



Texas School Holding Power Improves – But Progress is Slow

Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2003-04

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- ❖ **Annual IDRA attrition study**
- ❖ **20th anniversary of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program**
- ❖ **College recruitment study**

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

For the third straight year, the statewide attrition rate in Texas was less than 40 percent, indicating that school holding power in Texas' public schools may be improving but is still not satisfactory. The latest attrition study by the Intercultural Development Research Association found that 36 percent of the 2000-01 freshman class left school prior to graduating in the 2003-04 school year.

That compares to 38 percent in 2002-03, 39 percent in 2001-02 and 40 percent in 2000-01 and 1999-00.

IDRA's latest study of school holding power in Texas found that 139,413 out of 378,158 students from the class of 2004 were lost from public school enrollment between the 2000-01 and 2003-04 school years.

Attrition rates are an indicator of a school's holding power or ability to keep students enrolled in school and learning until they graduate. Attrition, in its simplest form, is the rate of shrinkage in size or number. Therefore, an attrition rate is the percent change in grade level enrollment between a base year and an end year.

Spanning a 19-year period from 1985-86 through 2003-04, the IDRA attrition studies provide time series data on the number and percent of public school students who leave school prior to graduation.

In 1986, IDRA conducted Texas' first comprehensive statewide study of high school dropouts using a high school attrition formula to estimate the number and percent of students who leave school prior to graduation. The study in 1986 was the state's first major effort to assess the school holding power of Texas public schools.

IDRA's inaugural study found that 86,276 students had not graduated from Texas public high schools, costing the state \$17 billion in forgone income, lost tax revenues, and increased job training, welfare, unemployment and criminal justice costs (Cárdenas, Robledo and Supik, 1986).

Between the 1985-86 and 2003-04 school years, more than 2 million students have been lost from public school enrollment costing the state of Texas about \$500 billion in forgone income, lost tax revenues, and increased job training, welfare, unemployment and criminal justice

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costs.

Latest Study Results

During the fall of each year, school districts are required to report information to the Texas Education Agency via the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) for all public school students and grade levels. IDRA’s attrition studies involve the analysis of ninth-grade enrollment figures and 12th-grade enrollment figures three years later. This period represents the time span during which a student would be enrolled in high school.

IDRA collects and uses high school enrollment data from the Fall Membership Survey of TEA to compute countywide and statewide attrition rates by race-ethnicity and gender. Enrollment data from special school districts (military schools, state schools and charter schools) are excluded from the analyses, because they are likely to have unstable enrollments or lack a tax base for school programs.

“We know what is needed to address the problem of weak school holding power. What we need is the public will and commitment to carry it out.”

– Dr. María Robledo Montecel, IDRA Executive Director

Historical statewide attrition rates and numbers of students lost to attrition are categorized by race-ethnicity and by gender (see box on Page 6). General conclusions from this year’s study follow.

The overall attrition rate has increased by 9 percent from 1985-86 to 2003-04. The percentage of students who left high school prior to graduation was 33 percent in 1985-86 compared to 36 percent in 2003-04. Over the past 19 years, attrition rates have fluctuated between a low of 31 percent in 1988-89 and 1989-90 to a high of 43 percent in 1996-97.

Numerically, 139,413 students were lost from public high school enrollment in 2003-04 compared to 86,276 in 1985-86.

The overall attrition rate was less than 40 percent in 2003-04 for

the third time in 10 years. Between 1994-95 and 2000-01, the overall attrition rate ranged from a low of 40 percent to a high of 43 percent. In 2003-04, the overall attrition rate was 36 percent, representing the lowest rate since 1992-93.

The gaps between attrition rates of Hispanic students and Black students and those of White students have widened since 1985-86. Hispanic students and Black students historically have had much higher attrition rates than White students. From 1985-86 to 2003-04, attrition rates of Hispanic students increased by 9 percent (from 45 percent to 49 percent). During this same period, the attrition rates of Black students increased by 29 percent (from 34 percent to 44 percent). Attrition rates

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Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program Celebrates 20 Years of Keeping Students in School

As the struggle to keep many young people in school continues to face educators, parents and communities around the country, one successful initiative, the IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, celebrates its 20th anniversary this month as a leader in dropout prevention. Educators from throughout San Antonio and South Texas joined those who have traveled from programs in four states for a two-day National Teacher Coordinator Institute sponsored by the Intercultural Development Research Association.

The Harvard Civil Right Project reports that, nationally, only 68 percent of students graduate on time with a diploma. According to the latest data from IDRA, the high school attrition rate in Bexar County last year was 36 percent – meaning 8,570 high school students did not receive a diploma. Among Hispanic students, that rate was 43 percent, or 6,642 students. Attrition rates measure the drop in enrollment of the class of 2004 from

the time they entered as freshmen to when they were to become seniors. (See story on Page 1.)

“The reason we as a nation have failed to reduce dropout rates is that we have been blaming the students – claiming that their soul, their mind, their heart or their community environment is unhealthy – rather than tending to what grown-ups and schools should be doing to keep children in school,” said María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., IDRA executive director.

The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is making a difference. Funded by a grant from The Coca-Cola Foundation, IDRA created this internationally-recognized dropout prevention program with an unusual twist. The program works by identifying junior high and high school students in at-risk situations and enlisting them as tutors for elementary school students who are also struggling in school. Given this role of personal and academic responsibility, the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program tutors gain self-

discipline, increase their self-esteem and succeed academically. The program design is based on IDRA research of dropout data and school holding power.

“The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is successful, because it demonstrates to students the value of their own education and of the contributions they can make in the lives of others. The students feel needed and important. They know others rely on them as role models. And the young

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Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program tutor in San Antonio tutors a first grader in reading.

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students really do see our tutors as heroes!” said Dr. Robledo Montecel.

According to the Valued Youth creed “all students are valuable, none is expendable.” This philosophy is helping schools across the United States and Brazil lower the drop out rate. In areas where the program operates, the drop out rates among tutors are averaging 2 percent, keeping 98 percent of young people in the classroom and learning. The program currently spans five U.S. states and 14 cities in Brazil, and throughout the 20 years has

positively impacted the lives of more than 220,000 children, families and educators, keeping more than 12,000 “at-risk” students in school.

