

# Analysis of Performance Gaps

Austin Independent School District, 2012–2013 through 2014–2015

## State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)

Performance on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) varied by student group from Spring 2013 to Spring 2015. STAAR passing rates generally dipped and rebounded slightly in 2015 (Figures 1–9), but performance of some student groups improved or declined to a greater extent, and few gaps narrowed. It is important to note that the more rigorous STAAR Accommodated replaced the STAAR Modified in 2015 as one of the main tests available to students with disabilities. Statewide performance on the STAAR Accommodated was much lower than it had been on the STAAR Modified.

### Reading

Figure 1  
Reading passing rates increased each year for **English language learners** but decreased each year for students in **special education**. Performance gaps remained stable for **economically disadvantaged** students.

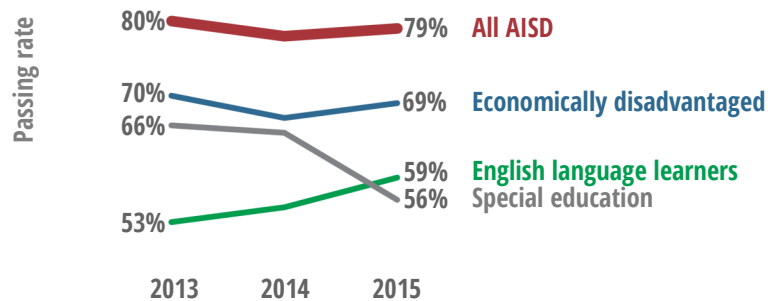


Figure 2  
Reading performance gaps remained stable for **gender**.

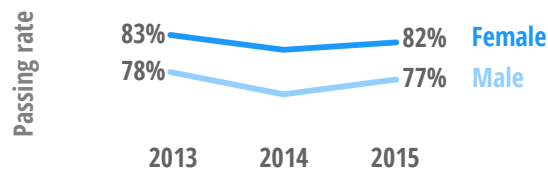
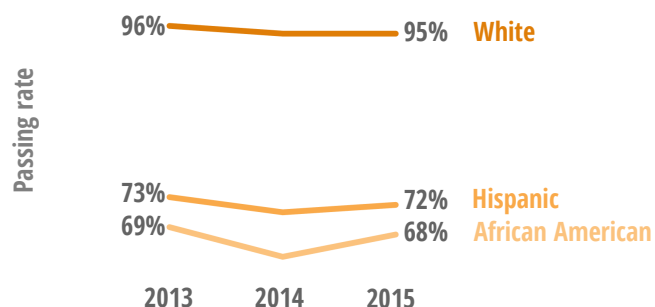
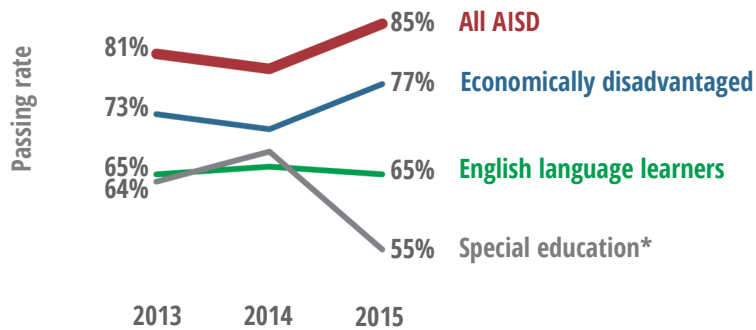


Figure 3  
Reading performance gaps remained stable for **race/ethnicity**.

