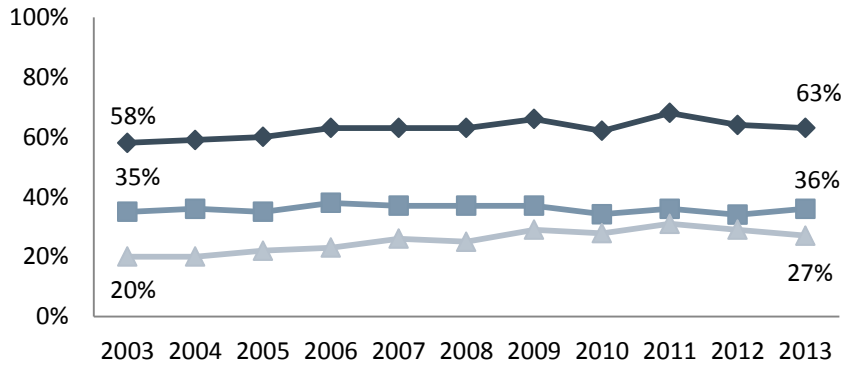
Postsecondary Enrollment for 2013 Graduates: Austin Independent School District

How many AISD graduates enrolled in postsecondary education?

Longitudinal trends. Since 2003, Austin Independent School District's (AISD) postsecondary enrollment has increased incrementally (Figure 1). Over the years, the percentages of students enrolling in 2-year institutions appear to account for the overall increase in postsecondary enrollment. The slight decline in AISD postsecondary enrollment rates paralleled national trends, as overall national college enrollment rates dropped from 66.2% for the Class of 2012 to 65.9% for the Class of 2013 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013, 2014).

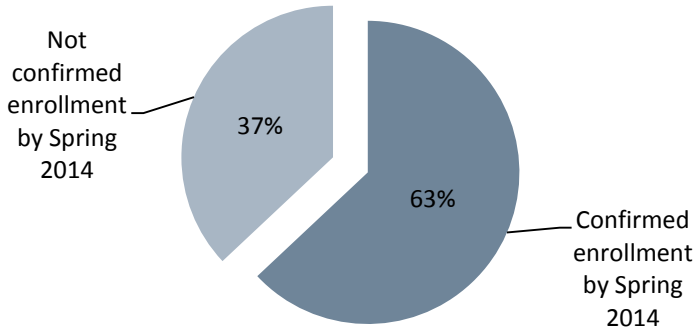
Figure 1. AISD postsecondary enrollment has increased incrementally since 2003.



Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014

2013 graduates. Of the 4,236 Class of 2013 graduates, most were enrolled in a postsecondary institution by the Spring 2014 semester (Figure 2). Fifty-five percent of graduates were direct-to-college enrollees, meaning they enrolled in college the fall semester immediately following graduation from high school.

Figure 2. Sixty-three percent of AISD graduates enrolled in college the year after graduating from high school.



Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014

Understanding the data. This summary presents postsecondary enrollment rates for AISD's Class of 2013 during the Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 semesters based on National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) data. The NSC database contains 98% of nationwide enrollment in both public and private postsecondary institutions. In accordance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations, data from NSC were linked to the 2013 AISD graduate records submitted to the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) on the following variables: student's first and last name, date of birth, and zip code. Please refer to the supplemental report (Wiggins & Stelling, 2015) for technical documentation.

Limitations. This summary may be an underestimate of actual enrollment. An enrollment match only occurs if each variable matches exactly. Discrepancies in a student's name or a change in zip code are common reasons an enrollment record might not be found. Also, the NSC data do not include all postsecondary institutions in the United States or report on student enrollment outside of the United States. Moreover, students may choose to opt out of sharing their enrollment data with external agencies, in which case their postsecondary enrollment is not reported to the NSC and is not included in the summary. Even with these limitations, the NSC database is the most comprehensive source available, and is commonly used by universities, the education finance industry, government agencies, high schools, and educational researchers.

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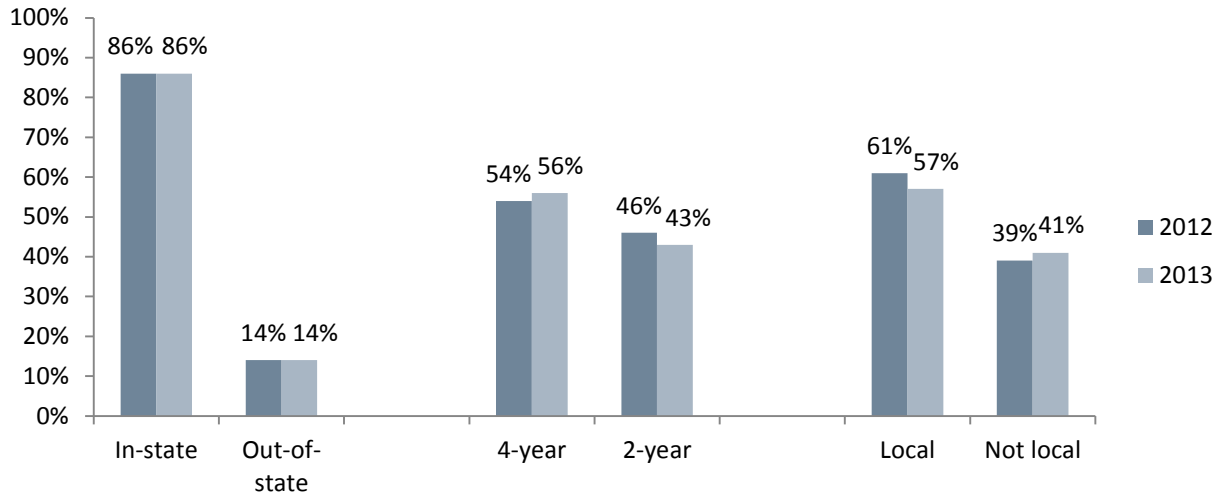
Eighty-six percent of AISD graduates who enrolled in postsecondary education attended in-state institutions, and 57% of graduates attended a local university (Figure 3). More than half of AISD graduates enrolled in 4-year institutions.

