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ERC

Student Success and Postsecondary Transition of Houston Area Youth

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Executive Summary

Given the rapidly changing nature of the global economy, with its emphasis on information and technology, there is growing consensus among policymakers, the business community, and educational leaders that postsecondary entrance and completion is the key to future economic and societal wealth in the United States. As a result, the nation is seeing an increased focus and effort to adequately prepare high school students to be successful in postsecondary education, whether it is a technical degree or a 2- or 4-year college degree.

The state of Texas has recently implemented several initiatives designed to strengthen the college readiness of its high school graduates as well as increase the number of post-secondary degrees awarded in the state. The goals of these reforms in high schools hold the potential to ensure the continued growth of the Texas economy. By understanding the types of instructional environments that provide strong structures of support to encourage skills and aspirations for a college-going culture, we can better equip high school students to meet the 21st-century challenges.

This report examines students' progress through high school and enrollment in postsecondary education. Specifically, this report focuses on a cohort of Texas students who were high school freshman in the school year 2003-04. The report addresses high school matriculation, graduation rates, college readiness, and the college-going patterns. The cohort analysis includes all Texas students, Regional Education Service Center IV students, and Houston Independent School District students. The analysis disaggregates students by ethnicity and socioeconomic-status.

Results indicate:

- The percent of students in freshman cohorts who remained, graduated on-time, and enrolled in postsecondary the following fall (2007) ranged from 39.2% to 55.1

- The percent of students in freshman cohorts who remained, graduated on-time, and enrolled in postsecondary the following spring ranged from 42.1% to 55.6. Interestingly, HISD increased from fall 2007 to spring 2008 by almost 3%, whereas the State enrollment of that cohort decreased and the Region IV enrollment only increased a half a percent.

- The HISD cohort of 2003-04 freshman enrolled 975 Hispanic students and 847 African American student the fall 2007 and 1071 Hispanic students and 911 African American students in the spring 2008. In addition, by spring 2008, there were over 1550 students from HISD cohort attending postsecondary that were economically disadvantaged.

- Of the students that enrolled in postsecondary education, almost 60% of the HISD cohort attended a public 4-year university the following fall. In contrast, Region IV and State cohorts enrolled fewer in public universities and more in community and technical colleges.

- In the HISD cohort, African American students were represented at a higher rate in college enrollment than in the final high school graduating cohort in contrast to cohorts which had lower representation of African American students enrolled in postsecondary than their final graduating cohort.

Introduction

The State of Texas has recently implemented several initiatives designed to strengthen the college readiness of its high school graduates as well as increase the number of post-secondary degrees awarded in the state. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) adopted *Closing the Gaps* in October of 2000. This higher education plan outlines the goals of closing the gaps in higher education participation and success. The ambitious plan proposed to overhaul significantly higher education in Texas by 2015. The report argued that stagnant college attendance and completion rates would soon produce an under-educated workforce unable to support a growing state economy (THECB, 2005). By the 2015 deadline, the initiative proposes to expand post-secondary enrollment in Texas by 630,000, and increase the number of post-secondary degrees awarded by 210,000. *Closing the Gaps* represents an overhaul to the Texas education system with a broad set of goals geared towards increasing college attendance.

Moreover, in 2006 the Texas P-16 Council recommended a college success and readiness plan to the commissioners of Texas Public Education (K-12) and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The P-16 College and Career Readiness and Success (CCRS) plan, as it is called, seeks to ensure that all students, upon high school graduation, have the skills necessary to succeed in a post-secondary institution (TEA P-16 Council, 2006). In the same year, in response to an executive order from Governor Perry, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) implemented a college readiness indicator system designed to evaluate the college readiness of Texas high school graduates (TEA, 2006). Innovations under the CCRS plan are large in scope; they cover teacher preparation, student achievement, college preparedness, and community college transition among other reforms.

In total, the goals set by Texas' *Closing the Gaps* and implemented under various CCRS programming represent a huge step in ensuring a stable and educated workforce in the future. The goals of these reforms hold the potential to ensure the continued growth of the Texas economy through maintaining a supply of highly qualified workers capable of meeting the demands of the 21st Century labor market. Indeed, in a recent study estimating the potential economic benefits *Closing the Gaps* reforms could have on the state, the Perryman Group concluded that the economic gains associated with a more educated work force amount to $200 billion per year in incremental gross product and more than 1 million additional jobs (Perryman Group, 2007).

Outline of Current Study

In light of the significant steps being taken at the federal and state level to strengthen the college and career readiness of public high school graduates, the Houston Endowment INC, a philanthropic organization serving the greater Houston area, commissioned The University of Texas at Austin Education Research Center (TERC) in 2008 to conduct a longitudinal study of state and the Houston area public school students.

The goal of the current report is to review briefly the predictors of postsecondary transition and success literature. Second, we address the research related to national trends. This is followed by the Texas trends. Finally, the report presents the Houston area trends in students accessing postsecondary education. Specifically, this report focuses on a cohort of Texas students who were high school freshman in the school year 2003-04. The analysis will address high school matriculation, graduation rates, and the college-going patterns. The cohort analysis includes all

Texas students, Region IV students (Region IV is the regional Education Service Center (ESC) which serves the schools in and around the Houston area), and Houston Independent School District students. The analysis disaggregates students by ethnicity and socioeconomic-status.

First, this report describes a short description of background information on the predictors of postsecondary transition and success. This is followed by the current national and state trends in postsecondary enrollment, transition, and completion. Third, we present descriptions of a Texas cohort of students who were high school freshman in the school year 2003-04. Following this, we examine closely this cohorts' high school matriculation, graduation rates, college readiness, and the college-going patterns.

Because of the rapidly changing nature of the global economy, with its emphasis on information and technology, there is growing consensus among policymakers, the business community, and educational leaders that postsecondary entrance and completion is the key to future economic and societal wealth in the United States. As a result, the nation is seeing an increased focus and effort to adequately prepare high school students to be successful in postsecondary education, whether it is a technical degree or a 2- or 4-year college degree. Next we present literature on predictors of postsecondary transition and success.

Chapter One

Predictors of Postsecondary Transition and Success

Given these persistent gaps in post-secondary transition and success, educational researchers have devoted significant attention to the role that high schools play in postsecondary outcomes. Extant research has identified several facets of a student's secondary education that significantly predict postsecondary outcomes. The purpose of this section is not to provide a comprehensive review of this vast literature, or to disentangle the many ongoing debates regarding the relative importance of specific variables. Rather, this section provides a brief synopsis of the more robust findings to-date.

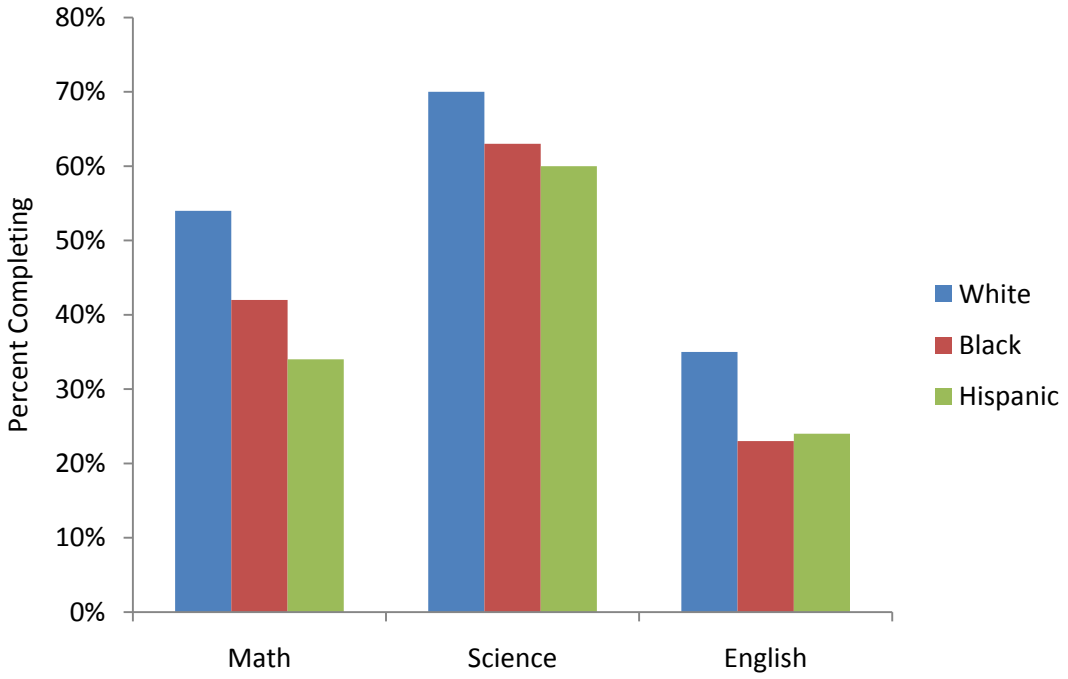
In a widely cited Department of Education (DOE) study, Adelman (1999) examined student transcript data to assess the relationship between high school characteristics and postsecondary outcomes for a national sample of students who were high school sophomores in 1980. Adelman found student high school GPA, achievement test scores and the rigor of their coursework to be significant predictors of postsecondary completion. The rigor of the coursework a student pursues while in high school was an especially strong predictor of college outcomes, explaining 41% of the variation in college completion rates of his sample. A number of other studies have identified similar relationships between student academic resources and postsecondary outcomes (ACT, 2004; USDOE, 2001).

