

Texas College, Career, and Military Readiness Indicator Study: Examining Time to a Self-Sufficiency Standard Wage

White Paper

Kristina L. Zeiser, Molly Cain

July 2025



Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
A. Introduction	4
B. Background	4
C. Study Overview and Research Questions	6
D. Findings	9
E. Limitations.....	22
F. Policy Recommendations Suggestions for Future Research	23
References	25
Appendix A. Data and Measures.....	26
Appendix B. Supporting Tables	29

Exhibits

Exhibit 1. College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) standards and indicators in the Texas A–F Accountability System for districts and high schools	5
Exhibit 2. SSSW attainment of 2017–18 graduates within 6 years of high school: Percent and average time, overall and by student characteristics.....	9
Exhibit 3. Percentage of 2017–18 graduates who achieved an SSSW each year, overall and by CCMR indicator	12
Exhibit 4. Percentage of 2017–18 graduates who received special education services and who achieved an SSSW each year, overall and by CCMR indicator.....	13
Exhibit 5. Working and college enrollment status in the first year after high school graduation, overall and by CCMR indicator	14
Exhibit 6. Working and college enrollment status in the first year after high school graduation, overall and by CCMR indicator for graduates who received special education services.....	16
Exhibit 7. Percentage of 2017–18 graduates who achieved an SSSW each year between the first and sixth year after high school graduation, overall and by working and college enrollment status in the first year after high school graduation	17
Exhibit 8. College enrollment and attainment status within 6 years of high school graduation, overall and by CCMR indicator	18
Exhibit 9. College enrollment and attainment status within 6 years of high school graduation, overall and by CCMR indicator for students who received special education services.....	19
Exhibit 10. Percentage of 2017–18 graduates who achieved an SSSW each year, overall and by college enrollment and attainment status	21
Exhibit A1. Estimates of SSSW for each school year between 2018–19 and 2023–24, adjusted for inflation	27
Exhibit B1. Percentage of high school graduates achieving an SSSW between the first and sixth year after high school graduation, overall and by CCMR indicators and postsecondary pathways	29
Exhibit B2. Postsecondary pathways of 2017–18 high school graduates, overall and by CCMR indicator	31

Executive Summary

Study Description

In 2023, the Texas legislature appropriated funds for the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to study the effectiveness of the college, career, and military readiness (CCMR) indicators. The funded research was intended to investigate the CCMR indicators and their relationships with longer term postgraduation outcomes, including students' achievement of a self-sufficiency standard wage (SSSW) over time. Because the time required to achieve an SSSW is likely to vary depending on the pathway that students follow after high school (such as enrolling in college, directly entering the workforce, or some combination of employment and college course taking), this research also explores relationships between CCMR indicators and students' postsecondary employment and college enrollment outcomes.

TEA contracted with the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) to document students' achievement of an SSSW for the first 6 years after high school and to identify predictors of successfully achieving an SSSW. Using data from the Education Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin, AIR researchers examined the postsecondary outcomes for the population of 347,850 high school graduates in 2017–18 through spring 2024. The primary outcome of interest was achievement of an SSSW, which was defined as the 2023 weighted average SSSW for households with a single adult across counties in Texas: **\$34,659.12**. AIR researchers applied an annual inflation adjustment to this threshold.

Results

Relationships between completion of CCMR indicators and achievement of an SSSW were varied.

- Completing a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate during high school was related to the greatest likelihood of achieving an SSSW each year between the first (6%) and sixth (49%) year after high school graduation. Excluding students who completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate, students who did not complete CCMR indicators during high school had the greatest likelihood of achieving an SSSW for the first 4 years after high school (increasing from 3% to 21%). However, by the end of the sixth year after high school graduation, they had the lowest likelihood of achieving an SSSW (35%) when compared with students who completed a CCMR indicator (between 37% and 49%).
- Beginning in Year 5, achieving an SSSW was more likely among students who completed an associate degree during high school (35%), students who took dual credit (32%), and students who completed an aligned, industry-based certification (32%) than among students who did not complete CCMR indicators (28%).

- Beginning in Year 6, achieving an SSSW was more likely among students who completed OnRamps courses (42%), students who met the Texas Success Initiative criteria in reading and mathematics (40%), and students who successfully passed at least one Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exam (37%) than among students who did not complete CCMR indicators (35%).
- Among students who received special education services, students who graduated with an advanced diploma were more likely to achieve an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation (29%) than students who demonstrated workforce readiness (21%).

Completion of CCMR indicators during high school is related to students' postsecondary college enrollment and employment outcomes.

- Students who completed college readiness indicators during high school were more likely to enroll in college in the first year after high school graduation (ranging from 65% to 79%) than students who did not complete CCMR indicators (30%).
- Students who completed college readiness indicators during high school were more likely to complete a bachelor's degree within 6 years of high school graduation (ranging from 39% to 54%) when compared with students who did not complete CCMR indicators (4%).
- Students who completed career readiness indicators also were more likely to earn an associate degree (ranging from 11% to 14%) or a bachelor's degree (ranging from 17% to 30%) relative to students who did not complete CCMR indicators (4% completed an associate degree, and 4% completed a bachelor's degree).

Students' postsecondary pathways were related to SSSW achievement, but economic returns to college enrollment and completion were not immediate.

- Students who were employed and not enrolled in college in the first year immediately after high school graduation (about a third of high school graduates) had the greatest likelihood of achieving an SSSW between the first (6%) and the fifth (37%) year after high school graduation.
- Beginning in Year 6, students who were both enrolled in college and working in the first year after high school graduation (also about a third of graduates) had the greatest likelihood of achieving an SSSW (48%).
- Six years after high school graduation, students who never enrolled in college had the lowest likelihood of achieving an SSSW (28%), and students who completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate (54%) and students who completed a bachelor's degree (50%) had the greatest likelihood of achieving an SSSW.

Policy Implications

Considerations for advising Level 1 and Level 2 certificate earners. Study findings have implications for Texas education policies associated with advising strategies. Although completion of a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate during high school resulted in the highest probability of achieving an SSSW over time, the state should consider how increasing the number of graduates achieving a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate over time may create a surplus of students with training in specific trades, which could result in a decrease in the returns to these credentials over time. To maintain the economic benefits of this credential, it will be important for districts to monitor local labor markets to identify the needs of local employers across industries.

Uncovering new measures of career readiness. With the exception of students who earned a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate during high school, students who did not demonstrate CCMR indicators had the highest probability of achieving an SSSW for the first 4 years after high school graduation. Given the higher rates of employment and relative success of this group in the years immediately after high school graduation, TEA could consider additional measures of career readiness that may further distinguish career readiness among students who experience successful outcomes in the workforce without college enrollment. In addition, future research may want to consider the ways in which combinations of, or refinements to, existing CCMR indicators may strengthen or weaken relationships with longer term outcomes.

Need for a longer follow-up time period. For many of the college readiness CCMR indicators, we found larger increases in the percentage of students who achieved an SSSW after the fourth year after high school graduation, and for some indicators, advantages over students who did not complete CCMR indicators were not observed until the sixth year after high school graduation. This suggests that future research may need to follow students for longer than six years after high school to assess the relative advantages of certain CCMR indicators as they relate to achieving an SSSW.

A. Introduction

In 2023, the Texas legislature appropriated funds for the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to study the effectiveness of the college, career, and military readiness (CCMR) indicators. The funded research was intended to investigate the CCMR indicators and their relationships with both immediate and longer term postgraduation outcomes, including both college credit accumulation and students' achievement of a self-sufficiency standard wage (SSSW) over time.

Although TEA recognizes SSSW as a key outcome for students, the agency needs research evidence to determine how much time, on average, students need to achieve an SSSW after high school graduation. Moreover, it is likely that the time required to achieve an SSSW will vary depending on the pathway that students follow after high school (such as enrolling in college, directly entering the workforce, or some combination of employment and college course taking) as well as the actions that students took during high school to become college and career ready. TEA contracted with the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) to document students' achievement of an SSSW for the first 6 years after high school and to identify among 2017–18 high school graduates predictors of successfully achieving an SSSW. Results of this study are presented in this white paper.

B. Background

The state of Texas sought to identify a set of outcomes that students experience during high school that is predictive of student success in college and/or careers after high school, including employment and earnings. The CCMR indicators established in the Texas Education Code, Section 39.053(b) are intended to measure graduates' preparedness for college, the workforce, or the military. These indicators are used in the state's A–F Accountability System and are related to the calculation of the outcomes bonus funding for districts. As described in the Texas Education Code, the Texas Commissioner of Education may periodically review the indicators to assess their appropriateness for predicting successful student outcomes and revise the CCMR indicators as necessary.

As of January 1, 2024, the Texas Education Code includes 10 CCMR indicators: Six indicators measure college readiness; three indicators, career readiness; and one indicator, military readiness. Two of these indicators (one college-ready indicator and one career-ready indicator) apply only to students who receive special education services. Exhibit 1 describes each category of readiness standards and their indicators as identified in the accountability system (Texas

Education Agency, 2024). Although there are 10 readiness indicators, students can achieve some of the indicators in multiple ways. For example, to meet the Advanced Placement (AP) indicator, a student must earn a minimum score on one AP exam from a selection of almost 40 courses. These courses are offered in a variety of disciplines, ranging from math and sciences to art and languages (College Board, 2025).

