

Freshman Year Success Initiative

Presented by

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Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR)

- The CCSR studied freshman course performance and high school completion in Chicago Public Schools
- Evaluation & Accountability has been conducting similar studies in Dallas ISD since 2007
- Dallas ISD has participated in three CCSR pilot institutes



The Dallas ISD Freshman Performance Study

- In 2007 the District examined the relationship between freshman year performance and graduating in 4 years:
 - Credit Accumulation
 - Grade Point Average
 - Absences
 - Semester Course Failures
 - First Six-Weeks Course Failure



Credit accumulation or state testing?

About 9,100 students started high school in fall 2003.

- About 800, or 9%, failed the 11th grade ELA *TAKS*.
- About 1,100, or 12%, failed the Mathematics *TAKS*.
- More than 4,300 had left the district or did not have enough credits to reach 11th grade by spring 2006.

Failure to accumulate course credit is a more serious barrier to on-time graduation than *TAKS* failure.

Ninth Grade Absences

- Freshmen missed nearly a week of school on average
- Repeating ninth graders averaged 20 absences
- 2003-04 freshmen in 12th grade in 2006-07:
 - 0-4 absences: 78%
 - 5-9 absences: 66%
 - 20 or more absences: <30%

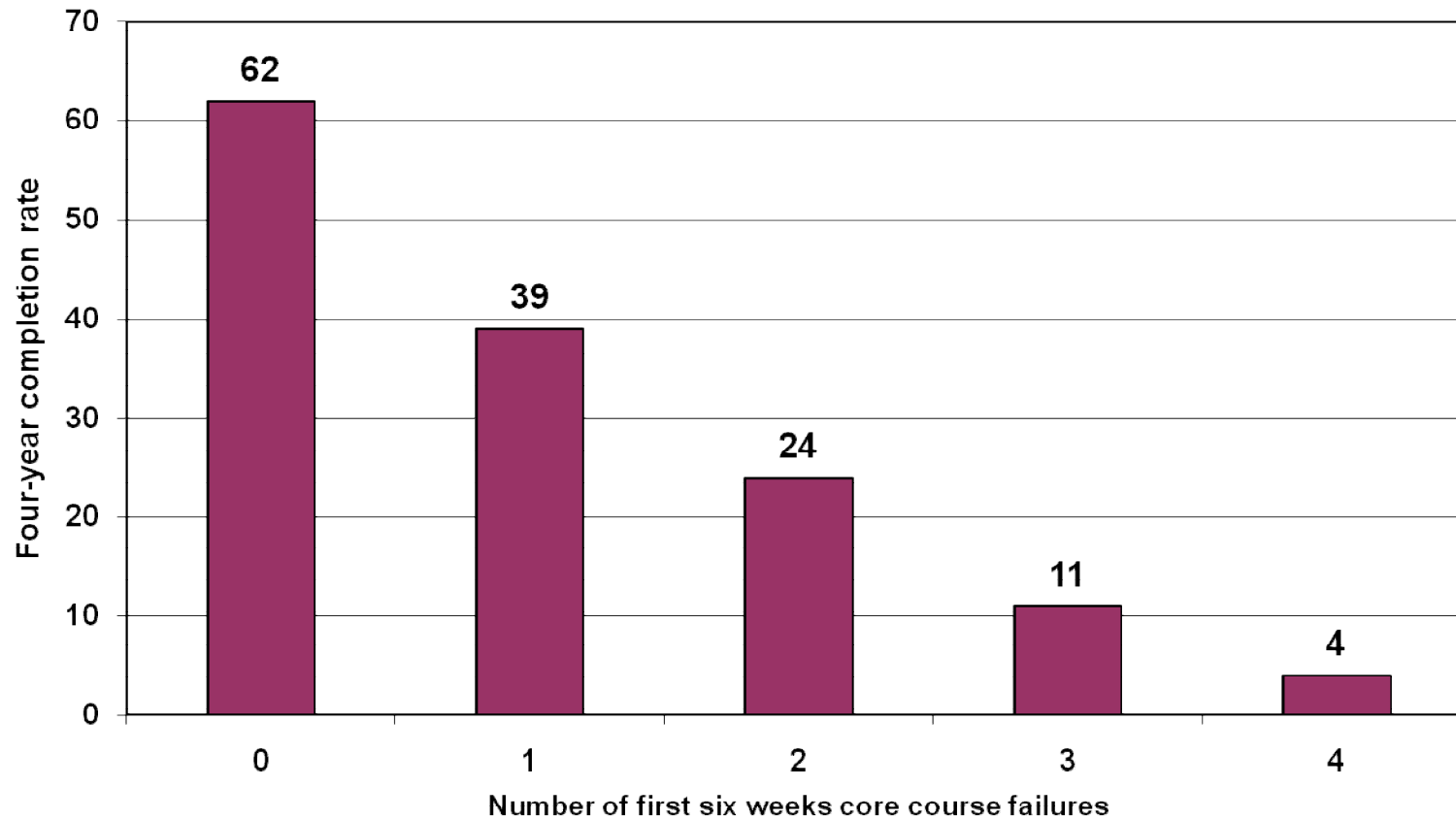
Freshman course failures (2006-07)

