



*Getting To and Through College
and Beyond: What Matters and
What Works?*

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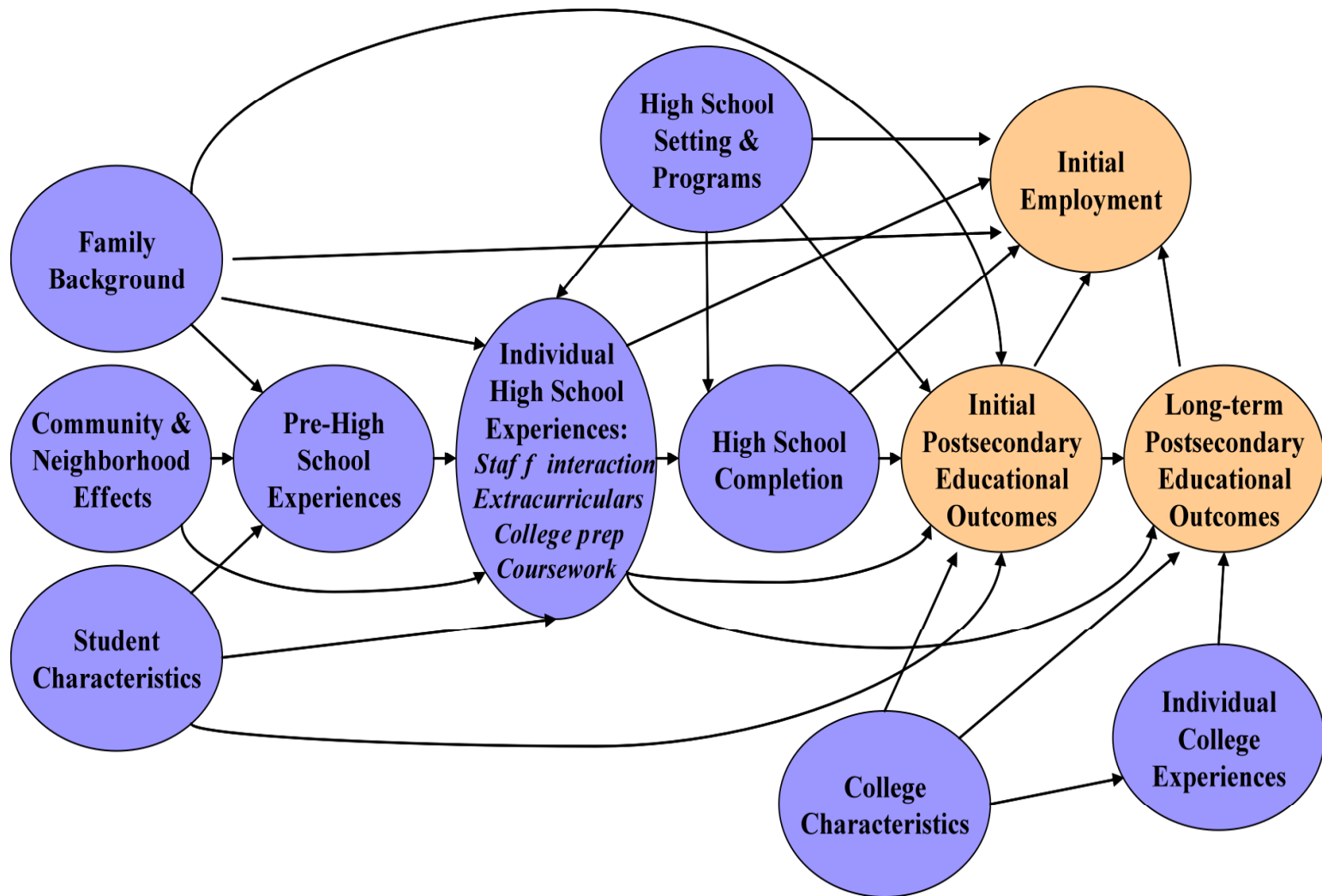
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Basis



- 1) *Central Texas Student Futures Project* research, part of broader Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce (GAC) initiative:
 - ✓ Ongoing (2005-2013) partnership of Ray Marshall Center, GAC and 11 ISDs, touching 84% of area high school seniors
 - ✓ Longitudinal analysis of student-level education and workforce records, including student exit surveys linked to secondary, postsecondary education and labor market outcomes data
- 2) *National research literature*

Model of Factors Affecting College Enrollment & Work



Source: B. Levy & C. King, *Central Texas Student Futures Project Conceptual Model* (2009).

Getting TO College



First, review **factors** statistically associated with enrolling in 4-year and 2-year institutions.

