

West Virginia

Alliance of States

Big goals

West Virginia's five-year Master Plan for West Virginia Higher Education lays much of the groundwork needed to boost graduation rates and to set up its residents for success in the global economy. Gov. Joe Manchin III has indicated he will make completion a priority as the incoming chair of the National Governors Association.

For more information on West Virginia's leadership in improving college completion, see:

[Master Plan for West Virginia Higher Education, 2007-2012](#)

West Virginia sees improving graduation rates as an important vehicle for creating jobs and stimulating economic growth. West Virginia has the nation's lowest percentage of residents with bachelor's degrees, at 17.3 percent.

Leadership for success

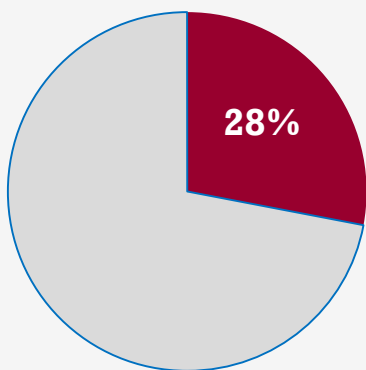
West Virginia has created performance-based funding models, but has yet to put the models into practice. The delay comes as the state wrestles with severe resource shortages, and recently-raised questions by some over whether the state's 11 four-year colleges are too many given its relatively small population. A recent audit noted that some four-year colleges have graduation rates of 20 percent, which Gov. Manchin called unacceptable.

Although a record 93,712 students were enrolled in colleges and universities this past fall, the state's college-going rate is below the national average. Much of that college-going population, however, are adults working their way through school while supporting families, or are working and taking classes part-time.

Relative to the United States as a whole, a disproportionate number of the state's college students are financially poor and are the first members of their families to attend college, a demographic with traditionally low completion rates. These factors make the governor and state policymakers eager to develop new ways to measure college success that will reflect the challenge and support that West Virginia students need.

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By the end of this decade, more than 60% of jobs will require college education.¹



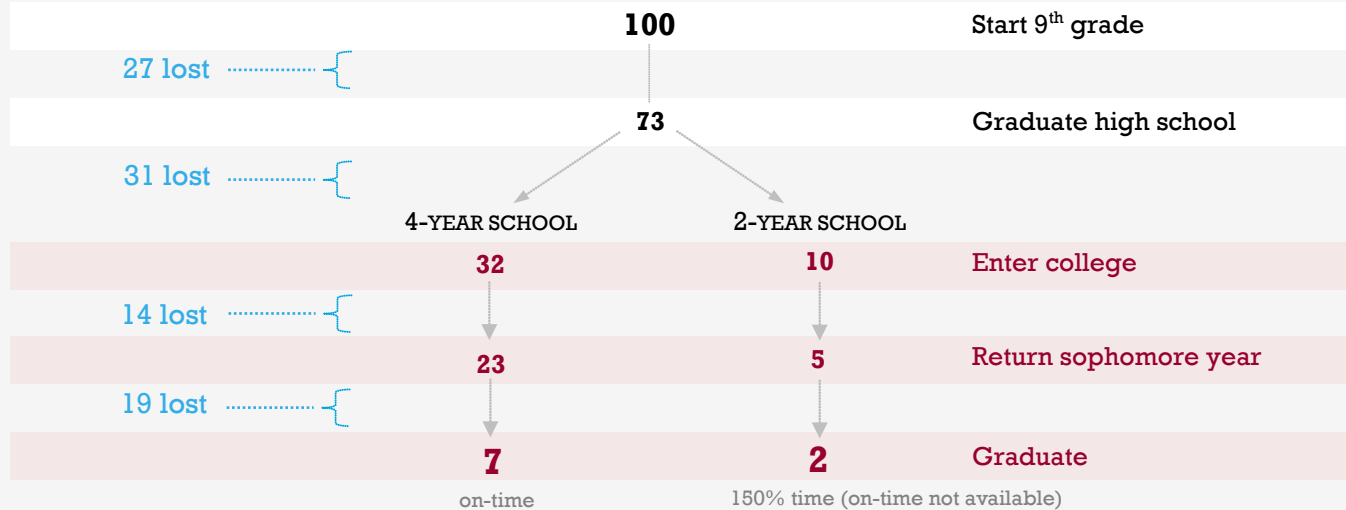
Today, 28% of West Virginia's adults aged 25-34 have a college degree.²

