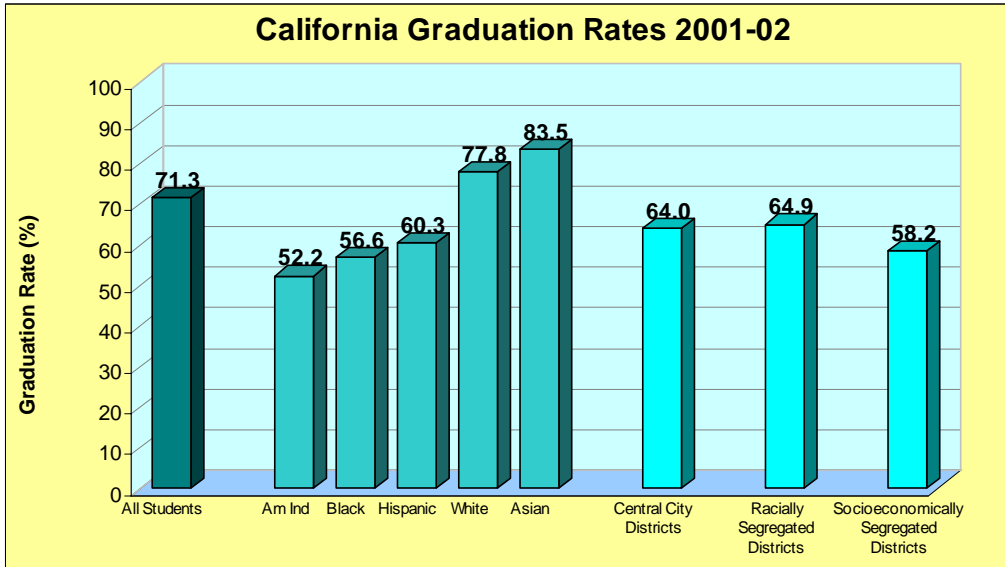




Minority Students Lag Behind, Effects of Segregation Persist



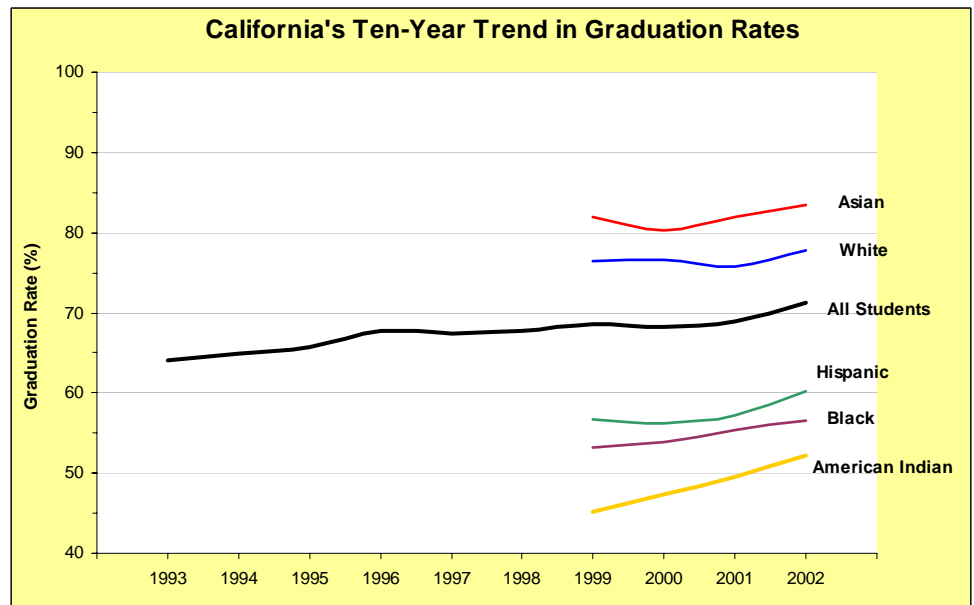
Graduation rates for the high school class of 2002 show that 71 percent of all students in California's public education system complete high school with a diploma. This level falls slightly above the national average. However, we also find very large disparities between students from different racial-ethnic groups. A graduation gap of over 30 percentage points separates the highest- and the lowest-performing groups. Historically disadvantaged minorities have graduation rates between 50 and 60 percent.

Fewer than two-thirds of all students graduate from high school in central city districts and in communities that suffer from high levels of racial and socioeconomic segregation.

Graduation Rates Show Modest Rise over Past Decade

Graduation rates in the state have been slowly but steadily increasing for the past decade. The proportion of all students graduating with a standard high school diploma has risen from 64 percent in 1992 to about 71 percent in 2002. Overall results for California have typically paralleled patterns for the nation as a whole in high school completion.

