

# Community Voices for Public Education (CVPE)

## SOTS Postcard Sources Cited and Additional Facts

Great All Over Means...	But in HISD...
<p><b>Standardized testing should be limited</b> and used for diagnostic purposes. Classroom tests should be written by the students' teachers.</p> <p>STAAR tests have not been proven valid. 74% of HISD 3rd graders passed the 2013 STAAR reading test, but Stanford scores showed that only 29% of elementary students could read at or above grade level.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>While students prepared for the STAAR test, Stanford reading scores declined between 2011 and 2013.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>High stakes testing leads to a narrowing of the curriculum. Most instructional time is spent on tested subjects such as math and language arts, leading to the marginalization of social studies and science.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>Researchers have found that elementary school students show more test anxiety, including cognitive and physiological symptoms, when given high stakes standardized tests as opposed to low stakes tests.<sup>4</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texas state law allows 2 district practice tests per subject<sup>5</sup>, but HISD 1st graders will take 16 STAAR practice tests this year<sup>6</sup> and older students will take up to 30.<sup>7</sup></li> <li>• The obsession with standardized testing does not prepare students for college, career, or active citizenship.</li> </ul> <p><b>Solution:</b> Obey state law; students gain 15 days of instructional time.</p>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.houstonpress.com/2013-12-12/news/hisd-reading-problem/full/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.houstonpress.com/2013-12-12/news/hisd-reading-problem/full/>

<sup>3</sup> Fitchett, P. G. and Heafner, T. L. (2010). A National Perspective on the Effects of High-Stakes Testing and Standardization on Elementary Social Studies Marginalization, *Theory & Research in Social Education*, Vol. 38 (1)

<sup>4</sup> Segool, N. K., Carlson, J. S., Goforth, A. N., von der Embse, N. and Barterian, J. A. (2013). Heightened Test Anxiety Among Young Children: Elementary School Students' Anxious Responses To High-Stakes Testing. *Psychol. Schs.*, 50: 489–499. doi: 10.1002/pits.21689

<sup>5</sup> [http://tea.texas.gov/news\\_release.aspx?id=25769806226](http://tea.texas.gov/news_release.aspx?id=25769806226)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.houstonisd.org/Page/102486>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.houstonisd.org/Page/102487>; <http://www.houstonisd.org/Page/102488>: [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cvpe/pages/42/attachments/original/1420599576/Issues\\_brief-leverage\\_leadership.pdf?1420599576](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cvpe/pages/42/attachments/original/1420599576/Issues_brief-leverage_leadership.pdf?1420599576)

Great All Over Means...	But in HISD...
<p><b>Strong open enrollment, comprehensive neighborhood schools</b> can be the cornerstone of our communities. A “great all over” district values and supports each school and each community.</p> <p>Closing “underperforming” schools hurts student achievement and social adjustment, both for students whose schools have been closed and for students at the schools to which they are relocated.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Closing schools damages local communities, and re-opening schools as charters or magnets does not repair the damage. After Ryan Middle School, a Third Ward school, was closed and re-opened as a magnet, only 11% of its students are from the original neighborhood.<sup>9</sup></p> <p>HISD abruptly closed Dodson Elementary and Jones HS without giving parents adequate warning or explanation. Superintendent Grier stated that these school buildings were needed to temporarily house students during construction projects. HISD policy does not authorize closures for this reason.<sup>10</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since 2002, HISD has permanently closed over 50 schools.<sup>11</sup> Closures disproportionately affect low income families and communities of color.</li> </ul> <p><b>Solution:</b> The Community School model, which combats the in-school effects of poverty with social services, is a powerful alternative to school closures.<sup>12</sup></p> <p>The Community Schools model has turned around other cities, such as Cincinnati, which has seen an 85% reduction in child hospitalizations.<sup>13</sup></p>

<sup>8</sup> Journey for Justice Alliance, *Death by A Thousand Cuts: Racism, School Closures, and Public School Sabotage* (2014) at <http://www.i4jalliance.com/campaigns/>

Kirshner, B., Gaertner, M., & Pozzoboni, K. (2010). Tracing Transitions The Effect of High School Closure on Displaced Students. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 32(3), 407-429.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.chron.com/opinion/outlook/article/Fix-the-process-for-closing-schools-5304879.php>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.chron.com/news/education/article/Activists-mount-final-effort-to-prevent-school-5308577.php>

<http://www.chron.com/opinion/outlook/article/Corkin-McCoy-HISD-has-yet-to-justify-closing-5442910.php>

Irwin, B. and Seasons, M. (2012). School Closure Decision-Making Processes: Problems and Prospects, *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 21 (2), 45-67.

<sup>11</sup> [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cvpe/pages/76/attachments/original/1423635006/HISD\\_School\\_Closures\\_data2000-2014.pdf?1423635006](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cvpe/pages/76/attachments/original/1423635006/HISD_School_Closures_data2000-2014.pdf?1423635006)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/latest-columns/20150206-community-schools-are-what-disd-needs.ece>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.boldapproach.org/>; [http://www.boldapproach.org/uploads/db\\_files/Infographic.jpg](http://www.boldapproach.org/uploads/db_files/Infographic.jpg)

