



# Digest of Education Statistics 2008

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# FOREWORD

The 2008 edition of the *Digest of Education Statistics* is the 44th in a series of publications initiated in 1962. The *Digest* has been issued annually except for combined editions for the years 1977–78, 1983–84, and 1985–86. Its primary purpose is to provide a compilation of statistical information covering the broad field of American education from prekindergarten through graduate school. The *Digest* includes a selection of data from many sources, both government and private, and draws especially on the results of surveys and activities carried out by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). To qualify for inclusion in the *Digest*, material must be nationwide in scope and of current interest and value. The publication contains information on a variety of subjects in the field of education statistics, including the number of schools and colleges, teachers, enrollments, and graduates, in addition to educational attainment, finances, federal funds for education, libraries, and international comparisons. Supplemental information on population trends, attitudes on education, education characteristics of the labor force, government finances, and economic trends provides background for evaluating education data. Although the *Digest* contains important information on federal education funding, more detailed information on federal activities is available from federal education program offices.

The *Digest* contains seven chapters: All Levels of Education, Elementary and Secondary Education, Postsecondary Education, Federal Programs for Education and Related Activities, Outcomes of Education, International Comparisons of Education, and Libraries and Educational Technology. Preceding these chapters is an Introduction that provides a brief overview of current trends in American education, which supplements the tabular materials in chapters 1 through 7. The *Digest* concludes with three appendixes. The first appendix, Guide to Sources, provides a brief synopsis of the surveys used to generate the *Digest* tables; the second, Definitions, is included to help readers understand terms used in the *Digest*; and the third, Index of Table Numbers, allows readers to quickly locate tables on specific topics.

In addition to updating many of the statistics that have appeared in previous years, this edition contains new material, including

- number and percentage of public school students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (table 42);
- percentage distribution of children at about 2 and 4 years of age, by type of child care arrangement and selected child and family characteristics (table 46);
- percentage distribution of quality ratings of child care arrangements of children at about 4 years of age, by type of arrangement and selected child and family characteristics (table 47);
- children’s specific language, literacy, mathematics, color knowledge, and fine motor skills at about 4 years of age, by age of child and selected characteristics (table 114);
- average National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading scale scores of 4th-, 8th-, and 12th-graders, by selected student and school characteristics (table 123);
- average NAEP writing scale score and percentage of students attaining NAEP writing achievement levels, by selected student characteristics and grade level (table 125);
- average NAEP mathematics scale scores of 4th-, 8th-, and 12th-graders, by selected student and school characteristics (table 136);
- average NAEP mathematics scale score of 8th-graders and percentage reporting various attitudes toward mathematics work, by frequency of attitude and selected student and school characteristics (table 137);
- average NAEP science scale score of 12th-graders and percentage reporting various attitudes toward science, by selected student and school characteristics (table 140);
- percentage of elementary and secondary school students who do homework outside of school, whose parents check that homework is done, and whose parents help with homework, by frequency and selected student and school characteristics (table 156);
- total full-year enrollment in degree-granting institutions, by control and type of institution and state or jurisdiction (table 222);
- degrees in Arabic, Chinese, Korean, and Russian conferred by degree-granting institutions, by level of degree (table 309);
- full-time, first-time degree/certificate seeking undergraduate students enrolled in degree-granting institutions, by participation and average amount awarded in financial aid programs, and type and control of institution (table 336); and
- percentage of 18- to 25-year-olds reporting substance abuse during the past 30 days and the past year, by drug used and selected characteristics (table 396).

Updates to tables from the next *Digest of Education Statistics* will appear on the NCES website prior to printing the full edition. The *Digest* can be accessed from <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest>.

Val Plisko  
Associate Commissioner  
Early Childhood, International, and Crosscutting Studies  
Division



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### Chapter 3. Postsecondary Education

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# INTRODUCTION

In fall 2008, about 74.1 million people were enrolled in American schools and colleges (table 1). About 4.6 million people were employed as elementary and secondary school teachers or as college faculty, in full-time equivalents (FTE). Other professional, administrative, and support staff at educational institutions totaled 5.2 million. All data for 2008 in this Introduction are projected. Some data for other years are projected or estimated as noted. In discussions of historical trends, different time periods and specific years are cited, depending on the timing of important changes as well as the availability of relevant data.

