

Equity Landscape Report: Exploring Equity Gaps in Washington Postsecondary Education



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Introduction

Equity gaps in our society have existed and persisted over time. The racial wealth gap between Black and White families has been consistent since the 1960s—a typical Black household still has a net worth less than one-tenth of a typical White household (Luhby, 2020). Poverty rates also reveal immense disparities by race. The poverty rate is more than twice as high for Black and Hispanic people compared to White people, and despite reaching historic lows in 2019, one in ten Americans still lives in poverty (Creamer, 2020). Recent events have further emphasized racial injustices in our society. The disproportionate health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on people of color have exacerbated existing inequities, leading to renewed calls for social justice. The COVID-19 crisis is also shedding light on stark equity gaps in education that limit opportunities for social and economic mobility. This report examines disparities in postsecondary education in Washington that must be addressed in order to confront persistent inequities in our state.

Education can help reduce poverty and improve people’s lives. People with higher levels of educational attainment fare better in the labor market, resulting in financial stability and opportunities for fulfilling work. Those with higher levels of educational attainment also tend to have higher incomes than those with only a high school diploma. Over their lifetime, bachelor’s degree holders earn approximately \$1.5 million more than those with only a high school diploma (Kwakyie & Kibort-Crocker, 2020b). Employment and income are tied to health, wealth, and personal wellbeing, so those with higher educational attainment tend to fare better than those without.

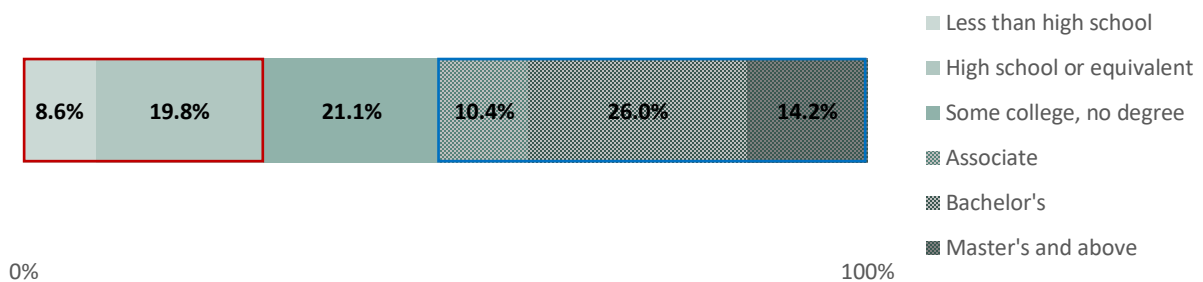
Despite the indisputable benefits, there are persistent equity gaps in education that hinder opportunities for some groups. Some students are faced with uneven hurdles that lead to poorer outcomes throughout their educational trajectory and lower chances of earning a postsecondary credential. An education system that works for all students can help diminish inequities in our society and provide opportunities for social and economic mobility. Understanding existing disparities can lay the foundation for a more equitable education system that provides access to opportunities for all people in Washington to thrive.

This report compiles existing data to provide an overview of equity gaps in postsecondary education in Washington to inform policy discussions and develop effective strategies. For each student outcome measure, we will present outcomes for Washington students overall, followed by a breakdown by gender, race, and income. The first section of the report details current educational attainment levels in Washington and describes progress towards the state attainment goal. Next, we present findings on high school student outcomes to assess equity in postsecondary access. We then turn to postsecondary enrollment patterns, followed by several metrics of postsecondary success. Then we examine labor market outcomes to understand how unemployment and earned income compares for different groups in our state. Finally, we conclude with a discussion of findings and some strategies for narrowing equity gaps in postsecondary education.

Measuring Postsecondary Attainment in Washington

Among adults in Washington ages 25-44, approximately half do not have a postsecondary degree—9 percent have less than a high school education, 20 percent have a high school diploma or equivalent, and 21 percent have some college but no degree¹. Of the remaining half, 10 percent have an associate degree, 26 percent have a bachelor’s degree, and 14 percent have a graduate degree (figure 1). Currently, we do not have a clearly defined way of counting certificates. Those in the “some college no degree” category (shown with no outline below) could have a postsecondary certificate that is not specifically defined in the American Community Survey that collects this data. There is an opportunity for Washington to define a data agenda that allows for identifying adults in the “some college no degree” category who hold a postsecondary certificate.

Figure 1. What is the educational attainment for Washington adults ages 25-44?



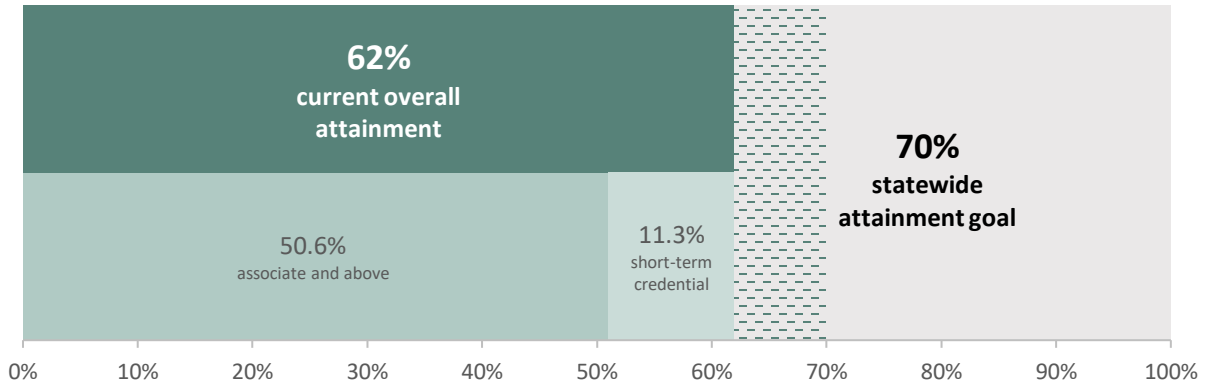
Source: American Community Survey, 2018 PUMS 1-Year Data, Washington postsecondary attainment ages 25-44. Data on educational attainment retrieved from the American Community Survey (ACS) does not specify the number of adults who have a postsecondary certificate.

Washington has set forth a postsecondary education agenda with a goal to increase the number of people ages 25-44 with a postsecondary credential to 70 percent². The state currently falls short of the goal. Approximately 51 percent of adults ages 25-44 have at least an associate degree, as shown in figure 1. Evidence from research estimates that an additional 11 percent of adults in Washington have a postsecondary certificate or certification (*A Stronger Nation*, 2020). Added together, an estimated 62 percent of adults in Washington have a postsecondary credential, eight percentage points shy of the statewide attainment goal (figure 2).

¹ Data on educational attainment retrieved from the American Community Survey (ACS) does not specify the number of adults who have a postsecondary certificate.

² RCW 28B.77.020 states that WSAC “shall propose educational attainment goals and priorities to meet the state’s evolving needs.” The 2013 Roadmap report established educational attainment goals for the state. The full report can be found here: <https://wsac.wa.gov/the-roadmap>

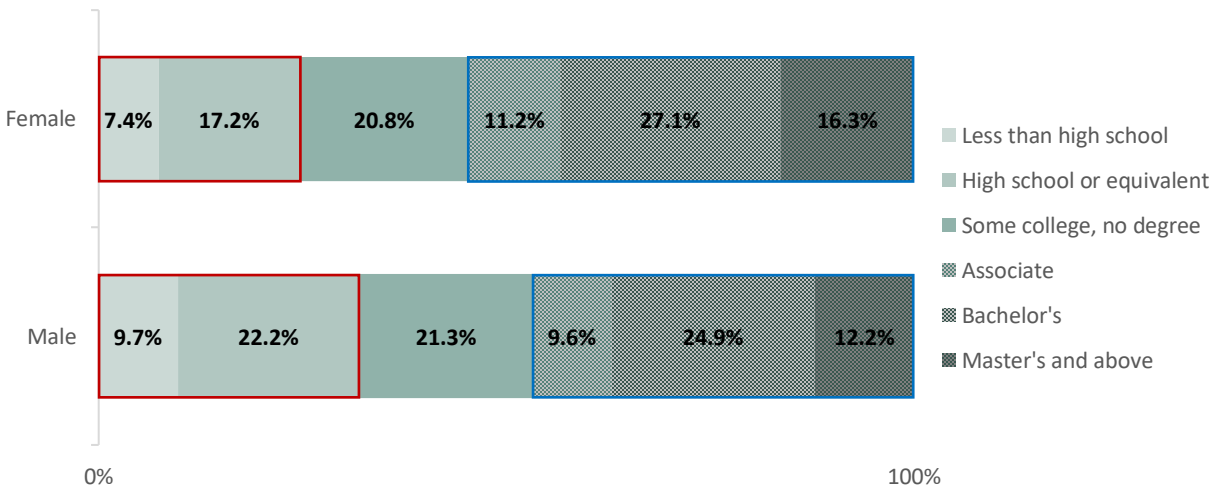
Figure 2. Approximately 62 percent of adults in Washington currently have a postsecondary credential³



Source: Associate and higher data retrieved from American Community Survey, 2018 PUMS 1-Year Data, Washington postsecondary attainment, ages 25-44. Short-term credential data retrieved from Lumina Foundation, *A Stronger Nation*, Washington residents ages 25-64

Looking at the data closer reveals troubling gaps in educational attainment rates by gender, race, and income level. While 51 percent of all adults ages 25-44 in Washington have at least an associate degree, some groups are even further from the attainment goal.

Figure 3. Men in Washington have lower educational attainment than women



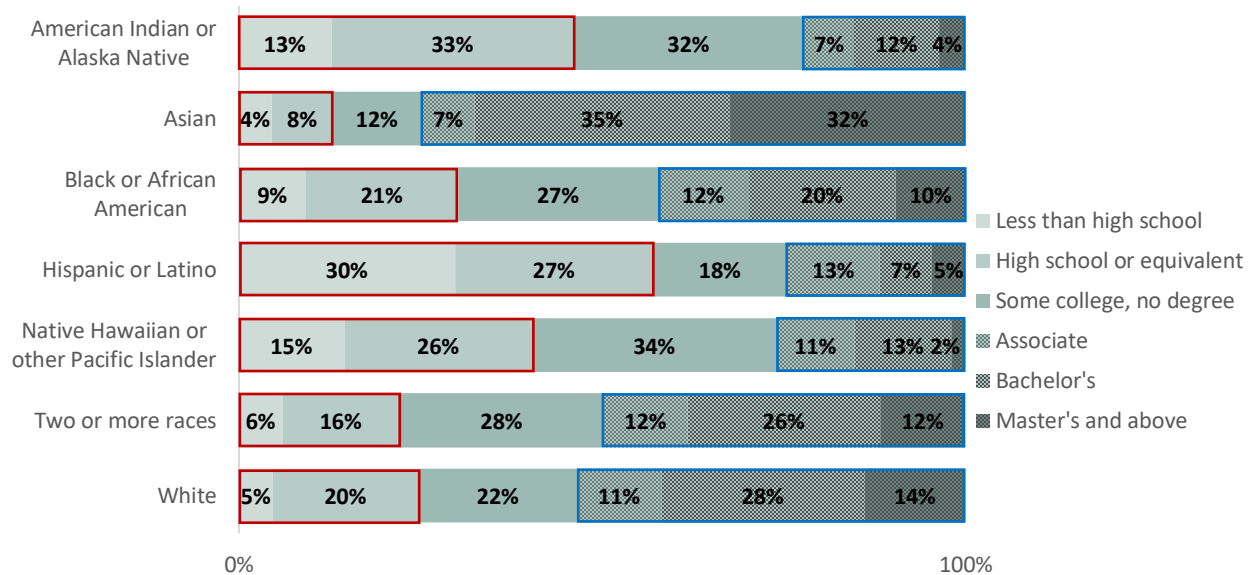
Source: American Community Survey, 2018 PUMS 1-Year Data, Washington postsecondary attainment by gender, ages 25-44. Data on educational attainment retrieved from the American Community Survey (ACS) does not specify the number of adults who have a postsecondary certificate.

In Washington, 55 percent of women have at least an associate degree, compared to 47 percent of men (figure 3). The disparity in educational attainment between genders aligns with earlier indicators of educational success for males. Male students are less likely to graduate high school and enroll in

³ Associate and higher attainment retrieved from 2018 American Community Survey, short-term credentials retrieved from *A Stronger Nation* report by the Lumina Foundation

postsecondary programs than female students, leading to lower chances of obtaining postsecondary credentials.

Figure 4. Some racial minority groups are further from the statewide attainment goal than others



Source: American Community Survey, 2018 PUMS 1-Year Data, Washington postsecondary attainment by race, ages 25-44. Data on educational attainment retrieved from the American Community Survey (ACS) does not specify the number of adults who have a postsecondary certificate.

There are significant differences in educational attainment among racial groups in Washington (figure 4). Three-quarters of Asian adults and more than half of White adults in Washington have at least an associate degree, compared to just one in five American Indian adults and one in four Hispanic adults⁴.

The gap between current attainment and the statewide goal is largest for American Indian people (48 percentage points), Hispanic people (45 percentage points), Native Hawaiian people (44 percentage points), and Black people (28 percentage points). This compares to a gap of 17 percentage points for White people. (Note: these numbers do not include workforce certificates or certifications).

⁴ Shortened titles of race/ethnicity categories may be used throughout the report for brevity

Figure 5. People with lower incomes in Washington have lower educational attainment



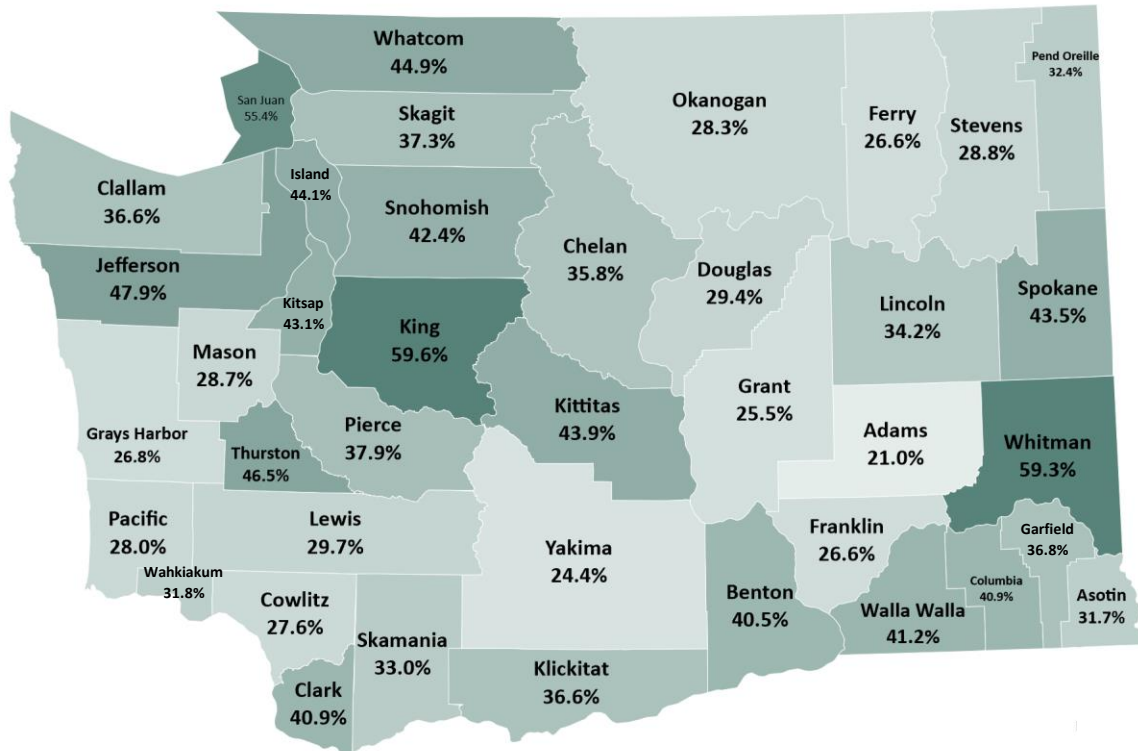
Source: American Community Survey, 2018 PUMS 1-Year Data, Washington postsecondary attainment by income, ages 25-44. Data on educational attainment retrieved from the American Community Survey (ACS) does not specify the number of adults who have a postsecondary certificate.

We know that higher education leads to higher earnings, so it is not surprising that those with lower incomes in Washington have lower educational attainment, and those with higher incomes have higher educational attainment. While over 80 percent of people whose incomes exceed \$100,000 annually in Washington have a postsecondary degree, only about 36 percent of people who make less than \$25,000 per year have one (figure 5).

There are policies in place to help people with lower incomes afford higher education. The Washington College Grant provides funding to cover tuition and fees at public institutions in the state. Individuals making up to \$27,500 per year are eligible for the full award, and those who make up to \$50,500 can receive a partial award⁵. Financial aid opportunities can help reduce the barriers to entry that inhibit postsecondary educational attainment.

⁵ Those making up to 55% of the state’s median family income are eligible to receive the full Washington College Grant award. Those making up to 100% of the state’s median family income are eligible to receive a partial award. A full description of eligibility and award levels can be found here: <https://wsac.wa.gov/wcg-awards>

Figure 6. Educational attainment in Washington varies by county



See appendix A for a complete table of postsecondary attainment rates by county

Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018 PUMS 5-Year Data, proportion of Washington residents with at least an associate degree by county, age 25+. Data on educational attainment retrieved from the American Community Survey (ACS) does not specify the number of adults who have a postsecondary certificate.

There is variation across counties in Washington in the proportion of adults with a postsecondary credential (figure 6). The attainment rate by county ranges from as low as 21 percent to as high as 60 percent. The state cannot reach its 70 percent attainment goal if the county attainment levels do not improve. Ensuring that all Washingtonians have access to equitable education opportunities in their county is critical for increasing postsecondary attainment across the state and reaching the state attainment goal.

Assessing Equity in Postsecondary Access

Improving educational attainment begins well before college. Beyond academic preparation, activities that create a college-going culture can encourage postsecondary enrollment after high school. Participating in dual credit courses, signing up for Washington’s College Bound Scholarship program, completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and graduating from high school in four years may all lead students to accessing postsecondary opportunities. Understanding the experiences and behaviors of high school students can help identify barriers to college access that lead to inequitable postsecondary outcomes.

Table 1. Who is enrolled in public high schools in Washington?

