



## National College Progression Rates

**For high schools participating in the National Student Clearinghouse StudentTracker service**

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Our fourth annual report provides new data on high school graduates' college access, persistence, and completion outcomes. The data in this report are presented for students from different types of high schools, such as low versus higher income and low versus high minority, to enable more focused discussions, particularly about low income and minority students traditionally not well served by higher education.

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## **Introduction**

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The fourth annual High School Benchmarks Report provides new data on high school graduates' college access, persistence, and completion outcomes. The data in this report are presented for students from different types of high schools, such as low versus higher income and low versus high minority, to enable more focused discussions, particularly about low income and minority students traditionally not well served by higher education.

High school context can lead students to make different educational choices such as enrolling or not enrolling in college or what college to attend (CLASP, 2015; Wolniak & Engberg, 2010; Hurwitz, Smith, Howell, & Pender, 2012; Roderick, Coca & Nagaoka, 2011). High schools are an important source of information for students making postsecondary education plans (Bell, Rowan-Kenyon, & Perna, 2009; Hossler, Schmidt, & Vesper, 1999). They also have a lasting effect on students, with some high school context variables continuing to be important for students even after they enroll in college (Black, Lincoln, Cullinove, & Vernon, 2012).

Some data on the college-going rates of high school students at the national level are available (Kena et al., 2016). Many schools and districts also have access to timely reports on the college access, persistence, and completion rates of their own graduates through the StudentTracker® service of the National Student Clearinghouse. This report is designed to enable those schools to benchmark their students' outcomes to those of other schools with similar characteristics and that also use the StudentTracker service. Using the results reported here, high schools and districts can place their own StudentTracker results into context with the college access, persistence, and completion rates for schools with similar student populations in similar locales across the country.

This is a descriptive study. No causal inferences should be made based on these results alone. The data on which this report is based do not comprise a nationally representative sample of schools or high school graduates. Yet, it is a large and broad sample, covering about five million students from public and private high schools for five high school graduating classes, or a quarter to one-third of all U.S. high school graduates each year. It includes data from all 50 states. In addition to providing reasonable benchmarks for individual schools and districts using StudentTracker reports, we believe it also significantly contributes to discussions among practitioners and policymakers at the school, district, state, and national levels about equitable access to, and attainment in, postsecondary education.

### **What To Find In This Report**

The report provides college enrollment, persistence, and completion outcomes for public non-charter; public charter; and private high school graduates.

It is important to note that the sample sizes for charter and private high schools are relatively smaller than those of the public non-charter schools. Therefore, the results for charter and private schools are subject to higher variance and uncertainty than the results for public non-charter schools. For this reason, we do not recommend comparing these categories or using the results to draw conclusions about the differences between the school types.

For students of public non-charter high schools, all outcomes are reported in nine categories. These categories are defined by the aggregate characteristics of each high school, not by the characteristics of individual students, as follows:

- Low income schools
  - High poverty schools
- Higher income schools
  - Low poverty schools
- Low minority schools
- High minority schools
- Urban schools
- Suburban schools
- Rural schools

For the purpose of this report:

- Low income schools are defined as schools where at least 50 percent of the students are eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch.
- High minority schools are defined as schools where at least 40 percent of the students are black or Hispanic.
- Locale is defined by the NCES urban-centric locale code. Schools with a code from 11 to 13 are defined as urban. Schools with a code from 21 to 23 are defined as suburban. And those with a code from 31 to 43, covering both town and rural areas, are defined as rural.

For schools in low income and higher income categories, we also have outcomes for graduates from a subset of low income schools defined as high-poverty schools (schools where at least 75 percent of the student population are eligible for free or reduced price lunch) and a subset of higher income schools as low-poverty (schools where less than 25 percent of the student population are eligible for free or reduced price lunch). Selected outcomes for high-and-low poverty schools are highlighted in the main part of the report. All outcomes can be found in Appendix C. Further breakdowns, not highlighted in the narrative of the report, are also provided in Appendix C.

A complete explanation of definitions can be found in Appendix A.

This report presents postsecondary outcomes for the high school graduating classes of 2009 and from 2012 through 2015. The tables and figures present:

- Total college-going rate, including:
  - Enrollment in the first fall after high school graduation
  - Enrollment at any time in the first year after high school graduation
  - Enrollment at any time in the first two years after high school graduation
- Persistence from first to second year of college. This is the number of students who remained enrolled for their second year of college as a percent of the number of students who enrolled in during the first year after high school graduation. It includes students who may have transferred or re-enrolled at a different institution from the one where they started.
- Six-year college completion rates, both overall and in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields in particular, expressed as the percentage of high school graduates who complete a degree at any college within six years of high school graduation.

College enrollment rates are calculated for the most recent two graduating classes for which data are currently available. Thus, the first fall outcome has been calculated for the classes of 2015 and 2014, the first year outcome calculated for the classes of 2014 and 2013, and the first two years' outcomes calculated for the classes of 2013 and 2012. The persistence rates were calculated for the high school graduating class of 2013. The six-year college completion rates were calculated for the high school graduating class of 2009. Results are also broken down by the type of college attended: public and private institutions, two- and four-year institutions, as well as in-state and out-of-state institutions.

### **Important Note On The Data**

The data on high school graduates for this report were drawn from a voluntary sample of high schools participating in the StudentTracker for High Schools service (STHS) administered by the National Student Clearinghouse (The Clearinghouse). High schools participating in this service pay a small annual fee (typically \$425) to receive an extensive set of analytic data reports, three times per year, detailing the postsecondary access and success outcomes for up to eight cohorts of their graduating classes.

This is not a nationally representative sample of schools or of high school graduates. Compared to all U.S. high schools, participating STHS schools tend to have greater representation among schools with more low income students, more minority enrollments, and more urban locales.

All types of high schools, including public non-charter, public charter, and private schools can participate in the Clearinghouse STHS service. The sample includes schools from all 50 states and the majority of the 100 largest districts in the U.S., with a total of about five million high school graduates or a quarter to one-third of all public high school graduates each year (for more detailed information about the sample, see Appendix A).

The data on college enrollments for this report, and for the STHS reports that the participating high schools receive, were drawn from the National Student Clearinghouse. The National Student Clearinghouse is the nation's trusted source for education verification and student educational outcomes research.

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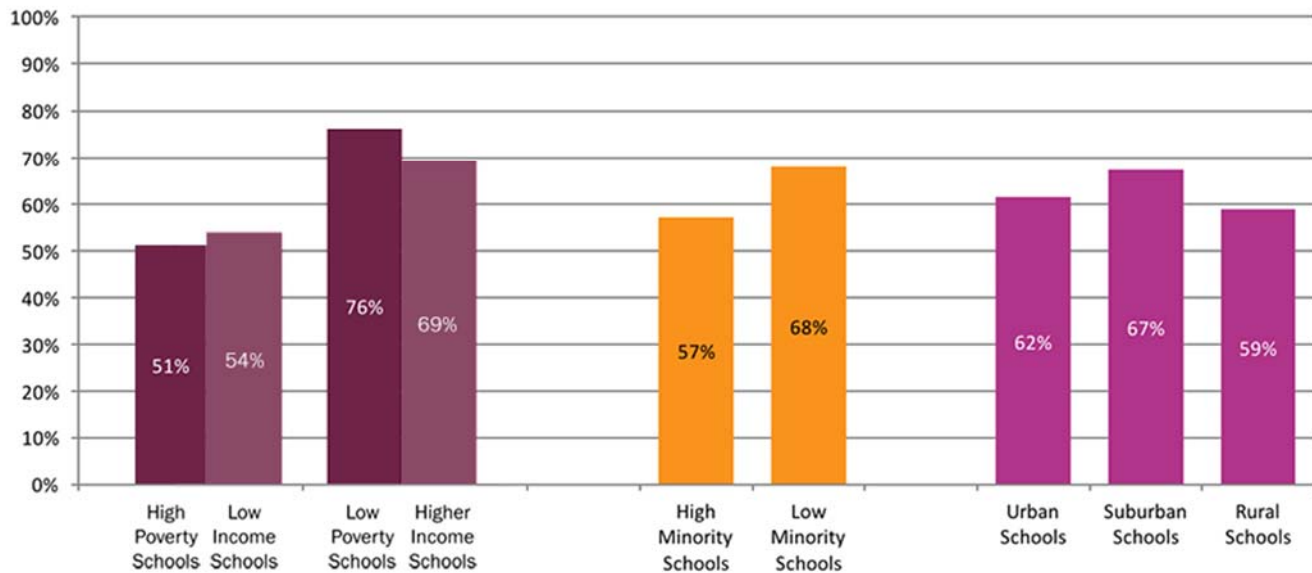
## **Section 1: National Results**

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High schools are interested in their former students' college enrollment and success patterns. This section describes the results on one measure of college attendance (enrollment) and two measures of college success (persistence and graduation) for high schools that serve different populations. **Readers should remember that these results are insufficient support for any claims about what factors do or do not cause higher college enrollment, persistence, or graduation.**

## Enrollment

**Figure A. College Enrollment Rates in the First Fall after High School Graduation, Class of 2015, Public Non-Charter Schools**



Immediate college enrollment is perhaps the outcome on which high schools have the most direct impact. **Figure A** shows the rates of immediate college enrollment in the first fall after high school graduation for the class of 2015. Income was the strongest correlate with immediate college enrollment. Students from higher income schools were more likely to enroll immediately than students from lower income schools (69 percent and 54 percent, respectively). The gap became even larger when we examined this outcome for graduates of high-poverty schools (where at least 75 percent of the student population was eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch, or FRPL) and low-poverty schools (where less than 25 percent of their student population was eligible for FRPL). A 25 percentage point difference, exists between high- and low-poverty schools (51 percent and 76 percent, respectively).

