

Texas' College- and Career-Ready Commitment

The Economic Imperative

Today, nearly every good job requires some postsecondary education and/or training (e.g., an associate's or bachelor's degree, certificate, or apprenticeship or significant on-the-job training). All students need to be academically prepared to compete for good jobs in the global economy.

In 1950, 60% of jobs were classified as unskilled, attainable by young people with high school diplomas or less. Today, less than 20% jobs are considered to be unskilled.ⁱ

More education is associated with higher earnings and higher rates of employment in Texas.ⁱⁱⁱ

- **80%** of Texas' jobs are middle or high skills (i.e., require some postsecondary education or training).
- **Only 34%** of Texas' adults have some postsecondary degree (associate's or higher).ⁱⁱ

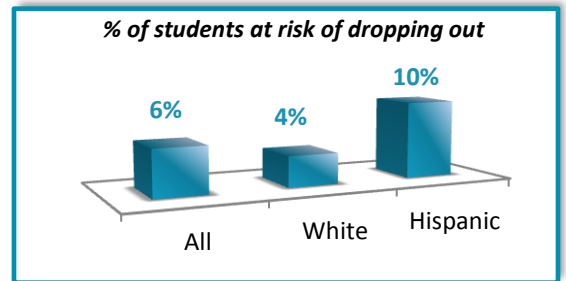
Mean Income	Education Level	Unemployment
\$11,467	HS Dropout	14%
\$24,083	HS Graduate	11%
\$30,075	Some College	8%
\$59,679	Bachelors & Above	4%

The Equity Imperative

Far too many students drop out or graduate from high school unprepared for success, closing doors and limiting their options and opportunities – in particular minority and low-income students.

Texas' achievement gaps begin in the earliest grades and extend through college enrollment and admissions.^{iv}

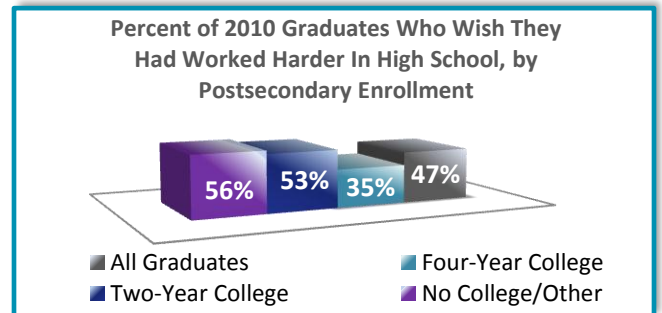
	All	White	Black	Hispanic	Low SES
4 th Grade Math Proficiency	39%	60%	25%	29%	28%
8 th Grade Reading Proficiency ^v	27%	42%	15%	17%	16%
HS Graduation Rate ^{vi}	72%	80%	64%	64%	N/A
College Completion Rate ^{vii}	50%	56%	36%	38%	N/A



The Expectations Gap

The bar has been set too low for too long, keeping students from reaching their full potential. If we want students to achieve more, we need to expect more.

- **38%** of Texas' students in two-year colleges and **24%** of Texas' students in four-year colleges require remediation.^{viii}
- Only half (**50%**) of students who enter public colleges in Texas earn their degrees.
- **34%** of employers deem the preparation of newly hired employees with only a high school diploma as "deficient," (and only 16% find their preparation "excellent.")^{ix}
- **49%** of employers surveyed noted they anticipate requiring higher levels of education for most jobs – and another **60%** noted more specific technical skills will be required – in the next 3-5 years.^x



All too often, students regret not working harder once they leave high school.^{xi}

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The College- and Career-Ready Agenda

Over the past five years, states have driven the college- and career-ready agenda – a policy agenda that seeks to ensure all students graduate high school, and graduate ready for their next steps.

Texas' is among the states that have made college and career readiness a priority for all students.^{xii}

- In 2009, Texas revised their academic standards in math, English, science and social studies to ensure their alignment the state's College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS).
- In 2003, Texas first adopted the Recommended High School Program (RHSP) – a college- and career-ready curriculum – as the default graduation requirements for all students. In 2008, Texas further raised the rigor of the RHSP, requiring four courses in the four core academic subjects.

Texas is one of only 24 states (including DC) with requirements at this level

- Texas' current high school assessment – the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) – has a college-ready cut score used by postsecondary institutions for placement. Among the new STAAR end-of-course assessments that are replacing the TAKS will be exams in Algebra II and English III that will have a college-ready cut score as well.

Texas is one of 18 states with high school tests used by higher education for placement decisions letting students know if they are ready for college-level coursework while still in high school to give them time to address any readiness gaps

- Texas has met eight of the ten State Actions identified by the Data Quality Campaign, providing a foundation for strong and sound student-level data collection and use.

Texas is one of 26 states with a P-20 longitudinal data system that regularly matches student-level K-12 and postsecondary data

- Texas is the only state that has an accountability and reporting system that values college and career readiness for all students, supported by the use of multiple college- and career-ready indicators.

College- and Career-Ready Indicator	Publicly Reported	State Set Goal	Incentive to Improve	Accountability Formula
CCR Diploma	YES	YES	YES	YES
CCR Assessment	YES	YES	YES	
Postsecondary Remediation	YES	YES	YES	
Exceeding CCR	YES	YES	YES	

How Texas Can Further Advance the College- and Career-Ready Agenda

- ✓ ...Fully realize the promise of the college- and career-ready standards by implementing them fully and successfully, and taking steps to ensure they fully reach every classroom across the state.
- ✓ ...Closely monitor which students are completing the college- and career-ready curriculum, and which are opting out.
- ✓ ...Continue to make progress on the state's K-12 accountability system to determine how it can further reward measures of college and career readiness, in alignment with the state's standards, course requirements and assessments.
- ✓ ...Focus efforts around increasing the state's graduation rate (and decreasing the dropout rate) through student support programs and partnerships with higher education.

ⁱ Carnevale, Anthony P. and Donna Desrochers (2003). *Standards for What? The Economic Roots of K-12 Reform*, Education Testing Services.

ⁱⁱ www.learnedearn.org/For-Educators/Standards-for-What.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ Skills to Compete <http://www.skills2compete.org>

^{iv} U.S. Census Bureau (2011). *Current Population Survey*. Figures are based on the total persons in the civilian labor force.

www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstc/cps_table_creator.html

^v Annie E. Casey Foundation. Kids Count Data Center. 2010, <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx>

^{vi} Analysis of NAEP data downloaded from nationsreportcard.gov

^{vii} Education Week (2009). *Graduation in the United States*.

www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2012/06/07/

^{viii} NCES. *IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey*, analyzed by National Center for Management of Higher Education Systems.

www.texaspolicy.com/pdf/2007-09-PP25-remediation-bt.pdf

^{ix} Corporate Voices for Working Families & Civic Enterprises (2011). *Across the Great Divide: Perspectives of CEOs and College Presidents on America's Higher Education and Skills Gap*. www.civicerprises.net/pdfs/across-the-great-divide.pdf

^x Achieve/SHRM

^{xi} College Board (2011). *One Year Out: Findings From A National Survey Among Members Of The High School Graduating Class Of 2010*.

www.collegeboard.org/OneYearOut

^{xii} Achieve (2012). *Closing the Expectations Gap 2011: 50-State Progress Report on the Alignment of High School Policies with the Demands of College and Careers*.