



PUBLIC EDUCATION

THE MEADOWS FOUNDATION

approved by The Meadows Foundation's Board of Directors - November 2009

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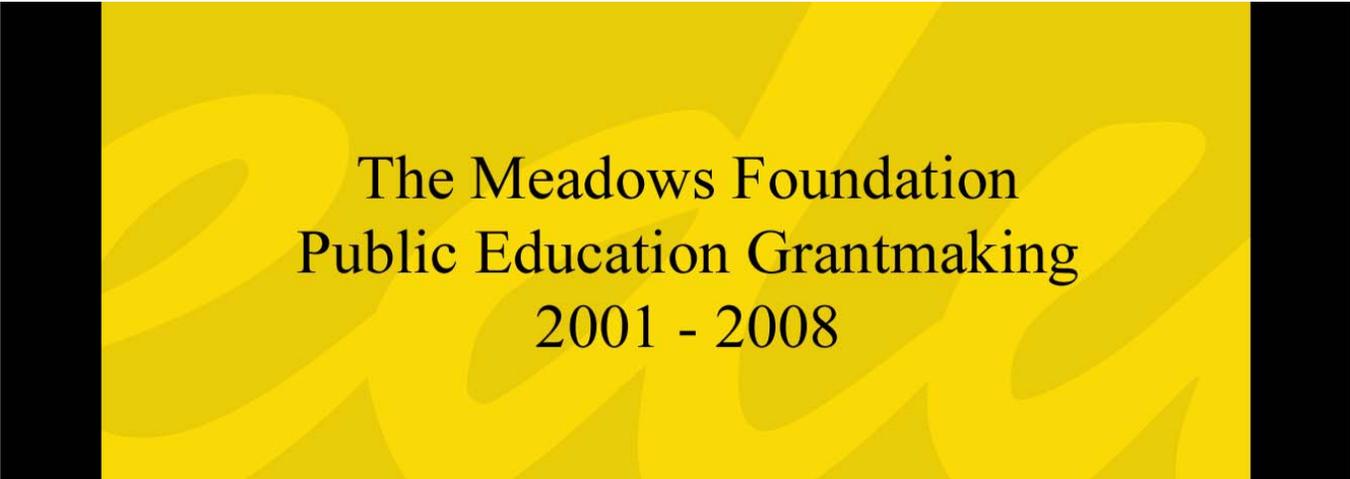
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Introduction

This document presents the Meadows Foundation Strategic Plan for Public Education, 2010 – 2015. Included in the plan is a summary of the 2001 Public Education Plan that served as a guide for MFI grantmaking through 2008 as well as progress toward the goals and objectives of 2001 plan. Also included is a look at the current state of education in Texas which assisted in developing our education goals and strategies for the next six years. The final section of the document contains the goals and strategies for the next few years.



The Meadows Foundation
Public Education Grantmaking
2001 - 2008

The 2001 Public Education Plan

In March of 2001, a strategic plan for public education was approved by the Meadows Foundation Board of Directors. **The overall goal was to improve the academic success of all public school children in grades K-12.** In order to achieve this goal, the Foundation chose to focus on three primary areas: **early childhood development** to ensure that children come to school ready to learn; **beginning reading**, which is the foundation for all academic success; and **teacher and administrator preparation** so they can create a school environment that best fosters student achievement. In the years following the adoption of the 2001 strategic plan a fourth area, **mathematics**, was adopted by the Foundation as another focus area. The first math grant was awarded in November 2003.

Approved in the 2001 plan was a set of guiding principles, grantmaking strategies, financial targets, and program goals for the Foundation to follow. A summary of the principles, strategies, and targets follows, along with progress made towards reaching the targets and goals, where appropriate.

Guiding Principles

- Keep building on our strengths and on what we have been doing where appropriate; such as our earlier investment in:
 - Early childhood development;
 - Beginning reading;
 - Parenting education;
 - Family literacy; and
 - Teacher and principal preparation.
- Invest in projects and programs that are research-based and outcome driven.
- Continue to expand inter-foundation collaboration. Identify public and private

partners with similar goals to participate in joint projects.

- Look for opportunities to address underlying root causes of problems.
- Be sure that projects we support are reflective of the true needs of stakeholders.

Grantmaking Strategies

- We will make grants on two levels: those designed to have a statewide impact and those more specifically focused on regional and community needs.
- We will be appropriately proactive in seeking grant partners and grantmaking opportunities.
- We will screen in unsolicited grant opportunities as appropriate.
- When possible and appropriate, the Foundation will seek opportunities to work with Dallas ISD in ways that meet the Foundation's expressed Public Education goals.
- The Foundation will also look for ways to reduce the dropout rate among Hispanic students within the overall goals and objectives of this plan.

Financial Targets

The 2001 strategic plan set two financial goals. First, to increase all grants to education, including public education, to **20% of all annual grantmaking** (approximately \$6 - \$7 million per year). During the period between 2001 and 2008, an average of **\$4.2 million per year** was granted to all education, which was less than the targeted amount.

The second financial target was to award approximately 50% of the annual education grants specifically to the three, later four, areas of focus: early childhood development, beginning reading,

teacher/administrator preparation, and math. Between 2001 and 2008, 117 public education grants totaling over \$22 million were awarded in the areas of early childhood development, beginning reading, teacher/ administrator preparation, math, and other related public education grants accounting for approximately **66%** of all education grant dollars. Teacher/ administrator preparation accounted for the largest percentage (24%), followed by reading (12%), early childhood development (11%), and math (5%). Related public education grants that do not fit the previously-defined high interest categories accounted for 14% of all education grants.

Program Goals

Early Childhood Development

Research shows that the first three years in brain development have significant implications for education. Early learning experiences are extremely important in setting the stage for emotional and intellectual development, which has a significant impact on success in school. For these reasons, three early childhood development program goals were laid out in the 2001 plan:

- Support programs that provide parents with the information they need.
- Increase the number of child care facilities that meet industry quality standards.
- Increase the number of early childhood teachers (professionals) who are properly trained.

Between 2001 and 2008, 30 grants were awarded in early childhood development totaling \$3,547,550.

- 2,414 children were served in early childhood programs

- 2,440 parents were served in parent education programs
- 4,114 child care providers received professional training
- 12 child care facilities were expanded, acquired or constructed, serving over 1,100 children
- One funder collaborative was established involving 13 Dallas foundations

Early Childhood Development Lessons Learned

- Pre-schools and day care centers are part of a highly fragmented and decentralized "system." In addition, the quality of early childhood programs varies and few programs have demonstrated outcomes. As a result, we have found only a limited number of partners that we can work with to affect changes across large numbers of programs and facilities.
- We believe that we will gain valuable learning experiences from our involvement with the Zero-to-Five Collaborative in Dallas, and many of these findings will be replicable in other communities and settings.
- There are also opportunities to affect policy changes at the state level through partnerships with statewide organizations like the Children's Defense Fund, Texas Early Childhood Education Coalition and others.

Beginning Reading

In 1998, between 20% and 30% of Texas third graders were reading below grade level. The majority of poor readers were not identified and given appropriate reading instruction until they had failed for at least two years. Research shows that without appropriate diagnostic and intervention services before the third grade, 75% of students will continue to have reading difficulties throughout school and adulthood. Poor

readers are more likely to be poor, non-white, and non-native English speakers. For these reasons, the following beginning reading goals were laid out in the 2001 plan:

- Increase the number of children reading at grade level in public schools where grants have been made.
- Increase the number of classroom teachers with knowledge of effective reading instruction.
- Increase the number of school principals who understand and are able to support effective reading instruction in their schools.
- Support programs that provide effective early literacy and pre-writing programs for preschool children.
- Support programs that provide effective family literacy programs involving parents and their young children.

Between 2001 and 2008, 20 reading grants were awarded totaling \$4,112,050.

- Approximately 493,000 Texas children were served in reading programs:
 - 16,300 in early literacy
 - 254,500 in beginning literacy
 - 222,300 in adolescent literacy
- 136 literacy/reading programs were established or expanded
- Over 34,000 educators were trained in literacy programs:
 - 1,000 in early literacy
 - 1,000 in beginning literacy
 - 32,000 in adolescent literacy
- Reading scores improved, including 96% of all third graders passing the TAKS test.

- Building on prior reading success the Meadows Center for Prevention of Educational Risk was created to focus on areas of educational risk

Reading Lessons Learned

- It is possible to make targeted grants that can have an important and strategic impact on a major educational objective such as early reading.
- Building upon relationships with “reading” grantees to focus on students in middle grades and adolescents with reading difficulties can achieve positive results.
- Online coursework can be an effective tool to support existing teachers and reach large numbers.
- A weak foundation in reading prohibits future school success in all subjects, contributing to failing grades and eventual school dropouts - the Foundation’s work in this area continues to be important.
- The focus must be on language development, especially language for learning, from very young children (early childhood) to older students. This should include language for learning science, math, social studies, and other content related areas.

Teacher and Administrator Preparation

In researching public school reform efforts, MFI learned that **the quality of the teacher in the classroom was the single most important factor in academic achievement.** Class size, curriculum choices and technology were all secondary to the role of the teacher. In addition, we learned that **the principal is the most important factor in establishing the overall campus environment**

which in turn affects the ability of the classroom teacher to perform.

Texas has an ongoing teacher (and increasingly an administrator) shortage – both in quantity and in quality. At the start of the 2002-03 school year, there remained approximately 37,000 teaching vacancies to be filled in Texas school districts. Of the 290,000 teachers eventually hired, almost 34,000 were not holding a standard certificate and over 56,000 were teaching out of their field of study. Because these statistics have looked the same for years, the following goals were laid out in the 2001 plan in the area of teacher and administrator preparation:

- Support programs that have proven successful in recruiting well-qualified teachers.
- Support programs that have proven successful in encouraging new and experienced teachers to stay in public education.
- Support programs that have proven successful in improving teacher preparation.
- Support programs that have proven successful in improving principal preparation.
- Support programs that have proven successful in improving superintendent preparation.
- Support programs that provide elected school board members training in appropriate governance.

Between 2001 and 2008, 32 teacher and administrator preparation grants were awarded totaling \$8,221,341.

- 167 school board members were trained in effective governance
- 1,944 new teachers were certified and 2,480 candidates were in the process of receiving certification primarily in the fields of special education, math, science, and bilingual education

- 331 principals were certified
- Over 2,700 teachers, principals, and superintendents received professional development training
- Over 500 Teach for America corps members were placed as teachers in high-need schools

Teacher and Administrator Preparation Lessons Learned

- Alternative Certification Programs are capable of producing teachers at a faster and higher rate than four-year universities.
- The method of instruction of existing teachers – whether online or face-to-face training – is equal in terms of the quality of instruction.
- If departments of education work together with other departments and schools within a university, they have a greater chance of encouraging students in other disciplines to choose teaching as a profession. This has been demonstrated with math majors choosing to teach.
- There are a limited number of effective programs for principal and superintendent development and support.

Math

In Texas, passing rates on the TAKS math test are higher in elementary school than in middle or high school. Trends show that scores hit their lowest point in ninth grade, languish for a year and rebound on the eleventh-grade exam, which students must pass in order to graduate.

Experts note, however, that problems begin well before the ninth grade with many students struggling in elementary and middle school. If students do not build a strong math foundation in the earlier grades then ninth-grade math, which is

typically Algebra, poses a significant challenge to them. For these reasons, MFI funding has focused on:

- Improving the math skills of all students, with an emphasis on middle grades.

Between November 2003 and 2008, eight math grants were awarded totaling \$1,562,000.

