

Together We Educate **Hays**



Letter to the Community

Central Texas is at a critical juncture. Despite our booming economy, a wide gap exists between available jobs and local workforce talent. Approximately 50% of our current job openings require a bachelor's degree, 12% require an associate degree and 85% of our unemployed lack either.¹ Over the last decade, nearly 100,000 Central Texas students, a majority of our high school graduates, directly enrolled in college. Our direct-to-college enrollment rates increased by ten percentage points between 2003 and 2008, but leveled off at 60% over the last five years and now sits below the national average.²

When Central Texans lack the skills and education to participate in the economy, the health and prosperity of our community is threatened.

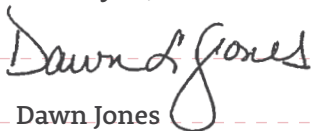
As Chair of the Chamber's 2015 Education Progress Report Taskforce, I believe we can work together as a community to close this opportunity gap. Our progress reports now unite 11 school districts, 11 regional chambers and dozens of business leaders to track regional challenges, successes and identify ways to improve student educational and

¹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, College Enrollment and Work Activity of 2013 High School Graduates, April 2014

career opportunities. These school districts and partners have worked to improve college readiness rates from 47% in 2007, to 64% in 2013.³ In partnership with Central Texas school districts, the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce has also set a 70% regional direct-to-college enrollment goal for 2015, to ensure our students are prepared for college and 21st century careers.

So, to all of you who are engaged in this collective work—whether as educators, business and non-profit leaders or activists, thank you. Educating a child takes a community, and I am so proud to live in a community that comes together to put kids first.

Thank you,



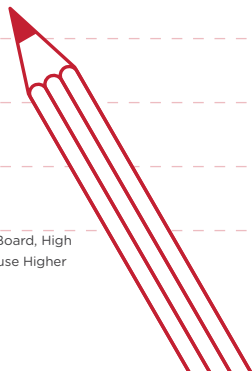
Dawn Jones

External Affairs Manager, Intel

Education Progress Report Taskforce Chair

² The Conference Board Help Wanted OnLine* (HWOL) and Travis County Workforce Board. Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, High School to College Linkages 2002-2013, and The University of Texas at Austin, Ray Marshall Center and National Student Clearinghouse Higher Education Enrollment Outcomes for Central Texas High School Graduates 2009-2014.

³ Academic Excellence Indicator System 2007 and Texas Academic Performance Reports 2013



A Snapshot of Hays CISD

Hays CISD is a rapidly growing district just south of Austin. Since 2002, student enrollment increased by more than 100%, and low-income student enrollment swelled from 38% to 51% in 2014.

17,205

Students

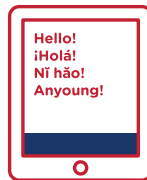
51%

Economically
Disadvantaged

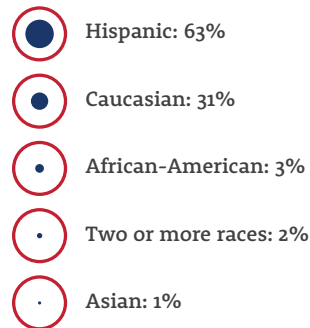


16%

English Language
Learners



Demographic summary



Source: Academic Excellence
Indicator System 2001-2002 and Texas
Academic Performance
Report, HCISD 2013-2014



2,230

Employees



\$1.00

2013–2014 Tax Rate
(\$ per \$100 valuation)

\$46.5K

Average Teacher Annual
Salary

\$124M

Operations Budget

10

Average Teacher Years of
Experience

Hays CISD understands that funding for education comes from hardworking taxpayers. The district focuses its financial resources on recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers because that has the greatest impact on student achievement. The district maximizes its resources to meet the needs of its students.

