Trends in High School Dropout and Completion Rates in the United States: 1972–2008

Compendium Report

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Introduction

Dropping out of high school is related to a number of negative outcomes. For example, the median income of persons ages 18 through 67 who had not completed high school was roughly $23,000 in 2008.[1] By comparison, the median income of persons ages 18 through 67 who completed their education with at least a high school credential, including a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, was approximately $42,000. Over a person's lifetime, this translates into a loss of approximately $630,000 in income for a person who did not complete high school compared with a person with at least a high school credential (Rouse 2007).[2] Among adults ages 25 and older, a lower percentage of dropouts are in the labor force compared with adults who earned a high school credential. Among adults in the labor force, a higher percentage of dropouts are unemployed compared with adults who earned a high school credential (U.S. Department of Labor 2010). Further, dropouts ages 25 or older reported being in worse health than adults who are not dropouts, regardless of income (Pleis, Lucas, and Ward 2009). Dropouts also make up disproportionately higher percentages of the nation's prison and death row inmates.[3] Comparing those who drop out of high school with those who complete high school, the average high school dropout is associated with costs to the economy of approximately $240,000 over his or her lifetime in terms of lower tax contributions, higher reliance on Medicaid and Medicare, higher rates of criminal activity, and higher reliance on welfare (Levin and Belfield 2007).[4]

This report builds upon a series of National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports on high school dropout and completion rates that began in 1988. It presents estimates of rates in 2008, provides data about trends in dropout and completion rates over the last three and a half decades (1972–2008),[5] and examines the characteristics of high school dropouts and high school

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[1] U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), March 2009. These are not all high school dropouts: 1.0 percent of persons ages 18 through 67 were enrolled in high school in 2008 (U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey [CPS], October 2008).

[2] Rouse estimates a lifetime loss of $550,000 using 2004 March CPS data. The estimate here is adjusted for inflation between March 2004 and March 2008 using March-to-March consumer price index adjustments.

[3] Estimates from the most recent data available indicate that approximately 34 percent of federal and state inmates (data from 2004) and 50 percent of persons on death row (data from 2008) lack a high school credential (U.S. Department of Justice 2004, 2009). Although not strictly comparable because of different age ranges considered, estimates for those 25 and older in the general population during the same years indicate that about 15 percent were dropouts (U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau 2004, 2007).

[4] Levin and Belfield estimate costs at $209,000 as of 2004. The estimate here is adjusted for inflation between 2004 and 2008 using March 2004 and March 2008 consumer price indexes.

[5] Trend analyses have shown a pattern of decline in event dropout rates prior to 1990, a brief upward trend from 1991 through 1995, and then another decline through 2008. As a result, in this report, overall trends from 1972 to 2008 are reported, as well as separate trends from 1972 through 1990, 1990 through 1995, and 1995 through 2008, to increase the understanding of patterns over time in these rates.

completers in 2008. Four rates are presented to provide a broad picture of high school dropouts and completers in the United States, with the event dropout rate, the status dropout rate, the status completion rate, and the averaged freshman graduation rate each contributing unique information.

- The **event dropout rate** estimates the percentage of high school students who left high school between the beginning of one school year and the beginning of the next without earning a high school diploma or an alternative credential (e.g., a GED). This report presents a national event dropout rate for students attending both public and private schools using the Current Population Survey (CPS), and state event dropout rates for public high school students using the Common Core of Data (CCD).[6] Event dropout rates can be used to track annual changes in the dropout behavior of students in the U.S. school system.

- The **status dropout rate** reports the percentage of individuals in a given age range who are not in school and have not earned a high school diploma or an alternative credential. The rate is calculated using CPS data. It focuses on an overall age group as opposed to individuals in the U.S. school system, so it can be used to study general population issues.

- The **status completion rate** indicates the percentage of individuals in a given age range who are not in high school and who have earned a high school diploma or an alternative credential, irrespective of when the credential was earned.[7] The rate is calculated using CPS data. It focuses on an overall age group as opposed to individuals in the U.S. school system, so it can be used to study general population issues.[8]

- The **averaged freshman graduation rate** estimates the proportion of public high school freshmen who graduate with a regular diploma 4 years after starting 9th grade. The rate is calculated using data from the CCD. It focuses on public high school students as opposed to all high school students or the general population and is designed to provide an estimate of on-time graduation from high school. Thus, it provides a measure of the extent to which public high schools are graduating students within the expected period of 4 years.

Data presented in this report are drawn from the annual October Current Population Survey (CPS), the annual Common Core of Data (CCD) collections, and the annual General Education Development Testing Service (GEDTS) statistical reports. Data in the CPS files are collected through household interviews and are representative of the civilian, noninstitutionalized population in the United States, including students attending public and private schools. The CCD data are collected from state education agencies about all public schools and school systems in the United States, and contain aggregates of administrative record data kept by these agencies that are representative of all public school students in this country. The GEDTS data are also built from administrative record data kept by the testing service, and contain information

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[6] These datasets are described briefly in the main text and in more detail in appendix A.

[7] The status completion rate is not the inverse of the status dropout rate (i.e., status completion does not equal 100 minus the status dropout rate). The rates are based on different age ranges, and the completion rate excludes high school students from its denominator, whereas high school students are included in the denominator of the status dropout rate.

[8] Seastrom et al. (2006a) refer to this rate as the "Current Population Survey High School Completion Indicator."

about all GED test takers (data presented in this report are only for individuals in the 50 states and the District of Columbia).[9]

As with all data collections, those used in this report are useful for calculating some types of estimates, but poorly suited for calculating other types. For example, CPS data are well suited for studying the civilian, noninstitutionalized population in the United States, including students attending public and private schools, but do not provide information about military personnel or individuals residing in group quarters, such as prison inmates or patients in long-term medical facilities. Data from the CCD are appropriate for studying public school students in a given year, but do not provide information on private school students. GEDTS data are helpful for identifying the number of people who take and pass the GED examination in a given year, but do not contain information about schools that GED test takers attended before taking the GED test. In addition, none of the datasets track individual students over time, limiting their usefulness for studying processes and precise time lines associated with completing high school or dropping out.[10]

All changes or differences noted in this report were tested using Student's *t* statistic and are statistically significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. When significance tests fail to meet the $p \leq .05$ criterion and the comparison is of substantive interest, terminology such as "no measurable difference was found" is used in this report. Regression analysis was used to test for trends across age groups and over time. Analyses did not include any adjustments for multiple comparisons. Standard error tables are available in appendix C.

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[9] Appendix A of this report contains information about the three data collections and describes in detail how the rates reported here were computed.

[10] Several states have student-level administrative record systems that follow student progress over time that can be used for this kind of analysis. NCES is supporting the development of similar systems across additional states (see http://nces.ed.gov/programs/slds/ for details), and periodically conducts national-level longitudinal studies of high school students that can be used for such analysis, as in the High School Longitudinal Study.

Findings

National Event Dropout Rates

The national event dropout rate presented here is based on data from the CPS and is an estimate of the percentage of both private and public high school students who left high school between the beginning of one school year and the beginning of the next without earning a high school diploma or an alternative credential (e.g., a GED). Specifically, the rate describes the percentage of youth ages 15 through 24 in the United States who dropped out of grades 10–12 from either public or private schools in the 12 months between one October and the next (e.g., October 2007 to October 2008).[11] The measure provides information about the rate at which U.S. high school students are leaving school without a successful outcome. As such, it can be used to study student experiences in the U.S. secondary school system in a given year. It is not well suited for studying how many people in the country lack a high school credential irrespective of whether they attended U.S. high schools, nor does it provide a picture of the dropout problem more generally because it only measures how many students dropped out in a single year, and students may reenter the school system after that time. More detail about the definition and computation of the event dropout rate and other rates in this report can be found in appendix A.

- **Event dropout rates**: On average, 3.5 percent of students who were enrolled in public or private high schools in October 2007 left school before October 2008 without completing a high school program (table 1). No measurable change was detected in the event dropout rate between 2007 and 2008 (3.5 percent in both years); however, since 1972, event dropout rates have trended downward, from 6.1 percent in 1972 to 3.5 percent in 2008 (figure 1 and table 2).[12] Declines occurred primarily from 1972 through 1990, when the rate reached 4.0 percent. From 1990 through 1995, event rates increased, but then trended downward again from 1995 through 2008. These fluctuations during the 1990s and early to mid-2000s resulted in no measurable difference between the 1990 and 2008 event dropout rates.

- **Event dropout rates by sex**: There was no measurable difference in the 2008 event dropout rates for males and females, a pattern generally found since 1972 (tables 1 and 3). Exceptions to this pattern occurred in 4 years—1974, 1976, 1978, and 2000—when males had measurably higher event dropout rates than females.

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[11] Data about 9th-grade dropouts are not available in the Current Population Survey (see appendix A for more information). The state event dropout rates for public high school students presented later in this report are based on the Common Core of Data, which includes 9th-graders.

[12] Trend analyses were conducted using regressions. See appendix A for more details.

- **Event dropout rates by race/ethnicity**:[13] Between October 2007 and October 2008, Black and Hispanic students in public and private high schools had higher event dropout rates than White students (table 1). The event dropout rate was 6.4 percent for Blacks and 5.3 percent for Hispanics, compared with 2.3 percent for Whites. The general downward trend in event dropout rates over the three and a half decade period from 1972 through 2008 observed in the overall population was also found among Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics (table 3).[14] However, the decreases happened at different times over this 36-year period for these racial/ethnic groups. The pattern found among Whites mirrored the overall population: a decrease in event rates from 1972 through 1990, an increase from 1990 through 1995, and another decrease from 1995 through 2008. Blacks also experienced a decline from 1972 through 1990, and an increase from 1990 through 1995, but their event dropout rates fluctuated and no measurable trend was found between 1995 and 2008. Hispanics, on the other hand, experienced no measurable change in their event dropout rates from 1972 through 1990, and no measurable change from 1990 through 1995, but did experience a decline from 1995 through 2008.

- **Event dropout rates by family income**: In 2008, the event dropout rate of students living in low-income families was about four and one-half times greater than the rate of their peers from high-income families (8.7 percent vs. 2.0 percent) (table 1).[15]

  Students from low-, middle-, and high-income families experienced an overall decline in event dropout rates during the three-decade period of the mid-1970s through 2008 (figure 1 and table 4). All three groups of students experienced declines in event dropout rates from 1975 through 1990. Those from low-income families had rates that fell from 15.7 percent to 9.5 percent. Students from middle-income families had rates fall from 6.0 percent to 4.3 percent and those from high-income families had rates fall from 2.6 percent to 1.1 percent. From 1990 to 1995, students from low-income families experienced an upward trend in rates from 9.5 percent to 13.3 percent, while their peers from middle- and high-income families experienced no measurable change. In the last 13 years (1995–2008), the event rates for low-income and middle-income families trended downward. While event dropout rates for students from high-income families fluctuated and no measurable trend was found during the

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[13] All of the 2008 tables report data for the following four racial/ethnic categories: White (non-Hispanic), Black (non-Hispanic), Asian/Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic), and Hispanic. The first three categories consist of individuals who identified as only one race, and who did not identify as Hispanic. A fourth category consists of Hispanics of all races and racial combinations. For 2008 status dropouts and status completion rates (tables 6 and 9), results for two additional race/ethnic groups are presented: American Indian/Alaska Native (non-Hispanic) and persons of two or more races (non-Hispanic). Because of small sample sizes, American Indians/Alaska Natives and persons of two or more races are included in the total but not shown separately for 2008 event dropout rates and event dropout, status dropout, and status completion results for prior years. For simplicity, the terms "Black," "Hispanic," "Asian/Pacific Islander," "American Indian/Alaska Native," and "two or more races" are used in the text of this report without the "(non-Hispanic)" label.

[14] The trend analyses conducted to examine this three-and-a-half-decade period are based on annual rate estimates for each year from 1972 through 2008. Separate trend analyses were also conducted for each racial/ethnic group separately for trends across the three shorter time periods indicated in the bullet: 1972–1990, 1990–1995, and 1995–2008. Because of small sample sizes for many of the earlier years, reliable trend analyses could not be conducted for Asians/Pacific Islanders, American Indians/Alaska Natives, and persons of two or more races.

[15] "Low income" is defined here as the lowest 20 percent of all family incomes, while "high income" refers to the top 20 percent of all family incomes. In 2008, low-income families included those with $18,985 or less in family income, while high-income families included those with $88,080 or more in family income. For respondents missing data for family income (17.4 percent of the weighted sample in table 1), cold-deck procedures were used to impute data.

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same 13-year period, there was no measurable difference between their 1995 and 2008 rates (2.0 percent in both years).

- **Event dropout rates by age**: Students who pursued a high school education past the typical high school age were at higher risk than others of becoming an event dropout (table 1). The 2008 event dropout rates for students in the typical age range for fall high school enrollment (ages 15 through 17) were lower than those for older students (ages 20 through 24). Specifically, 2.4 percent of 15- through 16-year-olds and 3.1 percent of 17-year-olds dropped out in the 1-year reference period, compared with 14.9 percent of 20- through 24-year-olds.

- **Event dropout rates by region**: In 2008, the event dropout rates for high school students in the South (4.3 percent) were higher than for their peers in the Northeast (2.3 percent) and Midwest (2.7 percent), and event dropout rates for students in the West (4.1 percent) were higher than those for students in the Northeast (table 1).

State Event Dropout Rates for Public High School Students

State-level event dropout rates for public high school students are calculated using data from 1993 through 2008 from the CCD. The rates reported in this publication reflect the percentage of public school students who were enrolled in grades 9–12 at some point during the 2007–08 school year but were not enrolled in school in October 2008 and had not earned a high school diploma or completed a state- or district-approved education program.[16] Some state or district education programs include special education programs and district- or state-sponsored GED programs. State event dropout rates are useful for evaluating the performance of public high school systems in reporting states. They do not include information about individuals outside the public school system. Rates are presented for the District of Columbia and 49 states that submitted data that could be reported for the 2007–08 school year; a "reporting states" rate was calculated based on data from the reporting states (table 5). Dropout counts from Vermont were suppressed due to a high frequency of missing data.

- **State event dropout rates for 9th- through 12th-grade public high school students**: The 2007–08 CCD event dropout rates ranged from 1.7 percent in Indiana and New Jersey to 7.5 percent in Louisiana (table 5). In all, event dropout rates for public school students in grades 9–12 were lower than 3 percent in fifteen states: Indiana and New Jersey, 1.7 percent; Idaho, 2.0 percent; Alabama, 2.2 percent; South Dakota and Wisconsin, 2.3 percent; North Dakota, 2.4 percent; Kansas and Nebraska, 2.5 percent; Pennsylvania, 2.6 percent; Virginia, 2.7 percent; Connecticut, Kentucky, and Minnesota, 2.8 percent; and Iowa, 2.9 percent. Six states had event dropout rates of 6 percent or more: Delaware, 6.0 percent; Michigan, 6.2 percent; Colorado, 6.4 percent; Arizona, 6.7 percent; Alaska, 7.3 percent; and Louisiana, 7.5 percent.

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[16] Some states report using an alternative 1-year period from one July to the next. Rates for those states are presented because event dropout rates based on the July-to-July calendar are comparable to those calculated using an October-to-October calendar (Winglee et al. 2000).

- Combining data from the 49 reporting states and the District of Columbia, approximately 613,000 public school students dropped out of grade 9–12 during the 2007–08 school year (data not shown in tables). This translates into an event dropout rate of 4.1 percent.[17]

National Status Dropout Rates

The status dropout rate measures the percentage of individuals who are not enrolled in high school and who do not have a high school credential. The status dropout rate is higher than the event rate in a given year because the status dropout rate includes all dropouts in a particular age range, regardless of when or where they last attended school, including individuals who may have never attended school in the United States. Based on the 16- through 24-year-old age range, the measure provides an indicator of the proportion of young people who lack a high school credential. While useful for measuring overall educational attainment among young adults in the United States, the status dropout rate is not useful as an indicator of the performance of schools because it includes those who never attended school in the United States. Using data from the CPS, the status dropout rate in this report shows the percentage of young people ages 16 through 24 who are out of school and who have not earned a high school diploma or equivalency credential (e.g., a GED).

- **Status dropout rates**: In October 2008, approximately 3.0 million 16- through 24-year-olds were not enrolled in high school and had not earned a high school diploma or alternative credential (table 6). These status dropouts accounted for 8.0 percent of the 38 million noninstitutionalized, civilian 16- through 24-year-olds living in the United States.

  Among all individuals in this age group, status dropout rates trended downward between 1972 and 2008, from 14.6 percent to 8.0 percent (figure 2 and table 7). The status dropout rate of 2008 was lower than that of 1990, unlike the event dropout rate where no differences were detected between these 2 years.

- **Status dropout rates by sex**: Males ages 16–24 had higher status dropout rates than females in 2008 (8.5 percent vs. 7.5 percent) (table 6).

- **Status dropout rates by race/ethnicity**: The 2008 status dropout rates for persons of two or more races (4.2 percent), Asian/Pacific Islanders (4.4 percent), and Whites (4.8 percent) were the lowest among the racial/ethnic groups considered in this report. The Black status dropout rate was lower than the rate for Hispanics (9.9 percent and 18.3 percent, respectively) (table 6).

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[17] The number of event dropouts based on CCD data is significantly higher than the number of event dropouts based on CPS data, after restricting CCD counts to grades 10–12 to align with grade-ranges used in CPS estimates. This may be due in part to how the different sources of data account for alternative credentials like the GED. Students earning GEDs through public school systems are generally not counted as dropouts in the CCD, while students who leave the public school system are considered dropouts. Irrespective of how a GED is obtained, CPS data do not count them as dropouts. When this reporting difference is accounted for, estimates from both sources are not detectably different.

Since 1972 the difference between the status dropout rates of Whites and Blacks has narrowed (figure 2 and table 8). This narrowing of the gap occurred during the 1980s, with no measurable change during the 1970s or between 1990 and 2008.

The percentage of Hispanics ages 16–24 who were dropouts was consistently higher than that of Blacks and Whites throughout the 36-year period of 1972–2008 (figure 2 and table 8). White and Black status dropout rates have fallen significantly since 1972; the rates for Whites fell from 12.3 to 4.8 percent and the rates for Blacks declined from 21.3 to 9.9 percent. Between 1972 and 1990, Hispanic status dropout rates were generally consistent, but since 1990 they have demonstrated a downward trend, falling from 32.4 percent to 18.3 percent.

In 2008, some 32.8 percent of Hispanic 16- through 24-year-olds born outside the United States were status high school dropouts (table 6). Hispanics born in the United States had lower status dropout rates than immigrant Hispanics (10.5 percent and 10.8 percent for "first generation" and "second generation or higher," respectively).[18] In each "recency of immigration" category in table 6, Hispanic youth had higher status dropout rates than non-Hispanic youth.

- **Status dropout rates by sex and race/ethnicity**: Dropout rates for Whites and Hispanics varied by sex (figure 3). Among White students, 5.4 percent of males were status dropouts in 2008 compared with 4.2 percent of females. Hispanic males also had higher status dropout rates than their female counterparts (19.9 percent vs. 16.7 percent, respectively). No differences by sex were detected in status dropout rates for Blacks, Asian/Pacific Islanders, American Indian/Alaska Natives, or persons of two or more races.

- **Status dropout rates by age**: Persons ages 16 and 17 had lower status dropout rates in 2008 (2.2 percent and 5.0 percent, respectively) than 18- through 24-year-olds (7.8 percent to 9.9 percent), at least in part because most 16- and 17-year-olds were still actively pursuing a high school diploma (table 6).[19]

- **Status dropout rates by region**: In 2008, the Northeast had the lowest status dropout rates (5.6 percent) and the South and the West had the highest (8.8 percent and 9.1 percent, respectively) (table 6). Dropouts were disproportionately concentrated in the South and the West. In 2008, some 35.9 percent of 16- through 24-year-olds lived in the South while 39.6 percent of all status dropouts lived there. Similarly, 23.8 percent of the 16- through 24-year-old population lived in the West but 27.0 percent of status dropouts lived there. In contrast, dropouts were underrepresented in the Northeast. Some 17.9 percent of 16- through 24-year-olds lived in the Northeast, but 12.5 percent of status dropouts lived there.