“I’m the youngest of four kids, and I will be the first to graduate from high school. I would not be graduating if I wasn’t a tutor,” according to one Valued Youth tutor in San Antonio.

“The Coca-Cola Company believes in the value of education and that is why we focus our support around education and youth development. This year we celebrate with IDRA, 20 years of student success and achievement.



Ingrid Saunders Jones, chairperson of The Coca-Cola Foundation.

Heard at the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program 20th Anniversary Celebration

“I was just an average student, but when I was in front of my tutees, I felt above average...My job now is to protect and serve, but now that I think about it, that’s something I learned 10 years ago at Faulk Middle School as a tutor.”

– Mr. Pablo López, former Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program tutor, today a police officer

“The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program gives an opportunity for young people to see themselves and for others to see them as the valuable and important young people that they are... not limited by adult or school perceptions about them.”

– María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., IDRA Executive Director

“Even though the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has been localized to Brazil so that it presents the local reality, the objectives and goals of the program are exactly the same. It is a good and vitally important program that has helped over 10,000 children in Brazil.”

– Mr. Marco Simões, Executive Director, Coca-Cola Institute, and Communications Director, Coca-Cola Brazil

“What this program does is help everyone in the business of education. Generations are saved from dropping out with this program.”

– Dr. Nabor Cortez, Superintendent, South San Antonio Independent School District

“The Coca-Cola Company believes in the value of education and that is why we focus our support around education and youth development. This year we celebrate with IDRA, 20 years of student success and achievement. We are proud of the Valued Youth tutors for making the decision to continue their education.”

– Ingrid Saunders Jones, Chairperson, The Coca-Cola Foundation

We are proud of the Valued Youth tutors for making the decision to continue their education,” said Ingrid Saunders Jones, chairperson, for The Coca-Cola Foundation.

In San Antonio, the program started in four independent school districts (ISD) and is currently active in the South San Antonio ISD, which is also the only district to have maintained the program every year since its inception.

“I’ve seen firsthand the difference this program can make in the lives of young people. The kids I work with have improved as students and as people because of this program. That’s been amazing to watch, especially since no one thought they would even stay in school,” said one Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program teacher coordinator in San Antonio.

The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program National Teacher Coordinator Institute is a two-day training institute for current and prospective teacher coordinators hosted by IDRA and held each fall. This year, the institute reviewed the impact of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program on tutors, tutees, parents, families and campuses, as well as sharing challenges, learnings, and highlights and looking to future innovations that will positively shape the program and its outcomes.

For more information on the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program contact IDRA at 210-444-1710, comment@idra.org or visit www.idra.org

Research Findings – Part II

Effective College Recruitment Strategies

**by Albert Cortez, Ph.D., and
Josie Danini Cortez, M.A.**

Despite recruitment efforts, a San Antonio community college was experiencing a marked decrease in Latino enrollment, particularly from neighborhood high schools that traditionally had been their feeder schools. The Intercultural Development Research Association examined the problem and found that the college, like many two- and four-year institutions, was faced with high attrition rates in high schools, competition among colleges and universities for a smaller pool of students, and shifting demographics. This article identifies the factors contributing to this phenomenon and reinforces the need for colleges and universities to work with K-12 schools to support student achievement throughout the K-16 system.

IDRA recently completed research to identify effective strategies for recruiting Hispanic and low-income students to enroll in San Antonio College. Funded through the duPont Foundation, San Antonio College (SAC) commissioned IDRA to identify best practices for recruiting Hispanic and low-income students. The findings are informing strategies that the college will use to improve its recruitment of Hispanic, low-income students.

This is the second in a series of three articles in the *IDRA Newsletter* presenting the results of this research study, with SAC's permission.

Enrollment Patterns

The first level of data review and analysis focused on identifying the enrollment patterns at SAC. An assessment of the geographic distribution of 18- and 19-year-old SAC students provided a geographic and demographic profile of enrollment patterns.

SAC's Institutional Research and Effectiveness Department provided the fall 2002 enrollment data as well as three years of its fact books containing

profile data of students and faculty. IDRA also accessed high school data from our own databases and the Texas Education Agency's Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) in order to analyze the potential post-secondary education impacts of key variables at the feeder high schools.

Variables included number of high school graduates, number enrolling in the college track curriculum, and trend data over nine years on the number of graduates from selected feeder high schools. In addition, IDRA requested Alamo Community College District campus-specific data in order to assess whether changes in competing

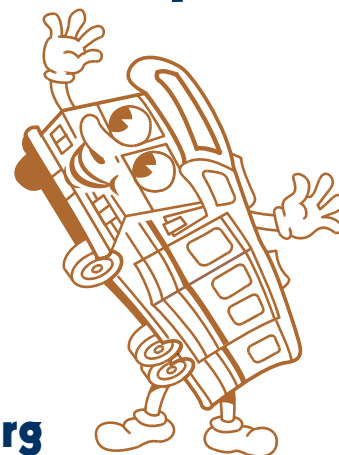
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- ✦ Use IDRA's topical index to find what you are looking for

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institutions' enrollment is contributing to changes in SAC enrollment trends.

IDRA also engaged in conversations with project staff focusing on their assessment of college attendance trends in feeder high schools as a way of triangulating data from multiple sources.

Limited Applicant Pool

One of the key findings was that the major target feeder high schools have very high attrition rates (students enrolled in the ninth grade who are no longer present three years later). According to IDRA's research on school holding power, most of these schools suffer from a 30 percent to 50 percent attrition rate.

The loss of one third to one half of

prospective graduates significantly reduces the number of students from the target high schools who might have been recruited for college enrollment. These attrition rates have been persistent over time: only two of the six targeted high schools show even a minimal increase in the number of graduates over a nine-year span. Unless such trends are reversed, it may be difficult for SAC to increase its enrollment from these schools.