For example, Bowen, Chingos and McPherson (2009) analyzed the college going patterns of a sample of 150,000 high school seniors, graduating in 1999. The study finds that high school GPA is a much stronger predictor of 6-year graduation rates than student SAT/ACT scores. In fact, for the 52 universities included in the study, SAT/ACT scores are often non-significant predictors, suggesting they have zero effect on 6-year graduation rates. This relationship holds across selective and non-selective universities, and for all racial/ethnic subgroups. It is important to note however, that it is not surprising that SAT/ACT scores fail to predict college completion. Such assessments are not designed to predict completion rates, but rather GPA in the freshman year of college.

Bowen, Chingos and McPherson (2009) conduct a secondary analysis predicting cumulative college GPA. The results of this analysis suggest that SAT/ACT scores are much better at predicting college GPA than college completion. However, as with 6-year completion rates, high school GPA is a stronger predictor of college GPA than SAT/ACT. Again, this relationship hold across selective any non-selective universities, however SAT/ACT scores are nearly as strong of predictors as high school GPA among those students attending the most selective universities in the country.

Another important facet of this research area is the extent to which there are significant racial/ethnic and socioeconomic differences in the relationship between student academic resources and postsecondary outcomes. Extant research has found that non-white and poor students graduate from high school less prepared for college than their white and economically privileged counterparts (Barth, 2003; USDOE, 1999). For example, according to a USDOE (1997) study conducted on high school graduates in 1992, less than half of black and Latino graduates had the necessary qualifications for admission into a 4-year university. Comparatively, nearly 70% of whites met the admissions criteria for 4-year universities. More recently, a USDOE (2007) report found that black and Latino students have among the lowest advanced coursework completion rates. Figure 10 reveals this trend, with whites completing significantly more advanced courses in math, science, and English than both black and Hispanic students.

Figure 1. National: Percent Students Completing Some Advanced Coursework in Math, Science and English, by Race/Ethnicity, 2004



This unequal distribution of advanced coursework completion is particularly problematic because the amount and level of advanced coursework taken by a student in high school is highly predictive of their postsecondary success. For example, Adelman (1999) found that the level of high school mathematics a student reaches is highly predictive of their likelihood of obtaining a bachelor's degree. Among student finishing high school with Algebra 2, 40% obtained a bachelor's degree. Comparatively, 80% of the students that completed calculus obtained bachelor's degrees.

In addition to providing student with the resources they need to adequately prepare for successful postsecondary careers, high schools also play an important role in connecting students to the postsecondary institution that best matches their academic abilities. Dubbed "matching" by researchers at the Chicago Consortium on Public Schools, this approach focuses on the relationship between a student's high school qualifications (e.g. GPA, test scores and coursework) and the selectivity of the college in which they enroll (Roderick, Nagaoka, & Allensworth, 2006). In a recent report focusing on all students in Chicago Public Schools (CPS), 62% of the students enrolled in higher education were not attending institutions that matched their academic credentials. That is, nearly two-thirds of CPS graduates had the GPAs, test scores and coursework to attend more selective universities (Roderick, Nagaoka, Coca, et al., 2008). Moreover, the Chicago study found that mismatch was particularly acute among Latino students. Given the rapidly increasing number of Latino student in Texas, this finding should be of central concern for educators and policy makers.

The federal government is also increasing its focus on the college readiness and post-secondary success of American high school graduates. For example, a principle goal of the Obama Administration's recently released blueprint for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is to increase the college readiness of all students regardless of their race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or language background (USDOE, 2010). Next, we turn to the national trends in postsecondary enrollment, transition, and completion.

Chapter Two

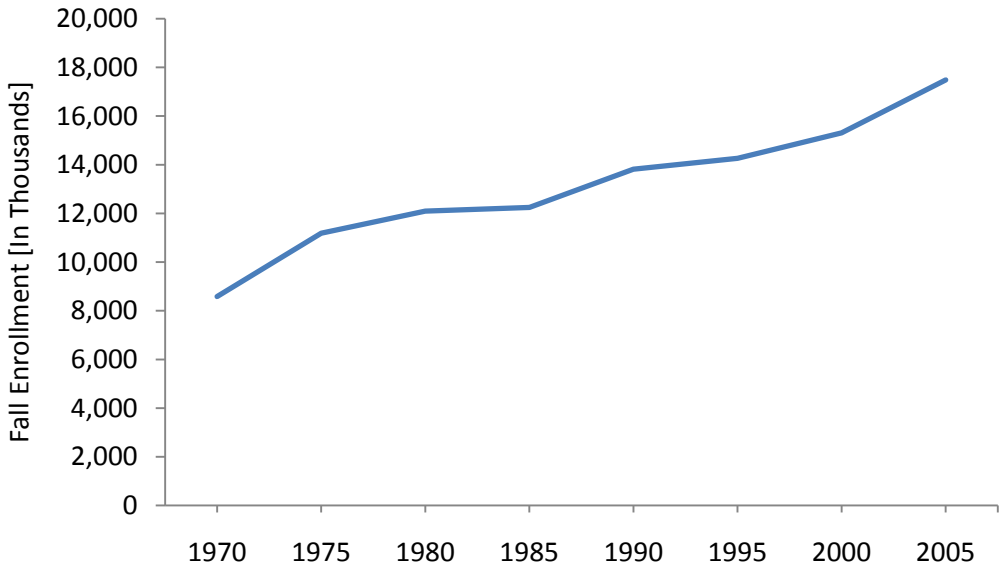
National Trends in Postsecondary Enrollment, Transition, and Completion

National Trends in Postsecondary Enrollment

Overall, the number of high school graduates enrolling in post-secondary education has steadily increased over the past several decades. As Figure 2 demonstrates, between 1970 and 2005, enrollment in degree granting institutions[1] rose from just over 8 million to nearly 20 million, an increase of 104% (NCES, 2005). There is evidence, however, that the rate of growth in postsecondary enrollment is slowing. For example, from 1970 to 1980, postsecondary enrollment increased by 41%. In the following decade, enrollment increased by only 14%. Similarly, growth remained low in the 1990s, as enrollment increasing by only 11% over the decade. Enrollment rates have risen somewhat between 2000 and 2005, returning to what they were in the 1980s.

