
Minorities in AISD Schools

— A Look at the Data —

STAAR Reading Scores

Figure 1
Reading passing rates increased each year for **English language learners** but decreased each year for students in **special education**. Performance gaps remained stable for **economically disadvantaged** students.

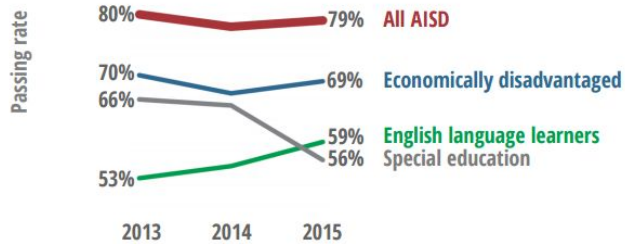
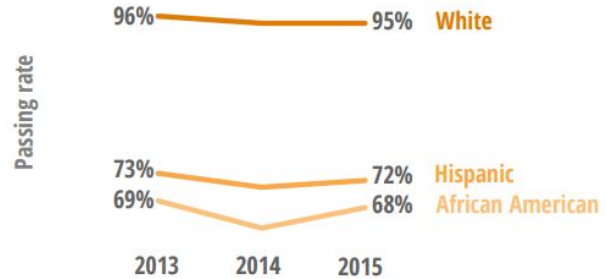


Figure 3
Reading performance gaps remained stable for **race/ethnicity**.



STAAR Math Scores

Figure 4
Math passing rates declined in 2015 for **English language learners** and students in **special education**, widening the gaps with their peers. **Race/ethnicity** performance gaps narrowed slightly between White and Hispanic students.

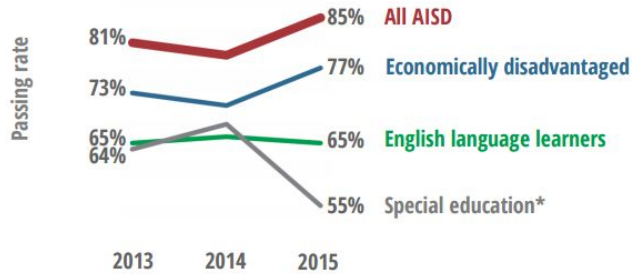
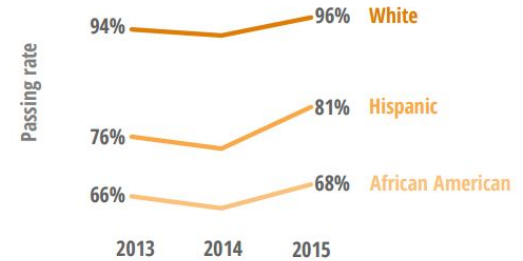


Figure 6
Math **race/ethnicity** performance gaps narrowed slightly between White and Hispanic students.



STAAR Writing Scores

Figure 7
Writing passing rates declined since 2013 for students in special education, widening the gaps against their peers. Performance gaps narrowed for English language learners but remained similar for economically disadvantaged students.

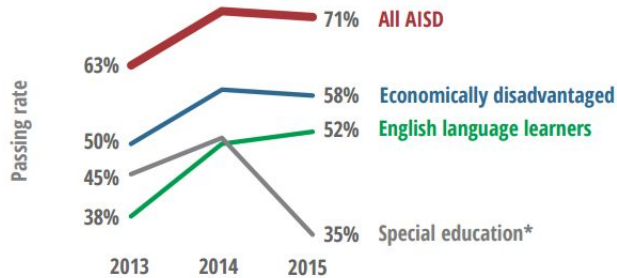
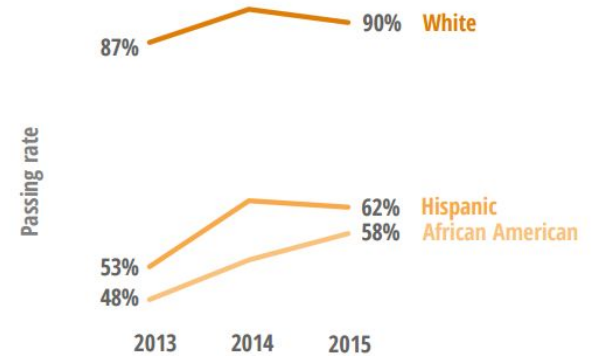


Figure 9
Writing race/ethnicity performance gaps narrowed substantially over time.



Disciplinary Action

Figure 10
The gaps in disciplinary placement/removal rates narrowed for students in special education but remained similar for other student groups.