Figure 3. Most AISD graduates enrolled at in-state, local, 4-year institutions.



Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014
Note. "Local" is defined as within 60 miles of downtown Austin.

Where did most 2013 graduates enroll after high school graduation?

Top 10 colleges. Thirty-eight percent of AISD graduates who enrolled in college were enrolled in Austin Community College (ACC) within the year after graduation (Table 1).

Table 1. Almost 40% of AISD graduates enrolled at Austin Community College.

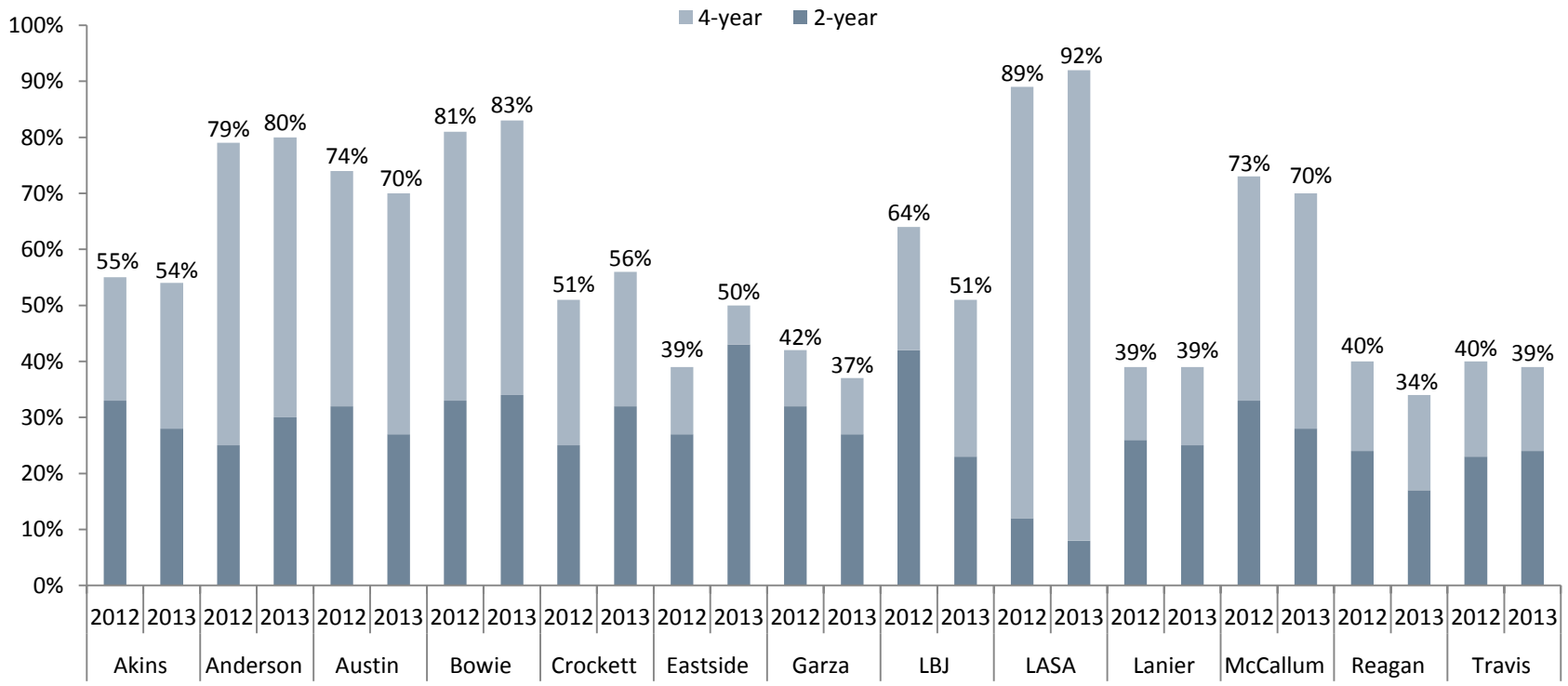
Postsecondary institution	Number	Percentage
Austin Community College	1,020	38%
University of Texas - Austin	224	8%
Texas State University - San Marcos	206	8%
Texas A&M University	126	5%
University of Texas - San Antonio	91	3%
St. Edwards University	59	2%
Texas Tech University - Lubbock	49	2%
University of North Texas	42	2%
Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi	39	1%
Blinn College	30	1%

Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014

How did postsecondary enrollment compare for 2012 and 2013 graduates of AISD high schools?

Comparison by high school. In half of AISD high schools, overall postsecondary enrollment percentages decreased from 2012 to 2013 (Figure 4). Overall postsecondary enrollment for Eastside High School graduates increased 11 percentage points, from 39% (2012) to 50% (2013), including a 16 percentage point increase in 2-year institutions. Eight out of 12 high schools had a decline in enrollment at 2-year post-secondary institutions from 2012 to 2013. LASA had a 7 percentage point increase in enrollment at 4-year postsecondary institutions.

Figure 4. Overall postsecondary enrollment decreased from 2012 to 2013 in half of AISD high schools.



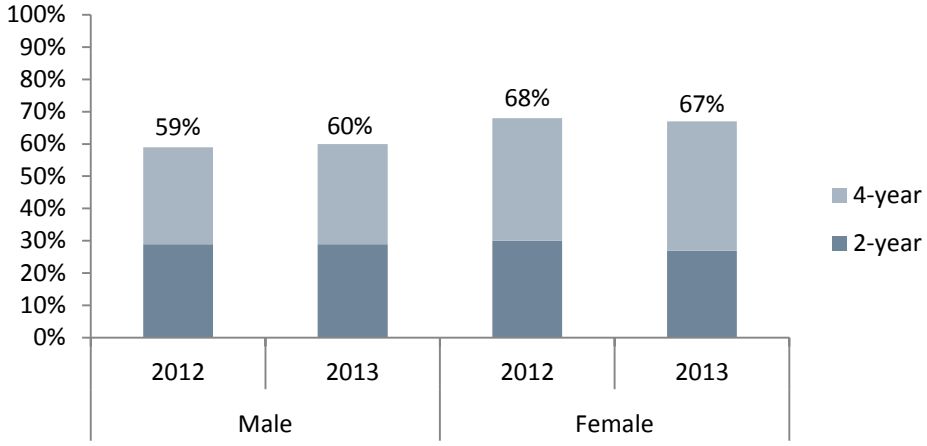
Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014

Note. Each enrollment percentage was rounded to the nearest whole number. The total percentage enrolled may differ from the sum of 2- and 4- year enrollment percentages.

