

Progress on Talent Strong Texas Metrics

TACRAO
College Station, TX
July 21, 2026

Welcome



Brandon Griggs, Ph.D.

Assistant Commissioner

Academic and Health Affairs

Brandon.Griggs@highered.texas.gov

About the THECB

- Provides college planning resources
- Helps students find cost-effective programs with strong employment outcomes



Building a Talent Strong Texas

Measuring Progress at the Midpoint of the State
Strategic Plan for Higher Education

Building a Talent Strong Texas

2022–2030 Strategic Plan

Goals

Attainment
of Postsecondary
Credentials

Postsecondary
Credentials of Value

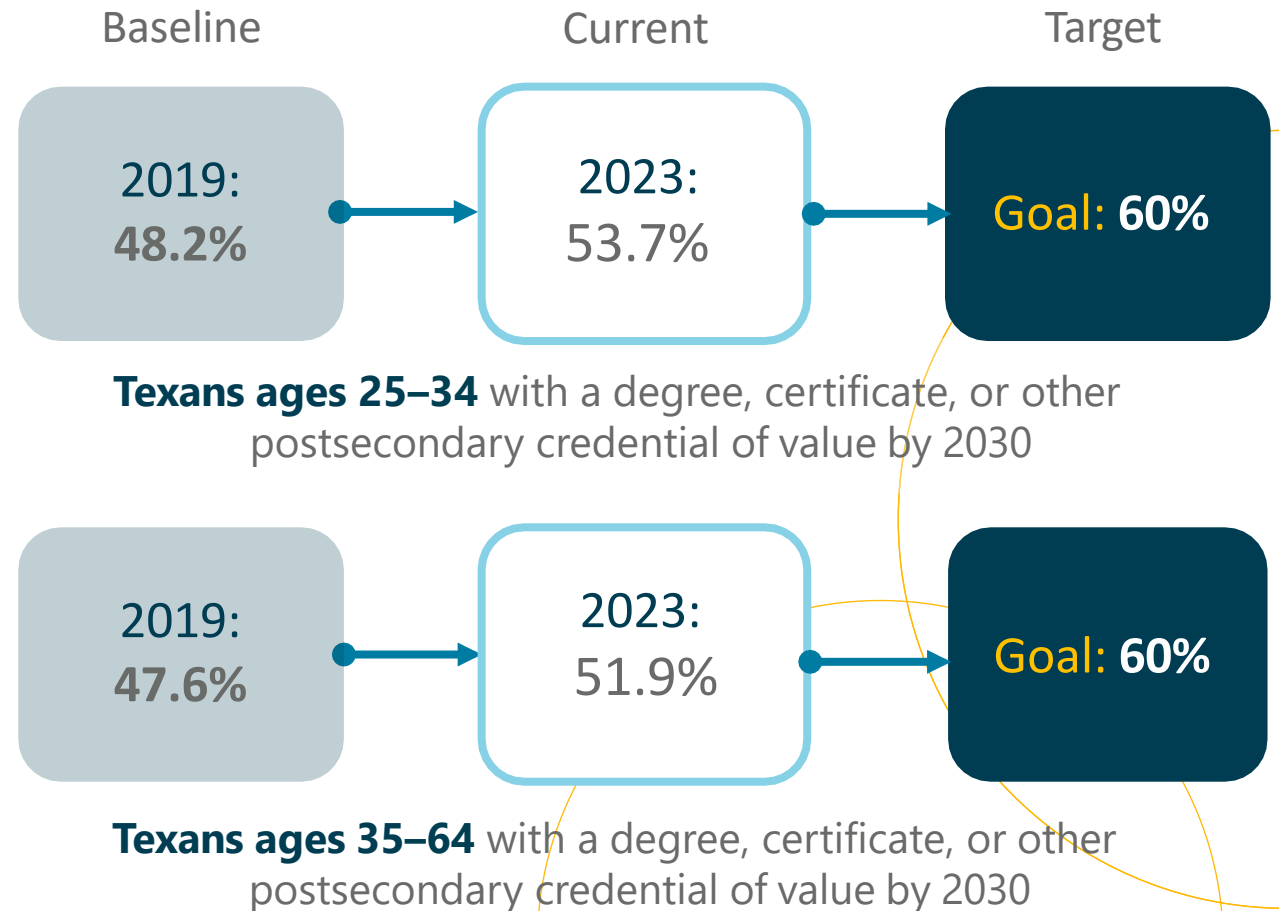
Research,
Development,
and Innovation

Collaboration
by Engaging Public and
Private Sector Stakeholders

Postsecondary Credential Attainment

We expanded our attainment goal to include all working-age Texans:

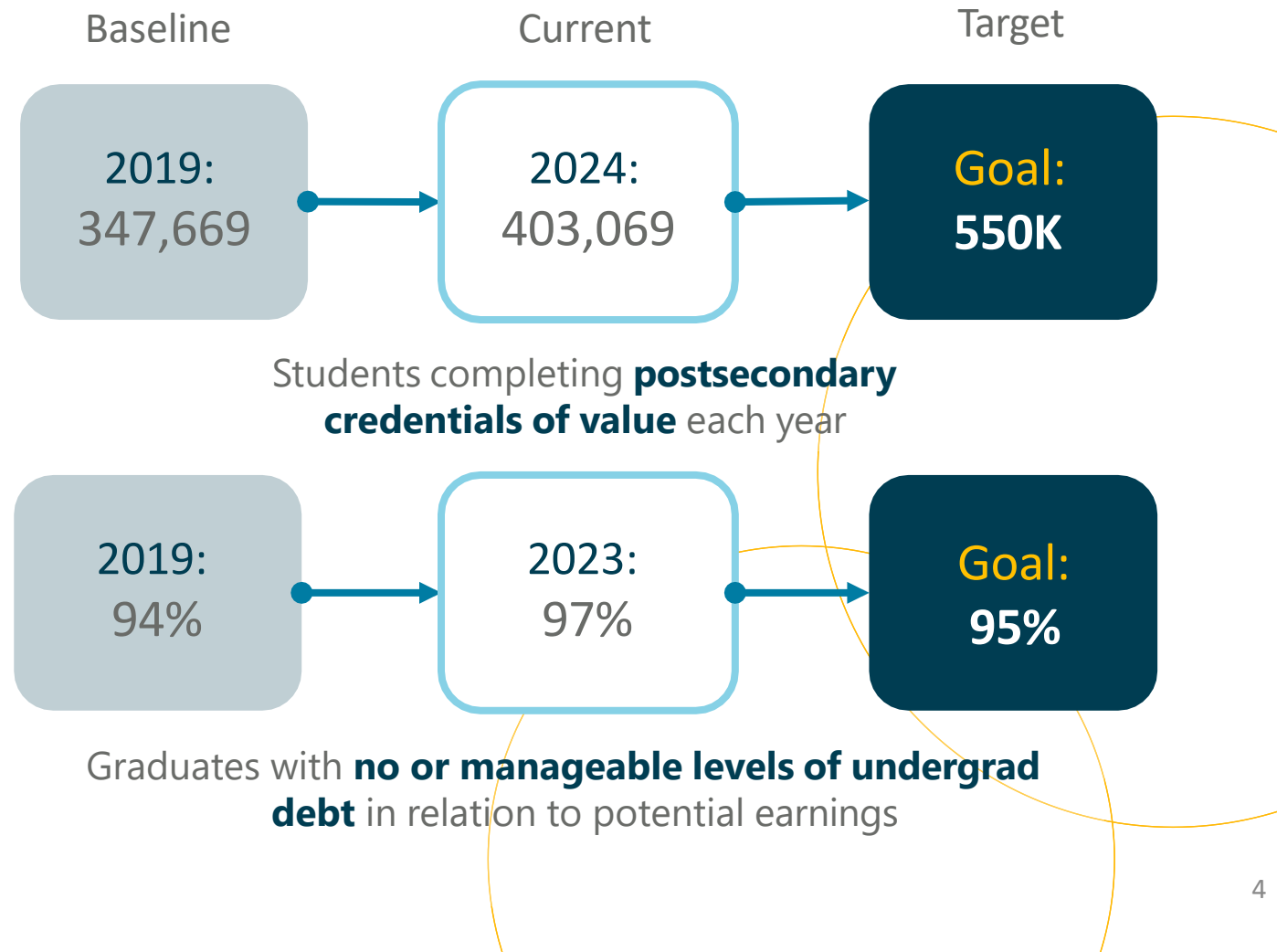
- Increasing lifelong **employment opportunities and advancement**
- Creating a **deeper talent pool** for employers
- Ensuring **educational and workforce alignment** to support our state's future economic competitiveness



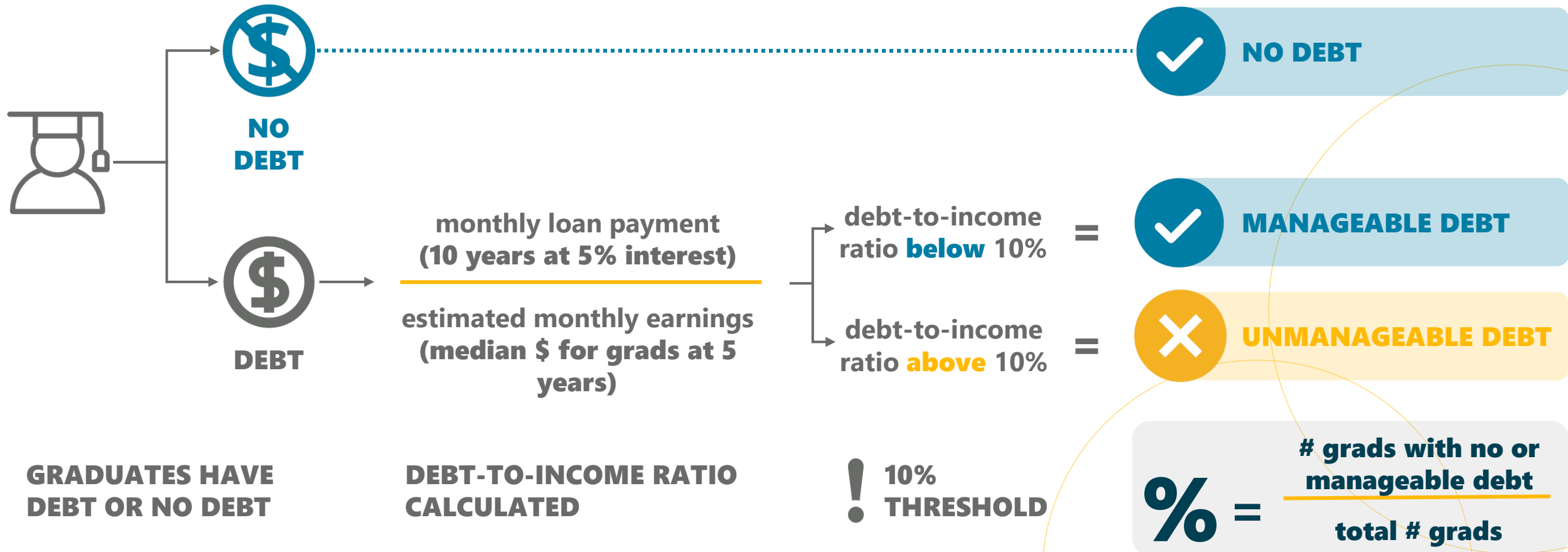
Postsecondary Credentials of Value

Credentials from Texas institutions of higher education must provide a positive return on investment:

- Economic **benefits exceed the costs** to receive them.
- Students have **no debt or manageable student debt** in relation to potential earnings.
- Programs help students progress efficiently toward completion and **align with career opportunities**.



Desired student debt-to-income ratio is 10% or lower



Texas Tri-Agency Initiative: Aligning the Talent Pipeline

Launched in March 2016, this collaborative effort brings together **the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Texas Workforce Commission** to strategically align and strengthen education, training, and workforce development in three priority areas:



Pathways

Supporting flexible, efficient pathways to short-term credentials, degrees, & certificates, with a focus on high-demand fields.