- A majority (59%) of first-time ninth graders in Dallas ISD failed at least one semester course.
- Almost 10% failed 8 or more courses.
- At five high schools, more than 70% of first-time ninth graders failed at least one semester course.
- At two schools, more than 20% of students failed 8 or more courses.

The first six weeks

First Six Weeks Grade	Semester Grade			
	A	B	C	F
A	50.2	37.9	9.7	1.9
B	7.1	48.3	37.3	6.8
C	0.6	13.8	56.8	28.1
F	0.0	2.1	22.6	73.5
Total	12,470	21,918	27,085	19,464

Cohort study: First six weeks failures and completion



The On-Track Indicator

- A freshman is considered on-track if he or she
- has accumulated five full course credits, and
 - has no more than one semester F in a core subject (English, math, science, or social studies).
 - Baseline was established and performance targets set in 2007-08 (85% comprehensive, 95% magnets)
 - Inclusion in Principal Appraisal System proposed for 2009-10

DEWS (Dropout Early Warning System)

- Alerts principals to students who are at risk of dropping out
- Students listed are failing two or more state credit core courses
 - Can be sorted by student, by teacher, and by course
 - Teachers with >20% failure rates must develop intervention plans
- Information includes student's absences, GPA, credits, age, disciplinary actions
- Updated each six weeks
- All students listed have a risk level of at least 1 for state credit core-course failure designation, plus truancy intervention level and number of TAKS failures



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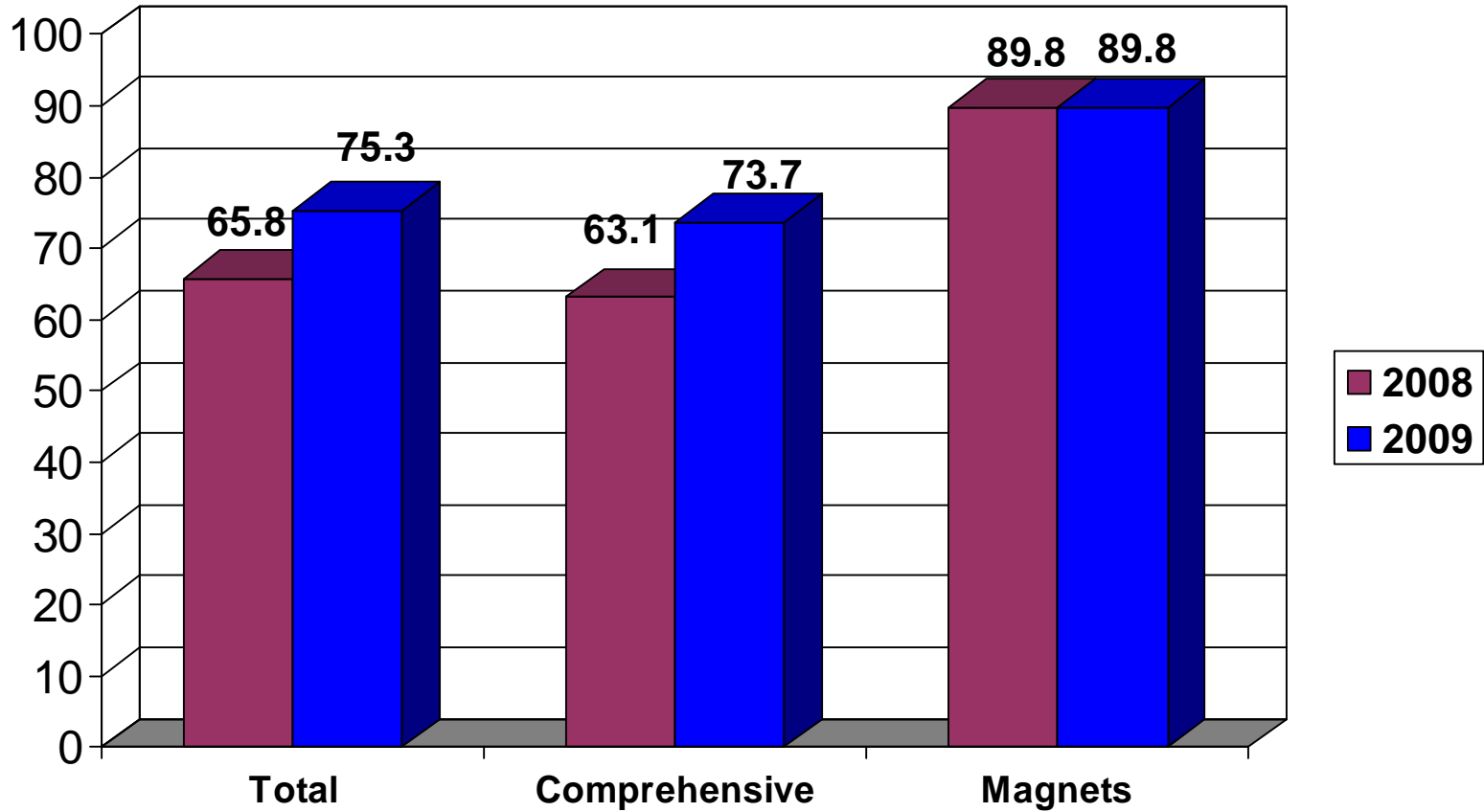
As a result of the study, principals and executive directors began initial work on the Freshman Success Initiative in the spring of 2008

