006-07*	226,712	290,662	70.7	68.5	88.2	81.4	78.0
2007-08*	237,576	300,488	71.8	70.8	88.8	81.7	79.1
2008-09*	248,500	308,427	73.8	73.5	89.7	80.3	80.6
2009-10*	264,632	314,079	78.8	78.8	91.6	84.2	84.3
2010-11*	274,562	319,588	80.9	81.8	92.0	93.3	85.9
2011-12*	277,778	316,758	83.5	84.3	93.0	93.6	87.7
2012-13*	289,298	328,584	84.1	85.1	93.0	92.5	88.0
2013-14*	294,240	333,286	84.2	85.5	93.0	93.2	88.3
2014-15*	302,262	339,626	85.2	86.5	93.4	93.7	89.0
2015-16*	312,605	350,684	85.4	86.9	93.4	93.6	89.1
2016-17*	323,373	360,606	86.1	87.7	93.6	94.0	89.7
2017-18*	335,500	372,919	86.5	88.2	93.6	94.1	90.0
2018-19*	344,021	382,451	86.2	88.2	93.7	94.3	90.0
2019-20*	347,392	384,600	87.0	88.6	94.0	94.4	90.3

**Beginning in the 2005-06 school year, the dropout rate and graduation rate were calculated using definitions of the National Center for Education Statistics. Using the NCES definition, a dropout is defined as "a student who is enrolled in public school in grades 7-12, does not return to public school the following fall, is not expelled, and does not graduate, receive a General Education Development (GED) certificate, continue school outside the public school system, begin college, or die." To implement the legislative requirements for the computation of dropout rates, TEA had to make changes in some dates affecting dropout status and some changes in groups of students who had not been considered dropouts previously.

Data source: Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2019-20, August 2021.

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Exit Reasons for School Leavers, Grades 7-12
Reported by the Texas Education Agency

Leaver Reasons (Code)	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Graduated or received an out-of-state GED									
Graduated from a campus in this district or charter (01)	292,636	301,418	303,109	313,397	324,311	334,424	347,893	355,615	360,220
Graduated outside Texas before entering Texas public school, entered a Texas public school, and left again (85)	46	97	61	51	59	56	51	43	27
Completed GED outside Texas (86)	61	98	54	40	46	41	44	54	30
Graduated from another state under provisions of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Minority Children (90)	18	22	29	28	14	15	19	12	12
Moved to other educational setting									
Withdrew from/left school to enter college and is working toward an associate's or bachelor's degree (24)	399	380	318	319	303	267	288	285	278
Withdrew from/left school for home schooling (60)	20,629	21,375	21,812	21,120	21,456	22,516	24,292	22,967	21,229
Removed by CPS and the district has not been informed of the student's current status or enrollment (66)	232	239	312	164	171	174	185	188	220
Withdrew from/left school to enroll in a private school in Texas (81)	11,553	10,767	9,938	8,809	7,412	7,373	7,539	7,518	6,074
Withdrew from/left school to enroll in a public or private school outside Texas (82)	37,323	34,857	35,347	35,283	34,763	34,609	32,740	30,949	27,114
Withdrew from/left school to enroll in the Texas Tech University ISD High School Diploma Program or the University of Texas at Austin High School Diploma Program (87)	269	273	271	252	207	194	271	223	177
Withdrawn by district									
Expelled under the provisions of the Texas Education Code §37.007 and cannot return to school (78)	242	153	134	116	132	102	146	196	129
Withdrawn by district when the district discovered that the student was not a resident at the time of enrollment, had falsified enrollment information, or had not provided immunization records (83)	408	355	321	397	333	456	443	319	241
Other reasons									
Died while enrolled in school or during the summer break after completing the prior school year (03)	579	565	565	636	542	679	642	634	702
Withdrew/left school because of pregnancy – female or male (08)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	33
Withdrew from/left school to return to family's home country (16)	13,089	12,059	12,576	12,631	12,936	13,375	12,416	11,867	10,773
Suffered a condition, injury, or illness that requires substantial medical care (20)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	32
Student was ordered by a court to attend a GED program and has not earned a GED certificate (88)	2,063	1,857	1,716	1,441	509	757	959	946	596
Student was incarcerated in a state jail or federal penitentiary as an adult or as a person certified to stand trial as an adult (89)	533	380	406	458	497	417	326	316	256
Other (reason unknown or not listed above) (98)	33,721	32,499	33,269	31,565	32,476	31,896	32,437	33,242	30,024
All leaver reasons	**413,801**	**417,394**	**420,238**	**426,707**	**436,167**	**447,351**	**460,691**	**465,374**	**458,157**

Source: Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2008-09 to 2019-20
Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Texas' National Ranking in On-Time Graduation Rate Slips from Fifth to Eighth

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

The Texas ranking in on-time graduation rates slipped nationally from fifth in 2017-18 to eighth in 2018-19 even while achieving a 90% graduation rate in both years. On-time graduation rates in the nation are continuing to increase based on the latest data on the adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR) for the 2018-19 school year. Texas ranked eighth with an ACGR of 90% compared to the national average of 86%.

The ACGR is now considered the most accurate of the national measures of on-time graduation. It measures the percentage of public high school students who graduate with a regular high school diploma four years after starting ninth grade plus the number of students who transfer into the cohort minus those who transfer out.

