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## El Paso Regional Overview

*Prepared for:*



GREATER TEXAS FOUNDATION



COMMUNITIES  
FOUNDATION  
of TEXAS

HOUSTON ENDOWMENT INC.

A PHILANTHROPY ENDOWED BY MR. AND MRS. JESSE H. JONES

**The Meadows  
Foundation**

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## Executive Summary – El Paso

- El Paso is a **geographically isolated**, self-contained region. El Paso residents have a **lower income** than the Texas average and are **mainly Hispanic (82%)**. The student population will grow by 18% in the next 20 years, fueled mainly by Hispanic student growth
- El Paso has been successful in **raising the persistence and success rates of its Hispanic population above Texas average**. However, graduation rates are still woefully low for all ethnicities (13%)
- Despite significant progress in education attainment, El Paso still faces serious challenge in college readiness. Half of students who enroll in its four-year university require developmental coursework – a very high number. Among its community college students, almost two-thirds require developmental coursework, but their completion is only slightly lower than those who enter college-ready, indicating that additional challenges beyond academic readiness need to be addressed if the region is to improve its postsecondary outcomes
- Recent large-scale immigration from troubled Juarez, just across the border, will also stretch El Paso's capacities
- El Paso is aware of the challenges facing the region and the urgent need for reform. The region has a more than twenty-year long tradition of innovation and collaboration around student success which it can leverage to continue to improve student outcomes. The region's key assets include:
  - A tightly-knit **community** with a strong sense of urgency about improving education opportunities
  - **Group of committed leaders** with a long-established willingness and ability to collaborate among its single two and four year IHEs, large high school districts and municipal government
  - Its ability to attract significant **philanthropic resources** through its commitment to education reform and innovation

# El Paso Is a Geographically Isolated, Self-Contained Region With a Population That Is Over 80% Hispanic

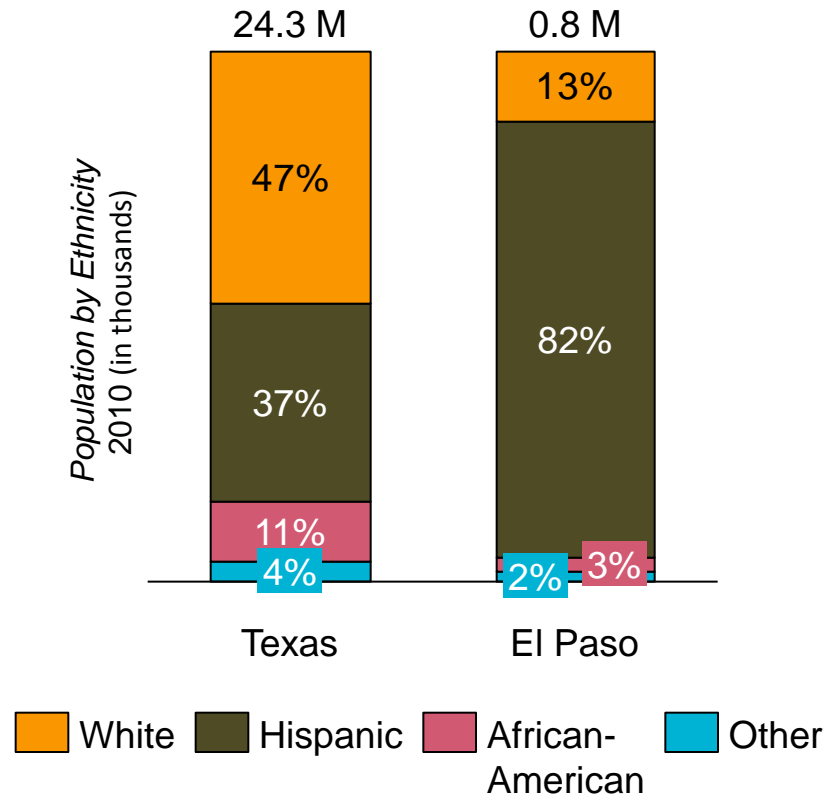
The nearest Texas IHE outside of El Paso is located more than 213 miles away, which highlights the isolation of the area

