

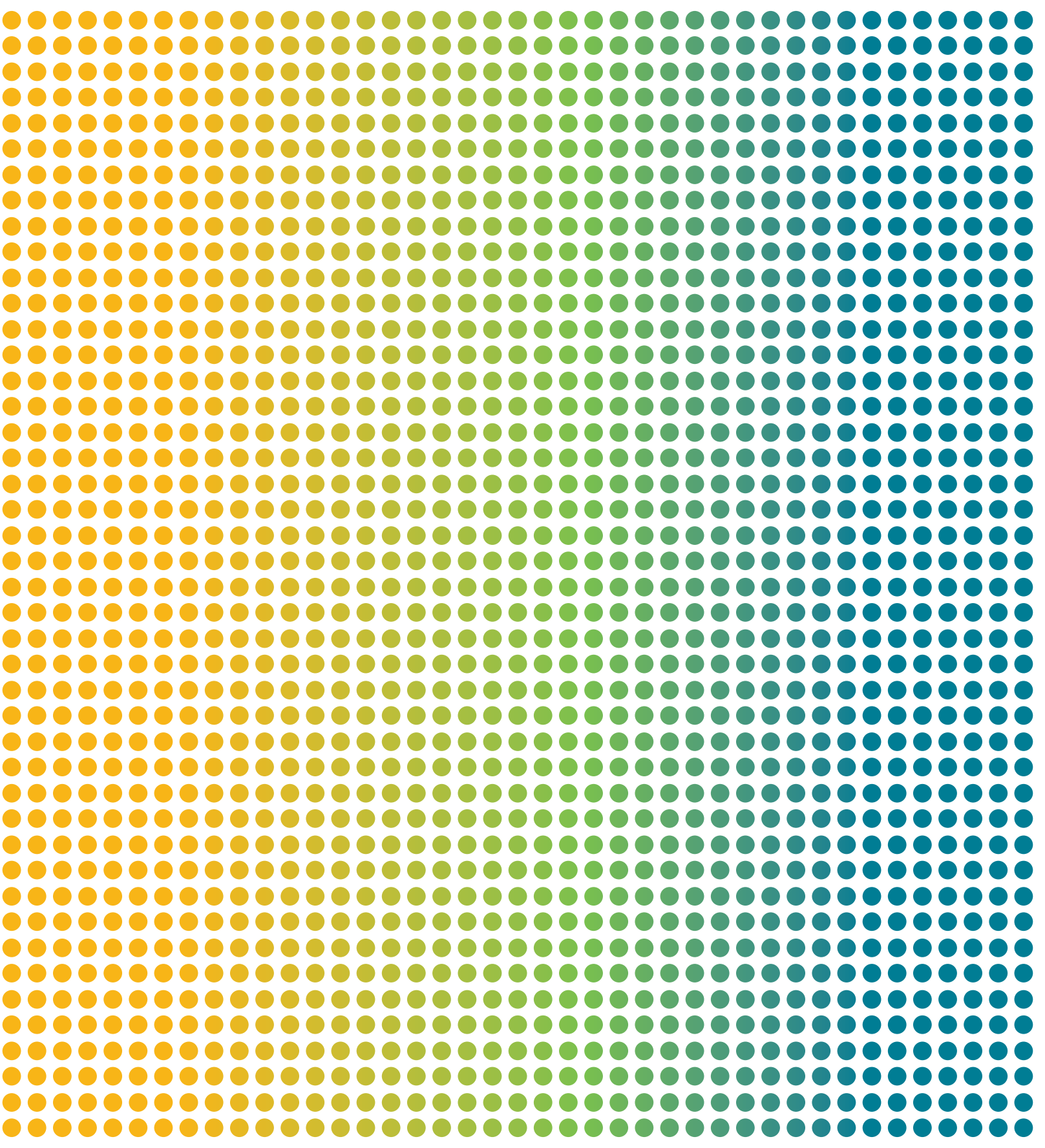
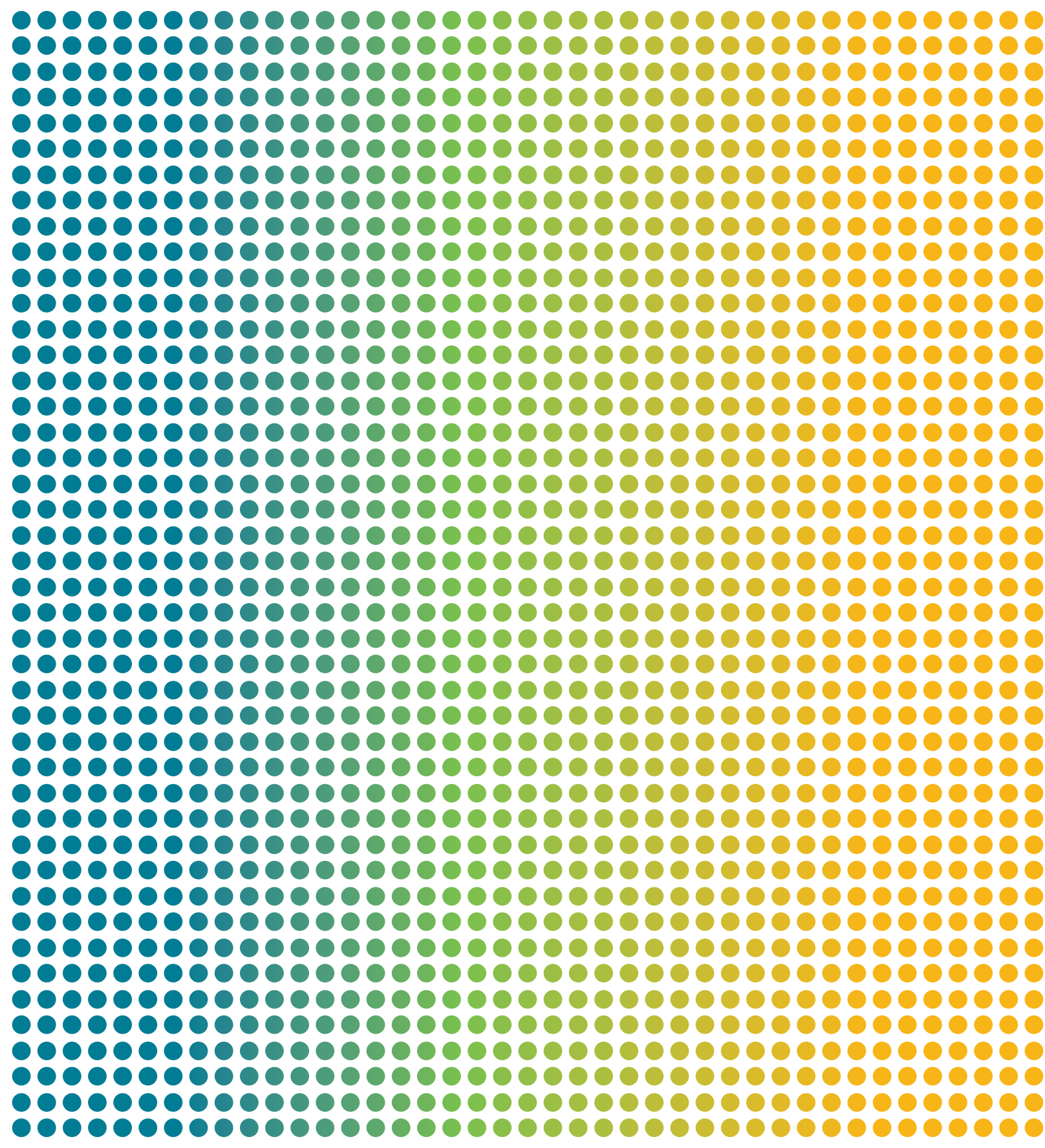
THE COMMIT PARTNERSHIP

2022

DALLAS COUNTY  
SCORECARD



 **commit**  
OUR KIDS. OUR TOMORROW.



**MISSION**

By 2040, at least half of all 25–34 year old residents of Dallas County, irrespective of race, will be provided the opportunity to earn a living wage.

**VISION**

Dallas County can be an inclusive and prosperous region where economic opportunity is shared equitably rather than predicted by race, place, and socioeconomic status.

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## Dear Valued Partner,

Since our Partnership was founded over 11 years ago, we've relentlessly worked to help change our troubling regional academic outcomes and their resulting impact on living wage attainment and overall poverty levels. We knew that our challenges were too big to solve alone and that together, armed with robust data insights, we could begin to accelerate our community's progress. Thanks to the tireless efforts of numerous area organizations working in tandem, that growth has begun.

Across all 12 indicators that our Partnership tracks — including living wage attainment, which we added just last year — the growth of students in Dallas County exceeded statewide growth from 2012 through 2019, despite reflecting higher concentrations of poverty and a greater percentage of Emergent Bilingual students.

