

2018 LEGISLATIVE REPORT ON

THE POSTSECONDARY PROGRESS AND SUCCESS OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES



This report was prepared by the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) pursuant to 23-1-113 C.R.S.

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COLORADO
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Introduction

Earning a postsecondary credential is increasingly important for individuals, the economy and the future of our society. Projections show that by 2020, 74 percent of Colorado’s jobs will require some form of postsecondary education. To ensure that Colorado can meet these workforce demands, the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education have outlined a bold vision in their statewide plan *Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development*, designed to help Colorado reach 66 percent attainment among adults by 2025. To get there, the master plan lays out four strategic goals: increase credential completion, erase equity gaps, improve student success and invest in affordability and innovation.

A chief strategy for reaching these goals is ensuring that Colorado’s high school graduates matriculate into the postsecondary system and meet key success points early in their college careers. Pursuant to statute (23-1-113 [9] C.R.S), CDHE is required to submit a report on the academic progress and success of the preceding high school graduating classes. This report covers the high school graduating classes of 2009 through 2016 and has been submitted to the Education Committees of the Senate and House of Representatives and to the State Board of Education. The findings of this report track progress and identify promising strategies toward meeting statewide goals.

The report consists of three parts:

1. Postsecondary enrollment trends, including information on in-state and out-of-state enrollment and institution type
2. Information on first-year college students in Colorado, including financial aid status, average grade point average (GPA) and credit accumulation
3. Progress toward a credential, including degree level, first-year retention and postsecondary credential completion

All data are broken out by gender and race ethnicity.

Highlights

- College enrollment has remained constant across the years reflected in this report (2009-2016).
- In the Top 10 districts, more than 70 percent of students go on to enroll in college; in the bottom 10 districts, only 13 to 35 percent of students enroll in college directly out of high school.
- Equity gaps in credential completion begin with lower college enrollment rates—particularly for Hispanic and low-income populations.
- The gap between college-going rates for those who received free and reduced lunch and those who do not is greatest among white students at more than 20 percent. The smallest gap in college-going rates by income is for African American students.
- Minority students, particularly Hispanics, and low-income populations are significantly less likely to attend an out-of-state institution than white students or students who did not receive free and reduced lunch.
- Students who do enroll out of state are most likely to enroll in institutions located in California or Arizona.
- Thirty-three percent of first-year college students received a Federal Pell Grant in 2016.
- Equity gaps start early in a student’s postsecondary education with underrepresented minorities accumulating fewer credit hours and achieving lower GPAs in their first year of college.
- First-year retention rates at four-year institutions are significantly higher than those at two-year institutions.
- Completion rates have been growing overall since 2009, and the trajectory of those rates has also increased.
- Females have higher credential attainment rates within two years than males, and the difference is especially pronounced within four years.
- Comparing racial/ethnic populations, 7.7 percent of the Hispanic students and 9.5 percent of Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders earn a credential in two years. Four years after entering college, more than 37 percent of white students had earned some type of certificate or degree compared to 19 percent of African American students.
- Hispanic students have one of the highest two-year completion rates and one of the lowest four-year completion rates.

Part I. Postsecondary Enrollment

Colorado’s high school graduates are perhaps the largest input in meeting the statewide goal of 66 percent attainment by 2025 among adults ages 25 to 34. This report explores how Colorado’s recent high school graduates fared after finishing high school by asking questions such as: Who enrolled in college? In what type of college did those students enroll? How successful were students in their first year of college? How many degrees have been awarded? By answering these questions, Colorado’s K-12 and higher education systems can better coordinate so that all students may transition more seamlessly from high school into college.

Overview

The high school class of 2016 consisted of 56,238 individual graduates. Of those students, 31,384, or 55.8 percent, enrolled in a postsecondary institution in Colorado or another state during the fall immediately following graduation. Although the number of high school students who enrolled into a postsecondary institution increased, the 2016 total enrollment rate is down from last year’s rate of 56.5 percent. Of the 2016 high school graduates, 42.9 percent enrolled at a Colorado college or university, while 13 percent went out of state to attend college.

Table 1. Summary Statistics for High School Graduates

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION YEAR	TOTAL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	TOTAL COLLEGE ENROLLMENT	% HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLING IN COLLEGE
2016	56,238	31,384	55.8%
2015	53,128	30,042	56.5%
2014	53,771	30,015	55.8%
2013	54,498	30,115	55.3%
2012	52,012	29,625	57.0%
2011	52,246	29,974	57.4%
2010	51,702	29,937	57.9%
2009	50,184	29,525	58.8%

Table 2. In-State and Out-of-State Enrollment Summary

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION YEAR	% HS GRADUATES ENROLLING IN COLLEGE IN STATE	% HS GRADUATES ENROLLING IN COLLEGE OUT OF STATE	% HS GRADUATES NOT ENROLLED IN COLLEGE
2016	42.9%	13.0%	44.2%
2015	43.1%	13.4%	43.5%
2014	42.5%	13.3%	44.2%
2013	42.9%	12.4%	44.7%
2012	44.4%	12.5%	43.0%
2011	45.2%	12.2%	42.6%
2010	45.9%	12.0%	42.1%
2009	47.4%	11.4%	41.2%

College enrollment information for the top 10 and bottom 10 districts—as ranked by the overall college-going rate—is displayed in Tables 3 and 4. Aspen 1 had the highest college enrollment rate (75.5 percent), and Plateau Valley School District 50 had the lowest rate (13.1 percent). College enrollment information for all school districts in the state can be found in Appendix A.

Table 3. Top 10 Districts* with Highest College-Going Rates

DISTRICT NAME	% COLLEGE ENROLLMENT
ASPEN 1	75.5%
LEWIS-PALMER 38	75.6%
CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN 12	73.0%
STEAMBOAT SPRINGS RE-2	72.1%
ALAMOSA RE-11J	71.9%
SUMMIT RE-1	71.8%
LITTLETON 6	71.6%
DOUGLAS COUNTY RE 1	71.3%
ACADEMY 20	70.6%
CROWLEY COUNTY RE-1-J	70.3%

Table 4. Bottom 10 Districts* with Lowest College-Going Rates

DISTRICT NAME	% COLLEGE ENROLLMENT
PLATEAU VALLEY 50	13.10%
SHERIDAN 2	27.59%
FALCON 49	29.41%
JULESBURG RE-1	30.12%
BYERS 32J	32.26%
PEYTON 23 JT	32.76%
ENGLEWOOD 1	33.85%
MONTEZUMA-CORTEZ RE-1	34.32%
WESTMINSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	34.65%
ADAMS COUNTY 14	35.08%

*Excluding districts with fewer than 25 graduates.



Class Characteristics

Colorado’s high school graduating class of 2016 consisted of an almost even number of males and females (see Tables 5a). Almost 59 percent of graduates were white; 29 percent were Hispanic; 5 percent were African American; more than 3 percent were Asian; 3 percent reported being of two or more races; and just under 1 percent were American Indian/Alaskan Native or Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. About 30 percent of the 2016 graduating class was eligible to receive free or reduced lunch.

More female and white students from the high school class of 2016 enrolled in college the fall following their graduation (see Tables 5b). While Hispanic students made up almost 30 percent of the high school graduating class, they account for just 23 percent of the students who enrolled in college directly out of high school in the fall of 2016. About 22 percent of this group of first-year college students had received free or reduced lunch in high school.

