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Title I, Part A Program Summary, 2014—2015





Title I, Part A Program Summary, 2014-2015

Executive Summary

The purpose of the federal Title I, Part A program is to provide funds to improve elementary and secondary educational programs in both public and private nonprofit schools and institutions. During the 2014–2015 school year, the Austin Independent School District (AISD) received more than \$31 million in Title I, Part A funds to serve 77 public schools, of which 65 were schoolwide (i.e., funds used to support all students in the school), and 12 were targeted assistance (i.e., funds used to support specific eligible students in the school). Funds received were based on the percentage of low-income students living in the school’s attendance area.

On the state-required achievement tests, State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) and end-of-course (EOC), AISD Title I students on average passed at lower rates than did AISD non-Title I students, and this trend has continued over several years.

Compared to students at AISD non-Title I schools, students at Title I schools were more often Hispanic, economically disadvantaged, and English language learners. AISD’s Title I student population has decreased slightly over the past 3 years. The average cost per Title I student served was \$790 in 2014-2015.

However, AISD is closing the gap in EOC performance between Title I and non-Title I students. In addition, for the first time in 2014–2015, two Title I high schools, successfully graduated 13 students with both a high school diploma and a college associate’s degree due to the Early College High School partnership with the Austin Community College.

The Texas Education Agency’s (TEA) preliminary 2015 state accountability ratings showed that all but seven AISD schools met the state’s standard rating. The seven schools that were rated as needing improvement were all Title I schools (three middle schools and four elementary schools). In most cases, these schools did not meet standard on the student achievement indicator or postsecondary readiness indicator. In the state’s PBMAS 2015 report, AISD’s Title I students’ program performance levels did not meet state Title I program students’ performance levels for STAAR passing rates in grades 3 through 8 (in all subject areas) only. AISD is implementing a district-wide improvement plan to address these needs.

As the district faces financial shortfalls, it is critical that district staff ensure the cost-effective use of the funds available. Because AISD needs to help support schools in improving students’ academic performance, it is suggested that district staff review ways in which AISD is leveraging its Title I, Part A, funds along with other funds, to support students and staff at its Title I schools.

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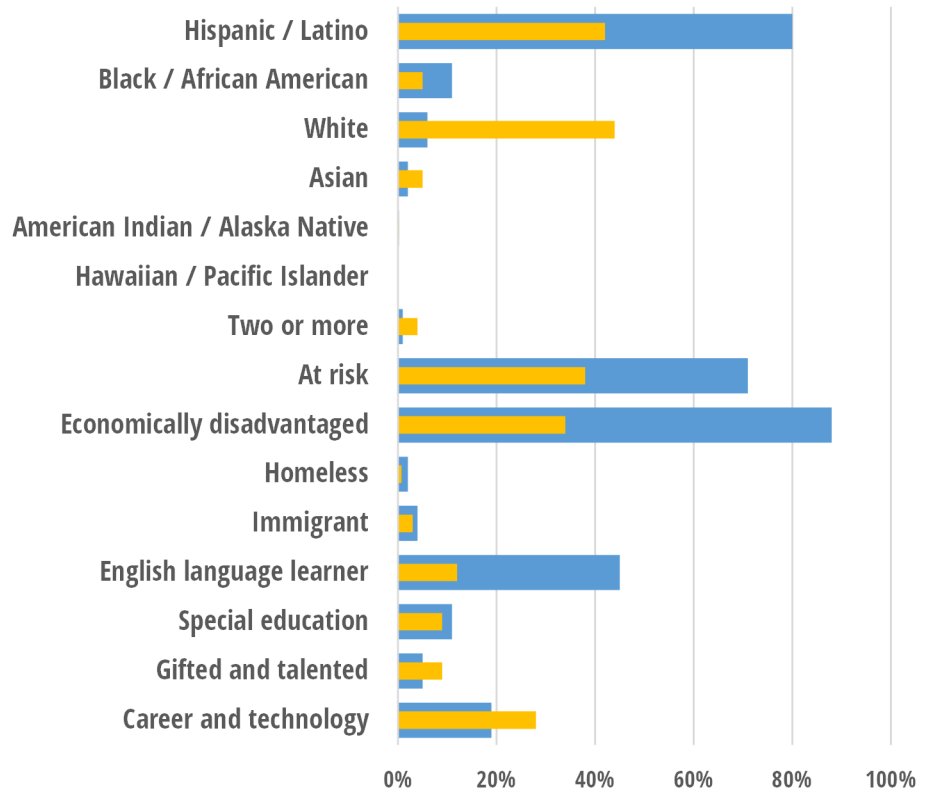
Title I Program Overview

