

AFRICAN AMERICAN EDUCATION FACT SHEET

High School Dropout and College Enrollment Rates

► U.S. census data for 2003 indicate that among persons 16-24 years old, the highest status dropout rates were for Hispanic males (26.7%), followed by those for Hispanic females (20.1%), black males (12.5%), black females (9.5%), white males (7.1%), and white females (5.6%). Among persons 18 to 24 years of age, the lowest college enrollment rates are for black males (26.5%) and Hispanic males (21.7%). (U.S. Census, 2003)

► Half of the nation's African American and Latino students are dropping out of high school. The most severe problems are in segregated high poverty schools. For the high school class of 2002 almost a third of the high schools that were more than 50 percent minority graduated less than half of their class. Among schools that were 90 percent or more white, only one school in fifty had this kind of record. Half of the majority-minority schools had dropout rates over 40 percent as did two-thirds of the schools with less than a tenth white students. (Source: Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2005)

► About 1.4 million black students and close to a million Latino students attend schools that are almost all minority (defined as being between 90–100% minority) compared to less than ten thousand white students. (Source: Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2005)

► 88 percent of high minority schools are high poverty schools (more than 50 percent of the students are on free and reduced lunch). (Source: Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2004)

► The U.S. Census estimates that high school dropouts will earn \$270,000 less than high school graduates over their working lives. Census data also shows that the earning gap between high school graduates and dropouts has grown over the last two decades—in 1975, high school dropouts earned 90% as much as high school graduates; in 1999, high school dropouts earned only 70% as much. (Source: Jennifer Cheeseman Day and Eric C. Newburger. The big payoff: Educational attainment and synthetic estimates of work-life earnings (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2002))

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► There are more black males in college than in prison. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2005 there were 530,000 black males age 18-24 in college; that same year there were 193,000 black males age 18-24 in prison.

Educational Attainment

► The percentage of African-Americans graduating from high school decreased between 1991 and 2005 while it increased for white students. The percentage of blacks completing college went up, but it simply kept pace with improvement in white college graduation rates.

Educational Attainment by Race in 1991 and 2005

Race	High School Diploma 1991	High School Diploma 2005	College Graduates 1991	College Graduates 2005
African-Americans	82%	80% (2 point decrease)	12%	18% (6 point increase)
White Americans	87%	90% (3 point increase)	25%	31% (6 point increase)

(Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

► More Black women than Black men had earned at least a bachelor's degree (16 percent compared with 13 percent), while among non-Hispanic Whites, a higher proportion of men than women had earned at least a bachelor's degree (26 percent and 23 percent, respectively). (Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, The Office of Minority Health, <http://www.omhrc.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=2&lvlID=51>.)

► Among blacks age 25 and older, 1.1 million had an advanced degree in 2005 (e.g., master's, Ph.D., M.D. or J.D.). Ten years earlier—in 1995—only 677,000 blacks had this level of education. (U.S. Census Bureau)

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Public Schools

America's schools are suffering from a critical shortage of minority teachers. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, about one-third of public schools students are members of racial or ethnic minority groups, but minority teachers make up only 13.5% of the workforce. In fact, 42% of the nation's public schools report having no minority teachers at all. (National Center for Education Statistics)