Table 5a. Class Characteristics of 2016 High School Graduates

STATE	PERCENT
Gender	
Female	50.4%
Male	49.6%
Race/Ethnicity	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.7%
Asian	3.4%
African American	4.9%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.2%
Hispanic	29.0%
Two or More Races	3.3%
White (not Hispanic)	58.5%
Socio-economic status	
Did Not Receive Free Reduced Price Lunch	70.5%
Received Free Reduced Price Lunch	29.5%

Table 5b. Class Characteristics of 2016 High School Graduates Who Enrolled in College

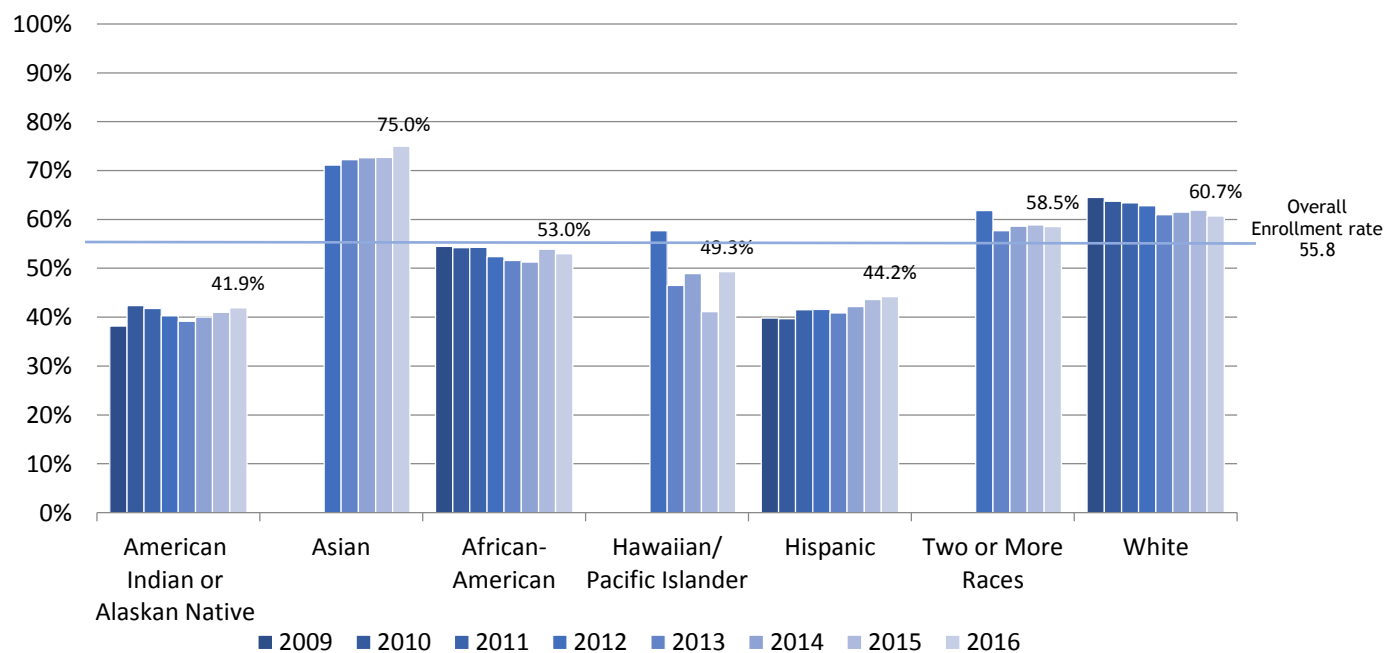
STATE	PERCENT
Gender	
Female	54.5%
Male	45.5%
Race/Ethnicity	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.5%
Asian	4.5%
African American	4.6%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.2%
Hispanic	23.0%
Two or More Races	3.4%
White (not Hispanic)	63.7%
Socio-economic status	
Did Not Receive Free Reduced Price Lunch	77.8%
Received Free Reduced Price Lunch	22.2%

Enrollment Rates by Gender, Race/Ethnicity and Income

Figures 1 and 2 depict college enrollment rates for 2009 through 2016 for high school graduates by race/ethnicity, gender and income (as represented by free and reduced lunch eligibility in high school). Asian and white high school graduates had the highest college-going rates in 2016—75 percent and 60.7 percent, respectively—while American Indian/Alaskan Native had the lowest college-going rate at 41.9 percent. In 2015, when comparing just white and Hispanic graduates, there was a more than 18 percent gap in college enrollment rates; this gap narrowed slightly to 16.5 percentage-points in 2016 (see Figure 1).

Compared to 2015, enrollment rates declined slightly for African American students, white students and students of two or more races. They grew noticeably for Asian students and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students; however, because both of those groups are relatively small in number, they are more likely to show greater variance from year to year.

Figure 1. College Enrollment Rates by Race/Ethnicity, 2009-2016



Note: New racial/ethnicity categories have been added to comply with state and federal reporting standards. Data and comparisons for Asian students, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students and students of Two or More Races are not available prior to 2012.

Female graduates were more likely than male graduates to be enrolled in college (see Figure 2). In 2016, for example, 60.3 percent of female students attended college in the fall immediately following graduation, compared to 51.2 percent of male students. Overall enrollment for males has shown a downward trend since 2009. High school graduates who received free and reduced lunch go to college at significantly lower rates than those who did not: 42 percent and 61.6 percent respectively in 2016.

