

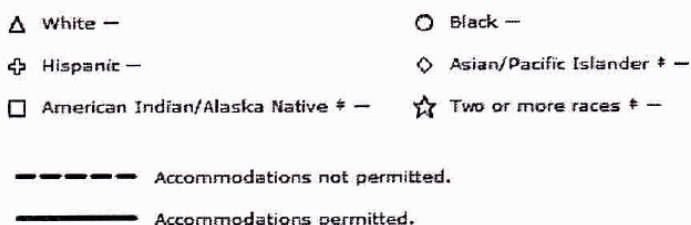
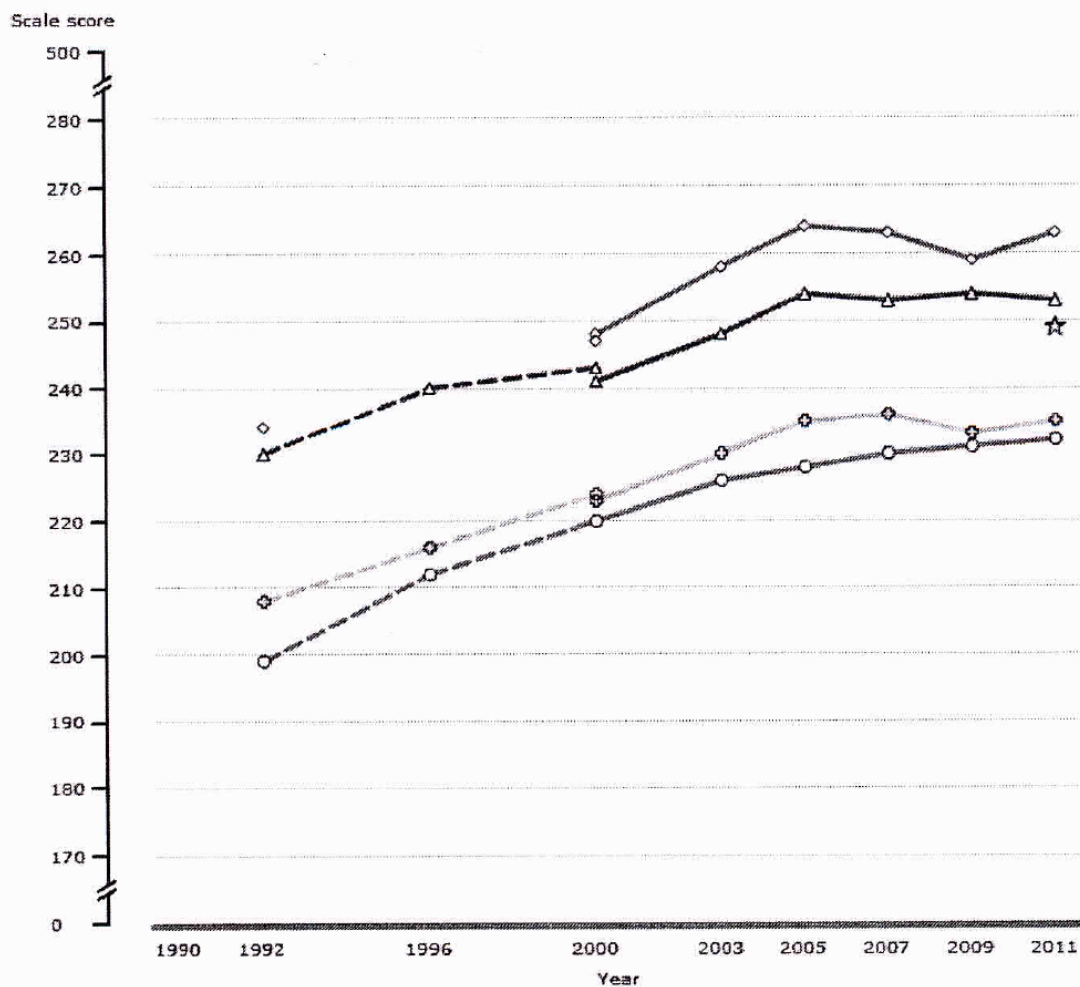
A Picture Tells a 1000 Words

Look at the accompanying charts. These are NAEP scores for Texas, not TAAS or TAKS. Recall that Texas started its accountability system in the 1993-1994 school year. Also, it's important to know that a gain of 10 scale score points is approximately equivalent to an advance of a grade level.

I must use a few words to accompany the pictures:

1. In 4th grade math, in Texas:
 - (a) Black students have improved 33 scale score points since 1992 and, thus, now are over 3 grade levels ahead of where they were then;
 - (b) Hispanic students have improved 28 scale score points since 1992 and, thus, now are almost 3 grade levels ahead of where they were then; and
 - (c) White students have improved 23 scale score points since 1992 and, thus, now are over 2 grade levels ahead of where they were then.

