

OUTMIGRATION CONTEXT: COLLEGE ENROLLMENT PATTERNS OF RECENT ILLINOIS PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

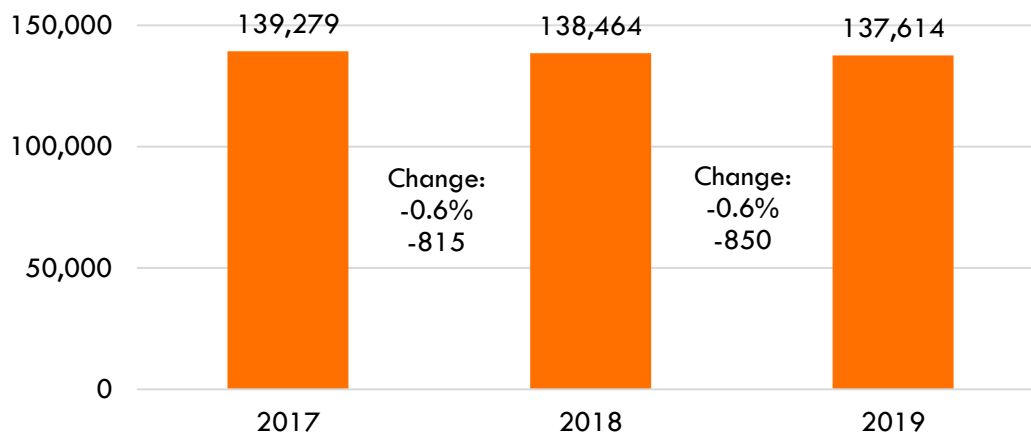
KEY FINDINGS

- Overall college enrollment slightly declined for 2019 Illinois public high school graduates, with a slight increase in the enrollment rate at four-year institutions and a marginal decline in the enrollment rate at two-year institutions.
- High school graduates leaving Illinois to go to four-year institutions has been trending slightly downward from 47.7% for those graduating in 2017, to 47.3% in 2018, and to 46.8% in 2019.
- The top destination states for recent Illinois high school graduates have largely remained unchanged. The top six states: Wisconsin, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, Michigan, and Ohio continue to account for six out of every ten Illinois outmigrants.
- However, from 2017 to 2019, four-year institutions in Tennessee, North Carolina, and Louisiana experienced the largest increases in their enrollment share of Illinois public high school graduates.
- For the first time, this report looks at college-going rates and outmigration by race/ethnicity and income status.
- There were large gaps in college-going rates among graduates from 2019 when the information was disaggregated by race/ethnicity and income status.
- While nearly 70% of 2019 white high school graduates enrolled in college the fall semester following high school graduation, only half of African Americans and 56% of Latinx high school graduates did.
- Only half of low-income graduates enrolled in college, while nearly three out of every four of their not low-income counterparts enrolled.

ILLINOIS PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

As illustrated in Figure 1, there were similar declines (-0.6%) in the number of Illinois public high school graduates from 2017 to 2018 and from 2018 to 2019. These declines represented a loss of slightly more than 800 graduates each year.

Figure 1: Illinois Public High School Graduates by Year



COLLEGE ENROLLMENT PATTERNS

The following analysis examines the college enrollment patterns of recent Illinois public high school graduates. As shown in Table 1, when comparing 2018 to 2019, there was a small decline in the percentage of graduates enrolling in college the fall semester following high school graduation. This overall decline was a result of the year-over-year decline in the percentage of recent high school graduates enrolling within the two-year sector. A marginally higher percentage of recent high school graduates enrolled at four-year institutions in fall of 2019 relative to fall of 2018.

Table 1: Initial College Enrollment* for Recent Illinois Public High School Graduates

Sector**	2017		2018		2019	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
4-Year	53,159	38.2%	53,847	38.5%	53,476	38.9%
2-Year	36,623	26.3%	36,080	26.1%	34,272	24.9%
Total Enrolled	89,782	64.5%	89,927	64.9%	87,748	63.8%
Not Yet Enrolled	49,497	35.5%	48,537	35.1%	49,866	36.2%
Total HS Graduates	139,279	100.0%	138,464	100.0%	137,614	100.0%

