

Student Performance

“The 1998 results of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills tests show that student performance in Texas continues to improve. The TAAS and our state accountability system are challenging both students and school districts to reach their fullest potential.”

Mike Moses, Commissioner of Education, May 1998

In 1998, Texas public school students continued an upward trend in performance by recording substantial gains on the percentages passing the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) tests. The increased passing rates occurred even as the number of students tested rose by over 31,000. The results from the state assessment program provide tangible evidence of continuing achievement as schools work to enable their students to meet the future and its challenges.

This chapter outlines statewide TAAS results for the 1997-1998 academic year, including results for various segments of the student population. To allow an even broader view of the assessment program's history, a five-year comparison of both the percentage passing rates and the Texas Learning Index (TLI) data is included; comparing data from five test administrations (spring 1994 through spring 1998) allows an illustration of four years' worth of gain. Also included are statewide data from the administration of the Spanish TAAS tests and the Biology I and Algebra I end-of-course examinations.

The data in this chapter represent the test results of students not in special education and include results of students in year-round education. Results for students receiving special education services can be found in a separate publication titled *Student Performance Results 1997-1998*, published by the Texas Education Agency Division of Student Assessment. District and campus-level results can be found in the Academic Excellence Indica-

tor System (AEIS) reports, available through the Division of Communications, or online at www.tea.state.tx.us.

Each year, the agency releases to the public all items on the TAAS and end-of-course tests used to determine student performance. It also provides districts with detailed item analysis reports to help identify strengths and weaknesses in their academic programs.

Percent Passing TAAS

The 1998 TAAS results indicate the continuation of an upward trend in achievement at all grade levels. In **reading**, the percentage of students passing rose across the board, with each grade level now showing passing rates of 85 percent or higher. Reading scores ranged from 85 percent of all students passing at Grades 6, 7, and 8 to 89 percent passing at Grade 4.

In **mathematics**, most grade levels made notable gains, with the most impressive improvement at Grade 8 (an 8-point gain compared to the 1997 results) and at Grade 10 (a 6-point gain). Scores ranged from 78 percent passing at Grade 10 to 89 percent passing at Grade 5.

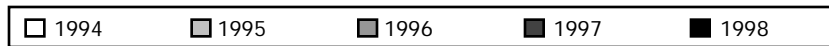
Writing scores improved at all three grades tested in this subject. Scores ranged from 83 percent passing at Grade 8 to 89 percent passing at Grade 10.

In addition, every grade level made gains in the **all tests taken** category; for the first time, all grade levels had passing rates in the 70s or above. The percentage of students passing all tests taken (reading and mathematics at Grades 3, 5, 6, and 7 and reading, mathematics, and writing at Grades 4, 8, and 10) ranged from 72 percent at Grades 8 and 10 to 83 percent at Grade 5.

For purposes of comparison across grade levels, the all tests taken category includes the TAAS reading and mathematics tests at Grades 3, 5, 6, and 7 and the reading, writing, and mathematics tests at Grades 4, 8, and 10. The results of the science and social studies tests, administered only to students in Grade 8, are presented separately.

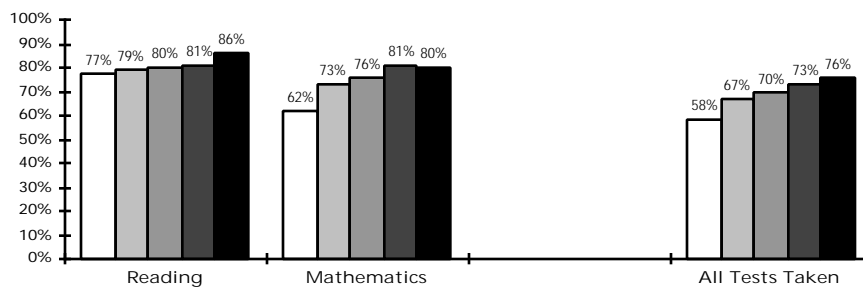
Figure 1.1 Percent Passing Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS)

all students not in special education



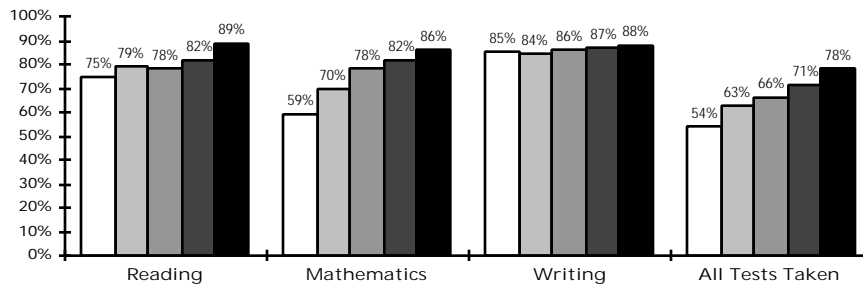
Grade 3

Reading scores rise 5 percentage points compared to 1997 results. Mathematics performance declines by 1 percentage point.



Grade 4

Grade 4 shows the largest one-year gain of any grade level in reading and all tests taken.



Grade 5

Grade 5 continues to score the highest of any grade level in the all tests taken category.

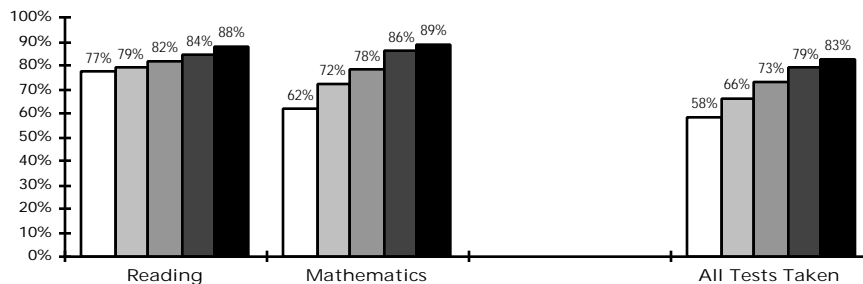
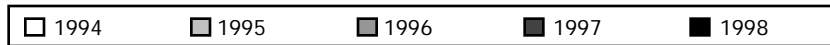


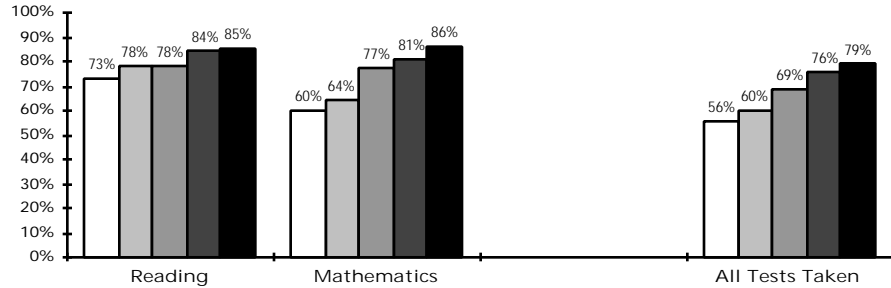
Figure 1.1 Percent Passing Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) (cont'd.)

all students not in special education



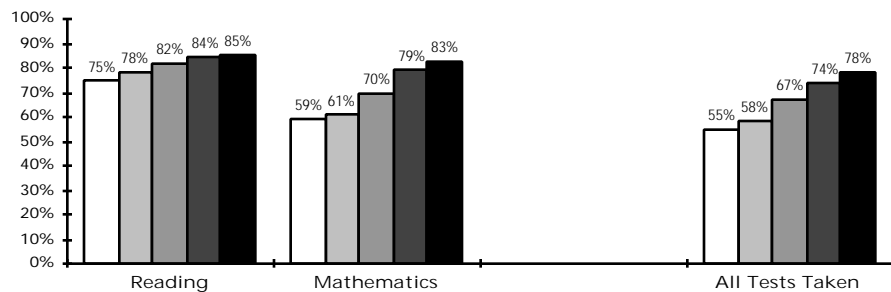
Grade 6

Over four years, Grade 6 gains 26 percentage points in mathematics and 23 percentage points in all tests taken.



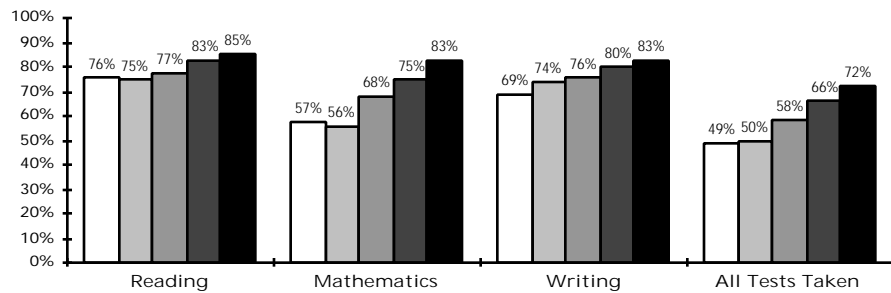
Grade 7

Mathematics scores climb into the 80s this year, while the all tests taken results continue to improve.