Total Population = .8 M (~ 3% of Texas population)



4 Year University 2 Year College

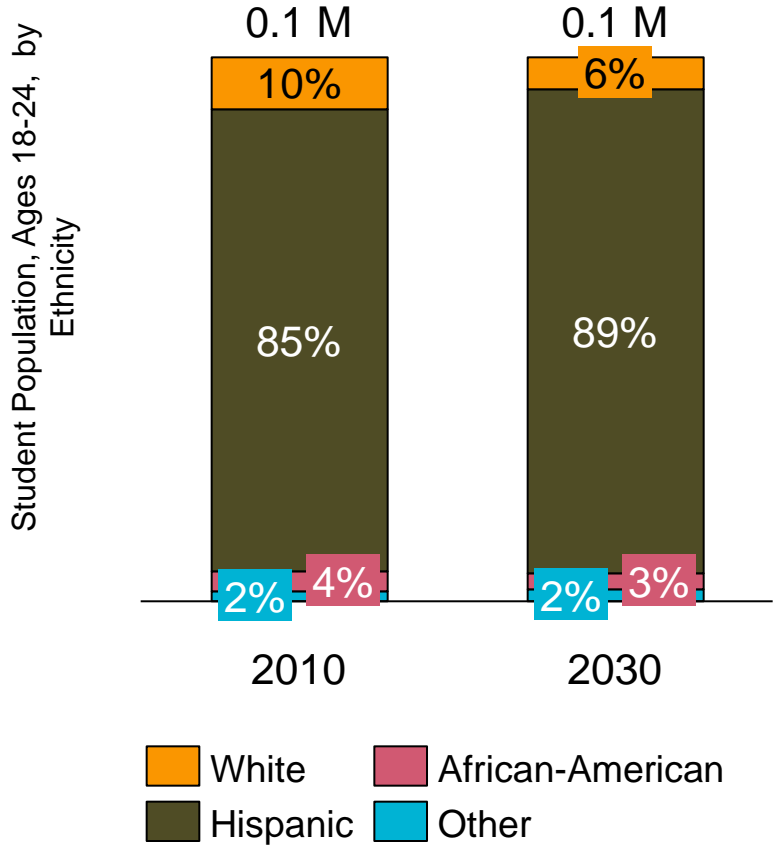
At 82%, the Hispanic population in El Paso is more than double the Texas average



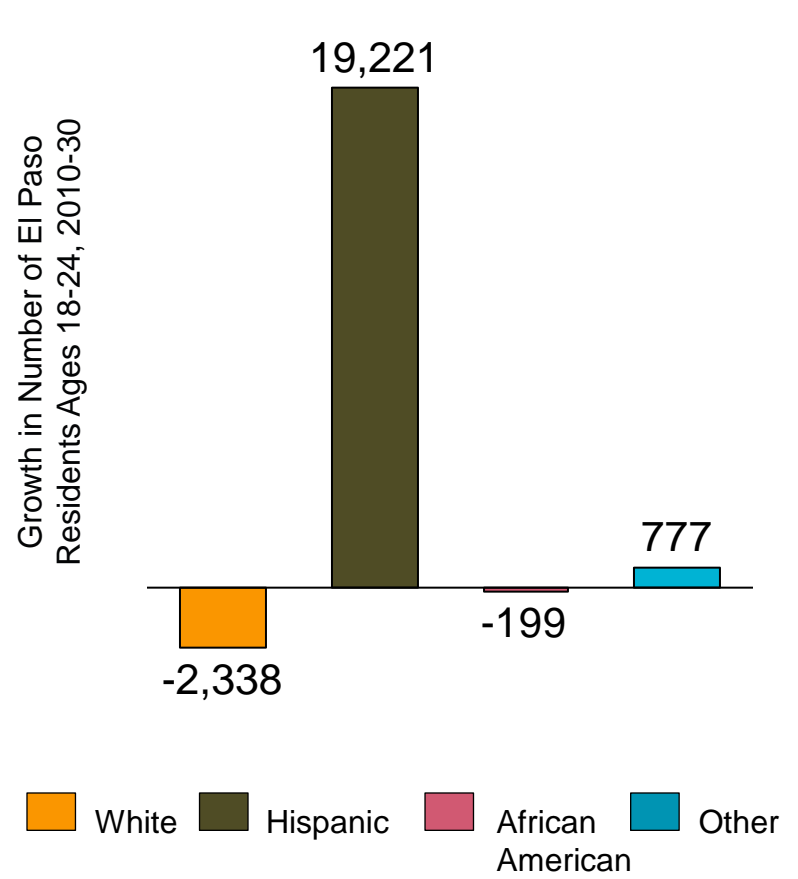
Note: Left Graph: Projected Distribution in Number of Total Texas and El Paso Residents, 2010 (in millions)  
 Source: Texas Data Center, 2008 Population Projections, Migration Scenario 0.5; FSG analysis