Gender	Percent	Number
<i>Female</i>	48.5%	167,481
<i>Gender X⁶</i>	0.2%	587
<i>Male</i>	51.3%	177,084

Race	Percent	Number
<i>American Indian</i>	1.3%	4,618
<i>Asian</i>	8.2%	28,269
<i>Black</i>	4.5%	15,452
<i>Hispanic</i>	23.0%	79,557
<i>Nat. Haw./Pac. Islander</i>	1.2%	4,032
<i>Two or More Races</i>	7.5%	25,846
<i>White</i>	54.3%	187,342

Income	Percent	Number
<i>Low-Income</i>	42.1%	145,282
<i>Non-Low Income</i>	57.9%	199,870

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Washington School Report Card, high school enrollment, academic year 2019-2020

Approximately 350,000 students attend public high schools in Washington (table 1). Roughly half of students are male and half are female, with a small number identifying as gender X. Slightly more than half of students are White, and about a quarter are Hispanic. Asian students comprise about 8 percent of the total population, followed by students of two or more races, and Black students who make up approximately 5 percent of the total. American Indian and Native Hawaiian students each make up about 1 percent of the total. Over 40 percent of students in public high schools in Washington are low-income. The rate of low-income students is calculated from the number of students who receive Free and Reduced Priced Lunch (FRPL). While not a perfect estimate, FRPL is a reasonable proxy for low-income status⁷. Despite diversity among high school students in Washington, not all students participate in activities that lead to postsecondary enrollment at equal rates.

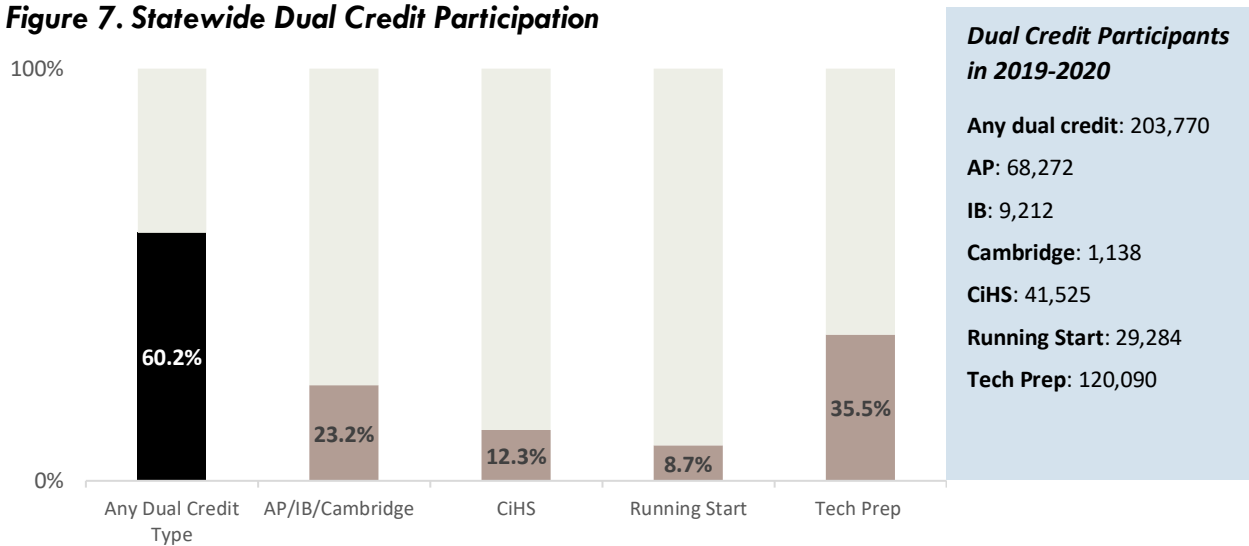
⁶ One of the reporting categories required by Washington law is gender, reported as Male, Female, and Gender X. (WAC 246-490-075 defines "X" as "a gender that is not exclusively male or female, including, but not limited to, intersex, agender, amalgagender, androgynous, bigender, demigender, female-to-male, genderfluid, genderqueer, male-to-female, neutrois, nonbinary, pangender, third sex, transgender, transsexual, Two Spirit, and unspecified.")

⁷ In this report, FRPL is used as a proxy for low-income status of high school students due to data limitations

Is dual credit participation equitable?

In 2019, 60 percent of high school students in Washington took a dual credit course of any type (figure 7). The four dual credit course types offered to Washington high school students are exam-based (including Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Cambridge), College in the High School (CiHS), Running Start, and Tech Prep⁸ (Miller et al., 2019). Dual credit coursework allows students to fulfill high school requirements while simultaneously earning college credit, saving students time and money in working towards a postsecondary credential. Students who participate in dual credit coursework also tend to graduate high school, enroll in college, and obtain a postsecondary credential at higher rates than those who do not (*Dual Enrollment Programs*, 2017). A closer look at the numbers reveal that some students are underrepresented in some types of dual credit courses.

Figure 7. Statewide Dual Credit Participation

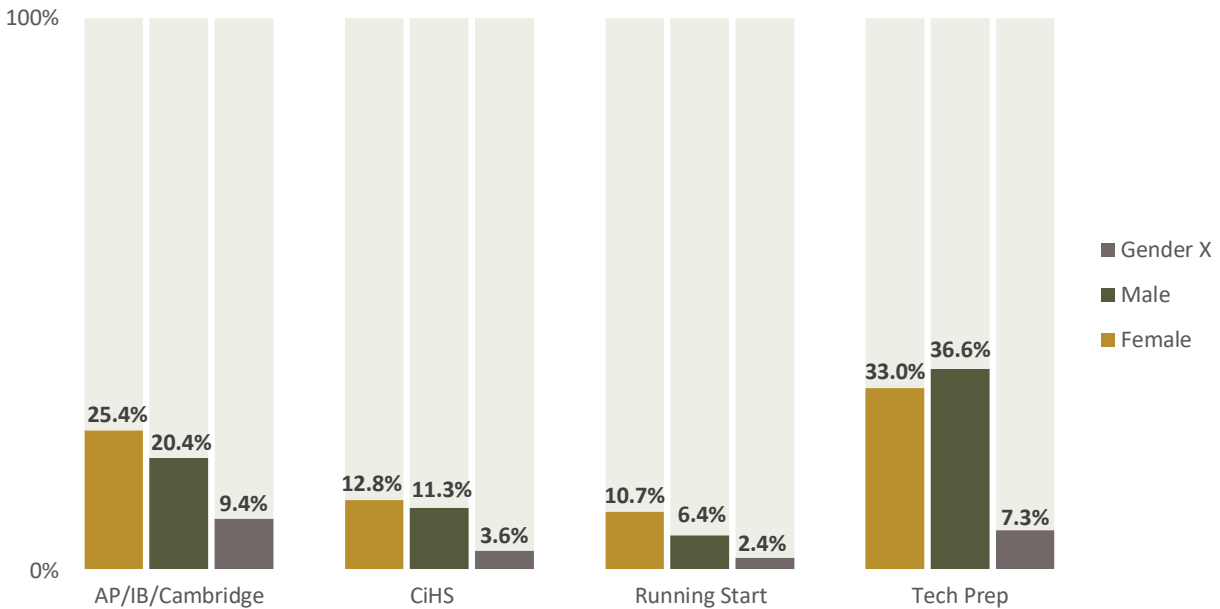


Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, statewide dual credit participation, academic year 2019-2020

Note: Some students may take more than one type of dual credit type, so they may be counted in multiple categories. Participation in the unique types of dual credit coursework does not sum to the total participation rate.

⁸ Tech Prep is Washington’s term for Career and Technical Education courses (CTE). There is uncertainty around how Tech Prep credits are reported in school districts across the state and how participation is articulated in postsecondary institutions (Miller et al., 2019). Therefore, participation in Tech Prep courses may necessarily lead to postsecondary credits for students and may not be as closely related to postsecondary enrollment and success as other dual credit types.

Figure 8. Female students are more likely to take exam-based, College in the High School, and Running Start courses than males

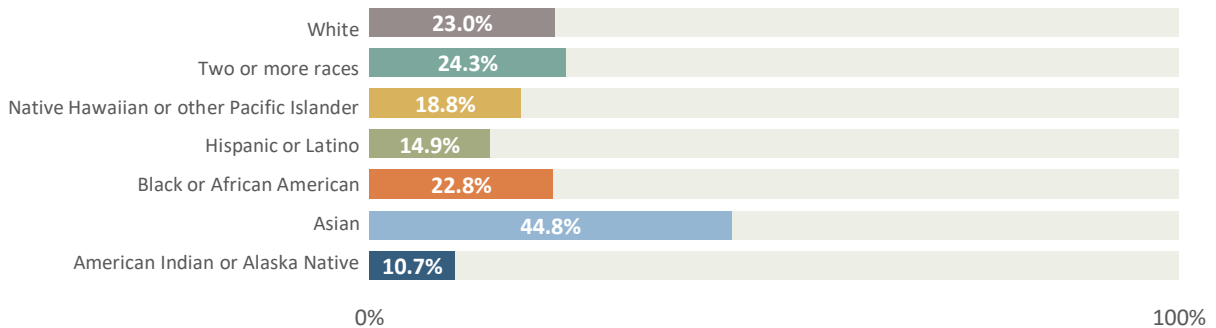


Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, dual credit participation by gender, academic year 2019-2020

Female students are more likely than male students to be enrolled in all dual credit course types except for Tech Prep. The largest disparities are in exam-based courses, where female students are five percentage points more likely to participate than males, and Running Start, where the difference is over four percentage points (figure 8). In contrast, male students participate in Tech Prep courses at higher rates than female students. Students who identify as gender X are underrepresented in all dual credit course types.

There is variation in dual credit course participation by race

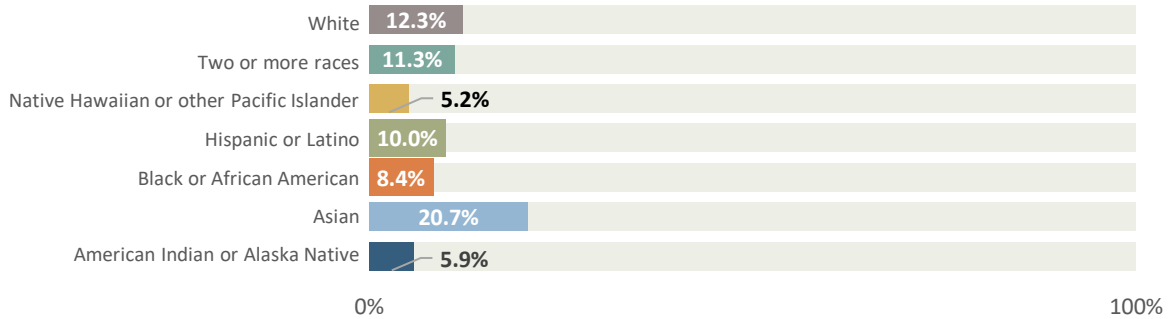
Figure 9a. AP/IB/Cambridge Participation



Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, AP/IB/Cambridge participation by race, academic year 2019-2020

Many students participate in exam-based dual credit courses, however there is major variation by student race (figure 9a). Almost half (45 percent) of Asian students take exam-based dual credit courses, compared to just 15 percent of Hispanic students and 11 percent of American Indian students.

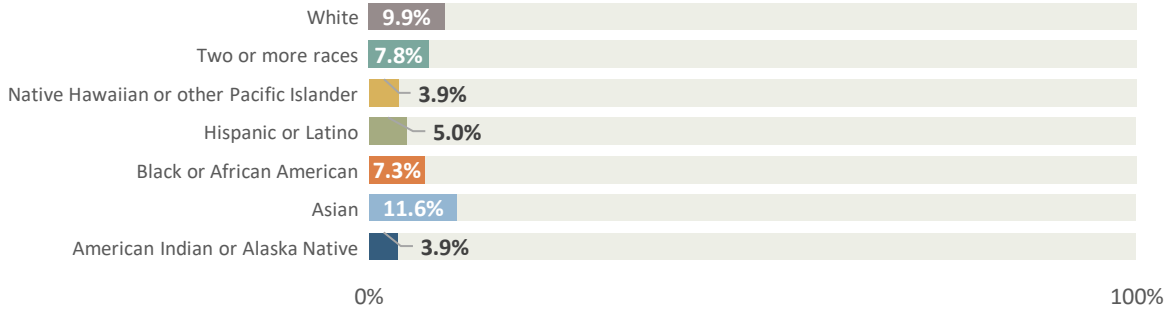
Figure 9b. CiHS Participation



Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, CiHS participation by race, academic year 2019-2020

Fewer students overall participate in CiHS, but there are disparities by race (figure 9b). Roughly one in five Asian students take CiHS courses, compared to about one in ten Hispanic students, and one in twenty American Indian or Native Hawaiian students.

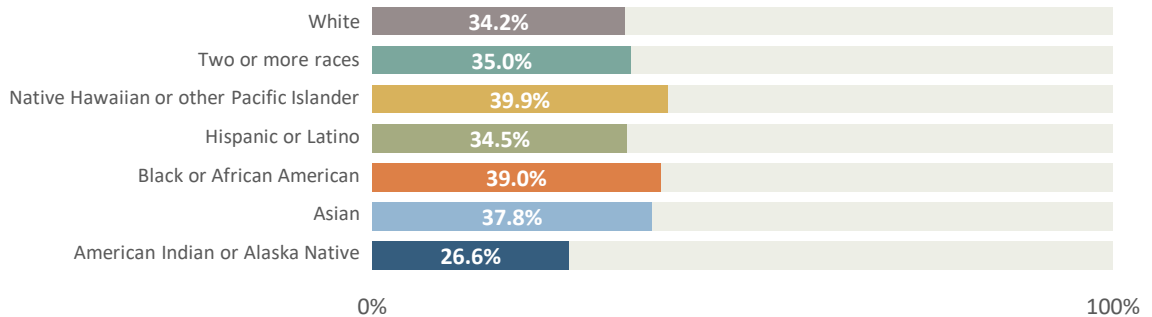
Figure 9c. Running Start Participation



Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, Running Start participation by race, academic year 2019-2020

Fewer still students take Running Start courses, with Asian and White students most likely to enroll and American Indian and Native Hawaiian students least likely to enroll (figure 9c). Hispanic students, the second largest racial group among high school students in Washington, are about half as likely to take Running Start courses as White students.

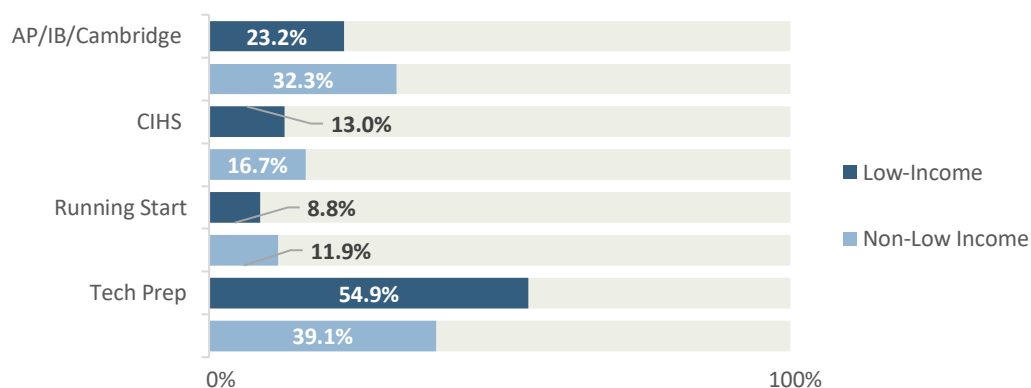
Figure 9d. Tech Prep Participation



Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, Tech Prep participation by race, academic year 2019-2020

Tech Prep courses have the highest enrollment across the board, with participation ranging from 27 percent for American Indian students to 40 percent for Native Hawaiian students (figure 9d).

Figure 10. Low-income students are less likely to participate in most dual credit courses than non-low income students



Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, dual credit participation by FRPL status, academic year 2019-2020

There are disparities in dual credit participation by income level (figure 10)⁹. The biggest difference is in exam-based courses, where non-low income students are nine percentage points more likely to participate than low-income students. This difference may stem from the upfront costs associated with some dual credit courses (Miller et al., 2019). In contrast, 55 percent of low-income students take Tech Prep courses, compared to 39 percent of non-low income students. Tech Prep courses generally do not require fees for high school students, however, as mentioned above, credit articulation to postsecondary institutions is inconsistent. (See the appendix for analysis on dual credit participation across school districts in Washington).

Are there equity gaps in who applies for financial aid?

Washington has several different ways of supporting students to afford higher education. The two largest state financial aid programs are the Washington College Grant and the College Bound Scholarship (*Financial Aid Overview*, 2020). Beyond making college more affordable, applying for financial aid is likely to lead to enrolling in postsecondary programs after high school.

Who is participating in the College Bound Scholarship program?

The College Bound Scholarship (CBS) is one of several state financial aid programs in Washington that helps low-income students afford college. The scholarship covers tuition and some fees and provides a small stipend for textbooks for eligible students whose families make up to 65 percent of the state’s median family income¹⁰. Students who meet income requirements can sign up for the program in 7th or 8th grade. Of the 41,842 students who were eligible for CBS in the high school graduating class of 2023, 72 percent signed up¹¹.

⁹ In this report, FRPL is used as a proxy for low-income status of high school students due to data limitations

¹⁰ Eligibility requirements for College Bound Scholarship: Low-income students may apply in 7th or 8th grade and must graduate high school with at least a 2.0 GPA, have no felony convictions, and complete FAFSA/WASFA during their senior year. More information available here: <https://readysetgrad.wa.gov/college/College-Bound-Sign-Up>

¹¹ Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) calculation of reconciled CBS sign up rate

Table 2a. Male and female students participate in College Bound at a similar rate

Gender	Percent	Number
Female	49.8%	14,340
Male	49.6%	14,267
Gender X	0.1%	20
Unknown	0.6%	162

Source: Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) Research analysis of Washington College Bound Scholarship participation by gender, academic year 2018-2019

Male and female students participate in the College Bound Scholarship program at equivalent rates (table 2a).

Table 2b. The majority of College Bound Scholarship participants are students of color

Race	Percent	Number
American Indian	1.5%	431
Asian	5.1%	1,462
Black	5.7%	1,630
Hispanic	46.1%	13,273
Nat. Haw./Pac. Islander	1.6%	452
Two or More Races	6.5%	1,883
White	33.0%	9,490
Not Provided	0.6%	168

Source: WSAC Research analysis of Washington College Bound Scholarship participation by race, academic year 2018-2019

Roughly 46 percent of College Bound students are Hispanic, 33 percent are White, and 7 percent are students of two or more races (table 2b). The College Bound Scholarship program is designed to serve only low-income students. (*College Bound Scholarship sign up rates for each school district can be found in Appendix C*)

Which students complete FAFSA and WASFA?

