



National Summary

Education Pipeline Data Profile

February 2005

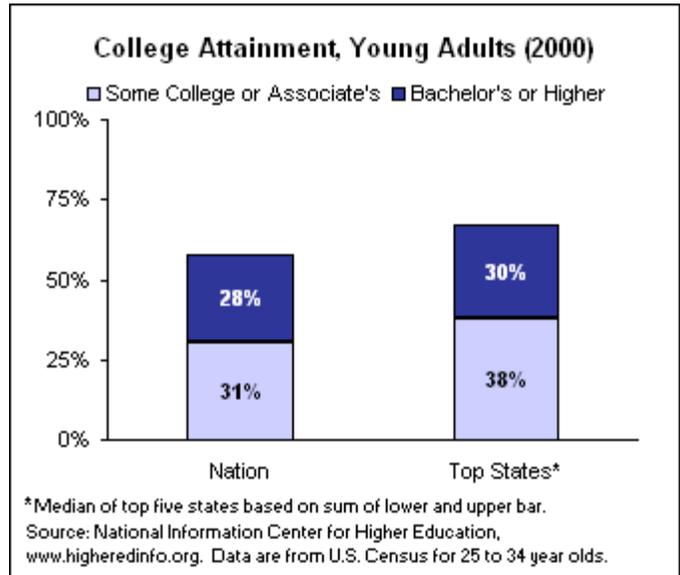
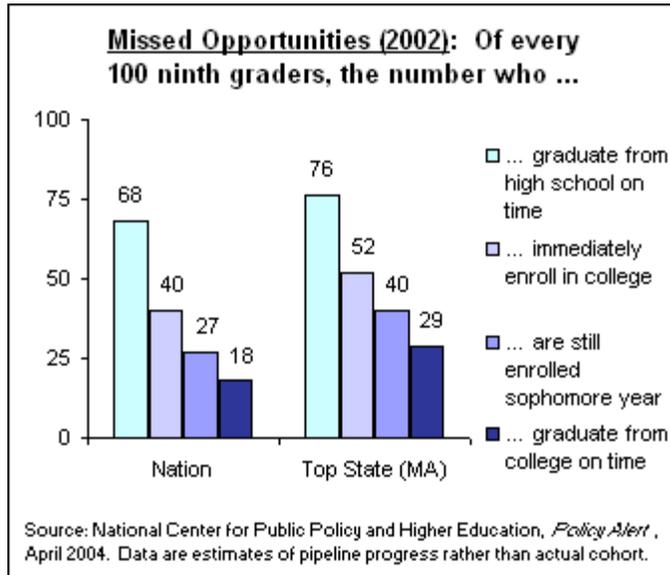
This data profile provides an important perspective on how well the nation is doing in preparing young people for college and work by comparing the progress of students across the country with that of students in top-performing states. Note that this profile includes only those data that were available for all states. Other agencies and organizations have additional data disaggregated by state, county, program, district or school that allow a closer look at education pipeline issues.

The Big Picture

To be successful in today's economy, all students will need education and training that go beyond the high school diploma. The data below show how well the nation is moving students through the education pipeline. How many graduate from high school? How many drop out? How many go on to postsecondary education, either a four-year institution or community college? How many are well enough prepared when they get there to be successful and ultimately earn a bachelor's or an associate's degree? How well are the nation's top-performing or highest-improving states doing?

How many make it to, and through, college?

How many young adults earn degrees?

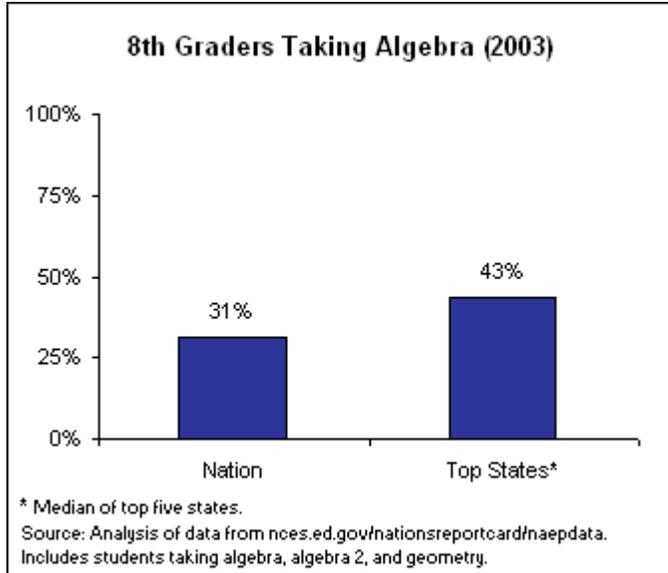


Is educational attainment improving?