Great All Over Means...	But in HISD...
<p><b>Student needs are met.</b>            Money is spent wisely and responsibly, addressing the conditions of poverty that so negatively impact learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 70% of HISD schools do not have certified librarians<sup>14</sup></li> </ul> <p>Reading scores rise in schools with certified librarians.<sup>15</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 39% of HISD's K-4 classes exceed the state class size limit of 22 students<sup>16</sup></li> </ul> <p>Studies show that students in smaller classes tend to be 1-2 months ahead of peers, across all subjects.<sup>17</sup></p> <p>Students who are placed in small classes in elementary school retain an academic advantage even if they are later placed in large classes in upper elementary and middle school.<sup>18</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Some high school classes have up to 50 students</li> <li>● HISD schools have a student to counselor ratio of 700+ to 1<sup>19</sup></li> </ul> <p>HISD school counselors face a 700 (sometimes as high as 2000) to 1 student to counselor ratio. (The state average is 400 to 1).<sup>20</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HISD spent 60 million on test prep program Apollo 20. The result? Sharp declines in AP scores<sup>21</sup>, no sustained STAAR gains<sup>22</sup> and 25% enrollment declines<sup>23</sup> in many schools. Why would the School Board allow it to be expanded to the rest of HISD as Leverage Leadership?<sup>24</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>Solution:</b> Spend less on test prep and more on equitable funding of personnel and services.</p>

<sup>14</sup> <http://blog.chron.com/k12zone/2013/10/librarians-dwindle-in-hisd/>: Updated below  
[https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cvpe/pages/76/attachments/original/1424216878/Staffing\\_breakdown\\_in\\_HISD\\_Libraries.Oct.2014.pdf?1424216878](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cvpe/pages/76/attachments/original/1424216878/Staffing_breakdown_in_HISD_Libraries.Oct.2014.pdf?1424216878)

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.lrs.org/documents/closer\\_look/CO4\\_2012\\_Closer\\_Look\\_Report.pdf](http://www.lrs.org/documents/closer_look/CO4_2012_Closer_Look_Report.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <http://blog.chron.com/k12zone/2014/10/more-hisd-elementary-class-sizes-exceeding-state-limit/>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/why-class-size-matters>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/why-class-size-matters>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.houstonchronicle.com/local/gray-matters/article/In-need-of-guidance-5715814.php>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.houstonchronicle.com/local/gray-matters/article/In-need-of-guidance-5715814.php>

<sup>21</sup> HISD Advanced Placement Reports 2009-2014

<sup>22</sup> [http://kinder.rice.edu/uploadedFiles/Urban\\_Research\\_Center/Spotlights/Whats\\_New/HERC%20Review%20of%20Apollo%20Report.pdf](http://kinder.rice.edu/uploadedFiles/Urban_Research_Center/Spotlights/Whats_New/HERC%20Review%20of%20Apollo%20Report.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.chron.com/opinion/outlook/article/APOLLO-CON-Poor-results-focus-on-test-prep-show-4608166.php>

<sup>24</sup> [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cvpe/pages/76/attachments/original/1424105126/HS\\_Analysis\\_2.apollo.pdf?1424105126](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cvpe/pages/76/attachments/original/1424105126/HS_Analysis_2.apollo.pdf?1424105126)

<sup>24</sup> [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cvpe/pages/42/attachments/original/1420599576/Issues\\_brief-leverage\\_leadership.pdf?1420599576](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cvpe/pages/42/attachments/original/1420599576/Issues_brief-leverage_leadership.pdf?1420599576)

Great All Over Means...	But in HISD...
<p><b>Valued, experienced teachers and school leaders</b></p> <p>Teachers are supported, fairly paid and their input is valued. Recruiting and retaining good teachers is easy because teaching in a “great all over” district is highly satisfying.</p> <p>HISD teacher turnover increased abruptly, coinciding with the high stakes STAAR test. In 2010-2011, the turnover rate was 12.4%. In 2011-2012, it climbed sharply to 17.2%. By 2012-2013, it was 18.7%. In 2013-2014, it was 19.5% <sup>25</sup></p> <p>Teacher turnover is expensive. A 2007 study found that hiring and training new teachers on account of teacher turnover cost Milwaukee \$15,325 and Chicago \$17,872 for every teacher who left. <sup>26</sup></p> <p>Researchers found that students in areas with high teacher turnover perform worse than their peers in more stable situations, in both English and math. <sup>27</sup></p> <p>HISD has gotten rid of extra pay for teachers with master’s degrees. This disregard for teachers who have pursued higher education has been cited as a possible factor contributing to teacher turnover. <sup>28</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the last 3 years, HISD has lost over 50%<sup>29</sup> of its teachers and half of HISD schools have new principals.<sup>30</sup> Running teachers out of HISD hurts student academic performance.</li> <li>• HISD uses test scores to evaluate teachers. No other area district does. Instead, most offer teachers raises at a faster rate and extra pay for master’s degrees and hard-to-staff specialties.</li> </ul> <p><b>Solution:</b> Focus on teacher retention and effective teacher training. Stop evaluating teachers using test scores, a practice deemed unreliable by the American Statistical Association. <sup>31</sup></p>

<sup>25</sup> [Texas Academic Performance Reports](#), 2010-11 through 2013-2014, Texas Education Agency

<sup>26</sup> <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED497176.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Ronfeldt, M., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2013). How teacher turnover harms student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 50 (1), 4-36.

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.newsobserver.com/2014/02/08/3600665\\_teachers-jobs-are-getting-harder.html?rh=1](http://www.newsobserver.com/2014/02/08/3600665_teachers-jobs-are-getting-harder.html?rh=1)

<sup>29</sup> [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cvpe/pages/76/attachments/original/1423634217/Teacher\\_Turnover.pdf?1423634217](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cvpe/pages/76/attachments/original/1423634217/Teacher_Turnover.pdf?1423634217)

<sup>30</sup> Texas Education Agency open records request, Fall 2014

<sup>31</sup> [http://www.amstat.org/policy/pdfs/ASA\\_VAM\\_Statement.pdf?1420416000028](http://www.amstat.org/policy/pdfs/ASA_VAM_Statement.pdf?1420416000028)

<http://www.chron.com/opinion/outlook/article/Lee-Sridharan-Sung-HISD-gets-a-failing-grade-5460933.php>