



Paper Thin?


Why All High School Diplomas Are Not Created Equal

New Alliance Report Uncovers Gaps in Access to College- and Career-Ready Diplomas

Of the nearly 100 different types of high school diplomas that are awarded across all fifty states and the District of Columbia, less than half prepare students for success in college and a career, according to a new Alliance report. And while the national high school graduation rate is at an all-time high, the rate at which students earn these college- and career-ready (CCR) diplomas is substantially lower, especially among students from low-income families, students of color, and other traditionally underserved students.

[Read the Report](#)

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How MC² STEM High School Connects Deeper Learning to Real-World Experiences

Don't expect to find students sitting passively in neatly rowed desks at MC² STEM High School. It's far more likely to see students cutting plywood with laser cutters or driving remote-controlled robots down the hall at this open-enrollment high school dedicated to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). The school fosters an atmosphere of innovation, both in its physical structure and its approach to instruction, that empowers students to direct their own learning.

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 [Click to Tweet:](#) How does @MC2STEMHigh connect #deeperlearning to real-world experiences? Find out: bit.ly/2uOgDFr



How Estonia Became a World Leader in Science

Estonia, the northernmost of the Baltic countries, has a population of 1.3 million people, roughly the size of the population of Maine or New Hampshire. Although it is one of the poorest countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), with a 2014 per capita gross domestic product of \$28,140 compared to the OECD average of \$39,333, Estonia has one of the strongest education systems among OECD countries. The nation boasts above-average results on PISA, almost

universal access to pre-primary education, and a rate of educational attainment at the secondary level that is among the highest in the European Union and among OECD member nations. So how does Estonia do it?

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Which Students Are More Likely to be Victims of School Violence? New Report Provides Answers

A new survey from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) identifies national trends in school violence by asking a nationally representative sample of school principals about the prevalence of violence and crime in their schools. This latest report includes responses from more than 2,000 school principals.

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In Case You Missed It



Federal Flash: U.S. House of Representatives Tackles ESSA Implementation and Education Funding

This Federal Flash provides highlights from the recent U.S. House education committee hearing on opportunities and challenges facing educators as they implement the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). It also examines funding cuts to education programs that were included in a bill that passed the U.S. House Appropriations Committee.

[Watch the Video](#)

[Click to Tweet:](#) Get highlights from the latest #ESSA hearing & updates on education funding in #FederalFlash: Watch at all4ed.org/FederalFlash.

Alliance in the News

ESSA in States

Many states either are ignoring or violating provisions under ESSA in several areas of their state plans, said the Alliance's Phillip Lovell at a recent House education committee hearing, reports *Education Week*.

[Learn More](#)

Lovell also emphasized the importance of the U.S. Department of Education enforcing the requirement that states test at least 95 percent of all students to ensure that data accurately shows disparities in performance of students from low income families and students of color. *EdSource* explores the importance of this topic.

[Read More](#)

Who Gets Hurt When High School Diplomas Are Not Created Equal?

One of the uncomfortable truths of the high school graduation business is that not all diplomas are created equal. Some are strong, and signify that students are well prepared for good jobs or postsecondary schooling. Others are weak, and leave students unprepared to do much of anything.

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Recommended Reading



School segregation didn't go away. It just evolved.

They said their schools were already overcrowded and underfunded, so why should they bus in other kids who weren't part of their community? Here's what they hinted at - what everyone knew but was never articulated: They were carving out a more affluent, more white area and starting their own school district with it.

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Foster Care as Punishment: The New Reality of 'Jane Crow'

"We've inflicted the most devastating remedy we have on these families, then we're basically saying, within a month, 'Sorry, our mistake' and these families are left to deal with the consequences."

[Read More](#)



Why the Myth of Meritocracy Hurts Kids of Color

A new study finds that believing society is fair can lead disadvantaged adolescents to act out and engage in risky behavior.

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[Ask the Alliance!](#)



Do you have a question about policy implementation in your state or district? How about a question on the best or promising practices for improving high schools? Ask the Alliance! The Alliance will share concise, research-backed answers, with resources, that you can use to inform your work. Visit all4ed.org/ask-the-alliance/ to learn more.