How did postsecondary enrollment vary for different student demographic groups?

Gender. Overall, female enrollment in postsecondary institutions significantly outpaced male enrollment in 2012 and 2013 ($p < .01$) (Figure 5). These outcomes are consistent with national trends (see sidebar).

Figure 5. Significantly more females than males enrolled in college the year after graduating from high school.



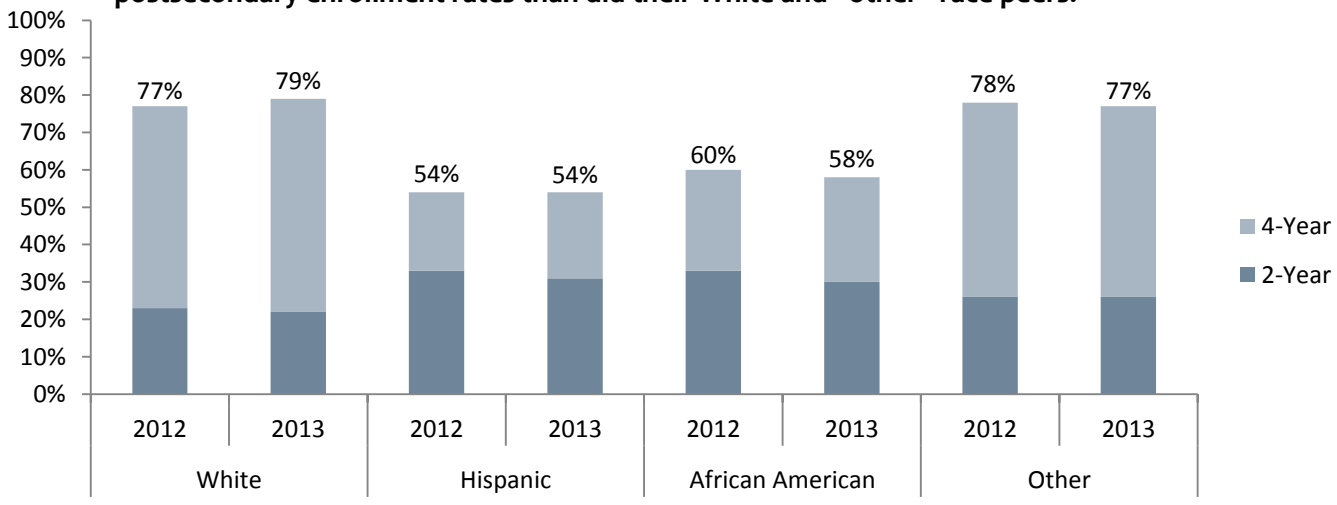
Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014

Race and ethnicity. In the classes of 2012 and 2013, Hispanics had significantly lower overall postsecondary enrollment rates than did their peers who reported African American, White, or "other" race ($p < .01$) (Figure 6). Also for both years, overall postsecondary enrollment rates for African American graduates were significantly lower than were rates for their White or "other" race peers ($p < .01$).

National postsecondary enrollment trends. A recent Pew Research Center Report (Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2014) on national postsecondary enrollment trends indicated that certain demographic groups outpaced others in 2012.

Postsecondary enrollment figures from October 2012 indicated that 71% of U.S. females enrolled in college following high school graduation, compared with 61% of males. Also, for each racial/ethnic group, a higher percentage of females than males enrolled in college following high school graduation.

Figure 6. African American and Hispanics had significantly lower postsecondary enrollment rates than did their White and "other" race peers.

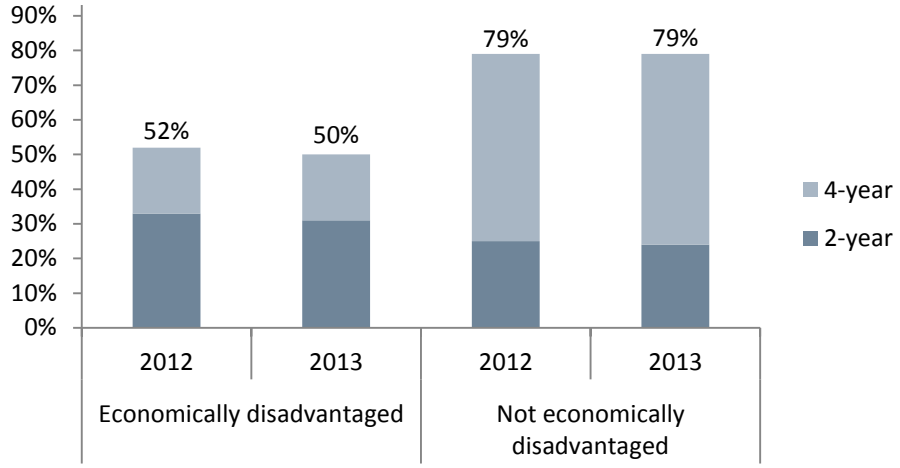


Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014

Note. "Other" includes Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and two or more races.

Economic status. Overall, enrollment rates for Classes of 2012 and 2013 graduates who were not economically disadvantaged were significantly higher than were rates for their economically disadvantaged peers ($p < .01$) (Figure 7). These findings are consistent with national trends (see side bar).

Figure 7. Economically disadvantaged graduates enrolled in college at significantly lower rates than did their non-economically disadvantaged peers.

