

The College Completion Agenda 2010 Progress Report



Acknowledgments

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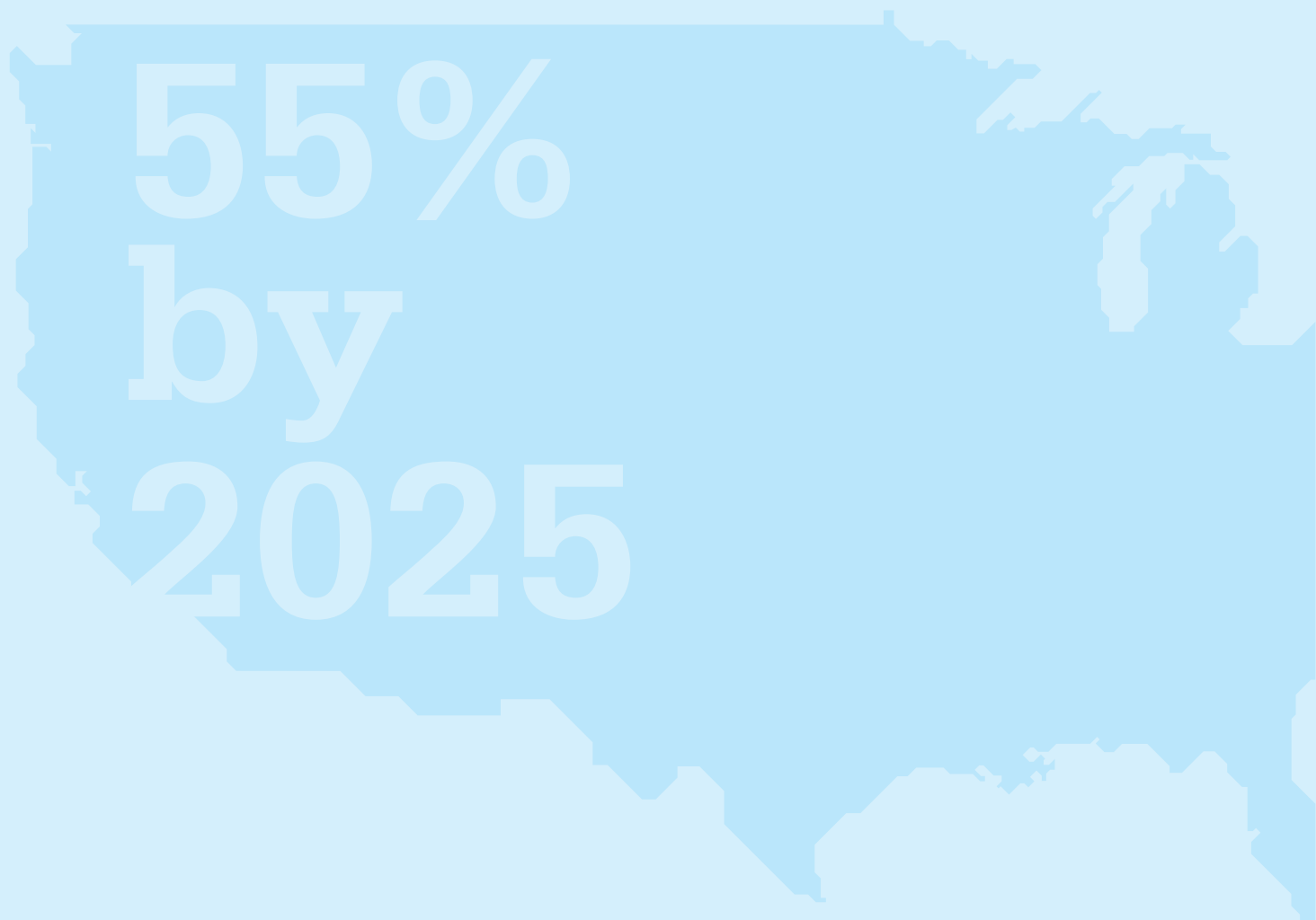
We heartily acknowledge the efforts of these individuals in the process of conducting this research. We also recognize that the responsibility for the content of this report, including errors, lies solely with the authors.

The College Completion Agenda

2010 Progress Report

John Michael Lee, Jr.
Anita Rawls

The Goal: Increase the proportion of 25- to 34-year-olds who hold an associate degree or higher to 55 percent by the year 2025 in order to make America the leader in educational attainment in the world.



One

Provide a program of voluntary preschool education, universally available to children from low-income families.

Two

Improve middle and high school college counseling.

Three

Implement the best research-based dropout prevention programs.

Four

Align the K–12 education system with international standards and college admission expectations.

Five

Improve teacher quality and focus on recruitment and retention.

Six

Clarify and simplify the admission process.

Seven

Provide more need-based grant aid while simplifying and making financial aid processes more transparent.

Eight

Keep college affordable.

Nine

Dramatically increase college completion rates.

Ten

Provide postsecondary opportunities as an essential element of adult education programs.

Recommendations So Important They Cannot Be Ignored

When the Commission on Access, Admissions and Success in Higher Education (subsequently referred to as the commission) convened in the fall of 2008, the educational landscape included a number of issues that the commission's members recognized as formidable challenges to those students who aspire to enroll and succeed in college. The Commission's 2008 report, *Coming to Our Senses: Education and the American Future*, painted a disheartening portrait of recent trends in education: college and high school completion ranking had dropped dramatically; the proportion of adults with postsecondary credentials was not keeping pace with growth in other industrialized nations; and significant disparities existed for low-income and minority students. As such, the commission faced two key questions: What must be done to improve the nation's education system, and how will we know if the changes that are made are successful?

Echoing the findings of other key educational policymakers, the commission declared that it is critical — and thus should be a primary goal — that 55 percent of the nation's young adults attain an associate degree or higher. The commission offered a 10-part action plan in the form of 10 recommendations.

The commission noted that these recommendations are so important they must be measured on a regular basis to help us understand the state of the educational landscape in the nation and how it changes over time. This report is designed to illustrate the degree to which the nation is moving toward — or away from — taking the necessary steps for ensuring an educated and enlightened citizenry.

The Commission on Access, Admissions and Success in Higher Education

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Jerome Lucido (Vice Chair), Vice Provost for Enrollment	University of Southern California
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Arlene Wesley Cash, Vice President for Enrollment Management	Spelman College
Frank Chong, President	Laney College
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Continuing the Conversation:

An overview of the measurement of progress on the commission's recommendations

The 10 Recommendations

The commission believes that American education is the nation's greatest strength and most powerful force for advancing the common good. To return America to its place as the global leader in educational attainment, the commission recommends the following 10-part action agenda:

One. Provide a program of voluntary preschool education, universally available to children from low-income families, such that all children at or below 200 percent of the official poverty line have a chance to enter school ready to learn.

Two. Improve middle and high school college counseling by meeting professional staffing standards for counselors and involving colleges and universities in college planning.

Three. Implement the best research-based dropout prevention programs, which include early identification of those students who are at risk of dropping out and subsequently providing them a safety net.

Four. Align the K–12 education system with international standards and college admission expectations so that all students are prepared for future opportunities in education, work and life.

Five. Improve teacher quality and focus on recruitment and retention; an education system can only be as good as its teachers.

Six. Clarify and simplify the admission process; a transparent and less complex process will encourage more first-generation students to apply.

Seven. Provide more need-based grant aid while simplifying and making financial aid processes more transparent; to minimize student debt and at least keep pace with inflation, make financial aid processes more transparent and predictable, and provide institutions with incentives to enroll and graduate more low-income and first-generation students.

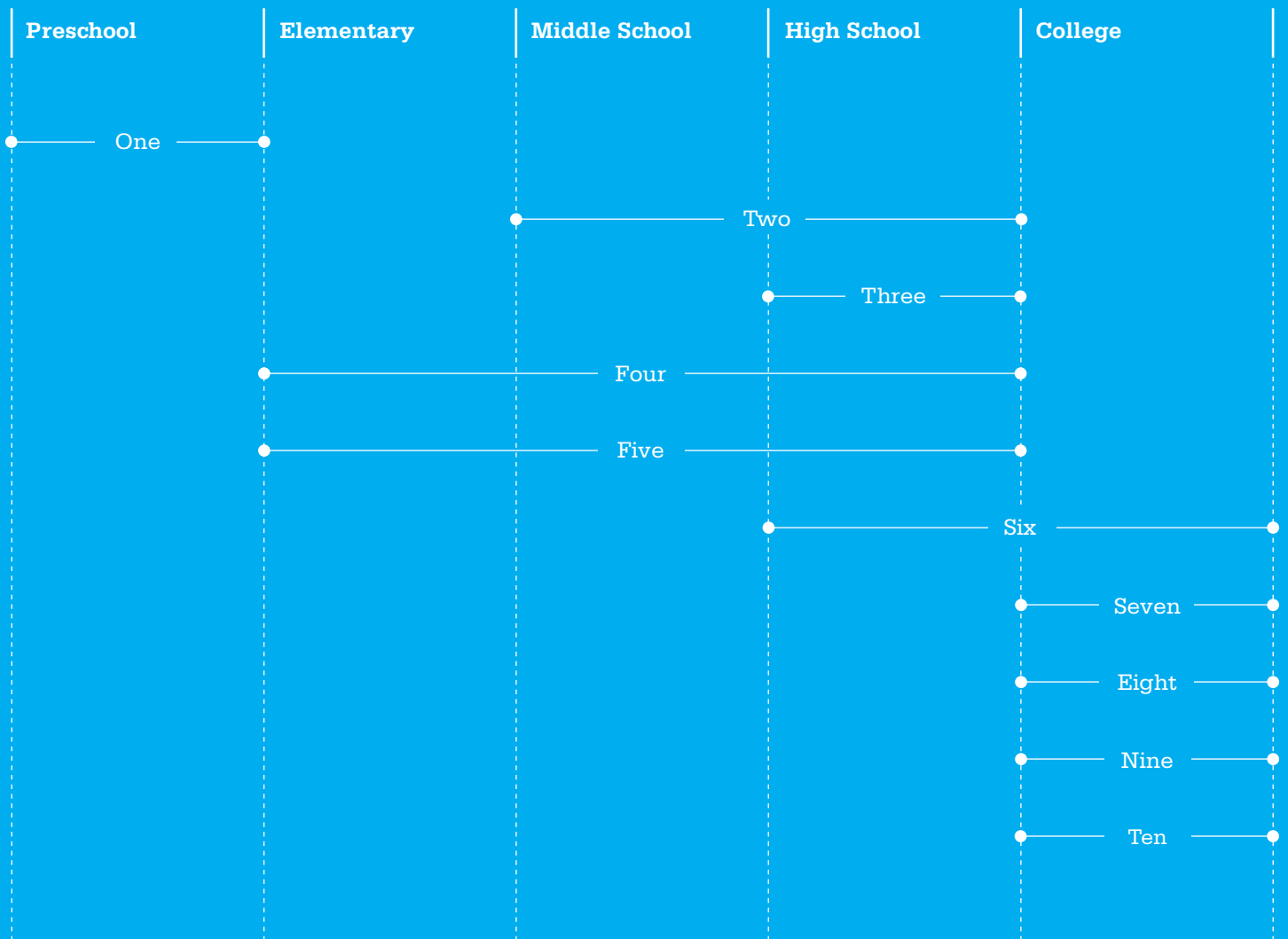
Eight. Keep college affordable by controlling college costs, using available aid and resources wisely, and insisting that state governments meet their obligations for funding higher education.

Nine. Dramatically increase college completion rates by reducing the number of dropouts, easing transfer processes and using data-based approaches to improve completion rates at both two- and four-year institutions.

Ten. Provide postsecondary opportunities as an essential element of adult education programs by supplementing existing basic skills training with a new “honors GED” and through better coordination of existing adult education, veterans benefits, outreach programs and student aid.

Completion at Every Stage

In order to reach the goal of 55 percent of 25- to 34-year-olds obtaining an associate degree or higher by the year 2025, the commission has put forth a 10-part recommendation that is aimed at strengthening the educational pipeline at every stage throughout a student's trajectory from preschool to college completion.



The Commission's Approach to Assessing the Current Status on the Recommendations

The commission's goal of 55 percent of young adults receiving a postsecondary credential by 2025 can be measured on a regular basis, and this annual publication can be used to measure progress toward this goal. The purpose of this document is to measure or demonstrate the need to establish an appropriate measure of the commission's goal and recommendations. The measures identified in this report are meant to give some indication of the current status and future changes that impact the goal and recommendations. As such, one or more indicators have been identified that, when taken together, allow one to infer the current status and trends over time. This initial report serves to gauge the current state of affairs based on these indicators. Only after multiple years of data collection will we be able to understand the trends and thus measure change on each of these recommendations.

In addition, it is important to note that the recommendations drove the decisions about which indicators to include in the final report. Consequently, in some cases, data are not yet available to measure some of indicators identified in the report. This is an important testament to the need to continue the national dialogue about developing effective data sources to measure educational endeavors.

The commission recognizes that the measurement of educational efforts can take many forms. Due to the nature of the commission's goal and 10 recommendations, some of the indicators take the form of traditional quantitative statistics, whereas others are in the form of narratives.

Wherever possible, data and indicators represent the most current nationally recognized sources. Rather than create new measures of the educational horizon, this report seeks to determine the degree to which the commission's goal and 10 recommendations are being met. Many high-quality data sources and reports exist that can be used to inform current status and future progress on the goal and recommendations. This report employs data provided by well-respected organizations such as *Education Week*, the National Center for Education Statistics, the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, and the U.S. Census Bureau, among others.

In the selection of the indicators to measure the commission's goal and 10 recommendations, the statistics were vetted using the following criteria:

- **The indicators are rigorous.** All data must meet the generally accepted standards for rigor within the field of educational measurement. All data and collection methods are examined to ensure policymakers, educators, parents and students can make valid inferences about the nation's current status on each indicator.
- **The indicators are measurable on a regular basis.** A key concern for the commission is determining the degree to which progress is made over time on the goal and 10 recommendations. Therefore, only data sources available on a regular basis are included in this report. One-time reports, although helpful in providing a snapshot of the status of the nation on the goal and recommendations, will not aid in helping track progress over the coming years.
- **The indicators can be disaggregated.** Whenever possible, indicators are applicable to the nation and comparable across the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The commission's recommendations concern the entire nation, thus the indicators have a national focus. Importantly, individual states are conducting excellent work to allow policymakers and citizens within those states to track the status and note the trends on the goal and recommendations put forth by the commission. Only indicators available on a national basis are featured herein.

This is a report on the nation's status on the commission's goal and 10 recommendations. The indicators highlighted in this report represent those data that are available to help policymakers, educators, parents and students understand where the nation stands on the goal. As policies and practices change, new indicators may be added or obsolete indicators removed to ensure that the indicators associated with each recommendation note the nation's status and subsequent progress on the commission's goals and 10 recommendations.

A Year in Review

Since the commission convened, the educational landscape has changed dramatically. These changes directly impact the goal of the commission and each of the proposed recommendations. In the fall of 2008, the nation began feeling the effects of one of the worst periods of recession in our history. During the recession, unemployment increased, as did the number of home foreclosures, and budgets for federal and state governments declined. This turn in the economy coincided with new leadership in the White House.

In November of 2008, the nation elected Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States to lead Americans through these tough economic times. President Obama started the road to recovery with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), an economic stimulus bill that provided \$787 billion to stimulate the economy, and his administration made education a major part of this investment.¹ The stimulus package provided money to states to help close funding gaps and avoid massive layoffs of teachers and professors.

The Obama administration also set aside \$4 billion to fund its Race to the Top initiative, which provides grants to states to implement education reforms that work. The president recently requested a \$1.35 billion increase in funding for fiscal year 2011 for this program.² The Obama administration clearly recognizes the importance of education in securing the future of America and initiated these major investments in education.

While the nation struggles to strengthen the economy, the educational capacity of our country continues to decline. The most recent figures from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) show that the United States does not rank first in the attainment of “tertiary” or postsecondary degrees among adults in developed countries.

According to OECD, in 2007 our nation ranked sixth (See Figure A) in postsecondary attainment in the world among 25- to 64-Year-Olds. Figure C shows that the United States ranked fourth in postsecondary attainment for citizens ages 55 to 64. The United States trails the Russian Federation, Israel and Canada in this age group. As America’s aging and highly educated workforce moves into retirement, the nation will rely on young Americans to increase our standing in the world. However, Figure B illustrates that among citizens between the ages of 25 and 34 in developed countries, America ranked 12th. In this key demographic group, Canada, Korea, the Russian Federation, Japan, New Zealand, Ireland, Norway, Israel, France, Belgium and Australia are ahead of the United States. Also, Denmark and Sweden are close to parity with our nation. If America is to regain its status as the leader in educational attainment, we must make an investment in higher education access, admission and success for all students.

1. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, 2009.

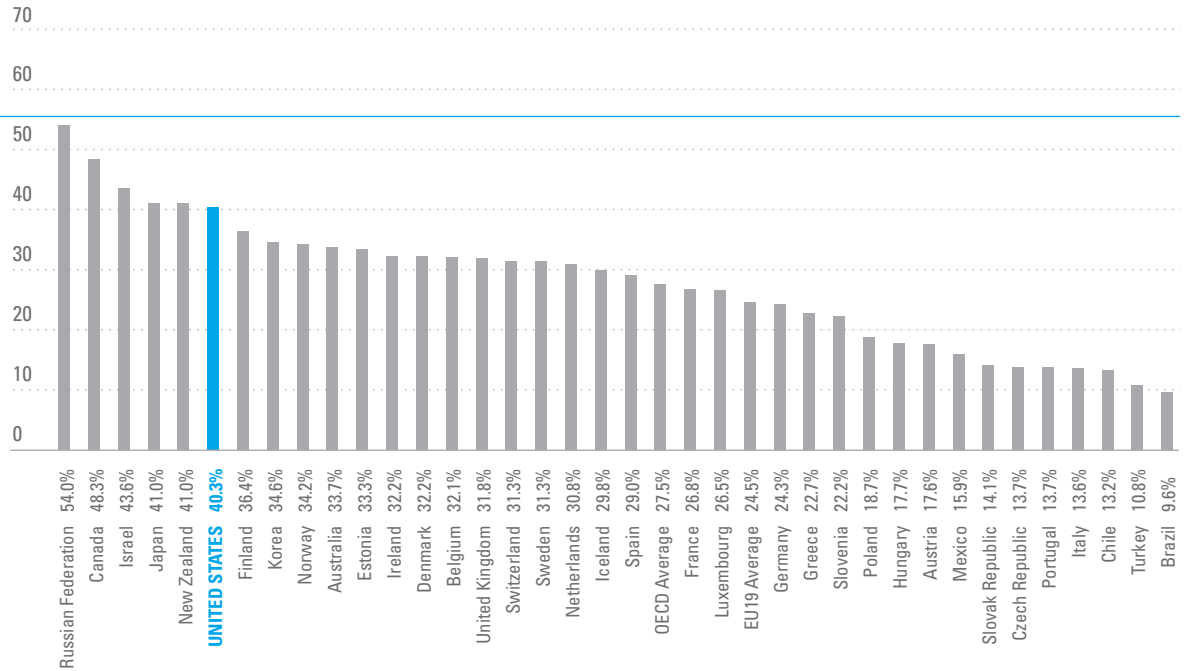
2. U.S. Department of Education, 2010, retrieved on March 3, 2010.
<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html>

A

Percentage of 25- to 64-Year-Olds with an Associate Degree or Higher, 2007

Source: Organisation for Economic and Co-operative Development, 2009

5
Countries
United States
30
Countries

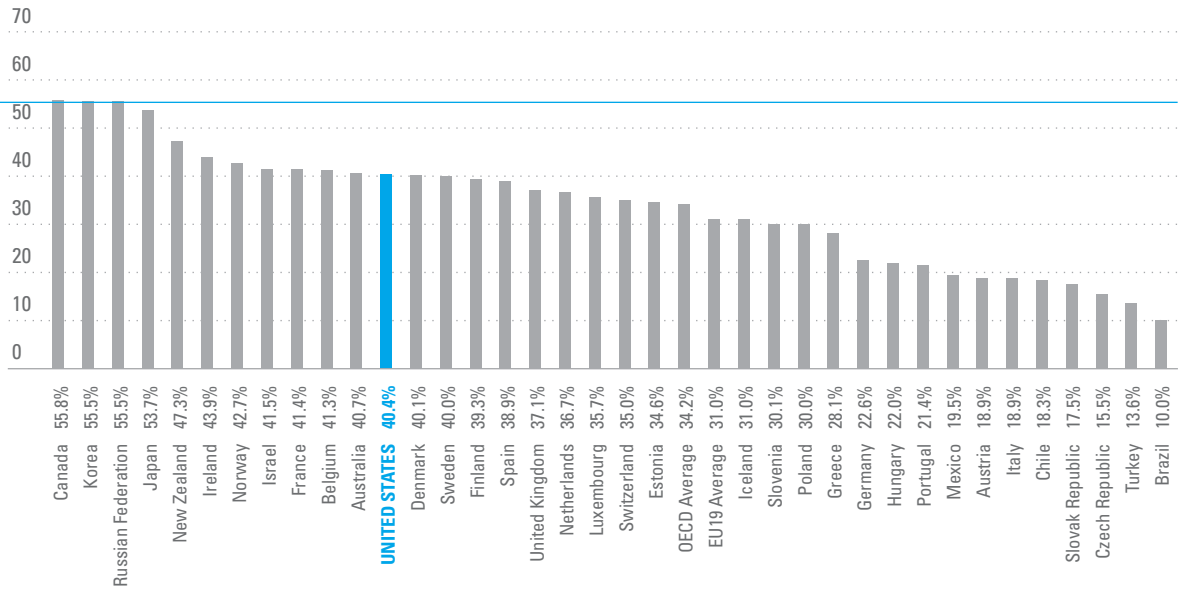


B

Percentage of 25- to 34-Year-Olds with an Associate Degree or Higher, 2007

Source: Organisation for Economic and Co-operative Development, 2009

11
Countries
United States
24
Countries

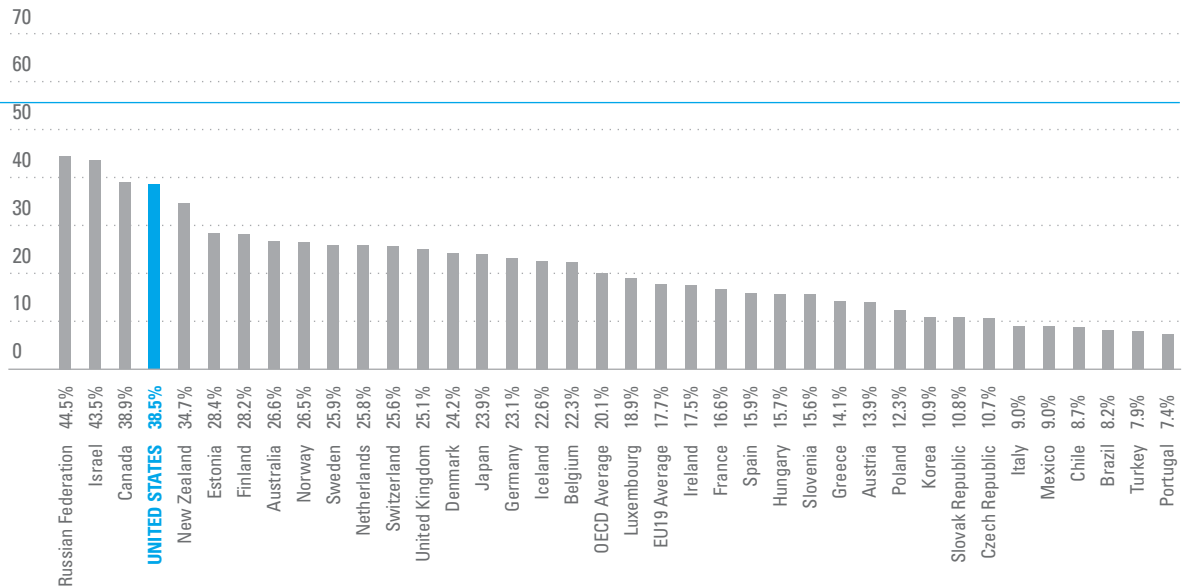


C

Percentage of 55- to 64-Year-Olds with an Associate Degree or Higher, 2007

Source: Organisation for Economic and Co-operative Development, 2009

3
Countries
United States
32
Countries



Overall Goal of the Commission

The commission called for the United States to take immediate action to reverse its fall from the top ranks of countries with a college-educated workforce. It warned that if postsecondary success was not made a national priority, our country's economic and social health would continue to weaken. The commission noted the alarming decline of educational attainment ranking among 25- to 34-year-olds, with the United States ranking 12th out of 36 nations.³

America is facing the reality that a highly educated but aging workforce is preparing to retire. As those workers retire, it is expected that the educational level of the younger generation of Americans will not approach their parents' level of education.

As of 2008, 41.6 percent of 25- to 34-year-olds attained an associate degree or higher in the United States (please note that the data presented in figures A, B and C are from 2007, while this percentage represents data from 2008). Individual states achieved different levels of educational attainment for the segment of their population that was 25 to 34 years old in 2007. The lowest level of educational attainment for 25- to 34-year-olds was 27.8 percent (e.g., Arkansas and New Mexico) while the highest educational attainment for 25- to 34-year-olds was 52.8 percent (e.g., Massachusetts).

For America to be among the leaders in education throughout the world, the commission established a goal of ensuring that by the year 2025, 55 percent of young Americans will earn at least a community college degree.

Part of the challenge in reaching the goal of 55 percent of young Americans with an associate degree or higher lies in erasing disparities in educational attainment for low-income students and underrepresented minorities. By eliminating the severity of disparities between underrepresented minorities and white Americans, it is estimated that more than half the degrees needed to meet the 55 percent goal would be produced.⁴

3. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Education at a Glance*: 2009, 30.

4. National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, "Adding It Up: State Challenges for Increasing College Access and Success" (Boulder: NCHEMS, 2007).

41.6%

As of 2008,
41.6 percent of 25-
to 34-year-olds had
attained an associate
degree or higher in
the United States.

30.3%

As of 2008,
30.3 percent of
African Americans
ages 25 to 34 had
attained an associate
degree or higher.

19.8%

As of 2008,
19.8 percent of
Hispanics ages 25
to 34 had attained
an associate degree
or higher.

Measuring the Goal: U.S. Educational Attainment Among 25- to 34-Year-Olds

What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator measures the percentage of adults in the United States between 25 and 34 years old who have attained at least an associate degree. The indicator is important in assessing the postsecondary attainment of a new generation of workers in the United States and allows us to monitor the progress that America makes toward the goal of being the world leader in providing educational access. Unfortunately, over the last seven years, the U.S. ranking in the world has declined.

Trends. The United States ranks fourth out of 36 nations in postsecondary attainment for citizens ages 55 to 64 years old. The United States is fourth behind the Russian Federation, Israel and Canada in the percentage of citizens with postsecondary degrees.⁵ However, among 25- to 34-year-olds, the United States falls to 12th in degree attainment.⁶ For this key demographic group, Canada, Korea, the Russian Federation, Japan, New Zealand, Ireland, Norway, Israel, France, Belgium and Australia have managed to leap ahead of the United States, while Denmark and Sweden are close to parity with the United States.⁷

Where are we now? The latest statistics from 2008 show that in the United States 41.6 percent of 25- to 34-year-olds had attained an associate degree or higher (please note that the data presented in figures A, B and C are from 2007, while this percentage represents data from 2008). The nation is 13.4 percentage points away from the goal of obtaining 55 percent by 2025. Figure D shows that the percentage of adults ages 25 to 34 who attained an associate degree or higher increased marginally from 38.1 percent in 2000 to 41.6 percent in 2008. If we are to achieve the goal of 55 percent by 2025, the growth must be significantly larger over the next 15 years than in the previous seven years.

Further, Figure F shows that in 2008, 41.1 percent of adults ages 25 to 64 had obtained an associate degree or higher in the United States. Just 40 percent of adults ages 55 to 64 obtained an associate degree or higher and 41.6 percent of adults ages 25 to 34 achieved this goal. While this does not seem like a problem, it is easier to understand the issue after we look at other leading nations. For example, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2009), 54 percent of adults in the Russian Federation had an associate degree or higher. Among 55- to 64-year-olds in the Russian Federation, only 44 percent of adults had attained an associate degree or higher, yet the number rises to 55 percent for adults ages 25 to 34. Clearly, the Russian Federation has ensured that the younger generation is significantly more educated than its aging population, and other countries have also kept pace.

5. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Education at a Glance, 2009, 30. See <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/664024334566> for full data.

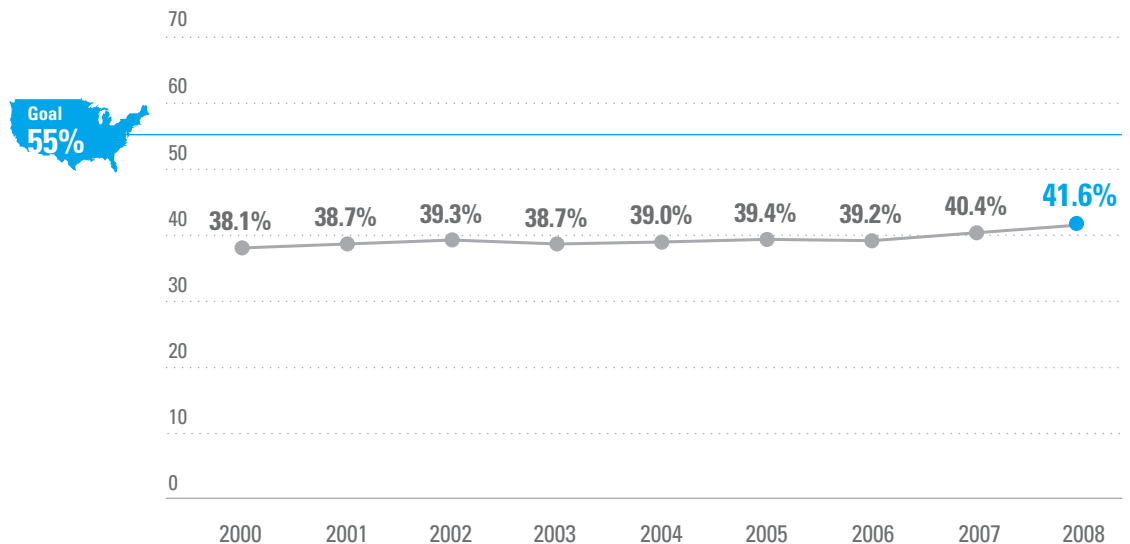
6. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Education at a Glance, 2009, 30.

7. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Education at a Glance, 2009, 30.

D

Percentage of 25- to 34-Year-Olds with an Associate Degree or Higher in the United States, 2000–2008

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2010



In Canada and Korea, for example, 56 percent of adults ages 25 to 34 have obtained an associate degree or higher. However, in the United States the education of both generations is nearly equal. This must change if the United States is to regain its standing in the world, and the key to making this happen is to increase attainment for all Americans.

Educational attainment by race/ethnicity is a daunting problem for our country and one that we must solve as the demographics of our society continue to change. Figure E shows that among adults ages 25 to 64, 62.9 percent of Asians and 46.0 percent of whites have attained an associate degree or higher in 2008. However, only 30.4 percent of African Americans and 20.2 percent of Hispanics met the goal. It is important for all citizens of the United States to have equal access to and succeed in higher education. The data also show that younger Asians and whites are more educated than their older peers, while young African Americans and Hispanics are not much more educated than their elders ages 55 to 64. We must seek greater numbers of 25- to 34-year-olds who obtain an associate degree or higher regardless of race, but we must also make larger gains for underrepresented minorities in the United States.

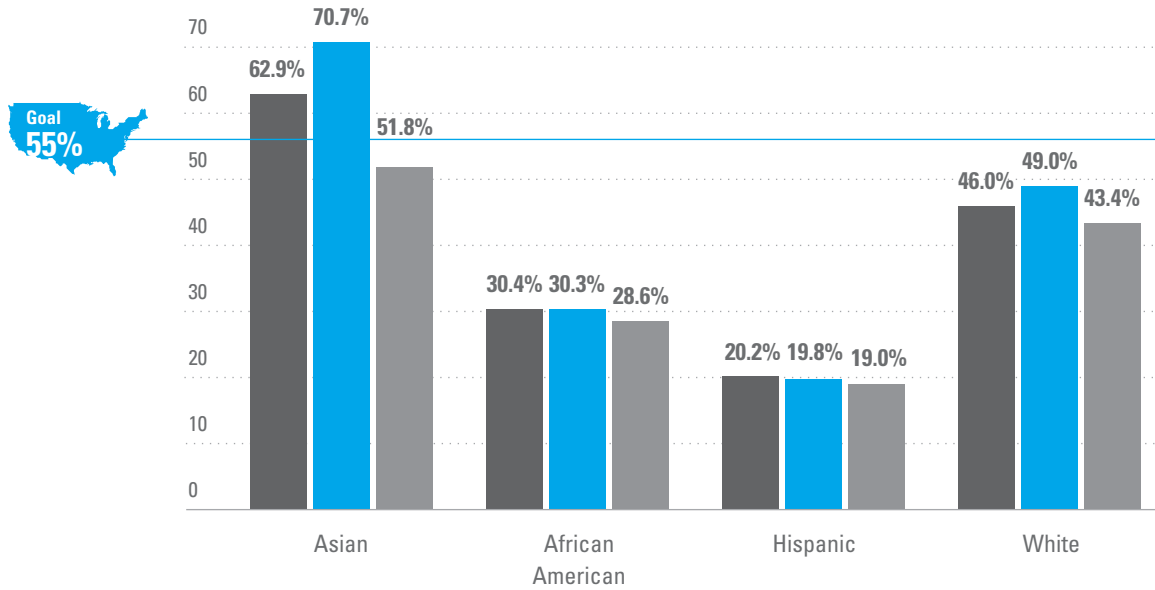
When the view among states is examined (Figure G), no state has reached the goal of 55 percent of its citizens with an associate degree or higher except the District of Columbia. The percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds with an associate degree or higher ranges from 22.5 percent in Arkansas to 62.2 percent in the District of Columbia. Figure G shows that when states are placed in rank order, the top states are the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Minnesota and New York. The bottom states are Arkansas, Louisiana, Nevada, West Virginia and New Mexico.

E

Percentage of 25- to 34-Year-Olds with an Associate Degree or Higher in the United States by Race/Ethnicity and Age, 2008

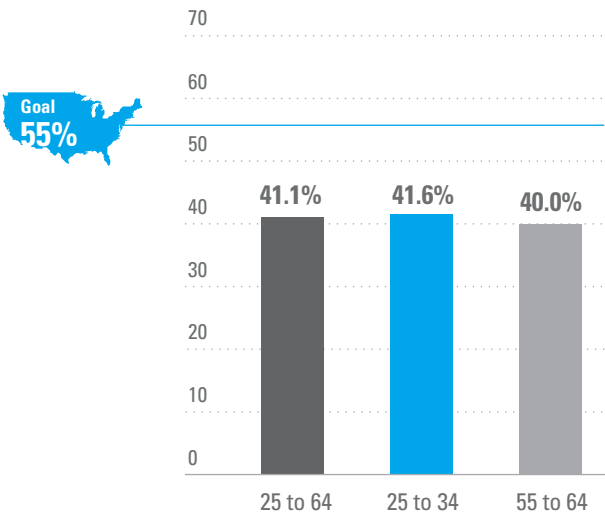
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2010

■ 25- to 34-Year-Olds
■ 25- to 64-Year-Olds
■ 55- to 64-Year-Olds

**F**

Percentage of 25- to 34-Year-Olds with an Associate Degree or Higher in the United States by Age, 2008

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2010

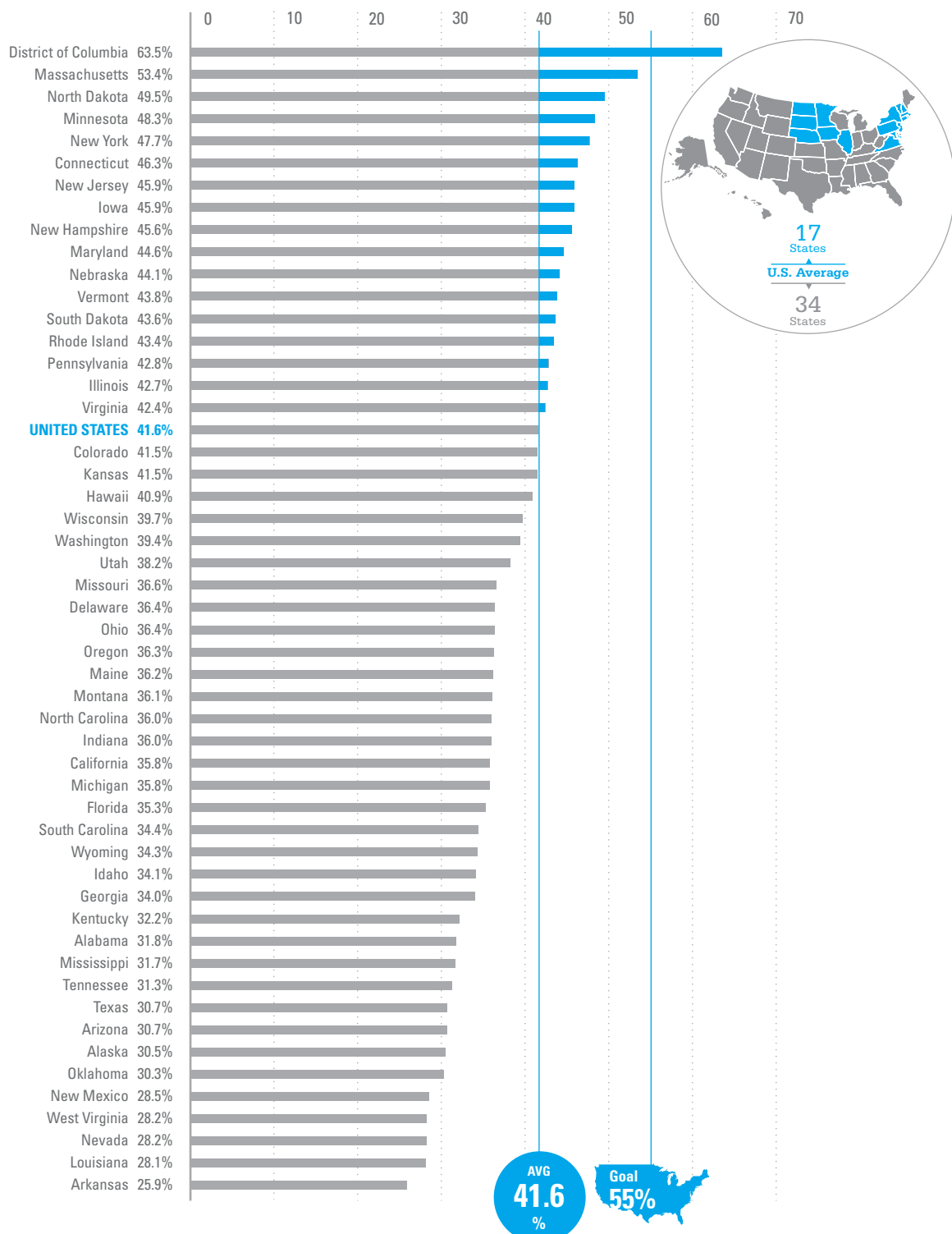


G

Percentage of 25- to 34-Year-Olds with an Associate Degree or Higher in the United States by State Rank, 2008

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) and Current Population Survey (CPS), 2010

Note: State level data were calculated using ACS while the national number is based on CPS.



When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

In order for the United States to make headway in reaching the goal of 55 percent of Americans with an associate degree or higher, the nation must ensure that all Americans have access to higher education. A major part of the challenge lies in erasing disparities in educational attainment so that low-income students and underrepresented minorities have the ability to complete degrees. Just 30.4 percent of African Americans, 20.2 percent of Hispanic Americans, and 23.0 percent of American Indian or Alaska Natives have at least an associate degree.⁸ For this reason, we must monitor not only the educational attainment of all citizens, but also the educational attainment of each race/ethnicity and income group.

Reading the Document

The remaining chapters in this document identify the indicators used to assess the status of the nation in achieving the commission's goal and recommendations. Each chapter gives an overview of the identified measures, a description of their importance, possible issues faced by policymakers, the current statistics and points to consider when interpreting the measures. While each measure is from a well-respected source, readers are encouraged to consider the collection of data points presented in this report to inform their inferences about where the nation stands on the education frontier.

8. National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, "Racial/Ethnic Gaps: Percent of Adults with an Associate Degree or Higher-Gaps between Whites and Minorities" (Boulder: NCHEMS, 2009).

One

Provide a program of voluntary preschool education, universally available to children from low-income families

WE RECOMMEND that states provide a program of voluntary high-quality, preschool education, universally available to 3- and 4-year-old children from families at or below 200 percent of the poverty line.

The commission believes that a program of voluntary preschool education should be universally available to all students to ensure that all children develop the skills needed to be successful later in school. While the children of better-educated and higher-income families are more likely to take advantage of preschool programs, children from low-income families are not afforded the same opportunities. Research suggests that preschool programs produce children that are more ready for school and help children that are from low-income families secure the foundation necessary to succeed.

The commission noted the importance of preschool programs for children from low-income families, including this area of focus as a recommendation. Preschool programs offer children the opportunity to develop vocabulary skills and prepare them for success in reading and comprehension in later grades. It will be important for local, state and federal agencies to work together to provide universal access to high-quality preschool programs for all children, especially those from low-income families. Note: The terms preschool and pre-K were used interchangeably.

The following indicators will assist in examining the accessibility of universally available preschool education to children from low-income families:

- Percentage of 3- to 5-year-olds enrolled in preschool programs;
- Percentage of 3- to 4-year-olds enrolled in state-funded pre-K programs; and
- Percentage of 3- to 4-year-olds enrolled in Head Start programs by state.

The data provided for this recommendation include the percentage of 3- to 5-year-olds in center-based programs (i.e., preschools, Head Start, day-care centers), percentage of 3- to 4-year-olds in state-funded pre-K programs and percentage of 3- to 4-year-olds in Head Start programs by state. Programs, such as Head Start, are targeted for this recommendation because they are designed, as the recommendation indicates, to provide comprehensive school readiness to low-income students.

General Findings for This Recommendation

- As of 2005, 57.0 percent of all 3- to 5-year-olds are enrolled in preschool programs.
- As of 2005, 47.0 percent of all low-income 3- to 5-year-olds are enrolled in preschool programs.
- As of 2008, 23.0 percent of 4-year-olds are enrolled in state-funded pre-K programs compared to 6.0 percent of 3-year-olds who are enrolled in state-funded pre-K programs.
- As of 2008, 8.8 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds are enrolled in Head Start programs.

57.0%

As of 2005,
57.0 percent of all
3- to 5-year-olds
are enrolled in
preschool programs.

47.0%

As of 2005,
47.0 percent of
3- to 5-year-olds
below the poverty
line are enrolled in
preschool programs.

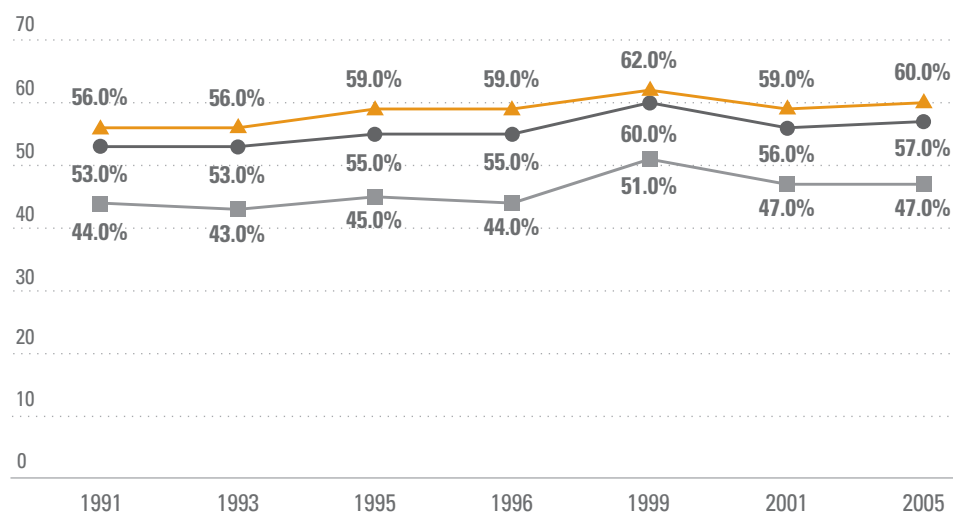
Percentage of 3- to 5-Year-Olds Enrolled in Preschool Programs

1.1

National Percentage of 3- to 5-Year-Olds Enrolled in Preschool Programs by Poverty Status, 2008

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2009

▲ Above the Poverty Line
● United States
■ Below the Poverty Line



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measure is the percentage of children enrolled in center-based early childhood care and educational programs. It presents an overview of national level data on preschool enrollment and high-quality child care for 3- to 5-year-olds. It monitors how many children have access to center-based preschool programs.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Access to preschool education can have a direct effect on the ability of children to perform later in school. Many of the educational disparities found in students later in their educational careers can be linked back to preparation disparities in children when they enter kindergarten. Because the experiences of students when growing up are so important to their future development, it is important that children from low-income backgrounds have access to preschool programs to ensure they are ready for the demands of many years of schooling.

Many children from low-income families do not have access to high-quality preschool programs. State policy must be developed to provide, on a voluntary basis, universal access to first-class, preschool programs for children from low-income families. States and the nation must ensure that all students have access to preschool programs.

This measure assists state policy leaders in identifying how many children from low-income families have access to universal preschool education. Universal preschool programs offer children high-quality education that prepares the foundation that will be important in later school success.

Where are we now? In the United States, 57.0 percent of all 3- to 5-year-olds are currently enrolled in preschool programs. When the data are disaggregated by poverty status, 47.0 percent of 3- to 5-year-olds from families below the poverty line are enrolled in preschool programs. In comparison, 60.0 percent of 3- to 5-year-olds from families above the poverty line are enrolled in preschool programs. Figure 1.1 also shows that this trend has remained relatively stable from 1991 through 2005.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

The data provide information on the general enrollment for center-based early childhood care and educational programs for the United States. Child and family characteristics include children ages 3 to 5, race/ethnicity, mother's highest education, household income and economic status. It is also important to note the data do not show enrollment of students in preschool education programs by individual states, yet this data needs to be collected on a state by state basis.

3.6%

As of 2008,
3.6 percent of 3-year-olds are enrolled in state-funded pre-K programs.

24.0%

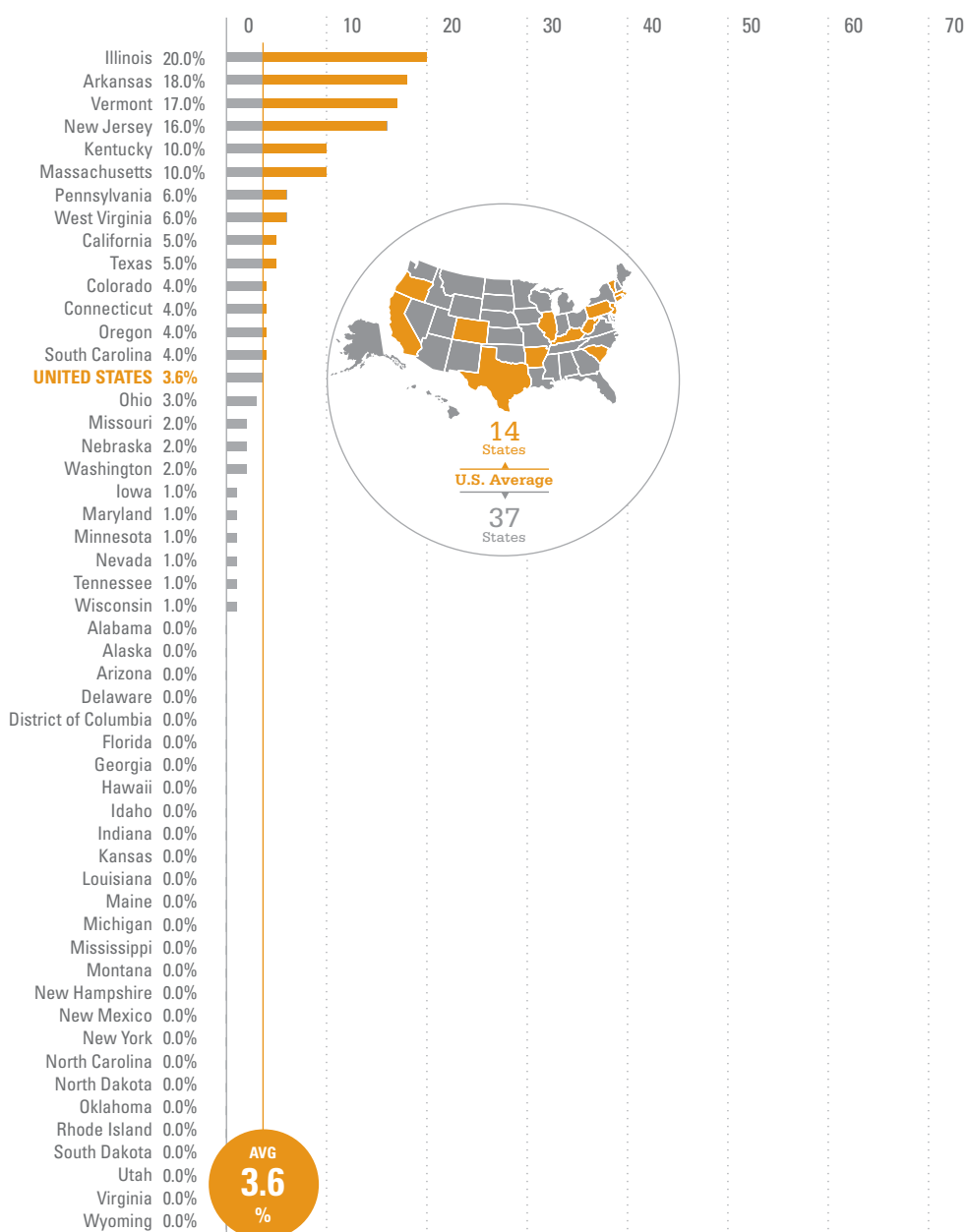
As of 2008,
24.0 percent of 4-year-olds are enrolled in state-funded pre-K programs.

Percentage of 3- to 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in State-Funded Pre-K Programs

1.2a

Percentage of 3-Year-Olds Enrolled in State-Funded Pre-K Programs by State Rank, 2008

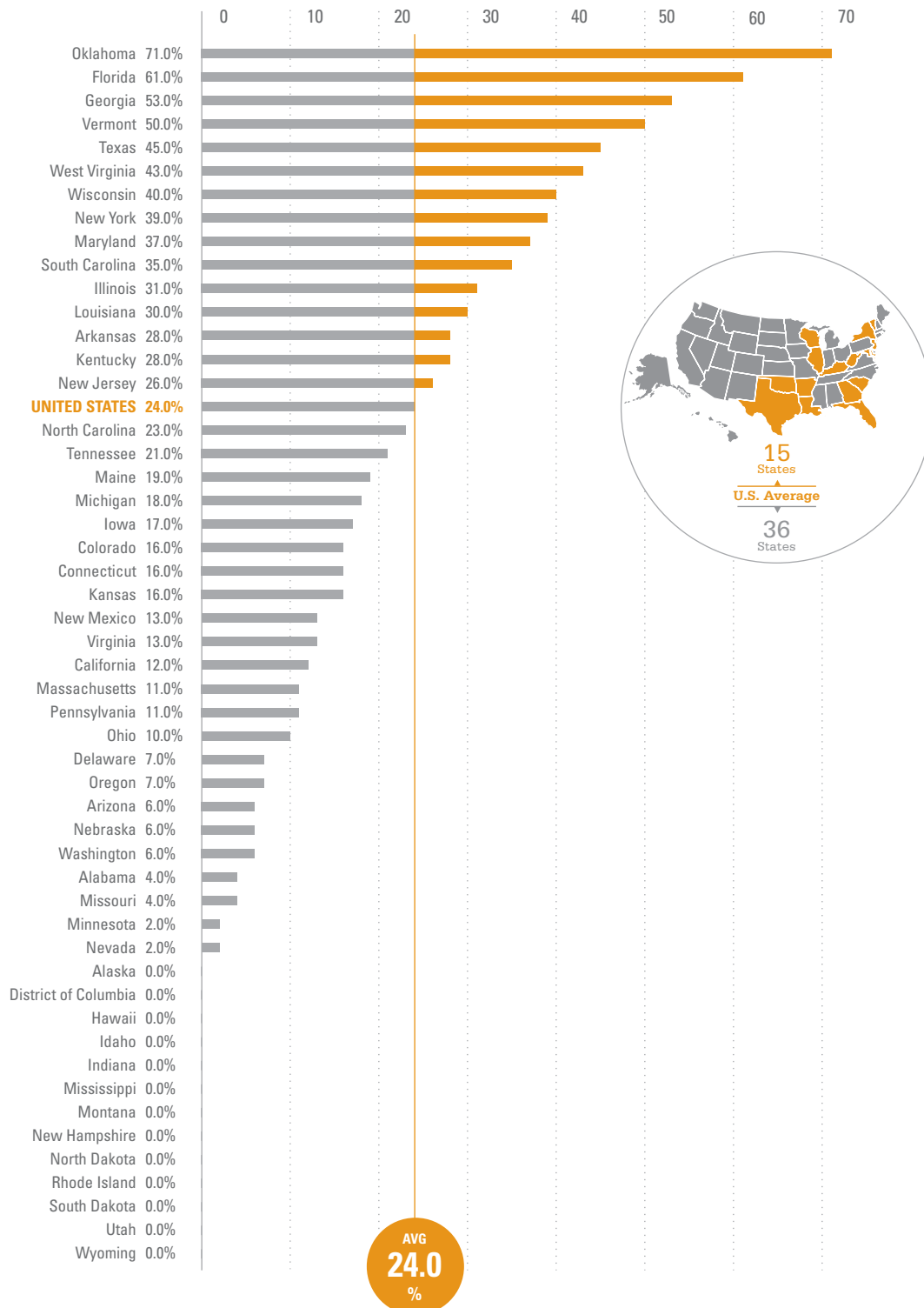
Source: National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers Graduate School of Education, 2009



1.2b

Percentage of 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in State-Funded Pre-K Programs by State Rank, 2008

Source: National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers Graduate School of Education, 2009



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measure is the percentage of children enrolled in state-funded preschool education programs. This measure presents an overview of state-level data on enrollment in high-quality child care for 3- and 4-year-olds. It is important because it determines the percentage of students who have access to pre-K programs. Participation in a pre-K program ensures that 3- and 4-year-olds are prepared for success in kindergarten and beyond.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? The Commission on Access, Admissions and Success in Higher Education report notes the importance of states developing funding formulas to assist communities in establishing high-quality preschool programs. Also, the commission recommends that local school boards and districts play a role in helping establish preschool programs. They do this by offering space for preschool programs to operate and utilizing best practices for the alignment of a preschool curriculum with the learning expectations in kindergarten.

Where are we now? In the United States currently, 24.0 percent of all 4-year-olds are enrolled in state-funded pre-K programs, while only 3.6 percent of 3-year-olds were enrolled in the program. It should be noted that 27 states do not have state-funded preschool programs for 3-year-olds, while 13 states do not have preschool programs for 4-year-olds.

When the data are disaggregated by state for 4-year-olds who are enrolled in state-funded pre-K programs, the percentages range from 0.0 percent in several states to 71.0 percent in Oklahoma. Figure 1.2b shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the largest percentage of participation are Oklahoma, Florida, Georgia, Vermont and Texas. Of the states that have a program, the states with the lowest percentage of participation are Nevada, Minnesota, Missouri, Alabama and Washington. When the data are disaggregated by state for 3-year-olds enrolled in state-funded pre-K programs, the percentages range from 0.0 in several states to 20.0 percent in Illinois. Figure 1.2a shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the largest percentage of participation are Illinois, Arkansas, Vermont, New Jersey and Kentucky. The states with the lowest percentage of participation (of those states that have programs) are Wisconsin, Tennessee, Nevada, Minnesota and Maryland.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? The State Preschool Yearbook data provide information for each state on access, quality standards and resources for state-funded preschool programs.⁹ It is important to note that preschools are the only one of several types of educational programs that districts can target for Title I funds. In addition, there are several states that do not offer state-funded programs: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

9. Barnett, S., Epstein, D., Friedman, A., Boyd, J., & Hustedt, J. "The State of Preschool 2008" (New Brunswick, NJ: NIEER, 2008).

8.8%

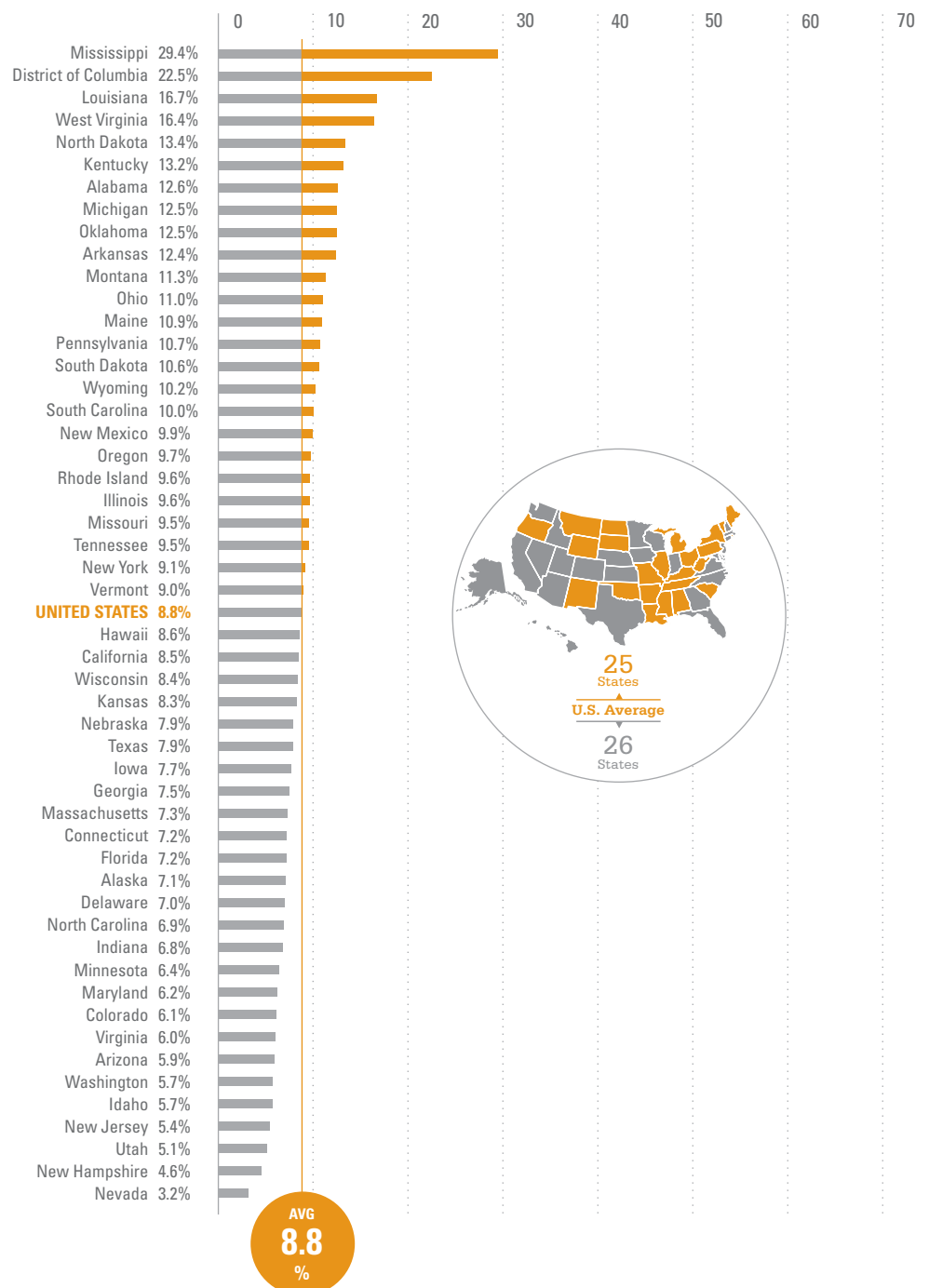
As of 2008,
8.8 percent of 3-
and 4-year-olds are
enrolled in Head
Start programs.

Percentage of 3- and 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in Head Start Programs

1.3a

Percentage of 3- and 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in Head Start Programs by State Rank, 2008

Source: National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers Graduate School of Education, 2009



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measure is the percentage of children enrolled in federally funded Head Start education programs. Enrollment in Head Start is especially important because the program is designed to serve the whole child. In particular, Head Start funding provides preschool education, medical care, dental care, nutrition services and mental health services to its participants.¹⁰ This measure presents an overview of state-level data on enrollment in Head Start programs for 3- and 4-year-olds.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? For several years, there has been some concern from the federal government about the use of funds for Head Start programs across the nation. Congress did not pass the Head Start Accountability Bills of 2005¹¹ or 2007¹², which suggested that states properly manage the funds appropriated for Head Start programs. Policymakers in this area, specifically at the state level, should ensure that clear and concise policies and practices are in place to provide evidence of the proper use of the funding.