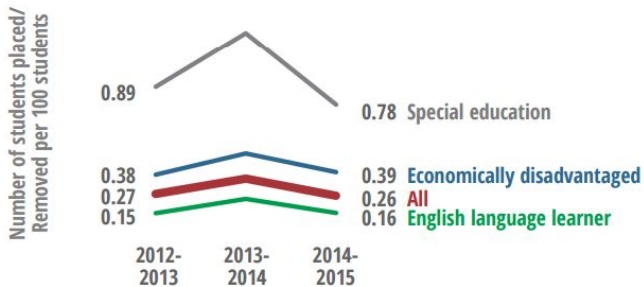
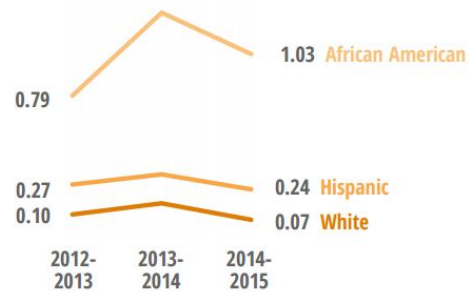


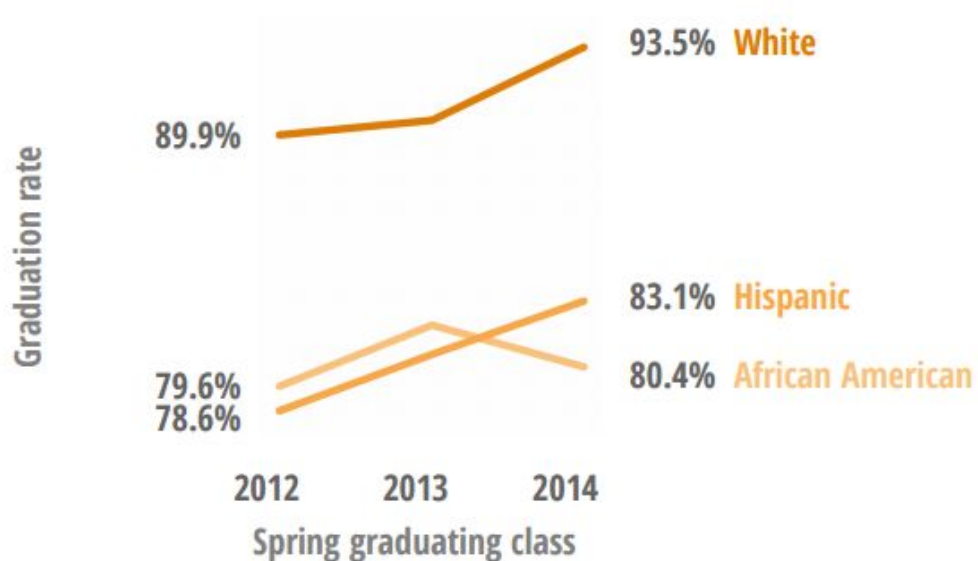
Figure 12
The race/ethnicity gap in disciplinary placement/removal rates widened for African American students.