But we faced a challenge we didn't see coming. Despite the best efforts of our dedicated educators, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted the delivery of instruction and continuation of student success. In the intervening years, our educators worked harder than ever to accelerate student learning, and we are beginning to see those efforts pay off: reading achievement has largely returned to pre-pandemic levels in Dallas County ([see pg. 5 for an overview of how Dallas County and the State of Texas are doing on key educational benchmarks](#)).

It's clear we have much more ground to cover. Learning indicators in other subjects, particularly in the essential topic of Algebra I, are struggling to return to pre-pandemic levels. Most worrisome to me, our postsecondary enrollment and completion rates remain stubbornly low, even when compared to 2012 rates, making it critical we remain steadfast in our efforts in this sector if we're going to achieve our "true north" living wage attainment goal.

Still, over this past year, despite the obstacles facing our community, our students, educators, and administrators have continued to shine.

The courageous and student-centered educators, school leaders, and superintendents right here in Dallas County provide clear examples we can look to as we seek new strategies to growing student success:

- In Lancaster ISD, we see reading growth driven by long-term investments in pre-K and reading infrastructure ([see pg. 13 for more on Lancaster's foundation for success](#)).
- In Dallas ISD, we see promising growth in Algebra I enrollment in eighth grade fueled by an innovative opt-out policy that just recently became state law ([see pg. 17 to learn more about this new policy](#)).
- And at Dallas College's School of Education, we see an innovative approach to addressing teacher vacancies that is solving another problem for our county: college persistence ([see pg. 19 to learn more about their new programming](#)).

These are just a few examples of the incredible work being done in our county to address learning gaps and set all of our children up for success. I'm especially excited to be featuring an institution of higher education in our "Bright Spot" section for the first time in the history of the Partnership's scorecard reports. My ability to earn a living wage was made possible by 99% financial aid from Austin College, and it's my hope access to a quality public education and that our shared efforts locally (with the Dallas County Promise) and statewide (through legislation shaped by the Texas Commission on Community College Finance) can provide that kind of opportunity to more young North Texans for years to come.

Our Partnership deeply believes Dallas County — and our state as a whole — can be an inclusive and prosperous region where economic opportunity is shared by all rather than consistently predicted by race, place, and socioeconomic status. But it will take all of us to create the enabling conditions that reverse the impact of systems built up over decades that currently hinder success for many of our children.

This work is long-dated. It will take time, continued resolve, and trust — but it can be done. Thank you for being our partner in this critical work.

In gratitude,

**Todd Williams**  
Chairman and CEO



Our partnership deeply believes Dallas County — and our state as a whole — can be an inclusive and prosperous region where economic opportunity is shared by all rather than consistently predicted by race, place, and socioeconomic status. But it will take all of us to create the enabling conditions that reverse the impact of systems built up over decades that currently hinder success for many of our children.



**Todd Williams**



# DALLAS COUNTY VS. STATE OF TEXAS (2022)

Commit measures 12 key indicators annually to gauge academic and economic progress for the more than half a million students attending Texas public schools. To learn more about how each of these benchmarks support our true north goal of increased living wage attainment, see our Sources & Methodology (pg. 27).





INDICATOR	DALLAS COUNTY	STATE	DALLAS COUNTY CHANGE SINCE 2012
Living Wage Attainment	30%	26%	+6%
Postsecondary Completion*	30%	No Data	0%
Postsecondary Persistence*	36%	No Data	-16% <sup>†</sup>
Postsecondary Enrollment*	44%	46%	-18% <sup>†</sup>
High School Graduation	87%	90%	+4%
College Readiness	24%	33%	+10%
End-of-Course Algebra I	41%	46%	+8%
Eighth-Grade Science	37%	43%	+8%
Fourth-Grade Math	36%	41%	+8%
Third-Grade Reading	43%	50%	+8%
Kindergarten Readiness	60%	58%	+7%
Pre-K Enrollment	48%	42%	+13%





Scan the QR code to unlock deeper insights into the 2022 Scorecard data.

## WHY EACH INDICATOR MATTERS

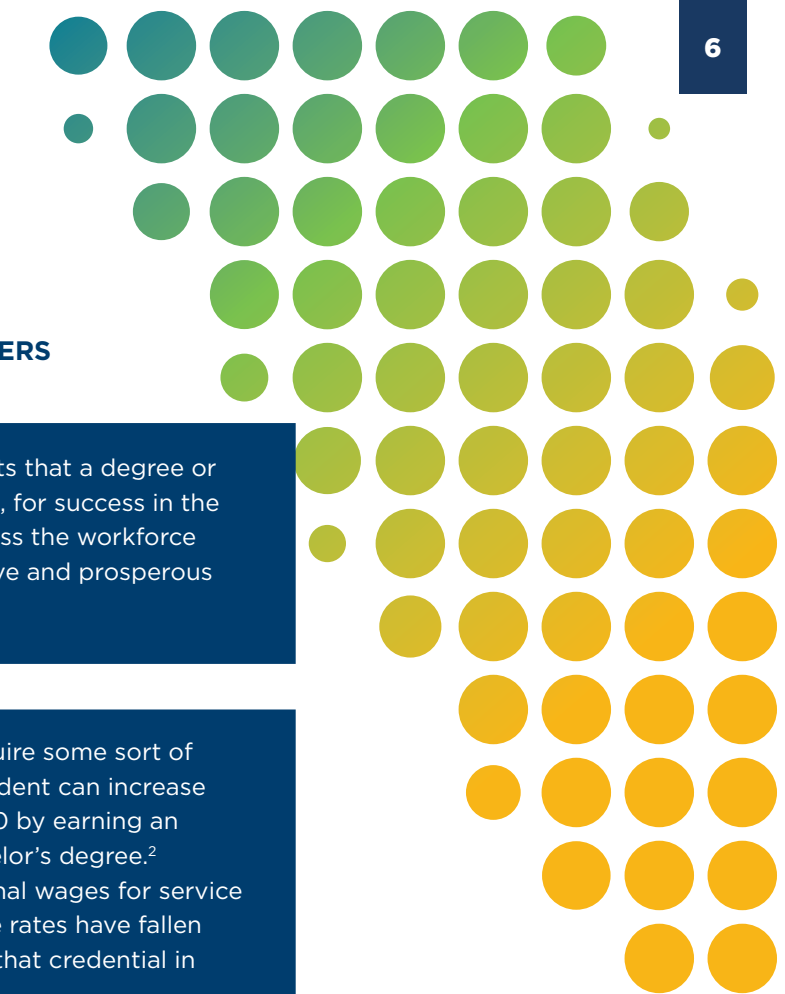
 Analysis of the Dallas job market suggests that a degree or certificate is necessary, but not sufficient, for success in the Dallas County economy. Eliminating barriers across the workforce pipeline is essential in order to achieve an inclusive and prosperous region.

 By 2030, 62% of jobs in Texas will require some sort of postsecondary credential.<sup>1</sup> A Texas student can increase their lifetime earnings by an average of \$600,000 by earning an associate degree and by \$1.3 million with a bachelor's degree.<sup>2</sup> Following the pandemic and the spiking of regional wages for service industries, postsecondary enrollment/persistence rates have fallen and must be addressed given the importance of that credential in long-term living wage employment.<sup>†</sup>

 Students who perform on grade level in these subject areas are more likely to be placed in advanced math pathways, and students who take two math classes beyond Algebra II are three times more likely to graduate college.<sup>3</sup>

 Students who attend pre-K are 1.7 times more likely to be ready to enter kindergarten.<sup>4</sup> Students who enter kindergarten ready are three times more likely to be able to read by third-grade,<sup>5</sup> and students who learn to read by third-grade are four times more likely to graduate high school.<sup>6</sup>

