

# REPORT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Office of Superintendent of Schools  
Board of Education Meeting of September 11, 2008

August 27, 2008

SUBJECT: **BOARD MONITORING SYSTEM–GOAL 1, SECTION A: ELIMINATE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP BETWEEN STUDENT GROUPS**

At the March 2007 meeting, the Board of Education implemented a revised Board Monitoring System in order to efficiently maintain and measure achievement of Houston Independent School District (HISD) goals and adherence to its 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 AF(LOCAL) states "*the administration shall report to the Board of Education on each goal and core value using the specific method and timing set out.*"

In reference to the district's **Goal 1: Eliminate the Achievement Gap**, the attached report provides information regarding **section A: Eliminate the Achievement Gap Between Student Groups**. This policy states that "*the administration shall provide the Board of Education with a report reflecting any gap in TAKS passing rates between white, African-American, Hispanic, and economically disadvantaged students, and by gender, in each tested topic. The report shall provide cumulative, Districtwide scores combining all grade levels into one chart. It shall be reported in bar chart format showing the pass rate of each group's scores and the extent to which those scores fall behind the scores of the leading group. The charts shall be provided to Board members as an A-1 report annually, in August or September.*"

The attached reports provide the information requested for the 2007–2008 school year.



## Board Monitoring System: Indicator A

### 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 ELIMINATE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP BETWEEN STUDENT GROUPS. The objective of this indicator is: "To eliminate any achievement gap between student groups as measured by the statewide TAKS examination" (Goal 1, Section A).

#### Findings

##### *TAKS Achievement Gap*

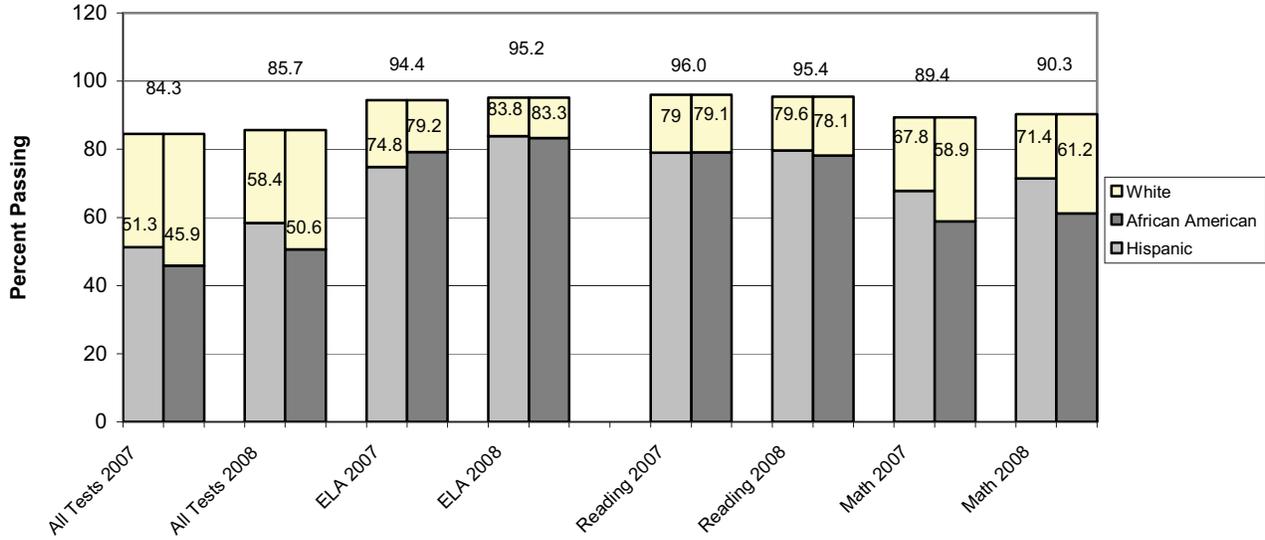
- When examining the percentage passing at the state standard on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in 2007 and in 2008, the differences between white students' and Hispanic and African-American students' test scores generally decreased from 2007 to 2008. In 2008, the gap between White students' test scores and Hispanic students' test scores decreased in all seven subtests reported, with decreases ranging from 8.2 percentage points in English language arts to .7 of a percentage point in writing. The 2008 gap between white students' test scores and African-American students' test scores decreased from 2007 in six of seven subtests, with a range of 5.4 percentage points in science to 1.1 percentage points in writing. (Figure 1a and Figure 1b).
- In 2008, the largest gaps between white students' and Hispanic and African-American students' test scores were in the areas of math and science, with white students reporting 90.3 percent passing the math section of the TAKS test as compared with 71.4 percent of Hispanic students and 61.2 percent of African-American students. On the science test in 2008, 92.8 percent of white students passed at the state standard compared with 67.3 percent of Hispanic students and 62.1 percent of African-American students (Figure 2).
- In 2008, the gap between white students and Hispanic students on all TAKS tests taken decreased from 2007 by 5.7 percentage points from 33 percent to 27.3 percent. The gap between white students and African-American students decreased