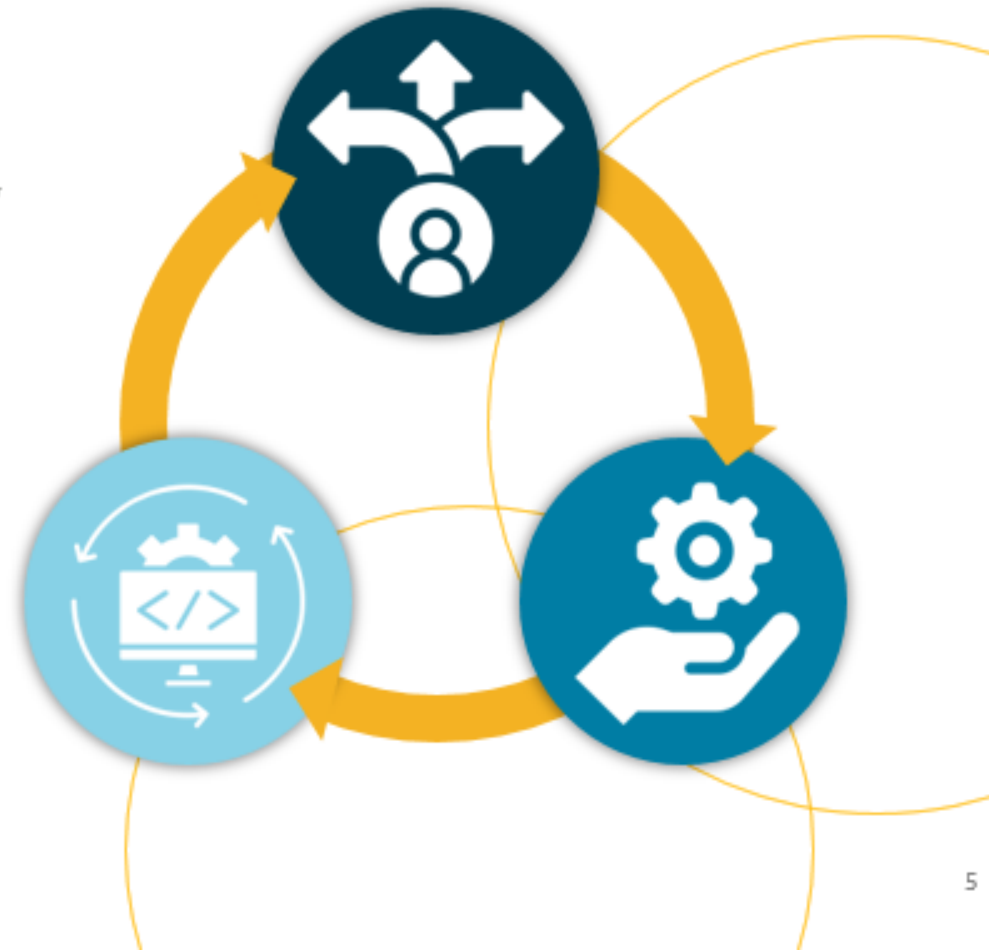
Support

Ensuring learners receive necessary support through all education, training, & workforce transitions.



Infrastructure

Building & coordinating systems, data, & processes to improve outcomes and align with employer/industry needs.



State Outlook

Forces of Change in Our Economy and Workforce

TRENDS

1

Over 60% of jobs in Texas will require some higher education

2

Skills required by employers are changing faster than ever before

3

Workers without education beyond high school suffered greatest job losses during the pandemic

IMPLICATIONS

Pathway to long-term economic mobility runs through higher education

Higher education needs to be more agile and responsive to meet changing needs

Equitable economic recovery requires boosting credential attainment and upskilling/reskilling workers

Sources: Carnevale, A. P., Smith, N., & Strohl, J. (2013). Recovery: Job growth and education requirements through 2020; Sigelman et al. (2022). Shifting skills, moving targets, and remaking the workforce; Carnevale, A.P., & Wenzinger, E. (2020). Tracking the Covid-19 economic devastation.

Texas-Sized Impact:

Supporting the World's 8th Largest Economy



WORKFORCE

Our state leads the nation
with almost
650,000 job openings



OPPORTUNITY

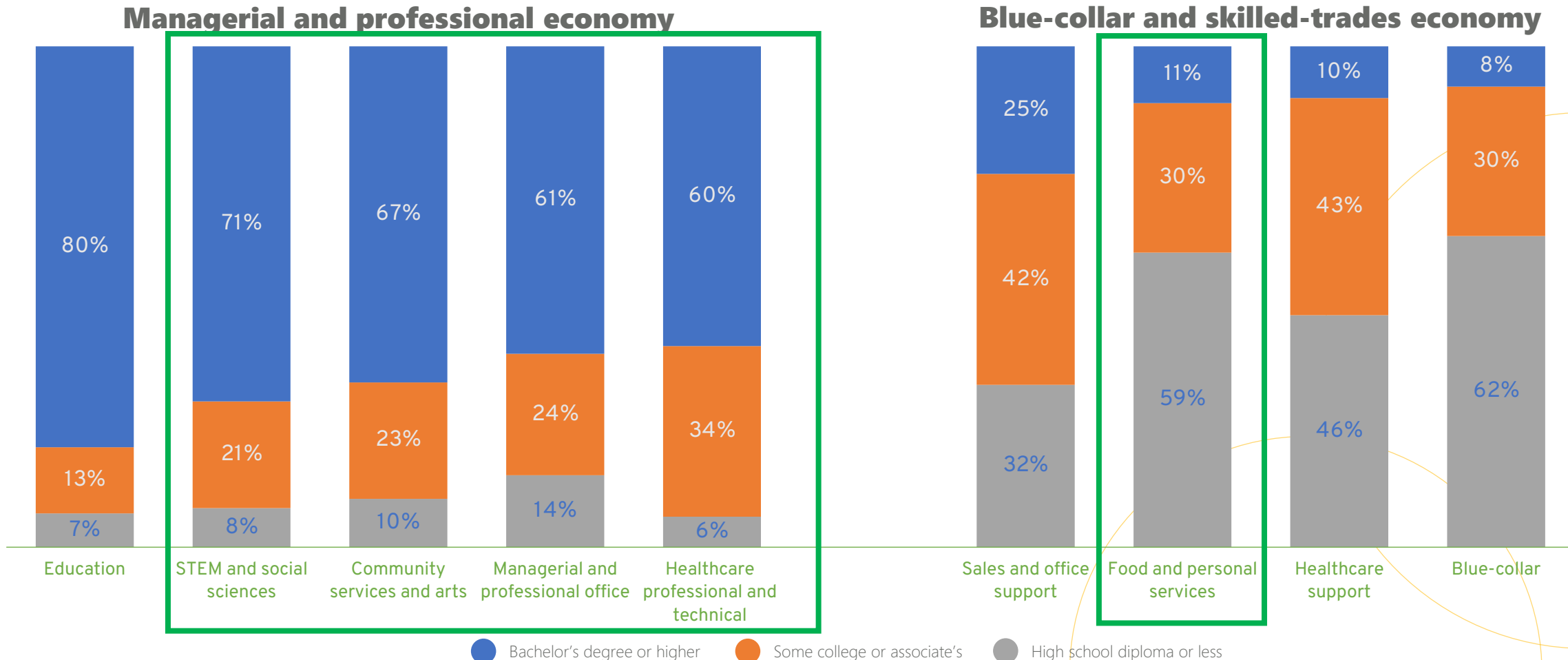
Nearly 1 out of every 10 jobs
across the U.S. is located
in Texas



INDUSTRY

1 out of every 8
employers
is housed within our state

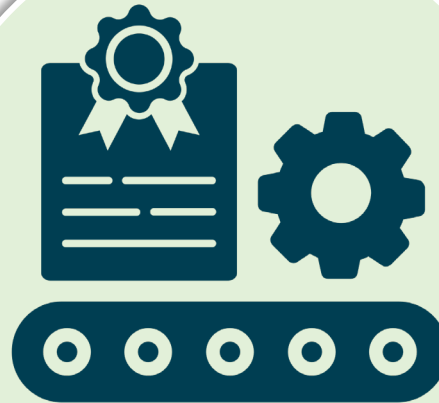
Will growth lead to opportunities for economic prosperity for all Texans?



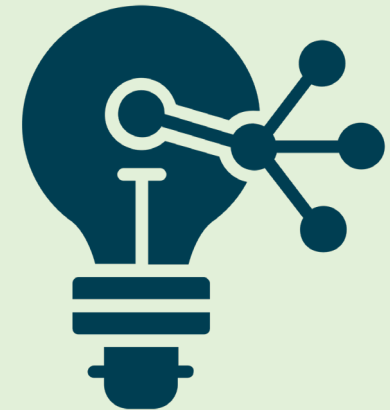
Continued economic competitiveness depends on higher education



Increase in **educational and skills attainment** required for good jobs



Greater **productivity of the talent pipeline** between secondary and postsecondary education



Attraction of **capital investments for research and development** aligned to core industries

Addressing workforce needs through new higher education models

Workforce Demand Signals

37%

of the average worker's skills have been **replaced or upgraded** to keep up with changing demands

22%

of skills in demand by employers are **entirely new** since 2016

28%

of all tasks within current jobs will be **automated** by 2031

Key Components for Higher Education



Value for Students

Equip and support students to participate in a dynamic workforce



Employer Engagement

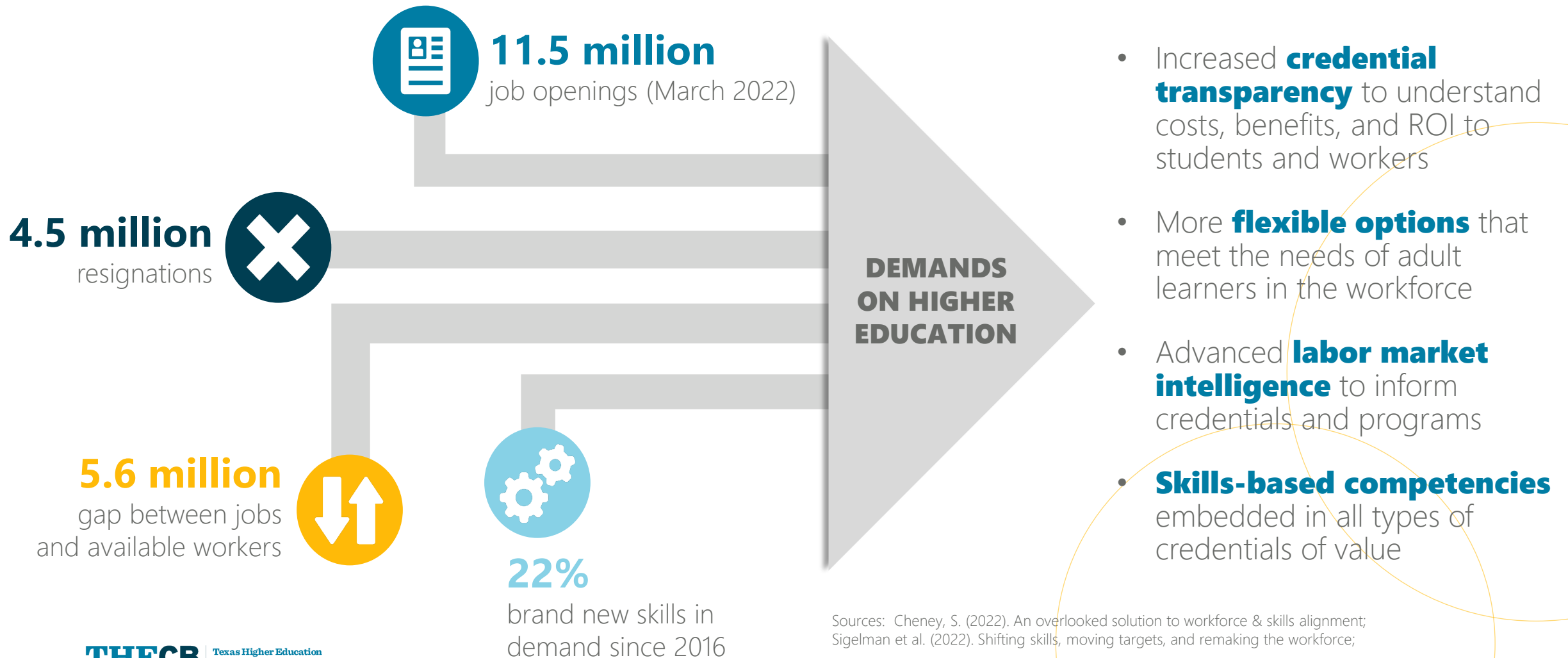
Help employers address urgent and future business needs