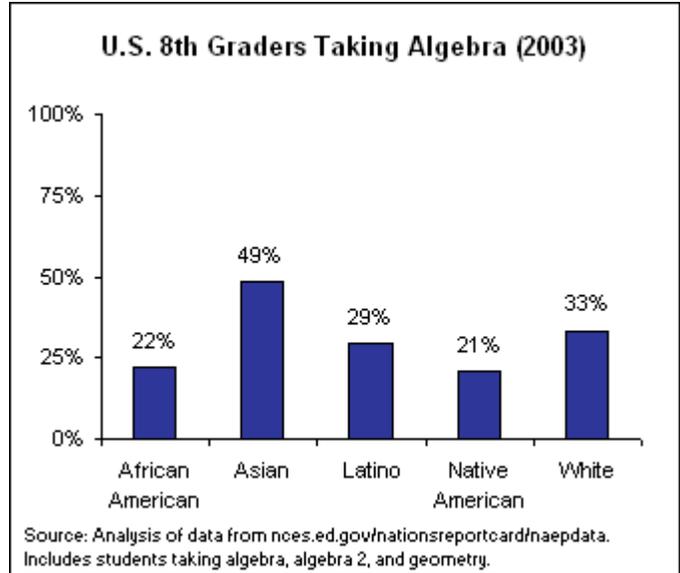
25 to 34 Year Olds with Bachelor's Degree in 1990	25 to 34 Year Olds with Bachelor's Degree in 2000	Nation's Improvement	Top Improver (MN)
22.7%	27.5%	+ 4.8	+ 8.7

Preparation for postsecondary education and good jobs begins well before high school. Students who take challenging courses and meet high standards in middle school are much more likely to enter high school ready to succeed. Algebra is widely recognized as a “gateway” course — students who take it by the end of 8th grade are much more likely to take rigorous courses in high school that lead to a college degree.

Are students taking “gateway” courses?



Are there inequities in course taking?

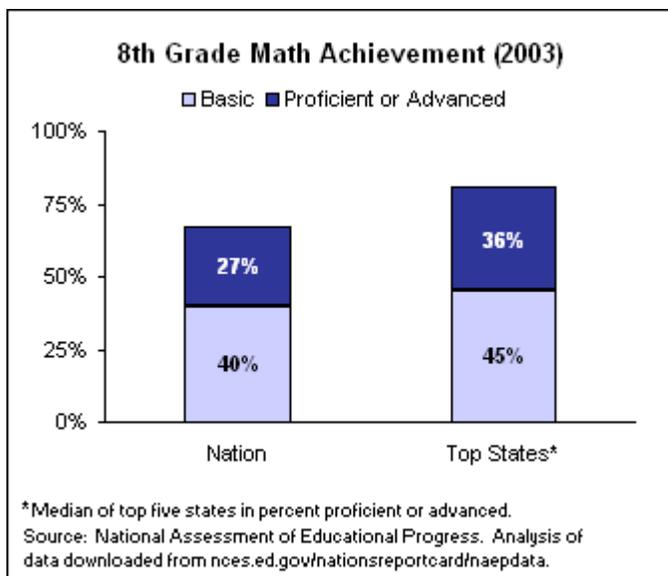


Are more students taking gateway courses over time?

