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Brenda Lee Arteaga

May 2013

A STUDY OF A TURNAROUND HIGH SCHOOL'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
INDICATORS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

A Doctoral Thesis Presented to the
Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education
in Professional Leadership

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May 2013

Dedication

For Mercedes Araceli Arteaga

We have been through thick and thin together. That is what writing this dissertation has felt like – thick and thin – but you always encouraged me to keep going and gave me the desire to fulfill this dream of mine. Funny...daughter encouraging mother...one day it will be the other way around and I'll get to see you walk across that stage multiple times as you reach out to achieve your life's goals.

Thank you for giving away some of your "mommy time" so that I could move forward on this path but most of all, thank you for being you. I love you with all of my heart and if it had not been for you, I'm not sure that I would have ever started this process. For all of your patience, love, and support through this crazy time, I love you with all of my heart. Thank you!

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For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

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To my family, you are truly my anchor. You have seen me through many hard and difficult times and never gave up on believing in me and my abilities. You have never wavered in your support and I could not ask for a better family. Aunt Helen and Uncle Ralph, it is because of you that I am truly “here”; you have made a huge impact in my life, one that is embossed forever. Thank you for being exactly who you are.

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Abstract

Turnaround schools have been pushed to the forefront as a result of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 which endorsed a reform effort of standards-based education. NCLB asserted the fact that schools could no longer continue failing students and reform efforts were soon put into place. This descriptive study examined a high school in a large urban district (LUD) in the Southwest part of Texas that implemented its version of a turnaround school model, "Advance Now" in 2010.

The Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) was used to extrapolate the data of the school in order to discern whether progress had been made in the turnaround effort. This study found that progress was made in many areas; however, there were significant disparities between the subgroups. These disproportions supported the fact that there is much work to be done in closing all educational gaps.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Education reform began in ancient times with Plato and has weaved itself throughout history in one form or another. In the mid-20th century, education reform was again brought to the forefront during the Civil Rights Movement. Later linked through the Bush administration, education reform focused on two key areas: closing the achievement gap and closing the gap between the United States and other countries. Zhao (2009) reiterated the fact that the United States would have to compete with China and India and were, in fact, losing jobs to foreign countries. The Obama administration later funded the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and opened the Race to the Top (RTTT) \$4.35 billion contest for educational reform. These reforms included longitudinal data systems, ensuring that schools had effective leaders and teachers, common core standards were developed and implemented, state success factors, general selection criteria, and school turnaround. Finding a solution to the school turnaround process was one of the biggest quandaries of the 21st century education reform. Everyone had a take on how it should be done, what program model was the best, or creating one from the four models proposed by the USDE. RTTT had many critics that complained that there was too much federal control within the guidelines of the RTTT grants. In education, all situations were different. There were none that were alike. Reading from a learning perspective, one will find that history, in fact, brought solutions. The reader will not find the solution to turnaround problems in this study; however, they will find golden nuggets that can possibly aid in the turnaround journey and a history on what can happen when someone decides to make a difference.

Brief Review

According to the U.S. Department of Education's Mapping America's Educational Progress (2008), in school year 2006–07, 70% of 98,905 schools nationwide (64,546) made AYP; 10,676 schools were designated as schools in need of improvement, and 2,302 schools were designated as schools in need of improvement restructuring. These under-performing schools that were in need of restructuring had to decide which of the four restructuring models would be used in their turnaround school. According to Pytel (2010), there were three proven programs that turn schools around: Uncommon Schools, YES Prep Public School, and Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA). Two of these schools were charter schools and one was a high school-community college partnership. Each one of these schools had at-risk populations according to the data statistics presented by Pytel. Pytel based her work on Whitmire and Rotherham's 2010 U.S. News & World News Report article. Whitmire and Rotherham (2010) focused on three key areas in their report: (1) How do school districts do more than just talk about effective teaching?; (2) How do you build inner city schools that turn out college-ready students?; and (3) How do you draw more minority students into four-year college programs? (p. 1) Whitmire and Rotherham (2010) stated that these three proven programs represent trends that are powerful and positive that would help America reach its goal by 2020 of being educationally viable in the global markets.

Hassel, Hassel, & Rhim (2007), stated that schools need to identify practices that assist with a one to three year turnaround. Schools that dramatically improved student outcomes in a short time were considered turnaround schools.

Turnaround schools became one of the latest methods in taking underperforming schools, and even districts, and used a variety of techniques to raise student achievement and performance. The extent of the need for effective turnaround schools strategies was presented in Stuit's (2010) five year study that examined more than 2,000 of the worst-performing district and charter schools in 10 states and found that very few of them closed, and even fewer – about 1% – truly “turned around.” The U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Science's What Works Clearinghouse (2008) which released a practice guide that outlined four recommendations for turnaround schools: (1) Signal the need for dramatic change with strong leadership, (2) Maintain a consistent focus on improving instruction, (3) Make visible improvements early in the school turnaround process (quick wins), and (4) Build a committed staff (p. 8).

According to the two studies by Picucci et al. and Duke, all turnaround schools experienced major changes in leadership practices. Picucci et al. (2002a) suggested eight factors which signaled a strong change in leadership practices: (1) communicating a clear purpose to school staff; (2) creating high expectations and values, (3) sharing leadership and authority; (4) demonstrating a willingness to make the same types of changes asked of their staff; (5) identifying advocates within the staff; (6) building a consensus that permeated the entire staff; (7) eliminating any distractions to ensure that the maximum amount of classroom time was focused on instruction; and (8) establishing a cohesive culture (p. 48-52). In contrast to Picucci's leadership practices, Duke (n.d.) identified the following eight dimensions of leadership change in his study: (1) leadership changes; (2) school policy changes; (3) program changes; (4) changes in organizational processes and procedures; (5) personnel and staffing changes; (6) changes

in classroom practices; (7) changes in parental and community involvement; and (8) changes in school facilities (p. 5). Hassel and Hassel (2009) recommended six key TL actions to be considered:

- (1) focus on early wins;
- (2) break organizational norms;
- (3) push rapid-fire experimentation;
- (4) get the right staff, right the remainder;
- (5) drive decisions with open-air data; and
- (6) lead a turnaround campaign (p. 21-27).

Regardless of whether a system decided to replace all staff or keep it intact, Fullan (2011) suggested that leaders must help their organization survive and thrive by using six secrets of change that involve loving your employees and valuing them; making connections between peers in your organization; building capacity amongst individuals and groups; utilization of job-embedded professional development; developing complete transparency about results and positive practices; and enveloping the system with leadership at all levels. The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (2009) produced research that stated that one of the six quality indicators of high-achieving schools is effective instruction.

Futernick (2010) refuted the argument that teachers should be fired if they are not performing. Futernick suggested that the current systems are dysfunctional and that we should instead focus on the following in order to establish better-equipped teachers: meaningful performance evaluation of teachers that is tied to high-quality professional development, peer mentoring, and classroom assignments that effectively match their

training and preparation. According to the Wallace Foundation Report (2011), approximately 2,000 public schools, both traditional and charter, operated or utilized some variation of extended day and/or year schedules. Scheerens and Bosker (1997) conducted a meta-analysis that indicated a 15 percentile point increase in student achievement based on teachers' optimized use of time.

Allensworth and Easton (2007) confirmed that data should be used to keep students "on-track" (p. 1). One of the crucial pieces of their study focuses on the need to continuously track attendance data and how attendance links to dropouts. The researchers concluded that "attendance is the largest predictor of course failure" (p. 26). Van Barneveld (2008) reported that research verifies that (1) high-performing schools plan their use of data; (2) use data to direct decisions; (3) teachers' understanding of data is conceptual; (4) there had to be a clear link between data and the planning and decision-making practices; and (5) time had to be factored into the equation when teachers are developing their data expertise (p.1).

Rothman and Henderson (2011) results indicate that borderline students who received school-based tutoring from district teachers performed higher on standardized test scores in the areas of mathematics and language arts than borderline students who did not participate in tutoring. Apthrop et al. (2005) examined 76 high-needs schools and ascertained that the high-performing schools all created a culture of high expectations. Everyone on the staff had a common, committed vision and everyone was focused on the same goals. A common, committed vision included high expectations for student performance and behavior.

Statement of the Problem

Current budget woes and political and parental pressures mounting for public schools to perform, everyone from the district to the campus level was looking for ways to improve failing schools. Reform movements and the requirements of the federal government and legislation, such as, NCLB, and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measures, school districts were struggling with implementing the right turnaround model. There was not a significant amount of research in the field that addresses the model. The turnaround model that was chosen by an underperforming district should address many factors but the utmost determining factor should have been student achievement. In Texas, in particular, only 28% of the districts made AYP for the 2011-2012 school year; that was a massive amount of schools, 71.4% that missed AYP (Texas Education Agency (TEA), 2012). The LUD attempted to address these concerns through its “Advance Now” turnaround school model. Millions of dollars were diverted into funding for these underperforming schools, the stakes were even greater.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to provide a descriptive analysis that compares the 2010-2012 AEIS data to the previous years' AEIS data of one turnaround high school's performance indicators on the state assessment program and other AEIS indicators and to provide implications for school district leaders. With the large quantity of underperforming schools, school district leaders needed more reliable studies that addressed turnaround models; their advantages, disadvantages, and also the different models that were currently being implemented. The study reported on current and previous Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) indicators and achievement

scores in English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies for African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students. This study also focused on other AEIS indicators:

- attendance rates;
- annual dropout rates;
- four-year completion rates;
- advanced course/dual enrollment completion (based on a count of students who complete and receive credit for at least one advanced course in grades 9-12);
- recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates;
- the Texas Success Initiative (TSI)– English Language Arts (ELA) and Math progress (percent of grade 11 examinees with a scale score of 2200 or more and a score of 3 or higher on the essay);
- average SAT scores;
- ELA and Math College-Ready graduates (number of graduates who scored at or above the college-ready criteria on both ELA and mathematics, divided by the number of graduates with results in both subjects to evaluate);
- enrollment;
- mobility;
- number of students per teacher;
- number of graduates;

- minimum high school plan/recommended/distinguished high school plan graduates; and
- total operating expenditures funding and accelerated education funding

The study represented 3 years of data for African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students before and after being selected as a turnaround school model.

Research Questions

1. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on ELA state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data?

2. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on math state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data?

3. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on science state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data?

4. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on social studies state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data?

5. What are the differences in other AEIS data (attendance rates, annual dropout rates, four-year completion rates, advanced course/dual enrollment completion, recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates, the Texas Success Initiative (TSI)– English Language Arts (ELA) and Math progress, average SAT scores, ELA and Math College-Ready graduates, enrollment, mobility, number of students per teacher, number of graduates, minimum high school plan/recommended/distinguished high school plan graduates, and total operating expenditures funding and accelerated education funding) for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 AEIS data?

Research Hypotheses

The following are the research hypotheses of this project:

1. There will be differences in performance measures for 11th-grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on ELA state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data, with students in current cohorts performing at higher rates.
2. There will be differences in performance measures for 11th-grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on math state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data, with students in current cohorts performing at higher rates.

3. There will be differences in performance measures for 11th-grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on science state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data, with students in current cohorts performing at higher rates.

4. There will be differences in performance measures for 11th-grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on social studies state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data, with students in current cohorts performing at higher rates.

5. There will be differences in AEIS data measures for 11th-grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 data in other AEIS data (attendance rates, annual dropout rates, four-year completion rates, advanced course/dual enrollment completion, recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates, the Texas Success Initiative (TSI)– English Language Arts (ELA) and Math progress, average SAT scores, ELA and Math College-Ready graduates, enrollment, mobility, number of students per teacher, number of graduates, minimum high school plan/recommended/distinguished high school plan graduates, and total operating expenditures funding and accelerated education funding) over a three year time period for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 AEIS data.

Significance of the Study

This study will contribute data to the limited research that is currently available on turnaround schools in general and the “Advance Now” schools in particular by identifying where progress has been made in regards to achievement and to analyze where, if any, are there significant gaps in the selected “Advance Now” school. Analysis of these data, strategies, and gaps could further research into the turnaround efforts so that future turnaround models will be able to utilize the study to make turnaround school decisions. If significant gaps are noted, this might initiate future studies to analyze the source of those disparities.

Limitations

Education was a multifaceted establishment; education was about business but with a different kind of product than any other company had – creating successful students as an end-product. School turnaround compounded the complexities of the general education environment. Each student created a different dynamic within the complexities. Each student of each parent brought about another dimension that affected the end-product, whether it be positive, negative, or neutral. There were many turnaround models that had many different principles. This research study may not be used as a generalization for all types of turnaround schools as the turnaround models were as complex as the educational system that encompassed them. An important limitation to be considered in the study was also that the study only included one campus, in one school district, and only one grade level; therefore, generalizations could not be assumed for any or all turnaround campuses.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to 11th grade students who were enrolled in one LUD campus and to the AEIS indicators available on the TEA accountability website. The results of the study were not generalizable to entire turnaround campuses nor to 11th grade students in a turnaround school.

Definition of Terms

1. No Child Left Behind- The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 was a United States Act of Congress that included a reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The Act included Title I, which supported disadvantaged students.

NCLB supported a standards-based education reform with a foundation of setting high standards and establishing measureable goals. A requirement of the ACT was that states must develop assessments in basic skills to be given to all students in those set grade levels if the state desired to receive federal funding. Achievement standards were set by each state. The major components of NCLB magnified the federal role in public education in the following areas: annual accountability and testing, annual academic progress, AYP report cards, teacher qualifications, and changes in education budgets.

NCLB was originally proposed by the administration of George W. Bush immediately after he took office. [4] The bill, shepherded through the Senate by co-author Senator Ted Kennedy, received overwhelming bipartisan support in Congress.

Several states were granted NCLB requirement waivers by President Obama in 2012. “In exchange for that flexibility, those states ‘have agreed to raise standards,

improve accountability, and undertake essential reforms to improve teacher effectiveness,' in a White House issued statement.” CNN (2012) reported.

2. Large Urban District (LUD) – a district that was located in a city with a population of more than 250,000.
3. Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) – compiled data reports for every public school, district, and/or region in the state of Texas. Reports were disseminated every year in the fall. The AEIS system was developed to stress accountability through student achievement. According to the TEA website, “the performance indicators were:
 - Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), (criterion-referenced assessments that were designed to measure the students’ level of knowledge and skills in order to determine whether the student had met mastery for each tested grade level; by grade, by subject, and by all grades tested; note: for 2011-2012, TAKS was only available for grades 10 and 11;
 - Exit-level TAKS Cumulative Passing Rates;
 - Progress of Prior Year TAKS Failers;
 - Attendance Rates;
 - Annual Dropout Rates (grades 7-8, grades 7-12, and grades 9-12);
 - Completion Rates (Four-year longitudinal);
 - College Readiness Indicators;
 - Completion of Advanced / Dual Enrollment Courses;
 - Completion of the Recommended High School Program or Distinguished Achievement Program;

- Participation and Performance on Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Examinations;
- Texas Success Initiative (TSI) – Higher Education Readiness Component;
- Participation and Performance on the College Admissions Tests (SAT and ACT), and
- College-Ready Graduates;

Performance on each of these indicators was shown disaggregated by ethnicity, sex, special education, low income status, limited English proficiency status (since 2002-03), at-risk status (since 2003-04, district, region, and state), and, beginning in 2008-09, by bilingual/ESL (district, region, and state, in section three of reports). The reports also provided extensive information on school and district staff, finances, programs, and student demographics.”

4. Race to the Top (RTTT) - A United States federal grant program which offered \$4.35 billion to states and districts that were reforming their educational systems. Under Phase 1, 2, and 3, Race to the Top (2009) asked States to “advance reforms around five specific areas:
 - Designing and implementing rigorous standards and high-quality assessments;
 - Attracting and keeping great teachers and leaders in America’s classrooms;
 - Supporting data systems that inform decisions and improve instruction;
 - Using innovation and effective approaches to turn-around struggling schools; and
 - Demonstrating and sustaining education reform.”
5. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) – schools, districts, and states had to meet this measure under Title I of NCLB standards for student achievement. AYP was used by

the federal government to determine if the above entities were successful in their educational endeavors. AYP was used to determine progress for all students and also student subgroups. The grades that were used to determine AYP were grades 3-8 and grade 10. States determined their own performance standards. Performance standards for Texas for the 2012 school year were 87% in Reading/English Language Arts and 83% in Mathematics.

6. National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) – a criterion-referenced test that provided a national sampling of students from across the United States that measured math, reading, writing, civics, science, geography, the arts, and other fields. The majority of tests that were often referenced for progress were the reading and math sections because they were given frequently to determine long-term trends. Students were ranked as basic, proficient, and advanced. States who received Title I federal funds had to participate in the NAEP reading and math for grades 4 and 8 every two years.
7. Texas Education Agency (TEA) – the administrative unit for Texas that was primarily responsible for PK-12 education. According to the TEA website, the agency was supported by state and federal funds and was “responsible for:
 - managing the textbook adoption process;
 - overseeing development of the statewide curriculum;
 - administering the statewide assessment program;
 - administering a data collection system on public school students, staff, and finances;
 - rating school districts under the statewide accountability system;

- operating research and information programs;
- monitoring for compliance with federal guidelines; and
- serving as a fiscal agent for the distribution of state and federal funds.”

The TEA was headed by the Commissioner of Education, Michael L. Williams, a governor-appointed position.

8. Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) – criterion-referenced assessments that were designed to measure the students’ level of knowledge and skills in order to determine whether the student had met mastery for each tested grade level. There were several different versions of the TAKS test. The TAKS-Accommodated (TAKS-A) test was designed for those Special Education students who met specific eligibility criteria for specific accommodations. The TAKS-A included differentiation in format, such as, larger font, fewer items per page, and did not include field-test questions. The TAKS- Modified (TAKS-M) was designed as an alternate assessment for Special Education students that required more accommodations with modified curriculum and achievement standards than regular TAKS and TAKS-A students. TAKS-M, like TAKS-A, had a differentiated format but also included a test design that had fewer answer choices, vocabulary that was modest and not technical, and modified sentence structures within the question structure. TAKS-Alternate (TAKS-Alt) was an additional alternate assessment for Special Education students with considerable cognitive disabilities. The TAKS-Alt was significantly different than any of the other state exams. Teachers assessed student performance based on the dimensions of a rubric that were then submitted through an online system. The TAKS-Alt did not have a paper version. The

Linguistically Accommodated Test (LAT) was designed for Limited English Proficient students that met specific criteria according to federal and state law. Students were only eligible to take the exam if they were labeled as a non-English speaking student. In this particular study, there were no LAT students as the test was unavailable to grade 11 students.

9. Texas Success Initiative (TSI) – a state-legislated program that was created to improve student success in college by analyzing ELA and Math scores. Students from grade 11 were required to meet a scale score of 2200 or higher on their ELA and Math TAKS test and a score of 3 or higher on the written essay portion of the TAKS.
10. Standardized Admissions Test (SAT) – the most widely used college admissions test in the United States. Most students took the SAT during their junior year in high school. The SAT consisted of three main exams-reading, writing, and math; however, there were also subject exams that students could elect to take for college entrance.
11. American College Testing (ACT) – a college admission exam that consisted of four multiple-choice tests: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science.
12. Teach for America (TFA) – a national non-profit corps of recent college graduates who committed two years to teaching in urban and rural public schools.
13. Texas Essential of Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) – the standards for each grade level and subject area that comprised the K-12 curriculum for the state of Texas. All standards were state-mandated to be taught within the current grade level/subject area.

14. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)- “Educators committed to working collaboratively in ongoing processes of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous, job-embedded learning for educators” (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008, p. 14)
15. Turnaround Leader (TL) – an effective school leader that was put into a turnaround school. These leaders were placed or hired for positions that were within failing situations and they were responsible for rapid, dramatic improvements that were not only academic but also cultural. The TL had certain competencies combined with a fast cycle of actions that not all school leaders possess. The TL had impact and influence on the school setting in which they were placed, drove results, could easily problem solve, and were confident in their leadership abilities.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Education reform focused on two key areas in the late 20th and 21st centuries: closing the achievement gap and closing the gap between the United States and other countries. In 2008, the USDE designated 10,676 schools as schools in need of improvement and 2,302 schools were designated as schools in need of improvement restructuring. That is 12,978 schools that were designated as performing below standards. The literature review gave a general overview of the literature published regarding effective turnaround school models and then focuses on the five basic tenets of a specific turnaround program, the “Advance Now” program: (1) an effective principal and effective teachers; (2) more instructional time; (3) use of data to drive instruction; (4) in-school tutoring; and (5) culture of high expectations (Houston ISD, n.d.). It was important to have an overview of the general guidelines that were published regarding turnaround schools in addition to the program model that was formulated and implemented by Dr. Roland Fryer, Harvard consultant for the LUD. Although several establishments and institutions, researchers, and school districts released best practice studies regarding turnaround methods, none matched the same five tenets of the LUD’s “Advance Now” program.

Cultural Capital

The theoretical framework that was used for this study was the social capital theory. The social capital theory was a theory that refers to the social networks connections and was first mentioned by Hanifan (1916) in an article regarding rural school support in which he referred to “social capital” as social cohesion and personal investment in the community. Hanifan wrote about the social unit in the school system.

Social capital theory indicated that people gain their social status through their connections. As applied to this study, this theory holds that one would expect that the African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students enrolled in the current “Advance Now” cohorts would have performed at higher levels on state assessment scores. The “Advance Now” schools had been targeted as a turnaround model with additional support models applied, such as, the tutoring of 11th grade students in reading or math.

Turnaround Schools

According to the U.S. Department of Education’s Mapping America’s Educational Progress (2008), in school year 2006–07, 70% of 98,905 schools nationwide (64,546) made AYP; 10,676 schools were designated as schools in need of improvement, and 2,302 schools were designated as schools in need of improvement restructuring. The schools that were in need of restructuring had to decide which of the four restructuring models would be used in their turnaround school. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan (2012) gave a very preliminary report on the state of the schools that were currently in need of improvement. In that report, he stated that one in four schools saw math increases in the double-digits while one in five schools reported that progress in reading proficiency during the first year of the program. Hassel, Hassel, & Rhim (2007), stated that schools need to identify practices that assist with a one to three year turnaround. Schools that dramatically improved student outcomes in a short time were considered turnaround schools.

Turnaround schools became one of the latest methods in taking underperforming schools, and even districts, and used a variety of techniques to raise student achievement

and performance. The extent of the need for effective turnaround schools strategies was presented in Stuit's (2010) five year study that examined more than 2,000 of the worst-performing district and charter schools in 10 states and found that very few of them closed, and even fewer – about 1% – truly “turned around.”

Gottfried (2010) found that students with better attendance have higher GPAs and standardized test scores than those who have poor attendance. Allensworth and Easton (2007) confirmed that data should be used to keep students “on-track”. One of the crucial pieces of their study focused on the continuous need to track attendance data and how attendance links to dropouts. The researchers concluded that “attendance is the largest predictor of course failure” (p.26).

According to Pytel (2010), there were three proven programs that turn schools around: Uncommon Schools, YES Prep Public School, and Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA). Two of these schools were charter schools and one was a high school-community college partnership. Each one of these schools had at-risk populations according to the data statistics presented by Pytel. Pytel based her work on Whitmire and Rotherham's 2010 U.S. News & World News Report article. Whitmire and Rotherham (2010) focused on three key areas in their report: (1) How do school districts do more than just talk about effective teaching?; (2) How do you build inner city schools that turn out college-ready students?; and (3) How do you draw more minority students into four-year college programs? (p.1) Whitmire and Rotherham (2010) stated that these three proven programs illustrate trends that are both powerful and positive that would help America reach its goal by 2020 of being educationally viable in the global markets.

The U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Science’s What Works Clearinghouse (2008) provided another model for turnaround schools. The practice guide outlined four recommendations for turnaround schools: “(1) Signal the need for dramatic change with strong leadership; (2) Maintain a consistent focus on improving instruction; (3) Make visible improvements early in the school turnaround process (quick wins); and (4) Build a committed staff” (p. 8).

Some cities, such as Chicago, started their own academies for turnaround schools and districts. These academies focused on using best practices and creating frameworks based on existing and recommended turnaround models and on practices recommended by Robert Marzano, Michael Fullan, Rick DuFour, and Larry Lezotte. Several other large urban districts have developed their own approaches to turnaround schools. According to The Academy of Urban School Leadership (AUSL), AUSL was developed in Chicago by a venture capitalist. AUSL manages turnaround schools through a contract with the Chicago Public School system and serves 25 public schools with more than 14,000 students. The AUSL used their self-developed PASSAGE framework for its turnaround schools. AUSL’s PASSAGE framework (n.d.) included the following six principles: “(1) Positive School Culture; (2) Action Against Adversity; (3) Setting Goals and Getting it Done; (4) Shared Responsibility for Achievement; (5) Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum; and (6) Engaging and Personalized Instruction” (p. 1). There were three phases of support that turnaround schools were provided: Turnaround (year 1 and 2), Continued Improvement (years 3, 4, & 5), and Sustained Change (Years 6, 7, & 8). At the time of this study, 19 schools were under contract with AUSL. The first turnaround school under AUSL was The Chicago Academy, a PreK–8 school.

Unlocking Potential was a nonprofit turnaround organization that was developed in Boston. According to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (2010), there were 35 low-performing schools in Massachusetts. Unlocking Potential had two turnaround schools in Boston. The premise of the turnaround was based on extended school time, both years and days; high standards for both academic and social areas; a large amount of focus on accountability; homework that was rigorous was given on a daily basis; employed gifted and effective leaders and teachers; and developing a cultural that was enthusiastic and full of joy.