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[18] Individuals defined as "first generation" were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia, and one or both of their parents were born outside the 50 states or the District of Columbia. Individuals defined as "second generation or higher" were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia, as were both of their parents.

[19] In 2008, data from the CPS show that high school enrollment rates by age group were 95.2 percent for 16-year-olds, 88.8 percent for 17-year-olds, 27.7 percent for 18-year-olds, 6.6 percent for 19-year-olds, and 0.9 percent for 20- through 24-year-olds (estimates not shown in tables).

National Status Completion Rates

The status completion rate indicates the percentage of young people who have left high school and who hold a high school credential. The rate reported here is based on CPS data and represents the percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who have earned a high school diploma or an alternative credential, including a GED certificate. The status completion rate includes individuals who may have completed their education outside the United States, so the rate is not suited for measuring the performance of the education system in this country. The status completion rate is not the inverse of the status dropout rate (i.e., status completion does not equal 100 minus the status dropout rate). The rates are based on different age ranges, with the status dropout rate reported for 16- through 24-year-olds and the status completion rate reported for 18- through 24-year-olds. The completion rate excludes high school students from its denominator, whereas high school students are included in the denominator of the status dropout rate.

- **Status completion rates**: In 2008, some 89.9 percent of 18- through 24-year-olds not enrolled in high school had received a high school diploma or equivalency credential (table 9).[20] Overall, status completion rates have increased since 1972 (figure 4 and table 10), but during the 1970s they remained largely flat. Since 1980, the rate has shown an upward trend, starting at 83.9 percent in 1980 and rising to 89.9 percent in 2008.

- **Status completion rates by sex**: Females ages 18–24 who were not enrolled in high school in 2008 had a higher status completion rate (90.5 percent) than their male counterparts (89.3 percent) (table 9).

- **Status completion rates by race/ethnicity:** In 2008, among 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school, Asians/Pacific Islanders (95.5 percent), Whites (94.2 percent) and persons of two or more races (94.2 percent) had status completion rates of over 90 percent. All three had rates that were higher than those for Blacks (86.9 percent), American Indians/Alaska Natives (82.5 percent), and Hispanics (75.5 percent) (table 9).

  Status completion rates for Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics exhibited no general patterns of change during the 1970s, but rates trended upward for each group between 1980 and 2008 (figure 4 and table 11).

  In 2008, some 59.8 percent of foreign-born[21] Hispanics ages 18–24 who were not currently enrolled in high school had completed high school (table 9). Compared to foreign-born Hispanics, status completion rates were higher for Hispanics born in the United States (85.1 percent for "first generation" and 85.8 percent for "second generation or higher"), although in each immigrant category Hispanics had higher status completion rates than non-Hispanics.

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[20] Considering all 18- through 24-year-olds, irrespective of enrollment status, 84.7 percent held a high school credential in October 2008 (estimates not shown in tables).

[21] Foreign-born refers to people who were born outside of the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

- **Status completion rates by sex and race/ethnicity:** For Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics, status completion rates differed by sex (figure 5). In 2008, White and Hispanic females had higher status completion rates than their male counterparts. Specifically, 94.9 percent of White females and 77.9 percent of Hispanic females had completed high school in 2008, compared with 93.6 percent of White males and 73.2 percent of Hispanic males, respectively. Among Blacks, males had higher status completion rates (89.1 percent vs. 85.0 percent). No measurable differences by sex were detected between the status completion rates of American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asians/Pacific Islanders, and persons of two or more races.

- **Status completion rates by region**: Consistent with status dropout data by region, 18- through 24-year-olds in the West, South, and Midwest had lower status completion rates (88.7 percent, 89.1 percent, and 90.3 percent, respectively) than their contemporaries in the Northeast (92.7 percent). Additionally, the West had lower rates than the Midwest (table 9).

General Educational Development (GED) Credentials and National Status Completion Rates

General Educational Development (GED) programs allow individuals who would otherwise lack a high school credential because they did not complete a regular high school program of study, to obtain an alternative credential. Not completing a regular high school program can occur for several reasons including dropping out of high school and immigrating into the country without ever enrolling in U.S. high schools. The GED is accepted by most colleges and universities that require a high school diploma for admission, and most companies that have positions requiring a high school diploma accept the GED as an alternative credential (American Council on Education 2009). While GEDs provide an important opportunity for those who do not earn a regular high school diploma to obtain a high school credential, GED recipients tend to fare significantly worse than those holding regular diplomas across a range of measures. For example, while GED recipients and regular diploma recipients who complete postsecondary programs experience the same economic benefits from the programs, GED recipients attend and complete postsecondary programs at much lower rates than regular diploma holders. Also, while high school dropouts with relatively low cognitive skills experience improved incomes if they earn a GED, dropouts with relatively high cognitive skills do not experience increased earnings after earning a GED (see Boesel, Alsalam, and Smith 1998, and Tyler 2003 for overviews of GED research).

To better understand how the rate of GED receipt relates to different rates presented in this report, data from the GED Testing Service are used to estimate the number of GED holders in

the civilian, noninstitutionalized population in 2008.[22] Estimates are provided for 18- through 24-year-olds to correspond to age ranges used for the status completion rates.[23]

- **National estimates of 18- through 24-year-olds with a GED in 2008**: There were approximately 1,500,000 persons ages 18 through 24 in 2008 who had passed the GED exam in 2008 or in prior years (data not shown in tables). This represents 5.5 percent of the civilian, noninstitutionalized population of 18- through 24-year-olds who were not in high school in 2008. Subtracting out those who passed the GED exam, the status completion rate in 2008 for regular high school diploma holders and those holding alternative credentials other than a GED was 84.4 percent (data not shown in tables).[24]

  Focusing on the 18- through 24-year-old population without consideration of high school enrollment, approximately 84.7 percent held some form of high school credential in 2008 with 5.2 percent holding a GED and 79.5 percent holding a regular high school diploma or other alternative credential (data not shown in tables).[25]

Averaged Freshman Graduation Rates for Public School Students

The averaged freshman graduation rate (AFGR) provides an estimate of the percentage of public high school students who graduate on time—that is, 4 years after starting 9th grade—with a regular diploma. The rate uses aggregate student enrollment data to estimate the size of an incoming freshman class and aggregate counts of the number of diplomas awarded 4 years later. The incoming freshman class size is estimated by summing the enrollment in 8th grade for 1 year, 9th grade for the next year, and 10th grade for the year after and then dividing by 3. The averaging is intended to account for higher grade retention rates in the 9th grade. Although not as accurate as an on-time graduation rate computed from a cohort of students using individual student record data, this estimate of an on-time graduation rate can be computed with currently available data. The AFGR was selected from a number of alternative estimates that can be

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[22] The number of GED holders was based on counts of those who passed the GED exam. Counts of successful GED examinees each year are published by GEDTS. It is possible to pass the GED exam and not obtain a GED, so estimates here represent an upper bound of GED holders in the population. To determine how many people in a given age range have earned a GED requires summation of reported data over multiple years of GEDTS reports. For example, the number of 18- through 24-year-olds in 2008 who had passed the GED exam was estimated by taking the sum of those who passed the exam in 2008 at ages 18–24 plus those who passed the exam in 2007 at ages 17–23 plus those who passed the exam in 2006 at ages 16–22, and so on. See appendix A of this report for details of this calculation.

[23] Civilians in the noninstitutionalized population are the focus of the status dropout and completion rates. To align the GED estimates with this population, data from the *Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 2004* prorated to 2008 and data provided by the Defense Manpower Data Center for active duty military personnel in 2008 were used. See appendix A of this report for details of how the GED estimates were aligned with the noninstitutionalized population.

[24] The CPS data used for the status completion rate include those holding alternative credentials such as a GED in the count of completers. Other alternative credentials exist so removing GED counts from the counts of completers does not result in a count of regular high school diploma holders.

[25] Similar estimates could be made in reference to the 16- through 24-year-old population, which is the focus of the status dropout rate. There were approximately 1,597,000 persons ages 16 through 24 in 2008 who had passed the GED exam in 2008 or prior years (data not shown in tables). This represents 4.3 percent of the civilian, noninstitutionalized population of 16- through 24-year-olds in 2008.

calculated using cross-sectional data based on a technical review and analysis of a set of alternative estimates (Seastrom et al. 2006a, 2006b). AFGR estimates are based on the CCD "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," with ungraded[26] enrollments distributed proportional to reported enrollments by grade. Rates are presented for the 49 states and the District of Columbia that submitted data necessary to estimate AFGR for the 2007–08 school year; a national-level rate was calculated for reporting states based on data from the 49 states and the District of Columbia. Diploma count data for 2007–08 are missing for South Carolina.

- **National averaged freshman graduation rate for public school students**: The AFGR among public school students in the United States for the class of 2007–08 was 74.9 percent (table 12).

- **State averaged freshman graduation rates for public school students**: For the class of 2007–08, the AFGR ranged from 51.3 percent in Nevada to 89.6 percent in Wisconsin (figure 6 and table 12). Seventeen states had rates of 80.0 percent or higher—Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wisconsin. Eight states had rates below 70.0 percent—Alabama, Alaska, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, and New Mexico—as did the District of Columbia.

- **Changes in rates from 2006–07 to 2007–08:** The AFGR among public school students in the graduating class of 2007–08 was higher than the rate for the class of 2006–07 (74.9 percent versus 73.9 percent) (table 13).[27] A comparison of data from 2007–08 to data from the prior school year, 2006–07, shows a percentage point or greater increase in the AFGR for 16 states and the District of Columbia. The AFGR decreased by a percentage point or more for six states during that same time period.

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[26] Ungraded students are those who are assigned to a class or program that does not have standard grade designations.

[27] South Carolina did not report diploma information for 2007–08. Data were available to estimate the number of first-time freshmen in 2004–05 (the graduating class of 2007–08). If the AFGR for 2006–07 in South Carolina were applied to the estimate of first-time freshmen in 2004–05, and the freshmen count and resulting diploma count added to national totals, the AFGR for the United States would have been 74.7 percent in 2007–08.

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Figures

Figure 1. Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by family income: October 1972 through October 2008
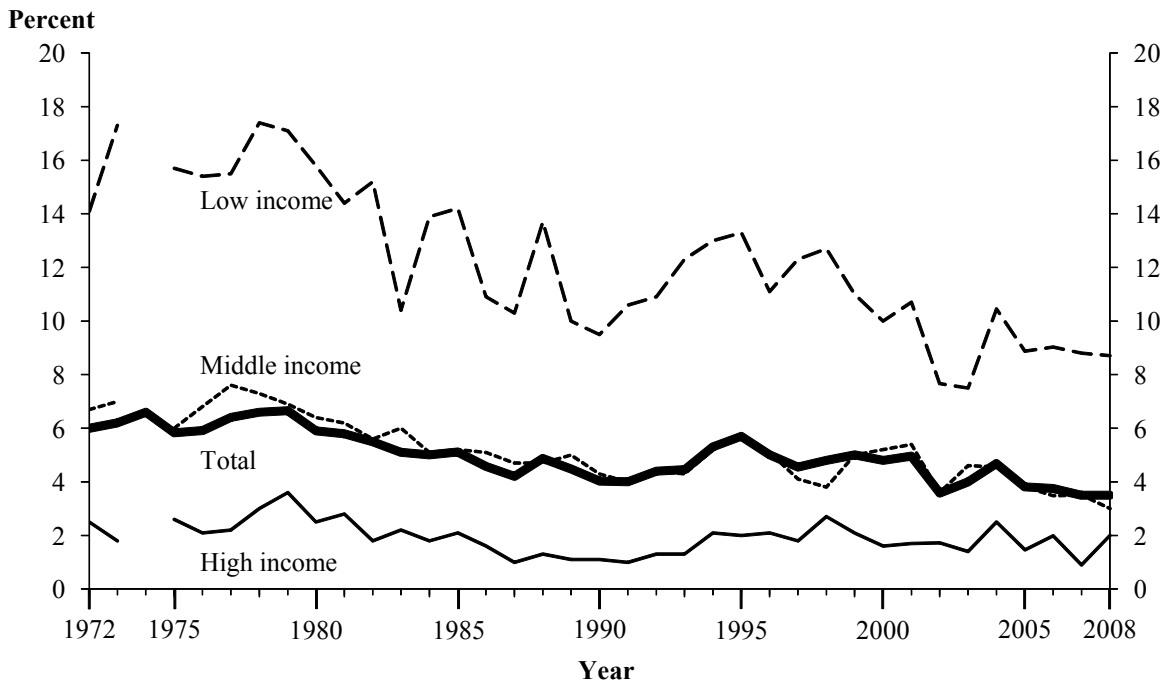
Percent

NOTE: The event dropout rate indicates the percentage of youth ages 15 through 24 who dropped out of grades 10–12 between one October and the next (e.g., October 2007 to October 2008). Dropping out is defined as leaving school without a high school diploma or equivalent credential, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for the year; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes. Data on family income are missing for 1974. Estimates beginning with 1987 reflect new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Estimates beginning with 1992 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item. Estimates beginning with 1994 reflect changes due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing. For details about changes in the Current Population Survey (CPS) over time, please see Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., and Chapman, C. (2004). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2005-046). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Figure 2. Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008
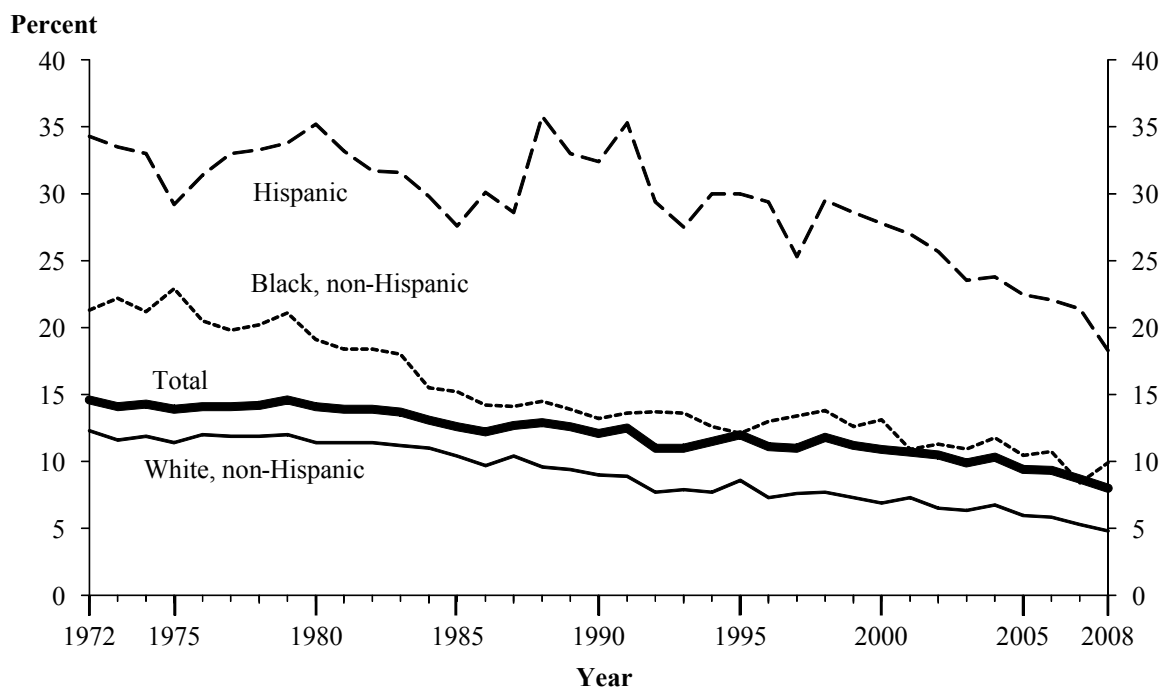
NOTE: The status dropout rate indicates the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who lack a high school credential. High school credentials include high school diplomas and equivalent credentials, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. Beginning in 2003, respondents were able to identify themselves as being two or more races. The 2003 through 2008 categories for White (non-Hispanic) and Black (non-Hispanic) contain only respondents who indicated just one race. The Hispanic category includes Hispanics of all races and racial combinations. Due to small sample sizes for some or all of the years shown in the figure, American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asians/Pacific Islanders who are not Hispanic are included in the totals but not shown separately. The Two or more races (non-Hispanic) category is also included in the total in 2003 through 2008 but not shown separately due to small sample sizes. The variability of Hispanic status rates reflects, in part, small Hispanic sample sizes in earlier years of the Current Population Survey (CPS). Beginning with 1987, estimates reflect new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Estimates beginning with 1992 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item. Estimates beginning with 1994 reflect changes due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing. For details about changes in the CPS over time, please see Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., and Chapman, C. (2004). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2005-046). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Figure 3.   Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity and sex: October 2008
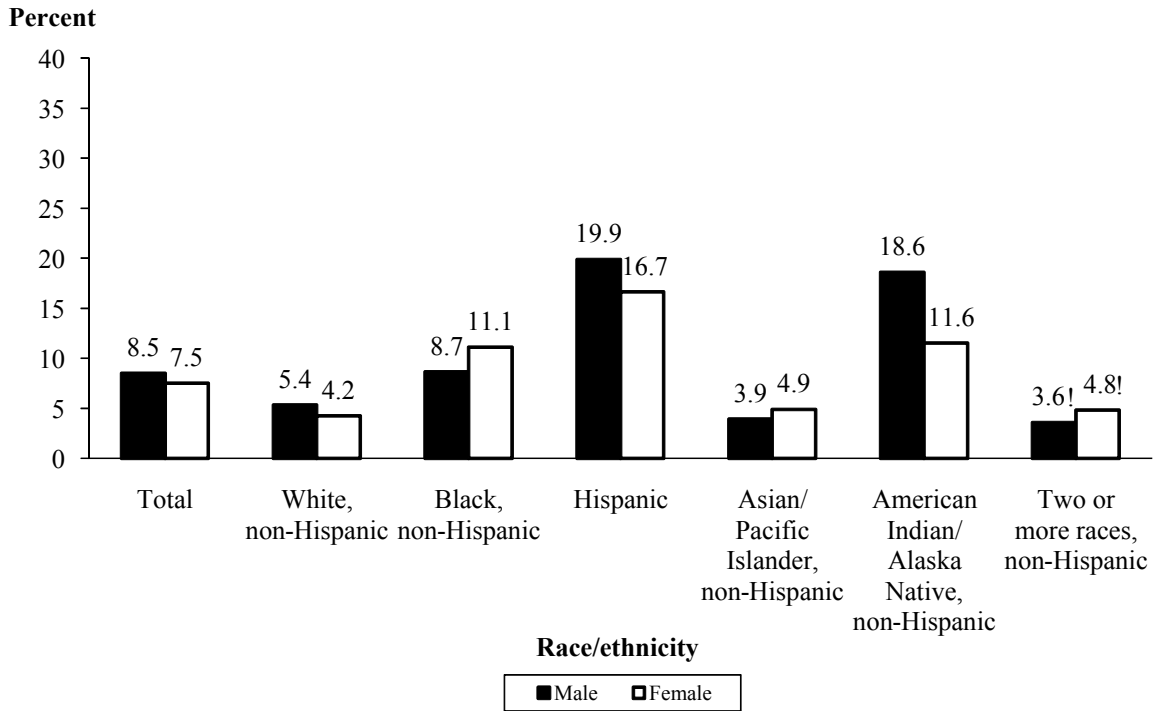
Percent

! Interpret data with caution. Due to relatively large standard errors, estimates are unstable.
NOTE: The status dropout rate indicates the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who lack a high school credential. High school credentials include high school diplomas and equivalent credentials, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. Respondents were able to identify themselves as being two or more races. The White (non-Hispanic), Black (non-Hispanic), Asian/Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic), and American Indian/Alaska Native (non-Hispanic) categories consist of individuals who considered themselves to be one race and who did not identify as Hispanic. Non-Hispanics who identified themselves as multiracial are included in the Two or more races (non-Hispanic) category. The Hispanic category consists of Hispanics of all races and racial combinations.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 2008.

