



CENTRAL TEXAS
Student*Futures*
PROJECT

CREST Meeting Update

January 10, 2011

Research Questions



- What are graduating seniors' **high school experiences, plans and preparation** for life after high school?
- What share of high school graduates **enroll in postsecondary education, become employed,** or do both in the fall after graduation?
- What share of graduates are **enrolled and/or employed** over time?
- Which **factors** are **significantly associated** with positive **postsecondary education and employment outcomes**?
- How do these outcomes **change over time** for each cohort of graduates and selected populations groups?



Work Recently Completed



- **2010 senior survey report**

- Focus on changes over time
- Released January 2011

Work Currently Underway

- **Factors linked to initial enrollment for 2008 and 2009 graduates**

- Incorporation of college-readiness measures
- Focus on graduates in middle of class rank
- School and district variation
- Scheduled for April 2011 release

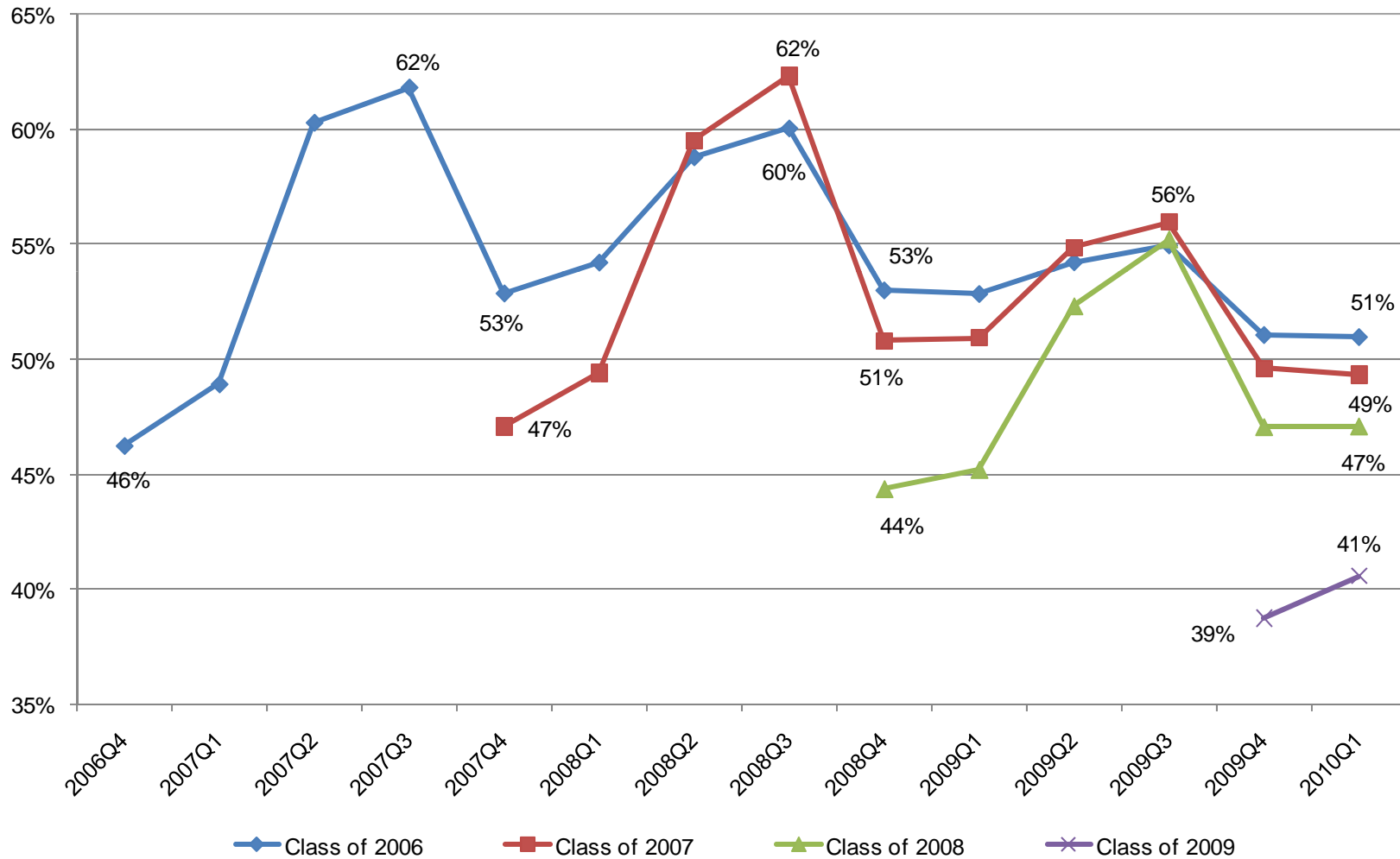
Highlights from Recent Reports



- The shares of Hispanic and low-income graduates are gradually increasing over time
- Overall initial college enrollment rates were unchanged for 2009 graduates;
 - Enrollment in 4-year schools dropped while enrollment in 2-year schools increased
- Overall employment rates in the fall after graduation dropped 7 percentage points between 2007 and 2009;
 - Largest declines occurred for Black, Hispanic and low-income graduates



Overall Post-Graduation Employment Status, by Graduating Class



Class of 2010 Senior Surveys



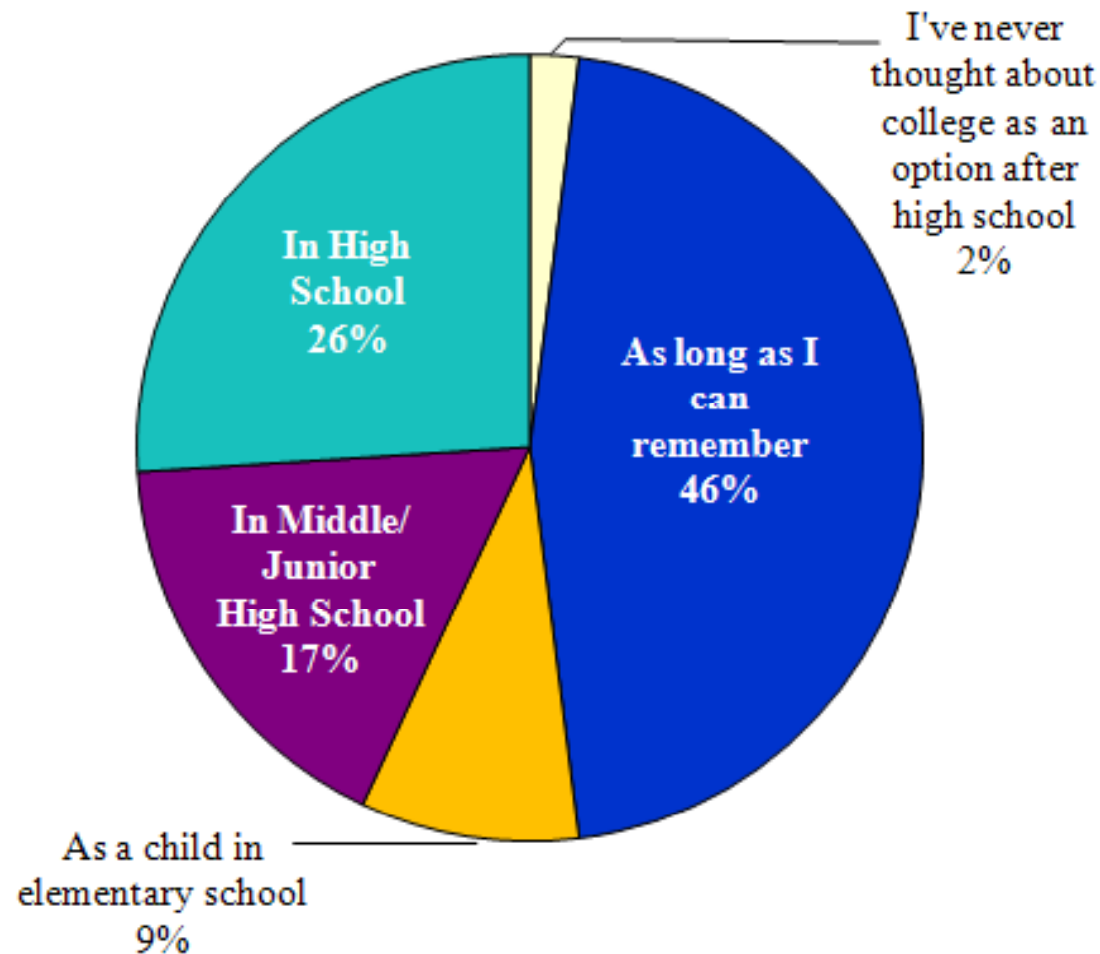
- Over 9,700 2010 seniors from eleven Central Texas school districts completed more than half of the survey questions.
- This represents 81% of all seniors in participating districts.



