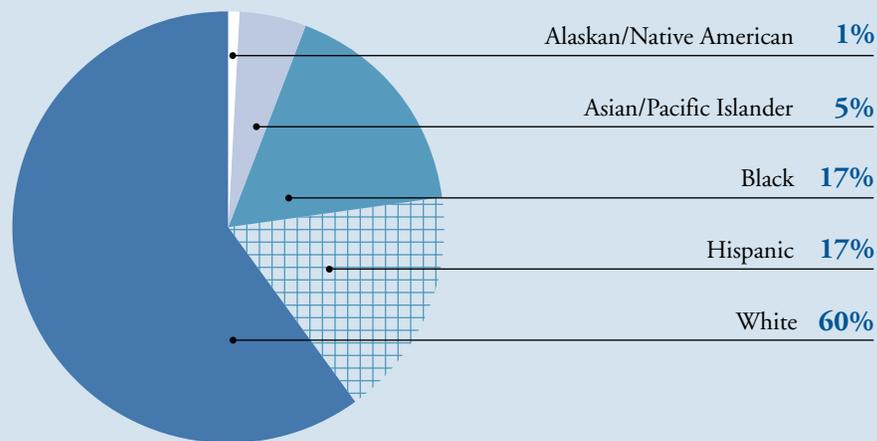


High Schools in the United States

The Students

- In 2004–2005, **14,495,524** students attended public high schools in the United States (Sable & Hill, 2006).
- In 2001–2002, **861,875** limited English proficient (LEP) students attended public high schools in the United States (Kindler, 2002).
- **LEP students are the fastest growing student population** in the United States (Cosentino de Cohen, Deterding, & Clewell, 2005).
- The majority of LEP students (**79.2%**) **speak Spanish** as their native language (Kindler, 2002).
- In 2000, **56%** of secondary LEP students were **born in the United States** (Capps et al., 2005).

Demographic Distribution of High School Students, 2005–2006



(Source: NCES, 2007a)

Students With Disabilities

In 2007, **2,138,487** students, ages 14–18 years, were diagnosed with a disability and provided federally mandated services for students with disabilities (Data Accountability Center, 2008).

In 2005, **2,161,387** students, ages 14–18 years, were served under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (Data Accountability Center, 2006).

A considerable gap in achievement in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies exists between youth with disabilities and their peers in the general education population (Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Levine, & Garza, 2006).

Nine percent of youth with disabilities have attended a 4-year college since leaving high school. Students in the general education population are about 4.5 times as likely as youth with disabilities to currently be taking courses in 4-year colleges (Wagner et al., 2006).

Table 1. Percentage of High School Graduates and Those Who Took the AP Test and Mean AP Test Score, by Race/Ethnicity, 2007

Race/Ethnicity	Percentage of student population who graduated, 2007	Percentage of high school graduates who took the AP test, 2007	Mean score across all subjects in the AP Test, 2007
White/Caucasian	64.0%	61.7%	2.95
Black/African American	14.0%	7.4%	1.91
Hispanic/Latino	14.6%	14.0%	2.48
Asian/Pacific Islander	5.5%	10.4%	3.05
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.1%	0.6%	2.39
All students			2.83

(Source: The College Board, 2008b)

In 2005–2006, 57% of students with disabilities exited high school with a regular diploma, an increase from 43% in 1996–1997. Over this same period, the percentage of students with disabilities who dropped out of high school decreased from 46% to 26% (Planty et al., 2008).

In 2005–2006, among students with specific learning disabilities, those ages 14 years and older with emotional disturbance dropped out of school more often than any other group (Planty et al., 2008).

High School Student Achievement

- In 2005, **39%** of 12th-grade students could not solve basic level mathematical problems that require the direct application of concepts and procedures in familiar situations. Only **2%** of 12th-grade students

could demonstrate in-depth knowledge of mathematical concepts and procedures at the advanced level (NCES, 2007b).

- Among high school graduates in 2007, **24.9%** took an AP exam in high school, compared with **18.1%** of graduates in 2002 (The College Board, 2008b).
- Among high school graduates in 2007, **15.2%** earned a score of 3 or above on at least one AP test during high school, compared with **11.7%** of graduates in 2002 (The College Board, 2008b).

The Schools

- Number of high schools, 2005–2006: **14,132** (NCES, 2008b)
- Average high school enrollment, 2005–2006: **819** (NCES, 2008a)

Table 2. Average SAT Scores Among College-Bound Seniors, by Race/Ethnicity, 2008

Race/Ethnicity	Critical Reading	Math	Writing	Combined
White/Caucasian	528	537	518	1,583
Black/African American	430	426	424	1,280
Hispanic/Latino	455	461	448	1,364
All students	502	515	494	1,511

(Source: The College Board, 2008a)

- Percentage of high schools identified as being in need of improvement, 2005–2006: **12%** (Stullich, Eisner, & McCrary, 2007)

School Funding

- *Total spending:* For fiscal year 2005, approximately **\$424,562,095,000** was spent on public education (Zhou, Honegger, & Gaviola, 2007).
- *Average amount spent per pupil:* For fiscal year 2005, **\$8,701 was spent per pupil** at the public elementary and secondary schools (Zhou et al., 2007).

High School Graduation Rate

Among all public high school students who graduated in 2005, the average freshman graduation rate was **74.7%** (Laird, Cataldi, KewalRamani, & Chapman, 2008).

In 2005–2006, students from low-income families were about **4.5 times more likely** than students from high-income families to drop out of high school (Laird et al., 2008).

On average, students from certain minority groups, such as Blacks/African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos, are at an **increased risk** of not completing high school (USDOE, NCES, 2006).

High School Graduation Requirements

In 2005, 37 states required public high school students to take at least 20 credits of coursework to graduate, while eight states required students to take fewer than 20 credits. In the remaining five states, credit requirements are set by school districts and local education agencies (Planty, Provasnik, & Daniel, 2007).

Twenty-three states require students to take and pass exit exams before receiving high school diplomas; three more states are adopting such a requirement by 2012 (Zabala, Minnici, McMurrer, & Briggs, 2008).

Sixty-eight percent of public high school students attend schools in a state that requires students to pass an exit exam to graduate from high school (Zabala et al., 2008).

As of 2008:

- **Eighteen states** that require exit exams provide alternative paths to graduation for general education students.
- All **23 states** that require exit exams provide alternative paths to graduation specifically for students with disabilities.
- **Three states** that require exit exams provide alternative paths to graduation specifically for LEP students.
- **Six states** require students to take college entrance exams and work readiness tests to graduate high school (Zabala et al., 2008).

Most high school exit exams are aligned with 10th-grade proficiency standards, but some are aligned with 8th- or 9th-grade proficiency standards (USDOE, NCES, 2006).

From High School to College

The number of students entering college immediately after high school increased from **49%** in 1972 to **67%** in 2004 (Livingston, 2006).

Between 1970 and 2006, the rate at which women enrolled in college **increased more than three times the rate** at which men enrolled (Livingston, 2008).

Between 1989–1990 and 2003–2004, **minority students** accounted for **approximately half of the growth** in undergraduate degrees awarded, but gaps remain. In 2006, for example, **69%** of White students, compared with only **58%** of Hispanic students, enrolled in college immediately after high school (Livingston, 2008).

In 2002–2003, **813,000** high school students took college-level classes; **84%** did so through a dual enrollment program (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005).

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