



# Straight A's

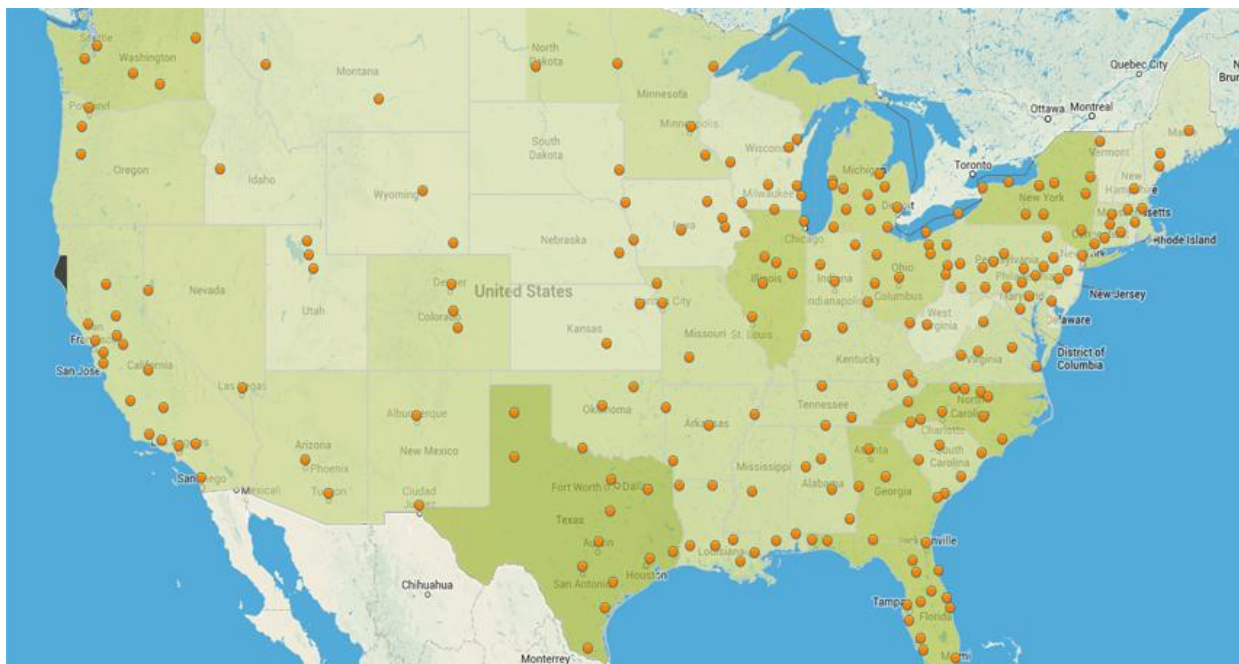
Public Education Policy And Progress



## **EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMY: New Alliance Economic Analysis Links Increased Educational Attainment to Economic Growth in 200+ Metro Areas**

With all eyes on the economy this month, new findings from the Alliance for Excellent Education further cement the connection between improved education outcomes and economic gains at the national, state, and local levels. According to the detailed analysis, increasing the national high school graduation rate to 90 percent for just one high school class would create as many as 65,700 new jobs and boost the national economy by as much as \$10.9 billion. The nation would also see increases in home and automobile sales of as much as \$16.8 billion and \$877 million, respectively, and an annual increase in federal and state tax revenues of as much as \$1.3 billion and \$661 million, respectively.

These findings and more have been infused into a sophisticated and highly interactive map-based website, [impact.all4ed.org](http://impact.all4ed.org). The website combines the latest education data on high school and college graduation rates, college preparedness data, literacy, employment, and more to demonstrate the economic impact of increasing the high school graduation rate to 90 percent for the nation as a whole, all fifty states and the District of Columbia, and more than 200 metro areas. The metro areas included in the analysis are indicated with an orange dot in the map below. (Click on the map below for a larger image.)