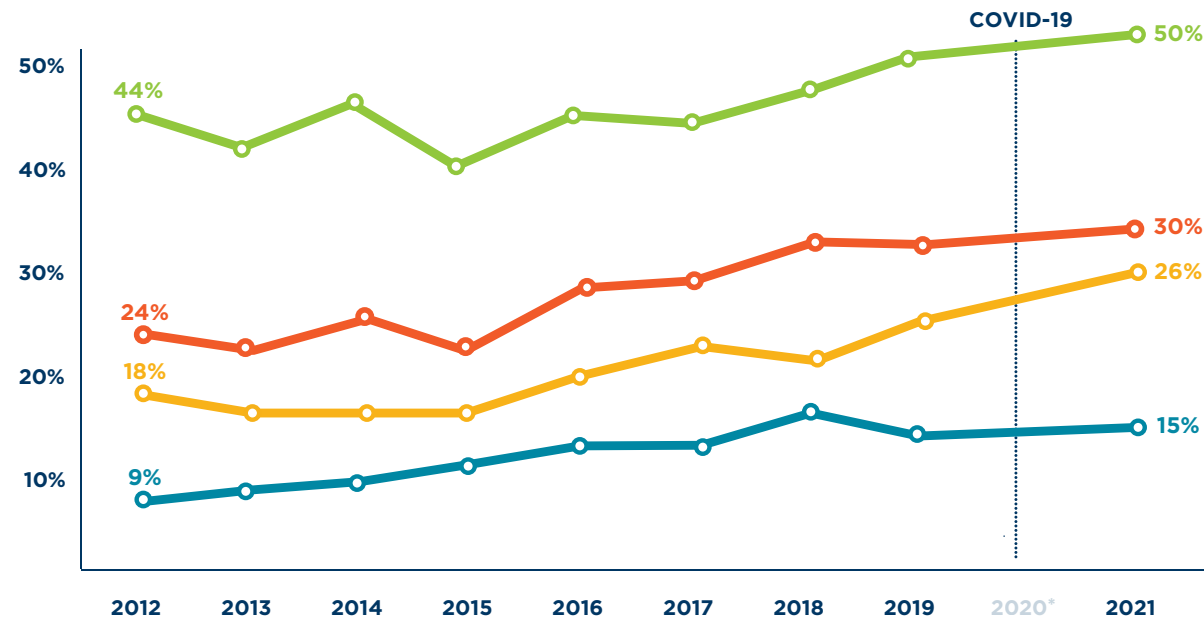
<sup>1</sup>Texas Senate Higher Education Interim Committee Hearing, 05.10.22  
<sup>2</sup>The College Payoff, Georgetown Center On Higher Education and the Workforce  
<sup>3</sup>E3 Alliance analysis of PEIMS data, UT Austin Education Research Center  
<sup>4</sup>Commit Partnership analysis of TPEIR data  
<sup>5</sup>Commit Partnership 2017 Community Achievement Scorecard  
<sup>6</sup>Double Jeopardy, Annie E. Casey Foundation  
<sup>†</sup>Postsecondary Enrollment is based on Texas Academic Performance Reports for the class of 2020 data and Postsecondary Persistence is based on National Student Clearinghouse data



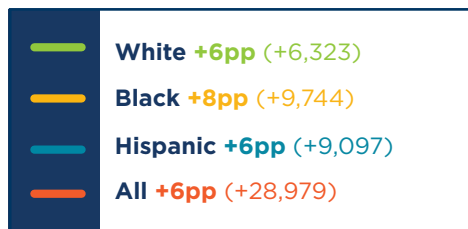
# DESPITE GROWTH IN LIVING WAGE ATTAINMENT RATES, SIGNIFICANT GAPS REMAIN

The North Texas economy continues to grow, and North Texans of diverse backgrounds are all sharing in that growth, with thousands more young people of all races earning a living wage than in 2012. But large, persistent wage gaps by race remain, demonstrating the need to provide equitable support for young people across the education and workforce pipeline.

**Dallas County Young Adult (25-34) Living Wage Attainment, Percentage and Total Number, by Race, 2012-2021**



**Living Wage Attainment Growth From 2012 By Race**

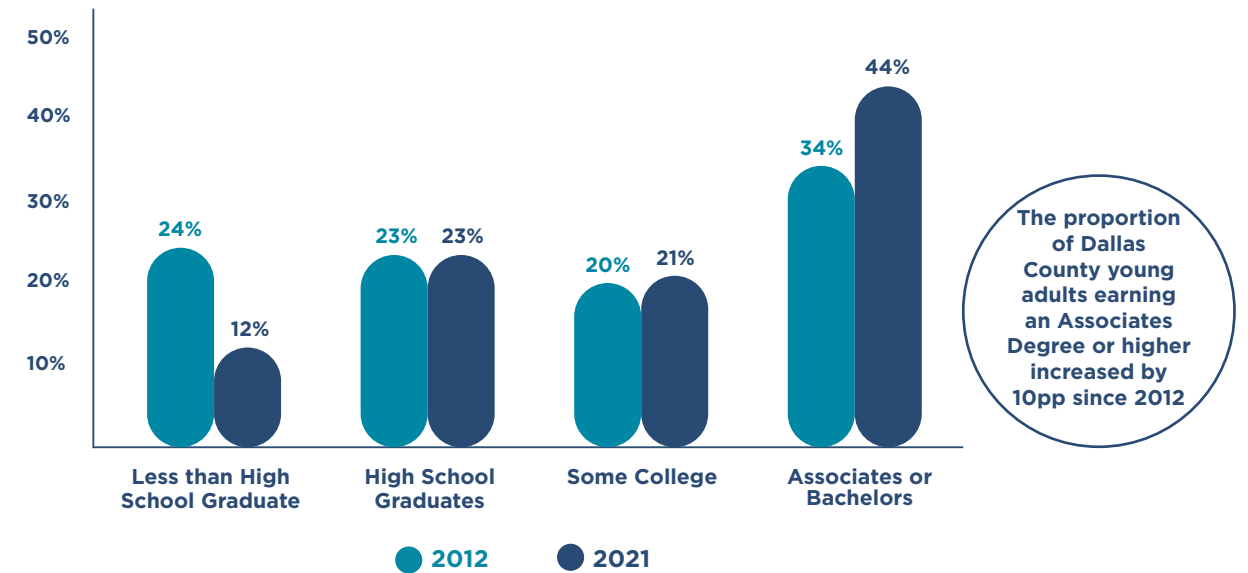


**Living Wage Attainment Differential By Race**

	2012	2021
White/Black	2.4x	1.9x
White/Hispanic	4.9x	3.4x

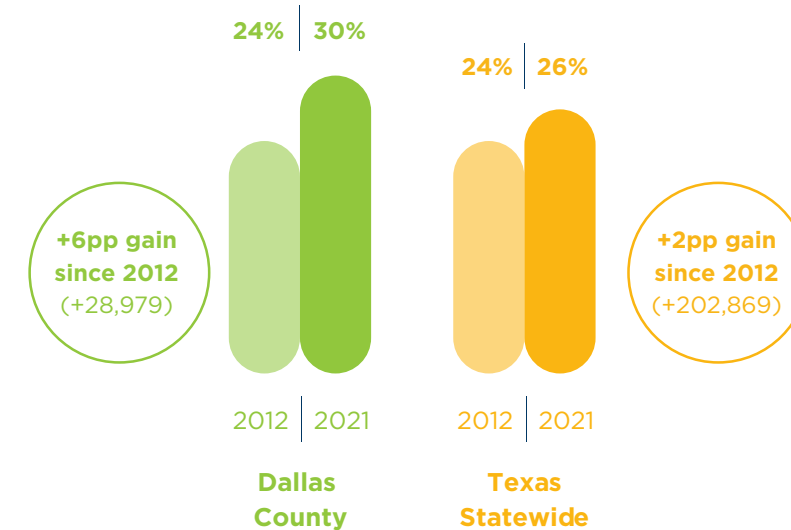
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1-Year ACS PUMS, 2012-2019, and 2021. Living wage data for 2020 is not shown due to data collection concerns with the 1-Year ACS in 2020. \*2020 census data unavailable due to pandemic-related collection challenges

**Living Wage Attainment of 25-34 Year Olds by Educational Level In Dallas County**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 5-Year ACS, 2012 and 2021.

**Dallas County VS Texas Living Wage Attainment for Young Adults (25-34)**

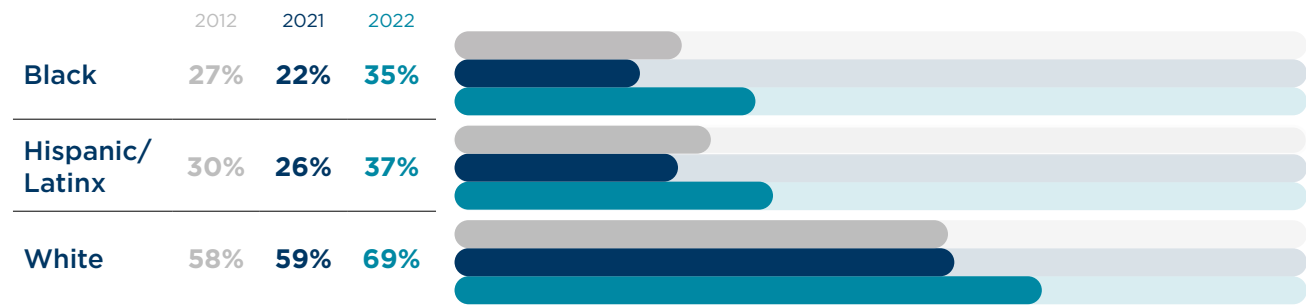


## DISAGGREGATED DATA

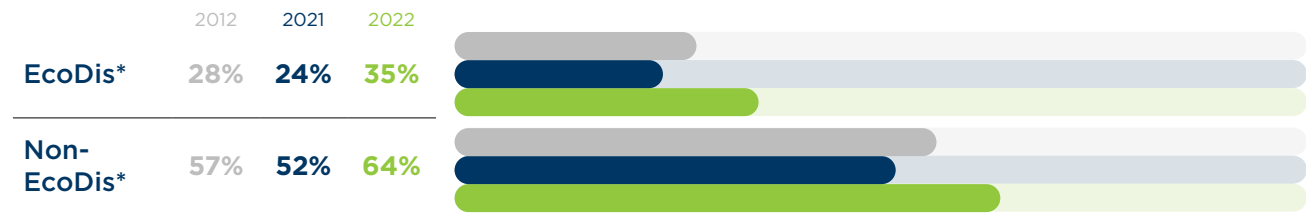
Making progress along our Scorecard indicators requires targeted support for the students who need it most. In order to make data-driven decisions about how to best allocate resources, we must fully understand how each of our unique student subgroups are performing by disaggregating the data. We have chosen to focus on third-grade reading and Algebra I proficiency, two especially important predictors of long-term success (see pgs. 9 & 10).