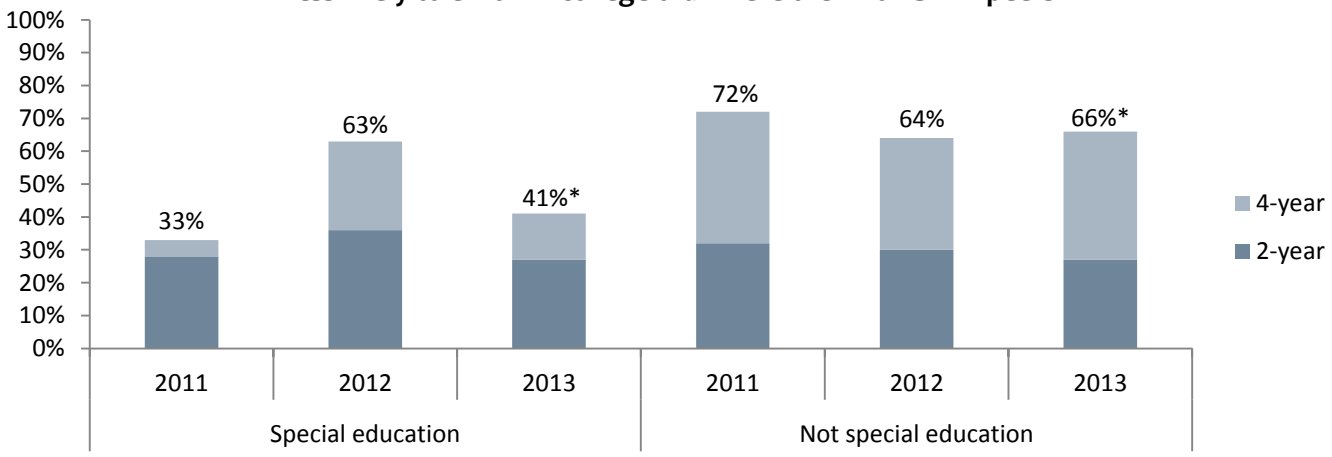


Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014

National postsecondary enrollment trends. According to National Center for Education Statistics (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014), high-income students were more likely to enroll in college than were their lower income peers since 1990. In 2012, 80% of high school graduates from high-income families enrolled in college, compared with 65% of middle-income students and 52% of low-income students.

Special education (SPED) status. The overall postsecondary enrollment rate was significantly higher for Class of 2013 graduates who were not classified as SPED, than for their counterparts classified as SPED. Also, the 2013 postsecondary enrollment rate decreased 22 percentage points for graduates classified as SPED, with most of this decline in the 4-year sector. However, 2013 postsecondary enrollment rates for graduates classified as SPED were 8 percentage points higher than enrollment rates from 2011 (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Class of 2013 special education (SPED) graduates were significantly less likely to enroll in college than were their non-SPED peers.

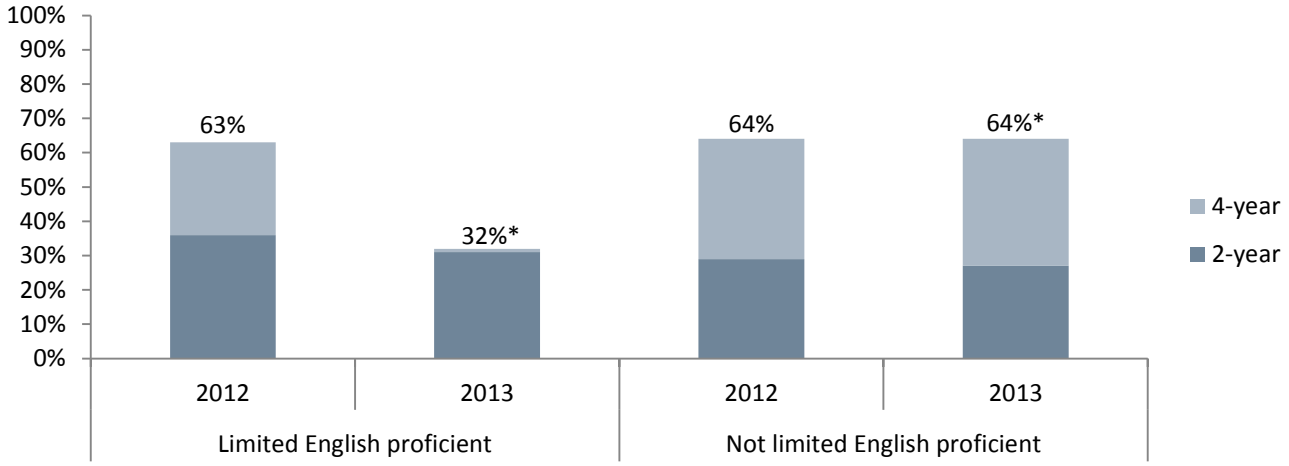


Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014

*Differences in percentage totals are statistically significant ($p < .01$).

Limited English proficiency (LEP) status. Class of 2013 graduates who were classified as LEP were significantly less likely to enroll in postsecondary education than were their non-LEP peers. Enrollment rates remained steady from 2012 to 2013 for graduates who were not classified LEP (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Class of 2013 graduates who were classified as limited English proficiency (LEP) were significantly less likely to enroll in college than were their non-LEP peers.