Grade 8

Between 1994 and 1998, Grade 8 exhibits an impressive 26-point rise in the mathematics passing rate.



Grade 10

For the first time, the passing rate for Grade 10 in the all tests taken category rises into the 70s.

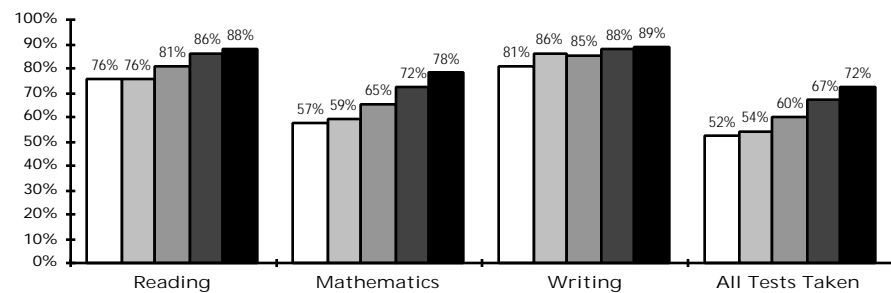
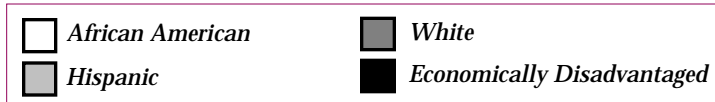


Figure 1.2 Percent Passing TAAS: Results by Student Groups

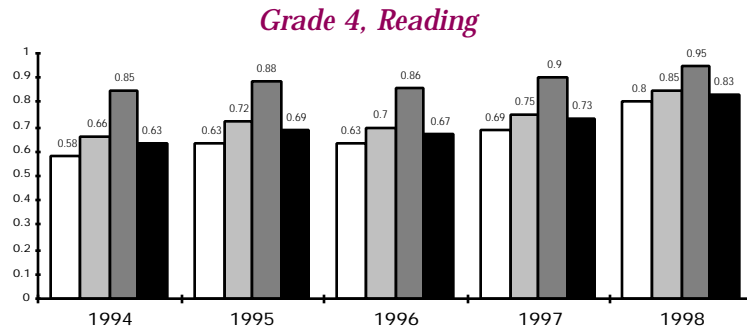
(NOTE: Only results of grades 4, 8, and 10 are compared so that writing scores can be included in the comparison).



Grade 4

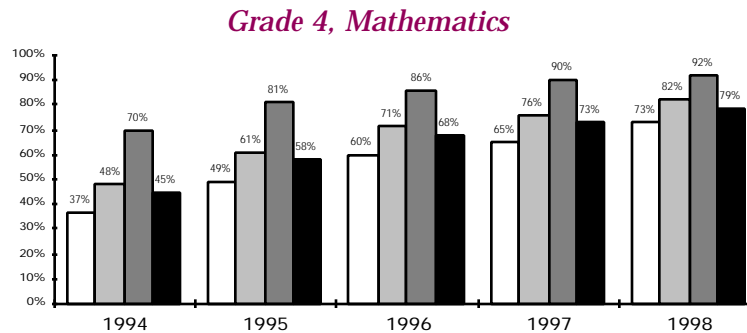
Reading

African American students made the biggest one-year gain, improving 11 percentage points to 80 percent passing in 1998. White students reach 95 percent passing.



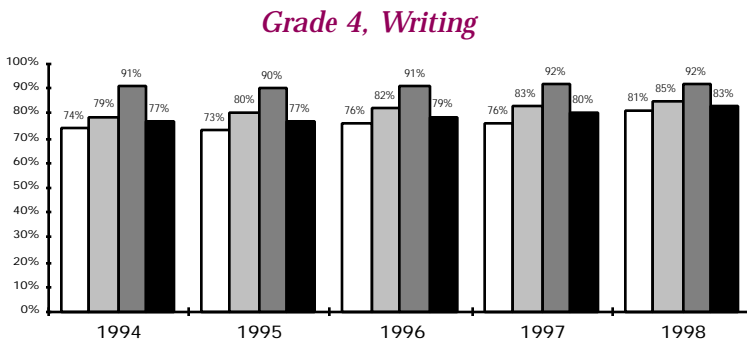
Mathematics

The comparison between 1994 and 1998 shows impressive improvement: 36 percentage points for African American students and 34 points for both economically disadvantaged and Hispanic students.



Writing

Scores rose by 5 percentage points over 1997 levels for the African American students, 3 percentage points for economically disadvantaged students, and 2 percentage points for Hispanic students; white students held steady.



All Tests Taken

All groups showed improvement in 1998. African American students improved their performance to 63 percent passing, an increase of 10 percentage points compared to 1997 and 30 percentage points compared to 1994.

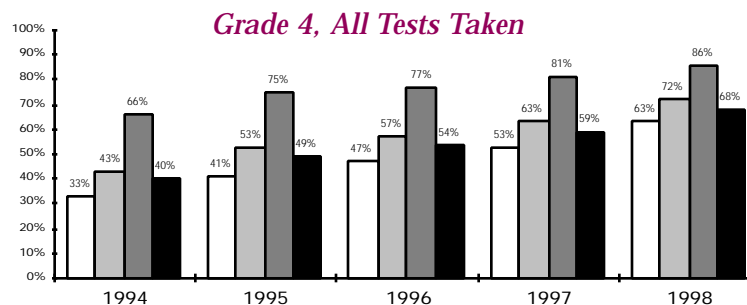
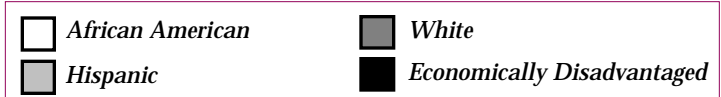


Figure 1.2 Percent Passing TAAS: Results by Student Groups (cont'd.)

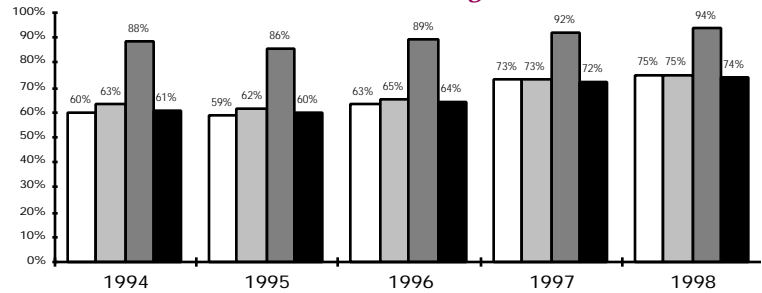


Grade 8

Reading

African American and Hispanic students reached 75 percent passing, economically disadvantaged students posted a 74-percent passing rate, and white students reached 94 percent passing. African American students made the greatest four-year gain, with an increase of 15 percentage points.

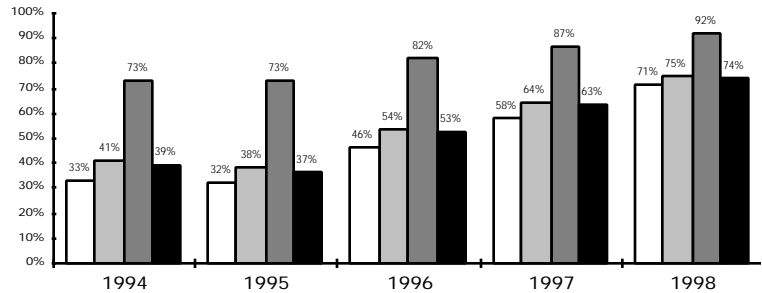
Grade 8, Reading



Mathematics

African American students showed a one-year gain of 13 percentage points; Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students each posted a gain of 11 points. The difference between passing rates of African American students and white students has fallen from 40 percentage points in 1994 to 21 points in 1998.

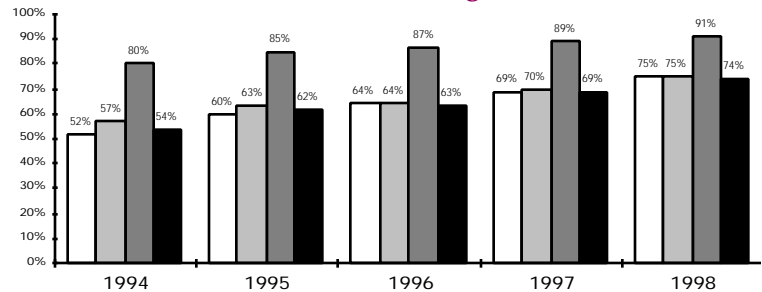
Grade 8, Mathematics



Writing

African American and Hispanic students reached passing levels of 75 percent. Economically disadvantaged students gained 5 points compared to 1997 with 74 percent passing, and white students improved to 91 percent passing.