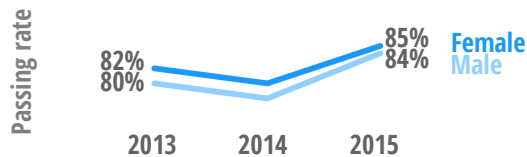


## Mathematics (Math)

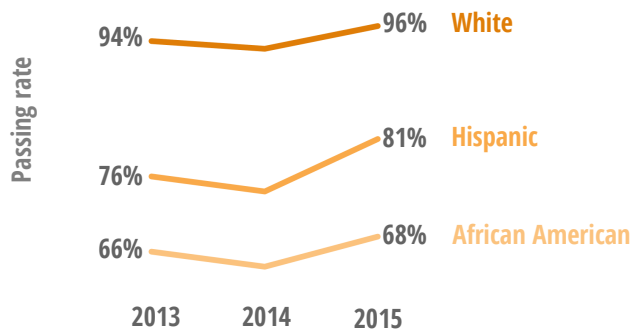
**Figure 4**  
**Math passing rates declined in 2015 for English language learners and students in special education, widening the gaps with their peers. Race/ethnicity performance gaps narrowed slightly between White and Hispanic students.**



**Figure 5**  
**Math gender performance gaps narrowed slightly.**



**Figure 6**  
**Math race/ethnicity performance gaps narrowed slightly between White and Hispanic students.**



## About This Report

This report is one of several that examines the data to investigate equity in the Austin Independent School District.

This report describes the performance gaps between and among student groups district-wide.

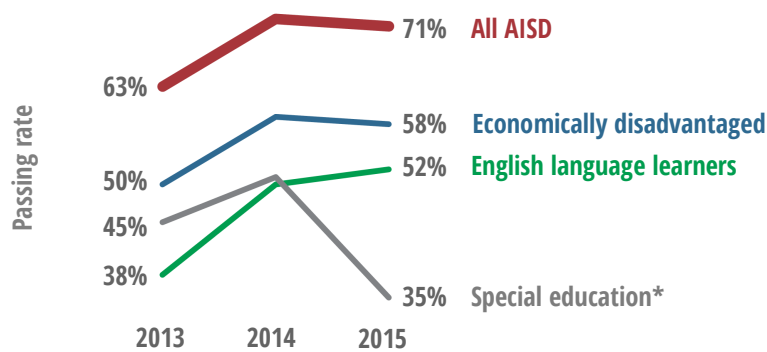
Additional reports examine disparities in school performance and gaps in the performance of student groups within each school.



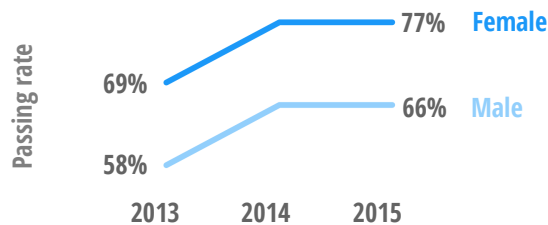
\*In 2015, the more rigorous STAAR Accommodated replaced the STAAR modified as one of the main tests available to students with disabilities.

## Writing

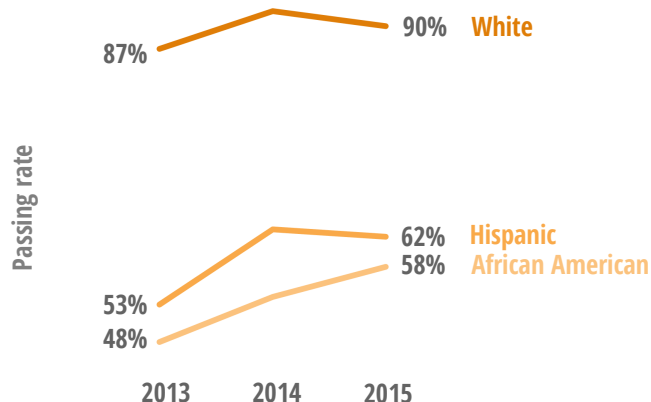
**Figure 7**  
 Writing passing rates declined since 2013 for students in special education, widening the gaps against their peers. Performance gaps narrowed for English language learners but remained similar for economically disadvantaged students.



**Figure 8**  
 Writing gender performance gaps remained the same.



**Figure 9**  
 Writing race/ethnicity performance gaps narrowed substantially over time.



\*In 2015, the more rigorous STAAR Accommodated replaced the STAAR modified as one of the main tests available to students with disabilities.

## Data in This Report

### STAAR

The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) were summarized by the AISD Department of Campus and District Accountability.

### Discipline

The disciplinary placement/removal data were provided by the AISD Department of Student Services, and rates were computed by the Department of Research and Evaluation.

