

High School Exit Survey: Austin

Austin Independent School District

Class of 2015

Purpose

The 13th annual Austin Independent School District (AISD) High School Exit Survey (HSES) was administered online to seniors in every AISD high school during Spring 2015. In total, 436 Austin High School seniors completed the survey, for a response rate of 95%.

On each campus, Project ADVANCE facilitators primarily were responsible for ensuring all seniors were given the opportunity to complete the survey. Special education chairs at each campus may have provided eligible special education students with guidance and assistance in completing the survey.

The purpose of the HSES was to monitor high school students' perceptions of their high school experience. Results are used to improve the campus environment and program supports for students. Survey results also are used in the monitoring of the district's strategic plan *Goal 3: All students will graduate ready for college, career, and life in a globally competitive economy.*

Postsecondary Aspirations, Parental Engagement, & Support

Table 1.

Over half of Austin seniors planned to work part time while attending college.

Postsecondary plans	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Continue my education	93%	90%	86%
Attend college or technical school <u>without working</u>	29%	28%	20%
Attend college or technical school while <u>working full time</u>	10%	8%	11%
Attend college or technical school while <u>working part time</u>	58%	54%	56%
Work full time only	3%	3%	4%
Work part time only	1%	1%	1%
Enlist in the military	2%	2%	3%
No plans/ not sure yet	3%	3%	4%
Other	4%	2%	2%

Table 2.

Most Austin seniors who planned to enroll in college planned to enroll **Fall 2015**.

Semester enrollment	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
This summer	7%	8%	8%
This fall	89%	88%	85%
Next spring	4%	4%	7%

Table 3.

Sixty-six percent of Austin seniors planned to enroll in a **4-year institution**. Twenty-four percent of seniors planned to enroll in a **2-year college and then transfer to a 4-year college**.

Type of institution	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
A 4-year college or university	60%	66%	57%
A 2-year college or university	8%	9%	10%
A 2-year community college and then transfer to a 4-year college	33%	24%	30%
A private career or trade school	2%	1%	2%

Table 4.

Almost 30% of Austin seniors planned to attend **Austin Community College**.

Postsecondary institutions	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Austin Community College (ACC)	35%	29%	35%
Texas State University	9%	10%	8%
University of Texas-Austin	10%	8%	9%
University of Texas-San Antonio	3%	1%	4%
Texas A&M University	4%	3%	4%
St. Edward's University	4%	6%	2%
Blinn College	2%	0%	2%
University of North Texas	3%	1%	2%
Texas Tech University	4%	6%	3%
Stephen F. Austin University	2%	1%	1%
Other	30%	35%	31%

Table 5.

Health sciences, business, and engineering were top areas Austin seniors planned to study in college. Five percent of Austin seniors were interested in studying computer and information sciences, a 2% percentage point increase since 2014.

Jobs/careers	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Health sciences	13%	14%	17%
Business	13%	19%	13%
Engineering	12%	9%	13%
Law, public safety, corrections, and security	6%	3%	6%
Computer and information sciences	3%	5%	5%
Human services	2%	4%	3%
I do not know	6%	9%	9%
Visual and performing arts	8%	7%	7%
Agricultural sciences and technologies	3%	2%	3%
Natural sciences and mathematics	8%	6%	7%
Education	4%	4%	5%
Communication	6%	6%	4%
Architecture	2%	2%	2%
Social sciences	2%	6%	3%
Hospitality and tourism	2%	1%	1%
Humanities	2%	2%	1%
Office skills	0%	0%	0%
Trade and industrial	2%	1%	1%

Table 6.

More than 2/3 of Austin seniors took a high school course in the area they planned to study in college.

	Austin 2015	District 2015
Yes	64%	65%
No	36%	35%

Table 7.