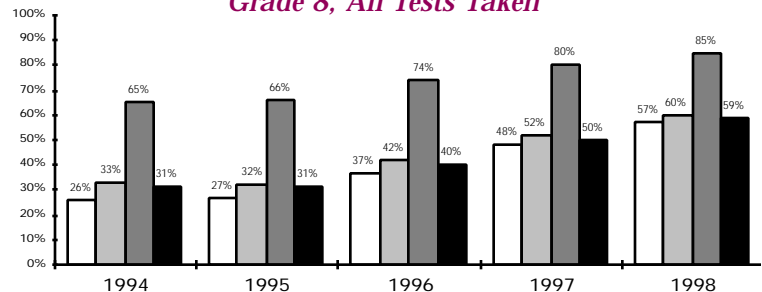
Grade 8, Writing



All Tests Taken*

All groups continue to make substantial gains; however, significant progress remains to be made to ensure that more minority and economically disadvantaged students pass all tests at Grade 8.

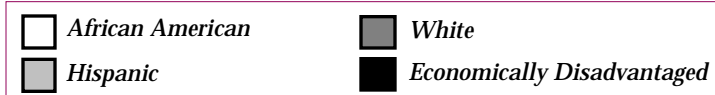
Grade 8, All Tests Taken



*excludes science and social studies results, which are presented separately

Figure 1.2 Percent Passing TAAS: Results by Student Groups (cont'd.)

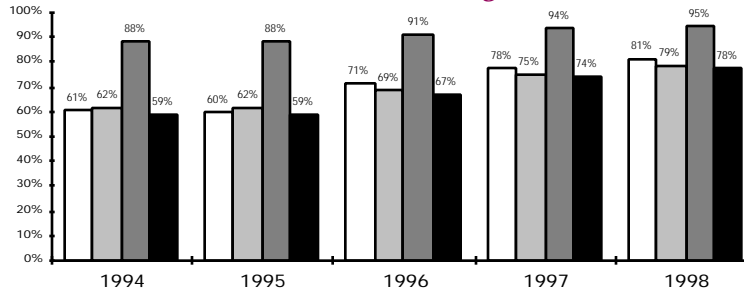
Grade 10 (Exit Level)



Reading

Hispanic students and economically disadvantaged students each gained 4 percentage points compared to last year's levels. African American students, at 81 percent passing, exhibited a 3 point gain, while white students' results rose 1 point to reach 95 percent passing.

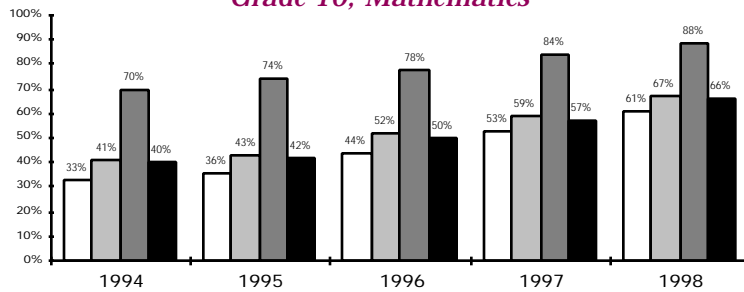
Grade 10, Reading



Mathematics

The comparison between 1994 and 1998 shows African American students exhibiting a gain of 28 percentage points and both the Hispanic and the economically disadvantaged groups making notable gains of 26 percentage points each. White students gained 18 percentage points over this four-year period.

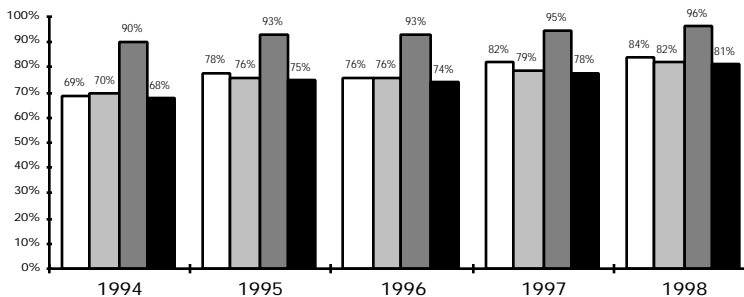
Grade 10, Mathematics



Writing

All groups exhibited passing rates of over 80 percent. Hispanic students and economically disadvantaged students reached 82 and 81 percent passing, respectively; African American students gained 2 points to reach 84 percent passing, while white students reached 96 percent passing.

Grade 10, Writing



All Tests Taken

Passing rates that stood in the 30-35 percent range in 1994 have risen to almost 60 percent. While this increase is substantial, even more students must pass all sections of the exit-level TAAS, a requirement for graduation.

Grade 10, All Tests Taken

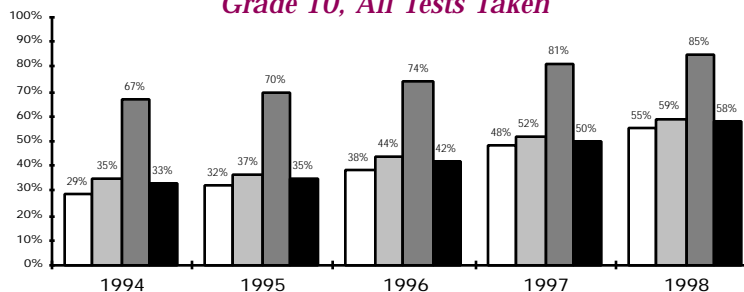


Table 1.1
Percent Passing TAAS: Results by Special Population

<i>all students not in special education</i>															
ALL TESTS TAKEN															
LEP Students							Non-LEP Students								
							Gain							Gain	
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	
Grade 3	35	48	55	60	66	6	31	59	68	71	75	77	2	18	
Grade 4	32	41	46	49	61	12	29	56	65	68	73	79	6	23	
Grade 5	27	35	45	50	61	11	34	60	68	74	81	85	4	25	
Grade 6	21	22	27	37	39	2	18	58	63	72	79	83	4	25	
Grade 7	16	16	24	32	32	0	16	58	61	69	77	81	4	23	
Grade 8*	13	11	15	21	26	5	13	51	52	61	69	75	6	24	
Grade 10	14	14	15	22	26	4	12	54	57	62	70	75	5	21	
At-Risk Students							Not At-Risk Students								
							Gain							Gain	
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	
Grade 3	32	44	48	55	58	3	26	66	74	77	80	82	2	16	
Grade 4	30	37	40	45	55	10	25	69	80	80	84	88	4	19	
Grade 5	34	42	47	55	62	7	28	78	84	88	91	93	2	15	
Grade 6	30	32	41	49	52	3	22	70	80	86	90	92	2	22	
Grade 7	29	29	39	46	47	1	18	73	78	84	89	90	1	17	
Grade 8*	25	20	27	33	42	9	17	72	72	78	84	87	3	15	
Grade 10	25	31	35	44	49	5	24	69	72	74	81	84	3	15	

*excludes results of Grade 8 science and social studies TAAS

Percent Passing TAAS: Results By Special Population

Table 1.1 provides aggregate TAAS percent passing results of limited English proficient (LEP) students and those at risk of dropping out of school and compares them to the results of students who are not LEP or at-risk.

Note that a LEP student who is not exempt from state assessments takes the English TAAS unless it is determined locally that the appropriate assessment for that student is the Spanish TAAS (available at Grades 3 through 6). This section presents results of the LEP students who took the English TAAS tests; Spanish TAAS results appear in a later section.

Table 1.1 indicates that LEP students continued making gains in performance at all grades. LEP students' 1998 scores in the *all tests taken* category ranged from 26 percent passing at Grade 8 and Grade 10 to 66 percent at Grade 3. Between 1994 and 1998, the passing rate of Grade 5 LEP students showed the greatest improvement, rising a notable 34 percentage points.

Table 1.1 also shows that at-risk students made gains in performance at all grades. Grade 4 at-risk students exhibited the greatest 1997 to 1998 improvement, rising by 10 percentage points to 55 percent passing all tests taken. Between 1994 and 1998, the passing rate of Grade 5 at-risk students registered the greatest gain, rising 28 percentage points.