# Hispanic Students Make Up 85% of El Paso's Student Population and Will Account for Almost 100% of Student Growth in the Next 20 Years

The El Paso student population has the same makeup as the total population

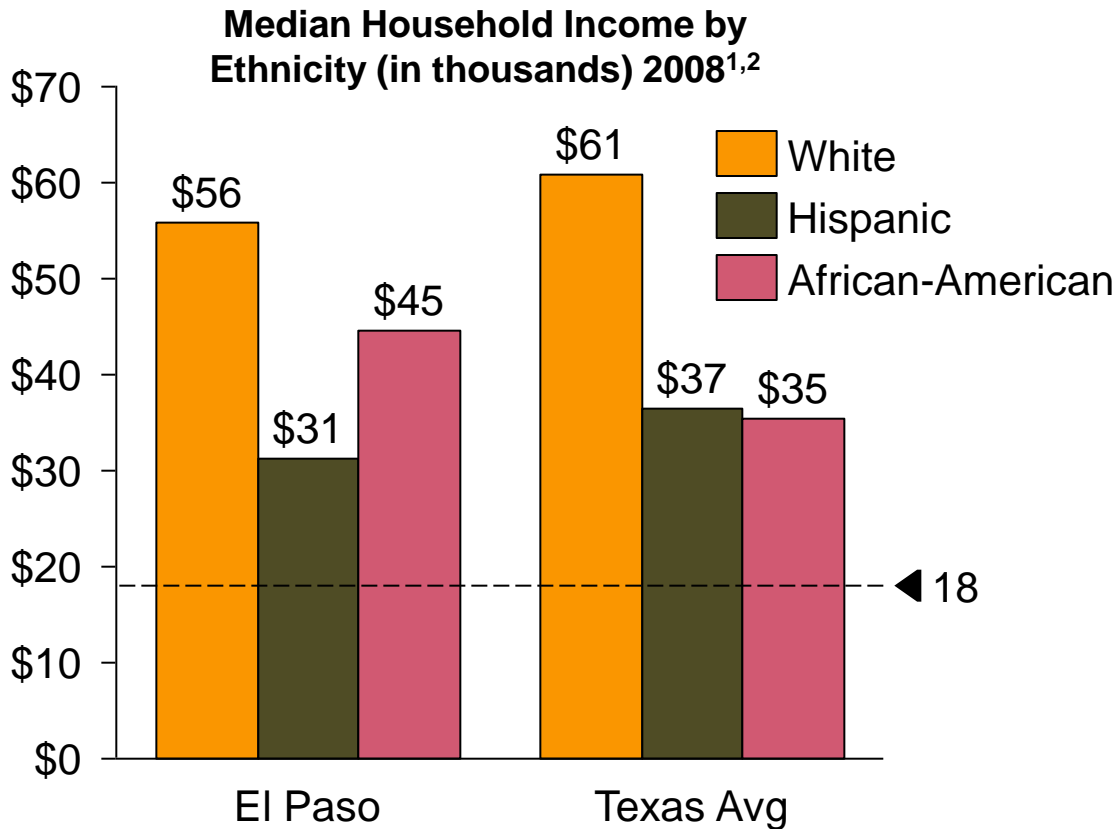


96% of total positive student growth in the next 20 years will come from Hispanics



