# IDRA
## REPORT

### Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2014-15

# Texas High School Attrition Rates Stall

*by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.*

This report presents results of long-term trend assessments of attrition data in Texas public high schools. In this most recent annual attrition study that examines school holding power, IDRA found that 24 percent of the freshman class of 2011-12 left school prior to graduating from a Texas public high school in the 2014-15 school year (see table on Page 2). For each racial and ethnic group, the study found that 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 and Black students are still nearly as high as or higher than 30 years ago. The current statewide attrition rate of 24 percent is 9 percentage points lower than the initial rate of 33 percent found in IDRA's landmark 1985-86 study, a decline of 27 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. (Montes, 2015) (See analysis on Page 22.)

Key findings of the latest study include the following.

- The overall attrition rate stayed the same in 2014-15 as last year in 2013-14 at **24 percent**.

- Texas public schools are **failing to graduate one out of every four students**.

- At this rate, Texas will not reach universal high school education for **another quarter of a century** in 2035.

- Numerically, **99,297 students were lost** from public high school enrollment in 2014-15 compared to 86,276 in 1985-86.

- The overall attrition rate was less than 30 percent

**24%** All Students

**14%** White Students

**26%** Black Students

**31%** Hispanic 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.**

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

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

### It has taken three decades to improve by 9 percentage points: from 33 percent to 24 percent

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## Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools by Year 1985-86 to 2014-15

| 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 |

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

in the last six study years – the attrition rate was 29 percent in 2009-10, 27 percent in 2010-11, 26 percent in 2011-12, 25 percent in 2012-13, 24 percent in 2013-14, and 24 percent in 2014-15.

- From 1985-86 to 2014-15, attrition rates of Hispanic students declined by 31 percent (from 45 percent to 31 percent). The attrition rates of Black students declined by 24 percent (from 34 percent to 26 percent). Attrition rates of White students declined by 48 percent (from 27 percent to 14 percent).

- **Racial and ethnic gaps are nearly as high as or higher than 30 years ago.** The attrition gap between White students and Hispanic students was 17 percentage points in 2014-15 nearly matching the 18 percentage points from 1985-86, and the gap between White students and Black students increased from 7 percentage points in 1985-86 to 12 percentage points in 2014-15.

- For the class of 2014-15, **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 3.5 million students** from public high school enrollment prior to graduation.

- The attrition rates of males have been higher than those of females. In the class of 2014-15, males were 1.2 times more likely to leave school without graduating with a diploma than females.

- From 1985-86 to 2014-15, 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, Robledo Montecel & Supik, 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, Robledo Montecel & Supik, 1986). The 69th Texas 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.

Over the 30-year study period, Texas public schools have lost a cumulative total of more than 3.5 million students from high school enrollment without a high school diploma. 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 have been showing a positive change for the number and percent of students

who continue their school enrollment through graduation. IDRA's latest annual attrition study shows that the overall attrition rate declined from 29 percent in 2009-10 to 27 percent the next year, and 26 percent, 25 percent, and 24 percent each subsequent year until this year when the rate did not change. For only the sixth time in the 30-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.

Over the last decade, attrition rates have been on a steady decline by one or two percentage points each year. Although this indicated improvement in schools' abilities to hold on to their students

## 2011-12 and 2014-15 Enrollment, 2014-15 Attrition in Texas

| Race-Ethnicity and Gender | 2011-12 9th Grade Enrollment | 2014-15 12th Grade Enrollment | 2011-12 9-12th Grade Enrollment | 2014-15 9-12th Grade Enrollment | 2014-15 Expected 12th Grade Enrollment | Students Lost to Attrition | Attrition Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Native** | 1,819 | 1,308 | 6,416 | 5,713 | 1,621 | 313 | 19 |
| Male | 972 | 676 | 3,352 | 3,041 | 882 | 206 | 23 |
| Female | 847 | 632 | 3,064 | 2,672 | 739 | 107 | 14 |
| **Asian/Pacific Islander** | 13,812 | 13,536 | 50,428 | 56,781 | 15,553 | 2,017 | 13 |
| Male | 7,041 | 6,849 | 2,5990 | 29,139 | 7,894 | 1,045 | 13 |
| Female | 6,771 | 6,687 | 24,438 | 27,642 | 7,659 | 972 | 13 |
| **Black** | 50,613 | 38,267 | 173,732 | 177,778 | 51,792 | 13,525 | 26 |
| Male | 26,661 | 19,090 | 88,968 | 91,044 | 27,283 | 8,193 | 30 |
| Female | 23,952 | 19,177 | 84,764 | 86,734 | 24,509 | 5,332 | 22 |
| **White** | 119,788 | 102,061 | 446,179 | 443,647 | 119,108 | 17,047 | 14 |
| Male | 62,391 | 52,344 | 229,678 | 228,412 | 62,047 | 9,703 | 16 |
| Female | 57,397 | 49,717 | 216,501 | 215,235 | 57,061 | 7,344 | 13 |
| **Hispanic** | 189,243 | 143,154 | 623,632 | 685,363 | 207,979 | 64,825 | 31 |
| Male | 99,118 | 71,406 | 318,838 | 350,668 | 109,013 | 37,607 | 34 |
| Female | 90,125 | 71,748 | 304,794 | 334,695 | 98,966 | 27,218 | 28 |
| **Multiracial** | 5,917 | 5,301 | 21,191 | 24,603 | 6,871 | 1,570 | 23 |
| Male | 2,925 | 2,571 | 10,345 | 12,176 | 3,443 | 872 | 25 |
| Female | 2,992 | 2,730 | 10,846 | 12,427 | 3,428 | 698 | 20 |
| **All Groups** | 381,192 | 303,627 | 1,321,578 | 1,393,885 | 402,924 | 99,297 | 24 |
| Male | 199,108 | 152,936 | 677,171 | 714,480 | 210,562 | 57,626 | 27 |
| Female | 182,084 | 150,691 | 644,407 | 679,405 | 192,362 | 41,671 | 22 |

Notes: Figures calculated by IDRA from Texas Education Agency *Fall Membership Survey* data. IDRA's 2014-15 attrition study involved the analysis of enrollment figures for public high school students in the ninth grade during 2011-12 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 2014-15 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, 2015

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 at grades nine through 12 increased from 1,410,004 in 2013-14 to 1,449,066 in 2014-15 (see table on Page 5). The percentage of the ninth through 12th grade population reported as Hispanic increased from 48.9 percent to 49.6 percent in the one-year period. The percentage of

## Attrition and Dropout Rates in Texas Over Time
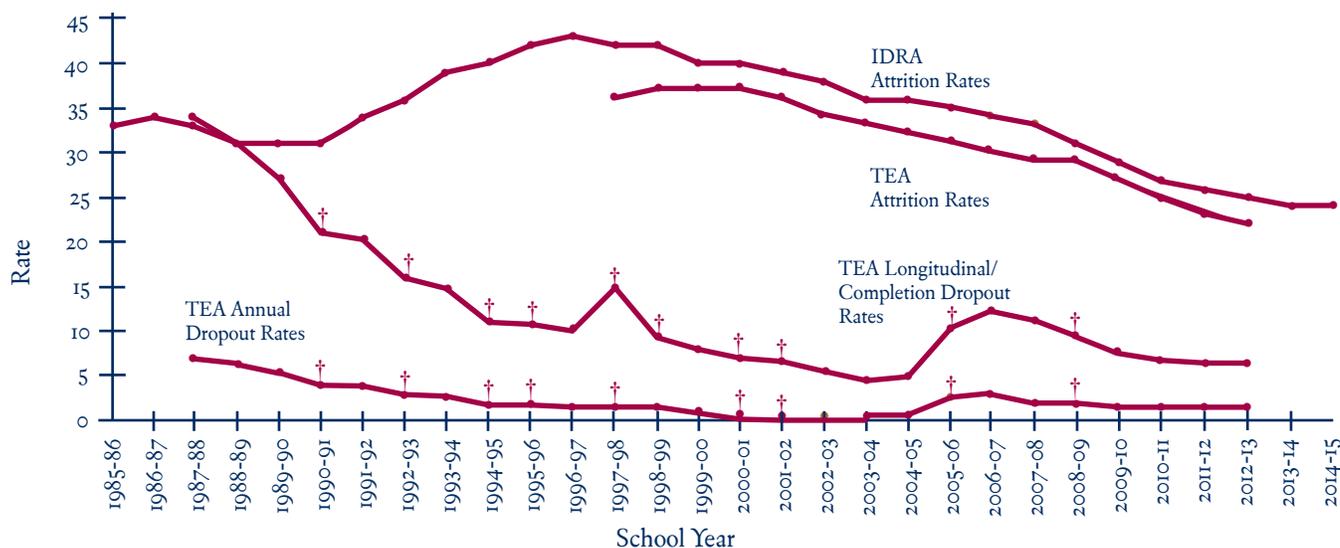


† Change in TEA dropout definition or data processing procedures
Sources: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015. Texas Education Agency, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15.*

the ninth through 12th grade population reported as Black or African American declined from 13.0 percent to 12.9 percent, and the percentage reported as White declined from 32.0 percent to 31.4 percent (see table on Page 6).

### 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 (see Page 38 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 today, the attrition studies conducted by IDRA 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 two 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 12th grade 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 table on Page 8). Enrollment data from special school districts (military schools, state schools, charter schools) are excluded from the analyses because they are likely to have unstable enrollments or lack a tax base for school programs.

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

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 (24 percent) from the freshman class of 2011-12 left school prior to graduating with a high school diploma. For the

## Additional Resources Online

- Look Up Your County – See attrition rates and numbers over the last 10 years
- Tool – Quality School Holding Power Checklist
- eBook – Types of Dropout Data Defined
- OurSchool data portal – see district- and high school-level data (in English and Spanish)
- Book – Courage to Connect: A Quality Schools Action Framework
- Overview of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, which keeps 98 percent of students in school
- Ideas and Strategies for Action
- Set of principles for policymakers and school leaders
- Classnotes Podcasts: on Dropout Prevention and College-Readiness
- Graduation for All E-letter (English/Spanish)

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## Texas Student Enrollment, Grades 9-12, 2011-12 to 2014-15

| Race-Ethnicity | Enrollment by Grade | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 9-12 |
| **2011-12** | | | | | |
| Black or African American | 52,807 | 45,440 | 42,738 | 39,371 | 180,356 |
| Hispanic | 196,580 | 165,255 | 149,874 | 135,357 | 647,066 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 1,915 | 1,672 | 1,669 | 1,464 | 6,720 |
| White | 121,994 | 115,622 | 111,185 | 105,829 | 454,630 |
| Asian | 13,688 | 12,823 | 12,150 | 11,159 | 49,820 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 521 | 434 | 433 | 413 | 1,801 |
| Multiracial | 6,048 | 5,652 | 5,168 | 4,786 | 21,654 |
| **Total** | **393,553** | **346,898** | **323,217** | **298,379** | **1,362,047** |
| **2012-13** | | | | | |
| 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 or Other Pacific Islander | 522 | 498 | 453 | 400 | 1,873 |
| Multiracial | 6,538 | 5,799 | 5,491 | 4,959 | 22,787 |
| **Total** | **402,426** | **350,561** | **327,840** | **305,237** | **1,386,064** |
| **2013-14** | | | | | |
| 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 or Other Pacific Islander | 554 | 469 | 513 | 422 | 1,958 |
| Multiracial | 6,952 | 6,196 | 5,643 | 5,357 | 24,148 |
| **Total** | **408,202** | **362,569** | **330,382** | **308,851** | **1,410,004** |
| **2014-15** | | | | | |
| 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 or Other Pacific Islander | 532 | 540 | 464 | 496 | 2,032 |
| Multiracial | 7,295 | 6,614 | 6,012 | 5,404 | 25,325 |
| **Total** | **419,942** | **373,245** | **342,069** | **313,810** | **1,449,066** |

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, 2015.

# Texas Student Enrollment, Grades 9, 12 and 9-12,
## 2011-12 to 2014-15 (percent)

| Race-Ethnicity | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **9th Grade Enrollment** | | | | |
| Black or African American | 13.4 | 13.4 | 13.2 | 13.0 |
| Hispanic | 50.7 | 51.0 | 51.0 | 51.5 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| White | 31.0 | 30.3 | 30.1 | 29.5 |
| Asian | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3.7 |
| Native Hawaiian/Other or Pacific Islander | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Multiracial | 1.5 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 1.7 |
| **Total All Ethnicities** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** |
| **12th Grade Enrollment** | | | | |
| Black or African American | 13.2 | 12.9 | 12.7 | 12.7 |
| Hispanic | 45.4 | 46.4 | 47.0 | 47.5 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| White | 35.5 | 34.5 | 33.9 | 33.2 |
| Asian | 3.7 | 3.9 | 4.2 | 4.3 |
| Native Hawaiian/Other or Pacific Islander | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| Multiracial | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 1.7 |
| **Total All Ethnicities** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** |
| **9-12th Grade Enrollment** | | | | |
| Black or African American | 13.2 | 13.1 | 13.0 | 12.9 |
| Hispanic | 47.5 | 48.3 | 48.9 | 49.6 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| White | 33.4 | 32.6 | 32.0 | 31.4 |
| Asian | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.8 | 3.9 |
| Native Hawaiian/Other or Pacific Islander | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Multiracial | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 1.7 |
| **Total All Ethnicities** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** | **100.0** |

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, 2015.

class of 2014-15, 99,297 students were lost from public school enrollment between the 2011-12 and 2014-15 school years. (See table on Page 9.)

The overall attrition rate declined from 33 percent in 1985-86 to 24 percent in 2014-15. 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 table on Page 2.)

The overall attrition rate was less than 30 percent for the sixth time in 30 years. After 24 consecutive years of overall statewide attrition rates at 31 percent or higher, the rates of 29 percent in 2009-10, 27 percent in 2010-11, 26 percent in 2011-12, 25 percent in 2012-13, 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 table on Page 2 and graph on Page 7.)

**Racial-Ethnic Student Data.** The attrition rates of Hispanic students and Black students are much higher than those of White students (see table on Page 3). From 1985-86 to 2014-15, 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 24 percent (from 34 percent to 26 percent). Attrition rates of White students declined by 48 percent (from 27 percent to 14 percent). Since last year, the gap between the attrition rates of White students and of Black students and Hispanic students remained the same.

Native American students had a decline of 58 percent in their attrition rates (from 45 percent to 19 percent), and Asian/Pacific Islander students had a decline of 61 percent (from 33 percent to 13 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 2014-15, 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 (see box on Page 15). 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 2014-15. The gap between the attrition rates of White students and Hispanic students slightly decreased from the 18 percentage points in 1985-86 to 17 percentage points in 2014-15. (See graphs on Page 10.)

The gap between the attrition rates of White students and Native American students has declined from 18 percentage points in 1985-86 to 5 percentage points in 2014-15. 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 one percentage point advantage in 2014-15.

Historically, Hispanic students and Black students have comprised a large proportion of students lost by schools. For the period of 1985-86 to 2014-15, students from ethnic minority groups account for nearly three-fourths (73.1 percent) of the estimated 3.5 million students lost from public high school enrollment.

Hispanic students account for 54.5 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 26.9 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 (see box on Page 3). From 1985-86 to 2014-15, 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 2014-15. 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 2014-15, 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 a map (on Page 11) and on an attrition rate table on Pages 12-13. In addition, trend data by county are available on IDRA's website at http://www.idra.org/Research/Attrition/ (see also box on Page 11). School district and high school-level data are available online as well through IDRA's OurSchool data portal, where the attrition figures provided are

from TEA databases (see box on Page 15).

The graph on Page 4 and table on Page 10 show 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 38.

## Conclusions

Recent reports from the state education agency and national education agencies show declines in dropout rates and increases in graduation rates. Independent researchers, including those from noted universities and groups involved with graduation campaigns, also are noting improvement in dropout and graduation rates. 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 due to concerns about counting and reporting (i.e., school leaver codes in Texas) and scandals surrounding reporting improprieties by some school officials. There are also continued concerns about the persistent gaps in the dropout rates among racial and ethnic groups.

