



**RGV FOCUS**

*a collaboration with Educate Texas*

# **RGV FOCUS: Leaders Working Together to Increase Latino Educational Attainment**

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**THECB Student Success Summit 2015**

**July 14, 2015**



# RGV FOCUS Overview

# Executive Summary



In 2012, *RGV FOCUS* was launched to transform college readiness, access, and success across the four counties of Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, and Willacy.

*RGV FOCUS* is a Collective Impact initiative established by a cross-sector group of leaders, the “Leadership Team”, and has met regularly to identify assets and needs in the RGV, adopt a common vision, and establish shared goals, strategies, and metrics. The work to date is driven by the following vision: *All RGV learners will achieve a degree or credential that leads to a meaningful career.*

## ***RGV FOCUS* and the Leadership Team have been focused on the following three areas:**

- Engagement – Ensuring the Leadership Team and Action Groups are actively participating in scoping the plan going forward
- Activation – Identifying, disseminating, and advancing effective strategies with our partners to help achieve our shared vision
- Measurement and Communication - Creating a common set of measures to evaluate and assess our progress against key goals within the region

# Our Region



4 Counties.

1 Community.



## Population

- 1.3 Million
- 90% Latino

## Median Age

- 30 years (RGV)
- 34 years (Texas)
- 37 years (US)

## Area

- 43,000 square miles

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

# Our Region



Leaders United  
to  
Change Lives



**33%** below  
poverty  
**\$40,000** median  
income



**14%** below  
poverty  
**\$52,000** median  
income



**15%** below  
poverty  
**\$53,000** median  
income

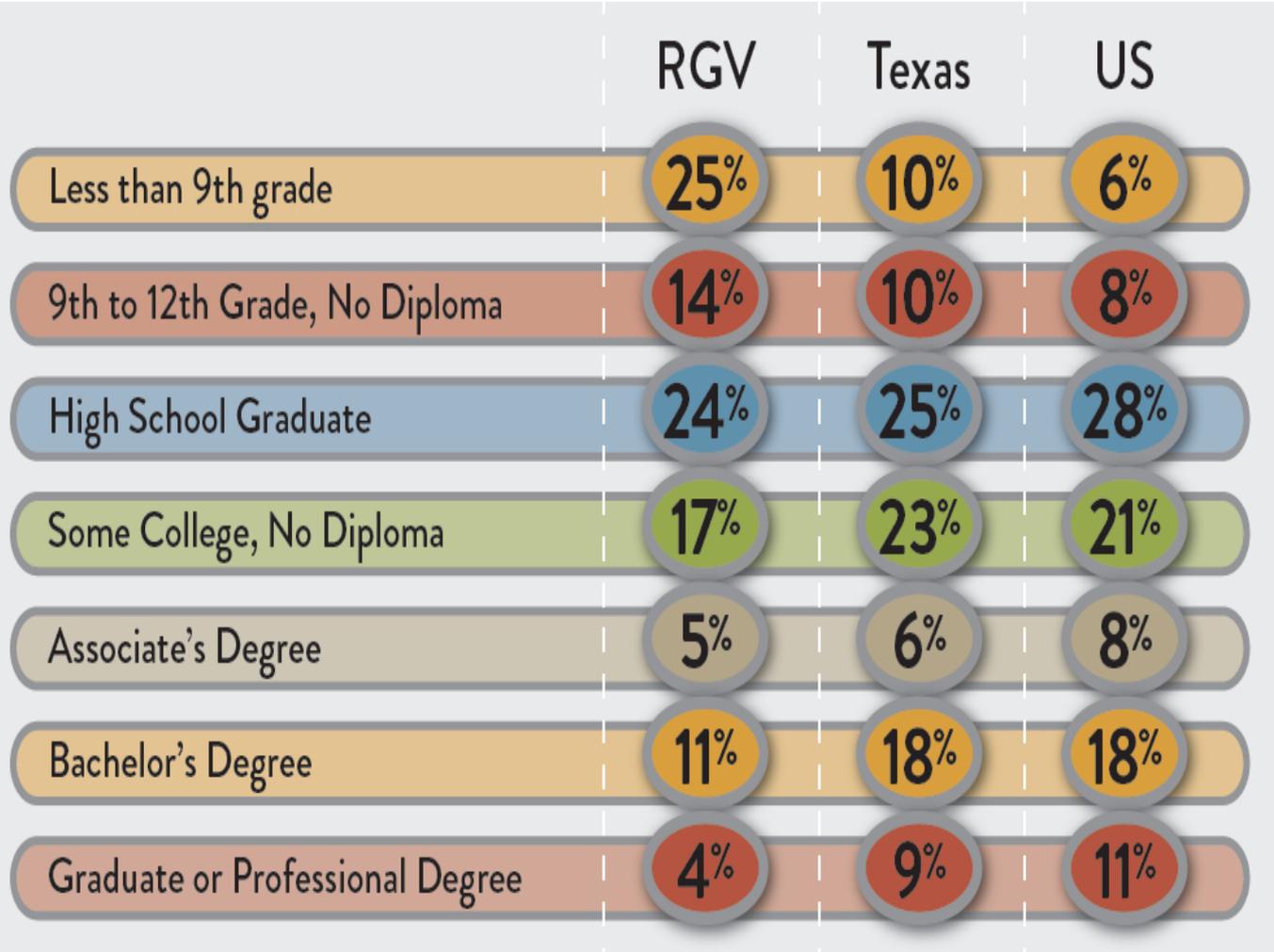
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

# Our Region



## Educational Attainment: Adults 25 and Older

Source: U.S. Census Bureau,  
2008 - 2012 American  
Community Survey



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

# What is Collective Impact?

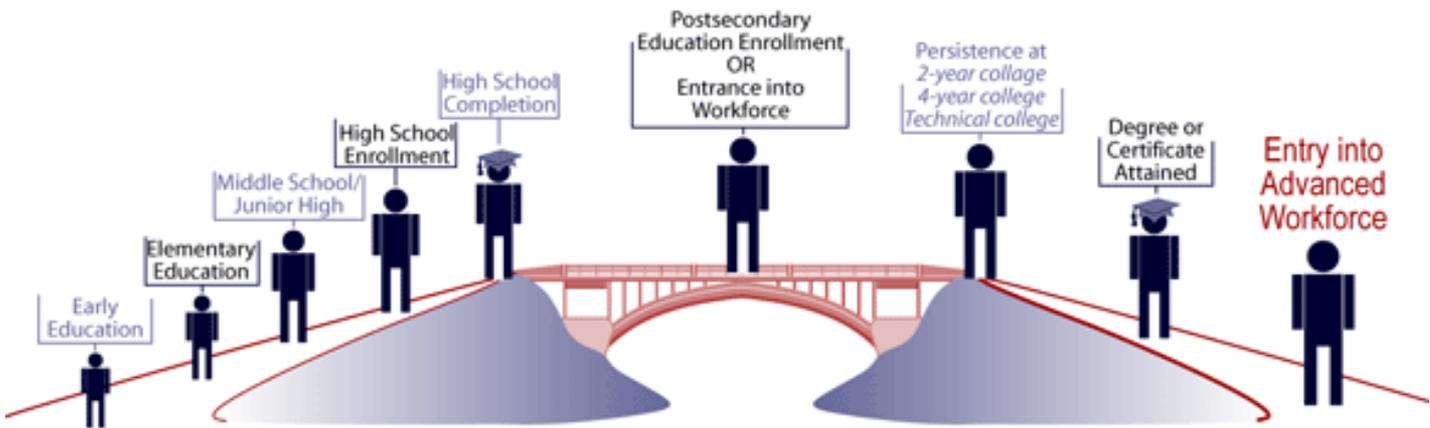


Collective impact is a framework that focuses on bringing members from different sectors within a community together to drive large scale social change.

In order for the framework to be effective, the following conditions must be met.



# Leaders Bridging Success to Impact





# Leadership Team



**Dr. Alda Benavides**  
Superintendent,  
La Joya ISD



**Dr. William Fannin**  
Interim President,  
UT at Brownsville



**Eduardo Infante**  
Superintendent,  
Lyford CISD



**Dr. Havidan Rodriguez**  
President ad Interim,  
UT-Pan American



**Gonzalo Salazar**  
Superintendent,  
Los Fresnos CISD



**Tom Torkelson**  
CEO,  
IDEA Public Schools



**VACANT**  
Superintendent,  
Progreso ISD



**Judith Solis**  
Superintendent,  
La Villa ISD



**Dr. Daniel King**  
Superintendent,  
Pharr San Jan Alamo ISD



**Dr. James Ponce**  
Superintendent,  
McAllen ISD



**Mike Seifert**  
Network Weaver, Equal Voice  
Networks



**Juanita Valdez Cox**  
CEO,  
La Union del Pueblo Entero



**Dr. Cornelio Gonzalez**  
CEO,  
Region 1



**Frank Almaraz**  
Interim CEO,  
Workforce Solutions



**Dr. Stella Garcia,**  
Interim President,  
Texas State Technical College



**Dr. Shirley Reed**  
President,  
South Texas College



**Dr. Lily Tercero**  
President,  
Texas Southmost College



**Traci Wickett**  
CEO, United Way of Southern  
Cameron County



**Dr. Arturo Cavazos**  
Superintendent,  
Harlingen ISD



**Carlos Guzman**  
Superintendent,  
Roma ISD



**Dr. Carl Montoya**  
Superintendent,  
Brownsville ISD



**Dr. Wynn Rosser**  
CEO,  
Greater Texas Foundation



**Pat Hobbs**  
CEO,  
Workforce Solutions  
Cameron County



**Dr. Guy Bailey**  
President,  
UTRGV



**Dr. Juliet Garcia**  
Executive Director,  
UT Institute of the  
Americas

RGV FOCUS

# Over 40 Organizations and 100+ Individuals Are Currently Working Together on RGV FOCUS



# Mission and Vision



## Our Vision

**All RGV learners will achieve a degree or credential that leads to a meaningful career**

We will achieve this by strengthening each step of the educational pathway; better connecting our education system; and aligning community resources to provide the supports learners need to succeed throughout high school and postsecondary in order to pursue a meaningful career in the RGV and beyond.