Public Confidence

Expand higher education's impact for individuals and communities

Economic signals shape the demands on higher education and its delivery



89th Texas Legislature

An Overview of Key Legislation

View the Complete Summary Report: Higher Education Legislation During the 89th Session



Priority Areas for the 89th Legislature: Accelerating Progress Towards Goals



AFFORDABILITY

Increasing higher education affordability for students to increase enrollment, completion



INCENTIVES FOR IMPACT

Aligning incentives in funding formulas to Talent Strong Texas goals and priorities



WORKFORCE NEEDS

Addressing critical workforce needs in key sectors of the state's economy



RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Boosting investments in research, development, and innovation at institutions

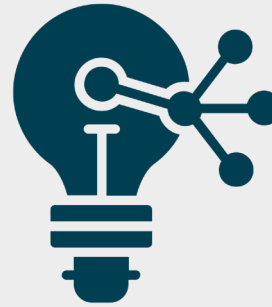
Sustaining Our Momentum: Support for THECB Exceptional Items



\$320.3 M

Student Financial Aid

Expanding student opportunity
and increasing affordability
through strategic investments



\$400.9 M

Research Initiatives

Advancing research programs
at Texas public institutions of higher
education



\$15 M

Technology Modernization

Partial restoration of base
funding for ongoing technology
modernization efforts

Student Financial Aid

Increased Portability & Predictability

\$320.3 M
in additional
financial support for
students across
Texas

Provide guaranteed state aid to eligible HS students who graduate in the top 25% of their class

Allow TEOG grant recipients at 2-year IHEs to continue receiving aid through the Texas Grant when transferring to a 4-year IHE

Maintain the current Texas Leadership Scholars Program cohort size at 300

Expand Texas Leadership Research Scholars to recruit more high-achieving doctoral students to Texas public institutions (2026: cohort of 100; 2027: cohort of 300)

Increase in maximum award for the Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program from \$15,000 to \$30,000

Expand access to financial aid by increasing the number of eligible students served by Texas Grants, TEG, and TEOG programs to 67.5%

Expanding Educational Opportunities **for** Texans



SB 2314

My Texas Future

Expands awareness and utilization of MTF & Direct Admissions, two tools designed to help make college and career pathways more accessible, navigable, and student-focused



SB 2231

Free College Application Week

Enables Texans to apply to any public college or university without paying an application fee, during the second full week in October, encouraging more students to take the first step towards higher education



SB 1786

Community College Finance

Continues to build outcomes-based funding by ensuring colleges are rewarded when students transfer to private Texas universities, defining credentials of value in statute, & establishing a wage threshold

From Policy to Practice: Shaping the Future of Texas Higher Education



PERFORMANCE-BASED FUNDING EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Conduct a comprehensive study, with a 21-member committee, to develop performance-based funding recommendations for public, four-year Texas institutions aimed at increasing student success and aligning education to workforce outcomes



GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Evaluate how general education courses are selected and consider strategies to streamline the 42-hour core, currently comprised of over 14,000 course options, to create more streamlined and navigable pathways to credentials of value

General Education Curriculum Advisory Committee



September
2025



September-
November
2025



December
2025 -
February
2026



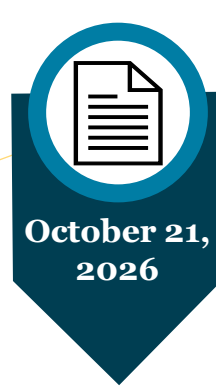
February –
April 2026



June – July
2026



August 1,
2026



October 21,
2026

Committee Began Convening

Advisory Committee begins their one-year series of convenings

Landscape. Analysis & Context Setting

Review of Similar Work in Other States and Research on Topic

Exploration

Sub-Groups begin meeting for specialized topic exploration

Stakeholder Engagement

THECB gathered input on the knowledge and skills students need from GEC for workforce readiness and long-term success

Recommendation & Design

Develop a synthesis of discovery findings with leading themes from exploration

Writing & Final Report

Writing will happen throughout the process and the GEC report will be given to the Commissioner

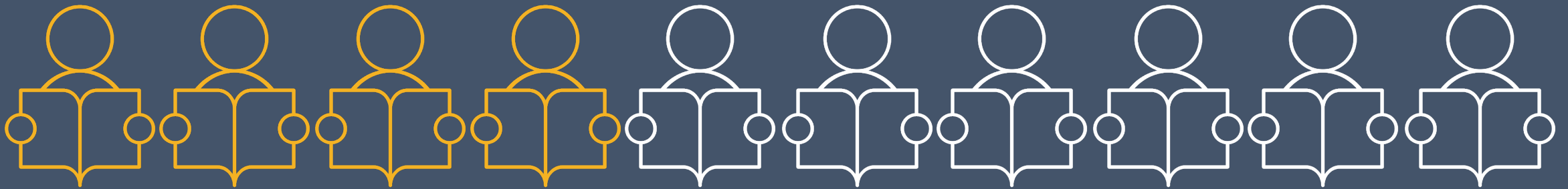
Report to THECB Board

The GEC Report will be given to the THECB for review and next steps

90th Texas Legislature

Context Setting

For too many Texas students, high school graduation is the end of the educational journey rather than the beginning of a career pathway

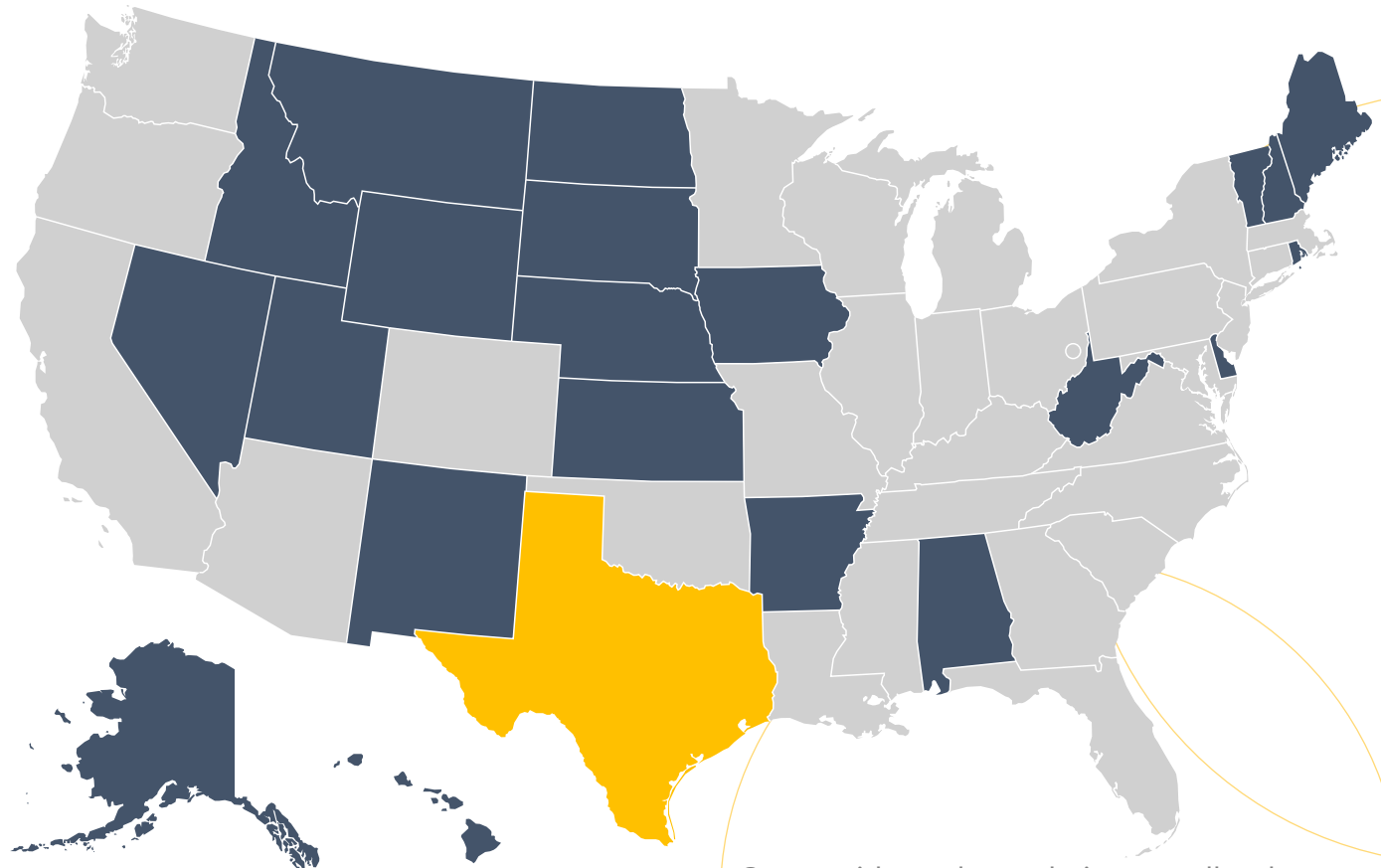


With 4 out of every 10 Texas students
not pursuing education beyond high school

The Texas Story: A Talent Pipeline to Scale Economic Growth

With 3.7 million Texans ages 16–24, **Texas has a youth population larger than the total population of 21 U.S. states**, representing a powerful potential pipeline of future workers.

Turning this opportunity into sustained economic growth will require higher education to align, adapt, and innovate on a Texas-sized scale.



■ States with total populations smaller than Texas's 16-24-year-old population.

Talent Scarcity Across the Nation

TRENDS

1

Between 2024 and 2032, 18.4M postsecondary-educated workers will retire, while only 13.8M similarly educated young workers will enter the labor market.

2

Over the same period, 685,000 net new jobs will require some college, meaning the U.S. will need approximately 5.25M additional workers with education or training beyond high school.

3

As of December 2025, job openings fell to the lowest level since 2020, yet employers continue to report difficulty filling specific skilled roles, particularly those requiring technical, credentialed, or postsecondary preparation.