The purpose of the federal Title I, Part A program is to provide funds to improve elementary and secondary educational programs in both public and private nonprofit schools and institutions. During the 2014–2015 school year, the Austin Independent School District (AISD) received more than \$31 million in Title I, Part A funds to serve 77 public schools, of which 65 were schoolwide (i.e., funds used to support all students in the school), and 12 were targeted assistance (i.e., funds used to support specific eligible students in the school). Funds received were based on the percentage of low-income students living in the school’s attendance area.

Figure 1 shows demographics and other education program characteristics of Title I and non-Title I students in AISD for 2014–2015. Students attending Title I schools accounted for 47% of AISD’s total student population in 2014–2015, representing a 3-percentage point decrease from the 2012–2013 school year (Figure 2).

Figure 1.
AISD Title I and Non-Title I Student Demographics and Educational Program Participation, Fall 2014

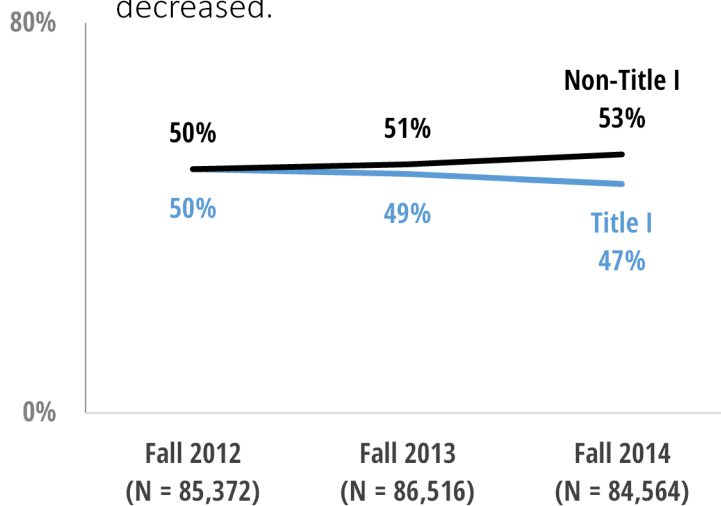
Compared to **non-Title I students**, greater percentages of **Title I students** were Hispanic, at risk, economically disadvantaged, and English language learners.



Source: AISD student records, Fall 2014.

Figure 2.
AISD Title I and Non-Title I Student Population Over Time

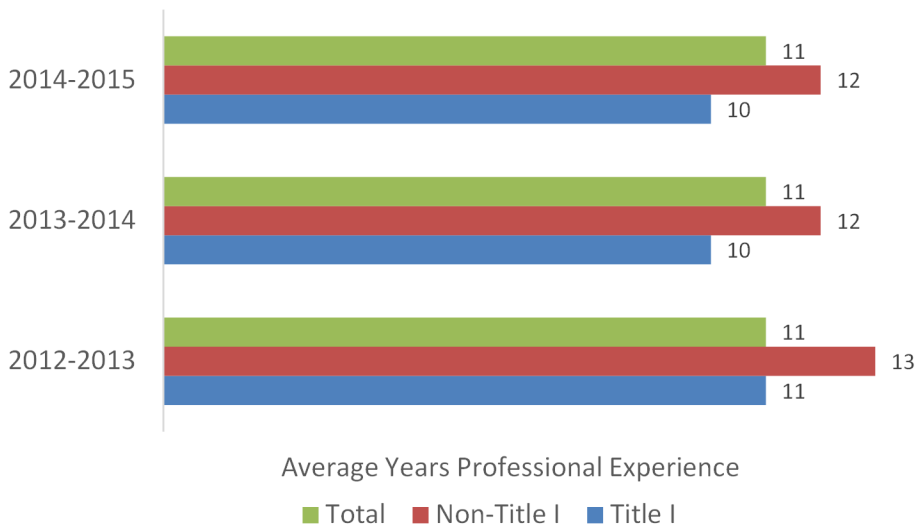
AISD's **non-Title I student** group increased over time while its **Title I student** group and **overall** population decreased.