Job growth across the U.S., 2010-2020:

High-growth jobs	Required education
Dental hygienist	Associate degree
Computer software engineer	Bachelor's degree
HVAC/refrigeration mechanic	Certificate
Physical therapist assistant	Associate degree
Network systems analyst	Bachelor's degree
Licensed practical nurse	Certificate

Too many students get lost along the way, hindering West Virginia's economic growth.³

(This chart models how success rates at each stage impact overall educational attainment. It is not based on longitudinal data, but is an attempt—using a collection of available data—to illustrate the challenges states face.)



Note: Sum of the numbers entering 4-year and 2-year schools may not match combined total due to rounding.

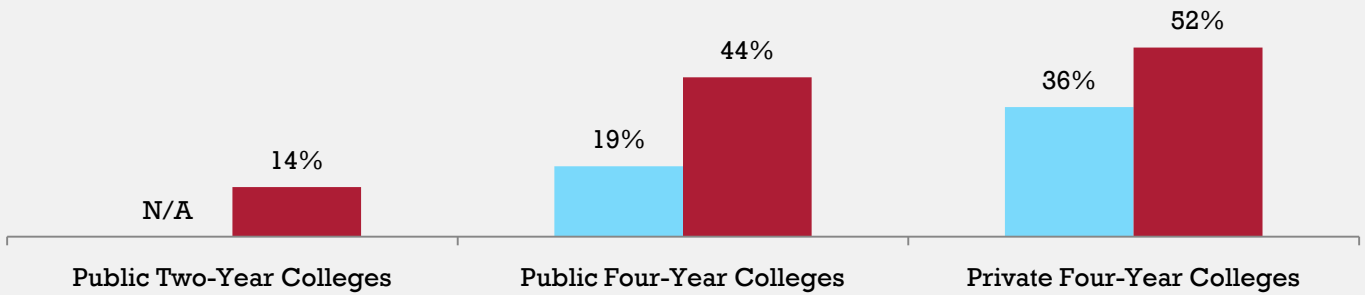
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Graduation Rates

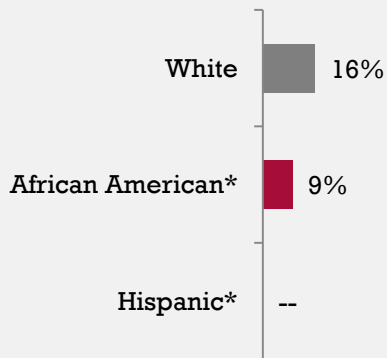
West Virginia must raise completion rates overall and place extra focus on closing the college attainment gap for underrepresented students. ⁴

Graduation Rates by Institution Type

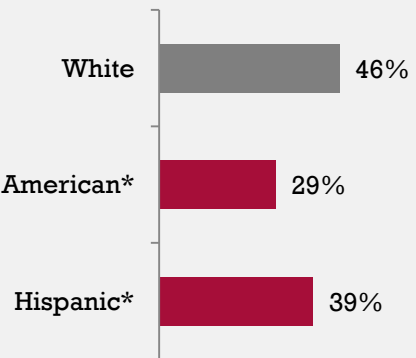
■ On-Time ■ Within 150% of time



Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity: Public 2-Year Colleges (150% time)



Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity: Public & Private 4-Year Colleges (150% time)