In the most recent data on on-time graduation, the ACGR in Texas trailed seven states – Alabama was first at 91.7%; Iowa was second at 91.6%; West Virginia was third at 91.3%; Kentucky and New Jersey were tied for fourth at 90.6%; Tennessee was sixth at 90.5%; and Wisconsin was seventh at 90.1%.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) released the four-year ACGR data for 2018-19 in July 2020. The data do not include school years affected by COVID-19. NCES prefers the ACGR because it is more accurate than the averaged freshman graduation rate (AFGR) as it takes into consideration the number of students of students who transfer in and out of the cohort, thus defining the term "adjusted cohort" for this latest measure of high school graduation.

Beginning with the 2011-12 school year, this measure became a required component of each state's Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR). Data for this measure were drawn from counts of enrollment by grade and graduates in the Common Core of Data (CCD) State Non-Fiscal Survey of Public Elementary/ Secondary Education.

The 50 states and the District of Columbia reported counts of high school graduates in 2018-19 (see table on next page for rates by state and rank orders by state for the last five years).

Major Findings

Major findings of the latest NCES study on the adjusted cohort graduation rate include the following (also see the following tables).

In the 2018-19 school year, about four out of five students in the United States graduated from high school on-time – within four years after starting high school as a freshman in grade 9 and adjusting for cohort transfers and removals.

The ACGR in the United States was 85.8% in 2018-19 and ranged from a low of 68.9% in the District of Columbia to a high of 91.7% in Alabama.

Twenty-seven of the reporting entities had rates equal to or higher than the national average of 85.3% (Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin).

Texas ranked eighth with graduation rate of 90% compared to the national average of 86%.

Nationally, states ranged from a low of 69% in the District of Columbia to a high of 92% in Alabama.

In 2018-19, Texas ranked eighth among the 50 reporting states and the District of Columbia with a rate of 90.0%. The Texas ACGR increased from 89.0% in 2014-15 to 90.0% in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Twenty-four of the 50 reporting states and the District of Columbia had rates lower than the overall average of 85.8% (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont, Washington and Wyoming).

In 2018-19, American Indian/Alaska Native, Black and Latino students had an ACGR below the national average of 85.3%. American Indian/Alaska Native had a national average rate of 74.3%, Black students had a national rate of 79.6%, and Latino students had a rate of 81.7%. White students had a rate of 89.4%.

The state of Texas ranked high in the graduation rates of students from all race-ethnicity groups as the graduation rates exceeded the respective student group averages. Texas ranked second in the graduation rates of students with two or more races (93.7%). Texas ranked third in the graduation rates of white students (93.7%) and Latino students (88.2%). Texas ranked fourth in the graduation rate of Black students with an ACGR of 86.2% and ranked eighth for American Indian/Alaskan Native students with an ACGR of 87.0%.

For special population groups nationally, economically disadvantaged students had an ACGR of 80.0%, emergent bilingual students (limited English proficient*) students had a rate of 69.2%, and students with disabilities had a rate of 68.2%. Each of these groups had a rate below the national average.

The state of Texas ranked in the top tier in the graduation rates of students in special population groups. Texas ranked third in the nation in the graduation rate of economically disadvantaged students with an ACGR of 87.2%. The state of Texas ranked seventh in the graduation rate of emergent bilingual students with a rate of 78.0%. For the special population group of students with disabilities, Texas ranked eighth with a rate of 77.9%.

> **Nationally, students from families with limited incomes had an graduation rate of 80%, emergent bilingual students had a rate of 69%, and students with disabilities had a rate of 68%.**

Conclusion

Though graduation rates are increasing, there is still concern that only a fourth of the states have achieved the national graduation goal. Persistent graduation gaps continue to exist between white students and other racial and ethnic student groups. Students of color and those in special populations have on-time graduation rates below the national average and those of white students.

Three decades ago, the nation's governors in the 1989 Education Summit at the University of Virginia established an education goal of having a national graduation rate of 90% by 2020. Under Title I, Part A of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states and their local education agencies are required to set and meet challenging graduation goals for all students.

Despite the continuing improvement over the past several years, the goal was not reached by 2020. Only eight states, (Alabama, Iowa, West Virginia, Kentucky, New Jersey, Tennessee, Wisconsin and Texas) have reached the 90% goal. Seven other states are creeping closer to the 90% graduation goal, including Missouri, Delaware, Connecticut, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota and Massachusetts.

Acknowledgement of the continued increase in on-time graduation rates over the past years is appropriate, but local, state and national efforts are needed to ensure every student receives an excellent education leading to high school graduation and post-secondary and career success. Work must continue in addressing questions about the disparities in graduation rates of student groups and the disparities in graduation rates among states.

Terms for race-ethnicity, gender and language status in this report reflect TEA designations.

**The adjusted cohort rate is calculated by dividing the number of cohort members who earn a regular high school diploma by the end of the school year by the number of first-time ninth grade students in the fall of their freshman year plus students who transferred in, minus students who transferred out, emigrates or died during the four-year school enrollment period. The result of the calculation is expressed as a percent.

*** Under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Resources

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Roy L. Johnson, M.S., was IDRA's director of research and evaluation and retired in February 2022.

Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) and Rank by State, 2018-19

State	2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank
United States	**83.2**		**84.1**		**84.6**		**85.3**		**85.8**	
Alabama	89.3	3	87.1	16	89.3	7	90.0	5	91.7	1
Alaska	75.6	46	76.1	47	78.2	46	78.5	49	80.4	46
Arizona	77.4	44	79.5	43	78.0	48	78.7	47	77.8	49
Arkansas	84.9	25	87.0	17	88.0	14	89.2	9	87.6	16
California	82.0	31	83.0	30	82.7	34	83.0	36	84.5	31
Colorado	77.3	45	78.9	45	79.1	45	80.8	44	81.1	42
Connecticut	87.2	14	87.4	15	87.9	15	88.4	13	88.5	11
Delaware	85.6	22	85.5	25	86.9	19	86.9	21	89.0	10
District of Columbia	68.5	51	69.2	51	73.2	50	68.5	51	68.9	51
Florida	77.9	42	80.7	37	82.3	38	86.3	26	87.2	20
Georgia	78.8	40	79.4	44	80.6	41	81.6	41	82.0	40
Hawaii	81.6	33	82.7	32	82.7	34	84.5	30	85.2	28
Idaho	78.9	39	79.7	40	79.7	43	80.7	45	80.8	45
Illinois	85.6	22	85.5	25	87.0	18	86.5	24	86.2	27
Indiana	87.1	15	86.8	19	83.8	30	88.1	14	87.2	20
Iowa	90.8	1	91.3	1	91.0	1	91.4	1	91.6	2
Kansas	85.7	20	85.7	23	86.5	24	87.2	18	87.2	20
Kentucky	88.0	8	88.6	7	89.7	4	90.3	3	90.6	4
Louisiana	77.5	43	78.6	46	78.1	47	81.4	42	80.1	47
Maine	87.5	12	87.0	17	86.9	19	86.7	22	87.4	18
Maryland	87.0	16	87.6	12	87.7	16	87.1	19	86.9	23
Massachusetts	87.3	13	87.5	13	88.3	12	87.8	16	88.0	15
Michigan	79.8	36	79.7	40	80.2	42	80.6	46	81.4	41
Minnesota	81.9	32	82.2	35	82.7	34	83.2	34	83.7	36
Mississippi	75.4	47	82.3	34	83.0	33	84.0	32	85.0	29
Missouri	87.8	10	89.0	6	88.3	12	89.2	9	89.7	9
Montana	86.0	19	85.6	24	85.8	27	86.4	25	86.6	24
Nebraska	88.9	5	89.3	4	89.1	8	88.7	12	88.4	12
Nevada	71.3	49	73.6	49	80.9	40	83.2	34	84.1	33
New Hampshire	88.1	7	88.2	9	88.9	10	88.8	11	88.4	12
New Jersey	89.7	2	90.1	2	90.5	2	90.9	2	90.6	4
New Mexico	68.6	50	71.0	50	71.1	51	73.9	50	75.1	50
New York	79.2	38	80.4	38	81.8	39	82.3	37	82.8	37
North Carolina	85.6	22	85.9	22	86.6	19	86.3	26	86.5	25
North Dakota	86.6	17	87.5	13	87.2	17	88.1	14	88.3	14
Ohio	80.7	34	83.5	29	84.2	28	82.1	38	82.0	39
Oklahoma	82.5	30	81.6	36	82.6	37	81.8	39	84.9	30
Oregon	73.8	48	74.8	48	76.7	49	78.7	47	80.0	48
Pennsylvania	84.8	26	86.1	21	86.6	19	85.9	28	86.5	25
Rhode Island	83.2	29	82.8	31	84.1	29	84.0	32	83.9	35
South Carolina	80.3	35	82.6	33	83.6	32	81.0	43	81.1	42
South Dakota	83.9	28	83.9	28	83.7	31	84.1	31	84.1	33
Tennessee	87.9	9	88.5	8	89.8	3	90.0	5	90.5	6
Texas	89.0	4	89.1	5	89.7	4	90.0	5	90.0	8
Utah	84.8	26	85.2	27	86.0	26	87.0	20	87.4	18
Vermont	87.7	11	87.7	11	89.1	8	85.1	29	84.5	31
Virginia	85.7	20	86.7	20	86.9	19	87.5	17	87.5	17
Washington	78.2	41	79.7	40	79.4	44	86.7	22	81.1	42
West Virginia	86.5	18	89.8	3	89.4	6	90.2	4	91.3	3
Wisconsin	88.4	6	88.2	9	88.6	11	89.7	8	90.1	7
Wyoming	79.3	37	80.0	39	86.2	25	81.7	40	82.1	38

Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) by State and Race-Ethnicity, 2018-19