Source. AISD student records, 2012, 2013, 2014

With respect to professional experience over the past 3 years, a slight difference was found between the average years of experience of teachers at Title I schools and that of teachers at non-Title I schools (Figure 3).

Figure 3.
AISD Title I and Non-Title I Schools Teachers Average Years of Experience



Source. AISD PEIMS records Fall 2012, Fall 2013, Fall 2014

The Title I, Part A program is part of the federal No Child Left Behind legislation of 2001 (NCLB: Public Law 107-110, 2001). Title I, Part A funding flows from the U.S. Department of Education through state agencies—in the case of Texas, the Texas Education Agency (TEA)—to qualifying school districts. A school's Title I, Part A funding is determined by the percentage of low-income students living in the school's attendance area. In AISD, a child is low income if he or she is eligible for free- or reduced-price meals.

Schools are ranked annually on the basis of projected percentages of low-income children residing in the school's attendance area. Districts must use Title I, Part A funds to serve schools with 75% or more low-income children residing in the school's attendance area. Remaining schools with less than 75% low-income students are served in rank order. Some funds are required to be set aside for serving eligible students at participating private nonprofit schools in the AISD Title I schools' attendance zones.



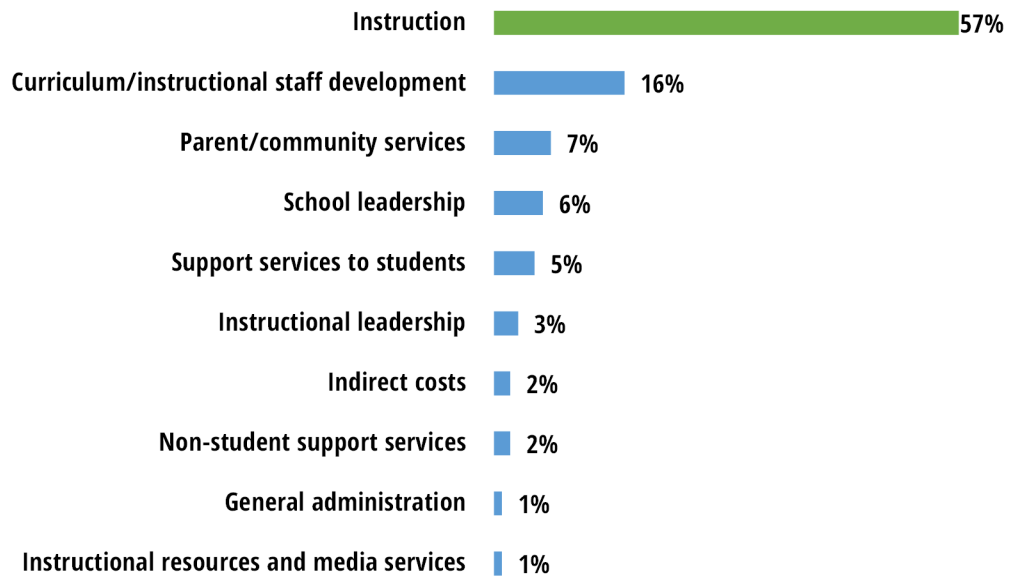


Title I Program Funding

Figure 4 shows the majority of 2014–2015 Title I, Part A funds were used for student instruction (57%), primarily supporting staff salaries. Staff development services supported trainings during the year. Parent services primarily supported campus efforts to engage parents; during the school year, more than 15,300 unique parents were served at Title I schools. Figure 5 shows that Title I, Part A funds and the AISD Title I student population decreased over the past 3 years.

