

Connecting the Dots
INAUGURAL SCORECARD 2018

GOOD REASON HOUSTON

Every Child. Every Neighborhood.

More than 900,000 children call Harris County home — children who will be future innovators, scientists, teachers, and parents. Ensuring all 900,000 young Houstonians can grow up to be whatever they want to be is our collective responsibility.

The reality, however, is most children in Houston are not receiving the education they deserve. While 65% of jobs now require more than a high school education, only 20% of our students are on track to receive a postsecondary credential.

This means 720,000 children in our schools today will not be prepared for the Houston of tomorrow. **This is unacceptable.**

This inaugural publication of *Connecting the Dots* aims to ground us in the current reality. It is a look at 10 key indicators that track student progress from early childhood through postsecondary education. By knowing our starting point, we can build a pathway to a brighter future.

There is no one solution or path forward, but we believe that in a region of entrepreneurs, pioneers, and leaders, we can find innovative solutions to transform our education system.

We have 900,000 good reasons to get this right.



Letter from the Chief Executive Officer:

In 2016, a group of visionary leaders in the Houston community united around the idea that Houston prospers when every Houstonian prospers. To ensure Houston is an extraordinary place to live and work, this group, which included leaders from the Houston Endowment, the Kinder Foundation, and the Greater Houston Partnership, responded to a groundswell of community sentiments on the need to dramatically accelerate educational progress for each and every child.

This group of individuals looked around the country and learned that cities making the fastest progress had created a central nonprofit to set a region-wide vision and coordinate efforts in pursuit of that vision. From this idea, Good Reason Houston was founded.

I was honored to join the organization in the fall of 2017, and since then, I have had the privilege of learning from hundreds of educators, parents, and community leaders. The insights gained from these conversations helped our team design an organization for Houston built by Houstonians. As these conversations continued, one shared belief became evident — that every child, in every neighborhood, deserves a world-class education.

With this vision in mind, the Good Reason Houston team spent 2018 building a strong foundation for the organization. We knew our work must begin by understanding the current reality for our students, and so it is my privilege to share our 2018 *Connecting the Dots* scorecard, featuring data on Harris County's education pipeline. We hope this serves as a catalyst for our community as we partner to ensure all children achieve their dreams.

Our efforts to make an impact started on a small scale, but we look forward to expanding our reach in the coming year. This publication provides a glimpse into three initial efforts launched in partnership with school districts, including region-wide campaigns for pre-K enrollment, FAFSA completion, and teacher recruitment. We are eager to build upon this preliminary work in collaboration with our schools, educators, parents, and community leaders.

As the fourth largest city in the country, the stakes in Houston are high, and our efforts must be strategic and urgent. We need you to join us in this effort to ensure that every child, in every neighborhood, excels in a world-class public school and thrives in the Houston of tomorrow.

With gratitude and hope,

Alex

Alex Hales Elizondo



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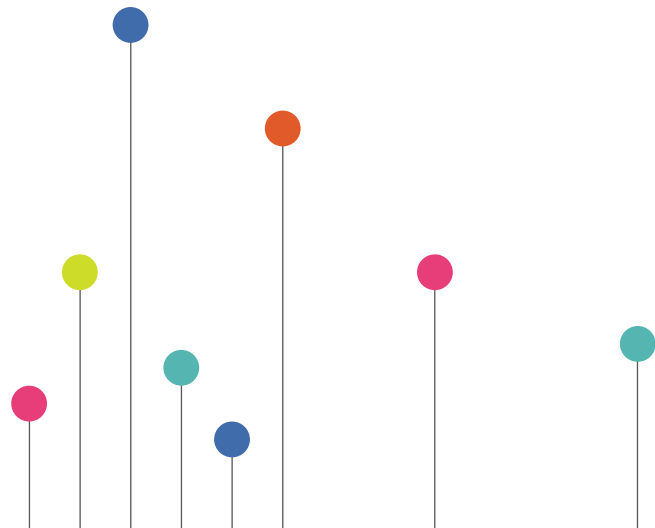
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The Harris County Story

Our overwhelming strength is our diversity, and yet we have struggled to address the high levels of inequity in Harris County. It is time for us to create opportunities for every child, in every neighborhood, to succeed.

