



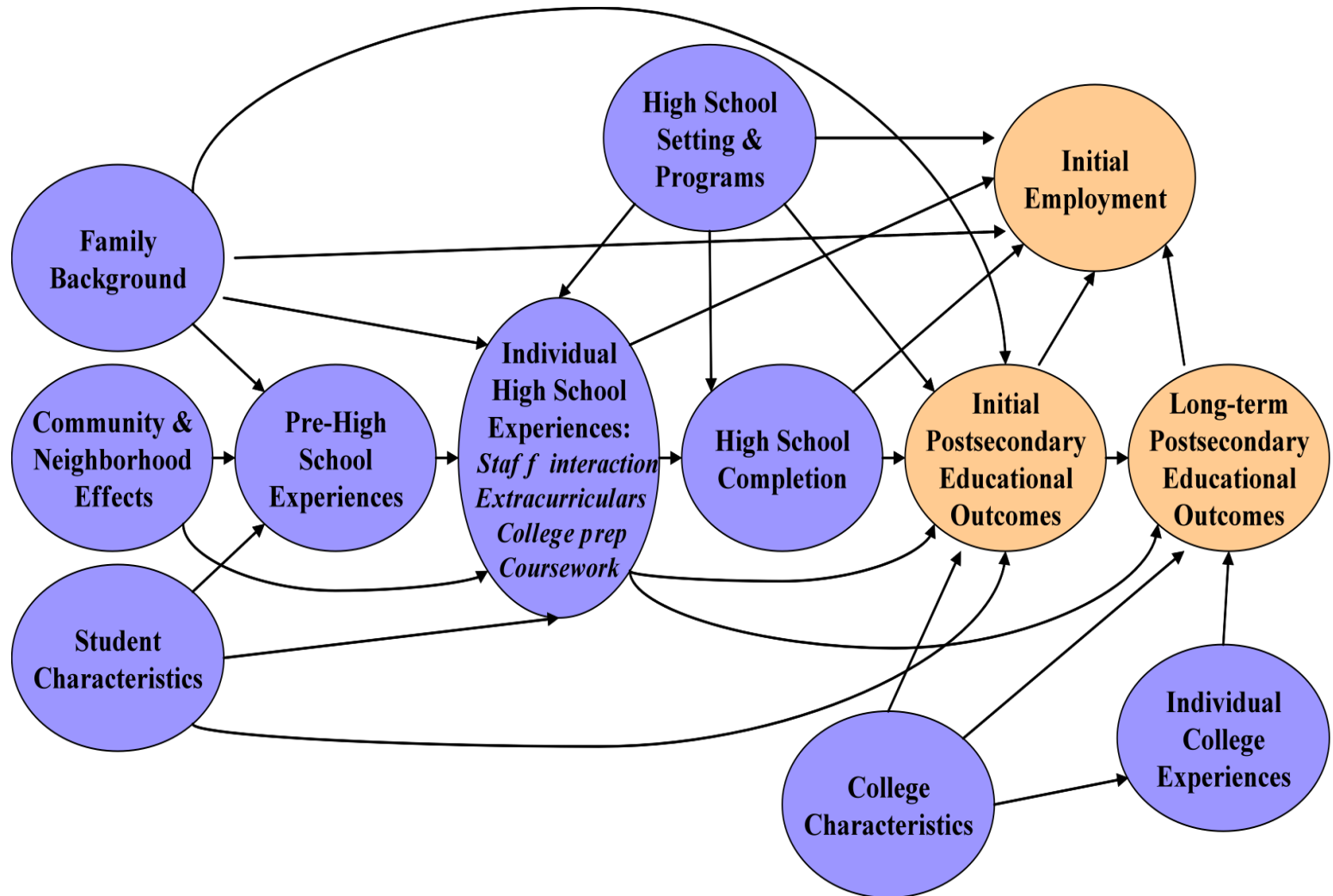
College & Career Readiness: Insights from the Central Texas Student Futures Project

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Factors Affecting College Enrollment & Work



Source: B. Levy & C. King, *Central Texas Student Futures Project Conceptual Model* (2009).

