



# Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups



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# HIGHLIGHTS

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*Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups* examines the educational progress and challenges of students in the United States by race/ethnicity. This report shows that over time, the numbers of students of each race/ethnicity who have completed high school and continued their education in college have increased. Despite these gains, the rate of progress has varied, and differences persist among Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders, American Indians/Alaska Natives and students of two or more races in their performance on key indicators of educational performance.

## Demographics

- Between 1980 and 2008, the racial/ethnic composition of the United States shifted—the White population declined from 80 percent of the total population to 66 percent; the Hispanic population increased from 6 percent of the total to 15 percent; the Black population remained at about 12 percent; and the Asian/Pacific Islander population increased from less than 2 percent of the total population to 4 percent. In 2008, American Indians/Alaska Natives made up about 1 percent and people of two or more races made up about 1 percent of the population. *(Indicator 1)*
- In 2007, about 14 percent of the U.S. population was born outside of the 50 states and District of Columbia; this included the approximately 69 percent of Asians and 44 percent of Hispanics who were born outside of the 50 states and District of Columbia. *(Indicator 2)*
- In 2007, across all racial/ethnic groups except Blacks and American Indians/Alaska Natives, the majority of children under 18 lived with married parents. About 34 percent of Black children under 18 lived with married parents and 56 percent of Black children lived with a female parent with no spouse present. *(Indicator 3)*
- The percentages of children who were living in poverty were higher for Blacks (34 percent), American Indians/Alaska Natives (33 percent), Hispanics (27 percent), and Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders (26 percent), than for children of two or more races (18 percent), Asians (11 percent) and Whites (10 percent). *(Indicator 4)*
- In 2008, a higher percentage of Asian children (51 percent) had a mother with at least a bachelor's degree than did White children (36 percent), children of two or more races (31 percent), Black children (17 percent), American Indian/Alaska Native children (16 percent), and Hispanic children (11 percent). *(Indicator 5)*

### Preprimary, Elementary, and Secondary Education Participation

- In 2005–06, a higher percentage of White, Black, and Asian 4-year-olds participated in center-based care than did Hispanic 4-year-olds. (*Indicator 6*)
- From 2000–01 to 2007–08, the proportion of public school enrollment composed of White students decreased from 61 to 56 percent. During the same period, Hispanic school enrollment increased from 17 to 21 percent of the total enrollment and Asian/Pacific Islander enrollment increased from 4 to 5 percent of the total. The percentage of Black (17 percent) and American Indian/Alaska Native (1 percent) students remained unchanged. (*Indicator 7.1*)
- In 2007–08, White students were concentrated in suburban and rural areas, with lower percentages in cities and towns. Black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander students were concentrated in cities and suburban areas. (*Indicator 7.2*)
- In 2007–08, public schools in which at least half of the enrollment was White enrolled 87 percent of all White students. Schools in which at least half of the enrollment was Black enrolled 48 percent of all Black students, and schools in which at least half of the enrollment was Hispanic enrolled 57 percent of all Hispanic students. (*Indicator 7.4*)
- Forty-eight percent of public school 4th-graders were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches in 2009, including 77 percent of Hispanic, 74 percent of Black, 68 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native, 34 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander, and 29 percent of White 4th-graders. (*Indicator 7.5*)
- From 1998 to 2007, the percentage of 6- to 21-year-olds who were served by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) increased by less than 1 percentage point, and in 2007, 9 percent were served by IDEA. Fourteen percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives in this age group were served under IDEA in 2007, compared with 12 percent of Blacks, 9 percent of Hispanics, 8 percent of Whites, and 5 percent of Asians/Pacific Islanders. (*Indicator 8.1*)

- In 2007, about 69 percent of Hispanic and 64 percent of Asian elementary/secondary school students spoke a language other than English at home. About 18 percent of Hispanic and 17 percent of Asian students spoke English with difficulty, compared with 7 percent of Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders, 3 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, and 1 percent each of Whites and Blacks, according to household reports. (*Indicator 8.2*)
- In 2007–08, about 25 percent of secondary mathematics teachers who taught in schools with at least half Black enrollment had neither a certification nor a college major in mathematics, compared to 8 percent of secondary mathematics teachers who taught in schools with at least half White enrollment. (*Indicator 9.1*)