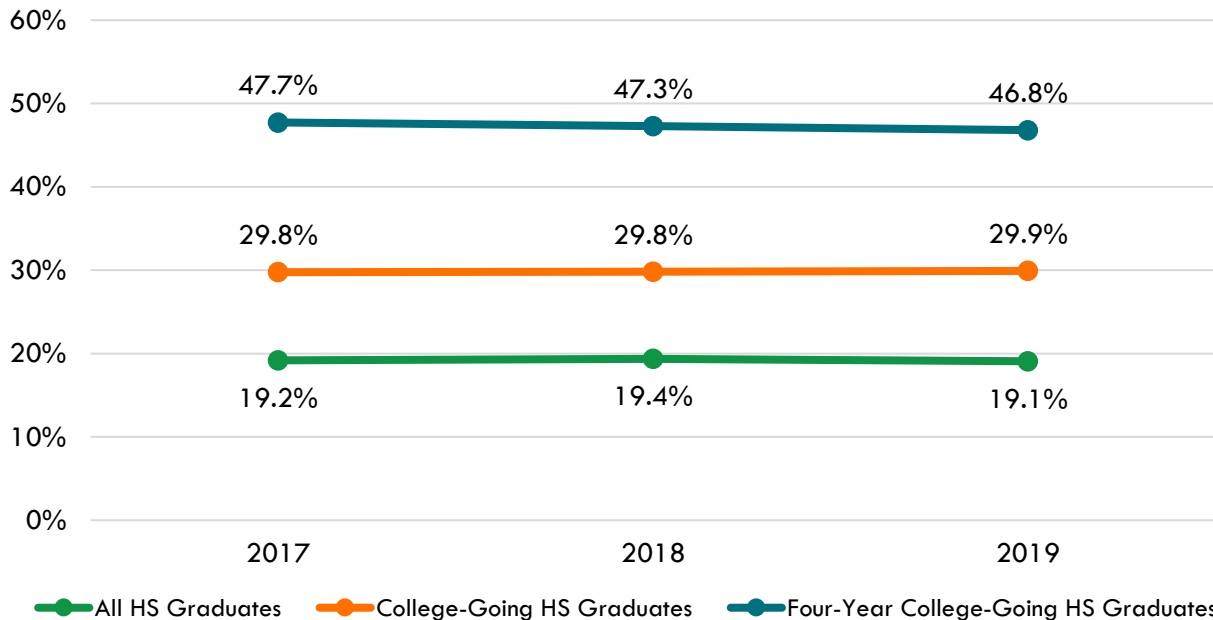
*Initial college enrollment is operationalized as enrollment between July and December immediately following high school graduation.

** See Definitions section.

Out-of-State Enrollment

The short-term trends presented in Figure 2 depict the rate of out-of-state enrollment among: all high school graduates; college-going high school graduates; and high school graduates initially enrolling at four-year institutions. From 2017 to 2019, there was a marginal decline in the proportion of four-year college-going students enrolling outside the state of Illinois (-0.9 percentage points).

Figure 2: Percent of Recent Illinois Public High School Graduates Enrolled Out-of-State



For additional context, in 2002, only 29.3% of the four-year college-going Illinois high school graduates enrolled outside the state (Smalley, Lichtenberger, and Brown, 2010). Although the trend is moving in the right direction, the rate of out-of-state enrollment is 17.5 percentage points (59.7%) higher than it was in 2002.

Top States for Out-of-State Four-Year College Enrollment

As shown in Table 2, the top six destination states for Illinois high school graduates have remained the same (with some reordering) and still account for roughly six out of every ten out-of-state enrollments. In fact, the top ten states have remained largely unchanged over the past three years, except for Kentucky moving into the top ten and Minnesota moving out in 2018.

Table 2: Top 10 Destination States for Illinois Public High School Graduates Enrolling at Four-Year Colleges

2017			2018			2019		
State	#	Share	State	#	Share	State	#	Share
Iowa	3,230	12.7%	Wisconsin	3,218	13.4%	Wisconsin	3,172	12.7%
Indiana	3,156	12.4%	Indiana	3,190	12.4%	Indiana	2,846	11.4%
Wisconsin	3,058	12.1%	Iowa	2,968	12.2%	Iowa	2,799	11.2%
Missouri	2,544	10.0%	Missouri	2,638	10.2%	Missouri	2,746	11.0%
Michigan	1,915	7.5%	Michigan	1,901	6.8%	Michigan	1,942	7.8%
Ohio	1,406	5.5%	Ohio	1,435	5.7%	Ohio	1,422	5.7%
Minnesota	749	3.0%	Kentucky	662	2.8%	Kentucky	720	2.9%
Alabama	726	2.9%	Florida	650	2.8%	Florida	653	2.6%
Florida	660	2.6%	California	630	2.6%	Alabama	611	2.4%
California	603	2.4%	Alabama	629	2.6%	California	608	2.4%