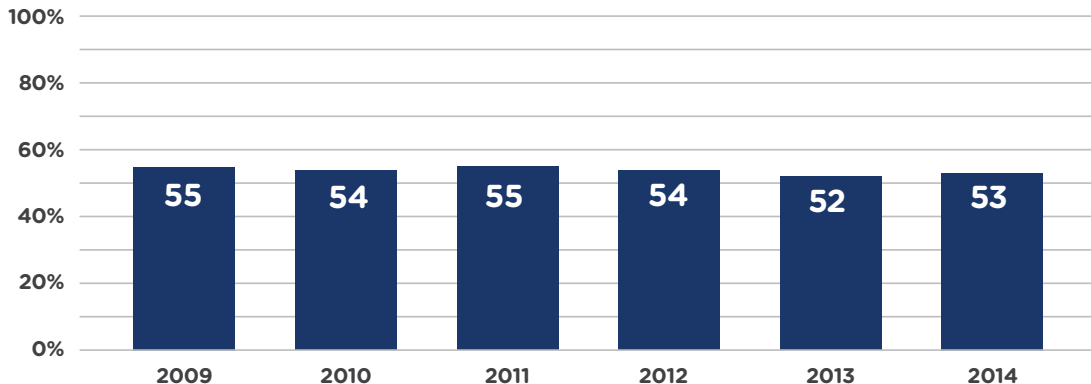
What Share of Hays CISD Students Directly Enroll in Higher Education?

Despite gains in college/career readiness and graduation rates, Hays CISD's (HCISD) direct-to-college enrollment rate hit a 5 year low at 52% in 2013. Recognizing that higher education is the key vehicle for economic mobility, HCISD focuses programmatic support for students on their path to college. In the summers of 2013 and 2014, Hays CISD participated in a summer college transition pilot that saw a 3% increase in college applications and financial aid submissions. HCISD's focus on continuous improvement yielded a 5% increase in direct-to-college enrollment for low-income students between 2008 and 2013.⁴ A huge opportunity for HCISD students arose in 2014 when ACC opened its Hays Campus, which provides local students with access to college courses while still in high school and facilitates a transition to college after high school graduation.

⁴ The University of Texas at Austin, Ray Marshall Center, Outcomes and Impact Estimates for the Summer Melt Program in Central Texas, April 2014 and Trends in Low-Income Enrollment in Central Texas for School Districts and Campuses, 2008 through 2013

Percentage of Graduates Who Directly Enroll in Higher Education

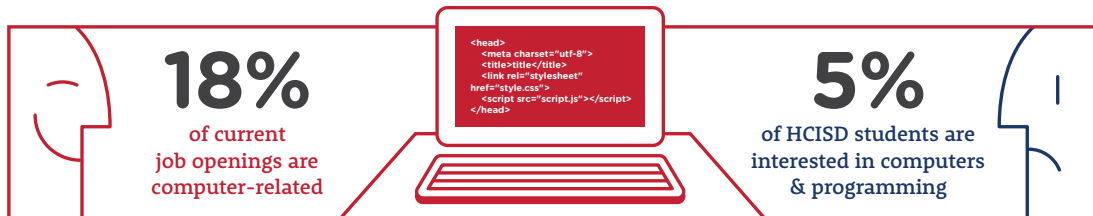
Percentage of high school graduates who enrolled in community college or four-year, degree-granting institutions, in Texas or outside of the state, for the first time no later than the fall following graduation.



