

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

MARYLAND

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).

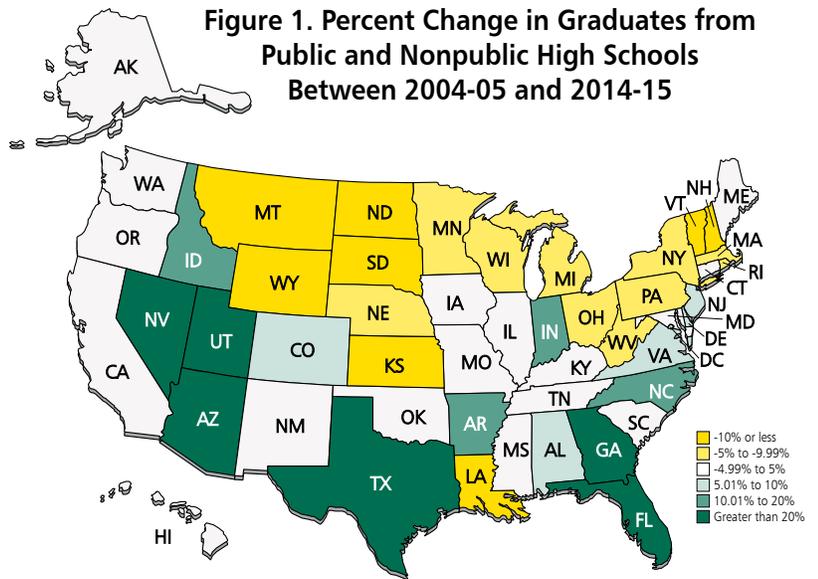
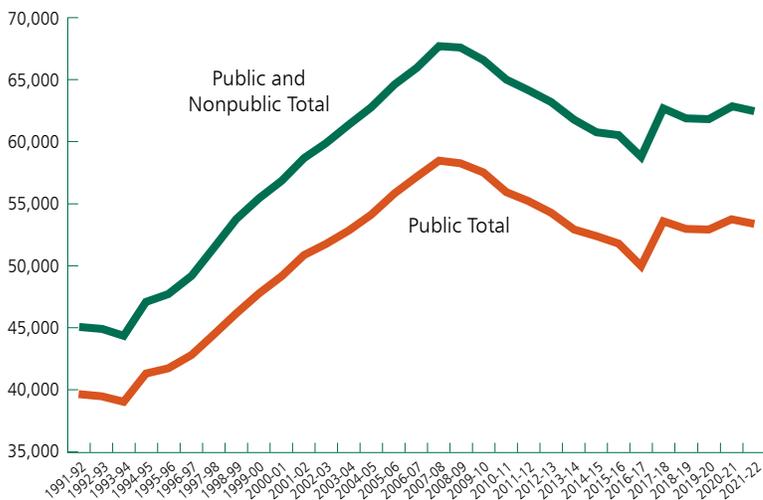


Figure 1. Percent Change in Graduates from Public and Nonpublic High Schools Between 2004-05 and 2014-15

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



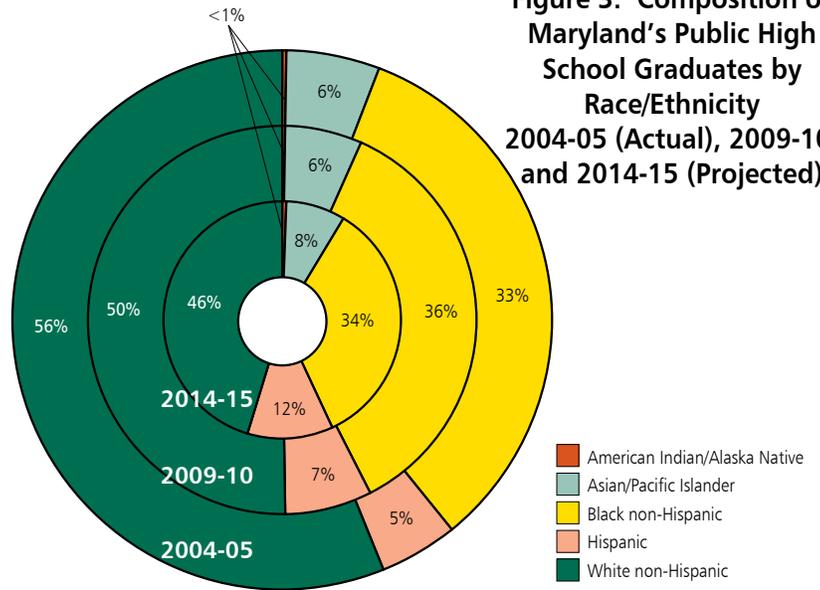
Maryland produced about 15,700 more graduates in 2004-05 than it did a decade earlier, an increase of 33.3 percent. Projections indicate that Maryland's production of graduates will continue growing for the near future before undergoing a period of decline. Assuming existing patterns of high school completion and migration continue, the state projects to produce over 2,000 fewer high school graduates a decade after 2004-05, a decrease of about 3 percent.

