

REPORT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Office of Superintendent of Schools
Board of Education Meeting of October 11, 2012

SUBJECT: **BOARD MONITORING SYSTEM—GOAL 1, SECTION I:
DEMONSTRATE VALUE-ADDED GROWTH USING EVAAS DATA**

At the February 11, 2010 meeting, the Board of Education implemented a revised Board Monitoring System in order to efficiently maintain and measure Houston Independent School District's (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) states “[T]he administration shall report to the Board on each goal and core value using the specific method and timing set out below, . . .”

In reference to the district's **Goal 1: Increase Student Achievement**, the attached report provides information regarding **Section I: Demonstrate Value-Added Growth using EVAAS Data**. The policy states that “[T]he administration will provide the Board with a report that reflects the value-added gains by grade and subject for the District.

Timing: This report shall be presented to the Board each year at the October Board meeting.”

In accordance with the district's targets, the attached report provides the estimated mean Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) gains in all grades on the composite measure across all subjects and the cumulative mean NCE gain across grades and subjects.



Board Monitoring System: Indicator I

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 the district's goals and core values. The Board Monitoring System will report on each goal and core value on a routine basis. The goal currently under review is to demonstrate value-added growth as measured by the Educational Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS). Goal 1, Section I Value-Added growth is specifically measured using the annual estimated mean Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) gain.

With the transition from TAKS to STAAR in 2011, a new growth standard for value-added analysis has been established. Starting this year, the growth standard will be the 2011-2012 state distribution of student gains on the STAAR instead of the TAKS state distribution from 2006. With this new baseline, it is not possible to compare the 2011-2012 gain with previous years' gain; this will be reflected in the proceeding findings where graphs reflect single-year results only.

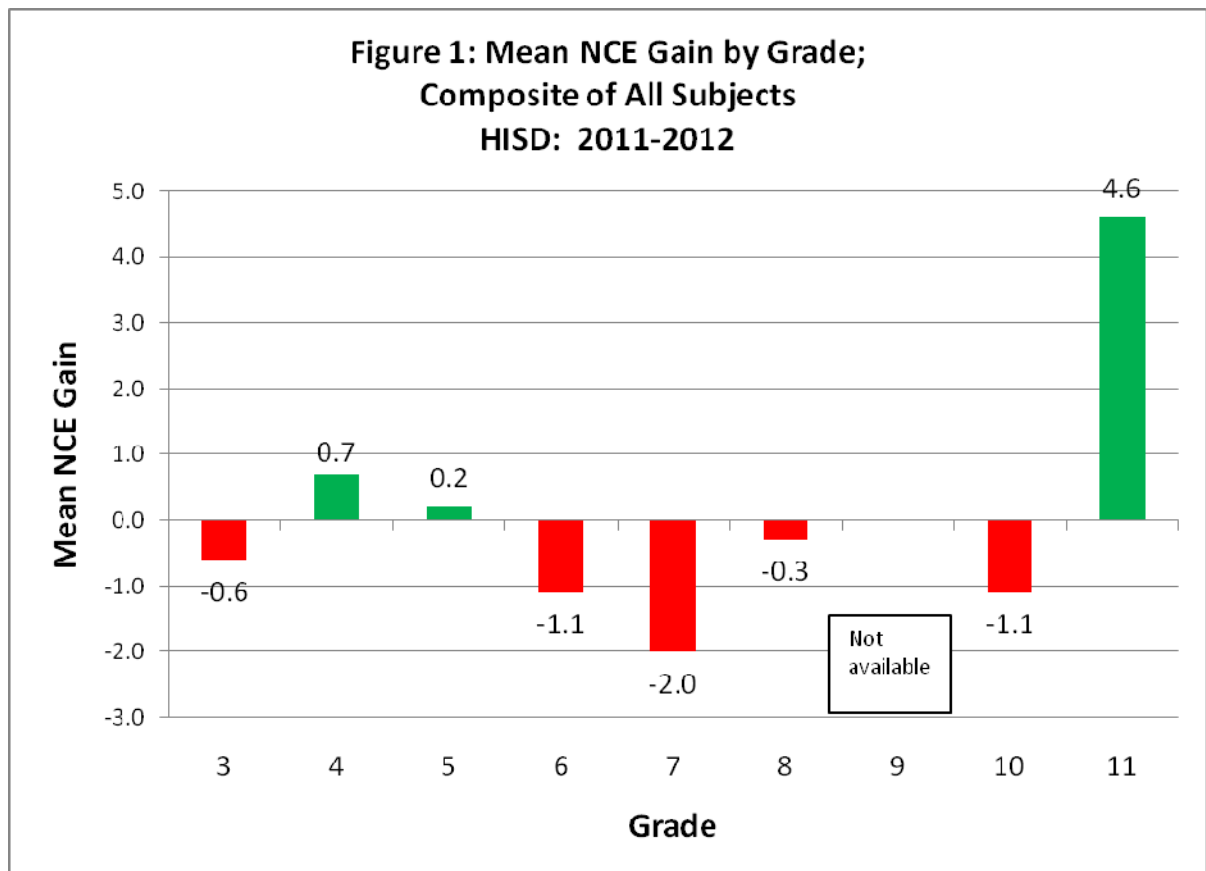
Also new for 2011-2012, certain grade levels will not have district-level value-added reports. Specifically, ninth grade, where students took the End-of-Course exams, will not have any district-level value-added reports because of the methods used by EVAAS. Campuses will have End-of-Course reports for all subjects tested in ninth grade, except in Geometry where there wasn't a sufficient number of takers across grades and subjects to generate a valid model. In the proceeding findings, specific sections will note when EVAAS analysis is not available.