Figure 4. Status completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008
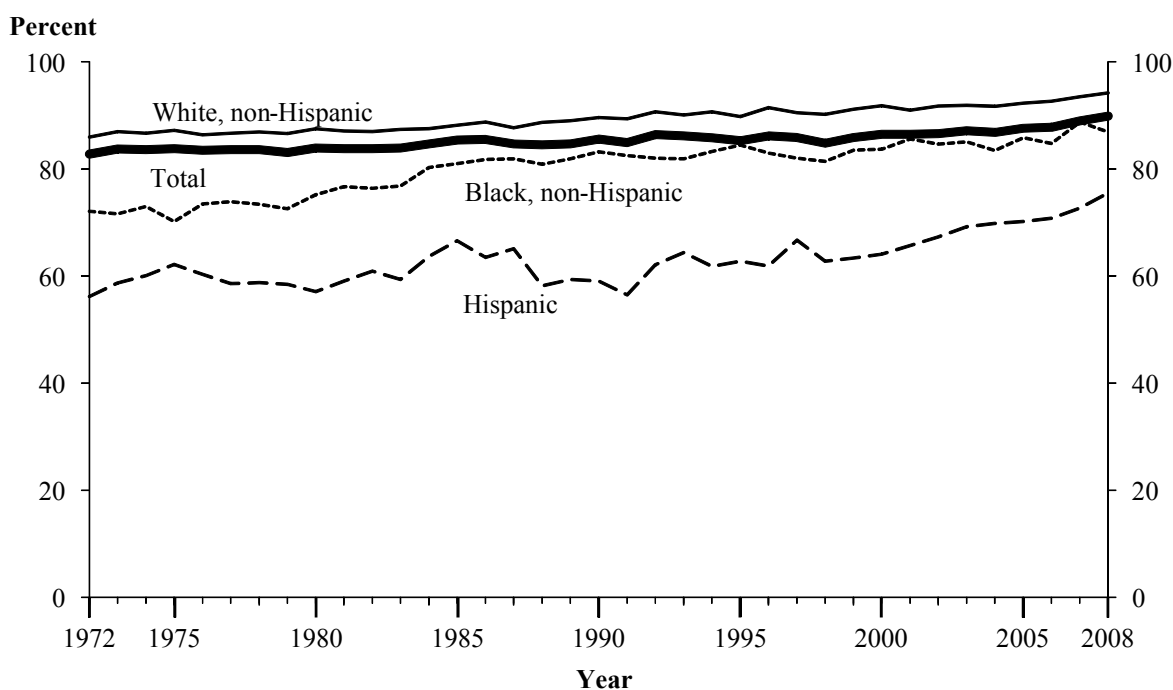
NOTE: Status completion rates measure the percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who also hold a high school diploma or equivalent credential, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. Those still enrolled in high school are excluded from the analysis. Beginning in 2003, respondents were able to identify themselves as being two or more races. The 2003 through 2008 categories for White (non-Hispanic) and Black (non-Hispanic) contain only respondents who indicated just one race. The Hispanic category includes Hispanics of all races and racial combinations. Due to small sample sizes for some or all of the years shown in the figure, American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asians/Pacific Islanders who are not Hispanic are included in the totals but not shown separately. The Two or more races (non-Hispanic) category is also included in the total in 2003 through 2008 but not shown separately due to small sample sizes. The variability of Hispanic status rates reflects, in part, small sample size of Hispanics in earlier years of the Current Population Survey (CPS). Beginning with 1987, estimates reflect new editing procedures for cases missing school enrollment item data. Estimates beginning with 1992 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item. Estimates beginning with 1994 reflect changes due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing. For details about changes in the CPS over time, please see *Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., and Chapman, C.* (2004). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2005-046). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Figure 5.   Status completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by race/ethnicity and sex: October 2008

Percent

Race/ethnicity

■ Male   □ Female
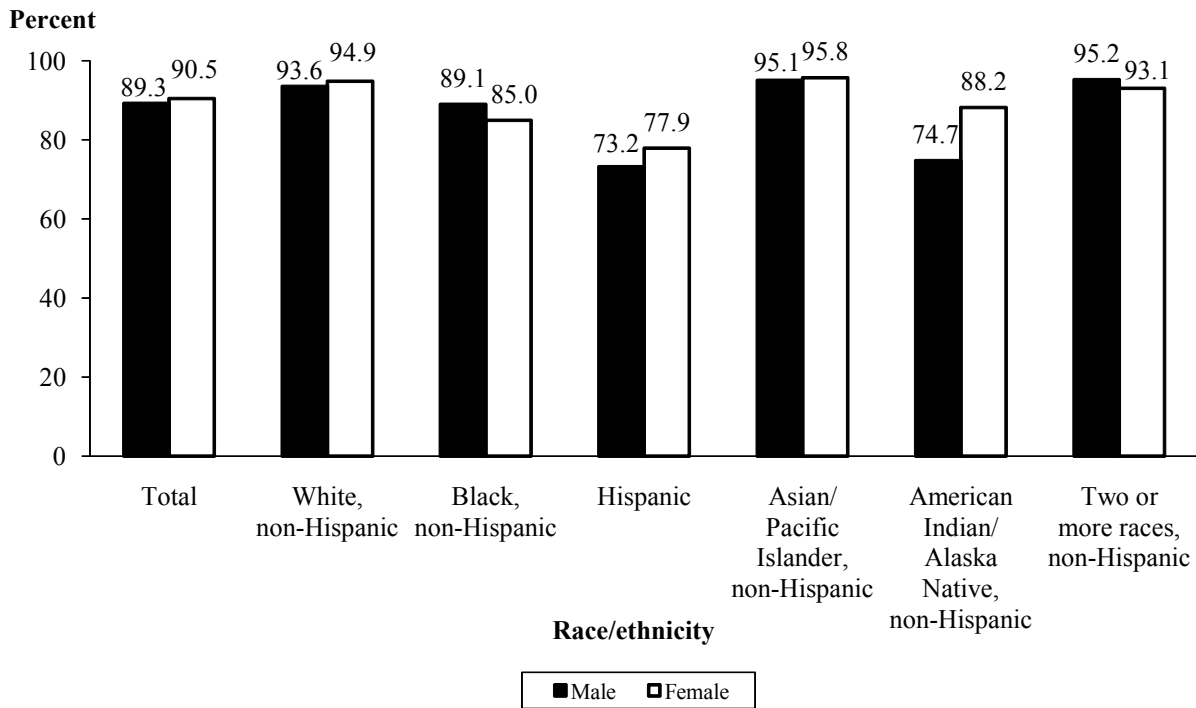
NOTE: Status completion rates measure the percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who also hold a high school diploma or equivalent credential, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. Those still enrolled in high school are excluded from the analysis. Respondents were able to identify themselves as being two or more races. The White (non-Hispanic), Black (non-Hispanic), Asian/Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic), and American Indian/ Alaska Native (non-Hispanic) categories consist of individuals who considered themselves to be one race and who did not identify as Hispanic. Non-Hispanics who identified themselves as multiracial are included in the Two or more races (non-Hispanic) category. The Hispanic category consists of Hispanics of all races and racial combinations.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 2008.

Figure 6.   Averaged freshman graduation rates of public high school students, by state: School year 2007–08
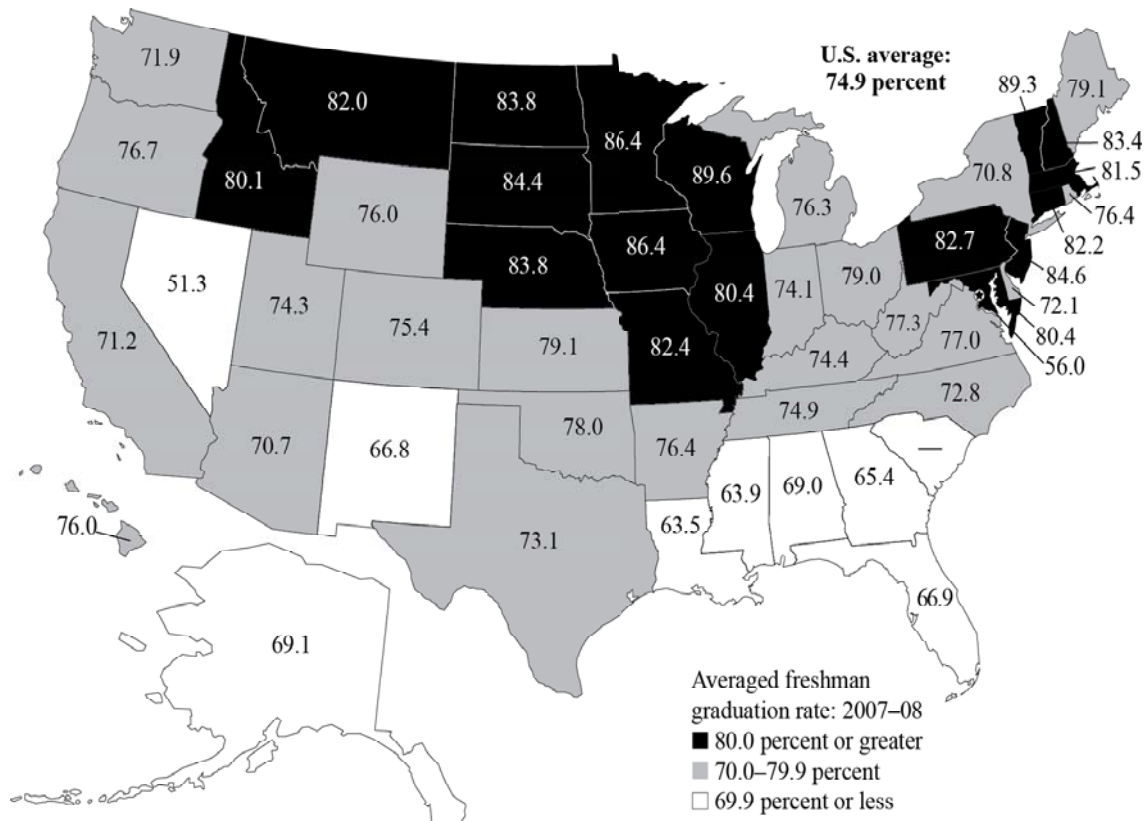
— Not available.
NOTE: The averaged freshman graduation rate (AFGR) is an estimate of the percentage of an entering freshman class graduating in 4 years. For 2007–08, it equals the total number of diploma recipients in 2007–08 divided by the average membership of the 8th-grade class in 2003–04, the 9th-grade class in 2004–05, and the 10th-grade class in 2005–06. See table 13 in this report for more information about these state rates.
SOURCE: Stillwell, R. (2010). *Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2007–08* (NCES 2010-341), table 5.

Tables

Table 1. Event dropout rates and number and distribution of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by selected characteristics: October 2008

Characteristic	Event dropout rate (percent)	Number of event dropouts (thousands)	Population enrolled[1] (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population enrolled
Total	3.5	390	11,058	100.0	100.0
Sex					
Male	3.1	174	5,625	44.6	50.9
Female	4.0	216	5,433	55.4	49.1
Race/ethnicity[2]					
White, non-Hispanic	2.3	156	6,721	40.0	60.8
Black, non-Hispanic	6.4	106	1,651	27.1	14.9
Hispanic	5.3	101	1,898	25.9	17.2
Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	4.0 !	17 !	426	4.3 !	3.9
Family income[3]					
Low income	8.7	132	1,527	34.0	13.8
Middle income	3.0	196	6,468	50.3	58.5
High income	2.0	61	3,063	15.7	27.7
Age[4]					
15–16	2.4	74	3,133	19.0	28.3
17	3.1	118	3,806	30.4	34.4
18	3.6	106	2,959	27.2	26.8
19	4.9	40	815	10.3	7.4
20–24	14.9	51	345	13.1	3.1
Recency of immigration					
Born outside the 50 states and District of Columbia					
Hispanic	8.1	35	434	9.0	3.9
Non-Hispanic	4.6	19	418	4.9	3.8
First generation[5]					
Hispanic	3.7	31	842	8.0	7.6
Non-Hispanic	1.4 !	11 !	780	2.7 !	7.1
Second generation or higher[5]					
Hispanic	5.5	35	622	8.9	5.6
Non-Hispanic	3.3	259	7,962	66.5	72.0

See notes at end of table.

Table 1. Event dropout rates and number and distribution of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by selected characteristics: October 2008—Continued

Characteristic	Event dropout rate (percent)	Number of event dropouts (thousands)	Population enrolled[1] (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population enrolled
Region					
Northeast	2.3	46	1,998	11.8	18.1
Midwest	2.7	71	2,640	18.1	23.9
South	4.3	167	3,847	42.8	34.8
West	4.1	106	2,574	27.3	23.3

! Interpret data with caution. Estimate is unstable because the standard error represents more than 33 percent of the estimate.

[1] This is an estimate of the population of 15- through 24-year-olds enrolled during the previous year in high school based on the number of students still enrolled in the current year and the number of students who either graduated or dropped out the previous year.

[2] Respondents were able to identify themselves as being two or more races. The White (non-Hispanic), Black (non-Hispanic), and Asian/Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic) categories consist of individuals who considered themselves to be one race and who did not identify as Hispanic. The Hispanic category consists of Hispanics of all races and racial combinations. Due to small sample size, the American Indians/Alaska Natives and those who identified themselves as being two or more races, but not Hispanic are included in the total but are not shown separately.

[3] Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 2008; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

[4] Age when a person dropped out may be 1 year younger, because the dropout event could occur at any time over a 12-month period.

[5] Individuals defined as "first generation" were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia, and one or both of their parents were born outside the 50 states or the District of Columbia. Individuals defined as "second generation or higher" were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia, as were both of their parents.

NOTE: The event dropout rate indicates the percentage of youth ages 15 through 24 who dropped out of grades 10–12 between one October and the next (e.g., October 2007 to October 2008). Dropping out is defined as leaving school without a high school diploma or equivalent credential, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 2008.

Table 2.   Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, and number of dropouts and population of 15- through 24-year-olds who were enrolled: October 1972 through October 2008

Year[2]	Event dropout rate (percent)	Number of event dropouts (thousands)	Population enrolled[1] (thousands)
1972	6.1	647	10,550
1973	6.3	674	10,736
1974	6.7	735	10,894
1975	5.8	631	10,875
1976	5.9	641	10,844
1977	6.5	729	11,178
1978	6.7	739	11,012
1979	6.7	745	11,044
1980	6.1	655	10,758
1981	5.9	636	10,746
1982	5.5	573	10,435
1983	5.2	531	10,146
1984	5.1	504	9,828
1985	5.2	502	9,597
1986	4.7	462	9,828
1987	4.1	405	9,819
1988	4.8	460	9,613
1989	4.5	403	9,001
1990	4.0	347	8,675
1991	4.0	348	8,700
1992	4.4	383	8,716
1993	4.5	381	8,549
1994	5.3	497	9,374
1995	5.7	544	9,509
1996	5.0	485	9,612
1997	4.6	454	9,984
1998	4.8	479	10,079
1999	5.0	519	10,464
2000	4.8	488	10,126
2001	5.0	505	10,187
2002	3.6	367	10,254
2003	4.0	429	10,698
2004	4.7	486	10,385
2005	3.8	414	10,870
2006	3.8	407	10,849

See notes at end of table.

Table 2. **Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, and number of dropouts and population of 15- through 24-year-olds who were enrolled: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued**

Year[2]	Event dropout rate (percent)	Number of event dropouts (thousands)	Population enrolled[1] (thousands)
2007	3.5	383	10,967
2008	3.5	390	11,058

[1] This is an estimate of the population of 15- through 24-year-olds enrolled during the previous year in high school based on the number of students still enrolled in the current year and the number of students who either graduated or dropped out the previous year.

[2] Estimates beginning in 1987 reflect new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Estimates beginning in 1992 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item. Estimates beginning in 1994 reflect changes due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing. For details about changes in the Current Population Survey (CPS) over time, please see Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., and Chapman, C. (2004). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2005-046). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
NOTE: The event dropout rate indicates the percentage of youth ages 15 through 24 who dropped out of grades 10–12 between one October and the next (e.g., October 2007 to October 2008). Dropping out is defined as leaving school without a high school diploma or equivalent credential, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table 3. Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008

Year[2]	Total (percent)	Sex (percent)		Race/ethnicity (percent)[1]		
		Male	Female	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	6.1	5.9	6.3	5.3	9.5	11.2
1973	6.3	6.8	5.7	5.5	9.9	10.0
1974	6.7	7.4	6.0	5.8	11.6	9.9
1975	5.8	5.4	6.1	5.0	8.7	10.9
1976	5.9	6.6	5.2	5.6	7.4	7.3
1977	6.5	6.9	6.1	6.1	8.6	7.8
1978	6.7	7.5	5.9	5.8	10.2	12.3
1979	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.0	9.9	9.8
1980	6.1	6.7	5.5	5.2	8.2	11.7
1981	5.9	6.0	5.8	4.8	9.7	10.7
1982	5.5	5.8	5.1	4.7	7.8	9.2
1983	5.2	5.8	4.7	4.4	7.0	10.1
1984	5.1	5.4	4.8	4.4	5.7	11.1
1985	5.2	5.4	5.0	4.3	7.8	9.8
1986	4.7	4.7	4.7	3.7	5.4	11.9
1987	4.1	4.3	3.8	3.5	6.4	5.4 !
1988	4.8	5.1	4.4	4.2	5.9	10.4
1989	4.5	4.5	4.5	3.5	7.8	7.8 !
1990	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.3	5.0	7.9
1991	4.0	3.8	4.2	3.2	6.0	7.3
1992	4.4	3.9	4.9	3.7	5.0	8.2
1993	4.5	4.6	4.3	3.9	5.8	6.7
1994	5.3	5.2	5.4	4.2	6.6	10.0
1995	5.7	6.2	5.3	4.5	6.4	12.4
1996	5.0	5.0	5.1	4.1	6.7	9.0
1997	4.6	5.0	4.1	3.6	5.0	9.5
1998	4.8	4.6	4.9	3.9	5.2	9.4
1999	5.0	4.6	5.4	4.0	6.5	7.8
2000	4.8	5.5	4.1	4.1	6.1	7.4
2001	5.0	5.6	4.3	4.1	6.3	8.8
2002	3.6	3.7	3.4	2.6	4.9	5.8
2003	4.0	4.2	3.8	3.2	4.8	7.1
2004	4.7	5.1	4.3	3.7	5.7	8.9
2005	3.8	4.2	3.4	2.8	7.3	5.0
2006	3.8	4.1	3.4	2.9	3.8	7.0

See notes at end of table.

Table 3.   Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued

Year[2]	Total (percent)	Sex (percent)		Race/ethnicity (percent)[1]		
		Male	Female	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
2007	3.5	3.7	3.3	2.2	4.5	6.0
2008	3.5	3.1	4.0	2.3	6.4	5.3

! Interpret data with caution. Estimate is unstable because the standard error represents more than 33 percent of the estimate.

[1] Beginning in 2003, respondents were able to identify themselves as being "more than one race." The 2003 through 2008 White, non-Hispanic and Black, non-Hispanic categories consist of individuals who considered themselves to be one race and who did not identify as Hispanic. The Hispanic category includes Hispanics of all races and racial combinations. Due to small sample sizes for some or all of the years shown in the table, American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asians/Pacific Islanders are included in the totals but not shown separately. The "more than one race" category is also included in the total in 2003 through 2008 but not shown separately due to small sample size.