Six in 10 Austin seniors who did not take a course in the area they planned to study in college did not do so because **there were no such courses offered at Austin.**

Reasons	Austin 2015	District 2015
I wanted to, but there were no such courses offered at my school.	61%	27%
My parents did not want me to take a course in that area.	1%	1%
I wanted to, but my schedule would not allow it.	24%	51%
I was not interested in taking a course in this area in high school.	16%	18%
A counselor steered me away from those courses.	0%	1%
Other	10%	11%

Table 8.

Thirty-seven percent of Austin seniors who did not plan to enroll in college immediately after high school, planned to **take a year off from school to pursue other things.**

Reason	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Financial	6%	10%	18%
Academic	12%	7%	7%
Personal obligation	0%	2%	7%
Personal preference	21%	24%	20%
Gap year	46%	37%	35%
Other	15%	20%	14%

Table 9.

Fifty-one percent of Austin seniors' mother's education level was a **college degree or above.**

School status	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Doctorate degree (e.g., PhD, EdD, etc.)	2%	3%	3%
Professional degree (e.g., MD, JD, etc.)	6%	4%	20%
Master's degree	10%	10%	9%
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	33%	29%	20%
Associate degree (2-year)	7%	5%	5%
Some college	10%	17%	13%
High school diploma or earned a GED	17%	18%	19%
Less than high school	13%	12%	24%
Don't know or does not apply	3%	2%	4%

Table 10.

Seventy-eight percent of Austin seniors' parents expected them to **earn a college degree or industry license/certification**.

Level of education	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Doctorate degree (e.g., PhD, EdD, etc.)	8%	9%	12%
Master's degree	14%	18%	16%
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	44%	45%	37%
Associate degree (2-year)	7%	4%	5%
Industry license or certification	--	2%	3%
Some college	4%	4%	7%
High school or earned a GED	3%	6%	8%
I am not sure	11%	12%	12%

Table 11.

Almost all Austin seniors expected to earn a **college degree or certification** in their lifetime.

Level of education	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Doctoral or professional degree	--	19%	20%
Master's degree	--	33%	28%
Bachelor's degree (4-yr college or university)	44%	38%	35%
Associate degree (2-year community college)	8%	4%	8%
Industry license or certification (e.g., trade/technical school)	1%	3%	4%
High school diploma	2%	3%	5%

Table 12.

Austin seniors have been told mostly by their **parents and friends** they should go to college.

Level of education	Austin 2015	District 2015
Parents	94%	89%
Teachers	77%	78%
College and career advisor	52%	55%
School counselor	51%	55%
Coach(es)	36%	38%
Sibling(s) or other family member(s)	69%	63%
Friend(s)	80%	75%
Other adult in my life	51%	47%
No one	2%	3%

Table 13.

Austin seniors' parents were involved with their schooling mostly by **talking to them about how their doing in their classes** and **talking to them about their homework**.

Seniors who responded either <i>sometimes</i> or <i>often</i>	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Talking to you about homework	71%	79%	68%
Making sure you completed your homework	68%	71%	65%
Asking you about what you're learning in school	65%	73%	65%
Helping you decide what classes to take	54%	59%	54%
Talking to you about how you're doing in your classes	85%	89%	79%
Rewarding you when you do well in school	59%	59%	56%
Communicating with your teachers	50%	54%	46%
Attending school meetings	50%	52%	47%
Attending school events	50%	62%	58%
Volunteering at your school	32%	37%	28%
Joining and participating in the PTA	22%	24%	18%
Use Parent Cloud to monitor your grades	68%	59%	51%

Table 14.

Most Austin seniors know at least one teacher who supported their personal lives, high school academics, and postsecondary aspirations.

Teacher help	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Would be willing to give you extra help with your school work if you needed it	90%	92%	88%
Would be willing to help you with a personal problem	79%	83%	74%
Cares about how you're doing in school	84%	86%	79%
Would be willing to write you a letter of recommendation for a job or college	87%	87%	81%
Knows what you will be doing next year	67%	70%	65%
Would be willing to help you even after you graduate	67%	71%	64%
I do not know a teacher who fits any of the items above.	--	3%	4%

Persistence and Motivation

Table 15.