A second factor impacting college enrollment is the extent that students have access to and enroll in college preparation curriculum. Enrollment in college preparatory curriculum was relatively limited. And there were no substantive increases until 2001, the year the state announced its intention to have the recommended program become the default program for

students.

A projected increase in the number of students enrolled in the college-track curriculum may help improve the prospects for increasing the number of students from target high schools who ultimately enroll at SAC.

Shifting City Demographics

Data analyses also suggest that increasing numbers of students enrolling at SAC reside in the city's northeastern and northwestern quadrants. This is a shift in the enrollment trends experienced in prior decades when greater percentages of the college enrollment were drawn from the western, southern and eastern sectors of the city. The new trend however, is reflective of a broader city trend of

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Too Few Seniors Demonstrate Strong Academic Skills

The most recent trend data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show that gaps between groups of students are still wide.

	African American	Latino	White
Reading at Age 17 – NAEP 1996			
Learn from specialized reading materials	2%	2%	8%
Understand complicated information	16	18	37
Interrelate ideas and make generalizations	49	44	42
Show partially developed skills and understanding	28	30	12
Writing at Grade 11 – NAEP 1996			
Effective, coherent writing	1%*	1%	3%
Complete, sufficient writing	16	18	34
Beginning focused, clear writing	53	51	51
Incomplete, vague writing	28	28	12
Mathematics at Age 17 – NAEP 1996			
Multistep problem solving and algebra	1%*	2%*	9%
Moderately complex procedures and reasoning	30	38	60
Numerical operations and beginning problem solving	60	52	30
Beginning skills and understanding	9	8	1

**interpret with caution*

Source: NAEP 1996 Trends in Academic Progress, U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement, NCES 97-985, Washington, D.C., September

Higher Education Characteristics of Six States

	Arkansas	Florida	New Mexico	New York	North Carolina	Texas
Completion grade (composite grade, based on the four measures immediately below)	D+	B+	D-	A-	B+	D+
Percent of first-year community college students who return for a second year	54%	61%	52%	62%	52%	41%
Percent of freshmen at four-year institutions who return for a second year	67%	80%	69%	78%	80%	73%
Percent of first-time full-time undergraduates who complete a bachelor's degree within five years	32%	52%	30%	53%	56%	43%
Number of certificates, degrees, and diplomas awarded per 100 undergraduate students	15	18	12	19	19	14
Public community college enrollments as a percent of total post-secondary enrollments	38%	55%	55%	29%	43%	51%
Number of enrollments in public community colleges	38,997	320,710	51,674	241,502	143,006	432,362
State grant aid targeted to low-income families as a percent of Pell Grant aid	21%	10%	10%	92%	26%	13%
Expected percent change in number of high school graduates by 2010 (compared with 1999)	-2.1%	26.4%	5.1%	9.1%	20.1%	11.7%

Source: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2000.

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expanding population growth in some sectors, coupled with either population stagnation or decline in the others.

This would suggest that the decreasing proportion of students enrolling at SAC from westside, southside and eastside schools may be due, in part, to a proportionally stagnant or smaller graduation pool at these historical feeder high schools.

A more important factor, however, may be the overall shift in

city population, a factor that will continue to impact SAC's enrollment profile. This is a development that the college may not be able to alter, even with increased recruitment in targeted feeder high schools.

One confounder in the high school feeder counts was the inclusion of dual credit enrollees from the Northside Independent School District (ISD) and the Northeast ISD that may be inflating the enrollment figures for these northwest and northeast sectors. IDRA

was unable to secure additional data from SAC that disaggregates dual credit students from the general student enrollment population. Further analyses are recommended to discern the extent to which dual enrollment may be inflating enrollment profiles.

IDRA analyses did include enrollment by age range. Preliminary data analyzed suggest that only a quarter of the fall 2002 enrollees were between the ages of 16 and 19 years old. Twenty-

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to 39-year-olds comprise two-thirds of the fall 2002 enrollees. These data suggest that the college may be more successful in recruiting and retaining older individuals who return to school after spending time in the local workforce.

This high concentration of older students, however, may contribute to a perception by some high school students that SAC is an institution that focuses on serving older populations. The 16- to 19-year-old percentage may be even smaller, given that the dual credit students are still included in the total. Prospective interviews with current SAC and high school students may provide some insights on these issues and what the college may be able to do to address such perceptions, if they indeed exist.

Given changing demographics within San Antonio, limited enrollment pools in the targeted feeder high schools and increased competition from other community colleges and the University of Texas at San Antonio Downtown Campus, the decline from the targeted older feeder high schools should be expected. These trends will persist unless new strategies are developed in specific areas, including:

- increasing the high school graduation rate,
- increasing the number of students enrolled in college-track courses,
- creating a unique niche that distinguishes SAC from the other community colleges and four-year universities, and
- re-assessing recruitment efforts in light of new competitors and changing demographics.

Overview of SAC Recruitment and “Enrollment Management”

SAC recruitment efforts are integrated into a larger management structure that focuses not only on

incoming students, but an array of student subgroups. These include currently-enrolled students, transfer students, former students, continuing education students and first time (new) enrolling students.

General Recruitment Efforts

SAC has engaged in various efforts to expand its minority student population, and particularly its Hispanic enrollment, over the years. In addition to collaborating with Project STAY (a San Antonio-based TRIO program that works with students to help them get into college), SAC staff have also established good working relationships with the San Antonio Education Partnership. The TRIO program is a federally-funded educational outreach program targeting low-income, first-generation college students, and students with disabilities to succeed from middle school through graduate school. The program guarantees that students graduating from 10 participating area high schools with a B average and a 90 percent attendance rate automatically qualify for scholarships to help offset some college-related costs. Between the two programs, SAC enrolls an estimated 1,300 pupils per year, mostly low-income and Hispanic students.

The college has also created positive working relationships with the San Antonio Pre-Freshman Engineering Program (PREP). This is a citywide effort that provides middle and high school students an opportunity to experience summer math and science classes in a college campus setting. With annual summer enrollment of more than 1,000 pupils, many of whom are high school seniors, the PREP program provides SAC an ideal group from which to recruit prospective students.