---

on the all-tests-taken indicator by 3.3 percentage points, from 38.4 percent in 2007 to 35.1 percent in 2008 (Figure 2).

- When considering economic status at the state passing standard on the TAKS in 2008 and in 2007, there was a decrease in the gap on four of the seven subtests of the TAKS. The gap between non-economically disadvantaged students and economically disadvantaged students decreased by 4.6 percentage points in language arts, by 3.8 percentage points in science, by 1.5 percentage points in social studies, and by .8 percentage points on all tests taken. The gap between non-economically disadvantaged students and economically disadvantaged students increased in writing (1.7 percentage points), in reading (1.1 percentage points) and math (.1 of a percentage point) (Figure 3).
- In 2008, the largest gaps between economically disadvantaged students' and non-economically disadvantaged students' TAKS scores may be found in the science and reading subtests. On the science TAKS test, 78.5 percent of non-economically disadvantaged students passed at the state standard as compared with 65.6 percent of economically disadvantaged students. In reading, non-economically disadvantaged students reported 89.9 percent passing as compared with 78.4 percent of economically disadvantaged students (Figure 3).
- When examining the 2008 TAKS all-tests-taken indicators by economic status, the gap between non-economically disadvantaged students' and economically disadvantaged students' scores decreased from 15 percentage points in 2007 to 14.2 percentage points (Figure 4).
- For the past two years, female students in HISD outscored their male counterparts in language arts, reading, writing, social studies, and all tests taken, while males outscored females in math and science. However, in 2008 female students also outscored male students in math, with 71 percent passing compared with 70.7 for males (Figure 5).
- When examining the state passing standard on the 2008 TAKS test, the gap between male and female students decreased in two subtests. From 2007 to 2008, the gap between males' and females' test scores decreased by 2.2 percentage points for language arts and by .6 of a percentage point for science. The gap between males' and females' TAKS scores increased in writing (1.6), reading (1.2), and social studies (.5) (Figure 5).
- In 2008, the largest gaps between males' and females' TAKS scores are reported in the areas of writing, with 91.6 percent of females and 83.3 percent of males passing, and in language arts, with 88.4 percent of females and 82.4 percent of males passing (Figure 5).
- When reviewing the 2008 TAKS all-tests-taken indicator by sex, the gap between males' and females' test scores increased from 1.3 percentage points in 2007 to 3.1 percentage points (Figure 6).