In addition, the elimination of the Stanford testing for high schools in the 2011–2012 school year did not allow value-added analysis in Science and Social Studies. In the section for Science and Social Studies findings, the graphs will note where EVAAS data are not available for Science and Social Studies.

Findings

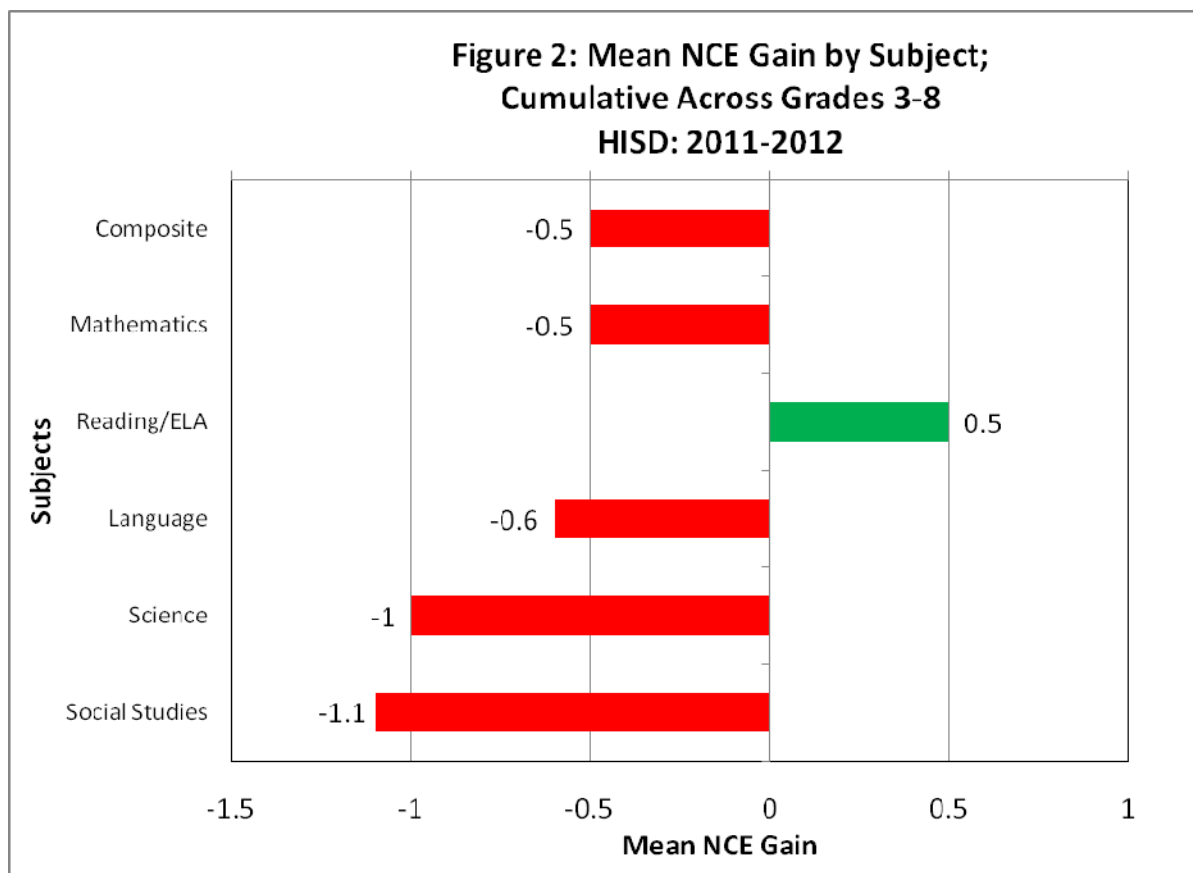
NCE Gain: Composite Across all Subjects for Each Grade