## DISAGGREGATING THIRD-GRADE READING

DATA: STAAR Outcomes in **Third-Grade Reading** 2012 vs 2021 and 2022 by Race



DATA: STAAR Outcomes in **Third-Grade Reading** 2012 vs 2021 and 2022 by Economic Status



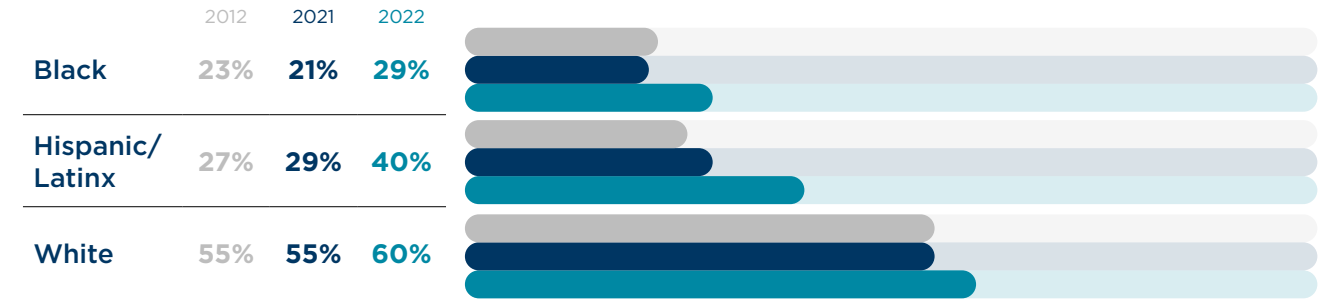
DATA: STAAR Outcomes in **Third-Grade Reading** 2012 vs 2021 and 2022 by English Language Learners (ELL)



Data Deep Dive: STAAR Outcomes, 2012, 2021 and 2022  
\*Economically Disadvantage and (Non-) Economically Disadvantage

## DISAGGREGATING ALGEBRA I

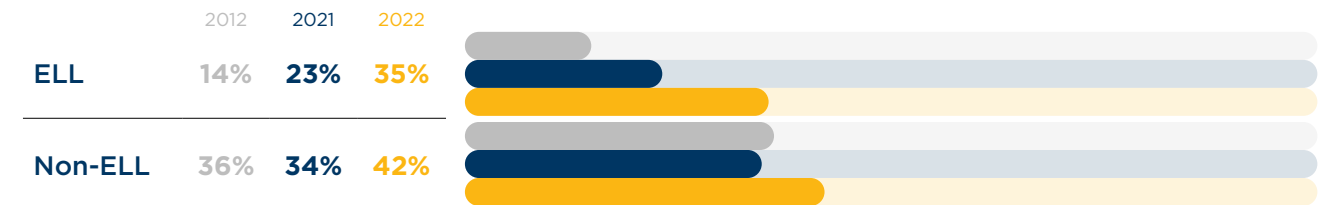
DATA: STAAR Outcomes in **Algebra I** 2012 vs 2021 and 2022 by Race



DATA: STAAR Outcomes in **Algebra I** 2012 vs 2021 and 2022 by Economic Status



DATA: STAAR Outcomes in **Algebra I** 2012 vs 2021 and 2022 by English Language Learners (ELL)



Data Deep Dive: STAAR Outcomes, 2012, 2021 and 2022  
\*Economically Disadvantage and (Non-) Economically Disadvantage

## COLLABORATING TO SUPPORT STUDENTS

Setting Dallas County on a path where at least half of all young adults, regardless of race, will have the opportunity to earn a living wage by 2040 requires collaboration from cradle to career. The Commit Partnership is privileged to work alongside valuable partners to provide strategic resourcing and support students to reach key academic milestones.

## STRONG FOUNDATIONS

**Why it's important:** About **90% of a child's brain develops by the age of five**, and research shows that students who attend pre-K are more likely to succeed later in life. Local analysis shows that eligible students who attend pre-K are twice as likely to meet early literacy standards at the beginning of kindergarten, and students who are kindergarten-ready are three times more likely to be proficient readers in third grade. Early Matters Dallas is a broad-based coalition of business, civic, education, philanthropic and nonprofit organizations and volunteers working together to raise awareness about and advocate for the importance of high-quality early education for a strong economy tomorrow.

**Key fact:** Since the Early Matters Dallas pre-K campaign launched in 2015, Dallas County has increased pre-K enrollment by **11 percentage points** compared to a **2-percentage-point** increase for the state.

**“Collaboration is key in ensuring every child has access to quality early education. By working together on pre-K enrollment — across districts, through partner organizations, and with trusted community messengers — we can break down barriers and provide a strong foundation for our youngest learners, putting them on a path for success and economic mobility in the years to come.”**

**Chelsea Jeffery, Commit Partnership Chief Regional Officer**



## EFFECTIVE ACADEMIC INTERVENTIONS

**Why it's important:** Only **half of Texas third-graders meet grade-level expectations in reading, and even fewer do so in math**. Texas has historically struggled to catch students back up to grade-level, but effective interventions such as high-impact tutoring can reverse this trend. The North Texas Tutoring Coalition supports three Dallas County school districts in facilitating high-impact tutoring among students who stand to benefit the most.

**Key fact:** North Texas Tutoring Coalition partner districts have facilitated **632,709 total tutoring hours** as of March of this school year.

**“The tactics of the past will not be enough to combat the learning lost during the pandemic. It is time to change our mindsets and implement evidence-based policies like high quality, high-impact tutoring. It is difficult, but it is doable — and proven to work for our students.”**

**Dr. Sharla Horton-Williams, Commit Partnership Senior Director of Academic Recovery**



## COLLEGE ACCESS

**Why it's important:** Today **just one in four Dallas County eighth-grade students attain a postsecondary degree or credential by the age of 24**, resulting in only 30% of Dallas County residents ages 25-34 earning above a living wage. Dallas County Promise is a coalition of school districts, colleges, universities, employers, and communities working together to create an affordable pathway to a degree, certificate, or credential at 10 of the region's two- and four-year college and university partners.

**Key fact:** Over the past five years, Dallas County Promise has supported **115,000 students** in their journey to accessing an affordable pathway to a postsecondary credential.

**“I probably wouldn't be where I am today without the Dallas County Promise.”**

**Vanessa Larez, Dallas County Promise Alumni & Development Manager for Bachman Lake Together**





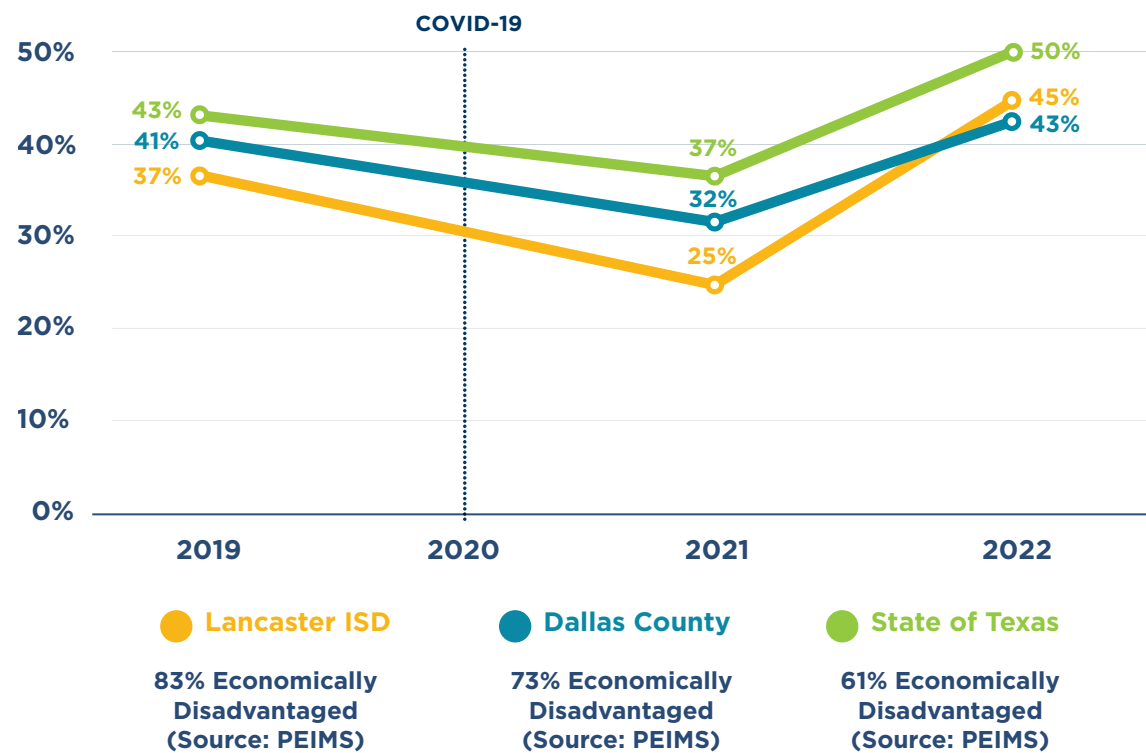


# THIRD-GRADE READING BRIGHT SPOT LANCASTER ISD

The yearly release of results from our state’s standardized State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) exams provides Texas families, leaders, and voters with an opportunity to learn how our schools are doing and where especially great work is happening. The finalized results reveal a number of insights, but one thing is clear: Lancaster ISD is emerging as a model for the state in growing third-grade reading scores, a foundational milestone for later academic success.