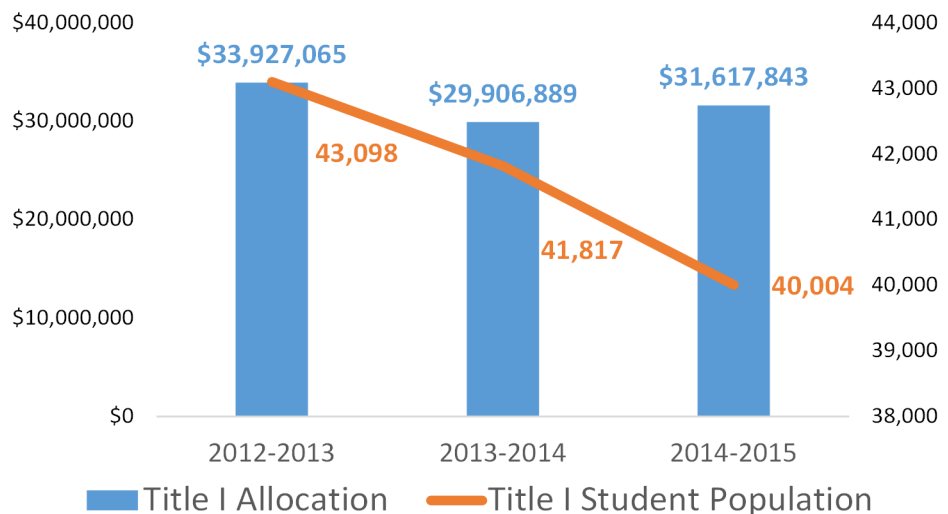
Figure 4.
AISD Title I, Part A Expenditures by Function, 2014-2015

Most Title I expenditures were on **instruction**



Source. AISD Title I, Part A financial records

Figure 5.
AISD Title I Allocations and Student Population Over Time



Source. AISD Title I, Part A financial records and AISD PEIMS records

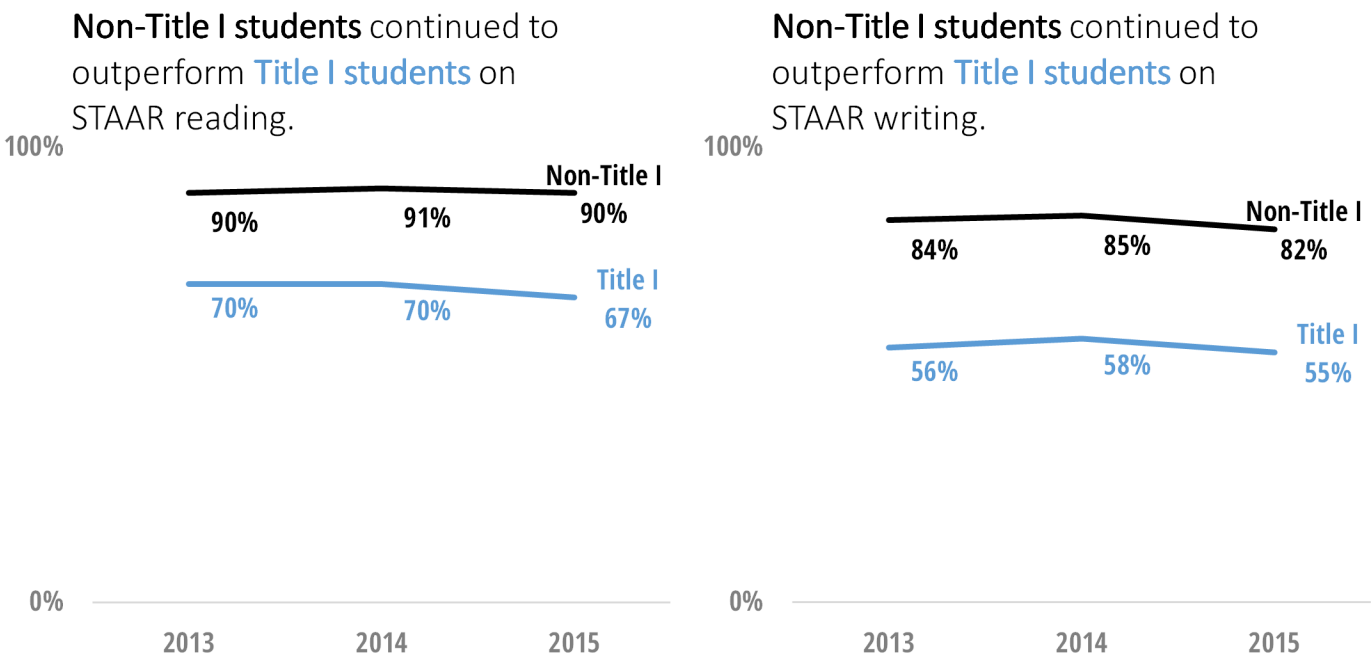
Student Outcomes

Annually, Texas public school students' academic performance in a variety of subject areas is assessed. In grades 3 through 8, students are assessed on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR). For some middle students and for all high school students, academic performance is assessed using the end-of-course (EOC) tests. Results from these tests contribute to the state accountability system ratings for schools and districts.

