

education

THE BENEFITS OF AN EDUCATION EXTEND NOT ONLY TO EARNINGS, HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE, BUT ALSO TO FUTURE GENERATIONS AND THE COLLECTIVE WELL-BEING AND ECONOMY OF OUR REGION.

A person with a bachelor's degree earns an average of \$1.3 million more over a lifetime compared to those with a high school diploma only.^{1,2} They also enjoy the lowest unemployment rates. Adults with stable, well-paying jobs are less likely to rely on the social safety net (nutritional assistance, subsidized housing, etc.) and less likely to interact with the criminal legal system.³ People with higher education tend to be healthier, live longer^{4,5,6} and are also more likely to vote.^{7,8} Now imagine if these individual benefits were enjoyed by the majority of a population.

Regions that are home to skilled and educated workers attract employers that provide good jobs. A 2009 report by McKinsey & Company estimated that gaps in educational outcomes have had a larger negative impact on GDP than all recessions since the 1970s. The whole region benefits from a growing population of skilled workers, and higher levels of civic engagement. Even better, these benefits are more likely to be passed to future generations.⁹

However, only a minority successfully walk through this door of opportunity. For every 100 eighth-graders in the Houston region, 78 graduate from high school, 53 enroll in a two- or four-year in-state college, and 23 receive a degree or credential by the time they are 25 years old.

Children in the Houston region have disparate access to high-quality education that adequately prepares them for academic success. Black and Hispanic students in the region are five times more likely to attend a high-poverty school than white students, which results in very different educational experiences and contributes to the fact that Black and Hispanic students lag between three and three-and-a-half years behind their white counterparts.¹⁰ This is because of discriminatory practices that have existed since our nation's founding continue to be exacerbated by present-day inequities. Compounded over generations, the result is academic outcomes and educational attainment levels that vary significantly by race and ethnicity.

Recognizing its educational challenges, in 2019 Texas signed into law House Bill 3 (HB3), which would inject millions of dollars into Texas's public schools. Then COVID-19 arrived, disrupting an already strained educational system. Academic outcomes for students worsened, and pre-existing disparities were exacerbated during the pandemic. Regional enrollment fell 23% in pre-kindergarten, 7% in kindergarten, and 3% in public schools overall in 2020-21, the first full academic year during the pandemic. The proportion of students in the region who met state standards that year fell 5 percentage points in third-grade reading assessments, 20 points in eighth-grade math, and 17 points in algebra from the pre-pandemic STAAR administration in 2018-19.

It is too soon to know how the pandemic may affect the college-going behavior of these students, but high school graduates in the region enrolled in a public college or university in Texas at slightly lower rates than the state in 2018 and 2019. Only 9% of students who graduated from a high school in the region in 2013 completed their degree at a public in-state university within four years and only 18% did within six years.

Despite challenges in shepherding students successfully through the educational pipeline, overall levels of education in the region have grown. The percentage of adults without a high school diploma in the three-county area fell by 8.6 percentage points, and the share with bachelor's degree or higher in the three-county area increased to 34% from 25%. However, this is partly because our region attracts talent from across the nation and state to work in the lucrative oil and gas and professional services industries. For our region to remain competitive with today's and future jobs, more must be done to ensure all students receive a high-quality education that prepares them for success in their future pursuits.

The more we know about where and when students need the most support during their academic careers, the better equipped we are to work toward an education system that prepares every Houston-area child to thrive and contribute to our region's vibrant future.

5 Subtopics of Education

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



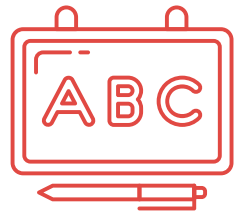
46%

of adults in Fort Bend County have a bachelor's degree or higher.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

23% decline

in pre-K enrollment in first year of pandemic.



ACADEMIC OUTCOMES



6 point decline
one-year into
the pandemic

in reading proficiency
among third-graders in
Harris County.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION



Less than
1 in 4

8th graders in the region earned an in-state
post-secondary credential by the time they are
25 years old.

FUNDING, ENROLLMENT & TEACHERS

44th

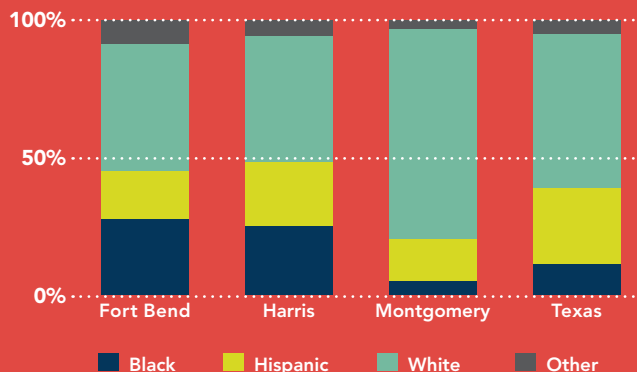
Texas ranking among all
states and D.C. in most
per pupil spending.