## Elementary/Secondary Education

### Enrollment

A pattern of annual increases in total public elementary and secondary school enrollment began in 1985 (table 3). Between 1985 and 2008, public school enrollment rose 26 percent, from 39.4 million to 49.8 million (table 2). Private school enrollment grew more slowly than public school enrollment during this period, rising 9 percent, from 5.6 million to 6.1 million. As a result, the percentage of elementary and secondary students enrolled in private schools declined from 12.4 percent in 1985 to 10.8 percent in 2008.

In public schools between 1985 and 2008, there was a 29 percent increase in elementary enrollment (prekindergarten through grade 8), compared with a 20 percent increase in secondary enrollment. Part of the relatively fast growth in public elementary school enrollment resulted from the expansion of prekindergarten programs (table 37). Between 1985 and 2006, enrollment in prekindergarten increased 611 percent, while enrollment in other elementary grades increased 23 percent. The number of children enrolled in prekindergarten increased from 0.2 million in 1985 to 1.1 million in 2006, and the number enrolled in kindergarten through grade 8 increased from 26.9 million to 33.1 million. Public secondary school enrollment declined 8 percent from 1985 to 1990, but then started increasing. For most of the period after 1992, secondary enrollment increased more rapidly than elementary enrollment, leading to relatively large secondary enrollment gains in recent years. For example, between 1998 and 2008, public secondary school enrollment rose 13 percent, compared with 5 percent for public elementary school enrollment. Overall, public school enrollment rose 7 percent between 1998 and 2008.

Since the enrollment rates of kindergarten, elementary, and secondary school-age children changed by less than 2

percentage points between 1985 and 2007 (table 7), increases in public and private elementary and secondary school enrollment have been driven primarily by increases in the number of children in these age groups. The enrollment rate of prekindergarten age children (ages 3 and 4) rose between 1985 and 2007, which was reflected by an increase in prekindergarten enrollment.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) forecasts record levels of total elementary and secondary enrollment through at least 2017, reflecting expected increases in the school-age population. For public schools, the projected fall 2008 enrollment is expected to be a new record, and new records are expected every year through 2017, the last year for which NCES enrollment projections have been developed (table 3). Public elementary school enrollment (prekindergarten through grade 8) is projected to increase by 10 percent between 2008 and 2017. Public secondary school enrollment (grades 9 through 12) is expected to increase 5 percent between 2008 and 2017. Overall, total public school enrollment is expected to increase 9 percent between 2008 and 2017.

### Teachers

A projected 3.7 million full-time-equivalent (FTE) elementary and secondary school teachers were engaged in classroom instruction in fall 2008 (table 4). This number has risen 15 percent since 1998. The 2008 projected number of FTE teachers includes 3.2 million public school teachers and 0.5 million private school teachers.

The number of public school teachers has risen faster than the number of public school students over the past 10 years, resulting in declines in the pupil/teacher ratio (table 64). In the fall of 2008, there were a projected 15.3 public school pupils per teacher, compared with 16.4 public school pupils per teacher 10 years earlier.

The average salary for public school teachers in 2006–07 was \$50,816, about 3 percent higher than in 1996–97, after adjustment for inflation (table 78). The salaries of public school teachers have generally maintained pace with inflation since 1990–91.

### Student Performance

Most of the student performance data in the *Digest* are drawn from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The NAEP assessments have been conducted using three basic designs: the national main NAEP, state NAEP, and long-term trend NAEP. The national main NAEP and state

NAEP provide current information about student performance in a variety of subjects, while long-term trend NAEP provides information on performance since the early 1970s in reading and mathematics only. Results from long-term trend NAEP are included in the discussion in chapter 2 of the *Digest*, while the information in this Introduction includes only results from the national main and state NAEP.