Figure 2. Enrollment Rates by Gender and Income, 2009-2016

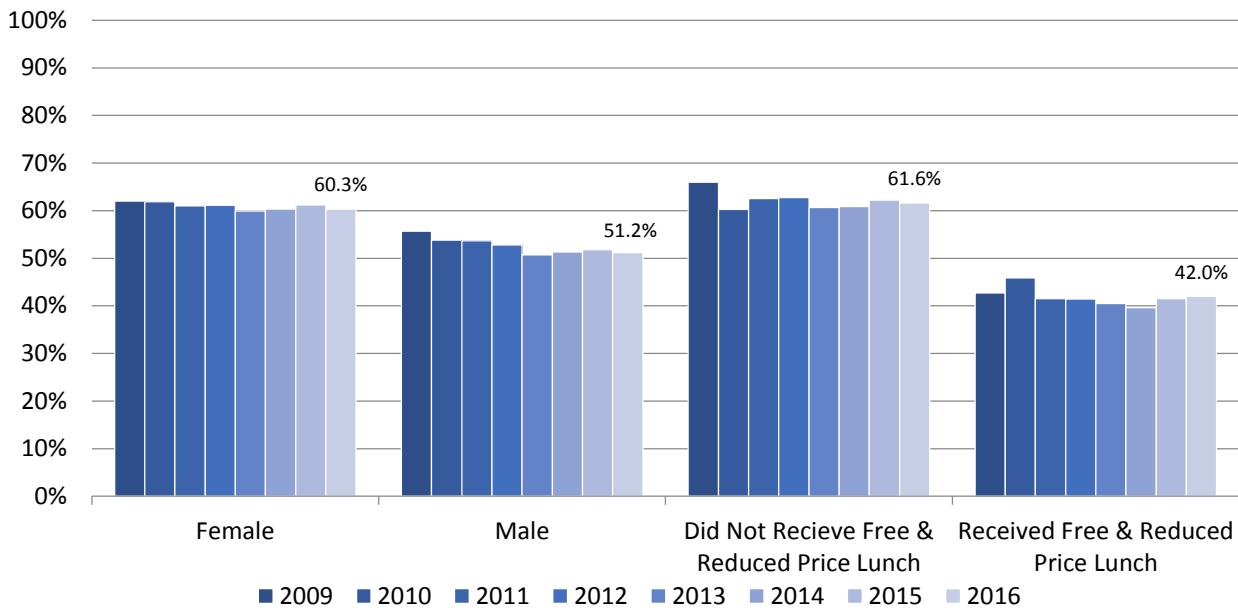


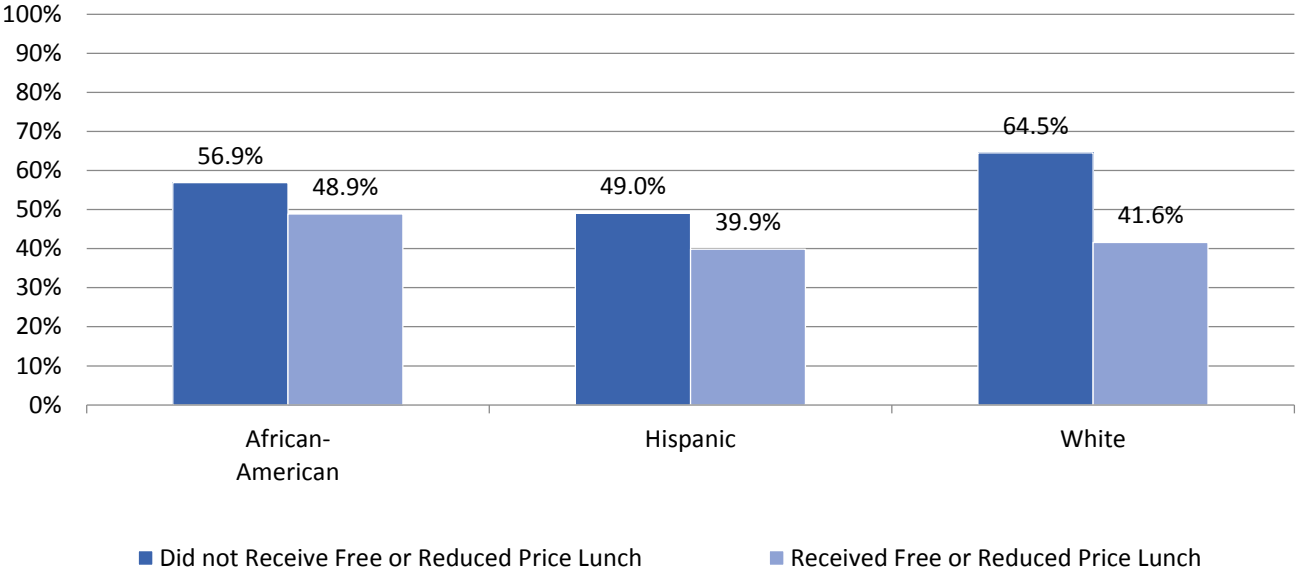
Table 6 shows significant differences among the number of 2016 graduates who enrolled in state versus out of state. Minority students, particularly Hispanic and American Indians or Alaska Natives, are significantly less likely to attend an out-of-state institution than white, Asian or mixed race students. Only 5 percent of students who received free and reduced lunch enrolled out of state, compared with 16 percent of those who did not. These data illustrate the importance of eliminating equity gaps in Colorado, since minority and low-income students are most likely to enroll in state if they enroll at all.

Table 6. College Enrollment Details by Gender, Race/Ethnicity and Income 2016

	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	% STUDENTS ENROLLED IN STATE	% STUDENTS ENROLLED OUT OF STATE	TOTAL % ENROLLED IN COLLEGE	% NOT ENROLLED IN COLLEGE
Gender					
Female	28,358	45.5%	14.8%	60.3%	39.7%
Male	27,880	40.2%	11.1%	51.2%	48.8%
Race/Ethnicity					
American Indian or Alaskan Native	384	32.3%	9.6%	41.9%	58.1%
Asian	1,896	60.1%	14.9%	75.0%	25.0%
African American	2,741	41.8%	11.2%	53.0%	47.0%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	140	35.7%	13.6%	49.3%	50.7%
Hispanic	16,329	39.1%	5.1%	44.2%	55.8%
Two or More Races	1,840	43.0%	15.5%	58.5%	41.5%
White (not Hispanic)	32,908	43.9%	16.8%	60.7%	39.3%
Socio-economic status					
Did Not Receive Free Reduced Price Lunch	39,663	45.3%	16.3%	61.6%	38.4%
Received Free Reduced Price Lunch	16,575	36.9%	5.0%	42.0%	58.0%

Figure 3 displays enrollment rates by income level for the largest three race/ethnic populations. Students who qualify for free or reduced lunch in high school go to college at lower rates than those who do not qualify in each race/ethnicity group. The gap in college-going rates for those who received free and reduced lunch and those who did not is greatest among white students at more than 20 percent; the smallest gap in college-going rates by income is among African American students. Almost 50 percent of African American students who receive free and reduced lunch enrolled in college. Overall Hispanic students have the lowest college-going rates: Hispanics who are eligible for free and reduced price lunch have the lowest college-going rate at 39.9 percent.

Figure 3. Enrollment Rates for Different Race/Ethnicities by Income Level 2016



College Enrollment by Location

Of the 2016 graduates who enroll in college within six months of graduation, about 76.8 percent stay in state and attend a Colorado college or university, while 23.2 percent attended out-of-state institutions (see Figure 4). This breakdown mirrors 2015 data. Figure 6 shows that the highest number of 2016 graduates enrolled in California or Arizona institutions. Neighboring states Nebraska, Kansas and Wyoming enroll the next highest number of graduates.

Figure 4. In-state and Out-of-state Enrollment 2016

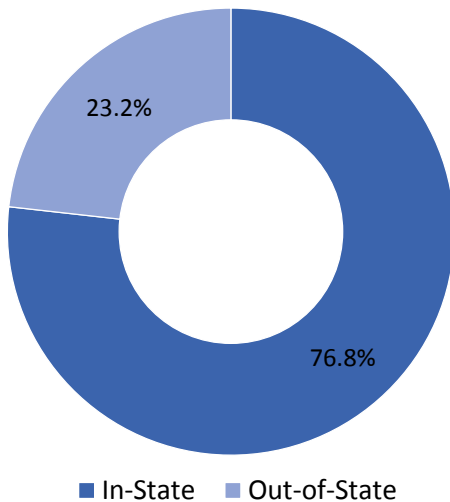


Table 7. Out-of-state Enrollment

STATE	# OF STUDENTS ENROLLED
California	733
Arizona	635
Nebraska	426
Kansas	408
Wyoming	396
Texas	378
Utah	299
Washington	298
Montana	266
New York	234

Over half (54 percent) of the 2016 high school graduates attended an institutions on the “Top 10 Most Attended Institutions” list. Like the class of 2015, members of the class of 2016 were most likely to attend Colorado State University, followed by the University of Colorado at Boulder. Students leaving Colorado for college were most likely to attend the University of Wyoming, Montana State University-Bozeman, Grand Canyon University or Arizona State University.

Table 8. Top 10 Most Attended Institutions

INSTITUTION	ENROLLMENT	
	#	%
Colorado State University	3,095	9.9%
University of Colorado Boulder	2,988	9.5%
University of Northern Colorado	1,694	5.4%
Metropolitan State University of Denver	1,576	5.0%
Front Range Community College	1,530	4.9%
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs	1,505	4.8%
Colorado Mesa University	1,311	4.2%
Pikes Peak Community College	1,130	3.6%
University of Colorado Denver	1,104	3.5%
Community College of Denver	866	2.8%

Table 9. Top 10 Out-of-State Institutions

INSTITUTION	ENROLLMENT	
	#	%
University of Wyoming	268	0.9%
Montana State University -Bozeman	223	0.7%
Grand Canyon University-Traditional	189	0.6%
Arizona State University	134	0.4%
Brigham Young University	113	0.4%
Northern Arizona University	111	0.4%
University of Kansas	104	0.3%
University of Nebraska - Lincoln	86	0.3%
University of Arizona	78	0.2%
Fort Hays State University	77	0.2%

College Enrollment by Institution Type

A little over a quarter of the class of 2016 who enrolled in college within six months of graduation enrolled at a two-year institution (see Figure 5). Only 11.3 percent of students who attend college out of state enrolled at two-year institutions. Almost one-third of students who stay in Colorado attend a two-year institution.

Figure 5. 2-Year and 4-Year Enrollment 2016

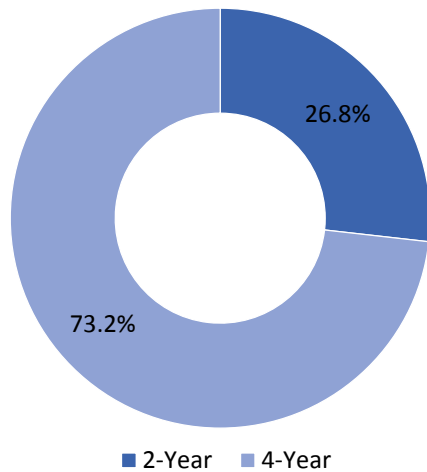
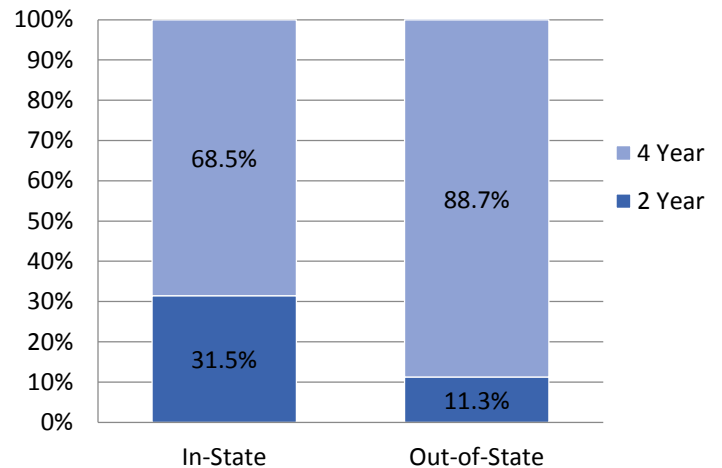


