

College Success

Definition

Students with academic needs is the percent of students who enter Kentucky public postsecondary institutions underprepared in one or more subjects after graduating from high school within the previous two years. *Six-year college graduation rate* is the percent of entering college freshmen who graduate from a four-year college within six years.

Data in context

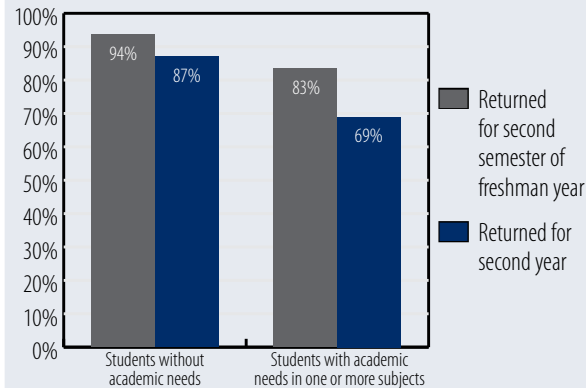
Higher educational attainment benefits both the greater public and individuals. States with higher rates of college graduates benefit from increased tax revenues, greater workplace productivity, increased volunteerism and voter participation, and decreased reliance on government support.¹ Graduating from college is an increasingly important milestone. College graduates enjoy a higher likelihood of employment, higher personal income, better health, and improved quality of life.²

To succeed in college, students need to be prepared for the rigors of college-level work. While about 70 percent of U.S. high school graduates go on to college within two years of graduating,³ about half of those who do have not received the preparation they need from their high schools for college-level courses.⁴ In Kentucky, 46 percent of students who entered college in 2004 had developmental needs in one or more subjects. Nationally, about 57 percent of students beginning college as full-time freshmen will graduate within six years.⁵ Kentucky falls far below this national average, with a 46 percent six-year college graduation rate.⁶

School systems are critical links to information about college requirements and needed preparation for students and their parents. However, students of color and low-income students have less access to college preparatory courses or high-quality college counseling.⁷ For instance, while African-American students made up 10 percent of students in Kentucky public schools in 2005, they made up only 2 percent of students taking the AP Calculus test.⁸

Colleges have a vested interest in eliminating the achievement gaps that exist among the students they admit. When colleges lack a concerted effort to support students

Percent of Students Remaining in College of Those Entering in Fall of 2004



Source: Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, Kentucky High School Feedback Report.

in overcoming gaps in preparation, their graduation rates suffer, and too often disparities emerge. Freshmen of color and those from low-income families are far less likely to complete degrees than their peers.⁹ In Kentucky, one-third of African-American and Latino students who enrolled as first-time, full-time freshmen in 1999 graduated within six years, compared to 47 percent of White freshmen.¹⁰

In 16 Kentucky counties, two-thirds or more of students entered college underprepared in one or more subject in 2004, compared to one-fourth or less of freshmen from Fulton, Marshall, and Oldham Counties. Less than one in four students from Knox, Lyon, and McCreary Counties who attended college graduated within six years, while six counties saw over two-thirds of students graduate within that time frame.

Preparation for college success should begin in the early grades of the K-12 system with support extending well into a student's post-high school experience.¹¹ The Pathways to College Network recommends the following model:

- ▶ Create a culture of high expectations for all students by collecting and disaggregating data for high-risk populations and ensuring that these students are taught by highly qualified teachers;

- ▶ Increase academic rigor and support by offering a college preparatory curriculum to all middle and high school students;
- ▶ Build social supports such as K-12/higher education transition programs for families;
- ▶ Use data to benchmark progress and make resource allocation decisions; and
- ▶ Establish P-16 alignment including early college opportunities and curricular articulation regarding admissions standards.¹²

Data Source: Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education Comprehensive Database.

- 1 Institute for Higher Education Policy (2005). *The Investment Payoff: A 50-State Analysis of the Public and Private Benefits of Higher Education*. Available at <http://www.ihep.org>. Accessed October 2008.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Venezia, A., Callan, P., Finney, J., Kirst, M., and Usdan, M. (2005). *The Governance Divide: A Report on a Four-State Study on Improving College Readiness and Success*. The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. Available at <http://www.stanford.edu>. Accessed October 2008.
- 4 Callan, P., Finney, J., Kirst, M., Usdan, M., and Venezia, A. (2006). *Claiming Common Ground: State Policymaking for Improving College Readiness and Success*. The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. Available <http://www.highereducation.org>. Accessed October 2008.
- 5 The Education Trust (2006). *EdWatch Online 2006 State Summary Reports*. Available at <http://www.edtrust.org>. Accessed October 2008.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Venezia, A., Kirst, M., and Antonio, A. (2003). *Betraying the College Dream: How Disconnected K-12 Postsecondary Education Systems Undermine Student Aspirations*. Stanford Institute of Higher Education Research. Available at <http://www.stanford.edu>. Accessed October 2008.
- 8 The Education Trust (2006). *EdWatch Online 2006 State Summary Reports*. Available at <http://www.edtrust.org>. Accessed August 2008.
- 9 Haycock, Kati. (2006). *Promise Abandoned: How Policy Changes and Institutional Practices Restrict College Opportunities*. The Education Trust. Available at <http://www.edtrust.org>. Accessed October 2008.
- 10 The Education Trust (2006). *EdWatch Online 2006 State Summary Reports*. Available at <http://www.edtrust.org>. Accessed August 2008.
- 11 Greene, J., and Forster, G. (2003). *Public High School Graduation and College Readiness Rates in the United States*. (Education Working Paper No. 3) Manhattan Institute for Policy Research. Available at <http://www.manhattan-institute.org>. Accessed October 2008.
- 12 Pathways to College Network (2008). *College Readiness for All Toolbox*. Available at <http://www.pathwaystocollege.net>. Accessed October 2008.