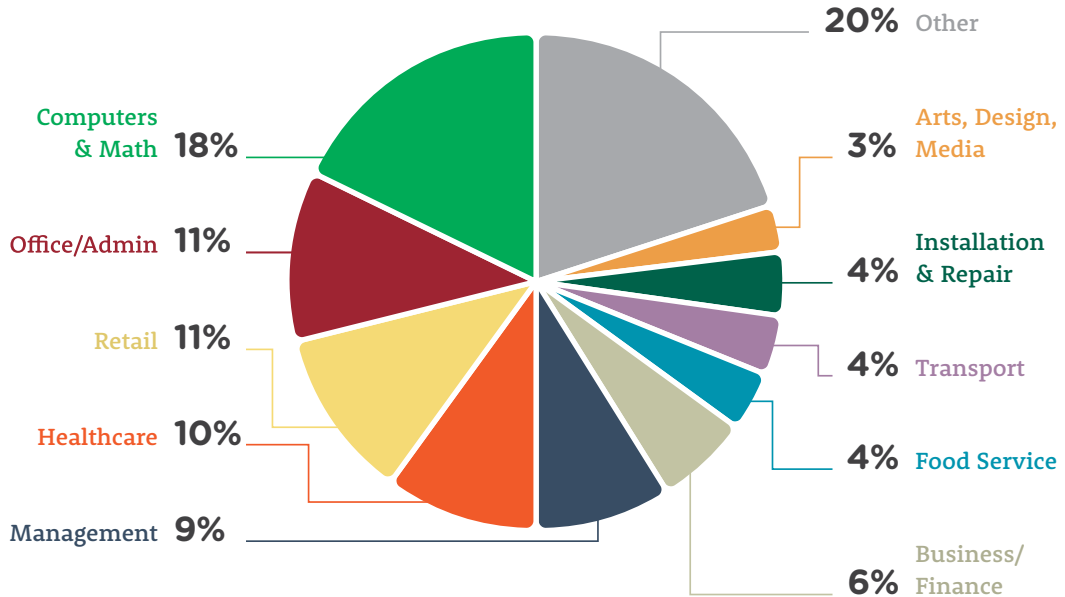
 **College enrollment rates have remained largely flat since 2009.**

How Do Hays CISD Student Career Interests Align with Job Market Demand?

Hays CISD is working to ensure their graduates have the skills required to pursue 21st century careers. In Central Texas there are 44,000 open jobs and 41,000 unemployed. HCISD is working to solve this mismatch in skills, interests and job market demand by continuously monitoring employment trends and encouraging coursework that excites and engages students in high-need fields. Hays CISD has dramatically increased the number of industry certifications across all fields offered since 2011. Hays CISD students earned 11 industry certifications in 2012, 119 certifications in 2013, and 965 in 2014—an increase of almost 90% in three years.



Top 10 Current Job Openings in Central Texas



A blue-tinted photograph of three students in a chemistry laboratory. They are wearing safety goggles and are focused on their work with various glassware and equipment on a lab bench. The background shows a whiteboard and other lab equipment.

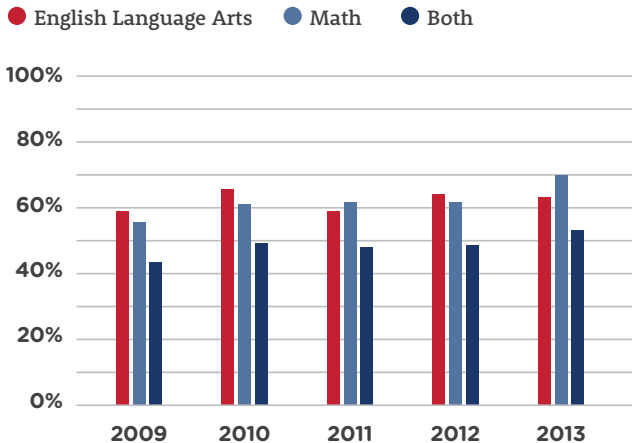
In order to reach Hays CISD's goal of enrolling 70% of our students in higher education, we are focusing on

3 primary goals.

Goal 1

Bolster Student College and Career Readiness

Percentage of high school graduates who met the state college and career readiness standard in:



- Hays CISD funds AP exams for all students in AP courses to allow them to earn college credit while in high school.
- Hays CISD provides free online SAT and ACT prep program and implemented classes to help students meet state college and career readiness standards prior to graduation.

Goal 2

Increase Student Participation in College Prep Activities

- Hays CISD high school counselors are dedicated to helping students complete college and financial applications, enroll in dual credit courses, meet college deadlines, and partner with universities to support direct-to-college enrollment.
- The Austin Chamber and HCISD have hosted Financial Aid Saturdays since 2009, resulting in over \$4 million in aid awarded and more than 750 families served.¹



75%

**Aspire to
Attend College**

69% of those enrolled.



81%

**Applied via
ApplyTexas**

65% of those enrolled.

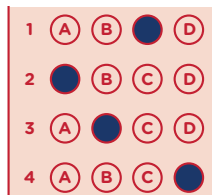
The University of Texas Ray Marshall Center Has Identified Six Activities That Increase the Likelihood That a Student Will Directly Enroll in Higher Education.



