



CENTRAL TEXAS  
**Student***Futures*  
PROJECT

***Strategies for Increasing Postsecondary Enrollment***

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*Successful 21<sup>st</sup> Century High School Symposium*

June 12, 2012



# Employment Outcomes

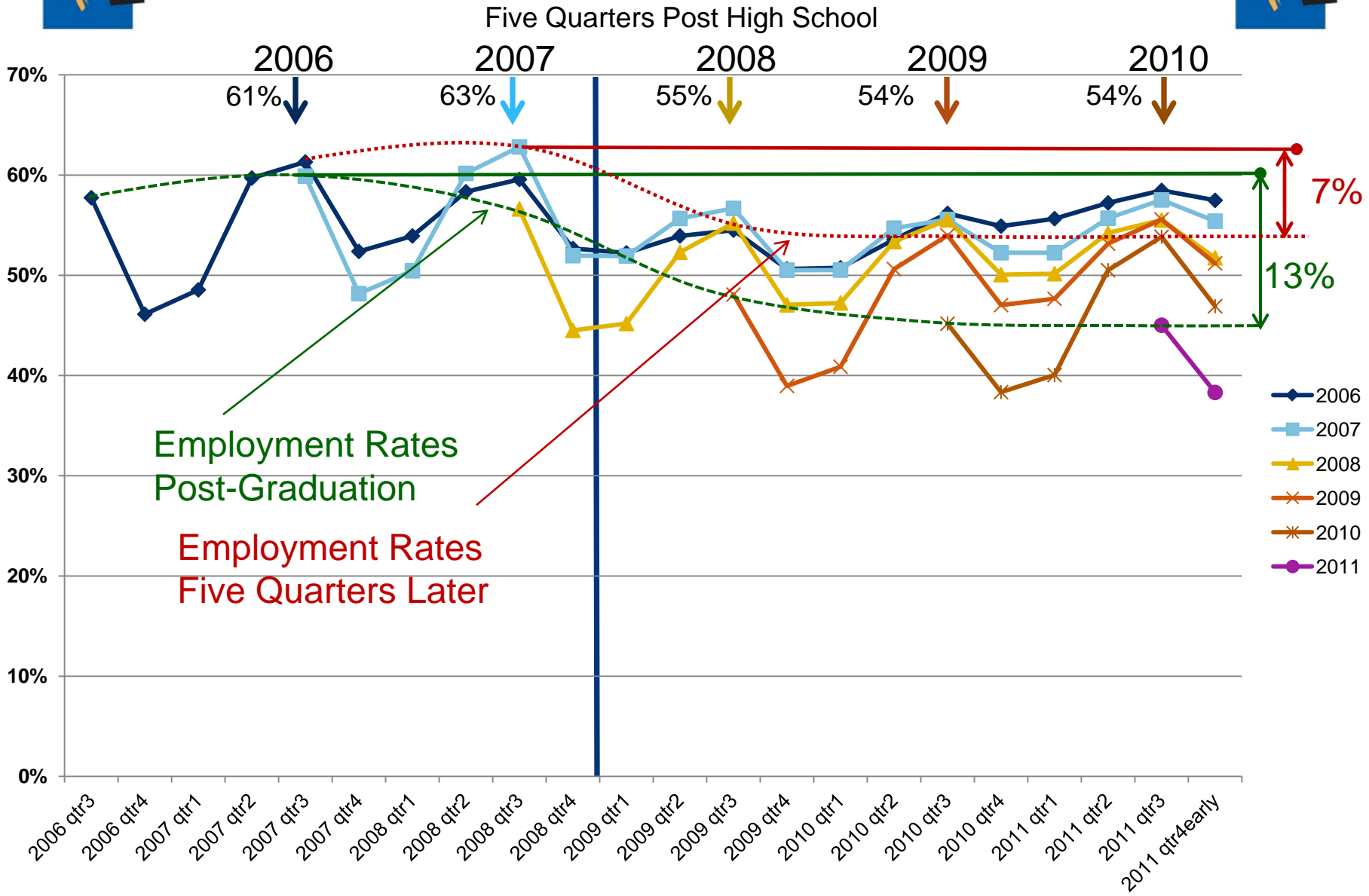
## **June 6<sup>th</sup> article in the New York Times, “Harder Times for High School Graduates”**

- Based on results from a survey done for Rutgers University\*
- Broke down employment rates pre-recession (2006-8) and post-recession (2009-11)
- Found that students who graduated high school and did not have a college degree showed a stark contrast in employment rates pre- and post-recession.
- Do we see similar trends in Central Texas?