IDRA is continuing to urge communities to come together to review issues surrounding school

# Longitudinal Attrition Rates by Race-Ethnicity in Texas Public Schools, 1985-86 to 2014-15
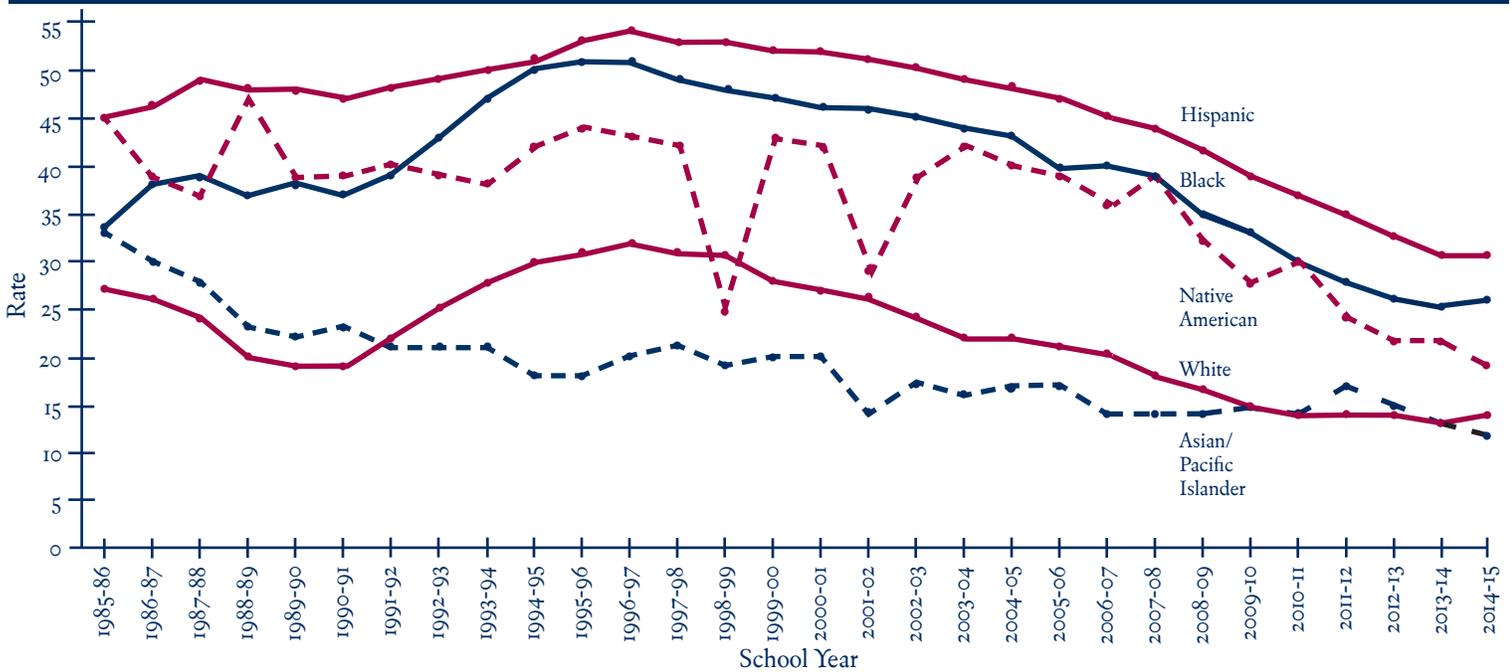


Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

# Longitudinal Attrition Rates in Texas Public High Schools,
## 1985-86 to 2014-15

| 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** |
| Percent Change* From 1985-86 to 2013-14 | -58 | -61 | -24 | -48 | -31 | N/A | -23 | -31 | -27 |

*\* Rounded to nearest whole number.*

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

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

dropouts and to take action for the benefit of children and the future of Texas. This fall, IDRA played a role in convening community leaders, families and superintendents in the Texas Rio Grande Valley to implement a standard graduation plan that provides students the courses needed for college readiness.

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 (Bojorquez, 2014). The report's webpage (http://www.idra.org/College_Bound_and_Determined/) provides details about this story and on how the report can be acquired (see Page 25).

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 (Robledo Montecel & Goodman, 2010). The book's web

# Numbers of Students Lost to Attrition in Texas,
## 1985-86 to 2013-14

| 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 |
| **All Years** | **3,553,531** | **10,551** | **48,488** | **598,126** | **955,113** | **1,938,101** | **3,152** | **2,029,563** | **1,523,968** |

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

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

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

N/A = Not applicable

## Trend in Black-White Attrition Rates

Black

Gap

White

**School Year**
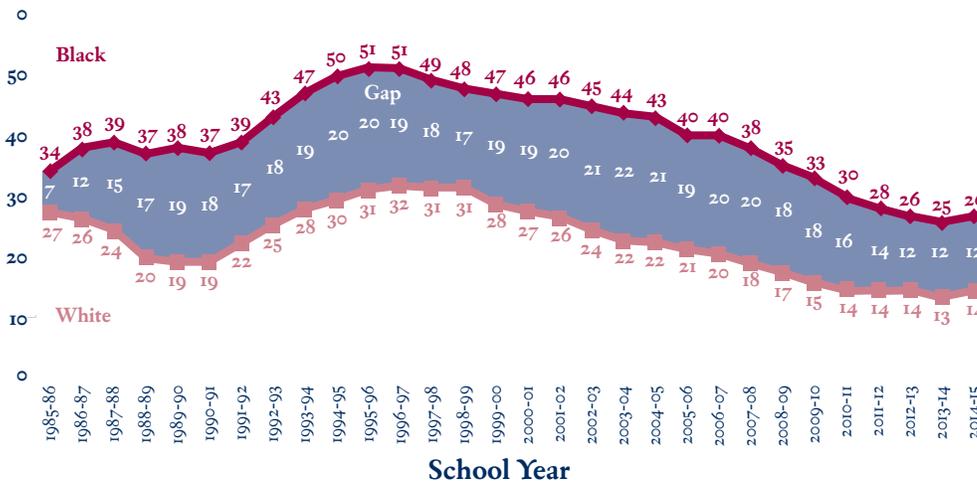
Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

## Trend in Hispanic-White Attrition Rates

Hispanic

Gap

White

**School Year**
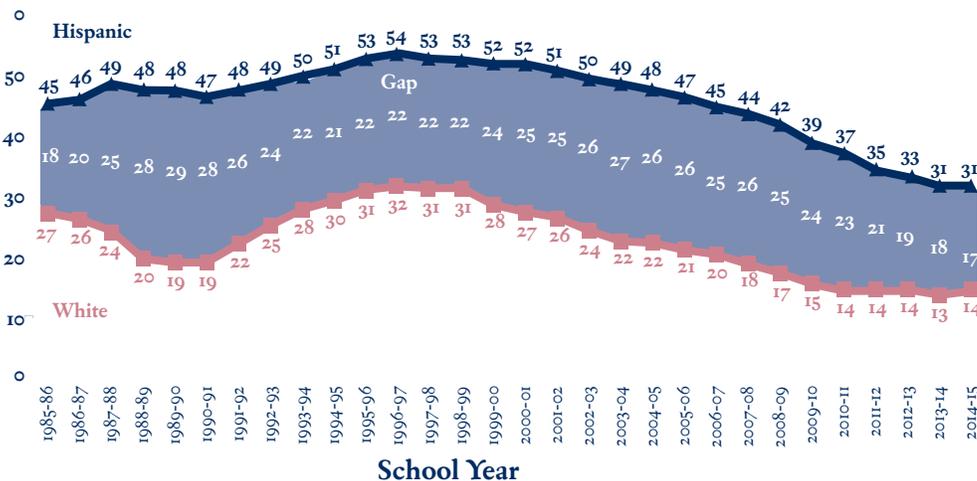
Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

## Attrition and Dropout Rates in Texas Over Time

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

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

page (http://www.idra.org/couragetoconnect) provides a table of contents, excerpts, related podcasts and other resources.

IDRA's online OurSchool data portal helps community and school partners to examine their school data and plan joint actions to improve school holding power. The portal can be assessed free of charge at http://www.idra.org/OurSchool. IDRA's one-page Quality School Holding Power Checklist provides a set of criteria for assessing and selecting effective dropout prevention strategies.

### Resources

Bojorquez, H. *College Bound and Determined* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2014).

Cárdenas, J.A., & M. Robledo Montecel, J. Supik. *Texas Dropout Survey Project* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1986).

Johnson, R., & F. Montes. *Public School Attrition Study, 2013-14: Texas Attrition Rate Dips One Percentage Point* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 2014).

Montes, F. "Elusive Zero Attrition Rate at Least 20 Years Away, Despite Progress," Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2014-15 (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 2015).

Robledo Montecel, M., & C.L. Goodman (eds). *Courage to Connect – A Quality Schools Action Framework* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2010).

Texas Education Agency. *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2013-14* (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency, August 2013).

Texas Education Agency. Standard Reports, Enrollment Reports, 2007-08 to 2014-15 (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency, 2015). http://ritter.tea.state.tex.us/adhocrpt/adste.html

*Roy L. Johnson, M.S., is director of IDRA Support Services. Felix Montes, Ph.D., is an IDRA research associate. Charles Cavazos, an IDRA education assistant, provided assistance with data analysis. Comments and questions may be directed to them via e-mail at comment@idra.org.*

# Attrition Rates by Texas County, 2014-15

See Pages 12-13
for County-level
Rates



**Legend:**
- 40%- 49%
- 30%-39%
- 20%-29%
- 19% or less
- No high school
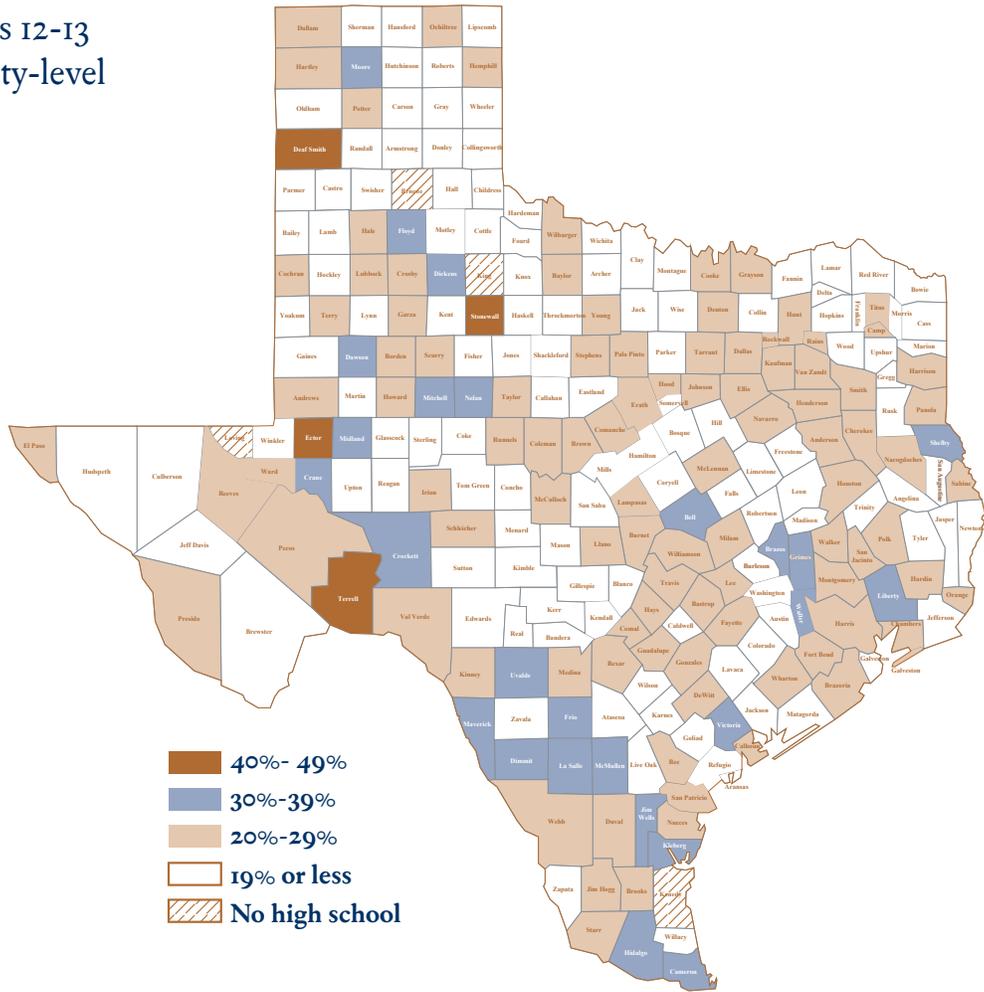
Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2014

# 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.

www.idra.org/Research/Attrition/
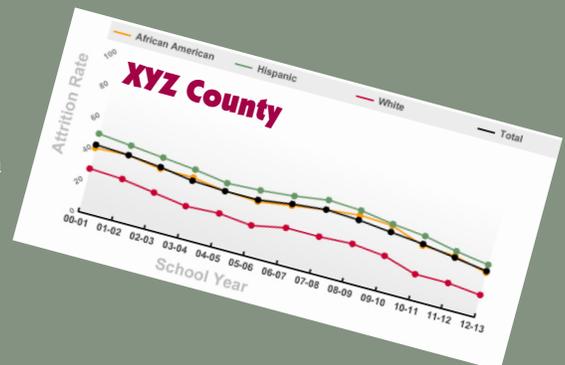
# Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools, by Texas County,
## by Race-Ethnicity, 2014-15