Students' STAAR Performance

Results for STAAR 2015 indicate that AISD students at Title I schools generally had lower rates of passing than did AISD students at non-Title I schools. This trend has been consistent over time, as shown in Figures 6 through 7.

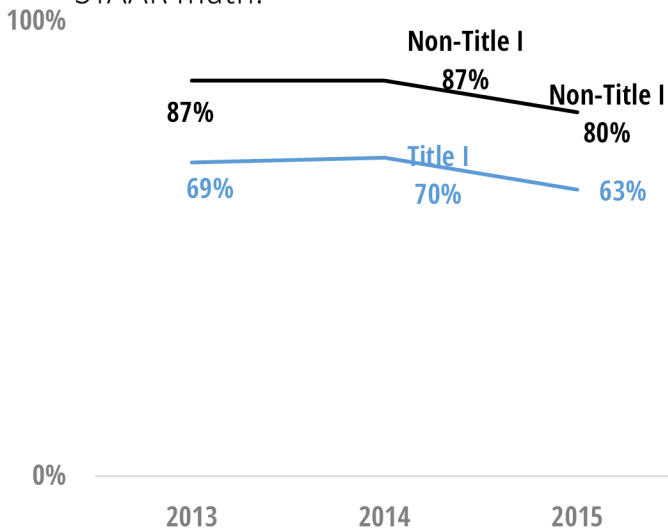
Figure 6.
AISD Title I and Non-Title I Students' STAAR Performance on Reading and Writing, 2013, 2014, 2015



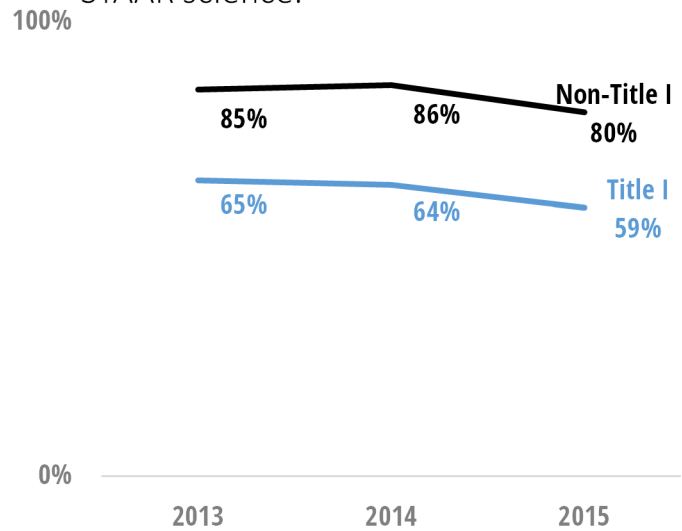
Source. AISD student STAAR records
Note. STAAR analyses included scored tests only, all administrations, both English and Spanish versions, and test versions S, A and L.

Figure 7.
AISD Title I and Non-Title I Students' STAAR Performance on Math, Science and Social Studies, 2013, 2014, 2015

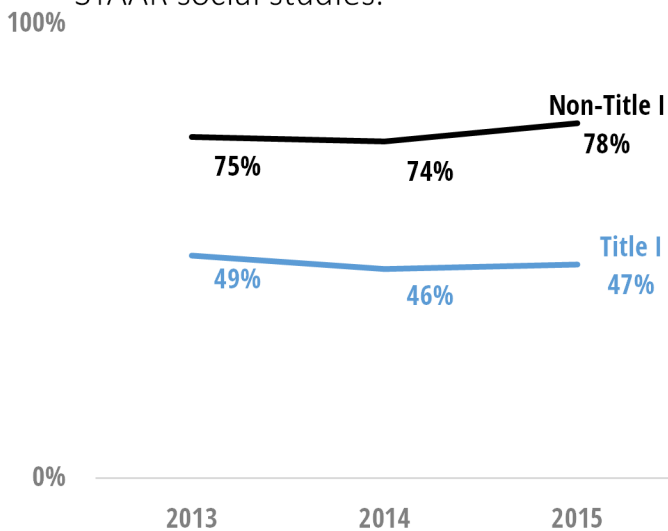
Non-Title I students continued to outperform **Title I students** on STAAR math.



