

# HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE U.S.

## THE STUDENTS

Number of high school students: **14,370,902**

(NCES School Year Report, 2003–2004)

Number of limited English proficient high school students, 2001–02: **861,875**

(Kindler, 2002)

Spanish is the native language of the majority of limited English proficient students: **79.2%**

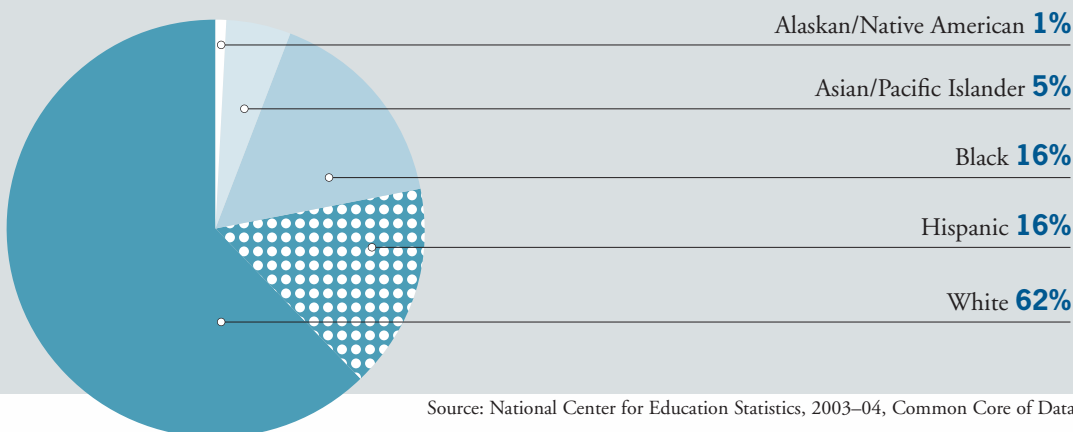
(Kindler, 2002)

Number of students served under the Individuals with Disabilities Act ages 14–18: **1,995,961** in 2002

(U.S. Department of Education, 26th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of IDEA, 2006)

High school student demographics

### Demographic Distribution, 2003–2004



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2003–04, Common Core of Data

## THE SCHOOLS

Number of high schools, 2004: **18,435**

(NCES, 2005)

Average High School Size: **768**

(NCES School Year Report, 2003–2004)

Number of high schools identified as in need of improvement, 2004–05: **11%**

(IES, National Assessment of Title I, 2006)

## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

About **50%** of 17-year-old students can understand moderately complex mathematical procedures and only **38%** can understand the complicated information they read. (NAEP, 2004)

**22.7%** of high school students took an AP Exam in high school in 2005.

(Advanced Placement Report to the Nation, 2006)

Students representing **14,573** secondary schools took AP Exams in 2005.

(Advanced Placement Report to the Nation, 2006)

- **11,498** of schools with students taking AP exams are public schools, an increase of 302 over 2005 figures
- **3,075** of schools with students taking AP exams are nonpublic schools, an increase of 127 over 2005 figures

## SAT Scores, 2004–2005

RACIAL/ETHNIC BACKGROUND	Verbal	Math
All Students	508	520
White	532	536
Black	433	431
Hispanic or Latino	463	469

(National Center for Education Statistics, 2006)

## SCHOOL FUNDING

### Total spending

Expenditures for public education in 2002–03 totaled approximately **\$387,592,494,000**.

(NCES, Revenues and Expenditures, 2002–03)

### Average amount spent per pupil

**\$8,044** per pupil in membership for public elementary and secondary schools in 2002–03.

(NCES, Revenues and Expenditures, 2002–03)

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

### Graduation rate

Among all public high school students in the class of 2002–03, the averaged freshman graduation rate was **74.3%** in 2003–04.

(NCES, Average Freshmen Graduation Rate, 2006)

On average, students from low income families, students with disabilities, and students from certain minority groups such as Native American students, Black students, and students of Hispanic descent are at increased risk of not completing high school.

(EPE Research Center, 2006)

School districts where most students are members of racial or ethnic minorities have graduation rates almost 20 percentage points lower than majority-white districts.

(EPE Research Center, 2006)

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

### High school exit examinations, 2004

(The Condition of Education, 2005)

Twenty states have mandatory exit examinations in both English/language arts and mathematics. Ten states also tested science knowledge, and 9 of these 10 states also tested social studies knowledge.

By 2009, a total of 25 states will have exit examinations in place and all but 6 will use these examinations to meet certain accountability requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

As of 2006:

- **23 states** required students to pass exit exams in order to get a diploma
- **15 states** offer an appeals process whereby students can bypass the exit exam
- **6 states** offer ‘multiple standard diploma’ options
- **24 states** will give students who complete required coursework early ‘advanced recognition’
- **26 states** offer ‘alternative credentials’ to students who do not meet all standard requirements
- **17 states** track individual graduation rates
- **77%** is the average graduation rate objective as outlined in states’ AYP plans to the U.S. Department of Education

## HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE

The number of students entering college after high school increased in the past 30 years. The enrollment rate of those who entered college immediately after high school increased from 49 percent in 1972 to 67 percent in 2004.

(Condition of Education, 2005)

**813,000** high school students took college level classes in the 2002–2003 academic school year. 84% of these students did so through a dual enrollment program.

(NCES Enrollment of High School Students at Postsecondary Institutions, 2002–03)

For full citations and more information regarding high schools in individual states, please visit the National High School Center Website ([www.betterhighschools.org](http://www.betterhighschools.org)).

## NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL CENTER at the American Institutes for Research

in collaboration with Learning Point Associates, MDRC, the National Center for Educational Accountability, the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network, the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities and WestEd.

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Hoffman, L., & Sable, J. (2006). Public elementary and secondary students, staff, schools, and school districts: School year 2003–04 (NCES 2006-307). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

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## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

Seastrom, M., Hoffman, L., Chapman, C., & Stillwell, R. (2006). The averaged freshman graduation rate for public high schools from the common core of data: School years 2002–03 and 2003-04 (NCES 2006–606rev). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

The National High School Center will update this statistic with information produced by the National Governors Association's method of calculating the graduation rate, once all states that have agreed to implement that method are able to do so. [Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate [ACGR]=[on time grads in yr x]÷[first time 9<sup>th</sup> graders in yr x-4) + (transfers in)-(transfers out)]

Researchers continue to debate the best way to calculate graduation rates, but almost all agree that more accurate information on who completes high school is needed. Depending on who is providing data and what method is being used to calculate the graduation rate, there is a great variance in actual figures. For example, a collection of Alaska's graduation rate from a variety of sources report the rate as being anywhere from 85% to 73.4% to 59%. Additionally, not only are there different ways to calculate the graduation rate, but states vary in how they collect and analyze their data. The NGA method provides states not only with a consistent way of calculating graduation rates, but suggests a uniform method for collecting data, and allows for comparability across states. Once states are able to use the NGA developed method of calculating, then a clearer picture will be available.

EPE Research Center. (2006). Diplomas count: An essential guide to graduation policy and rates. From Education Week Web site: <http://www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2006/06/22/index.html>

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## HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE

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