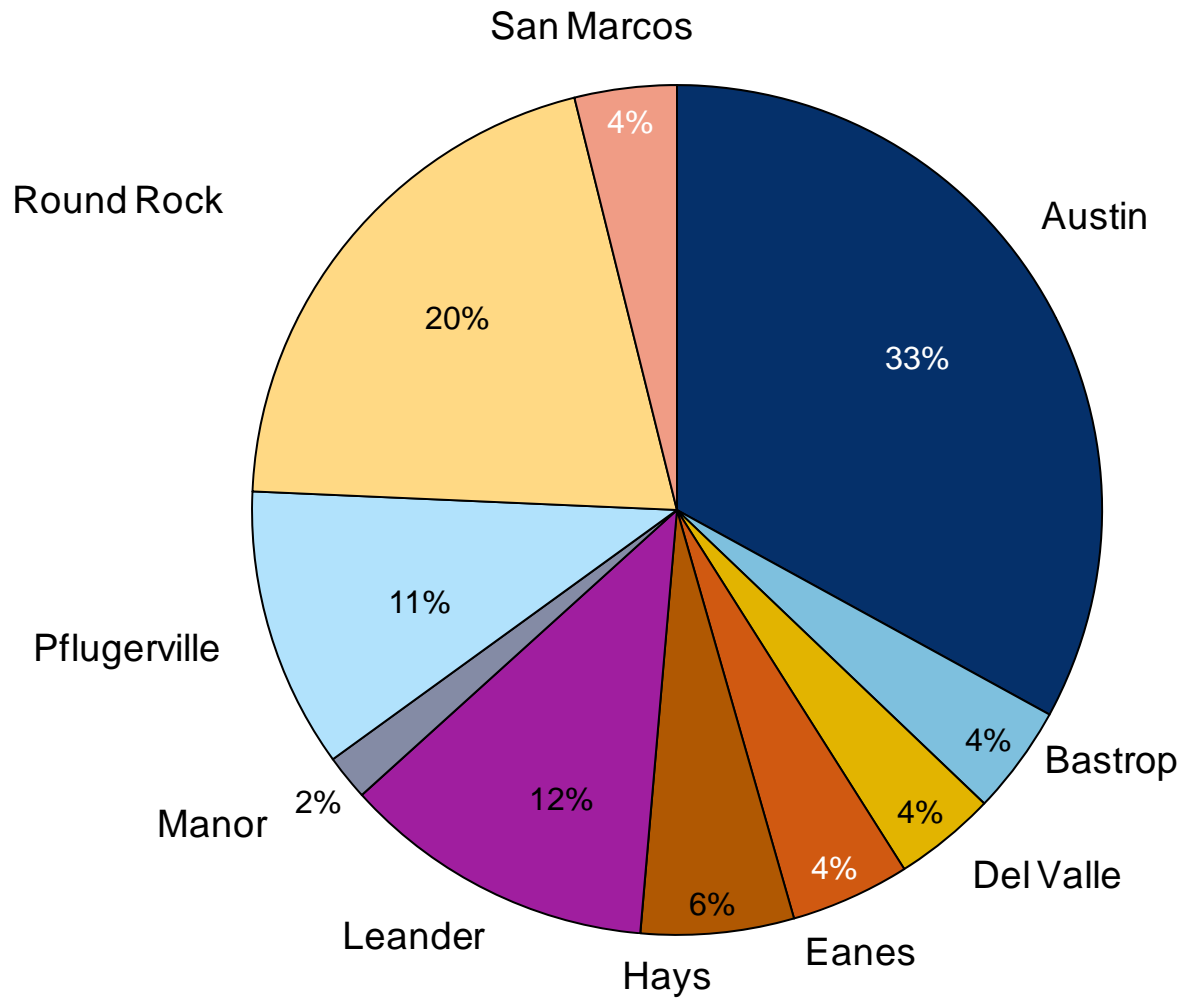
Then, identify particular **strategies** for increasing college enrollment rates in both 4- and 2-year institutions.

Highlight results for key groups, especially **low-income, Hispanic** and **first-generation college** students.

→ Factors and strategies vary by type of college and population group: ***one-size-fits-all approaches unlikely to succeed.***



District Composition of 2009 Graduates (SFP)





Composition of Graduates (2007 SFP Districts)



Hispanic and low-income shares gradually increasing.

	Class of 2007	Class of 2008	Class of 2009
Totals	9,410	10,452	10,793
Ethnicity			
Asian	6%	6%	6%
Black	11%	12%	12%
Hispanic	29%	31%	32%
White	52%	52%	48%
Gender			
Female	48%	50%	50%
Male	50%	50%	50%
Family Income Status			
Low-income	21%	23%	26%
Not Low-income	73%	73%	70%
Special Education Status			
Special Education	9%	9%	9%
Not Special Education	85%	87%	87%