900,000

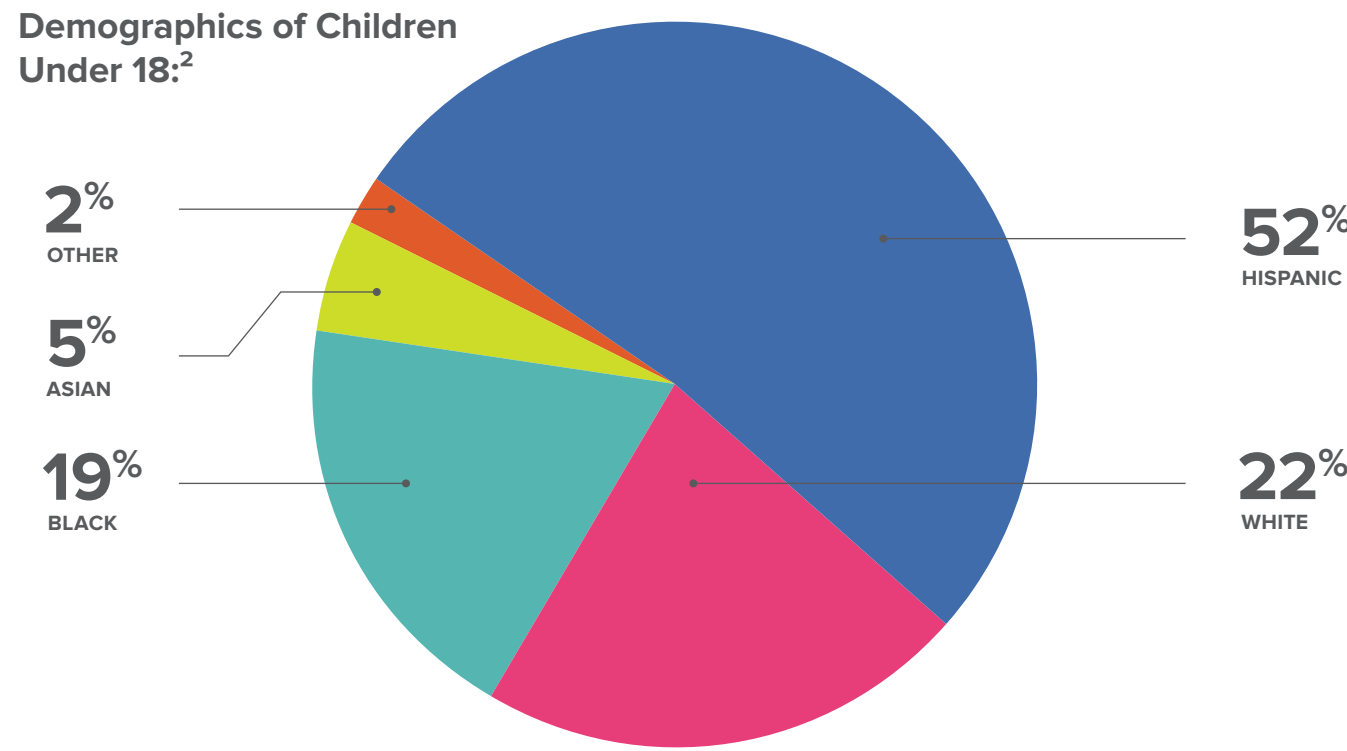
PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS

in Harris County¹

145

LANGUAGES

spoken at home²



63%

of students in public schools, or 570,000 students, are economically disadvantaged.¹

Economically disadvantaged is defined as students who qualify for free and reduced lunch.

1 in 4 kids in Harris County, or 305,000 kids, live in poverty.²

Poverty is defined as an annual income of \$25,000 or less for a family of four.

Only 1 in 5 students in Harris County earn a postsecondary credential.³

A postsecondary credential is a 4-year degree, 2-year degree, or technical certification.

1 in 8

LOW-INCOME 8TH GRADERS

complete a postsecondary credential.³

At this pace,

720,000 KIDS

in Harris County schools today are not on-track to receive a postsecondary credential that will position them to earn a living wage.



About Good Reason Houston

Our mission is to increase the number of students succeeding in high-quality schools today and thriving in the workforce tomorrow.

We start by listening to students, parents, and educators, analyzing student achievement data, consulting national research, and studying outcomes from evidence-based practices. These learnings inform the design of solutions and strategies that aim to:



GROW GREAT SCHOOLS

We aspire to create more high-quality school options for Houston's students. We do this by partnering with school districts to improve existing schools as well as supporting the introduction of new school models. We provide strategic consulting to superintendents and their senior teams with the aim of increasing the number of A & B schools in their district.