| County Name | Attrition Rates[1] | | | | County Name | Attrition Rates[1] | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Black | White | Hispanic | Total | | Black | White | Hispanic | Total |
| Anderson | 19 | 24 | 30 | 24 | Dewitt | 34 | 6 | 42 | 26 |
| Andrews | 25 | 20 | 28 | 26 | Dickens | • | 44 | 22 | 37 |
| Angelina | 15 | 15 | 29 | 19 | Dimmit | ** | 22 | 38 | 37 |
| Aransas | 40 | 16 | 25 | 19 | Donley | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Archer | 33 | 11 | 18 | 12 | Duval | 100 | 16 | 23 | 24 |
| Armstrong | • | 10 | 27 | 14 | Eastland | • | 15 | 20 | 16 |
| Atascosa | 48 | 2 | 22 | 18 | Ector | 46 | 29 | 43 | 40 |
| Austin | 12 | 8 | 25 | 15 | Edwards | • | ** | ** | ** |
| Bailey | • | 0 | 17 | 15 | Ellis | 19 | 16 | 26 | 20 |
| Bandera | 20 | 8 | 27 | 13 | El Paso | 27 | 12 | 23 | 23 |
| Bastrop | 21 | 16 | 39 | 29 | Erath | ** | 27 | 29 | 26 |
| Baylor | 14 | 16 | 35 | 20 | Falls | ** | ** | 13 | ** |
| Bee | ** | 31 | 30 | 29 | Fannin | 18 | 4 | 18 | 8 |
| Bell | 34 | 22 | 36 | 30 | Fayette | 23 | 14 | 33 | 20 |
| Bexar | 29 | 13 | 30 | 27 | Fisher | ** | 3 | ** | ** |
| Blanco | • | 10 | 31 | 16 | Floyd | 45 | 11 | 41 | 33 |
| Borden | • | 23 | 33 | 28 | Foard | ** | ** | 19 | ** |
| Bosque | ** | 11 | 39 | 18 | Fort Bend | 22 | 8 | 35 | 20 |
| Bowie | 18 | 12 | 33 | 16 | Franklin | ** | 16 | 16 | 13 |
| Brazoria | 22 | 19 | 36 | 26 | Freestone | 28 | 16 | 15 | 19 |
| Brazos | 35 | 13 | 44 | 30 | Frio | • | 5 | 35 | 32 |
| Brewster | 0 | 24 | 7 | 16 | Gaines | 60 | 5 | 22 | 15 |
| Briscoe | • | 31 | ** | ** | Galveston | 25 | 12 | 27 | 18 |
| Brooks | • | 14 | 29 | 29 | Garza | ** | 5 | 40 | 28 |
| Brown | 47 | 25 | 34 | 29 | Gillespie | ** | ** | 30 | 10 |
| Burleson | 33 | 4 | 31 | 17 | Glasscock | • | ** | 22 | 3 |
| Burnet | 19 | 15 | 33 | 22 | Goliad | 9 | 11 | 3 | 7 |
| Caldwell | 5 | 11 | 20 | 16 | Gonzales | 18 | ** | 34 | 24 |
| Calhoun | ** | 7 | 37 | 27 | Gray | 13 | 7 | 22 | 13 |
| Callahan | • | 11 | 50 | 15 | Grayson | 25 | 15 | 41 | 23 |
| Cameron | 32 | 10 | 34 | 33 | Gregg | 26 | 11 | 26 | 18 |
| Camp | 13 | 25 | 27 | 24 | Grimes | 38 | 27 | 39 | 33 |
| Carson | • | ** | 8 | ** | Guadalupe | 6 | 18 | 30 | 22 |
| Cass | 10 | 9 | 4 | 11 | Hale | ** | ** | 33 | 23 |
| Castro | ** | 16 | 20 | 19 | Hall | ** | 14 | 2 | 5 |
| Chambers | 20 | 22 | 16 | 20 | Hamilton | • | 13 | 23 | 14 |
| Cherokee | 30 | 22 | 35 | 29 | Hansford | • | 8 | 3 | 6 |
| Childress | ** | 8 | 19 | 9 | Hardeman | ** | 2 | 5 | ** |
| Clay | • | 5 | ** | 6 | Hardin | 27 | 23 | 28 | 24 |
| Cochran | ** | ** | 41 | 24 | Harris | 29 | 13 | 32 | 26 |
| Coke | • | 11 | 0 | 10 | Harrison | 13 | 20 | 28 | 20 |
| Coleman | 74 | 20 | 25 | 22 | Hartley | • | 33 | 5 | 24 |
| Collin | 20 | 15 | 25 | 19 | Haskell | ** | 12 | 25 | 14 |
| Collingsworth | 25 | ** | 41 | 10 | Hays | 5 | 15 | 31 | 24 |
| Colorado | 35 | 4 | 25 | 17 | Hemphill | • | 14 | 43 | 25 |
| Comal | 24 | 14 | 32 | 21 | Henderson | 20 | 23 | 21 | 23 |
| Comanche | • | 17 | 42 | 28 | Hidalgo | 27 | 21 | 33 | 33 |
| Concho | • | 1 | 18 | 3 | Hill | 24 | 10 | 19 | 14 |
| Cooke | ** | 11 | 42 | 21 | Hockley | 18 | 1 | 21 | 13 |
| Coryell | 19 | 18 | 29 | 19 | Hood | ** | 23 | 17 | 21 |
| Cottle | ** | 0 | 37 | ** | Hopkins | 20 | 11 | 19 | 14 |
| Crane | 42 | 54 | 26 | 30 | Houston | 23 | 17 | 44 | 23 |
| Crockett | • | 67 | 20 | 33 | Howard | ** | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| Crosby | 4 | 23 | 26 | 26 | Hudspeth | • | 59 | 10 | 16 |
| Culberson | • | ** | 12 | 2 | Hunt | 23 | 19 | 32 | 22 |
| Dallam | ** | 27 | 28 | 27 | Hutchinson | 21 | 15 | 27 | 18 |
| Dallas | 25 | 3 | 33 | 25 | Irion | • | 18 | 47 | 26 |
| Dawson | ** | 23 | 33 | 30 | Jack | 100 | 13 | 6 | 13 |
| Deaf Smith | 100 | 23 | 49 | 46 | Jackson | ** | 5 | 12 | 7 |
| Delta | ** | 17 | 17 | 8 | Jasper | 24 | 13 | 26 | 16 |
| Denton | 24 | 17 | 31 | 21 | Jeff Davis | • | ** | 3 | ** |

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

** = Attrition rate is less than zero (0).
*** = No high school.

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

# Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools, By Texas County,
## by Race-Ethnicity, 2014-15 (continued)

| County Name | Attrition Rates | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Black | White | Hispanic | Total |
| Jefferson | 18 | 6 | 31 | 17 |
| Jim Hogg | • | 100 | 28 | 27 |
| Jim Wells | 0 | 25 | 40 | 38 |
| Johnson | 19 | 28 | 34 | 29 |
| Jones | ** | 10 | 8 | 7 |
| Karnes | ** | 6 | 21 | 14 |
| Kaufman | 30 | 22 | 31 | 25 |
| Kendall | ** | 12 | 20 | 15 |
| Kennedy | *** | *** | *** | *** |
| Kent | • | 16 | 13 | 16 |
| Kerr | 30 | 15 | 26 | 19 |
| Kimble | • | 5 | ** | 6 |
| King | *** | *** | *** | *** |
| Kinney | • | 25 | 20 | 21 |
| Kleberg | 54 | 17 | 37 | 34 |
| Knox | 37 | 27 | ** | 15 |
| Lamar | 26 | 15 | 39 | 19 |
| Lamb | 2 | ** | 16 | 9 |
| Lampasas | 2 | 21 | 26 | 22 |
| La Salle | • | 18 | 32 | 32 |
| Lavaca | ** | 14 | 13 | 13 |
| Lee | 22 | 19 | 30 | 23 |
| Leon | ** | 21 | 11 | 16 |
| Liberty | 23 | 27 | 42 | 31 |
| Limestone | ** | 10 | 33 | 16 |
| Lipscomb | • | 8 | ** | 6 |
| Live Oak | 67 | 9 | 16 | 14 |
| Llano | 0 | 28 | 24 | 27 |
| Loving | *** | *** | *** | *** |
| Lubbock | 26 | 10 | 32 | 22 |
| Lynn | 100 | 7 | 30 | 18 |
| Madison | 36 | 13 | 2 | 15 |
| Marion | 20 | 12 | ** | 15 |
| Martin | • | ** | 23 | 12 |
| Mason | • | 9 | 15 | 11 |
| Matagorda | 17 | 14 | 24 | 19 |
| Maverick | ** | 42 | 32 | 32 |
| McCulloch | 8 | 14 | 40 | 25 |
| McClennan | 32 | 13 | 30 | 24 |
| McMullen | • | 10 | 60 | 33 |
| Medina | 30 | 12 | 29 | 23 |
| Menard | • | ** | ** | ** |
| Midland | 39 | 14 | 38 | 31 |
| Milam | 11 | 9 | 36 | 20 |
| Mills | • | ** | ** | ** |
| Mitchell | 37 | 26 | 34 | 31 |
| Montague | 100 | 17 | 11 | 17 |
| Montgomery | 30 | 21 | 33 | 25 |
| Moore | 70 | 25 | 35 | 39 |
| Morris | ** | 29 | 4 | 15 |
| Motley | • | ** | ** | ** |
| Nacogdoches | 25 | 13 | 26 | 20 |
| Navarro | 24 | 15 | 28 | 22 |
| Newton | 8 | 13 | 24 | 12 |
| Nolan | 43 | 22 | 47 | 34 |
| Nueces | 20 | 10 | 26 | 22 |
| Ochiltree | 50 | ** | 39 | 25 |
| Oldham | 9 | 18 | 3 | 12 |
| Orange | 26 | 17 | 35 | 20 |
| Palo Pinto | ** | 21 | 17 | 20 |
| Panola | 26 | 25 | 41 | 28 |
| Parker | 47 | 15 | 34 | 19 |
| Parmer | ** | ** | 16 | 9 |
| Pecos | ** | 9 | 27 | 22 |
| Polk | 13 | 24 | 18 | 22 |
| Potter | 35 | 17 | 32 | 27 |
| Presidio | • | ** | 31 | 27 |

| County Name | Attrition Rates | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Black | White | Hispanic | Total |
| Rains | 6 | 26 | 20 | 25 |
| Randall | 4 | 11 | 28 | 15 |
| Reagan | • | 12 | 26 | 23 |
| Real | • | 33 | ** | 15 |
| Red River | ** | 10 | 29 | 7 |
| Reeves | 33 | ** | 22 | 20 |
| Refugio | ** | 10 | 17 | 12 |
| Roberts | • | 9 | 100 | 10 |
| Robertson | 7 | 17 | 24 | 17 |
| Rockwall | 29 | 15 | 37 | 22 |
| Runnels | 65 | 16 | 23 | 20 |
| Rusk | 8 | 15 | 23 | 15 |
| Sabine | 9 | 24 | 47 | 22 |
| San Augustine | 4 | 10 | 60 | 14 |
| San Jacinto | 2 | 25 | 36 | 22 |
| San Patricio | ** | 21 | 26 | 23 |
| San Saba | • | ** | 16 | 3 |
| Schleicher | • | 38 | 23 | 30 |
| Scurry | 47 | 11 | 38 | 25 |
| Shackelford | ** | 20 | ** | 11 |
| Shelby | 32 | 21 | 45 | 31 |
| Sherman | 100 | ** | 14 | 1 |
| Smith | 26 | 16 | 38 | 25 |
| Somervell | • | 7 | 23 | 9 |
| Starr | 0 | ** | 23 | 23 |
| Stephens | 77 | 25 | 32 | 28 |
| Sterling | • | 18 | ** | 5 |
| Stonewall | • | 37 | 100 | 42 |
| Sutton | 0 | 9 | 12 | 8 |
| Swisher | 44 | 16 | 13 | 16 |
| Tarrant | 33 | 14 | 38 | 27 |
| Taylor | 30 | 15 | 37 | 24 |
| Terrell | • | 46 | 47 | 48 |
| Terry | 54 | 12 | 28 | 27 |
| Throckmorton | • | 6 | 7 | 6 |
| Titus | 33 | 8 | 32 | 25 |
| Tom Green | 10 | 10 | 23 | 17 |
| Travis | 16 | 7 | 33 | 22 |
| Trinity | 16 | 16 | 33 | 19 |
| Tyler | 17 | 14 | 5 | 14 |
| Upshur | 14 | 11 | 21 | 12 |
| Upton | 14 | ** | 37 | 14 |
| Uvalde | 100 | 4 | 36 | 32 |
| Val Verde | 12 | 11 | 30 | 28 |
| Van Zandt | ** | 20 | 32 | 21 |
| Victoria | 30 | 14 | 41 | 31 |
| Walker | 29 | 15 | 34 | 25 |
| Waller | 19 | 27 | 45 | 35 |
| Ward | 42 | 23 | 23 | 24 |
| Washington | 15 | 5 | 25 | 12 |
| Webb | 30 | 3 | 26 | 26 |
| Wharton | 21 | 12 | 32 | 23 |
| Wheeler | 11 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| Wichita | 13 | 7 | 29 | 14 |
| Wilbarger | 38 | 5 | 38 | 20 |
| Willacy | • | ** | 8 | 7 |
| Williamson | 21 | 16 | 28 | 20 |
| Wilson | 32 | 12 | 21 | 16 |
| Winkler | 33 | 8 | 17 | 15 |
| Wise | 10 | 11 | 32 | 17 |
| Wood | 1 | 13 | 21 | 15 |
| Yoakum | • | ** | 26 | 18 |
| Young | 100 | 21 | 32 | 24 |
| Zapata | 100 | 45 | 12 | 13 |
| Zavala | • | 46 | 16 | 17 |
| **Total** | **26** | **14** | **31** | **24** |

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

# Changes in High School Attrition Rates in Texas Counties

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

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anderson | Cameron | El Paso | Hays | McClennan | Rusk | Trinity |
| Archer | Camp | Gaines | Hill | McCulloch | San Jacinto | Tyler |
| Atascosa | Cass | Galveston | Hopkins | Moore | San Saba | Webb |
| Bailey | Castro | Garza | Jackson | Navarro | Shackelford | Wichita |
| Bastrop | Childress | Gillespie | Jefferson | Newton | Sherman | Willacy |
| Brazoria | Comal | Glasscock | Kaufman | Ochiltree | Stephens | Wilson |
| Brazos | Concho | Goliad | Kerr | Oldham | Sterling | Wood |
| Brooks | Cooke | Guadalupe | Kleberg | Palo Pinto | Sutton | |
| Burleson | Coryell | Hale | Lamb | Rains | Taylor | |
| Caldwell | Denton | Hall | Lee | Reagan | Titus | |
| Callahan | Eastland | Hartley | Martin | Red River | Travis | |

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

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Andrews | Coleman | Franklin | Hudspeth | Live Oak | Parmer | Upton |
| Angelina | Collin | Freestone | Hunt | Llano | Pecos | Uvalde |
| Aransas | Collingsworth | Frio | Hutchinson | Lubbock | Potter | Val Verde |
| Armstrong | Colorado | Gonzales | Irion | Lynn | Presidio | Van Zandt |
| Austin | Comanche | Gray | Jack | Madison | Randall | Walker |
| Bandera | Crane | Grayson | Jasper | Marion | Reeves | Waller |
| Baylor | Crockett | Gregg | Jim Hogg | Mason | Roberts | Ward |
| Bell | Dallam | Grimes | Johnson | Matagorda | Robertson | Washington |
| Bexar | Dallas | Hamilton | Karnes | McMullen | Runnels | Wharton |
| Borden | Dawson | Hansford | Kendall | Medina | San Augustine | Wheeler |
| Bosque | Deaf Smith | Hardin | Kent | Midland | San Patricio | Winkler |
| Bowie | Delta | Harris | Kinney | Milam | Schleicher | Wise |
| Brewster | Dewitt | Harrison | Knox | Mitchell | Scurry | Yoakum |
| Brown | Dickens | Hemphill | La Salle | Montague | Shelby | Young |
| Burnet | Dimmit | Henderson | Lamar | Montgomery | Smith | Zapata |
| Calhoun | Duval | Hidalgo | Lampasas | Morris | Somervell | Zavala |
| Chambers | Ellis | Hockley | Leon | Nolan | Stonewall | |
| Cherokee | Erath | Hood | Liberty | Orange | Swisher | |
| Cochran | Fayette | Houston | Limestone | Panola | Terry | |
| Coke | Floyd | Howard | Lipscomb | Parker | Tom Green | |

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

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bee | Fort Bend | Kimble | Nacogdoches | Rockwall | Tarrant | Wilbarger |
| Blanco | Jim Wells | Lavaca | Nueces | Sabine | Upshur | Williamson |
| Ector | Jones | Maverick | Polk | Starr | Victoria | |

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

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Briscoe | Donley | Hardeman | Real |
| Carson | Edwards | Haskell | Refugio |
| Clay | Falls | Jeff Davis | Terrell |
| Cottle | Fannin | Menard | Throckmorton |
| Crosby | Fisher | Mills | |
| Culberson | Foard | Motley | |

**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 12-13 of the Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2014-15.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

## Get District- and High School-Level Data at IDRA's OurSchool Portal

Designed to help educators and community members find out how well their high school campus is preparing and graduating students, what factors may be weakening school holding power, and what they can do together to address them.

What's Included...

- Key data to help you determine whether high dropout rates and weak school holding power are a problem for your school.

- Actionable knowledge and key questions to spark conversations and action planning around: teaching quality, curriculum quality, attrition, college readiness, college access and college sending.

- Real-time data collection features via surveys (e.g., to measure parent engagement).

- Social networking features you can use to share data with others and attach charts or graphs, keep track of your own notes, or call a community-school meeting to work on a specific issue.

- Texas data on college persistence, developmental courses and success of Texas high school students.

- Latest STAAR results for high schools based on the higher "recommended" standard.

- Bilingual (Spanish/English) content.

