Developmental Education

Definition and Legislation

**Developmental Education** refers to the continuum of undergraduate courses and services ranging from tutoring and advising to remedial coursework and other instruction to prepare students for college level (and therefore work-ready) courses and continued academic success.

**Current Enabling Legislation**

In 2003, the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) was enacted by the 78th Legislature to help ensure that college students have the reading, writing, and math skills they need to do college-level work.

**The Texas Success Initiative TEC § 51.3062**

The Legislature...
- shall allocate appropriate funds for non-degree-credit developmental education courses.
- 18 semester credit hours limit for a general academic teaching institution; and
- 27 semester credit hours limit for a public junior college, public technical institute, or public state college.
- may appropriate the money required to provide the additional funding under formulas developed by the Board

The Board...
- shall prescribe college readiness assessment standards
- may develop supplemental formulas
- may develop a performance formula
- shall evaluate the effectiveness of the Success Initiative
- shall adopt rules

The Institutions...
- shall administer a diagnostic assessment of each entering undergraduate
- shall establish a program on advisement to include an individual academic plan
- shall determine the college readiness of each student

**Facts and Figures** (Fall 2003 Cohort)

Of the 127,032 First-Time-In-College (FTIC) students in Community Colleges...
- 53,057 were not college ready in math
- 33,334 were not college ready in reading
- 24,145 were not college ready in writing
(Duplicated students count across subject area)

Of the 61,876 FTICs in Universities...
- 8,959 were not college ready in math
- 6,333 were not college ready in reading
- 4,933 were not college ready in writing

Of the 5,338 FTICs in Texas State Technical Collegess and Lamar Universities...
- 2,413 were not college ready in math
- 1,584 were not college ready in reading
- 1,242 were not college ready in writing

Source: The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Accountability System, Fall 2003
The following chart shows the percent of students who were successful in completing a college-level course related to their developmental need by subject area for the fall 2003 cohort.

**Percent of Students Completing the Related College-Level Course by Institution for Fall 2003**

Source: The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Accountability System, Fall 2003

**Questions and Answers**

**Is the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) the same as the Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP)?**

No, the TASP law has been repealed and replaced by a new program, the Texas Success Initiative (TSI). The TSI requires students to be assessed in reading, writing and math skills prior to enrolling in college, and to be advised based on the results of that assessment, but now each institution determines what to do with students who don't pass one or more parts of the test. Institutions have the flexibility to determine the best path for individual students to take to become college ready and to demonstrate that they are indeed ready for college-level courses.

**What is the Texas Higher Education Assessment (THEA)?**

The TASP Test has been renamed the Texas Higher Education Assessment (THEA). The THEA is one of the tests that can be administered to students to determine if they are college ready.
Questions and Answers continued

What tests can institutions use for the Texas Success Initiative (TSI)?

Institutions can use the same tests that were used for TASP purposes: the ASSET; the ACCUPLACER; the COMPASS; and the THEA (formerly known as the TASP Test). The MAPS was used for TASP purposes, but it is not on the list of tests for the Texas Success Initiative because it is no longer being printed and distributed by the test publisher. The Stanford Achievement Test, used under the TASP law for students who are hearing impaired, is no longer available under the TSI.

Can institutions still require students to make a higher score than the state’s minimum as a prerequisite to certain courses?

Yes, institutions have always had the prerogative to require higher performance standards than the minimum passing standards if they choose to do so. For instance, the suggested math score on the THEA that would indicate readiness for college algebra is 270. Institutions can still use that suggested higher score to determine which students they will admit to college algebra courses.

Could an institution set its own cut scores and use specific sections of one of the approved assessment instruments as an entrance/placement test, and then add the remaining sections of the same instrument to fulfill the TSI requirement?

