

TEXAS EDUCATION TODAY

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News from the Texas Education Agency

Enrollment in Texas public schools likely to hit 5 million this year

Enrollment in Texas public schools grew 21 percent over the past decade, reaching 4.9 million students in the 2010-2011 school year. It is likely to reach the 5 million mark this year.

The enrollment in Texas is second only to that of California, which has more than 6 million public school students.

In Texas, Hispanics had the largest numerical increase between 2009-10 and 2010-11, growing by 81,316 students. In the 2010-2011 school year, Hispanics were the largest student group, representing 50.3 percent of the total enrollment. That year, white students accounted for 31.2 percent of the enrollment, while African-American students made up 12.9 percent of the total student body, according to a new Texas Education Agency report called "Enrollment in Texas Public Schools 2010-2011."

The number of students living below the poverty line continues to grow. Now, 59 out of every 100 students are economically disadvantaged, up from 49 of 100 a decade ago. While Hispanics represent the largest group of economically disadvantaged students both in sheer number and as a percent, this group saw the lowest change as a percentage of the economically disadvantaged population over the past 10 years. As of last school year, 77.4 percent of Hispanics were economically disadvantaged, compared to 75.4 percent 10 years ago.

The largest change occurred among the white population with 20.3 percent economically disadvantaged in 2000-2001,

compared to 28.3 percent in the 2010-2011 school year. Among African-American students, those living below the poverty line rose from 63.7 percent to 71.6 percent during the decade. Some of the changes may be due to revised definitions of racial and ethnic groups.

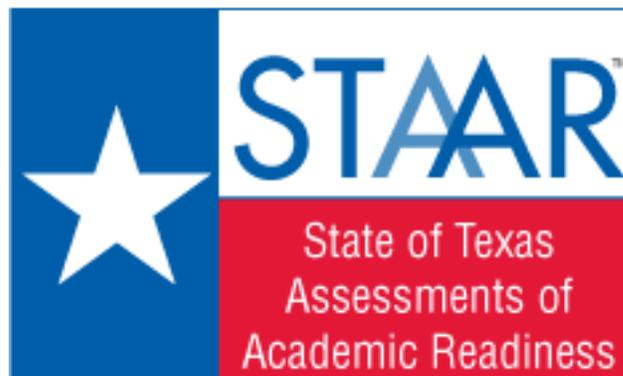
The report also found that:

- The largest enrollment occurs in the ninth grade, due in part to the high number of students who repeat that grade. Last school year, there were 390,665 high school freshmen. The second largest enrollment occurs in first grade, which enrolled 387,884 last year.
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes have boomed, increasing enrollment by 39.5 percent over the past 10 years.
- Texas districts ranged in size from less than one square mile in Boys Ranch ISD to nearly five thousand square miles in Culberson County-Allamore ISD.
- Twenty students attended school in each of the two districts with the lowest enrollment – Doss Consolidated Common School District and San Vicente Independent School District. The largest district in the state remains the Houston Independent School District, with more than 200,000 students.

STAAR™ communications toolkit available

Do you need to explain the new STAAR™ testing program to your local reporters or PTA?

The STAAR [media toolkit](#) can help. It provides answers and charts that address commonly asked questions about the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, which will be in use in the Texas public schools beginning this school year.



Additionally, new information is posted virtually every school

day on the main [STAAR website](#).

Recently updated items on this page include a STAAR PowerPoint presentation, samples of STAAR-M questions, and a chart comparing STAAR, STAAR Spanish, STAAR Modified, STAAR Alternate and STAAR L.

Texas Hispanic and African-American students rank second on eighth-grade NAEP math test

Texas Hispanic and African-American students earned the second highest score among their peer groups on the 2011 eighth-grade National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) mathematics test, according to results released Nov. 1. The state's white eighth-grade students ranked fourth, missing out on the second place position themselves by less than one point.

Only Hispanic students in Montana earned a higher scale score on the math test than did eighth-grade Hispanic Texans. Only African-American students in Hawaii earned a higher average score than did their counterparts in Texas.

White students in the District of Columbia earned an average scale score of 319, the highest score for that ethnic group. Texas students ranked fourth, with less than a fraction of a point separating this group from students in Massachusetts and New Jersey. Massachusetts students had the second highest scale score at 304.2876, while Texas received an average score of 303.5460.