The percentage of minority students at schools was also a strong correlate. Students from low minority high schools were more likely to enroll immediately than those from high schools with higher minority populations (68 percent and 57 percent, respectively). Location was not as strongly correlated, but still demonstrated some relationship with immediate college enrollment. Students from suburban schools (67 percent) were more likely to immediately enroll than those from urban (62 percent) or rural (59 percent) schools.

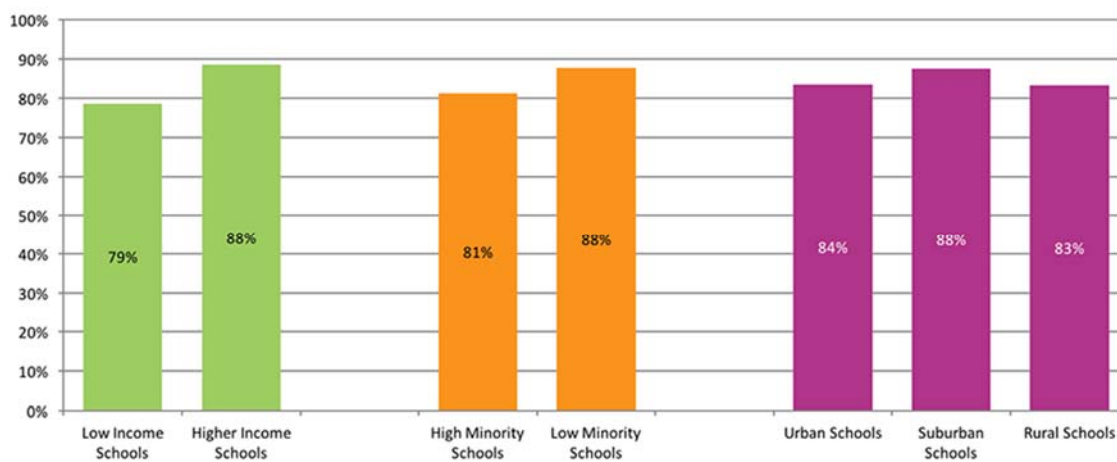
These patterns are consistent for multiple graduating classes (2014 and 2015) and when the data are expanded to include students who delay their enrollment until the spring and summer terms (enrollment in the first year) or the following year (enrollment in the first two years) (see Appendix C, Tables 2-5). Across all groups, enrollment rates increased markedly when we counted all enrollments in the first year after graduation, compared to the first

fall enrollments (Appendix C, Tables 3 and 4). Students attending two-year institutions drove most of the increases, which is not surprising as two-year institutions generally allow more flexibility in start times.

Enrollments at out-of-state institutions were higher for students from higher income and low minority high schools. Fifteen percent of the college-going graduates from higher income schools enrolled at out-of-state institutions, compared to just five percent of those from low income high schools. Fifteen percent of graduates from low minority high schools enrolled in an out-of-state institution, compared to just 7 percent of graduates from high minority high schools (see Appendix C, Table 1).

