



RESULTS OF THE 2004-2005 AISD HIGH SCHOOL EXIT SURVEY FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN, HISPANIC, AND WHITE STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION

The third annual Austin ISD High School Exit Survey was administered electronically to seniors in every AISD High School during the Spring of 2005. The results for selected items are described below for African American, Hispanic, and White students in the Class of 2005. The response rate for the High School Exit Survey continues to improve (Table 1). Surveys were received from 3,324 students (85.3%) in the Class of 2005.¹ The survey sample once again closely resembles the ethnic and gender distribution of the senior class, indicating that the results are representative of the entire senior class population.

Table 1. AISD High School Exit Survey Response Rates, Classes of 2003, 2004, and 2005

	Percentage of Enrolled Seniors Responding		
	Class of 2003	Class of 2004	Class of 2005
All AISD High Schools	68.9%	81.5%	85.3%

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

The summary below highlights a portion of the survey results according to four general topics: Climate, High School Experiences, Postsecondary Intentions, and Postsecondary Preparation.

PART 1: CLIMATE

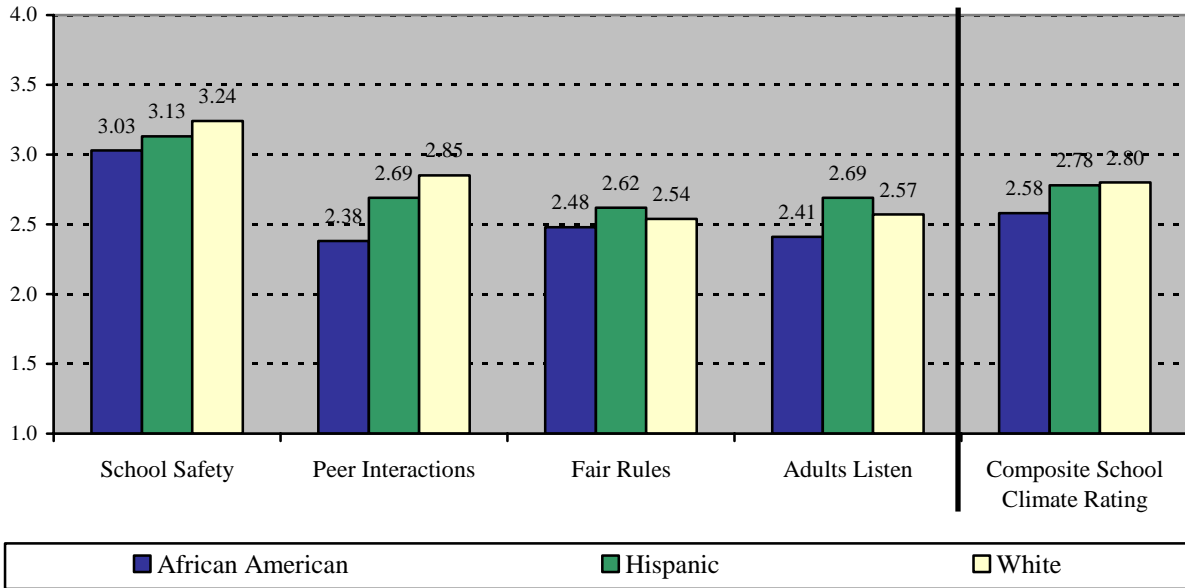
The campus environment is assessed on the High School Exit Survey through two dimensions called School Climate and Learning Climate. School Climate is measured with four survey items (Items 2-5) that describe the general “personality” of a campus, such as school safety and whether or not adults at school listen to students’ opinions. School Climate results for the each ethnic group are shown in Figure 1, along with a key detailing the text of each individual item. African American average responses are slightly less positive than Hispanic and White responses. The greatest disparity among ethnic groups is on the item regarding the extent to which students get along with each other, while the responses are most similar on the item regarding the extent to which school rules are implemented fairly.

Learning Climate describes the academic atmosphere on a campus, including the levels of academic rigor and teacher expectations. Learning Climate results are shown in Figure 2, along with a key detailing the text of each individual item. Average responses to these items are generally higher than those for School Climate items, and are very similar across ethnic groups.

Hispanic students more often (7 out of 9 items) rated overall school climate more highly than did White students. The Hispanic students' ratings also were, on average, equal to or better than those given by African American students on all 9 items.