Grade 8 Science and Social Studies Tests

Science

Results of the spring 1998 administration show that, compared to the previous year, passing rates held steady, with 84 percent of all students tested passing (Table 1.2). This pattern of consistent results from 1997 to 1998 is repeated for most groups of students, although passing rates were down by 1 percentage point for Hispanic students, 5 points for LEP students, and 4 points for at-risk students. When comparing this year's performance to 1995 results, however, a substantial gain is apparent, with African American students posting a

Table 1.2
Percent Passing Science and Social Studies TAAS

<i>all students not in special education</i>										
STUDENT POPULATION	Science					Social Studies				
	1995	1996	1997	1998	Gain (95-98)	1995	1996	1997	1998	Gain (95-98)
All Students	76	77	84	84	8	65	69	67	69	4
African American	56	59	69	69	13	46	51	49	53	7
Hispanic	63	64	75	74	11	48	54	51	53	5
White	90	90	94	94	4	80	83	82	84	4
LEP	34	33	49	44	10	20	25	21	24	4
Non-LEP	79	80	86	86	7	67	72	69	72	5
At-Risk	57	56	66	62	5	39	44	37	39	2
Not At-Risk	91	90	94	94	3	84	85	83	83	-1
Economically Disadvantaged	62	63	73	73	11	47	53	49	52	5
Not Economically Disadvantaged	85	86	91	91	6	75	80	78	80	5

gain of 13 points and both the Hispanic and economically disadvantaged groups achieving 11-point gains over this period.

Social Studies

In the spring 1998 administration, 69 percent of all students tested passed; this rate was up 2 percentage points from 1997 levels. Compared to the previous year's passing rate, all ethnic groups, special population groups, and economic groups gained from 2 to 4 percentage points with the exception of the not at-risk group, whose scores held steady. Over the period from 1995 to 1998, the at-risk group's passing rate has remained consistent and the not at-risk group's passing rate has declined by 1 percentage point; all other groups, however, have exhibited gains over this period, ranging from 4-point gains for white and LEP students to a 7-point gain for African American students.

Percent Passing Spanish TAAS

In spring 1996, the Spanish TAAS reading and mathematics tests at Grades 3 and 4 were benchmarked. The following year, the Spanish TAAS reading and mathematics tests at Grades 5 and 6 and the Spanish TAAS writing test at Grade 4 were benchmarked. At the time of a benchmark administration, passing rates have not yet been set. As a result, data exist for a one-year comparison of results only at Grades 3 and 4 and only in mathematics and reading.

LEP students who take the Spanish TAAS are not being exempted from the statewide assessment. The students for whom Spanish TAAS is determined to be the appropriate assessment are being tested in the same manner as students taking TAAS in English because both groups must demonstrate performance on the same academic skills in reading, mathematics, and writing.

Table 1.3
Percent Passing Spanish TAAS

<i>all students not in special education</i>									
	Reading			Mathematics			Writing		
	1997	1998	Gain 97-98	1997	1998	Gain 97-98	1997	1998	Gain 97-98
Grade 3	44	65	21	52	66	14			
Grade 4	36	39	3	47	58	11	*	63	N/A
Grade 5	*	50	N/A	*	56	N/A			
Grade 6	*	27	N/A	*	36	N/A			

*benchmark year

Table 1.4
Number and Percent of Students Requiring Intensive Instruction

<i>all students not in special education</i>								
	One Test Only		Two Tests Only		All Three Tests		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Grade 3	37,832	15%	25,497	10%			63,329	26%
Grade 4	32,033	13%	16,482	7%	11,669	5%	60,184	25%
Grade 5	26,733	11%	16,341	7%			43,074	18%
Grade 6	31,022	13%	21,185	9%			52,207	21%
Grade 7	31,954	13%	23,643	9%			55,597	22%
Grade 8*	34,328	14%	19,881	8%	14,374	6%	68,583	28%
Grade 10	35,529	16%	15,112	7%	10,465	5%	61,106	28%

*does not include results of science and social studies TAAS

Results of the spring 1998 administration show notable gains at Grades 3 and 4 (Table 1.3). In reading, passing rates rose 21 percentage points at Grade 3 to 65 percent passing. Scores at Grade 4 rose 3 percentage points to 39 percent passing.

Gains in mathematics were also dramatic, with double-digit gains at both Grade 3 and Grade 4.

The Grade 3 passing rate of 66 percent represented a rise of 14 percentage points over the previous year's results, while Grade 4, with 58 percent passing, registered a gain of 11 percentage points.

Intensive Instruction

Texas Education Code, §39.024, requires that districts offer an intensive program of instruction for students who did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument mandated by the code.

In the 1998-1999 school year, as Table 1.4 indicates, districts must offer intensive instruction in either reading, writing, mathematics, or a combination of these subject areas to between 18 percent and 28 percent of the students tested at each grade level in Grades 3 through 8. At Grade 10, 28 percent of the students tested in spring 1998 did not pass one or more tests (reading, writing, mathematics) of the exit level TAAS and must be offered intensive instruction.

The legislature also mandated that study guides be provided to assist parents in helping their children strengthen academic skills during the summer when school is in recess. Therefore, the Texas Education Agency developed *TAAS Study Guides* for all grade levels and subject areas tested on TAAS. A study guide is provided free of charge,

through districts, to each student who fails one or more TAAS tests. Exit level study guides are distributed three times a year (December, May, and August), while the study guides for Grades 3 through 8 are distributed once a year, when the results from spring testing are reported.

Retesting Opportunities

All students who do not pass the exit level TAAS on their first attempt during the spring of their sophomore year have up to seven additional opportunities to retest before the end of their senior year. Administrations of the exit level TAAS are provided during every academic semester, including the summer. During all but the late spring administration, out-of-school examinees are also given the opportunity to retest.

The late spring TAAS administration, provided only a few weeks before the end of the school year, gives graduating students an additional opportunity to retest immediately prior to commencement. As a result of the late spring administration, an additional 3,224 students were able to satisfy the TAAS diploma requirement prior to spring 1998 graduation ceremonies.

End-Of-Course Examinations

End-of-course examinations are administered at the end of the last semester of Biology I, Algebra I, U.S. History, and English II. The end-of-course tests provide statewide, regional, and district-level data on performance in the specified secondary-level courses. In addition, school districts may use the end-of-course tests for local purposes. The State Board of Education has set the passing standards

Table 1.5
Percent Passing End-of-Course Tests

<i>all students not in special education</i>												
STUDENT POPULATION	Biology I						Algebra I					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	Gain		1995	1996	1997	1998	Gain	
					97-98	95-98					97-98	96-98
All Students	73	76	78	80	2	7	*	28	35	39	4	11
African American	55	59	60	64	4	9	*	11	15	20	5	9
Hispanic	56	61	62	67	5	11	*	14	20	26	6	12
White	87	90	91	92	1	5	*	40	48	52	4	12
LEP	28	33	28	37	9	9	*	9	10	14	4	5
Non-LEP	76	79	81	83	2	7	*	29	37	41	4	12
At-Risk	56	58	59	62	3	6	*	7	11	15	4	8
Not At-Risk	84	87	88	88	0	4	*	40	48	51	3	11
Economically Disadvantaged	56	59	60	65	5	9	*	14	19	25	6	11
Not Economically Disadvantaged	79	83	85	87	2	8	*	35	42	47	5	12

for Biology I, Algebra I, U.S. History, and English II end-of-course tests at an equivalent of 70 percent of the items correct, which is represented by a scale score of 1500.

Table 1.5 presents the spring 1995-1998 Biology I end-of-course test results and the spring 1996-1998 Algebra I end-of-course test results for all students not in special education. Note that no passing rates are listed for Algebra I in 1995 because the test was benchmarked in the spring of that year and the passing rate had not yet been set. The U.S. History and English II end-of-course tests were benchmarked in spring 1998 and will be implemented fully in spring 1999.

Biology I

Results of the spring 1998 administration showed that 80 percent of the students tested performed successfully, up from 78 percent the previous year. Compared to the previous year's passing rate, all ethnic groups, special population groups, and economic groups gained from 1 to 9 percentage points with the exception of the not at-risk group, whose scores remained consistent. Over the period from 1995 to 1998, all groups have exhibited gains, with the greatest gains achieved by Hispanic students (11 percentage points) and African American, LEP, and economically disadvantaged students (9 percentage points).

Algebra I

Although still significantly lower than the passing rate for the Biology I end-of-course test, the pass-

ing rate for the Algebra I end-of-course test continued an upward trend across all ethnic groups, special population groups, and economic groups. Spring 1998 results show that 39 percent of the students tested passed, up from 35 percent in 1997. Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students made the greatest gains (6 percentage points). Over the period from 1996 to 1998, all groups showed improvement, with double-digit gains achieved by Hispanic, white, non-LEP, not at-risk, economically disadvantaged, and not economically disadvantaged students.