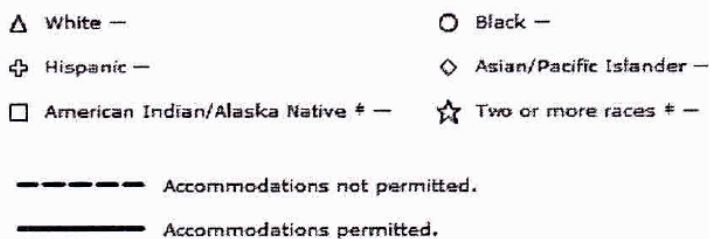
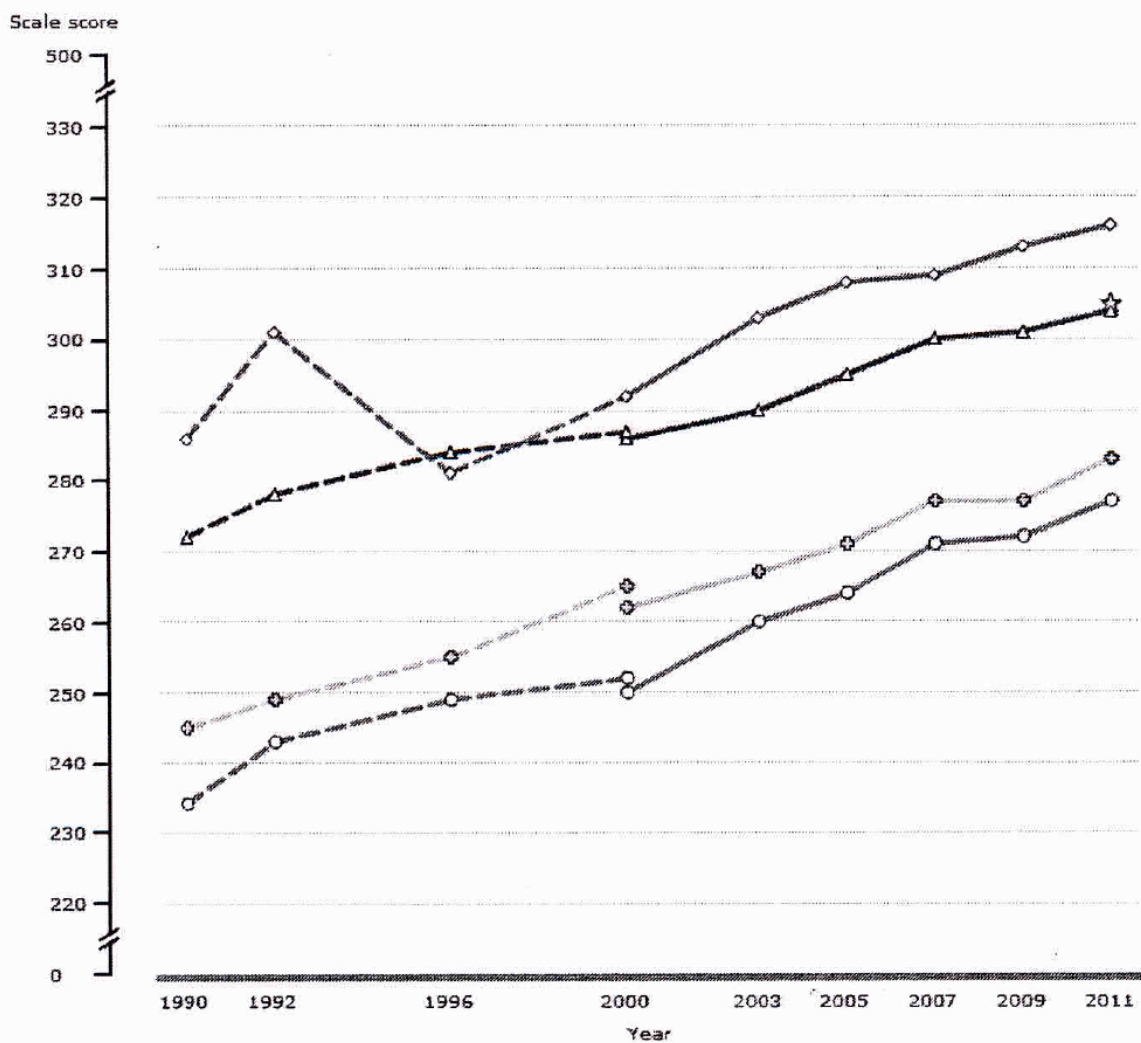
Average scale scores for mathematics, grade 4 by race/ethnicity used to report trends, school-reported [SDRACE] for year and jurisdiction: 1990, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2011
Texas



2. In 8th grade math, in Texas:

- (a) Black students have improved 34 scale score points since 1992 and, thus, are roughly 3 ½ grade levels ahead of where they were then;
- (b) Hispanic students have improved 34 scale score points since 1992 and, thus, also, are roughly 3 ½ grade levels ahead of where they were then; and
- (c) White students have improved 36 scale score points since 1992 and, thus, are 3 ½ grade levels ahead of where they were then.