- 1 pre-algebra and 1 early math curricula were piloted
- 3,122 fifth and sixth graders were provided with pre-algebra instruction
- 153 new math teachers were certified
- Fifth grade web-based math curricula was developed and utilized by 850 students

Math Lessons Learned

- Middle school math, particularly as it relates to Algebra I, is a gateway subject. Mastering algebra highly correlates to success in higher math and to college and job readiness. Failure to master algebra highly correlates to poor results in higher math and less likelihood of progression to higher education.

Related Public Education Grants

Related public education grants do not fit into the previously-defined high interest categories but are significant and represent strategic opportunities.

Between 2001 and 2008, 27 additional public education grants were awarded totaling \$4,796,365.

- 13 high performing charter and private schools were opened, expanded or supported
- 3,724 students were enrolled in charter and private schools

Related Education Grantmaking Lessons Learned

- We must continue to be open to unforeseen grant opportunities that can complement the Foundation's goal to improve public education.
- We should continue to monitor and assess the role of charter schools within larger public school reform efforts, supporting successful programs when opportunities arise.

2001 – 2008 Program Highlights

The following section highlights notable grants awarded between 2001 and 2008 with progress made to date. A complete list of grants awarded is provided in the Appendix.

Early Childhood Development

Notable Parenting Grants:

North Texas Public Broadcasting (KERA)
(\$350,000 in 2002)

\$350,000 was awarded (September 2002) after a prior grant of \$350,000 (1999) for the production of a series of documentaries focused on the importance of early childhood development titled *First Impressions: Ready for Life*. The documentaries were viewed by an estimated 3,000,000 families on public television stations.

To support the content of the documentaries, KERA established a statewide toll-free information and referral telephone line, and developed an interactive website and other outreach materials. Since 2000, over 8,000 outreach workshops have been conducted, reaching over 100,000 participants.

A series of training modules for parent educators and those providing training to child care providers were developed in both English and Spanish. Over 1,100 North Texas parents and caregivers were trained through the Campfire USA, Urban League, AVANCE, and others.

AVANCE
(\$122,300 to Rio Grande Valley in 2003, \$125,000 to El Paso in 2003, \$170,000 to Waco in 2005, and \$180,000 to El Paso in 2007)

Four grants totaling \$597,300 expanded parent education programs to serve over 890 parents in several communities and hired development

directors to build agency capacity in both El Paso and the Rio Grande Valley.

Dallas Foundation for the Zero-to-Five Collaborative
(\$25,000 in 2007, \$15,000 in 2008, and \$200,000 in 2009)

Since early 2007 a group of Dallas foundations, led by MFI staff, have joined together to study issues facing area families with children from birth to age five. This group of foundations, referred to as the Zero-to-Five Funder's Collaborative, has grown to 13 funders. Over a two-year period, the collaborative has worked with consultants to research existing early childhood programs, gaps in services, barriers to success and best practices across the country. The collaborative has narrowed its focus to working with parents and caregivers of children ages zero to five on language development. The selection of Dallas' high-need area of Bachman Lake was made in the fall of 2008. A request for Letters of Interest (LOI) from service providers in the area was made in early 2009, with the result of 34 LOI submissions totaling more than \$29 million. Eight agencies were asked to submit full proposals based on their LOI submissions and four grantees were selected: AVANCE, Catholic Charities, Dallas Concilio, and East Dallas Community School. The collaborative hopes to have a majority of the programs up and running in the fall of 2009.

Notable Grants to Increase the Number of Child Care Facilities:

Texas A&M International University, Laredo
(\$25,000 in 2003)

Renovations on a campus child care facility are complete and capacity has increased from 36 to 264 children served daily.

Head Start of Greater Dallas
(\$135,000 in 2004)

Construction was complete in summer 2007 and the new early childhood Head Start facility on Brookhaven College campus opened in September 2007. With eight classrooms, the new facility serves 152 children ages three to five and is used as a teaching center for the college's early childhood education program.

Texas Tech University System, Lubbock (\$250,000 in 2004)

The Child Development Research Center was completed in August 2006. With six classrooms, the facility can serve up to 110 children, ages six months to five years. The university named one of the classrooms the "Meadows Foundation Infant Classroom."

Children's Defense Fund for the Texas Early Childhood Education Coalition (\$138,000 in 2006)

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) uses research about the status of children, information, technical assistance and training to help policymakers and public citizens advocate for children. Particular attention is paid to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities.

The MFI grant allowed the Coalition to hire a director of research and public policy so that other staff could focus on the production of policy briefs related to specific national and state legislation regarding early education.

The Coalition supported numerous bills during the recent legislative session, including a key piece of legislation to create a voluntary, integrated system of quality early care and education for all children birth to age five in the state, beginning with three- and four-year olds. The legislation passed both the

House and Senate but was eventually vetoed by the Governor.

Notable Grants to Train Early Childhood Professionals:

Connections Resource Center
(\$130,000 in 2002)

Child care training on a range of literacy topics was provided to 662 teachers and an additional 361 child care providers received early literacy information, materials and technical assistance. In addition, 133 parents and 110 children attended parent/child workshops.

Child Care Group
(\$150,000 in 2007)

MFI funds provided bridge funding to continue professional training for child care providers and directors in Dallas County. Over 3,400 child care professionals received training, impacting 34,000 Dallas-area children.

Reading

Notable Reading Grants:

UT Health Science Center at Houston – Center for Improving the Readiness of Children for Learning and Education (CIRCLE)
(\$135,000 in 2002)

Following a \$177,460 grant in 2000, the 2002 grant to CIRCLE aided in the expansion of child care personnel training on how to effectively teach language and pre-reading skills. They expanded from 8 to 14 centers, reaching 326 teachers. In 2003, CIRCLE merged with CARS (Center for Academic and Reading Skills) and became known as the Children's Learning Institute (CLI). Currently, 2,600 pre-school centers in 38 communities across Texas receive ongoing training, materials, technical support and mentors from CLI. In 2003 Governor

Rick Perry named the CLI as the Texas State Center for Early Childhood Development to work with the Office of the Governor and the Texas Education Agency to design plans for implementing the Governor's Early Start Initiatives.

UT Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts

(\$86,700 in 2003, \$333,000 in 2004, \$399,000 in 2007, and \$1,500,000 in 2008)

Three grants totaling \$818,700 awarded to the Center for the development of reading research and teacher training curricula. To date, the Center's teacher training academies have reached 25,000 Texas educators and over 350,000 educators across the country. The Center's efforts, coupled with the state's attention, have resulted in a significant impact: 96% of all third graders now pass the TAKS test, including 88% of Hispanic third graders. With MFI funding the Center is focusing on developing teacher training academies for adolescent readers in grades four through seven and bilingual children with reading difficulties. MFI's grantmaking to the Center culminated in 2008 with a \$1.5 million grant to establish the Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk, which will conduct research and develop materials aimed at reducing the number of students at risk of dropping out.

University of Texas at Austin, The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk

(\$1,500,000 in 2008)

Building on the success of the University's Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts, the same leadership created a new center focused on research and training for teachers and school leaders. The research and training is aimed at reducing the number of at-risk drop out students and increasing the number of students who are academically successful. The new center, named

the Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk, opened in August 2008. In the first year, over 20 school districts, 7,800 teachers, and 222,000 students were directly impacted by the center through professional development, research, and consulting services. The work of the Vaughn Gross Center continues within the umbrella of The Meadows Center.

Teacher and Administrator Preparation

Notable Traditional Teacher Certification Grants:

University of Houston Downtown

(\$170,910 in 2001)

The University developed a Master of Arts in Teaching to provide individuals who have been teaching with emergency certification permits to become fully certified. Over a three-year period, 168 individuals graduated with a Masters of Arts in Teaching, designed for urban schools. Thirty-eight of the 48 graduates from the first two cohorts responded to a recent survey and 100% of the 38 were still in an educational setting, either as teachers or administrators.

West Texas A&M University

(\$796,000 in 2002)

The University worked with local community colleges to expand the number of students graduating with teaching certificates from four A&M campuses. They exceeded the grant goals, increasing the number of teacher candidates recruited from 480 to 2,086 by the end of the 2005-06 school year.

Notable Alternative Teacher Certification Program (ACP) Grants:

Teach For America (TFA) – Rio Grande Valley (RGV) Chapter
(\$300,000 in 2001, \$225,000 in 2005, and \$250,000 in 2008)

Since 1993, MFI has awarded Teach For America Rio Grande Valley Chapter six grants totaling \$1,184,000. Since then, 500 corps members have each spent at least two years teaching in hard-to-fill teaching positions in public schools in 12 area school districts. Over 32% of corps members remain as teachers in the RGV after their two-year commitment and another 20% stay in the field of education. Over the years, MFI funding has helped grow the number of corps members working in the RGV from 36 in 1993-94 to 175 in 2008-09. Students in 65% of TFA classrooms demonstrated significant or solid academic gains.

Teach For America – Houston
(\$225,000 in 2006)

After years of funding Teach For America in the Rio Grande Valley, MFI awarded a grant to the Houston TFA, allowing them to grow to 335 corps members teaching in over 100 Houston area schools in 2007-08. They anticipate placing 400-420 corps members in 2008-09.

Teach For America – Dallas
(\$600,000 in 2008)

The 2008 grant to Teach For America aids in the development of a TFA site in Dallas. TFA proposes to open the Dallas site with 50 corps members in its first year (2009-10) and then 90-100 corps members annually in the following years. TFA will recruit, select, train and provide ongoing support to corps members while the school district pays teacher salaries.

Project ARRIBA
(\$123,000 in 2005)

Through MFI funding, a pilot was developed for a Teaching Corps in far West Texas. Over three years, Project ARRIBA recruited, enrolled and provided support services to 64 low-income individuals now pursuing education majors. So far, 33 of these have graduated and are employed as teachers in high need areas. The remaining 31 participants graduated shortly thereafter.

The New Teacher Project
(\$468,600 in 2005)

With MFI funding, The New Teacher Project embarked on a statewide effort to recruit and train highly qualified individuals to serve as teachers in critical subject areas. In 2006-07, they recruited, trained and placed 191 individuals and in 2007-08 increased their numbers to 278 individuals hired by over 40 school districts across the state. The campaign has successfully recruited high level students with an average GPA of 3.31 to go into teaching. Eighty-nine percent are teaching in high-need subject areas and 46% are minorities.

Notable Administrator and Teacher Support Grants:

Center for Reform of School Systems (CRSS)
(\$25,000 in 2000, \$4,500 in 2001, \$300,000 in 2001, \$300,000 in 2004, \$820,000 in 2007, and \$25,000 in 2008)

Since 2000, MFI has awarded CRSS six grants totaling \$1,474,500. Since then, the Center has trained 167 school board members from 37 school districts in effective school reform strategies. These districts enroll 1.75 million school children, or 52% of the state's minority students. In 19 of these districts, the majority of the school board has been trained by the Institute. As the number of

trained individuals on each board increases, the Center is working to evaluate the impact of school reform training in board decisions and student performance.

In 2007, \$320,000 of MFI's grant went to provide an intensive two-year training process in reform governance for the Dallas ISD superintendent and board members. Thus far, three off-site training and three on-site work sessions have been held. As a result, several significant district policies have been completely redesigned.

Trinity University
(\$225,000 in 2006)

Building on its strong relationship with the San Antonio area's 21 school districts, the University established a Principals' Center to develop leadership skills and to promote retention among principals in area schools. The University hired a part-time director to coordinate programming which so far, is in high demand. Fifty-one principals have been trained as principal mentors and over 75 principals have received principal coaching.

