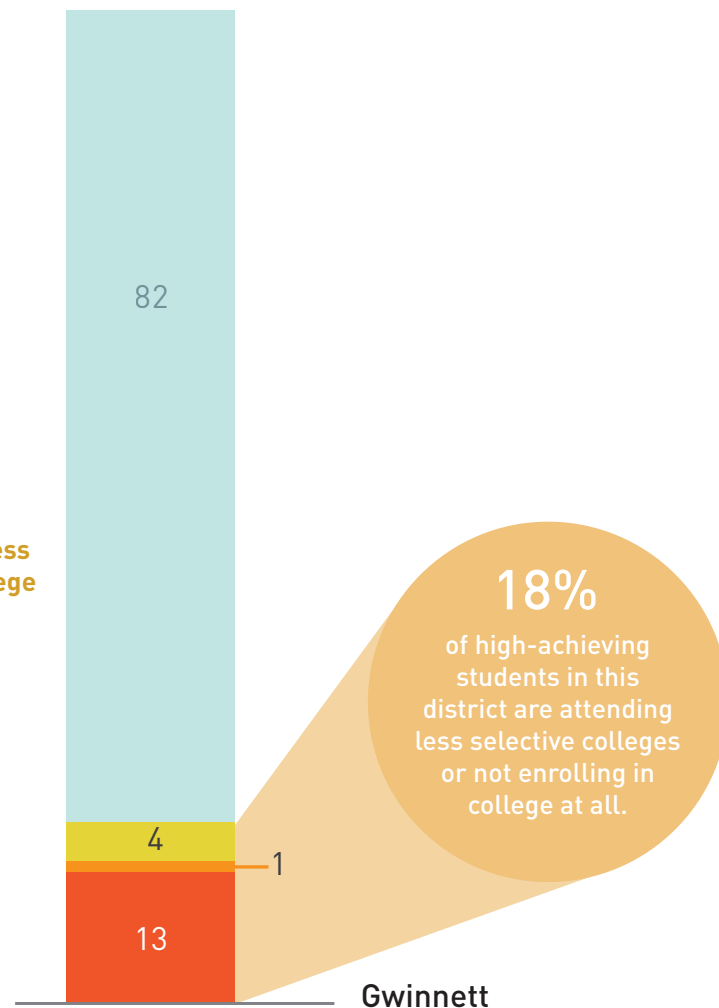
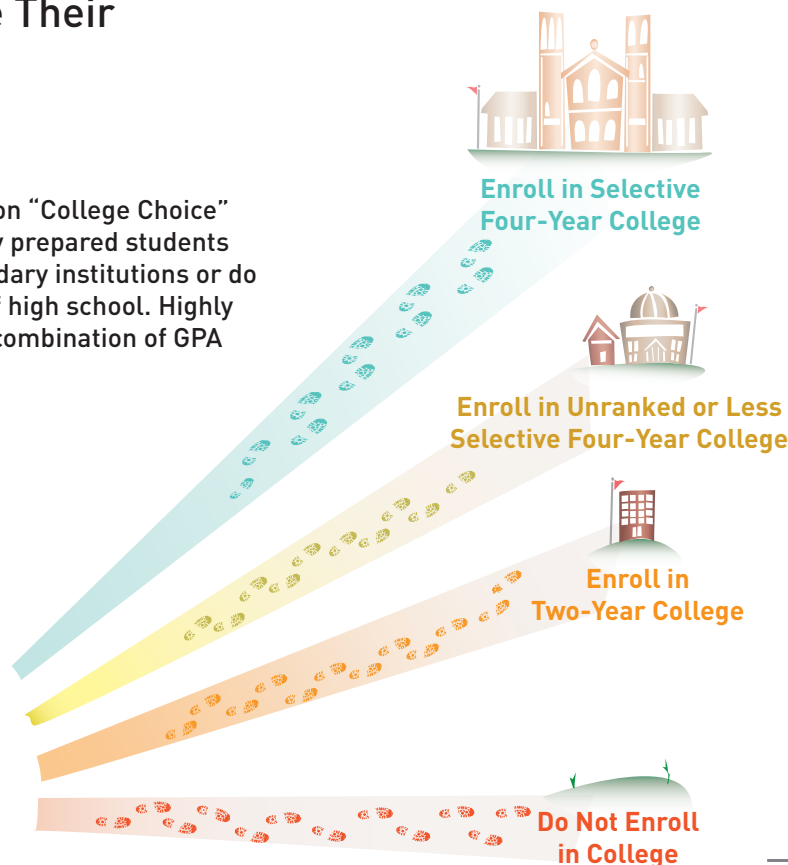
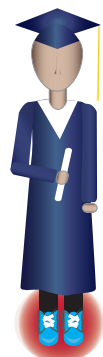


Do High School Graduates Enroll in Colleges That Maximize Their Chances of Success?

Not often enough.

The Strategic Performance Indicator on “College Choice” reveals that many highly academically prepared students opt to attend less selective postsecondary institutions or do not attend college at all directly out of high school. Highly qualified students are identified by a combination of GPA and college entrance exam scores.

