A. Texas State will increase the recruitment and retention rates of Black/African-American and Hispanic/Latino students with a special emphasis on achieving HSI designation (At least 25 percent Hispanic/Latino full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate enrollment; of which 50 percent are low-income—defined as 150 percent of the poverty level as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.)

**Measure #1:** Annually Texas State will demonstrate an increase in the matriculation or yield rate of first-time freshmen to 48 percent and transfer applicants to 75 percent with an emphasis on Black/African-American and Hispanic/Latino students.

**Data and Analysis:**

Although the student enrollment in K-12 in Texas is rising, the demographic mix of students is changing. The number of white students graduating from public schools in Texas is projected to decline from 108,602 in 2007 to 96,568 in 2015. Since whites are often more affluent and have had a greater likelihood of attending and graduating from college than other groups, this poses an enrollment challenge for colleges and universities. At the same time, it is projected that a total number of Hispanic/Latino high school graduates will increase 36.7 percent from 88,242 in 2007 to 120,607 in 2015. As demonstrated in Table 1, modest increases will also occur among Black/African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander and Native American students.

If Texas is to maintain a robust economy, it will need to increase the number of college graduates, especially among Hispanic/Latino students.

In terms of enrollment, Texas State has been successful in attracting more Hispanic/Latino students. As Table 2 indicates, the number of Hispanic/Latino students submitting applications for admission has increased 34.5 percent, from 2,472 in 2003 to 3,324 in 2006. Applications from white students during the same period rose only 1.7 percent. Applications from Black/African-American and Asian/Pacific Islander students increased 29.5 percent and 8 percent respectively. Clearly, the university’s market share of applications reflects the changing demographics.

Generating applications, however, is only a part of the enrollment management picture. In the end, it is the matriculation rate that determines the size and composition of the entering class. As the demography has changed, competition for high ability students has intensified. In addition, changing enrollment goals of the larger public universities in Texas continues to impact recruitment efforts and enrollment patterns. As Table 3 indicates, matriculation rates for incoming freshmen have declined slightly. This is due in part to our higher admission standards which have placed us in greater competition with the largest and wealthiest public institutions in the state. Thus far, our transfer matriculation rates have remained stable, but increased competition from other universities is expected in the coming years. For example, Texas A&M recently announced that they would like to significantly increase the size of their community college transfer group—a move designed to improve their campus diversity. Such strategies indicate that we must redouble our efforts to maintain or improve our matriculation rate.
**Measure #2:** Annually Texas State will demonstrate an increase in the retention rate for new Black/African-American and Hispanic/Latino freshmen to 78 percent and new Black/African-American and Hispanic/Latino transfer students to 80 percent.

**Data and Analysis:**

As Table 4 shows, the first year retention rate for students at Texas State has remained stable, averaging between 76-78 percent for freshmen and 81-83 percent for transfers over the past four years. The retention rate for Hispanic/Latino freshmen is presently at 75 percent and it is 82 percent and 84 percent for Black/African-American and Asian/Pacific Islander students respectively.

Reaching the overall freshman target of 78 percent will require additional institutional efforts to address the transition to college life. New retention efforts being led by the Division of Student Affairs and the Division of Academic Affairs are already taking shape. The introduction of new merit scholarships for 2007-2008 will attract additional high ability students who will, in turn, have positive impact on future retention and graduation rates. The implementation of a summer bridge program for at-risk freshmen is another example of these efforts.

First-year retention rates for transfer students are excellent, averaging well over 80 percent, but even here, efforts are underway to improve these outcomes.

If we succeed in improving our retention efforts, we will impact our graduation rates. The six-year graduation rate is, in many respects, the defining measure of institutional effectiveness for the *Closing the Gaps* initiative in Texas. As Table 5 demonstrates, Texas State has one of the highest graduation rates in the state, but by strengthening our retention efforts, further improvement is possible.

**Measure #3:** Annually, Texas State will make substantial progress towards achieving HSI status.

**Data and Analysis:**

In recent years, we have succeeded in increasing the size of our Hispanic/Latino prospect and applicant pools. This has allowed us to increase the number of acceptances, which has resulted in an increase in the number of matriculants. As Table 6 illustrates, we are making marked progress toward achieving HSI status.

**Challenges:**

1. Changing demographics in Texas will make it difficult to achieve our goal of controlled, but sustained enrollment growth.

2. Increased competition from in-state and out-of-state institutions is growing in our state’s major population centers. The state’s two largest institutions have deployed admissions and financial aid staff across the state in several regional centers. Texas A&M, for example, has 40 full-time staff spread across the state. Out-of-state institutions such as Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Ohio State, Arkansas, LSU, Auburn and Alabama have staff and, in some cases, offices in Dallas and Houston.

3. While Hispanic/Latino enrollment in K-12 is growing, we are faced with several challenges. First, Hispanic/Latino students have a higher high school and college drop-out rate than other groups. Second, a large percentage of these students are first-generation to college and do not
have a good understanding of the value of a four-year degree or seeking that degree in a residential setting. Third, many of the families in this group have limited incomes, which may make community colleges a more attractive choice. Finally, while we will undoubtedly see increasing numbers of students coming to us from the community colleges, the fact remains that the percentage of community college students who complete a four-year degree is relatively small.

4. Rising college costs impact college attendance and completion rates.

5. The availability of classes is critical to student retention and completion.

6. Adequate housing, parking, and other student services directly impact student outcomes. Providing these services for a growing student population presents staffing, programming, and facility challenges.

Suggestions:

1. Develop need-based grants/scholarships for students.

2. Establish a regional office in Houston.

3. Add a second admission counselor in Dallas/Ft. Worth.

4. Increase out-of-state recruitment efforts.

5. Develop a summer bridge program to help “at risk” PAS students make successful transition to academic life here.

6. Continue to increase faculty and academic facilities for departments with growing enrollments.

7. Meet the housing, parking and other student services needs of a growing student body. Evaluate policies, procedures and facilities.

8. Implement targeted retention activities.

9. Through internal marketing, build institutional pride among students, faculty and staff.