University of North Texas – Dallas Campus
(\$500,000 in 2008)

The University's new principal development program, aimed at growing quality leaders for area schools, helped increase 2008-09 enrollments in the educational administration masters program by 78 candidates and issued 331 principal certifications.

Dallas Independent School District (DISD)
(\$667,000 in 2008)

DISD's mentor-coaching program provides intensive support to existing principals with the overall goal of increasing each principal's ability to actively engage teachers in the collaborative processes required for school improvement and

increased student achievement. In the first year, 11 principal coaches were recruited and trained. Intensive, one-on-one coaching was provided to 22 principals by the coaches.

University of Houston System – Center for Research, Evaluation and Advancement of Teacher Education
(\$400,000 in 2008)

The Center for Research, Evaluation & Advancement of Teacher Education (CREATE) is a consortium of 30 teacher education programs associated with the state's five public university systems. CREATE seeks to improve the effectiveness of Texas' university-based teacher education programs by examining teacher preparation practices and their effects on student achievement. CREATE developed a framework to transform schools of education into organizations that build and maintain high levels of faculty engagement in ways that influence teacher candidate and P-12 learning. The Center's programs are expected to result in stronger collaboration among school districts and universities in recruiting, preparing and retaining teachers. As a result, there will be an increase in the number and quality of teachers prepared by CREATE universities for Texas schools, especially in high need fields.

Math

Notable Math Grants:

Texas State University
(\$244,000 in 2003 and \$386,000 in 2007)

The University developed a multi-prong approach aimed at increasing the number of education majors on track to become math teachers, increasing the math ability of all graduating teachers, providing training and support to area

middle school teachers, and improving the math abilities of area middle school students. As a result of the grant, the University doubled the number of math and education majors on track to become certified teachers from 112 in 2001-02 to 223 in 2005-06. By providing math majors with hands-on experiences working with teachers and students in an area middle school, 48% of all math majors are now on the teacher certification track.

The second MFI grant builds on the success of the University's Mathworks program, developing and piloting a math curriculum focused on pre-algebraic and algebra concepts for middle school students. So far, 11 teachers and 466 fifth and sixth grade students from seven school districts have participated in the pilot program. The University is evaluating the curriculum as it is piloted, inputting the results as they go along. They are in the process of training additional teachers to pilot the revised algebra curriculum with 1,000 seventh grade students in 2009-2010.

Reasoning Mind
(\$250,000 in 2007)

The agency has developed a web-based and self-paced math program that incorporates technology into teaching. Teachers can integrate online work with traditional instruction and students are challenged in internet-based game-like programs to push themselves to mastery. MFI funds continued the research and development stages, allowing the agency to refine and implement fifth and sixth grade curricula that have the potential to significantly improve the way math is taught in the middle grades. Feedback from students and teachers from participating schools is positive and overall, Reasoning Mind students outperform non-Reasoning Mind students by an average of 3% on the TAKS test.

Related Education Grants

Notable Related Education Grants:

National Center for Educational Accountability (NCEA)

(\$209,000 in 1999, \$350,000 in 2002, and \$500,000 in 2005)

Three grants were awarded between 1999 and 2005 totaling \$1,059,000. Since 1999, NCEA has analyzed public school data from across the state and identified best practices at the classroom, school and district levels in elementary, middle and high schools. The Center's website includes best practices and case studies for all grade levels and allows teachers, schools and districts to audit gaps in their own practices. The most recent MFI grant enabled the Center to develop more user-friendly materials to help educators to know how to use data to effect change within their classrooms and schools. Both Dallas and Houston ISDs are currently using the materials and data. NCEA was recently acquired by ACT, resulting in these user-friendly tools being used at the national level.

KIPP

(\$250,000 in 2001 and \$317,750 in 2003)

MFI funding helped support the KIPP Academy in Houston and the KIPP TRUTH Academy in Dallas. KIPP charter schools continue to receive local and national recognition. In fall 2003, the entering fifth grade class at KIPP Dallas (Class of 2011) took the Stanford 10 as a baseline. Within two years, the class that entered KIPP performing on a third grade level in reading and math were reading at the seventh grade level and performing math above the tenth grade level. Their TAKS test results also indicated significant gains, with passing rates jumping from 56% in reading and 62% in math to 80% and 76%, respectively.

UT System

(\$252,000 in 2003)

The System developed an online diagnostic and assistance program to help students prepare for the exit-level TAKS test. Over the grant period, they received over 5 million hits to the website, with about 60,000 eleventh graders using the diagnostic tests in core subject areas and over 50,000 students using the online learning materials as instructional support. They also provided online tutoring to twelfth graders from 25 high schools that need extra assistance in English/Language Arts and Math to pass the test.

Communities Foundation of Texas for the Texas High School Project - Early College High School

(\$400,500 in 2008)

This represents the first significant MFI grant toward the state's overall school reform efforts. MFI funds helped establish an early college high school in Brownsville aimed at increasing the number of low-income, first-generation students who attend college.

The University of Texas at Dallas Center for BrainHealth

(\$200,000 in 2008)

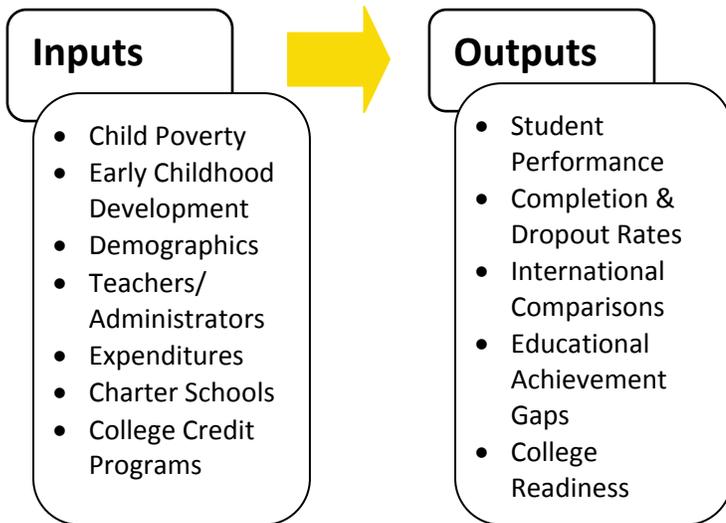
Healthy brain development during the middle school years fosters the ability to analyze, synthesize and evaluate information that is fundamental to acquiring higher level verbal and mathematics reasoning skills. The Center has developed a tool called SMART (Strategic Memory and Reasoning Test) to assess the brain deficits of children with ADHD and mild-to-severe brain trauma. More recently, they are using SMART with mainstream middle school students to assess their level of reasoning ability and to teach them how to think critically and effectively use the information they learn. To date, the Center has piloted the

SMART program with 50 middle school students. The grant from MFI allows the Center to test an additional 150 middle school students in order to broaden their sample and better assess how pervasive the lack of reasoning skills is among middle school students. The results of the expanded testing helped to attract \$6 million in state funding to support a large-scale demonstration project in North Texas.



A current look
at the state of education
in Texas

Education in Texas – Current Snapshot



- By the age of three, children from professional families have an average of 591 more words in their vocabulary than children from welfare families. This demonstrates the importance of language intervention to equalize children’s opportunities.
- Upon entering kindergarten, most children from families with the combination of low parental education levels, low incomes, and single parents bring less foundational knowledge for learning mathematics than do children from more advantaged backgrounds.

Inputs

Child Well-Being

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defines the poverty level as an income of \$10,830 for one; \$14,570 for a family of two, \$18,310 for a family of three, and \$22,050 for a family of four.
- Texas has a greater proportion of children in poverty than the national average – in a three year period from 2005-07, the U.S. mean poverty rate for children under the age of 18 was 18.5% with Texas at 24.7%.

Early Childhood Development

- Research shows that the first three years in brain development have serious implications for education. These early learning experiences are extremely important in setting the stage for emotional and intellectual development, which has a significant impact on success in school.

Child Care

- In Texas, 57% of children under age six (1.27 million) have all available parents in the workforce. Thirty-five percent of Texas jobs are low wage without benefits, making it difficult for Texas families to afford quality child care on their own. State subsidized care supports parents who work, attend school, or engage in job training by providing child care assistance for children ages zero to twelve.
- In 2006, 255,480 unduplicated children received state subsidized child care in Texas, an increase of 9% from 2004. While the total number of children in subsidized care continues to grow, so does the number of children on waiting lists (33,000 on waiting lists in fiscal year 2008).
- Subsidized child care is successful in helping parents maintain employment. For parents receiving both TANF and subsidized child care from 2005-2006, 78% found employment and 71% maintained employment after one year.
- The majority of Texas children are cared for at home in an informal setting, home-based child

care centers, and private facilities – the quality of which is unknown.

Public Pre-Kindergarten

- In 2006, 47% (169,795) of all four-year-olds participated in public pre-kindergarten while only 5% (16,898) of all three-year-olds participated.
- According to the 2007 Head Start Program Information Report, 87,287 Texas children were enrolled in Head Start programs during the 2006-07 school year. Despite increases in enrollment in recent years, federal funding for the program has decreased 10.6% between 2004 and 2008.

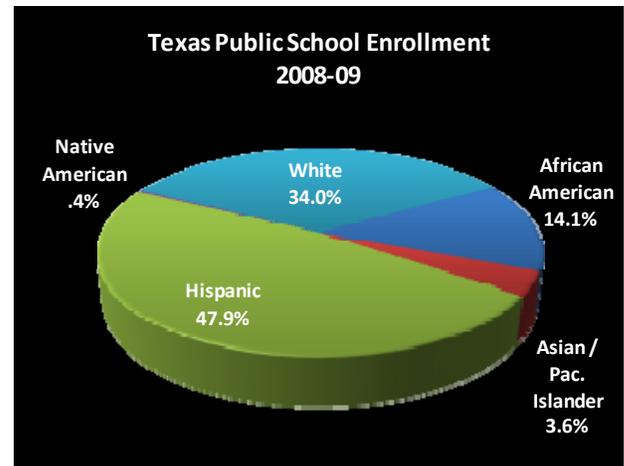
Public School Demographics

Student Population

- The student population in Texas is one of the fastest growing in the country. In the fall of 2008, Texas public school enrollment reached 4.7 million, representing 86% of school-aged children; the remaining 14% attend private school or home school. The growth in Texas public school enrollment has increased 20% over the last ten years; double the national rate increase of 10%.
- The largest group of new students is Hispanic and low income. Between 1998 and 2009, enrollment in bilingual/ESL classes rose 56% to 748,250 students; the number of economically disadvantaged students rose to 2,686,259, representing 57% of all students; and the enrollment increased or remained the same for all ethnic groups except Whites, which decreased.

Enrollment in Schools by Race

- In 2008-09, minority students made up 66% of the total student population with Hispanic students alone accounting for 48% of the total student population. In 2007, the Hispanic student population accounted for 21% nationally.



- Hispanic (49%), African American (18%), and Other (67%) school enrollments increased over the last 10 years (1998-99 through 2008-09), while the enrollment of White students decreased by 7%.

English Proficiency

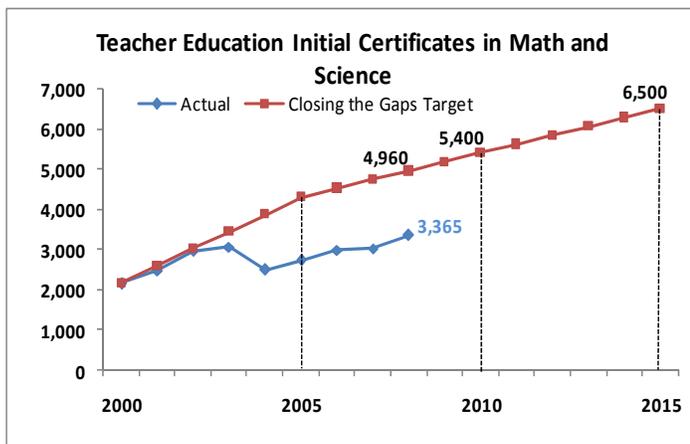
- In the 2008-09 school year, 17% of students qualified as limited-English-proficient (LEP).

