
MEASURING UP

2004

**THE STATE REPORT CARD
ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

NEVADA



**THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR
PUBLIC POLICY AND
HIGHER EDUCATION**

WHAT IS MEASURING UP?

This state report card is derived from *Measuring Up 2004*, the national report card for higher education. Its purpose is to provide the public and policymakers with information to assess and improve postsecondary education in each state. *Measuring Up 2004* is the third in a series of biennial report cards.

Measuring Up 2004 evaluates states on their performance in higher education because it is the states that are primarily responsible for educational access and quality in the United States. In this report card, “higher education” refers to all education and training beyond high school, including all public and private, two- and four-year, for-profit and nonprofit institutions.

The report card grades states in six overall performance categories:

■ **Preparation:** How adequately are students in each state being prepared for education and training beyond high school?

■ **Participation:** Do state residents have sufficient opportunities to enroll in education and training beyond high school?

■ **Affordability:** How affordable is higher education for students and their families?

■ **Completion:** Do students make progress toward and complete their certificates and degrees in a timely manner?

■ **Benefits:** What benefits does the state receive as a result of having a highly educated population?

■ **Learning:** What is known about student learning as a result of education and training beyond high school?

Each state receives a grade in each performance category, and the grades are based on the state’s performance on several indicators, or quantitative measures, in each category. Most states receive an “Incomplete” in learning because there are no common benchmarks that allow for state-by-state comparisons in learning. Five states, however, receive a “Plus” in learning to highlight their work in developing measures to evaluate the state’s educational capital—that is, the reservoir of high-level knowledge and skills

that the state’s population has attained. For more information about this, see page 12 of this state report card.

In four of the performance categories—preparation, participation, completion, and benefits—grades are calculated by comparing each state’s current performance to that of the best-performing states. This provides a basis for assessing and comparing each state’s performance in the national context and encourages each state to “measure up” to the highest performing states.

In the affordability category, however, the nation as a whole is “measuring down.” That is, even in the best-performing states, higher education has become *less* rather than *more* affordable when the costs of attending college are considered in relation to family income. As a result, grades in the affordability category are calculated by comparing each state’s current results to the performance of the top states *a decade ago*. This enables policymakers to examine their state’s results in relation to other states, while also encouraging improved performance over time. A glance at the table of state grades on page 15 reveals that the affordability category is the only one in which no state receives an A.

Measuring Up 2004 also compares each state’s current results with its own performance a decade ago. Although this historical information is not graded, it is offered to allow states to examine their improvements and declines in performance. In gathering information for this period, information from 1992—or the closest year available—is compared with the most recently available data. All information was collected from national, reliable sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Education. (For more information about grading, data collection, and sources, please see the technical report at www.highereducation.org.)

This state report card begins by summarizing the state’s performance today compared with ten years ago, and by presenting key policy questions that these results suggest for the state. Next, the state’s performance in each category is described in greater detail, followed by additional contextual information.

A Snapshot of Improvement Over the Past Decade

High school graduates are, in general, better prepared for college today than their peers were a decade ago. However, most states, and the nation as a whole, have made little progress in translating these gains into improvements at the college level.

Preparation: 44 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 6 improved on some of the indicators.

Participation: 8 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 23 improved on some of the indicators; 19 declined on every indicator.

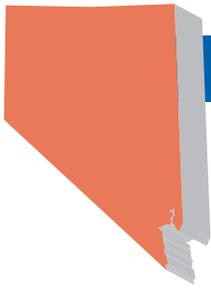
Affordability: 2 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 31 improved on some of the indicators; 17 declined on every indicator.

Completion: 37 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 9 improved on some of the indicators; 4 declined on every indicator.

Benefits: 41 states improved on more than half of the indicators; 8 improved on some of the indicators; 1 declined on every indicator.

Learning: 45 states receive an “Incomplete”; 5 states (Illinois, Kentucky, Nevada, Oklahoma, and South Carolina) receive a “Plus.”

For more information about improvement, please see *Measuring Up 2004: The National Report Card on Higher Education* at www.highereducation.org.



Nevada is the lowest performing state in the proportion of young adults with a high school certificate, and in the likelihood of students enrolling in college by age 19. However, the state has made some improvements, over the past decade, in enrolling students in college immediately after high school. Continued progress in improving schools and enrolling young people in higher education is imperative as the state faces steep increases—the highest in the country—in the numbers of young people graduating from high school.

