Gap Analysis 2008

Executive Summary

The North Texas P-16 Council published its first Gap Analysis Report in 2003 and updated Gap Analysis in each subsequent year. These documents present an overview of the gaps in achievement and other non-academic indicators for PK-16 students in the Dallas/Fort Worth region. Each year's report or update has grown in the breadth and depth of the information presented. The 2008 Gap Analysis Report is similar to the previous one to report the data and findings in graphs rather than in tables. It continues to use the combo box along with the graph to enable the users to view indicators by district membership or other applicable entities.

Although the 2008 GAP Analysis Report builds on the work of the earlier reports in general, it departs from earlier documents significantly in an effort to identify the trends by utilizing additional relevant longitudinal data. In addition, the 12 core data elements provided by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) P-16 Initiatives guide the GAP Analysis in 2008. Thus, some topics in the earlier reports such as Teacher Supply are not included in the current report.

As demonstrated in the section of demographic profiles for this report in Part 1, over 77% of the PK-12 students in the 14 school districts in the North Texas Regional Council are non-Anglo in the school year of 2007-2008. African American and Hispanic students made up 74% of the student body. In addition, students in the 14 ISDs have become more economically disadvantaged with an annual growth rate over 1% for the past six years. Increasing student diversity is not confined to the large urban school districts only, smaller urban districts and suburban/rural areas are also seeing increased diversity.

Data for the report were taken from a variety of sources. THECB P-16 Initiatives chose 12 core common data elements and provided data to its member regional councils. These data files from the THECB P-16 Initiatives are the primary source, and they serve as the foundation for organizing this report. To identify the trends, the 2008 GAP Analysis Report makes an effort to locate other publicly available longitudinal data related to the 12 data elements by THECB. The utilized sources include the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), the Lone Star Report System, and the Reports from of the Division of Accountability Research of the Texas Education Agency. Texas Higher Education Data from THECB are used as well. Data are also extracted from Texas PK-16 Public Education Information Resources, a cross-agency project by the Texas Education Agency and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. This executive summary offers highlights of

the 2008 report. The previous reports and the current detailed report are available at our website at www.coe.unt.edu/NTP16.

Overview of the Demographic Profiles

The first part of this report intends to provide the contextual references for the 2008 GAP analysis, in addition to this executive summary and the introduction. It contains three major components: the general socio-demography in the surrounding four North Texas counties, the school district and student demographic profiles, and accountability rating and adequate yearly progress in the 14 member school districts. Each component starts with the most recently available data as the snapshot, followed by a trend analysis on the changes over the past years.

For the general population in 2008, only Dallas county had higher ratio of African Americans and Hispanics than the state. The other three North Texas counties all had higher percentage of Anglo American than the state. The Dallas county also was the only one with higher percentage of economically disadvantaged and LEP persons than the state. On population change from 2000 to 2008, the two small counties (Collin and Denton) had grown at least two times faster than the two large counties (i.e., Dallas and Tarrant) and the state. Most importantly, all counties but Dallas had changed faster than the state on the ratio of the under-represented population.

On the school district and student demographic profiles, the 14 ISDs in the North Texas Regional Council made up about 10% of the total PK-12 student population in the state in 2008. Quite different from the picture in the general population, the regional council had over 77% percentage of PK-12 students from the minority, economically disadvantaged, or LEP background, almost 12% higher than the state in 2008. Moreover, the regional council had a faster growth rate of the students from the under-represented families between 2002 and 2008 than the state, especially in the small school districts.

On both accountability rating and AYP, the regional council was slightly below the state in 2007-2008. It had a higher percentage of academically unacceptable or missed AYP. The change trend between 2004 and 2008 also demonstrated that the state as a whole performed better than the regional council on accountability rating. Only five out of the 14 ISDs in the regional council had a net positive annual growth rate on accountability rating from 2004 to 2008. Whereas the regional council collectively had a similar annual growth rate on met AYP or missed AYP to that in the state from 2004 to 2008, several districts had changed much faster than the council or the state in the undesirable direction.

Overview of PK-5 Findings

The second part of this report covers the public Pre-K enrollment in 2007-2008, first graders meeting standards for 2nd grade by the end of 1st grade for Reading and Mathematics in 2006-2007, TAKS performances in Grade 3 Reading, Grade 4 Writing, and Grade 5 Mathematics on meeting the minimum passing and commended standards in 2007-2008. In addition, this reports tracks the change trend on meeting the passing standards on TAKS in Grade 3 Reading, Grade 4 Writing, and Grade 5 Mathematics from 2002-2003 to 2007-2008.

