



CREATING STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATIONAL  
AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

# Early College Schools: A Strategy for Achieving Postsecondary Success for All

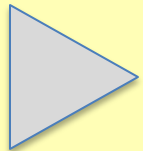
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials  
September 27, 2011



**JOBS FOR THE FUTURE**

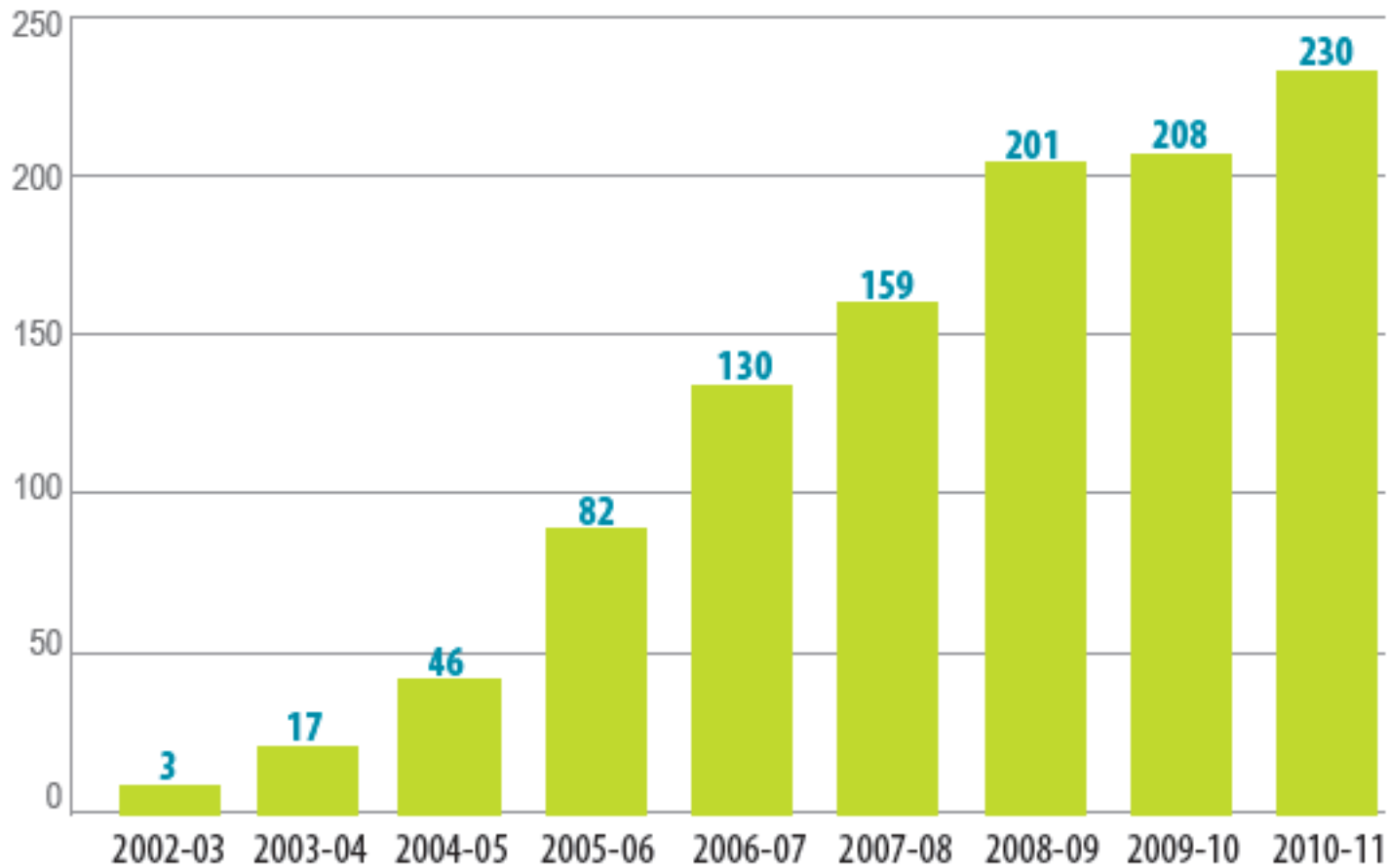
Joel Vargas, Vice President, High School through College

- **For Students:** Free college courses with support motivates students to accelerate: completed college course work is strong signal of college readiness; at high school graduation, are already college students
- **For Schools, Districts, and Postsecondary Institutions:** Alignment of high school college and career ready standards with college courses; students enter college without need for remediation
- **For States:** Return on the investment in lower cost to degree completion, more college graduates



**Our Aim:** Move from small early college schools to district early college designs. All students supported to achieve at least 12 college credits by the end of high school (including college math and composition).