Strengths

Participation

■ A large percentage of working-age adults are enrolled part-time in college-level education or training. However, this percentage has decreased over the past decade, dropping more than the nationwide decline on this measure.

Completion

■ A large percentage of first-year students at four-year colleges and universities return for their second year. Over the past decade, Nevada has improved on this measure more than any other state.

■ Over the past decade, Nevada has narrowed the gap between whites and all minority ethnic groups in the proportion of students completing certificates and degrees relative to the number enrolled. However, this gap remains large.

Weaknesses

Preparation

■ Nevada is one of the lowest performing states in the percentage of young people earning a high school credential.

■ Small proportions of high school students enroll in upper-level math and science. The proportion enrolling in science has

decreased substantially over the past decade, in contrast to a nationwide increase on this measure.

■ A small percentage of 8th graders take algebra.

■ The state's 8th graders perform very poorly on national assessments in math, science, reading, and writing. Over the past few years, the percentage of 8th graders performing well in reading has decreased—more than the nationwide decline on this measure.

■ Compared with their peers in other states, Nevada's low-income 8th graders perform very poorly on national assessments in math.

■ Relatively few Nevada students take and perform well on Advanced Placement tests.



Participation

■ Compared with other states, the likelihood of Nevada 9th graders enrolling in college within four years is very low. Two factors underlie this poor performance. Relatively few students graduate from high school, and relatively few enroll in college.

Affordability

■ Net college costs for low- and middle-income students to attend public two- or four-year colleges represent about 40% of their annual income. (Net college costs equal tuition, room, and board minus financial aid.)

Completion

■ A fairly small proportion of first-time, full-time college students complete a bachelor's degree within six years of entering college.

■ A small proportion of students complete certificates and degrees relative to the number enrolled.

Benefits

■ Compared with other states, a small proportion of Nevada residents have a bachelor's degree.

■ Over the past decade, the gap has widened between whites and minority ethnic groups in the percentage that have a bachelor's degree.

Policy Questions

■ Can higher education build upon partnerships with K–12 schools to improve student achievement and preparation for college?

■ Can Nevada increase the proportion of students who finish high school within four years?

■ Can Nevada provide college opportunities for the increasing numbers of high school students expected to graduate and enroll in college?

■ Can the state maintain its use of the General Education Development (GED) credential to improve the educational attainment of its residents?

■ Can Nevada encourage more young and working-age adults to enroll in higher education?

■ Nevada's Millennium Scholarship Program provides funds for students to enroll in higher education based largely on academic performance in high school. Can the state develop financial aid programs focusing on students' financial need in order to ensure access to college for all qualified students?

2004
Grade

Improvement
Over Decade



Despite improvement over the past decade, Nevada continues to struggle in preparing students to succeed in college. This year Nevada receives a D in preparation because other states performed better.

Graded Information

■ Nevada is among the poorest-performing states in the percentage of young adults earning a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) diploma by age 24.

■ Compared with other states, very small proportions of high school students are enrolled in upper-level math (32%) and science (20%).

■ A very small proportion (13%) of 8th graders take algebra.

■ Eighth graders perform very poorly on national assessments in math, science, reading, and writing, indicating that they are not very well prepared to succeed in challenging high school courses.

■ Compared with their peers in other states, low-income 8th graders perform very poorly on national assessments in math.

■ Extremely small proportions of 11th and 12th graders score well on Advanced Placement tests, and only fair proportions score well on college entrance exams.

■ Sixty-one percent of secondary school students are taught by qualified teachers, which is only average compared with top-performing states.

PREPARATION	NEVADA		Top States 2004
	A Decade Ago	2004	
High School Completion (20%)			
18- to 24-year-olds with a high school credential	82%	82%*	94%
K-12 Course Taking (35%)			
9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level math course	29%	32%	59%
9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level science course	22%	20%	41%
8th grade students taking algebra	7%	13%	35%
12th graders taking at least one upper-level math course	n/a	n/a	66%
K-12 Student Achievement (35%)			
8th graders scoring at or above "proficient" on the national assessment exam:			
in math	n/a	20%	36%
in reading	24%	21%	39%
in science	n/a	23%	42%
in writing	17%	16%	41%
Low-income 8th graders scoring at or above "proficient" on the national assessment exam in math	n/a	10%	23%
Number of scores in the top 20% nationally on SAT/ACT college entrance exam per 1,000 high school graduates	132	171	227
Number of scores that are 3 or higher on an Advanced Placement subject test per 1,000 high school juniors and seniors	49	102	219
Teacher Quality (10%)			
<i>7th to 12th graders taught by teachers with a major in their subject</i>	52%	61%	81%

*Seventy-four percent of 18- to 24-year-olds have a regular high school diploma; 8% have a GED.