The Philadelphia Public School System's website disclosed that The Promise Academies (TPA) were developed by the Philadelphia Public School System. TPA consisted of five high schools, one middle school, and three elementary campuses. The Promise Academy mission was: "(1) reinvigorating the academic program; (2) providing students and teachers with additional, targeted resources; and (3) extending the school day and year for more time to learn" (para. 4). According to CBS Philly (2011), there were supposed to be 16 Promise Academies for the 2011-2012 school year; however, as a result of budget cuts, only three additional schools were added for the 2011-2012 school year (para. 2).

"Advance Now" Program

In August 2010, the LUD began the "Advance Now" program, a turnaround school initiative. The "Advance Now" program was based on best practices and strategies from successful public and charter schools that had been identified through research. At the time of the study, there were 20 schools in the "Advance Now" program—four high schools, five middle schools, and 11 elementary schools. The LUD partnered

with Harvard University's Education Innovation Laboratory's Dr. Roland Fryer. Mellon (2011) reported that Dr. Fryer formed a nonprofit, called Blueprint Schools Network, and Blueprint is expected to cost the district \$2.2 million over the three-year period. The total "Advance Now" project is projected to cost approximately \$20 million a year. Fryer (2010) helped the LUD identify five basic tenets for the "Advance Now" program: (1) an effective principal and effective teachers; (2) more instructional time; (3) use of data to drive instruction; (4) in-school tutoring; and (5) culture of high expectations (Houston ISD, n.d.). The following sections provide more detail about each of these tenets.

An effective principal and effective teachers.

The LUD focused on human capital as the first tenet in its "Advance Now" program. Not only did the selected school hire an effective principal but also effective teachers, both groups received performance bonuses and merit pay. One of the often used strategies in turnaround was a focus on the leadership. There were two keys approaches to leadership – strengthening or replacement (Picucci et al., 2002a; Duke, n.d.).

According to the two studies by Picucci et al. and Duke, all turnaround schools experienced major changes in leadership practices. Picucci et al. (2002a) suggested eight factors which signaled a strong change in leadership practices: "(1) Communicating a clear purpose to school staff; (2) creating high expectations and values; (3) sharing leadership and authority; (4) demonstrating a willingness to make the same types of changes asked of their staff; (5) identifying advocates within the staff; (6) building a consensus that permeated the entire staff; (7) eliminating any distractions to ensure that the maximum amount of classroom time was focused on instruction; and (8) establishing

a cohesive culture” (p. 48-52). In contrast to Picucci’s leadership practices, Duke (n.d.) identified the following “eight dimensions of leadership change in his study: (1) leadership changes; (2) school policy changes; (3) program changes; (4) changes in organizational processes and procedures; (5) personnel and staffing changes; (6) changes in classroom practices; (7) changes in parental and community involvement; and (8) changes in school facilities” (p. 5). Hassel and Hassel (2009) recommended six key TL” actions to be considered:

- (1) focus on early wins;
- (2) break organizational norms;
- (3) push rapid-fire experimentation;
- (4) get the right staff, right the remainder;
- (5) drive decisions with open-air data; and
- (6) lead a turnaround campaign” (p. 21-27).

In the New Leaders for New Schools (NLNS) report (2009), there were five key points in a framework that would support an urban principal: ensuring rigorous, goal-and data-driven learning and teaching, building and managing a high-quality staff aligned to the school’s vision of success for every student, developing an achievement- and belief-based school-wide culture, instituting operations and systems to support learning, and modeling the personal leadership that sets the tone for all student and adult relationships in the school (p. 4). Effective leaders accepted several responsibilities in the school turnaround process according to Marzano, Waters, & McNulty (2005). The researchers performed a meta-analysis of several high-quality studies on effective leadership and found 21 principal responsibilities that correlated with high academic achievement (p.42-

43). Those responsibilities that had the highest correlation to a school's sense of collective efficacy in the meta-analysis were: "affirmation, communication, culture, ideals/beliefs, optimizer, relationships, situational awareness, and visibility" (p.70). In addition, the study identified those responsibilities that had a high correlation in regards to deep change; "change agent, flexibility, intellectual stimulation, ideals/beliefs, knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, monitoring/evaluation, and optimizer" (p.100-101).

Public Impact (2008) developed a selection toolkit to help districts with the selection of a TL. There were two levels of designations for these competencies for school administrators: critical (achievement and impact/influence) and secondary (monitoring/directiveness, team leadership, and self-confidence). In a key turnaround leadership study, Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, (2004) found three basics of school leadership: (1) setting direction; (2) developing people; and (3) redesigning the organization. Steiner and Barrett (2012) recommended that school systems focus on the following: (1) outstandingly effective leadership, (2) a clear vision with an ability to help make that vision a reality, as well as (3) understanding the competencies of the job. Kutash et al. (2010) identified two key factors in regards to human capital identifying school leadership early that could institute a vision, heighten community involvement, and the ability to generate a new school culture; meeting the students' needs through specialized staff, recruit and train teachers with specific capabilities, and securing external providers. Kutash et al. (2010) expounded adding that principals and leadership teams should be empowered to make key decisions about staffing, program, budget, schedule, and data.

Mellon (2012) reported that four of the nine principals left after the first year and one elementary principal was removed. In the LUD's "Advance Now" model, some of the principals may not have found that turnaround was their niche or perhaps, they had a fixed mindset. Dweck (2006) focused on the idea of mindset by defining two types of mindsets: fixed and growth. Those individuals with a fixed mindset almost always underestimated their abilities while the individuals with a growth mindset had an open mind about their abilities, development, and the things that they could do and learn. Dweck (2006) stated that it was "not only your abilities; it's your personal qualities too" (p. 13). Dweck did believe, however, that no matter what everyone could change their mindset. The effective principals that entered into these turnaround schools, had to have that growth mindset.

Fairchild and DeMary (2011) focused on the mindset of the TL and developed a 2-S model that incorporates Systems and Stakeholders and a 3-E model that incorporates Environment, Executive, and Execution. The focus on applying business concepts to the education model is woven throughout the book. All five of the areas of their mindset model focus on key concepts in the business world. By applying these models, a TL could utilize readily available business management tools, such as, 90-day plans, project management, communication plans, etc.

Alongside the effective principal, according to researchers, the effective teacher was necessary for turnaround schools. Of the 600 teachers at the nine "Advance Now" secondary schools when the program was initiated, only 378 were asked to return to their home campus according to the "Advance Now" Fact Sheet (2011). Marzano and McNulty (2005) indicated that teachers could account for as much as 33% of a school's

total impact on student achievement. Duke (n.d.) stated that lead teachers and team leaders played key roles in turnaround efforts in the schools that the study examined. In these turnaround schools, important school-level decisions involved teachers. Duke continued, “in 9 of the 15 schools, principals took action to remove staff members who lacked skills to raise student performance or the desire to work with low-achieving students” (p.18).

The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (2009) produced research that stated that one of the six quality indicators of high-achieving schools is effective instruction. One of the criteria under effective instruction was the necessity for teachers to participate in professional development that is related to their classroom needs, based on practice rather than theory, and continuously monitored and supported. Hawley and Valli (2006) conducted several syntheses of current literature and stated that professional development that is high quality should exude many different elements, such as: (1) provide a strong foundation; (2) integrated and data driven; (3) respond to teacher needs; (4) based in the school setting; (5) continual with follow-up; and (6) evaluated for teacher value and student success.

Futernick (2010) refuted the argument that teachers should be fired if they are not performing. Futernick suggested that the current systems are dysfunctional and that we should instead focus on the following in order to establish better-equipped teachers: meaningful performance evaluation of teachers that is tied to high-quality professional development, peer mentoring, and classroom assignments that effectively match their training and preparation. Futernick continued that teachers should have supports, such as, adequate time for planning and collaboration, a trusting and respectful professional

environment, reasonable class sizes, among several other system supports. Gordon, Kane, & Staiger (2006) identified five recommendations for improving the quality of the teacher pool: reduce the barriers to entry into teaching, make it harder to promote the least effective teachers to tenured positions, provide bonuses to highly effective teachers willing to teach in schools that have a high proportion of low-income students, evaluate individual teachers using various measures of teacher performance on the job, and develop data systems to link student performance with the effectiveness of individual teachers over time.

Levin, Mulher, & Schunck (2005) reported that principals dealt with low achieving teachers by “passing them around from school to school” rather than providing staff development or terminating them. Walsh (2005) and Feldman (2004) both agreed that teachers’ evaluations should not be solely based on test scores. Kane and Staiger (2002) produced a study that showed that teachers that start out effective improve at a slightly quicker rate than those who began as ineffective. What were the implications? New teachers at these “Advance Now” campuses will likely need a large amount of professional development, mentoring, and support.

Fryer (2011) stated that 60 experienced teachers with a history of producing student achievement gains transferred to the nine “Advance Now” schools; a bonus was offered to the teachers that agreed to transfer. The “Advance Now” Mid-Year Network Education Report (2011) asserts that 196 new teachers were assigned to the “Advance Now” schools, an equivalent of 39% of the “Advance Now” teachers. The report also maintains that four professional development classroom management sessions were given to first year and selected “Advance Now” teachers. In addition to these sessions, the

report verifies that Saturday professional development was also provided in the following areas: student engagement and motivation, differentiation for all students (by content area), use of daily assessments and checking for understanding and planning for effective learning. “Advance Now” principals were able to choose which of these training opportunities teachers would attend. A key finding in the Mid-Year report is that, in the selected “Advance Now” high school, 50% of the staff is new teachers.

In March 2011, the LUD’s Research and Accountability department published a report regarding their partnership with Teach for America (TFA). According to the report, the partnership was formed to help manage teacher shortages scarcities. In the 2009 – 2010 summary evaluation report on TFA, there were several findings: from 2005 – 2010, there was a total of 647 new TFA teachers that had been hired although the number of new teacher hires during that time period had actually decreased. The percentage of TFA hires increased from 15.3% to 30% in 2009 – 2010. However, the report also shows that TFA retention rates were only 44% after their two-year program commitment is complete. According to the “Advance Now” Teach for America report (2009), 76 TFA teachers were hired at “Advance Now” schools. The report also addresses the performance of TFA teachers and non-TFA teachers and stated that “the results were mixed. In general, TFA teachers’ students outperformed non-TFA teachers’ students on TAKS mathematics and science tests while the opposite was true for the Stanford 10 Normal Curve Equivalent” (p.2-3).

Another key characteristic of the effective principal and effective teacher tenet was the area of performance pay. There were several different ways that performance pay could be implemented, such as, school-based, team-based, content-based, or

individual-based. The LUD implemented a performance pay system. The district launched the performance pay model in the 2007 – 2008 school year. According to Battelle for Kids, the LUD is utilizing a district-based, department-based, campus-based, and individual-based performance pay model. Jacob and Ludwig (2008) reported that bonuses for teachers in hard-to-staff schools could not eliminate the disproportions in educational results alone. Murnane and Cohen (1986) noted that few performance pay systems have survived. Gratz (2009) affirmed that performance pay could work but only if it is broadly defined and all parties agreed to the plan. The National Center on Performance Incentives (2010) released a study citing that students in classrooms where teachers received bonuses compared to those teachers who did not receive an incentive saw the same gains. Assertions that tying test scores to teachers' effectiveness would ultimately improve student achievement had been questioned in recent research (Baker, et al., 2010).

All of the focus on turnaround schools had to eventually turn into a focus on leadership. Leithwood, Harris, & Strauss (2010) made the following statements in regards to the TL in the key points of their research in turnaround schools:

- Provided many forms of psychological support.
- Used a wide array of formal to informal methods for development of their colleagues' professional skills and knowledge.
- Modeled desirable practices and values.
- Leadership was aimed at developing people.
- Teachers perceived intellectual stimulation.

- Leader practices aimed at developing people were considered to be moderately useful (p.126-127).

The practices that assist in TL success expounded on by the authors were:

- Nurtured the development of norms and values.
- Restructured the school so that teacher collaboration was both possible and likely.
- Understood the enormous effect that family environments had on academic learning.
- Aimed to ensure that families and students had access to social service agencies.
- Provided adequate resources for instruction.
- Modified organizational structures contributed most to the success of turnaround schools (p.152-153).

The Southern Regional Education Board (2010) affirmed that improving schools requires three essential elements: district vision, district and state support, and principal leadership. The report asserted “these three elements rarely were present and working together.” The report further emphasized that the problem is “Districts and states are failing to create the conditions that make it possible for principals to lead school improvement effectively.” The Southern Regional Education Board (2010) identified essential jobs for the three levels:

- State – build capacity, help local districts develop a coherent vision, as well as the knowledge and skills to support principals and teachers as they create their own visions and goals at the school level;
- District – must have the capacity to develop and articulate both a vision and set of practices that send a clear message of what schools are to be about; and

- School – engage faculty and develop a vision of what the school must to do graduate and prepare students in the 21st century.

At all three levels, there had to be a high level of accountability for results (p.ii-iv).

Leaders had to continually be engaged in the common practices and contexts of the situation that they were currently involved in. In other words, leadership was situational. Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson (2012) affirmed that leaders must apply different styles depending on the situation. Leaders were able to employ the Situational Leadership Model that Martin (2010) modified below when deeming the types of behaviors that they were dealing with in their organization. This model focused on the behavior of the leader (Figure 2-1).

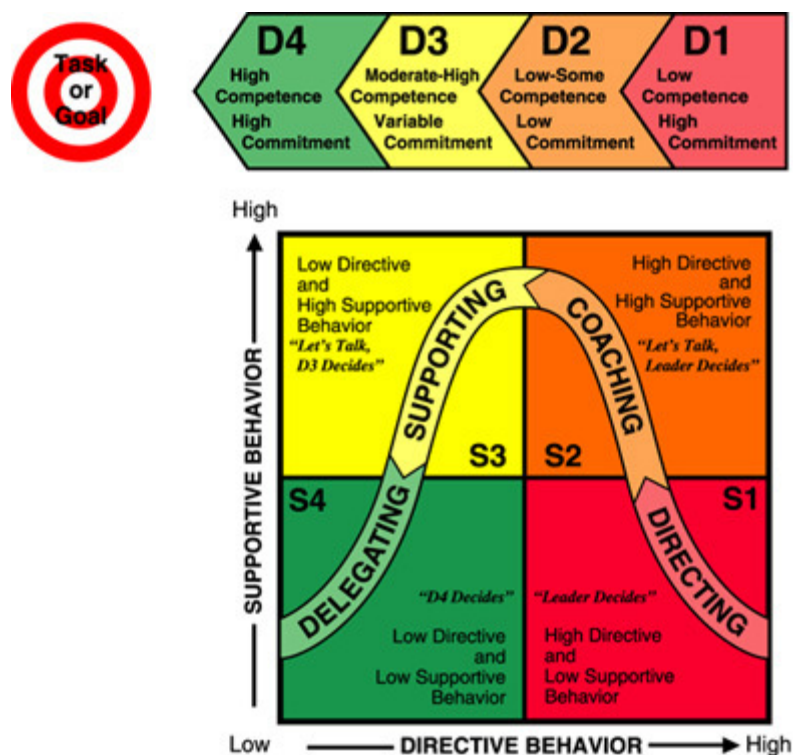


Figure 2-1 Martin's Modified Version of The Situational leadership Model

The research was mixed in regards to replacing the principals and teachers at the campuses as required by the school improvement models and there were varying views in regards to these replacements. Many of these schools had limited human capital from which to select and many of the schools that were in need of improvement are, more often than not, in areas that have a large population of low socio-economically disadvantaged students. Urban, suburban, and rural settings could have suffered because of this requirement. Regardless of whether a system decided to replace all staff or keep it intact, Fullan (2011) suggested that leaders must help their organization survive and thrive by using six secrets of change. This involve loving your employees and valuing them; making connections between peers in your organization; building capacity amongst individuals and groups; utilization of job-embedded professional development;

developing complete transparency about results and positive practices; and enveloping the system with leadership at all levels.

More instructional time.

The “Advance Now” program included additional instructional time during the school year and the school day. Middle and high schools under the “Advance Now” plan added 5 additional days in 2010 – 2011 for 185 instructional days and 10 additional days in the 2011 – 2012 school year for a 190-day instructional year calendar. In addition to these modifications to the school year, the school day was extended. According to the Apollo 20 Mid-Year Network Education Report (2011), there had been an increase of 17.3% of total student time on task from the 2009 – 2010 school and the 2010 – 2011 school year. Several studies support adding time to the instructional day time allotment. According to the Wallace Foundation Report (2011), approximately 2,000 public schools, both traditional and charter, operated or utilized some variation of extended day and/or year schedules. Scheerens and Bosker (1997) conducted a meta-analysis that indicated a 15 percentile point increase in student achievement based on teachers’ optimized use of time.

Denham and Lieberman (1980) classified four basic types of time: allocated (amount of time teachers allocate for instructional activities), instructional (proportion of allocated time that is used solely for instruction), engaged (instructional time in which students are engaged in learning), and academic success and productivity (students are meeting the academic standard or goal by performing tasks that are both meaningful and relevant to the learning). Denham and Lieberman were proponents for increasing instructional time so that it would allow for a small-group pullout instructional design.

The two researchers also carefully pointed out that creating and allotting extra time does not always equate to improved student performance. Marzano (2000) cited “researchers have found that each category of time shows a stronger correlation with student achievement than the previous one” (p. 58); i.e., allocated time had the least amount of a correlational relationship than instructional in regards to strengthening student achievement. Johnson and Asera (1999) confirmed that each of the nine schools in their study created additional time for academic instruction; some were aligned during the day while others added supplemental time beyond the regular school hours. Some of the ways in which these schools delineated these times were through extended blocks of reading, after-school programs, and tutoring during the lunch periods.

In order to address increased student achievement, schools looked at several other ways in which extended instructional time could be accomplished. Aladjem et al. (2010) completed a cross-site analysis and noted that Weston Elementary did a comprehensive approach to extended time by changing their school year calendar from traditional to year-round, had small-group focus lessons, and increased their extracurricular academic programs during the hours both before and after school. In a Wallace Foundation report, Bodilly et al. (2010) chronicled the use of out-of-school (OST) programs and their benefits; they reported that both after-school and summer learning programs had been shown to positively affect youth development and reduce negative behaviors.

Increased instructional time appeared to be effective when used with not only research-based methodologies but also within an environment that was focused on improvement; however, there were varying views of how to utilize that time effectively. Choosing one of the four basic types of times seemed to be left open to the school;

nevertheless, research tended to lean toward academic learning time over all of the other methods. According to the research, there was not a clear-cut method in which to deliver more instructional time. One of the key factors in being able to provide more instructional time would also have been more instructional dollars in an era of extreme budget cuts to education. When looking to create a replicable model that could be applied in different cities and states, the amount of funding that would have to go towards more instructional time may have outweighed the benefit of the tenet.

Use of data to drive instruction.

In order to increase the connection between teachers and the parents, the LUD utilized a data system that gave parents complete information about a child's progress and absences. According to the LUD's website, the district gave interim standards-based assessments every three weeks in order to evaluate whether the students have made progress over that period. The LUD's Curriculum Department stated that the district uses Teachers Workbench 5.5, a system that allowed teachers to scan and obtain data for assessments that provided teachers access to students' scores and results within seconds. Teachers Workbench 5.5 gave a myriad of information In addition to these two data systems; The LUD formulated a new appraisal system for teachers and principals.

According to the 2005 Data Quality Campaign, there were only 21 states that collected data to identify schools producing the strongest academic growth. The number had increased to 44 states. However, also noted on the website was that 17 of the 44 states could not link teacher and student data. Conzemius (2000) maintained that turnaround schools should build a framework of three elements – focus, reflection, and collaboration. Johnson and Asera (1999) completed a study of nine high-performing,

high-poverty urban elementary schools in Austin noting that these schools focused on aligning instruction to standards and assessments. A Wallace Foundation report, Bodilly et al. (2010) chronicled the use of Management Information (MI) systems in the five highlighted programs used that gave officials important information in order to improve their programs. The MI systems were used to identify such factors as enrollment, attendance, and demographics and even pinpoint specific targets, such as, middle school students were more likely to drop out of OST programs than other students so that they could target those students.

Allensworth and Easton (2007) confirmed that data should be used to keep students “on-track” (p.1). One of the crucial pieces of their study focuses on the need to continuously track attendance data and how attendance links to dropouts. The researchers concluded that “attendance is the largest predictor of course failure” (p.26). Kutash et al. (2010) recommended two areas in regards to student performance: measures of student progress and outcomes for students. Student progress is measured by rate of credits earned and grade-level promotion and truancy and dropout rates. Student outcomes were measured in rates in the following three capacities: grade level performance by subject area, proficiency on state assessments, and graduate and college-attending. Van Barneveld (2008) reported that research verifies that (1) high-performing schools plan their use of data; (2) use data to direct decisions; (3) teachers’ understanding of data is conceptual; (4) there had to be a clear link between data and the planning and decision-making practices; and (5) time had to be factored into the equation when teachers are developing their data expertise (p.1).

While the research points schools in the direction that they should take when analyzing data, research also clearly confirmed that high-performing schools used data in order to plan instruction and guide instructional decision-making processes. The conundrum occurred when choosing which data should be analyzed and what the response to that data should be. The complexity of knowing that the data that schools were utilizing was valid and reliable along with the factors of ensuring that the school was choosing quality data instruments and, in turn, evaluating the data in an effective manner all lend themselves to whether the treatment would have been effective for the selected groups. While choosing data are complex, what schools choose to do with the data after enquiry could have been as much of a loophole as the selection of data.

In-school tutoring.

In the “Advance Now” model, all sixth- and ninth-graders were provided in-school math tutoring regardless of math abilities. Students in grades 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12 who were below grade level, received a double-dose of math OR reading based on the subject in which they were most behind. Fryer (2011) chronicled the impact of these tutorial changes in math student achievement by 0.276 standard deviations and 0.059 in reading. These standard deviation differences were significant because in the “Advance Now” model, mathematics had been a primary focus in regards to double dose tutoring. 1,407 students were also assigned to the Read 180 program. The “Advance Now” Mid-Year Report (2011) showed mixed results below in Table 2-1. Only 56%, or 613 of the 1,407 students, shown in Table 2-1 showed growth using Read 180 in the “Advance Now” schools.

Table 2-1 *Amount of reading growth using Read 180 in the “Advance Now” schools*

Number of students	Percentage	Typical Reading Growth
263	19	2.0
327	23	1.0-2.0
204	14	0.5-1.0

The “Advance Now” Mid-Year Report (2011) gave an overview of the implementation. 1217 Math Fellows were recruited and 254 were hired. These selected tutors completed 10 days of training with MATCH Schools, Inc. of Boston, MA. According to the report, each “Advance Now” school had a Fellows Coordinator. The LUD began The “Advance Now” Math Fellows program, a 10-month urban education tutoring program. According to the district’s website, in order to become an “Advance Now” Math Fellow, you had to meet the following three criteria: have at least a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university; possess strong math skills; and make a commitment of 10 months, beginning in August 2011. In return for meeting the three criteria, tutors were paid a \$20,000 salary, were able to have benefits, and had the opportunity to qualify for a performance/attendance bonus of up to \$5,000. According to the LUD’s website, the program was based on the TFA model.

Johnson and Asera (1999) noted that four of the nine schools that they studied engaged in some form of in-school tutoring and that all adults on staff were expected to participate in literacy activities during the reading blocks. One school used its assessment data to change instructional groups two times a week with a three-to-one ratio. Students who do not develop the necessary academic skills were at risk for continued school failure, underemployment, and the inability to participate fully in

society (Hock et al., 2001). Rothman and Henderson (2011) results indicate that borderline students who received school-based tutoring from district teachers performed higher on standardized test scores in the areas of mathematics and language arts than borderline students who did not participate in tutoring. (Ritter et al., 2009) found that, in general, tutoring had a positive effect on academic achievement. Miles and Frank (2008) stated that by utilizing student time strategically and emphasizing core academics varying time and instructional programs to ensure that all students meet the standards. A tutor's proficiency and coaching abilities were the significant for improving a student's level of knowledge and compounding positive effects on student's achievement results at the elementary (Fuchs, Fuchs, Hamlett, Phillips, & Bentz, 1994); secondary (Warren & Fitzgerald, 1997), and postsecondary (Ceprano, 1995; Condavy, 1995; Graesser et al., 1997; Semb, Ellis, & Araujo, 1993) levels.

Windram, Scierka, & Silberglitt (2007) confirmed that tutorial interventions were successful for students that were given extra instruction in math and reading. These tutorial interventions occurred during the school day and in the school setting. In-school tutoring could have had an overall positive effect for students; however, with the current budget crisis, school administrators had to consider if the investment in this portion of the LUD's five tenets was truly worth the human capital and tremendous resources that it took to employ this method under the school improvement umbrella and whether the improvements were significant enough to turnaround a school in the expected timeline.

Culture of high expectations.

According to the district's website, in the beginning of the "Advance Now" program (the 2010-2011 school year), the following several expectations were put in

place in regards to performance, attendance, and parental involvement. They were as follows: 100% of students performing on or above grade level; 100% of students taking at least one college-level course; 100% graduation rate; 95% attendance rate for students and staff; 100% of students accepted to a four-year college or university; school-parent contract was signed. In the Apollo 20 Schools Mid-Year Network Education Report 2010 – 2011, there were only three goals listed for the “Advance Now” schools: 100% of students performing on or above grade level, 100% graduation rate, and 95% attendance rate for students and staff. In the information available on the district’s website, as of March 2013, the following were now the goals for a culture of high expectations: (1) all children will perform at or above grade level; (2) all high school students will take at least one college-level course; and (3) every student will graduate from high school college-ready. Fryer (2011) later interpreted the culture and expectations with a concentration on college matriculation and an interview with teachers and their responses to interview questions. Thernstrom and Thernstrom (2003) assert that, for the most part, the adults in the building set the expectations for student performance and culture. Dobbie and Fryer (2011) show that in “No Excuses” charter schools, middle school students gain 0.229 standard deviations in math per year and 0.047 in reading. In Table 2-2, Muhammad (2009) developed the following framework for cultural change within an organization (p.30):

Table 2-2 *The Four Types of Educators and Their Goals*

Educator Classification	Organizational Goal
Believer	Academic success for each student
Tweener	Organizational stability
Survivor	Emotional and mental survival
Fundamentalist	Maintains the status quo

The TL should have utilized a system, such as Muhammad's in Table 2-2, to identify where the current staff could have been classified. Utilizing such a system could have helped to determine where the school was culturally. Apthrop et al. (2005) examined 76 high-needs schools and ascertained that the high-performing schools all created a culture of high expectations. Everyone on the staff had a common, committed vision and everyone was focused on the same goals. A common, committed vision included high expectations for student performance and behavior. Apthrop et al.'s (2005) study also established that the school environment is a critical part of an effective school. Effective schools had to have a disciplined atmosphere in order to either become or maintain that status. Expectations for students were "clear and enforced" and "minimize disruptions".

