

Glossary





Glossary

A

Achievement levels: Achievement levels define what students should know and be able to do at different levels of performance. In the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the achievement levels are *Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced*. The definitions of these levels, which apply across all grades and subject areas, are as follows:

Basic: This level denotes partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at each grade.

Proficient: This level represents solid academic performance for each grade assessed. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.

Advanced: This level signifies superior performance.

ACT Assessment: An examination administered by ACT, Inc. (formerly the American College Testing Program). The ACT Assessment® is designed to assess high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. The ACT differs from the SAT in that it assesses students' knowledge in the curricular areas of English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning.

Activities for supervision: A form of care arrangement that includes extracurricular activities such as sports, arts, and clubs that are not associated with center- or school-based arrangements. Parents may use such activities to provide children with adult supervision (nonparental care). Similar activities may also be undertaken because of children's personal interest and enjoyment and not for the purpose of adult supervision (adapted from NCES 2004–008, page 7, 3, § 6–7).

Adult education: Adult education includes enrollment in a formal course of any length from 1 day to a semester or longer in any of seven types of activities: English as a Second Language (ESL); Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Educational Development (GED) preparation classes, and adult high school programs; college or university degree programs; vocational or technical diploma programs; apprenticeship programs; work-related courses (related to a job or career other than postsecondary credential programs or apprenticeship programs, whether or not respondents had a job when they took the courses); and personal interest courses (various types of educational activities that have an instructor and are not included in the other categories). For the purposes of this volume, adult education for work-related reasons includes apprenticeships, formal work-related courses, college or university degree or certificate programs for work-related reasons, and vocational/technical diploma programs for work-related reasons. It excludes informal learning (e.g., brown bag demonstrations, conferences, or self-paced study). The adult population includes civilian, noninstitutionalized individuals, age 16 and above, who are not enrolled in elementary or secondary school.

Advanced degree: Any formal degree attained after the bachelor's degree. Advanced degrees include master's degrees, doctoral degrees, and first-professional degrees.

Afterschool programs: Center- or school-based programs regularly scheduled at least once each month during afterschool hours.

Alternative schools: Alternative schools serve students whose needs cannot be met in a regular, special education, or vocational school. They provide nontraditional education and may serve as an adjunct to a regular school. Although these schools fall outside the categories of regular, special education, and vocational education, they may provide similar services

Glossary

Continued

or curriculum. Some examples of alternative schools are schools for potential dropouts; residential treatment centers for substance abuse (if they provide elementary or secondary education); schools for chronic truants; and schools for students with behavioral problems. Between 3 and 4 percent of the schools included in the Common Core of Data (CCD) files are alternative schools.

Assistantship: An assistantship is a form of institutional aid in which the student receives aid in exchange for teaching, research, or other services. This form of aid is most commonly used for graduate students, but is sometimes available to undergraduates.

Associate's degree: A degree granted for the successful completion of a subbaccalaureate program of study, usually requiring at least 2 years (or the equivalent) of full-time college-level study. This includes degrees granted in a cooperative or work-study program.

At-risk: Being “at-risk” means having one or more family background or other factors that have been found to predict a high rate of school failure at some time in the future. This “failure” generally refers to dropping out of high school before graduating but also can mean being retained within a grade from one year to the next. The risk factors include having a mother whose education is less than high school, living in a single-parent family, receiving welfare assistance, and living in a household where the primary language spoken is other than English.

B

Baccalaureate degree: (See Bachelor's degree.)

Bachelor's degree: A degree granted for the successful completion of a baccalaureate program of study, usually requiring at least 4 years (or the equivalent) of full-time college-level study. This includes degrees granted in a cooperative or work-study program.

C

Carnegie unit: A standard of measurement used for secondary education that represents the completion of a course that meets one period per day for 1 year.

Center- or school-based programs: A care arrangement that encompasses supervised and organized activities in a nonresidential setting, such as the child's school or a community center.

Certificate: An award granted for the successful completion of a subbaccalaureate program of study, which usually requires less than 2 years of full-time postsecondary study.

Cohort: A group of persons who share one or more particular statistical or demographic characteristics, such as having received their bachelor's degree in a certain year or range of years.

College: A postsecondary institution that offers a general or liberal arts education, usually leading to an associate's, bachelor's, master's, doctor's, or first-professional degree. Junior colleges and community colleges are included.

Community college: A commonly used term for a public 2-year institution, which provides 2-year programs that lead to a certificate or an associate's degree or that fulfill part of the requirements for a bachelor's degree or higher at a 4-year institution.

Constant dollars: Dollar amounts that have been adjusted by means of price and cost indexes to eliminate inflationary factors and allow direct comparison across years.

Consumer price index (CPI): This price index measures the average change in the cost of a fixed-market basket of goods and services purchased by consumers.

Glossary

Continued

Control of institutions: A classification of institutions of elementary/secondary or post-secondary education by whether the institution is operated by publicly elected or appointed officials (public control) or by privately elected or appointed officials and derives its major source of funds from private sources (private control).

Core curriculum: The most commonly implemented form of the New Basics curriculum, which includes 4 years of English and 3 years each of mathematics, science, and social studies, but not the one-half year of computer science included in the New Basics curriculum. (See New Basics curriculum.)

Current dollars: Dollar amounts that have not been adjusted to compensate for inflation. (See Constant dollars.)

Current expenditures: Expenditures for operating local public schools, excluding capital outlay and interest on school debt. These expenditures include such items as salaries for school personnel, fixed charges, student transportation, books and materials, and energy costs. Expenditures for state administration are excluded.

D

Dependent student: (See Financial dependency.)

Distance education: Instructional programs or courses in which the instructor and students need not be in the same physical place, particularly those relying on computers, audio, or video technology as the medium for delivery and, sometimes, for two-way interaction.

Doctoral institutions: Includes 4-year post-secondary institutions that award at least a doctoral or first-professional degree in one or more programs.

Doctor's degree: An earned degree carrying the title of Doctor. The Doctor of Philosophy degree (Ph.D.) is the highest academic degree and requires mastery within a field of knowledge and demonstrated ability to perform scholarly research. Other doctor's degrees are awarded for fulfilling specialized requirements in professional fields, such as education (Ed.D.), musical arts (D.M.A.), business administration (D.B.A.), and engineering (D. Eng. or D.E.S.). Many doctor's degrees in both academic and professional fields require an earned master's degree as a prerequisite. First-professional degrees, such as M.D. and D.D.S., are not included under this heading. (See First-professional degree.)

Dropout: The term is used to describe both the event of leaving school before graduating and the status of an individual who is not in school and who is not a graduate. Transferring from a public school to a private school, for example, is not regarded as a dropout event. A person who drops out of school may later return and graduate but is called a "dropout" at the time he or she left school. At the time the person returns to school, he or she is called a "stopout." Measures to describe these often complicated behaviors include the event dropout rate (or the closely related school persistence rate), the status dropout rate, and the high school completion rate. (See Event dropout rate and Status dropout rate.)

E

Educational attainment: The highest level of schooling attended and completed.

Elementary school: An elementary/secondary school with one or more grades of K–6 that does not have any grade higher than grade 8. For example, schools with grades K–6, 1–3, or 6–8 are classified as elementary.