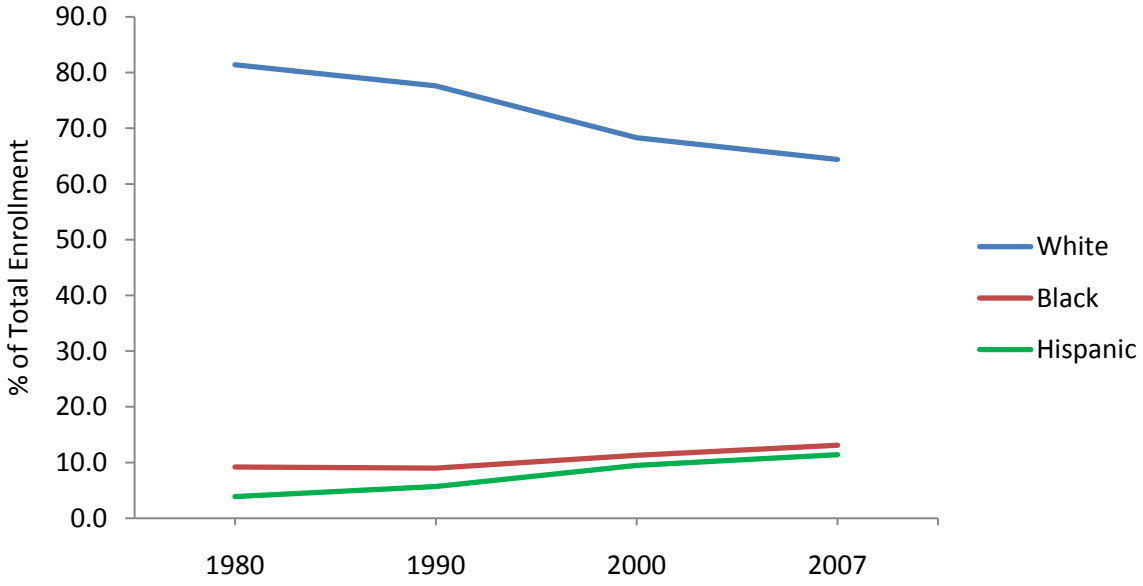
[1] The National Center for Education Statistics defines degree-granting institutions as institutions that offer associates or higher degrees and also participate in the Federal Title IV financial aid program.

Figure 2. National: Total Fall Enrollment of Degree Granting Institutions, 1970-2005



When overall trends in postsecondary enrollment are broken down by the race/ethnicity of students, significant inequities are revealed. As shown in Figure 3, while black and Hispanic representation in higher education has increased since the 1980s, a significant gap between non-white and white students remains. Specifically, black and Hispanic students accounted for only 13% of the total enrollment in degree-granting institutions in 1980. By 2007, black and Hispanic students represented nearly a quarter of total postsecondary enrollment, an increase of 90%. Despite these gains, white students continue to account for the bulk of postsecondary enrollment, as 64% of those enrolled in degree-granting institutions where white in 2007.

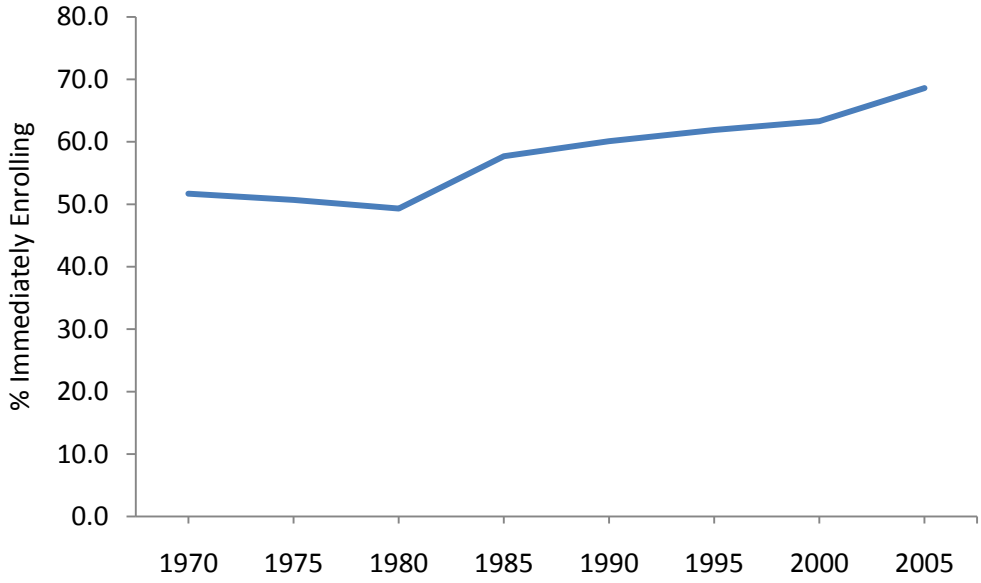
Figure 3. National: Racial/Ethnic Composition of Degree Granting Institutions, 1980-2007



National Trends in Postsecondary Transitions

Along with an overall growth in postsecondary enrollment, students are increasingly likely to enroll in postsecondary institutions immediately upon graduating from high school. As Figure 4 demonstrates, 52% of those who graduated from high school in 1970 were enrolled in college the October after graduation. By 2005, the number of students immediately enrolling in degree-granting institutions upon graduating from high school had increased to 69% (NCES, 2005).

Figure 4. National: Percentage of High School Completers enrolled in college the October Immediately following graduation, 1985-2005



Disaggregating the data by student race/ethnicity and family income reveals persistent disparities in college transitions over time. As Figure 5 reveals, black, Hispanic, and white subgroups exhibit different trends in the proportion of students immediately enrolling in college upon high school graduation. Between 1985 and 2000, the proportion of white students immediately enrolling in college showed a steady increase of about 10% over the 15 year period. In the five years to follow (2000-2005), white's experienced another 10% increase in the proportion of students immediately enrolling in degree-granting institutions, representing an escalating trend.

While white students have immediately transitioned to college at increasingly higher rates since 2000, available data suggest that growth in the immediate transition rate for black students has slowed since 2000. For example, the rate at which black students were immediately transitioning to postsecondary institutions grew by 30% between 1985 and 2000. Between 2000 and 2005, however, that growth rate slowed to just 2%[2].

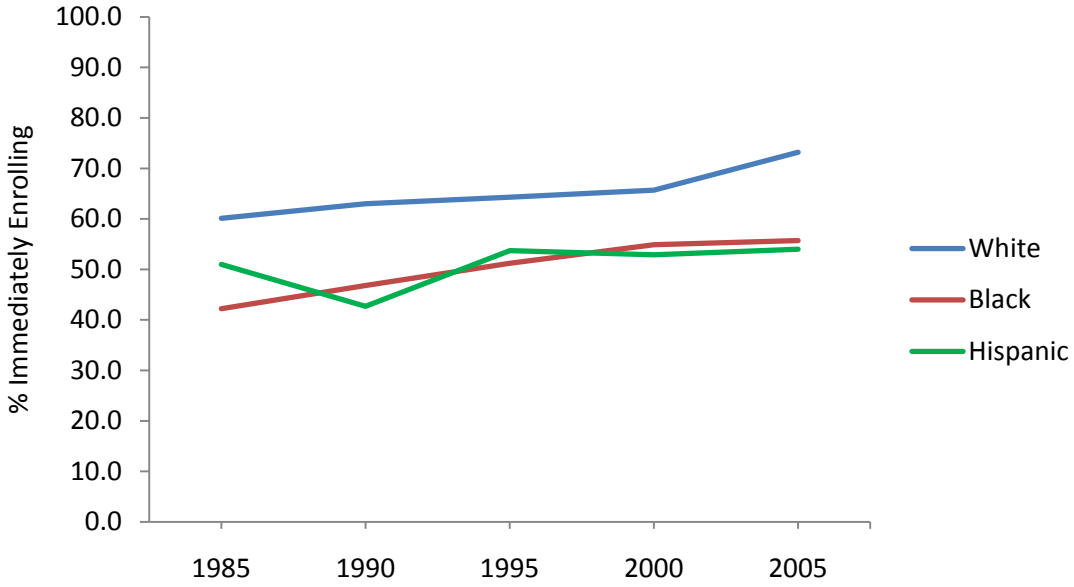
Hispanic students have demonstrated the slowest growth in rates of immediate postsecondary transition. Between 1985 and 2000, the number of Hispanic students immediately enrolling in

[2] Due to small sample sizes, the Nation Center for Education Statistics recommends caution when interpreting transition data for black and Hispanic students.

degree-granting institutions upon high school graduation grew by 4%. Between 2000 and 2005, growth in the transition rate slowed to just 2%[3].

As a result of the different rates of growth in the proportion of students immediately transitioning into degree-granting institutions upon high school graduation, gaps in the transition rate between white and non-white students have remained relatively stable since 1985. For example, the gap in immediate transition rates between white and black students was 17.9 percentage points in 1985. By 2005 the gap was 17.5, a decrease of only 0.4 percentage points.

