



# Texas Public School Attrition Study 2015-16



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## Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2015-16

# Texas' Overall Attrition Rate Inches Up – School Holding Power Improvement Slowed

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

In this most recent annual attrition study that examines school holding power, IDRA found that 25 percent of the freshman class of 2012-13 left school prior to graduating from a Texas public high school in the 2015-16 school year. The overall high school attrition rate in Texas inched up by one percentage point from 24 percent in 2014-15 to 25 percent in 2015-16. Not since the period of 1995-96 to 1996-97 has the overall attrition rate in Texas increased, following 18 years of rates that declined or held constant from one year to the next (see box on Page 4).

The study found that, for each racial and ethnic group, attrition rates were lower than rates found in the 1985-86 study. However, the gaps between the attrition rates of White students and Hispanic students and of White students and Black students are still nearly as high as or higher than 31 years ago. The current statewide attrition rate of 25 percent

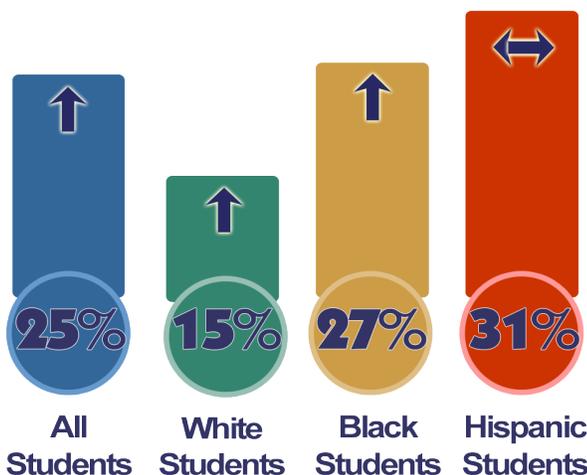
is 8 percentage points lower than the initial rate of 33 percent found in IDRA's landmark 1985-86 study, a decline of 24 percent.

A supplemental analysis using linear regression models predicts that Texas will not reach an attrition rate of zero until over two decades from this year. At this pace, the state will lose an additional 1.59 million to 2.25 million students. (See analysis on Page 21.)

Key findings of the latest study include the following.

- The overall attrition rate increased since last year to **25 percent**, which is a decline from 33 percent in 1985-86.
- Texas public schools are **failing to graduate one out of every four students**.

*102,610 students were lost from public high school enrollment in 2015-16... At this pace, the state will lose an additional 1.59 million to 2.25 million students.*



**Schools are twice as likely to lose Hispanic students and Black students before they graduate.**

Schools are still losing **1 in 3** Hispanic students and **1 in 4** Black students.

## Texas public schools are losing 1 out of 4 students



It has taken three decades to improve by 8 percentage points: from 33 percent to 25 percent

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

- At this rate, Texas will not reach universal high school education for **another quarter of a century in 2035**.
- **102,610 students were lost** from public high school enrollment between 2012-13 and 2015-16.
- From 1985-86 to 2015-16, attrition rates of Hispanic students declined by 31 percent (from 45 percent to 31 percent). During this same period, the attrition rates of Black students declined by 21 percent (from 34 percent to 27 percent). Attrition rates of White students declined by 44 percent (from 27 percent to 15 percent).
- **Racial and ethnic gaps are nearly as high as or higher than 30 years ago.** The gap between the attrition rates of White students and Hispanic students and between White students and Black students are nearly as high as or higher than 31 years ago. The attrition gap between White students and Hispanic students was 16 percentage points in 2015-16 nearly matching the 18 percentage points from 1985-86, and the attrition gap between White students and Black students has increased from 7 percentage points in 1985-86 to 12 percentage points in 2015-16.
- For the class of 2015-16, **Hispanic students and Black students are about two times more likely to leave school** without graduating than White students.
- Since 1986, Texas schools have **lost a cumulative total of more than 3.6 million students** from public high school enrollment prior to graduation.

- The attrition rates for males have been higher than those of females. In the class of 2015-16, males were 1.2 times more likely to leave school without graduating with a diploma than females.
- From 1985-86 to 2015-16, attrition rates of male students declined by 23 percent (from 35 percent to 27 percent) while the attrition rates of female students declined by 31 percent (from 32 percent to 22 percent).

Since 1986, IDRA has conducted an annual attrition study to track the number and percent of students in Texas who are lost from public secondary school enrollment prior to graduation. The study builds on the series of studies that began when IDRA conducted the first comprehensive study of school dropouts in Texas with the release of the initial study in October 1986 (Cárdenas, et al., 1986).

The study in 1986, entitled *Texas School Dropout Survey Project*, was conducted under contract with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the then Texas Department of Community Affairs. That first study found that 86,276 students had not graduated from Texas public schools, costing the state \$17 billion in foregone income, lost tax revenues and increased job training, welfare, unemployment and criminal justice costs (Cárdenas, et al., 1986).

The 69th Legislature responded by the passing HB 1010 in 1987 through which the state and local responsibilities for collecting and monitoring dropout data were substantially increased (TEA, July 2011).

Over the 31-year study period, Texas public schools have lost a cumulative total of more than 3.6 million

## Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools by Year 1985-86 to 2015-16

Year	Black	White	Hispanic	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

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

## 2012-13 and 2015-16 Enrollment, 2015-16 Attrition in Texas

Race-Ethnicity and Gender	2012-13 9th Grade Enrollment	2015-16 12th Grade Enrollment	2012-13 9-12th Grade Enrollment	2015-16 9-12th Grade Enrollment	2015-16 Expected 12th Grade Enrollment	Students Lost to Attrition	Attrition Rate
<b>Native American</b>	<b>1,739</b>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>6,189</b>	<b>5,587</b>	<b>1,570</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>20</b>
Male	911	647	3,233	2,967	836	189	23
Female	828	603	2,956	2,620	734	131	18
<b>Asian/Pacific Islander</b>	<b>13,650</b>	<b>13,826</b>	<b>52,273</b>	<b>60,046</b>	<b>15,678</b>	<b>1,852</b>	<b>12</b>
Male	7,174	7,178	26,988	30,851	8,201	1,023	12
Female	6,476	6,648	25,285	29,195	7,477	829	11
<b>Black</b>	<b>51,466</b>	<b>39,048</b>	<b>174,089</b>	<b>180,881</b>	<b>53,471</b>	<b>14,423</b>	<b>27</b>
Male	27,275	19,624	89,270	92,636	28,303	8,679	31
Female	24,191	19,424	84,819	88,245	25,168	5,744	23
<b>White</b>	<b>119,100</b>	<b>102,225</b>	<b>442,485</b>	<b>444,592</b>	<b>119,666</b>	<b>17,441</b>	<b>15</b>
Male	61,923	52,455	227,802	228,745	62,179	9,724	16
Female	57,177	49,770	214,683	215,847	57,487	7,717	13
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>195,955</b>	<b>150,369</b>	<b>643,737</b>	<b>713,670</b>	<b>217,232</b>	<b>66,863</b>	<b>31</b>
Male	103,171	75,400	329,950	365,207	114,195	38,795	34
Female	92,784	74,969	313,787	348,463	103,037	28,068	27
<b>Multiracial</b>	<b>6,356</b>	<b>5,718</b>	<b>22,264</b>	<b>26,018</b>	<b>7,429</b>	<b>1,711</b>	<b>23</b>
Male	3,160	2,789	10,926	12,946	3,744	955	26
Female	3,196	2,929	11,338	13,072	3,685	756	21
<b>All Groups</b>	<b>388,266</b>	<b>312,436</b>	<b>1,341,037</b>	<b>1,430,794</b>	<b>415,046</b>	<b>102,610</b>	<b>25</b>
Male	203,614	158,093	688,169	733,352	217,458	59,365	27
Female	184,652	154,343	652,868	697,442	197,588	43,245	22

Notes: Figures calculated by IDRA from Texas Education Agency *Fall Membership Survey* data. IDRA's 2015-16 attrition study involved the analysis of enrollment figures for public high school students in the ninth grade during 2012-13 school year and enrollment figures for 12th grade students in 2014-15. 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. For the 2015-16 school year, TEA collected enrollment data for race and ethnicity separately in compliance with new federal standards. For the purposes of analysis, IDRA continued to combined the Asian and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander categories.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

students from high school enrollment. The overall attrition rate in Texas has ranged from a low of 24 percent in 2013-14 and 2014-15 to a high of 43 percent in 1996-97.

Recent trends in attrition rates for Texas public high schools continue to show a positive outlook for the number and percent of students who continue their school enrollment through graduation. IDRA's latest attrition study shows that the overall attrition rate declined from 29 percent in 2009-10 to 27 percent in 2010-11 to 26 percent in 2011-12 to 25 percent in 2012-13 to 24 percent in 2013-14, and increased to 2014-15 to 25 percent in 2015-16.

For the seventh time in the 31-year history of reporting trends in dropout and attrition rates in Texas public schools, this latest study shows that fewer than 30 percent of students were lost from public enrollment prior to graduation with a diploma.

Prior to this year, attrition rates had been on a steady decline by one or two percentage points each year. Though this gradual decline in attrition rates implies improvement in schools' abilities to hold on to their students until they graduate, long-term trend assessments also suggest that it is not yet time to celebrate as the data show persistent

gaps among racial and ethnic groups.

### 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 and grade levels.

Beginning in 2010-11, TEA reported student enrollment data on race and ethnicity based on new federal standards that required data on

race and ethnicity 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 data at grades nine through 12 increased from 1,449,066 in 2014-15 to 1,491,035 in 2015-16 (see box on Page 7). The percentage of the ninth through 12th grade population reported as Hispanic increased from 49.6 percent to 50.3 percent in the one-year period. The percentage of the ninth through 12th grade population reported as Black or African American declined from 12.9 percent to 12.8 percent, and the percentage reported as White declined from 31.4 percent to 30.6 percent (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 different meaning and calculation methods, each provides unique information that is important for assessing schools’ quality of education and school holding power (see Page 41 for dropout indicators).

Attrition, in its simplest form, is the rate of shrinkage in size or number. Therefore, an attrition rate is the percent change in grade level enrollment between a base year and an end year.

Spanning a period from 1985-86 through 2015-16, the IDRA 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. These studies are the only source for examining the magnitude of the dropout problem in Texas across more than three decades using uniform methods. 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.

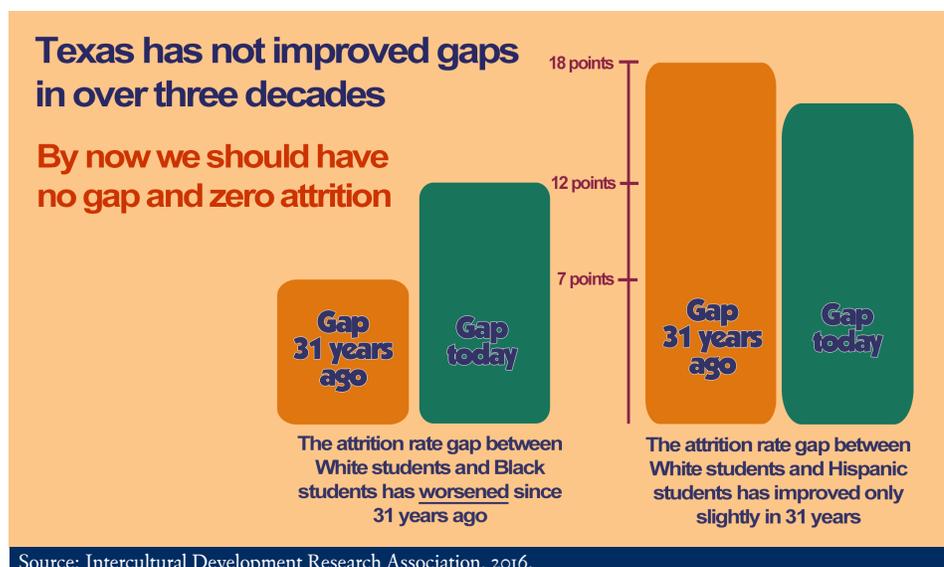
IDRA collects and uses high school enrollment data from the TEA Fall Membership Survey to compute countywide and statewide attrition rates by race-ethnicity and gender (see box on Page 10). Enrollment data from special school districts (military schools, state schools, charter schools) are excluded from 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

## Additional Resources Online

- Look Up Your County – See attrition rates and numbers over the last 10 years
- eBook – Types of Dropout Data Defined
- Online graphs
- eBook – Resources on Student Discipline Policy and Practice
- Book – Courage to Connect: A Quality Schools Action Framework
- Book – College Bound and Determined
- Overview of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, which keeps 98 percent of students in school
- Ideas and Strategies for Action
- Classnotes Podcasts: on Dropout Prevention and College-Readiness
- IDRA eNews E-letter (English/ Spanish)

[www.idra.org](http://www.idra.org)



## Texas Student Enrollment, Grades 9-12, 2012-13 to 2015-16

Race-Ethnicity	Enrollment by Grade				
	9	10	11	12	9-12
<b>2012-13</b>					
Black or African American	54,003	45,791	42,091	39,519	181,404
Hispanic	204,130	169,130	155,084	141,614	669,958
American Indian or Alaska Native	1,828	1,646	1,518	1,499	6,491
White	121,795	114,315	110,332	105,237	451,679
Asian	13,610	13,382	12,871	12,009	51,872
Native Hawaiian/Other or Pacific Islander	522	498	453	400	1,873
Multiracial	6,538	5,799	5,491	4,959	22,787
<b>Total</b>	<b>402,426</b>	<b>350,561</b>	<b>327,840</b>	<b>305,237</b>	<b>1,386,064</b>
<b>2013-14</b>					
Black or African American	53,883	47,429	42,523	39,128	182,963
Hispanic	208,211	178,873	157,682	145,156	689,922
American Indian or Alaska Native	1,662	1,535	1,449	1,312	5,958
White	123,071	114,526	109,202	104,651	451,450
Asian	13,869	13,541	13,370	12,825	53,605
Native Hawaiian/Other or Pacific Islander	554	469	513	422	1,958
Multiracial	6,952	6,196	5,643	5,357	24,148
<b>Total</b>	<b>408,202</b>	<b>362,569</b>	<b>330,382</b>	<b>308,851</b>	<b>1,410,004</b>
<b>2014-15</b>					
Black or African American	54,705	48,016	43,989	39,820	186,530
Hispanic	216,296	186,121	166,500	149,136	718,053
American Indian or Alaska Native	1,646	1,520	1,451	1,359	5,976
White	124,068	116,415	109,828	104,151	454,462
Asian	15,400	14,019	13,825	13,444	56,688
Native Hawaiian/Other or Pacific Islander	532	540	464	496	2,032
Multiracial	7,295	6,614	6,012	5,404	25,325
<b>Total</b>	<b>419,942</b>	<b>373,245</b>	<b>342,069</b>	<b>313,810</b>	<b>1,449,066</b>
<b>2015-16</b>					
Black or African American	55,616	49,189	45,027	40,730	190,562
Hispanic	224,127	195,093	173,392	156,961	749,573
American Indian or Alaska Native	1,736	1,449	1,379	1,307	5,871
White	122,593	117,706	111,378	104,374	456,051
Asian	16,371	15,580	14,237	13,830	60,018
Native Hawaiian/Other or Pacific Islander	617	548	546	447	2,158
Multiracial	7,644	6,969	6,360	5,829	26,802
<b>Total</b>	<b>428,704</b>	<b>386,534</b>	<b>352,319</b>	<b>323,478</b>	<b>1,491,035</b>

Data source: Texas Education Agency, Standard Reports, Enrollment Reports, 2011-12 to 2014-15, <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/adhocrpt/adste.html>.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

## Texas Student Enrollment, Grades 9, 12 and 9-12, 2012-13 to 2015-16 (percent)

Race-Ethnicity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
<b>9th Grade Enrollment</b>				
Black or African American	13.4	13.2	13.0	13.0
Hispanic	50.7	51.0	51.5	52.3
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4
White	30.3	30.1	29.5	28.6
Asian	3.4	3.4	3.7	3.8
Native Hawaiian/Other or Pacific Islander	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Multiracial	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.8
<b>Total All Ethnicities</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>12th Grade Enrollment</b>				
Black or African American	12.9	12.7	12.7	12.6
Hispanic	46.4	47.0	47.5	48.5
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4
White	34.5	33.9	33.2	32.3
Asian	3.9	4.2	4.3	4.3
Native Hawaiian/Other or Pacific Islander	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
Multiracial	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.8
<b>Total All Ethnicities</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>9-12th Grade Enrollment</b>				
Black or African American	13.1	13.0	12.9	12.8
Hispanic	48.3	48.9	49.6	50.3
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4
White	32.6	32.0	31.4	30.6
Asian	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0
Native Hawaiian/Other or Pacific Islander	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Multiracial	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.8
<b>Total All Ethnicities</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Data source: Texas Education Agency, Standard Reports, Enrollment Reports, 2012-13 to 2015-16, <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/adhocrpt/adste.html>

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

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 new multiracial category were provided, but the calculation of an attrition rate could not be achieved without corresponding first-year categories.