**EXPLORE ALL FIVE SUBTOPICS
FURTHER ON OUR WEBSITE.**

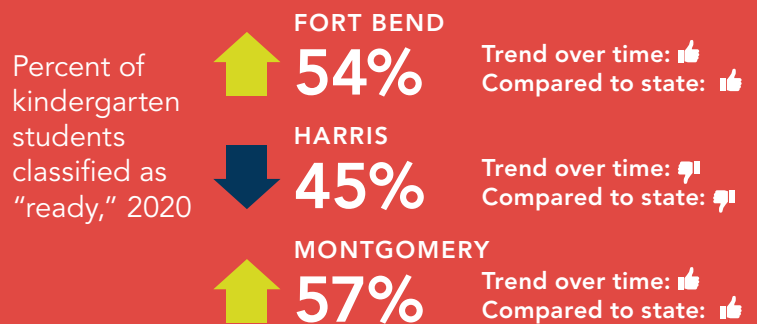
TEACHER DEMOGRAPHICS, 2020-21

The teacher workforce in Fort Bend and Harris counties is more diverse than in Montgomery County and Texas.

Percentage of Teachers by Race/Ethnicity 2020-22

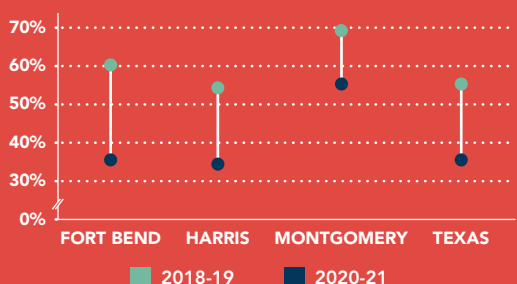


KINDERGARTEN READINESS



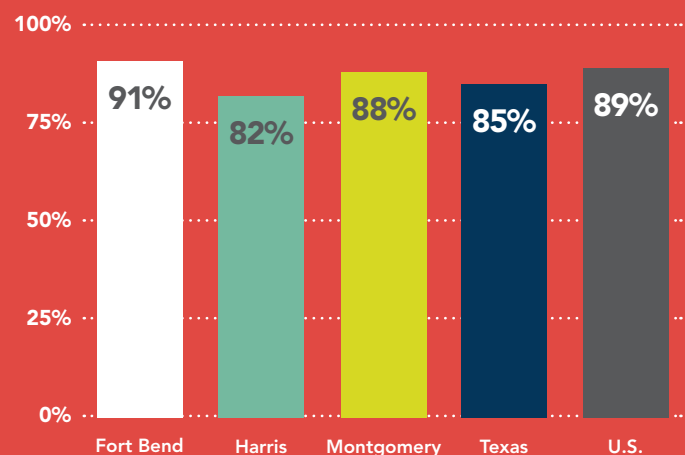
STAAR EIGHTH GRADE MATH PROFICIENCY

Percent Who Met/Exceeded State Standards Before and After Pandemic



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Percentage of Adults with High School Diplomas 2019



Despite gains in the number of adults with a high school diploma, rates in Harris County continue to lag behind the nation.

LEGENDS

LOCATIONS: **FB** Fort Bend **H** Harris **M** Montgomery

COMPARISONS: **Up** Better **Down** Worse **Same** Same **No Info** No Info

See next page for references and data sources.

references

education

1. There are, of course, differences across age, gender, race/ethnicity, and occupation.
2. Carnevale, A. P., Cheah, B., & Rose, S. J. (2021). *The College Payoff: More Education Doesn't Always Mean More Earnings*. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. Retrieved from <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/the-college-payoff/>.
3. Ewert, S., & Wildhagen, T. (2011). *Educational characteristics of prisoners: Data from the ACS*. Presentation at the Population Association of America. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/library/working-papers/2011/demo/SEHSD-WP2011-08.html>.
4. Raghupathi, V., Raghupathi, W. *The influence of education on health: an empirical assessment of OECD countries for the period 1995–2015*. Arch Public Health 78, 20 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13690-020-00402-5>.
5. Zajacova, A., & Lawrence, E. M. (2018). *The Relationship Between Education and Health: Reducing Disparities Through a Contextual Approach*. Annual review of public health, 39, 273–289. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-031816-044628>.
6. Roy, B., Kiefe, C. I., Jacobs, D. R., Goff, D. C., Lloyd-Jones, D., Shikany, J. M., Reis, J. P., Gordon-Larsen, P., & Lewis, C. E. (2020). Education, Race/Ethnicity, and Causes of Premature Mortality Among Middle-Aged Adults in 4 US Urban Communities: Results From CARDIA, 1985–2017. *American journal of public health*, 110(4), 530–536. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2019.305506>.
7. Milligan, K., Moretti, E., & Oreopoulos, P. (2004). *Does education improve citizenship? Evidence from the United States and the United Kingdom*. Journal of Public Economics, 88(9–10), 1667–1695.
8. Sondheimer, R. M., & Green, D. P. (2010). *Using experiments to estimate the effects of education on voter turnout*. American Journal of Political Science, 54(1), 174–189.
9. Kaushal, N. (2014). Intergenerational Payoffs of Education. *The Future of Children*, 24(1), 61–78. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23723383>.
10. Analysis of data from the Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University by Dr. Ruth Turley, Houston Education Research Consortium. Retrieved from <https://www.understandinghouston.org/blog/the-costliest-problem-we-know-how-to-fix>.

DATA SOURCES

SUBTOPICS

Early Childhood Education: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, Student Enrollment Reports

Funding, Enrollment & Teachers: U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Survey of School System Finances Tables

Academic Outcomes: Texas Education Agency, STAAR Aggregate Data

Educational Attainment: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey

INDICATORS HIGHLIGHTED

Kindergarten Readiness: Texas Education Agency, TPEIR, Kindergarten Programs & Readiness

Teacher Demographics: Texas Education Agency, TAPR District Staff Information

STAAR Eighth-grade Math Proficiency: Texas Education Agency, STAAR Aggregate Data

Adults with High School Diplomas: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey