



Knocking at the College Door

Projections of High School Graduates

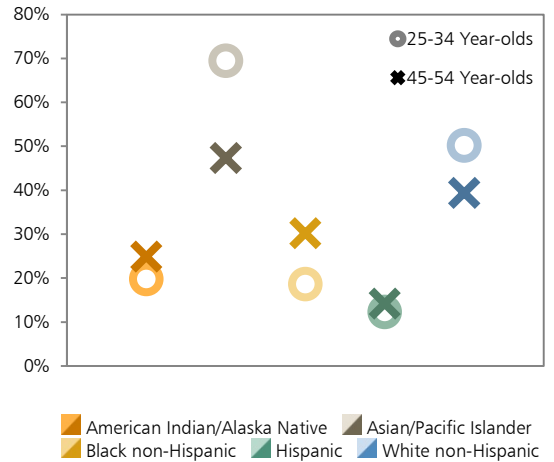
NEBRASKA

National and regional trends mask important variation among states in the supply of high school graduates. This profile provides brief indicators for Nebraska related to: current levels of educational attainment, our projections of high school graduates into the future, and two common barriers to student access and success – insufficient academic preparation and inadequate finances.

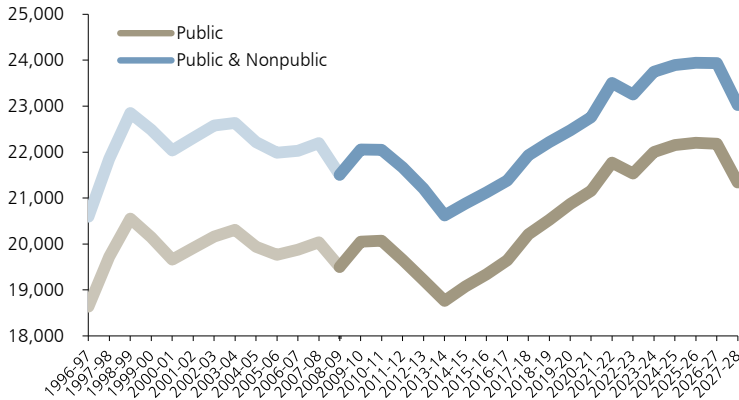
Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity¹

Workforce projections indicate there will be a growing demand for well-educated labor, which means that younger adults need to be as well as or more educated than older adults given how much longer they will need to be employed. In Nebraska between 2008 and 2010, overall 44% of younger adults (aged 25-34) had at least an associate's degree, compared to 38% of older adults (aged 45-54).

- Younger adults of White non-Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander origin have higher degree attainment rates than the state average and than their older counterparts, with 11% and 22% more young adults holding degrees than older adults, respectively for each group.
- But, younger and older adults who are American Indian/Alaska Native, Black non-Hispanic or Hispanic are less likely to have a postsecondary degree than others overall, and Hispanics of either age group have particularly low rates of degree attainment.



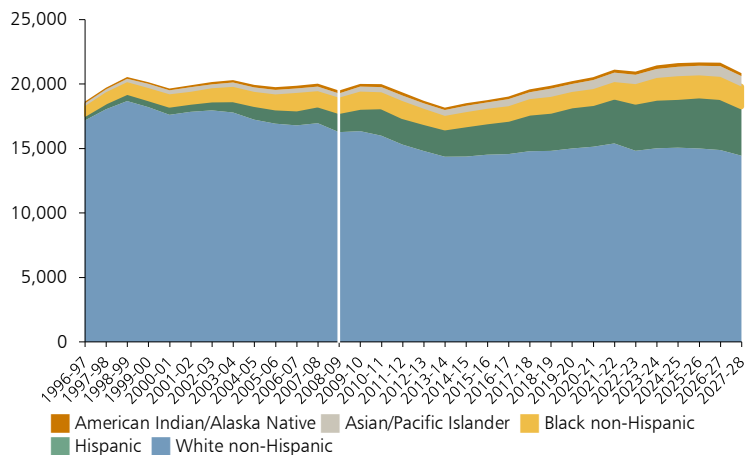
Production of High School Graduates



- Graduating class sizes in Nebraska were relatively stable at around 22,000 as the state entered the period covered by these projections.
- While it is projected to dip a bit in some years, particularly in the next several years through 2014-15, Nebraska will generally produce a steady number of graduates and even end the projections period up by almost 10%, up to 23,000 or more graduates beginning with the class of 2022.
- The number of nonpublic high school graduates from Nebraska decreases from about 2,000 in 2008-09 to about 1,600 by 2019-20, a 20% decline.

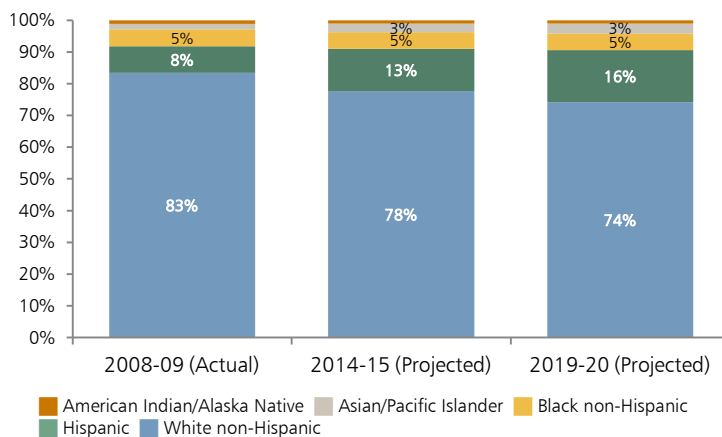
Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

- The number of White non-Hispanic graduates from Nebraska declined from about 18,700 in 1998-99 to about 16,300 in 2008-09. Our projections indicate that they will decline another 9% through 2018-19, to about 14,800 graduates, after which there will be about 15,000 White non-Hispanics graduates in most years through the end of the projections.
- Hispanics will see the largest numerical increases, doubling from about 1,600 in 2008-09 to 3,300 by 2019-20, and then increasing to about 4,000 per year in the last several projected years.
- Asian/Pacific Islanders will about double during the course of the projections, from 330 in 2008-09 to 620 by 2019-20.