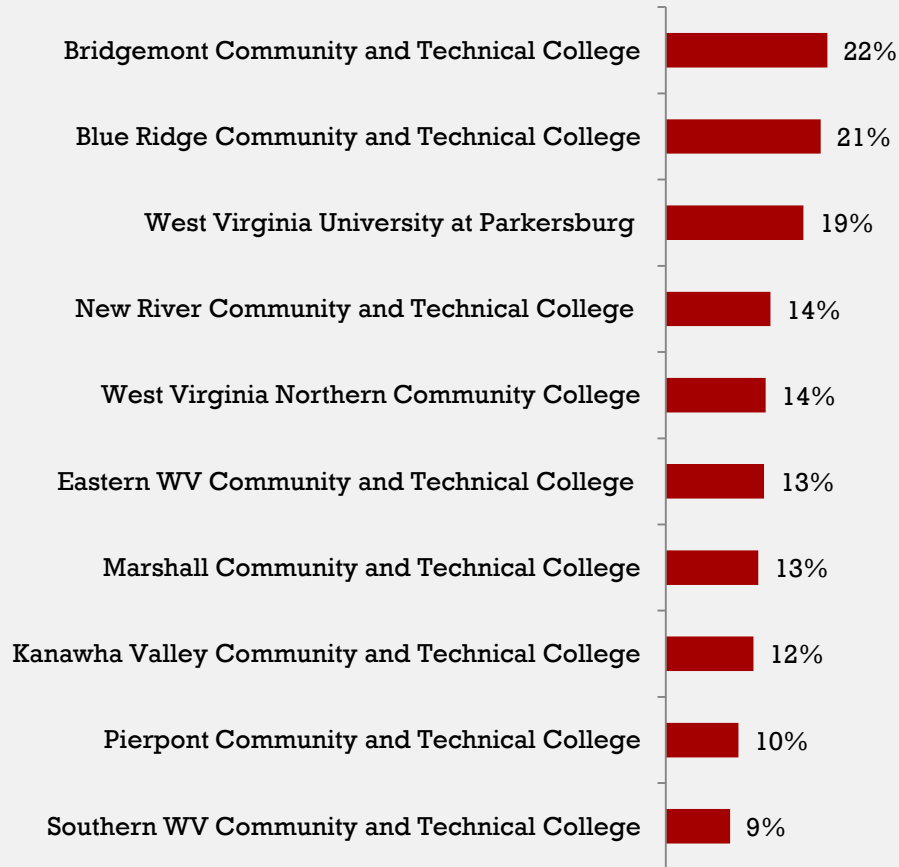


* less than 3% of entering cohort
 -- cohort size too small to report grad rates

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Graduation Rates by Campus

Public Two-Year Colleges (150% time)