Despite having the highest percentage of students considered economically disadvantaged in the county — over 85% of the student body — Lancaster ISD had a 20 percentage point increase in third-grade reading scores between 2021 and 2022. Importantly, this was also 8 percentage points above 2019 proficiency rates, demonstrating Lancaster students are recovering from the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a return to a pre-pandemic trend: Lancaster ISD’s growth in this metric has exceeded that of both Dallas County and the state overall since 2012.

Lancaster ISD Third-Grade Reading, 2019-2022, Meets Level



## How did Lancaster ISD achieve this incredible growth?

According to Lancaster ISD Superintendent Dr. Katrise Perera, this success didn’t happen overnight or over the course of just one year. “This has been an accumulation of things that Lancaster has been putting into place in order to see the growth of our students,” Perera said. In fact, for these third-graders, the work started five years ago, when many of them started in pre-K.

“When you talk about that 20 point jump [in reading scores], we are seeing in some cases, or in many cases, the fruit of the pre-K program,” said Yvonne Thornton, the principal of Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary. Lancaster was one of the first districts in Dallas County to offer pre-K for both three- and four-year-olds in a bold, research-backed move to establish a strong foundation for its students and improve academic success.

By getting kids in the classroom by age three, Lancaster ISD hopes that it can put the structures in place for students to excel.

**“Our students get that early foundation and then they know the expectation that we have here at Rosa Parks. The routine, the expectation, it’s all the same.”**

**Cheryl Scott**  
Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary  
fourth-grade reading teacher





### The Foundation for Reading

This strong pre-K push built the foundation for learning, but as Superintendent Perera said, “if you can’t read, you don’t have literacy and numeracy; it’s really hard to do anything else.” That’s why Lancaster ISD invested in data-driven reading infrastructure for its students based on a structured literacy approach.

Principal Thornton makes it clear: “[Data] guides everything that we are doing.” Monthly running records inform the school’s instructional palette, and built-in intervention time called What I Need, or WIN Time, provides students with an opportunity to get feedback and grow in their reading ability.

For Cheryl Scott, a fourth-grade reading teacher at Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary, Texas’ Reading Academies — established by House Bill 3 (86 R) to ensure elementary teachers are trained in the science of teaching reading — were essential. “Going through the Reading Academy, that literacy foundation was a big help,” she said. For her, it served as a critical reminder that “these are the skills that we need to go back to and make sure that the students are actually able to be successful with.”

It also filled gaps, helping Lancaster ISD teachers become even stronger by providing them with the information and tools they needed to improve the education of students across the district. According to Superintendent Perera, “Reading Academies have definitely allowed [our teachers] to learn things that they may not have learned as a part of their certification programs or their educational programs in college.”

Students needed this strong reading foundation more than ever, given the setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. When Principal Thornton welcomed her teachers back to campus post-pandemic, she was clear:

**“Our third-graders, when we truly look at it, are going to come in and will be functioning as first-graders. Our first-graders are pre-Kers. Our fifth-graders may be second- or third-[graders].”**

**Milbrook/Rosa Parks Elementary Principal Yvonne Thornton**

As a result, she set a new mission statement for Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary:

**“One team, one vision, one mission, one goal. And growth is the goal.”**



With 20 percentage points of growth in third-grading reading, it’s safe to say that goal was exceeded — but that wasn’t necessarily a surprise.

**“I’m never surprised [by] what kids can do. It’s really about the expectations of the adults. Because if you provide them what they need and set that expectation and build that relationship and really know how they learn and grow, it’s not a surprise. It’s an expectation.”**

**Lancaster ISD Superintendent Dr. Katrise Perera**

The adults at Lancaster ISD set high expectations and laid the groundwork for student success with a strong focus on pre-K enrollment and reading infrastructure. The districts of Dallas County — brought together in the Dallas County Learning Community (DCLC) — are taking encouragement from Lancaster’s results and continuing their push for expanded pre-K access and quality. Since 2012, pre-K enrollment has increased 13-percentage points and now 49 percent of eligible Dallas County students are enrolled.

**“What we’re seeing in Lancaster is exactly what we need to celebrate and replicate across Dallas County. That’s why we brought the DCLC here for our first site visit. I’m so excited to watch all our students thrive when we commit to learning from each other’s successes.”**

**Dr. Jeannie Stone**  
Commit Superintendent-In-Residence





# ALGEBRA I BRIGHT SPOT DALLAS ISD

Algebra I has often been referred to as the gatekeeper subject. Completing the course has a strong correlation to both college and career success by itself, but crucially, it also opens the door for students to complete other advanced mathematics courses in high school, especially if taken in the eighth grade. Algebra I even has implications for a student's likelihood of graduating college: according to an analysis from E3 Alliance, students who take two math classes beyond Algebra II in high school are three times more likely to graduate college. However, not all students have equitable access to Algebra I in eighth grade, even if tests indicate they are ready. That's exactly what Dallas ISD is working to change with its new and innovative opt-out policy.

As part of Dallas ISD's racial equity work, the district discovered it had a problem: Black and emergent bilingual students (students learning English for the first time) had dismal access to rigorous coursework. In 2019, just 32% of fifth-grade students who met state math standards on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) exam enrolled in honors classes in the sixth grade.

According to Shannon Trejo, Dallas ISD's Chief Academic Officer, this data caused the team to pause and reflect.

**“What was astonishing to us was that we’ve got this group of African American kids that are scoring on-grade-level and above-grade-level ratings on the state assessment, but they’re not going into any honors coursework. Not even one honors class. And so it really made us sit down and take a really strong look at how kids gain entry.”**

**Dallas ISD Chief Academic Officer Shannon Trejo**

At the time, students were enrolled in honors pathways in sixth grade based on teacher recommendations. This honors pathway would put students in the pipeline to take advanced level classes, including Algebra I, in middle school. In light of this new data and a recognition of the role racial bias may play in making honors recommendations, the district realized something needed to change to open access to this critical coursework to all students who qualify. That's why Dallas ISD wrote a new policy stating all fifth-graders who met grade-level math standards on STAAR exams would be automatically enrolled in advanced pathways, while parents retained the option to have their children opt out.

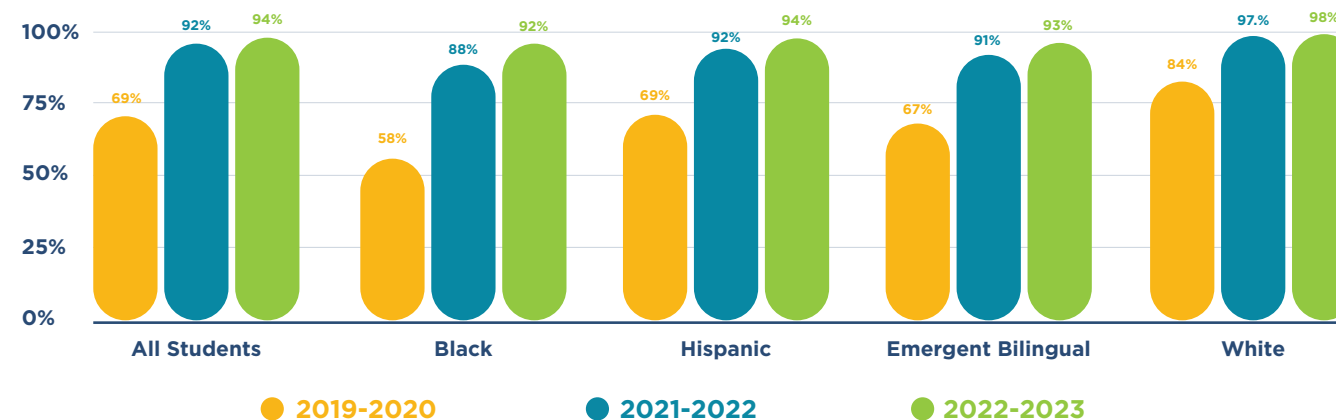
Trejo said the inspiration for the policy was simple. “Sometimes it is just having someone say to a child, ‘I believe in you. I know you can do this. I’m putting you in this class, you will stay, and you will do well.’ And that’s what we’re hoping will make a huge difference for our kiddos,” she said.