\* “Left Out. Forgotten? Recent High School Graduates and the Great Recession” (Van Horn, et. al. June 2012)

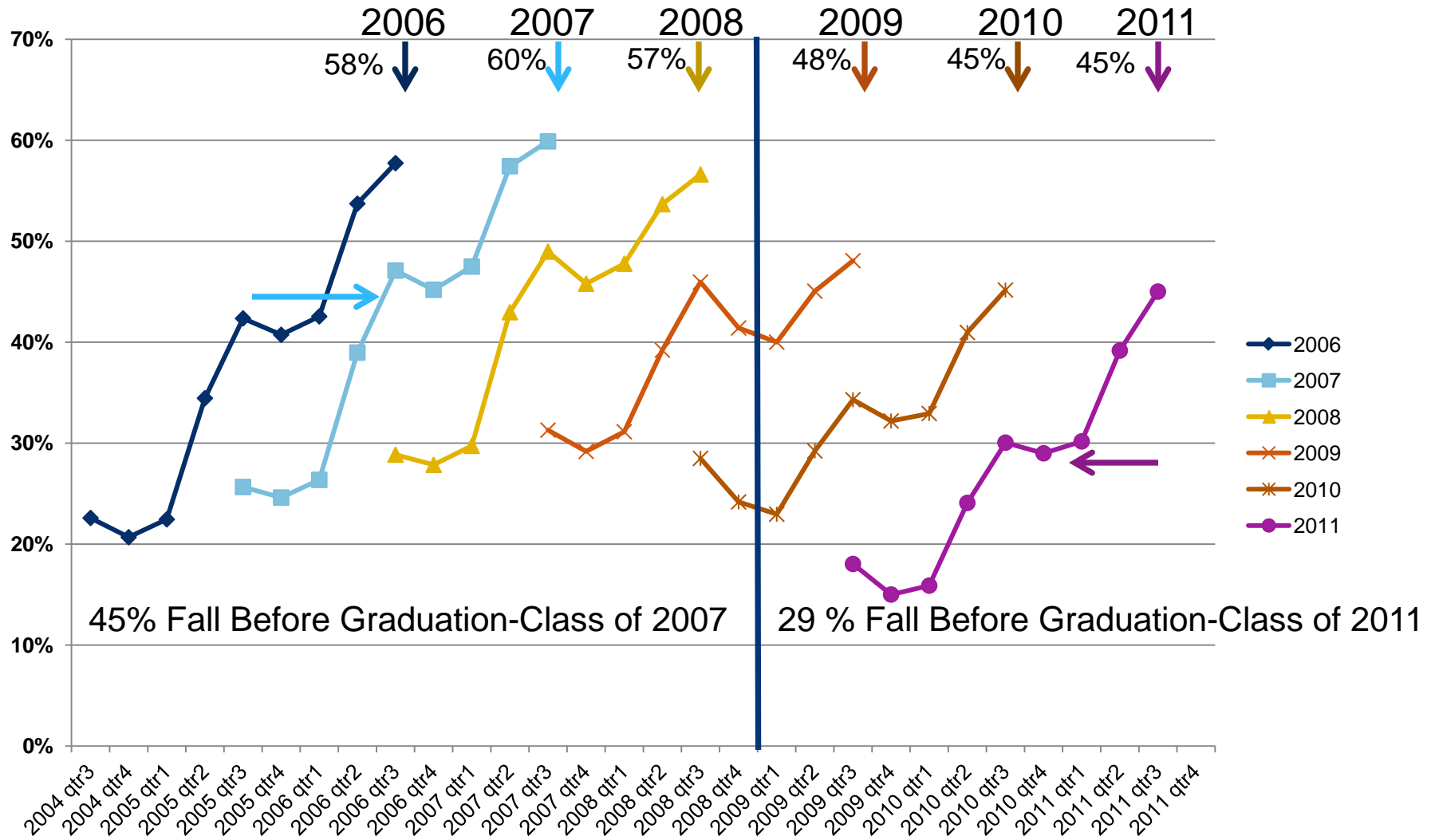


# Employment Status Graduation to End of 2011





# Employment Status Junior Year to Quarter after High School Graduation





# Increasing Postsecondary Enrollment

*Can the region capitalize on this potential increase in available outside-of-classroom time for high school juniors and seniors and increase postsecondary enrollment rates?*