Overall, the state ranked 10th, with an average scale score of 290, substantially above the national average score of 283.

"Our Texas eighth graders turned in an outstanding performance. Their performance surpassed levels earned in 2009 when the NAEP was last given. This summer, we learned that the state's 2011 graduates earned a record high score on the math section of the ACT. Clearly, our increased training for math teachers and improved math curriculum standards are paying off," said Commissioner of Education Robert Scott. "However, we know we still have room to grow, which is why we are currently revising our math standards to make sure our improvement continues."

Fourth-grade students outpaced most of their ethnic group peers as well and received overall scores that were statistically significantly higher than scores for their national counterparts.

African-American Texans earned the fourth highest score among African-Americans across the country, with students in New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Hawaii earning slightly higher scores.

Scores for white Texans ranked seventh, behind the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey, Minnesota

and Colorado. Hispanic fourth graders in Texas earned the 12th highest score. Students in the following jurisdictions earned higher scores: Maryland, Alaska, North Carolina, Montana, Virginia, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Kentucky, Florida, Department of Defense schools and Wyoming.

NAEP READING

NAEP, which is called the nation's report card because it is given to a sampling of students in all states and territories, showed less progress for Texas students in the area of reading. The state's overall scores in both grades were slightly lower than the national scores. However, when compared by ethnic groups, Texas' three major student groups earned higher scores than their peer groups across the country. Nationally, scores were largely flat between the 2011 and 2009 results as well.

"Our state is seeing little change in the area of reading and English language arts on three tests given to students across the country – the NAEP, [ACT](#) and [SAT](#). We introduced new improved English language arts and reading curriculum standards into Texas classrooms in the 2009-2010 school year, and began providing new instructional material in 2010. The new State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness also significantly ramps up expectations for this area. I am optimistic that these efforts combined will begin to produce improved results soon," Scott said.

The student group that produced the best results compared to their peers was fourth-grade African-American Texans whose scores were the eighth highest in the country. Scores for white fourth-grade students ranked 12th, while scores for Hispanics ranked 15th.

Reading scores for Texas eighth-grade students are higher than those for the state's fourth graders and are higher than the national scale score for the three major ethnic groups, but the students don't fare as well in the state-by-state comparison.

African-American Texans earned the 11th highest average score in the country, while scores for white Texas ranked 15th and Hispanics ranked 24th.

Final accountability ratings released

Accountability appeals changed the state ratings of nine school districts and 63 campuses, final results released Nov. 2 show.

After appeals, eight campuses and one district moved up to an *Exemplary* rating and 16 campuses and five districts moved up to a *Recognized* rating, while 39 campuses and three districts managed to upgrade their *Academically Unacceptable* rating to

the *Academically Acceptable* level. However, ratings remained unchanged for most districts and campuses. Overall, 72 of the 202 district or campus appeals were granted.

State accountability data tables and information for individual districts and campuses are available at <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/index.html>.

NAEP math and reading results for fourth and eighth grade

NAEP 2011 Grade 8 Mathematics

Scale score range 0-500

| Year | Jurisdiction | All Students | White | African American | Hispanic |
|------|--------------|--------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|
| 2011 | National | 283 | 293 | 262 | 269 |
| | Texas | 290 | 304 (4th) | 277 (2nd) | 283 (2nd) |
| 2009 | National | 282 | 292 | 260 | 266 |
| | Texas | 287 | 301 | 272 | 277 |

NAEP 2011 Grade 4 Mathematics

| Year | Jurisdiction | All Students | White | African American | Hispanic |
|------|--------------|--------------|-----------|------------------|------------|
| 2011 | National | 240 | 249 | 224 | 229 |
| | Texas | 241 | 253 (7th) | 232 (4th) | 235 (12th) |
| 2009 | National | 239 | 248 | 222 | 227 |
| | Texas | 240 | 254 | 231 | 233 |

NAEP 2011 Grade 8 Reading

| Year | Jurisdiction | All Students | White | African American | Hispanic |
|------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------------|------------|
| 2011 | National | 264 | 272 | 248 | 251 |
| | Texas | 261 | 274 (15th) | 252 (11th) | 254 (24th) |
| 2009 | National | 262 | 271 | 245 | 248 |
| | Texas | 260 | 273 | 249 | 251 |