### Achievement

- Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native 4-year-olds had lower rates of proficiency in letter recognition compared with 4-year-olds of other racial/ethnic groups in 2005–06. (*Indicator 10*)
- On the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading assessment, higher percentages of Asian/Pacific Islander and White 4th-graders and 8th-graders scored at or above *Proficient* than did American Indian/Alaska Native, Black, and Hispanic students at the same grade levels. On the 2009 NAEP 4th and 8th grade mathematics assessment, a higher percentage of Asians/Pacific Islanders scored at or above *Proficient* than did 4th- and 8th-graders of all other races/ethnicities shown. (*Indicator 11*)
- On the 2007 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Asians in the United States scored higher in mathematics at both the 4th- and 8th-grade levels than students of any other race/ethnicity in the United States. In 4th-grade mathematics, Asians in the United States scored higher than students from all other participating jurisdictions except Hong Kong, Singapore, and Chinese Taipei. (*Indicator 12*)

- Among 2005 high school graduates, a lower percentage of Hispanic students had completed courses in geometry, algebra II, and statistics than had White, Black or Asian/Pacific Islander students. (*Indicator 13.1*)
- From 1999 to 2008, the total number of Black and Hispanic students taking an Advanced Placement (AP) exam more than tripled, from 94,000 to 318,000 students. In 2008, Asians had the highest mean AP exam score (3.08) across all exams, while Blacks had the lowest (1.91). (*Indicator 14*)
- The population of SAT test-takers has become more diverse in the past decade, predominantly due to an increase in participation among Hispanic students. Hispanics comprised 9 percent of test-takers in 1998 and 13 percent in 2008, while Asians comprised 9 percent of test-takers in 1998 and 11 percent in 2008. White students scored higher than any other racial/ethnic group on the critical reading portion of the exam in 2008, while Asian students had the highest average scores on the mathematics portion. (*Indicator 15.1*)
- In 2008, Black students were 14 percent of ACT test-takers, compared with 11 percent in 1998, and Hispanic students were 9 percent, compared with 6 percent in 1998. Nearly one-third of Asian ACT test-takers met the college readiness benchmark, established by ACT, on all four exams, compared to 3 percent of Black test-takers. (*Indicator 15.2*)

### Persistence

- Among 8th-graders in 2009, Asians/Pacific Islanders, at 63 percent, had the highest percentage of students who had no absences in the past month, compared to 35 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives. (*Indicator 16*)
- In 2007, a higher percentage of Black elementary/secondary students had been retained in a grade (21 percent) than

was the case for White, Hispanic, or Asian elementary/secondary students. Additionally, a higher percentage of Black 6th- through 12th-grade students had been suspended (43 percent) from school at some point than was the case for students of any other race/ethnicity. (*Indicator 17*)

- Between 1997 and 2007, the percentage of 16- to 24-year-olds who were high school status dropouts<sup>1</sup> decreased from 11 percent to 9 percent. In 2007, the status dropout rate was higher among Hispanics (21 percent) than among Blacks (8 percent), Asians/Pacific Islanders (6 percent), and Whites (5 percent). (*Indicator 18.1*)
- Of the students who entered high school in the 2003–04 school year, 74 percent graduated within 4 years, including 91 percent of Asians, 80 percent of Whites, 62 percent of Hispanics, 61 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives, and 60 percent of Blacks. (*Indicator 18.2*)

### Student Behaviors

- In 2007, parents of Asian high school students reported that their children spent the most hours per week on homework (10 hours, on average). Of the students ages 16 years and older who were employed, higher percentages of Black and Hispanic students reported that they worked more than 20 hours per week (50 and 54 percent, respectively) than White students (35 percent), although the percentage of White students who worked was higher than that of Black and Hispanic students. (*Indicator 19*)
- In 2007, a higher percentage of White (18 percent) children ages 12 to 17 reported drinking alcohol in the past month than did their Hispanic (15 percent) peers, peers of two or more races (13 percent), and Black (10 percent) and Asian (8 percent) peers. (*Indicator 20*)
- Between 1991 and 2005, birth rates for 15- to 19-year-old females decreased for all racial/ethnic groups. However, the teen