Table 3 lists the top states for growth in enrollment of recent four-year college-going Illinois high school graduates from 2017 to 2019. As shown in Table 3, Tennessee experienced the greatest proportional increase in the enrollment of recent Illinois high school graduates from 2017 to 2019, followed by North Carolina (+21.6%), and Louisiana (+11.7%). Tennessee also experienced the largest real number increase in recent Illinois high school graduates enrolled (+149), followed by Missouri (+108), and Kentucky (+58).

Table 3: Top Five States for Growth in Illinois Public High School Graduates Enrolling at Four-Year Colleges (2017 to 2019)

Percent Increase***		Number Increase	
Tennessee	+32.6%	Tennessee	+149
North Carolina	+21.6%	Missouri	+108
Louisiana	+11.7%	Kentucky	+58
Kentucky	+8.8%	North Carolina	+44
Pennsylvania	+8.6%	Michigan	+41

***Only includes states that enrolled 100 or more Illinois HS Graduates from 2017

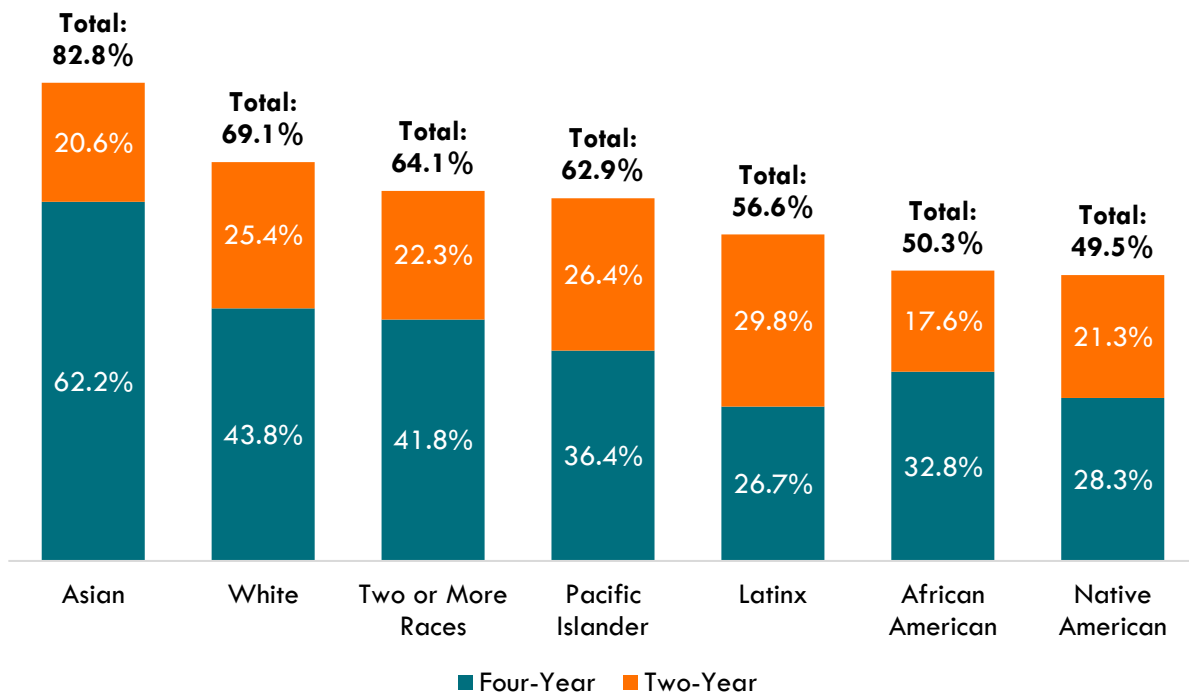
RECENT ENROLLMENT TRENDS BY RACE/ETHNICITY

For the first time this year, IBHE is presenting information disaggregated by race/ethnicity and income, in alignment with our goal to close equity gaps in higher education attainment.

