

**STATE OF IOWA**

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**POSTSECONDARY  
READINESS REPORTS**

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**FINDINGS**

**JANUARY 17, 2017**

# INTRODUCTION

For the first time, Iowans have information on postsecondary enrollment patterns, remedial course-taking rates, and postsecondary retention and award rates that can be connected to every public high school in Iowa. The new Postsecondary Readiness Reports connect data from the Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Board of Regents. Reports by school are available at the following website:

(<http://educateiowa.gov/postsecondaryreadiness>).

The Postsecondary Readiness Reports are significant because they provide a statewide portrait of how prepared Iowa high school graduates are for success in postsecondary education in a variety of areas such as arts, sciences, engineering, or workforce-bound career and technical education programs. The reports provide local results to help guide improvement efforts in Iowa schools.

This document represents a summary of statewide findings from the Postsecondary Readiness Reports, as well as the report methodology.

## KEY FINDINGS

- 71.1 percent of Iowa high school graduates enrolled in college or training programs within one year of high school graduation.
- 18.9 percent of those students took a remedial math class within one year of high school graduation.
- 9.2 percent of those students took a remedial English class within one year of high school graduation.
- 90.1 percent of college-bound students enroll within the first year and 95.2 percent within two years of high school graduation.
- Rates of postsecondary enrollment differ greatly by students' family income, race/ethnicity, first language spoken, and special education status.

# POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT

Iowa's postsecondary enrollment rate of 71.1 percent in the first year after high school graduation is slightly higher than the national average of 67.1 percent.

However, gaps exist in enrollment rates for students from diverse backgrounds and students who face economic challenges. Students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, students whose first language is not English, students in special education, and black and Hispanic students enroll in postsecondary institutions at a lower rate than the state average. In addition, Hispanic and Asian students from Iowa enroll in postsecondary institutions at a rate below the national average.

The Postsecondary Readiness Reports also provide preliminary information about

**TABLE 1**  
**Postsecondary Enrollment 1 Year from High School Graduation**

Category . . . . .	Iowa . . . . .	Nation*
<b>All HS Graduates.</b> . . . . .	<b>71.1%</b> . . . . .	<b>67.1%</b>
<b>Male**</b> . . . . .	<b>66.4%</b> . . . . .	<b>64.0%</b>
<b>Female**</b> . . . . .	<b>75.8%</b> . . . . .	<b>72.6%</b>
<b>White</b> . . . . .	<b>72.8%</b> . . . . .	<b>68.3%</b>
<b>Black</b> . . . . .	<b>61.7%</b> . . . . .	<b>63.1%</b>
<b>Hispanic</b> . . . . .	<b>55.9%</b> . . . . .	<b>62.5%</b>
<b>Asian</b> . . . . .	<b>75.7%</b> . . . . .	<b>84.8%</b>

\* National data courtesy of the IPEDS, 2014 three-year moving average, Table 302.10, 302.20 <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest>

\*\* National comparison on gender is based on a 2014 one year average (IPEDS Table 302.10)

the postsecondary retention rates of Iowa students.

Most students who go to college do so in the first year following high school graduation.

Findings show 90.1 percent of college-bound students enroll within the first year and 95.2 percent enroll within two years of high school graduation.

# REMEDIAL COURSEWORK

The Postsecondary Readiness Reports provide information about the preparedness of Iowa high school students in the key content areas of English and mathematics. Students who are not ready for college-level coursework are usually placed into remedial classes (called “developmental courses” at colleges and universities). The U.S. Department of Education defines remedial classes as those that fall below the 100 level (e.g., Math 50). However, the process for placing students into remedial classes varies by college. For example, at Iowa’s public universities remedial math is required if a placement test indicates a student is not ready for college-level algebra. Many community colleges also use placement tests, but they may or may not require students to take remedial classes. Remedial class credits do not count toward a degree and usually must be completed prior to attempting college-level coursework.

The Postsecondary Readiness Reports provide rates at which students enroll in remedial math and/or English courses in the first year after high school graduation. Remedial course-taking data in this report are shown only for students who attended an Iowa public community college or university.

Comparing Iowa’s remedial course-taking rates to other states is difficult because of a lack of data for national and state-to-state comparison. Although the scope of reported data and details for how other states determine remedial placement are not available, Tables 2 and 3 compare Iowa remedial course-taking rates with those of other states that had information available.

**TABLE 2 - Remedial Math 1 Year after High School Graduation**

Category	Iowa (2013-14)	Missouri* (2014)	Utah* (2014)	Minnesota* (2008)	Alabama* (2014)
<b>All HS Graduates</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>26.2%</b>	<b>34.0%</b>	<b>32.0%</b>	<b>26.0%</b>
Male	16.2%	23.6%	-	-	-
Female	21.3%	28.2%	-	-	-
White	17.4%	23.0%	-	-	-
Black	40.8%	44.0%	-	-	-
Hispanic	26.7%	31.6%	-	-	-
Asian	11.7%	18.3%	-	-	-

**Remedial math course-taking rates show:**

- Iowa students take remedial math classes at a lower rate (18.9 percent) in their first year after high school graduation compared to students in other states shown in Table 2.
- Female students have slightly higher rates of remedial math enrollment than male students.
- Black students have the highest remedial math rates of the racial/ethnic groups reported.

