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New ABOR Data Reflects College Going, Completion Rates in Arizona

The Arizona Board of Regents released new data today that reflects college going and completion rates of students who graduate from Arizona public high schools. The data reflects a drop in the college going rate in one year from 53.1 to 52.5 percent with the six-year trend for the number of students going on to postsecondary education showing an increase of 24.5 percent.

During the past six years, Arizona has seen improvements in college completion numbers, increasing by 37.1 percent from 9,770 students graduating from a four-year postsecondary institution from the 2004-05 high school graduating class to 13,393 graduating from the 2009-10 high school graduate cohort. From the 2008-09 class (12,971 college graduates) to 2009-10 class, there were an additional 422 students (3.25 percent) who earned degrees from four-year institutions.

For students graduating from two-year postsecondary institutions, significant improvement is shown in high school graduating classes from 2004-05 (2,107 graduates) through 2009-10 (4,321 graduates) in college completion numbers, increasing by 105.1 percent. There was a decrease of 47 students (1 percent) graduating from two-year institutions from 2008-09 (4,368 graduates) to 2009-10.

Among ethnic groups, there is an increase in Hispanic college completion rates among students in high school graduating classes from 2005-06 to 2009-10. College completion among Hispanics rose 3.4 percent, a significant increase in Arizona where Hispanic student numbers are increasing. Comparatively, Asian college completion rates during the same time period rose 5.7 percent, 2.75 percent for whites, 2.6 percent for African Americans and 2.1 percent for American Indians.

“Ensuring success for students at all levels is crucial Arizona; it is especially important for our Hispanic students who are the majority population in our K-12 schools,” said Bill Ridenour, board chair. “This matters to our future in Arizona where the majority of jobs will soon require education beyond high school.”

Among high school students going to college, statewide high school performance is inconsistent with half of college-going students coming from 11.6 percent of Arizona public high schools, up from 11 percent in 2014-15. High schools that sent no graduates on to postsecondary education rose in one year from 33 or 6.4 percent to 35 (7 percent). Fifty-eight high schools out of 501 produced half of total graduates going to postsecondary education (11.6 percent).

The data shows that among Arizona high school students going on to college, their overwhelming choice of higher education institutions are Arizona’s public universities - Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona. Among two year institutions, Glendale Community
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College, Pima Community College and Chandler/Gilbert Community College have the highest enrollments.

“This encouraging data for Hispanic students speaks to our ability and concerted efforts with Arizona’s K-12 system to ensure more students from diverse backgrounds are successful. We need every school in Arizona to be able to prepare students for higher learning so these students can secure a good job in the future when the majority of jobs will require education past high school. With an increasing demand for workforce talent, we must continue all efforts to accelerate the rate of Arizona students going to college and completing degrees for their success and that of our state,” said Eileen Klein, Arizona Board of Regents president.

In addition to releasing the new numbers, the data is available in an easy-to-use, interactive tool that enables students and families in Arizona to clearly see how a high school’s [college going](#) and [completion](#) rates compare with other high schools in the state. (A Google Fusion map of Arizona high schools is also [available](#).) The new data tool, part of the board’s emphasis on transparency and outcomes, puts students and families at the center of the decision-making process so they can make better decisions about where to invest their time and resources.

The tool also provides an additional resource to high school officials wishing to enhance their efforts around student success and college advising.

About the data

This data was compiled through a partnership with the Arizona Department of Education, the National Student Clearinghouse and the Arizona Board of Regents. The data includes Arizona charter schools in addition to traditional public district schools. Private schools are not included in the college going and completion data because their individual student data is not shared with the Arizona Department of Education. No identifying information was used in the data sharing agreement, which protects student-level data.