



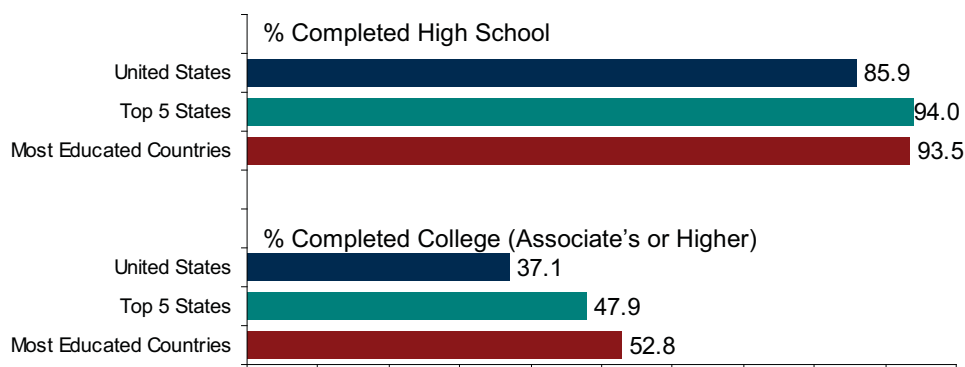
Adult Learning in Focus: National and State-by-State Data Highlights From the Report CAEL and NCHEMS 2008

This pamphlet provides some of the highlights from Adult Learning in Focus: National and State-by-State Data, a 2008 report from the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), produced with funding from Lumina Foundation for Education and in partnership with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS).

Reclaiming a U.S. Strength

There is a strong and growing argument for higher educational attainment in the United States. The benefits of an educated citizenry include higher wages and greater productivity as well as increased economic opportunities, social mobility, quality of life and civic engagement. Higher levels of education are associated with decreased reliance on government financial assistance. Also, growth in personal income – influenced by higher levels of educational attainment – yields greater returns to a state in the form of tax revenues. The jobs that are expected to support our economy in the coming years will depend on a skilled workforce that is able to learn and adapt quickly to new challenges. Yet, the U.S. has lost its position as education leader of the world.

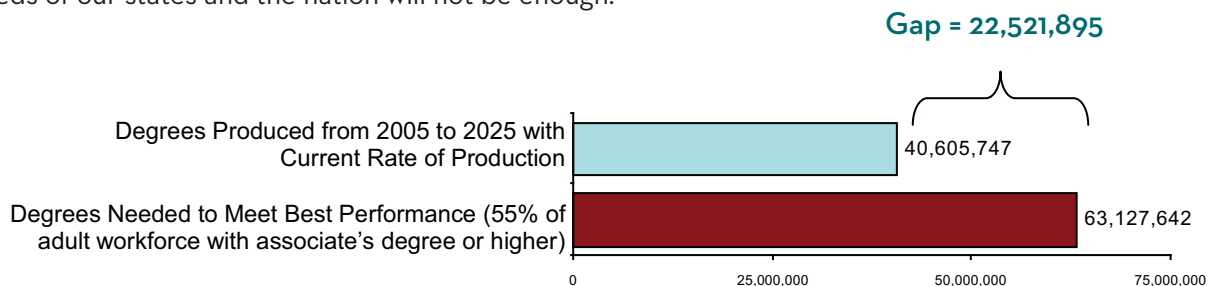
Young Adults in the U.S. Compared to the Best Performing States and Countries (Age 25 to 34)



Note: The most educated countries in 2005 include Korea, Japan and Canada.

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey; OECD 2005

Demographic patterns demonstrate that relying on the traditional K-16 pipeline to meet the educational and workforce needs of our states and the nation will not be enough.