All major racial-ethnic groups have shown improvements in the past few years. Since gains have generally been stronger for the lowest-performing students, the graduation gap has closed slightly since 1998 (the first year for which disaggregated rates can be calculated). Nevertheless very large disparities still remain among students from different racial-ethnic groups.



A Note about Our Methods: Graduation rates are calculated here using the Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI), a widely-cited method for computing graduation rates developed at the Urban Institute. In this analysis, only students receiving standard diplomas (not GEDs or other completion credentials) are counted as graduates. Data on California's schools and districts were obtained from the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data. For more a detailed description of our methodology, please see *Who Graduates? Who Doesn't?* (The Urban Institute, 2004).

FACTS AND FIGURES – CALIFORNIA

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE											
Public Education System				Student Demographics (%)							
Student Population	6,073,443			Race/Ethnicity							
Schools	8,705			Native American				0.9			
Districts	988			Asian				11.3			
Charter Agencies	10			Hispanic				44.5			
				African American				8.3			
				White				35.0			
				Limited English Prof.				24.8			
				Free/Reduced Lunch				47.7			
				Special Education				10.9			
GRADUATION RATE PROFILE											
Results by Student Subgroup			Graduation Rate (%)	Results by District Type			Percent of Districts	Graduation Rate (%)			
All Students			71.3	Racial Composition							
Gender				Majority White			54.3	81.2			
Female			74.7	Majority Minority			45.7	66.9			
Male			66.8	LEP Participation							
Race/Ethnicity				Low (<9%)			41.4	79.5			
American Indian			52.2	High (>9%)			58.6	68.8			
Asian			83.5	Free/Reduced Lunch							
Hispanic			60.3	Low (<39%)			50.3	79.8			
Black			56.6	High (>39%)			49.7	64.0			
White			77.8	Special Education							
Race by Gender				Low (<13%)			83.5	71.1			
Female			----	High (>13%)			16.5	75.8			
American Indian			----	Location							
Asian			86.8	Central City			13.8	64.0			
Hispanic			64.9	Suburb			57.9	76.5			
Black			60.2	Town			7.8	71.6			
White			80.2	Rural			20.5	74.3			
TEN LARGEST DISTRICTS											
	Enrollment	Locale	Largest Racial/Ethnic Group	Minority %	Free or Reduced Lunch %	Graduation Rate (%)					
						Total	Am Ind	Asian	Hisp	Black	White
Los Angeles USD	735,058	Cent. City	Hispanic	90.4	72.8	45.3	39.7	76.7	39.1	46.5	66.7
San Diego City USD	141,599	Cent. City	Hispanic	73.4	61.4	63.8	60.0	81.2	49.2	52.0	77.5
Long Beach USD	96,488	Cent. City	Hispanic	82.7	66.9	69.1	61.1	82.7	62.6	59.4	78.7
Fresno USD	81,058	Cent. City	Hispanic	80.8	73.7	56.9	59.0	76.6	47.4	46.3	66.1
Santa Ana USD	61,909	Cent. City	Hispanic	96.3	73.4	72.5	68.6	79.8	72.6	70.5	65.8
San Francisco USD	58,566	Cent. City	Asian	89.5	54.5	70.9	---	82.4	55.9	47.1	74.3
San Bernardino City USD	54,166	Cent. City	Hispanic	81.1	78.2	50.6	42.2	82.4	48.5	49.4	51.8
Oakland USD	53,545	Cent. City	Black	94.3	51.5	47.8	33.8	67.5	42.8	42.0	52.1
Sacramento City USD	53,418	Cent. City	Hispanic	76.6	63.1	52.6	48.3	73.5	41.3	38.2	55.0
San Juan USD	51,383	Suburb	White	26.1	27.2	93.9	---	---	---	---	97.9

Note: Cut points for high district levels of LEP participation, Free/Reduced Lunch eligibility, and Special Education are set at national averages.

† Results not reported because data were available for less than 75 percent of student population.

The Urban Institute is a nonprofit nonpartisan policy research and educational organization established to examine the social, economic, and governance problems facing the nation. It provides information and analysis to public and private decision makers to help them address these challenges and strives to raise citizen understanding of the issues and tradeoffs in policy making.

The Institute's **Education Policy Center** is composed of a multi-disciplinary team of researchers who conduct original research and program evaluations on a broad range of topics including educational accountability, school vouchers, the effectiveness of federal policies, school finance reform, urban high school initiatives, educational technology, and teacher quality.