The main NAEP reports current information for the nation and specific geographic regions of the country. The assessment program includes students drawn from both public and nonpublic schools and reports results for student achievement at grades 4, 8, and 12. The main NAEP assessments follow the frameworks developed by the National Assessment Governing Board and use the latest advances in assessment methodology. The state NAEP is identical in content to the national main NAEP, but the state NAEP reports information only for public school students. Chapter 2 presents more information on the NAEP designs and methodology, and additional details appear in Appendix A: Guide to Sources.

### Reading

Reported on a scale of 0 to 500, national average reading scores of 4th- and 8th-graders were higher in 2007 than in 1992, by 4 and 3 points, respectively (table 123). These 2007 scores were also higher than the 2005 scores. The reading score of 12th-graders was 6 points lower in 2005 (the most recent assessment year for grade 12) than in 1992. In the most recent assessment, females at each grade level outscored their male counterparts. For example, 12th-grade females scored 13 points higher than males in 2005. Average scores were higher in 2007 than in 1992 for White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander 4th-graders (ranging from 6 to 16 points) and for White, Black, and Hispanic 8th-graders (ranging from 5 to 7 points), while scores were lower in 2005 than in 1992 for White, Black, and Hispanic 12th-graders (ranging from 5 to 7 points).

The 2007 main NAEP reading assessment of states found that the average reading proficiency of public school 4th- and 8th-graders varied across participating jurisdictions (the 50 states, the Department of Defense overseas and domestic schools, and the District of Columbia). For 4th-graders in public schools, the U.S. average score was 220, with average scores in participating jurisdictions ranging from 197 in the District of Columbia to 236 in Massachusetts (table 121). For 8th-graders in public schools, the U.S. average score was 261, with average scores in participating jurisdictions ranging from 241 in the District of Columbia to 273 in the Department of Defense schools, Massachusetts, and Vermont (table 122).

### Mathematics

From 1990 to 2007, average NAEP mathematics scores increased 27 points for 4th-graders and 19 points for 8th-graders (table 136). (NAEP mathematics scores are reported on a scale of 0 to 500.) Increases in scores were seen for both males and females and for most racial/ethnic groups. Both male and female 4th- and 8th-graders scored higher in 2007 than in any of the previous assessments. In 2007, at each grade, males

outscored females by 2 points; these score gaps were not measurably different from the gaps in either 2005 or 1990. At grade 4, average scores in 2007 for White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander students were higher than the scores in any of the previous assessments. Although the score for American Indian/Alaska Native 4th-graders increased over time, there was no measurable difference between their 2005 and 2007 scores. At grade 8, average scores in 2007 for White, Black, and Hispanic students were higher than in any of the previous assessments. The average score for 8th-grade Asian/Pacific Islander students was higher in 2007 than in 1990, but not measurably different from their 2005 score. No measurable differences were detected in the scores for American Indian/Alaska Native 8th-graders over the assessment years.

The 2007 main NAEP assessment of states found that the average mathematics proficiency of public school 4th- and 8th-graders varied across participating jurisdictions (the 50 states, the Department of Defense overseas and domestic schools, and the District of Columbia). For 4th-graders in public schools, the U.S. average score was 239, with average scores in participating jurisdictions ranging from 214 in the District of Columbia to 252 in Massachusetts (table 134). For 8th-graders in public schools, the U.S. average score was 280, with average scores in participating jurisdictions ranging from 248 in the District of Columbia to 298 in Massachusetts (table 135).

### Science

NAEP has assessed the science abilities of students in grades 4, 8, and 12 in both public and private schools since 1996, using a separate scale of 0 to 300 for each grade. The national average 4th-grade science score increased from 147 in 1996 to 151 in 2005; there was no measurable change in the 8th-grade score; and the 12th-grade score decreased from 150 in 1996 to 147 in 2005 (table 138). Certain subgroups outperformed others in science in 2005. For example, males outperformed females at all three grades. Male 4th-graders had a higher average score in 2005 than in 1996, and both male and female 12th-graders had lower scores in 2005 than in 1996. White students scored higher, on average, than Black and Hispanic students at all three grades in 2005. At grade 4, average scores were higher for White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander students in 2005 than in 1996. At grade 8, the average score for Black students was higher in 2005 than in 1996, but the scores did not measurably change for other racial/ethnic groups. At grade 12, there were no measurable changes in average scores for any racial/ethnic group when comparing results from 2005 with those from 1996.

