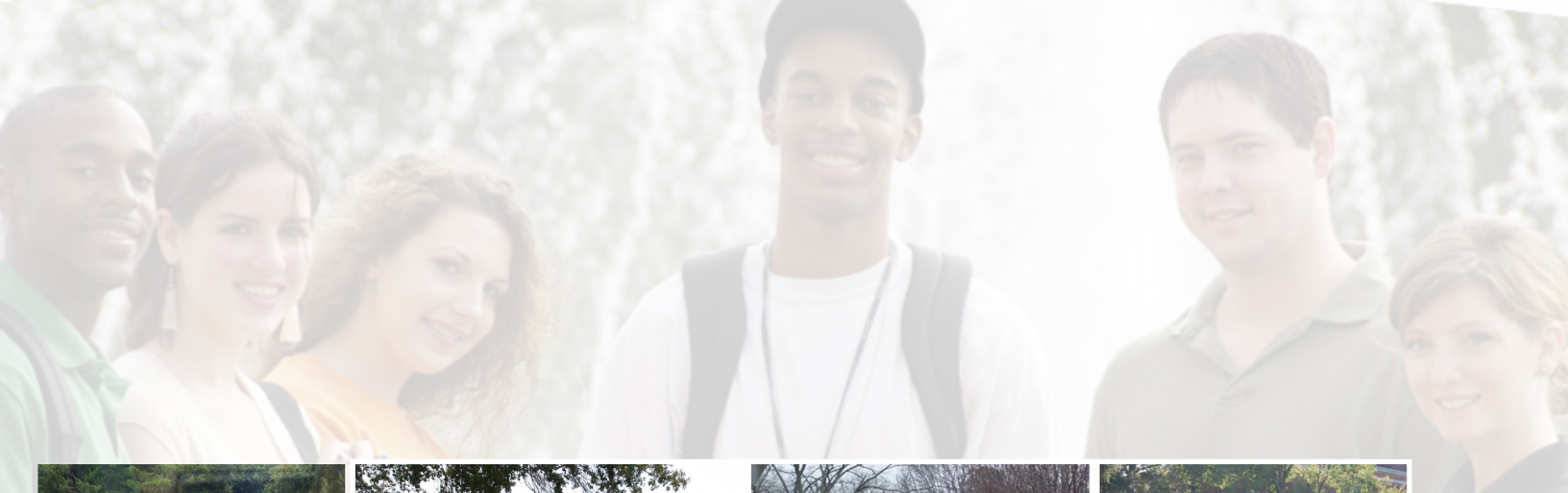




*Building our future, together*



# 13. Education





Building our future, together

**EDUCATION CHAPTER**

When the City of Tyler convened the Steering Committee for the five-year update to the Tyler 1st plan, the committee reviewed data gathered during the community wide survey. The survey results showed that only 20% of respondents ranked Tyler’s education system as excellent and 47% felt that it was average or below. However, 50% of this same group of respondents felt that the quality of schools is extremely important when making a decision of where to live.

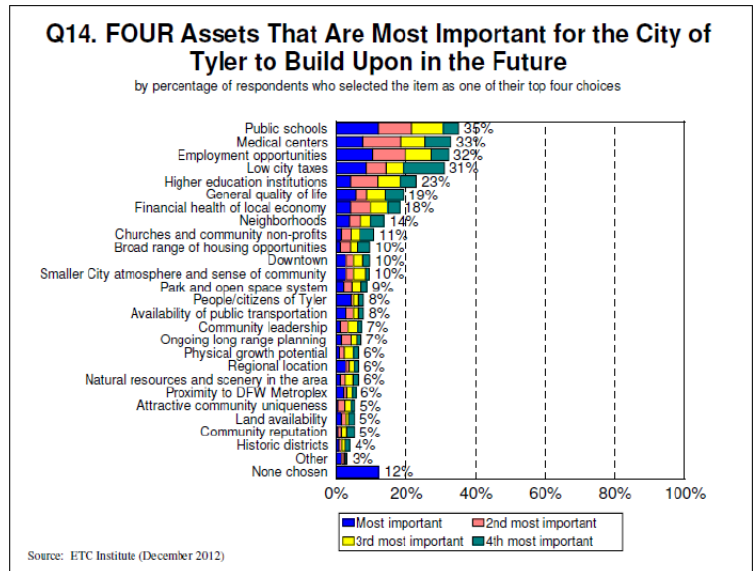
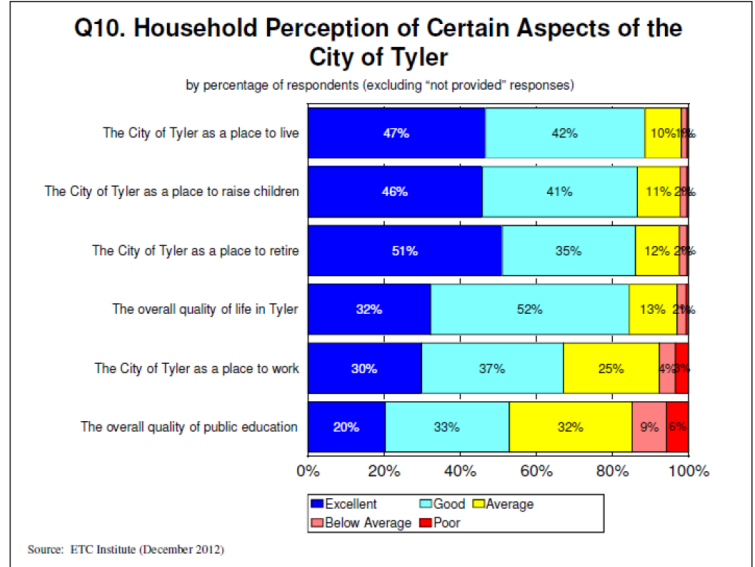
When asked what the top priorities are for the community to address in the next five years, respondents overwhelmingly selected public schools. Focus on this area grew by 3% between 2006 and 2012.