## Number of Early College Schools

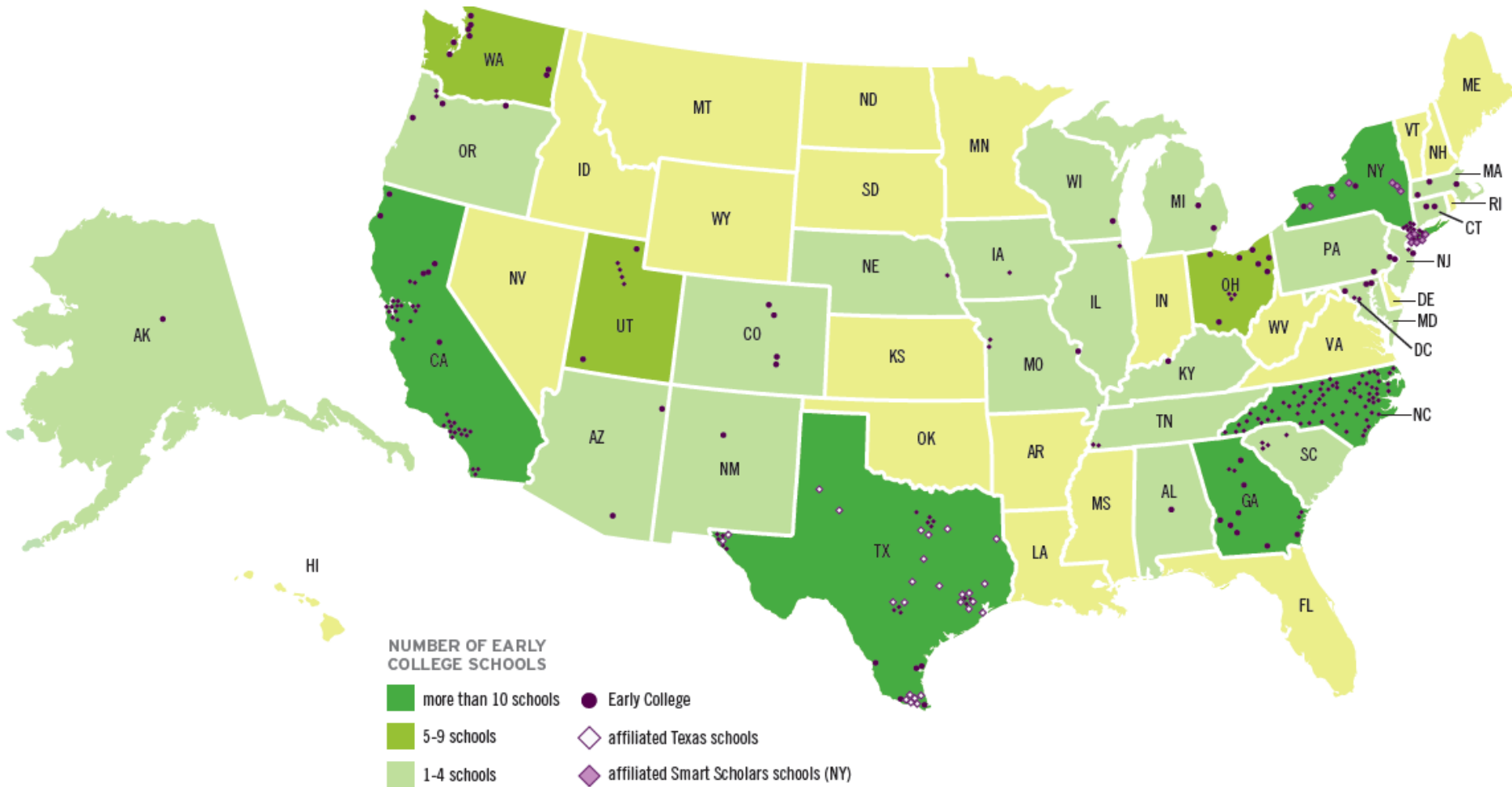


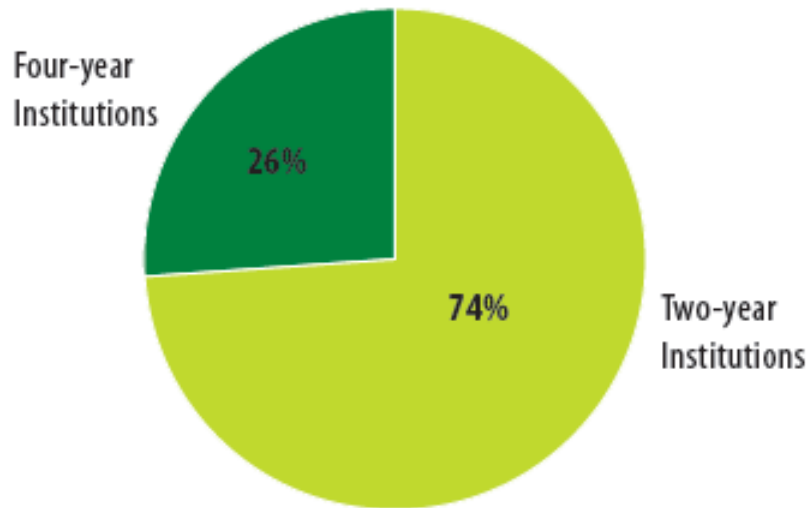
# EARLY COLLEGE NATIONAL PICTURE

