

Moving Washington's blue arrow

Opportunity abounds in Washington. In the arts, in civic life and public service, and in science and industry there are openings for innovators, dreamers and doers. But to take advantage of this abundance of opportunity, more Washingtonians need higher levels of education.

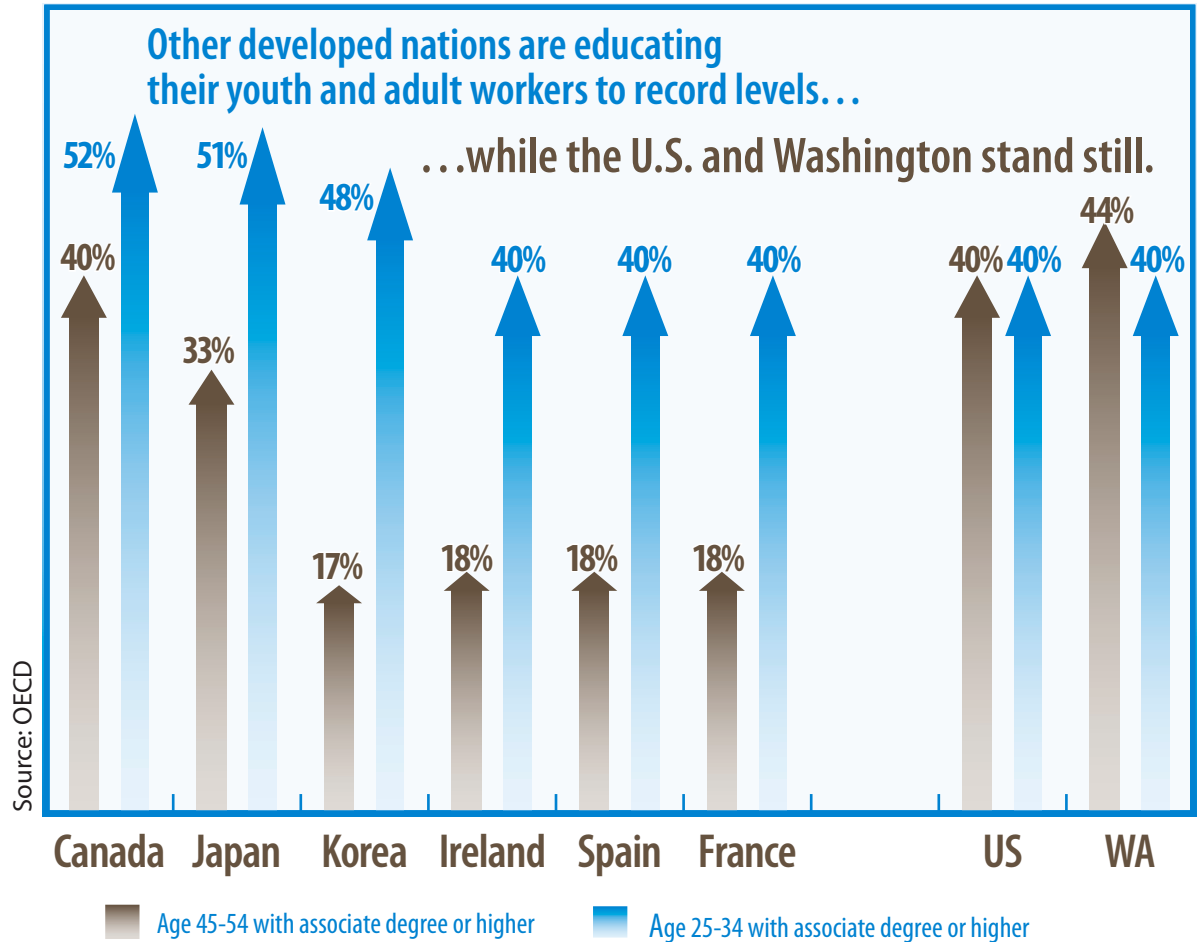
Washington's baby boomers (people born between 1946 and 1964) are the most highly educated generation in our history. Younger adults in our state have, on average, *less* education than boomers.