Note: Indicators in italics are new for 2004.

Change in Graded Measures

- Over the past decade, the proportion of high school students enrolled in upper-level science has decreased substantially.
- The proportion of 8th graders taking algebra has almost doubled in the same period, but the state’s current performance on this measure is very poor compared with other states.
- During the past few years, the percentage of 8th graders performing well on national assessments in reading has declined.
- Over the past decade, the proportions of 11th and 12th graders taking and scoring well on Advanced Placement exams have more than doubled, although the state’s current performance on this measure is very low relative to other states.

Other Key Facts

- Blacks and Native Americans in the 9th to 12th grades are about half as likely as whites to enroll in upper-level science and math. Hispanics in the 9th to 12th grades are only about one-third as likely as whites to enroll in upper-level science and math.
- Young adults from minority ethnic groups are two-thirds as likely as whites to earn a high school credential.
- Among young adults, 8% receive a GED rather than a high school diploma, one of the highest percentages in the nation.
- About 15% of children under age 18 live in poverty, compared with a national rate of 17%.
- Policymakers and state residents do not have access to important information about 12th graders taking upper-level math because the state did not report the data by grade level.

The preparation category measures how well a state’s K–12 schools prepare students for education and training beyond high school. The opportunities that residents have to enroll in and benefit from higher education depend heavily on the performance of their state’s K–12 educational system.

2004
Grade

Improvement
Over Decade



Over the past decade, Nevada has made no notable progress in enrolling students in higher education. This year Nevada receives a C in participation.

Graded Information

■ Compared with other states, the chance of Nevada high school students enrolling in college by age 19 is very low, because few students graduate from high school and enroll in college.

■ However, a large percentage of working-age adults (ages 25 to 49) are enrolled part-time in college-level education or training.

Change in Graded Measures

■ Over the past decade, the chance of enrolling in college by age 19 has increased by 19%—one of the steepest increases among the states on this measure. Although a slightly smaller percentage of students graduate from high school within four years, more of those who graduate enroll in college. Nevada's current performance on this measure remains very low relative to other states.

■ Over the past decade, the percentage of working-age adults who are enrolled part-time in education or training beyond high school has declined by 17%, compared with a nationwide decline of 11%.

PARTICIPATION	NEVADA		Top States 2004
	A Decade Ago	2004	
Young Adults (60%)			
Chance for college by age 19	23%	28%	52%
18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college	29%	28%	40%
Working-Age Adults (40%)			
25- to 49-year-olds enrolled part-time in any type of postsecondary education	5.4%	4.5%	5.4%

Other Key Facts

■ The state's population is projected to grow by 17% from 2000 to 2015, compared with a national rate of 13%. During approximately the same period, the number of high school graduates is projected to more than double.

■ About 14% of the adult population has less than a high school diploma or its equivalent, a rate that matches that of the nation as a whole.

■ In Nevada, 523 more students are leaving the state than are entering to attend college. About 19% of Nevada high school graduates who go to college attend college out of state.

The participation category addresses the opportunities for state residents to enroll in higher education. A strong grade in participation generally indicates that state residents have high individual expectations for education and that the state provides enough spaces and types of educational programs for its residents.

2004
Grade

Improvement
Over Decade



The affordability of higher education in Nevada has declined substantially over the past decade. This year Nevada is one of many states to receive an F in affordability.

Graded Information

■ Compared with best-performing states, families in Nevada devote a large share of family income, even after financial aid, to attend public two- and four-year colleges and universities, which enroll 93% of college students in the state.

■ The state makes no investment in need-based financial aid.

■ Undergraduate students borrowed on average \$3,490 in 2003.

Other Key Facts

■ In Nevada, 55% of students are enrolled in community colleges and 38% in public four-year colleges and universities.

