

Final Closing the Gaps Report Finds Texas Met All Success Targets, but Fell Short of Meeting All Participation Targets

In 2000, Texas set the goal of “closing the gaps” in participation and success in higher education by 2015. The state aimed to achieve this goal by increasing the number of students enrolled by 630,000, and increasing the number of degrees and certificates awarded by 50 percent. In June 2016, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) released the final progress report for the Closing the Gaps goals.

Texas fell just shy of meeting its 2015 total higher education enrollment goal by about 6,000 students, but surpassed its goal for African-American enrollment by over 50,000 students. African-American enrollment increased by 98 percent from when Closing the Gaps targets were created in 2000. Texas did not meet its 2015 enrollment targets for Hispanic and White students. White student participation has decreased for the past six consecutive years, falling by over 60,000 students since fall 2009. Although Hispanic enrollment rose by more than 100,000 since fall 2010, 2015 enrollment was still over 100,000 students short of the Closing the Gaps target.

Texas met its 2015 goal for the total number of degrees and certificates awarded. The state surpassed its target for total certificates and degrees awarded by over 48,000, and doubled the number of associates degrees awarded between 2000 and 2015. Texas’ new 15 year strategic plan for higher education, referred to as 60X30TX, is currently being implemented.

Texas Closing the Gaps Participation Targets for 2015

	Actual Fall 2015	2015 Targets	Difference	Met 2015 Target?
Total enrollment	1,643,879	1,650,000	6,121	No
African-American enrollment	223,137	172,700	-50,437	Yes
Hispanic enrollment	571,118	676,100	104,982	No
White enrollment	610,812	671,300	60,488	No

Texas Closing the Gaps Success Targets for 2015

	Actual FY 2014	2015 Targets	Difference	Met 2015 Target?
Total certificates and degrees	258,795	210,000	-48,795	Yes
Associate degrees	81,153	55,500	-26,153	Yes
Bachelor's degrees	127,032	112,500	-14,532	Yes

Sources: THECB. *Closing the Gaps Final Progress Report*, June 2016
<http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/reports/PDF/8138.PDF?CFID=51491906&CFTOKEN=35266879>. THECB. Report Center
<http://www.txhighereddata.org/index.cfm?objectid=27718BD7-BD77-2355-39495E1FB4605755>).