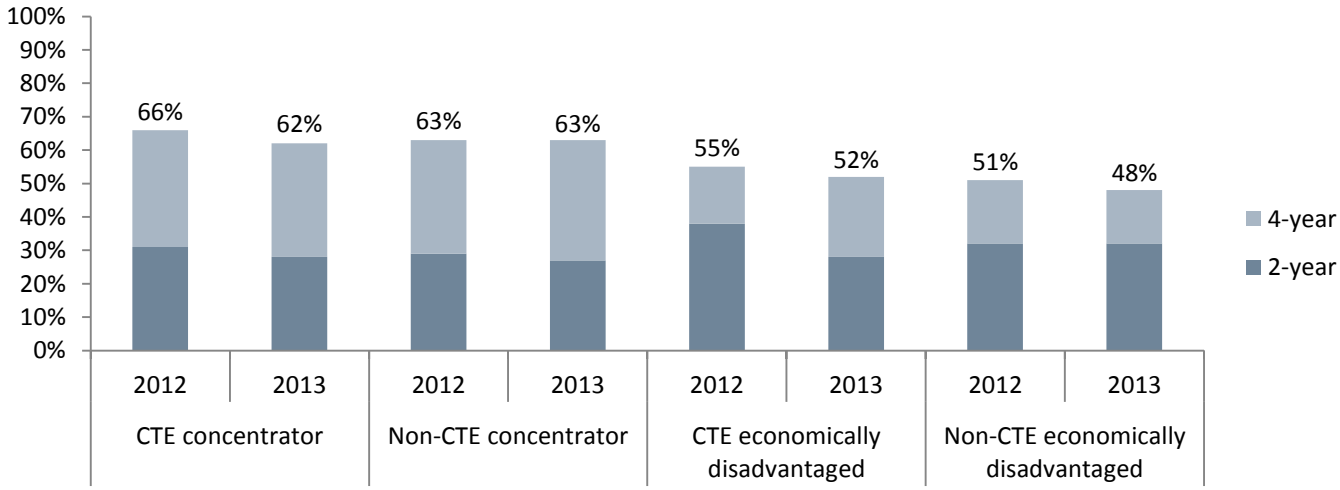


Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014

*Differences in percentage totals are statistically significant ($p < .01$).

Career and technical education (CTE) concentrator status. For the Class of 2013, postsecondary enrollment showed only a one percentage point difference between CTE and non-CTE concentrators. There was a 4 percentage point decline in overall enrollment from Class of 2012 to Class of 2013 for CTE concentrators. For the Classes of 2012 and 2013, overall postsecondary enrollment rates for CTE concentrators who were classified as economically disadvantaged were higher than the rates for their non-CTE peers (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Postsecondary enrollment rates for economically disadvantaged career and technical education (CTE) concentrators were higher than their economically disadvantaged non-CTE peers.



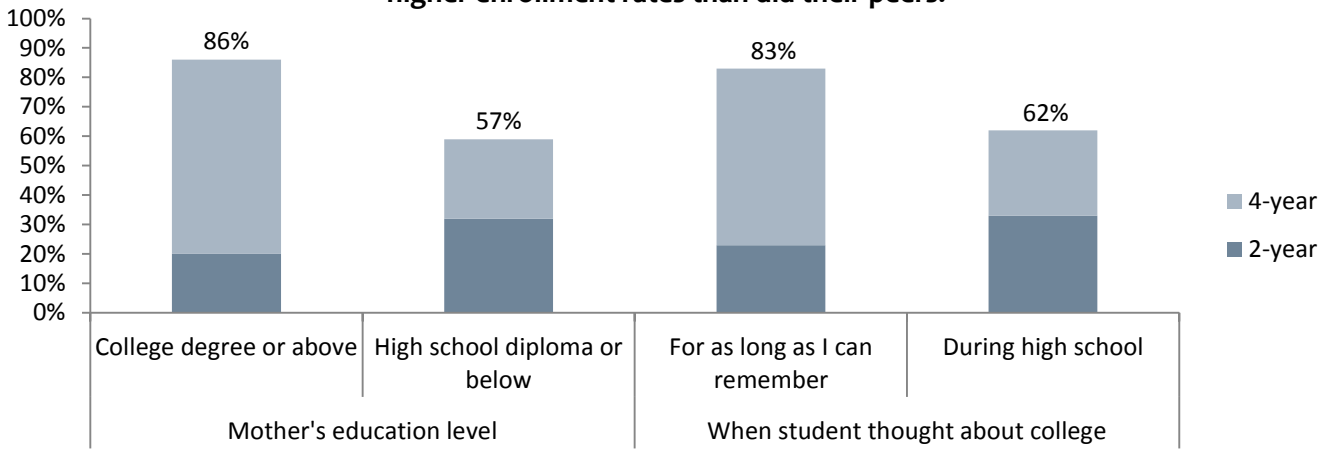
Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014

Note. A senior is classified as a CTE concentrator if (a) his or her 4-year plan of courses reflected the intent to take a sequence of CTE courses for three or more credits, (b) he or she took one of the CTE courses in the sequence prior to senior year, and (c) he or she took an upper-level CTE course in the sequence during junior or senior year that met the credit requirement.

Did enrollment vary according to predictors of postsecondary enrollment?

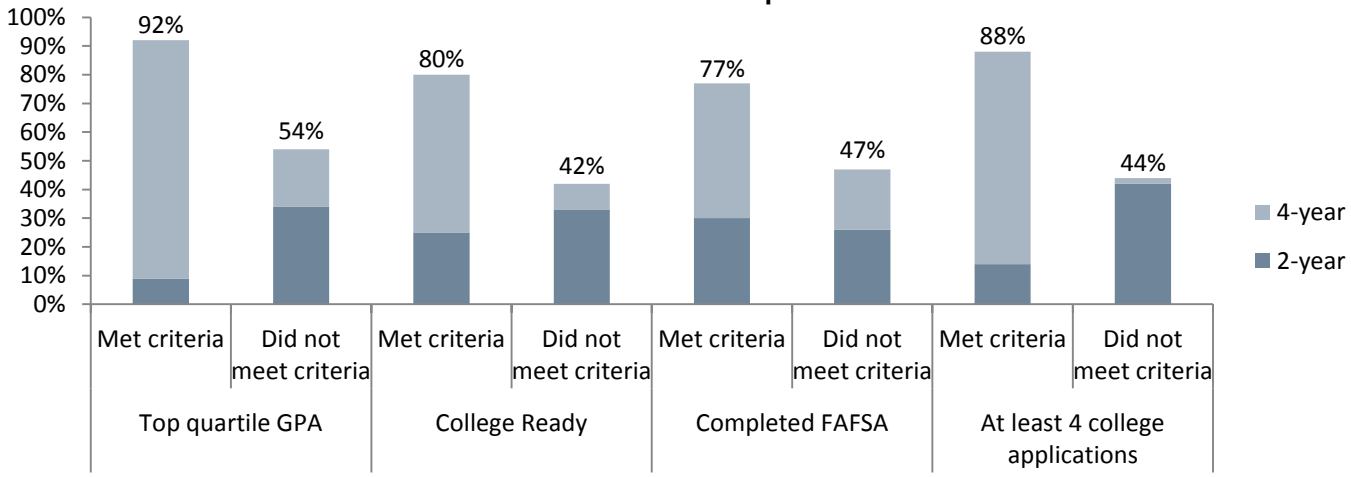
Predictors of enrollment. In 2008, DRE staff (Garland, 2008) conducted a study to determine which student characteristics predicted enrollment in a postsecondary institution. This study was modeled after research from the Chicago Consortium of School Research (Roderick, Nagaoka, Coca, & Moella, 2008). The study was updated using Class of 2013 data. Additional indicators were found to be statistically significant in predicting college enrollment: mother's education level, when the student thought about college, and college readiness in math and English language arts (ELA). Overall, the percentages of graduates who met predictive criteria and enrolled in a postsecondary institution the following year were significantly greater than the percentages of those who did not meet predictive criteria. Figures 11a and 11b list the predictors from the updated AISD predictive study that were strong influences on postsecondary enrollment for Class of 2013 graduates.