AFFORDABILITY	NEVADA		Top States A Decade Ago
	A Decade Ago	2004	
Family Ability to Pay (50%)			
Percent of income (average of all income groups) needed to pay for college expenses minus financial aid:			
at community colleges	25%	25%	15%
at public 4-year colleges/universities	27%	27%	16%
at private 4-year colleges/universities	36%	48%	32%
Strategies for Affordability (40%)			
State investment in need-based financial aid as compared to the federal investment	2%	0%	89%
At lowest-priced colleges, the share of income that the poorest families need to pay for tuition	8%	10%	7%
Reliance on Loans (10%)			
Average loan amount that undergraduate students borrow each year	\$2,857	\$3,490	\$2,619

Note: In the affordability category, the lower the figures the better the performance for all indicators except for "State investment in need-based financial aid."

The affordability category measures whether students and families can afford to pay for higher education, given income levels, financial aid, and the types of colleges and universities in the state.

A CLOSER LOOK AT FAMILY ABILITY TO PAY	Average family income	Community colleges		Public 4-year colleges/universities		Private 4-year colleges/universities	
		Net college cost*	Percent of income needed to pay net college cost	Net college cost*	Percent of income needed to pay net college cost	Net college cost*	Percent of income needed to pay net college cost
Income groups used to calculate 2004 family ability to pay							
20% of the population with the lowest income	\$15,080	\$8,339	55%	\$8,921	59%	\$17,055	113%
20% of the population with lower-middle income	\$30,000	\$8,643	29%	\$9,291	31%	\$16,627	55%
20% of the population with middle income	\$45,822	\$8,827	19%	\$9,610	21%	\$15,720	34%
20% of the population with upper-middle income	\$67,850	\$8,880	13%	\$9,753	14%	\$15,323	23%
20% of the population with the highest income	\$112,500	\$8,879	8%	\$9,799	9%	\$16,279	14%
40% of the population with the lowest income	\$22,540	\$8,491	38%	\$9,106	40%	\$16,841	75%

*Net college cost equals tuition, room, and board, minus financial aid.

Those who are striving to reach or stay in the middle class—the 40% of the population with the lowest incomes—earn on average \$22,540 each year.

■ If a student from such a family were to attend a community college in the state, their net cost to attend college would represent about 38% of their income annually:

Tuition, room, and board:	\$8,901
Financial aid received:	–\$ 410
Net college cost:	\$8,491
Percent of income:	38%

■ If the same student were to attend a public four-year college in the state, their net cost to attend college would represent about 40% of their income annually:

Tuition, room, and board:	\$10,121
Financial aid received:	–\$ 1,015
Net college cost:	\$9,106
Percent of income:	40%

Note

The numbers shown for tuition, room, and board minus financial aid may not exactly equal net college cost due to rounding.

2004
Grade

Improvement
Over Decade



Although there has been substantial improvement over the past decade, the proportion of Nevada's students earning a certificate or degree in a timely manner is well below the national average. Nevada receives an F in completion this year.

Graded Information

- Compared with other states, a fairly large percentage (49%) of first-year students in community colleges return for their second year.
- A large percentage—almost three-quarters—of freshmen at four-year colleges and universities return for their sophomore year.
- Among first-time, full-time college students, a fairly small percentage complete a bachelor's degree within six years of entering college.
- Also, a very small proportion of students complete certificates and degrees relative to the number enrolled.

Change in Graded Measures

- Over the past decade, Nevada has improved more than any other state in the percentage of first-year students at four-year colleges and universities returning for their second year.

COMPLETION	NEVADA		Top States 2004
	A Decade Ago	2004	
Persistence (20%)			
1st year community college students returning their second year	n/a	49%	63%
Freshmen at 4-year colleges/universities returning their sophomore year	60%	73%	84%
Completion (80%)			
First-time, full-time students completing a bachelor's degree within 6 years of college entrance	38%	44%	64%
Certificates, degrees, and diplomas awarded at all colleges and universities per 100 undergraduate students	7	9	21

- Over the past few years, the percentage of first-time, full-time college students earning their bachelor's degree within six years of enrolling in college has increased.

- Over the past decade, Nevada has been one of the fastest improving states in the proportion of students completing certificates and degrees relative to the number enrolled. However, Nevada's current performance on this measure remains extremely low when compared with other states.

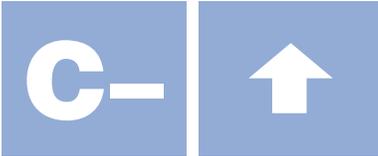
Other Key Facts

- Over the past decade, Nevada has made progress in narrowing the gaps between whites and all minority ethnic groups in the proportion of students completing certificates and degrees relative to the number enrolled. Nonetheless, Hispanic students are only two-thirds as likely as white students to complete certificates and degrees.

