

College Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation: Statewide Results

**73 Percent of Public High School Graduates Enrolled in College
47 Percent Graduate within Six Years**

Summary

Among students in the 2013 public high school graduating class, 73.3 percent enrolled in college at any time during their first year after graduation. Nearly 47 percent of the high school graduating class of 2008 graduated from college with an associate's, bachelor's or higher degree within six years, with 31.5 percent attaining a degree in four years. These statewide results were provided to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) by the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). Reports for Connecticut's public high schools on college enrollment, persistence, and graduation that were generated by the NSC are online at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2758&q=335288>.

Approximately 28,300 students from the class of 2013 enrolled in college in the first year after graduation. Of those:

- 65 percent chose a public higher education institution;
- 74 percent chose a four-year institution; and
- 59 percent remained in the state.

These figures have remained relatively stable over the last several graduating classes.

Of the 27,900 graduates of the class of 2012 who enrolled in college the first year:

- 88.9 percent of students returned for a second year;
- those who enrolled in private colleges had higher retention rates than those enrolled in public schools (95 percent vs. 85.3 percent);
- those who enrolled in four-year colleges had higher retention rates than those enrolled in two-year colleges (94.9 percent vs. 72.1 percent),
- those who enrolled at out-of-state institutions had higher retention rates than in-state students (95 percent vs. 84.3 percent).

When the data are disaggregated by student demographic characteristics, wide disparities emerge, especially in the six-year college graduation rate for the high school class of 2008.

- Female students had a six-year graduation rate of approximately 52.3 percent, compared with 40.8 percent for male students.
- Asian students and white students had higher graduation rates (60.1 percent and 53.8 percent respectively) as compared with black/African American (24.4 percent) and Hispanic/Latino (21.4 percent) students.
- Only 20.2 percent of economically disadvantaged students earned a college degree within six years as compared with 54.2 percent of their non-disadvantaged peers.

Appendix

All Students

Of the high school graduating class of 2014, a total of 68.1 percent enrolled in college in the fall immediately following graduation. 73.3 percent of the class of 2013 enrolled at any time during their first year out of high school. 76.8 percent of the 2012 graduating class entered college during the first two years after high school (last year data for which two-year enrollment data was available).

Of the students from the high school graduating class of 2008, 31.5 percent graduated with an associate's, bachelor's or higher degree within four years, 42.5 percent graduated within five years, and 46.6 percent graduated within six years.

Students by Gender

Female students were much more likely to enroll in college than their male counterparts. From the class of 2013, nearly 78.9 percent of female students enrolled during the first year after high school, compared with only 67.8 percent of males.

Enrollment Any Time during the First Year after High School: by Class Year (percent of graduating class subgroup)

Demographic	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Female	74.5%	76.5%	77.3%	77.1%	78.1%	77.6%	78.9%
Male	64.9%	66.7%	67.9%	68.3%	67.1%	67.0%	67.8%

Females also outpaced males in freshman-to-sophomore retention, with 90.4 percent of female students from the class of 2012 returning for a second year of college compared with 86.8 percent of male students.

The success rate in terms of graduation from college showed an even larger gender gap. Female students from the class of 2008 had a six-year graduation rate of approximately 52.3 percent, compared with 40.8 percent for male students.

Students by Race/Ethnicity

Enrollment in college during the first year after high school graduation varied considerably across racial/ethnic groups for the class of 2013. Asian students were the most likely to enroll (83.2 percent), followed by white students (77.7 percent), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders (70.8 percent), Black or African American students (63.9 percent), multiracial students (69.6 percent), Hispanic/Latino students (59.2 percent), and American Indian or Native Alaskan students (58.5 percent).