### International Comparisons

On the 2003 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), the average mathematics score of U.S. 4th-graders exceeded the international average for the 25 participating educational systems (table 406). (Most participating educational systems represent countries; however, some represent subnational entities with separate educational systems.)

U.S. 4th-graders outscored students in 13 educational systems, but were outperformed by students in 11 educational systems. Also on the 2003 TIMSS, U.S. 8th-graders exceeded the international average score for the 45 educational systems participating at the 8th-grade level (table 407). U.S. 8th-graders outscored students in 25 educational systems, and were outperformed by students in 9 educational systems.

On the 2006 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), the average score of U.S. 15-year-olds in mathematics literacy was 474, which was lower than the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average of 498 (table 403). (Possible scores on PISA assessments range from 0 to 1,000.) The average mathematics literacy score in the United States was lower than the average score in 23 of the other 29 OECD countries for which comparable PISA results were reported, higher than the average score in 4 of the other OECD countries, and not measurably different from the average score in 2 of the OECD countries. In science literacy, the average score of 15-year-olds in the United States was lower than the average score in 16 of the other 29 OECD countries, higher than the average score in 5 of the other OECD countries, and not measurably different from the average score in 8 of the OECD countries.

## High School Graduates and Dropouts

About 3,328,000 high school students are expected to graduate during the 2008–09 school year (table 104), including 3,011,000 public school graduates and 317,000 private school graduates. High school graduates include only recipients of diplomas, not recipients of equivalency credentials. The number of high school graduates projected for 2008–09 is lower than the record-high projection of 3,346,000 graduates for 2007–08, but exceeds the high point during the baby boom era in 1976–77, when 3,152,000 students earned diplomas. In 2005–06, an estimated 73.4 percent of public high school students graduated on time—that is, received a diploma 4 years after beginning their freshman year (table 106).

The number of General Educational Development (GED) credentials issued rose from 330,000 in 1977 to 487,000 in 2000 (table 108). A record number of 648,000 GED credentials were issued in 2001. In that year, candidates who had already taken any of the five tests in the GED test battery had to complete the entire battery before the end of the year or else take all five tests over again. The reason is that a new GED test series was introduced in 2002. In the same year, data collection procedures changed, with data from the states on the number of credentials issued being replaced by test data from individual test-takers. In 2006, 464,000 passed the GED tests, up from 330,000 in 2002, the first year of the new test series.<sup>1</sup>

The percentage of dropouts among 16- to 24-year-olds has shown some decreases over the past 20 years. This percent-

age, known as the status dropout rate, includes all people in the 16- to 24-year-old age group who are not enrolled in school and who have not completed a high school program, regardless of when they left school. (People who left school but went on to receive a GED credential are not treated as dropouts.) Between 1987 and 2007, the status dropout rate declined from 12.6 percent to 8.7 percent (table 109). Although the status dropout rate declined for both Blacks and Hispanics during this period, their rates (8.4 and 21.4 percent, respectively) remained higher than the rate for Whites (5.3 percent) in 2007. This measure is based on the civilian noninstitutionalized population, which excludes people in prisons, people in the military, and other people not living in households.

## Educational Technology

The number of computers in public schools has increased. In 2005, the average public school contained 154 instructional computers, compared with 90 in 1998 (table 427). One important technological advance that has come to classrooms following the introduction of computers has been connections to the Internet. The percentage of instructional rooms with access to the Internet increased from 51 percent in 1998 to 94 percent in 2005 (figure 29). Nearly all schools had access to the Internet in 2005 (table 427).