When Seniors Started Thinking About College



(Survey Responses 2010 Cohort)

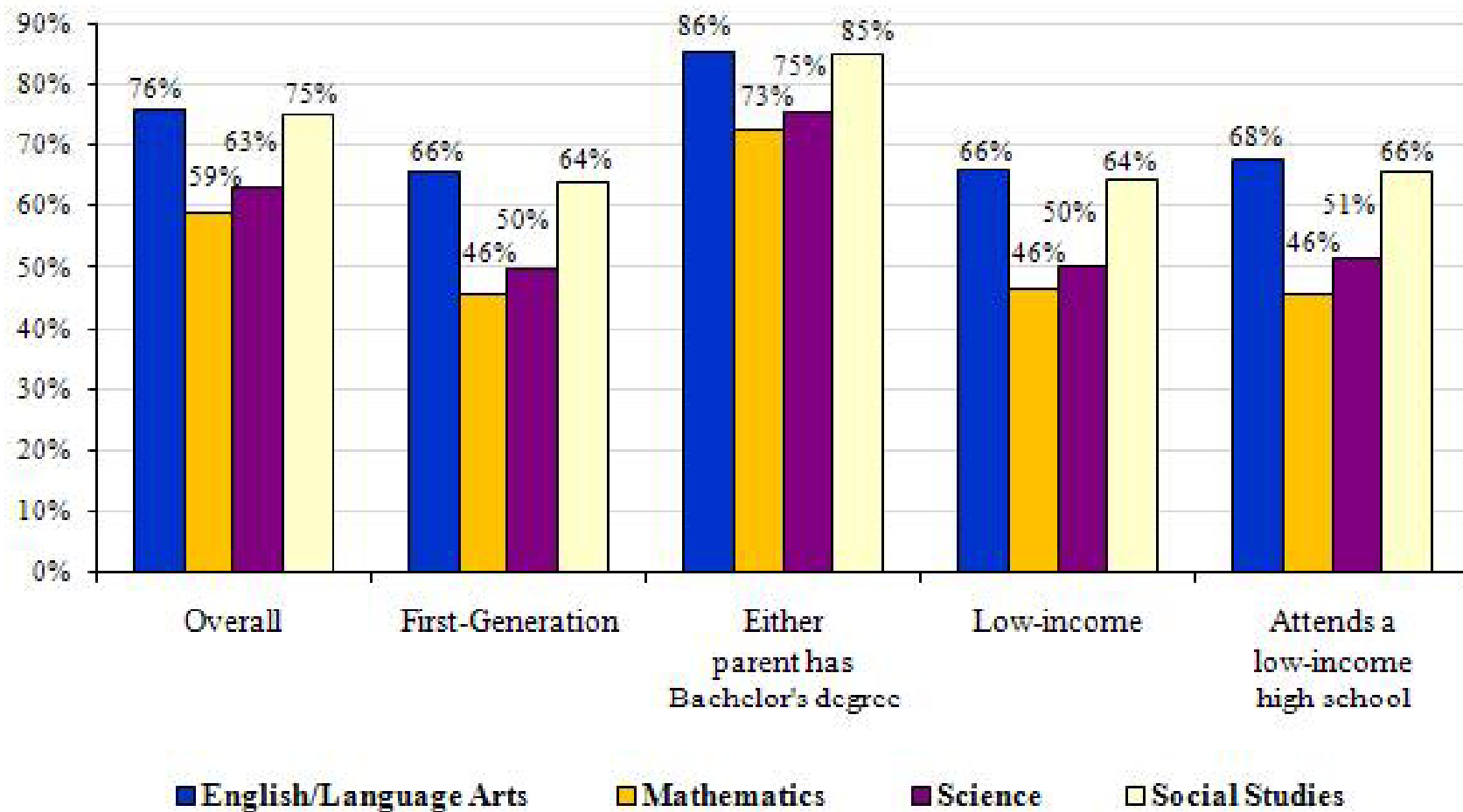




Weekly Hours Studying while in High School



(Survey Responses 2010 Cohort)