- HISD's target is to show value-added growth in estimated mean NCE gain greater than one standard error above the growth standard in all grades on the composite measure across all subjects. For the 2011-2012 school year, HISD met this target in one of the eight grades for which value-added data is calculated (**Figure 1**). Eleventh grade is showing the most gain (4.6) on the Composite measure for 2011-2012 while fourth and second grades show gains at a smaller scale. With many of the district's 7th graders taking the 8th grade test, the negative gains at the 7th grade level were expected, and with many 8th graders taking the 9th grade End-of-Course exams, the low gains posted at the 8th grade level were expected as well. Ninth grade does not have district level value-added results due to the implementation of End-of-Course exams.



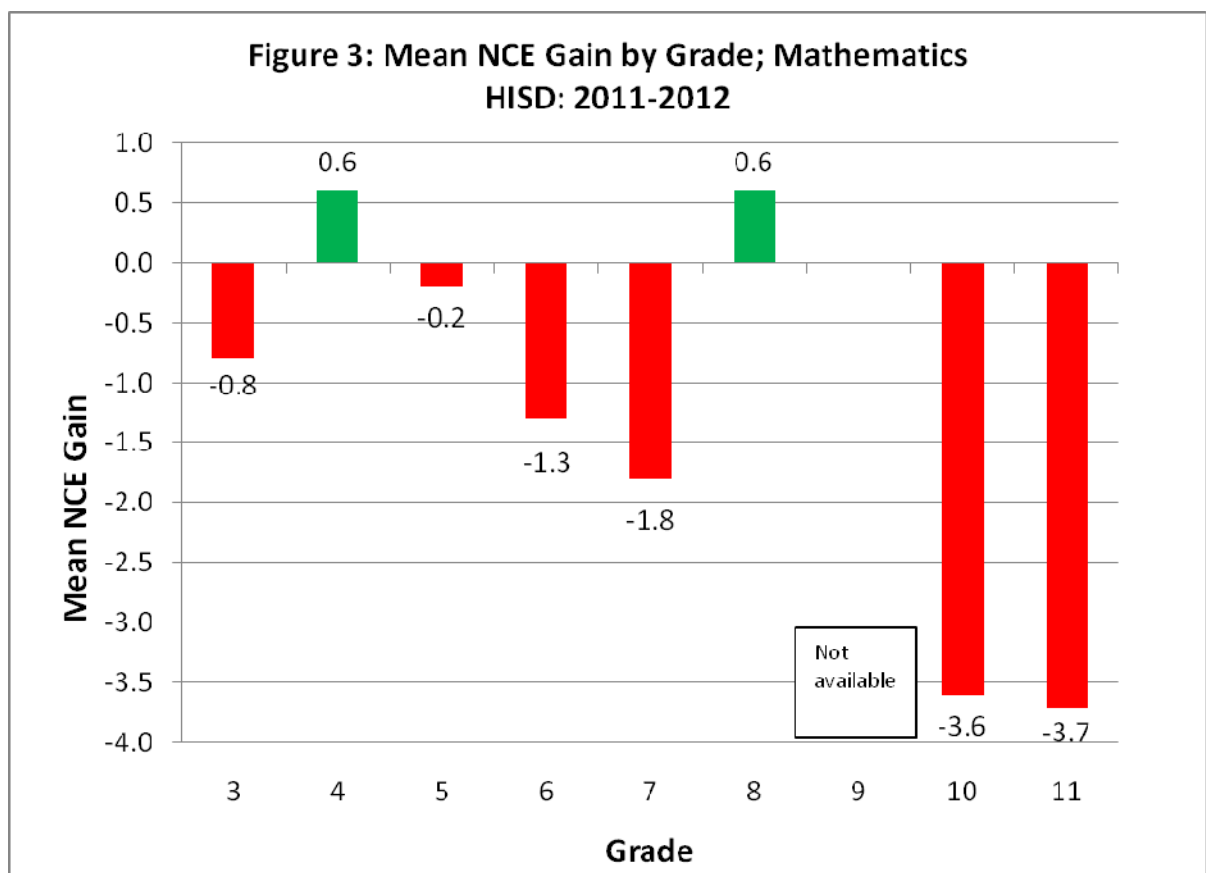
NCE Gain: Cumulative Across Grades for Each Subject