[2] Estimates beginning in 1987 reflect new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Estimates beginning in 1992 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item. Estimates beginning in 1994 reflect changes due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing. For details about changes in the Current Population Survey (CPS) over time, please see Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., and Chapman, C. (2004). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2005-046). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
NOTE: The event dropout rate indicates the percentage of youth ages 15 through 24 who dropped out of grades 10–12 between one October and the next (e.g., October 2007 to October 2008). Dropping out is defined as leaving school without a high school diploma or equivalent credential, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table 4. Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by family income: October 1972 through October 2008

Year[2]	Total (percent)	Family income (percent)[1]		
		Low income	Middle income	High income
1972	6.1	14.1	6.7	2.5
1973	6.3	17.3	7.0	1.8
1974	6.7	—	—	—
1975	5.8	15.7	6.0	2.6
1976	5.9	15.4	6.8	2.1
1977	6.5	15.5	7.6	2.2
1978	6.7	17.4	7.3	3.0
1979	6.7	17.1	6.9	3.6
1980	6.1	15.8	6.4	2.5
1981	5.9	14.4	6.2	2.8
1982	5.5	15.2	5.6	1.8
1983	5.2	10.4	6.0	2.2
1984	5.1	13.9	5.1	1.8
1985	5.2	14.2	5.2	2.1
1986	4.7	10.9	5.1	1.6
1987	4.1	10.3	4.7	1.0
1988	4.8	13.7	4.7	1.3
1989	4.5	10.0	5.0	1.1
1990	4.0	9.5	4.3	1.1
1991	4.0	10.6	4.0	1.0
1992	4.4	10.9	4.4	1.3
1993	4.5	12.3	4.3	1.3
1994	5.3	13.0	5.2	2.1
1995	5.7	13.3	5.7	2.0
1996	5.0	11.1	5.1	2.1
1997	4.6	12.3	4.1	1.8
1998	4.8	12.7	3.8	2.7
1999	5.0	11.0	5.0	2.1
2000	4.8	10.0	5.2	1.6
2001	5.0	10.7	5.4	1.7
2002	3.6	7.7	3.6	1.7
2003	4.0	7.5	4.6	1.4
2004	4.7	10.4	4.6	2.5
2005	3.8	8.9	3.8	1.5
2006	3.8	9.0	3.5	2.0

See notes at end of table.

Table 4. **Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by family income: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued**

Year[2]	Total (percent)	Family income (percent)[1]		
		Low income	Middle income	High income
2007	3.5	8.8	3.5	0.9
2008	3.5	8.7	3.0	2.0

— Not available.

[1] Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for the year; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

[2] Estimates beginning in 1987 reflect new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Estimates beginning in 1992 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item. Estimates beginning in 1994 reflect changes due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing. For details about changes in the Current Population Survey (CPS) over time, please see Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., and Chapman, C. (2004). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2005-046). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
NOTE: The event dropout rate indicates the percentage of youth ages 15 through 24 who dropped out of grades 10–12 between one October and the next (e.g., October 2007 to October 2008). Dropping out is defined as leaving school without a high school diploma or equivalent credential, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table 5.   Event dropout rates for public school students in grades 9–12, by state: School years 1993–94 through 2007–08

State	1993 –94	1994 –95	1995 –96	1996 –97	1997 –98	1998 –99	1999 –2000	2000 –01	2001 –02	2002 –03	2003 –04	2004 –05	2005 –06	2006 –07	2007 –08
Reporting states[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.9	4.4	4.1
Alabama[2]	5.8	6.2	5.6	5.3	4.8	4.4	4.5	4.1	3.7	3.5	3.3	2.8	2.5	2.3	2.2
Alaska[3]	—	—	5.6	4.9	4.6	5.3	5.5	8.2	8.1	7.6	7.0	8.2	8.0	7.3	7.3
Arizona[2]	13.7	9.6	10.2	10.0	9.4	8.4	—	10.9	10.5	8.5	6.7	6.2	7.6	7.6	6.7
Arkansas	5.3	4.9	4.1	5.0	5.4	6.0	5.7	5.3	5.3	4.6	4.7	4.3	3.1	4.6	4.7
California	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.7	5.5	5.0
Colorado	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.5	5.4	7.8	7.8	6.9	6.4
Connecticut	4.8	4.9	4.8	3.9	3.5	3.3	3.1	3.0	2.6	2.1	‡	‡	2.0	2.1	2.8
Delaware	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.7	4.1	4.1	4.2	6.2	5.5	6.1	5.3	5.5	5.5	6.0
District of Columbia	9.5	10.6	—	—	12.8	8.2	7.2	—	—	—	—	—	‡	7.1	5.5
Florida[2]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4.4	3.7	3.4	3.4	3.5	4.1	3.8	3.3
Georgia	8.7	9.0	8.5	8.2	7.3	7.4	7.2	7.2	6.5	5.8	5.4	5.6	5.2	4.6	4.3
Hawaii[3]	—	—	—	—	5.2	5.3	5.3	5.7	5.1	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.7	5.4	5.4
Idaho[3]	8.5	9.2	8.0	7.2	6.7	6.9	—	5.6	3.9	3.9	3.1	3.0	2.7	2.6	2.0
Illinois[2]	6.8	6.6	6.4	6.6	6.9	6.5	6.2	6.0	6.4	5.7	5.3	4.5	4.0	4.0	5.2
Indiana	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2.3	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.9	2.7	1.7
Iowa	3.2	3.5	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.4	1.9	‡	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.9
Kansas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.2	3.1	2.4	2.2	2.1	2.4	2.7	2.5
Kentucky	—	—	—	—	5.2	4.9	5.0	4.6	4.0	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.0	2.8
Louisiana[4]	4.7	3.5	11.6	11.6	11.4	10.0	9.2	8.3	7.0	7.5	7.9	7.5	8.4	7.4	7.5
Maine	3.1	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.1	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.8	5.4	5.3	4.4
Maryland[2]	5.2	5.2	4.8	4.9	4.3	4.4	4.1	4.1	3.9	3.6	4.1	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.6
Massachusetts	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.5	3.4	—	3.3	3.7	3.8	3.4	3.8	3.4
Michigan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4.5	4.6	3.9	3.5	7.4	6.2
Minnesota	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.5	4.9	4.5	4.3	4.0	3.8	3.8	‡	‡	3.1	3.0	2.8
Mississippi	6.1	6.4	6.2	6.0	5.8	5.0	4.9	4.6	3.9	3.7	2.9	2.8	3.0	4.3	4.6
Missouri	7.0	7.0	6.5	5.8	5.2	4.8	4.4	4.2	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.7	4.1	3.7	4.9
Montana	—	—	5.6	5.1	4.4	4.5	4.2	4.2	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.7	3.7	5.2
Nebraska	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.2	3.1	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.5
Nevada	9.8	10.3	9.6	10.2	10.1	7.9	6.2	5.2	6.4	6.1	6.0	5.8	7.7	4.5	5.1
New Hampshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5.4	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.5	3.2	3.2	3.0
New Jersey[2]	4.3	4.0	4.1	3.7	3.5	3.1	3.1	2.8	2.5	1.8	‡	‡	1.7	2.0	1.7
New Mexico	8.1	8.5	8.3	7.5	7.1	6.7	6.0	5.3	5.2	4.7	5.2	4.2	5.5	6.1	5.2
New York[3]	—	—	—	—	3.2	4.0	4.1	3.8	7.1	5.5	5.6	5.7	4.4	5.3	3.9
North Carolina	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6.3	5.7	5.2	5.2	5.2	‡	5.7	5.2
North Dakota	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.8	2.4	2.7	2.2	2.0	2.2	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.3	2.4

See notes at end of table.

Table 5. **Event dropout rates for public school students in grades 9–12, by state: School years 1993–94 through 2007–08—Continued**

State	1993 –94	1994 –95	1995 –96	1996 –97	1997 –98	1998 –99	1999 –2000	2000 –01	2001 –02	2002 –03	2003 –04	2004 –05	2005 –06	2006 –07	2007 –08
Ohio[3]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.1	3.0	3.3	3.5	4.1	4.5	4.3
Oklahoma[3]	4.6	5.8	5.7	5.9	5.8	5.2	5.4	5.2	4.4	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.1
Oregon	7.3	7.1	7.0	—	6.8	6.3	6.2	5.3	4.9	4.4	—	—	4.6	4.6	3.8
Pennsylvania	3.8	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.7	4.0	3.6	3.3	3.2	2.9	2.9	2.8	—	2.6
Rhode Island	4.9	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.9	4.5	4.8	5.0	4.3	4.0	3.4	4.1	4.1	5.8	5.3
South Carolina	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.3	—	3.9	3.9
South Dakota[3]	5.3	5.3	5.7	4.5	3.1	4.5	3.5	3.9	2.8	3.3	4.2	4.4	4.4	3.9	2.3
Tennessee[2]	4.8	5.0	4.9	5.1	5.0	4.6	4.2	4.3	3.8	3.2	3.3	2.7	2.8	3.1	3.9
Texas	—	—	—	—	—	—	5.0	4.2	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.3	4.0	4.0
Utah	3.1	3.5	4.4	4.5	5.2	4.7	4.1	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.3	3.1	4.2
Vermont[2]	4.8	4.7	5.3	5.0	5.2	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.0	3.5	2.8	2.6	‡	—	—
Virginia[3]	4.8	5.2	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.5	3.9	3.5	2.9	3.0	2.8	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.7
Washington	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7.1	6.2	6.5	4.5	5.6	5.1	5.7
West Virginia	3.8	4.2	3.8	4.1	4.1	4.9	4.2	4.2	3.7	3.7	4.3	4.1	3.9	4.0	4.4
Wisconsin[3]	3.1	2.7	2.4	2.7	2.8	1.8	2.6	2.3	1.9	2.0	‡	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.3
Wyoming[3]	6.5	6.7	5.7	6.2	6.4	5.1	5.7	6.4	5.8	4.5	4.6	4.8	5.7	5.1	5.0

— Not available. These states do not report dropouts that are consistent with the NCES definition.

‡ Reporting standards not met. (Too few cases for a reliable estimate.)

[1] Average event dropout rate for all reporting states. Prior to 2002–03, too few states reported to calculate a reporting states total.

[2] These states used an alternative calendar for each year shown, reporting students who drop out between one July and the next. The rates from both calendar approaches are comparable (see Winglee et al. 2000).

[3] The following states reported data using the alternative calendar of one July to the next in the years indicated: Alaska (1995–96 and 1999–2000 through 2001–02); Hawaii (2000–01); Idaho (1993–94 through 1998–99); New York (1998–99 and 2000–01 through 2003–04); Ohio (1993–94); Oklahoma (1993–94 through 2000–01); South Dakota (1993–94 through 1998–99); Virginia (1993–94 through 1999–2000); Wisconsin (1993–94 through 1996–97 and 1998–99); and Wyoming (1993–94).

[4] Effective in the 1995–96 school year, Louisiana changed its dropout data collection from school-level aggregate counts reported to districts to an individual student-record system. The apparent increase in the dropout rate is partly due to the resulting increased ability to track students.

NOTE: These event dropout rates measure the percentage of public school students in grades 9–12 who dropped out of school between one October and the next (e.g., October 2007 to October 2008). Data are reported by states to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. The Common Core of Data (CCD) includes public school students only. Some estimates differ from those in previously published reports because of updates to the estimates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.) *Documentation to the NCES Common Core of Data Local Education Agency Universe Dropout and Completion Data File: School Years 1991–92 Through 1996–97*, tables 2a, 2b, 2c, and 2d; Sable, J., and Naum, J. (2004a), *Documentation to the NCES Common Core of Data Local Education Agency Universe Survey Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 1997–98* (NCES 2001-302R), table E-1; Sable, J., and Naum, J. (2004b). *Documentation to the NCES Common Core of Data Local Education Agency Universe Survey Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 1998–99* (NCES 2002-310R), table E-3; Sable, J., and Naum, J. (2004c). *Documentation to the NCES Common Core of Data Local Education Agency Universe Survey Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 1999–2000* (NCES 2002-384R), table E-3; Sable, J., and Naum, J. (2004d). *Documentation to the NCES Common Core of Data Local Education Agency Universe Survey Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2000–01* (NCES 2002-315R), table E-3; Sable, J., Naum, J., and Thomas, J.M. (2004). *Documentation to the NCES Common Core of Data Local Education Agency Universe Survey Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2001–02* (NCES 2005-349), table E-2; Chapman, C., and Hoffman, L. (2007). *Event Dropout Rates for Public School Students in Grades 9–12: 2002–03 and 2003–04* (NCES 2007-026), table 1; Stillwell, R. and Hoffman, L. (2009). *Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2005–06* (NCES 2008-353rev), table 7; Stillwell, R. (2009). *Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2006–07* (NCES 2010-313), table 4; Stillwell, R. (2010). *Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2007–08* (NCES 2010-341), table 7.

Table 6. **Status dropout rates and number and distribution of dropouts of 16- through 24-year-olds, by selected characteristics: October 2008**

Characteristic	Status dropout rate (percent)	Number of status dropouts (thousands)	Population (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	8.0	3,010	37,569	100.0	100.0
Sex					
Male	8.5	1,606	18,948	53.4	50.4
Female	7.5	1,403	18,621	46.6	49.6
Race/ethnicity[1]					
White, non-Hispanic	4.8	1,103	22,956	36.7	61.1
Black, non-Hispanic	9.9	535	5,387	17.8	14.3
Hispanic	18.3	1,232	6,721	40.9	17.9
Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	4.4	67	1,504	2.2	4.0
American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic	14.6	43	294	1.4	0.8
Two or more races, non-Hispanic	4.2	30	706	1.0	1.9
Age					
16	2.2	93	4,269	3.1	11.4
17	5.0	216	4,349	7.2	11.6
18	7.8	337	4,332	11.2	11.5
19	9.9	413	4,160	13.7	11.1
20–24	9.5	1,951	20,459	64.8	54.5
Recency of immigration					
Born outside the 50 states and District of Columbia					
Hispanic	32.8	766	2,334	25.4	6.2
Non-Hispanic	5.5	104	1,908	3.5	5.1
First generation[2]					
Hispanic	10.5	254	2,419	8.4	6.4
Non-Hispanic	3.1	72	2,326	2.4	6.2
Second generation or higher[2]					
Hispanic	10.8	213	1,968	7.1	5.2
Non-Hispanic	6.0	1,602	26,615	53.2	70.8

See notes at end of table.

Table 6. **Status dropout rates and number and distribution of dropouts of 16- through 24-year-olds, by selected characteristics: October 2008—Continued**

Characteristic	Status dropout rate (percent)	Number of status dropouts (thousands)	Population (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Region					
Northeast	5.6	377	6,708	12.5	17.9
Midwest	7.5	631	8,414	21.0	22.4
South	8.8	1,191	13,496	39.6	35.9
West	9.1	811	8,949	27.0	23.8

[1] Respondents were able to identify themselves as being two or more races. The White (non-Hispanic), Black (non-Hispanic), Asian/Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic), and American Indian/Alaska Native (non-Hispanic) categories consist of individuals who considered themselves to be one race and who did not identify as Hispanic. Non-Hispanics who identified themselves as multiracial are included in the Two or more races (non-Hispanic) category. The Hispanic category consists of Hispanics of all races and racial combinations.

[2] Individuals defined as "first generation" were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia, and one or both of their parents were born outside the 50 states or the District of Columbia. Individuals defined as "second generation or higher" were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia, as were both of their parents.

NOTE: The status dropout rate indicates the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who lack a high school credential. High school credentials include high school diplomas and equivalent credentials, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 2008.

Table 7. Status dropout rates, number of status dropouts, and population of 16- through 24-year-olds: October 1972 through October 2008

Year[1]	Status dropout rate (percent)	Number of status dropouts (thousands)	Population (thousands)
1972	14.6	4,769	32,643
1973	14.1	4,717	33,430
1974	14.3	4,847	33,968
1975	13.9	4,823	34,700
1976	14.1	4,980	35,222
1977	14.1	5,031	35,658
1978	14.2	5,113	35,931
1979	14.6	5,264	36,131
1980	14.1	5,085	36,143
1981	13.9	5,143	36,945
1982	13.9	5,056	36,452
1983	13.7	4,905	35,884
1984	13.1	4,626	35,204
1985	12.6	4,325	34,382
1986	12.2	4,141	33,945
1987	12.7	4,252	33,452
1988	12.9	4,230	32,893
1989	12.6	4,038	32,007
1990	12.1	3,797	31,443
1991	12.5	3,881	31,171
1992	11.0	3,410	30,944
1993	11.0	3,396	30,845
1994	11.5	3,727	32,560
1995	12.0	3,876	32,379
1996	11.1	3,611	32,452
1997	11.0	3,624	32,960
1998	11.8	3,942	33,445
1999	11.2	3,829	34,173
2000	10.9	3,776	34,568
2001	10.7	3,774	35,195
2002	10.5	3,721	35,495
2003	9.9	3,552	36,017
2004	10.3	3,766	36,504
2005	9.4	3,458	36,761
2006	9.3	3,462	37,047

See notes at end of table.

Table 7. Status dropout rates, number of status dropouts, and population of 16- through 24-year-olds: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued

Year[1]	Status dropout rate (percent)	Number of status dropouts (thousands)	Population (thousands)
2007	8.7	3,278	37,480
2008	8.0	3,010	37,569

[1] Estimates beginning in 1987 reflect new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Estimates beginning in 1992 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item. Estimates beginning in 1994 reflect changes due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing. For details about changes in the Current Population Survey (CPS) over time, please see Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., and Chapman, C. (2004). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2005-046). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
NOTE: The status dropout rate indicates the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who lack a high school credential. High school credentials include high school diplomas and equivalent credentials, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table 8.   Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008

Year[2]	Total (percent)	Sex (percent)		Race/ethnicity (percent)[1]		
		Male	Female	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	14.6	14.1	15.1	12.3	21.3	34.3
1973	14.1	13.7	14.5	11.6	22.2	33.5
1974	14.3	14.2	14.4	11.9	21.2	33.0
1975	13.9	13.3	14.5	11.4	22.9	29.2
1976	14.1	14.1	14.2	12.0	20.5	31.4
1977	14.1	14.5	13.8	11.9	19.8	33.0
1978	14.2	14.6	13.9	11.9	20.2	33.3
1979	14.6	15.0	14.2	12.0	21.1	33.8
1980	14.1	15.1	13.1	11.4	19.1	35.2
1981	13.9	15.1	12.8	11.4	18.4	33.2
1982	13.9	14.5	13.3	11.4	18.4	31.7
1983	13.7	14.9	12.5	11.2	18.0	31.6
1984	13.1	14.0	12.3	11.0	15.5	29.8
1985	12.6	13.4	11.8	10.4	15.2	27.6
1986	12.2	13.1	11.4	9.7	14.2	30.1
1987	12.7	13.3	12.2	10.4	14.1	28.6
1988	12.9	13.5	12.2	9.6	14.5	35.8
1989	12.6	13.6	11.7	9.4	13.9	33.0
1990	12.1	12.3	11.8	9.0	13.2	32.4
1991	12.5	13.0	11.9	8.9	13.6	35.3
1992	11.0	11.3	10.7	7.7	13.7	29.4
1993	11.0	11.2	10.9	7.9	13.6	27.5
1994	11.5	12.3	10.6	7.7	12.6	30.0
1995	12.0	12.2	11.7	8.6	12.1	30.0
1996	11.1	11.4	10.9	7.3	13.0	29.4
1997	11.0	11.9	10.1	7.6	13.4	25.3
1998	11.8	13.3	10.3	7.7	13.8	29.5
1999	11.2	11.9	10.5	7.3	12.6	28.6
2000	10.9	12.0	9.9	6.9	13.1	27.8
2001	10.7	12.2	9.3	7.3	10.9	27.0
2002	10.5	11.8	9.2	6.5	11.3	25.7
2003	9.9	11.3	8.4	6.3	10.9	23.5
2004	10.3	11.6	9.0	6.8	11.8	23.8
2005	9.4	10.8	8.0	6.0	10.4	22.4
2006	9.3	10.3	8.3	5.8	10.7	22.1

See notes at end of table.

Table 8. **Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued**

Year[2]	Total (percent)	Sex (percent)		Race/ethnicity (percent)[1]		
		Male	Female	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
2007	8.7	9.8	7.7	5.3	8.4	21.4
2008	8.0	8.5	7.5	4.8	9.9	18.3

[1] Beginning in 2003, respondents were able to identify themselves as being "more than one race." The 2003 through 2008 White, non-Hispanic and Black, non-Hispanic categories consist of individuals who considered themselves to be one race and who did not identify as Hispanic. The Hispanic category includes Hispanics of all races and racial combinations. Due to small sample sizes for some or all of the years shown in the table, American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asians/Pacific Islanders are included in the totals but not shown separately. The "more than one race" category is also included in the total in 2003 through 2008 but not shown separately due to small sample size.