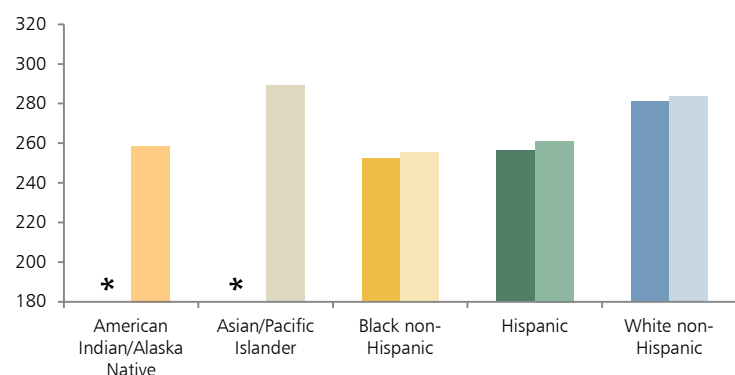


Composition of Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

- 83% of Nebraska's public graduates were White non-Hispanic in 2008-09. Projections indicate that White non-Hispanics are likely to decrease as a share of the total throughout the projections, to 74% by 2019-20 and to only about 70% by the last projected years.
- Hispanics increase rapidly as a proportion of the total, doubling from 8% of the public graduates in 2008-09 to 16% by 2019-20.
- Though a small share of the total, Asian/Pacific Islanders double from 2% in 2008-09 to 4% in the second half of the projections.
- Black non-Hispanics will be 5% to 6% of the public high school graduates most years until increasing to 7% in the last projected years.



Composite Math and Reading Scores by Race/Ethnicity²



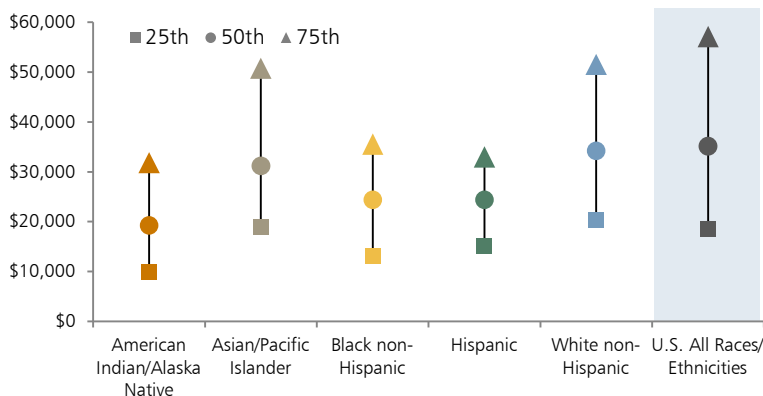
Note: Nebraska in darker shades; U.S. in lighter shades. *Reporting standards were not met and no score is available.

Academic preparation is a major factor in college access and success, and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) provides some measure of differences by race/ethnicity.

- The average composite math and reading scores for 8th graders in Nebraska in 2011 were 252 for Black non-Hispanics, 256 for Hispanics and 281 for White non-Hispanics, a 25 to 30 point difference between White non-Hispanics and the others. (Scores were not available for American Indian/Alaska Natives or Asian/Pacific Islanders.)
- The average score for eighth graders of each race/ethnicity was generally about the national average for the group, for the available scores.

Annual Income by Race/Ethnicity³

A second major factor is access to the financial resources needed to pay for college. The statewide median income among working-age adults in Nebraska from 2006 to 2010 was \$32,244, compared to \$35,147 for the nation. Precise estimates are difficult to come by for smaller populations, so comparisons between groups can be problematic. But, the estimates suggest that underrepresented populations in Nebraska earn considerably less than the statewide median (and than White non-Hispanics), with median incomes for American Indians/Alaska Natives, Hispanics and Black non-Hispanics being only between 60% to 76% of the statewide median at \$24,400 or less.



Projections of high school graduates are from WICHE, *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates*, 2012. 1996-97 to 2008-09 are actual reported graduates and 2009-10 to 2027-28 are projections. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems supplied the data used in the first and last figures. State-level estimates for those figures are only reported for a racial/ethnic group when the coefficients of variation for all estimates do not exceed 25% and sample size is 50 or greater. Readers should understand that estimates for small samples can be imprecise due to large standard errors. WICHE provides relevant data tables at <http://wiche.edu/knocking-8th/technicalNotes>.

¹Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-10 American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) File. Average annual percent of population aged 25-34 and 45-54 with an Associate's degree or higher in 2008-10.

²Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2009 and 2011 Mathematics and Reading Assessments, generated using the NAEP Data Explorer. <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/>. Notes: Composite scores are the average of the Math and Reading scores for 8th graders tested in 2011, scale of 0 to 500; scores for 12th graders taking NAEP were not available for this state.

³Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-10 American Community Survey Five-Year Public Use Microdata Sample File. Note: Percentiles for wage/salary income were calculated for persons age 25-64 with positive earnings; unemployed persons with \$0 income were also included. Figures are in 2010 dollars. Native Hawaiians are included in Asian/Pacific Islander.

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