

Highlights From *The Condition of Education 2017*

Spotlights



Risk Factors and Academic Outcomes in Kindergarten Through Third Grade

During the 2010–11 school year, 6 percent of first-time kindergartners had both the risk factor of living in poverty and the risk factor of not having a parent who completed high school, 2 percent had the single risk factor of not having a parent who completed high school, and 18 percent had the single risk factor of living in poverty. Students who were living in poverty and who did not have a parent who completed high school tended to score lower in reading, mathematics, and science in each of their first four years of school compared to their peers who had neither risk factor at kindergarten entry.

Homeless Children and Youth in Public Schools

In 2014–15, some 2.5 percent of students in U.S. public elementary and secondary schools were reported as homeless children or youth (1.3 million students). This percentage varied from 2.0 percent in suburban school districts to 2.4 percent in rural districts, 2.6 percent in town districts, and 3.7 percent in city districts. The largest numbers of homeless students were enrolled in city (578,000 students) and suburban districts (422,000 students), compared to rural (149,000 students) and town districts (139,000 students).

First-Time Postsecondary Students' Persistence After 3 Years

Seventy percent of all first-time postsecondary students who began at 2- and 4-year institutions in 2011–12 were still enrolled or had attained a certificate or degree by spring 2014. However, this percentage, also known as a persistence rate, varied by institutional, academic, and student characteristics, including level (2- and 4-year) and control (public, private nonprofit, and private for-profit) of institution, SAT or ACT scores, student age, and race/ethnicity. For example, the persistence rate for students who began at 2-year institutions (57 percent) was 23 percentage points lower than for students who began at 4-year institutions (80 percent). At 4-year institutions, students who were 19 years old or younger when they began had a higher persistence rate (85 percent) than students who were 20 to 23 years old (53 percent), 24 to 29 years old (48 percent), and 30 years old or over (57 percent).

Disability Rates and Employment Status by Educational Attainment

About 16 percent of 25- to 64-year-olds who had not completed high school had one or more disabilities in 2015, compared to 11 percent of those who had completed high school, 10 percent of those who had completed some college, 8 percent of those who had completed an associate's degree, 4 percent of those who had completed a bachelor's degree, and 3 percent of those who had completed a master's or higher degree. Differences in the employment and not-in-labor-force percentages between persons with and without disabilities were substantial, amounting to about 50 percentage points each. Among those who had obtained higher levels of education, the differences were smaller.

Population Characteristics



ATTAINMENT

Educational Attainment of Young Adults

Between 2000 and 2016, educational attainment rates among 25- to 29-year-olds increased. During this time, the percentage who had received at least a high school diploma or its equivalent increased from 88 to 92 percent, the percentage with an associate's or higher degree increased from 38 to 46 percent, the percentage with a bachelor's or higher degree increased from 29 to 36 percent, and the percentage with a master's or higher degree increased from 5 to 9 percent.

International Educational Attainment

Between 2001 and 2015, the OECD average percentage of the adult population with any postsecondary degree rose to 35 percent, an increase of 12 percentage points. During the same period, the percentage of U.S. adults with any postsecondary degree rose to 45 percent, an increase of 7 percentage points.

ECONOMIC OUTCOMES

Annual Earnings of Young Adults

In 2015, the median earnings of young adults with a bachelor's degree (\$50,000) were 64 percent higher than those of young adult high school completers (\$30,500). The median earnings of young adult high school completers were 22 percent higher than those of young adults who did not complete high school (\$25,000).

Employment and Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment

In 2016, the employment rate was higher for people with higher levels of educational attainment than for those with lower levels of educational attainment. For example, among 20- to 24-year-olds, the employment rate was 88 percent for those with a bachelor's or higher degree and 48 percent for those who did not complete high school.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Characteristics of Children's Families

In 2015, some 10 percent of children under the age of 18 had parents who had not completed high school, 27 percent lived in mother-only households, 8 percent lived in father-only households, and 20 percent were living in poverty.

Children's Access to and Use of the Internet

In 2015, about 71 percent of children ages 3 to 18 used the Internet. Among these children, 86 percent used the Internet at home; 65 percent used it at school; 31 percent used it at someone else's home; 27 percent used it at a library, community center, or other public place; and 14 percent used it at a coffee shop or other business offering internet access. In addition, 27 percent of these children used the Internet while traveling between places.