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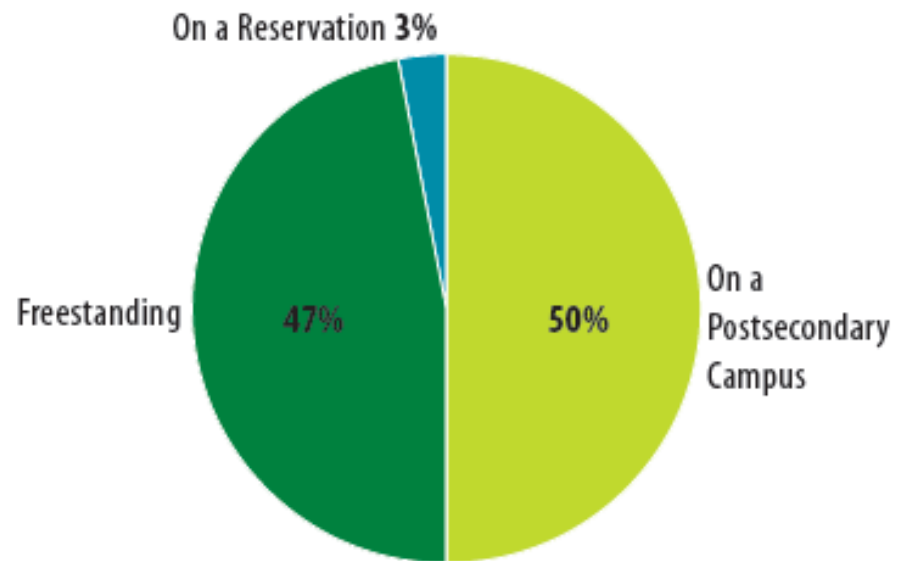
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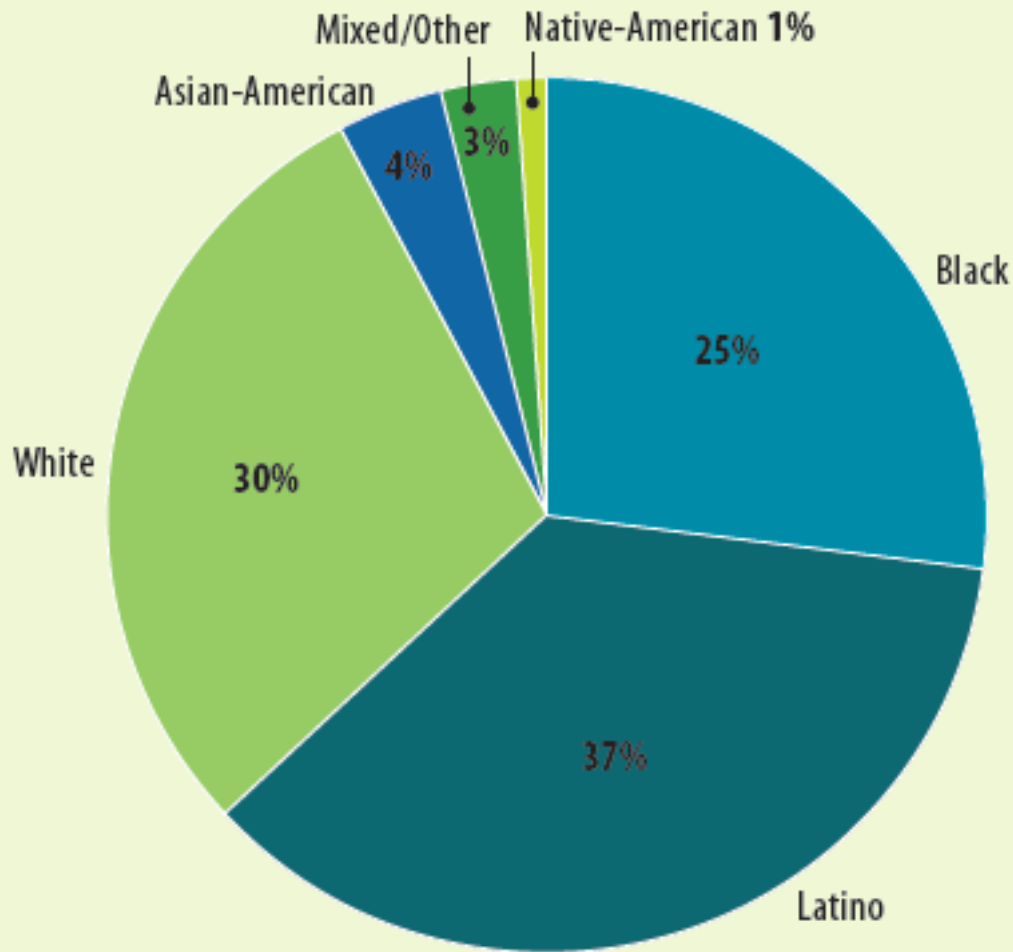




