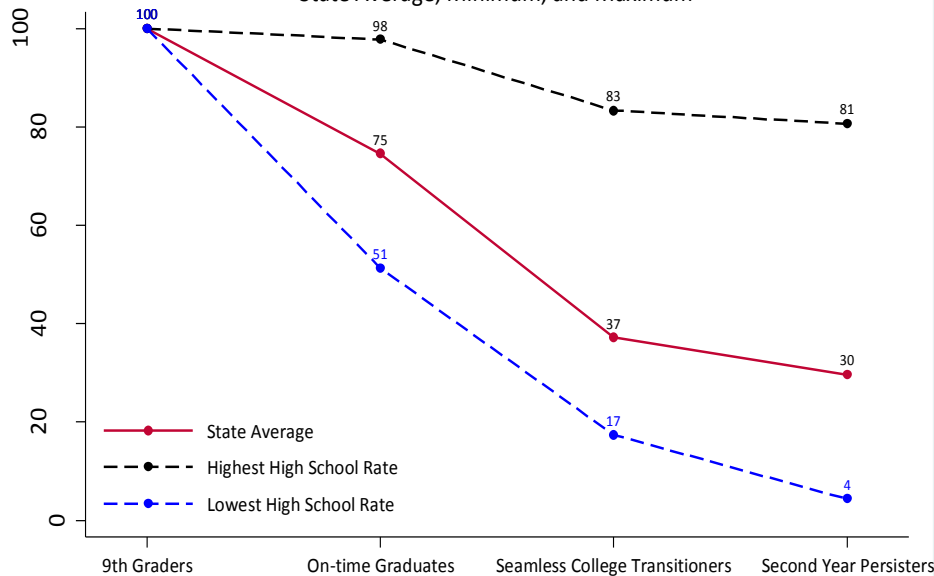


'The Set': Which Delaware Students Enroll and Persist in College?

Monthly Data Briefs from the Delaware Dept. of Education's Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit

Each year around 8000 students graduate from Delaware's (DE) public school system. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 68.2% of students nationwide enroll in college after graduation. But what share of DE students enroll and persist in college? Are certain students more likely to enroll and persist? Using enrollment records from the National Student Clearinghouse and 6 years of student data, this brief explores the progression of DE high school students from 9th grade to graduation and into college.

Figure 1. Student Progression from 9th Grade into College
State Average, Minimum, and Maximum



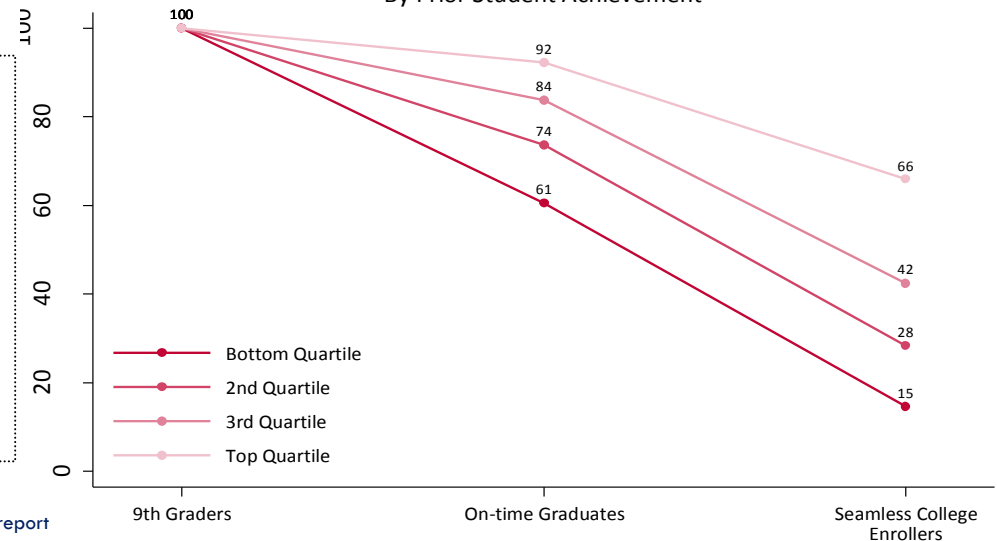
Average Graduation, College Enrollment, and College Persistence Rates

