

Together We Educate **Hutto**



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,



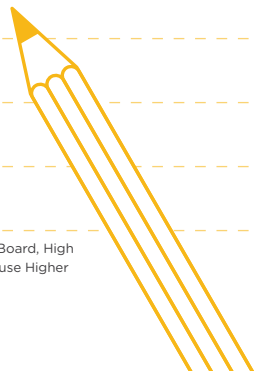
Dawn Jones

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 Hutto ISD

Hutto ISD encompasses the city of Hutto, the surrounding rural area and the eastern part of the city of Round Rock. Over the last 5 years enrollment in the school district has grown by more than 1,000 students for a total increase of 23%.

5,915

Students

45%

Economically
Disadvantaged



10%

English Language
Learners



Demographic summary

- Hispanic: 42%
- Caucasian: 40%
- African-American: 12%
- Two or more races: 5%
- Asian: 1%



725

Employees



\$1.67

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

\$46.8K

Average Teacher Annual
Salary

\$44M

Operations Budget

9.6

Average Teacher Years of
Experience

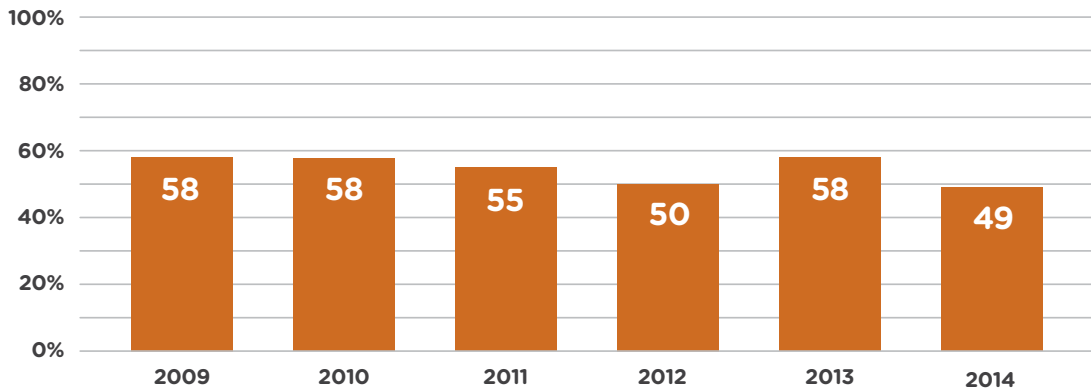
Hutto ISD (HISD) has one of the smallest amounts of money per student in Central Texas and is saddled with high debt due to construction of buildings to accommodate a fast-growing population. Despite demographic changes, Hutto ISD continues to have one of the highest graduation rates for students who are low-income in Central Texas. This graduation data is evidence of Hutto's commitment to improving outcomes for all students despite budgetary limitations.

What Share of HISD Students Directly Enroll in Higher Education?

HISD is focused on promoting programs that support students on their path to college. During the Austin Chamber's 9th Annual State of Education, HISD and Hutto High School were recognized for having 100% of seniors submit a college application and an 8 percentage point gain in direct-to-college enrollment rates in the campus and district category between 2012 and 2013. To counter the 2014 decline in college enrollment, HISD has empowered their team members to create a strong college-going culture that is tangible, pervasive, and accessible to all students. HISD has worked to send strong, consistent messages that every student is college material. Team members are focused on creating academic momentum, workable college plans, comprehensive college services and coordinating college supports.

Percentage of Graduates Who Directly Enroll in Higher Education

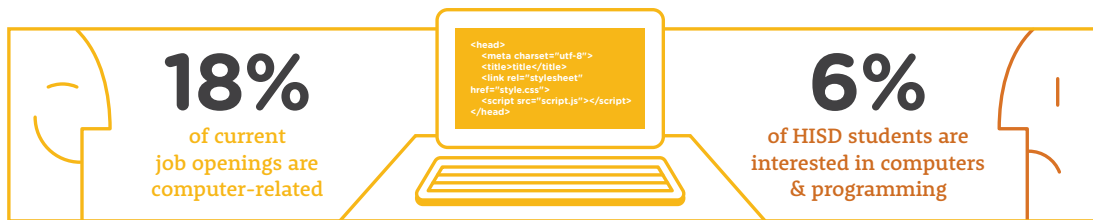
Percentage of high school graduates who enrolled in community college or four-year, degree-granting institutions, in Texas or outside of the state, for the first time no later than the fall following graduation.