In many other countries, the reverse is true: younger adults are *more* educated than their elders, and the long-term trend shows a steady increase in the overall level of education of each new generation.

This is good for them, but not for us. Countries where education attainment is rising have rising incomes and productivity.







In these countries, parents can reasonably expect that their children will have more opportunity to make a good living, and to understand and shape the world around them. They can also expect that their children will live in societies characterized by economic, technological, scientific, cultural, civic and social progress.

We cannot share those expectations unless we *act now to reverse the trend* of falling educational attainment among our younger adults and children.



The goal of this strategic master plan is to move Washington's blue arrow by raising the overall level of educational attainment among Washington's younger citizens and under-educated adult workers.

Washington's changing demographics – 2005-2030

<p>There will be more of us 2.5 million increase (+37%)</p>	<p>2005 - 6.2 million</p> 
	<p>2030 – 8.6 million</p> 
<p>We will be older Those over 65 will increase most rapidly (+72%)</p>	<p>2005 = 11% of population</p> 
	<p>2030 = 19% of population</p> 
<p>We will be more diverse We will experience a 39% increase in the diversity of our population</p>	<p>2005 = 23% people of color</p> 
	<p>2030 = 32% people of color</p> 

An aging workforce

Over the next 10 years, a generation of well-educated people will leave the workforce and be replaced by a generation with lower average levels of education and skill. As the baby boomers retire, some occupations and industries may have skill shortages such as: nursing, teaching, and “management occupations.”

Washington’s Office of Financial Management estimates that about 400,000 people aged 55 and older will leave the labor force in the next decade. This represents 11.7 percent of the current labor force.

These employees will take with them a great deal of knowledge and experience. It is often the case that those employees in management positions also are older workers – because they have invaluable industry wisdom – and so, as baby boomers retire, much of today’s leadership in business, government, education, and civic life will retire as well.

Occupations most impacted by baby boomer retirements

- Nursing
- Education
- Social Services
- Personnel Management
- Civil Engineering
- Transportation Services
- Government
- Machinists/Technicians
- Computer/Mathematical
- Legal

Education and the public good

Education is the wellspring of economic growth. It also is the foundation of democracy, and the shared experience that knits a diverse society together.

Education Benefits

24.4% of those with less than a high school diploma are living below the poverty level. Only 2.4% of those with a bachelor's degree are below the poverty level. (U.S. Census)

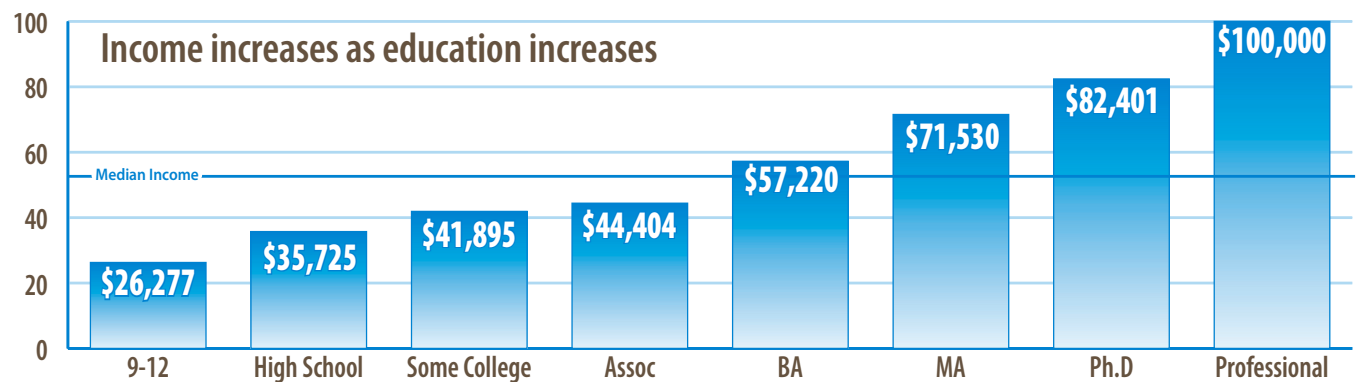
Although infant mortality rates are associated with race and ethnicity, they decrease proportionately with education attainment for all reported racial and ethnic categories. (NCHS)