College preparation & outcomes

(percent of students entering with academic needs and graduating within six years)

| | 2004 Students with academic needs | 2006 Six-year college graduation rate |
|--------------|---|---|
| Kentucky | 46 | 46 |
| Adair | 63 | 50 |
| Allen | 51 | 51 |
| Anderson | 47 | 49 |
| Ballard | 52 | 56 |
| Barren | 44 | 47 |
| Bath | 55 | 48 |
| Bell | 71 | 27 |
| Boone | 36 | 47 |
| Bourbon | 54 | 31 |
| Boyd | 54 | 48 |
| Boyle | 50 | 46 |
| Bracken | 49 | 86 |
| Breathitt | 76 | 46 |
| Breckinridge | 31 | 61 |
| Bullitt | 39 | 37 |
| Butler | 63 | 37 |
| Caldwell | 45 | 61 |
| Calloway | 37 | 51 |
| Campbell | 38 | 48 |
| Carlisle | 63 | 73 |
| Carroll | 55 | 50 |
| Carter | 62 | 62 |
| Casey | 36 | 37 |
| Christian | 58 | 61 |
| Clark | 56 | 33 |
| Clay | 66 | 29 |
| Clinton | 55 | 50 |
| Crittenden | 44 | 45 |
| Cumberland | 38 | 47 |
| Daviess | 38 | 57 |
| Edmonson | 36 | 50 |
| Elliott | 71 | 35 |
| Estill | 33 | 36 |
| Fayette | 42 | 52 |
| Fleming | 56 | 44 |
| Floyd | 74 | 27 |
| Franklin | 46 | 49 |
| Fulton | 21 | 43 |
| Gallatin | 28 | 33 |
| Garrard | 43 | 42 |

| | 2004 Students with academic needs | 2006 Six-year college graduation rate |
|------------|---|---|
| Grant | 46 | 58 |
| Graves | 41 | 60 |
| Grayson | 51 | 33 |
| Green | 55 | 55 |
| Greenup | 46 | 39 |
| Hancock | 35 | 69 |
| Hardin | 49 | 52 |
| Harlan | 71 | 46 |
| Harrison | 48 | 46 |
| Hart | 50 | 54 |
| Henderson | 53 | 56 |
| Henry | 50 | 36 |
| Hickman | 44 | 90 |
| Hopkins | 45 | 51 |
| Jackson | 67 | 48 |
| Jefferson | 41 | 43 |
| Jessamine | 39 | 49 |
| Johnson | 56 | 55 |
| Kenton | 40 | 50 |
| Knott | 68 | 43 |
| Knox | 56 | 20 |
| LaRue | 63 | 60 |
| Laurel | 54 | 45 |
| Lawrence | 71 | 41 |
| Lee | 50 | 37 |
| Leslie | 86 | 29 |
| Letcher | 74 | 50 |
| Lewis | 58 | 45 |
| Lincoln | 48 | 29 |
| Livingston | 50 | 43 |
| Logan | 44 | 39 |
| Lyon | 42 | 14 |
| McCracken | 33 | 66 |
| McCreary | 74 | 24 |
| McLean | 51 | 58 |
| Madison | 52 | 40 |
| Magoffin | 71 | 46 |
| Marion | 27 | 63 |
| Marshall | 23 | 55 |
| Martin | 50 | 44 |
| Mason | 53 | 31 |

| | 2004 Students with academic needs | 2006 Six-year college graduation rate |
|------------|---|---|
| Meade | 46 | 58 |
| Menifee | 58 | 33 |
| Mercer | 63 | 55 |
| Metcalfe | 66 | 48 |
| Monroe | 59 | 61 |
| Montgomery | 56 | 41 |
| Morgan | 65 | 35 |
| Muhlenberg | 56 | 60 |
| Nelson | 48 | 51 |
| Nicholas | 62 | 69 |
| Ohio | 41 | 58 |
| Oldham | 25 | 46 |
| Owen | 58 | 37 |
| Owsley | 50 | 33 |
| Pendleton | 52 | 59 |
| Perry | 70 | 41 |
| Pike | 52 | 39 |
| Powell | 61 | 32 |
| Pulaski | 49 | 58 |
| Robertson | 57 | 100 |
| Rockcastle | 55 | 47 |
| Rowan | 52 | 42 |
| Russell | 57 | 48 |
| Scott | 43 | 48 |
| Shelby | 34 | 46 |
| Simpson | 33 | 49 |
| Spencer | 51 | 30 |
| Taylor | 35 | 40 |
| Todd | 50 | 54 |
| Trigg | 37 | 46 |
| Trimble | 43 | 44 |
| Union | 51 | 44 |
| Warren | 49 | 47 |
| Washington | 36 | 61 |
| Wayne | 62 | 62 |
| Webster | 51 | 42 |
| Whitley | 42 | 27 |
| Wolfe | 70 | 31 |
| Woodford | 46 | 49 |