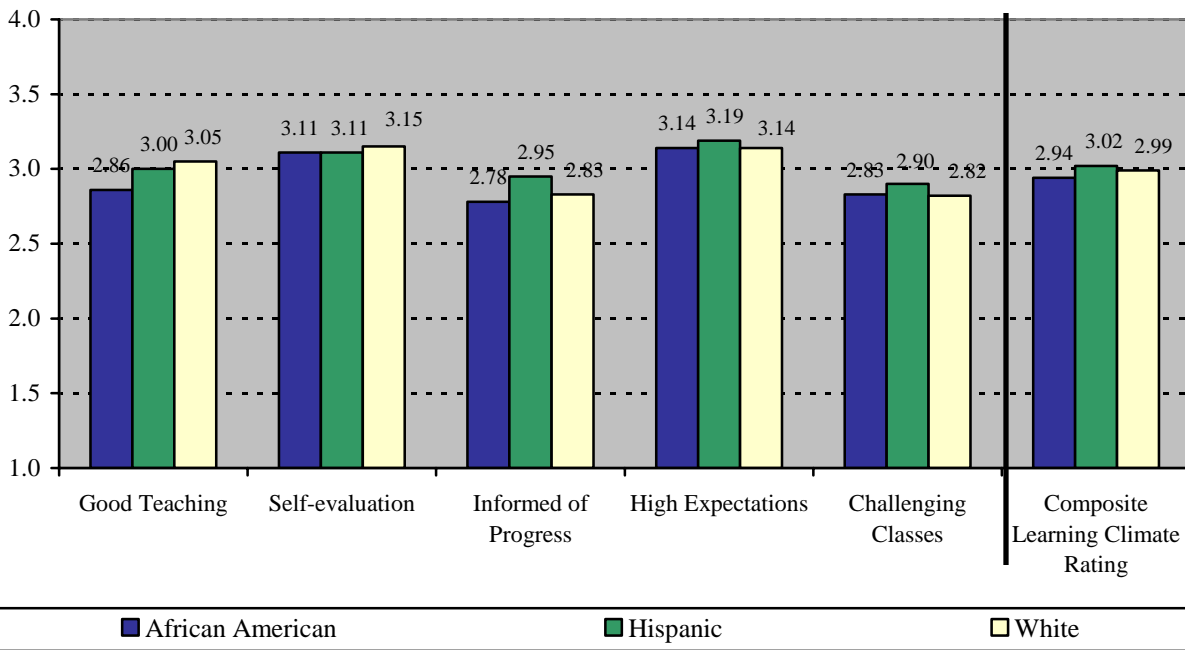
¹ Response rates are based on enrollment at the end of the 5th six weeks reporting period. See Appendix A for individual campus response rates. Note: Due to enrollment of some Special Education students with severe cognitive disabilities, a 100% response rate is not expected.

Figure 1. Average Ratings Given to School Climate Items (Items 2-5)



Key: School Safety – This school is a safe place to learn. (Item 2)
 Peer Interactions – The students in this school get along with each other. (Item 3)
 Fair Rules – The rules of this school are implemented fairly. (Item 4)
 Adults Listen – The adults at this school listen to the opinions of students. (Item 5)
 Composite School Climate Rating – Average score of Items 2 – 5, measuring the overall “personality” of the school.

Figure 2. Average Ratings Given to Learning Climate Items (Items 6-10)



Key: Good Teaching – My teachers taught in a way that was clear and easy to understand. (Item 6)
 Self-evaluation – I have learned how to evaluate my own work and keep track of my progress. (Item 7)
 Informed of Progress – My teachers kept me informed about how I was doing in my classes. (Item 8)
 High Expectations – My teachers expected me to do high quality work. (Item 9)
 Challenging Classes – My classes were rigorous and challenging. (Item 10)

PART 2: HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

Seniors were asked to rate how well their high school helped them to develop academic skills in a variety of areas (Table 2). While ratings were similar across ethnic groups, average ratings were generally higher among Hispanic and African American students than White students. Mathematics is the only subject area for which White students provided the highest average rating.