DEVELOP GAME-CHANGING EDUCATORS

We aim to fill every school with game-changing educators who are prepared and continuously supported to maximize their impact. We work to develop teachers and principals through both region-wide initiatives and targeted strategies.



ADVANCE EQUITABLE ACCESS

We strive to ensure parents and students have access to the information they need to make informed decisions about educational opportunities. Our work starts with our youngest students, and continues beyond high school as we foster equitable access to high-quality education options.



Measuring What Matters

This *Connecting the Dots* report measures key data points from early childhood through postsecondary completion. It is important we understand the current state of education in Harris County and have a way to measure and track our progress over time. We selected 10 key indicators to track year over year so we can intentionally drive toward specific targets for our students.

Key Indicators

On pages 12 and 13 you will see an overview of all 10 indicators. On the following pages (denoted with orange tabs), we take a deeper dive into the indicators, and look at the racial and socio-economic disparity that is our current reality. By taking a closer look at all student groups, we can identify solutions to reach every child.

Good Reason Houston Initiatives

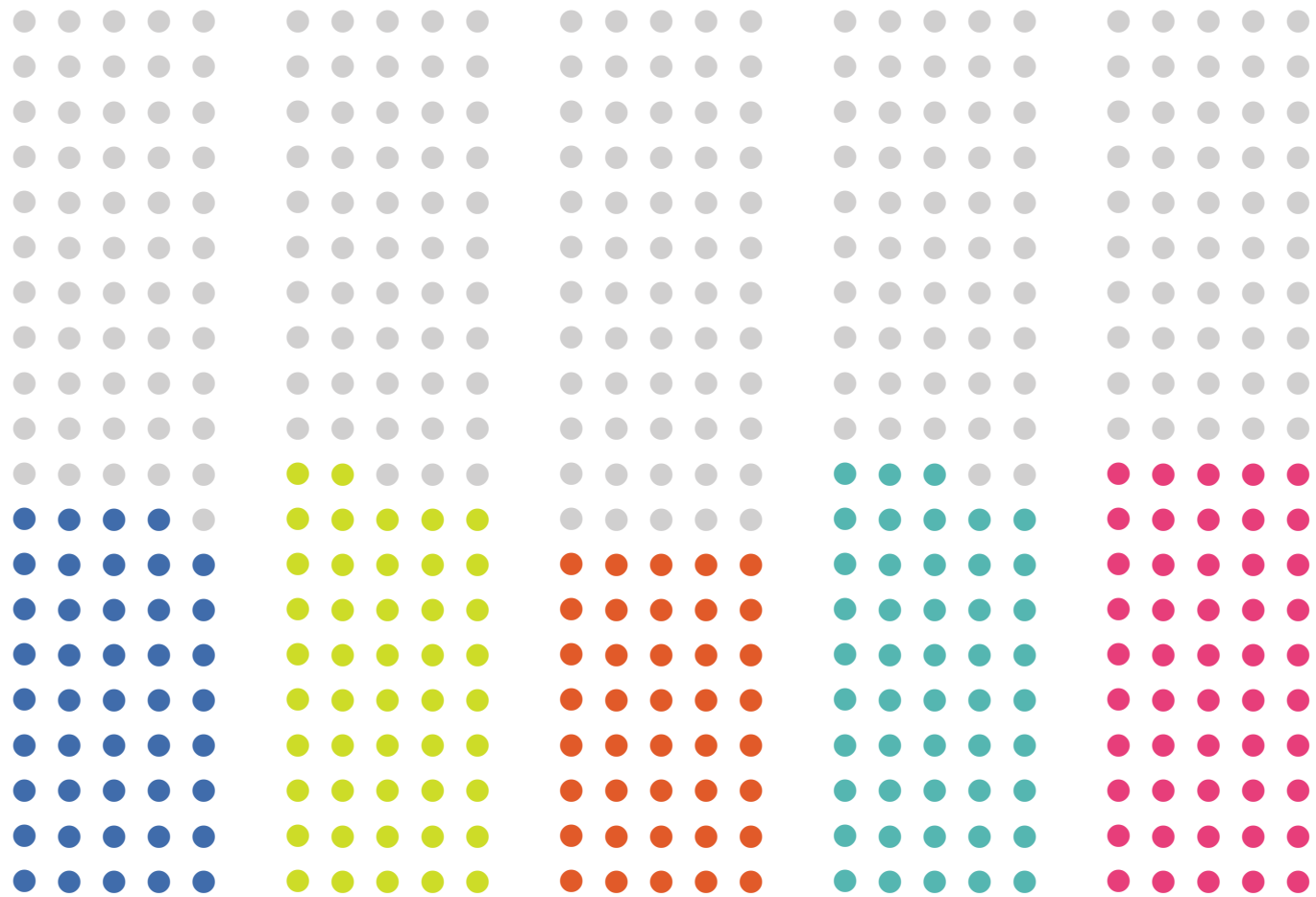
The Good Reason Houston Initiatives sections (denoted with teal tabs) preview the strategies Good Reason Houston has launched. While this report does not include all of our 2018–19 school year initiatives, we believe these strategies are foundational and critical to accelerating progress on our key indicators.