Where are we now? In the United States, 8.8 percent of all 3- to 4-year-olds are enrolled in federally funded Head Start programs. However, 7.3 percent of 3-year-olds are enrolled in the program compared to 10.3 percent of 4-year-olds.

When the data are disaggregated by state for 3- to 4-year-olds who are enrolled in state-funded pre-K programs, the percentages range from 3.2 percent in Nevada to 29.4 percent in Mississippi. Figure 1.3a shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the largest percentage of participation are Mississippi, District of Columbia, Louisiana, West Virginia and North Dakota. The states with the lowest percentage of participation are Nevada, New Hampshire, Utah, New Jersey and Idaho.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? Head Start is a national initiative with variations in the program models across states. All Head Start programs focus on helping children to learn, but may also focus on other aspects of childhood. Also, the level of implementation of Head Start programs may vary from program to program. It is important to remember that students participating in the program may receive various types of instruction.¹³

10. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (January 2010). Head Start Impact Study. Final Report. Washington, D.C. p9.

11. Head Start Accountability Act of 2005, H.R. 778, 109th Cong. (2005).

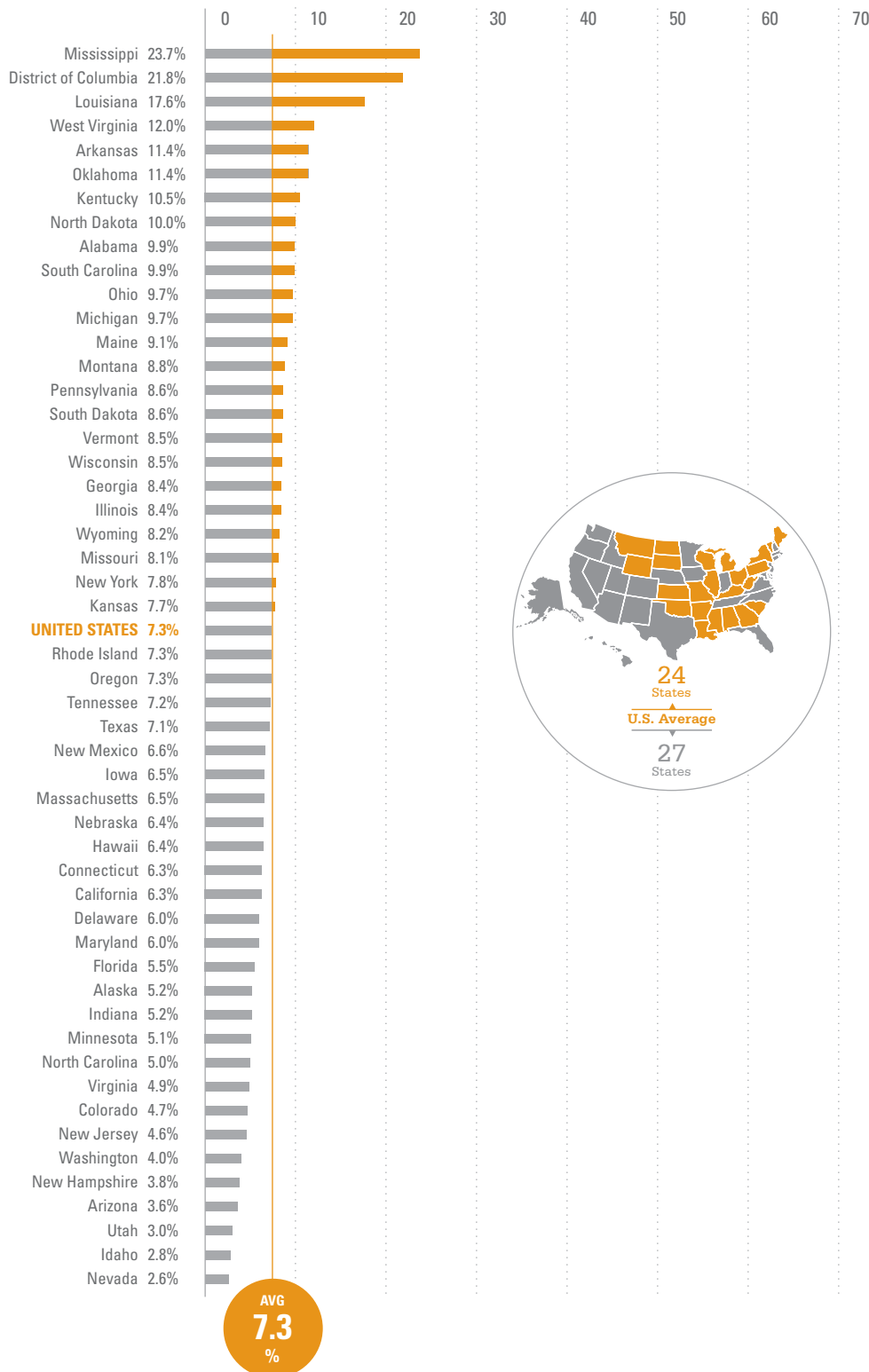
12. Head Start Accountability Act of 2007, H.R. 1630, 110th Cong. (2007).

13. Mathematica Policy Research. Results from the "I am Moving, I am Learning" Stage 1 Survey, 2007. Retrieved June 17, 2010 from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/hs/eval_move_learn/reports/stage1_survey/stage1_survey.pdf

1.3b

Percentage of 3-Year-Olds Enrolled in Head Start Programs by State Rank, 2008

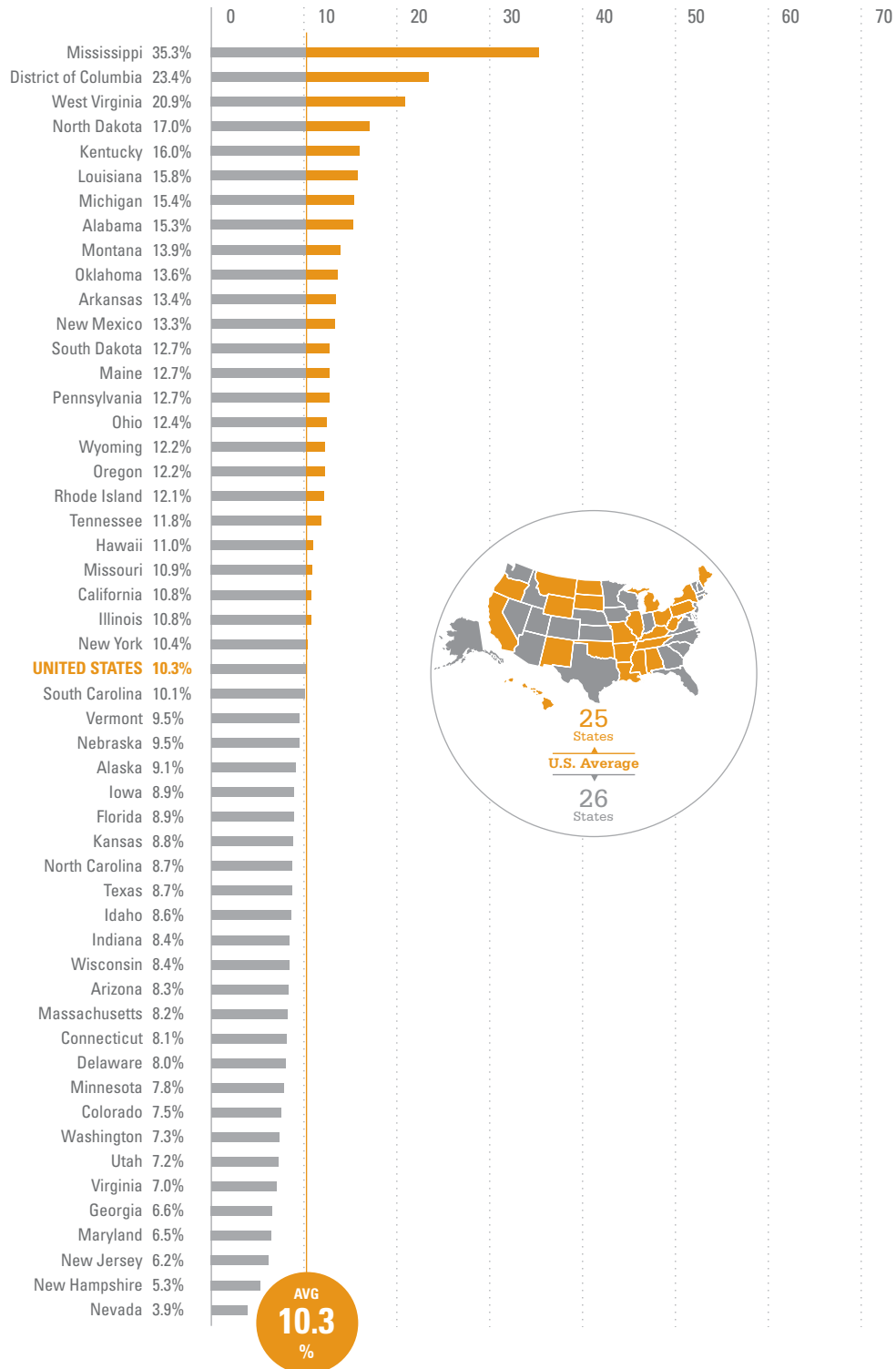
Source: National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers Graduate School of Education, 2009



1.3c

Percentage of 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in Head Start Programs by State Rank, 2008

Source: National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers Graduate School of Education, 2009



Two

Improve middle school and high school counseling

WE RECOMMEND that states and localities move toward professional norms for staffing middle and high school counseling offices and that colleges and universities collaborate actively to provide college information and planning services to all students (with a special focus on low-income students).

College counseling programs in middle and high schools build a college-going culture among students and help students and families understand the value of college. To create this culture, school counselors must ensure that students and families understand the importance of taking college-preparatory courses, know how to navigate the college admission process, and comprehend the financial aid processes. Middle school college counseling programs are especially helpful to ensure that students are completing course work that will allow them to participate in a college preparatory curriculum upon entering high school. Middle school is not too early to start college counseling, and it is often too late to begin preparing students after they reach high school.

A major function of the college counseling program in high schools is to expose students to various colleges, universities and other postsecondary opportunities that may fit their career and personal goals. College counselors should aid students in comprehending the importance of college and other postsecondary educational opportunities and help students navigate the often complex college admission and financial aid processes.¹⁴ Counselors should use their vast knowledge of postsecondary options to help students choose the path that is best for their future goals and expectations, and this should include work and career, military, athletic and academic options. The earlier college counseling begins, the better prepared students will be for life after high school.

The following indicators will assist in assessing the state of middle and high school college counseling:

- Student-to-counselor ratio;
- Number of statewide comprehensive school counseling programs;
- Professional development for secondary school college counselors; and
- Percentage of counselors' time spent on tasks.

General Findings for This Recommendation

- As of 2007–2008, the U.S. average student-to-counselor ratio was 467:1.
- As of 2007, Louisiana, New Hampshire, Vermont and Wyoming were the only states to meet the recommended student-to-counselor ratio of 250:1.¹⁵
- As of 2008, 71.0 percent of states have implemented a statewide comprehensive counseling program.
- As of 2008, 39.9 percent of secondary schools require college counselors to participate in professional development.
- As of 2008, secondary school counselors spend 28.8 percent of their time on postsecondary admission counseling.

14. American School Counselor Association, School counselor competencies. Retrieved on Feb. 2, 2010, from ASCA website: <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/files/SCCompetencies.pdf>, 68.

15. American School Counselor Association, Student-to-counselor ratios. Retrieved on March 5, 2010, from ASCA website: <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/content.asp?contentid=460>

467:1

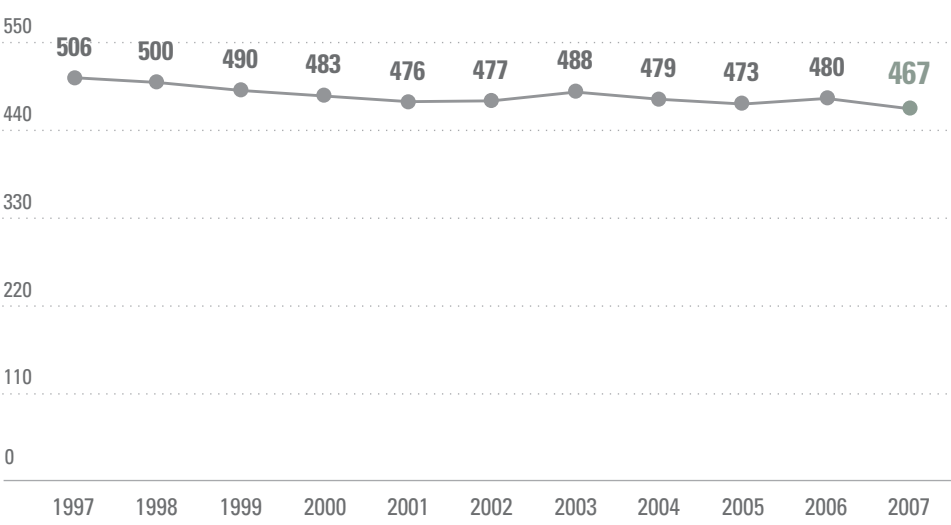
As of 2007,
the U.S. average
student-to-counselor
ratio is 467:1
The maximum
recommendation for
student-to-counselor
ratio is 250:1.

Student-to-Counselor Ratio

2.1a

National Student-to-Counselor Ratio, 1997–2007

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, 2008



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measure provides the student-to-counselor ratio for the nation. The total number of students and the total number of counselors are given for this measure by each state for elementary and secondary schools. The student-to-counselor ratio identifies the potential access a student may have to the college counseling services provided in a particular school, school district or state.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? While counselors work in schools across the nation, many of the state-level student-to-counselor ratios suggest that school counselors are overloaded with the number of students to whom they must provide services. States should adopt policies that move toward reducing the number of students that are assigned to a counselor. Attention should also be paid to increasing the number of school counselors in a school, school district or state to meet the recommended student-to-counselor ratio.

Where are we now? In the United States, the average student-to-counselor ratio is 467 students per counselor. Figure 2.1a shows that this student-to-counselor ratio decreased from 1997 to 2007 from a high of 506 students to one counselor. Although the trend in the ratio is decreasing, it is far from the recommended student-to-counselor ratio of 250 students per counselor.

When the data are disaggregated by state, the student-to-counselor ratio ranges from 203:1 in Wyoming, to 1,076:1 in Illinois. Figure 2.1b shows that when states are placed in rank order for 2007, the top states are Wyoming, Vermont, Louisiana, New Hampshire and Hawaii. The bottom states are Illinois, California, Minnesota, Utah and Arizona.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

The student-to-counselor ratio data include all school counselors and do not identify how much time they spend providing college counseling to middle or high school students. It is important that all students receive college counseling early, particularly by middle school. Counselors are essential to students, because they improve access to information about college and career options.

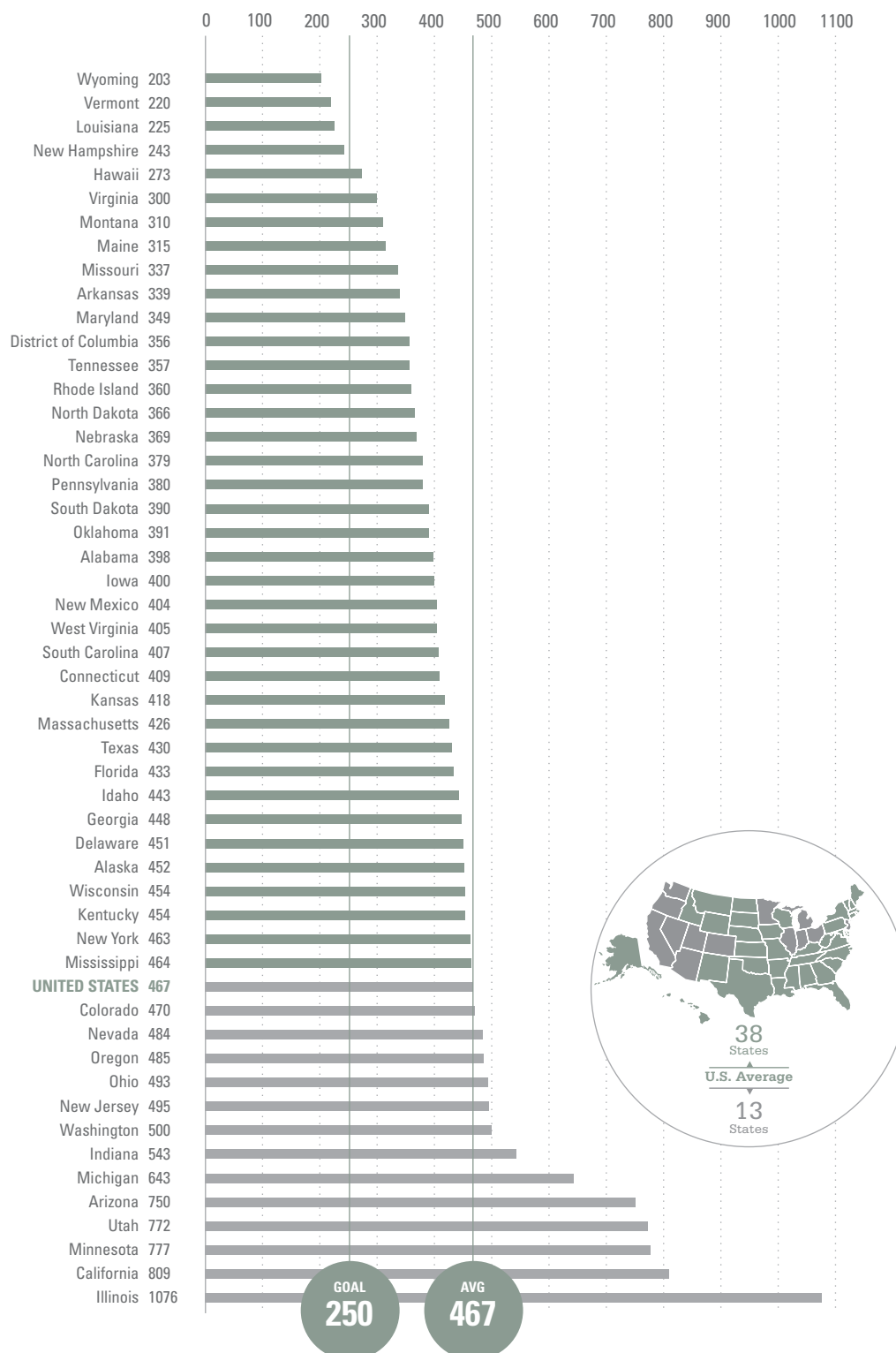
As of 2007, Louisiana, New Hampshire, Vermont and Wyoming are the only states to meet the recommended student-to-counselor ratio of 250:1. Although these states have met the recommended ratio, this measure does not speak to the quality of services received by students from the school counselor. School counselors are often unable to fulfill their role and responsibilities if school officials are requesting they complete unrelated activities such as proctoring exams.¹⁶

16. American School Counselor Association, ASCA National Model. Retrieved March 5, 2010, from ASCA website: <http://www.ascanationalmodel.org/>

2.1b

Student-to-Counselor Ratio by State Rank, 2007

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, 2008



71%

As of 2008,
71 percent of states
have a statewide
comprehensive
school counseling
program.

Statewide Comprehensive School Counseling Programs

What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measures the percentage of states whose schools offer college counseling for middle and high school students. It is important for school counselors to provide support, encouragement and guidance to students; particularly in helping students prepare for college and for success in college.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? While most states have designed a comprehensive school counseling program, many school counselors are often assigned to complete auxiliary tasks. The percentage of time a school counselor spends implementing the American School Counselor Association National Model is unknown. However, ASCA made a recommendation concerning appropriate and inappropriate work activities for school counselors.¹⁷ State policies should make an effort to remind and encourage teachers, school administrators and other school officials to allow school counselors the opportunity to participate in appropriate activities as suggested by ASCA and implement the national model of comprehensive school counseling.¹⁸ State policies also should make an effort to move toward the development of a measure and collection of data that will determine the level of implementation of the comprehensive school counseling programs in the state.

Where are we now? In the United States, only 36 states and the District of Columbia have a statewide comprehensive school counseling program. This represents 71 percent of all states. This suggests the nation has more work to do to ensure that all students have access to quality school counseling. Further, it is believed that more data must be collected on the interactions between counselors and students at both the middle and high school levels.

17. American School Counselor Association, "Appropriate and inappropriate activities for school counselors," Retrieved from American School Counselor Association website on Feb. 2, 2010: <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/files/appropriate.pdf>, 2008, 1.

18. American School Counselor Association, ASCA National Model. Retrieved March 5, 2010, from ASCA website: <http://www.ascanationalmodel.org/>

2.2

States with Comprehensive School Counseling Programs, 2008

Source: American School Counselor Association, 2008

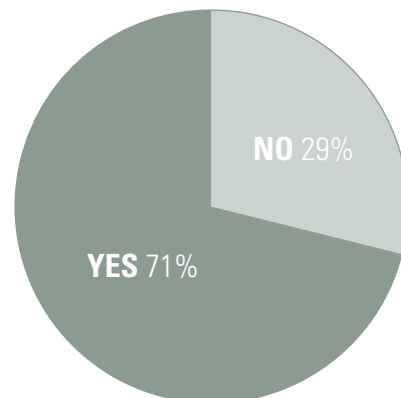
YES

Alabama
Alaska
Arizona
Arkansas
Connecticut
Delaware
Florida
Georgia
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Louisiana
Maine
Massachusetts
Michigan
Missouri

Montana
Nebraska
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York
North Carolina
Oklahoma
Oregon
Rhode Island
South Carolina
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Virginia
West Virginia
Wisconsin

NO

California
Colorado
District of Columbia
Hawaii
Kentucky
Maryland
Minnesota
Mississippi
Nevada
North Dakota
Ohio
Pennsylvania
Vermont
Washington
Wyoming



When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? Currently no rigorous estimate is regularly available for the percentage of students who have access to college counseling in middle and high school. Although estimates for the student-to-counselor ratio are available, these estimates do not take into account the myriad functions filled by contemporary school counselors in addition to college counseling. Disciplinary issues, scheduling and other guidance issues tend to crowd the schedule for the nation's middle and high school counselors. College counseling is, however, a necessity for students across the nation — especially those from backgrounds that are traditionally underrepresented in college. It is critical that policymakers and educators discuss ways to create a measure to gauge the degree to which students have access to high-quality college counselors.

39.9%

As of 2008,
39.9 percent of
secondary schools
require college
counselors to
participate in
professional
development.

35.0%

As of 2008,
35.0 percent of
public secondary
schools require
college counselors
to participate
in professional
development.

61.3%

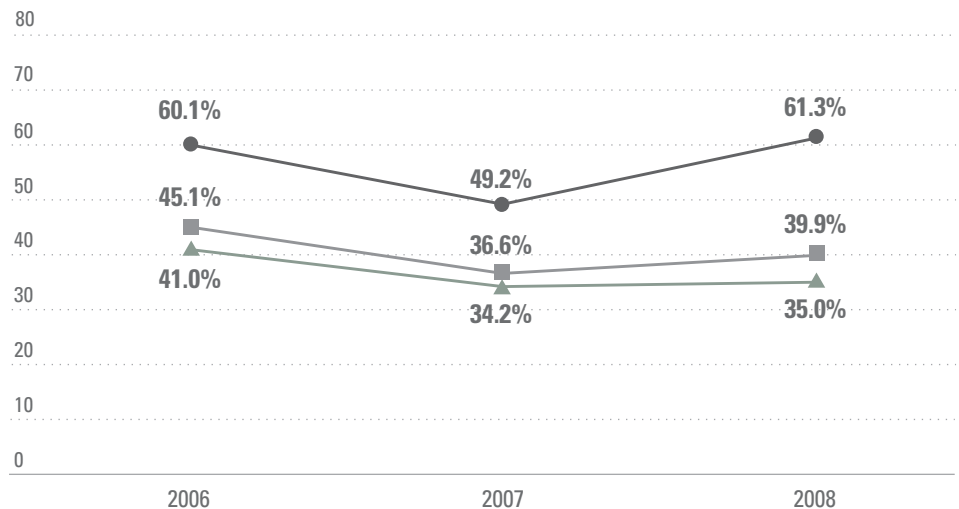
As of 2008,
61.3 percent of
private secondary
schools require
college counselors
to participate
in professional
development.

Professional Development for Secondary School College Counselors

2.3a

Percentage of Secondary Schools that Require Professional Development, 2006–2008

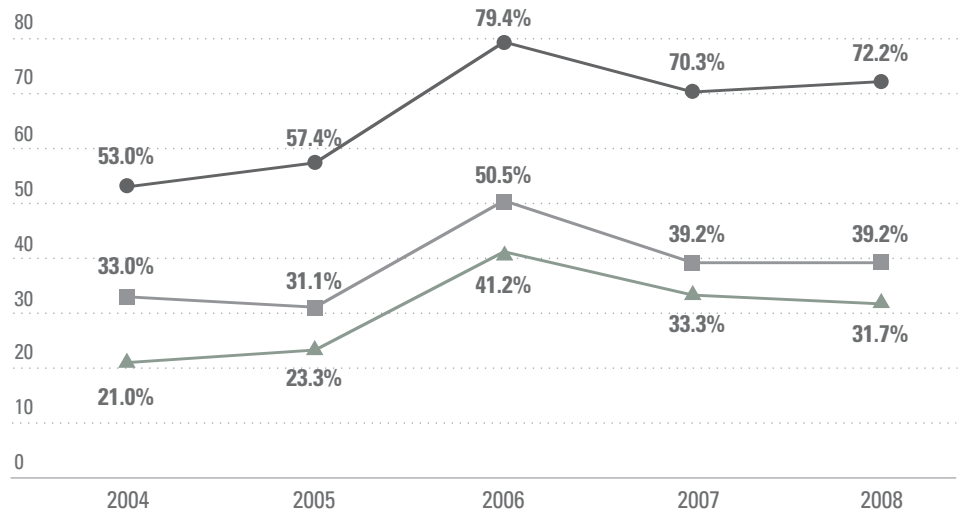
Source: National Association for College Admission Counseling, Counseling Trends Survey, 2006–2008



2.3b

Percentage of Secondary Schools that Cover All Professional Development Costs, 2004–2008

Source: National Association for College Admission Counseling, Counseling Trends Survey, 2004–2008



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? The continued development or education of employees is a common practice across many professions. This remains true for college counselors in secondary schools. Their lack of professional development is detrimental to their ability to provide students with current and complete information. This indicator measures the percentage of secondary schools that require their college counselors to participate in professional development. The measure also gives the percentage of schools that make the required participation possible by covering all or some of the costs associated with this professional development.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Although schools, districts and states require college counselors to participate in professional development, many of them do not cover the associated costs. Policymakers should ensure that budget appropriations made are adequate to cover the cost of the required professional development for all college counselors. Covering the cost for college counselors may encourage more of them to attend the available professional development activities, thus increasing the potential for students to have access to the most current and useful information about college from the school counselor. Policymakers should also note opportunities that exist for counselors to increase their knowledge, skills and abilities.¹⁹

Where are we now? Currently, 39.9 percent of secondary schools in the United States require counselors to participate in professional development. Figure 2.3a shows that while 61.3 percent of private schools require professional development, only 35.0 percent of public schools have the same requirement. The differences in the public and private funding of professional development had a relatively stable trend from 2004–2008.

Similarly, only 31.7 percent of all secondary schools in the United States cover all the costs for counselors to participate in professional development. Figure 2.3b shows that while 72.2 percent of private schools cover all the costs for professional development, only 31.7 percent of public schools do the same. The trend has been relatively stable from 2004–2008.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

Another important aspect of professional development is the fidelity of the implementation of the learned ideas, services and products by the trainees. Currently, the nation lacks a measure to assess effectiveness of professional development for school counselors. It is unknown whether the common practices of school counselors change after participating in professional development related to college counseling. This indicator does not eliminate this gap in the data, but it will provide an indirect look at the level of importance placed on professional development by schools, districts and states.

19. The College Board, Counselor Workshops. Retrieved March 17, 2010, from <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/prof-dev/workshops/counselors>, 2009.

28.8%

As of 2008,
secondary school
counselors spend 28.8
percent of their time
on postsecondary
admission counseling.

22.8%

As of 2008,
public secondary
school counselors
spend 22.8 percent
of their time on
postsecondary
admission counseling.

54.4%

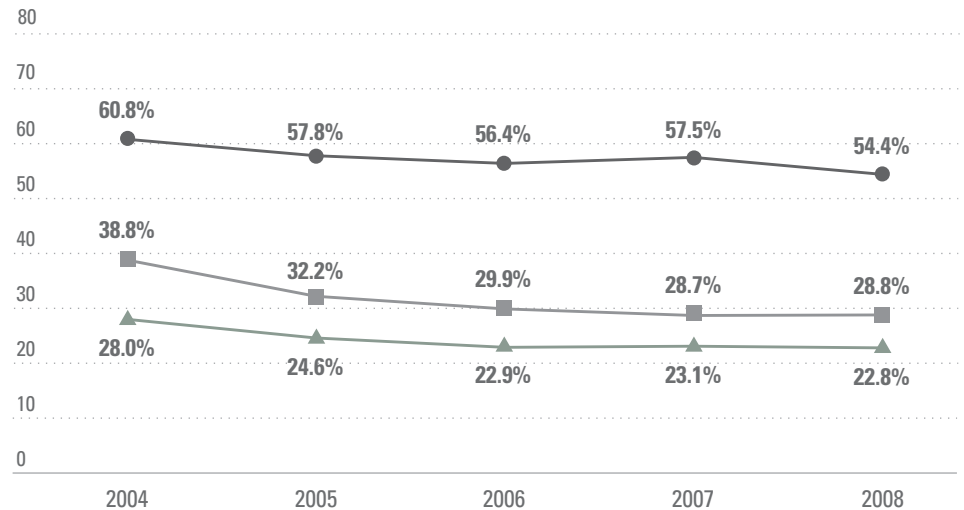
As of 2008,
private secondary
school counselors
spend 54.4 percent
of their time on
postsecondary
admission counseling.

Percentage of Counselors' Time Spent on Tasks

2.4a

Percentage of Counselors' Time Spent on Postsecondary Admission Counseling by School Type, 2004–2008

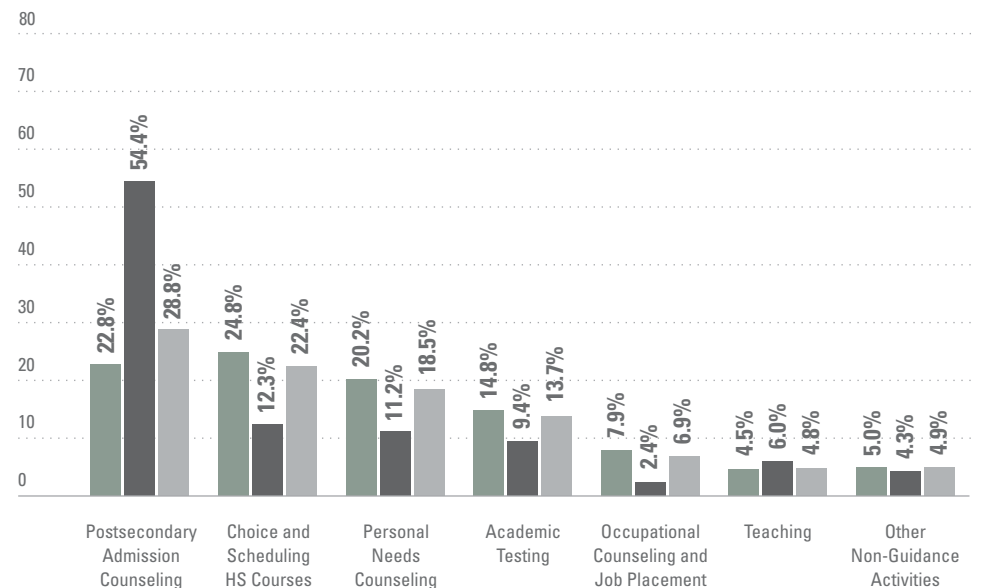
Source: National Association for College Admission Counseling, Counseling Trends Survey, 2004–2008



2.4b

Percentage of Counselors' Time Spent on Tasks by School Type, 2008

Source: National Association for College Admission Counseling, Counseling Trends Survey, 2008



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? The day-to-day role and responsibilities of the school counselor can vary from building to building. This measure presents the average percentage of time spent on various tasks. The measure seeks to raise the awareness of the role and responsibilities of school counselors, in particular, the role of postsecondary admission counseling. It is important to monitor the amount of time spent on postsecondary education to ensure students are receiving the information, services and support they need to gain access to college.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? This measure represents the average percentage of time counselors spend on various activities. It is a reminder of the variety of roles a counselor must fill in a school. The data presented in this measure can be used by administrators to understand the average percentage of time spent on counseling tasks. When administrators gain a thorough understanding of the most appropriate roles and responsibilities;²⁰ they will be able to advocate for the tools necessary for school counselors to fulfill their role. Policymakers are encouraged to use this measure in combination with the others presented in this recommendation to ensure that there are no conflicting policies that will prevent counselors from working to the best of their ability.

Where are we now? As of 2008, 28.8 percent of counselors' time is spent on postsecondary admission counseling in the United States. Figure 2.4a shows that while 54.4 percent of private school counselors' time is spent on postsecondary admission counseling, only 22.8 percent of public school counselors' time is spent on postsecondary admission counseling. Many private schools have school counselors whose role is more unidimensional than that of the public school counselor (See Figure 2.4b). Thus, they are able to spend more time in postsecondary admission counseling.

Private school counselors devote more time to this activity. Figure 2.4b shows that public school counselors devote almost an equal percentage of time to postsecondary admission counseling as to scheduling students in courses and attending to the personal needs of students. While public school counselors spend 24.8 percent of their time on student scheduling, private school counselors spend only 12.3 percent of their time on this activity. Similarly, public school counselors spend 20.2 percent of their time on personal-needs counseling while private school counselors devote only 11.2 percent of their time to this activity.

Public school counselors also devote a significant amount of time (14.8 percent) to academic testing of students, while private school counselors dedicate only 9.4 percent of their time to this activity. The same is true for occupational counseling and job placement: Public school counselors devote 7.9 percent of their time to occupational and job placement counseling compared to private school counselors, who devote 2.4 percent of their time to these activities.

20. American School Counselor Association, *Appropriate and inappropriate activities for school counselors*, Retrieved from American School Counselor Association website on Feb. 2, 2010: <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/files/appropriate.pdf>, 2008.

Private school counselors dedicate more time (6.0 percent) to teaching issues than public school counselors (4.5 percent). However, both public and private school counselors spend 5.0 percent and 4.3 percent of their time, respectively, on other non-guidance activities.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? The percent of time a counselor spends on one task can be very different depending on the grade levels assigned to the counselor. This measure looks primarily at secondary school counselors; it does not account for the role of the elementary or middle school counselor. The role of the elementary and middle school counselor is just as important as that of the high school counselor in preparing students for college. Caution should also be taken when interpreting this measure because it is not all inclusive of every task a school counselor must undertake. This measure reports the most common tasks for school counselors. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) highlights all of the tasks in which a school counselor should be competent.²¹ ASCA recommends counselors address the education, vocational and personal/social development of students. When counselors spend more time on college counseling, there is less time to meet the demands of the other areas recommended by ASCA.

21. American School Counselor Association, School Counselor Competencies. Retrieved on Feb. 2, 2010, from ASCA website: <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/files/SCCompetencies.pdf>

Three

Implement the best
research-based dropout
prevention programs

WE RECOMMEND that states and local educational agencies adopt targeted interventions (starting in elementary and middle schools) focused on early warning signs of students in danger of dropping out, to identify such students and put an educational safety net under them.

For many educators and members of the general public, understanding why students are dropping out of high school can be difficult, and finding solutions to this problem is just as mysterious. The commission called for educators' attention to the early warning signs of dropping out and for state and local educators to take the lead in implementing dropout prevention programs.

In developing an effective dropout program, it is important to study the trends and patterns of students who drop out of school in this country. Specifically, we must know whether the dropout rate is increasing and which students are most likely to drop out of high school.

The following indicators can aid legislators in understanding these questions:

- Graduation rates for public high school students;
- National status dropout rates — Non-institutional (i.e., 16- to 24-year-olds);
- National status dropout rates — Institutional (i.e., 16- to 24-year-olds); and
- National event dropout rates (i.e., 15- to 24-year-olds).

General Findings for This Recommendation

- In 2006, 73.4 percent of public high school students who entered high school as freshmen graduated.
- In the United States, approximately 3.3 million 16- through 24-year-olds were not enrolled in high school and had not earned a high school diploma or alternative credential. In October 2007, these dropouts accounted for 8.7 percent of the 37 million non-institutionalized civilians ages 16 to 24 living in the United States.
- In 2007, white, non-Hispanic students had the lowest dropout rates among all racial/ethnic groups.
- In the United States, the status dropout rate was 9.3 percent for 16- to 24-year-olds in 2007. This includes those living in military barracks and those who are in prisons, hospitals, and other institutions.²²
- In 2007, the national event dropout rate was 3.5 percent for 15- to 24-year-olds.²³

22. The status dropout rate represents the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and have not earned a high school credential.

23. The event dropout rate represents the proportion of youth ages 15 through 24 who drop out of grades 10 through 12 in a 12-month period.

73.4%

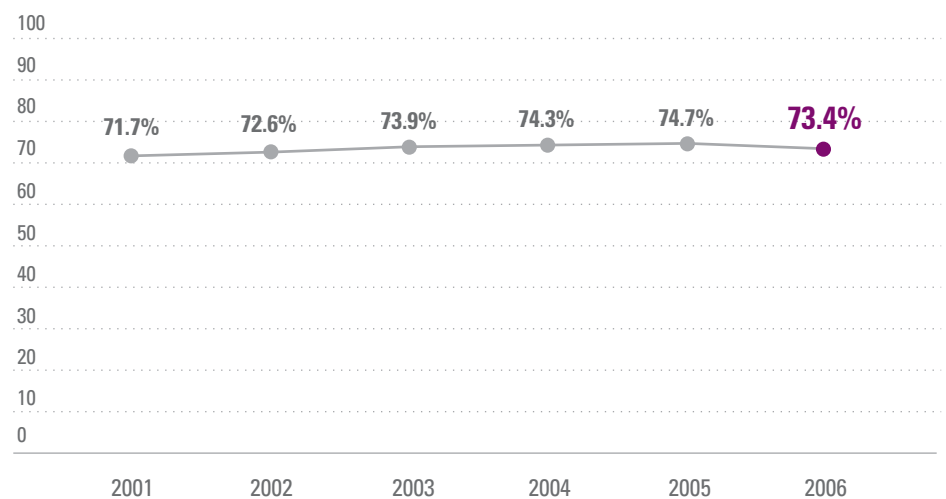
As of 2006, 73.4 percent of public high school students who entered high school as freshmen graduated with a high school diploma.

Graduation Rates for Public High School Students

3.1a

National Average Graduation Rates for Public High School Students, 2001–2006

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), 2009



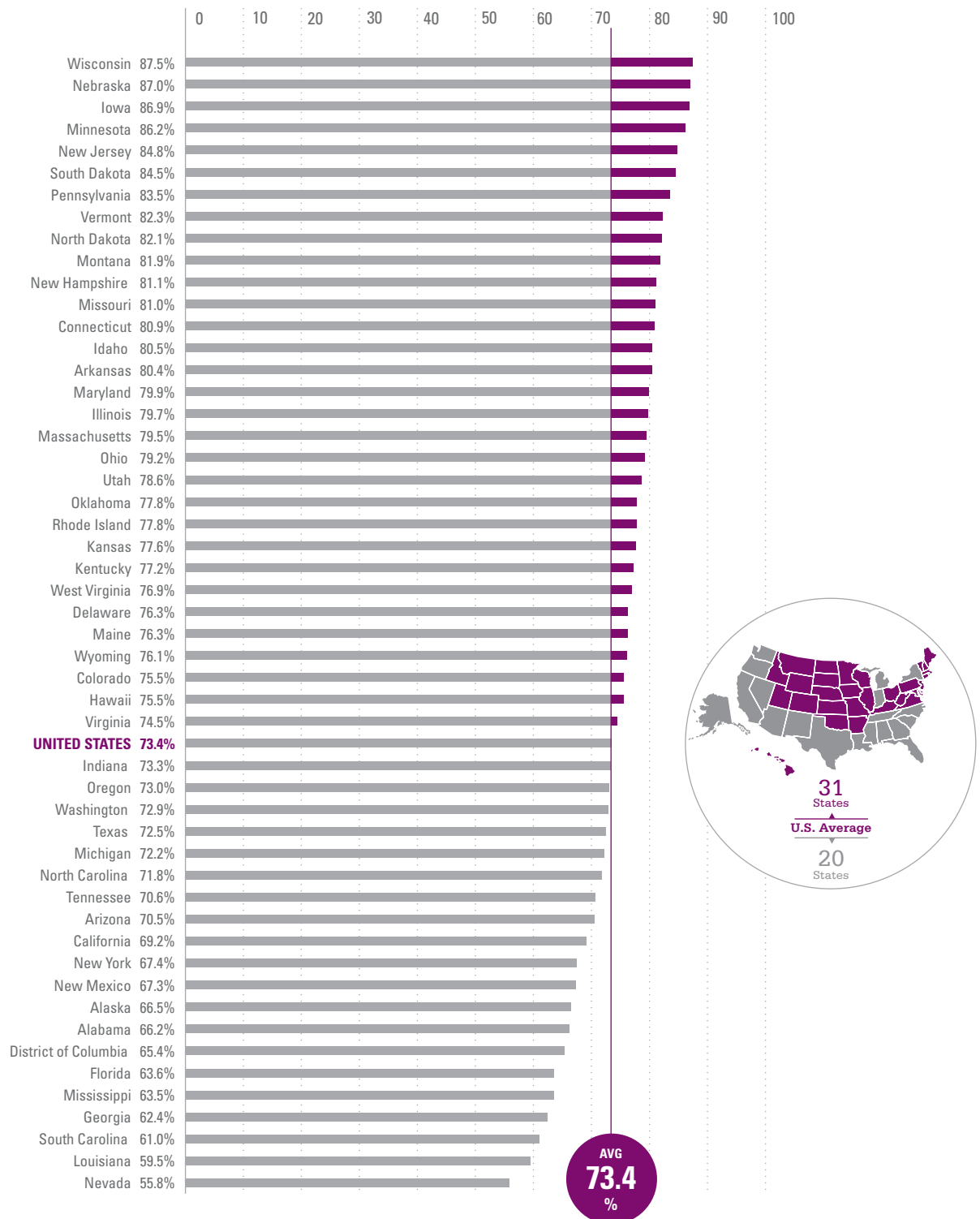
What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measure is the percentage of public high school students who enter school as freshmen and graduate with a diploma in four years. This measure is important in assessing whether students are completing school in a timely manner. This measure also shows whether adequate supports are in place to graduate students.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? In an effort to understand the dropout problem, it is important to know the percentage of students who enter high school as freshmen and graduate with a diploma in four years. Knowing this number across the nation and by state will help policymakers gauge the seriousness of the problem in their state. Reducing the dropout rate and increasing the graduation rate in each state will ensure that students will be eligible for postsecondary options in higher education and in the workforce.

3.1b

Average Graduation Rates for Public High School Students, 2006

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), 2009



8.7%

As of October 2007, approximately 3.3 million 16- to 24-year-olds are not enrolled in high school and have not earned a high school diploma or alternative credential. These dropouts account for 8.7 percent of the 37 million non-institutionalized, civilian 16- through 24-year-olds living in the United States.

Where are we now? In the United States in 2006, 73.4 percent of all public school students who entered high school as freshmen graduated. Figure 3.1a shows that the national average graduation rate remained relatively flat from 2001 to 2006, and peaked at 74.7 percent in 2005. However, in 2006, the rate slipped lower than its 2003 level.

When the data are disaggregated by state for the average freshman graduation rate for public high school students, the percentages range from 55.8 percent in Nevada to 87.5 percent in Wisconsin. Figure 3.1b shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the largest percentage of graduates are Wisconsin, Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota and New Jersey. The states with the lowest percentage of graduates are Nevada, Louisiana, South Carolina, Georgia and Mississippi.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

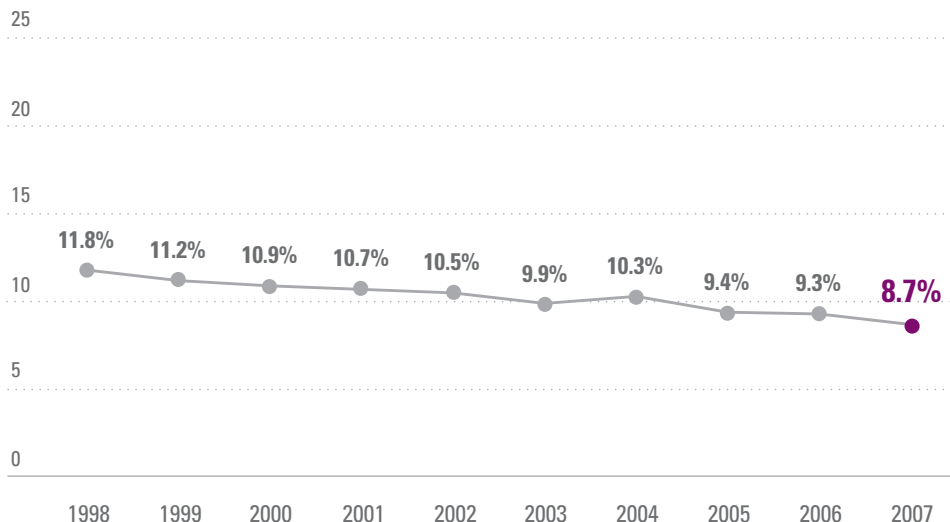
Policymakers should also keep in mind when comparing the graduation rates across the nation that the requirements for graduation may vary from state to state. In many states students are required to pass a state examination and complete varying years of course work in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.²⁴

National Status Dropout Rates (Non-Institutional)

3.2a

National Status Dropout Rates of Non-Institutionalized 16- to 24-Year-Olds, 1998–2007

Source: Cataldi, E. F., Laird, J., KewalRamani, A., Chapman, C (September 2009). High School Dropout and Completion Rates in the United States: 2007. Compendium Report. National Center for Education Statistics



24. Doughnay, J. (2006). Alignment of high school graduation requirements and state-set college admissions requirements. Retrieved June 17, 2010 from <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/68/60/6860.pdf>

19.4%

As of 2007, American Indians have a non-institutional status dropout rate of 19.4 percent.

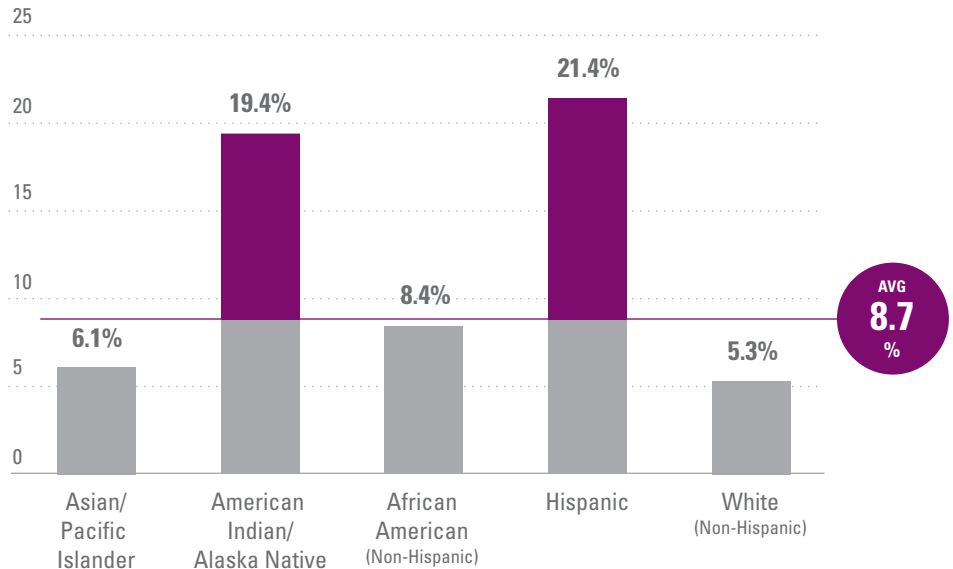
21.4%

As of 2007, Hispanics have a non-institutional status dropout rate of 21.4 percent.

3.2b

National Status Dropout Rates of Non-Institutionalized 16- to 24-Year-Olds by Race/Ethnicity, 2007

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 2009



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measures the percentage of non-institutionalized (excluding individuals in military barracks, prisons, and other institutions) individuals (ages 16 through 24) who are not enrolled in high school and who do not have a high school credential (e.g., GED), irrespective of when they dropped out of school. This measure helps to gauge the overall educational attainment at the national level across years.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? It is important for states to identify and support dropout students. Minority and first-generation students are reported as more likely to be at risk of dropping out of K–12 schools. States should not only implement a dropout prevention program but also work to improve the high school performance of students overall.

Where are we now? In the United States, approximately 3.3 million 16- to 24-year-olds were not enrolled in high school and had not earned a high school diploma or alternative credential. These dropouts accounted for 8.7 percent of the 37 million non-institutionalized civilians ages 16 to 24 living in the United States. Figure 3.2a shows this number decreased since 1998 when the status dropout rate of non-institutionalized 16- to 24-year-olds was 11.8 percent.

While the status dropout rate has decreased overall, the numbers are still high for many racial and ethnic groups. Figure 3.2b shows that in 2007 whites and Asians had the lowest status dropout rates (5.3 percent and 6.1 percent, respectively), the dropout rates are considerably higher among Hispanics and American Indians (21.4 percent and 19.4 percent, respectively). African Americans had a status dropout rate of 8.4 percent, yet this number represents only those African Americans in the non-institutional population.

Across gender, Figure 3.2c shows that males have a higher status dropout rate than females. The dropout rate for males is 9.8 percent compared to 7.7 percent for females. When we look by age group, the status dropout rate is largest among 20- to 24-year-olds. Figure 3.2d shows the rate ranges from 3.3 percent for 16-year-olds to 11.2 percent for 20- to 24-year-olds. The status dropout rate for 18-year-olds is 8.4 percent and 7.8 percent among 19-year-olds.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

The status dropout rate of 8.7 percent in 2007 was calculated using the United States Census Current Population Survey (CPS), which is based on the non-institutionalized population in the United States, including students attending public and nonpublic schools. This rate does not provide information about military personnel or individuals residing in group quarters, such as prison inmates or patients in long-term medical facilities. The status dropout rate counts individuals who may have never attended a U.S. school as a dropout.²⁵

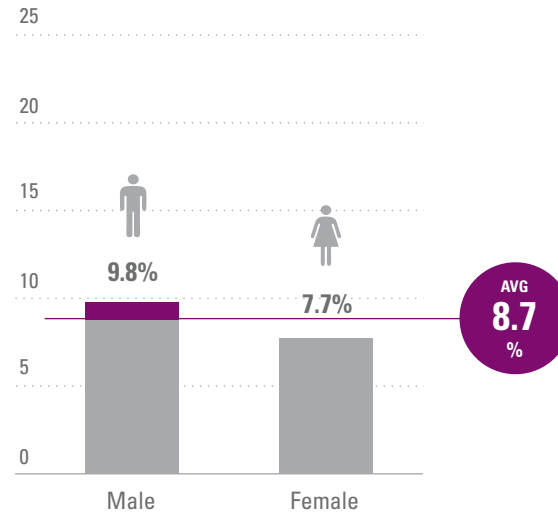
This status dropout rate uses the United States Census Current Population Survey data; therefore, the estimates presented are not directly comparable to the 2007 estimates based on the American Community Survey (ACS) data which are presented in the next indicator.²⁶ Unlike the CPS, the ACS includes residents of military barracks and individuals who are institutionalized.

25. Planty, M., Hussar, W., Snyder, T., Kena, G., KewalRamani, A., Kemp, J., Bianco, K., & Dinkes, R. The condition of education 2009, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009.

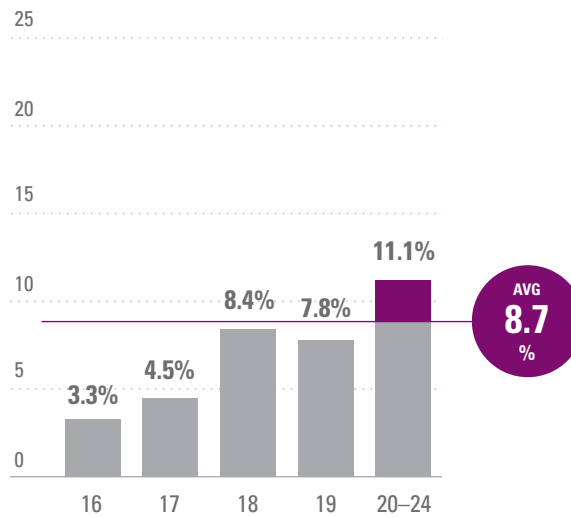
26. Planty et al., The condition of education 2009, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009, p.182, table A-20-1.

3.2c**National Status Dropout Rates of Non-Institutionalized 16- to 24-Year-Olds by Gender, 2007**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 2009

**3.2d****National Status Dropout Rates of Non-Institutionalized 16- to 24-Year-Olds by Age, 2007**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 2009



9.3%

As of 2007, the status dropout rate of 16- through 24-year-olds is 9.3 percent. This status dropout rate is based on the American Community Survey (ACS), which includes persons living in military barracks in the United States and institutionalized persons.

15.3%

As of 2007, American Indians have an institutional status dropout rate of 15.3 percent.

11.5%

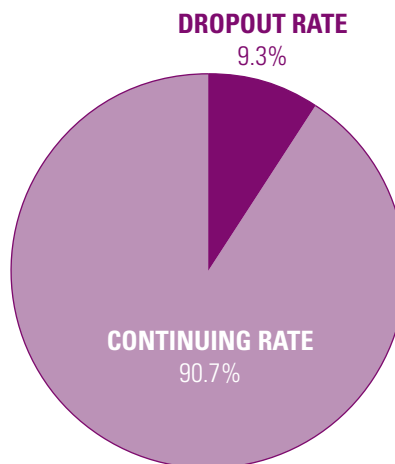
As of 2007, African Americans have an institutional status dropout rate of 11.5 percent.

National Status Dropout Rates (Institutional)

3.3a

National Status Dropout Rates of Institutionalized 16- to 24-Year-Olds, 2007

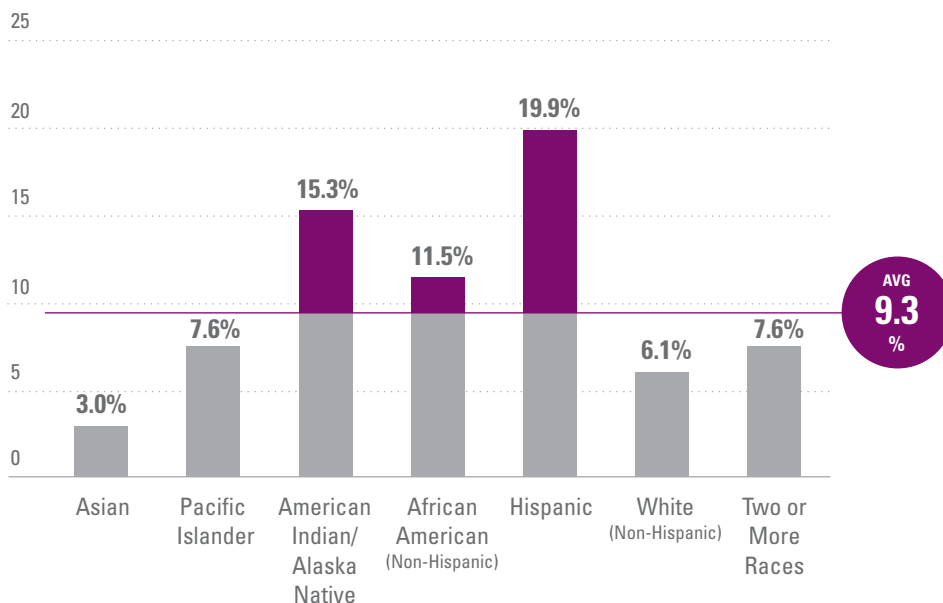
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 2009



3.3b

National Status Dropout Rates of Institutionalized 16- to 24-Year-Olds by Race/Ethnicity, 2007

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 2009



19.9%

As of 2007,
Hispanics have an
institutional status
dropout rate
of 19.9 percent.

What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measures the percentage of individuals (ages 16 through 24) who are not enrolled in high school and who do not have a high school credential (e.g., GED), irrespective of when they dropped out. The measure uses the American Community Survey (ASC) that includes those living in military barracks in the United States and those who are institutionalized, which provides us with a broader, more inclusive population.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? It is important that states understand the dropout rate of institutionalized persons so that interventions can be put in place that will prevent dropouts from falling through the cracks. Early intervention programs may help ensure that students make it to a college or university rather than a prison cell. While there is much debate over whether institutionalized or non-institutionalized dropout rates are more accurate, there is no debate about the fact that society benefits when more people become productive citizens. These citizens will contribute to the overall productivity of the United States and will generate more tax dollars for our states and the nation.

Where are we now? In the United States, the status dropout rate was 9.3 percent in 2007 for 16- to 24-year-olds. This includes those living in military barracks and institutionalized persons. The institutional status dropout rate numbers are very high for many racial and ethnic groups. Figure 3.3b shows that while Asians, whites and Pacific Islanders had the lowest status dropout rates (3.0 percent, 6.1 percent and 7.6 percent, respectively); the dropout rates are considerably higher among Hispanics, Native Americans, and African Americans (19.9 percent, 15.3 percent and 11.5 percent, respectively).

Males have a higher status dropout rate than females (See Figure 3.3c). The dropout rate for males is 10.9 percent compared to 7.6 percent for females. When we look by age group, the status dropout rate is larger among 20- to 24-year-olds. Figure 3.3d shows the rate ranges from 3.2 percent for 16-year-olds to 11.5 percent for 20- to 24-year-olds. The status dropout rate for 18-year-olds is 8.4 percent and 9.9 percent among 19-year-olds.

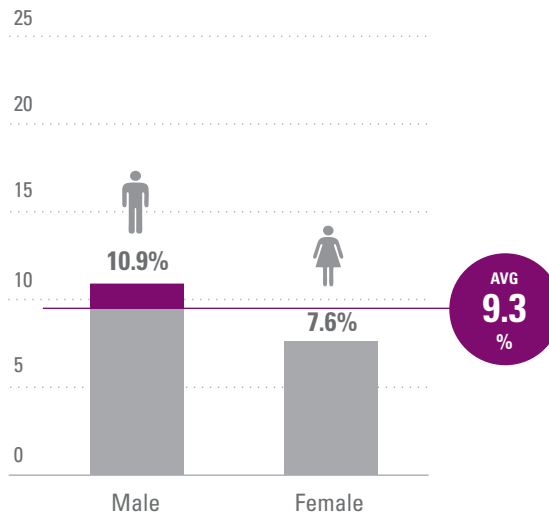
When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? This status dropout rate was calculated using the American Community Survey (ACS), which includes residents of military barracks in the United States and individuals living in institutionalized group quarters including adult and juvenile correctional facilities, nursing facilities, and other health care facilities.²⁷

This status dropout rate uses the ACS data; therefore, estimates are not directly comparable to the 2007 estimates based on the CPS data.

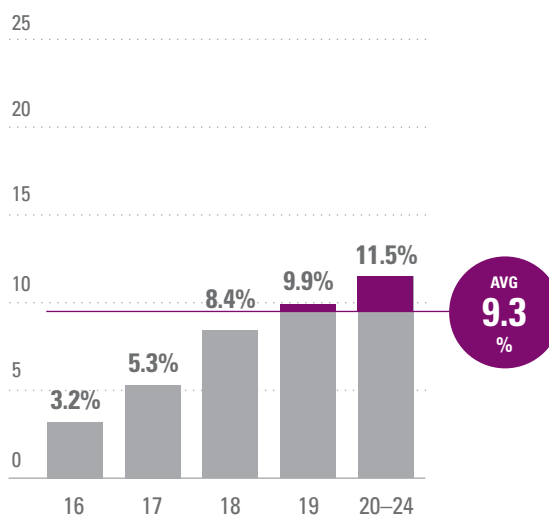
27. Planty et al. The condition of education 2009, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009.

3.3c**Status Dropout Rates of Institutionalized 16- to 24-Year-Olds by Gender, 2007**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 2009

**3.3d****National Status Dropout Rates of Institutionalized 16- to 24-Year-Olds by Age, 2007**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 2009



3.5%

In October 2006, about 3.5 percent of students enrolled in grades 10 through 12 in public or private high schools left school before October 2007 without completing a high school program.

4.5%

As of 2007, African Americans have an event dropout rate of 4.5 percent.

6.0%

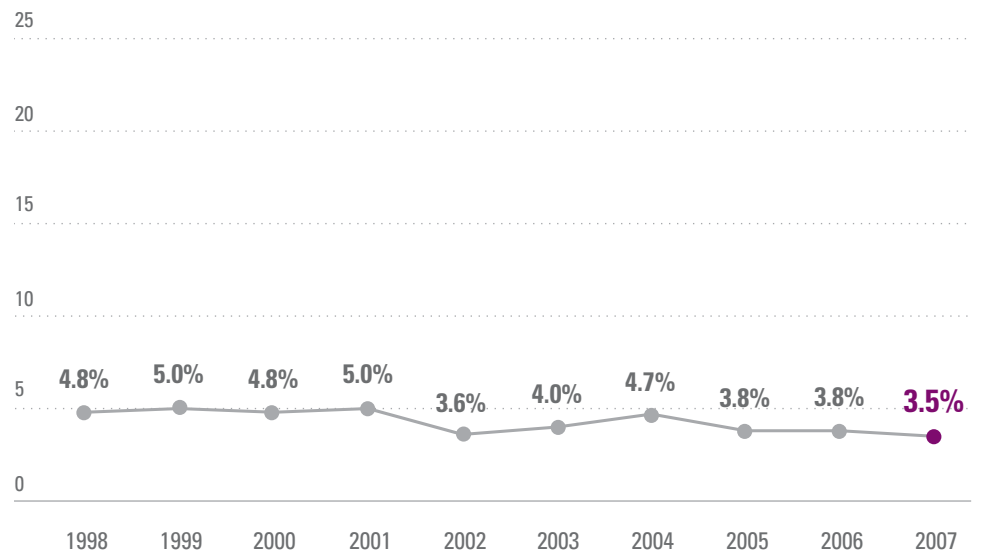
As of 2007, Hispanics have an event dropout rate of 6.0 percent.

National Event Dropout Rates

3.4a

National Event Dropout Rates of 15- to 24-Year-Olds, 1998–2007

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), 2009

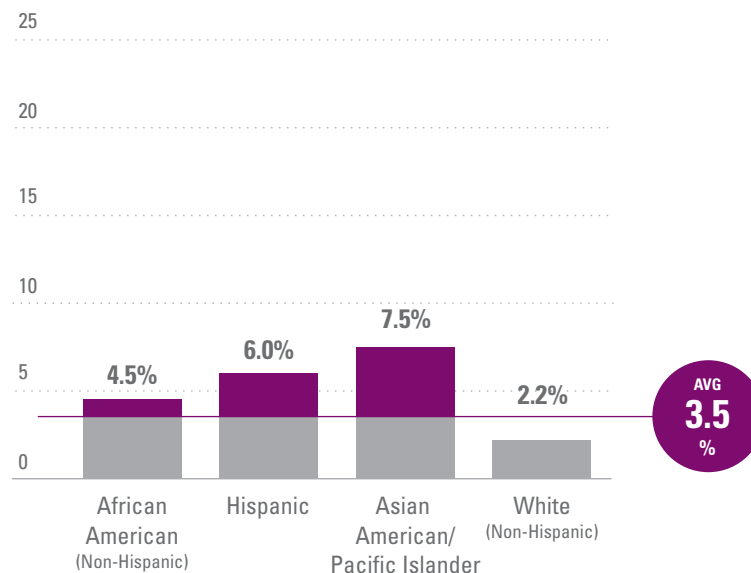


3.4b

National Event Dropout Rates of 15- to 24-Year-Olds by Race/Ethnicity, 2007

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), 2009

Note: American Indian category is not available.



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? The national event dropout rate describes the percentage of youths ages 15 to 24 in the United States who dropped out of grades 10 through 12 from either public or private schools in the 12 months between one October and the next (e.g., October 2006 to October 2007). This measure can be used to study student experiences in high school in a given year. It helps understand which students drop out of school during a particular period of time.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? It is important for states to identify and support students who are most likely to drop out. From the data, it is seen that minority students are reported as more likely to be at risk of dropping out of high school. States should be aware that not only is it important to implement dropout prevention programs but also to improve high school performance overall.

Where are we now? The national event dropout rate shows the percentage of youths who drop out in a 12-month period. In 2007, the national event dropout rate was 3.5 percent for 15- to 24-year-olds. This includes all students who dropped out in grades 10 through 12. Figure 3.4a shows that the national event dropout rate has decreased over time from a high of 5.0 percent in 1999 and 2001 to a low of 3.5 percent in 2007.

However, the national event dropout rate is higher for African Americans and Hispanics. Figure 3.4b shows that while whites had the lowest event dropout rate at 2.2 percent, the dropout rates are more than two times higher among Hispanics and African Americans.

When comparing gender, Figure 3.4c shows that males have a slightly higher national event dropout rate than females. When looking across income levels, the event dropout rate is larger among low-income 15- to 24-year-olds. Figure 3.4d shows that the national event rate for low-income students is more than twice as high as the rate for middle and high-income students.

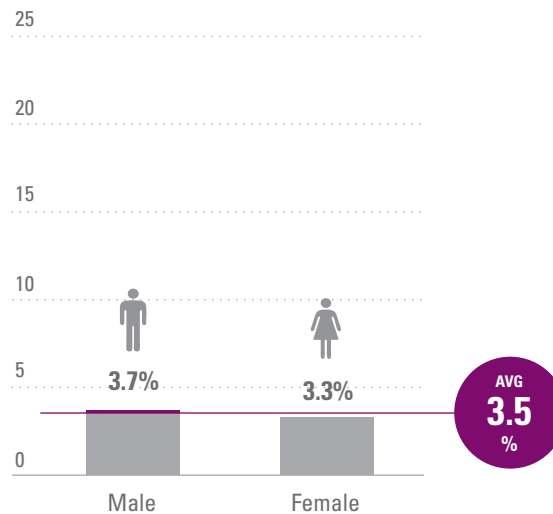
When the data are disaggregated by state for the event dropout rate for public high school students in grades 9 through 12, the percentages range from 1.7 in New Jersey to 8.4 percent in Louisiana. Figure 3.4e shows that when the data are placed in rank order, New Jersey, Connecticut, North Dakota, Iowa and Wisconsin have the lowest percentage of national dropout rates. Louisiana, Alaska, Colorado, Nevada and Arizona have the highest percentage of national dropout rates.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

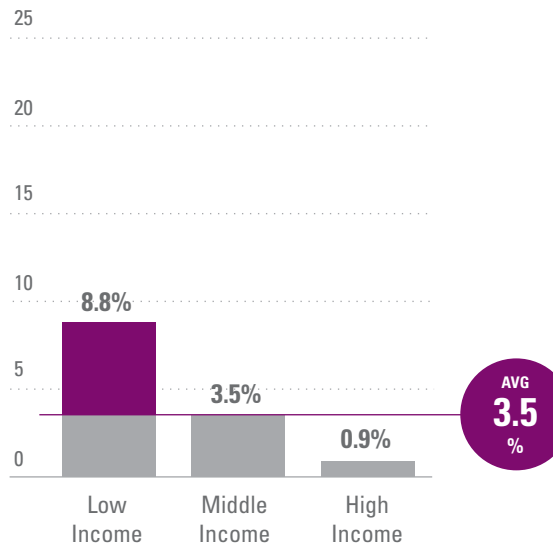
This indicator only measures how many students dropped out in a single year, and students may reenter the school system after that time. It does not provide a picture of the dropout problem more generally. This age range (15- through 24-year-olds) was chosen in an effort to include as many students in grades 10 through 12 as possible. Because the rate is based on retrospective data, it is delayed one year, meaning that some 15-year-olds have turned 16 by the time of the survey.

3.4c**National Event Dropout Rates of 15- to 24-Year-Olds by Gender, 2007**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), 2009

**3.4d****National Event Dropout Rates of 15- to 24-Year-Olds by Family Income, 2007**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), 2009

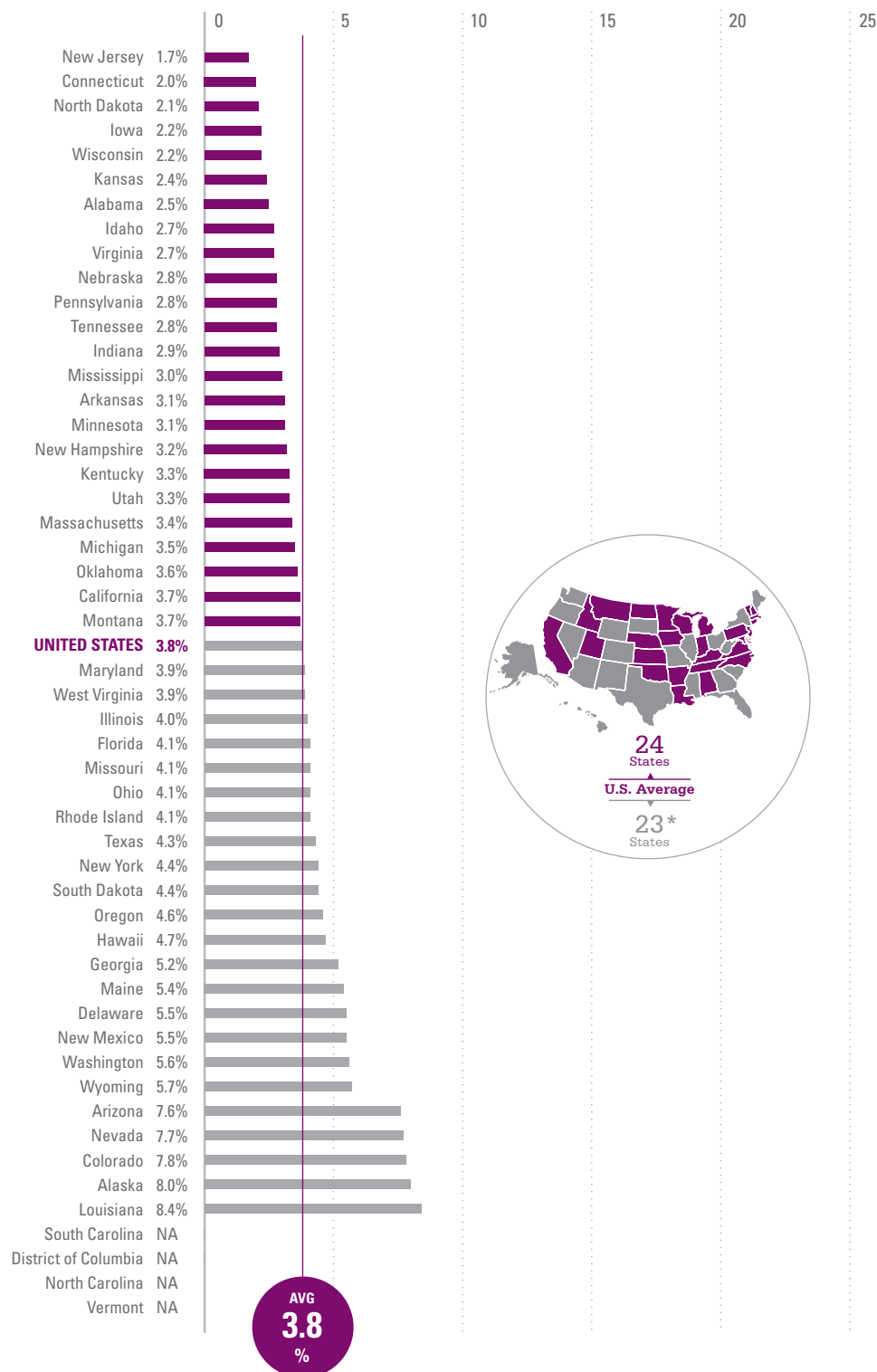


3.4e

Event Dropout Rates for Public School Students in Grades 9–12 by State Rank, 2006

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), 2009

Note: Vermont, North Carolina and the District of Columbia did not meet reporting standards. South Carolina reported data that were inconsistent with NCES definition.



* Indicator data not available for all states.

Four

Align the K–12 education system with international standards and college admission expectations

WE RECOMMEND that governors, legislators and state education agencies work to provide a world-class education to every American student by aligning high school programs with international benchmarks tied to the demands of college, work and life.

The commission believes that the academic intensity of the high school curriculum followed by students is the most important predictor of college success. Business leaders also think that the standards required for success in the workplace are increasingly parallel to those required for college work.²⁸ However, too many students do not have access to a rigorous high school curriculum and too many graduate unprepared to succeed in college or on the job.

Students must have access to a rigorous high school curriculum that also is aligned with the skills necessary for students to succeed in college and the workplace. There is a real need for leaders in K–12 and higher education to work together to align these systems. Unfortunately, a number of analyses indicate that many state graduation standards are not adequate for preparing students for success in college or on the job, requiring higher education institutions and businesses to spend an estimated \$17 billion on remediation.²⁹ States must align their standards, pedagogy, assessment and professional development activities to meet the expectations of college and workforce readiness, which will increase the chances that students will succeed whether they enter college or the workforce.

Since the commission released its initial recommendations in 2008, there has been an increased national interest in examining the educational preparation of our students. For example, the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers are working together to create the National Common Core Standards in reading, language arts and mathematics that can be adopted by all states to ensure that students have access to a rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum. This effort brought together a team of experts from several education organizations, including Achieve Inc., ACT, the College Board, and Educational Testing Service, in an effort to create standards that are aligned to college and work.

In understanding the degree to which the nation is succeeding in aligning K–12 education systems with international standards and college admission expectations, three indicators will be used to monitor the progress:

- Percentage of public high schools offering Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) or IB courses in the four core subject areas;
- Percentage of states with alignment between K–12 and higher education standards; and
- Percentage of students in remedial classes.

28. American Diploma Project, *What Is College- and Career-Ready?* (Washington, D.C.: Achieve Inc., 2009).

29. Greene, J. P. *The Cost of Remedial Education* (Midland, MI: Mackinac Center for Public Policy, 2000), 1.

34.8%

As of 2009, 34.8 percent of public high schools in the United States offer AP or IB courses in the four core subject areas: English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

General Findings for This Recommendation

- As of 2009, 34.8 percent of schools in the United States offer AP or IB courses in the four core subject areas (i.e., English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies).
- As of 2009, 46.0 percent of states have achieved alignment between K–12 and higher education standards. Many states are developing these alignment policies and will have them implemented by 2011.
- As of 2000, 28.0 percent of students across the nation who enter a college or university as freshmen are in remedial classes.

Percentage of Public High Schools Offering AP® or IB Courses in the Four Core Subject Areas

What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator measures the percentage of public high schools in the United States that offer AP or IB courses in each of the four core subject areas: English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

This indicator is important because it measures the percentage of public high schools that provide access to a rigorous high school curriculum that is aligned with national and international standards for college readiness.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? College and career readiness is the level of content knowledge that students should possess in reading, mathematics, writing and communications in order to be successful in the workforce or at an institution of higher education.³⁰ Both AP and IB are proven methods of rigor for high school students, and both have been shown to improve college and workforce readiness. Although AP and IB are not the only indicators of academic rigor that are provided in high schools, they are a good indicator of the rigor that is available to students in public schools across the nation. Other rigorous course work provided to students includes magnet programs, honors programs and dual enrollment, although the data for these programs are not yet available.

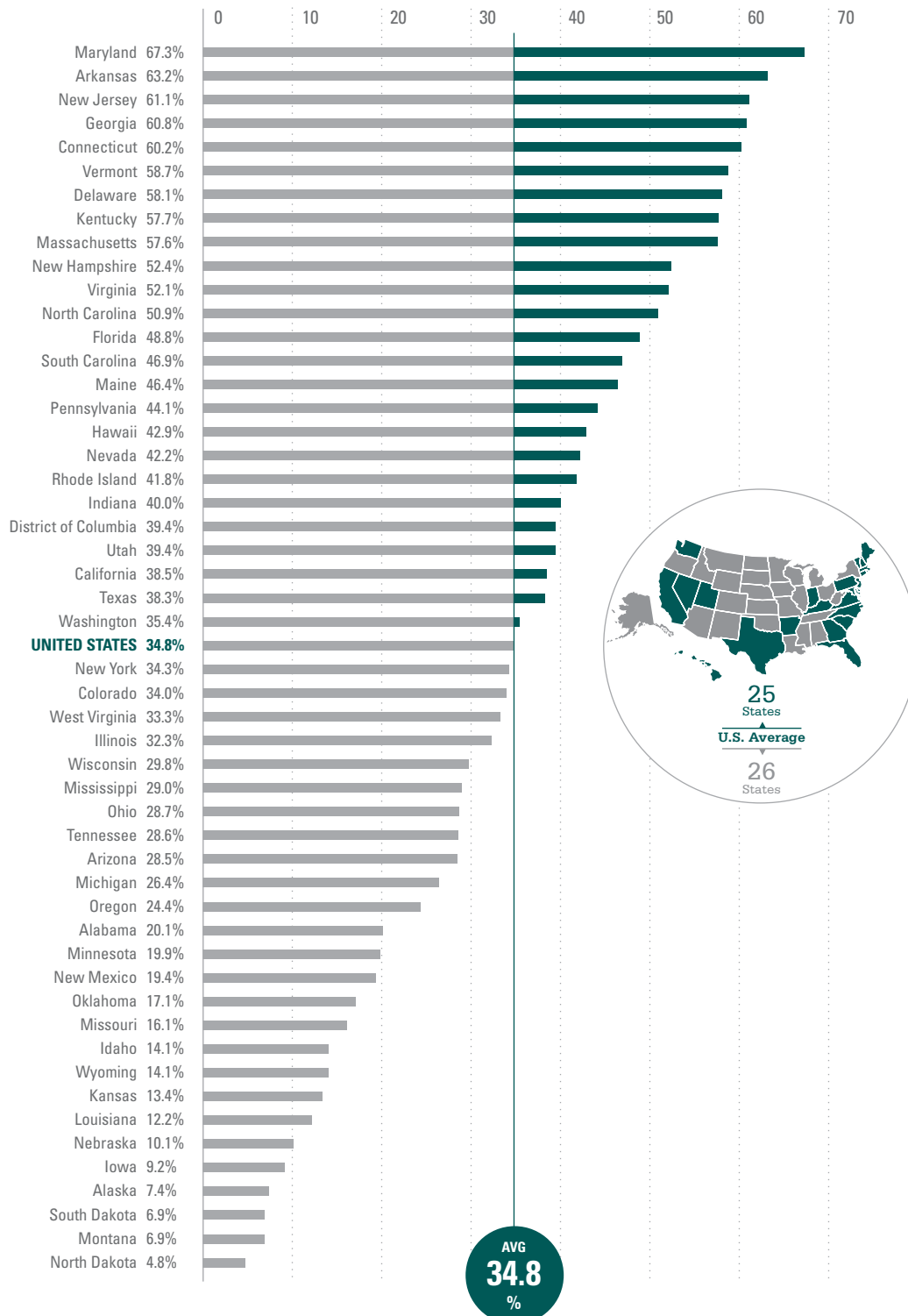
Where are we now? In the United States, 34.8 percent of public high schools across the nation currently offer AP or IB courses in the four core subject areas (English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies).

30. American Diploma Project, *What Is College- and Career- Ready?* (Washington, D.C.: Achieve Inc., 2009).

4.1a

Percentage of Public High Schools Offering Advanced Placement® (AP®) or International Baccalaureate (IB) Courses in the Four Core Subject Areas, 2009

Source: The College Board and International Baccalaureate, 2009



When the data are disaggregated by state for public high schools across the nation that currently offer AP or IB courses in the four core subject areas (English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies), the percentages range from 4.8 percent in North Dakota to 67.3 percent in Maryland. Figure 4.1a shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the largest percentage of schools offering AP or IB courses are Maryland, Arkansas, New Jersey, Georgia and Connecticut. The states with the smallest percentage of schools offering AP or IB courses are North Dakota, Montana, South Dakota, Alaska and Iowa.

When the data are disaggregated by state for public high schools across the nation that currently offer AP courses in the four core subject areas (English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies), the percentages range from 4.8 percent in North Dakota to 67.3 percent in Maryland. Figure 4.1b shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the largest percentage of schools offering AP courses are Maryland, Arkansas, New Jersey, Georgia and Connecticut. The states with the lowest percentage are North Dakota, Montana, South Dakota, Alaska and Iowa.

When the data are disaggregated by state for public high schools across the nation that currently offer IB courses in the four core subject areas the percentages range from 0.0 percent in several states to 9.9 in South Carolina. Figure 4.1c shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the largest percentage of schools offering IB courses are South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Florida, Colorado and Oregon. The bottom states are Vermont, South Dakota, Rhode Island, North Dakota and New Mexico. None of these states offer IB programs.

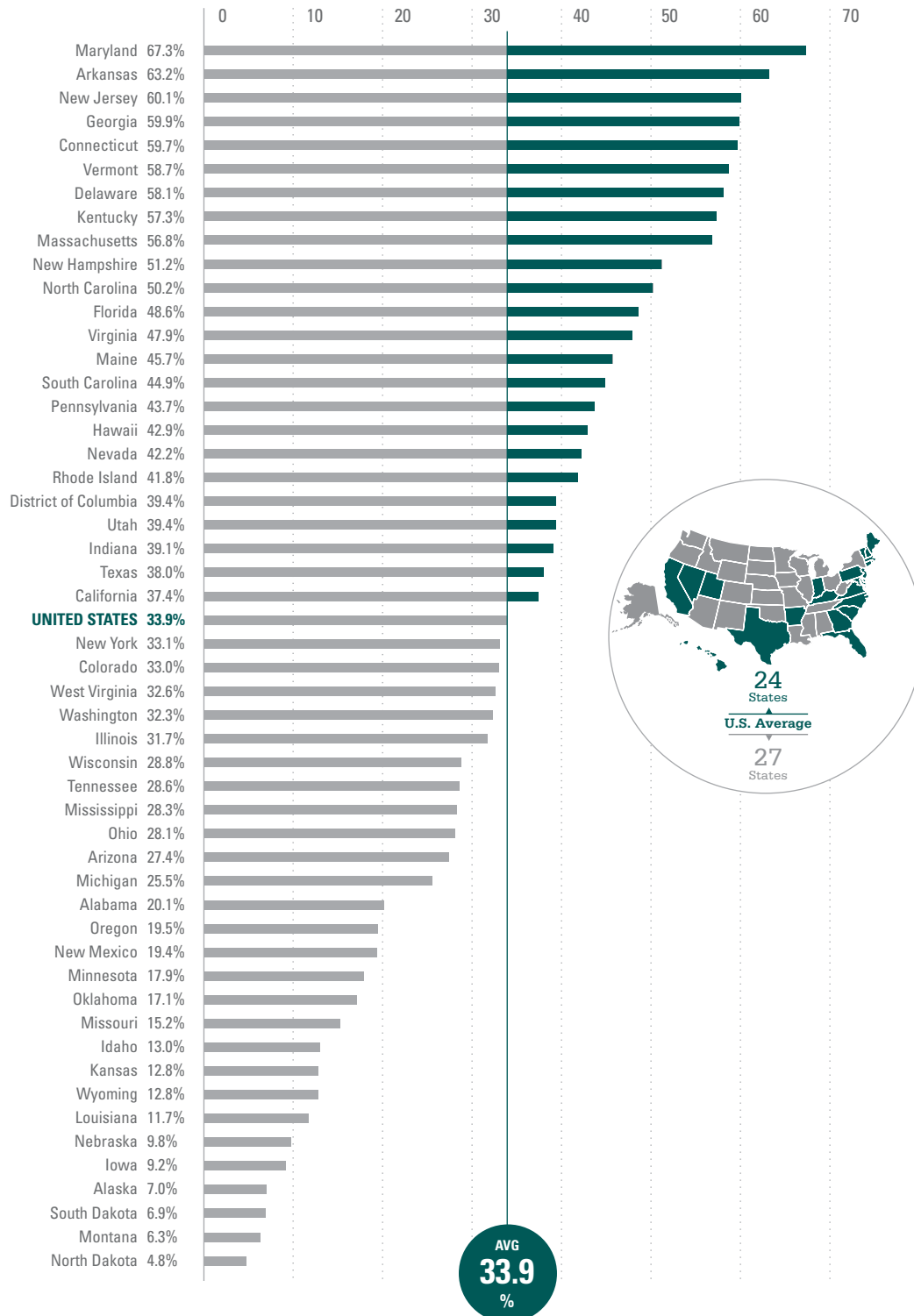
When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

This measure should not be misconstrued to mean that only schools that offer AP and IB courses offer a rigorous high school curriculum. Instead, this measure should be used as a gauge of the amount of rigor available to students in public high schools across the nation. While this measure is not a perfect yardstick to measure rigor, it is the best measure that is available to date.

4.1b

Percentage of Public High Schools Offering Advanced Placement (AP) in the Four Core Subject Areas, 2009

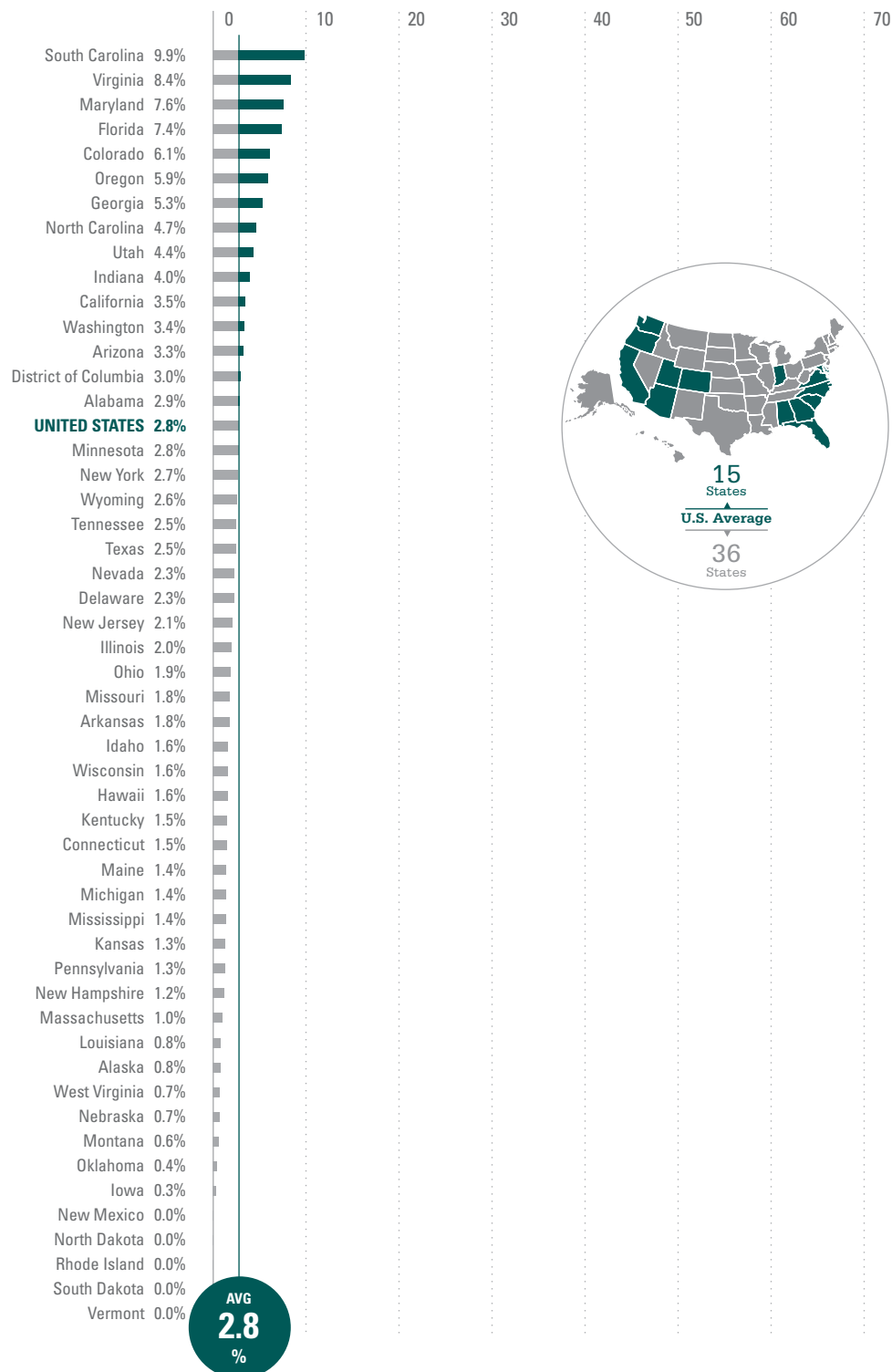
Source: The College Board and International Baccalaureate, 2009



4.1c

Percentage of Public High Schools Offering International Baccalaureate (IB) Courses in the Four Core Subject Areas, 2009

Source: The College Board and International Baccalaureate, 2009



45%

As of 2009,
45 percent of states
in the United States
have aligned K–12
and higher education
standards.

39%

As of 2009,
39 percent of states
in the United States
have aligned high
school graduation
requirements and
college and workplace
expectations.

Percentage of States with Alignment Between K–12 and Higher Education Standards

4.2a

Percentage of States with Alignment Between High School Standards and College and Workplace Expectations, 2009

Source: Achieve Inc., 2009

YES

Arizona
Arkansas
California
Delaware
Georgia
Indiana
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Michigan
Minnesota
Mississippi
Nebraska
New Jersey
New York
Ohio
Oklahoma
Rhode Island

Tennessee
Texas
Washington
West Virginia

NO

Alaska
Iowa
Montana
North Dakota
Vermont
Wyoming

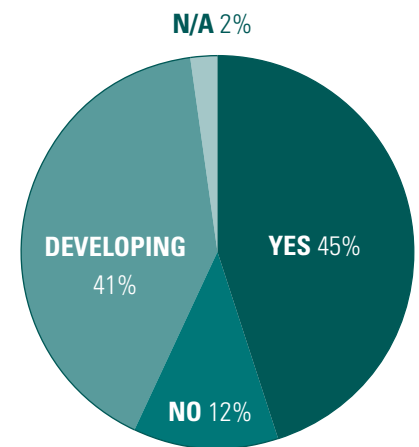
DEVELOPING

Alabama
Colorado
Connecticut
Florida
Hawaii

Idaho
Illinois
Kansas
Massachusetts
Missouri
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Mexico
North Carolina
Oregon
Pennsylvania
South Carolina
South Dakota
Utah
Virginia
Wisconsin

N/A

District of Columbia



4.2b

Percentage of States with Alignment Between High School Graduation Requirements and College and Workplace Expectations, 2009

Source: Achieve Inc., 2009

YES

Alabama
Arizona
Arkansas
Delaware
Georgia
Indiana
Kentucky
Louisiana
Michigan
Minnesota
Mississippi
New Mexico
New York
North Carolina
Ohio
Oklahoma
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Washington

NO

Alaska
California
Colorado
Idaho
Illinois
Iowa
Kansas
Maine
Massachusetts
Missouri
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Hampshire
North Dakota
Oregon
Pennsylvania
South Carolina
Vermont
Virginia

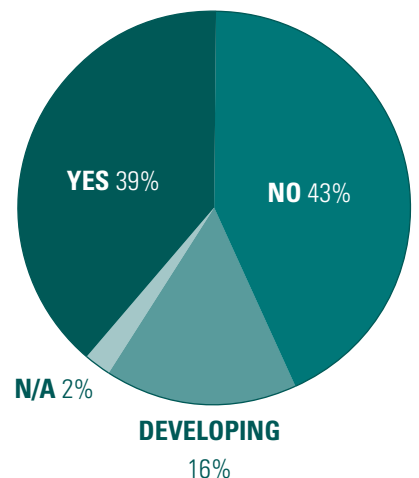
West Virginia
Wyoming

DEVELOPING

Connecticut
Florida
Hawaii
Maryland
New Jersey
Rhode Island
Utah
Wisconsin

N/A

District of Columbia



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator measures the degree to which states have policies that allow K–12 and higher education to work together to ensure that students have access to a high school curriculum that will prepare them for success in college. The measures that are a part of this indicator include the percentage of states that have alignment between high school standards and college and workplace expectations; the percentage of states with alignment between high school graduation requirements and college and workplace expectations; the percentage of states with college- and career- ready assessment systems; the percentage of states with P-20 longitudinal data systems; and the percentage of states committed to adopting the national common core standards.

These measures are important because they establish the state environment necessary to guarantee that students have access to a curriculum that will ensure they are ready for college and work after leaving high school. States that collaborate between K–12 and higher education will be better equipped to ensure that high school and college standards are aligned so that students will not need remediation in order to be successful in college or the workplace.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Only recently — on a national level — have state officials, together with college leaders, begun working to define what skills and content signify college readiness. This lack of collaboration was the cause of confusion in the past. Parents, teachers and colleges have no agreed-upon benchmark for what readiness entails, so students may not be certain about what courses to take to ensure that they are prepared. As a result, the case is not effectively being made that hard work in high school leads to future success in college.

Unless K–12 and higher education institutions come together, high school courses will continue to be inconsistent in their academic content and rigor. Although some students are exposed to content-rich, stimulating classes that build college-ready skills (e.g., AP and IB) in high school, many others have access only to courses that offer remedial and nonacademic content. The National Common Core Standards will define the knowledge and skills necessary for students to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing, academic college courses and in workforce training programs. According to the Common Core State Standards Initiative, the National Common Core Standards will:

- Align with college and work expectations;
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards;
- Be internationally benchmarked, so that all students can be prepared to succeed in our global economy and society; and
- Be evidence and/or research based.³¹

31. National Common Core Standards, 2009. Retrieved on Jan. 20, 2010, from <http://www.corestandards.org/>

Where are we now? In the United States, 23 states (45 percent) have aligned K–12 and higher education standards. Figure 4.2a shows that an additional 21 states are in the process of developing this alignment. However, only 20 states (39 percent) have aligned high school graduation requirements with college and workplace expectations, and figure 4.2b shows that 8 more states are in the process of developing this alignment. Figure 4.2c shows that 10 states (20 percent) have developed college and career-ready assessment systems, and 23 states are currently developing these systems. Also, Figure 4.2d shows the 12 states (23 percent) that have developed P-20 longitudinal data systems, while 37 other states are developing these systems. Figure 4.2e shows that 48 states and the District of Columbia have committed to adopting the National Common Core Standards in English language arts and mathematics. This represents 96 percent of states.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

This indicator measures the number of states that have aligned high school standards and the expectations of college and work. The commission believes that it is important to measure the implementation of each of these alignment activities across the states. Equally important is the ability of states to track students throughout their educational careers. States that implement these data systems will be better equipped to ensure that the alignment between K–12 and postsecondary education and the workplace continues to exist.

4.2c

Percentage of States with College and Career-Ready Assessment Systems, 2009

Source: Achieve Inc., 2009

YES

California
Colorado
Georgia
Illinois
Kentucky
Maine
Michigan
New York
Tennessee
Texas

NO

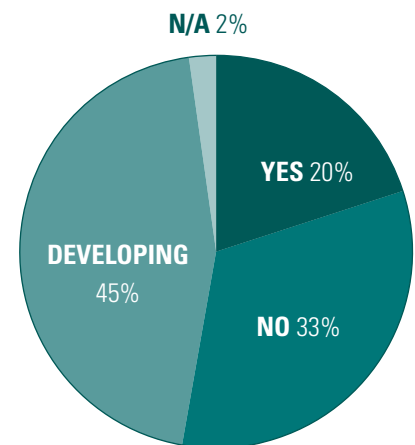
Alabama
Alaska
Delaware
Idaho
Iowa
Kansas
Missouri
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
North Dakota
South Carolina
South Dakota
Utah
Vermont
Virginia
Wyoming

DEVELOPING

Arizona
Arkansas
Connecticut
Florida
Hawaii
Indiana
Louisiana
Maryland
Massachusetts
Minnesota
Mississippi
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico
North Carolina
Ohio
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin

N/A

District of Columbia

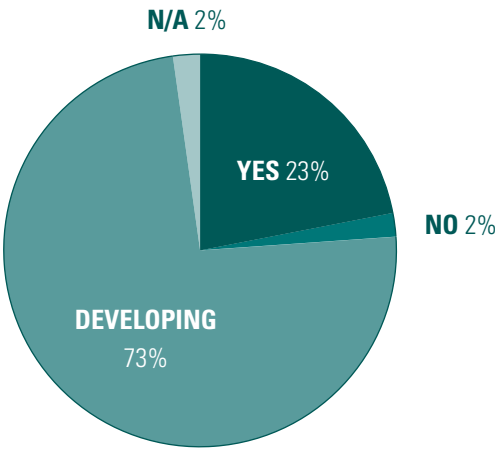


4.2d

Percentage of States with P–20 Longitudinal Data Systems, 2009

Source: Achieve Inc., 2009

YES	DEVELOPING	
Arkansas	Alabama	New Hampshire
Delaware	Alaska	New Jersey
Florida	Arizona	New Mexico
Iowa	California	New York
Louisiana	Colorado	North Carolina
Massachusetts	Connecticut	North Dakota
Missouri	Georgia	Ohio
Oregon	Hawaii	Oklahoma
Texas	Idaho	Pennsylvania
Utah	Illinois	Rhode Island
Washington	Indiana	South Carolina
Wyoming	Kansas	South Dakota
	Kentucky	Tennessee
	Maine	Virginia
	Maryland	West Virginia
	Michigan	Wisconsin
	Minnesota	
	Mississippi	N/A
	Montana	District of Columbia
	Nebraska	
	Nevada	

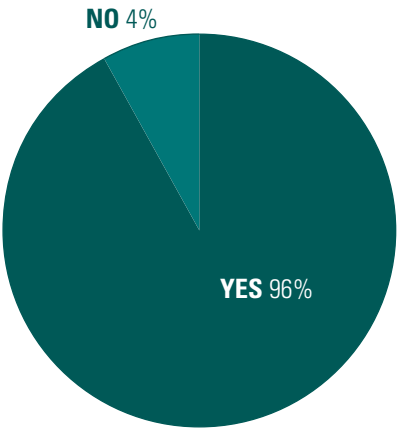


4.2e

Percentage of States Committed to Adopting the National Common Core Standards, 2009

Source: National Governors Association & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2009

YES	NO
Alabama	Alaska
Arizona	Texas
Arkansas	
California	Montana
Colorado	Nebraska
Connecticut	Nevada
Delaware	New Hampshire
District of Columbia	New Jersey
Florida	New Mexico
Georgia	New York
Hawaii	North Carolina
Idaho	North Dakota
Illinois	Ohio
Indiana	Oklahoma
Iowa	Oregon
Kansas	Pennsylvania
Kentucky	Rhode Island
Louisiana	South Carolina
Maine	South Dakota
Maryland	Tennessee
Massachusetts	Utah
Michigan	Vermont
Minnesota	Virginia
Mississippi	Washington
Missouri	West Virginia
	Wisconsin
	Wyoming



28.0%

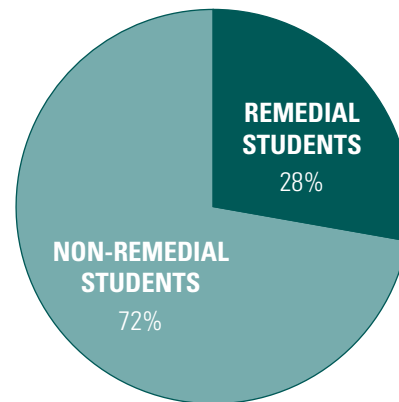
As of 2000, 28.0 percent of students across the nation who enter a college or university as freshmen are in remedial classes.

Percentage of Students in Remedial Classes in College

4.3

National Percentage of Students in Remedial College Classes, 2000

Source: NCES Postsecondary Education Quick Information System (PEQIS), 2001



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator measures the percentage of students who are required to participate in remedial classes in reading, writing or mathematics when entering a college or university as a freshman.

This is an important measure of the ability of K–12 systems to adequately prepare students for college and of the need for K–12 alignment with institutions of higher education.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Remediation in postsecondary education is a controversial concern and a focal point of ongoing debate in policy-related literature. Central to this discussion is the question of whether remedial course offerings are appropriate at the college level and whether those courses should be offered at all colleges or be restricted to two-year colleges.³² There have also been increasing concerns about the costs of remedial course offerings and the impact of remedial course offerings on academic standards at four-year institutions. In response to these concerns, some states have taken steps to reduce or eliminate remedial course offerings at four-year institutions and to restrict the use of public funds for such courses. Most of the debate about postsecondary remediation stems from cost concerns.³³

32. McCabe, R. *No One to Waste*. Denver, CO: Community College Press, 2000; Shults, C. *Institutional Policies and Practices in Remedial Education: A National Study of Community Colleges* (ED447884). Washington, DC: American Association of Community Colleges, 2000.

33. Hoyt, J., & Sorenson, C. (2001). High School Preparation, Placement Testing, and College Remediation. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 25(2): 26–33.

Where are we now? As of 2000, 28.0 percent of students across the nation who enter a college or university as a freshman are enrolled in remedial classes.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

National Center for Education Statistics studies provide a working definition of postsecondary remedial education as courses in reading, writing or mathematics for college-level students lacking those skills necessary to perform college-level work at the level required by the institution.³⁴ Students participating in remedial education in college may not earn credit toward their degrees by completion of these courses. Specifically, the NCES data tell us what proportion of entering freshmen were enrolled in remedial courses in fall 2000.

The study was conducted through the NCES Postsecondary Education Quick Information System (PEQIS) and has not been replicated since 2000. The PEQIS is designed to collect small amounts of policy-relevant data on a quick turnaround basis from a previously recruited, nationally representative sample of two-year and four-year postsecondary institutions. The unweighted survey response rate was 95 percent, and the weighted response rate was 96 percent. This study is based on a sample of all colleges and universities.

34. Parsad, B., Lewis, L., & Greene, B. "Remedial Education at Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions in Fall 2000," National Center for Education Statistics, November 2003.

Five

Improve teacher quality
and focus on recruitment
and retention

WE RECOMMEND that states, localities and the federal government step up to the crisis in teaching by providing market-competitive salaries, creating multiple pathways into teaching, and fixing the math and science crisis.

Teachers are the key to excellence in education, and there must be focused efforts to improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers. In its first report to the nation, the commission stated it was critical that the United States substantially improve the quality of teachers to ensure students have the benefit of learning from the most educated and innovative teachers possible.

Regrettably, states are still struggling with the recruitment of teachers who meet minimum professional standards. In 2006, Guarino, Sanitbañez, and Daley described the recruitment and retention of teachers using economic labor market theory. They wrote:

“... economic labor market theory suggests that the willingness of individuals to obtain the necessary qualifications and work as teachers depends on the desirability of the teaching profession relative to alternative opportunities. Individuals compare the overall compensation — salaries, benefits, working conditions, and various forms of rewards — offered by teaching with that offered by other jobs or activities available to them. Schools and districts can influence elements of overall compensation to bring supply in line with their demand for teachers. In addition, they may adjust their standards of teacher quality according to whether teachers are in short or large supply.”³⁵

Despite the complexity of attracting people to the teaching profession, it is necessary to ensure that the quality of the individuals serving as teachers is constantly improving.

There are multiple approaches to assessing the degree to which the United States is improving the quality of its teachers; those featured in this report include:

- State encouragement and support for teacher professional development;
- Percentage of public school teachers in grades 9 through 12 by field;
- State policies on out-of-field teachers;
- Percentage of bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees earned in education; and
- Number of teachers leaving the profession.

35. Guarino, C. M., Santibañez, L., & Daley, G. A. (2006). Teacher recruitment and retention: A review of the recent empirical literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(2):173–208.

General Findings for This Recommendation

- As of the 2007–2008 academic year, 80.0 percent of states have professional development standards for K–12 teachers.
- During the 2007–2008 school year, the majority of the public high school teachers taught English or language arts (15.9 percent) followed by mathematics (13.4 percent), vocational/technical (12.8 percent), natural sciences (11.6 percent) and social sciences (11.4 percent).
- As of the 2007–2008 academic year, only 10.0 percent of states require parental notification of out-of-field teachers for K–12 students.
- As of 2007–2008, only 8.0 percent of states have a ban or cap on the number of out-of-field teachers in K–12 classrooms.
- In 2006, 8.5 percent of bachelor's degrees, 30.6 percent of master's degrees and 29.8 percent of doctoral degrees were awarded in education.
- As of the 2004–2005 academic year, 8.0 percent of public school teachers did not return to the teaching profession.
- As of the 2004–2005 academic year, 14.0 percent of private school teachers did not return to the teaching profession.

80%

As of the 2007–2008 academic year, 41 states have professional development standards for K–12 teachers.

47%

As of the 2007–2008 academic year, 24 states finance professional development for all districts.

State Encouragement and Support for Teacher Professional Development

5.1a

States with Professional Development Standards, 2008

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, State Education Reforms, 2008

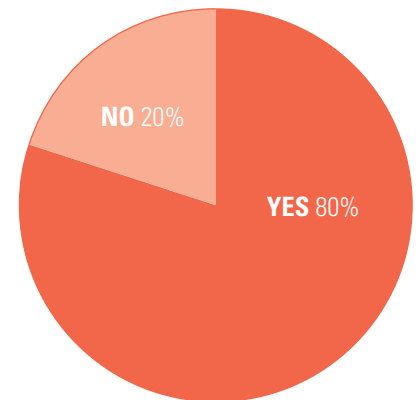
YES

Alabama
Arizona
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Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Mississippi
Missouri

Montana
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York
North Carolina
North Dakota
Ohio
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Carolina
Tennessee
Utah
Vermont
Virginia
Washington
West Virginia
Wyoming

NO

Alaska
California
District of Columbia
Idaho
Illinois
Nebraska
Nevada
South Dakota
Texas
Wisconsin



5.1b

States that Finance Professional Development for All Districts, 2008

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, State Education Reforms, 2008

YES

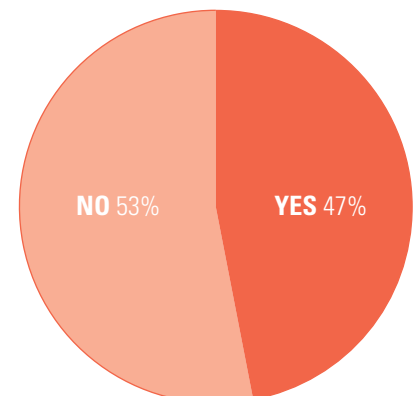
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Missouri
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
North Carolina
North Dakota
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Carolina

Utah
Virginia
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin

NO

Alaska
Arizona
California
Colorado
Connecticut
District of Columbia
Florida
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Kansas
Maine

Massachusetts
Michigan
Mississippi
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York
Ohio
Oklahoma
Oregon
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Vermont
Wyoming



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? To ensure that teachers in the United States continue to be skilled, there is a critical need for ongoing professional development initiatives. These initiatives can take on many forms and need to be tracked. The measures identified in this section give the number and percentage of states that have made teacher professional development a priority.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Schools and districts are encouraged to show they have processes and procedures in place to provide professional development for their teachers. However, these professional development opportunities must be aligned with other goals and objectives within a school, district and/or state. Alignment of the professional development opportunities for teachers will ensure that the knowledge and skills of the teachers are being developed in the most effective areas.

Where are we now? As of 2008, Figure 5.1a shows there are 41 states (80 percent) that have professional development standards for K–12 teachers. Figure 5.1b illustrates that 24 states (47 percent) finance professional development for all districts in the state. Figure 5.1c shows that 16 states (31 percent) require districts to set aside time for professional development. In Figure 5.1d, 30 states (59 percent) require districts to align professional development with local priorities and goals. Finally, Figure 5.1e shows that 38 states (75 percent) provide incentives for K–12 teachers to earn National Board Certification.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? Professional development can take many different forms, with varying degrees of effectiveness. Although tracking the number of states with professional development initiatives is helpful in understanding the degree to which teachers have further educational opportunities beyond formal schooling, it is also important to track the effectiveness of the professional development courses. Effective programs should be promulgated to other districts and other states, whereas ineffective programs should be identified and discontinued.

5.1c

States that Require Districts/Schools to Set Aside Time for Professional Development, 2008

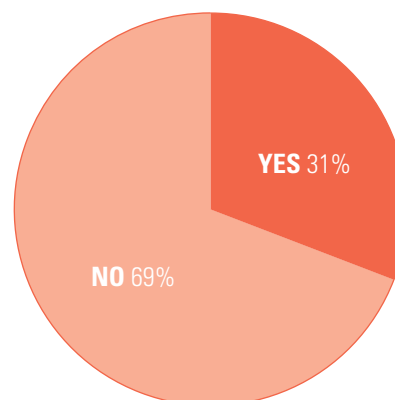
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, State Education Reforms, 2008

YES

Alabama
Arkansas
Connecticut
Delaware
Georgia
Kentucky
Louisiana
Michigan
Montana
Nebraska
New York
North Dakota
South Carolina
Tennessee
Vermont
West Virginia

NO

Alaska
Arizona
California
Colorado
District of Columbia
Florida
Hawaii
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Minnesota
Mississippi
Missouri
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico
North Carolina
Ohio
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Dakota
Texas
Utah
Virginia
Washington
Wisconsin
Wyoming



5.1d

States that Require Districts to Align Professional Development with Local Priorities and Goals, 2008

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, State Education Reforms, 2008

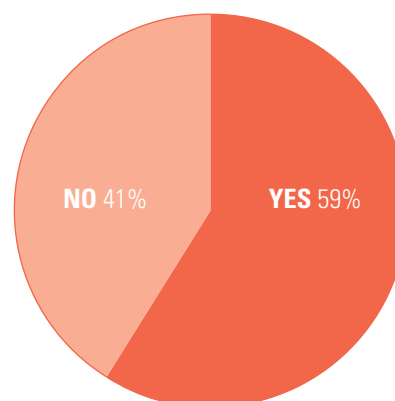
YES

Arkansas
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Missouri
Montana
Nevada
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York

North Carolina
North Dakota
Oklahoma
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Carolina
Tennessee
Utah
Vermont
West Virginia
Wisconsin

NO

Alabama
Alaska
Arizona
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
District of Columbia
Idaho
Illinois
Maine
Mississippi
Nebraska
New Hampshire
Ohio
Oregon
South Dakota
Texas
Virginia
Washington
Wyoming



5.1e

States that Provide Incentives for Teachers to Earn National Board Certification, 2008

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, State Education Reforms, 2008

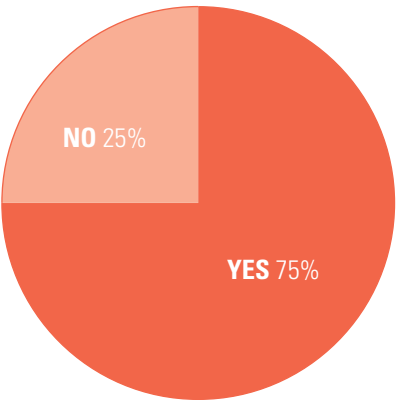
YES

Alabama
Arizona
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California
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Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Mississippi

Missouri
Montana
Nevada
New Jersey
New York
North Carolina
North Dakota
Ohio
Oklahoma
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Carolina
South Dakota
Vermont
Virginia
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

NO

Alaska
Colorado
Connecticut
District of Columbia
Indiana
Minnesota
Nebraska
New Hampshire
New Mexico
Oregon
Tennessee
Texas
Utah



15.9%

As of the 2007–2008 academic year, 15.9 percent of public high school teachers taught English or language arts classes.

13.4%

As of the 2007–2008 academic year, 13.4 percent of public high school teachers taught mathematics classes.

11.6%

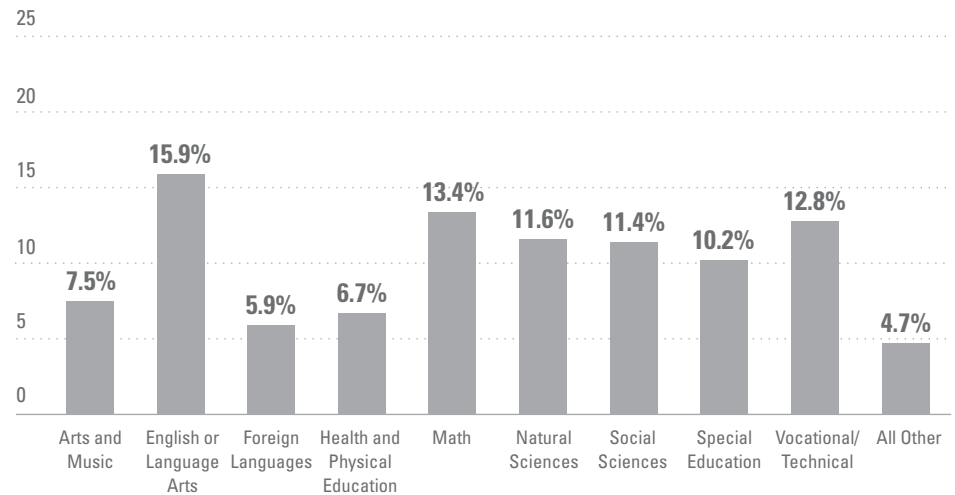
As of the 2007–2008 academic year, 11.6 percent of public high school teachers taught science classes.

Percentage of Public School Teachers in Grades 9 Through 12 by Field

5.2a

Percentage of Public School Teachers of Grades 9 Through 12 by Field, 2008

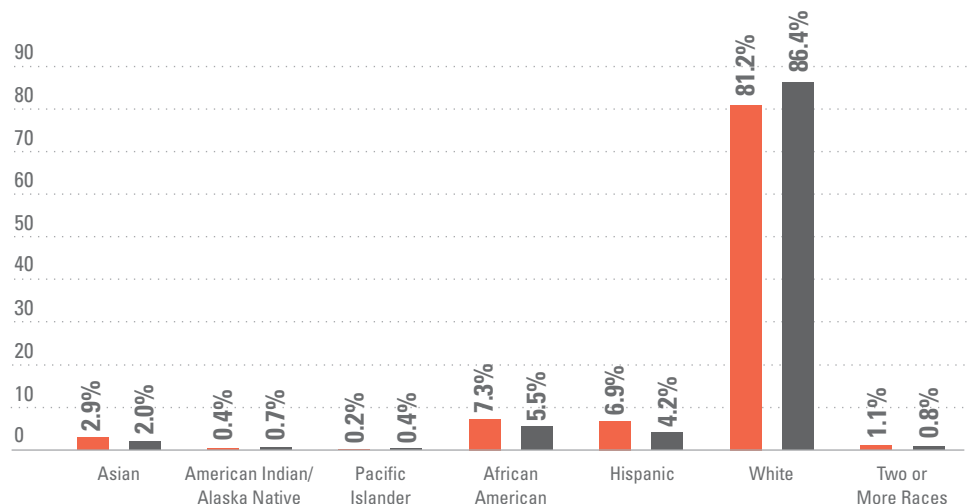
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009



5.2b

Percentage of Public School Teachers of Grades 9 Through 12 in STEM Fields by Race/Ethnicity, 2008

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? The primary teaching assignment of public school teachers for grades 9 through 12 is represented in this measure. This measure gives the percentage of teachers assigned to all fields; but, in particular, it highlights the demand for teachers in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. This information is important because it represents the areas in which students are receiving the most instruction.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? The number of grades 9 through 12 teachers in a specific subject area is closely related to the course requirements for graduation. If states require students to complete a specific sequence of courses to receive a high school diploma, it is expected that the schools offer these courses to students. As a result, policymakers should work with schools and districts to ensure that students are receiving instruction in the areas that will count toward graduation.

Where are we now? Figure 5.2a shows that the highest percentage of teachers are in English or language arts (15.9 percent) while teachers in the social sciences are at 11.4 percent. Collectively, 25.0 percent of teachers are in STEM fields with 13.4 percent in mathematics and 11.6 percent in the natural sciences.

An exploration of the race/ethnicity of teachers in STEM fields shows that 81.2 percent of mathematics teachers and 86.4 percent of natural science teachers are white (Figure 5.2b). In comparison, African Americans account for 7.3 percent of mathematics teachers and 5.5 percent of science teachers. Similarly, Hispanics account for 6.9 percent of mathematics teachers and 4.2 percent of natural science teachers. This is a trend that must change with the changing demographics of school-age children. Teachers in STEM fields, and all fields, should mirror the changing demographics of our country.

Figure 5.2c shows the majority of teachers in both the mathematics and natural science fields are women. Women account for 56.8 percent of mathematics teachers and 53.8 percent of science teachers.

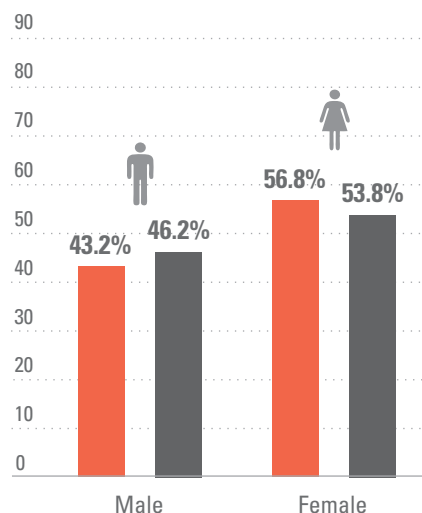
When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

This measure accounts for the primary teaching assignment of teachers in grades 9 through 12. This measure does not speak to academic rigor of the courses being taught. It is important to know what subjects are being taught in the schools, but it is equally important that these courses have a competitive level of rigor across the schools, districts, states and the nation. Currently, the level of rigor in all high school courses is not measured; however, the Advanced Placement Course Audit³⁶ may provide a framework for implementing such a measure for all high school courses.

5.2c**Percentage of Public School Teachers of Grades 9 Through 12 in STEM Fields by Gender, 2008**

■ Mathematics
■ Natural Sciences

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009



36. The College Board (2010). AP Course Audit. Retrieved March 21, 2010, from <http://www.collegeboard.com/html/apcourseaudit/>

10%

As of the 2007–2008 academic year, there are only five states that require parental notification of out-of-field teachers for K–12 students.

8%

As of the 2007–2008 academic year, there are only four states that have a ban or cap on the number of out-of-field teachers in K–12 classrooms.

State Policies on Out-of-Field Teachers

5.3a

States that Require Parental Notification of Out-of-Field Teachers, 2008

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, State Education Reforms, 2008

YES

Arkansas
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
New Mexico

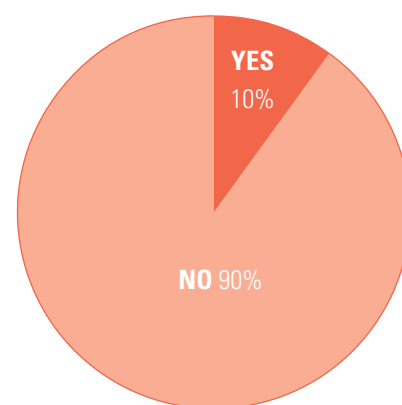
Kansas
Kentucky
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Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan

Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Carolina
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Vermont
Virginia
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

NO

Alabama
Alaska
Arizona
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
District of Columbia
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa

Minnesota
Mississippi
Missouri
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New York
North Carolina
North Dakota
Ohio



5.3b

States that Have a Ban or Cap on the Number of Out-of-Field Teachers, 2008

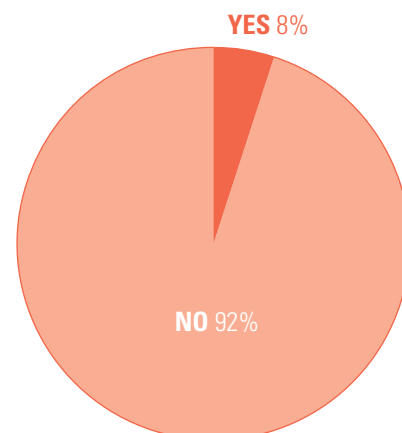
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, State Education Reforms, 2008

YES

Florida
Kentucky
Nebraska
South Carolina

Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Mississippi
Missouri
Montana
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico

New York
North Carolina
North Dakota
Ohio
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Vermont
Virginia
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? A hallmark of a qualified teacher is that he or she received an education in the same field in which they now teach. Regrettably, due to limited availability of individuals who are choosing to pursue positions in the teaching field, there are increasing numbers of schools that allow teachers to teach classes that are not in the primary focus of their formal education. This measure seeks to gain an understanding of the number and percentage of states that notify their students and parents when a teacher is teaching out-of-field. The measure also provides the number and percentage of states that have a ban or cap on the number of out-of-field teachers permissible in classrooms.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? The identification of out-of-field teachers is a very sensitive issue for schools and districts. Identification of these teachers in their schools may adversely affect the schools' accreditation or reputation.³⁷ Implementing policies that require states to send parental notification or place a ban or cap on the number of out-of-field teachers will bring attention to those middle and high school teachers who have little or no formal training in the subject matter they teach.

Where are we now? Currently, only five states require parental notification of out-of-field teachers. These states are Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii and New Mexico. Figure 5.3a shows this represents only 10 percent of states in the United States. As of 2008, there are only four states that have a ban or cap on the number of out-of-field teachers that are allowed. These states were Florida, Kentucky, Montana and South Carolina. Figure 5.3b shows that this represents a mere 8 percent of states.

