

Knocking at the College Door Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity, 1992-2022

INDIANA

At over 3.3 million, the nation's graduating class of 2007-08 is projected to be history's largest. In fact, 2007-08 will mark the last year in an era of continuous growth in the nation's production of high school graduates, a period that reaches back to 1994. Over that time, the number of graduates swelled by 35.7 percent. In 2008-09, however, our country will begin a protracted period during which its production of high school graduates is expected to stagnate, assuming existing patterns persist. The number of graduates nationally will dip slightly over the next several years before growth resumes at a slower pace around 2015. Ultimately, projections indicate that between 2004-05 (the last year of available actual data) and 2021-22, the number of high school graduates will grow by approximately 265,000, or 8.6 percent.

The national data obscure significant variations in this picture at the regional and state levels, however. Regionally, in the decade leading up to 2004-05, the number of high school graduates grew the fastest in the West at 34 percent, with the South growing by 23.5 percent, the Northeast by 20.7 percent, and the Midwest by 14.2 percent. But the regions face very different futures in the years to come. The South will see the most growth in its production of high school graduates, at about 9 percent by 2014-15; and the West's numbers will climb by 7.1 percent. But the number of graduates produced in the Northeast and the Midwest will decline – by 6.1 and 3 percent, respectively.

As with the national view, the regional picture masks considerable variation at the state level (Figure 1). Indiana produced

Figure 1. Percent Change in Graduates from Public and Nonpublic High Schools Between 2004-05 and 2014-15

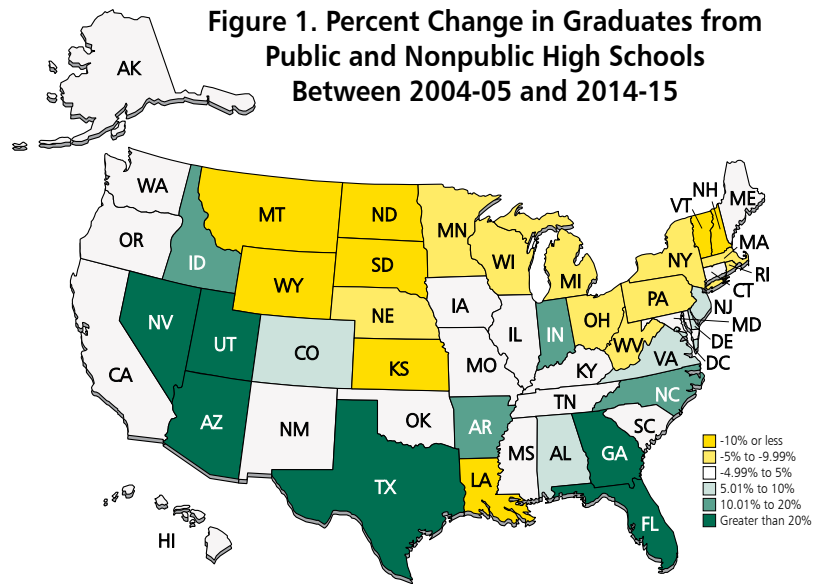
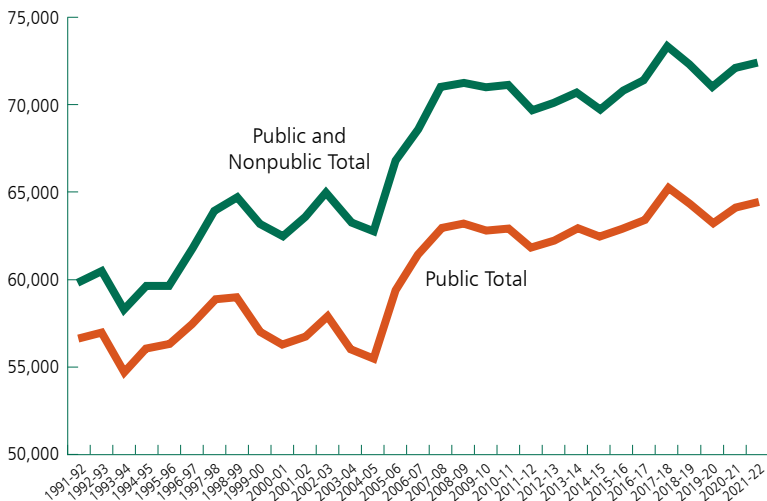


Figure 2. Indiana High School Graduates 1991-92 to 2004-05 (Actual), 2005-06 to 2021-22 (Projected)



over 3,100 more graduates in 2004-05 than it did a decade earlier, an increase of 5.2 percent. Projections indicate that the state will actually experience accelerated growth in its production of high school graduates in the years ahead, assuming existing patterns of high school completion and migration continue. The state projects to have about 7,000 more high school graduates a decade after 2004-05, an increase of more than 11 percent, although the growth is expected to be most rapid through 2007-08.