Subsequently, the Steering Committee was asked to review the Vision and Principles from the original plan adopted in 2007. The Committee chose to add only one new Principle and that was focusing on education.

***New Principle: Cultivate and ensure high quality education at every level:***

- Develop Tyler as an educational destination.
- Champion, support and partner with K-12 public schools, colleges and universities for excellence in academic achievement.
- Encourage an environment of education and life-long learning in families.
- Collaborate with business entities to enhance educational efforts.
- Recognize that education directly impacts economic development and quality of life.

One of the most basic obligations of any community is to prepare its children to lead productive lives as adults. This means preparing students with a strong foundation in literacy, numeracy and analytical skills.



GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
<p><b>Recognize that education directly impacts economic development and quality of life.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster a culture of community support for education.</li> <li>• Encourage peer support of educational attainment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Develop Tyler as an educational destination.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that K-16 education is a priority in the community and that this is evident through demonstrated actions.</li> <li>• Support the Industry Growth Initiative plans directed toward education.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Champion, support and partner with K-12 public schools, colleges and universities for excellence in academic achievement.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively support the implementation of the TISD strategic plan.</li> <li>• Support programs to attract and retain talented teachers to the community.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Encourage an environment of education and life-long learning in families.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate to develop programs to support strong parenting skills and involvement in education.</li> <li>• Ensure that fundamental family needs are met.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Collaborate with business entities to enhance educational efforts.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with the Business Education Council to support educational outcomes and programs in the community.</li> <li>• Encourage businesses to grow involvement and investment in the education of Tyler's youth as their future labor force.</li> </ul>

## EDUCATION FACTS

- **SMITH COUNTY:**
  - > Early Childhood Centers: ~90
  - > Pre K enrollment: 19% of 3 & 4 year olds
  - > Public School Districts: 8
  - > Children Enrolled in Public School Districts: ~35,000
  - > Private Schools: 12 (total enrollment of 4,560 students)
  - > Charter Schools: 5 (total enrollment of 1,057 students)
  
- **RESEARCH FINDS THAT SIX KEY INDICATORS CAN PREDICT WHETHER A STUDENT WILL ACHIEVE POST-SECONDARY SUCCESS:**
  - > Literacy
  - > Numeracy
  - > Advanced coursework
  - > SAT/ACT performance
  - > College and career readiness
  - > Family and community support

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- In 1973, only 28% of all U.S. jobs required postsecondary education. By 2020, 65% of the jobs will require this level of education.
  
- In Smith County, the percentage of residents with a postsecondary credential is ~35%.
  
- Recent data indicates that only 20% of East Texas high school graduates are successfully earning a certificate or degree, diminishing to 10% for minority students.

### SMITH COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL STANDINGS

<b>Grade 3 – STAAR: % that meet standards</b>	78% - Reading, 68% - Math <sup>1</sup>
<b>Grade 5 – STAAR: % that meet standards</b>	75% - Reading, 75% Math <sup>1</sup>
<b>Grade 8 – STAAR: % that meet standards</b>	85% - Reading, 85% Math <sup>1</sup>
<b>Grade 12 – Advanced/Dual Credit</b>	25% have completed advanced or dual enrollment courses <sup>2</sup>
<b>Grade 12 – SAT/ACT</b>	64% taken SAT or ACT (Avg Score: SAT: 969, ACT: 20) <sup>2</sup> – Expected college readiness score for nation is 1100
<b>Grade 12 – College Ready Graduates</b>	52% are College Ready (31% for African American & Hispanic, 33% for Economically Disadvantaged) <sup>2</sup>

Sources: City of Tyler

<sup>1</sup>Pearson Texas Assessment ([https://tx.pearsonaccess.com/tclp/portal/tclp.portal?\\_nfpb=true&\\_pageLabel=pa2\\_analytical\\_reporting\\_page](https://tx.pearsonaccess.com/tclp/portal/tclp.portal?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=pa2_analytical_reporting_page))

<sup>2</sup>Texas Education Agency Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reports - <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/> and <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/ayp/>

## **FINDINGS**

- By the year 2020, 65% of jobs in the United States will require some level of post-secondary education. Currently in Smith County, approximately 35% of residents possess a post-secondary credential. Recent studies show that as few as 20% of high school graduates are successfully earning a certificate or degree.
- “College for all” should be broadened to become “post high school credential for all.”
- Six key indicators predict whether a student will achieve post-secondary success. These are literacy, numeracy, advanced coursework, SAT/ACT performance, college and career readiness and family and community support.