37. Ingersoll, R. M. (1999). The problem of underqualified teachers in American secondary schools. *Educational Researcher*, 28(2): 26–37. Ingersoll, R. M. (2003). Out-of-field teaching and the limits of teacher policy. (Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy and The Consortium for Policy Research in Education) <http://depts.washington.edu/ctpmail/PDFs/LimitsPolicy-RI-09-2003.pdf>

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

Although parental notification and bans or caps on the number of out-of-field teachers can, in part, aid in improving the quality of teachers in the United States, the indicator does little to protect students from teachers who received their degree in the field in which they teach yet fail to provide an acceptable teaching experience, yielding students who are uneducated despite the teacher's perceived qualifications.

Parental notification, as well as caps and bans can also be problematic in regions in which there are simply not enough teachers to fill classrooms. By instituting such policies schools are challenged to find teachers who are both skilled educators and fit the necessary qualifications for effectiveness. School districts, if possible, may offer monetary incentives to recruit qualified, in-subject teachers to relocate to less desirable locations.

Finally, few mechanisms exist to allow a teacher to become qualified as an in-field educator. With few exceptions, teachers must return for formal schooling to be termed an in-field teacher, even if the educator acquires the requisite knowledge without formal schooling.

8.5%

As of 2006,
8.5 percent of
bachelor's degrees
earned are in
education.

30.6%

As of 2006,
30.6 percent of
master's degrees
earned are in
education.

29.8%

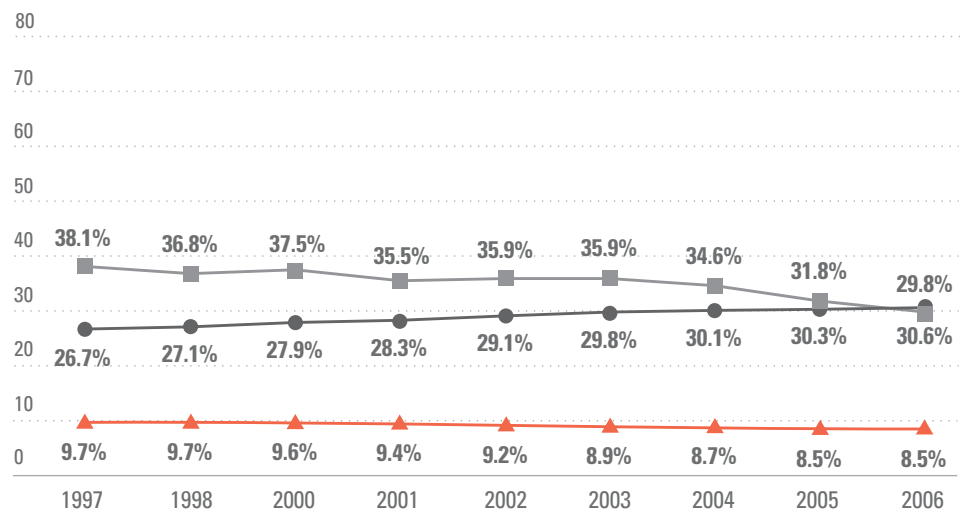
As of 2006,
29.8 percent of
doctoral degrees
earned are in
education.

Percentage of Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral Degrees Earned in Education

5.4a

Percentage of Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral Degrees Earned in Education, 1997–2006

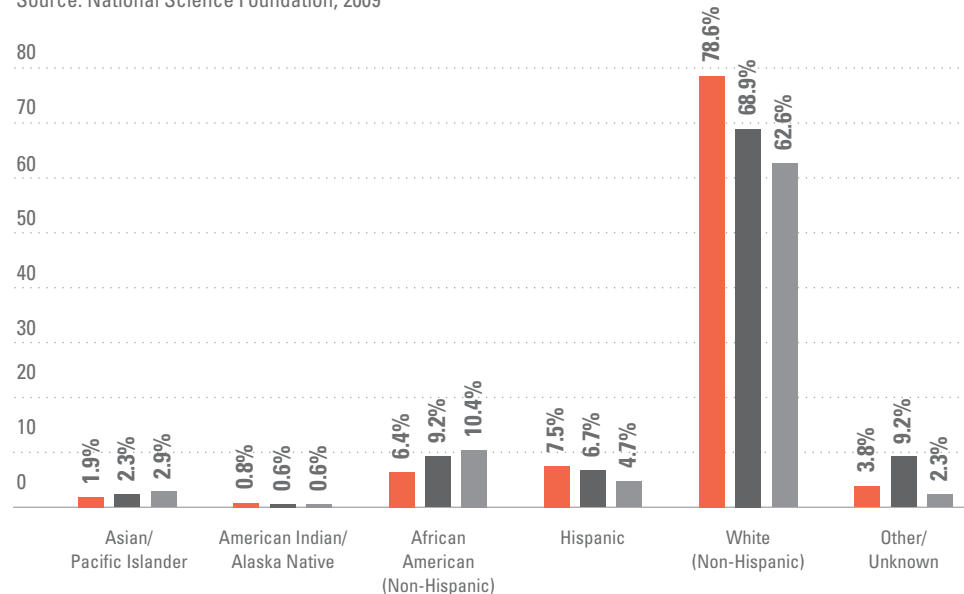
Source: National Science Foundation, 2009



5.4b

Percentage of Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral Degrees Earned in Education by Race/Ethnicity, 2006

Source: National Science Foundation, 2009



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? The percentage of degrees granted in education speaks to the percentage of graduates who may be eligible for teacher licensure. This measure gives the percentage of bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees earned in education by sex, race/ethnicity and citizenship.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Students seeking teacher licensure or certification upon graduation are encouraged to attend an institution with an approved education program. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education³⁸ is a membership organization that provides standards by which schools of education are assessed to determine the level of rigor in the curriculum and the quality of the teacher preparation programs.

Where are we now? As of 2006, 8.5 percent of bachelor's degrees earned in the United States are in education. Figure 5.4a shows that the number of bachelor's degrees earned in education is down from 9.7 percent in 1997. However, 30.6 percent of master's degrees earned in the United States are in the field of education. This number increased from 26.7 percent in 1997 to 30.6 percent in 2006. The percentage of doctoral degrees earned in higher education is at 29.8 percent. Figure 5.4a shows that the percentage of doctoral degrees earned has declined from 38.1 percent in 1997 to 29.8 percent in 2006.

Figure 5.4b illustrates the percentage of bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees earned in education by race/ethnicity in 2006. Whites represented 78.6 percent of all bachelor's degrees earned in education, 68.9 percent of all master's degrees earned in education and 62.6 percent of all doctoral degrees earned in education.

When we look at bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees earned in education as of 2006, we find that most degrees are earned by women. Figure 5.4c shows that women accounted for 74.9 percent of bachelor's degrees earned in education, 76.5 percent of all master's degrees earned in education and 65.1 percent of all doctoral degrees earned in education. Men comprised 25.1 percent, 23.5 percent and 34.8 percent, respectively.

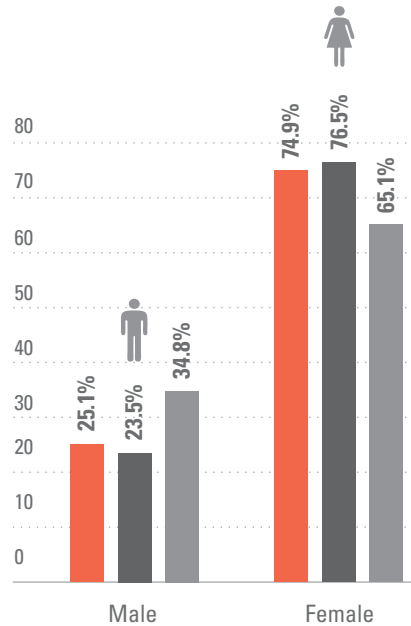
38. National Council on Accreditation of Teacher Education (2010). Retrieved March 21, 2010, from <http://www.ncate.org/>

5.4c

Percentage of Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral Degrees Earned in Education by Gender, 2006

Source: National Science Foundation, 2009

■ Bachelor's
■ Master's
■ Doctoral

**When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?**

Although this measure gives the percentage of degrees earned in education; the measure for bachelor's degrees includes various areas of education beyond the teacher education, such as educational psychology, religious education, school psychology and athletic training. The measures for master's and doctoral degrees also include a variety of areas in education beyond teacher education including the following: curriculum and instruction, education statistics, school psychology and education evaluation, among other areas. This is not a direct measure of the number of graduates completing an approved teacher education program.

8.4%

As of 2004–2005, 8 percent of public school teachers did not return to the teaching profession.

13.6%

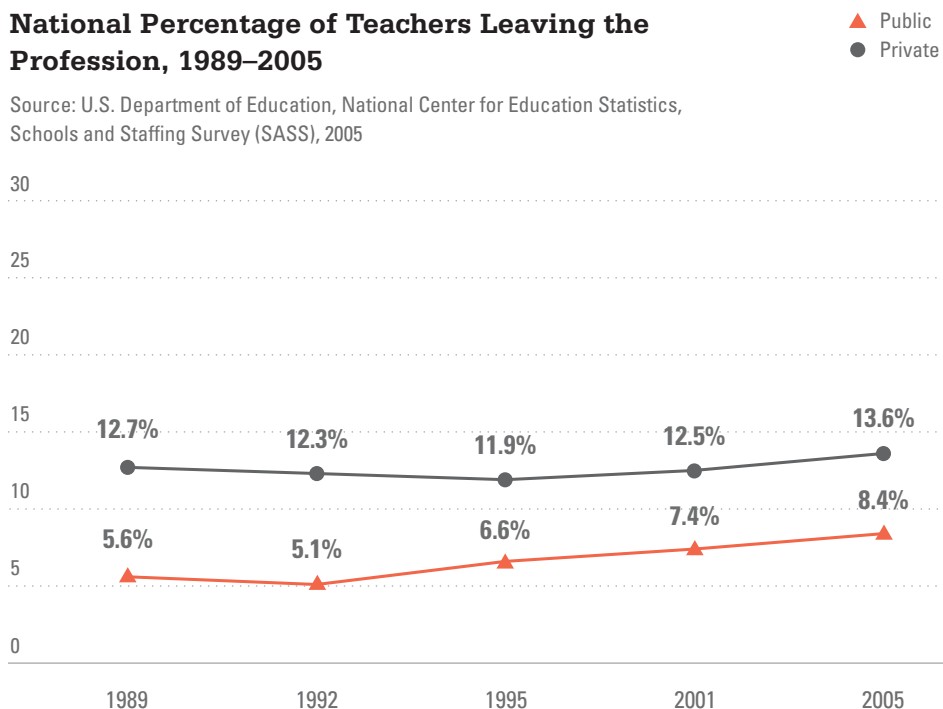
As of 2004–2005, 14 percent of private school teachers did not return to the teaching profession.

Percentage of Teachers Leaving the Profession

5.5a

National Percentage of Teachers Leaving the Profession, 1989–2005

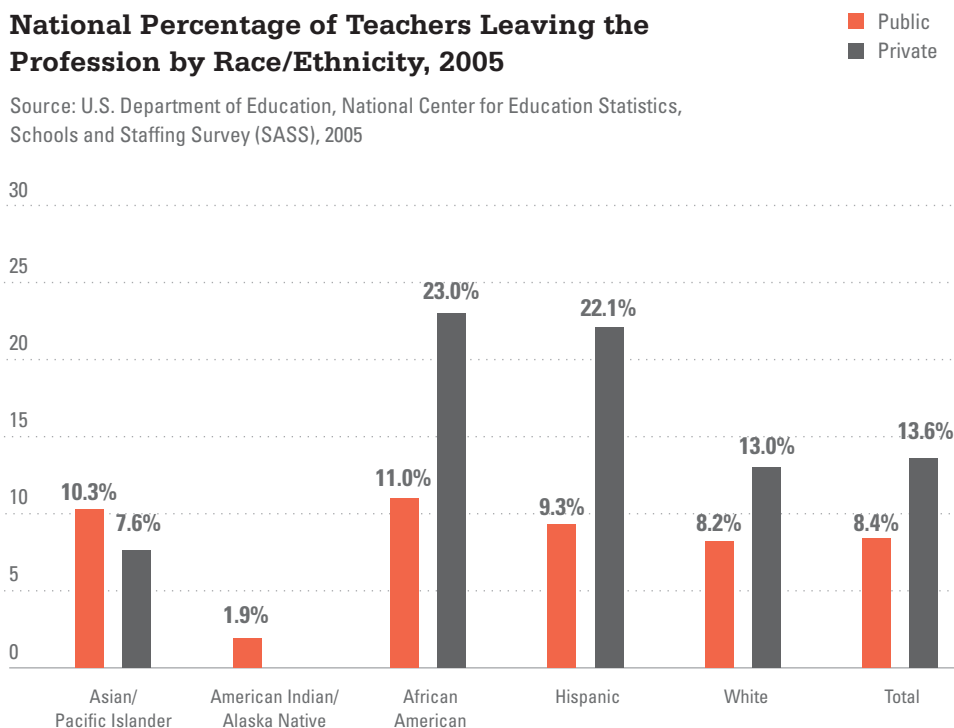
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 2005



5.5b

National Percentage of Teachers Leaving the Profession by Race/Ethnicity, 2005

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 2005



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? Teacher attrition occurs for a variety of reasons; however, many teachers have cited dissatisfaction with the various aspects of the job as their reason for leaving.³⁹ This measure tracks the percentage of teachers leaving the profession. Knowing this percentage will give insight into the number of teachers needed to be recruited and trained to replace those leaving the profession.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Teacher turnover can be very costly. These teachers have received professional development and other support services during their tenure that will have to be repeated for their replacement. Schools with high poverty rates and high minority student populations are losing their teachers at a higher rate than other schools.⁴⁰ The Alliance for Excellent Education (2005) estimates that the cost of replacing teachers who leave the profession is \$2.2 billion per year.⁴¹ The cost, based on the Department of Labor's conservative estimate of 30 percent of the leaving employee's salary, varies by school, district and state.

Where are we now? In 2005, 8.4 percent of public school teachers and 13.6 percent of private school teachers left the profession in the United States. Figure 5.5a shows that the number of public and private school teachers leaving the profession has risen steadily since 1992.

Figure 5.5b presents the percentage of teachers leaving the profession by race/ethnicity in 2005. Among public school teachers leaving the profession, the rates are lowest among American Indian and Alaska Native teachers (1.9 percent) and highest among African American (11.0 percent) and Asian and Pacific Islander (10.3 percent) teachers. Among private school teachers leaving, the rate is lowest among Asian and Pacific Islander (7.6 percent) and American Indian and Alaska Native (7.8 percent) teachers and highest among African American (23.0 percent) and Hispanic (22.1 percent) teachers.

Figure 5.5c shows the percentage of teachers leaving the profession by gender. Male teachers are leaving the profession at a rate of 7.7 percent for public schools and 14.2 percent for private schools. Female teachers are leaving the profession at a rate of 8.6 for public schools and 13.4 percent for private schools. Figure 5.5d looks at the percentage of teachers leaving the profession by age. The figure shows that public school teachers who are leaving the profession tend to do so during retirement age (60 and over).

39. Ingersoll, R.M. (2001). Teacher turnover and teacher shortages: An organizational analysis. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(3): 499–534.

40. Barnes, G., Crowe, E., & Schafer, B. (2007). The cost of teacher turnover in five school districts: A pilot study. Retrieved Feb. 19, 2010, from http://www.nctaf.org/resources/demonstration_projects/turnover/TeacherTurnoverCostStudy.htm p.50.

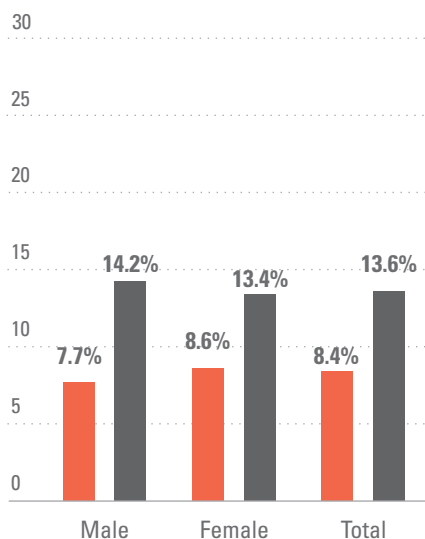
41. Alliance for Excellent Education (2005). Teacher attrition: A costly loss to the nation and to the states. Retrieved Feb. 19, 2010, from: <http://www.all4ed.org/publications/TeacherAttrition.pdf#search=%22alliance%20for%20excellent%20education%20cost%20of%20turnover%22>, 1.

5.5c

National Percentage of Teachers Leaving the Profession by Gender, 2005

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 2005

Public
Private

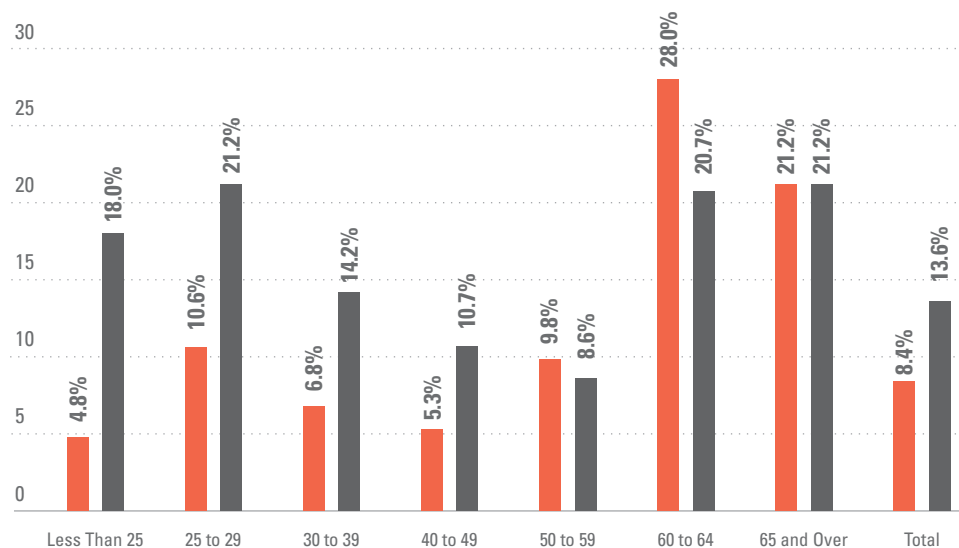


5.5d

National Percentage of Teachers Leaving the Profession by Age, 2005

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 2005

Public
Private



When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

This measure accounts for teachers who left the profession. This measure does not take into account teachers who change schools or relocate to different states. This measure also does not consider the reasons for which teachers are leaving the profession. Many teachers are dissatisfied with their working conditions, but the specific situations with which they are unhappy are not captured in this measure. A study by the National Center for Education Statistics (1995) suggests that teachers leave for reasons related to salary and benefits.⁴²

42. National Center for Education Statistics. Which types of schools have the highest teacher turnover? IB-5-95. August 1995. Retrieved June 17, 2010 from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs95/web/95778.asp>

Six

Clarify and simplify
the admission process

WE RECOMMEND that public and private institutions of higher education continue to uphold the highest professional standards in admission and financial aid and collaborate to make the admission process more transparent and less complex.

The commission and the College Board's Task Force on Admissions in the 21st Century believe that higher education needs to reduce the complexity of the admission process and demystify it. The commission believes that the college admission process should be easily maneuvered by all students. Simplifying the admission process does not necessarily mean requiring fewer application components. Application requirements should be driven in large part by the desire to gain sufficient insight into the student's potential for success, and the process should be dedicated toward providing a complete picture of the applicant. Applicants will benefit from increased transparency in admission terminology and greater clarity in how admission decisions are made. For example, many students agonize over the subtleties of recommended versus required application components. Others devote an extraordinary amount of time to interviews, many of which will play little to no role in the admission decisions. Limiting application requirements to elements that lend meaningful insight about the student and to those truly factored into decisions will benefit applicants, as well as the admission officers tasked with reading applications.

Complexity of the process is relative to the student, and no single metric exists with which to assess it. While many applicants approach the admission process as well-informed consumers with a comprehensive support system (e.g., counselors, tutors and parents who have experienced the admission process), far more — especially those from minority, low-income and first-generation college-going backgrounds — encounter the admission process without this backing. Modern technology has led to several innovations that ultimately serve to streamline and simplify the admission process and have the potential to reach a broader array of applicants. It remains to be seen how phone-based applications or social-media tools will be used to enhance the application experience for students. Thus, we focus here primarily on the growth of online application tools.

We look at the admission process from both the student's and institution's perspective and focus on four indicators:

- Percentage of four-year colleges with applications available online;
- Percentage of four-year colleges to which students can submit applications online;
- Percentage of four-year colleges that participate in national application systems; and
- Immediate enrollment rate for high school graduates.

80.9%

As of 2008, 80.9 percent of four-year colleges report the availability of their application online through their websites.

General Findings for This Recommendation

- As of 2008, 80.9 percent of four-year colleges report that their application is available online through their website.
- As of 2008, applicants are able to submit applications online to 73.4 percent of four-year colleges.
- For the 2008–2009 admission year, 20.4 percent of four-year institutions participated in national application systems that aim to streamline the admission process.
- As of 2007, 67.2 percent of high school completers enrolled in a two- or four-year college immediately after completing high school.

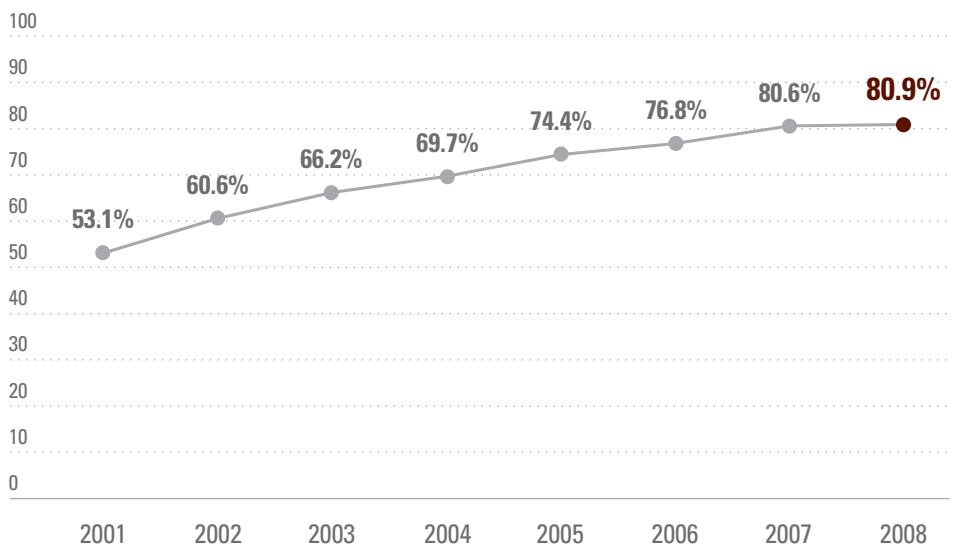
Percentage of Four-Year Colleges with Admission Applications Available Online

6.1a

National Percentage of Four-Year Colleges with Admission Applications Available Online, 2001–2008

Source: College Board Annual Survey of Colleges, NCES/IPEDS, 2010

Note: Analysis limited to four-year, degree-granting, not-for-profit, TitleIV-participating institutions located in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? The admission landscape fundamentally changed as the process transitioned from one based on paper materials to one focused more on electronic means of communication. Institutions have made great strides over the past decade and a half in utilizing the Web as an outreach tool for a new generation of technologically savvy applicants. Admission officers quickly recognized the potential of the Web to disseminate applications to a broader range of applicants than the institution might have attracted through traditional mailings.

We believe that one of the first steps toward simplifying the process for all students is for institutions to make their applications readily available online. This removes potential obstacles for applicants, such as having to call during school hours to reach the admission office during business hours or missing a deadline because of insufficient turnaround time to request, complete and return the application.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Institutions and their applicants will benefit from policies that increase the availability of applications online. For most institutions, this means ensuring that adequate staff and financial resources are in place to develop, maintain and improve the admission website. In addition, outreach efforts that aim to connect students with the online application must be in place.

Where are we now? In the United States in 2008, 80.9 percent of four-year colleges and universities have admission applications available online. Figure 6.1a shows that the number of colleges that have admission applications available online has grown from a low of 53.1 percent in 2001 to a high of 80.9 percent in 2008.

When the data are disaggregated by state, the percentages range from 50.0 percent in Arizona to 100 percent in Hawaii and Wyoming. Figure 6.1b shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states that have the highest percentage of admission applications online are Hawaii, Wyoming, Maine, West Virginia and Iowa. The states that have the lowest percentage of admission applications online are Arizona, Mississippi, Delaware, New York and Arkansas.

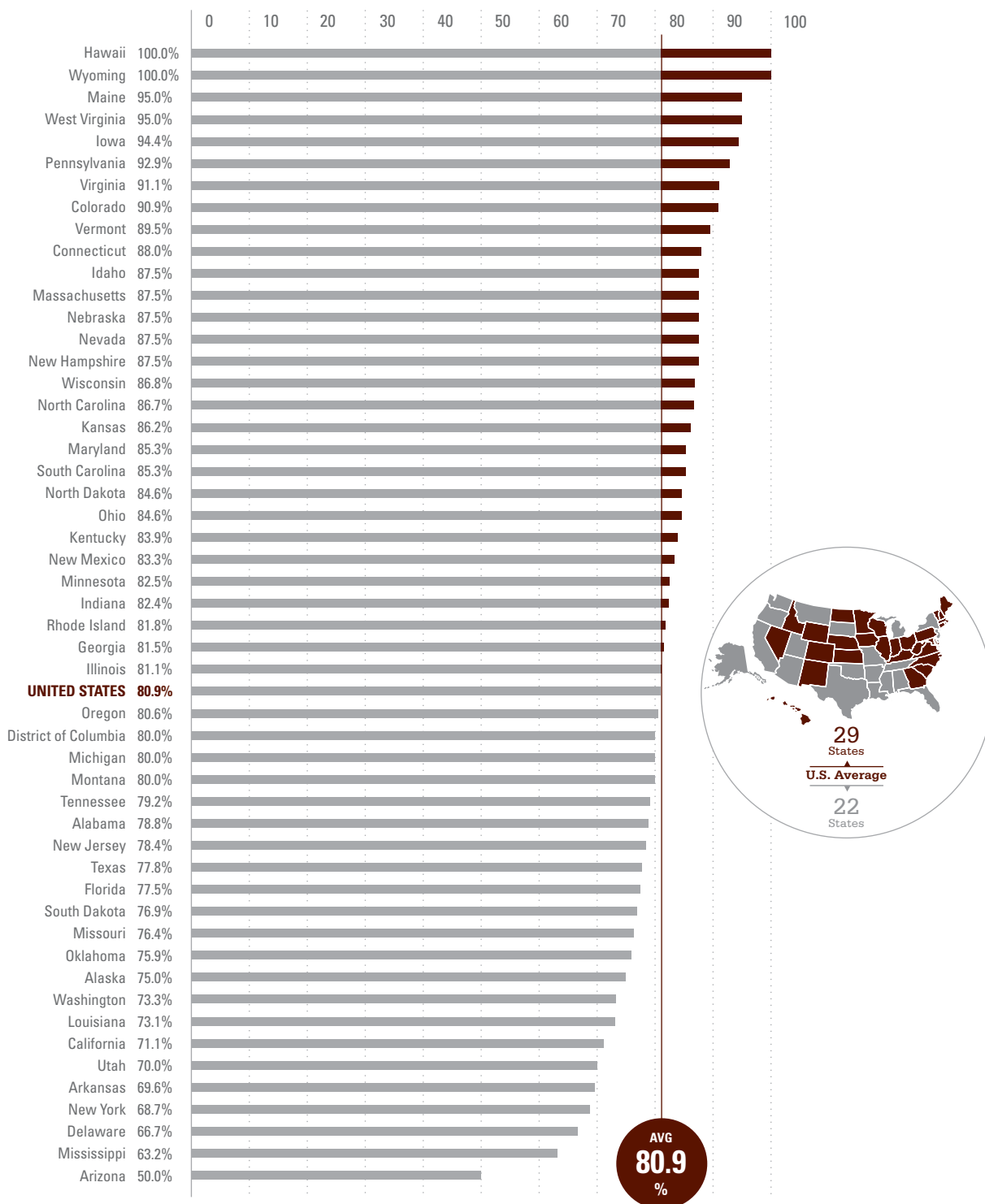
When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? The Annual Survey of Colleges is based on self-reported information from the institution, and colleges do not necessarily respond to all questions on the survey. This indicator is calculated solely from affirmative responses (i.e., those institutions explicitly indicating that the application is available online through the college's website). This may slightly underestimate the proportion of four-year colleges with the option.

6.1b

Percentage of Four-Year Colleges with Admission Applications Available Online by State Rank, 2008

Source: College Board Annual Survey of Colleges, NCES/IPEDS, 2010

Note: Analysis limited to four-year, degree-granting, not-for-profit, TitleIV-participating institutions located in the 50 states and District of Columbia.



73.4%

As of 2008, applicants are able to submit applications online to 73.4 percent of four-year colleges.

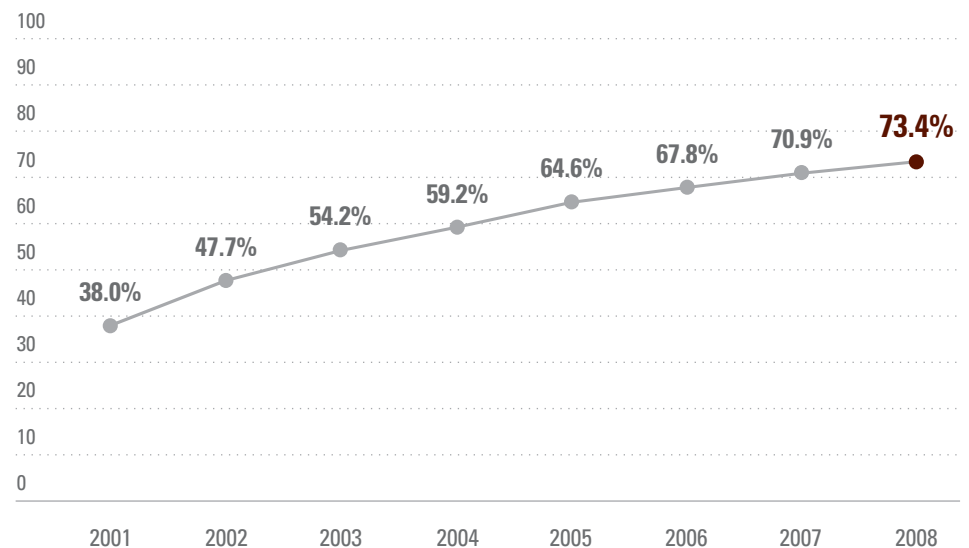
Percentage of Four-Year Colleges that Accept Admission Applications Online

6.2a

National Percentage of Four-Year Colleges that Accept Admission Applications Online, 2001–2008

Source: College Board Annual Survey of Colleges, NCES/IPEDS, 2010

Note: Analysis limited to four-year, degree-granting, not-for-profit, TitleIV-participating institutions located in the 50 states and District of Columbia.



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? The previous measure demonstrates that the vast majority of four-year institutions have made their applications available through their websites. This indicator examines a similar issue but focuses more specifically on the ability to submit the application electronically.

The technology with which to submit the application online lagged slightly behind the general availability of applications online. Given the impressive increases in the proportion of four-year colleges with this technology, it is clear that institutions are making this a priority. This is important because the ability to submit the application online streamlines the process for students and frees up resources in the admission office. In theory, if these resources are no longer devoted to the manual entry of data, they can be used in other productive ways to improve the admission process.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Of increasing concern is the complexity involved when some, but not all, elements of the application can be submitted electronically. Institutions should ensure that students fully understand which requirements have been submitted and which elements may require additional work on the student's part (i.e., contacting teachers for recommendations to be sent directly to the college or for the school to send the transcript or counselor recommendation). Secondary schools and higher education institutions should increase outreach to students to increase levels of understanding of how to effectively use these tools.

Additionally, institutions should make sure that online application tracking technology does not sacrifice accuracy for efficiency. Online application submission tools also should be designed to ensure the integrity of the information being sent, particularly as schools increasingly use such technology to submit confidential student information such as recommendations or transcripts.

Where are we now? While many institutions have applications available online, not all institutions are equipped to accept these applications electronically. Currently, 73.4 percent of four-year colleges and universities in the United States accept admission applications online. Figure 6.2a shows that the number of colleges that accept admission applications online grew from a low of 38.0 percent in 2001 to a high of 73.4 percent in 2008.

When the data are disaggregated by state for four-year colleges and universities that accept admission applications online, the percentages range from 57.9 percent in Mississippi to 100 percent in Wyoming. Figure 6.2b shows that when states are placed in rank order, states that accept the highest percentage of admission applications online are Wyoming, Maine, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Virginia. States with the lowest percentage of admission applications accepted online are Mississippi, California, Montana, District of Columbia and Arizona.

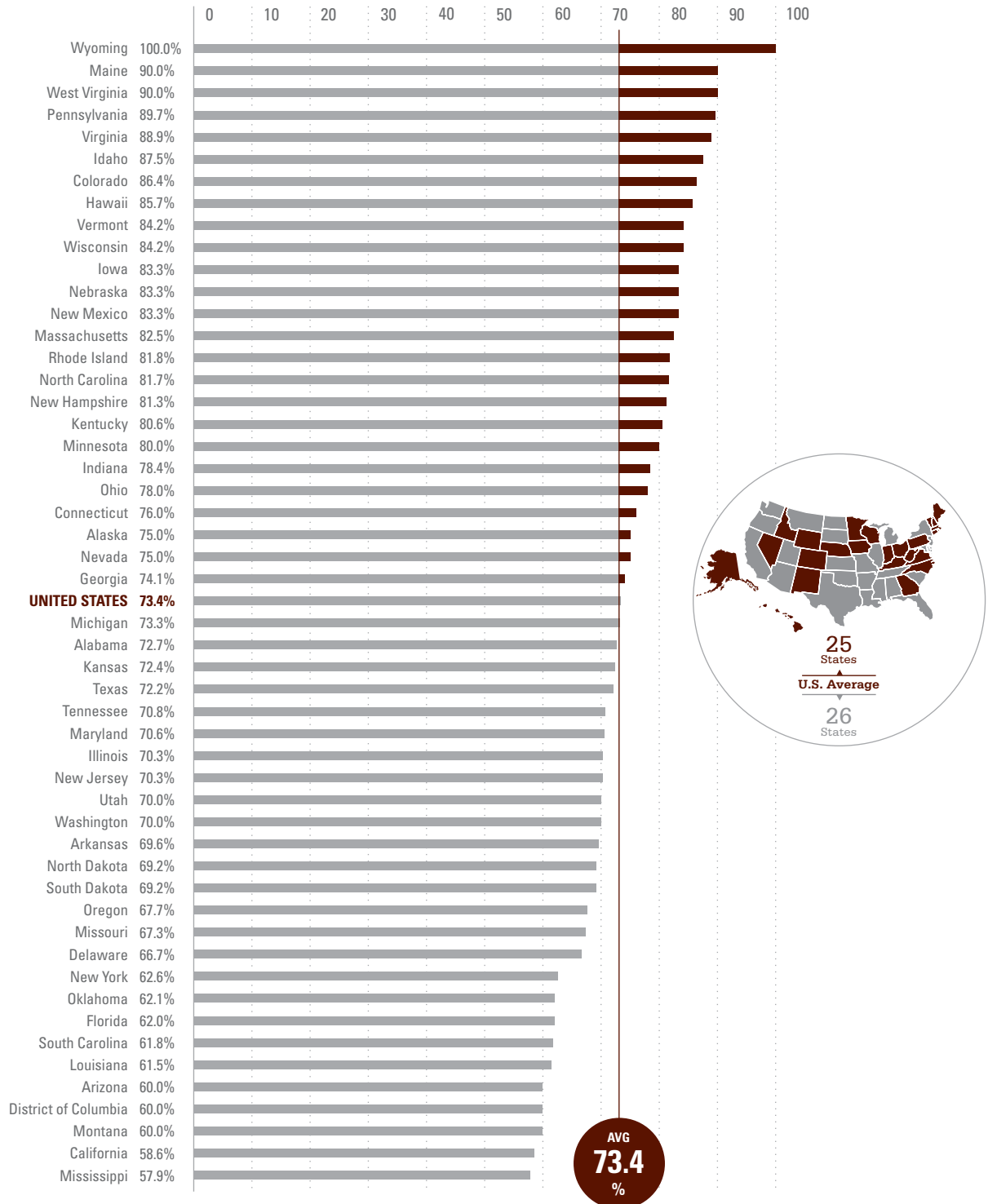
When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? As was the case with the previous indicator, the Annual Survey of Colleges is based on self-reported information from the institution, and colleges do not necessarily respond to all questions on the survey. This indicator is calculated solely from affirmative responses (i.e., those institutions explicitly indicating that the application can be submitted online) and may underestimate the proportion of colleges for which the technology is in place.

6.2b

Percentage of Four-Year Colleges that Accept Admission Applications Online by State Rank, 2008

Source: College Board Annual Survey of Colleges, NCES/IPEDS, 2010

Note: Analysis limited to four-year, degree-granting, not-for-profit, TitleIV-participating institutions located in the 50 states and District of Columbia.



20.4%

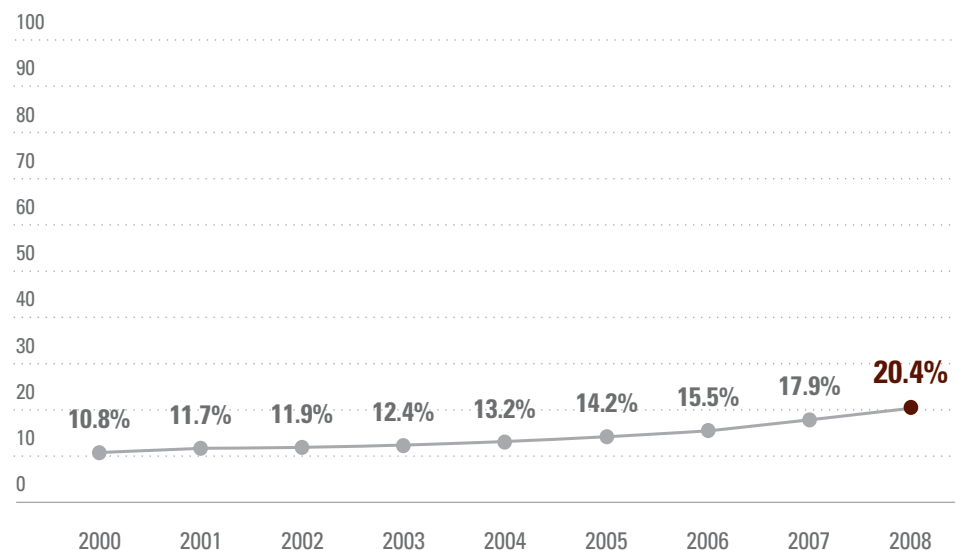
As of the 2008–2009 admission year, 20.4 percent of four-year institutions participated in national application systems that aim to streamline the admission process.

Percentage of Four-Year Colleges that Participate in National Application Systems

6.3a

National Percentage of Four-Year Colleges that Use the Common Application, Universal College Application, SuperAPP or the Common Black College Application, 2000–2008

Source: Common Application, Universal College Application, SuperAPP, Common Black College Application, NCES/IPEDS, 2009



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This metric represents the proportion of four-year colleges that participate in application systems that specifically aim to simplify the admission process. The application systems address the overlap in applications and provide a platform for students to enter information once and then send the application to multiple colleges.

Over the past two decades, the options themselves, as well as the number of participating institutions, expanded greatly. The Common Application (CA), which had existed in paper form since 1975, was introduced online in 1998, and by 2006, all members accepted the application online. Since then, CA launched its online school form system and partnered with Naviance to provide school officials the option of submitting transcripts, school forms and recommendations electronically. Though it is difficult to estimate the number of paper common applications submitted, nearly 1.4 million online CAs were submitted in the 2008–2009 admission season.⁴³

43. Common Application (2010) History and Common Questions for Applicants. Retrieved from <https://www.commonapp.org/>

The Universal College Application (UCA), introduced in 2007, expanded the opportunity for a centralized electronic application to colleges that do not necessarily use “holistic” review processes. While CA membership is limited to those requiring components such as teacher recommendations and an essay, UCA does not have this stipulation. This potentially opens the door to a wider range of higher education institutions, particularly in the public sector.

The Common Black College Application (CBCA), founded roughly 10 years ago, originally collaborated with five historically black colleges and universities with the goal of increasing the presence of these colleges in new markets and increasing educational options for students. CBCA participates in a range of outreach activities in schools and communities. Students are now able to apply simultaneously to 35 HBCUs (there are 103 HBCUs nationally) with the CBCA. The process is simplified further in that students pay a single application fee. CBCA has served over 70,000 students since its inception.

It remains to be seen how the addition of SuperAPP in the 2009–2010 admission cycle will alter the admission landscape. Several major urban districts (including Baltimore Public Schools and the Cleveland Metropolitan School District) and a rapidly growing number of colleges have partnered with SuperAPP in order to streamline the process for students and schools alike. The platform allows schools to send complete applications (including the student and school requirements) electronically to the college. SuperAPP is designed to support various application formats, including CA and UCA, in addition to the unique applications of 1,400 colleges.

Where are we now? Only 20.4 percent of four-year institutions in the United States currently participate in national application systems that aim to streamline the admission process. Figure 6.3a shows that this number rose steadily from 10.8 percent in 2000 to 20.4 percent in 2008.

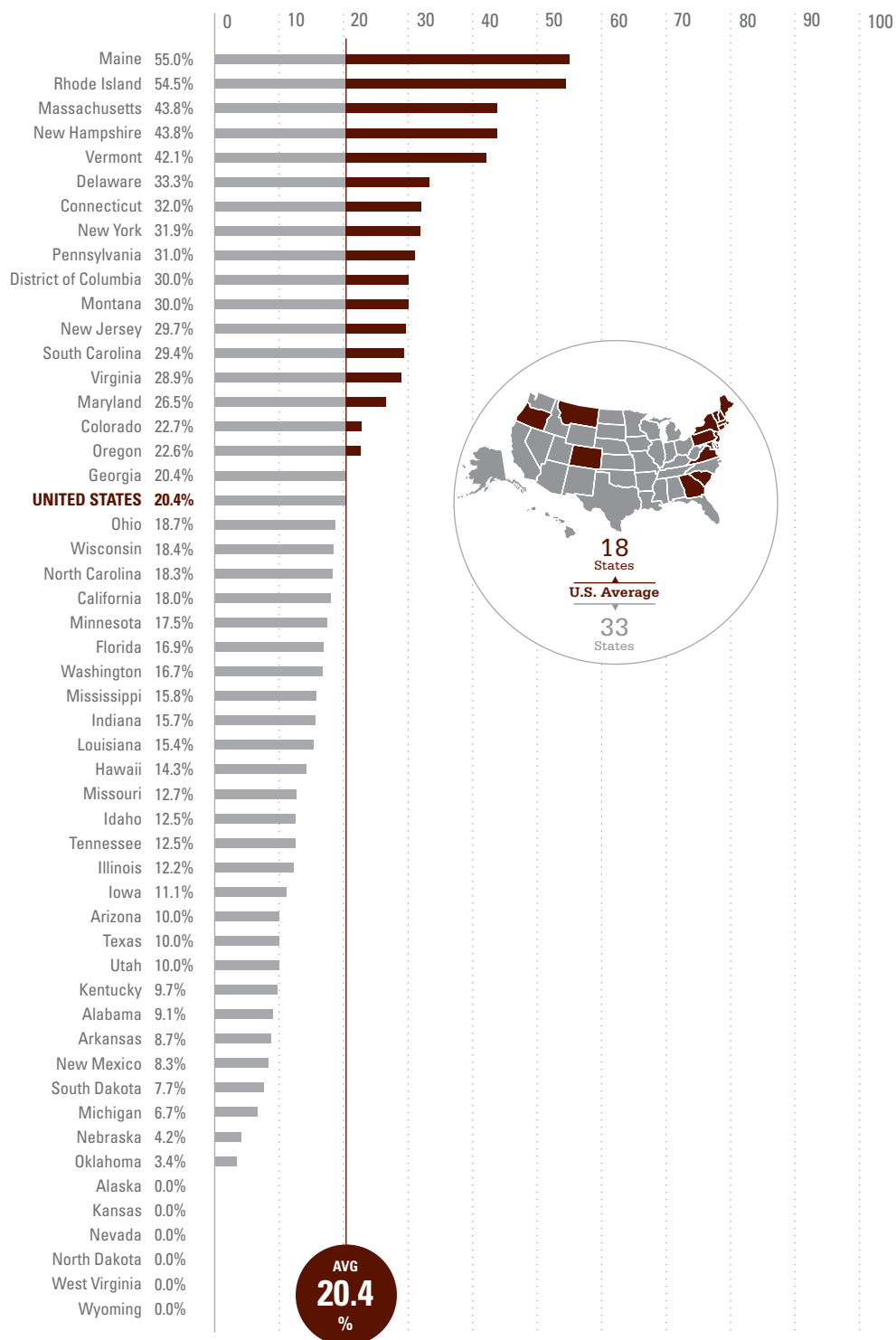
When the data are disaggregated by state, the percentages range from 0.0 percent in Alaska, Kansas, Nevada, North Dakota, West Virginia and Wyoming to 55.0 percent in Maine and Rhode Island. Figure 6.3b shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the highest percentage of usage of national applications are Maine, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Perhaps the greatest issue is that of access to information and resources — knowing that the above options exist, having the ability to pay application fees or the knowledge to seek fee waivers, and subsequently having access to the technology with which to complete one of the above options. Institutions should examine payment and fee-waiver policies in order to ensure that all students have the ability to participate equally in the above application systems. Institutions that are not current members of a centralized application system should examine the costs and benefits of participation. The K–12 and higher education communities should strive to improve outreach to low-income and first-generation students about the benefits of these application systems.

6.3b

Percentage of Four-Year Colleges that Use the Common Application, Universal College Application, SuperAPP or the Common Black College Application by State Rank, 2008

Source: Common Application®, Universal College Application®, SuperAPP®, Common Black College Application®, NCES/IPEDS, 2009



When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? There are other examples of applications that students can use to apply to more than one institution. For example, many state or city higher education systems have centralized application systems. As our interest was in describing application systems that connect students to a broader array of colleges, we have excluded numerous four-year institutions that do, in fact, participate in “common” application systems. Other programs have simplified the process for school officials, which can have an indirect effect on the process for students. For example, schools that use Naviance’s “College Planner” are able to send materials electronically to over 1,100 colleges. In nearly 4,000 K–12 schools, Naviance sent 2.4 million “edocs” midway through the 2009–2010 admission season.⁴⁴

There are additional examples of “common” application models that have come and gone over the past decade. It is difficult to project which of these will shape the admission landscape in the coming years, perhaps with the exception of the CA, which has been the industry standard for a few decades. Ultimately, the survival of each application system will be determined by the open market, but it should be kept in mind that the use of more of these systems does not necessarily mean a better experience for students. However, it can be argued that having more colleges participate in the existing systems could create a better experience for students, in that they could use a single application for all or most of the institutions on the final college list.

In addition, while the above systems indicate increased numbers of applicants and applications over time, we are currently unable to estimate the proportion of students who take advantage of such options.

44. Naviance (Feb. 12, 2010). Naviance delivers more than 2.4M times and counting! Retrieved from <http://www.naviance.com/news/2010/naviance-delivers-more-than-24m-times-and-counting.html>

67.2%

As of 2007,
67.2 percent of high
school graduates
enrolled in a two-
or four-year college
immediately after
completing high
school.

55.6%

As of 2007,
55.6 percent of African
American high school
graduates enrolled
in a two- or four-year
college immediately
after completing high
school.

60.9%

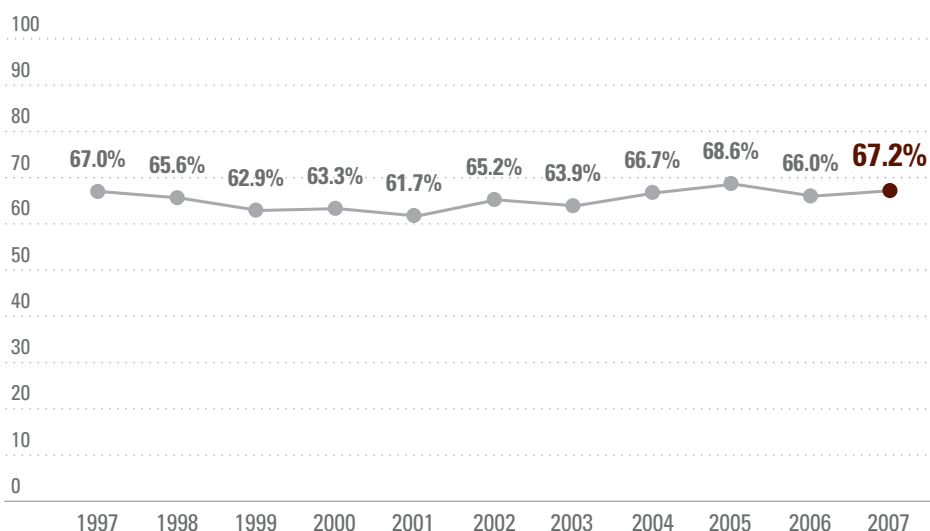
As of 2007,
60.9 percent of
Hispanic high school
graduates enrolled
in a two- or four-year
college immediately
after completing high
school.

Immediate Enrollment Rate of High School Graduates

6.4a

National Percentage of High School Graduates Enrolled in Two- or Four-Year Colleges Immediately Following Graduation, 1997–2007

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 2009

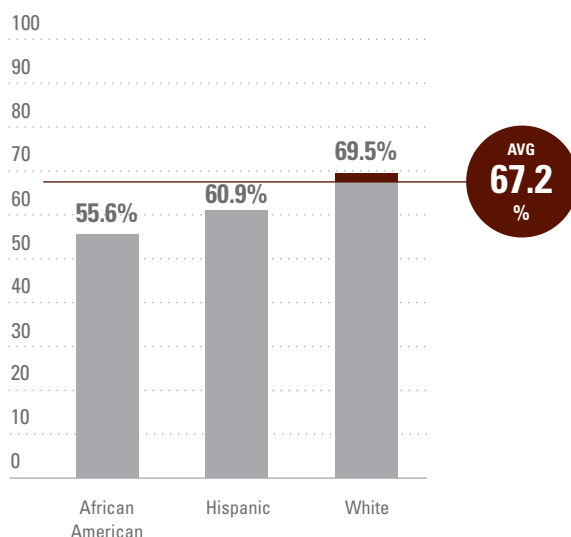


6.4b

National Percentage of High School Graduates Enrolled in Two- or Four-Year Colleges Immediately Following Graduation by Race/ Ethnicity, 2007

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 2009

Note: Data not Available for Asian American/ Pacific Islander and American Indian



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? One way to assess whether efforts to streamline, simplify, and demystify the admission process are effective is to examine the proportion of students applying to college. This hinges upon an assumption that if the process is perceived as less intimidating, then more students will ultimately apply to college. However, there does not appear to be a comprehensive source for this information. The issue can be explored indirectly through the immediate enrollment rate of students who have just completed high school. It stands to reason that if a greater proportion of students enroll, then a greater proportion of them must have applied to college in the first place. However, the method of application remains unknown. Also, the availability of online applications did not appear to influence enrollment (See Figure 6.4a).

This measure is fundamental to the overall goal of the commission. While in this case it is being used as an indirect indicator of application behavior, it reflects an important piece of the admission pipeline, in which students must apply, enroll, return for sophomore year, and ultimately complete their degree (see Recommendation Nine for more details on retention and completion).

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? From the data presented in this section, enrollment rates can be seen to differ based on family income, parental education, race/ethnicity, and gender. Policies geared toward improving application and enrollment rates for low-income and underrepresented minority students in particular will contribute greatly to the commission's goal.

Where are we now? In 2007, 67.2 percent of U.S. high school graduates enrolled in a two- or four-year college immediately after completing high school. Figure 6.4a shows that the national percentage of high school graduates enrolled in two- or four-year colleges immediately following graduation remained relatively stable between 1997 and 2007. Figure 6.4b shows that the immediate enrollment rate in 2007 for African American (55.6 percent) and Hispanic (60.9 percent) students trails that of white (69.5 percent) students in the United States.

Figure 6.4c shows that the immediate enrollment rate for males (66.1 percent) is only slightly behind the rate for females (68.3 percent). Figure 6.4d shows that the immediate enrollment rate of high school graduates increases as income improves. While 55.0 percent of low-income students enroll in two- or four-year colleges immediately after graduating from high school, middle- and high-income students enroll at rates of 63.3 percent and 78.2 percent, respectively. Figure 6.4e shows that the immediate enrollment rate increases as parental educational attainment increases. Although 50.9 percent of students whose parents have high school diplomas or less enroll immediately in school, the number improves to 65.2 percent for students whose parents have some college and 85.8 percent for students whose parents have a bachelor's degree or higher.

When the data are disaggregated by high school graduates enrolled in two- or four-year colleges immediately following graduation, the percentages range from 45.0 percent in Arizona to 75.4 percent in Mississippi. Figure 6.4f shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the highest percentage of high school graduates to immediately enroll in college are Mississippi, New York, Massachusetts, South Dakota and North Dakota. States with the lowest percentage of high school graduates to immediately enroll in college are Arizona, Idaho, Alaska, Utah and Oregon.

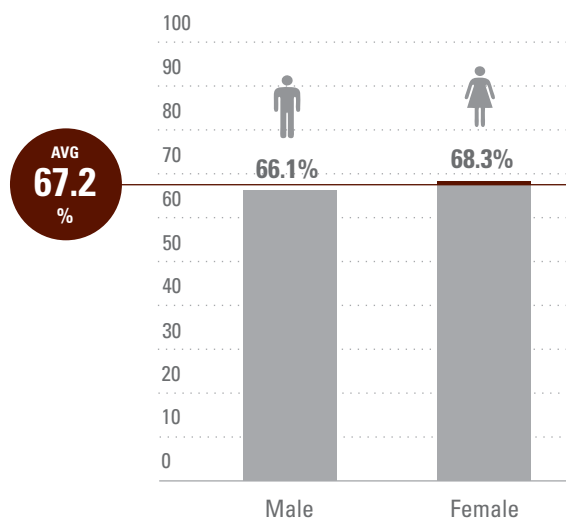
When the data are disaggregated by high school graduates enrolled in two- or four-year colleges in their home state immediately following graduation, the percentages range from 14.6 percent in the District of Columbia to 69.3 percent in Mississippi. Figure 6.4g shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the highest percentage of high school graduates to immediately enroll in college in their home state are Mississippi, South Carolina, New York, North Carolina and Michigan. States with the lowest percentage of high school graduates to immediately enroll in college in their home state, along with the District of Columbia, are Vermont, Alaska, Rhode Island and Connecticut.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? A student may complete the admission process only to find that certain factors, such as family finances, prevent him or her from enrolling. Therefore, this measure likely underestimates the actual proportion of recent high school completers who applied to college.

6.4c

National Percentage of High School Graduates Enrolled in Two- or Four-Year Colleges Immediately Following Graduation by Gender, 2007

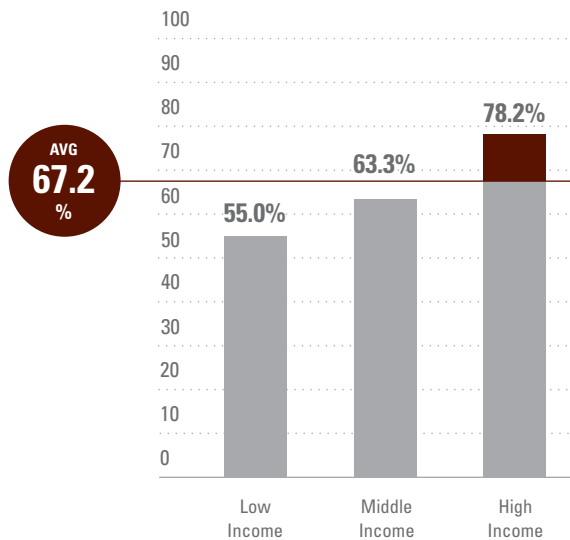
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 2009



6.4d

National Percentage of High School Graduates Enrolled in Two- or Four-Year Colleges Immediately Following Graduation by Family Income, 2007

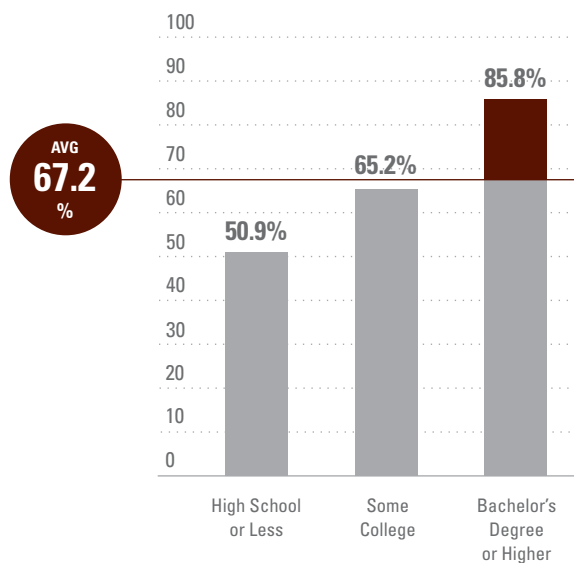
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 2009



6.4e

National Percentage of High School Graduates Enrolled in Two- or Four-Year Colleges Immediately Following Graduation by Parental Education, 2007

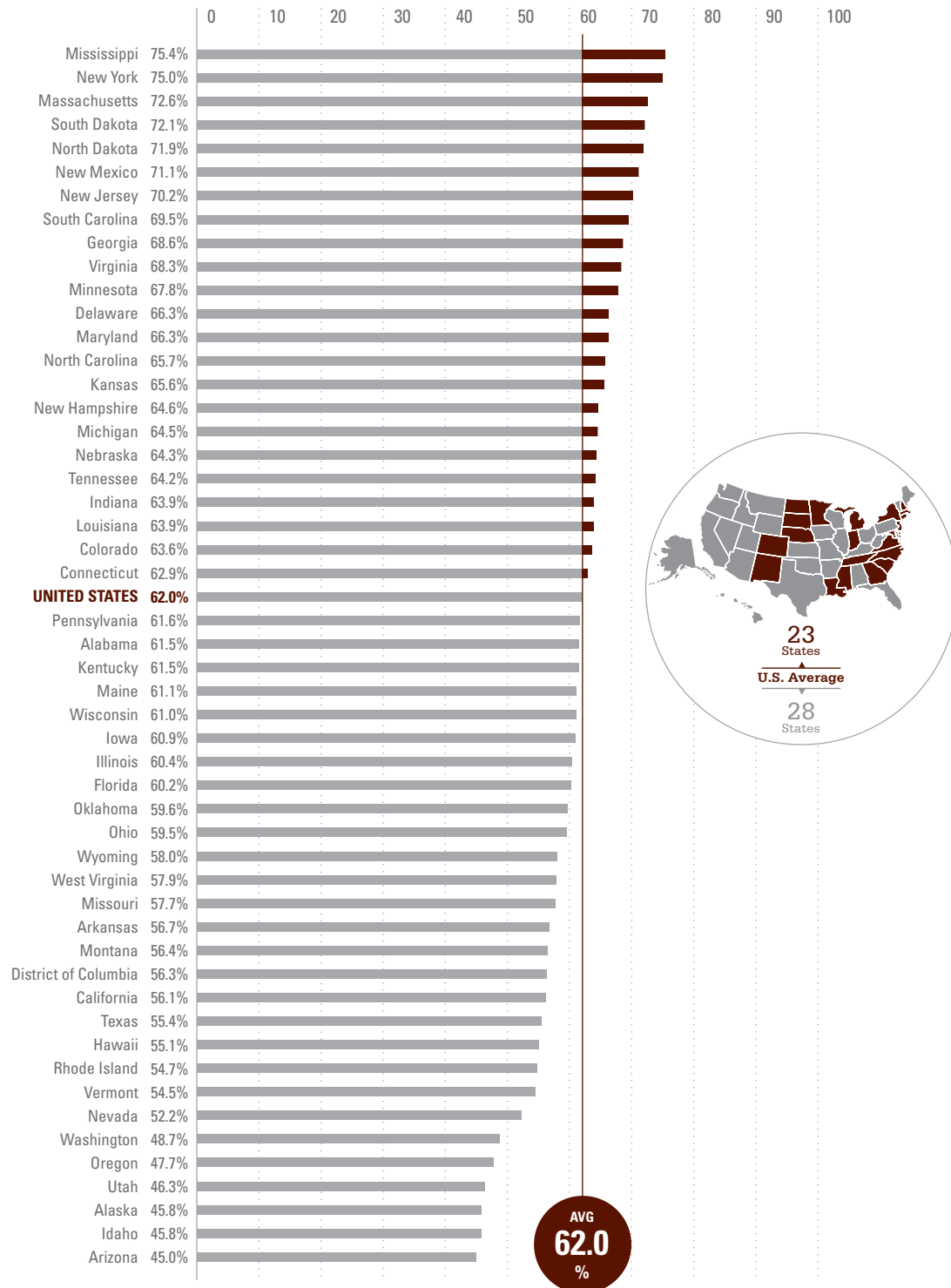
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education, 2009



6.4f

Estimated Rate of High School Graduates Going to College by State Rank, 2006

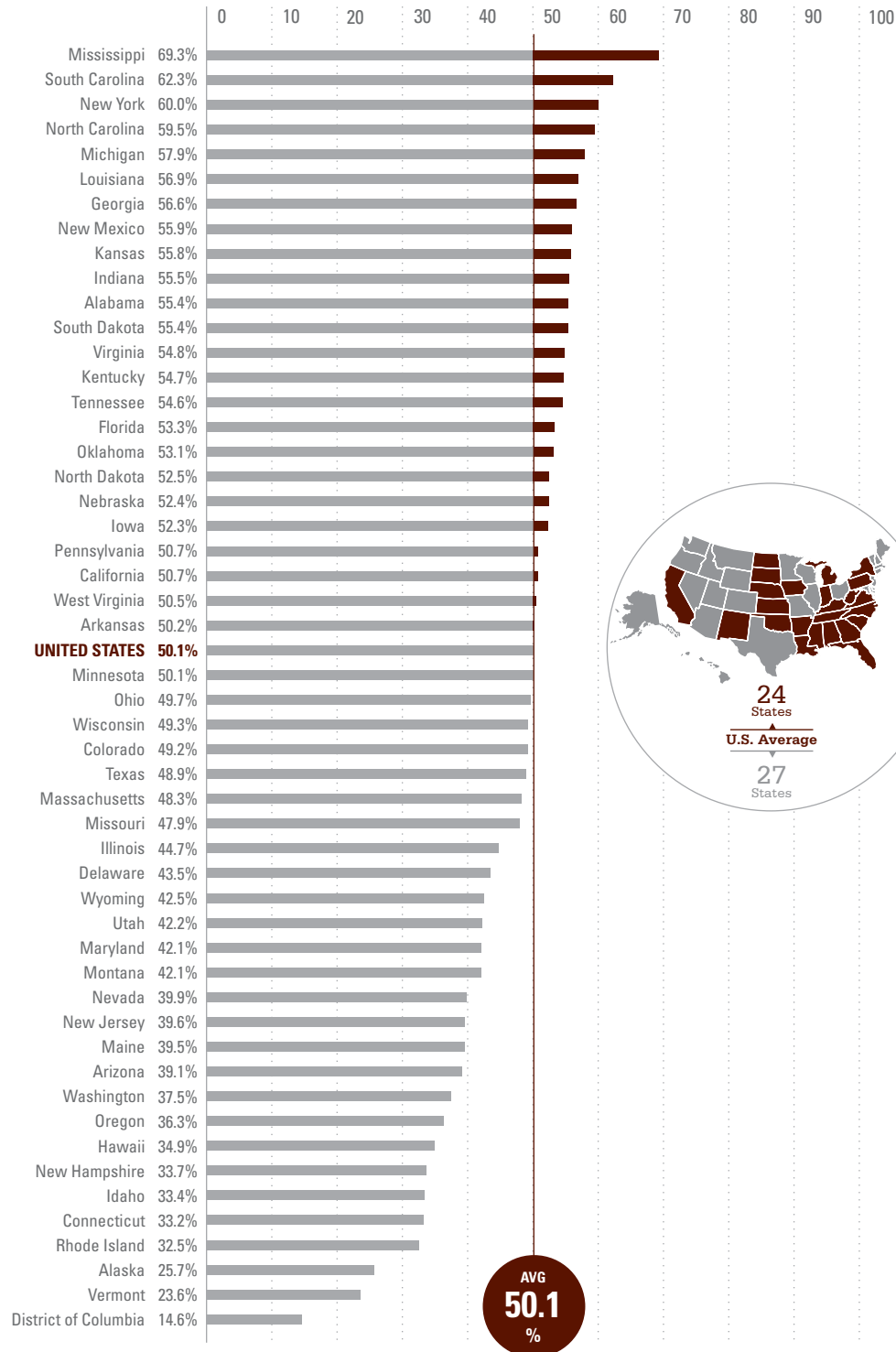
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), 2008



6.4g

Estimated Rate of High School Graduates Going to College in Home State by State Rank, 2006

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), 2008



Seven

Provide more
need-based grant
aid while simplifying
the financial aid
system and making
it more transparent

WE RECOMMEND that federal and state officials encourage increased access by providing more need-based grant aid, making the process of applying for financial assistance more transparent and predictable, and finding ways to inform families, as early as the middle school years, of aid amounts likely to be available to individual students.

It is important that sufficient need-based aid be available to allow low- and moderate-income students to enroll and succeed in college. First-generation students and underrepresented minorities are particularly vulnerable when our financial aid system is inadequate.

In *Coming to Our Senses*, the commission called for an increase in need-based grant aid, for avoidance of excessive reliance on student debt, and for simplifying financial aid processes and making them more transparent. The commission also recommended providing institutions with incentives to enroll and graduate more low-income and first-generation students.

Better information for students is vital as many students, particularly those whose parents did not go to college, are unaware of the available financial aid and do not know how to access it. The nation must do more to simplify the financial aid process for all students and to make the process transparent for all families. In many cases, access to social capital is directly tied to the ability of students and families to gain access to higher education. Simplifying the financial aid system and providing early information can improve access to higher education for low-income and first-generation students.

Indicators of progress on this recommendation include:

- Grant aid for students from low- and moderate-income families;
- Student debt levels;
- Changes in the federal student aid application process and financial aid programs; and
- Implementation of policies designed to provide incentives for institutions to promote enrollment and success of low-income and first-generation students.

General Findings for This Recommendation

- Between 2003–2004 and 2007–2008, at public two-year colleges, average grant aid increased by 1.8 percent or \$53 per year (after adjusting for inflation) for low-income dependent students.
- Between 2003–2004 and 2007–2008, at public four-year colleges, average grant aid increased by 4.4 percent or \$283 per year (after adjusting for inflation), for low-income students.
- Between 2003–2004 and 2007–2008, at private four-year colleges, average grant aid increased by 5.8 percent or \$686 per year (after adjusting for inflation) for low-income dependent students.
- The median total debt for those who borrowed increased by 1.3 percent per year beyond inflation.
- As of January 2010, some applicants can populate the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with data supplied directly from the tax forms they have filed with the IRS.
- The online FAFSA was modified to incorporate increased use of “skip logic,” reducing the number of questions many applicants must answer.
- Applicants who complete the FAFSA are immediately provided with information about the types and amounts of aid they are likely to receive, as well as information about the colleges to which they are applying, including tuition and graduation rates.
- Our understanding of the best ways to promote student success is limited. Any programs designed to further this goal should involve sound evaluation plans to assure that the funds are as productive as possible.

1.8%

Between fiscal year 2004 and fiscal year 2008, the trend at public two-year colleges, average grant aid increases at a rate of 1.8 percent or \$53 per year (after adjusting for inflation) for low-income dependent students.

4.4%

Between fiscal year 2004 and fiscal year 2008, the trend at public four-year colleges, average grant aid increases at a rate of 4.4 percent or \$283 per year (after adjusting for inflation) for low-income students.

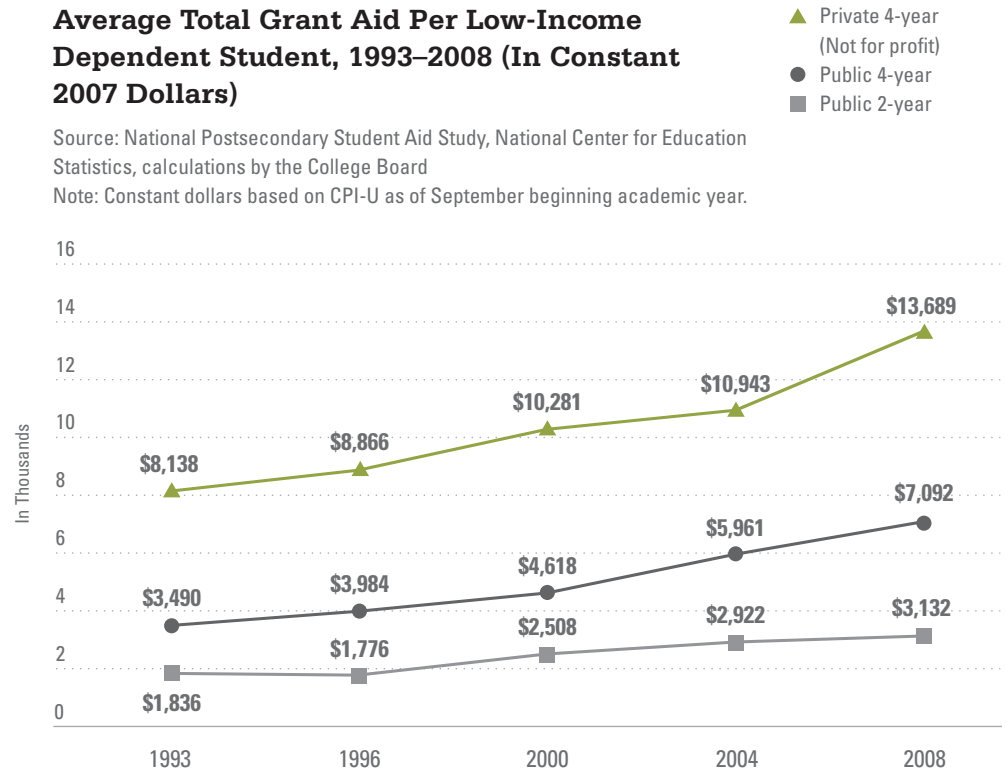
Grant Aid for Students from Low-Income Families

7.1a

Average Total Grant Aid Per Low-Income Dependent Student, 1993–2008 (In Constant 2007 Dollars)

Source: National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, National Center for Education Statistics, calculations by the College Board

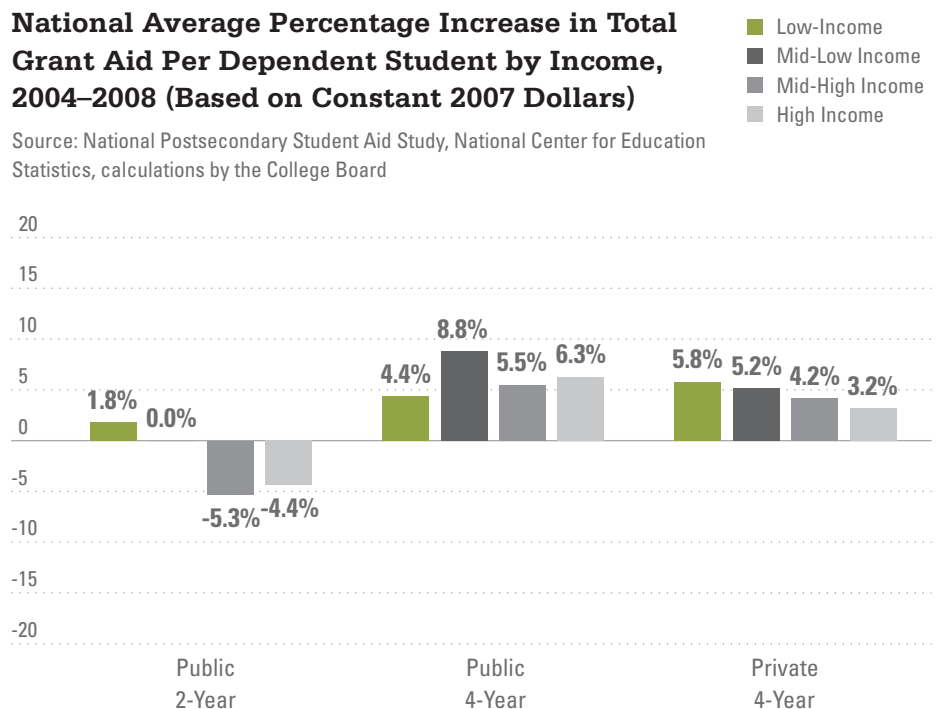
Note: Constant dollars based on CPI-U as of September beginning academic year.



7.1b

National Average Percentage Increase in Total Grant Aid Per Dependent Student by Income, 2004–2008 (Based on Constant 2007 Dollars)

Source: National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, National Center for Education Statistics, calculations by the College Board



5.8%

Between fiscal year 2004 and fiscal year 2008, the trend at private four-year colleges, average grant aid increases at a rate of 5.8 percent or \$686 per year (after adjusting for inflation) for low-income dependent students.

What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator measures the amount of grant aid available to students by income level. This measure is important because students from low- and moderate-income families can enroll and succeed in college only if they have access to adequate financial resources. The educational attainment of higher-income students is not significantly affected by increases in aid, but lower-income students are much more price sensitive.⁴⁵

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? The federal government provides the foundation of need-based aid through Pell Grants to low- and moderate-income students. Funding for Pell Grants is subject to annual appropriations. State governments also provide important grant aid to students. Some of this aid is need-based, but other funds are distributed on the basis of academic qualifications, and many of these dollars go to students who could enroll without them. Colleges and universities also distribute considerable amounts of grant aid. As with state grants, the majority of these dollars are awarded to meet financial need, but many funds also go to students who can afford college without this assistance.

Where are we now? Total grant aid for low-income dependent students in the United States has risen steadily from 1993 to 2008. Figure 7.1a shows that average total grant aid for full-time students from low-income families attending public two-year institutions increased from \$1,836 in 1993 to \$3,312 in 2008. Average total grant aid for full-time, low-income students attending public four-year institutions rose from \$3,490 in 1993 to \$7,092 in 2008 and from \$8,138 in 1993 to \$13,689 in 2008 for those attending private four-year institutions.

Figure 7.1b shows that the percentage increase in average total grant aid to low-income dependent students from 2004 to 2008 was 1.8 percent at public two-year institutions, 4.4 percent at public four-year institutions and 5.8 percent at private four-year institutions. Figure 7.1c shows the annual dollar increase in total grant aid to low-income dependent students from 2004 to 2008 was \$53 at public two-year institutions, \$283 at public four-year institutions and \$686 at private four-year institutions.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? There are multiple definitions of “need-based” aid. Sometimes, only aid that is awarded explicitly on the basis of financial need is considered need based. But the critical issue is that sufficient dollars go to students who need them, regardless of how these dollars are labeled. Accordingly, monitoring the amount of grant aid low- and moderate-income students receive is the most meaningful way to examine the assistance these students are receiving to enable them to participate in postsecondary education.

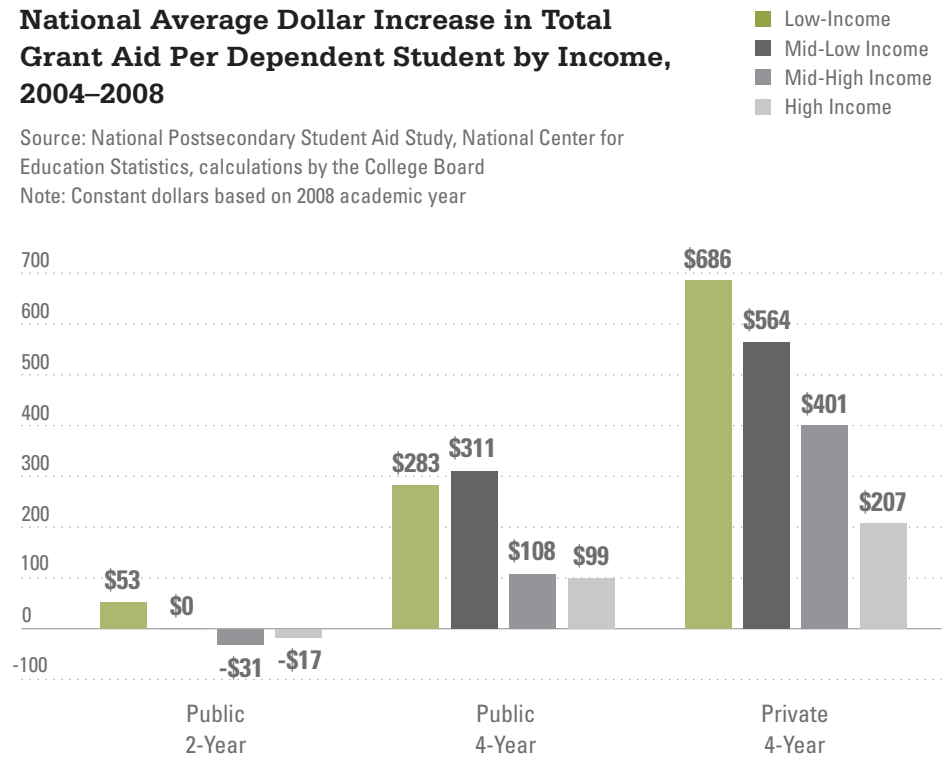
45. The College Board. (2009). Trends in college pricing. Retrieved June 17, 2010 from http://www.trends-collegeboard.com/college_pricing/pdf/2009_Trends_College_Pricing.pdf

7.1c

National Average Dollar Increase in Total Grant Aid Per Dependent Student by Income, 2004–2008

Source: National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, National Center for Education Statistics, calculations by the College Board

Note: Constant dollars based on 2008 academic year



Students at public two-year colleges rely almost entirely on federal and state grants, but public four-year colleges provide considerable institutional grant aid. At private not-for-profit colleges, institutional grant aid provides more subsidies than do federal and state governments. (Note: available data highlighting for-profit institutions are not adequate for reporting.) The effectiveness of increases in grant aid depends on how much tuition increases.

2.6%

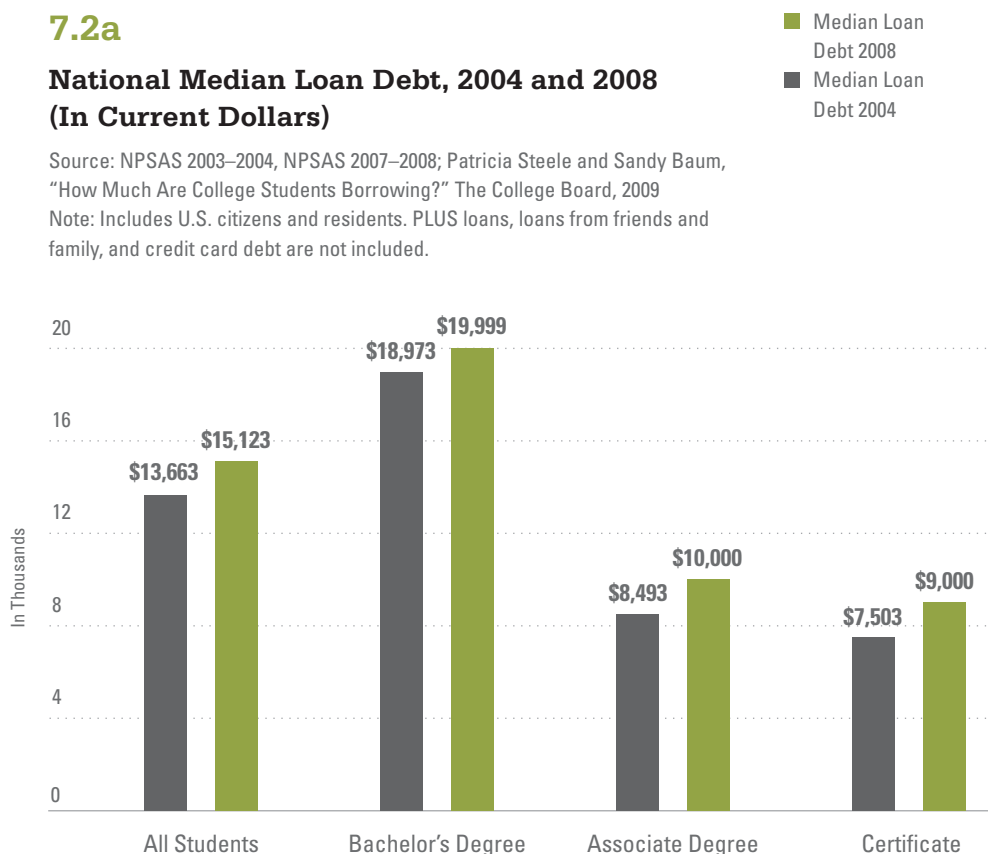
The median total debt for graduates who borrow increases by 2.6 percent per year beyond inflation.

Student Debt Levels

7.2a

National Median Loan Debt, 2004 and 2008 (In Current Dollars)

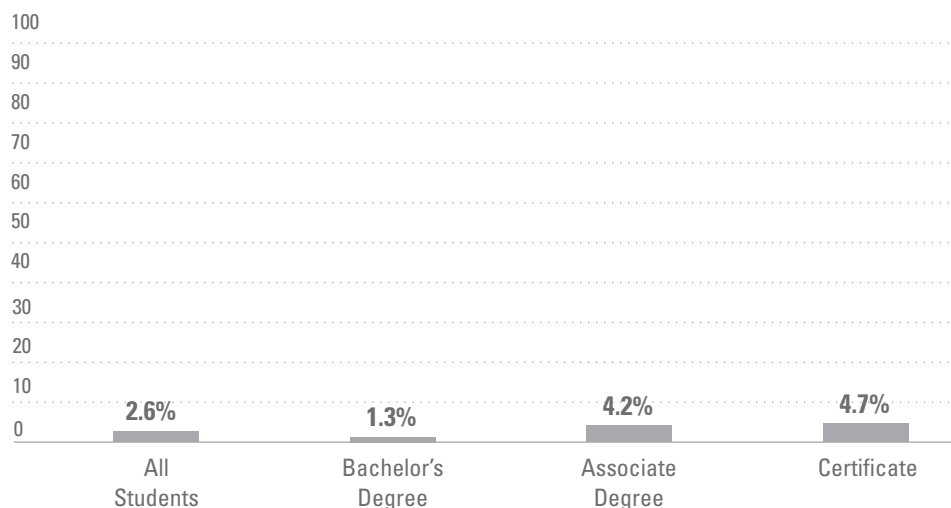
Source: NPSAS 2003–2004, NPSAS 2007–2008; Patricia Steele and Sandy Baum, “How Much Are College Students Borrowing?” The College Board, 2009
Note: Includes U.S. citizens and residents. PLUS loans, loans from friends and family, and credit card debt are not included.



7.2b

National Average Annual Percentage Increase in Median Debt Level, 2004–2008 (In Current Dollars)

Source: NPSAS 2003–2004, NPSAS 2007–2008; Patricia Steele and Sandy Baum, “How Much Are College Students Borrowing?” The College Board, 2009
Note: Includes U.S. citizens and residents. PLUS loans, loans from friends and family, and credit card debt are not included.



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator measures the median debt accumulated by students by degree and institution type. Postsecondary education is an investment with a high rate of return for most students. However, some students do not complete the programs they begin, and for others, the payoff in the labor market is less than they might have anticipated. While typical students can pay off their education debts without undue difficulty, for a growing minority of students, debt burdens are unmanageable. The need to borrow at high levels discourages some students from enrolling or persisting in college, and for others, it creates very difficult circumstances during the repayment period after college.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Many factors, including changing incomes and income inequality, rising college prices, and lifestyle choices, contribute to the amounts students borrow. However, more generous need-based federal, state and institutional grant programs can mitigate the need for students to rely on borrowed funds.

Where are we now? Student debt levels in the United States continue to rise each year for students who persist to degree completion. Figure 7.2a shows that debt levels for all graduates increased from \$13,663 in 2004 to \$15,123 in 2008. The debt levels for associate degree graduates are significantly lower than those for bachelor's degree attainees. Figure 7.2b shows that the average annual percentage increase in the median debt level from 2004 to 2008 was 2.6 percent for all graduates, 1.3 percent for bachelor's degree attainees, 4.2 percent for associate degree graduates, and 4.7 percent for certificate awardees.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? Median debt levels conceal the range of borrowing levels. About a third of bachelor's degree recipients graduate with no education debt. In any given academic year, only about half of all full-time students take education loans. However, increases in median debt levels for those who do borrow, combined with information on the proportion of students with debt, provide an important indicator of reliance on debt.

The proportion of bachelor's degree recipients graduating with debt was about two-thirds in both 2003–2004 and 2007–2008. Median debt levels increased by 1.3 percent per year beyond inflation.

The proportion of for-profit bachelor's degree recipients graduating with debt and the proportion of associate degree and certificate recipients who borrowed to finance their education increased measurably over this four-year period. In addition, median debt levels for these groups increased much more rapidly than for other groups.

Simplifying the Federal Student Aid System and the Application Process

What is this measure, and why is this measure important? Even when sufficient financial aid funds are available, students frequently have difficulty accessing those funds. A simpler application process and programs that are more predictable and transparent have the potential to increase educational opportunities.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? The Department of Education has the authority to modify the student aid application process in significant ways. Other measures, including removing questions from the application, modifying the formula used to calculate aid eligibility and consolidating programs, require congressional action.

Where are we now? Many students who would be eligible for federal aid do not complete the FAFSA. Some of these students would likely apply if the application were simpler or if students were less intimidated by the application. Others might apply if they had better information about the aid for which they could qualify.

During 2009, the Department of Education made considerable strides toward improving the application process.

- As of January 2010, some applicants can populate the FAFSA with data supplied directly from the tax forms they have filed with the IRS.
- The online FAFSA has been modified to incorporate increased use of “skip logic,” reducing the number of questions many applicants must answer.
- Applicants who complete the FAFSA immediately receive information about the types and amounts of aid they are likely to receive, as well as information about the colleges to which they are applying, including tuition and graduation rates.

In 2009, the House of Representatives passed legislation that would have eliminated from the FAFSA all financial questions that cannot be answered with IRS data. This change would have simplified the eligibility formula, making it possible for students to predict in advance the Pell Grants for which they would be eligible and for all financial data to come directly from the IRS. However, when student aid revisions were incorporated into the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, these changes were not enacted.

Implementation of Policies Designed to Provide Incentives for Institutions to Promote Enrollment and Success of Low-Income and First-Generation Students

What is this measure, and why is this measure important? Existing student aid programs were designed primarily to promote access to postsecondary education. The nation has done a much better job of increasing enrollment rates than of promoting college success and completion. Too many students — particularly low-income and first-generation students — are beginning postsecondary education but never earning a credential.⁴⁶

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? The federal government provides funds directly to students and provides some student aid funds to campuses to distribute to their students in the form of grants, loans and work study. The allocation of these funds is almost entirely unrelated to institutional success rates.

Where are we now? Our understanding of the best ways to use financial incentives to promote student success is limited. Any program designed to further this goal should involve sound evaluation plans to assure the use of funds is as productive as possible.

The Health Care Reconciliation Act of 2010 passed by Congress in March includes the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act that includes College Access and Completion funds.⁴⁷ These funds will spend \$2.5 billion, over the course of five years, on supporting state efforts to boost the college completion rates of low-income students. An evaluative component will be created to assess these many efforts in order to pinpoint the most successful ones. This step that Congress has taken will allow valuable data to be created that will inform states about effective promotion of success for low-income students.

46. Choy, Susan P. 2001. Students Whose Parents Did Not Go To College: Postsecondary Access, Persistence, and Attainment (NCES 2001-126). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/2001126.pdf>

47. Health Care Reconciliation Act, 2010.

Eight

Keep college
affordable

WE RECOMMEND restraining growth in college costs and prices, using available aid and resources wisely, and insisting that state governments meet their obligations for funding higher education.

In *Coming to Our Senses*, the commission called for assuring college affordability by restraining increases in college prices. In order to make this a reality, state governments must meet their obligations for funding higher education.

State appropriations are not keeping pace with the increasing enrollments at colleges and universities, contributing to rapid increases in tuition and fees.⁴⁸ The lag in appropriations by states is leaving families and students with the burden of financing an increasing portion of the cost of higher education. However, state appropriations and tuition prices cannot be viewed in a vacuum. While state appropriations and tuition are indeed important, ensuring college affordability also depends on other factors, such as living expenses, family ability to pay, and the availability of financial aid. Each of these factors affects the affordability of attending a college or university. All of these areas are reflected in the measures that have been chosen for this recommendation.

Indicators of progress on this recommendation include:

- State appropriations to fund public higher education;
- Tuition, fees and other costs of attendance at colleges and universities;
- Net price students pay for college;
- Change in family income levels; and
- Earnings of college graduates.

General Findings for This Recommendation

- State support for public higher education declined by 1.0 percent between fiscal year 2009 and fiscal year 2010.
- Average tuition and fees at public four-year colleges and universities continued to increase in the United States in 2009–2010.
- Students paid average net tuition and fees of \$1,620 at public four-year colleges in 2009–2010, after subtracting grants and federal tax benefits.
- Average income for families in the lowest 20 percent of the population declined 3.7 percent from 1998 to 2008, after adjusting for inflation.
- Average earnings for full-time workers ages 25 to 29 from 2007 to 2008 declined by 10.7 percent for those workers with an associate degree, yet increased by 0.6 percent for workers with some college, 0.2 percent for those with bachelor's degrees, and 0.4 percent for those workers with a bachelor's degree or higher.

48. The College Board. (2009). Trends in college pricing. Retrieved June 17, 2010 from http://www.trends-collegeboard.com/college_pricing/pdf/2009_Trends_College_Pricing.pdf

-1.0%

Between fiscal year 2009 and fiscal year 2010, the change in total public support for public higher education is a decline of 1.0 percent.

-2.1%

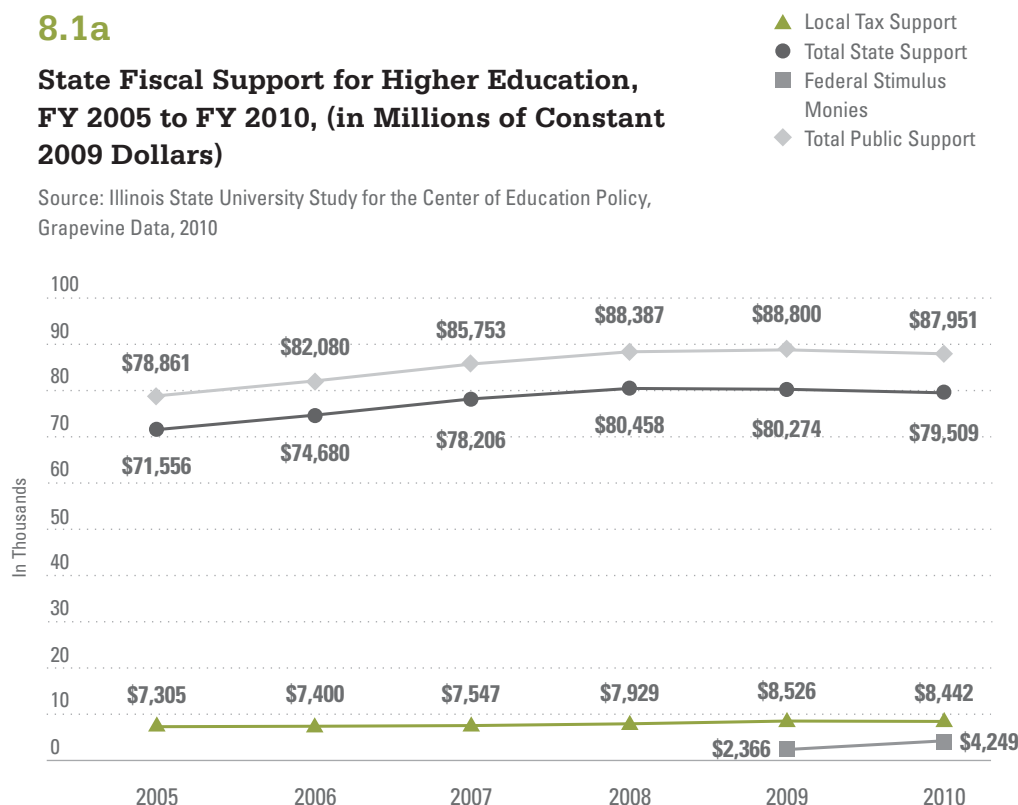
Between fiscal year 2009 and fiscal year 2010, the change in state support for higher education is a decline of 2.1 percent.

State Appropriations to Fund Higher Education

8.1a

State Fiscal Support for Higher Education, FY 2005 to FY 2010, (in Millions of Constant 2009 Dollars)

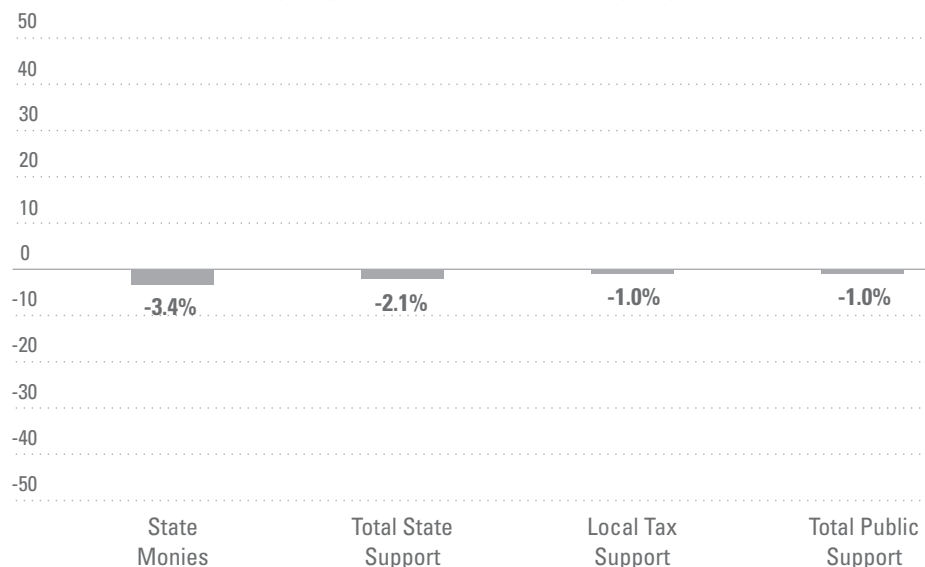
Source: Illinois State University Study for the Center of Education Policy, Grapevine Data, 2010



8.1b

Change in State Fiscal Support for Higher Education, FY 2009 to FY 2010

Source: Illinois State University Study for the Center of Education Policy, Grapevine Data, 2010



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator measures the state appropriation dollars used to support higher education in the United States. Revenues for public colleges and universities, where about 80 percent of students are enrolled, come primarily from a combination of state appropriations and the tuition and fees students pay. This measure is important because the failure of state appropriations to keep up with enrollment growth has been a primary driver of rising tuition levels.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? State funding levels depend on the interaction of state priorities and philosophies of educational funding with fiscal constraints. With pressures on state budgets from declining revenues and increasingly costly competing demands, only a strong commitment to affordable, high quality public higher education on the part of state legislatures can assure the funding levels required to restrain tuition increases and provide adequate need-based aid.

Where are we now? In the United States, state fiscal support for education has declined because of the recession that has crippled state funding. Figure 8.1a shows there has been a decrease in total public support since 2009. Figure 8.1b shows total public support for education has declined by 1.0 percent from the 2009 to 2010 fiscal years. There were declines in state money, total state support and local tax support for education. Though the states received stimulus dollars, this was not enough to offset the declining education dollars in many states.

When the data are disaggregated by state, the percentages range from -11.2 percent in Arizona to 23.3 percent in Missouri. Figure 8.1c shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the highest percentage increase fiscal support for education are Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island. The states with the greatest decline in fiscal support for education are Arizona, Vermont, New Jersey, Indiana and Virginia.

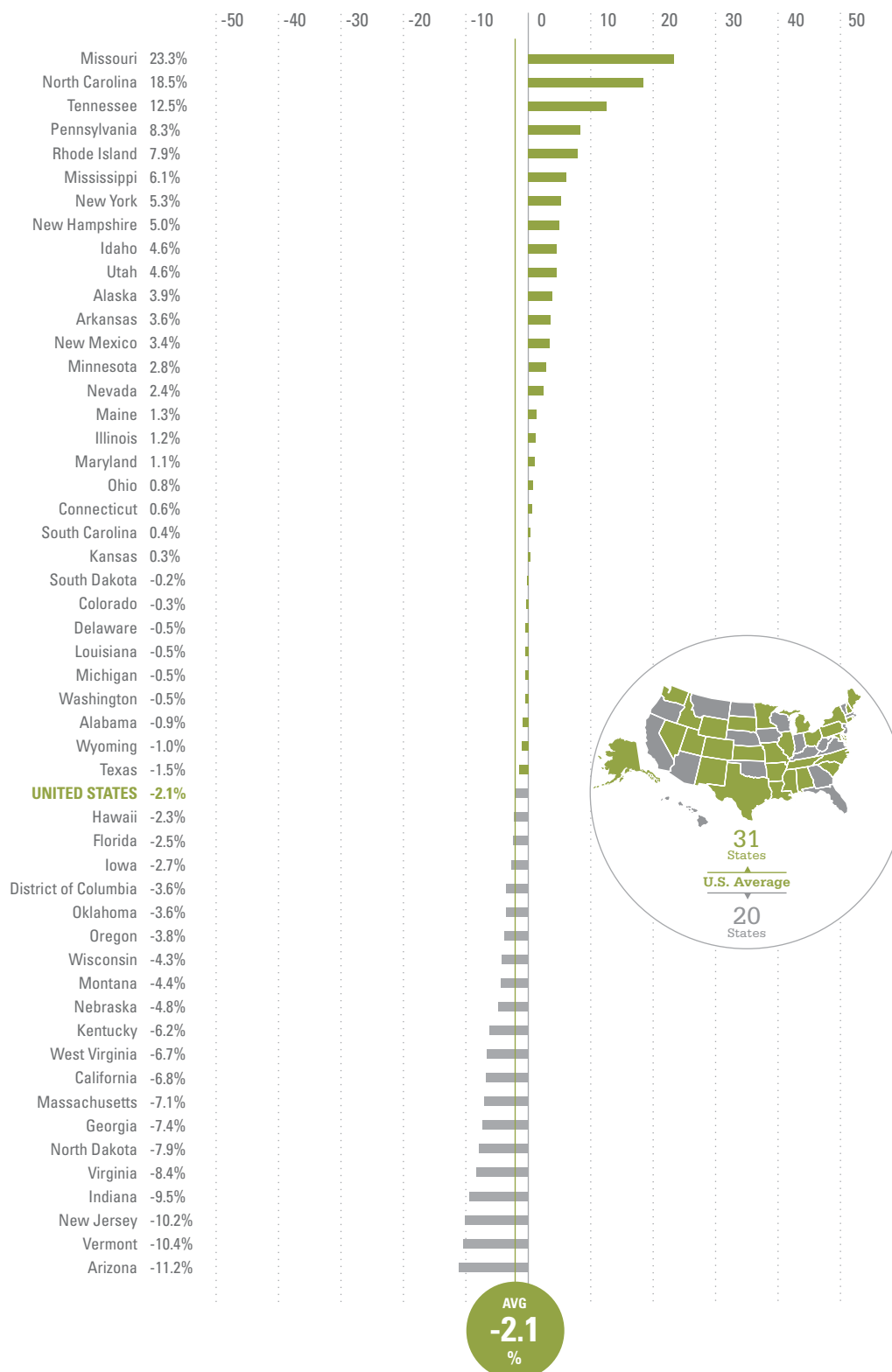
When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

State appropriation levels and patterns differ considerably across states. Both enrollment levels and economic circumstances must be understood to put appropriations into context. However, changes in national appropriations do provide an important snapshot. Total public appropriations for higher education increased rapidly from 2004–2005 through 2007–2008, but declined in 2008–2009 and again in 2009–2010.

8.1c

Change in State Fiscal Support for Higher Education by State Rank, FY 2009 to FY 2010

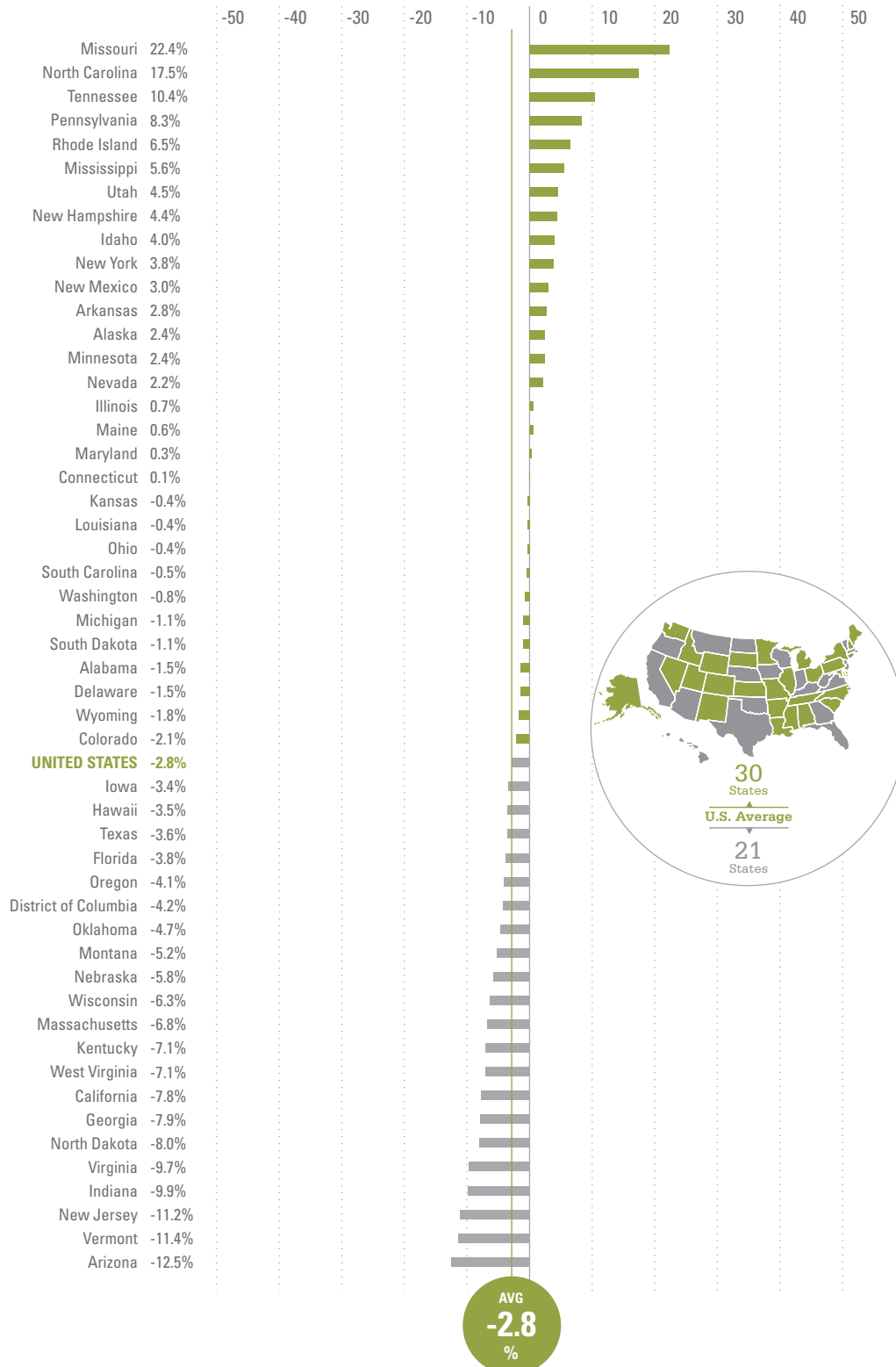
Source: Illinois State University Study for the Center of Education Policy, Grapevine Data, 2010



8.1d

Per Capita Change in State Fiscal Support for Higher Education by State Rank, FY 2009 to FY 2010

Source: Illinois State University Study for the Center of Education Policy, Grapevine Data, 2010



7.3%

From 2008–2009 to 2009–2010, the change in average tuition and fees at public two-year colleges and universities in the United States is an increase of 7.3 percent.

6.5%

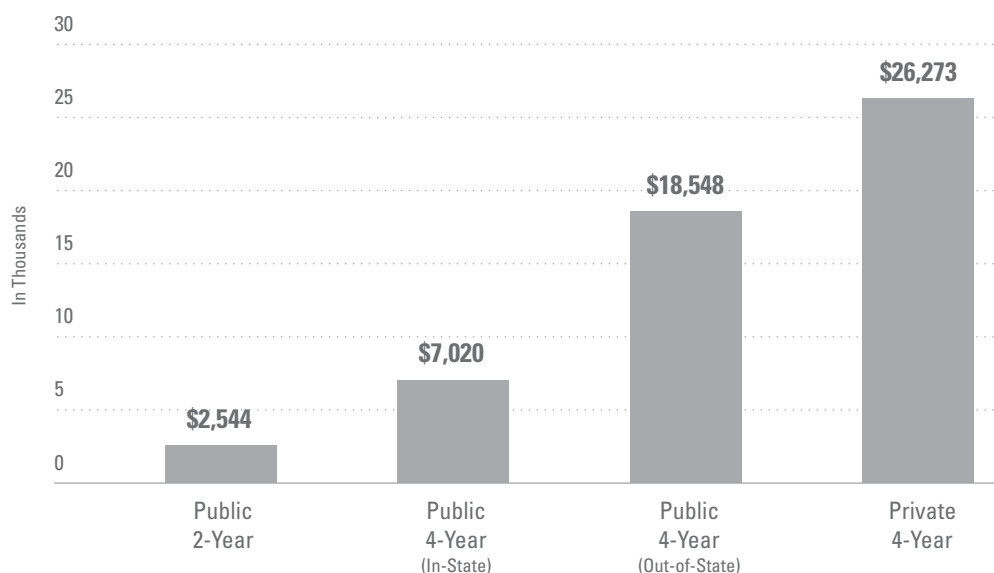
From 2008–2009 to 2009–2010, the change in average in-state tuition and fees at public four-year colleges and universities in the United States is an increase of 6.5 percent.

Tuition, Fees and Other Costs of Attendance at Colleges and Universities

8.2a

Levels of Tuition and Fees for 2009–2010 (Enrollment-Weighted)

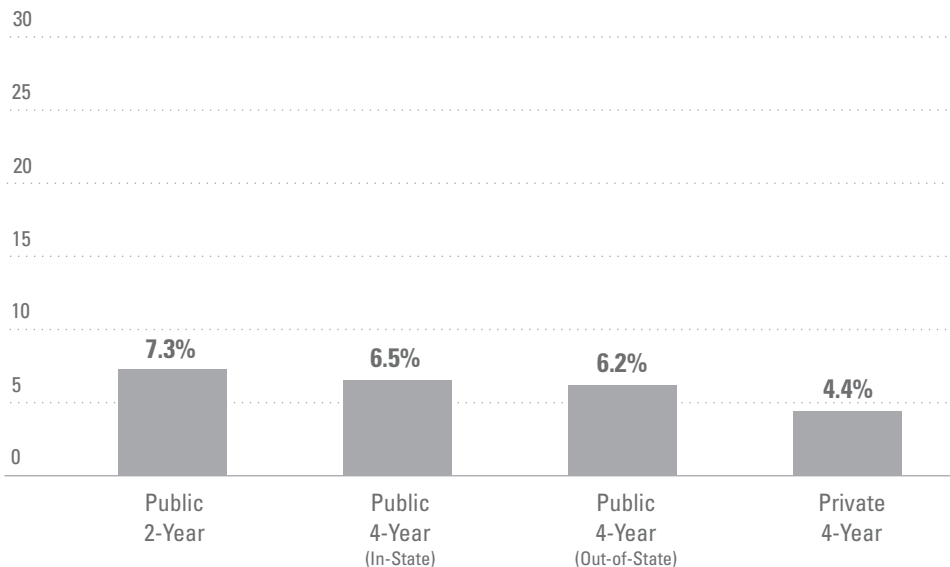
Source: The College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2009



8.2b

Percentage Change in Published Tuition and Fees Charges for Undergraduates, 2008–2009 to 2009–2010 (Enrollment-Weighted)

Source: The College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2009



6.2%

From 2008–2009 to 2009–2010, the change in average out-of-state tuition and fees at public four-year colleges and universities in the United States is an increase of 6.2 percent.

4.4%

From 2008–2009 to 2009–2010, the change in average tuition and fees at private four-year colleges and universities in the United States is an increase of 4.4 percent.

What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator shows the tuition, fees and other costs of attendance at colleges and universities, the average annual percentage increase in inflation-adjusted published prices by decade, and the published tuition prices by state. Although published prices can be deceptive because many students receive grant aid that reduces the price they actually pay, other students do pay the full price. Moreover, because of incomplete knowledge about the complex system of financial aid, many students are unaware of the subsidies available to them and make decisions based on the published prices. Other costs, including room, board, books and other expenses are larger than tuition for many students and must also be considered in evaluating financial barriers to college participation.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Prices are sometimes set by institutions and sometimes by state legislatures or other public bodies. While it is tempting to push for small tuition increases in order to promote affordability, the provision of quality education requires adequate resources. Accordingly, tuition policy cannot be viewed in isolation from state appropriations and student aid policies.

Where are we now? In the United States, the average published charges for undergraduates have continued to increase. Figure 8.2b shows published tuition and fee charges for undergraduate students has increased 7.3 percent for public two-year tuition; 6.5 percent for public four-year in-state tuition; 6.2 percent for public four-year out-of-state tuition; and 4.4 percent for private not-for-profit tuition. Figure 8.2c shows the annual percentage increase in inflation-adjusted tuition and fees by decade. It is difficult to understand changes in tuition and fees by state without understanding how much states currently charge for tuition.

When the data are disaggregated by state, in-state published tuition prices at public two-year institutions range from \$809 in California to \$6,010 in Vermont. Figure 8.2d shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the lowest in-state published tuition prices at public two-year institutions are California, New Mexico, North Carolina, Texas, and Mississippi. The states with the highest percent in-state published tuition prices at public two-year institutions are Vermont, New Hampshire, Minnesota, Massachusetts and South Dakota.

When the data are disaggregated by state, in-state published tuition prices at public four-year institutions range from \$3,649 in Wyoming to \$11,883 in Vermont. Figure 8.2e shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the lowest in-state published tuition prices at public four-year institutions are Wyoming, District of Columbia, Louisiana, Florida, and North Carolina. The states with the highest percent in-state published tuition prices at public four-year institutions are Vermont, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Illinois.

When the data are disaggregated by state, in-state published tuition prices at private four-year institutions range from \$5,571 in Utah to \$33,427 in Massachusetts. Figure 8.2f shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the lowest in-state published tuition prices at private four-year institutions are Utah, Idaho, Hawaii, Delaware, and Mississippi. The states with the highest percent in-state published tuition prices at private four-year institutions are Massachusetts, Connecticut, California, District of Columbia and Maryland.

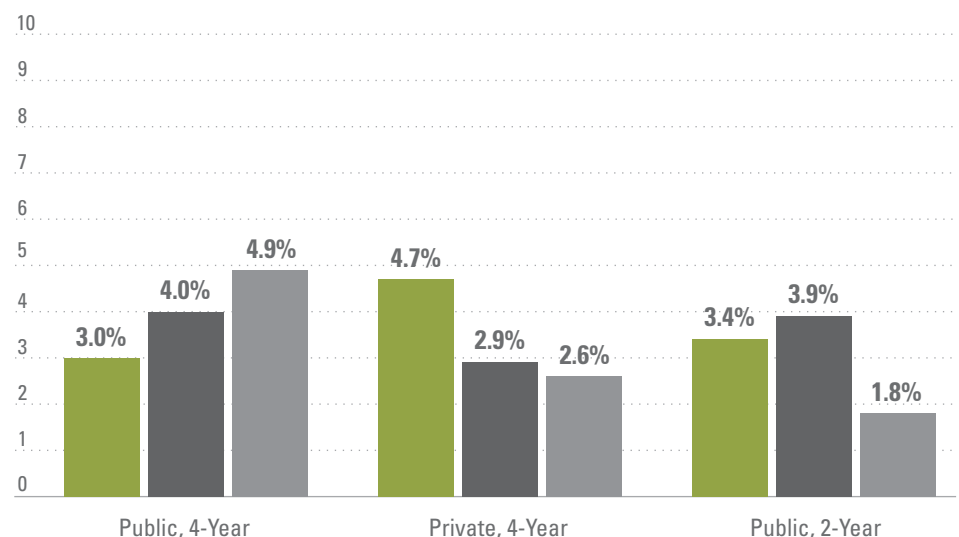
When the data are disaggregated by state, the change in in-state published tuition prices at public two-year institutions range from -0.8 percent in Alabama to 27.6 percent in California. Figure 8.2g shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the lowest percentage change in in-state published tuition prices at public two-year institutions are Alabama, Missouri, Oklahoma, Ohio and Montana. The states with the highest percentage change in in-state published tuition prices at public two-year institutions are California, Georgia, Alaska, North Carolina and Hawaii.

8.2c

Average Annual Percentage Increase in Inflation-Adjusted Published Prices by Decade, 1979–1980 to 2009–2010

■ 1980
■ 1990
■ 2000

Source: The College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2009



When the data are disaggregated by state, the change in in-state published tuition prices at public four-year institutions range from -1.0 percent in Mississippi to 16.2 percent in Arizona. Figure 8.2h shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the lowest percentage change in in-state published tuition prices at public four-year institutions are Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, Ohio and Maryland. The states with the highest percentage change in in-state published tuition prices at public four-year institutions are Arizona, Florida, Hawaii, New York and Washington.

When the data are disaggregated by state, the change in in-state published tuition prices at private four-year institutions range from a -1.0 percent in Nevada to 6.8 percent in Alaska. Figure 8.2i shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the lowest percentage change in in-state published tuition at private four-year institutions are Nevada, West Virginia, Mississippi, Missouri and Arizona. The states with the highest percentage change in in-state published tuition at private four-year institutions are Alaska, Arkansas, Hawaii, Alabama and Oklahoma.

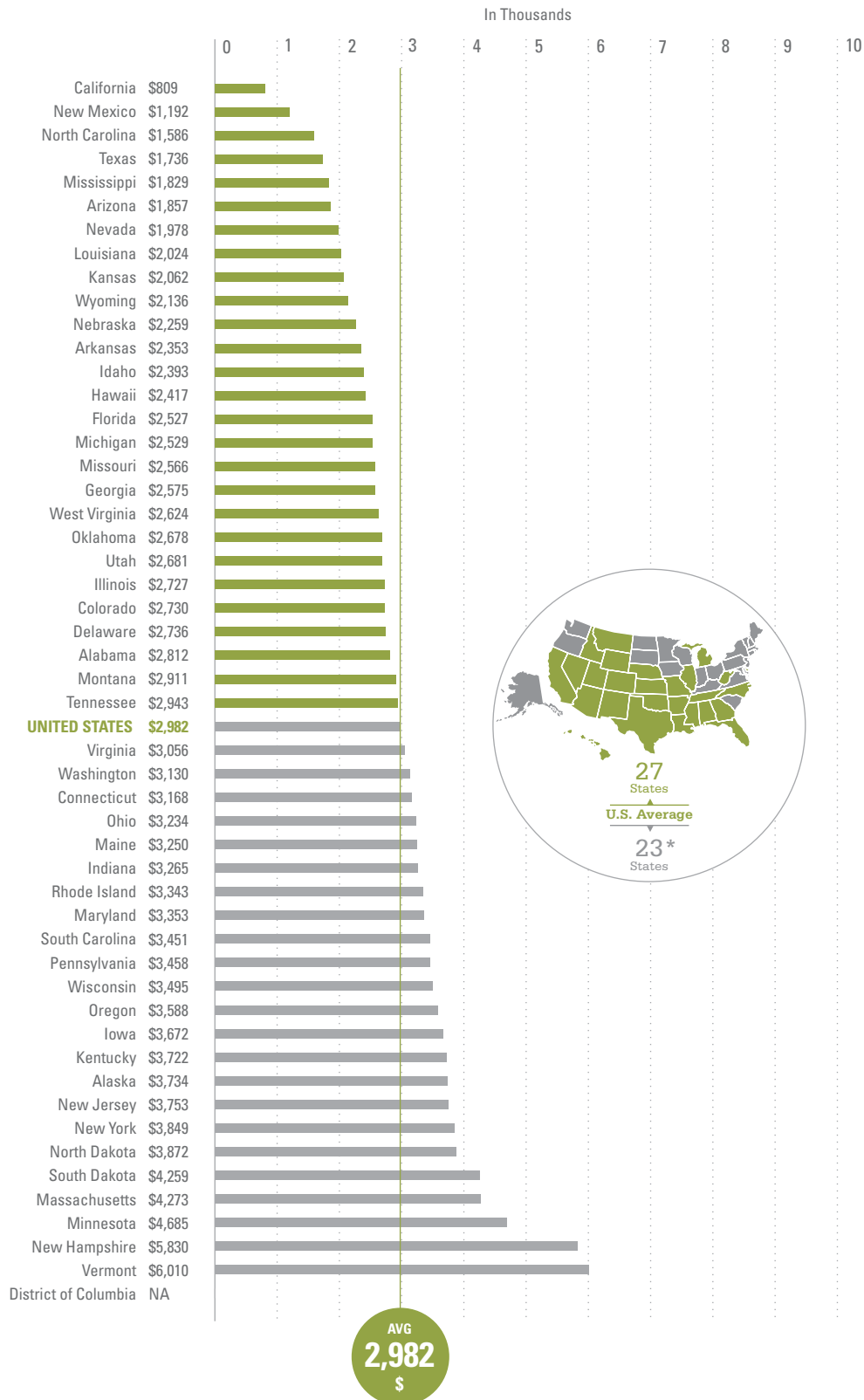
When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? Focusing on published prices without also considering student aid and net prices can give an exaggerated picture of the financial hurdles facing students. Moreover, there is considerable variation in the prices charged by colleges and universities in the United States. Typically, two-year public colleges charge less than four-year public institutions, which have lower prices than for-profit institutions, and the highest published prices are in the private not-for-profit sector. However, there are also sizable differences within these sectors, particularly by state or region and among doctoral universities, master's universities, and baccalaureate colleges. Increasingly, there are also multiple tuition levels within institutions, depending on program and/or year of study.

One-year changes are of immediate interest, but it is really the long-run path of college prices that determines the charges facing students. The 4.9 percent annual rate of increase in inflation-adjusted tuition and fees at public four-year colleges and universities from 1999–2000 to 2009–2010 was more rapid than the growth rates of the two previous decades. However, rates of tuition growth in the public two-year and private not-for-profit four-year sectors were lower than in the two preceding decades.

8.2d

In-State Tuition Prices at Public Two-Year Institutions by State Rank, 2010

Sources: The College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2009

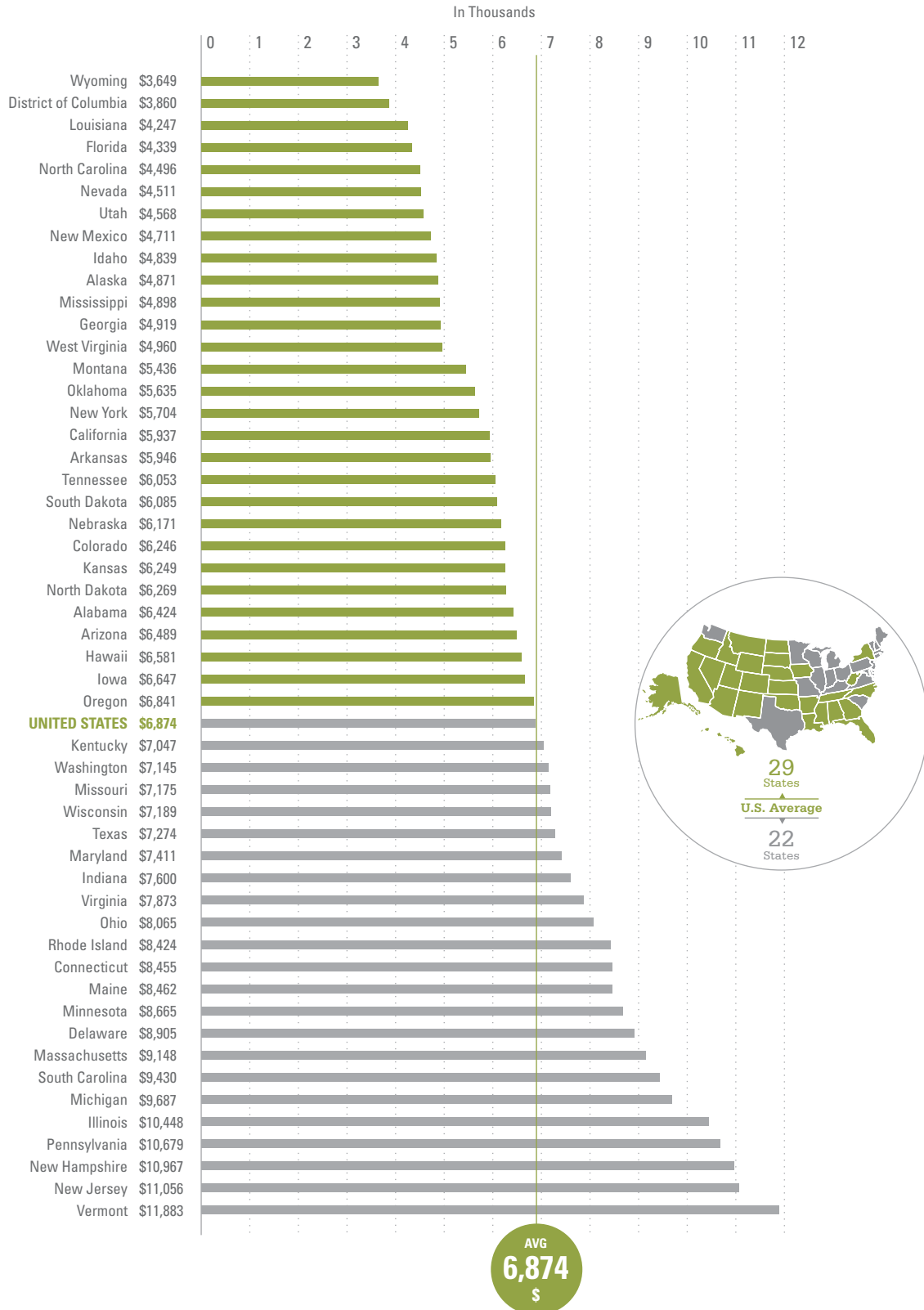


* Indicator data not available for all states.