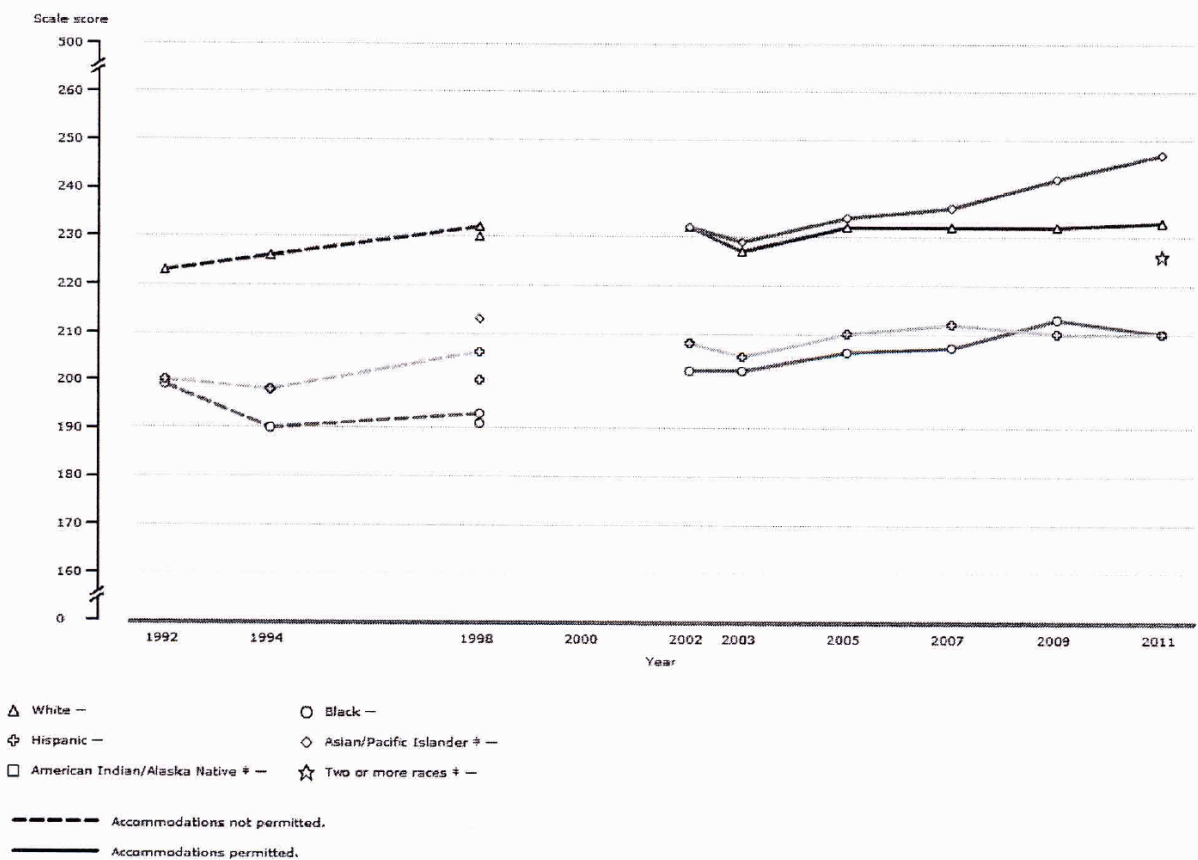
Average scale scores for mathematics, grade 8 by race/ethnicity used to report trends, school-reported [SDRACE] for year and jurisdiction: 1990, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2011
Texas



3. In 4th grade reading, in Texas:

- (a) Black students have improved 20 scale score points since 1994, and, thus, are 2 grade levels ahead of then;
- (b) Hispanic students have improved 12 scale score points since 1994, and, thus, are over 1 grade level ahead of then; and
- (c) White students have improved 10 scale score point since 1994, and, thus, are 1 grade level ahead of then.