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

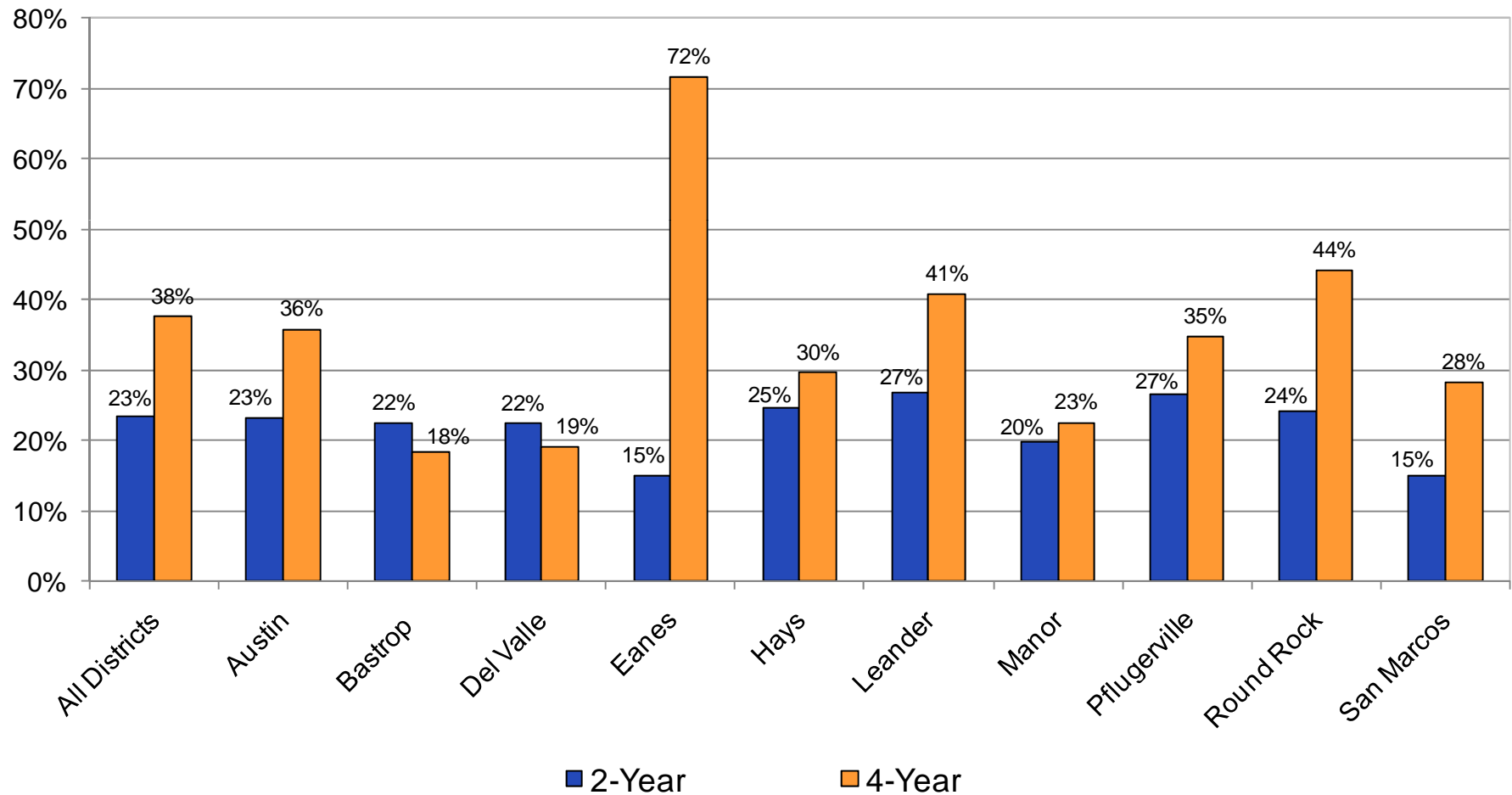


	2007		2008		2009*	
	2-Year	4-Year	2-Year	4-Year	2-Year	4-Year
Enrolled Graduates (%)	22%	40%	22%	40%	23%	39%
Ethnicity						
Asian	21%	57%	20%	63%	17%	65%
Black	23%	35%	22%	33%	25%	36%
Hispanic	22%	22%	23%	22%	25%	23%
White	23%	49%	22%	50%	23%	48%
Income Status						
Low-income	21%	19%	20%	20%	24%	22%
Not low-income	23%	47%	23%	48%	23%	48%
Unknown	21%	12%	22%	11%	20%	6%

* 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.