## Postsecondary Education

### College Enrollment

College enrollment was a projected 18.2 million in fall 2008, higher than in any previous year except 2007 (table 3). College enrollment is expected to continue setting new records throughout the fall 2009 through fall 2017 period. Between fall 2007 and fall 2017, enrollment is expected to increase by 10 percent. Despite decreases in the traditional college-age population during the late 1980s and early 1990s, total enrollment increased during this period (tables 7, 15, 188, and 204). The traditional college-age population (18 to 24 years old) rose 16 percent between 1997 and 2007, which was reflected by an increase of 26 percent in college enrollment. Between 1997 and 2007, the number of full-time students increased by 34 percent compared to a 15 percent increase in part-time students (table 188). During the same time period, the number of males enrolled increased 22 percent, while the number of females enrolled increased 29 percent.

### Faculty

In fall 2007, degree-granting institutions—defined as postsecondary institutions that grant an associate's or higher degree and are eligible for Title IV federal financial aid programs—employed 1.4 million faculty members, including 0.7 million full-time and 0.7 million part-time faculty (table 245). In addition, degree-granting institutions employed 0.3 million graduate assistants.

<sup>1</sup> Information on changes in GED test series and reporting is based on the 2003 edition of *Who Passed the GED Tests?*, by the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education, as well as communication with staff of the GED Testing Service.

## Postsecondary Degrees

During the 2008–09 academic year, postsecondary degrees are projected to number 731,000 associate’s degrees; 1,603,000 bachelor’s degrees; 649,000 master’s degrees; 93,300 first-professional degrees; and 61,700 doctor’s degrees (table 268). Between 1996–97 and 2006–07, the number of degrees conferred rose at all levels. The number of associate’s degrees was 27 percent higher in 2006–07 than in 1996–97, the number of bachelor’s degrees was 30 percent higher, the number of master’s degrees was 44 percent higher, the number of first-professional degrees was 14 percent higher, and the number of doctor’s degrees was 32 percent higher.

Between 1996–97 and 2006–07, the number of bachelor’s degrees awarded to males increased 25 percent, while the number awarded to females increased 34 percent. As a result, females earned 57 percent of all bachelor’s degrees in 2006–07, compared with 56 percent in 1996–97. Between 1996–97 and 2006–07, the number of White students earning bachelor’s degrees increased 22 percent, compared with larger increases of 55 percent for Black students, 84 percent for Hispanic students, 53 percent for Asian/Pacific Islander students, and 54 percent for American Indian/Alaska Native students (table 284). In 2006–07, White students earned 72 percent of all bachelor’s degrees awarded (vs. 77 percent in 1996–97), Black students earned 10 percent (vs. 8 percent in 1996–97), Hispanic students earned 8 percent (vs. 5 percent in 1996–97), and Asian/Pacific Islander students earned 7 percent (vs. 6 percent in 1996–97). American Indian/Alaska Native students earned about 1 percent of the degrees in both years.

## Undergraduate Prices

For the 2007–08 academic year, annual prices for undergraduate tuition, room, and board were estimated to be \$11,578 at public institutions and \$29,915 at private institutions (table 331). Between 1997–98 and 2007–08, prices for undergraduate tuition, room, and board at public institutions rose 30 percent, and prices at private institutions rose 23 percent, after adjustment for inflation.

## Educational Attainment

The U.S. Census Bureau collects annual statistics on the educational attainment of the population. Between 1998 and 2008, the percentage of the adult population 25 years of age and over who had completed high school rose from 83 percent to 87 percent, and the percentage of adults with a bachelor’s degree increased from 24 percent to 29 percent (table 8). High school completers include those people who graduated from high school with a diploma, as well as those who completed high school through equivalency programs. The percentage of young adults (25- to 29-year-olds) who had completed high school in 2008 was about the same as it was in 1998 (88 percent in both years). The percentage of young adults who had completed a bachelor’s degree increased from 27 percent in 1998 to 31 percent in 2008.

## Education Expenditures

Expenditures for public and private education, from pre-kindergarten through graduate school (excluding postsecondary schools not awarding associate’s or higher degrees), are estimated at \$1,017 billion for 2007–08 (table 25). Expenditures of elementary and secondary schools are expected to total \$631 billion, while those of degree-granting postsecondary institutions are expected to total \$386 billion. Total expenditures for education are expected to amount to 7.4 percent of the gross domestic product in 2007–08, about 0.5 percentage points higher than in 1997–98.