Graduation Rates

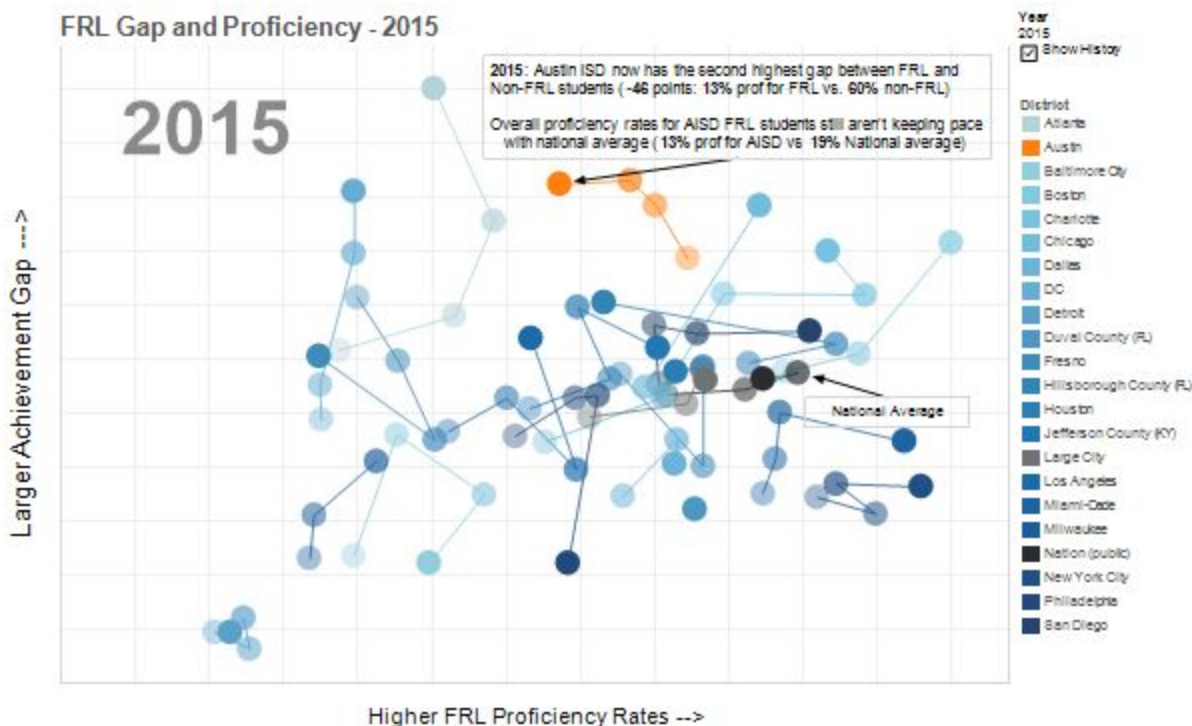
Figure 15

The **race/ethnicity** gap in graduation rates narrowed in 2013 but widened again in 2014.



NAEP 2015 District Comparisons

Difference (in points) between FRL and Non-FRL proficiency rates trends | Composite Reading and Math for 8th grade



Description

The x-axis is the overall proficiency rate for FRL students; the y-axis is the gap in points between FRL and non-FRL students

Ideally, schools would be in the lower right of the graph (higher proficiency, smaller gap)

Click through results chronologically; past marks will appear as a lighter shade to show growth/decline of proficiency and gap

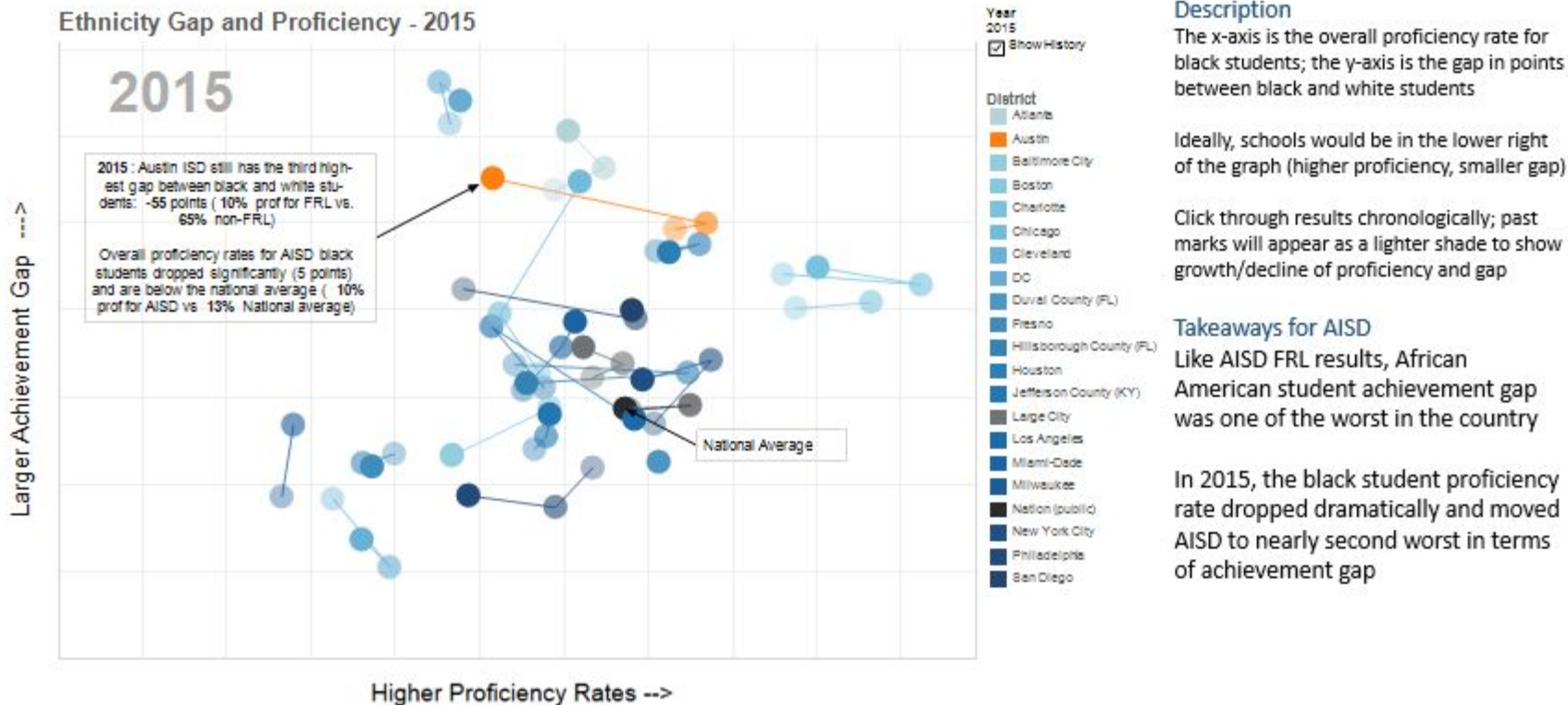
Takeaways for AISD

Since 2009, the FRL achievement gap at AISD has increased while the overall proficiency rate for FRL students has decreased and not kept pace with the national average

That is, AISD is moving to the upper left of the graph, which means lower proficiency rates and bigger achievement gap.