Austin seniors indicated their feelings about their persistence, motivation, and interactions with teachers.

Percentage who responded either <i>sometimes</i> or <i>always</i>	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
I can do even the hardest schoolwork if I try.	89%	91%	92%
I enjoy doing my schoolwork.	52%	52%	59%
I feel/felt well prepared for STAAR/EOC.	80%	83%	84%
I try hard to do my best work.	91%	90%	91%
I feel successful in my schoolwork.	88%	88%	89%
My teachers push us to think hard about the things we read.	89%	87%	87%
My teachers push everyone to work hard.	90%	92%	90%
I can reach the goals I set for myself.	96%	97%	96%
My homework helps me learn things I need to know.	69%	76%	78%
My schoolwork makes me think about things in new ways.	69%	71%	73%
My teachers connect what I am learning to life outside of class.	67%	68%	70%
I have fun learning in my classes.	78%	76%	77%
I like to come to school.	70%	70%	71%

Extracurricular Activities

Table 16.

The school-affiliated activities Austin seniors were mostly involved in were **sports** and **academic clubs**.

In school	Did not participate	1-2 years	3-4 years
Music	64%	13%	22%
Theater/drama	78%	15%	6%
Dance	82%	12%	7%
Sports	43%	24%	34%
Academic clubs/UII competitions	53%	22%	23%
Speech/debate	60%	36%	3%
Student government	80%	17%	3%
Career and technical student organizations	90%	8%	2%

Table 17.

Austin seniors were mostly involved in **community service** and **sports** outside of school.

Outside of school	Did not participate	1-2 years	3-4 years
Music	68%	11%	21%
Theater/drama	86%	9%	5%
Dance	88%	7%	6%
Sports	47%	22%	31%
Providing routine care for family members	75%	13%	12%
Community service	32%	27%	41%
Environmental projects/activities	64%	20%	16%
Boy/Girl Scouts	89%	4%	6%

Work and Study Time

Table 18.

Six in 10 Austin seniors **worked** during their senior year.

Work time	Percentage who worked <i>during</i> senior year		
	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Did not work	40%	39%	39%
Less than 20 hours	34%	35%	28%
20 hours or more	26%	26%	33%

Table 19.

Most Austin seniors who worked during their senior year worked because they **liked the freedom of having their own money**.

Reason	Austin 2015	District 2015
To save money for college	21%	19%
To help my family with bills/expenses	15%	20%
I like the freedom of having my own money	59%	52%
Other	6%	9%

Table 20.

On average, Austin seniors studied **1 to 5 hours** each week.

Study time	Percentage who studied each week		
	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
None	6%	5%	9%
1 to 5 hours	40%	35%	40%
6 to 10 hours	27%	29%	22%
11 to 15 hours	15%	16%	12%
16 to 20 hours	9%	8%	9%
More than 20 hours	4%	7%	9%

Instructional Quality

Table 21.

Austin High School helped seniors to actively develop **Twenty-first Century Skills**.

Percentage who responded <i>somewhat well</i> or <i>very well</i>	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Teamwork	89%	91%	91%
Creative thinking	88%	89%	90%
Problem solving	93%	94%	93%
Conflict resolution	86%	85%	87%
Personal health/fitness	73%	71%	81%
Time management	81%	82%	84%
Technology	83%	81%	84%

Table 22.

Austin seniors rated the quality of their **English language arts**, **social studies**, and **performing/fine arts** instruction most favorably.

Percentage who responded <i>good</i> or <i>excellent</i>	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
English language arts	86%	84%	81%
Social studies	79%	76%	75%
Performing/Fine arts	78%	73%	73%
Career and technical (CTE)	72%	64%	71%
Science	63%	63%	70%
Mathematics	60%	67%	73%
Computer/Technology	62%	57%	64%
Foreign language	64%	60%	64%

Technology Access and Use

Table 23.