Table 2. Average Ratings of Quality of Assistance in Developing Academic Skills
(Items 27-33)

Academic Skill	All Austin ISD High Schools		
	African American	Hispanic	White
Writing	2.48	2.47	2.47
Mathematics	2.26	2.33	2.36
Science	2.22	2.28	2.27
Social Studies	2.53	2.49	2.45
Computer/Technology	2.45	2.42	2.21
Foreign Language	2.11	2.35	2.11
Performing/Fine Arts	2.34	2.31	2.31
Composite Score	2.34	2.38	2.31

Note: Responses can range from 1 (not well) to 3 (very well).

Seniors were also asked to report their perceptions of the quality of assistance in developing personal skills such as teamwork and conflict resolution (Table 3). Once again, the average ratings provided by White students were slightly lower than those provided by African American and Hispanic students.

Table 3. Average Ratings of Quality of Assistance in Developing Personal Skills
(Items 34-38)

Personal Skill	All Austin ISD High Schools		
	African American	Hispanic	White
Teamwork	2.45	2.47	2.29
Creative Thinking	2.47	2.41	2.38
Problem Solving	2.40	2.39	2.36
Conflict Resolution	2.20	2.29	2.16
Personal Health/Fitness	2.38	2.35	2.10
Composite Score	2.38	2.38	2.26

Note: Responses can range from 1 (not well) to 3 (very well).

Seniors were also asked to report their participation in extra-curricular activities both inside and outside of school. Table 4 describes the participation in various school-affiliated activities. The largest school-affiliated extra-curricular participation disparities among ethnic groups are in Sports, Theater/Drama, and UIL Academic Competitions.

Table 4. Percentage of Respondents Reporting Participation in Extra-curricular Activities Affiliated with High School (Item 14)

Activity	All Austin ISD High Schools		
	African American	Hispanic	White
Music	32.0%	27.0%	34.2%
Theater/Drama	19.9%	9.2%	19.2%
Dance	14.5%	17.2%	16.4%
Sports	66.7%	55.7%	52.9%
UIL Academic Competition	8.0%	8.7%	16.7%
Journalism	11.1%	11.5%	13.5%
Speech/Debate	9.6%	8.3%	9.6%

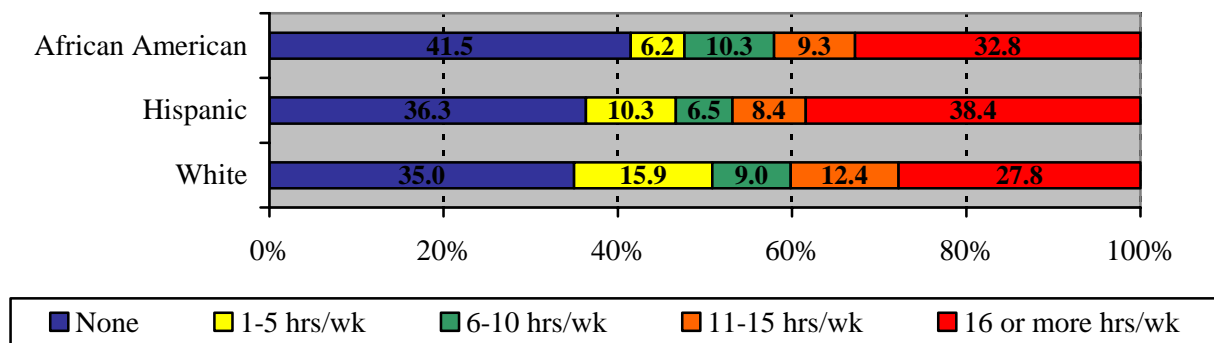
Table 5 describes the participation in various extra-curricular activities outside of school. The largest participation disparities among ethnic groups are in Family Care, where Hispanic participation was highest, and Community Service, where White participation was highest.

Table 5. Percentage of Respondents Reporting Participation in Extra-curricular Activities Outside of High School (Item 15)

Activity	All Austin ISD High Schools		
	African American	Hispanic	White
Organized Sports	41.1%	32.6%	40.2%
Art/Music/Dance	31.4%	21.7%	35.5%
Community Service	49.7%	45.3%	61.6%
Environmental Projects	12.3%	13.2%	20.5%
Family Care	32.6%	42.2%	22.0%

In addition to extra-curricular activities, many students are employed outside of school. The following table indicates that although White students are most likely to report some employment during their senior year, they are least likely to report employment of more than 10 hours a week. African American students are slightly more likely than Hispanic or White students to report having no employment, while Hispanic students are slightly more likely to report being employed more than 10 hours a week.