Ask the Alliance

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Grateful for opportunity to join [@All4Ed](#), [@LouisianaSupe](#), [@NASBE](#), & state leaders to discuss [#ESSA](#) as a lever for advancing equity.



All4Ed @All4Ed
"If we fail to educate low-income students and students of color, we fail as a country." @JohnBKing @EdTrust #ESSAinNOLA #ESSA

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SGR
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Dr. Steiner: The "average student" is mythical. ALL curricula needs to be tailored to student needs [#ESSAinNOLA](#) [@All4Ed](#)

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"Students shouldn't have to fail on everything in order to qualify for additional support," Lovell [@All4Ed](#) says. [#ESSA](#)

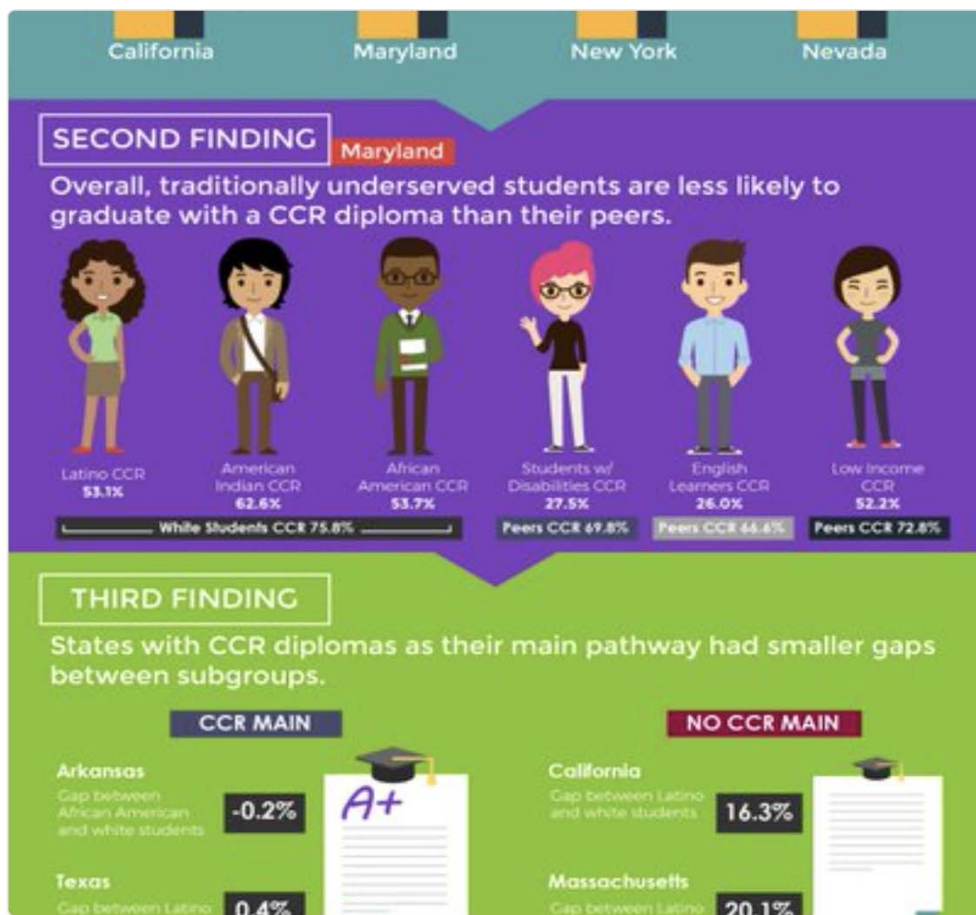
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Infographic summarizing @all4ed's new report on gaps in access to college- & career-ready diplomas. Download report: all4ed.org/DiplomaPathway...



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A Summer Postcard from the Alliance for Excellent Education

Dear Straight A's Reader:

With schools around the country out for summer and vacations underway across the U.S., the Alliance newsletter-although not the Alliance staff-will be taking a brief summer vacation.

The next issue of Straight A's will be on September 12. In the meantime, please follow the Alliance on Twitter at www.twitter.com/all4ed and visit the Alliance's "[High School Soup](http://www.all4ed.org/high-school-soup)" blog for the latest education news. Also, keep an eye on the Alliance's website for upcoming webinars at <http://all4ed.org/webinars>.

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