Figure 6. 2-Year and 4-Year Enrollment for In-State and Out-of-State Students 2016



Front Range Community College and Pikes Peak Community College enrolled the most 2016 high school graduates among all two-year institutions. Like the class of 2015, the class of 2016 that attended a four-year institution was most likely to attend Colorado State University followed by the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Table 10. Top 10 Most Attended 2-Year Institutions

INSTITUTION	ENROLLMENT	
	#	%
Front Range Community College	1,530	4.9%
Pikes Peak Community College	1,130	3.6%
Community College of Denver	866	2.8%
Red Rocks Community College	764	2.4%
Arapahoe Community College	622	2.0%
Aims Community College	614	2.0%
Community College of Aurora	515	1.6%
Pueblo Community College	385	1.2%
Northeastern Junior College	315	1.0%
Otero Junior College	216	0.7%

Table 11. Top 10 Most Attended 4-Year Institutions

INSTITUTION	ENROLLMENT	
	#	%
Colorado State University	3,095	9.9%
University of Colorado Boulder	2,988	9.5%
University of Northern Colorado	1,694	5.4%
Metropolitan State University of Denver	1,576	5.0%
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs	1,505	4.8%
Colorado Mesa University	1,311	4.2%
University of Colorado Denver	1,104	3.5%
Colorado State University - Pueblo	587	1.9%
Colorado School of Mines	455	1.5%
Colorado Mountain College	410	1.3%

College Enrollment Characteristics by Race/Ethnicity, Gender and Income

Figure 7 includes data for all students who enrolled in college. Hispanic students are the least likely of Colorado’s racial/ethnic populations to leave the state at 11.6 percent. White students and students of two or more races are the most likely to leave Colorado (27.6 and 26.6 percent, respectively). Hispanic students are also most likely to enroll in a two-year institution at 40.7 while their Asian and white counterparts are least likely to enroll in a two-year institution (18.6 and 22.2 percent, respectively).

Figure 7. College Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity and Institution Type 2016

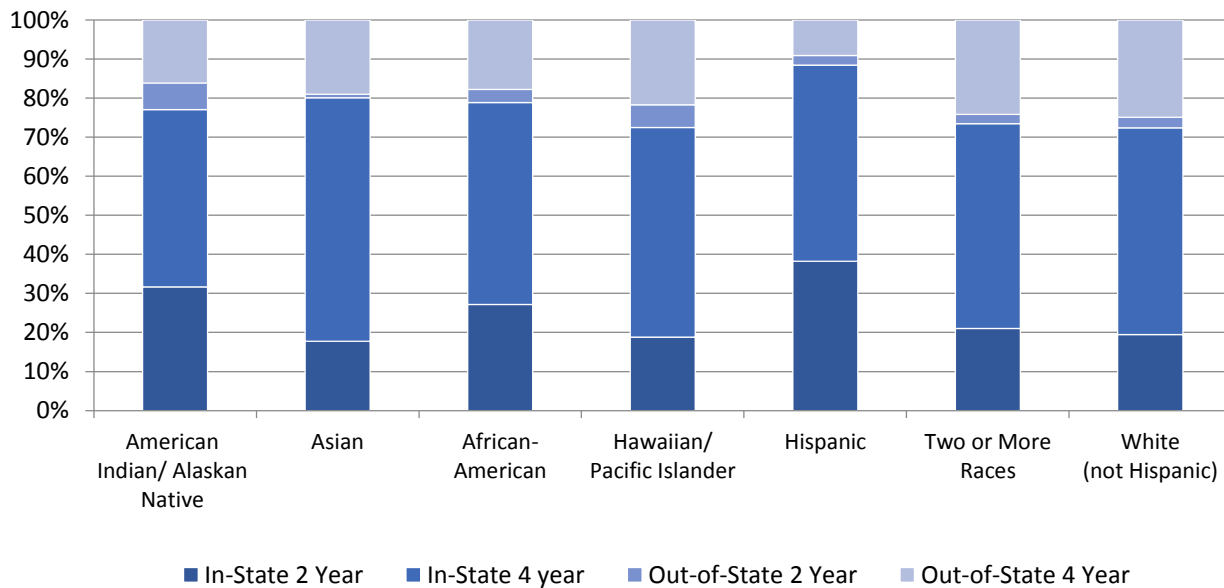
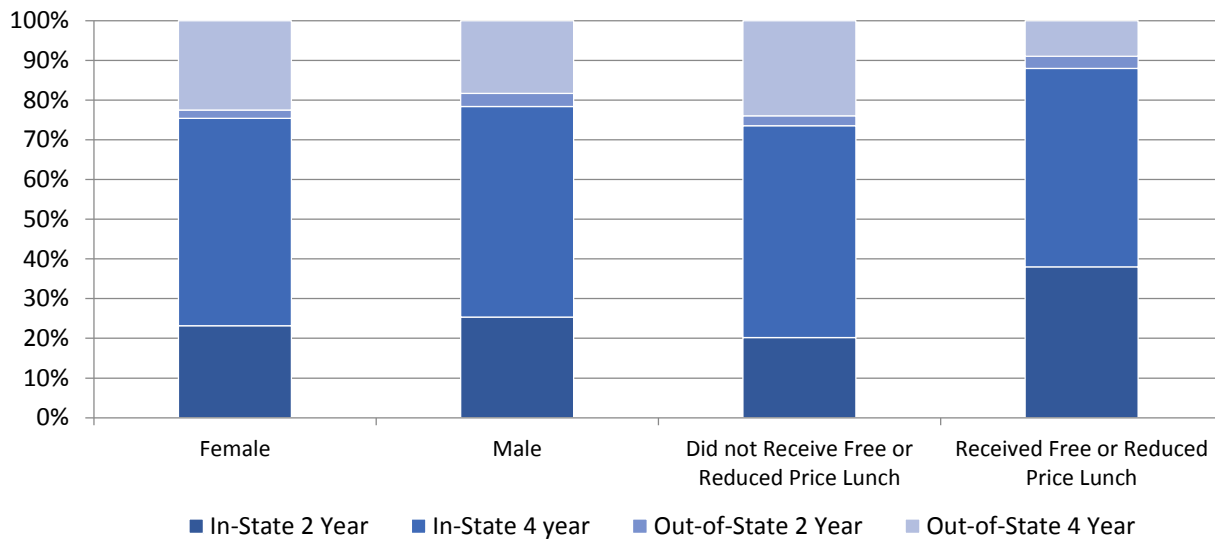


Figure 8 displays the breakdown of student enrollments by type of institution and gender. Female students were slightly more likely than male students to attend an out-of-state institution—specifically, a four-year, out-of-state institution. Students who received free and reduced lunch were significantly more likely to enroll in in-state, two-year institutions and significantly less likely to enroll in out-of-state, four-year institutions.

Figure 8. College Enrollment by Gender/Socioeconomic Status and Institution Type 2016



Part II. First-Year College Students

The previous section helps us understand enrollment patterns and access to higher education for the classes of 2009-2016; it is equally important to understand whether students are on the trajectory for success. This section provides information about first-year college students, including financial aid status, GPA and credit accumulation. It is important to note that the total student counts in this section may be different than in the previous section; the data set is limited to students who attend a public, state college or university or the following private institutions: University of Denver, Regis University, and Colorado Christian University. Data from the previous section also included students who attended college out of state.

Financial Aid Recipients

Thirty-three percent of first-year college students received a Federal Pell Grant in 2016 (see Table 12). Thirty-six percent of females received a Pell grant, compared to about 30 percent of males. The percent of students who received a Pell grant by racial/ethnicity remained stable for the larger groups, with Hispanic students seeing a 2 percent increase. Hawaiian/Pacific islanders did see a big swing, with a 20 percentage point decrease, and American Indian students saw a 4 percent decrease. Since these populations are small in number, however, they are prone to fluctuations year over year.