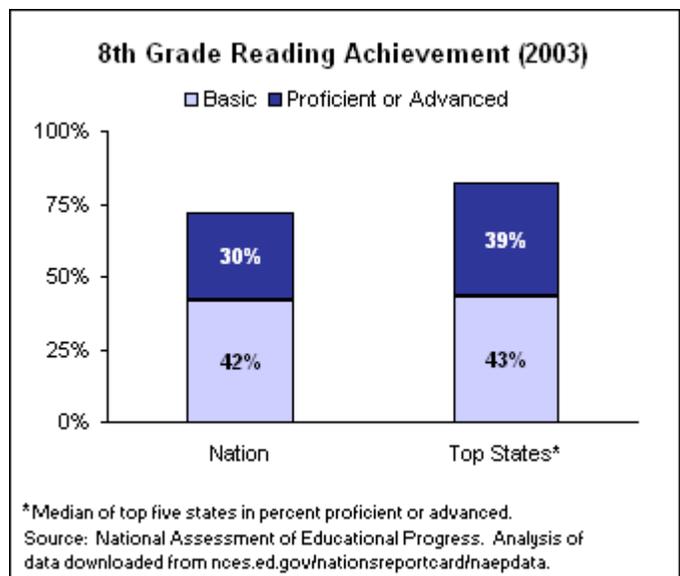
8th Graders Taking Algebra in 1992	8th Graders Taking Algebra or Higher in 2003	Nation's Improvement	Top Improver (CA)
19%	31%	+ 12	+ 35

While each state gives its own reading and math assessments in grades 3–8, the standards for proficiency on those tests differ from state to state, making cross-state comparisons unreliable. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a common test taken by a sample of students in every state and in the nation as a whole, making it a reliable yardstick for comparing achievement through middle school.

Are students meeting proficiency in math?



... in reading?



Is math achievement improving?

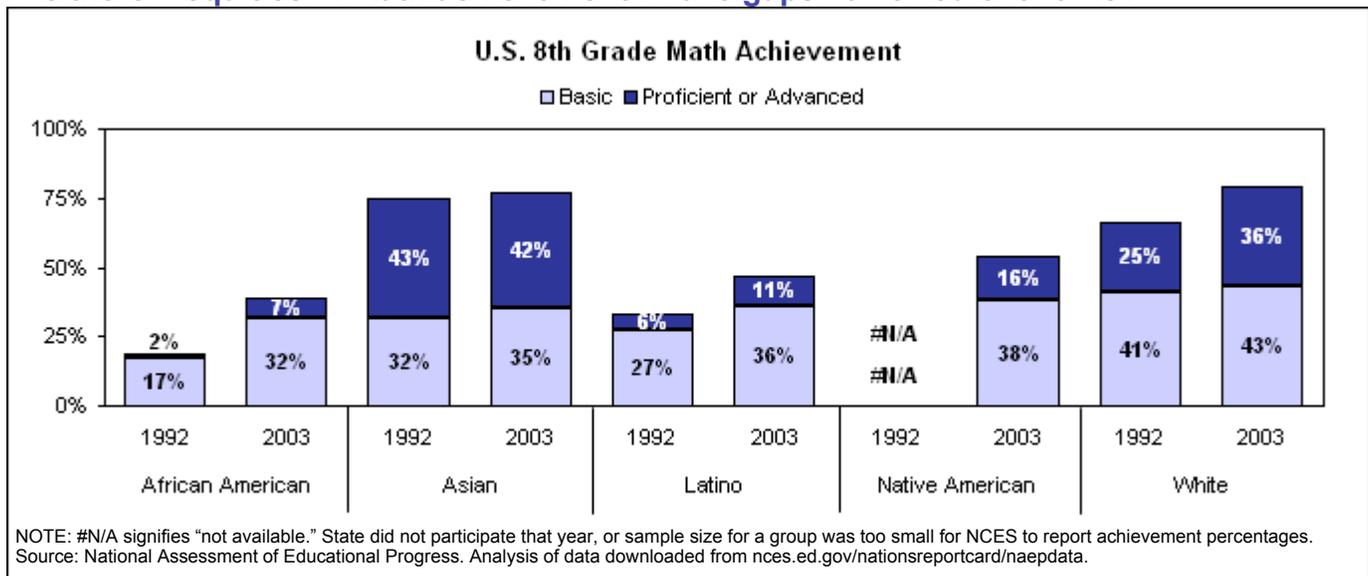
8th Graders Proficient or Advanced in 1992	8th Graders Proficient or Advanced in 2003	Nation's Improvement	Top Improver (NC)
20%	27%	+ 7	+ 20

Is reading achievement improving?