## Our Goals

All RGV students graduate high school college ready

All high school graduates transition to postsecondary within a year

All postsecondary students can achieve a degree or credential on time

All postsecondary graduates can be employed within 6 months

## Why This Work Will Succeed

We are **focused on students** and their experiences, strengths, challenges, and aspirations

The strategies we pursue are **transformational** both for individual institutions and the RGV at large

We **collaborate** across institutions and sectors, and invest the resources to ensure this collaboration will be sustained

Our work is **community centered** and depends on the voices of many organizations and individuals across the RGV

We are **evidence driven** in our approach and use shared data and metrics to drive constant improvement across the region

# Strategic Priorities



## Pathway From High School To A Meaningful Career

### High School

#### College and career readiness

- Agree and commit to a **common definition of college and career readiness** that prepares students to succeed in postsecondary and in a meaningful career
- Expand dual credit, AP, CTE, Gold Seal approval, and other innovative programs to **ensure that students meet rigor and readiness standards**

#### Dropout prevention and recovery

- Improve **relevancy and strengthen dropout prevention within 9<sup>th</sup> grade**, and provide students who have dropped out with multiple recovery pathways aligned to college and careers

#### Excellent teaching

- **Ensure teacher quality in the RGV** by attracting the best talent, developing teachers more intentionally, and leveraging the master teachers who deliver the best results and the most improvement

### Transition

#### Culture of attending college

- Educate **students, families, and the regional community** – early and often – about the value of college and how to support students to succeed
- Strengthen **counseling** to help students apply to college, secure all available aid resources, and gain admission to college
- Expand access to quality **transition and bridge programs** between high school and college

### Postsecondary

#### College supports

- Strengthen **on-campus IHE supports** through employment and internship opportunities, mentorship programs, academic aid, and peer support communities

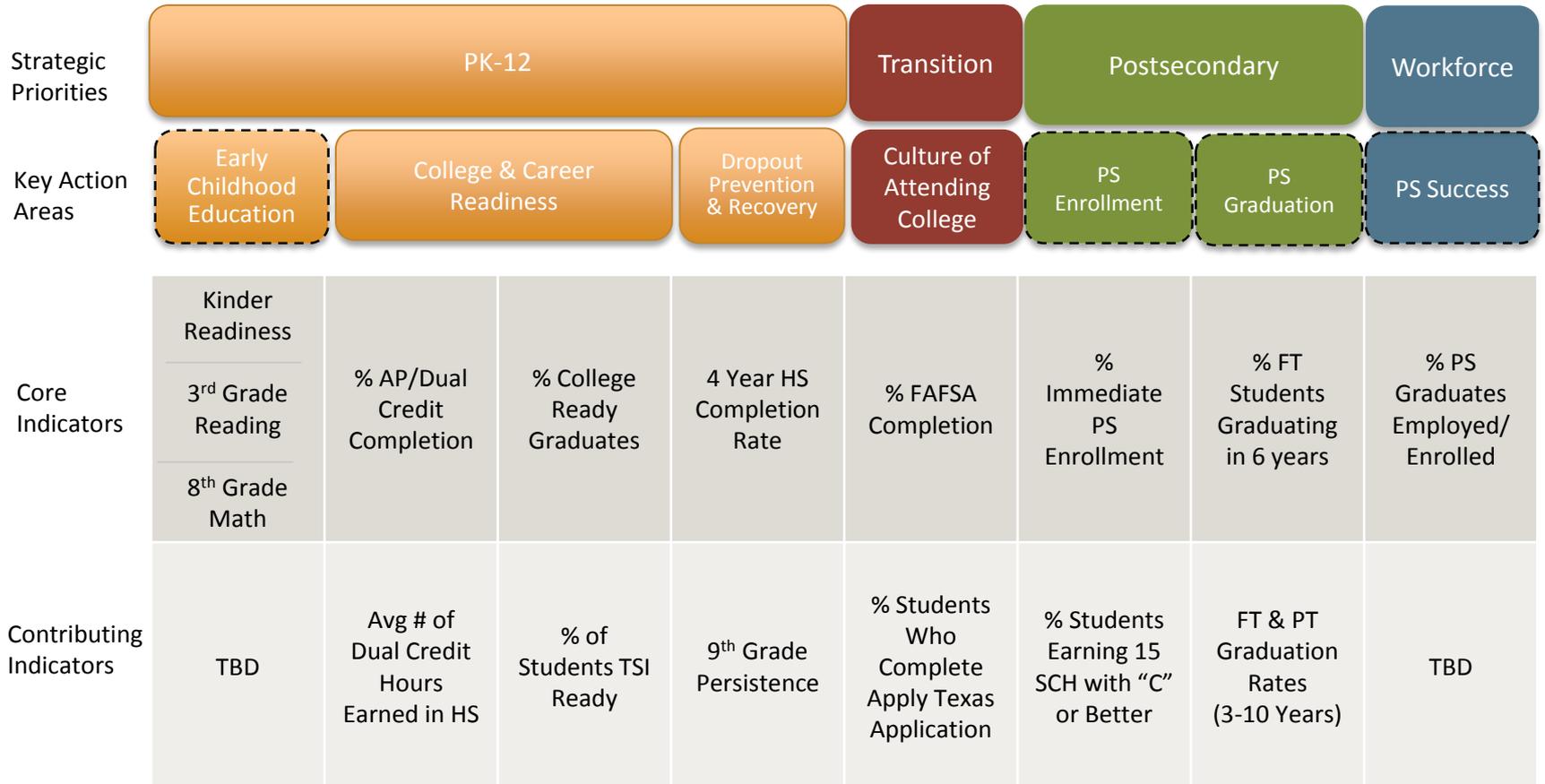
#### Career connections

- Support the **stacking, combining, and leveraging of credentials** with labor market value throughout a student's educational progression
- **Work with employers** to define workforce needs and skills, and strengthen and align academic pathways accordingly
- Enhance **career planning** to help students understand their interests, employment opportunities, wages, and the courses they need to take to attain their career goals

# Cradle to Career Outcomes Framework



**Overarching Metric:** % of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students achieving any sort of postsecondary certificate or degree within six years of their expected high school graduation date



*The audience varies for different level of metrics*

- Core Indicators are published annually on the Community Scorecard
- Action Committees focus on specific Contributing Indicators to strategize

Indicates Action Committee TBD

# HB5 College Prep Courses: A Regional Approach to Complying with a State Mandate

# College Preparatory Courses



- Mandate for each school district to partner with at least one institution of higher education to develop two courses
  - *Mathematics and English Language Arts Courses*
- Courses are for 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who do not meet the college-readiness standards

# Regional Approach



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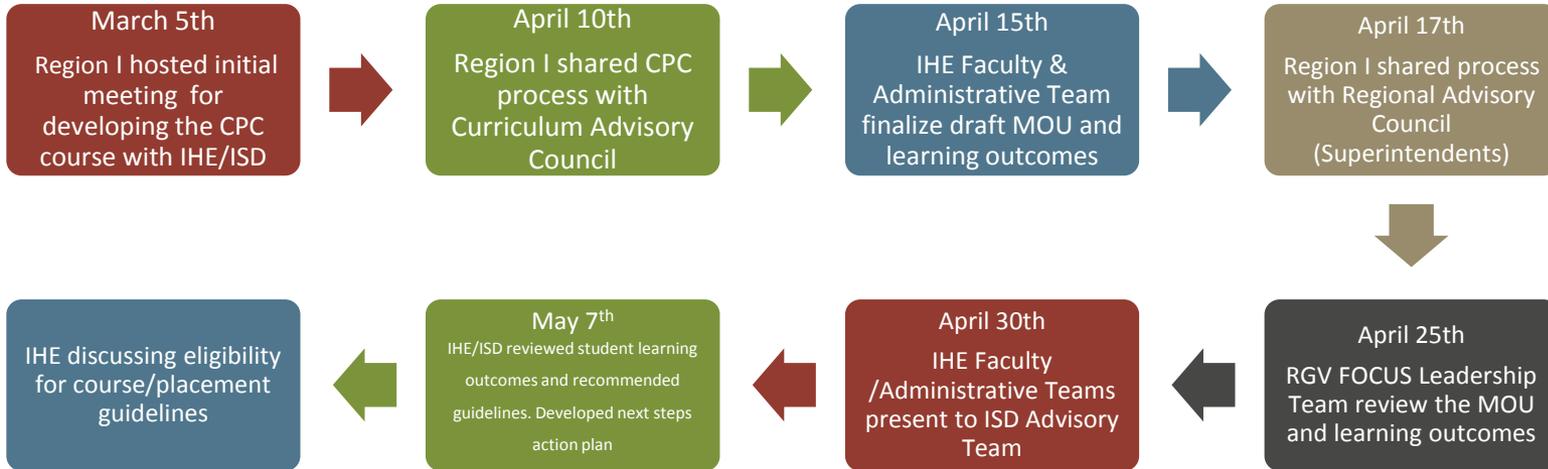


# Regional Goal

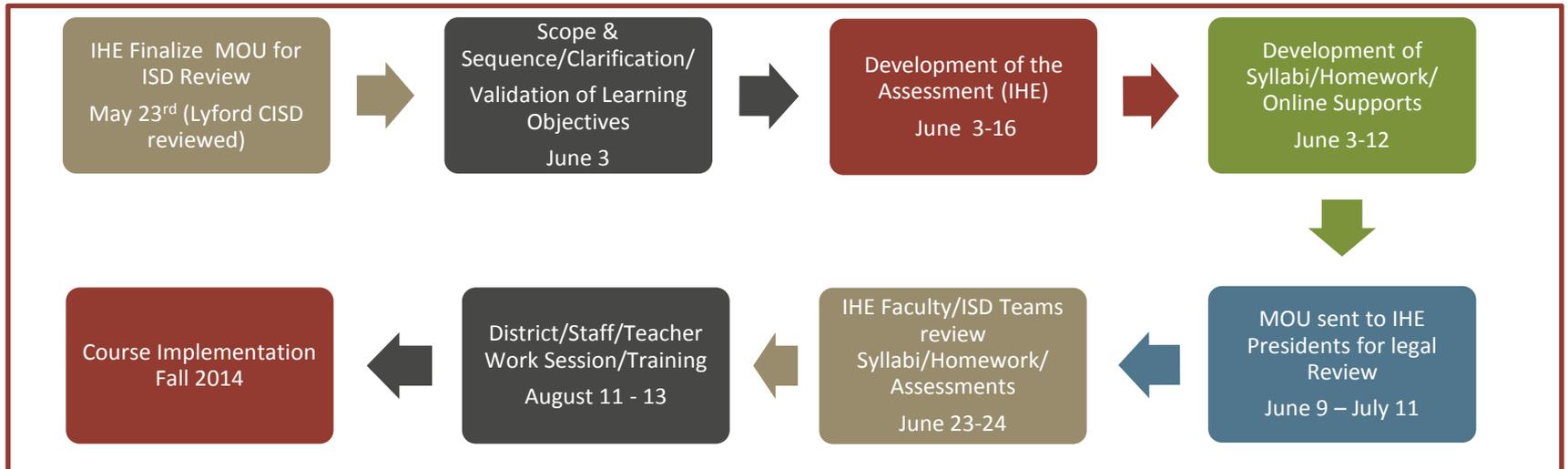


- To collaboratively create two courses that provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate college readiness in mathematics and/or English language arts while still in high school.
- Ensure that students are able to begin taking credit bearing courses their first year of college.

# College Prep Course Timeline



## Summer Timeline



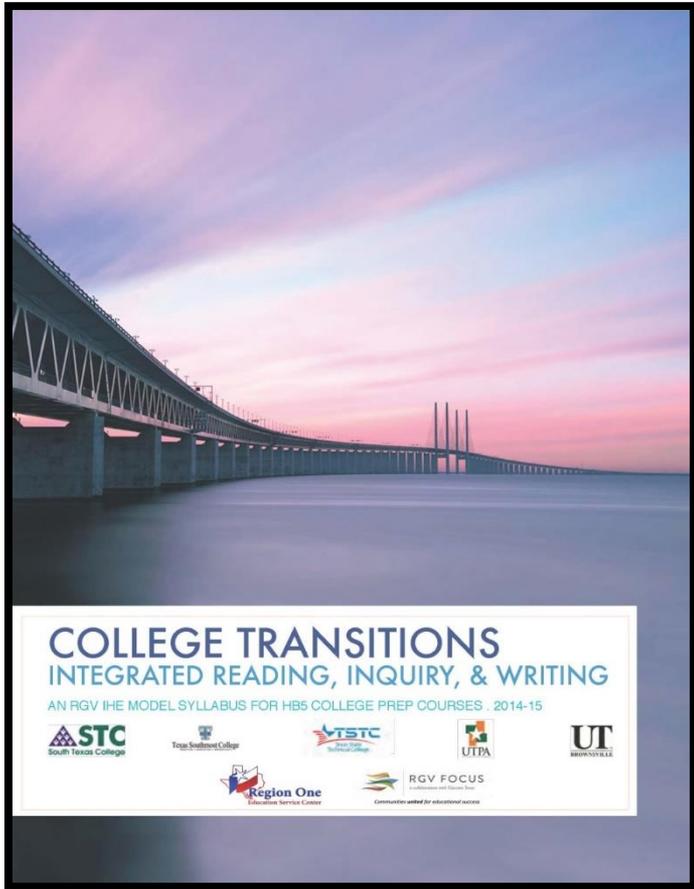
# HB 5 College Prep Course Professional Development for Teachers



## **One day workshops:**

- **August 12, 2014** – *University of Texas-Pan American*
  - *English Language Arts (Workshop # 43505)*
  - *Mathematics (Workshop# 43507)*
- **August 13, 2014** – *University Center at TSTC (Lower Valley)*
  - *English Language Arts (Workshop # 43514)*
  - *Mathematics (Workshop# 43515)*

# ELA/Math Instructional Resources



UTPA **WeBWorK**  
Department of Mathematics

MAA MATHEMATICAL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/college-transitions/id906939850?mt=11>

<https://webwork.utpa.edu/CollegPrep-fall2014.html>



***RGV FOCUS & Region One*** would like to invite you to...

***Signing Ceremony for the HB 5 College Prep Courses***

**Friday, August 22, 2014**

**10:00 AM**



**South Texas College  
Mid-Valley Campus  
400 N. Border  
Weslaco, Texas 78596**



*Communities united for educational success*

# MOU Signing Ceremony



# MOU Signing Ceremony



# Lessons Learned



## Developing a Common, Cohesive, and Understood Vision/Purpose

- Transparency
- Acknowledging fear and frustration with change

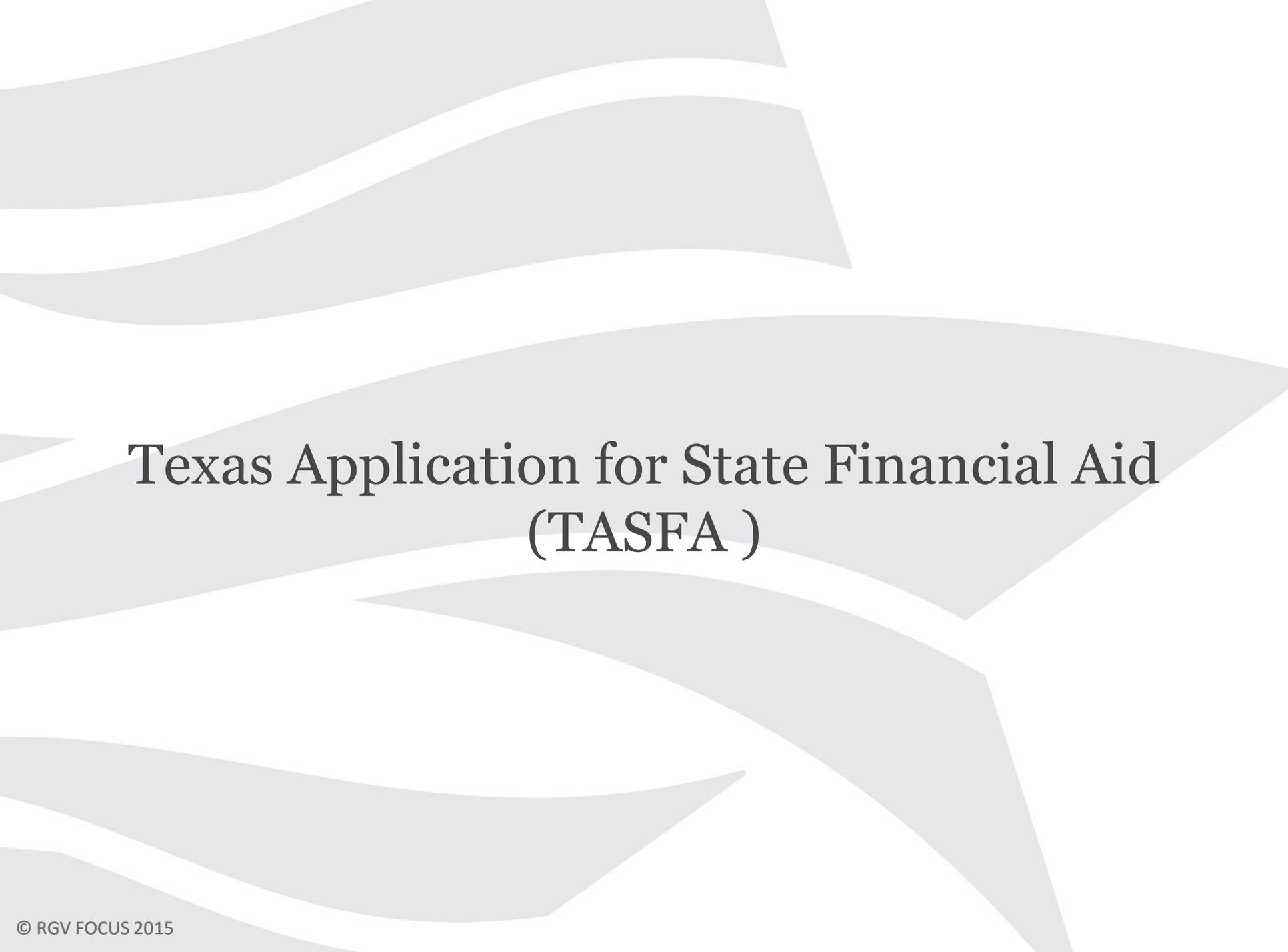
## Capitalizing on Real Collective Need

- Mandate created urgency
- Collaboration value added

Win-Win

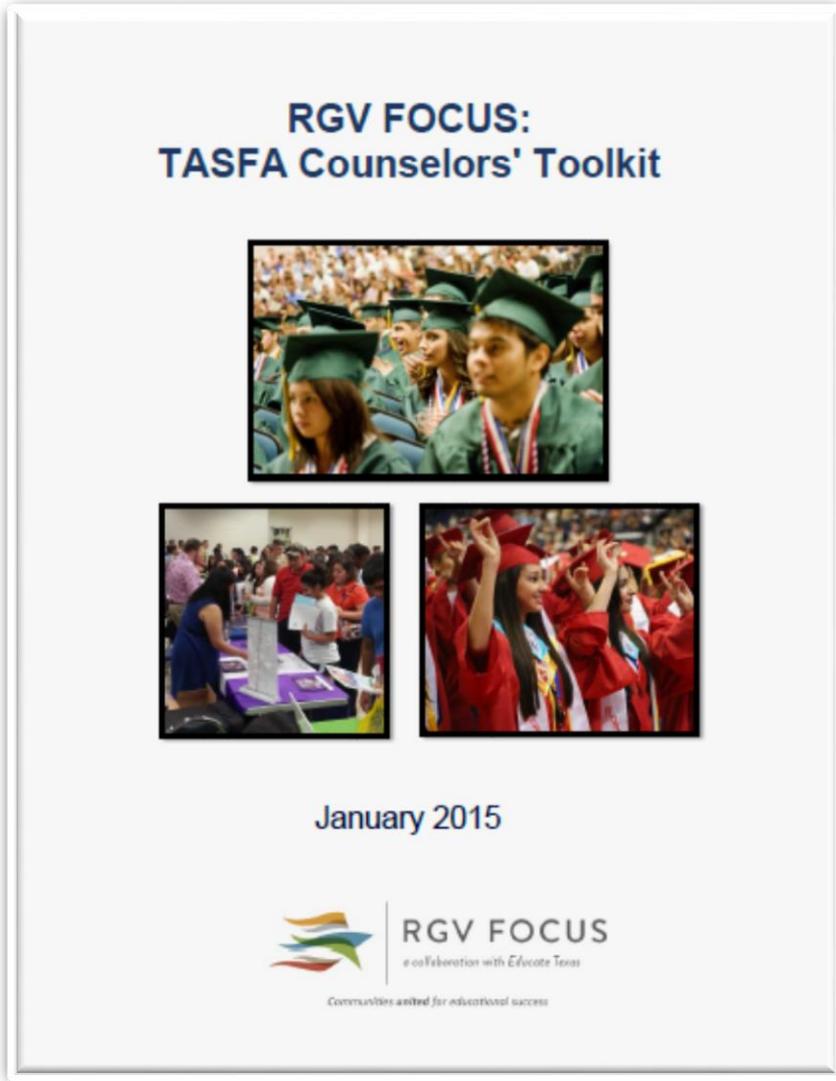
## Cross Sector Knowledge Critical

- Acknowledge what each partner brings to the table
- Building on assets of all partners



# Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA )

# One Application for the RGV



5 Institutions of Higher Education



1 Process



1 Application

# FAFSA/TASFA Super Saturday

# Regional Sites



SOUTH TEXAS  
COLLEGE



UTPA



# Institution Led



- Tax Preparation Services (United Way/VITA; AARP)
- Community-Based Organization Partnership (LUPE, ARISE, VIDA)
- Institutional Scholarships
- Cross Division Activities and Support



# Web Banner



NEED \$\$\$ FOR COLLEGE? DON'T MISS YOUR OPPORTUNITY AT THE

**2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL FAFSA/TASEFA  
SUPER SATURDAY**

FEBRUARY 21, 2014 | 9AM - 2PM





## NEED \$\$\$ FOR COLLEGE?



Don't Miss Your Opportunity @  
**2nd ANNUAL FAFSA/TASFA  
 SUPER SATURDAY**

With Support from



**02.21.2015** FROM 9AM - 2PM

South Texas College • Texas Southmost College • TSTC Harlingen • UT RGV-Brownsville • UT RGV-Edinburg

- Free one-on-one help filling out federal (FAFSA) and state (TASFA) forms for college financial aid
- College Information Fair
- Please get your pin from [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov)
- Bring your parent and student 2014 completed tax returns with W2 statements\*

\*If parent and student have not completed the 2014 tax returns, bring all W2 statements and any other statements showing income, 1099 statements, Social Security/SSI statements and call for tax help

### Locations for the Event:

Texas Southmost College  
 Oliveira Student Services Center  
 80 Fort Brown  
 Brownsville, TX 78520

UT RGV - Brownsville (UTB)  
 1 W University Blvd.  
 Brownsville, TX 78520

South Texas College  
 Mid-Valley Campus (Building F)  
 400 N. Border  
 Weslaco, TX 78596

Texas State Technical College  
 Student Services Center - Building EK  
 1902 North Loop 499  
 Harlingen, Texas 78550

UT RGV - Edinburg (UTPA)  
 1201 W. University Drive  
 Edinburg, TX 78539

South Texas College  
 Pecan Campus (Building K)  
 3201 W. Pecan  
 McAllen, TX 78501

South Texas College  
 STAR Campus (Building G)  
 142 FM3167  
 Rio Grande City, TX 78569



### QUESTIONS?

Contact us at [FAFSA-SuperSaturday@ctexas.org](mailto:FAFSA-SuperSaturday@ctexas.org)

## ¿Necesitas dinero para la universidad?



No pierdas la oportunidad en el  
**2do Super Sábado Anual de  
 FAFSA/TASFA**

Con el apoyo de



**21 FEB 2015** DE 9AM - 2PM

South Texas College • Texas Southmost College • TSTC Harlingen • UT RGV-Brownsville • UT RGV-Edinburg

- Ayuda gratis y personalizada para llenar formularios federales y estatales para ayuda financiera para la universidad
- Feria de información universitaria
- Por favor, obtenga su pin en [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov)
- Traer la declaración de impuestos del 2014 de los padres y del estudiante con formas W2\*

\* Si los padres y los estudiantes no han completado las declaraciones de impuestos del 2014, traiga todas las formas W2 y cualquier otra forma demostrando los ingresos; forma 1099, formas SSI. Habrá asistencia disponible para las declaraciones de impuestos.

### Locaciones del Evento

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South Texas College  
 Pecan Campus (Building K)  
 3201 W. Pecan  
 McAllen, TX 78501

### ¿Preguntas?

Contactanos en [FAFSA-SuperSaturday@ctexas.org](mailto:FAFSA-SuperSaturday@ctexas.org)



# Social Media



La Unión del Pueblo Entero - LUPE

February 21 · 🌐

👍 Like Page

Recuerda que hoy de 9-2pm puedes llenar su aplicación para ayuda financiera para ir al colegio. Ve a la universidad más cercana a ti. Su status migratorio no importa, infórmate!

#RGVSuperSaturday

#TexasCollegeAccess



Don't Miss Your Opportunity @

**2nd ANNUAL FAFSA/TASFA**

**SUPER SATURDAY**

With Support from



**RGV FOCUS**  
a collaboration with Educate Texas

FASFA/TASFA Super Saturday Bash

FASFA/TASFA Super Saturday Bash |

RGVFOCUS.ORG



Maria Esther Rodriguez

February 21 · Edited · 🌐

Students are lining up for help with their FAFSA and TASFA applications at UTPA! Join us for help with your financial aid application!  
#RGVSuperSaturday2015



Like · Comment · Share · 👍 26 ➦ 2

# Social Media



South Texas College @STCPR - Feb 20  
#FAFSASuperSaturday is tomorrow! Get free FAFSA help @Pecan, Mid-Valley & Starr, from 12-2p! #RGVSuperSaturday2015



Luzelma Canales @LuzelmaCanales

2/21/15

These are the folks that make it happen! #RGVSuperSaturday2015  
@EducateTexas @RGVFOCUS



# TV, Radio, and Print Media



## RGV Focus to help students with financial aid

By TRAVIS M. WHITEHEAD Staff Writer | Posted: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 9:30 pm

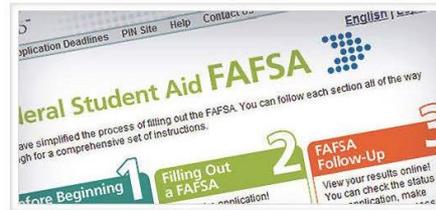
HARLINGEN — Need a little help with forms for financial aid?

RGV Focus is holding an event this Saturday to help high school seniors do just that. The event is called FAFSA/TASFA Super Saturday. FAFSA stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid. TASFA stands for Texas Application for State Financial Aid.

The event is geared toward helping first generation college students, said Esther Rodriguez, RGV Focus project manager. RGV Focus is a collective impact initiative established by leaders in the community.

“Most of our students in the Valley are first generation,” Rodriguez said. “We’re just trying to help them get the information as soon as possible so that they know what needs to happen in order for them to be ready to enroll in the fall of 2015.”

Rodriguez said the event will be held 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. All of the Rio Grande Valley’s institutions of higher education will be hosting it: Texas State Technical College in Harlingen, University of Texas at Brownsville, Texas Southmost College in Brownsville, and the University of Texas-Pan American in Edinburg. The three South Texas College campuses in McAllen, Weslaco, and Rio Grande City will also host the event.