## Interpreting Statistics

Readers should be aware of the limitations of statistics. These limitations vary with the exact nature of a particular survey. For example, estimates based on a sample of institutions will differ somewhat from the figures that would have been obtained if a complete census had been taken using the same survey procedures. Standard errors are available for sample survey data appearing in this report. In most cases, standard errors for all items appear in the printed table. In some cases, only standard errors for key items appear in the printed table. Standard errors that do not appear in the tables are available from NCES upon request. Although some of the surveys conducted by NCES are census or universe surveys (which attempt to collect information from all potential respondents), all surveys are subject to design, reporting, and processing errors and errors due to nonresponse. Differences in sampling, data collection procedures, coverage of target population, timing, phrasing of questions, scope of nonresponse, interviewer training, data processing, coding, and so forth mean that the results from the different sources may not be strictly comparable. More information on survey methodologies can be found in Appendix A: Guide to Sources.

Estimates presented in the text and figures are rounded from original estimates, not from a series of roundings. Percentages in the text are rounded to whole numbers, while ratios and percentage distributions are normally presented to one decimal place, where applicable.

Unless otherwise noted, all data in this report are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Unless otherwise noted, all financial data are in current dollars, meaning not adjusted for changes in the purchasing power of the dollar due to inflation. Price indexes for inflation adjustments can be found in table 31.

Common data elements are collected in different ways in different surveys. Since the *Digest* relies on a number of data sources, there are discrepancies in definitions and data across tables in the volume. For example, several different surveys collect data on public school enrollment, and while similar, the estimates are not identical. The definitions of racial/ethnic groups also differ across surveys, particularly with respect to whether Hispanic origin is considered an ethnic group regardless of race, or counted separately as a racial/ethnic group. Individual tables note the definitions used in the given studies.

All statements cited in the text about differences between two or more groups or changes over time were tested for statistical significance and are statistically significant at the .05 level. Various test procedures were used, depending on the nature of the statement tested. The most commonly used test procedures were *t* tests, equivalence tests, and linear trend tests. Equivalence tests were used to determine whether two statistics are substantively equivalent or substantively different. This was accomplished by using a hypothesis test to determine whether the confidence interval of the difference between

sample estimates is substantively significant (i.e., greater or less than a preset substantively important difference). In most cases involving percentages, a difference of 3.0 was used to determine substantive equivalence or difference. In some comparisons involving only very small percentages, a lower difference was used. In cases involving only relatively large values, a larger difference was used, such as \$1,000 in the case of annual salaries. Linear trend tests were conducted by evaluating the significance of the slope of a simple regression of the data over time, and a *t* test comparing the end points.



# GUIDE TO TABULAR PRESENTATION

This section is intended to assist the reader in following the basic structure of the *Digest* tables and to provide a legend for some of the common symbols and indexes used throughout the book. Unless otherwise noted, all data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Changes in survey instruments sometimes mean that data for specific categories are not available in a consistent manner over the entire reporting period. Because of these survey limitations, data for these specific categories may be noted as included with other categories where applicable.

## Table Components

**Title** Describes the table content concisely. (Tables may not include data for all years implied in table titles. When this is the case, the title will include the term “Selected years.”)

**Unit indicator** Informs the reader of the measurement unit in the table—“In thousands,” “In millions of dollars,” etc. Noted below the title unless several units are used, in which case the unit indicators are generally given in the spanner or individual column heads.