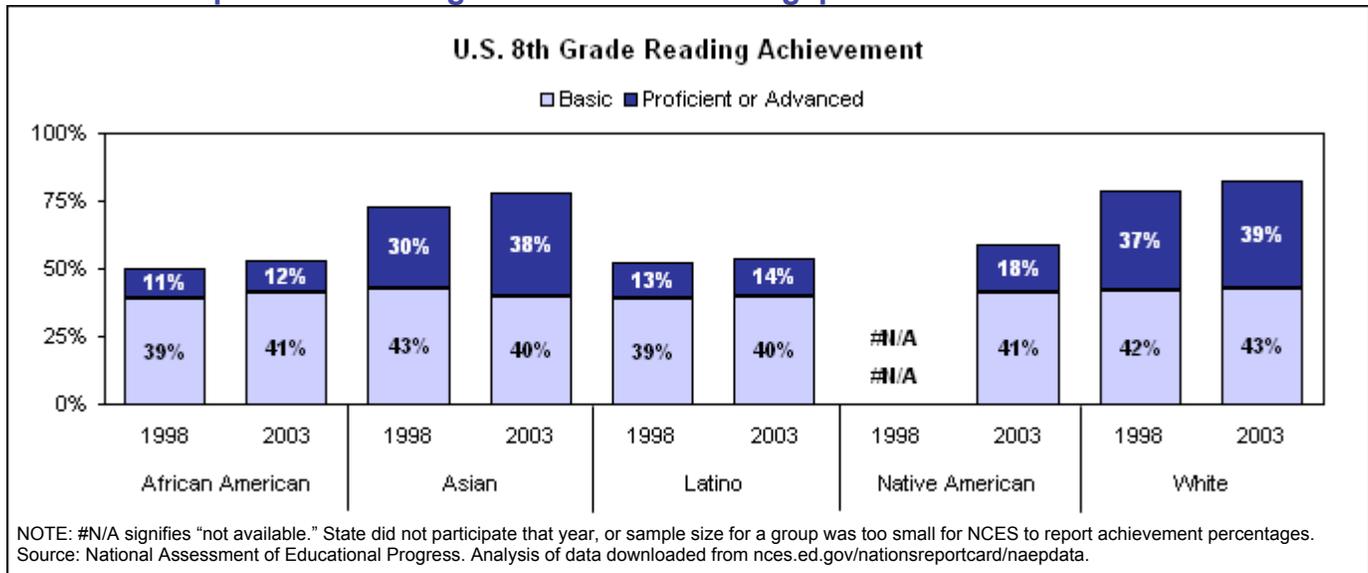
8th Graders Proficient or Advanced in 1998	8th Graders Proficient or Advanced in 2003	Nation's Improvement	Top Improver (DE)
30%	30%	+ 0	+ 8

Across the nation and in most states, there is an achievement gap that separates African American, Hispanic and Native American students from white and Asian students. How large is that gap, and how successful has the nation been in closing it over time?

Are there inequities in math achievement? Have gaps narrowed over time?

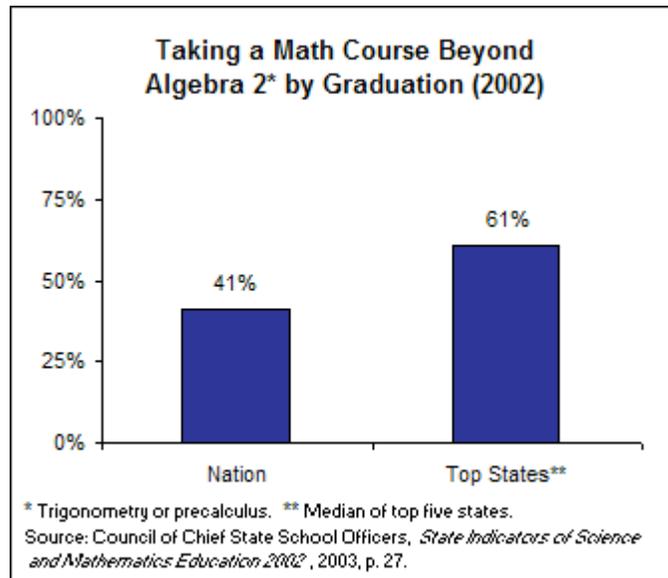


Are there inequities in reading achievement? Have gaps narrowed over time?