“During this time of economic uncertainty, the best economic stimulus is a high school diploma,” said **Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and former governor of West Virginia**. “Individuals who graduate from high school help themselves in the form of increased earnings and better life outcomes, but they also help boost national, state, and local economies.”

In addition to the projected benefits listed above, the national economy is already expected to receive an additional \$17.3 billion dollars in income from recent increases in the high school graduation rate between the 2010–11 and 2011–12 school years.

“All the hard work to raise high school graduation rates in recent years has a definite positive dollars-and-cents impact,” Wise said.

This work, which was made possible through generous support from State Farm<sup>®</sup>, builds on the Alliance’s previous work linking education and the economy and provides clear evidence that education is the only currency in an information-age economy.

“The Alliance’s findings make clear that jobs, our economy, and education are inextricably linked,” said **Edward B. Rust Jr., chairman and chief executive officer of State Farm<sup>®</sup>**. “Today’s students will become a significant portion of our future workforce. Ensuring that each one has access to a high-quality education is not just the right thing to do; it’s also the smart thing—both for the individual and the economy.”

“Compared to high school dropouts, high school graduates are [less likely to be unemployed](#), [less likely to tangle with the criminal justice system](#), and [more likely to have positive life outcomes](#), including better health and a longer life span,” said Wise. “But as these findings show, the individual isn’t the only one who benefits—we all do.”

The Alliance calculated the economic impacts associated with increased high school graduation rates by analyzing state economies through a sophisticated economic input-output model created by Economic Modeling Specialists Inc., an Idaho-based economic firm specializing in socioeconomic impact tools.

The findings are based on the most current economic data available from sources including the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and are comparable to results from similar studies that forecast the economic impact of education at the state and national levels.

Dropout data included in the model for each state were calculated by Editorial Projects in Education’s Research Center using the Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) method. The CPI was used in this analysis because it is the most readily available method that allows for a universal comparison of graduation counts across school districts and states.

Visit [impact.all4ed.org](http://impact.all4ed.org) to explore the findings and see additional information, including technical notes and frequently asked questions.

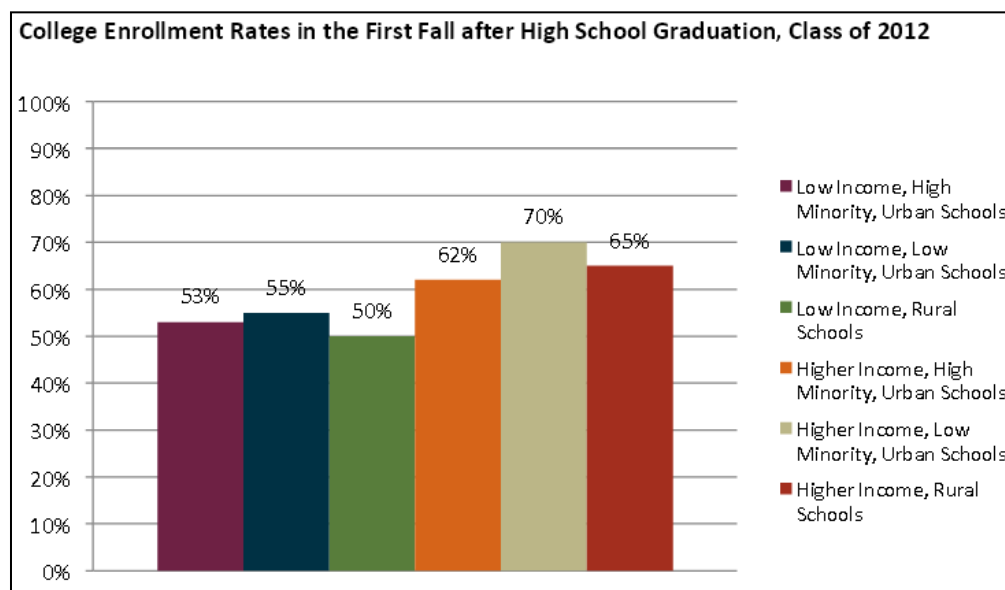


## **HIGH SCHOOL BENCHMARKS: Poverty Biggest Factor in Transition from High School Graduation to College Enrollment, New Report Finds**

High schools with a larger number of low-income students had lower college enrollment rates than schools with mostly higher-income students, regardless of the number of minority students or where the schools were located, finds a new report from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. And, once enrolled in college, students from low-income high schools were less likely to persist to their sophomore year. The report, *High School Benchmarks Report: National College Progression Rates*, provides high school-to-college transition rates for public high school graduates for the Class of 2010 through the Class of 2012.