## **KEY CHALLENGES**

- The United States as a whole is lagging key global competitors in educational attainment.
- To support economic health and development for Tyler, we must increase the percentage of our residents that hold a post-secondary credential.
- 57% of Smith County students are considered economically disadvantaged, making them eight times less likely to earn a post-secondary credential than their economically stable counterparts.

## A. Current Conditions

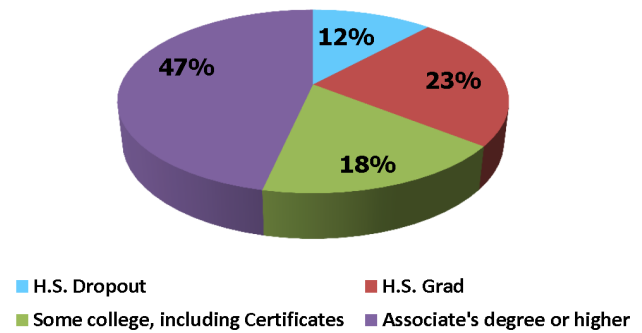
### POST-SECONDARY ATTAINMENT

In 1973, only 28% of all U.S. jobs required postsecondary education or skills. By 2020, this number will increase to 65%. Currently in the state of Texas, 32% of residents, ages 25 to 34, hold an associate degree or higher. This lags our nation as a whole by 10 points and key global competitors by as much as 30 points.

The Center on Education and Workforce at Georgetown University projects that the U.S. economy will create nearly 47 million job openings before 2018. However, two-thirds of these jobs will require some post-secondary education, whether it is a college degree or occupational certificate. Workers with only a high school diploma or who didn't complete high school will fill only 36% of the openings. Students who do not complete a post-secondary degree or certificate will find it increasingly difficult to find success in the labor market.

**U.S. Workforce Projections by Required Education Level, 2020**

Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, July 2012



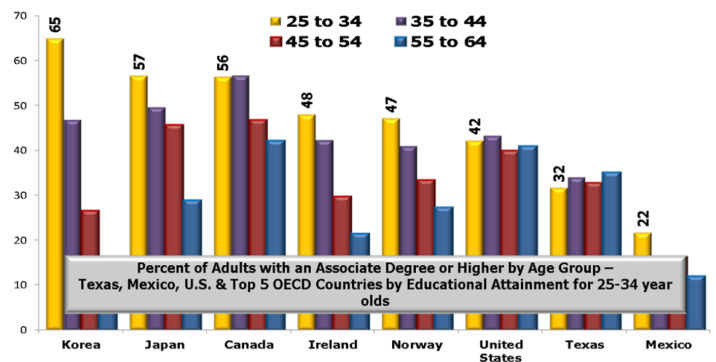
In addition to the lag in that particular age group, there is also grave concern that in Texas and across the United States the educational attainment rate is staying basically flat over time. Conversely, younger generations in countries such as Korea, Japan and Canada are earning post-secondary credentials at a much higher rate than their parents or grandparents.

In East Texas, recent studies show that as few as 19% of high school graduates are entering and successfully completing a certificate or degree program. For minority students, the completion rate drops to 10% and for those of low socioeconomic status it is even lower at 8%.

In East Texas, recent cohort studies show that there are numerous “leaks” in the educational pipeline. Of 100 students that begin in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, 88 enter 9<sup>th</sup> grade, 71 graduate high school and only 52 enter into any type of postsecondary education. Only 19 of the original 100 will successfully complete a certificate or degree program. For minority students, only 1 in 10 students will earn a post-secondary credential and for students of low socioeconomic status, the number drops to 1 in 12. Along this pipeline, the earning potential increases

**Percent of Adults with Associate Degree or Higher**

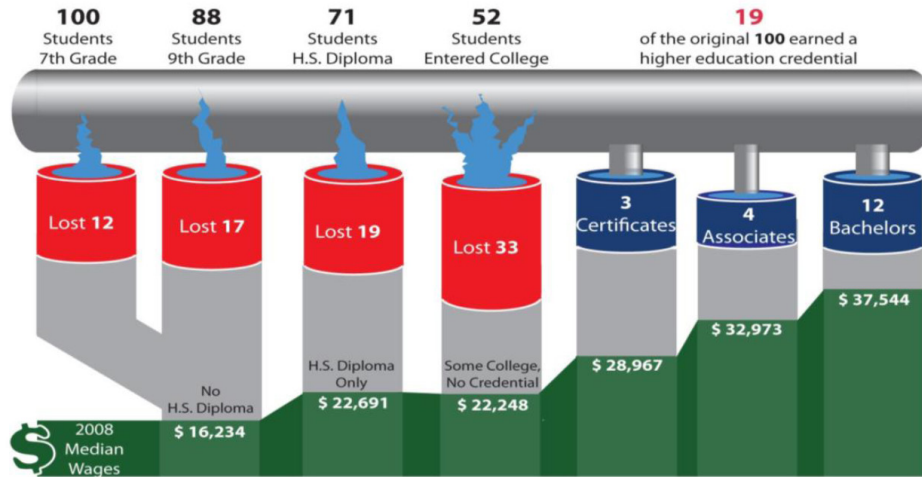
Sources: OECD, Education at a Glance 2012, American Community Survey 2011



significantly. Those with a post-secondary credential earn, on average, twice what those earn that never complete high school.

