

REPORT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Office of Superintendent of Schools
Board of Education Meeting of September 13, 2012

SUBJECT: **BOARD MONITORING SYSTEM–GOAL 1, SECTION K: ENGLISH ACQUISITION FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS**

At the February 2010 meeting, the Board of Education implemented a revised Board Monitoring System in order to efficiently maintain and measure Houston Independent School District (HISD) goals and core values. The monitoring system was designed to give district administrators clear direction on how to meet the Board's expectations in these crucial areas.

Board Policy AE(LOCAL) requires that “[T]he administration shall report to the Board on each goal and core value using the specific method and timing set out.”

In reference to the district's **Goal 1: Increase Student Achievement**, the attached report provides information regarding **Section K: English Acquisition for Limited English Proficient Students**. The policy states that “[t]he administration shall provide the Board of Education with a report listing how many LEP students exited bilingual and ESL programs in the prior year by grade level.”

The attached report provides the information requested for the 2011–2012 school year.



Board Monitoring System: Indicator K

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) exists to strengthen the social and economic foundation of Houston by assuring its youth the highest-quality elementary and secondary education available anywhere. In fulfilling this goal, HISD's Board of Education has designed a program to systematically monitor achievement of the district's goals and adherence to core values. The Board Monitoring System requires the administration to report on each goal and core value on a routine basis. The indicator currently under review is ENGLISH ACQUISITION FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) STUDENTS. The objective of this indicator states: "[L]imited english proficient students shall transition into English courses as rapidly as possible." (Goal 1, Section K).