“This report underscores our need to fully realize that the biggest factor limiting the academic success of our students is poverty,” said **Daniel A. Domenech, executive director of AASA, the School Superintendents Association**. “[The report] should signal a call to action to educate the total child—all aspects of child development—in order to transform America’s school systems so more students enter college. It’s up to our political, community, and business leaders to help close the achievement gap, which unfortunately begins before children ever come to school.”

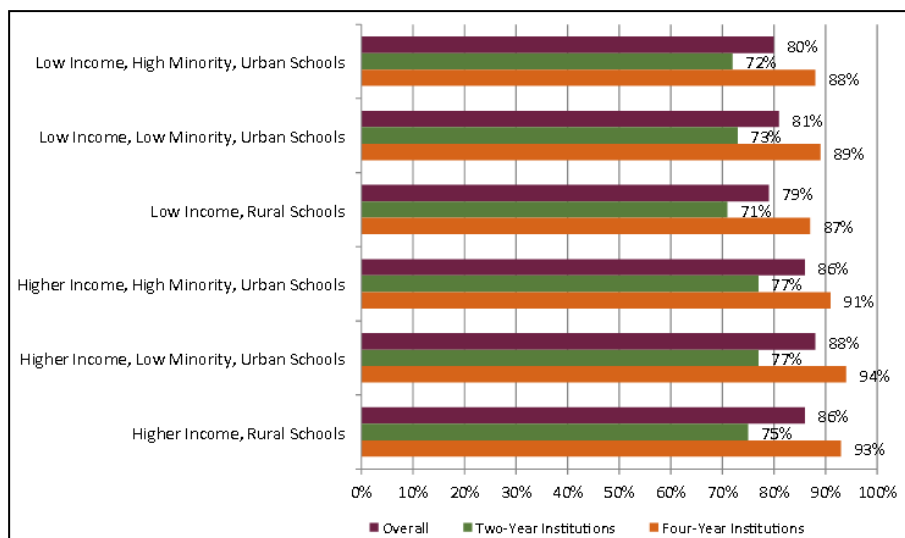
As shown in the graph below, only half of students attending low-income rural high schools enrolled in college (two- or four-year institutions) in the fall immediately following their high school graduation—the lowest of six types of high schools profiled in the report. Students from higher-income, low-minority urban high schools (70 percent) were most likely to transition immediately to college with no gap after high school graduation, followed by students from higher-income rural high schools (65 percent).<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> In the report, low-income schools are defined as schools in which at least 50 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Minority schools are defined as schools in which at least 40 percent of the students are black or Hispanic. Urban/rural is defined by the National Center for Education Statistics urban centric locale code; city, suburb, and town schools are defined as urban and schools in rural areas are defined as rural.

Students from low-income, rural high schools (28 percent) were also the least likely to enroll in a four-year institution in the fall after high school graduation, followed by students from low-income, high-minority urban high schools (30 percent) and low-income, low-minority urban schools (30 percent). Students from higher-income, low-minority high schools (48 percent) were most likely to enroll in four-year institutions. The inverse was true for two-year institutions, with students from low-income high schools more likely to enroll than students from higher-income high schools, the report finds.

The report also examines persistence rates from the first to second year of college for the Class of 2010. Overall, at least 79 percent of students from all of the six types of high schools studied made it to their second year, but students from higher-income high schools fared better than their peers from low-income high schools.