Highly Qualified
High School Graduates



WHAT ARE STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS?

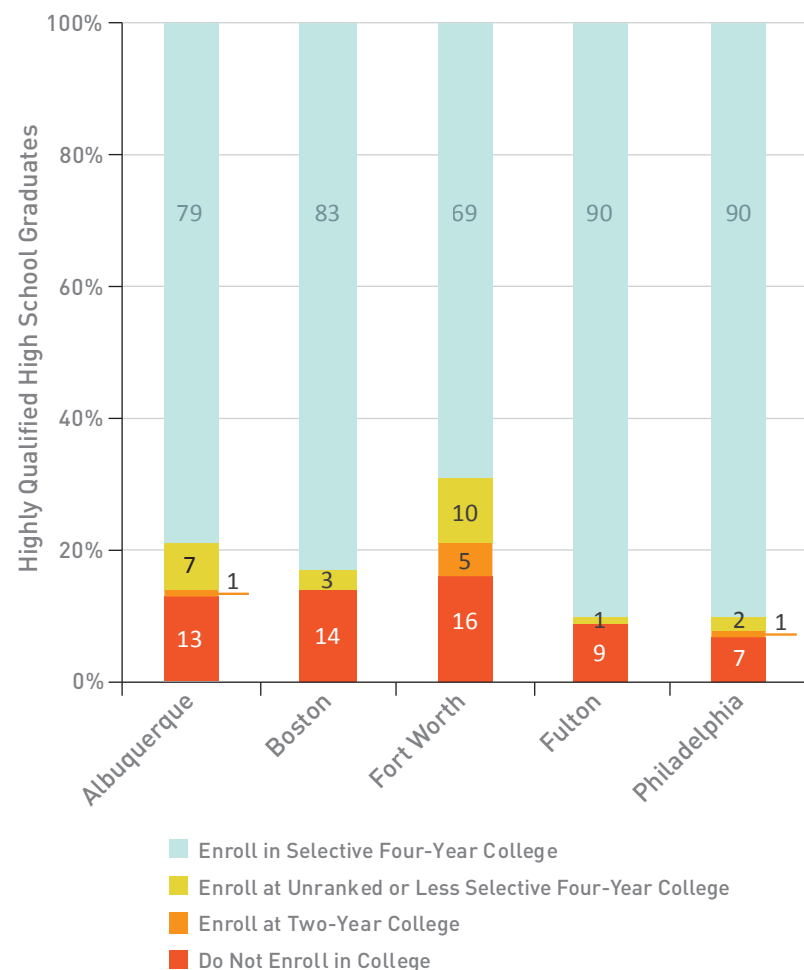
Strategic Performance Indicators (SPIs) are measures that reveal policy and management levers that have the potential to improve student outcomes. SPIs are derived from the Strategic Data Project (SDP) Diagnostics, rigorous descriptive analyses that SDP performs on a common set of issues using existing data from partnering education agencies. SDP’s goal is that education agencies will adopt these SPIs, creating benchmarking information to understand their success in working toward key outcomes over time. Results are included for Albuquerque Public Schools (NM), Boston Public Schools (MA), Fort Worth Independent School District (TX), Fulton County Schools (GA), Gwinnett County Public Schools (GA), and The School District of Philadelphia (PA).

Housed at the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University, SDP’s mission is to transform the use of data in education to improve student achievement.

All SPI infographics and memos are available at www.gse.harvard.edu/sdp

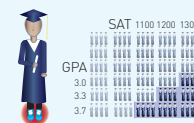
What are the results regarding college choice in other partner districts?

The graph below provides the enrollment patterns for the five other districts. In each district, a surprising share of highly qualified high school graduates do not enroll in college at all. Still others opt to attend less selective post-secondary institutions.



For more information about how to construct this measure and other analytical factors for use in performance measurement of education systems, please visit the SDP Toolkit for Effective Data Use at www.gse.harvard.edu/sdp/tools

How do we examine patterns in college choice?



1 First, within each district, we identify high school graduates who are **highly qualified for college**. These are students who earn:

- a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher and math/verbal SAT score of 1300 or higher,
- a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher and math/verbal SAT score of 1200 or higher, or
- a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or higher and math/verbal SAT score of 1100 or higher.

2 Next, we use National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) data to examine college enrollment outcomes for these students.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?



3 Then, among high school graduates who do not enroll in college, we utilize the Barron's College Admissions Selector Ratings to determine the selectivity of the colleges into which these students matriculate.

With the dataset assembled, we focus on the share of highly qualified high school graduates who do not enroll in any postsecondary institution as well as the share who attend an unranked or less selective four-year college or a two-year college.

4 We find that high-achieving students who enroll in less selective colleges **persist at lower rates than those who enroll in selective four-year colleges**.

As a result they are also **less likely to attain a postsecondary degree**.

Finally, the impact of not going to college on earnings is substantial. Earnings for individuals with bachelor's degrees are nearly double those of high school graduates.