Background

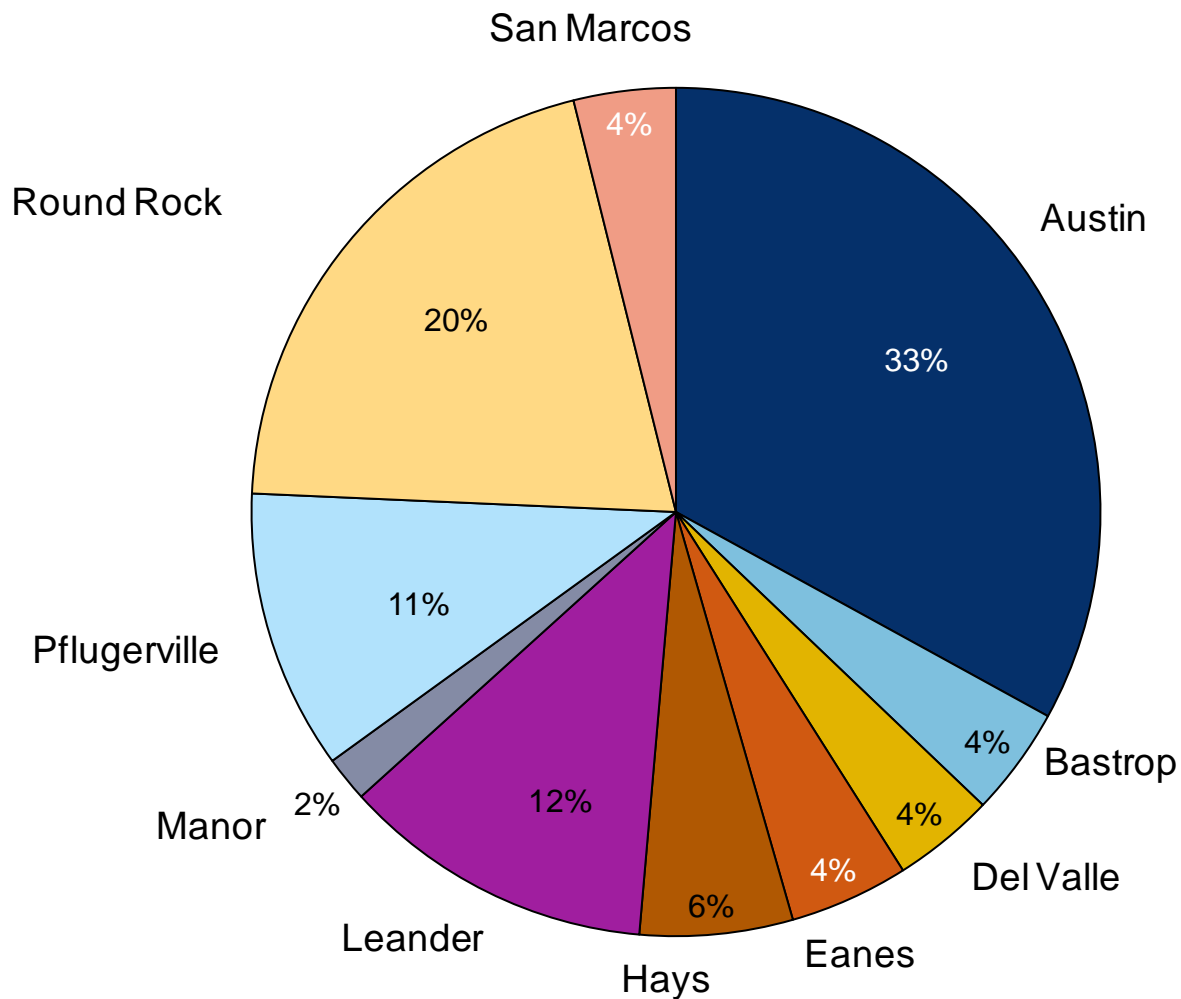


The *Central Texas Student Futures Project* research is part of a broader Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce (GAC) initiative:

- ✓ Ongoing (2005-2013) partnership of the Ray Marshall Center, GAC and 11 ISDs, touching 84% of area high school seniors
- ✓ Longitudinal analysis of student-level education, workforce and other records, including student exit surveys linked to secondary, postsecondary education, labor market, corrections and other outcomes data



District Composition of 2009 Graduates (SFP)





Composition of Graduates (2007 SFP Districts)



Black share relatively constant; Hispanic and low-income shares gradually increasing.

	Class of 2007	Class of 2008	Class of 2009
Totals	9,410	10,452	10,793
Ethnicity			
Asian	6%	6%	6%
Black	11%	12%	12%
Hispanic	29%	31%	32%
White	52%	52%	48%
Gender			
Female	48%	50%	50%
Male	50%	50%	50%
Family Income Status			
Low-income	21%	23%	26%
Not Low-income	73%	73%	70%
Special Education Status			
Special Education	9%	9%	9%
Not Special Education	85%	87%	87%



Getting *TO* College



First, review ***factors*** statistically associated with enrolling in 4-year and 2-year institutions.

Then, identify particular ***strategies*** for increasing college enrollment rates in both 4- and 2-year institutions.

Highlight results for key groups, especially ***low-income, Hispanic*** and ***first-generation college*** students.

➔ Factors and strategies vary by type of college and population group: ***one-size-fits-all approaches not likely to succeed.***



Postsecondary Enrollment of Central Texas HS Graduates, Fall Following Graduation, by College Type, Ethnicity and Income Status (2007 SFP Districts)



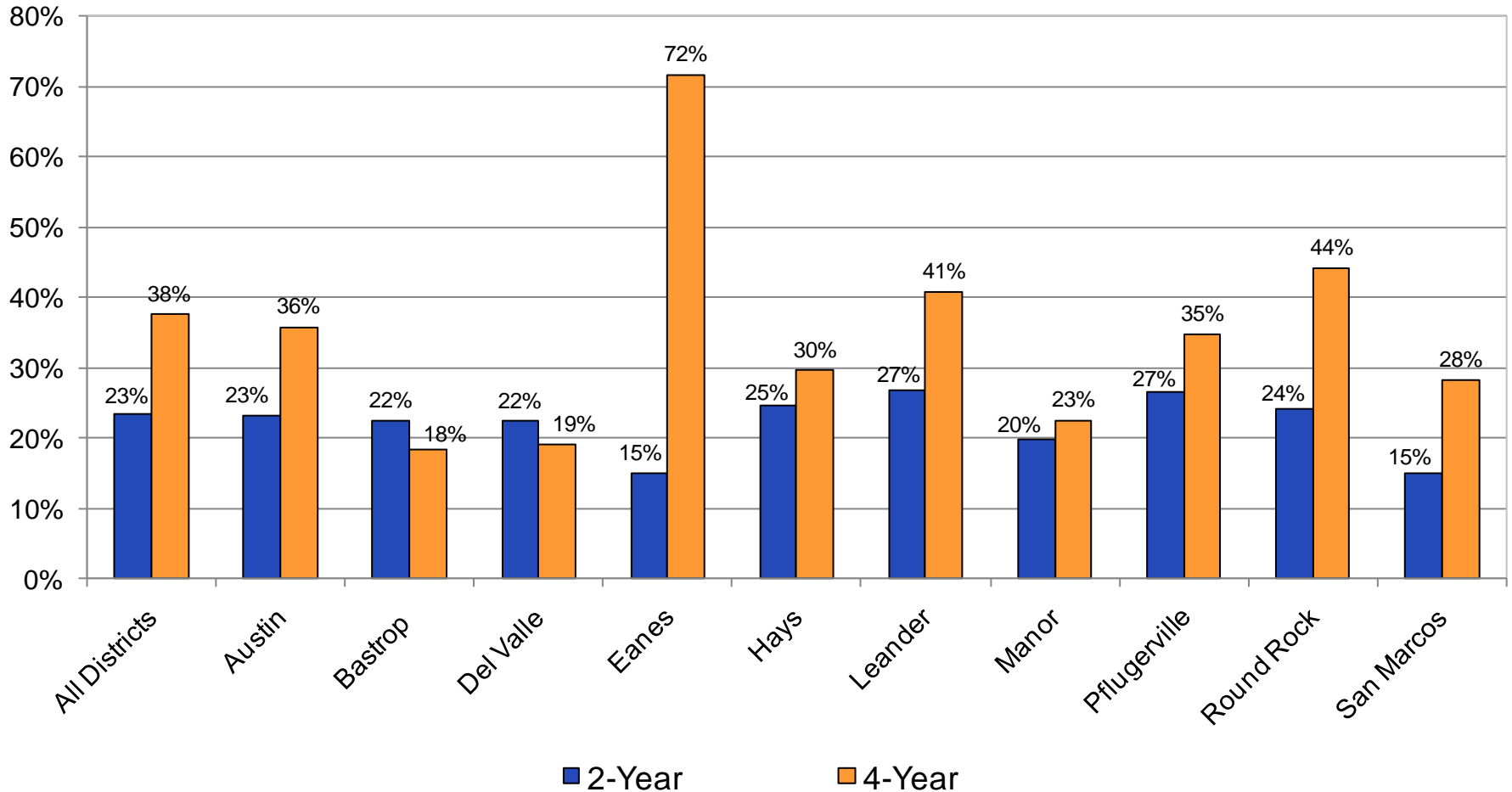
	2007		2008		2009*	
	2-Year	4-Year	2-Year	4-Year	2-Year	4-Year
Enrolled Graduates (%)	22%	40%	22%	40%	23%	39%
Ethnicity						
Asian	21%	57%	20%	63%	17%	65%
Black	23%	35%	22%	33%	25%	36%
Hispanic	22%	22%	23%	22%	25%	23%
White	23%	49%	22%	50%	23%	48%
Income Status						
Low-income	21%	19%	20%	20%	24%	22%
Not low-income	23%	47%	23%	48%	23%	48%
Unknown	21%	12%	22%	11%	20%	6%