Glossary

Continued

Elementary/secondary school: As reported in this publication, elementary/secondary schools include regular schools (i.e., schools that are part of state and local school systems and private elementary/secondary schools, both religiously affiliated and nonsectarian); alternative schools; vocational education schools; and special education schools. Schools not reported here include subcollegiate departments of postsecondary institutions, residential schools for exceptional children, federal schools for American Indians or Alaska Natives, and federal schools on military posts and other federal installations.

Employment status: The employment status of civilian, noninstitutionalized individuals in the population is indicated by whether they are in the labor force or not. If they are employed either full time or part time or unemployed but looking for work they are in the labor force; otherwise, they are not.

English: A group of instructional programs that describes the English language arts, including composition, creative writing, and the study of literature.

Enrollment: The total number of students registered in a given school unit at a given time, generally in the fall of a year.

Event dropout rate: Event rates calculated using the October Current Population Survey (CPS) data for a certain year measure the proportion of students who dropped out between October of that year and October of the previous year. The event rate is determined by counting all persons in a certain age range (e.g., 15–24 years old) who were enrolled in high school in October of the previous year but had not completed high school and were not enrolled in grades 10–12 a year later. This count is then divided by the total number of persons in that age range who were enrolled the previous October to compute the rate. High school is

completed when the person either earns a high school diploma or an alternative credential such as a GED.

Expenditures: Charges incurred, whether paid or unpaid, that are presumed to benefit the current fiscal year. For elementary/secondary schools, these include all charges for current outlays plus capital outlays and interest on school debt. For postsecondary institutions, these include current outlays plus capital outlays. For government, these include charges net of recoveries and other correcting transactions, other than retirement of debt, investment in securities, extension of credit, or as agency transactions. Also, government expenditures include only external transactions, such as the provision of prerequisites or other payments in kind. Aggregates for groups of governments exclude intergovernmental transactions among the governments.

F

Federal student aid: Student financial aid provided through the federal government. This aid can either be provided by or administered by a federal agency. Federal agencies providing aid include the Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Defense, Veterans Administration, and the National Science Foundation. Federal student aid can be in the form of grants, loans, and work-study aid.

Financial dependency: For purposes of determining eligibility for federal student aid, students are normally considered financially dependent on their parents or guardians (regardless of the amount of support actually provided) unless they meet one of the criteria for independence. A student is considered to be independent if he or she is age 24 or older, a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces, enrolled in a graduate or professional program beyond a bachelor's degree, married, an orphan or ward

Glossary

Continued

of the court, or has legal dependents other than a spouse. Students under 24 who do not meet any of these conditions but are receiving no parental support may be classified as independent by campus financial aid officers using their professional judgment. Most undergraduates under 24 are considered dependent.

First-professional degree: An award that requires completion of a degree program that meets all of the following criteria: (1) completion of the academic requirements to begin practice in the profession; (2) at least 2 years of college work before entering the degree program; and (3) a total of at least 6 academic years of college work to complete the degree program, including previously required college work plus the work required in the professional program itself. First-professional degrees may be awarded in the following 10 fields: chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.), osteopathic medicine (D.O.), dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D.), pharmacy (Pharm.D.), law (L.L.B. or J.D.), podiatry (D.P.M., D.P., or Pod.D.), medicine (M.D.), theology (M.Div., M.H.L., B.D., or Ordination), optometry (O.D.), and veterinary medicine (D.V.M.).

Formal learning: Formal work-related adult education is defined by the presence of an instructor and includes a college degree or post-degree certificate program for work-related reasons, a vocational degree/diploma program for work-related reasons, an apprenticeship program leading to journeyman status in a skilled trade or craft, and work-related courses (training, workshops, seminars, courses, or classes taken for work-related reasons).

Four-year institution: Denotes a postsecondary institution that can award bachelor's degrees or higher.

Free lunch eligibles: (See National school lunch program.)

Full-time enrollment: The number of students enrolled in postsecondary education courses with a total credit load equal to at least 75 percent of the normal full-time course load.

G

GED certificate: (See High school equivalency certificate.)

General revenue: Noncategorical revenues that consist of all local revenues, state general formula assistance, and state payments on behalf of the local education agency for employee benefits.

Grants: This term can have one of two possible meanings. In this publication, grants most commonly refer to funds awarded to an individual by a college, an agency, or another institution to attend postsecondary education. Grants, which do not have to be repaid, include need-based grants, merit-based scholarships, fellowships, and tuition waivers. Grants may also refer to funds provided by the federal or state government or some other institution to other agencies to support the delivery of services, undertake research or another innovative activity, or to provide other beneficial services.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP): Gross national product less net property income from abroad. Both gross national product (GNP) and gross domestic product (GDP) aggregate only the incomes of residents of a nation, corporate and individual, derived directly from the current production of goods and services by consumers and government, gross private domestic investment, and net exports of goods and services. The goods and services included are largely those bought for final use (excluding illegal transactions) in the market economy. A number of inclusions, however, represent imputed values, the most important of which is rental value of owner-occupied housing.

Glossary

Continued

Gross National Product (GNP): A measure of the money value of the goods and services available to the nation from economic activity. GNP can be viewed in terms of expenditure categories, which include purchases of goods and services by consumers and government, gross private domestic investment, and net exports of goods and services. The goods and services included are largely those bought for final use (excluding illegal transactions) in the market economy. A number of inclusions, however, represent imputed values, the most important of which is rental value of owner-occupied housing. GNP, in this broad context, measures the output attributable to the factors of production, labor, and property supplied by U.S. residents.

Guidance staff: All staff whose primary responsibility is to provide academic, career, or personal/social counseling to high school students.

H

High school: A secondary school offering the final years of high school work necessary for graduation, usually including grades 10, 11, 12 (in a 6-3-3 plan) or grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 (in a 6-2-4 plan).

High school completion: An individual has completed high school if he or she has been awarded a high school diploma or an equivalent credential, including a General Educational Development (GED) credential.

High school diploma: A formal document regulated by the state certifying the successful completion of a prescribed secondary school program of studies. In some states or communities, high school diplomas are differentiated by type, such as an academic diploma, a general diploma, or a vocational diploma.

High school equivalency certificate: A formal document certifying that an individual has

met the state requirements for high certificate school graduation equivalency by obtaining satisfactory scores on an approved examination and meeting other performance requirements (if any) set by a state education agency or other appropriate body. One particular version of this certificate is the GED. The GED (General Educational Development) Test is a comprehensive test used primarily to appraise the educational development of students who have not completed their formal high school education and who may earn a high school equivalency certificate through achieving satisfactory scores. GEDs are awarded by the states or other agencies, and the test is developed and distributed by the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education.

High school grades teachers: Teachers who teach only students in grade 9 and those who teach students in any of the grades 10–12.

Humanities: Instructional programs in the following fields: area and ethnic studies, foreign languages, letters, liberal/general studies, multi/interdisciplinary studies, philosophy and religion, theology, and the visual and performing arts.

I

Independent student: (See Financial dependency.)