Table 12. Summary of Pell Recipients, by High School Graduation Year

High School Graduation Year	Number of College Students (In-State)	Pell Grant Recipients	% Of Pell Recipients
2016	21,905	7,260	33.1%
2015	20,333	6,611	32.5%
2014	19,377	6,558	33.8%
2013	20,865	7,178	34.4%
2012	20,903	7,334	35.1%
2011	22,458	8,265	36.8%
2010	22,972	7,955	34.6%
2009	23,182	6,634	28.6%

Table 13. Pell Grant Recipients, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

	COLLEGE STUDENTS (IN-STATE)	STUDENTS RECEIVING A PELL GRANT	% OF STUDENTS RECEIVING A PELL GRANT	2015-2016 PERCENTAGE POINT CHANGE
Gender				
Female	11,730	4,236	36.1%	0.8%
Male	10,175	3,024	29.7%	0.6%
Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian or Alaskan Native	112	43	38%	-0.04
Asian	10,46	423	40%	0.00
African American	1,009	653	65%	-0.01
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	46	13	28%	-0.20
Hispanic	5,567	2799	50%	0.02
Two or More Races	719	248	34%	0.00
White (not Hispanic)	13,406	3081	23%	0.00

GPA's

At the end of the 2016-2017 academic year, the average GPA for first-year college students in Colorado was 2.78 (see Table 14). Overall, GPAs have been increasing slowly since 2009. The average GPA for females is approximately two-tenths of a percent higher than men. White and Asian students have significantly higher GPAs than their minority counterparts.

Table 14. Summary of GPA Averages, by High School Graduation Year

High School Graduation Year	College Students (In-State)	First Year GPA	25 th Percentile	75 th Percentile
2016	21,905	2.78	2.3	3.5
2015	20,333	2.79	2.3	3.5
2014	19,377	2.78	2.3	3.4
2013	20,865	2.76	2.3	3.4
2012	20,903	2.72	2.2	3.4
2011	22,463	2.67	2.1	3.4
2010	22,972	2.66	2.1	3.3
2009	23,182	2.66	2.1	3.3

Table 15. Summary of GPAs, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

	COLLEGE STUDENTS (IN-STATE)	FIRST YEAR GPA	25 TH PERCENTILE	75 TH PERCENTILE
Gender				
Female	11,730	2.87	2.1	3.4
Male	10,175	2.67	2.4	3.5
Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian or Alaskan Native	112	2.57	2.0	3.4
Asian	1,046	2.91	2.5	3.5
African American	1,009	2.36	1.7	3.1
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	46	2.44	2.0	3.1
Hispanic	5,567	2.53	2.0	3.3
Two or More Races	719	2.68	2.1	3.4
White (not Hispanic)	13,406	2.90	2.4	3.6

Credit Hour Accumulation

Research suggests the number of credit hours earned in a student’s first year of college influences their likelihood of completion. Research shows that first-year credit completion is positively correlated with degree completion and time to degree.¹ Students who graduated from high school in Colorado in 2016 who went on to immediately enroll in college accumulated an average of 30.6 credit hours (Table 14). The credit hour accumulations include credits earned through concurrent enrollment programs, which accounts for approximately one in four Colorado high school students.

Table 16. Summary of Credit Hour Accumulation, by High School Graduation Year

High School Graduation Year	College Students (In-State)	First Year Average Credits Completed	25 th Percentile	75 th Percentile
2016	21,905	30.6	18	39
2015	20,333	29.5	18.5	36.5
2014	19,377	30.0	20	36
2013	20,865	29.1	19	35
2012	20,903	28.8	19	35
2011	22,463	28.3	18	34
2010	22,972	27.9	18	34
2009	23,182	28.1	18	35

¹ Belfield, C., Jenkins, D., Lahr, H. (2016). Momentum: The Academic and Economic Value of a 15-Credit First-Semester Course Load for College Students in Tennessee. Community College Research Center Working Paper No. 88. Available at: <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/momentum-15-credit-course-load.pdf>



Table 17 displays credit hour accumulation by gender and race/ethnicity. In 2016, female students had a slightly higher credit accumulation average (31.2) than male students (29.9). Asian and white students had the highest average number of credits completed in their first year of college (35.8 and 33.1 credits, respectively). Hispanic students, on average, completed about six fewer credits in their first year than white students, and African American students completed about 10 fewer credits. To erase equity gaps, Colorado must explore ways to ensure African American and Hispanic students finish at rates comparable to their white and Asian peers during the first year of enrollment.

Table 17. Summary of Credit Hour Accumulation, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

	COLLEGE STUDENTS (IN-STATE)	FIRST YEAR AVERAGE COMPLETED CREDITS	25 TH PERCENTILE	75 TH PERCENTILE
Gender				
Female	11,730	31.2	19	40
Male	10,175	29.9	18	37
Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian or Alaskan Native	112	27.7	14.75	33.25
Asian	1,046	35.8	22	45.5
African American	1,009	23.9	13	30
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	46	26.6	13	32
Hispanic	5,567	27.4	13	34
Two or More Races	719	29.5	16	37
White (not Hispanic)	13,406	33.1	22	41

Part III: Degree Seeking Status and Credential Attainment

This final section explores students' intention to pursue a degree and attainment levels for high school graduates who enrolled in college immediately after high school. These data are perhaps the most important, as Colorado has a limited time to accomplish its master plan goals. These data provide insight into existing trends in degree production within Colorado's high school population and will help the state focus their efforts on populations that are currently pursuing a degree.

Degree Level

Students who specify a degree in their first year of college are more likely to complete it. Almost 69 percent of 2016 high school graduates who enrolled in college the fall after graduation specified a degree in their first year. About 68 percent of those students indicated that they are pursuing a Bachelor's degree, and 29.4 percent indicated they are pursuing some type of Associate degree. Only 2.5 percent of students are pursuing a certificate.

Figure 9. 2016 High School Graduates Enrolled in College who are Pursuing a Degree Program

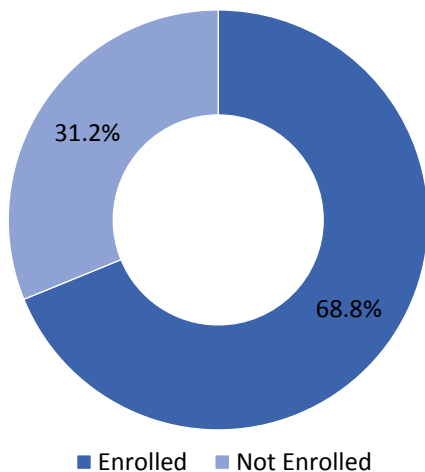
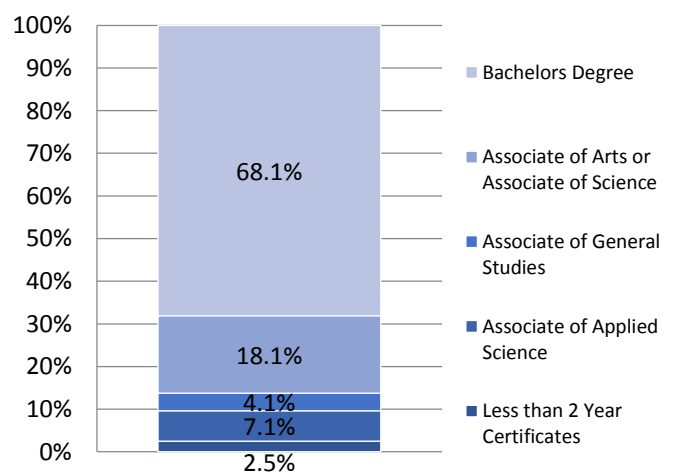


Figure 10. Types Degree Programs 2016 High School Graduates Enrolled In



Retention Rates

Students are most likely to drop out in their first year of college, so first-year retention rates are also important indicators. More than 80 percent of students who graduated high school in spring 2015 and enrolled in college in fall 2015 enrolled for a second year of college in fall 2016.² This number includes transfer students as long as students re-enrolled at another state institution. Colorado’s retention rates remain above national averages, which hovers around 70 percent.³ Nationally, however, retention rates are climbing; in Colorado, they are relatively stable and even declining slightly at four-year institutions.

The first-year retention rate at four-year institutions was 86.9 percent for 2015 graduates. Comparatively, the retention rate at two-year colleges was 62 percent for the same cohort of high school graduates— an increase from the past five years.

Table 18. First-Year Retention Rates by High School Graduation Year

High School Graduation Year	Overall	4 Year Institutions	2 Year Institutions
2015	80.7%	86.9%	62.0%
2014	80.2%	87.0%	60.3%
2013	79.4%	87.0%	60.3%
2012	80.0%	87.3%	61.6%
2011	79.9%	87.8%	60.2%
2010	80.7%	88.3%	62.1%
2009	81.4%	88.5%	63.3%

² Retention rates are not yet available for students who were in their first year of college in the 2016-2017 academic year.

³ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Retention rates for female students from the high school class of 2015 were almost 5 percent higher than retention rates for male students (see Table 15). American Indian or Alaskan Native students had the lowest overall retention rate at more than 72 percent, and Asian students had the highest at fewer than 88 percent. At two-year institutions, there is an 11 percent gap among white and African American students; at four-year institutions, a similar gap exists among white and Hispanic students and among white and American Indian students.

Table 19. Class of 2015 Retention Rates, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

	OVERALL	2 YEAR INSTITUTIONS	4 YEAR INSTITUTIONS
Gender			
Female	82.8%	64.5%	88.5%
Male	78.2%	59.3%	85.0%
Race/Ethnicity			
American Indian or Alaskan Native	72.1%	60.3%	79.4%
Asian	87.6%	70.3%	91.0%
African American	74.3%	53.2%	82.5%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	73.6%	55.6%	82.9%
Hispanic	72.5%	58.4%	81.1%
Two or More Races	79.8%	59.8%	85.0%
White (not Hispanic)	83.5%	64.6%	88.6%

Credential Completion

Table 20 shows the percentage of the 2009-2013 graduates who immediately enrolled in college and earned a postsecondary credential (a certificate, associate degree or bachelor’s degree) within two, four, five and six years. Almost 6 percent of the 2013 cohort earned a credential within two years, and 33.7 percent earned a credential within four years.

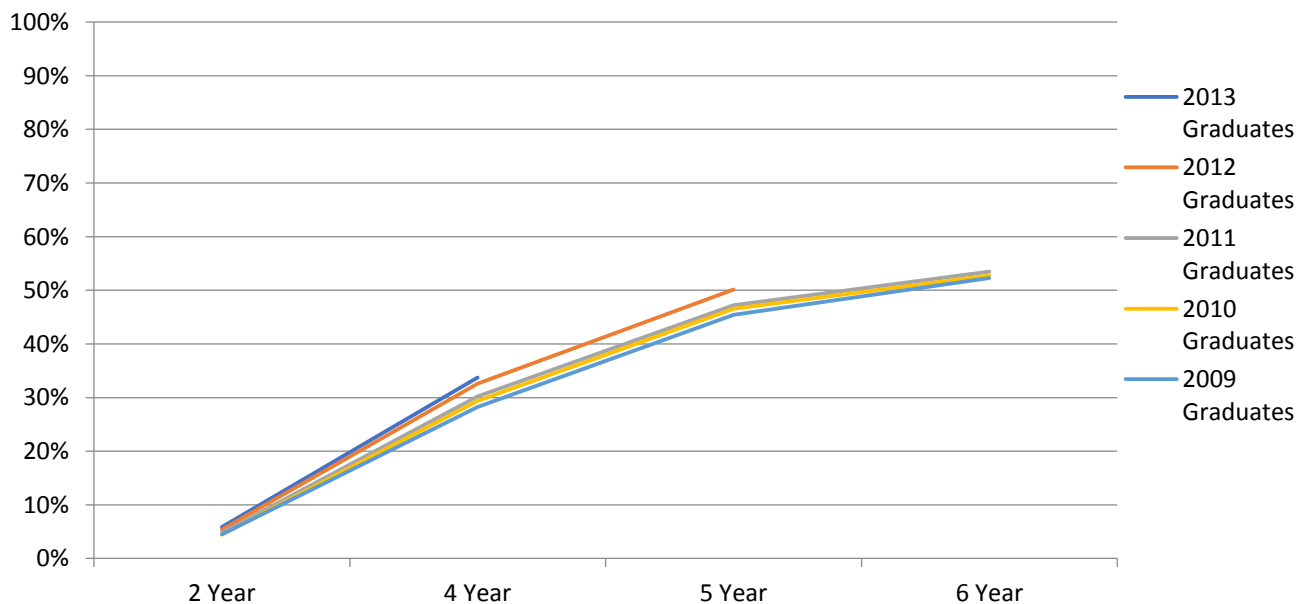
Table 20. Credential Completion Rates, by High School Graduation Year

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION YEAR	NUMBER OF COLLEGE STUDENTS (IN-STATE)	% EARNING A CREDENTIAL IN 2 YEARS	% EARNING A CREDENTIAL IN 4 YEARS	% EARNING A CREDENTIAL IN 5 YEARS	% EARNING A CREDENTIAL IN 6 YEARS
2013	20,865	5.9%	33.7%	N/A	N/A
2012	20,903	5.4%	32.6%	50.1%	N/A
2011	22,463	4.8%	30.2%	47.2%	53.5%
2010	22,972	4.5%	29.4%	46.5%	52.7%
2009	23,182	4.5%	28.3%	45.4%	52.3%

Note: The four, five and six year calculations are cumulative but unduplicated, credentials are only counted once.

Figure 11 illustrates the trajectory of completion rates between 2009 and 2013. Not only have rates been growing overall, but the trajectory of those rates has also increased during this time period.

Figure 11. Credential Completion Rates, by High School Graduation Year



Females have higher credential attainment rates within two years than males—a trend that is more pronounced among four-year rates. Comparing racial/ethnic populations, 7.7 percent of the Hispanic students and 9.5 percent of Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders earn a credential in two years. Four years after entering college, more than 37 percent of white students had earned some type of certificate or degree, compared to 19 percent of African American students.

Table 21. Class of 2013 Credential Completion Rates, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

	NUMBER OF COLLEGE STUDENTS (IN-STATE)	% EARNING A CREDENTIAL IN 2 YEARS	% EARNING A CREDENTIAL IN 4 YEARS
Gender			
Female	11,107	6.6	38.0
Male	9,758	5.0	28.8
Race/Ethnicity			
American Indian or Alaskan Native	118	6.8	28.0
Asian	992	2.5	32.7
African American	880	3.5	18.9
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	42	9.5	33.3
Hispanic	4,452	7.7	27.0
Two or More Races	569	4.0	29.7
White (not Hispanic)	13,812	5.7	37.1

Conclusion

This report summarizes and identifies trends in postsecondary education for previous cohorts of Colorado high school graduates. The report tracks the 2009 through 2016 high school graduating classes and describes student enrollment and progress following graduation. The data are disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity to further identify patterns. These data provide important insight to help the state as it works towards its 66 percent attainment by 2025 goal.

Now in its sixth iteration, the Postsecondary Progress and Outcomes Report has analyzed high school graduate college outcomes over a period of significant economic and demographic change in Colorado. Following the 2008 recession, the report began observing a downward trend in enrollment as the economy improved and more high school graduates opted to enter the workforce. As the enrollment rate flattens, the data show some promising trends related to degree completion.

Moving forward, Colorado is expected to experience growing high school graduate class sizes, while the nationwide number is projected to decrease. Colorado class sizes should peak around 2025 before beginning a downward trend. Over this same time period, the demographics of these graduating classes will continue to change. The 2016 graduating class highlighted in this report was composed of 58.5 percent White students—down from 60 in 2015—while the share of Hispanic students grew from 28 percent in 2015 to 29 percent in 2016. These trends are likely to continue: Hispanics and whites are projected to make up 31 percent and 32 percent of the population by 2025, respectively⁴.

As the demographics of the high school graduates change, reducing gaps in postsecondary outcomes among race/ethnicity groups will be increasingly critical to meeting Colorado's talent development goal and meet its workforce needs. The disaggregation presented in this report underscore the significant discrepancies in postsecondary enrollment and performance that exist across race/ethnicity groups and socioeconomic status. For Colorado to thrive, the attainment gap among minority and majority populations must not only be reduced, but eliminated.

⁴ Bransberger, P. and Michelau, D. (2016). Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates. Retrieved February 15, 2018 at: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57f269e19de4bb8a69b470ae/t/5a4bf94f24a694d32cfe41ab/1514928467746/Knocking2016FINALFORWEB-revised010218.pdf>

About this Report

The Colorado Department of Higher Education and the Colorado Department of Education worked on this report together so high schools and colleges may evaluate their programs and policies and better align the K-12 and higher education systems. To make this information easily accessible to the public, CDHE created a searchable database and individualized district profiles. The project, known as District at a Glance, is housed on CDHE's website at <http://highered.colorado.gov/Data/DistrictHSSummary.aspx>.