Administration and Resources

Teacher Shortages

- In 2008-09, 327,892 teachers taught over 4.7 million students in Texas public schools: 66.7% were White, 22.1% were Hispanic, 9.7% were African American, and 1.5% were Other. The percentage of Hispanic and African American teachers is up from 1997-98 numbers which were 16% and 8%, respectively.

- While 66% of Texas students are racial or ethnic minorities, 67% of the state's teachers are White. And while the number of Hispanic teachers is on the rise as noted above, they do not accurately represent the 48% of Hispanic students that make up the state's student body.
- Currently, the most acute teacher shortages are in secondary math and science. Since 2004, the shortage in high school science has increased by over 80%. Adding qualified math and science teachers is a more significant priority for the state now that additional math and science requirements are included in Texas high school curriculum.



- In addition to math and science, the Texas Education Agency designated special education, foreign language, bilingual/ESL, and technology applications as subject-matter teacher shortage areas for the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years.

Teacher Quality

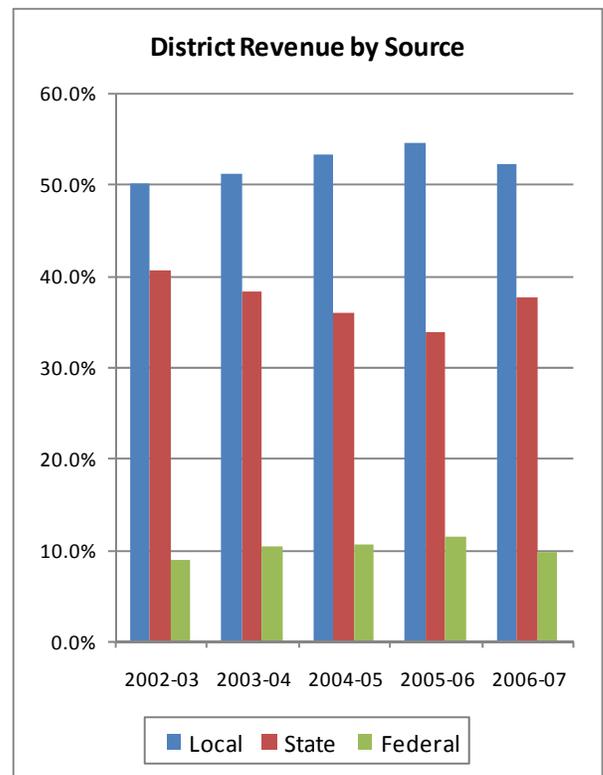
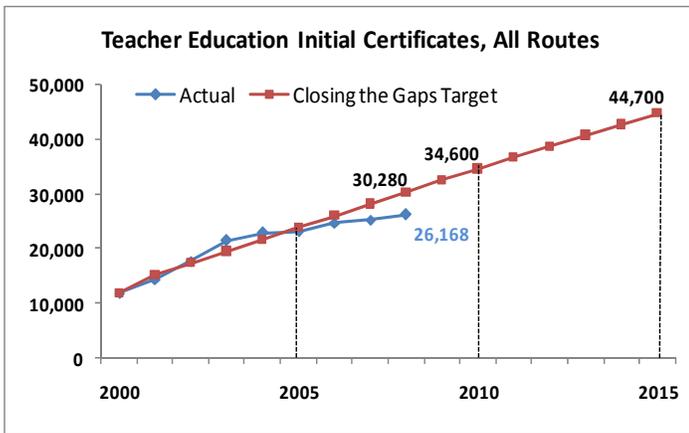
- In Texas, when it comes to teachers who are certified in the subjects they are teaching, the state comes up short. As a result, teachers are assigned “out of field,” or outside the subjects in which they have sufficient knowledge to teach. A 2008 report from researchers at the

University of Texas at Austin found that more and more schools with lower-income students are forced to use less-qualified teachers to teach classes that they are not certified to teach.

- Utilizing less-qualified teachers can be detrimental to a student's success. U.S. researchers have found that assigning students to strong teachers for three years in a row can boost their test scores by as much as 50 percentile points above what they would gain with three ineffective teachers in a row.
- Other research suggests that one of the most effective ways to raise high school graduation rates is to improve the transition from eighth to ninth grade. The best teachers, however, now tend to teach twelfth grade, electives, and honors courses, often leaving the least effective teachers with the students who need them most. Districts must find ways to place the most effective teachers with the students who need them most.

Teacher Preparation

- As of August 2008, there were 136 accredited educator preparation programs in Texas. These programs are housed in 96 institutions of higher education, 5 public school districts, 14 education service centers, and 21 other sites.
- Between September 2007 and August 2008, over 26,000 initial educator certificates were awarded in Texas. Approximately 50% of these certificates were completed through alternative certification educator preparation programs.



Teacher Salaries

- The overall U.S. average teacher salary in 2008 was \$52,308, ranking Texas 34th with an average salary of \$46,179. Texas teacher salaries went up slightly in 2009 to \$47,158.

Principals

- In 2008-09, there were 7,428 principals in Texas: 67.0% were White, 20.9% Hispanic, 11.2% African American, 0.5% Asian American and 0.4% Native American. Sixty percent were women compared to 40% men.
- According to the Texas Education Agency, the average salary for principals was \$78,483 in 2008-09.

Revenue Sources

- While the percentage of local funding for schools saw an increase between 2002-03 and 2005-06, it saw a small decline in 2006-07 with state funding rising nearly 4%.

Expenditures per Student

- In 2007-08, the average annual expenditure per student in Texas was \$7,988 compared with the national average of \$9,963. Texas ranks 45th among U.S. states and the District of Columbia for expenditures per student.

Charter Schools

- In the fall of 2007, over 300 Texas charter schools were operational, serving over 90,000 students statewide, ranking Texas fourth in the nation in the number of students enrolled and fifth in the number of charter schools operated.
- A large majority of Texas charter schools are open-enrollment schools created by eligible entities such as nonprofit organizations, universities, or local government groups. Charter schools are required to participate in the statewide standardized testing program

and are held to the same accountability standards as traditional district schools.

- An evaluation of charter schools operating in Texas in the 2006-07 year found that the schools enroll larger proportions of minority and low-income students than traditional schools.

College Credit Programs

- Texas students are provided with a number of opportunities to earn college credits while still in high school. These programs enable students to make progress toward earning a college degree before finishing high school.
- One example is dual-credit courses which are college courses taken by a high school student for which the student earns college and high school credit at the same time. The courses are taught by college faculty and college credit is earned upon successful completion of the course. Texas public high school graduates who participate in dual credit while in high school enroll in higher education at a slightly higher rate than other high school students.
- Advanced placement (AP) courses, on the other hand, are college level courses taught by high school teachers to high school students. Once a student passes an end-of-course exam and after attending one semester of college, the student must petition the college to accept the AP course as college credit. In 2007-08, approximately 147,000 students in over 1,300 Texas public and nonpublic schools took 270,466 AP exams. Research has shown that the four-year graduation rate for college freshmen increases from 50% to 80% for those who participate in one AP course.
- Early college high schools blend high school and college into one program, minimizing the

time it takes to complete high school and the first two years of college. The schools are designed so that low-income youth, first-generation college goers, English language learners, minority students, and other young people underrepresented in higher education can simultaneously earn a high school diploma and one to two years of transferable college credit—tuition free.

- The State of Texas currently has 41 early college high schools in operation. The schools are located on or near the campus of a two- or four-year college.
- An evaluation of early college high schools shows that early colleges are beating the odds for the students they serve:
 - Attendance rates for early college students average over 90%, indicating high levels of student engagement and commitment to the academic program.
 - Grade-to-grade promotion rates in early college schools also exceed 90%.
 - Early college students outperform students in their districts on state mandated math and English language arts exams.
 - Eighty-five percent earned at least a semester of transferable college credit.
 - More than 60% were accepted to four-year colleges, exceeding national rates for similar populations.

Outputs

Student Performance

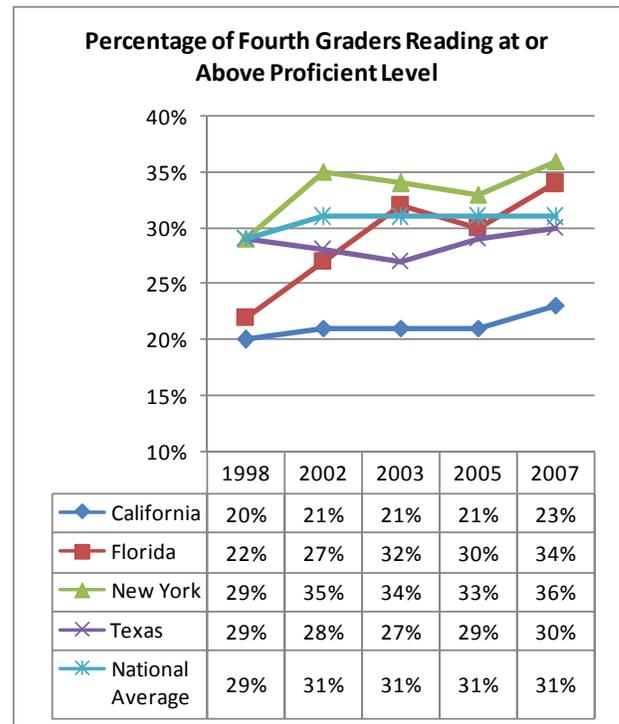
General Performance

- Texas student performance has improved in recent years as shown in increased percentages of students across all ethnic groups passing the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) exam.
- The State of Texas utilizes the TAKS exam to measure students' mastery of the state-mandated curriculum. Under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), each state can select their own tests and set proficiency standards within subjects, making direct comparisons of student performance across states difficult. As a result, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is increasingly being used as a benchmark against which student achievement across the nation can be compared.
- For Texas, however, there are substantial differences in proficiency standards as measured by the TAKS and NAEP exams. For example, 84% of Texas fourth graders scored at the proficient level on the 2007 TAKS reading exam while only 30% met or exceeded proficiency on the 2007 NAEP. And while the state has raised TAKS performance standards over the years, the difference between the two standards remains large.

NAEP Reading Scores

- Although the reading scores of Texas fourth graders have improved over the last few years, Texas ranks below the national average and below New York and Florida, which are similar demographically to Texas.

- Thirty percent of Texas fourth graders scored at or above the proficient reading level on the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), ranking Texas 33rd in the nation. The national average was 31%. Sixty-five percent of Texas fourth graders were at or above the basic reading level, leaving 35% below the basic level.



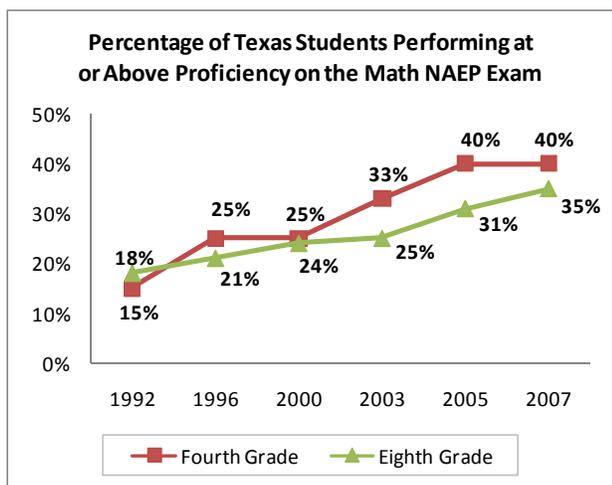
- Twenty-eight percent of Texas eighth graders scored at or above the proficient reading level on the 2007 NAEP, ranking Texas 30th in the nation. The national average was 29%. Seventy-three percent of Texas eighth graders were at or above the basic reading level, leaving 27% below the basic level.