Non-Title I students continued to outperform **Title I students** on STAAR science.



Non-Title I students continued to outperform **Title I students** on STAAR social studies.



Source. AISD student STAAR records

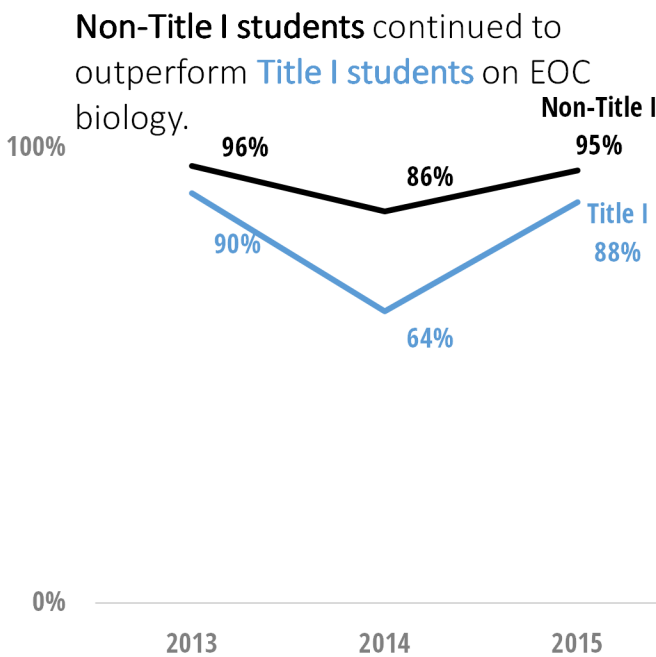
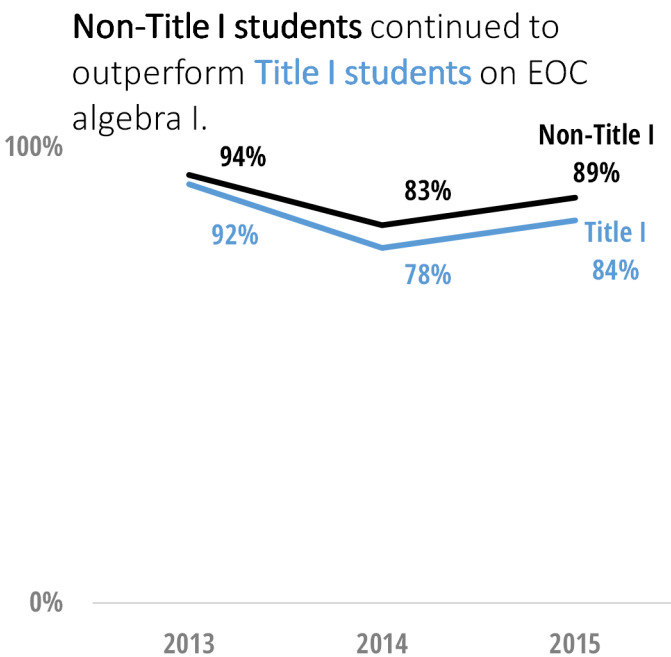
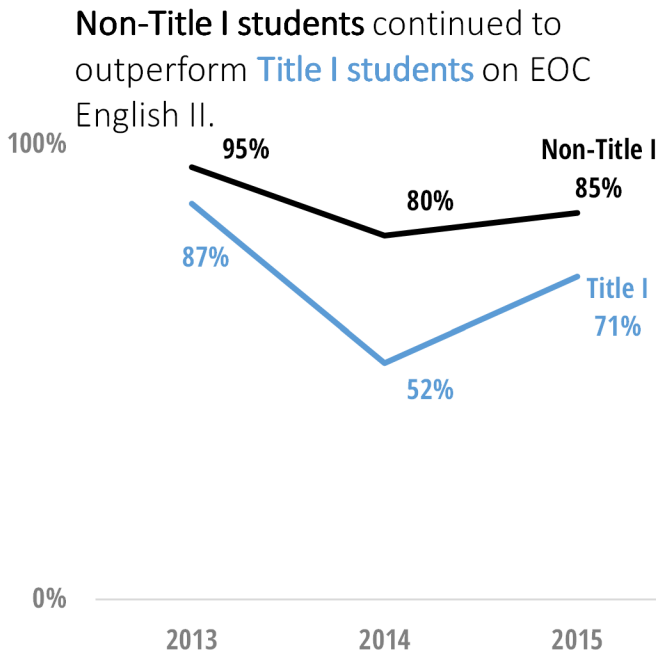
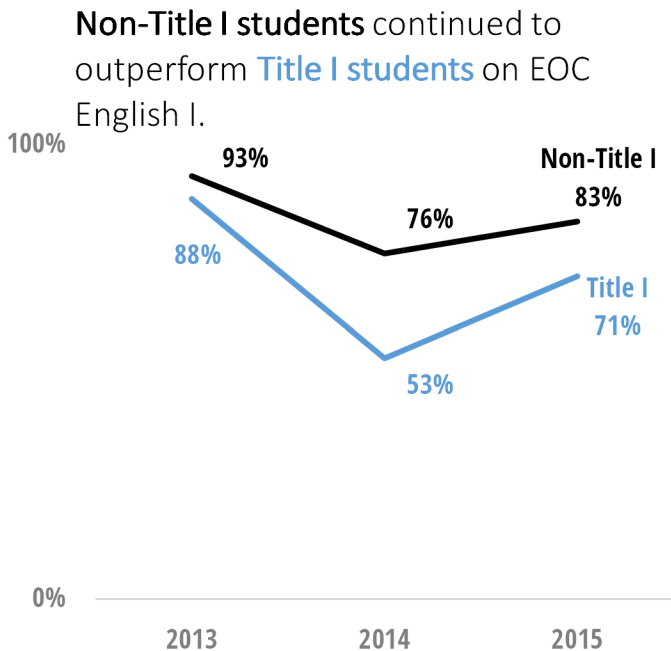
Note. STAAR analyses included scored tests only, all administrations, both English and Spanish versions, and test versions S, A and L.