Yes. Many colleges use one or two sections of an assessment as part of an admission requirement. If the student meets the entrance requirements and is accepted, the institution can give the student the section(s) he or she didn't take and have a complete test for TSI purposes.
THE COST OF DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION IN TEXAS

According to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), approximately 50 percent of community college freshman and 22 percent of university freshman enroll in at least one developmental education course. Approximately 20 percent of those students complete developmental programs and earn a bachelor’s degree within six years. For the 2006–07 biennium, the Texas Legislature appropriated approximately $206 million in General Revenue Funds for the instructional cost of developmental education at all public higher education institutions according to THECB. The price that public universities, community colleges, students and their families, and taxpayers pay to get under-prepared students prepared for a postsecondary education consists of a number of components and actual costs.

This report represents a collaborative effort of staff from the Legislative Budget Board (LBB), THECB, and The Charles A. Dana Center at The University of Texas at Austin to lay the foundation for the fiscal analysis of developmental education cost. In particular, this report draws from the January 2007 LBB report on State Formula Funding for Developmental Education and College Readiness and Texas Success Initiatives.

As Texas developmental education programs are enhanced to support student success, finance mechanisms for these programs must be structured to promote greater efficiency and effectiveness. The purpose of this report is to gain a better understanding of the allocation of funds (state, federal, local, direct/indirect funding) for these programs in Texas higher education institutions. This report explores the current funding architecture for developmental education by comparing resource allocation across institutions using a sample of data obtained through a statewide online survey.

The findings are based on 53 Texas public institutions of higher education that provided complete survey information, representing a response rate of 52 percent. The survey results provide a basis for determining the average cost per semester credit hour of developmental education at both two-year institutions and universities. Different patterns of direct and indirect costs for those institutions are also identified, and the relationship between total cost and state appropriations is explored. In addition, issues for further study are proposed to gain a better understanding of the link between funding and program effectiveness.

FACTS AND FINDINGS

Finding 1: The Statewide Average Cost Per Semester Credit Hour of Developmental Education Was $164.

For the institutions participating in this survey, the average total cost per semester credit hour (SCH) of developmental education for fiscal year 2005 was $164 statewide, $256 at Texas public universities, $152 at Texas public community colleges, and $189 at Texas State Technical Colleges (TSTC). The total cost per SCH of developmental education at universities was 68 percent higher than at community colleges and 35 percent higher than at TSTC. Ninety percent of all SCH of developmental education were delivered by community colleges in fiscal year 2005.

The THECB University Cost Study for FY 2005 determined that total cost per SCH of developmental education was $252, or 2 percent lower than the survey results for universities. For community colleges and TSTC the THECB Report of Fundable Operating Expenses for FY 2004 (most recent edition) determined that the total cost per SCH was $128 for math (developmental education and college level courses combined), and approximately $133 per SCH for both reading and writing courses, or roughly 15 percent lower than the survey results.

Finding 2: The Average Direct Cost Per Semester Credit Hour of Developmental Education Was Highest at TSTC, Lower at Universities, and Lowest at Community Colleges.

For the purposes of this survey, “direct costs” are those costs directly related to delivery of instruction, including faculty salaries, benefits and operational expenses. As shown in Figure 1, direct cost per SCH of developmental education was $50 statewide. By sector, direct cost was $61 at Texas public universities, $46 at Texas public community colleges, and $90 at TSTC. Direct cost per SCH at TSTC was 96 percent higher than at community colleges and 48 percent higher than at universities. Direct cost per SCH at universities was 33 percent higher than at community colleges.
FIGURE 1
DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT COSTS PER SEMESTER CREDIT HOUR BY SECTOR, FISCAL 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Statewide N=53</th>
<th>University N=18</th>
<th>Community College N=31</th>
<th>TSTC N=4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>$50 30%</td>
<td>$61 24%</td>
<td>$46 30%</td>
<td>$90 48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Support</td>
<td>16 10</td>
<td>32 12</td>
<td>15 10</td>
<td>16 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services</td>
<td>16 10</td>
<td>19 7</td>
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<td>17 9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>89 35</td>
<td>49 32</td>
<td>46 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>47 18</td>
<td>23 15</td>
<td>18 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>Indirect Cost Total</td>
<td>115 70</td>
<td>195 76</td>
<td>106 70</td>
<td>99 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$164 100%</td>
<td>$256 100%</td>
<td>$152 100%</td>
<td>$189 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Average weighted using semester credit hours; community college and TSTC contact hours converted to semester credit hours at 16:1 rate.