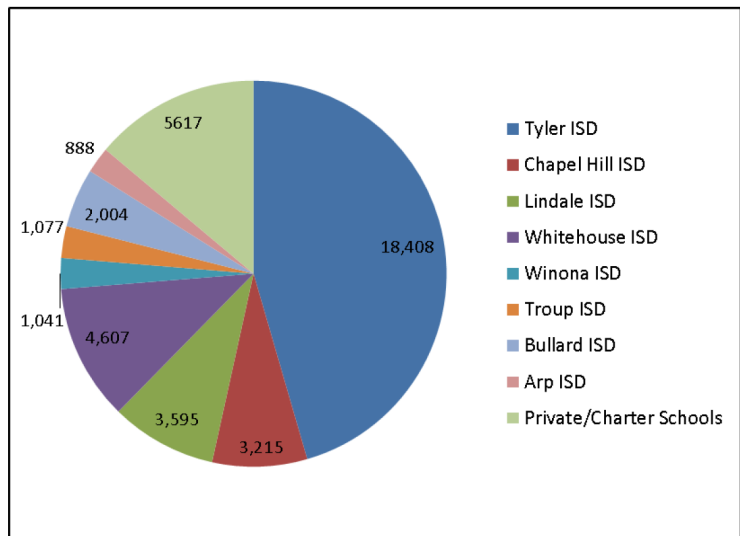
**East Texas Education Pipeline**

Source: THECB 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Cohort Study, ESC Region 7



**SMITH COUNTY K-12 SCHOOLS: DEMOGRAPHICS AND SOCIOECONOMICS**

Smith County is made up of eight independent school districts: Arp, Bullard, Chapel Hill, Lindale, Troup, Tyler, Whitehouse, and Winona. There are more than 40,000 students attending grades K-12. Tyler Independent School District is the largest district with 43% of the students in the county enrolled in one of their schools. Smith County also contains a number of private schools as well as a few relatively new charter schools which, in total, educate about 13% of students. A small percentage of area students are home schooled.

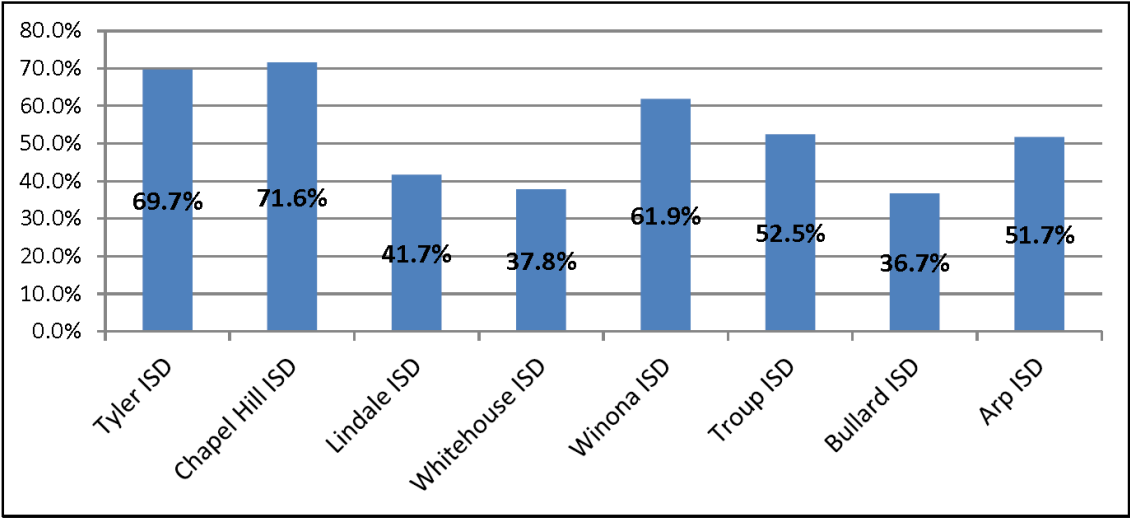


About 57% of Smith County students are considered economically disadvantaged, making them eight times less likely to earn a post-secondary credential than their economically stable counterparts. Tyler ISD has the greatest percentage of economically disadvantaged students and is also the most diverse district in the county with 40% Hispanic, 31% African



