

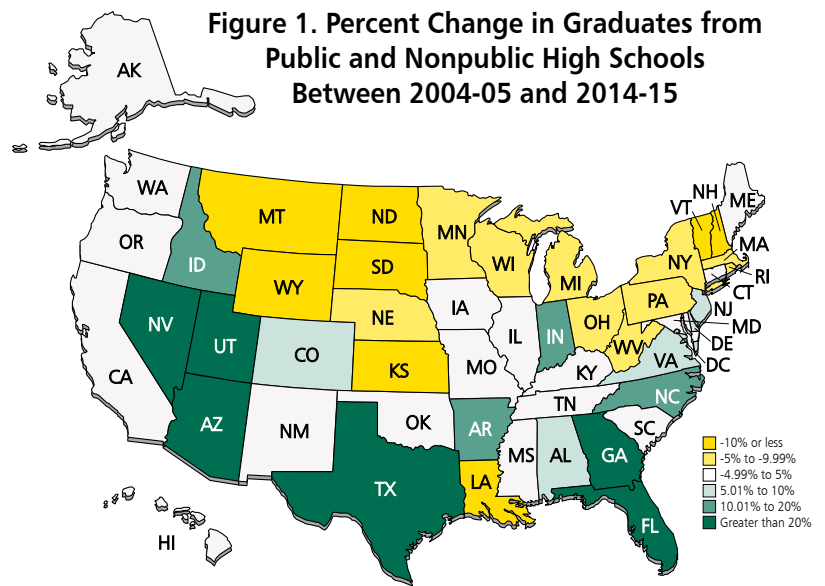
# Knocking at the College Door Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity, 1992-2022

## TEXAS

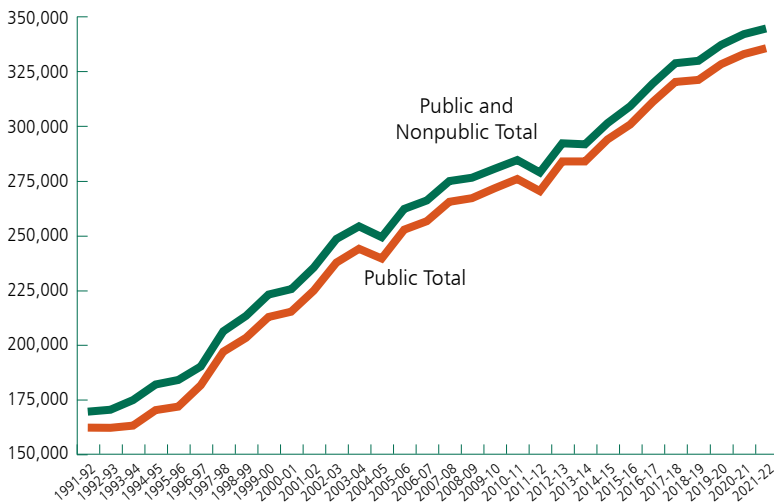
At over 3.3 million, the nation's graduating class of 2007-08 is projected to be history's largest. In fact, 2007-08 will mark the last year in an era of continuous growth in the nation's production of high school graduates, a period that reaches back to 1994. Over that time, the number of graduates 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 2. Texas High School Graduates 1991-92 to 2004-05 (Actual), 2005-06 to 2021-22 (Projected)**



Texas produced nearly 67,400 more graduates in 2004-05 than it did a decade earlier, an increase of 37 percent. Projections indicate that Texas will continue growing rapidly at a pace that exceeds that of nearly every other state. Assuming existing patterns of high school completion and migration continue, the state projects to produce over 52,000 more high school graduates in the decade after 2004-05, an increase of over 20 percent.

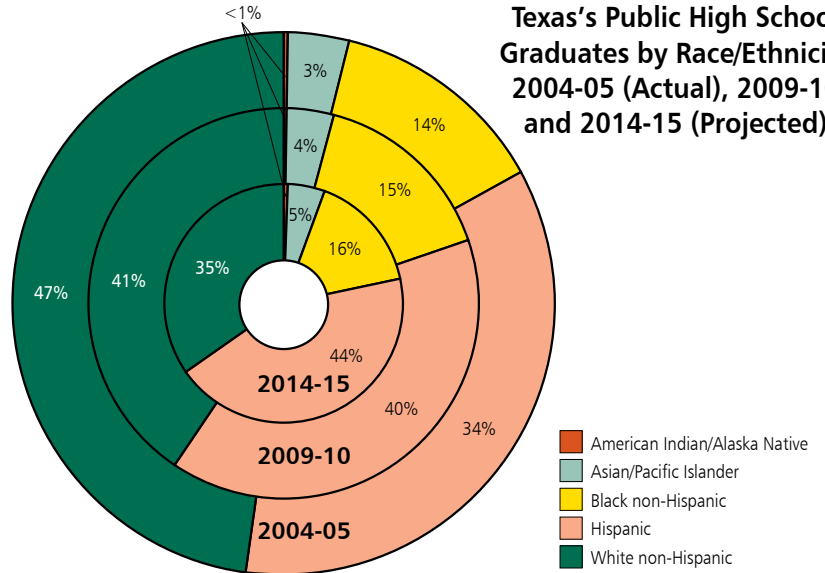
Texas was among the states with extremely rapid growth in its production of high school graduates between 1991-92 and 2004-05, the most recent year of actual data from public schools (Figure 2). In 2004-05, 239,717 students graduated from public high schools in the state, 77,447 more graduates than were produced in 1991-92, representing growth of 47.7 percent. Nonpublic schools in the state added an estimated 9,800 graduates in 2004-05, which was about 2,300 more than graduated in 1991-92. However, projections indicate production of nonpublic graduates will decrease in the years ahead.