College graduates have lower smoking rates, more positive perceptions of personal health, and healthier lifestyles than individuals who did not graduate from college. (CollegeBoard)

Adults with higher levels of education are less likely to depend on social safety-net programs, generating decreased demand on public budgets. (CollegeBoard)

Overview - Education & the public good

<p>Societal benefits</p> <p>Rising levels of education produce more engaged citizens who help make our society more stable and productive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voter participation increases • Volunteerism increases • Crime decreases • Welfare, health costs decrease
<p>Economic benefits</p> <p>More degreed individuals in a regional economy produce higher wages for everyone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productivity increases • Technology innovation rises • Economy grows on fast track • Tax contributions increase
<p>Personal benefits</p> <p>2.4% of those with a BA degree or higher live at or below the poverty level compared with 24.4% of those with less than a high school diploma.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A bachelor's degree brings • \$357,000 additional lifetime income for men • \$156,000 additional lifetime income for women
<p>Generational benefits</p> <p>Increasing college completion rates today will produce exponentially greater public return in the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those whose parents have completed college are most likely to earn a college degree.

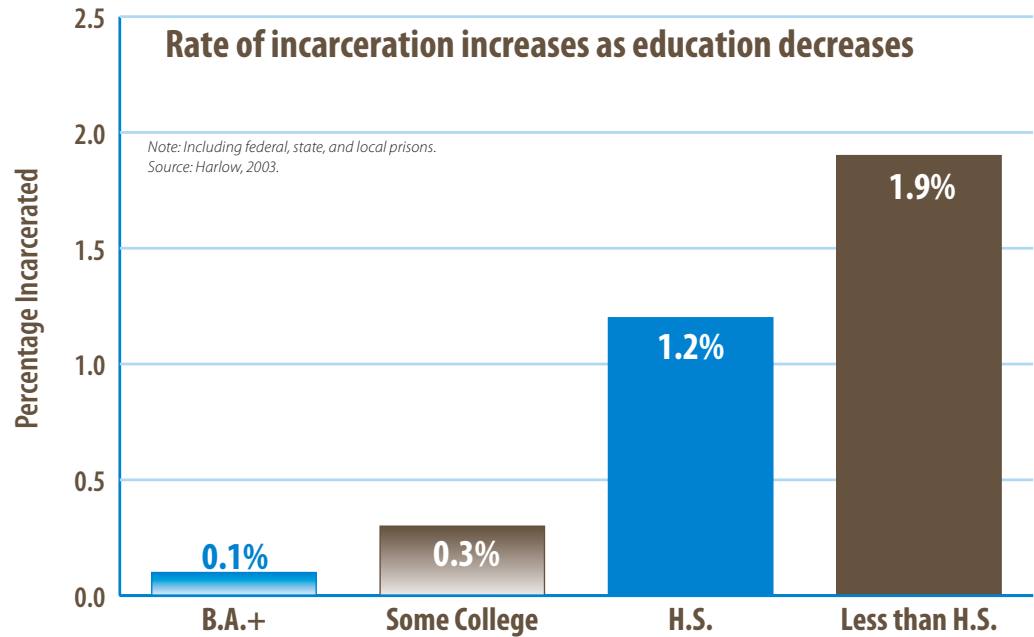


Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-60, "Money Income of Household, Families, and Persons in the United States," "Income, Poverty, and Valuation of Noncash Benefits," various years; and Series P-60, "Money Income in the United States," various years. From *Digest of Education Statistics 2005*.

Costs associated with low education levels

A society with low levels of educational attainment is the polar opposite of one with high levels of educational attainment. Lack of education drains our society of hope, opportunity, civic engagement, and economic growth. It creates a downward spiral of poverty, independence, ill health, alienation, and crime.

