

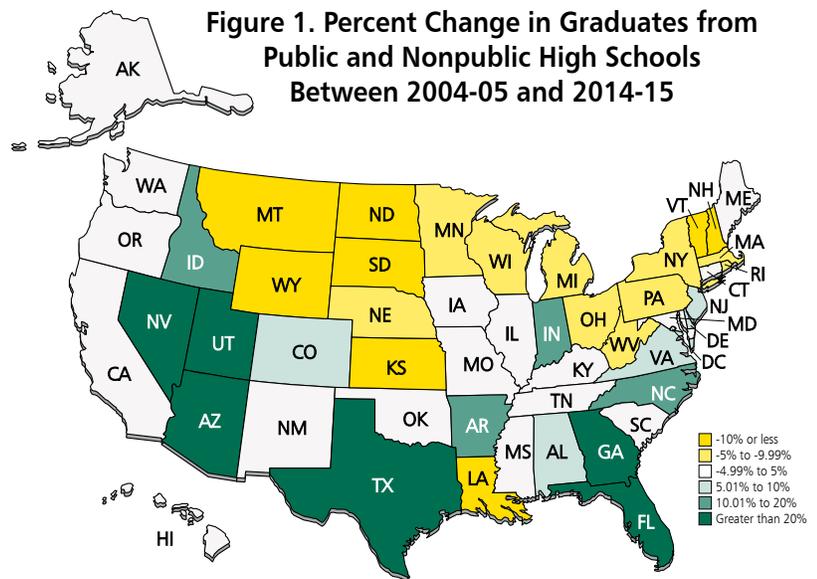
# Knocking at the College Door Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity, 1992-2022

## OREGON

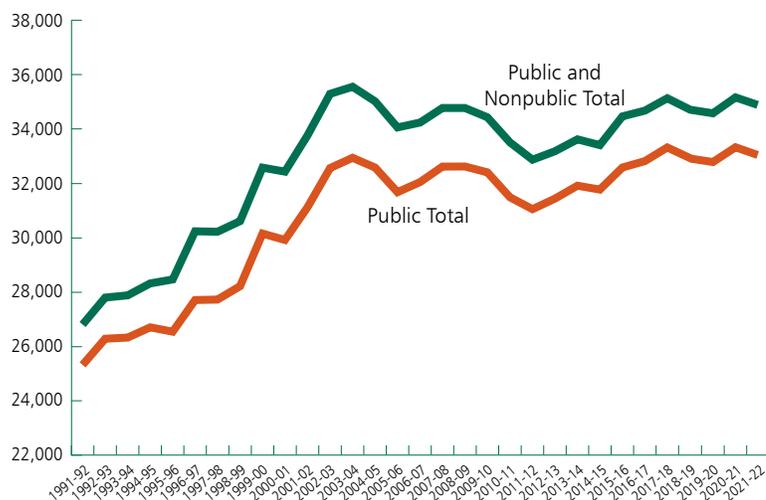
At over 3.3 million, the nation's graduating class of 2007-08 is projected to be history's largest. In fact, 2007-08 will mark the last year in an era of continuous growth in the nation's production of high school graduates, a period that reaches back to 1994. Over that time, the number of graduates swelled by 35.7 percent. In 2008-09, however, our country will begin a protracted period during which its production of high school graduates is expected to stagnate, assuming existing patterns persist. The number of graduates nationally will dip slightly over the next several years before growth resumes at a slower pace around 2015. Ultimately, projections indicate that between 2004-05 (the last year of available actual data) and 2021-22, the number of high school graduates will grow by approximately 265,000, or 8.6 percent.

The national data obscure significant variations in this picture at the regional and state levels, however. Regionally, in the decade leading up to 2004-05, the number of high school graduates grew the fastest in the West at 34 percent, with the South growing by 23.5 percent, the Northeast by 20.7 percent, and the Midwest by 14.2 percent. But the regions face very different futures in the years to come. The South will see the most growth in its production of high school graduates, at about 9 percent by 2014-15; and the West's numbers will climb by 7.1 percent. But the number of graduates produced in the Northeast and the Midwest will decline – by 6.1 and 3 percent, respectively.

As with the national view, the regional picture masks considerable variation at the state level (Figure 1).



**Figure 2. Oregon High School Graduates 1991-92 to 2004-05 (Actual), 2005-06 to 2021-22 (Projected)**



Oregon produced 6,702 more graduates in 2004-05 than it did a decade earlier, an increase of 23.7 percent. However, projections indicate that Oregon will experience a decrease in its production of high school graduates in the years ahead, assuming existing patterns of high school completion and migration continue. The state projects to have about 1,600 fewer high school graduates a decade after 2004-05, a decrease of about 4.6 percent.