**Spanner** Describes a group of two or more columns.

**Column head** Describes a specific column.

**Stub** Describes a row or a group of rows. Each stub row is followed by a number of dots (leaders).

**Field** The area of the table which contains the data elements.

## Example of Table Structure

**Table Number and Title** { Table 0. Projected number of participants in educational institutions, by level and control of institution: Fall 2006

**Unit Indicator** → [In millions]

Participants	All levels (elementary, secondary, and postsecondary degree-granting)	Elementary and secondary schools ← <b>Spanner</b>		
		Total	Public	Private
1	2	3	4	5
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>82.2</b>	<b>62.0</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>6.8</b>
Enrollment .....	72.7	55.1	48.9	6.1
Teachers and faculty .....	4.5	3.6	3.2	0.5
Other professional, administrative, and support staff.....	5.0	3.2	2.9	0.3 <sup>1</sup>

**Field** {

**Footnote** → <sup>1</sup>Reference (numbered) notes refer to specific parts of the table.

**Note** → NOTE: Includes enrollments in local public school systems and in most private schools (religiously affiliated and nonsectarian). Excludes federal schools. Excludes private preprimary enrollment in schools that do not offer kindergarten or above. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Data for teachers and other staff in public and private elementary and secondary schools and colleges and universities are reported in terms of full-time equivalents. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

**Source** → SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Projections of Education Statistics to 2015*; and unpublished projections and estimates. (This table was prepared September 2006.)

**Special notes** Symbols used to indicate why data do not appear in designated cell.

- Not available.
- † Not applicable.
- # Rounds to zero.
- ! Interpret data with caution.
- ‡ Reporting standards not met.

**Footnote** Describes a unique circumstance relating to a specific item within the table. Following are two typical examples:

**Estimated** Based on available information from a subset of the population of interest.

**Projected** Calculated from a forecasting model based on historical information.

**Note** Furnishes general information that relates to the entire table.

**Source** The document or reference from which the data are drawn. This note may also include the organizational unit responsible for preparing the data.

## Descriptive Terms

**Measures of central tendency** A number that is used to represent the “typical value” of a group of numbers. It is regarded as a measure of “location” or “central tendency” of a group of numbers.

**Arithmetic mean (average)** is the most commonly used average. It is derived by summing the individual item values of a particular group and dividing that sum by the number of items. This value is often referred to simply as the “mean” or “average.”

**Median** is the measure of central tendency that occupies the middle position in a rank order of values. It generally has the same number of items above it as below it. If there is an even number of items in the group, the median is the average of the middle two items.

**Average per capita**, or per person, figure represents an average computed for every person in a specified group, or population. It is derived by dividing the total for an item (such as income or expenditures) by the number of persons in the specified population.

**Index number** A value that provides a means of measuring, summarizing, and communicating the nature of changes that

occur from time to time or from place to place. An index is used to express changes in prices over periods of time, but may also be used to express differences between related subjects at a single point in time.

The *Digest* most often uses the Consumer Price Index to compare purchasing power over time.

To compute a price index, a base year or period is selected. The base-year price is then designated as the base or reference price to which the prices for other years or periods are related.

A method of expressing the price relationship is:

Index number =

$$\frac{\text{Price of a set of one or more items for related year}}{\text{Price of the same set of items for base year}} \times 100$$

When 100 is subtracted from the index number, the result equals the percent change in price from the base year.

**Current and constant dollars** are used in a number of tables to express finance data. Unless otherwise noted, all figures are in current dollars, not adjusted for inflation. Constant dollars provide a measure of the impact of inflation on the current dollars.

**Current dollar** figures reflect actual prices or costs prevailing during the specified year(s).

**Constant dollar** figures attempt to remove the effects of price changes (inflation) from statistical series reported in dollar terms.

The constant dollar value for an item is derived by dividing the base-year price index (for example, the Consumer Price Index for 1999) by the price index for the year of data to be adjusted and multiplying by the price of item to be adjusted. The result is an adjusted dollar value as it would presumably exist if prices were the same as the base year—in other words, as if the dollar had constant purchasing power. Any changes in the constant dollar amounts would reflect only changes in the real values.

In the 2008 edition of the *Digest*, the following 26 tables include finance data that are adjusted to school year 2006–07 dollars: tables 26, 32, 74, 78, 79, 86, 171, 174, 175, 181, 184, 185, 256, 257, 263, 331, 334, 350, 353, 355, 360, 361, 362, 364, 366, and 424. Data adjusted to calendar year 2007 dollars appear in tables 20, 384, 394, and 418. Table 373 includes adjustments to fiscal year (FY) 2008 dollars.