*That's why the challenge before us is so urgent. Our state's future is at stake. Our moral obligation to future generations requires a renewed and sustained commitment – a commitment of the time, resources, and creativity needed to transform our education system for a new economy, a new century, and **a new mix of diverse and promising students.***



Challenges in Washington

- Washington's under-educated working population is equal in size to its next 10 high school graduating classes.
- One out of four people aged 18-24 does not have a high school diploma.
- About 47% of Latinos 25 and over do not have a high school diploma.
- One in every three people 18-64 has only a high school diploma.

How did we fall behind?

If the need for rising levels of educational attainment is so obvious, why have we fallen behind? It's not because we've ignored our education needs; on the contrary, we have made enormous investments in education.

We have world-class research and regional universities and a community and technical college system that is the envy of other states. We have held on – against considerable pressure – to academic standards that ensure that our high school graduates can read and write. And we've begun to make new investments in early learning through the Department of Early Learning.

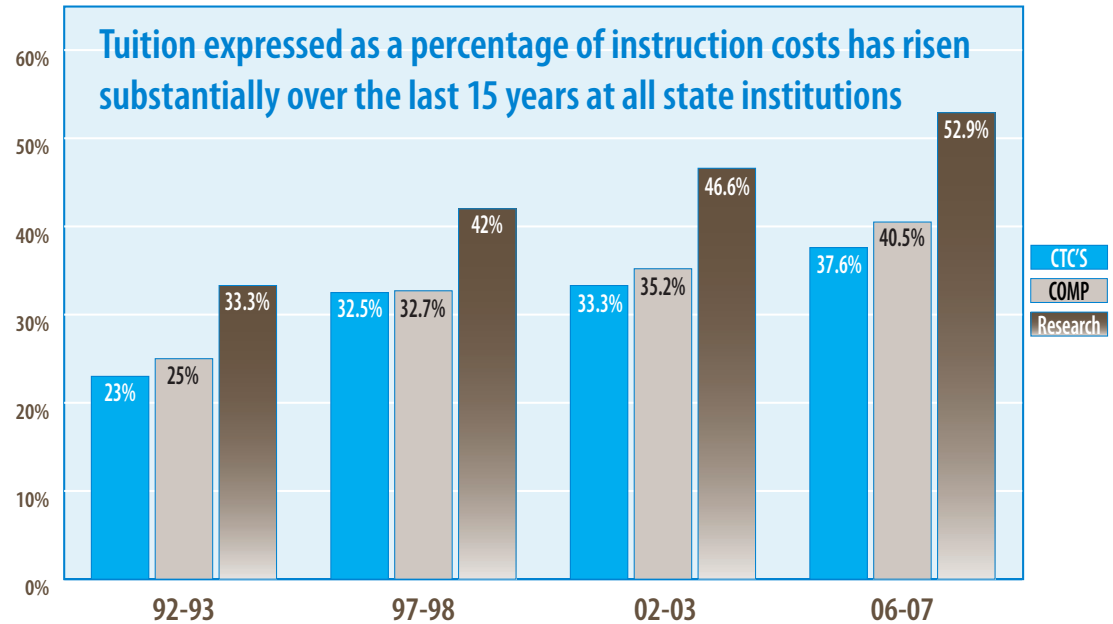
Between 1996 and 2009, our public and independent higher education enrollments are expected to grow by about 23 percent. We added nearly 10,000 new full time equivalent (FTE) students in the 2007-09 biennium. In fact, in 2007 the state Legislature provided more than \$443 million for increased enrollment, financial aid, and other improvements. This was the largest increase in state funding for public higher education in history.