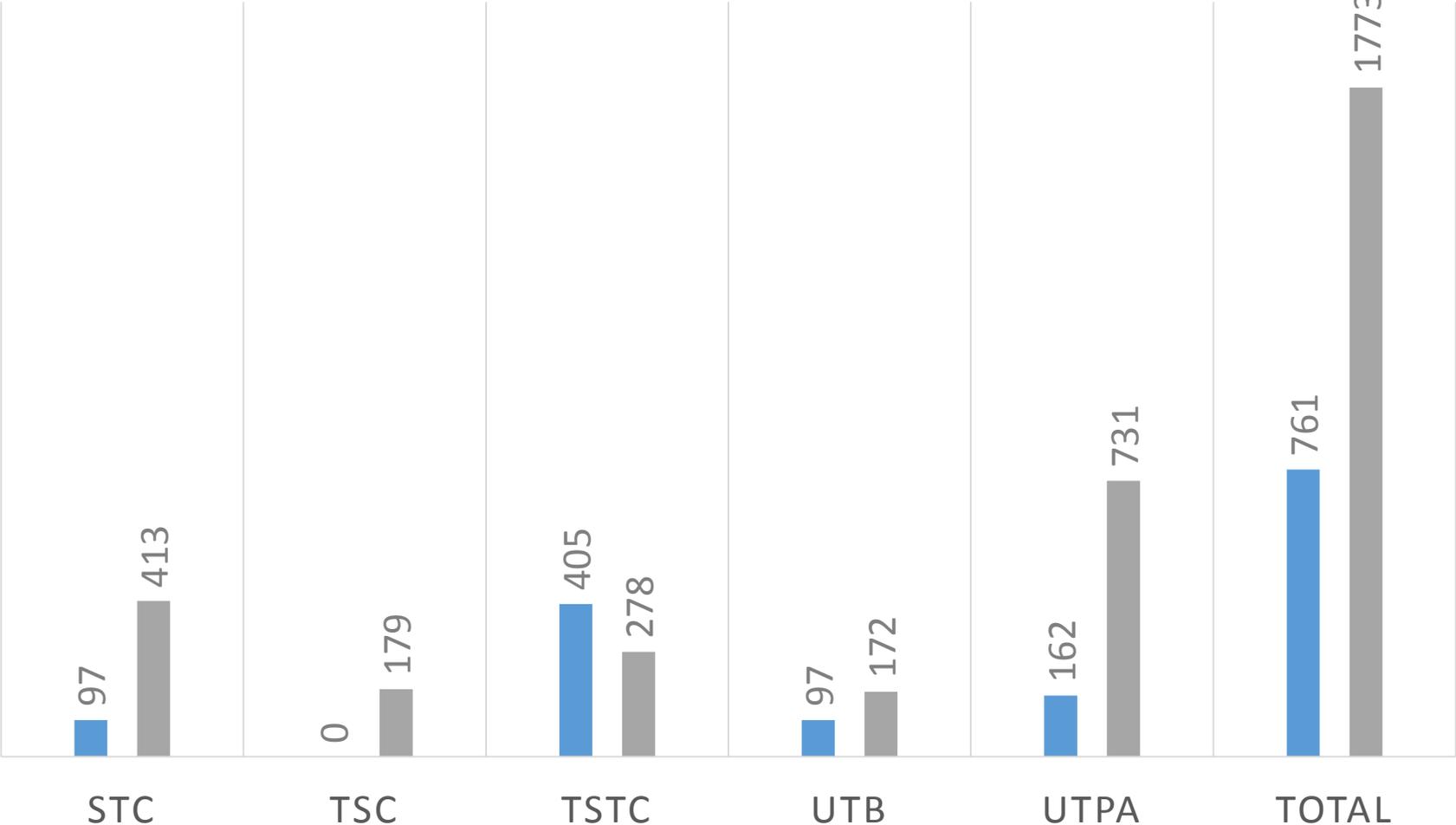
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# Super Saturday Year to Year



