



CENTRAL TEXAS
Student*Futures*
PROJECT



skillpoint alliance
where community, education and business connect

Project Partners



○ A research partnership of

- Ray Marshall Center, LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin
- Skillpoint Alliance
- Central Texas independent school districts (ISDs)

○ Project funders

- TG
- Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce
- Texas Education Agency
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Others

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School District Partners by First Year of Participation:

2004-05 Austin Independent School District
Del Valle Independent School District
Pflugerville Independent School District
Round Rock Independent School District

2005-06 Leander Independent School District
Manor Independent School District

2006-07 Eanes Independent School District
San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District

2007-08 Bastrop Independent School District
Hays Consolidated Independent School District

Project Purpose

- **Conduct longitudinal research on:**
 - what regional high school graduates are doing after high school
 - why they are making these decisions
 - how educational, personal and financial factors contribute to graduates' success in postsecondary education and the workforce
- **Foster educational improvement through:**
 - identifying and sharing best practices
 - workshops and seminars



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**RAY MARSHALL
CENTER**
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
AT AUSTIN

**SKILLPOINT
ALLIANCE**

Findings from

**Education and Work After High School:
A First Look at the Class of 2006**

TG Conference

April 24, 2008



Research Questions

- What share of seniors **enrolled in 2-year and 4-year postsecondary institutions** through December 2006?
- What share of seniors was **employed** through December 2006?
- What share of seniors was **both enrolled in postsecondary institutions and employed**?
- Which **factors** are **significantly associated with postsecondary and employment outcomes**?

Data Sources



High school records

- Student demographics
- Courses taken
- Course grades

Senior Survey

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

Postsecondary education records*

- National Student Clearinghouse
- University of Texas at Austin directory information

Employment records*

- Texas Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records

* through 12/06

Research Samples



- **All 2006 seniors in Austin, Manor, Pflugerville and Round Rock ISDs; consenting seniors only in Leander ISD**
 - 90% of all seniors
 - N = 8,295
 - Used to calculate enrollment and employment rates
- **All 2006 seniors in these ISDs with complete survey and educational outcomes data**
 - N = 4,393
 - Used to track steps in college pipeline



Characteristics of 2006 Central Texas Seniors

N = 8,295

	Percent		Percent
	100%		100%
Ethnicity		Mother's Education Level	
Asian or Pacific Islander	5%	Bachelor's degree or above	17%
Black	14%	Below a bachelor's degree	37%
Hispanic, Latino, of Spanish Origin	32%	Unknown	46%
White or Caucasian	49%		
Gender		School Income Status	
Female	50%	Low income	28%
Male	50%	Not low income	72%
Family Income Status		First-Generation College Goer¹	
Low income	29%	Yes	18%
Not low income	69%	No	36%
Unknown	2%	Unknown	46%

¹ Based on mother's education only in Austin ISD but on both parents' education in other ISDs

Postsecondary Enrollment



What share of seniors enrolled in 2-year and 4-year postsecondary institutions through December 2006?

Postsecondary Enrollment



THROUGH THE FALL 2006 SEMESTER:

- 42% of 2006 seniors were enrolled in postsecondary education
 - 60% in 4-year schools
 - 40% in 2-year schools
- **Postsecondary enrollment rates for individual high schools within most districts were similar.**
 - Austin ISD rates varied widely by high school

Employment



- **What share of seniors was employed through December 2006?**
- **What share of seniors was both enrolled in postsecondary institutions and employed after graduation?**