The completion category addresses whether students continue through their educational programs and earn certificates or degrees in a timely manner. Certificates and degrees from one- and two-year programs as well as the bachelor's degree are included.

2004
Grade

Improvement
Over Decade



Over the past decade, Nevada received increasing benefits from having a more highly educated population. Despite that improvement, Nevada still lags behind most other states and receives a C- in benefits this year.

Graded Information

■ Compared with other states, a small proportion of residents have a bachelor's degree, and this substantially weakens the state economy.

■ However, residents contribute substantially to the civic good, as measured by charitable giving.

Change in Graded Measures

■ Over the past decade, the percentage of residents voting has dropped substantially.

Other Key Facts

■ If all ethnic groups had the same educational attainment and earnings as whites, total personal income in the state would be about \$2.4 billion higher, and the state would realize an estimated \$834 million in additional tax revenues.

■ Over the past decade, the gap has widened between whites and minority ethnic groups in the percentage who have a bachelor's degree.

■ In 2002, Nevada scored 56 on the New Economy Index, compared to a nationwide score of 60. The New Economy Index, developed by the Progressive Policy Institute, measures the extent to which states are participating in knowledge-based industries.

BENEFITS	NEVADA		Top States 2004
	A Decade Ago	2004	
Educational Achievement (37.5%)			
Population aged 25 to 65 with a bachelor's degree or higher	19%	22%	36%
Economic Benefits (31.25%)			
Increase in total personal income as a result of the percentage of the population holding a bachelor's degree	6%	7%	12%
Increase in total personal income as a result of the percentage of the population with some college (including an associate's degree), but not a bachelor's degree	3%	3%	3%
Civic Benefits (31.25%)			
Residents voting in national elections	51%	40%	60%
Of those who itemize on federal income taxes, the percentage declaring charitable gifts	86%	87%	92%
<i>Increase in volunteering rate as a result of college education</i>	n/a	14%	22%
Adult Skill Levels (0%)*			
Adults demonstrating high-level literacy skills:			
quantitative	22%	23%	33%
prose	21%	22%	33%
document	17%	18%	28%

*Adult Skill Levels for 2004 are estimated and are not used to calculate grades.
Note: Indicators in italics are new for 2004.

■ Policymakers and state residents do not have access to important information about high-level literacy skills because the state has declined to participate in the national literacy survey.

The benefits category measures the economic and societal benefits that the state receives as the result of having well educated residents.

2004
Grade



Nevada residents perform below the national average on literacy measures, reflecting low levels of educational attainment. A significantly higher proportion of college graduates appear to be prepared to enter the teaching profession than in other states, and lower proportions appear ready to enter licensed technical careers or traditional graduate study. The performance of two-year college students on direct measures of student learning is below average.

In previous years, *Measuring Up* gave all states an “Incomplete” in learning because there are no common benchmarks for learning that would allow for state comparisons. *Measuring Up 2004*, for the first time, gives a “Plus” in learning to five states (Illinois, Kentucky, Nevada, Oklahoma, and South Carolina) that have developed comparable learning measures through their participation in a national project conducted by the National Forum on College-Level Learning and funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts.¹

Based on the results of the project, the learning category is being constructed as the other five performance categories in *Measuring Up* have been, with indicators that are grouped in several themes:

1. Literacy levels of the state’s residents:

What are the abilities of the college-educated population?

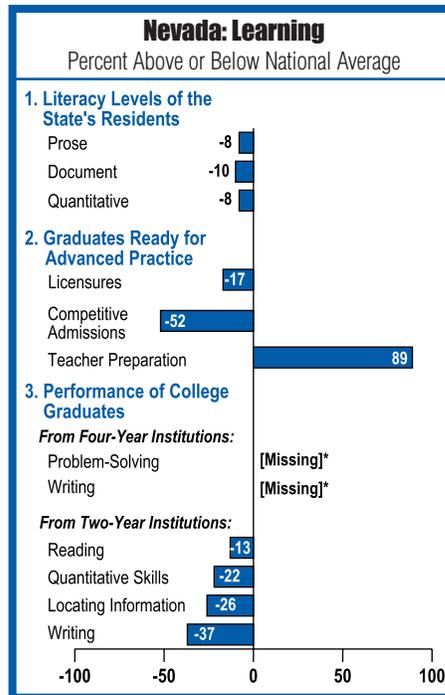
2. Graduates ready for advanced practice:

To what extent do colleges and universities educate students to be capable of contributing to the workforce?