**Percentage Economically Disadvantaged**

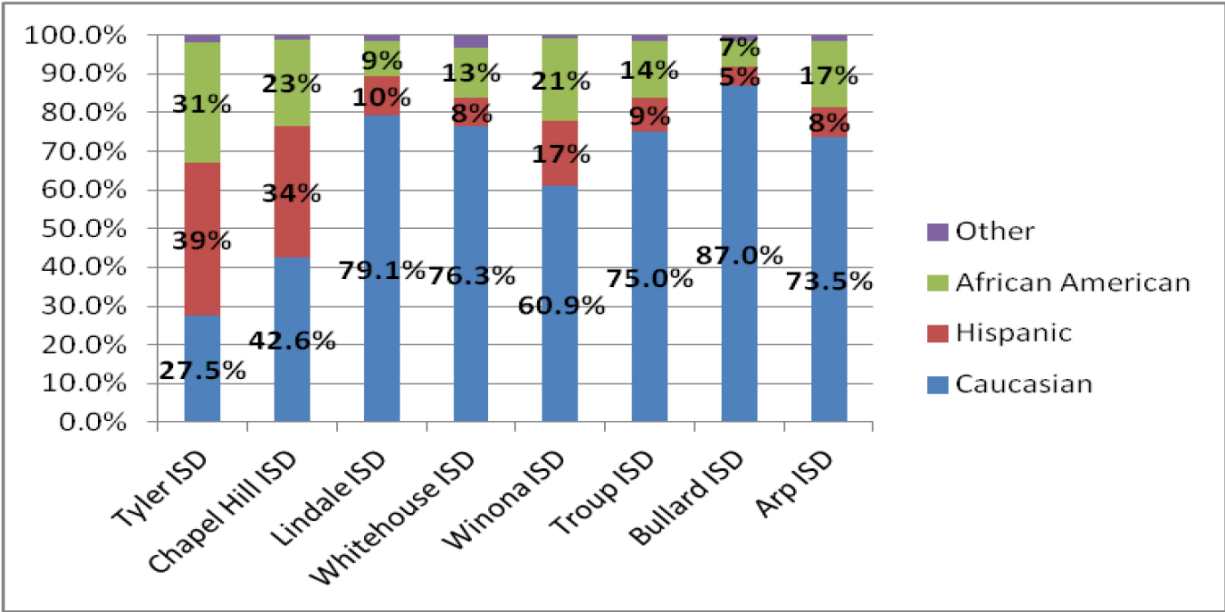
Source: Texas Education Agency AEIS Report 2012

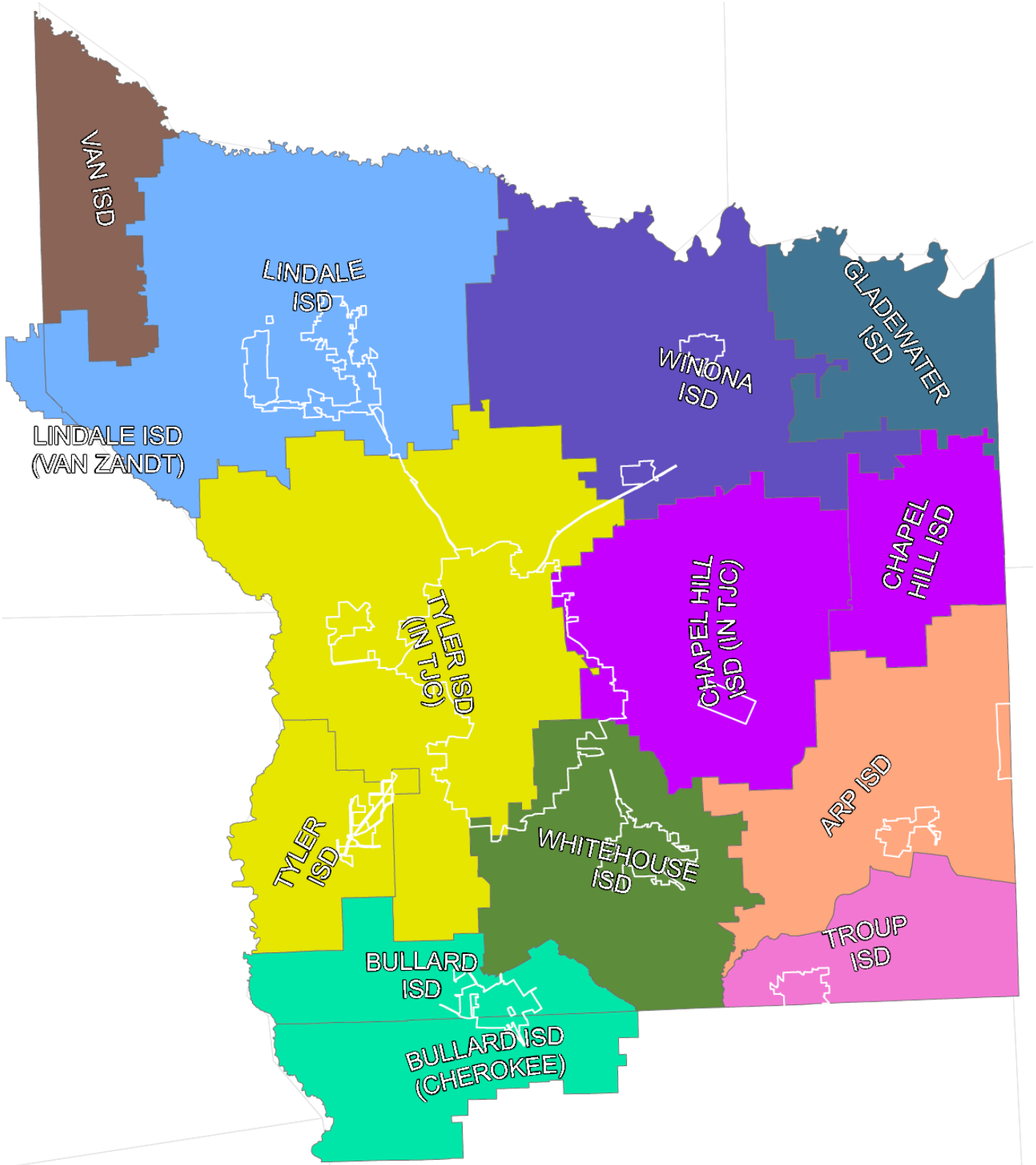


American, and 28% Caucasian students.