Texas Learning Index

Spring 1998 marked the fifth year of the Texas Learning Index, or TLI. The TLI is a score that describes how far a student's performance is above or below the passing standard. The TLI was developed to allow students, parents, and schools the opportunity both to relate student performance to a passing standard and to compare student performance from year to year. Because the purpose of the TLI is to show year-to-year progress as students move toward the exit level test, the TLI is only reported for tests administered in sequential grades, i.e., English TAAS reading and mathematics tests at Grades 3 through 8 and at the exit level.

The TLI provides one indicator of whether a student is making sufficient yearly progress to be reasonably assured of passing the exit level test. The TLI can be used in this way since the passing standards for the tests administered at the lower grades are aligned with the passing standard at the exit

Table 1.6
Average TLI by Grade

<i>all students not in special education</i>												
	Reading						Mathematics					
						Gain						Gain
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1994-1998	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1994-1998
Grade 3	78.2	78.0	78.6	79.7	82.3	4.1	70.3	73.3	76.5	78.4	78.1	7.8
Grade 4	78.4	80.1	79.9	80.9	84.4	6.0	70.5	74.6	77.4	79.0	80.0	9.5
Grade 5	78.8	79.9	81.6	83.8	85.3	6.5	71.0	74.7	77.5	80.6	82.1	11.1
Grade 6	78.5	79.8	80.8	83.3	83.9	5.4	70.7	72.6	77.0	78.9	80.6	9.9
Grade 7	78.3	78.8	81.1	82.2	82.8	4.5	70.6	71.8	75.6	77.6	79.5	8.9
Grade 8	77.9	78.0	79.8	81.8	83.3	5.4	70.0	69.7	73.8	76.7	78.7	8.7
Grade 10	77.7	77.8	80.0	82.1	83.9	6.2	69.9	71.2	72.9	75.3	77.4	7.5

level. In other words, it is as difficult for a third grader to pass the third-grade reading and mathematics tests as it is for an eighth grader to pass the eighth-grade reading and mathematics tests or for an exit level student to pass the exit level reading and mathematics tests. For example, a student who consistently achieves a TLI score of 70 or above at Grades 3 through 8 should be in line to succeed on the exit level test if current academic progress continues.

The results presented here are those for all students not in special education.

Average TLI

In order to pass the TAAS reading and mathematics assessments, a student must achieve a TLI of at least 70. Table 1.6 presents five years of average TLI scores, including the gain registered between the years 1994 and 1998 for both reading and mathematics. The table indicates that at all grades, average TLI scores in both reading and mathematics have been rising since 1994. Average 1998 TLIs in **reading** were in the 80s at all grades for the

first time, ranging from 82.3 at Grade 3 to 85.3 at Grade 5. Grade 5 exhibited the greatest four-year gain with an increase of 6.5 points. In **mathematics**, average TLI scores also increased at nearly every grade level, with average 1998 TLIs ranging from 77.4 at Grade 10 to 82.1 at Grade 5. Since 1994, Grade 5 has exhibited the greatest gain, with an increase in average TLI of 11.1 points.

Table 1.7 presents five years of average TLI scores for the same set of students. This group of 147,940 students tested in both reading and mathematics every year from 1994, when the students were in Grade 4, through 1998, when they were in Grade 8. The chart indicates that average TLI scores in both reading and mathematics have been rising steadily every year for these students. In **reading**, the group's average TLI score of 85.4 at Grade 8 represents a gain of 5.4 points over their performance on the Grade 4 test in 1994. The group's average TLI gain was even greater in mathematics, with a gain of 8.2 points when comparing their results on the Grade 4 and Grade 8 mathematics tests.

Table 1.7
Longitudinal TLI Growth of 147,940 Students

Reading						
Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Gain	
1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1994-1998	
80.0	81.6	82.9	84.6	85.4	5.4	
Mathematics						
Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Gain	
1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1994-1998	
72.2	76.4	78.9	79.7	80.4	8.2	

Table 1.8
Average TLI: Results by Ethnic Groups

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS														
Reading							Mathematics							
					Gain							Gain		
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98
Grade 3	71.7	71.5	71.9	74.1	77.6	3.5	5.9	62.5	65.9	69.9	72.3	72.2	-0.1	9.7
Grade 4	71.2	73.2	72.9	74.7	79.2	4.5	8.0	62.6	66.9	70.6	73.0	74.8	1.8	12.2
Grade 5	71.9	72.7	75.0	77.9	80.7	2.8	8.8	63.1	66.6	70.1	74.7	77.0	2.3	13.9
Grade 6	71.8	73.7	74.9	77.7	79.6	1.9	7.8	62.8	65.0	71.0	73.0	75.9	2.9	13.1
Grade 7	71.2	72.4	75.6	77.2	77.6	0.4	6.4	62.6	63.0	68.2	71.6	73.4	1.8	10.8
Grade 8	70.8	71.4	73.3	76.7	78.4	1.7	7.6	61.7	61.5	66.3	70.4	73.9	3.5	12.2
Grade 10	71.4	71.1	75.1	78.1	79.9	1.8	8.5	61.7	63.0	65.6	68.7	71.4	2.7	9.7
HISPANIC STUDENTS														
Reading							Mathematics							
					Gain							Gain		
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98
Grade 3	74.0	73.8	74.7	75.8	79.5	3.7	5.5	66.3	69.7	73.5	75.9	75.6	-0.3	9.3
Grade 4	74.3	76.5	75.8	77.1	81.3	4.2	7.0	67.0	71.3	74.7	76.8	78.2	1.4	11.2
Grade 5	74.2	75.5	77.3	79.6	82.1	2.5	7.9	67.2	71.4	75.0	78.5	80.5	2.0	13.3
Grade 6	73.3	75.3	75.4	78.3	78.7	0.4	5.4	66.2	68.0	73.3	75.7	78.0	2.3	11.8
Grade 7	72.8	73.5	76.2	77.3	78.2	0.9	5.4	65.5	66.3	71.0	74.0	76.1	2.1	10.6
Grade 8	72.1	72.5	74.1	76.7	78.5	1.8	6.4	64.4	63.9	69.1	72.6	75.5	2.9	11.1
Grade 10	71.7	71.9	74.3	76.8	79.4	2.6	7.7	64.6	65.5	68.4	70.6	73.5	2.9	8.9
WHITE STUDENTS														
Reading							Mathematics							
					Gain							Gain		
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98
Grade 3	82.2	82.0	82.7	83.5	85.3	1.8	3.1	74.5	77.3	80.1	81.5	81.3	-0.2	6.8
Grade 4	82.6	83.9	84.1	84.9	87.8	2.9	5.2	74.4	78.3	80.6	81.9	82.5	0.6	8.1
Grade 5	83.2	84.3	85.8	88.0	88.6	0.6	5.4	75.1	78.6	80.8	83.3	84.4	1.1	9.3
Grade 6	83.5	84.2	85.8	88.2	88.6	0.4	5.1	75.3	77.5	80.8	82.5	83.5	1.0	8.2
Grade 7	83.4	83.8	85.8	86.8	87.4	0.6	4.0	75.6	77.5	80.4	81.5	83.4	1.9	7.8
Grade 8	83.1	83.0	85.2	86.5	88.0	1.5	4.9	75.3	75.3	78.7	81.0	82.1	1.1	6.8
Grade 10	82.9	82.9	84.6	86.5	87.7	1.2	4.8	74.7	76.3	77.3	79.7	81.2	1.5	6.5

Average TLI: Results By Ethnicity

As Table 1.8 indicates, average TLI scores in **reading** rose for all major ethnic groups in all grades. For African American students, average TLI scores in 1998 ranged from 77.6 at Grade 3 and Grade 7 to 80.7 at Grade 5; the greatest four-year gain (8.8 points) was at Grade 5. For Hispanic students, average TLI scores ranged from 78.2 at Grade 7 to 82.1 at Grade 5, with the greatest four-year gain (7.9 points) at Grade 5. The average TLI for white students ranged from 85.3 at Grade 3 to 88.6 at Grades 5 and 6; between 1994 and 1998, the greatest gain (5.4 points) was exhibited at Grade 5.

In **mathematics**, only Grade 3 showed a slight decline at all groups; all other grade levels exhibited improvement. For African American students, average TLI scores in 1998 ranged from 71.4 at Grade 10 to 77.0 at Grade 5; the greatest improvement since 1994 was at Grade 5, with a 13.9 gain in average TLI. For Hispanic students, average TLI scores ranged from 73.5 at Grade 10 to 80.5 at Grade 5, with the greatest four-year gain (13.3 points) at Grade 5. The average TLI for white students ranged from 81.2 at Grade 10 to 84.4 at Grade 5; the greatest improvement since 1994 (9.3 points) was exhibited at Grade 5.

