AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

AND

CITY OF AUSTIN

Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students

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Findings and Recommendations

Final Report
June 16, 2006

Acknowledgments

The Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students would like to thank the Joint Subcommittees of the Austin City Council and AISD Board of Trustees for the opportunity to address the important educational issues and concerns of Hispanics in the community. We sincerely hope our findings and recommendations will assist the City of Austin and AISD in providing a quality educational experience to all AISD students.

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Table of Contents

	Page
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
INTRODUCTION	3
Background	3
Membership	3
Web Page	6
Process Overview	6
FINDINGS	8
Interviews	8
Online Survey	13
Online Comments on Draft Report	14
Community Forum	15
Additional Community Input	17
Data Research	17
Literature Research	18
Current Programs and Initiatives	20
Gap Analysis	22
RECOMMENDATIONS	25
Goals, Objectives, and Strategies	25
Expected Outcomes	29
Implementation Plan	30
APPENDICES	31
A. Task Force Charge	31
B. Task Force Charter	32
C. Interview Protocol	33
D. Detailed Results: Interviews	35
E. Online Survey Instrument	39
F. Detailed Results: Online Survey	45
G. Detailed Results: Online Comments on Draft Report	60
H. Community Forum Minutes	61
I. Detailed Results: Data Research	66
J. Detailed Results: Literature Review	94
K. Description of Current Programs	114
L. Possible Implementation Plan Action Steps	124

Executive Summary

The Task Force on Education and Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students was formed on October 14, 2005 by the Joint Subcommittees of the Austin City Council and AISD Board of Trustees. The task force was charged with considering current data, research on best practices, and community perspectives in developing findings and recommendations on the quality of education for Hispanic students in AISD. The task force membership includes community and business leaders and experts in education.

In responding to its charge, the task force held several meetings between December 2005 and May 2006. Major findings of the task force include:

- Following the large growth in the Hispanic population, the majority of the labor force will also become Hispanic, having profound implications on the quality of education for Hispanic students
- Significant gaps in academic achievement, high school graduation rates, and enrollment in post-secondary education persist between Hispanic students and their White peers
- Hispanic students are more likely to drop out of school, receive disciplinary actions, be placed in Special Education, and be retained at grade level compared to their White peers
- A large number of the Hispanic population are recent immigrants, with limited schooling and limited proficiency in English
- The majority of the growing population in poverty is Hispanic, deepening the needs of many Hispanic students

In addition to reviewing a considerable amount of pertinent data and literature, the task force obtained community input through several efforts, including an online survey, individual interviews, and a community forum and online comments on the draft task force report. Members of the community recognized many improvements related to the quality of education for Hispanic students, but cited the need for continued improvement in a number of areas. The most prevalent recommendations for improvement included:

- Preparing every student for college and career
- Acknowledging the plurality of the Hispanic population
- Enhancing outreach efforts
- Expanding support programs and services to meet growing needs
- Investing in a quality workforce

The task force also worked to gain community input from several other sources. The task force web site provided AISD and City of Austin contacts for questions and additional information, and these contacts received several emails and telephone calls. The task force dedicated the majority of time at one of its meetings to listen to specific

concerns expressed by representatives of Hispanic Advocates and Business Leadership of Austin (HABLA). And, the task force was represented during a locally televised town hall meeting on the quality of life in Austin.

The task force also held a special joint meeting with the parallel task force addressing the quality of education for African American Students. The two task forces identified several common issues and concerns, which will facilitate implementation of their recommendations. Additionally, the task force reviewed the previous findings of the Cultural Connections to Teaching and Learning Task Force and the Mayor's Committee on K-12 Educational Excellence.

The recommendations of the Task Force on Education and Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students include three broad goals, under which are several objectives and specific strategies which place emphasis on interlocal collaboration. The goals of the task force are to improve the quality of education for Hispanic students through:

- Building greater understanding of and positive attitudes toward their needs
- Ensuring access to a strong foundation for teaching and learning
- Preparation for college and career

The task force believes that implementing its recommendations will help lead to a number of positive outcomes related to providing a quality education to Hispanic students in AISD. These expected outcomes are largely focused on improvements in academics and include higher achievement levels and graduation rates, greater participation in and completion of advanced courses, and increases in college applications and college enrollment.

The task force strongly encourages the AISD Board of Trustees and Austin City Council to direct the development of a detailed plan to provide instructions for implementing the recommendations of the task force. The implementation plan would be in alignment with the AISD Strategic Plan and include action steps, necessary resources, responsible parties, timeframes for completion, and quantifiable targets. The plan would also include an annual monitoring process and a continued role for the task force.

Introduction

BACKGROUND

On May 26, 2005, the Austin City Council was presented with the cumulative findings of considerable research and community input on the quality of life for African Americans in the Austin area. Several components of the overall quality of life for African Americans were considered, including welcoming environment, arts and entertainment, jobs, police and community interactions, East Austin investment, business and economic development, housing, and education. A number of issues and concerns were raised in particular regard to education, and a recommendation was made for more cooperation and joint efforts between the City of Austin and the Austin Independent School District.

As part of a concerted response to these findings, City Council Members approached AISD Trustees to specifically address the educational issues and concerns raised by African Americans in the community. AISD Trustees were eager to join in this response, and requested that the educational issues and concerns of Hispanics in the community also be addressed. As a result, on October 14, 2005, the Joint Subcommittees of the Austin City Council and AISD Board of Trustees formed two parallel task forces with the charge to address the educational issues and concerns of African Americans and Hispanics in AISD (see Appendix A).

To clarify the roles and responsibilities of these task forces, a more detailed "charter" was subsequently established (see Appendix B). According to the charter, the task forces were directed to consider current data, research on best practices, and community perspectives in the development of findings and recommendations, to be reported to the Joint Subcommittees of the City Council and AISD Board of Trustees. Further, the task force reports were to be concise and compelling documents, in easily understood language and format, and available in both English and Spanish.

MEMBERSHIP

As directed, each task force consists of eight members from the community and staff, four appointed by the City of Austin and four appointed by AISD. Also as directed, the task forces consist of experts in education as well as business and community leaders.

Following are brief biographical sketches of the members of the Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students:

AISD APPOINTEES:

Rick Burciaga

Rick Burciaga currently serves as a banking consultant, having completed a 32 year career in banking, most recently 17 years with Wells Fargo and its predecessor institutions in the greater Austin area. Mr. Burciaga graduated from UCLA in Public Administration. He served in the U.S. Army Reserve for eight years. Since 1987 in Central Texas, he has served on the boards of several nonprofit organizations, including the Salvation Army, Capital IDEA, Austin Symphony, Junior Achievement, United Way, and Paramount Theater, and on the advisory boards of Caritas, Communities in Schools, Settlement Home, and Austin Lyric Opera. Mr. Burciaga also served as 2004 Chair of the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, and currently serves as Vice Chair of the Joe Long Performing Arts Center, Board Member of the Greater Austin Economic Development Corporation, and Trustee of Huston Tillotson University.

Dr. Janis Guerrero

Dr. Janis Guerrero holds three degrees from The University of Texas at Austin: a Ph.D. in Educational Administration; an MA in Curriculum and Instruction; and a BS in Education. In her current position as Executive Director for Planning and Community Relations at Austin Independent School District, Dr. Guerrero oversees the district's communications and media services, foundation development and special projects, strategic planning, ombudsman, customer service, and business and school partnerships. She has an extensive background in public school and higher education that ranges from classroom teaching in AISD, to directing a statewide professional development initiative at the Texas Education Agency, to directing communications and external relations at the Dana Center at The University of Texas. Dr. Guerrero currently serves on the Board of Directors of Goodwill Industries and recently completed a term as President of the Board of the Executive Women in Texas Government. Dr. Guerrero also serves on the Administrative Team for the Community Action Network and is an AISD representative for the Austin Partner in Education Board of Directors.

Dr. Angela Valenzuela

Dr. Angela Valenzuela is an Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and the Center for Mexican American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. A Stanford University graduate, her previous teaching positions were in Sociology at Rice University in Houston, Texas (1990-98), as well as a Visiting Scholar at the Center for Mexican American Studies at the University of Houston (1998-99). Her research and teaching interests are in the sociology of education, minority youth in schools, educational policy, and urban education reform. She is also the author of *Subtractive Schooling: U.S. Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring* (State University of New York Press, 1999), winner of both the 2000 American Educational Research Association Outstanding Book Award and the 2001 Critics' Choice Award from the American Educational Studies Association. She is also editor of *Leaving Children Behind: How "Texas-style" Accountability Fails Latino Youth* (State University of New York Press, 2004). Dr. Valenzuela currently serves as the executive director of a university-wide, education policy center at the University of Texas at Austin.

Linda Velasquez

Linda Velasquez graduated from the University of North Texas in 1990 with a BS in Accounting in 1990. She operates her own business, providing accounting and tax services since 1994. She also manages a pediatrics office. Ms. Velasquez is the guardian of two children, one who graduated from Akins High School and another who attends Paredes Middle School. She currently serves as an Austin Council of PTAs Vice-President, and also serves on the AISD District Advisory Council as well as the Campus Advisory Councils for Akins and Paredes. She was previously a member of the Casey Elementary School Campus Advisory Council, and has been an active PTA officer for the past five years. Ms. Velasquez has also served on the AISD Budget Task Force for the past three years.

CITY OF AUSTIN APPOINTEES:

Eyna Canales-Zarate

Eyna Canales-Zarate has lived in Austin since 1973, and is a graduate of St. Edward's University in Management and Marketing. She previously managed a small accounting and tax office, directed the financial and procurement activities of an educational consulting firm, and was the managing partner of a bookkeeping and tax business. In the public sector, she has worked with the state student loan collection division and in a variety of roles with the City of Austin, including auditing, economic development, transportation, fleet services, public works, and City Manager's office, and she currently serves as Library Services Administrator. Ms. Canales-Zarate taught Spanish to over 60 library employees to bring services to the Spanish speaking population in Austin. She has worked with El Buen Samaritano mentoring new immigrants in public speaking classes, solicited and coordinated a presentation with a renowned Spanish psychologist to speak to immigrant parents on the importance of education and good study habits, and served as spokesperson for promoting library services on Spanish television and radio stations. She is a member of the Travis County Children Protective Services Board, and served as Chair of the San Jose Catholic Church Finance Council. Ms. Canales-Zarate is the parent of two sons who attended AISD schools and was closely involved with their education. She has mentored high school students in college preparation sessions, taught and mentored high school students for summer intern work programs, and taught math, reading, and history to adults in preparation for their GED tests.

John Limon

John Limon was born and raised in East Austin. He retired in 1998 after worked for Tracor Inc. for 30 years. Mr. Limon has been a volunteer in the community for over 26 years. He first volunteered to help keep kids from joining gangs. He was a Big Brother for seven years and, after 12 years, continues to drive for Meals on Wheels years. Mr. Limon serves on the community board for Southwest Key Project in East Austin and the board of Family Eldercare, and was appointed to the Plaza Saltillo Redevelopment Citizen's Advisory Committee.

Rosie Mendoza, CPA

Originally from South Texas, Rosie Mendoza has lived in the Austin area since 1985. She is married and the mother of three children, one an AISD graduate, and two currently enrolled in AISD schools. Ms. Mendoza graduated in 1983 from the University of Texas at Austin with a BBA in Accounting. She is a Certified Public Accountant and is currently the managing shareholder of R. Mendoza & Company, PC. Her expertise is in financial and governmental accounting, and she has provided 21 years of service to wide variety of clients. Ms. Mendoza has been an active community volunteer, and currently serves on the Board of Managers for the Travis County Hospital District, and is the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She has also served with the Mexican American Cultural Center, Austin/Travis County MHMR, United Way Capital Area, Austin Museum of Art, Any Baby Can, Junior League of Austin, YWCA, Fiesta de Independencia Foundation, Center for Batter Women, and Leadership Texas. In 1994, Ms. Mendoza was recognized by the League of United Latin American Citizens as one of 15 outstanding Hispanic women in Austin for community participation and involvement. In 1998, she was granted the GAHCC Community Service Award for Civic and Community Involvement and, in 2005, she received the Girl Scouts Lone Star Council Women of Distinction Award and the Capital Area Democratic Women's Celebration of Champions Award.

Veronica Rivera

Veronica Rivera was elected to the Austin Community College Board of Trustees in 2004. She serves on the Board of Directors of the ACC Foundation, the Board of Directors for BiG Austin, and is the co-founder and board member of Las Comadres Para Las Americas, a network for Hispanic women. She is currently an attorney with Sheets & Crossfield in Round Rock, Texas, where she focuses on municipal law and real estate matters. Ms. Rivera is a former school teacher and has also worked in the Office of

the Governor, Criminal Justice Division. She is a past President of the Hispanic Bar Association of Austin and served on its Foundation Board. She served on the Board of the Austin Bar Association, the Hispanic Austin Leadership Steering Committee, and is a graduate of Leadership Austin and Hispanic Austin Leadership. Ms. Rivera has also served on various education committees, including the Austin Bar Association Partners in Education Committee, where she coordinated the establishment of a mentor program at Johnston High School, the Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, and the Johnston High School Future Committee. She has been a mentor at Baty Elementary in Del Valle ISD, Sanchez Elementary in AISD, the Texas Appleseed program at ACC, and the Hispanic Bar Association of Austin/UT Austin Chicano/Hispanic Law Students' Association Mentor program. For her efforts in education, Ms. Rivera was nominated for the Austin Under 40 Awards in 2002 and was named a Finalist in the Youth/Education category in 2005 and 2006. She received the Travis County Women Lawyer's Association Contribution to Minority Community 2005 Award and was a guest speaker at the 40th Anniversary of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act at the Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park in 2005. Ms. Rivera, a first generation Mexican-American and native of Brownsville, Texas, received her J.D. in 1998 from the University of Texas School of Law. While there, she served as the Co-Editor-in-Chief for the Texas Hispanic Journal of Law and Policy. She earned her MBA in 1995 from Texas State University in San Marcos and graduated with honors, and earned a BA in Political Science with a Teacher Certificate in Broad Social Studies in 1989 from St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas.

WEB PAGE

A special web site was created to ensure that members of the community are provided with information related to both the Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students and its parallel task force addressing African Americans. The web page can be accessed through both the AISD and City of Austin web sites, and following is a direct link: http://www.austinisd.org/inside/initiatives/taskforce/

The web page includes, for both task forces, important announcements, background information, draft and final reports, and minutes and various materials from meetings. Key information is also available on the web page in Spanish.

PROCESS OVERVIEW

Preparatory work for the Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students began in October, 2005, with the first meeting of the task force held in December, 2005. Following the development of draft reports and the consideration of public input, the work of the task force was concluded in June, 2006. Updates and opportunities for input were provided to the City Council and AISD Board of Trustees periodically during the process.

Following page is a process overview for the Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students:

Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students Process Overview	
Major Steps	**Timeframes**
Task force formed	Oct. 14, 2005
Charter and schedule development	Oct. 2005
Data and literature research	Oct.-Nov. 2005
Task force member selection	Oct.-Nov. 2005
Task force members announced	Nov. 22, 2005
Development of task force web page	Dec. 2005
First task force meeting (orientation, research results, initial discussion of interview list and protocol, report outline)	Dec. 6, 2005
Interviews of several individuals to gain their perspectives	Dec. 2005 -Feb. 2006
Task force meeting (preliminary interview results, identification of issues and priorities)	Jan. 24, 2006
Development of first draft of report	Jan.-Feb. 2006
Task force meeting (final interview results, first draft of report, initial discussion of online survey)	Feb. 15, 2006
Development of second draft of report	Feb. 2006
Development of draft online survey	Feb. 2006
Task force meeting (second draft of report, draft online survey)	Mar. 1, 2006
Development of third draft of report	Mar. 2006
Conduct online survey and analyze results	Mar. 2006
Task force meeting (third draft of report, initial results of online survey, planning for community forum)	Mar. 22, 2006
Development of public review draft of report	Mar.-Apr. 2006
Task force meeting (planning for community forum; public review draft of report)	Apr. 12, 2006
Public review draft of report placed online for comment	Apr. 2006
Task force holds community forum	Apr. 28, 2006
Joint meeting with African American Task Force (sharing recommendations and finding common ground)	May 3, 2006
Analysis of public input	May 2006
Task force meeting (evaluate collective public input and finalize recommendations)	May 6, 2006
Development of final report	May 2006
Task force work session (finalize recommendations)	May 12, 2006
Task force work session (finalize recommendations)	May 16, 2006
Task force work session (finalize recommendations)	May 18, 2006
Task force work session (finalize recommendations, establish priorities)	May 30, 2006
Task force formal presentation of final report	June 16, 2006
Final task report made available to community	June 16, 2006

Findings

INTERVIEWS

Methodology

To gain a broad sampling of perspectives from the community on important issues and possible priorities, over 70 individual interviews were conducted with respondents from several predefined categories. Members of the task force provided input into the categories of interviewees and recommended the names of several individuals. Interviewee categories included academicians, public officials, business and community leaders, representatives of community groups, school principals and administrators, teachers, and current and former students. Task force members also provided input in the development of an interview protocol (see Appendix C), consisting of both quantitative and qualitative items.

Qualitative items addressed success of AISD, challenges and risks to the district, and possible changes the district might make to improve the quality of education for Hispanic students. For the quantitative items, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement to specific statements relating to educational experience, needs and expectations, treatment by school staff, and learning environment for Hispanic students. Respondents were also given an opportunity to explain their numeric ratings.

Interviews were conducted over a six-week period. Most of the interviews were conducted either face-to-face or over the telephone, with a few individuals responding via email. On average, each interview required between 20 and 30 minutes to complete.

Results

Partial results of the interviews were provided to task force members and discussed at their initial meeting, and final results were evaluated at subsequent meetings of the task force. Detailed results are provided in Appendix D, and following are some highlights of the interviews.

Quantitative results from the interview questions indicate that respondents perceive the district as falling short in its efforts to provide a quality education to Hispanic students. As indicated in the following table, respondents gave the district generally low marks on items that measured their level of agreement with specific statements using a four-point scale (i.e., 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 4 = Strongly Agree). These statements were designed to gather information about the perceptions of respondents on the education that Hispanic students experience in AISD.

Survey Item	N	Average
Hispanic students in AISD receive a high quality education.	68	2.22
The needs and expectations of Hispanic students in AISD are adequately met.	68	2.23
Hispanic students in AISD are treated fairly and respectfully by school staff.	66*	2.64
Hispanic students in AISD learn in a safe and nurturing environment.	66*	2.67

*Some individuals did not respond to these items.

Respondent explanations of ratings reveal perceptions of educational experiences for Hispanic students that occur in relatively safe school environments, but are marred by educational professionals who have low expectations for their academic achievement and negative preconceptions about their behavior. Experiences like these, say the respondents, occur all too often and account for a generally unsatisfactory record of achievement in AISD for Hispanic students. An overview of the four most predominant themes that emerged from the explanations for the ratings follows:

- Unsatisfactory Record of Student Achievement. The persistence of achievement gaps between Hispanic and White students, high dropout rates, and unsatisfactory numbers of Hispanics who enroll in and graduate from higher education were cited as evidence that Hispanic students are not receiving a high quality education.

- Low Expectations and Negative Preconceptions. Respondents said that teachers have preconceptions that Hispanic children are unable or do not want to learn. Their evidence of low expectations included disproportionate referrals to special education, low participation in gifted and advanced placement classes, and unacceptable graduation and college-going rates.

- Inconsistent and Unfair Treatment. Respondents noted instances of unfairness in treatment of Hispanic students compared to their white peers and inconsistencies in the application of policies and procedures from one school to another. Respondents' evidence of unfair and inconsistent treatment included disproportionate numbers of suspensions and discipline referrals, incidences of prejudice and cultural insensitivity, and transfer revocations.

- Comfort with Safety. Respondents expressed comfort with school safety, particularly at elementary schools, and support of the district's overall improvements in safety and security. They noted campus safety initiatives, positive behavior supports, and smaller learning environments.

Additional Findings

Some of the most informative findings from the survey data were gathered from survey items that asked respondents to identify the greatest successes and biggest challenges or risks to the quality of education provided to Hispanic students, and to make recommendations for improvements. Following is a summary of the most frequently occurring responses (in order of greatest frequency).

GREATEST SUCCESSES:

- Improvements in Parent and Community Involvement and Communications. Respondents perceived that there were higher levels of community involvement and improved support for parental engagement. They noted the availability of information in Spanish, both in written documents and oral interpretation. Respondents expressed support for the work of the task force and appreciation for the opportunity to give input, and expressed interest in seeing the report.

- Programs Supporting Transition to English Fluency. Respondents applauded programs and academic offerings that support the transition of students to English fluency. These included supports to address language barriers and the learning needs of immigrant and early childhood learners.

- Innovative Educational Programs. Respondents noted the district's efforts and successes in implementing major innovative programs and establishing a strong, standardized core curriculum that is aligned with a unifying philosophy. Respondents referenced the redesign of high schools, Blueprint Schools, Principles of Learning, after-school and 21st Century programs, and the revamping of college and career programs as initiatives that are providing Hispanics with opportunities to succeed.

- Improvements in Staff Diversity and Professional Development. Respondents cited the district's progress in increasing the diversity of teaching and administrative staff, particularly bilingual staff. They also noted improvements in professional development and supports for teachers.

- Progress in Student Achievement. Respondents acknowledged the schools' and district's continuing efforts to decrease the dropout rate, increase the academic performance of Hispanics and close the achievement gap between Hispanics and other student groups.

BIGGEST CHALLENGES OR RISKS:

- Understanding and Connecting with Hispanic Parents and Community Members. Respondents perceived the district as unsuccessful in connecting and communicating effectively with Hispanic parents and community members. Some of the reasons cited were the district's lack of knowledge about diversity among Hispanics, and lack of knowledge and appreciation for Hispanic culture and values. Respondents acknowledged that language barriers created challenges to communication and mutual understanding, but they also pointed out that the district could diminish these challenges by recognizing the plurality of Hispanics in the student population and making advances in the number of Hispanics in leadership positions. At the same time, respondents called on the district to ensure that schools and central administration offices are welcoming, to arrange school and district-sponsored meetings to accommodate the work and transportation constraints of working-class families, and to closely monitor campuses to ensure their practice of the district's philosophy that all students can learn.

- Understanding How to Work With and Challenge Hispanic Students. A theme that is closely connected to the district's challenges in relating to Hispanic parents and community members emerged in regards to Hispanic students. Respondents said that district staff did not understand Hispanic students and how to work with and motivate them. Respondents attributed a number of negative effects to this lack of understanding, including high dropout rates, limited inclusion of Hispanic students in advanced classes, gifted programs, and extracurricular activities; and disparities in discipline and special education referrals for Hispanic students.

- Resource Distribution. A significant number of respondents noted the equitable distribution of resources, including teaching staff and financial resources, as a challenge for the district. Specific reference was made to the need to recruit qualified teachers and to reduce the placement of new and inexperienced teachers in schools with the highest need and schools with high numbers of Hispanic students. Related to this theme was a cluster of challenges to the provision of sufficient resources for rapidly-growing bilingual programs, including recruitment of bilingual teachers and the need for a bilingual program that meets the needs of secondary students.

- Providing Full Service Schools for Students and Families That Need More Support. Respondents described Hispanic students as bombarded by negative influences, affected by tensions between immigrant and native-born Hispanics, and disadvantaged by historical economic disparities. They cited the need for more schools to become full service centers that provide an array of supports for students and their families, including after school programs, tutoring, mentoring, and other needed services.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS:

- Every Student Should Be Prepared for College and Career. Respondents emphasized that greater numbers of Hispanic students should enroll in and complete gifted and advanced placement classes, and they should have access to high quality career and technical programs. The need to improve access to these classes and programs was a key point raised by respondents who expressed concern that low expectations reinforced the incidence of segregated advanced classes. While respondents acknowledged progress in closing achievement gaps, they pointed to disparities in special education referrals for Hispanic students as evidence that the district is not satisfactorily preparing them for the future. Finally, respondents urged the importance of a quality education for every student, meaning an educational experience that developed the whole child and was not focused on preparation for standardized testing.

- Acknowledge the Plurality of the Hispanic Population. Respondents called attention to demographic trends that make Hispanic students the largest group within the district, and they pointed out implications of the projected growth of that group. Specifically, they stressed the need for teachers and administrators to receive professional development in cultural awareness and in working effectively with Hispanic students and their families.

- Enhance Outreach Efforts. Closely related to the theme about the plurality of Hispanics, was an emphatic call to action from respondents for the district to enhance its outreach to Hispanic parents and community. They pointed out specific needs, such as providing more Spanish translated information and interpretation services, particularly at the campus level; increasing the number of bilingual Parent Support Specialists; and ensuring participation of Hispanic businesses and professionals in transforming high schools and providing internship opportunities.

- Expand Support Programs and Services to Meet Growing Needs. Respondents called on the district to expand programs and services to support Hispanic students and their families. Specifically, they asked for more high quality after-school programs, for tutoring and mentoring, and they encouraged the district to continue its efforts in bilingual education.

- Invest in a Quality Workforce. Respondents urged AISD to hire more Hispanic teachers and administrators and bilingual staff and to reward effective teachers and administrators so that they will stay with the district. Also, respondents recommended that the district create incentives to encourage the best teachers to work in schools that have the greatest needs.

ONLINE SURVEY

Methodology

An online survey was developed to assist the Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students in gaining broader insight into perspectives on the performance of AISD and the level of importance on various issues. The online survey was open to everyone in the Austin community.

The online survey was prepared in English and Spanish and made accessible on the AISD and City of Austin websites. The survey was run for approximately three weeks, and advertised through AISD and City of Austin website announcements, and through the local English and Spanish media, including written and audio-visual public service announcements, press releases, and newspaper ads. Messages were also sent to each campus requesting principals to notify their staff, Campus Advisory Councils, students, and parents of the online survey. In addition, all AISD staff received an email invitation to take the survey. Those without Internet access were encouraged to work with campuses and public libraries for assistance.

The online survey consisted of 22 items pertaining to how well AISD is addressing specific issues, rated on a five-point scale (i.e., 1 = Not at All Well, 2 = Not Very Well, 3 = Somewhat Well, 4 = Very Well, and 5 = Extremely Well). In addition, to further assist in evaluation, respondents were asked to provide certain demographic information, including respondent category (e.g., parent, student, AISD employee), ethnicity, gender, level of education, level of fluency in English and Spanish, and nativity. Respondents were also given an opportunity to provide general comments.

Respondents were instructed that their information was totally anonymous, and that various demographic information was optional. A complete version of the survey instrument is provided in Appendix E.

Results

Detailed results of the online survey are provided in Appendix F. For the 22 items on the survey, average scores for 20 items fell between 2 and 3 on the five-point scale described above, indicating considerable room for improvement in the quality of education for Hispanic students. Average scores for two items exceeded 3 (“friendly schools” averaged 3.15, and “information available in Spanish” averaged 3.32). By comparison, the two lowest-scoring items were “dropout rate for Hispanics” (which averaged 2.11) and “involvement of the Hispanic Business Community” (which averaged 2.24).

Also in Appendix F, average scores for the 22 survey items are presented graphically in three categories: Academic Preparation and Opportunity; Staff and Other Resources; and Parent and Community Involvement. These categories not only reflect the main

areas for improvement identified in the individual interviews (i.e., Preparation for College and Career, Programs and Services to Meet Growing Needs, Quality Workforce, Acknowledgement of Hispanic Plurality, and Enhanced Outreach Efforts), they closely parallel the balance of perspectives in the AISD Strategic Plan (i.e., Education, Staff, Resources, and Community).

A total of 768 individuals responded to the online survey. The majority (60.7%) of respondents were AISD employees, but this is not surprising since an email announcement about the survey was sent out to over ten thousand employees. However, no related skewness is evident in the survey results; as indicated in Appendix F, in most cases the responses of AISD employees closely approximate those of community members.

A relatively small number of individuals (13) responded to the survey in Spanish, and although their responses did not have a significant impact on the overall averages, it should be noted that their responses generally indicated less satisfaction. It should also be noted that of the individuals who responded to the survey in English, a majority (60.1%) indicated that they were Hispanic.

When comparing the average scores of Hispanic versus non-Hispanic respondents, varying degrees of skewness are evident in the data, as indicated in Appendix F. For all 22 survey items, the average scores for Hispanic respondents were lower (i.e., indicating less satisfaction) than those for non-Hispanic respondents.

When looking at all respondents, demographic characteristics included over 70% having a college degree, over 90% being born in the United States, and over 75% being female. Of those individuals responding to the survey in English, almost half indicated having proficiency in Spanish. More detailed demographic information is provided in Appendix F.

Of the 768 total survey respondents, 285 (37%) provided additional comments. These comments covered many issues and topics, but the most prevalent, in descending order, included: treatment of students; parent and community involvement; bilingual education programs; support for transitioning to English fluency; bilingual staff; behavior and discipline; resource distribution and equity; and student identity. A detailed description of the comments received is provided in Appendix F.

ONLINE COMMENTS ON DRAFT REPORT

Methodology

The public review draft of the task force report was placed online two weeks in advance of the community forum and was available online for another week thereafter. The entire community was invited to review the draft report and to provide comment.

The public review draft of the task force report was prepared in English and Spanish and made accessible on the AISD and City of Austin websites. Availability of the draft report was advertised through AISD and City of Austin website announcements, and through the local English and Spanish media, including public service announcements, press releases, and newspaper ads. Messages were also sent to each campus requesting principals to notify their staff, Campus Advisory Councils, students, and parents of the opportunity for review and comment. In addition, all AISD staff received an email invitation to review and comment on the draft report. Those without Internet access were encouraged to work with campuses and public libraries for assistance.

Respondents were asked to provide comments on each of the major sections of the draft report, namely the Introduction, Findings, Recommendations, and Appendices. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide general comments pertaining to the work of the task force. To assist in analysis, respondents were asked to identify their ethnicity and to categorize themselves as either a parent, student, AISD employee, etc. Respondents were instructed that this was not required information.