Figure 3. Number of Hours Employed Per Week During the Senior Year (Item 20)



PART 3: POSTSECONDARY INTENTIONS

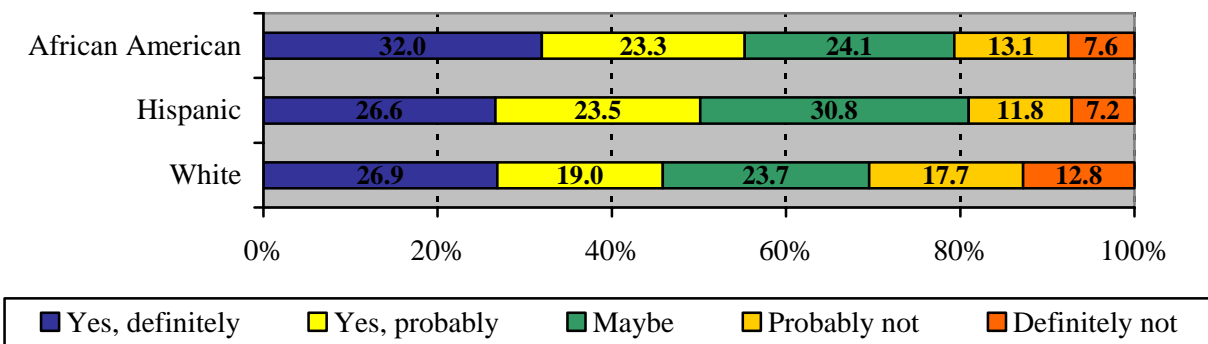
Students were asked to report their plans within a year after graduating high school (Table 6). The majority of survey participants indicate plans to pursue postsecondary education, and nearly half indicate plans for part-time or full-time employment. Hispanic students were least likely to report plans for postsecondary education and most likely to report having “no specific plans yet.” The percentages below may be lower than expected due to the placement of this item near the end of the survey. However, these results are comparable to data from a recently published federal report² stating that, “after high school graduation, some seniors will immediately enter the workforce or military. Some will start families. Many will go directly into postsecondary education (some 79 percent of the seniors cohort expected to go directly from high school to a postsecondary institution). Another 7 percent stated that they did not know what they would do, while 13 percent indicated that they would not go directly to postsecondary education.”

Table 6. Percentage of All Survey Respondents Reporting Specific Postsecondary Plans Within a Year (Item 51)

Plan	All Austin ISD High Schools		
	African American	Hispanic	White
Continue Education	73.1%	65.7%	82.2%
No specific plans yet	6.7%	15.0%	5.3%
Travel	8.2%	11.0%	12.9%
Full-time Parent	4.0%	3.9%	1.1%
Military	4.0%	3.9%	2.6%
Work full-time	14.0%	17.9%	10.8%
Work part-time	27.6%	34.7%	31.9%

Of those students who reported intentions to pursue postsecondary education, over one quarter in each ethnic group reported definite plans to borrow money for college (Figure 4). While the percentages are similar across groups, White students appear slightly less likely than African American and Hispanic students to borrow money for postsecondary education.

Figure 4. Postsecondary-bound Students’ Intentions to Borrow Money for College (Item 44)



² Ingels, S.J., Planty, M., and Bozick, R. (2005). A Profile of the American High School Senior in 2004: A First Look – Initial Results From the First Follow-up of the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002) (NCES 2006-348). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC:U.S. Government Printing Office.

PART 4: POSTSECONDARY PREPARATION

Students were asked to rate the quality of assistance they received from their high school with college and career preparation (Table 8). Average responses were similar across ethnic groups for college/career and postsecondary application preparation. However, African American and Hispanic students report higher ratings than White students for being well informed about financial aid.