**Demographics**

Source: Texas Education Agency AEIS Report 2012





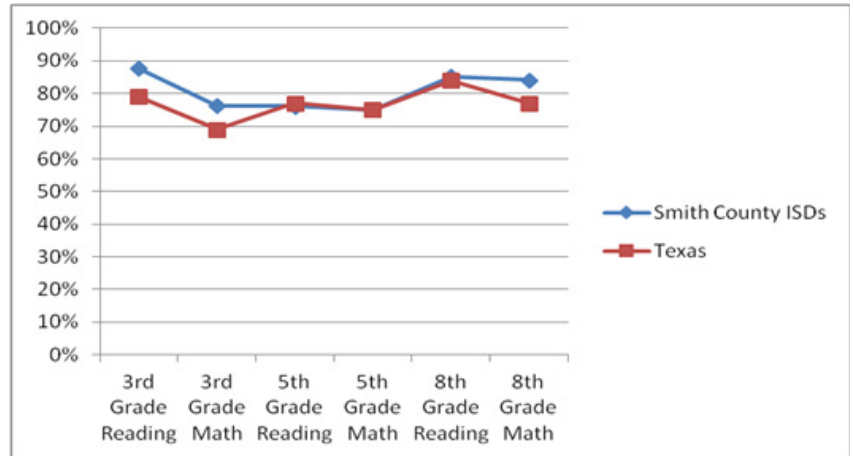
**KEY INDICATORS OF POST-SECONDARY SUCCESS**

**Literacy and Numeracy**

Source: 2013 STAAR Results, Pearson

Research finds that six key indicators predict whether a student will achieve post-secondary success. These are literacy, numeracy, advanced coursework, SAT/ACT performance, college and career readiness and family and community support.

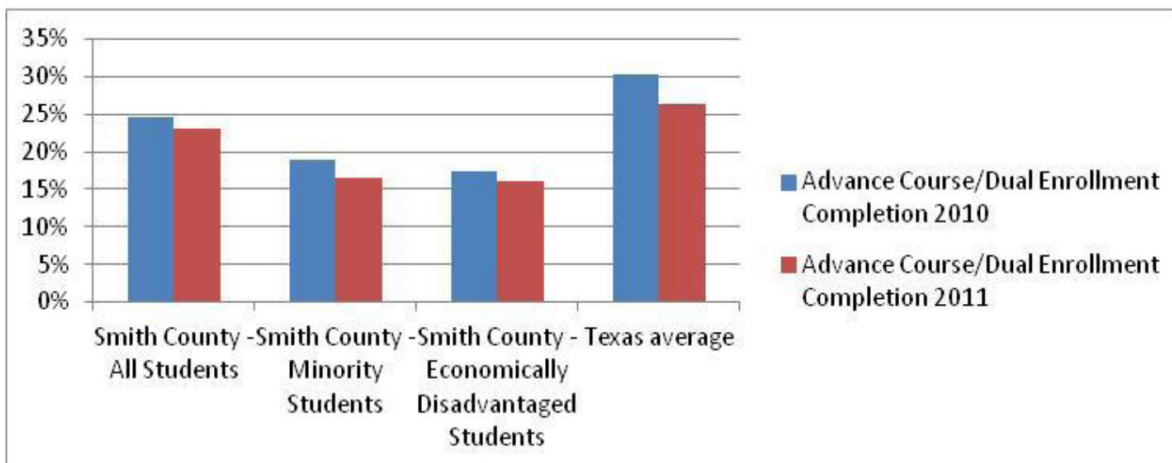
Students need strong literacy and numeracy skills to succeed in today's knowledge-based economy. Smith County performs at or above the state average on all standardized tests in reading and math.



Advanced coursework is primarily made up of two kinds of classes: advanced placement (AP) and dual credit. AP courses prepare students to pass an exam to prove their mastery of college-level curriculum. Dual credit enrolls students in college courses while they are still in high school, allowing them to earn credit for both. Of all Smith County students, only 25% are currently participating in advanced coursework, lagging the Texas average of 30%. The percentage of participating students drops below 20% when looking at minority and economically disadvantaged students.