State	Total		American Indian/ Alaska Native		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic/ Latino		Black		Two or More Races		White	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank
United States	**85.8**		**74.3**		—		**81.7**		**79.6**		—	NR	**89.4**	
Alabama	91.7	1	94	1	95.0	9	90.6	2	89.8	1	93.0	1	92.8	9
Alaska	80.4	46	68	39	90.0	27	80.0	26	79.0	25	76.0	42	85.7	39
Arizona	77.8	49	67.1	42	91.0	24	74.4	39	73.3	42	75.0	43	82.7	48
Arkansas	87.6	16	79	19	94.0	11	84.7	8	83.4	9	87.0	13	89.6	24
California	84.5	31	75	28	94.0	11	82.1	20	76.8	31	76.8	40	88.4	31
Colorado	81.1	42	65	44	90.0	27	74.0	41	74.4	38	81.0	33	85.9	37
Connecticut	88.5	11	92	2	<>	NR	80.2	25	79.9	22	88.0	10	93.3	6
Delaware	89.0	10	83	11	<>	NR	86.0	6	88.0	2	89.0	6	90.6	18
District of Col	68.9	51	<>	NR	<>	NR	60.0	51	68.7	50	79.0	37	93.0	8
Florida	87.2	20	78	22	95.7	5	86.1	5	81.9	14	88.4	9	90.4	20
Georgia	82.0	40	76	26	—	NR	75.9	35	79.6	24	82.3	28	85.6	41
Hawaii	85.2	28	†	NR	93.0	19	85.0	6	83.0	12	†	NR	84.0	45
Idaho	80.8	45	68	39	89.0	31	73.9	44	74.0	39	79.0	37	82.6	49
Illinois	86.2	27	78	22	93.9	17	82.2	19	76.5	32	86.9	15	90.8	17
Indiana	87.2	20	82	13	96.0	4	83.7	13	77.2	30	82.9	27	89.4	28
Iowa	91.6	2	77	25	92.0	20	84.5	9	82.0	13	88.0	10	93.3	6
Kansas	87.2	20	76	26	94.0	11	83.2	14	80.0	20	83.0	25	89.3	29
Kentucky	90.6	4	≥90%	4	94.0	11	84.0	12	83.2	11	89.0	6	92.1	12
Louisiana	80.1	47	88	6	90.0	27	67.1	50	75.6	35	84.0	22	85.9	37
Maine	87.4	18	78	22	<>	NR	82.0	21	80.0	20	82.0	29	87.8	34
Maryland	86.9	23	81	15	96.5	2	72.4	48	84.3	6	91.0	4	93.4	4
Massachusetts	88.0	15	83	11	95.2	6	74.4	39	79.9	22	88.0	10	92.7	10
Michigan	81.4	41	70	35	91.6	23	76.6	31	70.2	46	76.2	41	84.7	43
Minnesota	83.7	36	51	48	87.6	32	69.9	49	69.9	48	72.0	46	88.7	30
Mississippi	85.0	29	82	13	<>	NR	83.0	15	81.9	14	86.0	17	88.4	31
Missouri	89.7	9	85	9	—	NR	86.3	4	80.6	18	89.0	6	91.9	14
Montana	86.6	24	67	43	≥95%	7	83.0	15	78.0	27	83.0	25	89.6	24
Nebraska	88.4	12	71	32	84.0	35	80.5	24	78.0	27	82.0	29	92.5	11
Nevada	84.1	33	74	30	94.0	11	83.0	15	72.2	43	86.0	17	87.3	35
New Hampshire	88.4	12	≥80%	17	<>	NR	76.0	34	76.0	34	85.0	21	89.5	27
New Jersey	90.6	4	92	2	97.0	1	84.5	9	83.3	10	91.0	4	94.9	1
New Mexico	75.1	50	70	35	86.0	34	74.5	38	67.0	51	—	NR	79.0	51
New York	82.8	37	70	35	89.9	30	72.9	46	73.9	40	83.6	24	90.2	21
North Carolina	86.5	25	81	15	—	NR	81.1	23	83.7	8	83.9	23	89.6	24
North Dakota	88.3	14	72	31	<>	NR	74.0	41	81.0	16	—	NR	91.8	15
Ohio	82.0	39	71	32	—	NR	73.4	45	69.4	49	76.9	39	85.3	42
Oklahoma	84.9	30	84.8	10	87.0	33	81.8	22	80.1	19	86.6	16	86.3	36
Oregon	80.0	48	68	39	92.0	20	76.2	32	70.0	47	80.0	34	81.3	50
Pennsylvania	86.5	25	80	18	93.4	18	75.4	37	75.0	36	79.5	36	90.6	18
Rhode Island	83.9	35	70	35	<>	NR	76.1	33	81.0	16	80.0	34	88.2	33
South Carolina	81.1	42	71	32	—	NR	79.5	27	76.4	33	—	NR	84.2	44
South Dakota	84.1	33	54	47	<>	NR	74.0	41	79.0	25	75.0	43	89.7	22
Tennessee	90.5	6	90	5	95.0	9	84.4	11	84.6	5	—	NR	93.4	4
Texas	90.0	8	87	7	96.4	3	88.2	3	86.2	4	91.4	2	93.7	3
Utah	87.4	18	79	19	91.0	24	79.5	27	75.0	36	87.0	13	89.7	23
Vermont	84.5	31	<>	NR	<>	NR	78.0	29	71.0	45	75.0	43	85.7	39
Virginia	87.5	17	87	7	94.0	11	72.9	47	84.1	7	91.3	3	92.1	12
Washington	81.1	42	62	45	90.5	26	75.7	36	73.7	41	81.3	32	82.9	47
West Virginia	91.3	3	75	28	≥95%	7	91.0	1	88.0	2	86.0	17	91.5	16
Wisconsin	90.1	7	79	19	92.0	20	82.8	18	71.4	44	86.0	17	93.8	2
Wyoming	82.1	38	59	46	<>	NR	77.0	30	78.0	27	82.0	31	83.8	46

‡Reporting standards not met (too few cases)   >= Data blurred to protect student privacy   --- Not available   NR – Not Ranked

Data sources: U.S. Department of Education. (December 2018). Consolidated State Performance Report, 2010-11 through 2016-17. Snyder, T.D., de Brey, C., & Dillow, S.A. (January 2019). Digest of Education Statistics 2017: 53rd Edition. U.S. Department of Education. U.S. Department of Education. (July 24, 2020). EDFacts Data Group 695, School Year 2017-18.