* Overall denominator includes 100 students who lacked enough information to link to NSC records; 62% reflects the best possible rate using NSC and THECB data.

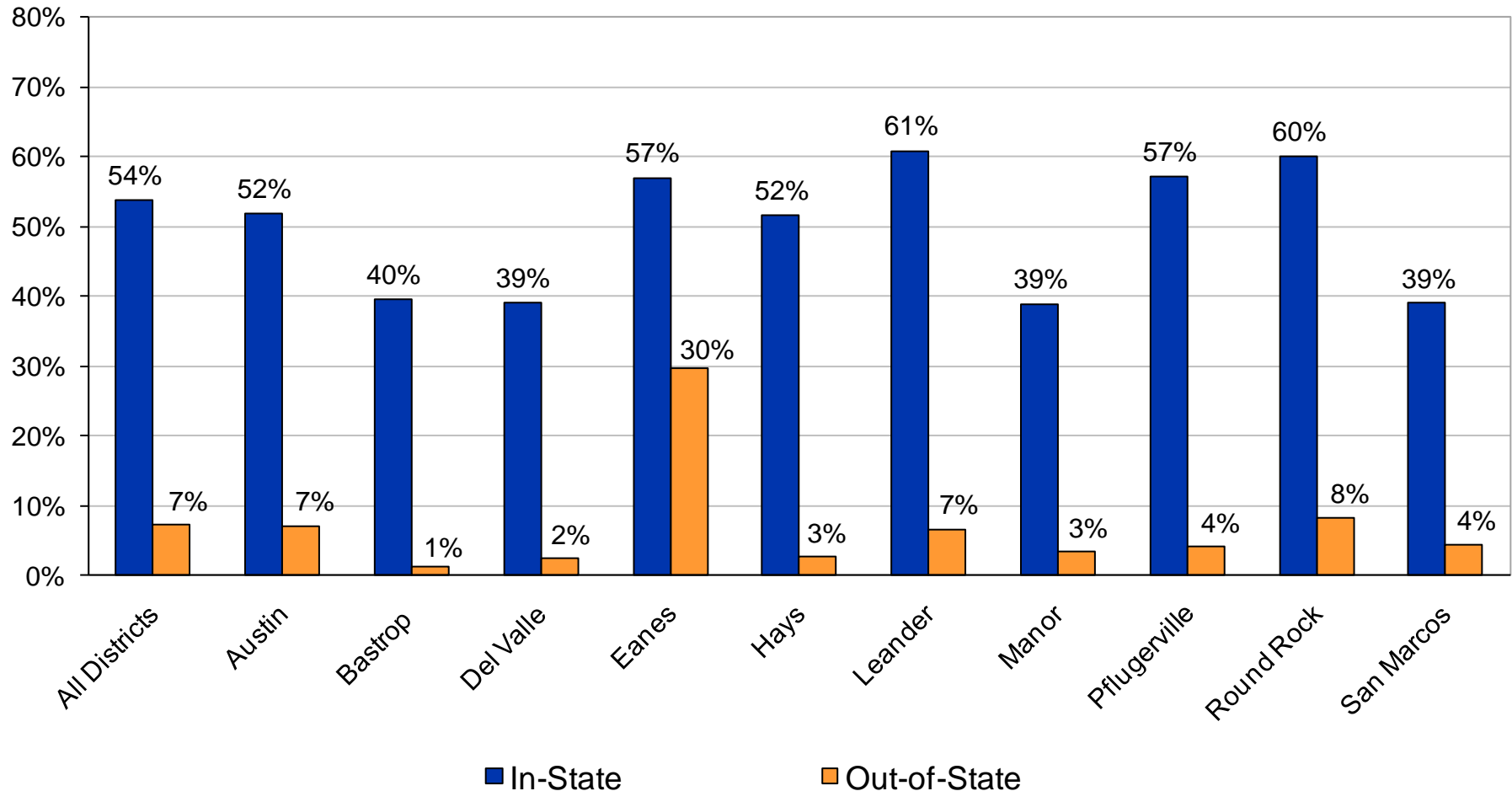


Percent of 2009 Graduates Enrolled in Fall 2009, by College Type and District (N=11,993)





Percent of 2009 Graduates Enrolled in Fall 2009, by Location and District (N=11,993)