TEA masked some data with aggregates less than five students 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.

### Latest Study Results

One of every four students (25 percent) from the freshman class of 2012-13 left school prior to graduating with a high school diploma. For the class of 2015-16, 102,610 students were lost from public school enrollment between the 2012-13 and 2015-16 school years. (See box on Page 11.)

The overall attrition rate declined from 33 percent in 1985-86 to 25 percent in 2015-16. Over the past two and a half decades, attrition rates have fluctuated between a low of 24 percent in 2013-14 and 2014-15 to a high of 43 percent in 1996-97. (See box on Page 4.)

The overall attrition rate was less than 30 percent for the seventh time in 31 years. After 24 consecutive

years of overall statewide attrition rates at 31 percent or higher, the overall statewide attrition rate of 29 percent in 2009-10, 27 percent in 2010-11, 26 percent in 2011-12, 25 percent in 2012-13 and 2015-16, and 24 percent in 2013-14 and 2014-15 are the lowest since the previous low of 31 percent in 1988-89, 1989-90, 1990-91 and 2008-09. (See boxes on Page 4 and Page 9.)

**Racial-Ethnic Student Data.** The attrition rates of Hispanic students and Black students are much higher than those of White students (see box on Page 4). From 1985-86 to 2015-16, attrition rates of Hispanic students declined by 31 percent (from 45 percent to 31 percent). During this same period, the attrition rates of Black students declined by 21 percent (from 34 percent to 27 percent). Attrition

rates of White students declined by 44 percent (from 27 percent to 15 percent).

Since last year, the gap between the attrition rates of White students and of Black students remained the same, and the gap between White students and Hispanic students declined by one point.

Native American students had a decline of 56 percent in their attrition rates (from 45 percent to 20 percent), and Asian/Pacific Islander students had a decline of 64 percent (from 33 percent to 12 percent).

Hispanic 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 2015-16, Black students and Hispanic 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 Hispanic students is nearly as high as or higher than 30 years ago. The gap between the attrition

rates of White students and Black students has increased from 7 percentage points in 1985-86 to 12 percentage points in 2015-16.

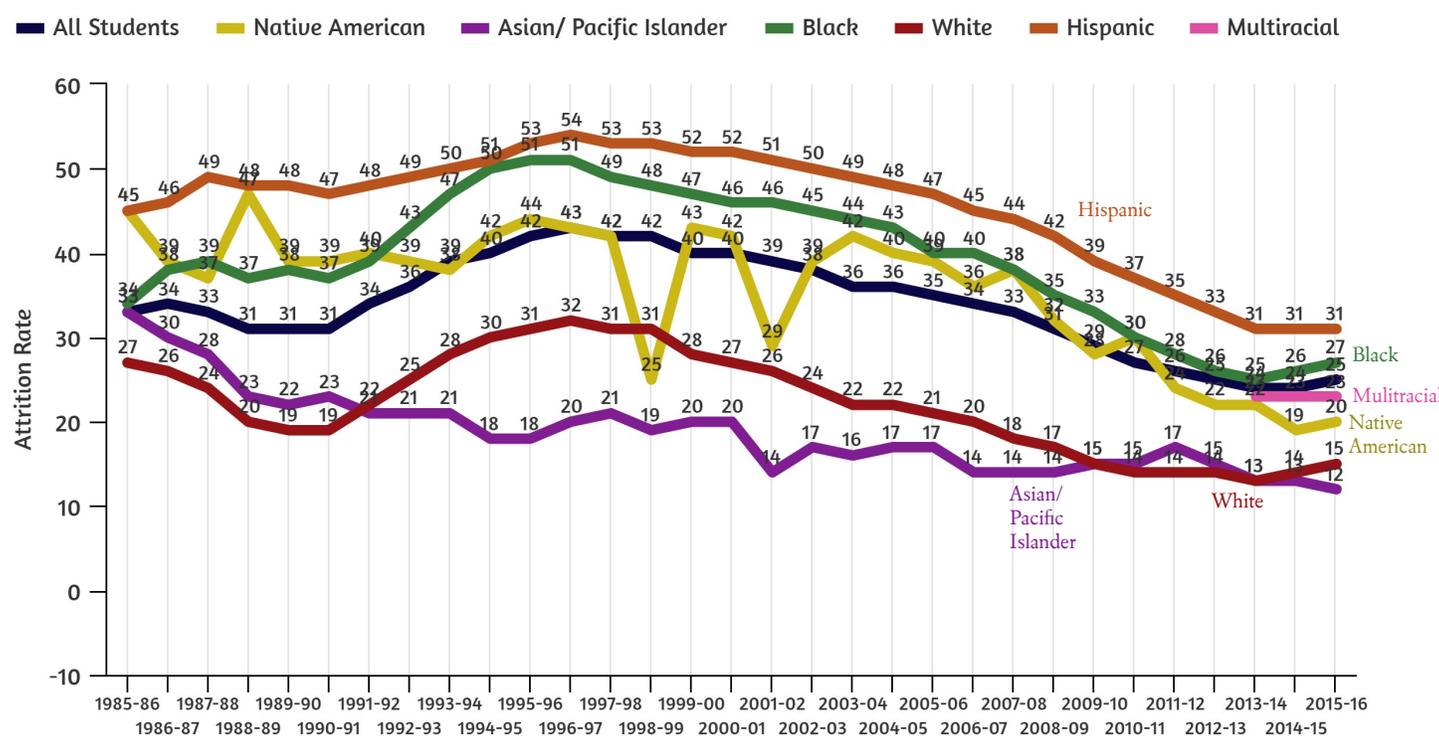
The gap between the attrition rates of White students and Hispanic students decreased from the 18 percentage points in 1985-86 to 16 percentage points in 2015-16. (See boxes on Page 12.)

The gap between the attrition rates of White students and Native American students has declined from 18 percentage points in 1985-86 to 5 percentage points in 2015-16.

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 6 percentage points in 1985-86 to a positive three percentage point advantage in 2015-16.

Historically, Hispanic students and Black students have comprised a large proportion of students lost by schools. For the period of 1985-86 to 2015-16, students from ethnic minority groups account for nearly three-fourths (73.4 percent) of the estimated

## Longitudinal Attrition Rates by Race-Ethnicity in Texas Public Schools, 1985-86 to 2015-16



Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

## Longitudinal Attrition Rates in Texas Public High Schools, 1985-86 to 2015-16

Group	Race-Ethnicity						Gender		Total
	Native American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	White	Hispanic	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	N/A	31	23	27
2011-12	24	17	28	14	35	N/A	29	22	26
2012-13	22	15	26	14	33	N/A	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
Percent Change* From 1985-86 to 2015-16	-56	-64	-21	-44	-31	N/A	-23	-31	-24

\* Rounded to nearest whole number.

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

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

## Numbers of Students Lost to Attrition in Texas, 1985-86 to 2015-16

School Year	Total	Race-Ethnicity						Gender	
		Native American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	White	Hispanic	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
<b>All Years</b>	<b>3,656,141</b>	<b>10,871</b>	<b>50,340</b>	<b>612,549</b>	<b>972,554</b>	<b>2,004,964</b>	<b>4,863</b>	<b>2,088,928</b>	<b>1,567,213</b>

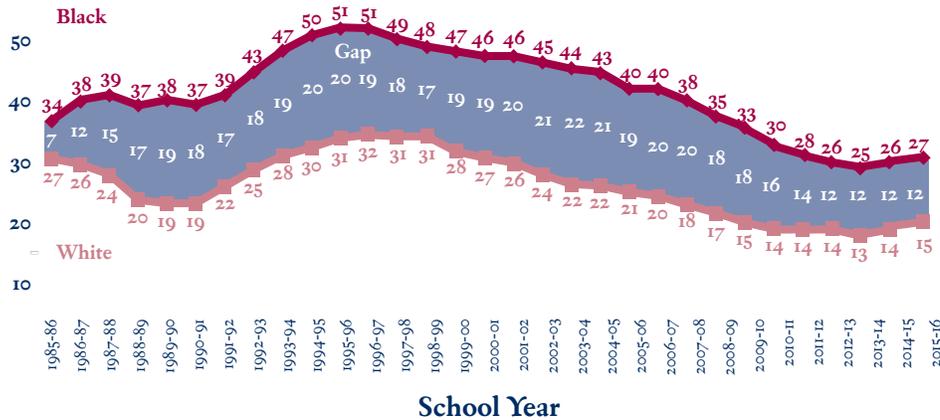
Figures calculated by IDRA from Texas Education Agency Fall Membership Survey data.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

\* Calculation of attrition could not be achieved without corresponding first-year data.

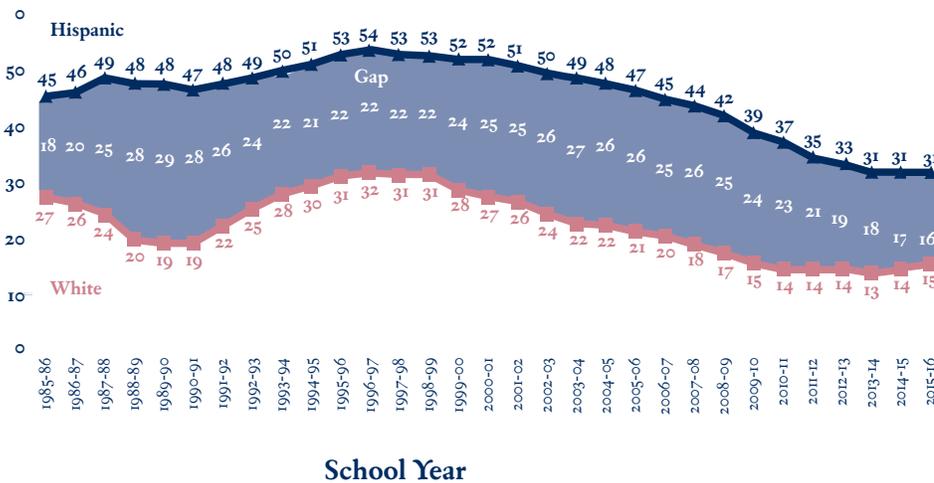
N/A = Not applicable

## Trend in Black-White Attrition Rates



Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

## Trend in Hispanic-White Attrition Rates



Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

3.6 million students lost from public high school enrollment.

Hispanic students account for 54.8 percent of the students lost to attrition. Black students account for 16.8 percent of all students lost from enrollment due to attrition over the years. White students account for 26.6 percent 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 2015-16, attrition rates of male students declined by 23 percent (from 35 percent to 27 percent). Attrition rates for females declined by 31 percent from 32 percent in 1985-86 to 22

percent in 2015-16. Longitudinally, males have accounted for 57.1 percent of students lost from school enrollment, while females have accounted for 42.9 percent. In the class of 2015-16, males were 1.2 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, trend data by county are available on IDRA's website at [www.idra.org](http://www.idra.org) (see box on Page 13).

The box on Page 12 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 41.

## Attrition and Dropout Rates in Texas Over Time

	IDRA Attrition Rates <sup>1</sup>	TEA Attrition Rates <sup>2</sup>	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	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup>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)

Sources: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016; Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts, 2003-04 to 2013-14; Texas Education Agency, Report on Public School Dropouts, 1987-88 to 1996-97

## Conclusions

At the state and national levels, education agencies are reporting declines in dropout rates and increasing graduation rates. The most recent adjusted cohort graduation data for the Class of 2014 shows that 29 states had graduation rates equal to or exceeding the national average of 82.3 percent, including Texas at 88.3 percent.

The latest Grad Nation report indicates that the number of schools classified as “dropout factories” has decreased from 2,007 in 2002 to 1,042 in 2014, a 48.1 percent reduction (Civic Enterprises & Everyone Graduates Center, 2016).

IDRA’s own studies of attrition and school holding power in Texas are showing slow and gradual improvement. Amidst this optimism, there is still skepticism in some circles about the legitimacy of reported improvement in dropout and graduation rates. Independent researchers, including those from noted universities and groups involved with graduation campaigns, though noting improvement in dropout and graduation rates, continue to express concerns about the validity of counting and reporting methods, and the persistent gaps in the dropout rates between race-ethnicity groups and for special populations (Civic Enterprises & Everyone Graduates Center, 2016; Vasquez Heilig, 2014).

IDRA is continuing to urge communities to work together to review issues surrounding school dropouts and to take action for the benefit of children and the future of Texas. IDRA has developed a number of products to guide communities and schools in improving school holding power in schools in Texas and across the nation. IDRA’s publication, *College Bound and Determined*, shows how one south Texas school district transformed itself from low achievement and low expectations to planning for all students to graduate from high school and college. The report’s

webpage (see Page 25) provides details about this story and on how the report can be acquired.

In the book, *Courage to Connect: A Quality Schools Action Framework™*, IDRA shows how communities and schools can work together to strengthen school success in a number of areas including graduation outcomes. The book’s web page (see Page 26) provides a table of contents, excerpts, related podcasts and other resources. IDRA’s one-page **Quality School Holding Power Checklist** provides a set of criteria for assessing and selecting effective dropout prevention strategies (see Page 28). IDRA’s set of **principles for policymakers and school leaders** is provided on Page 29.

In order to provide all students an equal opportunity to graduate and achieve post-secondary success, policymakers, educators, parents, students, researchers, other community members and organizations must come together in meaningful collaborations to address school dropout and graduation issues.

## Resources

- Cárdenas, J.A., & M. Robledo Montecel, J. Supik. *Texas Dropout Survey Project* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1986).
- Civic Enterprises & Everyone Graduates Center. (2016). *Building a Grad Nation: Progress and Challenges in Raising High School Graduation Rates, Annual Update 2016* (Washington, D.C.: Civic Enterprises & Everyone Graduates Center at the School of Education at John Hopkins University). [http://www.gradnation.org/sites/default/files/civic\\_2016\\_full\\_report\\_FNL.pdf](http://www.gradnation.org/sites/default/files/civic_2016_full_report_FNL.pdf)
- Johnson, R. (2015). *Public School Attrition Study, 2014-15: Texas High School Attrition Rates Stall* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association). [http://www.idra.org/images/stories/IDRA\\_Attrition\\_Study\\_2015.pdf](http://www.idra.org/images/stories/IDRA_Attrition_Study_2015.pdf)
- Texas Education Agency. (2013, August). *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2014-15* (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency). [http://tea.texas.gov/acctres/dropcomp\\_2014-15.pdf](http://tea.texas.gov/acctres/dropcomp_2014-15.pdf)

- Texas Education Agency. (2016). Standard Reports, Enrollment Reports, 2007-08 to 2015-16 (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency). [http://tea.texas.gov/acctres/enroll\\_index.html](http://tea.texas.gov/acctres/enroll_index.html)
- U.S. Department of Education. (2016). *Digest of Educational Statistics: 2014* (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics). <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d14/>
- Vasquez Heilig, J. (May 7, 2014). “Uncovering Lies and Damn Lies in @ArneDuncan Graduation Rates,” *Cloaking Inequity*. <https://cloakinginequity.com/2014/05/07/uncovering-lies-and-damn-lies-in-arne-duncans-graduation-rates/>

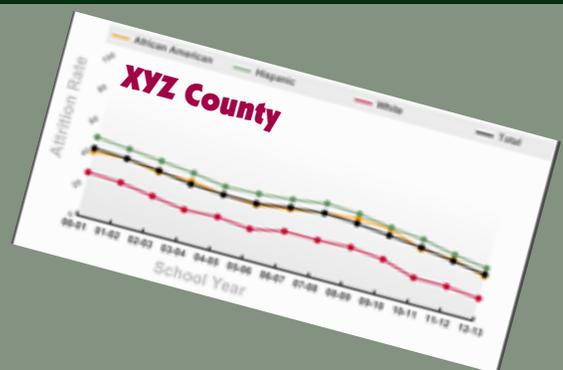
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## Look Up Your Texas County

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. You’ll also see the numbers of students by race-ethnicity who have been lost from enrollment in your county.