- On average 60% of DE high school graduates continue on to either a 2- or 4-year college.† This number, below the national college enrollment rate of 68.2%, includes 9% of students who entered college within two years of graduation, though not the first fall.
- 36% of high school graduates from school years 2007-2008 to 2009-2010 attended a 4-year college, while 24% attended a 2-year college.
- Of the state's first-time 9th graders in 2006-07, 75% graduated on time, 37% seamlessly enrolled in college‡ and 30% persisted in college through their second year (Figure 1).
- There is substantial variation among Delaware schools in graduation, college enrollment and persistence rates. In the school with the top rates, 98% of their first-time ninth graders in 2006-07 graduated on time, 83% made a seamless transition to college and 81% persisted to the second year. In comparison, of 2006-07 first-time 9th graders in the school with the lowest rate, only 51% graduated on time, 17% made a seamless college transition and 4% persisted to the second year of college (Figure 1).

Graduation and College Enrollment Rates by 8th Grade Test Performance

- Students with higher prior achievement, as measured by 8th grade state math test scores, are more likely to graduate on time and seamlessly enroll in college (Figure 2).
- The difference in graduation and college enrollment rates of high school students who scored in the top versus bottom quartiles on the state math test in 8th grade is substantial. Of the first-time 9th graders in 2007-2008, 92% of students in the top quartile graduated on time while only 61% of the students in the bottom quartile did the same (Figure 2).
- The difference in seamless college enrollment rates between students entering high school in the top quartile of 8th grade math test performance versus the bottom quartile is even wider than the on-time graduation rate gap. While only 15% of those in the bottom quartile transition seamlessly to college, 66% of those in the top quartile enroll seamlessly (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Student Progression from 9th Grade into College
By Prior Student Achievement



Notes: †Based on preliminary results from the Harvard Strategic Data Project Delaware College Going Diagnostic. Full report to be released in July 2013. ‡Seamless Transition to college is defined as entering college the fall immediately following a student's graduation.

Progression from 9th Grade to College by Student Race/Ethnicity and Income

- There are also racial differences in the graduation, college enrollment and college persistence rates of Delaware students (Figure 3). Hispanic and Asian students, the demographic groups with the smallest shares of students in the 2006-07 cohort, are those with the lowest and highest rates of graduation, enrollment, and second year persistence, respectively.
- There is a 19 percentage point on-time graduation rate difference between Hispanic and Asian students, a 37 point gap between seamless college enrollment rates, and a 40 percentage point 2nd-year persistence rate gap for these groups (Figure 3).
- The seamless college enrollment rate for white first-time ninth graders in 2006-2007 is 43% as compared to only 30% for African American students. 35% of white students in this cohort persisted to a 2nd year of college while only 22% of African American students persisted (Figure 3).
- There are also income disparities in graduation, enrollment and persistence. The gap between free and reduced price lunch-eligible first-time ninth graders (FRPL) in 2006-2007 and non-FRPL eligible students was 18 percentage points for on-time graduation rates (64% to 82%), 23 percentage points for seamlessly college enrollment (24% to 47%) and 22 percentage points for 2nd year persistence (17% to 39%).

Figure 3. Student Progression from 9th Grade into College By Student Race/Ethnicity

