

Postsecondary Outcomes of Traditional and Non-Traditional High School Students

**Data Summary Required by Texas Education Code,
Section §61.06692**

January 2021

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Agency Mission

The mission of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is to provide leadership and coordination for Texas higher education and to promote access, affordability, quality, success, and cost efficiency through *60x30TX*, resulting in a globally competitive workforce that positions Texas as an international leader.

Agency Vision

The THECB will be recognized as an international leader in developing and implementing innovative higher education policy to accomplish our mission.

Agency Philosophy

The THECB will promote access to and success in quality higher education across the state with the conviction that access and success without quality is mediocrity and that quality without access and success is unacceptable.

The THECB's core values are:

Accountability: We hold ourselves responsible for our actions and welcome every opportunity to educate stakeholders about our policies, decisions, and aspirations.

Efficiency: We accomplish our work using resources in the most effective manner.

Collaboration: We develop partnerships that result in student success and a highly qualified, globally competent workforce.

Excellence: We strive for excellence in all our endeavors.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services.

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Background

Per Texas Education Code, Section 61.06692, enacted in 2019 by the 86th Texas Legislature, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is required to conduct a study comparing postsecondary educational outcomes for students enrolled at institutions of higher education who received a high school diploma and students enrolled at those institutions who received a high school equivalency certificate, disaggregated by the high school equivalency examination completed.

The report looks at first-time-in-college (FTIC) cohorts from fall 2017 through fall 2019. THECB staff tracked three postsecondary outcomes: (1) first-year academic outcomes including total semester credit hours (SCHs) attempted and cumulative grade point average (GPA); (2) persistence two years after initial enrollment; and (3) earning a postsecondary certificate or degree.

The data show that FTIC students who had a traditional high school diploma tend to have higher average first-year GPAs, a higher average number of attempted SCHs, and a higher persistence rate than students with a high school equivalency certificate. This trend is the same across all years analyzed. The academic outcomes for students with different types of a high school equivalency certificate (GED and HiSET) are similar. These outcomes are difficult to compare, however, because of the small number of students with a high school equivalency certificate who enroll in academic and technical postsecondary education.

Students with a high school equivalency certificate earn a postsecondary certificate at a similar rate after one year (Table 1), two years (Table 2) and three years (Table 3) of enrollment. Further analysis shows that the frequencies of credentials earned by each group differs by type. Students with a GED or HiSet certificate have a higher percentage of earning postsecondary certificates (i.e. Level One Certificate, Level Two Certificate, Advanced Technology Certificate), and students with a traditional high school diploma tend to have a higher percentage of earning an Associate or Bachelor degree within the time measured. Since the study time frame does not allow for four years of postsecondary tracking (the amount of time a full-time student is expected to take to complete a bachelor's degree), these short-term outcomes should not be seen as indicative of longer term completion percentages or patterns among the groups studied.

First-Time-in-College Postsecondary Outcomes by Type of High School Diploma or Equivalency Certificate

Table 1. Postsecondary Outcomes by High School Completion Type for FTIC Cohort 2019

FTIC 2019	Total	Average Total SCHs Attempted in 1 st Year	Average 1 st Year GPA	Persisted to Fall 2020	Earned Postsecondary Award by FY 2020*
HS Diploma	160,760	22.6	2.6	73%	4%
GED	1,442	16.3	2.2	47%	3%
HiSET	78	13.3	2.1	39%	3%
Total	162,280	22.4	2.6	72%	4%

**Students with a High School Equivalency Certificate had a higher percentage of completing a postsecondary certificate than students with a traditional high school diploma; lower than typical completion percentages are likely related to the short study timeframe.*

Source: TEA high school graduate and high school equivalency data; THECB CBM001, CBM005

Note: Includes fall 2019 FTIC students who received a high school diploma at a Texas public high school or received a high school equivalency certificate in the two years before postsecondary enrollment.

Table 2. Postsecondary Outcomes by High School Completion Type for FTIC Cohort 2018

FTIC 2018	Total	Average Total SCHs Attempted in 1 st Year	Average 1 st Year GPA	Persisted to Fall 2019	Persisted to Fall 2020	Earned Postsecondary Award by FY 2020
HS Diploma	157,546	23.1	2.5	76%	63%	6%
GED	1,529	16.1	2.2	48%	34%	9%
HiSET	30	14.1	2.1	53%	40%	10%
Total	159,105	23.0	2.5	75%	62%	6%

**Students with a High School Equivalency Certificate had a higher percentage of completing a postsecondary certificate than students with a traditional high school diploma; lower than typical completion percentages are likely related to the short study timeframe.*

Source: TEA high school graduate and high school equivalency data; THECB CBM001, CBM005

Note: Includes fall 2018 FTIC students who received a high school diploma at a Texas public high school or received a high school equivalency certificate in the two years before postsecondary enrollment.

Table 3. Postsecondary Outcomes by High School Completion Type for FTIC Cohort 2017

FTIC 2017	Total	Average Total SCHs Attempted in 1 st Year	Average 1 st Year GPA	Persisted to Fall 2018	Persisted to Fall 2019	Earned Postsecondary Award by FY 2020*
HS Diploma	154,301	22.8	2.5	75%	64%	13%
GED	1,124	16.0	2.3	52%	37%	13%
HiSET	13	17.6	1.9	54%	46%	0%
Total	155,438	22.8	2.5	75%	64%	13%

**Students with a High School Equivalency Certificate had a higher percentage of completing a postsecondary certificate than students with a traditional high school diploma; lower than typical completion percentages are likely related to the short study timeframe.*

Source: TEA high school graduate and high school equivalency data; THECB CBM001, CBM005

Note: Includes fall 2017 FTIC students who received a high school diploma at a Texas public high school or received a high school equivalency certificate in the two years before postsecondary enrollment.



This document is available on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website:
<http://highered.texas.gov>.

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