IMPLICATIONS

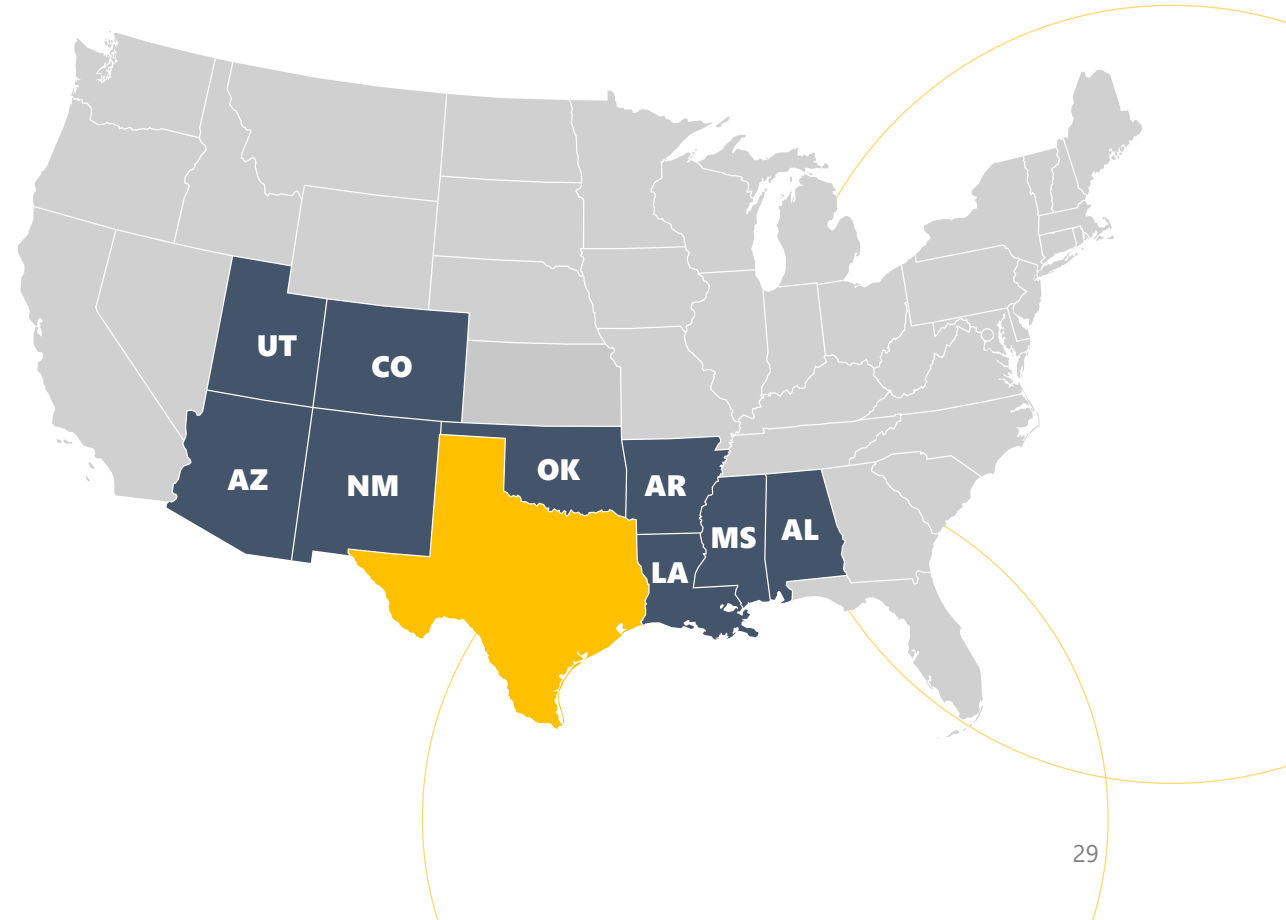
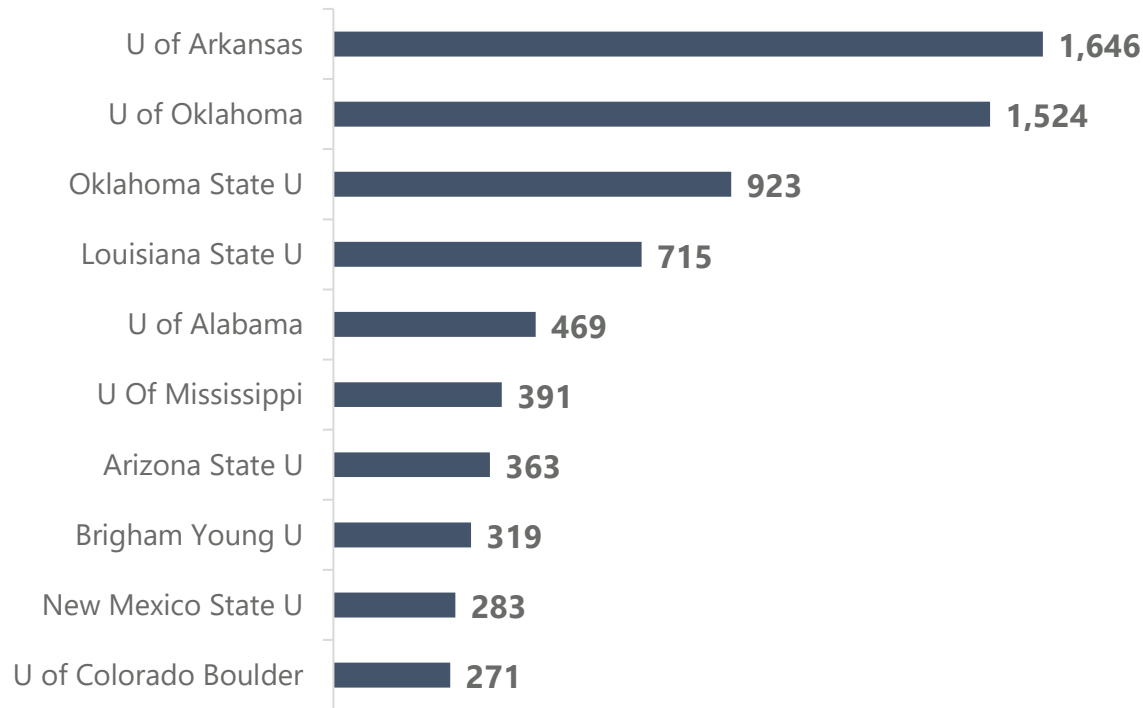
A structural shortfall of **4.6M educated workers**, even before accounting for economic growth, leaves a labor market not replenishing postsecondary talent fast enough to replace retirees.

Postsecondary systems must both **replace** retiring workers and **supply new growth**, a dual challenge they are not positioned to meet at current production levels.

This is **not a broad labor shortage**. Rather, it is a **skills and alignment shortage**, where available workers do not match employer needs.

A Pull Toward Neighboring States: Growing Competition for Texas Talent

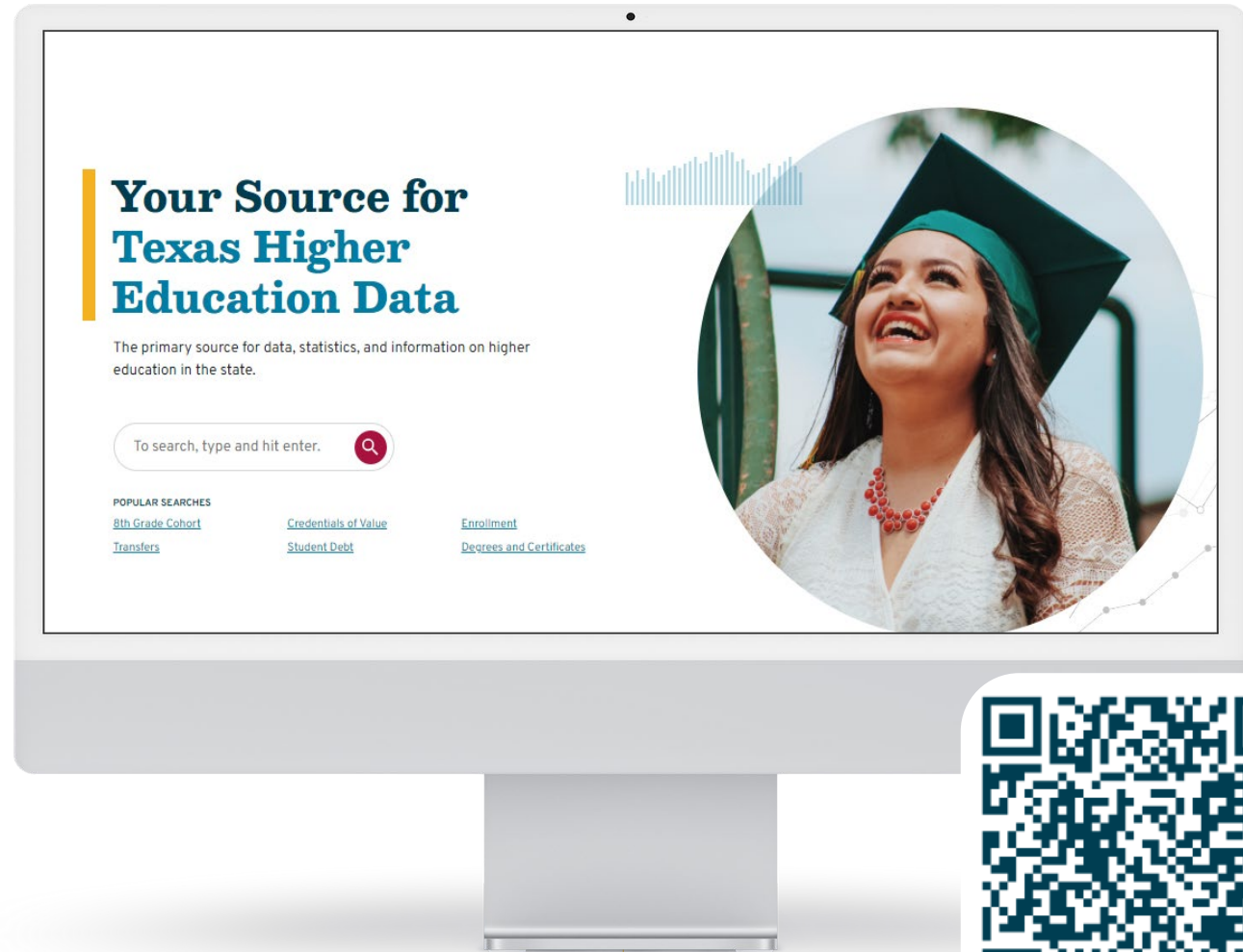
Institutions in neighboring states with shrinking youth populations recruited nearly 7,000 Texas high school graduates in 2023. Comprising 26% of those attending college outside of Texas, many of these students pursued high-demand credentials (ex. business management, health professions, & engineering) critical to our state's continued economic growth & competitiveness.



Understanding Value in Texas Higher Education

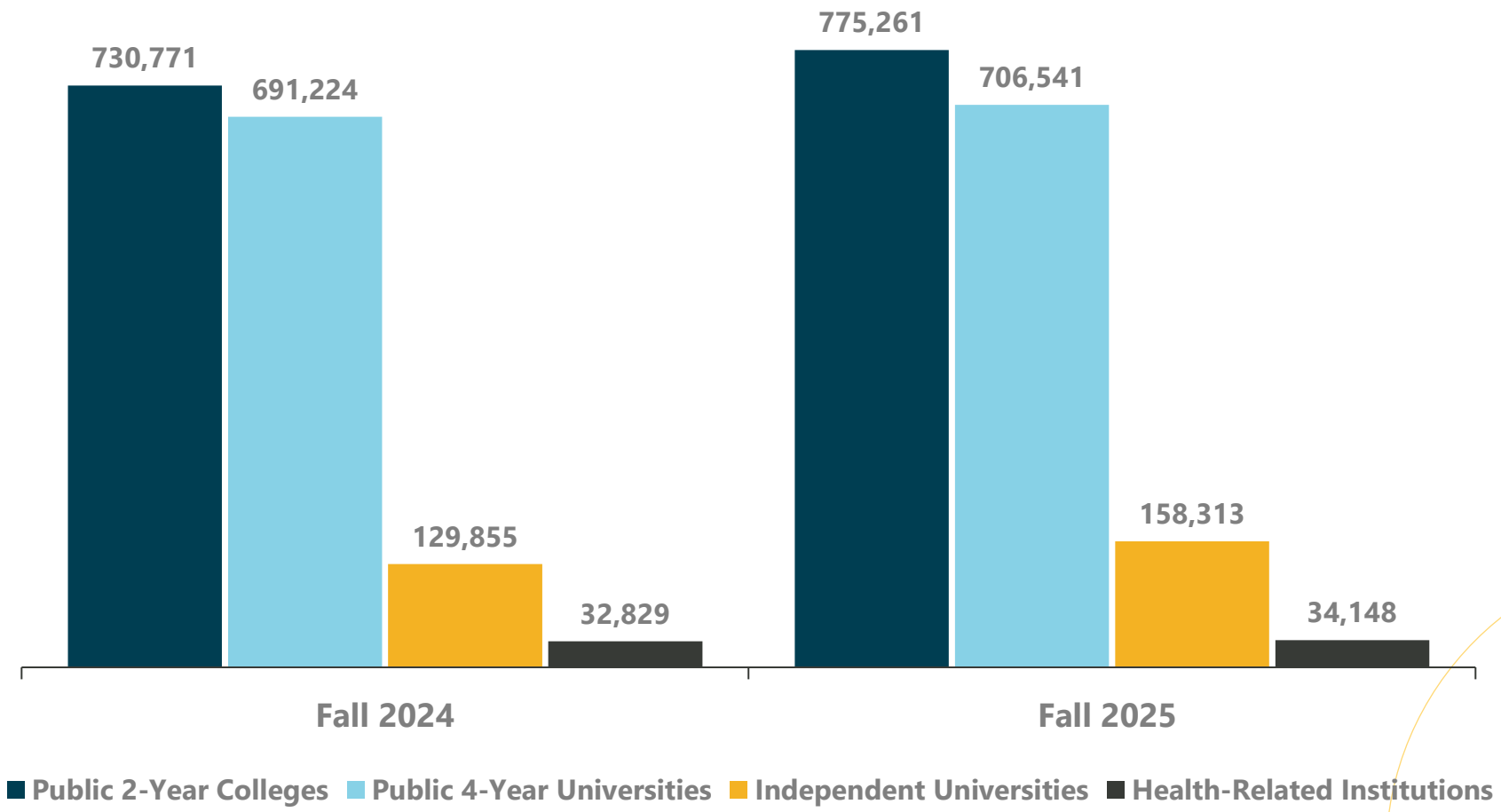
Explore the many ways Texans can examine **how education connects to earnings, workforce outcomes, and both short- and long-term opportunities.**

THECB leads this effort by **integrating education data with wage records** from the Texas Workforce Commission, **creating a comprehensive and transparent view of value** across the state.