Key Indicators: Measuring What Matters for Students

Harris County

The data below is gathered from publicly available sources indicated in the footnotes.

With 1 in 5 Texas children being educated in Harris County, it is imperative we improve these outcomes for the future of our region and our entire state.



44% 47% 40% 48% 50%

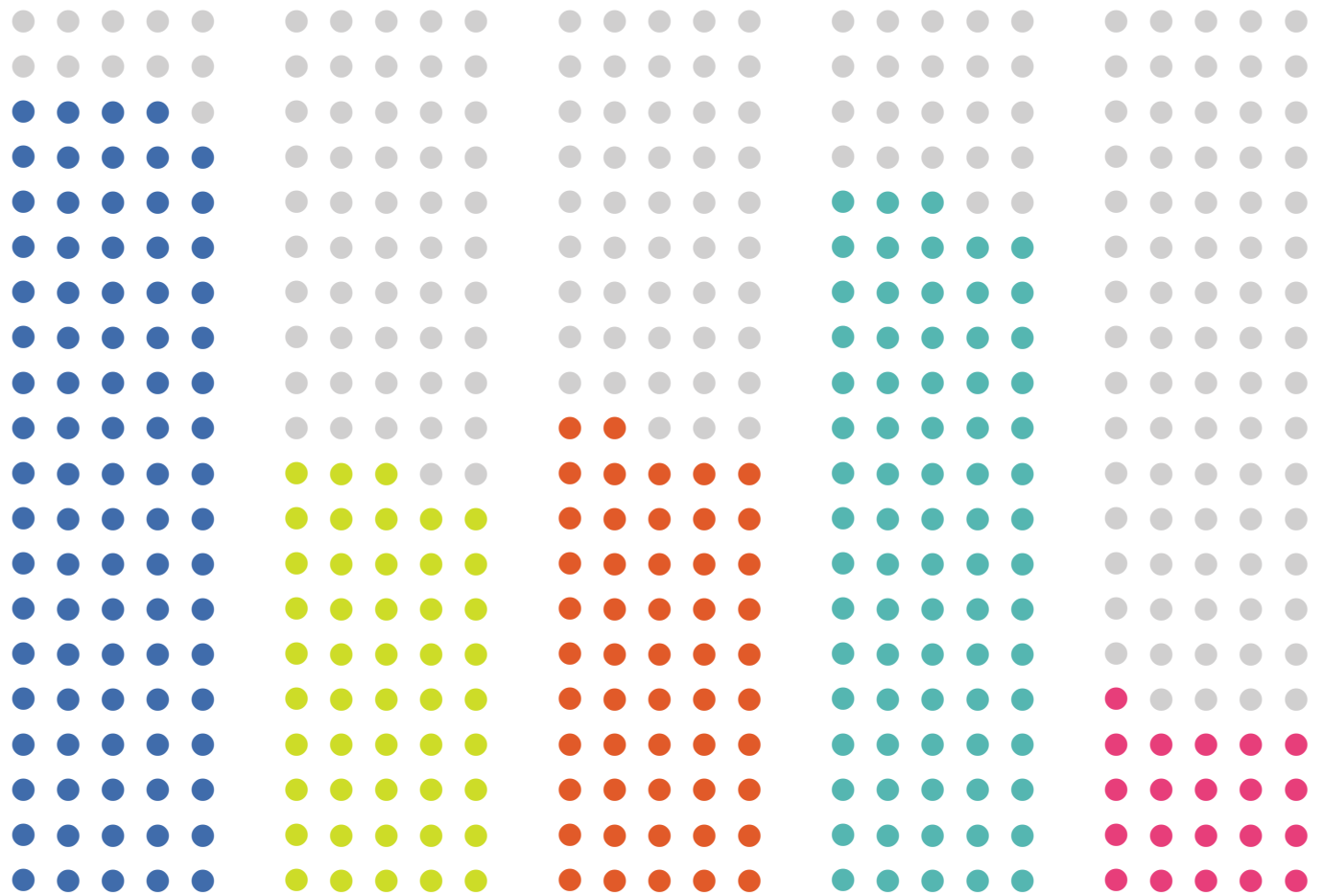
PRE-K ENROLLMENT
Percentage of eligible 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in public pre-K; total number of pre-K eligible students estimated based on the number of first-graders who were eligible for pre-K¹