Bruner and Greenlee (2000) corroborated that high achieving schools had a large amount of collaboration amongst its teachers. In collaborative environments, a cultural of high expectations is exhibited. In all nine schools studied by Johnson and Asera (1999), schools engaged in parental involvement activities. Johnson and Asera stated that these schools "helped parents believe that the school could provide great opportunities for their children" (p. 19). These opportunities were available in several ways – there were

“open-door policies” (p. 20) where parents were invited into the school and classrooms, teachers and administrators greeted the students in the morning at “drop-off”, parent centers were established, and child care was provided during parent conferences to name a few. Kutash et al. (2010) discussed the importance of school environment and classifies it into three categories: school culture, school connectivity, and teacher and school leader engagement and effectiveness. In regards to school culture, Kutash et al. recommends looking at attendance rates for students, serious misconduct and violence rates, data analysis of implementation plans and follow-through by school administration and staff, and infrastructure improvement. In the Apollo 20 Schools Mid-Year Network Education Report 2010 – 2011, the selected high school improved its attendance rating by 3.2% and suspensions decreased by 10.9%.

While a culture of high expectations for all is an ideal tenet, it certainly is a broad, vague, and qualitative tenet. With the high stakes of a turnaround model, the LUD’s fifth tenet for the “Advance Now” program emerges as a weak tenet amongst the other four tenets. All schools should have had a culture of high expectations for their students. The “Advance Now” project might have been strengthened even more if the fifth tenet would have been quantitative in nature. With many effective strategies that were in the research for turnaround schools, a culture of high expectations for all had limited evidence of effectiveness in the research and should have been considered as a standard for all schools, not merely those that were in need of improvement. Serva, Fuller, & Mayer (2005) asserted that trust is a significant predictor for risk-taking behaviors. Bryk and Schneider (2002) maintained that social trust among teachers, parents, and school leaders improves much of the routine work of schools and was a key resource for reform.

The literature review gives an insight into turnaround schools models and the five tenets of the “Advance Now” program. However, there was still much work to be completed in the research of the turnaround models and the specific strategies implemented in the turnaround schools processes. There were many different methods and supportive research for turnaround school programs but with each unique setting, came a different environment, culture, staff, students, and needs.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter outlines the procedures that examined the effects of academic achievement in a turnaround school for African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students. Included in this chapter are the research design, setting, procedures, instruments, analysis, and limitations of the study.

Description of the Research Design

The quantitative research design selected for this study was descriptive statistics, which compares statistical data across a broad spectrum. The AEIS measures that were used were achievement, attendance rates, annual dropout rates, four-year completion rates, and advanced course/dual enrollment completion (based on a count of students who complete and receive credit for at least one advanced course in grades 9-12). The study also reviewed the recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates, the Texas Success Initiative (TSI)–ELA and Math progress, average SAT scores, and ELA and Math College-Ready graduates (number of graduates who scored at or above the college-ready criteria on both ELA and mathematics, divided by the number of graduates with results in both subjects to evaluate). Other areas of non-academic achievement that were studied were enrollment, mobility, number of students per teacher, number of graduates, minimum high school plan/recommended/distinguished high school plan graduates, and total operating expenditures funding and accelerated education funding. These were reviewed for the 3 years data that the school was selected as a turnaround school model for the following: African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students before

2010 and compared to the 2009 AEIS data. Participants were 11th grade student cohort in one selected high school in a large urban district. No participants were randomly assigned to control groups in the study. Only participants that took part in TAKS testing were included in the study. All participants that took TAKS-Accommodated (compiled with TAKS results in the AEIS reports), TAKS-Modified, and TAKS-Alternate were included in the study. The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) was the foundation for what would be tested on the TAKS. Students in Grade 11 took the English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies Exit Level tests. Table 3-1 describes the blueprint from the TEA for Exit Level ELA.

Table 3-1 *TAKS Blueprint for Grade 11 Exit Level ELA*

TAKS Objective	Number of Items
Selections – one “triplet” (literary + expository + visual representation)	Approximately 3000-3500 words total
Objective 1: Reading – Basic Understanding	8 multiple-choice items
Objective 2: Reading – Literary Elements and Techniques	8 multiple-choice items 1 short answer item
Objective 3: Reading – Analysis and critical evaluation	12 multiple-choice items 2 short answer items
Objective 4 and 5: Composition	1 writing prompt
Objective 6: Revising and editing in the context of two peer-editing selections	20 multiple-choice items (10 items per selection)
Total number of items	48 multiple-choice items 3 short answer items 1 writing prompt

Note. Short answer items require students to respond briefly and accurately. Their responses must include a reasonable analysis or interpretation of the text supported by specific evidence from the text itself. One short answer item will assess the literary selection (Objective 2), one will assess the expository selection (Objective 3), and one will bridge the two selections (Objective 3). Two of the three short answer items are from Objective 3 because the “crossover” item deals with both selections and always requires students to analyze or evaluate some aspect of both texts; analysis and evaluation both fall under Objective 3. Taken from the TEA website.

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/taks/blueprints/>

Table 3-2 describes the blueprint from the TEA for Exit Level Mathematics.

Table 3-2 *TAKS Blueprint for Grade 11 Exit Level Mathematics*

TAKS Objectives	Number of Items
Objective 1: Functional Relationships	5
Objective 2: Properties and Attributes of Functions	5
Objective 3: Linear Functions	5
Objective 4: Linear Equations and Inequalities	5
Objective 5: Quadratic and Other Nonlinear Functions	5
Objective 6: Geometric Relationships and Spatial Reasoning	7
Objective 7: 2-D and 3-D Representations	7
Objective 8: Measurement	7
Objective 9: Percents, Proportions, Probability, and Statistics	5
Objective 10: Mathematical Processes and Tools	9
Total number of items	60

Table 3-3 describes the blueprint from the TEA for Exit Level Science.

Table 3-3 *TAKS Blueprint for Grade 11 Exit Level Science*

TAKS Objectives	Number of Items
Objective 1: Nature of Science	17
Objective 2: Organization of Living Systems	8
Objective 3: Interdependence of Organisms	8
Objective 4: Structures and Properties of Matter	11
Objective 5: Motion, Forces, and Energy	11
Total number of items	55

Table 3-4 describes the blueprint from the TEA for Exit Level Social Studies.

Table 3-4 *TAKS Blueprint for Grade 11 Exit Level Social Studies*

TAKS Objective	Number of Items
Objective 1: History	13
Objective 2: Geography	9
Objective 3: Economic and Social Influences	13
Objective 4: Political Influences	9
Objective 5: Social Studies Skills	11
Total number of items	55

Research Questions

1. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on ELA state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data?

2. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on math state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data?

3. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on science state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data?

4. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on social studies state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data?

5. What are the differences in other AEIS data (attendance rates, annual dropout rates, four-year completion rates, advanced course/dual enrollment completion, recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates, the Texas Success Initiative (TSI)– English Language Arts (ELA) and Math progress, average SAT scores, ELA and Math College-Ready graduates, enrollment, mobility, number of students per teacher, number of graduates, minimum high school

plan/recommended/distinguished high school plan graduates, and total operating expenditures funding and accelerated education funding) for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 AEIS data?

Research Hypotheses

The following are the research hypotheses of this project:

1. There will be differences in performance measures for 11th-grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on ELA state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data, with students in current cohorts performing at higher rates.
2. There will be differences in performance measures for 11th-grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on math state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data, with students in current cohorts performing at higher rates.
3. There will be differences in performance measures for 11th-grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on science state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data, with students in current cohorts performing at higher rates.

4. There will be differences in performance measures for 11th-grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on social studies state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data, with students in current cohorts performing at higher rates.

5. There will be differences in AEIS data measures for 11th-grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 data in other AEIS data (attendance rates, annual dropout rates, four-year completion rates, advanced course/dual enrollment completion, recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates, the Texas Success Initiative (TSI)– English Language Arts (ELA) and Math progress, average SAT scores, ELA and Math College-Ready graduates, enrollment, mobility, number of students per teacher, number of graduates, minimum high school plan/recommended/distinguished high school plan graduates, and total operating expenditures funding and accelerated education funding) over a three year time period for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 AEIS data.

Setting

The LUD was the seventh-largest public-school system in the nation and the largest in Texas. The LUD consisted of 298 campuses: 170 elementary, 42 middle, 55 high schools and 31 combination campuses and includes over 200,000 students. The demographics of the district included 61% Hispanic, 7.8% Caucasian, 26.5% African American, 2.9% Asian, and 0.3% Native American. Of the student population, 30.7% were considered Limited English Proficient and 79.2% qualified as Economically

Disadvantaged. There were over 12, 800 teachers and 125 administrators that served this diverse population of students with an average experience of 11.5 years. According to the AEIS report, during the 2009-10 school year, the LUD earned a TEA ranking as an Acceptable District. For the purpose of this study, all participants came from one selected high school from the LUD's "Advance Now" turnaround project.

Participants

Students.

The research data was limited to 11th-grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students during the 2008-2009, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, and 2011-2012 school years. During the 2011-2012 school year, there were a total of 304 students in the 11th grade, 24.8% of the total school population. The demographics of the school were as follows: 29.1% African American, 66.0% Hispanic, 2.4% White, 0.2% American Indian, 1.7% Asian, 0.0% Pacific Islander, and 0.6% were two or more races. During the 2011-2012 school year, 94.1% of the students were Economically Disadvantaged, 21.9% were labeled as Limited English Proficient, and 74.9% were at-risk. Mobility was 27.2% and students with disciplinary placements were 3.3%. The Special Education population made up 9.5% of the student population while 21.7% of the students were enrolled in English as a Second Language courses.

School.

The school is one selected high school in the "Advance Now" program located in a LUD in southwest Texas and served grades 9 through 12. According to the Houston Chronicle, an Associated Press 2007 John Hopkins University study labeled the school as

a “dropout factory” where at least 40% of the entering freshmen do not make it to their senior year. In the late 1980s, the school was involved in a race riot that resulted in 2 hospitalizations. The high school had a Leadership Academy magnet program.

Procedures

Descriptive statistics was used for this study. Data was collected through pre-existing/archival AEIS data for the 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 school years. The benchmark year for data was the 2008-2009 school year and the consecutive years following (2010-2012) were utilized for years that the turnaround model was implemented. In order to conduct an ethical research study, all procedures of the Institutional Review Board were followed as well as the procedures outlined by the University of Houston Human Protections Committee. No student names were associated with data collected through the TEA databases.

Instruments

Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS).

According to the TEA website, the TAKS assessments used a design that measured the extent to which a student had learned the TEKS and was able to apply them to a paper assessment for their grade level. The TAKS assessments were modified for Special Education (TAKS-Accommodated, TAKS-Modified, and TAKS-Alternate (ALT)) and Limited English Proficient (TAKS-Linguistically Accommodated Testing (LAT)) students. TAKS-Accommodated data was included in the AEIS reports with the standard TAKS information and is not disaggregated in the reporting. The data source that was utilized was AEIS. The TAKS assessments were based on the TEKS, the state standards that students should have been able to master. Students were expected to reach

a specific level on these criterion-referenced tests. Performance data could have been used to compare student growth from year-to-year as the assessment was built using the TEKS.

Limitations

Education was a multifaceted establishment; education was about business but with a different kind of product than any other company had – creating successful students as an end-product. School turnaround compounded the complexities of the general education environment. Each student created a different dynamic within the complexities. Each student of each parent brought about another dimension that affected the end-product, whether it was positive, negative, or neutral. There were many turnaround models that had many different principles. This research study may not be used as a generalization for all types of turnaround schools as the turnaround models were as complex as the educational system that encompassed them. An important limitation to be considered in the study was also that the study only included one campus, in one school district, and only one grade level; therefore, generalizations could not be assumed for any or all turnaround campuses.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to 11th grade students who were enrolled in one LUD campus and to the AEIS indicators available on the TEA accountability website. The results of the study were not generalizable to entire turnaround campuses or to 11th grade students in a turnaround school.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to provide descriptive statistics of one turnaround high school's performance indicators on the state assessment program and provide implications for school district leaders. In order to look at these results, an analysis was performed for the years 2009-2012 for the 11th grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students; also included are state, district, and campus comparisons where applicable. The "Advance Now" program started in the year 2010-2011; therefore, the previous year's data is also included as a benchmark point. Where applicable, an analysis of the 5 tenets of the "Advance Now" program was also addressed through the data; those 5 tenets were:

1. An effective principal and effective teacher in each school;
2. More instructional time;
3. Use of the data to drive instruction;
4. In-school tutoring; and
5. Culture of high expectations (Houston ISD, n.d.).

Although none of these tenets were measured directly utilizing the TAKS test's information, data could be analyzed regarding the effect of these measures on the 2010-2012 test results. The specific content areas that were analyzed are as follows: ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, and All Tests progress; ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, and All Tests commended performance progress; and ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, and All Tests TAKS-M and TAKS-ALT progress. In addition to an analysis of the state testing data, an analysis of the following AEIS areas were also included: attendance rates, annual dropout rates, four-year completion rates, advanced

course/dual enrollment completion, recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates, the TSI–ELA and Math progress, average SAT scores, ELA and Math College-Ready graduates, enrollment, mobility, number of students per teacher, number of graduates, minimum high school plan/recommended/distinguished high school plan graduates, and total operating expenditures funding and accelerated education funding. The following analysis was divided into 2 sections, one that focused on content achievement data that includes: AEIS TAKS (TAKS-A is included with TAKS), TAKS-M, and TAKS-ALT content data results that include data on students' commended performance progress and the TSI, average SAT scores, and College-Ready graduates; and a second section that focused on additional AEIS data that could impact achievement data which includes attendance rates, annual dropout rates, four-year completion rates, advanced course/dual enrollment completion, recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates, enrollment, mobility, number of students per teacher, number of graduates, minimum high school plan/recommended/distinguished high school plan graduates, and total operating expenditures funding and accelerated education funding.

Results

AEIS TAKS, TAKS-M, and TAKS-ALT, TSI, average SAT scores, and College-

Ready graduates content data results

TAKS

Figure 4-1 TAKS ELA Progress, 2009-2012

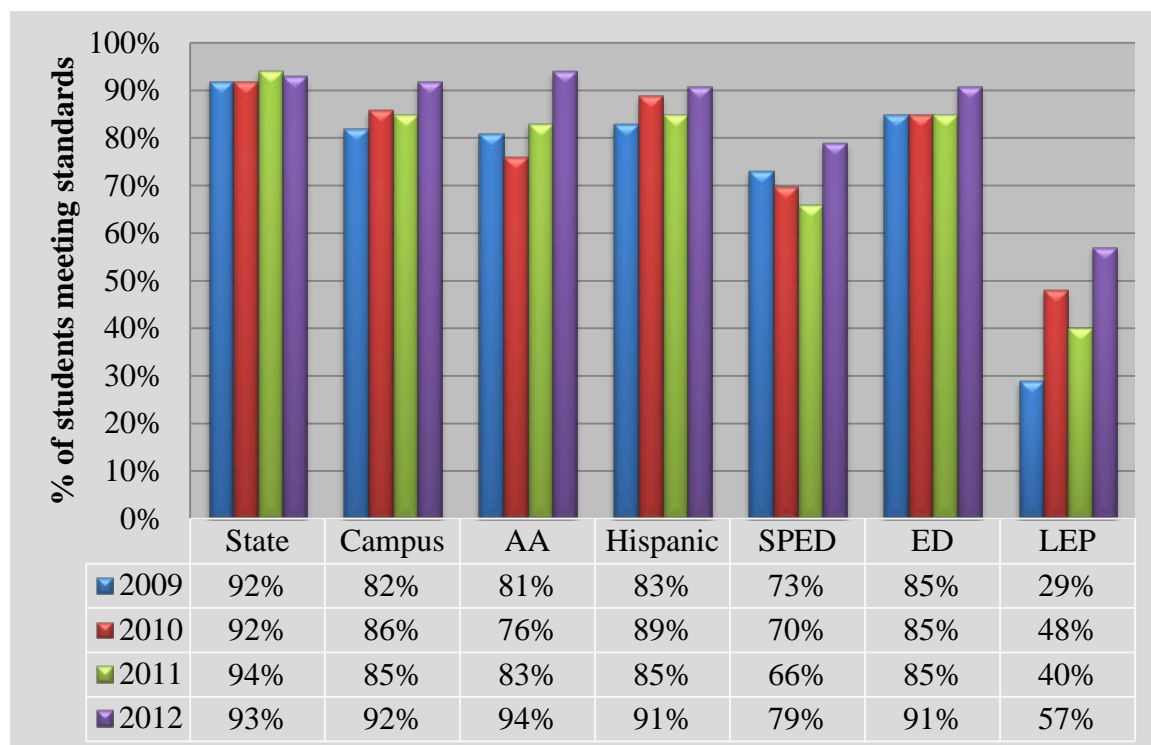


Figure 4-1 demonstrated the TAKS ELA progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-1 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS ELA students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-2 TAKS Math Progress, 2009-2012

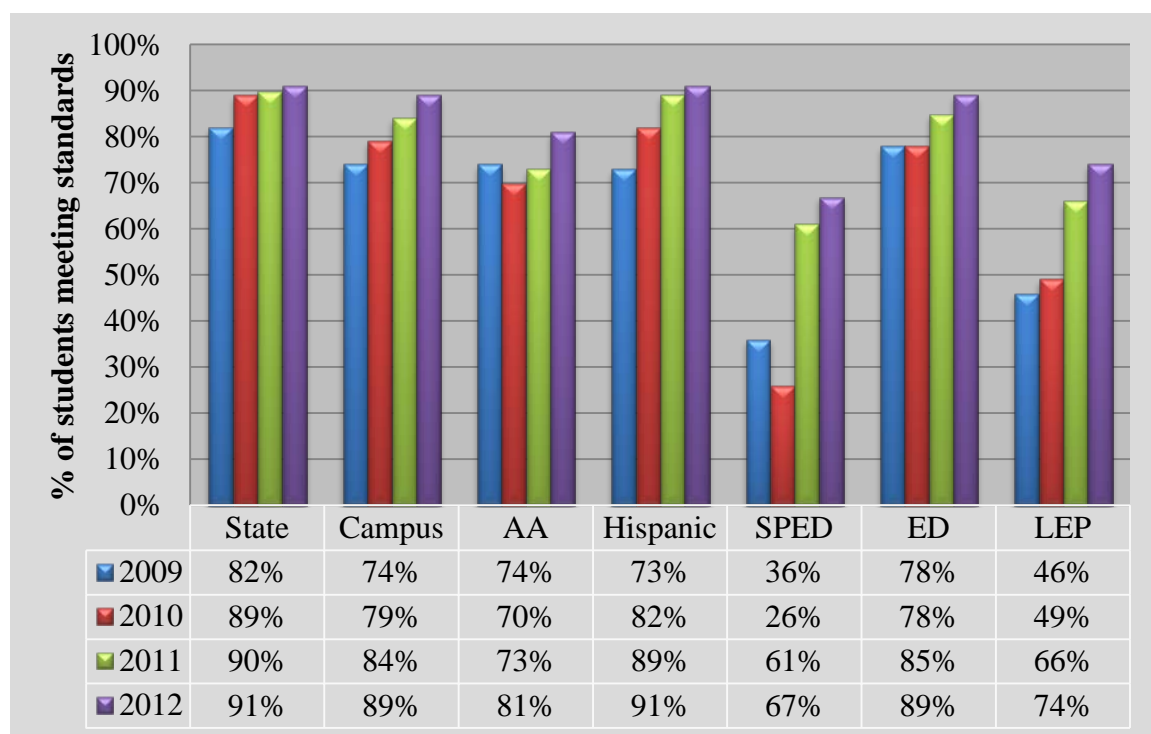


Figure 4-2 demonstrated the TAKS Math progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-2 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS Math students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-3 TAKS Science Progress, 2009-2012

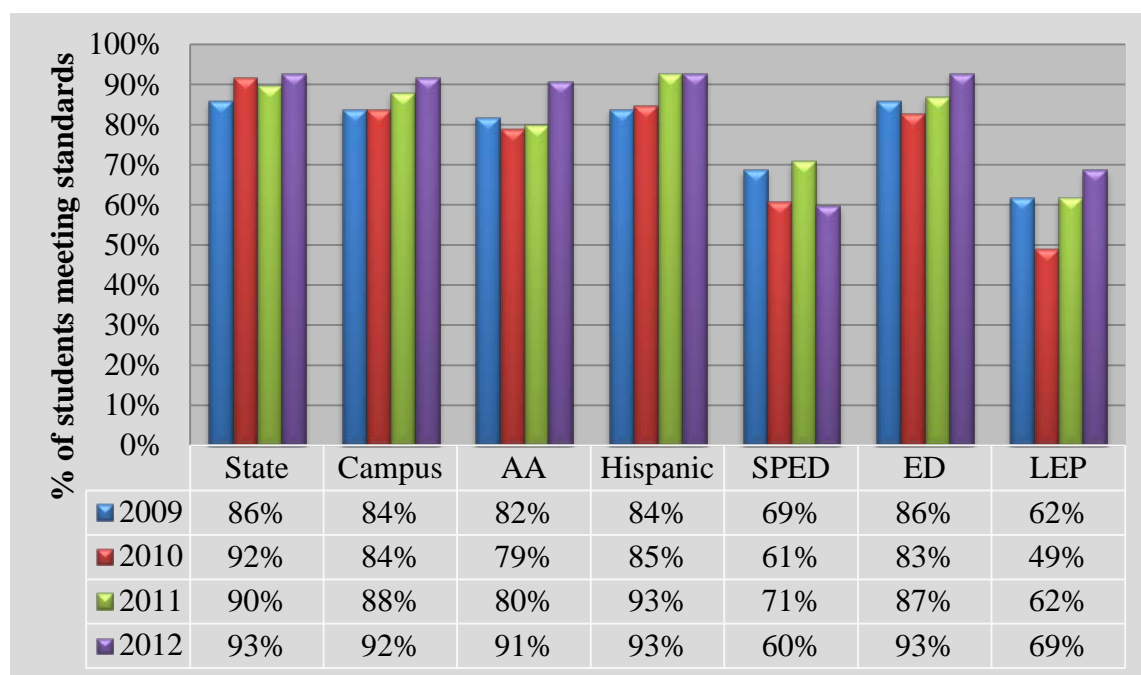


Figure 4-3 demonstrated the TAKS Science progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-3 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS Science students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-4 TAKS Social Studies Progress, 2009-2012

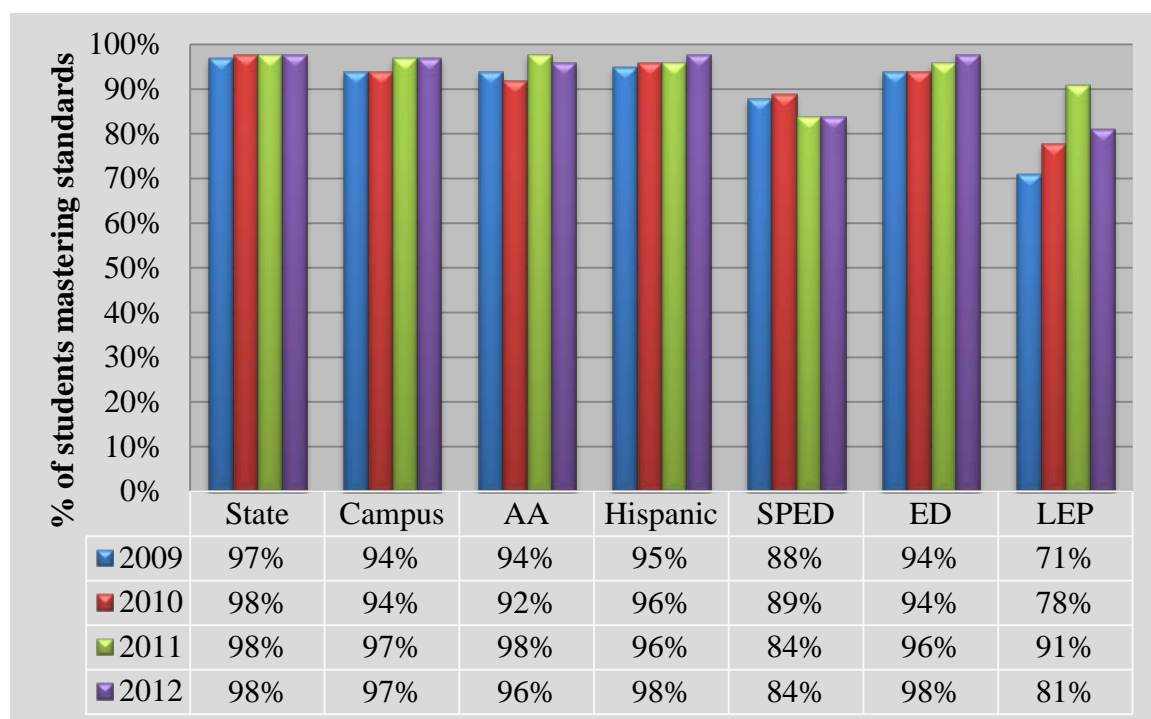


Figure 4-4 demonstrated the TAKS Social Studies progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-4 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS Social Studies students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-5 TAKS All Tests progress, 2009-2012

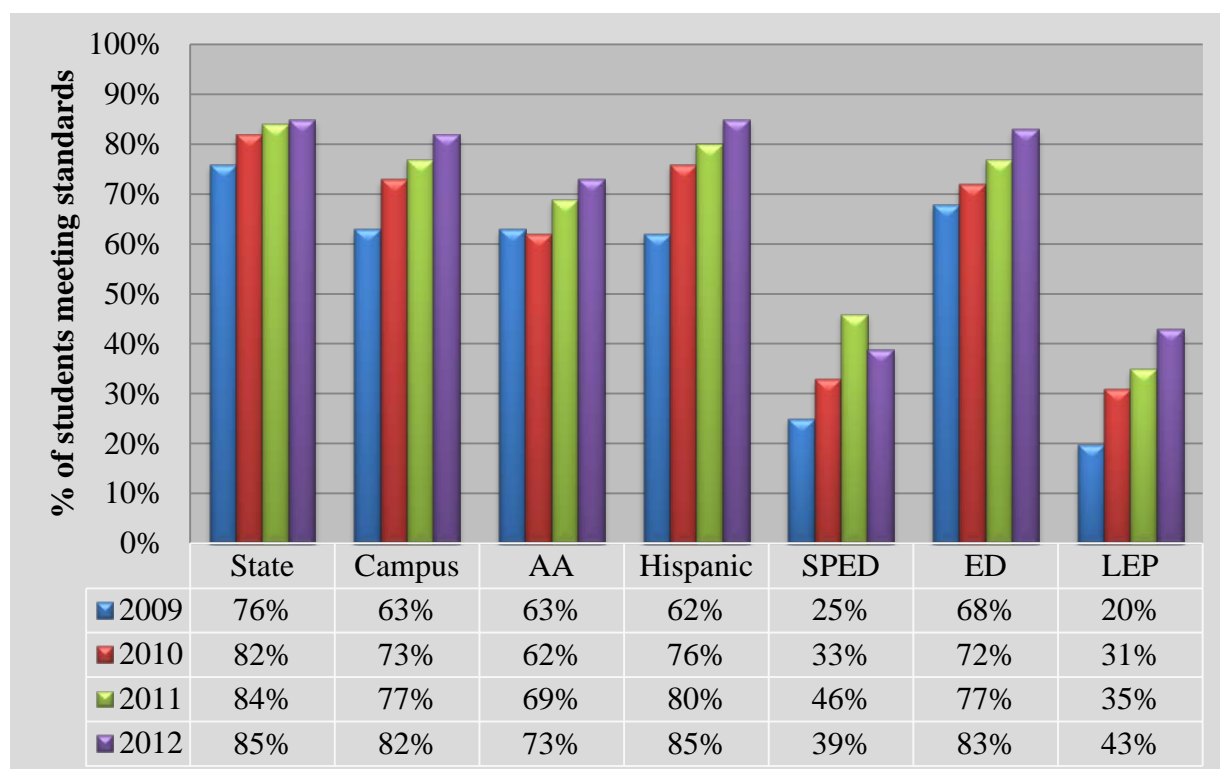


Figure 4-5 demonstrated the TAKS All Tests progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-5 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS All Tests students in the “Advance Now” program.