Participation in Education

PREPRIMARY

Preschool and Kindergarten Enrollment

In 2015, the percentage of 3- to 5-year-olds enrolled in preschool programs was higher for children whose parents had a graduate or professional degree (48 percent) than for those whose parents had a bachelor's degree (42 percent), an associate's degree (37 percent), some college (37 percent), a high school credential (29 percent), and less than a high school credential (29 percent).

ELEMENTARY/SECONDARY

Elementary and Secondary Enrollment

Between fall 2014 and fall 2026, total public school enrollment in prekindergarten through grade 12 is projected to increase by 3 percent (from 50.3 million to 51.7 million students), with changes across states ranging from an increase of 42 percent in the District of Columbia to a decrease of 14 percent in Connecticut.

Public Charter School Enrollment

Between fall 2004 and fall 2014, overall public charter school enrollment increased from 0.9 million to 2.7 million. During this period, the percentage of public school students who attended charter schools increased from 2 to 5 percent.

Private School Enrollment

Private school enrollment in prekindergarten (preK) through grade 12 increased from 5.9 million students in 1995–96 to 6.3 million in 2001–02, and then declined to 5.4 million in 2013–14.

Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools

In fall 2014, the percentage of students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools who were White was less than 50 percent (49.5 percent) for the first time and represents a decrease from 58 percent in fall 2004. In contrast, the percentage who were Hispanic increased from 19 to 25 percent during the same period.

English Language Learners in Public Schools

The percentage of public school students in the United States who were English language learners (ELLs) was higher in school year 2014–15 (9.4 percent, or 4.6 million students) than in 2004–05 (9.1 percent, or 4.3 million students). In 2014–15, the percentage of public school students who were ELLs ranged from 1.0 percent in West Virginia to 22.4 percent in California.

Children and Youth With Disabilities

In 2014–15, the number of children and youth ages 3–21 receiving special education services was 6.6 million, or 13 percent of all public school students. Among children and youth receiving special education services, 35 percent had specific learning disabilities.



POSTSECONDARY

Undergraduate Enrollment

Between 2000 and 2015, total undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions increased by 30 percent (from 13.2 million to 17.0 million). By 2026, total undergraduate enrollment is projected to increase to 19.3 million students.

Postbaccalaureate Enrollment

Total enrollment in postbaccalaureate degree programs was 2.9 million students in fall 2015. Between 2015 and 2026, postbaccalaureate enrollment is projected to increase by 12 percent (from 2.9 million to 3.3 million students).

Elementary and Secondary Education



SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS AND CLIMATE

Characteristics of Traditional Public Schools and Public Charter Schools

High-poverty schools, in which more than 75 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program, accounted for 25 percent of all public schools in 2014–15. In that year, 24 percent of traditional public schools were high-poverty compared with 36 percent of public charter schools.

Concentration of Public School Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

In school year 2014–15, nearly half of Hispanic and Black public school students, one-third of American Indian/Alaska Native students, and one-quarter of Pacific Islander students attended high-poverty schools. In contrast, 17 percent of students of Two or more races, 15 percent of Asian students, and 8 percent of White students attended high-poverty schools.

School Crime and Safety

Between 2001 and 2015, the percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being victimized at school during the previous 6 months decreased overall (from 6 to 3 percent), as did the percentages of students who reported theft (from 4 to 2 percent) and violent victimization (from 2 to 1 percent).



TEACHERS AND STAFF

Teachers and Pupil/Teacher Ratios

Of the 6.3 million staff members in public elementary and secondary schools in fall 2014, half (3.1 million) were teachers. The pupil/teacher ratio in public schools declined from 15.8 in 2004 to 15.3 in 2008. The pupil/teacher ratio then rose, reaching 16.1 in 2014.



FINANCE

Public School Revenue Sources

Elementary and secondary public school revenues totaled \$632 billion in school year 2013–14. Of this total, 9 percent of revenues were from federal sources, 46 percent were from state sources, and 45 percent were from local sources.

Public School Expenditures

In 2013–14, public schools spent \$11,222 per student on current expenditures, a category which includes salaries, employee benefits, purchased services, and supplies. Current expenditures per student were 5 percent higher in 2013–14 than in 2003–04, after adjusting for inflation. During this time period, current expenditures per student peaked in 2008–09 at \$11,699, declined to \$11,093 in 2012–13, and then rose 1 percent to \$11,222 in 2013–14.