KINDER-READY
Percentage of kindergarteners who meet standard on district assessments conducted within the first 60 days of the school year¹

3RD GRADE READING
Percentage of students who achieve at "Meets Grade Level or Above" on STAAR by answering at least 76% of questions correctly²

4TH GRADE MATH
Percentage of students who achieve at "Meets Grade Level or Above" on STAAR by answering at least 74% of questions correctly²

8TH GRADE SCIENCE
Percentage of students who achieve at "Meets Grade Level or Above" on STAAR by answering at least 71% of questions correctly²



89% 48% 52% 78% 21%

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION
Percentage of 2013–14 9th grade cohort who started and graduated high school within four years³

POSTSECONDARY READINESS
Percentage of 2017 graduates who meet or exceed the college-ready criteria on the TSIA, SAT, ACT, or by earning credit for a college prep course⁴

POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT
Percentage of 2017 high school graduates who enrolled in a higher education institution within one year of graduation⁵

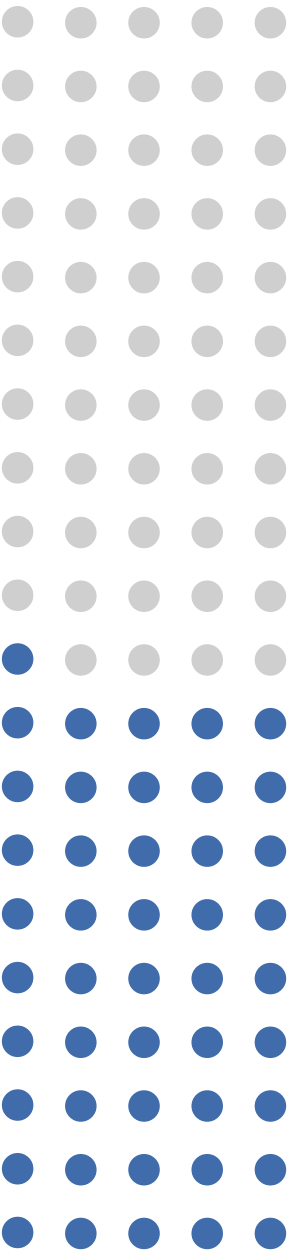
POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE
Percentage of 2016 high school graduates who enrolled and then returned for a second year of higher education⁶

POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION
Percentage of FY 2008 8th grade cohort who received a certificate or degree from a Texas college or university within six years of high school graduation⁷

Kindergarten Readiness

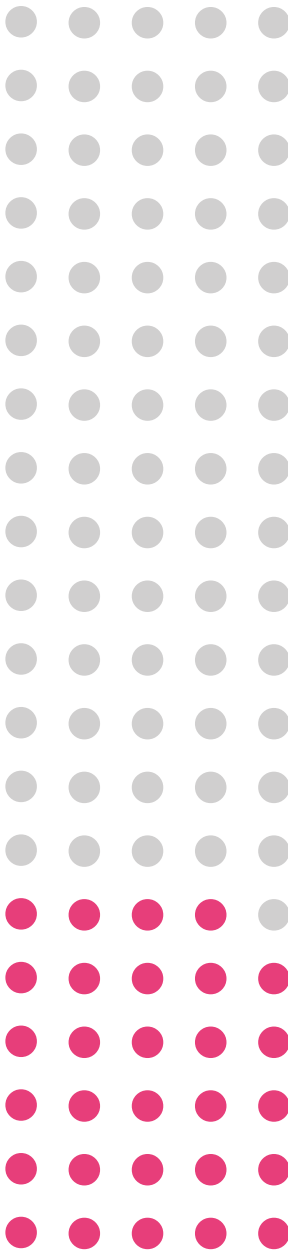
Readiness by Pre-K Attendance

Kinder-Ready
and **DID**
attend pre-K



46%

Kinder-Ready
and **DID NOT**
attend pre-K



29%

Pre-K plays a critical role in ensuring students start strong in kindergarten. Specifically, quality early education positively impacts students' social, emotional, and academic development. With 90% of brain development occurring by age 5, early education experiences impact children for the rest of their lives.¹