More broadly, strategies to increase postsecondary enrollment are:

- Long-term and Short-term
- Within the Classroom and Outside of the Classroom

# Successful 21<sup>st</sup> Century High Schools Symposium



## Within the Classroom

## Outside of the Classroom

Long-term

Short-term

Track 2:  
Effective High School Teaching

Track 3:  
Promising Practices to Foster College and Career Readiness

Track 4:  
Successful Strategies in Drop Out Prevention

Track 1:  
Community Resources for High Schools

# Factors Associated with Postsecondary Enrollment



	<b>Within the Classroom</b>	<b>Outside of the Classroom</b>
<b>Long-term</b>	<u>Academic sufficiency</u> -Meeting 8th grade math standard*	<u>Patterns of successful academic behavior</u>
	<u>Academic excellence</u> -Taking AP/IB courses* -Taking advanced math courses*	
<b>Short-term</b>	<u>College application within-subject aid</u> -Completing college essays in English	<u>College preparation activities</u> -Completing a FAFSA* -Taking a college test prep course*

\*Factors Associated with Education and Work After High School for the Classes of 2008 and 2009 (Cumpton et.al., 2012)

# Reasons to Examine Short-Term Strategies Outside the Classroom



## **Convenient:**

Does not demand additional classroom time and short-term means we could see results quickly.

## **Important:**

Literature in this field and common sense indicate they are important.

## **Focused:**

These activities are almost exclusively associated with the transition to college.

## **Manageable:**

There are so many things you CAN do, and this limits the number examined.

## **Collaborative Potential:**

Require pooling resources across the broader community.



# Short-Term Outside of the Classroom Variables Examined



## College Preparation Activities:

- Visiting one or more college campuses
- Taking the PSAT
- Taking ACC courses and/or dual credit
- Taking ACT/SAT preparation courses
- Participating in a college fair/college night
- Submitted a FAFSA

Knowledge of financial aid

High school counselor interactions related to college

Methods students planned to use to pay for college



# Methods I

Considered all 14 variables

Examined the marginal adjusted predicted effect (MPE) of each variable on postsecondary enrollment for the whole region and for specific populations of students:

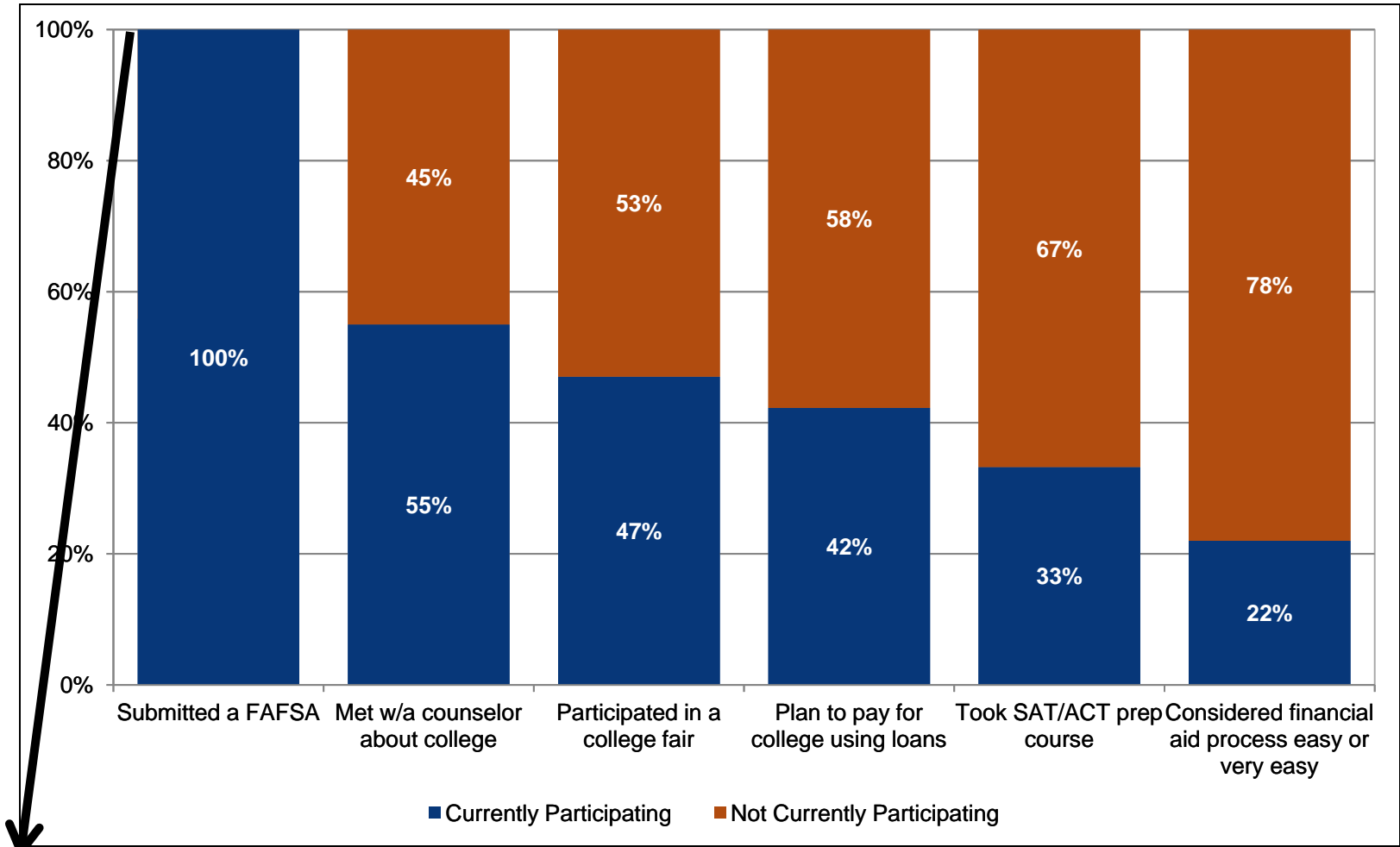
- 1) Background characteristics, and
- 2) High school graduation quartile