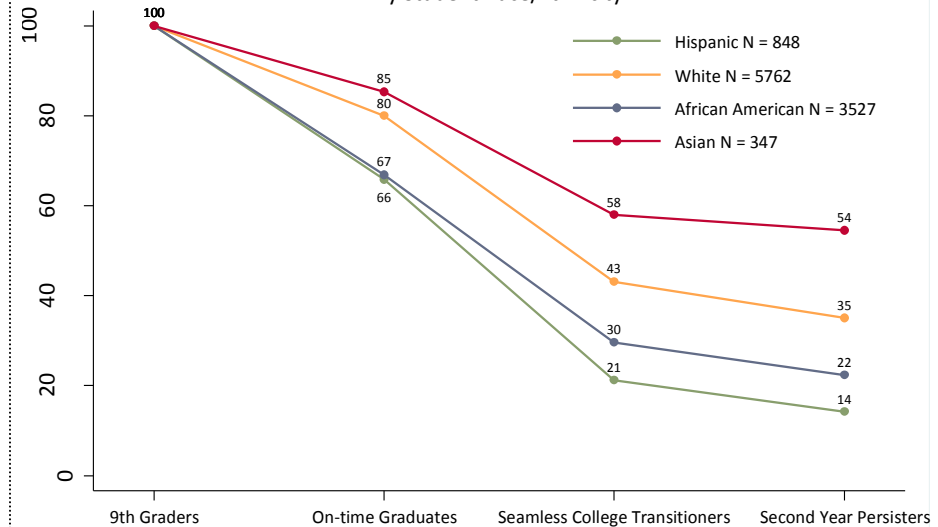
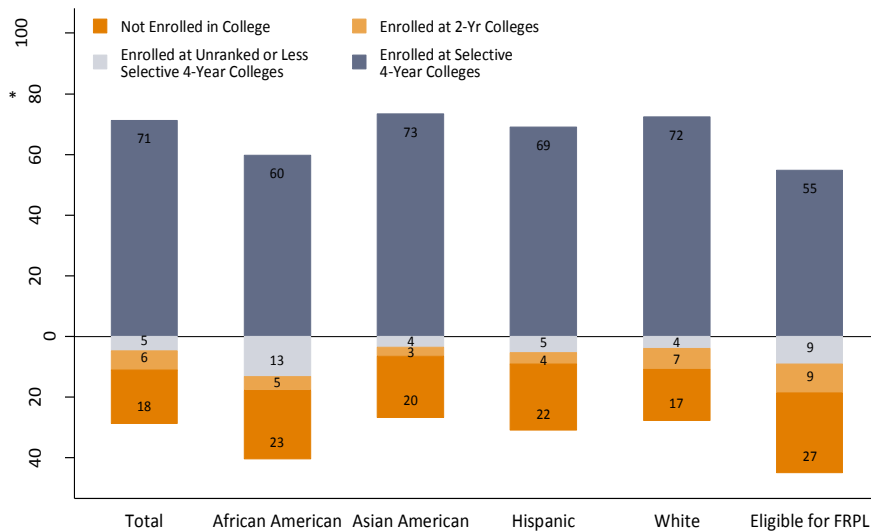


Figure 4. College Choices of Highly Qualified High School Graduates by Race and FRPL status



College Choices of Highly Qualified Graduates* by Race and Poverty

- Of the students scoring 1550 (the College Board college-ready benchmark) or higher on their combined SAT tests from 2007-08 through 2010-11, 18% did not enroll in college at all (Figure 4) and 71% enrolled in selective 4-year colleges (based on Barron's rankings).
- Of the African American students scoring 1550 or higher, 60% went to 4-year selective colleges as compared to 69% of Hispanic students, 72% of white students, and 73% of Asian American students (Figure 4). 27% of low-income students (eligible for FRPL) with scores of 1550 or higher on their SAT did not enroll in college and 55% enrolled in selective 4-year colleges.
- Among DE graduates who enrolled seamlessly in college from 2007-08 through 2009-10, the largest share of students (32%) attended Delaware Technical and Community College. 25% of DE graduates during these years enrolled in the University of Delaware, 5% attended Delaware State University, 4% attended Wilmington University, 3% attended Wesley College and 31% attended other universities.
- 11% of DE students seamlessly enrolling went to Pennsylvania, 4% to Maryland, 3% to Virginia, 2% to New York, 11% to other states, and 69% attended college in DE.

Notes: *Highly Qualified graduates are defined as having an SAT combined (including Writing) score greater than or equal to 1550 (the College Board college ready benchmark).

Source: Post-secondary enrollment information comes from National Student Clearinghouse matched records. All other data are from state administrative records. Analyses are preliminary results from the Harvard Strategic Data Project Delaware College Going Diagnostic to be released in July 2013. Data are from school years 2006-07 through 2010-11. For more information contact: rttt-tlev@doe.k12.de.us