

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

NEW YORK

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).

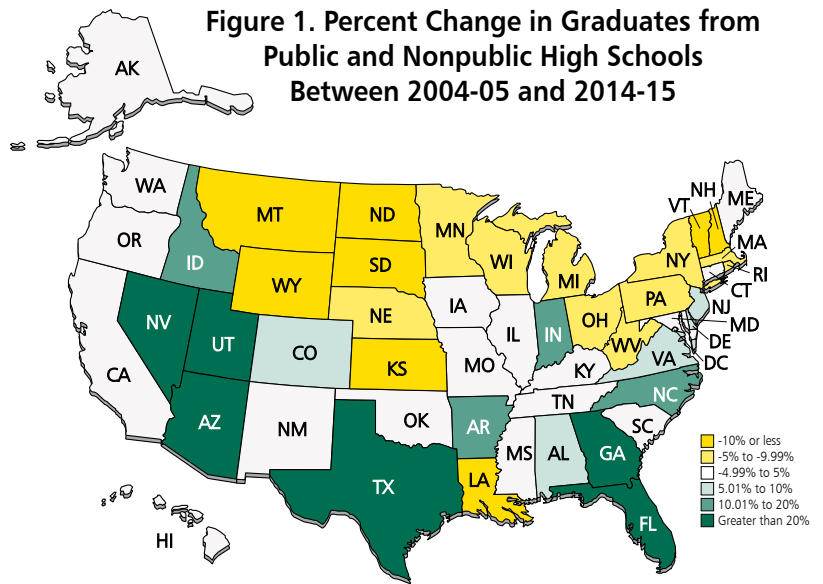
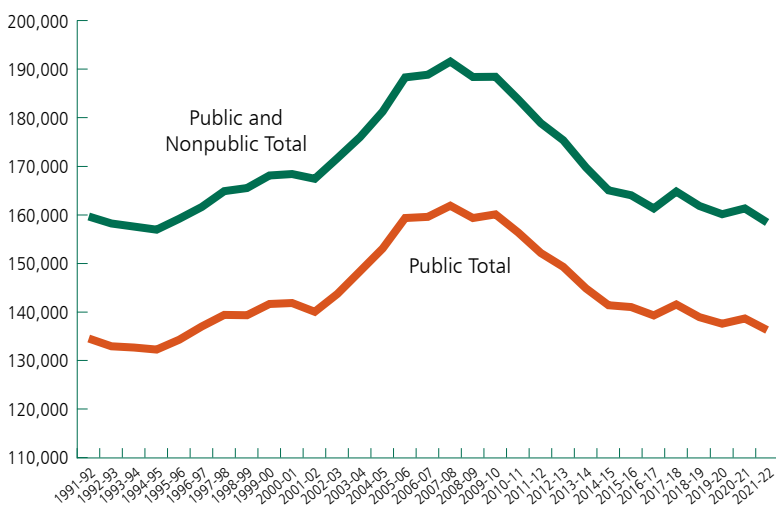


Figure 2. New York High School Graduates 1991-92 to 2004-05 (Actual), 2005-06 to 2021-22 (Projected)



New York produced about 24,300 more graduates in 2004-05 than it did a decade earlier, an increase of about 15.5 percent. Projections indicate that the state's number of graduates will grow though 2007-08 before beginning a sustained and substantial decline, assuming existing patterns of high school completion and migration continue. New York projects to produce more than 10,000 more high school graduates in 2007-08 than it did in 2004-05, an increase equal to about 5.6 percent.

New York saw mostly steady growth in its production of high school graduates between 1994-95 and 2004-05, the most recent year of actual data from public schools (Figure 2). In 2004-05, 153,203 students graduated from public high schools in the state, 20,802 more graduates than were produced in 1994-95, representing growth of 15.7 percent. Nonpublic schools in the state added an estimated 28,185 in 2004-05, which itself was about 3,500 more than graduated in 1994-95. Of New York's total number of high school graduates each

year, nonpublic schools produced an estimated 15 percent, on average.

However, along with much of the rest of the nation, New York is poised to enter a new period characterized by much more stagnant growth or declines in the production of high school graduates. After reaching a peak in 2007-08 at almost 162,000, the state will see a mostly uninterrupted decline in the number of public high school graduates lasting through 2016-17, assuming a continuation of existing patterns of enrollment, progression, and completion. During that timeframe, the number of high school graduates is forecast to drop by nearly 22,600 (13.9 percent). Subsequently, projections indicate that production will hold steadier through 2021-22.