But we still have not come far enough, fast enough. And we have not fully grasped how both the size and the nature of our educational challenge are changing. Here are some of the changes we need to face up to:

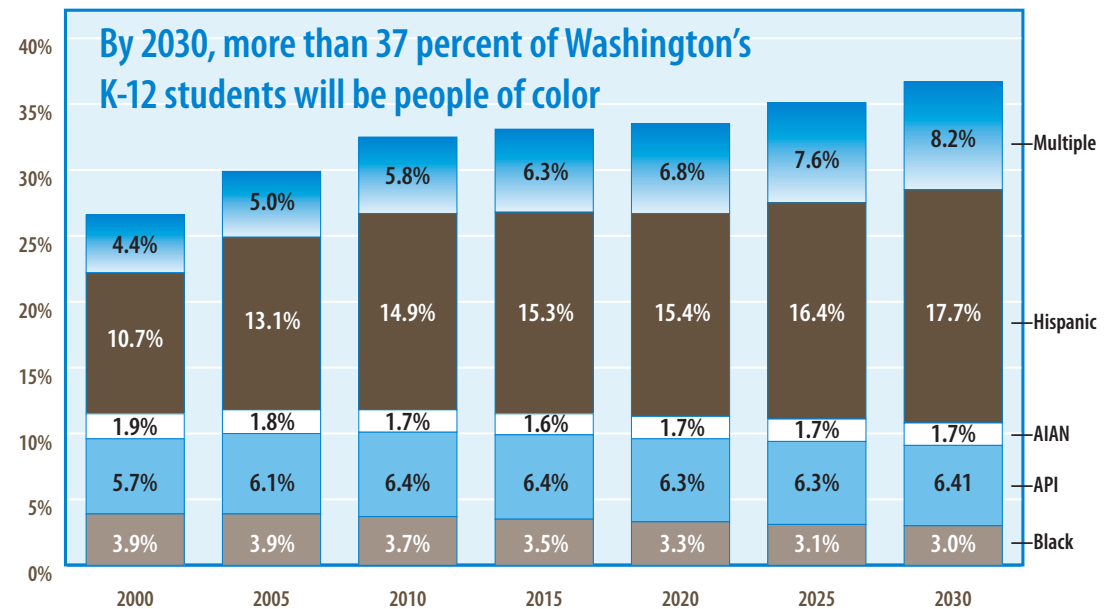


How did we fall behind?

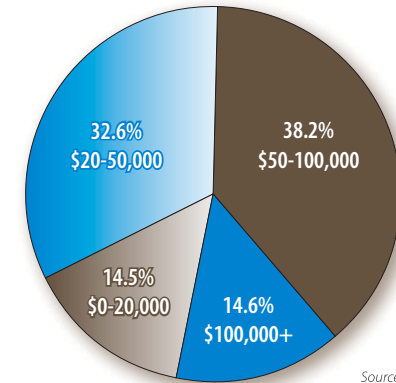
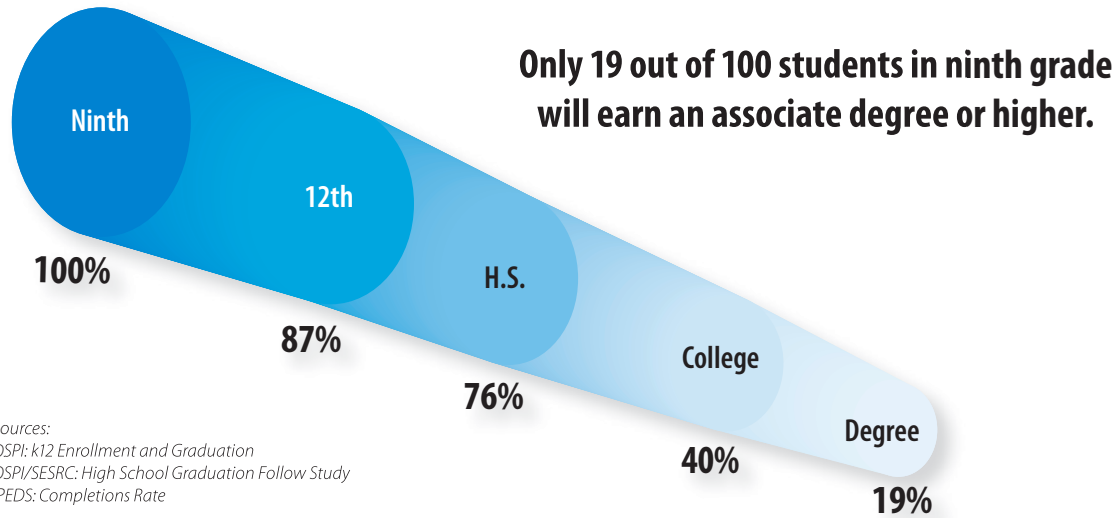
First, although legislative appropriations for higher education have increased steadily over the years and were raised dramatically in 2007, the share of total state resources assigned to higher education has declined steadily. Higher education has had to compete with rapidly escalating health care costs, acute transportation funding needs, rising expenditures for criminal justice, and higher social safety-net costs. As a result, students and families now must pay a much greater proportion of the cost of instruction.