NAEP 2015 District Comparisons

Difference (in points) between African American and white students' proficiency rates | Composite Reading and Math for 8th grade



Description

The x-axis is the overall proficiency rate for black students; the y-axis is the gap in points between black and white students

Ideally, schools would be in the lower right of the graph (higher proficiency, smaller gap)

Click through results chronologically; past marks will appear as a lighter shade to show growth/decline of proficiency and gap

Takeaways for AISD

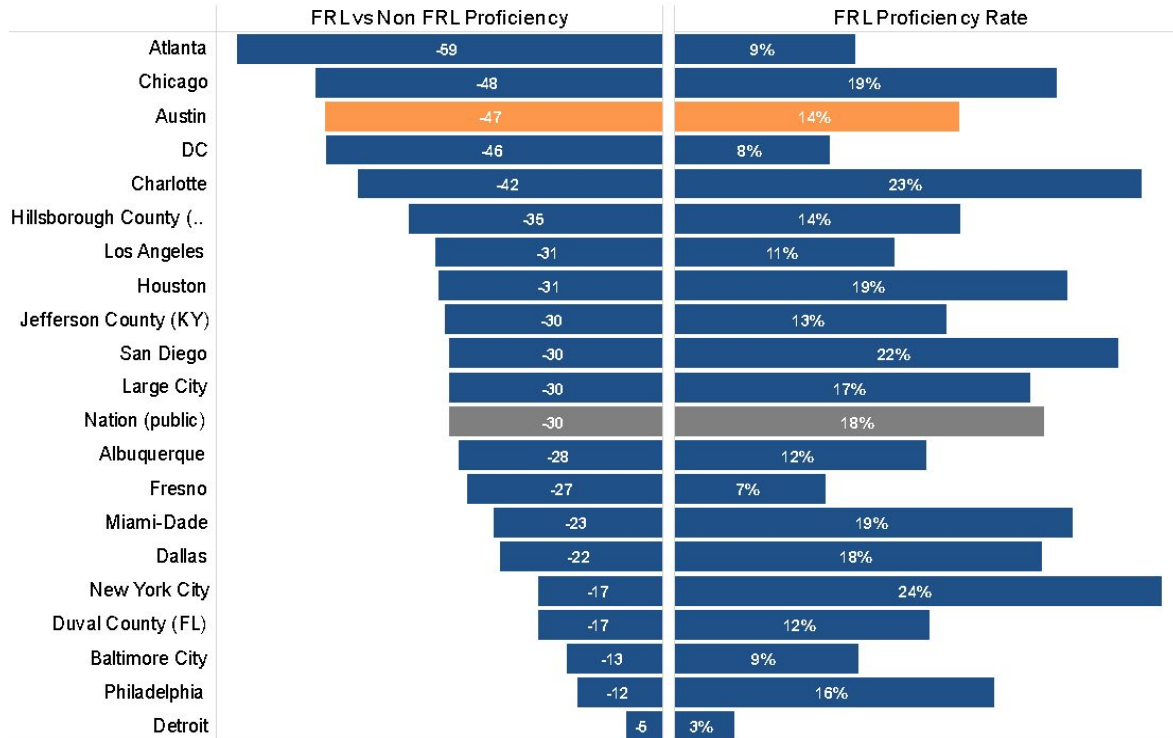
Like AISD FRL results, African American student achievement gap was one of the worst in the country

In 2015, the black student proficiency rate dropped dramatically and moved AISD to nearly second worst in terms of achievement gap

NAEP 2015 District Comparisons

Difference (in points) between FRL and Non-FRL proficiency rates and overall FRL % proficient | 8th grade

Math



Description

Left column shows the difference between FRL and Non-FRL proficiency rates for each district (FRL% - NonFRL%); districts are sorted from largest to smallest achievement gap

Right column is the 2015 proficiency rate for FRL students in each district (e.g., 11% means 11% of FRL students were proficient and above on NAEP tests)

Click on slide to see results for each subject (reading, math and composite of both)