 College enrollment rates have remained largely flat since 2009.

How Do HISD Student Career Interests Align with Job Market Demand?

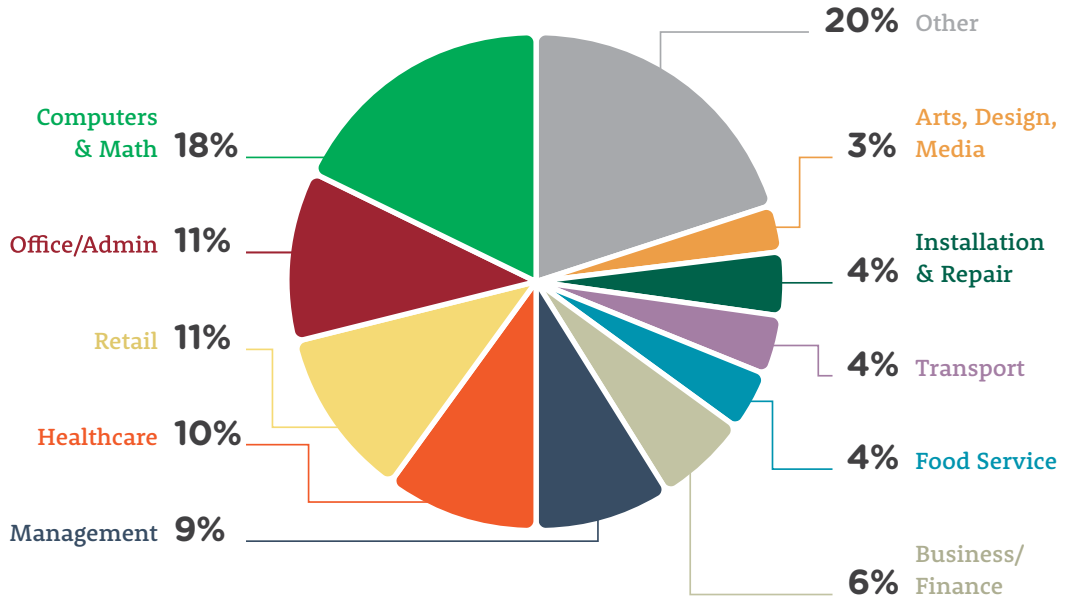
Hutto ISD is working hard to ensure their graduates have the skills required to pursue 21st century careers. In Central Texas there are 44,000 open jobs and 41,000 unemployed.⁴ HISD is working to solve this mismatch in skills, interests and job market demand by continuously monitoring employment trends and encouraging coursework that excites and engages students in high-need fields. HISD has realigned and expanded their endorsement pathways to promote more STEM and hands-on learning coursework. This expansion resulted in more students enrolling in engineering, computer science and robotics classes.



⁴ The Conference Board Help Wanted Online* (HWOL), November 2014

Source: University of Texas Ray Marshall Center, Student Futures Project 2014 Student Survey

Top 10 Current Job Openings in Central Texas



A photograph of three students in a chemistry laboratory. They are wearing safety goggles and are focused on their work. The lab bench is equipped with various glassware, including flasks and beakers, and a Bunsen burner. The background shows a typical classroom or lab setting with a whiteboard and other equipment. The entire image has a warm, orange-toned overlay.

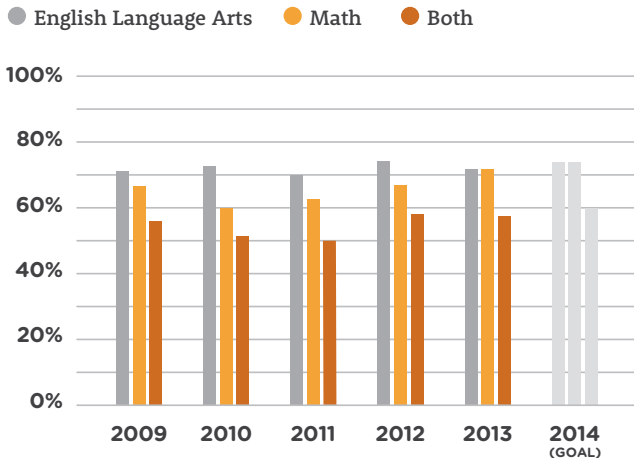
In order to reach HISD's goal of enrolling 70% of our students in higher education, we are focusing on