### www.idra.org/OurSchool

## Texas has not improved gaps in almost three decades

### By now we should have no gap and zero attrition

18 points

12 points

7 points

Gap 30 years ago

Gap today

Gap 30 years ago

Gap today

The attrition rate gap between White students and Black students has <u>worsened</u> since 30 years ago

The attrition rate gap between White students and Hispanic students is almost the same as it was 30 years ago

# Highest School Attrition Rates Are in Regions with the Most Students

*by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.*

Each of the 20 Texas education service center regions had lower attrition rates than they did 30 years ago, suggesting that each region has improved its school holding power. In its latest annual attrition study, the IDRA examined regional trends in Texas on the number and percent of students lost from public high school enrollment prior to graduation with a high school diploma. A comparative analysis of 1985-86 and 2014-15 attrition rates in Texas' 20 education service center (ESC) regions shows that 11 of the 20 Texas regions had attrition rates lower than the state average of 24 percent in 2014-15.

In general, the rate of students lost from high school enrollment prior to graduation with a diploma has improved; however, the number of students lost has increased from the initial study. While 11 education service center regions had lower attrition rates in 2014-15 than they did in 1985-86, three others matched the state average, and six had rates higher than the state average. Data in this latest study help to answer questions on regional trends on attrition rates and provides geographical comparisons among ESC regions.

In its inaugural comprehensive study in 1986 of the rate and number of students lost from public school enrollment prior to graduation with a high school diploma in Texas, IDRA's study entitled *Texas School Dropout Survey Project* found that attrition rates ranged from a low of 21 percent in ESC Region 5 (Beaumont) to a high of 43 percent in ESC Region 1 (Edinburg), compared to the state average of 33 percent (Cárdenas, Robledo Montecel & Supik) (see box on Page 17).

In 2014-15, attrition rates ranged from a low of 15 percent in ESC Region 9 (Wichita Falls) to a high of 31 percent in ESC Region 1 (Edinburg) and ESC Region 18 (Midland), compared to the state average of 24 percent (see box on Page 18). The education service centers with attrition rates lower that the state average included: ESC Region 9 (15 percent), ESC Region 8 (17 percent), ESC Region 5 (18 percent), ESC Region 7 (21 percent), ESC Region 15 (21 percent), ESC Region 17 (21 percent), ESC Region 3 (22 percent), ESC Region 13 (22 percent), ESC Region 10 (23 percent), ESC Region 14 (23 percent), and ESC Region 19 (23 percent).

Three ESC regions had attrition rates that matched the state average. These were ESC Region 6, ESC Region 12, and ESC Region 16.

The education service centers with rates higher than the state average were ESC Region 1 (31 percent), ESC Region 18 (31 percent), ESC Region 20 (26 percent), ESC Region 2 (25 percent), ESC Region 4 (25 percent), and ESC Region 11 (25 percent).

## ESC Attrition Rates by Race-Ethnicity

Statewide, the attrition rates of Hispanic students and Black students were higher than those of White students in both 1985-86 and 2014-15 (see boxes on Pages 19 and 20). For the most part, this pattern is the same across regions.

The attrition rates for **Black students** across the ESC regions in 2014-15 ranged from a low of 16 percent in ESC Region 8 (Mount Pleasant) to a high of 35 percent in ESC Region 18 (Midland). Eleven regions (55 percent) had rates lower than or equal to the state average of 26 percent for Black students (see Page 21). Nine regions (45 percent) had rates higher than the state average

for Black students.

In 2014-15, attrition rates for **White students** across regions ranged from a low of 8 percent in ESC Region 17 (Lubbock) to a high of 34 percent in ESC Region 6 (Huntsville). Eleven regions (55 percent) had rates lower than or equal to the state average of 14 percent for White students (see Page 21). Nine regions (45 percent) had rates higher than the state average for White students.

The attrition rates for **Hispanic students** across education service center regions in 2014-15 ranged from a low of 23 percent in ESC Region 19 (El Paso) to a high of 36 percent in ESC Region 11 (Fort Worth). Fourteen regions (70 percent) had rates lower than or equal to the state average of 31 percent for Hispanic students (see Page 21). Six regions (30 percent) had rates higher than the state average for Hispanic students.

## Conclusions

The examination of historical trend data on the number and percent of students lost from public school enrollment prior to graduation from high school is becoming increasingly important since distinct trends exist on a regional basis. For the most part, the highest attrition rates are concentrated in regions with the largest student enrollments, particularly those in urban areas and those with the largest low-income and minority populations. Education service center regions with traditionally high attrition rates include: ESC Region 1 (Edinburg), ESC Region 4 (Houston), ESC Region 11 (Fort Worth), and ESC Region 20 (San Antonio).

In order to guarantee that all students graduate from high school and be college-ready, schools and communities in Texas and around the country

## 1985-86 Attrition Rates in Texas Education Service Center Region
by Race-Ethnicity

| ESC Region | Attrition Rates[1] | | | | Number Lost[2] | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Black** | **White** | **Hispanic** | **Total** | **Black** | **White** | **Hispanic** | **Total** |
| Region 1 (Edinburg) | 30 | 27 | 45 | 43 | 6 | 348 | 7,210 | 7,523 |
| Region 2 (Corpus Christi) | 28 | 23 | 32 | 29 | 64 | 658 | 1,540 | 2,291 |
| Region 3 (Victoria) | 20 | 15 | 35 | 23 | 98 | 170 | 482 | 932 |
| Region 4 (Houston) | 39 | 31 | 55 | 37 | 4,851 | 9,192 | 5,723 | 20,315 |
| Region 5 (Beaumont) | 19 | 20 | 35 | 21 | 361 | 985 | 69 | 1,471 |
| Region 6 (Huntsville) | 27 | 34 | 50 | 34 | 342 | 922 | 122 | 2,857 |
| Region 7 (Kilgore) | 21 | 28 | 59 | 27 | 543 | 2,487 | 184 | 3,198 |
| Region 8 (Mt. Pleasant) | 20 | 25 | 47 | 24 | 205 | 750 | 11 | 974 |
| Region 9 (Wichita Falls) | 20 | 25 | 42 | 26 | 48 | 633 | 118 | 804 |
| Region 10 (Richardson) | 39 | 28 | 58 | 34 | 3,094 | 6,410 | 2,428 | 12,214 |
| Region 11 (Fort Worth) | 32 | 28 | 49 | 30 | 769 | 4,742 | 956 | 6,551 |
| Region 12 (Waco) | 23 | 25 | 34 | 26 | 305 | 1,374 | 248 | 1,955 |
| Region 13 (Austin) | 43 | 28 | 48 | 35 | 695 | 2,625 | 848 | 5,147 |
| Region 14 (Abilene) | 34 | 23 | 44 | 28 | 77 | 620 | 356 | 1,045 |
| Region 15 (San Angelo) | 31 | 24 | 44 | 32 | 40 | 227 | 748 | 1,331 |
| Region 16 (Amarillo) | 23 | 21 | 41 | 25 | 61 | 880 | 469 | 1,419 |
| Region 17 (Lubbock) | 25 | 16 | 43 | 27 | 118 | 515 | 978 | 1,617 |
| Region 18 (Midland) | 28 | 26 | 45 | 33 | 97 | 872 | 1,008 | 1,958 |
| Region 19 (El Paso) | 19 | 31 | 41 | 38 | 56 | 762 | 3,464 | 4,257 |
| Region 20 (San Antonio) | 37 | 23 | 44 | 36 | 518 | 1,756 | 2,700 | 8,199 |
| **Statewide** | **34** | **27** | **45** | **33** | **12,268** | **38,717** | **33,583** | **86,276** |

[1]Calculated by: (1) dividing the high school enrollment in the end year by the high school enrollment in the base year; (2) multiplying the results from Calculation 1 by the ninth grade enrollment in the base year; (3) subtracting the results from Calculation 2 from the 12th grade enrollment in the end year; and (4) dividing the results of Calculation 3 by the result of Calculation 2. The attrition rate results (percentages) were rounded to the nearest whole number.
[2]The aggregate sum of individual regions may not equal the statewide sum due to rounding.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 2015

must work together to improve school holding power and student success. State education agencies, schools and communities must work collaboratively to strengthen public schools' capacities to improve school holding power. Considering the persistently high attrition rates in some ESC regions, targeted resources and support services to schools and communities in these regions would be both feasible and appropriate.

### Resources

Cárdenas, J.A., & M. Robledo Montecel, J. Supik. *Texas Dropout Survey Project* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1986).

Texas Education Agency. *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2013-14* (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency, August 2013).

Texas Education Agency. Standard Reports, Enrollment Reports, 2007-08 to 2014-15 (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency, 2015). http://ritter.tea.state.tex.us/adhocrpt/adste.html

# 1985-86 Attrition in Texas Education Service Center Regions
## 1982-83 and 1985-86 Enrollment

| ESC Region | 1982-83 9th Grade Enrollment | 1985-86 12th Grade Enrollment | 1982-83 9-12th Grade Enrollment | 1985-86 9-12th Grade Enrollment | Students Lost to Attrition | Attrition Rate (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Region 1 (Edinburg) | 15,251 | 9,891 | 45,208 | 51,619 | 7,523 | 43 |
| Region 2 (Corpus Christi) | 7,893 | 5,708 | 28,302 | 28,682 | 2,291 | 29 |
| Region 3 (Victoria) | 4,227 | 3,195 | 15,659 | 15,289 | 932 | 23 |
| Region 4 (Houston) | 52,203 | 34,461 | 168,587 | 176,898 | 20,315 | 37 |
| Region 5 (Beaumont) | 7,285 | 5,597 | 26,836 | 26,038 | 1,471 | 21 |
| Region 6 (Huntsville) | 8,104 | 5,651 | 27,026 | 28,372 | 2,857 | 34 |
| Region 7 (Kilgore) | 11,269 | 8,724 | 39,876 | 42,187 | 3,198 | 27 |
| Region 8 (Mt. Pleasant) | 3,970 | 3,035 | 14,687 | 14,830 | 974 | 24 |
| Region 9 (Wichita Falls) | 3,058 | 2,321 | 11,161 | 11,407 | 804 | 26 |
| Region 10 (Richardson) | 33,285 | 23,306 | 111,883 | 119,395 | 12,214 | 34 |
| Region 11 (Fort Worth) | 19,737 | 15,468 | 69,968 | 78,058 | 6,551 | 30 |
| Region 12 (Waco) | 7,158 | 5,632 | 26,443 | 28,026 | 1,955 | 26 |
| Region 13 (Austin) | 12,967 | 9,697 | 43,381 | 49,662 | 5,147 | 35 |
| Region 14 (Abilene) | 3,621 | 2,674 | 12,580 | 12,921 | 1,045 | 28 |
| Region 15 (San Angelo) | 4,033 | 2,798 | 13,146 | 13,460 | 1,331 | 32 |
| Region 16 (Amarillo) | 5,590 | 4,323 | 20,155 | 20,704 | 1,419 | 25 |
| Region 17 (Lubbock) | 6,180 | 4,375 | 21,933 | 21,267 | 1,617 | 27 |
| Region 18 (Midland) | 5,784 | 3,956 | 19,691 | 20,134 | 1,958 | 33 |
| Region 19 (El Paso) | 10,330 | 7,024 | 32,147 | 35,105 | 4,257 | 38 |
| Region 20 (San Antonio) | 21,174 | 14,451 | 69,373 | 74,209 | 8,199 | 36 |
| **Statewide** | **243,119** | **172,287** | **818,042** | **868,263** | **86,276** | **33** |

Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency Fall Membership Survey data. IDRA's 1985-86 attrition study involved the analysis of enrollment figures for public high school students in the ninth grade during 1982-83 school year and enrollment figures for 12th grade students in 1985-86. 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. The aggregate sum of individual regions may not equal the statewide sum due to rounding.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

# 2014-15 Attrition in Texas Education Service Center Regions
## 2011-12 and 2014-15 Enrollment

| ESC Region | 2011-12 9th Grade Enrollment | 2014-15 12th Grade Enrollment | 2011-12 9-12th Grade Enrollment | 2014-15 9-12th Grade Enrollment | Students Lost to Attrition | Attrition Rate (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Region 1 (Edinburg) | 32,518 | 23,733 | 106,256 | 112,098 | 10,600 | 31 |
| Region 2 (Corpus Christi) | 8,136 | 6,285 | 28,489 | 29,202 | 2,070 | 25 |
| Region 3 (Victoria) | 4,089 | 3,247 | 14,599 | 14,957 | 956 | 22 |
| Region 4 (Houston) | 84,757 | 68,043 | 291,897 | 312,258 | 22,855 | 25 |
| Region 5 (Beaumont) | 6,280 | 5,029 | 22,307 | 21,875 | 1,159 | 18 |
| Region 6 (Huntsville) | 13,599 | 11,068 | 48,310 | 51,786 | 3,550 | 24 |
| Region 7 (Kilgore) | 12,940 | 10,500 | 46,268 | 47,809 | 2,909 | 21 |
| Region 8 (Mt. Pleasant) | 4,273 | 3,500 | 15,702 | 15,446 | 718 | 17 |
| Region 9 (Wichita Falls) | 2,854 | 2,409 | 10,472 | 10,361 | 428 | 15 |
| Region 10 (Richardson) | 56,493 | 46,049 | 197,829 | 209,975 | 13,085 | 23 |
| Region 11 (Fort Worth) | 42,945 | 34,465 | 147,717 | 158,326 | 11,766 | 25 |
| Region 12 (Waco) | 11,552 | 9,026 | 40,244 | 41,627 | 2,966 | 24 |
| Region 13 (Austin) | 29,410 | 25,054 | 104,489 | 113,583 | 7,007 | 22 |
| Region 14 (Abilene) | 3,289 | 2,544 | 11,806 | 11,839 | 760 | 23 |
| Region 15 (San Angelo) | 3,567 | 2,939 | 12,919 | 13,475 | 790 | 21 |
| Region 16 (Amarillo) | 6,661 | 5,184 | 22,770 | 23,230 | 1,642 | 24 |
| Region 17 (Lubbock) | 5,789 | 4,801 | 20,514 | 21,633 | 1,131 | 21 |
| Region 18 (Midland) | 5,893 | 4,368 | 20,516 | 21,951 | 1,971 | 31 |
| Region 19 (El Paso) | 15,804 | 11,965 | 53,820 | 52,865 | 3,563 | 23 |
| Region 20 (San Antonio) | 30,343 | 23,418 | 104,654 | 109,589 | 8,417 | 26 |
| **Statewide** | **381,192** | **303,627** | **1,321,578** | **1,393,885** | **99,297** | **24** |

Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency Fall Membership Survey data. IDRA's 2005-06 attrition study involved the analysis of enrollment figures for public high school students in the ninth grade during 2002-03 school year and enrollment figures for 12th grade students in 2005-06. 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. The aggregate sum of individual regions may not equal the statewide sum due to rounding.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