When the potential effect of a variable on postsecondary enrollment was positive for all populations, it was included for further analysis.

Ended up with six short-term outside of classroom variables for analysis



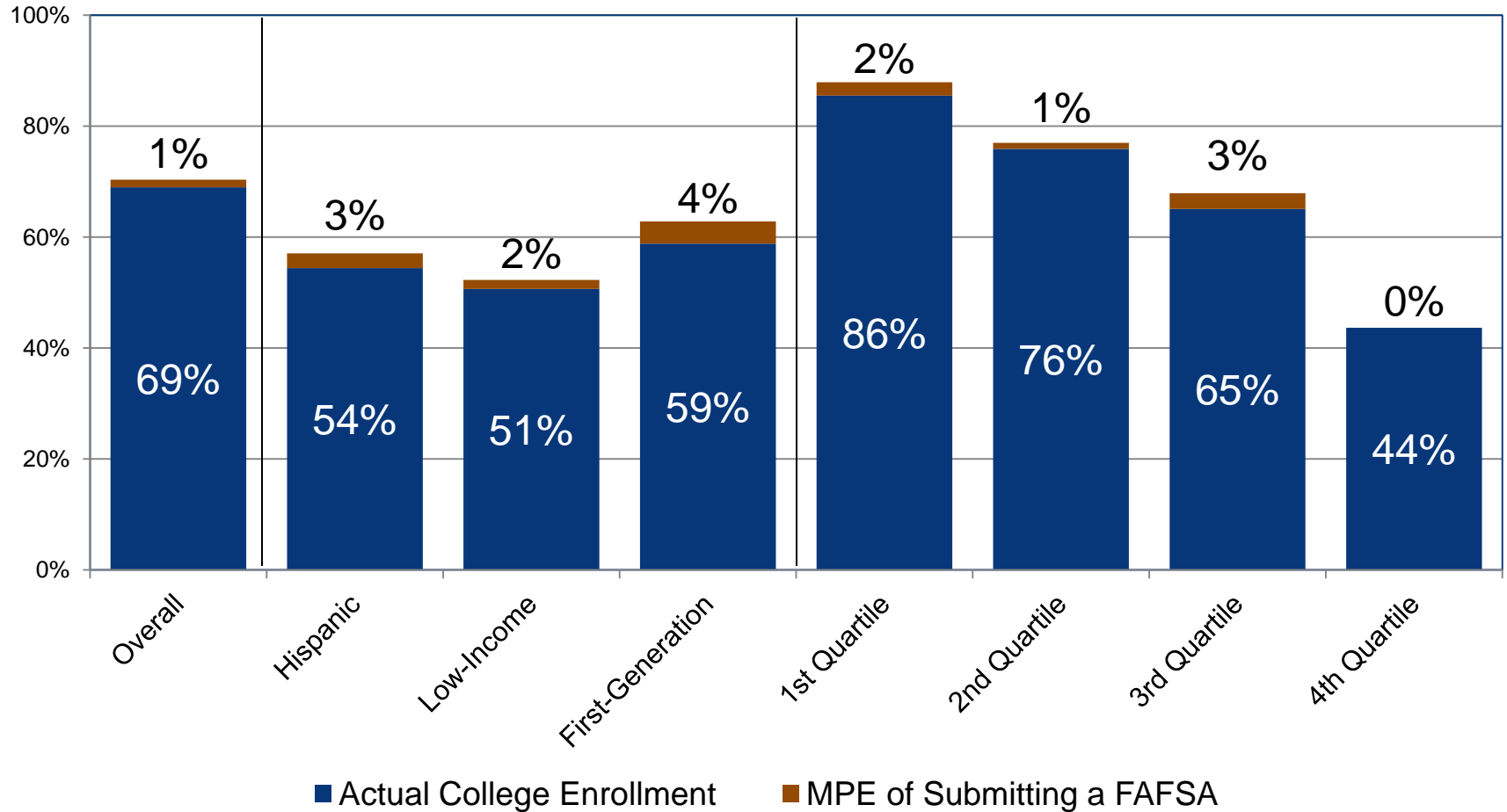
# Regional Participation Rates, Class of 2009 with Complete Data