Informal learning: Informal work-related adult education activities that take place without an instructor. Examples of such activities include on-the-job demonstrations by a supervisor or coworker; on-the-job mentoring or supervised training; self-paced study using books, videos, or computer-based software; attendance at brown-bag or informal presentations; and attendance at conferences, trade shows, or conventions related to one's work or career.

Glossary

Continued

L

Limited-English-proficient: A concept developed to assist in identifying those language minority students (children with language backgrounds other than English) who need language assistance services, in their own language or in English, in the schools. The Bilingual Education Act, reauthorized in 1988 (P.L. 100-297), describes a limited-English proficient (LEP) student as one who:

(1) meets one or more of the following conditions:

- a. a student who was born outside the United States or whose native language is not English;
- b. a student who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; or
- c. a student who is an American Indian or Alaskan Native and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant effect on his or her level of English language proficiency; and

(2) has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to deny him or her the opportunity to learn successfully in English-only classrooms.

Many ways of making this determination about an individual student's English proficiency are being used by school systems across the United States. These include various combinations of home language surveys, informal determinations by teachers, formal interviews, and a number of types of assessment tests for classification, placement, and monitoring of progress.

Loan: Borrowed money that must be repaid.

Local education agency (LEA): (See School district.)

M

Major: Primary field of study in pursuit of a bachelor's degree, implying that the individual has substantial knowledge of the academic discipline or subject area.

Master's degree: A degree awarded for successful completion of a program generally requiring 1 or 2 years of full-time college-level study beyond the bachelor's degree. One type of master's degree, including the Master of Arts degree, or M.A., and the Master of Science degree, or M.S., is awarded in the liberal arts and sciences for advanced scholarship in a subject field or discipline and demonstrated ability to perform scholarly research. A second type of master's degree is awarded for the completion of a professionally oriented program—for example, an M.Ed. in education, an M.B.A. in business administration, an M.F.A. in fine arts, an M.M. in music, an M.S.W. in social work, and an M.P.A. in public administration. A third type of master's degree is awarded in professional fields for study beyond the first-professional degree—for example, the Master of Laws (LL.M.) and Master of Science (M.S.) in various medical specializations.

Mathematics: A body of related courses concerned with knowledge of measurement, properties, and relations quantities, which can include theoretical or applied studies of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, statistics, and calculus.

Median: The median is a measure of central tendency on a scale indicating where a population is centered. The median of the population is the point on the scale that divides the population in half. Half of the population will have values that are equal to or larger than the median, and half will have values that are smaller than the median.

Glossary

Continued

Merit-based aid: Grants and scholarships awarded solely on the basis of academic, athletic, or other merit. That is, financial need is not considered.

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA): A geographic entity designated by the federal Office of Management and Budget for use by federal statistical agencies. A metropolitan statistical area (MSA) is a metropolitan area (MA) that is not closely associated with another MA. An MSA consists of one or more counties, except in New England, where MSAs are defined in terms of county subdivisions (primarily cities and towns). (See also *supplemental note 1*.)

Middle grade teachers: Teachers who teach students in the middle grades, generally 5–8, including those teaching some combination of grades K–9 and having a main assignment field other than elementary education or special education and not teaching any grades higher than 9.

Middle school: A separately organized and administered school between the elementary and senior high schools. When called a “junior high school,” a middle school usually includes grades 7, 8, and 9 (in a 6-3-3 plan) or grades 7 and 8 (in a 6-2-4 plan). In some districts, however, a middle school spans grades 5 to 8 or grades 6 to 8.

N

National school lunch program: Established by President Truman in 1946, the program is a federally assisted meal program operated in public and private nonprofit schools and residential child care centers. To be eligible, a student must be from a household with an income at 185 percent of the poverty level for reduced-price lunch or 130 percent of the poverty level for free lunch.

Need-based aid: Need-based aid is aid that is awarded on the basis of financial need as de-

termined by a formula that takes into account the student’s financial resources and the price of attending the institution in which the student is enrolled.

New Basics curriculum: A minimum curriculum recommended by the National Commission of Excellence in Education (NCEE) in 1983 to be completed by high school graduates that consists of 4 years of English; 3 years each of mathematics, science, and social studies; and one-half year of computer science. College-bound high school graduates are also advised to complete 2 years of foreign language. (See Core curriculum.)

Nondoctoral institutions: Includes 4-year postsecondary institutions that do not offer doctoral or first-professional degrees. They may offer master’s degrees.

Nonrelative care: A care arrangement where care is provided by family child care providers, neighbors, regular sitters, and other people not related to the child. This care may also be provided in the child’s home or another home.

Nonresident alien: A person who is not a citizen of the United States and who is in this country on a temporary basis and does not have the right to remain indefinitely.

Nontraditional student: A student with any of the following characteristics: has delayed enrollment, attends part time, works full time while enrolled, is considered financially independent for purposes of determining financial aid, has dependents other than a spouse, is a single parent, or does not have a high school diploma.

Nursery school: A separately organized and administered school for groups of children during the year or years preceding kindergarten, which provides educational experiences under the direction of professionally qualified teachers.

Glossary

Continued

O

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD): The OECD is an organization of 30 nations (as of 2002) whose purpose is to promote trade and economic growth in both member and nonmember nations. OECD's activities cover almost all aspects of economic and social policy. The current member countries include Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

P

Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS) program: The federally sponsored PLUS program is a low-interest loan for parents of dependent students. Parents may borrow up to the full cost of the student's education (less student financial aid).

Part-time enrollment: The number of students enrolled in postsecondary education courses with a total credit load less than 75 percent of the normal full-time credit load.

Pell grant program: The federal Pell grant program is the largest program of need-based grant aid available to postsecondary students, providing grants to low-income undergraduate students who have not yet received a bachelor's or first-professional degree. Pell grants serve as the base to which other financial aid awards are added.

Permanent resident: Any non-U.S. citizen who is residing in the United States under legally recognized and lawfully recorded permanent residence as an immigrant.

Postsecondary education: The provision of formal instructional programs with a curriculum designed primarily for students who have completed the requirements for a high school diploma or its equivalent. This includes programs with an academic, vocational, and continuing professional education purpose and excludes vocational and adult basic education programs. (See also *supplemental note 8*.)

Prekindergarten: Public preprimary education for children ages 3–4 (ages 3–5 in some states) who have not yet entered kindergarten. It may offer a program of general education or special education and, in some states, may be part of a collaborative effort with Head Start. Private preprimary educational programs are typically referred to as “center-based programs.” (See Preprimary.)

Preprimary: Elementary education programs for children who are too young for 1st grade, including center-based programs, prekindergarten, and kindergarten.

Private for-profit institution: A postsecondary institution that is privately owned and operated as a profit-making enterprise. Includes career colleges and proprietary schools. (See also *supplemental note 8*.)

Private not-for profit institution: A postsecondary institution that is controlled by an independent governing board and incorporated under Section 503(c) of the Internal Revenue Code. (See also *supplemental note 8*.)

Private school or institution: A school or institution that is controlled by an individual or agency other than a state, a subdivision of a state, or the federal government; that is usually not supported primarily by public funds; and that is not operated by publicly elected or appointed officials.

