



Knocking at the College Door

Projections of High School Graduates

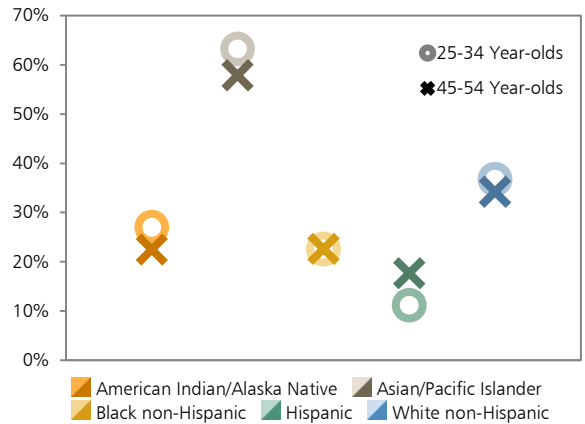
ALABAMA

National and regional trends mask important variation among states in the supply of high school graduates. This profile provides brief indicators for Alabama 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.

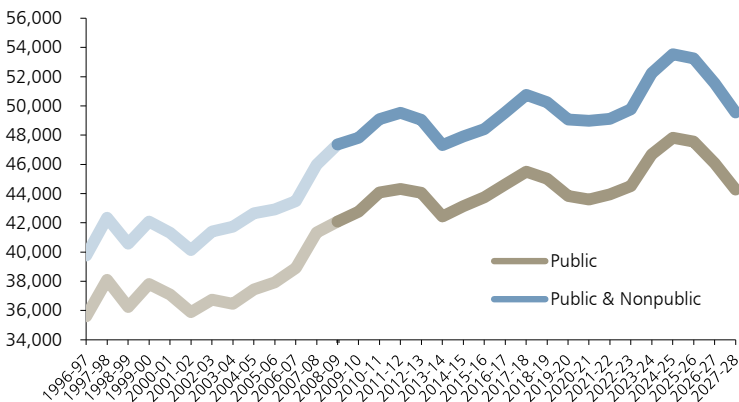
Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity¹

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. Attainment of postsecondary degrees appeared to be flat in Alabama between 2008 and 2010, at about 31 percent for both younger adults (aged 25-34) and older adults (aged 45-54).

- The rate at which younger adults possess postsecondary degrees in Alabama exceeds that of older adults for White non-Hispanics, Black non-Hispanics, and Asians/Pacific Islanders.
- But the rates for Hispanics and American Indians/Alaska Natives are slipping.
- The gap in educational attainment between racial/ethnic groups appears to be widening, as the generational increases for White non-Hispanics and Asians/Pacific Islanders are much higher than other groups.



Production of High School Graduates



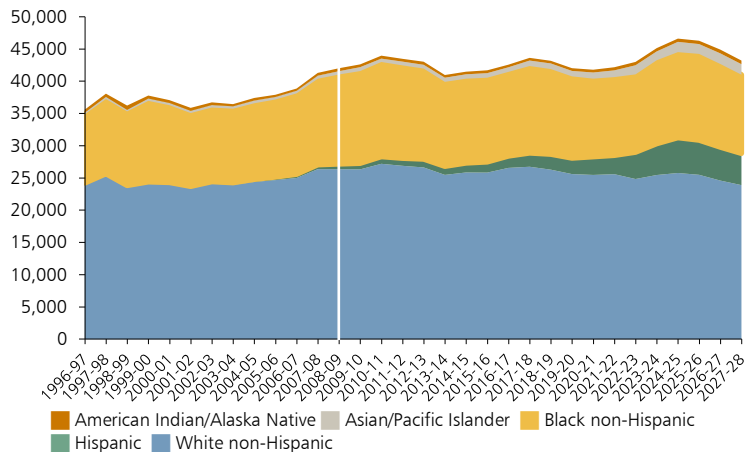
Alabama’s production of high school graduates will climb through the mid-2020s in fits and starts. Graduates reached a projected high point at a little over 49,500 in 2011-12. After a quick two-year drop, growth resumes through another crest at nearly 51,000 in 2017-18. By 2019-20, the number of graduates will be up about 3.6 percent compared to 2008-09, at which point Alabama’s rate of projected growth will be 13th in the nation.

The share of nonpublic graduates will remain relatively constant at between 10% and 11% of all graduates. Nonpublic schools will produce between 4,600 and 5,300 each year.

Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

Graduates of Alabama’s public high schools will grow gradually more diverse in the coming years.