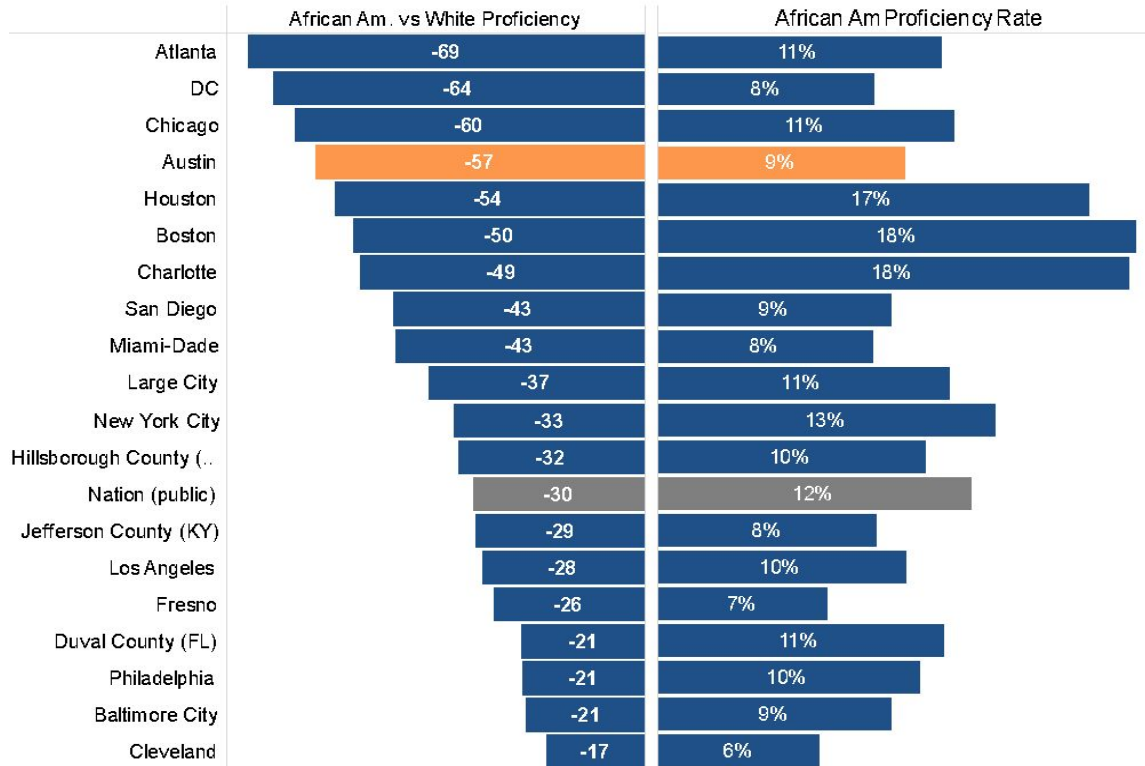
Takeaways for AISD

Although AISD FRL proficiency is within 4 points of national average, the gap between African American and white students is second worst overall

NAEP 2015 District Comparisons

Difference (in points) between African American and white proficiency rates and overall % proficient | 8th grade

Math



Description

Left column shows the difference between African American and white students proficiency rates for each district (Af Am% - White%); districts are sorted from largest to smallest achievement gap

Right column is the 2015 proficiency rate for African American students in each district (e.g., 11% means 11% of African American students were proficient and above on NAEP tests)

Click on slide to see results for each subject (reading, math and composite of both)

Takeaways for AISD

Although AISD FRL proficiency is not too far off from the national average it is still unconscionably low

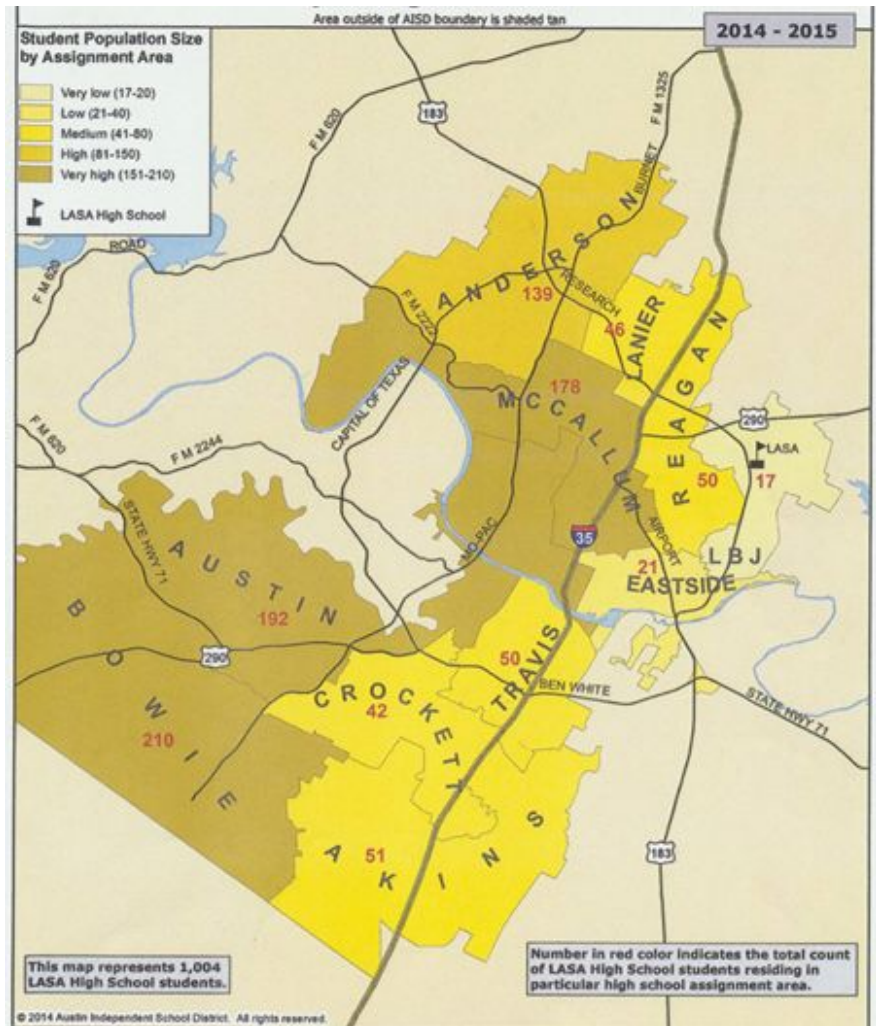
Like the FRL achievement gap, the gap between white and black students' proficiency rates at AISD is among the worst in the country