### Four Year Graduation Rates

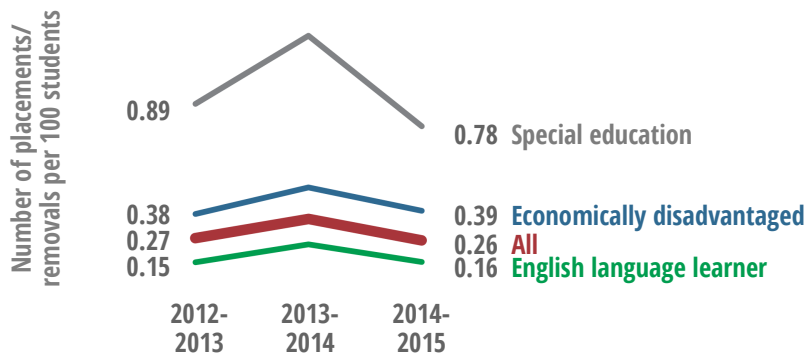
The AISD Federal Four Year Graduation Rates were provided by the AISD Office of Accountability and reflect data from the Texas Education Agency.



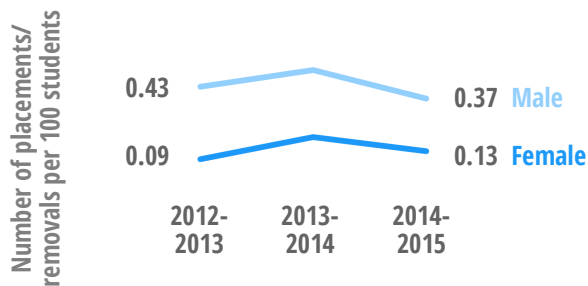
## Disciplinary Placement/Removal Rates

Since 2012–2013, the rates of disciplinary placement/removals spiked and then dropped again (Figures 10–12). African American rates remained higher in 2014–2015, but the rates for all other student groups were similar to those from 2012–2013.

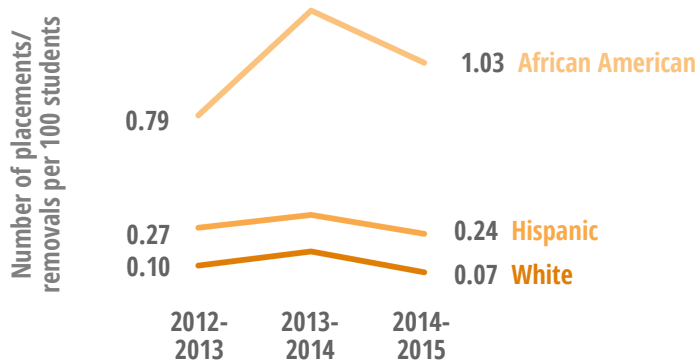
**Figure 10**  
The gaps in disciplinary placement/removal rates narrowed for students in special education but remained similar for other student groups.



**Figure 11**  
The gender gaps in disciplinary placement/removal rates narrowed over time.



**Figure 12**  
The race/ethnicity gap in disciplinary placement/removal rates widened for African American students.



## Four Year Federal Graduation Rates

The overall four year federal graduation rate improved from 2012 to 2014 (Figure 13), and improvements were greatest for English language learners (ELLs), males, and Hispanic students.

Figure 13

The improvement from 2013 to 2014 was lower for **economically disadvantaged**, **English language learners**, and students served with special education than for their peers, as evidenced by the steeper increase for **all students**.