Though useful as “feeder” programs, these efforts do not recruit students specifically for enrollment at SAC. Recognizing the need for more

targeted recruitment efforts, the college has created its own internal recruitment efforts.

Focused Recruitment Efforts

SAC has created and funded or acquired external funding for developing and implementing its own student recruitment efforts. Since 1999, SAC has operated its own College Access Project designed to recruit students specifically for enrollment at SAC.

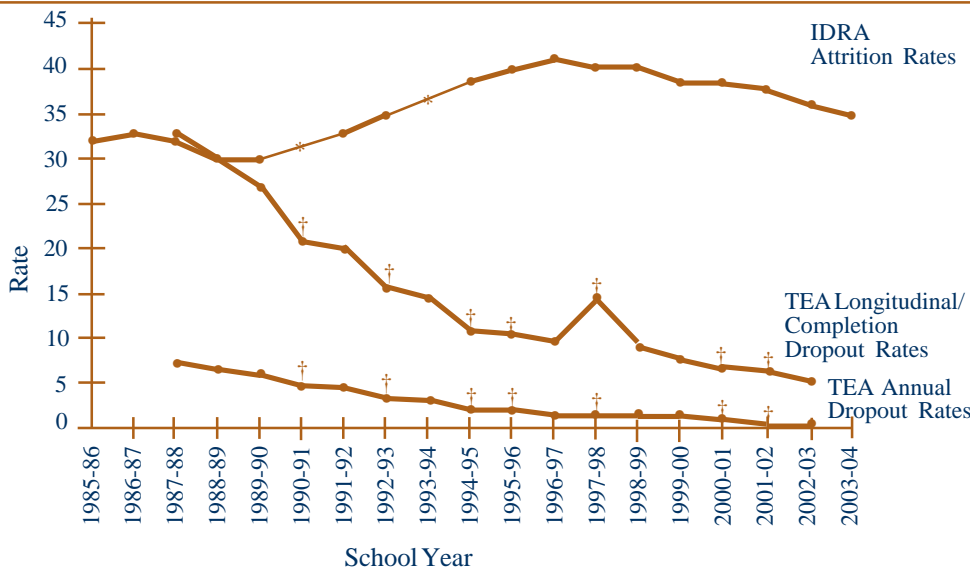
The project includes having a team of SAC counselors who visit area high schools to advise students of opportunities available at the college. Students can participate in off campus registration and school-based college assessments needed to help guide them in course placement discussions.

About 40 local high schools currently are targeted by the College Access Project, including all eight San Antonio ISD campuses. The project for high school seniors recruited 325 pupils from San Antonio-area schools in 1999. In 2000, the project outreached to more than 9,254 students, and 535 of those students enrolled at SAC. By design, existing outreach efforts focus on specific school and zip code areas, concentrating the potential impact to targeted schools.

The college also operates the College Access Project for Corporate World Business. The effort employs a SAC counselor to work with local corporations and business groups who have in-house employee tuition assistance programs or other options that encourage employees to continue or expand their education. Using the SAC mobile team, this effort provides comprehensive on-site support for working students who want to pursue further training or post-secondary degrees.

SAC sponsors the Young Women’s/Young Men’s Conference, which brings 500 high school juniors

Attrition and Dropout Rates in Texas Over Time



	IDRA Attrition Rates	TEA Long. Dropout Rates	TEA Annual Dropout Rates
1985-86	33	--	--
1986-87	34	--	--
1987-88	33	34.0	6.7
1988-89	31	31.3	6.1
1989-90	31	27.2	5.1
1990-91	*	21.4	3.9
1991-92	34	20.7	3.8
1992-93	36	15.8	2.8
1993-94	*	14.4	2.6
1994-95	40	10.6	1.8
1995-96	42	10.1	1.8
1996-97	43	9.1	1.6
1997-98	42	14.7	1.6
1998-99	42	9.0**	1.6
1999-00	40	7.7**	1.3
2000-01	40	6.8**	1.0
2001-02	39	5.6**	0.9
2002-03	38	4.9**	0.9
2003-04	36		

† Change in TEA dropout definition or data processing procedures

* Rates were not calculated for the 1990-91 and 1993-94 school years due to unavailability of data.

** Longitudinal completion rate

Sources: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2004. Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts, 2002-03.

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of White students declined by 19 percent (from 27 percent to 22 percent). Hispanic students have higher attrition rates than either White students or Black students.

From 1985-86 to 2003-04, Native American students, Asian/Pacific Islander students and White students saw a decline in their attrition rates. Native American students had a decline of 7 percent in their attrition rates (from 45 percent to 42 percent), and Asian/Pacific Islander students had a decline of 52 percent (from 33 percent to 16 percent).

Historically, the attrition rates for Hispanic students and Black students have been higher than the overall attrition rates. For the period of 1985-86 to 2003-04, students from ethnic minority groups account for more than two-thirds (68.3 percent) of the estimated 2 million students lost from public high school enrollment.

Hispanic students account for

about half (49.5 percent) of the students lost to attrition. Black students account for 17.3 percent of all students lost from enrollment due to attrition over the years. White students account for 31.7 percent of students lost from high school enrollment over time. Attrition rates for White students and Asian/Pacific Islander students have been typically lower than the overall attrition rates.

The attrition rates for males have been higher than those of females. Between 1985-86 and 2003-04, attrition rates for males have increased by 14 percent (from 35 percent to 40 percent). Attrition rates for females have increased by 3 percent (from 32 percent to 33 percent). Longitudinally, males have accounted for 56.5 percent of students lost from school enrollment, while females have accounted for 43.5 percent.

Conclusions

Though progress is being made, schools across the state and nation are continuing to do a poor job of keeping students in schools and having them graduate with a high school diploma. Though the overall attrition rate has declined by several percentage points in each of the last three years, attrition rates have remained relatively stable. Texas public schools are failing to graduate two out of every five students. Attrition rates as a school holding power index show that the attrition rate has remained near 40 percent.