Education Expenditures by Country

In 2013, the United States spent \$11,800 per full-time-equivalent (FTE) student on elementary and secondary education, which was 28 percent higher than the OECD average of \$9,200. At the postsecondary level, the United States spent \$27,900 per FTE student, which was 89 percent higher than the OECD average of \$14,800.



ASSESSMENTS

Reading Performance

While the 2015 average 4th-grade reading score was not measurably different from the 2013 score, the average 8th-grade score was lower in 2015 than in 2013, according to data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. At grade 12, the average reading score in 2015 was not measurably different from that in 2013.

Mathematics Performance

The average 4th- and 8th-grade mathematics scores in 2015 were lower than the scores in 2013 but were higher than the scores in 1990, according to data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. At grade 12, the average mathematics score in 2015 was lower than the score in 2013, but not measurably different from the score in 2005.

Science Performance

The percentage of 4th-grade students scoring at or above the *Proficient* level was higher in 2015 (38 percent) than in 2009 (34 percent), according to data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. In addition, the percentage of 8th-grade students scoring at or above the *Proficient* level was higher in 2015 (34 percent) than in 2009 (30 percent). The percentage of 12th-grade students scoring at or above the *Proficient* level in 2015 (22 percent) was not measurably different from the percentage in 2009.

Technology and Engineering Literacy

Overall, 43 percent of 8th-grade students performed at or above the *Proficient* level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress Technology and Engineering Literacy assessment in 2014. The percentage of students scoring at or above the *Proficient* level was higher for White and Asian students (56 percent each) than for Black students (18 percent), Hispanic students (28 percent), Pacific Islander students (30 percent), and students of Two or more races (45 percent).

International Comparisons: Reading Literacy at Grade 4

In the 2011 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), the average reading literacy score for 4th-grade students in the United States (556) was higher than the average score for participating countries (500). The United States was among the top 13 education systems in reading literacy and scored higher, on average, than 40 education systems.

International Comparisons: U.S. 4th-, 8th-, and 12th-Graders' Mathematics and Science Achievement

According to the 2015 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), the United States was among the top 15 education systems in science (out of 54) at grade 4 and among the top 17 education systems in science (out of 43) at grade 8. In mathematics, the United States was among the top 20 education systems at grade 4 and top 19 education systems at grade 8.

International Comparisons: Science, Reading, and Mathematics Literacy for 15-Year-Old Students

In 2015, there were 18 education systems with higher average science literacy scores for 15-year-olds than the United States, 14 with higher reading literacy scores, and 36 with higher mathematics literacy scores.



STUDENT EFFORT, PERSISTENCE, AND PROGRESS

Public High School Graduation Rates

In school year 2014–15, the adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR) for public high school students rose to 83 percent, the highest rate since the measure was first collected in 2010–11. In other words, more than 4 out of 5 students graduated with a regular high school diploma within 4 years of starting 9th grade. Asian/Pacific Islander students had the highest ACGR (90 percent), followed by White (88 percent), Hispanic (78 percent), Black (75 percent), and American Indian/Alaska Native (72 percent) students.

Status Dropout Rates

The status dropout rate decreased from 10.9 percent in 2000 to 5.9 percent in 2015. During this time, the Hispanic status dropout rate decreased by 18.6 percentage points, while the Black and White status dropout rates decreased by 6.6 and 2.4 percentage points, respectively. Nevertheless, in 2015 the Hispanic status dropout rate (9.2 percent) remained higher than the Black (6.5 percent) and White (4.6 percent) status dropout rates.

Youth Neither Enrolled in School nor Working

In 2016, some 17 percent of 20- to 24-year-olds were neither enrolled in school nor working, compared to 12 percent of 18- and 19-year-olds and 5 percent of 16- and 17-year-olds. In each age group, the percentage who were neither in school nor working was higher for those in poor households than for those in nonpoor households. For example, among 20- to 24-year-olds in 2016, some 31 percent of those in poor households were neither in school nor working, compared to 13 percent of those in nonpoor households.

Immediate College Enrollment Rate

The immediate college enrollment rate for high school completers increased from 63 percent in 2000 to 69 percent in 2015. The enrollment rate for those from high-income families (83 percent) was higher than the rate for those from low- and middle-income families (63 percent each) in 2015. The gap in enrollment rates between low- and high-income students narrowed from 30 percentage points in 2000 to 20 percentage points in 2015. The gap between low- and middle-income students was 12 percentage points in 2000, but there was no measurable gap between low- and middle-income students in 2015.

→ TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

College Enrollment Rates

The overall college enrollment rate for young adults increased from 35 percent in 2000 to 40 percent in 2015. During this time period, the enrollment rates also increased for Black and Hispanic young adult males, as well as for White and Hispanic young adult females.

Postsecondary Education

POSTSECONDARY ENVIRONMENTS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics of Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions

In academic year 2015–16, some 28 percent of 4-year institutions had open admissions policies (accepted all applicants), an additional 29 percent accepted three-quarters or more of their applicants, 30 percent accepted from one-half to less than three-quarters of their applicants, and 13 percent accepted less than one-half of their applicants.

Characteristics of Postsecondary Students

Some 10.5 million undergraduate students attended 4-year institutions in fall 2015, while 6.5 million attended 2-year institutions. Some 77 percent of undergraduate students at 4-year institutions attended full time, compared with 39 percent at 2-year institutions.

Characteristics of Postsecondary Faculty

From fall 1995 to fall 2015, the number of full-time faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions increased by 47 percent, while the number of part-time faculty increased by 95 percent. As a result of the faster increase in the number of part-time faculty, the percentage of all faculty who were part time increased from 41 to 48 percent over this period.



PROGRAMS, COURSES, AND COMPLETIONS

Undergraduate Degree Fields

For every racial/ethnic group, business was the most common field of study for bachelor's degrees conferred in 2014–15. Liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities; health professions and related programs; and business services were the top three associate's degree fields of study for all racial/ethnic groups in 2014–15.

Graduate Degree Fields

In 2014–15, nearly half of the 759,000 master's degrees conferred were concentrated in two fields of study: business (185,000 degrees) and education (147,000 degrees). Of the 179,000 doctor's degrees conferred, almost two-thirds were concentrated in health professions and related programs (71,000 degrees) and legal professions and studies (40,300 degrees).

Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Rates

About 59 percent of students who began seeking a bachelor's degree at a 4-year institution in fall 2009 completed that degree within 6 years; the graduation rate was higher for females than for males (62 percent vs. 56 percent).

Postsecondary Certificates and Degrees Conferred

The number of postsecondary certificates and degrees conferred at each degree level increased between 2004–05 and 2014–15. The number of certificates below the associate's degree level conferred during this period increased by 35 percent. The number of degrees conferred increased by 46 percent at the associate's level, by 32 percent at the bachelor's level, by 31 percent at the master's level, and by 33 percent at the doctor's level.

\$ FINANCE AND RESOURCES

Price of Attending an Undergraduate Institution

In 2014–15, the average net price of attendance (total cost minus grant and scholarship aid) at 4-year institutions for first-time, full-time undergraduate students (in constant 2015–16 dollars) was \$25,400 at private nonprofit institutions, \$21,500 at private for-profit institutions, and \$13,200 at public institutions.

Loans for Undergraduate Students

In 2014–15, the average annual undergraduate student loan amount of \$7,000 was 10 percent lower than the 2009–10 average of \$7,700 (in constant 2015–16 dollars). For undergraduate students ages 18 to 24 in their 4th year of college or above, the average cumulative amount borrowed was \$26,600 in 2011–12 (in constant 2015–16 dollars).

Sources of Financial Aid

The percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students at 4-year degree-granting postsecondary institutions awarded financial aid was higher in 2014–15 (86 percent) than in 2009–10 (85 percent).

Postsecondary Institution Revenues

Between 2009–10 and 2014–15, revenues from tuition and fees per full-time-equivalent (FTE) student increased by 22 percent at public institutions (from \$5,724 to \$6,963 in constant 2015–16 dollars) and by 6 percent at private nonprofit institutions (from \$19,586 to \$20,820). At private for-profit institutions, revenues from tuition and fees per FTE student were 9 percent lower in 2014–15 than in 2009–10 (\$15,089 vs. \$16,531).

Postsecondary Institution Expenses

In 2014–15, instruction expenses per full-time-equivalent (FTE) student (in constant 2015–16 dollars) was the largest expense category at public institutions (\$8,433) and private nonprofit institutions (\$17,426). At private for-profit institutions, the combined category of student services, academic support, and institutional support expenses per FTE student was the largest expense category (\$9,905).