[2] Estimates beginning in 1987 reflect new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Estimates beginning in 1992 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item. Estimates beginning in 1994 reflect changes due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing. For details about changes in the Current Population Survey (CPS) over time, please see Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., and Chapman, C. (2004). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2005-046). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
NOTE: The status dropout rate indicates the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who lack a high school credential. High school credentials include high school diplomas and equivalent credentials, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table 9. Status completion rates, and number and distribution of completers ages 18–24 not currently enrolled in high school or below, by selected characteristics: October 2008

Characteristic	Completion rate (percent)	Number of completers (thousands)	Population (thousands)	Percent of all completers	Percent of population
Total	89.9	24,518	27,270	100.0	100.0
Sex					
Male	89.3	12,169	13,626	49.6	50.0
Female	90.5	12,349	13,644	50.4	50.0
Race/ethnicity[1]					
White, non-Hispanic	94.2	16,018	16,998	65.3	62.3
Black, non-Hispanic	86.9	3,254	3,744	13.3	13.7
Hispanic	75.5	3,606	4,773	14.7	17.5
Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	95.5	1,045	1,094	4.3	4.0
American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic	82.5	177	215	0.7	0.8
Two or more races, non-Hispanic	94.2	419	445	1.7	1.6
Age					
18–19	89.0	6,237	7,010	25.4	25.7
20–21	91.0	7,235	7,951	29.5	29.2
22–24	89.7	11,047	12,308	45.1	45.1
Recency of immigration					
Born outside the 50 states and District of Columbia					
Hispanic	59.8	1,104	1,846	4.5	6.8
Non-Hispanic	93.7	1,442	1,539	5.9	5.6
First generation[2]					
Hispanic	85.1	1,349	1,584	5.5	5.8
Non-Hispanic	96.2	1,579	1,642	6.4	6.0
Second generation or higher[2]					
Hispanic	85.8	1,153	1,343	4.7	4.9
Non-Hispanic	92.6	17,892	19,315	73.0	70.8

See notes at end of table.

Table 9. Status completion rates, and number and distribution of completers ages 18–24 not currently enrolled in high school or below, by selected characteristics: October 2008—Continued

Characteristic	Completion rate (percent)	Number of completers (thousands)	Population (thousands)	Percent of all completers	Percent of population
Region					
Northeast	92.7	4,530	4,888	18.5	17.9
Midwest	90.3	5,396	5,977	22.0	21.9
South	89.1	8,737	9,804	35.6	36.0
West	88.7	5,854	6,601	23.9	24.2

[1] Respondents were able to identify themselves as being two or more races. The White (non-Hispanic), Black (non-Hispanic), Asian/Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic), and American Indian/Alaska Native (non-Hispanic) categories consist of individuals who considered themselves to be one race and who did not identify as Hispanic. Non-Hispanics who identified themselves as multiracial are included in the Two or more races (non-Hispanic) category. The Hispanic category consists of Hispanics of all races and racial combinations.

[2] Individuals defined as "first generation" were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia, and one or both of their parents were born outside the 50 states or the District of Columbia. Individuals defined as "second generation or higher" were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia, as were both of their parents.

NOTE: Status completion rates measure the percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who also hold a high school diploma or equivalent credential, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. Those still enrolled in high school are excluded from the analysis. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 2008.

Table 10.   Status completion rates, number of completers, and population of 18- through 24-year-olds: October 1972 through October 2008

Year[1]	Completion rate (percent)	Number of completers (thousands)	Population (thousands)
1972	82.8	19,623	23,688
1973	83.7	20,377	24,349
1974	83.6	20,724	24,794
1975	83.8	21,326	25,436
1976	83.5	21,677	25,953
1977	83.6	22,008	26,321
1978	83.6	22,308	26,697
1979	83.1	22,421	26,982
1980	83.9	22,746	27,122
1981	83.8	23,342	27,863
1982	83.8	23,290	27,790
1983	83.9	22,988	27,399
1984	84.7	22,871	27,014
1985	85.4	22,349	26,168
1986	85.5	21,766	25,453
1987	84.7	21,071	24,869
1988	84.5	20,838	24,650
1989	84.7	20,420	24,102
1990	85.6	20,269	23,689
1991	84.9	19,831	23,369
1992	86.4	19,874	23,004
1993	86.2	19,682	22,842
1994	85.8	20,538	23,946
1995	85.3	20,102	23,571
1996	86.2	20,074	23,277
1997	85.9	20,241	23,569
1998	84.8	20,451	24,113
1999	85.9	21,091	24,540
2000	86.5	21,743	25,138
2001	86.5	22,084	25,543
2002	86.6	22,249	25,697
2003	87.1	22,508	25,831
2004	86.8	22,991	26,476
2005	87.6	23,010	26,270
2006	87.8	23,331	26,568

See notes at end of table.

Table 10. Status completion rates, number of completers, and population of 18- through 24-year-olds: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued

Year[1]	Completion rate (percent)	Number of completers (thousands)	Population (thousands)
2007	89.0	24,100	27,086
2008	89.9	24,518	27,270

[1] Estimates beginning in 1987 reflect new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Estimates beginning in 1992 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item. Estimates beginning in 1994 reflect changes due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing. For details about changes in the Current Population Survey (CPS) over time, please see Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., and Chapman, C. (2004). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2005-046). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
NOTE: Status completion rates measure the percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who also hold a high school diploma or equivalent credential, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. Those still enrolled in high school are excluded from the analysis.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table 11. Status completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008

Year[2]	Total (percent)	Sex (percent)		Race/ethnicity (percent)[1]		
		Male	Female	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	82.8	83.0	82.7	86.0	72.1	56.2
1973	83.7	84.0	83.4	87.0	71.6	58.7
1974	83.6	83.4	83.8	86.7	73.0	60.1
1975	83.8	84.1	83.6	87.2	70.2	62.2
1976	83.5	83.0	84.0	86.4	73.5	60.3
1977	83.6	82.8	84.4	86.7	73.9	58.6
1978	83.6	82.8	84.2	86.9	73.4	58.8
1979	83.1	82.1	84.0	86.6	72.6	58.5
1980	83.9	82.3	85.3	87.5	75.2	57.1
1981	83.8	82.0	85.4	87.1	76.7	59.1
1982	83.8	82.7	84.9	87.0	76.4	60.9
1983	83.9	82.1	85.6	87.4	76.8	59.4
1984	84.7	83.3	85.9	87.5	80.3	63.7
1985	85.4	84.0	86.7	88.2	81.0	66.6
1986	85.5	84.2	86.7	88.8	81.8	63.5
1987	84.7	84.0	85.8	87.7	81.9	65.1
1988	84.5	83.2	85.8	88.7	80.9	58.2
1989	84.7	83.2	86.2	89.0	81.9	59.4
1990	85.6	85.1	86.0	89.6	83.2	59.1
1991	84.9	83.8	85.9	89.4	82.5	56.5
1992	86.4	85.3	87.4	90.7	82.0	62.1
1993	86.2	85.4	86.9	90.1	81.9	64.4
1994	85.8	84.5	87.0	90.7	83.3	61.8
1995	85.3	84.3	85.7	89.8	84.5	62.8
1996	86.2	85.7	86.8	91.5	83.0	61.9
1997	85.9	84.6	87.2	90.5	82.0	66.7
1998	84.8	82.6	87.0	90.2	81.4	62.8
1999	85.9	84.8	87.1	91.2	83.5	63.4
2000	86.5	84.9	88.1	91.8	83.7	64.1
2001	86.5	84.6	88.3	91.0	85.6	65.7
2002	86.6	84.8	88.4	91.8	84.7	67.3
2003	87.1	85.1	89.2	91.9	85.0	69.2
2004	86.8	84.9	88.8	91.7	83.4	69.8
2005	87.6	85.4	89.8	92.3	85.9	70.2
2006	87.8	86.5	89.1	92.6	84.8	70.8

See notes at end of table.

Table 11. Status completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued

Year[2]	Total (percent)	Sex (percent)		Race/ethnicity (percent)[1]		
		Male	Female	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
2007	89.0	87.4	90.6	93.5	88.8	72.7
2008	89.9	89.3	90.5	94.2	86.9	75.5

[1] Beginning in 2003, respondents were able to identify themselves as being "more than one race." The 2003 through 2008 White, non-Hispanic and Black, non-Hispanic categories consist of individuals who considered themselves to be one race and who did not identify themselves as Hispanic. The Hispanic category includes Hispanics of all races and racial combinations. Due to small sample sizes for some or all of the years shown in the table, American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asians/Pacific Islanders are included in the totals but not shown separately. The "more than one race" category is also included in the total in 2003 through 2008 but not shown separately due to small sample size.

[2] Estimates beginning in 1987 reflect new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Estimates beginning in 1992 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item. Estimates beginning in 1994 reflect changes due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing. For details about changes in the Current Population Survey (CPS) over time, please see Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., and Chapman, C. (2004). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (NCES 2005-046). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
NOTE: Status completion rates measure the percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who also hold a high school diploma or equivalent credential, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. Those still enrolled in high school are excluded from the analysis.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table 12. Averaged freshman graduation rate of public high school students, by state: School year 2007–08

State	Averaged freshman graduation rate (percent)	Regular diplomas, school year 2007–08	Estimated first-time 9th-graders, school year 2004–05[1]	Grade 10 membership, school year 2005–06	Grade 9 membership, school year 2004–05	Grade 8 membership, school year 2003–04
Reporting states[2,3]	74.9	2,964,371	3,958,987	3,841,810	4,247,085	3,788,070
Alabama	69.0	41,346	59,954	55,630	64,569	59,663
Alaska	69.1	7,855	11,370	11,035	11,934	11,140
Arizona	70.7	61,667	87,280	92,763	92,275	76,801
Arkansas	76.4	28,725	37,612	37,390	38,359	37,087
California	71.2	374,561	526,251	519,879	554,174	504,701
Colorado	75.4	46,082	61,102	59,962	64,446	58,897
Connecticut	82.2	38,419	46,766	45,266	49,177	45,854
Delaware	72.1	7,388	10,250	9,279	11,249	10,222
District of Columbia	56.0	3,352	5,986	5,775	6,700	5,484
Florida	66.9	149,046	222,755	212,560	250,263	205,443
Georgia	65.4	83,505	127,610	120,058	142,079	120,694
Hawaii	76.0	11,613	15,278	14,292	16,991	14,549
Idaho	80.1	16,567	20,681	20,609	21,344	20,091
Illinois	80.4	135,143	168,121	165,513	178,280	160,570
Indiana	74.1	61,901	83,516	81,090	87,829	81,629
Iowa	86.4	34,573	40,022	40,151	41,196	38,719
Kansas	79.1	30,737	38,863	38,252	40,557	37,781
Kentucky	74.4	39,339	52,910	50,700	57,419	50,611
Louisiana	63.5	34,401	54,162	43,292	59,182	60,013
Maine[3]	79.1	14,350	16,672	15,926	16,766	17,323
Maryland	80.4	59,171	73,556	70,031	81,270	69,368
Massachusetts	81.5	65,197	79,984	76,688	84,628	78,635
Michigan	76.3	115,183	150,960	146,291	163,124	143,465
Minnesota	86.4	60,409	69,904	71,051	70,751	67,909
Mississippi	63.9	24,795	38,812	35,868	41,261	39,306
Missouri	82.4	61,717	74,922	73,142	78,748	72,876
Montana	82.0	10,396	12,673	12,344	13,238	12,438
Nebraska	83.8	20,035	23,906	23,713	25,214	22,792
Nevada	51.3	17,149	33,403	32,665	36,105	31,440
New Hampshire	83.4	14,982	17,974	17,529	18,644	17,750
New Jersey	84.6	94,994	112,326	111,155	116,702	109,120
New Mexico	66.8	18,264	27,355	26,075	30,134	25,857
New York	70.8	176,310	248,854	243,322	273,438	229,801
North Carolina	72.8	83,307	114,447	108,210	126,414	108,717
North Dakota	83.8	6,999	8,351	8,261	8,547	8,245

See notes at end of table.

Table 12. **Averaged freshman graduation rate of public high school students, by state: School year 2007–08 —Continued**

State	Averaged freshman graduation rate (percent)	Regular diplomas, school year 2007–08	Estimated first-time 9th-graders, school year 2004–05[1]	Grade 10 membership, school year 2005–06	Grade 9 membership, school year 2004–05	Grade 8 membership, school year 2003–04
Ohio	79.0	120,758	152,906	145,999	165,656	147,064
Oklahoma	78.0	37,630	48,270	46,834	50,404	47,572
Oregon	76.7	34,949	45,549	44,921	46,785	44,941
Pennsylvania	82.7	130,298	157,530	157,058	164,389	151,144
Rhode Island	76.4	10,347	13,539	13,007	14,591	13,018
South Carolina	—	—	56,742	51,277	65,564	53,384
South Dakota	84.4	8,582	10,168	10,046	10,377	10,082
Tennessee	74.9	57,486	76,789	74,717	82,168	73,481
Texas	73.1	252,121	344,696	323,524	386,182	324,381
Utah	74.3	28,167	37,894	38,319	38,069	37,295
Vermont	89.3	7,392	8,275	8,152	8,552	8,121
Virginia	77.0	77,369	100,512	96,546	109,375	95,615
Washington	71.9	61,625	85,674	84,945	89,802	82,274
West Virginia	77.3	17,489	22,623	21,415	24,199	22,256
Wisconsin	89.6	65,183	72,748	73,409	76,173	68,663
Wyoming	76.0	5,494	7,226	7,150	7,355	7,173

— Not available.

[1] First-time 9th-graders were estimated as the average of student membership in grades 8, 9, and 10 in 3 consecutive years.

[2] U.S. totals include any of the 50 states and the District of Columbia that reported all data elements.

[3] Maine reported 1,161 diplomas that were awarded to students attending private high schools that received a majority of their funding from public sources. These 1,161 diplomas were included in Maine and the reporting states counts but were not included in the averaged freshman graduation rate (AFGR) calculations for the state and for the reporting states totals. The diploma counts used to calculate the AFGR for Maine and for the United States were 13,189 and 2,964,125, respectively.
NOTE: The averaged freshman graduation rate (AFGR) is an estimate of the percentage of an entering freshman class graduating in 4 years. For 2007–08, it equals the total number of diploma recipients in 2007–08 divided by the average membership of the 8th-grade class in 2003–04, the 9th-grade class in 2004–05, and the 10th-grade class in 2005–06. Ungraded students were allocated to individual grades proportionally to the reported enrollments by grade. The sum of the estimated first-time 9th-graders is not equal to the total because the sum of averages is not equal to the average of sums.
SOURCE: Stillwell, R. (2010). *Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2007–08* (NCES 2010-341), table 1.

Table 13. Averaged freshman graduation rates of public high school students and change in rates, by state: School years 2001–02 through 2007–08

State	Averaged freshman graduation rate (percent)							Change in rates from 2006–07 to 2007–08
	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	
Reporting states[1]	72.6	73.9	75.0 [2]	74.7	73.2 [3]	73.9	74.9 [4]	1.0
Alabama	62.1	64.7	65.0	65.9	66.2	67.1	69.0	1.9
Alaska	65.9	68.0	67.2	64.1	66.5	69.1	69.1	0.0
Arizona	74.7	75.9	66.8	84.7	70.5	69.6	70.7	1.1
Arkansas	74.8	76.6	76.8	75.7	80.4	74.4	76.4	2.0
California	72.7	74.1	73.9	74.6	69.2	70.7	71.2	0.5
Colorado	74.7	76.4	78.7	76.7	75.5	76.6	75.4	-1.2
Connecticut	79.7	80.9	80.7	80.9	80.9	81.8	82.2	0.4
Delaware	69.5	73.0	72.9	73.1	76.3	71.9	72.1	0.2
District of Columbia	68.4	59.6	68.2	68.8	‡	54.9	56.0	1.1
Florida	63.4	66.7	66.4	64.6	63.6	65.0	66.9	1.9
Georgia	61.1	60.8	61.2	61.7	62.4	64.1	65.4	1.3
Hawaii	72.1	71.3	72.6	75.1	75.5	75.4	76.0	0.6
Idaho	79.3	81.4	81.5	81.0	80.5	80.4	80.1	-0.3
Illinois	77.1	75.9	80.3	79.4	79.7	79.5	80.4	0.9
Indiana	73.1	75.5	73.5	73.2	73.3	73.9	74.1	0.2
Iowa	84.1	85.3	85.8	86.6	86.9	86.5	86.4	-0.1
Kansas	77.1	76.9	77.9	79.2	77.6	78.9	79.1	0.2
Kentucky	69.8	71.7	73.0	75.9	77.2	76.4	74.4	-2.0
Louisiana	64.4	64.1	69.4	63.9	59.5	61.3	63.5	2.2
Maine	75.6	76.3	77.6	78.6	76.3	78.5	79.1 [4]	0.6
Maryland	79.7	79.2	79.5	79.3	79.9	80.0	80.4	0.4
Massachusetts	77.6	75.7	79.3	78.7	79.5	80.8	81.5	0.7
Michigan	72.9	74.0	72.5	73.0	72.2	77.0	76.3	-0.7
Minnesota	83.9	84.8	84.7	85.9	86.2	86.5	86.4	-0.1
Mississippi	61.2	62.7	62.7	63.3	63.5	63.6	63.9	0.3
Missouri	76.8	78.3	80.4	80.6	81.0	81.9	82.4	0.5
Montana	79.8	81.0	80.4	81.5	81.9	81.5	82.0	0.5
Nebraska	83.9	85.2	87.6	87.8	87.0	86.3	83.8	-2.5
Nevada	71.9	72.3	57.4	55.8	55.8	52.0	51.3	-0.7
New Hampshire[5]	77.8	78.2	78.7	80.1	81.1	81.7	83.4	1.7
New Jersey	85.8	87.0	86.3	85.1	84.8	84.4	84.6	0.2
New Mexico	67.4	63.1	67.0	65.4	67.3	59.1	66.8	7.7
New York	60.5	60.9	—	65.3	67.4	68.8	70.8	2.0
North Carolina	68.2	70.1	71.4	72.6	71.8	68.6	72.8	4.2
North Dakota	85.0	86.4	86.1	86.3	82.1	83.1	83.8	0.7

See notes at end of table.

Table 13.   Averaged freshman graduation rates of public high school students and change in rates, by state: School years 2001–02 through 2007–08—Continued

State	Averaged freshman graduation rate (percent)							Change in rates from 2006–07 to 2007–08
	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	
Ohio	77.5	79.0	81.3	80.2	79.2	78.7	79.0	0.3
Oklahoma	76.0	76.0	77.0	76.9	77.8	77.8	78.0	0.2
Oregon	71.0	73.7	74.2	74.2	73.0	73.8	76.7	2.9
Pennsylvania	80.2	81.7	82.2	82.5	—	83.0	82.7	-0.3
Rhode Island	75.7	77.7	75.9	78.4	77.8	78.4	76.4	-2.0
South Carolina	57.9	59.7	60.6	60.1	—	58.9	—	—
South Dakota	79.0	83.0	83.7	82.3	84.5	82.5	84.4	1.9
Tennessee	59.6	63.4	66.1	68.5	70.6	72.6	74.9	2.3
Texas	73.5	75.5	76.7	74.0	72.5	71.9	73.1	1.2
Utah	80.5	80.2	83.0	84.4	78.6	76.6	74.3	-2.3
Vermont	82.0	83.6	85.4	86.5	82.3	88.6	89.3	0.7
Virginia	76.7	80.6	79.3	79.6	74.5	75.5	77.0	1.5
Washington	72.2	74.2	74.6	75.0	72.9	74.8	71.9	-2.9
West Virginia	74.2	75.7	76.9	77.3	76.9	78.2	77.3	-0.9
Wisconsin	84.8	85.8	—	86.7	87.5	88.5	89.6	1.1
Wyoming	74.4	73.9	76.0	76.7	76.1	75.8	76.0	0.2

— Not available.

‡ Reporting standards not met. (Too few cases for a reliable estimate.)

[1] Reporting states totals include any of the 50 states and the District of Columbia that reported all data elements.

[2] The national estimate of 75.0 percent for 2003–04 does not include data from two states with missing diploma counts: New York and Wisconsin.

[3] The national estimate of 73.2 percent for 2005–06 does not include data from two states, Pennsylvania and South Carolina, which did not report data, and the District of Columbia, for which reporting standards were not met. This is an important consideration when comparing the 2005–06 and 2006–07 national rates. Removing these states and the District of Columbia from the 2006–07 national counts results in a national rate of 73.7 percent, while prorating the 2006–07 rates to estimate the District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina data results in a 2005–06 rate of 73.4 percent.