Note: Left Graph: Projected Distribution in Number of Total Texas and El Paso Residents, 2010 (in millions)  
Source: Texas Data Center, 2008 Population Projections, Migration Scenario 0.5; FSG analysis

# Both the White and Hispanic Population in El Paso Earn Less Than the Texas Average for Their Demographic Group



*“The median income 25 years ago was highest in the state because El Paso was a manufacturing hub and that created a huge middle class. Now all those jobs have gone across the border, causing income to drop, and as more immigrants come in, racial poverty increases”*

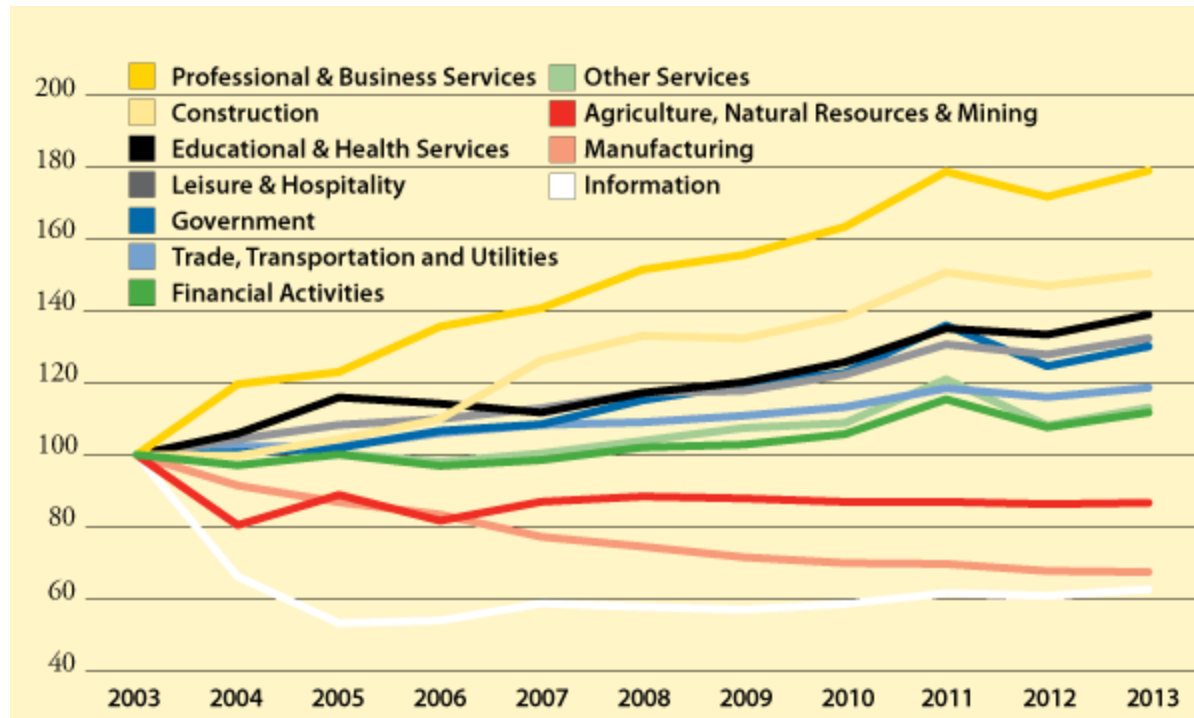
– Regional Education Service Center

***El Paso’s income (\$35,637) is the lowest income among all major Texas regions***

Notes: (1) Federal poverty level for a 3 person household was \$17,600 for 2008, (2) Median Household Income by Ethnicity calculated using the median household income per county and weighting by 2008 county population  
 Source: Left chart, Texas Data Center, 2008 Population Projections, Migration Scenario 0.5; Right chart, 2008 American Community Survey, Texas Data Center; FSG analysis