NAEP Math Scores

- Since 1992, the percentage of Texas fourth grade students performing at or above the proficient level on the NAEP math exam has steadily increased from 15% to 40% by 2007. The national average in 2007 was 38%, ranking Texas 23rd in the nation. Since 1996, Texas

proficiency level scores have outperformed the national average.

- Proficiency level scores for Texas eighth graders have also seen a steady increase since 1992. In 2007, 35% of eighth graders scored at or above proficiency in math, ranking Texas 17th in the nation. The national average was 31%. Eighty-seven percent of Texas eighth graders were at or above the basic math level, leaving 13% below the basic level.

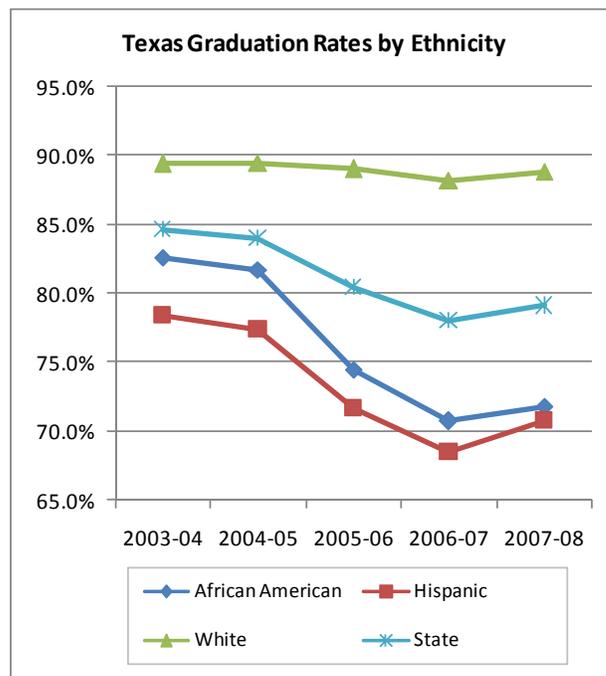


- According to the National Mathematics Panel, a sharp falloff in mathematics achievement in the U.S. begins as students reach late middle school, where, for more and more students, algebra course work begins. Algebra is a demonstrable gateway to later achievement. Students need algebra for any form of higher mathematics later in high school; moreover, research shows that completion of Algebra II correlates significantly with success in college and earnings from employment. In fact, students who complete Algebra II are more than twice as likely to graduate from college compared to students with less mathematical preparation.
- Poor mastery of fractions is a primary cause of students' difficulty with algebra. The teaching of fractions, including decimals, percents, and

negative fractions, must be acknowledged as critically important and improved before an increase in student achievement in algebra can be expected.

Graduation Rates

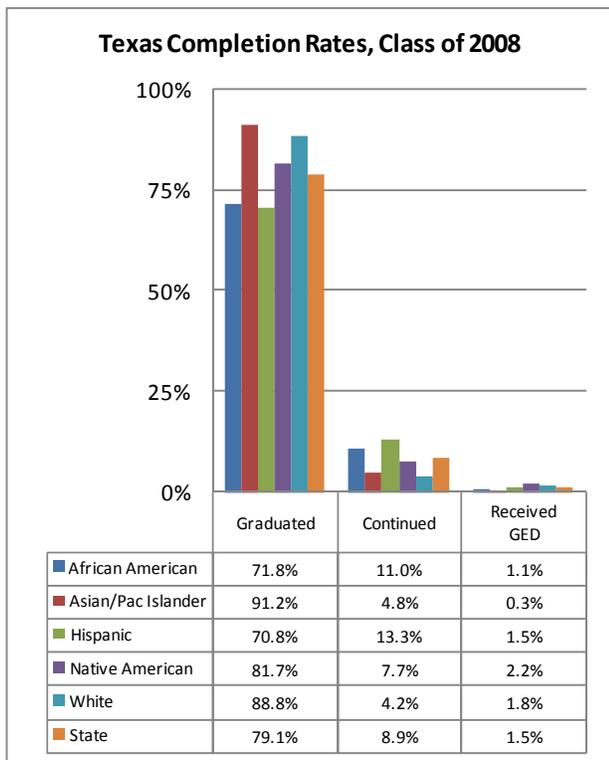
- After a six-year increase, and a three-year subsequent decline, graduation rates for Texas students increased in 2008 across all ethnic backgrounds, according to data from the Texas Education Agency (TEA).
- For the class of 2008, the highest graduation rates were recorded for students classified as Asian/Pacific Islander and White (91.2% and 88.8%, respectively), followed by African American (71.8%) and Hispanic (70.8%).



- Since the implementation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, states are required to use a particular graduation rate calculation. Poor definitions and inconsistent implementation, however, have resulted in a

wide variation between state-reported, federally-reported, and independently-reported rates. For example, 2004-05 graduation rates for Texas high schools vary by as much as 16% between sources: State-reported for NCLB: 84%; U.S. Dept. of Education: 74%; and Education Week: 69%. Improvements are hopefully on the horizon with recently announced federal regulations that require states to use a common formula by the 2010-11 school year.

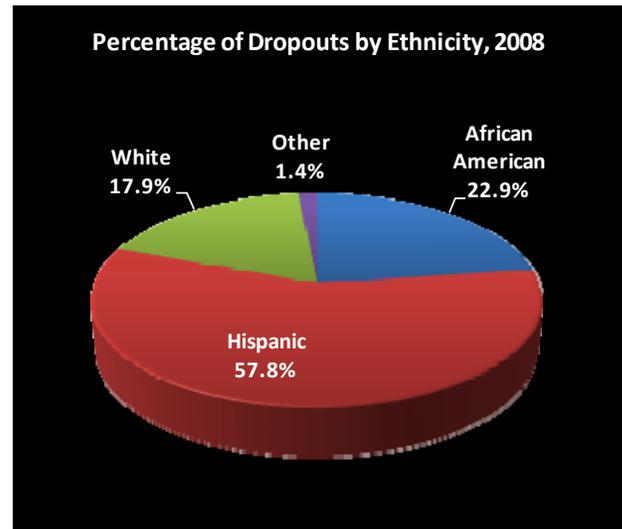
- Overall, completion rates for the class of 2008 were highest for Asian/Pacific Islander students (96%), followed by White (95%), Native American (92%), Hispanic (86%), and African American (84%) students (see chart below). Counted in completion rates are students that graduated, received a GED, or continued in school.



Note: The term “continued” in the above chart refers to students that did not complete graduation requirements but did not drop out.

Dropout Rates

- Beginning in the 2005-06 school year, the TEA was required by the Texas Legislature to compute dropout rates according to the national dropout definition utilized by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).
- For the class of 2008, there were 31,437 dropouts (grades 9-12), representing 10.5% of the class population. The dropout rate was highest for African Americans (16.1%) and Hispanics (14.4%), followed by Native Americans (8.4%), Whites (5.1%) and Asian/Pacific Islander (3.6%).
- While the dropout rate was highest for African Americans, Hispanic students actually accounted for over half (58%) of all dropouts.



District/Campus Performance

- The state accountability system assigns ratings to every campus and district in the Texas public education system each year. To determine the rating, the system evaluates indicators of performance, including assessment results on standardized assessment instruments as well

as longitudinal completion and annual dropout rates.

- In 2009, a larger percentage of schools were rated Exemplary and Recognized than in the 2008 year. In addition, the Acceptable ratings dropped while the number of Academically Unacceptable ratings increased.

Percentage of Schools by Accountability Rating			
RATING	2007	2008	2009
Exemplary	8.0%	12.2%	25.8%
Recognized	29.2%	34.4%	35.2%
Acceptable	51.0%	42.8%	27.6%
Unacceptable	3.4%	2.5%	3.2%
NR/Other	8.4%	8.1%	8.2%

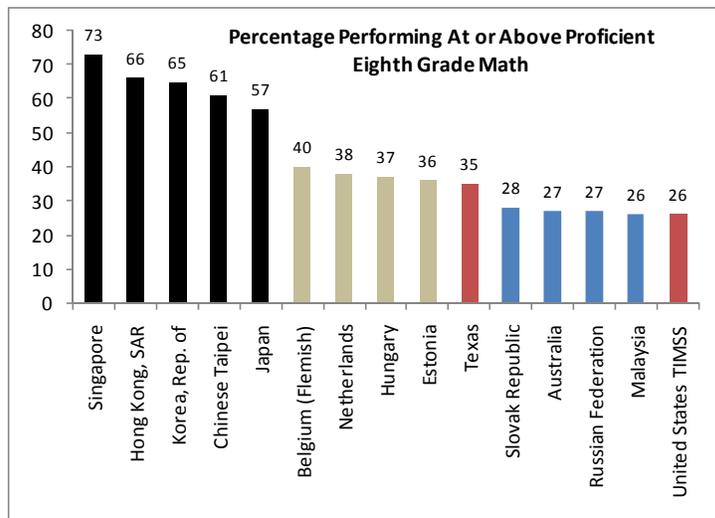
- The Texas Education Agency reports that increasing passing rates on state tests, coupled with a new growth measure called the Texas Projection Measure, contributed to the substantial increase in the number of Exemplary schools from 2008 to 2009. The new growth measure gives schools credit for the academic growth of students.
- Also implemented in 2009 was a new, more rigorous dropout definition. With school districts being held fully accountable for their dropouts, an increase was seen in the number of Academically Unacceptable schools.

International Perspective

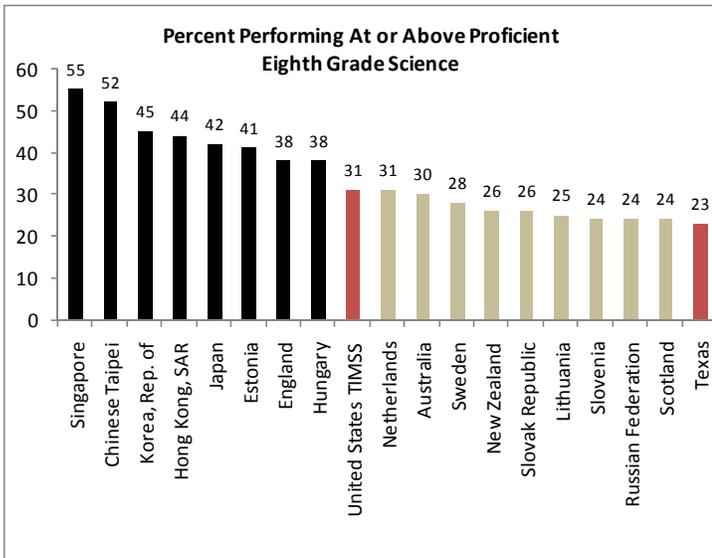
International Comparisons

- We are living in a world without borders. To meet the realities of the 21st century global economy and maintain America’s competitive edge into the future, Texas needs students who are prepared to compete, not only with their American peers, but with students from across the globe for the jobs of tomorrow.