Results

Complete results of the online comments are provided in Attachment G. Comments on the public review draft of the task force report were received from a total of 14 persons. A little over half (57.1%) of the respondents indicated that they were Hispanic; the same percentage of respondents also indicated that they were parents. The comments received could be broken down into 15 distinct topics or themes. However, none recurred more than twice, indicating no clearly dominant concerns. Those topics with a frequency of two included: more parental involvement; more information available in Spanish; respect for transportation and time constraints of parents; more Hispanic students in magnets and advanced courses; and more culturally relevant instruction.

COMMUNITY FORUM

Methodology

The task force recognized the importance of the community forum and planned for it during three preceding meetings. Advertisement of the community forum was accomplished along with that for the online comments on the public review draft of the task force report (see previous section). Included in the announcements of the forum were instructions to community members who required transportation assistance.

Task force members considered a number of possible venues for the forum, most of which were in areas of the community with large Hispanic populations. However, it was decided to hold the forum in the Austin City Council Chambers to underscore the importance of the event, as well as the joint district-city nature of the effort. In addition,

live television coverage could be provided from the Council Chambers. The forum was scheduled for the evening of April 28, 2006. Although task force members acknowledged the possible drawbacks of having a meeting on a Friday evening, they felt it was critical to select a time when both the Mayor and Superintendent could both attend.

In addition to signing up to speak, attendees of the forum could indicate whether they wanted to receive subsequent announcements and information. In addition, attendees were provided the opportunity to submit written comments to the task force. However, no written comments were received.

Prior to receiving comments from the public, task force members described their various efforts to gain community input and summarized the format and content of their draft report. Emphasis was placed on the fact that the report was a draft and that all of the community input received by the task force would be taken into consideration in the development of the final report.

Results

All of the eight members of the task force were in attendance at the community forum, and each member played a role in the proceedings. Opening remarks were provided by Austin Mayor Will Wynn and AISD Superintendent Dr. Pat Forgione. Both the Mayor and Superintendent acknowledged the importance of providing a quality education to the large and growing Hispanic population, and both provided assurance that the recommendations of the task force would receive careful consideration.

All information provided at the community forum was available in both English and Spanish, including the PowerPoint presentation on the draft report. In addition, Spanish translation services were made available.

In addition to the task force members and support staff, 36 individuals attended the community forum. Eight persons provided comments to the task force. Included among the speakers were representatives of HABLA (Hispanic Advocates and Business Leadership of Austin) and PODER (People Organized in Defense of Earth and her Resources), a school counselor, a city planner, and a City Council candidate. Comments included the importance of teachers, importance of parental and community involvement in schools, need for more effective Campus Advisory Councils, repercussions of zero-tolerance policies, need for leadership commitment and dedication of resources, need for fundamental and systemic changes, and better coordination and cooperation between AISD and the City of Austin.

A complete summary of the community forum proceedings, with attendance list and speaker comments, is provided in Appendix H.

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY INPUT

The task force also worked to gain community input from several other sources. The task force web site provided AISD and City of Austin contacts for questions and additional information, and over 50 responses were provided to emails and telephone calls. The task force dedicated the majority of time at one of its meetings to listen to specific concerns expressed by representatives of HABLA. And, the task force was represented during a locally televised town hall meeting on the quality of life in Austin.

The task force also held a special joint meeting with the parallel task force addressing the quality of education for African American Students. The two task forces identified several common issues and concerns, which will facilitate implementation of their recommendations. Additionally, the task force reviewed the previous findings of the Cultural Connections to Teaching and Learning Task Force and the Mayor's Committee on K-12 Educational Excellence.

DATA RESEARCH

Methodology

A considerable amount of data was gathered and analyzed for consideration by the Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students. Fifteen different data sources were consulted, including the U.S. Census Bureau, Texas State Data Center, National Center for Educational Statistics, Texas Education Agency, and AISD.

Data was collected not only on education, but also in other categories related to education and quality of life, including population, health, and economy. Data were presented on the national, state, and local levels, as available. All data were presented for African Americans, Hispanics, and Whites. In addition to current data, certain projections were also obtained.

Results

Results of the data research were provided to task force members and discussed at their initial meeting. Detailed results are provided in Appendix I, and following are some highlights of the data research.

At the national level, the Hispanic population is growing, but is equal to the African American population. By comparison, in Texas and Travis County, the Hispanic population is growing at a faster rate, and is larger than the African American population. By 2040, at the national level, the Hispanic population will have almost doubled, but Whites will still be in the majority. By comparison, by 2040 in Texas and Travis County, Hispanics will be in the majority by a large margin.

At the national level, the labor force is predominantly White, with Hispanics and African Americans having roughly equal representation. In Texas and Travis County, the labor force is also largely White, but Hispanics have greater representation than African Americans. However, by 2040, the majority of the labor force in Texas will be Hispanic, and this has tremendous implications to the education of this population and to the economy of the state.

At the national, state, and local levels, students enrolled in post-secondary education are predominantly White. At the elementary and secondary levels, compared to their White peers, Hispanic and African American students are more likely to drop out of school, receive disciplinary actions, be retained at grade level, and be identified for special education.

At almost 55 percent, the majority of students in AISD are Hispanic, but this percentage is lower than most other major urban school districts in the state. Although among other major urban school districts in the state AISD ranks high in terms of SAT/ACT scores for Hispanics and African Americans, AISD has some of the largest gaps between Whites and Hispanics and African Americans in terms of Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) achievement, advanced course participation, and graduation rates.

Based on the 2005 AISD High School Exit Survey, there were few variances between the feelings of African American, Hispanic, and White students in regard to school climate and school experiences. However, in terms of participation in school-affiliated extracurricular activities, significantly fewer Hispanic students indicated theater/drama and University Interscholastic League (UIL) academic competition. Also, in terms of participation in activities outside of school, a much higher percentage of Hispanic students indicated family care over other activities. In addition, a much lower percentage of Hispanic students indicated that they intended to continue their education.

Based on the 2005 AISD Parent Survey, of those parents responding the overwhelming majority were Hispanic. There were no significant variances between the feelings of African American, Hispanic, and White parents in regard to their experiences with AISD, with all average responses indicating general satisfaction. However, both response rates and satisfaction rates tended to be generally lower at the secondary level compared to the elementary level.

LITERATURE RESEARCH

Methodology

A considerable amount of literature was gathered and analyzed for consideration by the Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students. Over forty literature sources were consulted, including governmental, institutional, and private

works. Several recurring issues and themes were identified and summarized, and an annotated bibliography was prepared.

Results

Results of the literature research were provided to task force members and discussed at their initial meeting. Detailed results are provided in Appendix J, and following are some highlights of the literature research.

Four measures highlight the achievement gap when evaluating the K-12 educational experience for minority students. These include: standardized test scores; rates of students failing grade level; dropout, retention, and graduation rates; and rates of students enrolling in and graduating from institutions of higher education.

Two sets of factors correlated with performance are family conditions and student behavior. Programs targeted at eliminating the negative effects of these factors include: mentorship, counseling, and other individualized, long-term, student-centered supports; extended learning and intensive learning programs; pre-school education; scholarships and/or financial support; offering comprehensive services to students and their families; integrating Hispanic culture into services and programs in order to assist students navigating cultural differences between their home, community, and school; and providing bilingual services and information to students and their families.

Differences in the treatment of students based on race/ethnicity and language also affect performance. Minority students are disproportionately disciplined and enrolled below grade level and in special education, and are underrepresented in advanced and college-preparatory classes. In addition to the student supports listed above, teacher training for multicultural and linguistic minority students, efforts to increase minority participation in challenging academic courses, and programs that provide career pathway opportunities help minority students receive equal treatment as well as provide direct opportunities for students through school learning.

Segregation within and between schools, and inequities in resource distribution can also play large roles in determining student achievement. Greater integration between different incomes, races, and ethnicities helps schools and teachers establish high expectations for achievement for all students.

Teacher quality also has a huge effect on student performance. Teacher hiring should focus on research-supported indicators of teacher effectiveness such as strong verbal and math skills and deep content knowledge. Professional development should be conducted in a targeted, collaborative, and evaluated atmosphere. It should be ongoing, on-site, and focused on the content that students should learn. The distribution of quality teachers is also very important. District policy, emergency hiring, high turnover, salary differences, placement politics within schools, and other disincentives for teachers to work with poor and minority children all work against closing the student

achievement gaps. Providing a fair and effective policy for teacher placement and incentives and support for working with poor and minority students is a critical component in reducing disparities in achievement.

Curriculum and school culture can also influence the minority achievement gap. Curriculum and teaching strategies that cater to a diversity of learning types help underperforming students. Opportunities for small-group work, self-directed learning, peer-group activities, and leadership opportunities can all help engage students in the classroom through interactive, student-centered instruction. This empowers students to become excited about and responsible for their own learning. Treating bilingualism as an asset can also make a huge difference in student learning.

Recommendations from the literature on school reform encourage focusing efforts on improving instruction rather than changing the organizational structure of schools. Creating a positive school culture and developing high academic and behavioral standards for all students are also recommended. Parental involvement is also highlighted. Parental involvement can be encouraged by developing a shared responsibility and shared values among schools, families, students, and communities.

CURRENT PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

A number of programs and initiatives, conducted by AISD or on an interlocal basis with the City of Austin and other entities, are currently in effect or underway that have a direct impact on the quality of education for Hispanic students. Detailed descriptions of these programs and initiatives are provided in Appendix K, and following is summary information.

School Redesign

The High School Redesign initiative aims to enhance academic rigor for all students, establish positive relationships between students and adults, and demonstrate relevancy of high school work as preparation for continued education, good jobs, and successful lives.

The Blue Print Schools initiative involves the restructuring of six under-performing schools to provide qualified teachers in every classroom, consistent systems and procedures, specific curriculum, extensive professional development, structured student support systems, and strong relationships between parents and school staff.

Student Academic Success

AISD curriculum is closely aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) state curriculum standards. Instructional Planning Guides (IPGs) provide teachers with the instructional objectives of the curriculum. Student success is

monitored through Student Learning Profiles, which provide timely assessments of progress in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies.

AISD's English Language Learner (ELL) program focuses on the acquisition of both academic Spanish and academic English at the elementary level, and then shifts to academic English and the incorporation of rigorous problem solving skills at the secondary level. The International High School provides a specialized learning environment for recently arrived immigrant students at the high school level.

AISD advanced academic magnet programs offer students courses in math, science, technology, liberal arts, humanities, international studies, and law. The Gifted and Talented Program offers differentiated instruction in English and language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

AISD is also developing pilots for early childhood learning centers. Recent research correlates early childhood education with future performance.

Acceleration of Learning

A three-tier intervention model works to bring under-performing students up to speed through classroom instruction, reading and math intervention within the school day, and intensive intervention beyond the school day and during the summer.

Gonzalo Garza Independent High School, Diversified Education through Leadership, Technology, Academics (DELTA), and the Virtual School Program (VSP) all work to provide alternative programs with additional supports to meet the needs of students that are not well-served by the traditional high school programs.

College Readiness and Post-Secondary Education

AVID and GEAR UP are examples of programs working to prepare low-income or underachieving students for post-secondary education.

AISD provides Advanced Placement (AP) courses to give students the opportunity to earn college credit or advanced standing, and Pre-AP courses in grades 6-11 to prepare for AP coursework. Through the AP Incentive Program, AISD is also providing training for teachers and financial incentives for teachers and students to increase student enrollment in AP courses at seven high schools.

The Austin Community College/AISD Connection, dual credit courses, and career and technology college articulated courses are programs that help transition students from AISD to college and provide college credit.

Student and Family Support

AISD provides counselors, community liaisons, parent support specialists, and dropout specialists to support students and parents. The various student support staff work to provide early intervention for struggling learners and more intensive interventions for high need students.

AISD collaborates with agencies such as Communities in Schools, SafePlace, and LifeWorks to provide school-based services supporting student personal development and positive relationships. The district also works with other interlocal programs in the greater Austin area.

Safe and Nurturing Campus Environments

The district is implementing recommendations from the Community Safety Task Force to address: policies, facilities, campus environment, and continuum of support of students and families.

The District Improvement Plan includes specific performance goals for reducing the disparity in serious discipline problems among ethnic groups.

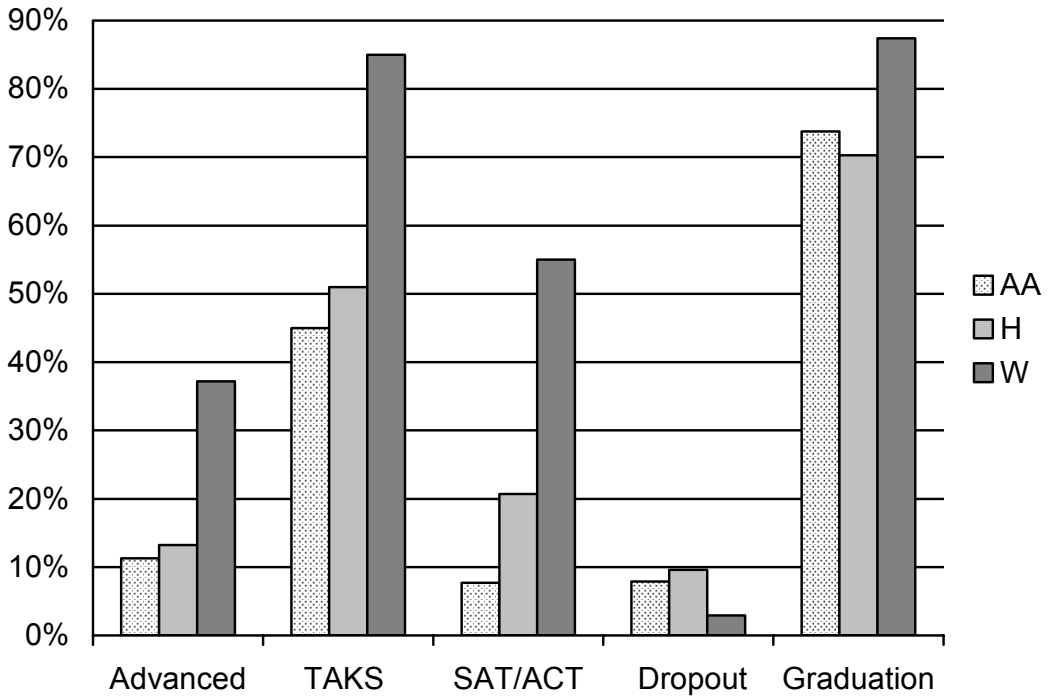
The implementation of Positive Behavior Support (PBS) systems and Character Education work to teach, model, and reinforce positive behavior and character skills.

GAP ANALYSIS

As described in the previous section, AISD and the City of Austin have made considerable progress in several areas related to the quality of education for Hispanic students, including high school redesign, Blueprint schools, programs for English Language Learners, student support services, and teacher training. However, based on data and literature research and on stakeholder input, continued improvements are needed.

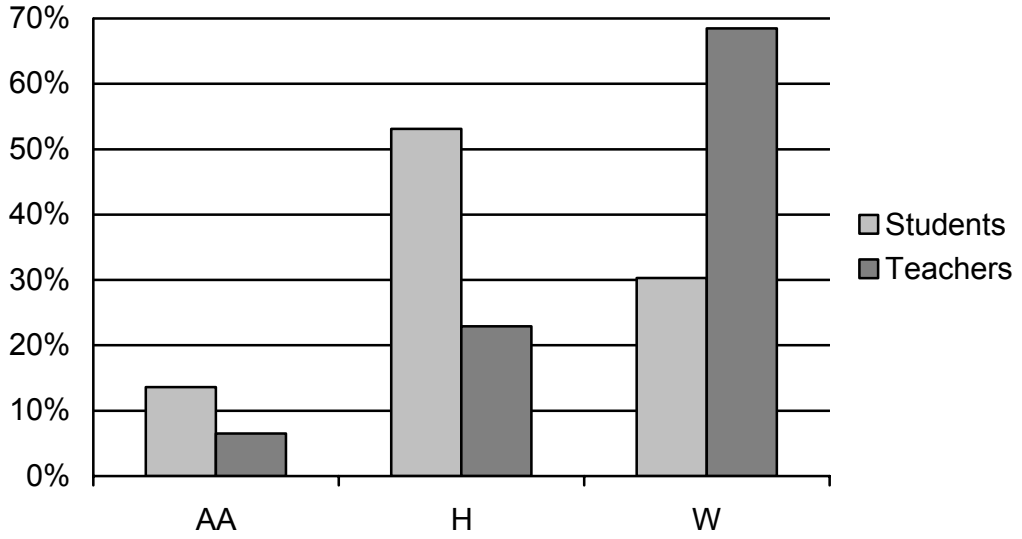
As indicated in the following charts, although progress is being made data show that there are still sizeable gaps in various measures of AISD student achievement as well as diversity in district staff.

Student Achievement



Notes: AA = African American; H = Hispanic; and W = White. Advanced = High School Advanced Courses Completion Rate; TAKS = Minimum TAKS Expectation Met; SAT/ACT = Scores at or above Criterion; Dropout = High School Dropout Rate; and Graduation = High School Graduation Rate. See Appendix I for details of data research.

Staff Diversity



Stakeholder input indicated that the district's efforts have been successful in improving parent and community involvement and communications, supporting English language transition, improving staff diversity and professional development, and decreasing the dropout rate and increasing academic performance of Hispanic students. However, stakeholders also identified a number of challenges and risks for the education of Hispanic students and need for improvements. Specifically, the district still needs to improve its connection with Hispanic parents, community members, and students. The district also needs to recruit qualified teachers and to reduce the placement of new and inexperienced teachers in high-need and high-Hispanic schools.

Concern was also expressed over the allocation of resources for the rapidly-growing bilingual programs, and the need for a bilingual program for secondary students. Finally, stakeholders felt that more schools become full-service centers, providing an array of supports for students and families to combat the tensions and negative influences experienced by Hispanic students.

Review of applicable literature suggests several possible actions to address these identified gaps, including:

- Developing a shared responsibility and shared values among schools, families, students, and communities.
- Training teachers in strategies to work with multicultural and linguistic minority students.
- Providing a fair and effective policy for teacher placement and incentives and support for working with poor and minority students.
- Providing individualized, long-term, student-centered and family support at school.

Recommendations

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

The Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students recommends that the City of Austin and AISD focus on three broad goals to effectively address the quality of education for Hispanic students in AISD, with several objectives and specific strategies associated with each of these goals. The recommendations of the task force are firmly based on research and stakeholder input, and place emphasis on interlocal collaboration.

The recommendations of the task force provide a strong alignment with the Mission of the AISD Board of Trustees: "All students will progress academically and intellectually, and will graduate prepared for personal success and inspired to contribute to society." The recommendations of the task force also directly support several other of the Board's Results Policies (indicated by R), and all of the AISD Strategic Plan Priorities (indicated by SP), as follows:

R-2 (Academic Achievement)
R-3 (College/Career)
R-5 (Citizenship)
R-6 (Personal Development Skills)

SP-1 (Education – Student Achievement)
SP-2 (Education – Holistic Educational Experience)
SP-3 (Education – Learning Environment)
SP-4 (Staff)
SP-5 (Community)
SP-6 (Resources)

The following goals, objectives, and strategies are not presented in any particular order of preference or priority.

Goal 1
Improve the quality of education for Hispanic students through building greater understanding of and positive attitudes toward their needs.

Objective 1.1
Better connect and communicate with Hispanic parents and the Hispanic community.

Strategies

1.1.1 Provide more AISD and City of Austin translation services and information available in Spanish to parents and community members at points of service and on websites.

1.1.2 Develop joint programs between the Austin Public Library and AISD that encourage reading and assist new immigrant assists students and parents in identifying resources they may need.

1.1.3 Fund full-time bilingual parent liaisons at every campus trained in community relations and advocacy for parent and student rights, and hold them accountable for success in bringing parents into schools.

1.1.4 Hold principals and administrators accountable for scheduling meetings and activities sensitive to the time and transportation constraints of parents.

Objective 1.2

Make administrative and campus offices more welcoming and forthcoming.

Strategies

1.2.1 Develop systems for evaluating employee accountability for providing consistent quality in customer service.

1.2.2 Build greater staff understanding of how to work effectively with Hispanic students and parents by providing cultural sensitivity training on a consistent periodic basis that is premised on their input.

Objective 1.3

Be more responsive to the plurality of the Hispanic population.

Strategies

1.3.1 Better ensure cultural connections to teaching and learning by provide more high quality, culturally relevant professional development opportunities for teachers and principals.

1.3.2 Develop more AISD and City of Austin programs and activities to increase awareness and appreciation of the Spanish language and Hispanic culture, values, and diversity.

1.3.3 Increase the number of Hispanics in teacher, principal, and district leadership positions to more closely reflect the ethnic makeup of the district.

1.3.4 Make principal search and selection processes and decisions more transparent to the community.

Objective 1.4

Eliminate disparities in disciplinary actions between Hispanics and other student groups.

Strategies

1.4.1 Implement alternative approaches to In-School Suspension such as peer juries and oversight committees.

1.4.2 Provide School Resource Officer training in cultural sensitivity through the Austin Police Department.

1.4.3 Ensure greater consistency across campuses in administering disciplinary actions.

Goal 2

Improve the quality of education for Hispanic students through ensuring access to a strong foundation for teaching and learning.

Objective 2.1

Allocate resources and services to address the greatest needs.

Strategies

2.1.1 Increase the number of teachers who are experienced and highly qualified to work in schools with large Hispanic and low-income student populations through focusing recruitment efforts and providing greater supports and incentives.

2.1.2 Expand the range and availability of after school programs.

2.1.3 Strengthen Level 2 services for struggling learners by increasing the number of Hispanic students receiving tutoring and mentoring, and periodically monitor the effectiveness of AISD and City of Austin mentoring and tutoring programs.

Objective 2.2

Improve programs to bring English Language Learners to proficiency in both English and Spanish.

Strategies

2.2.1 Increase the number and retention of certified bilingual education teachers and eliminate the use of non-certified bilingual education teachers in that program.

2.2.2 Realign the bilingual education program to maintain instruction in both English and Spanish through completion of elementary school.

2.2.3 Allocate greater resources to the English as a Second Language (ESL) program by replicating successful services such as the International Welcome Center and International High School in more locations throughout the district.

2.2.4 Expand the ESL program through providing peer mentoring and tutoring services.

2.2.5 Create opportunities for English learners and Spanish learners to learn together.

2.2.6 Explore dual language programs and consider pilots.

Objective 2.3
Promote equity in access to high quality Special Education services for Hispanic students.

Strategies

- **2.3.1** Develop professional training programs for all teachers and administrators that foster awareness of cultural, behavioral, and learning issues to eliminate over-identification of Hispanic students in Special Education and to support learning in all classrooms.
- **2.3.2** Provide funding for specialized programs that focus on transitional supports for students and parents receiving Special Education services.
- **2.3.3** Establish a third-party independent advocate to support Hispanic students and parents during and after the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) process.

Goal 3
Improve the quality of education for Hispanic students through creating a college-going and career-minded culture.

Objective 3.1
Establish collaborative efforts to support Hispanic students in raising expectations, taking challenging courses, excelling in their education, and being prepared for college.

Strategies

- **3.1.1** Ensure that students and parents have early and continuous access to guidance and counseling in making appropriate curriculum choices to be prepared for college (e.g., college requirements, costs, and sources of aid) and to have the skills and credentials necessary to secure living-wage jobs.
- **3.1.2** Expand Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP), National Hispanic Institute (NHI), and other programs designed to increase the number of students choosing to go to college, including advisory periods, dual credit, scholarship opportunities, and immigrant tuition waivers.
- **3.1.3** Implement an annual performance review for counselors to establish clear expectations and to monitor their outreach and advisement to Hispanic students related to college and career choices.
- **3.1.4** Conduct and report on an in-depth, comparative study on student pathways to advanced courses and college, beginning in the early grades.

3.1.5 Ensure that secondary schools provide smaller learning communities, are attentive to continuing individual development, and give teachers and students opportunities to remain together for longer periods of time.

3.1.6 Promote awareness of and encourage participation in student visits to colleges and universities, and provide periodic reports on these activities to regional higher education partners.

3.1.7 Encourage the daily presence of local college students as tutors.

Objective 3.2

Establish collaborative efforts to support Hispanic students in making well-informed choices on rewarding and fulfilling career paths.

Strategies

3.2.1 Provide a greater range and availability of high-quality technical courses and training opportunities.

3.2.2 Ensure greater participation of businesses and professionals in providing internship opportunities.

3.2.3 Coordinate AISD and City of Austin efforts to identify technical career opportunities within their organizations and to provide information and assistance to students and parents on possible career paths.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The task force believes that implementing its recommendations will help lead to a number of positive outcomes related to providing a quality education to Hispanic students in AISD. These expected outcomes are largely focused on improvements in academics and include:

- Higher achievement levels
- Higher attendance rates
- Lower dropout rates
- Higher graduation rates
- Fewer grade-level retentions
- Fewer special education referrals
- Fewer discipline referrals
- Greater participation in and completion of advanced courses
- Greater participation in extracurricular activities
- Greater participation in SAT/ACT testing with improved results
- Increases in college applications and college enrollment
- Increases in scholarship applications and scholarship awards
- Increases in college completions
- Greater satisfaction with the district's quality of services and education

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The task force strongly encourages the AISD Board of Trustees and Austin City Council to direct the development of a detailed plan to provide instructions for implementing the recommendations of the task force. The implementation plan would be in alignment with the AISD Strategic Plan and include the following components:

- Action steps
- Necessary resources
- Responsible parties
- Timeframes for completion
- Deliverables
- Quantifiable targets
- Monitoring process with annual report
- Continuing role for the task force

Several points were identified during task force discussions on objectives and strategies that were considered more appropriate as action steps at the implementation plan level (see Appendix L). Should a detailed implementation plan be directed, all or some of these points may be considered for possible inclusion.

APPENDIX A
Charge

October 14, 2005 Meeting of the
AISD/City of Austin
Joint Subcommittees

Task Forces on
Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for African American Students
and
Task Force on Education and the Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students

MOTION:

That the AISD/City of Austin Joint Subcommittees establish two parallel task forces to review how AISD and the City of Austin are addressing the challenges in public education and in the community facing many African American and Hispanic children;

That the task forces will identify current AISD and City of Austin initiatives, approaches, and best practices in order to support successful and effective strategies and interventions to enhance the educational attainment for African American and Hispanic students by 2015;

That each task force will be comprised of eight (8) members; three (3) from the community to be appointed by the members of the City's subcommittee; three (3) from the community to be appointed by AISD's subcommittee; one (1) City staff to be appointed by the City Manager; and one (1) District staff to be appointed by the Superintendent; and finally,

That the task forces will complete their work and present final reports to the Joint AISD/City of Austin Subcommittees.

Approved by the AISD/City of Austin Joint Subcommittee on October 14, 2005

APPENDIX B
Charter

In direct response to input received from the community, the City of Austin and the Austin Independent School District have directed the formation of task forces to address the quality of life, specifically education, of our African American and Hispanic citizens. Accordingly,

1. The task forces will consist of recognized experts in the field of education as well as business and community leaders.

2. In its deliberations, the task forces will consider current data, research on best practices, and community perspectives.

3. Each task force will oversee development of a report focused on providing a quality education.

4. The task forces will have ultimate responsibility for approving and representing the findings and recommendations of their reports.

5. The City Council and AISD Board of Trustees, and City of Austin and AISD executive staff, will have opportunities to provide overall guidance and to provide review and comments on draft reports.

6. Each task force will conduct at least one public forum to gain community input on draft reports, and the public will also have the opportunity to provide online comments on draft reports.

7. The task force reports will be concise and compelling documents, in easily understood language and format.

8. The draft and final task force reports will be available in English and Spanish.

9. The AISD/City of Austin Joint Subcommittees will receive the task force reports and will consider the findings and recommendations of those reports.

APPENDIX C
Interview Protocol

Name:

Date:

Affiliation:

Why We Are Conducting This Interview

Recently, the City of Austin and the Austin Independent School District formed a joint task force to study the quality of education in AISD for Hispanics. As a member of the Austin community, your input regarding the current status of education for Hispanic students in AISD is important and valued. We will be conducting a number of interviews to gain additional perspectives on this topic.

How Your Input Will Be Used

We will compile the results of our interviews and provide them to the task force, who will provide a report to the Austin community including recommendations for ways to ensure that all students in AISD receive a high quality education. The task force will also gain input through review of district data, research literature, and other sources of information.

Questions:

For our interview, I would like to ask you twelve questions. The first three are open-ended questions. The next eight seek your responses to specific statements on a scale of 1 to 4, with follow-up opportunities to explain your responses. Finally, there is another open-ended question to provide any concluding remarks you wish to make.

1. What do you feel are 2 or 3 of AISD's greatest successes in the quality of education provided to Hispanic students – things we should definitely continue to do?

2. What do you feel are 2 or 3 of the AISD's biggest challenges, risks, or threats to the quality of education provided to Hispanic students?

3. What do you feel are 2 to 3 improvements AISD might make in regard to the quality of education provided to Hispanic students?

4. On a scale from 1 to 4 -- with 1 being Strongly Disagree, 2 being Disagree, 3 being Agree, and 4 being Strongly Agree -- to what extent do you agree with the following statement: Hispanic students in AISD receive a high quality education.

5. Could you please share with me why you feel this way?

6. On a scale from 1 to 4 -- with 1 being Strongly Disagree, 2 being Disagree, 3 being Agree, and 4 being Strongly Agree -- to what extent do you agree with the following statement: The needs and expectations of Hispanic students in AISD are adequately met.

7. Could you please share with me why you feel this way?

8. On a scale from 1 to 4 -- with 1 being Strongly Disagree, 2 being Disagree, 3 being Agree, and 4 being Strongly Agree -- to what extent do you agree with the following statement: Hispanic students in AISD are treated fairly and respectfully by school staff.

9. Could you please share with me why you feel this way?

10. On a scale from 1 to 4 -- with 1 being Strongly Disagree, 2 being Disagree, 3 being Agree, and 4 being Strongly Agree -- to what extent do you agree with the following statement: Hispanic students in AISD learn in a safe and nurturing environment.