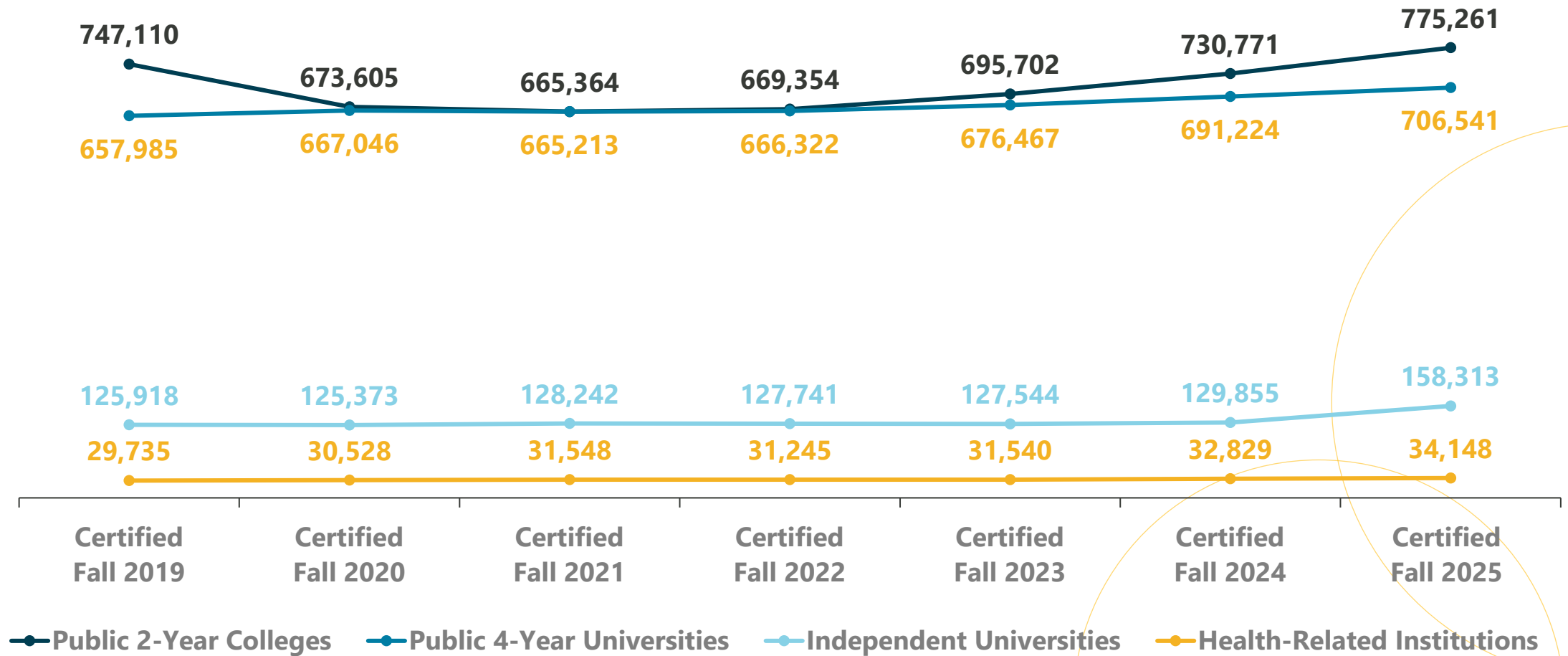
Enrollment Trends

Texas Colleges & Universities Report Record Fall Enrollment

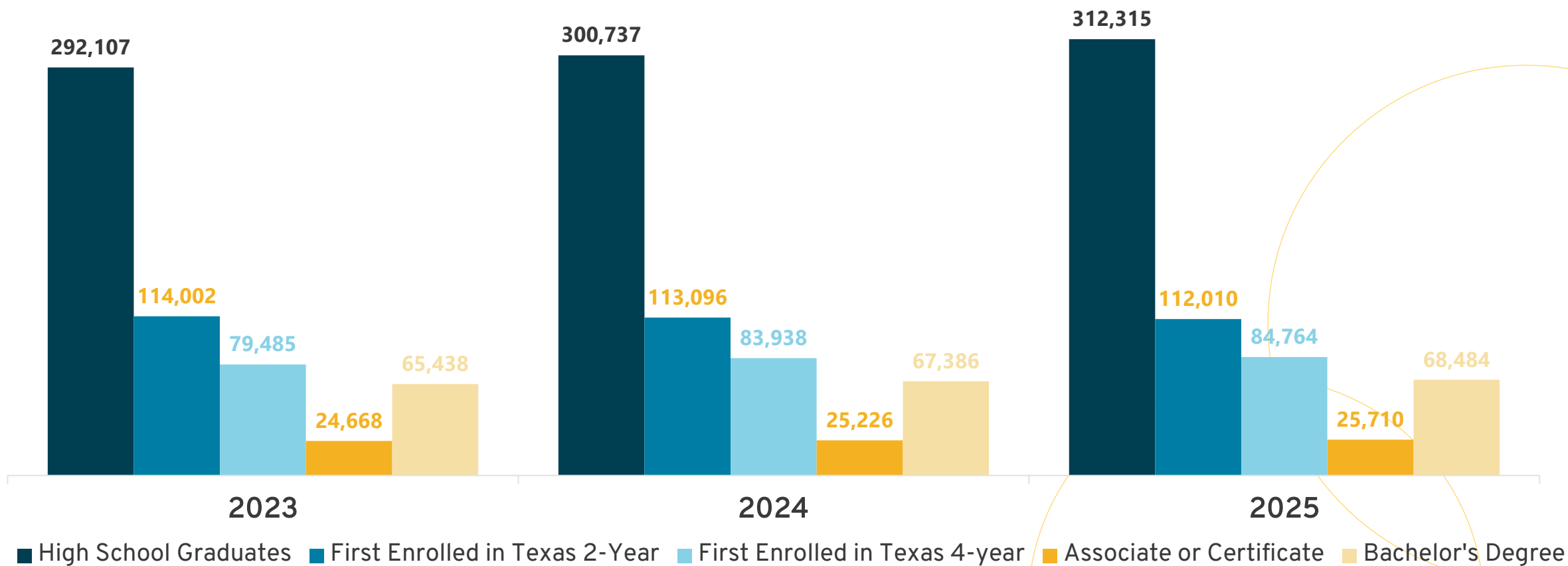


% CHANGE FROM FALL 2024-FALL 2025	
Public 2-Yr Colleges:	+6.1%
Public Universities:	+2.2%
Independent Institutions:	+6.7%
Health-Related Institutions:	+4%
Total	+4.7%

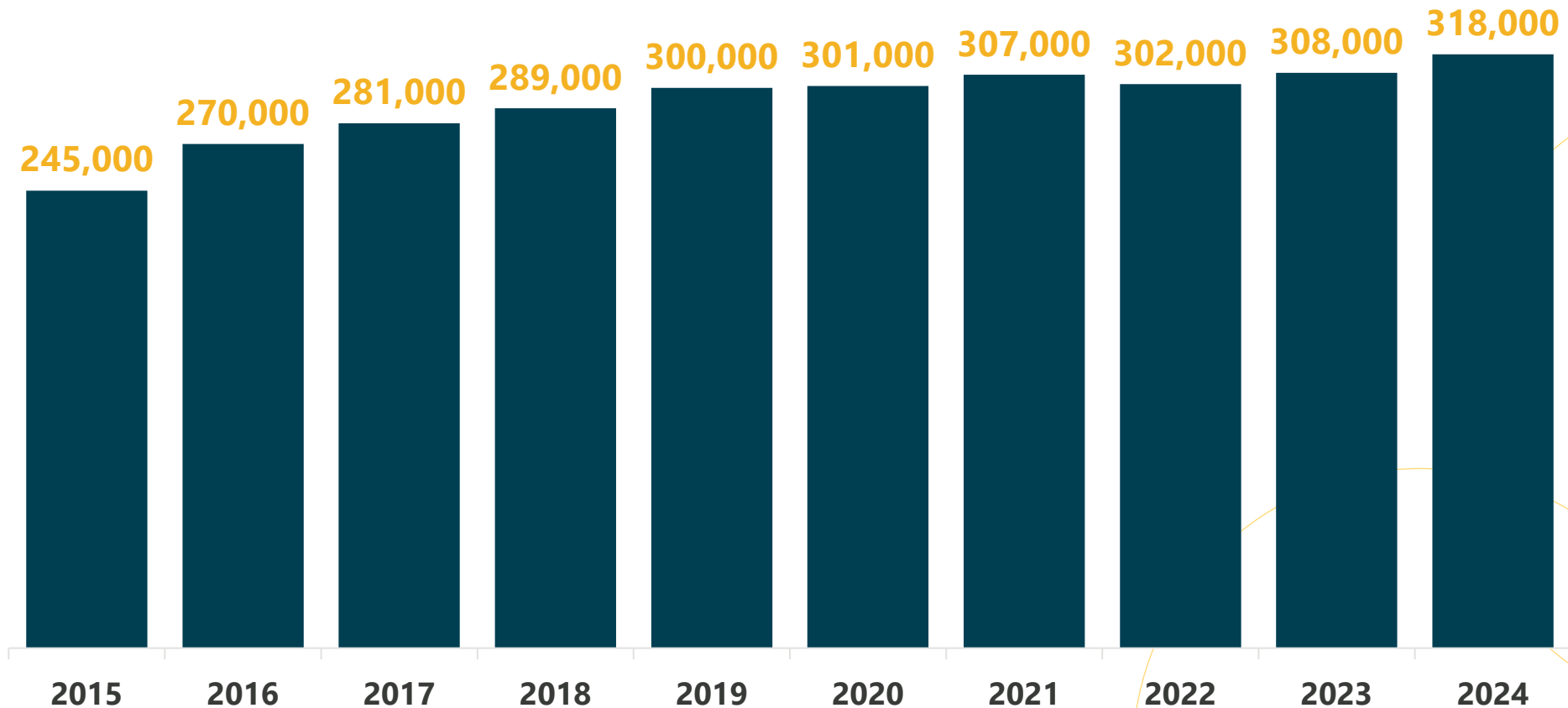
Enrollment at Texas Colleges & Universities Reaches Record Levels