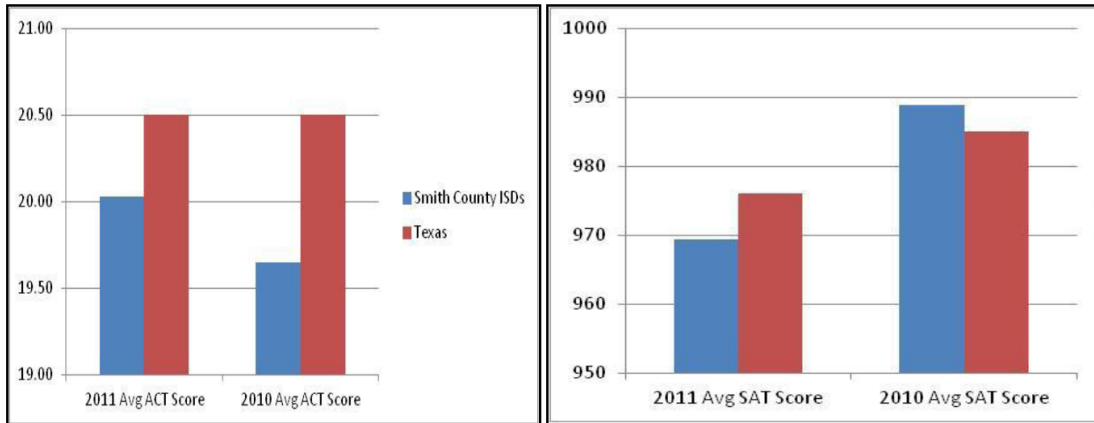
**Advanced Coursework**

Source: Texas Education Agency AEIS Report 2012



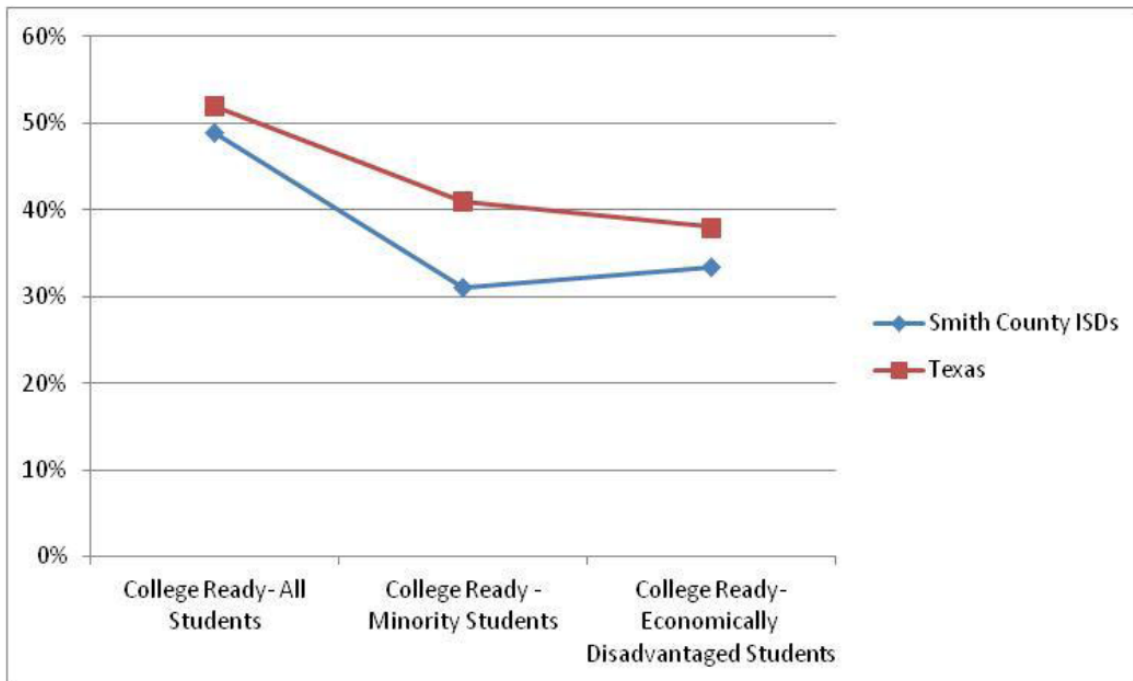
**Average SAT/ACT Performance**

Source: Texas Education Agency AEIS Report 2012



**College Readiness**

Source: Texas Education Agency AEIS Report 2012



SAT and ACT eligible student participation in Smith County is 64% and the most recent reported scores are slightly below the state average. For the SAT, Smith County students score an average of 970. The expected college readiness score is 1100.

Based on standardized test scores, approximately half of all Smith County graduates are deemed college ready. For minority and economically disadvantaged students, only one-third meet the benchmarks for college readiness. Smith County is below the average for the state of Texas.

### **COMMUNITY SUPPORT IS KEY**

To be successful, students need to be supported both inside and outside of the classroom by the community as a whole: churches, individuals, non-profits, businesses, parents, teachers and their peers.

The community is currently engaged in the Tyler ISD strategic planning process which will set future priorities and will demand excellence from the largest school district.

In addition, the Tyler Area Business Education Council has been developed to ensure direct business and community involvement in education. This group is comprised of a cross-section of business, community and public/private academia members that are all working together on a variety of initiatives to impact educational attainment throughout Smith County.

## B. Recommendations

### **GOAL:**

#### **1. Develop Tyler as an educational destination.**

Tyler has the foundation to become an educational destination. With four institutions of higher education and more than 18,000 college students, eight school districts and a robust system of private and charter schools, Tyler has the potential to leverage education as an economic development competitive advantage.