**Enrollment Any Time during the First Year after High School: by Class Year
(percent of graduating class subgroup)**

Demographic	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
American Indian or Native Alaskan	61.0%	58.7%	57.9%	70.7%	64.3%	68.4%	58.5%
Asian	76.2%	81.0%	80.0%	81.8%	81.3%	82.3%	83.2%
Black or African American	58.5%	61.7%	62.3%	62.4%	65.5%	63.4%	63.9%
Hispanic/Latino	47.0%	53.3%	53.7%	55.3%	58.2%	57.8%	59.2%
Two or more races	*	*	*	*	72.0%	66.1%	69.6%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	58.8%	52.4%	70.8%
White	74.7%	75.9%	77.1%	77.3%	76.3%	76.6%	77.7%

Freshman-to-sophomore retention—the percentage of college freshman returning for a second year—varied considerably across racial/ethnic groups. For the freshmen from the class of 2012, Asian students had the highest retention rate (94.4 percent) followed by white students (91.2 percent), multiracial students (85.7 percent), American Indian or Native Alaskan students (85.5 percent), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders (81.8 percent), Hispanic/Latino students (80.4 percent), and Black or African American students (79.6 percent).

Degree attainment in terms of six-year graduation rate from college showed significant racial/ethnic gaps. For the class of 2008, Asian students had the highest graduation rate (60.1 percent) followed by white students (53.8 percent), American Indian or Native Alaskan students (28.6 percent), Black or African American students (24.4 percent), and Hispanic/Latino students (21.4 percent).

Students by Income

Using eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch as a measure of income, the NSC data reveal a strong effect of poverty on college-going. During the first year after high school graduation in 2013, 56.3 percent of economically disadvantaged students enrolled in college, compared with 80.8 percent of higher income students. Although the enrollment gap declined between 2007 and 2011, it has increased slightly for the past two high school graduating classes.

**Enrollment Any Time during the First Year after High School: by Class Year
(percent of graduating class subgroup)**

Demographic	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Economically Disadvantaged	47.5%	51.9%	53.2%	53.7%	56.2%	55.5%	56.3%
Not Economically Disadvantaged	75.1%	77.3%	78.8%	79.6%	79.0%	79.4%	80.8%

Economic status also affected the ability of college freshmen to stay in school and to earn a degree. The freshman-to-sophomore retention rate for members of the class of 2012, for

example, was 78.7 percent for economically disadvantaged students enrolled in college compared with 91.7 percent of higher income students. Only 19 percent of the economically disadvantaged students in the class of 2008 earned a college degree within six years, compared with 54.2 percent of higher income students.

Students by English Language Learner Status

Proficiency in the English language also affected College-going, retention, and graduation rates. During the first year after high school graduation in 2013, 50.0 percent of English language learner students (ELL) enrolled in college, compared with 74.3 percent of non-ELL students. This enrollment gap has diminished but only modestly over the last several classes.

Enrollment Any Time during the First Year after High School: by Class Year
(percent of graduating class subgroup)

Demographic	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
English Language Learner	40.1%	45.9%	47.5%	48.2%	48.1%	48.8%	50.0%
Not English Language Learner	70.7%	72.6%	73.6%	73.7%	73.5%	73.3%	74.3%

ELL status also affected the ability of college freshmen to stay in school and to earn a degree. The freshmen-to-sophomore retention rate for members of the class of 2012, for example, was 82.2 percent for ELL students enrolled in college compared with 88.9 percent for non-ELL students. Only 20.4 percent of the ELL students in the class of 2008 earned a college degree within six years, compared with 47.6 percent of non-ELL students.

Students with Disabilities

Students with an individualized education program at any time during their high school years were less likely to enroll in college. 41.0 percent of students with disabilities from the class of 2013 enrolled in college during the first year after high school graduation, compared with 75.8 percent of nondisabled students.