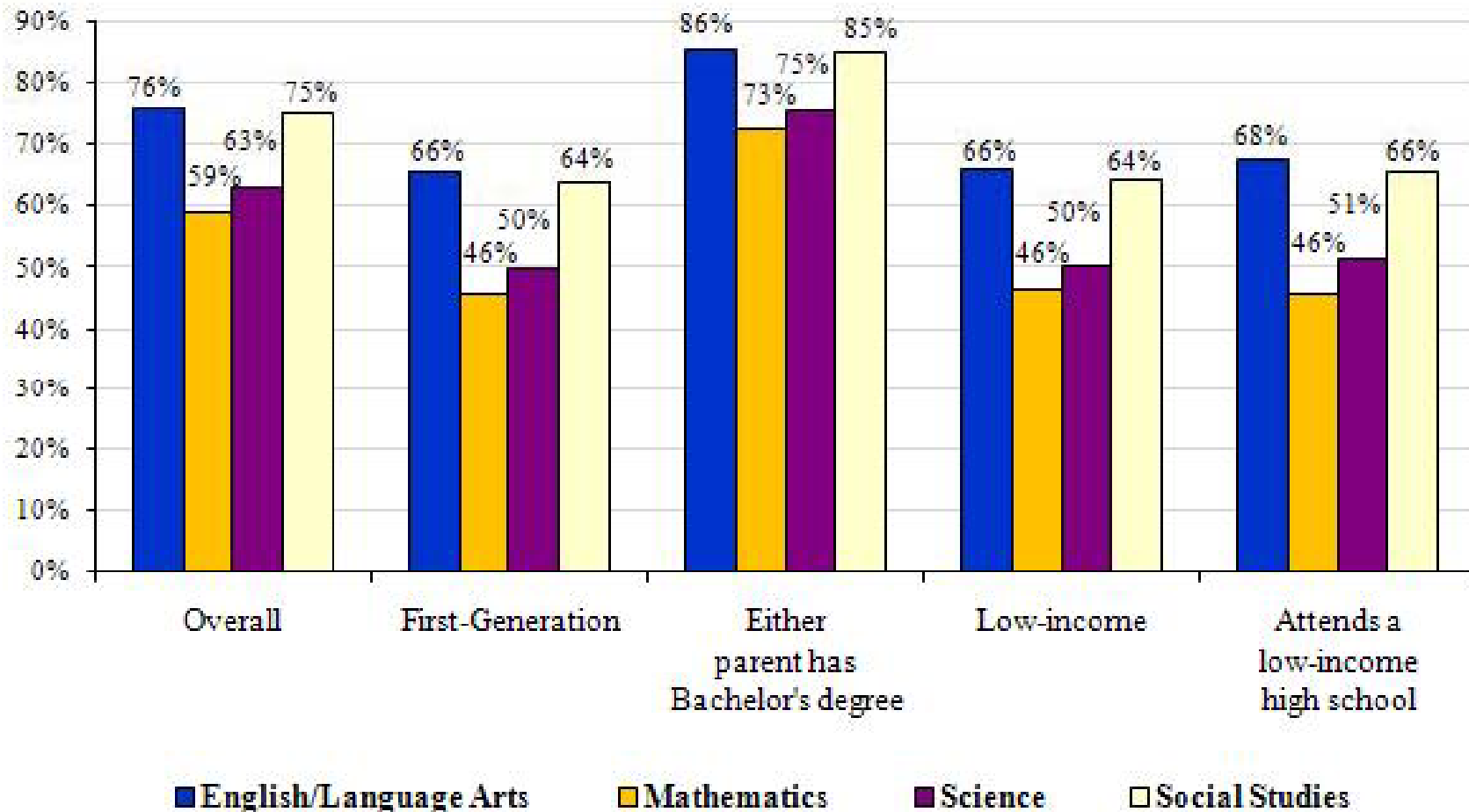




Preparation for College-Level Coursework



(Survey Responses 2010 Cohort)