Figure 11a. Class of 2013 graduates who indicated their mother's education level was college or above and those who indicated they thought about college "for as long as [they] can remember" had significantly higher enrollment rates than did their peers.



Source. AISD High School Exit Survey, National Student Clearinghouse, 2014
Note. Differences in percentage totals are statistically significant ($p < .01$).

Figure 11b. Class of 2013 graduates who met predictive criteria enrolled in college at significantly higher rates than did their peers.

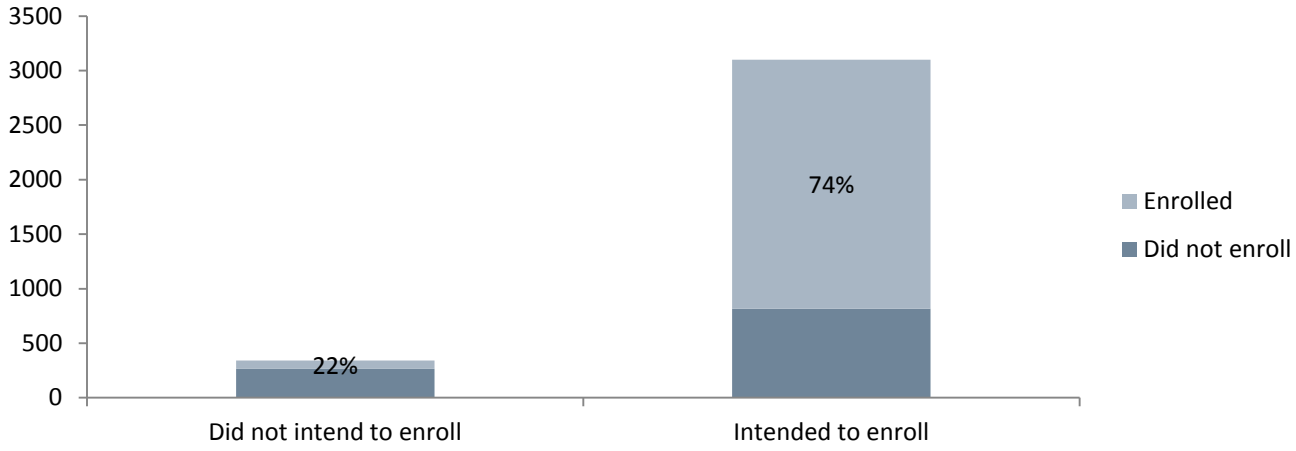


Source. AISD Academics, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion, National Student Clearinghouse, 2014
Note. Differences in percentage totals are statistically significant ($p < .01$). Also note, GPA is an acronym for grade point average.

What was the "aspiration gap" for the Class of 2013?

Aspiration gap. Aspiring to go to college requires students to complete preparation milestones. Assuming students have been preparing academically, AISD school staff make concerted efforts to help seniors complete college admissions and financial aid applications. The results of the Class of 2013 district's senior exit survey (Wiggins, 2014) showed that 90% (*n* = 3,101) of seniors planned to enroll in college. However, a gap existed between those who expressed an intention to enroll in college and those who actually enrolled the year following graduation. Only 74% of students who reported that they intended to enroll actually enrolled (Figure 12). Within AISD, this gap has remained consistent. Additional study may be required to determine why the gap persists and what resources are necessary to reduce the gap.

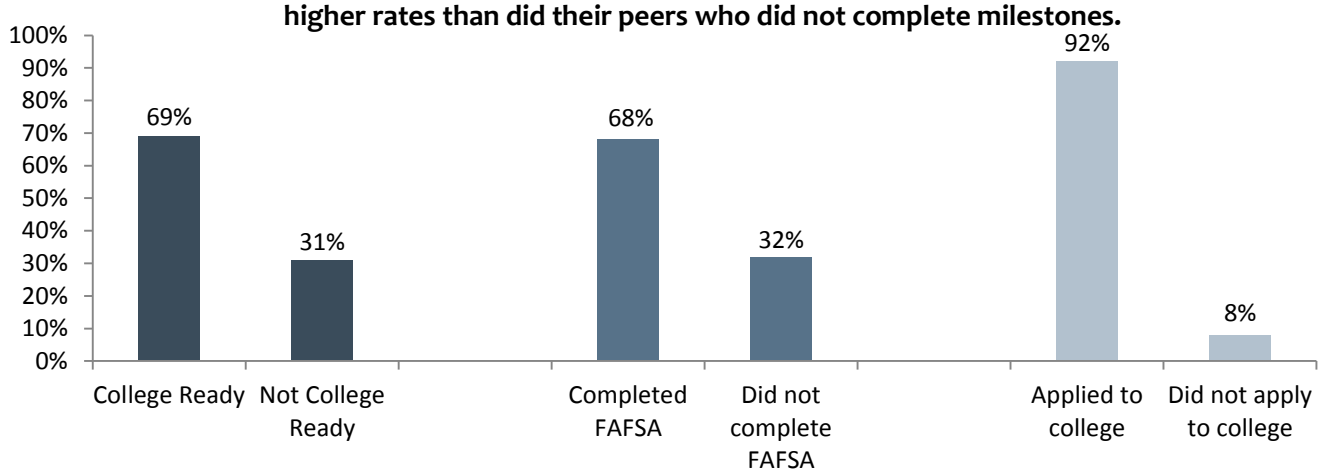
Figure 12. Seventy-four percent of Class of 2013 seniors who indicated they intended to enroll in college actually enrolled the year following high school graduation.