Almost 9 in 10 Austin seniors have a **computer with Internet access** at home.

Access	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
No computer	3%	3%	5%
No computer, but Internet access	5%	6%	12%
Computer, no Internet	4%	2%	4%
Computer with Internet access	89%	89%	79%

Table 24.

Austin seniors used Naviance mostly to check their **class rank and grade point average (GPA)**.

Percentage answering <i>yes</i>	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Class rank and GPA inquiry	87%	88%	82%
College search	79%	76%	70%
Counselor-directed activities	69%	71%	63%
College visit sign up	57%	58%	55%
Career exploration	49%	53%	48%
Resume building	43%	39%	36%

Postsecondary Preparation and Advising

Table 25.

Half of Austin seniors started thinking about college by the time they were in **elementary school**.

Time frame	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
As long as I can remember	47%	43%	37%
In elementary school	7%	7%	9%
In middle/junior high school	18%	20%	21%
In high school	27%	28%	31%
I've never thought about college	2%	2%	3%

Table 26.

Forty-two percent of Austin seniors who did not think about college until high school did not think about it until their junior and senior years.

Grade	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
9 th Grade	34%	30%	20%
10 th Grade	24%	27%	25%
11 th Grade	30%	31%	37%
12 th Grade	12%	11%	18%

Table 27.

Austin seniors prepared for postsecondary education mostly by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), taking college entrance exams, and visiting one or more colleges.

Type of preparation	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Took college entrance tests (e.g., SAT, ACT, THEA, COMPASS, ASSET)	71%	71%	60%
Took one or more Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate classes	54%	55%	51%
Took test prep class for the PSAT, SAT, ACT, etc.	45%	49%	45%
Completed or are currently enrolled in ACC courses	20%	24%	32%
Took other college level courses (e.g., Texas State, Texas Tech, TSTC)	4%	9%	9%
Visited one or more colleges or technical schools	59%	66%	58%
Met with the school counselor/ADVANCE staff to discuss college plans/processes	56%	57%	50%
Attended one or more college fairs	39%	44%	43%
Met with a college representative or recruiter at my high school	43%	50%	41%
Participated in ACC College Connections	30%	25%	24%
Attended Financial Aid Saturday event(s)	--	8%	10%
Completed and submitted the FAFSA	74%	72%	68%
Completed and submitted a scholarship application	51%	51%	47%
Ordered and submitted a transcript to a college or trade/ technical school.	63%	62%	56%
I have not completed any activities to prepare for continuing my education	16%	11%	17%
I have done nothing to academically prepare for continuing my education	15%	15%	19%
I have not completed any forms to prepare for continuing my education	10%	14%	19%

Table 28.

Austin seniors' family members helped them prepare for life after high school mostly by **talking to them about their career and/or college options** and **talking to them about their responsibilities as an adult**.

Form of help	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Talked to you about career and/or college options	85%	87%	79%
Talked to you about finances	73%	73%	65%
Talked to you about your responsibilities as an adult	77%	82%	75%
Talked to you about what a career and/or college would be like	69%	72%	62%
Helped you with financial aid (FAFSA and/or scholarships)	66%	65%	55%
Helped you complete applications for colleges or trade/technical schools	51%	52%	40%
Encouraged you to apply to several different colleges	58%	63%	53%
No one in my family talked to me about or helped me with these things.	4%	3%	6%

Table 29.

Austin seniors' teachers helped them most by **pushing their academic abilities**. School counselors helped them **select courses needed for work or college**. Project ADVANCE staff helped by encouraging them to **continue their education after high school**.