Glossary

Continued

Public institution: A postsecondary education institution supported primarily by public funds and operated by publicly elected or appointed officials who control the program and activities. (See also *supplemental note 8.*)

Public school: An institution that provides educational services for at least one of grades 1–12 (or comparable ungraded levels), has one or more teachers to give instruction, is located in one or more buildings, receives public funds as primary support, and is operated by an education or chartering agency. Public schools include regular, special education, vocational/technical, alternative, and public charter schools. They also include schools in juvenile detention centers, schools located on military bases and operated by the Department of Defense, and Bureau of Indian Affairs-funded schools operated by local public school districts.

Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) indices: Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) exchange rates, or indices, are the currency exchange indices rates that equalize the purchasing power of different currencies, meaning that when a given sum of money is converted into different currencies at the PPP exchange rates, it will buy the same basket of goods and services in all countries. PPP indices are the rates of currency conversion that eliminate the difference in price levels among countries. Thus, when expenditures on GDP for different countries are converted into a common currency by means of PPP indices, they are expressed at the same set of international prices, so that comparisons among countries reflect only differences in the volume of goods and services purchased.

R

Regular school districts: Can be either (1) a school district that is not a component of a supervisory union or (2) a school district component of a supervisory union that shares a superintendent and administrative services

with other local school districts. State- and federally operated institutions charged with serving special needs populations, regional education service agencies, and supervisory union administrative centers (or county superintendents serving the same purpose) are excluded.

Regular schools: Schools that are part of state and local school systems as well as private elementary/secondary schools, both religiously affiliated and nonsectarian, that are not alternative schools, vocational education schools, special education schools, subcollegiate departments of postsecondary institutions, residential schools for exceptional children, federal schools for American Indians or Alaska Natives, or federal schools on military posts and other federal installations.

Relative care: A care arrangement where grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and other relatives are the caregivers. Relative care takes place in the child's home or another home.

Remedial course (postsecondary): Courses provided in reading, writing, mathematics, or other subjects for college students lacking those skills necessary to perform college-level work at the level required by the attended institution; thus, what constitutes remedial courses varies from institution to institution.

Remedial education: Instruction for a student lacking the reading, writing, mathematics, or other skills necessary to perform college-level work at the level required by the attended institution.

Revenues: All funds received from external sources, net of refunds, and correcting transactions. Noncash transactions such as receipt of services, commodities, or other receipts "in kind" are excluded, as are funds received from the issuance of debt, liquidation of investments, and nonroutine sale of property.

Glossary

Continued

S

SAT Assessment: (See Scholastic Assessment Test.)

Scale score: Uses a set scale (e.g., 0–500 on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading and mathematics assessments) to assess overall achievement in a domain, such as mathematics. NAEP and the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998–99 (ECLS–K) use Item Response Theory (IRT) models to determine the scale.

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT): An examination administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) and used to predict the facility with which an individual will progress in learning college-level subjects. The SAT differs from the ACT in that it assesses students' aptitude in English, reading, and mathematics generally rather than their curricular knowledge.

School district: An education agency at the local level that exists primarily to operate public schools or to contract for public school services. Synonyms are “local basic administrative unit” and “local education agency.” (See Local education agency.)

Science: The body of related courses concerned with knowledge of the physical and biological world and with the processes of discovering and validating this knowledge.

Secondary school: An elementary/secondary school with one or more of grades 7–12 that does not have any grade lower than grade 7. For example, schools with grades 9–12, 7–9, 10–12, or 7–8 are classified as secondary.

Self-care: A care arrangement in which parents allow children to be responsible for themselves when a parent or another adult is unavailable for supervision.

Significantly different: (See Introduction to appendix 3 and the Reader's Guide.)

Social science: A body of related courses concerned with knowledge of the social life of human groups and individuals, including economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, social studies, and sociology.

Social studies: A group of instructional programs that describes the substantive portions of behavior, past and present activities, interactions, and organizations of people associated together for religious, benevolent, cultural, scientific, political, patriotic, or other purposes.

Stafford Loan program: The Stafford Loan program is the largest of federal student loans. For students with financial need, the federal government subsidizes the interest while the student is enrolled. Unsubsidized loans are available to students without regard to financial need.

Statistically significant: (See Introduction to appendix 3 and the Reader's Guide.)

Status dropout rate: The status dropout rate is a cumulative rate that estimates the proportion of young adults who are dropouts, regardless of when they dropped out. The numerator of the status dropout rate for any given year is the number of young adults ages 16–24 who, as of October of that year, had not completed high school and were not currently enrolled. The denominator is the total number of 16- to 24-year-olds in October of that same year.

T

Teacher certification: License granted by states for teachers to teach a given subject. In 2002, all states required a bachelor's degree that included subject matter as well as pedagogical studies; all but 10 states required basic skills tests in reading, mathematics, or general knowledge; and 31 states required subject-matter examinations.

Glossary

Continued

Tenure: The status that teachers or professors may be granted, after a trial period, to protect them from summary dismissal.

Tertiary-type A education: A level of higher education classified according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). Programs considered as tertiary-type A education are based largely on theory and are designed to provide sufficient qualifications for entry into advanced research programs and professions with high-skill requirements, such as medicine, dentistry, or architecture. Tertiary-type A programs have a minimum cumulative theoretical duration of 3 years of full-time-equivalent (FTE) enrollment, although they typically last 4 or more years and lead to the award of a bachelor's or higher degree.

Tertiary-type B education: A level of higher education classified according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). Programs considered as tertiary-type B education are typically shorter than tertiary-type A programs and focus on practical, technical, or occupational skills for direct entry into the labor market, although they may cover some theoretical foundations in the respective programs. These programs have a minimum duration of 2 years of full-time-equivalent (FTE) enrollment at the tertiary level.

Title I grant program: The federal government provides grants to local education agencies to supplement state and local education funding based primarily on the number of children from low-income families in each local education agency. The program provides extra academic support and learning opportunities to help disadvantaged students catch up with their classmates or make significant academic progress.

Title IV institutions: To participate in student financial aid programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act, institutions

must be accredited by an agency or organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, have a program of over 300 clock hours or 8 credit hours, have been in business for at least 2 years, and have a signed Program Participation Agreement (PPA) with the Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education.

Total expenditures for elementary and secondary education: Total expenditures per student in fall enrollment include all expenditures allocable to per student costs divided by fall enrollment. These allocable expenditures include current expenditures for regular school programs, interest on school debt, and capital outlay. Expenditures for nonelementary/secondary programs that include community services, adult education, and other are excluded.

Tuition and fees: A payment or charge for instruction or compensation for services, privileges, or the use of equipment, books, or other goods.

Two-year institution: Denotes a postsecondary institution that does not confer bachelor's degrees, but does provide 2-year programs that result in a certificate or an associate's degree, or 2-year programs that fulfill part of the requirements for a bachelor's degree or higher at a 4-year institution.

U

Undergraduate students: Students registered at a postsecondary institution in a program leading to a baccalaureate degree or other formal award below the baccalaureate such as an associate's degree.

University: A postsecondary institution that consists of a liberal arts college, a diverse graduate program, and usually two or more professional schools or faculties and that is empowered to confer degrees in various fields of study.

Glossary

Continued

Unsubsidized loans: (See Stafford Loan program.)

V

Vocational certificate: (See vocational/technical program.)