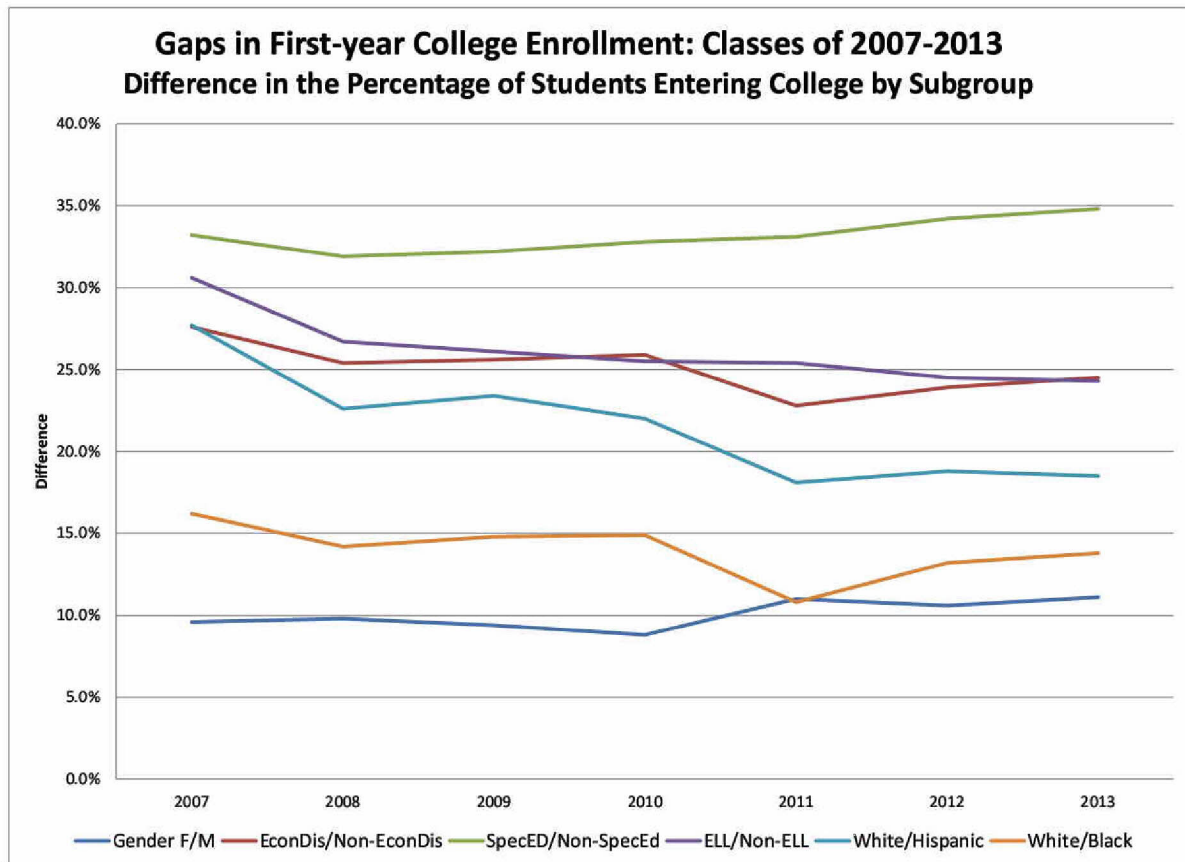
Enrollment Any Time during the First Year after High School: by Class Year
(percent of graduating class subgroup)

Demographic	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Students with disabilities	39.2%	42.0%	42.6%	42.1%	41.7%	40.7%	41.0%
Non-disabled Students	72.4%	73.9%	74.8%	74.9%	74.8%	74.9%	75.8%

The presence of a disability also affected retention and degree attainment. The freshmen-to-sophomore retention rate for members of the class of 2012, for example, was 73.1 percent for students with disabilities enrolled in college compared with 89.4 percent of nondisabled students. Only 15.6 percent of the students with disabilities in the class of 2008 earned a college degree within six years, compared with 49.0 percent of nondisabled students.

Trends in Enrollment Gaps

The following chart shows the difference in the percentage of students who enrolled in college during the first year after high school graduation by subgroup. Significant gaps exist across student subgroups based on gender, income, language, disability and race/ethnicity. For example, the difference between ELL and non-ELL student enrollment rates has dropped from over 30 percent to about 24 percent over the seven graduating class years. The female to male enrollment gap has been around 10 to 11 percent while the gap between students with disabilities and those without is the largest at about 35 percent with slight increases since the class of 2008.