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:



- HISD utilizes the college and career readiness software program, Naviance, to facilitate college and career goal setting for all students.
- HISD funds the PSAT for all 10th and 11th graders and administers the TSI for all 11th and 12th graders.⁵

⁵ Passage of the TSI college readiness test allows students to enroll in credit bearing college level courses for dual enrollment and after high school graduation

Goal 2

Increase Student Participation in College Prep Activities

- HISD implemented and staffed a College and Career Center with a college admissions industry expert to help all students file college applications, complete the FAFSA process, organize college fairs and college visits, and offer free SAT/ACT Prep classes.
- In collaboration with the Austin Chamber, HISD has hosted Financial Aid Saturdays since 2009 that have resulted in an estimated \$1 million in aid awarded and almost 200 families served.⁶



80%

**Aspire to
Attend College**

63% of those enrolled.



100%

**Applied via
ApplyTexas**

59% of those enrolled.

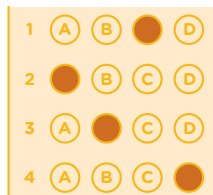
The University of Texas Ray Marshall Center Has Identified Six Activities That Increase the Likelihood That a Student Will Directly Enroll in Higher Education.



60%

Attended a College Fair

62% of those enrolled.



25%

Took SAT/ACT Prep Course(s)

73% of those enrolled.



79%

Met with a Counselor

59% of those enrolled.



33%

Thought Financial Aid Process was Easy

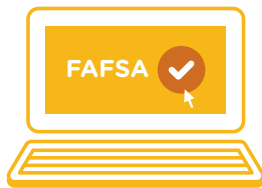
58% of those enrolled.



41%

Plan to Use Loans

64% of those enrolled.



65%

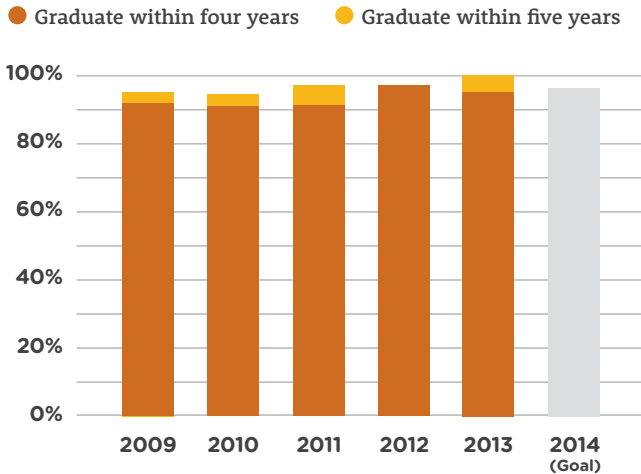
Completed FAFSA

67% of those enrolled.

Goal 3

Continue to Improve High School Graduation Rates

Percentage of students who graduate within four or five years:



- Every student meets at least twice with the counselor each year to discuss graduation plan and progress toward goals.
- Hutto ISD supports River Horse Academy, an alternative education program designed to help at-risk students reach their graduation goals. About 40 students graduate each year with the help of the River Horse program.



If we accomplish these goals,
HISD 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 HISD to continue targeting high-demand careers like computer science and other STEM areas that currently have low student interest.

College or Career Ready

Prepare students for the rigors of higher education

- Assess non-college and career ready juniors/seniors and enroll them in a course which prepares them to graduate college and career ready.
- Praise HISD for funding PSAT testing for 10th & 11th graders, allowing equal access to testing for all students regardless of income.
- Congratulate the district for providing SAT/ACT prep courses, to provide all students the opportunity to demonstrate preparedness for higher education.

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.
- Tie college enrollment activity outcomes to relevant staff evaluations so key staff are recognized, rewarded and accountable to meet student college enrollment goals.
- Actively promote student participation in influential college-prep activities (see page 10, 11).

4/5 Year Graduation

Set high expectations for all students

- Congratulate HISD for making the Distinguished Graduation Plan the administrative guideline for all entering high school students.

Maintain focus on outcomes during assessment transitions

Acknowledgments

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How to Get Involved in Hutto ISD

Get to Know Hutto ISD

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