## Persistence

**Figure B. Persistence Rates from First to Second Year of College, Class of 2013, Public Non-Charter Schools**

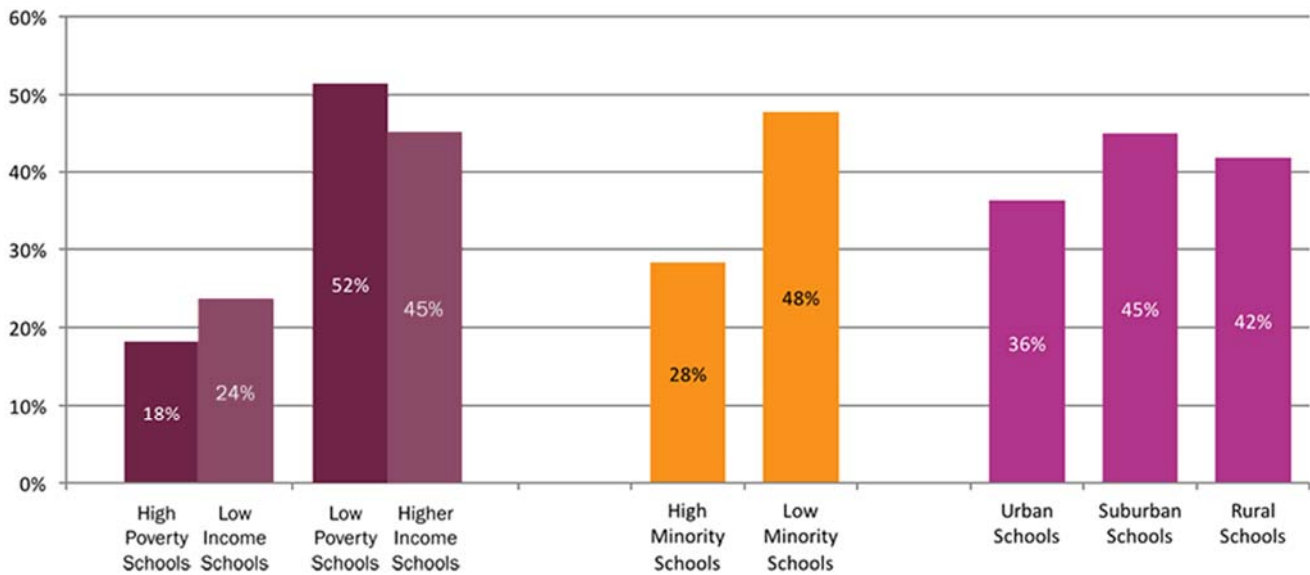


**Figure B** presents persistence rates from first to second year of college for the high school graduating class of 2013. Persistence rates for students from all types of high schools presented in Figure B range from 79 to 88 percent. As with enrollment, the percentage of low-income students in a school was the strongest correlate with persistence. Eighty-eight percent of college-bound students from higher income high schools remained enrolled for their second year, compared to only 79 percent from lower income high schools. The percentage of minority students in a school was also a strong correlate. Students from low minority high schools had higher rates of persistence (88 percent) than those from high minority high schools (81 percent). High school location was not as strongly correlated with persistence: Students from suburban high schools (88 percent) were more likely to return for their second year of college than those from rural (83 percent) and urban (84 percent) high schools.

Regardless of high school type, persistence rates among students who enrolled in private colleges and universities were higher than those in public institutions. Persistence rates for all students were also higher in four-year institutions than in two-year institutions and at out-of-state institutions versus in-state institutions (see Appendix C, Table 7).

## Completion

**Figure C. College Completion Rates Six Years after High School Graduation, Class of 2009, Public Non-Charter Schools**



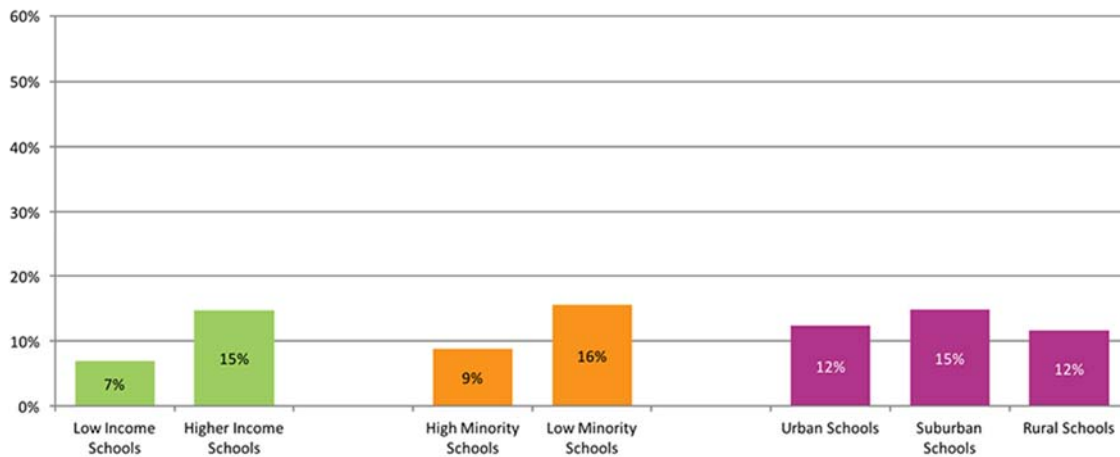
The differences in enrollment and persistence among students from different types of high schools become even more pronounced in the rates of college completion. **Figure C** presents the rates of college completion as a percentage of all students in the high school graduating class, not just those who enrolled in college. Again, income is the strongest correlate. Forty-five percent of all students from higher income high schools in the class of 2009 completed a college degree within six years of their graduation, compared to 24 percent of students from lower income schools. As it was the case in the immediate college enrollment rates, the achievement gap is even larger among graduates of high- and low-poverty schools. Only 18 percent of graduates from high-poverty high schools graduated college within six years of finishing high school, compared to 52 percent of low poverty school graduates.

The relationship of minority status of school with completion was equally strong. Forty-eight percent of students from low minority high schools completed a college degree within six years, compared to only 28 percent from high minority schools. For school location, urban students lagged behind: 36 percent of students from urban schools completed a degree within six years of graduation, compared to 42 percent from rural schools and 45 percent from suburban schools.