11. Could you please share with me why you feel this way?

12. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quality of education for Hispanic students in AISD?

APPENDIX D
Detailed Results: Interviews

Note: In total, 69 individuals were interviewed; however, not all individuals responded to each item.

Interview Item #1

What do you feel are two or three of AISD's greatest successes in the quality of education provided to Hispanic students – things we should definitely continue to do?

Responses (N = 66)	Frequency
Improvements in parent and community involvement and communications	40
Programs supporting English transition	32
Innovative educational programs and a strong, standardized core curriculum	30
Improvements in staff diversity and professional development	23
Progress in student achievement	13

Quotes from Respondents

"It is critical that we continue to reach out to Hispanic parents to impress upon them the importance of their children staying in school and getting a good education."

"The district is moving in a positive direction. Within some notable areas of the community, there is a lot of confidence in the district."

"The district is doing a much better job of prioritizing and getting community input."

Interview Item #2

What do you feel are 2 or 3 of the AISD's biggest challenges, risks or threats to the quality of education provided to Hispanic students?

Responses (N = 68)	Frequency
Understanding and connecting with Hispanic parents and community members	60
Understanding how to work with and challenge Hispanic students	41
Equitable and sufficient distribution of resources and placement of experienced staff	33
Providing full service schools for students and families that need more support	14
Preparing students for college	10

Quotes from Respondents

"Language barriers keep some parents from getting involved. Schools should consistently provide Spanish translation at PTA meetings, science fairs, all school events."

"As an organization, AISD is guilty of lumping all Hispanic students together, when in fact, there is great diversity in this group."

"There are thousands of new Hispanic immigrants and there is a difference between the values of the Hispanics that have a history in the United States and those who are newly arrived."

Interview Item #3
What do you feel are 2 or 3 improvements AISD might make in regard to the quality of education provided to Hispanic students?

Responses (N = 67)	Frequency
Every student should be prepared for college and career	40
Acknowledge the plurality of the Hispanic population	34
Enhance outreach efforts	28
Expand support programs and services to meet growing needs	17
Invest in a quality workforce	16

Quotes from Respondents

"*We need to get more in touch with Hispanic values and traditions – more than putting up just a façade – honestly celebrating them."*

"Staff at all levels should be bilingual."

"The district really needs to reach out to the Hispanic community – ask the critical questions and get honest perspectives."

Interview Item #4
On a scale of 1 to 4 – with 1 being Strongly Disagree, 2 being Disagree, 3 being Agree, and 4 being Strongly Agree – to what extent do you agree with the following statement: Hispanic students in AISD receive a high quality education.

N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
68	2.22	2.00	2.00	0.69

Interview Item #5
Could you please share with me why you feel this way?

Responses (N = 68)	Frequency
Unsatisfactory record of student achievement	40
Inequities in resource allocation and placement of experienced staff	22
Low expectations and negative preconceptions	18
Improvements needed to make instruction more relevant	14

Quotes from Respondents

"Hispanic students are often labeled as not able, so many of them feel that way."

"So many Hispanic students drop out and many others are not pursuing higher education. A high quality education would result in high graduation rates and high rates of college going."

"Compliance with No Child Left Behind has robbed us of time to focus on more culturally relevant education and on developing critical thinking skills."

Interview Item #6
On a scale of 1 to 4 – with 1 being Strongly Disagree, 2 being Disagree, 3 being Agree, and 4 being Strongly Agree – to what extent do you agree with the following statement: The needs and expectations of Hispanic students in AISD are adequately met.

N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
68	2.23	2.00	2.00	0.67

Interview Item #7
Could you please share with me why you feel this way?

Responses (N = 68)	Frequency
Low expectations and negative preconceptions	30
Need for better communications and connections	23
Instructional, programmatic, and other resource needs	16
Unsatisfactory record of student achievement	15

Quotes from Respondents

"We need to actually ask our Hispanic citizens what their needs are, rather than assuming."

"As long as our culture isn't understood and honored, the needs of Hispanic students can't totally be met."

"We need to find a way to better address the needs of Hispanic students individually rather than as a group."

Interview Item #8
On a scale of 1 to 4 – with 1 being Strongly Disagree, 2 being Disagree, 3 being Agree, and 4 being Strongly Agree – to what extent do you agree with the following statement: Hispanic students in AISD are treated fairly by school staff.

N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
66	2.64	2.50	2.00	0.77

Interview Item #9
Could you please share with me why you feel this way?

Responses (N = 64)	Frequency
Inconsistent and unfair treatment of Hispanic students compared to White peers	41
Commendable efforts by teachers who are dedicated and caring	13
Low expectations and preconceptions that Hispanic children are unable or don't want to learn	10
Inadequate connections with Hispanic parents and community	10

Quotes from Respondents

"Possessing the Hispanic culture and language is still seen by many as a deficit."

"There may be some breakdowns at the school or classroom level, but largely, the district is doing a better job of working with Hispanic students."

"In the high schools particularly, (Hispanic students) are treated more harshly than Anglo students on small violations or policy."

Interview Item #10

On a scale of 1 to 4 – with 1 being Strongly Disagree, 2 being Disagree, 3 being Agree, and 4 being Strongly Agree – to what extent do you agree with the following statement: Hispanic students in AISD learn in a safe and nurturing environment.

N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
66	2.67	3.00	3.00	0.74

Interview Item #11

Could you please share with me why you feel this way?

Responses (N = 66)	Frequency
Variances in safety from school to school	34
Comfortable with safety	26
Improvements needed	19

Quotes from Respondents

"I feel comfortable with the safety in the school. The new security is working very well."

"We need to know who our school communities are, and how to work and fit in with each other."

Interview Item #12

Is there anything else you would like to add about the quality of education for Hispanic students in AISD?

Responses (N = 62)	Frequency
Need for continued outreach and partnerships with Hispanic parents and community	34
Need to better understand and connect with the Hispanic community	16
Need to raise expectations for the achievement of Hispanic students	13
Need to support necessary improvements in schools	11

Quotes from Respondents

"We need to think more about the expanse of the Hispanic community – some speak no English, some speak English, some are poor, some are middle class – we can't peg the entire Hispanic community in a certain way."

"If we validate the gift of the Hispanic heritage and advantage, it will give (students) confidence and pride. It will give them a place."

"It is so important to participate. We have to find ways to help get parents connected."

APPENDIX E
Online Survey Instrument

Austin
Independent School District

Exit this survey >>

Quality of Education for Hispanics in AISD

Introduction (Page 1 of 4)

Recently, the City of Austin and the Austin Independent School District formed a joint task force to study the quality of education in AISD for Hispanics. The task force is interested in learning what the Austin community feels are the best ways to respond to the diverse needs of Hispanic/Latino students in our community.

As a member of the Austin community, your input regarding the current status of education for Hispanic students in AISD is important and valued, and we would appreciate your responses to the following survey. We will compile the results of this survey and provide them to the task force, who will use this and other information to develop a formal report including recommendations to the City of Austin and AISD. In addition, your responses may be shared with researchers who would use information from this survey to study issues influencing Hispanic/Latino education.

Your survey responses are completely anonymous and cannot be linked to you in any way. Please select "Save and continue" to participate in this survey.

Save and Continue >>

Austin
Independent School District

Exit this survey >>

Quality of Education for Hispanics in AISD

Issues in Education (Page 2 of 4)

We are interested in knowing your opinions about how well AISD is addressing a variety of issues that are important to the education of Hispanic students.

Following are several issues related to the quality of education in AISD for Hispanics. Please rate how well AISD is addressing these issues, using the scale provided.

How well is AISD addressing the issues below?

	Not at all well	Not very well	Somewhat well	Very well	Extremely Well	Not Sure
1. Parental involvement in schools	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Friendly schools	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Allocation of resources (funding, staff, facilities) across schools	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Recruitment and retention of bilingual teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Staff diversity reflective of the community's diversity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Information available in Spanish	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Appreciation for Hispanic culture and the Spanish language	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Support for English Language Learners to achieve English fluency	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Knowledge of the diversity within the Hispanic community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Staff who are trained to work effectively with Hispanic students and parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. High expectations for Hispanic students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Encouragement of Hispanic students to challenge themselves and to excel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. Impact of TAKS tests on grade-level promotion and graduation of Hispanic students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Dropout rate of Hispanic students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. Preparation of Hispanic students for academic success in college	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Not at all well	Not very well	Somewhat well	Very well	Extremely Well	Not Sure
17. Preparation of Hispanic students for college and financial aid applications	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Preparation of Hispanic students for career or vocation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. Participation of Hispanic students in advanced courses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. Number of Hispanic students in Special Education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. Number of disciplinary actions for Hispanic students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. Involvement of the Hispanic business community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

<< Go Back Save and Continue >>

Austin
Independent School District

Exit this survey >>

Quality of Education for Hispanics in AISD

Demographic Information (Optional, Page 3 of 4)

To assist our analysis, please tell us a little about yourself. The following questions are optional. You may select "Save and Continue" at the bottom of the page to skip this section.

Which of the following describes you? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Parent of a child in an AISD school
- ☐ Student in an AISD school
- ☐ Employee of AISD
- ☐ Community member who does not have a child in an AISD school
- ☐ Member of a Campus Advisory Council

Please select the category below that best describes you.

- ☐ African American
- ☐ Asian American
- ☐ Hispanic/Latino
- ☐ White, Non-Hispanic
- ☐ Other (please describe):

Which of the following describes you?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

Please indicate the highest level of education you have completed.

- ☐ Elementary School
- ☐ Middle School
- ☐ High School
- ☐ Some College of Two-Year College Degree
- ☐ Four-Year College Degree
- ☐ Graduate of Professional Degree

Please rate your fluency in English and Spanish by indicating how well you do each of the following tasks.

	Not at all	Somewhat	Very well
Speak English	☐	☐	☐
Understand spoken English	☐	☐	☐
Write English	☐	☐	☐
Read English	☐	☐	☐
Speak Spanish	☐	☐	☐
Understand spoken Spanish	☐	☐	☐
Write Spanish	☐	☐	☐
Read Spanish	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate which of the following people were born in the United States.

	Yes, born in the U.S.	N/A or Don't Know
Yourself	☐	☐
Your mother	☐	☐
Your father	☐	☐
Your spouse	☐	☐
Your spouse's mother	☐	☐
Your spouse's father	☐	☐

What is your zip code?

[ ]

<< Go Back Save and Continue >>

Austin
Independent School District

Exit this survey >>

Quality of Education for Hispanics in AISD

Thank you! (Page 4 of 4)

Thank you for taking the time provide your opinions regarding these issues related the education of Hispanics in AISD. If you would like to know more about the join City of Austin and AISD task force, please contact Dr. Janis Guerrero (414-9776 or jguerrer@austinisd.org) or Eyna Canales-Zarate (974-7446 or eyna.canales@ci.austin.tx.us).

Is there anything else you would like to share with us at this time? If so, please provide your comments below:

<< Go Back Done >>

APPENDIX F
Detailed Results: Online Survey

Following are detailed results of the online survey. The survey consisted of 22 items pertaining to how well AISD is addressing specific issues, rated on a five-point scale (i.e., 1 = Not at All Well, 2 = Not Very Well, 3 = Somewhat Well, 4 = Very Well, and 5 = Extremely Well).

Survey Items	Responses*	
	Avg.	Num.
1. Parental involvement in schools	2.64	719
2. Friendly schools	3.15	723
3. Allocation of resources (funding, staff, facilities) across schools	2.55	702
4. Recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers	2.48	717
5. Recruitment and retention of bilingual teachers	2.53	679
6. Staff diversity reflective of the community's diversity	2.71	723
7. Information available in Spanish	3.32	719
8. Appreciation for Hispanic culture and the Spanish language	2.93	714
9. Support for English Language Learners to achieve English fluency	2.85	700
10. Knowledge of the diversity within the Hispanic community	2.60	708
11. Staff who are trained to work effectively with Hispanic students and parents	2.64	714
12. High expectations for Hispanic students	2.63	715
13. Encouragement of Hispanic students to challenge themselves and to excel	2.69	715
14. Impact of TAKS tests on grade-level promotion and graduation of Hispanic students	2.58	646
15. Dropout rate of Hispanic students	2.11	638
16. Preparation of Hispanic students for academic success in college	2.36	668
17. Preparation of Hispanic students for college and financial aid applications	2.43	619
18. Preparation of Hispanic students for career or vocation	2.47	639
19. Participation of Hispanic students in advanced courses	2.31	630
20. Number of Hispanic students in Special Education	2.60	574
21. Number of disciplinary actions for Hispanic students	2.55	578
22. Involvement of the Hispanic Business Community	2.24	566

**These results combine responses provided in English and in Spanish. Some people did not respond to certain items on the survey. These results do not include responses of "Not Sure."*

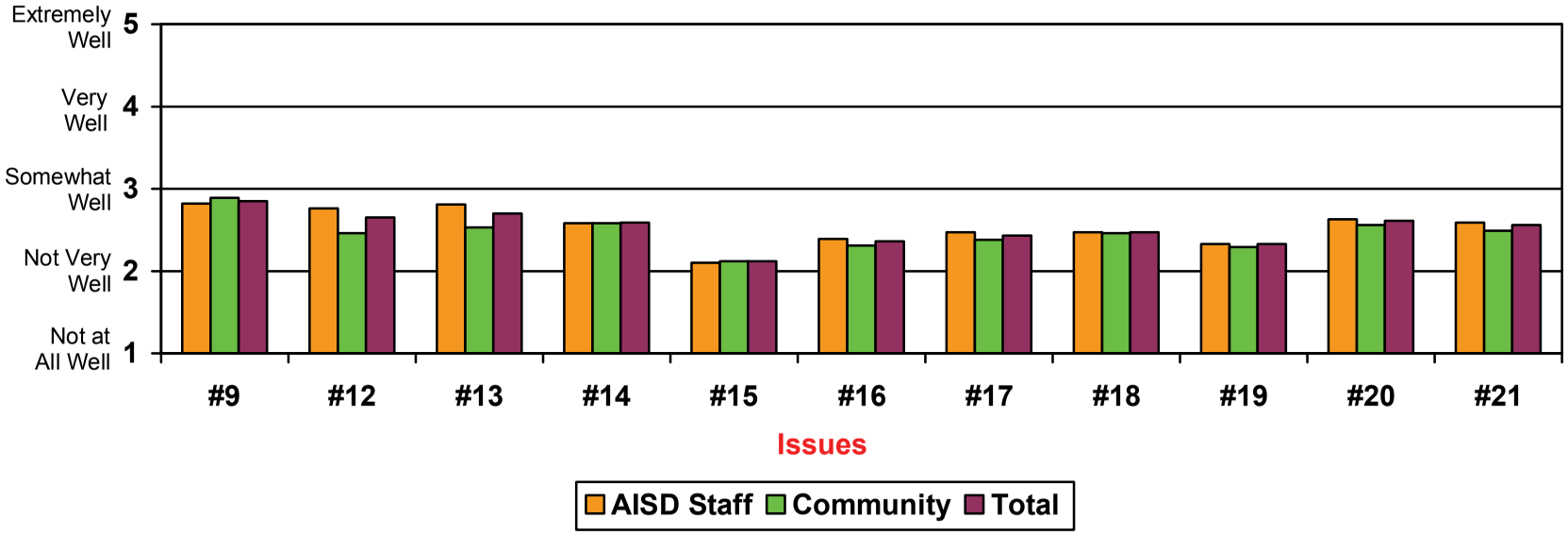
On the following pages are results of the online survey presented graphically. Average scores for the 22 survey items are arranged into three categories: Academic Preparation and Opportunity; Staff and Other Resources; and Parent and Community Involvement.

These categories not only reflect the main areas for improvement identified in the individual interviews (i.e., Preparation for College and Career, Programs and Services to Meet Growing Needs, Quality Workforce, Acknowledgement of Hispanic Plurality, and Enhanced Outreach Efforts), they closely parallel the balance of perspectives running through the AISD Strategic Plan (i.e., Education, Staff, Resources, and Community).

The survey results are presented in two fashions in order to assess any possible skewness in the data. Namely, the majority of respondents were AISD employees, and the majority of respondents were Hispanic. The first set of graphs compares the survey results for AISD employees, community members, and total respondents. The second set of graphs compares the survey results for Hispanic, Non-Hispanic, and total respondents.

In the first set of graphs, no significant skewness is evident in the data. In most cases, the responses of AISD employees closely approximated those of community members. However, in the second set of graphs, varying degrees of skewness are evident in the data. For all 22 survey items, the average scores for Hispanic respondents were more negative than those for non-Hispanic respondents.

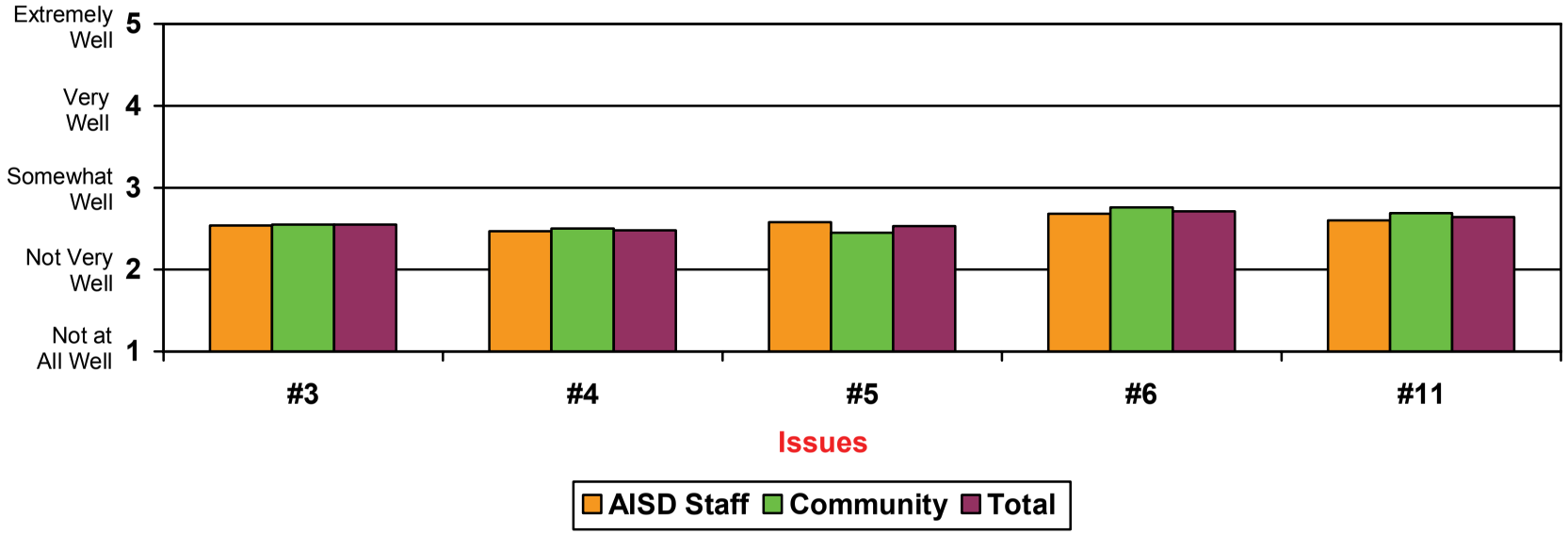
Online Survey Results
(Presented by AISD Staff, Community, and Total Results)
Category: Academic Preparation and Opportunity



On the scale of 1 to 5 indicated, how well is AISD addressing the following issues:

#9 Support for English Language Learners to achieve English fluency
#12 High expectations for Hispanic students
#13 Encouragement of Hispanic students to challenge themselves and excel
#14 Impact of TAKS tests on grade-level promotion and graduation of Hispanic students
#15 Dropout rate of Hispanic students
#16 Preparation of Hispanic students for academic success in college
#17 Preparation of Hispanic students for college and financial aid applications
#18 Preparation of Hispanic students for career or vocation
#19 Participation of Hispanic students in advanced courses
#20 Number of Hispanic students in Special Education
#21 Number of disciplinary actions for Hispanic students

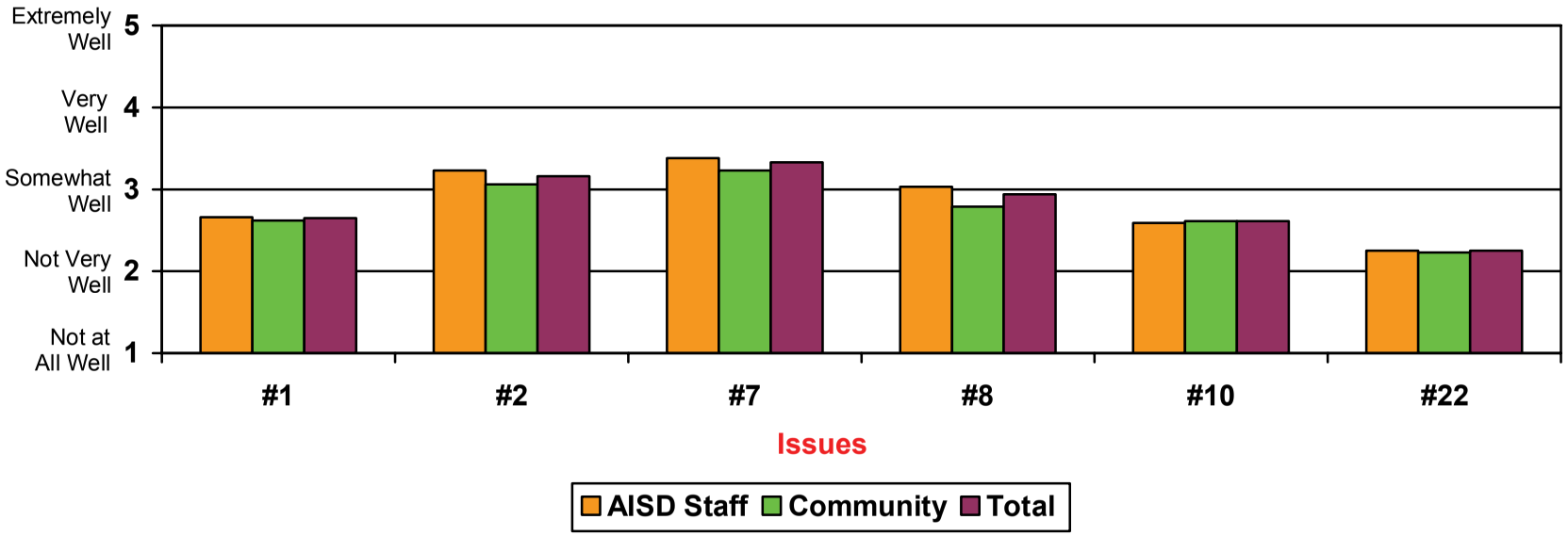
Online Survey Results
(Presented by AISD Staff, Community, and Total Results)
Category: Staff and Other Resources



On the scale of 1 to 5 indicated, how well is AISD addressing the following issues:

#3 Allocation of resources (funding, staff, facilities) across schools
#4 Recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers
#5 Recruitment and retention of bilingual teachers
#6 Staff diversity reflective of the community's diversity
#11 Staff who are trained to work effectively with Hispanic students and parents

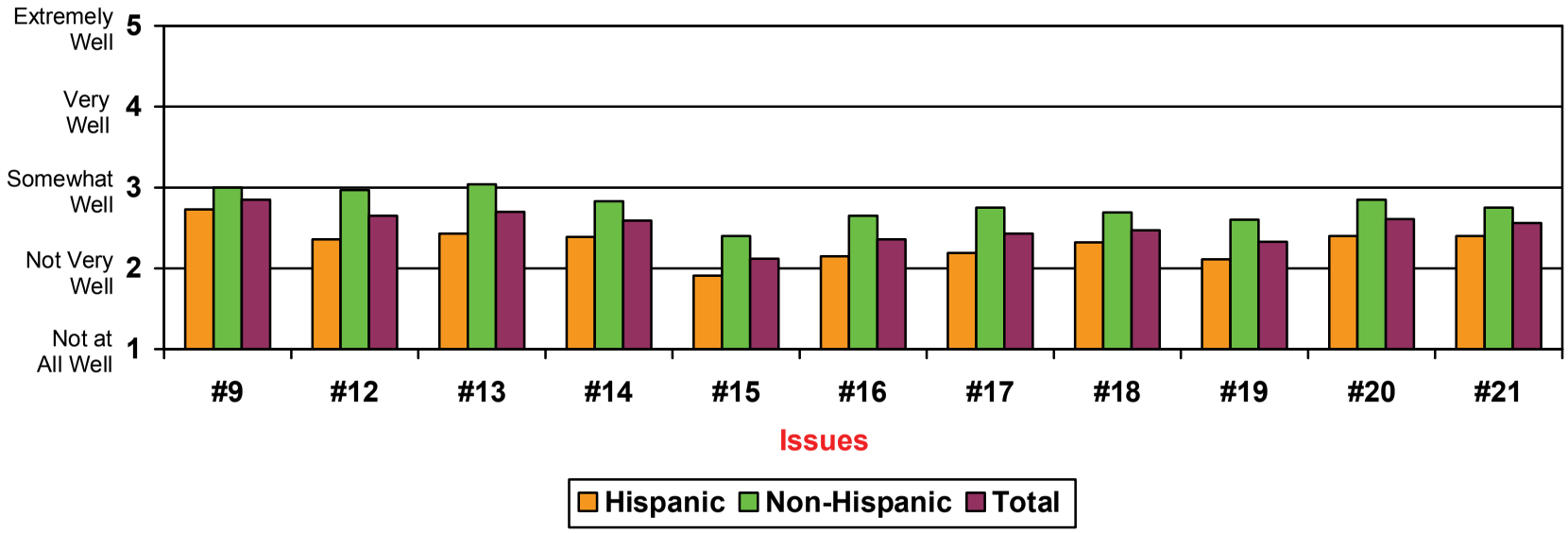
Online Survey Results
(Presented by AISD Staff, Community, and Total Results)
Category: Parent and Community Relations



On the scale of 1 to 5 indicated, how well is AISD addressing the following issues:

#1	Parental involvement in schools
#2	Friendly schools
#7	Information available in Spanish
#8	Appreciation for Hispanic culture and the Spanish language
#10	Knowledge of the diversity within the Hispanic community
#22	Involvement of the Hispanic Business Community

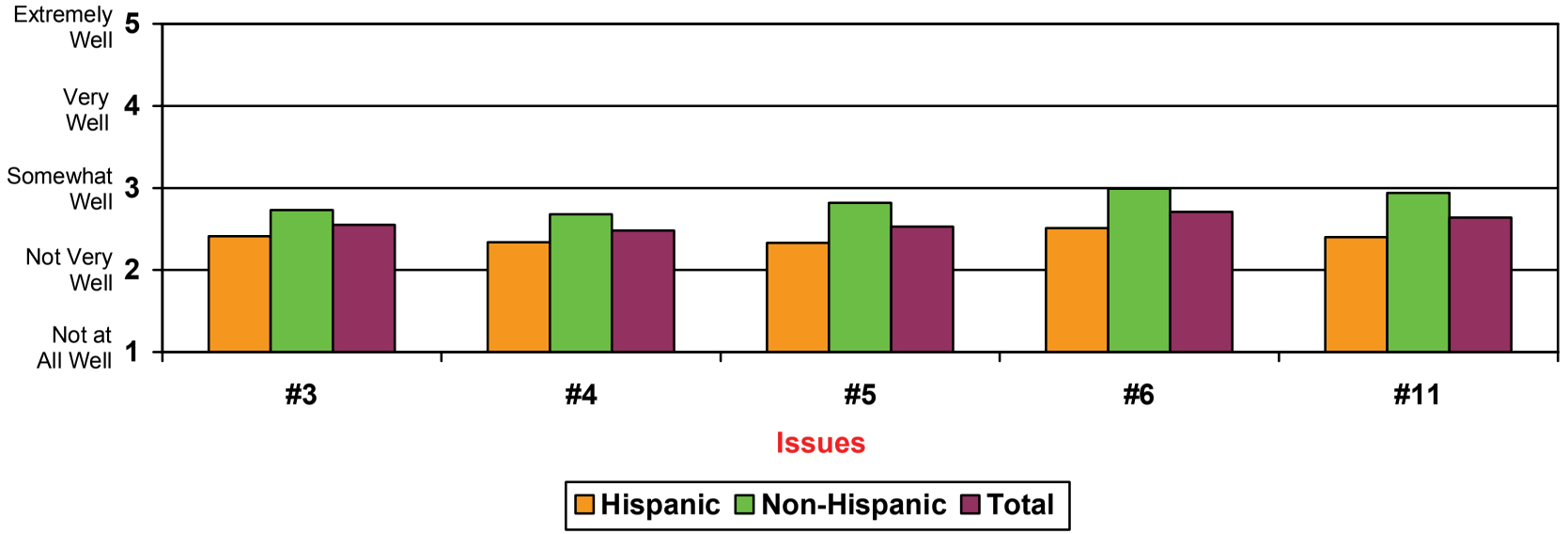
Online Survey Results
(Presented by Hispanic, Non-Hispanic, and Total Results)
Category: Academic Preparation and Opportunity



On the scale of 1 to 5 indicated, how well is AISD addressing the following issues:

#9	Support for English Language Learners to achieve English fluency
#12	High expectations for Hispanic students
#13	Encouragement of Hispanic students to challenge themselves and excel
#14	Impact of TAKS tests on grade-level promotion and graduation of Hispanic students
#15	Dropout rate of Hispanic students
#16	Preparation of Hispanic students for academic success in college
#17	Preparation of Hispanic students for college and financial aid applications
#18	Preparation of Hispanic students for career or vocation
#19	Participation of Hispanic students in advanced courses
#20	Number of Hispanic students in Special Education
#21	Number of disciplinary actions for Hispanic students

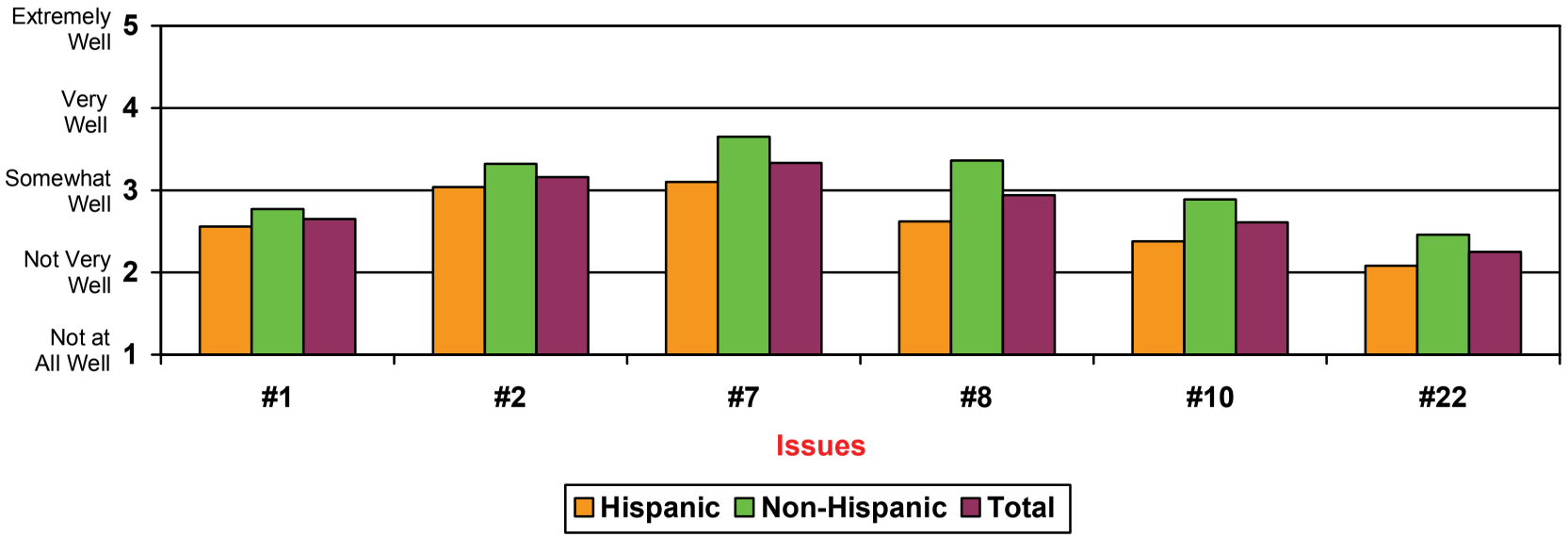
Online Survey Results
(Presented by Hispanic, Non-Hispanic, and Total Results)
Category: Staff and Other Resources



On the scale of 1 to 5 indicated, how well is AISD addressing the following issues:

#3 Allocation of resources (funding, staff, facilities) across schools
#4 Recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers
#5 Recruitment and retention of bilingual teachers
#6 Staff diversity reflective of the community's diversity
#11 Staff who are trained to work effectively with Hispanic students and parents

Online Survey Results
(Presented by Hispanic, Non-Hispanic, and Total Results)
Category: Parent and Community Relations



On the scale of 1 to 5 indicated, how well is AISD addressing the following issues:

#1 Parental involvement in schools
#2 Friendly schools
#7 Information available in Spanish
#8 Appreciation for Hispanic culture and the Spanish language
#10 Knowledge of the diversity within the Hispanic community
#22 Involvement of the Hispanic Business Community

Online Survey Results
Summary of Demographic Information

These results combine responses provided in English and in Spanish. Some people did not respond to certain items on the survey. These results do not include responses of "N/A" or "Not Sure."