## 2014-15 Attrition Rates in Texas Education Service Center Region
by Race-Ethnicity

| ESC Region | Attrition Rates[1] | | | | Number Lost[2] | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Black** | **White** | **Hispanic** | **Total** | **Black** | **White** | **Hispanic** | **Total** |
| Region 1 (Edinburg) | 29 | 14 | 31 | 31 | 16 | 69 | 10,486 | 10,600 |
| Region 2 (Corpus Christi) | 20 | 15 | 28 | 25 | 49 | 242 | 1,781 | 2,070 |
| Region 3 (Victoria) | 21 | 10 | 32 | 22 | 82 | 150 | 713 | 956 |
| Region 4 (Houston) | 28 | 14 | 32 | 25 | 4,983 | 2,873 | 14,171 | 22,855 |
| Region 5 (Beaumont) | 19 | 15 | 31 | 18 | 292 | 475 | 339 | 1,159 |
| Region 6 (Huntsville) | 26 | 18 | 34 | 24 | 403 | 1,424 | 1,609 | 3,550 |
| Region 7 (Kilgore) | 21 | 17 | 31 | 21 | 502 | 1,231 | 1,070 | 2,909 |
| Region 8 (Mt. Pleasant) | 16 | 13 | 28 | 17 | 131 | 302 | 235 | 718 |
| Region 9 (Wichita Falls) | 16 | 10 | 27 | 15 | 37 | 174 | 204 | 428 |
| Region 10 (Richardson) | 24 | 12 | 32 | 23 | 2,570 | 2,202 | 7,570 | 13,085 |
| Region 11 (Fort Worth) | 31 | 16 | 36 | 25 | 2,134 | 3,174 | 5,806 | 11,766 |
| Region 12 (Waco) | 30 | 16 | 31 | 24 | 717 | 820 | 1,186 | 2,966 |
| Region 13 (Austin) | 17 | 13 | 31 | 22 | 415 | 1,710 | 4,532 | 7,007 |
| Region 14 (Abilene) | 28 | 15 | 35 | 23 | 55 | 270 | 409 | 760 |
| Region 15 (San Angelo) | 24 | 15 | 26 | 21 | 22 | 205 | 553 | 790 |
| Region 16 (Amarillo) | 29 | 13 | 31 | 24 | 107 | 370 | 984 | 1,642 |
| Region 17 (Lubbock) | 24 | 8 | 30 | 21 | 72 | 165 | 884 | 1,131 |
| Region 18 (Midland) | 35 | 18 | 35 | 31 | 109 | 290 | 1,501 | 1,971 |
| Region 19 (El Paso) | 27 | 12 | 23 | 23 | 103 | 99 | 3,310 | 3,563 |
| Region 20 (San Antonio) | 29 | 13 | 30 | 26 | 565 | 696 | 6,981 | 8,417 |
| **Statewide** | **26** | **14** | **31** | **24** | **13,525** | **17,047** | **64,825** | **99,297** |

[1]Calculated by: (1) dividing the high school enrollment in the end year by the high school enrollment in the base year; (2) multiplying the results from Calculation 1 by the ninth grade enrollment in the base year; (3) subtracting the results from Calculation 2 from the 12th grade enrollment in the end year; and (4) dividing the results of Calculation 3 by the result of Calculation 2. The attrition rate results (percentages) were rounded to the nearest whole number.
[2]The aggregate sum of individual regions may not equal the statewide sum due to rounding.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 2015

# Regional Ranking
## by Attrition Rates for All Students, 2014-15

| Rank | ESC Region | Attrition Rate - All Students | Rank | ESC Region | Attrition Rate - All Students |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Region 9 (Wichita Falls) | 15 | 9 | Region 10 (Richardson) | 23 |
| 2 | Region 8 (Mount Pleasant) | 17 | 12 | Region 16 (Amarillo) | 24 |
| 3 | Region 5 (Beaumont) | 18 | 12 | Region 6 (Huntsville) | 24 |
| 4 | Region 15 (San Angelo) | 21 | 12 | Region 12 (Waco) | 24 |
| 4 | Region 17 (Lubbock) | 21 | 15 | Region 2 (Corpus Christi) | 25 |
| 4 | Region 7 (Kilgore) | 21 | 15 | Region 4 (Houston) | 25 |
| 7 | Region 13 (Austin) | 22 | 15 | Region 11 (Fort Worth) | 25 |
| 7 | Region 3 (Victoria) | 22 | 18 | Region 20 (San Antonio) | 26 |
| 9 | Region 14 (Abilene) | 23 | 19 | Region 18 (Midland) | 31 |
| 9 | Region 19 (El Paso) | 23 | 19 | Region 1 (Edinburg) | 31 |

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

# Regional Ranking
## by Attrition Rates for Black Students, 2014-15

| Rank | ESC Region | Attrition Rate – Black Students |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Region 8 | 16 |
| 1 | Region 9 | 16 |
| 3 | Region 13 | 17 |
| 4 | Region 5 | 19 |
| 5 | Region 2 | 20 |
| 6 | Region 3 | 21 |
| 6 | Region 7 | 21 |
| 8 | Region 15 | 24 |
| 8 | Region 17 | 24 |
| 8 | Region 10 | 24 |
| 11 | Region 6 | 26 |
| 12 | Region 19 | 27 |
| 13 | Region 4 | 28 |
| 13 | Region 14 | 28 |
| 15 | Region 16 | 29 |
| 15 | Region 1 | 29 |
| 15 | Region 20 | 29 |
| 18 | Region 12 | 30 |
| 19 | Region 11 | 31 |
| 20 | Region 18 | 35 |

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

# Regional Ranking
## by Attrition Rates for White Students, 2014-15

| Rank | ESC Region | Attrition Rate –White Students |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Region 17 | 8 |
| 2 | Region 9 | 10 |
| 2 | Region 3 | 10 |
| 4 | Region 10 | 12 |
| 4 | Region 19 | 12 |
| 6 | Region 20 | 13 |
| 6 | Region 8 | 13 |
| 6 | Region 16 | 13 |
| 6 | Region 13 | 13 |
| 10 | Region 4 | 14 |
| 10 | Region 1 | 14 |
| 12 | Region 15 | 15 |
| 12 | Region 5 | 15 |
| 12 | Region 2 | 15 |
| 12 | Region 14 | 15 |
| 16 | Region 11 | 16 |
| 17 | Region 12 | 16 |
| 18 | Region 7 | 17 |
| 19 | Region 18 | 18 |
| 19 | Region 6 | 18 |

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

# Regional Ranking
## by Attrition Rates for Hispanic Students, 2014-15

| Rank | ESC Region | Attrition Rate – Hispanic Students |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Region 19 | 23 |
| 2 | Region 15 | 26 |
| 3 | Region 9 | 27 |
| 4 | Region 8 | 28 |
| 4 | Region 2 | 28 |
| 7 | Region 17 | 30 |
| 7 | Region 20 | 30 |
| 9 | Region 16 | 31 |
| 9 | Region 5 | 31 |
| 9 | Region 7 | 31 |
| 9 | Region 1 | 31 |
| 9 | Region 12 | 31 |
| 9 | Region 13 | 31 |
| 15 | Region 10 | 32 |
| 15 | Region 3 | 32 |
| 15 | Region 4 | 32 |
| 17 | Region 6 | 34 |
| 18 | Region 14 | 35 |
| 18 | Region 18 | 35 |
| 20 | Region 11 | 36 |

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

# Elusive Zero Attrition Rate is at Least 20 Years Away; Texas Stands to Lose 2 Million More Students

*by Felix Montes, Ph.D.*

This year's high school attrition rate remained the same as last year, at 24 percent (Johnson, 2015). Since 1996-97, when the attrition rate reached 43 percent – the highest value ever calculated by the attrition analysis IDRA performs on an annual basis – the attrition rate has plateaued three times. First, in 1999-00 and 2000-01, when it reached 40 percent. Second, in 2003-04 and 2004-05, the rate went down to 36 percent. And now, when it has reached the lowest level ever calculated by the IDRA annual analysis. In each of the previous occasions, the rate continued to decline after the pause. Will this happen again?

To answer this question and estimate when the attrition would reach zero at the present rate of decline, IDRA conducted a supplemental inquiry to the Texas high school attrition study. The inquiry used linear regression analyses to predict when the attrition rate will 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 presents this year's update to the forecasting analysis with the most recent attrition figures.

IDRA's latest attrition study shows that the attrition rate continues to decline at the same pace as the last few years, which continues to put the state 20 years away from reaching an attrition rate of zero.

This year's attrition rate of 24 percent is within the range predicted by this analysis last year (between 24 percent and 31 percent). For the next 21 school years (2015-16 to 2036-37), the predicted attrition values are shown in the chart below, which first plots the most recent attrition historic values (green dots), followed by the forecasted values estimated in the last four years.

The new prediction keeps the zero attrition date forecasted at the year 2035. 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).

## Historic Attrition Rates and Next Year Forecasted Attrition Rates



Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015.
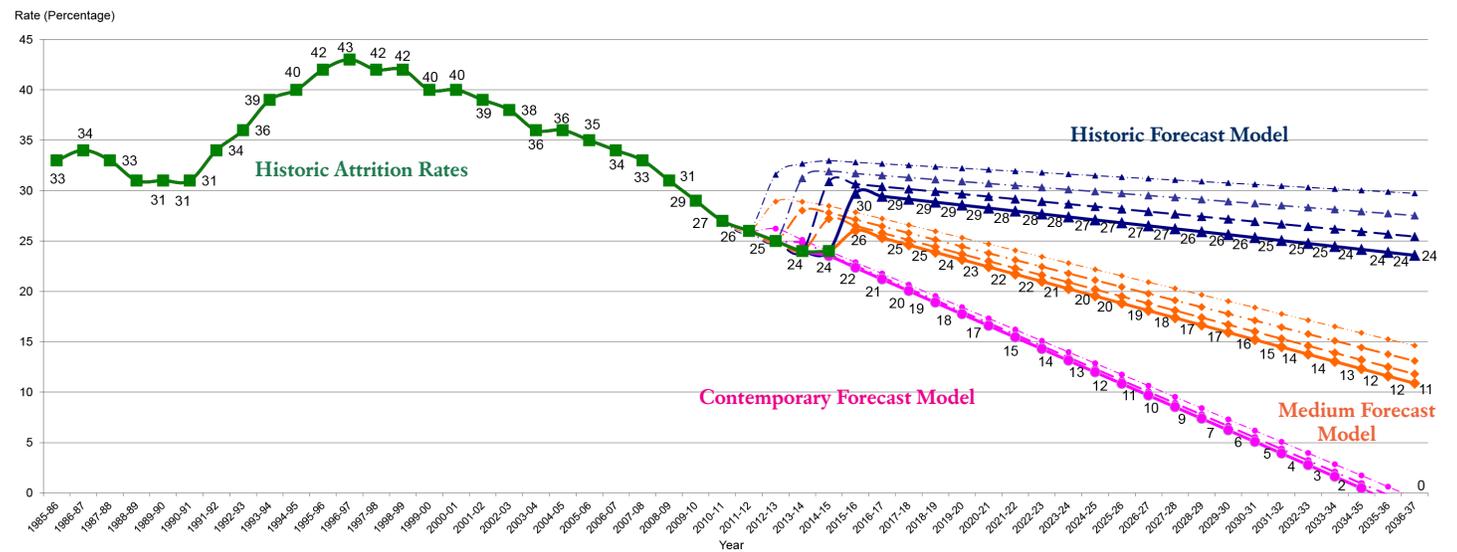
# Universal high school graduation is at least a quarter of a century away

**Texas stands to lose another 2.3 million students.**

**Attrition Rate = 24%**
Actual, 2014-15

**Attrition Rate = 0%**
Projected at Current Pace, 2034-35

| 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 | 2035 |
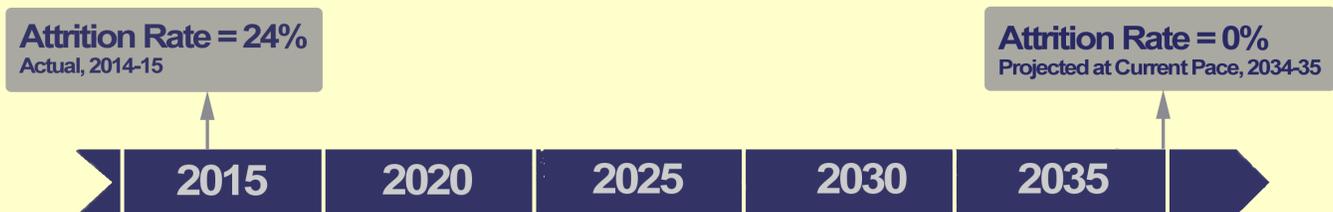
## Forecasting Models

The forecasting analysis uses three models. The first model, called **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 current downward trend as a cyclical bottom within the long-term progression of the curve. Therefore, it suggests that an upward reversal is overdue. In this formulation, for 2015-16, the attrition rate would increase to 30 percent. After that, it would begin a slow decline initiating another downward trend. This model is depicted in blue in the chart on Page 22.

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** used the values corresponding to 1996-97 to the present, which represents the subsection of the historic series portraying the current downward trend. This model predicts a 22 percent attrition rate for 2015-16, which is two points below the current attrition rate. After that, it will progressively decrease by one or two points annually until it reaches zero in 2034-35. This model is depicted in pink in the chart on Page 22.

The third model takes a centrist view between the historic and contemporary forecast models. Mathematically, this **Medium Forecast Model** is formed applying the medians between the pairs of corresponding two model values within the models

time horizon. Because of the strong influence of past history, this model predicts attrition rates to first increase slightly and then to resume their downward trend in subsequent years. This model predicts an attrition rate of 26 percent for 2015-16 and progressively lower attrition rates thereafter. This model is depicted in orange in the chart on Page 22.

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.

## Best Fit

The table on Page 24 shows the performance of the three models throughout their eight years of 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. It is clear that the contemporary model, with residuals between zero (no difference) and two, is the model that best fits the data. This makes us think that the next move in the attrition rate will be down, to answer the question posed in the opening paragraph.

Because this model is the best fit, it was used to forecast the year when the attrition rate will be expected to reach zero, listed in the last column of the exhibit on Page 24. The most current forecasting

indicates that 2035 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 negligible 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. 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 table on Page 24).

The historic forecast model predicts that more than 2.25 million students will be lost to attrition from 2015-16 to 2034-35. The contemporary model yielded a figure of nearly 1 million (930,000), and the medium forecast model predicted more than 1.59 million.

## Conclusions

- If we take the full historic values as a guide, the student attrition rate should be expected to increase to 30 percent next year and then remain between 24 percent and 29 percent for the foreseeable future. Under this scenario, more than 2.25 million additional students will be lost to attrition by the year 2035.

- If we assume that the current 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 6 percent, and it will reach zero in the year 2035. However, from now to that point, we would have lost nearly 1 million (930,000) students to attrition.

- Over the long to medium term, a more realistic model suggests that the current attrition rate will increase to 26 percent before resuming its downward trend. In this scenario, by the year 2035, attrition will still be at about 12 percent, and, during the period 2015-2035, we would have lost more than 1.59 million students.

Therefore, we should expect attrition rates in the range of 22 percent to 26 percent, for the next few years. We should also expect to lose between 930,000 and 1.59 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.L. "Texas High School Attrition Rates Stall," *Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2014-15* (San Antonio,

Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 2015).

Montes, F. "Elusive Zero Attrition Rate at Least 20 Years Away, Despite Progress," supplemental analysis in *Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2014-15* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 2014).

## Forecasted Students Lost to Attrition
### 2015-16 to 2034-35

| Period | Historic | Medium | Contemporary |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2015-19 | 466,917 | 397,827 | 328,738 |
| 2020-24 | 569,373 | 441,719 | 314,068 |
| 2025-29 | 557,241 | 380,234 | 203,227 |
| 2030-35 | 665,827 | 377,155 | 88,483 |
| **Total** | **2,259,359** | **1,596,936** | **934,513** |

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

## Forecasted Model Values and Residuals
### 2008-09 to 2015-16

| School Year | Attrition Rate | Historic Model | | Medium Model | | Contemporary Model | | Year Rate Will Be Zero |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Values | Residuals | Values | Residuals | Values | Residuals | |
| 2008-09 | 31 | 37 | 6 | 34 | 3 | 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 | 3037 |
| 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 | n/a | 30 | n/a | 26 | n/a | 22 | n/a | 2035 |

Intercultural Development Research Association, 2015

# College Bound & Determined

A report profiling what happens when a school district raises expectations for students instead of lowering them

COLLEGE BOUND & DETERMINED

FOR ONE SCHOOL DISTRICT TRANSFORMATION WENT BEYOND CHANGING SOBERING GRADUATION RATES OR EVEN GETTING GRADUATES INTO COLLEGE. THIS DISTRICT WAS TO CHANGE HOW WE THINK ABOUT COLLEGE READINESS

## 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 Dr. Daniel King, PSJA superintendent, school principals, teachers, counselors and students to explore how PSJA has achieved the kind of success that it has. IDRA saw that PSJA's vision and actions, clearly and independently aligned, with IDRA's own vision for change: the Quality Schools Action Framework™.