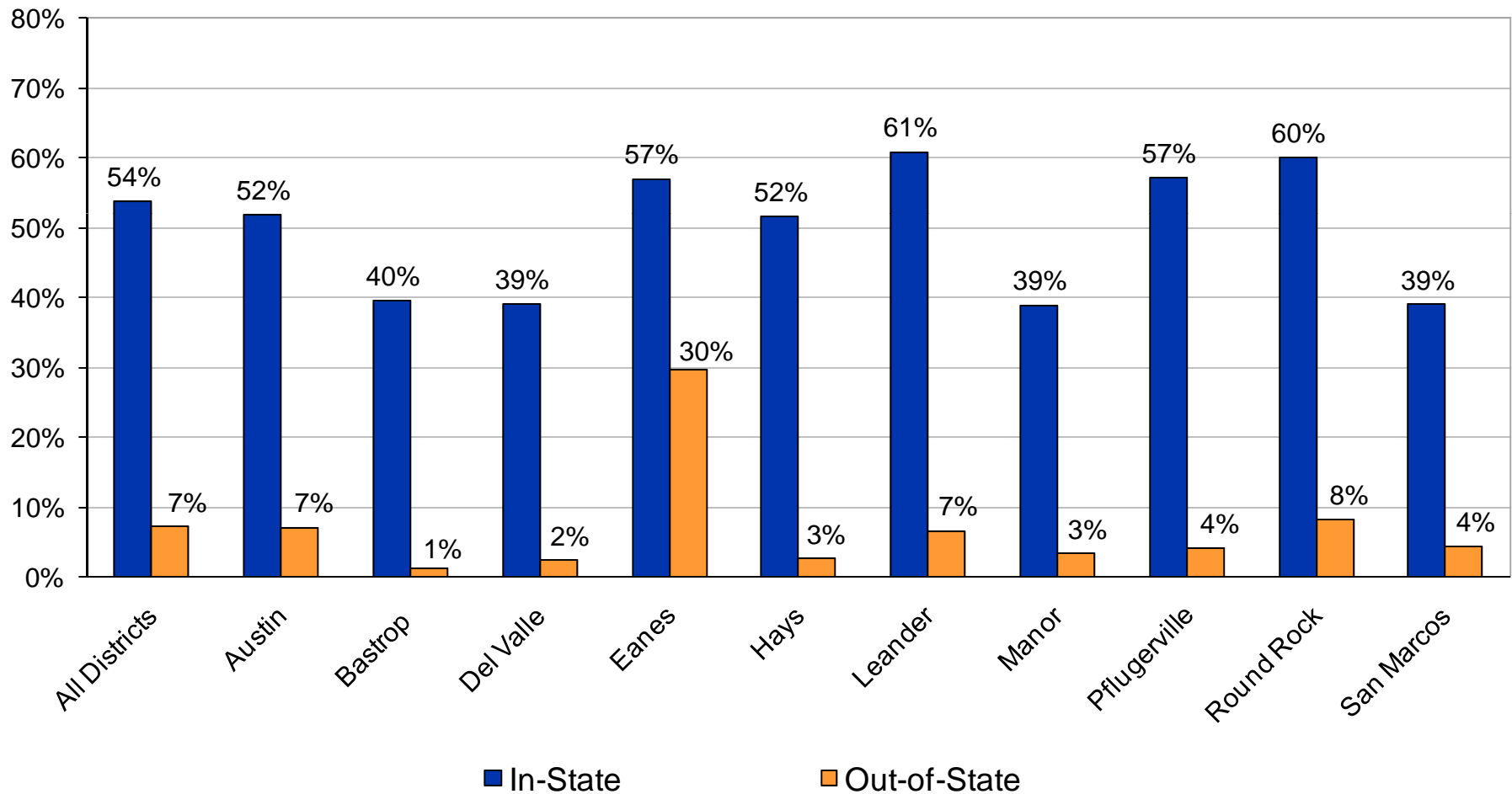


Percent of 2009 Graduates Enrolled in Fall 2009, by College Type and District (N=11,993)





Percent of 2009 Graduates Enrolled in Fall 2009, by Location and District (N=11,993)

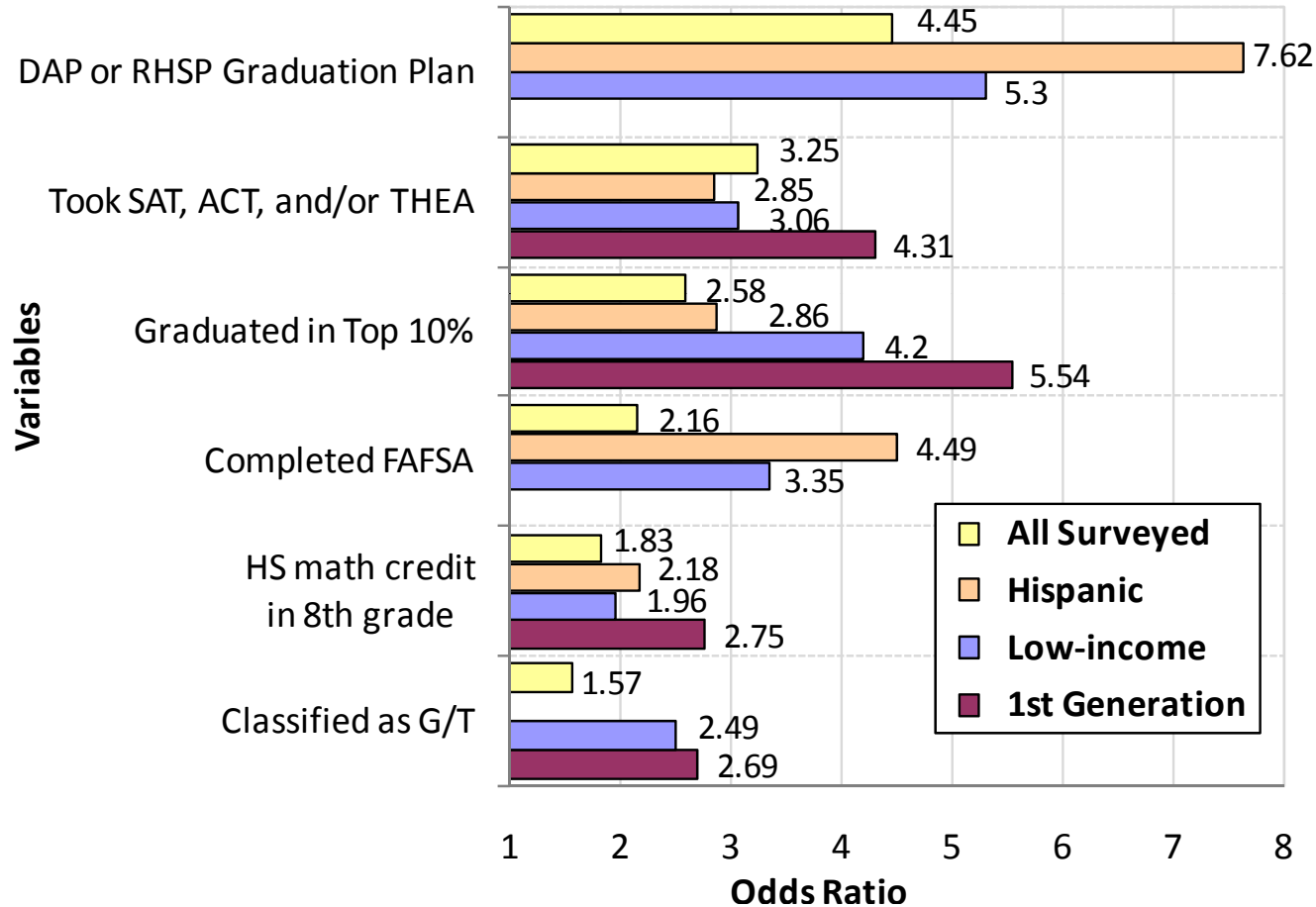




Major Factors Linked to Increased 4-Yr Enrollment Odds



(Class of 2007)



ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- All Surveyed
 - Participated in HS sports (1.8)
- Hispanic
 - Male (2.12)
- Low-income
 - Participated in HS music (1.51)
- 1st Generation
 - Participated in HS music (1.51)

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

Major 4-Yr Enrollment Factors, 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 money for college reduced 4-yr 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** the odds of enrolling in 2-year colleges 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.

Effective College Enrollment Strategies



- Various **college preparation activities**—college enrollment counseling, taking college entrance tests, completing college applications, applying for FAFSA—improve college enrollments for all (SFP & Tierney et al. 2009).
- Ensuring students **take a rigorous curriculum** and **excel in school** also effective for most (SFP & Tierney et al. 2009).
- **Reducing student mobility** critical: students changing high schools even once far less likely to go on to college (SFP).
- **Making college more affordable** critical as well. Because most Texas high school graduates attend in-state colleges, **affordability of state schools** also key to increasing college enrollment rates for all students, but especially for low-income, Hispanic and first-generation students (SFP).

Effective Strategies ...



National and Texas research suggest additional strategies to increase college enrollments:

- ✓ **Participation in extracurricular activities**, especially sports or music (Rumberger & Arellano, 2007; King et al. 2007; Schexnayder et al. 2009)
- ✓ **Enrolling in dual-credit, college-like and AP courses** (Quint et al. 2008; Bailey et al. 2003; Karp et al. 2007, 2008; Roderick et al. 2006; Adelman 1999; Klopfenstein & Thomas 2005)
- ✓ **Making college part of a student's 'individual life plan'** via guidance counselor interactions and other actions (Quint et al. 2008)
- ✓ **Surrounding students with adults and peers who build and support their college aspirations** (Tierney et al. 2009)
- ✓ **Providing integrated support services/counseling**, especially for those enrolling in 2-year colleges (Grubb 1996)

Texas Strategies



- **Pathways Projects** in San Antonio, Houston and El Paso, staffed by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, but regionally designed and tailored (<https://share.thecb.state.tx.us/sites/Pathways/>). Components: data analysis/research; vertical alignment teams; and evaluation.
- **Austin Partners in Education, Communities in Schools, Con Mi Madre, Skillpoint Alliance**, other nonprofits working in schools to foster college and career readiness and boost postsecondary enrollments in various ways.
- **Early college high schools.**
Initial results appear promising. Rigorous evaluations of these strategies not yet conducted/completed. Groundwork underway for some evaluations.
- **Greater Austin Chamber's comprehensive ongoing strategy** merits further consideration ...

Four-County Greater Austin Chamber Initiative



Goal: Increase direct-to-college enrollments by 20,010, to a rate of **64% by 2010**.

Now, aiming for a direct-to-college enrollment rate of **72% by 2015**.