Washington has generous financial aid programs, including the College Bound Scholarship, but receiving aid is contingent upon completing the FAFSA. FAFSA completion has also been correlated with higher rates of college enrollment (*National FAFSA Completion Rates for High School Seniors and Graduates*). However, Washington has among the lowest overall rates of FAFSA completion in the country, ranking in the bottom five states nationally for the past several years (*FAFSA Tracker, 2020*).

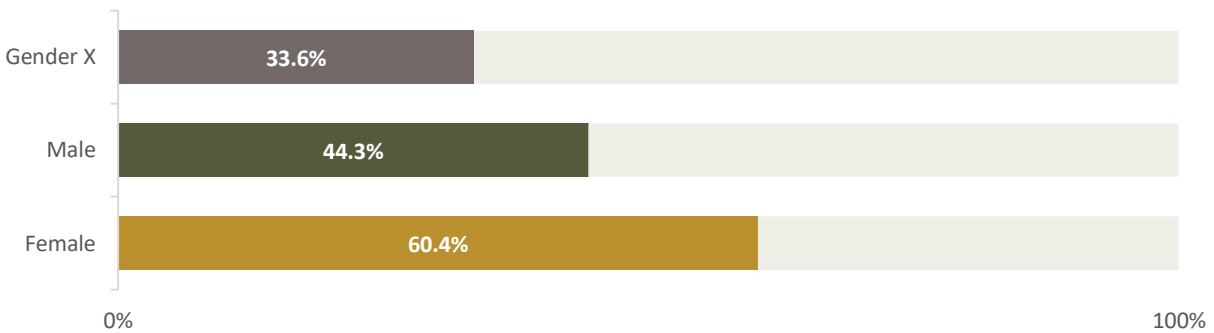
To help boost FAFSA completion efforts, the state has developed a data portal that is used by schools and school counselors to monitor and track students' FAFSA completion. As of September 2020, roughly 40,000 out of 76,000 students, or 52 percent, of high school seniors who were expected to graduate in 2019-2020 across the state completed FAFSA. Approximately 1,600 students submitted FAFSA with errors or without a signature¹². Students who attempt to complete FAFSA but make an error or miss a signature may forego opportunities for financial aid, even if they are otherwise eligible. FAFSA

¹² WSAC Research calculation of FAFSA completion portal data

completion and error rates vary by student group, and students who do not complete FAFSA miss out on opportunities to receive help paying for college.

Washington is one of several states that offers financial aid to undocumented students. However, instead of the federal form, undocumented students must complete the Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA)¹³. Over 3,300 students completed WASFA in 2020¹⁴.

Figure 11a. Male students have lower FAFSA completion rates than female students



Source: WSAC Research analysis of Washington FAFSA Completion Portal, FAFSA completion rate by gender, academic year 2019-2020

There is a substantial gender gap in FAFSA completion (figure 11a). About 60 percent of female students complete FAFSA compared to just 44 percent of male students. Only 34 percent of students who identify as gender X completed FAFSA.

Figure 11b. There are marginal differences in FAFSA error rates for male and female students



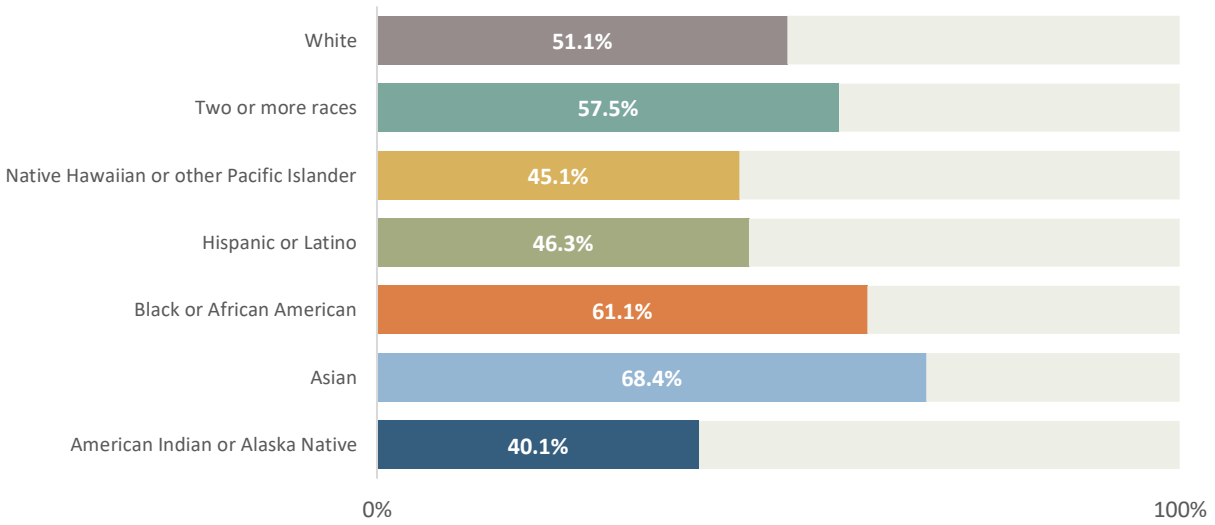
Source: WSAC Research analysis of Washington FAFSA Completion Portal, FAFSA error rate by gender, academic year 2019-2020

Error rates for male and female students are similar and are slightly lower for students identifying as gender X (figure 11b).

¹³ Washington is a state committed to providing opportunities to students and protecting the rights of families. WSAC is also committed to protecting the confidentiality of the information and privacy of students and families. More information about WASFA can be found here: <https://readysetgrad.wa.gov/wasfa-washington-application-state-financial-aid>

¹⁴ WSAC Student Financial Aid calculation of WASFA completions

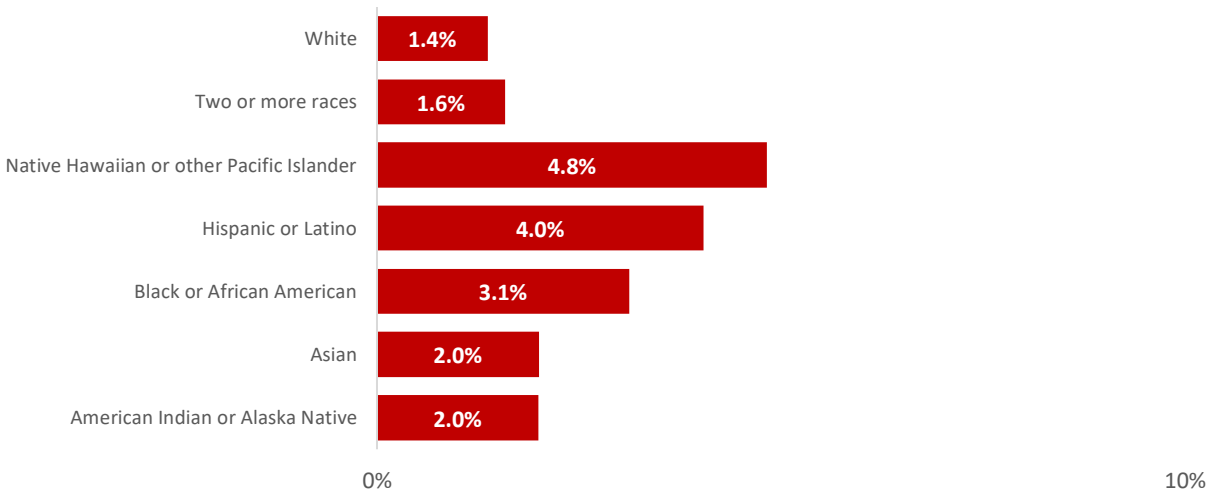
Figure 12a. Some students of color are less likely to complete FAFSA



Source: WSAC Research analysis of Washington FAFSA Completion Portal, FAFSA completion rate by race, academic year 2019-2020

Asian students have the highest rate of FAFSA completion, followed by Black students and students of two or more races (figure 12a). American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Hispanic students have among the lowest FAFSA completion rates.

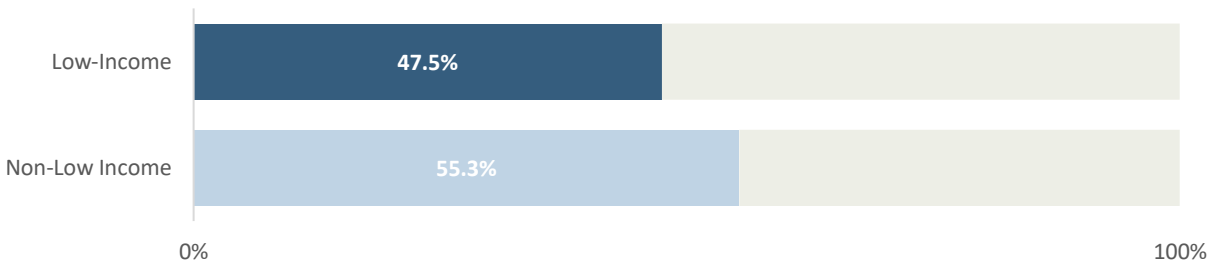
Figure 12b. Native Hawaiian and Hispanic students have the highest FAFSA error rates



Source: WSAC Research analysis of Washington FAFSA Completion Portal, FAFSA error rate by race, academic year 2019-2020

Error rates for students are higher than other racial groups (figure 12b). Reducing the error rate for Native Hawaiian and Hispanic students would increase FAFSA completion, and financial aid eligibility and receipt, for these students.

Figure 13a. Low-income students complete FAFSA at lower rates



Source: WSAC Research analysis of Washington FAFSA Completion Portal, FAFSA completion rate by FRPL status, academic year 2019-2020

Just 48 percent of low-income students complete FAFSA, compared to 55 percent of non-low income students (figure 13a)¹⁵. Students who are low-income are eligible for several state financial aid programs, however they cannot receive the aid if they don't complete FAFSA. They also cannot receive federal financial aid, including the Pell grant. Increasing FAFSA completion rates, especially for low-income students who may struggle to attend college because of cost, will make college more affordable and more accessible.

Figure 13b. The FAFSA error rate for low-income students is more than double the rate of their non-low income peers



Source: WSAC Research analysis of Washington FAFSA Completion Portal, FAFSA error rate by FRPL status, academic year 2019-2020

The error rate for low-income students is more than double the rate for non-low income students, meaning that there is a higher proportion of low-income students who attempt to file FAFSA but make a mistake¹⁶ (figure 13b). Low-income students who file FAFSA are also more likely to be flagged for verification, requiring them to submit additional documentation to support their responses (DeBaun, 2018). Failure to complete the verification process can disqualify students' applications for aid¹⁷. (FAFSA completion rates by school district can be found in Appendix D)

¹⁵ In this report, FRPL is used as a proxy for low-income status of high school students due to data limitations

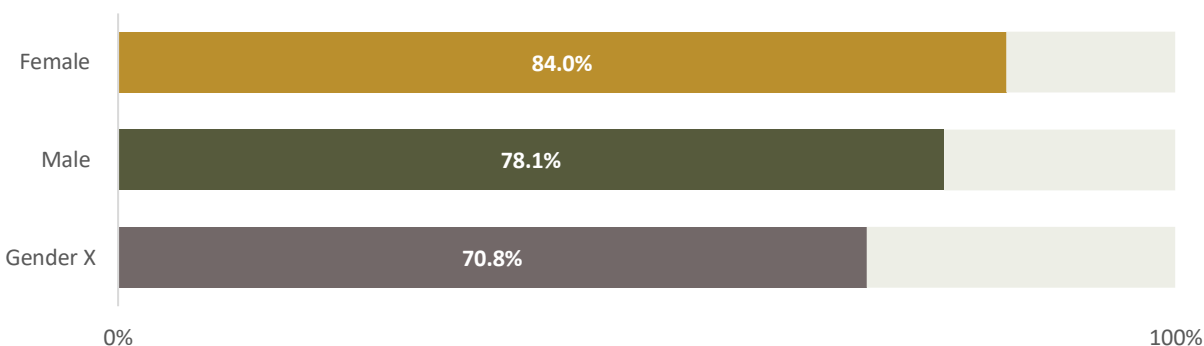
¹⁶ We are not able to determine the number of students who resolve FAFSA errors

¹⁷ Many students who are selected for FAFSA verification fail to complete the process. This is known as "verification melt." An estimated 22% of students selected for verification in the 2015-2016 academic year experienced verification melt (DeBaun, 2018).

Are there equity gaps in high school graduation rates?

Overall, 81 percent of students who attend public high schools in Washington graduate in four years. However, high school graduation rates vary by gender, race, and income. Increasing high school graduation rates for all students, and especially those who are further behind, is necessary to strengthen postsecondary enrollment and ultimately improve Washington’s educational attainment.

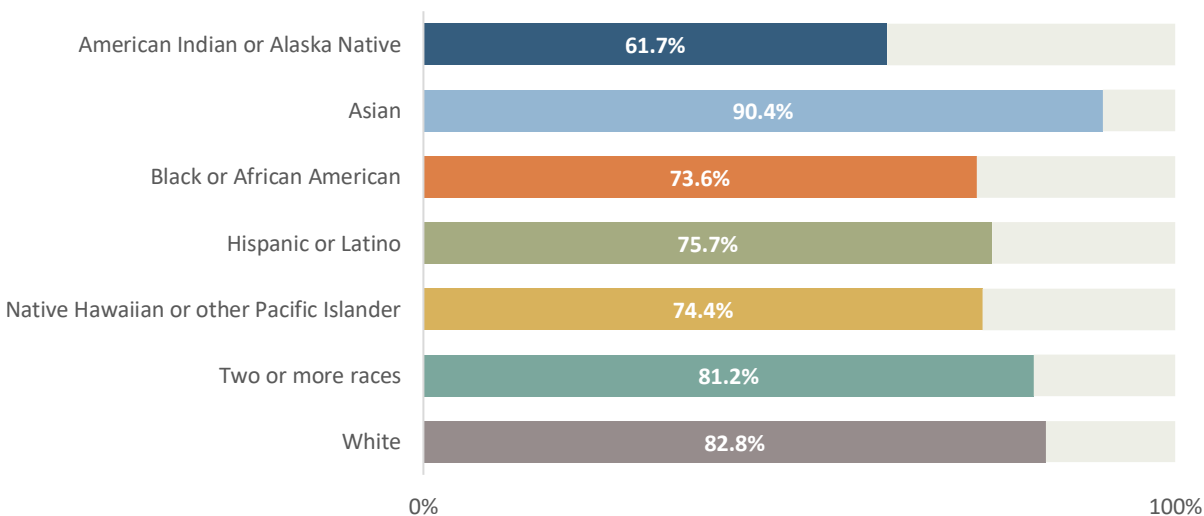
Figure 14. Female students graduate high school in four years at higher rates than males



Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, four-year graduation rates by gender, academic year 2019-2020

In Washington public high schools, the four-year graduation rate for female students is almost six percentage points higher than the rate for male students—84 percent and 78 percent, respectively (figure 14). Just 71 percent of students who identify as gender X graduate in four years. Disparities in high school graduation rates by gender contribute to lower postsecondary enrollment and ultimately, lower educational attainment for men in Washington, as discussed earlier in the report. While data on educational attainment for people who identify as gender X is limited, the substantially lower high school graduation rate raises the potential for lower rates of engagement with the postsecondary system.

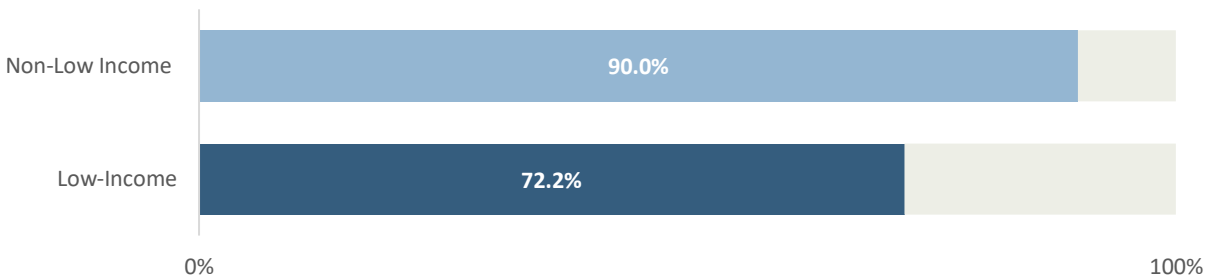
Figure 15. Students of color tend to have lower graduation rates than White students



Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, four-year graduation rates by race, academic year 2019-2020

There is variation in high school graduation rates across student race (figure 15). More than 90 percent of Asian students graduate high school in four years, almost 30 percentage points higher than the graduation rate for American Indian students. Black, Hispanic, and Native Hawaiian students also graduate at considerably lower rates than their White and Asian peers.

Figure 16. Low-income students have lower graduation rates than their non-low income peers



Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, four-year graduation rates by FRPL status, academic year 2019-2020

The gap between graduation rates for low-income students and non-low income students is almost 18 percentage points (figure 16)¹⁸. Less than three-quarters of low-income students graduate from high school in four years, compared to nine in ten non-low income students.

Assessing Equity in Postsecondary Enrollment

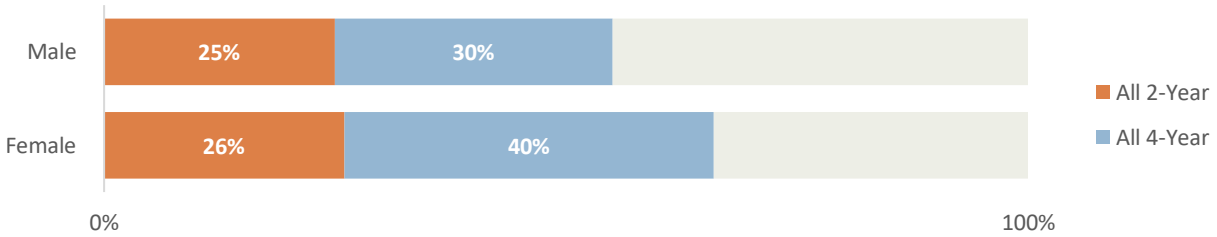
Overall postsecondary enrollment has increased over time, and historically underrepresented groups have made considerable gains in participation in postsecondary programs. But there are still equity gaps in enrollment that have endured over time (Schmidt, 2018). Addressing enrollment barriers for underrepresented student groups can increase their participation in postsecondary programs while also making progress towards Washington’s attainment goal.

Do high school students enroll immediately in postsecondary programs at equitable rates?

