

California Education Statistics Fact Sheet

General Education Statistics

The Challenge: California lags nearly all states in getting high school seniors to college or career/technical schools. The problem is especially severe among California's under-represented populations, due to a perception that college is neither affordable, nor accessible.

- More than 370,000 California high school seniors are projected to graduate in 2008.
Source: State of California. Department of Finance. California Public K-12 Enrollment and High School Graduate Projections by County, 2007 Series. October 2007.
- California ranks 40th among states in the rate of high school graduates going directly to college.
Source: Institute for Higher Educational Leadership and Policy. State of Decline? Gaps in College Access and Achievement Call for Renewed Commitment to Educating Californians. October 2006.

What the California Student Aid Commission is doing to help improve college-going rates:

Through its Cal Grant program, the California Student Aid Commission (Commission) offers a slate of programs that pay for state fees at all public universities, a \$1,551 access grant to all community colleges, and currently up to \$9,700 for independent colleges, universities and qualifying career technical schools. Other specialized programs help pay for loans for teachers and nurses. Overall, the Commission makes post-secondary education more affordable and in reach for our graduating high school seniors and other eligible students.

Education and California's Economy

The Challenge: California's economy will suffer if current low college-going trends continue. **The reason:** The State will lack a skilled workforce.

- The state's economic vitality is closely tied to higher education, with most residents (68 percent) believing that the state's economy will need a higher percentage of college-educated workers in 20 years.
Source: Public Policy Institute of California Statewide Survey. Californians and Higher Education. October 2007.
- By 2025, only 32 percent of the state's working-age adults will have a college degree. However, economic projections indicate that two of every five jobs (41 percent) will require a college degree.
Source: Public Policy Institute of California. Can California Import Enough College Graduates to Meet Workforce Needs? May 2007.

- Californians age 25 to 35 have lower levels of college attainment than the U.S. national average and lower levels than countries with comparable economies. California's most educated sector of the population, age 45-64, is approaching retirement or has retired.
Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission. Public Higher Education Performance Accountability Framework Report: Goal – Access and Affordability. Measure: Percentage of Racial Representation in Systems of Higher Education Compared to Racial Representation in the State. September 2007.

What the Commission is doing to encourage individuals to obtain post-secondary degrees for skilled career positions:

Cal Grants open the door to education at all post-secondary segments in California – from community colleges and career technical schools, to four-year state colleges and private universities. The Commission, through its outreach programs and awareness campaign, show how such education will help provide students with the tools and knowledge they need to succeed in skilled positions upon graduation. In addition to Cal Grants, the Commission offers loan assumption programs that focus on helping students pursue careers and fill the needs in skilled position areas, such as nursing and teaching.

Cost Barriers

The Challenge: Most Californians believe they can't afford college.

- Eighty four percent of Californians say that affording college is at least somewhat of a problem for students today, with 53 percent calling it a big problem. In fact, 66 percent of Californians believe that the cost of a college education prevents qualified, motivated students from pursuing higher education.
Source: Public Policy Institute of California Statewide Survey. Californians and Higher Education. October 2007.
- Eighteen percent of California's public college graduates and 29 percent of private college graduates have debt that would exceed manageable levels by accepting a job with earning equivalent to a teacher's starting salary.
Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission. Public Higher Education Performance Accountability Framework Report: Goal – Access and Affordability. Measure: Average Indebtedness of Graduates at Two- and Four-Year Colleges and Universities. September 2007.

What the Commission is doing to make college affordable:

The Commission offers and promotes Cal Grants, which offer “free cash” for college that does not have to be paid back. Last year, the Commission offered approximately \$800 million to more than 299,000 eligible students throughout the state. The Commission helps direct students and parents to other financial aid sources and offers loan assumption programs in certain high-need career fields that help relieve student debt. In the 2005-2006 academic year, the Commission provided nearly \$41 million in debt relief for more than 11,200 new and current loan assumption program participants.

Education and Income

The Challenge: Californians who don't have education beyond high school will make less than those who do.

- In 2005, the average income of a person with a high school diploma or GED was \$27,000. The average income for people with a bachelor's degree was \$56,000.
Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission. Accountability Framework Report: Goal – Contributions to Economic, Civic and Social Development. Measure: How is California Doing? September 2007.
- Compared to an average Californian with a high school-level education, possession of an associate degree increases income by 47 percent, a bachelor's degree increases income by 108 percent and a graduate or professional degree increases income by 189 percent.
Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission. Accountability Framework Report: Goal – Contributions to Economic, Civic and Social Development. Measure: How is California Doing? September 2007.
- Given the current disparities in educational attainment and projected growth by race/ethnicity, California's income will fall below the U.S. average by 2020 – unless race/ethnic gaps are closed.
Source: Institute for Higher Educational Leadership and Policy. State of Decline? Gaps in College Access and Achievement Call for Renewed Commitment to Educating Californians. October 2006.

What the Commission is doing:

Through its new Cal Grant College Cash Crew program, the Commission is showing students the financial advantages of obtaining a degree through real-life testimonials from former and current Cal Grant recipients who are themselves on the path to college and career success. The Commission also emphasizes the impact of higher education on future incomes during its public awareness campaign and outreach efforts.

Racial Inequities in Education

The Challenge: There is a disparity in educational attainment in California based on ethnicity.

- Educational attainment is not evenly distributed among ethnic groups in California. Fifty percent of Whites and 58.6 percent of Asians age 25 to 64 attained an associate degree or higher by 2005, compared to 14.9 percent of Latinos and 33.7 percent of African Americans.
Source: California Postsecondary Education Commission. Accountability Framework Report: Goal – Contributions to Economic, Civic and Social Development. Measure: How is California Doing? September 2007.