The total public Pre-K enrollment was usually proportional to the district size. Most of the enrolled 4-year olds were from the African American, Hispanic, and/or economically disadvantaged familial backgrounds. The percentage of total enrollment in Pre-K was typically about 4% of the total PK-12 student size in the districts, less than that in every other elementary grade including kindergarten. Although some of the qualified children may enroll in the Head Start program elsewhere, it is still possible that others missed the early childhood education opportunities. The change trend on the total enrollment from 2004 to 2008 was growing. The average annual growth rate was 4% in the regional council, and small districts had grown faster.

In 1st grade, the North Texas Regional Council overall was comparable to the state on meeting the grade level in Reading. Both were 84%. Nevertheless, the regional council was lower than the state in Mathematics, with 6% more of struggling children. The two biggest ISDs (Dallas and Fort Worth) in the council consistently had the high percentages of 1st graders struggling in both Reading and Mathematics.

In 3rd grade Reading, 4th grade Writing, and 5th grade Mathematics, the regional council was consistently lower than the state on the percentages of meeting both the passing and commended standards, usually 2-4% lower. The lower percentages in the regional council were largely contributory to the low performances of the African American, Hispanic, or economically disadvantaged groups. These three groups, which had similar percentages, were always dramatically than the White and Asian/Pacific Islander groups. In addition, several districts (DeSoto, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Lancaster) were found to have consistently low percentages in the council on meeting both of the standards. But since these ISDs had high percentages of African American, Hispanic, or low SES students, these two findings may signal the same message. Finally, the gap between districts appeared to be more evident in 5th grade Mathematics than in 3rd grade Reading or 4th grade Writing.

When tracking the change over the 6-year period from 2002-2003 to 2007-2008 on the percentage of meeting the passing standards in the collective and individual groups, it was found that the state, Regions 10 and 11, and most of the 14 ISDs had small positive average annual growth rates. The low performance education constituents or groups generally had higher annual growth rates than those with relatively high percentages. For instance, Region 10 was faster Region 11. The low performance districts had higher growth rates than the high performance ones. The Hispanic, African American, and low SES groups increased faster than

the White group. And the male group had a higher growth rate than the female in English Language Arts. However, contrary to this general trend, the female group grew slower than the male group in 5th grade Mathematics. This finding indicates that the gender gap on 5th Mathematics had become wider.

Overview of Secondary Education Findings

Part 3 of this report focuses on TAKS and non-TAKS indicator in secondary education. The TAKS indicators in middle school including 6th grade Reading and Mathematics, 7th grade Reading, Mathematics, and Writing, and 8th grade Reading, Mathematics, and Science in 2007-2008 were first examined. Then, the retention rates in 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 in Grades 6-12 were analyzed. Finally, five indicators at the high school level (9th grader taking 10th grade courses for Class of 2006-2007, first-time 9th grader advanced to 10th grade on time in 2006-2007, 12th graders taking advanced courses for Class of 2007-2008, the outcomes of the 9th grade cohort for Class of 2003-2004 in 2006-2007, and the changes of graduation plans from 1997-1998 to 2006-2007) were explored.

The TAKS scale scores at the middle school level for the regional council were found to be significantly lower than those for the state averages at least at the .01 level across the grade and subject area. The difference between the regional council and the state seemed to be larger on Mathematics and Science than on Reading and Writing, and larger in Grades 7-8 than in Grade 6. The analysis on the percentile ranks of the scale scores of 2100 and 2400 indicated that the regional council had higher percentage of students than the state on not meeting the passing standards across the grade and subject area. Nevertheless, these differences should be interpreted with caution as the practical significances were either trivial or small. Moreover, the earlier preliminary analysis, which treated Council 30 (the Dallas ISD) as an independent P-16 regional council but was not included in this report, found that the low TAKS scores in the Dallas ISD were the primary sources of the differences between the North Texas Regional Council and the state.

On retention rate, we expanded the original scope on Grades 6-8 in 2006-2007 from the THECB P-16 Initiatives to Grades 6-12 in 2005-2006 and 2006-2007. The retention rates in the middle school grades were generally less than 3% in the state, two ESC regions, and most of the 14 districts. But it suddenly climbed to 15% or higher in Grade 9, then dropped to about the half way of the pike in 9th grade in 10-12th grades. The African American, Hispanic, low SES, and male groups consistently had higher retention rates than the White and female groups. The retention rate was generally declining from 2005-2006 to 2006-2007. The differences between the state and the two ESC regions were not obvious, but some districts had relatively high retention rates across grade and time.

On first-time 9th grader taking 10th grade level courses, the White and Asian/Pacific Islander groups generally had percentages double or higher of those in the African American, Hispanic,

and low SES groups. It was interesting to notice that several low performance districts (e.g., Cedar Hill, Dallas, and Fort Worth) on other indicators in earlier grades had relatively high percentages in majority of the four ethnic and low SES groups, whereas the normally high performance districts such as McKinney, Plano, and Wylie did not have high percentages on this indicator. The exact reasons for this finding were unknown.