Statewide Attainment: Trends from 2022-2024



More Texans are Earning Degrees and Certificates Each Year

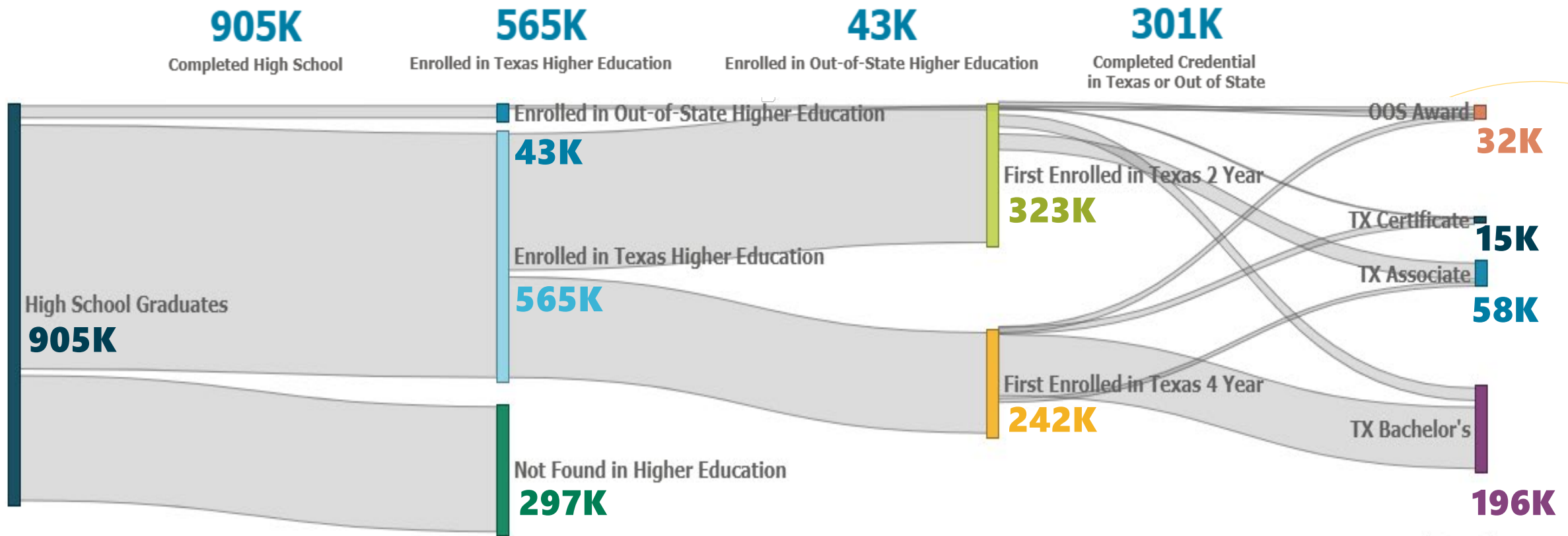


One in Three

Expanding the Reach of Higher Education in Texas

Students Lost Along the Path to Completion

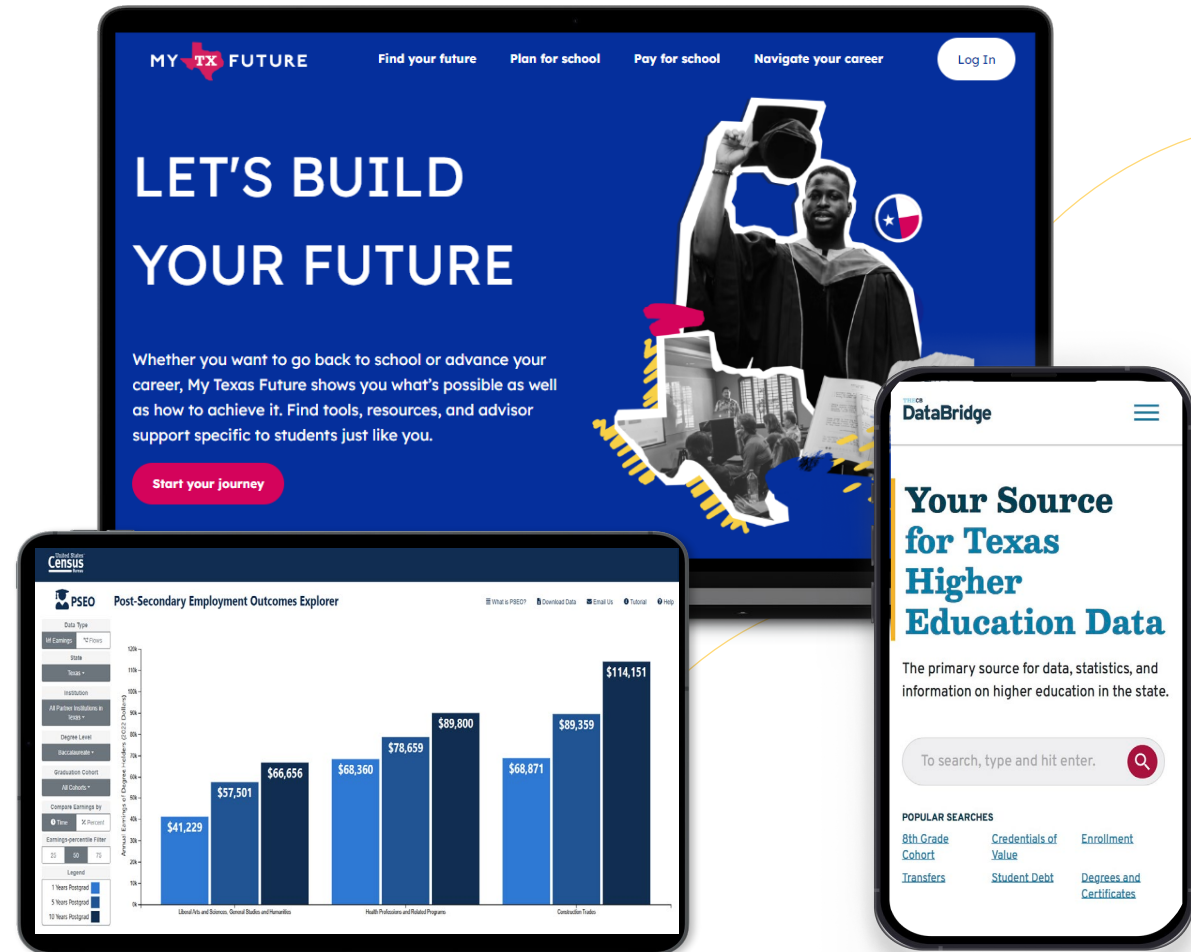
Flow of Texas Public High School Graduates into Higher Education
Statewide (3-Year Combined Cohort)



Creating Tools & Cultivating Data Literacy: Making information more accessible and actionable

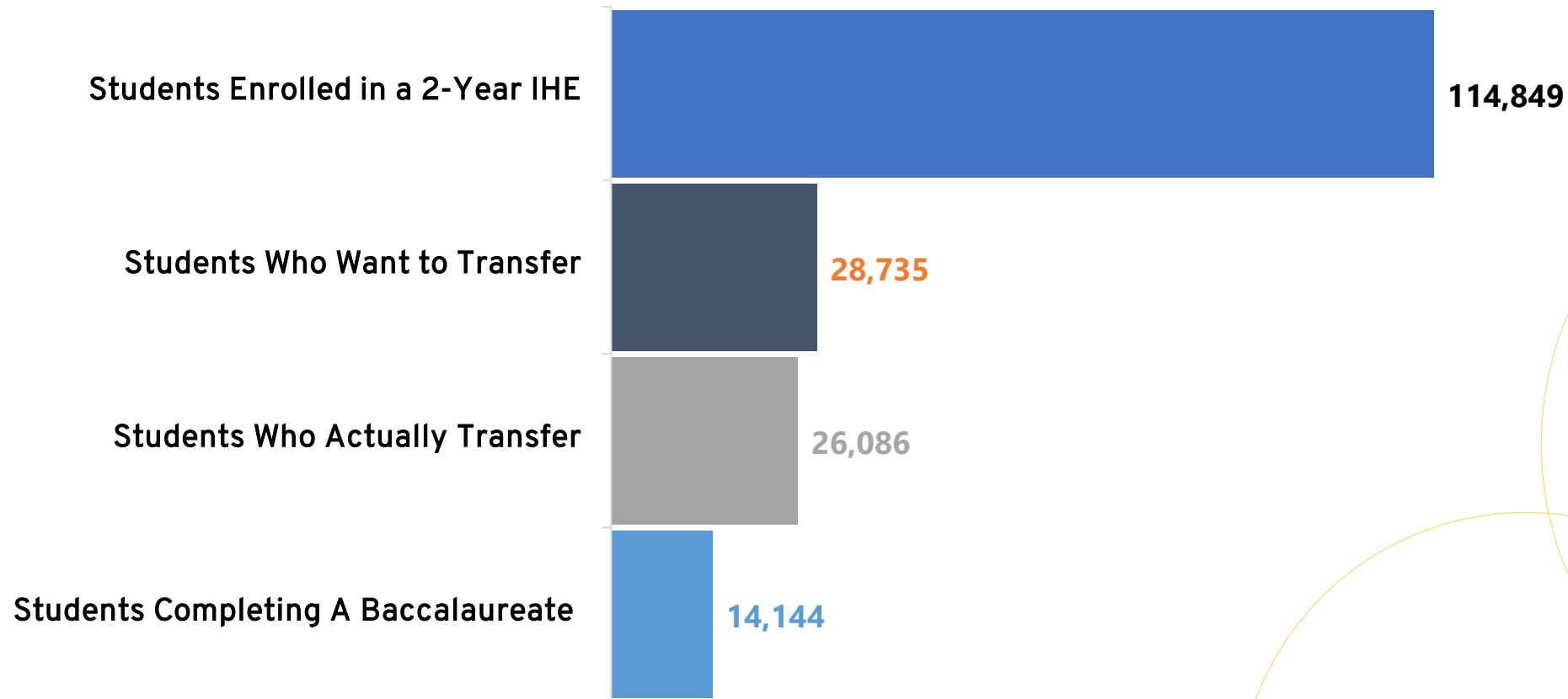
To overcome these obstacles, we can help expand awareness and use of data tools that enable students and families to:

- **Access data** to see where different pathways lead
- **Make data-informed decisions** about what comes next in their educational journey