**Figure 1a: HISD TAKS Percent Passing by Subject and by Race/Ethnicity: 2007 and 2008**



**Figure 1b: HISD TAKS Percent Passing by Subject and by Race/Ethnicity: 2007 and 2008, continued**

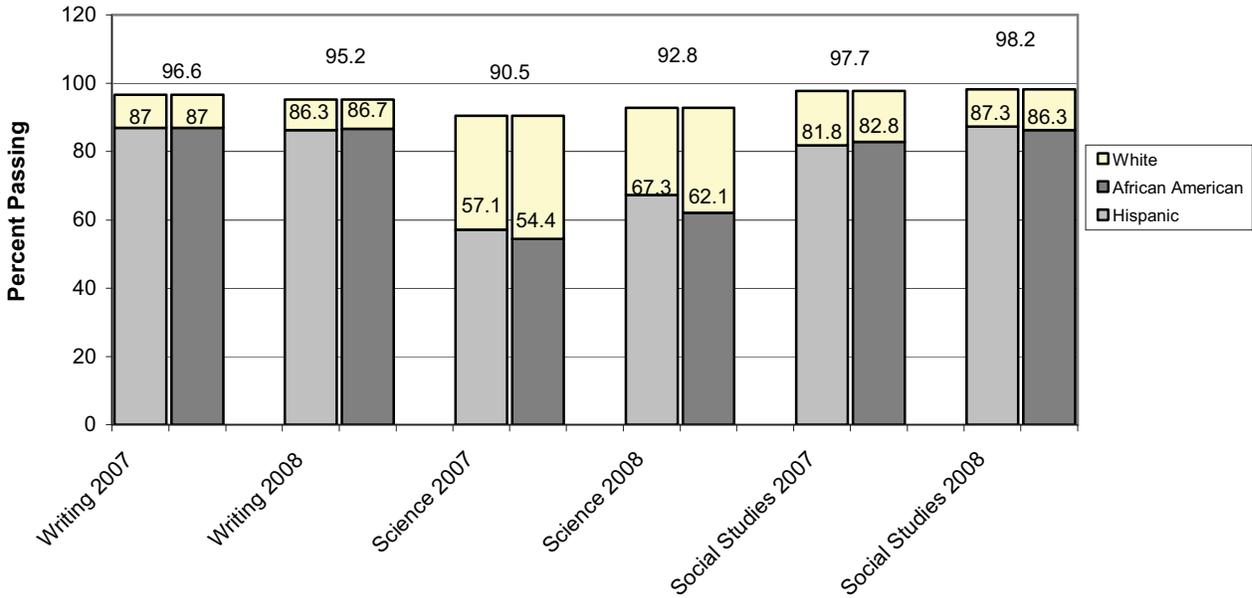
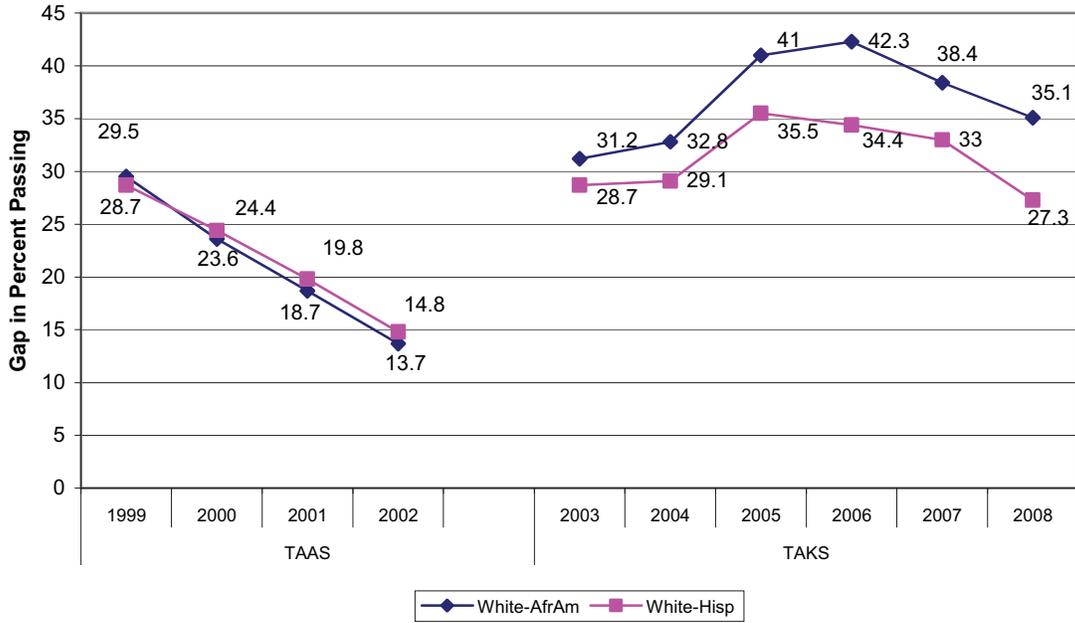
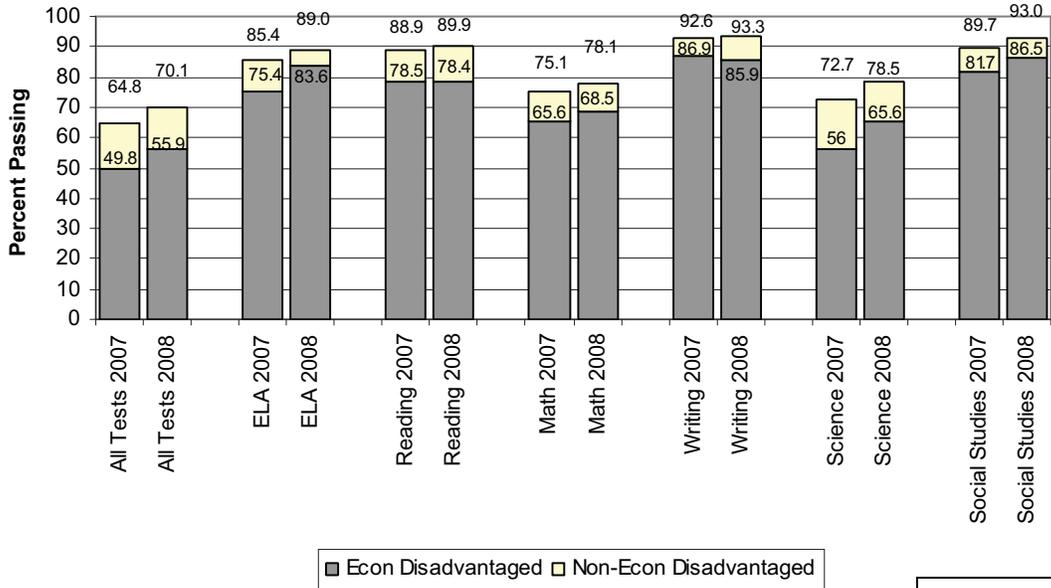