Note: May not sum due to rounding.

FINDING 3: THE AVERAGE INDIRECT COST PER SEMESTER CREDIT HOUR OF DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION WAS HIGHEST AT UNIVERSITIES, LOWER AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES, AND LOWEST AT TSTC.

For the purposes of this survey, “indirect” costs are those costs not directly related to instruction including academic support, student services and non-operating expenses. Survey respondents were asked to calculate indirect costs using a “straight allocation methodology” based upon developmental education SCH as a percentage of total SCH at the institution.

As shown in Figure 1, using a straight allocation methodology, indirect cost per SCH of developmental education was $115 statewide. By sector, indirect cost was $195 at Texas public universities, $106 at Texas public community colleges, and $99 at TSTC. Indirect cost per SCH at universities was 84 percent higher than at community colleges and 97 percent higher than at TSTC. Indirect cost per SCH at community colleges was 7 percent higher than at TSTC. Of the $89 difference between universities and community colleges, 72 percent was non-operating and institutional support cost.

In the survey, institutions were also allowed to report indirect cost using a different assumption than the straight allocation methodology and asked to explain the rationale for the alternative methodology. Responses to this question varied widely and the calculation methodology used by the institutions was not always provided. Thirty-one institutions reported that their alternative indirect cost was less than that calculated with the straight allocation methodology, whereas four institutions noted no difference. Eighteen institutions reported that their alternative indirect cost was greater than that calculated by the straight allocation methodology.

FINDING 4: THIRTY-ONE PERCENT OF AVERAGE COST PER SEMESTER CREDIT HOUR OF DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION IS MET BY STATE APPROPRIATIONS AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES, COMPARED TO 43 PERCENT AT TSTC.

Twenty-seven Texas public two-year institutions, (24 community colleges and 3 TSTC) reported data on cost, state appropriations, and tuition and fees during fiscal year 2005. For these community colleges, the average total cost per SCH of developmental education was $158; state appropriations met approximately 31 percent of cost, while tuition and fees met approximately 27 percent of cost. For these TSTC components, the average total cost per SCH of developmental education was $191, state appropriations met approximately 43 percent of cost, while tuition and fees met approximately 31 percent of cost.

Institutions reported using a variety of methods for covering the remaining cost. Several community colleges reported using local district taxes as a source of funds. Two-year institutions reported using a variety of other sources of funds, including federal and other grants, institutional funds from interest, auxiliary services, operating funds, operating...
reserves, gifts, and contributions. Insufficient appropriation data was reported to allow a similar analysis for universities.

ISSUES FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

REVIEW EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Additional analysis is necessary to determine whether the lower cost per SCH at community colleges is related to economies of scale at larger developmental education programs or to some other factor. Also, this report did not determine whether community colleges, TSTC, or universities are more effective developmental education providers (e.g. how many students succeed per dollar of cost). Research is needed to determine the performance of developmental education programs by linking the cost described in this study to student outcomes. Detailed cost and evaluation of outcomes should be included as a component of all developmental education initiatives.

Several institutions are currently monitoring the success of developmental education students and evaluating programs with funding from the Lumina Foundation’s Achieving the Dream Initiative. Case studies of developmental education at institutions conducting a Lumina project could include analyses of promising practices worthy of attention.

REVIEW COST STUDY FOR TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Based upon survey data, it is estimated that approximately 15 percent of the total cost of developmental education may be obscured by the methodology of the THECB Report of Fundable Operating Expenses. It is not clear how much of this amount may be due to (1) a difference between the costs of developmental and college-level SCH, (2) the exclusion of facilities cost at community colleges, or (3) inflation. The THECB Community College Formula Advisory Committee could recommend modification of the cost study to disaggregate developmental education and college-level courses in the areas of math, reading, and writing. If the cost differs as estimated, then the formula funding rates could be adjusted accordingly to allocate state appropriations to two-year institutions more accurately.