**TABLE 3 - Remedial English 1 Year after High School Graduation**

Category	Iowa (2014)	Missouri* (2014)	Utah* (2014)	Minnesota* (2008)	Alabama* (2014)
<b>All HS Graduates</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>9.0%</b>	<b>17.0%</b>	<b>17.0%</b>
Male	8.6%	14.4%	-	-	-
Female	9.8%	12.2%	-	-	-
White	7.8%	10.0%	-	-	-
Black	27.7%	32.1%	-	-	-
Hispanic	15.8%	19.7%	-	-	-
Asian	9.4%	12.5%	-	-	-

\* Sources for other states’ data included in report reference section

Iowa data reflects only Iowa public two- and four-year institutions for the 2013-14 cohort

**Remedial English course-taking rates show:**

- Iowa students take remedial English classes at a lower rate (9.2 percent) in their first year after graduation compared to students in other states shown in Table 3, with the exception of Utah.
- Female students have slightly higher rates of remedial English enrollment than male students.
- Black students have the highest remedial English rates of the racial/ethnic groups reported.

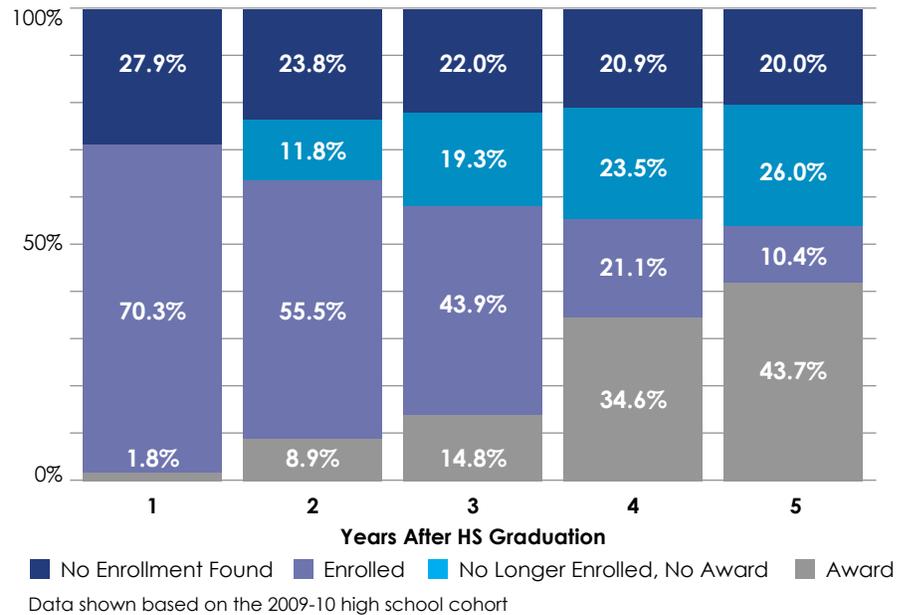
# POSTSECONDARY RETENTION AND AWARDS

The Postsecondary Readiness Reports also provide postsecondary enrollment and award trends beyond the first year after high school graduation. Figure 1 shows five years of data for the statewide cohort of students who graduated from high school in the Class of 2010.

For each year after high school graduation, every student is grouped into one of the categories defined below:

- **No Enrollment Found:** Students who did not match any postsecondary enrollment or receive any postsecondary award in a given year or previous years
- **No Longer Enrolled, No Award:** Students who enrolled in a previous year but not in a given year and have received no award
- **Enrolled:** Students who enrolled in a given year
- **Award:** Students who received any postsecondary award (i.e. degree, certificate, diploma, etc.) in a given year or a previous year

**FIGURE 1 - Postsecondary Enrollment and Award Status by Year after High School Graduation**



**Retention and awards findings show:**

- By the fifth year after high school graduation, 43.7 percent of students earned some type of postsecondary award (certificate, diploma, associate's degree, or bachelor's degree).
- 7.9 percent of high school graduates did not enroll in a postsecondary institution within their first year after graduation, but did enroll at some point in the following four years.
- 26.0 percent of high school graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution in at least one of the first four years after high school graduation, were no longer enrolled in the fifth year, and had not received any type of award.

# POSTSECONDARY RETENTION AND AWARDS (CONT.)

Table 4 presents three-year averages of Iowa's postsecondary enrollment and remedial course-taking rates. The remedial course-taking rates represent students who took either a remedial math or English class (the subject rates are combined).