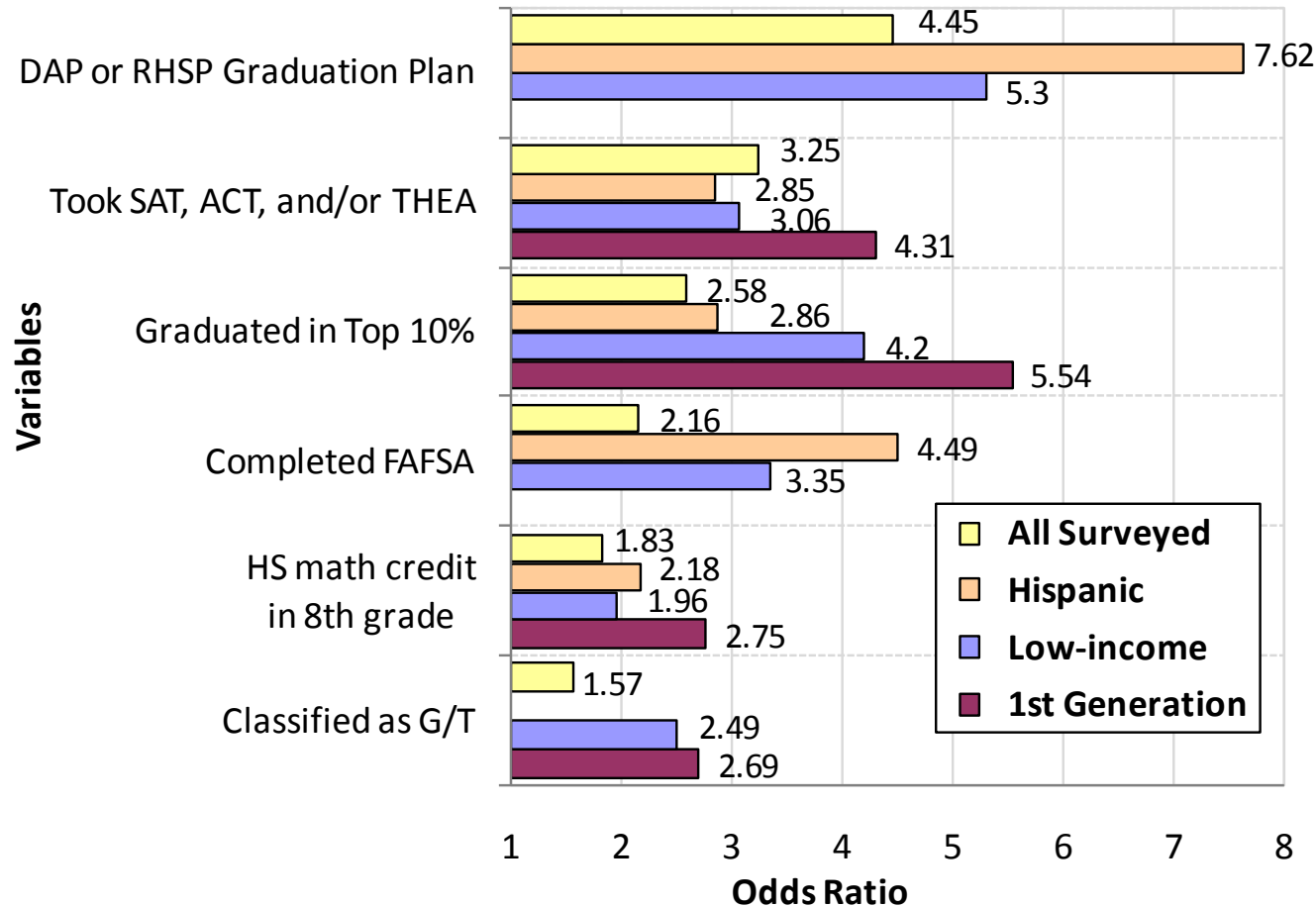




Major Factors Linked to Increased 4-Yr Enrollment Odds



(Class of 2007)



ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- All Surveyed
 - Participated in HS sports (1.8)
- Hispanic
 - Male (2.12)
- Low-income
 - Participated in HS music (1.51)
- 1st Generation
 - Participated in HS music (1.51)

*****Major factors increased enrollment odds by 50% or more.
No factors reduced enrollment odds by more than 50%.***

Major 4-Yr Enrollment Factors, Selected Populations (Class of 2007)



- ***Hispanic graduates***: many key factors the same but strength varied. Strong curriculum and FAFSA very important; males more likely to enroll; parental education and visiting campuses not significant.
- ***Low-income graduates***: far fewer significant variables. Curriculum and Top 10% most important.
- ***First-generation graduates***: Top 10% increased enrollment odds by 400%; college entrance exams, 8th grade high school math credit also important; curriculum not significant for this group.

*****For all graduates, uncertainty about borrowing money for college reduced 4-yr enrollment odds.***

Major Factors Linked to 2-year Enrollments (Class of 2007)



Fewer factors statistically associated with odds of 2-year college enrollment.

- None **increased** the odds of 2-year college enrollments by more than 50%.
- Graduating in the Top 10% of the senior class **reduced** 2-year enrollment odds by more than 50% for all groups.
- Never thinking about college as an option **reduced** 2-year enrollment odds by more than 50% for surveyed graduates overall, but not for the various groups.

Effective College Enrollment Strategies



- Various **college preparation activities**—college enrollment counseling, taking college entrance tests, completing college applications, applying for FAFSA—improve college enrollments for all students (SFP & Tierney et al. 2009).
- Ensuring students **take a rigorous curriculum** and **excel in school** is also effective for most (SFP & Tierney et al. 2009).
- **Reducing student mobility** is critical: students changing high schools, even once, are far less likely to go on to college (SFP).
- **Making college more affordable** is critical as well. Because most Texas high school graduates attend in-state colleges, **affordability of state schools** is key to increasing college enrollment rates for all students, but especially for low-income, Hispanic and first-generation students (SFP).

Effective Strategies ...