Respondent Category (Select All That Apply)	Response Percent	Response Total
Parent of a child in an AISD school	34.4%	248
Student in an AISD school	3.6%	26
Employee of AISD	60.7%	438
Community member who does not have a child in an AISD school	18.9%	136
Member of a Campus Advisory Council	7.9%	57
Total Respondents = 721		

Ethnicity	Response Percent	Response Total
African American	2.5%	18
Asian American	1.3%	9
Hispanic/Latino	60.1%	431
White, Non-Hispanic	31.2%	224
Other	4.9%	35
Total Respondents = 717		

Gender	Response Percent	Response Total
Female	76.9%	552
Male	23.1%	166
Total Respondents = 718		

Highest Level of Education Completed	Response Percent	Response Total
Elementary school	3.2%	23
Middle school	2.3%	17
High school	5.9%	43
Some college or two-year college degree	15.8%	115
Four-year college degree	30.3%	221
Graduate or professional degree	42.5%	310
Total Respondents = 729		

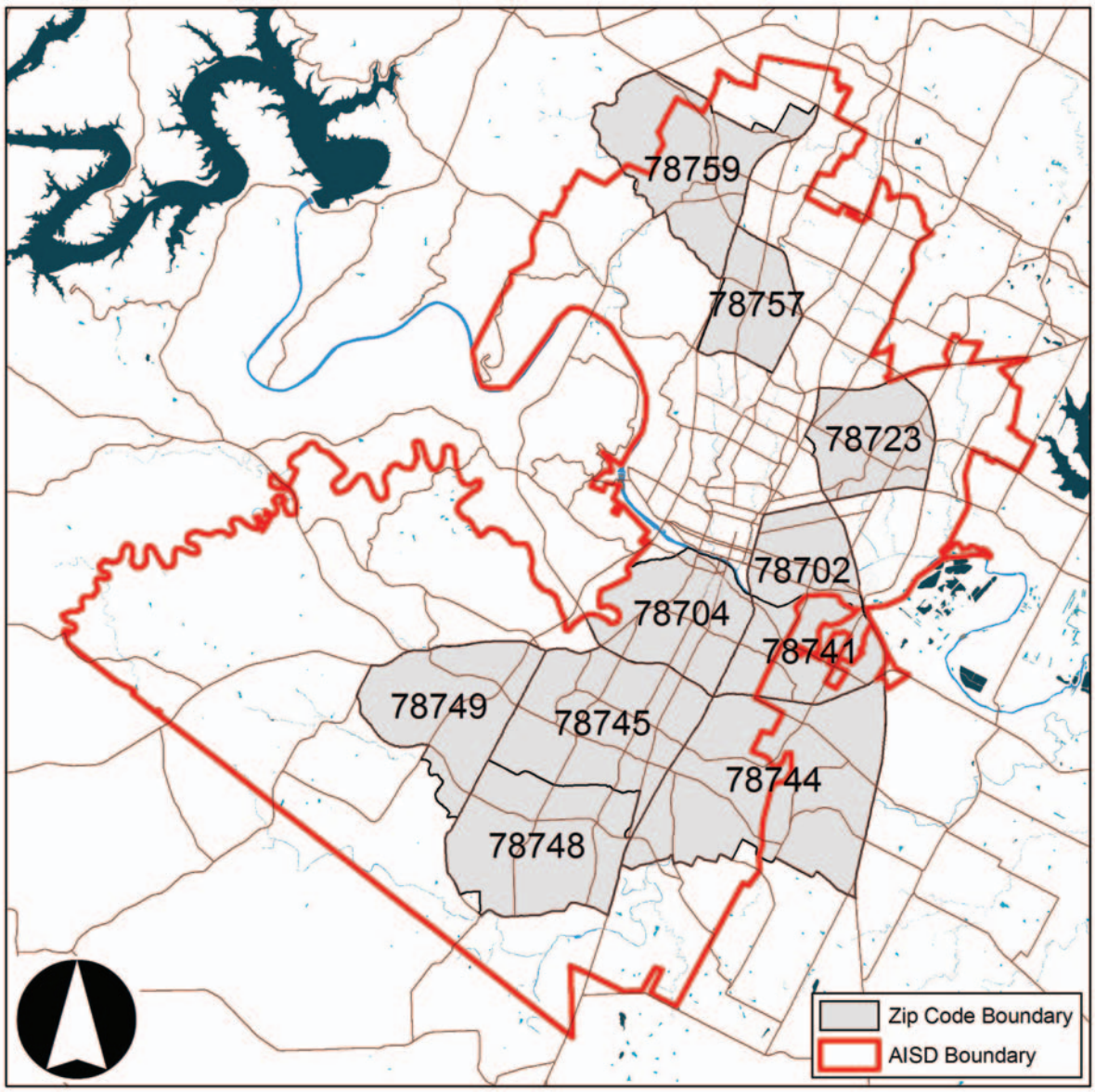
Fluency in English and Spanish	Not at All		Somewhat		Very Well	
	Response Percent	Response Total	Response Percent	Response Total	Response Percent	Response Total
Speak English	1.1%	8	1.2%	9	97.9%	716
Understand spoken English	0.7%	5	0.7%	5	97.7%	714
Write English	0.7%	5	1.1%	8	97.9%	716
Read English	0.5%	4	0.3%	2	98.6%	721
Speak Spanish	12.7%	93	36.9%	270	50.1%	366
Understand spoken Spanish	10.0%	73	33.0%	241	56.5%	413
Write Spanish	27.9%	204	31.5%	230	39.5%	289
Read Spanish	18.2%	133	34.3%	251	45.7%	334
Total Respondents = 731						

Nativity	Yes, Born in the U.S.	
	Response Percent	Response Total
Yourself	91.7%	649
Your mother	84.9%	553
Your father	86.0%	565
Your spouse	76.5%	485
Your spouse's mother	68.3%	414
Your spouse's father	67.9%	410
Total Respondents = 718		

Most Frequent Zip Codes*	Response Percent	Response Total
78745	11.7%	80
78748	8.9%	61
78749	8.8%	60
78704	7.3%	50
78702	4.5%	31
78744	4.3%	29
78723	3.7%	25
78759	3.7%	25
78741	3.5%	24
78757	3.2%	22
Total Respondents = 682		

*See map on following page

Online Survey
Most Frequent Zip Codes of Respondents



Online Survey Results
Summary of Respondent Comments

Comments from respondents focused on several key areas of concern to the Austin community regarding the quality of education for Hispanic students. The following summary of these comments is arranged by the most frequently occurring major themes.

Treatment of Students (56 Comments)
Respondents described a cultural divide in schools, characterized by segregation into different classes and differential expectations and treatment for Hispanic students. There is a perception that minorities are excluded from certain programs and classes and grouped into classes for "low-performers" and that testing provides unrealistic pressure for students and teachers and works to push out students from the education system. Respondents also described incidents of disrespect towards Hispanic students and the Spanish language by teachers and substitutes. They expressed a lack of compassion and empathy on the part of professionals working with Hispanic students, and that these students do not feel that they can turn to their teachers for academic or emotional support. Respondents perceive counselors as kept too busy with testing and paperwork to really support students in need.

Recommendations include hiring more Hispanic teachers and hiring staff that reflects student diversity. Recommendations for professional development include: teacher training for working with English Language Learners (ELLs), bilingual learners, and students in poverty; more-relevant coursework for students to help improve student-teacher rapport; training for school police to keep schools a nurturing environment; Spanish classes during the summer for teachers; and encouraging advanced studies for teachers.

Parent and Community Involvement (46 Comments)
Parental involvement in schools faces various language, cultural, economic, and political barriers. The lack of parental involvement confronts students with two very different worlds at school and at home. Respondents emphasized that bridging the divisions between the school, Hispanic parents, and the Hispanic community is essential for the successful education of Hispanic students.

Recommendations for the school district include: improving teacher and administrator communication with parents, training parents in how to support their children's education and how the school system works, providing Spanish-speaking office staff at all schools, and supporting parent and student groups.

Recommendations for parents and community include: taking greater responsibility for their students' discipline and attendance and reinforcing the need for their students to learn English.

Bilingual Programs (36 Comments)
Most respondents supported bilingual education, but many comments related to the state of bilingual education at AISD. Bilingual education is intended to provide both English and Spanish proficiency, but many people perceive that students are leaving the program without these skills. Respondents cited concerns about: high attrition rates of bilingual teachers; lack of English in classrooms – many students end up Spanish-only and many students are stuck with low language skills. Respondents also stated concerns about the demands of TAKS, high student dropout rates, class sizes that are too large, inconsistency in tutoring (tutors prioritized for TAKS testing grades, rather than when students first fall behind), and TAKS testing in Spanish that causes a shift away from English acquisition towards Spanish testing strategies.

Recommendations include better screening of bilingual educators for fluency/comfort in both English and Spanish, more advanced training and mentoring for bilingual teachers, more materials in Spanish and bilingual teaching resources, and larger stipends for teachers (doing translation work and creating bilingual lessons).

Support for Transitioning to English Fluency (36 Comments)
ESL and English transitioning was also widely discussed in the comments. Some respondents felt that ESL should be helping students to transition more effectively into English fluency while others felt that expectations were already unreasonable as to the speed of English language acquisition. Issues related to learning English included: not all ELL classrooms are teaching English grammar and developing fluency; ESL teachers that lack proper materials; few resources for ELLs in schools with smaller ELL populations; support for ESL students in middle and high school; and high dropout rates among ELLs.

Recommendations include: more support for parents learning English, additional resources for ESL teachers – especially in schools with smaller ESL programs, more rigorous English language acquisition, and strengthening academic support for ESL students in middle and high school.

Bilingual Staff (30 Comments)
Respondents discussed the availability of bilingual administrators and staff and the support and resources provided to them. This was important for parent and community support for their children's education, the welcoming environment of schools, and communication and coordination between teachers, administrators, and parents in addressing the education of their children.

Recommendations included: all major administrative areas and all schools should have bilingual staff that can handle Spanish communication with parents and students; ELLs should be assigned to bilingual assistant principals and counselors; and Spanish-speaking parents and community members should have sufficient translation and interpretation support to ensure their access to information and communication with staff, counselors, and teachers.

Behavior and Discipline (23 Comments)
The issue of student treatment and student identity spilling over into behavior and discipline was another major area of concern for survey respondents. Respondents stated concern about the number of students that don't try hard or want to succeed, but rather just try to get by. Respondents painted a picture of overcrowded classrooms with Hispanic students that refuse to speak English, ignore lessons, and talk through class. The lack of consistent academic and disciplinary consequences for poor behavior and performance feeds this behavior. They expressed concern that discipline is ineffectual – sending kids out of class, detention programs, the Alternative Learning Center – and usually means less work and lower expectations for students. Minority students are seen as disproportionately targeted by zero tolerance policies, police on campus, and quick to be labeled as gang members.

Recommendations for changing attitudes and behaviors include: reduce class sizes and improve classroom management; give students something to strive for and engage in; provide consistent disciplinary measures that don't allow students to opt out of academic work; work with parents to provide a shared responsibility for student behavior; and provide stronger monitoring, guidance, prevention and intervention for at-risk students instead of letting students fall through the cracks.

Resource Distribution and Equity (19 Comments)
Respondents commented on resource disparities in different parts of town, including differences in course offerings, student-teacher ratios, teacher quality, and funding at different schools. They also discussed student transfers and access to high-performing schools for different groups.

Respondents also voiced concern about a task force's focus on one group of minority students. Some felt that Hispanic students are marginalized and should get special attention while others felt that centering on the largest minority group left out many other students from the discussion on diversity and education. Still other respondents thought that the task force should consider all under-performing students and that the district should work to unify the community.

Student Identity (12 Comments)
Another area discussed by many respondents was the challenges specific to Hispanic students. Comments discussed a variety of issues including: tensions between native and immigrant groups as well as groups from different countries; students' lack of respect for their disempowered parents whom they perceive as possessing low levels of English proficiency and education; students' lack of pride in their culture and community; and biracial and multiracial identity issues within the Hispanic community,

Recommendations included: addressing identity issues and tensions at the school level, training teachers to better serve students with low language proficiency, more Hispanic and Spanish-language literature and history in libraries and coursework, teaching the qualities and sacrifices of Hispanic parents to develop appreciation of Latino history and culture.

Other Issues

College readiness, exposure, preparation, and support. (9 comments)

Everyone should strive/struggle with learning a language: The district should offer Spanish to all students, require 2-4 years of language for all students, and/or Spanish elective in middle school. (8 comments)

Recognizing and addressing the challenges that face many students outside of school that affect academic achievement. (8 comments)

- Health and mental health: Families that can't provide insurance, access to care, adequate nutrition, emotional support
- Economic constraints: Parents that can't provide academic support for their children in time, help, tutoring, experience, etc.
- Other risks and threats that can supersede academic studies: Eating disorders, drugs, gangs, sex, molestation, discrimination, segregation, legal status, poverty, homelessness

Practical coursework, vocational training, and preparation for professional career fields. (6 comments)

Training and resources for staff working with ELLs within Special Education. (6 comments)

Spanish-speaking family access to early childhood education. (5 comments)

APPENDIX G
Detailed Results: Online Comments on Draft Report

Breakdown of Respondents by Category:

Category*	Total N = 14	
	Number	Percentage
Parent	8	57.1%
Student	1	7.1%
AISD Employee	2	14.3%
Community Member (Non-Parent)	3	21.4%
Campus Advisory Council Member	1	7.1%

**Respondents could select more than one category*

Breakdown of Respondents by Ethnicity:

Category*	Total N = 14	
	Number	Percentage
African American	0	0.0%
Asian American	0	0.0%
Hispanic	8	57.1%
White	3	21.4%
Other or No Response	3	21.4%

Summary of Comments:

Topic	Frequency
More parental involvement	2
More information available in Spanish; more Spanish translation services	2
Respect for transportation and time constraints of parents	2
More Hispanic students in magnets and advanced courses	2
More culturally relevant instruction	2
More alternative educational approaches	1
More community and business involvement in schools	1
More counseling services	1
Better meet needs of low-income students	1
More input of Hispanics needed in this process	1
More after-school programs	1
More information on college financial aid and scholarships	1
Require all students to learn English and Spanish	1
More language immersion opportunities	1
“Hispanic” too broad of a term for such a diverse population	1
Better inform parents on how to become advocates for their children	1
Make the system more user-friendly and easier to navigate	1

APPENDIX H
Community Forum Minutes

April 28, 2006
Austin City Council Chambers

Task Force Members in Attendance:

Rick Burciaga, Eyna Canales-Zarate, Dr. Janis Guerrero, John Limon, Rosie Mendoza, Veronica Rivera, Dr. Angela Valenzuela, Linda Velasquez

Task Force Support Staff in Attendance (AISD, Office of Planning and Community Relations):

Joey Crumley, Justin Fried, Irma Gomez-Torres, Rosa Montoya, Maria-Elena Ramon

Others in Attendance:

Librado Almanza, PODER
Raul Alvarez, Austin City Council
Steve Bradley, TSEU
Susan Bradley
Michael Conn, Student
Vicki Clark-Bradley
Mario Cruz, AISD, School Counselor
Margarita Deciendo
Sylvia Del Bosque
Dr. Pat Forgione, AISD, Superintendent
Sam Guzman
Susana Guzman
Katie Halloran, City of Austin, Neighborhood Planning
Brenda Hummel, AISD, Student Support Services
Jennifer Kim, Austin City Council
DeWayne W. Lofton, Austin City Council Candidate
Robert Martinez, HABLA
Eliza May
Henry McMinton, Jr.
Della May Moore
John Moore
Lori Moya, AISD, Board Candidate
Ryan Robinson, City of Austin, Demographer
Paul Saldaña, Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, HABLA
Jean Sanchez
Rene Sanchez
Dr. Ann Smisko, AISD, Curriculum
Gloria Sullivan, AISD, Professional Development
Vincent Torres, AISD, Board Candidate
Linda Vásquez, Student
Ana Villalobos, PODER

Rocío Villalobos, Student
Mel Waxler, AISD, General Counsel
Dr. Darlene Westbrook, AISD, Chief Academic Officer
Melvin G. Wrenn
Will Wynn, Austin Mayor

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m.

Opening Remarks

- Task Force Chair Veronica Rivera welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for coming. She then introduced the other members of the task force and explained that the membership included community and business representatives and recognized experts in the field of education. Se said the task force was formed on October 14, 2005 and first met on December 6, 2005, with several meetings having been conducted since that time to consider current data, research on best practices, and community perspectives.
- Austin Mayor Will Wynn pointed out that Austin was now the sixteenth-largest city in the nation, with a quickly growing and culturally diverse population. He also pointed out that Austin was recently ranked the number one city in the nation for Hispanics. He said his goal was to make Austin the most livable city in the nation. He said he was a parent of children in AISD and felt the district was doing a commendable job. He assured those in attendance that their input would be received and seriously considered.
- AISD Superintendent Dr. Pat Forgione pointed out that 56 percent of AISD students were Hispanic, and many of these students were economically disadvantaged and English Language Learners (ELLs). He explained that there were 20,000 ELLs in AISD, 95 percent of whom were Spanish speakers. He said the district had several programs in place to specifically address the needs of ELLs. He added that all students were benefiting from the district's character education program, culturally relevant instruction, and high school redesign initiative. He said the new Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders would primarily target economically disadvantaged students. He concluded by saying that we need to build and maintain strong partnerships in this time of lean resources, and that a quality school system was the heart and soul of a great community.

Summary of Community Input Efforts

- Rick Burciaga went over several ways in which the task force was obtaining input from the community. He explained that almost 70 interviews representing a crosscut of the community were conducted to gain individual perspectives. He said that well over 700 individuals responded to an online survey. He added that the task force had recently met with representatives of HABLA to listen to their concerns.
- Mr. Burciaga explained that community input on the task force draft report was still being solicited online, and that comments received at the meeting tonight would be added to the collective community input received. He stressed that the task force report before the community at this time was a draft and subject to change based on the input received.

Summary of Draft Report

- Linda Velsquez said the principal contents of the report included an introduction, findings, recommendations, and appendices. She explained that an executive summary and sections on the results of tonight's meeting and online comments would be added to the final report. She said that the findings and recommendations were the heart of the report and were the focus of tonight's meeting. However, she reminded that the complete draft report with appendices was available online in English and Spanish.
- Eyna Canales-Zarate summarized the results of considerable data and literature research conducted to inform the task force. Highlights of the data research included a growing Hispanic population and work force, and continued disparities among Hispanic and African American students and their White peers in dropout and graduation rates, disciplinary actions, Special Education referrals, achievement levels, and college enrollment. The literature research focused on factors related to persistent achievement gaps, including family conditions, student behavior, treatment of students, equity in resource allocation, teacher quality, curriculum, and school culture.
- Dr. Janis Guerrero summarized the results of the individual interviews and online survey. She said in both cases, although participants acknowledged that improvements had been made, they generally felt there was considerable room for improvement in providing the quality education for Hispanic students. She said the most prevalent recommendations for continued improvement offered by the interviewees included: preparing every student for college and career; acknowledging the plurality of the Hispanic population; enhancing outreach efforts; expanding support programs and services; and investing in a quality workforce. She said the majority of the people who took the online survey were Hispanic, and their responses generally indicated less satisfaction than other people who took the survey.
- Dr. Angela Valenzuela reemphasized that the task force report was just a draft at this time, and that citizen input would be received shortly. She explained that the recommendations of the task force were divided into goals, strategies, and activities. She said she would be going over the three goals and ten corresponding strategies, but not the several activities in order to save more time for comments. The three goals covered the areas of: building greater understanding and positive attitudes; developing and allocating resources and services to build a strong foundation for teaching and learning; and preparation for college and career.

Citizens Communications

- Task Force Vice-Chair Rosie Mendoza reemphasized that task force members welcomed and valued the input of the community. She said task force members would be listening carefully and taking good notes. She explained that the choice of having the meeting on a Friday evening was probably not ideal, but was based on the availability of both the Mayor and Superintendent, the attendance of whom she felt was critical. She said that due to the relatively small number of people who had signed up to speak, that a little more time would be allowed to each speaker.

  Following are summaries of speaker comments:

1. **Mario Cruz** said that he was a counselor at Zavala Elementary School and had worked for AISD for 35 years. He said a major public relations campaign was needed to show support for our many hard-working teachers. He said that teachers do more than teach, and that they need to be appreciated, and not necessarily with more money. He said that many great teachers are leaving our schools because they feel a lack of support. This is particularly true in schools with predominantly Hispanic students.
2. **Katie Halloran** said she worked for the City's Neighborhood Planning Department, but was speaking for herself. She felt that more community involvement in schools was needed. She said more parental involvement was particularly needed, and more outreach efforts would help, particularly to immigrant families. She commended AISD for hiring Parent Support Specialists and said that their work was critical. She said it would be important now to focus on implementation of the recommendations of the task force.
3. **Robert Martinez** explained that HABLA was composed of business and community leaders and representatives of several Hispanic organizations. He said that HABLA members met with AISD Superintendent Dr. Pat Forgione in November to express their concerns and identified several specific areas for improvement. He said he wanted to particularly address Campus Advisory Councils (CACs) at this time. He said that there was a perception that many CACs were not operating at full effectiveness. He said more training for CAC members would be helpful.
4. **Librado Almanza** felt that zero-tolerance policies had resulted in several problems for youth of color. He said that teachers did not reflect the diversity of the student population, and more qualified teachers of color needed to be hired and retained. However, he said that Hispanics were over-represented in disciplinary actions. As alternatives involving students and families, he felt that oversight committees or peer juries should be used. He said that when in-school suspensions were necessary, that more productive learning opportunities were needed.
5. **Ana Villalobos** provided additional comments related to zero-tolerance. She reemphasized the disparities in disciplinary actions between students of color and their White peers, and felt that Hispanic students continued to be criminalized and placed on the margins of society. She said more mentoring and fewer suspensions were needed. She felt that the recommendations of the task force only scratched the surface, and that district leadership needed to take positive action now to change these problems.
6. **Sam Guzman** said he had seen numerous other task forces and committees look at similar issues, but little progress had been made. He felt that contributing factors included lack of commitment by district leadership, lack of political capital within the Hispanic community, and getting the right people to look at the problems. He said he hoped that some other group would not need to be convened after this task force concluded its work. He said that any changes recommended by the task force needed to be fundamental and actionable. He said such changes could require a lot of effort and funding.

7. **Paul Saldaña** felt that a well-educated Hispanic population would go a long way in addressing quality of life and empowerment concerns. He stated that the specific concerns of HABLA included discipline and campus environment, immigrant ELLs, Special Education, CACs, preparation for college and career, and communications and accountability. He felt that AISD needed to hire more Hispanic and bilingual teachers. He said more positive results were needed, which would require systemic and fundamental changes and greater supports. He said that AISD was a public corporation, and HABLA wanted to continue to work with the district and to serve as a resource.
8. **Eliza May** said that in her journey to become a City Council member, she had heard many community concerns relating to education and the need for more coordination and cooperation between AISD and the City of Austin. She said specific concerns included safer school crossings, truancy problems, and a desire for more people to be able to communicate well in English and Spanish. She said a common sentiment was to see a better utilization of resources.