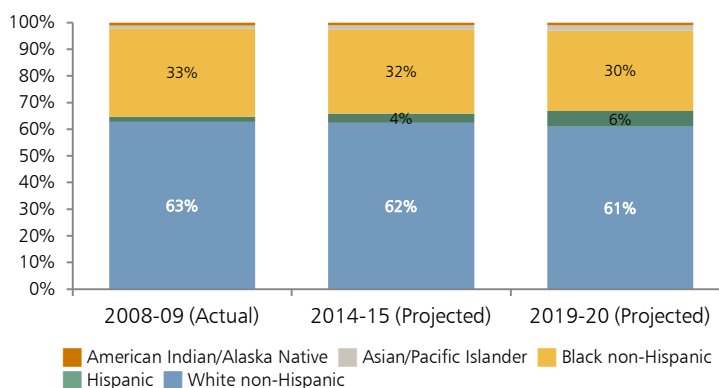
- Graduates of White non-Hispanic descent will remain relatively constant at between 25,400 and 27,000, before starting to slip early in the 2020s.
- Black non-Hispanic numbers will fall about 9 percent by 2019-20.
- The number of Hispanic graduates will rise quickly, roughly tripling from about 800 in 2008-09 to about 2,500 in 2019-20, reflecting a growth rate for that group that will be the third-fastest in the nation.



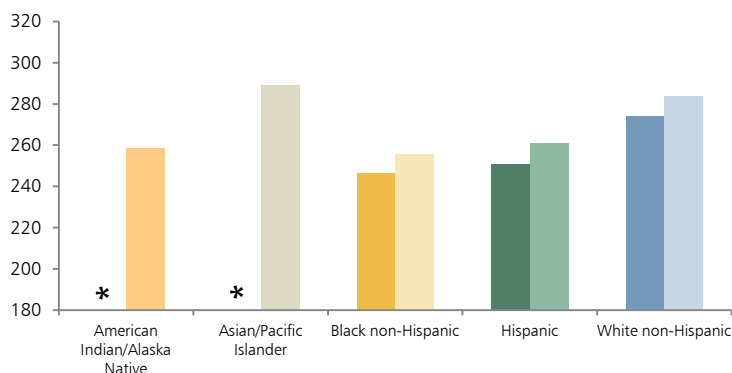
Composition of Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

Graduating classes in Alabama are projected to grow gradually more diverse over the next decade.

- Alabama's public high school graduating class will be 39% non-White non-Hispanic by 2019-20, an increase of just two percentage points.
- Growth among Hispanics will lead to their share increasing by 4 percentage points, to 6%.
- Black non-Hispanics' share will decline the most - about 3 percentage points - but they will remain the largest minority group in the state.
- Asians/Pacific Islanders and American Indians/Alaska Natives will remain a small fragment of graduating classes, together accounting for only about 3% of the class in 2019-20.



Composite Math and Reading Scores by Race/Ethnicity²



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

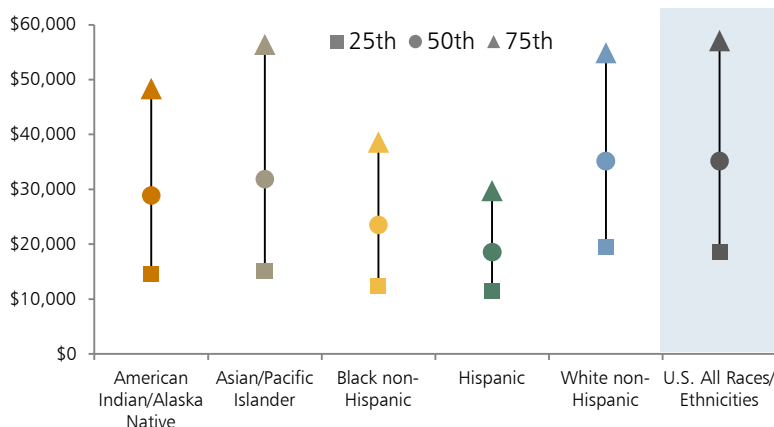
Academic preparation is one major barrier to student access and success in college. One indicator of readiness is provided by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which provides math and reading scores by race/ethnicity for eighth graders in 2011 for each state. Based on these scores:

- Black non-Hispanics have the lowest composite math and reading score, followed closely by Hispanics.
- White non-Hispanics score about 25 points higher.
- Alabama's scores lag the U.S. for all available races/ethnicities by 7-11 points.
- No data were available for American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asians/Pacific Islanders at the state level.

Annual Income by Race/Ethnicity³

A second major barrier is access to the financial resources needed to meet college costs. Among working-age adults in Alabama from 2006-2010:

- The statewide median income was \$30,938, compared with \$35,147 for the nation as a whole.
- Median income of Black non-Hispanics was about \$23,500, three-quarters of the state average.
- At roughly \$18,500, median income of Hispanics was about 60% of the state average.
- About three of four White non-Hispanics earned as much as or more than the typical Hispanic did.
- Incomes ranged much more widely among Asians/Pacific Islanders and White non-Hispanics than for Black non-Hispanics and Hispanics.



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.

For more information email knocking@wiche.edu or contact Peace Bransberger, Research Analyst, 303.541.0257, pbransberger@wiche.edu, or Brian Prescott, Director of Policy Research, 303.541.0255, bprescott@wiche.edu.

Visit <http://wiche.edu/knocking> to obtain the full publication and download these projections as [graphs](#) or [data files](#).