Second, our growing population includes more people who have not fared well in our education system – the poor, people of color, and immigrants. Poverty is the single most powerful risk factor for lack of academic attainment among children, and people of color – particularly Latino, Native American, and African American people – who have disproportionately low incomes. Differences in culture, race, and language are growing in our state, and they also play an important role in how both children and adults learn, and what they need from our education system.



How did we fall behind?



By 2013, 47.1 percent of high school graduates will come from families with incomes of \$50,000 a year or less. These students are less likely to have parents who completed college and are at greater risk for not participating and succeeding in postsecondary education.

Third, we have a “pipeline” problem. Too many of our young people start kindergarten already behind. Too many drop out of high school; and, among those who graduate from high school, too many require remediation (especially in math) before they can do college-level work. Too few go on to postsecondary education, and even fewer complete the postsecondary programs they enroll in. At every stage, the “education pipeline” leaks like a sieve.

Fourth, we have a “way of thinking” problem that inhibits our progress, and it is expressed in the very term “education pipeline.” We think of education as something for young people – something

that should be completed in our late teens or early twenties. And, we think of education as having an end point – in fact, academics actually use the rather odd phrase “terminal degrees” to describe it.

This just doesn’t match the reality of the 21st century, or of Washington’s education challenge. Education beyond high school and learning throughout our careers are the new normal, but we are late adapters to this change.

Equally important, our state has more than a million adults with a high school diploma or less. Each year, we add 15,000 high school dropouts to that population, along with 23,000 high school graduates who go straight into the workforce. The number of

immigrants who need to learn English as well as job skills also is growing; currently they account for half of all those enrolled in adult basic education programs.

Sixty percent of today’s jobs require some form of postsecondary education or job training, and 10 years from now, the percentage will be even higher. And as the economy changes, skills must change. More and more adults will need to return to the well for more education time and time again, throughout their careers. But though we have talked about “lifetime learning” for what seems like a lifetime already, we have not re-engineered our education system to make adult learning accessible and user-friendly for those who need it.

Where do we begin?

This plan builds on the work of generations of visionary leaders who created today's higher education system. Those leaders founded both public and private colleges and universities across the state, built the community and technical college system, and created a financial aid system for low-income students. They were guided by the ethic of creating opportunity for the next generation. Now it is our turn to build on their legacy, and to live up to their ethical example.

This plan has more recent inspiration as well. One source is the *System Direction*, a document published by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges in September 2006, (available on their Web site). It sets out bold ideas about innovation, student success, and economic growth, which have been incorporated into this plan.

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board biennially develops the state's strategic plan for workforce development. *High Skills, High Wages 2006*, sets out goals for workforce development, including:

- Preparing youth for success in postsecondary education and work;
- Providing adults with access to lifelong education and training;
- Meeting the needs of industry for skilled employees; and
- Better integrating services to support learners of all ages.

These goals also are strongly embraced in the policies and recommendations of this plan.

The Washington Learns Steering Committee, convened by Governor Gregoire, also provides both data and ideas that inform, direct, and inspire this plan. The committee examined education from cradle through careers, and its final report calls for a single, seamless system of learning that tailors education to the needs of individual students. It emphasizes early learning, academic rigor, clear accountability, creativity, and new partnerships between families, the public sector and the private sector.

In its final report, issued in November 2006, *Washington Learns* set out 10-year goals for a world-class education system.