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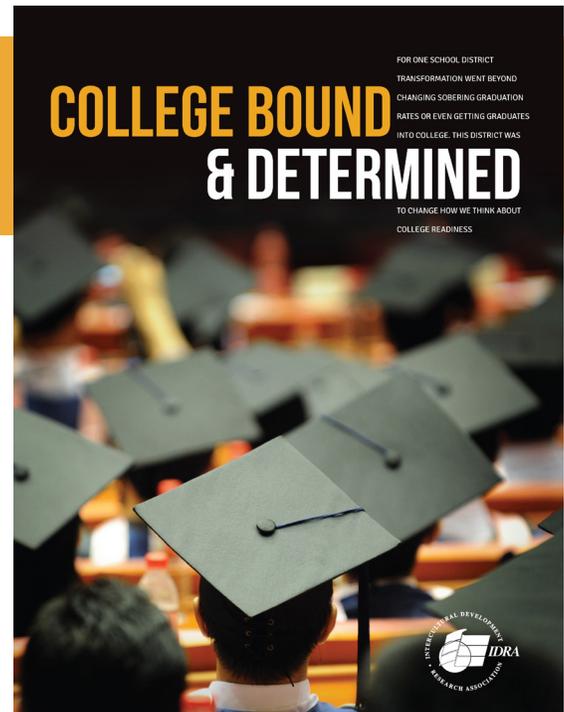
### PSJA...

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

• **Cut dropout rates in half**

• **Increased college-going rates.**

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

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

– Dr. Daniel King, 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: www.idra.org/College_Bound_and_Determined

# 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™
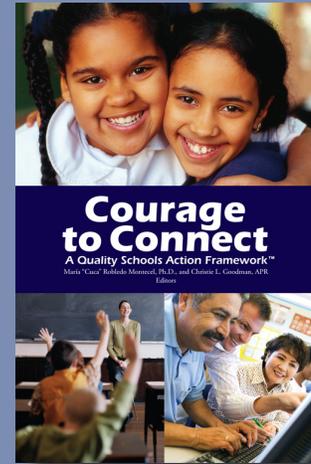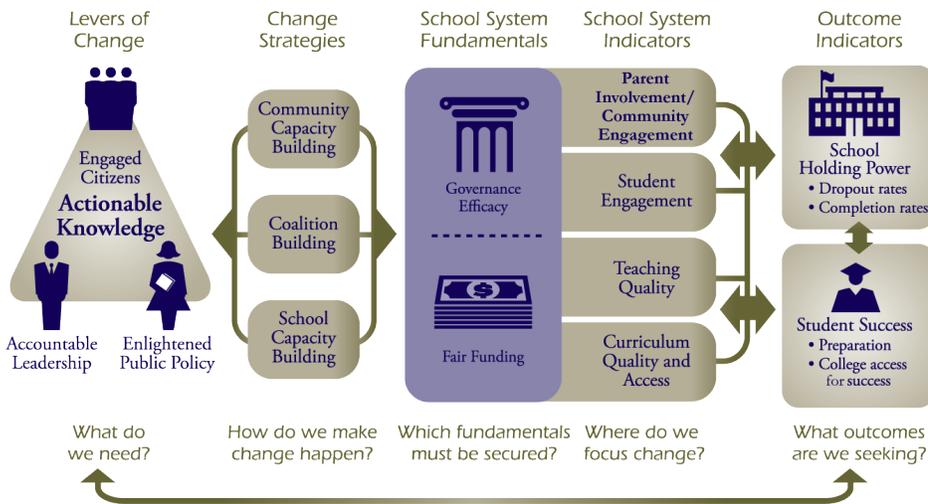


## Learn more about this framework

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

And visit

**www.idra.org/couragetoconnect**

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*

# 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://www.idra.org/Research/Attrition/

Get the attrition rate for **your county** over the last 10 years at: http://www.idra.org/Research/Attrition

Receive IDRA's **Graduation for All free monthly e-letter** (bilingual: Spanish/English) to get up-to-date information to make a difference in your school and community. Sign up online at: http://www.idra.org.

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/couragetoconnect) has an excerpt, related podcasts, images of the framework and other resources.

Use IDRA's **OurSchool data website** (http://www.idra.org/OurSchool) to provide community-school partners with actionable knowledge on:

- Student Engagement
- Teaching Quality
- Governance Efficacy
- Parent and Community Engagement
- Curriculum Quality and Access
- Funding Equity

## 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. It is free online: www.idra.org/Research/Attrition

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: www.idra.org/College_Bound_and_Determined

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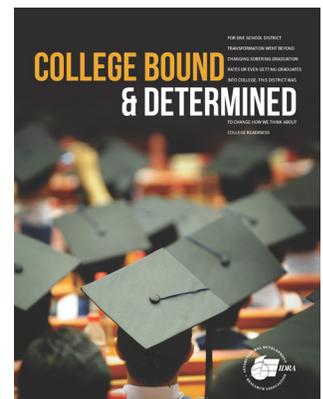
# Texas Education Agency Reports No Change in Annual Dropout Rate

*by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.*

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) released its latest dropout and school completion report in August 2015. This report entitled, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2013-14*, 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 ninth year, TEA used the dropout definition and calculation methods mandated by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

This latest report shows a 1.6 percent annual dropout rate for grades 7-12, and a 2.2 percent annual dropout rate for grades 9-12. These rates remained unchanged from the previous year (2012-13).

What did change was the number of reported dropouts. TEA reports that the number of school dropouts for grades seven through 12 increased from 34,696 in 2012-13 to 35,358 in 2013-14, an increase of 1.9 percent (see table on Page 29).

Of the 35,358 dropouts in the latest report, 3,974 were in grades seven and eight, and 31,384 were in grades nine through 12. The attrition rate for the class of 2014 (grades 9-12) was 20.9 percent – down from 22.1 percent for the class of 2013.

At the high school level (grades 9-12), TEA reported that the number of school dropouts decreased from 31,509 in 2012-13 to 31,384 in 2013-14, a decrease of 0.4 percent. Across race-ethnicity groups, the annual dropout rate was 3.1 percent for African American students, 2.7 percent for Hispanic students, and 2.7 percent for White students. The rates for African American

declined by two-tenths of a percentage point, while the rates for Hispanics and other students declined by one-tenth of a percentage point. The rate for White students remained unchanged. (See box on Page 30)

At the middle school level (grades 7-8), TEA reported that the number of school dropouts increased from 3,187 in 2012-13 to 3,974 in 2013-14, an increase of 24.7 percent. The annual dropout rate for grades 7-8 increased from 0.4 percent in 2012-13 to 0.5 percent in 2013-14. Across race-ethnicity groups, the annual dropout rate was 0.4 percent for African American students, 0.8 percent for Hispanic students and 0.2 percent for White students.

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; declined to 45,796 in 2007-08, to 40,923 in 2008-09, to 34,907 in 2009-10, and 34,363 in 2010-11; increased to 36,276 in 2011-12; declined to 34,696 in 2012-13; and increased to 35,358 in 2013-14. From 2004-05 to 2013-14, the number of dropouts increased by 17,068 students or by 93.3 percent. The dropout count was 1.78 times higher in 2013-14 than in 2004-05. The use of the NCES definition mandated by the 78th Texas Legislature's passage of Senate Bill 186 in 2003 has had dramatic impact on dropout counting and reporting in Texas.

TEA reported a ninth grade longitudinal dropout rate of 6.6 percent for the class of 2013 and the class of 2014. The reported longitudinal dropout rate for African American students (9.8 percent) was 2.72 times as high as the rate for White students (3.6 percent). Hispanic students had

an 8.2 percent longitudinal dropout rate, which was 2.28 times higher than the rate for White students.

According to TEA, 12th grade had the highest number of dropouts in 2013-14. The number of dropouts by grade level ranged from 1,122 in grade 7 to 9,103 in grade 12. At grade 12, Hispanic students represented 60.1 percent (5,472), African American students 19.0 percent (1,728), and White students 16.8 percent (1,525). Hispanic students comprised 60.1 percent of all dropouts compared to 47.7 percent of the grade level population.

During the 2012-13 school year, TEA tracked school leaver codes in 17 areas (see box on Page 31). 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 2013-14 school year, a total of 420,238 students were reported as school leavers. Of this number, 303,109 (72.1 percent) were reported as graduates from Texas public schools and 462 (0.1 percent) were reported as graduates outside of the state.

According to TEA, another 8.4 percent of students were reported as dropouts and 19.5 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, 347); (2) unknown reasons (33,269); (3) left for home schooling (21,812); (4) left to return to family's home country (12,576); and (5) left to enroll in a private school in Texas (9,938).

Nationally, Texas is considered one of the leading states with improved graduation rates

and lowered dropout rates. Based on information reported by TEA, the trends for school completion and dropout rates in Texas are generally positive though showing little overall change in the last several years. Among a growing number of researchers, there is a general concern about the authenticity of results, the continued gap in the rates of White students and other racial and ethnic groups, and the number of students who drop out at 12th grade. Concerns also persist about the application and verification of dropout leaver reasons particularly those regarding home schooling, return to home country, and enrollment in private schools.

**Resources**

Johnson, R. *Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2013-14, Texas Attrition Rate Dips One Percentage Point* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 2014).

Texas Education Agency. *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2013-14* (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency, August 2014).

Texas Education Agency. *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14* (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency).

## Texas Annual Dropout Rates – High School
### Reported by the Texas Education Agency, 1994-95 to 2013-14

| School Year | Dropouts | Students | Annual Dropout Rate (%) By Group, Grades 9-12 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | African American | Hispanic | White | Other | Total |
| 1994-95 | 26,499 | 1,058,191 | 3.3 | 3.6 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 2.5 |
| 1995-96 | 24,574 | 1,085,859 | 2.8 | 3.2 | 1.4 | 1.2 | 2.2 |
| 1996-97 | 24,414 | 1,124,991 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 2.2 |
| 1997-98 | 24,886 | 1,145,910 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 2.2 |
| 1998-99 | 27,592 | 1,773,117 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 0.8 | 0.9 | 1.6 |
| 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 |

*The 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14dropout 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 2013-14, August 2015.

# Texas Annual Dropout Rates – Middle and High School
## Reported by the Texas Education Agency, 1987-88 to 2012-13

| 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 |

*The 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14 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, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2013-14, August 2015.

Texas Education Agency, Report on Public School Dropouts, 1996-97 and 1997-98.

## Exit Reasons for School Leavers, Grades 7-12, 2005-06 to 2013-14
Reported by the Texas Education Agency

| Leaver Reasons (Code) | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Graduated or received an out-of-state GED** | | | | | | | | | |
| Graduated from a campus in this district or charter (01) | 240,485 | 241,193 | 252,121 | 264,275 | 280,520 | 290,581 | 292,636 | 301,418 | 303,109 |
| Graduated outside Texas before entering Texas public school, entered a Texas public school, and left again (85) | 318 | 160 | 85 | 42 | 76 | -- | 46 | 97 | 61 |
| Completed GED outside Texas (86) | 139 | 136 | 147 | 104 | 107 | 61 | 61 | 98 | 54 |
| Graduated from another state under provisions of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Minority Children (90) | | | | | | | 18 | 22 | 29 |
| **Moved to other educational setting** | | | | | | | | | |
| Withdrew from/left school to enter college and is working toward an Associate's or Bachelor's degree (24) | 439 | 712 | 748 | 763 | 651 | 673 | 399 | 380 | 318 |
| Withdrew from/left school for home schooling (60) | 16,811 | 20,716 | 22,622 | 20,948 | 20,214 | 20,876 | 20,629 | 21,375 | 21,812 |
| Removed by CPS and the district has not been informed of the student's current status or enrollment (66) | 282 | 287 | 294 | 194 | 232 | 702 | 232 | 239 | 312 |
| Withdrew from/left school to enroll in a private school in Texas (81) | 8,429 | 10,722 | 12,086 | 12,516 | 12,307 | 12,079 | 11,553 | 10,767 | 9,938 |
| Withdrew from/left school to enroll in a public or private school outside Texas (82) | 55,266 | 43,145 | 38,937 | 37,718 | 37,642 | 36,356 | 37,323 | 34,857 | 35,347 |
| 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) | NA | 94 | 272 | 214 | 252 | 262 | 269 | 273 | 271 |
| **Withdrawn by district** | | | | | | | | | |
| Expelled under the provisions of the Texas Education Code §37.007 and cannot return to school (78) | 591 | 585 | 481 | 526 | 637 | 253 | 242 | 153 | 134 |
| 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) | 2,724 | 2,536 | 1,379 | 1,161 | 719 | 505 | 408 | 355 | 321 |
| **Other reasons** | | | | | | | | | |
| Died while enrolled in school or during the summer break after completing the prior school year (03) | 719 | 733 | 601 | 611 | 603 | 546 | 579 | 565 | 565 |
| Withdrew from/left school to return to family's home country (16) | 14,932 | 15,985 | 16,601 | 15,319 | 14,446 | 13,816 | 13,089 | 12,059 | 12,576 |
| Student was ordered by a court to attend a GED program and has not earned a GED certificate (88) | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | 2,506 | 2,063 | 1,857 | 1,716 |
| 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 | NA | 516 | 533 | 380 | 406 |
| Other (reason unknown or not listed above) (98) | 52,595 | 55,485 | 45,888 | 40,972 | 34,949 | 31,367 | 33,721 | 32,499 | 33,269 |
| **All leaver reasons** | 393,730 | 392,489 | 392,262 | 395,363 | 403,355 | 411,140 | 413,801 | 417,394 | 420,238 |

Source: Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2005-06 to 2013-14.

# English Language Learners Most Likely to Drop Out of School

## Longitudinal Graduation and Dropout Rates in Texas Education Service Center Regions for Grades 9-12

*by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.*

The Texas Education Agency released its annual report of school completion and dropouts in August of this year and reported a record ninth grade four-year longitudinal graduation rate of 88.3 percent for the Class of 2014 (TEA, August 2015). On the surface this is fabulous news for the state of Texas, but the picture is mixed across the various student groups, particularly English language learners (ELLs) who had a graduation

## Longitudinal Graduation and Dropout Data in ESC Regions
### by Race-Ethnicity, 2013-14

| Education Service Center Region | Graduation Rates | | | | Longitudinal Dropout Rates | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All Students | African American | Hispanic | White | All Students | African American | Hispanic | White |
| ESC Region 1 (Edinburg) | 87.3 | 87.5 | 87.2 | 91.2 | 6.9 | 2.5 | 7.0 | 4.4 |
| ESC Region 2 (Corpus Christi) | 85.2 | 83.8 | 83.0 | 91.8 | 9.8 | 12.2 | 11.5 | 4.6 |
| ESC Region 3 (Victoria) | 90.8 | 89.7 | 87.3 | 94.9 | 5.6 | 6.0 | 8.1 | 2.7 |
| ESC Region 4 (Houston) | 87.8 | 83.6 | 85.1 | 93.0 | 7.0 | 10.5 | 8.4 | 3.4 |
| ESC Region 5 (Beaumont) | 89.7 | 83.7 | 87.4 | 93.1 | 6.5 | 11.5 | 8.0 | 3.8 |
| ESC Region 6 (Huntsville) | 89.6 | 81.8 | 86.4 | 92.5 | 5.3 | 11.5 | 6.7 | 3.6 |
| ESC Region 7 (Kilgore) | 92.7 | 91.0 | 91.6 | 93.6 | 4.5 | 6.2 | 5.1 | 3.7 |
| ESC Region 8 (Mount Pleasant) | 94.1 | 92.6 | 94.7 | 94.5 | 3.3 | 5.1 | 2.1 | 2.9 |
| ESC Region 9 (Wichita Falls) | 94.0 | 93.3 | 92.6 | 94.8 | 3.1 | 3.6 | 3.3 | 3.0 |
| ESC Region 10 (Richardson) | 87.7 | 82.7 | 84.5 | 93.0 | 6.7 | 10.1 | 8.5 | 3.6 |
| ESC Region 11 (Fort Worth) | 88.7 | 84.3 | 83.8 | 92.6 | 6.4 | 10.4 | 9.2 | 3.7 |
| ESC Region 12 (Waco) | 89.4 | 86.5 | 85.3 | 93.5 | 5.4 | 7.5 | 6.7 | 3.4 |
| ESC Region 13 (Austin) | 91.5 | 87.6 | 87.9 | 95.0 | 4.4 | 6.8 | 6.5 | 2.3 |
| ESC Region 14 (Abilene) | 87.1 | 78.0 | 85.2 | 89.1 | 6.7 | 11.8 | 8.7 | 5.3 |
| ESC Region 15 (San Angelo) | 92.0 | 78.3 | 90.5 | 94.6 | 5.0 | 14.5 | 5.8 | 3.3 |
| ESC Region 16 (Amarillo) | 89.3 | 77.9 | 87.7 | 92.9 | 4.6 | 9.1 | 5.1 | 3.2 |
| ESC Region 17 (Lubbock) | 90.8 | 80.9 | 88.8 | 95.1 | 6.2 | 12.9 | 7.7 | 3.0 |
| ESC Region 18 (Midland) | 82.0 | 72.1 | 80.6 | 86.3 | 12.4 | 19.4 | 13.2 | 9.6 |
| ESC Region 19 (El Paso) | 83.5 | 83.4 | 83.1 | 87.5 | 8.0 | 7.0 | 8.1 | 6.7 |
| ESC Region 20 (San Antonio) | 86.9 | 84.3 | 85.2 | 92.2 | 8.1 | 10.4 | 9.5 | 4.0 |
| **Total** | **88.3** | **84.2** | **85.5** | **93.0** | **6.6** | **9.8** | **8.2** | **3.6** |

Source: Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2013-14

rate of 71.5 percent for students in grades 9-12.