Trejo and her team sat down with each campus principal to explain the reason for this effort, to build buy-in, and to create the system-wide change the district needed. Now, three years after the policy was put into place, results are encouraging.

Despite the interruption from the COVID-19 pandemic, enrollment in the math honors pathway has steadily grown since the policy was implemented in 2019. Now, 94% of students who met grade-level standards in fifth-grade math are enrolled in sixth-grade honors math classes for the 2022-23 school year, with Black and emergent bilingual students represented in nearly equal proportion.

**Sixth-Grade Honors Math Enrollment For Students Who Met Fifth-Grade Level Standards**



Critically, this policy has not led to a decrease in student scores in these classes as some may have feared. Last year's eighth-grade Algebra I students had similar pass rates as years prior, with 65% of Black students showing they meet standards. For Trejo, this confirms the policy is working.

**“To me, the passing rates are just further affirmation that we’re doing the right thing by kids. The kids were ready, they should have been there in the first place, and they weren’t.”**

Dallas ISD's work to move more eligible students into advanced classes has prompted other large, urban districts in the state to tune in to the conversation, offering hope that these best practices can spread and more Texans can access the opportunities that taking Algebra I in eighth grade provides. This policy was a leap of faith, and Trejo credits the Dallas ISD board and leadership for making equity a top priority in this work. “It takes a very brave leadership team in a very brave district to be willing to recognize the inequities and then to take action,” she said. Now, that bravery is paying off for the students of Dallas ISD.



# COLLEGE COMPLETION BRIGHT SPOT DALLAS COLLEGE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Dallas College is making history with its new teacher apprenticeship and adaptive residency programs — the first of their kind in Texas. Responding to a community-wide need for more educators, Dallas College created two paid, work-based pathways to build a steady pipeline of well-trained teachers in Dallas County. The apprenticeship program gives aspiring teachers a chance to gain real-world experience and earn a salary with a partner school district while progressing towards a degree or certificate. With the adaptive residency program, Dallas College opens its doors to current school paraprofessionals as well, a previously untapped resource.

For Sara DeLano, the Dean of Educator Pathways at Dallas College, the move to an apprenticeship model was natural.

**“The research is very clear that in order to effectively prepare new teachers, they need as much practice as possible working with students.”**

**Sara DeLano, Dallas College Dean of Educator Pathways**



Through these tuition-free, work-based pathways, students can gain critical practical experience while simultaneously earning a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education for under \$10,000 (the first degree program of its kind at a Texas community college).

This innovative programming allows Dallas College to meet student-teachers where they are. As Mesias Trejo, Dallas College’s Associate Dean for Bilingual Education and a former principal, explains, “you get to get your education at a community college, you get to work in districts that are where you live or close to where you live. And if you’re already working in an institution or education area, then you can stay there and complete the program.”

Logan Aman had just switched her major to elementary education when Dallas College announced the creation of both its bachelor’s degree and residency program, and she jumped at the opportunity to join. Now, she’s a current resident fifth-grade teacher at Stults Road Elementary in Richardson ISD — one of the program’s inaugural partner districts. For the final year of her bachelor’s degree program, Aman follows the schedule of a full-time teacher and gradually takes on more responsibilities in her classroom throughout the year.



For Aman, what sets the teacher apprenticeship program apart from other programs is the financial and student support it provides. “None of us had to really take a huge financial hit by working for free, like a lot of student teachers do for a full year. We are able to be compensated and paid a living wage while we’re doing this,” said Aman. In addition to compensation, students have access to peer, faculty, and leadership support through Dallas College. “I’ve never heard of another opportunity like this with all of the accommodations for the student while still getting to learn and grow as a teacher,” she continued.

**“Students need support holistically. [That’s] the most innovative piece of this residency. It has to be 360, it has to be coming from everywhere. And when you [have] peer support, faculty support, and leadership support, you can’t lose.”**

**Shareefah Mason, Dallas College Associate Dean of Educator Certification**



This additional support was crucial for Brian Daniels, a senior in the Adaptive Residency program teaching fourth-grade math while continuing to work as the Dallas County Promise and Rising Star Case Manager at Dallas College. Thanks to strong student support through the program, Daniels has been thriving. “There could have been times where I could have [fallen] through the cracks, but [Dean Mason] didn’t let it happen,” Daniels said.

Daniels isn’t alone: overall students at Dallas College’s School of Education are persisting more than their peers.

### Postsecondary Completion:



\*Dallas County= All Dallas County students | DCSOE= Students enrolled in DCSOE

For Daniels, the adaptive residency program offered him unmatched flexibility and the opportunity to work at the school four of his children attend. “[This program] offered me affordability, it offered me convenience, it offered me time back in my community, and I was able to affect my community and my own family at the same time,” said Daniels. “So that’s a win, win, win, win.”

Dallas College has successfully created programming that addresses the critical shortage of teachers in the county while also supporting those students throughout the college journey — a lesson Dallas County and our state as a whole can learn from.

**“Our education program is new. It’s expanding. But we’re dedicated to making sure that when you leave any of our education programs, you’re going to be well prepared. Being in our program, you’re going to make a change.”**

**Mesias Trejo, Dallas College’s Associate Dean for Bilingual Education and Former Principal**

# THANK YOU

## Partnership is the Key to Our Continued Impact

We call ourselves a 'Partnership' because we could never hope to do this work alone. So if you have in any way taken action to support our organization or any of the public school districts in Dallas County we work alongside, we want to take this opportunity to express our gratitude. For your steadfast commitment to the mission at hand, we thank you.

### School Districts

The Commit Partnership would like to thank the following districts for providing data for various indicators and other metrics to assist the community in understanding where all of our students are academically:

Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD  
Cedar Hill ISD  
Dallas ISD  
DeSoto ISD  
Garland ISD  
Grand Prairie ISD  
Highland Park ISD  
Irving ISD  
Lancaster ISD  
Mesquite ISD  
Richardson ISD  
Uplift Education

### In-Kind Supporters

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Bain & Co.  
Boston Consulting Group  
College Football Playoff Foundation  
Dallas Mavericks Foundation  
DataKind  
Libby McCabe  
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### Partners

#### Early Childhood

ChildCare Group  
Dallas Early Education Alliance  
Educational First Steps  
Head Start of Greater Dallas  
Mi Escuelita Preschool  
Zero to Five Funders  
Collaborative

#### K-12 Education

Alcuin School: A Montessori and IB Education  
Bishop Dunne Catholic School  
Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD  
Cedar Hill ISD  
Coppell ISD  
Cristo Rey  
Dallas ISD  
DeSoto ISD  
Duncanville ISD  
Episcopal School of Dallas  
Garland ISD  
Good Shepherd Episcopal School  
Grand Prairie ISD  
Great Hearts Academy  
Greenhill School  
Harmony Schools  
Highland Park ISD  
The Hockaday School  
International Leadership of Texas  
Irving ISD  
Jesuit College Preparatory

KIPP DFW

The Lamplighter School  
Lancaster ISD  
Mesquite ISD  
Momentous Institute  
Parish Episcopal School  
Plano ISD  
Responsive Education Solutions  
Richardson ISD  
Shelton School  
St. Mark's School of Texas  
Texas CAN Academics  
Trinity Basin Prep  
Uplift Education  
Village Tech Schools  
The Winston School

#### Higher Education

Austin College  
Dallas County Community College  
Parker University  
Paul Quinn College  
Relay Graduate School of Education  
Southern Methodist University  
STARS Program - UT  
Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas  
Texas A&M University - Commerce  
University of Texas - Dallas  
University of Dallas  
University of N. Texas - Dallas  
University of N. Texas - Denton

University of Texas at Arlington  
Texas Women's University

#### Parent & Teacher Groups

Avance Dallas  
The Concilio  
Region 10 Education Service Center  
Stand for Children  
Teach for America DFW  
Teaching Trust  
Teach Plus  
Texas PTA

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Ernst & Young  
EverFi Fidelity Investments  
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Bachman Lake Together  
Behind Every Door  
Big Brothers Big Sisters Lone Star  
Big Thought  
Bold Idea  
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Dallas  
Bryan's House  
Camp Fire Lone Star  
Caring Loving All Youth (CLAY)  
Catholic Charities of Dallas, Inc.  
Children At Risk  
Children's Health  
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National Math & Science Initiative  
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NHP Foundation  
North Central Texas Interlink  
North Texas Alliance to Reduce Teen Pregnancy  
Parents Step Ahead  
Perot Museum of Nature and Science  
The Princeton Review Dallas  
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## SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

We've chosen to focus on 12 indicators in our annual Community Scorecard Report. Each indicator represents a key benchmark in a student's educational journey, from pre-K to postsecondary education. Taken together, these indicators provide a holistic picture of the health of the entire education system.