- HISD's target is to show a cumulative NCE gain across grades and subjects greater than 1.5 NCEs. The district did not meet this target for 2011–2012. The composite NCE gain across all grades and subjects was -0.5 (**Figure 2**).
- The composite NCE gain across all grades for four of the five tested subjects had mean NCE gains below the growth standard. Reading/ELA had a positive gain of 0.5 for 2011-2012.

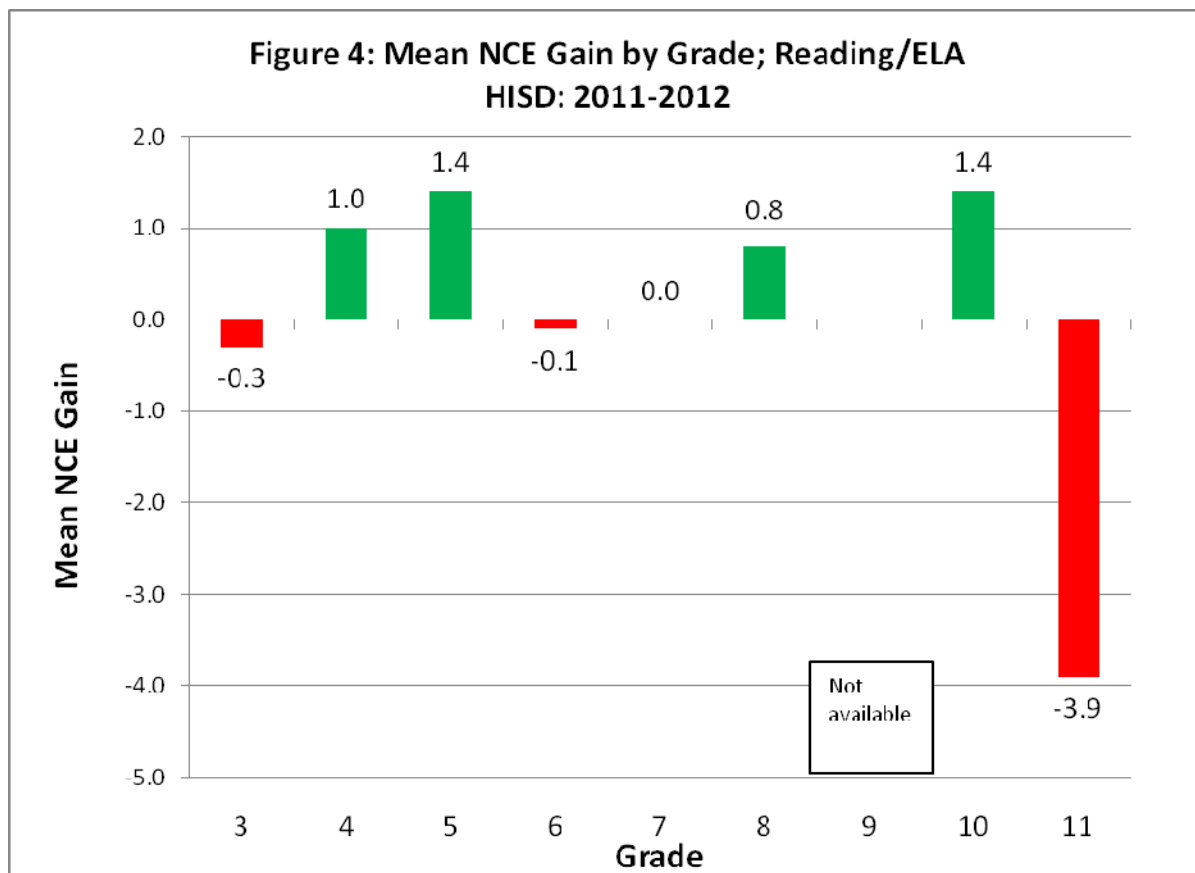


NCE Gain: For Each Subject by Grade