<sup>1</sup> Status dropouts are 16- to 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and who have not completed a high school program, regardless of when they left school. People who have received a GED are considered high school completers.

birth rates increased between 2005 and 2007 for Whites, Blacks, and American Indians/Alaska Natives. (*Indicator 21*)

- In 2007, among 9th- through 12th-grade students, higher percentages of students of two or more races (13 percent), Black students (10 percent), and Hispanic students (9 percent) reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property in the past 12 months than did White (7 percent) and American Indian/Alaska Native students (6 percent). (*Indicator 22*)

### Postsecondary Education

- In 2008, about 72 percent of recent White high school completers were enrolled in college in that same year, up from 50 percent in 1980. In addition, the immediate transition to college rate was higher in 2007 than the rate in 1980 for Blacks (56 vs. 44 percent) and for Hispanics (62 vs. 50 percent). (*Indicator 23.1*)
- In 2008, some 44 percent of White 18- to 24-year-olds were enrolled in colleges and universities, while in 1980 some 28 percent were enrolled. In addition, approximately 32 percent of Black 18- to 24-year-olds were enrolled in colleges or universities (an increase of 12 percentage points from 1980) and 26 percent of Hispanic 18- to 24-year-olds were enrolled (an increase of 10 percentage points from 1980). (*Indicator 23.2*)
- Between 1976 and 2008, total undergraduate fall enrollment increased for each racial/ethnic group; Hispanics and Asians/Pacific Islanders had the fastest rates of increase and Whites had the slowest rate of increase. In 2008, more females than males were enrolled as undergraduates—the gender gap was largest for Black undergraduates, with females accounting for 64 percent of Black undergraduate enrollment. (*Indicator 24.1*)
- Trends in graduate enrollments were similar to those in undergraduate enrollment, in that while there were increases in the rates for all racial/ethnic groups, the largest increases were for Hispanics and Asians/Pacific Islanders and the smallest increase was for Whites. Again, the largest gender gap was

for Black graduate students, with females representing 71 percent of Black graduate enrollment in 2008. (*Indicator 24.2*)

- Among students enrolled in college in 2008, about 81 percent of Hispanics and 79 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives attended public institutions, higher than the percentages of Whites (73 percent), Blacks (68 percent), and Asians/Pacific Islanders (75 percent) who did so. Some 21 percent of White, 18 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander, and 17 percent of Black students attended private not-for-profit institutions, while 11 percent of Hispanic and 12 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native students did so. A higher percentage of Black students (15 percent) attended private for-profit institutions than did students of the other races/ethnicities shown (ranging from 6 to 8 percent). (*Indicator 24.3*)
- In 2007–08, some 80 percent of full-time, full-year undergraduates received financial aid (grants or loans); Black students had the highest percentage of recipients (92 percent) and received the largest average amount per person (\$13,500). (*Indicator 25*)
- In 2008, females earned more degrees than males within each racial/ethnic group, and Black females received over twice as many degrees as Black males. (*Indicator 26.1*)

### Outcomes of Education

- In 2008, about 29 percent of U.S. adults (25 years of age or older) had at least a bachelor's degree, including 52 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander adults, 33 percent of White adults, 20 percent of Black adults, 13 percent of Hispanic adults, and 15 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native adults. (*Indicator 27*)
- In 2008, the unemployment rate was higher for Hispanics (8 percent), Blacks (9 percent), American Indians/Alaska Natives (10 percent), and persons of two or more races (10 percent), than it was for Whites and Asians (4 percent each). In general, lower unemployment rates were associated with higher levels of education for each racial/ethnic group. The unemployment rate for Blacks without a high school diploma or equivalent was 22 percent, compared with

11 percent for those with a high school credential and 4 percent for those with at least a bachelor's degree. (*Indicator 28*)

- In 2007, the median income of male workers was generally higher than that of female workers for each race/ethnicity and at each educational level. Median income differed by race/ethnicity. For example, of those with at least a bachelor's degree, the median income was \$71,000 for White males and \$69,000 for Asian males, compared with \$55,000 for Black males and \$54,000 for Hispanic males. For females, of those with at least a bachelor's degree, the median income was \$54,000 for Asians, compared with \$50,000 for Whites, \$45,000 for Blacks, and \$43,000 for Hispanics. (*Indicator 29*)

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