Keeping Austin Weird … or At Least Highly Educated: Results from the Student Futures Project

Christopher T. King

UT QUEST Program
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Overview

How is Austin ‘weird’ when it comes to education?

- The “human capital”, with real, long-term investments in education & workforce
- Broad, multi-sector collaboration, involving education, government, business & nonprofits
- Serious commitments of time and money
- Multi-faceted efforts at all levels
- Transparency
- Focus on program improvement, not just accountability, using data and metrics to support decisionmaking

In 2005, Greater Austin Chamber formed a task force, College Readiness Enrollment Support Team (CREST), to address region’s projected shortage of college-educated talent.

Chamber launched the 20,010 by 2010 Initiative to enroll 20,010 more college students regionally by 2010.

New, higher 2015 goals unveiled in November 2010.
Goal: Increase direct-to-college enrollments by 20,010 more students, a rate of 64%, by 2010.

Now, aiming for a DTC rate of 72% by 2015.
Austin’s Direct-to-College Rate Up 9 Points

Source: UT-Austin Student Futures Project, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2003-2009

* Estimate
Chamber Strategy

Be a “critical friend”

**Bottoms up, for leadership, focus and energy**
- ACC College Connection
- Financial Aid Saturdays
- Common Application
- College-readiness assistance for HS seniors

**Tops down, focusing local education leaders on college readiness**
- College Enrollment Mgrs at high schools in 14 ISDs
- Advocate for college readiness in state accountability
- Regular ACC & ISD Accountability Reports
- Strategic Compensation Pilot
- Real-time management tools, e.g., Common App, FAFSA, & the **Central Texas Student Futures Project** …
Student Futures Project

Purpose

Longitudinal research on:
- What Central Texas graduates do after high school
- How educational, personal and financial factors relate to graduates’ success in postsecondary education and the workforce

Performance management fostering educational improvement:
- Providing real-time data to educators
- Identifying and sharing best best practices
- Workshops and seminars
Project Partners

Partnership of
- Ray Marshall Center, LBJ School, UT-Austin
- 11 Central Texas ISDs

Project funders
- Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce
- TG
- Participating ISDs

Website for reports, presentations
www.centexstudentfutures.org
School District Partners

By 1<sup>st</sup> year of participation:

2004-05  Austin ISD
         Del Valle ISD
         Pflugerville ISD
         Round Rock ISD

2005-06  Leander ISD
         Manor ISD

2006-07  Eanes ISD
         San Marcos CISD

2007-08  Bastrop ISD
         Hays CISD

2010-11  Hutto ISD
Research Questions

- What are graduating seniors’ high school experiences, plans and preparation for life after high school?
- What share of high school graduates enroll in postsecondary education, become employed, or do both in the fall after graduation?
- What share of graduates are enrolled and/or employed over time? [Expanding outcomes set]
- Which factors are significantly associated with positive postsecondary education and employment [& other] outcomes?
- How do these outcomes change over time for each cohort and selected population groups? [Pathways]
Current Data Sources

**Historical School Records**
- Student demographics
- Courses taken
- Course grades

**Senior Surveys**
- Family background/influences
- High school experiences
- Preparation for life after high school

**Postsecondary Education Records**
- National Student Clearinghouse
- Texas Education Research Center records (2010-11 pilot)

**Employment Records**
- Texas Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records
New Data Sources*

Job Training & Other Records (TWC)
- WIA, Food Stamp, TANF, TAA, other E&T programs
- Apprenticeship
- Vital statistics

State Corrections Data (TWC)
- State jail system incarcerations

Postsecondary Education Records (THECB)
- Course data
- Developmental education

Federal Employment Data (THECB)
- Federal employment
- Postal Service employment
- Military service

*2011-2013 TWC/RMC Texas Workforce Data Quality Initiative funded by USDOL.
## Composition of Graduates
### (2007 SFP Districts)
Black share relatively constant; Hispanic and low-income shares gradually increasing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Class of 2007</th>
<th>Class of 2008</th>
<th>Class of 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>9,410</td>
<td>10,452</td>
<td>10,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Income Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Low-income</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Education Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Special Education</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
District Composition of 2009 Graduates