IDRA attrition analyses show that since the mid-1980s the number and percent of students lost from public school enrollment has increased for the state of Texas. TEA paints another picture. IDRA's studies show that the overall attrition rate has increased from 33 percent in 1985-86 to 36 percent in 2003-04. The annual number of students lost from public school enrollment has

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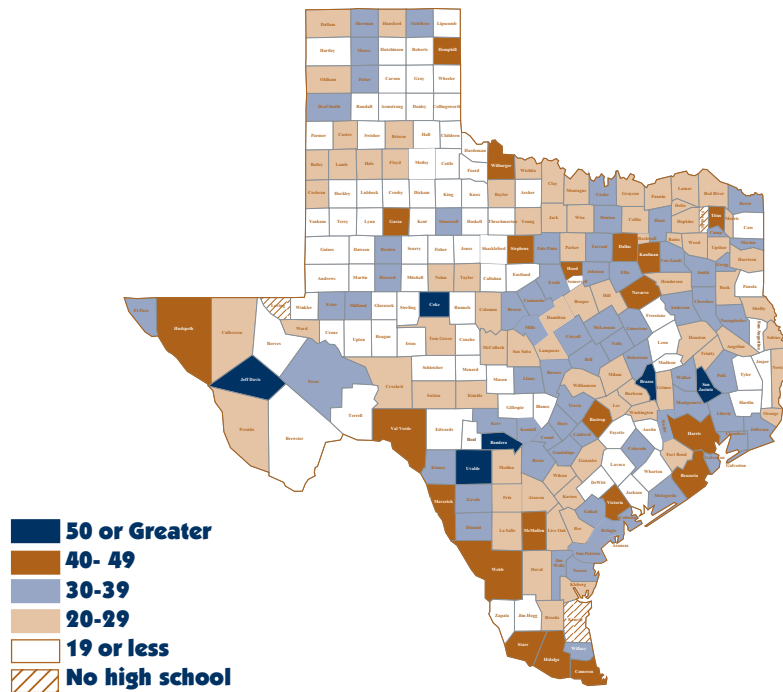
increased from 86,276 in 1985-86 to 139,413 in 2003-04.

TEA studies show that the seventh through 12th grade annual dropout rate has declined from 6.7 percent in 1987-88 to 0.9 percent in 2002-03, and the number of dropouts has declined from 91,307 students to 17,151 students during this same time period.

In August 2004, TEA reported for the 2002-03 school year an annual dropout rate of 0.9 percent for grades seven through 12 and 1.3 percent for grades nine through 12. For the class of 2003, TEA reported a longitudinal dropout rate of 4.9 percent for grades seven through 12 and 4.5 percent for grades nine through 12. For the 2002-03 school year, TEA reported 17,151 dropouts for grades seven through 12 and 15,665 dropouts for grades nine through 12.

IDRA found that the grade seven through 12 attrition rate in 2003 was 21.3 percent, while the grade nine

Attrition Rates by Texas County, 2003-04



Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2004.

Longitudinal Attrition Rates in Texas Public High Schools, 1985-86 to 2003-04

Group	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89	1989-90	1991-92	1992-93	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	Percent Change* From 1985-86 to 2003-04
Race-Ethnicity																		
Native American	45	39	37	47	39	40	39	42	44	43	42	25	43	42	29	39	42	-7
Asian/Pacific Islander	33	30	28	23	22	21	21	18	18	20	21	19	20	20	14	17	16	-52
Black	34	38	39	37	38	39	43	50	51	51	49	48	47	46	46	45	44	29
White	27	26	24	20	19	22	25	30	31	32	31	31	28	27	26	24	22	-19
Hispanic	45	46	49	48	48	48	49	51	53	54	53	53	52	52	51	50	49	9
Gender																		
Male	35	35	35	34	34	37	39	43	45	46	45	45	44	43	43	41	40	14
Female	32	32	31	29	29	30	33	37	39	40	38	38	36	36	35	34	33	3
Total	33	34	33	31	31	34	36	40	42	43	42	42	40	40	39	38	36	9

* Rounded to nearest whole number.

Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency Fall Membership Survey data.

Rates were not calculated for the 1990-91 and 1993-94 school years due to unavailability of data.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2004.

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through 12 attrition rate was 33.6 percent. Beginning in the 2005-06 school year, TEA will routinely calculate dropout and school completion rates using the National Center of Education Statistics (NCES) methodologies.

Reducing the dropout rate and increasing the number and percentage of students who complete a high school education are national and state goals. Keeping students in school through graduation and subsequent enrollment in post-secondary education must continue to be a focus.

We must no longer focus our energies on rationalizing away the fact that schools are failing to hold onto hundreds of thousands of students who

leave school prior to receiving a high school diploma.

Resources

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Number of Students Lost to Attrition in Texas School Years 1985-86 to 2003-04

School Year	Total	Race-Ethnicity					Gender	
		Native American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	White	Hispanic	Male	Female
1985-86	86,276	185	1,523	12,268	38,717	33,583	46,603	39,673
1986-87	90,317	152	1,406	14,416	38,848	35,495	48,912	41,405
1987-88	92,213	159	1,447	15,273	34,889	40,435	50,595	41,618
1988-89	88,538	252	1,189	15,474	28,309	43,314	49,049	39,489
1989-90	86,160	196	1,214	15,423	24,510	44,817	48,665	37,495
1990-91	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1991-92	91,424	215	1,196	15,016	27,055	47,942	51,937	39,487
1992-93	101,358	248	1,307	17,032	32,611	50,160	57,332	44,026
1993-94	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1994-95	123,200	296	1,226	22,856	41,648	57,174	68,725	54,475
1995-96	135,438	350	1,303	25,078	45,302	63,405	75,854	59,584
1996-97	147,313	327	1,486	27,004	48,586	69,910	82,442	64,871
1997-98	150,965	352	1,730	26,938	49,135	72,810	85,585	65,380
1998-99	151,779	299	1,680	25,526	48,178	76,096	86,438	65,341
1999-00	146,714	406	1,771	25,097	44,275	75,165	83,976	62,738
2000-01	144,241	413	1,794	24,515	41,734	75,785	82,845	61,396
2001-02	143,175	237	1,244	25,017	39,953	76,724	82,762	60,413
2002-03	143,280	436	1,611	25,066	36,948	79,219	82,621	60,659
2003-04	139,413	495	1,575	24,728	33,104	79,511	80,485	58,928
All Years	2,061,804	5,018	24,702	356,727	653,812	1,021,545	1,164,826	896,978

Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency *Fall Membership Survey* data. Rates were not calculated for the 1990-91 and 1993-94 school years due to the unavailability of data. Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2004.

Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools By Race-Ethnicity, 2003-04

COUNTY NAME ↓	ATTRITION RATES ¹				COUNTY NAME ↓	ATTRITION RATES ¹			
	BLACK ↓	WHITE ↓	HISPANIC ↓	TOTAL ↓		BLACK ↓	WHITE ↓	HISPANIC ↓	TOTAL ↓
ANDERSON	36	24	58	31	DENTON	44	29	56	35
ANDREWS	10	**	12	0	DEWITT	26	10	29	18
ANGELINA	25	19	47	25	DICKENS	**	**	27	4
ARANSAS	55	27	45	32	DIMITT	25	30	31	30
ARCHER	•	5	40	7	DONLEY	40	**	29	**
ARMSTRONG	•	**	100	4	DUVAL	•	14	25	25
ATASCOSA	71	14	35	28	EASTLAND	17	12	23	15
AUSTIN	21	9	40	17	ECTOR	42	16	46	34
BAILEY	•	6	37	24	EDWARDS	•	**	28	12
BANDERA	62	46	69	51	ELLIS	33	27	42	33
BASTROP	44	36	58	44	EL PASO	37	20	39	37
BAYLOR	25	22	26	21	ERATH	57	28	60	37
BEE	41	8	37	29	FALLS	46	5	46	31
BELL	40	27	44	33	FANNIN	**	25	43	25
BEXAR	38	20	43	36	FAYETTE	36	12	23	16
BLANCO	•	16	11	15	FISHER	47	13	19	16
BORDEN	•	35	**	32	FLOYD	37	**	45	28
BOSQUE	19	26	23	25	FOARD	14	**	**	**
BOWIE	45	20	58	30	FORT BEND	32	13	45	26
BRAZORIA	46	32	58	41	FREESTONE	24	13	36	18
BRAZOS	61	29	66	52	FRIO	100	24	28	28
BREWSTER	•	**	29	14	GAINES	1	10	24	17
BRISCOE	100	**	58	21	GALVESTON	38	29	52	33
BROOKS	•	**	24	23	GARZA	**	41	47	41
BROWN	45	20	54	30	GILLESPIE	25	2	39	11
BURLESON	33	28	25	29	GLASSCOCK	•	4	**	**
BURNET	34	26	51	32	GOLIAD	100	25	48	36
CALDWELL	42	20	46	35	GONZALES	36	8	31	24
CALHOUN	37	20	55	38	GRAY	13	5	37	13
CALLAHAN	33	19	14	18	GRAYSON	42	25	55	29
CAMERON	65	26	48	46	GREGG	42	19	61	30
CAMP	17	33	58	35	GRIMES	25	15	51	26
CARSON	•	**	48	2	GUADALUPE	34	23	50	36
CASS	8	18	60	16	HALE	16	**	34	21
CASTRO	20	**	34	23	HALL	10	**	22	12
CHAMBERS	39	29	44	32	HAMILTON	•	20	28	21
CHEROKEE	28	24	50	30	HANSFORD	•	24	27	24
CHILDRESS	23	**	20	7	HARDEMAN	**	4	**	2
CLAY	25	21	17	20	HARDIN	24	13	**	14
COCHRAN	59	11	27	24	HARRIS	50	23	58	44
COKE	94	29	74	62	HARRISON	32	23	56	28
COLEMAN	0	17	52	25	HARTLEY	0	**	40	3
COLLIN	39	23	50	28	HASKELL	25	2	**	2
COLLINGSWORTH	30	**	**	0	HAYS	30	21	46	32
COLORADO	41	16	53	33	HEMPHILL	100	8	70	48
COMAL	51	27	45	33	HENDERSON	40	24	55	29
COMANCHE	•	27	53	36	HIDALGO	40	20	49	48
CONCHO	•	16	12	14	HILL	22	23	50	28
COOKE	26	26	63	33	HOCKLEY	**	3	30	16
CORYELL	45	37	42	38	HOOD	77	39	56	41
COTTLE	18	1	**	3	HOPKINS	26	15	52	21
CRANE	**	**	18	6	HOUSTON	31	10	33	20
CROCKETT	•	11	31	23	HOWARD	47	19	51	34
CROSBY	**	**	21	5	HUDSPETH	•	40	40	40
CULBERSON	0	7	31	27	HUNT	54	24	61	33
DALLAM	33	21	29	21	HUTCHINSON	15	4	29	9
DALLAS	48	19	58	43	IRION	70	2	**	**
DAWSON	**	**	17	5	JACK	•	28	**	25
DEAF SMITH	68	3	41	33	JACKSON	**	2	23	8
DELTA	30	20	48	25	JASPER	12	18	36	17

¹Calculated by: (1) dividing the high school enrollment in the end year by the high school enrollment in the base year; (2) multiplying the results from Calculation 1 by the ninth grade enrollment in the base year; (3) subtracting the results from Calculation 2 from the 12th grade enrollment in the end year; and (4) dividing the results of Calculation 3 by the result of Calculation 2. The attrition rate results (percentages) were rounded to the nearest whole number.

** = Attrition rate is less than zero (0).

• = The necessary data are unavailable to calculate the attrition rate.

Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools By Race-Ethnicity, 2003-04 (continued)

COUNTY NAME	ATTRITION RATES ¹				COUNTY NAME	ATTRITION RATES ¹			
	BLACK	WHITE	HISPANIC	TOTAL		BLACK	WHITE	HISPANIC	TOTAL
JEFF DAVIS	33	56	59	57	RANDALL	51	15	40	18
JEFFERSON	45	18	52	35	REAGAN	67	**	7	**
JIM HOGG	•	7	6	6	REAL	•	14	**	9
JIM WELLS	100	7	35	31	RED RIVER	35	22	46	27
JOHNSON	59	33	61	38	REEVES	38	**	19	16
JONES	56	0	**	5	REFUGIO	16	27	36	31
KARNES	50	**	36	22	ROBERTS	•	2	•	3
KAUFMAN	44	39	60	42	ROBERTSON	38	22	45	32
KENDALL	8	24	47	30	ROCKWALL	22	20	48	25
KENT	0	**	17	**	RUNNELS	25	**	41	12
KERR	68	27	53	37	RUSK	14	20	59	25
KIMBLE	•	17	52	28	SABINE	20	27	57	26
KING	•	**	33	**	SAN AUGUSTINE	12	11	55	13
KINNEY	•	20	52	30	SAN JACINTO	45	56	69	54
KLEBERG	39	8	29	26	SAN PATRICIO	44	31	42	38
KNOX	23	15	0	10	SAN SABA	63	13	40	25
LAMAR	29	21	44	23	SCHLEICHER	**	**	19	8
LAMB	**	5	38	24	SCURRY	26	**	40	17
LAMPASAS	55	17	35	23	SHACKELFORD	•	7	20	10
LA SALLE	•	14	25	24	SHELBY	29	29	41	29
LAVACA	39	9	39	14	SHERMAN	•	24	50	33
LEE	23	15	44	24	SMITH	35	25	52	33
LEON	**	12	40	12	SOMERVELL	•	12	28	14
LIBERTY	21	30	55	33	STARR	•	**	43	43
LIMESTONE	3	29	47	31	STEPHENS	•	**	43	43
LIPSCOMB	•	**	29	**	STERLING	•	3	21	11
LIVE OAK	**	20	32	25	STONEWALL	100	34	12	33
LLANO	•	32	47	33	SUTTON	0	5	39	26
LUBBOCK	19	2	34	17	SWISHER	34	3	29	18
LYNN	19	**	34	15	TARRANT	47	27	58	39
MADISON	60	41	57	46	TAYLOR	35	19	47	27
MARION	44	25	•	34	TERRELL	•	**	20	**
MARTIN	**	1	34	19	TERRY	10	3	25	17
MASON	0	**	**	**	THROCKMORTON	•	0	**	**
MATAGORDA	34	29	47	37	TITUS	52	16	61	44
MAVERICK	•	27	47	48	TOM GREEN	26	10	40	24
MCCOLLUCH	40	20	33	25	TRAVIS	45	16	55	37
MCLENNAN	47	25	52	36	TRINITY	15	31	47	29
McMULLEN	•	14	64	44	TYLER	14	19	**	18
MEDINA	37	13	37	26	UPSHUR	5	25	26	23
MENARD	•	**	18	1	UPTON	25	0	5	3
MIDLAND	45	12	49	31	UVALDE	•	24	57	50
MILAM	28	10	47	25	VAL VERDE	27	21	45	43
MILLS	17	23	50	31	VAN ZANDT	6	30	58	31
MITCHELL	68	5	21	15	VICTORIA	51	23	63	48
MONTAGUE	•	19	42	22	WALKER	41	26	42	33
MONTGOMERY	42	32	55	36	WALLER	38	25	45	35
MOORE	**	**	52	32	WARD	46	14	30	24
MORRIS	12	28	41	24	WASHINGTON	55	11	49	29
MOTLEY	•	**	0	**	WEBB	44	19	41	41
NACOGDOCHES	41	23	61	33	WHARTON	5	0	32	14
NAVARRO	35	33	62	40	WHEELER	20	**	22	1
NEWTON	13	33	35	28	WICHITA	44	22	48	28
NOLAN	52	6	36	22	WILBARGER	49	25	60	40
NUECES	28	16	37	30	WILLACY	•	**	39	36
OCHILTREE	•	6	58	31	WILLIAMSON	38	23	48	29
OLDHAM	**	16	53	26	WILSON	29	19	34	26
ORANGE	36	23	41	25	WINKLER	100	**	30	12
PALO PINTO	39	30	56	35	WISE	28	26	49	29
PANOLA	23	10	35	14	WOOD	20	24	43	25
PARKER	52	30	51	33	YOAKUM	11	**	27	15
PARMER	0	1	19	13	YOUNG	30	19	44	24
PECOS	88	15	41	36	ZAPATA	•	4	15	15
POLK	37	27	34	30	ZAVALA	100	**	34	34
POTTER	41	18	50	31					
PRESIDIO	•	**	33	29					
RAINS	**	21	54	23	TOTAL	44	22	49	36

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2004.

2000-01 and 2003-04 Enrollment and 2003-04 Attrition in Texas

Race-Ethnicity and Gender	2000-01 9th Grade Enrollment	2003-04 12th Grade Enrollment	2000-01 9-12th Grade Enrollment	2003-04 9-12th Grade Enrollment	2003-04 Expected 12th Grade Enrollment	Students Lost to Attrition	Attrition Rate
Native American	996	693	2,920	3,483	1,188	495	42
Male	522	343	1,486	1,792	629	286	46
Female	474	350	1,434	1,691	559	209	37
Asian/Pacific Islander	8,742	8,297	32,221	36,373	9,872	1,575	16
Male	4,633	4,260	16,572	18,888	5,281	1,021	19
Female	4,109	4,037	15,649	17,485	4,591	554	12
Black	52,168	31,589	151,431	163,474	56,317	24,728	44
Male	27,574	15,119	76,401	82,468	29,764	14,645	49
Female	24,594	16,470	75,030	81,006	26,553	10,083	38
White	149,154	114,654	515,353	510,497	147,758	33,104	22
Male	77,642	58,107	263,856	262,350	77,199	19,092	25
Female	71,512	56,547	251,497	248,147	70,559	14,012	20
Hispanic	142,886	83,512	395,984	451,742	163,023	79,511	49
Male	75,946	41,434	202,808	231,994	86,875	45,441	52
Female	66,940	42,078	193,176	219,748	76,148	34,070	45
All Groups	354,946	238,745	1,097,909	1,165,569	378,158	139,413	36
Male	186,317	119,263	561,123	597,492	199,748	80,485	40
Female	167,629	119,482	536,786	568,077	178,410	58,928	33

Figures calculated by IDRA from the Texas Education Agency *Fall Membership Survey* data. IDRA's 2003-04 attrition study involved the analysis of enrollment figures for public high school students in the ninth grade during 2000-01 school year and enrollment figures for 12th grade students in 2003-04. This period represents the time span when ninth grade students would be enrolled in school prior to graduation. The enrollment data for special school districts (military schools, state schools, and charter schools) were excluded from the analyses since they are likely to have unstable enrollments and/or lack a tax base to support school programs.

