

2018-19 Dallas ISD On-Track Indicator

Larry Featherston, Ph. D.

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At-a-Glance

A high school diploma is rapidly becoming the minimum qualification requirement 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 a “make-or-break” year for many students in terms of eventual high school success and graduation.

Background

The Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) developed its own On-Track indicator in 2007-08. Like the Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) indicator¹, the Dallas ISD indicator combines two factors. 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).

Purpose and Methods of the Evaluation

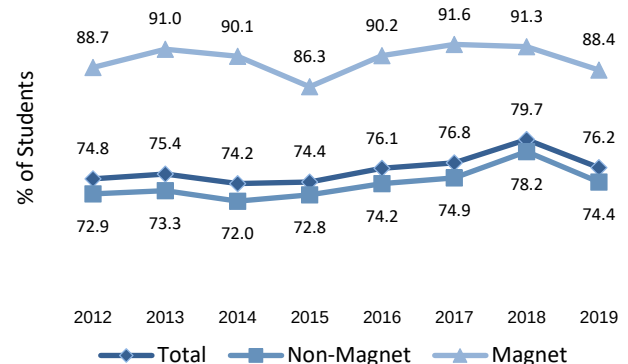
The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the ninth grade On-Track rates for the district and individual high school campuses. Only non-special education grade nine students who were enrolled in the same school for both fall and spring semesters were included. Student characteristics were extracted from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) district data file (10/26/2018) and course failures and course credits were extracted from the district course data file (10/17/2019). In 2018, the district began using a new student course record management system, PowerSchool. Several data integrity issues were found in the PowerSchool data files which may have impacted the results of this evaluation.

Results

Overall, the On-Track rate for 2019 (76.2%) was lower than the On-Track rates for 2017 and 2018 (Figure 1). On-Track rates for magnet schools were higher than those of non-magnet schools, resulting in a *gap* between the two groups. In 2019, the *gap* between the two groups widened slightly. The *gap* widened from

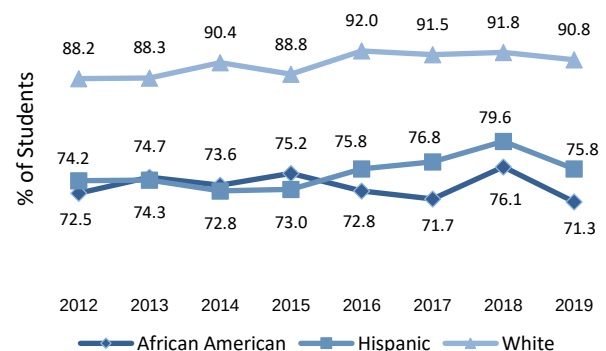
2012 to 2014 but decreased markedly in 2015. For 2016 and 2017, the *gap* widened slightly but decreased noticeably again in 2018.

Figure 1: On-Track Percentages of First-Time Ninth-Grade Students by School Type, 2012-2019



Source: Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) district data file (10/26/2018). District course data file (08/12/2019).

Figure 2: On-Track Percentages of First-Time Ninth-Grade Students by Ethnicity, 2012-2019



Source: Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) district data file (10/26/2018). District course data file (10/17/2019).

In 2019, the districtwide On-Track rate of African American students (71.3%) was lower than the On-Track rate of Hispanic students (75.8%) and White students (90.8%) (Figure 2). Since 2012, On-Track rates for White students have been higher than those of African American students and Hispanic students, resulting in a *gap* between the student groups. In 2019, the *gap* between the African American students and White students as well as the *gap* between Hispanic

¹ The 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.

students and White students widened considerably. The *gap* widened between African American students and White students from 2015 to 2017 but decreased noticeably in 2018. The *gap* widened between Hispanic students and White students from 2015 to 2016 but decreased in 2017 and 2018.