## STEM Completion

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**Figure D. College Completion Rates Six Years after High School Graduation, STEM Field of Study, Class of 2009, Public Non-Charter Schools**



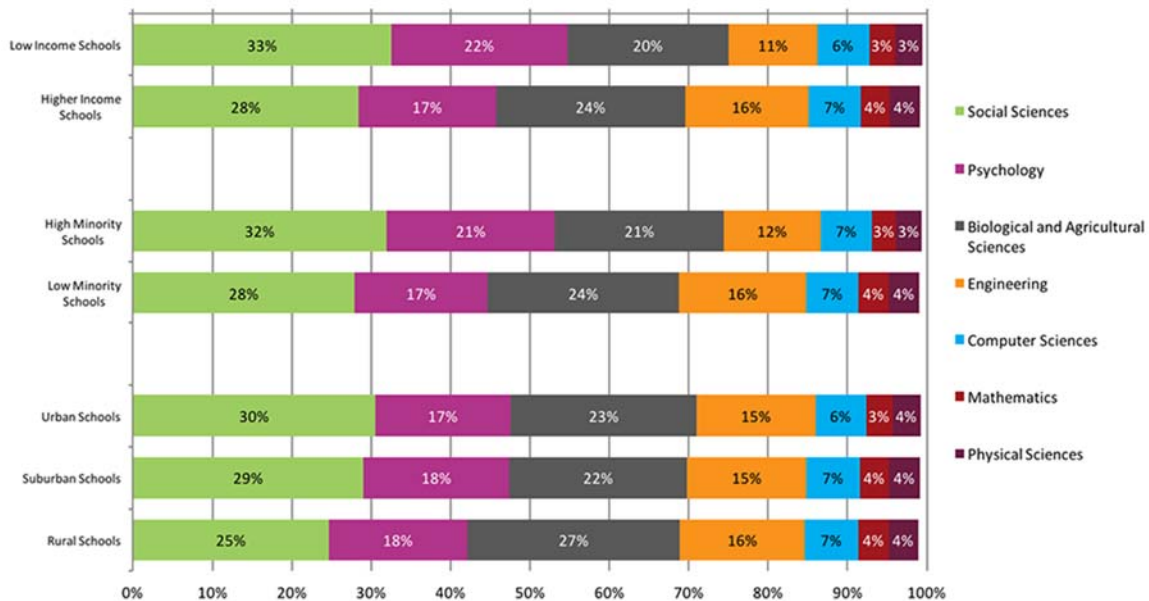
A report by the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology emphasized the critical importance of STEM education as a factor by which the U.S. can remain a world leader (PCAST, 2010). It states that the effectiveness of U.S. STEM education will determine whether we are able to find solutions to challenges in health, energy, and other fields. A STEM degree is also one of the best ways by which a student can ensure a strong economic future for herself/himself. The U.S. Department of Commerce projects that STEM occupations will have higher job growth and future earnings than non-STEM occupations (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2011).

**Figure D** presents the rates at which graduates from different types of high schools in the Class of 2009 completed a STEM degree within six years of high school graduation.<sup>1</sup> The percentages of both minority and low-income students in a school were strongly associated with STEM degree completion. Fifteen percent of students from higher income schools, but only seven percent of students from lower income schools, completed STEM degrees within six years of high school graduation. Similarly, 16 percent of students from low minority high schools completed a STEM degree within six years, compared to nine percent of students from high minority schools. The relationship between high school location and STEM degree completion was less pronounced. Fifteen percent of students from suburban high schools completed STEM degrees, compared to 12 percent of students from both rural and urban high schools.

<sup>1</sup>Figure D presents the number of students attaining degrees as a percentage of the number that graduated high school. The definition of STEM used in this analysis is based on a listing of six-digit CIP codes used by the National Science Foundation and includes social sciences and psychology (for a complete list, see Appendix A).



**Figure E. Distribution of Fields of Study among STEM Completers, Class of 2009, Public Non-Charter Schools**



**Figure E** shows STEM degree completion by field of study and reveals further patterns of disparities among students from different types of high schools, within the group of STEM completers. The majority of STEM degrees for students from both low income (55 percent) and high minority (53 percent) high schools are awarded in either psychology or the social sciences, compared to 45 percent for those from higher income and low minority schools. Students from higher income and low minority schools who completed STEM degrees were more likely to do so in physical sciences, mathematics, engineering, and biological and agricultural sciences.

### Observations Based on All National Results

Taken as a whole, the results strongly suggest that achievement gaps, based on the type of high school that students graduate from, exist in college enrollment, persistence, completion, and STEM completion. Students who attend high schools that serve low income or high minority populations are less likely to start college than their peers from higher income and low minority schools. Those who do enroll appear to fall further behind as time passes, becoming less likely to persist into the second year and, ultimately, to graduate. Students from disadvantaged high schools who do graduate from college are less likely to earn a degree in a STEM major, particularly in engineering and biological sciences.

## Section 2: Results by High School Type

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### Guidance on How to Interpret the Outcomes in this Section

This section provides detailed results for schools in low income and higher income categories as well as in high poverty and low poverty categories.



Outcomes are provided in two different ways: student-weighted totals and school percentile distributions.