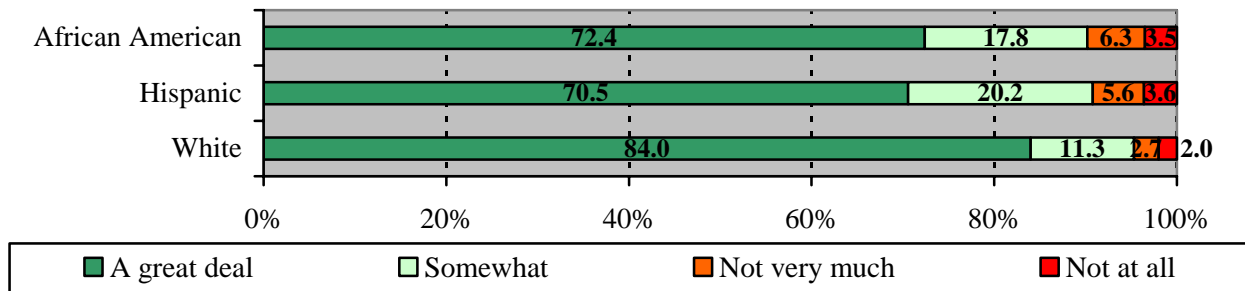
Table 8. Average Ratings of Preparation for College and Career (Items 22, 23, and 25)

Preparation For	All Austin ISD High Schools		
	African American	Hispanic	White
College/Career Goals	2.27	2.27	2.25
Postsecondary Application Process	2.16	2.11	2.19
Financial Aid	2.28	2.12	2.02

Note: Responses can range from 1 (not well) to 3 (very well).

Seniors also were asked to indicate the extent to which their families encouraged them to pursue postsecondary education (Figure 4). Less than ten percent of students in each ethnic group report receiving little or no family encouragement to continue their education, but White students are more likely than Hispanic and African American students to report a great deal of family support.

Figure 4. Reported Degree of Family Encouragement to Pursue Postsecondary Education (Item 49)



DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Based on these survey results³, it appears that White students are more likely than African American and, to a lesser extent, Hispanic students to feel positively about the general “personality” of their schools. However, few differences emerged among ethnic groups on ratings for the quality and rigor of the learning environment. In fact, where differences did appear, Hispanic students were more likely than White and African American students to provide high ratings for Learning Climate. In general, Hispanic and African American students report higher ratings than White students for how well their high school helped them to develop knowledge and skills in specific academic subjects and areas of personal development.

³ See Appendix A for detailed results regarding tests for statistical significance.

African American students report higher participation in sports than the other two groups, and Hispanic students report higher participation in family care and employment of more than 10 hours a week. White students are more likely to report participation in UIL academic competitions, environmental projects, and community service than African American or Hispanic students, and are least likely to work more than 10 hours a week.

Hispanic students are less likely to report intentions to pursue postsecondary education and more likely than White or African American students to report employment plans within the year following graduation. Of those with plans for postsecondary education, African American students are most likely to report definite intentions to borrow money for college. In addition, African American students report higher ratings than White and Hispanic students for preparation to apply for financial aid.

While family encouragement was high for each ethnic group, White students reported more family encouragement to participate in postsecondary education. White students also reported being slightly more prepared than African American and Hispanic students for postsecondary application process. However, all student groups reported similar ratings for how well their high school had prepared them to meet college and career goals.

APPENDIX A

The following table indicates the statistical differences that were found among ethnic groups for each climate item and for the composite School Climate and Learning Climate ratings.

Statistically Significant Differences on Climate Items and Composite Climate Ratings

School Safety	Peer Interactions	Fair Rules	Adults Listen	Composite School Climate
W > H > AA	W > H > AA	H > AA & W	H > W > AA	W & H > AA

Good Teaching	Self-evaluation	Informed of Progress	High Expectations	Challenging Classes	Composite Learning Climate
W > AA & H	No Differences	H > AA & W	No Differences	H > W	H > AA

Statistically Significant Differences on Ratings for How Well High School Prepared Students in Academic and Personal Development Areas

Writing	Math	Science	Social Studies	Computer/Technology	Foreign Language	Performing Arts
No Differences	W > AA	No Differences	No Differences	AA & H > W	H > AA & W	No Differences

Teamwork	Creative Thinking	Problem Solving	Conflict Resolution
AA & H > W	AA > W	No Differences	H > W

Statistically Significant Differences on Ratings for Preparation for College and Career Goals, Postsecondary Application Process, and Obtaining Financial Aid

College/Career Goals	Postsecondary Application Process	Financial Aid
No Differences	W > H	AA > H > W

Note: Differences reflected above are statistically significant at $p < .05$.