Figure 2: HISD All Tests Taken Gap by Race/Ethnicity

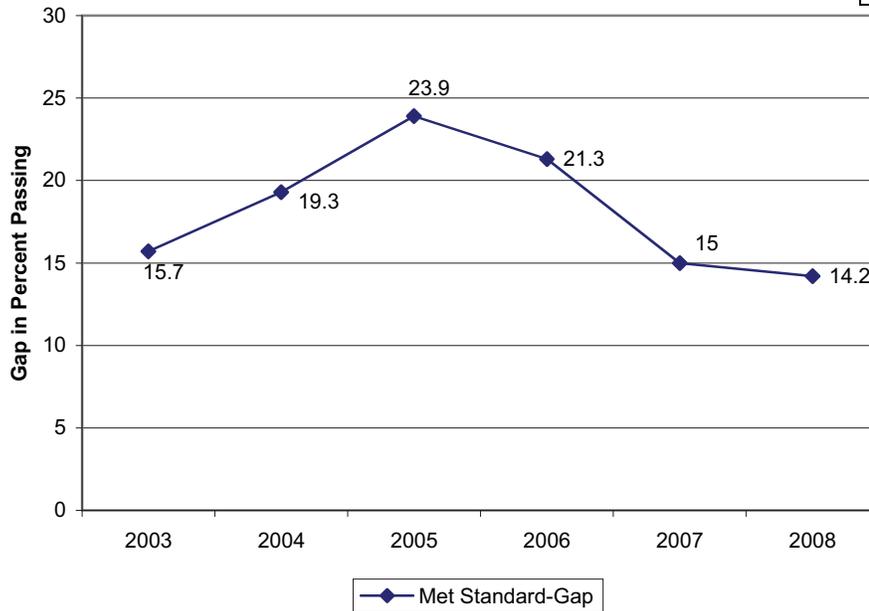


Target: Annual decrease by five percentage points.

**Figure 3: HISD TAKS Percent Passing by Subject and by Economic Status: 2007 and 2008**



**Figure 4: HISD All Tests Taken Gap by Economic Status**



Target: Annual decrease by three percentage points.

Source: TEA, Academic Excellence Indicator System 2002–03; TAKS data file Spring 2004–2008.