As illustrated in Figure 3, there were wide variations in the overall rates of college enrollment by race/ethnicity. While over 80% of Asian and nearly 70% of recent white high school graduates were enrolled in college the fall semester following high school graduation, only 50% of African Americans and Native Americans, and 56% of Latinx high school graduates were.

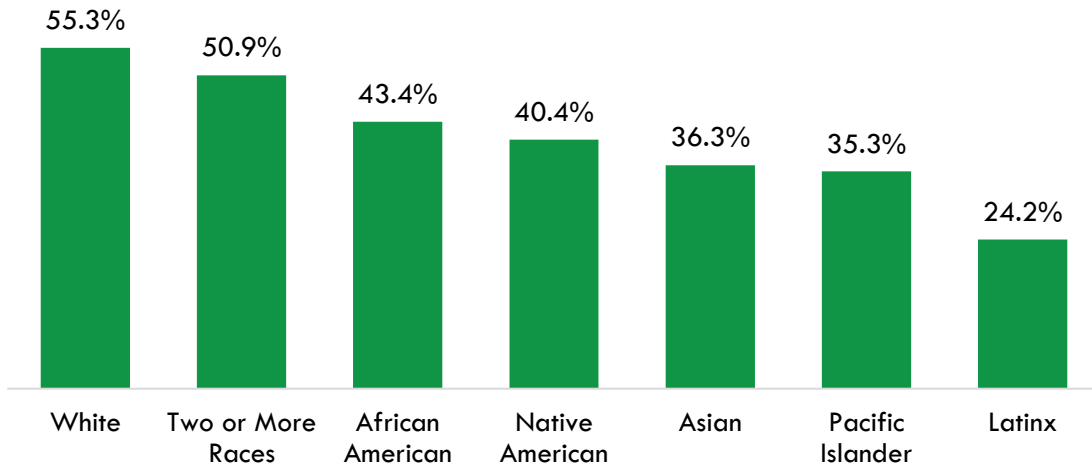
The patterns in terms of enrolling at four-year or two-year institutions (generally community colleges) also varied by race and ethnicity. Within each race/ethnicity groups, with the exception of Latinx, higher proportions enrolled at four-year institutions. Across all high school graduates, Latinx graduates had the highest proportion enrolling at two-year colleges, while having the lowest proportion enrolling at four-year institutions.

Figure 3: Enrollment Patterns by Race/Ethnicity (Class of 2019)



The rate of out-of-state enrollment at four-year institutions is presented in Figure 4. There was significant variation across the race/ethnicity groups. More than half (55.3%) of white and more than four out of every ten African American (43.4%) recent high school graduates enrolling college enrolled at four-year institutions outside the state. Roughly a quarter of Latinx, and slightly more than a third of Asian four-year college-going students enrolled outside the state.

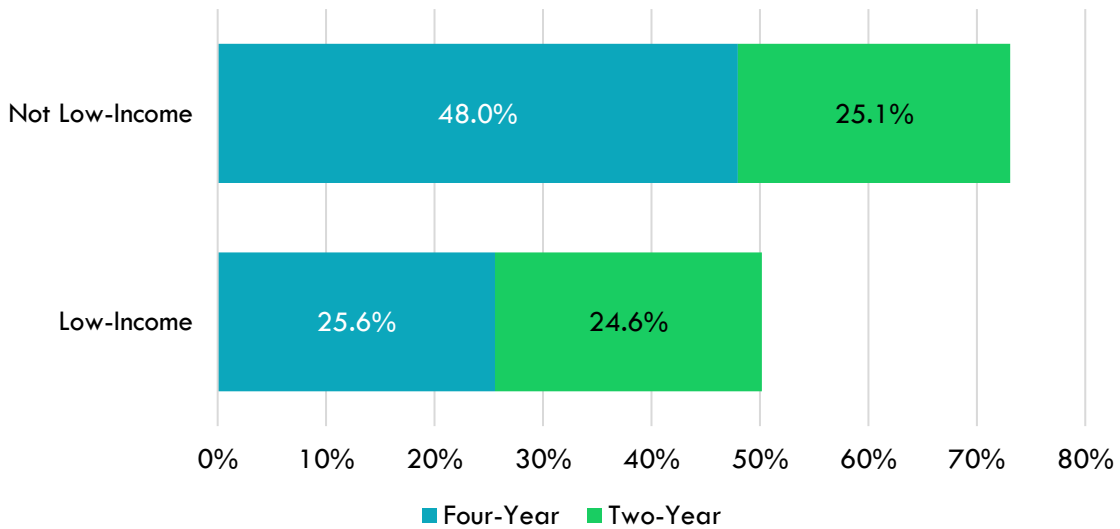
Figure 4: Out-of-State Enrollment among Four-Year College-Going Illinois High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity (Class of 2019)