Tables with student-weighted totals are designed to enable individual schools and districts to compare their StudentTracker results directly to the national benchmarks. Totals are calculated by computing the mean among all schools within the category, weighted by the size of each school's graduating class. By placing their own results into the context of these aggregate totals, practitioners can better understand the meaning of their students' college access and persistence outcomes.

Tables with school percentile distributions are designed to enable individual schools and districts to identify the approximate percentile rank of their students' college-going rate. These distributions are calculated by ranking schools on outcome without considering school size or number of graduates. Thus, if a school's college-going rate is the same as the rate at the 75th percentile, the school is said to have a college-going rate equal to or higher than that of 75 percent of all StudentTracker schools in that category.

### Results Tables & Figures

- [Public Non-Charter High Schools](#)
  - [Public Non-Charter High Schools by Poverty Level](#)
- [Public Charter High Schools](#)
- [Private High Schools](#)

## References

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## Appendix A: Methodological Notes

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This report contains college enrollment, persistence and completion outcomes for high school graduating classes of 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015. The results presented in the report center on the following outcomes:

1. College enrollment in the
  - i. first fall after high school graduation;
  - ii. first year after high school graduation; and
  - iii. first two years after high school graduation.
2. Persistence from the first to the second year of college.
3. College completion within six years after high school graduation.

The outcomes are presented by type of college attended, including public and private institutions, two-year and four-year institutions, and in-state and out-of-state institutions. These characteristics are defined by IPEDS Institutional Characteristics data as of 2014. In-state designations are defined relative to the state in which the high school is located, not the residency of individual students.

The high school dataset used for this report is based on a voluntary sample and is not a nationally representative sample of schools or of high school graduates. High school diploma data are submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse (the Clearinghouse) by schools and districts that participate in the StudentTracker for High Schools (STHS) service. High schools participating in this service pay a small fee (typically \$425) to receive a packet of reports with postsecondary access and success outcomes for their graduating classes. In general, the participating schools tend to have greater representation among schools with lower income, higher minority enrollments, and urban locales.

This report is based on the data submitted to the Clearinghouse on graduating classes of 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015. Table A1 below shows the number of participating high schools and high school graduates included in this report compared to the total number of U.S. high schools and high school graduates. All types of high schools, including both public and private schools, participate in the Clearinghouse STHS service.

**Table A1. Number of Public, Non-Charter High Schools and Public, Non-Charter High School Graduates Included in the Report**

Academic Year <sup>1</sup>	Number of Participating High Schools	Percent of All U.S.		Total N (Number of graduates in participating high schools)
		Public High Schools <sup>2</sup>	Percent of U.S. Grade 12 Enrollment Represented <sup>3</sup>	
2008-2009	3,018	19%	27.1%	760,968
2011-2012	4,029	24%	33.5%	960,344
2012-2013	4,092	24%	34.1%	962,434
2013-2014	4,071	24%	33.6%	951,437
2014-2015	3,701	22%	30.1%	840,534

<sup>1</sup>Academic year is defined as the period between September 1-August 31.

<sup>2</sup>The total number of schools used in the denominator of this calculation was obtained from NCES' Elementary and Secondary Information System (ELSi). The public school information is available from the Common Core of Data through 2013-14. The number of public, non-charter schools for 2014-15 is an estimate, equal to the number from 2013-14.

<sup>3</sup>The numbers used in both the denominator and numerator of this calculation were obtained from NCES' Elementary and Secondary Information System (ELSi). Grade 12 enrollment information is available from the Common Core of Data through 2013-14. The numbers for 2014-15 are estimates, equal to the numbers from 2013-14.

**Table A2. Number of Public, Charter High Schools and Public, Charter High School Graduates Included in the Report**

Academic Year <sup>1</sup>	Number of Participating High Schools	Percent of All U.S. Public High Schools <sup>2</sup>	Percent of U.S. Grade 12 Enrollment Represented <sup>3</sup>	Total N (Number of graduates in participating high schools)
2008-2009	193	15%	19.0%	12,266
2011-2012	336	20%	24.1%	24,670
2012-2013	380	21%	25.8%	28,055
2013-2014	403	21%	25.0%	30,629
2014-2015	323	17%	22.4%	30,620

<sup>1</sup>Academic year is defined as the period between September 1-August 31.

<sup>2</sup>The total number of schools used in the denominator of this calculation was obtained from NCES' Elementary and Secondary Information System (ELSi). The public school information is available from the Common Core of Data through 2013-14. The number of public, charter schools for 2014-15 is an estimate, equal to the number from 2013-14.

<sup>3</sup>The numbers used in both the denominator and numerator of this calculation were obtained from NCES' Elementary and Secondary Information System (ELSi). Grade 12 enrollment information is available from the Common Core of Data through 2013-14. The numbers for 2014-15 are estimates, equal to the numbers from 2013-14.