TAKS Test Results

In regards to ELA progress, all groups made gains. The most significant gains were in the Limited English Proficient subgroup with a 28% increase over the three-year period from the 2009 benchmark year. Math progress was even more substantial with double-digit gains in five of the six campus subgroups. Special Education students demonstrated the highest gains at 41% over the three-year period. Tutoring was provided

to students in either reading or math in the “Advance Now” program; however, it is unclear from the data which students received reading or math tutorials. Science and Social Studies progress was notably different from the ELA and Math progress in that there were no double-digit gains in any of the campus subgroups. In both of the Science and Social Studies progress measures, the Special Education subgroup decreased in overall performance gains. In All Tests progress, the Campus group and all subgroups exhibited double-digit gains for the three-year period while the state lagged behind with only a 9% increase in performance measures. Although Special Education students did achieve an overall 14% increase during the four-year period, there was a slight drop in scores of 7% in between the 2011-2012 school year and

TAKS Commended Performance

Figure 4-6 TAKS ELA Commended Performance, 2009-2012

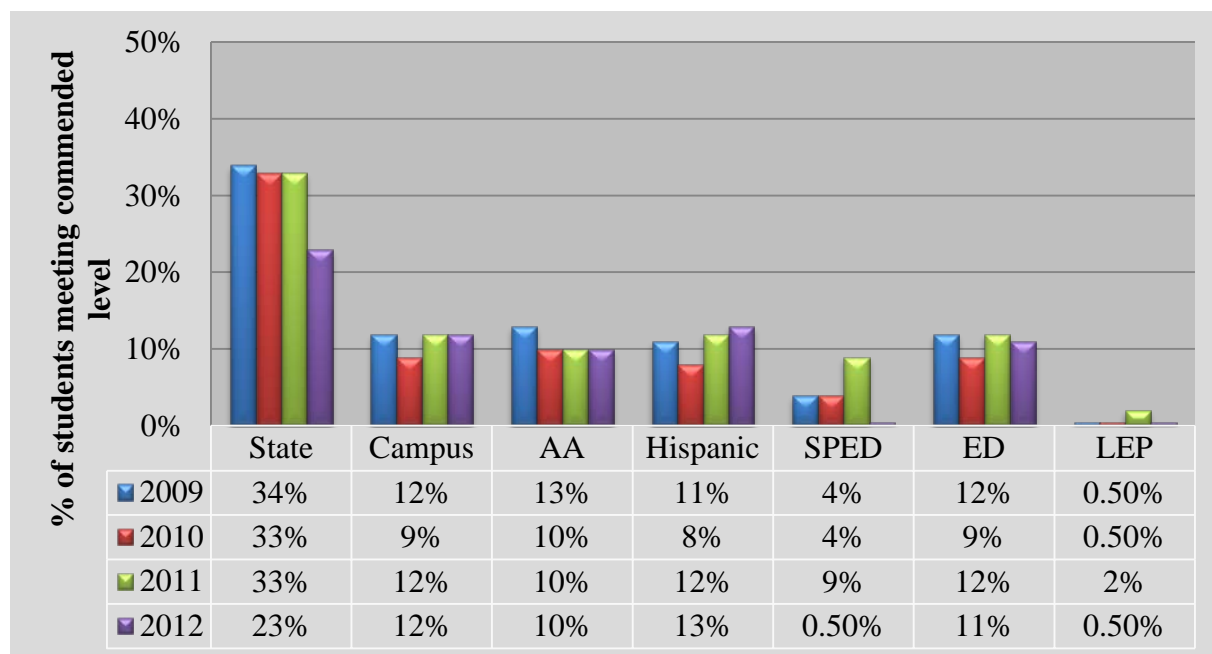


Figure 4-6 demonstrated the TAKS ELA Commended Performance progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-6 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS ELA Commended Performance students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-7 TAKS Math Commended Performance, 2009-2012

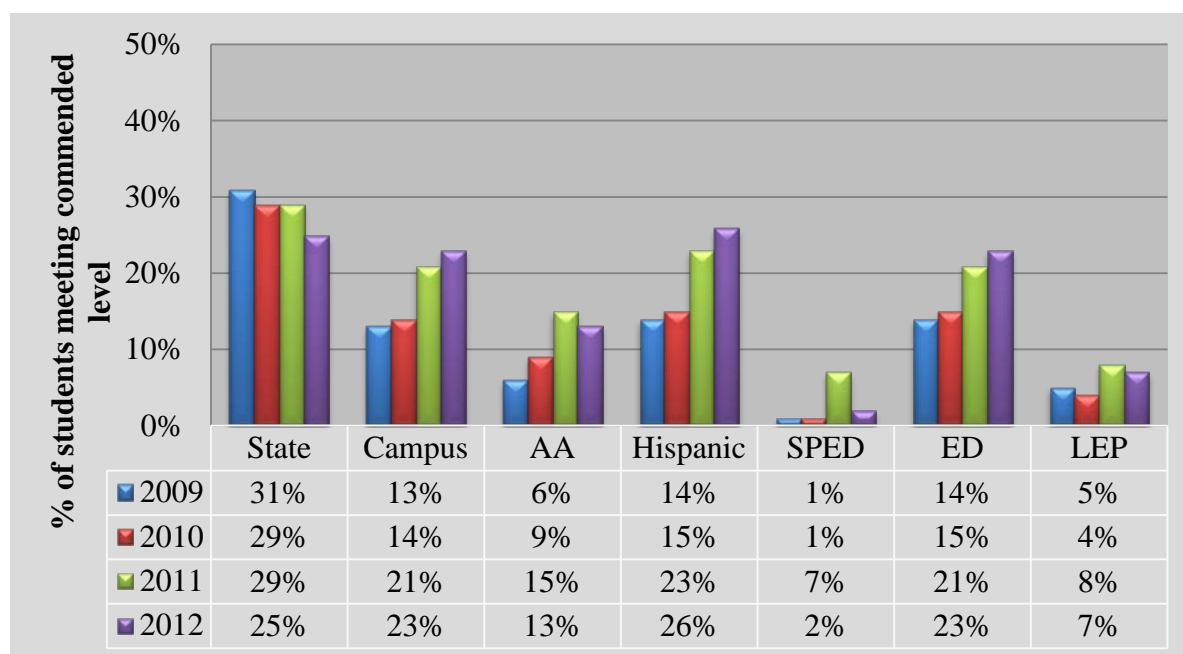


Figure 4-7 demonstrated the TAKS Math Commended Performance progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-7 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS Math Commended Performance students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-8 TAKS Science Commended Performance, 2009-2012

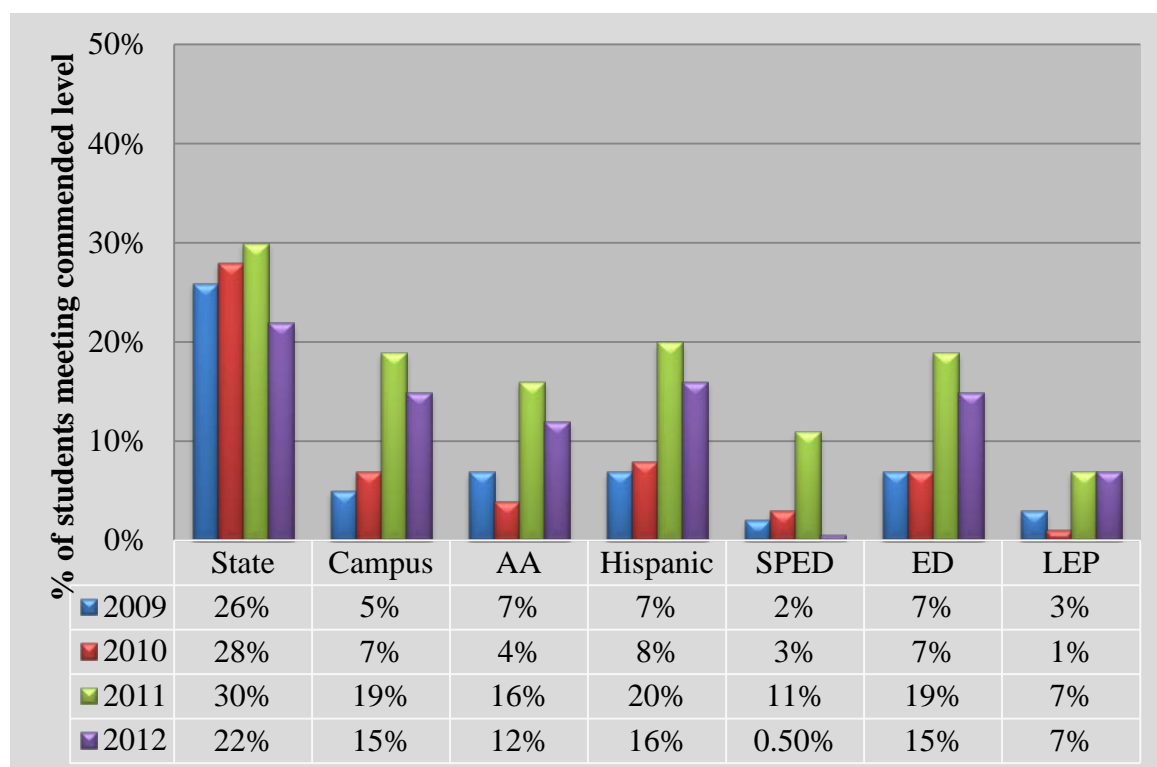


Figure 4-8 demonstrated the TAKS Science Commended Performance progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-8 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS Science Commended Performance students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-9 TAKS Social Studies Commended Performance, 2009-2012

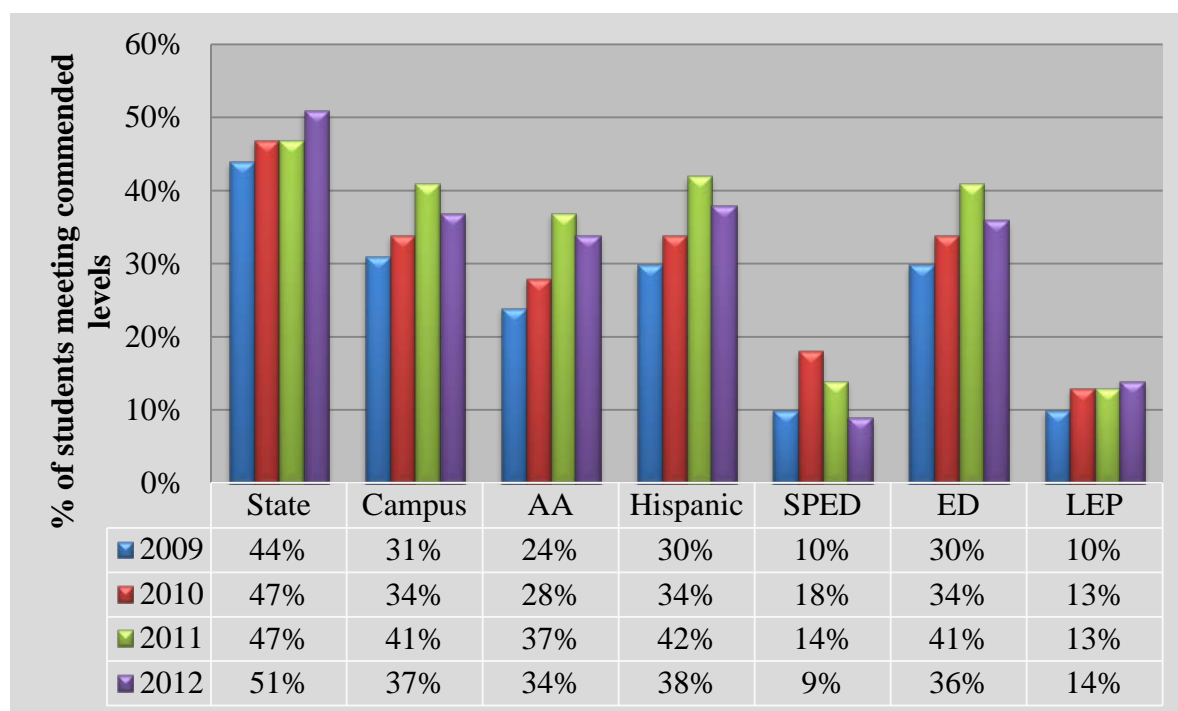


Figure 4-9 demonstrated the TAKS Social Studies Commended Performance progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-9 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS Social Studies Commended Performance students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-10 TAKS, All Tests, Commended Performance, 2009-2012

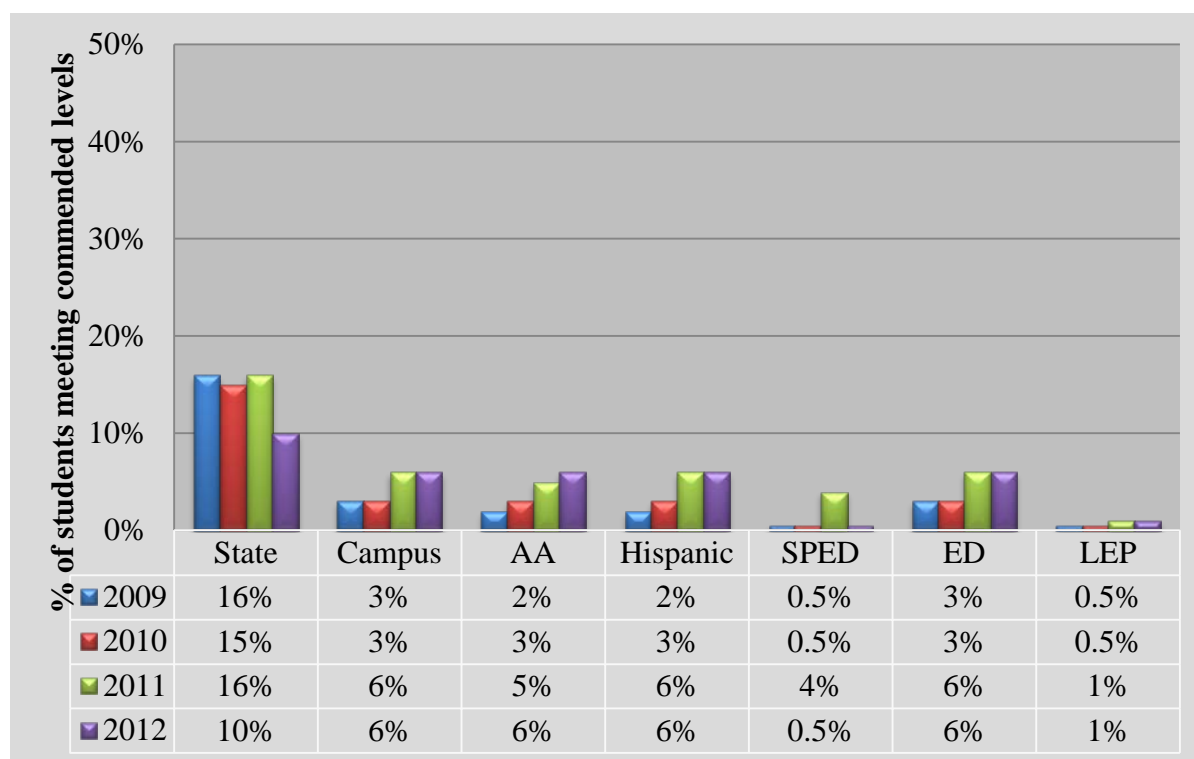


Figure 4-10 demonstrates the TAKS All Tests Commended Performance progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-10 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS All Tests Commended Performance students in the “Advance Now” program.

TAKS Commended Performance Results

TAKS commended performance results for the TAKS ELA measures reveal much different results than the overall TAKS performance results. Only one campus subgroup, Hispanic, had an increase in performance while the Campus group and all other subgroups either remained the same for the three-year period or declined. The state had an 11% decrease overall which was more than the Campus group and subgroups

included in the study. Math commended performance results were improved for the Campus group, and Hispanic and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups while the African American, Special Education, and Limited English Proficient experienced an overall decline. The most notable increase in this group was the Hispanic subgroup with a 12% increase overall. Special Education commended performance was 2% and Limited English Proficient was 7% for the 2011-2012 school years. In the area of Science and Social Studies, the campus groups and all subgroups had increases in the 2010-2011 school year, with the exception of Special Education, but all decreased in the 2011-2012 school year with the exception of Limited English Proficient in Social Studies with a 1% increase. In All Tests commended performance progress, there were not significant increases although the African American and Hispanic subgroups both obtained 4% increases. These were not significant as the Campus group and all subgroups ended the 2011-2012 school year with single digit progress. The Special Education and Limited English Proficient subgroups had either insignificant growth of less than 1% or remained the same over

TAKS-M

Figure 4-11 TAKS-M ELA progress, 2009-2012

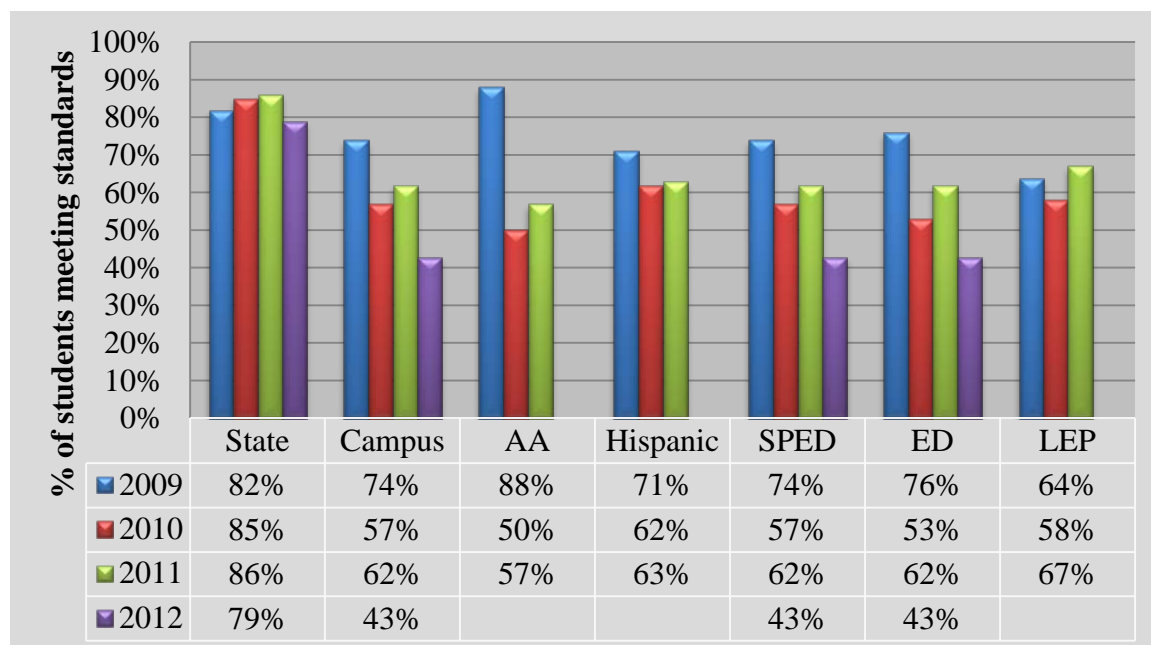


Figure 4-11 demonstrated the TAKS-M ELA progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-11 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS-M ELA students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-12 TAKS-M Math progress, 2009-2012

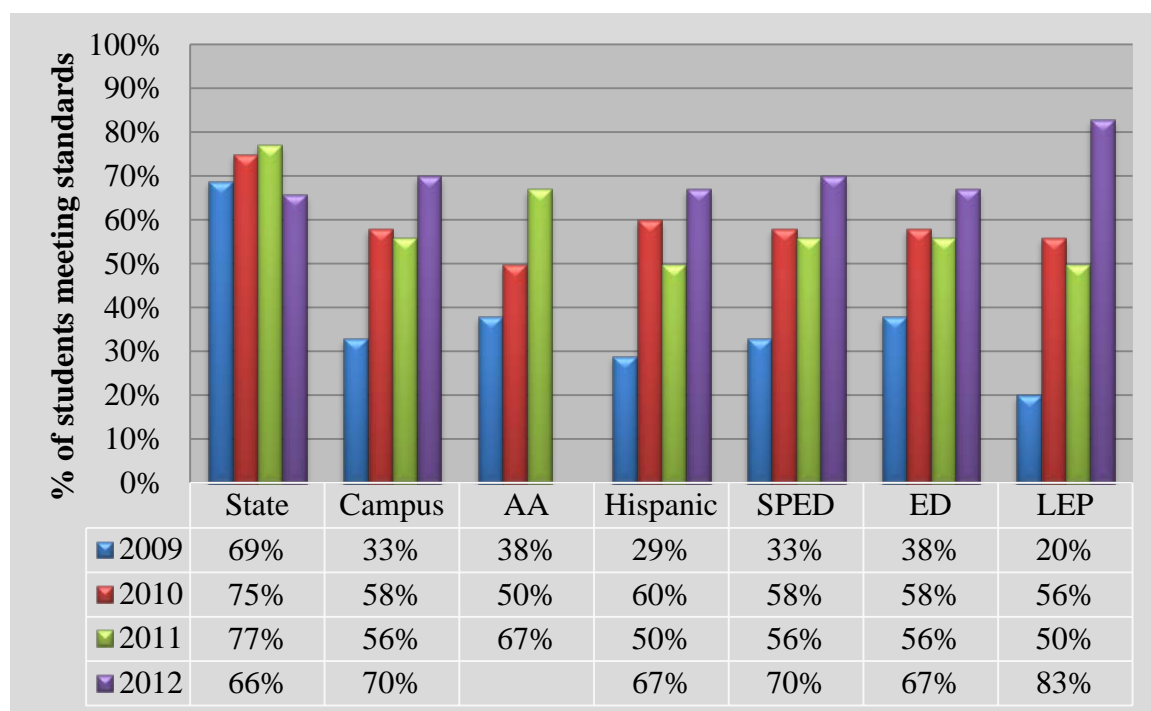


Figure 4-12 demonstrated the TAKS-M Math progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-12 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS-M Math students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-13 TAKS-M Science progress, 2009-2012