50%

Attended a College Fair

71% of those enrolled.



13%

Took SAT/ACT Prep Course(s)

75% of those enrolled.



64%

Met with a Counselor

65% of those enrolled.



22%

Thought Financial Aid Process was Easy

61% of those enrolled.



35%

Plan to Use Loans

74% of those enrolled.



57%

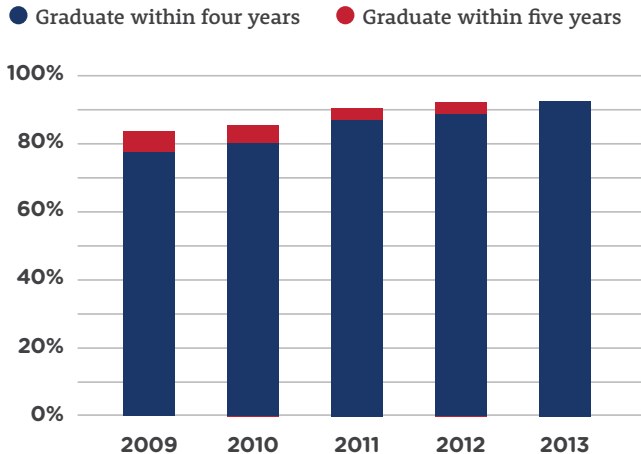
Completed FAFSA

75% of those enrolled.

Goal 3

Continue to Improve High School Graduation Rates

Percentage of students who graduate within four or five years:



- In 2012 Hays CISD implemented Project Hope, which identifies and provides assistance to students that are not on track to graduate.
- Hays CISD also set the Distinguished Graduation Plan as its default plan to set high expectations and ensure that students are prepared to succeed in higher education.



**If we accomplish these goals,
Hays CISD will prepare students
for higher education and**

**21st-century
careers.**

Recommendations

Direct to College Enrollment

Provide year-round support to college-bound seniors

- Extend senior counselor contracts between June and August to target college transition support to low-income and first-generation college intending students.

Job Market/Career Aspirations

Expose students to high-demand careers

- Urge HCISD to continue targeting high-demand careers, like computer science, that currently have low interest.

College or Career Ready

Prepare students for the rigors of higher education

- Continue to evaluate whether each junior has met college/career readiness threshold.
- Continue to counsel non-college/career ready rising seniors to enroll in college readiness courses.

Expand access to & affordability of college readiness exams

- Encourage HCISD to provide more on-site testing for the SAT, ACT and TSI to reduce the barriers to test completion.⁶

- Congratulate HCISD for free online SAT and ACT prep program, allowing all students the opportunity to prepare for college entrance exams. Expand on-site testing within RRISD to improve access to TSI college readiness tests.

College Prep Activities

Ensure that cost is less of a barrier to college enrollment

- Make it an administrative priority to ensure half of seniors submit the FAFSA before end of Q1 to maximize student chances to receive aid.
- Use Counselor Portal to target FAFSA, ApplyTexas and College Career Readiness support to improve timely resolution of

college enrollment requirements.

- Make college enrollment a core district priority
- Actively promote student participation in influential college prep activities (See pages 10, 11).

4/5 Year Graduation

Set high expectations for all students

- Applaud HCISD for making the Distinguished Graduation Plan the default.

Acknowledgments

Taskforce Chair

Dawn Jones
Intel

Hays CISD

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Buda EDC

Diana Blank-Torres
City of Kyle

Jim Lewis
Noah's Ark Self Storage

JR Gonzales
Buda Chamber

Julie Snyder
Kyle Chamber

Vince Collier
Encompass Lending
Group

How to Get Involved in Hays CISD

Get to Know Hays CISD

Stay connected to
Hays CISD at:

hayscisd.net

Facebook

[facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/hayscisd/)

[HaysConsolidatedISD](https://www.facebook.com/HaysConsolidatedISD/)

Twitter:

twitter.com/HaysCISD

Volunteer

Join Hays CISD Volunteer
in Public Schools (VIPs)
Program.

Call or email Angie Mendez
to learn how:

512-268-2141 x 6078

mendeza@hayscisd.net

hayscisd.net/vips

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