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2022

Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR), by Special Population Group, 2018-19

State	Total		Economically Disadvantaged		Limited English Proficiency		Students with Disabilities	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank
United States	**85.8**		**80.0**		**69.2**		**68.2**	
Alabama	91.7	1	87.4	2	76	9	69.6	26
Alaska	80.4	46	74.7	39	72	22	60.0	42
Arizona	77.8	49	73.5	42	50	48	69.0	27
Arkansas	87.6	16	84.8	5	82.8	2	82.6	1
California	84.5	31	81.1	16	68.7	31	67.7	30
Colorado	81.1	42	70.9	48	68.6	32	59.2	43
Connecticut	88.5	11	80.4	20	71	27	67.8	29
Delaware	89.0	10	82.0	13	76	9	73.0	14
District of Columbia	68.9	51	58.6	51	51	47	51.0	49
Florida	87.2	20	83.2	9	75.2	13	81.0	2
Georgia	82.0	40	77.2	32	59.3	44	62.9	39
Hawaii	85.2	28	80.7	18	70	28	63.0	37
Idaho	80.8	45	72.5	43	74	15	56.0	47
Illinois	86.2	27	78.3	28	72.0	22	69.9	23
Indiana	87.2	20	82.7	10	76	9	71.4	20
Iowa	91.6	2	85.2	4	79	6	76.1	10
Kansas	87.2	20	80.2	21	82.3	3	78.4	6
Kentucky	90.6	4	87.8	1	74	15	75.5	11
Louisiana	80.1	47	74.4	40	41	50	64.7	32
Maine	87.4	18	78.4	27	80	4	73.0	14
Maryland	86.9	23	77.7	29	53.7	46	63.5	35
Massachusetts	88.0	15	78.5	26	64.6	40	73.9	12
Michigan	81.4	41	70.8	49	73.2	18	57.8	46
Minnesota	83.7	36	71.1	46	67.2	34	63.0	38
Mississippi	85.0	29	82.2	12	66	36	42.2	51
Missouri	89.7	9	82.6	11	73	19	76.7	9
Montana	86.6	24	77.6	30	65	38	78.0	7
Nebraska	88.4	12	81.4	15	49	49	69.0	27
Nevada	84.1	33	80.8	17	76.8	8	67.2	31
New Hampshire	88.4	12	77.2	32	65	38	72.0	18
New Jersey	90.6	4	84.0	8	75.4	12	79.2	3
New Mexico	75.1	50	70.0	50	73.3	17	64.7	32
New York	82.8	37	76.4	36	34.3	51	58.8	45
North Carolina	86.5	25	81.8	14	71.4	26	69.8	24
North Dakota	88.3	14	77.0	34	72	22	73.0	14
Ohio	82.0	39	71.0	47	65.2	37	48.0	50
Oklahoma	84.9	30	78.8	25	69	29	79.1	4
Oregon	80.0	48	74.4	40	60	43	63.4	36
Pennsylvania	86.5	25	79.9	23	68.6	32	70.7	22
Rhode Island	83.9	35	76.7	35	69	29	64.0	34
South Carolina	81.1	42	84.3	7	79.3	5	54.4	48
South Dakota	84.1	33	75.0	38	73	19	72.0	18
Tennessee	90.5	6	84.4	6	72	22	73.9	12
Texas	90.0	8	87.2	3	78.0	7	77.9	8
Utah	87.4	18	77.3	31	73	21	72.4	17
Vermont	84.5	31	76.0	37	63	41	71.0	21
Virginia	87.5	17	79.6	24	56.0	45	62.9	39
Washington	81.1	42	72.3	44	62.6	42	62.2	41
West Virginia	91.3	3	80.0	22	92	1	78.7	5
Wisconsin	90.1	7	80.5	19	75	14	69.8	24
Wyoming	82.1	38	71.9	45	67	35	59.0	44

Taking Action to Hold on to Students

Communities and their neighborhood public schools can turn the tide. We can and must guarantee that every child graduates from high school ready for college and the world of work. Strategic action to address school holding power has two key elements:

- Community based action that reclaims neighborhood public schools, strengthens schools through school-community partnerships and holds schools and stakeholders accountable for student success.

- Statewide systems change to strengthen school holding power so all schools ensure that all children succeed and graduate. Each strategy must be informed by quality data about student outcomes and the factors that make up effective schools.

Get informed

See IDRA's latest attrition study online at: **https://idra.news/AttritionStudy**

Get the attrition rate for your county over the last seven years at: **https://idra.news/Txlook**

Receive IDRA's eNews free e-letter to get up-to-date information to make a difference in your school and community. Sign up online at: **https://idra.news/SubscribeMe**

Listen to IDRA's Classnotes podcast to hear strategies for student success: **https://idra.news/Classnotes**

Get connected

Create a community-school action team to examine the factors that must be addressed to strengthen your school's holding power – its ability to hold on to students through to graduation. Use IDRA's Quality Schools Action Framework™.

IDRA's book, Courage to Connect: A Quality Schools Action Framework™ shows how communities and schools can work together to be successful with all of their students. The book's web page (**https://www.idra.org/couragetoconnect**) has an excerpt, related podcasts, images of the framework and other resources.

Get results

See what happens when a school district raises expectations for students. *College Bound and Determined* shows how the Pharr-San Juan Alamo school district in south Texas transformed itself from low achievement and low expectations to planning for all students to graduate from high school and college (See Page 46). *College Bound & Determined* is available from IDRA for $15 and is free online at: **https://idra.news/CollegeBoundw**
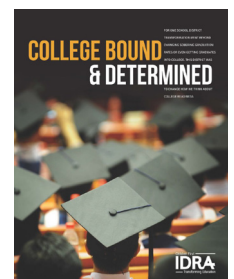
Bring the **Valued Youth Partnership** to your school. This program has demonstrated tremendous success helping students focus on their education and increasing the school's holding power by focusing on students with the highest need of support. See Page 44-45 or visit **https://www.idra.org/valued-youth**

College Bound
## & Determined

Free online!

An IDRA report showing what happens when a school district raises expectations for students

PSJA ISD Proves a School District Can Assure that All Students are College Bound

IDRA's report, *College Bound and Determined*, shows how the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo school district in south Texas transformed itself from low achievement and low expectations to planning for all students to graduate from high school and college.