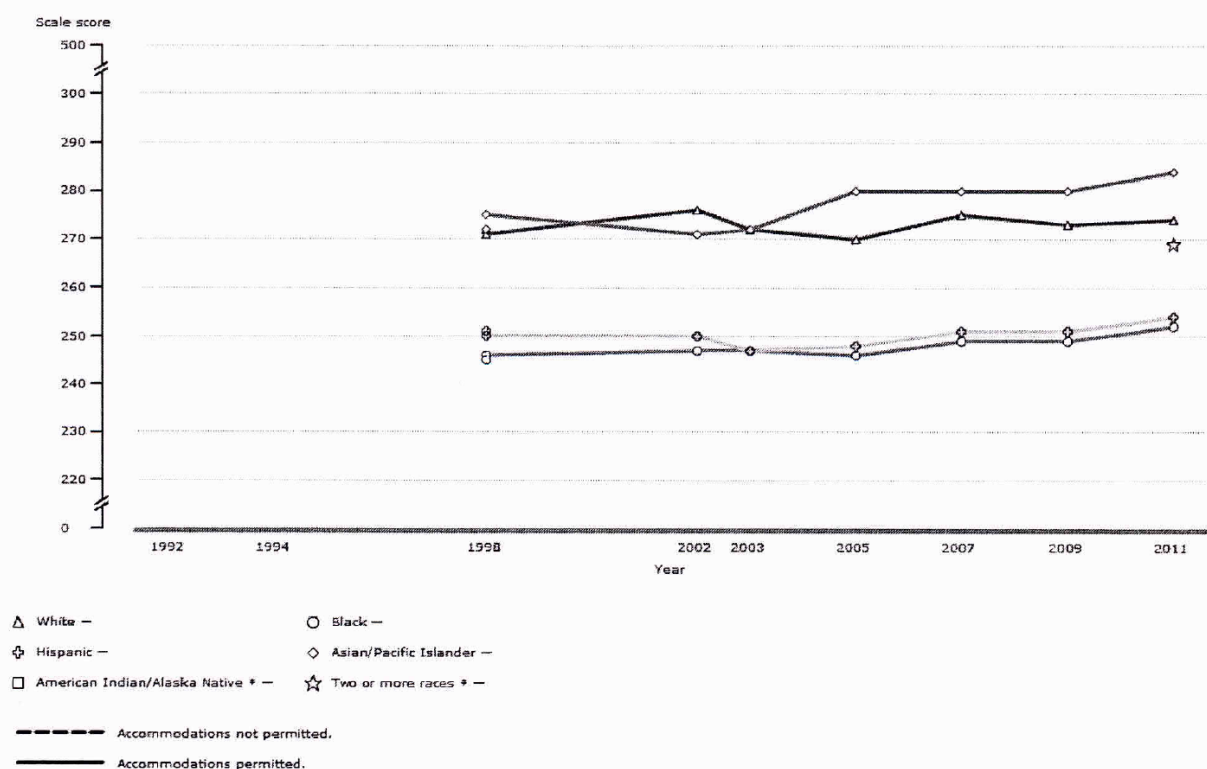
Average scale scores for reading, grade 4 by race/ethnicity used to report trends, school-reported [SDRACE] for year and jurisdiction: 1992, 1994, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2011
Texas



4. In 8th grade reading, in Texas:

- (a) Black students improved 7 scale score points since 1998 (the first year for which there is data), and, thus, are $\frac{3}{4}$ of a grade level ahead of where they were then;
- (b) Hispanic students improved 4 scale score points since 1998, and, thus, are about $\frac{1}{2}$ of a grade level ahead of where they were then; and
- (c) White students improved 3 scale score points since 1998, and, thus, are about $\frac{1}{3}$ of a grade level ahead of where they were then.

Average scale scores for reading, grade 8 by race/ethnicity used to report trends, school-reported [SDRACE] for year and jurisdiction: 1992, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2011
Texas



Brief Concluding Observations – Caveats and Exceptions

1. Reading gains are slender, though great effort has been exerted. The good news is that the new standards are better, and, by focusing more on vocabulary, content knowledge, and comprehension of complex text, we could accelerate the pace of gain.
2. The math gains are extraordinary, but they reflect mostly improved proficiency in arithmetic and lower level content. The ground is better prepared, but there's still a steep climb ahead toward proficiency in algebra and beyond.
3. Pipeline effects are appearing in high school and post secondary success, but far too slowly and modestly. The ramping up of high school performance through full implementation of HB3 is absolutely essential, as is a new and dramatic effort to increase post secondary completion success.
4. Acknowledging the huge challenges that still remain is important, but the remarkable progress that has been made in the past 15 years must, at the same time, be recognized, honored, and built upon.