Through TEA, the state of Texas is divided into 20 education service center regions (ESCs) (see map at http://tea.texas.gov/regional_services/esc/). Across those regions, the graduation rates for all students ranged from a low of 82.0 percent in ESC Region 18 (Midland) to a high of 94.1 percent in ESC Region 8 (Mount Pleasant). For ELLs in grades 9-12, the graduation rate ranged from a low of 63.3 percent in ESC Region 18 (Midland) to a high of 91.0 percent in ESC Region 8 (Mount Pleasant).

English language learners are one of the fastest growing student groups in Texas and the nation. ELLs are students whose primary home language is other than English and whose English language proficiency has been determined as limited by a test of English proficiency and/or a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee. In elemen-

tary school, ELLs generally receive instruction in bilingual education classes, and in middle school and high school they are instructed in English as a second language (ESL) classes. In grades 9-12 in 2013-14, 82,922 ELLs were enrolled in ESL (TEA, March 2015).

Nationally, the ELL population has increased from about 4.1 million (or 8.7 percent) of the K-12 student population in 2002-03 to about 4.4 million (or 9.2 percent) of the K-12 population in 2012-13 (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). The number of ELLs in Texas has grown from 831,812 in 2010-11 to 949,074 in 2014-15. In percentages, English language learners have increased from 16.9 percent of the total student population in 2010-11 to 18.1 percent in 2014-15. In grades 9-12, the number of ELLs has increased from 78,968 in 2010-11 to 102,708 in 2014-15.

Across Texas education service center regions,

## Longitudinal Graduation and Dropout Data in ESC Regions, 2013-14
### All Students and English Language Learners in Grades 9-12

| Education Service Center Region | Graduation Rates | | Longitudinal Dropout Rates | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All Students | ELLs in Grades 9-12 | All Students | ELLs in Grades 9-12 |
| ESC Region 1 (Edinburg) | 87.3 | 73.1 | 6.9 | 15.2 |
| ESC Region 2 (Corpus Christi) | 85.2 | 68.9 | 9.8 | 21.0 |
| ESC Region 3 (Victoria) | 90.8 | 75.3 | 5.6 | 14.4 |
| ESC Region 4 (Houston) | 87.8 | 68.8 | 7.0 | 16.9 |
| ESC Region 5 (Beaumont) | 89.7 | 69.3 | 6.5 | 23.6 |
| ESC Region 6 (Huntsville) | 89.6 | 74.6 | 5.3 | 11.3 |
| ESC Region 7 (Kilgore) | 92.7 | 81.1 | 4.5 | 12.7 |
| ESC Region 8 (Mount Pleasant) | 94.1 | 91.0 | 3.3 | 2.6 |
| ESC Region 9 (Wichita Falls) | 94.0 | 83.7 | 3.1 | 9.3 |
| ESC Region 10 (Richardson) | 87.7 | 72.9 | 6.7 | 15.1 |
| ESC Region 11 (Fort Worth) | 88.7 | 67.9 | 6.4 | 18.1 |
| ESC Region 12 (Waco) | 89.4 | 73.9 | 5.4 | 16.3 |
| ESC Region 13 (Austin) | 91.5 | 73.5 | 4.4 | 13.3 |
| ESC Region 14 (Abilene) | 87.1 | 76.1 | 6.7 | 14.9 |
| ESC Region 15 (San Angelo) | 92.0 | 75.9 | 5.0 | 13.4 |
| ESC Region 16 (Amarillo) | 89.3 | 66.4 | 4.6 | 17.9 |
| ESC Region 17 (Lubbock) | 90.8 | 79.4 | 6.2 | 13.5 |
| ESC Region 18 (Midland) | 82.0 | 63.3 | 12.4 | 23.0 |
| ESC Region 19 (El Paso) | 83.5 | 68.6 | 8.0 | 17.3 |
| ESC Region 20 (San Antonio) | 86.9 | 74.5 | 8.1 | 15.3 |
| **Total** | **88.3** | **71.5** | **6.6** | **15.9** |

Source: Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2013-14

# Texas Compares Well with Other States in Federal Dropout Report

*by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.*

In 2012-13, Texas ranked third out of 50 states and the District of Columbia on the newest measure of on-time graduation from public high schools – 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 was tied with one other state – Wisconsin – with an adjusted on-time cohort graduation rate of 88 percent compared to the national average of 81.4 percent. The previous year (2011-12), Texas was tied for second with three other states – Nebraska, Vermont and Wisconsin – with a rate of 88 percent.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences released the 2012-13 adjusted cohort graduation rates (ACGR) in February 2015. According to NCES, the ACGR is more accurate than the averaged freshman graduation rate (AFGR). The ACGR takes into consideration the number of students of students who transfer in and out of the cohort, thus defining the term "adjusted cohort" for this latest measure of high school graduation.

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

A provisional data file released by NCES late this month shows that Texas is expected to have an overall ACGR for 2013-14 of 88.3 percent and a national rank of fifth. The data for the 50 states and the District of Columbia will be finalized over the next few months. The ACGR in Texas has improved each year from 2006-07 when it was 71.9 percent through 2012-13 when it was 88.0 percent. Texas' national ranking has improved from 36th in 2006-07 to third in 2012-13.

## Methods

In the latest complete report, which covers 1012-13, 49 states and the District of Columbia reported counts of high school graduates (see table on next page for rates by state and rank orders by state). The state of Idaho did not provide ACGR data.

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

## Major Findings

Major findings of the latest NCES study on the adjusted cohort graduation rate include the following (also see the tables on Pages 35 and 36).

- In the 2012-13 school year, about **four out of five students** in the United States graduated from high school on time – within four years of after 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 **81.4 percent** in 2012-13, and ranged from a low of 62.3 percent in the District of Columbia to a high of 89.7 percent in Iowa.

- Twenty-nine of the reporting 49 states had **rates equal to or higher than** the national average of 81.4 percent – Arkansas, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. In 2012-13, Texas tied for third (with Wisconsin) among the 49 reporting states and the District of Columbia with a rate of 88 percent. The Texas ACGR remained unchanged from 2011-12 to 2012-13.

- Twenty-one of the 49 reporting states and the District of Columbia had **rates lower** than the overall average of 81.4 percent – Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Washington, and Wyoming.

- In the United States in 2012-13, American Indian/Alaska Native students, Black students and Hispanic students had an averaged freshman graduation rate below the national average. American Indian/Alaska Native students had an ACGR or 69.7 percent, Black students had an ACGR of 70.7 percent, and Hispanic students had an ACGR of 75.2

## 2012-13 Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR)
### by 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 |
| **United States** | **81.4** | | **69.7** | | **88.7** | | **75.2** | | **70.7** | | **86.6** | |
| Alabama | 80.0 | 32 | 86.0 | 1 | 89.0 | 20 | 74.0 | 28 | 73.9 | 22 | 83.9 | 32 |
| Alaska | 71.8 | 45 | 57.0 | 42 | 77.0 | 49 | 73.0 | 29 | 65.0 | 41 | 77.9 | 47 |
| Arizona | 75.1 | 43 | 61.1 | 39 | 84.0 | 40 | 68.9 | 38 | 69.6 | 32 | 82.6 | 36 |
| Arkansas | 84.9 | 19 | 78.0 | 13 | 81.0 | 44 | 82.0 | 4 | 78.1 | 6 | 87.8 | 18 |
| California | 80.4 | 30 | 72.8 | 24 | 90.9 | 12 | 75.7 | 23 | 68.1 | 36 | 87.7 | 20 |
| Colorado | 76.9 | 38 | 61.0 | 40 | 85.0 | 35 | 65.4 | 44 | 69.5 | 33 | 82.8 | 35 |
| Connecticut | 85.5 | 15 | 82.0 | 9 | 93.0 | 6 | 70.2 | 35 | 75.7 | 16 | 91.4 | 6 |
| Delaware | 80.4 | 31 | 80.0 | 11 | 88.0 | 26 | 78.0 | 17 | 76.1 | 14 | 83.1 | 34 |
| District of Columbia | 62.3 | 50 | ‹› | NR | 86.0 | 31 | 62.0 | 48 | 60.7 | 46 | 85.0 | 31 |
| Florida | 75.6 | 41 | 77.0 | 15 | 88.4 | 25 | 74.9 | 26 | 64.6 | 42 | 80.5 | 40 |
| Georgia | 71.7 | 46 | 64.0 | 34 | 81.8 | 43 | 62.6 | 46 | 64.4 | 43 | 79.2 | 45 |
| Hawaii | 82.4 | 27 | 62.0 | 37 | 83.8 | 41 | 77.0 | 19 | 75.0 | 17 | 79.0 | 46 |
| Idaho | — | NR | — | NR | — | NR | — | NR | — | NR | — | NR |
| Illinois | 83.2 | 23 | 78.0 | 13 | 91.7 | 9 | 76.3 | 21 | 70.9 | 30 | 89.3 | 13 |
| Indiana | 87.0 | 8 | 86.0 | 1 | 89.0 | 20 | 82.5 | 3 | 73.8 | 23 | 89.7 | 11 |
| Iowa | 89.7 | 1 | 83.0 | 7 | 90.0 | 15 | 80.0 | 9 | 74.0 | 21 | 91.5 | 5 |
| Kansas | 85.7 | 13 | 77.0 | 15 | 89.0 | 20 | 79.9 | 11 | 76.0 | 15 | 88.1 | 16 |
| Kentucky | 86.1 | 12 | 79.0 | 12 | 87.0 | 30 | 80.0 | 9 | 78.4 | 4 | 87.6 | 21 |
| Louisiana | 73.5 | 44 | 75.0 | 20 | 85.0 | 35 | 73.0 | 29 | 65.9 | 39 | 80.2 | 41 |
| Maine | 86.4 | 10 | 72.0 | 25 | >=95 | 2 | 81.0 | 7 | 75.0 | 17 | 86.9 | 27 |
| Maryland | 85.0 | 17 | 83.0 | 7 | 94.8 | 3 | 75.1 | 25 | 78.3 | 5 | 91.1 | 7 |
| Massachusetts | 85.0 | 17 | 73.0 | 23 | 90.2 | 13 | 66.8 | 42 | 73.8 | 23 | 90.1 | 9 |
| Michigan | 77.0 | 36 | 64.0 | 34 | 87.3 | 29 | 67.3 | 41 | 60.5 | 47 | 82.1 | 37 |
| Minnesota | 79.8 | 33 | 49.0 | 46 | 78.2 | 48 | 59.0 | 50 | 57.8 | 48 | 85.3 | 30 |
| Mississippi | 75.5 | 42 | 69.0 | 28 | 92.0 | 7 | 79.0 | 12 | 69.5 | 34 | 82.1 | 37 |
| Missouri | 85.7 | 13 | 82.0 | 9 | 91.0 | 10 | 81.0 | 7 | 72.1 | 27 | 89.1 | 14 |
| Montana | 84.4 | 22 | 65.0 | 32 | 94.0 | 4 | 79.0 | 12 | 77.0 | 9 | 87.0 | 25 |
| Nebraska | 88.5 | 2 | 72.0 | 25 | 77.0 | 50 | 78.6 | 14 | 77.0 | 9 | 92.2 | 4 |
| Nevada | 70.7 | 47 | 59.0 | 41 | 81.0 | 44 | 64.4 | 45 | 56.7 | 50 | 77.2 | 48 |
| New Hampshire | 87.3 | 7 | 84.0 | 5 | 86.0 | 31 | 77.0 | 19 | 82.0 | 2 | 87.8 | 18 |
| New Jersey | 87.5 | 5 | 76.0 | 18 | 95.8 | 1 | 78.6 | 14 | 76.4 | 13 | 93.1 | 1 |
| New Mexico | 70.3 | 48 | 64.3 | 33 | 86.0 | 31 | 67.9 | 40 | 69.0 | 35 | 77.0 | 49 |
| New York | 76.8 | 39 | 62.0 | 37 | 84.1 | 39 | 62.3 | 47 | 62.9 | 45 | 87.2 | 22 |
| North Carolina | 82.5 | 26 | 77.0 | 15 | 90.0 | 15 | 75.2 | 24 | 77.5 | 8 | 86.2 | 28 |
| North Dakota | 87.5 | 5 | 63.0 | 36 | 88.0 | 26 | 78.0 | 17 | 80.0 | 3 | 90.4 | 8 |
| Ohio | 82.2 | 28 | 68.0 | 29 | 89.0 | 20 | 68.9 | 38 | 63.4 | 44 | 87.0 | 25 |
| Oklahoma | 84.8 | 20 | 84.4 | 4 | 90.0 | 15 | 78.6 | 14 | 77.0 | 9 | 87.2 | 22 |
| Oregon | 68.7 | 49 | 52.0 | 44 | 81.0 | 44 | 60.8 | 49 | 57.0 | 49 | 71.0 | 50 |
| Pennsylvania | 85.5 | 15 | 74.0 | 21 | 91.0 | 10 | 70.7 | 33 | 72.6 | 26 | 89.7 | 11 |
| Rhode Island | 79.7 | 34 | 74.0 | 21 | 85.0 | 35 | 69.0 | 36 | 72.0 | 28 | 83.9 | 32 |
| South Carolina | 77.6 | 35 | 67.0 | 30 | 88.0 | 26 | 73.0 | 29 | 74.6 | 20 | 79.9 | 43 |
| South Dakota | 82.7 | 25 | 49.0 | 47 | 85.0 | 35 | 69.0 | 36 | 72.0 | 28 | 88.0 | 17 |
| Tennessee | 86.3 | 11 | 84.0 | 5 | 90.0 | 15 | 81.3 | 6 | 77.8 | 7 | 89.8 | 10 |
| **Texas** | **88.0** | **3** | **86.0** | **1** | **93.7** | **5** | **85.1** | **1** | **84.1** | **1** | **93.0** | **2** |
| Utah | 83.0 | 24 | 67.0 | 30 | 80.0 | 47 | 70.4 | 34 | 70.0 | 31 | 86.1 | 29 |
| Vermont | 86.6 | 9 | >=50 | 45 | 89.0 | 20 | 83.0 | 2 | 73.0 | 25 | 87.2 | 22 |
| Virginia | 84.5 | 21 | — | NR | 90.2 | 13 | 76.1 | 22 | 76.8 | 12 | 88.6 | 15 |
| Washington | 76.4 | 40 | 56.0 | 43 | 82.3 | 42 | 65.9 | 43 | 65.8 | 40 | 79.7 | 44 |
| West Virginia | 81.4 | 29 | 70.0 | 27 | 92.0 | 7 | 82.0 | 4 | 75.0 | 17 | 81.9 | 39 |
| Wisconsin | 88.0 | 3 | 76.0 | 18 | 90.0 | 15 | 74.3 | 27 | 66.1 | 37 | 92.4 | 3 |
| Wyoming | 77.0 | 36 | 41.0 | 48 | 86.0 | 31 | 71.0 | 32 | 66.0 | 38 | 80.0 | 42 |

— Not available.  ‹› Data were suppressed.  ✢ Greater than or equal.  NR Not Ranked

Source: United States Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Public High School Four-Year On-Time Graduation Rates.