Exhibit 1. College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) standards and indicators in the Texas A–F Accountability System for districts and high schools

Readiness Standard	Indicator Abbreviation	CCMR Indicator
College ready	AP/IB	Score a minimum of 3 on Advanced Placement (AP) or 4 on International Baccalaureate (IB) examinations.
	TSI	Meet Texas Success Initiative (TSI) criteria (SAT/ACT/Texas Success Initiative Assessment/college preparatory course) in reading and mathematics.
	Dual credit	Earn dual credit (9 hours or more in any subject or 3 hours or more in English language arts or mathematics).
	Associate degree	Earn an associate degree.
	OnRamps	Complete an OnRamps course in any subject and qualify to earn college credit.
	Advanced diploma	Graduate under an advanced diploma plan and currently be identified as a student receiving special education services.
Career ready	Align IBC	Complete a program of study and earn an aligned, industry-based certification (IBC).
	Certificate	Earn a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate.
	Workforce readiness	Graduate with a completed individualized education program and workforce readiness (graduation type codes 04, 05, 54, or 55) and identified as a student in special education.
Military ready	Enlisted	Enlist in the Armed Forces or the Texas National Guard.

Notes. The industry-based certification (IBC) indicator refers to the aligned IBC and a program-of-study completer that will be phased in with the class of 2026. The advanced diploma and workforce readiness indicators are specific to students receiving special education services. The military ready indicator is excluded from this analysis because accountability calculations will not be conducted until data can be obtained directly from the U.S. Armed Forces.

The theory behind CCMR indicators is that students who demonstrate college, career, and military readiness will experience more success in their chosen pathway after high school than students who do not demonstrate readiness. Following this theory, CCMR indicators would influence students' decisions about and success in their chosen postsecondary pathway, which ultimately will influence their workforce outcomes and economic well-being (which, for the purposes of this paper, we measure as achievement of an SSSW) over time. For example, students who enroll in college full time immediately after high school may be less likely to achieve an SSSW in the first year after high school when compared with students who enter the workforce directly. However, if these students complete a bachelor's degree within 4 years, they may be *more likely* to achieve an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation than those who entered the workforce directly after high school. Alternatively, students who earn an associate degree or certificate during high school may be more likely to enter the workforce and achieve an SSSW in a shorter period of time.

To uncover the relationships between CCMR indicators and longer term workforce outcomes, in this white paper, we describe the relationships among CCMR indicators and (a) the timing of SSSW achievement, (b) students' employment and college enrollment status during the school year immediately after high school graduation, and (c) students' college enrollment and completion status within 6 years of high school graduation. We also provide data about the timing of SSSW achievement for students with different postsecondary pathways.

C. Study Overview and Research Questions

To understand the relationships among CCMR indicators, postsecondary pathways, and achievement of an SSSW in Texas, the study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What percentage of graduates in 2017–18 achieved an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation, and how did the achievement of an SSSW vary by completion of CCMR indicators and chosen postsecondary pathways?
2. What percentage of graduates in 2017–18 achieved an SSSW within each year between the first and sixth year after high school graduation, and how did the achievement of an SSSW over time vary by success on CCMR indicators and chosen postsecondary pathways?

To address these research questions, AIR analyzed linked, longitudinal data files from the Education Research Center (ERC) at the University of Texas at Austin. These data include information about students' academic performance during high school, enrollment in Texas colleges after high school, and employment and earnings information from the Texas

Unemployment Insurance (UI) data system. The analyses focus on the population of 347,850 students who graduated from high school during the 2017–18 school year. Our analyses follow students for 6 years immediately after high school graduation, with each year beginning in July (that is, the beginning of Quarter 3 earnings in the UI data) and ending in June (that is, the end of Quarter 2 in the UI data). Defining years in this way also aligns with academic school years for students who enroll in college after high school.

This white paper focuses on three primary student outcomes after high school: the timing of SSSW achievement, employment and college enrollment immediately after high school, and students' college enrollment and completion within 6 years of high school graduation. In recent years, the state of Texas has worked with economists at the University of Washington to calculate the SSSW in every county and for different family compositions (Texas Workforce Commission, n.d.). Detailed information about the definition and measurement of SSSW is provided in Box 1.

Box 1. Defining and Measuring Self-Sufficiency Standard Wage

Definition: Self-Sufficiency Standard Wage (SSSW) is defined as the earnings necessary for a family to meet their basic needs, and its calculation considers multiple expenditures including housing, food, health care, transportation, and more.

Measurement: The analyses use the 2023 weighted average value of SSSW across Texas counties for households with a single adult, which is **\$34,659.12**. The weighted average SSSW is based on the University of Washington's calculations for each Texas county and different family types. We take the average across all counties because the analyses focus on the outcomes of a cohort of high school graduates across Texas, and we weight county-specific SSSW values using county-level population estimates from the US Census Bureau. This estimate is adjusted for inflation between the 2018–19 and 2023–24 school years, using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, ensuring that the threshold for SSSW is appropriate for the year in which it is measured. Once a student was identified as achieving an SSSW in a given school year, they were coded as achieving an SSSW in subsequent school years (i.e., the student had successfully achieved an SSSW). For additional information about the data sources and measures used in the study, please see Appendix A.

AIR examined ERC data in the 2018–19 school year to measure students' employment and college enrollment immediately after high school. High school graduates were placed into one of four categories: (a) enrolled in college, (b) working, (c) enrolled in college and working, or (d) neither enrolled in college nor working.¹ It is important to note that ERC data only include employment and college enrollment data within the state of Texas; therefore, students who were classified as neither working nor enrolled in college may have been enrolled in college or

¹ Using this categorization, graduates who are “enrolled in college” were not working, and students who were “working” were not enrolled in college.

employed outside Texas. Finally, we measured students' college enrollment and attainment status within 6 years of high school graduation using ERC data provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Students were classified into one of the six following categories based on their highest degree earned: (a) never enrolled in college, (b) enrolled in a 2-year college but did not complete a degree or certificate, (c) enrolled in a 4-year college but did not complete a degree, (d) completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate,² (e) completed an associate degree, or (f) completed a bachelor's degree.³ A brief overview of study limitations related to data and measures is provided in Box 2.

Box 2. Study Limitations

Before describing the study findings, it is important to highlight a few key study limitations. A more detailed description of these limitations is provided after the reporting of study findings. In general, limitations relate to earnings data coverage, the measurement of CCMR indicators, and the time period in which outcomes are measured.

- **Earnings data coverage.** Data on students' employment and earnings are not available for students who leave the state of Texas. In addition, several occupations (such as employment with the federal government and independent contractors) do not report earnings in the UI data system.
- **CCMR measures.** Students may complete one or more of the CCMR indicators during high school. Therefore, it is difficult to compare findings across CCMR indicators because high school graduates may be included in samples for multiple CCMR indicators.
- **Time period.** In this paper, we follow students for 6 years after high school graduation. For students who do not achieve an SSSW within this time frame, the time necessary to achieve an SSSW is unclear.

In the sections that follow, we illustrate findings associated with the study's two research questions, describe the study limitations, and discuss implications for policy and future research.

² Level 1 and Level 2 certificates are designed to provide students with academic and workforce skills to attain entry-level employment or progress to an associate degree. Level 1 certificates are awarded for completing a program consisting of between 15 and 42 semester credit hours; Level 2 certificates are awarded for completing a program consisting of between 30 and 51 semester credit hours (THECB, 2024).

³ Completion of an associate degree includes students with the "associate degree" CCMR indicator who did not complete another degree or certificate after high school. A small number of graduates completed an associate degree during high school and completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate after high school. These students are classified based on the certificate they earned after high school. Students who earned both a certificate and an associate degree during the follow-up time period are categorized based on their completion of an associate degree.

D. Findings

In this section, we illustrate the share of 2017–18 high school graduates who achieved an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation. We also describe the typical length of time it took graduates who achieved an SSSW to do so. The section concludes by describing postsecondary college enrollment, degree attainment, and employment status of high school graduates, and how these postsecondary trajectories relate to both CCMR indicators and SSSW achievement.

What percentage of graduates in 2017–18 achieved an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation, and how did the achievement of an SSSW vary by CCMR indicators and postsecondary pathways?

Overall, **more than one third (37%) of 2017–18 high school graduates achieved an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation** (Exhibit 2). Among graduates who achieved an SSSW within that time frame, the average amount of time it took for them to achieve an SSSW was 4.3 years. In contrast, fewer than one quarter of 2017–18 graduates who received special education services (24%) achieved an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation.

Exhibit 2. SSSW attainment of 2017–18 graduates within 6 years of high school: Percent and average time, overall and by student characteristics

Student group	Student count	Percentage of students achieving an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation (spring 2024)	Average time to SSSW among students who achieved an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation
Total Graduates	347,850	36.8%	4.3 years
Total Graduates who Received Special Education Services	25,954	23.9%	3.8 years
Completion of CCMR Indicators			
TSI	146,424	40.2%	4.7 years
Dual credit	71,983	44.1%	4.7 years
AP/IB	70,936	37.0%	4.8 years
Associate degree	5,035	45.7%	4.6 years
OnRamps	3,348	42.5%	4.8 years
Align IBC	5,396	42.5%	4.4 years
Level 1 or 2 certificate	2,029	49.4%	3.7 years
Workforce readiness ^a	5,817	21.0%	3.8 years
Advanced diploma ^a	8,880	29.0%	4.0 years
Did not complete any CCMR indicators	159,729	34.6%	3.9 years

Student group	Student count	Percentage of students achieving an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation (spring 2024)	Average time to SSSW among students who achieved an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation
Working and College Enrollment Status—Year 1 (2018–19)			
Enrolled in college	45,183	33.0%	5.1 years
Working	106,297	43.0%	3.6 years
Enrolled in college and working	126,713	48.0%	4.5 years
Not working and not enrolled in college ^b	69,657	9.7%	4.8 years
College Enrollment and Attainment Status (highest degree)—Within 6 years of high school graduation			
Never enrolled in college	145,254	28.4%	3.7 years
Enrolled in a 2-year college only, did not earn a college degree	67,160	40.5%	4.1 years
Enrolled in a 4-year college, did not earn a college degree	36,387	34.8%	4.5 years
Earned a certificate	6,516	54.1%	3.7 years
Earned an associate degree	23,399	39.8%	3.4 years
Earned a bachelor's degree	69,134	49.5%	5.1 years

^a CCMR indicators are designed specifically for students receiving special education services.