Activity	None of these people	School counselor	Teacher	College & career advisor
Select courses needed for work or admission to college	35%	45%	17%	21%
Push your academic abilities further	26%	19%	63%	10%
Take AP / honors courses	44%	23%	42%	7%
Take dual credit or articulated credit courses	59%	20%	24%	11%
Get information about careers/occupations	43%	27%	24%	26%
Continue your education after high school	31%	32%	41%	34%
Apply to multiple schools	43%	25%	24%	32%
Decide what school to attend	64%	13%	18%	21%
Fill out applications for postsecondary education	52%	18%	17%	29%
Write college application essays or personal statements	36%	15%	48%	22%

Table 30.

Most Austin seniors were **able to meet with** their school counselor and Project ADVANCE advisor.

Availability	School Counselor	College & Career Advisor
Yes, this person was available and I talked to him/her.	65%	72%
I tried to talk to this person and wasn't able to meet with him/her.	8%	5%
I never tried to meet with this person.	28%	23%

Applications to Postsecondary Institutions

Table 31.

Austin seniors who applied to a 4-year institution submitted **4 or more applications**, on average, while those who applied to 2-year institutions submitted **1 to 3 applications**, on average.

Institution type	0 applications	1-3 applications	4 or more applications
2-year	35%	62%	3%
4-year	26%	31%	43%
Business/technical/vocational school	90%	8%	2%

Table 32.

Austin seniors who applied to 2-year and 4-year institutions received **1 to 3 acceptances**, on average.

Institution type	0 acceptances	1-3 acceptances	4 or more acceptances
2-year	42%	55%	3%
4-year	32%	40%	28%
Business/technical/vocational school	91%	7%	2%

Postsecondary Financial Literacy

Table 33.

Seventy-three percent of Austin seniors planned to pay for college with family or personal savings.

Source	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Scholarships and/or grants	70%	65%	68%
Loans	42%	41%	42%
Family or personal savings	74%	73%	63%
Tuition and fees exemption	8%	9%	10%
Working during the school year	59%	55%	59%
Working during the summer	64%	59%	61%
I don't know	2%	2%	4%

Table 34.

Austin seniors learned about financial aid for college mostly from their parents or other adults.

Source of information	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Senior economics class	30%	21%	21%
Financial Aid Saturday events	17%	8%	16%
Talked to school counselor/college and career advisor/Project ADVANCE staff	44%	41%	48%
Information from a college or university (e.g., website, brochures)	38%	37%	35%
College recruiter	14%	18%	18%
U.S. Department of Education or FAFSA websites	30%	21%	23%
Parents or other adults	72%	75%	63%
None of these	14%	11%	10%
Social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, etc.)	7%	12%	12%

Table 35.

Almost half of Akins seniors who submitted the FAFSA indicated it was “some parts easy, some parts difficult” for their parents to complete.

Degree of ease	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
Easy	28%	23%	24%
Some parts easy, some parts difficult	48%	46%	47%
Difficult	12%	14%	12%
I did not apply for financial aid	12%	18%	16%

Table 36.

Most Austin seniors who did not submit the FAFSA did not do so because they did not know about the financial aid process, their family did not think they were eligible for financial aid, or they did not need financial aid to attend college.

Reason	Austin 2014	Austin 2015	District 2015
I did not need financial aid to attend college	29%	26%	18%
My parents were not willing to submit private financial information	9%	3%	6%
My family did not think we would qualify or be eligible for financial aid	27%	26%	19%
I did not plan to go to college	9%	18%	18%
I did not know about the financial aid process	27%	27%	38%

Acronym Key

The following acronyms are used in the High School Exit Survey summary reports. Where relevant, acronyms have a link to an external URL.

Acronym	Definition
ACC	Austin Community College
ACT	American College Testing
AP	Advanced Placement
ASSET	American College Testing (ACT) placement exam for students in community/technical colleges
COMPASS	American College Testing (ACT) Computer-adapted Placement Assessment and Support Services
EOC	End of Course exam
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
GPA	grade point average
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
PSAT	Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
STAAR	State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness
TAKS	Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
THEA	Texas Higher Education Assessment
TSTC	Texas State Technical College
UIL	University Interscholastic League