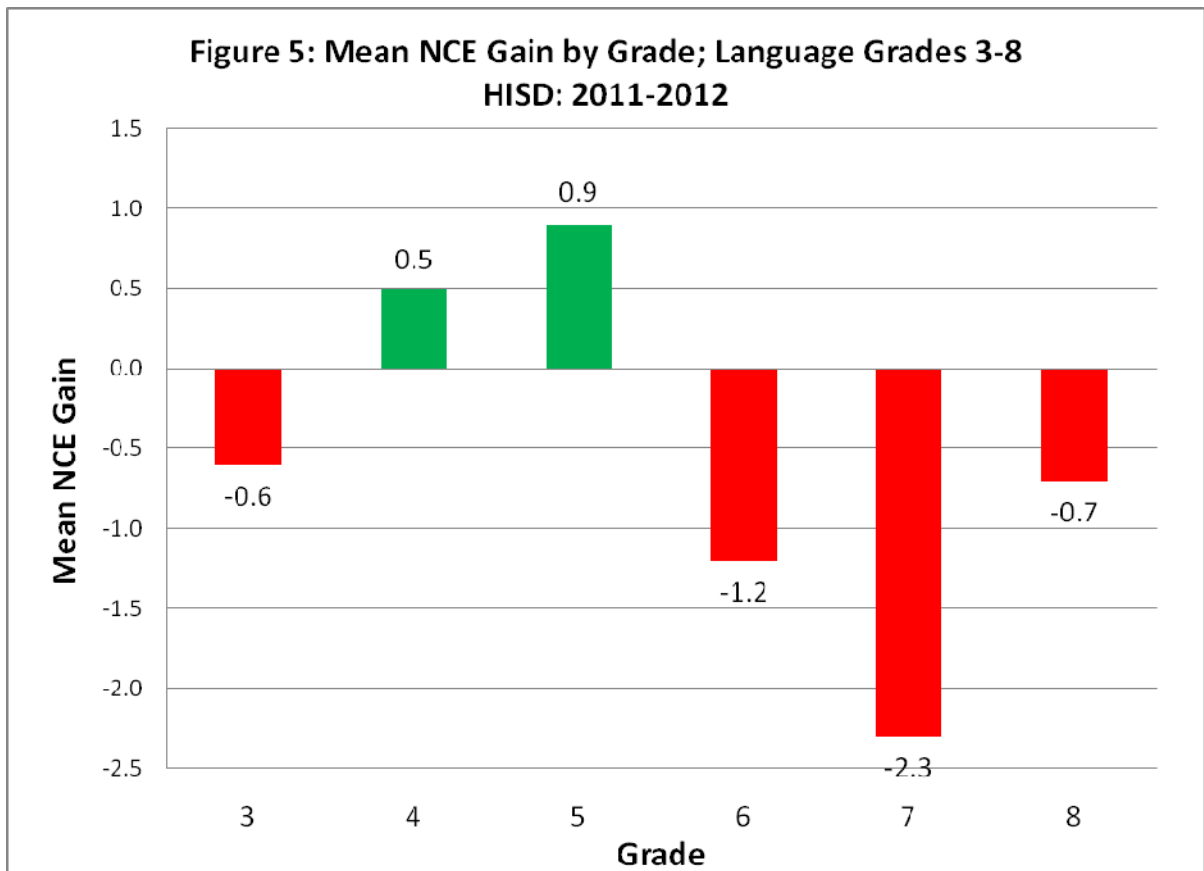
- HISD's target is to show Math mean NCE gains of 1.5; for 2011–2012 this target was not met. Two out of the eight grades for which EVAAS analysis was available did show some gains in Math (**Figure 3**). Fourth and 8th grades showed positive gains (0.6) compared to the growth standard. EVAAS district-level analysis was not available at the 9th grade because students took End-of-Course exams for Algebra and Geometry.