Conclusion

- John Limon thanked everyone for joining the task force in its effort to gain further input from the community on the very important issue of providing a quality education for Hispanic students. He thanked the staff of AISD and the City of Austin for their support. He said the minutes of tonight's meeting, including summaries of speaker comments, would be placed on the task force web site. He said the task force would be working over the next few weeks to assess all of the community input received, and would present its final report to AISD and the City of Austin on June 13. He then provided a message in Spanish.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

APPENDIX I
Detailed Results: Data Research

General Data Comparisons
Summary

Population

- At the national level, the Hispanic population is growing, but is equal to the African American population. By comparison, in Texas and Travis County, the Hispanic population is growing at a faster rate, and is larger than the African American population. *(See Table A)*
- By 2040, at the national level, the Hispanic population will have almost doubled, but Whites will still be in the majority. By comparison, by 2040 in Texas and Travis County, Hispanics will be in the majority by a large margin. *(See Table A)*
- Related to the growth of the Hispanic population are comparatively larger household sizes, higher fertility rates, and lower median ages. *(See Tables B,C, and D)*
- A much larger percentage of the Hispanic population is foreign born. *(See Table E)*

Health

- The Hispanic infant mortality rate is somewhat higher than that for Whites, but African Americans have a significantly higher rate. *(See Table F)*
- Life expectancy for Hispanics is somewhat higher than that for Whites, but African Americans have a significantly lower life expectancy. *(See Table G)*
- Teen pregnancy rates for Hispanics and African Americans are significantly higher than the rate for Whites. In Texas and Travis County, the rate for Hispanics is greater than that for African Americans. *(See Table H)*
- Compared to African Americans and Whites, Hispanics are much more likely to lack health insurance coverage. *(See Table I)*

Economy

- At the national level, the labor force is predominantly White, with Hispanics and African Americans having roughly equal representation. In Texas and Travis County, the labor force is also largely White, but Hispanics have greater representation than African Americans; however, by 2040 in Texas, the majority of the labor force will be Hispanic. *(See Table J)*
- The unemployment rate for Hispanics is greater than that for Whites, but African Americans have the highest unemployment rate. *(See Table K)*
- The median household income for Hispanics is less than that for Whites, but somewhat greater than the median household income for African Americans. By comparison, a much larger percentage of the Hispanic population is below the poverty level. *(See Tables L and M)*
- Business ownership is predominantly White, but business ownership among Hispanics is greater than that for African Americans. *(See Table N)*

- Home ownership is predominantly White. At the national and local levels, home ownership among Hispanics and African Americans is roughly equal; however, at the state level, home ownership among Hispanics is greater than that for African Americans. *(See Table O)*
- Among the prison and jail population, Hispanics are not over-represented, but African Americans are considerably over-represented. *(See Table P)*
- In military enlistment, Hispanics are under-represented, but African Americans are somewhat over-represented. *(See Table Q)*

Education

- Students enrolled in post-secondary education are predominantly White but, compared to the nation, a greater percentage of Hispanics and African Americans are enrolled in post-secondary education in Texas and Travis County. *(See Table R)*
- Persons with Bachelor's or advanced degrees are predominantly White, and Hispanics hold fewer Bachelor's or advanced degrees than both Whites and African Americans. In Travis County, more of the population holds Bachelor's or advanced degrees. *(See Table S)*
- Persons with a high school diploma are predominantly White, and Hispanics hold fewer diplomas than both Whites and African Americans. In Travis County, more of the general population holds a high school diploma. *(See Table T)*
- At the national level, elementary and secondary school enrollment is predominantly White, with Hispanics and African Americans enrolled at roughly the same rates. By comparison, at the state and local levels, elementary and secondary school enrollment is predominantly Hispanic. *(See Table U)*
- Elementary and secondary Hispanic students are more likely to receive disciplinary actions than Whites, and African Americans much more likely. *(See Table V)*
- Elementary and secondary Hispanic and African American students are more likely to be retained at grade level than Whites. Compared to the nation, state rates are generally lower. *(See Table W)*
- Hispanic and African American students are more likely to drop out of high school than Whites. Compared to the nation, state and local dropout rates are generally lower. *(See Table X)*
- Hispanic and African American high school students are less likely to participate in advanced placement exams than Whites. Compared to the nation, state rates are generally higher, and local rates are generally much higher. *(See Table Y)*
- Elementary and secondary teachers are predominantly White but, compared to the nation, more elementary and secondary teachers are Hispanic at the state and local levels. *(See Table Z)*

Table A: Population

Group	**U.S. 2000 % of Total**	**Texas 2005 % of Total**	**Travis Co. 2005 % of Total**	**U.S. 2040 % of Total**	**Texas 2040 % of Total**	**Travis Co. 2040 % of Total**
African American	12.7%	11.5%	9.2%	14.3%	9.5%	7.7%
Hispanic	12.6%	34.7%	31.2%	22.3%	52.6%	50.8%
White	69.4%	50.2%	54.0%	53.7%	32.2%	32.7%

U.S. Census Bureau; Texas State Data Center

Table B: Average Household Size

Group	U.S. 2000	Texas 2000	Travis Co. 2000
African American	2.6	2.7	2.6
Hispanic	3.3	3.6	3.3
White	2.5	2.4	2.2

U.S. Census Bureau; Texas State Data Center

Table C: Fertility Rate (Births per 1,000 Women Ages 15-44)

Group	U.S. 2002	Texas 2002	Travis Co. 2000
African American	64.6	68.1	46.5
Hispanic	82.0	101.8	43.8
White	56.5	60.0	39.1

U.S. Census Bureau; Texas Department of State Health Services

Table D: Median Age

Group	U.S. 2000	Texas 2000	Travis Co. 2000
African American	30.2	29.8	29.4
Hispanic	25.8	25.5	25.1
White	38.6	38.1	34.7

U.S. Census Bureau; Texas State Data Center

Table E: Foreign Born Population

Group	U.S. 2004 % of Group	Texas 2004 % of Group	Travis Co. 2004 % of Group
African American	8.3%	5.1%	7.6%
Hispanic	43.2%	32.8%	32.8%
White	4.5%	3.5%	4.7%

U.S. Census Bureau

Table F: Infant Mortality Rate (Deaths per 1,000 Births)

Group	U.S. 2002	Texas 2002	Travis Co. 2000
African American	13.9	13.5	11.9
Hispanic	5.8	5.5	5.3
White	5.9	5.7	4.2

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Texas Department of State Health Services

Table G: Life Expectancy, 2000

Group	U.S. 2000	Texas 2002
African American	71.7	71.8
Hispanic	80.4	78.1
White	77.4	77.3

U.S. Census Bureau; Texas Department of State Health Services

Table H: Teen Pregnancy Rate (Pregnancies per 1,000 Women Ages 15-19)

Group	U.S. 2000	Texas 2000	Travis Co. 2000
African American	151.0	120.0	47.0
Hispanic	132.0	142.0	64.3
White	56.9	65.0	14.9

National Center for Health Statistics; Austin-Travis County Health Department

Table I: Health Insurance Coverage

Group	U.S. 2000 % of Group	Texas 2003 % of Group
African American	80.3%	79.0%
Hispanic	67.3%	63.0%
White	88.7%	88.0%

U.S. Census Bureau; Texas Department of State Health Services

Table J: Labor Force

Group	U.S. 2004 % of Total	Texas 2000 % of Total	Travis Co. 2000 % of Total	Texas 2040 % of Total
African American	10.2%	10.7%	8.0%	7.9%
Hispanic	11.8%	27.5%	24.8%	58.7%
White	74.2%	58.4%	61.1%	25.2%

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Hispanic Demographic Growth in Texas

Table K: Unemployment Rate, Age 16+ in Labor Force

Group	U.S. 2005 % of Group	Texas 2000 % of Group	Travis Co. 2000 % of Group
African American	10.3%	10.5%	7.4%
Hispanic	5.8%	8.7%	5.6%
White	4.3%	4.1%	3.0%

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Texas State Data Center; U.S. Census Bureau

Table L: Median Household Income

Group	U.S. 2000	Texas 2000	Travis Co. 2000
African American	$30,134	$29,305	$34,796
Hispanic	$34,241	$29,873	$37,079
White	$48,977	$47,162	$52,582

U.S. Census Bureau; Texas State Date Center

Table M: Population below Poverty Level

Group	U.S. 2000 % of Total	Texas 2000 % of Total	Travis Co. 2000 % of Total
African American	24.7%	16.8%	12.5%
Hispanic	21.9%	53.2%	44.2%
White	8.6%	26.5%	35.2%

U.S. Census Bureau; Texas State Data Center

Table N: Business Ownership

Group	U.S. 2002 % of Total	Texas 2002 % of Total	Travis Co. 2002 % of Total
African American	5.2%	5.1%	2.5%
Hispanic	6.9%	18.4%	11.2%
White	82.1%	70.9%	83.2%

U.S. Census Bureau

Table O: Home Ownership

Group	U.S. 2002 % of Group	Texas 2002 % of Group	Travis Co. 2002 % of Group
African American	47.3%	46.4%	47.8%
Hispanic	48.2%	56.1%	46.5%
White	74.5%	70.8%	73.9%

U.S. Census Bureau

Table P: Prison and Jail Population

Group	U.S. 2004 % of Total	Texas 2000 % of Total	Travis Co. 2005 % of Total
African American	40.7%	43.5%	36.0%
Hispanic	19.2%	25.2%	26.0%
White	34.3%	30.9%	38.0%

U.S. Department of Justice; Texas State Data Center; Travis County

Table Q: Military Enlistment

Group	U.S. 2002 % of Total
African American	22.5%
Hispanic	9.5%
White	61.9%

U.S. Department of Defense

Table R: Post-Secondary Enrollment

Group	U.S. 2001 % of Total	Texas 2004 % of Total	Travis Co. 2000 % of Total
African American	11.6%	11.4%	6.4%
Hispanic	9.8%	25.6%	17.2%
White	67.6%	52.2%	62.0%

National Center for Education Statistics; Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board; U.S. Census Bureau

Table S: Bachelor's or Advanced Degree, Age 25+

Group	U.S. 2004 % of Group	Texas 2000 % of Group	Travis Co. 2000 % of Group
African American	17.7%	15.5%	20.5%
Hispanic	12.1%	8.9%	16.0%
White	30.6%	30.0%	51.0%

National Center for Education Statistics; Hispanic Demographic Growth in Texas; U.S. Census Bureau

Table T: High School Diploma, Age 25+

Group	U.S. 2004 % of Group	Texas 2000 % of Group	Travis Co. 2000 % of Group
African American	81.1%	76.0%	80.3%
Hispanic	58.4%	49.3%	57.3%
White	90.0%	87.3%	94.9%

National Center for Education Statistics; Hispanic Demographic Growth in Texas; U.S. Census Bureau

Table U: Elementary and Secondary School Enrollment

Group	U.S. 2003 % of Total	Texas 2004 % of Total	AISD 2004 % of Total
African American	16.1%	14.3%	13.6%
Hispanic	18.6%	43.8%	53.1%
White	58.3%	38.7%	30.3%

National Center for Education Statistics; Texas Education Agency

Table V: Elementary and Secondary Disciplinary Actions

Group	U.S. 2000 % of Group	Texas 2003 % of Group	AISD 2003 % of Group
African American	35.0%	35.6%	37.5%
Hispanic	20.0%	20.0%	19.4%
White	15.0%	16.3%	11.9%

National Center for Education Statistics; Texas Education Agency

Table W: Elementary and Secondary Grade Level Retention Rate

Group	U.S. 2000 % of Group	Texas 2003 % of Group
African American	18.0%	6.0%
Hispanic	13.0%	6.1%
White	9.0%	2.8%

National Center for Education Statistics; Texas Education Agency

Table X: High School Dropout Rate

Group	U.S. 2003 % of Group	Texas 2004 % of Group	AISD 2004 % of Group
African American	10.9%	6.3%	7.9%
Hispanic	23.5%	7.1%	9.6%
White	6.3%	2.2%	2.9%

National Center for Education Statistics; Texas Education Agency

Table Y: High School Participation in Advanced Placement Exams

Group	U.S. 2000 % of Group	Texas 2003 % of Group	AISD 2004 % of Group
African American	5.8%	7.8%	10.6%
Hispanic	11.0%	12.2%	18.2%
White	18.4%	19.5%	41.1%

National Center for Education Statistics; Texas Education Agency

Table Z: Elementary and Secondary Teachers

Group	U.S. 2003 % of Total	Texas 2003 % of Total	AISD 2004 % of Total
African American	8.4%	9.0%	6.5%
Hispanic	5.5%	18.0.%	22.9%
White	82.7%	72.0%	68.5%

U.S. Census Bureau; Texas Education Agency; AISD

Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS)
2003-2004 State Performance Report
Summary

Enrollment and Attendance

- For the state as well as the urban districts, the Hispanic student population is the largest; however, Austin and Fort Worth have the smallest Hispanic student populations of the urban districts. *(See Table A)*
- For the state as well as the urban districts, there is little variance in attendance among student groups; however, of the urban districts, Austin has the greatest variance between White students and Hispanic and African American students. *(See Table B)*

TAKS Achievement

- For the state as well as the urban districts, a significant gap exists between White students and Hispanic and African American students in meeting minimum TAKS expectations. Of the urban districts, Austin has one of the largest gaps. *(See Table C)*

High School Dropout and Graduation Rates

- For the state as well as the urban districts, the high school dropout rate for Hispanics is greater than that for Whites and African Americans. Of the urban districts, Austin has one of the highest dropout rates for Hispanics. *(See Table D)*
- For the state as well as the urban districts, the graduation rate for Hispanics is lower than that for Whites and African Americans. Of the urban districts, Austin has one of the lowest graduation rates for Hispanics. *(See Table E)*

Advanced Academics

- For the state as well as the urban districts, significantly more White students complete advanced high school courses than Hispanic and African American students. Of the urban districts, this gap is largest in Austin. *(See Table F)*
- For the state as well as the urban districts, significantly more White students participate in AP/IB exams than Hispanic and African American students. Of the urban districts, Austin has one of the largest gaps. *(See Table G)*

College Entrance Exams

- For the state as well as the urban districts, significantly more White students participate in SAT/ACT exams than Hispanic and African American students (with the exception of Ysleta). Of the urban districts, Austin is at the median for Hispanics. *(See Table H)*
- For the state as well as the urban districts, significantly more White students meet or exceed criterion SAT/ACT scores than Hispanic and African American students. Of the urban districts, Austin has the highest percentage for Hispanics. *(See Table I)*

Table A: Total Enrollment

Statewide and Urban Districts	All Students	African American Students	Hispanic Students	White Students
State	*4,311,502*	*14.3%*	*43.8%*	*38.7%*
Austin ISD	**78,172**	**13.6%**	**53.1%**	**30.3%**
Corpus Christi ISD	39,185	5.5%	72.5%	20.2%
Dallas ISD	160,319	31.3%	61.0%	6.3%
El Paso ISD	63,101	4.4%	80.7%	13.3%
Fort Worth ISD	80,223	28.1%	52.2%	17.7%
Houston ISD	211,157	29.8%	58.1%	9.1%
San Antonio ISD	56,812	8.8%	87.2%	3.6%
Ysleta ISD	46,591	2.2%	90.2%	6.8%

Table B: Attendance Rate (All Grades)

Statewide and Urban Districts	All Students	African American Students	Hispanic Students	White Students
State	*95.6%*	*95.3%*	*95.4%*	*95.7%*
Austin ISD	**94.1%**	**93.1%**	**93.6%**	**95.1%**
Corpus Christi ISD	94.7%	94.8%	94.5%	95.3%
Dallas ISD	95.2%	94.6%	95.6%	94.2%
El Paso ISD	95.5%	95.9%	95.5%	95.6%
Fort Worth ISD	94.0%	92.9%	94.5%	94.3%
Houston ISD	95.3%	94.6%	95.6%	95.6%
San Antonio ISD	94.8%	94.8%	94.8%	94.5%
Ysleta ISD	95.7%	96.0%	95.7%	95.4%

Table C: Minimum TAKS Expectation Met (All Grades and All Subject Areas)

Statewide and Urban Districts	All Students	African American Students	Hispanic Students	White Students
State	*68%*	*53%*	*58%*	*81%*
Austin ISD	**63%**	**45%**	**51%**	**85%**
Corpus Christi ISD	62%	50%	58%	78%
Dallas ISD	55%	52%	55%	76%
El Paso ISD	57%	53%	53%	76%
Fort Worth ISD	58%	48%	54%	79%
Houston ISD	57%	50%	54%	84%
San Antonio ISD	53%	41%	54%	69%
Ysleta ISD	64%	65%	63%	79%

Table D: High School Dropout Rate

Statewide and Urban Districts	All Students	African American Students	Hispanic Students	White Students
State	*4.5%*	*6.3%*	*7.1%*	*2.2%*
Austin ISD	**6.2%**	**7.9%**	**9.6%**	**2.9%**
Corpus Christi ISD	3.6%	3.9%	4.4%	1.7%
Dallas ISD	6.3%	6.3%	6.1%	7.3%
El Paso ISD	5.0%	6.2%	5.4%	3.3%
Fort Worth ISD	10.8%	10.5%	12.0%	9.6%
Houston ISD	14.6%	14.1%	18.2%	5.7%
San Antonio ISD	7.6%	7.7%	7.7%	6.1%
Ysleta ISD	5.5%	1.1%	5.8%	5.2%

Table E: High School Graduation Rate

Statewide and Urban Districts	All Students	African American Students	Hispanic Students	White Students
State	*84.2%*	*81.1%*	*77.3%*	*89.8%*
Austin ISD	**78.8%**	**73.8%**	**70.3%**	**87.4%**
Corpus Christi ISD	82.4%	82.0%	81.2%	84.8%
Dallas ISD	81.3%	83.4%	78.6%	83.8%
El Paso ISD	78.6%	80.1%	75.7%	90.0%
Fort Worth ISD	76.5%	77.4%	72.9%	81.1%
Houston ISD	71.3%	74.2%	64.2%	84.2%
San Antonio ISD	79.2%	79.5%	79.4%	75.5%
Ysleta ISD	80.5%	88.2%	79.5%	86.6%

Table F: High School Advanced Courses Completion Rate (Credit Received for at Least One Course)

Statewide and Urban Districts	All Students	African American Students	Hispanic Students	White Students
State	*19.7%*	*12.7%*	*15.3%*	*24.4%*
Austin ISD	**22.9%**	**11.3%**	**13.2%**	**37.2%**
Corpus Christi ISD	25.0%	19.7%	22.0%	32.5%
Dallas ISD	19.2%	18.9%	16.3%	34.3%
El Paso ISD	13.4%	12.5%	10.8%	24.2%
Fort Worth ISD	14.9%	9.7%	11.3%	27.5%
Houston ISD	19.8%	16.6%	16.2%	35.8%
San Antonio ISD	17.7%	19.6%	17.2%	22.1%
Ysleta ISD	24.3%	23.6%	23.5%	32.3%

Table G: Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate Exam Participation Rate (Grades 11 and 12, at Least One Exam Taken)

Statewide and Urban Districts	All Students	African American Students	Hispanic Students	White Students
State	*16.1%*	*7.8%*	*12.2%*	*19.5%*
Austin ISD	**28.4%**	**10.6%**	**18.2%**	**41.1%**
Corpus Christi ISD	19.0%	10.7%	15.5%	27.2%
Dallas ISD	20.6%	15.4%	18.3%	46.9%
El Paso ISD	12.6%	11.5%	9.9%	22.1%
Fort Worth ISD	18.0%	8.0%	13.6%	35.0%
Houston ISD	15.7%	6.6%	11.1%	36.7%
San Antonio ISD	25.0%	30.1%	24.0%	31.6%
Ysleta ISD	21.5%	19.4%	20.6%	28.0%

Table H: SAT/ACT Participation Rate

Statewide and Urban Districts	All Students	African American Students	Hispanic Students	White Students
State	*62.4%*	*59.5%*	*45.7%*	*66.4%*
Austin ISD	**70.4%**	**64.4%**	**46.3%**	**73.1%**
Corpus Christi ISD	60.5%	73.0%	52.3%	70.7%
Dallas ISD	53.5%	63.0%	33.1%	61.4%
El Paso ISD	61.1%	69.6%	53.6%	72.5%
Fort Worth ISD	51.0%	56.2%	29.1%	71.8%
Houston ISD	65.5%	64.2%	44.3%	76.0%
San Antonio ISD	65.5%	77.6%	61.1%	67.0%
Ysleta ISD	96.8%	*	92.3%	93.5%

*Data statistically improbable or reported outside reasonable range

Table I: SAT/ACT Scores at or above Criterion (1110 on SAT, or 24 on ACT)

Statewide and Urban Districts	All Students	African American Students	Hispanic Students	White Students
State	*27.2%*	*7.2%*	*10.8%*	*37.2%*
Austin ISD	**40.0%**	**7.7%**	**20.7%**	**55.0%**
Corpus Christi ISD	21.9%	5.5%	13.5%	38.5%
Dallas ISD	11.0%	4.4%	7.6%	43.5%
El Paso ISD	18.2%	8.0%	11.8%	36.3%
Fort Worth ISD	20.1%	3.3%	9.3%	42.1%
Houston ISD	23.8%	9.1%	10.8%	55.7%
San Antonio ISD	5.0%	1.8%	4.7%	17.9%
Ysleta ISD	5.8%	6.0%	3.8%	21.6%

AISD BASIC DATA, 2004-2005

Our Students[1]

African American	10,662	13.33%
Asian	2,222	2.78%
Hispanic	43,747	54.72%
Native American	197	0.25%
White	23,122	28.92%
TOTAL	**79,950**	**100.00%**

Economically Disadvantaged = 46,831 (58.58%)
Limited English Proficiency (LEP) = 18,169 (22.73%)

Our Schools[1]

Elementary Schools	74
Middle Schools	17
High Schools	12
Special Campuses	8
TOTAL	**111**

Our Employees[2]

Teachers	5,388
Administrators	388
Other Professionals	802
Other Employees	4,136
TOTAL	**10,714**

Average Teacher Salary = $40,500
AISD is the third-largest employer in the Metropolitan Statistical Area

Our Budget[2]

Operations*	$656,104,017
Food Service	$27,350,456
Debt Service	$48,166,986
TOTAL	**$731,621,459**

Tax Rate = $1.623/$100 valuation (lowest of any district in Central Texas)
Taxable Value = $40,191,751,980
Bonded Debt = $449,036,948
Recapture (Chapter 41) Payment = $135,501,051
**Net Operational Budget (after Recapture) = $520,602,966*
Net Operational Expenditure per Student = $6,512

[1]Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 11/04

[2]AISD Close-Up, 2004-2005

RESULTS OF THE 2004-2005 AISD HIGH SCHOOL EXIT SURVEY
FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN, HISPANIC, AND WHITE STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION

The third annual Austin ISD High School Exit Survey was administered electronically to seniors in every AISD High School during the Spring of 2005. The results for selected items are described below for African American, Hispanic, and White students in the Class of 2005. The response rate for the High School Exit Survey continues to improve (Table 1). Surveys were received from 3,324 students (85.3%) in the Class of 2005.[1] The survey sample once again closely resembles the ethnic and gender distribution of the senior class, indicating that the results are representative of the entire senior class population.

Table 1. AISD High School Exit Survey Response Rates, Classes of 2003, 2004, and 2005

	Percentage of Enrolled Seniors Responding		
	Class of 2003	Class of 2004	Class of 2005
All AISD High Schools	68.9%	81.5%	85.3%

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

The summary below highlights a portion of the survey results according to four general topics: Climate, High School Experiences, Postsecondary Intentions, and Postsecondary Preparation.

PART 1: CLIMATE

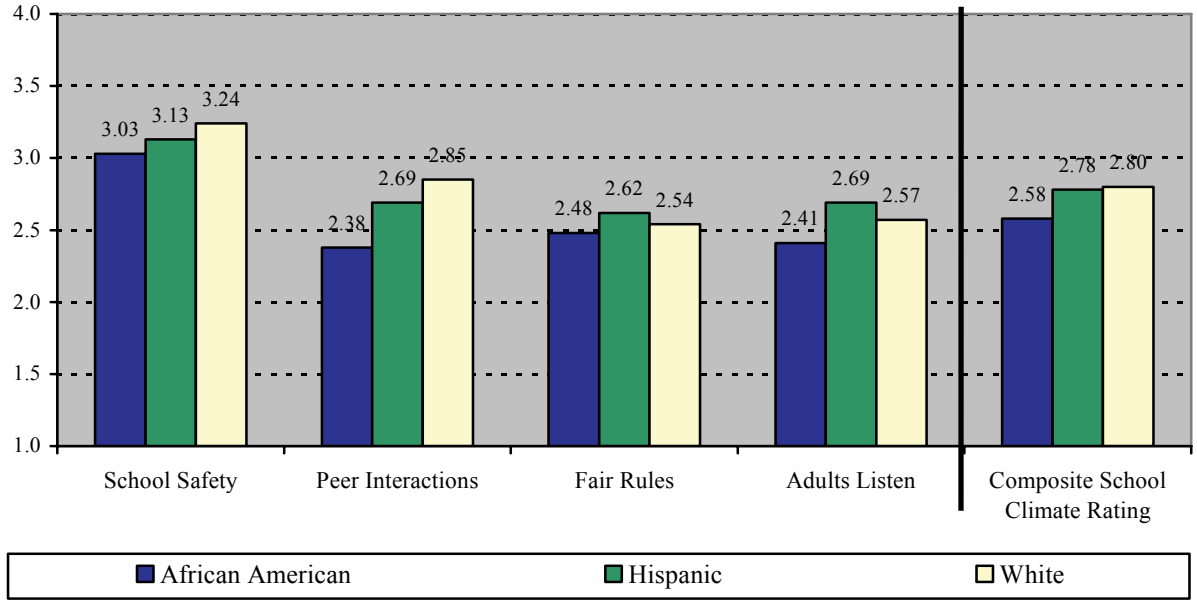
The campus environment is assessed on the High School Exit Survey through two dimensions called School Climate and Learning Climate. School Climate is measured with four survey items (Items 2-5) that describe the general "personality" of a campus, such as school safety and whether or not adults at school listen to students' opinions. School Climate results for the each ethnic group are shown in Figure 1, along with a key detailing the text of each individual item. African American average responses are slightly less positive than Hispanic and White responses. The greatest disparity among ethnic groups is on the item regarding the extent to which students get along with each other, while the responses are most similar on the item regarding the extent to which school rules are implemented fairly.

Learning Climate describes the academic atmosphere on a campus, including the levels of academic rigor and teacher expectations. Learning Climate results are shown in Figure 2, along with a key detailing the text of each individual item. Average responses to these items are generally higher than those for School Climate items, and are very similar across ethnic groups.

[1] Response rates are based on enrollment at the end of the 5th six weeks reporting period. Note: Due to enrollment of some Special Education students with severe cognitive disabilities, a 100% response rate is not expected.

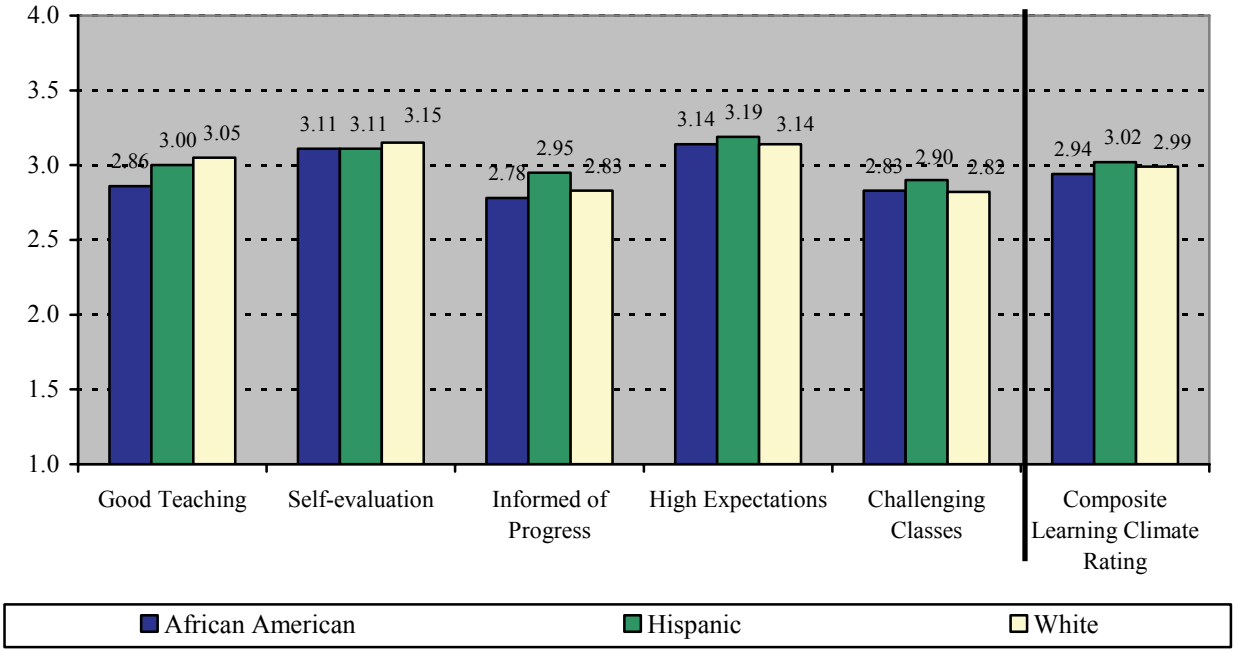
Hispanic students more often (7out of 9 items) rated overall school climate more highly than did White students. The Hispanic students' ratings also were, on average, equal to or better than those given by African American students on all 9 items.

Figure 1. Average Ratings Given to School Climate Items *(Items 2-5)*



Key: School Safety – This school is a safe place to learn. *(Item 2)*
Peer Interactions – The students in this school get along with each other. *(Item 3)*
Fair Rules – The rules of this school are implemented fairly. *(Item 4)*
Adults Listen – The adults at this school listen to the opinions of students. *(Item 5)*
Composite School Climate Rating –Average score of Items 2 – 5, measuring the overall "personality" of the school.

Figure 2. Average Ratings Given to Learning Climate Items *(Items 6-10)*



Key: Good Teaching – My teachers taught in a way that was clear and easy to understand. *(Item 6)*
Self-evaluation – I have learned how to evaluate my own work and keep track of my progress. *(Item7)*
Informed of Progress – My teachers kept me informed about how I was doing in my classes. *(Item 8)*
High Expectations – My teachers expected me to do high quality work. *(Item 9)*
Challenging Classes – My classes were rigorous and challenging. *(Item 10)*

PART 2: HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

Seniors were asked to rate how well their high school helped them to develop academic skills in a variety of areas (Table 2). While ratings were similar across ethnic groups, average ratings were generally higher among Hispanic and African American students than White students. Math is the only subject area for which White students provided the highest average rating.

Table 2. Average Ratings of Quality of Assistance in Developing Academic Skills *(Items 27-33)*

Academic Skill	All Austin ISD High Schools		
	African American	Hispanic	White
Writing	2.48	2.47	2.47
Mathematics	2.26	2.33	2.36
Science	2.22	2.28	2.27
Social Studies	2.53	2.49	2.45
Computer/Technology	2.45	2.42	2.21
Foreign Language	2.11	2.35	2.11
Performing/Fine Arts	2.34	2.31	2.31
Composite Score	2.34	2.38	2.31

Note: Responses can range from 1 (not well) to 3 (very well).

Seniors were also asked to report their perceptions of the quality of assistance in developing personal skills such as teamwork and conflict resolution (Table 3). Once again, the average ratings provided by White students were slightly lower than those provided by African American and Hispanic students.

Table 3. Average Ratings of Quality of Assistance in Developing Personal Skills *(Items 34-38)*

Personal Skill	All Austin ISD High Schools		
	African American	Hispanic	White
Teamwork	2.45	2.47	2.29
Creative Thinking	2.47	2.41	2.38
Problem Solving	2.40	2.39	2.36
Conflict Resolution	2.20	2.29	2.16
Personal Health/Fitness	2.38	2.35	2.10
Composite Score	2.38	2.38	2.26

Note: Responses can range from 1 (not well) to 3 (very well).

Seniors were also asked to report their participation in extra-curricular activities both inside and outside of school. Table 4 describes the participation in various school-affiliated activities. The largest school-affiliated extra-curricular participation disparities among ethnic groups are in Sports, Theater/Drama, and UIL Academic Competitions.