- A 2007 study conducted by the American Institutes for Research compared the performance of eighth grade students in each of the 50 states with those of their peers in 45 countries. This study is the first of its kind to link standardized test scores, state by state, with scores from other nations. The scores for U.S. students came from the federally-administered NAEP exams while foreign student scores came from tests administered worldwide as part of the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Both exams measure students’ knowledge of school-based curriculum.
- Five countries performed statistically better and four countries performed statistically similar to Texas on eighth grade math test results. Thirty-six countries performed statistically below Texas in mathematics. The percentage of Texas students at or above proficient is 35%.

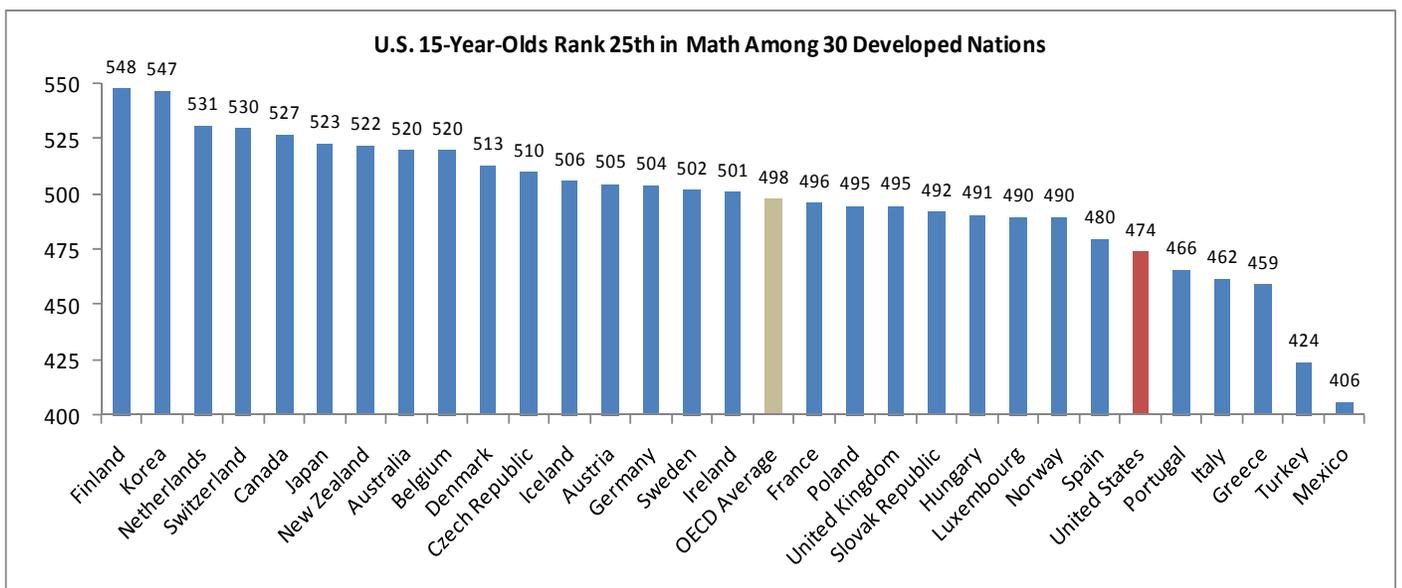


- Eight countries performed statistically better and 11 countries performed statistically similar to Texas on eighth grade science test results. Twenty-six countries performed statistically below Texas in science. The percentage of Texas students at or above proficient is 23%.



- Unlike the TIMSS, the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests skills that students pick up in and out of school. The PISA assesses students at the age of 15, rather than at a grade, and measures their ability to apply knowledge to real-world contexts.

- Based on PISA testing, the United States as a whole is slipping internationally:
 - 25th ranking of U.S. 15-year-olds in mathematics (2006)
 - 21st ranking of U.S. 15-year-olds in mathematics and science (2006)
 - 14th college AND university graduation rate (2006; tied for first in 1995).
- The U.S. was once a leader in education; however, other Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries have surpassed us. These countries put more focus on common standards and deep content over time and less focus on quantity; align curriculum and other tools to standards; invest more in teacher and principal recruitment, development, and retention; invest in more intervention and resources on kids not performing well; benchmark against their competitors; and use multiple ways to measure school performance.



Educational Achievement Gaps

- Between 1992 and 2007, the black-white mathematics gap among Texas fourth and eighth graders narrowed as gains of African American students outpaced the gains of White students. While these gaps have narrowed over the years, the differences between the scores remain significant with 23- and 29-point gaps within the fourth and eighth grade, respectively.
- Gaps in mathematics between Hispanic and White students have also narrowed over the years but still remain large. In 2007, the fourth grade performance gap was 17 points, down from 22 in 1992, and 23 points for eighth graders, down from 28.
- Unfortunately, reading gaps between African American and White students in Texas have not narrowed over the years. For fourth and eighth graders, reading gaps have fluctuated up and down, ending in 2007 with a slightly larger gap for both grade levels than originally measured in the 1990's.
- Over the last 10 years reading gaps between Hispanic and White students decreased by two points for fourth graders (from 23 to 21 points) while the gap increased by two points for eighth graders (from 22 to 24 points).
- A large gap exists among racial and ethnic groups in both enrollment and graduation from the state's colleges and universities as well. The state's Hispanic and African American populations have enrolled in higher education at rates well below that of the White population.
- In 2007, college enrollment of 18-24 year olds in Texas (30%) fell short of the national average of 34%. And among 18-24 year olds in

Texas, only 24% of Hispanics and 33% of African Americans were enrolled in college, compared with 39% of Whites.

- During the 2006-2007 academic year, Texas colleges and universities conferred over 210,000 degrees and certificates. Over 53% of the degrees conferred were awarded to White students while 23% went to Hispanic and 11% to African American students.
- Texas is becoming a minority majority state. The Texas State Data Center (TSDC) estimates that in 2008, Hispanics accounted for 37% of the state's population and African Americans represented 12%, for a total "minority" population of 49%. By 2015, TSDC projections show a combined African American and Hispanic population accounting for over 51% of the Texas population. If these educational gaps are not closed, Texas will have proportionately fewer college graduates as the minority population continues to grow.

Educational Attainment

- According to the 2007 American Community Survey administered annually by the U.S. Census Bureau, Texas ranks 50th among all U.S. states and the District of Columbia in the percentage of adults with *at least* a high school diploma. Only Mississippi rates fall below those of Texas.

College Readiness

- College Readiness Indicators, tracked by the Texas Education Agency, are used to help provide a picture of college preparedness of Texas high school students.
- One such indicator uses the TAKS Grade 11 exit-level Mathematics and English Language Arts tests to assess students' readiness to

enroll in an institution of higher education. In 2007, only 57% of Texas students demonstrated college readiness in English Language Arts, while only 56% demonstrated readiness in Math.



Public Education Strategic Plan
The Next Six Years

What Have We Learned And Where Are We Going?

The Foundation recognizes there is a growing awareness among educators and policymakers that the academic standards associated with college readiness are necessary to prepare students to take advantage of opportunities in the workplace. Because of the connection between a strong education and lifelong opportunities, college readiness standards may be couched as “opportunity readiness standards” for students who have no immediate desire to attend college.

We also recognize that a large gap exists among racial and ethnic groups in both enrollment and graduation from the state’s colleges and universities. The state’s Hispanic and African American populations have enrolled in higher education at rates well below that of the White population. If this gap is not closed, Texas will have proportionately fewer college graduates as the minority population continues to grow. By 2015, projections show a combined African American and Hispanic population accounting for over 51% of the Texas population.

We further recognize that with fewer college graduates in our future, Texas will gradually become less educated, less prosperous and less economically competitive. **If we continue on the same path for several more decades, by 2040 the annual loss in household income would exceed \$80 billion. But if we close the educational gaps within Texas, the gain would be more than \$110 million annually.** Only by reversing Texas’ declining enrollment and graduation rates, and building excellence in education, can the state compete successfully with other states and nations. This reversal will allow Texas to generate, attract and retain state-of-the-art, high-wage businesses and employment opportunities for all of its people.

Strategic Plan: The Next Six Years

The Foundation’s ambitious and overarching goal is the same goal as the one set by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) in 2000: **to close the education gap by 2015.**

Only 5% of the Texas population was enrolled in higher education in recent years compared to a national average of 5.4%. California and Illinois enroll 6% of their state population, while Michigan enrolls 5.7% and New York enrolls 5.6%. To achieve the 5.7% enrollment goal set by the Higher Education Coordinating Board, Texas will have to enroll an additional 630,000 students in some form of higher education by 2015. To get these kinds of numbers, we will have to:

1. Raise the bar on what students must learn – a rigorous college readiness curriculum.
2. Help struggling students succeed in the early grades and throughout K-12.
3. Improve poor performing schools.
4. Ensure fewer kids dropout of school.
5. Focus on closing the achievement gap between White and minority students by focusing more on Hispanic students.
6. Develop the teachers and administrators necessary for the task.

Meadows Foundation Goals

Goal 1: **Close the education gaps in Texas by enrolling 630,000 more students (a 60% increase) in some form of higher education by 2015.** The goal is to enroll in Texas colleges and universities an additional **430,000** academically prepared people beyond the **200,000** natural enrollment growth projected for 2015, and to maintain the

rate of enrollment at **5.7%** of the total population. This would bring the total higher education enrollment to 1,650,000 students annually by 2015.

Goal 2: Maintain the college enrollment rate at 5.7% for each of the major ethnic groups and for the total population by 2015 and beyond.

Goal 3: By 2015, increase by 50% the number of degrees, certificates and other identifiable student successes from high quality programs. Increase the overall number of students completing bachelor’s and associate’s degrees and certificates (BACs) to 210,000 by 2015.

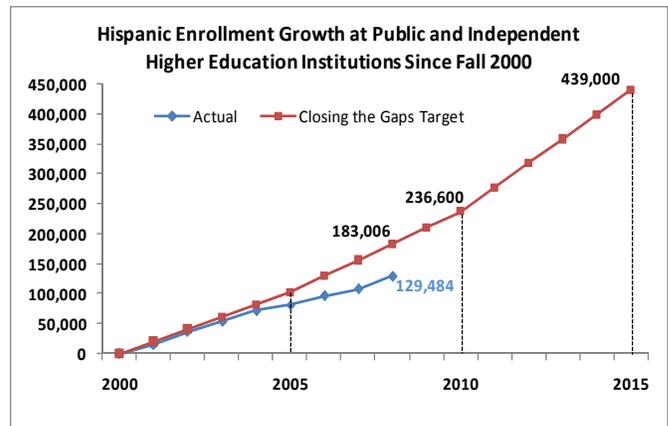
By focusing on college enrollment rates, the foundation is doing several important things:

1. Rather than looking just at current state test scores (TAKS), which are based on basic skills and are not indicators of college preparation levels, we are taking the long view and looking at graduation and college attainment rates; the ultimate purpose of K-12 education.
2. We are focusing our grantmaking - early school readiness, middle grade math and reading, and teacher development - on building the educational “ramp” that leads to college and toward achieving the 2015 target.
3. In this way we are organizing our grantmaking activities toward one overarching and measurable goal.
4. We are aligning ourselves with the state’s educational priorities and with a number of other foundations that fund education in Texas, thereby increasing the concentration of human and financial resources on a single, measurable result.