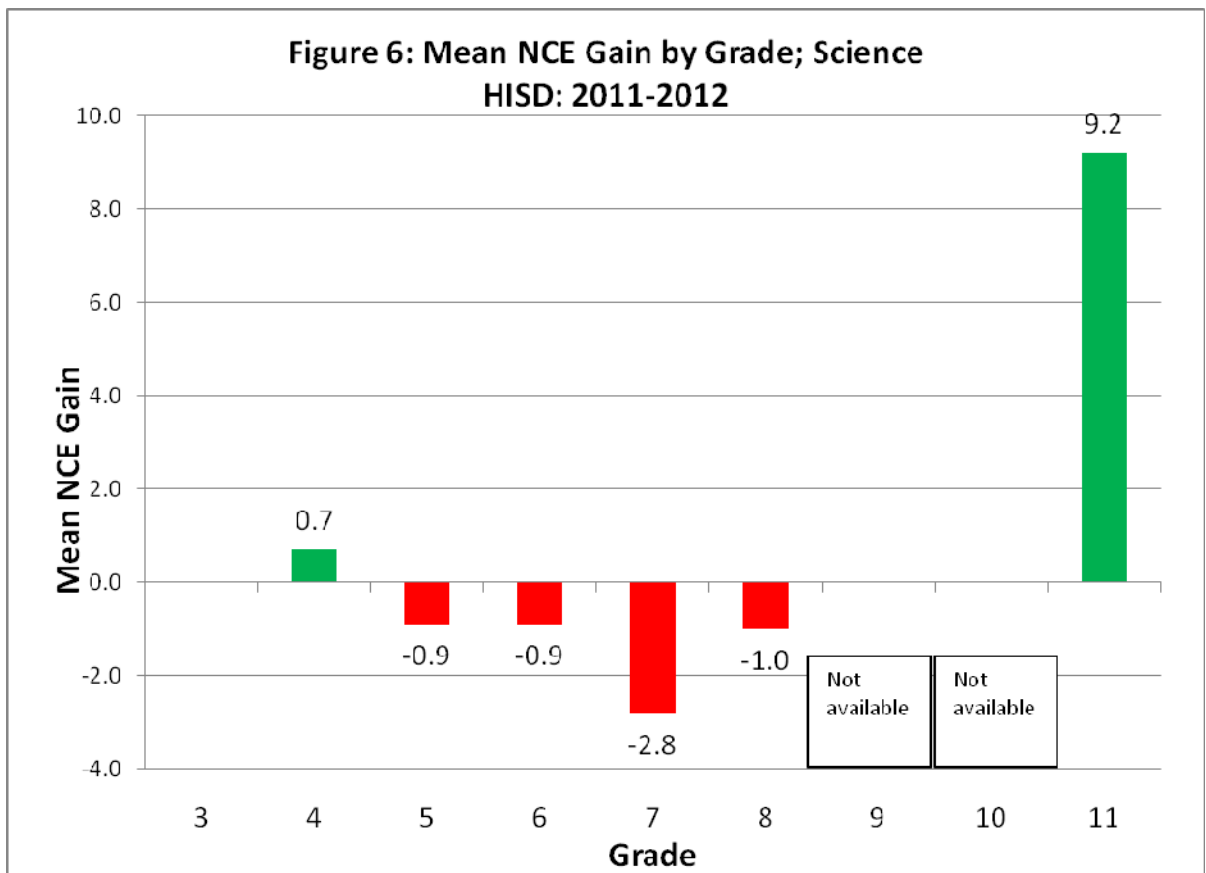
- In Reading/ELA, HISD's target is to show at least 1.5 mean NCE gain. For 2011–2012, the district did not meet this target. However, four of the eight grades for which EVAAS analyses were available showed gains. Highest gains were found in 5th and 10th grades (1.4) while positive gains were also posted at the 4th and 8th grades (**Figure 4**). EVAAS district-level analysis was not available at the 9th grade because students took End-of-Course exams for English.



