Knocking at the College Door

Projections of High School Graduates

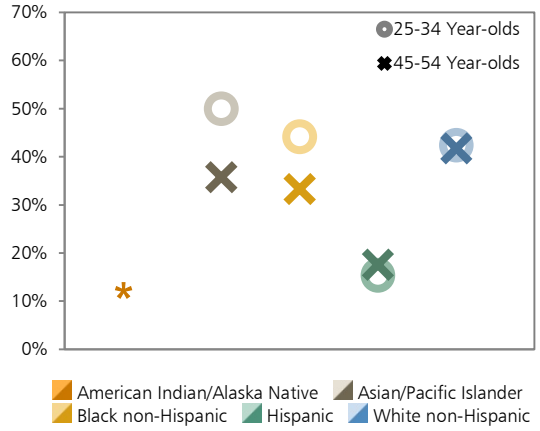
UTAH

National and regional trends mask important variation among states in the supply of high school graduates. This profile provides brief indicators for Utah 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/Ethnicity[1]

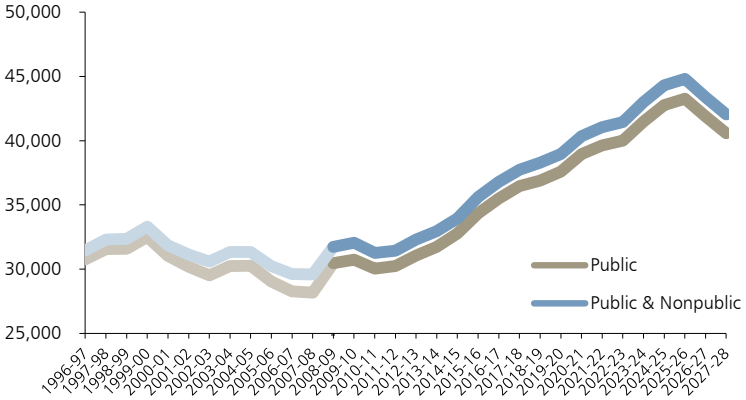
Workforce projections suggest a growing demand for well-educated labor, which means that younger adults need to be as well as or more educated than older adults given how much longer they will need to be employed. In Utah between 2008 and 2010, the 38.5% of younger adults (aged 25-34) who had postsecondary degrees was about identical to older adults (aged 45-54), statistically speaking, a sign that the state's educational attainment rate is not improving in concert with the growing need for educated talent.

There are also large gaps between Hispanics and other racial/ethnic groups. Although estimates are not precise enough to distinguish between attainment rates for Asians/Pacific Islanders or Black non-Hispanics and White non-Hispanics, it is clear that members of all three groups in both age ranges are more likely to have a postsecondary degree than Hispanics. (Due to small sample sizes, no estimates were available for American Indians/Alaska Natives.)



Note: * No estimates are reported due to a coefficient of variation that exceeded 25% for at least one estimate.

Production of High School Graduates

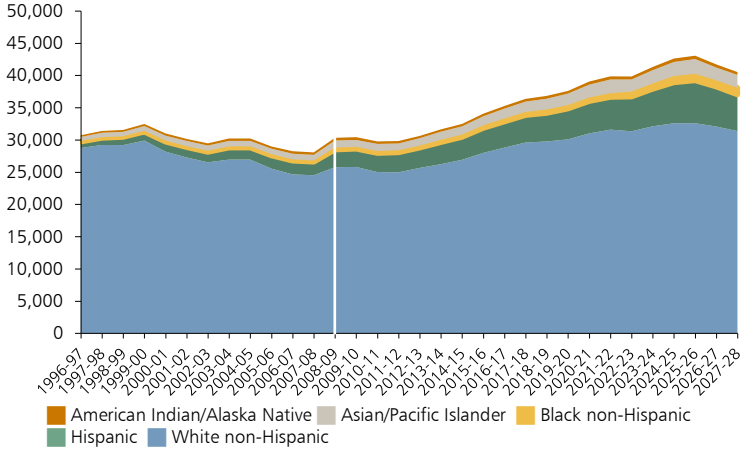


Utah's history of producing high school graduates is unusual. Whereas most states experienced substantial growth for nearly two decades after 1990, Utah's numbers held relatively constant or decreased. But a sustained period of steady growth is projected to have started in 2008-09. Between 2008-09 and 2019-20, overall graduate numbers are expected to climb by over 7,200, a 23% rise, the fastest rate of growth of any state.

Nonpublic schools contributed about 4% of the total number of graduates in 2008-09. Projections suggest their production is likely to remain relatively stable through 2018-19, though their share of the total is expected to slip modestly due to growth in the public sector.

Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

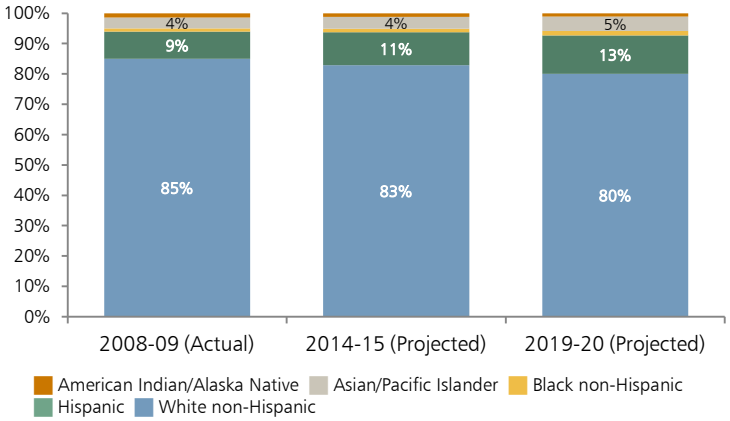
- Projections show that Utah can expect the number of graduates from all of its racial/ethnic groups, except American Indians/Alaska Natives, to grow in the years ahead.
- White non-Hispanic graduates are projected to climb about 4,300 to just above 30,000 by 2019-20, reflecting growth that leads the nation in sheer numbers and in pace; they are projected to peak above 32,600 around 2024-25.
- Hispanics are the second-largest racial/ethnic group are are likely to increase by more than 75% between 2008-09 and 2019-20, to nearly 4,800.
- Asians/Pacific Islanders and Black non-Hispanics are projected to increase more than 64% over the same period, reaching about 1,800 and 560, respectively.



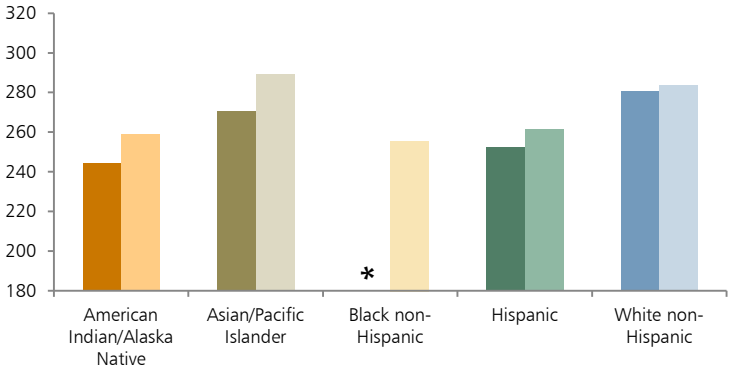
Composition of Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

Even though projections show Utah leading the nation in the growth of White non-Hispanic graduates, the state will also experience rapid diversification in public high school graduating classes.

- White non-Hispanic shares will drop 5 percentage points, to 80% of the total, between 2008-09 and 2019-20.
- Nearly all of that erosion in numbers of White non-Hispanics is expected to be offset by increased shares of Hispanics, whose are projected to be almost 13% by 2019-20.
- Asians/Pacific Islanders are projected to increase in share by 1 percentage point to 5%.



Composite Math and Reading Scores by Race/Ethnicity[2]



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

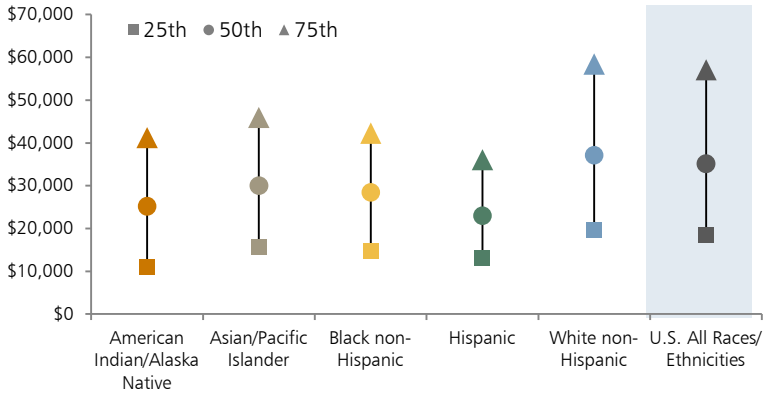
Academic preparation is a major factor in access to and success in college. One indicator of readiness comes from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) math and reading scores for eighth graders in 2011.

- Utah's American Indians/Alaska Natives, with a composite score of 244.1, and Hispanics, at 252.1, performed more poorly than other racial/ethnic groups. (Their scores were statistically indistinguishable from one another's.)
- With a score of 270.5, Asians/Pacific Islanders fell short of White non-Hispanics, who scored 280.6, a pattern opposite most other states.
- Utah's racial/ethnic groups were uniformly outperformed by their peers nationally, among the scores available.

Annual Income by Race/Ethnicity[3]

A second major barrier is access to the financial resources needed to pay for college. Among working-age adults (ages 25-64) in Utah from 2006 to 2010, the statewide median income was $34,049, compared with $35,147 for the nation.

- The median income of White non-Hispanics was $37,126, higher than any other racial/ethnic group in the state.
- With a median income of about $23,000, Hispanics typically earned less than members of other racial/ethnic groups. Half of White non-Hispanics earned about as much as the wealthiest quarter of Hispanics.
- Unlike in many states, Asians/Pacific Islanders typically earned less than the statewide median income.



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.

[1]*Source:* 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.

[2]*Source:* 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.

[3]*Source:* 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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Visit http://wiche.edu/knocking to obtain the full publication and download these projections as graphs or data files.

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