Chamber Strategy



Bottoms up, for leadership, focus and energy

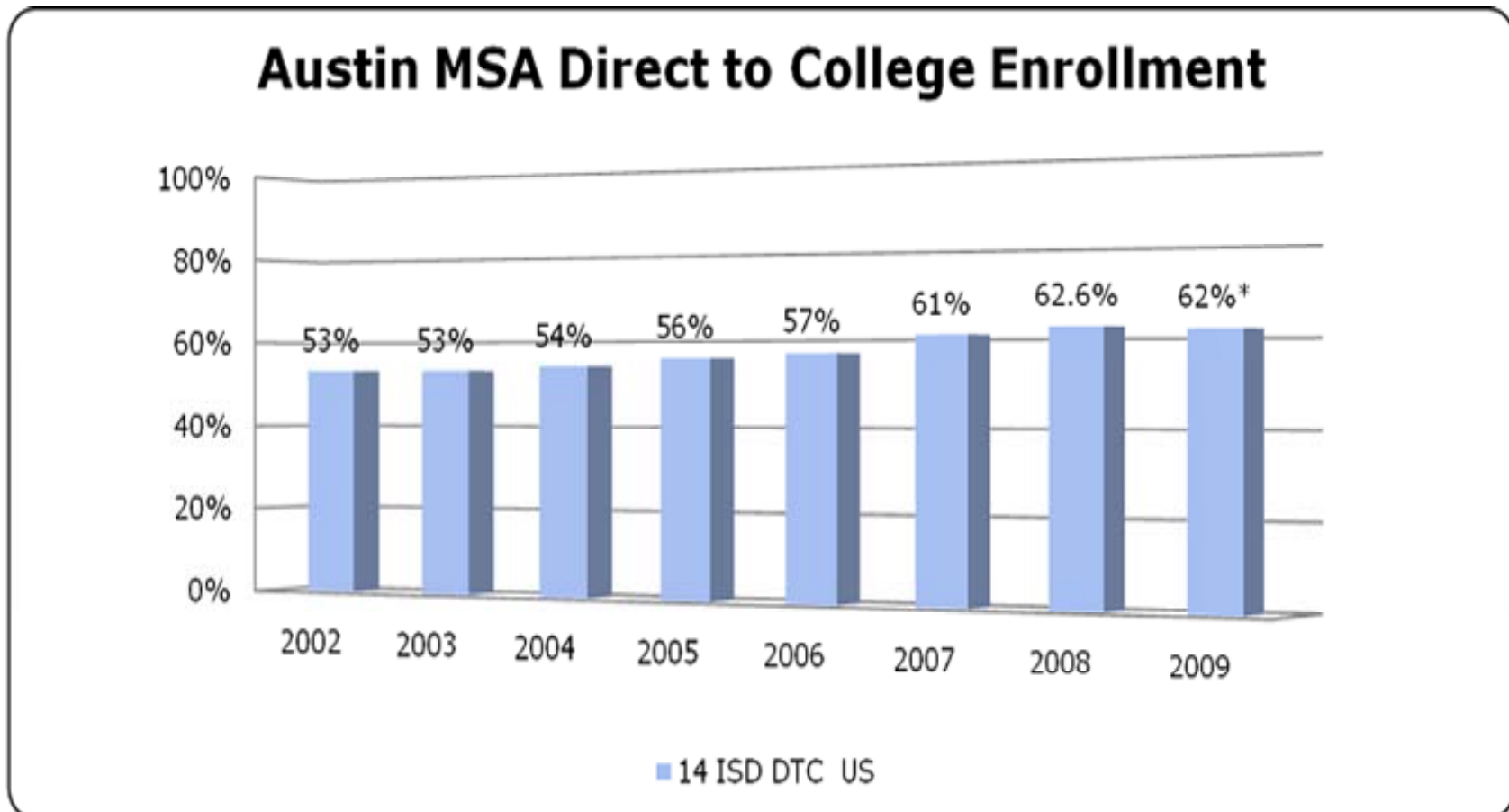
- Austin Community College Connection
- Financial Aid Saturdays
- Common Application to college
- College readiness assistance for seniors

Tops down, focusing local education leaders on college readiness

- Create College Enrollment Managers positioned in each high school in the region
- Advocate for college readiness in state accountability
- Pilot Strategic Compensation and other initiatives
- Create, foster real-time management tools (e.g., Common Application, FAFSA, Student Futures Project)



Metro Austin Direct-to-College Enrollment Rate Up 9 Points



Source: Student Futures Project, THECB, 2003-2009

* Estimate

Getting THROUGH College



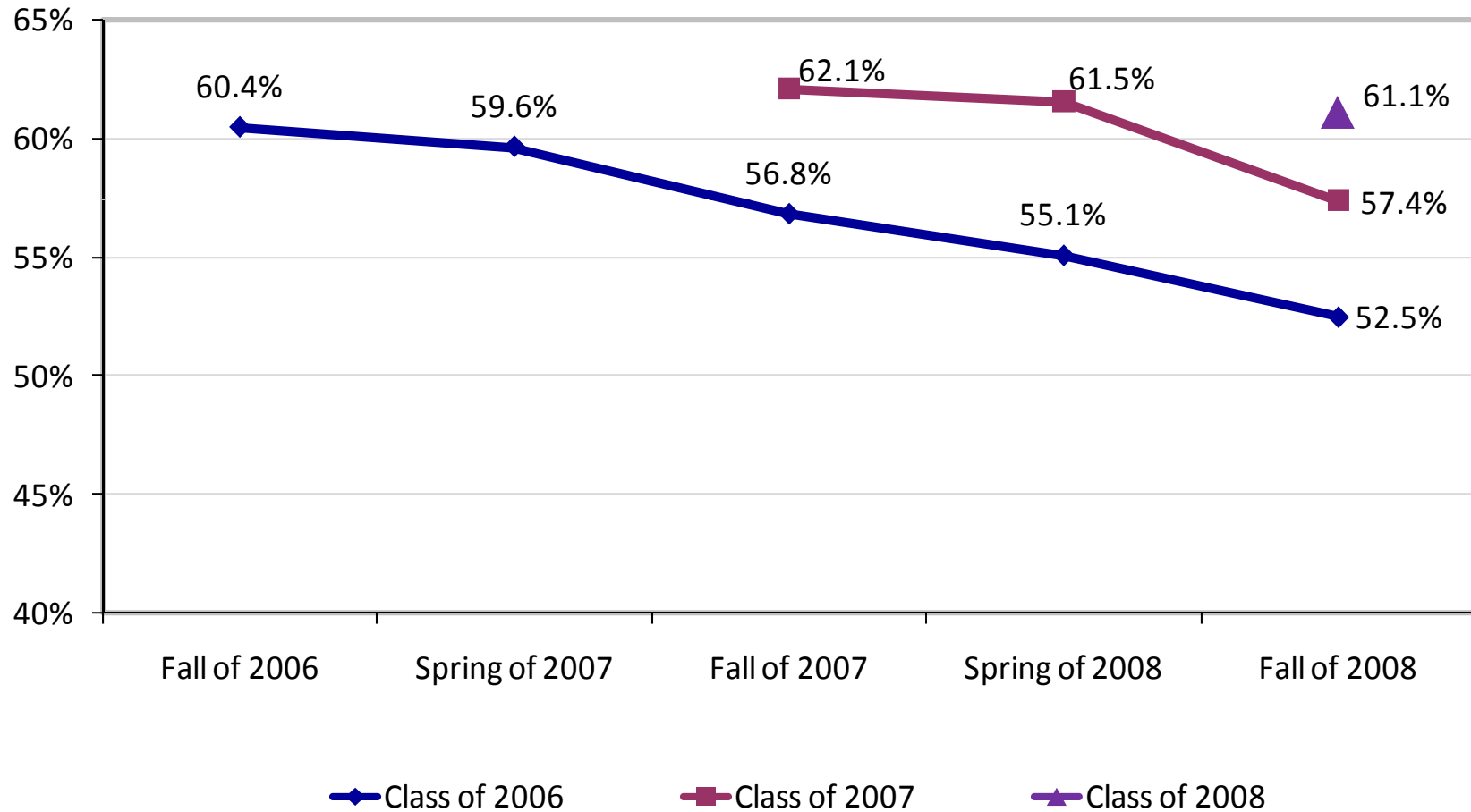
First, examine recent persistence experience for 2- and 4-year colleges in Central Texas.