Methodology and Data

This report uses data from the Department of Higher Education, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). The introduction of the State Assigned Student ID (SASID) enabled data to be shared between the two state agencies; therefore, data are currently not available prior to the 2009 high school graduating class. The academic years referred to in the report coincide with the following fall entry into college of the high school graduates. For example, the 2016 high school graduates tracked in this report enrolled in college in fall 2016. Please note that the report on the 2010 high school graduates (published in 2012) calculated college matriculation by considering high school graduates who enrolled in college within 18 months of graduating. This year's report continues the methodology that was used in the last several reports and calculates college matriculation based upon those students who enrolled in college in the fall immediately following high school graduation.

Numerous national organizations, such as the National Center for Higher Education Management Statistics, and several states, including Tennessee, Texas, and West Virginia, follow a six-month reporting period to define college-going rates. The majority of students who attend college do so immediately following high school graduation. The college-going rate, therefore, can be seen as an indicator of both the accessibility of and the value of college. Upon high school graduation, students are confronted with several choices including attending college, entering the workforce, or joining the military. Measuring how many students choose to enroll immediately in college reflects how attending college ranks among other post-high school options. Further, looking at college-going rates for different ethnic/racial groups and for low-income students can provide insight into college access issues.

Data Collection: Data were collected through the DHE Student Unit Record Data System (SURDS), and SASIDs were obtained from CDE. Additionally, data from the National Student Clearinghouse were linked to provide out-of-state enrollment information, as well as information on private institutions in Colorado not included in SURDS.

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Data Limitations: Certain data in this report is limited to schools included in SURDS (i.e., all public Colorado colleges and universities, plus Colorado Christian University, Regis University, and the University of Denver).

Contact Information: For more information, please contact: katie.zaback@dhe.state.co.us



Appendix A: District-Level Statistics

Postsecondary Enrollment by District, High School Graduating Class of 2016

* is shown for districts with 10 or less graduates

DISTRICT	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	% STUDENTS ENROLLED IN STATE	% STUDENTS ENROLLED OUT OF STATE	TOTAL % ENROLLED IN COLLEGE	% NOT ENROLLED IN COLLEGE
ACADEMY 20	1,880	50.5	20.2	70.6	29.4
ADAMS 12 FIVE STAR SCHOOLS	2,366	40.5	7.2	47.7	52.3
ADAMS COUNTY 14	419	33.4	1.7	35.1	64.9
ADAMS-ARAPAHOE 28J	2,168	37.5	4.6	42.2	57.8
AGUILAR REORGANIZED 6	8	*	*	*	*
AKRON R-1	16	68.8	6.3	75	25
ALAMOSA RE-11J	121	65.3	6.6	71.9	28.1
ARCHULETA COUNTY 50 JT	68	39.7	16.2	55.9	44.1
ARICKAREE R-2	10	*	*	*	*
ARRIBA-FLAGLER C-20	12	50	25	75	25
ASPEN 1	147	35.4	40.1	75.5	24.5
AULT-HIGHLAND RE-9	74	37.8	18.9	56.8	43.2
BAYFIELD 10 JT-R	66	34.8	15.2	50	50
BENNETT 29J	56	35.7	17.9	53.6	46.4
BETHUNE R-5	5	*	*	*	*
BIG SANDY 100J	22	40.9	13.6	54.5	45.5
BOULDER VALLEY RE 2	2,479	41.5	26.1	67.7	32.3
BRANSON REORGANIZED 82	47	31.9	4.3	36.2	63.8
BRIGGSDALE RE-10	14	50	14.3	64.3	35.7
BRUSH RE-2(J)	93	53.8	10.8	64.5	35.5
BUENA VISTA R-31	76	38.2	10.5	48.7	51.3
BUFFALO RE-4J	30	46.7	10	56.7	43.3

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DISTRICT	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	% STUDENTS ENROLLED IN STATE	% STUDENTS ENROLLED OUT OF STATE	TOTAL % ENROLLED IN COLLEGE	% NOT ENROLLED IN COLLEGE
BURLINGTON RE-6J	51	27.5	13.7	41.2	58.8
BYERS 32J	124	22.6	9.7	32.3	67.7
CALHAN RJ-1	31	45.2	0	45.2	54.8
CAMPO RE-6	3	*	*	*	*
CANON CITY RE-1	235	40	7.7	47.7	52.3
CENTENNIAL BOCES	92	19.6	1.1	20.7	79.3
CENTENNIAL R-1	13	92.3	0	92.3	7.7
CENTER 26 JT	41	56.1	0	56.1	43.9
CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE	938	42.6	10	52.7	47.3
CHERAW 31	11	54.5	18.2	72.7	27.3
CHERRY CREEK 5	3,722	45.8	18.3	64.1	35.9
CHEYENNE COUNTY RE-5	13	30.8	46.2	76.9	23.1
CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN 12	352	49.7	23.3	73	27
CLEAR CREEK RE-1	50	32	4	36	64
COLORADO DIGITAL BOCES	201	30.8	7.5	38.3	61.7
Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind	29	3.4	6.9	10.3	89.7
COLORADO SPRINGS 11	1,858	38.1	5.9	43.9	56.1
COTOPAXI RE-3	6	*	*	*	*
CREEDE SCHOOL DISTRICT	1	*	*	*	*
CRIPPLE CREEK-VICTOR RE-1	18	27.8	11.1	38.9	61.1
CROWLEY COUNTY RE-1-J	37	62.2	8.1	70.3	29.7
CUSTER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT C-1	30	40	3.3	43.3	56.7
DE BEQUE 49JT	8	*	*	*	*
DEER TRAIL 26J	7	*	*	*	*
DEL NORTE C-7	30	60	6.7	66.7	33.3



DISTRICT	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	% STUDENTS ENROLLED IN STATE	% STUDENTS ENROLLED OUT OF STATE	TOTAL % ENROLLED IN COLLEGE	% NOT ENROLLED IN COLLEGE
DELTA COUNTY 50(J)	343	37.3	8.5	45.8	54.2
DENVER COUNTY 1	4,527	40.8	9.4	50.2	49.8
DOLORES COUNTY RE NO.2	16	31.3	12.5	43.8	56.3
DOLORES RE-4A	49	22.4	16.3	38.8	61.2
DOUGLAS COUNTY RE 1	4,183	49.9	21.3	71.3	28.7
DURANGO 9-R	246	37	25.6	62.6	37.4
EADS RE-1	12	50	33.3	83.3	16.7
EAGLE COUNTY RE 50	411	39.2	15.6	54.7	45.3
EAST GRAND 2	88	47.7	13.6	61.4	38.6
EAST OTERO R-1	72	59.7	1.4	61.1	38.9
EATON RE-2	118	52.5	15.3	67.8	32.2
EDISON 54 JT	46	60.9	8.7	69.6	30.4
ELBERT 200	20	15	20	35	65
ELIZABETH C-1	172	43.6	11	54.7	45.3
ELLICOTT 22	42	26.2	19	45.2	54.8
ENGLEWOOD 1	195	30.3	3.6	33.8	66.2
ESTES PARK R-3	74	41.9	10.8	52.7	47.3
EXPEDITIONARY BOCES	22	63.6	4.5	68.2	31.8
FALCON 49	2,074	24	5.4	29.4	70.6
FORT MORGAN RE-3	207	48.8	8.2	57	43
FOUNTAIN 8	416	38	9.4	47.4	52.6
FOWLER R-4J	23	52.2	4.3	56.5	43.5
FREMONT RE-2	59	49.2	3.4	52.5	47.5
FRENCHMAN RE-3	16	50	25	75	25
GARFIELD 16	58	41.4	10.3	51.7	48.3
GARFIELD RE-2	266	47	6.4	53.4	46.6
GENOA-HUGO C113	11	81.8	9.1	90.9	9.1

