



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**New Report:
At Highly-Rated Texas Schools, Achievement Gaps are Hidden in Plain Sight**

Even at district public schools with an A or B grade, White students are dramatically more likely to meet grade-level academic standards than children of color

Texas public charter schools have closed these gaps by 10 to 25 points -- and in some subjects, reversed them

AUSTIN – New research reveals that even at the highest-rated district public schools in Texas, White students are dramatically more likely than their peers of color to meet state academic standards.

Texas' Hidden Achievement Gaps, [a study released today](#), documents the way thousands of Black and Hispanic students are being left behind at 4,500 ISD campuses that received an “A” or “B” grade on the state’s School Report Card.

The report also shows that Texas public charter schools are closing these gaps -- and in some cases, reversing them completely -- even as some critics argue that A and B-graded districts “don’t need” more public charter school options for students.

“In Texas, we can’t afford to give school districts a gold star if their White students are succeeding but Black and Brown students aren’t,” said Starlee Coleman, CEO of the Texas Public Charter Schools Association.

“We need to be serious about creating a public school system that works for every student. There’s a lot of work left to do, but the data shows that public charter schools -- when they’re allowed to serve families who want them -- are making an incredible difference for students of color.”

The Need for Greater Educational Equity

Data from the Texas Education Agency shows that at the average A or B-graded school, White students meet grade-level standards at a rate 24 percentage points higher than Black students across all tested subjects. There are nearly 700 campuses with an “A” or “B” grade where the gap is *double* that, or at least 48 points.

The average gap separating White and Hispanic students at these highly-rated schools is 10 points statewide. It’s even higher in certain metro areas -- such as Greater Austin, where it’s 15 points -- and in many suburbs.

If the “best” district public schools in the state closed these gaps completely, it would mean 257,000 additional students of color are on track for college. That’s about as many students as the total combined enrollment of Austin ISD and Houston ISD.

White-Black Achievement Gaps at Top-Rated Schools by Metro Area

Metro Area	# Campuses Graded A or B	Avg. Rate of Students Meeting Grade Level Standards		Avg. Gap for the Metro Area	Gap at Average Campus
		White Students	Black Students		
Austin	67	67.6%	43.8%	23.8%	25.2%
Dallas / Ft. Worth	116	65.2%	46.1%	19.1%	12%
San Antonio	23	64.4%	46.9%	17.5%	16.3%
Houston	118	64.1%	46.7%	17.4%	7.4%
Statewide	4,516	61.7%	41.9%	19.8%	24.4%

One Gap-Busting Strategy is Working

According to the data, one strategy has proven remarkably effective in closing achievement gaps: Allowing public charter schools to grow.

At Texas public charter schools, the average White-Black achievement gap in most subjects is significantly smaller than at top ISD schools. For example, in writing, White students meet state standards at a rate 25 points higher than Black students. At charters, the difference is 3 points.

Strikingly, Hispanic students at Texas public charter schools *outperform* their White peers in multiple subjects -- flipping achievement gaps and proving what traditionally underserved students can accomplish when provided the opportunities they deserve.

The report identifies four key reasons why public charter schools have been successful in shrinking achievement gaps. Charter students of color have greater access to teachers of color; receive more instructional time because they are suspended less often; attend smaller schools with more personalized attention; and are surrounded by more college-bound students and a culture of academic achievement.

Statewide Average White-Black Achievement Gap

	All Subjects	Science	Math	Reading	Social Studies	Writing
ISD Campuses Graded A or B	24.4%	34.4%	26%	25.7%	32.9%	25%
All Public Charter Schools	15.2%	9.9%	10.1%	10.4%	12.2%	2.7%

Statewide Average White-Hispanic Achievement Gap

	All Subjects	Science	Math	Reading	Social Studies	Writing
ISD Campuses Graded A or B	9.9%	34.4%	8.5%	7.9%	10.2%	6.1%
All Public Charter Schools	7.9%	9.9%	-5.3%	1.6%	-4.7%	-7.2%

To Learn More

To arrange interviews with TPCSA CEO Starlee Coleman or to speak with a charter school leader, teacher, or parent in your region, please contact Brian Whitley at bwhitley@txcharterschools.org

[Read the full report here.](#)

For more information about charter schools in Texas, [click here](#).

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About the Texas Public Charter Schools Association

The Texas Public Charter Schools Association is committed to making sure every child in Texas has access to a high-quality public school that will set them on the path to future success. Public charter schools enroll 340,000 students across Texas. Working as complements to ISDs, public charters are preparing the workforce of the future by sending more students to and through colleges, universities, and technical training programs. Public charter schools are accountable to taxpayers and are doing their part to help all Texas children can thrive.