<http://budurl.com/IDRALook>



# Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools, by Texas County, by Race-Ethnicity, 2015-16

COUNTY NAME	ATTRITION RATES <sup>1</sup>				COUNTY NAME	ATTRITION RATES <sup>1</sup>			
	BLACK	WHITE	HISPANIC	TOTAL		BLACK	WHITE	HISPANIC	TOTAL
ANDERSON	24	23	25	24	DEWITT	48	17	50	36
ANDREWS	**	17	29	24	DICKENS	.	43	13	34
ANGELINA	14	13	29	18	DIMITT	100	22	42	42
ARANSAS	**	23	33	25	DONLEY	54	7	**	8
ARCHER	20	6	52	10	DUVAL	.	8	24	23
ARMSTRONG	33	9	3	9	EASTLAND	19	16	5	14
ATASCOSA	0	6	19	15	ECTOR	50	28	43	40
AUSTIN	26	13	24	19	EDWARDS	.	**	**	**
BAILEY	.	9	27	23	ELLIS	21	16	22	19
BANDERA	0	17	35	22	EL PASO	24	23	22	22
BASTROP	29	18	39	30	ERATH	47	22	36	26
BAYLOR	29	16	20	13	FALLS	**	2	21	7
BEE	**	22	42	38	FANNIN	5	1	12	4
BELL	33	23	37	30	FAYETTE	25	4	33	16
BEXAR	34	12	32	28	FISHER	100	**	1	**
BLANCO	.	6	25	12	FLOYD	29	0	24	20
BORDEN	.	38	**	27	FOARD	.	**	60	**
BOSQUE	**	8	19	11	FORT BEND	20	9	36	20
BOWIE	23	13	21	17	FRANKLIN	69	15	14	19
BRAZORIA	21	20	32	25	FREESTONE	16	25	38	26
BRAZOS	44	20	50	37	FRIO	50	33	41	39
BREWSTER	.	41	10	20	GAINES	11	16	30	22
BRISCOE	0	30	26	28	GALVESTON	29	12	28	20
BROOKS	.	67	27	28	GARZA	60	10	34	29
BROWN	8	22	32	25	GILLESPIE	.	4	13	8
BURLESON	30	16	26	22	GLASSCOCK	.	2	1	2
BURNET	15	13	26	18	GOLIAD	26	8	38	20
CALDWELL	8	0	28	18	GONZALES	35	32	41	37
CALHOUN	55	5	32	23	GRAY	**	10	**	7
CALLAHAN	33	16	38	20	GRAYSON	27	16	34	22
CAMERON	28	15	33	32	GREGG	19	11	28	18
CAMP	12	31	8	17	GRIMES	38	18	40	29
CARSON	44	11	25	14	GUADALUPE	19	17	31	23
CASS	**	10	27	8	HALE	31	3	31	25
CASTRO	**	12	21	18	HALL	3	11	6	6
CHAMBERS	24	16	18	17	HAMILTON	**	4	20	4
CHEROKEE	31	27	33	31	HANSFORD	.	**	14	3
CHILDRESS	**	7	4	0	HARDEMAN	100	17	3	11
CLAY	60	5	**	4	HARDIN	10	19	21	19
COCHRAN	30	8	14	13	HARRIS	29	13	30	25
COKE	.	17	31	21	HARRISON	18	16	22	18
COLEMAN	13	35	34	35	HARTLEY	.	43	14	35
COLLIN	20	14	24	18	HASKELL	100	**	18	2
COLLINGSWORTH	**	**	16	1	HAYS	31	16	32	26
COLORADO	17	7	23	14	HEMPHILL	100	32	61	45
COMAL	26	15	28	20	HENDERSON	17	22	14	20
COMANCHE	100	15	31	23	HIDALGO	24	31	33	33
CONCHO	100	19	**	7	HILL	24	14	22	18
COOKE	63	7	31	16	HOCKLEY	22	10	26	20
CORYELL	19	26	20	24	HOOD	38	22	27	22
COTTLE	**	**	32	8	HOPKINS	30	18	16	18
CRANE	**	43	40	41	HOUSTON	25	12	14	17
CROCKETT	.	32	13	14	HOWARD	6	19	35	28
CROSBY	11	35	14	18	HUDSPETH	.	5	8	8
CULBERSON	.	8	11	11	HUNT	31	18	39	25
DALLAM	56	27	32	30	HUTCHINSON	35	9	9	9
DALLAS	26	3	34	27	IRION	0	23	23	22
DAWSON	33	5	34	29	JACK	20	15	33	17
DEAF SMITH	**	10	30	27	JACKSON	**	14	17	12
DELTA	**	17	11	7	JASPER	11	15	34	17
DENTON	25	15	26	19	JEFF DAVIS	.	**	3	**

<sup>1</sup>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 (o).  
 \*\*\* = No high school.

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

# Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools, By Texas County, by Race-Ethnicity, 2015-16 (continued)

COUNTY NAME	ATTRITION RATES				COUNTY NAME	ATTRITION RATES			
	BLACK	WHITE	HISPANIC	TOTAL		BLACK	WHITE	HISPANIC	TOTAL
JEFFERSON	22	7	29	19	REAGAN	.	**	21	15
JIM HOGG	.	27	23	22	REAL	.	**	29	2
JIM WELLS	100	5	38	33	RED RIVER	**	12	4	7
JOHNSON	26	22	35	25	REEVES	0	**	26	23
JONES	14	14	14	14	REFUGIO	**	**	16	5
KARNES	**	**	32	18	ROBERTS	.	19	**	13
KAUFMAN	26	22	31	24	ROBERTSON	2	11	40	18
KENDALL	100	14	29	18	ROCKWALL	21	17	36	23
KENT	.	5	36	18	RUNNELS	**	10	19	14
KERR	11	11	24	18	RUSK	20	19	18	19
KIMBLE	.	6	14	10	SABINE	14	18	25	18
KINNEY	.	21	11	17	SAN AUGUSTINE	7	13	56	18
KLEBERG	**	9	37	33	SAN JACINTO	18	25	38	26
KNOX	51	10	16	11	SAN PATRICIO	40	18	27	24
LAMAR	18	16	39	20	SAN SABA	0	9	22	17
LAMB	22	**	17	13	SCHLEICHER	.	13	12	13
LAMPASAS	**	18	17	14	SCURRY	34	12	36	25
LA SALLE	.	61	33	35	SHACKELFORD	**	7	10	6
LAVACA	11	9	49	17	SHELBY	30	13	33	22
LEE	13	17	22	19	SHERMAN	.	0	1	3
LEON	**	10	29	14	SMITH	29	16	39	26
LIBERTY	28	29	43	34	SOMERVELL	.	5	6	7
LIMESTONE	16	4	27	14	STARR	.	**	25	25
LIPSCOMB	100	**	3	**	STEPHENS	69	39	22	34
LIVE OAK	100	25	22	24	STERLING	.	**	20	11
LLANO	.	20	33	22	STONEWALL	33	0	25	8
LUBBOCK	26	9	30	22	SUTTON	.	21	11	14
LYNN	.	**	27	12	SWISHER	35	12	34	26
MADISON	25	29	21	26	TARRANT	34	14	37	27
MARION	14	9	**	13	TAYLOR	17	21	36	25
MARTIN	67	**	38	25	TERRELL	.	**	28	31
MASON	.	14	29	14	TERRY	60	9	19	18
MATAGORDA	27	13	36	27	THROCKMORTON	.	**	28	**
MAVERICK	.	46	35	35	TITUS	34	8	29	25
McCULLOCH	**	7	39	21	TOM GREEN	2	12	27	20
McCLENNAN	38	14	34	26	TRAVIS	18	9	32	22
McMULLEN	.	**	1	**	TRINITY	23	15	25	19
MEDINA	45	10	30	23	TYLER	15	23	**	20
MENARD	.	4	30	19	UPSHUR	0	14	30	16
MIDLAND	45	15	45	36	UPTON	50	17	34	25
MILAM	22	14	35	24	UVALDE	**	22	43	40
MILLS	.	**	**	**	VAL VERDE	**	14	17	17
MITCHELL	65	16	27	26	VAN ZANDT	**	20	31	20
MONTAGUE	20	14	26	16	VICTORIA	23	12	49	38
MONTGOMERY	30	20	31	24	WALKER	33	22	33	28
MOORE	36	20	11	15	WALLER	31	33	47	40
MORRIS	**	16	22	11	WARD	70	25	31	32
MOTLEY	.	**	19	**	WASHINGTON	39	**	45	20
NACOGDOCHES	43	13	31	24	WEBB	**	20	26	26
NAVARRO	23	11	26	20	WHARTON	32	22	40	33
NEWTON	9	23	58	21	WHEELER	**	0	4	**
NOLAN	32	15	32	24	WICHITA	6	10	23	14
NUECES	20	15	27	24	WILBARGER	54	15	36	25
OCHILTREE	100	14	47	38	WILLACY	0	31	20	20
OLDHAM	**	17	48	24	WILLIAMSON	18	14	25	18
ORANGE	35	14	33	19	WILSON	33	9	25	16
PALO PINTO	45	25	16	23	WINKLER	**	9	21	17
PANOLA	18	24	44	25	WISE	17	8	25	12
PARKER	26	18	26	20	WOOD	1	18	19	18
PARMER	**	4	13	11	YOAKUM	.	14	16	16
PECOS	**	6	32	24	YOUNG	64	18	11	17
POLK	12	27	15	20	ZAPATA	0	**	8	8
POTTER	30	17	28	25	ZAVALA	50	20	23	23
PRESIDIO	.	**	30	29					
RAINS	**	24	22	21					
RANDALL	9	8	20	10	TOTAL	27	15	31	25

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016

## Changes in High School Attrition Rates in Texas Counties

### 106 Counties Where High School Attrition Rates Improved Since Last Year

Andrews	Cass	Deaf Smith	Grimes	Kaufman	Montgomery	Sabine
Angelina	Castro	Delta	Hamilton	Kerr	Moore	Schleicher
Archer	Chambers	Denton	Hansford	Kinney	Morris	Shackelford
Armstrong	Childress	Dickens	Hardin	Kleberg	Navarro	Shelby
Atascosa	Clay	Duval	Harris	Knox	Nolan	Somervell
Baylor	Cochran	Eastland	Harrison	Lampasas	Orange	Stonewall
Blanco	Collin	Ellis	Haskell	Lee	Panola	Terrell
Borden	Collingsworth	El Paso	Henderson	Leon	Polk	Terry
Bosque	Colorado	Fannin	Houston	Limestone	Potter	Val Verde
Brazoria	Comal	Fayette	Hudspeth	Llano	Rains	Van Zandt
Brooks	Comanche	Floyd	Hutchinson	Lynn	Randall	Williamson
Brown	Cooke	Gillespie	Irion	Marion	Reagan	Wise
Burnet	Crockett	Glasscock	Jim Hogg	McCulloch	Real	Yoakum
Calhoun	Crosby	Gray	Jim Wells	Mitchell	Refugio	Young
Cameron	Dawson	Grayson	Johnson	Montague	Runnels	Zapata
Camp						

### 110 Counties Where High School Attrition Rates Worsened Since Last Year

Aransas	Concho	Guadalupe	Jones	McClennan	Rockwall	Tyler
Austin	Coryell	Hale	Karnes	Midland	Rusk	Upshur
Bailey	Crane	Hall	Kendall	Milam	San Augustine	Upton
Bandera	Culberson	Hartley	Kent	Nacogdoches	San Jacinto	Uvalde
Bastrop	Dallam	Hays	Kimble	Newton	San Patricio	Victoria
Bee	Dallas	Hemphill	La Salle	Nueces	San Saba	Walker
Bexar	Dewitt	Hill	Lamar	Ochiltree	Sherman	Waller
Bowie	Dimmit	Hockley	Lamb	Oldham	Smith	Ward
Brazos	Franklin	Hood	Lavaca	Palo Pinto	Starr	Washington
Brewster	Freestone	Hopkins	Liberty	Parker	Stephens	Wharton
Burleson	Frio	Howard	Live Oak	Parmer	Sterling	Wilbarger
Caldwell	Gaines	Hunt	Madison	Pecos	Sutton	Willacy
Callahan	Galveston	Jack	Martin	Presidio	Swisher	Winkler
Cherokee	Garza	Jackson	Mason	Reeves	Taylor	Wood
Coke	Goliad	Jasper	Matagorda	Roberts	Tom Green	Zavala
Coleman	Gonzales	Jefferson	Maverick	Robertson		

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

Anderson	Erath	Hidalgo	Red River	Titus	Trinity	Wichita
Bell	Fort Bend	Lubbock	Scurry	Travis	Webb	Wilson
Ector	Gregg	Medina	Tarrant			

### 17 Counties Where High School Attrition Rates Cannot be Compared with Last Year\*

Briscoe	Falls	Jeff Davis	Mills
Carson	Fisher	Lipscomb	Motley
Cottle	Foard	McMullen	Throckmorton
Donley	Hardeman	Menard	Wheeler
Edwards			

Look up your county to see  
10-year trends

<http://budurl.com/IDRAlook>

\* 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. More information is on Pages 14-15 of the Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2015-16.

# Zero Tolerance Policies Likely Contribute to High Attrition Rates of Black Students and Hispanic Students

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

Zero tolerance policies are a likely contributor to high attrition rates of Black students and Hispanic students in Texas public schools. Research shows that practices like referrals to disciplinary alternative education centers increases students' likelihood of dropping out of school later on (U.S. Department of Education, 2016; American Psychological Association, 2008; Kang-Brown, et al., 2013). In this additional analysis to IDRA's annual attrition study, we compared the trend lines for attrition rates to those of discipline data for the state of Texas.

IDRA's attrition studies involve an analysis of ninth-grade enrollment figures and 12th-grade enrollment figures three years later (see story on Page 3). The high attrition rates of Black students and Hispanic students were particularly acute in the mid-1990s and are likely fueling the continued disproportionality between White students and students of color today.

The contemporary origin of zero tolerance policies traces back to the 1980s when federal and state initiatives sought ways to wage the "war on drugs" and other societal issues. With the advancement and adoption of the "Broken Windows Theory" by Kelling, Wilson & Coles in the 1980s and 1990s, school systems began to apply zero tolerance approaches to minor school infractions (Teske, 2011). The theory purports that, by addressing problems when they are small, the likelihood of the problems escalating diminishes.

During the early to mid-1990s, school systems across the country began to adopt zero tolerance policies for minor school infractions in the belief that they were heading off larger potential problems. This resulted in the near doubling of

students suspended annually (Poe-Yamagata & Jones, 2000).

With the revision of the state education law in 1995, Texas enacted the modern version of the school discipline code establishing zero tolerance measures into state and school district codes of conduct and a variety of alternative school placements. In 2005, 2009 and 2015, the Texas Legislature made some efforts to mandate some level of discretion in school discipline under certain circumstances. The spike and fall in the attrition rates for all students – and particularly students of color and males – became acutely observable as shown in the IDRA attrition studies.

## Attrition Rates by Race-Ethnicity and Gender

Overall attrition rates in Texas range from a low of 24 percent in 2013-14 and 2014-15 to a high of 43 percent in 1996-97. Attrition rates for Hispanic students ranged from a low of 31 percent in 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 to a high of 54 percent in 1996-97. For Black students, attrition rates ranged from a low of 25 percent in 2013-14 to a high of 51 percent in 1995-96 and 1996-97. Attrition rates for White students ranged from a low of 13 percent in 2013-14 to a high of 32 percent in 1996-97.

The historical high attrition rate for each race-ethnicity group parallels the period when zero tolerance policies gained momentum in Texas. Lower attrition rates for each group coincide with Texas' legislative attempts to relax zero tolerance approaches under specific circumstances.

Males have higher attrition rates than females.

- Attrition rates for male students ranged from a low of 26 percent in 2013-14 to a high of 46

percent in 1996-97. Attrition rates for female students ranged from a low of 21 percent in 2013-14 to a high of 40 percent in 1996-97.