National and Texas research suggest additional strategies to increase college enrollments, including:

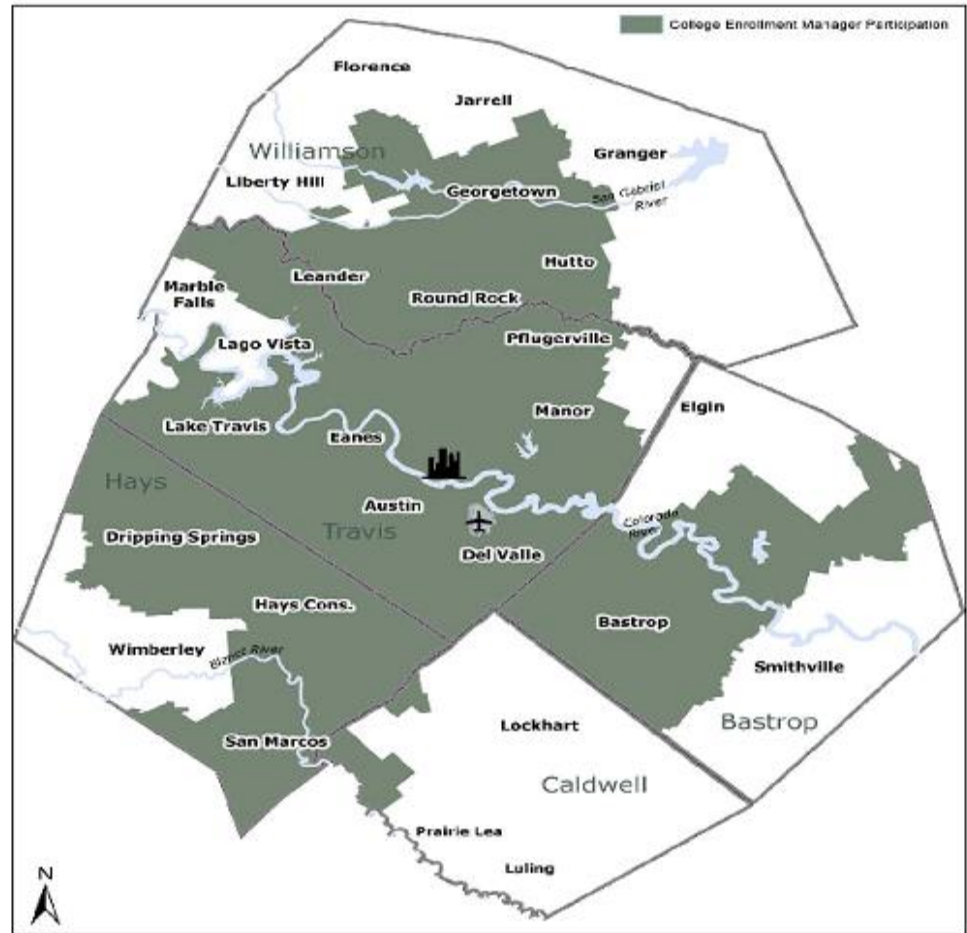
- ✓ Participation in **extracurricular activities**, especially sports or music (Rumberger & Arellano, 2007; King et al. 2007; Schexnayder et al. 2009)
- ✓ Enrolling in **dual-credit, college-like and AP courses** (Quint et al. 2008; Bailey et al. 2003; Karp et al. 2007, 2008; Roderick et al. 2006; Adelman 1999; Klopfenstein & Thomas 2005)
- ✓ Making **college part of a student's 'individual life plan'** via guidance counselor and other interactions (Quint et al. 2008)
- ✓ Surrounding students with **adults and peers** who build and support their college aspirations (Tierney et al. 2009)
- ✓ Providing **integrated support services/counseling**, especially for those enrolling in 2-year colleges (Grubb 1996)

Four-County Greater Austin Chamber Initiative



Goal: Increase direct-to-college enrollments by 20,010, to a rate of **64% by 2010.**

Now, aiming for a direct-to-college enrollment rate of **72% by 2015.**



Chamber Strategy



Bottoms up, for leadership, focus and energy

- Austin Community College Connection
- Financial Aid Saturdays
- Common Application to college
- College-readiness assistance for seniors

Tops down, focusing local education leaders on college readiness

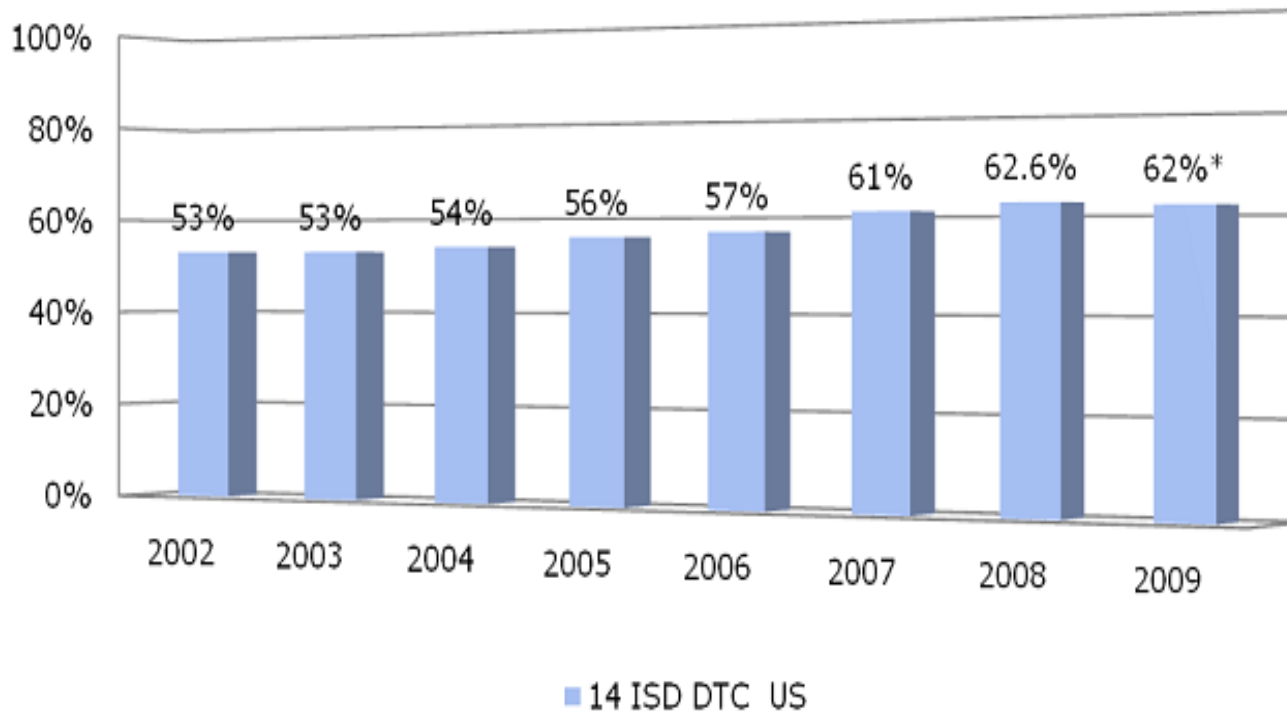
- Create College Enrollment Managers in each high school in the region
- Advocate for college readiness in state accountability
- Pilot Strategic Compensation and other initiatives
- Create, foster real-time management tools (e.g., Common Application, FAFSA, Student Futures Project)