Research has shown that a powerful predictor of whether high school students will graduate and earn a college degree isn't only grades or even test scores, but rather the rigor of the high school curriculum they complete. Taking a high-level math course beyond Algebra 2 is a key indicator of such a curriculum. Advanced Placement (AP) exams show how many students are taking challenging courses and attempting to earn college credit while still in high school.

Are students taking "gateway" courses?

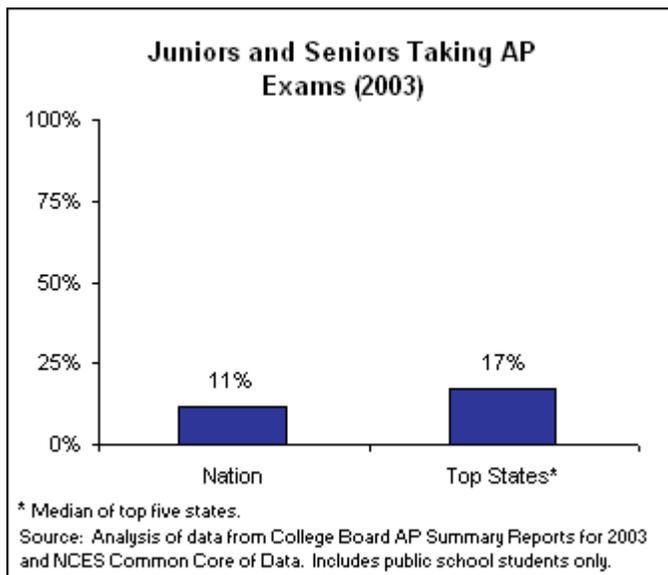


Are more students taking gateway courses over time?

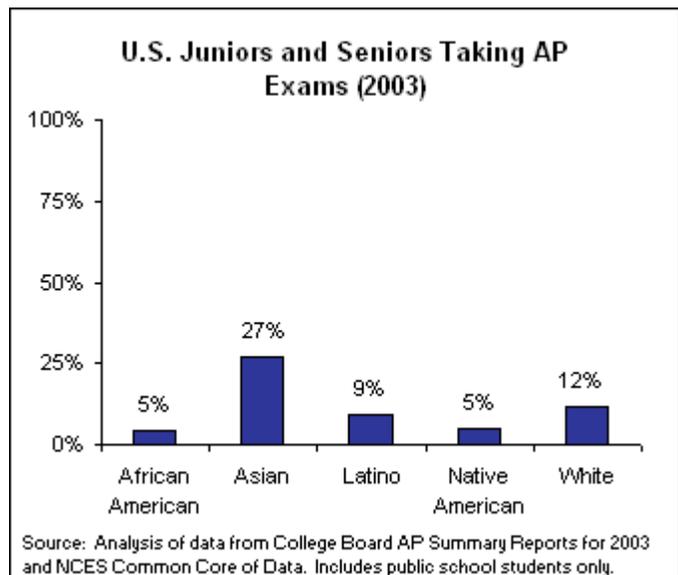
Grads Taking Math Course Beyond Algebra 2* in 1992	Grads Taking Math Course Beyond Algebra 2* in 2002	Nation's Improvement	Top Improver (WV)
29%	41%	+ 12	+ 44

* Trigonometry or precalculus.

Are students participating in AP courses?



Are there inequities in AP participation?

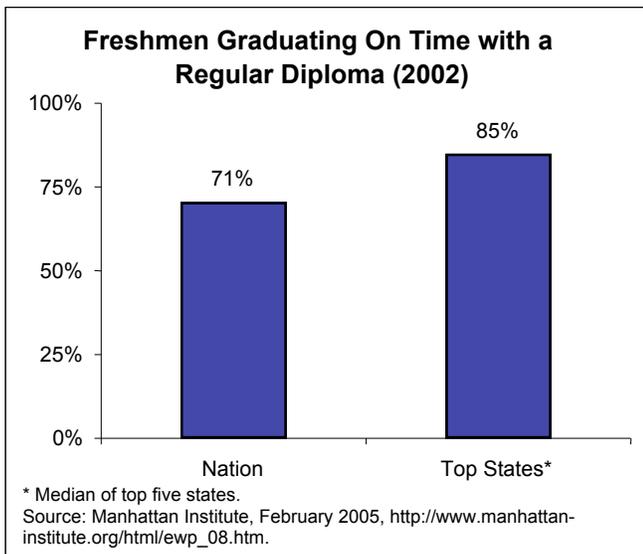


Are more students participating in AP over time?