Employment*

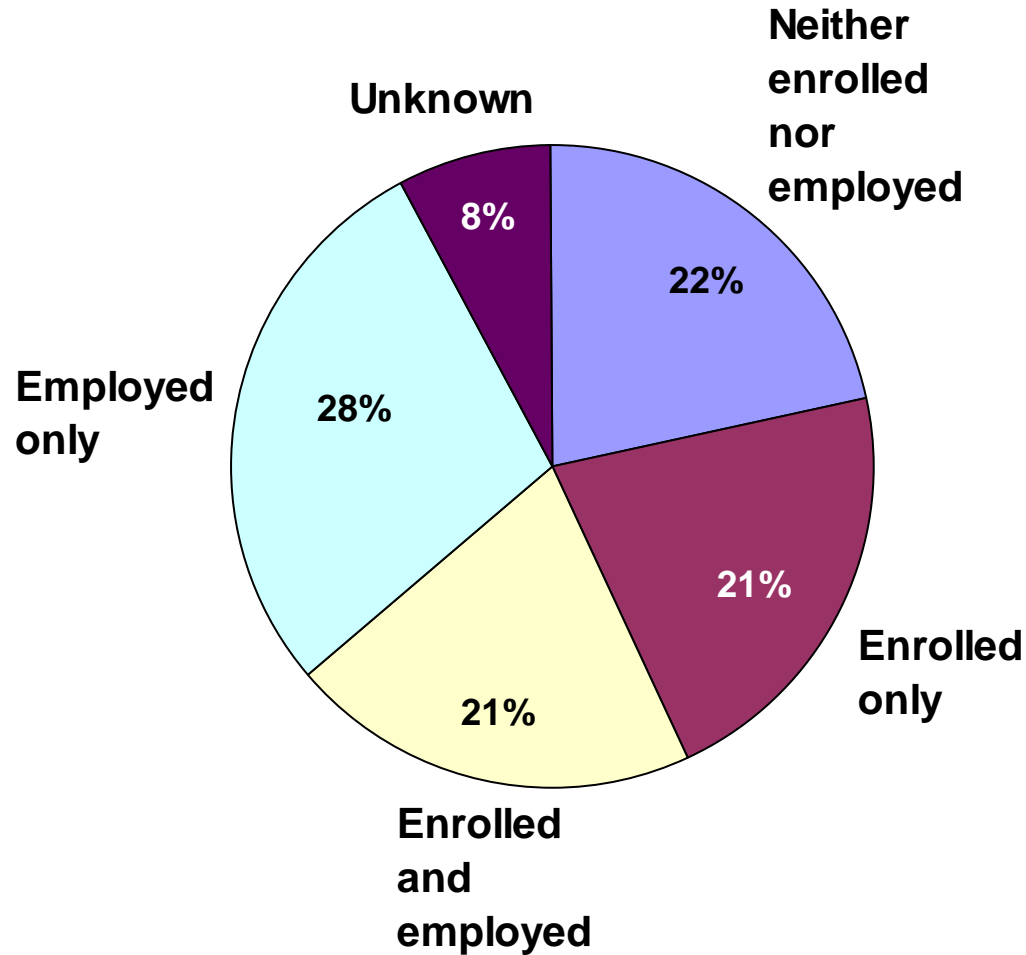


- In the 4th quarter of 2006, **49% of 2006 seniors were employed in Texas**
 - 28% employed only
 - 21% employed and enrolled in postsecondary education
- High schools with **lower** education enrollment rates tended to have **higher** employment rates