Unlike much of the rest of the nation, Texas is not projected to see its rapid growth in the production of high school graduates stagnate or decline. Instead, the state's growth curve is expected to continue mostly uninterrupted throughout the projected period, and there appears to be no end in sight. The rapid increases will likely strain the state's capacity to provide equal opportunity to education, especially at the postsecondary level.

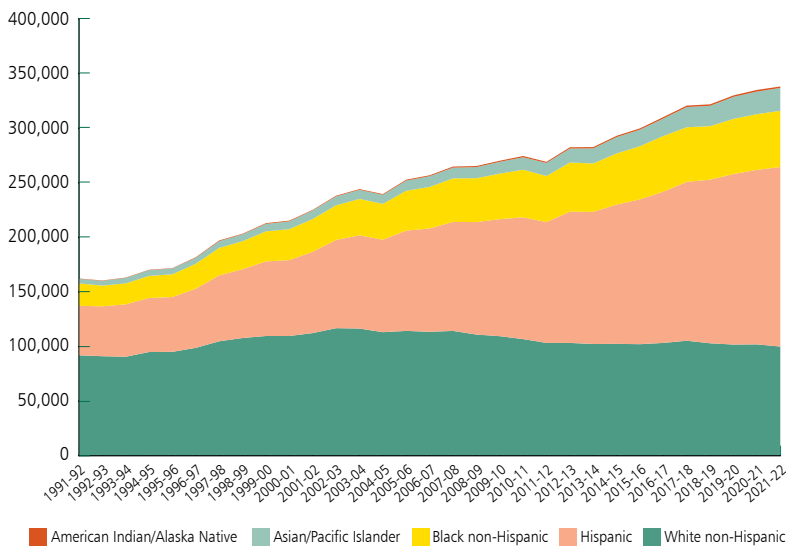
The racial/ethnic composition of Texas's public high school graduating classes will continue to show substantial diversification over the coming decade and beyond (Figure 3). Already a state where the public high school graduating class was "majority-minority" (where minority graduates outnumber White non-Hispanic graduates) in 1994-95, the state will see the proportion of graduates who are from minority backgrounds continue to climb. In 1994-95, White non-Hispanics accounted for 55.8 percent of the graduates from public high schools. A decade later, that proportion had dropped to 47.2 percent. By 2014-15, it will reach 35 percent. Assuming no changes in existing trends, Hispanics are projected to overtake White non-Hispanics as the single largest group in the public high schools' graduating class in 2010-11.

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 Texas, 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 decreases in the number of White non-Hispanics. 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 3. Composition of Texas's Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity 2004-05 (Actual), 2009-10 and 2014-15 (Projected)**



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



Hispanic graduates from public schools in Texas numbered 84,566 in 2004-05, but within a decade they are projected to number more than 127,500, an increase of greater than 50 percent (Figure 4). This is not even the fastest rate of growth among racial/ethnic groups in Texas. The number of Asian/Pacific Islander graduates is projected to climb by 78 percent; and the number of American Indian/Alaska Native graduates is projected to grow by more than 65 percent over the same period. But because the totals of these groups in 2004-05 were relatively low, at 8,363 and 764 graduates, respectively, their growth, though explosive, does not have as significant an impact as that of the Hispanic population. Black non-Hispanic growth will also be rapid, as the number of graduates from that group is projected to climb by 43 percent above its 2004-05 level of 32,811. Meanwhile, White non-Hispanics will likely see substantial decreases in their numbers over the same timeframe, with projections showing a drop-off from 113,213 in 2004-05 to about 102,400 in 2014-15, a 9.5 percent decline.

For more information, contact: Dolores Mize, Vice President, Public Policy and Research, 303.541.0221, [dmize@wiche.edu](mailto:dmize@wiche.edu); or Brian Prescott, Senior Research Analyst, Public Policy and Research, 303.541.0255, [bprescott@wiche.edu](mailto:bprescott@wiche.edu). To view the full publication or to place an order for a bound copy, visit our website at [www.wiche.edu/policy](http://www.wiche.edu/policy).