[4] In 2007–08, Maine reported 1,161 diplomas that were awarded to students attending private high schools that received a majority of their funding from public sources. These 1,161 diplomas were included in Maine and the reporting states counts but were not included in the averaged freshman graduation rate (AFGR) calculations for the state and for the reporting states totals. The diploma counts used to calculate the AFGR for Maine and for the reporting states were 13,189 and 2,964,125, respectively.

[5] New Hampshire included homeschooled students in reported membership in 2000–01. This could inflate the denominator for the AFGR in 2002–03, 2003–04, and 2004–05 slightly.

NOTE: The averaged freshman graduation rate (AFGR) is an estimate of the percentage of an entering freshman class graduating in 4 years. For 2007–08, it equals the total number of diploma recipients in 2007–08 divided by the average membership of the 8th-grade class in 2003–04, the 9th-grade class in 2004–05, and the 10th-grade class in 2005–06. Ungraded students were allocated to individual grades proportionally to the reported enrollments by grade.

SOURCE: Seastrom, M., Hoffman, L., Chapman, C., and Stillwell, R. (2005). *The Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate for Public High Schools From the Common Core of Data: School Years 2001–02 and 2002–03* (NCES 2006-601), table 1; Seastrom, M., Hoffman, L., Chapman, C., and Stillwell, R. (2007). *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), table 1; Sable, J., and Garofano, A. (2007). *Public Elementary and Secondary School Student Enrollment, High School Completions, and Staff From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2005–06* (NCES 2007-352), table 4; Stillwell, R. and Hoffman, L. (2009). *Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2005–06* (NCES 2008-353rev), table 1; Stillwell, R. (2009). *Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2006–07* (NCES 2010-313), table 1. Stillwell, R. (2010). *Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2007–08* (NCES 2010-341), table 1.

Appendix A—Technical Notes

Common Core of Data

The Common Core of Data (CCD), administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), is an annual survey of the state-level education agencies in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 7 other jurisdictions.[1] Through the CCD, statistical information is collected on all public school districts and their schools, staff, students, and finances. Information is not collected on private schools and their students, homeschoolers, individuals who never attended school in the United States, or those who have been out of a public school system for more than a year. Data from the CCD are used to calculate event dropout rates and averaged freshman graduation rates (AFGR) for public high school students.

The dropout data collection was initiated with a set of instructions to state CCD coordinators in the summer of 1991. Those instructions specified the details of dropout data to be collected during the 1991–92 school year. Dropouts are reported for the preceding school year. Thus, the 1991–92 data were submitted to NCES as a component of the 1992–93 CCD data collection. Most recently, the 2007–08 dropout data were submitted as a component of the 2008–09 CCD data collection. Dropout counts from Vermont were suppressed due to a high frequency of missing data. Rates are presented for the District of Columbia and 49 states that submitted data that could be reported for the 2007–08 school year; a "reporting states" rate was calculated based on data from the reporting states (table 5).

Data needed to estimate the AFGR, specifically data on diploma awards and enrollment by grade, have traditionally been part of the CCD data collection. Like dropout data, diploma recipient reports are lagged a year (e.g., 2006–07 diploma counts are in the 2007–08 data files).

Defining and Calculating Event Dropout Rates Using the CCD

The definition of "event dropout rates" that was agreed upon by NCES and the states was the following:

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[1] Dropout and averaged freshman graduation rate (AFGR) data presented in this report are based on the following CCD data files: "Local Education Agency Universe Survey Dropout and Completion Data File: School Years 1991–92 through 1996–97" (Version 1a); and "Local Education Agency Universe Survey Dropout and Completion Data File," School Years 1997–98, 1998–99, 1999–2000, 2000–01 (Versions 1b), and 2001–02 (Version 0d); and "State Nonfiscal Data File," School Years, 1997–98 (Version 1b), 1998–99 (Version 1c), 1999–2000 (Version 1c), 2000–01 (Version 1b), 2001–02 (Version 1b), 2002–03 (Version 1b), 2003–04 (Version 0c), 2004–05 (Version 0c), 2005–06 (Version 1a), 2006–07 (Version 1a), and 2007–08 (Version 1a). The seven other jurisdictions include Department of Defense dependents schools (domestic and overseas); Bureau of Indian Education; Puerto Rico; American Samoa; Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; Guam; and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The denominator of the rate is the current October 1st membership count for the state for the grades for which the dropout rate is being calculated. For example, the dropout rate for grades 9–12 would use a denominator that equals the October 1st enrollment count for grades 9–12.[2]

The numerator (dropouts) is all individuals who

- were enrolled in school at some time during the previous school year;

- were not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year;

- have not graduated from high school or completed a state- or district-approved education program; and

- do not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions: transferred to another public school district, private school, or state- or district-approved education program; temporary absence due to suspension or school-approved education program; or death.

For the purpose of this definition, the following statements apply:

- The school year is the 12-month period of time from the first day of school (operationally set as October 1), with dropouts from the previous summer reported for the year and grade in which they fail to enroll. Some states report using an alternative 12-month period from one July to the next, but the different periodicity does not affect the comparability of the estimates (Winglee et al. 2000);

- Individuals who are not accounted for on October 1 are considered dropouts; and

- A high school completer is an individual who has graduated from high school or completed a state- or district-approved education program upon receipt of formal recognition from school authorities. A state- or district-approved education program may consist of special education and district- or state-sponsored General Educational Development (GED) preparation.

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[2] Ungraded students are prorated across grades in the denominator proportional to known graded enrollment rates, and ungraded dropouts are included in the numerator.

Defining the Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate for Public School Students Using the CCD

Data from the CCD state nonfiscal files are used to calculate AFGRs in this report. In the AFGR, graduates include only diploma recipients. Other high school completers, such as those who earn a certificate of attendance, and those awarded high school equivalency credentials such as GEDs, are not considered graduates. The purpose of these exclusions is to make the AFGR as similar as possible conceptually to Adequate Yearly Progress provisions in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 2001 (P.L. 107-110). These provisions require measurement of on-time graduation from public high schools and explicitly exclude GEDs and other types of nonregular diplomas. Another reason for the exclusion of equivalency credentials in the AFGR is that not all states report giving equivalency credentials, so comparable estimates across states would not be possible.

Diploma Recipients. These are individuals who are awarded, in a given year, a high school diploma or a diploma that recognizes some higher level of academic achievement. They can be thought of as students who meet or exceed the coursework and performance standards for high school completion established by the state or other relevant authorities. State and local policies and data collection administration can have profound effects on the numbers of diploma recipients reported by a state. There are differences in what a high school diploma represents in different states. Some states award regular diplomas to all students who meet completion requirements, regardless of the extent to which these requirements address state or district academic standards. Other states award some form of alternative credential to students who meet some, but not all, requirements.

Exclusion of Other High School Completers. Other high school completers were excluded from the calculation of the AFGR. These individuals receive a certificate of attendance or some other credential in lieu of a diploma. One example of such a credential is a certificate of attendance for special education students who do not follow a regular academic curriculum. Students awarded this credential typically meet requirements that differ from those for a high school diploma. Some states do not issue an "other high school completion" type of certificate, but award all students who complete school a diploma regardless of what academic requirements the students have met.

Exclusion of High School Equivalency Recipients. High school equivalency recipients are awarded a credential certifying that they have met state or district requirements for high school completion by passing an examination or completing some other performance requirement. High school equivalency credentials, such as those earned by passing the GED test, are generally

considered valid completion credentials, but recipients of such credentials are excluded from the AFGR because the ESEA calls for only regular diploma recipients to be counted (table A-1). Incorporation of equivalency credentials into high school outcome measures would be further complicated by variation in how different states treat GED programs and recipients. Some states incorporate GED programs into their high school education systems and continue to follow the progress of individuals in these programs as part of their overall high school student population. These states count at least some GED recipients as equivalency credential holders in their high school data systems. Some states incorporate GED programs into adult social service programs or other programs outside of secondary education and do not track GED program participants or GED recipients as part of their high school student population.

Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate. The AFGR provides an estimate of the percentage of high school students who graduate on time. The rate uses aggregate student enrollment data to estimate the size of an incoming freshman class and aggregate counts of the number of regular diplomas awarded 4 years later. The incoming freshman class size is estimated by summing the enrollment in 8th grade for one year, 9th grade for the next year, and 10th grade for the year after and then dividing by 3. The averaging is intended to account for higher grade retentions in the 9th grade in order to estimate how many of them were first-time 9th-graders. Although not as accurate as an on-time graduation rate computed from a cohort of students using student record data, this estimate of an on-time graduation rate can be computed with currently available data. The AFGR was selected from a number of alternative estimates that can be calculated using cross-sectional data based on a technical review and analysis of a set of alternative estimates (Seastrom et al. 2006a, 2006b). The rate for the class of 2007–08 was calculated in the following manner:

$$\frac{\textit{High School Diplomas Awarded at End of 2007–08 School Year}}{\textit{Enrollment in (Grade 8 in fall 2003 + Grade 9 in fall 2004 + Grade 10 in fall 2005)/3}}$$

Although enrollments are reported by grade, some states report ungraded students[3] in addition to graded students. To adjust for this, an allocation procedure used in the CCD "Local Education Agency Universe Survey Dropout and Completion Data File" was applied. Through this process, the data for ungraded enrollment counts were redistributed across grades in proportion to the graded enrollment of the state, and the resulting estimates for grades 8, 9, and 10 were added to the reported enrollment counts for those grades. The AFGR for public school students in the United States for 2007–08 is based on data from 4 years. The numerator is the

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[3] Ungraded students are those who are assigned to a class or program that does not have standard grade designations.

2,965,286 diploma recipients reported for school year 2007–08. The denominator is the average of the estimated 3,788,070 students in 8th grade in October 2003, the estimated 4,247,085 students in 9th grade in October 2004, and the estimated 3,841,810 students in 10th grade in October 2005. The 2,965,286 public school diploma recipients divided by the 3,958,987 averaged number of public school freshmen, multiplied by 100, results in a 2007–08 public school graduation rate for the United States of 74.9 percent. The same formula is applied to compute the 2001–02, 2002–03, 2003–04, 2004–05, 2005–06, and 2006–07 AFGRs for public school students in the country and in each state.

Note that the AFGR is not the same as a true cohort graduation rate that shows the percentage of actual first-time 9th-grade students who graduated within 4 years of starting 9th grade. A true cohort rate requires data that track a given set of students over time. The CCD data used for the AFGR are collected using repeating cross-sectional surveys. Individual students are not followed from year to year. Although the AFGR was selected as the best of the available alternatives, there are several factors that make it fall short of a true on-time graduation rate. First, the averaged freshman class is, at best, an approximation of the actual number of first-time freshmen. To the extent that the averaging differs from actual net transfers into and out of a class, and to the extent that it does not accurately capture grade retention and dropout rates across all 4 years of a given freshman class's expected high school stay, the estimate will be less accurate. Second, by including all graduates in a specific year, the graduates may include students who repeated a grade in high school or completed high school early and, thus, are not on-time graduates in that year.

Taking these factors one at a time, it is possible that more high school students will move out of a given jurisdiction than move into it during the 4 years between the beginning of 9th grade and the expected graduation date. The averaged freshman count would overestimate the size of the actual cohort and thus underestimate the graduation rate. On the other hand, if more high school students moved into a jurisdiction than moved out during this 4-year period, the averaged freshman count would underestimate the size of the cohort and thus overestimate the graduation rate. Similarly, the use of 8th-, 9th-, and 10th-grade enrollment counts to estimate a first-time freshman class may not work as intended in many situations. Using 8th- and 9th-grade enrollment counts can be inaccurate to the extent that they do not adequately account for grade retention at 9th grade. Retention rates at 9th grade tend to be relatively large. While adding 8th-grade enrollments to the average may help diminish this problem, it is likely that in many cases it will not wholly adjust for actual 9th-grade retention rates, thus overestimating the first-time freshman count and underestimating the graduation rate. Using 9th- and 10th-grade enrollment numbers can be inaccurate to the extent that the 10th-grade counts exclude 9th-graders who

Table A-1.   Summary table of high school dropout, completion, and graduation rates

Rate	Current statistic (year)	Age group/ Grades	Description	Purpose	Equivalency certificate status
Event dropout rate	3.5 percent (2008)	15–24	Percentage of high school students who have dropped out of grades 10–12 in the past year	Indicator of the annual rate at which U.S. high school students are leaving school with an unsuccessful outcome	Students who get an equivalency certificate do not count as dropouts.
Event dropout rate (public school students)	4.1 percent (2007–08)	Grades 9–12	Percentage of public high school students who have dropped out of grades 9–12 in a given year	State-level indicator of the annual rate at which public high school students are leaving school with an unsuccessful outcome	Students who get a state-recognized equivalency certificate do not count as dropouts.
Status dropout rate	8.0 percent (2008)	16–24	Percentage of people who are not enrolled in high school and who do not have a high school credential	Indicator of the percentage of young people who lack a basic high school education	Students who have earned an equivalency credential do not count as dropouts.
Status completion rate	89.9 percent (2008)	18–24	Percentage of young adults who have left high school and who hold a high school credential	Indicator of the percentage of young adults who have a basic high school education	People who have earned an equivalency credential count as completers.

See notes at end of table.

Table A-1.   Summary table of high school dropout, completion, and graduation rates—Continued

Rate	Current statistic (year)	Age group/ Grades	Description	Purpose	Equivalency certificate status
Averaged freshman graduation rate (public school students)	74.9 percent (2007–08)	Grades 9–12	Percentage of public high school students who graduate with a regular diploma 4 years after starting 9th grade	Indicator of on-time grad- uation from public schools	High school equivalency credentials are not counted as "graduation."

SOURCE: Stillwell, R. (2010). *Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2007–08* (NCES 2010-341), tables 1 and 7. U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 2008.

dropped out from the previous year (effectively underestimating the cohort) or include students retained in 10th grade (effectively overestimating the cohort).

The inclusion of graduates who spent more or less than 4 years in high school increases the number of graduates in the numerator and yields a higher estimated rate than would be the case if only on-time graduates were included in the numerator. On the other hand, not recording early graduates with their actual cohort decreases the graduation rate for their original 9th-grade classes.

Data Considerations for the CCD

As a universe data collection, the CCD does not have sampling errors (the difference between an estimate based on a sample and the estimate based on an entire population). However, there are potential sources for nonsampling errors in universe data collections, including inability to get information about all cases (i.e., nonresponse), definitional difficulties, respondent inability to provide correct information, and errors made in recording, coding, and processing data. For more information about the CCD, go to http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/.

Current Population Survey

The Current Population Survey (CPS) provides nationally representative data for the civilian, noninstitutionalized population of the United States. The survey is conducted in a sample of 50,000–60,000 households each month. Households are interviewed for four successive

monthly interviews, are not interviewed for the next 8 months, and then are reinterviewed for the following 4 months. Typically, the first and the fifth interviews are conducted in person, with the remaining conducted via computer-assisted telephone interviewing. The sample frame is a complete list of dwelling-unit addresses at the time of the decennial Census updated by demolitions and new construction listings. The population surveyed excludes members of the armed forces, inmates of correctional institutions, and patients in long-term medical or custodial facilities; it is referred to as the civilian, noninstitutionalized population. The household-level nonresponse rate was 8.3 percent in the 2007 October basic CPS and the person-level nonresponse rate for the school enrollment supplement was an additional 5.3 percent. These rates cannot be combined to derive an overall person-level response rate. For more information, please see *Current Population Survey, October 2008: School Enrollment and Internet Use Supplement File (Technical Documentation CPS-08)* (U.S. Department of Commerce 2009). An adult member of each household serves as the informant for that household, supplying basic monthly data for each member of the household. In addition, in October of each year, supplementary questions regarding school enrollment are asked about eligible household members ages 3 and older. Data are collected about individuals who attend or attended public schools and private schools, who were homeschooled, or who never attended school in the United States.

CPS data on educational attainment and enrollment status in the current year and prior year are used to identify dropouts and completers, and additional items in the CPS data are used to describe some of their basic characteristics. The CPS is the only source of national time series data on dropout and completion rates. However, because the CPS collects no information on school characteristics and experiences, its usefulness in addressing dropout and completion issues is primarily for providing insights on who drops out and who completes. Sample sizes in the CPS collections do not support stable state-level estimates.

There are important differences in data collection procedures between the CPS and the CCD. First, the CCD collection includes only data for public schools, whereas the CPS counts include students who were enrolled in either public or private schools and some individuals who were never enrolled in school in the United States. Second, the CCD collects data about students from a given state's public school system. CPS data are based on where individuals currently reside, so the state of residence may differ from the state or country of earlier school attendance. Third, the CCD collection includes dropouts in grades 7–12, versus grades 10–12 in the CPS (although the CCD event rates are reported for grades 9–12 in this report). Fourth, the CCD collection is based on administrative records rather than individual self-reports based on household surveys as in the CPS. Finally, data in the CCD are collected from the full universe of public schools, whereas data in the CPS are collected from a sample of households, not the full universe of households. As a result, CPS data have sampling errors associated with estimates

whereas CCD data do not. For more information on CPS sampling errors and how to interpret them, see the section "Statistical Procedures for Analyzing CPS-Based Estimates" later in appendix A.

Defining and Calculating Dropout and Completion Rates Using the CPS

Event Dropout Rates

The October Supplement to the CPS is the only national data source that currently can be used to estimate annual national dropout rates. As a measure of recent dropout experiences, the event dropout rate measures the proportion of students who dropped out over a 1-year interval.

The numerator of the event dropout rate for 2008 is the number of persons ages 15–24[4] surveyed in October 2008 who were enrolled in grades 10–12 in October 2007, who were not enrolled in high school in October 2008, and who also did not complete high school (that is, had not received a high school diploma or an alternative credential such as an equivalency certificate) between October 2007 and October 2008.

The denominator of the event dropout rate for 2008 is the sum of the dropouts (that is, the numerator) and all persons ages 15–24 who were attending grades 10–12 in October 2007, who were still enrolled in October 2008, or who graduated or completed high school between October 2007 and October 2008.

The dropout interval is defined to include the previous summer (in this case, the summer of 2008) and the previous school year (in this case, the 2007 school year), so that once a grade is completed, the student is then at risk of dropping out of the next grade. Given that the data collection is tied to each person's enrollment status in October of 2 consecutive years, any student who drops out and returns within the 12-month period is not counted as a dropout.

Status Dropout Rates

The status dropout rate reflects the percentage of individuals who are dropouts, regardless of when they dropped out. The numerator of the status dropout rate for 2008 is the number of individuals ages 16–24[5] who, as of October 2008, had not completed high school and were not currently enrolled. The denominator is the total number of 16- through 24-year-olds in October 2008.

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[4] This age range was chosen in an effort to include as many students in grades 10–12 as possible. Because the rate is based on retrospective data, it is lagged 1 year, meaning that some 15-year-olds have turned age 16 by the time of the interview.

[5] Age 16 was chosen as the lower age limit because, in some states, compulsory education is not required after age 16. Age 24 was chosen as the upper limit because it is the age at which free secondary education is no longer available and the age at which the average person who is going to obtain a GED does so.

Status Completion Rates

The numerator of the high school status completion rate is the number of 18- through 24-year-olds[6] who had received a high school diploma or an alternative credential such as a GED. The denominator is the number of 18- through 24-year-olds who are no longer in elementary or secondary school.

GED Credentials and the Status Completion Rate. Prior to 2000, editions of this series of high school completion and dropout reports presented estimates of overall status completion rates and estimates of the method of completion—graduation by diploma or completion through an alternative credential such as the GED—based on data obtained through CPS reporting. Because of changes in CPS introduced in 2000, data on the method of completion were not comparable with prior year CPS estimates and the method of completion data were no longer reported. Please see the discussion of the GED Testing Service data below for further information.

Data Considerations for the CPS

Over the last several decades, data collection procedures, items, and data preparation processes have changed in the CPS. Some of these changes were introduced to ensure that CPS estimates were comparable to those from decennial Census collections, some were introduced to reflect changes in the concepts under study, some were introduced to improve upon measures, and some were introduced to develop measures for new phenomena. The effects of the various changes have been studied to help ensure they do not disrupt trend data from the CPS. For a summary of the changes and studies of their effects, please see appendix C of *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001* (Kaufman, Alt, and Chapman 2004).