Table 1.9
Average TLI: Results by Economic Groups

ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS														
Reading								Mathematics						
					Gain								Gain	
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98
Grade 3	73.2	72.9	73.7	75.1	78.7	3.6	5.5	65.4	68.8	72.4	74.9	74.6	-0.3	9.2
Grade 4	73.3	75.4	74.7	76.1	80.5	4.4	7.2	65.8	70.1	73.5	75.7	77.2	1.5	11.4
Grade 5	73.3	74.5	76.3	78.9	81.4	2.5	8.1	66.0	70.1	73.6	77.4	79.5	2.1	13.5
Grade 6	72.7	74.7	75.0	77.9	78.7	0.8	6.0	65.3	67.4	72.8	75.1	77.5	2.4	12.2
Grade 7	72.1	73.0	75.7	77.0	77.7	0.7	5.6	64.6	65.7	70.4	73.5	75.5	2.0	10.9
Grade 8	71.3	71.8	73.6	76.2	78.0	1.8	6.7	63.7	63.5	68.5	72.1	75.1	3.0	11.4
Grade 10	70.5	70.9	73.3	76.0	78.7	2.7	8.2	64.0	65.0	67.7	70.1	73.1	3.0	9.1
NOT ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS														
Reading								Mathematics						
					Gain								Gain	
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98
Grade 3	82.2	82.2	82.9	83.8	85.6	1.8	3.4	74.3	77.1	80.1	81.6	81.3	-0.3	7.0
Grade 4	82.5	84.0	84.3	85.0	87.8	2.8	5.3	74.3	78.2	80.7	81.9	82.5	0.6	8.2
Grade 5	83.0	84.3	85.9	88.1	88.7	0.6	5.7	74.8	78.4	80.7	83.3	84.4	1.1	9.6
Grade 6	82.7	83.6	85.4	87.7	88.3	0.6	5.6	74.5	76.5	80.4	82.0	83.2	1.2	8.7
Grade 7	82.1	82.6	84.9	86.0	86.6	0.6	4.5	74.2	75.9	79.3	80.7	82.5	1.8	8.3
Grade 8	81.5	81.5	83.7	85.4	86.9	1.5	5.4	73.4	73.3	77.2	79.8	81.2	1.4	7.8
Grade 10	80.5	80.5	82.7	84.8	86.2	1.4	5.7	72.1	73.7	75.2	77.6	79.4	1.8	7.3

Average TLI: Results By Economic Groups

As Table 1.9 indicates, average TLI scores of students identified as economically disadvantaged through eligibility for the free or reduced-price meal program reflected gains in **reading** across all grades. Average 1998 TLI scores for these students ranged from 77.7 at Grade 7 to 81.4 at Grade 5, with one-year gains ranging from 0.7 at Grade 7 to 4.4 at Grade 4. The average TLI of students not identified as economically disadvantaged also showed improvement, ranging from 85.6 at Grade 3 to 88.7 at Grade 5; one-year gains ranged from 0.6 at Grades 5, 6, and 7 to 2.8 at Grade 4. Economically disadvantaged students at Grade 10 posted the greatest gain over four years, with a rise in average TLI of 8.2 points.

In **mathematics**, both economic groups registered improvement at every grade level except at Grade 3, which exhibited a decline of 0.3 points for both groups. Average 1998 TLI scores for economically disadvantaged students ranged from 73.1 at Grade 10 to 79.5 at Grade 5, with one-year gains ranging from 1.5 at Grade 4 to 3.0 at Grades 8 and 10. The average TLI of students not identified as

economically disadvantaged ranged from 79.4 at Grade 10 to 84.4 at Grade 5, with one-year gains ranging from 0.6 at Grade 4 to 1.8 at Grades 7 and 10. Between 1994 and 1998, Grade 5 students identified as economically disadvantaged registered the greatest gain, with a rise in average TLI of 13.5 points.

Average TLI: Results By Special Population

Table 1.10 provides aggregate average TLI scores of limited English proficient (LEP) students and those at risk of dropping out of school and compares them to the results of students who are not part of these groups.

Note that a LEP student who is not exempt from state assessments takes the English TAAS unless it is determined locally that the appropriate assessment for that student is the Spanish TAAS (available at Grades 3 through 6). This section presents results of the LEP students who took the English TAAS tests.

In **reading**, LEP students achieved gains in average TLI scores in 1998 at all grades; the largest

gain compared to 1997 was registered at Grade 4, with an increase of 5.3 points. Average 1998 TLI scores for LEP students ranged from 65.3 at Grade 7 to 77.9 at Grade 3, with the largest four-year gain being an increase of 9.7 points at Grade

5. The average 1998 TLI scores of non-LEP students ranged from 82.7 at Grade 3 to 86.1 at Grade 5, with the greatest four-year gain (6.6 points) posted at Grade 5.

Table 1.10
Average TLI: Results by Special Population

LEP STUDENTS														
Reading							Mathematics							
					Gain							Gain		
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98
Grade 3	68.7	69.8	71.9	73.0	77.9	4.9	9.2	63.5	67.9	72.4	75.5	75.1	-0.4	11.6
Grade 4	68.2	71.0	70.5	71.3	76.6	5.3	8.4	62.6	67.6	72.1	74.1	75.9	1.8	13.3
Grade 5	65.4	66.9	69.0	71.3	75.1	3.8	9.7	61.6	65.7	70.5	74.2	76.8	2.6	15.2
Grade 6	63.7	66.8	64.7	67.4	67.6	0.2	3.9	59.6	60.2	66.2	68.5	71.6	3.1	12.0
Grade 7	61.4	61.5	64.8	65.1	65.3	0.2	3.9	57.3	57.5	62.5	66.7	67.3	0.6	10.0
Grade 8	60.6	61.3	61.8	65.2	65.6	0.4	5.0	56.5	56.1	60.5	64.5	67.8	3.3	11.3
Grade 10	58.3	58.7	58.7	63.1	65.6	2.5	7.3	58.0	58.5	60.0	62.9	66.1	3.2	8.1
Non-LEP STUDENTS														
Reading							Mathematics							
					Gain							Gain		
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98
Grade 3	78.8	78.5	79.1	80.3	82.7	2.4	3.9	70.8	73.7	76.8	78.7	78.4	-0.3	7.6
Grade 4	79.0	80.6	80.4	81.6	85.0	3.4	6.0	71.0	75.0	77.7	79.4	80.3	0.9	9.3
Grade 5	79.5	80.6	82.2	84.7	86.1	1.4	6.6	71.5	75.2	77.9	81.0	82.5	1.5	11.0
Grade 6	79.4	80.6	81.9	84.6	85.3	0.7	5.9	71.3	73.4	77.7	79.7	81.3	1.6	10.0
Grade 7	79.2	79.8	82.1	83.4	84.0	0.6	4.8	71.3	72.6	76.4	78.4	80.3	1.9	9.0
Grade 8	78.8	78.8	80.8	82.8	84.5	1.7	5.7	70.7	70.4	74.6	77.5	79.5	2.0	8.8
Grade 10	79.0	79.0	81.2	83.4	85.1	1.7	6.1	70.7	72.0	73.7	76.2	78.2	2.0	7.5
AT-RISK STUDENTS														
Reading							Mathematics							
					Gain							Gain		
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98
Grade 3	69.7	69.7	70.5	72.1	76.2	4.1	6.5	62.0	66.2	69.5	73.0	72.5	-0.5	10.5
Grade 4	70.3	72.4	70.2	71.4	76.5	5.1	6.2	62.8	66.8	69.8	72.0	73.6	1.6	10.8
Grade 5	71.3	71.7	72.5	74.8	76.9	2.1	5.6	63.6	67.2	70.0	74.0	75.7	1.7	12.1
Grade 6	69.8	72.4	71.9	73.7	73.6	-0.1	3.8	62.5	64.5	69.4	71.1	73.4	2.3	10.9
Grade 7	70.1	70.4	73.0	72.5	72.6	0.1	2.5	62.0	62.5	66.8	69.2	70.4	1.2	8.4
Grade 8	70.7	69.3	70.6	72.6	73.4	0.8	2.7	62.5	60.5	64.6	67.3	70.7	3.4	8.2
Grade 10	69.5	71.1	73.1	75.6	77.5	1.9	8.0	61.8	63.9	65.6	67.9	70.3	2.4	8.5
NOT AT-RISK STUDENTS														
Reading							Mathematics							
					Gain							Gain		
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	97-98	94-98
Grade 3	81.0	80.6	81.2	82.2	84.3	2.1	3.3	73.0	75.6	78.8	80.2	80.0	-0.2	7.0
Grade 4	83.5	85.0	84.7	85.5	88.0	2.5	4.5	75.2	79.6	81.1	82.4	82.9	0.5	7.7
Grade 5	85.2	85.8	87.0	88.8	89.3	0.5	4.1	77.2	80.2	82.0	84.2	85.2	1.0	8.0
Grade 6	83.2	84.9	86.1	88.2	88.4	0.2	5.2	75.0	78.3	81.6	82.9	83.8	0.9	8.8
Grade 7	83.7	84.2	86.0	87.0	87.0	0.0	3.3	76.3	77.9	80.9	81.9	83.3	1.4	7.0
Grade 8	84.5	84.3	85.6	86.8	88.0	1.2	3.5	77.0	76.5	79.7	81.9	82.5	0.6	5.5
Grade 10	83.1	82.8	83.9	85.9	87.2	1.3	4.1	75.3	76.9	77.2	79.7	81.2	1.5	5.9

Increases in average TLI scores for **mathematics** were registered by LEP students at all grades except Grade 3, which showed a slight decline of 0.4 points; the greatest 1997-1998 gain (3.3 points) was registered at Grade 8. Average 1998 TLI scores for LEP students ranged from 66.1 at Grade 10 to 76.8 at Grade 5; the largest four-year gain was an increase of 15.2 points at Grade 5. The average 1998 TLI scores of non-LEP students ranged from 78.2 at Grade 10 to 82.5 at Grade 5, with the greatest four-year gain (11.0 points) at Grade 5.