Students who start school ready for kindergarten are more likely to be reading on grade level in third grade, which is an early indicator of future academic success.² In contrast, students who are not reading on grade level by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of school.³

Quality early learning experiences for students mean a lower risk of repeating a grade, lower unemployment rates, and fewer teen pregnancies.⁴

Students who attend pre-K are better equipped for school when they enter kindergarten than their peers who do not, and the effects of pre-K are even larger for economically disadvantaged students and dual language learners.

A 2017 study of HISD pre-K showed that dual language learners who attended HISD pre-K were three times more likely to be ready for school than students who were not enrolled in the district's pre-K.⁵

Access to high-quality pre-K must be a collective priority to ensure students have a strong start.

KINDER-READY

Percentage of kindergarteners who meet standard on district assessments conducted within the first 60 days of the school year

Pre-K Enrollment Campaign

Good Reason Houston launched a small-scale pre-K enrollment campaign in 2018, which expanded for spring 2019 to a region-wide campaign.



44,000
OF OUR 3- & 4-YEAR-OLDS

are eligible for free, public pre-K and
are **not** currently enrolled
in any form of pre-K.⁶

As part of the 2019 pre-K Houston campaign, more than 25 school districts aligned around a common enrollment period from April 29 to May 3, 2019.

Currently, only 55% of Harris County children who qualify for free pre-K are enrolled in a private or public pre-K program.⁶

The region-wide campaign, which includes advertising, social media, and direct district outreach, encourages parents to visit PreKHouston.org, a website designed to help families determine their eligibility for free pre-K, find a program near them, and navigate the enrollment process.

PREKHOUSTON.ORG

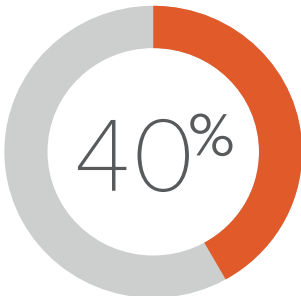
(1) Brain Development in Children and Adolescents: Insights from Anatomical Magnetic Resonance Imaging 2006
(2) Dallas ISD 2011–12; E3 Alliance 2016 (3) Early Warning! Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters 2010

(4) The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study 1993, 2004 (5) The Benefits of HISD Pre-Kindergarten 2017
(6) TPEIR 2018; Head Start Provider and Workforce Solutions Data from the Early Matters Council 2018

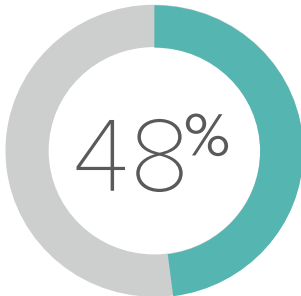
Postsecondary Readiness

STAAR Indicators

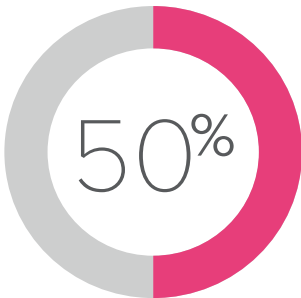
By third grade, Harris County students are not on track to be college-ready. This gap persists through high school, with fewer than half of 2017 graduates prepared for a postsecondary education.



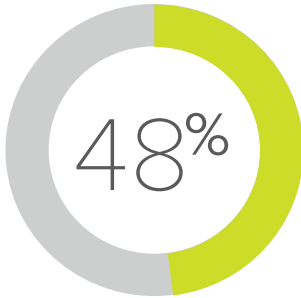
3rd Grade Reading¹



4th Grade Math¹



8th Grade Science¹



Postsecondary Readiness²

3RD GRADE READING

Percentage of students who achieve at "Meets Grade Level or Above" on STAAR by answering at least 76% of questions correctly

4TH GRADE MATH

Percentage of students who achieve at "Meets Grade Level or Above" on STAAR by answering at least 74% of questions correctly

8TH GRADE SCIENCE

Percentage of students who achieve at "Meets Grade Level or Above" on STAAR by answering at least 71% of questions correctly

POSTSECONDARY READINESS

Percentage of 2017 graduates who meet or exceed the college-ready criteria on the TSIA, SAT, ACT, or by earning credit for a college prep course

Teachers are a top factor influencing student outcomes, and our districts' ability to recruit and retain extraordinary teachers and principals will have a lasting impact on students. In order to transform the future for Harris County students, we must recruit, train, and continuously support game-changing educators in every classroom and school across our region.

