

# Archived Information

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Objective 3.1: Secondary school students get the information, skills, and support they need to prepare successfully for postsecondary education.

**Our Role.** The Education Department supports postsecondary preparatory programs such as Upward Bound, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), and Talent Search. These programs are designed to provide low-income youth with academic support, information about postsecondary costs and financing, and other assistance. In addition, the Education Department disseminates information and provides other postsecondary preparatory support services to a broad range of students and families, beginning in the middle school years and continuing throughout high school.

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## Our Performance

**How We Measure.** The performance indicators for Objective 3.1 relate to expected outcomes of the Education Department's efforts to improve postsecondary study awareness, including increasing postsecondary enrollment rates, creating greater awareness of the availability of financial aid and the academic requirements of postsecondary enrollment, and providing effective early intervention programs.

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**Indicator 3.1.a. Postsecondary education enrollment rates will increase each year for all students while the enrollment gap between low- and high-income and minority and non-minority high school graduates will decrease each year.**

**Assessment of Progress.** Some progress is being made in reducing the enrollment gap between low- and high-income students, but progress is not being made toward increasing the overall enrollment rate or reducing the gap between minority and non-minority students. There was recent progress among blacks, but movement away from the goal among Hispanics (figure 3.1.a.2). One factor affecting the achievement of this goal is that outside factors, such as academic preparation and returns to education, are as, or possibly even more, crucial to students' decisions about whether to attend college than Federal student aid. The data for 2000 are not available.

Figure 3.1.a.1

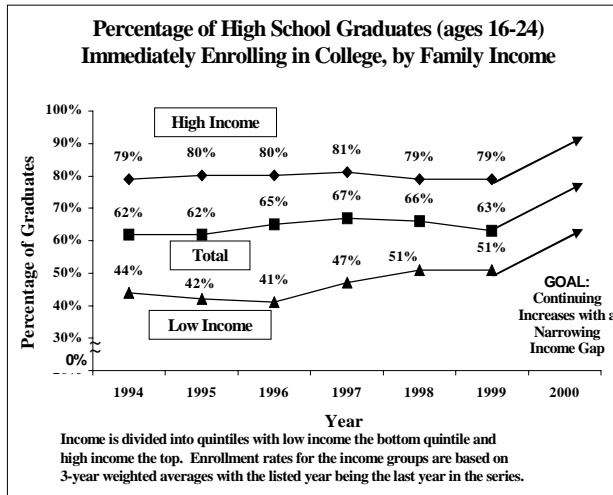
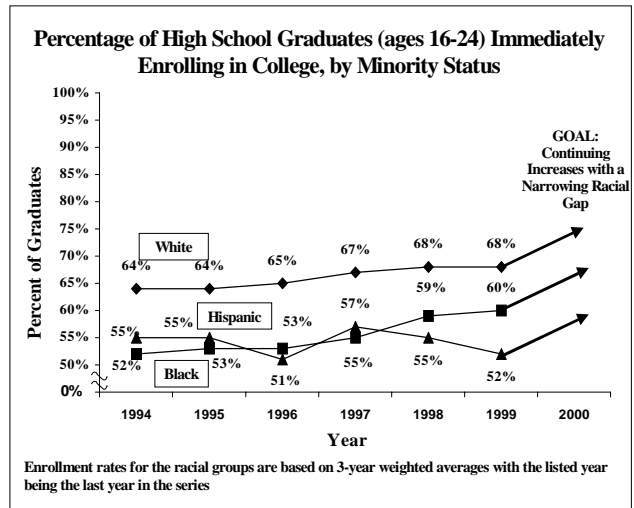


Figure 3.1.a.2

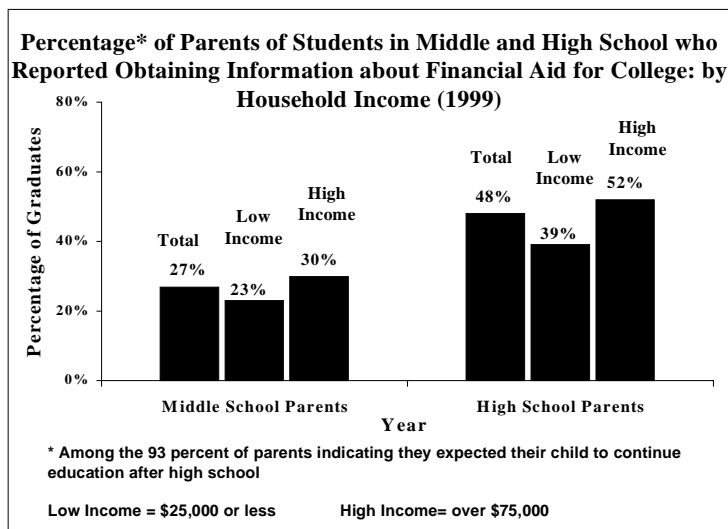


**Source:** October Current Population Surveys conducted by the Census Bureau. **Frequency:** Annual. **Next Update:** 2000 data will become available in 2001. **Validation procedure:** Verified by the Education Department’s data attestation process. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** Small subgroup sample sizes for low-income and minority students lead to large yearly fluctuations in enrollment rates. Three-year weighted averages are used to smooth out these fluctuations.