With funding from TG Public Benefit (TG), IDRA examined data and conducted interviews with then-PSJA Superintendent Dr. Daniel King, school principals, teachers, counselors and students to explore how PSJA has achieved the kind of success that it has. IDRA saw that PSJA's vision and actions, clearly and independently aligned with IDRA's own vision for change: the Quality Schools Action Framework™.

This change theory focuses on what research and experience say matters: parents as partners involved in consistent and meaningful ways, engaged students who know they belong in schools and are supported by caring adults, competent caring educators who are well-paid and supported in their work, and high quality curriculum that prepares students for 21st-century opportunities.
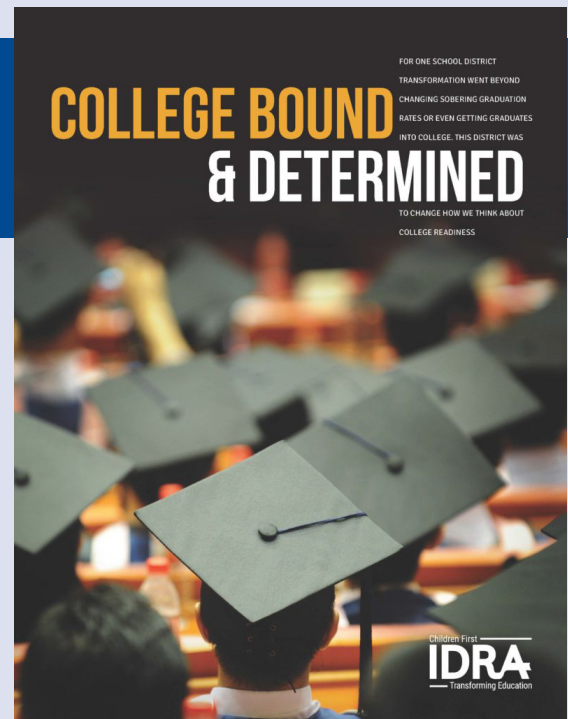
PSJA...

- **Doubled the number of high school graduates**

- **Cut dropout rates in half**

- **Increased college-going rates.**

In fact, <u>half</u> of the district's students are earning college credit while still in high school.

"Our vision can be boiled down to the phrase, College^3, meaning that all students will be College Ready, College Connected and will complete College."

– Dr. Daniel King, then-PSJA Superintendent

"You notice that there is no deficit thinking and no excuses in this approach. There is no 'students cannot learn' or 'parents don't care' or 'they do not speak English' or 'we can't do it, we have too many minorities,' or 'they're not college material.' Instead, at PSJA, you find thoughtful, data-based, coherent plans that connect K-12 with higher education and community to improve educational opportunities for all children."

– Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, IDRA President Emerita

College Bound & Determined is available from IDRA for $15 and is free online at: https://idra.news/CollegeBoundw
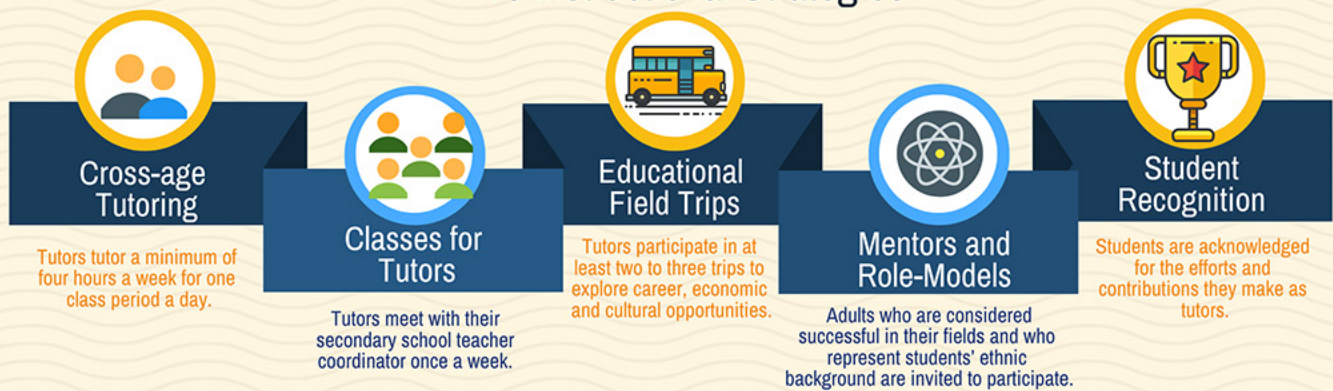
IDRA
Valued Youth Partnership

Now more than ever, reconnecting with students is critical. IDRA can help!

The IDRA Valued Youth Partnership is a proven cross-age tutoring program that works by identifying middle & high school students in at-risk situations and enlisting them as tutors for elementary school youngsters who are also struggling in school. Given this role of personal and academic responsibility, the Valued Youth tutors learn self-discipline and develop self-esteem. Schools shift to the philosophy and practices of valuing students considered at-risk.

✓ **98% stay in school**

✓ **Strengthen academic skills**

✓ **Build socio-emotional skills & self-esteem**

✓ **Increase attendance**

✓ **Reduce discipline rates**

▶ Five Instructional Strategies ◀

Cross-age Tutoring
Tutors tutor a minimum of four hours a week for one class period a day.

Classes for Tutors
Tutors meet with their secondary school teacher coordinator once a week.

Educational Field Trips
Tutors participate in at least two to three trips to explore career, economic and cultural opportunities.

Mentors and Role-Models
Adults who are considered successful in their fields and who represent students' ethnic background are invited to participate.