Improve Access to LASA & Kealing

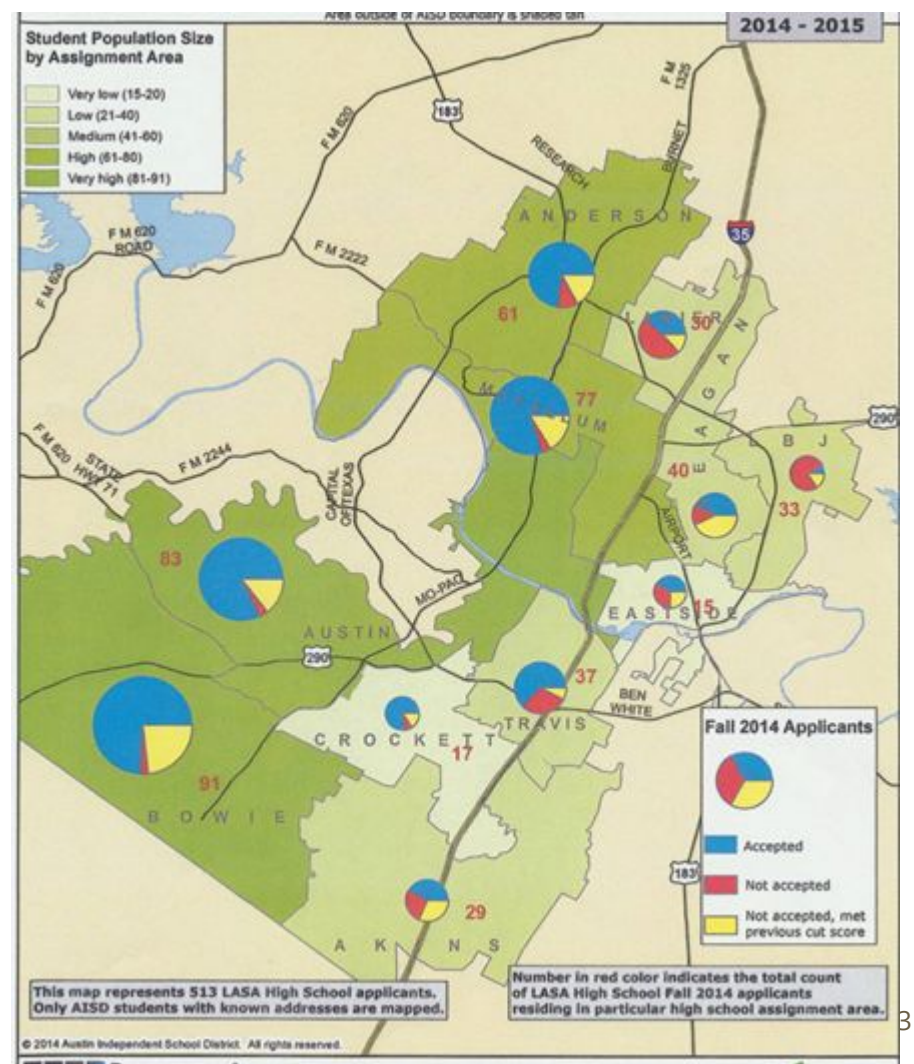
— Magnet School Working Group • —
May 2016

Group Goal: Improve diversity, specifically race & SES, of students in top programs, while improving overall access, maintaining high academic expectations, and not enrolling kids that don't want to be there.