Table 4. Percentage of Respondents Reporting Participation in Extra-curricular Activities Affiliated with High School *(Item 14)*

Activity	All Austin ISD High Schools		
	African American	Hispanic	White
Music	32.0%	27.0%	34.2%
Theater/Drama	19.9%	9.2%	19.2%
Dance	14.5%	17.2%	16.4%
Sports	66.7%	55.7%	52.9%
UIL Academic Competition	8.0%	8.7%	16.7%
Journalism	11.1%	11.5%	13.5%
Speech/Debate	9.6%	8.3%	9.6%

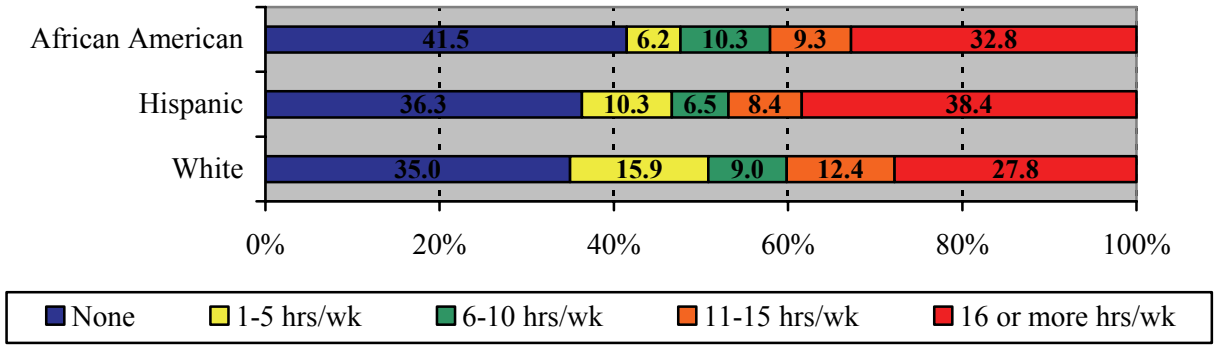
Table 5 describes the participation in various extra-curricular activities outside of school. The largest participation disparities among ethnic groups are in Family Care, where Hispanic participation was highest, and Community Service, where White participation was highest.

Table 5. Percentage of Respondents Reporting Participation in Extra-curricular Activities Outside of High School *(Item 15)*

Activity	All Austin ISD High Schools		
	African American	Hispanic	White
Organized Sports	41.1%	32.6%	40.2%
Art/Music/Dance	31.4%	21.7%	35.5%
Community Service	49.7%	45.3%	61.6%
Environmental Projects	12.3%	13.2%	20.5%
Family Care	32.6%	42.2%	22.0%

In addition to extra-curricular activities, many students are employed outside of school. The following table indicates that although White students are most likely to report some employment during their senior year, they are least likely to report employment of more than 10 hours a week. African American students are slightly more likely than Hispanic or White students to report having no employment, while Hispanic students are slightly more likely to report being employed more than 10 hours a week.

Figure 3. Number of Hours Employed Per Week During the Senior Year *(Item 20)*



PART 3: POSTSECONDARY INTENTIONS

Students were asked to report their plans within a year after graduating high school (Table 6). The majority of survey participants indicate plans to pursue postsecondary education, and nearly half indicate plans for part-time or full-time employment. Hispanic students were least likely to report plans for postsecondary education and most likely to report having "no specific plans yet." The percentages below may be lower than expected due to the placement of this item near the end of the survey. However, these results are comparable to data from a recently published federal report[2] stating that, *"after high school graduation, some seniors will immediately enter the workforce or military. Some will start families. Many will go directly into postsecondary education (some 79 percent of the seniors cohort expected to go directly from high school to a postsecondary institution). Another 7 percent stated that they did not know what they would do, while 13 percent indicated that they would not go directly to postsecondary education."*

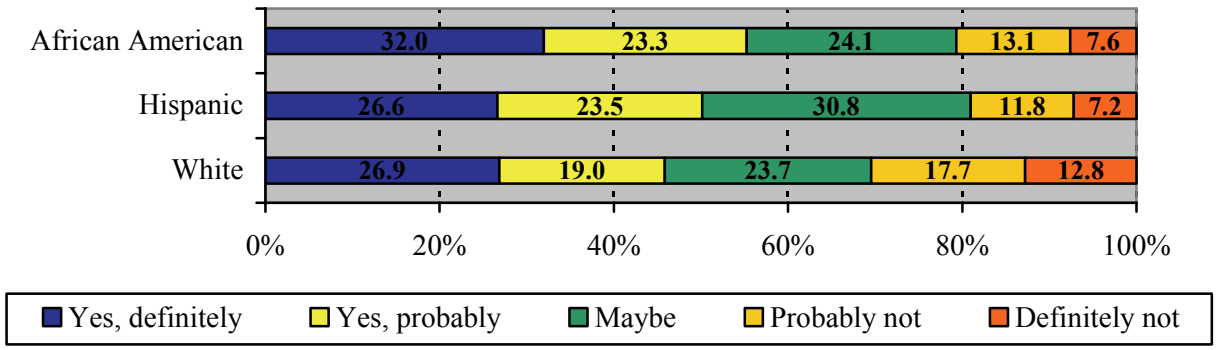
Table 6. Percentage of All Survey Respondents Reporting Specific Postsecondary Plans Within a Year *(Item 51)*

Plan	All Austin ISD High Schools		
	African American	Hispanic	White
Continue Education	73.1%	65.7%	82.2%
No specific plans yet	6.7%	15.0%	5.3%
Travel	8.2%	11.0%	12.9%
Full-time Parent	4.0%	3.9%	1.1%
Military	4.0%	3.9%	2.6%
Work full-time	14.0%	17.9%	10.8%
Work part-time	27.6%	34.7%	31.9%

[2] Ingels, S.J., Planty, M., and Bozick, R. (2005). A Profile of the American High School Senior in 2004: A First Look – Initial Results From the First Follow-up of the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002) (NCES 2006-348). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC:U.S. Government Printing Office.

Of those students who reported intentions to pursue postsecondary education, over one quarter in each ethnic group reported definite plans to borrow money for college (Figure 4). While the percentages are similar across groups, White students appear slightly less likely than African American and Hispanic students to borrow money for postsecondary education.

Figure 4. Postsecondary-bound Students' Intentions to Borrow Money for College *(Item 44)*



PART 4: POSTSECONDARY PREPARATION

Students were asked to rate the quality of assistance they received from their high school with college and career preparation (Table 8). Average responses were similar across ethnic groups for college/career and postsecondary application preparation. However, African American and Hispanic students report higher ratings than White students for being well informed about financial aid.

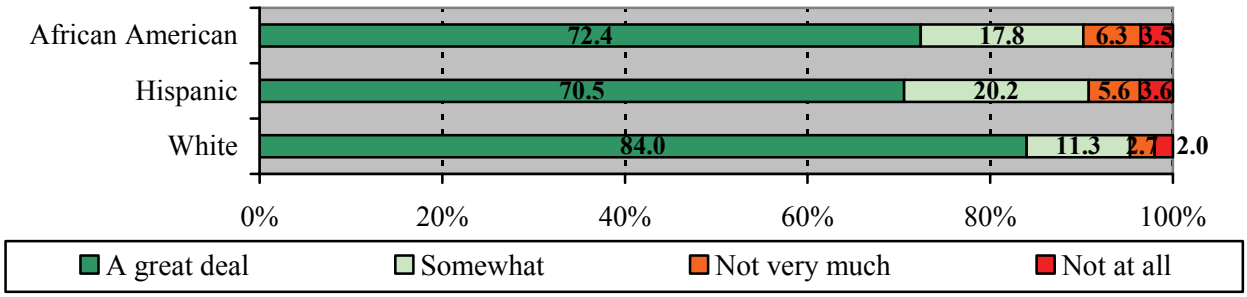
Table 8. Average Ratings of Preparation for College and Career *(Items 22, 23, and 25)*

Preparation For	All Austin ISD High Schools		
	African American	Hispanic	White
College/Career Goals	2.27	2.27	2.25
Postsecondary Application Process	2.16	2.11	2.19
Financial Aid	2.28	2.12	2.02

Note: Responses can range from 1 (not well) to 3 (very well).

Seniors also were asked to indicate the extent to which their families encouraged them to pursue postsecondary education (Figure 4). Less than ten percent of students in each ethnic group report receiving little or no family encouragement to continue their education, but White students are more likely than Hispanic and African American students to report a great deal of family support.

Figure 4. Reported Degree of Family Encouragement to Pursue Postsecondary Education
(Item 49)



DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Based on these survey results[3], it appears that White students are more likely than African American and, to a lesser extent, Hispanic students to feel positively about the general "personality" of their schools. However, few differences emerged among ethnic groups on ratings for the quality and rigor of the learning environment. In fact, where differences did appear, Hispanic students were more likely than White and African American students to provide high ratings for Learning Climate. In general, Hispanic and African American students report higher ratings than White students for how well their high school helped them to develop knowledge and skills in specific academic subjects and areas of personal development.

African American students report higher participation in sports than the other two groups, and Hispanic students report higher participation in family care and employment of more than 10 hours a week. White students are more likely to report participation in UIL academic competitions, environmental projects, and community service than African American or Hispanic students, and are least likely to work more than 10 hours a week.

[3] See Attachment A for detailed results regarding tests for statistical significance.

Hispanic students are less likely to report intentions to pursue postsecondary education and more likely than White or African American students to report employment plans within the year following graduation. Of those with plans for postsecondary education, African American students are most likely to report definite intentions to borrow money for college. In addition, African American students report higher ratings than White and Hispanic students for preparation to apply for financial aid.

While family encouragement was high for each ethnic group, White students reported more family encouragement to participate in postsecondary education. White students also reported being slightly more prepared than African American and Hispanic students for postsecondary application process. However, all student groups reported similar ratings for how well their high school had prepared them to meet college and career goals.

Attachment A

The following table indicates the statistical differences that were found among ethnic groups for each climate item and for the composite School Climate and Learning Climate ratings.

Statistically Significant Differences on Climate Items and Composite Climate Ratings

School Safety	Peer Interactions	Fair Rules	Adults Listen	Composite School Climate
W > H > AA	W > H > AA	H > AA & W	H > W > AA	W & H > AA

Good Teaching	Self-evaluation	Informed of Progress	High Expectations	Challenging Classes	Composite Learning Climate
W > AA & H	No Differences	H > AA & W	No Differences	H > W	H > AA

Statistically Significant Differences on Ratings for How Well High School Prepared Students in Academic and Personal Development Areas

Writing	Math	Science	Social Studies	Computer/ Technology	Foreign Language	Performing Arts
No Differences	W > AA	No Differences	No Differences	AA & H > W	H > AA & W	No Differences

Teamwork	Creative Thinking	Problem Solving	Conflict Resolution
AA & H > W	AA > W	No Differences	H > W

Statistically Significant Differences on Ratings for Preparation for College and Career Goals, Postsecondary Application Process, and Obtaining Financial Aid

College/Career Goals	Postsecondary Application Process	Financial Aid
No Differences	W > H	AA > H > W

Note: Differences reflected above are statistically significant at $p<.05$.

RESULTS OF THE AISD PARENT SURVEY 2005: PARENT PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH CAMPUS BASED STAFF FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN, HISPANIC, AND WHITE STUDENTS

OVERVIEW

The following report contains a subset of the results from the 2004-2005 AISD Parent Survey, focusing on items 3-7, each of which asked parents to rate the extent to which they agreed with positive statements about their relationships and interactions with AISD staff. For each item, parents were asked to answer the question as it applied to *each staff type* including: principals, assistant principals, counselors, office staff, and teachers. Not every parent evaluated every staff type, so the tables in each section present the *weighted average score* for each item, in order to account for this variation in response rates.[1]

Results were examined separately for elementary, middle, and high school for AISD's three largest ethnic groups: African American, Hispanic, and White. In comparison to their overall representation in AISD, African American parents and Hispanic parents were slightly underrepresented among respondents at the elementary and middle school level, and White parents were slightly underrepresented among high school level respondents (see Table 1). There is no way to confirm that the views of responding parents are representative of all AISD parents, so results presented here should be interpreted with caution.

Table 1. Ethnic Distribution of Respondents (RES) and of the Overall AISD Population (POP).

	Elementary		Middle		High	
	RES	POP	RES	POP	RES	POP
African American	9.2%	12.7%	9.0%	13.4%	14.4%	13.8%
Hispanic	49.0%	62.1%	43.6%	54.9%	47.0%	46.0%
White	22.1%	22.2%	34.8%	29.1%	27.8%	37.1%

Note. Columns do not sum to 100%. Responses from Native American, Asian, and parents who did not identify their ethnicity on the survey are not included in these analyses.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Parents *at all levels* and *of all ethnicities* provide mostly positive responses regarding their relationships with a variety of campus staff. Across each item, elementary parents had the highest average ratings, followed by middle school parents. High school parents reported the lowest average ratings.

[1] The ranges in the number of responses within each item are detailed in Attachment B.

- *Across the three ethnicities*, variation in satisfaction with parent-staff relationships was greatest among elementary parents followed by high school parents. Middle school parents' ratings were least likely to differ by ethnicity.
- *At the elementary level*, White parents consistently reported higher levels of satisfaction with parent-staff relationships than African American parents. Hispanic parents reported statistically higher levels of satisfaction than African American parents in about 60% of contrasts, but these levels were often still lower than those reported by White parents.
- *At the middle school level*, there was remarkable consistency in parent reports across the three ethnic groups. However, there are two noteworthy contrasts: (a) White parents were least likely to agree that AISD staff helped them become more involved in their child's education, and (b) African American parents were less likely than Hispanic parents to agree that AISD staff treat their child fairly with respect to culture, gender, ethnicity, etc.
- *At the high school level*, when there were significant differences across ethnicity, African American parents generally reported the lowest levels of satisfaction with parent-staff relationships. Occasionally these reports are significantly lower than those of White parents, and they were also likely to be lower than the ratings of Hispanic parents.

CONCLUSIONS

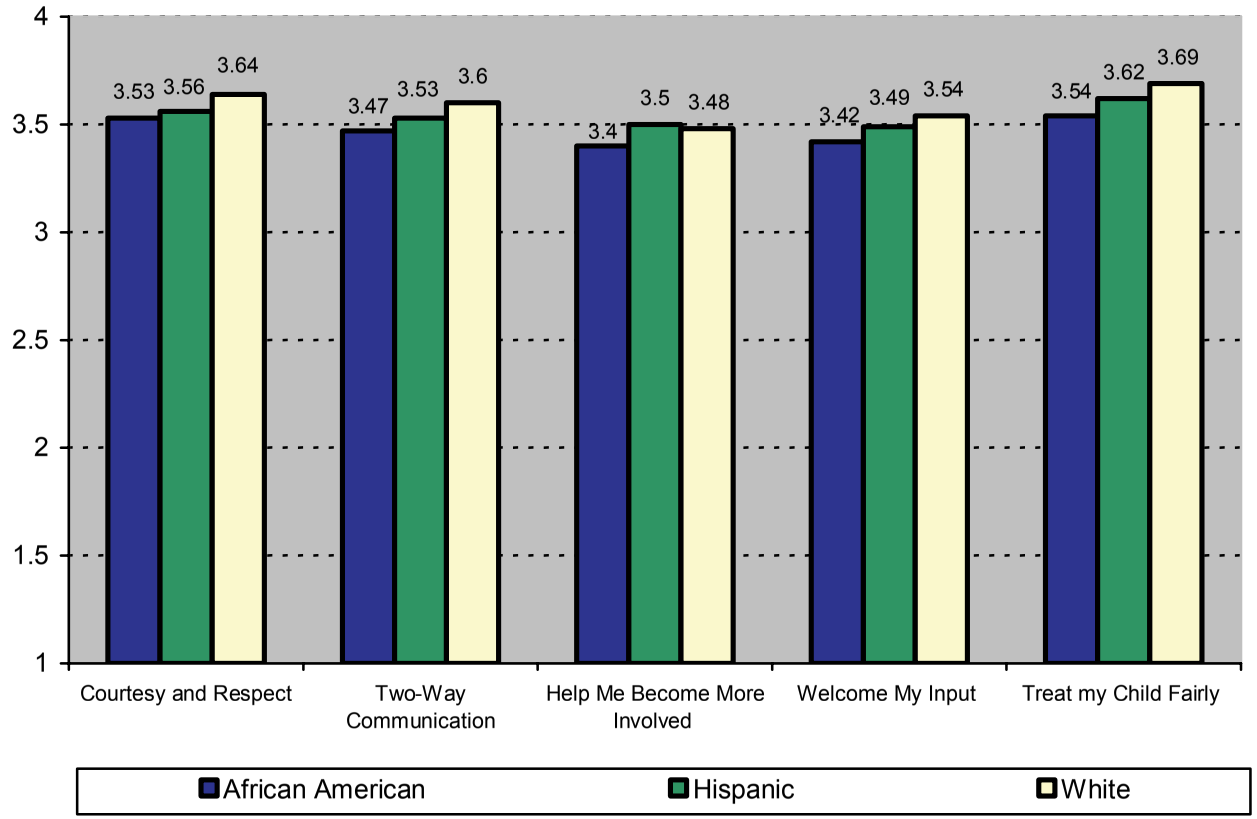
Overall, AISD staff and administrators are doing a good job of maintaining positive relationships with the *parents of elementary age* children of all ethnicities. However, these perceptions are consistently lower among African American and Hispanic parents than among White parents.

There is a relatively high level of satisfaction with the relationships between *middle school parents* and AISD staff and administrators and, with a few exceptions, these relationships are perceived similarly across the three ethnic groups.

High school parents of all ethnicities report lower levels of satisfaction with parent-staff relationships than do parents of younger students. This may because many parents play less of a role in the day-to-day school life of their high school age children and, as a result, have fewer opportunities to establish close positive relationships with AISD staff and administrators.

Parents of Hispanic and White students report similarly high ratings for quality of their relationship at the secondary level. However, there appears to be room for improving relationships with the parents of African American children, particularly at the elementary and high school level, and with Hispanic parents at the elementary level.

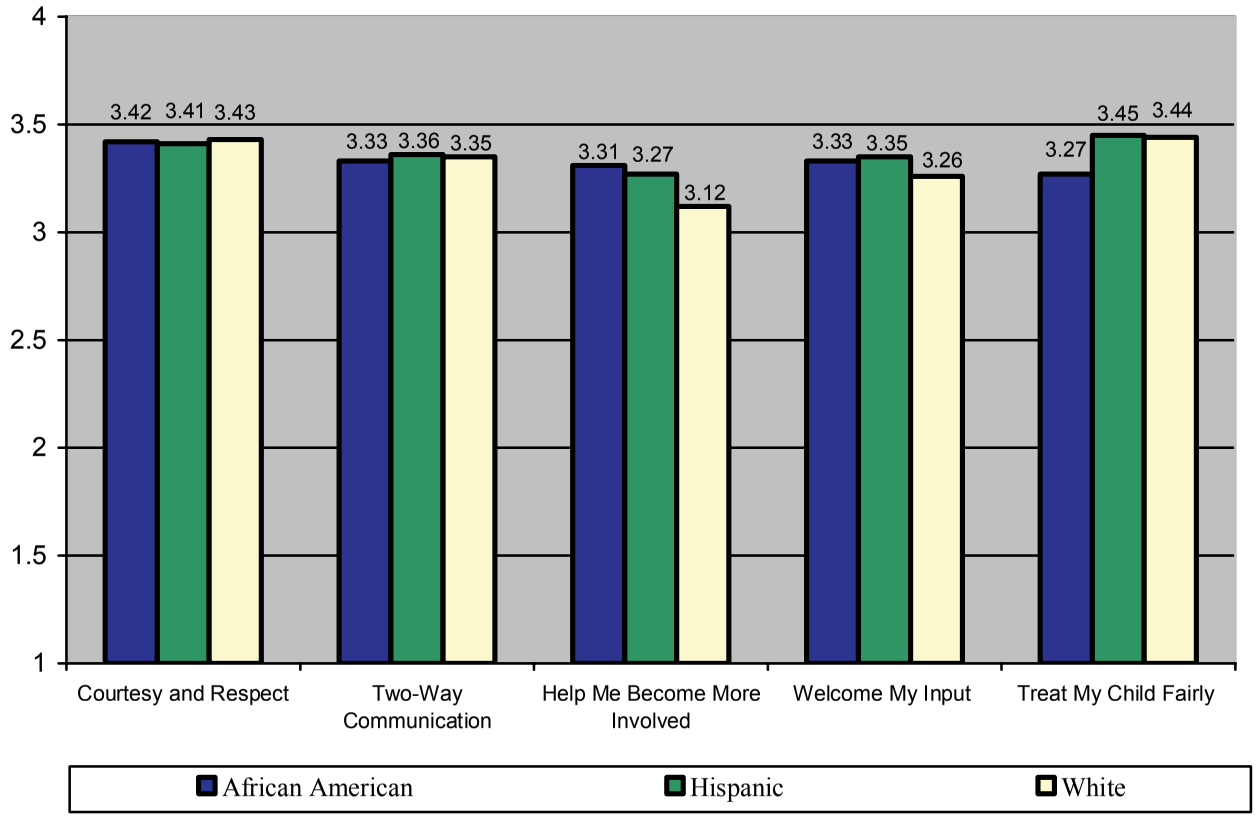
Figure 1. Elementary Parent Perceptions of Staff-Parent Relationships from the AISD Parent Survey 2004-05, Questions 3-7.



Note. Responses range from (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Agree, to (4) Strongly Agree. Parent responses of "don't know" and "does not apply" have been excluded from these analyses.

Key: Courtesy and Respect: The following school staff treat me with courtesy and respect (Item 3)
Two-Way Communication: The following school staff provide me with opportunities for two-way communication (e.g. phone calls, students agenda book, meetings, etc.) (Item 4).
Help Me Become More Involved: The following school staff have helped me become more involved in my child's education (Item 5).
Welcome My Input: The following school staff welcome my input in academic decisions about my child (Item 6).
Treat My Child Fairly: The following school staff treat my child fairly with respect to culture, gender, ethnicity, age, religion, and disability (Item 7).

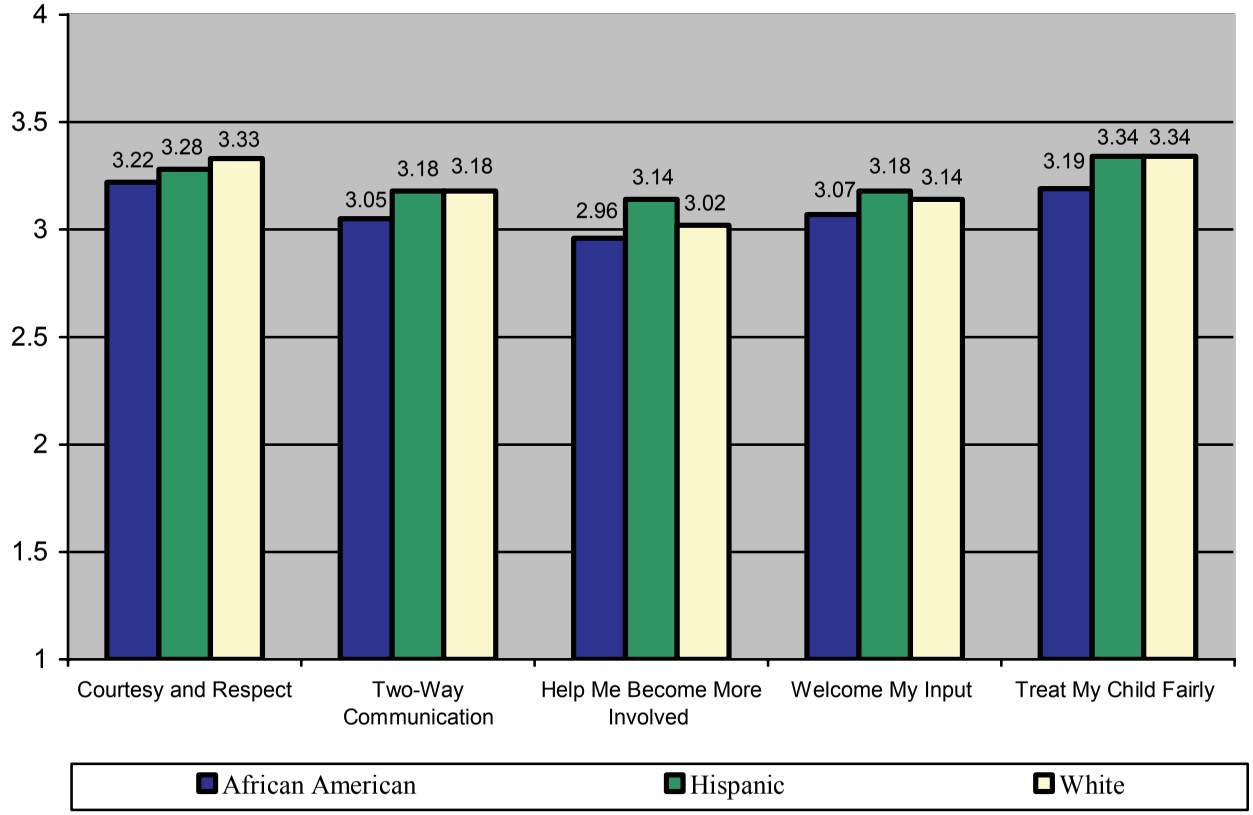
Figure 2. Middle School Parent Perceptions of Staff-Parent Relationships from the AISD Parent Survey 2004-05, Questions 3-7.



Note. Responses range from (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Agree, to (4) Strongly Agree. Parent responses of "don't know" and "does not apply" have been excluded from these analyses.

Key: Courtesy and Respect: The following school staff treat me with courtesy and respect (Item 3)
Two-Way Communication: The following school staff provide me with opportunities for two-way communication (e.g. phone calls, students agenda book, meetings, etc.) (Item 4).
Help Me Become More Involved: The following school staff have helped me become more involved in my child's education (Item 5).
Welcome My Input: The following school staff welcome my input in academic decisions about my child (Item 6).
Treat My Child Fairly: The following school staff treat my child fairly with respect to culture, gender, ethnicity, age, religion, and disability (Item 7).

Figure 3. High School Parent Perceptions of Staff-Parent Relationships from the AISD Parent Survey 2004-05, Questions 3-7.



Note. Responses range from (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Agree, to (4) Strongly Agree. Parent responses of "don't know" and "does not apply" have been excluded from these analyses.

Key: Courtesy and Respect: The following school staff treat me with courtesy and respect (Item 3)
Two-Way Communication: The following school staff provide me with opportunities for two-way communication (e.g. phone calls, students agenda book, meetings, etc.) (Item 4).
Help Me Become More Involved: The following school staff have helped me become more involved in my child's education (Item 5).
Welcome My Input: The following school staff welcome my input in academic decisions about my child (Item 6).
Treat My Child Fairly: The following school staff treat my child fairly with respect to culture, gender, ethnicity, age, religion, and disability (Item 7).

Attachment A. Statistically significant contrasts by staff type and ethnicity of child.

Elementary	Principal	Assistant Principal	Counselors	Office Staff	Teachers
Treat me with courtesy and respect	AA & H < W	AA & H < W	AA & H < W	AA & H < W	AA & H < W
Provide me with opportunities for 2 way communication	AA< W & H	AA & H < W	AA < H & W	AA & H < W	AA < H < W
Helped me become more involved in my child's education	AA & W< H	AA < H	AA < H & W	AA & W< H	AA < H < W
Welcome my input into academic decisions about my child	AA < H & W	AA < H & W	AA < H & W	AA < H & W	AA & H < W
Treat my child fairly with respect to culture, gender, ethnicity, age, religion & disability	AA < H < W	AA < H < W	AA < H < W	AA < H < W	AA < H < W

Middle School	Principal	Assistant Principal	Counselors	Office Staff	Teachers
Treat me with courtesy and respect					
Provide me with opportunities for 2 way communication					
Helped me become more involved in my child's education	W < AA & H	W < H		W < H	W< AA & H
Welcome my input into academic decisions about my child					
Treat my child fairly with respect to culture, gender, ethnicity, age, religion & disability	AA < H & W	AA < H	AA < H		

High School	Principal	Assistant Principal	Counselors	Office Staff	Teachers
Treat me with courtesy and respect	AA < W		AA & H < W	H < W	
Provide me with opportunities for 2 way communication			AA < W	AA < H	AA < H
Helped me become more involved in my child's education	AA < H	W < H		AA & W < H	AA & W < H
Welcome my input into academic decisions about my child	AA < H	AA < H			AA & W < H
Treat my child fairly with respect to culture, gender, ethnicity, age, religion & disability	AA < W & H	AA < W	AA < W & H		AA < H

Note. High numbers of responses among elementary level parents (see Appendix II) increase the likelihood of finding statistically significant contrasts. For this reason, it is important to focus on the overall pattern of results rather than any particular contrast.

Attachment B. Range in the number of responses across staff type, within each item, by school level and child ethnicity.

School level Ethnicity	Range in the Number of Responses Across Staff Type within Each Item				
	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Item 6	Item 7
Elementary					
African American	809-1064	767-1051	754-1027	687-986	818-1042
Hispanic	4243-5477	4021-5367	3902-5394	3697-4994	4406-5346
White	2012-2626	1742-2534	1594-2433	1303-2309	1989-2513
Middle					
African American	133-160	130-159	121-148	109-145	126-157
Hispanic	631-705	589-709	589-672	512-610	639-700
White	502-649	447-636	400-603	348-561	512-610
High					
African American	278-329	272-309	274-331	259-315	294-321
Hispanic	921-1064	876-1026	868-1007	818-930	956-1043
White	502-694	461-683	435-657	394-590	530-645

APPENDIX J
Detailed Results: Literature Review

Summary of Literature on
Hispanic Student Achievement Gap

When evaluating the K-12 educational experience, four measures highlight the achievement gap for Hispanic students:

- Standardized test scores
- Rates of students failing grade level
- Dropout, retention, and graduation rates
- Rates of students enrolling in and graduating from higher education

These gaps in the achievement of Hispanic students have been studied and discussed for some time, and dozens of models explaining them have been proposed. The following is a list of key issues affecting Hispanic student achievement identified in a review of the literature listed in the attached annotated bibliography:

- Segregation into high poverty, high minority schools
- Low levels of pre-school enrollment
- Family conditions
    - Poverty
    - Education of parents
    - Single-parent households
    - Immigrant
- Student behavior
    - Motivation and effort for learning
    - Youth culture and peer pressure
    - Alcohol and drug use
    - Crime
    - Gangs
    - Teen motherhood
- Disparate treatment of Hispanic students
    - Enrollment below grade level
    - Enrollment in advanced and college-preparatory classes
    - Disciplinary measures
    - Tracking
    - Expectations
    - Career and educational opportunities beyond school
- Teachers, curriculum, policies, and programs
    - Inequities in distribution of quality teachers within and between schools
    - Teacher training
    - Minority representation among teachers and staff

    - Classroom environment and learning strategies
    - Bilingualism – programs, teacher training, and student treatment
    - School reform and targeted programs
    - High-stakes testing and promotion, retention, and graduation policies
- Community involvement, capacity, and organization

Different researchers, programs, and strategies focus on one or more measures of achievement and issues that affect student outcomes. The following are an initial selection of priority issues and recommendations, strategies, programs, and policies to address them.