Because of the complexity of allocating indirect cost, institutions may reasonably categorize such cost differently. The extent to which indirect cost of developmental education may differ from indirect cost for college-level courses is likely to be the largest component of any difference in total cost. Consensus on the method of allocating indirect cost would be required for any adjustment of formula funding rates.
Challenges and Potentials in Developmental Education: An Interview with Raymund A. Paredes

By Hansel Burley

Higher education is not producing enough college graduates to meet our current and future workforce needs.

Nationally, educators and policy-makers have taken note of Texas. It served as a model for the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB); also, in 2000, the state launched an aggressive effort called Closing the Gaps, a plan for increasing higher education access and quality in order to dramatically improve workforce readiness for international economic competition. The key surveyor of educational gaps in Texas is the Texas Commissioner for Higher Education—Raymund A. Paredes—the chief executive and visionary for the plan. As perhaps the singular educational authority on the P-16 movement in the state, his gaze seems fixed on transitions from high school to college and, in particular, on developmental education. In fact, he sees developmental education as the keystone for improving pedagogy and assessment throughout K-12 and college.

Dr. Paredes was born and raised in El Paso, Texas. He received a B.A. in English and Ph.D. in American Civilization from The University of Texas at Austin. Although his research interests include Mexican American literature and culture and the effect of demographic changes on American culture and art, he has had long involvement in P-16 education. He has unabashedly championed and criticized developmental education. In a Commissioner's Report to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), he said, "We can not achieve our goals in terms of success for our undergraduate students unless we make significant improvement in developmental education which directly leads, of course, to our success in terms of graduation rates and time-to-degree" (Paredes, 2005, p. 1).

Hansel Burley (H.B.): Commissioner Paredes, thank you for championing developmental education. From the opening of Harvard College and the realization that the children of New England farmers did not have the necessary Latin and Greek to succeed at the new institution, developmental education has been a feature of American higher education. It was a necessity at the founding of many land-grant and historically Black colleges and universities and became more prominent following the passage of the first GI Bill. Although developmental education has been linked with increased access to higher education by many more diverse groups, it remains controversial.

Still, despite the storied history of developmental education, higher education is not producing enough college graduates to meet our current and future workforce needs. According to the Commission on the Future of Higher Education (2006), the root cause of barriers to access to higher education is "the complex interplay of inadequate preparation, lack of information about college opportunities, and persistent financial barriers" (p. 8). The Achieving the Dream (2005) initiative and, in Texas, Closing the Gaps (THECB, 2000) both seek to increase significantly degree attainment of students of color and low-income students in a relatively short period of time. What role do you see for developmental education in achieving these goals?

Raymund A. Paredes (R.A.P.): Well, it is obvious that developmental education is key to achieving our Closing the Gaps goals in terms of the actual graduation of students. If it is true, and I believe that it is, that according to ACT less than 20% of Texas high school graduates are prepared to do rigorous college work across the board; clearly there is a large number of students who will require some form of developmental or remedial education. Until we do better in preparing students for college, developmental education is going to be very important for us.

H.B.: Adelman (2004) has found that 40% of the students who get bachelor's degrees have had at least one developmental course. What do you make of this finding? Whose success or failure is this?

R.A.P.: This underscores that we have very high percentages of students who come to college underprepared to do college-level work. We have to do a better job of aligning high school exit stan-
dards and college readiness standards. The fact that 40% of students who get bachelor's degrees have had at least one developmental education course shows that we're having some success in getting students to the finish line, but we've got an awful lot more that don't make it that far.

H.B.: The Spellings Commission noted that developmental education costs about $1 billion and serves 40% of students taking at least one remedial course in 2- and 4-year postsecondary institutions combined (Commission, 2006). Further, a Department of Education report indicated that $330 billion was spent on all of higher education across the nation in 2003 (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). When one considers the total expenditures for higher education, developmental education appears to be a bargain. Why the fuss about the cost of developmental education courses, especially since they affect so many?