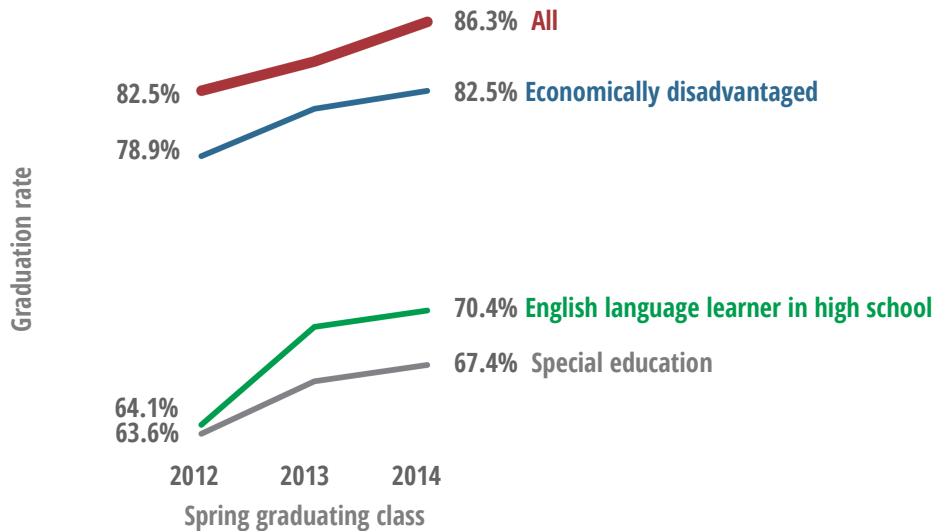


Figure 14

The **gender** gaps in graduation rates narrowed over time.

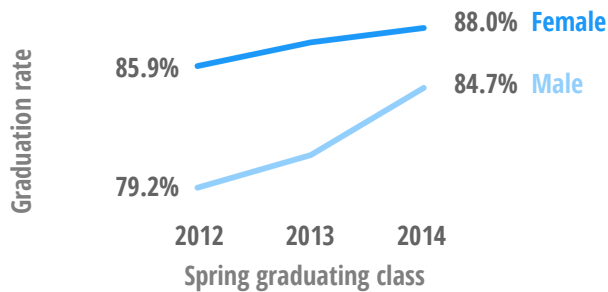
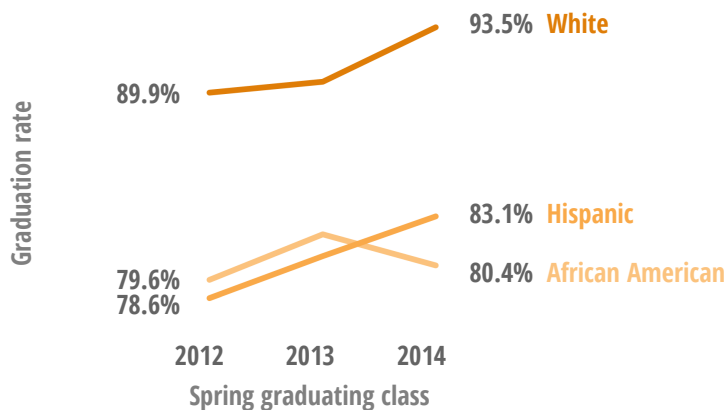


Figure 15

The **race/ethnicity** gap in graduation rates narrowed in 2013 but widened again in 2014.



## Conclusion

Over the past three years, student performance on STAAR generally improved, disciplinary placement/removal rates remained stable, and graduation rates improved. Patterns were not the same for each student group or across indicators.

Performance gaps between ELLs and their peers narrowed in reading and writing, but widened in math. Gaps between White and Hispanic students narrowed in math and writing, but gaps between students in special education and their peers widened in every subject. The gaps between students in special education and their peers were largely influenced by changes to the state assessment in 2015, when the STAAR Modified was discontinued. Statewide, performance was much lower on the more rigorous STAAR Accommodated than on the STAAR Modified.

Gaps in disciplinary removal/placement rates narrowed between students in special education and their peers, and between males and females. However, disciplinary gaps widened between African American and White students.

Despite some widening in the most recent year, over the three year period, gaps in graduation rates narrowed slightly between Hispanic and White students, males and females, and English language learners and their peers. However, gaps in graduation rate widened between African American and White students.

## AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Lisa Schmitt, Ph.D.  
Holly Williams, Ph.D.  
Cinda Christian, Ph.D.

### Department of Research and Evaluation



1111 West 6th Street, Suite D-350 | Austin, TX 78703-5338  
512.414.1724 | fax: 512.414.1707  
[www.austinisd.org/dre](http://www.austinisd.org/dre) | Twitter: @AISD\_DRE

April 2016

Publication 15.39 RB