➤ Ninth Grade Task Force

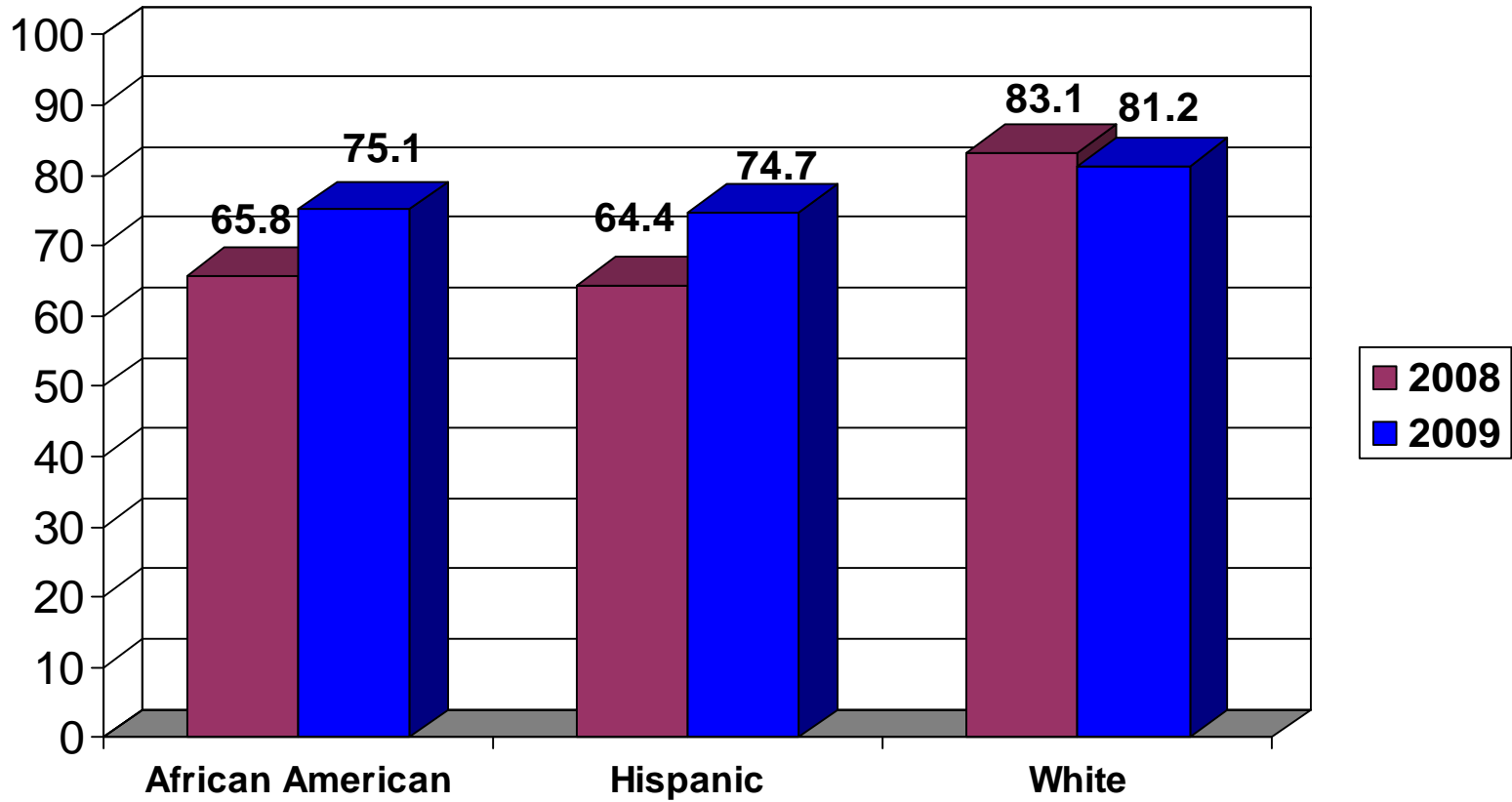
- Led by Dr. Robin Ryan
- Included secondary executive directors and high school principals
- Initiated strategies to address freshman year success
- Shared strategies at monthly principals' meetings
- Utilized Drop-out Early Warning System (DEWS)
- Established attendance goals and incentives



