

# Gender Sexuality Alliances (GSAs) Improve Short and Long-Term Educational Outcomes for Texas Students

**Gender sexuality alliances (GSAs) are student organizations designed to support and affirm students with diverse identities across sexual orientation and gender identity. GSAs can improve the quality of life for LGBT students by promoting inclusion of all students through direct support, education, and advocacy.<sup>1</sup>**



## RESEARCH SHOWS THAT GSAS ARE AN EFFECTIVE SAFE SCHOOL STRATEGY FOR LGBT YOUTH

1. They can serve as a community building space for LGBT students.<sup>7</sup>
2. They create spaces for activism around LGBT issues.<sup>10</sup>
3. They increase the perceived level of awareness of LGBT-specific issues at school and increase support from teachers and peers.<sup>10</sup>
4. An increased supportive environment translates to increased short-term outcomes, such as attendance, and long-term outcomes such as graduation and college enrollment.<sup>11,12</sup>
5. LGBT youth that have access to a school GSA experience less in-school victimization, discrimination, and harassment, with more positive school and mental health experiences.<sup>8,9</sup>

## NEW RESEARCH: GSAS IN THE TEXAS CONTEXT

In states like Texas that lack statewide LGBTQ-inclusive nondiscrimination policies, GSAs may be particularly important for supporting and protecting LGBTQ youth.

The Stories and Numbers research team conducted a study examining the link between GSAs and educational outcomes in the 20 largest school districts in Texas. We found that about half of secondary schools (grades 9-12) had a GSA,<sup>11,12</sup> and that Texas schools with GSAs are linked with positive short-term and long-term outcomes.<sup>11,12</sup>

- Short-term outcomes: Schools with GSAs were linked to higher SAT and ACT scores, a greater percentage of students who met STAAR assessments of grade-level knowledge, and better attendance.
- Long-term outcomes: Schools with GSAs had higher levels of retention, four-year graduation rates, and college-readiness. Finally, a higher percentage of students in schools with GSAs enrolled in Texas higher education after the completion of their high school education.

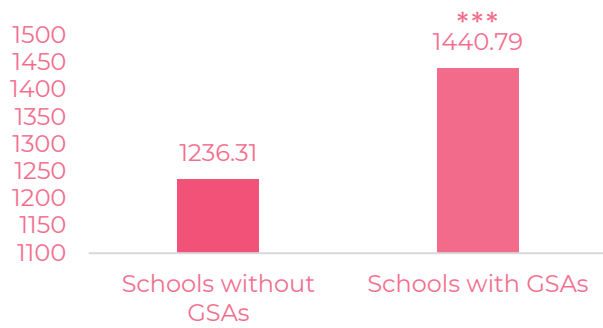
**DOWNLOAD THE FULL POLICY BRIEF, INCLUDING END NOTES THAT PERTAIN TO THIS SECTION:**

[storiesandnumbers.org/stories-and-numbers-policy-brief-full-report.pdf](https://storiesandnumbers.org/stories-and-numbers-policy-brief-full-report.pdf)

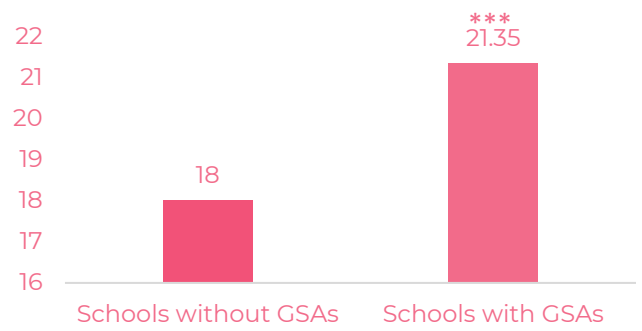
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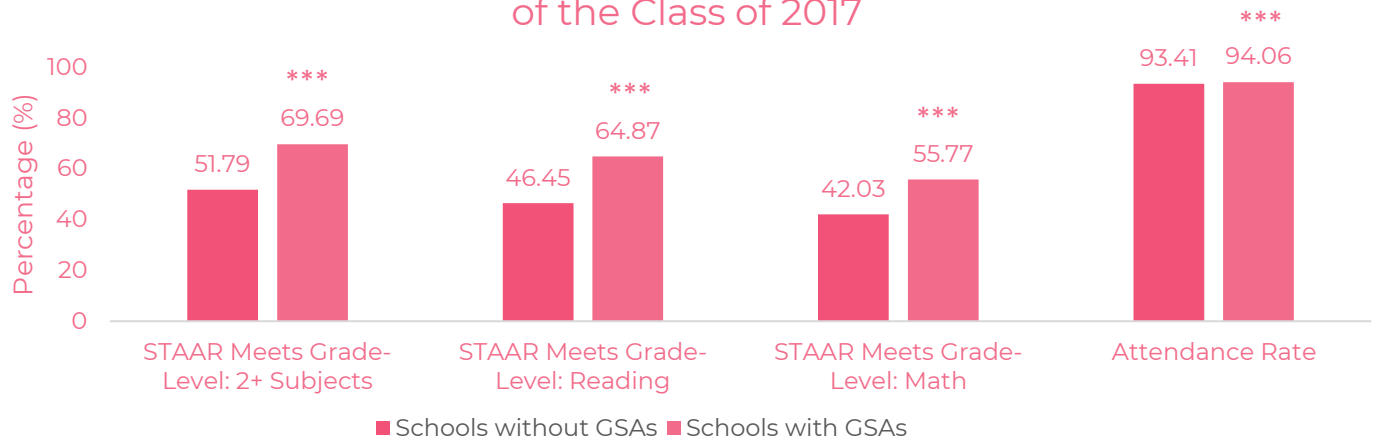
Means of Average SAT Scores of the Class of 2017



Means of Average ACT Scores of the Class of 2017



Means of Short-Term Outcome Variables of the Class of 2017



Means of Long-Term Outcome Variables of the Class of 2018