Oregon experienced rapid but uneven growth in its production of high school graduates between 1991-92 and 2004-05, the last year for which actual data were available (Figure 2). That year, 32,602 students graduated from public high schools in Oregon, 7,297 more graduates than were produced in 1991-92, which represented growth of 28.8 percent. Nonpublic schools in Oregon contributed an additional estimated 2,435 graduates in 2004-05, but their production is also expected to fall off substantially in the years ahead. Of the state's total number of high school graduates each year,

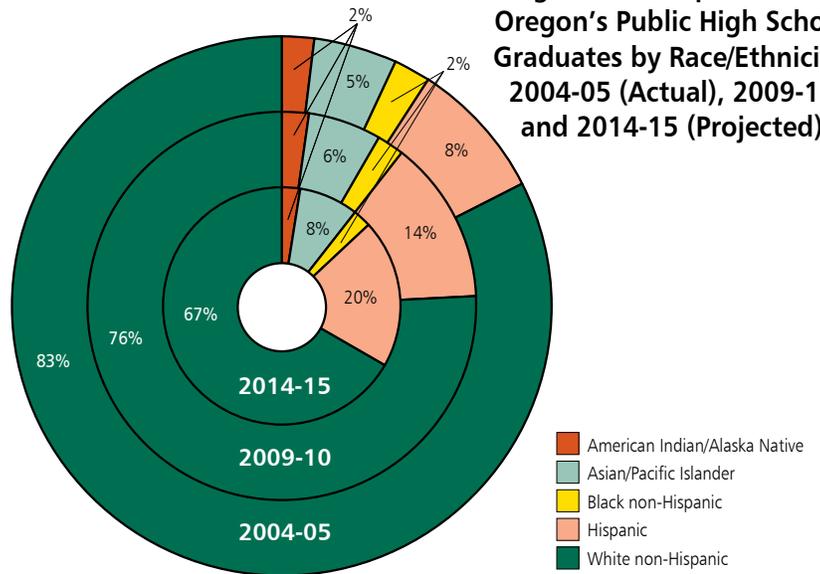
nonpublic schools produced an estimated 6 percent, on average.

Along with much of the rest of the nation, Oregon is poised to enter a new period characterized by much more stagnant growth or declines in the production of high school graduates. After peaking in 2003-04 at 32,958, Oregon will see a modest but uneven downward trend in the number of public high school graduates through 2011-12, assuming a continuation of existing patterns of enrollment, progression, and completion. Between 2004-05 and 2011-12, the number of public high school graduates is forecast to dip by 4.8 percent. Thereafter, it is projected to begin a recovery through the remainder of the projected period until 2021-22, at which time it should exceed 33,000.

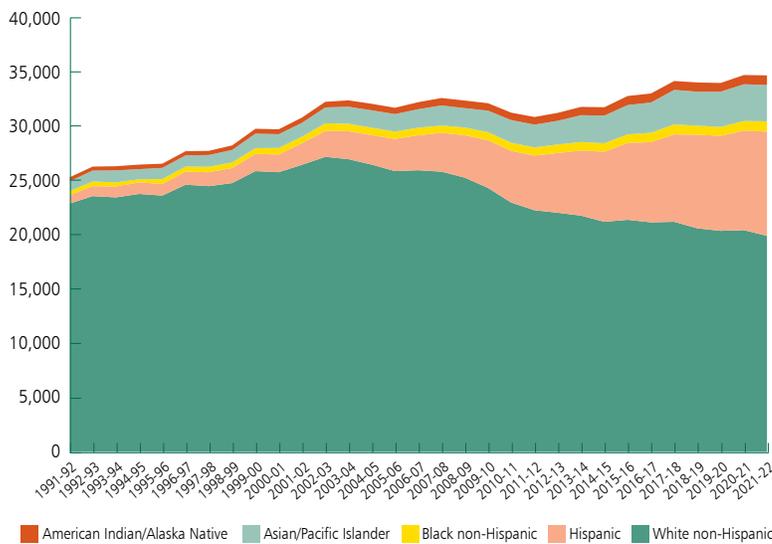
The racial/ethnic composition of Oregon's public high school graduating classes will continue to show diversification over the coming decade and beyond (Figure 3). In 1994-95, White non-Hispanic graduates accounted for 89.8 percent of the graduates from public high schools. A decade later, that proportion had dropped to 82.5 percent. The next decade will see further declines in the share of public high school graduates who are White non-Hispanic, with projections indicating it will reach 66.8 percent by 2014-15.

These changes are roughly comparable to the experience of states all over the country. Although the magnitude may differ substantially, the nation as a whole is undergoing sweeping changes in the racial/ethnic composition of its population. In Oregon, as in other states, the big changes are the result of rapid growth in the number of Hispanic high school students and graduates, coupled with a shrinking number of White non-Hispanics in the educational pipeline. While immigration has contributed to the growth of the Hispanic population, signs of the continuing demographic shift are evident in data showing a dramatic increase in the number of Hispanic births, which is due in part to a higher fertility rate among Hispanic women.

**Figure 3. Composition of Oregon's Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity, 2004-05 (Actual), 2009-10 and 2014-15 (Projected)**



**Figure 4. Oregon High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity 1991-92 to 2004-05 (Actual), 2005-06 to 2021-22 (Projected)**



In fact, in Oregon the decrease in the total number of graduates from public schools is entirely driven by declines in among White non-Hispanics. Graduate numbers in all other racial/ethnic groups are expected to climb between 2004-05 and 2014-15. Hispanic graduates from public schools in Oregon numbered 2,717 in 2004-05, while graduates from White non-Hispanic backgrounds were 26,482. Within a decade Hispanic graduates are projected to number 6,449, an increase of 137.4 percent, while White non-Hispanic graduates will fall 19.9 percent to 21,222 (Figure 4). Asians/Pacific Islanders also will see rapid increases in their projected number of public high school graduates, adding almost 1,000 over that timeframe (60 percent). Meanwhile, the number of Black non-Hispanic graduates will wind up increasing modestly, by nearly 100 graduates (12.7 percent); and American Indians/Alaska Natives are projected to add about 170 graduates (27.8 percent).

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