

Transitioning to College and Work

Part 1: Where Are High School Seniors from 2006-2008 Now?

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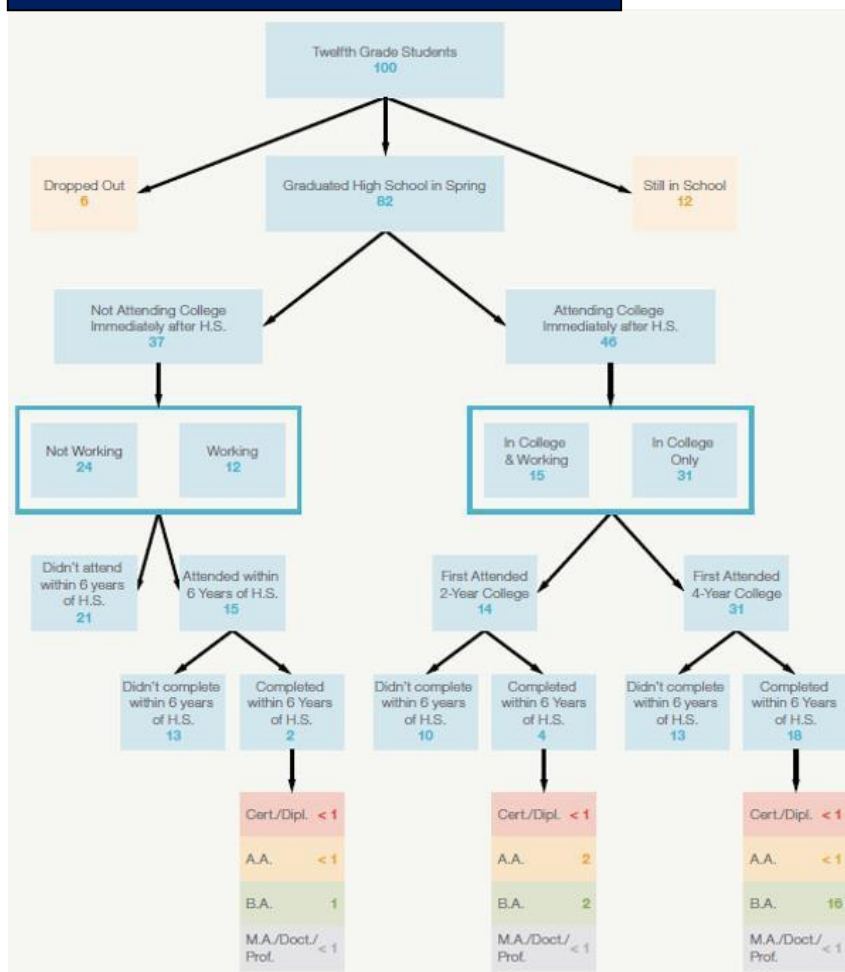
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This report examined college outcomes among three cohorts of 12th grade students in the Houston Independent School District (HISD), prior to the implementation of the district’s college advising program. The findings showed significant racial and ethnic gaps in college enrollment and completion. High test score and grades and earning college-level credits increased the likelihood of enrollment and completion.

The full report is available at <https://kinder.rice.edu/research/transitioning-college-and-work-part-1-where-are-high-school-seniors-2006-2008-now>

Key Findings

Figure 1. Pathway to College Completion in HISD



- The fall after high school, 46% of 12th grade students enrolled in college.
- Hispanic students had the lowest college enrollment rates. When they did attend college, they were more likely to choose two-year institutions.
- College enrollment appeared out-of-reach for students with high numbers of absences and poor or mediocre test scores or grades.
- Thirty-one percent of students completed a certificate, diploma, or degree within six years of high school.

Source: Figure 6 in full report.

Note: Figure is based on HISD 12th grade students in fall 2006–2008.

Students who earned college-level credits, attended a 4-year institution, and entered college immediately after high school were more likely to complete a certificate, diploma, or degree.

- Only 14 percent of high school graduates who *did not* earn any college-level credits in the senior year – the majority of students in HISD – completed a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree within six years.
- Attending a 4-year institution and entering college immediately after high school were associated with higher rates of certificate, diploma, and degree completion. In fact, Hispanic students had similar rates of college completion to the population at large when they enrolled in college the fall following graduation.

Recommendations

- 1: Given their low college enrollment rates, schools should identify strategies to reach out to and serve Hispanic students in the college application process.
- 2: Schools should encourage students to take college-level courses. Students who earned 0.5 or more AP, IB, or academic dual enrollment credits during the senior year were more likely to enroll in college and complete a degree.
- 3: Schools should support students so they can enroll in college the fall following high school graduation. This behavior might even close Hispanic gaps in college completion.
- 4: Schools should also advise students ready for a four-year college curriculum to choose a four-year institution. Students beginning at a four-year institution were more likely to graduate than students beginning at a two-year institution.



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