3. Performance of college graduates:

How effectively can college and university graduates communicate and solve problems?

In order to evaluate state performance, the values for each indicator within these themes are compared to a common standard: the national average on each measure. Performance on the resulting group of measures creates a “learning



* These data were unavailable due to insufficient numbers of test takers and due to logistics problems with test administration beyond the state's control.

profile” for each of the five states. Each state’s performance is reflected by how many percentage points *above* or *below* this national level its value falls (see chart). The bars to the left of the vertical line show how many percentage points below the national average the state falls; bars to the right indicate how many percentage points above this benchmark the state performs.

Nevada Results

Nevada has a unique economy and a small, nonselective higher education system

composed entirely of public institutions. The state has performed at the lower end of most *Measuring Up* indicators with respect to preparation (receiving a D this year) and educational attainment. Below-average performance on national literacy exams reflects this (see chart).

Nevada faces an unprecedented teacher shortage as the state’s K–12 system tries to keep up with an expanding population; the state’s graduates appear ready to meet this challenge with an unusually high proportion going into teaching. A smaller proportion of graduates take licensure examinations governing entry to careers like nursing or physical therapy, though their pass-rates are competitive. A lower-than-average proportion of four-year graduates take graduate admissions examinations, and fewer of them earn competitive scores. This likely reflects lower levels of preparation for students entering college, and the fact that fewer students graduate from college (Nevada receives an F in completion this year).

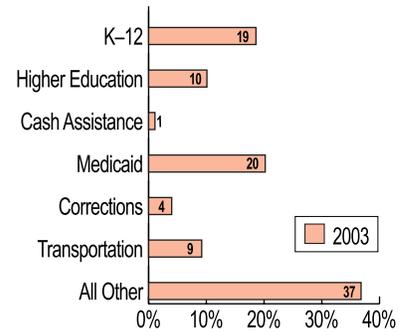
Students from two-year colleges are below national averages on all skill areas tested, especially writing. The performance of minority students appears to be a particular policy challenge. Nonwhite students in Nevada not only perform below their majority counterparts in the state but also below the levels that are typical of minority students in other states.

¹ A report on the results of the project will be released in November.

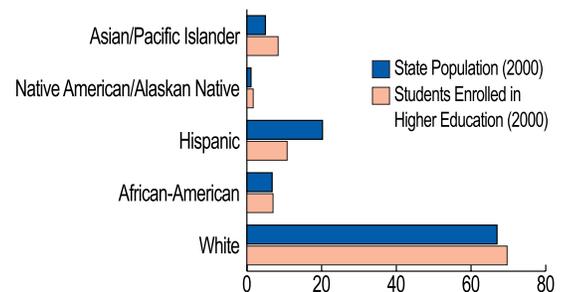
The learning results shown on this page are provided to make broad comparisons across states. But because relatively small numbers of students were tested on the exams under Performance of College Graduates, results should be treated with caution. Readers should look at the overall *pattern* of results in a state profile without making too much of the individual values for each measure.

State Context	Nevada	State Rank
Population (2003)	2,241,154	35
Gross state product (2001, in millions)	\$79,220	32
Leading Indicators	Nevada	U.S.
Projected % change in population, 2000-2015	16.5%	12.9%
Projected % change in number of all high school graduates, 2002-2017	145.2%	8.0%
Projected budget surplus/shortfall by 2010	-9.2%	-3.4%
Average income of poorest 20% of population (2002)	\$15,080	\$12,072
Children in poverty (2001)	14.0%	16.0%
Percent of adult population with less than a high school diploma or equivalent (2003)	14.4%	14.0%
New economy index (2002)*	55.7	60.3
Facts and Figures	Nevada	
	Number/Amount	Percent
Institutions of Postsecondary Education (2002-03)		
Public 4-year	2	
Public 2-year	4	
Private 4-year	3	
Private 2-year	5	
Students Enrolled by Institution Type (2001)		
Public 4-year	32,151	38%
Public 2-year	46,691	55%
Private 4-year	2,123	3%
Private 2-year	3,338	4%
Students Enrolled by Level (2001)		
Undergraduate	84,303	90%
Graduate	8,419	9%
Professional	646	1%
Enrollment Status of Students (2001)		
Full-time	38,337	41%
Part-time	55,031	59%
Net Migration of Students (2000)		
Positive numbers for net migration mean that more students are entering than leaving the state to attend college. Negative numbers reveal the reverse.	-523	
Average Tuition (2002-03)		
Public 4-year institutions	\$2,728	
Public 2-year institutions	\$1,507	
Private 4-year institutions	\$11,233	
State and Local Appropriations for Higher Education		
Per \$1,000 of personal income, FY 2004	\$7	
Per capita, FY 2004	\$215	
% change, FY 1994-2004		149%