Students who delay college enrollment after high school graduation may lose academic skills and momentum, and may be faced with additional competing priorities, making a successful transition to postsecondary programs more challenging. Students who delay entry also tend to have lower rates of degree completion (Bozick & DeLuca, 2005). Currently, just 60 percent of Washington students enroll in postsecondary programs within one year of high school graduation. However, there are substantial equity gaps in immediate enrollment by gender, race, and income.

¹⁸ In this report, FRPL is used as a proxy for low-income status of high school students due to data limitations

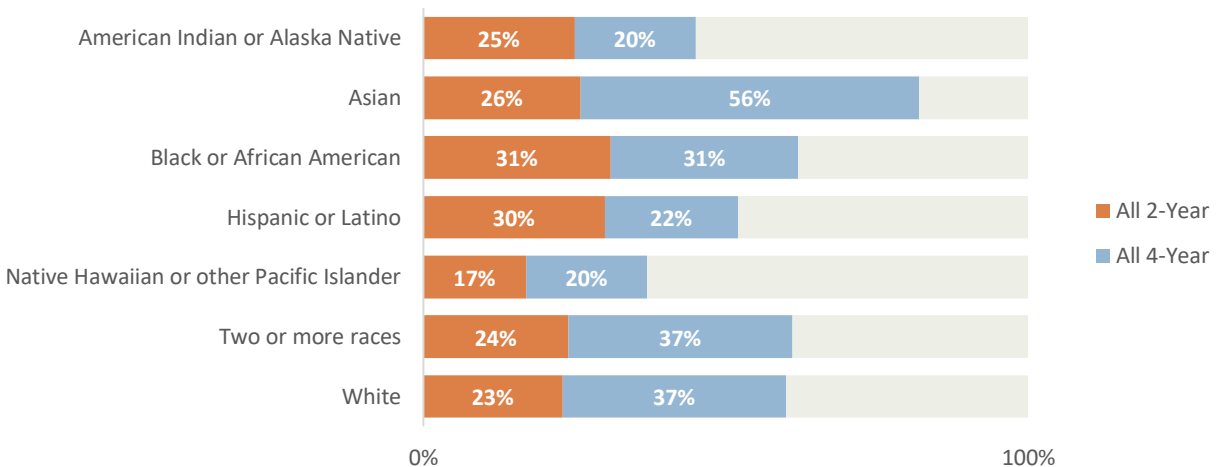
Figure 17. Male students are less likely to enroll in postsecondary programs immediately after high school than female students



Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), Washington postsecondary enrollment during first year after graduation, 2018 graduates, by gender

Immediate postsecondary enrollment for male students is 55 percent, compared to 66 percent for female students (figure 17). The difference in immediate enrollment rates by gender is negligible at 2-year institutions, with approximately one quarter of male and female students each enrolling within one year of high school graduation. However, there is a ten percentage point difference in immediate enrollment at 4-year institutions – 30 percent for males compared to 40 percent for females.

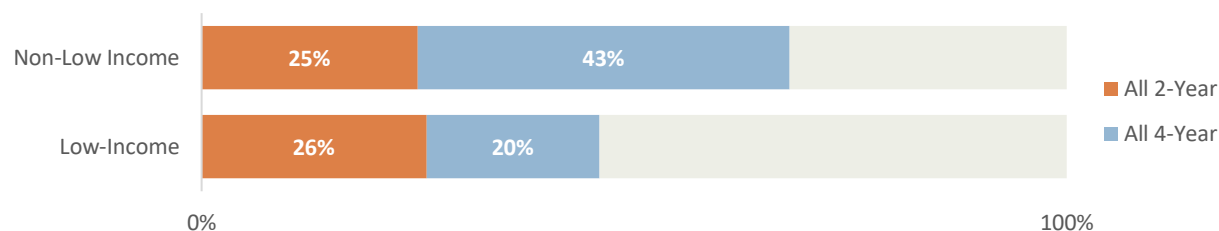
Figure 18. There are large disparities in immediate postsecondary enrollment by race



Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), Washington postsecondary enrollment during first year after graduation, 2018 graduates, by race

There is a major difference in the rate of immediate enrollment in postsecondary programs by racial group—ranging from 37 percent for Native Hawaiian students to 82 percent for Asian students (figure 18). However, there is more variation in immediate enrollment rates at 4-year institutions than at 2-year institutions. Just 20 percent of Native Hawaiian and American Indian students enroll in 4-year programs within one year of high school graduation, compared to 37 percent of White students and 56 percent of Asian students.

Figure 19. Low-income students are less likely to enroll immediately after high school than their non-low income peers



Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), Washington postsecondary enrollment during first year after graduation, 2018 graduates, by FRPL status

Non-low income students are more likely to enroll in postsecondary programs within one year of high school graduation than their low-income peers (figure 19)¹⁹. Each group enrolls in 2-year institutions at approximately the same rate, however, low-income students are half as likely to enroll in 4-year institutions as their non-low income classmates. As discussed earlier in the report, ensuring low-income students are accessing and utilizing financial aid can help make postsecondary enrollment more affordable, and could potentially increase the direct enrollment rate.

Table 3. Who is enrolled in public 2-year institutions in Washington?

Gender	Percent	Number
<i>Female</i>	52.8%	118,846
<i>Male</i>	40.3%	90,657
<i>Not Reported</i>	6.8%	15,391

Race	Percent	Number
<i>American Indian</i>	1.0%	2,186
<i>Asian</i>	11.1%	24,853
<i>Black</i>	5.5%	12,297
<i>Hispanic</i>	10.4%	23,307
<i>Nat. Haw./Pac. Islander</i>	0.6%	1,402
<i>Two or More Races</i>	11.9%	26,757
<i>White</i>	43.9%	98,697
<i>Not Reported</i>	15.7%	35,397

Income Status	Percent	Number
<i>Low-income</i>	21.5%	48,315
<i>Non-low income</i>	78.5%	176,581

Source: State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), Washington public 2-year institutions unduplicated fall headcount by gender, race, need-based aid status, academic year 2019-2020

¹⁹ In this report, FRPL is used as a proxy for low-income status of high school students due to data limitations

There are approximately 225,000 students enrolled in public 2-year institutions in Washington during Fall 2019. About 53 percent are female, 40 percent are male, and gender is unknown for the remaining students. The largest reported racial group is White students, who make up 44 percent of the population. Students of two or more races, Asian students, and Hispanic students each make up between 10 and 12 percent, and about 6 percent of students are Black. American Indian and Native Hawaiian students combined make up less than 2 percent of the population. About one-fifth of students enrolled in 2-year institutions are low-income. In this section, receipt of need-based financial aid is used as a proxy for low-income status²⁰. Because financial aid is means tested, it is an appropriate estimation for the incomes of college students.

Table 4. Who is enrolled in public 4-year institutions in Washington?

Gender	Percent	Number
<i>Female</i>	54.1%	65,341
<i>Male</i>	45.7%	55,237
<i>Unknown</i>	0.2%	210

Race	Percent	Number
<i>American Indian</i>	0.5%	569
<i>Asian</i>	10.4%	12,620
<i>Black</i>	2.3%	2,811
<i>Hispanic</i>	12.2%	14,721
<i>Nat. Haw./Pac. Islander</i>	0.6%	779
<i>Two or More Races</i>	10.0%	12,126
<i>White</i>	49.4%	59,644
<i>Other/Unknown</i>	14.5%	17,518

Source: ERDC, Washington public 4-year institutions unduplicated fall headcount by gender and race, academic year 2019-2020

Income Status²¹	Percent	Number
<i>Low-income</i>	28.8%	34,828
<i>Non-low income</i>	71.2%	85,960

Source: WSAC Research calculation of Unit Record Report annual financial aid data and ERDC Washington public 4-year institutions unduplicated fall headcount by need-based aid status, academic year 2018-2019

Looking at Fall 2019 enrollment at public 4-year institutions in Washington, approximately 120,000 students are enrolled. About 54 percent of students are female and 46 percent are male. White students make up the largest racial group, representing 49 percent of the population, followed by Hispanic students (12 percent), Asian students and students of two or more races (10 percent each). Black

²⁰ In this report, receipt of federal or state need-based aid is used as a proxy for low-income status due to data limitations

²¹ Due to data limitations, WSAC Research derived a proxy for income-status by using two different datasets (annual financial aid data and fall enrollment data) to estimate the proportion of students who are low-income

students make up 2 percent of the population, and Native Hawaiian and American Indian students combined make up about 1 percent. About 29 percent of students are low-income²².

Are there equity gaps in who receives financial aid?

Financial aid programs are designed to make postsecondary education affordable for students who face financial barriers. Many students in Washington are eligible for state aid to help cover the costs of college, in addition to the federal Pell grant. However, receipt of financial aid varies by gender, race, and income.

Table 5a. There are more female than male students receiving state financial aid

<i>Gender</i>	Percent	Number
<i>Female</i>	60.8%	53,721
<i>Male</i>	38.0%	33,534
<i>Unknown</i>	1.2%	1,085

Source: WSAC Research analysis of Unit Record Report, state financial aid recipients by gender, academic year 2018-2019

Roughly 90,000 students²³ received state financial aid²⁴ in the 2018-2019 school year. Approximately 61 percent of students who received state aid were female and 38 percent were male (table 5a).

Table 5b. Roughly half of state financial aid recipients are students of color

<i>Race</i>	Percent	Number
<i>American Indian</i>	1.6%	1,373
<i>Asian</i>	10.2%	9,027
<i>Black</i>	8.2%	7,243
<i>Hispanic</i>	20.6%	18,179
<i>Nat. Haw./Pac. Islander</i>	0.9%	763
<i>White</i>	44.6%	39,415
<i>Two or more races</i>	5.9%	5,199
<i>Other/Unknown</i>	8.1%	7,141

Source: WSAC Research analysis of Unit Record Report, state financial aid recipients by race, academic year 2018-2019

About 45 percent were White, 21 percent were Hispanic, 10 percent were Asian, 8 percent were Black, and 6 percent were multi-racial (table 5b). American Indian and Native Hawaiian students combined comprised roughly 3 percent of state financial aid recipients.

²² WSAC Research division calculation of Unit Record Report. In this report, receipt of federal or state need-based aid is used as a proxy for low-income status due to data limitations

²³ Includes students at public and private 2-year and 4-year institutions in Washington

²⁴ A complete list of state aid financial programs can be found here: <https://wsac.wa.gov/sfa-overview>

Table 5c. As expected, most students who receive state financial aid have incomes below 55 percent of the state median level

<i>MFI Category</i>	Percent	Number
<i>0-55%</i>	76.9%	67,941
<i>56-75%</i>	11.5%	10,137
<i>>75%</i>	3.1%	2,734
<i>Unknown</i>	8.5%	7,528

Source: WSAC Research analysis of Unit Record Report, Washington state financial aid recipients by state median family income (MFI), academic year 2018-2019

Close to 70,000 students who received state aid came from families with incomes below 55 percent of the state median level²⁵ (table 5c). Many of these students are also eligible to receive Pell grants.

Table 6a. There are more female than male students who receive Pell grants

<i>Gender</i>	Percent	Number
<i>Female</i>	60.4%	62,155
<i>Male</i>	38.6%	39,753
<i>Unknown</i>	1.0%	973

Source: WSAC Research analysis of Unit Record Report, Washington Pell grant recipients by gender, academic year 2018-2019

Approximately 100,000 students received Pell grants in Washington during the 2018-2019 academic year. The distribution of students receiving Pell grants follows a similar pattern as students who receive state aid. There were more female students who received Pell grants than male students (table 6a).

Table 6b. Roughly half of Pell grant recipients are students of color

<i>Race</i>	Percent	Number
<i>American Indian</i>	1.8%	1,862
<i>Asian</i>	9.9%	10,143
<i>Black</i>	8.2%	8,446
<i>Hispanic</i>	18.9%	19,455
<i>Nat. Haw./Pac. Islander</i>	1.0%	1,070
<i>White</i>	46.1%	47,448
<i>Two or more races</i>	6.4%	6,540
<i>Other</i>	7.7%	7,917

Source: WSAC Research analysis of Unit Record Report, Washington Pell grant recipients by race, academic year 2018-2019

White students represent the largest racial group receiving Pell grants, followed by Hispanic, Asian, and Black students (table 6b).

²⁵ 55% of the state median family income (MFI) for a family of four in 2018-2019 was \$48,500. A breakdown of MFI levels and aid eligibility can be found here: <https://wsac.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2018-19.SNG.MFichart.pdf>

Table 6c. As expected, the majority of students who receive Pell grants have incomes below 55 percent of the state median level

<i>MFI Category</i>	Percent	Number
0-55%	84.9%	87,315
56-75%	12.1%	12,444
>75%	3.0%	4,912

Source: WSAC Research analysis of Unit Record Report, Pell grant recipients by state median family income (MFI), academic year 2018-2019

Almost 90,000 students who received Pell grants came from families who made 55 percent of the state median income or below (table 6c).

Assessing Equity in Postsecondary Success

Beyond underrepresentation on college campuses in general, some groups fare worse in college, which leads to lower chances of postsecondary credential attainment. Students who do not complete a postsecondary credential do not fully benefit from the returns to higher education. Roughly 20 percent of adults ages 25-44 in Washington have some college experience but no degree. Decreasing barriers to early success in college, like developmental coursework²⁶, and improving early success indicators, like retention and transfer rates, can lead to higher completion rates and closing equity gaps by gender, race, and income.

Are there equity gaps in students who require developmental coursework?

Students who require developmental coursework are less likely to obtain a credential than their peers who do not (Valentine et al., 2017). Developmental courses do not count towards students' postsecondary academic progress, adding more time and cost to obtain a credential. When we examine students who graduated from public high schools in Washington in 2018, 34 percent of students who enrolled in public 2-year institutions and 12 percent of students who enrolled in public 4-year institutions took a developmental course in math, English, or both. More students required developmental coursework in math than English, and a smaller number of students took both subjects.

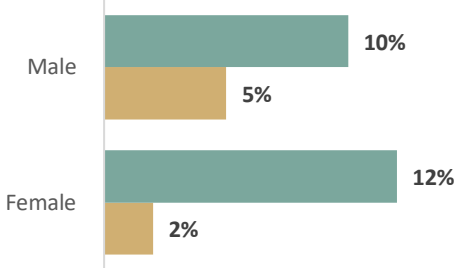
²⁶ Developmental coursework refers to pre-college, or remedial, courses that do not qualify for postsecondary credit

Figure 20. Female students were slightly more likely to take developmental math than male students

2-Year Institutions



4-Year Institutions

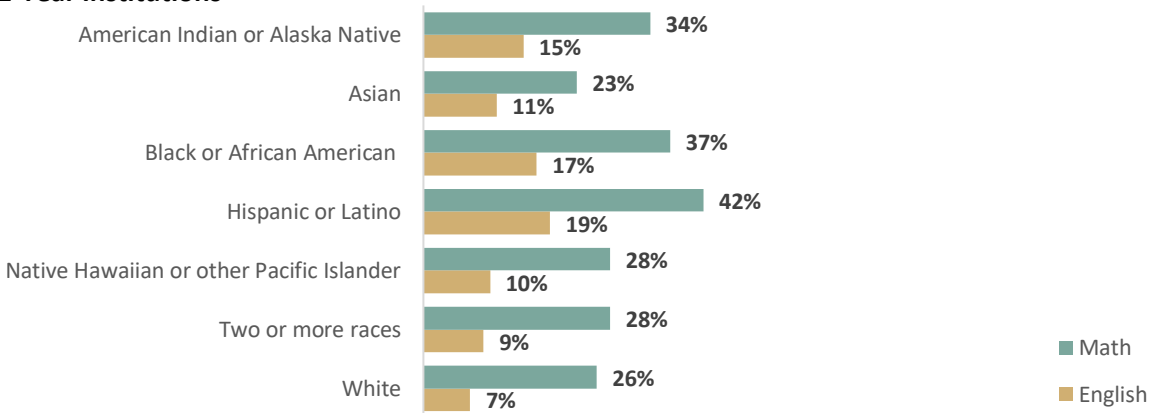


Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), developmental coursetaking for 2018 Washington high school graduates, by gender

At both 2-year and 4-year institutions, female students were slightly more likely to require developmental courses in math than male students²⁷ (figure 20). At 4-year institutions, male students were slightly more likely to take developmental English, but the rate was the same at 2-year institutions.

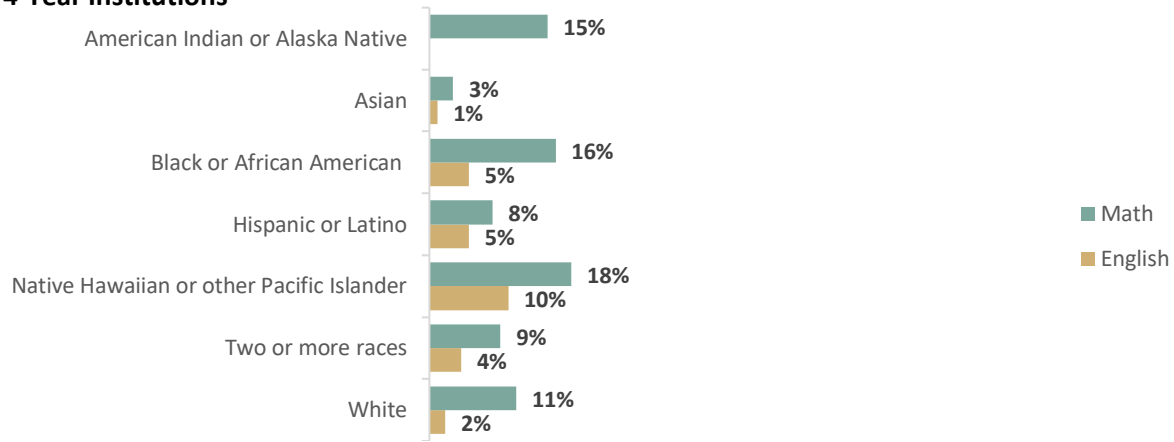
Figure 21. Students of color took developmental courses at higher rates than White students at 2-year institutions

2-Year Institutions



²⁷ Includes students who graduated from public high schools in Washington in 2018

4-Year Institutions



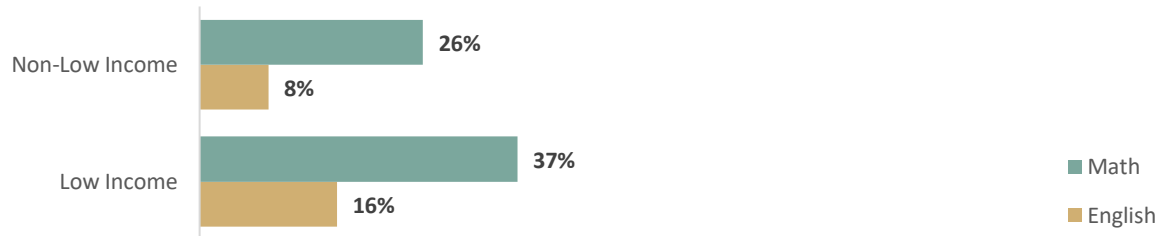
Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), developmental coursetaking for 2018 Washington high school graduates, by race
 Note: Developmental English coursetaking rate for American Indian/Alaska Native students is excluded due to insufficient data

At public 2-year institutions, 42 percent of Hispanic students took developmental math courses compared to 26 percent of White students²⁸ (figure 21). Black and American Indian students also took developmental math at much higher rates than White students. While fewer students overall needed developmental English courses, the rates were substantially higher for Hispanic, Black, and American Indian students than their White peers.