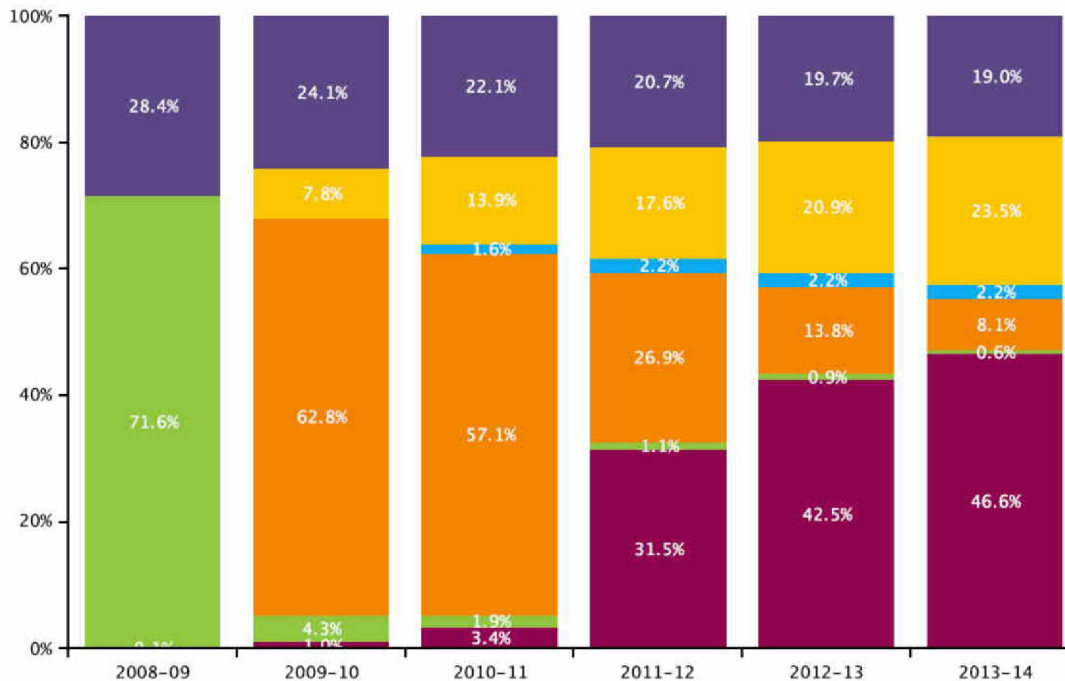


College enrollment rates are about 25 percent lower for students who are eligible for free or reduced lunch than those who were not. The income gap is slightly lower in recent years. Racial/ethnic gaps exist and trends differ across racial categories. The gap between white students and Hispanic students' enrollment has declined significantly from 28 percent to 19 percent while the gap between white and black students' enrollment has reversed its downward trend in recent years and is closer to its historical trend of about 14 percent.

Postsecondary Enrollment and Progress

The most complete picture of the progress of Connecticut's public school graduates through college can be obtained by following the class of 2008 through six years of National Student Clearinghouse data.

**Class of 2008 Postsecondary Enrollment and Progress:
Percentage of the Graduates of the class of 2008**



Graduated
 New to College
 Retained
 Returned After Stop Out
 No Longer Enrolled & Not Graduated
 Not in NSC to Date

Source: National Student Clearinghouse, Student Tracker Report

Highlights of these college enrollment and progress statistics include:

- 71.6 percent of the class of 2008 enrolled in the first year, while an additional 4.3 percent enrolled in the second year, 1.9 percent more in the third year, and approximately another one percent enrolled in each of the remaining years.
- 19 percent of students never enrolled in any college in the National Student Clearinghouse database.
- 23.5 percent of the class enrolled but left college without earning a degree.
- 8.1 percent of the class were still enrolled after six years.
- Each year, about 2 percent of the class returned after a gap in their postsecondary enrollment.

- After six years, 46.6 percent of the high school class of 2008 had earned a college degree.

This unique longitudinal look at a class of high school graduates sheds light on the variety of paths these students take through college. Nearly a quarter of students experience college at some point but don't return within this six-year time window. The four-year path from high school to college graduation no longer appears to be the norm, although the percentage of the graduating class who earned a degree in four years has increased slightly, from 31 percent to 33 percent from 2007 to 2010. More statewide enrollment and progress information can be found in the statewide feedback report available at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2758&q=335288>.

Note: NSC reports enrollment of students attending public and private, not-for-profit colleges and universities. While not all such institutions report their data, it is estimated that NSC collects data on approximately 94 percent of Connecticut students. For additional information, please see <http://nscresearchcenter.org/workingwithourdata/>.