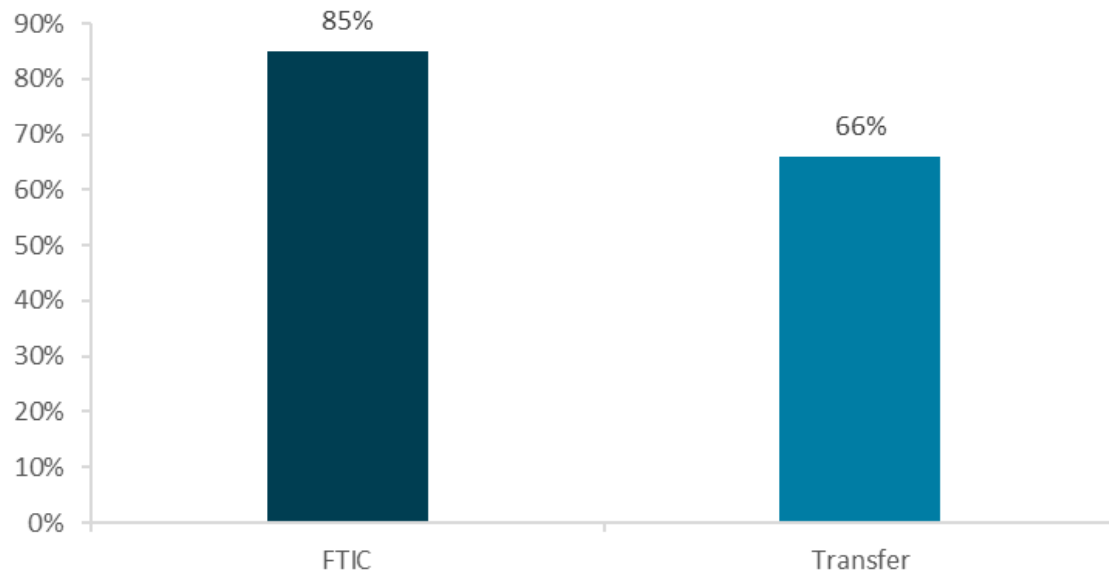
Texas Transfer Update

From 2-Year to 4-Year: Enrollment to Graduation



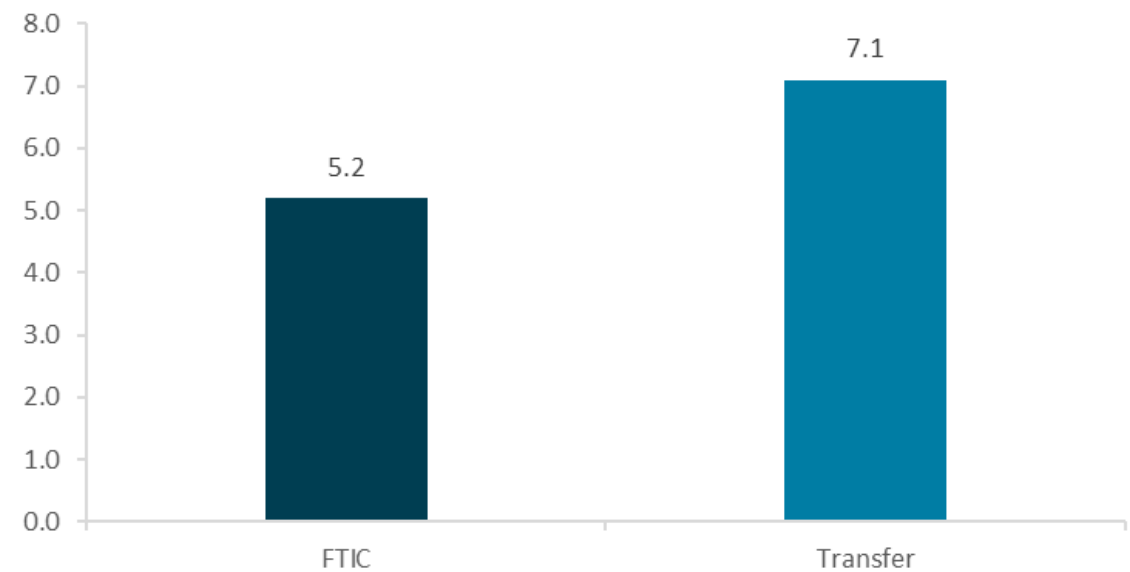
Transfer Student Outcomes

Completion Rate by Student Type, 2024



Percentage of students graduating in four years after achieving junior status

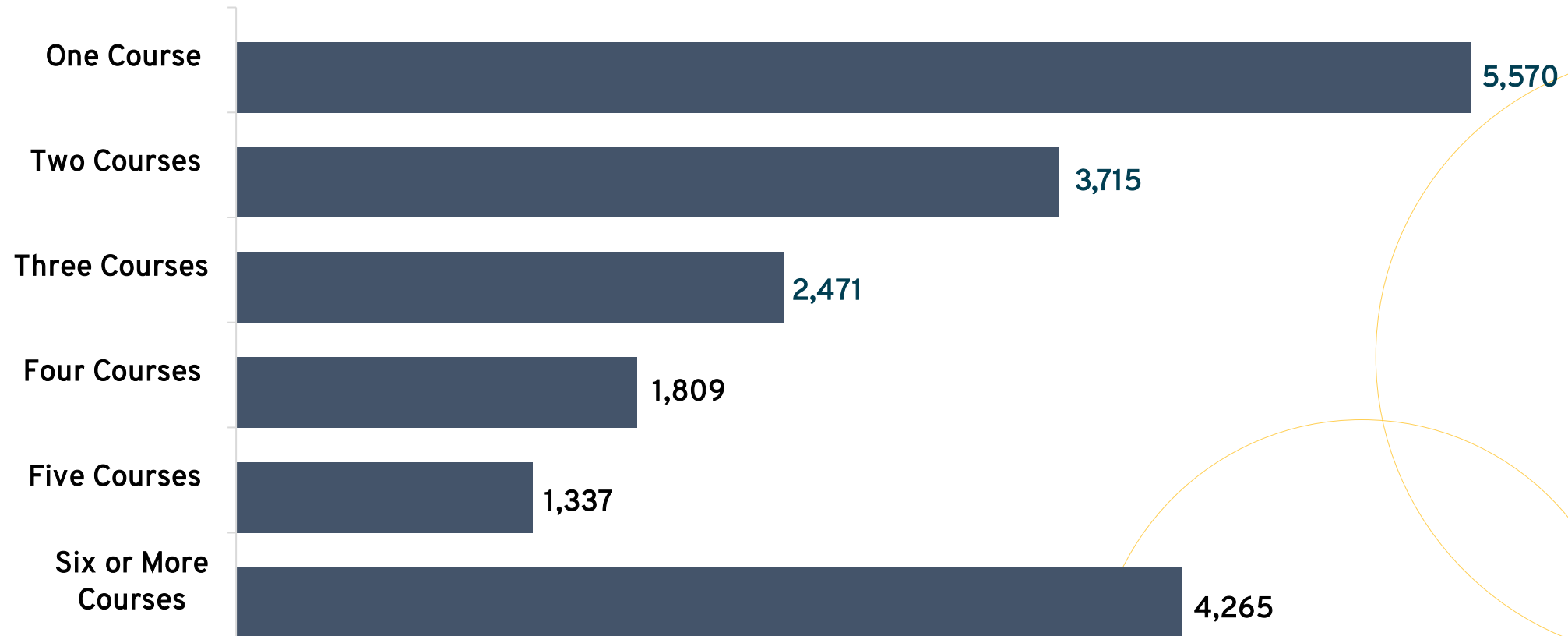
Time to Degree By Student Type, 2024



Average number of years from first enrollment in higher education to graduation

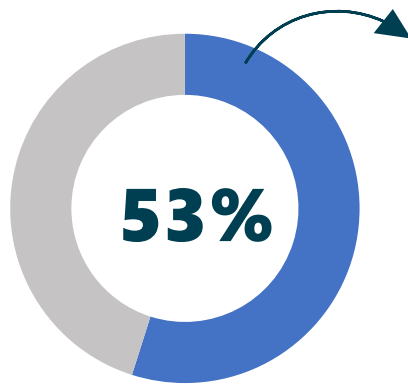
Barriers to Credit Mobility: Courses Lost in Transfer

Approximately **49% of students have three or more courses denied** when they transfer from a two-year to a four-year institution.



A Closer Look: Courses Denied Transfer

Top Reason for Transfer Course Denials

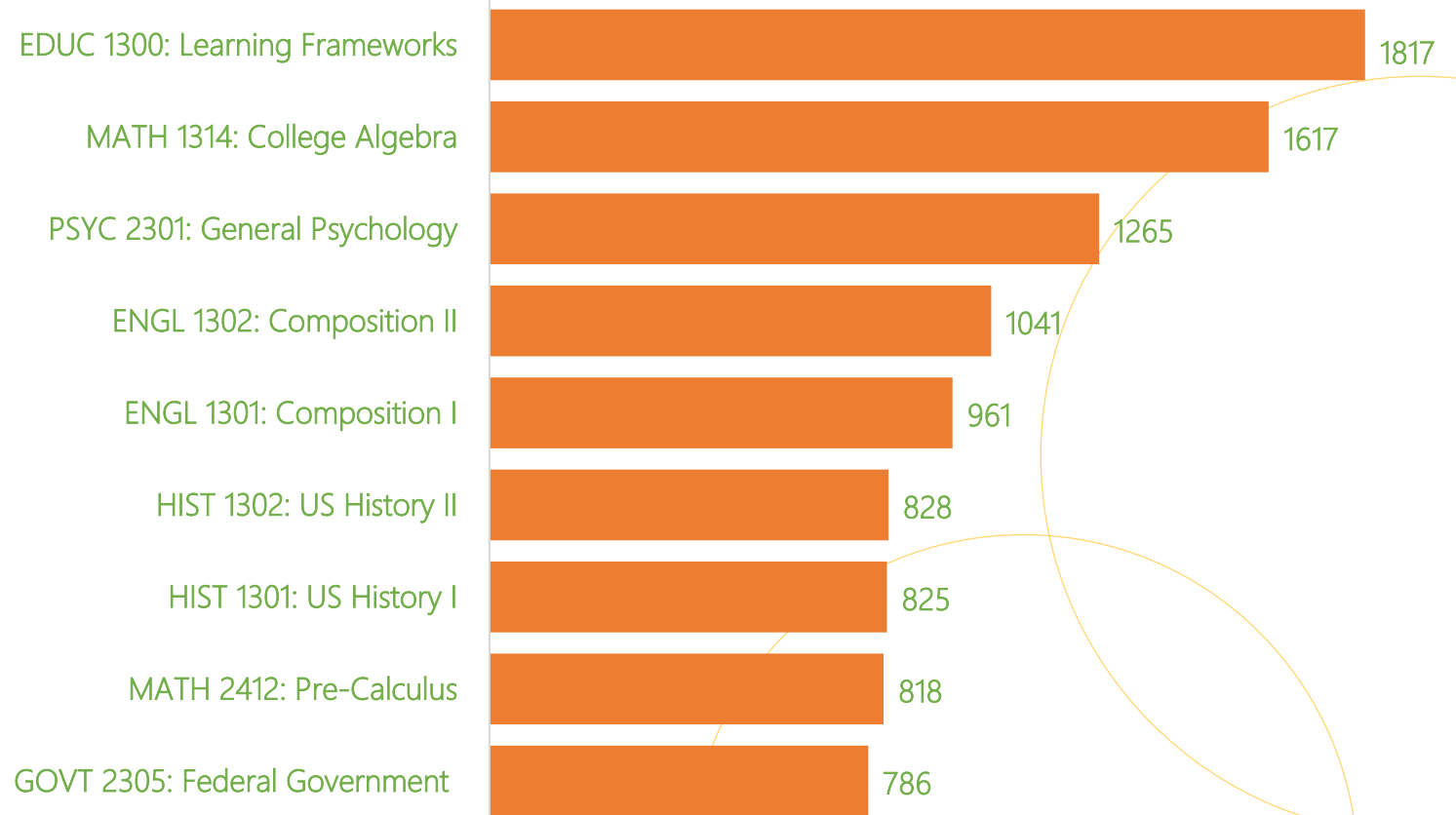


Of all transfer courses were denied because they were outside degree requirements

Top Degree Areas with Courses Denied Transfer Due to Degree Requirements

- Education
- Psychology
- Biology
- Computer Science
- Accounting & Related Purposes

Top Courses Denied Transfer: Outside Degree Requirement



Texas Transfer Framework and Texas Direct

Texas Transfer Framework Policy Tools



LOWER-DIVISION ACADEMIC COURSE GUIDE MANUAL (ACGM)

A course inventory of lower-division academic undergraduate courses and course descriptions required for community colleges



TEXAS COMMON COURSE NUMBERING SYSTEM (TCCNS)

A standard method of numbering courses consisting of four letters and four digits (e.g., ENGL 1301)



TEXAS CORE CURRICULUM (TCC)

A fully transferrable block of general education courses required for all academic undergraduate students in Texas



FIELD OF STUDY CURRICULUM (FOSC)

Discipline-specific pathways that are developed with the assistance of the Texas Transfer Advisory Committee (TTAC)

Which fields of study are currently approved?

Revised FOS	Status of Implementation (as of January 2026)
1. Business Administration 2. Criminal Justice 3. Sociology 4. Social Work 5. Political Science 6. Psychology 7. Nursing 8. History (BS) 9. Education – 4-8 10. Education – EC-6 11. Education – EC-3 12. Communications 13. Exercise Science	Approved.
14. Biology	Approved by TTAC and the agency is working to collect directed electives from universities.
15. English	Approved by TTAC and the agency is working to collect directed electives from universities.
16. History (BA)	Approved by TTAC and is currently out for public comment.
17. Computer and Information Sciences	Approved by TTAC and is currently out for public comment.
18. Engineering	Subcommittee was established by TTAC and will meet in the spring.
19. Architecture	Subcommittee was established by TTAC and will meet in the spring.
20. Music	Subcommittee was established by TTAC and will meet in the spring.