Metro Austin Direct-to-College Enrollment Rate Up 9 Points



Austin MSA Direct to College Enrollment



Source: Student Futures Project, THECB, 2003-2009

* Estimate

Getting *THROUGH* College



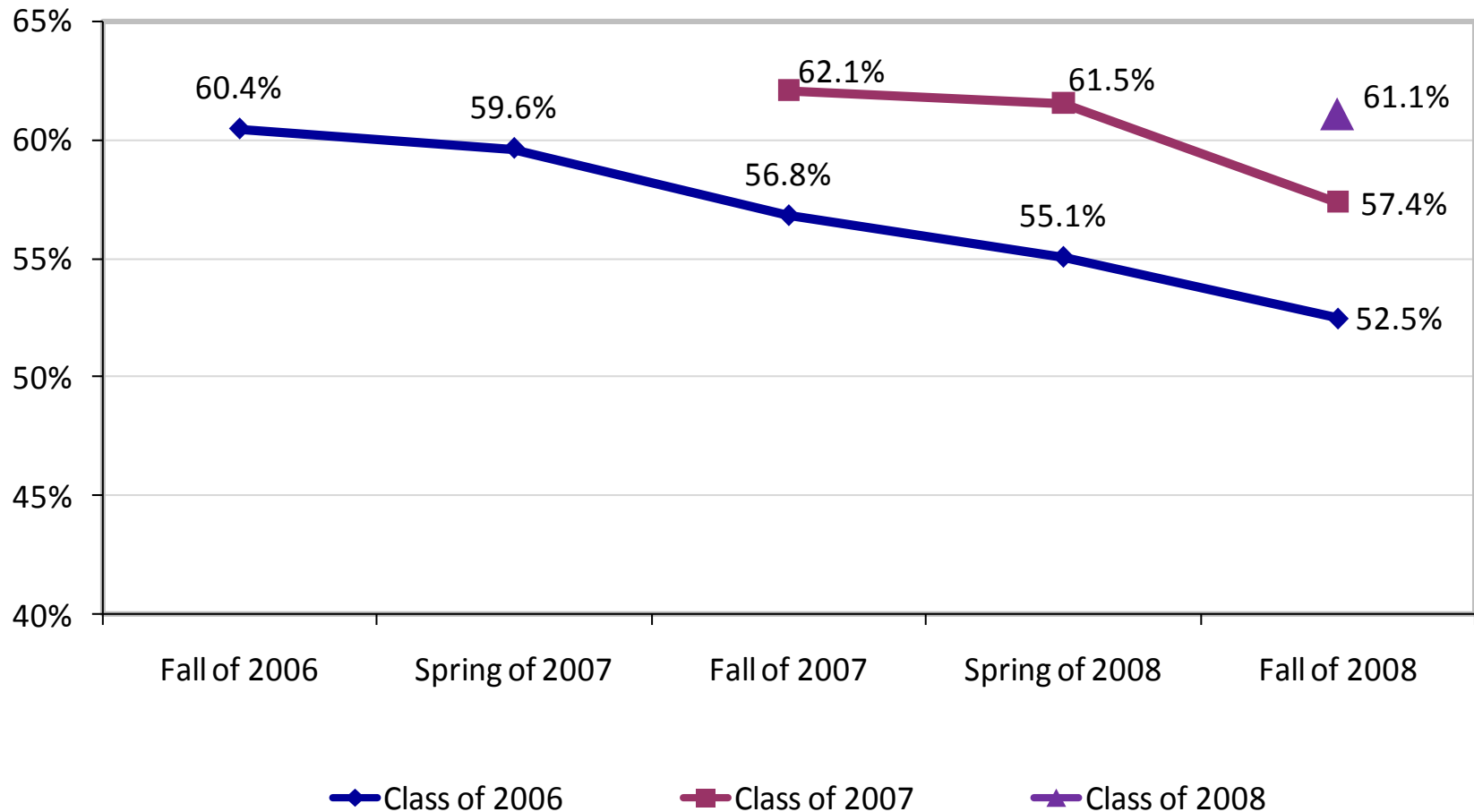
First, examine recent persistence experience for 2- and 4-year colleges in Central Texas.

Research on persistence and completion — and the factors and strategies that increase them — is not as well developed. Student Futures Project work on persistence/completion is still underway.