Raising the quality of the teacher in a single grade creates positive, life-long results for students, including:³



Increased probability of college attendance at age 20



Increased quality of the college that a student attends



Increased earning trajectories once students reach their 20s

Game-Changing Educators

Good Reason Houston joins our partners and school districts in addressing the growing teacher crisis in Houston.

Across the nation and in Harris County, we face a teacher recruitment crisis. Fewer teachers are entering the profession, and more are leaving the profession at exponential rates. The problem is not getting any easier — 54% of Americans say that they would not want their child to become a public school teacher.⁴ Teacher attrition costs our region time, money, and most importantly, has a long-term detrimental impact on students.

Teacher turnover costs

\$54M

to Harris County school districts every year.⁵

Local districts hire

10,000

teachers every year, 50% of whom are new to the profession.⁶



Good Reason Houston believes great schools are built by great teachers and leaders, so our beginning human capital initiatives focus on attracting and retaining high-quality educators to our local school districts.

In spring 2019, we launched TEACHforHouston.org, an online platform to attract strong teacher candidates to Houston and help them navigate the certification process. The platform profiles districts and educator prep programs and provides one-on-one support for candidates who seek certification.

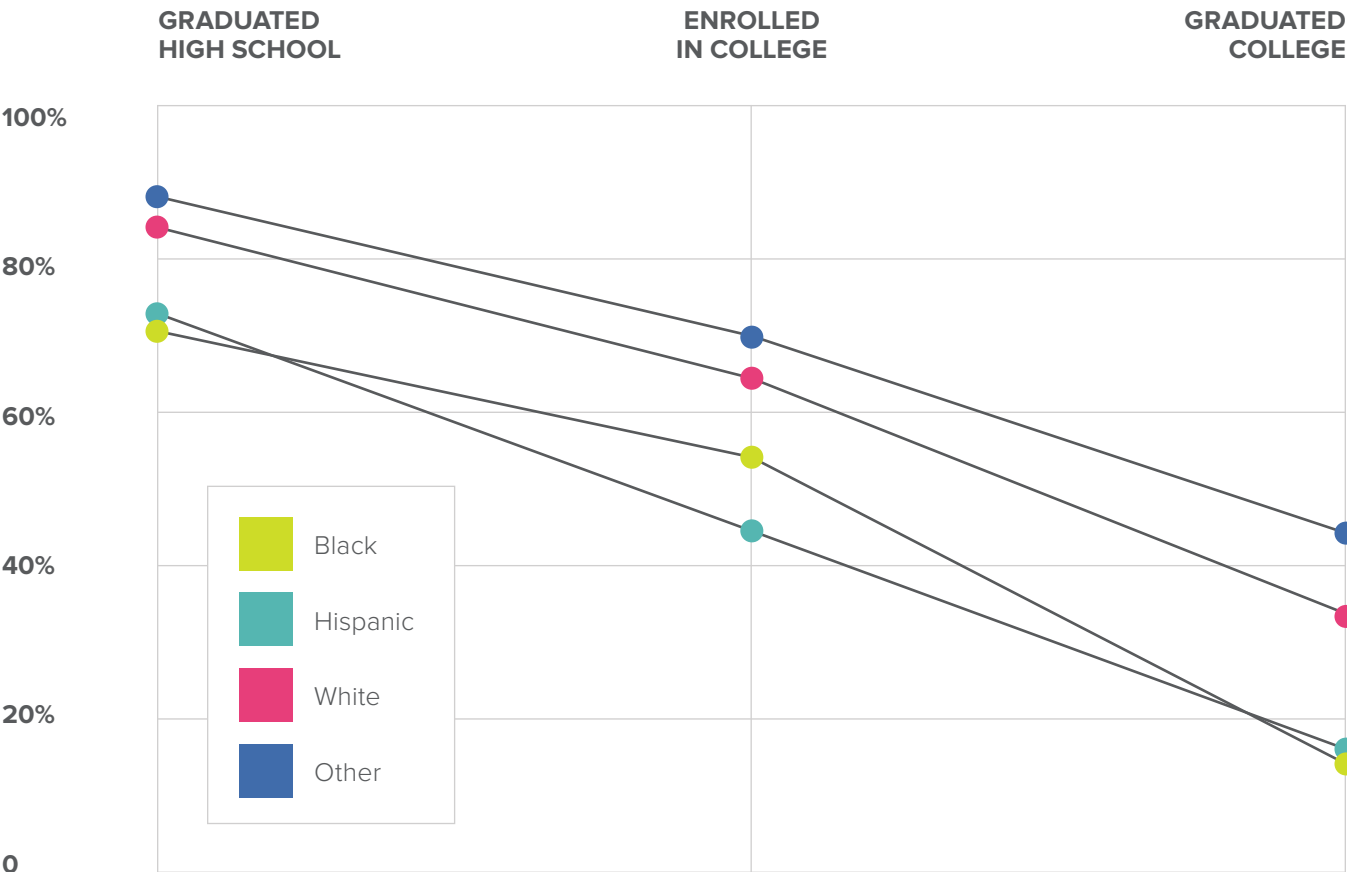
TEACH
forHOUSTON.ORG

(1) TEA STAAR 2018 (2) TEA TAPR 2018 (3) Measuring the Impact of Teachers II: Teacher Value-Added and Student Outcomes in Adulthood. American Economic Review 2014

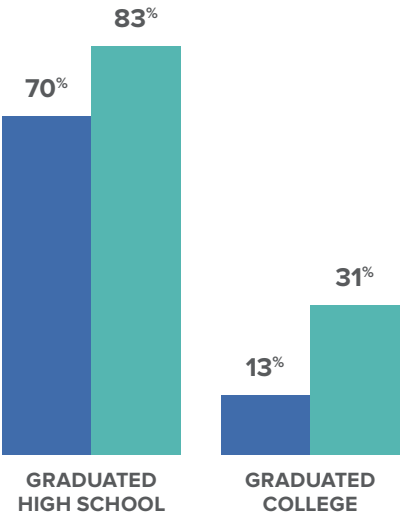
(4) 2018 Schooling in America Survey—EdChoice (5) Texas Center for Educational Research 2013 (6) TEA TAPR 2012–2017

Postsecondary Attainment

2008 8th Grade Cohort Snapshot



Graduation Rates of Economically Disadvantaged Students¹



65% of jobs require more than a high school education,² but in Harris County, only 21% of all students earn a postsecondary credential.¹ That rate is even lower for Black, Hispanic, and economically disadvantaged students, who are less likely to receive a postsecondary credential than their peers.¹ We are at a crisis point — we can't employ the same children we educate.