Overall, at least 79% of first-time 9th graders advanced to10th grade on time in 2006-2007 in the regional council. The African American, Hispanic, and low SES had similar percentages around 80%. The White and Asian/Pacific Islander groups were at least 94%. Four ISDs (Duncanville, Mesquite, Plano, and Richardson) had the relatively high percentages in the regional council across groups. The Dallas ISD was the only one with consistently lower percentages in every group than the council.

The percentage of 12th grade students taking advanced courses in 2007-2008 were low, less than 10% in each of the five groups. The White group appeared to have the highest percentage and the other four groups had similar percentages around 5-6%. The Cedar Hill and Irving ISDs had relatively high percentages in the regional council across the groups. Nevertheless, it should be noted that many districts had missing data on this indicator. Thus, the findings should be interpreted with caution.

The findings on the 9th grade cohort of 2003-2004 indicated that majority of the students graduated on RHSP and least number of graduates received GED in each individual group in the council. However, the group differences were evident on other outcomes. The African American, Hispanic, and low SES groups had higher percentages in the categories of MHP, continuers, and dropped out, and lower percentages on DAP than the White and Asian/Pacific Islander groups. The overall Completion Rate I for the African American, Hispanic, and low SES groups was slightly above 75%. But it was above or approaching to 95% for the Asian/Pacific Islander and White groups.

The analysis on the longitudinal data in 10 years from 1998 to 2007 on high school graduates' diploma types found that the state, the regional council, and the member districts all had the same change trend, that is, positive annual growth rates on RHSP, negative change rates on MHP/IEP, and virtually no changes on DAP. But, some districts improved faster than others across the diploma type.

Overview of Postsecondary Findings

The last part of this report concentrates on postsecondary education. Ten indicators were examined. The first six were on College-Ready: one for the percentage of College-Ready for both English Language Arts and Mathematics in 2006-2007 by district, three for the percentages of College-Ready for English Language Arts, Mathematics, or both in 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 in the collective and individual demographic groups, and two for the

percentages of TSI - Higher Education Readiness Component in English Language or Mathematics from 2004 to 2008 by demographic or collective group. The next two indicators were on college enrollment: percentage of high school students that enrolled directly into higher education in the fall following graduation in Class of 2007, and percentage of various types of higher education institutions that high school students enrolled in the fall following graduation in Class of 2002. The last two were on graduation from higher education: percentage of high school graduates that earned higher education degree or certificate in six years or less in Classes of 1999, 2000, and 2001, and percentage of universities that conferred the baccalaureate degree.

On College-Ready for both English Language Arts and Mathematics in 2007, the regional council and the state had the similar percentage of 37%. Regions 10 and 11 were 3% and 5% higher than the state, respectively. The two ESC regions were also about 2-4% higher than the state on English Language Arts or Mathematics in 2005-2006 and 2006-2007. The state and the two ESC regions generally had increased about 2% from 2006 to 2007. Region 11 appeared to be slightly faster than Region 10, and the increase in Mathematics was larger than in English Language Arts. The White and Asian groups were significantly higher than the African American, Hispanic, and low SES groups across the school years and subject areas. For the group difference on gender factor, whereas the female graduates were lower than the male peers on Mathematics, they outperformed the male counterparts on English Language Arts. When combined, the female group was about 2% higher than the male group on College-Ready in the two school years. The 5-year longitudinal data on TSI - Higher Education Readiness Component from 2004 to 2008 indicated that both the state and Regions 10 and 11 had increased in both English Language Arts and Mathematics. However, on this indicator, the annual growth rate for English Language Arts was about 3-4% higher than that for Mathematics, and Region 10 was slightly faster than Region 11.

On college enrollment, both the state and the council had more graduates enrolled than College-Ready. The enrollment rate in the regional council in Class of 2007 was 44%, 7% lower than that in the state. The college enrollment data indicated that majority of the trackable high school graduates enrolled into 4-year universities and local community colleges in Texas for the Class of 2001-2002 in the regional council and its member school districts. However, it should be noted that more than half of the high school graduates were non-trackable or not found in the Texas higher education system, including those enrolled in higher education elsewhere.

On graduation from higher education, only 21.8% and 21.7% students received a higher education degree or certificate within six years in Classes of 1999, 2000, and 2001 for the state and the regional council, respectively. Whereas the overall percentages of receiving degree or certificate were comparable between the regional council and the state, the North Texas Regional Council had higher percentage on associate and baccalaureate degrees and lower percentage on certificate than the state. For the higher education institutions offering the

baccalaureate degrees, six universities seemed to confer the most on high school graduates in the regional council. Among them, University of Texas at Austin, University of North Texas, and Texas A&M accounted for over 50% of the baccalaureate degrees offered.