Marginal Adjusted Predicted Effect: If you kept all other variables at there actual values, what change would you expect to see in postsecondary enrollment?



# Marginal Predicted Effect on Postsecondary Enrollment for Individual Variables



Range of MPE of submitting a FAFSA is from 4% (maximum) to 0% (minimum).



# Marginal Predicted Effect on Postsecondary Enrollment for Individual Variables (Range of Predicted Effects on DTC Enrollment)



	Maximum	Minimum
<b>Predicted Marginal Effect Differential (Predicted-Actual)</b>		
<i>College Preparation Activities</i>		
Visited one or more college campuses	2%	-2%
Took the PSAT	4%	-2%
Took ACC courses (early college start, dual credit)	4%	-1%
<b>Took SAT/ACT prep course</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Participated in a college fair/college night</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Submitted a FAFSA</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Considered financial aid process easy or very easy</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<i>Met with a high school or college counselor about:</i>		
Writing college applications/essays	3%	-3%
Scholarship/financial aid information	1%	-5%
<b>College information</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<i>Currently plans to pay for college using the following:</i>		
Scholarships and/or grants	1%	-1%
Personal or family savings	4%	-1%
<b>Loans</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Working during the school year/summer	0%	-2%

# Method II



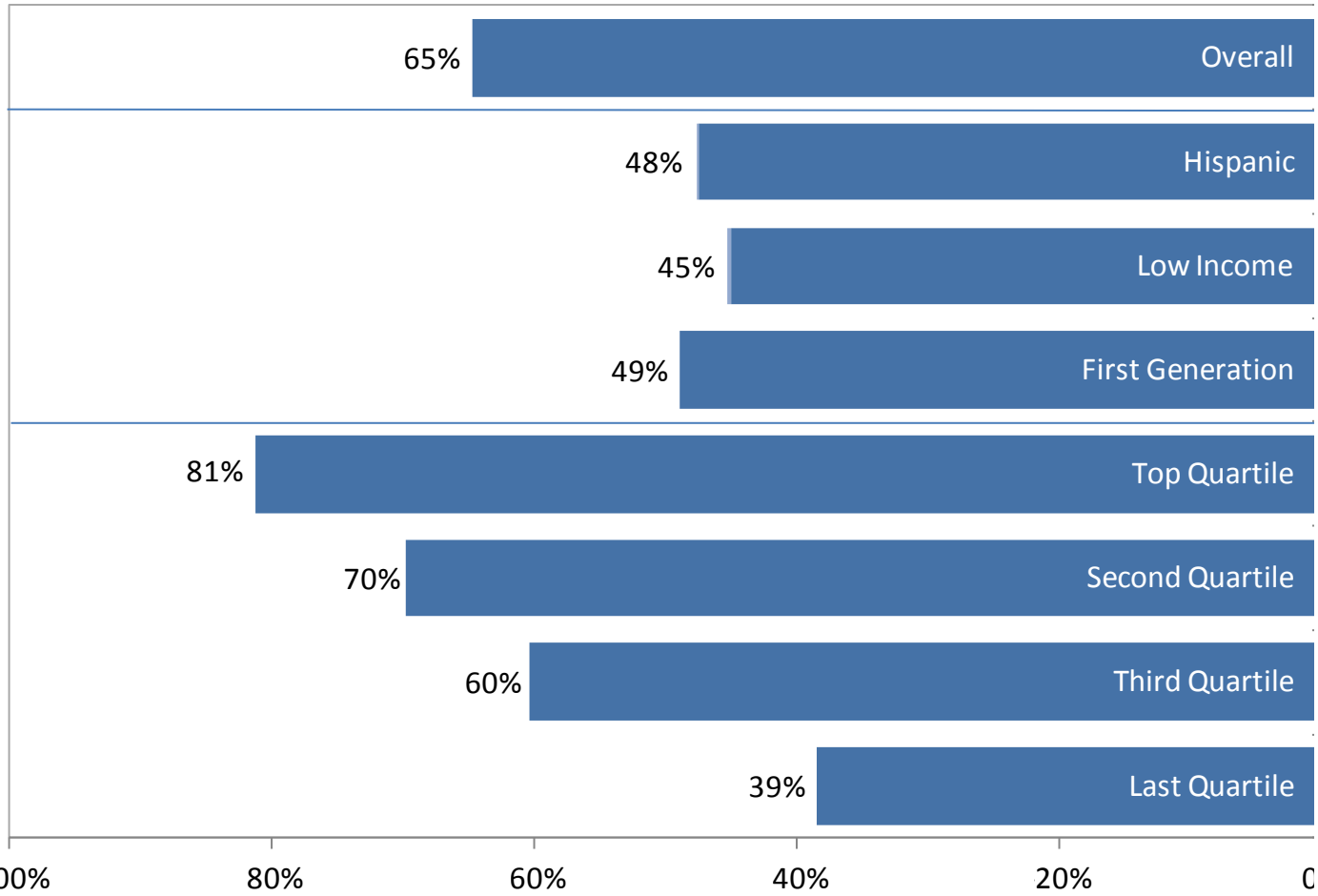
- 1) Use these variables to find the adjusted predicted probability if **none** of the activities were engaged in by any students. We term this a **baseline rate**.
- 2) Find the cumulative effect of engaging in multiple activities **by progressively “making” all students engage in each activity**.
- 3) Engage in this process for the sample as a whole and for specific populations.



# Predicted Cumulative Effects on College Enrollment, Class of 2009



Baseline Enrollment  
←