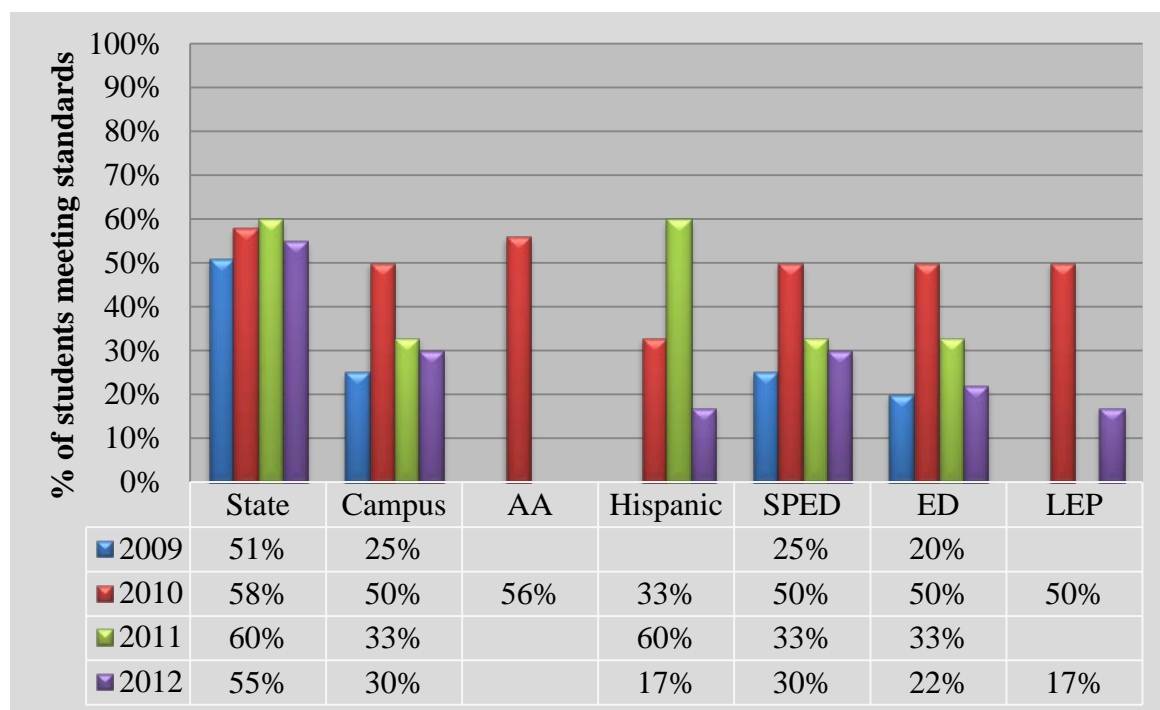


Figure 4-13 demonstrated the TAKS-M Science progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-13 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS-M Science students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-14 TAKS-M Social Studies progress, 2009-2012

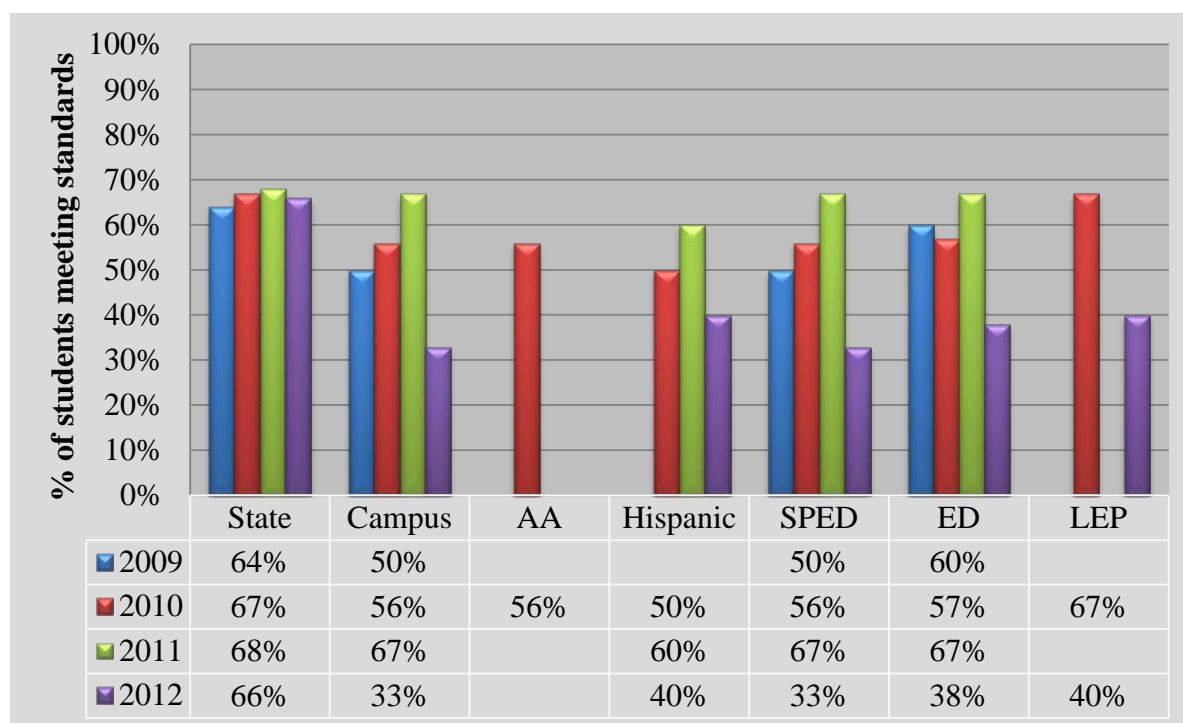


Figure 4-14 demonstrated the TAKS-M Social Studies progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-14 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS-M Social Studies students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-15 TAKS-M, All Tests progress, 2009-2012

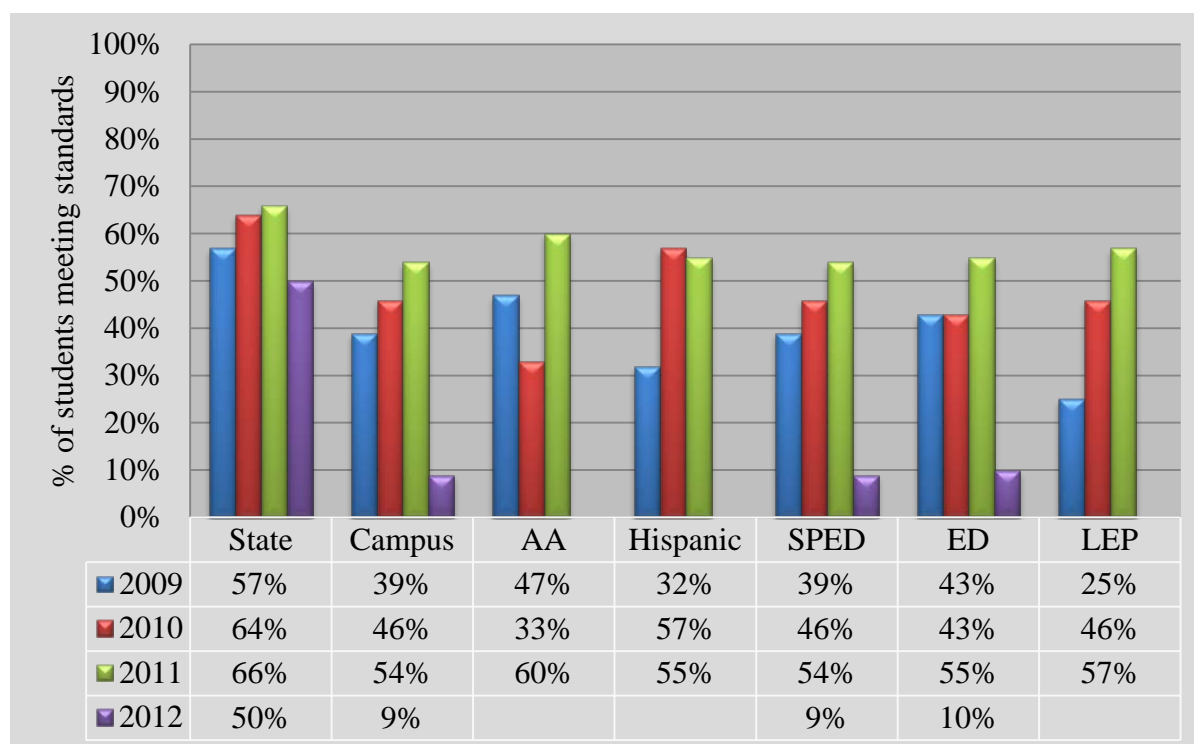


Figure 4-15 demonstrated the TAKS-M All Tests progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-15 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS-M All Tests students in the “Advance Now” program.

TAKS-M Performance Results

TAKS-M ELA progress was considerably lower than the TAKS ELA progress with double-digit decreases in the Campus group and three of the subgroups. The Campus group, African American, Special Education, and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups all experienced declines of 31% over the three-year period. An important aspect to note was that there were no TAKS-M ELA scores for the 2012 school year for

the African American and Hispanic subgroups; this could have been a question of data quality or the number of qualifying students fell below the state's minimum of 30. The state also experienced a decline of 3% while the Hispanic subgroup experienced an 8% decline over the two years of "Advance Now" program data. TAKS-M Math progress was substantial for the Campus group and all subgroups in the 2011-2012 school year while the state experienced a 3% decrease. Interestingly, in the second year of the "Advance Now" program, there were declines for every group with the exception of the African American subgroup, which had a 17% increase in one year. The Campus group experienced a 37% increase in performance for the three-year period; the African American subgroup had three years of data. The group that had the most sizable increase was the Limited English Proficient subgroup with a 63% increase from the 2009 school year. The largest gains were in the first year of the "Advance Now" program implementation. TAKS-M Science progress were mixed with sporadic data. The three groups that had consistent data for all three years were the Campus group and the Special Education and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups. All three of those groups had positive growth of 5%, 10%, and 2%, respectively from the 2009 school year; however, all groups decreased after the first year of implementation. There was no baseline data (2009) for the African American, Hispanic, and Limited English Proficient subgroups; however, there was sporadic data for the 2010-2012 years which were the treatment years for the "Advance Now" program, leaving one questioning either the data quality or the group size of the program. There was a 25% increase for the 2009-2010 school year and a 20% decrease by the 2011-2012 school year in the Campus group and a similar results in the Special Education, and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups. Although there

was no baseline, 2009 school year data, for the Hispanic subgroup, they had an increase of 21% in the 2011 school year but a decline of 43% in the 2012 school year. There was only two years of data for the Limited English Proficient subgroup (2010, 2012) and one year for the African American subgroup (2010). TAKS-M Social Studies progress was dismal for all campus groups, with the exception of the African American and Hispanic subgroups, which had one and two years of data, respectively. All other subgroups had double-digit decreases in performance measures. There were significant drops in performance for all subgroups in the 2012 school year. TAKS-M All Tests progress indicated double-digit decreases for the three groups that had measures for all four years: Campus (30%), Special Education (30%), and Economically Disadvantaged (33%). In the three years that had data reported (2009-2011), the African American, Hispanic, and Limited English Proficient subgroups all had increases of 13%, 23%, and 32%, respectively.

TAKS-ALT

Figure 4-16 TAKS-ALT, All Tests progress, 2009-2012

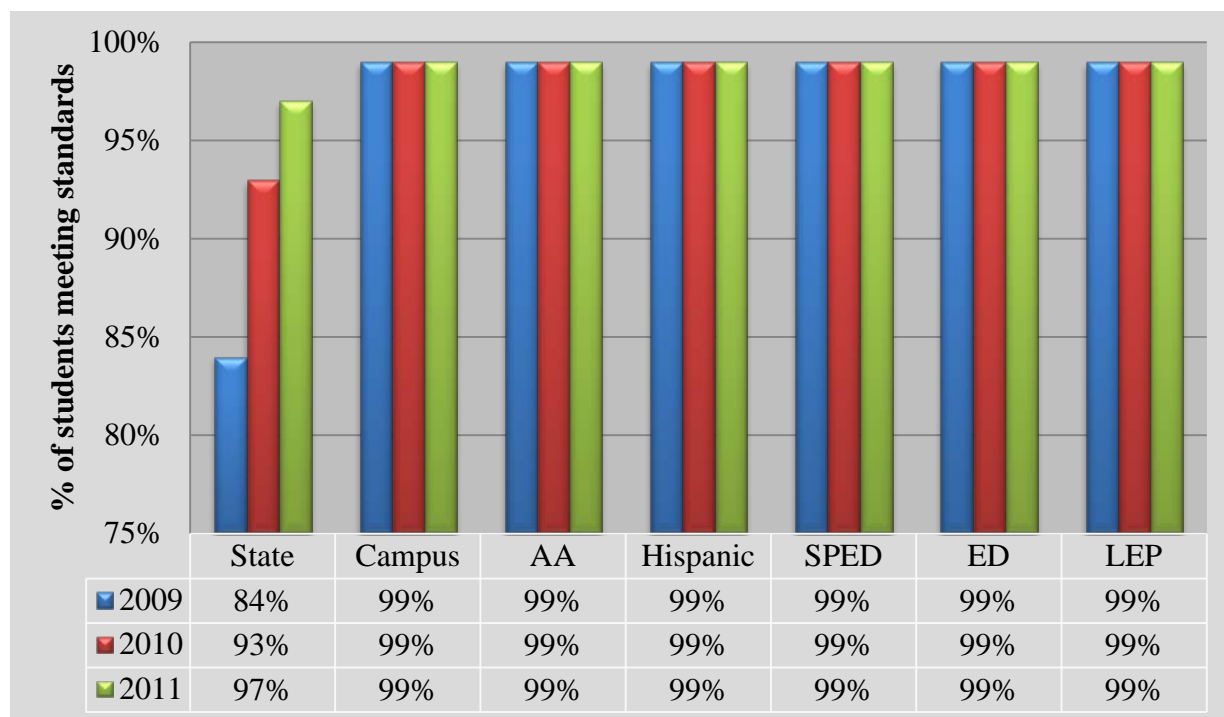


Figure 4-16 demonstrated the TAKS-ALT, All Tests progress for the 2009-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-16 indicated the progress for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TAKS-ALT All Tests students in the “Advance Now” program.

TAKS-ALT Performance Results

There was no significant growth for the campus as scores began and ended at 99%. There was a 13% increase for the state. There were no results for the 2012 school year as the TAKS-ALT program was removed from the state assessment.

TSI

Figure 4-17 TSI, ELA progress, 2008-2012

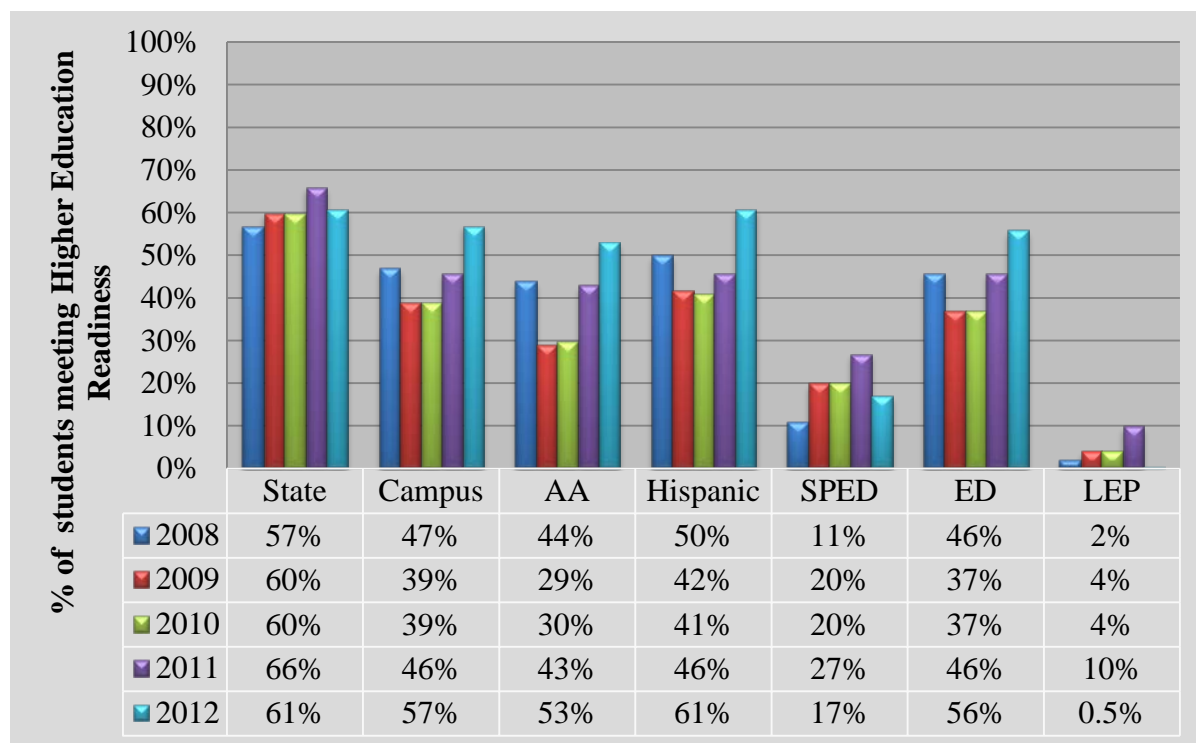


Figure 4-17 demonstrated the TSI, ELA progress for the 2008-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-17 indicated the progress for the 2008-2009 school years as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TSI ELA students in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-18 TSI, Math progress, 2008-2012

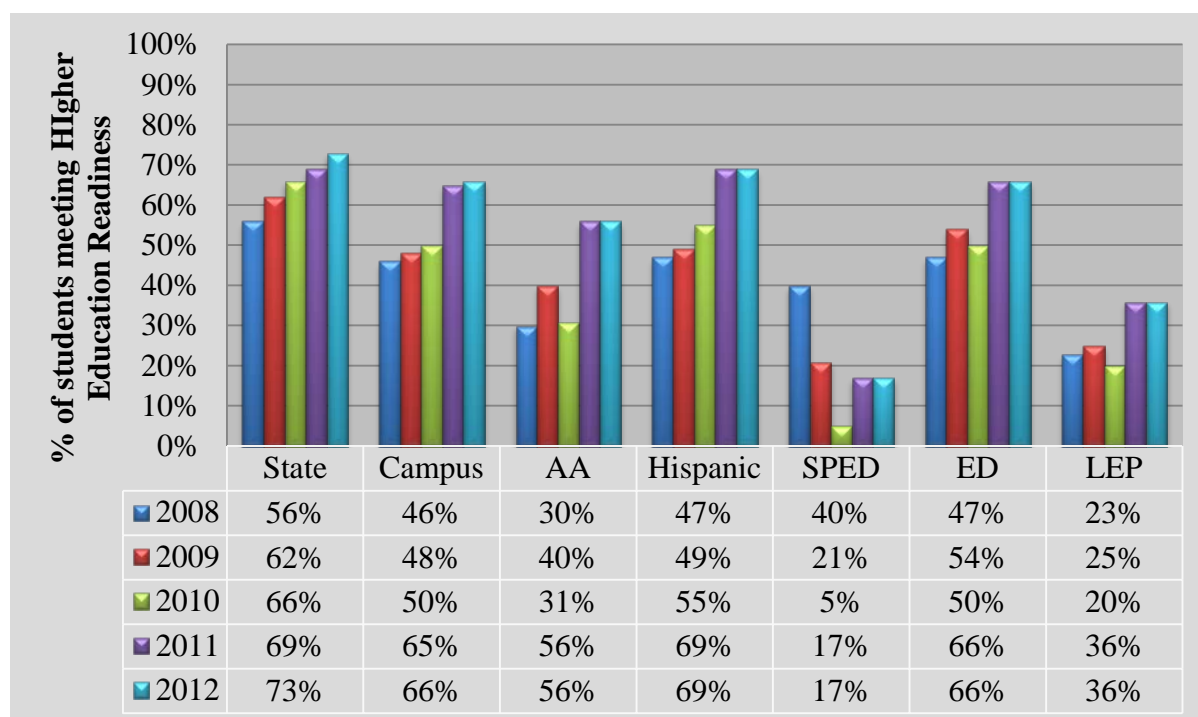


Figure 4-18 demonstrated the TSI, Math progress for the 2008-2012 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-18 indicated the progress for the 2008-2009 school years as well as the 2010-2012 years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade TSI Math students in the “Advance Now” program.

TSI Performance Results

The TEA reported TSI data on the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2008-2012 school years. Therefore, the 2008 school year data was included in the results. A comparison of the results for ELA and Math progress showed that Math outperformed ELA in the Campus group and all other subgroups with the exception of Special Education, with a 23% decline in progress. In the first year of the “Advance Now” program, the Special Education subgroup experienced a decrease to 5% but maintained a

12% increase in the subsequent two years. However, the Campus group and all other subgroups performed in Math at double-digit progress and most groups outperformed the State (17%) progress. The most significant increase was the African American subgroup with a 26% increase over the five-year period; however, the African American subgroup increased to a mere 56%. ELA progress maintained positive progress for the Campus group and all other subgroups with the exception of Special Education, with a 10% decrease in 2012, and Limited English Proficient, which experienced a 10% decline in the 2012 school year to end with less than 1%. All other groups outperformed the State progress of 4% with the Hispanic subgroup achieving the highest progress measure of 11%. TSI Math mirrored the ELA results, in that the Campus group and most subgroups showed progress; however, the Special Education subgroup experienced a 23% decline over the years and Limited English Proficient leveled out at 36% in the 2011 and 2012 school years.

Average SAT Scores

Figure 4-19 Average SAT score, 2007-2011

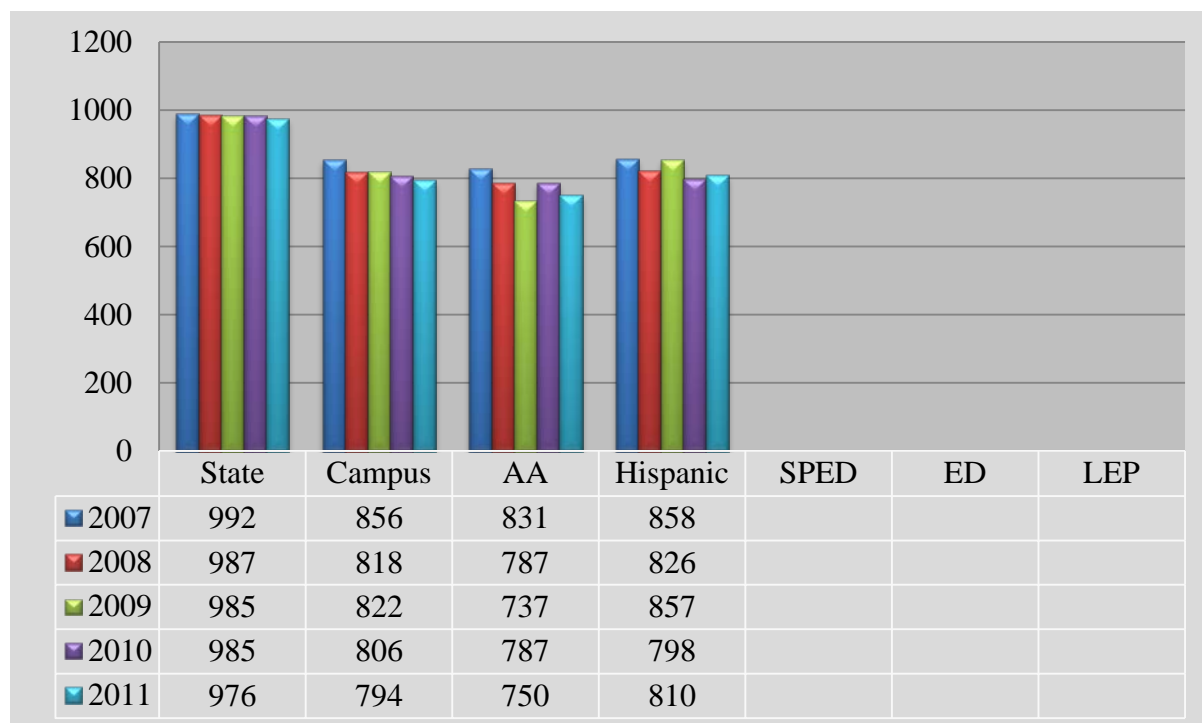


Figure 4-19 demonstrated the Average SAT scores for the 2007-2011 school years for the State, Campus, African American, and Hispanic populations. SAT does not report data for the Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-19 indicated the progress for the 2007-2009 school years as well as the 2010-2011 years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade SAT students in the “Advance Now” program. The State, Campus, African American, and Hispanic students were included.

Average SAT Scores Performance Results

The TEA reported SAT data on the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2007-2011 school years. There was no data available for the 2011-2012 school year. There was no reported data for the following subgroups: Special Education, Economically

Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient. For the groups that were reported, there was a decline in the Campus group, as well as all subgroups, including the State. The most significant decline was for the African American subgroup with an 81 point decrease in scores overall; however, in the 2009-2010 school year, the first year of treatment, there was an increase of 50 points. The Campus continued to decline in the treatment years, 2010-2011.