CPS data include weights to help make estimates from the data representative of the civilian, noninstitutionalized population in the United States. These weights are based on decennial Census data that are adjusted for births, deaths, immigration, emigration, etc., over time.

Imputation for Item Nonresponse in the CPS. For many key items in the October CPS, the U.S. Census Bureau imputes data for cases with missing data due to item nonresponse. However, the U.S. Census Bureau did not impute data regarding the method of high school completion before 1997. Special imputations were conducted for these items using a sequential hot deck procedure implemented through the PROC IMPUTE computer program developed by the

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[6] Age 18 was chosen as the lower age limit because most diploma holders earn their diploma by this age. Age 24 was chosen as the upper limit because it is the age at which free secondary education is no longer available and the age at which the average person who is going to obtain a GED does so.

American Institutes for Research. Three categories of age, two categories of race, two categories of sex, and two categories of citizenship were used as imputation cells.

Age and Grade Ranges in CPS Estimates. The age and grade ranges used in the CPS measures of dropout rates are constrained by available data. Ideally, the estimates would be able to capture reliable estimates of children in grades as low as grade 9. However, the CPS asks the question about enrollment in the previous October only about individuals ages 15 and older. Many 9th-graders are younger than age 15, so 10th grade was selected as the lower boundary of grade ranges in the event dropout rate.

Accuracy of CPS Estimates. CPS estimates in this report are derived from samples and are subject to two broad classes of error—sampling and nonsampling error. Sampling errors occur because the data are collected from a sample of a population rather than from the entire population. Estimates based on a sample will differ to some degree (dependent largely on sample size and coverage) from the values that would have been obtained from a universe survey using the same instruments, instructions, and procedures. Nonsampling errors come from a variety of sources and affect all types of surveys—universe as well as sample surveys. Examples of sources of nonsampling error include design, reporting, and processing errors and errors due to nonresponse. The effects of nonsampling errors are more difficult to evaluate than those that result from sampling variability. As much as possible, procedures are built into surveys in order to minimize nonsampling errors.

The standard error is a measure of the variability due to sampling when estimating a parameter. It indicates how much variance there is in the population of possible estimates of a parameter for a given sample size. Standard errors can be used as a measure of the precision expected from a particular sample. The probability that a sample statistic would differ from a population parameter by less than the standard error is about 68 percent. The chances that the difference would be less than 1.65 times the standard error are about 90 out of 100, and the chances that the difference would be less than 1.96 times the standard error are about 95 out of 100.

Standard errors for percentages and numbers of persons based on CPS data were calculated using the following formulas:

Percentage:

$$se \;=\; \sqrt{(b/N)(p)(100-p)}$$

where p = the percentage ($0 < p < 100$),
N = the population on which the percentage is based, and
b = the regression parameter, which is based on a generalized variance formula and is associated with the characteristic.

For 2008, b is equal to 2,131 for the total or White population, 2,410 for the Black population, 2,744 for the Hispanic population, and 2,410 for the Asian/Pacific Islander population ages 14–24. The b for regional estimates are 1.06 for the Northeast, 1.06 for the Midwest, 1.07 for the South, and 1.02 for the West.

CPS documentation explains the purpose and process for the generalized variance parameter:

Experience has shown that certain groups of estimates have similar relations between their variances and expected values. Modeling or generalizing may provide more stable variance estimates by taking advantage of these similarities. The generalized variance function is a simple model that expresses the variance as a function of the expected value of a survey estimate. The parameters of the generalized variance function are estimated using direct replicate variances (Cahoon 2005, p. 7).

Number of persons:

$$se \;=\; \sqrt{(bx)(1-(x/T))}$$

where x = the number of persons (i.e., dropouts),
T = population in the category (e.g., Blacks ages 16–24), and
b = as above.

Statistical Procedures for Analyzing CPS-Based Estimates

Because CPS data are collected from samples of the population, statistical tests are employed to measure differences between estimates to help ensure they are taking into account possible sampling error.[7] The descriptive comparisons in this report were tested using Student's *t* statistic. Differences between estimates are tested against the probability of a type I error,[8] or significance level. The significance levels were determined by calculating the Student's *t* values for the differences between each pair of means or proportions and comparing these with published tables of significance levels for two-tailed hypothesis testing.

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[7] The CCD and GEDTS data are universe data collections and therefore do not require statistical testing such as that used for estimates from the CPS sample survey data.

[8] A Type I error occurs when one concludes that a difference observed in a sample reflects a true difference in the population from which the sample was drawn, when no such difference is present. It is sometimes referred to as a "false positive."

Student's t values may be computed to test the difference between percentages with the following formula:

$$t = \frac{P_1 - P_2}{\sqrt{se_1^2 + se_2^2}}$$

where P_1 and P_2 are the estimates to be compared and se_1 and se_2 are their corresponding standard errors.

Several points should be considered when interpreting t statistics. First, comparisons based on large t statistics may appear to merit special attention. This can be misleading since the magnitude of the t statistic is related not only to the observed differences in means or proportions but also to the number of respondents in the specific categories used for comparison. Hence, a small difference compared across a large number of respondents would produce a large t statistic.

Second, there is a possibility that one can report a "false positive" or type I error. In the case of a t statistic, this false positive would result when a difference measured with a particular sample showed a statistically significant difference when there was no difference in the underlying population. Statistical tests are designed to control this type of error. These tests are set to different levels of tolerance or risk known as alphas. The alpha level of .05 selected for findings in this report indicates that a difference of a certain magnitude or larger would be produced no more than 1 time out of 20 when there was no actual difference in the quantities in the underlying population. When p values are smaller than the .05 level, the null hypothesis that there is no difference between the two quantities is rejected. Finding no difference, however, does not necessarily imply that the values are the same or equivalent.

Third, the probability of a type I error increases with the number of comparisons being made. Bonferroni adjustments are sometimes used to correct for this problem. Bonferroni adjustments do this by reducing the alpha level for each individual test in proportion to the number of tests being done. However, while Bonferroni adjustments help avoid type I errors, they increase the chance of making type II errors. Type II errors occur when there actually is a difference present in a population, but a statistical test applied to estimates from a sample indicates that no difference exists. Prior to the 2001 report in this series, Bonferroni adjustments were employed. Because of changes in NCES reporting standards, Bonferroni adjustments are not employed in this report.

Regression analysis was used to test for trends across age groups and over time. Regression analysis assesses the degree to which one variable (the dependent variable) is related to one or more other variables (the independent variables). The estimation procedure most commonly used in regression analysis is ordinary least squares (OLS). When studying changes in rates over time,

the rates were used as dependent measures in the regressions, with a variable representing time and a dummy variable controlling for changes in the educational attainment item in 1992 (= 0 for years 1972 to 1991, = 1 after 1992) used as independent variables. When slope coefficients were positive and significant, rates increased over time. When slope coefficients were negative and significant, rates decreased over time. Because of varying sample sizes over time, some of the observations were less reliable than others (i.e., some years' standard errors were larger than those for other years). In such cases, OLS estimation procedures do not apply, and it is necessary to modify the regression procedures to obtain unbiased regression parameters. This is accomplished by using weighted least squares regressions.[9] Each variable in the analysis was transformed by dividing by the standard error of the relevant year's rate. The new dependent variable was then regressed on the new time variable, a variable for 1 divided by the standard error for the year's rate, and the new editing-change dummy variable. All statements about trend changes in this report are statistically significant at the .05 level.

GED Testing Service

The GED Testing Service (GEDTS) collects data on individuals who take the GED exam each year and on individuals who pass the exam each year. These data are collected from test sites both in the United States and internationally. The GEDTS releases the data in aggregate form in annual statistical reports. The reports are organized to allow readers to differentiate between those individuals taking and passing the exam in the United States and those taking and passing the exam outside of the United States. Though GEDTS designs and administers the exam, states and sometimes jurisdictions within a state determine who can take the exam, how much pre-exam preparation is required, what scores are needed to pass the exam, how and when exam can be retaken, how much the exam cost, and the official name of the resulting credential (see http://www2.acenet.edu/gedtest/policy/index.cfm?return=1 for details).

Prior to 2000, NCES completion and dropout reports presented estimates of those holding alternative credentials such as GEDs directly from CPS data as part of the status completion rate. Examination of the changes in the CPS alternative credential items in the October 2000 and subsequent surveys has indicated that these estimates may not be reliable estimates of high school equivalency completions.[10] Therefore, CPS estimates of the method of high school equivalency completion were not presented in several NCES reports. Because GED recipients do

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[9] For a general discussion of weighted least squares analysis, please see Gujarati, D., *Basic Econometrics 2nd ed*. McGraw Hill, Inc., New York: New York, 1998.

[10] For a comparison of estimates from the CPS and the GED Testing Service of the number of 18- through 24-year-olds who have received a GED, see table A-1 in Laird, J., DeBell, M., Kienzl, G., and Chapman, C. (2007). *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2005* (NCES 2007-059). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.

have notably different life experiences than those with no high school credential and those with a regular high school diploma, the loss of information about alternative credential holders was an important measurement problem. In response, NCES developed an approach for using GEDTS to estimate how many young people in the civilian, noninstitutionalized population in a given age range had earned a GED by passing the GED exam. It is important to acknowledge here that Mishel and Roy (2006) simultaneously and independently developed a similar approach for research that they were conducting.

Table A-2 provides a summary of the data released by GEDTS on the number of people passing the exam each year and the age distribution of those passing the exam (American Council on Education, GED Testing Service 1991–2002, 2003–06, 2007, 2008, 2009). For the U.S. population, GEDTS indicates that approximately 250,000 persons ages 18–24 passed the GED in 2008. The GED status rate indicates the percentage of individuals in a given age range who passed the GED exam irrespective of when they passed the exam.[28] In order to derive the GED status rate, data from several GEDTS reports were combined. For 18- through 24-year-olds, this was done by adding the count of 18- through 24-year-olds who passed the exam in 2008 to counts of people who were ages 18–24 in 2008, but who passed the exam in earlier years. The number of 18- through 24-year-olds who passed the exam in 2008 was added to the number of 17- through 23-year-olds who passed the exam in 2007. That sum was added to the number of 16- through 22-year-olds who passed the exam in 2006, the number of 16- through 21-year-olds who passed the exam in 2005, the number of 16- through 20-year-olds who passed the exam in 2004, the number of 16- through 19-year-olds who passed the exam in 2003, the number of 16- through 18-year-olds who passed the exam in 2002, the number of 16- and 17-year-olds who passed the exam in 2001, and the number of 16-year-olds who passed the exam in 2000. Sixteen year-olds in 2000 would have been 24 in 2008. Based on this approach, approximately 1,622,000 persons ages 18 through 24 held a GED in 2008.

Because the CPS-based status rates developed for this report focus on individuals in the civilian, noninstitutionalized population, adjustments were made to the GED count estimates. GED count data are reported by year the GED was earned, whereas the status rates reflect the experience of individuals over multiple year periods. As such, individuals might have been part of the civilian, noninstitutionalized population when they earned a GED, and subsequently joined the military or the prison populations. Alternatively, individuals might have been in the military or prison when they earned a GED and subsequently reentered the civilian, noninstitutionalized population. To account for both possibilities, data for current active-duty military personnel for 2008 were obtained from the Defense Manpower Data Center and from the *Survey of Inmates in*

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[28] The GED Testing Service reports 20- through 24-year-olds as one age group. Single year of age data for those in the 20–24-year-old group was estimated by dividing the group count by 5 in a given year.

State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 2004 (op. cited). More recent prison data including inmate educational attainment were not available. Rates derived from the 2004 prison data were applied to 2008 prison data that contained prison inmate age distributions (table A-3). Prison data for 2008 were drawn from the Bureau of Justice Statistics' *National Prisoner Statistics 2008 (1b)*. After these adjustments, the estimated number of 18- through 24-year-old individuals in the civilian, noninstitutionalized population holding a GED in 2008 was approximately 1,500,000. A similar approach was used to estimate the number of 16-24-year-olds in the civilian, noninstitutionalized population holding a GED in 2008.

Table A-2. Percentage distribution of persons who passed the General Educational Development (GED) exam outside of federal and state contract facilities, by age group: 1998–2008

Year[1]	Number passed	Age group					
		16	17	18	19	20–24	25 or older
1998	480,947	2.8	11.8	19.1	12.2	24.1	30.0
1999	498,015	3.3	12.9	16.1	12.3	24.3	31.1
2000	486,997	3.2	13.0	16.5	12.2	24.9	30.2
2001	648,022	2.9	11.5	14.7	11.5	26.4	33.0
2002	329,515	4.4	15.8	17.4	11.6	24.6	26.2
2003	387,470	3.9	14.6	16.8	11.4	25.9	27.4
2004	405,724	4.0	14.0	16.8	11.4	26.2	27.6
2005	423,714	3.9	13.7	16.1	10.9	25.6	29.8
2006	398,045	4.1	14.4	16.7	10.9	24.9	29.0
2007	428,840	4.0	14.3	17.0	10.9	24.1	29.7
2008	467,994	3.6	13.5	16.9	11.1	24.0	30.9

[1] Prior to 2002, those passing GED exams in federal or state contract facilities were issued GEDs in their state of residence. Contract facilities include military installations and prisons.

NOTE: Data apply to the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The numbers and percentage distributions for 1998–2001 were reported in the original source as the number receiving a credential.

SOURCE: American Council on Education, GED Testing Service. (1991–2002). *Who Took the GED? GED Annual Statistical Report.* Washington, DC: Author; American Council on Education, GED Testing Service. (2003–06). *Who Passed the GED Tests? Annual Statistical Report.* Washington, DC: Author; American Council on Education, GED Testing Service. (2007). *2006 GED Testing Program Statistical Report.* Washington, DC: Author; American Council on Education, GED Testing Service. (2008). *2007 GED Testing Program Statistical Report.* Washington, DC: Author; and American Council on Education, GED Testing Service. (2009). *2008 GED Testing Program Statistical Report.* Washington, DC: Author.

Table A-3. Percentage distribution of persons who passed the General Educational Development (GED) exam at federal or state contract facilities, by age group: 1998–2008

Year[1]	Number passed	Age group					
		16	17	18	19	20–24	25 or older
1998	†	†	†	†	†	†	†
1999	†	†	†	†	†	†	†
2000	†	†	†	†	†	†	†
2001	†	†	†	†	†	†	†
2002	4,414	0.0	0.4	1.6	3.8	26.8	67.4
2003	6,332	0.3	1.0	1.7	2.7	27.9	66.4
2004	8,644	0.4	1.0	2.0	2.9	25.4	68.3
2005	10,591	0.3	3.1	4.0	4.1	23.9	64.6
2006	10,143	0.4	3.5	5.5	6.1	23.8	60.7
2007	11,741	0.3	3.0	7.5	7.1	25.0	57.1
2008	14,727	1.0	5.8	10.9	9.1	23.5	49.7

† Not applicable.

[1] Prior to 2002, people passing exams in federal or state contract facilities were issued GEDs in their state of residence.

NOTE: Data apply to the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The numbers and percentage distributions for 1998–2001 were reported in the original source as the number receiving a credential.

SOURCE: American Council on Education, GED Testing Service. (1991–2002). *Who Took the GED? GED Annual Statistical Report.* Washington, DC: Author; American Council on Education, GED Testing Service. (2003–06). *Who Passed the GED Tests? Annual Statistical Report.* Washington, DC: Author; American Council on Education, GED Testing Service. (2007). *2006 GED Testing Program Statistical Report.* Washington, DC: Author; American Council on Education, GED Testing Service. (2008). *2007 GED Testing Program Statistical Report.* Washington, DC: Author; and American Council on Education, GED Testing Service. (2009). *2008 GED Testing Program Statistical Report.* Washington, DC: Author.

Appendix B—Glossary

For dropout and completion rate estimates, please see the discussions above and table A-1.

Age. Age of the subject at the time of the interview.

Family income. In the Current Population Survey (CPS), family income is derived from a single question asked of the household respondent. Income includes money income from all sources including jobs, business, interest, rent, and social security payments. The income of nonrelatives living in the household is excluded, but the income of all family members 14 years old and older, including those temporarily living away, is included. Family income refers to receipts over a 12-month period.

There are several issues that affect the interpretation of dropout rates by family income using the CPS. First, it is possible that the family income of the students at the time they dropped out was somewhat different from their family income at the time of the CPS interview. Furthermore, family income is derived from a single question asked of the household respondent in the October CPS. In some cases, there are persons ages 15–24 living in the household who are unrelated to the household respondent, yet whose family income is defined as the income of the family of the household respondent. Therefore, the current family income of the respondent may not accurately reflect that person's family background. In particular, some of the young adults in the 15- through 24-year age range do not live in a family unit with a parent present.

GED, or General Educational Development. General Educational Development (GED) tests are standardized tests designed to measure the skills and knowledge that students normally acquire by the end of high school. The tests are developed by the American Council on Education's GED Testing Service. People who pass may receive a high school equivalency credential.

Geographic regions. There are four Census regions used in this report: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West. The Northeast consists of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The Midwest consists of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas. The South consists of Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee,

Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. The West consists of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, and Hawaii.

Recency of immigration. Recency of immigration was derived from a set of questions on the CPS survey inquiring about the country of birth of the reference person and his or her mother and father. From these questions, the following three categories were constructed: (1) born outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia, (2) first generation, and (3) second generation or higher. First generation is defined as individuals who were born in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia, but who had at least one parent who was not. Second generation or higher persons are individuals who themselves, as well as both of their parents, were born in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia. These three categories were subdivided using the variable for the subject's race/ethnicity (please see below) so that there were six categories: the three immigration categories plus a Hispanic and non-Hispanic category for each of the three immigration categories.

Race/ethnicity. This variable is constructed from two variables in the CPS. One asks about the subject's ethnic background and the second asks about the subject's race. Those reported as being of Hispanic background on the ethnic background question are categorized as Hispanic irrespective of race. Non-Hispanics are then categorized by race. Beginning in 2003, respondents were able to indicate two or more races. Those who indicated two or more races and who did not indicate that they were Hispanic are categorized as "Two or more races, non-Hispanic."

Sex. Sex of the subject.

Appendix C—Standard Error Tables

Table C-1.   Standard errors for table 1: Event dropout rates and number and distribution of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by selected characteristics: October 2008

Characteristic	Event dropout rate (percent)	Number of event dropouts (thousands)	Population enrolled (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population enrolled
Total	0.26	28.3	131.6	†	†
Sex					
Male	0.34	19.0	93.7	3.68	0.69
Female	0.39	21.0	92.4	3.68	0.69
Race/ethnicity					
White, non-Hispanic	0.27	18.0	102.6	3.62	0.68
Black, non-Hispanic	0.94	15.4	53.7	3.50	0.53
Hispanic	0.85	16.2	62.4	3.67	0.59
Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	1.47	6.2	27.6	1.60	0.28
Family income					
Low income	1.05	16.1	51.0	3.50	0.48
Middle income	0.31	20.1	100.7	3.70	0.68
High income	0.37	11.3	66.6	2.69	0.62
Age					
15–16	0.40	12.4	64.7	2.90	0.63
17	0.41	15.6	31.8	3.40	0.66
18	0.50	14.8	44.7	3.29	0.61
19	1.11	9.0	37.4	2.25	0.36
20–24	2.79	9.6	26.9	2.50	0.24
Recency of immigration					
Born outside the 50 states and District of Columbia					
Hispanic	2.17	9.4	31.3	2.40	0.31
Non-Hispanic	1.49	6.2	26.6	1.59	0.26
First generation					
Hispanic	1.08	9.1	40.2	2.27	0.42
Non-Hispanic	0.60	4.7	34.1	1.20	0.36
Second generation or higher					
Hispanic	1.52	9.5	35.1	2.38	0.36
Non-Hispanic	0.29	23.1	111.4	3.49	0.62
Region					
Northeast	0.50	10.1	57.4	2.45	0.55
Midwest	0.47	12.5	65.4	2.93	0.61
South	0.50	19.1	80.8	3.78	0.68
West	0.58	14.9	64.3	3.33	0.59

† Not applicable. The corresponding statistic refers to the total population, which is, by definition, 100 percent of the distribution.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 2008.

