

# Evaluating Public Education in Texas

## Texas education system fails to prepare all students for success

Civic, career and college readiness begins in a child’s earliest years. Too many Texas children struggle to meet academic benchmarks. Due to a legacy of discriminatory policies, children of color and children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are disproportionately likely to face barriers to academic achievement. Texas needs a more durable and well-funded pipeline across our education and workforce systems to prepare Texans of all backgrounds for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

### ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Of the **21,600 Texas students** who dropped out of the class of 2016, **more than two-thirds** were **economically disadvantaged**.

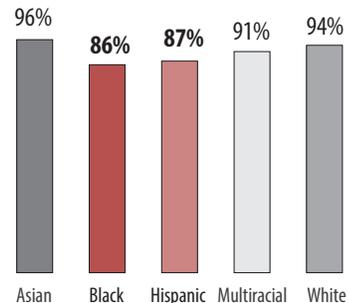
Achievement gaps occur when there is a disparity in academic performance between groups of students. They are caused by opportunity gaps that often begin in early childhood and continue throughout a child’s time in school. Children in low-income families often start behind and can stay behind throughout their educational career.

### OUTCOMES

Texas’ Black and Hispanic students are less likely to graduate from high school on time than their white and Asian peers.

When students struggle to complete their education, they can experience barriers to entry-level employment and pathways to jobs with wages high enough to meet their needs.

**4-year H.S. Graduation Rates by Race & Ethnicity (2016)**



### SOLUTIONS



**To address the holes in our educational pipeline, we should:**

- Provide support to economically disadvantaged students early by funding a full-day Pre-K program for currently eligible children.
- Remodel Texas’ outdated school finance system. For more information, see the *Texas Kids Count Data Guide on Texas Public Education*.
- Make higher education more affordable and less dependent on student loans so that the Texas labor force gains the skills demanded by our economy.

[Learn more at CPPP.org](http://CPPP.org)

### #TXVotes4Kids

1. Children in economically disadvantaged households and children who are English language learners are particularly likely to benefit from enrollment in early childhood education programs. However, in Texas, children in poorer families are less likely to attend preschool than their higher income peers.

 **What strategies do you support that could ensure early childhood education opportunities for all Texas kids?**

2. The achievement gaps in reading and math between students of color and White students—as well as lower income students and their higher income peers—show that the educational needs of all Texas students are not being met.

 **What strategies do you support to address the reading and math achievement gaps in education?**

3. Today's job market is especially difficult for young people without a high school diploma or with low math and reading skills.

 **How will you ensure that young Texans are prepared for the workforce or job training programs when they leave high school?**

4. Around 480,000 disconnected youth—young adults not in school or working—live in Texas and are disproportionately youth of color.

 **What strategies do you support to provide educational and training opportunities to all young people?**

5. Black and Hispanic students are 50 percent less likely to be proficient in reading than their White and Asian peers.

 **What strategies do you support to close the reading achievement gap in Texas schools?**

6. Many Texas children, especially students of color and economically disadvantaged students, do not have access to afterschool and summer programs.

 **What strategies do you support to increase access to out-of-school enrichment opportunities?**

7. Texas' on-time graduation rates have improved, but only 89 percent of Texas students in the class of 2016 graduated on time.

 **What strategies do you support to improve high school graduation rates?**