Source: Intercultural Development Research Association, 2004.

Research Findings – continued from Page 8

and seniors together at the college campus for a conference. The one-day event provides local youth experiences that “promote regular class attendance in school, encourage academic productivity, and encourage them to consider higher education.”

Prior to 1999, San Antonio ISD graduates could not attend SAC summer school classes because graduation dates occurred after the start of the SAC summer session began. To deal with the problem, SAC

designed and established a summer senior program. This is a series of classes with start dates designed for San Antonio ISD graduates. This simple change resulted in a 168 percent increase in San Antonio ISD graduates' enrollment at SAC in the summer of 1999 and continues to pay dividends for both San Antonio ISD students and SAC.

SAC offers a specialized recruitment program targeting students pursuing health-related

careers. The Summer Enrichment Program – Center for Health Policy Development provides 60 low-income high school students a summer bridge program that encourages them to consider or pursue a career in a health-related field, earn college semester credit hours, receive comprehensive student support services and assistance in planning and preparing for subsequent fall semester enrollment.

Documents produced by the college also describe two distinct

Research Findings – continued on Page 15

special population group recruitment efforts. The first focuses on work with community-based organizations that encourage their constituencies to pursue education after high school. Using the resources available from the SAC mobile team, this effort includes providing on-site services to individuals at the community-based organization sites.

A second special population recruitment effort involves individuals with special needs. SAC collaborates with such agencies as the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, State Commission for the Blind, and San Antonio Independent Living Services.

Other special population outreach efforts include veterans and eligible dependents, and students enrolled in Distance Learning efforts.

Another specialized student recruitment initiative is known as JETL and incorporates the first letters of the four area high schools (Jefferson, Edison, Fox Tech, and Lanier) that are specific targets. The JETL effort is focused on creating strong connections between selected SAC staff members and high school personnel, particularly the principals and counselors. The JETL effort is a more recent SAC initiative, but some data suggest an increased awareness of SAC as a post-secondary option at these schools.

Other Factors

Though there are other efforts in place at SAC that are designed to support minority and special needs student enrollments, many are focused on supporting students already enrolled or in the process of enrolling at the institution. A review of the SAC enrollment management flowchart reveals the array of efforts being implemented to support students already enrolled in the system.

Compounding recruitment efforts are the realities that SAC is one of numerous campuses competing for a limited student pool. In contrast to past decades when SAC was one of two

Research Findings – continued on Page 16

Highlights of Recent IDRA Activities

In August, IDRA worked with **9,570** teachers, administrators, parents and higher education personnel through **33** training and technical assistance activities and **168** program sites in **nine** states plus Mexico and Brazil. Topics included:

- ◆ Orientation for New Teachers on Bilingual Education
- ◆ Youth Education Advocacy
- ◆ Teacher Expectations – Raising the Bar
- ◆ Leadership Programs for Minority Youth and Women

Participating agencies and school districts included:

- ◆ Albuquerque Public Schools, New Mexico
- ◆ Communities That Care, Oregon
- ◆ Kingsville Independent School District (ISD), Texas
- ◆ San Antonio ISD, Texas
- ◆ U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

Activity Snapshot

The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is celebrating 20 years of success in 2004. The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has made an extraordinary difference in the lives of more than 12,000 students by keeping 98 percent of them in school. The lives of more than 220,000 children, families and educators have been positively impacted by the program in the United States, Puerto Rico, the United Kingdom and Brazil. In the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, secondary students who are considered to be at-risk of dropping out are placed as tutors of elementary school students, enabling the older students to make a difference in the younger students' lives. With a growing sense of responsibility and pride, the tutors stay and do better in school. The program supports them with positive recognition, instruction and support.

Regularly, IDRA staff provides services to:

- ◆ public school teachers
- ◆ parents
- ◆ administrators
- ◆ other decision makers in public education

Services include:

- ◆ training and technical assistance
- ◆ evaluation
- ◆ serving as expert witnesses in policy settings and court cases
- ◆ publishing research and professional papers, books, videos and curricula

For information on IDRA services for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210-444-1710.

Research Findings – continued from Page 15

community college options – with no public university within 100 miles—San Antonio now boasts four private universities (St. Mary’s University, Our Lady of the Lake University, University of the Incarnate Word, and Trinity University); a major fast-growing state-funded college with a suburban and central city campus (University of Texas at San Antonio); four community college campuses (SAC, St. Philips College, Palo Alto College and Northwest Vista College); and recent incursions from the Texas A&M system.

The expanded number of options may well be impacting SAC enrollment patterns, though at least some of these institutions have been in existence for decades. There are increasing numbers of minority students, specifically Hispanic students who tend to enroll in two-year institutions. This suggests that even with greater competition, SAC could be maintaining if not increasing its Hispanic enrollments.

The high attrition rate from feeder high schools and shifting demographics are not unique to SAC. These

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phenomena are common to many two-year and four-year institutions and should serve to inform recruitment and retention efforts.

One additional source of information, and perhaps the most important source, are the clients (current and prospective) themselves. The next installment in this series will provide key information from interviews with high school students, college

students and educators. It will shed light on what SAC and other colleges can do to ensure that all students have access and success in post-secondary education.

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