**Types of Postsecondary Partners**



**Locations of Schools**

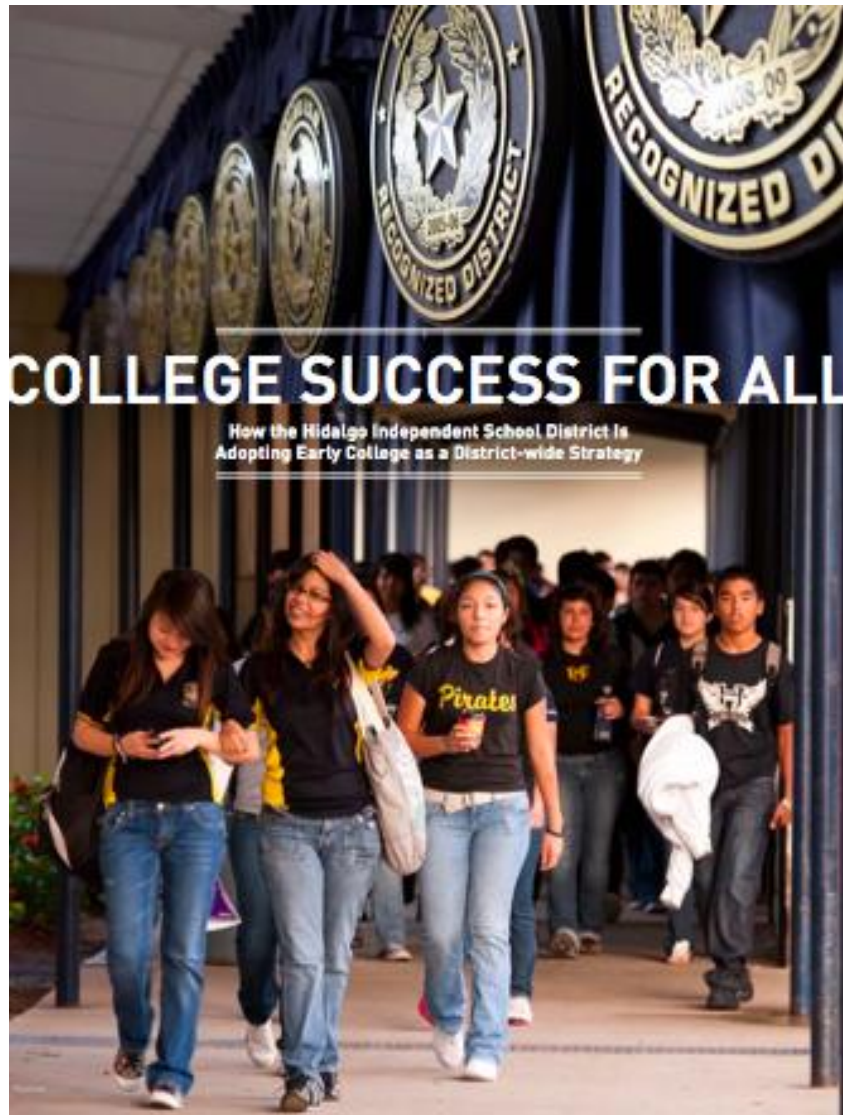


## Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Research Findings (NC & TX)

- Early college students are enrolling and progressing in key college preparatory classes at a **higher rate** compared to control group students
- The ECHS design is **closing the achievement gap** for students of color
- Early college students **outperformed their peers** in comparison schools

## National Findings from the Student Information System:

- On average, early college graduates earn more than **20 college credits**
- **39 percent** of graduates at early college schools open for four or more years earned more than one year of transferable college credits while in early college