- Hispanic males have higher attrition rates than Black and White male students. Attrition rates for Hispanic males ranged from a low of 31 percent in 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 to a high of 51 percent in 1995-96, 1996-97, 1997-98, and 1998-99.
- Attrition rates for Black males ranged from a low of 29 percent in 2013-14 to a high of 55 percent in 1995-96 and 1996-97.
- For White males, attrition rates ranged from a low of 14 percent in 2013-14 to a high of 34 percent in 1995-96, 1996-97, and 1997-98.

In 2015-16, the attrition rate of Hispanic males was 2.13 times higher than White males and 1.10 times higher than Black males.

Among females, Hispanic females have higher attrition rates than Black and White female students.

- Attrition rates for Hispanic females ranged from a low of 27 percent in 2015-16 to a high of 51 percent in 1996-97.
- Attrition rates for Black females ranged from a low of 20 percent in 2012-13 and 2013-14 to a high of 46 percent in 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97.
- Attrition rates for White females ranged from a low of 12 percent in 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14 to a high of 30 percent in 1996-97.

In 2015-16, the attrition rate of Hispanic females was 2.08 times higher than White females and 1.17 times higher than Black females.

### Discipline Data by Race-Ethnicity

The Texas Education Agency collects discipline data through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). Data are reported at the state, region and school district level with access readily available to annual summary reports for the last 10 years (2005-06 to 2014-15). A review of these data show disproportionately high disciplinary action rates for students of color and males.

In Texas, data are collected on four types of disciplinary actions: in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, referral to disciplinary alternative education programs (DAEP), and referrals to juvenile justice alternative education programs (JJAEP).

**In-School Suspension Data.** Each year from 2005-06 to 2014-15, Black students received in-school suspensions nearly two times the rate they comprised in the total population.

- In 2014-15, Black students represented 13 percent of public school enrollment in Texas, but 25 percent of students receiving in school suspensions.
- In comparison, White students represented 28 percent of enrollment but 21 percent of students receiving in-school suspensions. On average, 17 percent of Black students are suspended compared to 8 percent of White students.
- Hispanic students represented 52 percent of enrollment and 50 percent of students

suspended. On average, 9 percent of Hispanic students received in school suspensions.

- Males represented 51 percent of the 2014-15 total enrollment but 71 percent of the students suspended in-school. On average, 12 percent of males compared to 6 percent of females received in-school suspensions.

**Out-of-School Suspension Data.** As with in-school suspensions, Black students received out-of-school suspensions significantly more than the rate they comprised in the total population from 2005-06 through 2014-15 school years.

- In 2014-15 Black students represented 13 percent of public school enrollment in Texas, but 35 percent of students receiving out-of-school suspensions.
- White students represented 28 percent of enrollment but 14 percent of students receiving out-of-school suspensions. On average, 11 percent of Black students are suspended compared to 2 percent of White students.
- Hispanic students represented 52 percent of enrollment and 49 percent of students receiving out-of-school suspensions. On average, 4 percent of Hispanic students received out of school suspensions.
- Males represented 51 percent of the 2014-15 total enrollment but 73 percent of the students receiving out-of-school suspensions. On average, 12 percent of males compared to 6 percent of females were suspended.

**Other Discipline Data.** Annual discipline summaries also provide information on students removed from the classrooms in several other categories including disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP), juvenile justice alternative education program (JJAEP) and expulsions. DAEPs were established for criminal offenses – drug related activities, gun violations and assault – all violations that had been punishable by referral to the Texas JJAEP system. Because not all areas of the state had access to JJAEP facilities, DAEPs were presented as a means for creating options that would remove serious offenders from regular school settings, including many small school districts and those rural communities where no JJAEP facilities existed.

Instead, students as young as six years old were removed from their kindergarten classes and sent to DAEPs for “discipline” problems. And students often can’t catch up academically because many of their teachers are not qualified to teach them, and those who are qualified are unable to coordinate with the students’ “sending” schools.

In 1999, IDRA released a report on thousands of Texas public school students who were being criminalized, ostracized and stigmatized for “offenses” that were formerly managed by a visit to the principal’s office or even a simple timeout with its seminal assessment of Texas DAEPs. Ten years later, an IDRA policy update, showed that in the previous decade, more than three quarters of a million students had been sent to DAEPs. Four out of the five students there were not there

## Disciplinary Actions by Discipline Action Groupings

School Year	Total Enrollment	Number In-School Actions	Number Out-of-School Actions	Number DAEP Actions	Number JJAEP Actions	Number Expulsion Actions
2007-08	4,819,172	654,667	311,718	100,666	5,911	1,849
2008-09	4,892,748	631,265	289,809	92,719	4,938	1,645
2009-10	4,978,999	625,362	284,028	90,213	4,951	1,541
2010-11	5,063,863	596,422	265,543	87,553	4,039	1,227
2011-12	5,127,376	579,670	263,322	85,450	3,459	1,054
2012-13	5,205,659	549,305	248,266	81,104	2,819	893
2013-14	5,289,752	524,268	242,017	77,333	2,693	778
2014-15	5,371,933	496,497	232,769	75,208	2,543	828

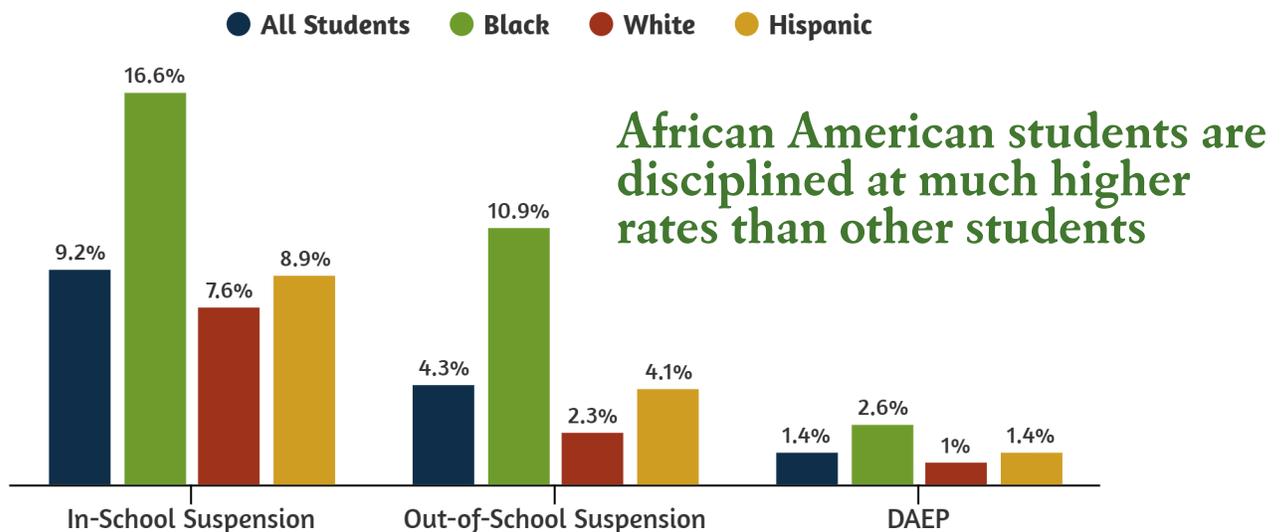
DAEP = Disciplinary Alternative Education Program JJAEP = Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program  
 Source: Texas Education Agency, State Level Annual Discipline Summary, PEIMS Discipline Data, 2007-08 to 2014-15

## Disciplinary Actions by Student Group in Texas, 2014-15

Student Group	Total Enrollment	Percent Enrollment	Percent In-School Actions	Percent Out-of-School Actions	Percent DAEP Actions	Percent JJAEP Actions	Percent Expulsion Actions
All Students	5,371,933	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
American Indian or Alaska Native	22,162	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	N/A	N/A
Asian	209,492	3.90	0.65	0.50	0.56	0.68	N/A
Black or African American	684,601	12.74	25.40	34.81	24.42	19.73	15.93
Hispanic/Latino	2,789,715	51.93	50.17	49.00	52.63	56.36	52.33
Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific	7,565	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.06	2.13	6.08
Two or More Races	106,607	1.98	2.02	1.75	1.81	1.86	1.86
White	1,551,791	28.89	21.28	13.53	20.05	20.95	28.84
Female	2,614,763	48.67	29.22	27.04	25.87	19.47	21.74
Male	2,757,170	51.33	70.78	72.96	74.13	80.53	78.26
Special Education	509,793	9.49	15.36	19.34	17.10	18.30	14.88
Economically Disadvantaged	3,288,416	61.21	76.06	81.47	76.85	70.98	70.93
At Risk	2,666,290	49.63	74.43	78.42	80.72	81.55	71.28

DAEP = Disciplinary Alternative Education Program      JJAEP = Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program  
 Source: Texas Education Agency, State Level Annual Discipline Summary, PEIMS Discipline Data, 2014-15

## Disciplinary Action Rates by Race-Ethnicity in Texas, 2014-15



Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

because of serious offenses.

Results for the DAEP and JJAEP categories in IDRA's 2016 review are provided in the tables and graphs on Pages 18-19. In each of these categories Black students and males were disproportionately represented.

## Conclusions

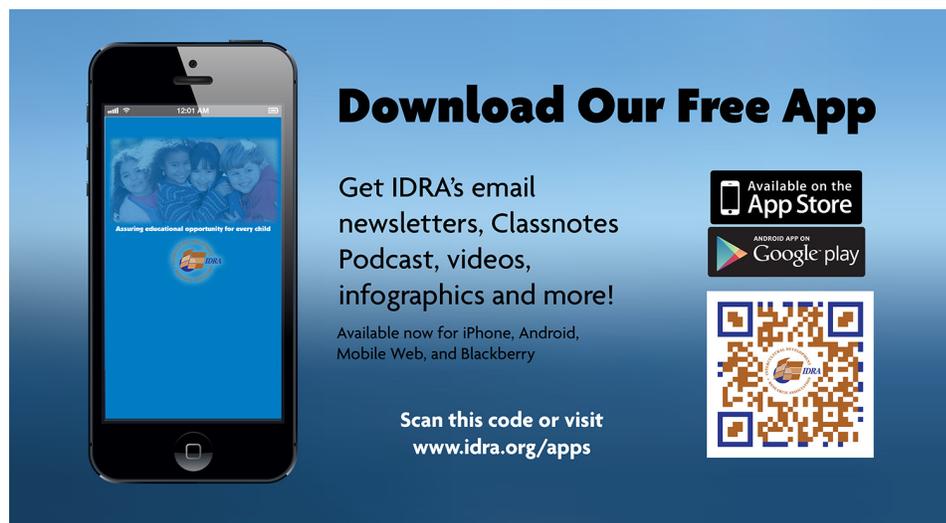
Zero tolerance policies are contributing to the high number and percent of students who are lost from public school enrollment, particularly students of color and males. High attrition rates coincide with the adoption of zero tolerance policies in the state of Texas in the early to mid-1990s and likely are contributing factors today. The research points to suspension as one of the biggest signs that a student may drop out.

Emerging research on zero tolerance and the positions of professionals in other related fields and the judicial field question the effectiveness of zero tolerance policies in maintaining a safe and disciplined school learning environment. There is no research to support that zero tolerance makes schools any safer. While zero tolerance was ostensibly created to respond to issues where students are at risk of harm, only 5 percent of disciplinary actions in recent years involved the possession of a weapon. Violent crime in juvenile populations is down, but it was already decreasing since 1991 (Kang-Brown et al., 2013).

What is indeed clear is the mounting amount of data on the disproportionality of discipline actions in schools. For example, as the Office for Civil Rights' research shows, preschool students face a disproportionately high rate of suspension. According to the data, "Young children who are expelled or suspended are as much as 10 times more likely to drop out of high school, experience academic failure and grade retention, hold negative school attitudes, and face incarceration than those who are not" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, & U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

And nationally, Black students are 3.8 times as likely to be subject to out-of-school suspension as white students. And they are 2.3 times as likely to be referred to law enforcement or subject to a school-related arrest than white students (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Through the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, is monitoring data on discipline in schools due to the overrepresent-



tation of students of color in suspensions and expulsions. Expulsions and suspensions are in violation of civil rights laws if they are found to be administered in such a way that targets minority students.

School systems and policymakers in Texas and the nation must ensure that the necessary reforms and actions be taken to provide equal education opportunity for every child in Texas regardless of race, color and gender. A number of reports and resources are available to assist stakeholders in public education in working toward sustainable changes that will reduce bias and help all students learn. See IDRA's eBook, *Resources on Student Discipline Policy and Practice* (<http://budurl.com/IDRAeBdLP>).

## Resources

- American Psychological Association, Zero Tolerance Task Force. (December, 2008). "Are Zero Tolerance Policies Effective in the Schools? An Evidentiary Review and Recommendations," *American Psychologist*, 63(9), 852-862. <http://www.apa.org/pubs/info/reports/zero-tolerance.pdf>
- Cortez, A., & J.D. Cortez. (2009). *Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Texas – A 2009 Update* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association). <http://budurl.com/IDRAadaepog>
- Cortez, A., & M. Robledo Montecel. (1999). *Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Texas - What is Known?* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association). <http://www.idra.org/images/stories/alted.pdf>
- Kang-Brown, J., & J. Trone, J. Fratello, T. Daftary-Kapur. (2013). *A Generation Later: What We've Learned About Zero Tolerance in Schools* (New York, N.Y.: Vera Institute of Justice). [https://storage.googleapis.com/vera-web-assets/downloads/Publications/a-generation-later-what-weve-learned-about-zero-tolerance-in-schools/legacy\\_downloads/zero-tolerance-in-schools-policy-brief.pdf](https://storage.googleapis.com/vera-web-assets/downloads/Publications/a-generation-later-what-weve-learned-about-zero-tolerance-in-schools/legacy_downloads/zero-tolerance-in-schools-policy-brief.pdf)
- Kelling, G.L., & C.M. Coles. (1998). *Fixing Broken Windows: Restoring Order and Reducing Crime in Our Communities* (Free Press).

## Also see...

### "In-Grade Retention in the Early Years – What's Holding Children Back?"

by Paula Johnson, M.A., in the October 2016 issue of the IDRA Newsletter

<http://budurl.com/IDRANOct16b>

- Poe-Yamagata, E., & M.A. Jones. (2000). *And Justice for Some* (Washington, D.C.: Building Blocks for Youth). <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED442882.pdf>
- Teske, S.C. (2011). "A Study of Zero Tolerance Policies in Schools: A Multi-Integrated Systems Approach to Improve Outcomes for Adolescent," *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing*, 24 (2011) 88-97. [http://www.ncfcj.org/sites/default/files/Zero%20Tolerance%20Policies%20in%20Schools%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.ncfcj.org/sites/default/files/Zero%20Tolerance%20Policies%20in%20Schools%20(2).pdf)
- U.S. Department of Education. (2016). *2013-2014 Civil Rights Data Collection: A First Look* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights). <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/2013-14-first-look.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education. (2014). *Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings* (Washington, D.C.). <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ee-expulsions-suspensions.pdf>

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# Attrition Rate Trend Reversed, Pushing Zero Attrition Rate Farther into the Future

by Felix Montes, Ph.D.

For the first time since we have been doing this forecast analysis (nine years), the annual attrition rate has worsened when compared to the previous year. Last year, the attrition rate was 24 percent; this year, it was 25 percent (see Page 3). Since 1985-86, when IDRA started calculating the attrition rate on an annual basis, there have been only four reversals. First, in 1987-88, the attrition rate went down to 33 percent from 34 percent the previous year. Second, in 1991-92, the rate went up to 34 percent from 31 percent. In 1997-98, the rate took the downward trend until last year, as the rate went down to 42 percent from 43 percent – the highest value ever calculated by the IDRA annual analysis.

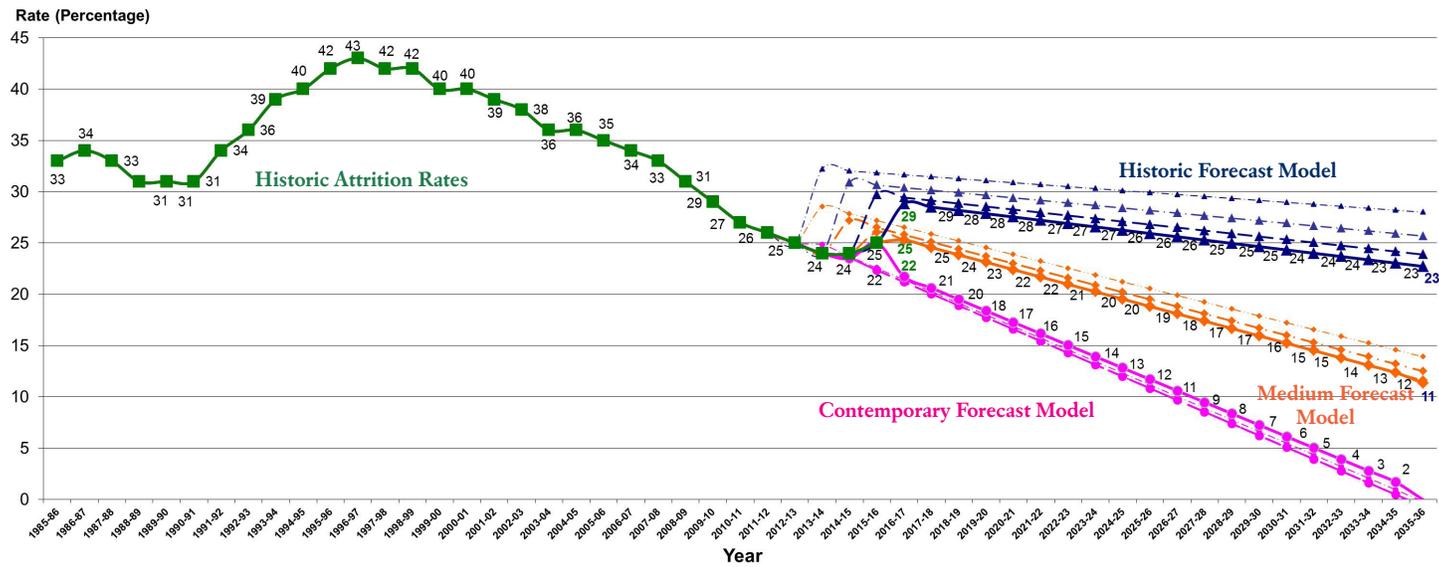
And now, after 17 years of slow decline, the rate reversed to 25 percent, after reaching 24 percent last year, the lowest level ever calculated by the IDRA annual analysis. The last time an upward reversal happened (1991-92), the new upward trend continued for five years. Will this happen again?

To answer this question and estimate when the attrition would reach zero at the present speed of decline, IDRA conducted this supplemental inquiry to the Texas high school attrition study. The investigation used linear regression analyses to predict when the attrition rate would reach negligible values.

This forecast analysis is a recurrent feature and each year is added to the full review IDRA devotes to this topic in October. This article represents this year's update to the forecasting analysis with the most recent attrition figures. IDRA's latest attrition study shows that the attrition rate rose, which continues to put the state 20 years away from reaching an attrition rate of zero.

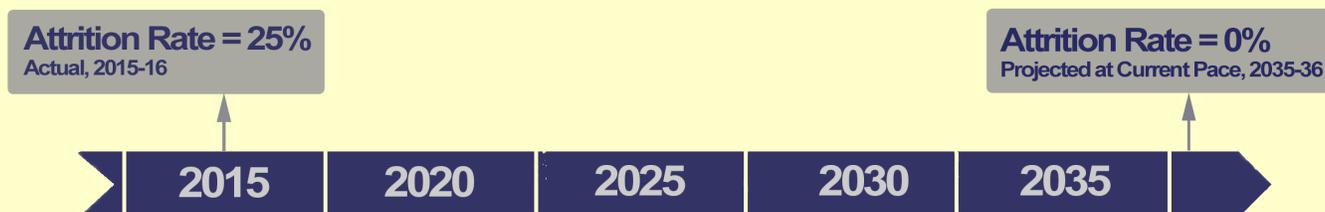
This year's attrition rate of 25 percent was within the range predicted by IDRA's analysis last year, between 22 percent and 30 percent. The predictions for next year are shown in the box below (between 22 and 29 in green, with 25 percent as the most likely value). The chart first plots the attrition historic

## Historic Attrition Rates and Next Year Forecasted Attrition Rates



# Universal high school graduation is at least a quarter of a century away

Texas stands to lose another 2.25 million students.



Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

values (green dots), followed by the forecasted values for the next 20 school years (2016-17 to 2035-36).

The new prediction moves the zero attrition date forecasted to the year 2036 from 2035 last year. As this result implies, the overall picture changed little, as evidenced by the similarity between the revised forecasting analyses, which present the forecast for next year (the heaviest lines) and the last three forecasted rounds (progressively lighter lines as time moves into the past).

However, one important change occurred in the contemporary model. The most recent line moved upward with respect to the previous year, signifying a reversal of the trend of moving the zero attrition closer to the present – a less optimistic outlook.

## Forecasting Models

The forecasting analysis uses three models. The **Historic Forecast Model**, takes into account all known attrition values, from 1986 to the present, as determined by the annual IDRA longitudinal attrition study. This model assumes that each past rate has equal weight over future rates.

For this model, most future attrition values within the model time horizon would be higher than the current value, since the model constructs the recent downward trend as a cyclical bottom within the long-term progression of the curve. Therefore, it suggests that an upward reversal is overdue. As this year's result shows, this model was correct in predicting a reversal. In this formulation, for 2016-17, the attrition rate will increase to 29 percent. After that, it will begin a slow decline, initiating another downward trend.

In this model, after 20 years, the attrition rate will be 23 percent. This model is depicted in blue in the chart on Page 21.

The second model assumes that the downward trend that started in 1996-97 is a more reasonable predictor of future attrition values. The fact that these are chronologically the most recent values supports this assumption. The recent past is usually more relevant to the present than the distant past. Consequently, this **Contemporary Forecast Model** uses the values corresponding to the school years 1996-97 to present, which represent the subsection of the historic series portraying the current downward trend.

This model predicts a 22 percent attrition rate for 2016-17, which is three points below the current attrition rate. After that, it will progressively decrease by one or two points annually until it will reach zero in the school year 2035-36 (one year farther from the last year forecasting, 2034-35). This model is depicted in pink in the chart.

The third model takes a centrist view between the historic and contemporary forecast models. Mathematically, this **Medium Forecast Model** is formed by applying the medians between the pairs of corresponding two model values within the model's time horizon. Given the current reversal and the strong influence of the past, this model predicts attrition rates to first remain the same at 25 percent in 2016-17, and then to resume the downward trend in subsequent years.

According to this model, after 20 years, the attrition rate will be 11 percent. This model is depicted in orange in the chart.

These models should not be understood as competing or alternative approaches; rather, they complement each other. The contemporary model is more useful for short-term predictions, such as estimating the attrition rates for the next few years. The historic model provides a more long-term view.

Absent of some fundamental changes, history tends to repeat itself. The medium model is useful for medium-term predictions and tries to bridge the gap between the contemporary and the historic models.

Since time in the long-term future is difficult to visualize, the medium forecast model might provide a more practical reference for planning purposes. Notice that another consequence of this year's attrition reversal was the collapsing of some of the dotted lines (prior year continuation trends) for the medium and contemporary models, which now appear to have three lines each. In fact, all four are present but one is underneath another.

## Best Fit

The box on Page 23 shows the performance of the three models throughout their nine-year application. For each model, its forecasted values and residuals – the difference between the forecasted and the actual values – are listed for each school year. The smallest residuals correspond to the model that best fits the data so far.

Until last year, the contemporary model, with residuals between zero (no difference) and two was the model that best fits the data and suggested a continuous downward trend. However, the current result indicates that this model was too optimistic as this year it undershot by 3 points (a difference of -3). Last year, the medium model missed the actual value by just 1 point. And it suggests that the attrition rate will remain the same at 25 percent next year.

However, over the nine-year period, the contemporary model continues to be the best fit overall (mean residual = 0.8). Because of this, IDRA used this model to forecast the year when the attrition rate will be expected to reach zero, listed in the last column in the box below.

The most current forecasting indicates that 2036 will be the year when attrition will reach zero. The contemporary model indicates that the attrition rate will reach single digits in the late 2020s and will progressively decrease to minimal values from there.

Thus, we are still at least 20 years away from achieving a zero attrition rate, at the current pace of improvement, with many children lost in the intervening time – the topic for the next section. In addition, it is essential to keep in mind that the contemporary model is the best fit for now, as further demonstrated by this year’s reversal. Since there isn’t a clearly discernible cause for a sustained attrition decrease over time, the current trend might prove to be cyclical, as the other models suggest.

### Forecasted Student Losses

To understand the severity of the situation, we used the updated three forecast models to estimate the number of students that will be lost to attrition before the contemporary model predicted rate reaches zero (see box above).

The historic forecast model predicts that more than 2.5 million students will be lost to attrition from the 2016-17 to 2035-36 school years. The contemporary model yielded a figure of 1.78 million, and the medium forecast model more than 1 million.

### Conclusions

- If we take the full historic values as a guide, the student attrition rate should be expected to increase to 29 percent next year and then remain between 23 percent and 29 percent for the foreseeable future. Under this scenario more than 2.5 million additional students will be lost to attrition by the year 2036.

## Forecasted Numbers of Students Lost to Attrition

Period	Statistical Models		
	Historic	Medium	Contemporary
2016-20	630,812	533,411	436,010
2021-25	631,566	481,070	330,573
2026-30	627,878	418,810	209,743
2031-36	618,389	345,953	73,518
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,508,645</b>	<b>1,779,244</b>	<b>1,049,844</b>

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

- If we assume that the recent downward trend is real – the result of systemic changes – the attrition rate will reach single digit values in the late 2020s. By 2030, the attrition rate will be about 7 percent and it will reach zero in the year 2036. However, from now to that point, we would have lost more than 1.04 million students to attrition.
- Over the long to medium term, a more realistic model suggests that the current attrition rate will remain at 25 percent before resuming its downward trend. In this scenario, by the year 2036, attrition will be at about 11 percent, and during the period 2016 to 2036, we would have lost more than 1.77 million students.

Therefore, we should expect attrition rates in the range 22 percent to 25 percent for the next few years. We should also expect to lose between 1.05 million and 1.78 million additional students to attrition before we reach a zero attrition rate, forecasted under the most optimistic scenarios, unless this issue is considered seriously by policymakers and systemic changes implemented to ameliorate the problem.

### Resources

Johnson, R. (2015). *Public School Attrition Study, 2014-15: Texas High School Attrition Rates Stall* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association). [http://www.idra.org/images/stories/IDRA\\_Attrition\\_Study\\_2015.pdf](http://www.idra.org/images/stories/IDRA_Attrition_Study_2015.pdf)

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## Forecasted Model Values and Residuals

School Year	Attrition Rate	Historic Model		Medium Model		Contemporary Model		Year Rate Will Be Zero
		Values	Residuals	Values	Residuals	Values	Residuals	
2008-09	31	39	8	35	4	32	1	2044
2009-10	29	36	7	33	4	31	2	2042
2010-11	27	34	7	32	5	29	2	2040
2011-12	26	33	7	30	4	27	1	2037
2012-13	25	32	7	29	4	26	1	2037
2013-14	24	31	7	28	4	25	1	2036
2014-15	24	31	7	27	3	24	0	2035
2015-16	25	30	5	26	1	22	-3	2035
2016-17	n/a	29	n/a	25	n/a	22	n/a	2036

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016.

# Temporary Texas Policy Using Individual Graduation Committee Relieves High-Stakes for 6,000 Students

by David Hinojosa, J.D.

Standardized testing, when valid and reliable, provides important information on how our schools are doing with all of our students. And disaggregated data helps us know where to focus improvement efforts. But children must not be hurt in the process. And students are hurt when Texas policy requires basing promotion and graduation on performance on the state's standardized tests.

Several states have reconsidered the high-stakes consequences attached to state-mandated high school tests. Texas did so in 2015 when its legislature authorized alternative assessments for high school graduation which greatly improved opportunities to graduate, particularly for students of color and lower income students. However, the policy is set to expire in 2017.

Texas currently requires students to pass five exit STAAR exams to graduate high school. With the new policy in SB149, students who have completed all requirements and do not pass one or two of the end-of-course exams may still graduate if approved by an individual graduation committee (IGC). The committee consists of the school principal or designee, the teacher of the course, the teacher's supervisor or department chair, and the parent or designee or student. They review the student's academic record to determine his or her eligibility to graduate.

TEA data for the 2014-15 school year show that the vast majority of IGC graduates failed the two end-of-course exams that are not required for testing by the federal government: English II and U.S. History. Of the 3,684 IGC graduates failing one high school exit exam, the English II and U.S. History exams account for 83 percent of all IGC graduates. In addition, of the 1,991 students

	Number of IGC Graduates	Number of All Graduates	Percent of IGC Graduates	Percent of All Graduates
Total IGC Graduates	6,279	313,387	100%	100%
African American Students	1,121	39,690	18%	13%
American Indian Students	-	<1,400	-	-
Asian American Students	179	13,089	3%	4%
Latino American Students	4,265	148,961	68%	48%
Pacific Islander Students	-	<500	-	-
White Students	645	104,375	10%	33%
Multiracial Students	36	5,451	1%	2%
Economically Disadvantaged Students	4,654	146,375	74%	47%

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2016. Data source: Texas Education Agency, 2014-15

failing two EOC exams, fewer than 1 percent failed a combination of exams that did not include either the English II or U.S. History exam.

According to the latest TEA data released for the 2014-15 school year, there were 12,077 students assigned an individual graduation committee. Of these, 52 percent (6,279) were recommended for graduation (see table).

IGC graduates account for 2 percent of all graduates in Texas. Of these, economically disadvantaged, Latino students and African American students seem to benefit mostly as a result of SB149's newly designed alternative graduation assessments.

IDRA and others have been calling for accountability

that does not misuse testing data for holding students back in grade or preventing them from graduating.\* Reliance on a single measure fails to consider multiple factors that impact student achievement, including the fact that the student has no control over inequitable school resources or the quality of teaching they receive. Texas is on the right track with the addition of the IGC policy and should extend it beyond 2017.

David Hinojosa, J.D., is the IDRA National Director of Policy ([david.hinojosa@idra.org](mailto:david.hinojosa@idra.org)).

\*See for example, "Texas Needs Diplomas, Not Delusions," testimony presented by IDRA President & CEO, María "Cucu" Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., in 2002: <http://budurl.com/IDRAtxDelusion>

# College Bound & Determined



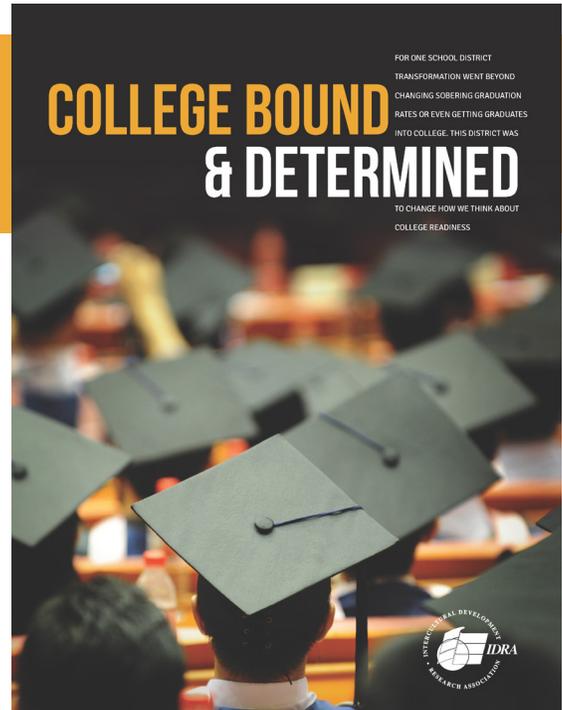
**An IDRA report showing what happens when a school district raises expectations for students instead of lowering them**

## **PSJA Proves that 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 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, half of the district's students are earning college credit while still in high school.**

**"Our vision can be boiled down to the phrase, College<sup>3</sup>, meaning that all students will be College Ready, College Connected and will complete College."**

– Dr. Daniel King, 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

College Bound & Determined is available from IDRA for \$15 and is free online at: <http://budurl.com/IDRAcbdw>

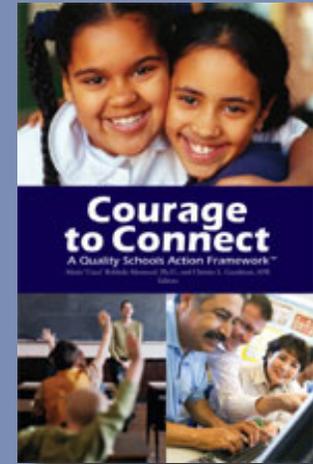
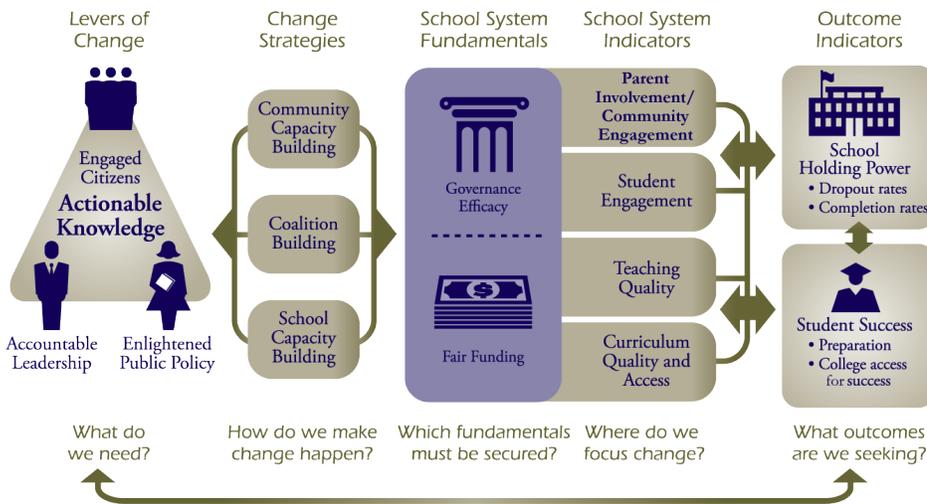
# A Model for Success

IDRA's Quality Schools Action Framework is an empirical and practical change model that can be used to link benchmarked standards with sustainable reform. The framework uses data not only for rear-view mirror assessments but to guide strategic actions that transform schooling for all.