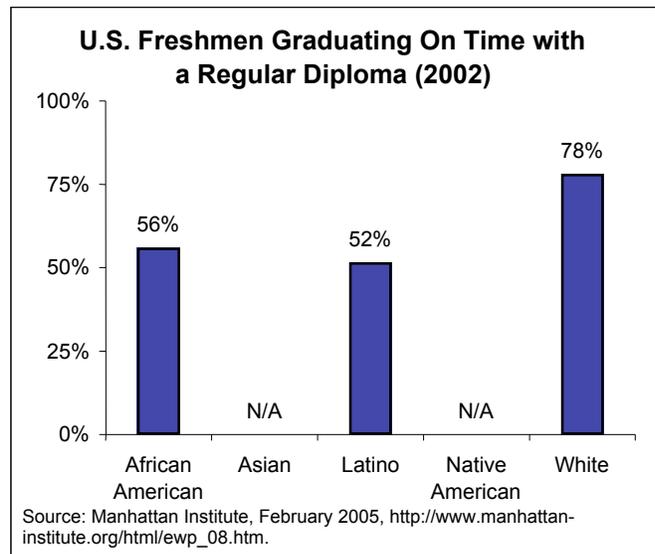
Juniors and Seniors Taking AP Exams in 1997	Juniors and Seniors Taking AP Exams in 2003	Nation's Improvement	Top Improver (MD)
7.6%	11.4%	+ 3.7	+ 7.4

Nationwide, nearly 30 percent of high school students don't graduate on time, and the figures are much lower for disadvantaged minority students than for white and Asian students. Without a high school diploma, students' chances for success in college or the workplace are severely restricted.

How many students graduate on time?



Are graduation rates equitable?

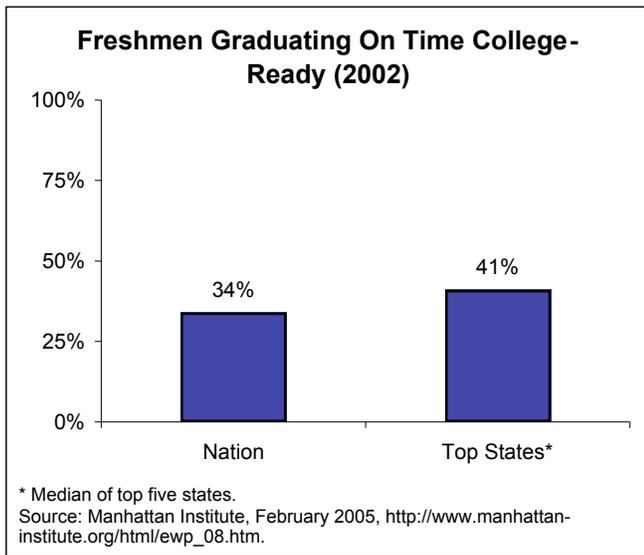


Are high school graduation rates improving over time?

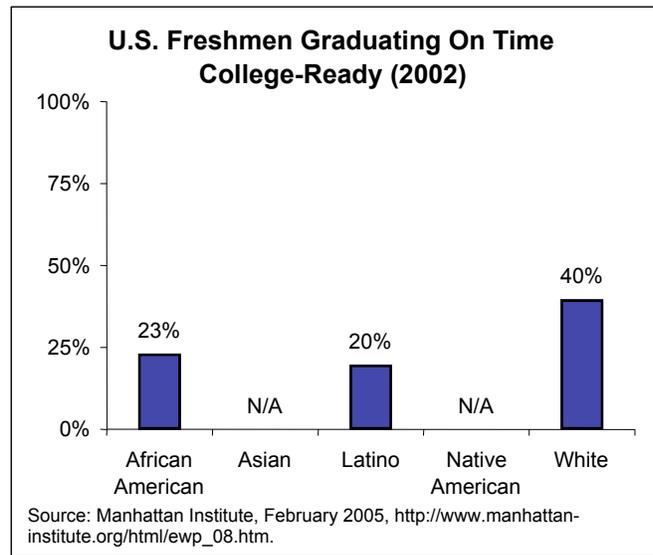
High School Graduation Rate in 1992	High School Graduation Rate in 2002	Nation's Improvement	Top Improver (NV)
73%	71%	- 2	+ 9

Jay Greene and Greg Forster of the Manhattan Institute have created several measures of college readiness. The data below consider whether students have earned a regular high school diploma, have completed the minimum coursework necessary to apply to college and have performed at least at the basic level on the NAEP reading test.