Then, identify effective strategies for boosting persistence and completion rates for 4- and 2-year. Factors and strategies likely to vary by type of college and population group: ***one-size-fits-all approaches unlikely to succeed.***



Postsecondary Enrollment Over Time, by Graduating Class (SFP)





Persistence One Year Out, Class of 2007 (SFP)



	Enrolled Within a Year of Graduating		Persisted to Fall of 2008	
	Number	Percent of Graduates	Number	Percent of Enrolled
Overall	6,313	67%	5,117	81%
Ethnicity				
Asian	456	84%	421	92%
Black	674	65%	458	68%
Hispanic	1,360	50%	1,004	74%
White	3,739	76%	3,173	85%
Gender				
Female	3,212	71%	2,656	83%
Male	3,043	65%	2,418	79%
Family Income Status				
Low-income	915	46%	624	68%
Not Low-income	5,205	76%	4,363	84%
Initial Enrollment Status				
2-Year Institution	2,706		1,828	68%
4-Year Institution	3,607		3,289	91%
Initial Enrollment Location				
In State	5,539		4,428	80%
Out of State	774		689	89%



Persistence Factors



Research on college persistence and completion is underway, including Student Futures Project, MDRC, Urban Institute and Columbia University's Community College Research Center.

- National studies point to series of important factors (shown at right).
- Limited access to detailed college participation data (e.g., Dev Ed) has limited Texas research.

Positive Factors

- + Parental postsecondary education
- + GPA
- + No. of math, dual-credit and AP classes
- + AP test scores
- + Took college entrance exams
- + Scholarships and grants
- + Parental financial support
- + Cultural social capital
- + Freshman learning communities
- + Pass college-level math/writing courses
- + Completing various credit thresholds
- + Earnings an associates degree

Negative Factors

- Non-Asian minority
- Low-income
- Working fulltime
- Reliance on loans
- Starting at a 2-year college
- Entering academically unprepared

Getting *BEYOND* College



Most of those needing postsecondary education and training already working and well past traditional schooling age: 56% of Austin/Round Rock MSA residents 25+ years of age lack a post-high school degree or certificate.

Public workforce funding is declining and access to financing for adults pursuing postsecondary is very difficult, but there are proven strategies for success:

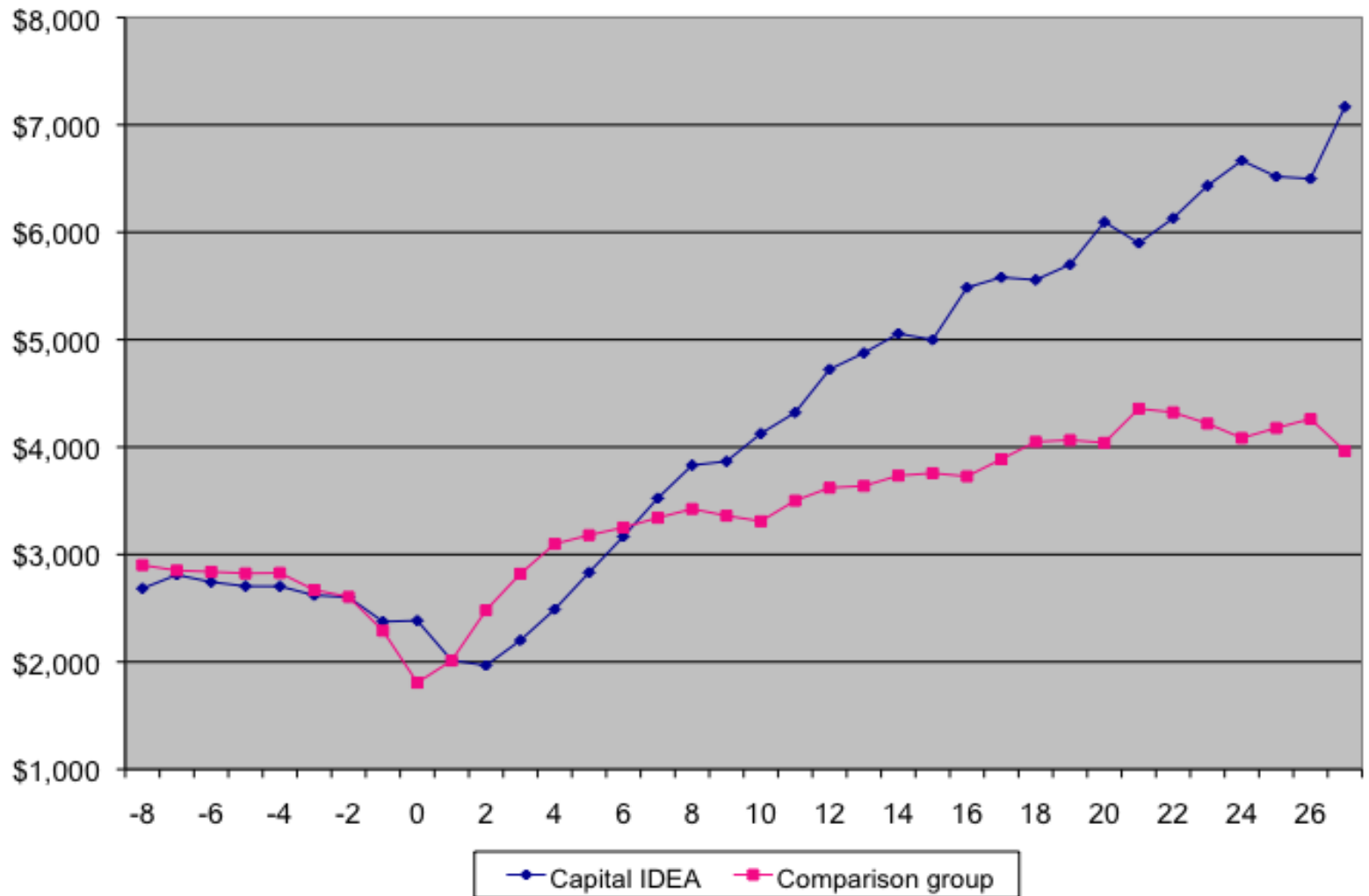
- ✓ **Sectoral workforce strategies via workforce intermediaries**
- ✓ **High-road (skills-oriented) workforce development services**

Workforce Strategies



- **“Tipping point”** for increasing earnings is obtaining **a year of college credit, plus a credential or certificate with value in the labor market** (Prince & Jenkins, 2005).
- **Sectoral training** implemented by workforce intermediaries with community/technical colleges and others in high-skill, high-wage occupations is a proven strategy for postsecondary success, nationally (Maguire et al., 2010) and in Texas (Glover and King, 2010; Smith et al. 2009, 2010, 2011).
- The **\$25M. Every Chance Fund** enacted by 81st Texas Legislature via the Comptroller’s Office fosters sectoral training across the state via workforce intermediaries.
- **Large, lasting statistically significant earnings impacts** for Capital IDEA, a highly successful local workforce intermediary, are illustrative...