Freshman On-Track: 2008 and 2009



Freshman On-Track: 2008 and 2009



Credits and promotion: 2008 and 2009

2007-2008

- Average freshman gained 6.2 credits
- 71% of freshmen gained 6 or more credits
- 11 of 27 high schools averaged 6 credits or more for freshmen
- 40% of repeaters gained 6 or more credits
- 15% of repeaters gained junior status

2008-2009

- Average freshman gained 6.7 credits
- 83% of freshmen gained 6 or more credits
- 26 of 28 high schools averaged 6 credits or more for freshmen
- 50% of repeaters gained 6 or more credits
- 24% of repeaters gained junior status

2008-2009 Freshman Class Performance: TAKS Gains

TAKS Subject	All	African American	Hispanic	White	Econ. Disadv.
Reading 2008	76.1	73.4	76.0	92.1	74.3
Reading 2009	83.0	80.6	83.3	93.9	82.3
Reading Gain	7.0%	7.2%	7.3%	1.8%	8.0%
Mathematics 2008	44.8	34.6	47.5	70.5	42.6
Mathematics 2009	56.5	44.4	60.7	73.2	55.7
Mathematics Gain	11.6%	9.8%	13.2%	2.6%	13.0%

* Data include all students tested (not the accountability subset)
Gains greater than 5 percentage points coded in green.

New for 2009-10

- On-Track Indicator incorporated into Principal Appraisal System
- Ninth grade facilitators assigned to each high school campus
 - Trained on DEWS and On-Track Indicator
- Kick-Off Mentoring Program
- High School Early Start Academy

Kick Off Mentoring (KOM)

The KOM Transition Program was developed to ease the transition of incoming freshman into their new high school environment by assigning upperclassmen as mentors.

- Piloted in four high schools in 2008-09
- Supported by grant funds received from AT&T
- Dallas ISD juniors and seniors received summer mentor training
- Every freshman was assigned an upperclassman mentor
- Mentors met their mentees at freshman orientation or fish camp and will support them throughout the year



High School Early Start Academy

- Summer bridge program for incoming freshmen
- 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. for first two weeks of August
- Breakfast and lunch provided
- High school principals showcased instructional and enrichment programs
- Campuses customized enrichment offerings:
 - “DISD Idol” and “Dancing with the Stars” (dance and vocal clinics), Debate/Writer’s Camp, Gaming & Web Design , Chess Club, Time & Money Management (organizational skills and financial literacy)
- Introduced first six weeks curriculum in core subjects:
 - English I
 - Algebra I & Geometry
 - Biology



High School Early Start Outcomes*

Early Start Participants

- Attendance rate 95%
- 93% passed first six weeks English
- 87% passed first six weeks science
- 85% passed first six weeks math
 - Algebra I: 83%
 - Geometry: 100%
 - Mean 8th grade TAKS Math scale score=2045

Other Freshmen

- Attendance rate 93%
- 92% passed first six weeks English
- 83% passed first six weeks science
- 90% passed first six weeks math
 - Algebra I: 90%
 - Geometry: 92%
 - Mean 8th grade TAKS Math scale score=2110

*Note: Data include SLC schools only (6 of 15 participating comprehensive high schools)

Freshman Year Success Initiative

For further information:

www.dallasisd.org/insidedisd/depts/evalacct/