Workforce Development

PSEO Coalition: Mission

Powering informed decisions through comprehensive, collaborative, and sustainable integration of nationwide postsecondary graduate outcomes data, driving strategic enhancements across educational and employment landscapes



NATIONWIDE COLLABORATION
40 member states participating in the work to link educational and employment outcomes



ANNUAL CONVENINGS
Providing members with opportunities to learn from fellow states at varying levels of data maturity

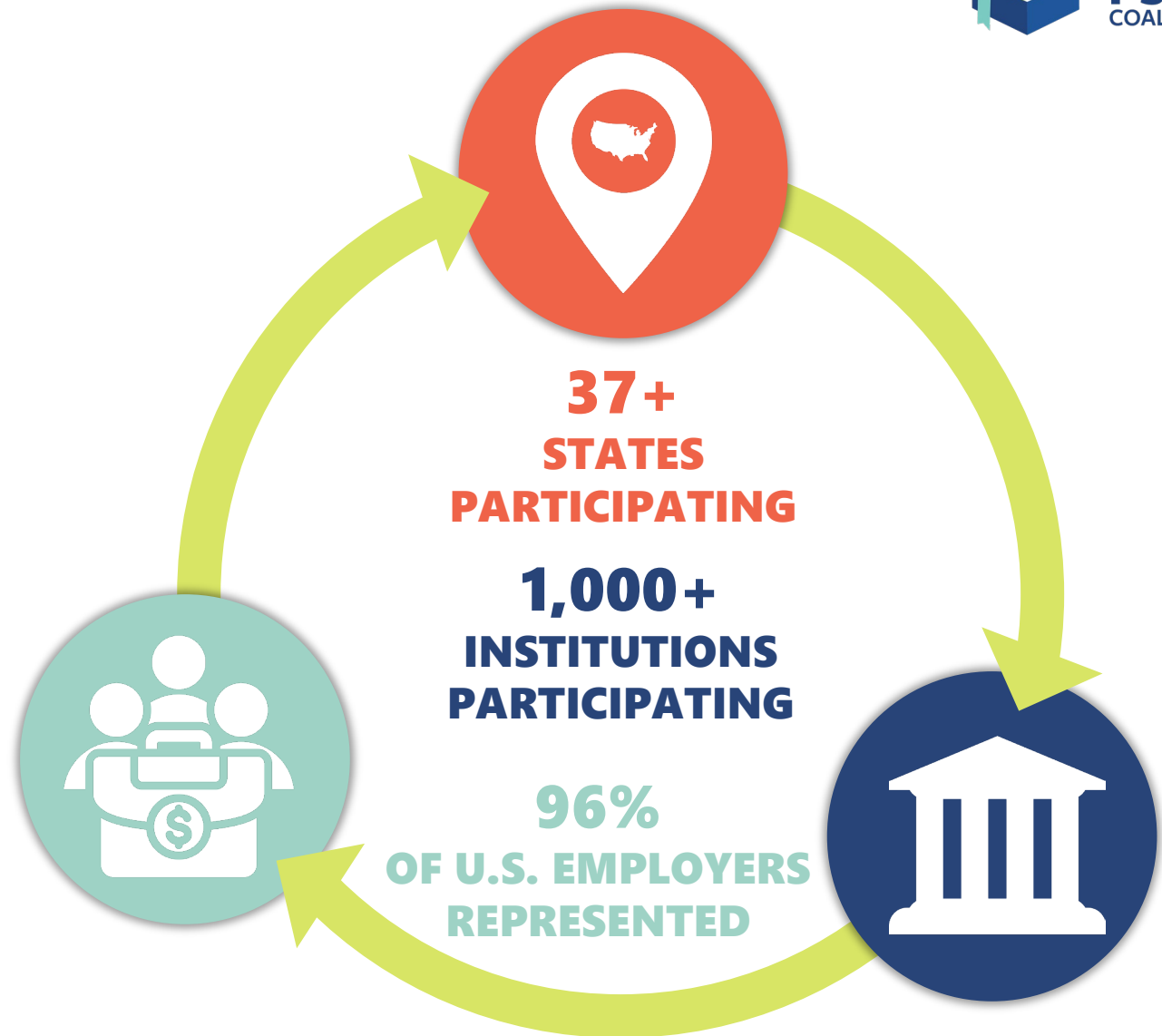


TOOLS & RESOURCES
Including the PSEO Outcomes Explorer, a tool that utilizes data from the U.S. Census Bureau

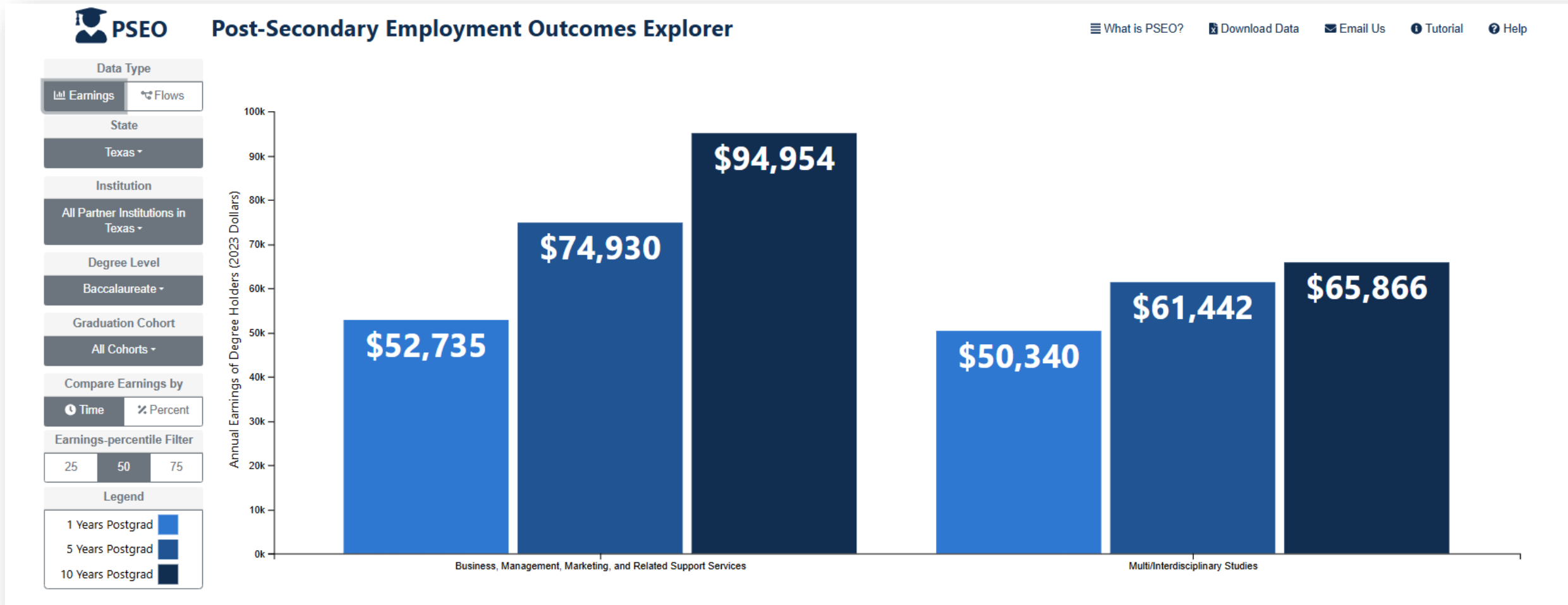
PSEO Coalition: Members



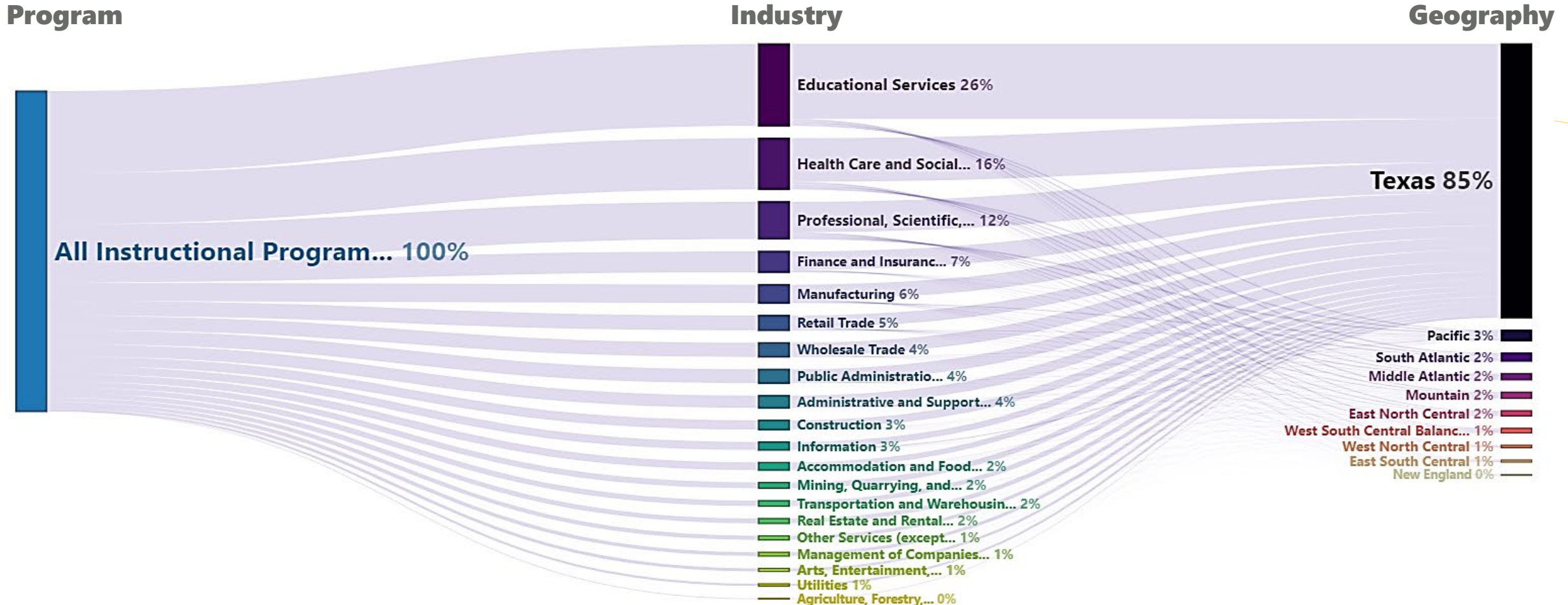
A network of **representatives from colleges, university systems, and state agencies** who **partner with the U.S. Census to provide data** for the PSEO project, and **to exchange ideas and improve the ways that postsecondary outcomes are measured and shared** with decision-makers.



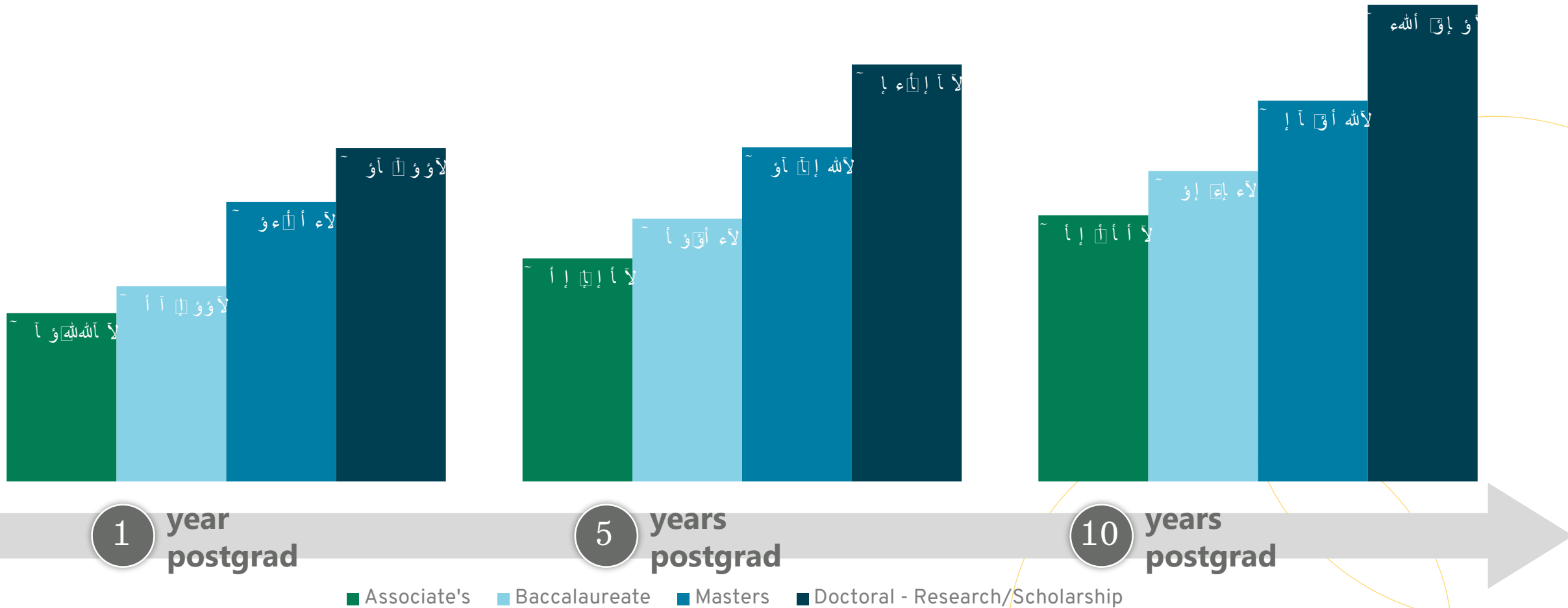
PSEO Texas Data



Texas Public Higher Education: Where are graduates employed after 5 years?



Texas Public Higher Education: What do graduates earn over time?



PSEO Explorer Tool: Earnings, Outcomes, & Employment Flows

The PSEO Explorer Tool is a publicly available data product from the U.S. Census Bureau containing **earnings outcomes** and **employment flows** for recent graduates of partner colleges and universities.



Thank You!