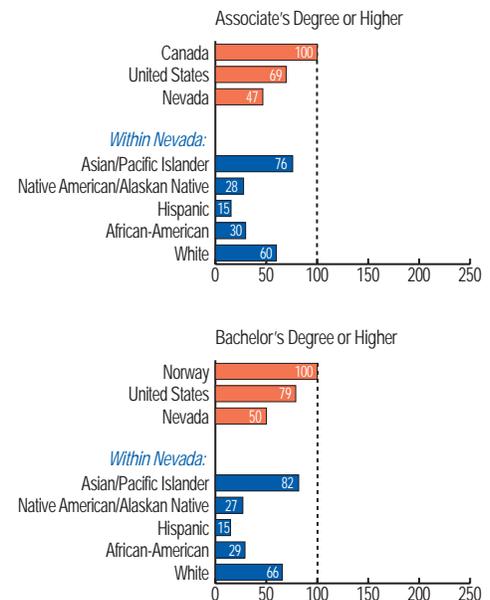
Share of State Appropriations



Ethnic Distribution (%)



Attainment of College Degrees in United States and Top Country, 25- to 34-year-olds (2000)



Note: These two charts compare performance in the U.S. to the performance of the top country, which receives a score of 100.

* This index, created by the Progressive Policy Institute, measures the extent to which a state is participating in knowledge-based industries. A higher score means increased participation.

Note: Percentages might not add to 100 due to rounding.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: Who is being graded in this report card, and why?

A: *Measuring Up 2004* grades states, not individual colleges or universities, on their performance in higher education. The states are responsible for preparing students for higher education through sound K–12 systems, and they provide most of the public financial support—\$69 billion currently—for colleges and universities. Through their oversight of public colleges and universities, state leaders affect the kind and number of programs available in the state. They determine the limits of financial support and often influence tuition and fees for public colleges and universities. They determine how much state-based financial aid to make available to students and their families, which affects students attending private as well as public colleges and universities.

Q: How are states graded?

A: The report card grades states in six performance categories: academic preparation, participation, affordability, completion, benefits, and learning. Each category is made up of several indicators, or quantitative measures—a total of 35 in the first five categories. Grades are calculated based on each state's performance on these indicators, relative to other states. *Measuring Up 2004* draws its data from the most recent public information available. Most of the data in *Measuring Up 2004* is from 2002 and 2003.

In the affordability category, *Measuring Up 2004* reflects the major changes in tuition and financial aid that occurred in 2003. In addition, each state's performance is now calculated in relation to the performance of top states a decade ago—rather than in relation to top states' current performance, as is the case with other graded categories. This change creates

a more stable basis for states to assess their performance in affordability, which is the most volatile of the graded categories.

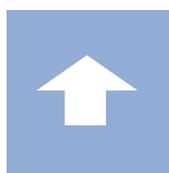
In the learning category, *Measuring Up 2004* reports information about five states (Illinois, Kentucky, Nevada, Oklahoma, and South Carolina) that participated in a pilot project on measuring learning. This report card gives these states a “Plus” for their efforts in assessing and measuring learning; however, all other states continue to receive an “Incomplete” in this category, as there is no information available to make state-by-state comparisons.

All data used to grade states in *Measuring Up 2004* were collected from national, reliable sources, including the U.S. Census and the U.S. Department of Education. All data are the most current available for state-by-state comparisons, are in the public domain, and were collected in ways that allow for effective comparisons among the states. The *Technical Guide* (available at www.highereducation.org) has information about sources used in *Measuring Up 2004*.

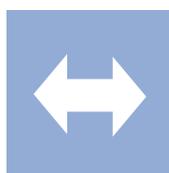
Q: What information is provided but not graded?