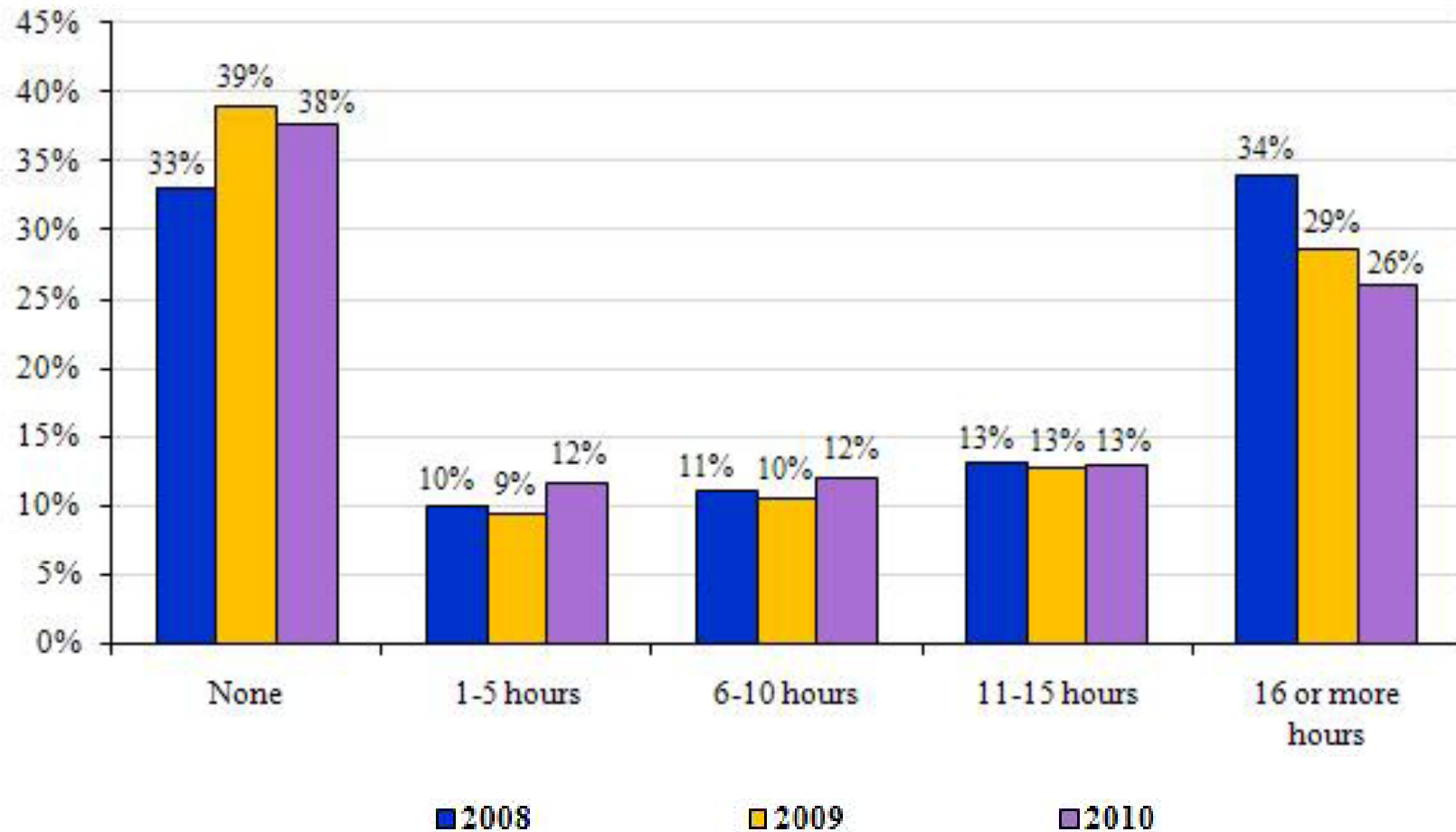




Weekly Hours Spent Working During Senior Year



(Survey Responses from 2008, 2009, and 2010 Cohorts)