- **25 percent** of graduates at early college schools open for four or more years earned two years of college credit or an Associate's degree
- **86 percent** of early college graduates in 2009 went on to some form of postsecondary education in the fall of that year



## What makes Hidalgo ISD an Early College District?

- College credits for all students
- College-going culture
- Academic alignment and rigor
- Career and technical pathways
- Comprehensive student supports

## THE HIDALGO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Rural district encompassing **36 square miles.**

Spanish is the home language for over **85% of residents.**

Southern boundary parallels the **Rio Grande River.**

Includes 4 elementary schools, 1 middle school, 1 high school, and 1 alternative high school

Total Enrollment: **3,519 students**

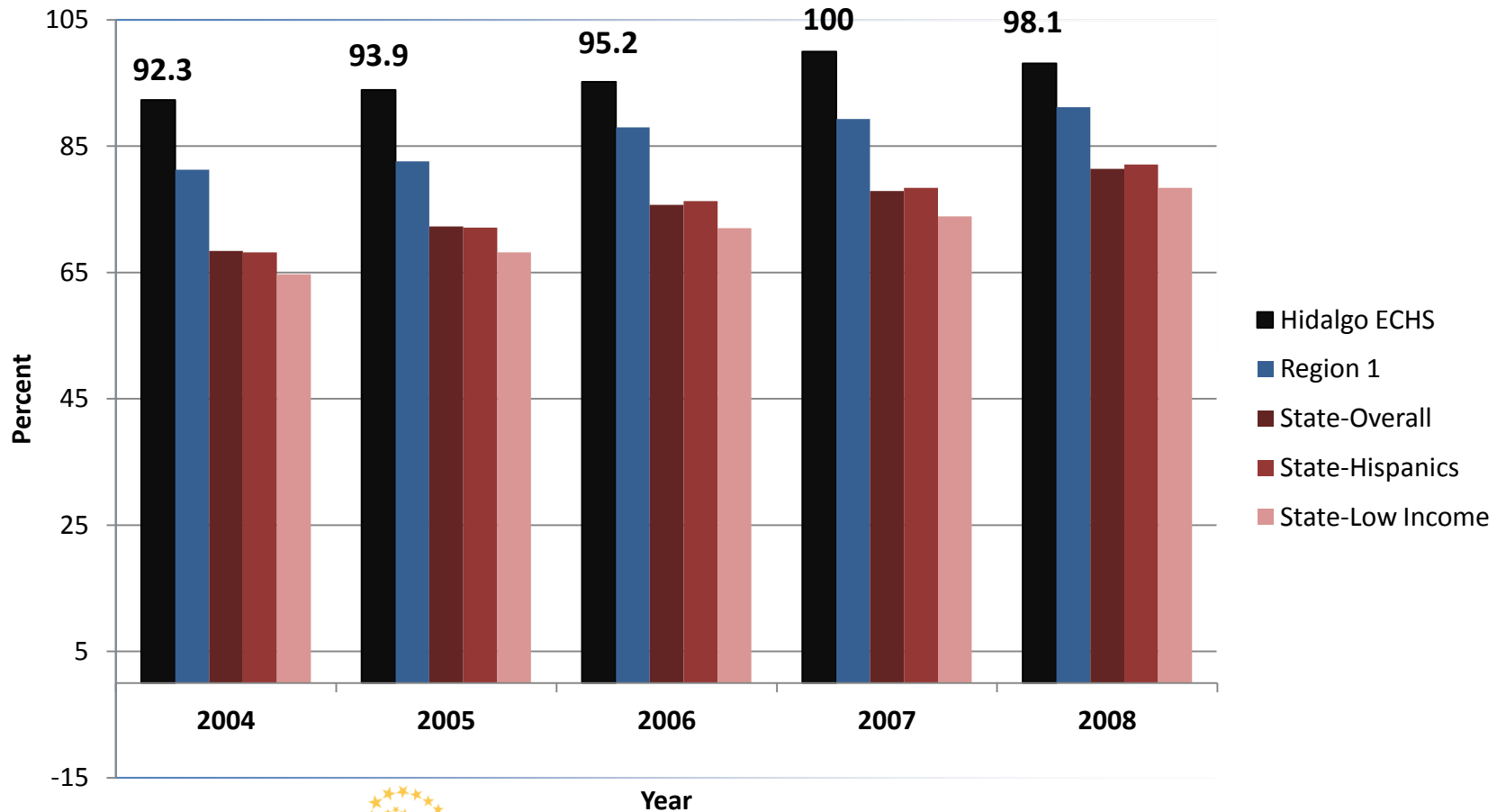
Student Demographics (2008-09):