LASA Population by Assignment Area



LASA Applicants by Assignment Area



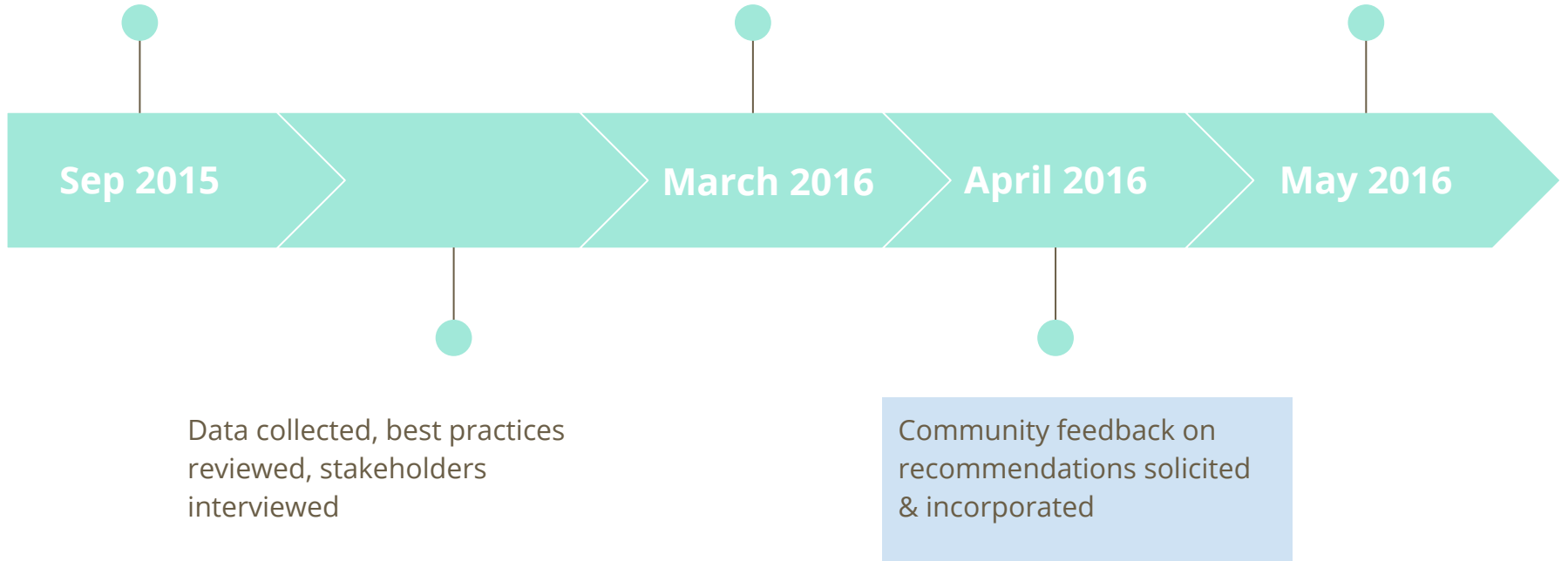
What you need to know

1. **Something needs to change to ensure equitable access**
 2. **There is political support for making a change**
 3. **A volunteer formed & lead group met for 7 mo. to develop recommendations**
 4. **These recommendations do NOT solve everything**
-

A working group formed from the community lead Coalition for East Austin Public Schools

Draft recommendations developed by Magnet school working group

Recommendations finalized & advocacy plan developed



Priority recommendations for immediate implementation

1. Make it easier to apply by having one application for middle school and one application for high school
2. Review expanded criteria as part of admissions to ensure diverse pool of quality students are admitted.
3. Provide accessible and accurate information about programs that exist in Austin ISD and how to apply as well as statistics about admissions and completion.

Create a single application

Issue: It is complicated to apply for the numerous magnet programs throughout the district. Students and parents have to collect application information from a variety of sources. Information is available but currently on different timelines for different programs.

Detailed Recommendation: Create 1 middle school and 1 high school application which could be used for all magnet programs in the district. This will make it easier for families and students to apply to multiple programs. Application should be designed so students can complete the application process with limited adult support. At minimum, Kealing and Fullmore should have a single shared application in use for the fall 2016 application cycle.

Rationale: A single application with a single deadline allows students and families to more easily apply to programs that meet their interests. The current patchwork of school applications contributes to qualified students not applying for programs where they may excel. Having a single application eliminates the need for students to apply for multiple schools and track multiple deadlines. A single application could also evolve over time to include the ability for students to rank their program preferences, allowing schools to more accurately predict the how many accepted students will matriculate. There is also the option of highlighting lesser known programming options, ensuring more choice programs are fully enrolled. In addition to improving access to quality AISD programming, this has been a strategy to curb enrollment decline in other districts.