# El Paso Has Experienced Steady Job Growth With the Highest Growth Industries Requiring a Postsecondary Degree

*Upper Rio Grande Region Industrial Employment Indices, 2002-2012*

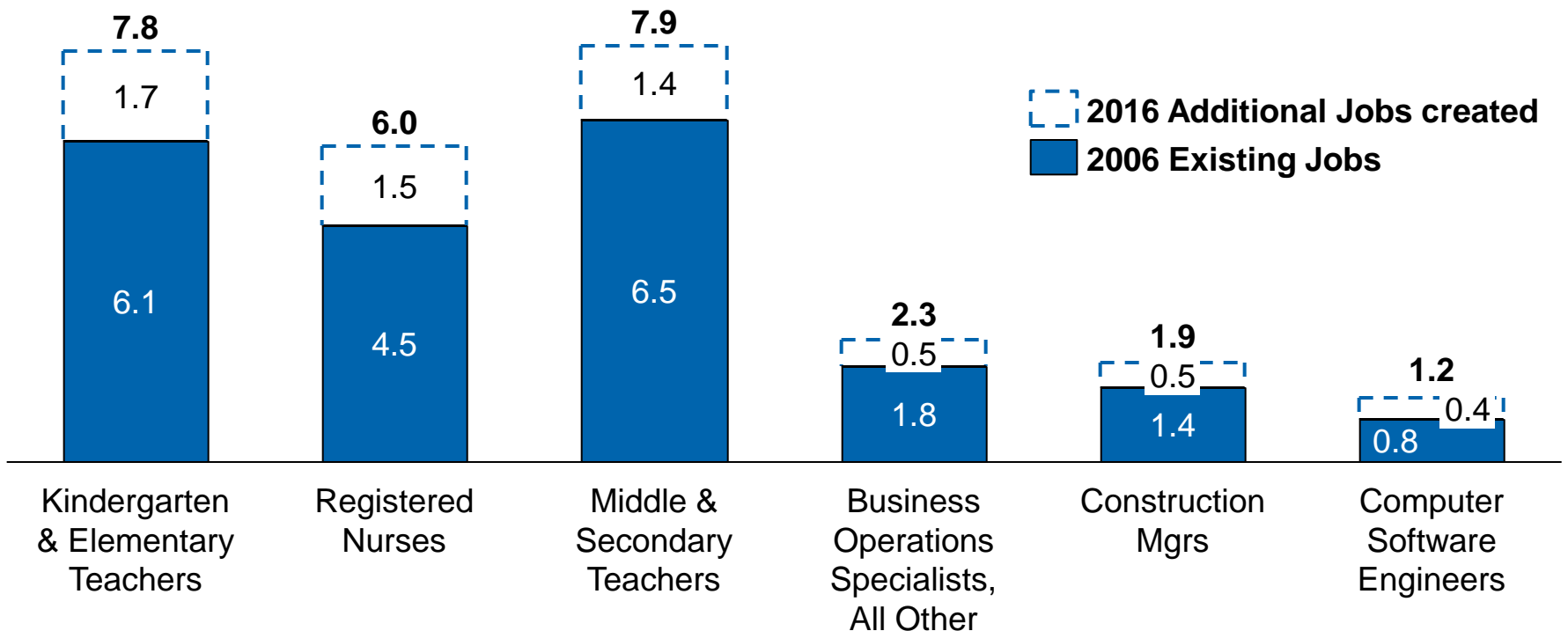


Note: Data after September 2009 are projected.