It is critical to recognize that while the college enrollment rates for African American and White students appear to be on track to achieve the overall target, the rates for Hispanic students are not (see table below). Unless Texas raises Hispanic educational outcomes, economic competitiveness and quality of life will decline in the state. **Thus, the key to meeting the state’s goal is improving Hispanic participation rates.**

Closing the Gaps Measure	Progress Relative to Target	
	July 2008 Report	July 2009 Report
Participation		
Statewide	Somewhat Below Target	Somewhat Below Target
African American	Somewhat Above Target	Well Above Target
Hispanic	Well Below Target	Well Below Target
White	Somewhat Above Target	Somewhat Below Target

To reach the statewide targets, we must prepare 310,000 Hispanic students over the next six years to be able to graduate and be ready for college level work. Therefore, while the Meadows Foundation will support the educational advancement of all students, much of our focus must be on increasing the college participation rates of Hispanic students.



We have separated the six-year goal into three-year and six-year targets:

Meadows three-year target: To increase the number of students, primarily Hispanic students, enrolling in higher education by 150,000 between 2010 and 2012.

Meadows six-year target: To increase the number of students, primarily Hispanic students, enrolling in higher education by 310,000 by 2015.

The urgency of the issues facing Texas compels the Foundation to move forward on multiple strategies simultaneously. However, it is important to realize that there are different timeframes by which we can expect to see measurable results towards our college attainment goals. We are taking the following approach:

1. Immediate Objectives and Strategies – Grant activities designed to produce measurable results within 1-3 years. For example, projects assisting students nearing high school graduation.
2. Intermediate Objectives and Strategies - Grant activities that would result in measurable changes over the next 3-5 years. For example, projects aimed at increasing the quantity and quality of school teachers and leaders.
3. Long-term Objectives and Strategies -Grant activities that will take 5-10 years in order to contribute toward our goals. Examples include projects targeting pre-school readiness, and those focused on reading and math instruction in the middle grades.

Immediate Objectives and Strategies (1-3 Years)

1. Objective: Increase high school completion rates of students currently in secondary grades annually by an additional 50,000.

- a. Strategy: Implement effective interventions for increasing high school completion rates of students. These could include online test preparation programs, intervention programs in adolescent reading and middle school algebra, and other proven programs to assist students in completing high school requirements. Special attention should be given to first generation college students who appear to be college ready but may encounter non-academic barriers to college enrollment.
- b. Strategy: Implement the research-based intervention strategies being developed by the Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk to help struggling students avoid dropping out of school (e.g., a screening measure for identifying students at risk for dropping out, school-wide models to promote school engagement and literacy, etc.).
- c. Strategy: In coordination with appropriate agencies, increase the number of dual credit and early college programs available so that high school students can easily transfer to college, with particular emphasis on enrolling Hispanic students.
- d. Strategy: In coordination with appropriate agencies, expand the enrollment capacity of high-performing charter high schools that produce high graduation and college enrollment rates, particularly for minority students.

Intermediate Objectives and Strategies (3-5 Years)

1. Objective: Increase the focus on academic outcomes and the quality of academic instruction in high-need schools.
 - a. Strategy: Increase the number of certified teachers in high-need content areas (math, science, bilingual) teaching in middle and secondary schools through targeted teacher preparation, retention, and professional development.
 - b. Strategy: Increase the number of effective principals, particularly in high-need middle and secondary schools.
 - c. Strategy: Provide training in leadership and good governance to 10% of all school board members in Texas.
 - d. Strategy: Ensure that 10% of all superintendents receive quality professional development in effective strategies to improve academic outcomes.

Long-term Objectives and Strategies (5-10 Years)

1. Objective 1: Increase the number of four- and five-year-old children demonstrating school readiness which focuses on social and emotional development, reading, writing, math, communication, and language, especially English language.
 - a. Strategy: Build on the learning developed through the Zero-to-Five Collaborative in Dallas to inform other groups and communities in how to conduct a comprehensive school readiness program.

- b. Strategy: Increase the number of quality pre-school programs that focus on preparing their students for school with an emphasis on English language skills.
 - c. Strategy: Increase efforts to inform parents and caregivers of the benefits in expanding language development in children, especially in English.
 - d. Increase the number of pre-school teachers that receive professional development focused on ways to improve the school readiness levels of their students.
2. Objective 2: Increase the percentage of students in middle grades passing state assessments in reading at or above proficient levels (based on NAEP) from 28% to 43% (top scoring state).
 - a. Strategy: Continue efforts to train teachers in elementary grades in effective early reading instruction.
 - b. Strategy: Increase the number of teachers trained in effective adolescent reading instruction and interventions, with a focus on developing academic language.
3. Objective 3: Increase the percentage of students in middle grades passing state assessments in math at or above proficient levels (based on NAEP) from the current 35% level to 51% (top scoring state).
 - a. Strategy: Increase the number of teachers in middle grades trained in effective math instruction and interventions particularly focused on the foundations of algebra.

- b. Strategy: Scale up evidence-based effective math programs that focus on teaching the foundations of algebra.
 - c. Strategy: Support the development of a Math Center(s) similar to the Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk, which can develop and translate research on effective math instruction into teacher training and classroom materials.
 - d. Strategy: Support research where needed to answer key policy questions related to teaching math. A critical need is research on the relationship between elementary and secondary teachers' knowledge, their instructional skill, and students learning, and to identify the mathematical and pedagogical knowledge needed for teaching mathematics.
4. Objective 4: Texas public school students will demonstrate the ability to compete with the top performing international countries, particularly in reading and math (fourth and eighth grade levels) by 2020.
- a. Strategy: Assist the state to use globally competitive reference standards based on the existing American Diploma Project (ADP) framework. The ADP is now working to further calibrate the framework to reflect international expectations as well as recent research on college and career readiness.
 - b. Strategy: Support development of more sophisticated student assessments which are typically more expensive to develop and administer than the multiple-choice exams commonly used in the U.S.
 - c. Strategy: Assist the state and districts to translate findings from high-performing countries into textbooks, workbooks, diagnostic tests for teacher use, and other classroom materials that enable teachers to bring the curriculum into the classroom in a relatively consistent, effective way.
 - d. Strategy: Ensure that teacher and administrator preparation and development programs include concepts and practices derived from international benchmarking efforts.
 - e. Strategy: Support research where needed to answer key policy questions related to other educational attainment issues.
5. Objective 5: Increase the affordability of higher education.
- a. Strategy: Inform policy makers about the cost-benefit value of increasing state funding for financial aid.
 - b. Strategy: Study the expansion of innovative financial aid programs such as repayable loan programs.
 - c. Strategy: Create incentives for more students to follow "two-plus-two" educational paths where students opt for completing their first two years of academic coursework at community colleges rather than universities.
6. Objective 6: Increase the academic supports designed to ensure college retention rates and success.
- a. Strategy: Research best practices in developmental education (a student taking a developmental course in math

has only an 11% chance of advancing and completing a credit-bearing college-level math course with a passing grade).

Guiding Principles

We propose to follow the guiding principles below.

- Invest in projects and programs that are research-based and outcome driven.
- Continue to expand inter-foundation collaboration. Identify public and private partners with similar goals to participate in joint projects.
- Look for opportunities to address underlying root causes of problems.
- Be sure that projects we support are reflective of the true needs of stakeholders.
- Be opportunistic in finding programs and projects that can contribute to the foundation's goals.
- Continue efforts to make MFI a resource for others. Promote the research conducted by The Meadows Center to bring interested parties together to build collaborations around our work.

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Appendix

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Early Childhood Development

2001		MFI Grant Amount
	Young Women's Christian Association of Fort Worth and Tarrant County, <i>March</i>	\$65,000
		1 \$65,000
2002		
	El Paso Children's Day Care Association, <i>February</i>	\$50,000
	Blessed Sacrament Academy Foundation, <i>March</i>	\$50,000
	North Texas Public Broadcasting (KERA-Channel 13), <i>September</i>	\$350,000
	Connections Resource Center, <i>October</i>	\$130,000
		4 \$580,000
2003		
	Cordi-Marian Sisters, <i>March</i>	\$37,000
	AVANCE-Rio Grande Valley Chapter, <i>April</i>	\$122,300
	Child Care Group, <i>April</i>	\$225,000
	AVANCE-El Paso Chapter, <i>May</i>	\$125,000
	El Paso Children's Day Care Association, <i>June</i>	\$17,000
	Texas A&M International University, <i>June</i>	\$25,000
	Healthy Families Bell County, <i>October</i>	\$71,000
		7 \$622,300

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Early Childhood Development

2004		MFI Grant Amount
	Mi Escuelita Preschool, <i>January</i>	Toward expanding early childhood services to low-income children in Cockrell Hill \$93,250
	Plano International Preschool, <i>March</i>	Toward expanding a preschool facility to serve an additional 18 low-income, non-English speaking children \$45,000
	Small Steps Nurturing Center, <i>March</i>	Toward constructing an early childhood education center to serve low-income, preschool children in Houston's Fifth Ward \$94,000
	Texas Tech University System, <i>June</i>	Toward renovating a building for use as a larger Child Development Research Center \$250,000
	Fred Moore Day Nursery School, <i>September</i>	Toward emergency operating support in order to continue providing affordable child care to low-income families in Denton County \$50,000
	Head Start of Greater Dallas, <i>September</i>	Toward constructing an early childhood development center for children of low-income families and those attending community college \$135,000
		6 \$667,250
2005		
	Day Nursery of Abilene, <i>January</i>	Toward new construction and capital improvements to childcare facilities \$173,000
	Howard County Junior College District, <i>February</i>	Toward constructing a new childcare and Head Start facility on campus \$85,000
	AVANCE Waco, <i>September</i>	Toward expanding parent education and childcare programs for low-income Latino families \$170,000
	Austin Families, <i>November</i>	Toward expanding a bilingual parent education program to reduce child abuse and neglect among at-risk families \$155,000
		4 \$583,000
2006		
	Children's Defense Fund for the Texas Early Childhood Education Coalition, <i>October</i>	Toward hiring a director of research and public policy to promote quality education and development for Texas children ages birth to five \$138,000
	Mi Escuelita Preschool, <i>November</i>	Toward classroom space to expand the number of low-income Hispanic children receiving English and early childhood instruction \$217,000
		2 \$355,000

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Early Childhood Development

2007		MFI Grant Amount
	Schulenburg ISD for the Schulenburg/ Weimar Parents as Teachers Program, <i>June</i>	Toward bridge funding for a parenting education and family support program \$55,000
	Dallas Foundation, <i>July</i>	Toward a multi-foundation collaborative to determine the needs of young children and their families in Dallas \$25,000
	AVANCE-El Paso Chapter, <i>September</i>	Toward expanding a comprehensive nine- month parenting program over a three- year period to serve additional low-income Hispanic families \$180,000
	Child Care Group, <i>October</i>	Toward bridge funding to continue professional training for child care providers and directors in Dallas County \$150,000
		4 \$410,000
2008		
	Daughters of Charity Services of San Antonio, <i>February</i>	Toward constructing a new early childhood education center to expand services to low-income families in South San Antonio \$250,000
	Dallas Foundation, <i>June</i>	Toward continuing a multi-foundation collaborative to support young children and their families in high-need Dallas neighborhoods \$15,000
		2 \$265,000
	Early Childhood Development Total	30 \$3,547,550

Reading

2002		
	Reading is Fundamental of Austin, <i>April</i>	Toward acquiring permanent office space to provide volunteer training and store books \$16,300
	Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic, <i>January</i>	Toward expanding a training program in San Antonio and Houston area schools to assist students with learning disabilities to read \$75,000
	University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, <i>March</i>	Toward expanding an early childhood teacher training program that focuses on literacy and language skills \$135,000
	W. Oscar Neuhaus Memorial Foundation, <i>May</i>	Toward expanding Web-based and video- conferencing instruction to classroom teachers on effective strategies to teach reading \$80,000
	University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, <i>October</i>	Toward continued statewide expansion of an initiative making early literacy part of pediatric care \$150,000
		5 \$456,300