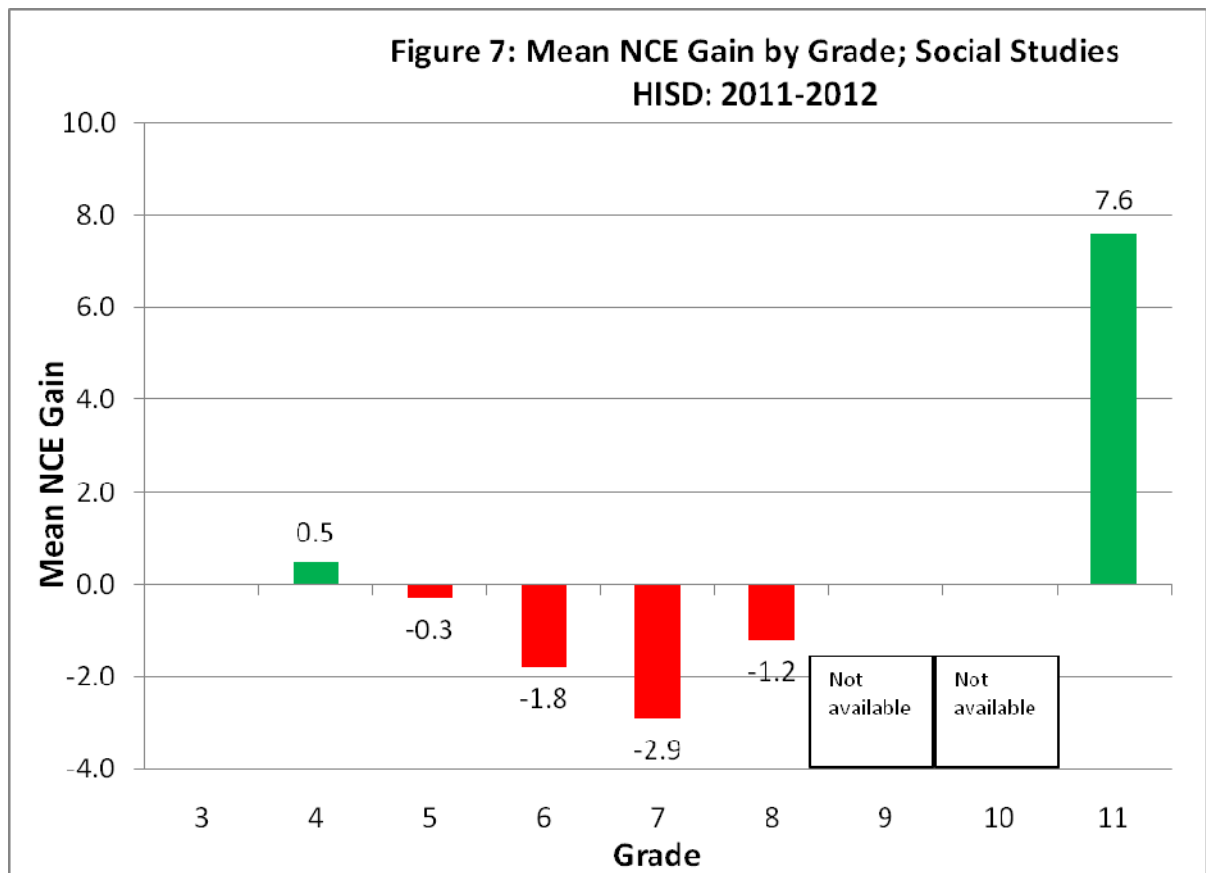
- In 2011-2012, HISD did not meet its target to show at least 1.5 mean NCE gain in Language. However, two of the six grades for which there were value-added analyses did show some positive growth. Fifth grade showed the highest gain (0.9) with 4th grade also showing some growth (0.5) (**Figure 5**). Since Stanford/Aprenda is no longer administered at the high school level, value-added analyses for Language at the high school level are no longer available.