Source. AISD High School Exit Survey, National Student Clearinghouse, 2014

Significantly more students who intended to enroll in college and completed postsecondary enrollment milestones (Figure 13), compared with students who did not complete these milestones—completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), passed college readiness exams, and applied to college—enrolled in a postsecondary institution within the year after graduating from high school.

Figure 13. Students who completed postsecondary enrollment milestones enrolled in college at higher rates than did their peers who did not complete milestones.



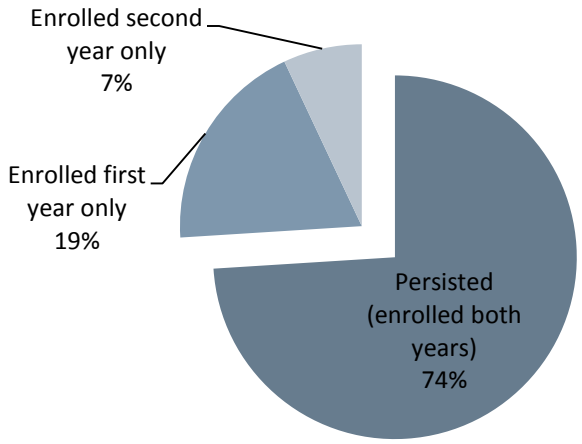
Source. AISD High School Exit Survey, FAFSA completion, National Student Clearinghouse, 2014

Note. Differences in percentage totals are statistically significant ($p < .01$).

Did college-goers from the Class of 2012 persist in their postsecondary enrollment?

College freshman persistence rate. Sixty-four percent of graduates from the Class of 2012 enrolled in a postsecondary institution within the first year after high school graduation. Of those graduates who enrolled in college the first year after high school graduation, 74% enrolled for a second year (persisted). Of the AISD graduates who did not enroll in a postsecondary institution the year after high school graduation, 7% enrolled for the first time in their second year after high school graduation (Figure 14). Sixty-nine percent of Class of 2012 graduates, both first-time enrolling and returning students, were enrolled in a postsecondary institution within the second year after high school graduation.

Figure 14. Seventy-four percent of AISD Class of 2012 graduates who enrolled in college the first year after high school graduation persisted in college.



Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014; AISD enrollment and graduation data prepared by the Department of Research and Evaluation
Note. Students who persisted are those who enrolled the first and second years immediately following their graduation from high school.

Students enrolled in 4-year institutions had higher return rates the following year than did students who were enrolled in 2-year institutions (Table 2). Research on persistence and degree attainment within 6 years of first-time enrollment at any postsecondary institution indicates that students who initially enrolled in 2-year institutions persisted and attained degrees at lower rates than did their peers who initially enrolled in 4-year institutions (Radford, Berkner, Wheeless, & Shepherd, 2010; Shapiro, Dundar, Ziskin, Yuan, & Harrell, 2013).

Table 2. Students enrolled in 4-year institutions had higher return rates the following year than did students who were enrolled in 2-year institutions.

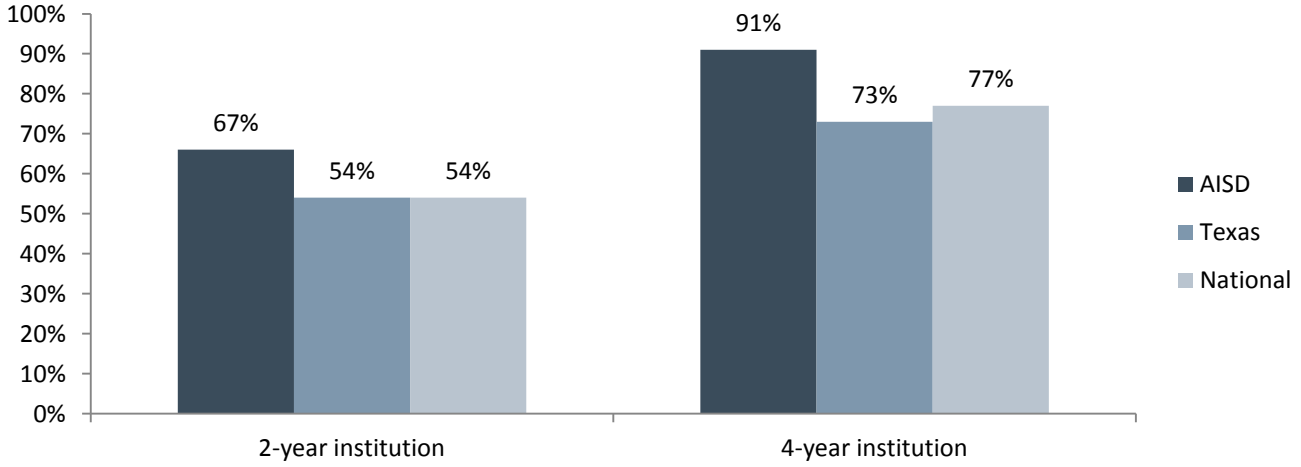
Type of institution	Class of 2011	Class of 2012
2-year institution	67%	67%
4-year institution	93%	91%

Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014; AISD enrollment and graduation data prepared by the Department of Research and Evaluation.

Did postsecondary persistence differ among 2012 graduates at the local, state, and national levels?

Local, state, and national persistence rates. AISD's college persistence rates exceeded state and national persistence rates for college freshmen in 2-year and 4-year institutions. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (2014) reported 77% of first-year college students from the Class of 2010—the most recently reported cohort—across the nation returned to a 4-year college for a second year, and in Texas, 73% of first-year college students from the Class of 2010 returned to a 4-year college for a second year. Ninety-one percent of AISD 2012 graduates returned to a 4-year college for a second year (Figure 15).