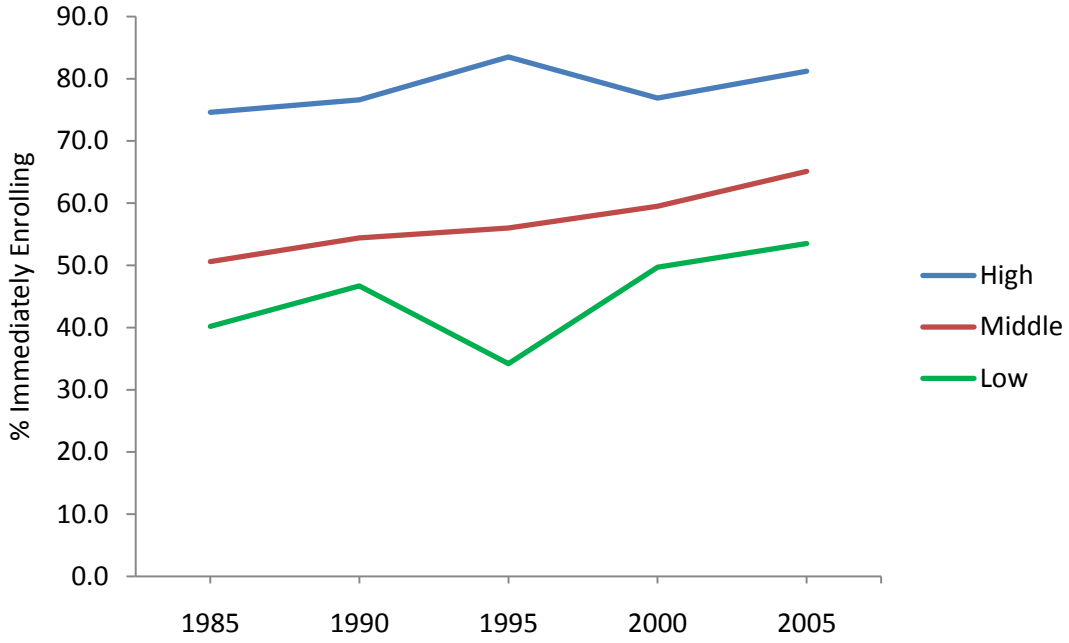
Figure 5. National: Percent High School Completers Enrolled in College the October Immediately Following Graduation, by Race/Ethnicity, 1985-2005



When examining immediate transition rates disaggregated by family income, similar patterns emerge. As with student race/ethnicity, students from high, middle and low income families showed increments in the rate of immediate transition between 1985 and 2005. As Figure 6 reveals, students from high-income families showed the lowest increase in immediate transition rates over this time period (9%). Middle-income families showed a gain of 29% and low-income families' rate increased by 33%. Despite the relatively large gains low and middle-income families experienced between 1985 and 2005, gaps in immediate transition rates remain large. For example, in 1985, the gap in immediate transition rates between students from high-income and low-income families was 34.4 points. Twenty years later, the gap was 27.7 points, a decrease of only 6.7 percentage points.

[3] *Ibid*.

Figure 6. National: Percent High School Completers Enrolled in Postsecondary Institution the October Immediately Following Graduation, by Family Income, 1985-2005

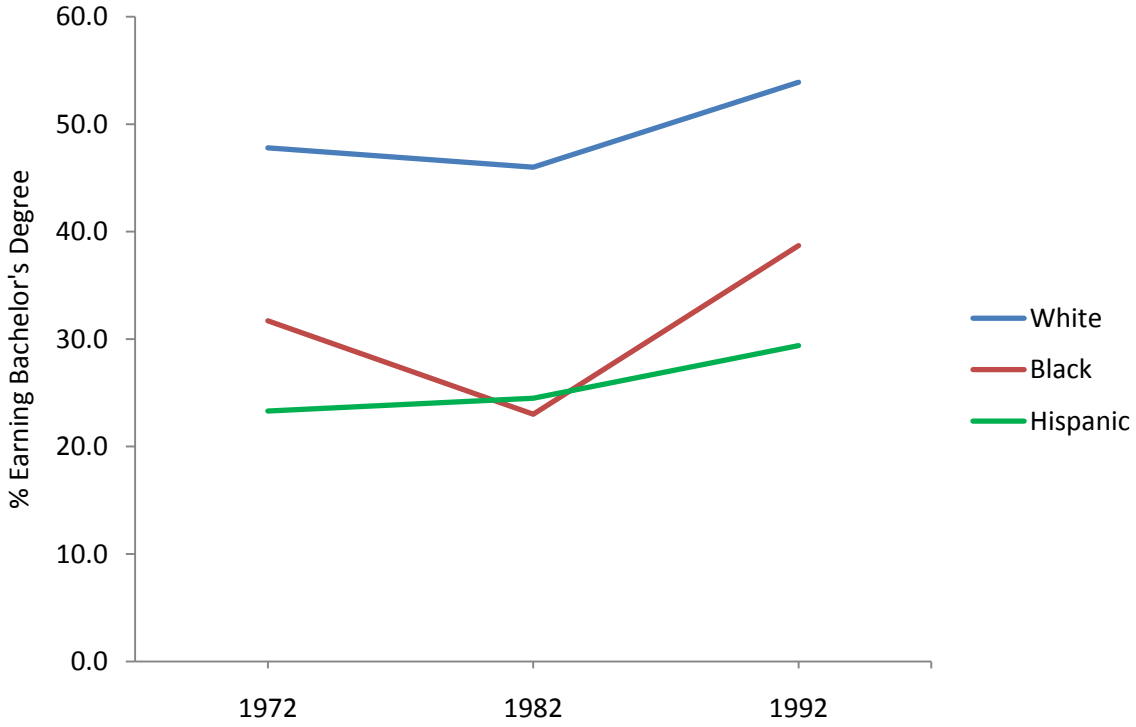


National Trends in Postsecondary Completion

Mirroring the previous discussion on postsecondary enrollment and transition, available data suggest that while college *completion* rates have increased over the last several decades, significant disparities exist across racial/ethnic groups. Among those graduating from high school in 1972 that went on to enroll in postsecondary institutions, 46% had earned a bachelor's degree 8.5 years later. Among those graduating from high school in 1992 that went on to enroll in postsecondary institutions, the percentage holding a bachelor's degree 8.5 years later had increased to 50%. More recently, among students that enrolled in a 4-year institution in 2000, 58% had earned a bachelor's by 2006.

Disaggregated, postsecondary completion rates continue to show significant racial/ethnic disparities. Figure 7 demonstrates racial/ethnic differences in the attainment of bachelor's degrees for three cohorts of students. While the proportion of students obtaining a bachelor's degree 8.5 years after enrolling in a postsecondary institution has increased for all racial/ethnic subgroups since 1972, the gap between white and non-white students has remained fairly stable over time. For example, 48% of white students entering postsecondary education in 1972 held a bachelor's degree 8.5 years later. Only 32% of the black students and 23% of Hispanic students in this cohort held a bachelor's degree 8.5 years later. Compared to the cohort of students entering postsecondary education in 1992, the gaps in degree attainment between white and non-white students were virtually identical to the 1972 cohort. Specifically, degree attainment increased to 54% for white students, 39% for black students, and 29% for Hispanic students.

Figure 7. National: Percent 12th Graders Entering Postsecondary Education that Earned a Bachelor's Degree Within 8.5 Years, by Race/Ethnicity



Overall, four primary conclusions can be drawn from the available data. First, postsecondary enrollment has steadily increased since the 1970s. This finding holds across racial/ethnic and socioeconomic subgroups as well. Second, the proportion of high school graduates immediately enrolling in postsecondary education has also increased since the 1970s across racial/ethnic and socioeconomic subgroups. Third, evidence suggests that larger proportions of postsecondary students seeking a degree are realizing their goal in a timely fashion. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the above discussion has highlighted the persistent disparities in postsecondary enrollment, transition, and completion that exist across racial/ethnic and socioeconomic groups. Despite steady gains in many indicators of postsecondary success, achievement gaps between whites and non-whites, higher and lower family incomes, remain large.

Next, we turn to the Texas trends in postsecondary enrollment, transition, and completion.