A: The state report cards highlight important gaps in college opportunities for various income and ethnic groups, and they identify improvements and setbacks in each state's performance over the past decade. In addition, the series of indicators measuring adult literacy skills (in the benefits category) is not being used to calculate grades in *Measuring Up 2004* because the data have not been updated in 12 years. As a temporary placeholder for these indicators, the National Center commissioned a study to estimate adult skill levels based on the 2000 Census. These estimates are provided in the charts found in the state report cards, but they are not used to calculate any grades.

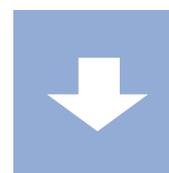
What do the arrows mean?



The state has improved on more than half of the indicators in the category.



The state has improved on some, but no more than half, of the indicators in the category.



The state has declined on every indicator in the category.

STATE GRADES

	Preparation	Participation	Affordability	Completion	Benefits
Alabama	D-	C	F	B-	C+
Alaska	B-	C	F	F	B
Arizona	D	B+	F	C+	B
Arkansas	C	C-	F	C	D+
California	C	A	B	C	A
Colorado	A-	B	D-	B-	A
Connecticut	A	A	F	B	A
Delaware	C+	C+	F	A-	A-
Florida	C	C	F	A-	B-
Georgia	C	D	F	B	B
Hawaii	C	B-	D	C	B
Idaho	C	C-	D-	C+	C
Illinois	B+	A	D	B	B-
Indiana	C	C+	D	B	C
Iowa	B+	B+	F	A	C
Kansas	B	A	F	B	B+
Kentucky	C-	B-	D-	C	B
Louisiana	F	D+	F	C	C
Maine	B	B-	F	B	B
Maryland	A-	A	F	B-	A
Massachusetts	A	A	F	A	A
Michigan	C	B+	F	C+	A-
Minnesota	B+	A	C-	B+	A
Mississippi	D+	D	F	B-	C
Missouri	B-	B	F	B	B
Montana	B+	C	F	C	C
Nebraska	B+	A	F	B	B
Nevada	D	C	F	F	C-
New Hampshire	B+	C+	F	A	A-
New Jersey	A	A-	D	B	A
New Mexico	F	A-	F	D	C+
New York	A	C+	F	B+	B
North Carolina	B	C+	D-	B	C
North Dakota	B	A-	F	B	C
Ohio	C+	C+	F	B	B-
Oklahoma	C-	C	F	C-	C+
Oregon	C	B-	F	C	B
Pennsylvania	B-	B	F	A	B
Rhode Island	C+	A	F	A	B+
South Carolina	C	C-	F	B	C
South Dakota	B	B+	F	B	C-
Tennessee	C-	C-	F	C+	C
Texas	C+	C	D	C	B-
Utah	A	C+	C	B	B
Vermont	C+	C	F	A	B-
Virginia	B+	B-	D-	B	A-
Washington	B-	C	F	A-	A-
West Virginia	C+	C-	F	C	D
Wisconsin	B+	B	D	A-	C+
Wyoming	C+	B	F	B+	D

MEASURING UP 2004 RESOURCES

To view *Measuring Up 2004* and its resources visit

www.highereducation.org

Select the *Measuring Up* icon

National Picture

- **Snapshot:** Performance overview on national maps
- **Improvement:** The nation's performance over the past decade
- **Download** the national report in PDF format

State Reports

- **State Report Cards:** A comprehensive picture of higher education in each state
- **Download** each state's report card in PDF format

Compare States

- **Graded Performance:** Compare state results by performance category
- **State Facts:** Compare non-graded state information
- **Index Scores (sort/compare/map):** Sort states by their rank within each category and create a national map based on individual indicator scores

Commentary

- **Foreword,** by James B. Hunt Jr., Chairman, and Garrey Carruthers, Vice Chairman of the National Center's Board of Directors
- **A Message** from Governor Mark R. Warner, Governor of Virginia and Chairman of the National Governors Association

- **A Ten-Year Perspective: Higher Education Stalled Despite High School Improvement,** by Patrick M. Callan, President of the National Center

- **Grading Learning: Extending the Concept**
- Special reports forthcoming

News Room

- **National Press Release**
- **State Press Releases**
- **Press Contact Information**

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- Questions and Answers about *Measuring Up 2004*
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