How many students prepare for college?



Are rates of college preparation equitable?

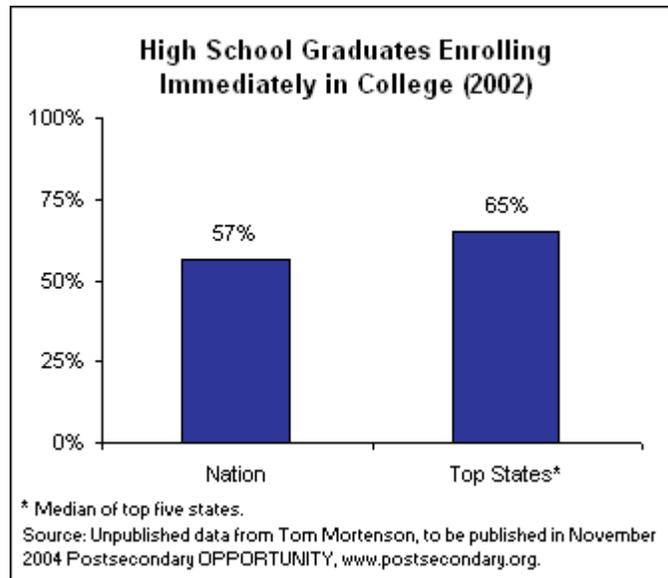


Are college-readiness rates improving over time?

College-Readiness Rate in 1992	College-Readiness Rate in 2002	Nation's Improvement	Top Improver (WV)
27%	34%	+ 7	+ 13

Earning a postsecondary credential has become increasingly important in today's economy, and some states have made significant gains in college-going rates. However, college admission is only the first step. Nationally, a quarter of college freshmen will not return for their sophomore year. Only slightly more than half of students in four-year colleges earn a degree within six years. The better prepared students are when they graduate from high school, the better their chances of getting into and succeeding in college.

How many high school graduates enroll in college the following fall?

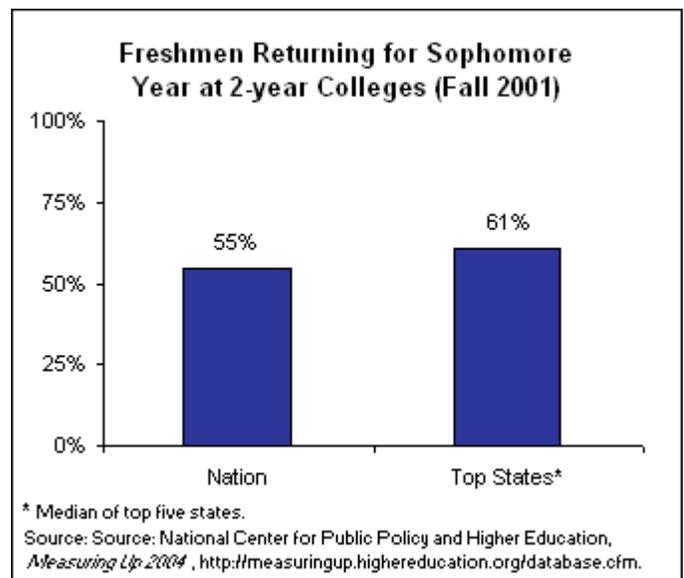
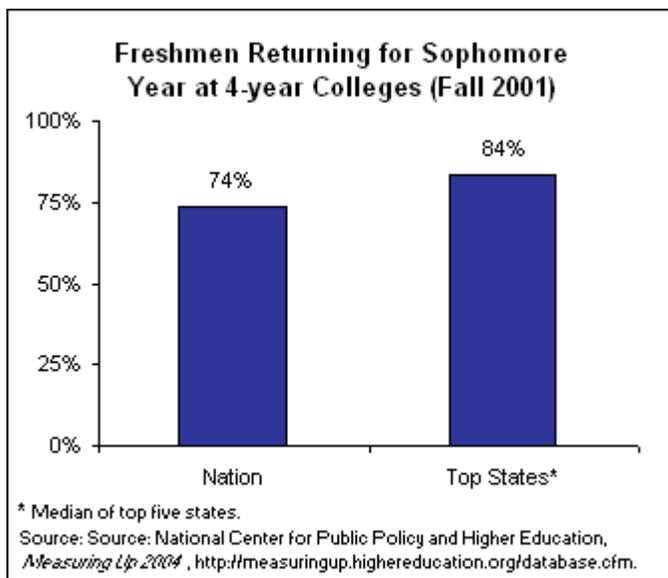