NAEP 2011 Grade 4 Reading

| Year | Jurisdiction | All Students | White | African American | Hispanic |
|------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------------|------------|
| 2011 | National | 220 | 230 | 205 | 205 |
| | Texas | 218 | 233 (12th) | 210 (8th) | 210 (15th) |
| 2009 | National | 220 | 229 | 204 | 204 |
| | Texas | 219 | 232 | 213 | 210 |

McKinney, Round Rock ISD teachers win Teacher of the Year

Teachers Karen Morman (pictured on the left) and Stephanie Stoebe (right) both wanted to make a difference in the lives of children and both were recognized for doing just that.

Morman, a reading specialist at J.W. Webb Elementary in McKinney Independent School District was named the 2012 Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year. Morman will also represent the state in the national Teacher of the Year competition as the Texas Teacher of the Year.



Stoebe, a reading teacher at Round Rock High School in Round Rock ISD was named 2012 Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year.

Morman and Stoebe learned of their awards during a luncheon held on Oct. 14 in Austin at the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center. Each teacher received a \$5,000 cash award, a technology package, a trophy and other prizes. Also honored at the event were four additional state finalists and the 34 Regional Teachers of the Year.

SBOE grants charter school to University of Texas at Tyler

Citing a need for innovation while promoting a strong science and math curriculum based on the state's science, technology, engineering and math or STEM model, representatives of the University of Texas at Tyler made their case for a new charter school to members of the State Board of Education (SBOE) in November.

After members of the board's Committee on School Initiatives extensively questioned charter representatives about the proposed school's structure and academic offerings, the full board approved granting the charter by a unanimous vote.

The University of Texas Tyler Innovation Academy is expected to open in the fall of 2012. Mavis Knight, an SBOE member from Dallas, remarked that it was exciting to see a school with this type of innovative program being approved.

Once final contractual issues are resolved and the contract with the state is signed, the school plans to have charter campuses at university facilities in Tyler, Longview and Palestine. The charter will focus heavily on project-based learning with a strong

use of technology. It also plans to emphasize science, math and engineering.

The schools collectively are authorized to serve up to 2,400 students. The charter holder plans to initially open as grade 3-6 campuses. It will add another grade each year until the schools ultimately serve students in grades 3-12. High school students will be able to take dual credit courses through UT-Tyler.

The UT Tyler charter is the fourth such university-operated charter granted since the Texas Legislature revised the original 1995 charter law in 2001 to allow the SBOE to grant charters to public senior colleges and universities without counting toward the charter cap. The statute was revised again in 2009 to include public junior colleges as being able to hold charters also without counting toward the open-enrollment charter cap. The University of Texas currently has two such university-based programs in Austin and Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches also holds a university-based charter.

Texas principal honored with the Terrel H. Bell Award

Karen Noble, principal of Hillcrest Elementary School in the Nederland Independent School District, was the recipient of the prestigious Terrel H. Bell Award in November. She is one of only seven educators nationwide to receive the award this year.

The Terrel H. Bell Award is named for the former U.S. Secretary of Education and recognizes outstanding school leaders. Principals nominated for the award are leaders who are committed to fostering successful teaching and learning at their schools.

During the same ceremony in which Noble was recognized, her school was honored as a 2011 National Blue Ribbon Schools recipient. Hillcrest has earned an Exemplary rating, the highest rating awarded in the state's accountability system every year

since 1996.

Noble and her school were honored at a luncheon at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C.

The Bell Award is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, along with the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the Association of Middle Level Education and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.



Principal Karen Noble

Board honors National Geographic Bee winner, National History Day winners



Board member Pat Hardy presents a resolution to Tine Valencic, the 2011 National Geographic Bee champion.



2011 National History Day winners

At its November meeting, the State Board of Education honored Tine Valencic, winner of the 23rd annual National Geographic Bee competition held in Washington, D.C. As the national champion, Valencic, a student at Colleyville Middle School in the Grapevine-Colleyville Independent School District, won a \$25,000 scholarship, a lifetime membership in the National Geographic Society, and a trip to the Galápagos Islands from National Geographic. This is the second time in the past three years that a Texas student has won the National Geographic Bee.

The board also recognized winners of the National History Day contest that was held in College Park, Maryland with the theme of *Debate & Diplomacy: Successes, Failures, Consequences*.