Indiana experienced uneven growth in its production of high school graduates between 1991-92 and 2004-05, the last year for which actual data were available (Figure 2). That year, 55,444 students graduated from public high schools in the state, a number that was 1,186 lower than in 1991-92, representing a slowdown of 2.1 percent. Nonpublic schools in Indiana contributed an additional estimated 7,318 graduates in 2004-05, and their production level is expected to grow modestly in the years ahead. Of the state's total number of high school

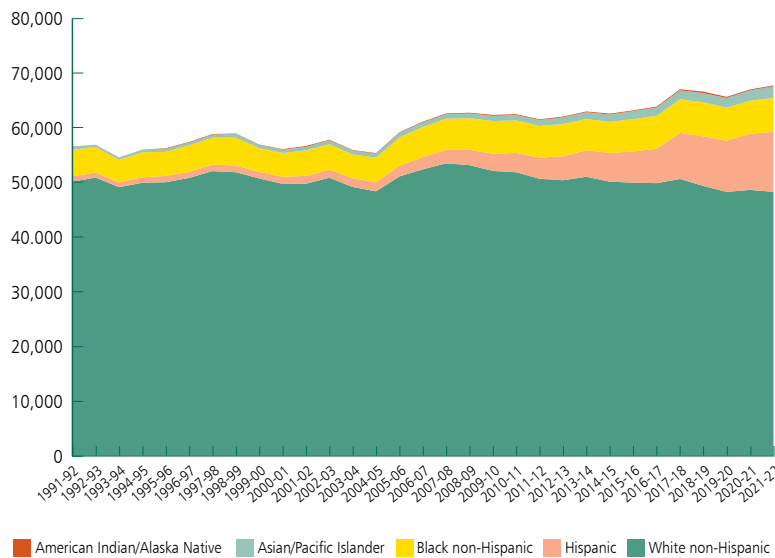
graduates each year, nonpublic schools produced an estimated 10 percent, on average.

However, between 2004-05 and 2007-08, Indiana's production of public high school graduates is expected to increase dramatically, adding over 7,500 in that short time (13.5 percent). But in the near future, Indiana will join much of the rest of the nation as it enters a new period characterized by much more stagnant growth or declines in the production of high school graduates. After peaking at over 63,165 in 2008-09, the state will begin a brief period of stable production in the number of public high school graduates through 2014-15, assuming a continuation of existing patterns of enrollment, progression, and completion. Thereafter and through the remaining projected years, annual changes in the number of high school graduates are forecast to be relatively volatile, growing considerably through 2017-18 before dipping again.

The racial/ethnic composition of Indiana's public high school graduating classes will continue to show diversification over the coming decade and beyond (Figure 3). In 1994-95, White non-Hispanics accounted for 89.2 percent of the graduates from public high schools. A decade later, that proportion had dropped slightly to 87.3 percent. But the next decade will see accelerating declines in the share of public high school graduates in the state who are White non-Hispanic, with projections indicating it will reach 80.1 percent by 2014-15.

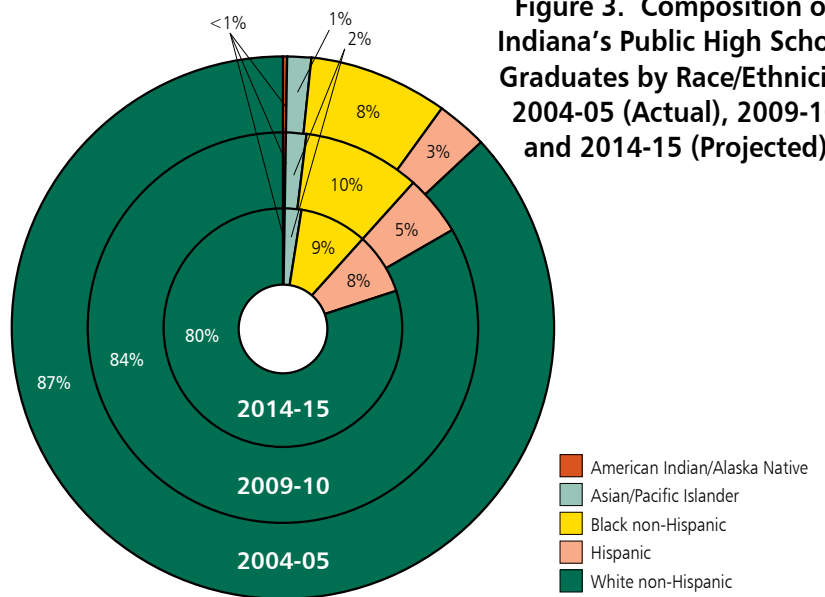
These changes are roughly comparable to the experience of states all over the country. Although the magnitude may differ substantially, the nation as a whole is undergoing sweeping changes in the racial/ethnic composition of its population. In Indiana, as in other states, the big changes are the result of rapid growth in the number of Hispanic high school students and graduates. While immigration has contributed to the growth of these populations, signs of the continuing demographic shift are evident in data showing a dramatic increase in the number of Hispanic births, which is due in part to a higher fertility rate among Hispanic women. Unlike other states, however, Indiana is not expected to see the number of White non-Hispanic graduates diminish. Projections indicate growth in all other racial/ethnic groups, as well.

Figure 4. Indiana High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity 1991-92 to 2004-05 (Actual), 2005-06 to 2021-22 (Projected)



Hispanic graduates from public schools in the state numbered 1,636 in 2004-05, but within a decade they are projected to number about 5,250, an increase of more than 220 percent (Figure 4). The number of Asian/Pacific Islander graduates is projected to climb by about 600 above its 2004-05 level of 719 (82 percent). Growth is also expected among graduates of Black non-Hispanic descent, whose numbers will rise by about 26 percent above the 4,549 who graduated in 2004-05. Meanwhile, the number of White non-Hispanic graduates is forecast to rise by nearly 1,800 (3.7 percent) from its 2004-05 level of 48,421. Finally, the number of American Indian/Alaska Native graduates is also expected to see an increase over the same timeframe, though their numbers will remain relatively small. They will see growth of about 40 percent above the 119 who graduated in 2004-05.

Figure 3. Composition of Indiana's Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity 2004-05 (Actual), 2009-10 and 2014-15 (Projected)



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