^b Almost two thirds (65.7%) of students in this subgroup were not found in Texas UI data during the 6-year follow-up.

Notes. CCMR = college, career, and military readiness; SSSW = self-sufficiency standard wage; TSI = met Texas Success Initiative criteria; AP/IB = Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate; IBC = industry-based certification. The CCMR designation categories are not mutually exclusive because students can complete multiple indicators. For postsecondary outcomes immediately after high school, “working” includes students who were not enrolled in college, and “enrolled in college” includes students who were not working. The categories “Not working and not enrolled in college” and “Never enrolled in college” may include graduates who have left Texas for college or employment. For the small number of graduates who completed an associate degree during high school and completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate after high school, the college attainment status after high school is based on the certificate they earned after high school.

CCMR Indicators. There is variation in the share of students who achieved an SSSW based on whether students completed a CCMR indicator. Of the CCMR indicators, **students who completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate in high school had the largest probability of achieving an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation (49%), followed by students who earned an associate degree during high school (46%) and students who took dual credit (44%).**⁴ Finally, among students who received special education services, the percentage of

⁴ Please note that students could achieve more than one CCMR indicator during high school; therefore, subgroups of students are not mutually exclusive. For example, students who earned an associate degree during high school would also count as completing dual credit during high school.

students who achieved an SSSW was higher among graduates who earned an advanced diploma (29%) when compared with all students who received special education services (24%).

Postsecondary Pathways. There seems to be a relationship between students' likelihood of achieving an SSSW and where they begin their postsecondary experience. Students who enrolled in college and worked immediately after high school graduation had the highest probability of achieving an SSSW within 6 years of high school graduation (48%), and the average amount of time it took for them to achieve an SSSW was 4.5 years. It is possible that students who were both not working and not enrolled in college immediately after high school moved outside Texas either to attend college or to seek employment. These students had the lowest probability (10%) of achieving an SSSW within 6 years after high school graduation.

Similar to the findings by CCMR indicators, **students who earned a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate as their highest degree⁵ had the highest chances of achieving an SSSW; more than half (54%) of these students achieved an SSSW. Completion of a bachelor's degree is also related to achieving an SSSW; about half (49.5%) of students who completed a bachelor's degree within 6 years of high school graduation achieved an SSSW.** Rates of achieving an SSSW were similar among students who completed an associate degree (40%) and those who enrolled in a 2-year college but did not complete a degree (41%). Students who did not enroll in college within 6 years of high school graduation had the lowest probability of achieving an SSSW (28%).

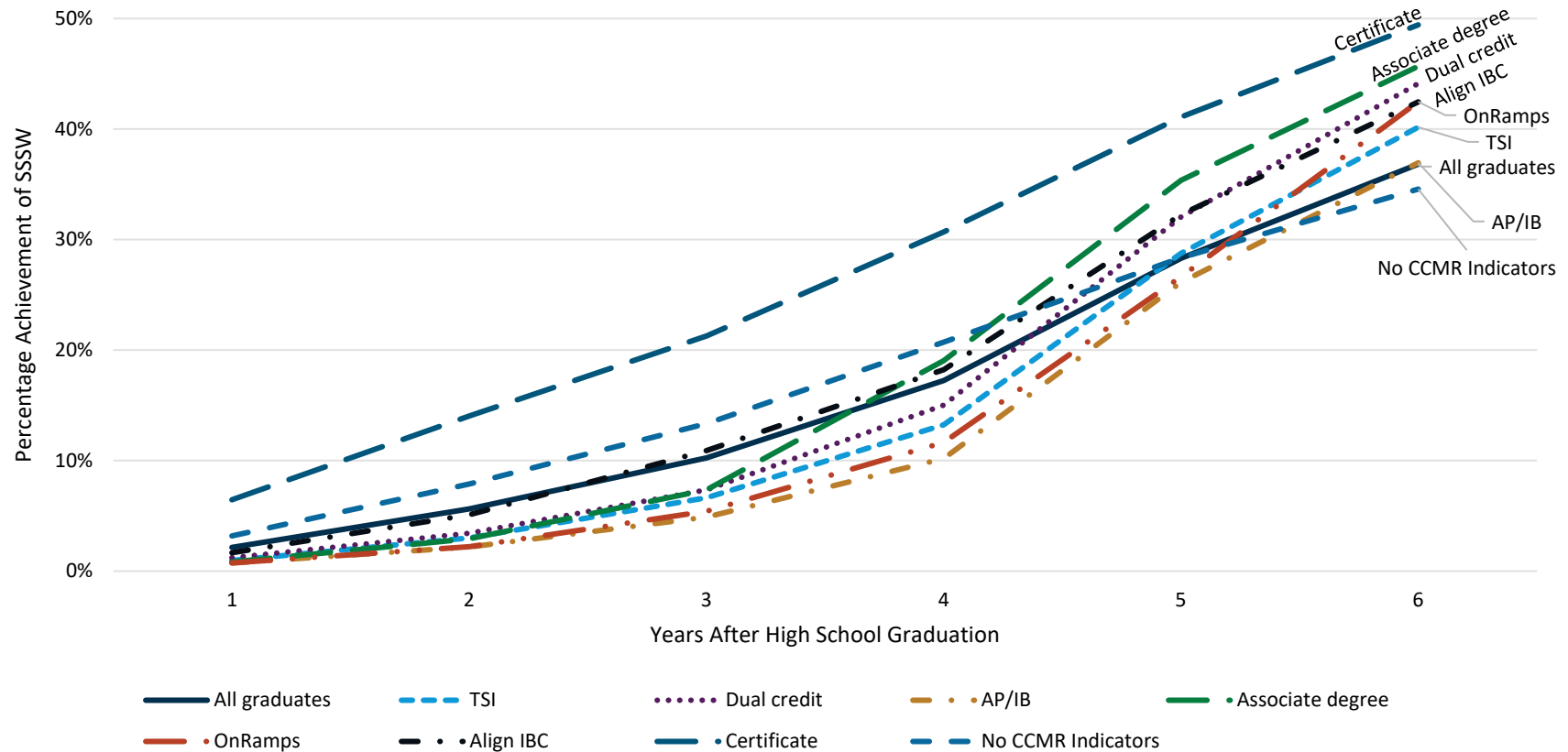
What percentage of graduates in 2017–18 achieved an SSSW within each year between the first and sixth year after high school graduation, and how did the achievement of an SSSW over time vary by CCMR indicators and postsecondary pathways?

CCMR Indicators. Findings illustrated in Exhibit 3 (for all graduates) and Exhibit 4 (for graduates who received special education services) show that the likelihood of achieving an SSSW increased each year after high school graduation, and that the relationships between CCMR indicators and achievement of an SSSW were not consistent over time.⁶ **Across all the CCMR indicators and in each year after high school graduation, students who earned a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate during high school had the highest likelihood of achieving an SSSW** (Exhibit 3). In the first year after high school graduation, 6% of graduates who earned a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate during high school were earning an SSSW, and this share increased by more than 5 percentage points in each subsequent year, with the largest jump of about 10 percentage points occurring between Years 4 and 5.

⁵ About one fifth (21.5%) of graduates whose highest degree was a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate completed their certificate during high school. In contrast, 31% of graduates who completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate during high school later completed an associate degree or bachelor's degree, and their degree completion status reflects the highest degree completed.

⁶ Counts and percentages for all subgroups are in Appendix Table B1.

Exhibit 3. Percentage of 2017–18 graduates who achieved an SSSW each year, overall and by CCMR indicator

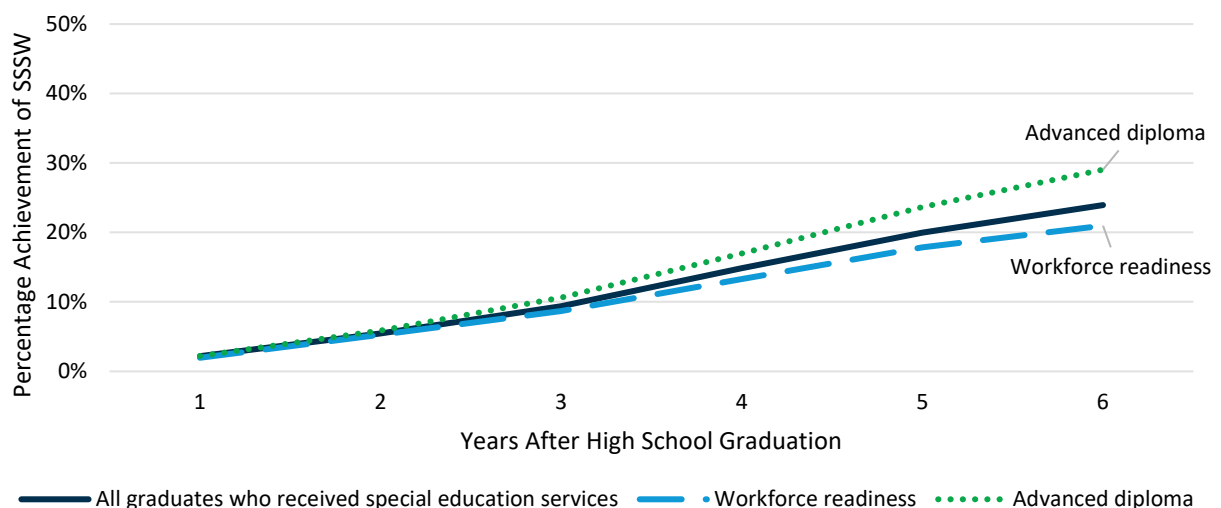


Notes. SSSW = self-sufficiency standard wage; CCMR = college, career, and military readiness; TSI = met Texas Success Initiative criteria; IBC = industry-based certification; AP/IB = Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate. The CCMR designation categories are not mutually exclusive because students can complete multiple indicators.