### **ACTIONS:**

#### **1a. Ensure that K-16 education is a priority in the community and that this is evident through demonstrated actions.**

Include education as a goal in Tyler 1st and implement the associated action plan.

#### **1b. Support the Industry Growth Initiative plans directed toward education.**

The Industry Growth Initiative includes two building blocks related to education. The first is focused upon K-12 and undergraduate education and the second is focused upon graduate education and its economic impact.

### **GOAL:**

#### **2. Champion, support and partner with K-12 public schools, colleges and universities for excellence in academic achievement.**

### **ACTIONS:**

#### **2a. Actively support the implementation of the TISD strategic plan.**

TISD is in the process of completing their district strategic plan. Support of the implementation of this plan will position the district for future academic success. The draft objectives in the plan include:

- 1) All students will graduate prepared for college or career and life-ready to compete in a global economy.
- 2) All students will learn in schools that meet the needs of our diverse community.
- 3) All students will learn from highly effective educators.
- 4) All students will learn in a safe, secure, and positive learning environment.
- 5) All students will learn through comprehensive and innovative education.
- 6) All students will learn using a cutting edge technology device in the educational environment.

#### **2b. Support programs to attract and retain talented teachers to the community.**

Attracting and retaining quality educators to the community is key to creating a successful educational system. Actions such as connecting teachers to affordable housing, creating reward programs in the retail sector, researching the potential of loan forgiveness programs, and offering more scholarship programs are opportunities Tyler can pursue. Additionally, establishing a marketing program that attracts new educators and also celebrates the successes of those who are here should be investigated.

**GOAL:****3. Encourage an environment of education and life-long learning in families.****ACTIONS:****3a. Collaborate to develop programs to support strong parenting skills and involvement in education.**

Ensuring parents have the skills needed to provide for their children and to know how to actively engage in their child's education is a crucial to strengthening educational outcomes in Tyler. Programs that provide for after school care for parents who work outside the home play a role in supporting families. Connecting churches and non-profits to families who need support may help; however, the key to achieving this goal is to assess the community needs and develop action plans to address them.

**3b. Ensure that fundamental family needs are met.**

Because of 70% of Tyler's students are considered disadvantaged, ensuring that all fundamental family needs are met is a critical component to enhancing academic success. Conducting an assessment of programming in Tyler that is available to families and ensuring they are connected to these services is paramount. Development of programs that fill the gaps can be undertaken once a comprehensive needs analysis is completed.

**GOAL:****4. Collaborate with business entities to enhance educational efforts.****ACTIONS:****4a. Collaborate with the Business Education Council to support educational outcomes and programs in the community.**

The Business Education Council was formed in 2013 as an evolution of the P16 council. Staffing for the Council is provided through the Chamber of Commerce with funding from the City of Tyler. During 2013, the Council has gathered data and strategically planned to involve the business community in educational outcomes. Moving forward the community should focus on implementation of these plans.

**4b. Encourage businesses to grow involvement and investment in the education of Tyler's youth as their future labor force.**

Involving business leaders in educational outcomes has demonstrated value in improving career readiness. Internships and work/study programs are valuable experiences to improve performance. Students who obtain experience in their vocation of choice have a better ability to translate coursework to their career path and see the value of their education. They also are better prepared to enter the workforce.

Business leaders also play an important role in mentoring students, particularly those who can connect with students based upon shared experiences and background.

**GOAL:****5. Recognize that education directly impacts economic development and quality of life.**

**ACTIONS:**

**5a. Foster a culture of community support for education.**

Creating a culture that demonstrates support for education can be accomplished through investment in community-wide educational events, such as a back to school fair, rallies for education achievement, recognition for students, family nights, community reading events and investment in the local library. Other concepts that should be considered to grow support for education include providing a “bag of books” to new mothers and supporting efforts of the Tyler Area Partners for Literacy (TAP for Literacy) initiative. Community mentoring programs should also be explored.

Volunteer activities at local schools can help foster a sense of connection between the community and school systems. Businesses could consider working with schools on career exploration activities, life skills programs, case studies, etc. to further strengthen this connection.

The community can also come together to evaluate educational data to determine five core outcomes they can come together to work to improve. Once these key outcomes are established, committees can be formed to further assess data and determine what interventions are working best in specific populations in the community. Strategies to improve these outcomes can then be developed and implemented. For example, other Texas communities have selected the following key outcomes to pursue:

- Kindergarten Readiness
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Reading
- High School Graduation Rate
- College or Career Readiness
- College Enrollment
- College Persistence
- Adults with College Degrees

To successfully evaluate success in these areas, identification of a resource for data/statistical analysis must happen.

**5b. Encourage peer support of educational attainment.**

Fostering programs that make educational attainment envied amongst peers should be pursued. A foundational project would be a PSA campaign where successful young people share their successes and how they overcame challenges. This campaign could be supported by local media.

Celebrations at local schools that focus on academic achievement versus athletics could be held to enhance peer support. Implementing community support initiatives will also help grow peer support.

Job shadowing programs will help students tie their academic endeavors to future careers and provide students with a tangible goal.

The latest technology should be utilized for educational purposes to better connect to this generation of learners. And finally, students should be engaged in community problem solving to help create a sense of purpose and community connection.