Vocational courses: High school courses in the following areas: agriculture, business, marketing/distribution, health care, technology/communications, construction, mechanical/repair, precision production (drafting, metals, electricity, etc.), public and protective services, food service/hospitality, child care/education, personal and other services (cosmetology, fashion design, etc.), and transportation/materials moving.

Vocational education: Organized educational activities that offer a sequence of courses that provides individuals with the academic and

technical knowledge and skills needed to prepare for further education and for careers requiring less than a bachelor's degree. At the high school level, vocational education consists of occupational education, general labor market preparation, and family and consumer sciences education.

Vocational/technical program: A postsecondary program, usually offered in a public or private for-profit institution, often completed in less than 2 years that generally leads to an occupational certificate or credential.

W

Work-study: Work-study programs provide students with financial aid in exchange for work, usually on campus. The funds may come from federal, state, or institutional sources.

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Contents

NCES Publications (Complete citation).....	282
NCES Publications (Chronologically, by NCES number)	286
Other Publications	289
NCES Surveys	292
Surveys From Other Agencies.....	295

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Index





Index

- A**
- Ability-level instructional activities, **2003:SA9**
- Absenteeism, **2002:17**
- Academic aspirations, **2001:xviii, 2001:xxii**.
See also Expectations for education
- Academic preparation. *See* Curriculum, high school; Preparing for college
- Academic standards, **2001:41**. *See also* Core curriculum (New Basics)
- Access to postsecondary education, **2001:xviii–xxxvi**. *See also* Postsecondary education
- Achievement tests. *See also* College entrance examinations
- comparison between private and public school students, **2002:SA17–SA18, 2002:SA22**
- geography performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:13**
- history performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:14**
- international comparisons, **2002:13, 2003:10**
- mathematics performance through elementary/secondary level, **2001:12, 2003:11, 2003:12, 2004:11**
- poverty affecting results from, **2002:11**
- reading performance through elementary/secondary level, **2001:10, 2002:8, 2004:9**
- reading skill gains for kindergarten through 1st grade, **2003:SA2–SA13**
- science performance through elementary/secondary level, **2001:13, 2002:12**
- writing performance through elementary/secondary level, **2004:10**
- ACT (American College Testing Program), **2001:xxii, 2001:xxviii, 2003:20**. *See also* College entrance examinations and teachers, **2002:31**
- Activities for supervision, **2004:33, 2004:34**
- Adult education, **2003:8, 2003:44**
- enrollment in, **2004:1**
- work-related learning, **2004:7**
- Adult literacy, **2001:15**. *See also* Literacy
- Advanced degrees, **2001:30**. *See also* Educational attainment
- attendance and employment patterns, **2001:6**
- parental level of education, **2001:xix**
- Advanced placement, **2001:xli–xlii, 2003:24**
- in private schools, **2002:SA6–SA7**
- African Americans. *See* Blacks
- After-school activities/care, **2001:53, 2004:33, 2004:34**
- Age/Age comparisons. *See also* Grade-level studies
- college attendance, **2001:xxx–xxxii**
- enrollment in school by, **2004:1**
- health affected by, **2004:12**
- kindergarten enrollment, **2004:3**
- kindergarten through 1st-grade reading and mathematics skills, **2001:8**
- reading performance, **2001:10, 2002:8**
- students' use of time, **2001:22**
- voting participation, **2003:15**
- Algebra, **2001:24, 2003:22**. *See also* Mathematics
- coursetaking by high school students, **2004:21**
- mathematics performance, **2003:11**
- Alternative schools, **2003:27**
- American College Testing Program (ACT), **2001:xxii, 2001:xxviii, 2003:20**. *See also* College entrance examinations and teachers, **2002:31**
- American Indians/Alaska Natives
- faculty at postsecondary institutions, **2002:39**
- geography performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:13**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

- American Indians/Alaska Natives—*continued*
- graduate enrollment, **2002:6**, **2003:7**
 - history performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:14**
 - mathematics and science coursetaking in high school, **2002:27**, **2004:22**
 - mathematics performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:11**, **2004:11**
 - science performance through elementary/secondary level, **2002:12**
 - undergraduate enrollment, **2003:32**
 - young adults not in school or working, **2004:13**
- Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), **2003:34**
- Applying for college, **2001:xxviii–xxx**
- Argentina, reading literacy in, **2003:10**
- Arts education
- after-school activities, **2004:34**
 - subject expertise of elementary/secondary teachers, **2003:28**
- Asian/Pacific Islanders
- faculty at postsecondary institutions, **2002:39**
 - geography performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:13**
 - graduate enrollment, **2002:6**, **2003:7**
 - history performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:14**
 - kindergarten enrollment, **2004:3**
 - language courses taken in high school, **2003:25**
 - mathematics and science coursetaking in high school, **2002:27**, **2004:22**
 - mathematics performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:11**, **2004:11**
 - in private schools, **2002:SA8**
 - reading and mathematics achievement through 3rd grade, **2004:8**
- Asian/Pacific Islanders—*continued*
- science performance through elementary/secondary level, **2002:12**
 - undergraduate enrollment, **2003:32**
 - work-related adult education, participation in, **2004:7**
 - writing performance through elementary/secondary level, **2004:10**
 - young adults not in school or working, **2004:13**
- Assessment of students, **2001:46**. *See also* Achievement tests
- Associate's degrees, **2001:27**
- attrition rates in programs for, **2002:SA37**
 - employment while enrolled in program, **2004:29**
 - by field of study, **2003:33**
 - international comparisons, **2004:17**
 - persistence towards, **2004:19**
 - persistence towards for nontraditional students, **2002:SA33–SA35**, **2002:SA36**
 - transferring to a 4-year institution, **2003:19**
- Athletics, **2001:20**
- At-risk students, **2001:52**, **2002:22**, **2003:SA13n4**. *See also* Students whose parents did not go to college
- in public alternative schools, **2003:27**
 - reading and mathematics achievement through 3rd grade, **2004:8**
 - reading skill gains in kindergarten, **2003:SA4**, **2003:SA5**
 - in smaller classrooms, **2002:SA5**
- Attainment in education. *See* Educational attainment
- Attendance status, postsecondary education, **2001:xxxiii**. *See also* Full-time enrollment at postsecondary institutions; Part-time enrollment at postsecondary institutions
- enrollment, **2004:1**
 - graduate enrollment, **2001:6**
 - undergraduate enrollment, **2001:5**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), 2003:34
 Attitudes of students, 2001:19, 2001:20
 reading skill gains of kindergartners, 2003:SA6
 Attrition rates, 2002:SA37. *See also* Stopouts from postsecondary education
 Australia, 2002:9
 civic performance, 2002:15
 expenditures for education, 2003:40
 instructional activities in 8th-grade mathematics, 2003:26
 instructional activities in 8th-grade science classes, 2004:23
 mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
 transition to postsecondary education, 2004:17
 Austria, 2001:57
 expenditures for education, 2002:41
 reading literacy in, 2002:9