**Table A3. Number of Private High Schools and Private High School Graduates Included in the Report**

<b>Academic Year<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Number of Participating High Schools</b>	<b>Percent of All U.S. Private High Schools<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Percent of U.S. Grade 12 Enrollment Represented<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Total N (Number of graduates in participating high schools)</b>
2008-2009	257	4%	14.4%	37,164
2011-2012	304	5%	16.5%	41,171
2012-2013	291	5%	15.6%	38,443
2013-2014	259	4%	13.9%	33,874
2014-2015	189	3%	9.9%	24,312

<sup>1</sup>Academic year is defined as the period between September 1-August 31.

<sup>2</sup>The total number of schools used in the denominator of this calculation was obtained from NCES' Elementary and Secondary Information System (ELSi). The private school information is available from the Private School Survey, which is collected every two years through 2011-12. The number of private schools for 2010-11, 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 are estimates, equal to the number from the previous available year.

<sup>3</sup>The numbers used in both the denominator and numerator of this calculation were obtained from NCES' Elementary and Secondary Information System (ELSi). Grade 12 enrollment information is available from the Private School Survey, which is collected every two years through 2011-12. The numbers for 2010-11, 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 are estimates, equal to the numbers from the previous available year.

## **Definitions of Public, Non-Charter High School Categories**

We used the Common Core of Data (CCD) to construct the sampling frame of schools. The CCD is the Department of Education's primary database on public elementary and secondary education in the United States. From the CCD, we created a sample frame that contains all regular public schools with a 12th grade.

In order to enable public, non-charter high schools to compare their own outcomes with those of similar high schools, the outcomes in this report are presented on the basis of school-level characteristics: low income and higher income (also high poverty and low poverty), high minority and low minority, urban and rural. Membership in these categories for each academic year is based on CCD data for the corresponding year with one exception: for the academic year of 2014-2015, the categories are based on the information from the same source for 2013-2014.

Low income schools are defined as schools where at least 50 percent of the entire student population (not just graduating seniors) is eligible for free or reduced price lunch (a subset of low income schools, where at least 75 percent of the student population are eligible for free or reduced price lunch, is defined as high poverty schools). Minority schools are defined as those schools where at least 40 percent of the students are Black or Hispanic. Locale is defined by the NCES urban-centric locale code. Schools with a code from 11 to 13 are defined as urban. Schools with a code from 21 to 23 are defined as suburban. And those with a code 31 to 43, covering both town and rural areas, are defined as rural.

Combinations of these characteristics resulted in nine groups of high schools. Thus, the outcomes are presented for the following categories of high schools:

- Low income schools
  - High poverty schools
- Higher income schools
  - Low poverty schools
- Low minority schools
- High minority schools
- Urban schools
- Suburban schools
- Rural schools



**Table A4. Number of Public, Non-Charter High Schools and Public, Non-Charter High School Graduates Included in the Report by Category of High Schools**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Number of Participating High Schools</b>	<b>Percent of U.S. Grade 12 Enrollment Represented</b>	<b>Number of States Represented</b>	<b>Total N (Number of graduates in sample)</b>
<b>Low Income Schools</b>	2008-2009	623	25%	40	135,400
	2011-2012	1,374	32%	46	263,806
	2012-2013	1,635	35%	48	344,117
	2013-2014	1,682	34%	48	367,155
	2014-2015	1,476	30%	47	301,152
<b>Higher Income Schools</b>	2008-2009	2,395	28%	49	625,568
	2011-2012	2,655	34%	51	696,538
	2012-2013	2,457	33%	50	618,317
	2013-2014	2,389	33%	49	584,282
	2014-2015	2,225	30%	49	539,382
<b>High Minority Schools</b>	2008-2009	871	31%	39	252,508
	2011-2012	1,407	39%	41	381,413
	2012-2013	1,462	41%	41	385,046
	2013-2014	1,489	40%	43	403,401
	2014-2015	1,271	35%	42	330,501

	2008-2009	2,147	26%	49	508,460
	2011-2012	2,622	30%	50	578,931
<b>Low Minority Schools</b>	2012-2013	2,630	31%	49	577,388
	2013-2014	2,582	30%	49	548,036
	2014-2015	2,430	28%	49	510,033
	2008-2009	928	37%	45	269,473
	2011-2012	1,220	47%	50	339,174
<b>Urban Schools</b>	2012-2013	1,287	48%	49	359,348
	2013-2014	1,301	48%	49	359,635
	2014-2015	1,080	40%	49	298,571
	2008-2009	916	34%	45	341,692
	2011-2012	1,070	39%	44	396,581
<b>Suburban Schools</b>	2012-2013	1,239	38%	44	440,485
	2013-2014	1,206	37%	44	431,539
	2014-2015	1,173	34%	44	392,365
	2008-2009	1,174	14%	46	149,803
	2011-2012	1,739	20%	49	224,589
<b>Rural Schools</b>	2012-2013	1,566	17%	47	162,601
	2013-2014	1,564	17%	48	160,263
	2014-2015	1,448	16%	46	149,598

The numbers used in both the denominator and numerator of this calculation were obtained from NCES' Elementary and Secondary Information System (ELSi). The denominator is the number of grade 12 enrollments for all schools in a particular category of high schools. The numerator is the number of grade 12 enrollments for participating public high schools in the category. Grade 12 enrollment information is available from the Common Core of Data through 2013-14. The numbers for 2014-15 are estimates, equal to the numbers from 2013-14.