Each indicator meets all of the following criteria:

- Valid measure of the outcome
- Consistently available over time
- Produced by a trusted source
- Similarly measured across regions and school districts
- Feasible to gather and report
- Easily understandable to local stakeholders
- Malleable to a significant degree by local action
- Useful in the day-to-day work of collaboratives that seek to improve student outcomes

With this in mind, let's look at each of the 12 indicators individually:

### Pre-Kindergarten Enrollment

#### Definition

Percentage of eligible 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in pre-K. Eligibility is determined by income, language proficiency, special needs, military status, foster status, and/or homelessness.

Source: Texas Public Education Information Resource

#### Significance

An estimated 90% of the brain is developed by the time a person is five years old. Research shows a strong correlation between quality early learning and regional prosperity. For every \$1 invested in early childhood, a community saves \$7

in long-term costs such as educational remediation, criminal justice, and welfare, and quality pre-K programming has been shown to close achievement gaps for low-income students and students of color. Texas children who attend pre-K are 1.7 times more likely to be ready to enter kindergarten.

Quality early learning for all children can change the economic outcome of our community in just one generation. When we ensure that all students receive the best education possible, from the very beginning, we set them up for success for the rest of their lives.

### Kindergarten Readiness

#### Definition

Percentage of students that qualify as "ready" based on an individual school district's assessment and the state of Texas' cut score. Currently, individual districts choose their own assessment to determine kindergarten readiness. A standardized and age-appropriate measure to be used by all districts across Texas is currently in development, as mandated by House Bill 3.

Source: Texas Public Education Information Resource (Kindergarten Readiness report provided by the Texas Education Agency [TEA])

#### Significance

Kindergarten readiness is closely linked to future academic achievement and life success, though indicators for this outcome area often differ across school districts and states. The Texas Education Agency does not mandate a single kindergarten readiness standard across school districts, but it does mandate that districts assess literacy among incoming kindergartners.

Kindergarten literacy levels, in turn, predict reading ability throughout a child's educational career. Across states, school-entry academic and attention skills are highly correlated with later academic achievement in elementary school.

### Third-Grade Reading

#### Definition

Percentage of students who achieve the "Meets Grade Level" standard on the

STAAR Third-Grade Reading exam.

Source: State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) data provided by TEA

#### Significance

In early grades, children begin to transition from learning to read to reading to learn. At these grade levels, the reading curriculum becomes more complex in both meaning and vocabulary.

Data show that disparities in literacy during early grades are linked to persistent achievement gaps. If children are behind by third-grade, they generally stay behind throughout their education. One longitudinal study found that students who do not read at grade level by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school than proficient readers. Conversely, students at or above grade level reading in earlier grades graduate from high school and attend college at higher rates than peers reading below grade level.

### Fourth-Grade Math

#### Definition

Percentage of students who achieve the "Meets Grade Level" standard on the STAAR Fourth-Grade Math exam.

Source: State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) data provided by TEA

#### Significance

Elementary math lays the foundation for all future mathematics, as students need a strong understanding of arithmetic and finite number sets to effectively tackle more complex concepts, such as algebra and infinite number sets.

Research indicates that an early understanding of math concepts is the most powerful predictor of later school success. Knowledge of fractions and division uniquely predicts subsequent knowledge of algebra and overall math achievement, and students in the lowest quartile of math achievement at ages 6, 8, and 10 are less likely to attend college than students who struggle in other subjects.

### Eighth-Grade Science

#### Definition

Percentage of students who achieve the "Meets Grade Level" standard on the STAAR Eighth-Grade Science exam.

Source: State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) data provided by TEA

#### Significance

A strong foundation in math and science at the middle school level can dramatically impact future workforce opportunities.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, "there were nearly 10 million workers in STEM occupations" in 2021, a total "projected to grow by 11%" in the following ten years. Earning potential in this field is also significantly higher, with median wages in STEM occupations over twice that of non-STEM median wages.

### Algebra I

#### Definition

Percentage of students who achieve the "Meets Grade Level" standard on the STAAR Algebra 1 exam.

*Note: This percentage is based on students enrolled in Algebra 1 in school who then take and pass the Algebra 1 STAAR EOC, which could include multiple grade levels.*

Source: State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) provided by TEA

#### Significance

Basic algebra has been referred to as the "gatekeeper subject" because of its correlation to both college and career success. Taking algebra in middle school opens the gateway to completing advanced mathematics courses in high school which, in turn, is highly valued for admission to many four-year colleges and universities.

According to analysis of Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data from E3 Alliance, students who take two math classes beyond Algebra II in high school are three times more likely to graduate college. This makes having access to Algebra I by eighth grade especially

important. Economists estimate that if the U.S. could raise math proficiency to Canadian levels, economic growth would improve by 1.5% annually and, in the long run, add \$75 trillion to the U.S. GDP.

### College Readiness

#### Definition

Percentage of annual graduates from all Texas public schools who scored "At or Above Criterion" on the College Board's SAT and/or ACT, Inc.'s ACT assessment.

"At or Above Criterion" is defined as follows for each exam:

SAT: 480 on evidence-based reading and 530 on mathematics

ACT: 19 on English, 19 on mathematics, and 23 composite

Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports

#### Significance

SAT/ACT exams administered in the 11th and 12th grades help us determine if a student has developed the academic foundation necessary for a successful transition from secondary to higher education. As nationally normed tests, these indicators allow our community to compare the progress of our school systems against those from around the country.

About 58% of students who do not require remediation upon entering college ultimately earn a bachelor's degree, compared to only 17% of students enrolled in remedial reading and 27% of students enrolled in remedial math. A strong correlation exists between SAT/ACT scores and first-year college GPA and retention rates, and SAT/ACT scores also help identify the need for remedial work. The three-year graduation rate at Texas community colleges for full-time students requiring remedial work is only 10%.

### High School Graduation

#### Definition

Percentage of students who graduate high school within four years.

Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports

### Significance

High school graduation is not only a precursor to college enrollment; it is also a major indicator for earnings throughout adulthood. On average, high school graduates make \$300,000 more in lifetime earnings than individuals who did not complete high school.

If the number of high school dropouts in the 50 largest U.S. cities were cut in half, the extra earnings of those high school graduates would add up to \$4.1 billion per year. High school graduation has been shown to predict health, mortality rates, teen childbearing, marital outcomes, and crime rates. Increasing the educational attainment of one generation improves the next generation's academic and social outcomes.

### College Enrollment

#### Definition

Percentage of students who enroll in a public Texas institution of higher education within one year of high school graduation.

Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports for the class of 2020

#### Significance

Postsecondary enrollment marks one of the critical transitions in the cradle to career pipeline. By 2030, 62% of Texas jobs will require some form of postsecondary education. Postsecondary credentials are not limited to four-year universities; two-year programs and technical certifications are also valuable in this knowledge-based economy.

Research has shown that "low income students, even those with high academic performance levels, are less likely to enroll in college, more likely to attend two-year colleges when they do enroll, and less likely to apply to more selective institutions compared to their more advantaged peers with similar academic preparation." Texas students experiencing economic insecurity enrolled in college at an average rate of 39%, compared to 54% of students not experiencing economic insecurity.



## College Persistence

### Definition

Percentage of Texas public and private, two- and four-year higher education students who enrolled in college and continue on to their second year.

Note: Currently, there is not publicly available college persistence data that can be disaggregated by race, socioeconomic status, etc.

Source: National Student Clearinghouse Reports provided by individual school districts (Community Scorecard Report)

\*College persistence is not reported on the Commit Data Dashboards.

### Significance

Students often begin higher education with strong ideals, but the transition from high school to postsecondary education proves very difficult. Supporting students during this critical period is essential for improving degree attainment.

As many as 1 in 3 students nationally do not return for their second year of college. Just over 1.2 million first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students began their undergraduate careers at public four-year colleges and universities in the fall of 2010. About 6 in 10 (62.4%) completed their degrees within six years. Of the 1 million first-time students who enrolled at two-year public institutions in fall 2010, only one in four (39.3%) completed degrees or certificates from their starting institution within six years.

## College Completion

### Definition

Percentage of college freshmen who graduate within 6 years of enrollment.

Note: Currently, there is not publicly available college persistence data that can be disaggregated by race, socioeconomic status, etc. This also does not take into account the number of high school students who do not enroll in college.

Source: National Student Clearinghouse Reports provided by individual school districts (Community Scorecard Report)

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Commit Data Dashboard)

## Significance

The benefits of postsecondary education span across social and economic domains. An associate degree holder earns nearly \$600,000 more in lifetime earnings over a high school graduate. A bachelor's degree holder earns over \$1.3 million more in life earnings than a high school graduate.