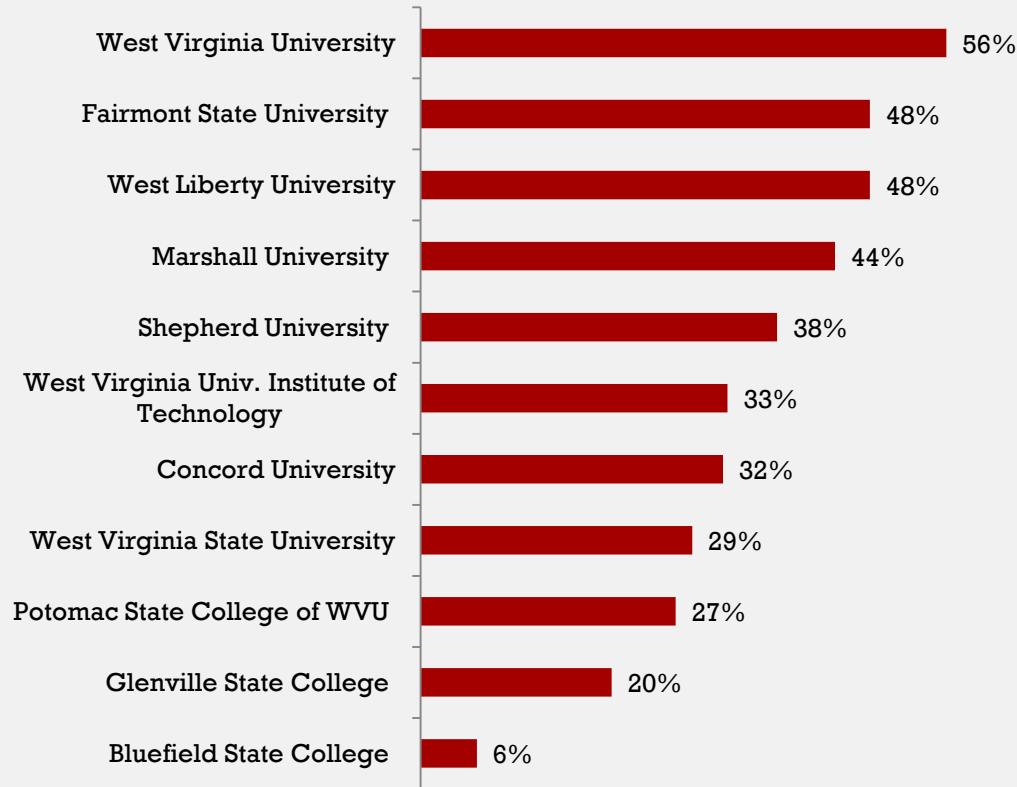


Reported by institutions to NCES Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Graduation rates for two-year colleges are for first-time, full-time students completing certificate or degree within 150% of normal program time. Source: U.S. Department of Education, IPEDS 2007-08 Graduation Rate File; gr2008 Early Release Data File Downloaded 11-05-09; aggregated by NCHEMS.

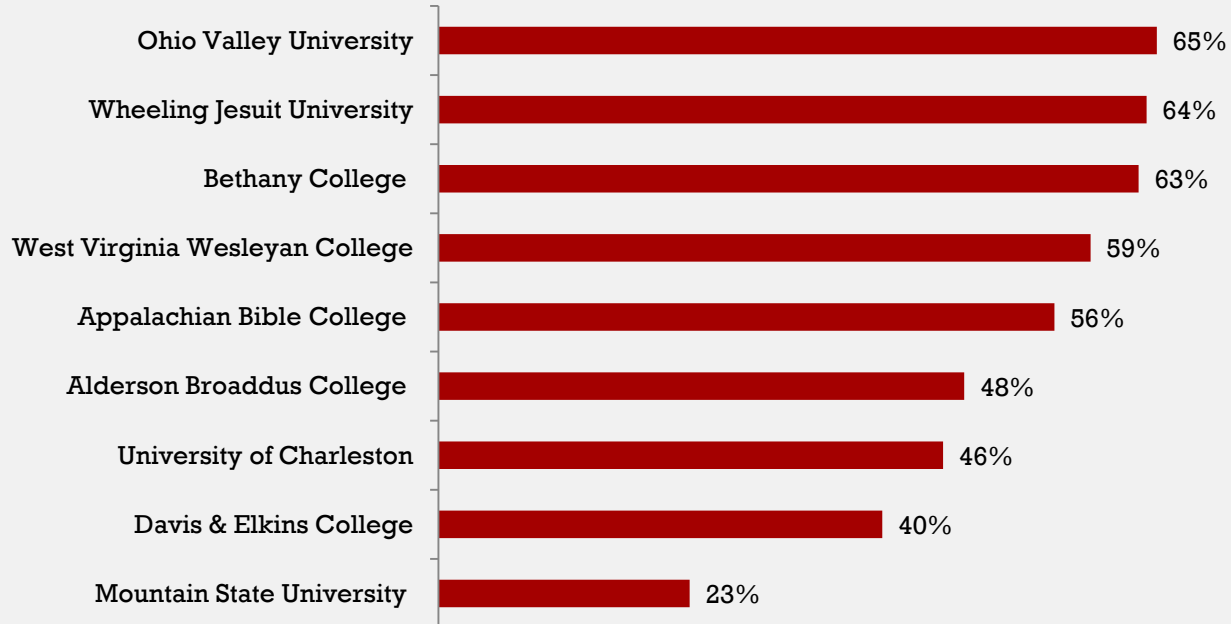
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Graduation Rates by Campus