Sources: Economic Modeling Specialists Inc. and Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

# The El Paso Economy Will Require An Increase in Workers With Post Secondary Degrees

Occupations Adding the Most New Jobs or Growing the Fastest, 2006-2016, El Paso (in thousands)

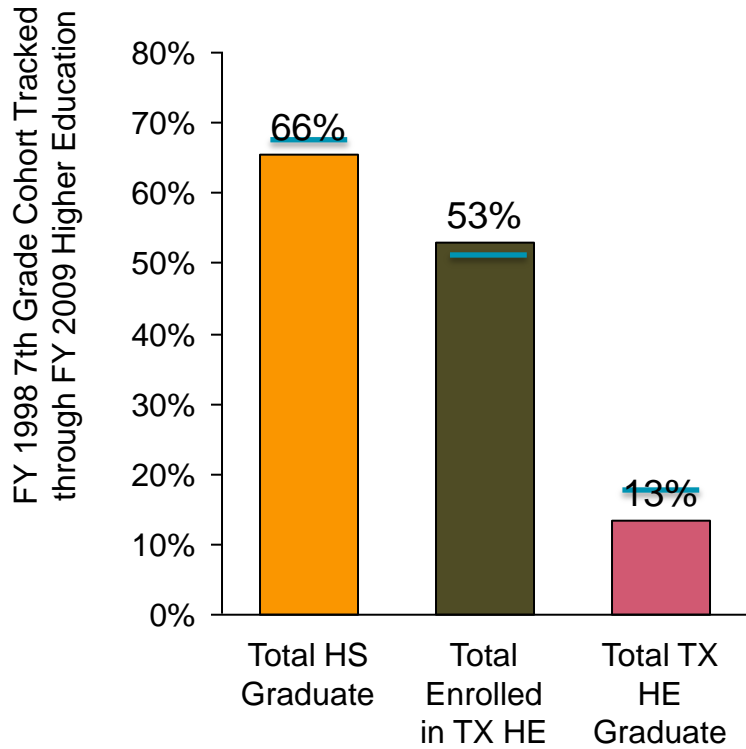


***The demand for degrees, combined with lagging educational outcomes, presents both a challenge and an incentive for El Paso to continue to innovate in educational reform***

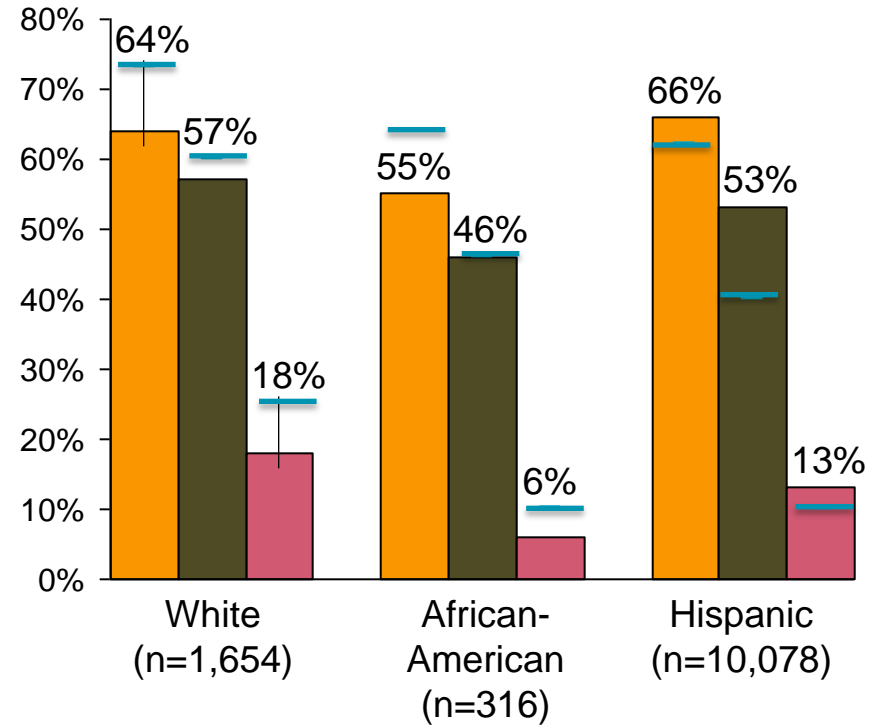
Source: Texas Workforce Commission as reported in the THECB's 2010 Regional Plan for Texas Higher Education