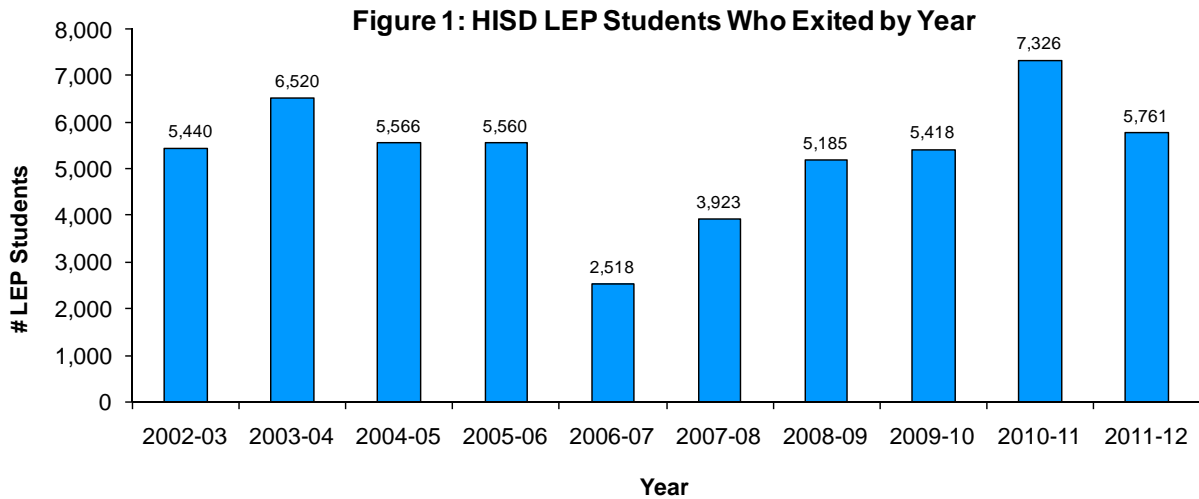
Findings

English Acquisition for LEP Students

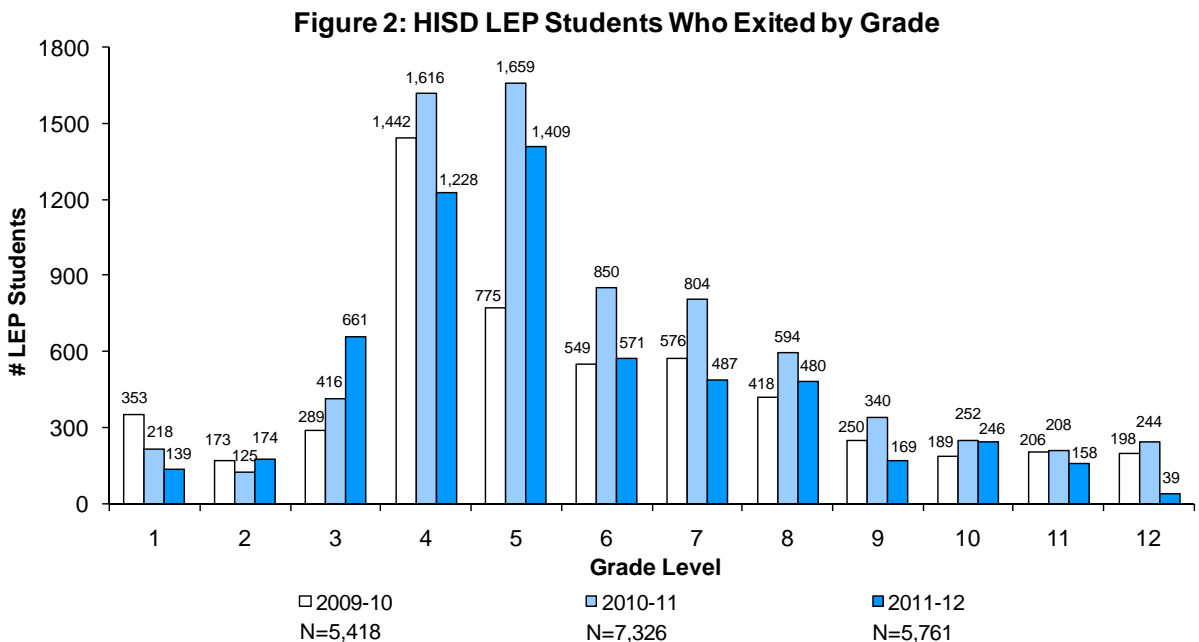
- In Figures 1 and 3, the total number of exited students decreased by 21 percent, going from 7,326 in 2010–2011 to 5,761 in 2011–2012.
- During the 2011–2012 school year, the largest number of exited students was in the fifth grade with 1,409, followed by fourth grade with 1,228.
- The number of LEP exits as a percentage of total LEP enrolment (Figure 3) also declined, going from 11.8 percent in 2010–2011 to 9.5 percent in 2011–2012.
- In Figures 4 and 5, the total number of first- or second-year exited LEP students (i.e., "monitored" students) declined from 10,626 in 2010–2011 to 9,087 in 2011–2012, a decrease of 14 percent.
- During the 2011–2012 school year, the largest number of monitored students was in the fifth grade with 1,609 followed by the sixth grade with 1,607.

Analysis/Administrative Response

- LEP exits declined in 2006–2007 (see **Figure 1**) in large part due to new exit criteria mandated by Texas Education Agency (TEA), specifically those requiring evidence of oral and written English proficiency. The multilingual department subsequently introduced, and continues to emphasize, an increased focus on productive (i.e., oral and written English) language for LEPs in professional development activities for the district's bilingual and english as a second language (ESL) teachers.



- Since these initiatives, the number of LEP exits has increased and returned to historically reported levels.



The Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines describe an exited LEP student as a LEP student who was reclassified as a non-LEP student in the last school year. Reclassification is based on state criteria. This chart (**Figure 2**) shows the number of LEP students who exited at each grade by year between 2009–2010 and 2011–2012. Grade shown is the grade in which they were enrolled at the time they were exited. Most exits in 2011–2012 occurred in the fourth and fifth grades, as has been the case in prior years. During the past academic year, the number of exits decreased by 21 percent, going from 7,326 in 2010–2011 to 5,761. This is in the range typically observed prior to 2006–2007, when new and more stringent LEP exit criteria were mandated by TEA.

It should be noted that the 7,326 figure obtained in 2010–2011 represents the largest number of LEP exits observed over a ten-year period. Over the nine-year period starting in 2002–2003, the average number of exits per year was 5,284. The most recent figure of 5,761 exceeds this average by 477, and is the third highest exit count obtained over the last ten years.