Maryland was among the states with rapid growth in its production of high school graduates between 1991-92 and 2004-05, the most recent year of actual data from public schools (Figure 2). In 2004-05, 54,170 students graduated from public high schools in Maryland, a number that included 14,450 more graduates than were produced in 1991-92, representing growth of 36.4 percent. Nonpublic schools in the state graduated an estimated 8,669 in 2004-05, over 3,300 more than in 1991-92. Of the state's total number of high school graduates each year throughout the actual and projected timeframe,

nonpublic schools produced an estimated 14 percent, on average.

However, along with much of the rest of the nation, Maryland is poised to enter a new period characterized by much more stagnant growth in the production of high school graduates. After reaching a peak in 2007-08 at 58,484, the state will see its number of public high school graduates drop each year through 2016-17, assuming a continuation of existing patterns of enrollment, progression, and completion. Between 2004-05 and 2007-08, the number of public high school graduates is forecast to climb by 8 percent, but between 2007-08 and 2016-17, it is projected to slide by about 14.5 percent. Thereafter, the number of public high school graduates is expected to return to its 2004-05 level and remain there throughout the rest of the projected period.

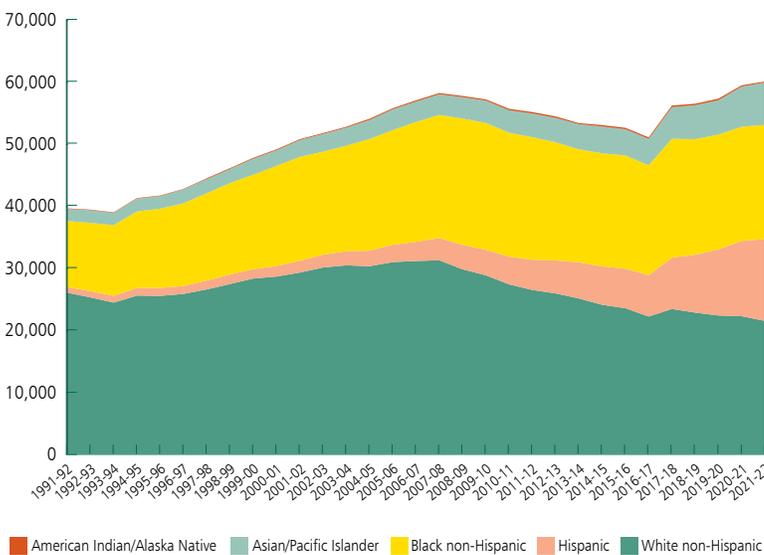
Figure 3. Composition of Maryland's Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity 2004-05 (Actual), 2009-10, and 2014-15 (Projected)



The racial/ethnic composition of Maryland's public high school graduating classes will continue to show substantial diversification over the coming decade and beyond (Figure 3). In 1994-95, White non-Hispanics accounted for 62 percent of the graduates from public high schools. A decade later, that proportion had fallen to 56.1 percent. The next decade will see further declines in the share of public high school graduates who are White non-Hispanic. The state's public high school graduating class is forecast to become "majority-minority" (when minority graduates outnumber White non-Hispanic graduates) in 2010-11. By 2014-15, the proportion of White non-Hispanic graduates will be approximately 45.5 percent.

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 Maryland, as in other states, the big changes are the result of rapid growth in the number of Hispanic high school students and graduates, coupled with declines in the number of White non-Hispanic graduates. While international immigration has contributed to the growth of the Hispanic population, 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.

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



Hispanic graduates from public schools in Maryland numbered 2,509 in 2004-05, but within a decade they are projected to number 6,176, an increase of 146.2 percent (Figure 4). Growth is also expected among graduates from other minority groups. Projections for 2014-15 show that the number of Black non-Hispanic graduates will increase by 1.3 percent above its 2004-05 level of 18,001 (a modest number that reflects that this group will give back gains reaching 13 percent in the first years of the projections). And the number of Asian/Pacific Islander graduates will climb by about 40 percent from 3,074. Meanwhile, the number of White non-Hispanic graduates is forecast to decline from 30,384 to about 24,186 over the same span (a 20.4 percent decrease). Finally, the number of American Indian/Alaska Native graduates will fluctuate over the course of the decade, with their numbers in 2014-15 exceeding the 2004-05 level by 40 (a 20 percent increase).

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