High poverty schools are defined as those where at least 75 percent of the student population is eligible for free or reduced price lunch. Low poverty schools are defined as those where less than 25 percent of the student population is eligible for free or reduced price lunch.

**Table A5. Number of Public, Non-Charter High Schools and Public, Non-Charter High School Graduates in High Poverty and Low Poverty Schools Included in the Report**

Group	Academic Year	Number of Participating High Schools	Percent of U.S. Grade 12 Enrollment Represented	Number of States Represented	Total N (Number of graduates in sample)
<b>High Poverty Schools</b>	2008-2009	147	23%	25	26,169
	2011-2012	526	40%	41	86,023
	2012-2013	660	43%	42	125,245
	2013-2014	712	40%	43	141,693
	2014-2015	604	35%	41	113,527
<b>Low Poverty Schools</b>	2008-2009	1,148	32%	47	360,913
	2011-2012	1,123	40%	49	362,462
	2012-2013	983	39%	47	305,609
	2013-2014	916	38%	47	281,929
	2014-2015	798	34%	47	250,338

## **Postsecondary Data**

College enrollment, persistence, and completion outcomes are determined by matching the graduate files received from high schools each year, to the postsecondary enrollment data held by the National Student Clearinghouse. The National Student Clearinghouse is a unique and trusted source for higher education enrollment and degree verification. Currently, Clearinghouse data include more than 3,600 postsecondary institutions and 98 percent of U.S. postsecondary enrollments (for detailed coverage of postsecondary enrollments see Appendix B). Because the database is comprised of student-level data, researchers can use it to link concurrent as well as consecutive enrollments of individual students at multiple institutions — a capability that distinguishes the Clearinghouse data from national databases built with institution-level data.

In order to preserve comparability to the reports that schools and districts receive on their graduates' college access, persistence, and completion rates through the Clearinghouse's StudentTracker service, results have not been adjusted to account for a student's outcome not being captured due to noncoverage by Clearinghouse data.

## **Definitions of Outcomes**

**College enrollment in the first fall after high school graduation:** Percentage of high school students who enrolled in a two- or four-year postsecondary institution in the fall semester immediately following graduation. The fall semester immediately following graduation is defined as any enrollment that occurs between August 15 and October 31.

**College enrollment in the first year after high school graduation:** Percentage of high school students who enrolled in a two- or four-year postsecondary institution in the academic year immediately following graduation. The first year after high school includes any enrollment that occurs between August 15 of the graduation year and August 14 of the following year.

**College enrollment in the first two years after high school graduation:** Percentage of high school students who enrolled in a two- or four-year postsecondary institution in the first two years following graduation. The first two years after high school includes any enrollment that occurs between August 15 of the graduation year and August 14 of the second year.

**Persistence from first to second year of college:** Percentage of students enrolled in the first year after high school graduation who remained enrolled in postsecondary education in the second year. This is the percentage of students who re-enrolled at any postsecondary institution, not necessarily the same one they started in. Thus, it is different from the typical measure of retention at the same institution.

**College completion within six years after high school graduation:** Percentage of high school graduates who attained a degree in a two- or four-year postsecondary institution in the six academic years immediately following high school graduation. Only associate, bachelor's, and advanced degrees are counted in these rates. Certificates are not included.

## **STEM College Completions**

Analysis is based on degree records that were awarded to students within six years of high school graduation. Only associate, bachelor's, and advanced degrees are considered. Certificates are not included. The field of study, whenever reported by the postsecondary institution, is mapped to the NCES' Classification of Instructional

Programs (CIP) code. NCES classifies instructional programs by a six-digit CIP code at the most granular level and organizes them into CIP families by their two-digit prefix.

- Biological and Agricultural Sciences
- Computer Sciences
- Earth, Atmospheric, and Ocean Sciences
- Engineering
- Mathematics
- Physical Sciences
- Psychology
- Social Sciences

If a student is awarded more than one degree and at least one of them is in a STEM discipline, the student is counted as a STEM completer. If a student is awarded more than one STEM degree, only the earliest is considered for the analysis of STEM disciplines.

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## **Appendix B: Postsecondary Coverage Tables**

- [Download Postsecondary Coverage Tables](#) (.xlsx)
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## **Appendix C:**

- [Download National Results Tables](#) (.xlsx)
  - [Download Results for Public Non-Charter Schools by Additional Breakdowns](#) (.xlsx)
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