As shown in the graph to the right, 88 percent of students from higher-income, low-minority urban high schools made it to their sophomore year of college, compared to only 79 percent of students from low-income rural schools.

The data in the report comes from the high schools that participated in the StudentTracker for High Schools service administered by the National Student Clearinghouse. The report cautions that the data does not comprise a nationally representative sample of high schools or high school graduates. However, the data is a “large and broad” sample that covers about one-quarter of all U.S. high school graduates from all fifty states and more than 15 percent of U.S. high schools. Participating high schools pay an annual fee of \$425 to receive three reports during the year detailing the postsecondary access and success outcomes for up to eight cohorts of their graduating classes.

“This report fills in knowledge gaps at a time when there is increased focus on the transition from secondary to postsecondary education,” said **Dr. Doug Shapiro, executive director of the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center**. “For the first time, high schools can compare their own graduates’ college enrollment rates with those for similar high schools. As this report will be repeated annually, it will help high schools to learn what works for improving college access for their students.”

The complete report is available at <http://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/HighSchoolBenchmarks2013.pdf>.



## **EMBRACING LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY: New Alliance Report Demonstrates How Seattle Public Schools Prepares English Language Learners for Success in a Globalized World**

Using Seattle Public Schools (SPS) as a model, a new report from the Alliance for Excellent Education shows how high-quality curriculum and innovative school designs that support the use of students' home languages, as well as English, produce better outcomes for English language learners (ELLs). The report, *Embracing Linguistic Diversity: The Role of Teacher Leaders in Building Seattle's Pipeline of International Schools*, also shows how SPS develops educators who value diversity and emphasize language development to further a districtwide focus on international education and global competency.

“At Seattle Public Schools, students' languages and diverse backgrounds are seen as assets, not liabilities,” said **Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and former governor of West Virginia**. “Students develop an understanding of their own race and identity as well as the culture and identity of others, leading them to become lifelong learners. In this way, all students, including English language learners, receive a high-quality education that prepares them for a technologically advanced, global economy.”

The report, which was written with support from MetLife Foundation, focuses on two “international” schools in Seattle—Denny International Middle School (DIMS) and Chief Sealth International High School (CSIHS)—that require students to learn a second language, putting ELLs and native English speakers on equal footing and preparing them for an economy that increasingly demands foreign language skills. More than 60 percent of the students at both schools are low-income, and one-third come from homes where a language other than English is spoken.

At the core of the SPS program are teacher leaders. Developing and retaining talented, skilled leaders who can engage students is one of the district's top priorities. To meet this goal, the district provides professional support and permits teacher leaders to exercise leadership and establish shared priorities and expectations for educating ELLs as part of a multicultural, global learning community. The SPS initiative encourages teachers to develop students' twenty-first-century knowledge, skills, and dispositions by building on the assets that students bring to the learning process.

“Teacher leaders must develop and practice the same global competencies that we aim to teach our students,” said **Noah Zeichner, a National Board–certified teacher at CSIHS**. “Highly nuanced communication and collaboration skills are essential for teacher leaders as we provide constructive feedback to our colleagues while navigating challenging political climates and antiquated school leadership structures.”

*Embracing Linguistic Diversity* lays out a set of policy recommendations to aid school districts in creating effective school designs, including (1) establishing shared responsibility for educating ELLs; (2) cultivating a schoolwide focus on language development; and (3) developing educators who value diversity and incorporate tools for language development into rigorous course work.

“As states adopt new college- and career-ready standards, it is critical that schools develop and support all students, particularly the fast-growing ELL population,” Wise said. “Seattle Public Schools provides an excellent model for this.”

On November 7, **Mariana Haynes, senior fellow at the Alliance and author of the report**, will moderate a webinar on *Embracing Linguistic Diversity* that will examine what lessons can be learned about how Seattle’s international schools leverage students’ linguistic and cultural assets to prepare them for a rapidly changing, competitive global society.