B

Baby boom echo, 2001:2, 2002:2, 2003:1, 2004:4
 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B), 2001:xix
 Bachelor's degrees, 2001:24. *See also* Educational attainment
 adult learning patterns, 2001:7
 attrition rates at, 2002:SA37
 community college students completing, 2003:19
 coursetaking by undergraduate students, 2004:30
 debt burden of college graduates, 2004:38
 earnings of young adults affected by, 2004:14
 educational expectations of 10th-graders, 2004:15
 employment while enrolled in program, 2004:29

Bachelor's degrees—*continued*
 by field of study, 2003:33
 health affected by, 2004:12
 international comparisons, 2004:17
 parents attaining, 2001:4, 2003:2
 persistence of nontraditional students towards, 2002:SA33–SA35, 2002:SA36
 persistence towards, 2001:27, 2002:23, 2003:20, 2004:19
 and student debt burden, 2001:59
 time to completion, 2003:21
 women earning, 2004:20
 work-related adult education, participation in, 2004:7
 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS), 2001:xviii, 2001:xxx, 2002:SA25
 Belgium
 civic performance, 2002:15
 expenditures for education, 2002:41
 mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
 reading literacy in, 2002:9
 Belize, reading literacy in, 2003:10
 Beyond New Basics high school curriculum, 2001:xlii, 2001:28. *See also* Curriculum, high school
 Bilingual education, 2004:28. *See also* English as a Second Language (ESL)
 Birthrate for the United States, 2001:2, 2002:2
 Blacks
 Black-White reading achievement gap, 2002:8
 child care, 2001:38, 2004:33
 community service of young adults, 2001:16
 dropout rates from high school, 2001:23, 2002:19, 2003:17, 2004:16
 early literacy activities, 2003:37

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with "SA" (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Blacks—*continued*

educational attainment by, 2001:31, 2002:25

elementary/secondary enrollment, 2002:3, 2004:5

employer financial aid for adult education, 2003:44

English and foreign languages courses taken in high school, 2003:25

enrollment in public schools, 2001:3

enrollment rates in college, 2001:26, 2002:20, 2003:18

faculty at postsecondary institutions, 2002:39

family characteristics of, 2003:2

geography performance through elementary/secondary level, 2003:13

graduate enrollment, 2002:6, 2003:7

history performance through elementary/secondary level, 2003:14

kindergarten enrollment, 2004:3

mathematics and science coursetaking in high school, 2002:27, 2004:22

mathematics performance through elementary/secondary level, 2001:12, 2003:11, 2003:12, 2004:11

parental satisfaction with schools, 2001:55, 2002:40

parents' level of education, 2001:4 and poverty, 2002:11

prekindergarten programs, participation in, 2004:2

preprimary enrollment, 2001:1, 2002:1 in private schools, 2002:SA8

public charter schools, 2002:30

reading and mathematics achievement through 3rd grade, 2004:8

reading habits of adults, 2001:15

reading performance through elementary/secondary level, 2001:10, 2002:8

Blacks—*continued*

reading skill gains in kindergarten, 2003:SA4, 2003:SA11

school choice, 2001:41, 2002:29

science performance through elementary/secondary level, 2001:13, 2002:12

status dropout rates for high school, 2004:16

student victimization, 2003:31

undergraduate enrollment, 2003:32

voting participation, 2003:15

work-related adult education, participation in, 2004:7

writing performance through elementary/secondary level, 2004:10

young adults not in school or working, 2004:13

Brazil, reading literacy in, 2002:9

Bulgaria

- civic performance, 2002:15
- mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
- reading literacy in, 2003:10

Bureau of the Census, 2002:4

Business, degrees in, 2003:33

Business colleges, 2004:1

Business courses, 2004:30

C

Calculus, 2002:SA21, 2003:22. *See also* Mathematics

- coursetaking by high school students, 2004:21

Canada, 2001:57

- educational attainment in, 2001:32
- mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
- reading literacy in, 2003:10

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with "SA" (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

- Catholic schools, **2002:SA3**, **2002:SA4**, **2002:SA5**. *See also* Private elementary/secondary schools
 class size, **2002:SA6**
 diversity in, **2002:SA8**, **2002:SA9**
 mathematics requirements at, **2002:SA18**
 principals in, **2002:SA16–SA17**
 school climate, **2002:SA10–SA11**
 special programs in, **2002:SA7**
 teacher satisfaction, **2002:SA14**
- Census Bureau, **2002:4**
- Center-based childcare programs, **2002:1**, **2003:38**
 after-school activities, **2004:34**
 after-school childcare, **2001:53**, **2004:33**
 enrollment in preprimary education, **2001:1**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, **2001:44**
- Certificate programs, **2001:6**, **2001:27**
 attrition rates at, **2002:SA37**
 persistence of nontraditional students in, **2002:SA33–SA35**, **2002:SA36**
 at private for-profit institutions, **2004:SA5**
 working while attending, **2004:29**
- Charter schools, **2002:SA2**, **2002:30**
- Chemistry, **2004:21**
- Child care, **2002:1**
 after-school activities, **2004:34**
 arrangements for after school, **2001:53**, **2003:38**, **2004:33**
 enrollment in preprimary education, **2001:1**
- Chile
 civic performance, **2002:15**
 mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
- China, mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
- Choice of school, elementary/secondary education, **2001:41**. *See also* School choice
- Choices of students for high school curriculum, **2001:xxviii**. *See also* Coursetaking by high school students; Curriculum, high school
- Church-related private schools, **2002:29**, **2004:25**. *See also* Private elementary/secondary schools; Religious affiliation
- Citizenship, **2001:15**, **2001:16**
- Civic Education Study, **2002:15**, **2003:16**
- Civic knowledge performance, **2002:15**
- Civic participation, **2003:16**
- Classroom activities, kindergarten, **2003:SA8**
- Class size, elementary/secondary schools, **2001:38**
 kindergartens, **2001:37**
 private schools, **2002:SA5–SA6**, **2002:SA22**
- Clubs as after-school activity, **2004:34**
- Collaboration between teachers, **2002:SA5**, **2002:33**
 school climate, **2002:SA12**
- College education. *See* Postsecondary education
- College entrance examinations, **2001:xxii**, **2001:xxviii**. *See also* Achievement tests
 increasing participation in, **2001:19**
 measuring teacher qualifications, **2001:42**, **2002:31**
- College preparation. *See* Preparing for college
- College qualification index, **2001:xxv**, **2001:xli**
- Colleges. *See* Four-year institutions; Postsecondary education
- Colombia
 civic participation, **2003:16**
 civic performance, **2002:15**
 reading literacy in, **2003:10**
- Combined schools (K–12), **2002:SA4**
- Community colleges, **2003:19**. *See also* Two-year institutions