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Reading

2003		MFI Grant Amount
	Communities in Schools, <i>June</i>	Toward expanding a literacy program for at-risk, low-income children \$78,000
	Focus Learning Academy, Inc., <i>June</i>	Toward supporting a summer reading and math program for students with learning difficulties \$15,750
	University of Texas at Austin for the Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts, <i>May</i>	To produce and disseminate video-based instruction to teachers of bilingual children with reading deficiencies \$86,700
		3 \$180,450
2004		
	University of Texas at Austin for the Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts, <i>April</i>	Toward developing and implementing teacher-training materials for children with reading difficulties in grades four through seven \$333,000
	The Foundation for Community Empowerment, <i>June</i>	Toward increasing the number of low-income children receiving a language-rich and research-based early childhood curriculum \$515,000
	W. Oscar Neuhaus Memorial Foundation, <i>September</i>	Toward translating a preschool language and early literacy curriculum into Spanish for teachers to use to teach children to speak and read English \$70,000
		3 \$918,000
2006		
	HLS&R Institute for Teacher Excellence, <i>March</i>	Toward expanding a teacher training program designed to improve early reading instruction to an increased number of at-risk children \$115,000
		1 \$115,000
2007		
	KIPP, <i>June</i>	Toward adding a reading specialist and high school placement staff for the Dallas Kipp Truth Academy \$147,000
	Plano Independent School District, <i>June</i>	Toward bridge funding to continue providing a literacy program for low-income, at-risk children and their families after federal funding cuts \$80,000
	University of Texas at Austin for the Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts, <i>November</i>	Toward developing and implementing teacher training materials to improve the reading proficiency of students in grades four and five \$399,000
		3 \$626,000

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Reading

2008		MFI Grant Amount	
	University of Texas at Austin, The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk, <i>March</i>	Toward creating a research and training institute for teachers and school leaders to increase the number of students who are academically successful and to reduce the number of students at risk of dropping out	\$1,500,000
	Houston Public Library Foundation, <i>June</i>	Toward purchasing and installing bi-lingual early literacy stations in neighborhood libraries	\$25,000
	W. Oscar Neuhaus Memorial Foundation, <i>June</i>	Toward developing web-based resources for reading teachers	\$51,300
	Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas, <i>November</i>	Toward improving academic achievement by implementing after-school activities that reinforce classroom instruction	\$100,000
	Reading Is Fundamental, Inc., <i>September</i>	Toward increasing the amount of printed materials in homes and literacy trainings to low-economic areas in south Texas	\$140,000
			5 \$1,816,300
	Reading Total		20 \$4,112,050

Teacher and Administration Preparation

2001			
	Texas Leadership Center, <i>April</i>	Toward designing a multi-year, statewide campaign to attract people to the teaching profession in Texas	\$10,000
	Dallas Independent School District, <i>May</i>	Toward developing a comprehensive plan to successfully recruit, select and hire quality teachers; and toward recruiting and training 100-125 certified teachers to fill critical vacancies for the 2002-2003 school year	\$372,320
	University of St. Thomas, <i>May</i>	Toward constructing classroom space for the teacher preparation and humanities programs	\$121,875
	Dallas County Schools, <i>June</i>	To provide classroom teachers simultaneous electronic access to media materials that supplement curricula for all grades	\$100,000
	Center for Reform of School Systems, <i>July</i>	Toward a foundation collaborative to develop plans for creating a statewide training institute for newly elected, urban school board trustees	\$4,500
	University of Houston-Downtown, <i>July</i>	Toward establishing a Masters in Teaching program as a strategy to encourage more people to enter the teaching profession and to encourage teacher retention	\$170,910

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Teacher and Administration Preparation

2001		MFI Grant Amount
Region VI Education Service Center, <i>September</i>	Toward establishing an on-line training program as part of a teacher preparation and certification program	\$77,000
Center for Reform of School Systems, <i>November</i>	Toward establishing a statewide training institute for newly elected, urban school board trustees	\$300,000
Teach For America, <i>November</i>	Toward increasing the number of teachers for schools in the Rio Grande Valley	\$300,000
		9
		\$1,456,605
2002		
State Board for Educator Certification, <i>March</i>	To sponsor a statewide symposium for educators and policymakers to study effective methods to support and retain beginning teachers	\$16,450
Texas A&M University System, <i>July</i>	Toward continuing a program to increase the quality and quantity of classroom teachers throughout the Texas A&M System	\$279,186
Texas Principal Leadership Initiative, <i>September</i>	Toward improving university and alternative principal preparation programs	\$125,500
Trinity University, <i>November</i>	Toward a pilot program designed to improve teacher retention	\$225,000
West Texas A&M University, <i>December</i>	Toward recruiting over 900 new teacher candidates at four A&M campuses over three years	\$796,000
		5
		\$1,442,136
2003		
University of Houston - Clear Lake, <i>January</i>	Toward scholarships for students in the STEP program pursuing teacher certification	\$50,000
		1
		\$50,000
2004		
College of the Mainland Foundation, <i>February</i>	Toward renovating and furnishing a facility in which to train an expanded number of individuals seeking certification as public school teachers	\$116,000
Center for Reform of School Systems, <i>September</i>	Toward continuing a statewide training institute for newly elected, urban school board trustees	\$300,000
Rensselaerville Institute, <i>September</i>	Toward expanding a pilot program aimed at improving student performance by providing training and support to principals at low-performing schools	\$238,000
		3
		\$654,000

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Teacher and Administration Preparation

2005		MFI Grant Amount
	Teach For America, <i>January</i>	Toward continuing to expand the number of corps members teaching in public schools in the Rio Grande Valley \$225,000
	Project ARRIBA, <i>May</i>	Toward developing and piloting a Teaching Corps in far West Texas \$123,000
	University of Texas at San Antonio, <i>June</i>	Toward presenting a training conference for superintendents from urban districts on building effective educational programs for minority populations \$6,000
	The New Teacher Project, <i>October</i>	Toward a statewide teacher effort to recruit highly qualified teachers in critical subject areas \$468,600
	Prairie View A&M University, <i>November</i>	Toward increasing the number of certified teachers in high need subject areas \$84,000
		5 \$906,600
2006		
	Teach for America, <i>June</i>	Toward doubling the number of corps members teaching in low-income, public schools in the Houston area \$225,000
	Trinity University, <i>November</i>	Toward establishing a Principals' Center to develop leadership skills and promote retention among principals from area schools \$225,000
		2 \$450,000
2007		
	Center for Reform of School Systems, <i>April</i>	Toward 1) continuing a statewide training institute for school board members, and 2) to provide an intensive two-year training process in reform governance for the Dallas Independent School District superintendent and board members \$820,000
		1 \$820,000
2008		
	Dallas Independent School District, <i>June</i>	Toward implementing a mentor-coaching program for existing principals to improve student achievement \$667,000
	University of North Texas - Dallas Campus, <i>June</i>	Toward a leadership development program aimed at increasing the number of new, high quality principals in public education \$500,000
	Center for Reform of School Systems, <i>July</i>	Toward building consensus around key goals for Texas public education \$25,000
	University of Houston System for the Center for Research, Evaluation, Advancement of Teacher Education, <i>July</i>	Toward transforming university teacher preparation programs to focus on educational quality and student achievement \$400,000

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Teacher and Administration Preparation

2008			MFI Grant Amount
	Teach For America, <i>September</i>	Toward launching a new teacher corps site in Dallas	\$600,000
	Teach For America, <i>September</i>	Toward expanding the number of corps members teaching in public schools in the Rio Grande Valley	\$250,000
			6 \$2,442,000
		Teacher & Administrator Preparation Total	32 \$8,221,341

Math

2003			
	Texas State University-San Marcos, <i>November</i>	Toward increasing the number of certified math teachers and to increase the math abilities of middle school students	\$244,000
			1 \$244,000
2004			
	University of the Incarnate Word, <i>March</i>	Toward constructing and renovating a science and mathematics facility in order to provide expanded programs	\$155,000
			1 \$155,000
2006			
	University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, <i>February</i>	Toward developing a pilot teacher training program that focuses on math readiness for economically disadvantaged kindergarten and pre-school children	\$180,000
	Texas State University System, <i>May</i>	Toward integrating an on-line tutoring program aimed at improving math achievement levels of middle school students with a program to provide hands-on experience for middle school math teachers	\$247,000
	Texas A&M University-Commerce, <i>July</i>	Toward bridge funding for a program to improve student performance in math and science	\$75,000
			3 \$502,000
2007			
	Reasoning Mind, <i>May</i>	Toward refining and testing a Web-based curriculum designed to improve middle school students' performance in math	\$250,000
	Texas State University-San Marcos, <i>October</i>	Toward piloting a math curriculum focused on pre-algebraic and algebra concepts for middle school students	\$386,000
			2 \$636,000
2008			
	Texas Alliance for Minorities in Engineering, <i>June</i>	Toward maintaining a mobile exhibit that provides students hands-on opportunities to engage in, learn and become excited about engineering and science	\$25,000
			1 \$25,000
		Math Total	8 \$1,562,000

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Related Public Education Grants

2001		MFI Grant Amount
	KIPP, <i>February</i>	\$250,000
		1 \$250,000
2002		
	St. Mark's School of Texas, <i>June</i>	\$25,000
	Texas Business and Education Coalition, <i>July</i>	\$112,500
	National Center for Educational Accountability, <i>October</i>	\$350,000
		3 \$487,500
2003		
	Sails Forever, <i>March</i>	\$146,300
	The University of Texas System, <i>April</i>	\$252,000
	KIPP, <i>May</i>	\$317,750
	The Parish Children's School, <i>May</i>	\$50,000
	Winfrey Academy Charter School, <i>May</i>	\$152,000
	IDEA Academy, <i>November</i>	\$262,600
		6 \$1,180,650
2004		
	I Am That I Am Academy of Fine Arts, Science and Technology, <i>May</i>	\$100,000
	Jean Massieu Foundation for Jean Massieu Academy, <i>June</i>	\$100,000
	Texas Woman's University, <i>June</i>	\$25,000

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Related Public Education Grants

2004		MFI Grant Amount
	A. W. Brown-Fellowship Charter School, <i>September</i>	\$134,000
	Boy Scouts of America, <i>October</i>	\$90,000
		5
		\$449,000
2005		
	June Shelton School and Evaluation Center, <i>June</i>	\$25,000
	The University of Texas System, <i>June</i>	\$36,715
	Breakthrough, <i>September</i>	\$149,000
	National Center for Educational Accountability, <i>September</i>	\$500,000
	Texas Business and Education Coalition, <i>November</i>	\$100,000
		5
		\$810,715
2006		MFI Grant Amount
	Jasper Independent School District, <i>January</i>	\$75,000
	West Dallas Initiative, <i>January</i>	\$250,000
	IDEA Academy, <i>May</i>	\$417,000
	College For All Texans Foundation: Closing The Gaps, <i>June</i>	\$251,000
		4
		\$993,000

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Related Public Education Grants

2008		MFI Grant Amount
Communities Foundation of Texas for the Texas High School Project, <i>April</i>	Toward creating an early college high school to increase the number of low-income students in Brownsville who will attend college	\$400,500
Education Commission of the States, <i>June</i>	Toward support for the National Forum on Education Policy to be held in Austin	\$25,000
The University of Texas at Dallas for The Center for BrainHealth, <i>November</i>	Toward a program to improve reasoning skills in middle school students	\$200,000
	3	\$625,500
	<i>Related Pubic Education Total</i>	<i>27</i> <i>\$4,796,365</i>
Total for Public Education		117 \$22,239,306