Capital IDEA Earnings Impacts



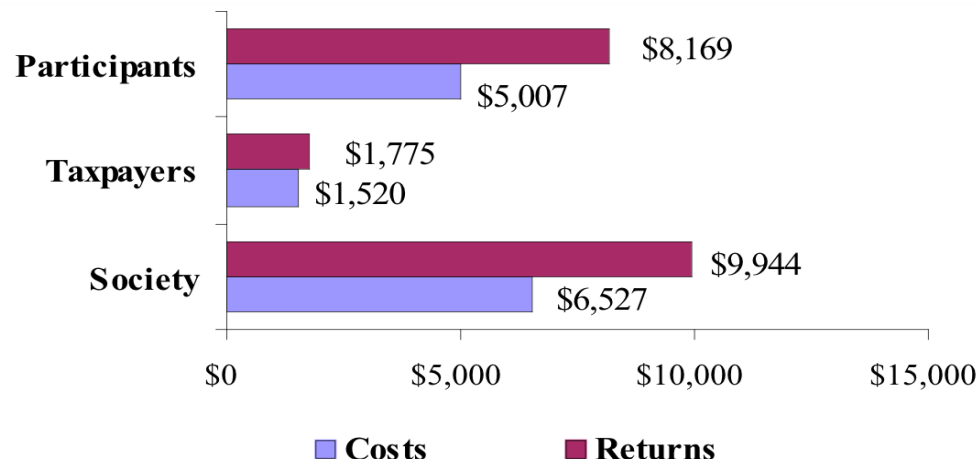
Source: Smith, King & Schroeder (forthcoming 2011).

High-skill Workforce Training Strategies



Analysis of Texas data shows that workforce development—especially **intensive skill-building**—**yields large returns on investment (ROI)** for participants (individuals and employers), taxpayers and society. High-skill, high-wage strategies typically entail skills training conducted via community and technical colleges.

5-Year Costs and Returns for Texas Workforce Services



Source: King et al. 2008

Texas College-readiness Indicators



■ Secondary School-Level

- Advanced course/dual-enrollment completion
- Recommended/Distinguished Achievement Program grads
- AP/IB results
- SAT/ACT score results
- Texas Success Initiative (TSI) results

■ College-Ready Graduates (Student-Level)

- Math: qualifying TAKS or SAT/ACT scores
- English Lang. Arts (ELA): qualifying TAKS or SAT/ACT scores
- Both: meet qualifications for both Math and ELA

■ College-Level. TSI recognizes multiple assessments:

- THEA: math (230), reading (230), writing (220)
- ASSET: math (38), reading (41), writing (40/6 on essay)
- COMPASS: math (39), reading (81), writing (59/6)
- ACCUPLACER: math (63), reading (78), writing (80/6)

College-readiness Indicators ...



Unclear whether changes coming:

- Possible new secondary school-level measure tied to different state assessment tests
- Indicators for graduates may be based on performance on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)

TSI-related Community College Results (THECB)

- Students enrolling in college direct from high school are meeting TSI standards at higher rates: 42% ready in all 3 areas (2009) v. 37% (2004)
- Students returning to college meeting TSI standards at lower rates: 29% in all 3 areas (2009) v. 36% (2004)
- First-time, degree-seeking community college students of all races/ethnicities meeting TSI at higher rates, but rates remain low: All students, 42%; White, 54%; African-American, 24%; Hispanic, 34% (2009)
- First-time, degree-seeking students taking more rigorous HS curricula met TSI at higher rates: 67% (DAP), 45% (Rec. HS)

Texas Career- Readiness Indicators



■ Secondary School-Level

- No standardized measure
- There are measures related to Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses, including class size, student enrollment, number of teachers, and expenses

■ Career-Ready Graduates (Student-Level)

- No standardized measure
- Information collected on students related to CTE courses taken, including whether a student has taken any CTE course, just one CTE course, part of a 'coherent sequence' of CTE courses, or a set of courses qualifying as technical preparation

Career-readiness Indicators ...



- **Secondary-Level**

- No current bills in the Texas Legislature would create a high school measure of career readiness

- **Career-Ready Graduates (Student Level)**

- No standardized measures examining whether a student is career-ready are currently being considered by the Texas legislature

However, it's not clear that a direct measure of career readiness is actually needed for high school seniors/graduates. If most (two-thirds) new and replacement jobs require some level of postsecondary education and/or training, then ***college-readiness is tantamount to career readiness.***

Career-readiness Indicators ...



- ACT, Inc. has created the ***National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)***, which has been adopted for use by a growing number of states as well as some school systems and districts. It disaggregates career-readiness into three assessments:
 - Applying mathematics
 - Locating information
 - Reading for information
- NCRC *complements* other ACT work-readiness assessments that measure foundational skills (e.g., teamwork and writing) and soft skills (e.g., performance and fit).
- NCRC is especially useful for high school dropouts and those without diplomas beyond traditional school-going years who need a way to ***‘signal’ to employers*** that they have what it takes to succeed in today’s labor market, as well as for workforce programs and training providers.

Concluding Observations



- Focusing on college preparation can improve postsecondary enrollment for all groups. Experience in recent economic downturn suggests that other strategies likely needed for groups traditionally under-enrolling in college.
- Financial aid—especially for low-income, Hispanic and first-generation students—is critical.
- Need to explore promising interventions for low-income and Hispanic students and better understand relationships between education, training and career pathways. Ray Marshall Center is now working with TWC on this with USDOL funding.
- Evidence on factors and strategies for college persistence/completion less well developed, though similar factors apparent.
- Proven workforce strategies (e.g., sectoral, high-skills) exist but are under-funded.
- College- and career-readiness measures still evolving, the most important being those for college readiness.



For More Information

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