2017-19 Educational Attainment - Update

Washington's Goals For 2023:

100% of adults* will have a high school diploma or equivalent.

70% of adults will need a postsecondary credential or degree.

But in 2013:

90% of adults had a high school diploma or equivalent.

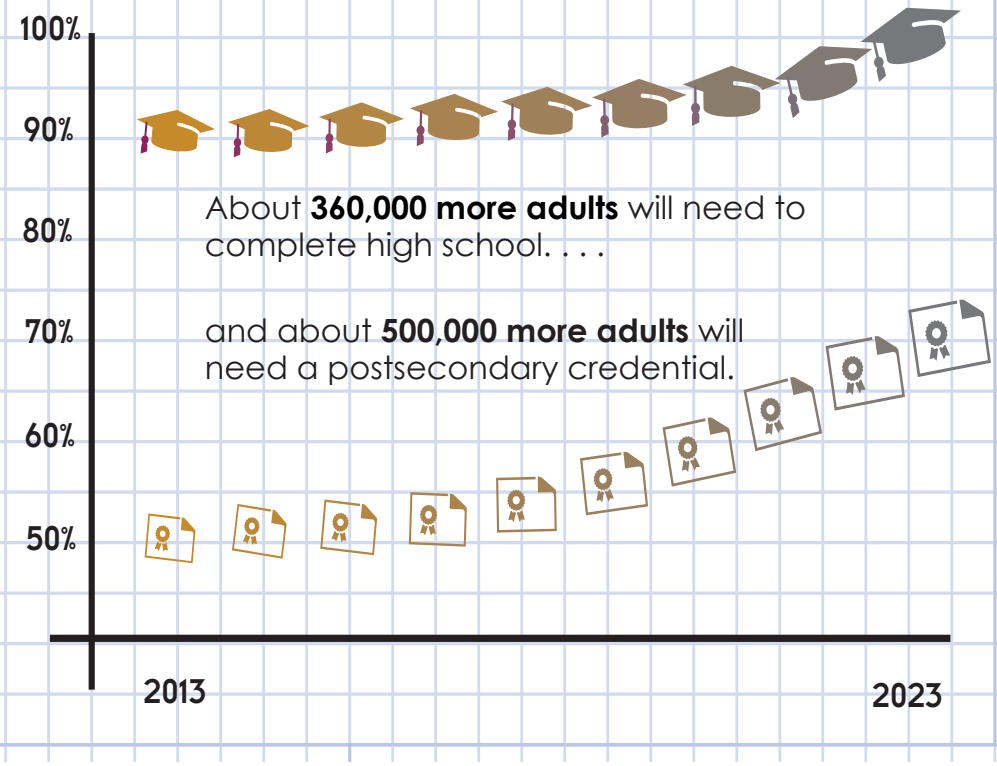
51% of adults had a postsecondary credential or degree.

Both high school and postsecondary attainment levels increased only one percentage point between 2011 and 2013.

*Throughout this document, the term *adults* refers to those ages 25–44, unless noted otherwise.

Overall attainment gains are inadequate to meet the state's goals by 2023.

To keep pace with population growth and workforce demand:



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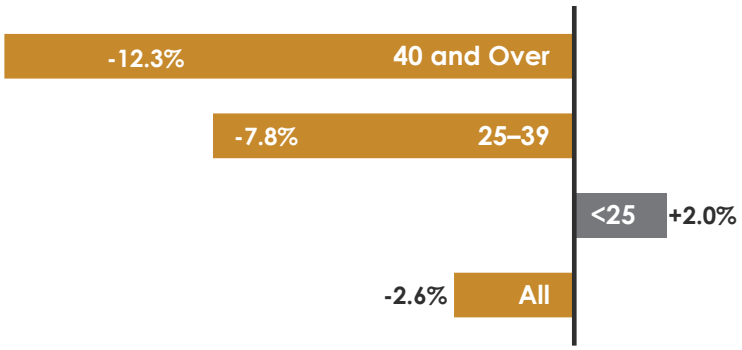
A Plan to Increase Educational Attainment in Washington

Success depends upon serving populations we have not adequately reached within our education system.

Roughly 700,000 Washington adults ages 17–54 have earned some college credit, but haven't completed a degree.

Percent Change in Enrollment by Age Group From 2011 to fall 2013

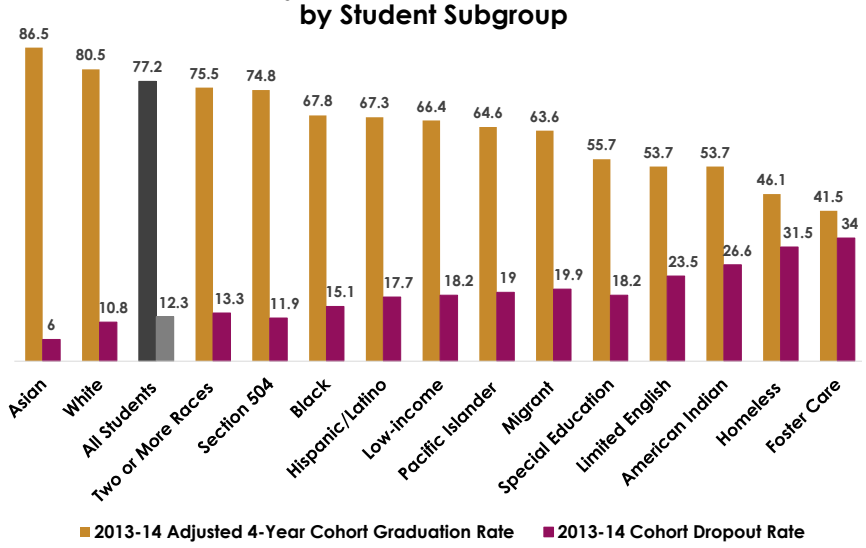


- Two out of three of these adults have a year or more of college credit, but don't have a degree.
- Earnings remain stagnant until workers earn their associate degree.
- Enrollments of students ages 25 years and older declined by almost 14,000 during the reporting period.

The fastest growing student populations are historically underserved in K-12 and underrepresented in higher education.

- Although Hispanic/Latinos are about 13% of Washington's adult population, they are almost 50% of the adult population that hasn't completed high school.
- African Americans are 4% of Washington's adult population, but they account for only 2.8% of adults with an associate degree or higher.

2013-14 Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation and Dropout Rates by Student Subgroup



Affordability remains an issue:

Despite the Governor and the Legislature lowering tuition at public institutions in 2015-16, students are covering 58 percent of the cost at public four-year institutions, far above the pre-recession share of 38 percent. And financial need remains high, as financial applications have increased 50 percent since the great recession. Every year since 2009, approximately one-third of eligible and enrolled students did not receive the State Need Grant due to underfunding. Financial constraints are the key reason that many students don't finish their credential.

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