With the exception of students who earned a certificate during high school, fewer than 5% of high school graduates achieved an SSSW in the first year after high school graduation, and graduates who did not complete any of the CCMR indicators had the greatest likelihood of achieving an SSSW for each of the first 4 years after graduation. However, **after 4 years, the likelihood of achieving an SSSW was higher among students who earned an associate degree, completed dual credit, or completed an aligned IBC during high school than those who did not complete any of the CCMR indicators.** By the end of the sixth year after high school graduation, students who completed any of the CCMR indicators were more likely to achieve an SSSW than students who did not complete any of the CCMR indicators. Taken together, these findings show that, with the exception of students who completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate during high school, the positive relationship between successful completion of CCMR indicators and achievement of an SSSW did not appear until the fifth year after high school graduation.

As shown in Exhibit 4, starting in the third year after high school graduation, **students who received special education services and graduated with an advanced diploma had a higher likelihood of achieving an SSSW than students who demonstrated workforce readiness, and differences between these groups increased over time.** Within 6 years after high school graduation, among students who received special education services, 29% of students who graduated with an advanced diploma plan achieved an SSSW, compared with 21% of students who completed workforce readiness.

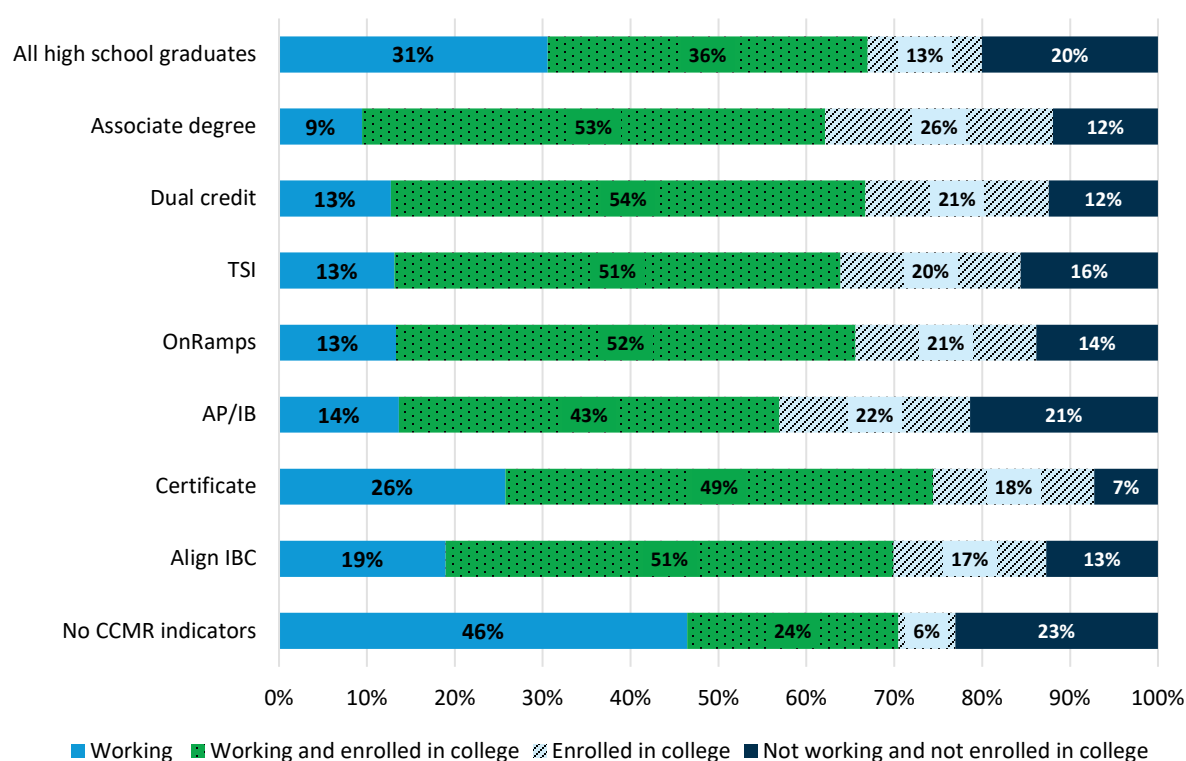
Exhibit 4. Percentage of 2017–18 graduates who received special education services and who achieved an SSSW each year, overall and by CCMR indicator



Notes. SSSW = self-sufficiency standard wage; CCMR = college, career, and military readiness. The CCMR designation categories are not mutually exclusive because students can complete multiple indicators.

Postsecondary Pathways. The relationship between CCMR indicators and achievement of an SSSW may be driven by students' postsecondary pathways after high school. As we illustrate in Exhibit 5, **approximately two thirds of 2017–18 high school graduates were working immediately after high school and almost half enrolled in college after high school, with 36% of graduates both working and enrolling in college at the same time.** About one fifth (20%) of graduates were both not enrolled in college and not working in the school year immediately after high school graduation. Please note that this subgroup of students may include students who traveled outside the state of Texas for either college or employment; thus, their postsecondary information would not be available in the ERC data.

Exhibit 5. Working and college enrollment status in the first year after high school graduation, overall and by CCMR indicator



Notes. CCMR = college, career, and military readiness; TSI = met Texas Success Initiative criteria; AP/IB = Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate; IBC = industry-based certification. The CCMR designation categories are not mutually exclusive because students can complete multiple indicators. For postsecondary outcomes immediately after high school, “working” includes students who were not enrolled in college, and “enrolled in college” includes students who were not working. The category “Not working and not enrolled in college” may include graduates who have left Texas for college or employment.

As expected, the **CCMR indicators are related to which postsecondary pathway students entered after high school graduation** (Exhibit 5).⁷ Fewer than 15% of graduates with completion of at least one of the five college readiness indicators were not enrolled in college and, instead, were working immediately after high school. This contrasts with the 46% of graduates who did not complete any of the CCMR indicators and were working (and not enrolled in college) after high school. Between 43% and 54% of graduates who completed at least one CCMR indicator were both working and enrolled in college. In contrast, 24% of students without CCMR indicators were both working and enrolled in college.

In Exhibit 3, we showed that graduates who completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate during high school consistently demonstrated the highest likelihood of achieving an SSSW for the first 6 years after high school graduation. As we show in Exhibit 5, this subgroup of graduates had the highest probability (26%) of working and not enrolling in college among students who completed CCMR indicators. Additionally, **about two thirds of graduates who completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate during high school were enrolled in college immediately after graduation, which was similar to the percentage of college-goers among students who successfully completed AP/IB exams during high school (65%)⁸ and only somewhat lower than percentages among students completing other college readiness indicators (ranging from 71% to 79%).**

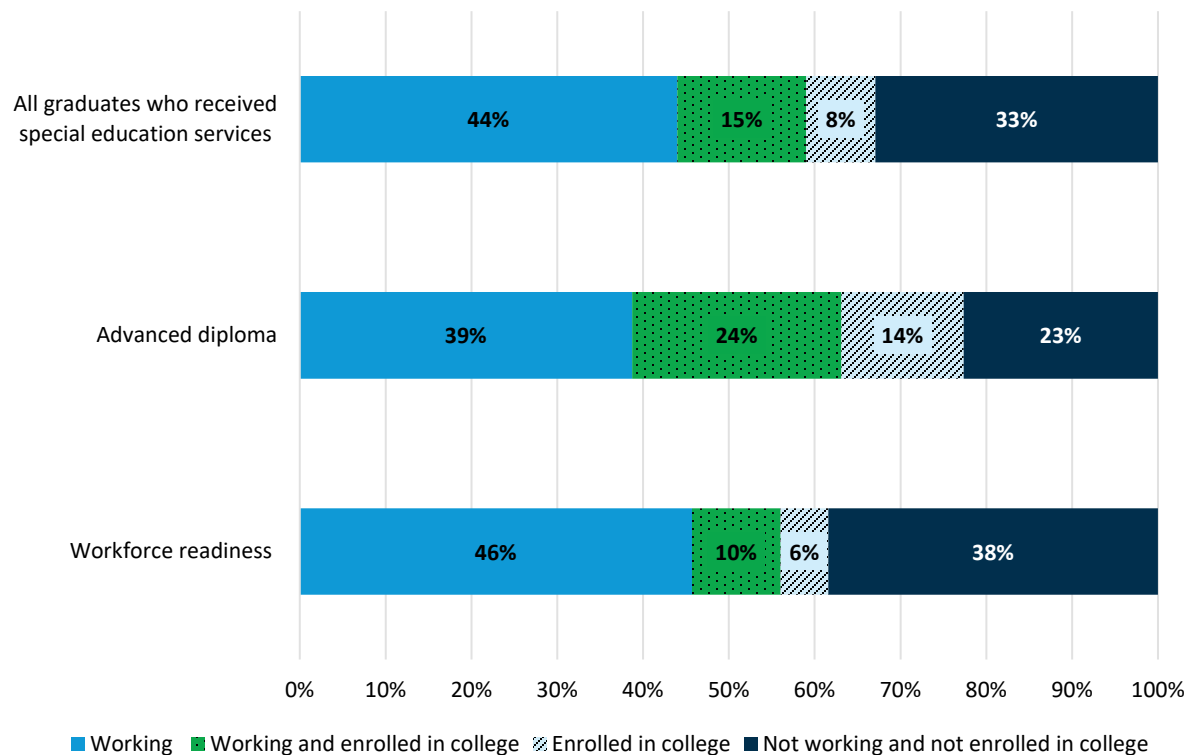
Consistent with findings shown in Exhibit 4, among students who received special education services, students who graduated with an advanced diploma had distinct postsecondary outcomes when compared with students who demonstrated workforce readiness (Exhibit 6).⁹ For example, graduates who completed an advanced diploma were more likely to be both working and enrolled in college immediately after high school (24%) compared with those who demonstrated workforce readiness (10%). Similarly, graduates with an advanced diploma were more likely to be only enrolled in college (14%) than those with workforce readiness (6%). Conversely, students who completed workforce readiness were more likely to be working but not enrolled in college (46% vs. 39%) and more likely to be neither working nor enrolled in college (38% vs. 23%).