# Conclusions



Efforts are already underway in many districts to maximize the number of students learning information on financial aid and engaging in these types of activities. The key is to

- Get more students to engage in these activities and to
- Appropriately target these activities to those who need them and to get more student.

There appears to be considerable return on “bundling” related services or activities, particularly for specific types of students, including those who would be the first-generation to go to college.



# Additional Policy Implications and Suggestions



- School districts should work to identify and keep accurate records of students who would be the first generation in their family to go to college. Targeting services to them could show larger potential returns on increasing direct-to-college enrollment rates than for other populations.
- Financial aid Saturdays are helpful but may not be enough, since understanding financial aid plays such a critical role. The region should consider additional efforts related to financial aid, perhaps by
  - Having Juniors complete draft FAFSAs, and potentially
  - Discussing the details of de-identified copies of financial award letters with students in the fall prior to graduation.

# For More Information



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# Caveats



- The threshold for this study was to essentially predict what would happen if all students engaged in these activities or possessed certain knowledge. Considering that this would mean getting, potentially, thousands of high school seniors to do the same thing, this analysis should be considered optimistic. (Anyone here every taught in a high school?)
- This study is looking at surveyed students from the class of 2009. More solid conclusions would need to include additional cohorts of students and additional methods.
- This study is designed to meet the needs of the Central Texas Student Futures Project and while many of the demographic trends occurring in the region reflect those across the country, these results may not be completely generalizable.