Figure 15. AISD's postsecondary persistence rates exceeded state and national rates.*

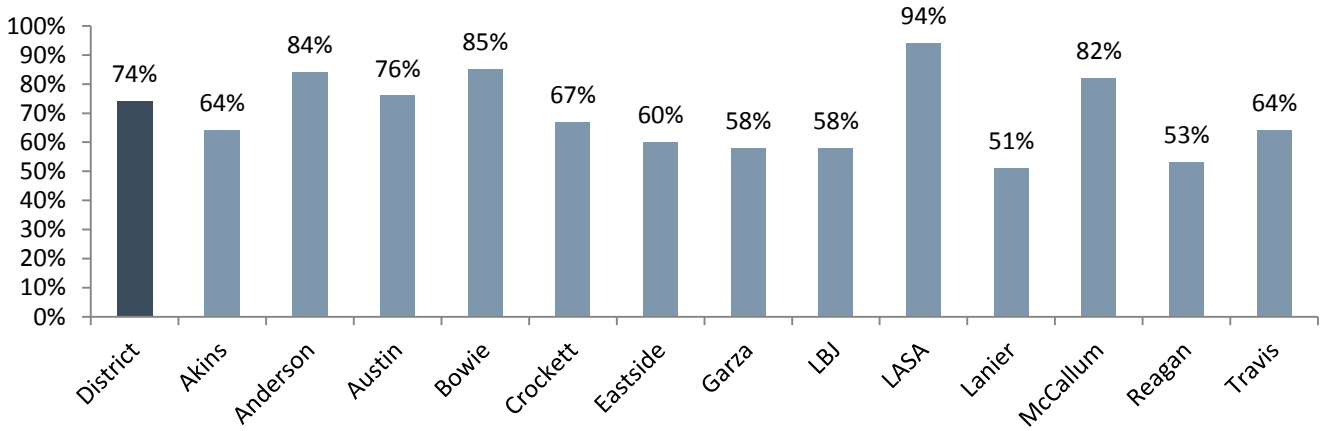


Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014; AISD enrollment data prepared by the Department of Research and Evaluation
*The most recently reported State of Texas and national persistence rates are for the Class of 2010.

Did postsecondary persistence differ for 2012 graduates from various AISD high schools?

Campus persistence rates. Postsecondary persistence rates varied for Class of 2012 graduates depending on the high school they attended. The high schools with the highest persistence rates also had the highest first first-year enrollment rates Figure 16).

Figure 16. Class of 2012 college persistence rates varied by AISD high school.

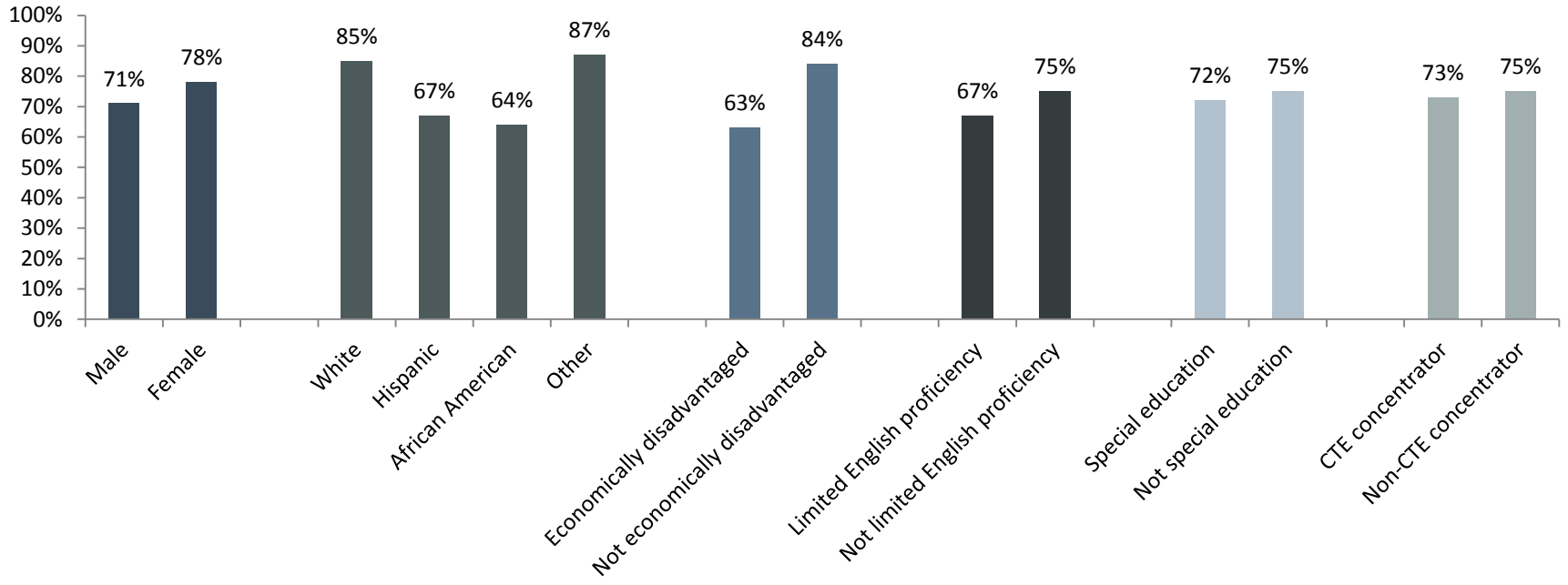


Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014; AISD enrollment data prepared by the Department of Research and Evaluation

Did postsecondary persistence for 2012 graduates differ among student groups?

Persistence for student groups. Persistence rates varied between student groups within the Class of 2012. Students classified as Hispanic, White, and "other" race had significantly higher persistence rates than did students classified as African American. White and "other" race students had significantly higher persistence rates than did Hispanic students. Female students had significantly higher persistence rates than did their male counterparts. Students classified as economically-disadvantaged had significantly lower persistence rates than did their peers who were not classified as economically disadvantaged. Although, persistence rates for students classified as LEP, SPED, and CTE were lower than were rates for their peers not classified as such, percentage differences were not statistically significant (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Persistence rates were significantly different for gender, race, and economic status demographic groups.



Source. National Student Clearinghouse, August 2014; AISD enrollment and graduation data prepared by the Department of Research and Evaluation
Note. "Other" includes Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and two or more races.
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