R.A.P.: Well, developmental education is very costly, and, across the board, I don't think it is efficient at all. Here in Texas only 20% of students who enter developmental education actually complete a certificate or degree. I think that if you're only having success with that percentage of students, then clearly it is not as efficient as it ought to be. Now, we have a lot of students who need developmental courses in more than one area, and we have an awful lot of students in Texas who have to take more than one course in a particular area; it is neither a bargain nor very effective academically, in Texas. We have pockets of success, but, across the board, developmental education is not as effective as it should be.

H.B.: How much of your vision for developmental education—particularly how you experienced it in Southern California and in Texas—is affected by what you learned from your father about education while riding around El Paso in his bread truck?

R.A.P.: [Laughter] Well, I don't think that there is anything that my father and I talked about that impacted my vision. I learned a lot of educational values from my father but nothing specific to developmental education. I guess you could argue that one of the educational values I believe in is that, if you admit students to a college or university, you should do everything you can to help them be successful. I'm not sure we do that. I think that the notion of educational equity and educational opportunity ought to be enhanced through greater success in helping students who need developmental education.

H.B.: How would you profile an effective developmental educator?

R.A.P.: I don't think that there is any uniform profile; I think that a good developmental educator is committed to educational opportunity for all students from different backgrounds. I think that a strong developmental professional would be someone who has had a lot of experience working with a range of students. Usually, these are people who have had a good deal of experience in the classroom. It is important to make sure that we do not put our least capable faculty in developmental classrooms. This is often what happens in K-12 education, and it does not work any better in higher education than it does in K-12 education. A strong developmental professional is someone who knows how to make adjustments in the curriculum and in the pedagogical approach based on the particular needs of students. A good developmental professional knows that the same pedagogical approaches or techniques do not work equally well in all circumstances. One has to be adept in developing programs that meet the needs of students in a particular class at a particular moment in time.

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H.B.: Allow me to follow-up: How would training and certification improve this profile of an effective developmental educator?

R.A.P.: I do not think that we have a lot of good research on developmental education. I do not think that we have strong research on what kinds of related approaches work best for particular kinds of students. I do not believe success can be measured in terms of the faculty who teach developmental education any better than it's possible to identify the most salient characteristics of good teaching in any educational sector. To the extent that we develop more research capability in developmental education, the better we'll understand what we need to do. I also think more training programs for developmental education are imperative. We need more faculty at all levels, K-12 as well as higher education, who simply know how to design intervention programs for students who are behind at some particular points in the educational pipeline.

H.B.: What is your profile of an effective developmental program?

R.A.P.: As I have said, the most important ingredient to programs and teachers is flexibility. Both should recognize that not all students are the same. There are classes—in any discipline for any kind of student—that have their own characteristics, and one has to adapt to those. In my career as a faculty member, I have had courses in which the students were volatile and forthcoming and very independent—effective, independent thinkers—and I have had classes in which the students were very quiet and had to be pushed outside their comfort zone. I had to get their attention and be willing and able to apply different pedagogical techniques to help students master the material in the course. The same thing applies to developmental education. I think that another characteristic of good developmental programming is that it takes advantage of technology that is available today: educational software, tutoring programs, interactive chat rooms, and so forth that offer different ways to appeal particularly to young people today who are very comfortable with computer-based instruction and learning and in some cases prefer that to conventional modes of instructional delivery.

So an effective developmental program includes flexibility, hybrid courses, and I believe that the third component is good assessments. It is essential to identify, as precisely as possible, what students need in developmental education. How can professionals distinguish between students who are way behind in a given subject compared to those students who previously mastered the subject but have forgotten some of the material because they have not used it recently? There is a big difference between somebody who never was given effective instruction to achieve understanding in a given discipline compared to those students who mastered the subject in a good educational environment but have forgotten it because they have not used it. Students who need serious, fundamental developmental education are very different from students who need a refresher course.