8.2e

In-State Tuition Prices at Public Four-Year Institutions by State Rank, 2010

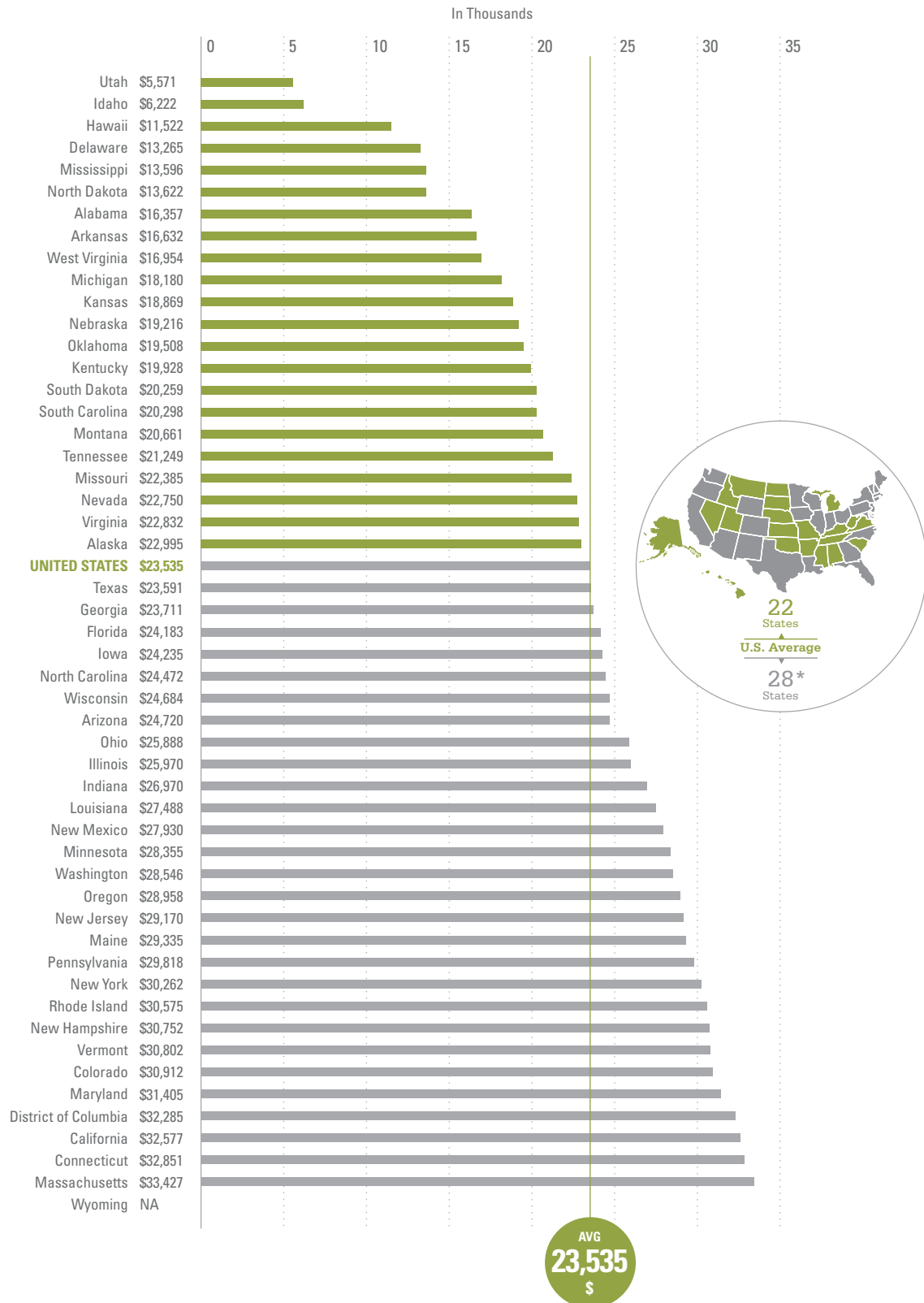
Sources: The College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2009



8.2f

In-State Tuition Prices at Private Four-Year Institutions by State Rank, 2010

Sources: The College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2009

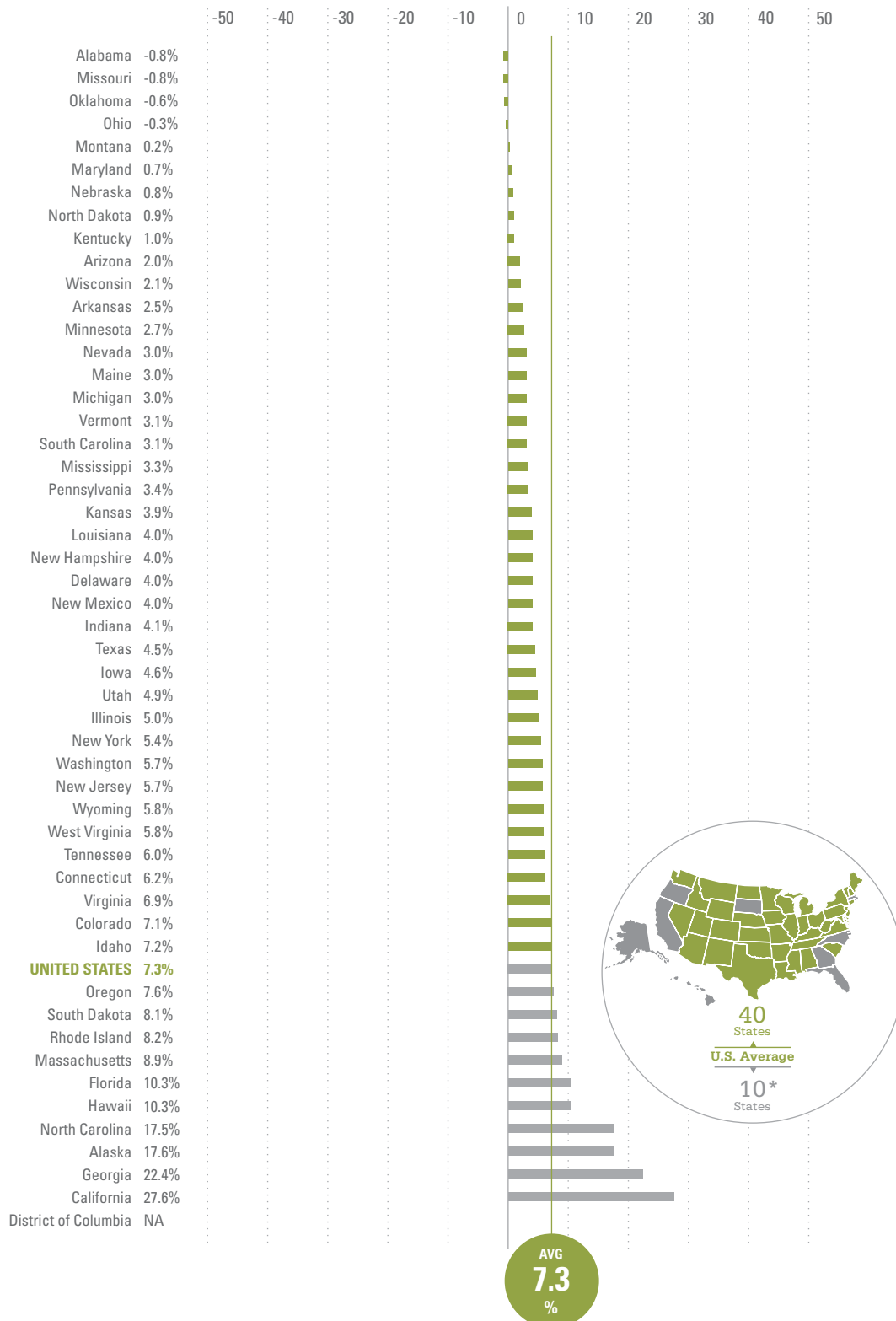


* Indicator data not available for all states.

8.2g

Percentage Change in In-State Published Tuition Prices at Public Two-Year Institutions by State Rank, 2008–2009 to 2009–2010

Sources: The College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2009

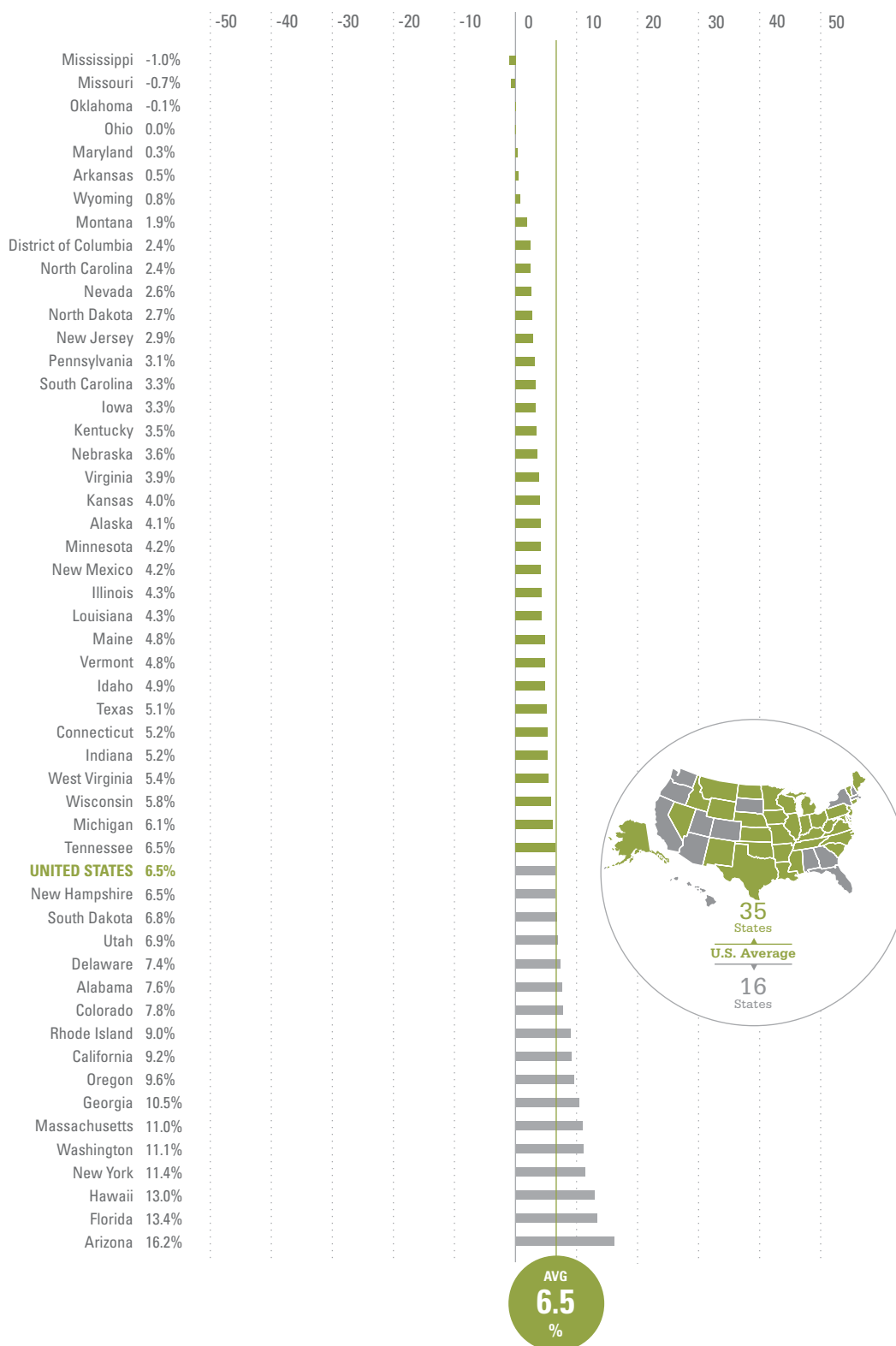


* Indicator data not available for all states.

8.2h

Percentage Change in Published In-State Tuition Prices at Public Four-Year Institutions by State Rank, 2008–2009 to 2009–2010

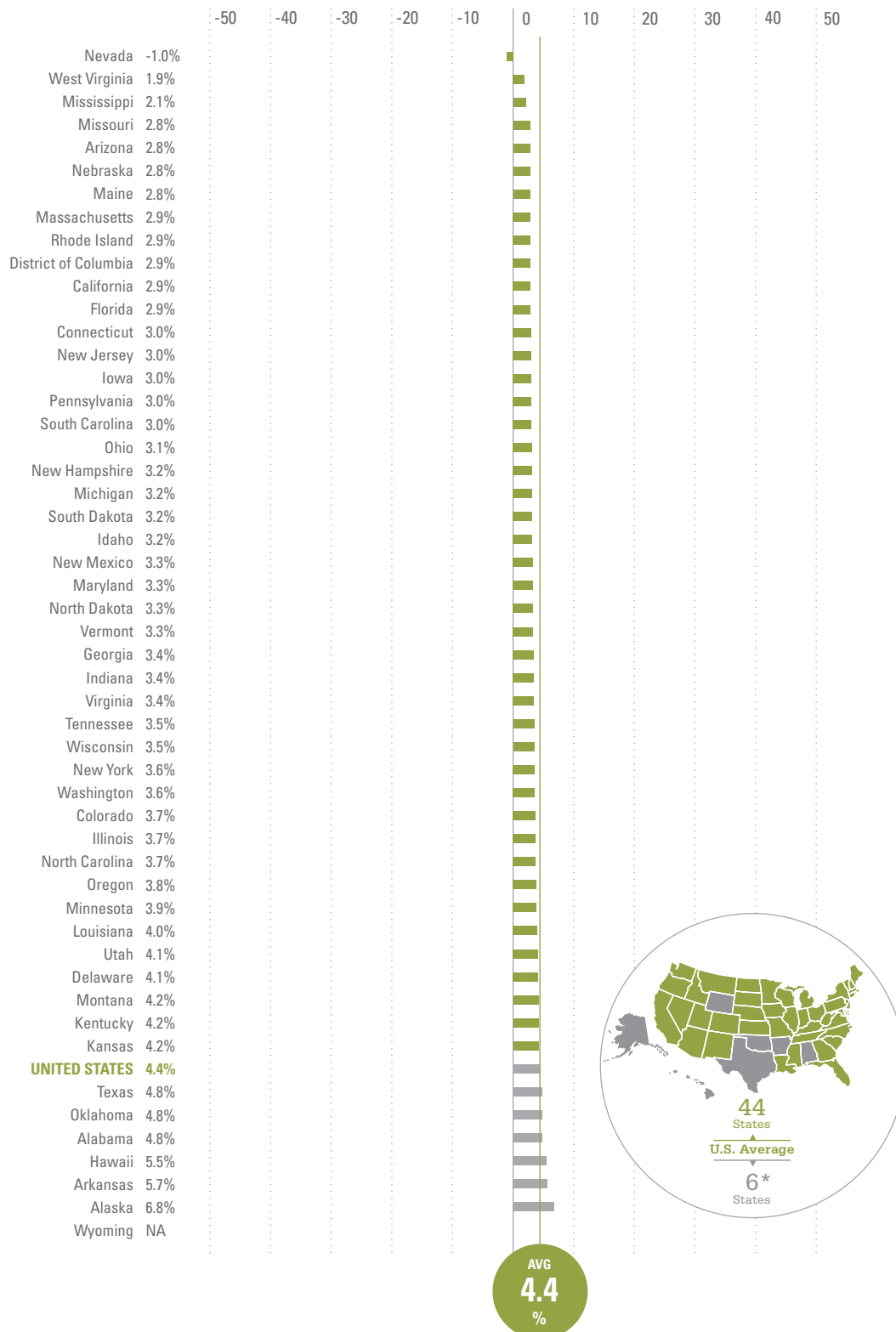
Sources: The College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2009



8.2i

Percentage Change in Published In-State Tuition Prices at Private Four-Year Institutions by State Rank, 2008–2009 to 2009–2010

Sources: The College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2009



* Indicator data not available for all states.

\$1,620

As of 2009–2010, at public four-year institutions, the net price students pay for tuition and fees is \$1,620 (after subtracting grants and federal tax benefits).

-\$460

As of 2009–2010, at public two-year institutions, the net price students pay for tuition and fees is -\$460 (after subtracting grants and federal tax benefits).

\$11,870

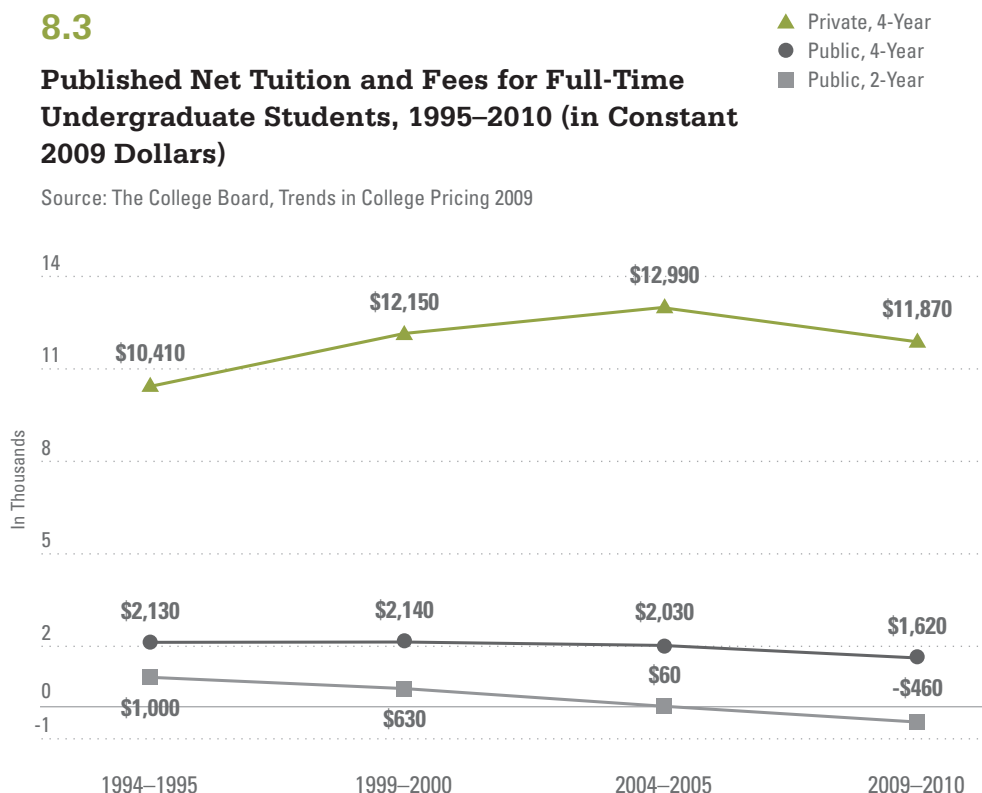
As of 2009–2010, at private four-year institutions, the net price students pay for tuition and fees is \$11,870 (after subtracting grants and federal tax benefits).

Net Price Students Pay for College

8.3

Published Net Tuition and Fees for Full-Time Undergraduate Students, 1995–2010 (in Constant 2009 Dollars)

Source: The College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2009



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator measures the average tuition and fees at institutions. This measure is important because increases in need-based grant aid frequently provide better-targeted improvements in college affordability than does across-the-board tuition restraint.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Net prices are the result of the interaction of tuition and fee levels, the other expenses students face, and student aid availability. Policymakers must focus on both published prices and financial aid to monitor growth in net prices.

Where are we now? In the United States today, the average net tuition and fees for full-time students is -\$460 at public two-year institutions, \$1,620 at public four-year institutions and \$11,870 at private four-year institutions — after adjusting for inflation. Figure 8.3 shows that the average net tuition and fees for full-time students has decreased from 2005–2010 at all institutional types.

-3.7%

The trend from 1998 to 2008 in inflation adjusted average family income is a decline of 3.7 percent.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

Average net prices within sectors provide a clear view of the contrast between published prices and the amount typical students actually pay. However, it is the distribution of net prices across income levels that provides the most insight into affordability.

On average, net tuition and fees have risen more slowly than published prices, and net tuition and fees have even declined from 2004–2005 to 2009–2010 after adjusting for inflation. However, average net tuition, fees, room and board at public four-year colleges increased 1.4 percent per year beyond the general rate of inflation over this five-year period.

Price increases have a much larger impact on low- and moderate-income students than on those with greater resources. In recent years, net prices have risen most rapidly at public four-year colleges for students from families in the upper half of the income distribution.

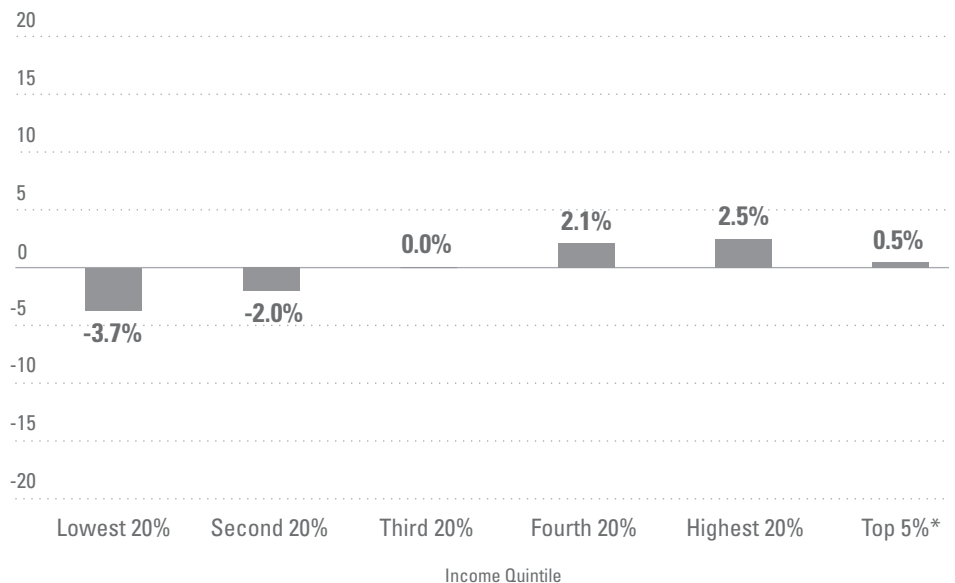
Changes in Family Income Levels

8.4

Growth in Mean Family Income by Quintile, 1998–2008 (in Constant 2008 Dollars)

Source: The College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2009; data from U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Table F-3.

*Note: Top 5% is a subset of the Highest 20%.



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator measures the percentage growth in mean family income by quintile in constant 2008 dollars. This measure is important because college affordability depends on family financial capacity and on the prices of other major goods and services. Much of the current difficulty families and students face in financing postsecondary education arises from widespread unemployment, increased income inequality and general economic weakness.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Income levels are not directly correlated to education policy, but changes in incomes must be kept in mind in evaluating reasonable education financing policies.

Where are we now? In the United States, growth in average family income for low-income families declined 3.7 percent from 1998 to 2008. Figure 8.4 shows that the percent growth in mean family income also declined for the second quintile by 2.0 percent, yet for middle-income families there was no growth. Income levels increased for the fourth 20 percent, highest 20 percent, and the top 5 percent (which is a subset of the top 20 percent).

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? The distribution of income and changes in that distribution over time highlight the extent to which college affordability problems are concentrated in certain segments of the population.

0.2%

Average earnings for full-time workers ages 25 to 29 increases by 0.2 percent for those with bachelor's degrees.

0.4%

Average earnings for full-time workers ages 25 to 29 increases by 0.4 percent for those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

-10.7%

Average earnings for full-time workers ages 25 to 29 declines by 10.7 percent for those with an associate degree.

Earnings of College Graduates

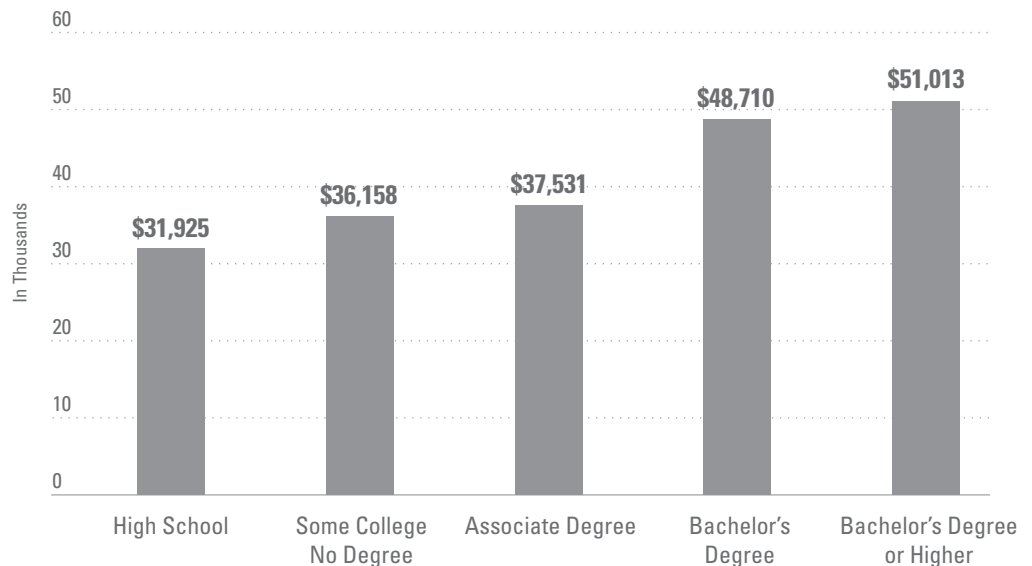
What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator measures the average earnings of full-time workers ages 25 to 29 in the United States. This measure is important because postsecondary education is an investment in the future that pays off in a variety of ways, including higher lifetime earnings. It is reasonable for students to borrow and repay their debts out of future earnings. The earnings premium for college education determines how feasible it is to repay these debts.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? The earnings of recent college graduates determine the ease with which they can repay their student debt. Slow growth and instability in these earnings levels make the need for income-based repayment and other protections for borrowers in repayment more urgent.

8.5a

Average Earnings of Full-Time Workers Ages 25–29, 2008

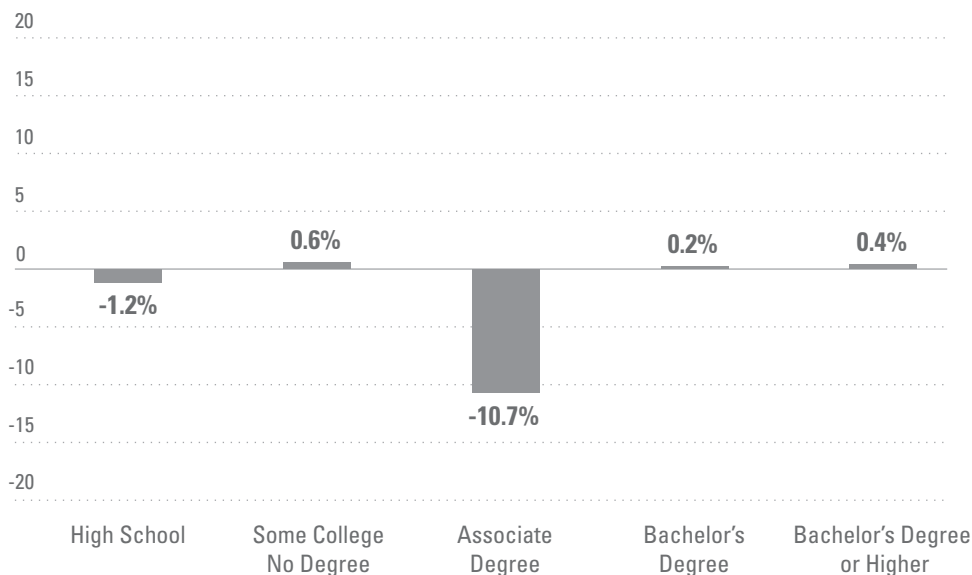
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2009



8.5b

Change in Average Earnings of Full-Time Workers Ages 25–29, 2007 to 2008

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2009



Where are we now? In 2008, the inflation adjusted average earnings for full-time workers ages 25 to 29 in the United States was \$31,925 for high school graduates compared with \$48,710 for those with a bachelor's degree. Figure 8.5b shows the average earnings for full-time workers ages 25 to 29 from 2007 to 2008 declined by 10.7 percent for those workers with an associate degree, yet increased by 0.6 percent for workers with some college experience, 0.2 percent for those with bachelor's degrees, and 0.4 percent for those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? Earnings for 25- to 29-year-olds have not grown measurably in recent years — even without adjusting for inflation — for workers at any level of educational attainment. Those with no college education and those with associate degrees have seen the largest declines. The gap in mean earnings between those who have earned bachelor's degrees and those with no college experience was \$16,785 in 2008.

Nine

Dramatically increase
college completion rates

WE RECOMMEND that institutions of higher education set out to dramatically increase college completion rates by improving retention, easing transfer among institutions and implementing data-based strategies to identify retention and dropout challenges.

Increasing college graduation rates is very important to ensuring that the nation reach 55 percent of 25- to 34-year-olds with an associate degree or higher. The commission noted that it is imperative that institutions have the determination to understand why some students do not graduate, with the hope of developing and implementing interventions that will enhance graduation rates across all student groups.

Increasing college completion rates is all the more challenging in light of the projected demographic changes in the coming years.⁴⁹ These projections indicate that the greatest growth in high school graduates will be among groups who historically have not had as much access to or success in higher education. The commission's goal cannot be met without a substantial commitment by states and institutions to eliminate racial and ethnic gaps in degree completion. The impact of the changing population will not be felt equally across states, and the subsequent implications for policymakers and educators vary by state as well.^{50, 51}

Since the commission released its initial recommendation in 2008, there has been a renewed national interest concerning college students who fail to earn a degree; however, there has been little progress in actually tracking those students who graduate and those who do not.

In understanding the degree to which the nation is successfully increasing completion rates, three indicators may prove fruitful to policymakers and educators:

- Freshman-to-sophomore retention;
- Three-year graduation rates of associate degree-seeking students; and
- Six-year graduation rates of bachelor's degree-seeking students.

General Findings for This Recommendation

- As of 2007, 78.0 percent of full-time students across the nation who enter a public four-year institution with the intent to earn a degree are retained from freshman to sophomore year.
- As of 2007, 59.0 percent of full-time students across the nation who enter a public two-year institution with the intent to earn a degree are retained from freshman to sophomore year.
- As of 2007, 27.8 percent of students across the nation who enter an institution with the intent of earning an associate degree persist to graduation in three years or less.

49. See *Knocking at the College Door* (2008), Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education for more details.

50. *Hitting Home: Quality, Cost, and Access Challenges Confronting Higher Education Today* (2007), Produced by Jobs for the Future (Travis Reindl) for Making Opportunity Affordable.

51. *Adding It Up: State Challenges for Increasing College Access and Success* (2007). Produced by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems and Jobs for the Future for Making Opportunity Affordable.

78.0%

As of 2007, 78.0 percent of full-time students across the nation who enter a public, four-year institution with the intent to earn a degree are retained from freshman to sophomore year.

59.0%

As of 2007, 59.0 percent of full-time students across the nation who enter a public, two-year institution with the intent to earn a degree are retained from freshman to sophomore year.

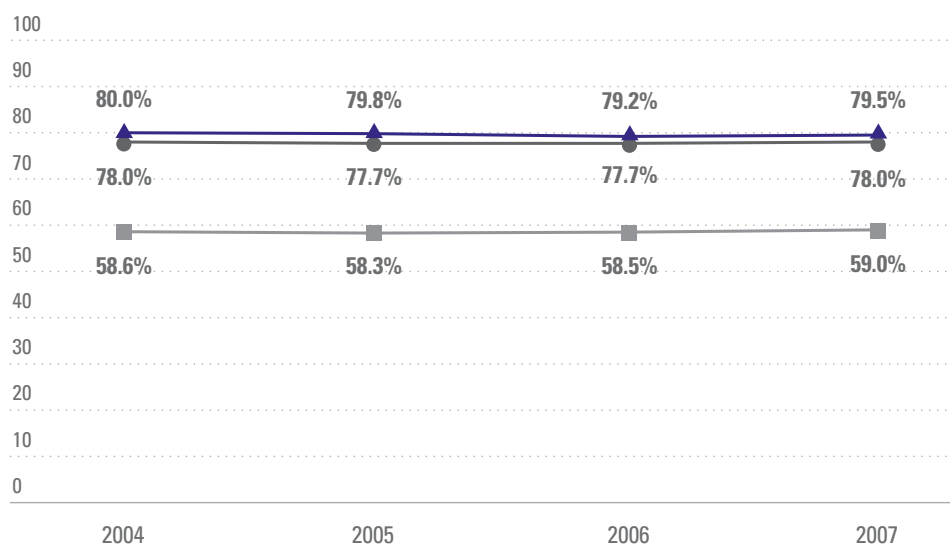
- As of 2007, 56.1 percent of students across the nation who enter an institution with the intent of earning a bachelor's degree persist to graduation in six years or less.

Freshman-to-Sophomore Retention Rate

9.1a

National Full-Time Freshman-to-Sophomore Retention Rates, 2004–2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator measures the retention rates from freshman to sophomore year at public and private two- and four-year institutions in the United States. This measure is important in ensuring that students are on track to completing an associate or bachelor's degree in a timely manner (three years for associate degree-seeking students and six years for bachelor's degree-seeking students).

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? This measure reflects how students within states are retained from freshman to sophomore year at two- and four-year institutions. Freshman-to-sophomore year retention rates are an important indicator in the pipeline for students desiring to obtain an associate or bachelor's degree. Graduation rates are closely associated with first-year retention rates because many students abandon their pursuit of a

79.5%

As of 2006,
79.5 percent of full-time students across the nation who enter a private, four-year institution with the intent to earn a degree are retained from freshman to sophomore year.

degree during their first year. Though there are several factors that may lead students to drop out (e.g., financial aid, preparation, adjustment to college, socioeconomic background, ethnicity, etc.), students who end their pursuit of a degree in the first year will be less likely to graduate in a timely manner.⁵²

Where are we now? In the United States, 78.0 percent of full-time students across the nation who enter a public four-year institution with the intent to earn a degree are retained from freshman to sophomore year. Similarly, 59.0 percent of full-time students across the nation who enter a public two-year institution with the intent to earn a degree are retained from freshman to sophomore year. Figure 9.1a shows that the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate remained relatively stable for public two-year, public four-year, and private four-year institutions.

When the data are disaggregated by the full-time freshman-to-sophomore retention rate at public two-year institutions, the percentages range from 42.8 percent in Montana to 68.9 percent in North Dakota. Figure 9.1b shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the highest retention rate are North Dakota, California, South Dakota, Florida and Nevada. The states with the lowest retention rate are Montana, Alaska, Indiana, Vermont, Oklahoma and Louisiana.

When the data are disaggregated by the full-time freshman-to-sophomore retention rate at public four-year institutions, the percentages range from 66.2 percent in Idaho to 85.8 percent in Virginia. Figure 9.1c shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the highest retention rate are Virginia, Delaware, California, New Jersey and New Hampshire. The states with the lowest retention rate are Idaho, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Alaska and South Dakota.

When the data are disaggregated by the full-time freshman-to-sophomore retention rate at private four-year institutions, the percentages range from 55.0 percent in Delaware to 85.7 percent in Massachusetts. Figure 9.1d shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the highest retention rate are Massachusetts, California, Washington, Maryland and Minnesota. The states with the lowest retention rate are Delaware, New Mexico, Michigan, Montana and Kansas.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

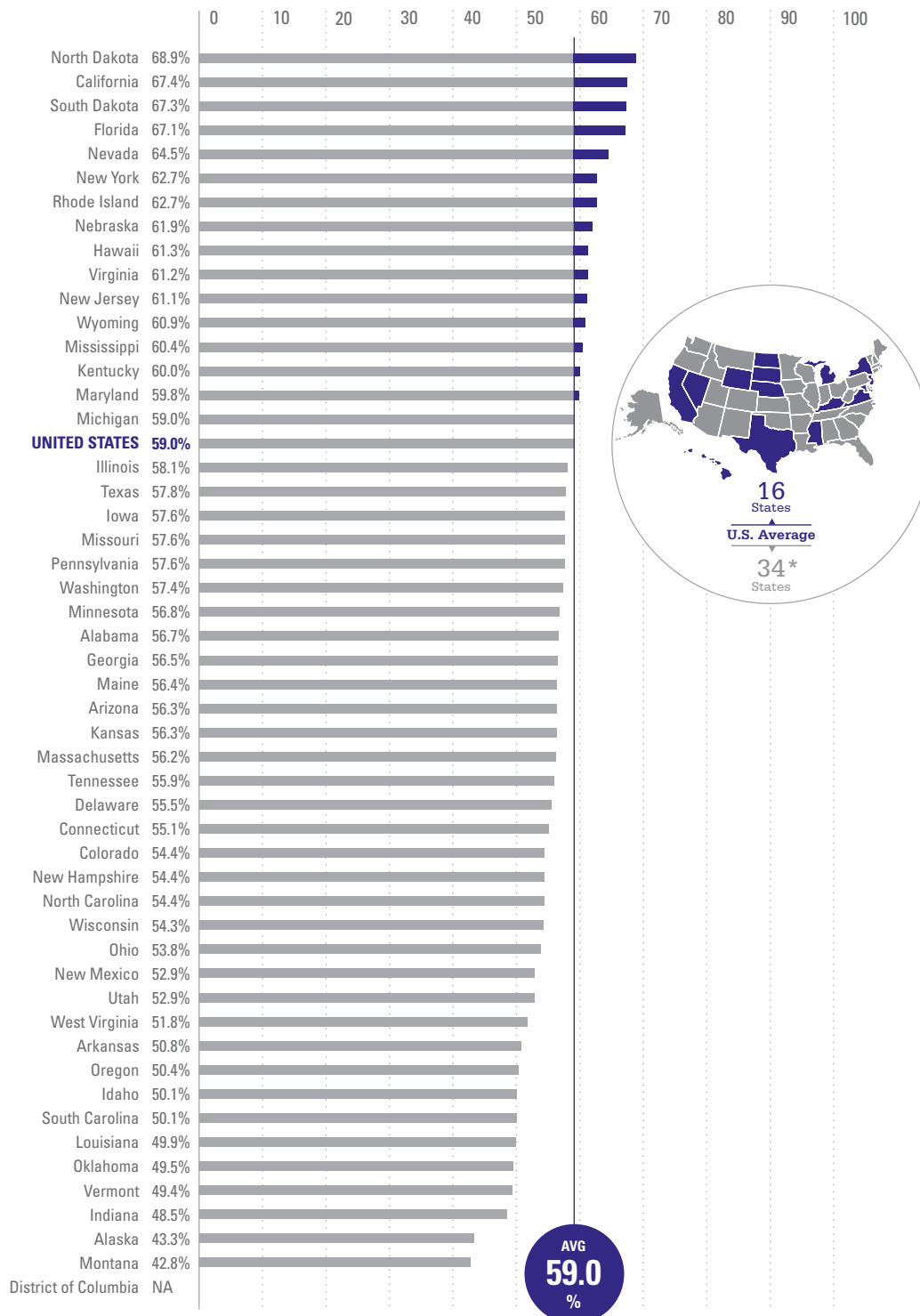
Freshman-to-sophomore year is merely an indicator to gauge how well institutions are retaining students after the first year; it will not fully determine the graduation rates of students who are seeking associate or bachelor's degrees. Students who work while in school, attend school irregularly, and/or have problems financing school will also fall behind in both retention and graduation indicators. Students who transfer are included in these numbers, making retention rates seem lower at schools with high transfer rates.

52. Terezini, P. T., Springer, L., Yaeger, P. M., Pascarella, E. T. and Nora, A. (1996). First-generation college students: Characteristics, experiences and cognitive development. *Research in Higher Education*, 37(1), 1-22.

9.1b

Full-Time Freshman-to-Sophomore Retention Rates at Public Two-Year Institutions by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009

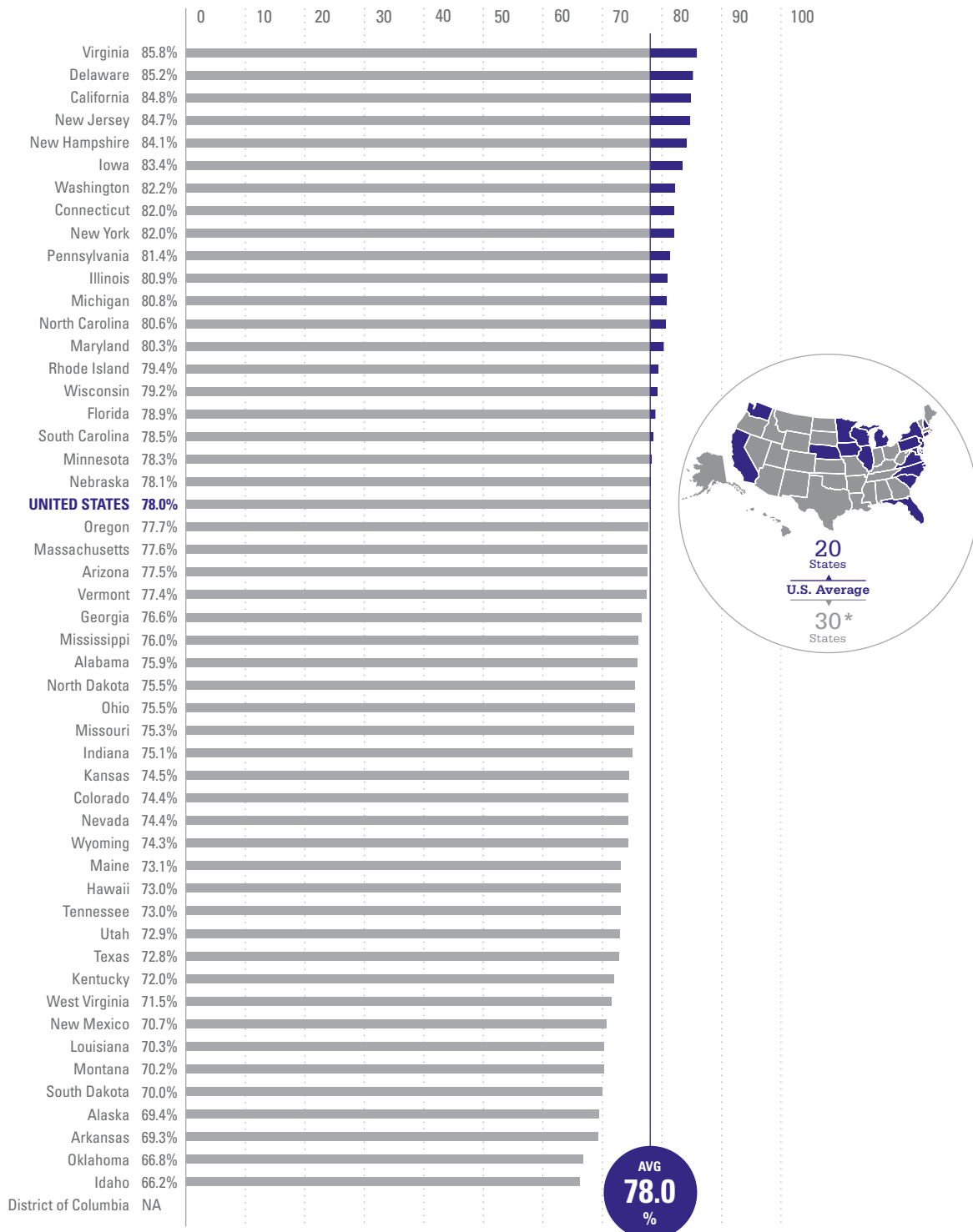


* Indicator data not available for all states.

9.1c

Full-Time Freshman-to-Sophomore Retention Rates at Public Four-Year Institutions by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009

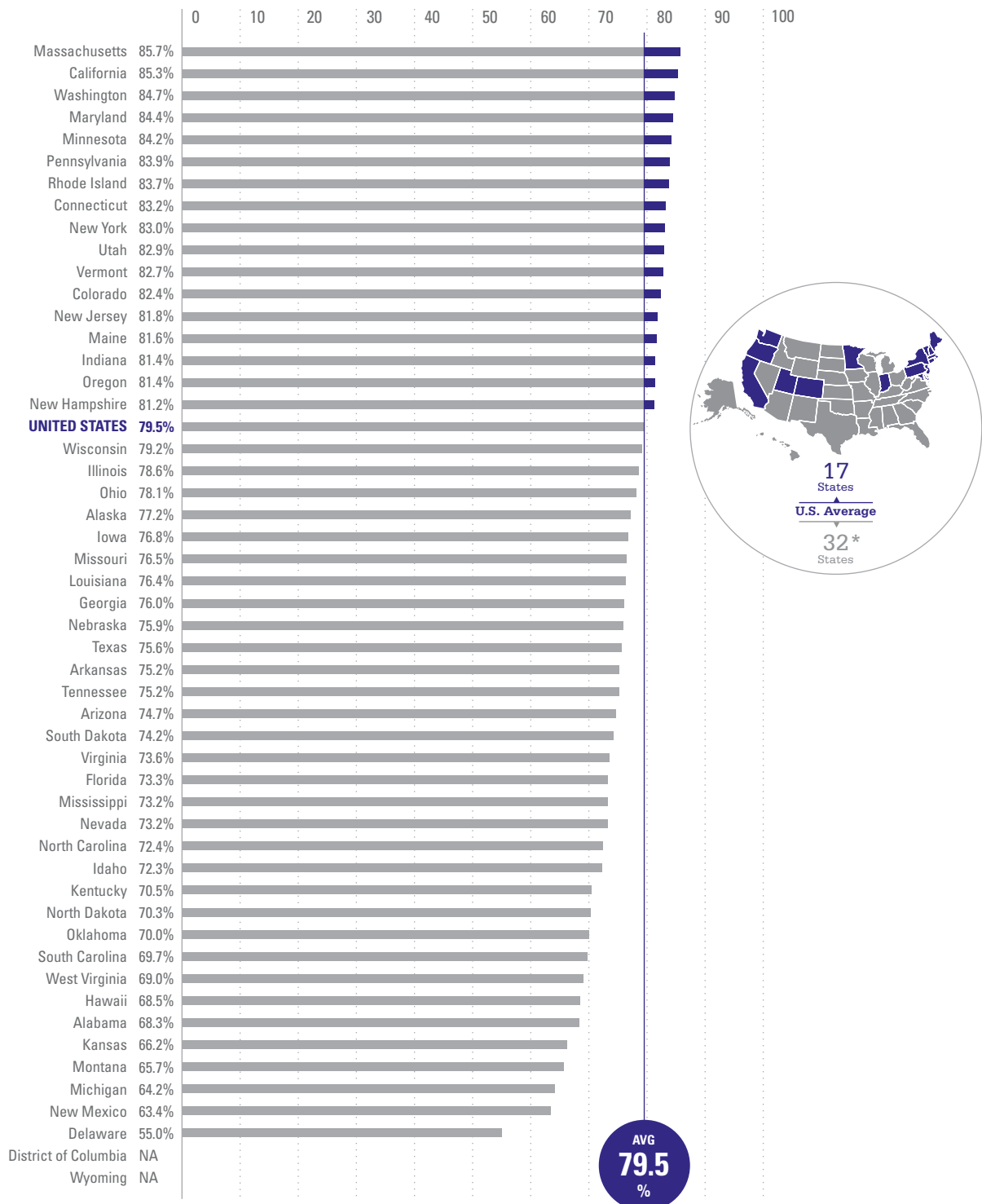


* Indicator data not available for all states.

9.1d

Full-Time Freshman-to-Sophomore Retention Rates at Private Four-Year Institutions by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009



* Indicator data not available for all states.

27.8%

As of 2007,
27.8 percent of
students across the
nation who enter
an institution with
the intent of earning
an associate degree
persist to graduation
in three years or less.

21.2%

As of 2007,
21.2 percent of
associate degree-
seeking American
Indian students
persist to graduation.

26.4%

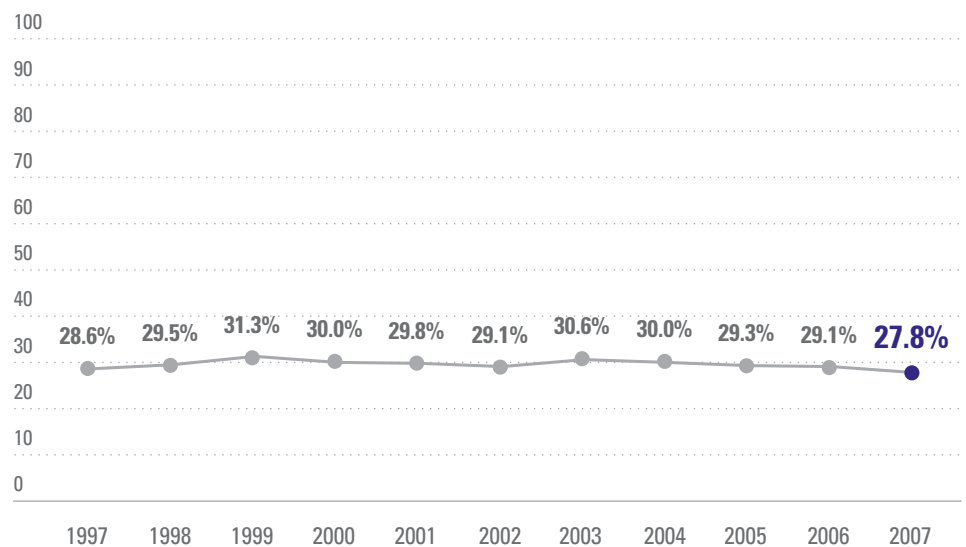
As of 2007,
26.4 percent of
associate degree-
seeking African
American students
persist to graduation.

Three-Year Graduation Rates of Associate Degree-Seeking Students

9.2a

National Three-Year Graduation Rates of Associate Degree-Seeking Students, Fall 1997–2007

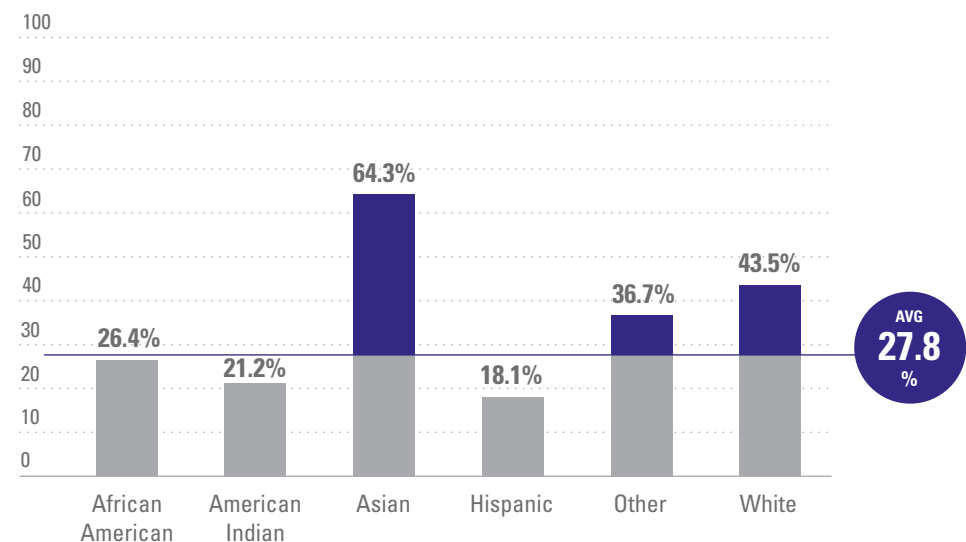
Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009



9.2b

National Three-Year Graduation Rates of Associate Degree-Seeking Students by Race/Ethnicity, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009



18.1%

As of 2007, 18.1 percent of associate degree-seeking Hispanic students persist to graduation.

What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measure builds upon the retention indicator to provide a more complete picture of the educational progress of American college students. It represents the proportion of entering first-year, associate degree-seeking students who graduate within 150 percent of normal program length (i.e., three years).

The measure is central to the commission's goal and important because of the role that two-year degree programs play in the American educational landscape. This role may become increasingly important due to the changing demographics described in the introduction to this section and the economic challenges faced by a growing number of Americans.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? This measure reflects how well students within states are persisting to an associate degree and is, in part, a measure of the timeliness with which students complete college. States benefit in two important ways from high graduation rates at two-year institutions. First, it leads to higher associate degree production and a better-educated citizenry. Second, it signals that the postsecondary pipeline is functioning better — that students are moving through the pipeline. If a greater proportion of students complete their degree, it allows more room for others to enter.

Where are we now? In the United States, 27.8 percent of students across the nation who enter an institution with the intent of earning an associate degree persist to graduation in three years or less. Figure 9.2a shows the national three-year graduation rate has remained relatively stable from 1997 to 2007, yet the rate seems to have declined since 2003. Figure 9.2b shows there are vast differences in three-year graduation rates by race/ethnicity. While Asians and whites have the highest graduation rate at 64.3 percent and 43.5 percent respectively, the graduation rates for American Indian, African American and Hispanic students are 21.2 percent, 26.4 percent and 18.1 percent, respectively.

When the data are disaggregated by the three-year graduation rate of associate degree-seeking students, the percentages range from 10.8 percent in Delaware to 70.6 percent in South Dakota. Figure 9.2c shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the highest three-year graduation rate are South Dakota, Wyoming, Arizona, Nevada and Florida. The states with the lowest three year graduation rate are Delaware, South Carolina, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Hawaii.

When the data are disaggregated by the three-year graduation rate of associate degree-seeking students by Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander students, the percentages range from 36.2 percent in Alaska to 77.7 percent in New Jersey. Figure 9.2d shows that when states are placed in rank order for Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander students, states with the highest graduation rate are New Jersey, North Dakota, Michigan, Illinois and Connecticut. The states with the lowest graduation rate are Alaska, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah and Arkansas.

When the data are disaggregated by the three-year graduation rate of associate degree-seeking students by American Indian or Alaska Native students, the percentages range from 10.7 percent in Alaska to 44.0 percent in Maryland. Figure 9.2e shows that when states are placed in rank order for Native American and Alaska Native students, states with the highest graduation rate are Maryland, New Hampshire, West Virginia, Illinois and Massachusetts. The states with the lowest graduation rate are Alaska, Maine, Louisiana, Arizona and Ohio.

When the data are disaggregated by the three-year graduation rate of associate degree-seeking students by African American students, the percentages range from 16.8 percent in Louisiana to 62.4 percent in North Dakota. Figure 9.2f shows that when states are placed in rank order for African American students, states with the highest graduation rate are North Dakota, New Mexico, New Hampshire, Arizona and Utah. The states with the lowest graduation rate are Louisiana, Wisconsin, South Dakota, Nevada and Arkansas.

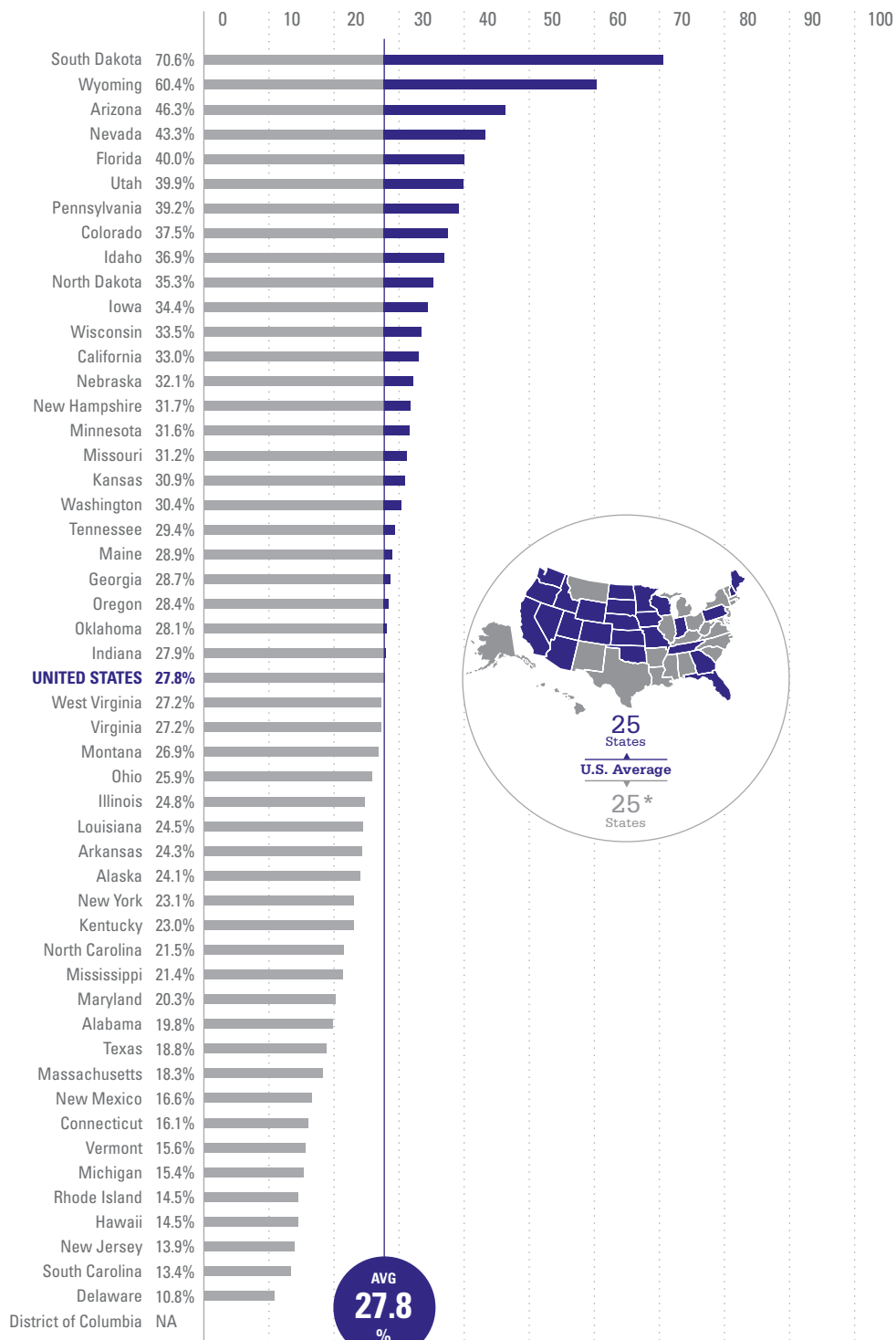
When the data are disaggregated by the three-year graduation rate of associate degree-seeking students by Hispanic students, the percentages range from 10.0 percent in Arkansas to 41.7 percent in Vermont. Figure 9.2g shows that when states are placed in rank order for Hispanic students, states with the highest graduation rate are Vermont, North Dakota, Florida, New Hampshire and Montana. The states with the lowest graduation rate are Arkansas, Nevada, Oklahoma, Idaho and Nebraska.

When the data are disaggregated by the three-year graduation rate of associate degree-seeking students by white students, the percentages range from 27.5 percent in West Virginia to 54.7 percent in Massachusetts. Figure 9.2h shows that when states are placed in rank order for white students, states with the highest graduation rate are Massachusetts, New York, Colorado, Connecticut and New Jersey. The states with the lowest graduation rate are West Virginia, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana and Tennessee.