### Findings Show:

- There are substantial differences in both enrollment and remedial course-taking rates by students in special education (Individualized Education Program, or IEP), students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL), and students whose first language is not English (English Language Learner, or ELL).
- Controlling for other factors, state assessment scores, FRL status, and IEP status are the best predictors of a student enrolling in remedial coursework in college. ELL students also take remedial courses at high rates, but their overall low postsecondary enrollment numbers cause the difference to not be statistically significant.

**TABLE 4 - Postsecondary Enrollment 1 Year from High School Graduation**

Category	% of HS Graduates who Enrolled in College	% who Enrolled in College and Took a Remedial Math or English Class
<b>All Students</b>	<b>71.1%</b>	<b>23.2%</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>75.8%</b>	<b>25.1%</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>66.4%</b>	<b>21.1%</b>
<b>Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL)</b>	<b>52.9%</b>	<b>35.0%</b>
<b>Non-FRL</b>	<b>80.8%</b>	<b>18.7%</b>
<b>Individualized Education Program (IEP)</b>	<b>38.1%</b>	<b>49.5%</b>
<b>Non-IEP</b>	<b>75.6%</b>	<b>21.1%</b>
<b>English Language Learner (ELL)</b>	<b>49.8%</b>	<b>41.4%</b>
<b>Non-ELL</b>	<b>71.7%</b>	<b>22.8%</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>75.7%</b>	<b>16.5%</b>
<b>Black</b>	<b>61.7%</b>	<b>51.1%</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>55.9%</b>	<b>35.2%</b>
<b>Multi-Racial</b>	<b>66.0%</b>	<b>30.0%</b>
<b>Pacific Islander</b>	<b>60.4%</b>	<b>23.8%</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>72.8%</b>	<b>21.3%</b>
<b>Racial/Ethnic Minority</b>	<b>61.2%</b>	<b>35.6%</b>
<b>White/Non-Hispanic</b>	<b>72.8%</b>	<b>21.3%</b>

Iowa data shows three-year averages of high school graduate cohorts (2011-12 to 2013-14). Remedial data reflect only students who attended Iowa public two- and four-year institutions.

# METHODOLOGY

Iowa traditionally has lacked widespread access to data on enrollment in college, enrollment in college-based workforce training programs, and college remedial course-taking rates. The Postsecondary Readiness Reports build on data from the Iowa Department of Education's K-12 collection system for public high school students. Information can be analyzed beginning with the Class of 2010 graduate cohort. Each cohort includes students who began 9th grade four years earlier or students who transferred into an Iowa public school district. The data do not include students who transferred out or are deceased. A data set is built annually for each graduating cohort. There is a lag in results because enough time must elapse between high school graduation and subsequent postsecondary enrollment. A cohort file is created approximately 20 months after

high school graduation to capture first-year postsecondary student enrollment. Cohort data sets are updated to include students who may take longer to complete high school. Students are then matched to the three Iowa public universities, 15 Iowa community colleges, and National Student Clearinghouse data to determine if they attended a postsecondary institution. These data combined reflect student enrollment in colleges and universities nationally. While many workforce training programs offered at colleges are included in these data, these reports do not include participation in employer training program or registered apprenticeships.

## PROTECTING CONFIDENTIAL DATA

After records were matched across agency systems, personally identifiable information was removed. The data were then summarized for reporting purposes. Even the highest-level users cannot

access identifiable information. Users will see only summary-level reports. Additional steps have been taken to further protect individual information, such as redacting data in the reports for groups whose numbers are so small that they could potentially identify a student by age, race, or other characteristics.

## FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The Postsecondary Readiness Reports are intended to be dynamic reports that respond to input from stakeholders. The reports will be expanded to include the percentage of students who earn certificates/awards/degrees and measures of college and career readiness, such as state assessment results, high school course-taking patterns, and the highest-level math class taken by high school students. Other data elements will be added as they become available.

# REFERENCES

## ALABAMA

*High School Report (Rep.)*. (2015, February 17). Retrieved March 15, 2016, from Alabama Commission on Higher Education website: [http://www.ache.state.al.us/content/Abstract1415/Student-DB/1\\_HSBasic.pdf](http://www.ache.state.al.us/content/Abstract1415/Student-DB/1_HSBasic.pdf)

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*Getting prepared: A 2010 report on recent high school graduates who took developmental/remedial courses (Rep.)*. (2011, January). Retrieved March 15, 2016, from Minnesota State Colleges & Universities website: <https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/pdf/gettingPrepared10.pdf>

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## UTAH

Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) High School Feedback Report. (2015, October). Retrieved March 15, 2016, from <https://viz.uen.org/t/ushe/views/UtahHighSchoolFeedbackReport-StateLevel/StateDashboard?isGuestRedirectFromVizporta>

## NOTE

State rates are calculated using postsecondary remedial course enrollment data. National remedial rates are not used in this comparison because those data are based on student self-report surveys rather than actual enrollment. Missouri was the only adjoining state for which publicly available remedial course enrollment data included a breakdown by both gender and race/ethnicity.