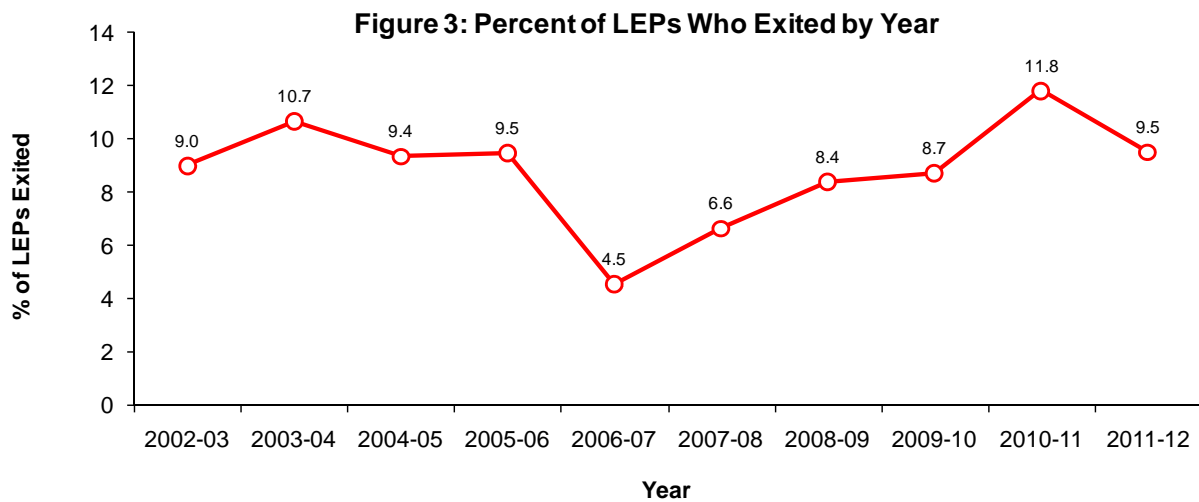
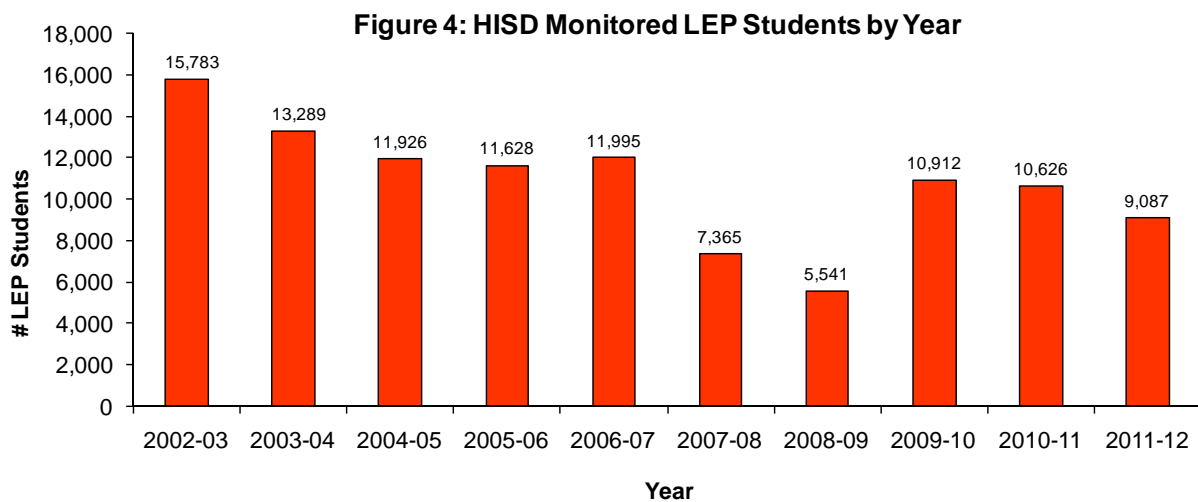


Figure 3 shows LEP exits as a percentage of the total LEP enrollment in the district, for the period 2002–2003 through 2011–2012. On average, 8.8 percent of enrolled LEPs exited each year between 2002–2003 and 2010–2011. During this past year, the percentage of LEPs to exit decreased, going from 11.8 percent in 2010–2011 to 9.5 percent. Thus, approximately one in 10 LEP students exited, which is slightly higher than the performance observed over the time period shown in Figure 3.