■ Economically Disadvantaged
■ Not Economically Disadvantaged

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

The percentage of the FY 2008 8th grade cohort who graduated high school

COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

The percentage of the FY 2008 8th grade cohort who enrolled in college

COLLEGE COMPLETION

The percentage of the FY 2008 8th grade cohort who received a certificate or degree from a Texas college or university within six years of high school graduation

Economically disadvantaged is defined as students who qualify for free and reduced lunch.

FAFSA Campaign

Good Reason Houston partners with districts and community organizations to increase Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion rates.



Every additional
\$1,000
in grant aid increases a student's postsecondary persistence rate by 4%.³

90%
of seniors who complete the FAFSA matriculate directly to college.³

FAFSA Completion Rates⁴ as of June 30, 2018

HARRIS COUNTY	49%
TEXAS	56%

FAFSA completion is one of the most accurate indicators of whether a high school senior will matriculate to college.

In fall 2018, Good Reason Houston launched a region-wide FAFSA campaign to increase the number of seniors completing their FAFSA.

The campaign includes a website, data support for districts, coordination of resources, and individualized support for students.

FAFSAHOUSTON.ORG

(1) THECB TEA FY 2008 8th Grade Cohort (2) Georgetown Public Policy Institute, Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements through 2020

(3) NCAN (4) StudentAid.Gov

Thank You

Thank you to our founding funders – the Houston Endowment and the Kinder Foundation – for their generous support of Good Reason Houston and each and every child in our region. We would also like to thank our partners, Board of Directors, Leadership Council, Early Matters Council, Human Capital Council, and FAFSA Coalition for their continued support.

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The City Fund

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**Every child.
Every neighborhood.**

GOOD REASON HOUSTON

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