At public 4-year institutions, Native Hawaiian, Black, and American Indian students were most likely to take developmental math. Native Hawaiian, Black, and Hispanic students were most likely to take developmental English.

Figure 22. Low-income students were more likely to require developmental coursework than their non-low income peers

2-Year Institutions



4-Year Institutions



Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), developmental coursetaking for 2018 Washington high school graduates, by FRPL status

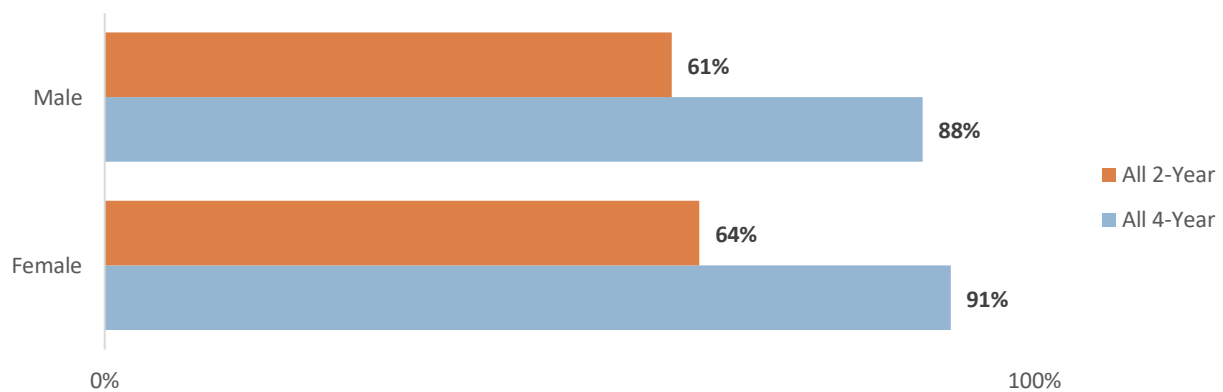
²⁸ Includes students who graduated from public high schools in Washington in 2018

Low-income students who were enrolled in both 2-year and 4-year institutions were more likely to take developmental courses (figure 22)²⁹. At 2-year institutions, 37 percent of low-income students took developmental math, compared to 26 percent of non-low income students. Additionally, low-income students took developmental English courses at twice the rate of their non-low income peers. While there were fewer students taking developmental courses at 4-year institutions, the rates were still higher for low-income students.

Do students persist at equitable rates?

Obtaining a postsecondary credential requires that students stay enrolled until they reach graduation. However, among students who graduated from Washington public high schools in 2017, just 63 percent persisted beyond their first year at 2-year institutions, and 89 percent persisted at 4-year institutions. Persistence rates differ by gender, race, and income.

Figure 26. Male students had slightly lower persistence rates than female students



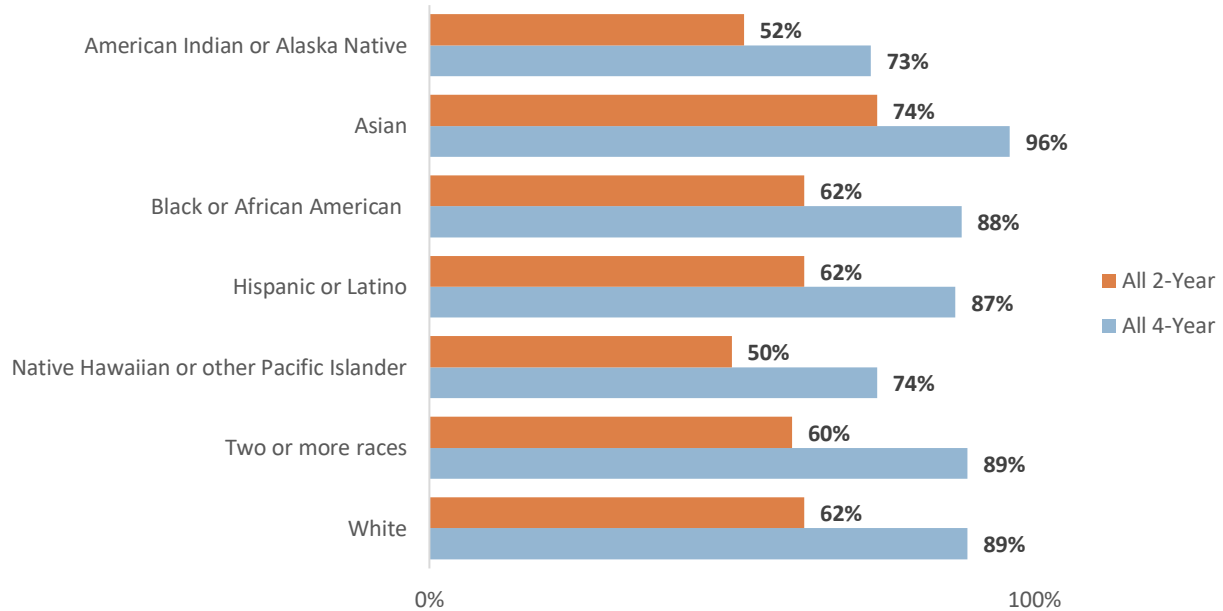
Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), persistence rates for 2018 Washington high school graduates, by gender

At both 2-year and 4-year institutions, male students had persistence rates that were three percentage points lower than their female classmates³⁰ (figure 26). The imbalance in persistence rates may contribute to equity gaps in educational attainment by gender.

²⁹ In this report, FRPL is used as a proxy for low-income status of high school students due to data limitations. Includes students who graduated from public high schools in Washington in 2018

³⁰ Includes students who graduated from public high schools in Washington in 2017

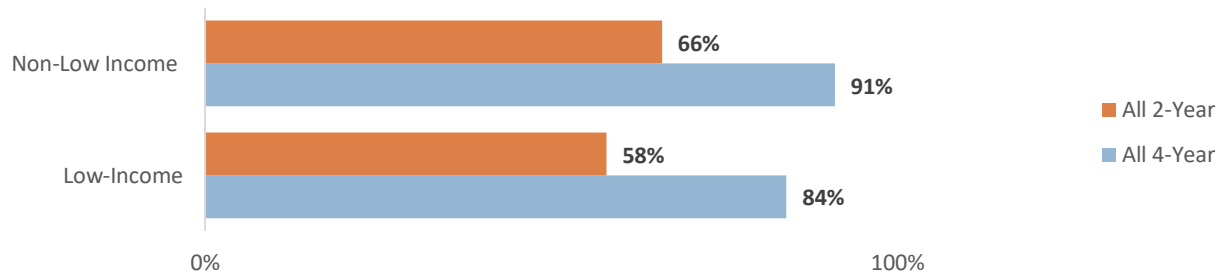
Figure 27. Native Hawaiian and American Indian students are much less likely to persist beyond their first year than their peers



Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), persistence rates for 2018 Washington high school graduates, by race

At both 2-year and 4-year institutions, Native Hawaiian and American Indian students were the least likely to persist beyond their first year³¹ (figure 27). At 2-year institutions, just half of Native Hawaiian and American Indian students persisted beyond their first year, compared to 62 percent of White students and 74 percent of Asian students. Similarly, at 4-year institutions persistence rates were higher across the board, but still lagged for Native Hawaiian and American Indian students.

Figure 28. Non-low income students are more likely to persist than their low-income peers



Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), persistence rates for 2018 Washington high school graduates, by FRPL status

Non-low income students are eight percentage points more likely to persist at 2-year institutions and seven percentage points more likely to persist at 4-year institutions than their low-income peers³² (figure 28). On top of disparities in postsecondary enrollment, disparate persistence leads to lower completion and degree attainment rates for low-income students.

³¹ Includes students who graduated from public high schools in Washington in 2017

³² In this report, FRPL is used as a proxy for low-income status of high school students due to data limitations. Includes students who graduated from public high schools in Washington in 2017

Are transfer rates equitable?

Many students choose to begin their postsecondary educational trajectory at a 2-year institution because they are open access and offer an affordable gateway to earning a postsecondary degree. In Washington, there are more 2-year campuses spread across the state, allowing students to study close to home.

Washington has a Direct Transfer Agreement to make transferring from a 2-year institution to a 4-year institution easier for students. The Direct Transfer Agreement allows students to fulfill their general education requirements at a 2-year institution before transferring to a 4-year institution and obtaining junior class standing (*Transfers*, 2020). However, many students who enroll in 2-year institutions with the intent to transfer to a 4-year institution never in fact do. In the 2016-2017 academic year, 36 percent of students enrolled in public 2-year institutions expressed intent to transfer. Among those who intended to transfer, only 22 percent were actually enrolled in a public 4-year institution two years later³³. Successful transfer rates among students in Washington vary by gender, race, and income.

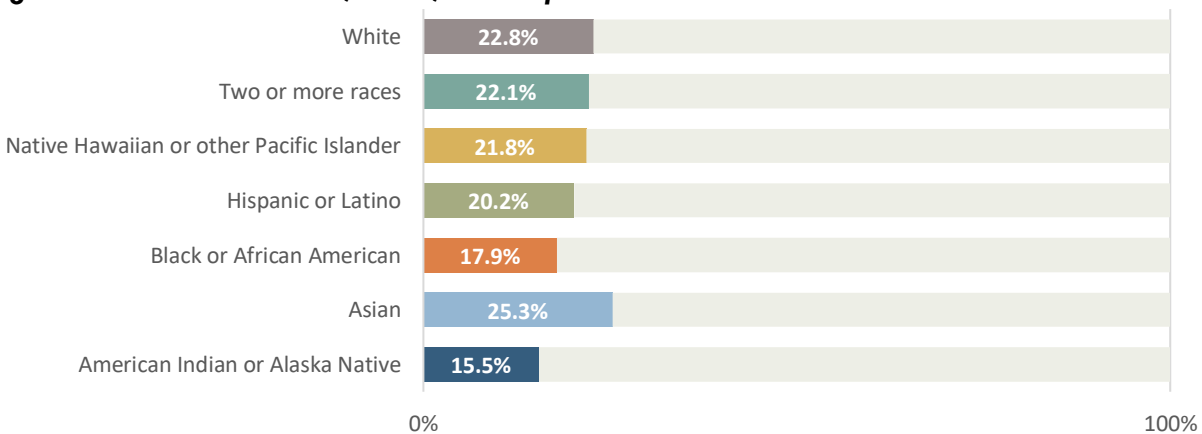
Figure 23. Male and female students transfer at similar rates



Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) calculation of Washington public 2-year academic transfer student headcount in academic year 2016-2017 and Washington public 4-year institution transfer student enrollment in academic year 2018-2019, by gender

The same proportion of male and female students enrolled in 2-year institutions express intent to transfer. Among these students, the transfer rate for males and females is roughly the same—23 percent for males and 22 percent for females (figure 23).

Figure 24. American Indian, Black, and Hispanic students have the lowest transfer rates



Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) calculation of Washington public 2-year academic transfer student headcount in academic year 2016-2017 and Washington public 4-year institution transfer student enrollment in academic year 2018-2019, by race

³³ Analysis of transfer rates utilizes annual enrollment headcounts instead of term enrollment

Among students who enrolled in 2-year institutions, 31 percent of American Indian, 33 percent of Black, and 37 percent of Hispanic students indicated their intention to transfer to a 4-year institution, compared to 41 percent of White and Asian students. When we examine students who actually do transfer, we see disparities by race. Just 16 percent of American Indian students, 18 percent of Black students, and 20 percent of Hispanic students who expressed an intent to transfer were enrolled in 4-year institutions two years later, compared to 23 percent of White students and 25 percent of Asian students (figure 24). These differences may contribute to underrepresentation of students of color at 4-year institutions, and poorer labor market outcomes for these groups.

Figure 25. Low-income students are less likely to transfer than their non-low income peers



Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) calculation of Washington public 2-year academic transfer student headcount in academic year 2016-2017 and Washington public 4-year institution transfer student enrollment in academic year 2018-2019, by need-based aid status

Of low-income students enrolled in 2-year institutions, 49 percent expressed intent to transfer, which is higher than the rate for non-low income students (33 percent). There is also a difference between low-income and non-low income students who actually transferred—18 percent and 24 percent, respectively (figure 25)³⁴. It is possible that students who initially express interest in transferring to a 4-year institution later change their minds, but the disparity in successful transfer rates for low-income students suggests that there are still equity gaps in transfer outcomes. Some low-income students see transfer as an affordable pathway to acquiring a bachelor’s degree, so making transfer more efficient and effective can help these students succeed.

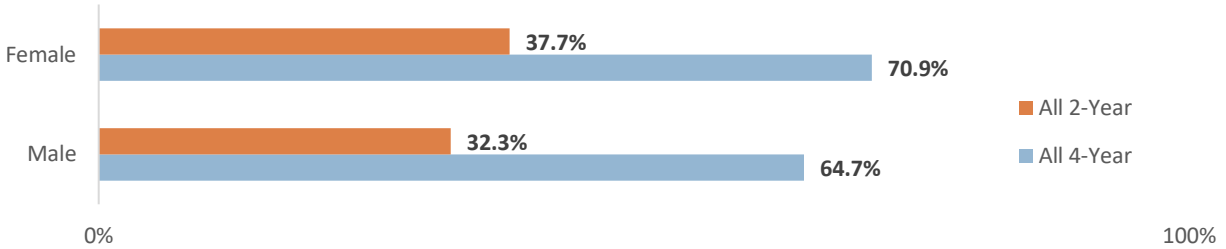
Do students complete postsecondary programs at equitable rates?

Barriers to success while in college mean that many students who enroll do not reach graduation. At 2-year institutions in Washington, only about one-third of students graduate. About two-thirds of students at 4-year institutions graduate. Addressing barriers in college, especially for students with even lower success rates, can help increase graduation rates and improve educational attainment in Washington.

There have been discussions around how the federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) has presented outcomes for typical community college students. Graduation rates from IPEDS exclude counts for transfer students and part-time students. For this section, we are limited to data that allows us to disaggregate by gender, race, and income. *(Appendix E presents data from the IPEDS Outcomes Measures that includes awards earned for part-time and transfer students, however, we cannot currently disaggregate by gender and race)*

³⁴ In this report, receipt of federal or state need-based aid is used as a proxy for low-income status due to data limitations

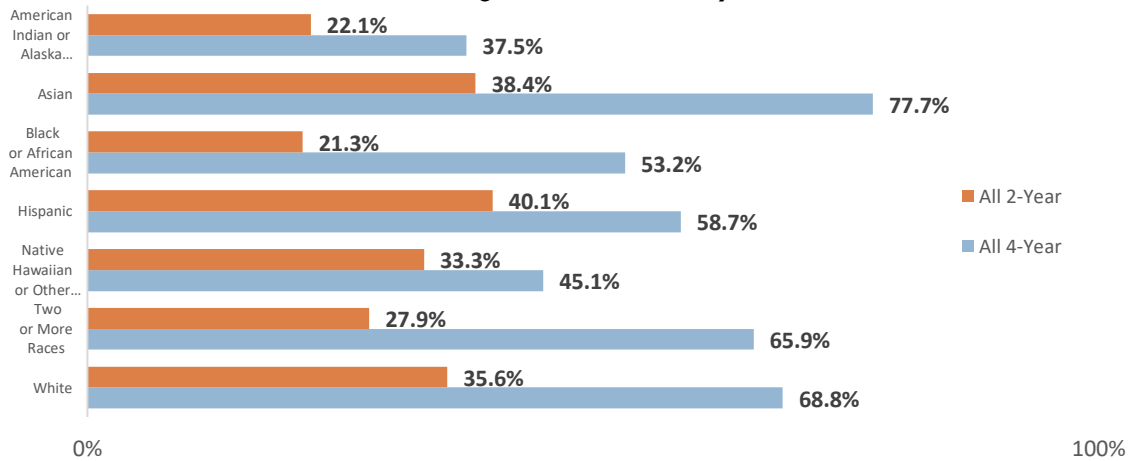
Figure 29. Female students have higher graduation rates than male students



Source: National Center for Education Statistics Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Washington graduation rates within 150% of normal time (within 3 years for 2-year institutions, within 6 years for 4-year institutions), Fall 2012 cohort for 4-year and Fall 2015 cohort for 2-year, by gender

At both 2-year and 4-year institutions, female students graduate at rates about six percentage points higher than their male counterparts (figure 29). This sizable difference in graduation rates between genders directly contributes to equity gaps in educational attainment.

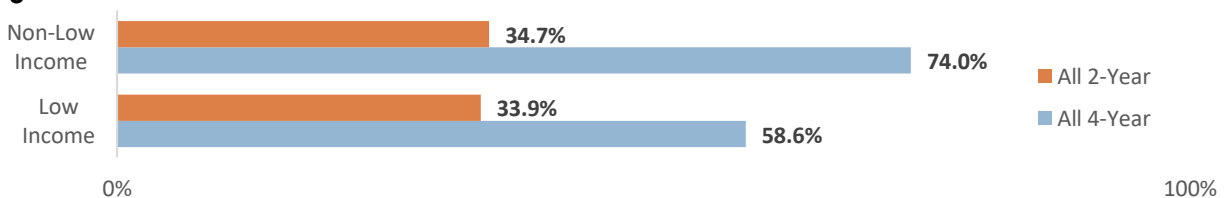
Figure 30. There is considerable variation in graduation rates by race



Source: National Center for Education Statistics Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Washington graduation rates within 150% of normal time (within 3 years for 2-year institutions, within 6 years for 4-year institutions), Fall 2012 cohort for 4-year and Fall 2015 cohort for 2-year, by race

At 2-year institutions, Black and American Indian students have the lowest graduation rates—only around one in five students in each of these groups graduates within 150 percent of normal time (figure 30). American Indian and Native Hawaiian students have the lowest graduation rates at 4-year institutions, and Black and Hispanic students also trail their White and Asian peers.