College-Ready Graduates

Figure 4-20 ELA College-Ready Graduates, 2007-2011

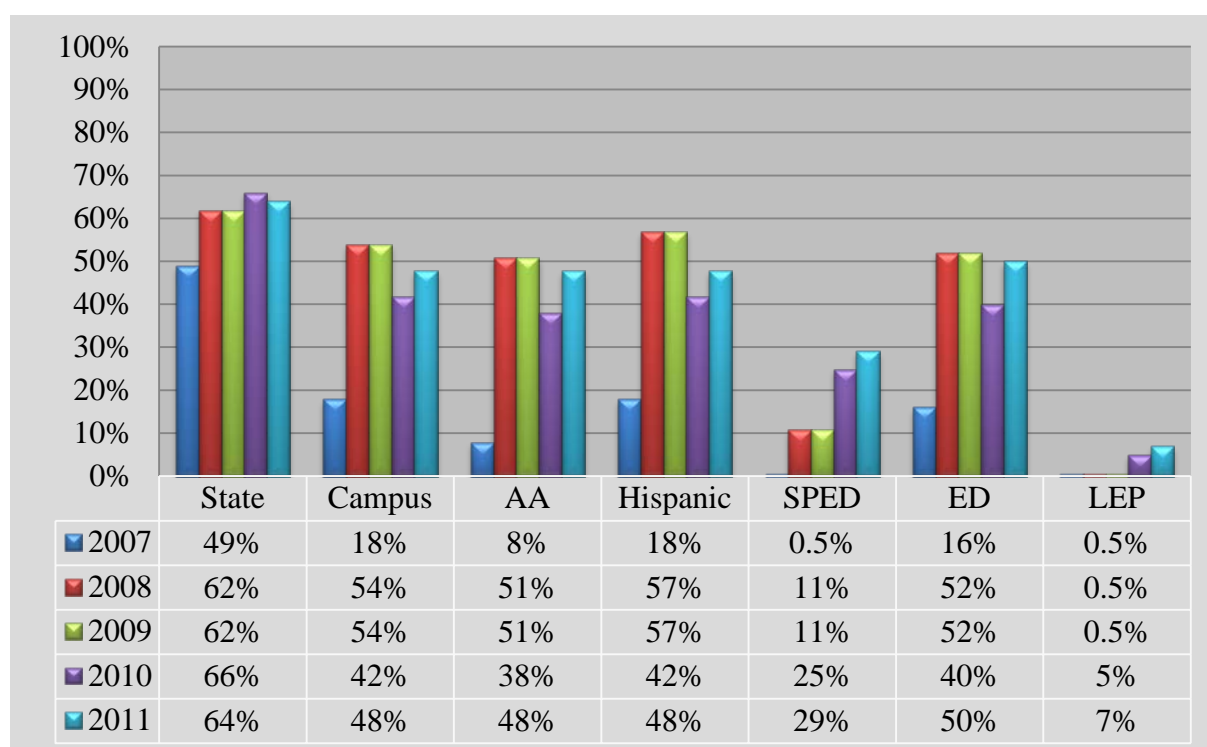


Figure 4-20 demonstrated the ELA College-Ready Graduates for the 2007-2011 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-20 indicated the progress for the 2007-2009 school years as well as the 2010-2011 school

years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade ELA college-ready graduates in the “Advance Now” program.

Figure 4-21 Math College-Ready Graduates, 2007-2011

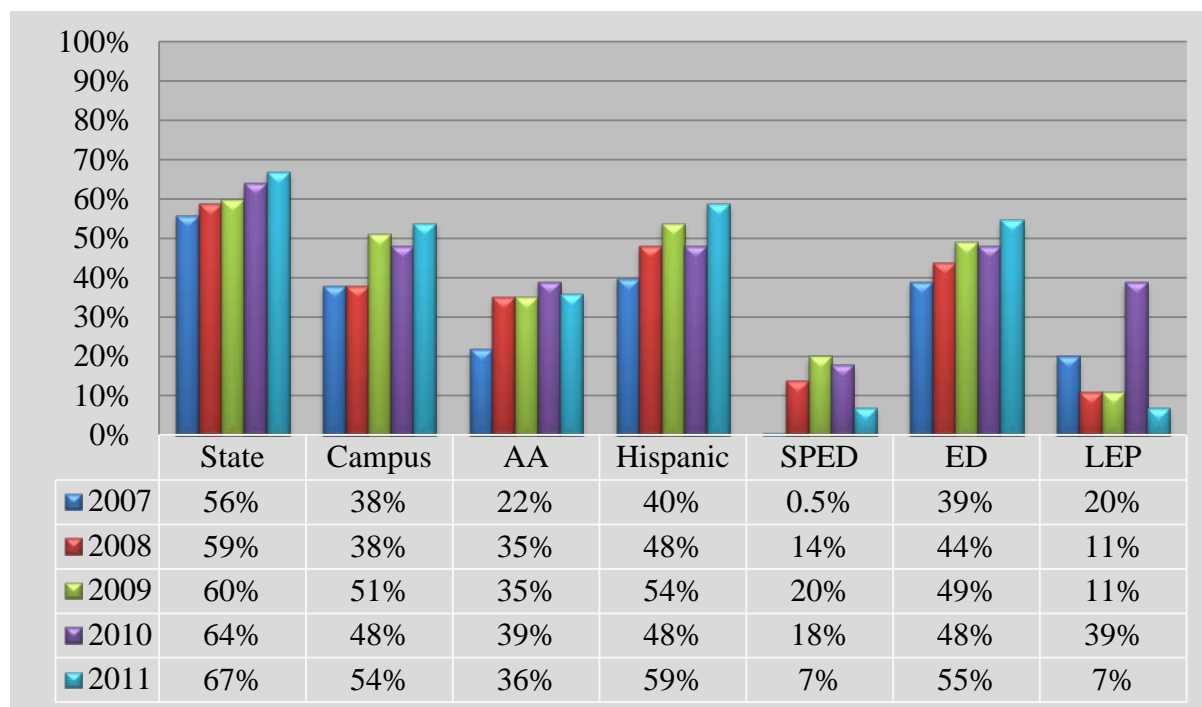


Figure 4-21 demonstrated the Math College-Ready Graduates for the 2007-2011 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-21 indicated the progress for the 2007-2009 school years as well as the 2008-2011 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade Math college-ready graduates in the “Advance Now” program.

College-Ready Graduates Performance Results

The TEA reported College-Ready Graduates data on the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2007-2011 school years. There was no data available for the 2011-2012 school year. For all of the groups reported, there was growth. The most significant growth was in ELA. The State achieved a 15% increase over the five-year period while the Campus

group increased by 30%. The most substantial increase was in the African American subgroup with 40%. However, when comparing the Campus and subgroups to the overall State percentage, there was still a need for major improvement as the highest performance rate was 48%. Additionally, during the 2010 and 2011 “Advance Now” implementation years, the Campus and all subgroups, with the exception of Special Education and Limited English Proficient, experienced decreases. All groups increased in the 2011 school year but ended with dismal ratings of 50% or less. Results did not increase significantly in Math; however, the overall achievement percentages for all subgroups, except Special Education and Limited English Proficient, were higher than the overall ELA percentages. Limited English Proficient students experienced a sharp decline in the 2010-2011 school year 32% whereas, in the previous year, the Limited English Proficient subgroup had a 28% increase. The Special Education and Limited English Proficient ended the 2011 school year with 7% and the African American students with 36%.

Additional AEIS indicators

Attendance rates

Figure 4-22 Attendance rates, 2006-2011

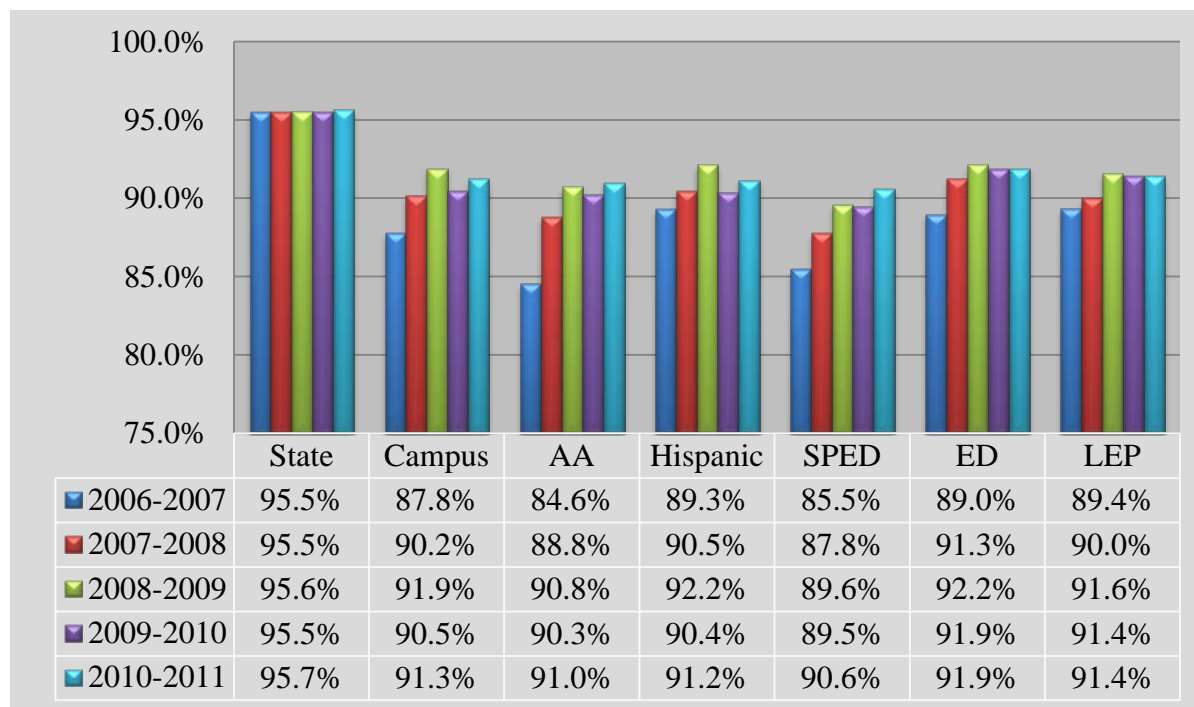


Figure 4-22 demonstrated the attendance rates for the 2006-2011 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-22 indicated the attendance rates for the 2007-2009 school years as well as the 2010-2011 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade students in the “Advance Now” program.

Attendance rates results

The TEA reported data on attendance rates for the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2007-2011 school years. There was no data available for the 2011-2012 school year as attendance was reported for the year preceding the current reporting year. The 2010 Accountability Manual reported that the “standard attendance rate for high schools is 95.0%”. The attendance rate increased for the Campus group by 3.5% while the group

that had the greatest increase was the African American subgroup with 6.4%. Overall, the Campus group, African American, Hispanic, and Special Education subgroups had minimal growth while the Economically Disadvantaged and Limited English Proficient subgroups remained the same during the first year of the “Advanced Now” program.

Annual Dropout Rates

Figure 4-23 Annual Dropout Rates, 2006-2010

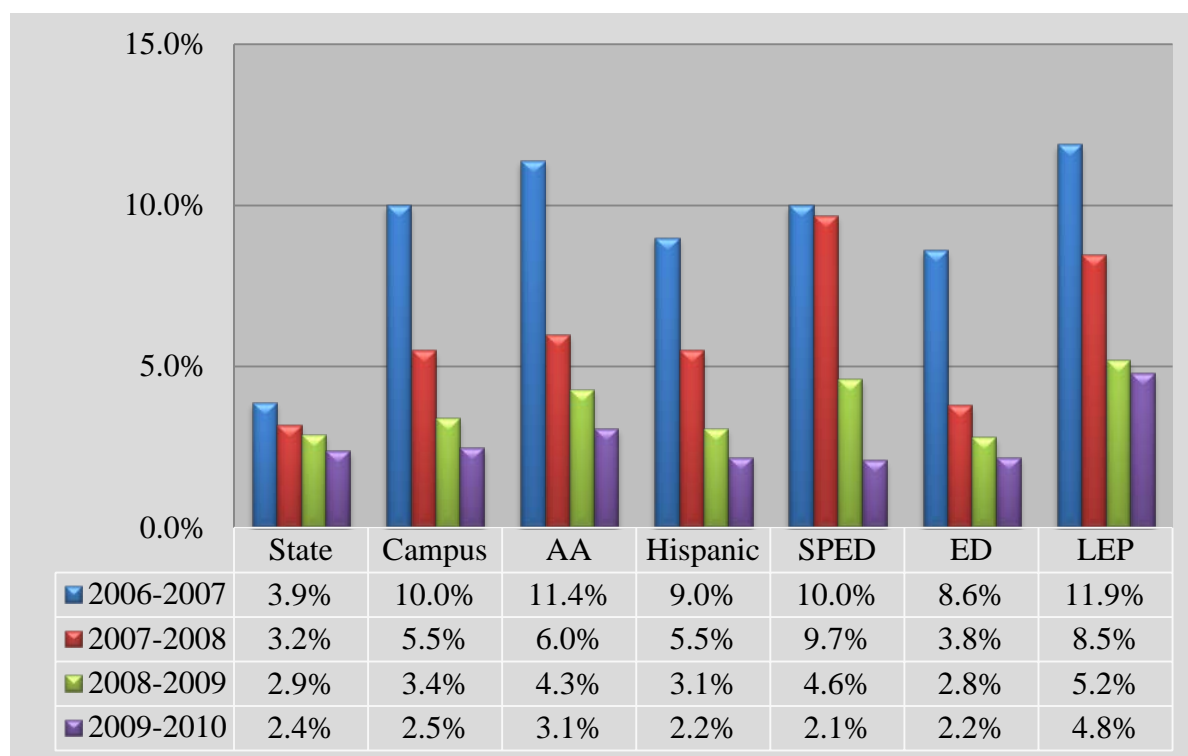


Figure 4-23 demonstrated the annual dropout rates for the 2006-2010 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-23 indicated the annual dropout rates for the 2007-2010 school years for 11th grade students at the “Advance Now” campus.

Annual Dropout Rates results

The TEA reported data on attendance rates for the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2007-2011 school years. There was no data available for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years as annual dropout rates were reported for the two years preceding the current reporting year. The 2010 Accountability Manual specified that this particular “indicator is based on grade 7-12 dropouts as a percent of total students enrolled...in a

single school year.” The standard was a 1.8%. All groups had a decrease in their dropout rates. The African American subgroup had the largest decrease at 8.3%. For the 2006-2007 school year data, the all campus groups had very high dropout rates. There were decreases in all groups for each consecutive year following the 2006-2007 school year.

Four-Year Completion Rates

Figure 4-24 Four-Year Completion Rates, 2008-2011

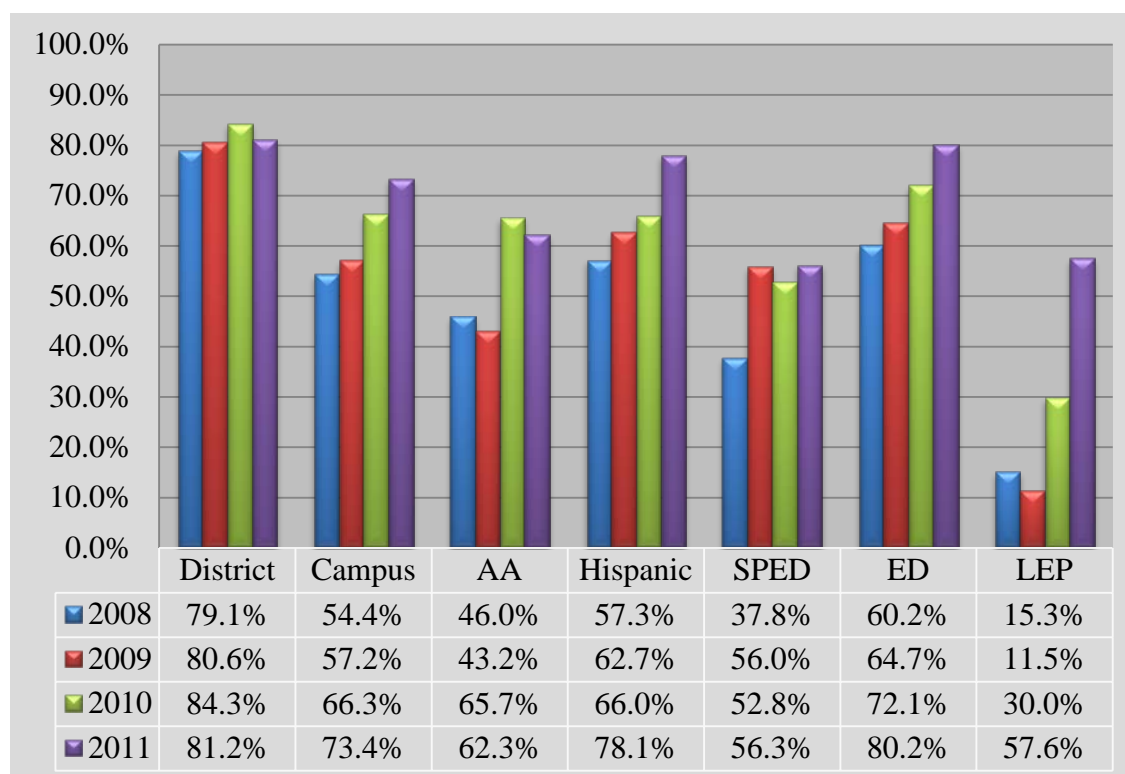


Figure 4-24 demonstrated the Four-Year Completion Rates for the 2008-2011 school years for the District, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-24 indicated the four-year completion rates for the 2008-2009 school year as well as the 2010-2011 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade students in the “Advance Now” program.

Four-Year Completion Rates results

The TEA reported data on the four-year completion rates for the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2008-2011 school years. There was no data available for the 2011-2012 school year as four-year completion rates were reported for the year preceding the current reporting year. Also, data was not reported for the State but rather for the District. According to the 2010 Accountability Manual, a school must meet a standard of 75.0% within two years. The measures were equated between the classes of the previous two years. The District met the standard; however, the Campus group fell below the standard. The following subgroups met the standard: Hispanic and Economically Disadvantaged; the African American, Special Education, and Limited English Proficient groups did not meet the four-year Completion rates. There were increases in the completion rates for the two years of the “Advance Now” program implementation period for the Campus group, as well as, the Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient subgroups. The African American subgroup had a decline in the 2011 school year of 3.1%.

Advanced Course/Dual Enrollment Completion

Figure 4-25 Advanced Course/Dual Enrollment Completion, 2006-2011

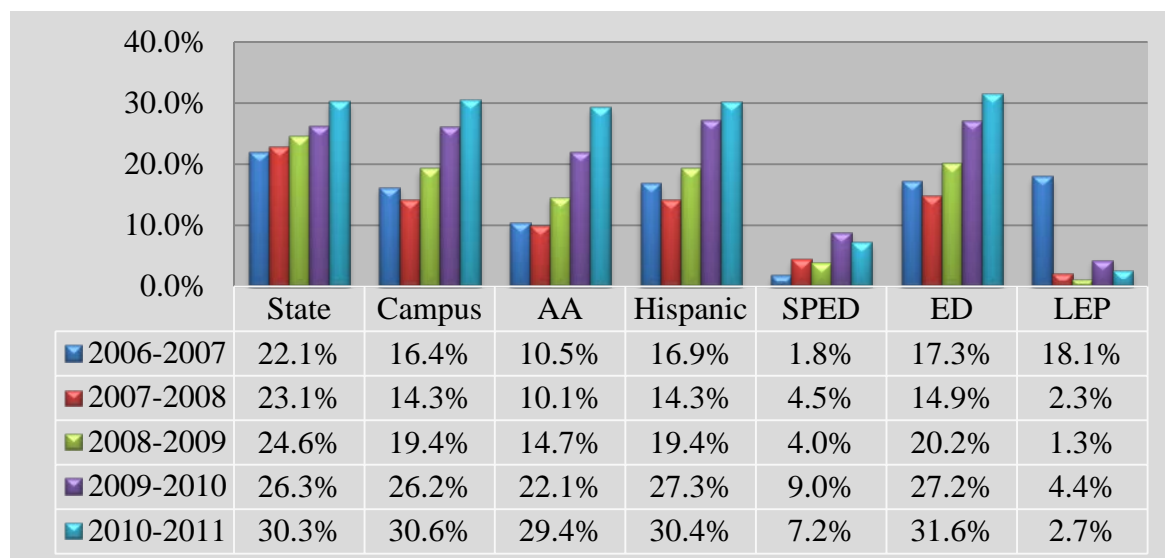


Figure 4-25 demonstrated the Advanced Course/Dual Enrollment Completion for the 2006-2011 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-25 indicated the advanced course/dual enrollment completion rates for the 2007-2009 school year as well as the 2010-2011 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade students in the “Advance Now” program.

Advanced Course/Dual Enrollment Completion results

The TEA reported data on advanced course/dual enrollment completion rates for the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2006-2011 school years. There was no data available for the 2011-2012 school year as these enrollment completion rates were reported for the year preceding the current reporting year. Rates increased for the Campus group, as well as all other subgroups in the study, with the exception of the Limited English Proficient subgroup, which had a -15.4%. The Campus, Hispanic, and Economically Disadvantaged groups surpassed the State; African American students were only 0.9%

under the State results. Conversely, the Special Education and Limited English Proficient groups fell short of the others by with 7.2% and 2.7%, respectively.

Recommended High School Program and Distinguished Program Graduate

Figure 4-26 Recommended High School Program and Distinguished Program Graduates, 2007-2011

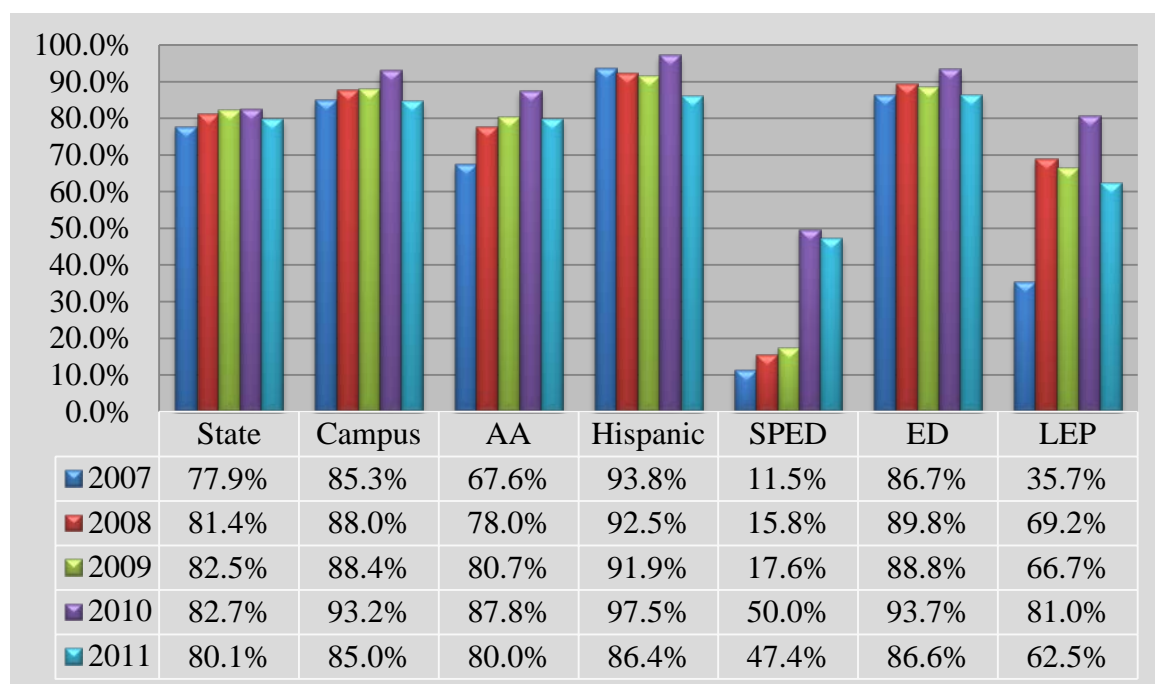


Figure 4-26 demonstrated the Recommended High School Program and Distinguished Program Graduates for the 2007-2011 school years for the State, Campus, African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Figure 4-26 indicated the recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates for the 2007-2009 school years as well as the 2010-2011 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade students in the “Advance Now” program.

Recommended High School Program and Distinguished Program Graduate results

The TEA reported data on recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates for the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2007-2011 school years. There was no data available for the 2011-2012 school year as these graduate rates were reported for the year preceding the current reporting year. The Campus group and Hispanic and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups outrank the State; African American was only 0.1% under the State. However, the Special Education and Limited English Proficient subgroups were lagging far behind the State at 32.7% and 17.6%, respectively, and possibly even more critical was the gap between the Campus and Special Education groups at 37.6%. In the first year of the “Advance Now” program, the Campus group and all subgroups had positive growth while in the second year of the program, all of the groups had a decline.

Enrollment

Figure 4-27 Enrollment, 2009-2012

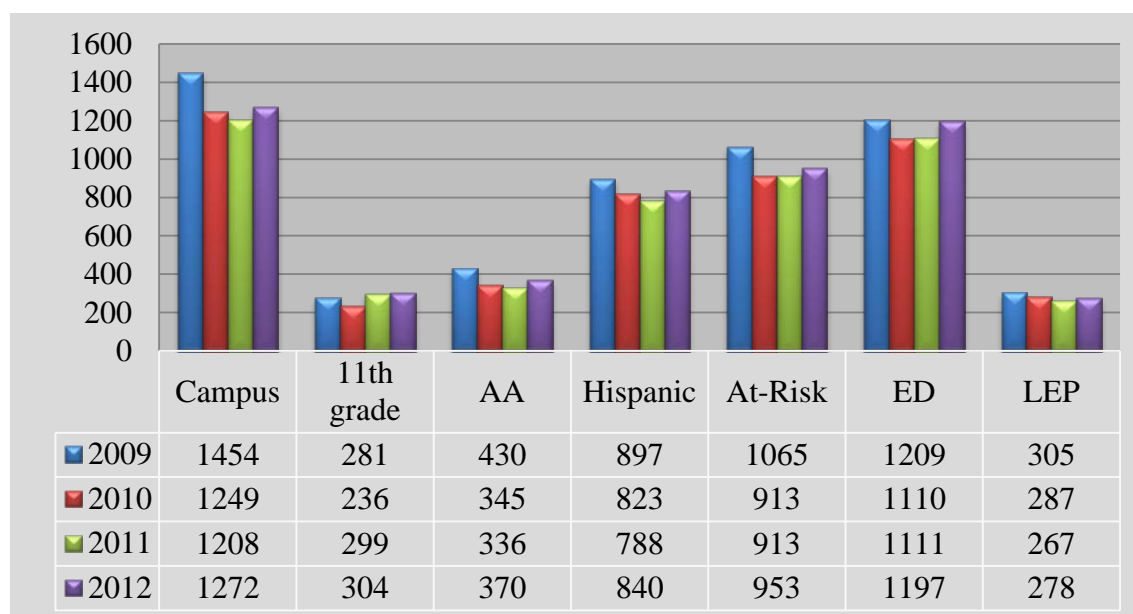


Figure 4-27 demonstrated the enrollment for the 2009-2012 school years for the Campus, all 11th grade students, African American, Hispanic, At-Risk, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient populations. Data for Special Education was not collected in AEIS reports. Figure 4-27 indicated the enrollment for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for 11th grade students in the “Advance Now” program.