Are more high school graduates enrolling immediately in college over time?

College-Continuation Rate in 1992	College-Continuation Rate in 2002	Nation's Improvement	Top Improver (SC)
54.3%	56.7%	+ 2.4	+ 16

How many persist to sophomore year?

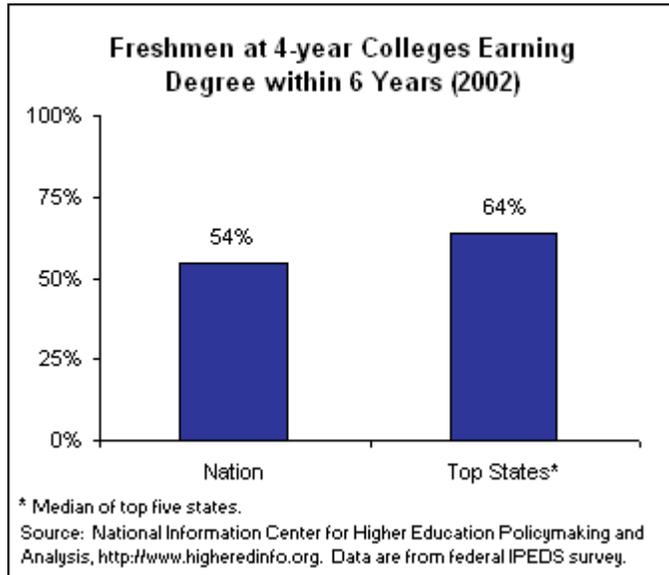
... at 2-year colleges?



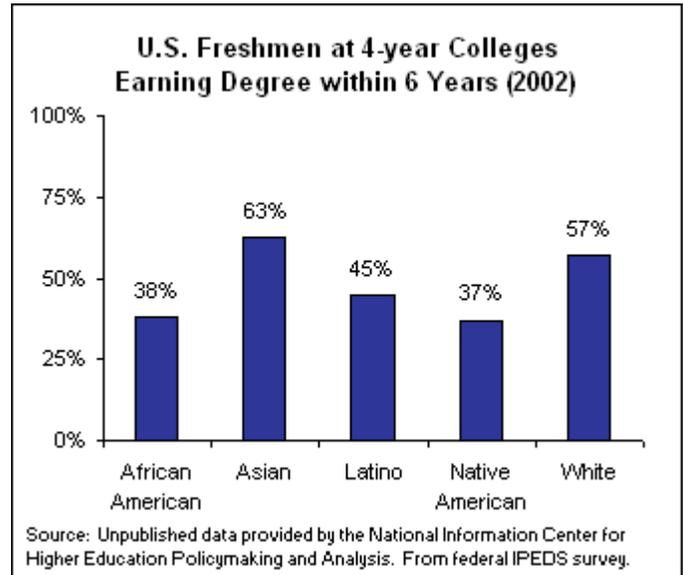
Are college retention rates improving over time?

Retention Rates at 4-Year Colleges in Fall 1988	Retention Rates at 4-Year Colleges in Fall 2001	Nation's Improvement	Top Improver (NV)
74.8%	73.6%	- 1.2	+ 12.3

How many graduate from college?



Are college graduation rates equitable?



Are college graduation rates improving over time?

6-Year Grad Rate from 4-Year Institutions in 1997	6-Year Grad Rate from 4-Year Institutions in 2002	Nation's Improvement	Top Improvers*
52.2%	54.3%	+ 2.1	+ 10

* Median of top three states (AK, DE and WY).