## 2012-13 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 |
| **United States** | **81.4** | | **73.3** | | **61.1** | | **61.9** | |
| Alabama | 80.0 | 32 | 71.8 | 30 | 44.0 | 45 | 76.9 | 5 |
| Alaska | 71.8 | 45 | 59.5 | 48 | 40.0 | 47 | 43.0 | 44 |
| Arizona | 75.1 | 43 | 69.4 | 34 | 20.0 | 50 | 63.3 | 24 |
| Arkansas | 84.9 | 19 | 80.3 | 7 | 81.0 | 2 | 80.4 | 1 |
| California | 80.4 | 30 | 74.8 | 20 | 63.1 | 25 | 61.9 | 27 |
| Colorado | 76.9 | 38 | 63.7 | 46 | 58.5 | 33 | 53.8 | 37 |
| Connecticut | 85.5 | 15 | 72.1 | 28 | 64.0 | 20 | 64.7 | 23 |
| Delaware | 80.4 | 31 | 74.2 | 22 | 71.0 | 10 | 60.0 | 30 |
| District of Columbia | 62.3 | 50 | 58.9 | 49 | 52.0 | 39 | 41.0 | 45 |
| Florida | 75.6 | 41 | 67.0 | 38 | 57.5 | 34 | 52.3 | 39 |
| Georgia | 71.7 | 46 | 63.8 | 44 | 43.8 | 46 | 35.1 | 48 |
| Hawaii | 82.4 | 27 | 78.2 | 9 | 57.0 | 35 | 61.0 | 28 |
| Idaho | – | NR | – | NR | – | NR | – | NR |
| Illinois | 83.2 | 23 | 73.0 | 26 | 63.7 | 23 | 70.1 | 13 |
| Indiana | 87.0 | 8 | 82.7 | 3 | 78.0 | 3 | 69.3 | 16 |
| Iowa | 89.7 | 1 | 80.4 | 6 | 76.0 | 4 | 72.7 | 10 |
| Kansas | 85.7 | 13 | 76.6 | 13 | 75.0 | 5 | 77.8 | 3 |
| Kentucky | 86.1 | 12 | 85.4 | 1 | 64.0 | 20 | 52.0 | 40 |
| Louisiana | 73.5 | 44 | 67.7 | 36 | 48.0 | 44 | 36.7 | 47 |
| Maine | 86.4 | 10 | 76.9 | 12 | 73.0 | 6 | 70.0 | 14 |
| Maryland | 85.0 | 17 | 75.8 | 17 | 57.0 | 35 | 60.0 | 30 |
| Massachusetts | 85.0 | 17 | 73.6 | 25 | 63.5 | 24 | 67.8 | 20 |
| Michigan | 77.0 | 36 | 63.9 | 43 | 65.4 | 18 | 53.6 | 38 |
| Minnesota | 79.8 | 33 | 63.8 | 44 | 59.3 | 31 | 58.2 | 35 |
| Mississippi | 75.5 | 42 | 70.2 | 32 | 57.0 | 35 | 22.5 | 50 |
| Missouri | 85.7 | 13 | 78.0 | 10 | 69.0 | 13 | 73.4 | 9 |
| Montana | 84.4 | 22 | 74.5 | 21 | 57.0 | 35 | 76.0 | 6 |
| Nebraska | 88.5 | 2 | 80.9 | 4 | 60.0 | 29 | 71.0 | 11 |
| Nevada | 70.7 | 47 | 64.0 | 42 | 24.0 | 49 | 26.4 | 49 |
| New Hampshire | 87.3 | 7 | 75.7 | 18 | 70.0 | 12 | 71.0 | 11 |
| New Jersey | 87.5 | 5 | 77.1 | 11 | 70.5 | 11 | 75.9 | 7 |
| New Mexico | 70.3 | 48 | 64.7 | 41 | 65.4 | 18 | 60.1 | 29 |
| New York | 76.8 | 39 | 67.5 | 37 | 39.1 | 48 | 47.2 | 42 |
| North Carolina | 82.5 | 26 | 76.1 | 16 | 49.0 | 43 | 62.3 | 25 |
| North Dakota | 87.5 | 5 | 72.0 | 29 | 61.0 | 28 | 70.0 | 14 |
| Ohio | 82.2 | 28 | 69.6 | 33 | 67.0 | 16 | 69.2 | 17 |
| Oklahoma | 84.8 | 20 | 79.7 | 8 | 64.0 | 20 | 78.5 | 2 |
| Oregon | 68.7 | 49 | 60.4 | 47 | 49.1 | 42 | 37.2 | 46 |
| Pennsylvania | 85.5 | 15 | 76.5 | 15 | 67.0 | 16 | 75.0 | 8 |
| Rhode Island | 79.7 | 34 | 69.3 | 35 | 73.0 | 6 | 59.0 | 33 |
| South Carolina | 77.6 | 35 | 70.5 | 31 | 69.0 | 13 | 43.2 | 43 |
| South Dakota | 82.7 | 25 | 67.0 | 38 | 59.0 | 32 | 60.0 | 30 |
| Tennessee | 86.3 | 11 | 80.7 | 5 | 73.0 | 6 | 67.3 | 22 |
| **Texas** | **88.0** | **3** | **85.2** | **2** | **71.3** | **9** | **77.8** | **3** |
| Utah | 83.0 | 24 | 72.9 | 27 | 60.0 | 29 | 67.4 | 21 |
| Vermont | 86.6 | 9 | 75.0 | 19 | 63.0 | 26 | 68.0 | 19 |
| Virginia | 84.5 | 21 | 74.0 | 23 | 51.8 | 40 | 51.5 | 41 |
| Washington | 76.4 | 40 | 65.0 | 40 | 50.6 | 41 | 54.6 | 36 |
| West Virginia | 81.4 | 29 | 73.7 | 24 | 83.0 | 1 | 62.1 | 26 |
| Wisconsin | 88.0 | 3 | 76.6 | 13 | 62.0 | 27 | 68.7 | 18 |
| Wyoming | 77.0 | 36 | 64.0 | 50 | 68.0 | 15 | 59.0 | 33 |

— Not available.     NR Not Ranked.

Source: United States Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Public High School Four-Year On-Time Graduation Rates: School Year 2012–13 (February 2015).

percent. White students had a rate of 86.6 percent while Asian/Pacific Islander students had a rate of 88.7 percent. The state of Texas ranked high in the graduation rates of students from all **race-ethnicity groups**. Texas ranked first in the graduation rates of American Indian/Alaska Native students (86.0 percent), Hispanic students (85.1 percent) and Black students (84.1 percent). In Texas, the ACGR for White students ranked second in the nation at 93.0 percent and at fifth for Asian/Pacific Islander students (93.7 percent).

- For **special population groups** in the nation as a whole, economically disadvantaged students had an ACGR of 73.3 percent, limited-English-proficient students had an ACGR of 61.1 percent, and students with disabilities had an ACGR of 61.9 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 second in the nation in the graduation rate of economically disadvantaged students with an ACGR of 71.3 percent. The state of Texas ranked third, tied with Kansas, in the graduation rate of students with

disabilities with a rate of 77.8 percent. For the special population group of limited-English-proficient students, Texas ranked ninth with a ACGR of 77.8 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 it has ever been with a rate of 81.4 percent. Some states, including the state of Iowa, Nebraska, Texas and Wisconsin, are creeping ever closer with reported graduation rates consistently from the mid-to-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.

With the growing possibility of the nation and some states to meet the 90 percent graduation

goal, continued monitoring 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 on-time graduation rates below the national average. Questions continue to persist regarding which students are removed from the cohort as school leavers, which students are considered dropouts, what constitutes a regular high school diploma, and other germane questions. Clearly, change is being observed regarding on-time graduation rates as estimated by ACGR, but steps to improve verification of school dropout and school completion are paramount in telling the complete and accurate story surrounding dropout and graduation in our public schools.

## Resources

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education, Public High School Four-Year On-Time Graduation Rates and Event Dropout Rates: School Years 2010-11 and 2011-12, First Look (April 2014).

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education, Public High School Four-Year On-Time Graduation Rates: School Year 2012-13 (February 2015).

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**Continued from Page 33**

ELLs ranged from a low of 4.2 percent of the student population in ESC Regions 2 and 15 to a high of 36.5 percent in ESC Region 1. The number of ELLs ranged from just under 2,000 in ESC Region 9 to nearly 253,000 in ESC Region 4 (Houston). About 26.6 percent of all ELLs were located in ESC Region 4.

As reported by the state education agency, the ninth grade four-year longitudinal graduation rate among other noted student groups was 84.2 percent for African American students, 85.5 percent for Hispanic students, 93.0 percent for White students, 85.2 percent for economically disadvantaged students, and 77.5 percent for special education students.

The ninth grade four-year longitudinal dropout rate for the Class of 2014 was 6.6 percent statewide, 9.8 percent for African American students, 8.2 percent for Hispanic students, 3.6 percent for White students, 9.0 percent for economically disadvantaged students, 15.9 percent for ELL students in grades 9-12, and 11.2 percent for special education students. ELLs had the lowest graduation rate of all subgroups and the highest dropout rate.

Across education service center regions, the longitudinal dropout rate reported by TEA for all students ranged from a low of 3.1 for ESC Region 9 (Wichita Falls) to a high of 12.4 percent for ESC Region 18 (Midland). The rates for ELLs in 9-12 ranged from a low of 2.6 percent for ESC Region 8 (Mount Pleasant) to a high of 23.6 percent for ESC Region 5 (Beaumont).

The quality of instructional programs for ELL students, particularly at the middle and high school levels, have been a concern of educators, civil rights advocates, community members and others for a number of years. The education outcomes for ELL students have continued to lag behind those of other student groups, and this phenomenon is readily apparent in the recently released graduation and dropout rates in Texas. ELLs are among the group of students who are most likely to drop out of school. Though ELLs in grades 9-12 constitute 7.1 percent of the overall 9-12 total enrollment, they constitute 18.3 percent of all dropouts.

The progress that Texas is making in improving graduation and lowering dropout rates cannot be ignored, but neither can the gaps in the outcomes

of ELLs compared to other student groups. This can no longer be the state of affairs in Texas or anywhere in the country. With greater attention to the quality of instructional programs for ELLs and to the adequate and equitable funding for ELLs, we can secure educational opportunity for our all of students.

## Resources

Texas Education Agency. Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2013-14 (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency, August 2015).

Texas Education Agency. "ELL Student Reports by Category and Grade," PEIMS Standard Reports 2014-15 (Austin, Texas: Texas Education Agency, March 24, 2015).

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2015 Digest of Education Statistics (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

See IDRA's proceedings report focusing on education of ELLs with recommendations for policymakers, educators, community and business leaders and parents.

**budurl.com/IDRAenJun15**

# 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.
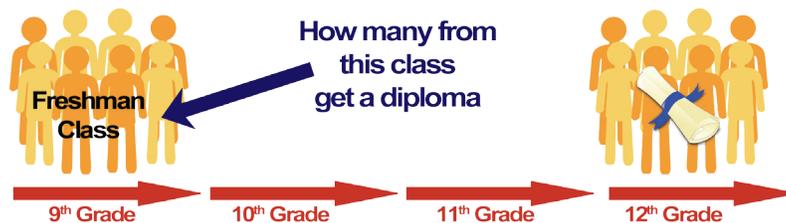


Freshman Class — How many from this class get a diploma

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

## Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

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



Freshman Class — this class get a diploma + or - those who move in to or out of the school (or leave for other reasons or who pass away)

9th Grade → 10th Grade → 11th Grade → 12th Grade
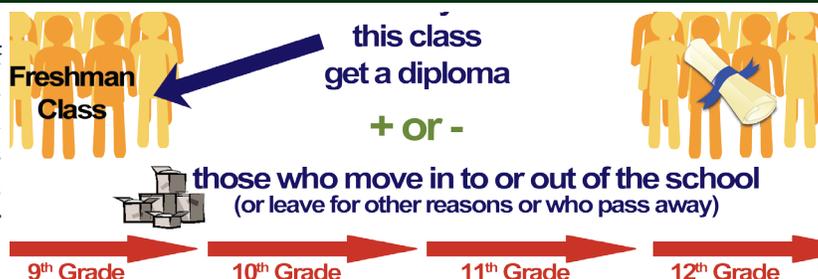
## Event Dropout Rate (or Annual Dropout Rate)

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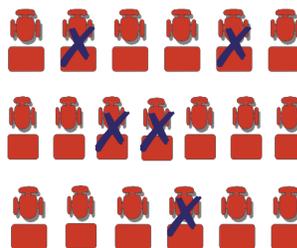


How many drop out in one year

## 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 <u>do not</u> 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 <u>do</u> 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 12th grade enrollment four years later). Attrition data are similar to cohort data. Each year for the state of Texas, TEA reports simple attrition rates, while IDRA reports adjusted attrition rates (that account for fluctuations in school enrollment and in and out migration).

**Freshman Class**

**How many from this freshman class are still in school three years later**

9th Grade    10th Grade    11th Grade    12th Grade
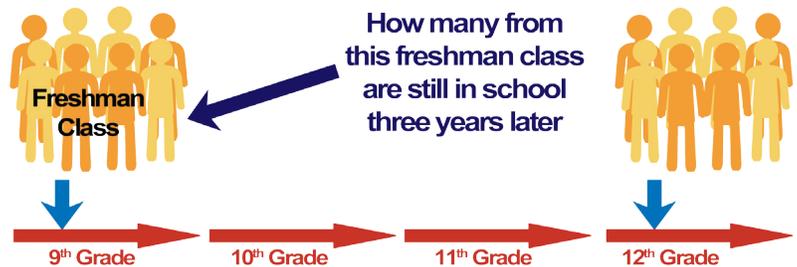
### Cohort Rate

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

**What hapens to this group over time – includes background and context info**
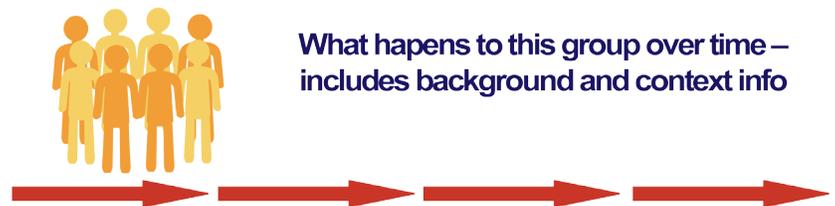
### Graduation Rate

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

**Freshman Class**

**How many from this class get a diploma**

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

# 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.

**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.

**Intercultural Development Research Association**
5815 Callaghan Road, Suite 101
San Antonio, Texas 78228
210-444-1710
contact@idra.org
www.idra.org

*Assuring educational opportunity for every child*