According to the Lumina Foundation, the number of jobs requiring an associate degree has grown by 1.6 million, and the number of jobs requiring a bachelor's degree has grown by 2 million, since the end of the recession. Society as a whole benefits from a more educated population as well, through lower instances of child abuse, lower rates of criminal behavior, and fewer teen pregnancies among children of college-educated parents.

## Living Wage Attainment

### Definition

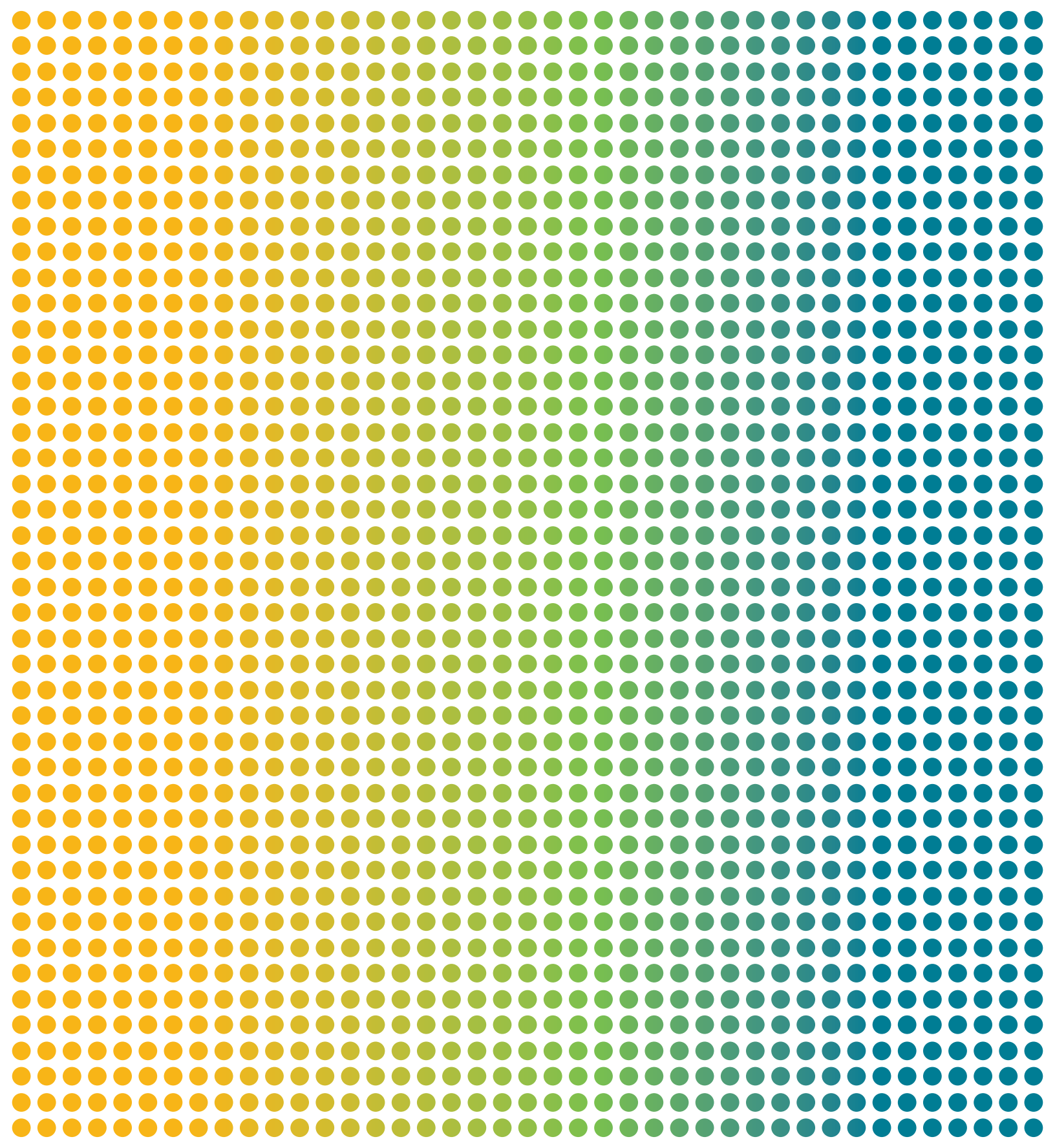
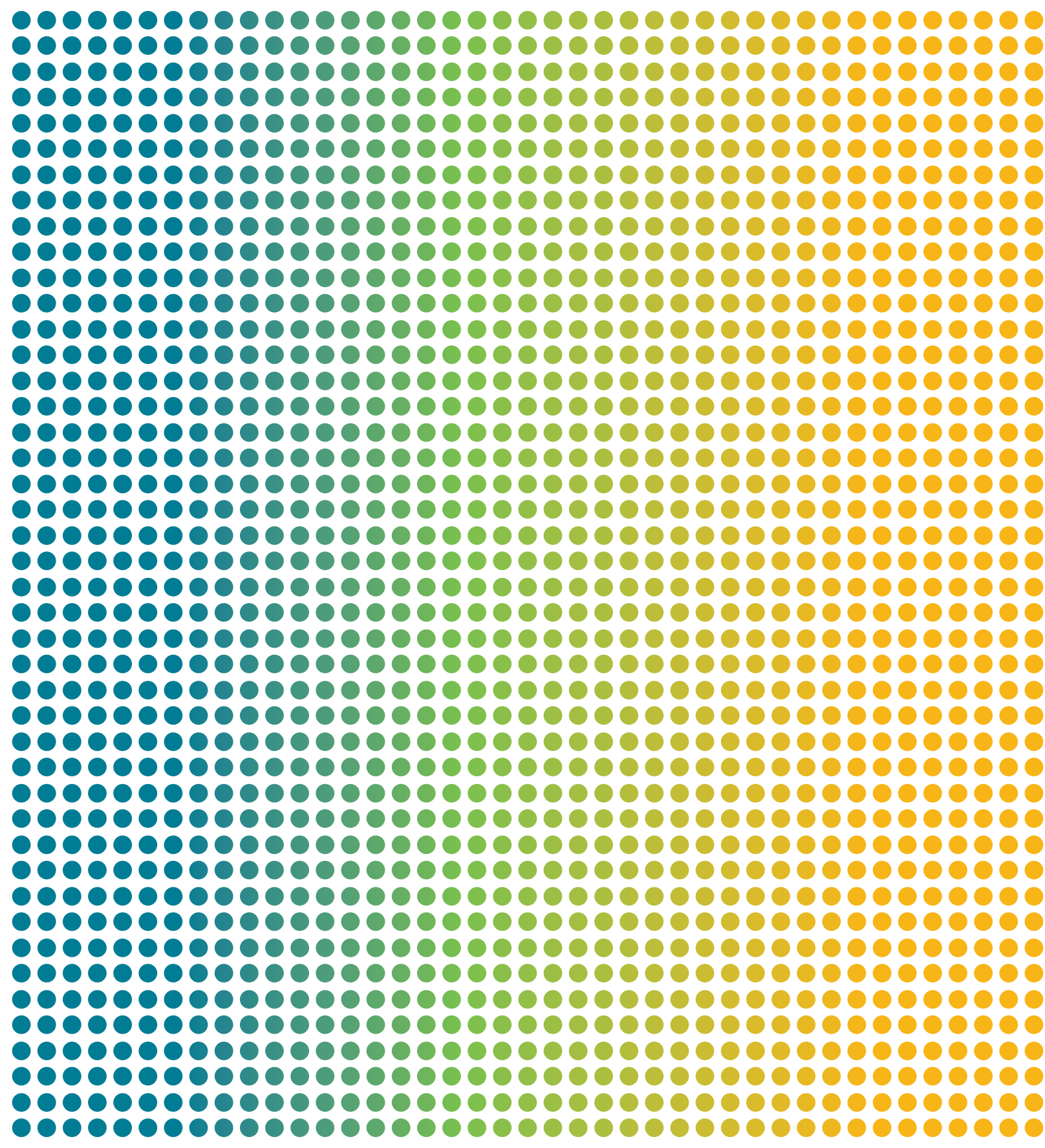
Percentage of young adults (ages 25-34) earning above a living wage. Commit set the individual annual income that constitutes a living wage at \$50,000 in 2018 based on the MIT Living Wage Calculator. To account for inflation, the individual income for a living wage increases by 3% in every subsequent year. In 2021, the most recent year that data is available, an individual would need to have an annual income above \$54,636 to earn a living wage.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample

### Significance

Analysis of the Dallas job market suggests that a degree or certificate may not be enough for people to prosper in the local economy, especially for Black and Hispanic/Latinx residents. A postsecondary credential is necessary, but not sufficient, for success in the Dallas County economy. Eliminating barriers across the workforce pipeline is essential in order to achieve an inclusive and prosperous region.







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