Public Four-Year Colleges (150% time)



Private Four-Year Colleges (150% time)



Reported by institutions to NCES Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Graduation rates for four-year institutions are for first-time, full-time students completing a bachelor's or equivalent degree within six years. Source: U.S. Department of Education, IPEDS 2007-08 Graduation Rate File; gr2008 Early Release Data File Downloaded 11-05-09; aggregated by NCHEMS.

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A Note about Graduation Rates

The graduation rates presented here are based on data reported by institutions to the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). These rates reflect the percentage of first-time, full-time students who complete within 150% of normal program time. (Graduation rates for part-time students are typically much lower.) These data do not capture the graduation rates of transfer students—including those who begin at colleges with some credits already accumulated—or part-time students. Many states have or are developing longitudinal data systems that would be able to measure the graduation rates of all students, including part-time and transfer students.

The IPEDS data are presented here because they are the only nationally available and comparable graduation rates. Complete College America believes that states should make the improvement of data systems to more accurately measure completion rates—and the annual public reporting of those rates—a top priority.

ENDNOTES

¹ Carnevale, T., Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2009. High-growth fields based on national projections of total new and replacement jobs. <http://cew.georgetown.edu/research/jobs/79012.html>

² "College degree" means an associate degree, bachelor's degree, or higher. National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), 2008 (from U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample File.) <http://www.higheredinfo.org/>

³ **The pipeline is a model for illustrative purposes and is not based on longitudinal data.** Pipeline data aggregated by NCHEMS: reflects high school graduation rates, college-going rates, college retention rates, and college graduation rates (using the most recent data available for each metric). For the high school graduation rate, NCHEMS uses NCES Common Core Data and divides high school graduates into 9th graders four years earlier. Future revisions will incorporate the cohort-based HS graduation rates that conform to the definitions of the NGA Graduation Compact (for states where those data are available), which are more accurate than the current ratio. The pipeline represents the number of students who graduate from high school within four years, enter college the immediate following fall, return for their sophomore year the following year, and graduate from college. Two-year college graduation rates reflect credentials earned within 150% of expected program time, and include certificates awarded for programs of less than two years; two years but less than four years; and associate degrees. Four-year graduation rates reflect **on-time completers** of bachelor's or equivalent degrees (**within four years**). The data do not account for transfers across institutions. <http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=72>

⁴ Aggregated by NCHEMS from IPEDS 2007-08 Graduation Rate File; gr2008 Early Release Data File, downloaded 11-05-09. Graduation rates are reported by institutions to NCES based on adjusted cohort of first-time, full-time students. Two-year graduation rates include certificates completed within 150% of normal program time in addition to associate degrees completed within three years. IPEDS does not report two-year (or "on-time") completion rates for two-year colleges. Graduation rates by race aggregated by NCHEMS from IPEDS 2006-07 Graduation Rate File. Graduation rates for Asian/Pacific Islander and American Indian/Alaska Native students are included only if those populations represent greater than 5% of the adjusted cohort. Disaggregated graduation rates are excluded for populations with an adjusted revised cohort size of less than 30, even if that cohort represents greater than 5% of the total entering cohort. Note that 2008 overall graduation rates may be higher than rates reflected in the disaggregated data from 2007 based on differences in graduation rates between years. In each instance, "Private" refers to private not-for-profit institutions only. Graduation rates by campus are presented for Title IV, degree-granting institutions with an adjusted revised cohort greater than 30.