Figure 5: HISD TAKS Percent Passing by Subject and by Gender: 2007 and 2008

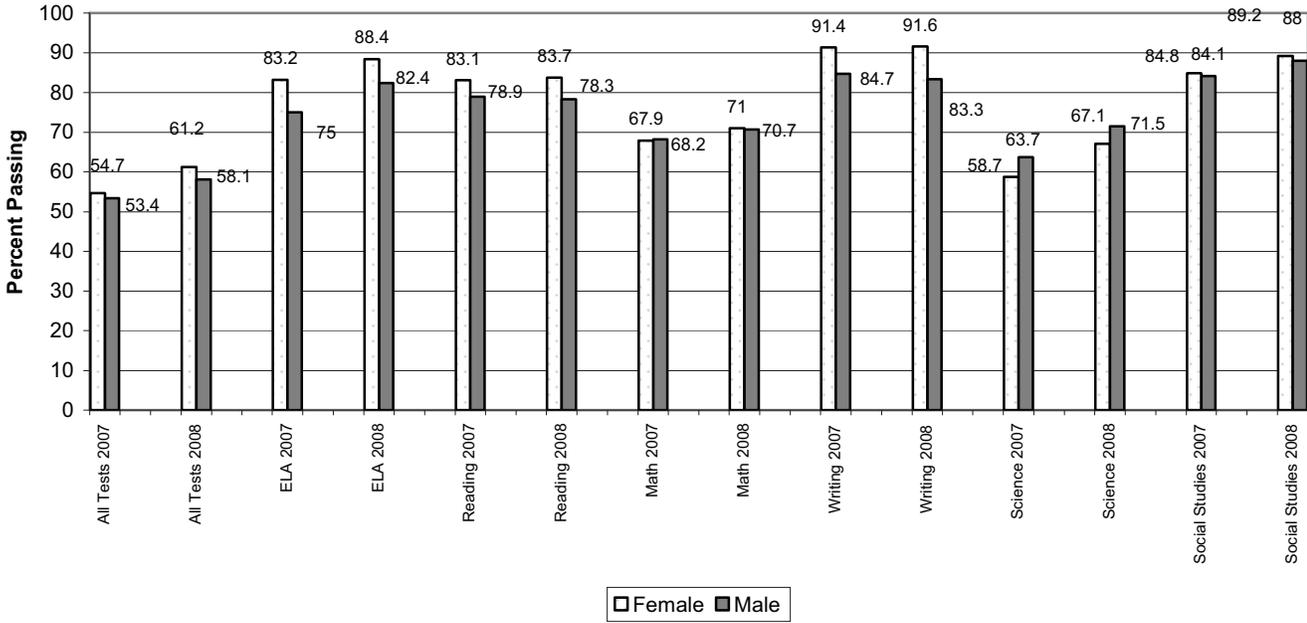
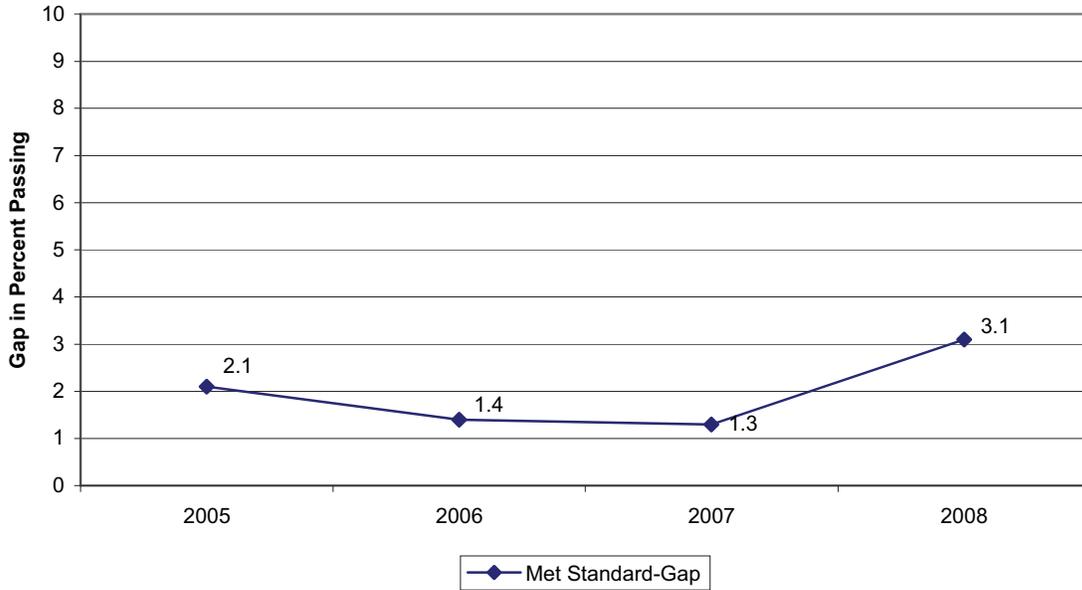


Figure 6: HISD All Tests Taken Gap by Gender



Target: Eliminate achievement gap.

Source: TAKS data file Spring 2005–2008.