Note: research on persistence and completion and the factors and strategies known to increase them not as well developed. Student Futures Project work on persistence/completion still underway.

Then, identify effective strategies for boosting persistence and completion rates for 4- and 2-year. Factors and strategies likely to vary by type of college and population group: ***one-size-fits-all approaches unlikely to succeed.***



Postsecondary Enrollment Over Time, by Graduating Class (SFP)





Persistence One Year Out, Class of 2007 (SFP)



	Enrolled Within a Year of Graduating		Persisted to Fall of 2008	
	Number	Percent of Graduates	Number	Percent of Enrolled
Overall	6,313	67%	5,117	81%
Ethnicity				
Asian	456	84%	421	92%
Black	674	65%	458	68%
Hispanic	1,360	50%	1,004	74%
White	3,739	76%	3,173	85%
Gender				
Female	3,212	71%	2,656	83%
Male	3,043	65%	2,418	79%
Family Income Status				
Low-income	915	46%	624	68%
Not Low-income	5,205	76%	4,363	84%
Initial Enrollment Status				
2-Year Institution	2,706		1,828	68%
4-Year Institution	3,607		3,289	91%
Initial Enrollment Location				
In State	5,539		4,428	80%
Out of State	774		689	89%

Persistence Factors



Research underway on 2- and 4-year college persistence and completion, including Student Futures Project, MDRC, Urban Institute and Community College Research Center.

- National studies point to series of important factors (shown at right).
- Limited access to detailed college participation data (e.g., Dev Ed) constraining Texas research.

Positive Factors

- + Parental postsecondary education
- + GPA
- + No. of math, dual-credit and AP classes
- + AP test scores
- + Took college entrance exams
- + Scholarships and grants
- + Parental financial support
- + Cultural social capital
- + Freshman learning communities
- + Pass college-level math/writing courses
- + Completing various credit thresholds
- + Earnings an associates degree

Negative Factors

- Non-Asian minority
- Low-income
- Working fulltime
- Reliance on loans
- Starting at a 2-year college
- Entering academically unprepared

Getting BEYOND College



Most of those needing postsecondary education and training already working and well past traditional schooling age: 56% of Austin/Round Rock MSA residents 25+ years of age lack a post-high school degree or certificate.

While public workforce funding falling and access to financing for adults pursuing postsecondary help difficult, proven strategies for success include:

