

Aspire
Access
Achieve

In School Partnerships

From Practice to Evaluation

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El Paso, Texas

- 750,000 residents
- 6th largest city in Texas, 22nd largest in U.S.
- Across the border from Juarez, Mexico
- 80% Hispanic
- Southern most point of the Rocky Mountains in the U.S.



- Combined population of over 2,000,000
- El Paso is 81% Hispanic
- Fifth poorest congressional district in the U.S.

Major Educational Institutions

- The University of Texas at El Paso
- El Paso Community College
- 12 Independent School Districts

UTEP

- Over 21, 000 students, established in 1814
- UTEP is the largest university in the U.S. with a majority Mexican-American student population (about 75%)
- It is the only such university to be classified as a Research University by the Carnegie Foundation
- 86 undergraduate degree, 65 master's degrees and 17 doctoral degrees

EPCC

- Over 30,000 students, established in 1969
- Five campuses and classrooms on Fort Bliss
- Fastest growing community college in the Texas and the largest grantor of associate degrees to Hispanic students in the nation



- 43 Technical disciplines
- 24 Academic disciplines

Independent School Districts

- 12 independent school districts ranging from the largest at over 63,000 students at 94 campuses to 382 students at 4 campuses
- Approximately 187,000 students in the region
- 30% student Limited English Proficient, 66% Low Income

Highest Educational Attainment

	25 years or older with a high school diploma	25 years or older with a bachelor's degree
El Paso	70.3 %	18.9%
Texas	79.2 %	25.1%
U.S.	84.5%	27.4%



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- Infrastructure
 - Themes / Issues
 - Assessment
 - Future
 - Lessons



El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence - 1991

Presidents of UTEP & EPCC

Superintendents of the 3 largest ISDs

Presidents of the 3 Chambers of Commerce

Mayor

<http://www.epcae.org>

Infrastructure

College Readiness Initiative

- Initial Charge: Placement Testing
- Current Charge:
 - Communicate information about College Readiness to all stakeholders in Region XIX
 - Facilitate access to higher education for all Region XIX students

Reason for not Completing a Program in Higher Education

Major reason	%
I really need to work full-time, and I don't think I could work and go to school at the same time	56%
I needed to go to work and make money	54%
I have family commitments	53%
I just couldn't afford the tuition and fees	31%
I still would not be able to afford college (even if a grant covered tuition and books)	26%
No school near me has classes that fit my schedule	17%
I didn't have enough time for my family	16%

Barriers to Success in First Year of College

Issues related to transition from high school to university

- Difference in interaction styles of college instructors
- Increased academic workload compared to high school
- Feeling lost in a bigger campus
- Not being prepared in high school about how different college was going to be
- Larger class size

Issues related to family

- Having big families and having to share responsibilities
- No suitable place to study at home
- Lack of support or encouragement from parents

Issues related to \$\$, life

- Financing for College
- Lack of Childcare
- Transportation issues: cost of fuel, time to cross the U.S.-Mexico border and cost of parking permit
- Medical/health issues

Access

Aspirational Access

- Build a college going culture in a region with a high first generation population

Academic Access

- Create College Readiness Programming to give area students the academic skills necessary for success in higher education

Financial Access

- Develop resources for a community with a household median income well below the national average


Physical Access

- Provide alternative pathways as well as remove barriers to degree completion

EPCC UTEP Articulation Committee

- Course credit transfer, 2 + 2 degree plans
- Reverse Transfer, BAAS
- Alignment





Other Relationships/Programs

- Joint Admission
- Common Student ID number
- Financial Aid Consortium
- EPCC / UTEP Academic Advisors' conference
- Early College High School
- Grants

Themes / Issues

- Those four categories of access
- Excellence for all
- All levels of participation – top to bottom
- Flexibility
- In it for the long haul



*Talent is everywhere,
opportunity is not.*

Evaluation / Assessment

- Formative & Summative
- Qualitative & Quantitative
- Direct & Indirect

Easy? No.

Necessary? Yes.

Fox Fine Arts

101
Hazen Court & Fox
Ball Room
Ball Library
1014 1st
Hazen & Ball, Fox Fine Arts
1014

Future


- **Changing Populations**
 - **Increased military presence**
 - **Non-traditional becoming Traditional**
- **Economic Challenges – doing more with less – for us and our students**

GEOLOGICAL SCIENCES

A photograph of a two-story building with a stone base and a brick upper level. The building has several windows and is set against a clear blue sky. The building is surrounded by some vegetation and a stone wall in the foreground.

Lessons Learned

- **Every Level / Every Year**
- **Expect ups and downs**
- **Always put the students' needs first and the answers come more easily**
- **The work is never finished**
- **Institutionalize the commitment**

A photograph of a classical building's silhouette against a vibrant sunset sky. The sky transitions from deep blue at the top to bright orange and red near the horizon. The building's features, including a prominent column and a pediment, are rendered in dark black. The email address 'dekal@utep.edu' is overlaid in white text on the right side of the building's silhouette.

dekal@utep.edu