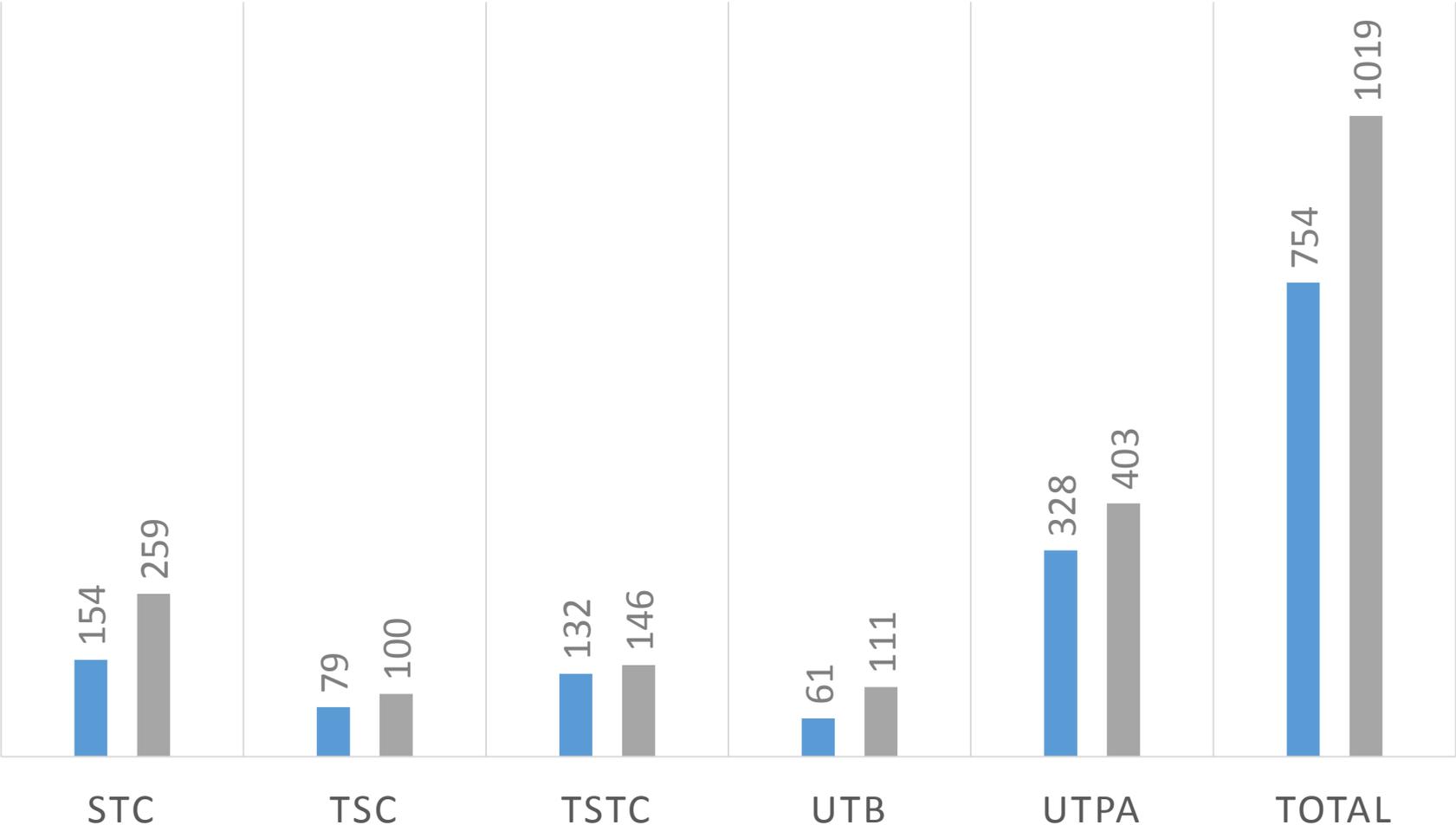
■ 2014 ■ 2015



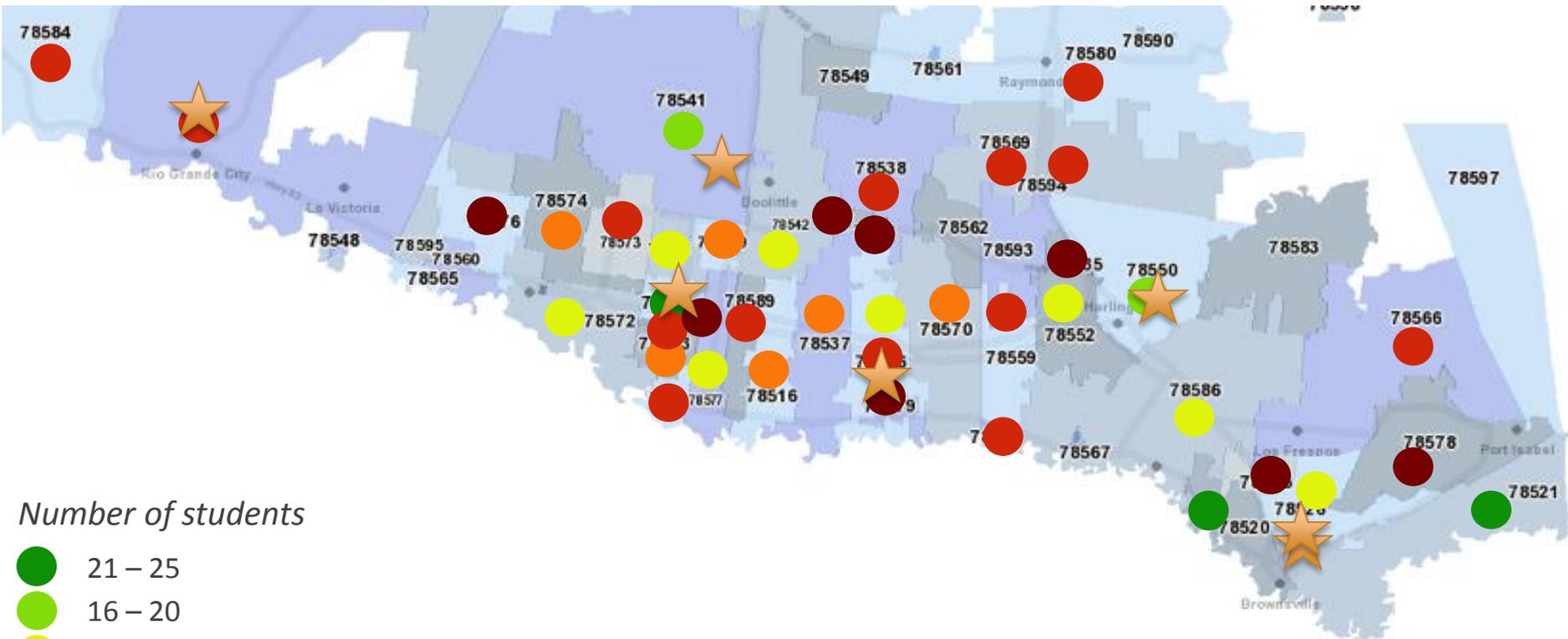
# Super Saturday 2015 Attendees



■ Students ■ Family Members



# FAFSA Super Saturday Zip Code Map



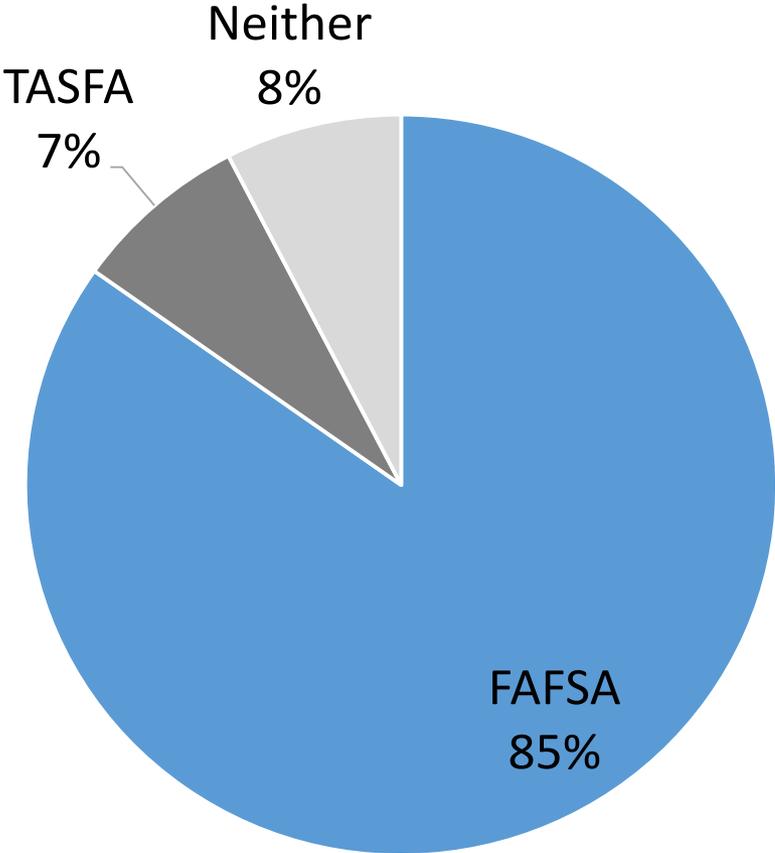
*Number of students*

- 21 – 25
- 16 – 20
- 11 – 15
- 6 – 10
- 2 – 5
- 1

# Super Saturday Exit Survey



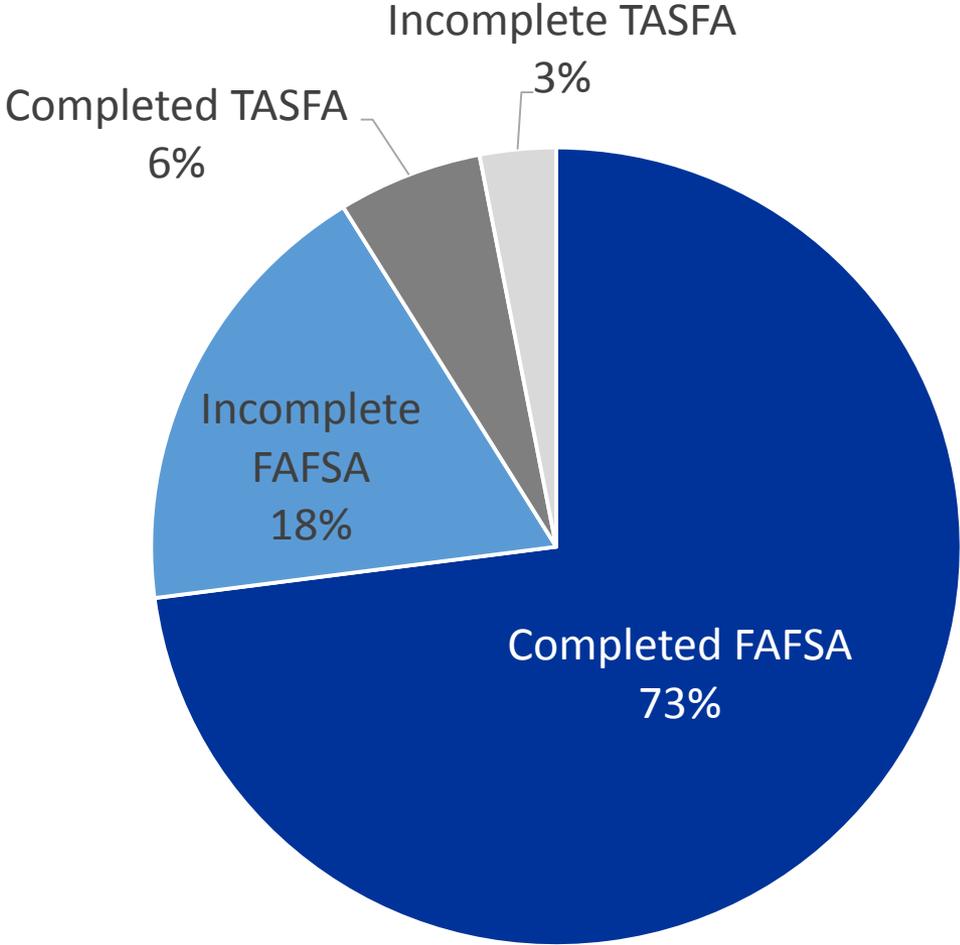
*Which application did you work on today?*



# Super Saturday Exit Survey



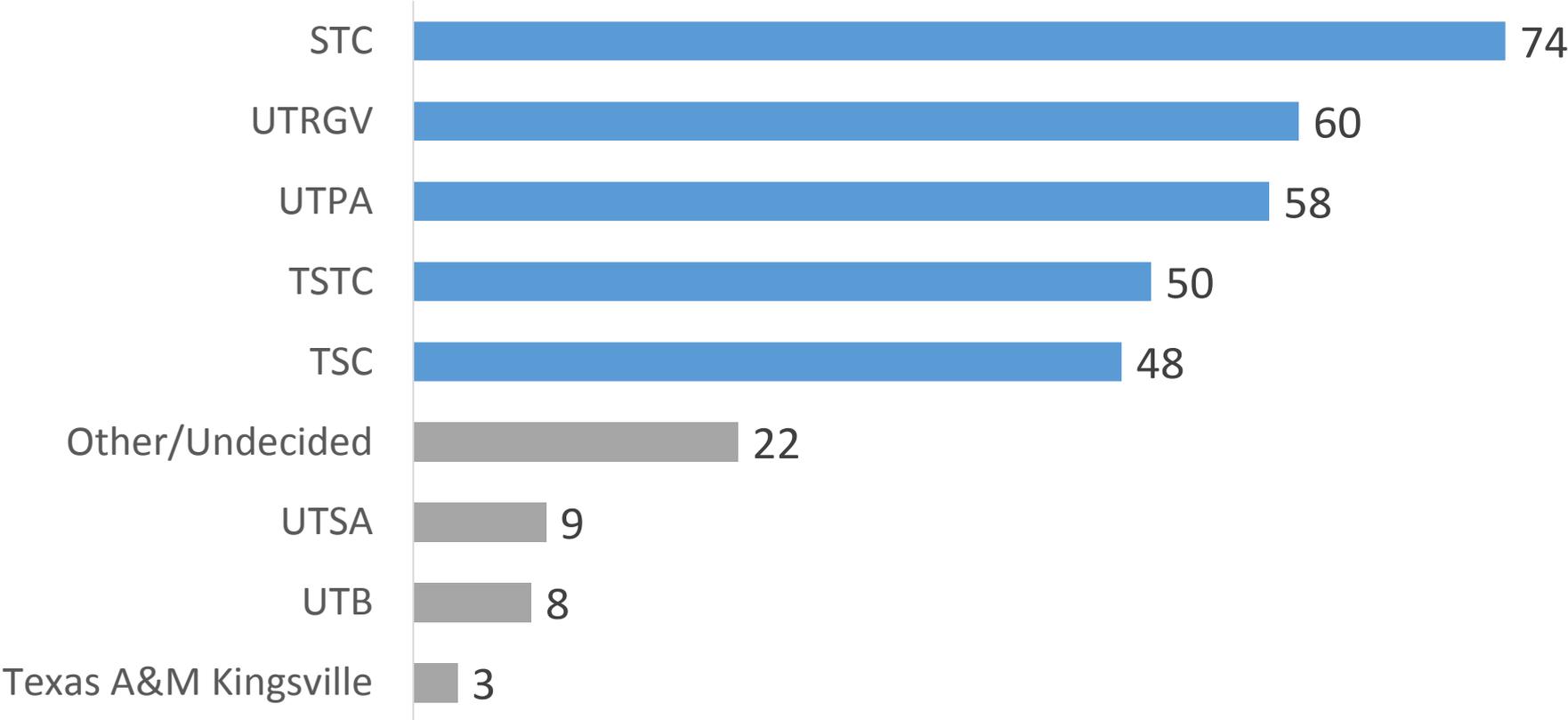
*Did you fully complete the FAFSA/TASFA application?*