IDRA's "Quality Schools Action Framework speaks to the need and possibility of engaging citizens, leaders and policymakers around high quality data that call all of us as members of the community to act, to establish common ground, to strengthen education, and finally and most importantly and fundamentally, to align our values with our investments in the school system." (Robledo Montecel & Goodman, 2010)

With two outcomes in mind – graduation and student success – IDRA's Quality Schools Action Framework is an empirically-based model that we and our partners use to shape effective, collaborative work on behalf of all children. Whether providing compelling facts ("actionable knowledge") to spur action; connecting and building capacity among school, community and coalition partners to leverage change; or promoting courageous leadership that secures educational equity and excellence, the framework speaks both to what is needed – and what is possible.

## IDRA Quality Schools Action Framework™



## Learn more about this framework

Read **Courage to Connect – A Quality Schools Action Framework**, which is available from IDRA.

And visit

[www.idra.org/couragetocconnect](http://www.idra.org/couragetocconnect)

to see the book's detailed table of contents, read an excerpt, listen to related podcasts and more!

*“We have a choice: Equal educational opportunity can remain a well-intended but unfulfilled promise, or move to becoming the engine of shared prosperity for generations of Americans. Much depends on the clarity and the urgency with which we approach the challenge.”*

– Dr. María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel, IDRA President and CEO, *Courage to Connect: A Quality Schools Action Framework*, 2010



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[budurl.com/IDRAYouTube](http://budurl.com/IDRAYouTube)

# 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: <http://budurl.com/IDRAatrn16>

Get the attrition rate for **your county** over the last 10 years at: <http://budurl.com/IDRALook>

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: <http://budurl.com/IDRAsubscribe>

Listen to IDRA's **Classnotes podcast** to hear strategies for student success.

## Get connected

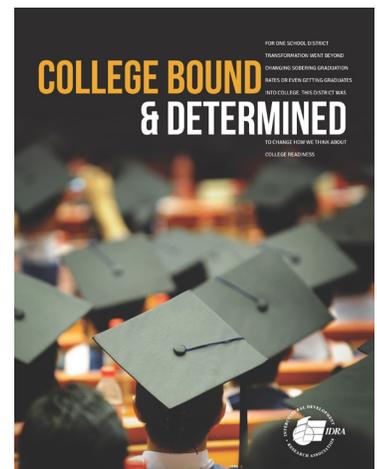
Create a **community-school action team** to examine the factors that must be addressed to strengthen your school's holding power – its ability to hold on to students through to graduation. Use IDRA's Quality Schools Action Framework™.

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 (<http://www.idra.org/couragetconnect>) has an excerpt, related podcasts, images of the framework and other resources.

## Get results

Use IDRA's one-page **School Holding Power Checklist** that has a set of criteria for assessing and selecting effective dropout prevention strategies and for making sure your school is a quality school. See Page 28.

See what happens when a school district raises expectations for students instead of lowering them. **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. **College Bound & Determined** is available from IDRA for \$15 and is free online at: <http://budurl.com/IDRAcbd>





# Quality School Holding Power Checklist

It has never been as important for schools to have the tools needed to decrease their dropout rates. IDRA's Quality School Holding Power Checklist provides a set of criteria for assessing and selecting effective dropout prevention programs or models, as well as determining if your school is a quality school ready to ensure all students stay in school and succeed.

The Quality School Holding Power Checklist is based on a different paradigm for preventing dropouts. For years, researchers, educators and policymakers have generally focused on "fixing" students rather than on strengthening or changing the school systems that are accountable and responsible for ensuring that children and youth succeed throughout the educational system.

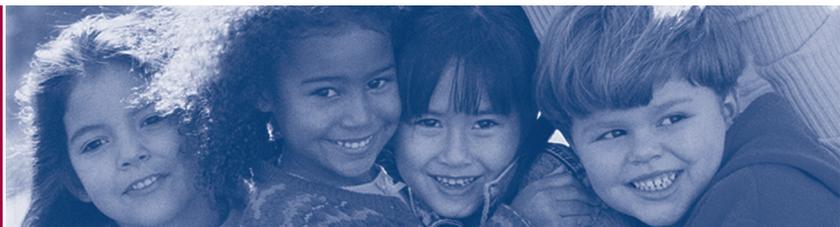
Since 1973, IDRA has worked to change the focus from a deficit perspective to a valuing of all children. IDRA has led the paradigm shift from dropouts to "school holding power" – the idea that schools must hold on to students because of their inherent value, their contributions and their potential significance to their communities and society, as a whole. This shift changes a school culture from "preventing dropouts" and finding students, who are "at risk" to creating a quality school culture that seeks ways to hold on to students and develops a graduation plan for each and every student. To get more information on how to create quality schools, visit <http://budurl.com/IDRAct>.

The checklist here is based on significant research and evaluation conducted by IDRA and others. It takes into account important factors for schools deemed at risk of losing students. Total your score and see where there is work to be done to make your school a "Quality School" with strong school holding power.

### What does your score mean?

100-90	89-80	79 or lower
Strong	Moderate	Low

Key Characteristics	Not at all	Minimal	Somewhat	Extensive
<b>Dropout Prevention Strategy...</b>				
1. Has clear and aligned mission, goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4
2. Is research- or evidence-based.	1	2	3	4
3. Has evidence that students stay in school.	1	2	3	4
4. Has evidence that students' academics (grades, achievement test scores) improve.	1	2	3	4
5. Is integrated into school rhythm and culture (not add-on program).	1	2	3	4
6. Implements rigorous evaluation used for ongoing decision-making.	1	2	3	4
<b>Teaching Quality</b>				
7. Teachers expect all students will succeed.	1	2	3	4
8. Effective professional development is provided for all teachers.	1	2	3	4
9. Teachers collaborate across grade levels and content areas.	1	2	3	4
10. Teachers are certified and competent.	1	2	3	4
11. Teachers advocate for their students.	1	2	3	4
12. Teachers share accountability for student success.	1	2	3	4
13. Teachers have access to and use technology to enhance student achievement.	1	2	3	4
<b>Student Engagement</b>				
14. Students are supported academically in effective ways.	1	2	3	4
15. Students are recognized for their contributions in ways that do not stigmatize.	1	2	3	4
16. Students are engaged in the school and feel they belong in ways that are appropriate to their interests and that demonstrate their intelligence and uniqueness.	1	2	3	4
17. Students have an expanded vision of their future.	1	2	3	4
18. Students have one educator in their life who is totally committed to their success.	1	2	3	4
<b>Family and Community Involvement</b>				
19. Families are valued partners in their child's education.	1	2	3	4
20. Businesses and communities partner with schools in ongoing and meaningful ways.	1	2	3	4
<b>Curriculum Quality and Access</b>				
21. Culturally and linguistically competent curriculum prepares all students for success, graduation, and college and career.	1	2	3	4
22. Individualized learning and support is provided when needed.	1	2	3	4
<b>Accountable Leadership</b>				
23. School leaders are committed to all of their students' success.	1	2	3	4
24. School leaders support all of their teachers and staff in program implementation.	1	2	3	4
25. School environment is caring, supportive, predictable and safe.	1	2	3	4
<b>Total</b> _____				



## Uncompromising Expectations for Graduating All Students

Every year, we are losing hundreds of thousands of young people from U.S. schools prior to their graduation. Twelve students are lost from public school enrollment every hour. The dropout crisis persists at tremendous cost to individual students, families, communities and the nation. We must move from a low and archaic expectation that only some of our country's students can successfully graduate from high school to a guarantee that all of our students will graduate. It is time to change course. We call upon the country to take immediate action to address this issue, based on the following principles.

**Principle 1:** All students enrolled in U.S. schools should be expected, and must be supported, to graduate from high school with a regular high school diploma in four years.

**Principle 2:** At the federal level, we must create a credible system to accurately account for the educational status of every pupil who enters the ninth grade in any secondary school, including formal and verifiable student re-enrollments and transfers.

**Principle 3:** Using student-level longitudinal data, the United States should implement a transparent and simple methodology to count and report on high school graduates.

**Principle 4:** The creation of high school graduation rate data should not replace calculation and reporting of high school dropout rates that inform and guide prevention and recovery efforts.

**Principle 5:** Alternative education settings must be subject to the same graduation standards as all other schools.

**Principle 6:** In addition to using four-year graduation rates, states, school districts and schools should report annual and longitudinal dropout rates; number and percent of students who graduate in five or six years; number of in-grade retentions; number of students receiving GEDs; and students meeting all graduation requirements but not receiving a regular high school diploma because of failure to pass a state-level high-stakes exam.

**Principle 7:** High school graduation and dropout data should be reported at the federal, state, district and school levels and should be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, socio-economic and English language learner status.

**Principle 8:** Exemptions from graduation and dropout counting must be strictly limited and must conform to IDEA provisions.

**Principle 9:** Reporting should be readily available and easily accessible to the public. Reporting must directly inform communities and parents about status of the issue and progress being made to address it.

**Principle 10:** State and local progress requirements should be proportional to the graduation rate gap to be closed.

**Principle 11:** State efforts to address high school graduation rates should recognize systemic issues that affect student graduation, including teaching quality, curriculum quality and access, student engagement, and parent and community engagement.

**Principle 12:** Ongoing evaluation of progress must be an integral part of any effort at the federal, state and local levels to address graduation goals.

**Principle 13:** In ensuring that all students graduate, schools should incorporate pedagogical changes that enable them to better adapt to the needs and strengths of their students.

**Principle 14:** No single criterion (e.g., high-stakes testing) should be used to make high school graduation decisions for any individual student.

**Principle 15:** The federal level and states must acknowledge shared accountability for the graduation of all students by investing the personnel and equitable fiscal resources needed to help schools meet federally-established graduation targets.

**Principle 16:** All efforts to increase graduation rates must be based on valuing families, educators, communities and students; no response should promote a "deficit model" or blame.

**Principle 17:** It is vital to recognize that this issue affects students of all races and ethnicities (for example, the largest numbers of dropouts in many states are White students).

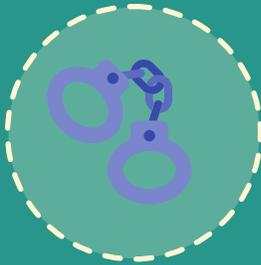
**Principle 18:** Since low graduation rates disproportionately impact racial and ethnic minority students, accelerated efforts to address the issue in these communities is essential.



# 6 Policies

that lead to higher dropout rates

## Zero Tolerance



There is no research to support that zero tolerance 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.

➔ See zero tolerance article [budurl.com/IDRAzero](http://budurl.com/IDRAzero)

## In-grade Retention

Retained students have a 14 percent to 50 percent higher risk of dropping out, and the risk increases to 90 percent for those who have been retained twice. Young children who are expelled or suspended are up to 10 times more likely to drop out, experience academic failure and grade retention, hold negative school attitudes, and face incarceration.



➔ See in-grade retention article <http://budurl.com/IDRAnOct16b>

## Low Funding & Support for ELs



English learners are among the most likely to drop out. 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. Texas is significantly underfunding EL education, and only two of five teachers of ELs are fully certified. Only one out of 10 ELs is prepared to go to college.

➔ See IDRA EL report <http://budurl.com/IDRAellBK15i>

## 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, poor school districts have had attrition rates that were more than double those of high-wealth districts.



See IDRA statement  
<http://budurl.com/IDRAeN051316>

## 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 3 to 6 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.

See College Bound report  
<http://budurl.com/IDRAcbd>

## Testing that is High-Stakes

A large body of research says that one test should never be used as a sole criterion for high-stakes decisions about students. Reliance on a single measure fails to consider multiple factors that impact achievement. In 2015, 6,000 Texas seniors who failed at least one exam were able to graduate when a temporary policy let school officials consider their course grades and other factors.



See review committee article <http://budurl.com/IDRAigc>

# It doesn't have to be this way

[www.idra.org](http://www.idra.org)

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American Psychological Association. (December, 2008). "Are Zero Tolerance Policies Effective in the Schools? An Evidentiary Review and Recommendations." American Psychologist. <http://www.apa.org/pubs/info/reports/zero-tolerance.pdf> • Johnson, R. (October 2016). "Zero Tolerance Policies Likely Contribute to High Attrition Rates of Black Students and Hispanic Students." Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2015-16. IDRA. [budurl.com/IDRAzero](http://budurl.com/IDRAzero) • Hoff, N., Peterson, R.L., & Strawhun, J. (2014). Grade Retention & Demotion: A Traditional Discipline Consequence. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln. [http://k12engagement.unl.edu/strategy-briefs/Grade%20Retention%20%26%20Demotion%2011-30-15%20\\_0.pdf](http://k12engagement.unl.edu/strategy-briefs/Grade%20Retention%20%26%20Demotion%2011-30-15%20_0.pdf) • Johnson, P. (October 2016). "In-Grade Retention in the Early Years – What's Holding Children Back?," IDRA Newsletter. <http://budurl.com/IDRAeN051316> • IDRA. (June 2015). IDRA José A. Cárdenas School Finance Fellows Program 2015 Symposium Proceedings – New Research on Securing Educational Equity & Excellence for English Language Learners in Texas Secondary Schools. <http://budurl.com/IDRAeIIBK15> • IDRA. Report of the Intercultural Development Research Association Related to the Extent of Equity in the Texas School Finance System and Its Impact on Selected Student Related Issues (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, August 2012). <http://budurl.com/IDRArptJ13> • IDRA. (May 13, 2016). "Fair Funding is Nonnegotiable – Texas Must Have Excellent Schools for All." IDRA statement. <http://budurl.com/IDRAeN051316> • Bojorquez, H. (2014). College Bound and Determined. IDRA. <http://budurl.com/IDRAcbdw> • Hanover Research. (2012). High Expectations and Student Success – Prepared for Springfield R-XII Public Schools. <http://danhaesler.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/High-Expectations-Mindset.pdf> • Honojosa, D. (October 2016). "Temporary Texas Policy Using Individual Graduation Committee Relieves High-Stakes for 6,000 Students." Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2015-16. IDRA. [budurl.com/IDRAigc](http://budurl.com/IDRAigc)

# Texas Education Agency Reports 33,437 Students Dropped Out

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

The Texas Education Agency released its latest dropout and school completion report in August 2016. This report entitled, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2014-15*, presented information on the number and percent of seventh through 12th grade students who left school prior to graduation with a high school diploma. The report also presented information on high school graduation and completion rates. For the 10th year, TEA used the dropout definition and calculation methods mandated by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

**Annual Dropout Rate.** This latest report shows a 1.5 percent annual dropout rate for grades 7-12, and a 2.1 percent annual dropout rate for grades 9-12. These rates were one-tenth of a percentage point lower, respectively, than previous year (2013-14). The annual dropout rate is the percentage of high school students who left high school in a particular year.