⁷ Counts of graduates associated with each of the postsecondary pathway measures and for all CCMR subgroups are in Appendix Table B2.

⁸ Because college credits earned through the successful completion of AP tests are widely accepted nationwide, the smaller percentage of high school graduates who completed AP/IB exams during high school who immediately enrolled in college, and the larger percentage who were neither enrolled in college nor working (21%) immediately after high school graduation, may be due to the fact that these students may be more likely to enroll in a college outside of Texas.

⁹ Although they are not presented in Exhibit 6, the immediate postsecondary outcomes of graduates who received special education services who did not complete CCMR indicators closely resemble the outcomes of graduates who demonstrated workforce readiness.

Exhibit 6. Working and college enrollment status in the first year after high school graduation, overall and by CCMR indicator for graduates who received special education services

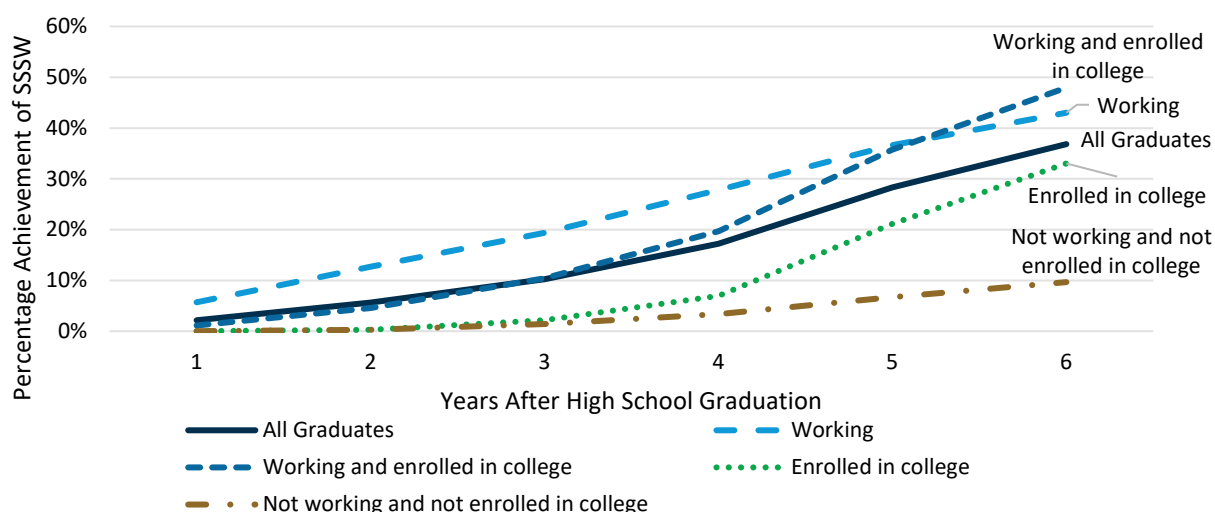


Notes. CCMR = college, career, and military readiness. The CCMR designation categories are not mutually exclusive because students can complete multiple indicators. For postsecondary outcomes immediately after high school, “working” includes students who were not enrolled in college, and “enrolled in college” includes students who were not working. The category “Not working and not enrolled in college” may include graduates who have left Texas for college or employment.

Findings shown in Exhibit 7 demonstrate relationships between students’ employment and college enrollment status immediately after high school graduation and the likelihood of achieving an SSSW. For the first 5 years after high school graduation, students who were working (and not enrolled in college) in the year immediately after high school graduation had the highest probability of achieving an SSSW. Students who were not working and not enrolled in college had the lowest probability of achieving an SSSW over time, which may reflect the fact that some of these graduates left the state of Texas, either to attend college or to work.

Beginning in Year 6, the percentage of graduates who achieved an SSSW was higher among students who were both working and enrolled in college immediately after graduation (48%) than among students who were working but did not enroll in college immediately after graduation (43%).

Exhibit 7. Percentage of 2017–18 graduates who achieved an SSSW each year between the first and sixth year after high school graduation, overall and by working and college enrollment status in the first year after high school graduation

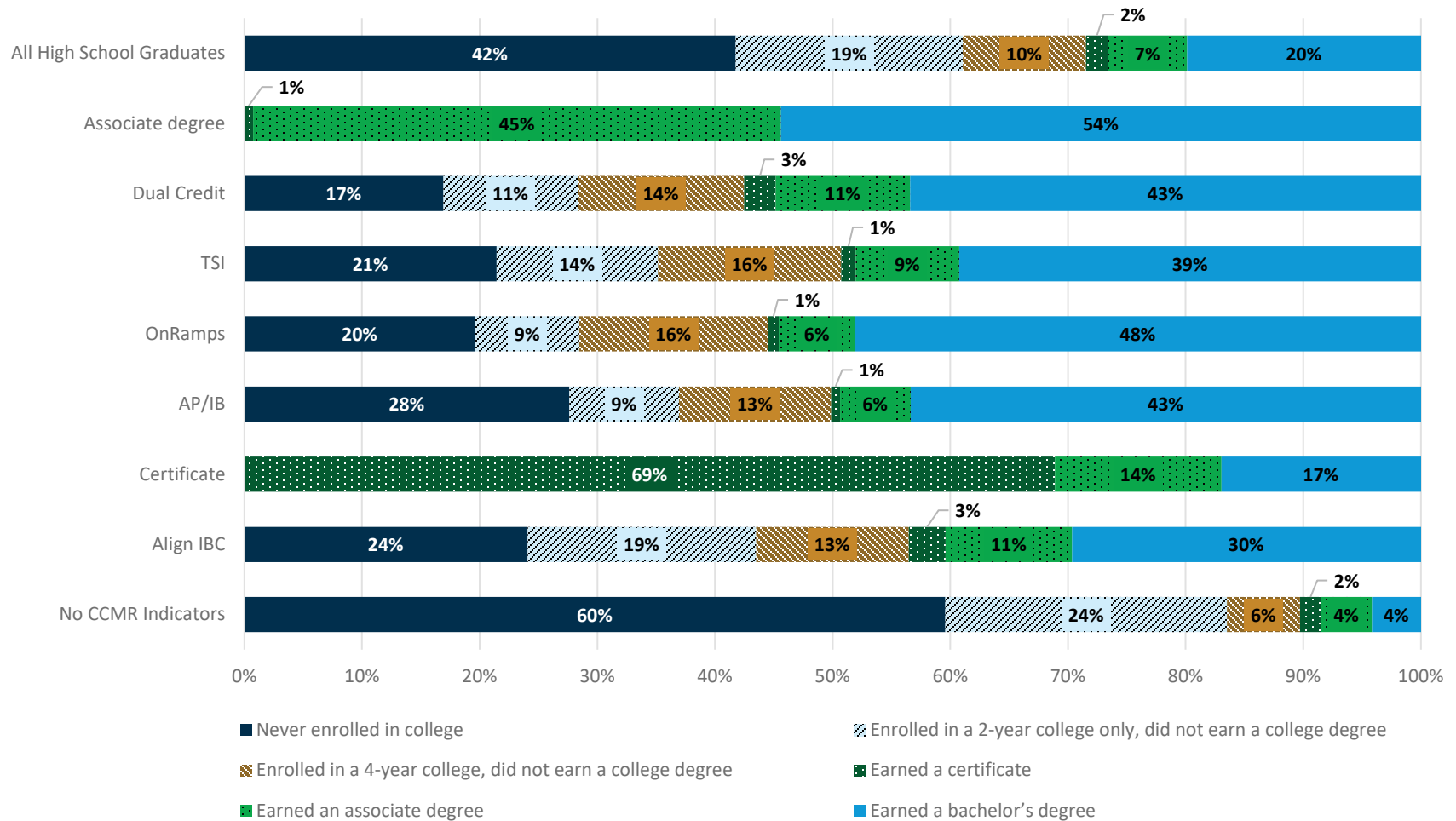


Notes. SSSW = self-sufficiency standard wage. For postsecondary outcomes immediately after high school, “working” includes students who were not enrolled in college, and “enrolled in college” includes students who were not working. The category “Not working and not enrolled in college” may include graduates who have left Texas for college or employment.