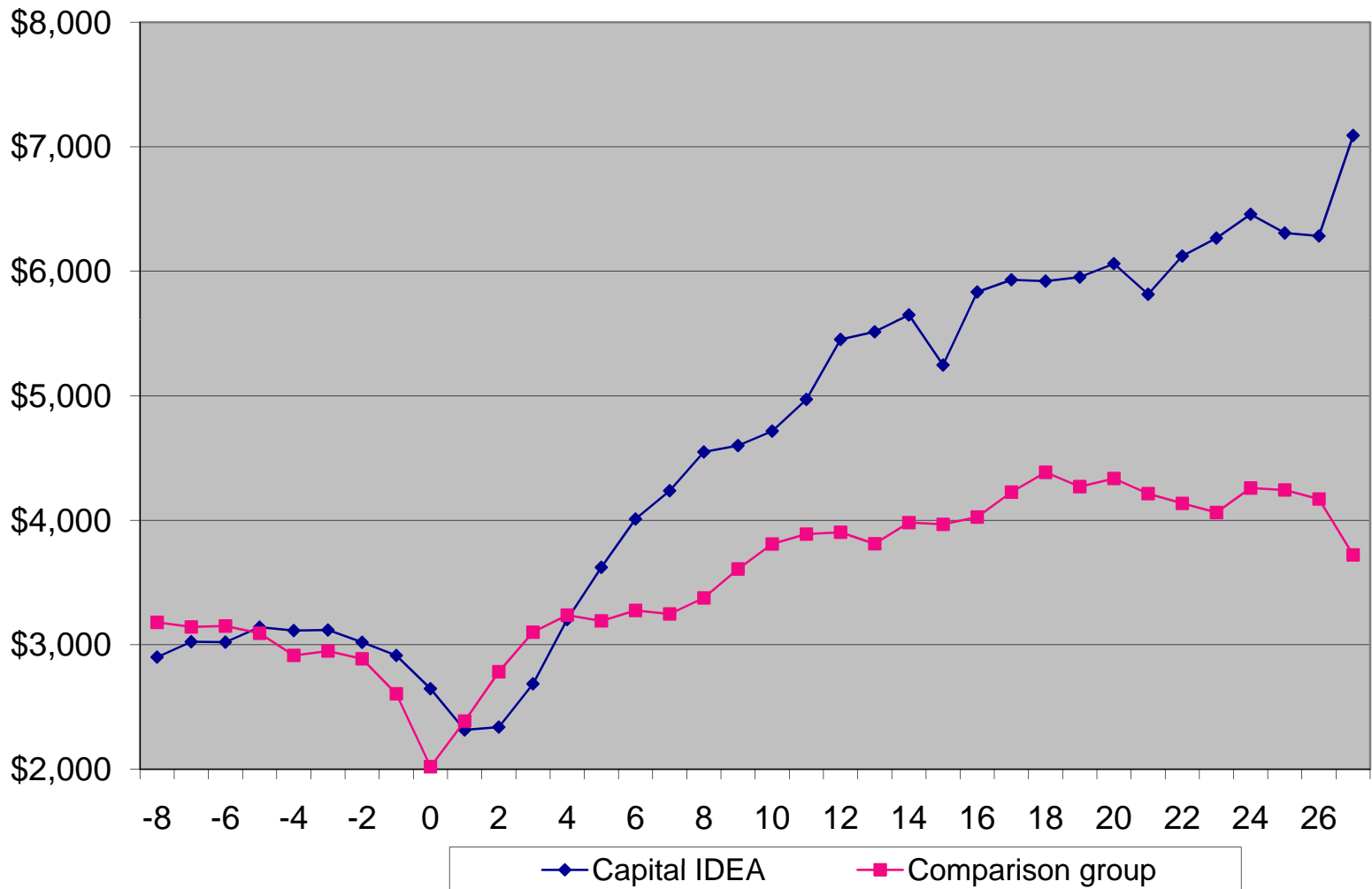
- ✓ **Sectoral workforce strategies via workforce intermediaries**
- ✓ **High-skills workforce development services**

Workforce Strategies



- Longitudinal research finds “**tipping point**” for earnings for students obtaining **a year of college credit plus a credential or certificate** (Prince and Jenkins, 2005).
- **Sectoral training** implemented by workforce intermediaries with community/technical colleges and other organizations in high-skill, high-wage occupations a key strategy for improving postsecondary success, nationally (Maguire et al., 2010) and in Texas (Glover and King, 2010; Smith et al. 2009, 2010).
- The **\$25M. Every Chance Fund** enacted by 81st Texas Legislature via the Comptroller’s Office fostering sectoral training via intermediaries across Texas.
- **Large, lasting statistically significant earnings impacts** for Capital IDEA, highly successful local workforce intermediary, illustrative...

Capital IDEA Earnings Impacts



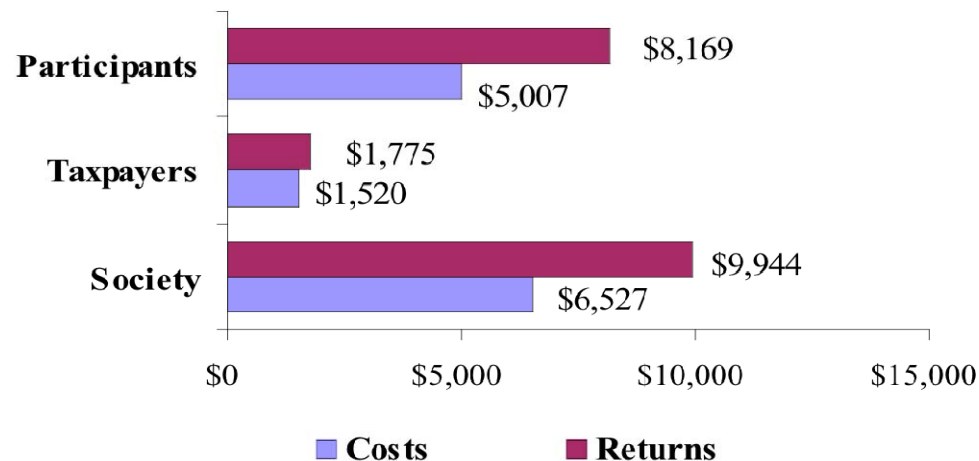
Source: Smith, King & Schroeder (forthcoming 2011).

High-skill Workforce Training Strategies



Analysis of Texas data shows that workforce development—especially **intensive skill-building**—yields larger returns on **investment (ROI)** for participants (individuals and employers), taxpayers and society. High-skill, high-wage strategies typically entail skills training conducted via community and technical colleges.

5-Year Costs and Returns for Texas Workforce Services



Source: King et al. 2008

Concluding Observations



- Focusing on college preparation activities can improve postsecondary enrollments for all groups.
- Experience in recent economic downturn shows other strategies likely needed for groups traditionally under-enrolling in college.
- Financial aid—especially for low-income, Hispanic and first-generation students—critical.
- Need to explore promising interventions for low-income and Hispanic students and better understand relationships between education, training and career pathways. Center work starting up with TWC with funding from USDOL.
- Evidence on factors and strategies for college persistence/completion less well developed. Similar factors apparent, but more rigorous research needed.
- Proven workforce strategies (e.g., sectoral, high-skills) known but under-funded.

For More Information



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