Figure 31. Graduation rates are lower for low-income students



Source: National Center for Education Statistics Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Washington graduation rates within 150% of normal time (within 3 years for 2-year institutions, within 6 years for 4-year institutions), Fall 2012 cohort for 4-year and Fall 2015 cohort for 2-year by need-based aid status

The difference between graduation rates by income is marginal at 2-year institutions (figure 31)³⁵. In both groups, just about one in three students graduates within 150 percent of normal time. But at 4-year institutions, low-income students graduate more than 15 percentage points behind their non-low income peers.

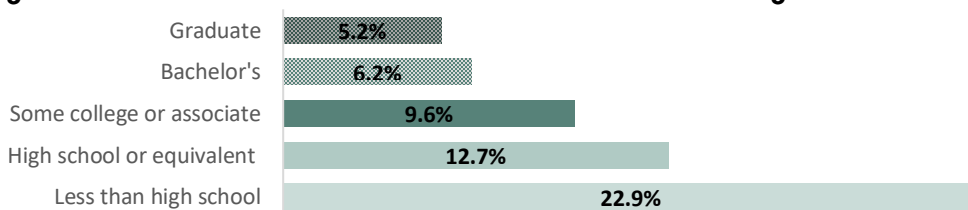
A sizable portion of students who enroll in postsecondary programs do not graduate, preventing them from experiencing the full benefits of higher education.

Measuring Equity in Labor Market Outcomes

Disparities along the educational pipeline that result in equity gaps in educational attainment have profound consequences on people’s lives and livelihoods. A postsecondary credential is a valued asset in the labor market. Without it, employment can be less stable, and wages tend to be lower, leading to a poorer quality of life. Addressing the educational attainment gaps that manifest as disparities in unemployment and earnings can help make our state a more equitable place.

How do unemployment rates compare for different groups of Washingtonians?

Figure 32. Those with lower educational attainment have higher rates of unemployment



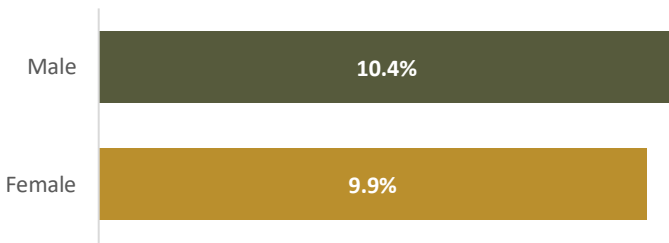
Source: Burning Glass Technologies calculation of Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) and American Community Survey (ACS) data, Washington unemployment rate July 2020, by educational attainment

Recent unemployment statistics demonstrate significant variability by educational attainment (figure 32). The unemployment rate is more than twice as high for those with only a high school diploma than those with a bachelor’s degree, and more than three times as high for those with less than a high school education.

Despite inflated unemployment due to the current COVID-19 crisis, the patterns mirror historical ones and trends seen nationally. Higher levels of educational attainment tend to open up employment opportunities and offer additional protection from job loss during economic downturn (Kwakye & Kibort-Crocker, 2020a).

³⁵ In this report, receipt of federal or state need-based aid is used as a proxy for low-income status due to data limitations

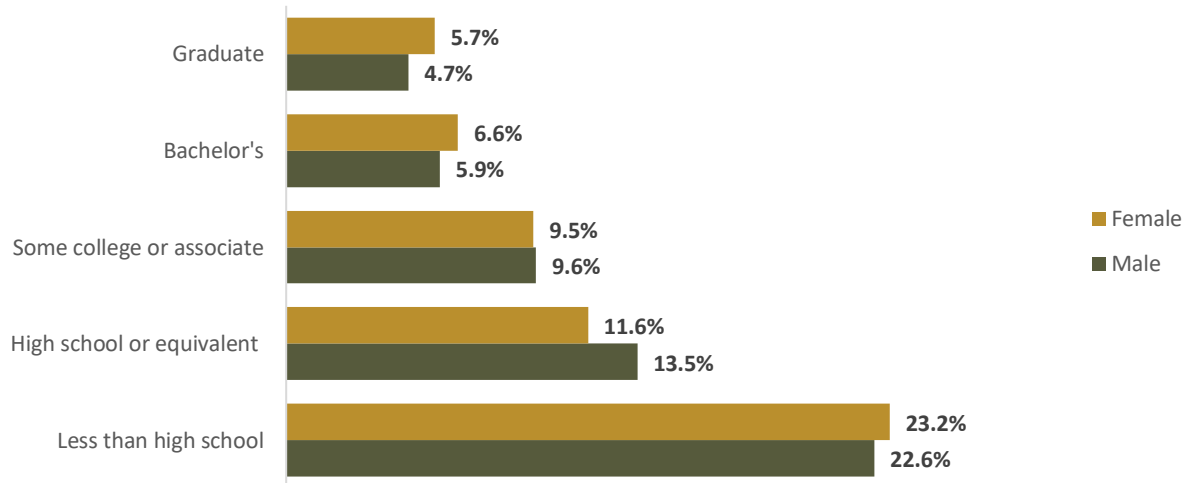
Figure 33. The unemployment rate for males and females in Washington is roughly equal



Source: Burning Glass Technologies calculation of LAUS and ACS data, Washington unemployment rate July 2020, by gender

The July 2020 unemployment rate for males in Washington is 10.4 percent, which is marginally different than the 9.9 percent unemployment rate for females (figure 33).

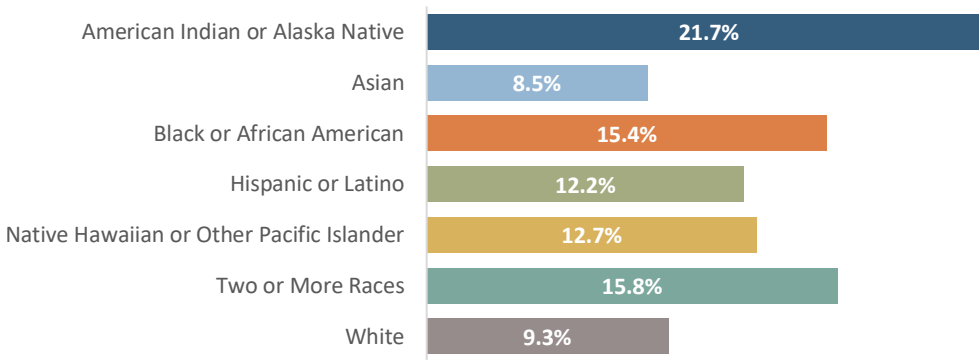
Figure 34. Unemployment rates are comparable for males and females across educational attainment levels



Source: Burning Glass Technologies calculation of LAUS and ACS data, Washington unemployment rate July 2020, by educational attainment and gender

Differences in unemployment rates for males and females across educational attainment levels are minimal (figure 34). The largest difference is for those with a high school education, where males have an unemployment rate that is two percentage points higher than females.

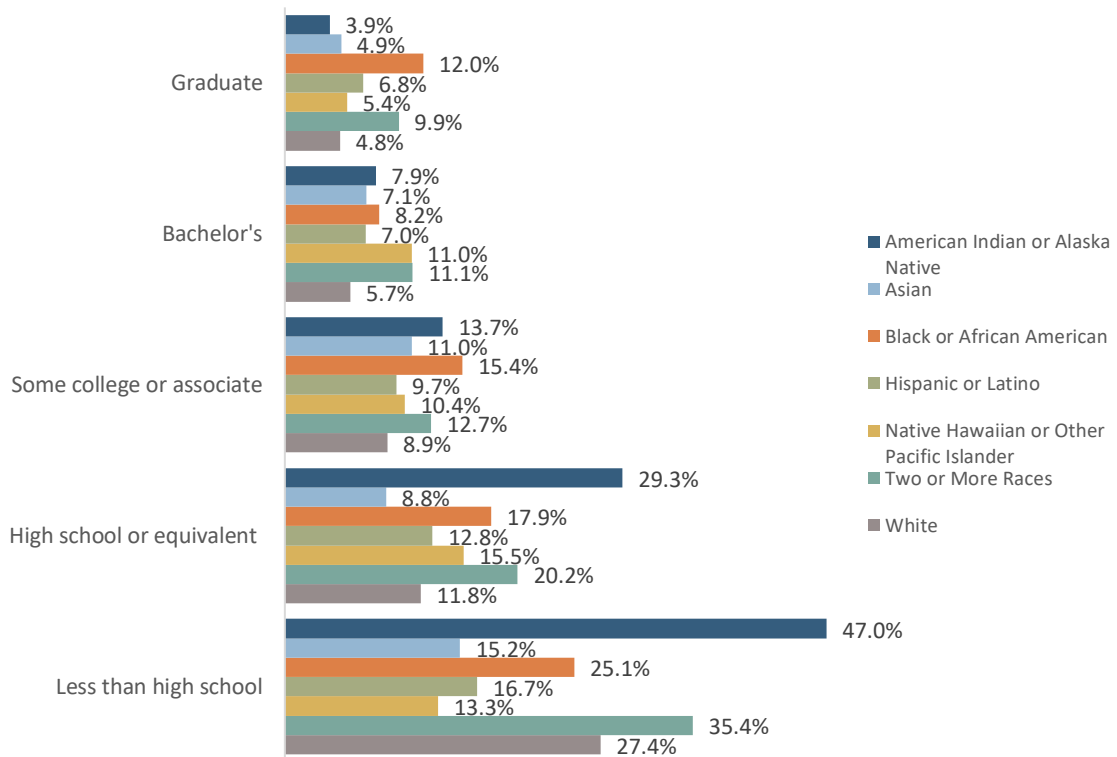
Figure 35. Unemployment rates are higher for people of color



Source: Burning Glass Technologies calculation of LAUS and ACS data, Washington unemployment rate July 2020, by race

Unemployment rates vary widely for different racial groups in Washington (figure 35). Asian and White people have the lowest unemployment rates, around 9 percent in July 2020, and American Indian people have the highest rate, 22 percent. The unemployment rate is more than six percentage points higher for Black people than White people in Washington. Equity gaps in postsecondary attainment may contribute to disparities in unemployment rates.

Figure 36. Unemployment rates are higher for some racial groups, regardless of educational attainment



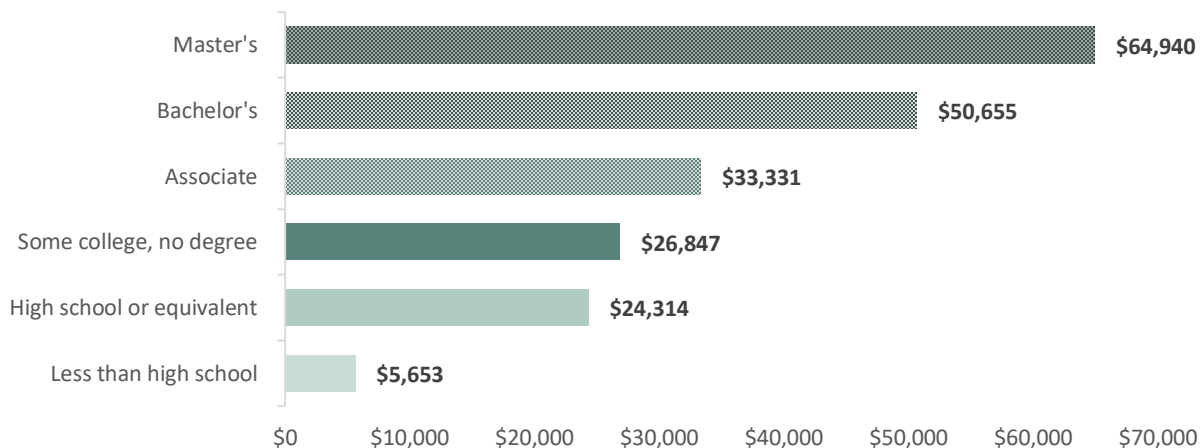
Source: Burning Glass Technologies calculation of LAUS and ACS data, Washington unemployment rate July 2020, by educational attainment and race

Even within the same educational attainment level, there are disparities in unemployment rates by race. For those with only a high school education, American Indian and Black people have substantially higher unemployment rates (29 percent and 18 percent, respectively) than Asian and White people (9 percent and 12 percent, respectively) (figure 36). Among bachelor’s degree holders, Native Hawaiian, Black, and American Indian people all have notably higher rates of unemployment than White people in Washington.

How does personal income compare for different groups of Washingtonians?

Higher education is correlated with higher income—those with higher educational attainment are more likely to be employed in high-paying jobs. Higher earnings allow individuals to live economically sustaining lives.

Figure 37. Higher educational attainment is associated with higher income

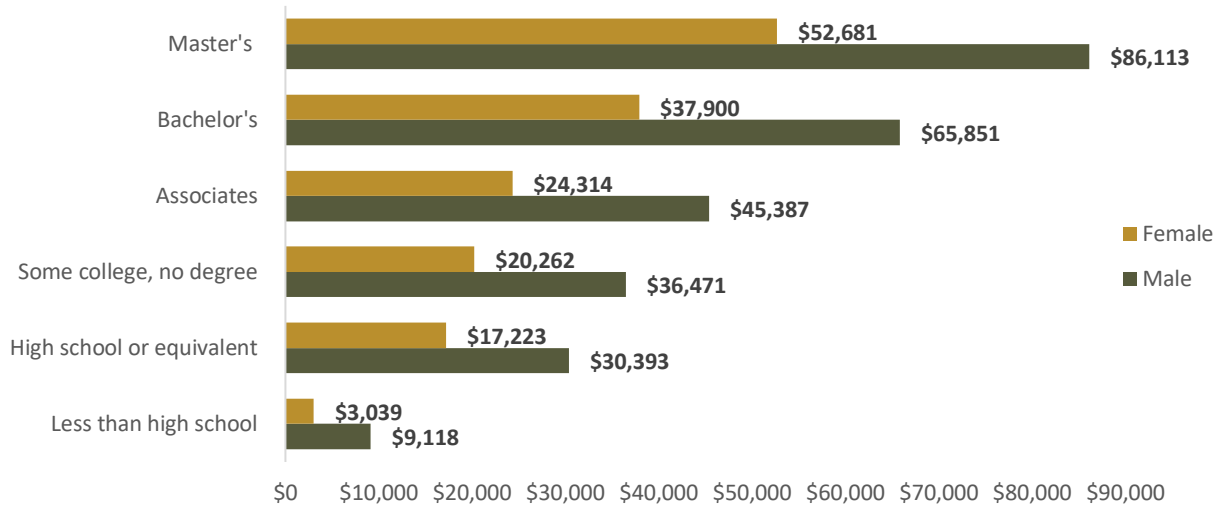


Source: WSAC calculation of American Community Survey, 2018 PUMS 1-Year Data, Washington annual median total person’s income by educational attainment

The median income in Washington for individuals with a high school diploma is about \$24,000 per year, compared to roughly \$33,000 for those with an associate degree and about \$51,000 for those with a bachelor’s degree (figure 37). Median income is higher still for those who obtain a graduate degree. The benefit of obtaining a postsecondary degree is clear—those with some college experience but no degree lose out on the full benefit of a postsecondary degree. They have annual median incomes roughly \$6,000 less per year than those with an associate degree, and roughly half the amount as those with a bachelor’s degree.

Lifetime earnings provide additional evidence of the benefits of obtaining a postsecondary credential. Those with only a high school education earn roughly \$1.5 million over their lifetime, compared to \$2 million for those with an associate degree and \$3 million for those with a bachelor’s degree (Kwakye & Kibort-Crocker, 2020b).

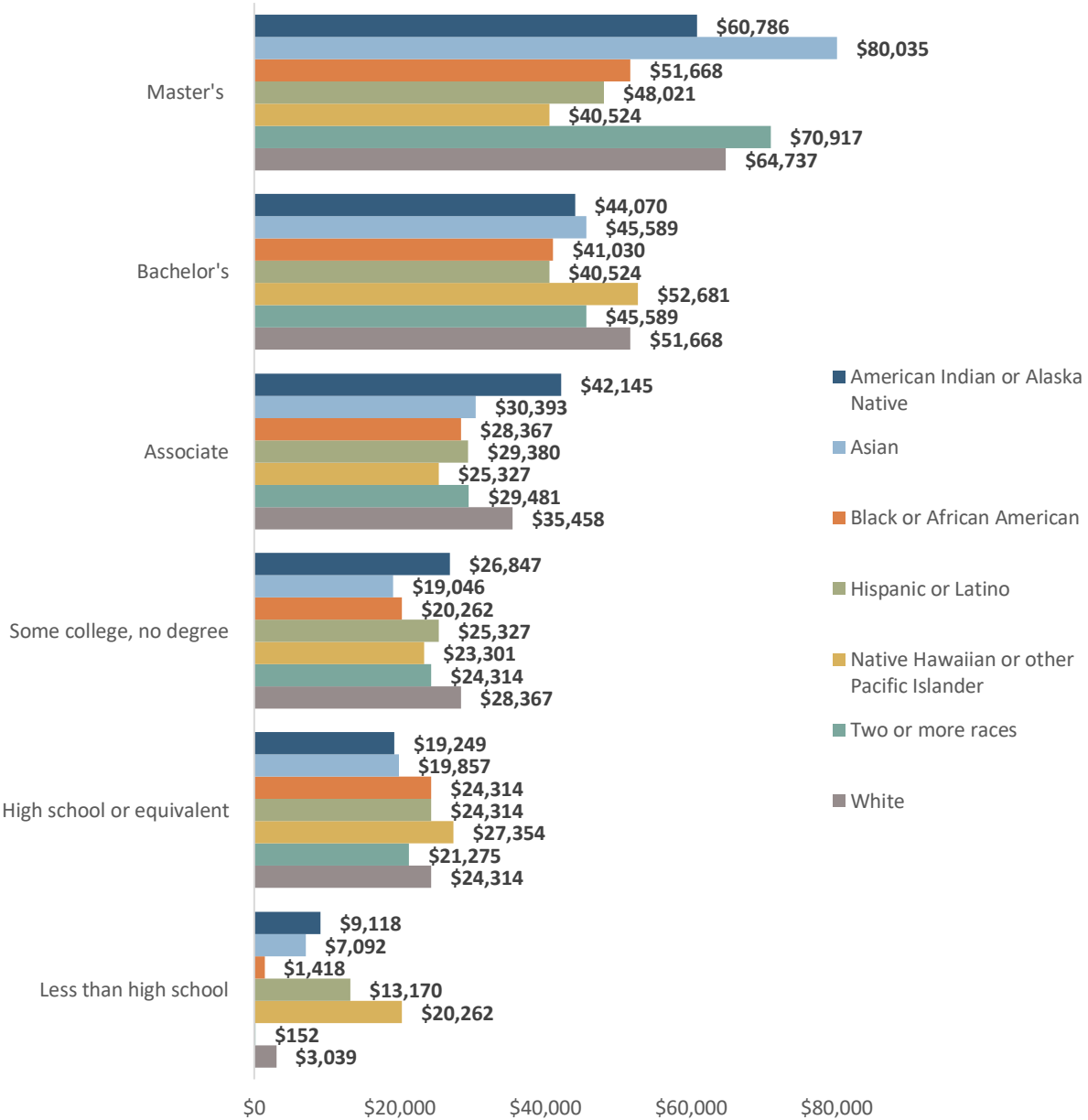
Figure 38. Personal income for males outpaces that of females across all educational attainment levels



Source: WSAC calculation of American Community Survey, 2018 PUMS 1-Year Data, Washington annual median total person's income by educational attainment and gender

The income gap between males and females is substantial and increases with higher levels of educational attainment (figure 38). Among people with a high school education, the median income for females is about \$17,000 while the median income for males is about \$30,000. For bachelor's degree holders, the difference is even wider—the median income for females with a bachelor's is about \$38,000 while the median income for males with a bachelor's is \$66,000. Females are more likely to have a postsecondary credential but earn less than their male counterparts at all levels of educational attainment.