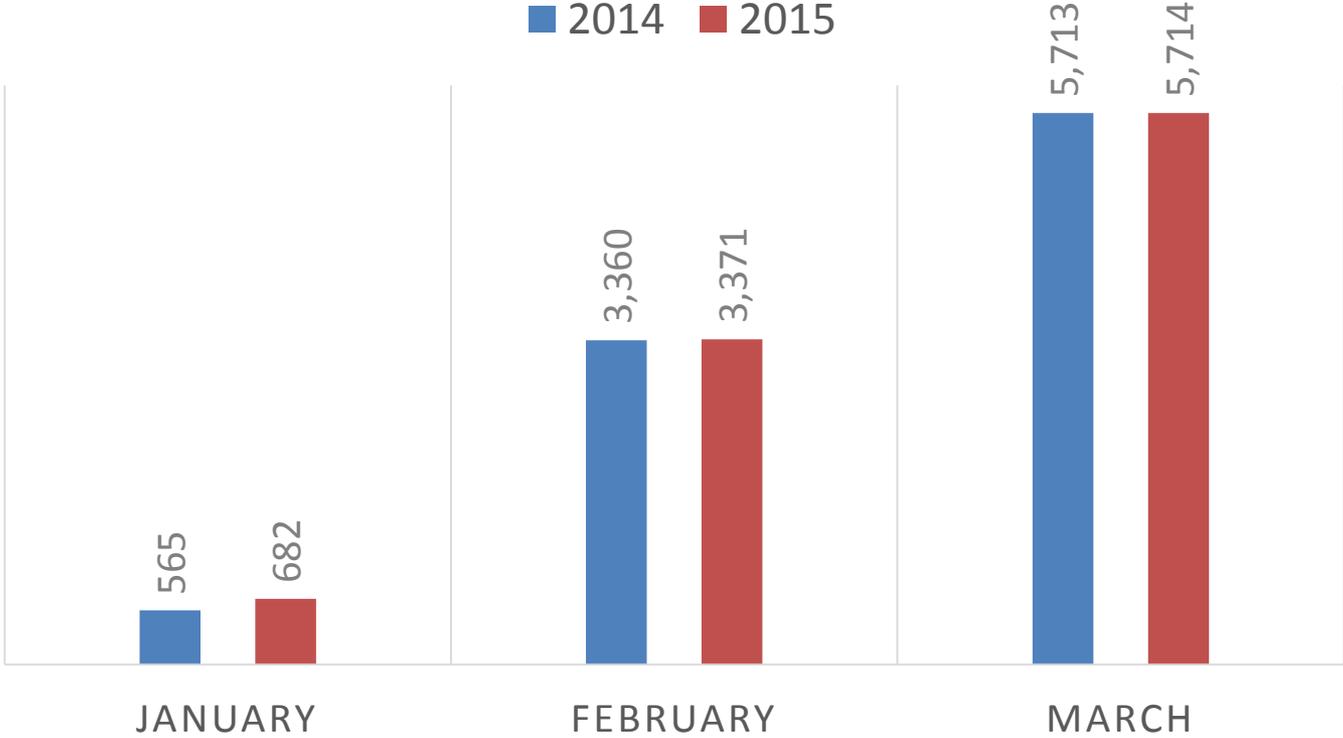
# Super Saturday Exit Survey



*What college or university do you plan to attend?*



# FAFSA Completions by Month

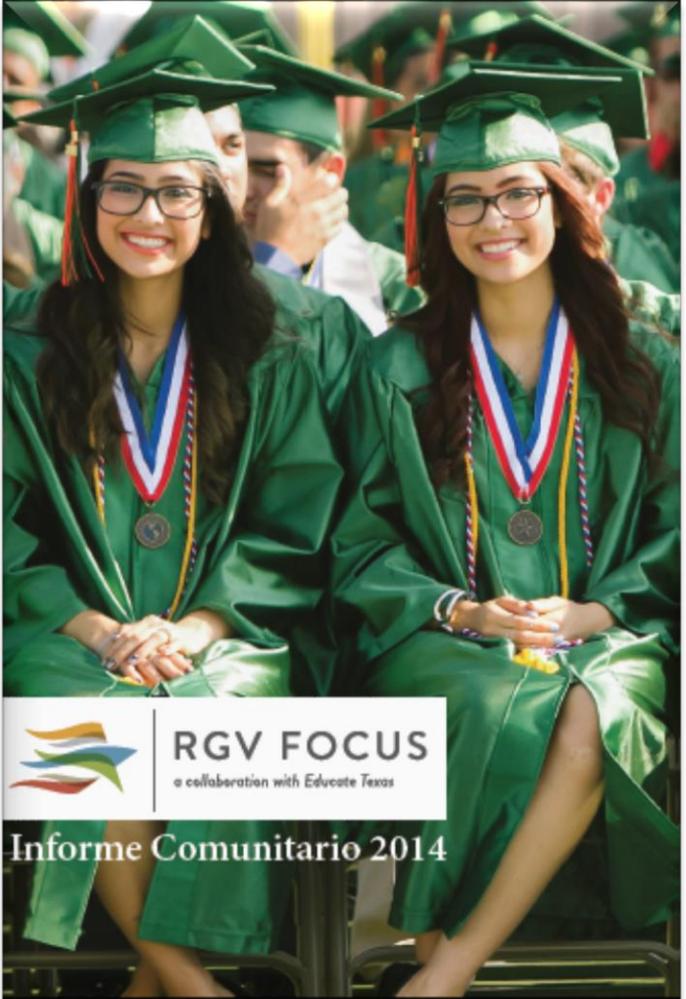


Note: 90% of the campuses' senior count are provided by TG through special request from TEA. The rest is based on the number of juniors by the end of the 2012-2013 school year. The FAFSA completion rates above should be seen as estimates.  
Source: Department of Education, [Federal Student Aid](#), FAFSA Applications through March 6, 2015; TEA, TAPR Report; TG Research and Analytical Services

The background features several overlapping, wavy, abstract shapes in shades of light grey and white, creating a sense of movement and depth. The shapes are layered, with some appearing to be in front of others, and they flow across the frame from left to right.

How are we doing?