- Austin: 33%
- Round Rock: 4%
- Manor: 4%
- Hays: 4%
- Del Valle: 4%
- Eanes: 6%
- Bastrop: 4%
- Pflugerville: 11%
- Leander: 12%
- San Marcos: 20%
- 2%

Total: 100%
Postsecondary Enrollment of Central Texas HS Graduates, Fall Following Graduation, by College Type, Ethnicity and Income Status (2007 SFP Districts)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-Year</td>
<td>4-Year</td>
<td>2-Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled Graduates (%)</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not low-income</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 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)

- All Districts: 23% (2-Year), 38% (4-Year)
- Austin: 23% (2-Year), 36% (4-Year)
- Bastrop: 22% (2-Year), 18% (4-Year)
- Del Valle: 22% (2-Year), 19% (4-Year)
- Eanes: 15% (2-Year), 72% (4-Year)
- Hays: 25% (2-Year), 30% (4-Year)
- Leander: 27% (2-Year), 41% (4-Year)
- Manor: 20% (2-Year), 23% (4-Year)
- Pflugerville: 27% (2-Year), 35% (4-Year)
- Round Rock: 24% (2-Year), 44% (4-Year)
- San Marcos: 15% (2-Year), 28% (4-Year)

Legend:
- Blue: 2-Year
- Orange: 4-Year
Percent of 2009 Graduates Enrolled in Fall 2009, by Location and District (N=11,993)

- **All Districts**: 54% In-State, 7% Out-of-State
- **Austin**: 52% In-State, 7% Out-of-State
- **Bastrop**: 40% In-State, 1% Out-of-State
- **Del Valle**: 39% In-State, 2% Out-of-State
- **Eanes**: 57% In-State, 30% Out-of-State
- **Hays**: 52% In-State, 3% Out-of-State
- **Leander**: 61% In-State, 7% Out-of-State
- **Manor**: 39% In-State, 3% Out-of-State
- **Pflugerville**: 57% In-State, 4% Out-of-State
- **Round Rock**: 60% In-State, 8% Out-of-State
- **San Marcos**: 39% In-State, 4% Out-of-State
Postsecondary Enrollment Over Time, by Graduating Class

- Class of 2006: 60.4%, 59.6%, 56.8%, 55.1%, 52.5%
- Class of 2007: 62.1%, 61.5%, 57.4%
- Class of 2008: 61.1%, 57.4%
# Persistence One Year Out, Class of 2007 (SFP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Enrolled Within a Year of Graduating</th>
<th>Persisted to Fall of 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent of Graduates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>6,313</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1,360</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>3,739</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3,212</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3,043</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Income Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income</td>
<td>915</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Low-income</td>
<td>5,205</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial Enrollment Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Year Institution</td>
<td>2,706</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Year Institution</td>
<td>3,607</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial Enrollment Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In State</td>
<td>5,539</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of State</td>
<td>774</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall Post-Grad Employment Status, by Graduating Class

Class of 2006
- 2006Q4: 46%
- 2007Q1: 53%
- 2007Q2: 62%
- 2007Q3: 47%
- 2007Q4: 51%
- 2008Q1: 56%
- 2008Q2: 53%
- 2008Q3: 44%
- 2008Q4: 39%
- 2009Q1: 49%
- 2009Q2: 51%
- 2009Q3: 55%
- 2009Q4: 60%
- 2010Q1: 65%

Class of 2007
- 2006Q4: 62%
- 2007Q1: 60%
- 2007Q2: 53%
- 2007Q3: 62%
- 2007Q4: 51%
- 2008Q1: 60%
- 2008Q2: 62%
- 2008Q3: 53%
- 2008Q4: 44%
- 2009Q1: 39%
- 2009Q2: 49%
- 2009Q3: 51%
- 2009Q4: 47%
- 2010Q1: 41%

Class of 2008
- 2006Q4: 47%
- 2007Q1: 51%
- 2007Q2: 53%
- 2007Q3: 60%
- 2007Q4: 56%
- 2008Q1: 51%
- 2008Q2: 56%
- 2008Q3: 53%
- 2008Q4: 44%
- 2009Q1: 39%
- 2009Q2: 49%
- 2009Q3: 51%
- 2009Q4: 47%
- 2010Q1: 41%