9.2c

Three-Year Graduation Rates of Associate Degree–Seeking Students by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009

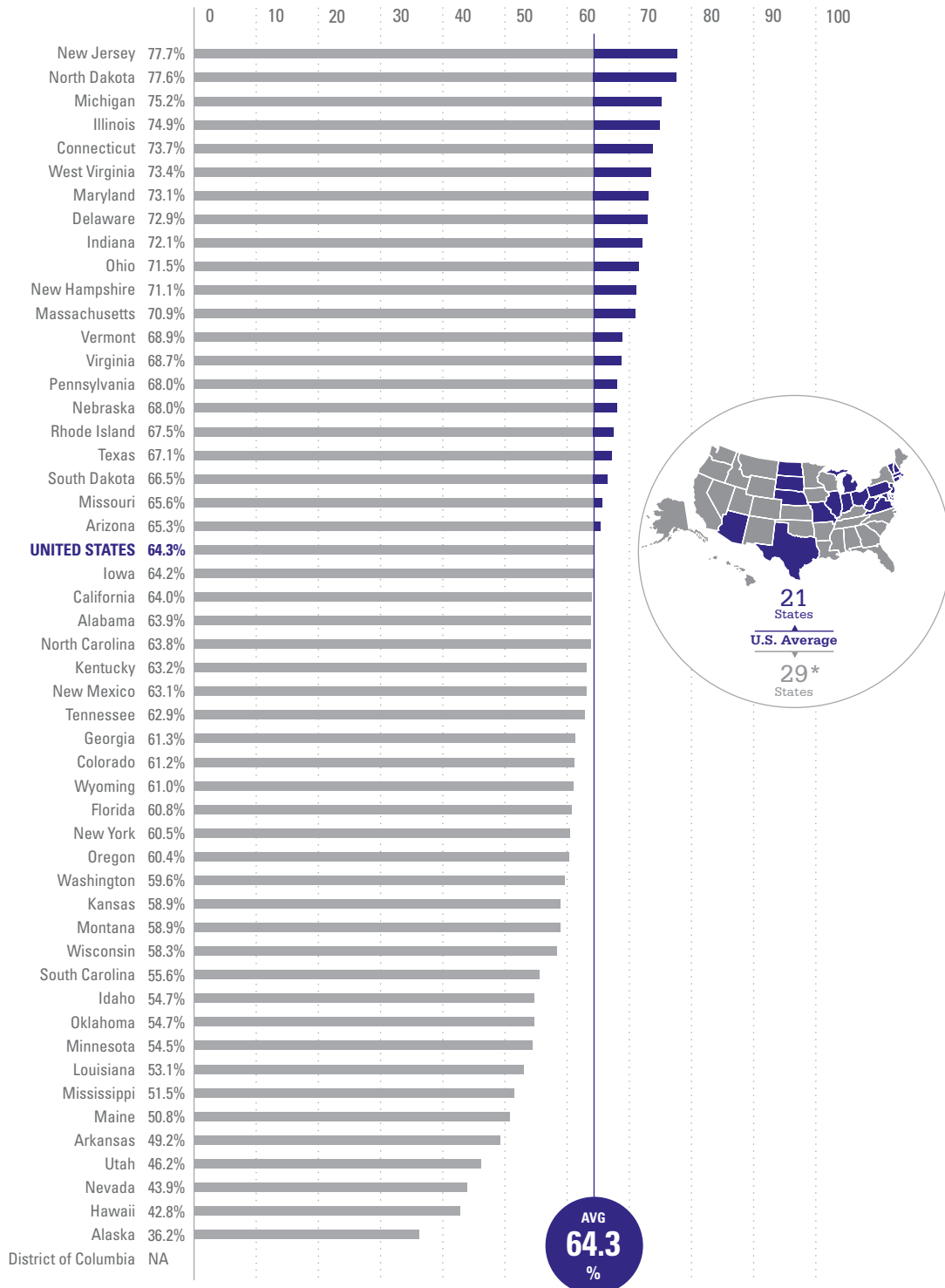


* Indicator data not available for all states.

9.2d

Three-Year Graduation Rates for Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Associate Degree–Seeking Students by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009

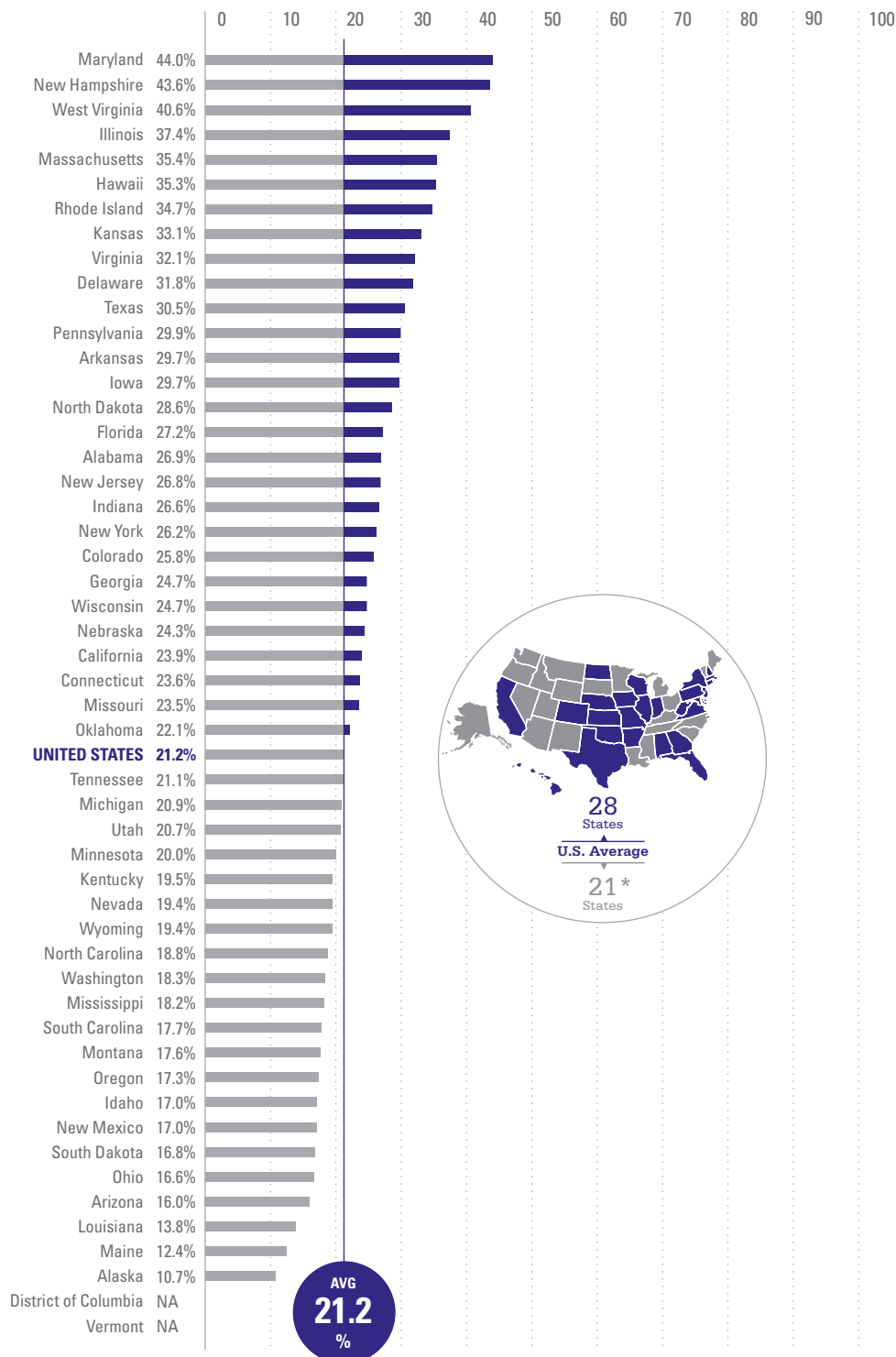


* Indicator data not available for all states.

9.2e

Three-Year Graduation Rates for American Indian or Alaska Native Associate Degree–Seeking Students by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009

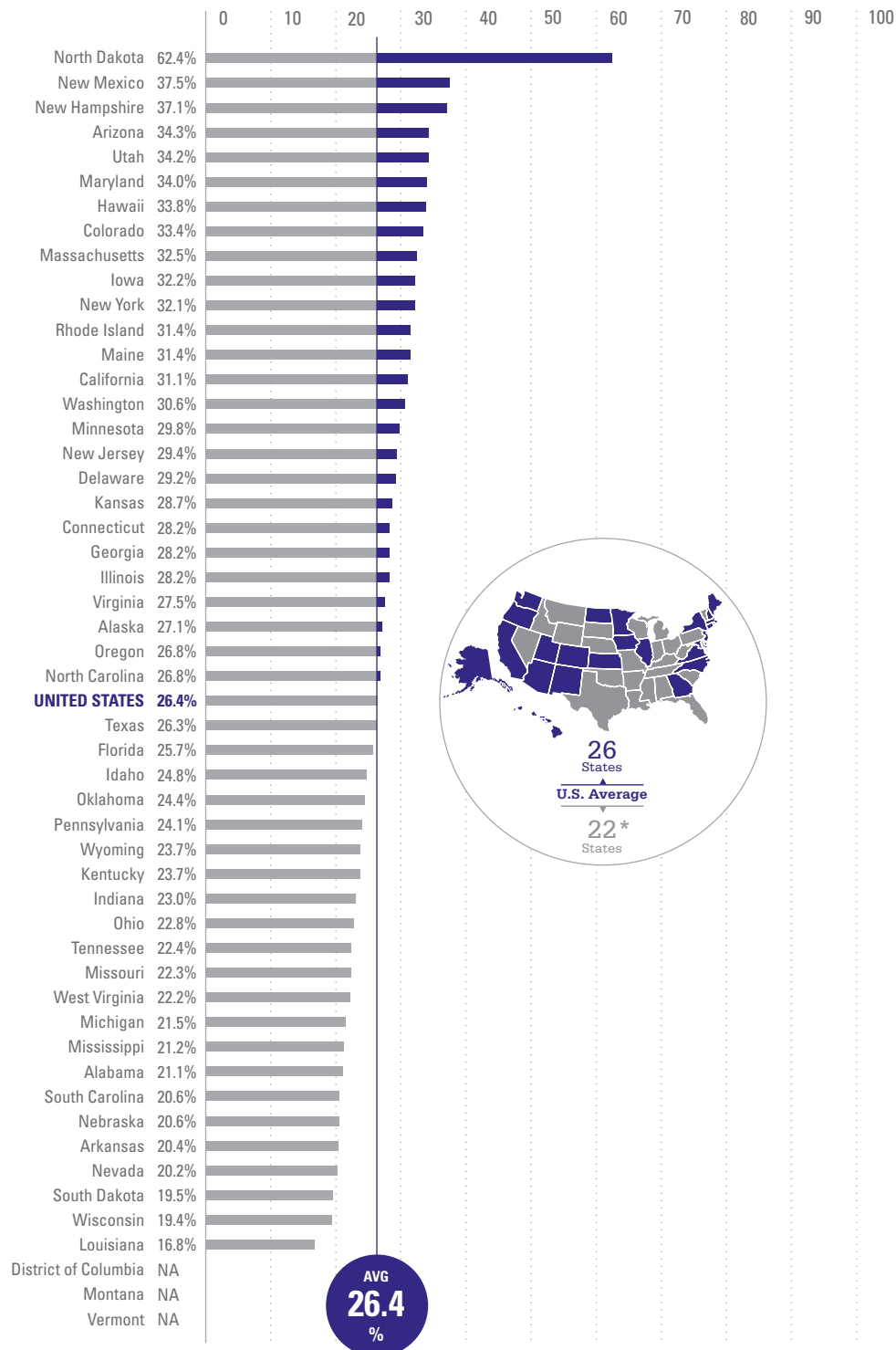


* Indicator data not available for all states.

9.2f

Three-Year Graduation Rates for African American Associate Degree–Seeking Students by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009

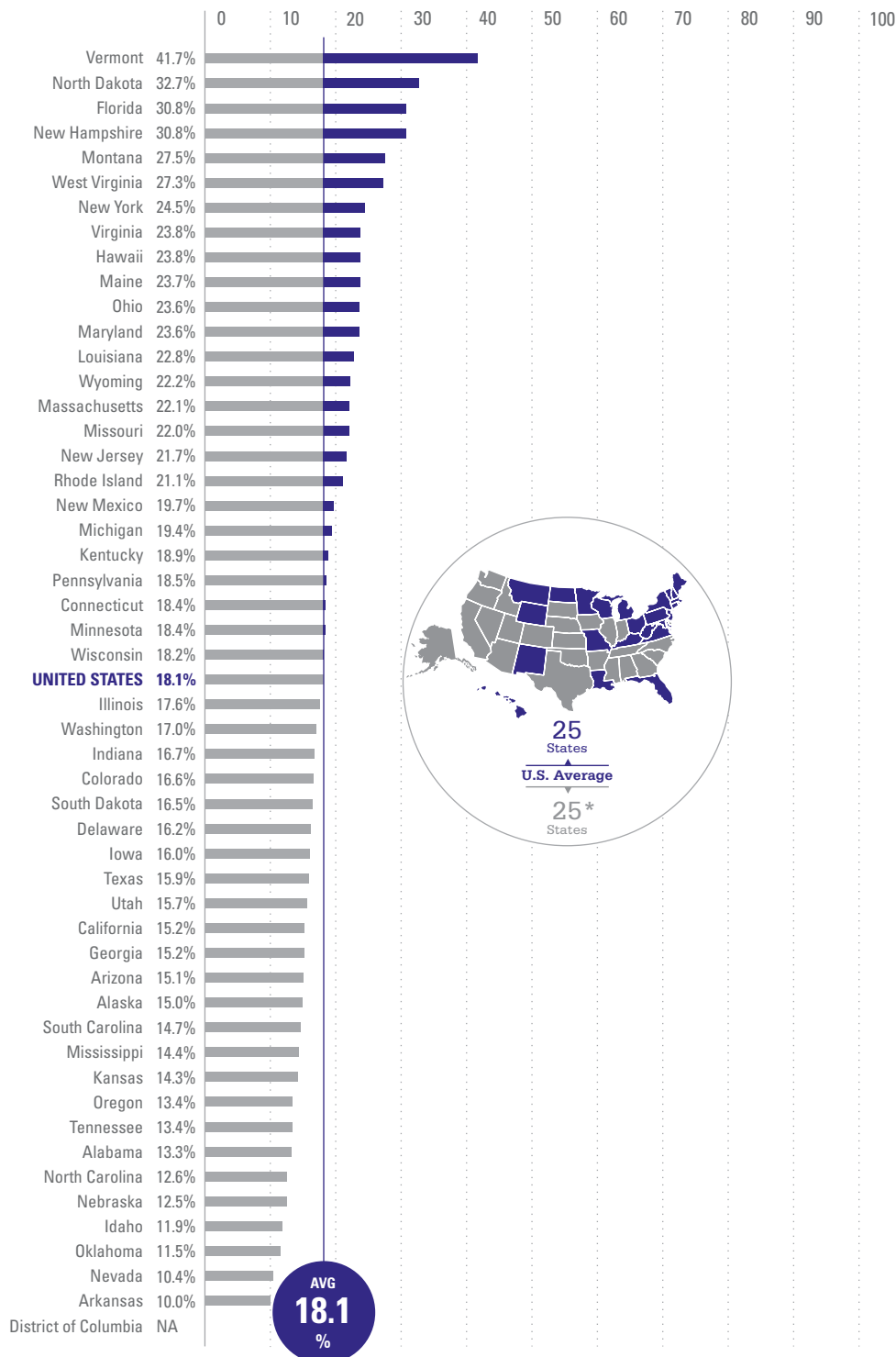


* Indicator data not available for all states.

9.2g

Three-Year Graduation Rates for Hispanic Associate Degree–Seeking Students by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009

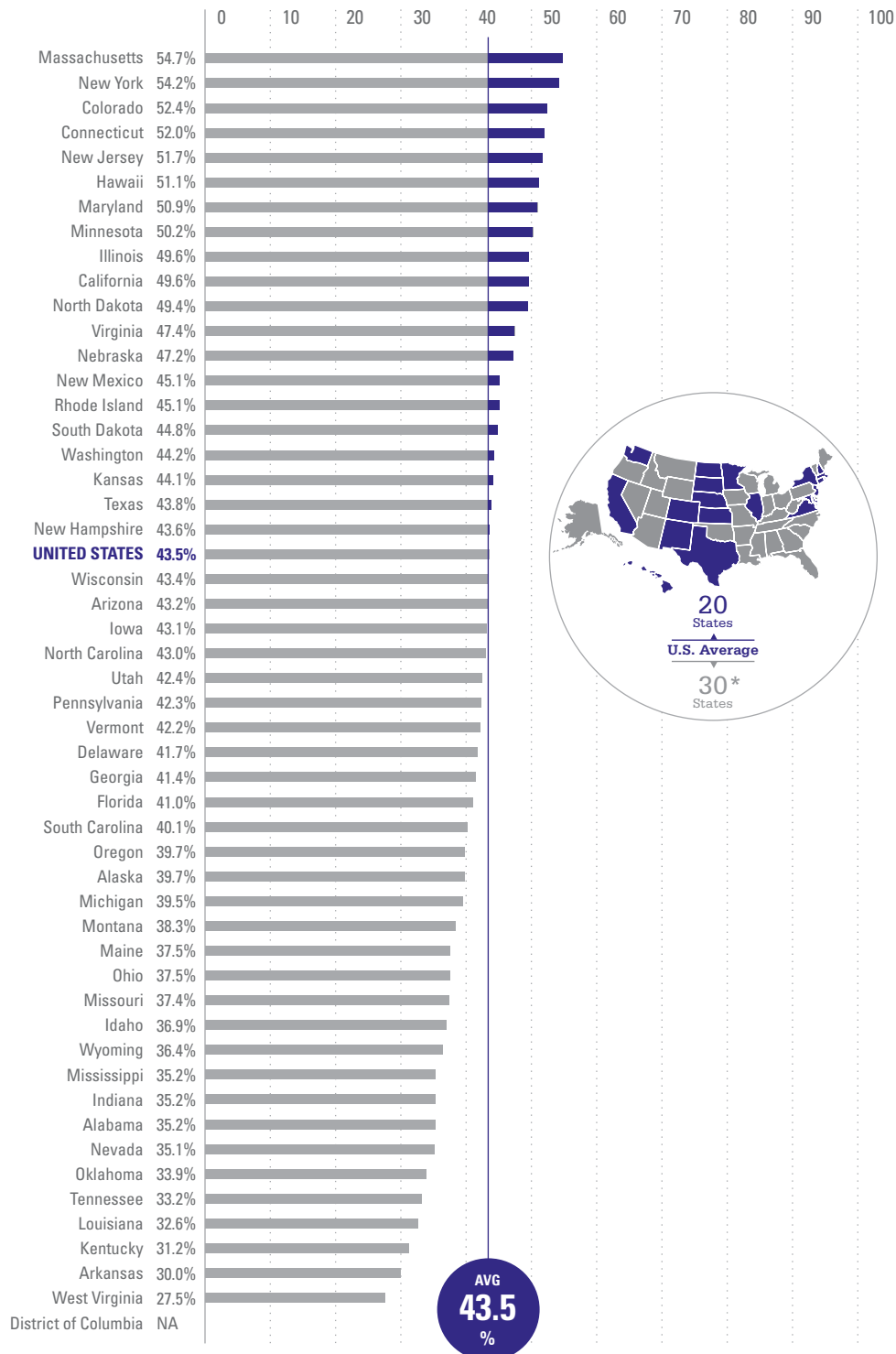


* Indicator data not available for all states.

9.2h

Three-Year Graduation Rates for White Associate Degree–Seeking Students by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009



* Indicator data not available for all states.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

Graduation rates are associated with many other factors (e.g., first-generation status, preparation, socioeconomic background, ethnicity, adjustment to college, etc.). This statistic does not account for transfers across institutions. It should also be noted that students who do not graduate with an associate degree in three years may still persist and complete the degree at a later date. This measure captures only those students who graduated in the three-year time frame (150 percent of normal program length) within which they were expected to graduate.

It remains to be seen whether the current economic climate will increase the demands placed on two-year programs. Students who traditionally aspire to attain four-year degrees may be forced to turn their attention toward two-year programs in order to keep the overall cost of attaining a bachelor's degree down. However, retention and degree attainment at two-year institutions are well below those of four-year institutions. Strong articulation agreements between two- and four-year institutions are needed throughout the United States in order to reverse this trend, and more must be done to ensure that students who enter two-year institutions complete these degrees in a timely manner. Because many low-income and underrepresented minorities are increasingly gaining access to two-year institutions, it is important that the retention and graduation rates at two-year institutions follow suit to ensure that the graduation rates among these groups also increases.

56.1%

As of 2007,
56.1 percent of
students across the
nation who enter an
institution with the
intent of earning a
bachelor's degree
persist to graduation
in six years or less.

38.6%

As of 2007,
38.6 percent of
bachelor's degree-
seeking American
Indian students
persist to graduation.

40.5%

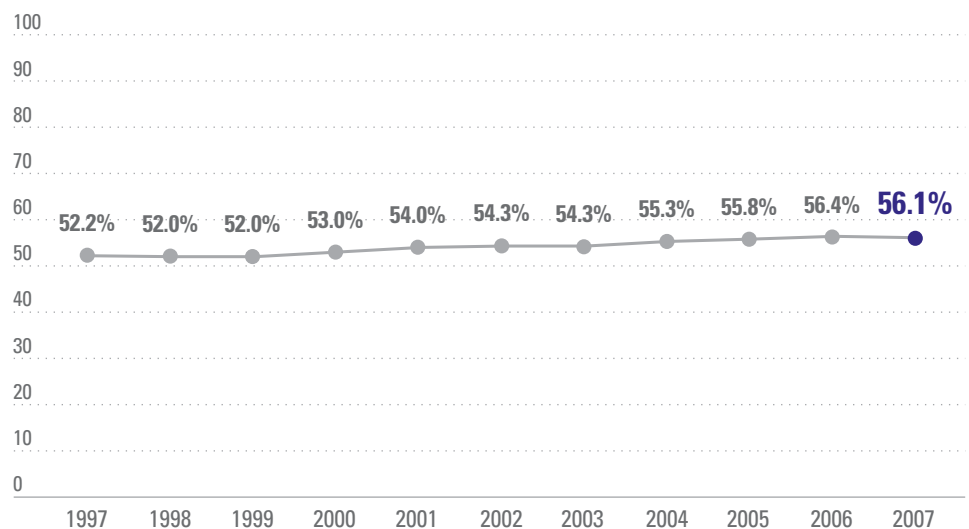
As of 2007,
40.5 percent of
bachelor's degree-
seeking African
American students
persist to graduation.

Six-Year Graduation Rates of Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Students

9.3a

National Six-Year Graduation Rates of Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Students, 1997–2007

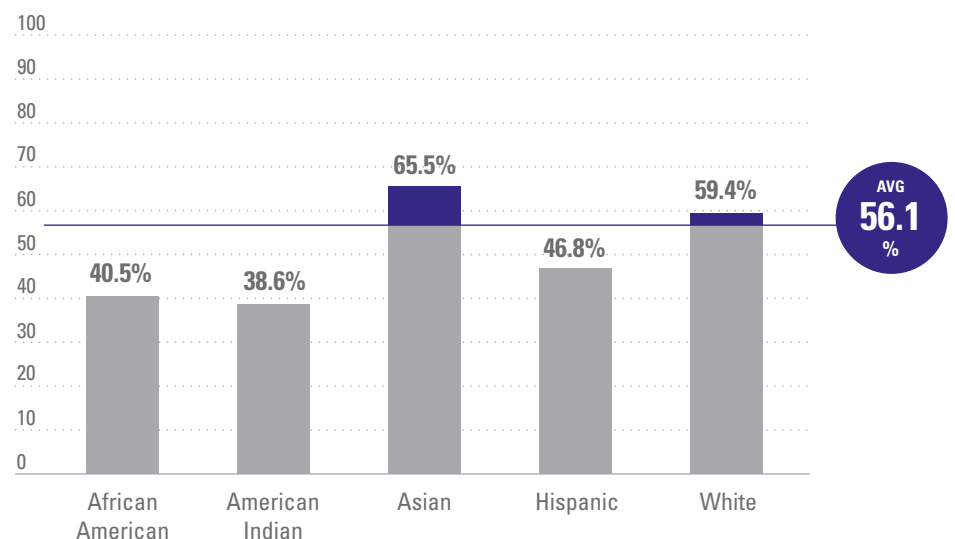
Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009



9.3b

National Six-Year Graduation Rates of Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Students by Race/Ethnicity, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009



46.8%

As of 2007,
46.8 percent of
bachelor's degree-
seeking Hispanic
students persist to
graduation.

What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This indicator measures the rate at which entering freshmen graduate within 150 percent of normal program length. The data represents the six-year graduation rates for full-time bachelor's degree-seeking students.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? This measure reflects how well students within states are persisting to a bachelor's degree and is, in part, a measure of an institution's ability to create the environment necessary for timely completion of bachelor's degrees among students.

Where are we now? In the United States, 56.1 percent of students across the nation who enter an institution with the intent of earning a bachelor's degree persist to graduation in six years or less. Figure 9.3a shows that the national six-year graduation rate has remained relatively stable from 1997 to 2007, increasing slightly from 52.2 percent in 1997 to 56.1 percent in 2007. Figure 9.3b shows there are vast differences in six-year graduation rates by race/ethnicity. While Asians and whites have the highest graduation rates at 65.5 percent and 59.4 percent, respectively, the six-year graduation rates for American Indian, African American and Hispanic students are 38.6 percent, 40.5 percent and 46.8 percent, respectively.

When the data are disaggregated by the six-year graduation rate of bachelor's degree-seeking students, the percentages range from 22.4 percent in Alaska to 68.0 percent in Massachusetts. Figure 9.3c shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the highest graduation rate are Massachusetts, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Maryland. The states with the lowest graduation rate are Alaska, Nevada, New Mexico, Louisiana and Arizona.

When the data are disaggregated by the six-year graduation rate of bachelor's degree-seeking students by Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander students, the percentages range from 17.9 percent in Alaska to 80.2 percent in New Hampshire. Figure 9.3d shows that when states are placed in rank order for Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander students, states with the highest graduation rate are New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Maryland, Rhode Island and Pennsylvania. The states with the lowest graduation rate are Alaska, South Dakota, Montana, North Dakota and Nevada.

When the data are disaggregated by the six-year graduation rate of bachelor's degree-seeking students by American Indian or Alaska Native students, the percentages range from 10.4 percent in Alaska to 68.3 percent in New Hampshire. Figure 9.3e shows that when states are placed in rank order for American Indian and Alaska Native students, states with the highest graduation rate are New Hampshire, Maryland, Rhode Island, South Carolina and Massachusetts. The states with the lowest graduation rate are Alaska, Hawaii, North Dakota, Idaho and Nevada.

When the data are disaggregated by the six-year graduation rate of bachelor's degree-seeking students by African American students, the percentages range from 13.6 percent in South Dakota to 59.9 percent in Massachusetts. Figure 9.3f shows that when states are placed in rank order for African American students, states with the highest graduation rate are Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Maine and Wyoming. The states with the lowest graduation rate are South Dakota, Alaska, North Dakota, Idaho and Nevada.

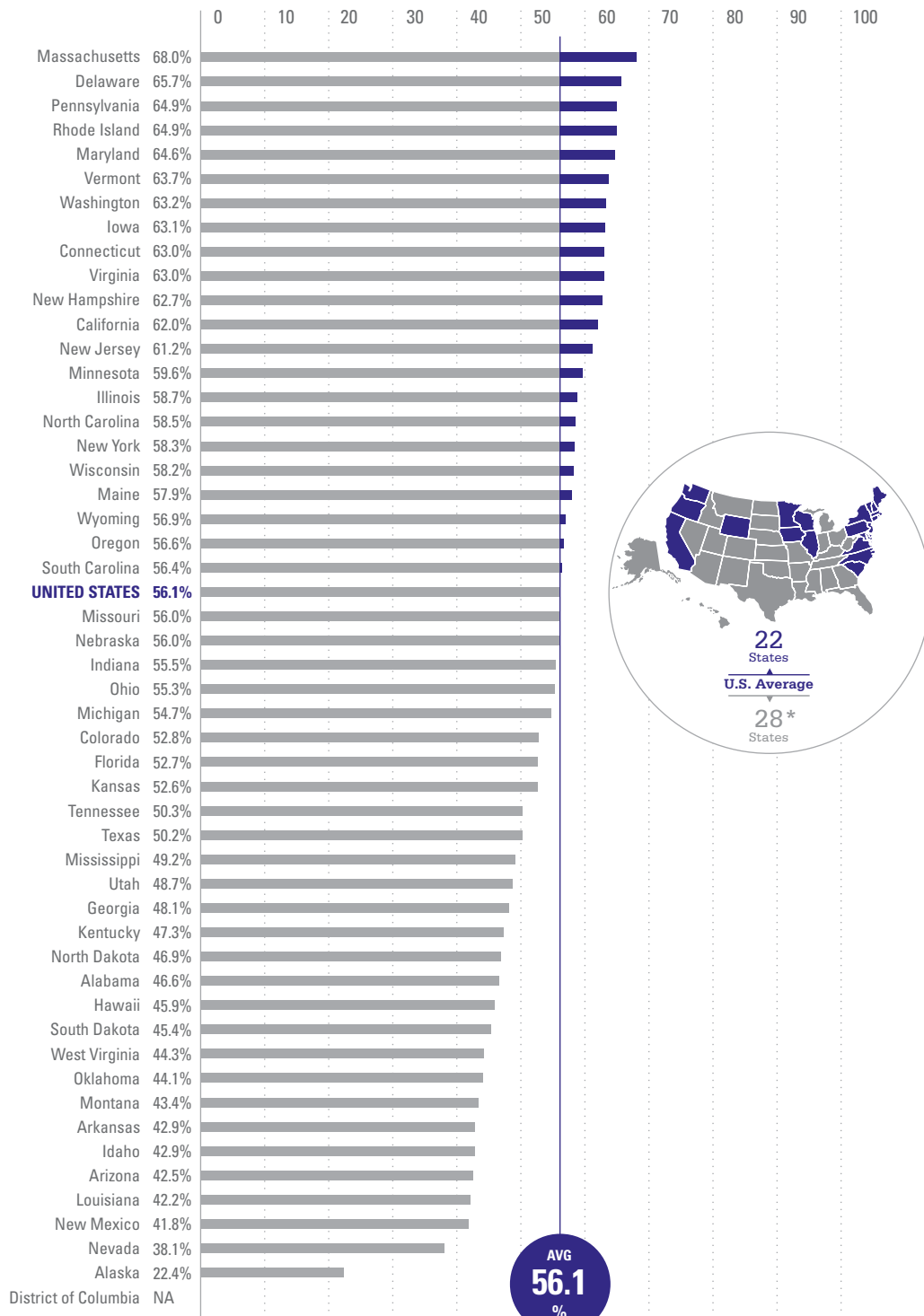
When the data are disaggregated by the six-year graduation rate of bachelor's degree-seeking students by Hispanic students, the percentages range from 22.6 percent in Alaska to 66.6 percent in Massachusetts. Figure 9.3g shows that when states are placed in rank order for Hispanic students, states with the highest graduation rate are Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maryland, North Carolina and Vermont. The states with the lowest graduation rate are Alaska, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho and Nevada.

When the data are disaggregated by the six-year graduation rate of bachelor's degree-seeking students by white students, the percentages range from 24.7 percent in Alaska to 73.4 percent in Delaware. Figure 9.3h shows that when states are placed in rank order for white students, states with the highest graduation rate are Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Virginia and Pennsylvania. The states with the lowest graduation rate are Alaska, Hawaii, Nevada, Montana and Idaho.

9.3c

Six-Year Graduation Rates of Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Students by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009

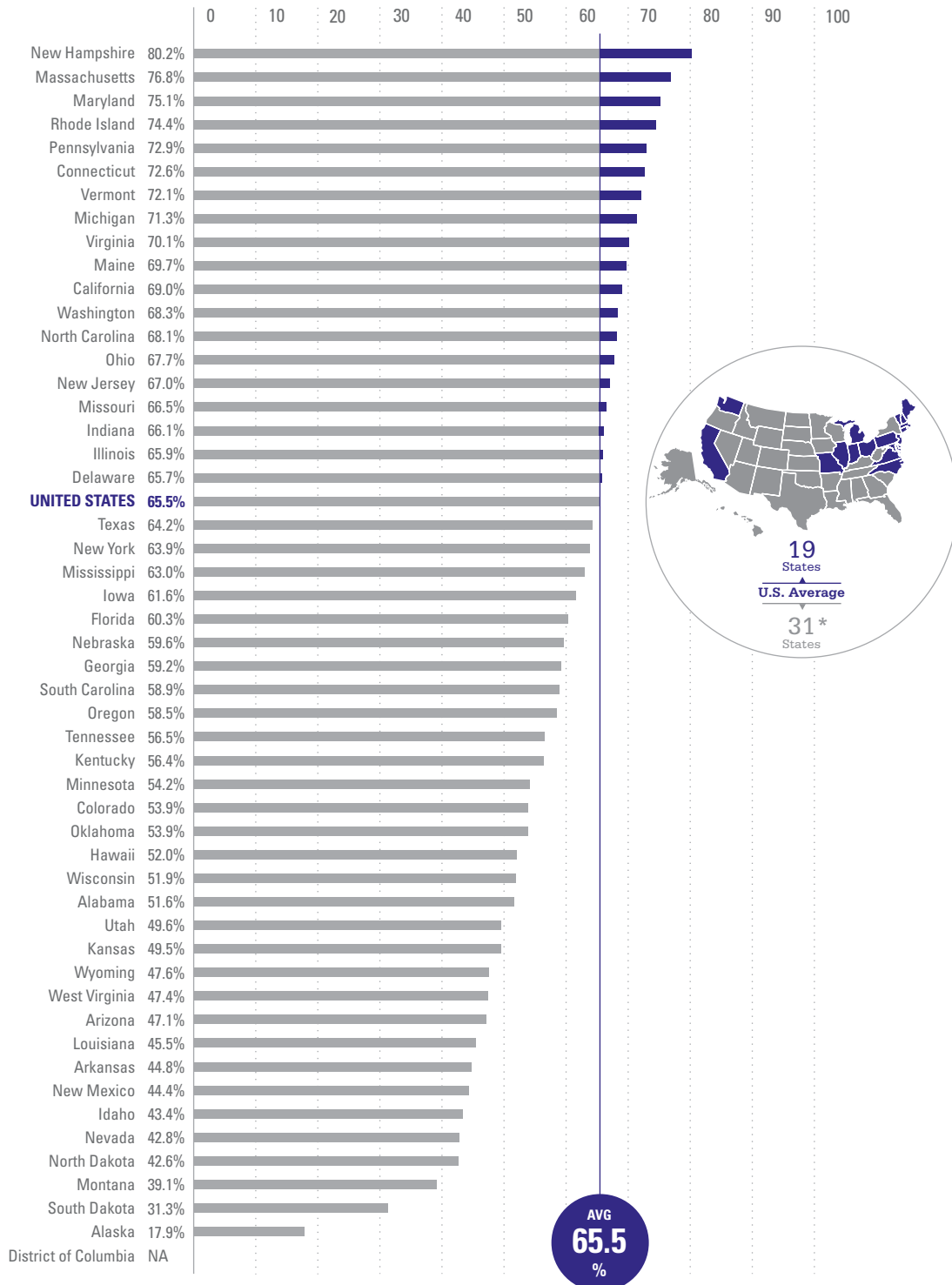


* Indicator data not available for all states.

9.3d

Six-Year Graduation Rates for Asian American or Pacific Islander Bachelor's Degree–Seeking Students by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009

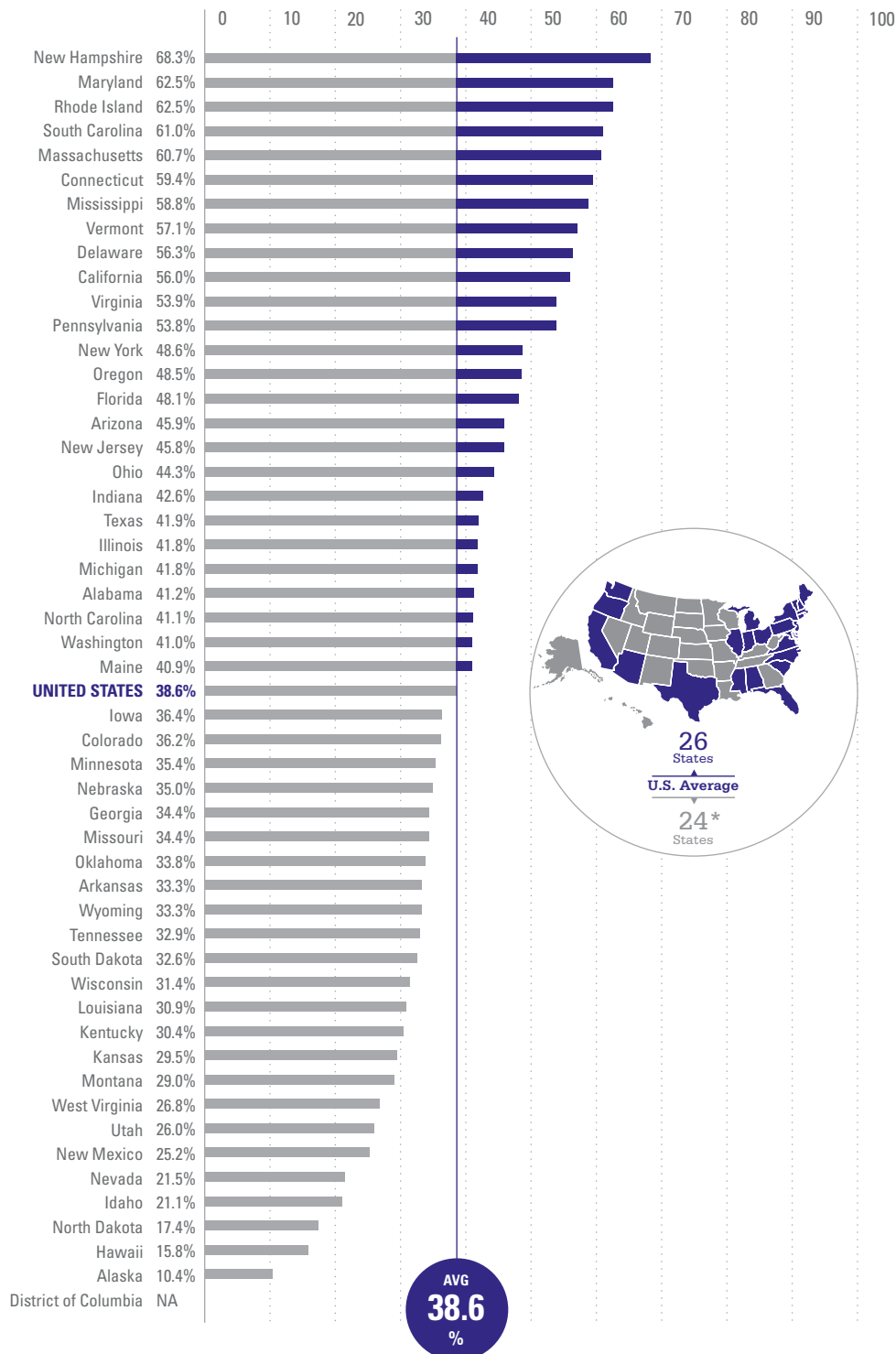


* Indicator data not available for all states.

9.3e

Six-Year Graduation Rates for American Indian or Alaska Native Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Students by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009

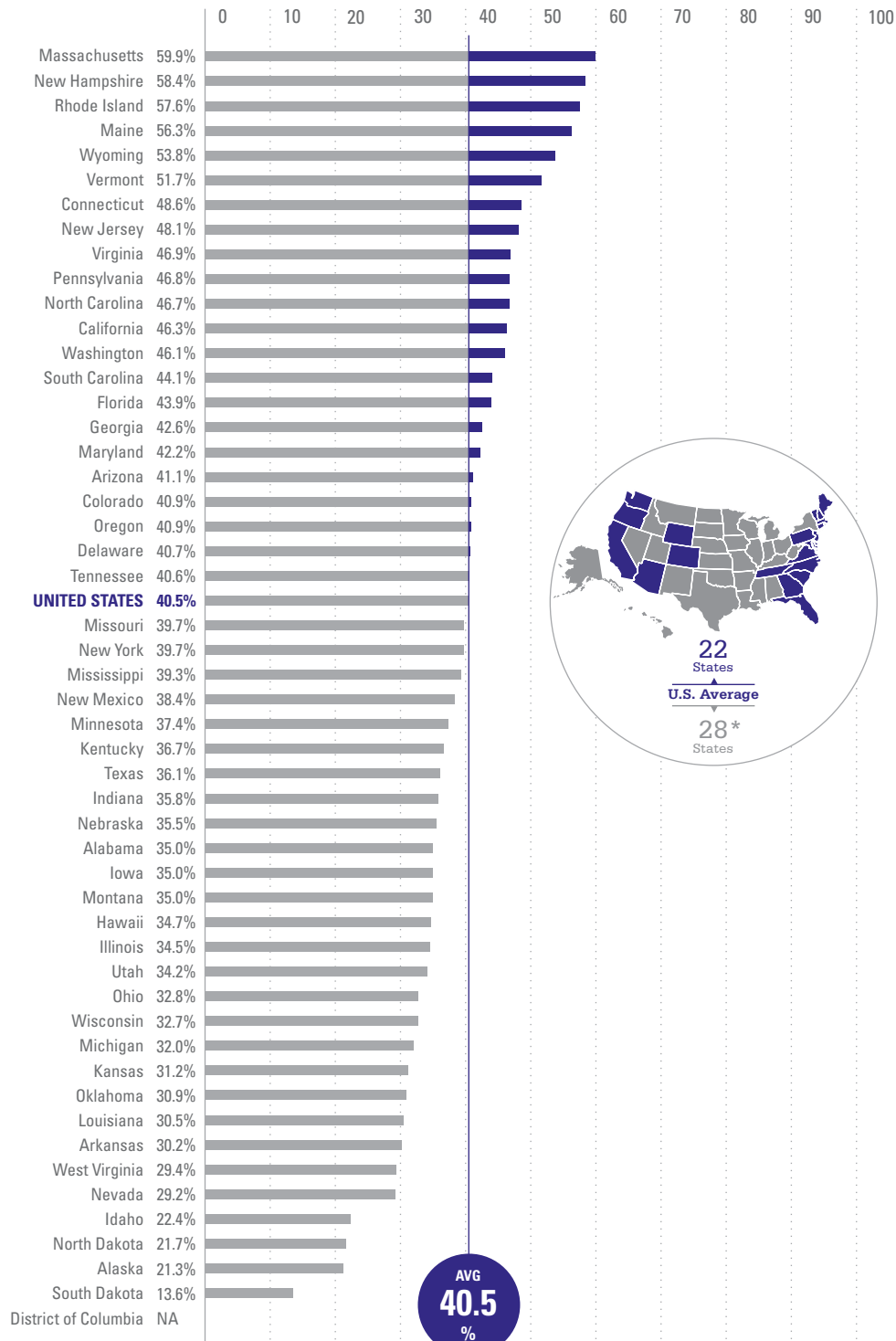


* Indicator data not available for all states.

9.3f

Six-Year Graduation Rates for African American Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Students by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009

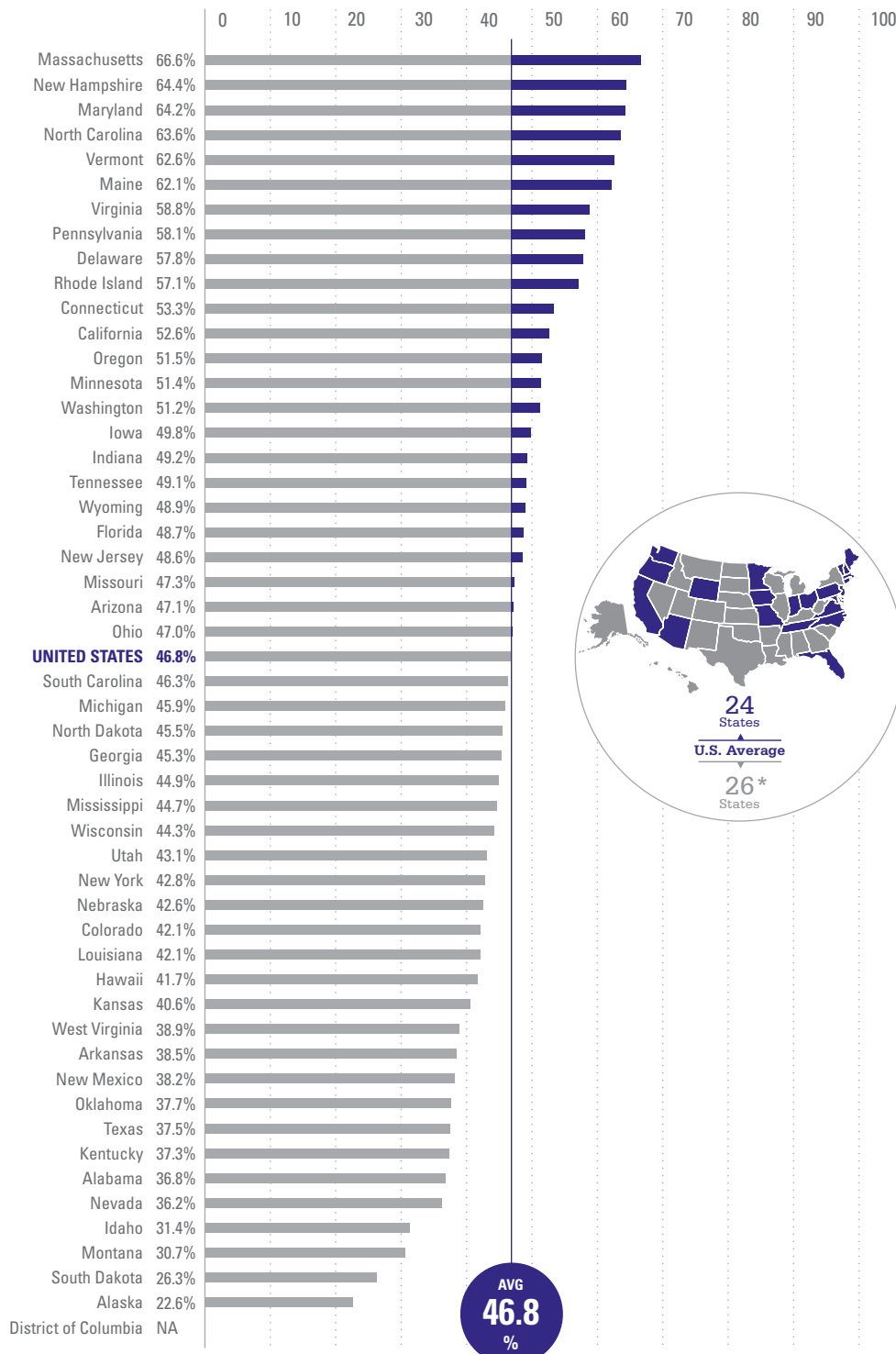


* Indicator data not available for all states.

9.3g

Six-Year Graduation Rates for Hispanic Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Students by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009

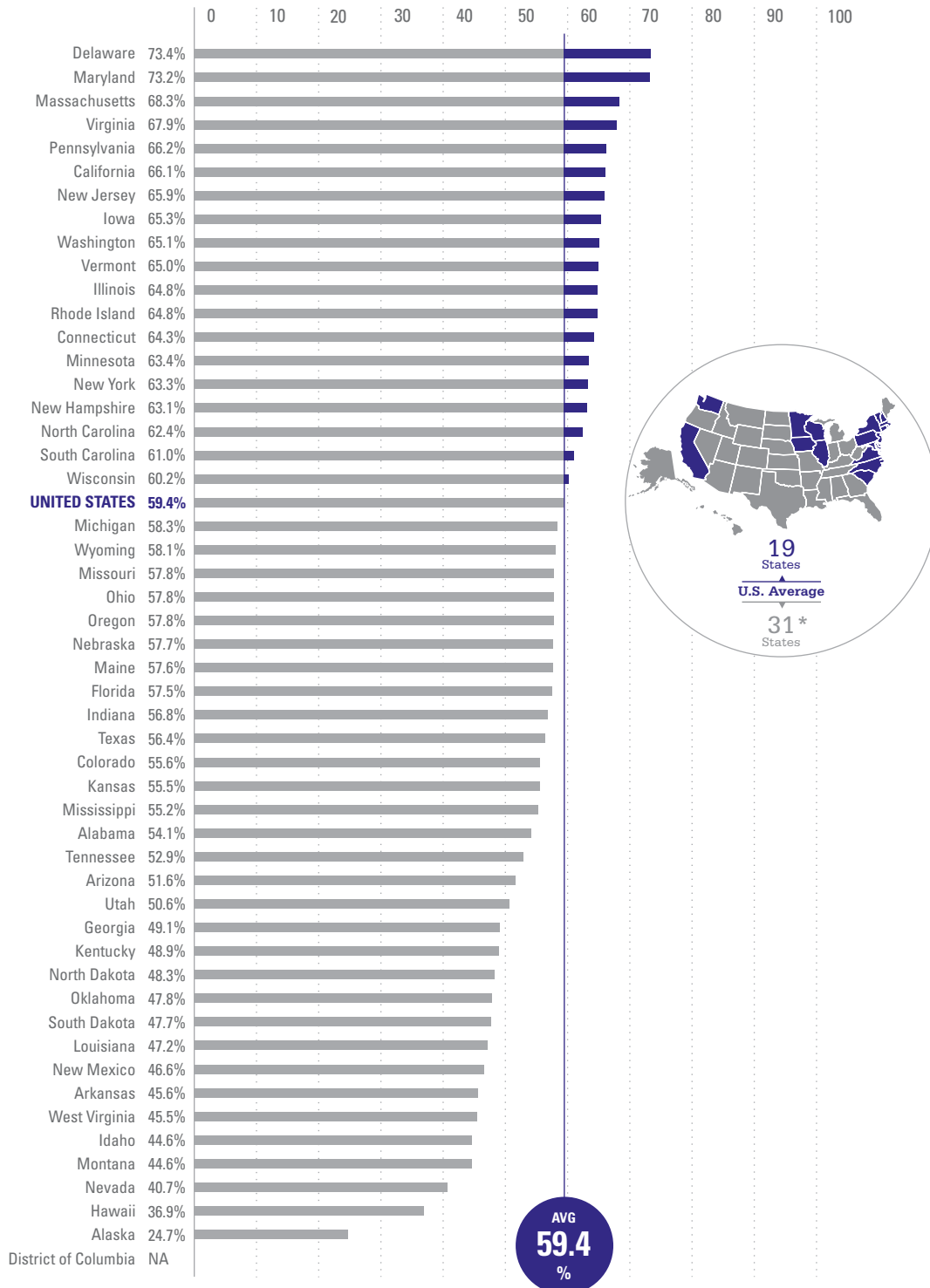


* Indicator data not available for all states.

9.3h

Six-Year Graduation Rates for White Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Students by State Rank, 2007

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2009



* Indicator data not available for all states.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

Bachelor's degree graduation rates are associated with several other important issues (e.g., preparation, first-generation status, socioeconomic background, ethnicity, adjustment to college, etc.). This statistic also does not account for transfers across institutions. Graduation rates are also closely associated with first-year retention rates because many students abandon their pursuit of a bachelor's degree during their first year. It should also be mentioned that just because a student does not graduate with a bachelor's degree in six years does not mean that these students did not or will not graduate. It only means that these students did not graduate in the six-year time frame (time and a half) within which they were expected to graduate. Many students take a longer time to graduate from institutions, including students who begin as full-time students but spend most of their undergraduate experience attending part time, and students who must work while attending college. These students tend to take longer to graduate, thus making overall six-year graduation rates much lower.

Education is the most effective intervention available for improving the social and economic future of America. Students who earn a bachelor's degree earn 61.0 percent more during their lifetime than students who only have a high school diploma. And given the changing nature of our economy, a high school education is not enough. Addressing socioeconomic, racial and ethnic inequalities in higher education will require persistent and meaningful efforts by states to provide postsecondary access and opportunity to the steadily growing numbers of undereducated and underrepresented minorities. Beyond the moral imperative to achieve equity among populations of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, there are economic reasons for doing so. Many states in the U.S. face rapidly changing demographics — with the least-educated populations growing at the fastest rates.⁵³

53. Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity 1992–2022, March 2008.

Ten

Provide postsecondary opportunities as an essential element of adult education programs

WE RECOMMEND a renewed commitment to adult education opportunities, one that supplements existing basic skills training and General Educational Development opportunities with a new “honors GED,” and better coordination of federal and state efforts to provide adult education, veterans benefits, outreach programs and student aid.

The nation is in need of highly skilled workers; however, 62.8 percent of the U.S. adult population does not have a postsecondary degree. This percentage is detrimental to U.S. competitiveness as the nation continues to slip further behind other countries in the percentage of the population with postsecondary credentials.⁵⁴

The commission asserts that there is a plethora of existing programs in adult literacy and adult basic education; however, many are underfunded and operate in isolation from each other, the K–12 education system, and higher education. These existing adult education programs need better support and coordination. Adult education programs need to supplement current programs with a new emphasis on postsecondary opportunities for adults who do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent or a postsecondary degree. In order to advance adult education programs, states must renew their commitment to adult literacy and adult basic education programs. Also, the federal government must provide more funding to support adult education programs, and this is a goal of the Obama administration.

In examining the proposed recommendations, four indicators are presented:

- Educational attainment for adults ages 25 to 64;
- GEDs awarded to adults with no high school diploma;
- Enrollment in state-administered adult education programs; and
- Enrollment of nontraditional-age adults in postsecondary education.

General Findings for This Recommendation

- As of 2008, 4.8 percent of adults ages 18 to 24 across the nation were awarded GEDs.
- As of 2008, 1.0 percent of adults ages 25 to 49 across the nation were awarded GEDs.
- As of 2005, 101.7 per 1,000 individuals ages 18 to 64 with less than a high school diploma enrolled in state-administered (ABE) programs.
- As of 2005, 19.1 percent of adults ages 25 to 39 across the nation were enrolled in a postsecondary education program.
- As of 2005, 4.7 percent of adults ages 40 to 64 across the nation were enrolled in a postsecondary education program.

54. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Education at a Glance*: 2009.

58.9%

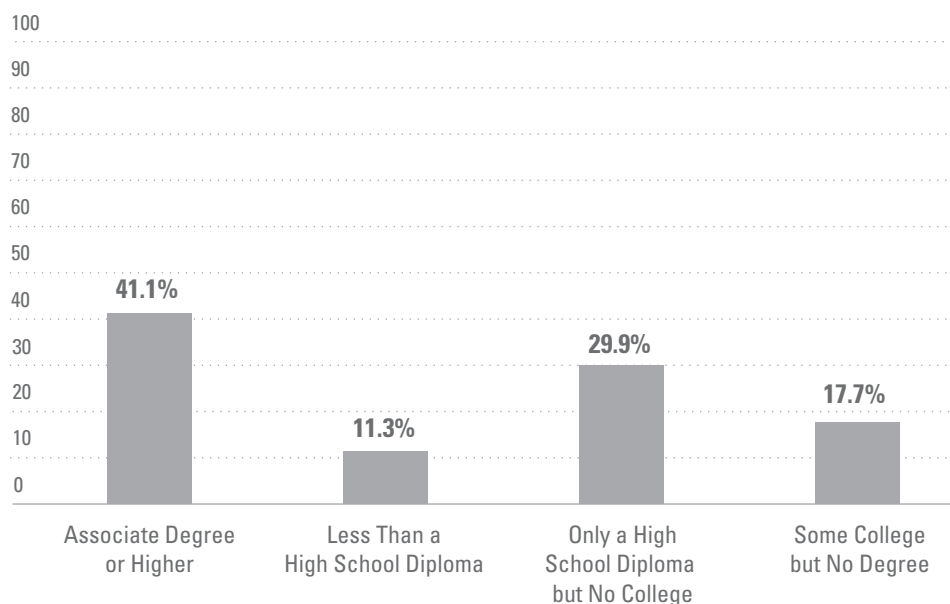
As of 2008,
58.9 percent of
adults ages 25 to 64
across the nation
earned less than an
associate degree.

Educational Attainment for Adults Ages 25 to 64

10.1a

National Educational Attainment of Adults Ages 25–64, 2008

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2010



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measure describes the percentage of adults ages 25 to 64 with less than an associate degree. This measure helps states to learn the specific populations most in need, in order to raise educational attainment.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? States vary significantly in the proportion of work-age adults ages 25 to 64 who have earned at least an associate degree. In order to raise educational attainment, states will require different policies and approaches, depending on which specific population they need to target.

Where are we now? In the United States today, 58.9 percent of adults ages 25 to 64 have less than an associate degree. Figure 10.1a shows that of adults ages 25 to 64, 11.3 percent have less than a high school diploma, 29.9 percent have only a high school diploma but no college, and 17.7 percent have some college but no degree.

When the data are disaggregated by adults ages 25 to 64 with less than a high school diploma, the percentages range from 5.3 percent in North Dakota to 18.7 percent in California and Texas. Figure 10.1b shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the lowest percentage of adults are North Dakota, Minnesota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Alaska and Vermont. The states with the highest percentage of adults are California, Texas, Mississippi, Nevada, Louisiana and Arizona.

When the data are disaggregated by adults ages 25 to 64 with only a high school diploma, the percentages range from 18.7 percent in the District of Columbia to 40.7 percent in West Virginia. Figure 10.1c shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the lowest percentage of adults are the District of Columbia, California, Colorado, Washington and Utah. The states with the highest percentage of adults are West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Louisiana and Kentucky.

When the data are disaggregated by adults ages 25 to 64 with some college but no degree, the percentages range from 15.1 percent in the District of Columbia to 30.5 percent in Alaska. Figure 10.1d shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the lowest percentage of adults are the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New York, Vermont and Pennsylvania. The states with the highest percentage of adults are Alaska, Wyoming, Idaho, Utah and Oregon.

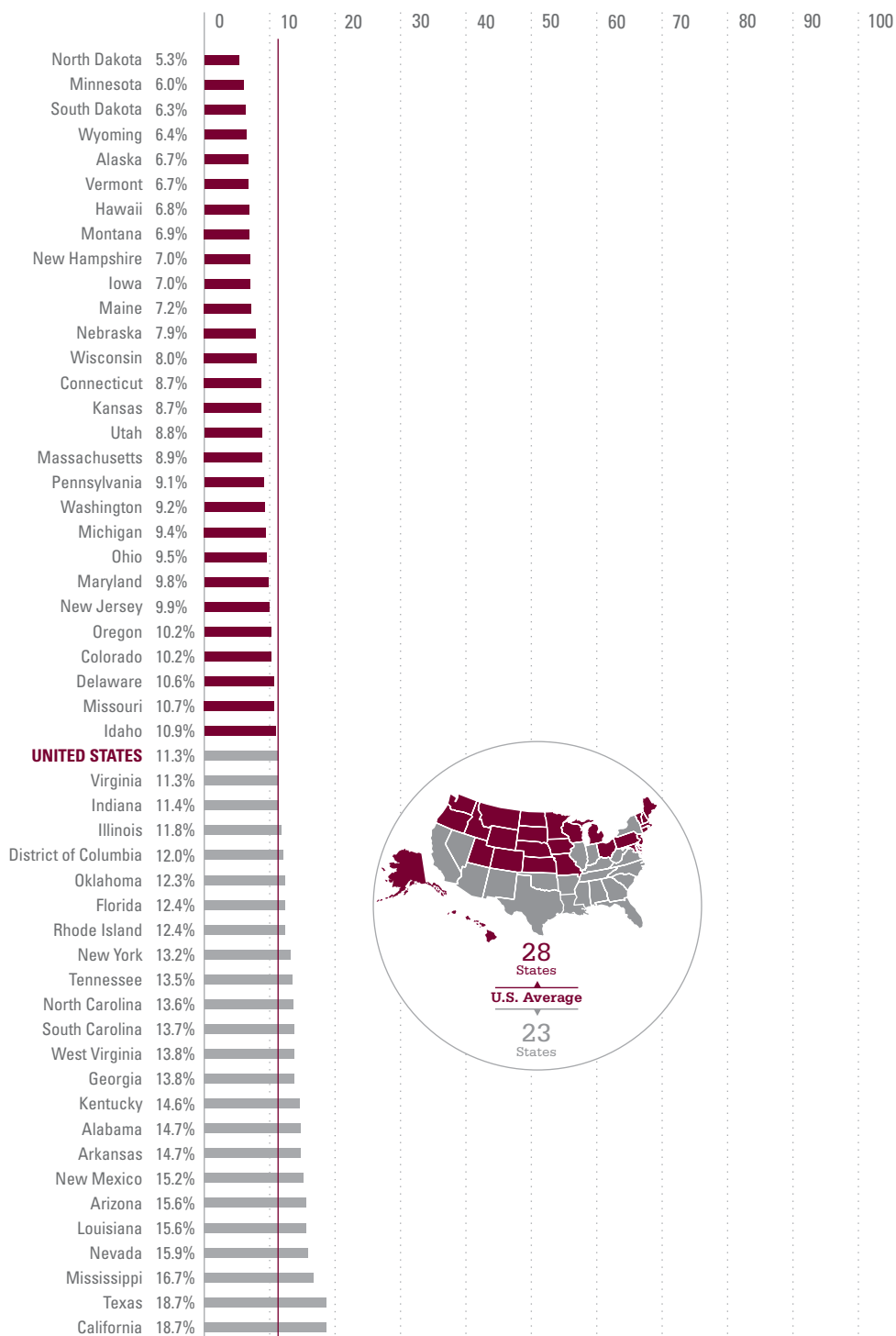
When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? Although there are statistics that will provide information about the educational attainment for adults, ages 25 to 64 by gender, race/ethnicity, income, etc; there are large variations in the population across states. This measure is best explored at the state level.