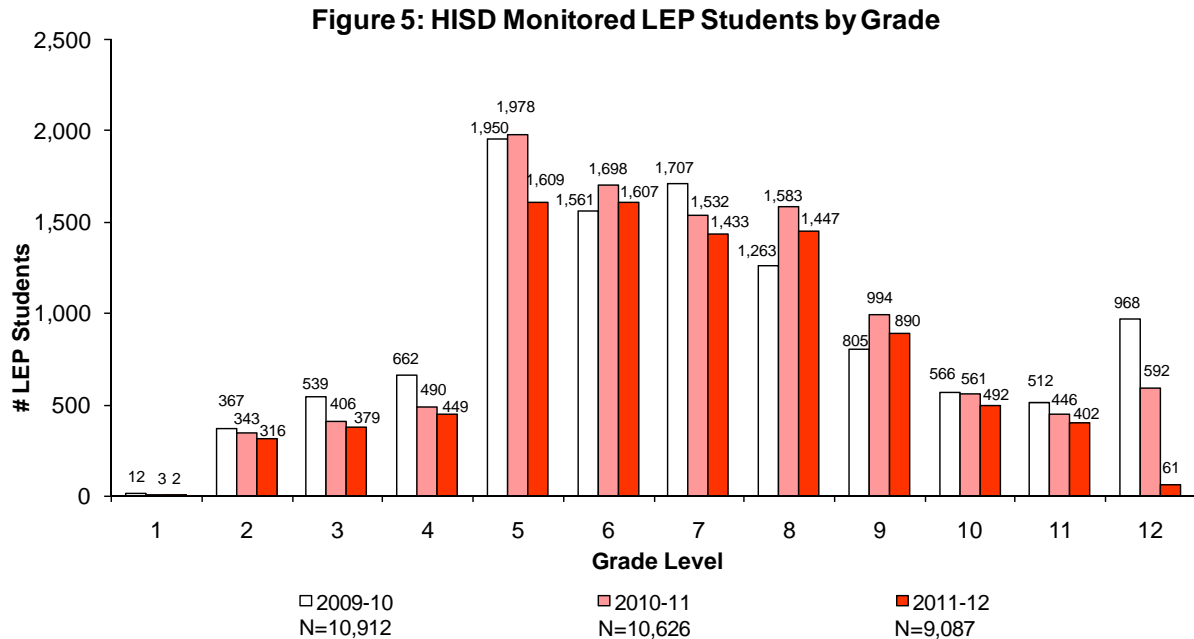
New English Language Learner exit standards which were established in 2006 required LEPs at all grade levels to demonstrate proficiency in oral and written English as well as in reading. Since 2007, the multilingual department has focused on increasing the emphasis on productive aspects of English language proficiency

(i.e., speaking and writing) in its professional development activities for bilingual and ESL teachers. Other initiatives that have taken place during the last two school years include (a) identifying students who had met the reading and writing criteria, to ensure that they also took the appropriate oral language assessments, (b) holding additional training for schools to improve teacher scoring of Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System writing samples, and (c) reminding campuses of the oral language proficiency requirements and the need to assess all LEP students individually before they could meet exit criteria. Taken together, these steps are largely responsible for the increase in LEP exits observed since 2007.



- The number of monitored students declined in 2011–2012, and is 1,920 below the nine-year average observed over the period 2003 to 2011 (11,007).

The Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines describe a monitored LEP student as a LEP student who was reclassified as a non-LEP student sometime during the previous two school years. The total number of monitored students declined from 10,626 in 2010–2011 to 9,087 in 2011–2012, an decrease of 14 percent. This chart (**Figure 4**) shows the number of monitored LEP students by year for the period 2002–2003 through 2011–2012. The largest number of monitored students recorded was 15,783 in 2002–2003, with the smallest occurring in 2008–2009, two years after a similar decline in the number of LEP exits (compare with Figure 1).



The final chart (**Figure 5**) shows the number of monitored LEP students at each grade by year between 2009–2010 and 2011–2012. The largest number of monitored students were in the fifth grade, with the next highest count in the sixth grade.

Despite the decline in the number of monitored LEPs observed in 2011–2012, the number of monitored LEP students has increased markedly over values observed in 2008–2009, when there were only 5,541 monitored students in the district. The count of monitored LEPs is rebounding as the number of LEP exits returns to more historically observed levels. That is, the relatively low number of monitored LEPs observed in 2008–2009 was a reflection of two consecutive years with low exit numbers. With these apparently approaching more typically observed levels of 5,000+ annually, the number of monitored LEPs has recovered as well.

That having been said, it is true that the number of reported monitored LEPs has declined for two consecutive years. The causes for this apparent decline are currently being investigated, and the issue will be addressed pending the outcome of a comprehensive data analysis. One possibility is that campuses are not being diligent enough in properly coding students as monitored in Chancery. This and other possible factors will be fully reviewed.