H.B.: You have called for better assessment tools that would do a better job of identifying the kind of help that students need. However, in Texas alone, there are 20 to 30 different placement tools being used simultaneously. How can educators identify and employ the most effective developmental education placement tools?

R.A.P.: I think that we have to do several things. First of all, reducing the number of assessment tools down to a minimal number, so that everybody is using the same metrics to determine which students need developmental education, is important. And Texas is working with The
College Board that develops the Accuplacer® to improve the assessment capabilities of that tool. The second thing we need to do is go to more holistic evaluation of the students we are considering placing in developmental education. For example, if a student at Austin Community College scores 20 points below the cut-off score for math and an advisor looks at the student’s academic file and sees that student has been in the military for 6 years and made straight A’s in high school and took advanced math and even a pre-calculus course in high school, then one might conclude that the student needs a refresher course instead of a full-blown developmental math course. This gets back to the point I made about flexibility. If a student scores 5 to 10 points below the cut score, maybe a 2-week refresher course in the summer would bring that student up to speed, so that he or she would not need the developmental course at all. I know that El Paso Community College is looking at this issue, and they have had some success.

Another thing that higher education needs to do is work more closely with high schools. If we could get a college-readiness score in either the 10th or 11th grade, we would have some time in high school for higher education and public education to work together to get more students better prepared to go to college. I know one thing about developmental education: The earlier you intervene, the more effective it is and the more cost efficient it is.

H.B.: Dual credit and dual enrollment programs are on the rise in Texas and the nation. However, these programs seem to serve students primarily from middle- and high-income families. You were part of a Southern Regional Education Board/League of Innovation in the Community College forum that called for “early college high schools.” According to the report (Southern Regional Education Board, 2006), these high schools target underrepresented and underserved students who have weak academic skills by providing low socioeconomic students access to college credit. Please expand on the definition of these programs. Also, what role might developmental education play in an early college high school that targets Texas’ underrepresented and underserved population?

R.A.P.: Developmental education experts need to work throughout the educational pipeline. Intervention programs should be available to students as soon as we find that they are behind. Students start taking standardized tests in the 3rd grade. If students are behind in reading, we ought to develop intervention programs for them at that point, so they can catch up. Universities that have developmental education programs need to provide research to the K-12 sector so the K-12 sector can develop intervention programs based on sound research and best practices. Once the students are getting close to going to college, colleges and universities should work directly with high schools through summer bridge programs or academic boot camps, where university personnel work with high school personnel to get students ready. I’ve seen a lot of very successful programs. I ran several of these kinds of programs while I was at UCLA. We worked with students who were not quite college ready between their junior and senior years. Over the space of 5-week residential programs, we had some pretty astonishing results. I can’t stress the importance of cooperation throughout the educational pipeline enough. It is colleges and universities that really set what college readiness standards ought to be. Higher education professionals need to make sure they work with colleagues in the K-12 sector to get as many students as ready as possible to be able to do college-level work. That requires working in every conceivable kind of institution: charter schools, early college high schools, high schools with strong AP schools, and dual credit programs, the gamut.

H.B.: In an interview in Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education, you discuss a recommendation by the P-16 Council’s Developmental Education Subcommittee: improving research on developmental education (Martinez & Martinez, 2006). You call current research in the field “superficial and weak” (p. 12). Also, you call for a “focus on innovative pedagogies that may shorten the length of time that students need to be in developmental programs” (p. 12). Could you share more on the weaknesses in this research? In your opinion, what are some ways to strengthen developmental education research in order to better identify and replicate or adapt new pedagogies?

R.A.P.: First, more institutions with really excellent faculty need to take this issue seriously. If you look at the profile of the best universities in the country, you might be surprised at how little attention is being given to developmental education. I think that we need more research in the field, both qualitative and quantitative research. Most of the research that I see on developmental education is descriptive, not nearly as analytical as I would like it to be. Both better research and more graduate programs to train developmental specialists throughout the academic pipeline are crucial. THECB has been urging institutions in Texas to take a hard look at this field and perhaps develop graduate master’s and doctoral programs that would give us more research capability and more field practitioners.