Students' EOC Performance

Results for AISD students in secondary grade levels who took the EOC tests in 2015 indicate that Title I students generally had lower rates of passing than did non-Title I students. This trend has been consistent over time, as shown in Figures 8 through 9. However, **from 2014 to 2015, AISD was closing the gap in EOC performance between Title I and non-Title I students on all subject tests except algebra I (the difference remained steady).**

Figure 8.

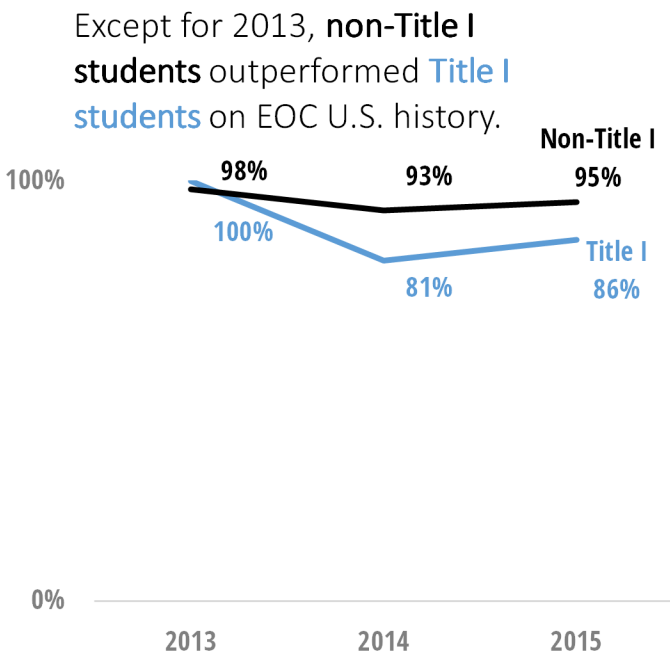
AISD Title I and Non-Title I Students' End of Course Results for English I and II, Algebra I, and Biology, 2013, 2014, 2015



Source. AISD student End of Course (EOC) records.