Teacher quality

- Focus on research-supported indicators of teacher effectiveness in **hiring**
    - Strong verbal and math skills
    - Deep content knowledge (Haycock 1998)
- **Recruitment and retention** to attract the best into teaching profession (Haycock 1998)
- Collecting **data** to measure teacher effectiveness through student outcomes
- **Professional development** in a targeted, collaborative, and evaluated atmosphere. (Closing the Achievement Gap 2004); ongoing, on site, and focused on the content that students should learn (Haycock 1998)
- Teacher training for multicultural and linguistic minority students (President's 1996)
- Equitable **distribution** of quality teachers; address the following issues:
    - "Emergency hiring, assignment of teachers outside their fields of preparation, and high turnover in underfunded schools" (Darling-Hammond 1996)
    - Where teachers come from and where they want to teach
    - Interdistrict differences in salaries for beginning and midcareer teachers
    - The practice of concentrating beginning teachers in school buildings with concentrations of poor children
    - District policies – often gained through collective bargaining – that reward senior teachers with the 'right' to transfer to 'easier' schools
    - Practices within schools where teachers fight over who teaches whom, resulting in the senior, better-educated teachers teaching the most-advanced children
    - The absence of clear incentives and prevalence of disincentives for teachers to work with poor and minority children (Haycock 1998)

Student treatment and performance

- Mentorship, counseling, and student-centered institutional support (Gándara 1998)
- Setting clear goals and establishing high expectations for student achievement (state tests, mastery of curriculum, and college preparation) (Open Doors 2001)
- Increasing minority participation in challenging academic courses (Kober 2001)
- Target youth apprenticeship, mentoring, and career pathway opportunities for Hispanic students. (President's Advisory Commission 1996)
- Providing extended learning and more intensive programs for students having difficulties (Kober 2001); non-stop learning – longer days, weeks, years ((Thernstrom 2003)

- Need to provide pre-school education for all Hispanic American children who qualify. (President's Advisory Commission 1996)

Educational support programs

- Focus on: program quality, academically demanding curriculum, professional development, family involvement, reduced student-to-teacher ratios, individualized supports, extended learning time, community involvement, long-term (multiple-year) supports for youth, and scholarships and/or financial support. (James 2001)
- Provide parents with access to and information on the public school system
- Have a significant Hispanic presence among the dedicated and professional staff, serving as mentors
- Provide opportunities for small-group work, self-directed learning, peer-group activities and leadership opportunities
- Offer comprehensive services to students and their families that assist in addressing the multiple needs and challenges
- Integrate Hispanic culture into services and programs in order to assist students navigating cultural differences between their home, community and school
- Have professional and capable leaders who develop strong networks with the community
- Provide bilingual services and information to students and their families
- Have staff who know their program goals and take steps to measure progress, confront obstacles, and implement policies to achieve these goals. (Brown 2004)
- Methodologically sound program evaluations that provide disaggregated data in order to adequately measure program effects on minority academic achievement. (James 2001)

School reform

"Many administrators continue to assume that changes in the organizational structure of schools – block scheduling, advisories, Small Learning Communities – will result in changes in the classroom. Research on school reform has shown that such change rarely occurs (Fullan & Miles, 1992), and that lasting improvements in teaching and learning can only come from a strategy focused on improving instruction (Elmore, 1996)." (Noguera 2004)

Recommended strategies from the literature include:

- Creating a positive school culture; instill the desire, discipline, and dedication to succeed (Noguera 2004; Thernstrom 2003)
- Develop high academic and behavioral standards and expectations for all students (Noguera 2004; Thernstrom 2003; Opening Doors 2001; DoD Model 2003)
- Provide on-site, year-round professional development designed around teachers' needs (Noguera 2004)
- Require a high level of parent involvement. (Noguera 2004; DoD Model 2003)
- Take the time to make sure that teachers, parents, and students understood the purpose behind each reform strategy and have mechanisms in place to evaluate whether a reform is achieving its goal. (Noguera 2004)
- Shared responsibility and shared values – accountability, commitment, and discipline – across schools, their communities, families, and students (DoD Model 2003)

- Provide nonstop learning; from pre-school to summer school to after-school (Thernstrom 2003; DoD Model 2003)
- Using student performance data to guide instruction, focusing on instruction and individual learning, supporting teachers and enhancing collaboration, and fostering an environment of respect and affection for students (Opening Doors 2001)
- Empower and train teachers to match curricula to the unique needs of Hispanic students and make instruction interactive and student-centered (Reyes 1999; DoD Model 2003)
- Create shared common aspirations, goals, and visions of what should be expected of Hispanic students and their schools among adults and student peer groups (Reyes 1999)
- Assessment needs to be ongoing and advocacy-oriented (Reyes 1999)
- Teachers should work to empower students to become excited about and responsible for their own learning. (Reyes 1999; Llano Grande)
- Clear goals and accountability measures; use of data to drive decisions for management, policy, and practice (DoD Model 2003)

Annotated Bibliography on the
Achievement Gap for Hispanic Students

Measuring the Achievement Gap

"The Condition of Education 2005" (2005). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.
This comprehensive report provides quantitative and qualitative analyses on the state of education in America, covering a broad range of topics, including: participation in education; learner outcomes; student effort and educational progress; contexts of elementary and secondary education; contexts of postsecondary education; and societal support for learning. Under each of these topics, specific indicators are established. Current and historical data are presented, much of which is disaggregated by ethnicity.

Lee, Jaekyung (2002). "Racial and Ethnic Achievement Gap Trends: Reversing the Progress Toward Equity?" Educational Researcher. 31:1, p. 3-12.
This article looks at trends in the racial and ethnic achievement gaps (national average test-score differences based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and SAT results) over the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. The Black-White achievement gap narrowed significantly up to the mid-80s, but then stayed in some cases or returned to the levels of the late 70s or early 80s in other cases. The Hispanic-White test score gaps dropped relatively little, showing inconsistent gains and losses over the entire period. The study finds that conventional measures of socioeconomic and family conditions (educational attainment, income, poverty, single household), youth culture and student behavior (motivation and effort for learning, alcohol and illicit drug usage, crime), and schooling conditions and practices (instructional resources, teachers, course taking, dropout, segregation) do not fully account for the variations over the 30 year period.

"The Hispanic-White achievement gap never followed the same path, which could suggest that segregation was not associated with the Hispanic achievement gap to the extent that it was associated with the Black achievement gap."

Rumberger, Russell W. and J. Douglas Willms (1992). "The Impact of Racial and Ethnic Segregation on the Achievement Gap in California High Schools". Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis. 14:4. p. 377-396.
Significant differences in achievement levels across school districts and across schools within a district still exist after adjusting for differences in the background characteristics of students. This suggests that segregation can, but doesn't always, lead to achievement differences across schools and among different ethnic groups. The study finds differences among ethnic groups in the correlation between individual and family circumstances and student achievement. The results indicate that a significant portion of the achievement gap for Asians and Hispanics is attributable to their family and individual circumstances – parental education, rates of transience, and English proficiency. However, Blacks would continue to perform more poorly than other ethnic groups and Whites even if they had the same family backgrounds, rates of transience, and English proficiency. A school's average parental background has positive effects on individual

student achievement; therefore, efforts to desegregate students are likely to reduce differences in achievement. The study can't say whether changing the distribution of resources would have the same result. They do find that forcing school districts to integrate is on the decline. Two different strategies are now being used by some communities: integrating housing in order to integrate schools and equitably redistributing resources among schools.

Skrla, Linda, et al. (2002). "Educational Equity Profiles: Practical Leadership Tools for Equitable and Excellent Schools". Draft for Comment, August, 2002. Presented at the convention of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration, Burlington, VT.
This paper discusses a work in progress of creating an educational equity profile to supplement equity audits in providing school leaders with a simple measure of equity within schools from readily available data. To accomplish systemic equity, assessment needs to move beyond the achievement gap measured by high-stakes testing to measure resource and opportunity gaps as well. They propose 12 indicators measuring teacher quality equity, programmatic equity and achievement equity in within schools and between schools in a district. They are working to provide a working model of the profile and benchmarks for the various indicators.

Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics (2003). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. NCES 2003-008.
This comprehensive report provides quantitative and qualitative analyses on the state of Hispanic education in America, covering a broad range of topics, including: elementary and secondary school enrollment, grade retention and discipline, dropout and completion rates, and student performance; postsecondary enrollment and degrees conferred; and adult education. Hispanics have made gains in several key educational areas in the past two decades, but gaps in academic performance still remain between Hispanic and White students. In "Section II: Preliminary, Elementary, and Secondary Education", the report provides indicators showing trends over time and among different school environments for Hispanic students in participation, persistence, academics and achievement, social environments and parental support for learning, and studen behaviors.

Torres, Cruz C. (2005). "Hispanic Demographic Growth in Texas". Texas A&M University.
Presented to the Hispanic Alliance for Progress 2005 Policy Forum, this data presentation provides current information in a number of areas, including: population change and migration; household and labor force compositions; income levels and poverty status; and school enrollment and educational attainment. Latinos will play a central role in the future of Texas, but they will need to acquire additional social and human capital to fully contribute to the state's prosperity.

Closing the Achievement Gap

The College Board (1999). "Reaching the Top: A Report of the National Task Force on Minority High Achievement". College Entrance Examination Board.
This report reviews the status of high achievers among minority students. It presents a review on research in the differences in educational outcomes among racial and ethnic groups in the US

and what strategies are available for reducing these gaps. The report also provides recommendations for action specifically for elementary and secondary education, supplementary education, early childhood and parent education, minority leaders and parents, foundations and government agencies, business, and the news media – though the recommendations remain relatively broad.

Hispanic Border Leadership Institute (2002). "A Compromised Commitment: Society's Obligation and Failure to Serve the Nation's Largest Growing Population." Arizona State University.
This report looks at Hispanic education in five states in the southwest. It provides a regional overview, but then gives good state-level data on Texas and the other states. It provides data on demographic, educational, and economic indicators, the social, political, and economic dynamics, and legislative action at the state level. The report also discusses more general legislative issues, political action, and recommendations for the state.

Kober, Nancy (2001). "It Takes More than Testing: Closing the Achievement Gap". Center on Education Policy.
This report reviews studies and test data on the achievement gap for African American and Hispanic students. The report highlights trends, findings, and policy options that the author feels have not received proper attention in the current debate. The report goes on to make policy recommendations, encouraging schools and policymakers to approach strategies to close the gap with stronger and more comprehensive action. Recommendations on raising achievement include: investing in teacher professional development, lowering class size in high-minority schools, increasing minority participation in challenging academic courses, implementing comprehensive, research-based models for school improvement, expanding access to high-quality preschool programs, providing extended learning and more intensive programs for students who are having difficulties, and strengthening parent and community support for learning. Recommendations on improving equity between schools include: ensuring adequate supply of well-qualified teachers in high-minority and high-poverty schools, expanding access to advanced courses and rigorous instruction, provide additional resources to high-need schools, rallying parents and community leaders to support high achievement and offer enhanced learning opportunities, and addressing other disparities in curriculum, instruction, and facilities.

President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans (2003). "From Risk to Opportunity: Fulfilling the Educational Needs of Hispanic Americans in the 21st Century". White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans.
This final report of the President's Advisory Commission indicates that a crisis still exists in the state of Hispanic education in America. However, several recommendations for improvement are presented, including: setting new and high expectations; supporting No Child Left Behind; reinforcing and expanding a high-quality teaching profession; developing a federal research agenda to identify the needs of Hispanic students; creating pathways to college graduation; and creating increased federal accountability and coordination.

President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans (2000). "Creating the Will: Hispanics Achieving Educational Excellence". White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans.
This report is a follow-up to the Commission's first report in 1996, "Our Nation on the Faultline". The Commission finds that the concerted national action necessary to raise the level of educational achievement for Hispanics has not materialized. This report lays out a more targeted plan of action than the first report. It calls for recognition of the problem, replication on a large scale of effective practices and solutions, high expectations, and targeted technical assistance. The commission emphasizes high academic achievement and the results of high expectations for all Hispanic students. The report provides good information on the national level, and best practices and case studies for different sectors and for each level of education.

President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans (1996). "Our Nation on the Fault Line: Hispanic American Education". White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. With an April 1998 Update to the Report.
This report outlines the state of the educational attainment gap for Hispanic students and the implications for the economic productivity of the nation in calling for local, state, and national action. It outlines specific factors that contribute to educational disparities for Hispanic Americans, and provides recommended solutions to close the achievement gap.
Some recommendations include:

- Report states that pre-school program enrollment is less than 15% currently, and that we need to provide pre-school education for all Hispanic American children who qualify.
- Target youth apprenticeship, mentoring, and career pathway opportunities for Hispanic Students.
- Increase the pool of Latino students eligible for higher education opportunities, especially in the sciences, health-related professions, mathematics, engineering, and education.
- Train teachers to deal effectively with multicultural populations and linguistic minority students
- Ensure adequate funding and proper implementation of Bilingual Education programs

Romo, Harriett D. and Toni Falbo (1996). Latino High School Graduation: Defying the Odds. The Hogg Foundation Monograph Series. Charles M. Bonjean, ed. The University of Texas Press.
This book reports on a four-year, longitudinal study of 100 Mexican-origin youth in Austin designated as "at risk" of dropping out by the state of Texas. Qualitative and quantitative data was gathered from the families, schools, and youth themselves through questionnaires, open-ended interviews, observation, and institutional information on students. The book focuses on seven key problems identified as critical to a student's success or failure in getting a diploma, with a chapter discussing each: tracking of students, grade retention and high standards, gang involvement, teen motherhood, special needs of immigrant families, the GED, and administrative glitches and punitive school policies. They finish each chapter with recommendations for changes in school policies that would improve outcomes for future students similar to those students highlighted in each case. They also find that schools often overestimate the educational,

financial, and emotional resources of parents, and while many individuals help particular students graduate on time, the school system as a whole often impedes student progress toward graduation.

Thernstrom, Abigail and Stephan Thernstrom (2003). No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning. Simon & Schuster, New York, New York.
This book explores the historical and social context of the racial achievement gap, the conventional wisdom on causes, and a look at various efforts to eliminate the gap. The authors emphasize the work of a few good schools that successfully serve highly disadvantaged kids. These schools are setting high academic and behavioral standards, are providing nonstop learning, and are working to change the culture of their students. These schools set social norms that create effective learning environments. Teachers work hard to instill the desire, discipline, and dedication to succeed. Every student is expected to work hard to acquire the skills and knowledge that tests measure. The authors also discuss the politics of school reform, the power of teachers unions, and the issues of performance, evaluation, and school choice, and the roadblocks facing real education reform. All of the successful schools the authors point to in this book are charter schools, with much fewer constraints than public schools in this country. Choice for teachers, students, and parents plays an important role in the success of these schools.

Teachers

"Closing the Achievement Gap: Policy Implications for Teacher Quality, Curriculum and Teacher Expectations" (2004). The Education Alliance.
This paper provides a review of recent literature on factors contributing to the racial/ethnic achievement gap, focusing on unequal expectations, academic curriculum, and teacher quality. It concludes with a list of policy implications addressing the factors of academic expectations and teacher quality. This is a good source to review current research being done and what the researchers are saying.

This report provides a meta analysis of several investigations into the reasons for the persistence of achievement gaps among student groups, especially poor and African American and Hispanic students. The analysis concludes that the gap is the product of a complex set of interactions among a combination of school, home, and community factors. The report focuses on two major contributors to the achievement gap: academic expectations and teacher quality, and it presents summaries of recent research that show:

- Evidence that poor and minority students are subject to lower academic and social expectations, including lower grading standards, less access to advanced courses, limited curriculum, and less connection to school.
- Despite a positive correlation between curriculum rigor and academic achievement, and although there have been large increases in advanced placement course taking and testing by all student groups, large differences remain for African American and Hispanic students. Some researchers attribute the persistence of this gap to student tracking, lack of encouragement, insufficient access to AP and other rigorous courses, and "dumbed down" curricula.

- A quality teacher in the classroom is one of the best ways to close the achievement gap. Unfortunately, several studies show that under-qualified teachers are disproportionately assigned to teach in low performing and at-risk classrooms.
- Teacher quality is positively impacted by such factors as certification status, a degree in the field taught, and professional development, when it is presented in a targeted, collaborative, and evaluated atmosphere.

Haycock, Kati (1998). "Good Teaching Matters: How Well-Qualified Teachers Can Close the Gap." Education Trust, Washington, D.C.
This article reviews a number of studies on teacher effectiveness and student achievement. It finds teacher effectiveness and placement to be the most important factor in the achievement gap for poor and minority students. The article first walks through several studies demonstrating the lasting effects effective and ineffective teachers have on the reading and math scores of students. It finds that teacher verbal and math scores and deep content knowledge are the best indicators of teacher effectiveness. Indicators related to teaching knowledge and skills don't have a clear relationship with student achievement. The article then finds inequities in the distribution of least- and most-effective teachers across students and schools of different race and class. Modeling and exceptions-to-the-rule indicate that much of the achievement gap would disappear if the distribution of teacher effectiveness was more equitable. The paper makes recommendations for raising the quality of teachers and for guaranteeing that poor and minority students have teachers that are at least as qualified as those teaching other students.

Russell, Jeanne (2005). "Teachers Figure into the School Gap". San Antonio Express News. May 22, 2005.
This news article presents a summary of a statewide analysis of teacher data that shows that the least prepared teachers tend to end up in the most vulnerable schools. The Teacher Quality Index, devised by Ed Fuller, ranks schools on a 1 to 10 scale, assessing the school's percentage of beginning teachers, rate of teacher turnover, and percentage of teachers working outside their subject area. Each of these factors shows a statistically significant relationship with student test scores. The higher the TQI, in general, the higher the student achievement, even when comparing schools of similar demographics.

Treatment of Students

Noguera, Pedro A. and Antwi Akom (2000). "Disparities Demystified: Causes of the Racial Achievement Gap all Derive from Unequal Treatment". The Nation. June 5, 2000. p 29-30.
Poor and minority children are consistently educated in schools that are inadequate in quality and funding. But there is a racial gap in achievement that is distinguishable from class. Middle class African American students, and often Latino students as well, still lag behind white students. Educational practices often favor white students and hinder the educational opportunities of African-American and Latino students. Students of color are more likely to be excluded from gifted programs and honors and AP classes. They are more likely to be turned away from advanced courses based on the recommendation of counselors and teachers even when they meet the criteria for access. They are also more likely to be placed in remedial and special-education classes, and to be subjected to school discipline. Disproportionate sorting practices also affect

racial identities, making certain activities and courses seem safe and others off-limits. This affects peer support and exclusion, making it difficult for students to participate in courses and activities seen as 'white'. Studies have shown differences in study time and study habits for middle-class African-American and Latino students as well. Racial stereotypes and broader race relations also shape college and career aspirations, and subsequently influence priorities in school. One of the author's recommendations is "providing parents in low-income areas with the means to exert greater influence over the schools their children attend."

Valenzuela, Angela (1999). Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring. State University of New York Press.
This book presents the findings of a three-year ethnographic study of academic achievement and education among Mexican immigrant and Mexican American students at a high school in Houston, Texas. Valenzuela characterizes the school as processing their students in a subtractive manner that "divests them of important social and cultural resources, leaving them monolingual, English-speaking, neither identified with Mexico nor equipped to function competently in the American mainstream," and progressively vulnerable to academic failure. Valenzuela's research suggests that schools are organized formally and informally in ways that fracture students' cultural and ethnic identities, creating social, linguistic, and cultural divisions between immigrant and U.S.-born Latinos, and between the students and the staff. Direct consequences of these divisions are social relationships that are fragile or nonexistent, resulting in teachers who fail to create meaningful relationships with their students, students who are alienated from their teachers and other students, and a pervasive feeling among students and teachers alike, that no one cares. In this atmosphere of mistrust, real learning, says Valenzuela, is difficult, and the subtractive nature of schooling virtually assures that students will not succeed.

Community

Lopez, M. Elena (2003). "Transforming Schools Through Community Organizing: A Research Review". Family Involvement Network of Educators, Harvard Family Research Project, Harvard Graduate School of Education.
This paper looks at the difference in approach between parent involvement and community organizing in engaging parents in poor performing schools and improving children's educational outcomes. It discusses the strategies for community organizing around school reform and the accomplishments of these efforts.

Mueller, Dan (2005). "Tackling the achievement gap head on: A background and discussion paper for community groups interested in helping all children succeed in school". Wilder Research.
This paper provides an overview of the income, race, and language achievement gaps in the St. Paul and Twin Cities metro area, the factors that contribute to the gaps, and a review of strategies recommended for closing the achievement gap for preschool and school-age children. It also provides information on strategies that have weaker and inconsistent evidence for effectiveness in closing the achievement gap. It concludes with a look at how community organizations have worked with public schools on the issue, lessons learned, and recommendations for future community efforts.

Accountability

Valenzuela, Angela, ed. (2005). Leaving Children Behind: How 'Texas-style' Accountability Fails Latino Youth. State University of New York Press, Albany, NY.
While 'Texas-style' accountability claims to promote equity by making schools teach poor and minority children, the authors in this book argue that it fails Latino and other minority youth and their communities. The policy fails minority youth by exacerbating historic inequities through collateral effects of state policy and a failure to accommodate the needs and skills of English-language learners. They also argue that high-stakes test scores showing dramatic improvement in Texas are not reflected in nationwide test scores like the SAT or ACT and mask accelerating dropout and projected retention rates. They argue that the accountability system is flawed for attaching retention, promotion, and graduation to a single measure of students' academic abilities, for attaching high-stakes consequences for schools and districts that encourages a test-driven curriculum, and for promoting a uniform and objectivist way of knowing. The result is the redirecting of school focus away from keeping kids in school and individualized attention to students.

Reforming Schools

Noguera, Pedro A. (2004) "Transforming High Schools". Educational Leadership. May 2004. p. 26-31.
National studies have pointed to the following as causes of the problems facing high schools: organizational flaws including fragmentation, insufficient attention to quality control in programs and services, and a lack of coherence in mission; school curriculum offers a broad but disconnected variety of courses that lack depth and intellectual rigor; teachers tend to rely on a lecture format and emphasize delivery of content rather than mastery of knowledge and skills; pervasive student alienation, boredom, strained relations with adults, and anti-intellectual peer cultures; schools are too large and overcrowded. Major reforms being undertaken in high schools were standards-based accountability and efforts to personalize schooling. The successful cases were relatively small schools that had successfully created a positive school culture and developed high work expectations for all students, provided on-site, year-round professional development designed around teachers' needs, and required a high level of parent involvement. The schools took the time to make sure that teachers, parents, and students understood the purpose behind each reform strategy and had mechanisms in place to evaluate whether a reform was achieving its goal.

Bilingual Education

Genesee, Fred and Patricia Gándara (1999). "Bilingual Education Programs: A Cross-National Perspective". Journal of Social Issues. 55:4, p. 665-685.
This article evaluates the effects of second-language immersion programs in Canada and dual-language bilingual programs in the U.S on prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping in K-12 students from minority and majority group backgrounds. The authors find that bilingual education has positive effects for inter-group attitudes, identity/self-esteem, language use, and in

some cases affiliation and contact. However, they also find that changes in inter-group attitudes and behavior were not always sustained over the long term nor as substantial as might have been hoped. They also find that without sustained, explicit attention to socially based inter-group factors, teachers often re-create in the classroom unequal inter-group relationships that exist outside of school. With proper cross-cultural training, teachers are able to recognize unequal relationships among student groups in their classroom and develop alternative teaching strategies to serve different groups more equitably.

Successful Programs

Brown, Sarita and Deborah Santiago (2004). "What Works For Latino Students". Excelencia in Education, Inc., Washington, D.C., February 2004.
This publication builds on the 1999 edition of "What Works for Latino Youth". The primary purpose of this publication is to provide information about programs that are working for Latino students. What Works For Latino Students was presented to Hispanic educators and policy makers seeking to identify increased opportunities and achievement for Hispanic students. Many of the programs are cited as having a positive effect on Hispanic student achievement. Their research concluded the following as key characteristics of programs that work.
Successful programs:

- Provide parents with access to and information on the public school system.
- Have a significant Hispanic presence among the dedicated and professional staff, serving as mentors.
- Provide opportunities for small-group work, self-directed learning, peer-group activities and leadership opportunities.
- Offer comprehensive services to students and their families that assist in addressing the multiple needs and challenges.
- Integrate Hispanic culture into services and programs in order to assist students navigate cultural differences between their home, community and school.
- Have professional and capable leaders who develop strong networks with the community
- Provide bilingual services and information to students and their families
- Have staff who know their program goals and take steps to measure progress, confront obstacles, and implement policies to achieve these goals.

Several Texas based programs are profiled. These include: Avance family Support and Educational Program, Descubriendo La Lectura/Reading recovery, Project GRAD (Graduates really Achieve Dreams), Project SEED, SER Child Development Centers, Coca-Cola Valued Youth program and TexPREP (Texas Prefreshman Engineering Program)

Dispelling the Myth – Online. DTM 2.0. The Education Trust.
http://www2.edtrust.org/edtrust/dtm/ 10/27/2005.
This program provides information on high-performance and high-improvement schools for low-income and minority students by state. You can search for schools with similar demographics to a specific school but that have higher scores or made greater improvement, or you can search by specific demographic or achievement criteria. It provides score results for these schools by race, poverty, and subject matter.

Edcouch-Elsa High School/Llano Grande Center for Research and Development:

"Edcouch-Elsa High School/Llano Grande Center" (2005). National School Boards Association, Alexandria, VA. http://www.nsba.org/site/page_REN4.asp?TRACKID=&DID=539&CID=428 <11/18/2005>

Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District. http://www.eeisd.org/ <11/22/2005>

"Llano Grande Center's Oral History Project Sparks Cultural and Economic Renewal in Texas's Rio Grande Valley" (2003). The Rural School and Community Trust. http://www.ruraledu.org/projects/project0400.html <11/18/2005>

"Origins: The History of the Llano Grande Center". Llano Grande Center for Research and Development. http://www.llanogrande.org/origins.html <11/18/2005>

"Small Towns, Big Dreams: In Dying Rural Economies, Youth Efforts Infuse New Hope and Money" (2001). What Kids Can Do, Providence, RI. http://www.whatkidscando.org/smalltowns.html <11/18/2005>

"Relationships. That's where educational reform begins. Relationships: building up trust; building up commitments; giving students and teachers and community people an opportunity to believe, to create change, to try something new. All this starts with one person getting to know another person – listening, talking, taking the time." – Francisco Guajardo, Director

The Llano Grande Center for Research and Development has evolved from an oral history project into a regional intellectual and economic center for the Mexican-American communities of the Rio Grande Valley Delta area that has helped revitalize the region's educational, cultural, civic, and economic life. It exists in an extremely poor area. 91% of families earn less than $10,000 a year. Combined assessed valuation per student is $24,223 (compared to $802,612 in one of the wealthiest districts in the state). 40% of students migrate with their families based on crop schedule – the school population can expand or shrink by hundreds of students within a few weeks time.

It started as an oral history project that effectively changed the educational experience for students. It taught oral history research methods, created learning communities rather than teacher experts, moved students beyond viewing their communities as poor to find inspiration in the lives of elders; students recorded, archived, transcribed, translated, and edited for publication in English and Spanish. Work became material for students in all grade levels, and has since been reworked into fiction, art, drama, and photography and television projects.

The work connects schools to the community through documenting and celebrating its history, its members, and its identity. It changes students' perceptions of their community. The work spurs community building activities and exchanges between communities inside and outside of school. It has also brought in additional funds into the community that support enhanced educational activities.

The project has since moved beyond oral history; analyzing needs for housing, education, and technology in the community. All the research work is pragmatically geared towards community and economic development. Alumni provide mentoring and technical guidance for projects. The project has intentionally developed a high tech component; digital storytelling, computer graphics, etc. – focus on acquiring 21st-century skills students will need in the future.

Joint teacher and alumni efforts to get students accepted with scholarships into the most selective colleges and universities.

El Paso Collaborative for Academic Achievement (EPCAE):

Blot, Kevin J., Della-Piana, Gabriel, and Turner, Wyona. "The Development and Employment of Formative Evaluation Instruments to Enhance Students' Opportunity to Learn" (1998). S4H, 1998 FIE Conference.

Navarro, M. Susana and Natalicio, Diana S. (1999). Closing the Achievement Gap in El Paso: A Collaboration for K-16 Renewal". Phi Delta Kappan, 80:8.

Villa, Elsa Q. et al. "K-16 Partnerships: Casting a Broad Net for Filling the Critical Gaps in Engineering" (2001). T4E-10, 31st ASEE/IEEE Frontiers in Education Conference, October 10-13, 2001, Reno, Nevada.

"As a result of the preliminary sessions, 11 key leaders came together to form the El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence. Included among these leaders were the superintendents of the three districts mentioned above, the presidents of the El Paso community College and the University of Texas, El Paso; the executive director of Region 19, the Texas Education Agency's regional service center; the lead organizer of the El Paso Interreligious Sponsoring Organization, a grassroots organization affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation; the presidents of the Greater El Paso and El Paso Hispanic chambers of commerce; the mayor of the city of El Paso; and the county judge."