- 99.5% Hispanic, 0.2% African American, 0.2% White, 0.1% Asian/Pacific Islander
- **89% Economically Disadvantaged**
- **72% At Risk**
- **56% Limited English Proficient**

Sources: Hidalgo Independent School District and Texas Education Agency (TEA), "2008-09 Academic Excellence Indicator System," 2008-09 District Profile for Hidalgo ISD.



**Percent of Graduates Completing the Texas State Board of Education Recommended High School Program (RHSP) or Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP), 2004-2008**



- More than **95 percent** of the Class of 2010 earned college credit during high school.
- In total, the students in the Class of 2010 earned a combined **3,743 college credit hours**.
- **Two thirds** of the students earned at least a semester of credit.





- Developed a range of postsecondary options to enable a broad student population to earn college credits.
- Achieved support of college administrators who could champion cause and leverage the necessary resources
- Created aligned coursework and comprehensive supports for students
- Encouraged professors to incorporate high-engagement strategies into their instruction
- Incentivized Hidalgo teachers to pursue adjunct status on at the local universities to reduce costs



## Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Goal:

Create district-wide portfolio of options that enable all students to graduate high school with significant college credits.

## Key Strategies:

- **Start with most under-served** by identifying youth not graduating and launching Back on Track to College school (College, Career, and Technology Academy)
- **Expand to district-wide portfolio** of early college designs
- **Strengthen academic program** across all schools so that all students meet college and career ready standards while in high school to prepare for post-secondary success
- **Increase dual enrollment opportunities and enhance career pathways** to prepare students for post-secondary success
- **Support students' post-secondary transitions** by deepening partnerships with IHEs, increasing campus-based counseling, and providing additional transition support for graduates.

1. Early college designs are prime college and career readiness lever in the statewide college readiness strategy.
2. A public-private partnership or SEA office of college and career readiness manages the start up and expansion of early college designs.
3. College credit substitutes for high school credit, allowing students to accelerate in the specific subjects in which they demonstrate readiness.
4. Course quality meets college standards; school readies students for college coursework by 11<sup>th</sup> grade.
5. Funding provided by flex in use of ADA & FTE; no cost to students, no financial harm to secondary and postsecondary partners.
6. The state has EC goal; measures, monitors, and reports on program's impact.

- College Success for All: How the Hidalgo Independent School District Is Adopting Early College as a District-wide Strategy  
<http://www.jff.org/publications/education/college-success-all-how-hidalgo-independ/1144>
- Hidalgo Early College Toolkit: [hidalgo.jff.org](http://hidalgo.jff.org)
- A Policymaker's Guide to Early College Designs: Expanding a Strategy for Achieving College Readiness for All  
[www.jff.org/publications/education/policymaker's-guide-early-college-design/1141](http://www.jff.org/publications/education/policymaker's-guide-early-college-design/1141)



## **JOBS FOR THE FUTURE**

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