H.B.: In the same Hispanic Outlook article, Hunter Boylan concludes that the link between developmental education and underrepresented groups is socioeconomic status (Martinez & Martinez, 2006). This is a fairly complex and
large-scale issue. Further, in October 2000, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board adopted the Closing the Gaps educational initiative. The driving force for the plan is to meet the state's future workforce needs to help maintain the state's prosperity. The most important feature of the plan is admitting and graduating more citizens from low-income families and from Texas' many diverse communities. Failure to reach the plan's aggressive goals could result in the increase of the poverty rate in the state. How can developmental education be part of a systemic solution that helps to reverse the impact of poverty on student success?

R.A.P.: Resources must be more equitably distributed. There is a lot of evidence that demonstrates that students in poorer schools oftentimes get fewer resources than students in more affluent schools. I'm not talking about simply calculating per capita funding per student. I'm talking about taking into account resources such as the number of really excellent teachers that teach in poor schools or the number of teachers who have an actual degree in the discipline in which they are teaching in poor schools compared to teachers in affluent areas. The work done by a number of educational groups, such as The Education Trust, demonstrates that educational resources aren't distributed equitably.

The entire educational system should carefully think about and actively pursue alternative and fairer ways of distributing resources. I would attract our best teachers to work with students who need the most help. I would make sure that schools in poorer districts have the same resources as those in affluent areas. Once again, I'm not talking simply about money. I'm talking about human resources as well as financial ones. That's the first thing. We have to look at a very serious paradigm shift in education delivery. Clearly, we need to extend the school year and take advantage of technology to help bring educational opportunities to poor students. We need a massive shift in the way we provide educational opportunities and actually deliver education to poor students. A few months ago, there was a great article in the New York Times Magazine (Tough, 2006) called "What It Takes to Make A Student," and it pointed out what schools that work with poor students have to do. They not only have to work on educational issues, but on cultural issues as well. These educators have to make sure that students from poor families are familiar with the culture of success in this country and the way young people have to carry themselves and conduct themselves in ways that are consistent with the culture of success in this country. This involves not only teaching basic knowledge and skills but also acculturating students.

H.B.: In our nation, with its ever-changing diversity, will developmental education ever go away? Why or why not?

R.A.P.: No, I don't think it will ever go away. Despite all the controversy about immigration and immigration laws, the fact is that the U.S. will always have a lot of kids who come from other countries or who come from circumstances of poverty, and they are going be behind when they go to college. If institutions are going to admit them, they will have to find a way to help these students be successful. So I don't think that we will ever do away with developmental education completely, but I think we can certainly reduce the need for it dramatically. If it's a case where 50 to 60%, or according to the ACT 80%, of students need some form of developmental education, we can certainly cut those numbers drastically by getting students better prepared in K-12 and by having stronger cooperation between higher education and elementary/secondary education. Maybe we can reduce that number from 50% and cut it in half in the next 10 to 12 years, then cut it in half yet again in the next 20 to 25 years. I'd be very happy with only 10% of our students using postsecondary developmental education. That would be a substantial improvement compared to the current situation.

H.B.: Commissioner Paredes, do you have any final comments?

R.A.P.: Developmental education is critical to our educational goals in Texas. We need to have an educational philosophy in Texas that is based on two premises. Number one, we believe that students from all backgrounds—all socioeconomic, all racial, and all ethnic backgrounds—can learn. Secondly, we're never going to give up on our students. As long as they are in our school systems, whether in K-12 or public community colleges and universities, we will not give up on them. We are going to provide them with whatever help they need to be successful.

H.B.: Thank you so much. I've been reading your speeches and testimony before the legislature long before this interview. You are unique because of your authentic vision for education in the state. You clearly have no plans to leave developmental education behind, and you are not treating developmental education as a kind of second sister. Your voice is inspirational to developmental educators and researchers alike. Thank you again.

References
Southern Regional Education Board. (2006). Building transitions from high school to college and careers for Texas' youth. Atlanta, GA: Southern Regional Education Board.