

2017-18 Dallas ISD On-Track Indicator

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EA18-153-4

At-a-Glance

A high school diploma is rapidly becoming the minimum qualification for most occupations in the American economy. Consequently, addressing graduation and dropout rates has taken on greater urgency in school districts across the country. The first year of high school is increasingly recognized as a transition period that may be “make-or-break” for many students in terms of eventual high school success and graduation.

Purpose and Methods of the Evaluation

The Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) developed an On-Track indicator in 1999 to gauge whether students in their first year of high school were making enough progress to have a reasonable expectation of graduating in four years. Unlike other indicators, it provides information about progress and performance from a relatively early point in a student’s high school career.

Dallas Independent School District developed its own On-Track indicator in 2007-08. From 2009-10 through 2011-12, the Dallas On-Track Indicator was incorporated into the Principal Appraisal System.

Like the Chicago indicator, the Dallas indicator combines two factors: the number of credits earned during freshman year and the number of semester Fs in core subjects. A student is considered to be On-Track at the end of ninth grade if he or she has met both of the following criteria:

- The student has accumulated five full course credits, and
- The student has no more than one semester F (that is, one-half of a full credit) in a core subject (English, mathematics, science, or social studies).

The model was developed using data for students entering high school for the first time in 2003-04. The cohort consisted of 8,008 first-time, regular education ninth graders who were enrolled for the full school year. The cohort was 35 percent African American, 58 percent Hispanic, and 16 percent Limited English Proficient.

Analyses were conducted in June, 2008, to construct a baseline measure districtwide. Only non-special education grade nine students who were enrolled in the same school for both fall and spring semesters were included. Results were calculated only for schools receiving an accountability rating; alternative schools were excluded from the analyses.

In 2011-12, On-Track documentation was improved, as new state testing requirements necessitated identification of all first-time ninth grade students, and this information was made available through the Chancery student data system.

Results

Figure 1 shows freshman On-Track percentages for all district high schools, for all schools other than magnets (i.e., comprehensive and Early College high schools), and for magnets only, for the 2008-09 through 2017-18 school years. The overall On-Track rate for 2018 (79.7%) was higher than in any previous year for which the rate was calculated. The On-Track rate for magnet schools was similar to the 2017 rate, while non-magnet schools improved over the prior-year rate.

Figure 1: On-Track Percentages of First-Time Ninth-Grade Students, 2009- 2018

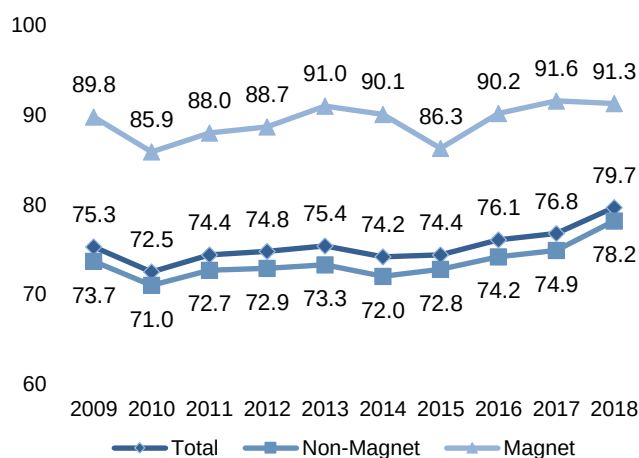


Figure 2 shows On-Track percentages by student ethnicity for the 2008-09 through 2017-18 school years. In 2018, the districtwide On-Track rate of African American students was 76.1 percent; Hispanic students, 79.6 percent; and White students, 91.8 percent.

Historically, the On-Track rate of White students fell in 2010, but increased gradually in subsequent years. African American and Hispanic students’ rates remained relatively stable from 2011 through 2015. However, the On-Track rate of Hispanic students increased in 2016 and 2017, while that of African American students decreased over the same two-year period. In 2018, On-Track rates of both African American and Hispanic freshmen were higher than in

previous years, providing the improvement needed for the overall district increase.

Figure 2: On-Track Percentages of First Time Ninth-Grade Students by Ethnicity, 2009-2018