# The Large Proportion of Hispanic Students in El Paso Has Helped to Create an Environment Where They Can Succeed Above Texas' Averages

**El Paso lags Texas in high school and postsecondary graduation rates but outperforms in enrollment**



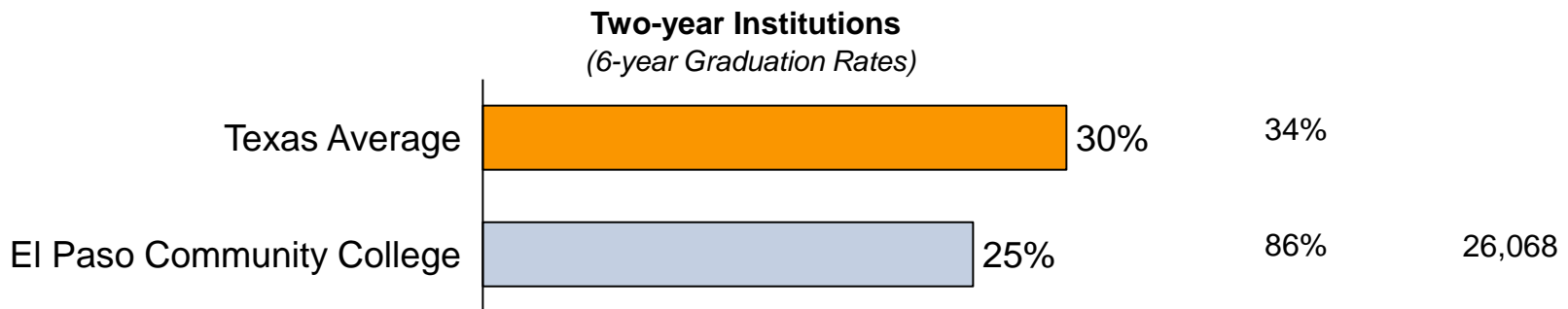
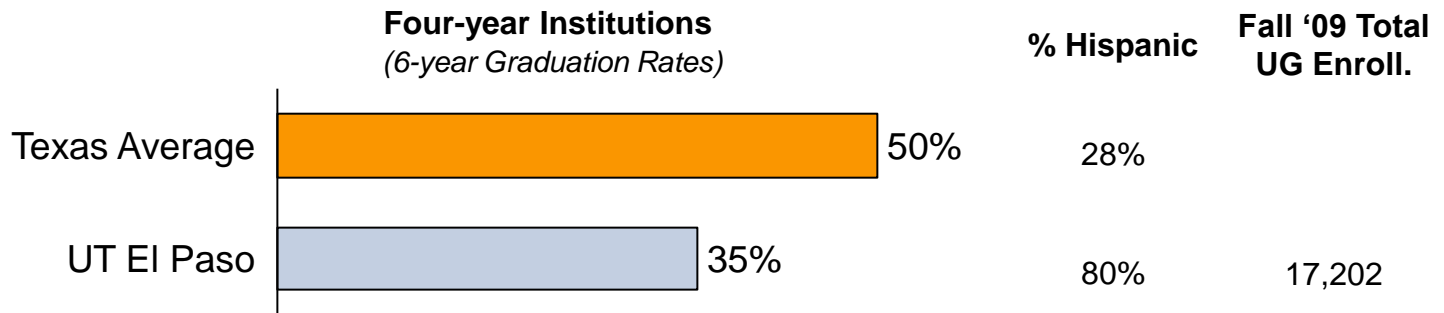
**When looked at by ethnicity, educational outcomes vary, with Hispanics in El Paso outperforming the Texas Hispanic averages**



■ HS Graduate   
 ■ Enrolled in HE   
 ■ HE Graduate   
 — TX Average

Note: *n* indicates the size of the 7th grade cohort for each ethnicity, Data above is for the Upper Rio Grande Region, of which El Paso county makes up 97% of total population. Source: Texas Higher Education Data, Regional Data for Seventh Grade Cohort and High School to College