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

- Community service, **2001:16**
 as after-school activity, **2004:34**
 parental involvement in education process, **2001:54**
 required for high school graduation, **2002:SA18, 2002:SA19**
- Computer sciences, degrees in, **2003:33**
- Computers in education, **2001:39, 2001:48**
- Congressional elections, **2003:15**
- Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, **2004:SA5**
- Continuing education, **2003:8, 2003:44**. *See also* Adult education
- Core curriculum (New Basics), **2001:xxxiv, 2001:xliv**. *See also* Curriculum, high school and college persistence rates, **2002:23**
 English and foreign languages, **2003:25**
 mathematics and science coursetaking in high school, **2004:22**
 science and mathematics, **2002:27**
- Cost of attending college, **2001:55, 2001:58, 2004:SA2–SA30**
 efforts to fund postsecondary education, **2002:42**
 need analysis for financial aid eligibility, **2004:SA8–SA13**
 net price after grants and loans, **2004:SA21–SA25**
 net price of, **2002:44, 2003:43**
 student financial aid, **2004:SA2–SA4, 2004:SA6–SA7, 2004:SA13–SA21** (*See also* Financial aid to students)
 students' and parents' knowledge of, **2001:xxx, 2001:25**
 and students' debts, **2001:59**
 tuition and fee increases, **2004:SA2**
- Cost of Education Index, **2001:56**
- Coursetaking by high school students, **2004:21, 2004:22**. *See also* Curriculum, high school
- Coursetaking by undergraduate students, **2004:30, 2004:31**
- Credits earned for bachelor's degrees, **2004:30, 2004:31**
- Crime in schools, **2001:44**
- Current Population Survey, **2004:1, 2004:13, 2004:14**
- Curriculum, high school, **2001:xxiv–xxviii**
 comparison between private and public schools, **2002:SA6–SA7, 2002:SA17–SA19**
 English and foreign language courses, **2003:24, 2003:25**
 influence of principals on, **2004:26**
 influence of teachers on, **2002:SA11–SA12, 2002:SA13**
 levels of achievement, **2001:xli–xliv**
 mathematics, **2001:24**
 mathematics and science coursetaking, **2002:26, 2002:27, 2004:21, 2004:22**
 persistence at college influenced by, **2001:xxxiv–xxxvi, 2002:23**
 science achievement, **2002:12**
 size of school, **2002:SA5**
 vocational education, **2001:35**
- Cutting classes, **2002:17**
- Cyprus
 civic participation, **2003:16**
 civic performance, **2002:15**
 mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
 reading literacy in, **2003:10**
- Czech Republic
 civic performance, **2002:15**
 expenditures for education, **2002:41**
 instructional activities in 8th-grade mathematics, **2003:26**
 instructional activities in 8th-grade science classes, **2004:23**
 mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with "SA" (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

Czech Republic—*continued*
reading literacy in, 2002:9, 2003:10

D

Day care, 2001:53, 2003:38
Debts for college, 2001:59, 2004:38
Decision-making in schools, 2002:SA11–SA12, 2002:SA13
Degree programs, distance education and, 2004:32
Degrees earned, 2001:31
affecting annual income, 2002:16
educational expectations of 10th-graders, 2004:15
by field of study, 2003:33
nontraditional undergraduate students, 2002:SA35
by race/ethnicity, 2002:25
teachers, 2002:32
time taken to earn degree, 2001:xxxvi–xxxvii
by women, 2001:30
Denmark, 2001:57
civic performance, 2002:15
expenditures for education, 2002:41
reading literacy in, 2002:9
Disabilities, students with, 2001:40, 2002:28
services in postsecondary education for, 2003:34
testing accommodations, 2004:9, 2004:11
Disadvantaged students. *See* Students whose parents did not go to college
Discipline at school, 2001:41, 2003:30, 2004:26
Distance education, 2002:38
faculty participation in, 2001:49
increase in classes, 2004:32
nontraditional students using, 2002:SA31–SA32
Doctoral degrees, 2001:6, 2001:30, 2004:20

Doctoral institutions, 2001:47, 2001:48, 2001:51
Dropout rates, 2001:23. *See also* Stopouts from postsecondary education
earnings of young adults affected by, 2004:14
by family income, 2004:16
by race/ethnicity, 2002:19, 2003:17
risk factors, 2002:22
youth neither enrolled nor working, 2004:13

E

Early childhood education, 2001:37. *See also* Preprimary education
center-based early childhood care, 2001:53
early literacy activities, 2003:37
enrollment in, 2001:1, 2002:1
home activities affecting reading skills, 2003:36
prekindergarten programs at public schools, 2004:2
reading and mathematics skills, 2001:8, 2001:9
Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998–99, 2003:SA2, 2003:SA13n6
reading and mathematics achievement through 1st grade, 2003:9
reading and mathematics achievement through 3rd grade, 2004:8
Earnings, young adults, 2001:18, 2002:16, 2004:14. *See also* Income
Educational attainment, 2001:31
and earnings of young adults, 2001:18, 2002:16
earnings of young adults affected by, 2004:14
expectations for, 2004:15 (*See also* Expectations for education)
health affected by, 2001:xxxv, 2002:14, 2004:12

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

- Educational attainment—*continued*
- and high school mathematics curriculum, **2001:24**
 - international comparisons, **2001:32**
 - of nontraditional undergraduate students, **2002:SA34–SA38**
 - parents of school-age children, **2003:2** (*See also under Parents*)
 - persistence towards bachelor's degrees, **2003:20**
 - private vs. public schools, **2002:SA19–SA21**
 - by race/ethnicity, **2002:25**
 - reading habits of adults affected by, **2001:15**
 - teachers, **2002:32**
 - by the 8th-graders of 1988, **2003:22**
 - voting participation affected by, **2003:15**
 - working while attending postsecondary institutions, **2004:29**
 - work-related adult education, **2004:7**
- Eighth grade, **2001:36, 2001:43**
- educational achievement level by 1988 cohort, **2003:22**
 - geography performance, **2003:13**
 - history performance, **2003:14**
 - instructional activities in mathematics, **2003:26**
 - instructional activities in science, **2004:23**
 - international comparisons of mathematics and science, **2002:13**
 - mathematics performance, **2003:11, 2004:11**
 - private vs. public school students' educational attainment, **2002:SA19–SA21**
 - reading performance in, **2004:9**
 - writing performance in, **2004:10**
- Elections, voting participation in, **2003:15**
- Elementary/secondary education, **2001:33–45, 2002:26–34, 2004:21–28**
- absenteeism in, **2002:17**
 - choice of school, **2001:41**
 - completion rates by race/ethnicity, **2002:25**
 - computer and Internet usage, **2001:39**
 - dropout rates, **2001:23, 2002:19**
 - English and foreign language courses taken, **2003:24, 2003:25**
 - enrollment, **2001:2, 2002:2, 2003:1, 2004:1, 2004:4**
 - expectations for education, **2001:19** (*See also Expectations for education*)
 - expenditures per student, **2001:56, 2001:57, 2002:41**
 - guidance counselors, **2004:27**
 - homework, **2001:21**
 - international comparisons for mathematics and science, **2001:36, 2002:13**
 - international comparisons for science instructional methods, **2004:23**
 - international comparisons of expenditures for education, **2003:40, 2004:36**
 - kindergarten through 1st-grade skills development, **2001:8, 2001:9**
 - mainstreaming disabled students, **2001:40, 2002:28**
 - mathematics achievement, **2001:12** (*See also Mathematics*)
 - mathematics and science coursetaking, **2002:26, 2002:27, 2004:21, 2004:22**
 - “out-of-field” teachers, **2003:28, 2004:24**
 - overcrowding in schools, **2001:45**
 - parental educational attainment, **2001:4** (*See also Parents, level of education*)
 - parental involvement in schools, **2001:54**
 - parents' satisfaction with schools, **2001:55**
 - persistence in, **2001:23**
 - poverty-level children, **2002:4, 2003:3**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