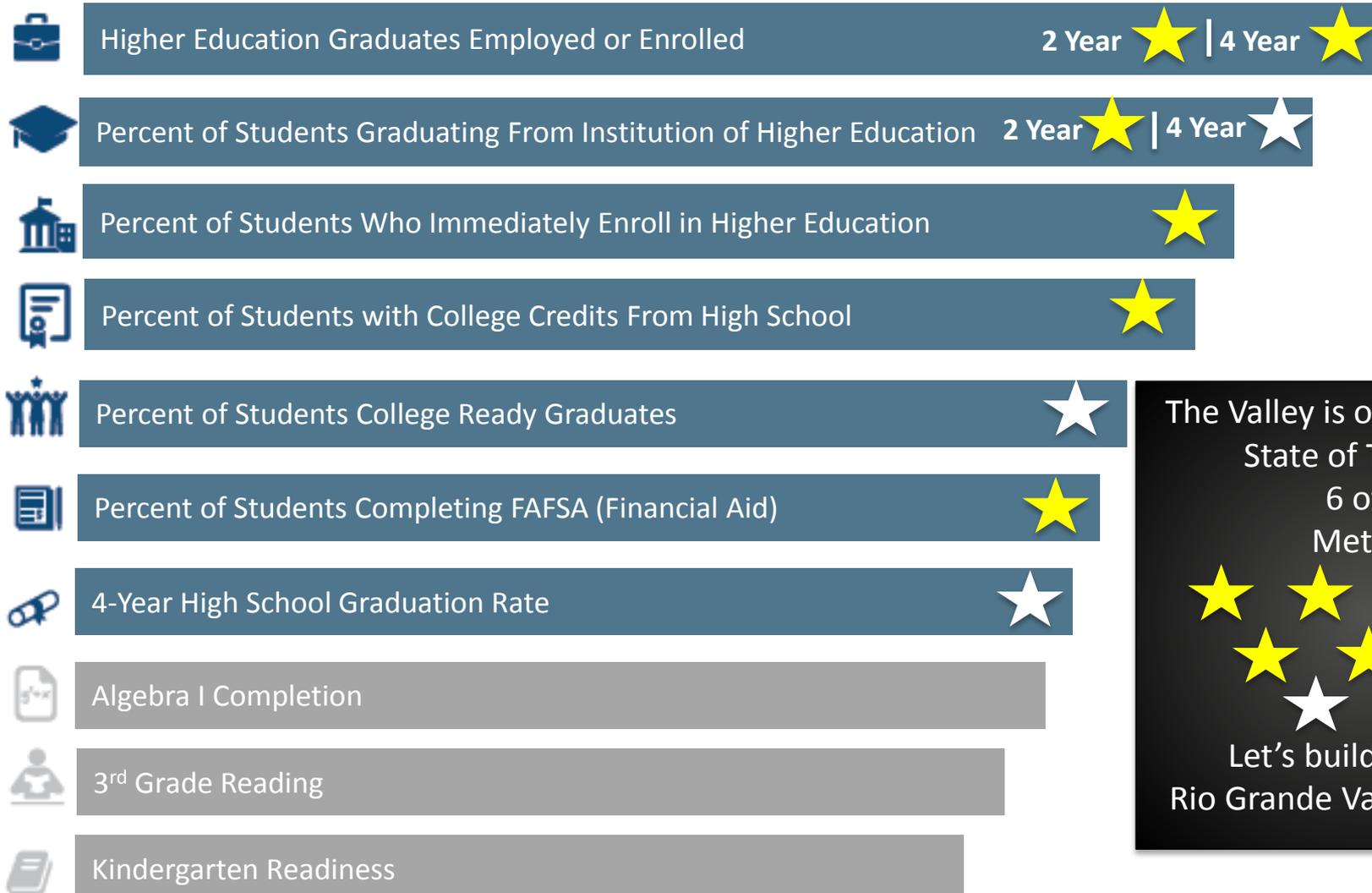
# Baseline & Community Reports



# Measurement Framework

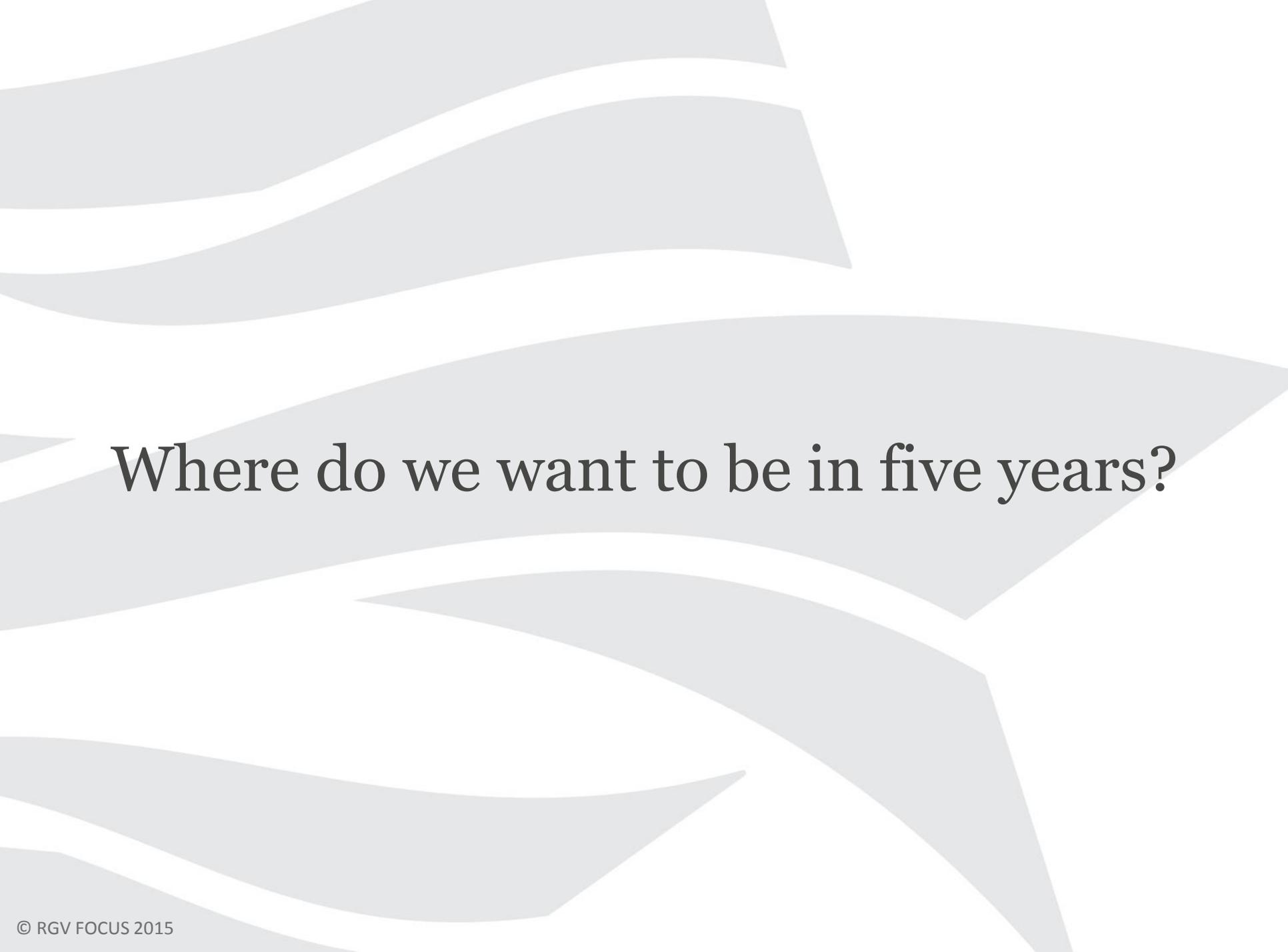
## Success from Cradle to Career

In order to track our progress as a region, our partners developed a set of outcomes to measure going forward.



The Valley is outperforming State of Texas on 6 of 9 Metrics

Let's build the best Rio Grande Valley Possible.



Where do we want to be in five years?

# Advanced Course and Dual Enrollment Target



Year	9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> graders	% AP/DC completion	Texas % AP/DC completion
2012	90,739	32%	31%
2011	89,159	31%	30%
<b>Target</b>		52%	

Source: TEA, AEIS and TAPR reports

# College Ready Graduates Target



Graduating Year	Graduates with ELA and Math Results	College Ready Graduates	% College Ready	Texas % College Ready
2012	16,379	7,719	47%	57%
2011	15,926	6,763	42%	52%
2019			67%	



Source: TEA, AEIS and TAPR reports

# FAFSA Completion Target



Year	Seniors <sup>1</sup>	FAFSA Completed <sup>2</sup>	% FAFSA Completion	FAFSA Application Gap
2013	19,690	12,309	63%	7,381
2012	19,181	11,291	59%	7,890
2019			75%	



Note: 1. Senior count limits to schools with available FAFSA data; 2. FAFSA completion as of Dec 2014

Source: Department of Education, [Federal Student Aid](#); TEA, AEIS reports, TAPR reports

# Higher Ed Immediate Fall Enrollment Target



Year	Trackable HS Graduates	Enrolled in College	% College Enrollment	Texas % College Enrollment
2012	17,747	9,956	56%	54%
2011	17,582	10,472	60%	55%
2019			70%	



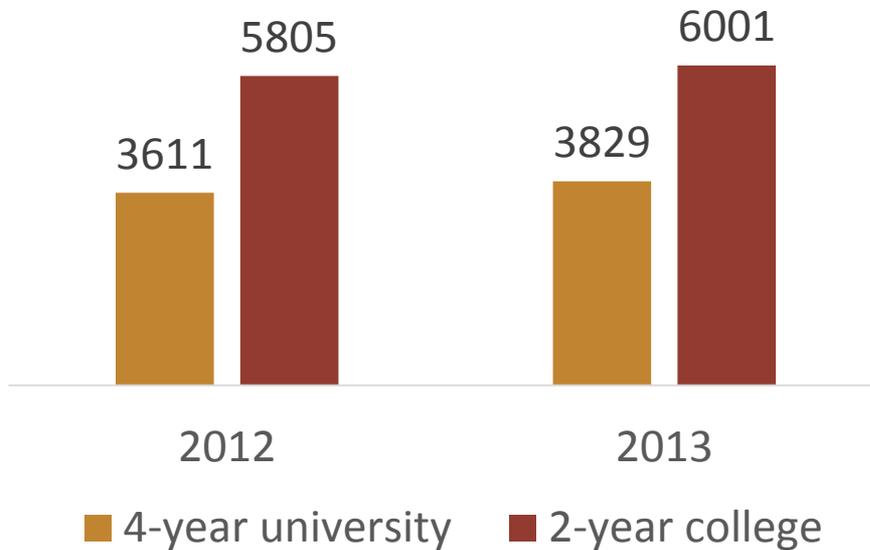
Note: 1. Trackable HS graduate = HS graduates – Non-trackable graduates, where non-trackable graduates have non-standard ID numbers that will not find a match at Texas higher education institutions.

Source: THECB, [High School Graduates Enrolled in Higher Education the Following Fall by High School County, School District, High School](#)

# Annual Degrees Awarded Target



	2012	2013	2019
4-year university	3,611	3,829	5,500
2-year college	5,805	6,001	8,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,416</b>	<b>9,830</b>	<b>13,500</b>



Total degrees and certificates awarded from 4-year and 2-year institutions have been increasing over time.

Source: THECB, [Accountability System Report](#)



# Looking to the Future

# 2015-2016 Outlook



FAFSA/ TASFA

Is Summer  
Melt Occurring  
Among My  
Students?

Summer Melt & College  
Enrollments



College Readiness & TSI  
Assessments



HB5 College Prep Courses,  
Graduation Plans, Endorsements

# Find us at [rgvfocus.org](http://rgvfocus.org)



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