CCMR indicators also appear to be related to students’ college enrollment and degree attainment status 6 years after high school graduation. In Exhibit 8, we see that 42% of the 2017–18 high school graduates did not enroll in a college in Texas within 6 years of high school graduation, and that this percentage was higher (60%) among high school graduates who did not complete any CCMR indicators. In contrast, across four of the college readiness indicators (dual credit, TSI, OnRamps, and passing an AP/IB exam), the percentage of graduates who did not enroll in college ranged from 17% to 28%. In addition, **while 20% of 2017–18 graduates completed a bachelor’s degree, bachelor’s degree completion rates across the five college readiness indicators ranged from 39% to 54%.** Finally, across the two career readiness indicators, we saw higher rates of associate degree completion (ranging from 11% to 14%, compared with 7% of all graduates) and that students who completed an aligned IBC were more likely than students who earned a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate to complete a bachelor’s degree (30% vs. 17%).¹⁰

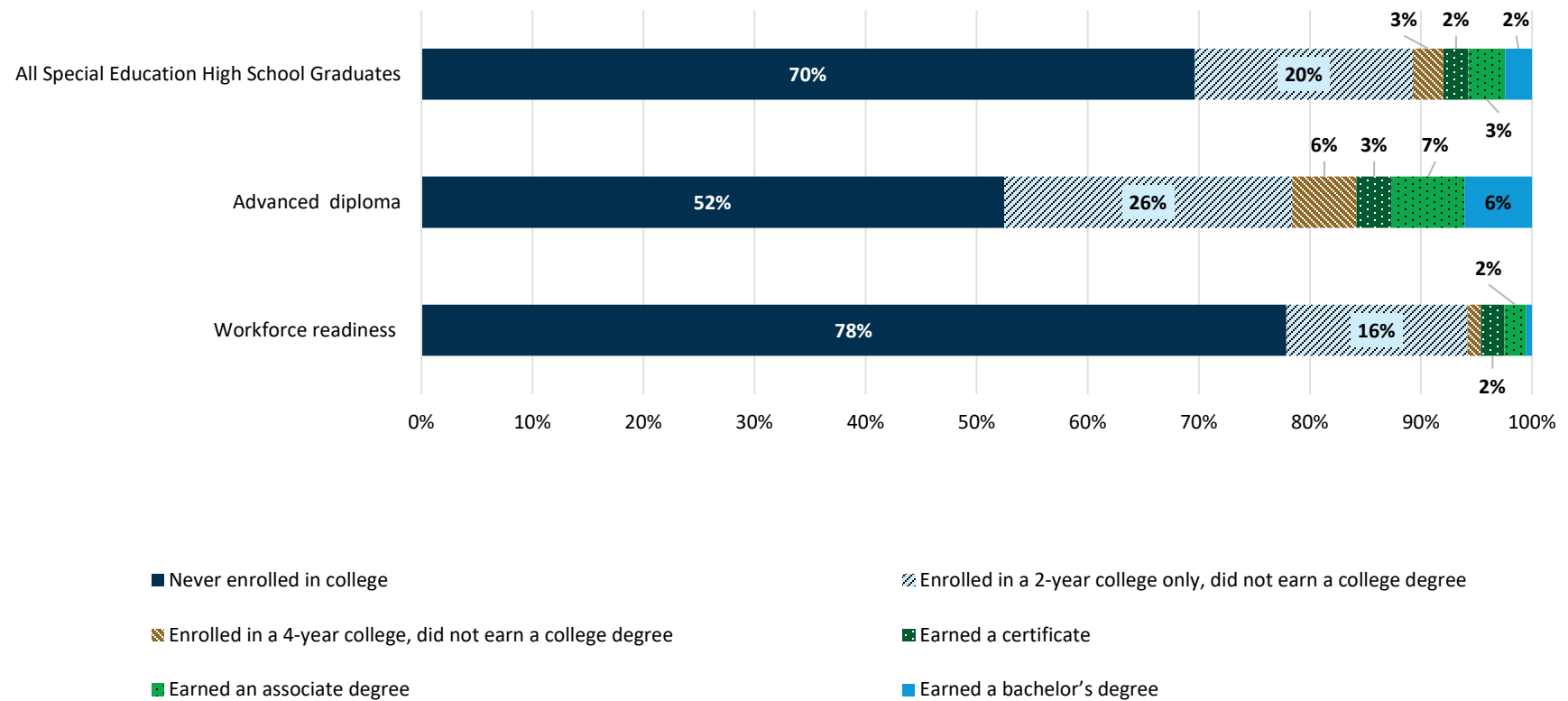
¹⁰ Please note that completion of CTE programs of study was not implemented until the 2020–21 school year. TEA provided data that retroactively identified students who completed a program of study, but students who completed these courses during high school did so without specific guidance about programs of study.

Exhibit 8. College enrollment and attainment status within 6 years of high school graduation, overall and by CCMR indicator



Notes. CCMR = college, career, and military readiness; TSI = met Texas Success Initiative criteria; AP/IB = Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate; IBC = industry-based certification. The CCMR designation categories are not mutually exclusive because students can complete multiple indicators. The category “Never enrolled in college” may include graduates who have left Texas for college or employment.

Exhibit 9. College enrollment and attainment status within 6 years of high school graduation, overall and by CCMR indicator for students who received special education services



Notes. CCMR = college, career, and military readiness. The CCMR designation categories are not mutually exclusive because students can complete multiple indicators. The category "Never enrolled in college" may include graduates who have left Texas for college or employment.

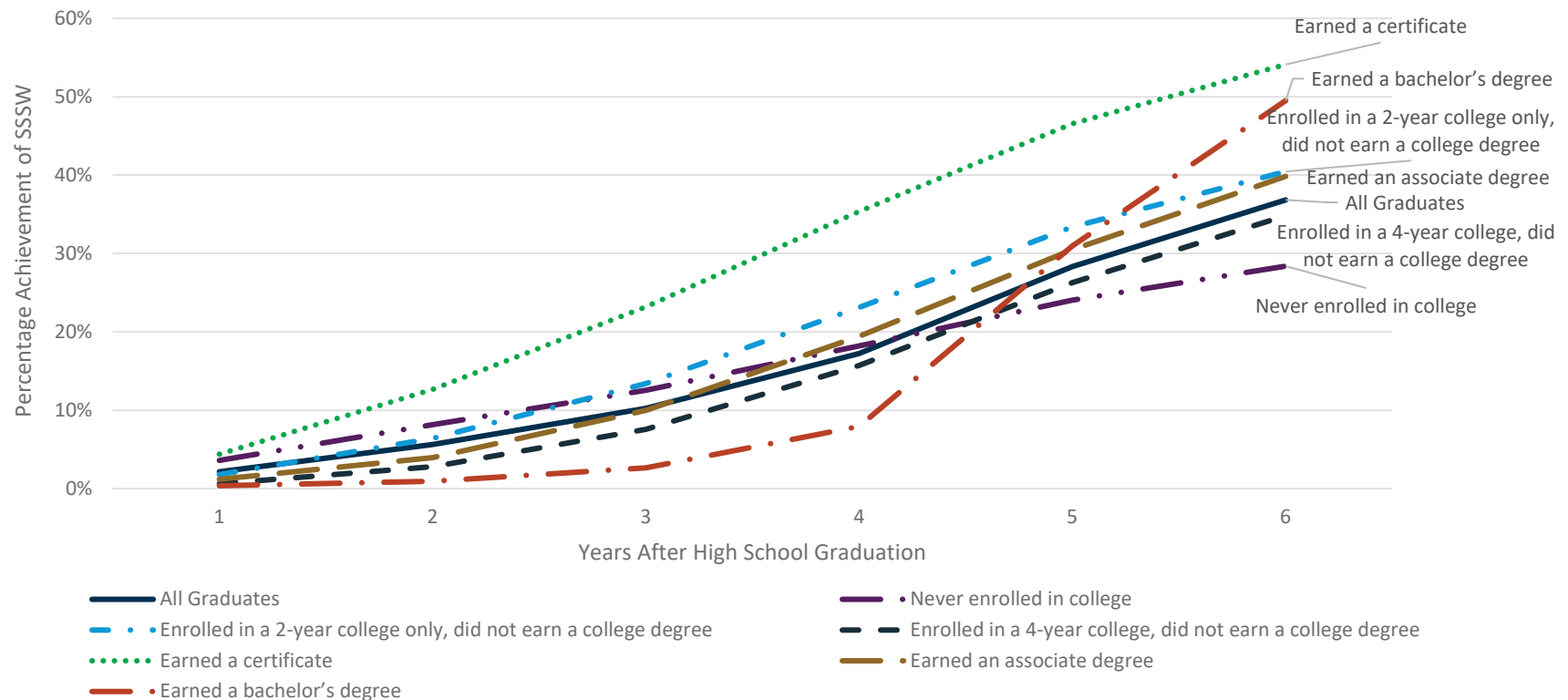
In Exhibit 9, we look at the same outcomes for graduates who received special education services. Overall, 70% of 2017–18 high school graduates who received special education services did not enroll in college. The share of graduates never enrolling in college was lower for graduates who completed an advanced diploma (52%), and a larger percentage of these students completed a certificate (3%), associate degree (7%), or bachelor’s degree (6%).

Finally, we examined the percentage of graduates who achieved an SSSW based on their college enrollment and attainment status within 6 years of high school. In Exhibit 10, we see that **students who completed a certificate as their highest degree¹¹ demonstrated the highest probability of achieving an SSSW in each of the 6 years after high school examined here.** Students who earned a bachelor’s degree within 6 years of high school graduation had the lowest probability of achieving an SSSW in each of the first 4 years after high school graduation, but with steep increases between Years 4 and 5 and Years 5 and 6, the percentage of these graduates who achieved an SSSW is the second highest by the fifth year after high school.

In Exhibit 10, we see that the rate of the increase in the likelihood of achieving an SSSW over time was similar among students who earned an associate degree and students who enrolled in a 2-year college or a 4-year college but did not complete a college degree or certificate. In addition, the probability of achieving an SSSW increased over time among students who did not enroll in college, but the rate of increase was lower for this group of students such that, although they had the second highest rate of achieving an SSSW within the first 2 years after high school graduation, by the end of Year 5 (24%) and Year 6 (28%), they had the lowest probability of achieving an SSSW.