- If Hispanics, African Americans and Native Americans achieved the same levels of education of Whites by 2020, California's personal income would increase by \$101.6 billion (in year 2000 dollars).

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems. As America Becomes More Diverse: The Impact of State Higher Education Inequality. California State Profile. November 2005.

- The Latino population is the least educated and the fastest growing in California. Latinos will represent nearly 50 percent of the state's working-age population by 2020, making it imperative that the state reduce gaps in educational attainment to maintain economic and social health.

Source: Institute for Higher Educational Leadership and Policy. State of Decline? Gaps in College Access and Achievement Call for Renewed Commitment to Educating Californians. October 2006.

What the Commission is doing to assist underserved students in the path toward higher education:

California Student Aid Commission programs and partnerships provide financial aid and vital services that help students of all ethnic groups progress toward their ultimate goal of an education beyond high school, including career/technical training. Our programs are designed not only to help students from every ethnic group, but to supply teachers, parents, guidance counselors and high school administrators with tools and information – including bilingual materials – to help those students reach their educational goals.

The Commission has outreach programs designed to ensure underserved groups get information and help in applying for all types of available student aid. Those programs include targeted outreach efforts to our priority schools in underserved areas; our multi-lingual statewide California Cash for College workshops; multilingual resources for school counselors, teachers, students and parent groups using our "Fund Your Future" workbook series; and work with faith and community-based organizations to get out information about student financial aid.

In addition, we have cultivated helpful partnerships that include the College Access Foundation and the John Burton Foundation for Children Without Homes, which offer valuable financial backing to aid underserved students and foster youth in pursuing post-secondary education.

Awareness

The Challenge: Many students and their parents are unaware of the availability of, or requirements for, financial aid for those who want to continue their education after high school.

- Three-fourths of Latino young adults not currently in college would have been more likely to attend college if they were exposed to better information about financial aid. Further, more than half of all Latino parents and 43 percent of Latino young adults could not name a single source of financial aid.

Source: The Tomas Rivera Policy Institute. Caught in the Financial Aid Information Divide. A National Survey of Latino Perspectives on Financial Aid. March 2004.

- According to a recent Tomas Rivera Policy Institute survey, nearly all Latino youth respondents (98 percent) felt that it is important to have a college education. Only 41 percent of respondents felt they knew the eligibility requirements to apply for either a Cal Grant or Pell Grant.

Source: The Tomas Rivera Policy Institute. Perceptions of College Financial Aid Among California Latino Youth. June 2006.

What the Commission is doing to enhance public awareness about the availability of Cal Grants and other financial aid for post high school education:

The Commission conducts an annual public awareness campaign that focuses on making students and parents aware of state and federal financial aid programs, including Cal Grants and loan programs. Through our public awareness campaign, we convey the message that financial aid is available to even the most disadvantaged students. The Commission works with its partners to provide educational funding information and scholarships and provides hands-on help to complete the financial aid application process through its Cash for College program.

During the 2006-2007 campaign, the Commission:

- Sent 4,500 College Cash boxes (financial aid information kits) to counselors and financial aid administrators throughout California;
- Achieved 31 million media impressions among 17-19-year olds with its radio and TV ads;
- Aired more than 266 TV ads on the Spanish-language Univision stations in Northern and Southern California; and
- Had more than 18 million online impressions with its Internet banner ads.

To assist students to apply for all possible financial aid, the Commission continues to work with its regional and campus partners to provide hands-on help to complete the financial aid application process through the Cash for College program, which conducted more than 400 workshops in 2007 to more than 20,000 low-income and first generation college-bound students and their families. In partnership with the College Access Foundation of California, the largest foundation of its kind, an additional \$1,000 scholarship is provided at qualifying workshops to encourage high school seniors to apply for a Cal Grant and federal aid. More than \$3 million in scholarships and scholarship program funding has been granted to the Cash for College program since 2005.

The Commission also offers the California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP), established 30 years ago to improve the flow of information about postsecondary education and financial aid to low-income, elementary and secondary school students, while improving their achievement levels. Other valued partnerships with GEAR-UP, ScholarShare, the California Community College “I Can Afford College” campaign and the Wellness Foundation’s “Make it in Scrubs” allied health opportunity program, provide further information and support to increase awareness of financial aid and post-secondary education opportunities.

Cal Grants and Re-Enrollment:

The Challenge: The state continues to struggle to keep students in college beyond their first year.

- California is ranked 46th in the country in awarding bachelor's degrees to enrolled undergraduates.

Source: Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy. Invest in Success: How Finance Policy Can Increase Student Success at California's Community Colleges. October 2007.

How the Commission is helping to keep students enrolled in college:

The Commission's Cal Grant program has a powerful impact on students' re-enrollment at both two- and four-year institutions, regardless of other factors that may influence progress toward education goals. Consider:

- More than 96 percent of Cal Grant A recipients re-enrolled after their first year of study.
- Cal Grant B recipients had a second-year re-enrollment rate of 93 percent.
- Cal Grants also played a significant role in promoting successful transfer from community colleges to four-year institutions, providing more than 4,300 students with the financial means to do so in the 2005-2006 academic year.
- Cal Grant A community college students were twice as likely to transfer to and remain enrolled at four-year institutions by their third and fourth year as their non-grant counterparts.

Source: Determined to Succeed: Realizing the College Dream in California. California Student Aid Commission and EdFund. May 2004.

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