Timeline: confirmation from district personnel for implementation of single application by June 2016 with a launch of a single application for the Fall 2017 application process

Expand criteria for admissions to increase diversity

Issue: Despite residing in east Austin, NE Austin resident students are underrepresented in magnet campuses near their homes. The current application and screening process isn't currently producing successful applicants reflective of the diversity in race, SES, and geographic boundaries. Access to the magnet program at Kealing or the LASA campus should be more inclusive of the diversity in our district.

Detailed Recommendation: Learning from top colleges and universities, an expanded criteria beyond grades, test scores, essays and recommendations should be considered as part of the application review process. We strongly recommend that the process for screening and admitting applications should awarded a % of seats based based on the current process and a % should be allocated based on the expanded criteria. Additional factors could include geography, socio economic status, race, and extracurricular participation.

Rationale: Supporting diverse learning communities benefits all students, better preparing them for college and career in the 21st century. We recognize all students need to meet an academic bar to qualify for the program, but standardized tests and GPA, when rank ordered, have been found to screen out high achieving, low income kids. Having a multi-tiered system allows this to be phased in over time. Models of other magnet programs successfully ensure high quality programing with diversity through a more holistic admissions process (see Dallas ISD). It is recommended that In the first year, 80% of students could be admitted using the current ranking process, while 20% could be admitted with expanded criteria that accounts for difference is SES and geography. Based on outcomes of the tiered system, the % admitted through the 2nd tier would increase over time to ensure high achieving students from currently underrepresented school feeder patterns, have access to the program.

Timeline: Adopt admissions policies that include expanded criteria by September 2016 so they can be used for the 16-17 admissions process.

Establish a single point of contact

Issue: Multiple magnet choices and different applications creates a time consuming process which limits access. Currently support for students and parents to navigate the magnet school process is inconsistent across schools. Parents have to call multiple people to get information about multiple programs. Data related to program applications, acceptances, matriculation and completion of magnet programs also needs to be to access and more transparent.

Detailed Recommendation: Identify a single point of contact for external stakeholders (parents, community, students, mentors, guardians) with questions about magnet programs, outreach, applications, and acceptance. This single point of contact will not only provide information and guidance for those applying to particular programs but track and monitor data about accessibility of the program producing regular reports with data about applications, acceptances and waitlists.

Rationale: Without someone directly responsible for supporting outreach and monitoring data related to the program, it won't happen in an effective and coordinated way. It is difficult to get information about who is targeted with outreach, who is apply, & who is admitted. There is also a need for a central point of contact for parents and mentors needing more information about specific programs.

Timeline: Staff assigned as single point of contact for parents and community about magnet programs by summer 2016 with the first report on magnet access based on previous years data presented in Sep 2016.

Future work

1. Develop a medium and long plan for education in NE Austin (including LASA & Kealing)
2. Increase the number of seats at LASA or LASA like programs. Supply should equal demand.
3. Relieve physical capacity issues already at LASA & LBJ in the short term and long term.
4. Support school communities in their efforts to best serve students.
5. Schools of choice incorporate into their mission statement a commitment to serve a community of diverse learners

Appendix

FAQ related to recommendations

Meeting Notes and process

[Additional ideas for supporting access and quality at choice & magnet programs in AISD](#)

[Implementation Timeline](#)

[Admissions Materials from AISD choice programs](#)

Historical Information about LASA & Kealing

[14-15 LASA enrollment by Assignment Area](#)

[Demographic Information of Top Texas High Schools](#)

Selected References

“Students of all races who attend integrated schools have higher levels of critical thinking, meaning the ability to adopt multiple perspectives” and research “overwhelmingly” shows higher achievement in math, reading, and science for all students who attend racially and socioeconomically diverse schools (Minnesota [Study](#), FN 40 and 41, Citing PRRAC).

U.S. Department of Education [guidance](#) on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools is an extremely informative resource as districts develop admissions policies. Elementary and secondary schools may voluntarily consider race to further the compelling interests schools have in achieving diversity and avoiding racial isolation.

Academic criteria is used by [17% of magnet schools](#). Criteria may include GPA and test scores, making a school less diverse. [A Report to the Magnet Schools of America](#) recommends interviews and essays to offset the segregating effects of using GPA, test scores, and auditions. Further recommended is adding race, geography (neighborhood residence), and/or socioeconomic status as one or more factors in these competitive admissions processes.

Specific outreach programs prove effective in enhancing a magnet school’s diversity. ([Report to Magnet Schools of America](#), pages 29-31, citing the United States Supreme Court). Related findings from the report include the following: While a magnet may be open to all, not all populations know of the school, how to apply, or that they are truly welcome and invited to apply and attend. Parental networks are a primary way school information is shared. Outreach across demographics can ensure a broad range of parents and students learn off the school and how to access the opportunities. Outreach can take many forms, including: A parent information center of which parents are aware (E.g., Chicago Public Schools has its own dedicated office and staff in the [Office of Access and Enrollment](#))