The 2011 National History Day winners were (pictured from left to right): Annie Salinas, who is homeschooled in Spring; Luke Victor, Christian Isenhour, Stephen Mathew, Cyrus Yasrebi, and Jonathan Holle of Noel Grisham Middle School in Round Rock ISD; and Gabriel Nesler of Copperas Cove Junior High in Copperas Cove ISD.

Not pictured are Hanna Zerdo and Rachel Lahowetz of Cedar Bayou Junior High in Goose Creek Consolidated ISD; and Matthew Broussard of Gentry Junior High in Goose Creek CISD.

Want to receive TEA updates?

If you would like to receive email updates related to various agency programs, subjects or divisions, you can subscribe to specific TEA listservs.

To view the available topics, go to <http://miller.tea.state.tx.us/list/> and click on the drop-down arrow. To subscribe to a particular list, highlight the title of your choice and click the “Join or Leave” button. To confirm your identity and prevent third parties from subscribing you to a list, an e-mail message with a confirmation code will be sent to the email address you specify in the form. After receiving the confirmation, follow the instructions in the email to confirm the operation and officially join the list. You may join as many lists as you’d like.

For more information about the lists available, click on the “Description” button. For technical support, email lstadmin@tea.state.tx.us.

TEA TWEETS!

You can also find TEA on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/#!/teainfo>. The Texas Education Agency twitter feed provides brief news updates and allows followers to track action during State Board of Education meetings.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING DATES FOR 2012

The schedule for 2012 meetings are as follows:

•January 25-27, 2012

•April 18-20, 2012

•July 18-20, 2012

•November 14-16, 2012

Summaries of actions taken by the State Board of Education from the Nov. 16-18 meeting can be found on the Texas Education Agency’s website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=5161>

Voters approve Constitutional amendment to modify the Permanent School Fund

Despite a low turnout at the polls, Texas voters approved Proposition 6, a constitutional amendment that changes the methodology used to determine the amount of money that can be transferred for school funding purposes.

Though only 5.2 percent of the 12.8 million registered voters cast a ballot on Nov. 8, nearly 51.6 percent of those voting approved amending Art. 7, sec. 5 of the Texas Constitution that made three basic changes.

The most significant part of the amendment modifies the methodology used to calculate the distributions from the Permanent School Fund (PSF) to the Available School Fund (ASF). The new methodology will include not only the investment assets from the PSF, but also most of the assets from the General Land Office (GLO). By increasing the base to include both investment assets, the distribution from the PSF to the ASF is estimated to increase by approximately \$73.7 million per year, based on the current distribution rate set by the SBOE of 4.2 percent for fiscal years 2012 and 2013.

The amendment also allows, but does not require, the GLO to pay out up to \$300 million each year to the ASF of the net revenue derived during that year from the real properties.

The least significant change simply clarifies language throughout the Texas Constitution that is used to refer to the Permanent School Fund. Previously, the Constitution used the terms “perpetual school fund,” the “public free school fund,” and the “permanent school fund” interchangeably. With the passage of the amendment, each of those terms used will be updated to

say “permanent school fund.”

BACKGROUND

Established under the Texas Constitution, Art. 7, sec. 5, the Permanent School Fund (PSF) is a trust fund that holds the proceeds from state land and mineral rights that have been invested, as well as investments in stocks, bonds and real estate. The PSF’s investment returns are constitutionally dedicated to the benefit of Texas public education.

The elected 15-member State Board of Education (SBOE) manages the investment of the PSF, and, if the fund’s investment performance permits, the SBOE makes distributions to the Available School Fund (ASF). The ASF consists of distributions from the PSF and revenue from one-fourth of motor fuels taxes. Distributions to the ASF are used to fund instructional materials and technology for schools and also provide funding to school districts on a per-student basis in a distribution known as the per-capita distribution.

To preserve the principal of the PSF, the constitution caps the percentage of the PSF that may be distributed to the ASF, and also prohibits any distribution in years when doing so would result in paying out more than all of the return on the fund over a ten-year period.

The School Land Board, staffed by the General Land Office (GLO), supervises the management, leasing, and sale of the public school lands. A provision in state law permits the School Land Board to release investment funds directly to the Available School Fund or to the SBOE to be included in the PSF.