Enrollment results

The TEA reported data on enrollment for the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2009-2012 school years. Enrollment decreased significantly on the campus between the 2009-2010 school years. The year that the “Advance Now” program began was 2010. Enrollment decreased in the 2010-2011 school year and increased in the 2011-2012 school year.

Mobility rates

Figure 4-28 Mobility rates, 2009-2012

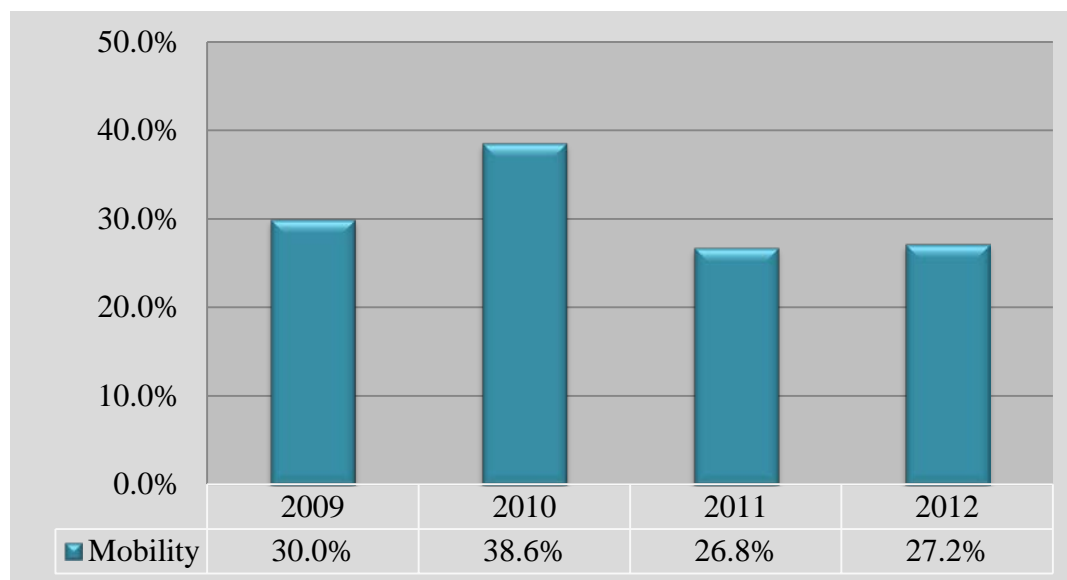


Figure 4-28 demonstrated the mobility for the 2009-2012 school years for the campus. Figure 4-28 indicated the mobility for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for the campus.

Mobility rates results

The TEA reported data on mobility for the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2009-2012 school years. Mobility increased in the 2009-2010 school year, the first year of the “Advance Now” program; however, decreased by 8.6% in the 2010-2011 school year. A slight increase in mobility was experienced in the 2011-2012 school year, the second year of the program.

Number of students per teacher

Figure 4-29 Number of students per teacher, 2009-2012

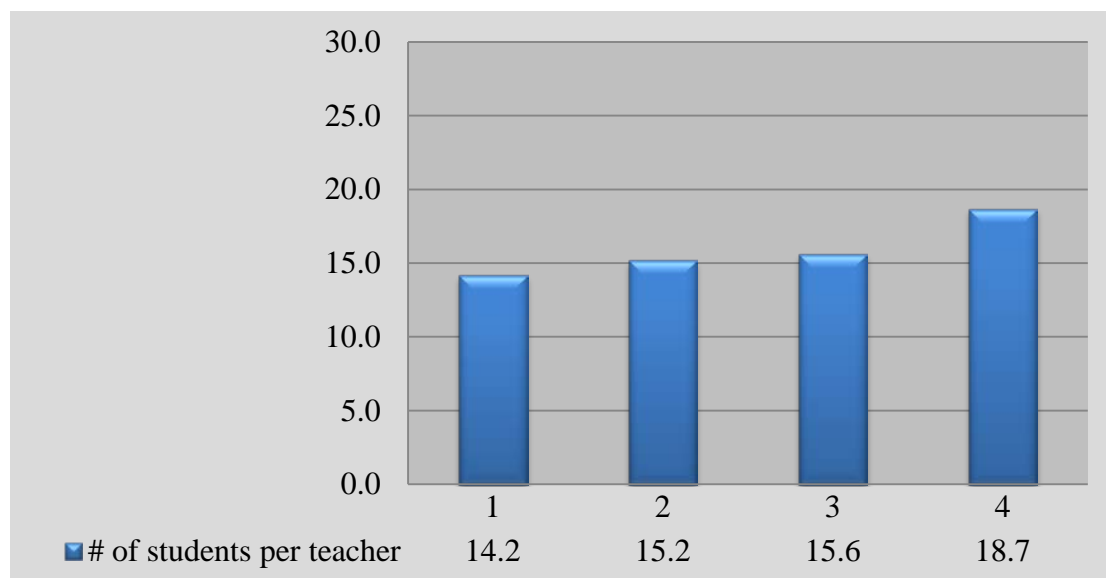


Figure 4-29 demonstrated the number of students per teacher for the 2009-2012 school years for the campus. Figure 4-29 indicated the number of students per teacher for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for the campus.

Number of students per teacher results

The TEA reported data on number of students per teacher results for the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2009-2012 school years. The number of students increased from year 1 (2009) through year 4 (2012) of the “Advance Now” program.

Number of graduates

Figure 4-30 Number of graduates, 2008-2011

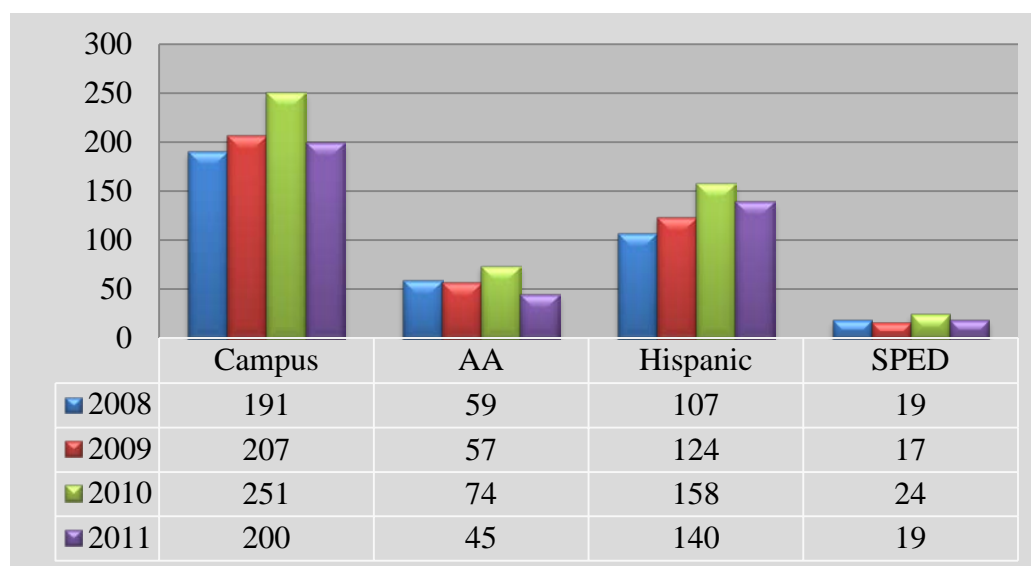


Figure 4-30 demonstrated the number of graduates for the 2008-2011 school years for the Campus, African American, Hispanic, and Special Education populations. Data was not disaggregated in AEIS for the Economically Disadvantaged and Limited English Proficient students. Figure 4-30 indicated the number of graduates for the 2009 school year as well as the 2010-2012 school years of the “Advance Now” program for the campus.

Number of graduates results

The TEA reported data on number of graduates results for the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2008-2011 school years. The number graduates increased overall for the Campus group between the 2008-2011 school years with the largest increase between the 2009-2010 school year, the benchmark and first year of the “Advance Now “program implementation. When compared with the total number of students enrolled for the 2009-2011 school years, there was a 14%, 20%, and 17% graduation rate. Although the

Campus grew in the 2010 school year while the enrollment decreased, there was still an increase of 6% in the graduation rates. However, during the next year, 2011, there was a decline in the population of the Campus group by 41 students and the graduation rate dropped to 17% of the total students enrolled.

Minimum, Recommended/Distinguished Advanced High School Plan rates

Figure 4-31 Minimum, Recommended/Distinguished Advanced High School Plan, 2008-2011

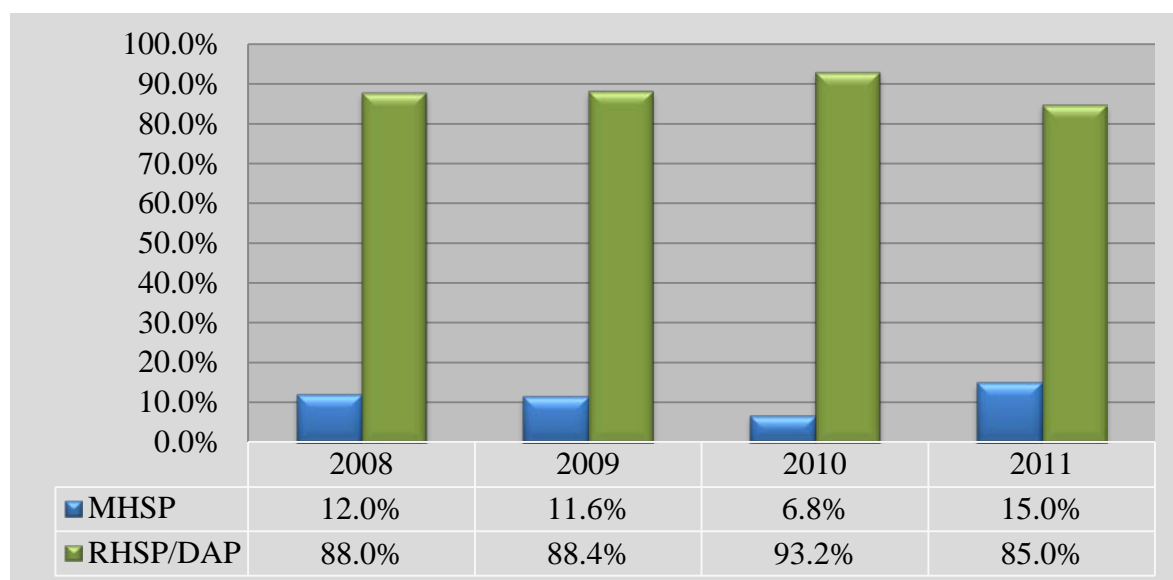


Figure 4-31 demonstrated the Minimum, Recommended/Distinguished Advanced High School Plan for the 2008-2011 school years for the campus. Figure 4-31 indicated the rates for the minimum, recommended/distinguished advanced high school plan rates for the 2008 school year as well as the 2009-2011 school years of the “Advance Now” program for the campus.

Minimum, Recommended/Distinguished Advanced High School Plan rates results

The TEA reported data on minimum, recommended/distinguished advanced high school plan rates for the 2009-2012 AEIS reports for the 2008-2011 school years. Rates

were not reported for the current reporting year. During the first year of the “Advance Now” program, the enrollment in the minimum high school plan decreased and recommended/distinguished advanced high school plan increased by 4.8%. During the following year, 2011-2012, the minimum high school plan increased to 15.0% and decreased to 85.0% for the recommended/distinguished advanced high school plan.

Total Operating Expenditures Funding

Figure 4-32 Total Operating Expenditures Funding, 2007-2011

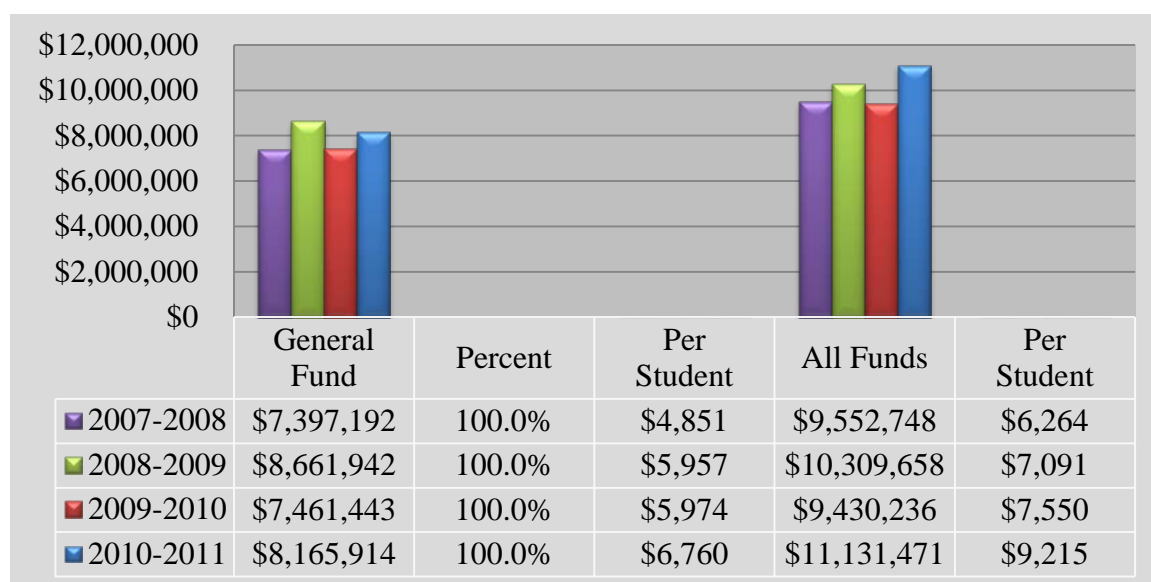


Figure 4-32 demonstrated the total operating expenditures funding for the 2008-2011 school years for the campus. Included in the data are the general fund amounts and all funds amounts as well as a per student allocation. Figure 4-32 indicated the total operating expenditures funding for the 2008-2009 school years as well as the 2010-2011 school years of the “Advance Now” program for the campus.

The TEA reported data on the total operating expenditures for the campus. The general fund for the school increased during the first year of the “Advanced Now”

program, the 2010-2011 school year, by \$704,471 in the general fund or \$1,665 per student.

Accelerated Education Funding

Figure 4-33 Accelerated Education Funding, 2007-2011

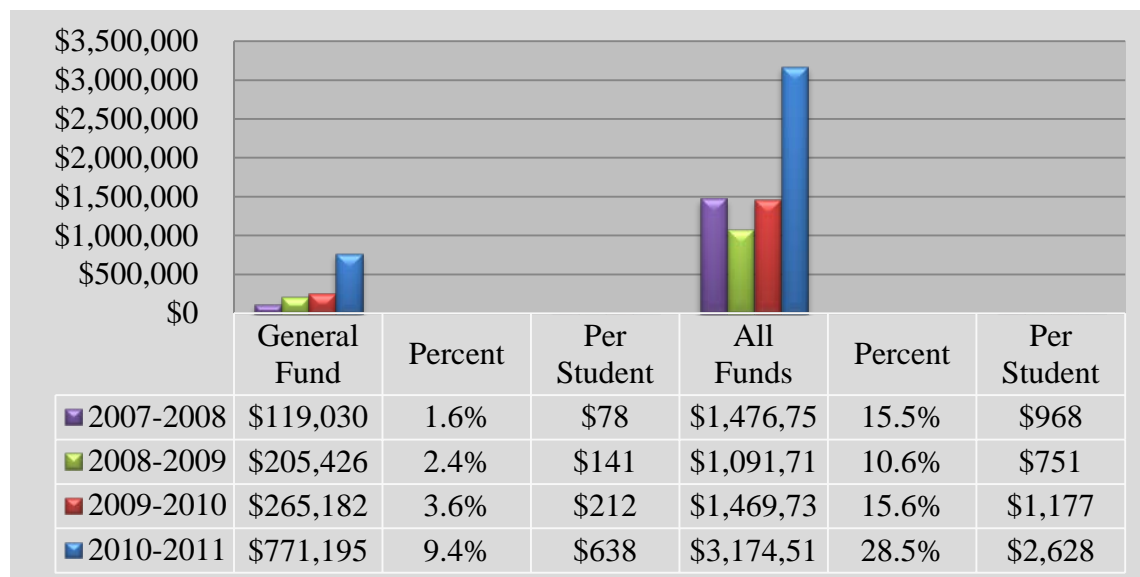


Figure 4-33 demonstrated the accelerated education funding for the 2008-2011 school years for the campus. Included in the data are the general fund amounts in accelerated education and an all funds amounts as well as a per student allocation. Figure 4-33 indicated the total operating expenditures funding for the 2008-2009 school years as well as the 2010-2011 school years of the “Advance Now” program for the campus.

The TEA reported data on the accelerated education funding for the campus. Funding was significantly increased for the first year of the “Advance Now” program in the 2010-2011 program as compared to the 2009-2010 school year. An increase of 5.8% or \$426 per student was allocated Accelerated Education Funding budget.

Chapter 5 examined the overview of the study, review of the results, implications for school leaders, and recommendations for further research.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

Student achievement became increasingly important in the area of education.

School leaders had to be informed regarding a myriad of data and when that data confirmed low-performance status, these leaders had to be prepared to face the reality of school reform and in particular, school turnaround models. A study of different models assisted school leaders in prescribing the right model for their particular school. With the looming cuts in education, school leaders had to think about strategies to assist ailing and underperforming schools. An analysis of different strategies assisted in these prescription models. Each turnaround model offered a different perspective on the implementation methods and strategies used within the model. This chapter includes an overview of the study, review of the results, conclusions drawn regarding the data, implications for school leadership, and recommendations for further research.

Overview of Study

The purpose of this study was to provide descriptive statistics of one turnaround high school's performance indicators on the state assessment program and provided implications for school district leaders. AEIS indicators were used for data in the study. The goal of the study was to not only analyze the achievement data but also other indicators that were impacted by the Advance Now turnaround model. The five research questions that were examined in this study were:

1. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on math state assessments

for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data?

2. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students over a three year time period on science state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to previous achievement?

3. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students over a three year time period on English language arts state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to previous achievement?

4. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students over a three year time period on social studies state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to previous achievement?

5. What are the differences in other AEIS data (attendance rates, annual dropout rates, four-year completion rates, advanced course/dual enrollment completion, recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates, the Texas Success Initiative (TSI)– English Language Arts (ELA) and Math progress, average SAT scores, ELA and Math College-Ready graduates, enrollment, mobility, number of students per teacher, number of graduates,

minimum high school plan/recommended/distinguished high school plan graduates, and total operating expenditures funding and accelerated education funding) for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010-2012 for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 AEIS data?

Discussion of Results

1. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 on math state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 achievement data?

An overall progress review for TAKS and TAKS-A students indicated that all groups made gains over the previous achievement period. The most significant gain was the Limited English Proficient students with a 28% gain; however, for the 2011-2012 school year, the Limited English Proficient achievement level was only 57%. Gains during the three year period for all students, with the exception of the African American subgroup, were not steadily increasing, and rather fluctuated during the three year time period studied. ELA commended performance indicated that performance was hindered not only for the school but also for the state. All groups decreased in the areas of Commended Performance with the exception of the Hispanic subgroup which had a 2% gain over the three year period. When comparing the 11th grade students to the state, there was an average 18.66% difference in the achievement of the two groups. The Campus group lagged behind the state in this performance area. ELA TAKS-M

demonstrated a negative performance in the Campus group and all subgroups, with the exception of Limited English Proficient, which had a 3%, increase overall. There were no statistics for three of the groups: African American, Hispanic, and Limited English Proficient for the 2011-2012 school year. The African American, Special Education , and Economically Disadvantaged groups all had negative progress of 31% overall.

2. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students over a three year time period on science state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to previous achievement?

Overall math progress for TAKS and TAKS-A students was positive for the Campus group and the subgroups. The most substantial progress was made in the Special Education subgroup with a 31% increase over the three year time period. Limited English Proficient progress was close at a 28% increase. The African American, Hispanic, and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups had increases of 7%, 18%, and 11% respectively. Math commended performance also increased for the Campus group and all subgroups. The African American, Hispanic, and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups had a 7%, 12%, and 9% increase, respectively; however, Special Education and Limited English Proficient subgroups only had a 1% and 3% gain over the three year time period. The state experienced a 6% decline in the three year period. TAKS-M students demonstrated significant progress in the three year time period. The Limited English Proficient subgroup increased by 63% in TAKS-M results, the most significant increase in the study. The African American subgroup increased 29% in the two year period (there was no data for the 2011-2012 school year); the Hispanic subgroup

increased 38%, Special Education , 37%; and Economically Disadvantaged, 29% while the state had a 3% decrease in the TAKS-M math progress.

3. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students over a three year time period on English language arts state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to previous achievement?

TAKS and TAKS-A students had a slight increase in all groups except the Special Education students. Progress for all other groups increased: African American, 9%; Hispanic, 9%, Economically Disadvantaged; 7%; and Limited English Proficient 7%. However, although Limited English Proficient students increased, their progress was 69% in the 2011-2012; Special Education students had 60%, down 11% from the previous school year. Science commended performance increased for all groups except Special Education. Special Education had a 2% decrease. The groups increased as follows: African American, 5%; Hispanic, 9%; Economically Disadvantaged, 8%; and Limited English Proficient, 4%. None of the groups met the state average of 22%, which was a 4% decrease over the three year period. TAKS-M science students showed minimal progress. Data was sporadic for the TAKS-M science students. There were only two subgroups that had the complete three years of data, Special Education and Economically Disadvantaged students. Special Education and Economically Disadvantaged students' averages increased over the three year time period by 10% and 2%, respectively; however, they were far below the state level of 55%, at 30% and 22%, respectively. For the data that was reported for Hispanic students, there was no 2008-2009 school year data

but for the following three years of data, there was a 43% decrease in the performance average.

4. What are the differences in performance measures for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students over a three year time period on social studies state assessments for students under the turnaround school model as compared to previous achievement?

Social Studies progress for TAKS and TAKS-A students showed slight increases in all groups with the exception of Special Education which had a 4% decrease. State averages were high at an average of 98%. The Hispanic and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups met the same percentage passing as the state by increasing their scores by 3% and 4%, respectively. Limited English Proficient had the highest gains of any group with a 10% increase to 81%; however, this lagged behind the state average by 17%. African American had encouraging rates of 96%. Special Education students averaged 84%. In the area of commended performance, the Campus group and all subgroups, except for Special Education, had increases in performance. Interestingly, Special Education scores had increased in both of the previous year, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, but declined in the 2011-2012 school year by 5%. In general, the campus lagged behind the state averages for commended performance; however, Special Education and Limited English Proficient indicated averages of 9% and 14%, respectively. These fell 42% and 37% below the state level. The data for TAKS-M social studies students was sparse for the African American and Limited English Proficient population. The African American students only had one year of data and the

Limited English Proficient students only had two years of data out of the three year period. The Campus group showed a 17% decrease in scores over the three year period. Of the three years of data, and without a baseline for the 2008-2009 school year, the Hispanic subgroup had a regression of 10%. The Special Education and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups had 17% and 22% decreases on TAKS-M, respectively.

5. What are the differences in other AEIS data (attendance rates, annual dropout rates, four-year completion rates, advanced course/dual enrollment completion, recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates, the Texas Success Initiative (TSI)– English Language Arts (ELA) and Math progress, average SAT scores, ELA and Math College-Ready graduates, enrollment, mobility, number of students per teacher, number of graduates, minimum high school plan/recommended/distinguished high school plan graduates, and total operating expenditures funding and accelerated education funding) for 11th –grade African American, Hispanic, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students from 2010- 2012 for students under the turnaround school model as compared to 2009 AEIS data?

Attendance rates for the campus and groups were well below the state average. Although there had been increases in every group throughout the three year period, there remained a significant area that could not only increase student achievement but also funding for the campus. There was a difference of 4.4% between the state and Campus groups. Results were very similar for the other subgroups.

The annual dropout rate improved for all groups in the three year period; only three subgroups had an average less than the state: Hispanic, Special Education, and

Economically Disadvantaged. A focus for improvement in this area would be for the African American and Limited English Proficient subgroups with a 3.1% and 4.8%, respectively.

The four-year completion rates should have also been a focus for the Campus group as well as all subgroups, which were well below the district average of 81.2%. The only subgroup that was close to the District was the Economically Disadvantaged subgroup at 80.2%. The campus should have collaborated with the feeder pattern middle school to ensure that these students had a graduation plan and were monitored throughout the completion process.

A positive for the campus was the advanced course/dual enrollment completion rates; the Campus group and African American, Hispanic, and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups doubled or tripled. However, there is a significant disparity for Special Education at 7.2%. Limited English Proficient actually declined by 15.40%. A plan should have been set in place to encourage and support the Special Education group for more participation and an initiative should have been put in place for the Limited English Proficient students.

The recommended high school program and distinguished program graduates increased for all groups with the exception of the Hispanic subgroup. Special Education and Limited English Proficient subgroups increased significantly with growth of 35.9% and 36.8%; however, the groups' overall rates were 47.4% and 62.5% respectively by the end of the 2010-2011 school year.

