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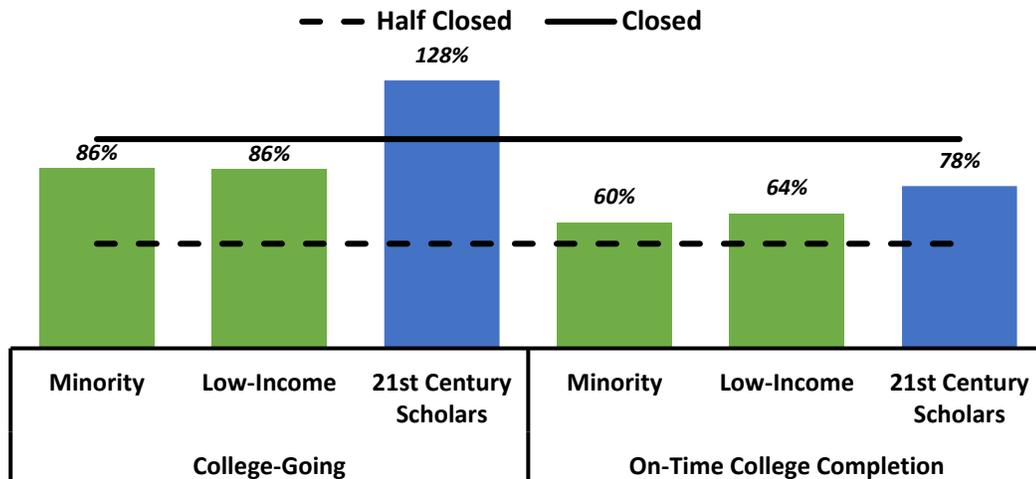
INDIANA ON TRACK TO CLOSE COLLEGE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

State sees largest gains for students in 21st Century Scholars program

A report issued by the [Indiana Commission for Higher Education](#) today shows that Indiana is making significant progress in closing the college achievement gap for low-income and minority students, with the most dramatic gains coming from students enrolled in the state's [21st Century Scholars](#) early promise program.

In 2013, the Commission passed a [resolution](#) to cut the state's achievement gap in half by 2018 and close it completely by 2025. While the gap is over halfway closed when comparing low-income and minority students with the overall student population, Scholars are the only group on track to closing the achievement gap by 2025.

Current Status of Achievement Gap (Compared to the Overall Population)



“We’re making considerable progress toward closing Indiana’s college achievement gap, and while we celebrate this milestone, it is now more important than ever to continue the positive momentum,” said Indiana Commissioner of Higher Education Teresa Lubbers. “By every measure, 21st Century Scholars are outpacing their low-income and minority peers. I believe the program is our key to ultimately closing the achievement gap.”

The data show Scholars are outperforming the state average by almost every measure:

Scholars have closed the college-going achievement gap and are more likely to attend college than their peers. In 2016, 21st Century Scholars saw the highest college going rate (82 percent) among all demographic populations. The college going rate for Scholars was over double that of their low-income peers (39 percent) and 12 percentage points higher than their higher-income peers (70 percent).

Scholars continue to make progress in early-college success, while other low-income students fall short. Between 2014 and 2015 alone, the gap in early-college success between Scholars and the overall population was reduced to only 2 percentage points – a trend that coincides with new high school GPA requirements for Scholars

and increased outreach efforts at both the state and campus levels. If progress continues at its current rate, the gap in early-college success between Scholars and their higher-income peers is projected to close by 2025.

Scholars' on-time completion rates are improving more quickly than all other student populations.

From 2012 to 2017, on-time graduation rates for 21st Century Scholars have increased by double digits across four- and two-year Indiana public campuses, which can be attributed in large part to the state financial aid reforms enacted by Indiana lawmakers five years ago requiring Scholars to complete at least 30 credit hours each calendar year.

“The substantial gains made by 21st Century Scholars is a reminder to all of us that closing the achievement gap is possible,” said Commissioner Lubbers. “While we still have some specific challenges to address, we know we have a solution that works.”

Designed as a companion piece to the Commission’s annual College Readiness and College Completion reports, the 2018 College Equity report provides a snapshot of Indiana’s college achievement gap progress – measured by the college-going rate, early success in college and college completion – for low-income and minority students. While significant progress has been made for low-income and minority students enrolled in the 21st Century Scholars program, challenges remain for minority students overall.

Hispanic students are the least likely racial/ethnic group to enroll in college.

In 2016, 52 percent of Hispanic students enrolled in college compared to 57 percent of Black students and 66 percent of White students.

Black students are less likely to be ready for college coursework than their peers.

In 2015, only 23 percent of Black students met all three areas of early success in college – no remediation, persistence to second year and completing all credits attempted – compared to 38 percent of Hispanic students and 50 percent of White students. The data reveal that the largest gap comes from failing to complete all credits attempted. In the 2015 high school cohort, 30 percent of Black students completed all coursework they attempted in the first year, compared to 46 percent of Hispanic students and 57 percent of White students.

On-time completion rates continue to rise for all minority populations, but gaps remain.

At four-year campuses, the on-time completion rate improved by 12 percentage points for Hispanic students and 7 percentage points for Black students. At two-year campuses, the on-time completion rate improved by 8 percentage points for Hispanic students and by 5 percentage points for Black students. The only on-time graduation gap on track to close by 2025 is between Hispanic and White students at two-year campuses.

“As we work toward closing all achievement gaps, the disaggregated data will be important in understanding exactly where our focus should be as we double down on efforts to ensure college success for all students,” said Commissioner Lubbers.

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About the Indiana Commission for Higher Education

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education is a 14-member public body created in 1971 to define the missions of Indiana’s colleges and universities, plan and coordinate the state’s postsecondary education system, and ensure that Indiana’s higher education system is aligned to meet the needs of students and the state. The Commission includes representatives from each Congressional district, three at-large members, a college faculty representative and a college student representative.

Learn more about the Commission’s *Reaching Higher, Delivering Value* strategic plan at www.in.gov/che/.