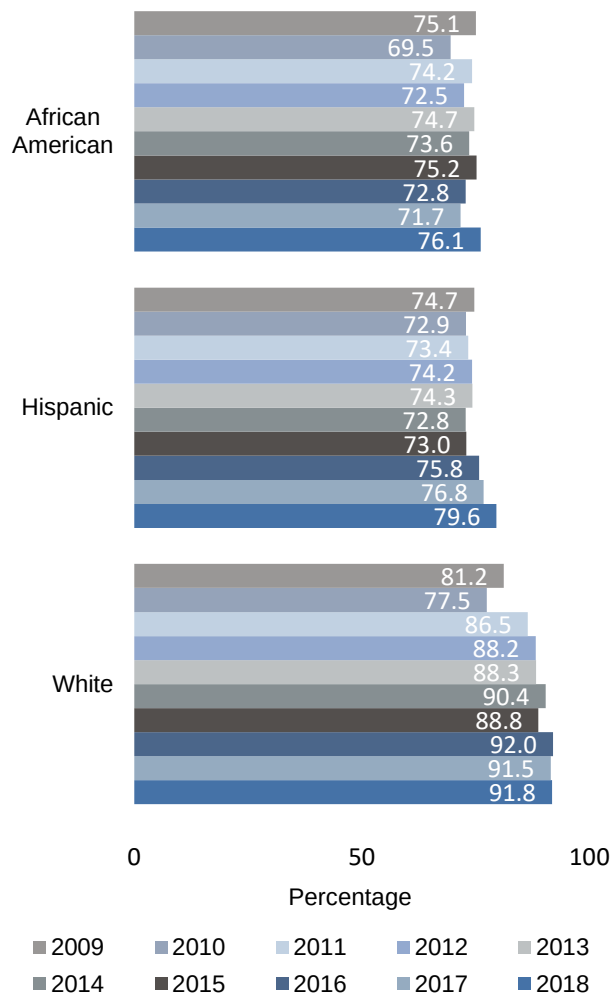


Table 1 shows On-Track percentages by school and school group for the 2015-16 through 2017-18 school years, and the percentage point change over the three-year period.

As a group, non-magnet (comprehensive and Early College) high schools had an On-Track rate in 2018 of 78.2 percent, an increase over the two preceding years. Ten comprehensive high schools had rates exceeding 80 percent. Only one school, Roosevelt, fell below 60 percent On-Track, and one other, North Dallas, fell below 70 percent. All Early College High Schools (ECHS) had On-Track rates of 95 percent or more.

Over the period from 2016 through 2018, four comprehensive high schools had On-Track increases of 10 percentage points or more; these were Hillcrest, Jefferson, Pinkston, and South Oak Cliff. The only school with a decrease greater than five points was Spruce. Of the two schools with the lowest On-Track

rates, Roosevelt has persistently had On-Track rates below 70 percent, while North Dallas increased from 57.1 percent in 2016 to 74.4 percent in 2017, but fell to 62.8 percent in 2018.

Magnet high school On-Track rates increased very slightly, from 90.2 percent in 2016 to 91.3 percent in 2018. The largest increase in On-Track rate was seen at New Tech High School (13 percentage points), followed by Obama Male Leadership Academy (11.3 points). The Townview Education and Social Services magnet had a decrease of 8.4 points, and the Townview Talented and Gifted magnet fell by 5.3 points.

Table 1: Freshman On-Track Rates by School, 2016-2018

School	Percent On-Track			
	2016	2017	2018	Change
Comprehensive High Schools				
B. Adams	76.5	82.2	81.9	5.4
Adamson	74.9	73.2	81.5	6.6
Carter	73.6	67.8	70.4	-3.2
CityLab	-	-	89.7	NA
Conrad	72.4	81.2	78.4	6.0
Hillcrest	67.0	72.3	78.7	11.7
IDEA	83.8	81.6	93.1	9.3
Jefferson	70.6	74.6	82.5	11.9
Kimball	75.2	78.0	79.6	4.4
Lincoln	72.3	72.2	75.8	3.5
Madison	82.5	81.8	83.3	0.8
Molina	77.2	73.3	84.9	7.7
North Dallas	57.1	74.4	62.8	5.7
Pinkston	67.9	80.8	87.5	19.6
Roosevelt	60.0	64.9	59.1	-0.9
Samuell	81.4	76.7	81.2	-0.2
Seagoville	69.4	78.8	79.3	9.9
Skyline	73.3	74.0	72.4	-0.9
S. Oak Cliff	63.7	60.0	75.5	11.8
Spruce	76.9	67.1	70.3	-6.6
Sunset	72.8	74.7	74.0	1.2
White	77.7	73.7	76.1	-1.6
Wilmer-Hutchins	69.3	56.9	76.2	6.9
Wilson	79.7	76.6	84.3	4.6
Early College High Schools (ECHS)				
Garza Early College	95.5	99.1	97.2	1.7
Gilliam Collegiate Academy	95.6	95.3	97.9	2.3
Lassiter Early College	100.0	98.3	94.7	-5.3
Comprehensive/ECHS Total	74.2	74.9	78.2	4.0
Magnet High Schools				
New Tech HS	80.2	84.3	93.2	13.0
Obama HS	79.2	80.4	90.5	11.3
Rangel HS	98.7	98.5	100.0	1.3
Townview Business	85.2	87.2	86.4	1.2
Townview ESSM	93.0	83.8	84.6	-8.4
Townview Health	97.2	95.2	93.3	-3.9
Townview Law	88.2	88.3	86.5	-1.7
Townview SEM	99.1	100.0	97.3	-1.8
Townview TAG	98.5	98.4	93.2	-5.3
Washington Arts	86.1	93.2	91.1	5.0
Magnet Total	90.2	91.6	91.3	1.1

Note: Schools with 2017-18 On-Track rates below 70 percent are highlighted in gray.

Recommendations

- **Progress of recent freshman cohorts should be analyzed to revalidate the On-Track Indicator.** New analyses would help to determine whether recently introduced criteria for diploma endorsements and changes in End-Of-Course testing requirements have affected the On-Track measure. As well, investigations should examine underlying reasons for large annual fluctuations at individual high school campuses. These investigations should include failure rates for specific courses and individual teachers, as well as failure rates of students from different middle schools.

An electronic version of this report can be found at www.dallasisd.org/Page/888. For more information, please contact Program Evaluation at evaluation@dallasisd.org.

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