**Indicator 3.1.b. The percentage of parents of students in middle and high school obtaining information concerning financial aid for postsecondary study will increase, while the difference in rates between low- and high-income families will decrease.**

**Assessment of Progress.** Unable to judge progress, as data for 1999 are baseline measures. Figure 3.1.b.1 shows that parents of high school students were more likely to obtain financial aid information than were parents of middle-school students (48 percent versus 27 percent). Higher income parents were also more likely to obtain financial aid information than were lower income parents.

Figure 3.1.b.1

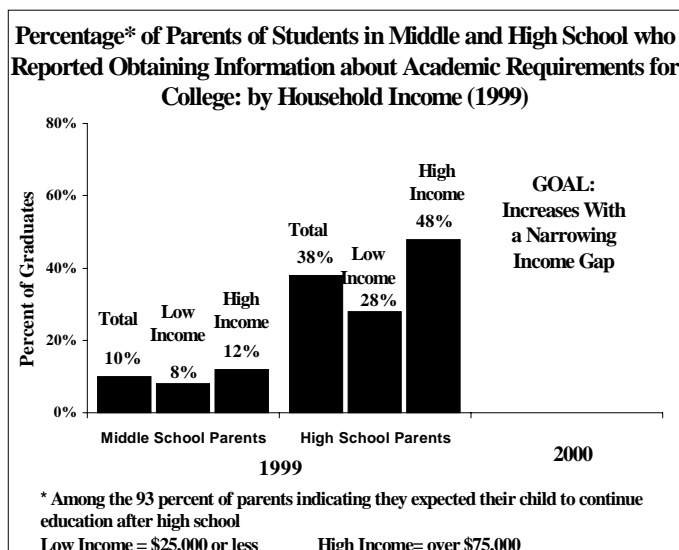


**Source:** National Household Education Survey. **Frequency:** Periodic. **Next Update:** 2002. **Validation procedure:** Data validated by National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) review and *NCES Statistical Standards*. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** None.

**Indicator 3.1.c. The percentage of parents of students in middle and high school obtaining information concerning the academic requirements for postsecondary study will increase, while the difference in rates between low- and high-income families will decrease.**

**Assessment of Progress.** Progress cannot be judged until trend data are available. In no group were the majority of parents knowledgeable about college requirements. Figure 3.1.c.1 shows that parents of high school students were more likely to obtain information about the academic requirements for postsecondary education than were parents of middle-school students (38 percent versus 10 percent). Higher-income parents were also more likely to obtain information about academic requirements for postsecondary education than were lower-income parents. The data for 2000 are not available.

Figure 3.1.c.1



Source: National Household Education Survey. Frequency: Periodic. Next Update: 2002. Validation procedure: Data validated by NCES review and NCES Statistical Standards. Limitations of data and planned improvements: None.

**Indicator 3.1.d. Participants receiving support services through the Education Department’s early intervention programs will enroll in postsecondary programs at rates higher than comparable nonparticipants.**

**Assessment of Progress.** The goal for 1999 was met for certain subgroups of students, but not for the overall program. Figure 3.1.d.1 summarizes key results for the program. Educational outcomes were higher for Upward Bound participants who had lower educational expectations, were academically high-risk students, and were male, compared with those than they were for similar students in a random control group. Overall, however, students who participated in Upward Bound did not have a higher number of total high school credits earned, high school graduation rate, grade point average (GPA), or postsecondary enrollment rate than did comparable nonparticipants. The data for 2000 are not available.

Figure 3.1.d.1

### Upward Bound Evaluation Findings

Results are based on information collected 2 to 3 years after students applied to Upward Bound. About two-thirds of the students in the sample had completed high school, but only one-quarter were enrolled in college. Because many of the students had not attended college, the most credible results pertain to students' high school experiences:

- **The overall effects of Upward Bound on high school students are limited.** Participants who had slightly higher educational expectations earned more credits in math and social studies, earned more credits from 4-year postsecondary institutions, were more likely to have received financial aid, and were more actively involved in college activities. However, participation did not affect total high school credits earned, high school graduation, GPA, or postsecondary school enrollment.
- **Upward Bound has a large impact on academically at-risk students.** Three groups of students who benefited substantially were students entering Upward Bound with lower educational expectations, academically high-risk students, and boys. The evaluation had positive results for these students across a wide range of topics including educational expectations, high school academic credits, high school graduation, and college enrollment.
- **The duration of participation matters.** A longer exposure to Upward Bound was associated with a greater program impact.
- **The findings from the evaluation strongly suggest that two ways to improve the program's effectiveness are to enroll more at-risk students and to improve program retention.**

**Source:** Special Upward Bound evaluation commissioned by the Education Department. *Frequency:* Periodic. *Next Update:* 2001. **Validation procedure:** Data validated by conducting the evaluation in accordance with strict methodological standards including the random assignment of students to treatment and control groups. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** Major program evaluations, while providing rigorous information comparing recipients and nonrecipients, are conducted very infrequently. We are currently assessing the feasibility of combining program performance reports with data on student aid recipients to assess the success of the TRIO programs in getting students to enroll in and complete postsecondary study. Data regarding the performance of the TRIO programs, as reported by grantees on their annual performance reports, will be verified against the evaluation results.