Student Recognition
Students are acknowledged for the efforts and contributions they make as tutors.

▶ Five Support Strategies ◀

Curriculum	**Coordination**	**Staff Enrichment**	**Family Engagement**	**Evaluation**
Focused on self-concept, tutoring skills and literacy skills.	For program monitoring, communication & support.	Provided by IDRA based on campus staff needs.	Values the families' contributions.	Analysis to inform program implementation.

Let the IDRA Valued Youth Partnership touch the lives of students, parents and educators in your district.

www.idra.org/valued-youth • www.facebook.com/IDRAed • Instagram @idra_vyp

IDRA
Transforming Education

The Valued Youth Partnership has a long record of transforming students' socio-emotional learning and relationships with school

Interventions that address socio-emotional factors through **experiences** rather than a prescribed curriculum have far-reaching impacts. While it is important that students understand concepts, like leadership, responsibility, self-regulation, it is **far more powerful for students to experience success and believe in their own talents and abilities.**

The University of Chicago Consortium on School Research reported that, when schools **provide leadership experiences** for students who are in at-risk situations, they persevere in the face of challenges and make significant academic gains. (Farrington, et al., 2012)

For over 35 years, the IDRA Valued Youth Partnership has worked with students who are at-risk of academic disengagement by providing meaningful leadership experiences. The outcomes have positively affected student's confidence and self-worth, attendance and academic achievement.

The program has been successful everywhere it has been in keeping Valued Youth students in school, in the classroom and learning. The program has grown across the United States and has been in Brazil, England and Puerto Rico. The White House named VYP a Hispanic Ed "Bright Spot."

IDRA Valued Youth Partnership

The IDRA Valued Youth Partnership directly addresses socio-emotional factors that are essential to reconnecting and re-engaging with students after the pandemic.

In a recent five year analysis of VYP tutors, data show:

- ✓ **Disciplinary referrals decreased by 14%**
- ✓ **Tutor absences decreased by 16%**

> "Last year, I had a rough year: constantly on campus suspension, referrals, verbally disrespecting teachers... Ever since I started the VYP program, I feel like I am a different person.
>
> — *Eighth grade VYP tutor*

The IDRA Valued Youth Partnership is backed by research on socio-emotional factors and learning. The Hemingway Measure of Adolescent Connectedness & evaluation data show:

- ✓ **61% of VYP tutors improved sense of self oriented toward the future**
- ✓ **59% of VYP tutors improved their sense of involvement in & caring for their families**
- ✓ **54% of VYP tutors improved their sense of being productive at their school work, enjoying school more & feeling successful at school**
- ✓ **66% of VYP tutors improved reading test scores**
- ✓ **57% of VYP tutors improved math scores**

Farrington, C.A., Roderick, M., Allensworth, E., Nagaoka, J., Keyes, T.S., Johnson, D.W., & Beechum, N.O. (2012). Teaching Adolescents to Become Learners. The Role of Noncognitive Factors in Shaping School Performance: A Critical Literature Review. Chicago: University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research. • CASEL. (2019). What is SEL? webpage. Chicago: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. • Dweck, C.S., & G.M. Walton, G.L. Cohen. Academic Tenacity: Mindsets and Skills that Promote Long-Term Learning (Seattle, Wash.: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2014). • IDRA. (2016-2020). Program evaluations and data analysis, unpublished. San Antonio: IDRA. • Kurtz, H. (October 15, 2020). In-Person Learning Expands, Student Absences Up, Teachers Work Longer, Survey Shows. Education Week. • Ramón, A. (March 2021). Student Researchers Collect Insights from Peers about the Pandemic's Effects on Schooling. IDRA Newsletter. • Toth, M.D. (March 17, 2021). Why Student Engagement is Important in a Post-COVID World – and 5 Strategies to Improve It. Learning Sciences International.

www.idra.org/valued-youth • www.facebook.com/IDRAed • Instagram @idra_vyp

IDRA
Children First
Transforming Education
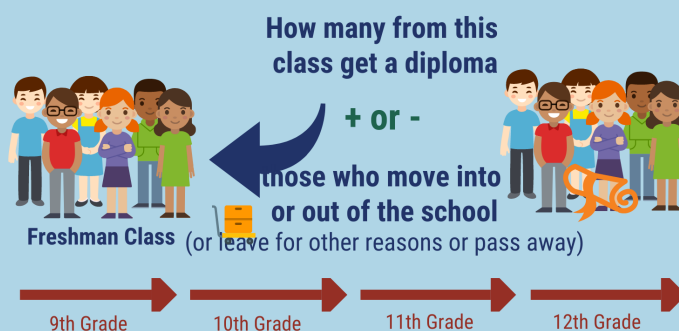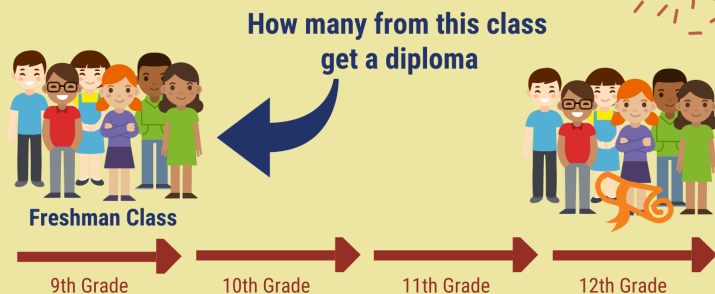
8 Types of Dropout Data Defined

The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the principal federal agency responsible for the collection, analysis and reporting of data on the condition of education in the United States. Dropout data from NCES examines rates within racial and ethnic groups, across gender groups, and across states and geographical regions. NCES defines the various types of dropout rates as stated below.

