



The **Middle School Advanced Mathematics Program** in Dallas ISD offers rigorous coursework for high-achieving students, preparing them for advanced math pathways and Algebra I by eighth grade, as required by Texas Senate Bill 2124 (2023). Fifth graders scoring in the top 40 percent on math assessments are automatically enrolled, with a parental opt-out option that promotes access while respecting family choice. Since adopting the opt-out model in 2019-20, participation has grown, especially among historically underrepresented groups, expanding access to higher-level math and strengthening college readiness pathways.

Key Findings

Implementation

- Since 2019-20, DISD pioneered an opt-out model that automatically places students in advanced math based on fifth grade criteria, which vary by campus and usually required a STAAR 5 score of Meets+.
- Between 2018-19 and 2024-25, the percentage of middle school students in the Advanced Math program rose from 27 percent to 65 percent (a 141% increase), and total enrollment grew from 8,715 to 17,525 students (a 101% increase).
- The program changed the characteristics of students enrolled in advanced math courses from a traditional TAG model to be more representative: TAG proportion dropped (-30%), while enrollment increased for economically disadvantaged (+11%), emergent bilingual (+29%), and special education (+657%).
- From 2018-19 to 2024-25, enrollment gaps in advanced math declined most for emergent bilinguals (-38%), followed by White vs. Hispanic (-20%), White vs. African American (-19%), Hispanic vs. African American (-19%), and economically disadvantaged students (-13%).
- However, enrollment gaps still persist; the largest by ethnicity (especially White vs. African American), followed by special education, socioeconomic, emergent bilingual status, and the smallest by gender.

Student Outcomes

i-Ready

- Compared to matched peers in traditional curriculum, advanced math students earned higher *i-Ready* grade placements from BOY to EOY in sixth and seventh grades, and resulted in few students in the lowest-tiers at EOY.
- From BOY to EOY, advanced math students demonstrated greater growth than those in the traditional program (+34% in 6th, +155% in 7th for students one grade below; +78% in 7th for students two or more grades below).
- Growth was stronger in sixth grade advanced math, especially in Stretch Growth, while seventh grade outcomes matched the comparison group.

STAAR and STAAR EOC

- Advanced math students outperformed matched peers on STAAR in grades 6-8. Students who took advanced coursework were roughly 10 percent more likely to achieve Approaches+, up to two times more likely to reach Meets+, and two to five times more likely to achieve Masters compared to their matched peers.
- All sixth graders in Advanced Math showed positive outcomes, regardless of prior academic performance: those meeting fifth grade standards were more likely to reach Approaches+ (3.4), Meets+ (2.6), and Masters (2.7), while those below Meets were 1.5, 1.7, and 1.1 times more likely, respectively.
- Students who took Algebra I in 8th grade were about four times more likely to enroll in ECHS and about three times more likely to enroll in P-TECH courses when they entered high school the following year.

TEKS and SEs

- From 2024 to 2025, sixth grade STAAR Math TEKS with ≥ 70 percent correct increased from one to three, while eighth grade TEKS decreased from two to zero (Goal: increase from one to seven in Spring 2025).

Recommendations

- **Explore Wider Implementation of the Advanced Math coursework.**

The opt-out policy has increased enrollment, reduced barriers, and fostered a more diverse, equitable student body. At the same time, the curriculum supported academic growth for middle school learners, including sixth graders who scored below Meets+ on fifth grade STAAR and still took the advanced course. As Algebra I enrollment expands to all eighth graders in 2025-26, continue monitoring program outcomes and consider extending advanced math coursework to all sixth and seventh graders. Given its dual impact on equity and achievement, the program remains a strong candidate for broader adoption.