# The Large Group of Students Enrolling in Postsecondary Education in El Paso Have Only Two Post Secondary Institutions to Attend, Both of Which Graduate Fewer Than 35% of Their Students



**Although graduation rates at both institutions are lower than Texas averages, El Paso overall has been able to increase graduation rates by 5% in the past 6 years**

Note: Data from THECB for Fall enrollment – credit students  
Source: THECB, FSG analysis

# El Paso Still Faces Several Critical Challenges Including Academic Readiness, Immigration Patterns and Limited Resources

Challenges	Description
<b>Misalignment in College Readiness between K-12 and Postsecondary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High percentage of EPCC students (63%) and UTEP students (49%) require developmental education. In particular, the UTEP rate is much higher than Texas average (22%)</li> <li>• College readiness levels in Math are the lowest in the state, in particular at EPCC, where only 5% of students were deemed college ready in Math</li> <li>• Few resources to fund collaboration on curriculum design</li> </ul>
<b>Recent influx of English Language Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a large influx of recent immigrants from Juarez (40,000 families) out of which will come a large group of ESL learners</li> </ul>
<b>Limited systemic and financial resources to support student persistence and success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60% of EPCC students have Pell Grants. This funding does not suffice to cover UTEP tuition after transferring</li> <li>• 42% of UTEP students have household income less than \$20,000; almost all postsecondary dropouts cite financial burden as a cause of their leaving school</li> <li>• The low differential (2%) in graduation rates between dev ed and non dev ed students points to challenges in student persistence overall</li> </ul>

***“Greater awareness of challenges young people face is important ,as I don’t think most people have a clue about how difficult it is to be poor in America today, and to have to get a higher education.” – Four-Year Institution***

# El Paso Has Many Assets That Can Be Built Upon to Address the Challenges It Faces

## *Key Regional Assets*

### Community Wide Collaboration

- A close community of educators and administrators from K12 and PSE, community activists, and business leaders have worked together in a P16 Collaborative to improve education outcomes over the past 20 years
- El Paso Community College and UTEP believe themselves to not just be educational institutions but leaders responsible for engaging the community

### Committed Education Leaders

- Committed leadership at the one community college system, one 4-year university along with high schools, has allowed alignment of pathways between high school, community college and university

### Philanthropic Involvement

- Strong national and state funder presence in El Paso
  - Gates, Lumina, Texas High School Project, Greater Texas Foundation and the Texas Education Agency have funded College Readiness Initiatives, Early College High Schools, Dual Credit
- Results and learnings from both EPCC and ECHSs in El Paso have been highly publicized nationally, providing El Paso with a spotlight to help attract additional dollars

### Tight Knit Community

- Efforts to improve the education of teachers at UTEP benefited local high schools as UTEP graduates remain in El Paso and become teachers
- Because El Paso is isolated there is a sense of community involvement and pride which fosters a sense of urgency for improving education outcomes
- Tracking data and seeing results of interventions is easier given the small size of the education system

# A Public Private Partnership Could Help El Paso Better Direct Its Existing Assets to Address Its Critical Gaps

ILLUSTRATIVE

## *Preliminary Opportunities for the Region*

### **Continue to Address College Readiness**

- Focus on shortening the time spent in developmental education; scale up modular developmental education course systems to all subjects
- Alignment between K-12 and PSE
  - Direct additional resources towards teacher, faculty and leadership release time to focus on curriculum design and alignment

### **Scale Up and Sharing of Knowledge from Successful Programs**

- Provide additional funding to scale up “Catch-Up” programs to improve the college readiness levels of high school graduates before they start college
- Translate effective practices and learnings from Early College High Schools into the traditional high schools

### **Restructure Financial Support**

- Provide momentum funding for students and schools who are able to achieve “momentum points” such as developmental education and gatekeeper course completion, 15 and 30 hour completion, and graduation
- Offer work-study opportunities, especially to immigrant students from Juarez (international students) who are not able to work off-campus