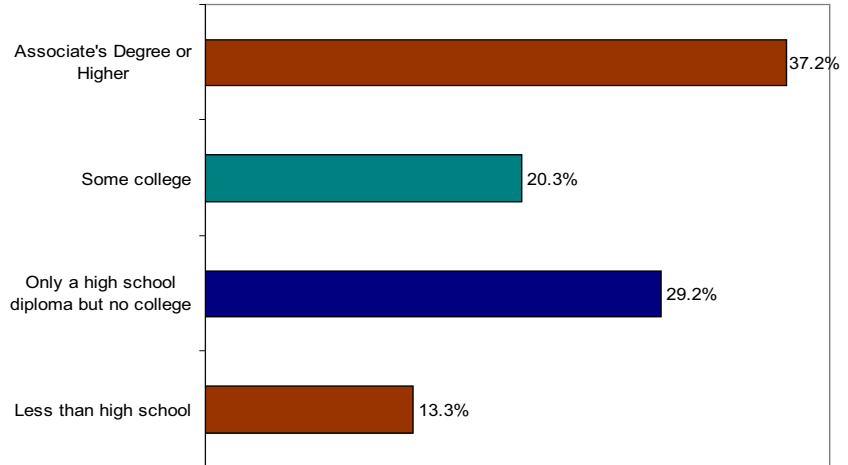
NCHEMS and JFF, Adding it Up, 2007

The Potential of Adult Learning in the U.S.

Not enough is known or has been publicized about the scope and potential of adult learning in the U.S. But what we do know is striking: In the U.S., more than 59 million people, or nearly 30 percent of the adult population, have a high school diploma and have never taken a college level course. However, 20 percent of the adult population have a high school diploma and have taken some college. This is a population that can be targeted for re-enrollment strategies.

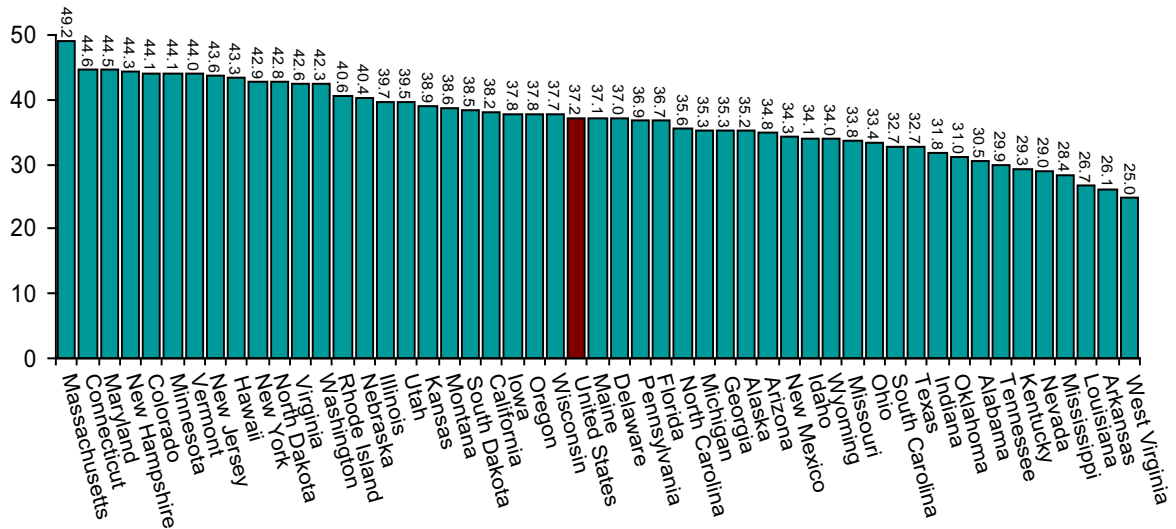
In 35 states, more than 60 percent of the population does not have an associate's degree or higher.

U.S. Educational Attainment (Age 25-64), 2006



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS

Percentage of Adults Age 25-64 with an Associate's Degree or Higher, 2006



U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (Public Use Microdata Samples)

Adults in Educational Programs

The good news is that adults are making up an ever larger share of the total enrollment in postsecondary institutions. By 2004, adults made up approximately 43 percent of total enrollment at community colleges (includes full-time and part-time).