TEA reports that the number of school dropouts for grades 7-12 decreased from 35,358 in 2013-14 to 33,437 in 2014-15, a decrease of 5.4 percent (see Page 31).

Of the 33,437 dropouts in the latest report, 2,584 were in grades 7-8, and 30,853 were in grades 9-12. The attrition rate for the class of 2015 (grades 9-12) was 20.3 percent – down from 20.9 percent for the class of 2014.

At the high school level (grades 9-12), TEA reported that the number of school dropouts decreased from 31,384 in 2013-14 to 30,853 in 2014-15, a decrease of 1.7 percent (see table below). Across race-ethnicity groups, the annual dropout rate was 3.0 percent for African Ameri-

can students, 2.5 percent for Hispanic students, and 1.1 percent for White students. The rates for African American students declined by one-tenth of a percentage point, while the rates for Hispanics and other students declined by two-tenths of a percentage point. The rate for White students remained unchanged at 1.1 percent.

At the middle school level (grades 7-8), TEA reported that the number of school dropouts decreased from 3,974 in 2013-14 to 2,584 in 2014-15, a decrease of 35.0 percent (see Page 32). The annual dropout rate for grades 7-8 decreased from 0.5 percent in 2013-14 to 0.3 percent in 2014-15. Across race-ethnicity groups, the annual dropout rate was 0.5 percent for African American students, 0.4 percent for Hispanic students and 0.2 percent for White students.

**NCES Dropout Definition.** The use of the NCES definition mandated by the 78th Texas Legislature's passage of Senate Bill 186 in 2003 continues to have a dramatic impact on dropout counting and reporting in Texas because more students who are not in school are factored into the dropout count. Since the use of the NCES dropout definition, the total number of dropouts reported by TEA at grades 7-12 increased from 18,290 in 2004-05 to 51,841 in 2005-06 and to 55,306 in 2006-07.

In the following years, the number ranged from a high of 45,796 in 2007-08 to a low of 33,437 in 2014-15.

From 2004-05 to 2014-15, the number of dropouts increased by 15,147 students or by 82.8 percent. The dropout count was 1.83 times higher in 2014-15 than in 2004-05.

**Longitudinal Dropout Rate.** TEA reported a ninth grade longitudinal dropout rate of 6.3 percent for the class of 2015 compared to 6.6 percent for the class of 2014. The reported longitudinal dropout rate for African American students (9.5 percent) was 2.79 times as high as the rate for White students (3.4 percent). Hispanic students had a 7.7 percent longitudinal dropout rate which was 2.26 times higher than the rate for White students.

According to TEA, ninth grade had the highest number of dropouts in 2014-15 with 8,229 dropouts, followed closely by grade 12 with 8,155 dropouts. The number of dropouts by grade level ranged from 993 in grade 7 to 8,229 in grade 12.

**Leaver Codes.** Beginning in the 1997-98 school year, Texas school districts have been required to report the reasons that students in grades 7-12 leave school. Districts must report information on every student enrolled in these grade levels using the following choices: (1) the student is enrolled during the current school year, or (2) the student is a leaver and must then be reported on the "leaver record" with at least one departure reason for that student.

During the 2014-15 school year, TEA tracked school leaver reasons in 17 areas (see Page 33). For each reported school leaver, school districts were allowed to report one of these reasons as to why the student is not counted as a dropout. For the 2014-15 school year, a total of 426,707 students were reported as school leavers. Of this number, 313,397 (73.5 percent) were reported as graduates from Texas public schools, and 119 (0.02 percent) were reported as graduates outside of the state.

According to TEA, another 7.8 percent of

students were reported as dropouts, and 18.7 percent left school for other reasons. Besides graduating from school or dropping out, the top five exit reasons included (1) left school to enroll in a school outside of Texas (35, 283); (2) unknown reasons (31,565); (3) left for home schooling (21,120); (4) left to return to family's home country (12,631); and (5) left to enroll in a private school in Texas (8,809).

On the national stage, Texas is considered one of the leading states with improved graduation rates and lowered dropout rates. At the state and local scene, TEA reports that the trends for

school completion and dropout rates in Texas are generally positive. Despite the optimism, some independent researchers continue to have a general concern about the authenticity of results, the continued gap in the rates of White students and other racial and ethnic groups, and concern the application and verification of dropout leaver reasons (Chávez, 2015; DeRuy, 2014).

**Resources**

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Texas Education Agency. (2016). Standard Reports, Enrollment Reports, 2005-06 to 2015-16 (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency). [http://tea.texas.gov/acctres/enroll\\_index.html](http://tea.texas.gov/acctres/enroll_index.html)

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## Texas Annual Dropout Rates – High School Reported by the Texas Education Agency, 1997-98 to 2014-15

School Year	Dropouts	Students	Annual Dropout Rate (%) By Group, Grades 9-12				
			African American	Hispanic	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

\*The 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 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." 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.

Source: Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2014-15, August 2016.

## Texas Annual Dropout Rates – Middle and High School

Reported by the Texas Education Agency, 1987-88 to 2014-15

School Year	Dropouts	Students	Annual Dropout Rate (%) By Group, Grades 7-12				
			African American	Hispanic	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

\*The 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 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." 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.

Source: 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 2014-15, August 2016.

## Exit Reasons for School Leavers, Grades 7-12, 2006-07 to 2014-15 Reported by the Texas Education Agency

Leaver Reasons (Code)	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
<b>Graduated or received an out-of-state GED</b>									
Graduated from a campus in this district or charter (01)	241,193	252,121	264,275	280,520	290,581	292,636	301,418	303,109	313,397
Graduated outside Texas before entering Texas public school, entered a Texas public school, and left again (85)	160	85	42	76	--	46	97	61	51
Completed GED outside Texas (86)	136	147	104	107	61	61	98	54	40
Graduated from another state under provisions of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Minority Children (90)						18	22	29	28
<b>Moved to other educational setting</b>									
Withdrew from/left school to enter college and is working toward an Associate's or Bachelor's degree (24)	712	748	763	651	673	399	380	318	319
Withdrew from/left school for home schooling (60)	20,716	22,622	20,948	20,214	20,876	20,629	21,375	21,812	21,120
Removed by CPS and the district has not been informed of the student's current status or enrollment (66)	287	294	194	232	702	232	239	312	164
Withdrew from/left school to enroll in a private school in Texas (81)	10,722	12,086	12,516	12,307	12,079	11,553	10,767	9,938	8,809
Withdrew from/left school to enroll in a public or private school outside Texas (82)	43,145	38,937	37,718	37,642	36,356	37,323	34,857	35,347	35,283
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)	94	272	214	252	262	269	273	271	252
<b>Withdrawn by district</b>									
Expelled under the provisions of the Texas Education Code §37.007 and cannot return to school (78)	585	481	526	637	253	242	153	134	116
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 proof of identification of immunization records (83)	2,536	1,379	1,161	719	505	408	355	321	397
<b>Other reasons</b>									
Died while enrolled in school or during the summer break after completing the prior school year (03)	733	601	611	603	546	579	565	565	636
Withdrew from/left school to return to family's home country (16)	15,985	16,601	15,319	14,446	13,816	13,089	12,059	12,576	12,631
Student was ordered by a court to attend a GED program and has not earned a GED certificate (88)	NA	NA	NA	NA	2,506	2,063	1,857	1,716	1,441
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)	NA	NA	NA	NA	516	533	380	406	458
Other (reason unknown or not listed above) (98)	55,485	45,888	40,972	34,949	31,367	33,721	32,499	33,269	31,565
<b>All leaver reasons</b>	<b>392,489</b>	<b>392,262</b>	<b>395,363</b>	<b>403,355</b>	<b>411,140</b>	<b>413,801</b>	<b>417,394</b>	<b>420,238</b>	<b>426,707</b>

Source: Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2006-07 to 2014-15

# Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate Texas Ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in On-time Graduation in 2014-15

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

In 2014-15, Texas ranked fourth out of 50 states and the District of Columbia on the newest measure of on-time graduation from public high schools – the adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR), which 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. Texas had an adjusted cohort graduation rate of 89.0 percent compared to the national average of 83.2 percent in 2014-15.

The ACGR in Texas has improved each year – the rate has improved from 2006-07 when it was 71.9 percent through 2014-15 when it was 89.0 percent. In 2013-14, Texas was in fifth place with a rate of 88.3 percent compared to the national average of 82.3 percent. In 2014-15, Texas had a fourth place ranking with an on-time cohort graduation rate of 89.0 percent compared to the national average of 83.2 percent.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, released the 2014-15 ACGR in September 2016. According to NCES, the ACGR is more accurate than the averaged freshman graduation rate (AFGR). The ACGR takes into consideration the number of students who transfer in and out of the cohort, thus defining the term “adjusted cohort” for this latest measure of high school graduation. (See Page 41 for dropout measure definitions.)

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. In order to calculate the rate, aggregate student enrollment data are used to estimate the size of the incoming freshman class and aggregate counts of the number of diplomas awarded four years later.

## Methods

The 50 states and the District of Columbia reported counts of high school graduates in 2014-15 (see box on Page 36 for rates by state and rank orders by state for the last four years).

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, emigrated or died during the four-year school enrollment period. The result of the calculation is expressed as a percent.

## Major Findings

Major findings of the latest NCES study on the adjusted cohort graduation rate include the following (also see the boxes on Pages 36-38).

- In the 2014-15 school year, about four out of five students in the United States graduated from high school on time – within four years of starting high school as a freshman in ninth grade and adjusting for cohort transfers and removals.
- The adjusted cohort graduation rate in the United States was 83.2 percent in 2014-15, and ranged from a low of 68.5 percent in the District of Columbia to a high of 90.8 percent in Iowa.

- Twenty-nine of the reporting entities had rates equal to or higher than the national average of 83.2 percent. In 2014-15, Texas ranked fourth among the 50 reporting states and the District of Columbia with a rate of 89.0 percent. The Texas ACGR increased from 2013-14 (88.3 percent) to 2014-15 (89.0 percent).
- Twenty-two of the 50 reporting states and the District of Columbia had rates lower than the overall average of 83.2.
- In the United States in 2014-15, American Indian/Alaska Native, Black and Hispanic students had an adjusted cohort graduation rate below the national average of 83.8 percent. American Indian/Alaska Native had a national average ACGR of 71.6 percent, Black students had a national ACGR of 74.6 percent, and Hispanic students had a national ACGR of 77.8 percent. White students had a national ACGR of 87.6 percent while Asian/Pacific Islander students had a national ACGR of 90.2 percent.
- 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 White students (93.4 percent), Hispanic students (86.5 percent), and Black students (85.2 percent).
- In Texas, the ACGR for American Indian/Alaskan Native students ranked fourth in the nation at 86.0 percent and at third for Asian/Pacific Islander students (95.1 percent).
- For special population groups for the nation as a whole, economically disadvantaged students had an ACGR of 76.1 percent, limited-English-proficient students had an ACGR of 65.1 percent, and students with disabilities had an ACGR of 64.6 percent. Each of these groups had a rate below the national average.
- The state of Texas ranked high in the graduation rates of students in special population groups. Texas ranked first in the nation in the graduation rate of economically disadvantaged students with an ACGR of 85.6 percent. The state of Texas ranked second in the graduation rate of students with disabilities with a rate of 78.2 percent. For limited-English-proficient students, Texas ranked 13th with an ACGR of 73.3 percent.

Since the convening of the nation's governors in the 1989 Education Summit at the University of Virginia, the nation has sought to obtain

an education goal of having a graduation rate of at least 90 percent. In 1994, the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* specified that by the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent. To date, this goal has not been realized, but based on the latest report on adjusted cohort graduation rates, the nation is the closest as it has ever been with a rate of 83.2 percent. Based on the ACGR measure, one state (Iowa) has reached the 90 percent goal and five states (Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Texas, and Wisconsin) are creeping ever closer to the 90 percent goal with reported graduation rates consistently in the upper 80s over the last three years.

Nationally and in Texas, about four out of five students who enter a freshman class graduated with a regular diploma within four years as measured by the adjusted cohort graduation rate.

Despite the continuing improvement and the possibility that more states will soon reach the 90 percent graduation rate goal, the need to continue the monitoring of the ACGR as the major measure of on-time graduation and school completion must continue to be undertaken. In the United States, most minority group students and students in special populations had an on-time graduation rate below the national average.

Questions persist regarding which students are removed from the cohort as school leavers, what students are considered a school dropout, what constitutes a regular high school diploma, what verification steps of school dropout and completion are being undertaken, and other germane factors (Civic Enterprises & Everyone Graduates Center, 2016; Morgan, 2014). Without a doubt the improvement in graduation rates in the nation should be applauded with efforts strengthened to eradicate the gap in graduation rates for students of color.

## Resources

- Civic Enterprises & Everyone Graduates Center. (2016). *Building a Grad Nation: Progress and Challenges in Raising High School Graduation Rates, Annual Update 2016* (Washington, D.C.: Civic Enterprises & Everyone Graduates Center at the School of Education at John Hopkins University). [http://www.gradnation.org/sites/default/files/civic\\_2016\\_full\\_report\\_FNL.pdf](http://www.gradnation.org/sites/default/files/civic_2016_full_report_FNL.pdf)
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## Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) by State

State	2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank
<b>United States</b>	<b>79</b>		<b>80</b>		<b>81.4</b>		<b>82.3</b>		<b>83.2</b>	
Alabama	72	40	75	37	80.0	32	86.3	18	89.3	3
Alaska	68	43	70	43	71.8	45	71.1	48	75.6	46
Arizona	78	26	76	35	75.1	43	75.7	43	77.4	44
Arkansas	81	21	84	15	84.9	19	86.9	15	84.9	25
California	76	33	79	28	80.4	30	81.0	33	82.0	31
Colorado	74	37	75	37	76.9	38	77.3	41	77.3	45
Connecticut	83	12	85	11	85.5	15	87.0	13	87.2	14
Delaware	78	26	80	25	80.4	30	87.0	13	85.6	22
District of Columbia	59	48	59	48	62.3	50	61.4	51	68.5	51
Florida	71	41	75	37	75.6	41	76.1	43	77.9	42
Georgia	67	45	70	43	71.7	46	72.5	46	78.8	40
Hawaii	80	23	81	23	82.4	27	81.8	30	81.6	33
Idaho	---	NR	---	NR	---	NR	77.3	41	78.9	39
Illinois	84	10	82	22	83.2	23	86.0	20	85.6	22
Indiana	86	4	86	8	87.0	8	87.9	7	87.1	15
Iowa	88	1	89	1	89.7	1	90.5	1	90.8	1
Kansas	83	12	85	11	85.7	13	85.7	21	85.7	20
Kentucky	---	NR	---	NR	86.1	12	87.5	9	88.0	8
Louisiana	71	41	72	42	73.5	44	74.6	45	77.5	43
Maine	84	10	85	11	86.4	10	86.5	16	87.5	12
Maryland	83	12	84	15	85.0	17	86.4	17	87.0	16
Massachusetts	83	12	85	11	85.0	17	86.1	19	87.3	13
Michigan	74	37	76	35	77.0	36	78.6	36	79.8	36
Minnesota	77	30	78	31	79.8	33	81.2	32	81.9	32
Mississippi	75	36	75	37	75.5	42	77.6	40	75.4	47
Missouri	81	21	84	15	85.7	13	87.3	10	87.8	10
Montana	82	19	84	15	84.4	22	85.4	22	86.0	19
Nebraska	86	4	88	2	88.5	2	89.7	2	88.9	5
Nevada	62	47	63	47	70.7	47	70.0	49	71.3	49
New Hampshire	86	4	86	8	87.3	7	88.1	6	88.1	7
New Jersey	83	12	86	8	87.5	5	88.6	3	89.7	2
New Mexico	63	46	70	43	70.3	48	68.5	50	68.6	50
New York	77	30	77	32	76.8	39	77.8	39	79.2	38
North Carolina	78	26	80	25	82.5	26	83.9	26	85.6	22
North Dakota	86	4	87	6	87.5	5	87.2	11	86.6	17
Ohio	80	23	81	23	82.2	28	81.8	30	80.7	34
Oklahoma	---	NR	---	NR	84.8	20	82.7	28	82.5	30
Oregon	68	43	68	46	68.7	49	72.0	47	73.8	48
Pennsylvania	83	12	84	15	85.5	15	85.3	23	84.8	26
Rhode Island	77	30	77	32	79.7	34	80.8	34	83.2	29
South Carolina	74	37	75	37	77.6	35	80.1	35	80.3	35
South Dakota	83	12	83	20	82.7	25	82.7	28	83.9	28
Tennessee	86	4	87	6	86.3	11	87.2	11	87.9	9
<b>Texas</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>88.0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>88.3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>89.0</b>	<b>4</b>
Utah	76	33	80	25	83.0	24	83.9	26	84.8	26
Vermont	87	2	88	2	86.6	9	87.8	8	87.7	11
Virginia	82	19	83	20	84.5	21	85.3	23	85.7	20
Washington	76	33	77	32	76.4	40	78.2	38	78.2	41
West Virginia	78	26	79	28	81.4	29	84.5	25	86.5	18
Wisconsin	87	2	88	2	88.0	3	88.6	3	88.4	6
Wyoming	80	23	79	28	77.0	36	78.6	36	79.3	37

--- Not available NR – Not Ranked

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Consolidated State Performance Report, 2010-11 through 2013-14; U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, ED Facts, 2010-11 through 2014-15, September 15, 2016.

## Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) by State and Race-Ethnicity

State	Total		American Indian/ Alaskan Native		Asian/Pacific Islander		Hispanic		Black		White	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank
<b>United States</b>	<b>83.2</b>		<b>71.6</b>		<b>90.2</b>		<b>77.8</b>		<b>74.6</b>		<b>87.6</b>	
Alabama	89.3	3	90.0	1	93.0	9	90.0	1	87.0	1	90.5	12
Alaska	75.6	46	64.0	38	83.0	42	72.0	36	71.0	36	80.0	46
Arizona	77.4	44	66.8	34	87.0	31	72.7	33	72.6	31	83.2	37
Arkansas	84.9	25	80.0	14	86.0	34	84.5	3	77.5	18	87.4	28
California	82.0	31	73.0	27	92.2	14	79.0	18	71.0	36	88.0	25
Colorado	77.3	45	64.0	38	87.0	32	67.6	46	69.9	39	82.6	42
Connecticut	87.2	14	87.0	3	95.0	4	74.8	31	78.0	17	92.7	4
Delaware	85.6	22	69.0	32	94.0	7	81.0	14	83.2	3	88.0	25
District of Columbia	68.5	51	<	NR	79.0	47	68.0	44	67.1	44	86.0	33
Florida	77.9	42	76.0	20	90.5	24	76.7	24	68.0	41	82.7	39
Georgia	78.8	40	76.0	20	87.9	30	72.0	36	75.2	26	82.8	38
Hawaii	81.6	33	61.0	41	82.8	43	75.0	27	74.0	30	79.0	48
Idaho	78.9	39	66.0	35	84.0	40	71.2	39	75.0	27	80.8	45
Illinois	85.6	22	79.0	17	93.8	8	80.7	15	75.5	25	90.2	13
Indiana	87.1	15	86.0	4	88.0	28	83.0	6	74.9	29	89.6	14
Iowa	90.8	1	85.0	7	92.0	15	83.0	6	79.0	14	92.4	6
Kansas	85.7	20	81.0	12	91.0	18	78.2	20	79.0	14	88.3	23
Kentucky	88.0	8	81.0	12	91.0	18	83.0	6	80.4	11	89.3	17
Louisiana	77.5	43	76.0	20	90.0	26	75.0	27	71.4	35	82.7	39
Maine	87.5	12	82.0	10	93.0	10	80.0	16	80.0	12	87.9	27
Maryland	87.0	16	79.0	17	95.9	2	76.9	23	82.3	5	92.0	7
Massachusetts	87.3	13	80.0	14	92.3	13	72.2	34	77.5	18	91.6	8
Michigan	79.8	36	71.0	28	90.3	25	72.1	35	67.3	43	83.5	36
Minnesota	81.9	32	52.0	46	82.7	44	65.6	51	62.0	48	86.9	30
Mississippi	75.4	47	70.0	30	85.0	38	68.0	44	72.0	32	79.4	47
Missouri	87.8	10	86.0	4	93.0	10	84.0	4	75.6	24	90.6	10
Montana	86.0	19	67.0	33	95.0	4	83.0	6	82.0	7	88.7	20
Nebraska	88.9	5	76.0	20	79.0	47	81.6	13	75.0	27	92.5	5
Nevada	71.3	49	58.0	44	82.0	45	66.7	49	55.5	51	78.0	49
New Hampshire	88.1	7	75.0	25	91.0	18	75.0	27	80.0	12	88.9	19
New Jersey	89.7	2	89.0	2	96.3	1	82.8	11	81.5	8	94.0	1
New Mexico	68.6	50	63.0	40	79.0	47	67.2	48	61.0	49	73.6	51
New York	79.2	38	65.0	36	84.9	39	66.0	50	66.5	45	88.7	20
North Carolina	85.6	22	82.0	10	92.0	15	80.0	16	82.2	6	88.3	23
North Dakota	86.6	17	60.0	42	78.0	50	75.0	27	76.0	23	90.6	10
Ohio	80.7	34	75.0	25	86.0	34	69.9	41	59.7	50	85.7	34
Oklahoma	82.5	30	82.2	9	89.0	27	78.8	19	77.4	20	84.2	35
Oregon	73.8	48	55.0	45	84.0	40	67.4	47	63.0	47	76.0	50
Pennsylvania	84.8	26	76.0	20	90.7	23	69.5	43	71.8	34	89.3	17
Rhode Island	83.2	29	65.0	36	87.0	32	76.0	25	77.0	21	86.6	32
South Carolina	80.3	35	80.0	14	91.0	18	77.0	22	76.7	22	82.7	39
South Dakota	83.9	28	49.0	48	81.0	46	70.0	40	72.0	32	89.5	16
Tennessee	87.9	9	85.0	7	93.0	10	83.5	5	80.6	10	90.9	9
<b>Texas</b>	<b>89.0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>86.0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>95.1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>86.5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>85.2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>93.4</b>	<b>2</b>
Utah	84.8	26	70.0	30	86.0	34	74.4	32	70.0	38	87.4	28
Vermont	87.7	11	>=50%	47	76.0	51	82.0	12	81.0	9	88.5	22
Virginia	85.7	20	---	NR	91.9	17	76.0	25	78.8	16	89.6	15
Washington	78.2	41	60.0	42	85.5	37	69.6	42	68.8	40	80.9	44
West Virginia	86.5	18	71.0	28	>=95%	4	83.0	6	83.0	4	86.7	31
Wisconsin	88.4	6	78.0	19	91.0	18	77.5	21	64.1	46	92.9	3
Wyoming	79.3	37	45.0	49	88.0	28	72.0	36	68.0	41	81.8	43

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

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Consolidated State Performance Report, 2010-11 through 2013-14.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, EDData, 2010-11 through 2014-15, September 15, 2016.

## Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR), by Special Population Group

State	Total		Economically Disadvantaged		Limited English Proficiency		Students with Disabilities	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank
<b>United States</b>	<b>83.2</b>		<b>76.1</b>		<b>65.1</b>		<b>64.6</b>	
Alabama	89.3	3	84.7	4	75.0	9	72.4	11
Alaska	75.6	46	66.6	46	56.0	38	57.0	40
Arizona	77.4	44	73.1	33	34.0	50	64.4	30
Arkansas	84.9	25	81.7	8	86.0	1	81.9	1
California	82.0	31	78.0	15	69.0	18	65.0	29
Colorado	77.3	45	65.5	49	61.1	33	53.8	43
Connecticut	87.2	14	75.9	25	67.0	21	65.6	28
Delaware	85.6	22	76.0	24	69.0	18	66.0	26
District of Columbia	68.5	51	68.2	41	62.0	29	46.0	48
Florida	77.9	42	70.4	39	59.5	35	56.8	41
Georgia	78.8	40	74.5	31	56.4	37	54.3	42
Hawaii	81.6	33	75.9	25	46.0	47	60.0	33
Idaho	78.9	39	72.0	34	72.0	15	58.0	37
Illinois	85.6	22	77.9	17	72.0	15	70.5	16
Indiana	87.1	15	84.2	5	75.0	9	70.9	15
Iowa	90.8	1	84.8	2	83.0	3	77.0	5
Kansas	85.7	20	77.3	19	77.0	4	77.3	4
Kentucky	88.0	8	84.8	2	67.0	21	66.0	26
Louisiana	77.5	43	70.8	37	50.0	44	44.3	49
Maine	87.5	12	75.6	28	77.0	4	74.0	9
Maryland	87.0	16	78.6	13	49.0	46	63.9	31
Massachusetts	87.3	13	78.2	14	64.0	24	69.9	18
Michigan	79.8	36	67.5	43	72.1	14	57.1	39
Minnesota	81.9	32	67.2	44	63.1	27	61.1	32
Mississippi	75.4	47	70.5	38	53.0	42	30.7	50
Missouri	87.8	10	80.7	11	71.0	17	76.6	6
Montana	86.0	19	76.9	21	62.0	29	75.0	8
Nebraska	88.9	5	81.4	10	55.0	41	71.0	14
Nevada	71.3	49	63.7	50	32.0	51	29.0	51
New Hampshire	88.1	7	76.7	22	77.0	4	73.0	10
New Jersey	89.7	2	81.7	8	74.0	12	78.0	3
New Mexico	68.6	50	63.5	51	64.0	24	59.3	35
New York	79.2	38	71.0	35	36.0	49	52.9	44
North Carolina	85.6	22	79.6	12	58.0	36	67.3	24
North Dakota	86.6	17	71.0	35	62.0	29	68.0	20
Ohio	80.7	34	68.7	40	50.0	45	67.0	25
Oklahoma	82.5	30	77.5	18	60.0	34	75.6	7
Oregon	73.8	48	66.4	47	51.0	43	52.7	45
Pennsylvania	84.8	26	75.9	25	62.6	28	71.5	13
Rhode Island	83.2	29	75.6	28	77.0	4	68.0	20
South Carolina	80.3	35	73.7	32	76.0	8	49.0	47
South Dakota	83.9	28	67.0	45	56.0	38	60.0	33
Tennessee	87.9	9	83.5	6	75.0	9	70.0	17
<b>Texas</b>	<b>89.0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>85.6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>73.3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>78.2</b>	<b>2</b>
Utah	84.8	26	76.7	22	66.0	23	67.9	22
Vermont	87.7	11	78.0	15	69.0	18	72.0	12
Virginia	85.7	20	75.4	30	44.6	48	52.6	46
Washington	78.2	41	68.1	42	55.8	40	58.0	37
West Virginia	86.5	18	82.9	7	86.0	1	69.0	19
Wisconsin	88.4	6	77.3	19	62.0	29	67.5	23
Wyoming	79.3	37	66.0	48	64.0	24	59.0	36

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Consolidated State Performance Report, 2010-11 through 2013-14; U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, EDData, 2010-11 through 2014-15, September 15, 2016.

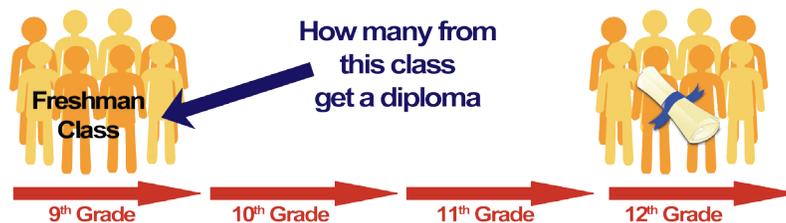
## Types of Dropout Data Defined

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) and 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. The Texas Education Agency reports an annual dropout rate; longitudinal graduation, completion and dropout rates and attrition rate.

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?

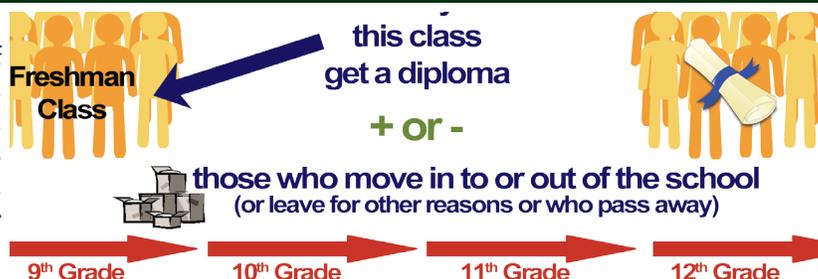
### Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate

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.



### 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 10<sup>th</sup> grade in high schools that begin with the 10<sup>th</sup> 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.



## Types of Dropout Data Defined (continued)

### 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.)



How many of a certain age aren't in school and do not have a diploma or GED

### Status Completion Rate

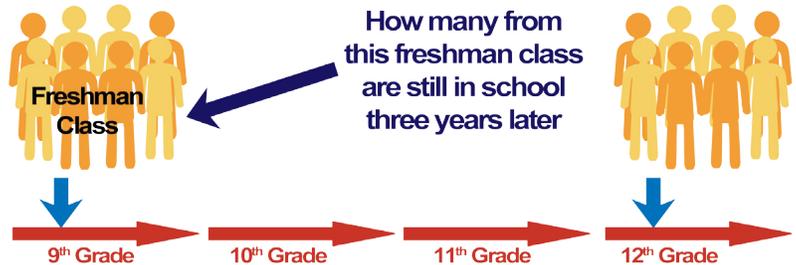
High school status completion rates describe the proportion of individuals in a given age range who are not in high school and who have earned a high school diploma or equivalency credential (namely the GED certificate), irrespective of when the credential was earned. (This rate also is referred to as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



How many of a certain age aren't in school and do have a diploma or GED

### Attrition Rate

Attrition rates measure the number of students lost from enrollment between two points in time (e.g., ninth grade and 12<sup>th</sup> 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).



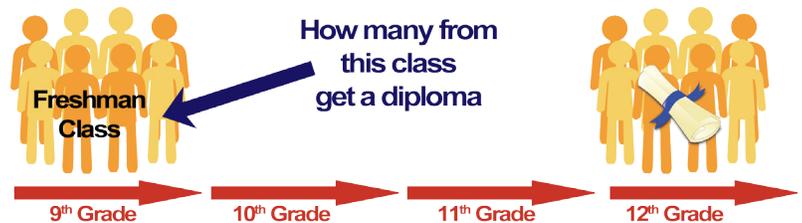
### Cohort Rate

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.



### 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.





Continuities: Lessons for the Future of Education from the IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is available from IDRA or free online at [www.idra.org](http://www.idra.org).



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## What We Have Learned

Anchored in IDRA's experience, *Continuities: Lessons for the Future of Education from the IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program*, captures seven key lessons for improving the quality of education for all students. It was released on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program and in celebration of its success in keeping tens of thousands of students in school and positively impacting more than half a million children, families and educators on three continents.



- 1. Valuing Youth Works.** If you provide young people with an opportunity to contribute – to themselves, their families, their communities – they will.
- 2. Local Ownership is Key.** To scale up and replicate success requires holding fast to essentials while adapting to local contexts.
- 3. School Leadership Sets the Tone.** To squarely take on attrition, school leaders must inspire innovation, embody engagement, and incorporate actionable knowledge.
- 4. Realizing the Power of One + One + One.** All students must have at least one caring adult in their lives at school and a reason to care.
- 5. Family and Community Engagement is Essential.** The school-family-community triad is at the heart of holding on to students and ensuring their success.
- 6. Success Demands Well-Defined Partnerships.** When roles are clear and each partner contributes from its unique strengths, a multi-sector collaboration can reap dramatic results.
- 7. Structure and Innovation Sustains Impact.** Transformative impact demands sustained structures, resources and a commitment to valuing all youth.

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IDRA is an independent, private non-profit organization, directed by María Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., dedicated to assuring educational opportunity for every child. At IDRA, we develop innovative research- and experience-based solutions and policies to assure that (1) all students have access to and succeed in high quality schools, (2) families and communities have a voice in transforming the educational institutions that serve their children, and (3) educators have access to integrated professional development that helps to solve problems, create solutions, and use best practices to educate all students to high standards.

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