



Knocking at the College Door

Projections of High School Graduates

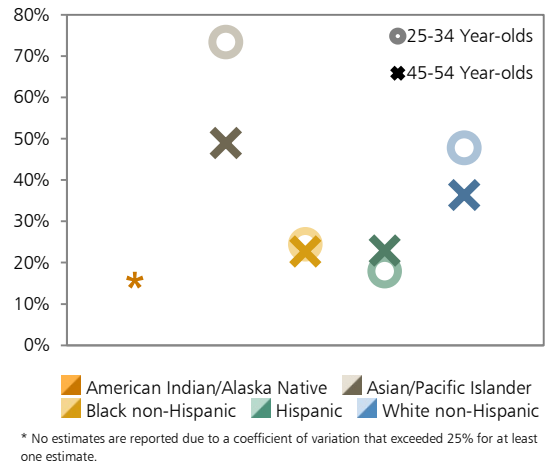
PENNSYLVANIA

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

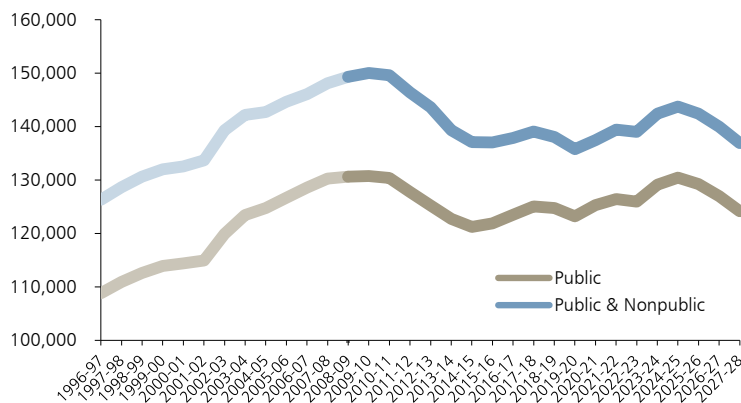
Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity¹

Workforce projections suggest 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 Pennsylvania between 2008 and 2010, 43.9% of younger working-age adults (aged 25-34) had earned postsecondary degrees, slightly more than the 34.9% of older adults (aged 45-54). This improvement is good news for the state's economy, but large gaps in educational attainment exist among racial/ethnic groups, especially for younger adults.

- Younger cohorts of Asians/Pacific Islanders (73.4%) and White non-Hispanics (47.8%) hold postsecondary degrees at substantially higher rates than their older peers (49% and 36.4%, respectively).
- Estimates are not precise enough to report educational attainment differences by age group for Black non-Hispanics. But, the 17.9% of younger Hispanics who have a degree are less than their older counterparts, and about a third less than young White non-Hispanics.



Production of High School Graduates

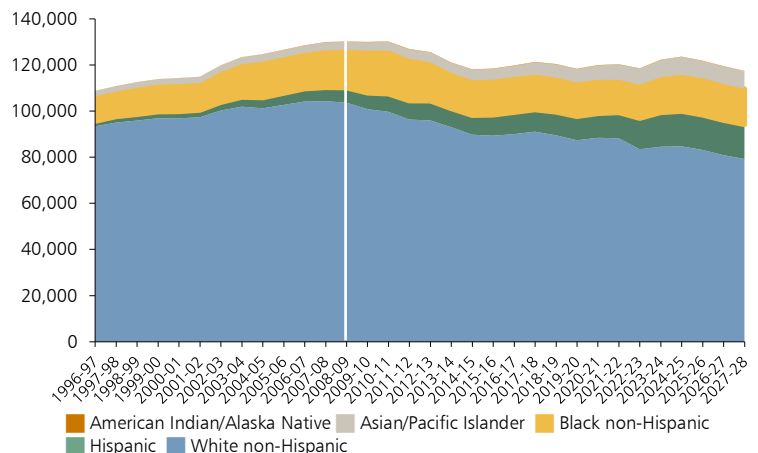


Like many other states, Pennsylvania's high school graduating class sizes have been on an uninterrupted climb, but that is about to change.

- From 1993-94 to 2008-09, the total number of graduates increased 26%, by 30,681.
- After peaking in 2009-10 at 150,000, a decline is projected, bottoming out at 136,000 by 2019-20 before any growth returns.
- Nonpublic schools contributed 14% of the state's graduates in 2001-02, but their share of the total has been falling and will accelerate according to projections. By 2020-21, they will be down about a third, about 6,000 fewer graduates than in 2008-09, their share of the state's total falling to about 9%.

Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

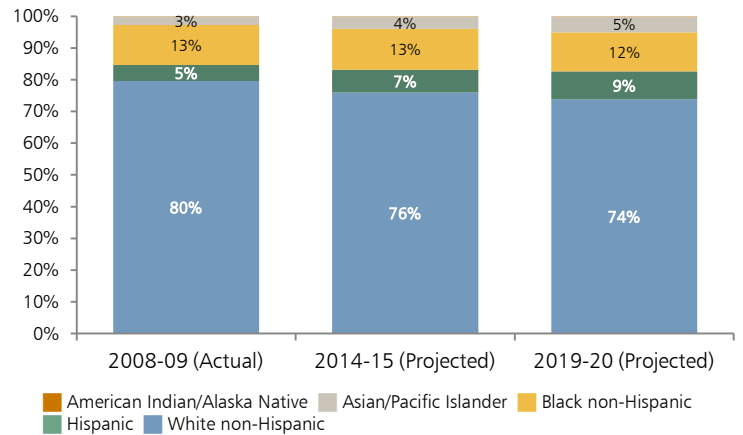
- After reaching a high point of 104,355 in 2007-08, projections show that White non-Hispanics public high school graduates drop by nearly 17,000 through 2019-20 (16%), the fifth largest decline among all states.
- Graduates of Black non-Hispanic descent are also projected to decline an initial bump upward, dropping by over 4,000 (22%) between 2010-11 and 2021-22.
- By contrast, significant increases are projected among both Asians/Pacific Islanders and Hispanics. Pennsylvania will see a nearly 70% increase in Asian/Pacific Islander graduates between 2008-09 and 2019-20, the fifth-fastest pace among the states. Hispanics are projected to increase by 60% over the same time period.



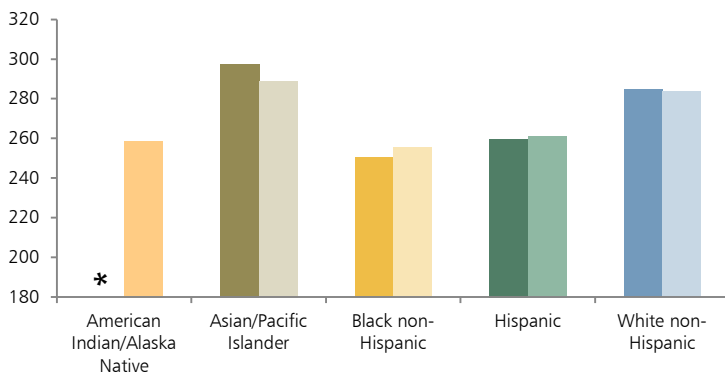
Composition of Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

Historically, Pennsylvania's public high school graduating classes have been dominated by White non-Hispanics. Racial/ethnic diversification is accelerating, even though projections suggest White non-Hispanics will still account for nearly three out of four graduates through 2019-20.

- The Black non-Hispanic share will also shrink, though only modestly, to 12% by 2019-20.
- Asian/Pacific Islander shares are rising and are projected to account for 5% of the class by 2019-20.
- Hispanic shares are rapidly growing, projected to increase by almost 4 percentage points between 2008-09 and 2019-20. By 2023-24, the Hispanic share is projected to nearly equal that of Black non-Hispanics.



Composite Math and Reading Scores by Race/Ethnicity²



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

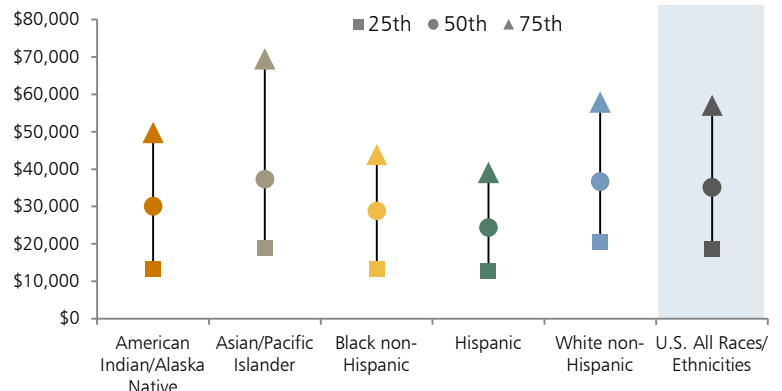
Academic preparation is a major factor in access to and success in college. One indicator of readiness comes from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) math and reading scores for eighth graders in 2011.

- Pennsylvania's Black non-Hispanics, with a composite score of 250.4, and Hispanics, at 259.6, performed poorer than White non-Hispanics. The former groups' scores were statistically indistinguishable.
- Black non-Hispanics in Pennsylvania did not score as well as they did nationwide.
- White non-Hispanics posted a composite score of 284.8, not quite as high as the state's Asians/Pacific Islanders, who scored 297.5.
- No state-level scores were available for American Indians/Alaska Natives.

Annual Income by Race/Ethnicity³

A second major barrier is access to the financial resources needed to pay for college. In Pennsylvania from 2006 to 2010, the statewide median income for the working-age population (25-64) was \$35,267, compared with \$35,147 for the nation.

- The median income of White non-Hispanics and Asians/Pacific Islanders each only modestly exceeded the statewide median.
- Hispanics typically earned \$24,363, substantially less than other races/ethnicities. Three-quarters of Hispanics earned less than \$40,000.
- A quarter of Black non-Hispanics and Hispanics earned about \$13,000 a year 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.

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](#).