- HISD's target is to show 1.5 mean NCE gain in Science for 2011–2012. The district met this target in one of the six grades for which there are value-added analyses. Eleventh grade showed the highest gain (9.2) with 4th grade also showing positive gains (0.7). Due to ninth graders taking End-of-Course exams (Biology), value-added analysis at the district level was not available. In addition, there was no previous year test data to be used for the 10th graders, precluding an analysis for the tenth grade (**Figure 6**).



- In Social Studies, HISD's mean NCE gains for 2011–2012 were at or above the targeted growth standard of 1.5 in one out of the six grades for which there are value-added analyses. Eleventh grade showed the highest gain (7.6) with 4th grade also showing gains (0.5). Due to ninth graders taking the End-of-Course exams (World Geography), value-added analysis at the district level was not available. In addition, there was no previous year test data to be used for the 10th graders, precluding an analysis for the tenth grade (**Figure 7**).



Administrative Response:

Since 2007, the district has been implementing value-added measures based on the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) methodology to measure the effectiveness of the district, schools, and teachers on student learning. During the 2011-2012 school year, the State of Texas adopted a new accountability/assessment system known as State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) that is a more rigorous assessment of student mastery of academic content standards and includes administration of a set of End of Course assessments (EOCs) in the 9th grade, and the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and

Skills (TAKS) at grades 10 and 11. The TAKS will be phased out over the next two years as EOCs replace TAKS.

Because of these changes to the state assessment system, administration is not wholly surprised by the district wide value-added results. In the 11th grade, significant gains were evident in science and social studies; however, student growth in math is lower than expected for grades 10 and 11 and in reading for grade 11. This past summer and into the 2012-2013 school year, the district has invested heavily in training through Neuhaus Education Center of secondary teachers in developing strong literacy instructional practices. In addition, the district has implemented reading intervention software for 9th grade students who are behind on grade level or whom did not pass the EOC. Students are in essence “double-dosed” in reading every day during the school year. The District Cumulative Gain score in reading across grades 3-8 and in grade 10 indicate progress in Reading/ELA is being made at these grade levels.

Regarding increasing student academic growth in all core subjects, HISD released a new set of curriculum documents that include pacing guides, scope and sequence, a vertical alignment matrix, and other resources that align with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Extensive training of principals and teachers took place during Summer 2012, and support for schools on the implementation of the new curriculum will continue throughout the school year. In addition, the district is developing model lessons across all grades and subjects to serve as a guide for teachers in instructional practices, particularly of concepts where students have had difficulty learning based on data from state assessments.

Finally, HISD is implementing a comprehensive formative assessment system that will enable school administrators and teachers to monitor and track student growth throughout the school year. Data from formative assessments will provide teachers with immediate information on whether or not students need intervention or to progress in their learning. Differentiation of instruction and progress monitoring of students should be improved through the implementation of the comprehensive formative assessment system.