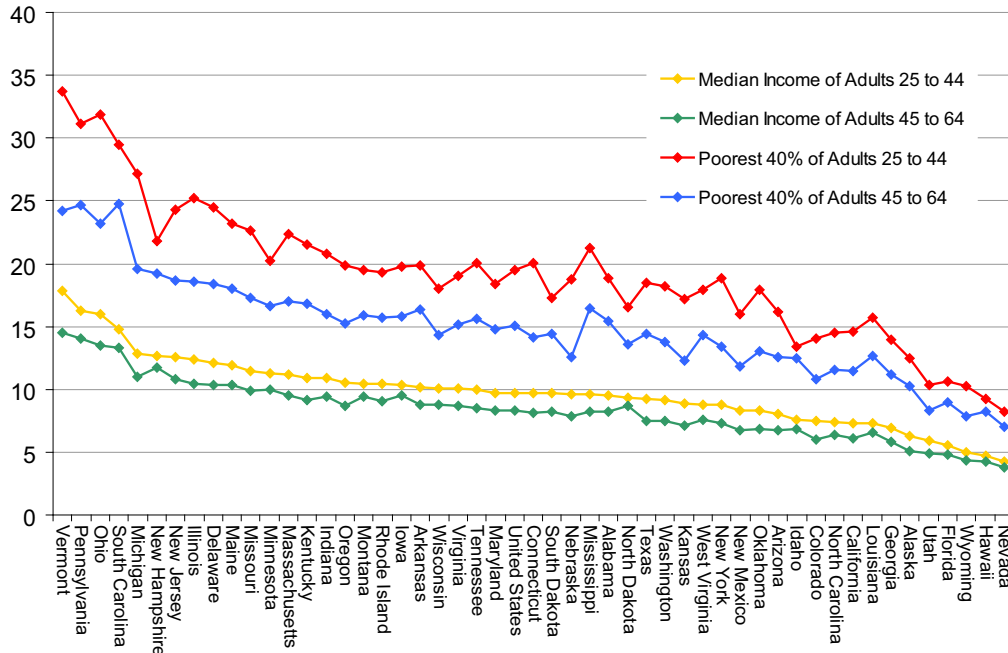
States vary widely in terms of how well they are meeting the adult learning needs. The Adult Learning in Focus report provides state-by-state and national data on:

- the proportion of adults with only a high school diploma who are enrolled in associate's or bachelor's degree programs
- the proportion of adults without high school diplomas who are awarded GEDs
- the proportion of adults with low literacy levels enrolled in adult basic education
- the proportion of adults who do not speak English enrolled in ESL programs

Can They Afford an Education?

There is variation in how affordable college tuition is for different population groups. Nationally, public four year college tuition and fees constitute 19.5 percent of median income for the poorest 25- to 44-year-olds and 15 percent of median income for the poorest 45- to 64-year-olds. State variations are shown in the graph below.

Public Four-Year Undergraduate Tuition and Fees as a Percent of Median Family Income by Age-Group and Income-Level (2005-06)

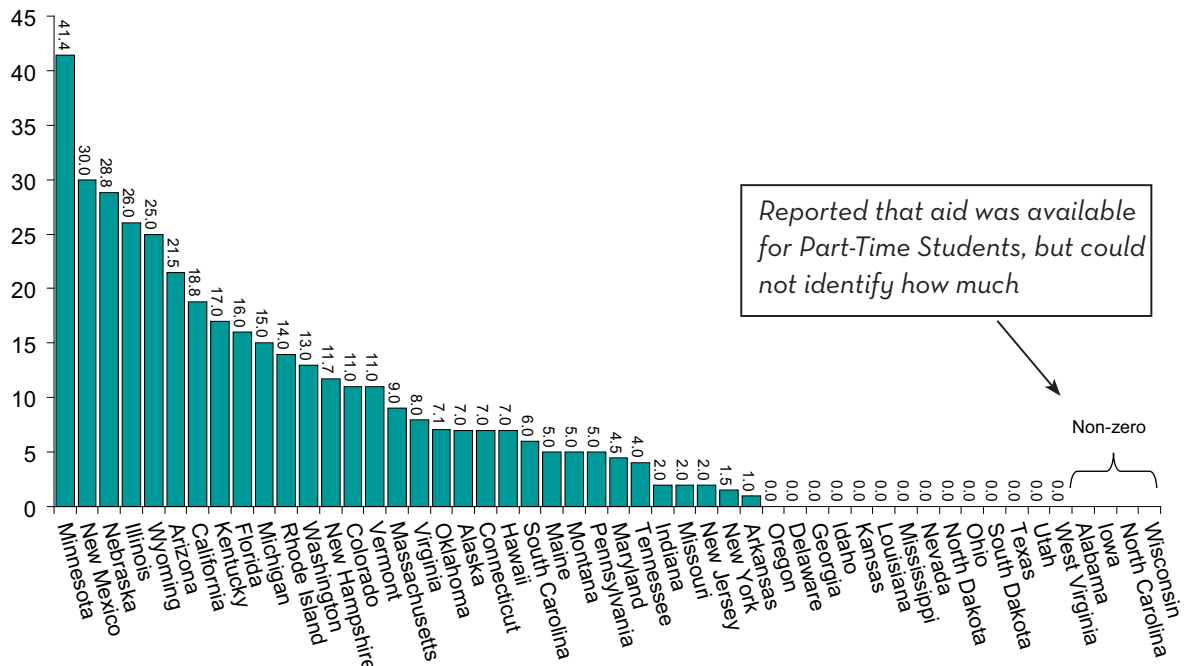


U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 ACS (Public Use Microdata Samples); IPEDS Institutional Characteristics Survey