Class of 2009
- 2006Q4: 45%
- 2007Q1: 50%
- 2007Q2: 55%
- 2007Q3: 60%
- 2007Q4: 65%
- 2008Q1: 55%
- 2008Q2: 60%
- 2008Q3: 56%
- 2008Q4: 53%
- 2009Q1: 44%
- 2009Q2: 39%
- 2009Q3: 49%
- 2009Q4: 51%
- 2010Q1: 41%
Median Earnings by Quarter for Central Texas HS Graduates
(Through Spring 2010, Any Employment by Cohort)
Major Factors Linked to Increased 4-Year Enrollments Class of 2007

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

All Surveyed Graduates

- Completion of Distinguished Achievement Program or Recommended High School Plan was strongest (+345%)
- College placement exams, Top 10% and FAFSA completion (all +100%)
- HS math in 8th grade, G/T, visiting college campus, high school sports (all +50%)

All Groups

- College entrance exams, Top 10%, HS math in 8th grade (+50% for all groups)
Major Factors Linked to Increased 4-year Enrollments for 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 for college reduced 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.
Senior Survey Recent Trends

More Students Reported FAFSA Submission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Income</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary Reason for Not Submitting FAFSA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do not need aid</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents not willing</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probably won't qualify</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know process</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't plan to enroll</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Senior Survey Recent Trends

Plans for Postsecondary Enrollment

- Overall: 91% in 2008, 91% in 2009, 86% in 2010
- Hispanic: 88% in 2008, 91% in 2009, 82% in 2010
- Low-Income: 88% in 2008, 88% in 2009, 81% in 2010

Primary Reason for Not Choosing Postsecondary Enrollment

- Financial: 24% in 2008, 31% in 2009, 29% in 2010
- Academic: 14% in 2008, 12% in 2009, 11% in 2010
- Personal preference: 23% in 2008, 16% in 2009, 18% in 2010
- Personal obligation: 7% in 2008, 6% in 2009, 6% in 2010
- Other: 32% in 2008, 36% in 2009, 36% in 2010
Implications for Policy

- Taking rigorous courses and focusing on college-prep activities (e.g., college enrollment counseling, college applications, FAFSA) improves initial postsecondary enrollment for all groups.
- Recent economic downturn shows that other strategies may be needed to continue improvement for groups that traditionally have not attended college at comparable rates.
- Because most graduates attend in-state colleges, affordability of Texas schools is an important public policy objective for continuing to increase enrollments.
- More work needed to:
  - Explore promising interventions for low-income Hispanics.
  - Boost persistence for African-Americans.
  - Better understand the relationship between various education-work pathways and future career success.
Implications for Practice

- GAC offers free financial aid sessions each spring targeting students who haven’t traditionally enrolled.
- College Enrollment Managers use data to:
  - Assess differences in students’ awareness of services they receive vs. actual services and outcomes.
  - Compare outcomes for their students to those of similar students in surrounding districts.
  - Tailor college-prep strategies to student needs.
  - Prioritize future services for students.
- GAC is working with USDoe and THECB so ISDs can obtain near-real-time college application and FAFSA completion data.
- ISDs have partnered with local college-access programs (e.g., College Forward, CIS, Con Mi Madre) to provide college-prep and mentoring services.
Ongoing/Future Research

- Working with TWC, add **new data sources** (e.g., dev ed, FAFSA, corrections, E&T) for more comprehensive analysis
- Fully document students’ **postsecondary “pathways” over time and factors shaping them**—which factors lead to successful pathways?
- **Identify the top 3-5 actions** school counselors can take to foster improved postsecondary success
- Create **user-friendly reports** for ISDs, business and civic leaders
- Use our data to **evaluate and improve college-preparation efforts**
For More Information

Christopher T. King, Director
*Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources*
Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs
The University of Texas at Austin
crking@austin.utexas.edu
512.471.2186

www.centexstudentfutures.org
www.utexas.edu/research/cshrh/