Figure 39. Considerable variation in earnings by race remains across educational attainment levels



Source: WSAC calculation of American Community Survey, 2018 PUMS 1-Year Data, Washington annual median total person's income by educational attainment and race

Median income varies by race across all levels of educational attainment (figure 39). Among bachelor's degree holders, the median income for White people in Washington is about \$52,000, compared to about \$41,000 for Black and Hispanic people. We see a similar pattern for those with an associate degree and those with a master's degree. Although on average, each racial group experiences a bump in income with each increase in educational attainment level, income disparities by race exists among those with the same educational attainment.

Discussion

Pervasive disparities in educational outcomes based on gender, racial group, income-level, disability status, immigration status, geography, and other socio-demographic characteristics are symptoms of deeply rooted societal inequities. Closing equity gaps in education in Washington will lead to increased individual, economic, and societal benefits. This report has focused on some of the equity gaps that exist in higher education, specifically looking at gender, race, and income. Existing evidence from research suggests that students' gender, race, and income are factors in their chances of educational and labor market success. For example, males of all races are more likely to drop out of high school than female students. Students from the lowest socioeconomic levels are considerably less likely to enroll in postsecondary programs than their more affluent peers (Hussar, 2020). And Black and Hispanic students' postsecondary completion rates trail those of White and Asian students (Shapiro et al., 2018).

This is no different from the trends that have been presented in this report. Among high school students in Washington, males, students of color, and low-income students are all less likely to graduate in four years than their counterparts. They also tend to enroll directly in postsecondary programs, persist in those programs, and obtain a credential at lower rates than their peers. Equity gaps along the education pipeline in Washington align with lower educational attainment for men, many communities of color, and those with lower incomes.

There are no quick fixes to address equity gaps in education. However, there are some promising strategies to improve educational outcomes for students who have been historically underrepresented in higher education, including racial minority and low-income students³⁶. Hiring more effective high school counselors to help students transition to postsecondary programs has been shown to increase enrollment and persistence, especially among low-income students (Hurwitz & Howell, 2013). And increasing teacher (Gershenson et al., 2018) and school counselor (Mulhern, 2019) diversity that reflects students' identities has been shown to be particularly positive for students of color. Providing students with financial aid, particularly in the form of grants, has been shown to boost college enrollment, persistence, and completion for low-income students and students of color (Nguyen et al., 2019). Holistic, cohort-based learning that includes intensive mentoring, financial aid, faculty support, and professional development has been shown to increase postsecondary retention, grade point average, and matriculation into advanced degree programs for students of color (Domingo et al., 2019). Combining student supports like advising and academic coaching with scholarships has also been shown to have a positive impact on low-income students' success rates in college (Page et al., 2017). Innovative and intentional strategies to address equity gaps in education will improve outcomes for students in Washington and help the state meet its educational attainment goal.

Addressing equity gaps in higher education is not only a social justice imperative but also a prerequisite for sustaining our labor market. The labor market is dependent upon people with skills and knowledge that are applicable in today's economy. Higher education systems equip individuals with the tools they need to succeed in the labor market with higher-paying jobs that lead to improved living standards and more secure and fulfilling lives. Those with higher education are rewarded with more than increased earnings and employment opportunities. They also experience better health for themselves and their

³⁶ See Kwakye & Kibort-Crocker (2020) for additional details of proven programs to close equity gaps in higher education here: <https://wsac.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Research.ClosingEquityGaps.Access.Completion.pdf>

families, higher civic engagement levels, and more trust in others (Schleicher, 2014). All Washington residents should have access to these benefits of education.

Conclusion

Washington is working to increase educational attainment so that 70 percent of adults ages 25-44 have a postsecondary credential. Ongoing inequities have limited the educational attainment of some groups in the state. Men, racial minorities, and people with lower incomes tend to have lower educational attainment and are further from the state attainment goal. Equity gaps in educational attainment are the product of many disparities in student outcomes by gender, race, and income along the educational pipeline.

Even before college, students have different rates of participation and success in activities that lead to postsecondary access. Males, students of color, and low-income students are all less likely to participate in dual credit courses that may help prepare them for postsecondary programs. They also tend to have lower high school graduation rates.

Disparities in high school educational outcomes lead to equity gaps in postsecondary enrollment for some students. Female students outnumber male students at both 2-year and 4-year institutions. Students of color are less likely to enroll immediately following high school. And non-low income students far outnumber low-income students. Not only are some groups underrepresented on college campuses, they also tend to experience lower rates of early success. They are more likely to require developmental coursework and less likely to persist beyond their first year, leading to a lower likelihood of graduating and obtaining a postsecondary credential.

Labor market outcomes vary for different groups in Washington. Those with lower educational attainment tend to experience worse labor market outcomes, including higher rates of unemployment and lower incomes. Examining unemployment by race reveals equity gaps—people of color are more likely to have higher unemployment rates than White people in Washington. The racial equity gaps in unemployment rates often persist even when people of color have higher educational attainment. We also see a significant gender wage gap across all levels of educational attainment.

Addressing equity gaps in education can help diminish barriers and improve equitable outcomes for Washington residents. All people in Washington should have the opportunity to lead productive and financially rewarding lives, and to contribute to the economic success and social wellbeing of our state.

Appendix A. County-Level Postsecondary Attainment

County	Total Population Age 25+	Percent with Associate Degree or Higher
Adams	10,676	21.0%
Asotin	16,074	31.7%
Benton	125,408	40.5%
Chelan	51,391	35.8%
Clallam	56,573	36.6%
Clark	312,774	40.9%
Columbia	3,037	40.9%
Cowlitz	72,862	27.6%
Douglas	27,061	29.4%
Ferry	5,699	26.6%
Franklin	52,111	26.6%
Garfield	1,634	36.8%
Grant	57,214	25.5%
Grays Harbor	51,839	26.8%
Island	59,402	44.1%
Jefferson	25,523	47.9%
King	1,537,475	59.6%
Kitsap	181,431	43.1%
Kittitas	25,948	43.9%
Klickitat	15,682	36.6%
Lewis	54,410	29.7%
Lincoln	7,577	34.2%
Mason	45,951	28.7%
Okanogan	29,026	28.3%
Pacific	16,360	28.0%
Pend Oreille	9,827	32.4%
Pierce	575,988	37.9%
San Juan	13,414	55.4%
Skagit	86,398	37.3%
Skamania	8,582	33.0%
Snohomish	542,602	42.4%
Spokane	338,047	43.5%
Stevens	31,482	28.8%
Thurston	191,915	46.5%
Wahkiakum	3,190	31.8%
Walla Walla	39,420	41.2%
Whatcom	142,652	44.9%
Whitman	23,841	59.3%
Yakima	150,447	24.4%

Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018 PUMS 5-Year Data, population and proportion of Washington residents with at least an associate degree by county, age 25+

Appendix B. District-Level Dual Credit Participation

School District	Dual Credit Participation Rate (All Course Types)
Aberdeen	40.8%
Adna	31.0%
Anacortes	78.0%
Arlington	49.3%
Asotin-Anatone	56.0%
Auburn	65.1%
Bainbridge Island	56.9%
Battle Ground	47.2%
Bellevue	90.4%
Bellingham	76.5%
Bethel	70.7%
Bickleton	27.6%
Blaine	58.0%
Bremerton	59.9%
Brewster	70.5%
Bridgeport	80.4%
Burlington-Edison	71.9%
Camas	50.0%
Cape Flattery	19.6%
Cascade	89.7%
Cashmere	74.1%
Castle Rock	40.0%
Central Kitsap	63.1%
Central Valley	46.4%
Centralia	37.7%
Chehalis	34.6%
Cheney	33.6%
Chewelah	23.2%
Chief Leschi Schools	<10%

School District	Dual Credit Participation Rate (All Course Types)
Chimacum	37.6%
Clarkston	65.3%
Cle Elum-Roslyn	45.2%
Clover Park	75.9%
Colfax	62.6%
College Place	21.0%
Colton	73.5%
Columbia (Stevens)	25.0%
Columbia (Walla Walla)	77.3%
Colville	24.9%
Concrete	<10%
Coulee-Hartline	73.5%
Coupeville	22.6%
Crescent	<10%
Creston	12.1%
Curlew	40.3%
Cusick	<10%
Darrington	18.7%
Davenport	42.0%
Dayton	73.3%
Deer Park	47.5%
East Valley (Spokane)	36.2%
East Valley (Yakima)	36.2%
Eastmont	64.7%
Easton	11.8%
Eatonville	78.3%
Edmonds	66.8%
Ellensburg	46.9%
Elma	56.4%
Entiat	33.3%

School District	Dual Credit Participation Rate (All Course Types)
Enumclaw	74.7%
Ephrata	67.0%
ESD 113 as a district	<10%
ESD 189 as a district	<10%
Everett	71.0%
Evergreen (Clark)	73.0%
Excel Public Charter School	<10%
Federal Way	68.6%
Ferndale	50.6%
Fife	88.6%
Finley	54.6%
Franklin Pierce	63.8%
Freeman	68.3%
Garfield	70.0%
Glenwood	<10%
Goldendale	61.6%
Grand Coulee Dam	16.2%
Grandview	17.2%
Granger	45.8%
Granite Falls	54.9%
Harrington	33.3%
Highland	47.4%
Highline	68.5%
Hockinson	30.2%
Hoquiam	47.2%
Inchelium	31.0%
Issaquah	72.0%

School District	Dual Credit Participation Rate (All Course Types)
Kahlotus	<10%
Kalama	66.7%
Kelso	59.5%
Kennewick	59.0%
Kent	75.5%
Kettle Falls	23.3%
Kiona-Benton City	27.5%
Kittitas	16.6%
Klickitat	<10%
La Center	18.5%
La Conner	30.8%
LaCrosse	41.7%
Lake Chelan	51.2%
Lake Quinault	<10%
Lake Stevens	79.5%
Lake Washington	83.1%
Lakewood	56.5%
Liberty	32.9%
Lind	<10%
Longview	42.0%
Lopez	24.5%
Lummi Tribal Agency	<10%
Lyle	19.0%
Lynden	71.2%
Mabton	73.5%
Mansfield	42.4%
Manson	59.9%
Mary M Knight	3.1%
Mary Walker	23.9%
Marysville	36.0%
Mead	28.5%

School District	Dual Credit Participation Rate (All Course Types)
Medical Lake	81.4%
Mercer Island	71.6%
Meridian	53.4%
Methow Valley	30.4%
Mill A	57.1%
Monroe	58.8%
Montesano	43.6%
Morton	89.7%
Moses Lake	65.7%
Mossyrock	22.6%
Mount Adams	38.6%
Mount Baker	72.0%
Mount Vernon	62.9%
Mukilteo	55.4%
Naches Valley	21.4%
Napavine	40.6%
Naselle-Grays River Valley	<10%
Newport	50.1%
Nine Mile Falls	65.3%
Nooksack Valley	62.2%
North Beach No. 64	22.6%
North Franklin	47.3%
North Kitsap	49.6%
North Mason	64.4%
North River	26.3%

School District	Dual Credit Participation Rate (All Course Types)
North Thurston Public Schools	43.6%
Northport	22.1%
Northshore	71.6%
Oak Harbor	71.7%
Oakesdale	30.4%
Oakville	<10%
Ocean Beach	43.8%
Ocosta	35.4%
Odessa	<10%
Office of the Governor (Sch for Blind)	<10%
Okanogan	48.2%
Olympia	57.1%
Omak	42.9%
Onalaska	16.0%
Orcas Island	45.1%
Oroville	79.6%
Orting	72.6%
Othello	42.9%
Palouse	77.4%
Pasco	67.8%
Pateros	43.5%
Pe Ell	58.8%
Peninsula	62.3%
Pomeroy	<10%
Port Angeles	60.9%
Port Townsend	42.7%
Prescott	22.7%
PRIDE Prep Charter	<10%
Prosser	32.0%

School District	Dual Credit Participation Rate (All Course Types)
Pullman	38.3%
Puyallup	68.4%
Quilcene	31.8%
Quileute Tribal	<10%
Quillayute Valley	20.8%
Quincy	46.7%
Rainier	54.1%
Rainier Valley Leadership Academy	<10%
Raymond	46.6%
Reardan-Edwall	22.4%
Renton	42.0%
Republic	20.9%
Richland	47.0%
Ridgefield	37.5%
Ritzville	13.2%
Riverside	23.9%
Riverview	77.7%
Rochester	27.7%
Rosalia	37.7%
Royal	82.1%
San Juan Island	46.2%
Seattle #1	63.7%
Sedro-Woolley	60.5%
Selah	23.6%
Selkirk	57.3%
Sequim	74.5%
Shelton	66.3%
Shoreline	81.0%
Skykomish	46.7%
Snohomish	77.0%
Snoqualmie Valley	84.2%
Soap Lake	38.0%

School District	Dual Credit Participation Rate (All Course Types)
South Bend	32.9%
South Kitsap	56.1%
South Whidbey	54.5%
Spokane	54.5%
Sprague	21.6%
St. John	28.9%
Stanwood-Camano	51.1%
Steilacoom Hist.	95.1%
Stevenson-Carson	23.5%
Sultan	27.6%
Summit Public School: Atlas	<10%
Summit Public School: Olympus	61.2%
Summit Public School: Sierra	50.1%
Sumner	76.9%
Sunnyside	18.8%
Suquamish Tribal Education Department	36.7%
Tacoma	79.1%
Taholah	<10%
Tahoma	54.2%
Tekoa	<10%
Tenino	23.5%
Thorp	20.0%
Toledo	59.3%
Tonasket	56.8%

School District	Dual Credit Participation Rate (All Course Types)
Toppenish	12.0%
Touchet	76.9%
Toutle Lake	43.6%
Trout Lake	25.0%
Tukwila	32.9%
Tumwater	48.6%
University Place	55.5%
Valley	35.4%
Vancouver	53.4%
Vashon Island	48.2%
Wahkiakum	58.2%
Wahluke	69.1%
Waitsburg	42.9%
Walla Walla Public Schools	49.2%
Wapato	67.2%
Warden	54.1%
Washington Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth	<10%
Washington Military Department	<10%
Washougal	81.2%
Washtucna	57.1%
Waterville	21.2%
Wellpinit #49	10.6%
Wenatchee	49.3%
West Valley (Spokane)	18.3%

School District	Dual Credit Participation Rate (All Course Types)
West Valley (Yakima)	40.0%
White Pass	35.3%
White River	87.7%
White Salmon Valley	47.8%
Wilbur	22.3%
Willapa Valley	87.0%
Wilson Creek	27.3%
Winlock	38.7%
Wishkah Valley	<10%
Wishram	10.3%
Woodland	26.2%
Yakima	42.2%
Yelm	77.7%
Zillah	45.3%

Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, dual credit participation by school district, academic year 2019-2020

Note: Due to data suppression, schools with small samples are denoted with <10% dual credit participation rate

Appendix C. District-Level College Bound Scholarship Sign Up Rates

School District	CBS Sign Up Rate
Aberdeen	60.7%
Adna	52.9%
Almira	100.0%
Anacortes	32.1%
Arlington	52.0%
Asotin-Anatone	76.2%
Auburn	88.9%
Bainbridge Island	72.2%
Battle Ground	76.4%
Bellevue	78.3%
Bellingham	81.4%
Bethel	75.5%
Bickleton	20.0%
Blaine	78.7%
Boistfort	33.3%
Bremerton	60.6%
Brewster	78.1%
Bridgeport	64.8%
Brinnon	100.0%
Burlington-Edison	54.5%
Camas	61.3%
Cape Flattery	34.8%
Carbonado	0.0%
Cascade	74.4%
Cashmere	38.1%
Castle Rock	56.7%
Centerville	0.0%
Central Kitsap	67.0%
Central Valley	65.3%
Centralia	84.8%
Chehalis	88.0%
Cheney	63.0%
Chewelah	7.5%
Chief Leschi Tribal Compact	60.0%

School District	CBS Sign Up Rate
Chimacum	82.1%
Clarkston	75.0%
Cle Elum-Roslyn	78.3%
Clover Park	59.6%
Colfax	69.6%
College Place	85.7%
Colton	100.0%
Columbia (Stevens)	43.8%
Columbia (Walla Walla)	68.8%
Colville	50.0%
Concrete	58.8%
Conway	36.4%
Coulee-Hartline	25.0%
Coupeville	42.4%
Crescent	64.0%
Creston	50.0%
Curlew	61.1%
Cusick	33.3%
Darrington	38.9%
Davenport	57.1%
Dayton	68.8%
Deer Park	79.6%
Dieringer	71.4%
East Valley (Spokane)	78.3%
East Valley (Yakima)	82.7%
Eastmont	82.5%
Easton	40.0%
Eatonville	80.0%
Edmonds	83.0%
Educational Service District 101	25.0%

School District	CBS Sign Up Rate
Educational Service District 112	33.3%
Ellensburg	88.2%
Elma	49.0%
Endicott	76.9%
Entiat	72.2%
Enumclaw	45.1%
Ephrata	87.4%
Everett	91.4%
Evergreen (Clark)	75.0%
Federal Way	88.4%
Ferndale	57.5%
Fife	63.8%
Finley	92.3%
Franklin Pierce	64.5%
Freeman	59.1%
Garfield	33.3%
Glenwood	40.0%
Goldendale	67.4%
Grand Coulee Dam	42.3%
Grandview	91.6%
Granger	58.0%
Granite Falls	50.8%
Grapeview	60.0%
Green Dot Public Schools Destiny	82.0%
Green Dot Public Schools Excel	40.6%
Green Mountain	9.1%
Griffin	29.4%
Harrington	88.9%
Highland	59.1%