¹¹ Please note that, for the purposes of this analysis, students who earned a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate during high school and later completed an associate degree or bachelor’s degree were reclassified into the higher degree type.

Exhibit 10. Percentage of 2017–18 graduates who achieved an SSSW each year, overall and by college enrollment and attainment status



Notes. SSSW = self-sufficiency standard wage. College enrollment and attainment status reflects the highest level of education within 6 years of high school graduation. The category “Never enrolled in college” may include graduates who have left Texas for college or employment. For the small number of graduates who completed an associate degree during high school and completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate after high school, the college attainment status after high school is based on the certificate they earned after high school.

E. Limitations

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the results of this study. First, UI data do not include information on earnings for all employed individuals. Some examples of excluded workers are self-employed individuals, workers for the federal government (including the military), and contractors. In addition, UI data do not have employment information for graduates who may be working in other states. Therefore, to the extent to which graduates across different CCMR subgroups may be more or less likely to fit into these employment categories that are not captured in the UI system, missing UI data may be contributing to observed differences between groups.

Second, to align with TEA accountability standards, we examined each CCMR indicator individually, but we acknowledge that students could achieve more than one CCMR indicator during high school. In particular, meeting the TSI criteria, earning dual credit during high school, and completion of an associate degree during high school are all closely related. In addition, the analyses were limited to whether students met or did not meet thresholds for CCMR indicators and did not examine whether students exceeded the minimum threshold (e.g., passing AP English and calculus exams versus passing any AP exam, earning 3 college credits in English through dual credit versus earning 15 total college credits).

Third, we followed students only for 6 years after high school graduation. Among students who have not yet achieved an SSSW (almost two thirds of 2017–18 graduates), we cannot extrapolate how long it will take them to achieve an SSSW. Fourth, we only look at achievement of an SSSW, which does not capture the variation in earnings. Among students who achieved an SSSW, some students may achieve annual earnings that are much higher than the SSSW threshold, and some students may have earnings just above the threshold. Therefore, findings in this report do not fully represent graduates' financial stability or economic well-being.

Fifth, the analyses were limited to the high school graduates of 2017–18 because this is the most recent cohort of high school graduates with observed outcomes 6 years after high school graduation. However, reliance on this older cohort of graduates has implications for the generalizability of the findings to more recent cohorts of graduates. For example, the aligned IBC and a program-of-study completer indicator will not be reflected in the A–F Accountability System until 2027, with 2026 graduates; therefore, the percentage of students achieving this indicator is likely to increase over time.

Finally, we acknowledge that military readiness is not currently captured in data systems in the state of Texas. Therefore, while this study sought to describe relationships between CCMR indicators and achievement of an SSSW over time, analyses were limited to college and career readiness indicators.

F. Policy Recommendations Suggestions for Future Research

Findings in this paper have implications for CCMR policies in the state of Texas. First, it appears that CCMR indicators are in fact predictive of students' postsecondary pathways and the achievement of an SSSW within the first 6 years after high school graduation. Across the CCMR indicators, completion of a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate during high school resulted in the highest probability of achieving an SSSW over time, highlighting the potential benefits of this credential. However, the state should consider how increasing the number of graduates achieving a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate over time may create a surplus of students with training in specific trades (such as welding), which could result in a decrease in the returns to these credentials over time. To maintain the economic benefits of this credential, it will be important for districts to monitor local labor markets to identify the local employer needs across industries.

Second, successful completion of AP/IB exams was the CCMR indicator that demonstrated the lowest probability of achieving an SSSW over time. There are two potential explanations for this finding. First, it is possible that this indicator is not accurately measuring CCMR due to the broad range of subjects for which students can demonstrate readiness. It is possible that a refined measure that focuses on successful AP/IB exam completion in core academic subjects (such as English, physics, calculus, or statistics) may more accurately represent CCMR than exam completion in non-core subjects (such as foreign languages). It is also possible that students who successfully complete AP/IB exams are more likely to leave the state after high school graduation to attend college outside the state, particularly because AP test results are recognized nationwide. This analysis focused specifically on college enrollment and employment outcomes in the state of Texas. While other data sources, such as data from the National Student Clearinghouse,¹² could allow us to measure college enrollment and degree completion outside Texas, these data would not allow us to measure employment or earnings in other states. Therefore, when interpreting the findings in this paper, it is important to consider that employment and earnings outside Texas are not captured, and the probability of

¹² Please note that the ERC data system does not contain National Student Clearinghouse data for all of the school years included in this study.

leaving the state for college or work may not be equally distributed across subgroups of students based on their CCMR indicators.

Third, it is interesting to note that, with the exception of students who earned a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate during high school, students who did not complete CCMR indicators during high school had the highest probability of achieving an SSSW for the first 4 years after high school graduation. Almost half of these graduates (46%) were working and did not enroll in college immediately after high school, and 60% never enrolled in college within 6 years after graduation. Given the higher rates of employment and relative success of this group of high school graduates during these early years, TEA could consider additional measures of career readiness that may further distinguish career readiness for students who do not enroll in college immediately after high school but experience successful outcomes in the workforce. In addition, future research may want to consider the ways in which combinations of, or refinements to, existing CCMR indicators may strengthen or weaken relationships with longer term outcomes.

Finally, for many of the CCMR indicators, we found larger increases in the percentage of students who achieved an SSSW after the fourth year after high school graduation, and for some indicators, advantages over students who did not complete CCMR indicators were not observed until the sixth year after high school graduation. This observation suggests that students may need to be followed for a longer period after high school to assess whether relative advantages with regard to achieving an SSSW persist into—and increase in—the future. In addition, future analyses could consider alternative thresholds for SSSW over time, because graduates are more likely to get married and have children as more time passes after high school graduation.

In conclusion, we found in this study that completion of CCMR indicators in Texas is related to students' postsecondary pathways and achievement of an SSSW over time. However, with the exception of completing a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate, the time required to observe the economic benefits of completion of CCMR indicators is at least 5 years after high school and varies across indicators. Findings in this paper could help inform college and career advising practices that aid students in making informed decisions about their high school experiences and postsecondary pathways, leading to a greater likelihood of achieving, and potentially exceeding, an SSSW in their future. Future research is required to determine whether refinements to existing CCMR indicators, or identification of new CCMR indicators, would result in indicators that are more predictive of SSSW achievement over time.

References

- College Board. (2025). *AP courses and exams*. <https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/courses>
- Texas Education Agency. (2018, January 3). *Understanding credentials in Texas: Certificates & certifications*. <https://reportcenter.highered.texas.gov/reports/data/understanding-credentials-in-texas-certificates-certifications/>
- Texas Education Agency. (2024). *2024 accountability manual for Texas public school districts and campuses*. <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/2024-accountability-manual-full.pdf>
- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2024, October). *Community college finance glossary*. <https://reportcenter.highered.texas.gov/reports/fiscal/community-college-finance-glossary/>
- Texas Workforce Commission. (n.d.). *Labor market information*. <https://lmi.twc.texas.gov/txsswage/texasselfsufficientwage.asp>
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. BLS Data Viewer: 2023–25. *All items in south urban, all urban consumers, not seasonally adjusted*. <http://data.bls.gov/dataViewer/view/timeseries/CUUR0300SA0>. Data extracted on June 12, 2025.
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (n.d.). *Wage Records Program*. <https://www.bls.gov/wrp/overview.htm#TX>

Appendix A. Data and Measures

Study Population and Data Sources

In this study, the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) focused on the population of graduating seniors in 2017–18 and followed that cohort 6 years after high school graduation. The study used deidentified, student-level, statewide administrative data housed within the data repository at the Texas Education Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin. Data used in this study included education records collected by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) on high school graduation and student special education status. For information on college enrollment and degree attainment, we used college enrollment and graduation data from public, private, and independent institutions collected by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Data on students' Texas employment and earnings were collected quarterly through the unemployment insurance (UI) report by the Texas Workforce Commission. Although not all jobs are captured in the UI data system, over 95% of the civilian labor force nationally is covered by UI records (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, n.d.). The data also contained a file that included the CCMR accountability standard(s) completed by each 2017–18 graduate, as calculated by TEA staff.

Outcome Measures

Achievement of a Self-Sufficiency Standard Wage

To calculate students' annual earnings during the first school year after high school graduation (i.e., Year 1), we summed their earnings as reported in quarterly UI data between Quarter 3 (Q3) of 2018 and Quarter 2 (Q2) of 2019. We followed the same procedure for the subsequent school years through the sixth year after high school graduation, which captured Q3 of 2023 to Q2 of 2024. We then compared observed annual earnings to thresholds for a self-sufficiency standard wage (SSSW), described below, to determine whether students achieved an SSSW during the school year. Once a student was identified as achieving an SSSW in a given school year, they were coded as achieving an SSSW in subsequent school years (i.e., the student had successfully achieved an SSSW).

The Texas Workforce Commission and the Ray Marshall Center at the University of Texas at Austin worked with the Center for Women's Welfare at the University of Washington to create a Texas state average SSSW in 2023. Estimates were calculated for every county in Texas and for a variety of family compositions, including single adults, married couples with a varying number of dependents, and households with more than two adults. Because this study focused on a cohort of high school graduates, we used the value of SSSW for a household with a single

adult. Using county population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, we calculated the weighted average SSSW across counties in Texas to arrive at the weighted SSSW of **\$34,659.12** in 2023. However, because we measured high school graduates’ annual earnings following the time frame of an academic year (e.g., Q3 of 2018 to Q2 of 2019), we used monthly data reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (Urban, or CPI-U) for each year to adjust for inflation over time and to accurately estimate the value of SSSW during each school year (beginning in July and ending in June). The following formula was applied:

$$(2018 - 19 \text{ CPI} - U (244.4) - 2023 \text{ CIP} - U (296.42)) \div 296.42 = \mathbf{17.55\% \textit{reduction}}$$

The resulting estimates of SSSW for each school year between 2018–19 and 2023–24 are provided in Exhibit A1.