Table 1: Freshman On-Track Rates by School, 2017-2019

School	Percent On-Track			Diff.
	2017	2018	2019	
Non-Magnet High Schools				
B. Adams	82.2	81.9	79.8	-2.4
Adamson	73.2	81.5	72.6	-0.6
Carter	67.8	70.4	72.5	4.7
CityLab	-	89.7	86.2	-3.5
Conrad	81.2	78.4	79.6	-1.6
Garza Early College	99.1	97.2	98.2	-0.9
Gilliam Collegiate Academy	95.3	97.9	91.1	-4.2
Hillcrest	72.3	78.7	78.1	5.8
IDEA	81.6	93.1	77.8	-3.8
Jefferson	74.6	82.5	77.3	2.7
Kimball	78.0	79.6	75.9	-2.1
Lassiter Early College	98.3	94.7	94.2	-4.1
Lincoln	72.2	75.8	65.4	-6.8
Madison	81.8	83.3	88.2	6.4
Molina	73.3	84.9	76.1	2.8
North Dallas	74.4	62.8	64.5	-9.9
Pinkston	80.8	87.5	77.6	-3.2
Roosevelt	64.9	59.1	58.2	-6.7
Samuell	76.7	81.2	67.6	-9.1
Seagoville	78.8	79.3	65.3	-13.5
Skyline	74.0	72.4	72.7	-1.3
South Oak Cliff	60.0	75.5	74.0	14.0
Spruce	67.1	70.3	58.6	-8.5
Sunset	74.7	74.0	69.3	-5.4
White	73.7	76.1	73.8	0.1
Wilmer-Hutchins	56.9	76.2	73.8	16.9
Wilson	76.6	84.3	86.8	10.2
Non-Magnet Total	74.9	78.2	74.4	-0.5
Magnet High Schools				
New Tech	84.3	93.2	33.3	-51.0
Obama	80.4	90.5	97.7	17.3
Rangel	98.5	100.0	100.0	1.5
Townview Business	87.2	86.4	83.8	-3.4
Townview ESSM	83.8	84.6	74.2	-9.6
Townview Health	95.2	93.3	95.1	-0.1
Townview Law	88.3	86.5	82.7	-5.6
Townview SEM	100.0	97.3	100.0	0.0
Townview TAG	98.4	93.2	97.3	-1.1
Washington Arts	93.2	91.1	84.5	-8.7
Magnet Total	91.6	91.3	88.4	-3.2

Source: Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) district data file (10/26/2018). District course data file (08/12/2019). Note: Schools with 2018-19 On-Track rates below 70 percent are highlighted in gray. Diff.=Difference change in On-Track percentage from 2017 to 2019. ESSM=Education and Social Science Magnet. SEM=Science and Engineering Magnet. TAG=Talented and Gifted.

Overall, magnet high schools (88.4%) had a higher percentage of On-Track students compared to non-magnet high schools (74.4%)(Table 1). In 2019, six non-magnet high schools had rates exceeding 80 percent which was a decrease from 2018 ($n = 13$) . Two

non-magnet schools, Roosevelt and Spruce, fell below 60 percent On-Track, and five other non-magnet schools, Lincoln, North Dallas, Samuell, Seagoville, and Sunset, fell below 70 percent. One magnet school, New Tech, fell below 60 percent, and one other magnet school, Townview ESSM, fell below 80 percent. In 2017 and 2018, all magnet schools had On-Track rates greater than 80 percent.

From 2017 through 2019, three non-magnet high schools had On-Track increases of ten percentage points or more; these were South Oak Cliff, Wilmer-Hutchins, and Wilson. Seven non-magnet schools had On-Track decreases of five percentage points or more; these were Lincoln, North Dallas, Roosevelt, Samuell, Seagoville, Spruce, and Sunset.

Overall, two magnet high schools' On-Track rates increased from 2017 to 2019. The largest increase in On-Track rates was seen at Obama (17.3 percentage points). Seven magnet high schools' On-Track rates decreased from 2017 to 2019. The largest decrease in On-Track rate was seen at New Tech High School (51.0 percentage points), followed by Townview ESSM (9.6 percentage points), and Washington Arts (8.7 percentage points). The Townview Law magnet had a decrease of 5.6 percentage points, and the Townview Business magnet fell by 3.4 percentage points.

Recommendations

- **Investigate how data integrity issues impacted the accuracy of the On-Track rate calculations.** In 2018, the district began using a new student course record management system, PowerSchool. Numerous data integrity issues were found in the PowerSchool data files which may have impacted the results of this evaluation.
- **Analyze progress of recent freshman cohorts to revalidate the On-Track Indicator.** Longitudinal analyses of freshman cohorts who have graduate should be conducted to determine the overall accuracy of the On-Track indicator and determine if other factors should be incorporated into the On-Track criteria.

Reference

Weir, D. (2018). *2017-18 Dallas ISD On-Track Indicator*. Dallas, TX. Dallas Independent School District.

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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Dallas ISD
Department of Evaluation and Assessment
H. B. Bell School Support Service Center
2909 N. Buckner Blvd.
Box 10
Dallas, TX 75228