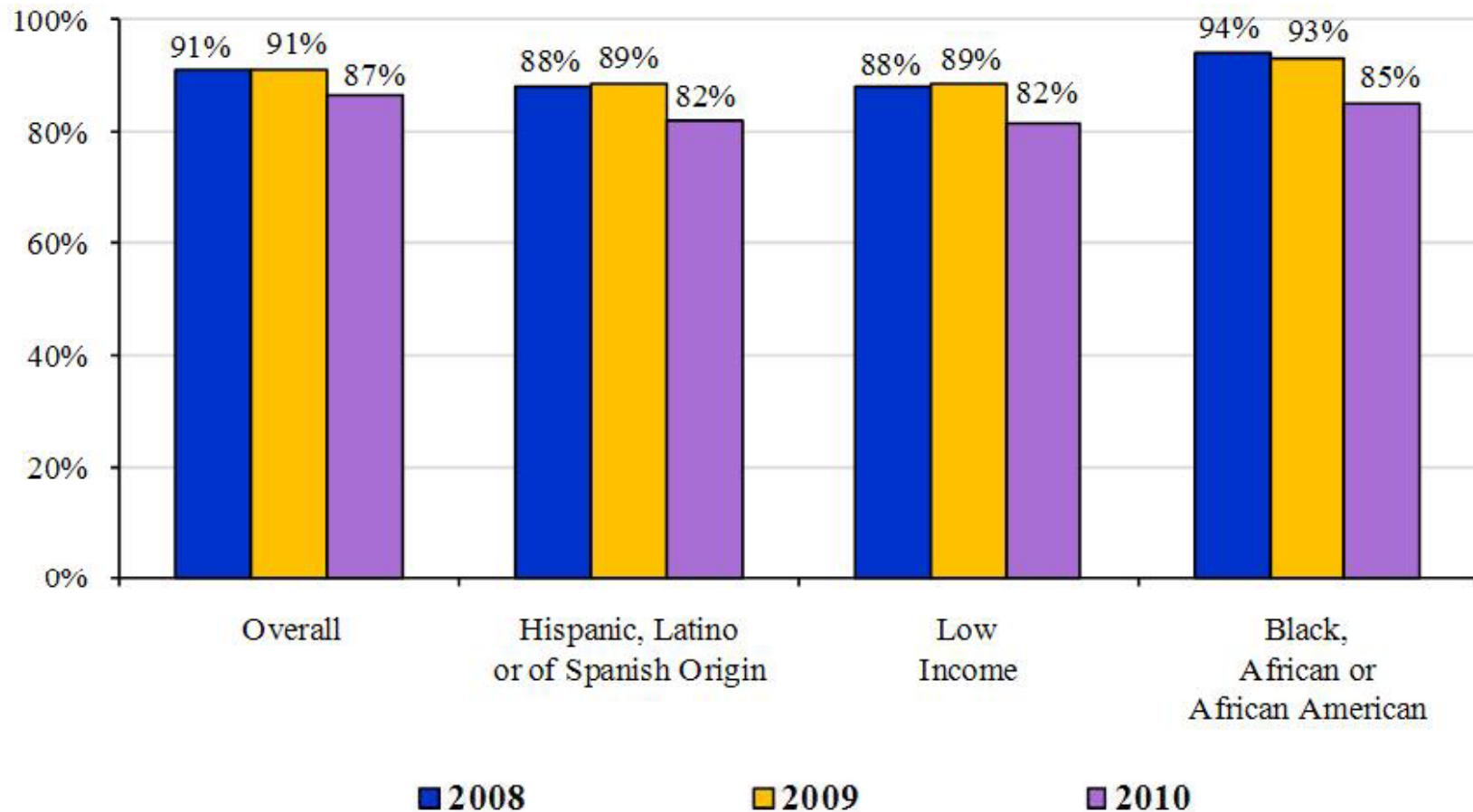




Postsecondary Enrollment Plans Within a Year from Graduation



(Survey Responses from 2008, 2009, and 2010 Cohorts)