Exhibit A1. Estimates of SSSW for each school year between 2018–19 and 2023–24, adjusted for inflation

School Year	CPI-U	Estimate of SSSW
2018–19	244.40	\$28,337.39
2019–20	247.24	\$28,667.00
2020–21	253.24	\$29,362.82
2021–22	272.64	\$31,611.40
2022–23	291.04	\$33,745.67
2023–24	301.40	\$34,946.32

Notes. SSSW = self-sufficiency standard wage; CPI-U = Consumer Price Index–Urban. The school year is measured as July to June. For example, 2021–22 shows the average CPI-U and SSSW for all months between July 2021 and June 2022. Conversions are made using the 2023 baseline wage of \$34,369.12 with a CPI-U of 296.42 (including all months between January 2023 and December 2023).

Source: BLS CPI-U south region estimates (<http://data.bls.gov/dataViewer/view/timeseries/CUUR0300SA0>).

Postsecondary Pathway Measures

This study used two measures of students’ postsecondary pathways. The first measure identified whether students were enrolled in college and/or working in the first academic year after high school graduation, 2018–19. College enrollment was defined as students being enrolled in at least one nondevelopmental college course at a public 2-year or 4-year college in Texas or enrolled at an independent college.¹³ Therefore, students identified as enrolling in

¹³ Data for independent colleges in Texas do not include course-level data. Therefore, enrollment in an independent college relied on overall college enrollment data.

college could be enrolled either as full-time students or as part-time students. Students were identified as working in the year after high school graduation if they had at least one quarterly UI record between Q3 of 2018 and Q2 of 2019.

The second postsecondary pathway measure focused on students' college enrollment and degree attainment status by the end of the sixth year after high school graduation. The six categories for this measure are mutually exclusive, with students being placed into the highest category they achieved within the 6 years:

- Never enrolled in college
- Enrolled in a 2-year college only, did not earn a degree or certificate
- Enrolled in a 4-year college only, did not earn a degree
- Earned a certificate
- Earned an associate degree
- Earned a bachelor's degree

Completion of an associate degree includes students with the "associate degree" CCMR indicator who did not complete another degree or certificate after high school. A small number of graduates completed an associate degree during high school and completed a certificate after high school. Assuming that the more recent certificate completion would be more relevant for employment outcomes, these graduates are classified as earning a certificate within 6 years after high school graduation.

Each of these college enrollment and attainment outcomes relied on college data from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board; therefore, college outcomes that students may have achieved outside the state of Texas are not captured in these data.

Appendix B. Supporting Tables

Exhibit B1. Percentage of high school graduates achieving an SSSW between the first and sixth year after high school graduation, overall and by CCMR indicators and postsecondary pathways

Student group	Student count	Percentage of students achieving a self-sufficiency standard wage within 1 to 6 years after high school graduation					
		1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
Total Graduates	347,850	2.15	5.63	10.26	17.25	28.32	36.83
Total Graduates who Received Special Education Services	25,954	2.19	5.48	9.4	14.88	19.98	23.94
CCMR indicators							
TSI	146,424	0.97	3.0	6.65	13.25	28.76	40.17
Dual credit	71,983	1.22	3.42	7.37	15.03	32.06	44.12
AP/IB	70,936	0.74	2.18	4.88	10.2	26.14	36.95
Associate degree	5,035	0.83	2.94	7.37	19.05	35.35	45.68
OnRamps	3,348	0.75	2.21	5.41	11.65	26.63	42.47
Align IBC	5,396	1.67	5.11	10.92	18.24	32.26	42.46
Certificate	2,029	6.46	14.05	21.29	30.7	41.1	49.43
Workforce readiness ^a	5,817	1.96	5.26	8.68	13.31	17.86	20.97
Advanced diploma ^a	8,880	2.21	5.88	10.64	16.99	23.66	29.04
No CCMR indicators	159,729	3.19	7.9	13.36	20.72	28.35	34.57
Working and college enrollment status—Year 1 (2018–19)							
Only working	106,297	5.69	12.68	19.37	27.84	36.65	43.01
Working and enrolled in college	126,713	1.12	4.56	10.4	19.65	35.77	47.95
Only enrolled in college	45,183	*	0.30	2.17	6.94	21.11	33.03
Not working and not enrolled in college	69,657	*	0.29	1.38	3.39	6.72	9.66
College enrollment and attainment status (highest degree)—within 6 years of high school graduation							
Never enrolled in college	145,254	3.6	8.16	12.56	18.19	24.05	28.38
Enrolled in a 2-year college only, did not earn a college degree	67,160	1.79	6.42	13.42	23.11	33.39	40.45

Student group	Student count	Percentage of students achieving a self-sufficiency standard wage within 1 to 6 years after high school graduation					
		1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
Enrolled in a 4-year college, did not earn a college degree	36,387	0.62	2.79	7.58	15.7	26.28	34.82
Earned a certificate	6,516	4.39	12.65	23.19	35.36	46.55	54.11
Earned an associate degree	23,399	1.19	3.96	10.00	19.43	30.50	39.84
Earned a bachelor's degree	69,134	0.37	0.95	2.66	7.93	30.97	49.51

^a CCMR indicators that are specifically designed for students receiving special education services.

* Number has been suppressed due to small cell sizes.

Notes. CCMR = college, career, and military readiness; SSSW = self-sufficiency standard wage; TSI = met Texas Success Initiative criteria; AP/IB = Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate; IBC = industry-based certification. The CCMR designation categories are not mutually exclusive because students can complete multiple indicators. For postsecondary outcomes immediately after high school, “working” includes students who were not enrolled in college, and “enrolled in college” includes students who were not working. The categories “Not working and not enrolled in college” and “Never enrolled in college” may include graduates who have left Texas for college or employment. For the small number of graduates who completed an associate degree during high school and completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate after high school, the college attainment status after high school is based on the certificate they earned after high school.

Exhibit B2. Postsecondary pathways of 2017–18 high school graduates, overall and by CCMR indicator

Student group	All high school graduates	All graduates who received special education services	College-ready						Career-ready			No CCMR indicators
			TSI	Dual credit	AP/IB	Associate degree	OnRamps	Advanced diploma ^a	Aligned IBC	Certificate	Workforce readiness ^a	
Population of students	347,850	25,954	146,424	71,983	70,936	5,035	3,348	8,880	5,396	2,029	5,817	159,729
Working and college enrollment status—Year 1 (2018–19)												
Only working	106,297	11,418	19,224	9,152	9,671	475	445	3,438	1,023	523	2,658	74,194
Working and enrolled in college	126,713	3,902	74,325	38,876	30,719	2,654	1,751	2,167	2,749	987	601	38,372
Only enrolled in college	45,183	2,088	30,011	15,016	15,372	1,305	689	1,266	938	372	324	10,344
Not working and not enrolled in college	69,657	8,546	22,864	8,939	15,174	601	463	2,009	686	147	2,234	36,819
College enrollment and attainment status (highest degree)—Within 6 years of high school graduation												
Never enrolled in college	145,254	18,075	31,383	12,183	19,592	*	657	4,660	1,299	*	4,530	95,153
Enrolled in a 2-year college only, did not earn a college degree	67,160	5,091	20,081	8,220	6,607	*	296	2,302	1,048	*	948	38,259
Enrolled in a 4-year college, did not earn a college degree	36,387	719	22,819	10,177	9,169	*	537	515	700	*	71	9,903
Earned a certificate	6,516	586	1,796	1,926	549	37	31	281	169	1,398	122	2,856
Earned an associate degree	23,399	856	12,892	8,223	4,257	2,259	217	583	580	287	115	6,901
Earned a bachelor's degree	69,134	627	57,453	31,254	30,762	2,739	1,610	539	1,600	344	31	6,657

^a CCMR indicators that are specifically designed for students receiving special education services.

* Number has been suppressed due to small cell sizes.

Notes. CCMR = college, career, and military readiness; TSI = met Texas Success Initiative criteria; AP/IB = Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate; IBC = industry-based certification. The CCMR designation categories are not mutually exclusive because students can complete multiple indicators. For postsecondary outcomes immediately after high school, “working” includes students who were not enrolled in college, and “enrolled in college” includes students who were not working. The categories “Not working and not enrolled in college” and “Never enrolled in college” may include graduates who have left Texas for college or employment. For the small number of graduates who completed an associate degree during high school and completed a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate after high school, the college attainment status after high school is based on the certificate they earned after high school.

About the American Institutes for Research®

Established in 1946, the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) is a nonpartisan, not-for-profit institution that conducts behavioral and social science research and delivers technical assistance both domestically and internationally in the areas of education, health, and the workforce. AIR's work is driven by its mission to generate and use rigorous evidence that contributes to a better, more equitable world. With headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, AIR has offices across the U.S. and abroad. For more information, visit [AIR.ORG](https://www.air.org).



AIR® Headquarters

1400 Crystal Drive, 10th Floor
Arlington, VA 22202-3289
+1.202.403.5000 | [AIR.ORG](https://www.air.org)

Notice of Trademark: "American Institutes for Research" and "AIR" are registered trademarks. All other brand, product, or company names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

Copyright © 2025 American Institutes for Research®. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, website display, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the American Institutes for Research. For permission requests, please use the Contact Us form on [AIR.ORG](https://www.air.org).