Chapter Three

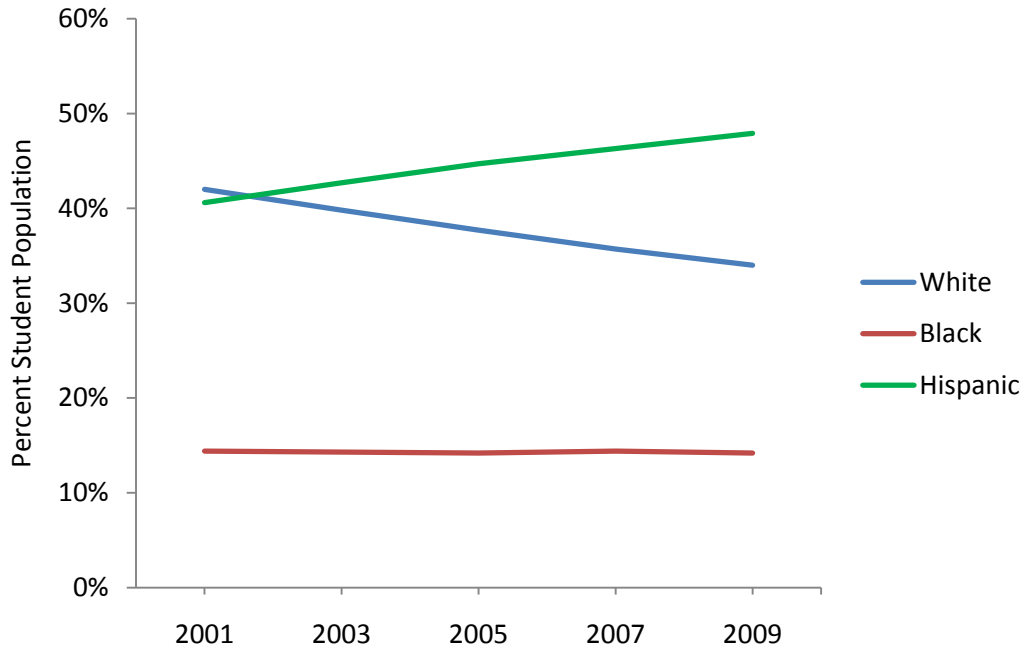
Texas Trends in Postsecondary Enrollment, Transition, and Completion

As previously mentioned, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) adopted a state plan called *Closing the Gaps* in October of 2000. This higher education plan outlines the goals of closing the gaps in higher education participation and success. The ambitious plan proposed to significantly overhaul higher education in Texas by 2015. By the 2015 deadline, the initiative proposes to expand post-secondary enrollment in Texas by 630,000, and increase the number of

post-secondary degrees awarded by 210,000. *Closing the Gaps* represents an overhaul to the Texas education system with a broad set of goals geared towards increasing college attendance.

Reflecting national trends, Texas has experienced overall growth in the number of students enrolling in, and completing college. However, as nationally significant racial/ethnic gaps remain, particularly between white and Hispanic students. This fact is troubling given that Hispanics are the fastest growing population of students in Texas, currently making up 48% of the total population (see Figure 8). If their rate of growth remains constant over the next several years, Hispanic students will account for nearly 60% of the total student population by the 2015 deadline imposed by *Closing the Gaps.*

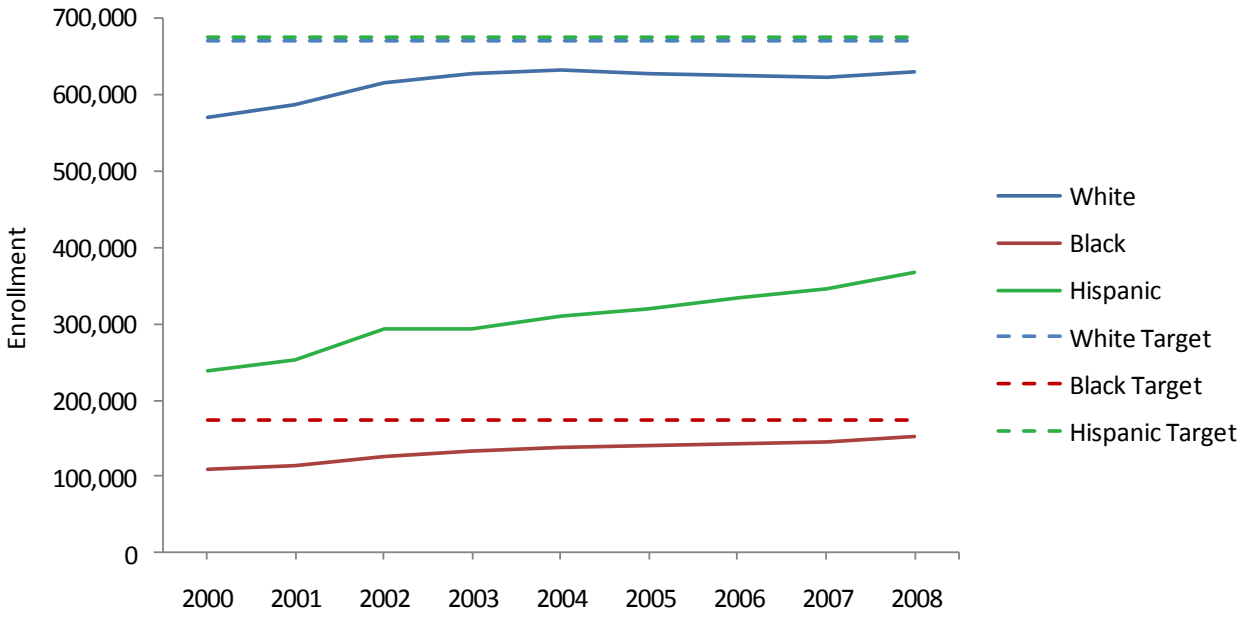
Figure 8. Texas Student Population, by Race/Ethnicity & Economic, 2001-2009



As Figure 9 reveals, postsecondary enrollment has grown for all racial/ethnic groups since 2001. Overall, enrollment in institutions of higher education[4] has increased by 27% over the last eight years. However, when disaggregated by student race/ethnicity, significant gaps in enrollment become apparent. The dotted lines in Figure 9 correspond to the 2015 target enrollment for each racial/ethnic group outlined in *Closing the Gaps*, while the solid lines represent actual enrollment numbers. Currently, white and black enrollment numbers are on track to reach the 2015 targets. However, Hispanic students continue to lag behind the other racial/ethnic groups. Note that the green target Hispanic line is almost equal to the blue target white line. In order to reach the target value, Hispanic higher education enrollment must increase by more 300,000 over the next seven years (THECB, 2009).

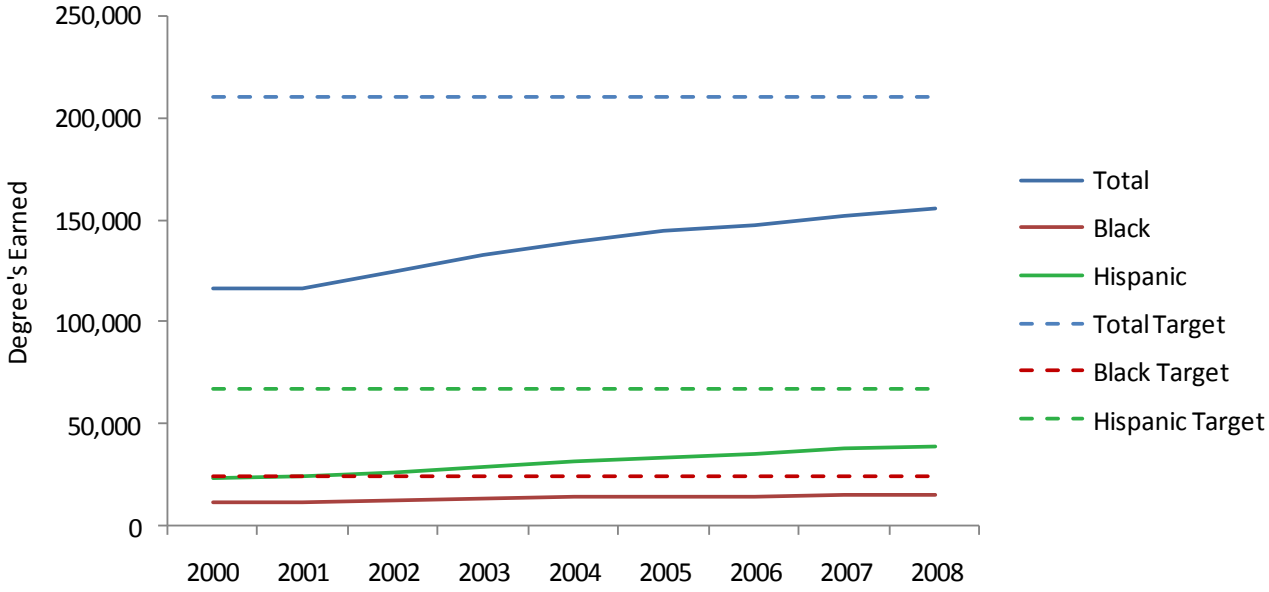
[4] Institutions of higher education include 4-year universities, 2-year colleges, and professional schools. Private as well as public institutions are also included this calculation. However, institutions are limited to those located within Texas.