DISTRICT	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	% STUDENTS ENROLLED IN STATE	% STUDENTS ENROLLED OUT OF STATE	TOTAL % ENROLLED IN COLLEGE	% NOT ENROLLED IN COLLEGE
GILPIN COUNTY RE-1	19	52.6	10.5	63.2	36.8
GRANADA RE-1	12	33.3	8.3	41.7	58.3
GREELEY 6	1,312	40.9	5.9	46.7	53.3
GUNNISON WATERSHED					
RE1J	110	36.4	19.1	55.5	44.5
HANOVER 28	14	50	0	50	50
HARRISON 2	409	41.3	8.3	49.6	50.4
HAXTUN RE-2J	22	50	18.2	68.2	31.8
HAYDEN RE-1	18	27.8	16.7	44.4	55.6
HINSDALE COUNTY RE 1	11	45.5	0	45.5	54.5
HI-PLAINS R-23	9	*	*	*	*
HOEHNE REORGANIZED 3	21	66.7	4.8	71.4	28.6
HOLLY RE-3	19	15.8	36.8	52.6	47.4
HOLYOKE RE-1J	35	40	25.7	65.7	34.3
HUERFANO RE-1	21	47.6	0	47.6	52.4
IDALIA RJ-3	8	*	*	*	*
IGNACIO 11 JT	54	24.1	11.1	35.2	64.8
JEFFERSON COUNTY R-1	5,817	49.1	12.4	61.5	38.5
JOHNSTOWN-MILLIKEN RE-5J	183	44.8	13.1	57.9	42.1
JULESBURG RE-1	83	22.9	7.2	30.1	69.9
KARVAL RE-23	6	*	*	*	*
KIM REORGANIZED 88	2	*	*	*	*
KIOWA C-2	16	50	12.5	62.5	37.5
KIT CARSON R-1	10	*	*	*	*
LA VETA RE-2	15	73.3	6.7	80	20
LAKE COUNTY R-1	57	40.4	3.5	43.9	56.1
LAMAR RE-2	87	52.9	13.8	66.7	33.3

DISTRICT	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	% STUDENTS ENROLLED IN STATE	% STUDENTS ENROLLED OUT OF STATE	TOTAL % ENROLLED IN COLLEGE	% NOT ENROLLED IN COLLEGE
LAS ANIMAS RE-1	24	33.3	12.5	45.8	54.2
LEWIS-PALMER 38	491	51.1	24	75.2	24.8
LIBERTY J-4	8	*	*	*	*
LIMON RE-4J	41	46.3	17.1	63.4	36.6
LITTLETON 6	1,309	47.4	24.2	71.6	28.4
LONE STAR 101	4	*	*	*	*
MANCOS RE-6	27	51.9	18.5	70.4	29.6
MANITOU SPRINGS 14	120	48.3	12.5	60.8	39.2
MANZANOLA 3J	12	41.7	0	41.7	58.3
MAPLETON 1	511	39.5	6.7	46.2	53.8
MC CLAVE RE-2	21	52.4	14.3	66.7	33.3
MEEKER RE1	37	32.4	18.9	51.4	48.6
MESA COUNTY VALLEY 51	1,378	40.9	9.1	50	50
MIAMI/YODER 60 JT	12	25	16.7	41.7	58.3
MOFFAT 2	16	25	12.5	37.5	62.5
MOFFAT COUNTY RE:NO 1	116	37.9	11.2	49.1	50.9
MONTE VISTA C-8	84	56	1.2	57.1	42.9
MONTEZUMA-CORTEZ RE-1	169	19.5	14.8	34.3	65.7
MONTROSE COUNTY RE-1J	408	35	10.3	45.3	54.7
MOUNTAIN BOCES	55	14.5	3.6	18.2	81.8
MOUNTAIN VALLEY RE 1	12	8.3	0	8.3	91.7
NORTH CONEJOS RE-1J	73	49.3	2.7	52.1	47.9
NORTH PARK R-1	17	47.1	47.1	94.1	5.9
NORWOOD R-2J	20	25	30	55	45
OTIS R-3	13	53.8	23.1	76.9	23.1
OURAY R-1	14	28.6	35.7	64.3	35.7
PARK COUNTY RE-2	22	50	4.5	54.5	45.5



DISTRICT	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	% STUDENTS ENROLLED IN STATE	% STUDENTS ENROLLED OUT OF STATE	TOTAL % ENROLLED IN COLLEGE	% NOT ENROLLED IN COLLEGE
PAWNEE RE-12	4	*	*	*	*
PEYTON 23 JT	58	29.3	3.4	32.8	67.2
PLAINVIEW RE-2	2	*	*	*	*
PLATEAU RE-5	16	31.3	37.5	68.8	31.3
PLATEAU VALLEY 50	84	10.7	2.4	13.1	86.9
PLATTE CANYON 1	68	55.9	5.9	61.8	38.2
PLATTE VALLEY RE-7	76	43.4	18.4	61.8	38.2
POUDRE R-1	1,922	44.2	17.2	61.3	38.7
PRAIRIE RE-11	13	38.5	38.5	76.9	23.1
PRIMERO REORGANIZED 2	10	*	*	*	*
PRITCHETT RE-3	8	*	*	*	*
PUEBLO CITY 60	894	53.4	3.4	56.7	43.3
PUEBLO COUNTY 70	587	48.4	7.8	56.2	43.8
RANGELY RE-4	20	55	5	60	40
REVERE SCHOOL DISTRICT	13	30.8	23.1	53.8	46.2
RIDGWAY R-2	23	30.4	43.5	73.9	26.1
ROARING FORK RE-1	348	42	14.9	56.9	43.1
ROCKY FORD R-2	45	37.8	2.2	40	60
SALIDA R-32	63	47.6	14.3	61.9	38.1
SAN JUAN BOCES	8	*	*	*	*
SANFORD 6J	26	57.7	19.2	76.9	23.1
SANGRE DE CRISTO RE-22J	22	81.8	0	81.8	18.2
SARGENT RE-33J	30	70	10	80	20
SCHOOL DISTRICT 27J	908	43.1	11	54.1	45.9
SHERIDAN 2	87	27.6	0	27.6	72.4
SIERRA GRANDE R-30	14	78.6	0	78.6	21.4
SILVERTON 1	3	*	*	*	*



DISTRICT	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	% STUDENTS ENROLLED IN STATE	% STUDENTS ENROLLED OUT OF STATE	TOTAL % ENROLLED IN COLLEGE	% NOT ENROLLED IN COLLEGE
SOUTH CONEJOS RE-10	21	52.4	4.8	57.1	42.9
SOUTH ROUTT RE 3	24	37.5	29.2	66.7	33.3
SPRINGFIELD RE-4	23	52.2	26.1	78.3	21.7
ST VRAIN VALLEY RE 1J	1,764	44.5	14.6	59.1	40.9
STEAMBOAT SPRINGS RE-2	165	42.4	29.7	72.1	27.9
STRASBURG 31J	81	45.7	12.3	58	42
STRATTON R-4	15	26.7	26.7	53.3	46.7
SUMMIT RE-1	177	54.2	17.5	71.8	28.2
SWINK 33	29	82.8	3.4	86.2	13.8
TELLURIDE R-1	61	31.1	32.8	63.9	36.1
THOMPSON R2-J	1,059	37.3	12.7	50	50
TRINIDAD 1	52	57.7	5.8	63.5	36.5
VALLEY RE-1	140	51.4	14.3	65.7	34.3
VILAS RE-5	1	*	*	*	*
WALSH RE-1	11	36.4	18.2	54.5	45.5
WELD COUNTY RE-1	102	48	7.8	55.9	44.1
WELD COUNTY S/D RE-8	118	38.1	0.8	39	61
WELD COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-3J	123	49.6	8.1	57.7	42.3
WELDON VALLEY RE-20(J)	19	68.4	5.3	73.7	26.3
WEST END RE-2	13	15.4	7.7	23.1	76.9
WEST GRAND 1-JT	24	20.8	16.7	37.5	62.5
WESTMINSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	482	32.2	2.5	34.6	65.4
WIDEFIELD 3	549	34.4	5.8	40.3	59.7
WIGGINS RE-50(J)	33	51.5	21.2	72.7	27.3
WILEY RE-13 JT	20	50	10	60	40
WINDSOR RE-4	272	53.3	14	67.3	32.7



DISTRICT	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	% STUDENTS ENROLLED IN STATE	% STUDENTS ENROLLED OUT OF STATE	TOTAL % ENROLLED IN COLLEGE	% NOT ENROLLED IN COLLEGE
WOODLAND PARK RE-2	179	36.9	9.5	46.4	53.6
WOODLIN R-104	4	*	*	*	*
WRAY RD-2	45	51.1	13.3	64.4	35.6
YUMA 1	50	30	26	56	44