The five NCES rates (the averaged freshman graduation rate, adjusted cohort graduation rate, the event dropout rate, the status dropout rate, and the status school completion rate) along with other traditional measures, such as the attrition rate and cohort dropout rates, provide unique information about high school dropouts, completers and graduates. Different states use various measures.

Though each rate has different meaning and calculation methods, each provides unique information that is important for assessing schools' quality of education and school holding power. Within these types of data are underlying questions of who is included in the data pool. For example, are students who drop out to earn a GED counted as dropouts? Are students who complete their coursework but are denied a diploma for failing to pass a state exit exam counted as dropouts?

Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate

Averaged freshman graduation rates describe the proportion of high school freshmen who graduate with a regular diploma four years after starting ninth grade. This rate measures the extent to which schools are graduating students on time. The first school year for which NCES provides averaged freshman graduation rates is 2001-02.

How many from this class get a diploma

Freshman Class

9th Grade → 10th Grade → 11th Grade → 12th Grade

How many from this class get a diploma

+ or -

those who move into or out of the school

Freshman Class (or leave for other reasons or pass away)

9th Grade → 10th Grade → 11th Grade → 12th Grade

Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

Adjusted cohort graduation rates describe the proportion of high school freshmen who graduate with a regular diploma four years after starting ninth grade (or 10th grade in high schools that begin with the 10th grade). This rate measures the extent to which schools are graduating students on time, but it also takes into account students who transfer into or out of a school in the state or who die.

Event Dropout Rate (or Annual Dropout Rate)

Event dropout rates describe the percentage of private and public high school students who left high school in a particular year (between the beginning of one school year and the beginning of the next) without earning a high school diploma or its equivalent. This rate is also referred to as an annual dropout rate. The Texas Education Agency reports the event rate (in addition to other rates). Definitions for TEA rates can be found on the TEA website.

How many dropout in a single year

How many of a certain age are not in school and do not have a diploma or GED

Status Dropout Rate

Status dropout rates provide cumulative data on dropouts among young adults within a specified age range (usually: 15 to 24 years of age, 16 to 24 years of age, or 18 to 24 years of age). They measure the percentage of individuals who are not in school and have not earned a high school diploma or equivalency, irrespective of when they dropped out. These rates, which are higher than event rates because they include all dropouts, reveal the extent of the dropout problem in the population. (This rate focuses on an overall age group or cohort rather than on individuals.)

Status Completion Rate

High school status completion rates describe the proportion of individuals in a given age range who are not in high school and who have earned a high school diploma or equivalency credential (namely the GED certificate), irrespective of when the credential was earned. (This rate also is referred to as the "school completion rate" as the positive way of expressing the status dropout rate.)

How many of a certain age are not in school and do not have a diploma or GED

How many from this class are not in school three years later

Freshman Class

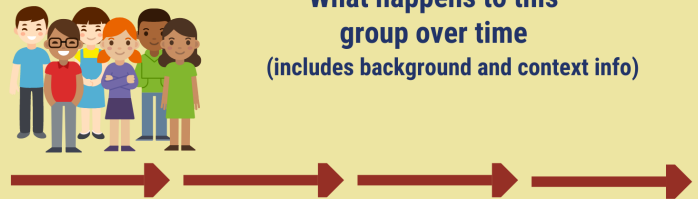9th Grade   10th Grade   11th Grade   12th Grade
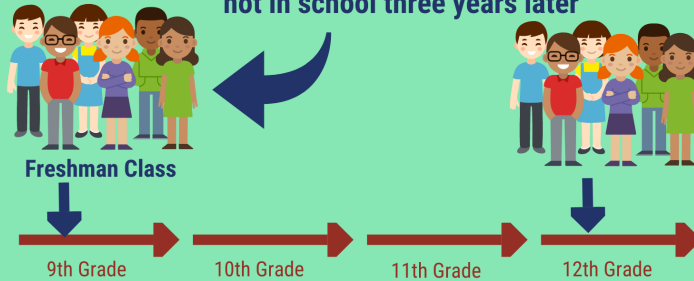
Attrition Rate

Attrition rates measure the number of students lost from enrollment between two points in time (e.g., ninth grade and 12th grade enrollment four years later). Attrition data are similar to cohort data. Each year for the state of Texas, TEA reports simple attrition rates, while IDRA reports adjusted attrition rates (that account for fluctuations in school enrollment and in and out migration).

Cohort Rate

Cohort rates measure what happens to a cohort of students over a period of time. These rates provide repeated measures of a group of students starting at a specific grade level over time. These measures provide longitudinal data on a specific group of students, including background and contextual data.

What happens to this group over time
(includes background and context info)

How many from this class get a diploma

Freshman Class

9th Grade   10th Grade   11th Grade   12th Grade
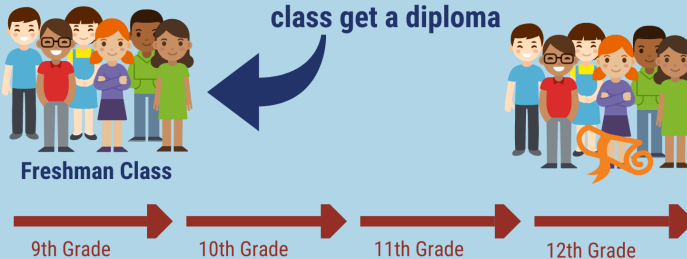
Graduation Rate

Graduation rates measure the percentage of students from a class of beginning seventh or ninth graders who graduate with a high school diploma.

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