In comparing 1997 and 1998 TLI averages of at-risk students in **reading**, gains were recorded at all grade levels except Grade 6, which exhibited a decline of 0.1 points. Grade 4 achieved the largest gain compared to 1997, with an increase of 5.1 points. Average TLI scores for the at-risk students in 1998 ranged from 72.6 at Grade 7 to 77.5 at Grade 10. The largest gain between 1994 and 1998 was an increase of 8.0 points at Grade 10. The average TLI scores of not at-risk students ranged from 84.3 at Grade 3 to 89.3 at Grade 5, with the greatest four-year gain (5.2 points) posted at Grade 6.

In **mathematics**, gains in average TLI scores for at-risk students continued their upward trend at all grade levels except for a decline of 0.5 points at Grade 3; the greatest 1997-1998 gain (3.4 points) was registered at Grade 8. Average TLI scores for at-risk students in 1998 ranged from 70.3 at Grade 10 to 75.7 at Grade 5. The largest four-year gain was an increase of 12.1 points at Grade 5. The average TLI scores of not at-risk students ranged from 80.0 at Grade 3 to 85.2 at Grade 5, with the greatest four-year gain (8.8 points) at Grade 6.

A Study of the Correlation of Course Grades with Student Performance on the Grade 8 TAAS Social Studies Test

Texas Education Code, §39.182(a)(4), mandates biennial studies to evaluate the correlation between student grades and student performance on state-mandated assessment instruments. To comply with this statute, the Texas Education Agency has conducted periodic studies to determine the relationship between a student's classroom performance and his/her scores on statewide criterion-referenced assessments.

This section describes a study completed in 1997 which compares specific end-of-year social studies course grades of eighth-grade students with their pass/fail rates on the TAAS Grade 8 social studies test. Only students enrolled in the course described as "social studies, Grade 8" in the state-mandated curriculum were considered in this study. Passing the Grade 8 TAAS social studies test is defined as attaining a scale score of at least 1500. One large urban district, one small urban district, one rural district, and two large suburban districts, each representing a different region of the state, volunteered to participate in this study. District assistance with this study was critical since data representing specific final grades for Grade 8 social studies are not available through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). All five districts used a numeric grading scale. For this study, the numerical grades were transformed into letter grades using the following scale:

A	=	90 – 100
B	=	80 – 89
C	=	70 – 79
D	=	60 – 69
F	=	below 60

Each district provided data for the TAAS social studies test administered in May 1997 and for the social studies course completed in May 1997. The purpose of this case study is to examine the relationship between pass/fail rates of eighth graders on TAAS social studies and the specific letter grades issued to those same students at the end of their social studies course. This study is not intended to represent statewide patterns.

Large Urban District

This large urban district administered the May 1997 TAAS Grade 8 social studies test to more than 10,400 students who were also enrolled in Grade 8 social studies during the 1996-1997 school year. Fifty-two percent of these students were Hispanic, 32 percent were African American, 11 percent were white, and 3 percent were Asian. In addition, more than 51 percent were classified as economically disadvantaged, and 45 percent were identified as at risk of dropping out of school.

As shown in Figure 1.3, the higher the letter grade a student received in the Grade 8 social studies

course, the more likely it was that he or she passed the TAAS social studies test. For example, students who received a final grade of A or B passed at rates of 79 and 61 percent, respectively. Similarly, the lower the letter grade, the more likely it was that a student failed the test: 27 percent of students who received an F in Grade 8 social studies passed the TAAS social studies test, and 30 percent who received a D passed the test.

Small Urban District

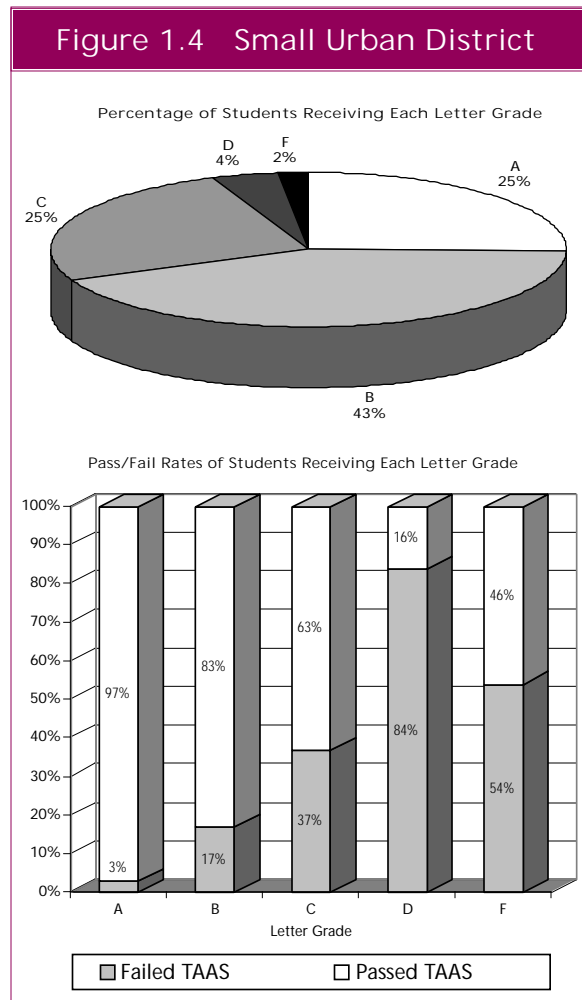
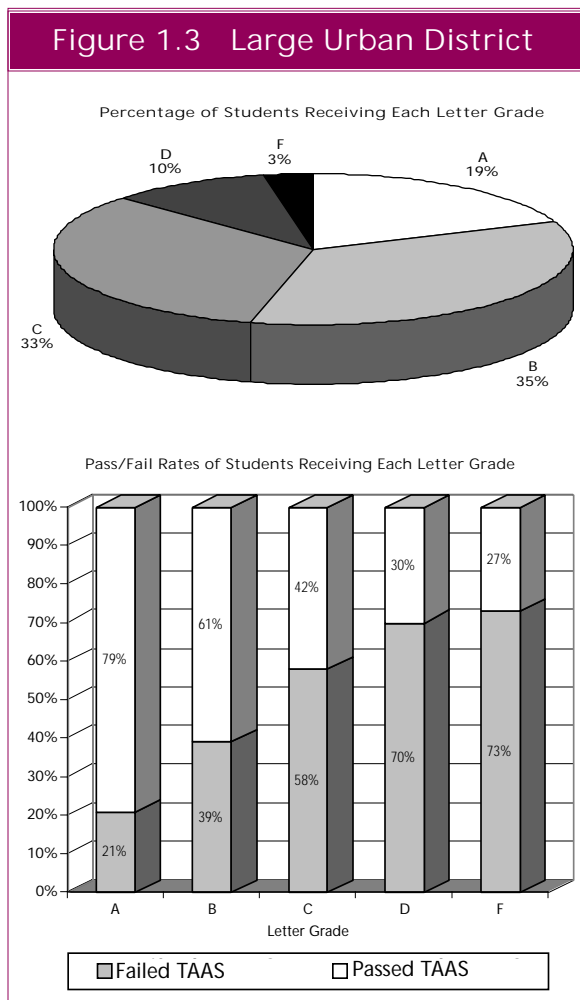
This district administered the May 1997 TAAS Grade 8 social studies test to approximately 750 students who were also enrolled in the Grade 8 social studies course during the 1996-1997 school year. Approximately 64 percent of these students were white, 16 percent were Hispanic, 15 percent were African American, and almost 3 percent were Asian. In addition, more than 39 percent of these students were classified as economically disadvan-

aged and 33 percent were at risk of dropping out of school.