School District	CBS Sign Up Rate
Highline	84.9%
Hockinson	42.9%
Hood Canal	37.5%
Hoquiam	51.5%
Inchelium	57.1%
Index	0.0%
Issaquah	67.4%
Kahlotus	50.0%
Kalama	58.3%
Kelso	78.3%
Kennewick	66.0%
Kent	78.6%
Kettle Falls	79.6%
Kiona-Benton City	59.3%
Kittitas	43.5%
Klickitat	80.0%
La Center	33.3%
La Conner	23.3%
Lake Chelan	44.9%
Lake Quinault	78.6%
Lake Stevens	78.8%
Lake Washington	70.3%
Lakewood	74.7%
Lamont	100.0%
Liberty	70.0%
Lind	72.7%
Longview	66.8%
Loon Lake	0.0%
Lopez	50.0%
Lummi Tribal Agency	87.1%
Lyle	82.4%
Lynden	58.2%
Mabton	77.6%
Mansfield	85.7%
Manson	62.1%
Mary M Knight	35.2%
Mary Walker	52.8%
Marysville	41.3%

School District	CBS Sign Up Rate
McCleary	9.5%
Mead	58.7%
Medical Lake	77.0%
Mercer Island	33.3%
Meridian	63.8%
Methow Valley	50.0%
Monroe	56.2%
Montesano	40.0%
Morton	37.5%
Moses Lake	83.0%
Mossyrock	57.6%
Mount Adams	90.0%
Mount Baker	55.9%
Mount Pleasant	0.0%
Mount Vernon	71.3%
Muckleshoot Indian Tribe	9.7%
Mukilteo	46.4%
Naches Valley	70.3%
Napavine	25.0%
Naselle-Grays River Valley	90.9%
Nespelem #14	0.0%
Newport	81.5%
Nine Mile Falls	27.6%
Nooksack Valley	71.4%
North Beach	38.6%
North Franklin	94.0%
North Kitsap	71.3%
North Mason	45.5%
North River	0.0%
North Thurston Public Schools	61.3%
Northport	61.5%
Northshore	85.1%

School District	CBS Sign Up Rate
Northwest Educational Service District 189	61.5%
Oak Harbor	40.9%
Oakesdale	66.7%
Oakville	66.7%
Ocean Beach	65.4%
Ocosta	34.7%
Odessa	69.2%
Office of the Governor (Sch for Blind)	50.0%
Okanogan	23.0%
Olympia	66.1%
Olympic Educational Service District 114	50.0%
Omak	46.5%
Onalaska	24.3%
Onion Creek	0.0%
Orcas Island	71.4%
Orondo	100.0%
Oroville	71.1%
Orting	29.1%
Othello	69.3%
Palouse	40.0%
Pasco	89.0%
Pateros	60.0%
Paterson	0.0%
Pe Ell	9.1%
Peninsula	49.3%
Pioneer	41.8%
Pomeroy	87.5%
Port Angeles	79.9%
Port Townsend	77.5%
Prescott	75.0%
PRIDE Prep Charter	52.5%
Prosser	81.4%
Pullman	71.9%

School District	CBS Sign Up Rate
Puyallup	63.4%
Quilcene	27.3%
Quileute Tribal	33.3%
Quillayute Valley	36.7%
Quincy	78.5%
Rainier Prep Charter	91.0%
Rainier	97.1%
Raymond	71.8%
Reardan-Edwall	65.2%
Renton	90.2%
Republic	71.4%
Richland	58.5%
Ridgefield	32.8%
Ritzville	50.0%
Riverside	59.0%
Riverview	52.1%
Rochester	67.9%
Rosalia	70.0%
Royal	90.8%
San Juan Island	81.6%
Seattle Public Schools	84.4%
Sedro-Woolley	49.7%
Selah	15.8%
Selkirk	23.1%
Sequim	74.2%
Shelton	48.3%
Shoreline	87.3%
Skamania	25.0%
Snohomish	57.6%
Snoqualmie Valley	67.2%
Soap Lake	66.7%
South Bend	56.0%

School District	CBS Sign Up Rate
South Kitsap	68.7%
South Whidbey	71.8%
Spokane International Academy	85.7%
Spokane	87.1%
Stanwood-Camano	63.2%
Starbuck	0.0%
Steilacoom Hist.	68.9%
Stevenson-Carson	64.1%
Sultan	55.2%
Summit Valley	100.0%
Sumner	67.5%
Sunnyside	77.2%
Suquamish Tribal Education Department	7.7%
Tacoma	80.9%
Taholah	21.4%
Tahoma	14.5%
Tekoa	93.8%
Tenino	46.2%
Thorp	18.2%
Toledo	57.5%
Tonasket	79.5%
Toppenish	80.2%
Touchet	71.4%
Toutle Lake	52.0%
Trout Lake	100.0%
Tukwila	88.4%
Tumwater	46.4%
Union Gap	96.5%
University Place	79.3%
Valley	34.0%
Vancouver	80.4%
Vashon Island	67.6%

School District	CBS Sign Up Rate
WA HE LUT Indian School Agency	37.5%
Wahkiakum	66.7%
Wahluke	93.0%
Waitsburg	57.9%
Walla Walla Public Schools	55.0%
Wapato	81.2%
Warden	43.9%
Washington Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth	0.0%
Washougal	53.4%
Washtucna	85.7%
Waterville	75.0%
Wellpinit	32.0%
Wenatchee	83.4%
West Valley (Spokane)	89.4%
West Valley (Yakima)	80.1%
White Pass	81.3%
White River	63.0%
White Salmon Valley	69.4%
Wilbur	61.5%
Willapa Valley	90.9%
Willow Public Charter School	40.0%
Wilson Creek	62.5%
Winlock	46.8%
Wishkah Valley	36.4%
Wishram	80.0%
Woodland	75.2%
Yakima	72.7%
Yelm	81.3%
Zillah	86.2%

Source: Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) Research analysis of Washington College Bound Scholarship sign up rate by school district, 8th grade class, academic year 2018-2019

Appendix D. District-Level FAFSA Completion Rates

School District	FAFSA Comp. Rate
Aberdeen	43.2%
Adna	71.4%
Anacortes	52.0%
Arlington	40.8%
Asotin-Anatone	61.9%
Auburn	53.3%
Bainbridge Island	63.9%
Battle Ground	34.0%
Bellevue	60.4%
Bellingham	60.1%
Bethel	54.9%
Bickleton	40.0%
Blaine	53.3%
Bremerton	38.4%
Brewster	81.5%
Bridgeport	44.4%
Burlington-Edison	48.0%
Camas	60.0%
Cape Flattery	56.0%
Cascade	76.0%
Cashmere	58.9%
Castle Rock	31.8%
Central Kitsap	45.1%
Central Valley	55.1%
Centralia	56.9%
Chehalis	49.8%
Cheney	48.6%
Chewelah	40.7%
Chief Leschi Tribal Compact	22.2%
Chimacum	29.7%
Clarkston	49.7%
Cle Elum-Roslyn	55.2%
Clover Park	43.4%
Colfax	63.4%
College Place	45.6%

School District	FAFSA Comp. Rate
Colton	72.7%
Columbia (Stevens-Hunters)	57.1%
Columbia (Walla Walla-Burbank)	55.1%
Colville	45.2%
Concrete	36.0%
Coulee-Hartline	60.0%
Coupeville	39.2%
Crescent	63.2%
Creston	50.0%
Curlew	12.1%
Cusick	25.0%
Darrington	21.2%
Davenport	51.9%
Dayton	47.8%
Deer Park	42.6%
East Valley (Spokane)	42.9%
East Valley (Yakima)	47.5%
Eastmont	44.5%
Easton	28.6%
Eatonville	35.2%
Edmonds	50.4%
Educational Service District 101	8.0%
Educational Service District 105	12.5%
Educational Service District 112	3.1%
Educational Service District 113	4.6%

School District	FAFSA Comp. Rate
Educational Service District 123	3.6%
Ellensburg	49.8%
Elma	35.5%
Entiat	63.2%
Enumclaw	40.6%
Ephrata	53.5%
Everett	59.2%
Evergreen (Vancouver)	51.1%
Federal Way	67.2%
Ferndale	48.7%
Fife	57.9%
Finley	44.4%
Franklin Pierce	45.3%
Freeman	48.6%
Garfield	42.9%
Glenwood	100.0%
Goldendale	47.0%
Grand Coulee Dam	35.6%
Grandview	52.5%
Granger	58.0%
Granite Falls	34.1%
Harrington	50.0%
Highland	60.3%
Highline	52.0%
Hockinson	48.0%
Hoquiam	41.7%
Inchelium	73.7%
Issaquah	62.0%
Kahlotus	75.0%
Kalama	34.2%
Kelso	46.8%
Kennewick	43.9%
Kent	56.8%
Kettle Falls	37.5%

School District	FAFSA Comp. Rate
Kiona-Benton City	32.3%
Kittitas	50.8%
Klickitat	57.1%
La Center	55.4%
LaConner	50.0%
LaCrosse	40.0%
Lake Chelan	53.9%
Lake Quinault	41.7%
Lake Stevens	40.8%
Lake Washington Institute of Technology	0.0%
Lake Washington	59.3%
Lakewood	42.6%
Liberty	63.3%
Lind	57.1%
Longview	38.4%
Lopez	83.3%
Lummi Tribal Agency	26.1%
Lyle	50.0%
Lynden	51.2%
Mabton	64.2%
Mansfield	75.0%
Manson	62.8%
Mary M Knight	24.2%
Mary Walker	52.4%
Marysville	40.3%
Mead	58.8%
Medical Lake	49.6%
Mercer Island	55.0%
Meridian	59.4%
Methow Valley	59.0%
Mill A	100.0%
Monroe	32.7%
Montesano	58.2%
Morton	43.8%
Moses Lake	45.9%
Mossyrock	61.0%

School District	FAFSA Comp. Rate
Mount Adams	58.0%
Mount Baker	68.6%
Mount Vernon	46.1%
Muckleshoot Indian Tribe	41.7%
Mukilteo	55.9%
Naches Valley	48.0%
Napavine	42.4%
Naselle-Grays River Valley	44.2%
Newport	47.7%
Nine Mile Falls	70.3%
Nooksack	70.2%
North Beach	77.8%
North Franklin	37.7%
North Kitsap	49.0%
North Mason	31.4%
North River	0.0%
North Thurston Public Schools	48.4%
Northport	33.3%
Northshore	58.5%
Northwest Educational Service District 189	0.0%
Oak Harbor	43.6%
Oakesdale	83.3%
Oakville	71.4%
Ocean Beach	54.4%
Ocosta	45.2%
Odessa	90.5%
Office of the Governor (Sch for Blind)	0.0%
Okanogan	42.0%
Olympia	62.8%
Olympic Educational Service District 114	0.0%
Omak	42.1%

School District	FAFSA Comp. Rate
Onalaska	58.5%
Orcas Island	44.4%
Oroville	58.1%
Orting	49.7%
Othello	54.2%
Palouse	60.0%
Pasco	40.9%
Pateros	60.0%
Pe Ell	42.9%
Peninsula	53.9%
Pomeroy	81.0%
Port Angeles	47.5%
Port Townsend	51.8%
Prescott	54.5%
Prosser	53.7%
Pullman	76.1%
Puyallup	48.5%
Quilcene	52.4%
Quileute Tribal	0.0%
Quillayute Valley	19.2%
Quincy	68.8%
Rainier	68.0%
Raymond	40.0%
Reardan-Edwall	66.0%
Renton	52.8%
Renton Technical College	0.0%
Republic	52.2%
Richland	46.8%
Ridgefield	51.2%
Ritzville	63.9%
Riverside	46.7%
Riverview	54.8%
Rochester	46.9%
Rosalia	71.4%
Royal	46.2%
San Juan Island	52.5%
Seattle Public Schools	74.2%

School District	FAFSA Comp. Rate
Sedro-Woolley	37.6%
Selah	50.7%
Selkirk	85.7%
Sequim	52.7%
Shelton	36.4%
Shoreline	69.3%
Skykomish	66.7%
Snohomish	52.6%
Snoqualmie Valley	60.5%
Soap Lake	44.4%
South Bend	58.8%
South Kitsap	42.0%
South Whidbey	51.4%
Spokane	60.6%
Sprague	37.5%
St. John	50.0%
Stanwood-Camano	41.2%
Steilacoom Hist.	53.5%
Stevenson-Carson	40.0%
Sultan	43.7%
Summit Public School: Atlas	0.0%
Summit Public School: Olympus	71.4%

School District	FAFSA Comp. Rate
Summit Public School: Sierra	86.8%
Sumner	46.7%
Sunnyside	52.4%
Tacoma	69.4%
Taholah	6.7%
Tahoma	54.4%
Tekoa	63.6%
Tenino	37.1%
Thorp	46.7%
Toledo	35.4%
Tonasket	48.1%
Toppenish	63.0%
Toutle Lake	42.9%
Trout Lake	84.6%
Tukwila	76.2%
Tumwater	49.7%
University Place	57.9%
Valley	90.9%
Vancouver	51.6%
Vashon Island	63.8%
WA State Center for Childhood Deafness and Hearing Loss	9.1%
Wahkiakum	54.3%
Wahluke	48.4%

School District	FAFSA Comp. Rate
Waitsburg	50.0%
Walla Walla	53.4%
Wapato	45.3%
Warden	58.8%
Washougal	44.8%
Washtucna	66.7%
Waterville	74.1%
Wellpinit	15.4%
Wenatchee	60.9%
West Valley (Spokane)	44.0%
West Valley (Yakima)	55.3%
White Pass	30.0%
White River	42.3%
White Salmon Valley	47.5%
Wilbur	78.9%
Willapa Valley	60.7%
Wilson Creek	75.0%
Winlock	39.2%
Wishkah Valley	37.5%
Wishram	100.0%
Woodland	25.7%
Yakima	51.5%
Yelm	50.8%
Zillah	60.9%

Source: Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) Research analysis of Washington FAFSA completion portal by school district, academic year 2019-2020

Appendix E. Awards Earned within Four, Six, and Eight Years using IPEDS Outcome Measures

Awards Earned for New Students Entering in Academic Year 2010-11, All 2-Year Institutions							
Entering Cohort Type	Adjusted Cohort Number	Number Certificate	Percent Certificate	Number Associate	Percent Associate	Number Bachelor's	Percent Bachelor's
After Four Years							
All	255,346	20,001	7.8%	68,770	26.9%	688	0.3%
First-Time, Full-Time	45,218	4,825	10.7%	10,403	23.0%	54	0.1%
First-Time, Part-Time	35,588	1,558	4.4%	3,808	10.7%	9	0.0%
Non-first-Time, Full-Time	71,367	7,636	10.7%	27,624	38.7%	281	0.4%
Non-first-Time, Part-Time	103,173	5,982	5.8%	26,935	26.1%	344	0.3%
After Six Years							
All	255,346	19,787	7.7%	74,500	29.2%	960	0.4%
First-Time, Full-Time	45,218	4,804	10.6%	11,439	25.3%	97	0.2%
First-Time, Part-Time	35,588	1,529	4.3%	4,728	13.3%	37	0.1%
Non-first-Time, Full-Time	71,367	7,510	10.5%	28,989	40.6%	362	0.5%
Non-first-Time, Part-Time	103,173	5,944	5.8%	29,344	28.4%	464	0.4%
After Eight Years							
All	255,346	19,641	7.7%	76,749	30.1%	1,230	0.5%
First-Time, Full-Time	45,218	4,764	10.5%	11,867	26.2%	145	0.3%
First-Time, Part-Time	35,588	1,510	4.2%	5,050	14.2%	73	0.2%
Non-first-Time, Full-Time	71,367	7,452	10.4%	29,499	41.3%	434	0.6%
Non-first-Time, Part-Time	103,173	5,915	5.7%	30,333	29.4%	578	0.6%

Source: WSAC Research analysis of 2018 IPEDS Outcomes Measures, awards earned for students entering 2-year institutions in Washington in academic year 2010-2011

Awards Earned for New Students Entering in Academic Year 2010-11, All 4-Year Institutions

Cohort Type	Adjusted Cohort Number	Number Certificate	Percent Certificate	Number Associate	Percent Associate	Number Bachelor's	Percent Bachelor's
After Four Years							
All	43,655	101	0.2%	178	0.4%	23,761	54.4%
First-Time, Full-Time	23,315	16	0.1%	47	0.2%	11,333	48.6%
First-Time, Part-Time	585	20	3.4%	11	1.9%	69	11.8%
Non-first-Time, Full-Time	15,880	34	0.2%	72	0.5%	10,484	66.0%
Non-first-Time, Part-Time	3,875	31	0.8%	48	1.2%	1,875	48.4%
After Six Years							
All	43,655	104	0.2%	190	0.4%	29,297	67.1%
First-Time, Full-Time	23,315	18	0.1%	51	0.2%	15,858	68.0%
First-Time, Part-Time	585	20	3.4%	14	2.4%	148	25.3%
Non-first-Time, Full-Time	15,880	34	0.2%	72	0.5%	11,198	70.5%
Non-first-Time, Part-Time	3,875	32	0.8%	53	1.4%	2,093	54.0%
After Eight Years							
All	43,655	105	0.2%	194	0.4%	30,021	68.8%
First-Time, Full-Time	23,315	19	0.1%	52	0.2%	16,333	70.1%
First-Time, Part-Time	585	20	3.4%	15	2.6%	173	29.6%
Non-first-Time, Full-Time	15,880	34	0.2%	73	0.5%	11,355	71.5%
Non-first-Time, Part-Time	3,875	32	0.8%	54	1.4%	2,160	55.7%

Source: WSAC Research analysis of 2018 IPEDS Outcomes Measures, awards earned for students entering 2-year institutions in Washington in academic year 2010-2011

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About the Washington Student Achievement Council

The Washington Student Achievement Council is committed to increasing educational opportunities and attainment in Washington. The Council has three main functions:

- Lead statewide strategic planning to increase educational attainment.
- Administer programs that help people access and pay for college.
- Advocate for the economic, social, and civic benefits of higher education.

The Council has nine members. Four members represent each of Washington’s major education sectors: four-year public baccalaureates, four-year private colleges, public community and technical colleges, and K-12 public schools. Five are citizen members, including one current student.

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