Action agenda emphasized four priorities:

1. Implementation of a high-quality standards-based curriculum and instruction program for all students, accompanied by professional development for school professionals to successfully implement such a program
2. Preparation of the best teachers possible, who on completion of their university program are equipped with the skills and abilities needed to bring students to standards-level learning
3. Leadership committed to high achievement among all students and to establish policies that support such achievement in school districts as well as in colleges and universities
4. Engagement of the broad community to foster understanding and ensure support of renewal efforts

"The basic mission of EPCAE is to promote achievement standards that are ambitious, age appropriate, and consistent with national standards, so the progress of all students can be monitored rigorously and progressively. . . The EPCAE proposes that the opportunity to learn and to achieve such standards is grounded in alternative, standards-based teaching strategies that focus on the students' active search for knowledge (e.g., construct, explain, converse, investigate) . . . 'knowledge often should emerge from experience with problems. In this way, students may recognize the need to apply a particular concept or procedure and have a strong conceptual basis for reconstructing their knowledge at a later time'".

One key component to the EPCAE is simultaneous renewal in K-12 and teacher education. UTEP teacher training has been completely revamped, and is very much field-based, linking new teachers to the changes taking place in area schools. Professional development has

also prepared teachers and mentors to implement hands-on experimentation and cooperative learning in the classroom.

Another element in EPCAE's work has been in demonstrating to students the connection between more rigorous and collaborative work in school and career possibilities, especially in science and technology. "An array of programs provides rich venues for attracting young people into engineering-, technology- and science-related careers. These account for contact with over 8,000 young people every year – each with opportunities to explore a number of career-related options and to interact with professional engineers, scientists, undergraduate/graduate science and engineering students and university faculty."

Test scores have shown a remarkable improvement in percentage of students passing math and reading exams, and considerable reduction in the minority achievement gap.

"Equity-Driven Achievement-Focused School Districts" (2000). Charles A. Dana Center, University of Texas at Austin, September 2000.

This report describes an in-depth study of four school districts that had multiple indicators of widespread, equitable success for all student groups, including impressive gains in passing rates on all TAAS tests for 6 years and widespread improvement in academic performance. Major findings were distilled into five themes:

1. State context of accountability for achievement and equity. This became the basis of the successful changes in the four districts.
2. Local equity catalysts. These included federal and state policies and monitoring, and local activists or community groups concerned about inequitable student achievement.
3. Ethical response of district leadership. In response to the accountability system and local catalysts, a group of district leaders decided to develop a district in which all student groups achieve at high levels.
4. District transformation. District leaders understood they had to: change teaching and learning in the classroom, develop and promulgate shared equity beliefs, institute focused equity practices, use proactive redundancy to achieve learning goals, treat staff in a positive and supportive way, and adopt new roles for district staff. The focus of the central office became student learning, and district personnel understood that the way to improve student learning was to support and assist teachers and principals.
5. Everyday equity. The pursuit of educational equity and excellence became the focus of everyday schooling.

Gándara, Patricia (2002). "A Study of High School Puente: What We Have Learned About Preparing Latino Youth for Postsecondary Education". Educational Policy. 16:4, p. 474-495.

This article analyzes results of High School Puente, a California program designed to increase Latino secondary students' enrollment in college. The study finds significant improvements in preparation for college, attitudes and aspirations, and college going over non-Puente students. Puente students attended college at nearly double the rate of non-Puente students who started high school with the same grades and test scores.

Gándara, Patricia, et al. (1998). "Capturing Latino Students in the Academic Pipeline". From the California Policy Seminar Brief Series, May 1998.
This report reviews three California school-based programs aimed at improving the rate of high school completion and college attendance among Latino students in different segments of the population (lowest achievers at risk of dropping out, underachievers with above-average test scores and the potential to take college-prep courses, and varied achievement levels to ensure high school graduation and college enrollment). All three programs set high academic standards and accompanied them with intense, student-centered institutional support. The most challenging implementation issues included crossing cultural borders among the various constituents, challenging tracking and related cultural beliefs, and fluctuating program support and school staff turnover. All three programs exhibited measurable successes.

Gold, Eva, Elaine Simon and Chris Brown (2002). "Strong Neighborhoods Strong Schools: The Indicators Project on Education Organizing". Research for Action and Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform.
Over the past decade, community organizing for school reform has taken root. Community groups work at the neighborhood and policy levels to address a range of issues facing urban public schools, and their efforts have begun to pay off. This report provides an Education Organizing Indicators Framework that identifies the strategies and accomplishments of education organizing. It also describes a Theory of Change that illustrates how the work of community organizing groups leads to increased community capacity and subsequently to improved student learning. They argue that when reforming schools is accompanied by building strong communities, the institution of schooling is itself fundamentally changed, increasing the chances that reform efforts will be carried out and sustained. Community groups help bring new resources to the schools with the highest need, improve school climate, and create better conditions for teaching and learning.

James, Donna Walker, Sonia Jurich and Steve Estes (2001). "Raising Minority Academic Achievement: A Compendium of Education Programs and Practices". Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum.
This report looks at 38 education programs that are providing measurable outcomes in improving academic achievement of minority students. The report provides an overview of each program, the components of the program, key findings, and contributing factors. The most frequent strategies of the programs studied include: program quality, academically demanding curriculum, professional development, family involvement, reduced student-to-teacher ratios, individualized supports, extended learning time, community involvement, long-term (multiple-year) supports for youth, and scholarships and/or financial support. The report also emphasizes the need for methodologically sound evaluations of educational programs that provide disaggregated data in order to adequately measure program effects on minority academic achievement.

"LULAC's Grassroots Approach to the Latino Dropout Problem: A Hispanic Education Summit"(2003). League of United Latin American Citizens.
LULAC organized two summits – one in Cicero, Illinois in 2002, and another in Dallas, Texas in 2003 – to address the critical state of Latino education, particularly at the secondary level. The summit approach was beneficial in bringing together concerned citizens with school

representatives and business and political leaders to share perspectives and to develop recommendations for improvement. LULAC hopes to organize other such summits across the country, to encourage the Latino community to voice its concerns and to hold school systems accountable.

Miles, Karen Hawley and Darling-Hammond, Linda (1997). "Rethinking the Allocation of Teaching Resources: Some Lessons from High Performing Schools". CPRE Research Report Series RR-38, Consortium for Policy Research in Education, Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania.
This study looks at the innovative ways in which five high performing public schools have organized their professional resources. The resource reallocation strategies they discuss include reduction of specialized programs, more flexible student grouping, structures to create more personal environments, longer and varied blocks of instructional time, more common planning time, and creative definition of staffing roles and work day. The authors then looked at the effects these strategies had on teacher resource distribution. Teachers and leaders stressed the following skill areas in successfully implementing these strategies: developing or learning new curriculum material and approaches; developing new instructional techniques to engage a wider range of learners; diagnosing the learning needs of a more diverse group of learners; assessing the progress of a wide range of learners on a variety of performances; working in teams; and supervising a teaching intern or aide.

"Opening Doors: Promising Lessons from Five Texas High Schools" (2001). Charles A. Dana Center, The University of Texas at Austin.
This project identified five Texas high schools with a majority of students identified as economically disadvantaged yet student achievement was above the state average as measured by the Texas Learning Index, the Algebra I End-of-Course Examination, or Advanced Placement enrollment and course offerings. Researchers then made two-day visits to each school where they conducted interviews, observed activities, and gathered planning documents and program materials. Key practices identified in all of the schools include: setting clear goals and establishing high expectations for student achievement (state tests, mastery of curriculum, and college preparation), using student performance data to guide instruction, focusing on instruction and individual learning, supporting teachers and enhancing collaboration, and fostering an environment of respect and affection for students.

"Raising Minority Academic Achievement: The Department of Defense Model" (2003). The Program of Research on the Affirmative Development of Academic Ability. Teachers College, Columbia University.
According to the NAEP 1998-2000, the average academic performance of all students in the Department of Defense Education Activity agency, the average academic performance of all students in DoDEA schools is high, and the performance of African American and Hispanic students is among the highest in the nation. The National Education Goals Panel commissioned a research group to study the schools and to identify policies and practices, which may contribute to the success of the schools. Lessons to be learned from the schools include the following:

1. The value of high expectations for all and of clear goals and accountability measures
2. The utility of data to drive decisions for management, policy, and practice

3. The importance of quality of staff, compensation, instructional materials, physical facilities, and ratio of staff to students
4. The utility of centralized direction coupled with flexibility in the adaptation of teaching and learning to the special requirements of specific situations
5. The importance of shared responsibility and shared values—accountability, commitment, and discipline—across schools, their communities, families, and students
6. The importance of the involvement of parents with their schools and their active support of their students' education
7. The active use of supplementary education including preschool and after school experiences

Reyes, Pedro, Jay D. Scribner and Alicia Paredes Scribner, ed. (1999). Lessons from High-Performing Hispanic Schools: Creating Learning Communities. Teachers College Press, New York, New York.
Using primarily qualitative case studies, this book analyzes high-scoring schools in the Valley. Successful schools had teachers empowered to match curricula to the unique needs of Hispanic students and instruction was interactive and student-centered. Adults and student peer groups shared common aspirations, goals, and visions of what should be expected of Hispanic students and their schools. Assessment was ongoing and advocacy-oriented. Teachers worked to empower students to become excited about and responsible for their own learning. The research led to the development of training modules (Reyes and Scribner 1996).

Snipes, Jason C. and Casserly, Michael D. (2004). "Urban School Systems and Education Reform: Key Lessons From a Case Study of Large Urban School Systems". Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk. 9:2, 127-141.
This study looks at Houston ISD, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Sacramento City USD, and the Chancellor's District in NYC, all of which demonstrated improvement in overall student achievement and the narrowing of the minority achievement gap over at least 3 years. The authors highlighted the importance of establishing preconditions for reform – political and organizational stability and consensus on educational reform strategies. Strategies for success included specific student achievement goals with a set schedule and defined consequences; accountability systems to hold district leadership and building-level staff personally responsible for producing results; focused attention on lowest-performing schools, including resources and quality teachers and administrators; adopting district-wide curricula and instructional approaches rather than allowing each school to devise its own strategies; consistent, centrally organized, thorough professional development and training; defining role for the central office that entailed guiding, supporting, and improving building-level instruction; data-driven decision making and instruction, including providing early and ongoing assessment data to teachers and principals; starting with reforms at the elementary grade levels; and providing intensive instruction in reading and math.

Steinmetz, Leann E. (2003). "Fostering Preservice Teachers' Knowledge of Community: A School Community Project. National Social Science Association Journal. 20:2.
This paper reports on the successes of a program to get undergraduate preservice teachers to look at community resources in their teaching. In providing a project to get Preservice teachers

exploring the school community and its institutions and resources, the program encourages teachers to think about the community as a resource for their efforts in the classroom. It also pushes preservice teachers to explore schools and school districts outside of their own experience, helping to dispel prejudices and stereotypes about other areas of the city or region that might end up being potential employers.

APPENDIX K
Description of Current Programs

AISD Overview

STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS

AISD is an effort-based school district. Effort-based education assumes that sustained and directed effort yields high achievement, and can also create ability. In short, people can become smart by working hard at the right kinds of learning tasks. In AISD, student effort and achievement are organized around a solid curriculum aligned with state standards and instructional strategies grounded in research-based best practices. Support for the success of all students is provided through a three-tier intervention model that assures early intervention for struggling learners.

Tier I - Classroom instruction and interventions at the classroom level;
Tier II - Supplemental reading or math interventions within the school day;
Tier III - Intensive reading and math interventions, beyond the school day.

Teaching and Learning Strategies – Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment

The district curriculum determines what is to be taught to students. It is imperative that this curriculum is aligned with state standards and that it is clearly communicated to teachers. The AISD curriculum is closely aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), which are the state curriculum standards.

The curriculum is organized and communicated to teachers through detailed *Instructional Planning Guides* (IPG), which align K-12 instructional objectives with TEKS. The IPGs also include references to instructional resources and research-based instructional strategies. The district publishes a *Family Learning Guide* to provide parents with suggestions on how to support student learning of the TEKS.

The Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh has organized a set of research-based instructional best practices into nine *Principles of Learning.* The district partnership with the Institute for Learning supports the integration of the Principles of Learning in all instruction.

Student Learning Profiles are used for ongoing monitoring of student success. These profiles provide timely assessments of student progress in reading, writing, math science and social studies so that appropriate adjustments can be made as appropriate.

English Language Learner Program

AISD is resolute about raising the academic achievement of its English Language Learners (ELLs), and is engaged in implementing a district-wide initiative. At the elementary level, the focus of instruction is on the acquisition of both academic Spanish and academic English. At the secondary level, the focus is on the acquisition of academic English and the incorporation and acceleration of rigorous problem solving skills.

Towards this effort elementary level, bilingual education teachers are gaining greater knowledge of Rigorous Instruction in Spanish and English (RISE), a framework built on providing all English Language Learners equal access to the standard curriculum while providing coherent programs in Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language.

In addition, middle and high school level English as a Second Language (ESL) and general education teachers have formed learning communities to gaining knowledge of the scaffolding and acceleration of English language and the teaching of problem solving skills.

Student identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) at the middle school level are provided an opportunity to accelerate their English language and reading skill by participating in the READ 180, a technology-based program that provides students an opportunity to accelerate language and reading skills.

At the high school level, recently arrived immigrant students are able to attend high school at the International High School (IHS). The International High School is designed to provide a sheltered environment where students can accelerate their knowledge of English, apply their previous knowledge base while acclimating to the American school system. The IHS is structured as a school within a school and is housed at Johnston High School. The IHS is complemented by the International Welcome Center (IWC). The IWC welcomes students to the district and completes academic-assessments, prior to students enrolling in AISD.

Special Education Program

Special education services provide students with disabilities with support in achieving at high levels, with a focus on the following:

- Standardized Inclusion of Best Practices District wide.
- Improved collaboration between general education and special education departments.
- Addressing relationship issues between students with disabilities and their peers through Positive Behavior Support initiative.
- Improving programming for special education students aged 19-22
- Improving customer service satisfaction,
- Implementation of Bilingual ELEVAR initiative.

Magnet Program

AISD offers students several advanced academic magnet programs at the secondary level. The magnet program at Kealing Magnet School offers students courses in math, science, technology, and leberal arts. The program at Fulmore Middle School offers an emphasis on humanities, international studies, and law. At the high school level, the Liberal Arts and Science Academy at Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) offers students a choice of enriched academic programs. The magnet programs offer students advanced academic studies in an environment built on collegial relationships, individual growth and intellectual rigor.

Gifted and Talented Program

The Gifted and Talented (G/T) Program identifies students in four core areas – English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. G/T students receive differentiated instruction in the core courses. Those courses include; Advanced Placement (AP),

Pre-AP, International Baccalaureate (IB), magnet courses or other designated courses. At the elementary level and secondary level, students identified for the G/T Program explore further and study more intensively the content of their academic subjects.

Pre-Kindergarten Program

In order to better prepare students for kindergarten, AISD proposes Early Childhood/Pre-Kindergarten Centers specifically designed for pre-kindergarten children. These centers will allow a greater number of children to be served, will allow for greater inclusion of students with special needs and will hold the potential of encouraging parents to engage in their child's learning.

Blue Print Schools

AISD has identified six under-performing elementary and middle schools to serve as prototypes for future efforts to raise student achievement. Intensive restructuring of these "blueprint schools" includes providing:

- Well-qualified teachers in every classroom
- Proven leadership
- Consistent systems and procedures
- Specific curriculum
- Extensive professional development
- Structured student support systems, and
- Strong relationships between parent and school staff.

ACCELERATION OF LEARNING

The district has developed a variety of programs and services for students who have fallen behind academically and require supplemental instruction and support to accelerate their learning. The following are descriptions of major AISD programs designed to accelerate student learning and progress towards graduation.

SSI / Student Success Initiative

Each elementary school is provided funding to support supplemental instruction for students who are struggling learners. Supplemental instruction is provided by certified teachers during the school day or through extended learning opportunities, after school.

Secondary Credit Recovery & Acceleration

Secondary School Campus-Based Tutorials
Each middle school and high school is provided funding to support campus-based tutorials. The structure and format of these tutorial programs is determined by the campus principal and approved by their Associate Superintendent.

Gonzalo Garza Independent High School
Gonzalo Garza is an open enrollment high school/choice schooll designed to meet the needs of student who:

- Have experienced unusuall life circumstances that have created barriers to graduation

- Have dropped out or are likely to drop out of regular high school
- Wish to pursue an eduation that provides integrated health and social services and prepares students for college; and
- Will thrive in a non-traditional approach to learning.
- Whomay opt for a flexible school schedule but must attend a minimum of 20 hours a week and
- Who have parental permission.

Diversified Education Through Leadership, Technology, Academics (DELTA)
The goal of DELTA is to provide an individualized, self-paced instructional program for recovered and potential school leavers in order for them to earn academic credits and graduate from high school. The DELTA Program is made available to students enrolled in each AISD comprehensive high school and Garza High School. DELTA is also used at alernative educational settings, including: the Alternative Learning Center, Gardner Betts Leadership Program, Phoenix House, Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program, Travis County Detention Center, and the La Fuente Learning Center.

Virtual School Program (VSP)
The Virtual School Program is a non-traditional, home based academic program that is available to high school seniors. The goal of VSP is to provide academic opportunities for students who are unable to participatre in a traditional classroom setting, most often because the are parents of young infants or must work full-time for economic reasons. Student in VSP earn high school credits and graduate from high school.

Student in the VSP are encouraged to dedicate a minimum of two hours daily completing self-paced lessons at home on an internet laptop assigned to them. Specially trained VSP teachers meet three times a week with student for a total of five hours per week. VSP is an open entry/open exit academic program.

Summer School
Each year, the district provides summer school programs for students ranging from Pre-K through high school. At the elementary school level, these programs are designed to accelerate student mastery of the English language, English language arts and math skills. Secondary level summer school also provides students with the opportunities for recovery of credit for courses failed during the regular school year.

COLLEGE READINESS AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

<u>AVID</u>

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is a program designed to help underachieving middle and high school students prepare for and succeed in colleges and universities. AVID students commit themselves to improvement and preparation for college. AVID offers a rigorous progrm of instruction in academic “survival skills” and college level entry skills. The AVID program teaches students how to study, read for content, take notes and mangage time. Students participate in collaborative study groups or tutorials led by tutors skilled in socratic questionning strategies.

SMART

Science, Math, and Reading Tutorials (SMART) involves certified teachers providing assistance in order to better prepare students for college prepartory classes.

GEAR UP

The Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) program is a discretionary grant program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP is a six-year grant, which provides services at high-poverty middle and high schools. Austin ISD's GEAR UP program serves an entire cohort of students beginning no later than the seventh grade and follows the cohort through high school. GEAR UP funds are also providing college scholarships to low-income students.

Advanced Placement Courses

Through college-level Advanced Placement (AP) courses, students have the opportunity to earn credit or advanced standing at most of the nation's colleges and universities. AP courses allow students to get a head start on college-level work, improve their writing skills, sharpen their problem-solving techniques, and develop the study habits necessary for tackling rigorous course work.

Pre–Advanced Placement Courses

Academic courses that lead to Advanced Placement courses are referred to as Pre-AP courses. Pre-AP courses can be taken in grades 6-11. Emphasis is given to the skills and strategies students need to succeed in AP courses in grades 11 and 12 and in post-secondary education.

AP Incentive Program

Beginning in Fall 2006, an AP Incentive Program will be funded at Travis, Reagan, Johnston, LBJ, Akins, Crockett, and Lanier high schools. This project will provide a $300.00 financial incentive to each student who earns a score of three or better on the AP exam. The AP Incentive Program will also provide the financial incentive to teachers for each student scoring three or higher on the AP exam. The staff incentive aims to recruit highly trained AP teachers to Austin's seven neediest high schools.

Austin Community College – AISD Connection

High School seniors who participate in the ACC-AISD Connection go through the college acceptance process with Austin Community College, while enrolled as an AISD student. This four step program involves the college application process, orientation and optional tour of ACC's five community college campuses, placement testing and academic and financial aid counseling by a college counselor. During the 2005-2006 school year, 86% of AISD's graduating seniors completed the process and were admitted to Austin Community College.

Dual Credit Courses

Dual Credit is a non-fee based program for students who are similtaneously enrolled in AISD and ACC. The students attend pre-approved college-level courses either at their high school or on an ACC campus and earn both college and high school credits Dual credit requires students:

- Be high school juniors or seniors,
- Be enrolled in a maximum of two college-level courses per semester
- Complete the Early College Start application
- Meet ACC's enrollment requirements
- Be recommended by high school principal and
- Have parental permission.

Career and Technology College Articulated Courses

A number of content-enhanced career and technology high school courses have been identified as equals to specific introductory-level college courses. A student completing these courses must earn a grade of "B" or better to receive articulated credit to Austin Community College. Completion of a course with this academic standing counts a a Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP) measure. All courses eligible for college credit are noted on students' transcripts and allow credit towards a certifiacte program or an associates degree in the career field.

International Baccalaureate Program

The IB program is open to all students and is currently available at Anderson High School. Johnston High School and Martin Middle School are involved in a planning phase for a middle to high school articulated IB program. The IB program is an internationally recognized curriculum that offers eleventh and twelfth grade students an opportunity to earn an IB Diploma. To earn an IB Diploma students complete courses and test in six IB subjects. This advanced comprehensive program of study offers an integrated approach to learning across the disciplines with an emphasis on meeting the challenges of living and working in a global, technological society.

STUDENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT

In order to put forth their best efforts in the learning process, many students need support in having regular school attendance, having healthy physical and personal development and overcoming obstacles to daily living associated with poverty. AISD efforts to address the attendance, behavior support and basic needs of students and their families are organized based on the three tier intervention model used to address academic needs. The roles and duties of district student support staff, including counselors, school/community liaisons and parent support specialists have been clarified to provide for more timely and effective interventions. For example, counselor duties have been modified to reduce administrative tasks, such as development of master schedules at secondary schools, and school/community liaisons are giving priority to early intervention support for students with attendance and behavior problems.

AISD student support services have also been strengthened through community youth and family service collaborations, including the Travis County Children's Mental Health Planning Partnership, City of Austin Truancy Task Force and the joint City/School District Juvenile Justice Task Force. These collaborations leverage community resources to link students and families with mental health and support services.

Early Intervention for Struggling Learners

The district strategy for supporting struggling learners provides for both early intervention and intensive services to address student needs related to academics, attendance and behavior. Early interventions include school-wide and classroom level strategies for supporting student learning, regular attendance and positive behaviors. The following are examples of the district's early intervention support services:

- The district *Positive Behavior Support (PBS)* initiative provides campuses with training and ongoing support for actively teaching, modeling and reinforcing expected student behaviors. Thirty campuses are formally implementing PBS systems this school year. The district plan is to have all campuses implementing PBS within the next three years.
- Several district departments, including Student Support Services, Alternative Education, Special Education and Professional Development collaborate to provide teachers specialized training and support related to *classroom management*. The training includes strategies for creating a positive learning environment and for deescalating potentially disruptive situations.
- Each Campus Improvement Plan is required to have a goal addressing *Character Education*. All campuses incorporate the teaching of specific character skills into school-wide, classroom and extra curricular activities. This year, campuses are focusing on these five character skills: Respect, Courage, Caring, Honesty, Perseverance.
- Community education programs, such as Prime Time and 21st Century Learning Center programs, which provide students with extended learning and personal development opportunities after school.

Intensive Interventions for High Need Students

Students with additional support service needs are provided more intensive interventions, including:

- *Campus Impact Process* which involves an assessment of student needs, individual student service plan and regular monitoring of student progress;
- *District School/Community Liaisons* (licensed counselors and social workers) assist students and families short-term problem solving and connections with community services related to health, mental health and basic needs.
- *District Dropout Specialists* work closely with students, families, campus staff and the courts to address barriers to regular school attendance.
- *District collaborations* with agencies such as Communities in Schools, SafePlace, and LifeWorks provide school based services supporting student personal development and positive relationships. District collaborations with community mental health agencies, such as Austin/Travis County MHMR, Austin Child Guidance and the Children's Mental Health Partnership help to address more intensive student needs.

SAFE AND NURTURING CAMPUS ENVIRONMENTS

The district is implementing recommendations put forth by the *Community Safety Task Force.* These recommendations addressed: Policies, Facilities, Campus Environment, Continuum of Support for Students and Families. Following are major district initiatives in place to address these areas:

- The District Improvement Plan includes specific performance goals for reducing the disparity in serious discipline among ethnic groups. For example, one objective is to reduce the number of Hispanic middle school students suspended from about 24 percent to less than eight percent over the next three years.
- Implementation of bond-funded campus safety enhancements, including cash doors in all portables, surveillance cameras, and keyless locks.
- Increased the numbers of SROs on high school campuses and increasing the duty hours for security monitors on middle school campuses.
- District wide implementation of Positive Behavior Support (PBS) systems. Principles of PBS include: campus wide agreement on specific positive behaviors to be actively taught, modeled and reinforced, campus wide agreement on behavior support strategies, use of data to monitor effectiveness and to make adjustments. Thirty campuses are currently receiving district support for implementation of PBS systems and additional campuses will be added each year.
- District wide implementation of Character Education to actively teach, model and reinforce specific character skills. The focus this year is on Respect, Courage, Caring, Honesty, Perseverance.
- The district Customer Service Initiative, led by the District Ombudsman, provides training for staff on Guidelines for Model Customer Service. Implementation of these guidelines is monitored through customer service satisfaction surveys, random phone calls and site visits.
- Student support services have been reorganized and are more closely aligned with the district Struggling Learner Intervention Model. These changes are expected to provide a more timely and effective response to student needs and more effective collaboration with community social services and mental health agencies.

Interlocal Overview

Program Name	Funding Source	Program Description
Community Education (AISD Interlocal)	General Fund	The Community Education funding provides program and administrative staff to develop and administer extended day classes, activities, and dropout reduction services through the collaborative efforts of the City of Austin and AISD, as well as federal, state and other local funding. Specific services include: after-school care and enrichment classes, educational and enrichment summer camps, education and support services for homeless students, and arrangements for public access to community schools for social, educational, recreational, and civic activities.
Victory Tutorial (AISD Interlocal)	General Fund	Tutors work out of branch libraries to recruit, train, match, and supervise volunteers who work one-on-one with participants. AISD recruits tutors from its Adopt-A-School Program and from throughout the community. AISD also recruits students through extensive outreach efforts on school campuses and in close coordination with the branch libraries.
After School Enrichment Prime Time Afterschool Program (AISD Interlocal)	General Fund	After School Enrichment provides after school programs at 25 schools. The program provides extended learning and youth development classes and activities during after school hours, two-to-three days per week. Schools apply for inclusion and are selected based on criteria, which includes low-income population, use of resources and parental involvement.
Weed and Seed Grant	US Dept of Justice	The program goal is to develop a community of learners centered on community schools by involving teachers and parents in the provision of free after school classes and activities. The classes reinforce student academic skills and increase student motivation for learning. As parents become active partners in the education of their children they will reinforce educational values in the community.
Adult Basic Education Program-ESL (AISD Interlocal in FY06)	General Fund/CDBG	The purpose of the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program is to provide English as a Second Language (ESL) classes in the evening to adults at AISD schools. City funds are combined with funds from Travis County and Austin Community College to support a total of seven school sites, which provide a comprehensive program of ESL classes.
Childcare forTeen Parents	CDBG	AISD competed in the childcare RFA in mid-2004 for childcare funding that started Fiscal Year 2005 with two renewals options. AISD receives $107,240 for childcare services in the centers at Crockett, Reagan, Travis, and Johnston High Schools. The program provides about 17 childcare spaces during the school year. The children served are infants and toddlers. In addition to childcare, the program provides parent education for the teens.

Program Name	Funding Source	Program Description
STEPS for a Healthier Austin	CDC	AISD provides/implements a variety of physical activity, nutrition, obesity prevention, and coordinated school health interventions and system redesigns.
Crime Prevention Program- Mendez and Reading and Math Camps 78744 Youth of Promise Initiative	Texas Dept of Family and Protective Services	The goal is to reduce risky behaviors in youth that attend school in the 78744 area by providing effective after school intervention programs and reading and math summer camps. Services targeting Mendez include: afterschool and summer youth leadership, peer mediation, extreme games, community service, mentoring programs, parenting classes, and project based learning. Reading and Math summer camps for elementary students at Houston, Langford, Palm, Widen and Rodriguez begin in June and last for approximately four weeks. Students are administered pre/post testing. Working in small groups, students utilize a curriculum based on the McGraw Hill Math Enrichment Kit and materials from Pentathlon. A rich supply of fiction and non-fiction books is used to support both math and reading skills development and reinforcements
Youthbuild Austin-GED (AISD MOA)	N/A (no funding)	The AISD provides GED support services for the HHSD Youthbuild Austin program. The Youthbuild Austin program provides construction and vocational training and GED preparation for youth who have dropped out of school. AISD provides: GED books, standardized curriculum, official GED practice tests, training and technical assistance for GED instructors, and outreach and promotion of the Youthbuild program.

APPENDIX L
Possible Implementation Plan Action Steps

The following points are presented for possible inclusion as action steps in a detailed plan for implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force on Education and Quality of Life in Austin for Hispanic Students, should such an implementation plan be directed by AISD and the City of Austin. These points came out of task force discussions on objectives and strategies, and were considered more appropriate as action steps at the implementation plan level. They are not presented in any particular order of preference or priority.

- Provide district and campus bilingual help desks or help lines.
- Promote oral history projects within language programs to develop mutual understanding and respect.
- Create opportunities to unite different groups within the Hispanic community, such as exploration of shared histories.
- Develop a hemispheric perspective in the curriculum, with opportunities for students to connect with peers in other countries and to develop a broader view of the Spanish language and Spanish speakers.
- Promote greater awareness of the achievements and contributions of members of the Hispanic community.
- Promote greater awareness of the value of learning to speak Spanish.
- Provide more adult education programs and encourage Hispanic parents to participate in those programs.
- Encourage Hispanic alumni and business and community members to volunteer their assistance.