As shown in Figure 1.4, the higher the letter grade a student received in the Grade 8 social studies course, the more likely it was that he or she passed the TAAS social studies test: 97 percent of students receiving an A, 83 percent receiving a B, and 63 percent receiving a C passed the TAAS social studies test. Only 16 percent of students receiving a D in the Grade 8 social studies course passed the TAAS social studies test; however, nearly half (46 percent) of students receiving an F in the course passed the TAAS.

Rural District

This district administered the May 1997 TAAS Grade 8 social studies test to over 700 students who were also enrolled in Grade 8 social studies during the 1996-1997 school year. More than 96 percent of these students were Hispanic, and 3



percent were white. Also, 87 percent of the students were classified as economically disadvantaged, and 41 percent were identified as at risk of dropping out of school.

As shown in Figure 1.5, students earning higher grades in the course did progressively better on the TAAS test: 23 percent who earned a C passed the test, 64 percent who earned a B passed the test, and 92 percent who earned an A passed the test. Students whose performance in the social studies course earned a grade lower than C were less likely to pass the TAAS social studies test: only 6 percent of students who received an F or a D for the Grade 8 social studies course passed the Grade 8 TAAS social studies test.

Large Suburban District I

This large suburban district administered the May 1997 TAAS Grade 8 social studies test to more than 3,200 students who were also enrolled in Grade 8

social studies during the 1996-1997 school year. More than 65 percent of these students were white, 16 percent were Hispanic, 9 percent were African American, and 8 percent were Asian. In addition, more than 14 percent of the students were classified as economically disadvantaged, and 19 percent were identified as at risk of dropping out of school.

As shown in Figure 1.6, students earning higher grades in the course did progressively better on the TAAS test: 64 percent who earned a C passed the test, 84 percent who earned a B passed the test, and 97 percent who earned an A passed the test. Students whose performance in the social studies course earned a D or F were less likely to pass the TAAS social studies test; 30 percent of students who received an F for the Grade 8 social studies course passed the Grade 8 TAAS social studies test, and 40 percent of students receiving a D in the course passed the test.

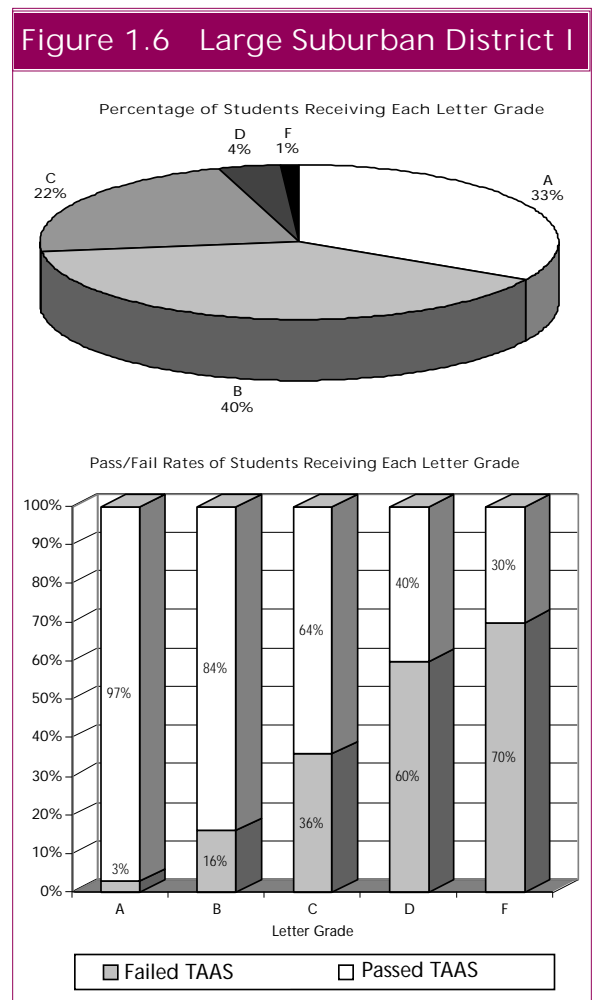
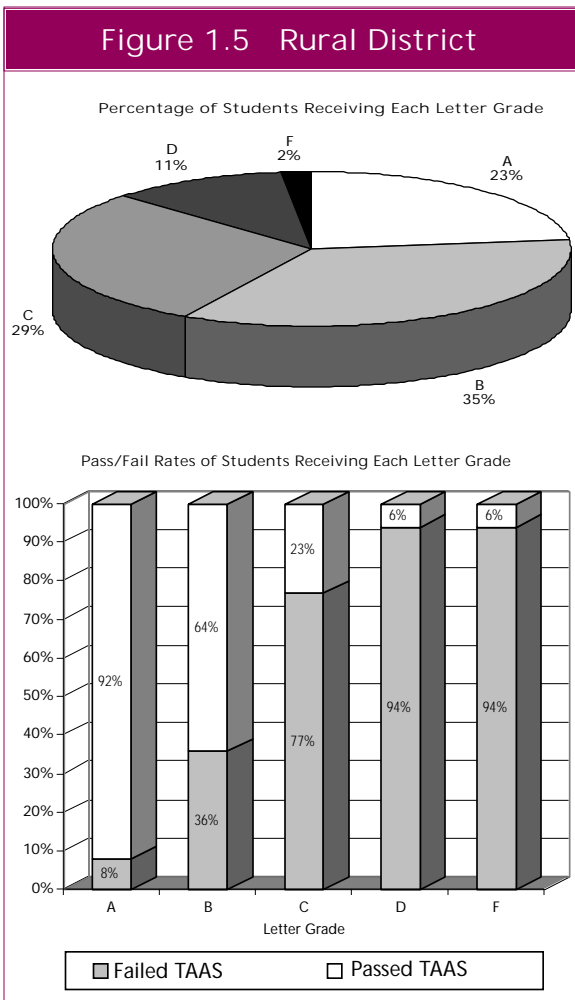
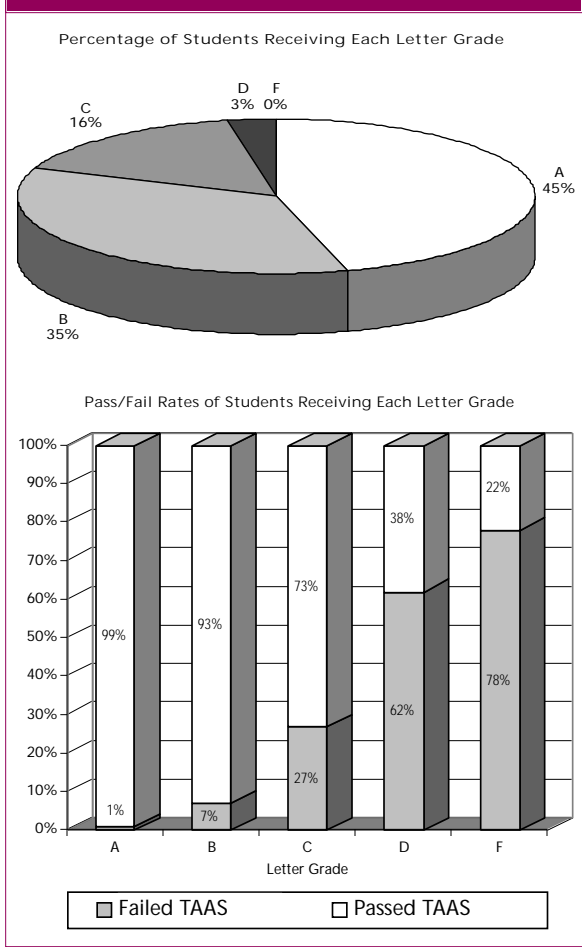


Figure 1.7 Large Suburban District II



Large Suburban District II

This large suburban district administered the May 1997 TAAS Grade 8 social studies test to nearly 3,000 students who were also enrolled in Grade 8 social studies during the 1996-1997 school year. More than 77 percent of these students were white, 11 percent were Asian, 6 percent were Hispanic, and 6 percent were African American. More than 6 percent of the students were classified as economically disadvantaged, and 10 percent were identified as at risk of dropping out of school.

As shown in Figure 1.7, students earning higher grades in the course did progressively better on the TAAS test: 73 percent who earned a C passed the test, 93 percent who earned a B passed the test, and 99 percent who earned an A passed the test. Students whose performance in the social studies course earned a grade lower than C were less likely to pass the TAAS social studies test. For example, 22 percent of students who received an F for the Grade 8 social studies course passed the Grade 8 TAAS social studies test, and 38 percent of students receiving a D in the course passed the test.

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Other Sources of Information

Texas Student Assessment Program: Student Performance Results, 1997-98, and Texas Student Assessment Program Technical Digest, published by the Student Assessment Division, available in early 1999.