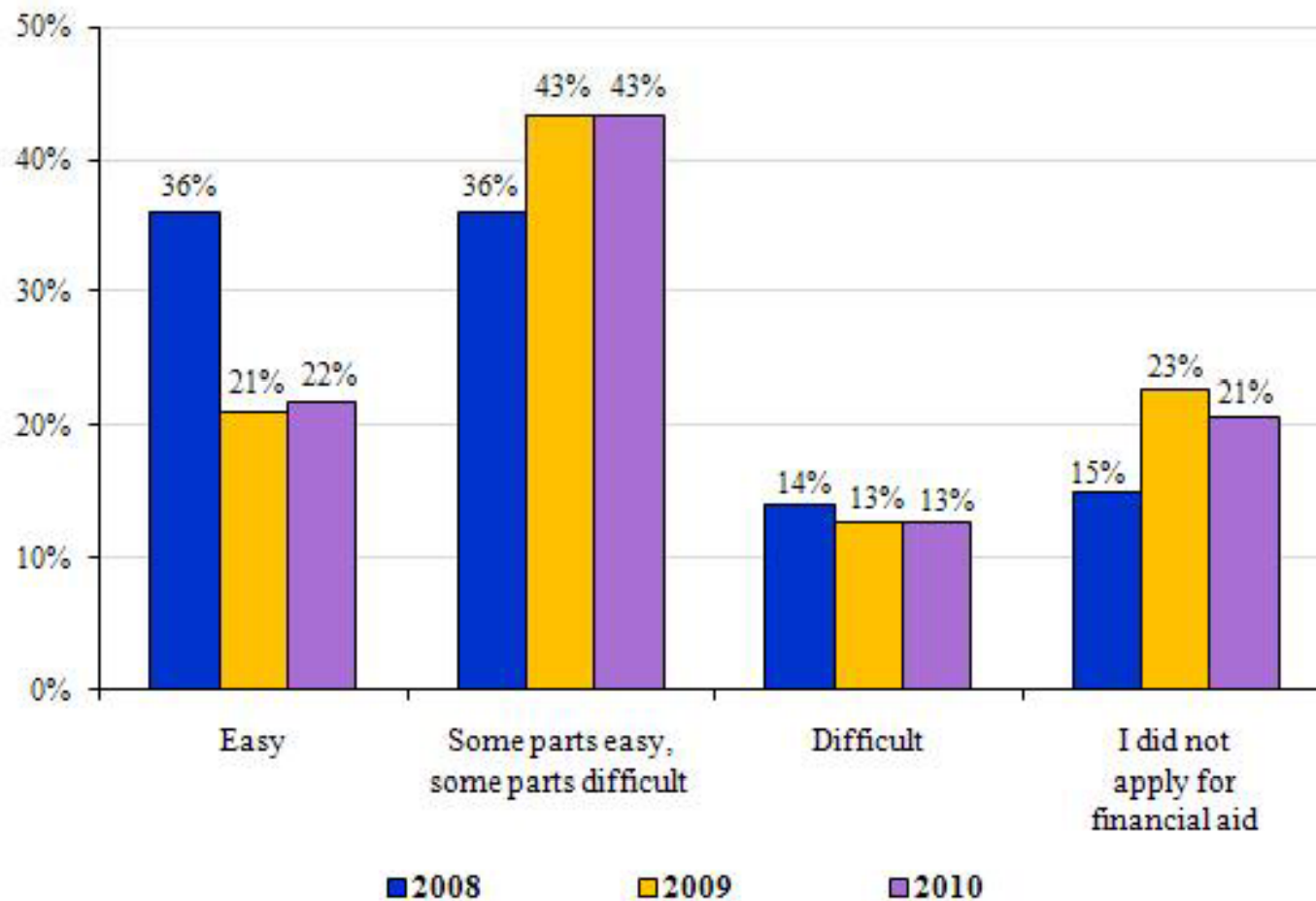




The Ease or Difficulty of the Financial Aid Process



(Survey Responses from 2008, 2009, and 2010 Cohorts)



Summary of Key Findings

(Survey Responses from Class of 2010)



- While a majority (55%) of seniors indicated they started thinking about college by the time they were a child or in elementary school, just over a quarter (26%) indicated they did not think about college until high school.
- Half of all students spent between one and five hours a week studying during high school. A larger share of Asian students (21%) indicated they studied for 16 or more hours per week compared to other racial and ethnic groups.
- Less than half of first-generation, low-income, and students who attended a low-income high school reported feeling prepared for college-level mathematics and only slightly higher shares of these students felt prepared for college-level sciences classes.



Summary of Key Findings

(Survey Responses from the
Classes of 2008, 2009, and 2010)



- While there were small differences among these cohorts in how much time they spent studying, the share of students indicating that they worked 16 or more hours a week decreased steadily from 2008 through 2010.
- In 2010, a smaller share of survey takers indicated they would enroll in postsecondary education within a year from graduating high school than was true in prior years. This drop in expectation of college enrollment was more pronounced among Hispanic, low-income and Black respondents.
- A smaller share of seniors in 2009 and 2010 (roughly 20%) found the financial aid process easy compared to seniors in 2008 (36%)

Implications for Policy



- Focusing on college preparation activities (college enrollment counseling, college applications, FAFSA, etc.) can improve initial postsecondary enrollment for all groups
- The recent economic downturn shows that other strategies may be needed to continue improvement for groups that traditionally have not attended college at comparable rates
- Because most graduates attend Texas colleges, affordability of those schools is an important public policy objective for continuing to increase overall enrollment



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