Note. EOC analyses included scored tests only, all administrations, and test versions S, A, and L.

Figure 9.
AISD Title I and Non-Title I Students' End of Course Results for U. S. History, 2013, 2014, 2015



Source. AISD student End of Course (EOC) records.

Note. EOC analyses included scored tests only, all administrations, and test versions S, A, and L.

State Accountability

By state and federal laws, public school districts and schools are rated annually in an accountability system based on various student participation and performance indicators (see <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2015/index.html>). In the 2015 Texas state accountability system, which is the federally approved accountability rating system, the four student indicators are student achievement, student progress, closing performance gaps, and postsecondary readiness. TEA preliminary 2015 ratings showed that all but eight AISD schools met the state's standard rating. The eight schools rated as needing improvement were all Title I schools (three middle schools and five elementary schools). In most cases, these schools did not meet standard on the student achievement indicator or postsecondary readiness indicator.

Another way that Texas public schools are assessed annually by the state is through the Performance-Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS). This process examines student measures by comparing districts' results with state results on the STAAR, EOC, dropout rates, graduation rates, and other indicators. Districts are assigned indicator performance levels, and any level above 0 requires the district to begin a year-long improvement plan. Results for district and state Title I program students are one of the areas for which programs are compared. In the 2015 PBMAS report, AISD had performance levels that required the district to implement an improvement plan for STAAR passing rates in grades 3 through 8 (in all subject areas) only. As a result, AISD staff will be working to create and follow through with an improvement plan to raise STAAR performance levels to the minimum range required by the state.

Successful Early College High Schools

During 2014–2015, AISD's L. B. Johnson and Reagan High Schools graduated their first group of 13 students who successfully completed a high school degree as well as earned an associate's college degree by taking dual credit courses



at Austin Community College. The program is funded through public-private partnerships, grants, and shared-cost agreements, which enable AISD to offer the program at no charge to eligible (i.e., low-income, minority, first-generation college-going, and at-risk of dropping out of school) students.

Conclusion

Title I Students and Funding

Over the past 3 years, the number of Title I students in AISD and the amount of federal Title I, Part A funds the district received decreased. During the 2014–2015 school year, AISD received more than \$31 million in Title I, Part A funds to serve 77 public schools, of which 65 were schoolwide (i.e., funds used to support all students in the school), and 12 were targeted assistance (i.e., funds used to support specific eligible students in the school). Compared with AISD non-Title I students, greater percentages of AISD’s Title I students were Hispanic, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, and at risk.

Title I Student Academic Performance

On the state-required achievement tests (i.e., STAAR and EOC), AISD Title I students on average passed at lower rates than did AISD non-Title I students, and this trend has continued over several years. However, from 2014 to 2015, AISD was closing the gap in EOC performance between Title I and non-Title I students on all subject tests except algebra I (the difference remained steady).

Accountability

TEA’s preliminary 2015 state accountability ratings showed that all but seven AISD schools met the state’s standard rating. The seven schools that were rated as needing improvement were all Title I schools (three middle schools, and four elementary schools). These schools did not meet standard on the student achievement indicator or postsecondary readiness indicator. In the state’s PBMAS 2015 report, AISD’s Title I students’ performance levels did not meet state Title I students’ performance levels for STAAR passing rates in grades 3 through 8 (in all subject areas) only. AISD is implementing a district-wide improvement plan to address these needs.

Recommendations

Students’ academic performance results suggest a need to review ways in which AISD is leveraging its Title I, Part A, funds along with other funds, to support students and staff at its Title I schools. Because AISD’s Title I funds distributed across campuses are not tied to specific program components and are not connected to specific students in schoolwide settings, it is hard to determine which elements of school-based practices are influencing students’ performance. AISD should find ways to track Title I funds more closely at the school as well as district level to determine if specific activities and initiatives are linked to student outcomes. As the district faces financial shortfalls, it is critical that district staff ensure the cost-effective use of the funds available.

References

No Child Left Behind. (2001). *Title I: Improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg.1.html>

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