Figure 9. Texas Higher Education Enrollment & 2015 Targets, by Race/Ethnicity, 2000-08



Similar to the trends in higher education enrollment, Figure 10 demonstrates that degree attainment has increased over the past several years in the state of Texas. Since 2001, the number of higher education degrees[5] being issued has increased by 33.8%. Since 2001, degree attainment has increased by 38.8% for black students and 68.0% for Hispanics. Despite the fact that non-white students are obtaining degrees in increasing numbers, if current trends persist, both black and Hispanic degree attainment will fail to reach the 2015 targets (THECB, 2009).

Figure 10: Texas Higher Education Degree's Attained & 2015 Targets, by Race/Ethnicity, 2000-08



[5] Higher education degrees include bachelor's degrees, associates degrees, and professional certificates.

Chapter Four

Description of Study Sample

This report focuses on a cohort of Texas students who were high school freshman in the school year 2003-04 (Table 1). The analysis will address high school matriculation, graduation rates, and the college-going patterns. The cohort analysis includes all Texas students, all Region IV students, and Houston Independent School District (HISD) students.

Table 1: Cohort of Student Who Were High School Freshman in 2003-04.

School Year	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Level	9th grade	10th grade	11th grade	12th grade	1st post

The state of Texas educates over 4 million students in the public K-12 schools. Table 2 illustrates that in 2003-04, 52.8% of Texas students were economically disadvantaged as defined by enrollment in federally funded free- or reduced-priced lunch. Also, note that Hispanic/Latino is the State's largest ethnic/race group.

In 1967 the Texas State Legislature created 20 regional Texas Education Service Centers (ESCs) for the purpose of providing services to the school districts within this defined geographic region. The ESCs act as a liaison between the Texas Education Agency and the local schools districts and the schools they serve by disseminating information, conducting training and consultation for both federal and state programs. The Region IV ESC serves the Houston area where there are seven counties and 51 independent school districts. The largest county in Region IV where HISD is located is Harris County. Within Harris County there are a total of 20 independent school districts, HISD being by far the largest district in the region.

HISD is the largest school district in Texas and the seventh largest in the United States, encompassing 301 square miles and serving 211,157 students in 307 schools. In 2003, the student population in this district is composed of 58.1% Hispanic students and 29.8% African American students. Asian students are 3.0% of the HISD population, Native American students are 0.1%, and White students are the remaining 9.1%. The diversity of this population is reflected in the 60 different languages spoken in the district. Much of this language diversity is a result of international immigration; thus, the district provides programs for students with limited English proficiency through bilingual classes and English as a second language to 29.0% of all HISD students. Also of note, 81.7% of the student population is economically disadvantaged, meeting the federal criteria for free and reduced-price lunch programs (AEIS, 2003). Both the African American and White populations have decreased over the last 10 years by approximately 7.0% and 3.0%, respectively, while the Hispanic population has grown by 9.0%. The bilingual/LEP population has also grown by 4.9%. The economically disadvantaged subgroup has seen a dramatic increase: 23.3% (Texas Education Agency, 2006a).

Table 2: 2003-04 Total State, Region IV, and HISD Demographics*

	Total State	Region IV	HISD
Number of Students	4,311,502	944,176	211,157
Ethnicity			
% American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
% Asian / Pacific Islander	2.9%	5.4%	3.0%
% Black / African American	14.3%	21.5%	29.8%
% Hispanic / Latino	43.8%	40.5%	58.1%
% White	38.7%	32.5%	9.1%
% Economically Disadvantaged	52.8%	51.5%	81.7%
% Limited English Proficient	15.3%	17.9%	29.0%
% Special Education	11.6%	10.0%	10.0%

* AEIS Data 2003-04

In this analysis, we further break down our sample by focusing on the cohort of student entering the 9th grade in fall of 2003. In this report, we are only interested in following students who remain in the cohort. This means that if a student moved, dropped out, moved out of the state, or attended a private school, they were no longer part of the cohort.

The same occurs for the Region IV level. If a student remained in Region IV, even if they changed schools or districts within Region IV they remained part of the Region IV Cohort. However, if students moved out of Region IV or the state, dropped out, or attended private schools, they were no longer considered part of the Region IV Cohort.

The same is true for the HISD Cohort. If student remained in HISD, even if they changed schools within HISD they remained part of the HISD Cohort. However, if a student moved out of HISD, dropped out, or attended a private school, they were no longer considered part of the HISD Cohort. We also did not add students to the cohorts or examine students who later became part of the district or region. In this report, we wanted to examine the more stable cohort of students and the ones that were influenced the most by the district or region in which they resided and attended public school.

Figure 11 and Table 3 illustrate the three cohort differences. HISD has the largest percent of Hispanic/ Latinos with almost 57% compared to Region IV at 39% and the state at 38.7 %. HISD also has a much higher percent (over 20 percentage points higher) of economically disadvantaged student compared to the other cohorts at 72.4%, which again is much higher that even the state as a whole at 52.8%.

Figure 11: Racial/Ethnic Make Up of the 9th Grade Cohorts

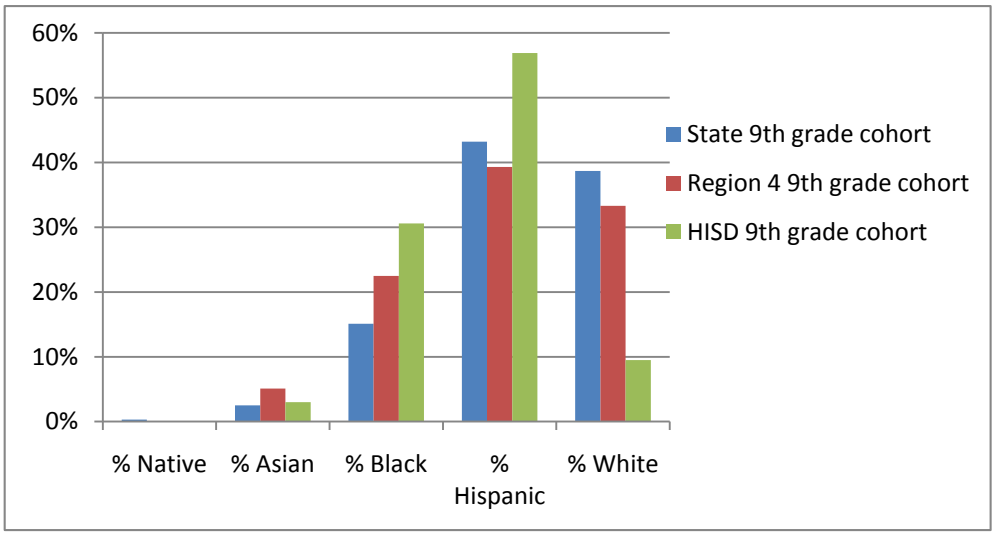


Table 3: 2003-04 Total State, State 9th Grade Cohort, Region IV 9th Grade Cohort, HISD 9th Grade Cohort

	Total State	State 9th grade cohort	Region IV cohort	HISD cohort
Number of Students	4,311,502	396,690	86,830	18,714
Ethnicity				
% American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0%
% Asian / Pacific Islander	2.9%	2.5%	5.1%	3.0%
% Black / African American	14.3%	15.1%	22.5%	30.6%
% Hispanic / Latino	43.8%	43.2%	39.3%	56.9%
% White	38.7%	38.7%	33.3%	9.5%
% Economically Disadvantaged	52.8%	44.5%	43.2%	72.4%
% Limited English Proficient	15.3%	7.4%	7.4%	13.3%
% Special Education	11.6%	12.5%	11.0%	12.8%