Table C-2. **Standard errors for table 2: Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, and number of dropouts and population of 15- through 24-year-olds who were enrolled: October 1972 through October 2008**

Year	Event dropout rate (percent)	Number of event dropouts (thousands)	Population enrolled (thousands)
1972	0.33	34.3	125.7
1973	0.33	35.2	127.0
1974	0.34	36.6	128.1
1975	0.32	34.4	128.3
1976	0.32	34.7	128.6
1977	0.34	37.1	130.0
1978	0.34	37.2	129.7
1979	0.34	37.2	129.3
1980	0.33	35.0	128.7
1981	0.33	34.5	128.7
1982	0.34	34.6	126.8
1983	0.33	33.1	125.7
1984	0.33	32.4	123.9
1985	0.34	32.3	122.8
1986	0.32	31.1	123.7
1987	0.30	29.9	123.1
1988	0.36	34.6	122.0
1989	0.36	32.4	119.5
1990	0.34	29.1	118.9
1991	0.34	29.1	119.3
1992	0.35	30.5	120.1
1993	0.36	30.4	119.5
1994	0.34	34.5	123.6
1995	0.35	36.0	124.3
1996	0.34	34.1	124.8
1997	0.32	32.0	126.7
1998	0.33	32.9	132.0
1999	0.33	34.2	134.1
2000	0.33	33.2	126.7
2001	0.33	33.7	133.7
2002	0.27	27.5	127.2
2003	0.28	29.6	129.3
2004	0.30	31.4	128.4
2005	0.27	29.1	130.5
2006	0.27	28.9	130.6

See notes at end of table.

Table C-2. **Standard errors for table 2: Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, and number of dropouts and population of 15- through 24-year-olds who were enrolled: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued**

Year	Event dropout rate (percent)	Number of event dropouts (thousands)	Population enrolled (thousands)
2007	0.26	28.1	131.2
2008	0.26	28.3	131.6

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table C-3. **Standard errors for table 3: Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008**

Year	Total (percent)	Sex (percent)		Race/ethnicity (percent)		
		Male	Female	White non-Hispanic	Black non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	0.33	0.46	0.48	0.34	1.32	2.81
1973	0.33	0.49	0.45	0.35	1.35	2.65
1974	0.34	0.51	0.46	0.35	1.41	2.52
1975	0.32	0.44	0.46	0.33	1.25	2.50
1976	0.32	0.48	0.43	0.35	1.15	2.05
1977	0.34	0.49	0.46	0.37	1.20	2.13
1978	0.34	0.51	0.46	0.36	1.31	2.75
1979	0.34	0.49	0.48	0.37	1.32	2.43
1980	0.33	0.49	0.45	0.35	1.21	2.56
1981	0.33	0.47	0.46	0.34	1.29	2.28
1982	0.34	0.49	0.46	0.36	1.21	2.31
1983	0.33	0.50	0.45	0.35	1.17	2.44
1984	0.33	0.49	0.46	0.36	1.06	2.51
1985	0.34	0.50	0.48	0.36	1.26	2.55
1986	0.32	0.46	0.45	0.34	1.05	2.69
1987	0.30	0.44	0.41	0.33	1.14	1.89
1988	0.36	0.52	0.50	0.39	1.20	3.09
1989	0.36	0.51	0.51	0.37	1.39	2.65
1990	0.34	0.48	0.47	0.36	1.15	2.29
1991	0.34	0.46	0.49	0.36	1.20	2.17
1992	0.35	0.46	0.53	0.38	1.09	2.23
1993	0.36	0.51	0.50	0.40	1.20	2.03
1994	0.34	0.48	0.49	0.37	1.03	1.52
1995	0.35	0.51	0.48	0.38	1.00	1.61
1996	0.34	0.49	0.51	0.38	1.05	1.50
1997	0.32	0.47	0.43	0.35	0.92	1.45
1998	0.33	0.45	0.47	0.36	0.91	1.48
1999	0.33	0.44	0.49	0.36	1.00	1.28
2000	0.33	0.49	0.43	0.37	1.01	1.24
2001	0.33	0.49	0.44	0.37	1.01	1.38
2002	0.27	0.39	0.37	0.28	0.87	1.01
2003	0.28	0.40	0.38	0.31	0.85	1.06
2004	0.30	0.44	0.41	0.34	0.94	1.20
2005	0.27	0.40	0.36	0.29	1.03	0.87
2006	0.27	0.39	0.36	0.30	0.77	1.01

See notes at end of table.

Table C-3. **Standard errors for table 3: Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued**

Year	Total (percent)	Sex (percent)		Race/ethnicity (percent)		
		Male	Female	White non-Hispanic	Black non-Hispanic	Hispanic
2007	0.26	0.37	0.35	0.26	0.80	0.98
2008	0.26	0.34	0.39	0.27	0.94	0.85

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table C-4.   Standard errors for table 4: Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by family income: October 1972 through October 2008

Year	Total (percent)	Family income (percent)		
		Low income	Middle income	High income
1972	0.33	1.55	0.45	0.39
1973	0.33	1.65	0.46	0.32
1974	0.34	†	†	†
1975	0.32	1.57	0.43	0.38
1976	0.32	1.61	0.46	0.34
1977	0.34	1.57	0.48	0.35
1978	0.34	1.69	0.48	0.40
1979	0.34	1.62	0.47	0.44
1980	0.33	1.51	0.46	0.38
1981	0.33	1.50	0.45	0.41
1982	0.34	1.52	0.46	0.36
1983	0.33	1.35	0.48	0.39
1984	0.33	1.49	0.45	0.37
1985	0.34	1.53	0.47	0.39
1986	0.32	1.33	0.45	0.34
1987	0.30	1.29	0.45	0.27
1988	0.36	1.59	0.48	0.35
1989	0.36	1.43	0.50	0.33
1990	0.34	1.39	0.45	0.33
1991	0.34	1.43	0.44	0.31
1992	0.35	1.42	0.46	0.36
1993	0.36	1.57	0.46	0.35
1994	0.34	1.44	0.44	0.41
1995	0.35	1.36	0.47	0.39
1996	0.34	1.34	0.46	0.41
1997	0.32	1.36	0.41	0.37
1998	0.33	1.34	0.39	0.46
1999	0.33	1.26	0.44	0.40
2000	0.33	1.23	0.45	0.35
2001	0.33	1.36	0.45	0.37
2002	0.27	1.05	0.36	0.34
2003	0.28	1.04	0.39	0.30
2004	0.30	1.24	0.39	0.41
2005	0.27	1.06	0.36	0.30
2006	0.27	1.12	0.34	0.36

See notes at end of table.

Table C-4. **Standard errors for table 4: Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by family income: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued**

Year	Total (percent)	Family income (percent)		
		Low income	Middle income	High income
2007	0.26	1.07	0.34	0.25
2008	0.26	1.05	0.31	0.37

† Not applicable. Data for family income are not available for 1974.
NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table C-5. **Standard errors for table 6: Status dropout rates and number and distribution of dropouts of 16- through 24-year-olds, by selected characteristics: October 2008**

Characteristic	Status dropout rate (percent)	Number of status dropouts (thousands)	Population (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	0.20	76.8	—	†	†
Sex					
Male	0.30	56.0	—	1.33	0.38
Female	0.28	52.6	—	1.33	0.38
Race/ethnicity					
White, non-Hispanic	0.21	47.3	—	1.28	0.37
Black, non-Hispanic	0.63	34.1	—	1.08	0.28
Hispanic	0.78	52.5	—	1.48	0.33
Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	0.82	12.4	—	0.42	0.16
American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic	3.20	9.4	—	0.34	0.07
Two or more races, non-Hispanic	1.17	8.3	—	0.28	0.11
Age					
16	0.33	13.9	—	0.46	0.24
17	0.48	20.9	—	0.69	0.24
18	0.59	25.7	—	0.84	0.24
19	0.68	28.2	—	0.92	0.24
20–24	0.30	61.3	—	1.27	0.38
Recency of immigration					
Born outside the 50 states and District of Columbia					
Hispanic	1.61	37.6	—	1.31	0.21
Non-Hispanic	0.76	14.5	—	0.49	0.17
First generation					
Hispanic	1.03	25.0	—	0.84	0.21
Non-Hispanic	0.53	12.2	—	0.41	0.18
Second generation or higher					
Hispanic	1.16	22.8	—	0.77	0.19
Non-Hispanic	0.21	56.6	—	1.33	0.34
Region					
Northeast	0.42	28.3	—	0.91	0.30
Midwest	0.43	36.3	—	1.12	0.32
South	0.37	49.8	—	1.35	0.37
West	0.45	40.0	—	1.19	0.32

— Not available.

† Not applicable. The corresponding statistic refers to the total population, which is, by definition, 100 percent of the distribution.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 2008.

Table C-6.   Standard errors for table 7: Status dropout rates, number of status dropouts, and population of 16- through 24-year-olds: October 1972 through October 2008

Year	Status dropout rate (percent)	Number of status dropouts (thousands)	Population (thousands)
1972	0.28	91.1	—
1973	0.27	90.9	—
1974	0.27	92.0	—
1975	0.27	92.0	—
1976	0.26	93.3	—
1977	0.27	94.9	—
1978	0.27	95.6	—
1979	0.27	96.8	—
1980	0.26	95.4	—
1981	0.26	96.1	—
1982	0.27	100.0	—
1983	0.27	98.6	—
1984	0.27	96.1	—
1985	0.27	93.2	—
1986	0.27	91.4	—
1987	0.28	92.3	—
1988	0.30	100.2	—
1989	0.31	98.0	—
1990	0.29	92.0	—
1991	0.30	92.8	—
1992	0.28	87.7	—
1993	0.28	87.5	—
1994	0.26	91.4	—
1995	0.27	92.9	—
1996	0.27	90.1	—
1997	0.27	87.4	—
1998	0.27	90.8	—
1999	0.26	89.7	—
2000	0.26	89.3	—
2001	0.25	89.3	—
2002	0.24	84.2	—
2003	0.23	82.6	—
2004	0.23	84.8	—
2005	0.22	81.7	—
2006	0.22	81.8	—

See notes at end of table.

Table C-6. Standard errors for table 7: Status dropout rates, number of status dropouts, and population of 16- through 24-year-olds: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued

Year	Status dropout rate (percent)	Number of status dropouts (thousands)	Population (thousands)
2007	0.21	79.8	—
2008	0.20	76.8	—

— Not available.

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table C-7. **Standard errors for table 8: Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008**

Year	Total (percent)	Sex (percent)		Race/ethnicity (percent)		
		Male	Female	White non-Hispanic	Black non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	0.28	0.40	0.39	0.29	1.07	2.22
1973	0.27	0.38	0.38	0.28	1.06	2.24
1974	0.27	0.39	0.38	0.28	1.05	2.08
1975	0.27	0.37	0.38	0.27	1.06	2.02
1976	0.26	0.38	0.37	0.28	1.01	2.01
1977	0.27	0.38	0.37	0.28	1.00	2.02
1978	0.27	0.38	0.37	0.28	1.00	2.00
1979	0.27	0.39	0.37	0.28	1.01	1.98
1980	0.26	0.39	0.36	0.27	0.97	1.89
1981	0.26	0.38	0.35	0.27	0.93	1.80
1982	0.27	0.40	0.38	0.29	0.98	1.93
1983	0.27	0.41	0.37	0.29	0.97	1.93
1984	0.27	0.40	0.37	0.29	0.92	1.91
1985	0.27	0.40	0.37	0.29	0.92	1.93
1986	0.27	0.40	0.37	0.28	0.90	1.88
1987	0.28	0.40	0.38	0.30	0.91	1.84
1988	0.30	0.44	0.42	0.32	1.00	2.30
1989	0.31	0.45	0.42	0.32	0.98	2.19
1990	0.29	0.42	0.41	0.30	0.94	1.91
1991	0.30	0.43	0.41	0.31	0.95	1.93
1992	0.28	0.41	0.39	0.29	0.95	1.86
1993	0.28	0.40	0.40	0.29	0.94	1.79
1994	0.26	0.38	0.36	0.27	0.75	1.16
1995	0.27	0.38	0.37	0.28	0.74	1.15
1996	0.27	0.36	0.36	0.26	0.75	1.13
1997	0.27	0.39	0.36	0.28	0.80	1.11
1998	0.27	0.40	0.36	0.28	0.81	1.12
1999	0.26	0.38	0.36	0.27	0.77	1.11
2000	0.26	0.38	0.35	0.26	0.78	1.08
2001	0.25	0.38	0.34	0.26	0.71	1.06
2002	0.24	0.35	0.32	0.24	0.70	0.93
2003	0.23	0.34	0.30	0.24	0.69	0.90
2004	0.23	0.34	0.31	0.24	0.70	0.89
2005	0.22	0.33	0.29	0.23	0.66	0.87
2006	0.22	0.33	0.30	0.23	0.66	0.86

See notes at end of table.

Table C-7. **Standard errors for table 8: Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued**

| Year | Total (percent) | Sex (percent) | | Race/ethnicity (percent) | | |
		Male	Female	White non-Hispanic	Black non-Hispanic	Hispanic
2007	0.21	0.32	0.29	0.22	0.59	0.83
2008	0.20	0.30	0.28	0.21	0.63	0.78

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table C-8. Standard errors for table 9: Status completion rates, and number and distribution of completers ages 18–24 not currently enrolled in high school or below, by selected characteristics: October 2008

Characteristic	Completion rate (percent)	Number of completers (thousands)	Population (thousands)	Percent of all completers	Percent of population
Total	0.27	72.6	—	†	†
Sex					
Male	0.39	52.6	—	0.47	0.44
Female	0.37	50.0	—	0.47	0.44
Race/ethnicity					
White, non-Hispanic	0.26	44.4	—	0.44	0.43
Black, non-Hispanic	0.86	32.0	—	0.34	0.32
Hispanic	1.03	49.2	—	0.37	0.38
Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	0.98	10.7	—	0.20	0.18
American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic	4.03	8.7	—	0.08	0.08
Two or more races, non-Hispanic	1.72	7.7	—	0.13	0.12
Age					
18–19	0.55	38.3	—	0.41	0.39
20–21	0.47	37.3	—	0.43	0.40
22–24	0.40	49.1	—	0.46	0.44
Recency of immigration					
Born outside the 50 states and District of Columbia					
Hispanic	1.89	34.9	—	0.22	0.25
Non-Hispanic	0.91	14.0	—	0.22	0.20
First generation					
Hispanic	1.48	23.5	—	0.24	0.23
Non-Hispanic	0.69	11.3	—	0.23	0.21
Second generation or higher					
Hispanic	1.58	21.2	—	0.22	0.22
Non-Hispanic	0.27	53.0	—	0.41	0.40
Region					
Northeast	0.56	27.4	—	0.37	0.35
Midwest	0.58	34.4	—	0.40	0.38
South	0.47	46.6	—	0.46	0.44
West	0.57	37.9	—	0.40	0.38

— Not available.

† Not applicable. The corresponding statistic refers to the total population, which is, by definition, 100 percent of the distribution.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 2008.

Table C-9.   Standard errors for table 10: Status completion rates, number of completers, and population of 18- through 24-year-olds: October 1972 through October 2008

Year	Completion rate (percent)	Number of completers (thousands)	Population (thousands)
1972	0.32	82.8	—
1973	0.31	82.3	—
1974	0.31	83.3	—
1975	0.30	83.8	—
1976	0.30	85.3	—
1977	0.30	94.5	—
1978	0.30	87.4	—
1979	0.30	88.9	—
1980	0.30	87.5	—
1981	0.29	88.9	—
1982	0.31	93.1	—
1983	0.31	92.2	—
1984	0.31	89.8	—
1985	0.31	86.6	—
1986	0.31	85.1	—
1987	0.32	86.0	—
1988	0.36	93.7	—
1989	0.36	91.7	—
1990	0.34	86.5	—
1991	0.34	84.4	—
1992	0.33	82.3	—
1993	0.34	82.1	—
1994	0.34	79.8	—
1995	0.35	80.3	—
1996	0.35	80.9	—
1997	0.35	82.3	—
1998	0.36	85.8	—
1999	0.34	83.8	—
2000	0.33	83.4	—
2001	0.33	83.4	—
2002	0.31	79.8	—
2003	0.30	78.6	—
2004	0.30	80.3	—
2005	0.30	78.0	—
2006	0.29	77.8	—

See notes at end of table.

Table C-9.   Standard errors for table 10: Status completion rates, number of completers, and population of 18- through 24-year-olds: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued

Year	Completion rate (percent)	Number of completers (thousands)	Population (thousands)
2007	0.28	75.2	—
2008	0.27	72.6	—

— Not available.
NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table C-10. **Standard errors for table 11: Status completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008**

| Year | Total (percent) | Sex (percent) | | Race/ethnicity (percent) | | |
		Male	Female	White non-Hispanic	Black non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	0.32	0.51	0.48	0.33	1.20	1.83
1973	0.31	0.49	0.47	0.31	1.17	1.83
1974	0.31	0.49	0.46	0.31	1.17	1.70
1975	0.30	0.47	0.46	0.30	1.18	1.72
1976	0.30	0.48	0.45	0.31	1.12	1.68
1977	0.30	0.49	0.45	0.31	1.12	1.66
1978	0.30	0.48	0.45	0.31	1.11	1.61
1979	0.30	0.49	0.45	0.31	1.11	1.58
1980	0.30	0.48	0.43	0.30	1.07	1.51
1981	0.29	0.48	0.43	0.30	1.02	1.46
1982	0.31	0.49	0.45	0.32	1.06	1.57
1983	0.31	0.50	0.45	0.32	1.06	1.59
1984	0.31	0.49	0.45	0.32	0.99	1.54
1985	0.31	0.49	0.44	0.32	1.00	1.58
1986	0.31	0.50	0.45	0.32	0.99	1.51
1987	0.32	0.51	0.47	0.34	0.99	1.47
1988	0.36	0.57	0.51	0.36	1.13	1.78
1989	0.36	0.57	0.51	0.37	1.11	1.73
1990	0.34	0.53	0.50	0.34	1.03	1.54
1991	0.34	0.55	0.50	0.35	1.06	1.53
1992	0.33	0.53	0.49	0.33	1.07	1.53
1993	0.34	0.53	0.50	0.35	1.07	1.49
1994	0.34	0.49	0.45	0.34	1.02	1.43
1995	0.35	0.50	0.47	0.36	1.01	1.40
1996	0.35	0.50	0.48	0.34	1.08	1.49
1997	0.35	0.51	0.47	0.36	1.10	1.42
1998	0.36	0.53	0.47	0.36	1.11	1.37
1999	0.34	0.50	0.46	0.34	1.04	1.39
2000	0.33	0.49	0.44	0.33	1.01	1.36
2001	0.33	0.50	0.43	0.34	0.97	1.31
2002	0.31	0.46	0.41	0.31	0.95	1.15
2003	0.30	0.46	0.40	0.31	0.96	1.15
2004	0.30	0.46	0.40	0.31	0.98	1.12
2005	0.30	0.45	0.38	0.30	0.91	1.12
2006	0.29	0.48	0.44	0.36	1.03	1.10

See notes at end of table.

Table C-10. **Standard errors for table 11: Status completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2008—Continued**

| | | Sex (percent) | | Race/ethnicity (percent) | | |
| | Total | | | White non- | Black non- | |
Year	(percent)	Male	Female	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic
2007	0.28	0.42	0.37	0.28	0.80	1.07
2008	0.27	0.39	0.37	0.26	0.86	1.03

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1972–2008.

Table C-11. **Standard errors for figure 3: Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity and sex: October 2008**

	Male	Female
Total	0.30	0.28
Race/ethnicity		
White, non-Hispanic	0.30	0.28
Black, non-Hispanic	0.85	0.93
Hispanic	1.12	1.08
Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	1.11	1.21
American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic	5.32	3.86
Two or more races, non-Hispanic	1.51	1.80

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 2008.

Table C-12. **Standard errors for figure 5: Status completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by race/ethnicity and sex: October 2008**

	Male	Female
Total	0.39	0.37
Race/ethnicity		
White, non-Hispanic	0.39	0.35
Black, non-Hispanic	1.15	1.25
Hispanic	1.48	1.42
Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	1.47	1.30
American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic	7.04	4.51
Two or more races, non-Hispanic	2.18	2.69

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 2008.