The webinar will feature Zeichner and **Karen Kodama, international education administrator for Seattle Public Schools**, who will provide an overview of the design of Seattle Public Schools’s pipeline of international schools. **Brandon Wiley, executive director of the International Studies Schools Network at the Asia Society**, will discuss Asia Society’s national network of international studies schools and how international best practice can inform their design. **Lisa Clarke, a teacher ambassador and 2013 Washington Teaching Ambassador Fellow from the U.S. Department of Education**, will share the U.S. Department of Education’s international strategy to prepare today’s youth for a globalized world.

Additional information on the webinar, including instructions on how to RSVP, are available at <http://all4ed.org/webinar/nov-7-2013/>.

*Embracing Linguistic Diversity: The Role of Teacher Leaders in Building Seattle’s Pipeline of International Schools* is available at <http://all4ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/LinguisticDiversity.pdf>.



### **EXPERT PERSPECTIVES: Education Leaders Weigh-In on How to Prepare Teachers in the Digital Age**

As schools, classrooms, and districts move toward more sophisticated instructional technologies to successfully implement higher college- and career-ready standards, educator-preparation programs must equip future educators with the necessary skills to use technology effectively to personalize instruction and increase student engagement.

A new report from the Alliance for Excellent Education’s Center for Digital Learning, *Expert Perspectives: Future of Teacher Preparation in the Digital Age*, shares views from experienced educators and national education leaders about the challenges and opportunities of teacher-preparation programs in the digital age. The report provides advice for prospective teachers who are transitioning to learner-centered instructional models, recommendations on state certification requirements, and a call to action to recruit qualified teachers to support English language learners.

“As the U.S. education system embraces digital learning, the teaching profession needs to change the way the nation’s teachers are prepared,” said **Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and former governor of West Virginia**. “Who better to ask how to make this change than people in schools and classrooms who see the need every day?”

Some questions the expert panel considered include:

- Should teacher-preparation programs be different for “traditional” and “alternative” routes to certification?”
- What legislation and certification measures can state policymakers enact to improve teacher-preparation programs and their connection to the needs of districts?
- How can the K–12 and higher education systems collaborate to ensure that teacher candidates can transition seamlessly from higher education institutions into a learner-centered classroom where personalized learning for each student includes rigorous content delivered through technology in a collaborative environment?
- What concrete steps can be taken now to enable colleges and universities to assume leadership in creating innovative teaching practices?
- How can advances in teacher preparation and technology integration address the urgent need for qualified teachers to support English language learners?

The report contains perspectives from seven leaders in education: **Barnett Berry, president and chief executive officer for the Center for Teaching Quality; Tom Carroll, president of the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future; Charlie Coble, cofounder and partner of Teacher Preparation Analytics; Sharon Robinson, president of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; Lynne Schrum, dean of West Virginia University College of Education and Human Services; Ronald Thorpe, president and chief executive officer of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and Mary Ann Wolf, president of WolfEd.**

*Expert Perspectives: Future of Teacher Preparation in the Digital Age* is a featured resource in the Center for Digital Learning’s Project 24: Plan for Progress initiative and is available at <http://plan4progress.org/files/3513/8213/4343/ExpertPerspectivesTeacherPrep.pdf>.

***Straight A’s: Public Education Policy and Progress*** is a free biweekly newsletter that focuses on education news and events in Washington, DC and around the country. The format makes information on federal education policy accessible to everyone from elected officials and policymakers to parents and community leaders. Contributors include Jason Amos, editor; Cyndi Waite; and Kate Bradley.

The Alliance for Excellent Education is a Washington, DC–based national policy and advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that all students, particularly those traditionally underserved, graduate from high school ready for success in college, work, and citizenship. For more information, visit [www.all4ed.org](http://www.all4ed.org). Follow the Alliance on Twitter ([www.twitter.com/all4ed](https://twitter.com/all4ed)), Facebook ([www.facebook.com/all4ed](https://www.facebook.com/all4ed)), and the Alliance’s “High School Soup” blog ([www.all4ed.org/blog](http://www.all4ed.org/blog)).