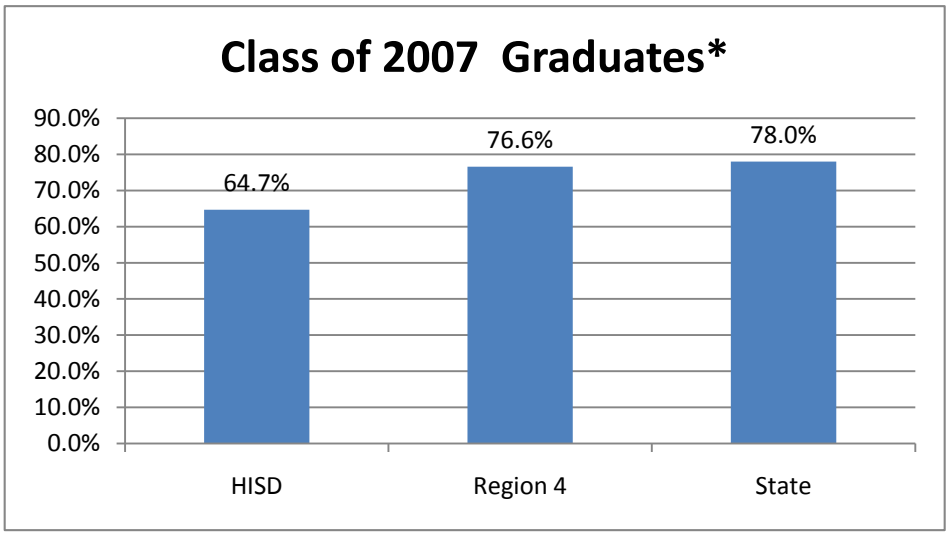
Chapter Five

Results of Tracking Study Cohorts

Next we track the State Cohort, Region IV Cohort, and HISD Cohort over time. The goal of the current report is to track high school matriculation, graduation rates, and the college-going patterns.

First we look at the state figures for graduation rates. The state does not follow a specific cohort; so as a result, the percents would logically bias higher due to the inclusion of students who complete early or late. Current Texas figures for the three cohorts for high school graduation are seen in Figure 12. The State rate and Region IV rate exceeds HISD rate by over 10 percentage points.

Figure 12: State data on the Class of 2007 Graduates.



* AEIS data 2008

Comparing Students Across 9th Grade Cohorts

Subsequently, we look at the three separate 9th grade cohorts throughout their high school career. We examine only the remaining students in a cohort after four years. As Table 4 demonstrates, after four years, there were 274,826 students remaining in the State 9th grade cohort, 57,925 in the Region IV 9th grade cohort, and 9,337 students remaining in the HISD 9th grade cohort. It can be seen that HISDs 9th grade cohort remaining after 4 years still had significantly high rates of economically disadvantaged students and Hispanic students.

The percent of the original cohort ranges from a low of 50% for HISD to a high of 69.2% at the state level. This means that students with higher mobility rates, but within the state public schools are still reflected in the rate. As a result, we would predict the state and region to be a higher rate due to less attrition at that level.

Table 4: State 9th Grade Cohort, Region IV 9th Grade Cohort, HISD 9th Grade Cohort Remaining in 2006-07 School Year

	State 9th grade cohort	Region IV cohort	HISD cohort
Number of Students	274,826	57,925	9,337
Percent of Students Remaining that Graduated	69.2%	66.7%	50.0%
Ethnicity			
% American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%
% Asian / Pacific Islander	3.1%	6.4%	4.2%
% Black / African American	14.7%	22.2%	30.1%
% Hispanic / Latino	39.7%	34.6%	53.4%
% White	42.2%	36.7%	12.2%
% Economically Disadvantaged	42.6%	39.8%	71.4%
% Limited English Proficient	6.5%	6.0%	10.7%
% Special Education	11.8%	10.1%	11.1%

Of these remaining students, only a portion of them graduated on time. Table 5 depicts that of the students that remained obtained a high school diploma that same year. The rates range from 77.3% to 68.1% of the students that remained after 4 years that graduated on-time in 2007. Again, the state and the region would be expected to have a higher rate because the data captures the student still in the public school system within the state or within the region. Whereas for HISD, even if the student moves a few blocks away out of the district, they are no longer part of the cohort.

Table 5: Total State, State 9th Grade Cohort, Region IV 9th Grade Cohort, HISD 9th Grade Cohort Remaining that Graduated on-time.

	Total State	State 9th grade cohort	Region IV cohort	HISD cohort
Number of Students	4,311,502	212,683	44,034	6358
Percent of Students Remaining that Graduated		77.4%	76.0%	68.1%
Ethnicity				
% American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
% Asian / Pacific Islander	2.9%	3.7%	7.8%	5.5%
% Black / African American	14.3%	13.1%	19.9%	31.3%
% Hispanic / Latino	43.8%	34.7%	29.4%	46.8%
% White	38.7%	48.2%	42.8%	16.3%
% Economically Disadvantaged	52.8%	39.8%	33.0%	65.3%
% Limited English Proficient	15.3%	6.0%	3.4%	5.7%
% Special Education	11.6%	10.1%	8.7%	9.3%

The percent of students who remained and graduated on-time and enrolled in postsecondary the following fall (2007) ranged from 39.2% to 55.1, HISD having the lowest rate of the three cohorts (See Table 6). The racial/ethnic makeup of HISD, as discussed previously in the literature would

assume that the students in the district would be less likely to enroll in college. The point should be made here that the HISD cohort enrolling in postsecondary was 55.8% economically disadvantaged and 39.1% Hispanic. This rate far exceeds the rates of the other cohorts.

Table 6: Total State, State 9th Grade Cohort, Region IV 9th Grade Cohort, HISD 9th Grade Cohort Remaining that Graduated on-time and Enrolled in Postsecondary in Texas in Fall 2007.

	Total State	State 9th grade cohort	Region IV cohort	HISD cohort
Number of Students	4,311,502	112,472	24,263	2492
Percent of Students that Graduated and		52.9%	55.1%	39.2%
Ethnicity				
% American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	.. %
% Asian / Pacific Islander	2.9%	4.6%	9.7%	7.5%
% Black / African American	14.3%	11.8%	18.4%	34.0%
% Hispanic / Latino	43.8%	29.2%	22.0%	39.1%
% White	38.7%	54.2%	49.7%	19.2%
% Economically Disadvantaged	52.8%	27.6%	23.0%	55.8%
% Limited English Proficient	15.3%	1.5%	1.0%	1.3%
% Special Education	11.6%	5.3%	4.4%	4.4%

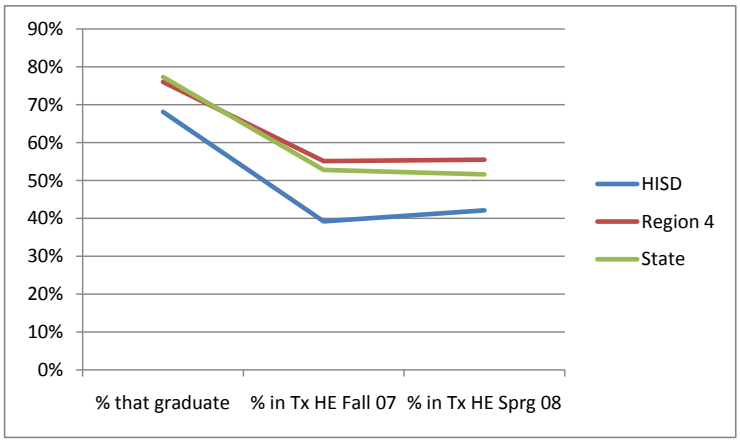
Finally, the percent of students who remained and graduated on-time and enrolled in a postsecondary institution the following spring (2008) ranged from 42.1% to 55.6. Interestingly, HISD increased from fall 2007 to spring 2008 by almost 3% (See Tables 6 & 7), whereas the State enrollment of that cohort decreased and the Region IV enrollment only increased a half a percent. The percent of economically disadvantaged students increased from 55.8% to 58% and the percent of Hispanic students increased slightly.

Table 7: Total State, State 9th Grade Cohort, Region IV 9th Grade Cohort, HISD 9th Grade Cohort Remaining that Graduated on-time and Enrolled in Postsecondary in Texas in Spring 2008.