The racial/ethnic composition of New York's public high school graduating classes will continue to diversify over the coming decade and beyond (Figure 3). In 1994-95, White non-Hispanics accounted for 69.7 percent of the graduates from the state's public high schools. A decade later, that proportion had dropped slightly to 65.4 percent. By 2014-15, the proportion of White non-Hispanics will have fallen to about 60.4 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 New York, 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 a shrinking number of White non-Hispanics in the educational pipeline. While immigration has contributed to the growth of the Hispanic population, signs of the continuing demographic shift is 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. New York's graduates of Asian/Pacific Islander descent are also projected to add substantially to their number of graduates.

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

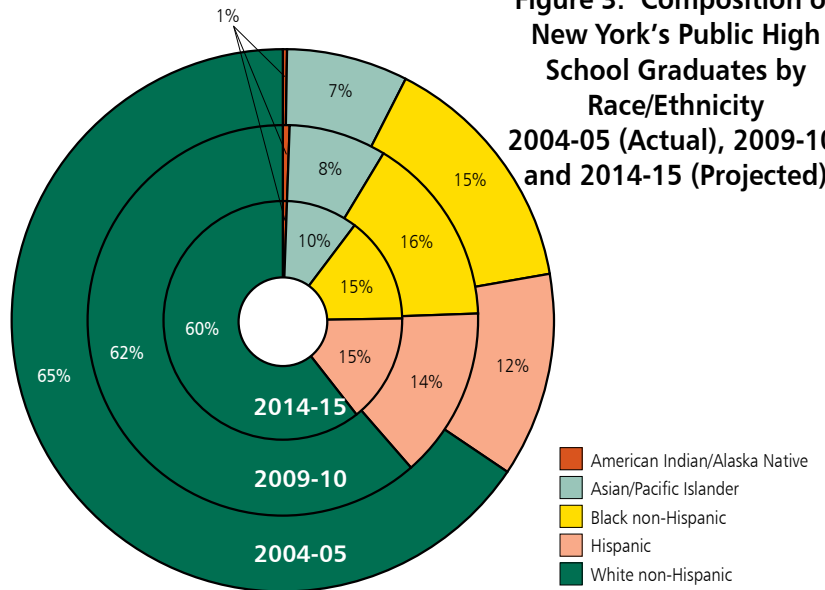
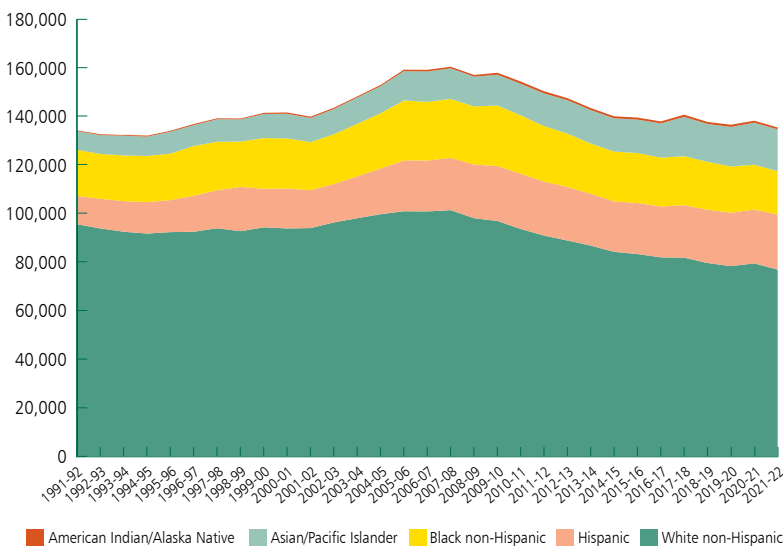


Figure 4. New York High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity 1991-92 to 2004-05 (Actual), 2005-06 to 2021-22 (Projected)



Hispanic graduates from public schools in the state numbered 18,761 in 2004-05. Within a decade, Hispanic graduates are projected to increase by around 10 percent to about 20,649 (Figure 4). Growth among Asians/Pacific Islanders will also be considerable over the same time span, rising by 23.4 percent over their 2004-05 level of 11,064. American Indians/Alaska Natives, who accounted for 520 graduates in 2004-05, are projected to see growth of about 58 percent over the same span, though their share of the total graduating cohort will remain small. Meanwhile, the number of White non-Hispanic graduates will plummet by about 15.4 percent from its 2004-05 level of 100,188. Black non-Hispanics, who accounted for 22,670 graduates in 2004-05, will see initial growth evaporate, and by 2014-15 their number will have dipped by more than 2,200 (10 percent).

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