* Updated in April 2008

Initial Outcomes for 2006 Seniors through December 2006*

N=8,295

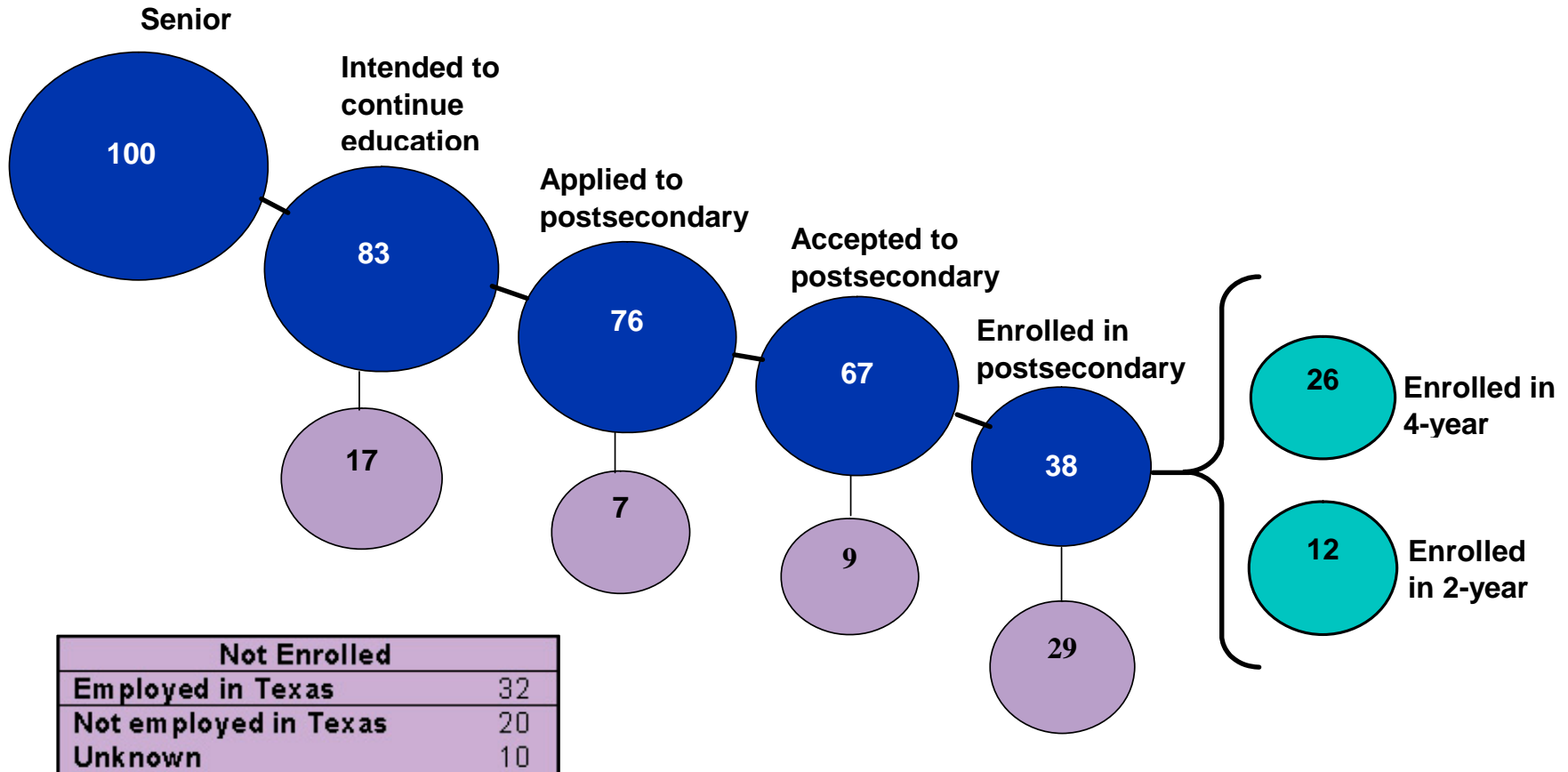


* Updated in April 2008



Tracking Steps to College Enrollment for 2006 Central Texas Seniors

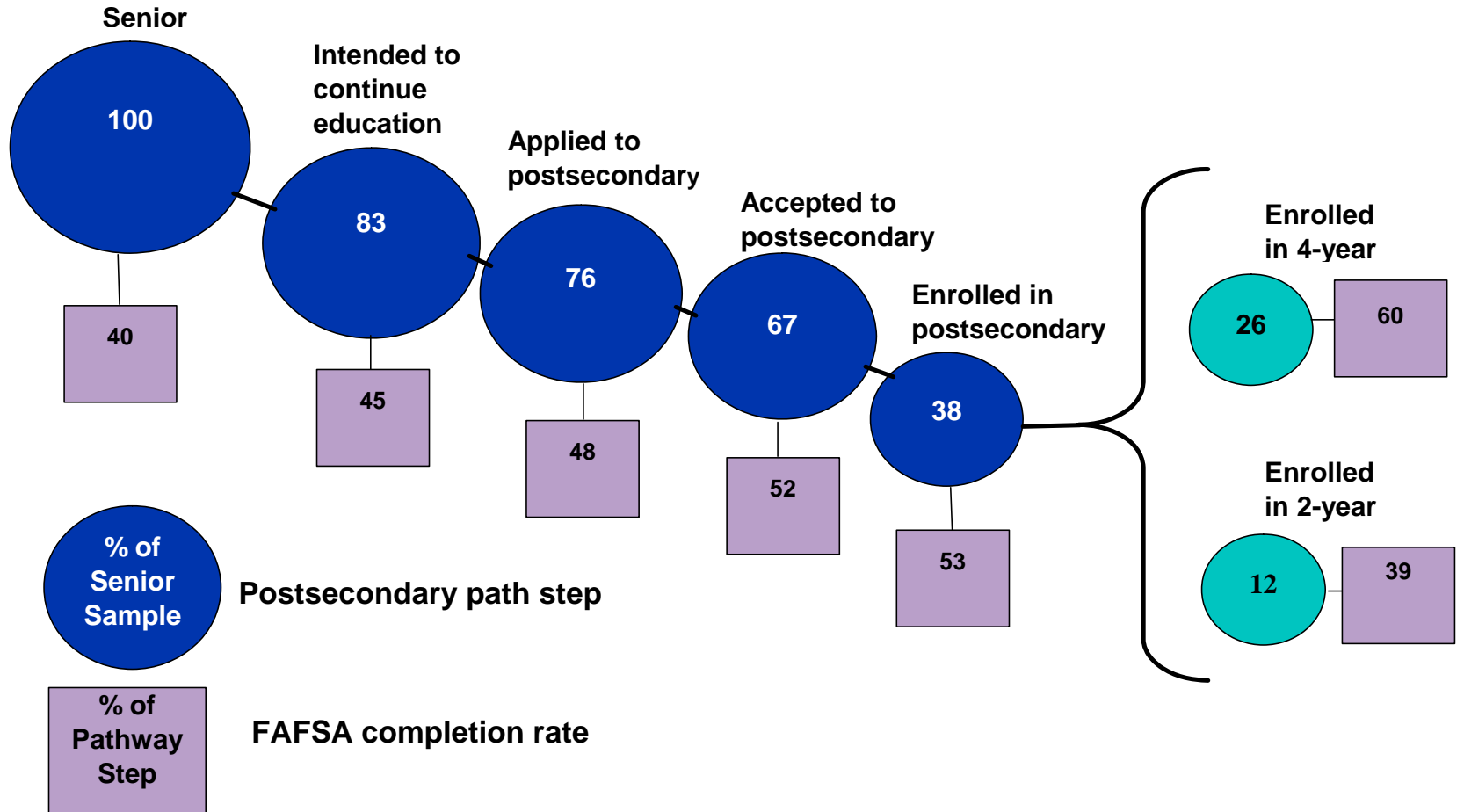
N= 4,393





Share of 2006 Central Texas Seniors Completing FAFSA

N=4,393



Factors Associated with Outcomes



Which factors are significantly associated with postsecondary enrollment?

Factors Related to 4-Year Enrollment



- **More likely to enroll:**
 - specific college preparation activities (SAT/ACT, FAFSA, visiting colleges, sending transcripts)
 - mother has college degree
 - participation in sports
- **Less likely to enroll:**
 - thinking about college since childhood or later
 - Hispanic
 - lower family income

Factors Related to 2-Year Enrollment



- **More likely to enroll:**

- taking SAT/ACT
- meeting with counselor about financial aid or career information
- thinking about college since childhood (vs. “as long as I can remember”)

- **Less likely to enroll:**

- being much older than average
- lower family income
- weak parental encouragement
- being retained in 9th grade
- factors associated with positive 4-year enrollments

Conclusions



- Education and student background factors appear to influence overall 2-year and 4-year postsecondary enrollment in different ways. These factors assume varying levels of importance for seniors from different socioeconomic, race/ethnic, and family backgrounds
- Factors most positively linked to seniors only being employed after high school are often negatively associated with postsecondary enrollment

Recommendations



- Schools, districts, and other stakeholders should **tailor college preparation programs** and policies to **meet the needs of different groups of students** rather than adopting one-size-fits all approaches
- Schools should **work harder to involve parents** in their efforts to create a college-going culture

Recommendations

(cont.)



- School districts and the community should focus on strategies to **create a college-going culture much earlier** in students' school careers, focusing on pre-kindergarten and early elementary school
- Districts and schools should **utilize the positive roles that counseling activities, college preparation and extracurricular activities (particularly sports) play** in transitions to college for some of their students

Future Plans



Research:

- Prepare reports on Senior Survey and Postsecondary Enrollment/Employment once each year
- Add more complete, longer-term postsecondary education and employment data
- Add school-level variables to account for differences among educational programs and practices at individual high schools (beginning with class of 2007)

Dissemination:

- Present research results to education stakeholders
- Collaborate with school districts and others to foster educational improvement in the region



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