The TSI – Math progress was almost double the ELA progress. Overall, the increases in math were as follows: Campus group, 20%; African American, 26%;

Hispanic, 22%; Economically Disadvantaged, 19%; and Limited English Proficient, 13%. Special Education had a decrease of 23%. The state average was 73% with 17% growth over the three year time period; however, all rates were lower than the state average in math. TSI-ELA demonstrated increases in all areas except Limited English Proficient. The TSI-ELA like the TSI-Math lagged behind the state with only one group, Hispanic, meeting the same average of 61%. The Limited English Proficient group was less than 1%.

SAT scores for the campus declined overall for all groups reported: Campus, African American, and Hispanic. There is no dissemination for Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficient students. The state also had a decline of 16 points; however, overall, the campus had a decline of 64 points; African American, 81 points; and Hispanic, 48 points.

In regards to college-ready graduates, the campus had increases in all groups for ELA. The AEIS data reports back to 2006-2007 for 2008-2009 school year. Taking all data into account, there was a 30% increase on the campus for the five years documented in the reports. African American increased 40%; Hispanic, 30%; Special Education 28.5%; Economically Disadvantaged, 34%; and Limited English Proficient, 6.5%. Math had lower progress rates than ELA; the Campus group increased 16%; African American, 14%; Hispanic, 19%; Special Education, 6.5%; and Economically Disadvantaged, 16%. Limited English Proficient had a decrease of 13%.

Overall campus enrollment declined by 182 students over the three year period. There was an increase in 11th grade students by 23 but a decline in all other groups. The budget analysis showed that although there was a decline in enrollment which would

have led to more than \$1,000,000 in decreased funding, the “Advance Now” program supplemented that loss with additional funding. Funding information was not available as to the amount of additional funding that was awarded to each school. However, an example of the increase was noted in the Accelerated Funding budget allocated to the school. There was an increase of \$652,165 over the three year period.

Mobility for the campus was high. The highest mobility rate was 38.6% in the first year of the program, 2009-2010. In the subsequent year, there was an 11.8% decrease in mobility and the 2012 school year only showed a slight increase of 0.4%.

The number of students per teacher increased during the three year period from 14.2 to 18.7. In one of the first meta-analysis of class size, Glass and Smith (1979) found that small class size contributes positively to student achievement. However, the opposite seemed to be true for the campus as well as all groups, with the exception of Special Education and Limited English Proficient, showed increases in most subjects. Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain (2005) concluded in their longitudinal study that smaller class sizes had little or no effect after grade 5. Further research into this area, using specific data for the demographic groups, may support achievement. The number of graduates for the three year period increased for the campus although there was a decline in enrollment.

Conclusion of Results

Student achievement in turnaround schools seemed to be very unpredictable especially at a campus with mobility as high as 27.2%, attendance rates that fell below the state average, and annual dropout rates that were, for certain groups, as high as 3.1% to 4.8%. Targeted school improvement included many of the factors that were guidelines

in the “Advance Now” program. However, there should have also been additional practices embedded within the five tenets of: (1) an effective principal and effective teachers; (2) more instructional time; (3) use of data to drive instruction; (4) in-school tutoring; and (5) culture of high expectations (Houston ISD, n.d.).

No one would argue that the first tenet was precise, an effective principal and effective teacher in each school. A strong professional development program should have been in place for these leaders and teachers as well as a mentor support system. There were no indications regarding a continuing professional development model for these neither TL leaders nor teachers.

Professional development was selected by the principals, who were new to the campus, with at least half of a staff that was new. In the Mid-Year Report (2011, p. 7), professional development focused on classroom management for selected teachers, as well as topics selected by the principal for Saturday trainings, such as, “student engagement and motivation, differentiation for all students, use of daily assessments and checking for understanding and planning for effective learning.” It was unknown how many campuses participated in these professional developments or if they were campus specific. Figure 5-1 demonstrates a framework that the Public Impact for The Chicago Public Education Fund (2007, p. 15) that was developed for teacher leadership development that TL could utilize when creating a network within their building. These types of models focused on a continuous improvement method rather than short-term solutions.



Figure 5-1 Fast Cycle of Actions in a Turnaround

Teacher turnover spiked to 53% in the “Advance Now” program over the summer of 2010 (Fryer, 2011, p. 9). Participating teachers received stipends for the first two years that they remained with the program. Jacob and Ludwig (2008) reported that bonuses for teachers in hard-to-staff schools could not eliminate the disproportions in educational results alone.

Reeves (2005) stated that consistent nonfiction writing assessments in every subject will lead to the greatest gains in achievement and equity (p. 65-66). The LUD could have enveloped their curriculum in such practices to promote achievement and equity for the Special Education and Limited English Proficient subgroups. Reeves (2006) reiterated that “one of the most formidable practices associated with student achievement is the practice of nonfiction writing” (p. 83). According to Reeves (2006), “the impact of nonfiction writing on student achievement is manifested not only in language arts but also in math, science, and social studies” (p.84). Graham and Perin (2007) identified 11 specific elements that will help improve the writing abilities of all

students that included writing for content learning. The LUD should have taken a more prescriptive approach in programming of professional development for these turnaround schools. The National Center for Education Statistics (2000) suggested that there were four indicators to ensure excellent teachers: high academic skills, required to teach in the field in which they received their training, have more than a few years of experience, and participate in high-quality induction and professional development programs.

The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (2009) produced research that stated that one of the six quality indicators of high-achieving schools was effective instruction. One of the criteria under effective instruction was the necessity for teachers to participate in professional development that was related to their classroom needs, based on practice rather than theory, and continuously monitored and supported. Hawley and Valli (2006) conducted several syntheses of current literature and indicated that professional development that is high quality should exude many different elements, such as, provided a strong foundation, integrated and data driven, should have been responsive to the needs of the particular teacher, should be school-based, should have been continual with follow-ups, and teachers should have been allowed to evaluate the professional development value and how well it correlated to student success.

Fryer (2011) stated that the triple-difference analysis that was completed for tutoring was “highly effective in increasing achievement”; however, the double dosing were “all statistically zero except for a large positive effect in eighth grade math” (p.27). Effective best practices for tutorials could have been garnered by teachers from professional development that may have not only impacted student achievement but also decreased many of the other AEIS areas that were impacted by the turnaround school

process. Denham and Lieberman (1980) classified four basic types of time: allocated (amount of time teachers allocate for instructional activities), instructional (proportion of allocated time that is used solely for instruction), engaged (instructional time in which students are engaged in learning), and academic success and productivity (students are meeting the academic standard or goal by performing tasks that are both meaningful and relevant to the learning). Denham and Lieberman were proponents for increasing instructional time so that it would allow for a small-group pullout instructional design. The “Advance Now” program did just that for Math with their Math Fellows program. The programming for Read 180 increased some ELA scores but for the most part, did not have the same effect as the Math Fellows program on overall increased scores.

In regards to utilizing data to drive instruction, a specific focus should have been placed on the following groups in the following areas:

Table 5-1 *Areas of Focus for Content Areas*

	ELA	Math	Science	Social Studies
TAKS	SPED, LEP	SPED, LEP	SPED, LEP	SPED, LEP
Commended Performance	SPED, LEP	AA, SPED, LEP	AA, SPED, LEP	SPED, LEP
TAKS-M	AA, Hispanic, SPED, ED, LEP		Hispanic, SPED, ED	Hispanic, SPED, ED, LEP

By building a positive culture and climate within the school system, maintaining effective principal and effective teachers in each school, an ability to devote more monies

to increased instructional time and in-school tutoring, and a continual use of data to drive instruction, the “Advance Now” program should have built a good foundational beginning.

Two student groups that showed little growth were the Limited English Proficient and Special Education students. In almost every category, there was a gap between the progress of the Campus group and other subgroups. The SAT scores were also lacking for the campus as compared with the state. All SAT scores had decreased during the “Advance Now” program. Although the increases in college-ready graduates were impressive, there was work to be done to close the gap in achievement for all groups. The Campus group and subgroups lagged behind the state in all groups. Enrollment was another factor that happened to be critical to school success and operations. Enrollment affected school funding and decreases in school funding eventually led to decreases in programs that benefited all students.

Attendance was poor at the turnaround campus. Although attendance increased in the Campus group and all of the subgroups, attendance was far below the state level of 95.7% with some groups falling 5.1% below that rate. One of the criteria that should have been addressed in the “Advance Now” program was the area of attendance. Gottfried (2010) found that “students with better attendance have higher GPAs and standardized test scores” than those who had poor attendance. Allensworth and Easton (2007) confirmed that data should be used to keep students “on-track” (p.2). One of the crucial pieces of their study focused on the need to continuously track attendance data and how attendance links to dropouts. The researchers concluded, “Attendance is the

largest predictor of course failure”. A specific and targeted focus on increasing attendance may have helped raise student achievement.

The annual dropout rate decreased in the Campus group, as well as, all subgroups. However, the numbers for the African American and Limited English Proficient subgroups were all elevated at 3.1% and 4.8% respectively. These students were major minority groups for the turnaround campus. The campus should have developed a specific plan to decrease all dropout rates but particularly focusing on these groups since they had the highest percentage rates in 2006-2007.

Implications for School Leaders

“Advance Now” included five tenets: (1) an effective principal and effective teachers; (2) more instructional time; (3) use of data to drive instruction; (4) in-school tutoring; and (5) culture of high expectations (Houston ISD, n.d.).

The implications for turnaround school leadership were situated within three main areas: actions, behaviors, and mindset. In order for turnaround schools to have been successful, an effective leader had to have been in place. Turnaround leadership encompassed many complexities. A turnaround leader (TL), and those who hired and supervised these individuals, had to comprehend these complexities and to have been able to identify strengths and potential limiters. No one individual had the fortitude to maintain all of these complexities without a support system that was based on a clear vision, autonomy, district collaboration, and a framework. In order to support turnaround leadership, districts had to: (1) foster the leaders’ self-confidence in their capacity to sustain continual improvement and successes; (2) communicate a shared vision of high expectations for all groups of students and have a strategic planning framework; and (3)

hold district leaders and staff accountable for collaboration, successful creation of high-performing teams, and data-driven results.

How did TLs impact continual improvement through their an alignment of their behaviors and actions? Hassel and Hassel (2009) recommended six key TL actions to be considered: (1) focus on early wins; (2) break organizational norms; (3) push rapid-fire experimentation; (4) get the right staff, right the remainder; (5) drive decisions with open-air data; and (6) lead a turnaround campaign.

Leaders should have coupled these recommendations with the Situational Leadership model (Figure 5-2) in order to support continual school improvement.

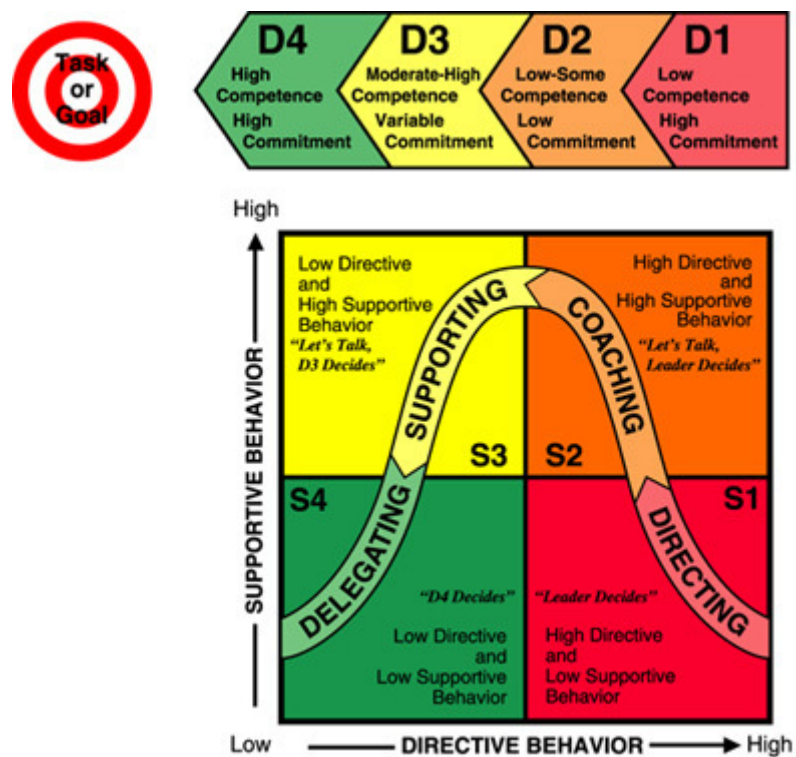


Figure 5-2 Martin's Modified Version of The Situational Leadership Model

An imperative for these turnaround schools was that the TL had to be supported from the top to the bottom of the organization. If there was any instability in the stakeholders, the leader would have eventually been unsuccessful in the turnaround

efforts. How could a TL have an effect on instability in the school climate? A TL continually revisited the vision, held staff accountable for results with high expectations, created a culture and climate of high expectations, communicated with both district- and campus-level staff and ensured that communication was two-fold. In other words, the TL had to not only be based in actions and behaviors but also had to have the growth mindset of a TL. Dweck (2006) focused on the idea of mindset by defining two types of mindsets: fixed and growth (Table 5-2).

Table 5-2 *Sample Indicators of Dweck's Fixed Mindset vs. Growth Mindset*

Indicators	Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset
Qualities	Fixed	True potential is unknowable
Learning	Desire to prove what they already know over and over	Deep desire for more knowledge
Feel accomplished	When they don't make mistakes	When they try and try again (even with mistakes) and accomplish their goal
Feedback	Not open to receiving	Open and will request
Setbacks	Will look for someone else to blame externally; will internally, blame themselves	Will look for what went wrong; will try to figure it out and try again; continual improvement toward goals

Effective principals and teachers would have had to have the growth mindset illustrated in Table 5-2 above in order to achieve the things that a turnaround school

would face. A TL had to have a growth mindset. Dweck (2006, p. 21) stated, “People in a growth mindset don’t just seek challenge, they thrive on it.” Dweck (2006) gave examples of growth mindsets throughout of Jaime Escalante, Christopher Reeves, Marva Collins, and even Benjamin Bloom, who developed Bloom’s Taxonomy, as well as many others that had growth mindsets.

A capable TL was the “instructional leader” of their campus. As the instructional leader, the TL had to have a toolkit that effectually promoted the continual school improvement process, such as, effective walkthrough strategies, awareness of alignment of standards to effective instruction, and an understanding of rigor and engagement. An outside-of-the-box mentality where the TL might break organizational norms in order to create a solution should also be allowed. Marzano, Waters, & McNulty (2005) performed a meta-analysis of several high-quality studies on effective leadership and found 21 principal responsibilities that correlated with high academic achievement.

School systems had to focus on finding individuals that could meet all of these requirements. In order for public school systems to bring a successful TL into their organizations, there were recommended standards for hiring these individuals. Steiner and Barrett (2012) recommended that school systems focus on the following: (1) outstandingly effective leadership, (2) a clear vision with an ability to help make that vision a reality, as well as (3) understanding the competencies of the job. Public Impact (2008) developed a selection toolkit to help districts with the selection of a TL. There were two levels of designations for these competencies for school administrators: critical (achievement and impact/influence) and secondary (monitoring/directiveness, team leadership, and self-confidence). Public Impact designates a Fast Cycle of Actions in

Turnaround model (Figure 5-1). What happened after an effective TL was found was as critical as hiring that person. The effective TL had to be allowed the autonomy to work within the district's framework, while at the same time, aligning both capital and human capital resources. A TL also had to be allowed to make the difficult choices regarding removal of under-performing employees or employees that no longer fit into the culture and climate of the school setting and also been given the authority to hire school staff. Districts had to ask themselves if they were willing to provide the TL the autonomy, flexibility, and assistance required to move these schools forward. The TL had to epitomize the commitment to believe that all students could move beyond minimum expectations and achieve high goals, believe in their ability to impact and influence the staff, provide monitoring/directiveness, team leadership, and exude self-confidence.

The district leadership had the responsibility to provide the tools and resources necessary for the turnaround along with developing and continually maintaining a fluid and comprehensive strategic plan. To have been considered a complete plan, effectual resources had to be included, such as, a superior-quality data management plan that links campus practices to student achievement and the district leadership mastered proficiency to assist the schools in utilizing the data efficiently and in a timely manner and for prescriptive programs for students that were in need of assistance. The district willingness to provide professional development for the TL and an effective mentor that supported initiatives within the turnaround school were necessary for the turnaround to be considered effective.

A major component of the turnaround plan resided in effective top leadership, i.e., the school board and superintendent. If these two entities were not cohesive, with the

same actions, behaviors, and mindset that support the turnaround process, the process could have easily failed. Inclusion of the school board and its involvement in the school improvement process was a critical component. The LUD's school board clearly supported the superintendent in the "Advance Now" program. Their support was unwavering. Clear goals and expectations were delineated from the school board to the superintendent that maintained a clear and achievable purpose – student achievement. With a continuous line of clarity from the school board down the organizational structure to the key stakeholders, a unified culture and vision could have been achieved. How could the school board have maintained a focus on the districts' priorities and values? A process for self-accountability was in place for the superintendent. There was an annual review process that included the components of the "Advance Now" program. School boards should have done the same that was expected for the superintendent, school leaders, and campus staff. They would have had to focus on the strategic framework, mission, vision, goals, and effective practices and develop an accountability system for themselves. What would have happened when the self-accountability deems that one of these is not working? The school board would have been able to address the area in clear communication with the superintendent and the TL. Time was of the essence in the turnaround model. A focus should have been on quick wins.

What about central office? Arne Duncan (2005) said it best as CEO of Chicago Public Schools, "We're going to flip the pyramid in [Chicago Public Schools] this year. When I say flip the pyramid, I'm saying that the job of the central office is to support the schools, not manage them. Principals run schools and we're here to make their job easier and help them succeed in the only place that matters – in the classroom." (p. 1) A shift in

the actions, behaviors, and mindset of the central office staff was critical. In the past, central office managed the schools. In the paradigm shift, central office staff had a heavier focus on curriculum, instruction, and supporting the schools. Within the district organizational structure, more time and resources should have been allocated to the under-performing schools. Central office staff should be visible in the schools and should actively and frequently visit the schools. Key to this paradigm shift was delivering professional development, building capacity to serve all grade levels, and providing student support services.

Creating teacher leadership should have also been a critical component of the school turnaround. A TL had to begin to develop teacher leadership within the system which would, in turn, build a positive climate and culture. How could schools systems provide flexibility for all of these things? School systems had to realize that leaders must be allowed to arrange the course for the turnaround. Fairchild and DeMary (2011) focused on the mindset of the TL and developed a 2-S model that incorporates Systems and Stakeholders and a 3-E model that incorporates Environment, Executive, and Execution. Application of business concepts to the education model was woven throughout the book. All five of the areas of the mindset model focused on key concepts in the business world. By applying these models, a TL could have utilized readily-available business management tools, such as, 90-day plans, project management, communication plans, etc.

Finally, districts had to allow the TL to have ownership and exude trust in the TL and their behaviors, actions, and mindset. Serva, Fuller, & Mayer (2005) assert that trust is a significant predictor for risk-taking behaviors. Bryk and Schneider (2002)

maintained that social trust among teachers, parents, and school leaders improved much of the routine work of schools and were a key resource for reform.

Implications for Further Research

- Many future research opportunities could transpire as a result of this research study. With budget woes, the federal sequestration of funds, the lack of a future viable workforce, among many other educational springs, school turnaround and its varying degrees of implementation and methods should be a fountain for researching the best way to utilize available funds to decrease the dropout rate and increase the future workforce while maintaining sound fiscal responsibilities.
- Further research may include a qualitative approach that includes interviews with the TL, staff, and key stakeholders. If it is a turnaround school, interview questions that were used in deciding which staff would remain at the campus and a rubric, if utilized, could be closely examined.
- A thorough analysis of different instructional programs, such as Read 180, or the math tutoring program and the implementation, methodologies, and results could add to current research on the turnaround models.
- If the district or state utilized value-added data, that information could also be useful when determining whether a turnaround school was effective or ineffective.
- An increase in graduation rates combined with the increased number of students per teacher led to an interesting area in which more research might increase these scores for the campus.

- Also, effective incentives for increasing attendance rates in the high school setting should be researched.
- Any of the five tenets for the “Advance Now” program could be researched as a separate research project or an analysis of the entire “Advance Now” program with all 20 schools included would add to the research on turnaround schools.
- Interviews with students and parents would allow another insight into the “Advance Now” program.
- Analysis of value-added data would add to the AEIS information that was currently available as these analyses include the Stanford Achievement Test information.

Conclusions

School turnaround had been a key buzzword for several presidential administrations. Leaders had a responsibility to look at failing schools and figure out how to turn them around effectively and efficiently. Two items that were not addressed with long-range plans in the “Advance Now” program were replication and sustainability. Many companies and nonprofit organizations supported the sustainability efforts of the LUD; however, the LUD’s future planning needed to solve the issues regarding replicating and sustaining such expensive programs if the programs prove successful in the coming years.

The “Advance Now” campus should include an initiative for Special Education and Limited English Proficient students. The subgroups seemed to be “falling through the cracks” at this particular school. Most of their scores were increasing; however, the current rate of success was minimal.

A continued focus on high expectations along with specific SAT prep courses, teacher professional development, classroom strategies, and multiple testing opportunities may have helped increase the SAT scores for the campus. Specifically, there seemed to be a need for best practice research as SAT scores were diminishing for the campus. A focus on differentiation in instruction could have increased SAT scores, commended performance scores, general assessment scores, and the college-readiness for students, as well as, equipping subgroups in their education.

The Limited English Proficient subgroup had a poor showing of 7% in ELA for college-ready graduates and both the Special Education and Limited English Proficient subgroups had 7% for Math for college-ready graduates while the African American subgroup had a dismal 36% in Math. A continual focus should have been placed on supporting these students for college-readiness; more progress needed to be made than was currently being made with the Math Fellows program.

The campus should market itself as a turnaround school and focus on the positive outcomes of the TL program in order to attract potential students and retain those that were currently enrolled. Currently, there is no information on the campus' website that indicates that they were a part of the program. A benefit of marketing would be including the gains that had been made in specific categories.

The campus should focus on retention of students. Although it could be difficult in an area that is riddled with crime, gangs, and apartment dwellers, a compact could be made with the local police station, apartment managers, and business owners to decrease the mobility and gain a sense of community surrounding the school. Parental

involvement should have been encouraged. Other schools that were successful, with the same demographics and population area, should have been visited for program modeling.

Attendance was less than desirable for a turnaround campus. One of the areas of focus should have been on having the students in attendance at the campus. Students could not be expected to learn the material when they were not there. In a turnaround situation, every moment should be counted as critical. How was the information that was missed disseminated back to the students? It appears that there may not have been much in the way of spiraling the curriculum for the students or utilizing programs to readdress missed information or objectives that were lacking.

There had been a steady decline in the dropout rate for the Campus group and the subgroups. However, it appeared that the African American and Limited English Proficient subgroups were not a focus during the data years studied. The African American subgroup had a 3.1% and the Limited English Proficient subgroup had a 4.8% in the 2009-2010 school year. The annual dropout rate should continue to be a focus on this campus with particular attention to the African American and Limited English Proficient populations. In the years following the “Advance Now” turnaround model, the campus should focus on decreasing the dropout rate for these subgroups.

In regards to a culture of high expectations for all, information available on the LUD’s website, as of March 2013, the following were the goals for a culture of high expectations: (1) all children will perform at or above grade level; (2) all high school students will take at least one college-level course; and (3) every student will graduate from high school college-ready. Data was not available for any of these goals. Up-to-

date information that was made public would be helpful in knowing how the campus was progressing in regards to these three expectations.

With the amount of money that had been invested in the “Advance Now” program, it appeared that there was some increased performance; however, it also appeared that many of the subgroups did not respond well to the “Advance Now” program. In particular, the Special Education and Limited English Proficient subgroups had decreases in many of the areas that were studied. For groups that did not make up a significant amount of the school’s population, it appeared that there was a lack of on these groups. In order to be a well-rounded program that responded to all students, achievement should have been equivalent for all students. In regards to the goals that were outlined in the previous paragraph, it did not appear that the campus was meeting the expectations of any of the published goals of (1) all children will perform at or above grade level nor (3) every student will graduate from high school college-ready. The data seemed to prove otherwise for many of the groups on the campus.

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Appendix A

Approval from the University of Houston Human Subject Research Committee

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

DIVISION OF RESEARCH

Ms. Brenda Arteaga
c/o Ms. Julie Fernandez
Curriculum and Instruction

Dear Ms. Brenda Arteaga,

Based upon your request for exempt status, an administrative review of your research proposal entitled "A Study of a Turnaround High School's Academic Performance Indicators and Implications for School Leaders" was conducted on April 11, 2013.

At that time, your request for exemption under **Category 4** was approved pending modification of your proposed procedures/documents.

The changes you have made adequately respond to the identified contingencies. As long as you continue using procedures described in this project, you do not have to reapply for review. * Any modification of this approved protocol will require review and further approval. Please contact me to ascertain the appropriate mechanism.

If you have any questions, please contact Alicia Vargas at (713) 743-9215.
Sincerely yours,



Kirstin Rochford, MPH, CIP, CPIA Director, Research Compliance

*Approvals for exempt protocols will be valid for 5 years beyond the approval date. Approval for this project will expire **April 1, 2018**. If the project is completed prior to this date, a final report should be filed to close the protocol. If the project will continue after this date, you will need to reapply for approval if you wish to avoid an interruption of your data collection.

Protocol Number: 13404-EX

316 E. Cullen Building Houston, TX 77204-2015 (713) 743-9204
Fax: (713) 743-9577
COMMITTEES FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