State Financial Aid for Part-time Students

States vary widely in their direct aid to part-time students, many of whom are the adult workforce. Fourteen states do not provide any need-based aid to part-time students, and another seventeen states devote less than 10 percent of need-based aid funds to part-timers.

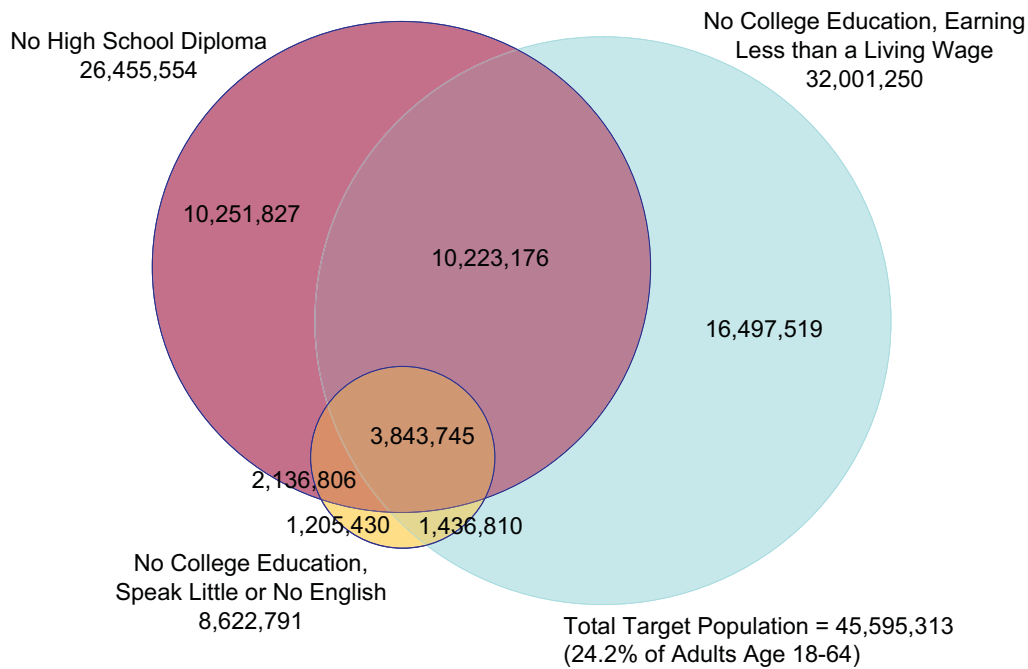
Proportion of Need-Based Aid Distributed to Part-Time Students, 2004-05



Source: NCHEMS Student Financial Aid Survey

Multiple Barriers Facing Many Who Lack a College Degree

Nationally, of the more than 45 million adults who do not have a college degree: over 8 million have not attended college and speak little or no English, more than 32 million are earning less than a living wage, and more than 10 million have the dual barrier of no high school diploma and the inability to earn a living wage.



U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (Public Use Microdata Samples)

The complete **Adult Learning in Focus: National and State-by-State Data** can be found at www.cael.org/adultlearninginfocus.htm. The site also connects you to additional publications and resources, including:

Individual state profiles for each of the fifty states, together with customized text highlighting distinctive policy challenges or advantages

A guide for policymakers on the implications of the data and recommendations for action. This guide also includes an Adult Learning Policy Review Framework to help states undertake a systematic adult learning policy audit and to aid efforts to change policies that affect adult learner participation and success.

Links to other useful publications on adult learning and workforce development policies and practices.

A link to NCHEMS' Information Center for State Higher Education Policymaking and Analysis, which provides access to a comprehensive database on higher education in the United States, including a new section with adult learning indicators, www.higheredinfo.org. (Selected adult learning indicators will be updated and maintained over time.)

Produced by:

The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)

and The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)

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