10.1b

Adults Ages 25–64 with Less Than a High School Diploma by State Rank, 2008

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey & Current Population Survey, 2010

Note: National Numbers Based on Current Population Survey, State Numbers Based on American Community Survey

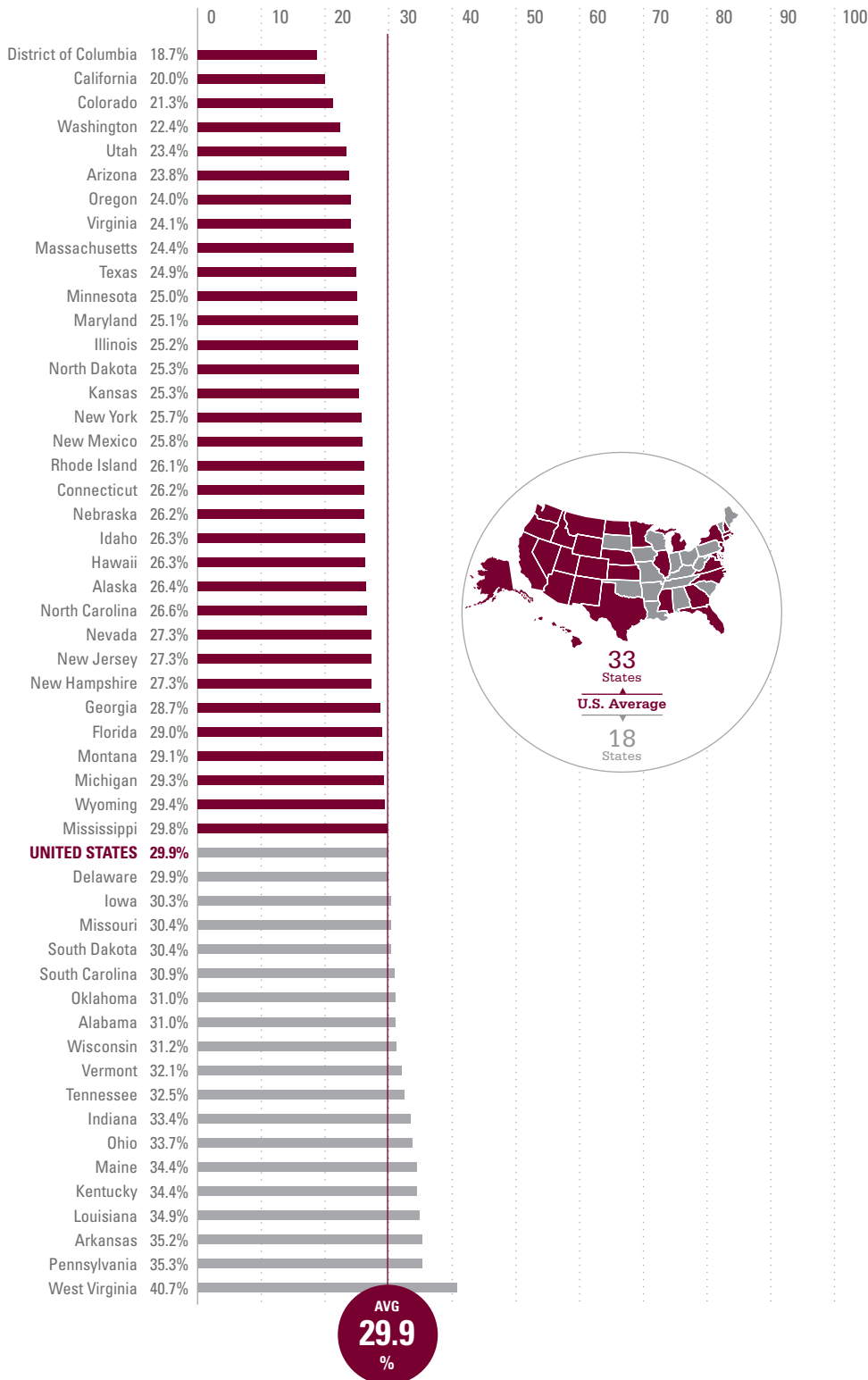


10.1c

Adults Ages 25–64 with Only a High School Diploma but No College by State Rank, 2008

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey & Current Population Survey, 2010

Note: National Numbers Based on Current Population Survey, State Numbers Based on American Community Survey

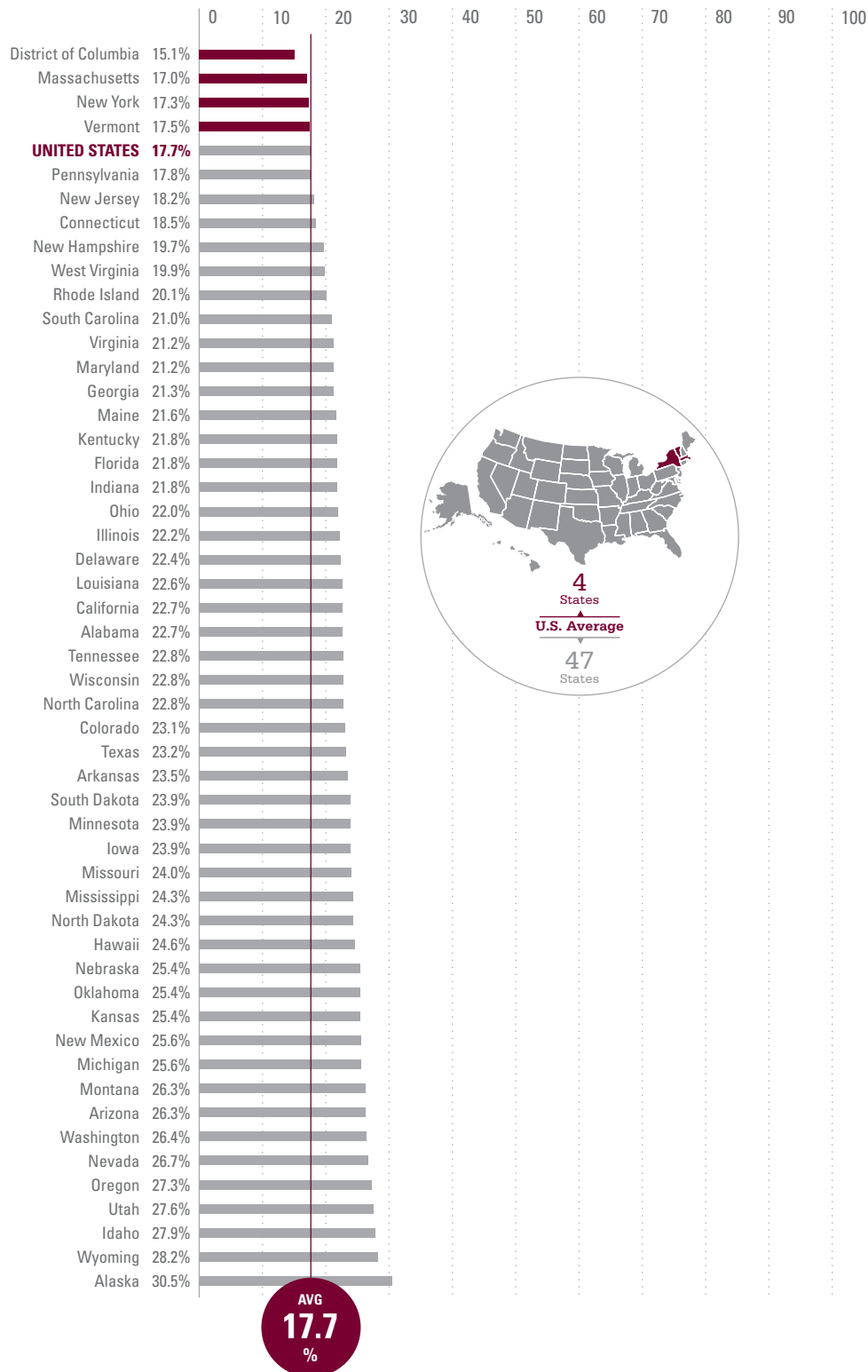


10.1d

Adults Ages 25–64 with Some College but No Degree by State Rank, 2008

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey & Current Population Survey, 2010

Note: National Numbers Based on Current Population Survey, State Numbers Based on American Community Survey



4.8%

As of 2008,
4.8 percent of
adults ages 18 to 24
across the nation
earned GEDs.

1.0%

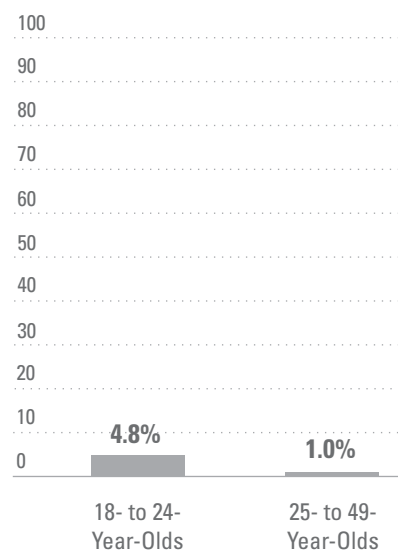
As of 2008,
1.0 percent of
adults ages 25 to 49
across the nation
earned GEDs.

Percentage of Adults with No High School Diploma Who Attained a GED

10.2a

National Percentage of GEDs Earned by Age, 2008

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measures the percentage of adults ages 18 to 49 who earned a GED, and did not have a high school diploma or any degree beyond a high school diploma. This measure indicates whether a higher percentage of GEDs are earned by adults annually, which increases the number of qualified workers able to fulfill the necessary positions for the 2025 workforce.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? A high school diploma seems to have less value as we move toward a more advanced, technological society. However, many of the jobs created today require at least a high school diploma or GED. It is important for states to raise awareness of the importance of obtaining a high school diploma or GED, and continuing education beyond high school.

Where are we now? In the United States in 2008, 4.8 percent of adults ages 18 to 24 across the nation earned GEDs, and 1.0 percent of adults ages 25 to 49 across the nation earned GEDs, as shown in Figure 10.2a.

When the data are disaggregated by the number of GEDs earned by 18- to 24-year-olds, the percentages range from 2.6 percent in California to 10.1 percent in Wyoming. Figure 10.2b shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the largest percentage of GEDs earned are Wyoming, Maine, Idaho, Virginia and West Virginia. The states with the smallest percentage of GEDs earned are California, Delaware, Texas, Louisiana and Maryland.

When the data are disaggregated by the number of GEDs earned by 25- to 49-year-olds, the percentages range from 0.5 percent in California to 2.8 percent in Wyoming. Figure 10.2c shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the largest percentage of GEDs earned are Wyoming, North Dakota, Montana, Maine and Alaska. The states with the smallest percentage of GEDs earned are California, Texas, Delaware, Louisiana, Rhode Island and Maryland.

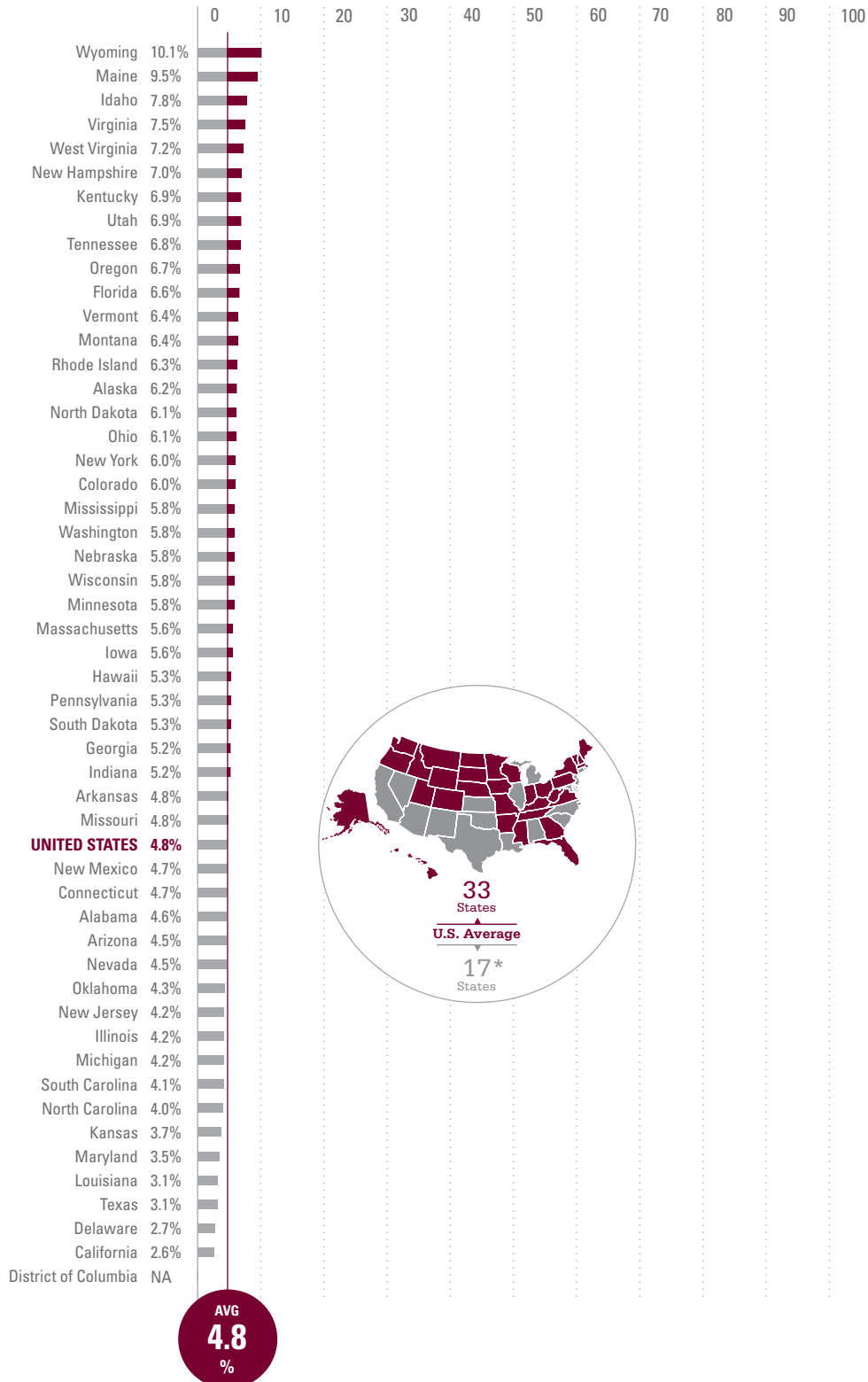
When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? The data obtained only examines two age groups awarded GEDs: 18- to 24-year-olds and 25- to 49-year-olds. Many people in the workforce are obtaining postsecondary education beyond the age of 49, because people over 50 are enrolled in colleges and universities to change their field of work. So it is pertinent that adults 50 years old and older receiving GEDs also are examined.

It is also important to examine how many people do not have a high school diploma and how states have assisted in funding and supporting GED programs. States should address issues of affordability, accessibility and retention of individuals with no high school diploma in the communities.

10.2b

Percentage of Adults 18- to 24-Years-Old with No High School Diploma Who Attained a GED by State Rank, 2008

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009

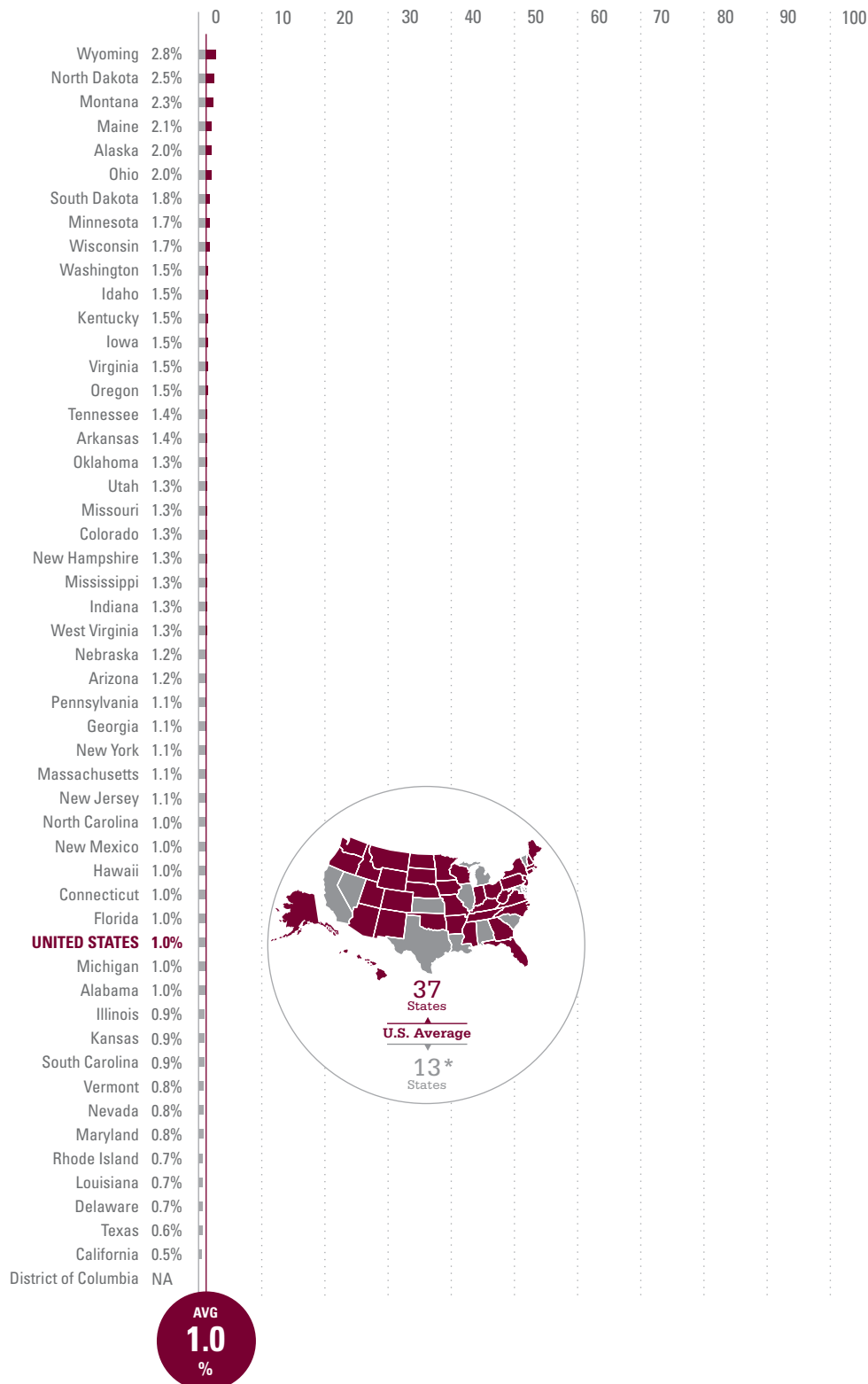


* Indicator data not available for all states.

10.2c

Percentage of Adults 25- to 49-Years-Old with No High School Diploma Who Attained a GED by State Rank, 2008

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009



* Indicator data not available for all states.

101.7

As of 2005, approximately 100 of every 1,000 adults ages 18 to 64 with less than a high school diploma are enrolled in state-administered Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs across the United States.

Enrollment in State-Administered Adult Education Programs

What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measure describes the enrollment in state-administered adult education programs per 1,000 adults ages 18 to 64 with less than a high school diploma. This measure is helpful to learn about opportunities that have been provided to people ages 18 and over who are not formally enrolled in school and have educational skills below the high school completion level.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs are offered primarily through public school districts, community colleges, technical colleges and private nonprofit organizations throughout the country. The primary target group for ABE are adults who are in need of the literacy skills required for employment, self-sufficiency or the completion of secondary education. Adult education and literacy programs are often funded through federal grants to the states, yet some states also provide funding for adult education programs. The amount each state receives from the federal government is based on a formula established by Congress.⁵⁵ States distribute this appropriated money to local entities that provide adult education and literacy services.⁵⁶

Where are we now? As of 2005, 101.7 per 1,000 adults ages 18 to 64 with less than a high school diploma were enrolled in state-administered (ABE) programs across the United States. Figure 10.3a shows the enrollment in state administered adult education programs per 1,000 U.S. residents with less than a high school diploma by age. The data reveal that the enrollment rate is higher for adults ages 18 to 24 and lower for adults ages 45 and older.

When the data are disaggregated by state, the enrollment ranges from 38.0 in Nevada to 240.8 in Florida. Figure 10.3b shows that when states are placed in rank order, states with the highest enrollment are Florida, Utah, Minnesota, South Carolina and Connecticut. The states with the lowest enrollment are Nevada, Alabama, Texas, Colorado and Arizona.

55. U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (2010). Retrieved June 17, 2010 from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/index.html>

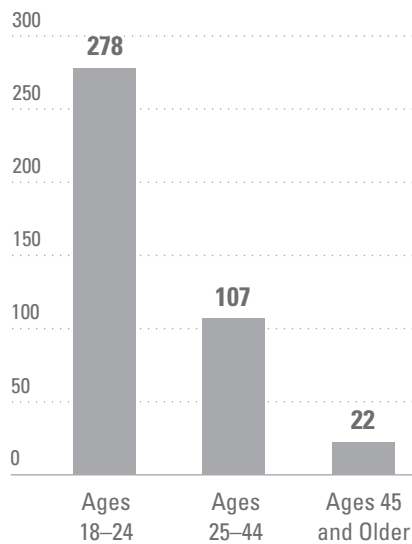
56. Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). 2008. Adult learning in focus: National and state-by-state data report, p.40.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind?

State-administered ABE programs are offered to people ages 18 and over who are not formally enrolled in school and do not have a high school diploma. According to the 2005 NCES data, most of the enrollees were between 18 to 24 years old. Enrollment varies widely across states.⁵⁷

10.3a**Enrollment in State-Administered Adult Education Programs per 1,000 U.S. Residents with Less Than a High School Diploma by Age Group, 2005**

Data Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), 2009

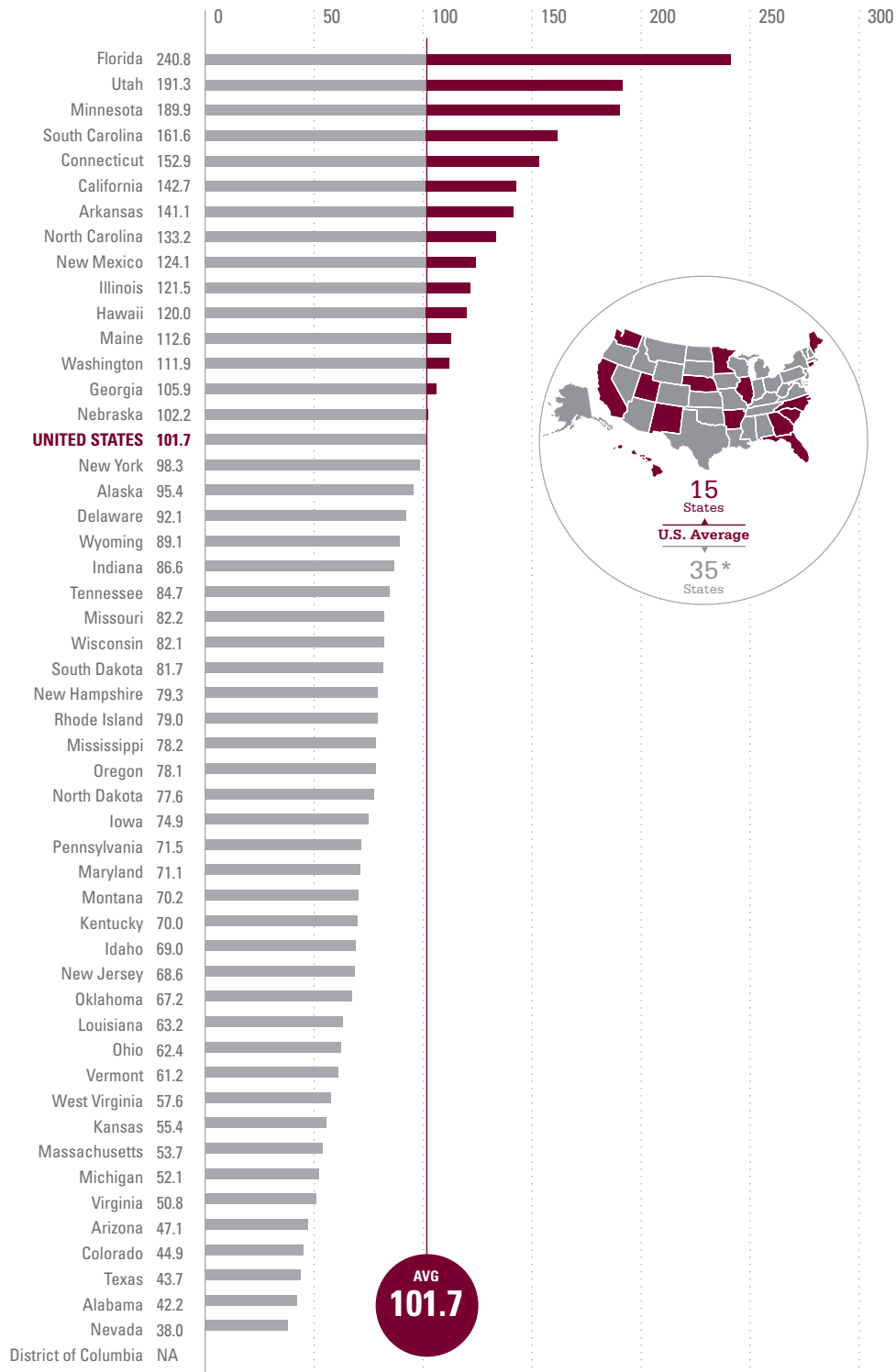


57. Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). 2008. Adult learning in focus: National and state-by-state data report, p.40.

10.3b

Enrollment in State-Administered ABE Programs per 1,000 Adults Ages 18–64 with Less Than a High School Diploma by State Rank, 2005

Data Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), 2009



* Indicator data not available for all states.

19.1%

As of 2005, 19.1 percent of adults ages 25 to 39 across the nation are enrolled in a postsecondary education program.

4.7%

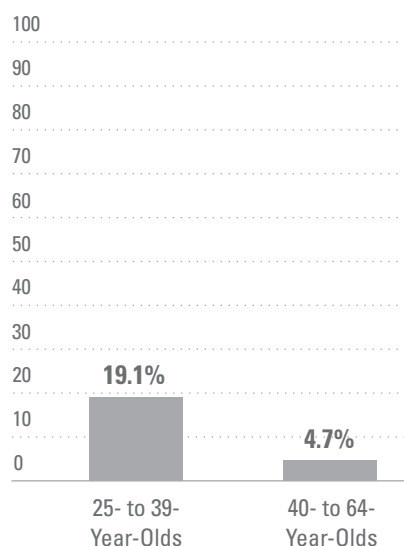
As of 2005, 4.7 percent of adults ages 40 to 64 across the nation are enrolled in a postsecondary education program.

Enrollment of Nontraditional-Age Students in Postsecondary Education

10.4a

National Percentage of Adults with Only a High School Diploma Enrolled in Postsecondary Education, 2005

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2005



What is this measure, and why is this measure important? This measure examines the percentage of nontraditional students 25 to 64 years old enrolled in postsecondary education programs. This measure provides the percentage of nontraditional adults seeking postsecondary education beyond high school education or GED.

What are the policy issues associated with this measure? The state system of education provides great opportunities to U.S. citizens, both in secondary and postsecondary education. The opportunities for obtaining an education are valuable and provide the United States with a market of educated workers. Functional literacy skills and the availability of opportunities for older adults to train and retrain are imperative for upward mobility and to meet the needs of a changing economy.⁵⁸

58. The National Center of Higher Education Management Systems, 2009, <http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?submeasure=327&year=2005&level=&mode=policy&state=0>

Where are we now? As of 2005, 19.1 percent of adults ages 25 to 39 across the nation were enrolled in a postsecondary education program, and 4.7 percent of adults ages 40 to 64 across the nation were enrolled in a postsecondary education program as shown in Figure 10.4a. A larger percentage of 25- to 39-year-olds are enrolled in postsecondary education than are 40- to 64-year-olds.

When the data are disaggregated by state for adults ages 25 to 39 across the nation that are enrolled in a postsecondary education program, the percentages range from 11.1 percent in New Hampshire to 44.3 percent in Arizona. Figure 10.4b shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the highest enrollment are Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, Iowa and North Dakota. The states with the lowest enrollment are New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Louisiana, Tennessee and South Carolina.

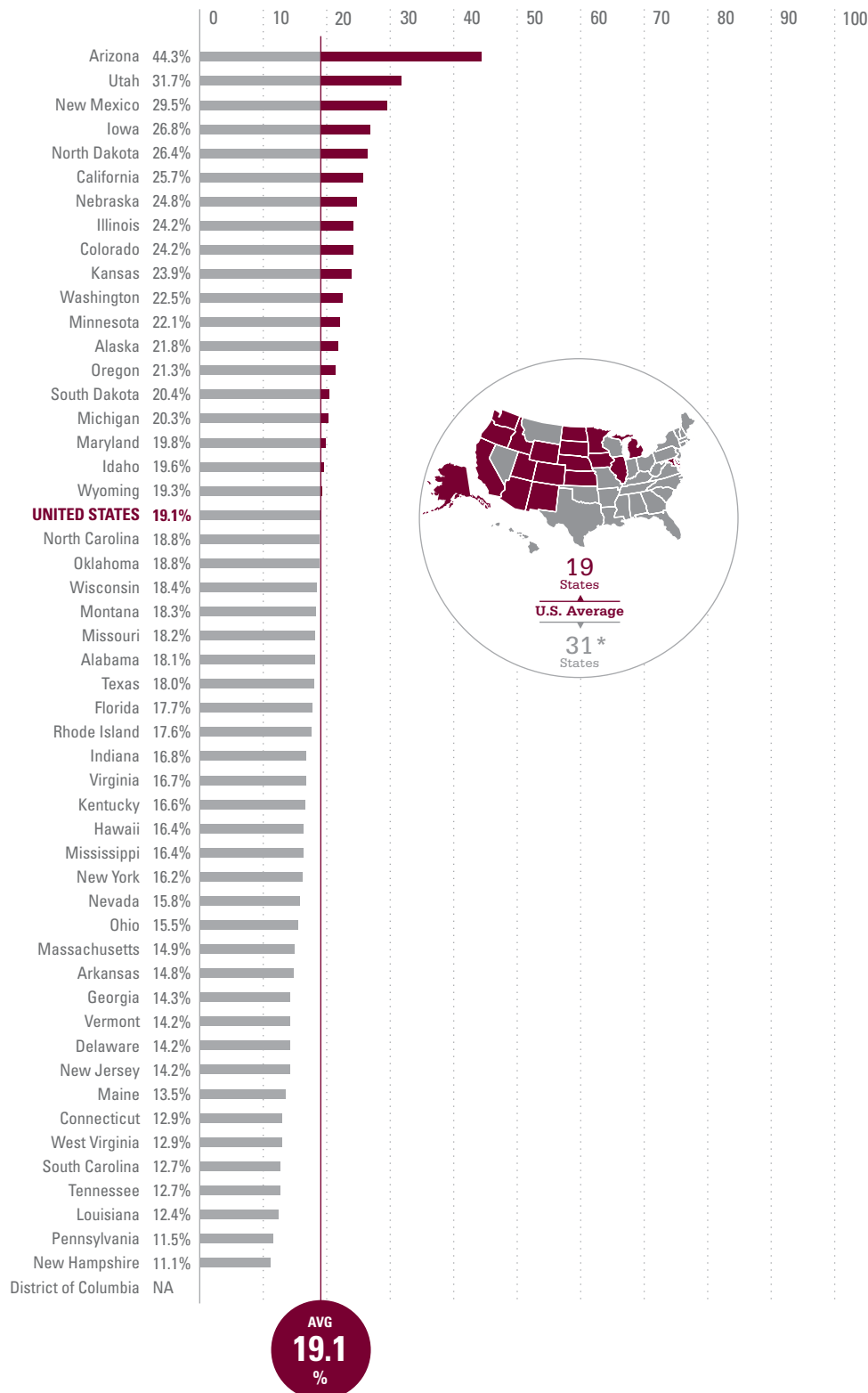
When the data are disaggregated by state for adults ages 40 to 64 across the nation that are enrolled in a postsecondary education program, the percentages range from 1.8 percent in Louisiana to 15.8 percent in Arizona. Figure 10.4c shows that when states are placed in rank order, the states with the highest enrollment are Arizona, California, New Mexico, Alaska and Washington. The states with the lowest enrollment are Louisiana, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Tennessee and South Carolina.

When interpreting this measure, what should be kept in mind? The data provide two age groups enrolled in postsecondary education institutions: 25- to 39-year-olds and 40- to 64-year-olds. The individuals enrolled in postsecondary education institutions are those with just a high school diploma.

10.4b

Percentage of 25- to 39-Year-Olds with Only a High School Diploma Enrolled in Postsecondary Education by State Rank, 2005

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2005

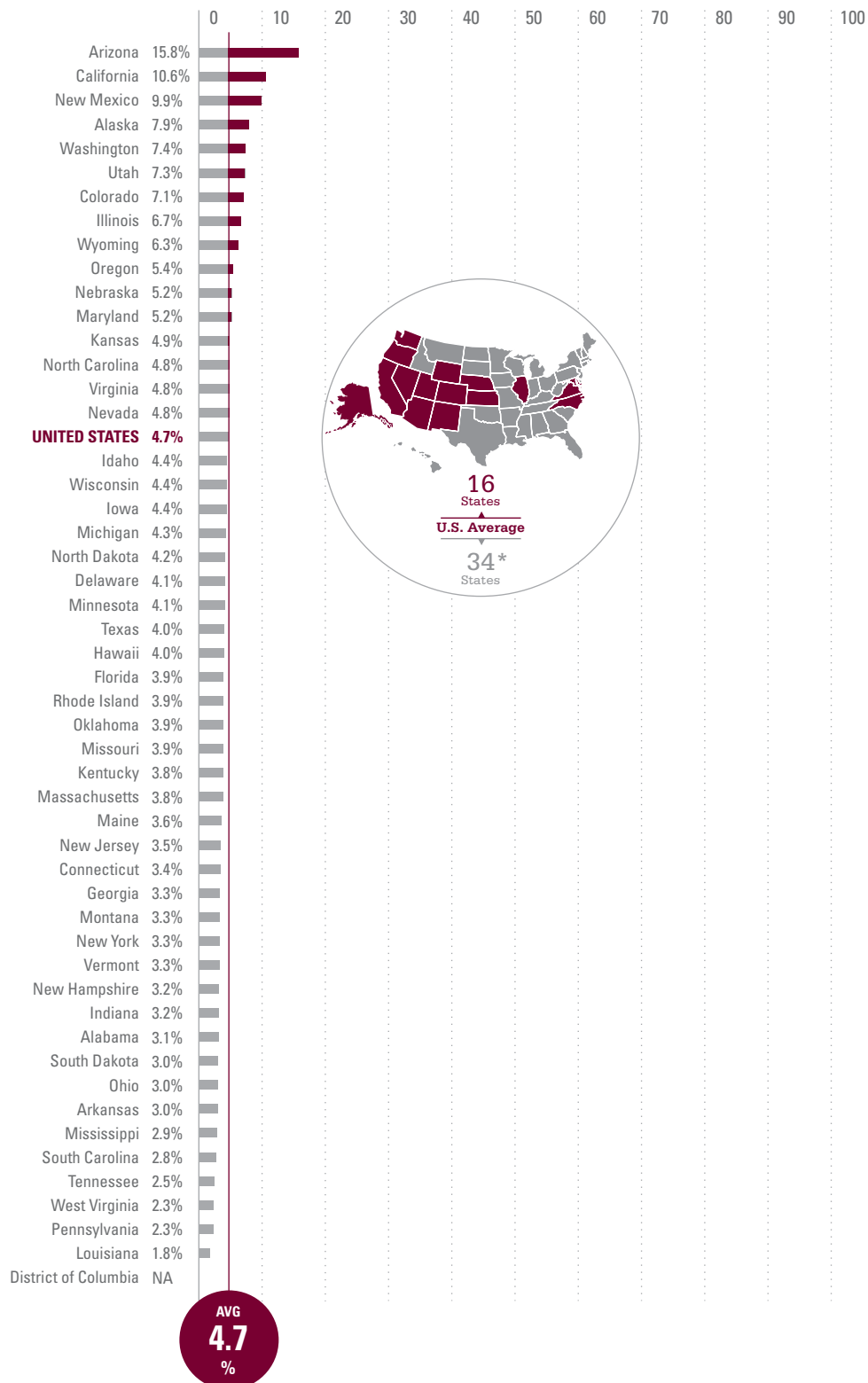


* Indicator data not available for all states.

10.4c

Percentage of 40- to 64-Year-Olds with Only a High School Diploma Enrolled in Postsecondary Education by State Rank, 2005

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2005



* Indicator data not available for all states.

Appendix

Data Book

Overall Goal of the Commission

INDICATOR: U.S. Educational Attainment Among 25- to 34-Year-Olds

Calculation

Percentage of adults between 25 and 34 years old in the United States who have attained at least an associate degree.

Sources/Links

U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2010.

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

<http://factfinder.census.gov>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are reported for 2000–2008, and data are gathered and produced annually.

Data Sources/Related Links

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/educ-attn.html>

Recommendation One: Provide a Program of Voluntary Preschool Education, Universally Available to Children from Low-Income Families

INDICATOR: Percentage of 3- to 5-Year-Olds Enrolled in Preschool Programs

Calculation

Percentage of 3- to 5-year-olds enrolled in preschool programs.

Sources/Links

National Center for Education Statistics, 2009.

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available and reported for 1991 to most recent available (2005)—irregularly.

Data Sources/Related Links

<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2007/section1/table.asp?tableID=662>

INDICATOR: Percentage of 3- to 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in State-Funded Pre-K Programs

Calculation

Numerator: Number enrolled in state-funded pre-K programs

Denominator: Number of 3- to 4-year-olds as reported in The Yearbook from U.S. Census Population Estimates, 2007.

Sources/Links

The State Preschool Yearbook, National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers Graduate School of Education, 2009.

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available and reported for 2001 to most recent available (2008)—annually.

Data Sources/Related Links

<http://nieer.org/yearbook2008/>

INDICATOR: Percentage of 3- to 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in Head Start by State**Calculation**

Numerator: Number enrolled in federal Head Start programs by state

Denominator: Number of 3- to 4-year-olds as reported in The Yearbook from the US Census Population Estimates, 2007.

Sources/Links

The State Preschool Yearbook, National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers Graduate School of Education, 2009.

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available and reported for 2001 to most recent available (2008)—annually.

Data Sources/Related Links

<http://nieer.org/yearbook2008/states>

Recommendation Two: Improve Middle and High School Counseling

INDICATOR: Student-to-Counselor Ratio**Calculation**

Ratio of students to counselors in schools.

Numerator: Number of students by state

Denominator: Number of guidance counselors by state

Sources/Links

Based on data from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Produced by the American Counseling Association, Office of Public Policy and Legislation, 2007–2008.

<http://www.counseling.org/PublicPolicy/>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for 2007–2008.

Data Sources/Related Links

<http://www.counseling.org/PublicPolicy>

INDICATOR: Statewide Comprehensive School Counseling Programs**Calculation**

Number of states that have implemented statewide school counseling programs.

Sources/Links

Based on data from the American School Counselor Association, 2008.
<http://www.schoolcounselor.org/content.asp?pl=133&sl=280&contentid=280>

Data Availability/Discussion

Website last updated in 2008.

Data Sources/Related Links

These data represent states that have designed comprehensive school counseling programs that follow the national model suggested by the American School Counselor Association.

INDICATOR: Professional Development for Secondary School College Counselors**Calculation**

Percentage reported by NACAC Admission Trends Survey 2006–2008 respondents.

Source/Links

Clinedist, M. & Hawkins, D. (2007–2009). State of College Admission. National Association of College Admission Counseling (NACAC); Washington, DC.
<http://www.nacacnet.org/PublicationsResources/Marketplace/research/Pages/StateofCollegeAdmission.aspx>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for Fall 2006 to most recent available (2008) and can be gathered annually. Data are available for both public and private schools.

INDICATOR: Percentage of Counselors' Time Spent on Tasks**Calculation**

Mean percentage reported by NACAC Admission Trends Survey 2006–2008 respondents.

Source/Links

Clinedist, M. & Hawkins, D. (2007–2009). State of College Admission. National Association of College Admission Counseling (NACAC); Washington, DC.
<http://www.nacacnet.org/PublicationsResources/Marketplace/research/Pages/StateofCollegeAdmission.aspx>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for Fall 2006 to most recent available (2008) and can be gathered annually. Data are available for both public and private schools.

Recommendation Three: Implement the Best Research-Based Dropout Prevention Programs

INDICATOR: Graduation Rate for Public High School Students

Calculation

Average Freshman Graduation Rate.

Sources/Links

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "NCES Common Core of Data State Dropout and Completion Data File," 2009.

Data Availability/Discussion

The averaged freshman graduation rate is the number of graduates divided by the estimated count of freshmen four years earlier. The estimated averaged freshman enrollment count is the sum of the number of 8th-graders five years earlier, the number of 9th-graders four years earlier (when current-year seniors were freshmen), and the number of 10th-graders three years earlier, divided by 3. Enrollment counts include a proportional distribution of students not enrolled in a specific grade. Graduates include only those who earned regular diplomas or diplomas for advanced academic achievement (e.g., honors diploma) as defined by the state or jurisdiction. Totals for reporting states include any of the 50 states and the District of Columbia that reported data for a given year.

Data Sources/Related Links

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009064.pdf>

INDICATOR: National Status Dropout Rate (Non-Institutional)

Calculation

Numerator: The number of individuals ages 16 to 24 who, as of October 2007, had not completed high school and were not currently enrolled.

Denominator: The total number of 16- to 24-year-olds in October 2007.

Sources/Links

KewalRamani, A., & Chapman, C. (2007). Dropout and completion rates in the United States: 2007. Compendium Report. National Center for Education Statistics, Table A-20-2.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009064.pdf>

Data Availability/Discussion

Calculated data are available and reported for 1972 to 2007 available—annually. The calculation does not account for transfers across institutions.

Data Sources/Related Links

Current Population Survey data download
<http://www.bls.census.gov/ferretftp.htm>

INDICATOR: National Status Dropout Rate (Institutional)**Calculation**

Numerator: The number of 16- through 24-year-olds surveyed by the 2007 ACS (American Community Survey) who are not enrolled in high school and who have not earned a high school credential (either a diploma or equivalency credential, such as a General Educational Development [GED] certificate).

Denominator: The total number of 16- through 24-year-olds as of 2007.

Sources/Links

Planty, M., Hussar, W., Snyder, T., Kena, G., KewalRamani, A., Kemp, J., Blanco, K., & Dinkes, R. (2009). The Condition of Education 2009. U.S. Department of Education, NCES 2009-081, Table A-20-1.
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009081.pdf>

Data Availability/Discussion

Calculated data are only available for 2007. The 2007 ACS includes institutionalized persons, incarcerated persons and active duty military personnel living in barracks in the United States. National-level data from the ACS are available starting with the year 2000. (NCES, 2009, p.276.)

Data Sources/Related Links

American Community Survey data download
<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Products/>

INDICATOR: National Event Dropout Rate**Calculation**

Numerator: The number of individuals ages 15 to 24 surveyed in October (e.g., 2007) who were enrolled in grades 10 to 12 in October (e.g., 2006), who were not enrolled in high school in October (e.g., 2007), and who also did not complete high school (that is, had not received a high school diploma or an alternative credential such as an equivalency certificate) between, for example, October 2006 and October 2007.

Denominator: The sum of the dropouts (that is, the numerator) and all individuals ages 15 to 24 who were attending grades 10 to 12 in October (e.g., 2006), who were still enrolled in October (e.g., 2007), or who graduated or completed high school between, for example, October 2006 and October 2007.

State Event Dropout Rate

Numerator: All individuals who

- Were enrolled in school at some time during the previous school year;
- Were not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year;
- Had not graduated from high school or completed a state- or district-approved education program; and
- Did not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions: transferred to another public school district, private school, or state- or district-approved education program; temporary absence due to suspension or school-approved education program; or death.

Denominator: The current October 1 membership count for the state, for the grades for which the dropout rate is being calculated. For example, the dropout rate for grades 9 to 12 would use a denominator that equals the October 1 enrollment count for grades 9 to 12.⁵⁹

Sources/Links

Cataldi, E. F., Laird, J., Kewell-Ramani, A., and Chapman, C. (2009). High school dropout and completion rates in the United States: 2007. Compendium Report. National Center for Education Statistics.
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009064.pdf>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available and reported for 1972 to 2007 available—annually. The measure provides information about the rate at which U.S. high school students are leaving school without a successful outcome. It is not well suited for studying how many people in the country lack a high school credential irrespective of whether they attended U.S. high schools, nor does it provide a picture of the dropout problem more generally because it only measures how many students dropped out in a single year, and students may reenter the school system after that time (NCES, 2007, p.4).

Data Sources/Related Links

Current Population Survey data download.

<http://www.bls.census.gov/ferretftp.htm>

The Common Core of Data (CCD), administered by the national Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pub_dropouts.asp

59. Ungraded students are prorated across grades in the denominator proportional to known graded enrollment rates, and ungraded dropouts are included in the numerator.

Recommendation Four: Align the K–12 Education System with International Standards and College Admission Expectations

INDICATOR: Percentage of Public High Schools Offering AP or IB Courses in the Four Core Subject Areas

Calculation

Numerator: Number of public high schools in the United States that offer Advanced Placement Program courses as reported by the College Board or IB courses as reported by International Baccalaureate in the four core subject areas.

Denominator: Number of public high schools in the United States, as maintained by the College Board.

Sources/Links

The College Board, 2010.

International Baccalaureate, 2010.

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are reported for 2008, and data are gathered and produced annually. Data was computed using lists of International Baccalaureate Schools available at www.ibo.org. Advanced Placement Program® Schools were computed using available data from the College Board. The number of public schools in the United States were computed using data from the National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core Data, and the College Board.

Data Sources/Related Links

<http://www.collegeboard.com/ap>

<http://www.ibo.org/>

<http://www.nces.ed.gov>

INDICATOR: Percentage of States with Alignment Between K–12 and Higher Education Standards

Calculation

Number of states with alignment between K–12 and higher education divided by the total number of states.

Percent of States Committed to Adopting the National Common Core Standards.

Calculation: Number of states who joined the Common Core Standards Initiative divided by the total number of states.

Sources/Links

Closing the Expectations Gap 2009: An Annual 50-State Progress Report on the Alignment of High School Policies with the Demands of College and Careers, Achieve Inc, 2009.

<http://www.achieve.org/closingtheexpectationsgap2009>

9/1/2009 Press Release Fifty-One States and Territories Join Common Core Standards Initiative.

<http://www.corestandards.org/CoreStandardsNews.htm>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are reported for 2006–2009, and data are gathered and produced annually by Achieve.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

<http://www.achieve.org/>

<http://www.ccsso.org/>

<http://www.nga.org/>

INDICATOR: Percentage of Students in Remedial Classes in College**Calculation**

Percentage of freshmen students who are required to participate in remedial classes in reading, writing or mathematics when they enter a college or university.

Sources/Links

National Center for Education Statistics. Postsecondary Education Quick Information System (PEQIS), Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1996.

<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/peqis/publications/97584/>

National Center for Education Statistics. IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 2003.

<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/peqis/publications/2004010/>

National Governors Association and Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010.
<http://www.nga.org/portal/site/nga/menuitem.be806d93bb5ee77eee28aca9501010a0/?vgnextoid=1716f7e861ed3210VgnVCM1000005e00100aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=759b8f2005361010VgnVCM1000001a01010aRCRD&vgnnextfmt=print>

<http://www.corestandards.org/>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are reported for 1995 and 2000. Data are not collected and produced annually by the National Center for Education Statistics.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/peqis/>

Recommendation Five: Improve Teacher Quality and Focus on Recruitment and Retention

INDICATOR: State Encouragement and Support for Teacher Professional Development

Calculation

The number and percentage of states with policies in the following five areas:

- State has formal professional development standards.
- State finances professional development for all districts.
- State requires districts/schools to set aside time for professional development.
- State requires districts to align professional development with local priorities and goals.
- State provides incentives for teachers to earn National Board Certification.

Sources/Links

National Center for Education Statistics, State Education Reforms, 2007-08.
http://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab3_8.asp

Data Availability/Discussion

Data collected annually since 1997.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

Date is reprocessed from Schools and Staffing Survey by Ed Week's Quality Counts report.
<http://www.edweek.org/qc/2009/>

INDICATOR: Percentage of Public School Teachers in Grades 9 Through 12 by Field

Calculation

Numerator: Number of teachers in specific field.

Denominator: Total number of teachers in public school in grades 9 through 12.

Source/Links

U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey.
http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d09/tables/dt09_070.asp

INDICATOR: State Policies on Out-of-Field Teachers

Calculation

The number and percentage of states that report they have a policy that requires parents to receive notification when their child's teacher(s) do not have formal schooling in the field in which they teach.

The number and Percentage of states that report the existence of a policy that stipulates a ban or cap on the number of out-of-field teachers.

Source/Links

The National Center for Education Statistics, State Education Reforms, 2007–2008.

http://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab3_10.asp

Data Availability/Discussion

Data is available on an annual basis.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

http://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab3_10.asp

INDICATOR: Percentage of Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral Degrees Earned in Education.**Calculation**

Numerator: Number of education degrees.

Denominator: Total number of degrees in all fields of study.

Source/Links

Tabulated by the National Science Foundation, Division of Science Resources Statistics using data from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Completions Survey.

http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/nsf08321/content.cfm?pub_id=3785&id=2

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available from 1997–2006, with the exception of 1999 for bachelor's and master's degrees.

INDICATOR: Number of Teachers Leaving the Profession**Calculation**

The number of teachers leaving the profession.

Sources/Links

Based on data from the National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 2007.

http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d08/tables/dt08_073.asp?referrer=list

Data Availability/Discussion

Data were last reported in Table 73 of the 2008 Digest of Education Statistics, released in March 2009.

Data Sources/Related Links

<http://nces.ed.gov/>

Recommendation Six:

Clarify and Simplify the Admission Process

INDICATOR: Percentage of Four-Year Colleges with Application Available Online

Calculation

Numerator: The total number of four-year institutions in the Annual Survey of Colleges in a given year (e.g., 2007) indicating that application is available online through college's website.

Denominator: The number of four-year, degree-granting, not-for-profit, Title IV-participating institutions in a given year (e.g., 2007). Universe includes four-year, degree-granting, not-for-profit, Title IV-participating institutions, which were identified using the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Source/Links

Annual Survey of Colleges administered by the College Board. See <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/higher-ed/recruitment/annual-survey>

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) online Data Center. U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for fall 2001 to most recent available (2008) and can be gathered annually. Data are available for both public and private schools.

INDICATOR: Percentage of Four-Year Colleges to Which Students Can Submit Applications Online

Calculation

Numerator: The total number of four-year institutions in the Annual Survey of Colleges in a given year (e.g., 2007) indicating that application may be submitted online.

Denominator: The number of four-year, degree-granting, not-for-profit, Title IV-participating institutions in a given year (e.g., 2007). Universe includes four-year, degree-granting, not-for-profit, Title IV-participating institutions, which were identified using the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Source/Links

Annual Survey of Colleges administered by the College Board.

<http://professionals.collegeboard.com/higher-ed/recruitment/annual-survey>

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) online Data Center.

US Department of Education, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for fall 2001 to most recent available (2008) and can be gathered annually. Data are available for both public and private schools.

INDICATOR: Percentage of Four-Year Colleges that Participate in National Application Systems**Calculation**

Numerator: The total number of unique four-year institutions that are members of the Common Application, Universal College Application, SuperAPP or Common Black College Application in a given admission cycle (e.g., 2007–2008).

Denominator: The number of four-year, degree-granting, not-for-profit, Title IV-participating institutions in fall of the corresponding admission cycle (e.g., 2007).

Source/Links

<https://www.commonapp.org/CommonApp/Members.aspx>

<https://www.universalcollegeapp.com>

<https://www.connectedu.net>

<http://www.eduinonline.com/>

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) online Data Center.

U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/>

Data Availability/Discussion

Common Application data are available for 1975 to most recent available (2009); Universal College Application partnered with colleges beginning with the 2007–2008 admission cycle, and data are available for fall 2007 to most recent available (2009); SuperAPP was introduced for the 2009–2010 admission cycle, and data will be available for fall 2009 and beyond; Common Black College Application membership was available only for the admission season beginning in fall 2009. Member institutions are updated annually. Data are available for both public and private schools.

INDICATOR: Immediate Enrollment Rate of High School Graduates**Calculation**

Includes high school graduates ages 16–24, who accounted for about 98 Percent of all high school graduates in a given year. Enrollment rates were calculated from the Current Population Survey (CPS) data.

Source/Links

Planty, M., Hussar, W., Snyder, T., Kena, G., KewalRamani, A., Kemp, J., Bianco, K., Dinkes, R. (2009). The Condition of Education 2009 (NCES 2009-081). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for 1972 to most recent available (2007) and are calculated annually. Data are available by gender, race/ethnicity, family income, parent education and type of institution.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2009/section3/indicator21.asp#info>

U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1972–2007.

Recommendation Seven: Provide More Need-Based Grant Aid While Simplifying and Making the Financial Aid Process More Transparent

INDICATOR: Grant Aid for Students from Low-Income Families**Calculation**

Average total grant aid per dependent student by family income.

Source/Links

National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, National Center for Education Statistics, calculations by the College Board.

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for 1992 to 2007 — annually.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

N/A

INDICATOR: Student Debt Levels**Calculation**

Median Debt Levels of Degree and Certificate recipients in constant 2008 dollars.

Source/Links

NPSAS 2003-04, NPSAS 2007-08; Patricia Steele and Sandy Baum, "How Much Are College Students Borrowing?" The College Board, 2009.

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for 2004 to 2008—annually.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

Annual Survey of Colleges administered by the College Board.

INDICATOR: Federal Student Aid Application Changes**Calculation**

N/A

Source/Links

U.S. Department of Education.

Data Availability/Discussion

N/A

Related Data Sources/Related Links

N/A

INDICATOR: Implementation of Policies Designed to Provide Incentives for Institutions to Promote Enrollment and Success of Low-Income and First-Generation Students**Calculation**

N/A

Source/Links

N/A

Data Availability/Discussion

N/A

Related Data Sources/Related Links

N/A

Recommendation Eight: Keep College Affordable

INDICATOR: State Appropriations to Fund Public Higher Education

Calculation

State Fiscal Support for Higher Education and Local Tax Support for Higher Education (in millions of dollars)/State Monies Plus Federal Stimulus and Government Service Funds.

Source/Links

Illinois State University Study for the Center of Education Policy, Grapevine Data, <http://www.grapevine.ilstu.edu/tables/index.htm>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for Fiscal Years 2004–2005, 2005–2006, 2006–2007, 2007–2008, 2008–2009, and 2009–2010.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

Annual Survey of Colleges administered by the College Board

INDICATOR: Levels of Tuition, Fees, and Other Costs of Attendance at Colleges and Universities

Calculation

Average Published Charges for Undergraduates by Type and Control of Institution, 2009–2010.

Average Published Charges for Undergraduates by Carnegie Classification, 2009–2010.

Average Annual Percentage Increase in Inflation-Adjusted Published Prices by Decade, 1979–1980 to 2009–2010.

Average published public four-year college tuition and fees in 2009–2010.

Source/Links

The College Board, Trends in College Pricing, 2009.

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for 2009–2010.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

N/A

INDICATOR: Net Prices Students Pay for College**Calculation**

Published tuition and fees, net tuition and fees, and room and board in constant 2009 dollars, full-time undergraduate students.

Average net prices for public four-year colleges by family income level of dependent students, in constant 2007 dollars.

Source/Links

The College Board, Trends in College Pricing 2009; data from National Postsecondary Student Aid Study.

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for 1995–2010.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

N/A

INDICATOR: Family Income Levels**Calculation**

Percentage growth in mean family income by quintile in constant 2008 dollars, 1978–1988, 1988–1998 and 1998–2008.

Source/Links

The College Board, Trends in College Pricing, 2009.

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for 1978–1988, 1988–1998 and 1998–2008.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

N/A

INDICATOR: Earnings of College Graduates**Calculation**

Mean average earnings of full-time workers ages 25 to 29.

Source/Links

U.S. Census.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/dinctabs.html>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available for 2003, 2007 and 2008.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

<http://www.census.gov>

Recommendation Nine: Dramatically Increase College Completion Rates

INDICATOR: Freshman-to-Sophomore Retention Rate

Calculation

Retention rates are determined by calculating a weighted average based on each reporting institution's first-time, full-time undergraduate enrollment.

Numerator: The number of students returning for sophomore year (aggregated across reporting institutions).

Denominator: The number of students who entered the previous fall (aggregated across reporting institutions).

Sources/Links

National Center for Higher Education Management Systems.
<http://higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=92>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available and reported for 2004 to most recent available (2007) and are gathered annually. Two-year private institutions data include for-profit colleges.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

National Center for Education Statistics. IPEDS Enrollment Survey, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

<http://www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>

Measuring Up: The State-by-State Report Card <http://www.highereducation.org>

INDICATOR: Three-Year Graduation Rate of Associate Degree–Seeking Students

Calculation

Graduation rates are determined by calculating a weighted average based on each reporting Title IV, degree-granting institution's first-time, full-time undergraduate enrollment of those who graduated within three years.

Numerator: The number of students graduating within three years of entry (aggregated across reporting institutions within a state).

Denominator: The number of students who entered in a given freshman cohort (aggregated across reporting institutions within a state).

Sources/Links

National Center for Higher Education Management Systems.
<http://higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?submeasure=24&year=2007&level=nation&mode=data&state=0>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available and reported for 1997 to most recent available (2007) and are gathered annually. The calculation does not account for transfers across institutions.

Related Data Sources/Related Links

National Center for Education Statistics. IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

<http://www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds>

Measuring Up: The State-by-State Report Card.

<http://www.highereducation.org>

INDICATOR: Six-Year Graduation Rate of Bachelor's Degree-Seeking Students**Calculation**

Graduation rates are determined by calculating a weighted average based on each reporting Title IV, degree-granting institution's first-time, full-time undergraduate enrollment who graduated within six years.

Numerator: The number of students graduating within six years of entry (aggregated across reporting institutions within a state).

Denominator: The number of students who entered in a given freshman cohort (aggregated across reporting institutions within a state).

Sources/Links

National Center for Higher Education Management Systems.

<http://higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/?year=2007&level=nation&mode=data&state=0&submeasure=27>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are available and reported for 1997 to most recent available (2007) and are gathered annually. The calculation does not account for transfers across institutions.

Data Sources/Related Links

National Center for Educational Statistics. IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

<http://www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>

Measuring Up: The State-by-State Report Card.

<http://www.highereducation.org>

Recommendation Ten:

Provide Postsecondary Opportunities as an Essential Element of Adult Education Programs

INDICATOR: Educational Attainment for Adults Ages 25 to 64

Calculation

Percentage of adults ages 25 to 64 with an associate degree or higher, with less than a high school diploma, with only a high school diploma but no college, with some college but no degree.

Sources/Links

U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2010.

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

<http://factfinder.census.gov>

Data Availability/Discussion

Data are reported for 2008, and data are gathered and produced annually.

Data Sources/Related Links

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/educ-attn.html>

INDICATOR: Percentage of Adults with No High School Diploma who Attained a GED

Calculation

Percentage of GEDs awarded in selected age-groups per 1,000, with no high school diploma.

Source/Links

The National Center of Higher Education Management Systems, GED Testing Service; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey.

Data Availability/Discussion

Calculated data are reported for 2005, 2006 and 2008, and will be updated annually.

Data Sources/Related Links

<http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=101>

INDICATOR: Enrollment in State-Administered Adult Education Programs**Calculation**

Enrollment in state-administered education programs per 1,000 adults ages 18 to 64 with less than a high school diploma.

Source/Links

Adult learning in focus: National and state-by-state data report. Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), 2008.

<http://www.cael.org/adultlearninginfofocus.htm>

Data Availability/Discussion

Calculated data are reported for 2005. The raw data were from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE).

Data Sources/Related Links

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/resource/index.html#research>

INDICATOR: Rate of Nontraditional-Age Adults Enrolled in Postsecondary Education**Calculation**

Percentage of undergraduate enrollment in selected age groups (ages 25 to 39 and 40 to 64) per 1,000 adults with just a high school diploma.

Source/Links

The National Center of Higher Education Management Systems, National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS Fall Enrollment; 2005 American Community Survey.

Data Availability/Discussion

Calculated data are reported for 2005 and will be updated biennially.

Data Sources/Related Links

<http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=102>

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