	Total State	State 9th grade cohort	Region IV cohort	HISD cohort
Number of Students	4,311,502	109,788	24,470	2674
Percent of Students that Graduated and		51.6%	55.6%	42.1%
Ethnicity				
% American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	.. %
% Asian / Pacific Islander	2.9%	4.6%	9.7%	7.2%
% Black / African American	14.3%	11.8%	18.4%	34.1%
% Hispanic / Latino	43.8%	29.2%	22.0%	40.1%
% White	38.7%	54.2%	49.7%	18.5%
% Economically Disadvantaged	52.8%	27.9%	24.0%	58.0%
% Limited English Proficient	15.3%	1.6%	1.1%	1.6%
% Special Education	11.6%	5.2%	4.6%	4.9%

Figure 13 illustrates the three cohorts and the percent that graduated the enrolled in either fall 2007 or spring 2008. Although, HISD lags behind, it does follow approximately the same type of pattern that both Region IV and the State follow.

Figure 13: The Percent of Student that Graduated and Enrolled in Texas Postsecondary the Fall 2007 and the Spring 2008 in the Three Cohorts.



Tracking Each Cohort from 9th Grade to Texas Postsecondary Institutions

Up until now we have compared across the three cohorts. Next, we compare changes over time within each cohort. Although, this view is somewhat repetitive and less attention grabbing, we wanted to emphasize the types of remaining students after four years and particularly the demographics of the final group of students enrolling in postsecondary education.

To recap the trends over time of the three cohorts, Tables 8, 9, and 10 illustrate the trend of each cohort separately. The most noteworthy finding is the HISD rates of minority and economically disadvantaged students. As we saw earlier, HISD students enrolled in public 4-year institutions at a slightly high rate that the other two cohorts. The noteworthy part of this is that the HISD population of students is so heavily minority and economically disadvantaged. Obviously, since HISD has more minorities and low-income students, they send more of these students to postsecondary, however, what is noteworthy here is that over 58% of those student were economically disadvantaged and 40% were Hispanic students.

Another noteworthy finding of the HISD cohort is that African American students were represented at a higher rate in college enrollment than in the final graduating cohort. By the spring 2008, 34.1% of the college enrollees were African American whereas the final graduating cohort only had 31.3% African Americans. Although, this is only a 3 percentage point difference, the other two cohorts had

lower representation of African American's enrolled in postsecondary than their final graduating cohort.

In real numbers, HISD sent 975 Hispanic students and 847 African American student the fall 2007 and 1071 Hispanic student and 911 African American students in the spring 2008. In addition overall, by the spring 2008, there were over 1550 students from HISD attending postsecondary that were economically disadvantaged.

Table 8: HISD Trend Over Time

	Total State	9th grade cohort	Cohort Still There	Cohort Grad-uates	Cohort Post Fall 2007	Cohort Post Sprg 2008
Number of Students	4,311,502	18,714	9,337	6,358	2492	2674
% Students from previous count			50.0%	55.6%	39.2%	42.1%
% American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	.. %	.. %
% Asian / Pacific Islander	2.9%	3.0%	4.2%	5.5%	7.5%	7.2%
% Black / African American	14.3%	30.6%	30.1%	31.3%	34.0%	34.1%
% Hispanic / Latino	43.8%	56.9%	53.4%	46.8%	39.1%	40.1%
% White	38.7%	9.5%	12.2%	16.3%	19.2%	18.5%
% Economically Disadvantaged	52.8%	72.4%	71.4%	65.3%	55.8%	58.0%
% Limited English Proficient	15.3%	13.3%	10.7%	5.7%	1.3%	1.6%
% Special Education	11.6%	12.8%	11.1%	9.3%	4.4%	4.9%

The Region IV cohort more closely mirrors the state cohort on percent representation decreasing from the graduating students to the enrollment of students in postsecondary education by 10 to 12 percentage points (See Tables 9 and 10).

Table 9: Region IV Trend Over Time

	Total State	9th grade cohort	Cohort Still There	Cohort Grad-uates	Cohort Post Fall 2007	Cohort Post Sprg 2008
Number of Students	4,311,502	86,830	57,925	44,034	24,263	24,470
% Students from previous count			66.7%	76.0%	55.1%	55.6%
% American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
% Asian / Pacific Islander	2.9%	5.1%	6.4%	7.8%	9.7%	9.7%
% Black / African American	14.3%	22.5%	22.2%	19.9%	18.4%	18.4%
% Hispanic / Latino	43.8%	39.3%	34.6%	29.4%	22.0%	22.0%
% White	38.7%	33.3%	36.7%	42.8%	49.7%	49.7%
% Economically Disadvantaged	52.8%	43.2%	39.8%	33.0%	23.0%	24.0%
% Limited English Proficient	15.3%	7.4%	6.0%	3.4%	1.0%	1.1%
% Special Education	11.6%	11.0%	10.1%	8.7%	4.4%	4.6%

Table 10: State Trend Over Time

	Total State	9th grade cohort	Cohort Still There	Cohort Grad-uates	Cohort Post Fall 2007	Cohort Post Sprg 2008
Number of Students	4,311,502	396,690	274,826	212,683	112,472	109,788
% Students from previous count			69.3%	77.4%	52.9%	51.6%
% American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
% Asian / Pacific Islander	2.9%	2.5%	3.1%	3.7%	4.6%	4.6%
% Black / African American	14.3%	15.1%	14.7%	13.1%	11.8%	11.8%
% Hispanic / Latino	43.8%	43.2%	39.7%	34.7%	29.2%	29.2%
% White	38.7%	38.7%	42.2%	48.2%	54.2%	54.2%
% Economically Disadvantaged	52.8%	44.5%	42.6%	39.8%	27.6%	27.9%
% Limited English Proficient	15.3%	7.4%	6.5%	6.0%	1.5%	1.6%
% Special Education	11.6%	12.5%	11.8%	10.1%	5.3%	5.2%

Enrollment in Texas Postsecondary Institutions

Now we look at what type of Texas postsecondary institution the student were enrolled in the fall 2007 and the spring 2008. Of the students that enrolled in postsecondary education, almost 60% of the HISD cohort attended a public 4-year university the following fall. The Region IV cohort and State cohort enrolled fewer in public universities and more in community and technical colleges that the HISD cohort.

Students in the HISD cohort were more likely to attend a 4 year public university that students in the Region IV cohort or the State cohort. When the ERCs add the National Student Clearinghouse data, we will then be able to track students to postsecondary institutions outside of Texas.

Table 11: Of those Student Enrolling in Postsecondary, Percent Attending a Public University, Community/Technical College, or Independent University

	Public University	Community Tech. College	Independent University
HISD			
Enrolled Fall 2007	59.8%	32.0%	8.3%
Enrolled Sprg 2008	55.0%	37.5%	7.4%
Region IV			
Enrolled Fall 2007	46.9%	45.9%	7.2%
Enrolled Sprg 2008	44.9%	48.3%	6.8%
State			
Enrolled Fall 2007	42.6%	48.8%	8.6%
Enrolled Sprg 2008	41.4%	50.3%	8.3%

Chapter Six

Preliminary Conclusions

Given that research indicates that non-white and poor students graduate from high school less prepared for college than their white and economically privileged counterparts and that it has been found that less than half of black and Latino graduates had the necessary qualifications for admission into a 4-year university, the current study findings in the HISD cohort particularly are surprising (Barth, 2003; USDOE, 1999; USDOE, 1997).

Preliminary Conclusions

- The percent of students in freshman cohorts who remained, graduated on-time, and enrolled in postsecondary the following fall (2007) ranged from 39.2% to 55.1.

- The percent of students in freshman cohorts who remained, graduated on-time, and enrolled in postsecondary the following spring ranged from 42.1% to 55.6. Interestingly, HISD increased from fall 2007 to spring 2008 by almost 3%, whereas the State enrollment of that cohort decreased and the Region IV enrollment only increased a half a percent.

- The HISD cohort of 2003-04 freshman enrolled 975 Hispanic students and 847 African American student the fall 2007 and 1071 Hispanic students and 911 African American students in the spring 2008. In addition, by spring 2008, there were over 1550 students from HISD cohort attending postsecondary that were economically disadvantaged.

- Of the students that enrolled in postsecondary education, almost 60% of the HISD cohort attended a public 4-year university the following fall. In contrast, Region IV and State cohorts enrolled fewer in public universities and more in community and technical colleges.

- In the HISD cohort, African American students were represented at a higher rate in college enrollment than in the final high school graduating cohort in contrast to cohorts which had lower representation of African American students enrolled in postsecondary than their final graduating cohort.