LOW-INCOME STATUS

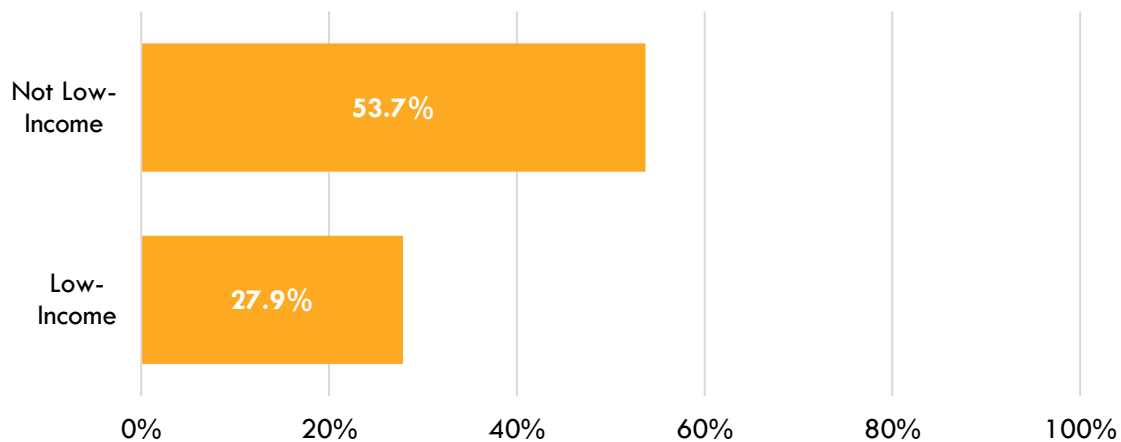
There were also differences in college enrollment patterns among recent Illinois high school graduates based on income. Roughly half of low-income and nearly three-quarters of their not low-income peers enrolled college the fall semester following high school graduation, demonstrating a large enrollment gap. The rate of enrollment at two-year institutions was nearly identical between low-income and not low-income high school graduates with about a quarter of each group enrolling at community colleges. The college enrollment gap was specific to not low-income students enrolling at four-year institutions at nearly two times the rate as their low-income counterparts (25.1% compared to 48.0%).

Figure 5: Enrollment Patterns by Low-Income Status (Class of 2019)



As shown in Figure 6, conditional upon enrolling at a four-year institution, there were also large differences in the rates of out-of-state enrollment by income status. The rate of out-of-state enrollment was nearly two times as high for the not low-income group when compared to their low-income counterparts.

Figure 6: Out-of-State Enrollment among Four-Year College-Going Illinois High School Graduates by Income Status (Class of 2019)



DEFINITIONS

(Adapted from the Integrated Postsecondary Educational System)

Four-Year sector: includes postsecondary institutions that offer programs of at least four years duration or offer programs at or above the baccalaureate level.

Two-Year sector: includes postsecondary institutions that offer programs of at least two but less than four years duration.

Not Yet Enrolled: recent Illinois high school graduates who had not yet enrolled in college during the fall semester immediately following high school graduation.

The initial college enrollment measure differs from what ISBE provides on their School Report Card, which includes enrollment within 12 months and 16 months of high school graduation. Over the past three years, the 12-month enrollment rates were between 70% and 75% and the 16-month enrollment rates were between 71% and 76% (ISBE, 2021).

Illinois State Board of Education. (2021). Illinois School Report Card 2018-2020: Postsecondary Enrollment. Springfield, IL. Retrieved from: [ILLINOIS | Postsecondary Enrollment \(illinoisreportcard.com\)](https://illinoisreportcard.com)

Smalley, D. J., Lichtenberger, E. J., & Brown, K. S. (2010). *A Longitudinal Study of the Illinois High School Class of 2002: A Six-Year Analysis of Postsecondary Enrollment and Completion*. Policy Research: IERC 2010-3. Illinois Education Research Council.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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