- Elementary/secondary education—*continued*
- prekindergarten programs, 2004:2 (*See also* Preprimary education)
 - principals, 2004:26 (*See also* Principals)
 - public charter schools, 2002:30
 - public support for, 2002:42
 - race/ethnicity in, 2001:3, 2002:3, 2004:5 (*See also* Race/ethnicity)
 - reading achievement, 2001:10, 2002:8 (*See also* Reading)
 - revenues for, 2003:41
 - school choice, 2002:29, 2002:30, 2004:25
 - science achievement, 2001:13 (*See also* Science)
 - sources of revenue for, 2002:43
 - status dropouts from, 2002:19
 - students' use of time, 2001:21
 - student/teacher ratios, 2001:38
 - student victimization in, 2003:31
 - support staff, 2004:27
 - teachers/teaching, 2002:31, 2002:32, 2002:33 (*See also* Teachers/Teaching)
 - twelfth-grade interest in school, 2002:18
 - values of high school seniors, 2001:20
 - violence at school, 2001:44
 - vocational education, 2001:35
- E-mail, 2001:48
- Employer financial aid for adult education, 2003:44
- Employment status, 2001:xxxvii–xxxviii
- and dropouts from high school, 2001:23
 - in high school, 2001:21
 - undergraduate students, 2002:37
 - while earning postsecondary degree, 2001:6, 2004:29 (*See also* Working while attending school (postsecondary education))
- Engineering, degrees in, 2003:33
- England, reading literacy in, 2003:10. *See also* United Kingdom of Great Britain
- English, high school, 2001:xli, 2001:xlii
- “out-of-field” teachers teaching, 2004:24
 - student characteristics, 2003:25
 - subject expertise of elementary/secondary teachers, 2003:28
 - trends in, 2003:24
- English as a Second Language (ESL), 2003:8
- teacher aides for, 2004:28
- English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), 2002:2, 2002:4. *See also* Limited English proficiency (LEP)
- adult literacy habits, 2001:15
 - increasing numbers of, 2003:2, 2003:4
- Enrollment, elementary/secondary schools, 2001:2, 2002:2, 2004:4
- by age, 2004:1
 - alternative schools, 2003:27
 - kindergarten, 2004:3
 - overcrowding, 2001:45
 - past and projected, 2003:3
 - private elementary/secondary schools, 2002:SA3, 2002:SA4, 2002:SA5 (*See also* Private elementary/secondary schools)
 - by race/ethnicity, 2002:3
 - size of high schools, 2003:30
- Enrollment, postsecondary education, 2001:xviii, 2001:5, 2001:26
- and academic qualifications, 2001:xxiv–xxv
 - delayed, 2002:SA26, 2002:SA28
 - of employees as undergraduates, 2002:SA31
 - foreign-born students, 2003:6
 - graduate level, 2001:xxxviii, 2002:6, 2003:7
 - mathematics courses taken in high school affecting, 2001:xxvi–xxvii, 2001:24
 - parental level of education affecting, 2001:xx, 2001:xxii, 2001:xxxiii
 - and preparing for college, 2001:xxix

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

- Enrollment, postsecondary education—
continued
race/ethnicity, **2003:18**
types of institutions, **2004:SA5–SA6**
undergraduate level, **2002:5, 2002:20, 2002:21, 2002:22, 2003:5, 2003:32**
- Enrollment, preprimary education, **2001:1, 2002:1**
trends by age, **2004:1**
- Environmental organizations, **2003:16**
- ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages).
See English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); Limited English proficiency (LEP)
- Estonia, civic performance, **2002:15**
- Evaluation of teachers, **2002:SA13**. *See also* Teachers/Teaching
- Event dropout rates, **2004:16**. *See also* Drop-out rates
- Expectations for education, **2001:xviii, 2001:xxii**
attaining a degree, **2001:xxxv**
and grade level of students, **2001:xxiii–xxiv**
nontraditional undergraduate students, **2002:SA32**
postsecondary expectations for 10th-graders, **2004:15**
principals', **2002:SA16–SA17**
seniors' for postsecondary education, **2001:19, 2001:20**
- Expected Family Contribution (EFC) for college costs, **2004:SA10–SA11, 2004:SA12, 2004:SA25–SA28**
- Expenditures for elementary/secondary education, **2001:56, 2001:57**
international comparisons, **2002:41, 2003:40**
per student, **2004:35**
by urbanicity, **2003:39**
- Expenditures for postsecondary education, **2002:41**
- Extended families. *See* Families
- Extracurricular activities
affecting transition to college, **2002:22**
as after-school childcare, **2004:33**
- F**
- Faculty, postsecondary education. *See also* Teachers/Teaching
instructional methods of, **2001:46**
part-time, **2001:50**
teaching distance education, **2001:49**
teaching undergraduates, **2001:47**
tenure, **2003:35**
time allocation of, **2001:51**
use of technology, **2001:48**
women and minorities, **2002:39**
- Families, **2003:2**. *See also* Income, family; Parents
child care, **2001:53, 2003:38**
contributions for college, **2004:SA10–SA11, 2004:SA12, 2004:SA25–SA28**
and home activities, **2001:52** (*See also* Home activities)
- Fathers. *See* Parents
- Federal government, **2002:43, 2003:42**
financial aid to students, **2004:SA3–SA4**
Pell grants, **2004:SA16**
tax credits for student loans, **2004:SA2**
- Federal Methodology (need analysis for financial aid to students), **2004:SA25**
- Field of study
degrees earned by women, **2001:30, 2004:20**
instructional methods, **2001:46**
teachers, **2004:24**
undergraduate degrees, **2003:33**
- Financial aid to students, **2001:xxix, 2001:xxxix, 2004:SA13–SA21**
adult education, **2003:44**
combinations of aid packages, **2004:SA13–SA14**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with "SA" (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

Financial aid to students—*continued*
 cost of attending college, **2001:58, 2002:44, 2003:43**
 eligibility for, **2004:SA11–SA13**
 federal grants and loans, **2003:42**
 from 4-year colleges and universities, **2004:37**
 grants, **2004:SA14–SA18** (*See also* Grants and scholarships)
 increase of, **2004:SA2**
 loans to students, **2001:59**
 net price of postsecondary education after grants, **2004:SA18, 2004:SA19**
 overview of system of, **2004:SA6–SA7**
 Pell Grants, **2002:24, 2003:23**
 percentage of undergraduates receiving, **2004:SA14**
 student loans, **2004:SA18–SA21** (*See also* Student loans)
 types and sources of, **2004:SA2–SA4**

Finland
 civic performance, **2002:15**
 mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
 transition to postsecondary education, **2004:17**

First-generation college students, **2001:xxx–xxxix**
 after earning a degree, **2001:xxxvii–xxxviii**
 after 5 years, **2001:xxxvi–xxxvii**
 after 3 years, **2001:xxxiv–xxxv**
 among the foreign-born population, **2003:6**
 characteristics of, **2001:xxx–xxxi**
 high school curriculum, **2001:24, 2002:23**

First-professional degrees, **2001:6**
 rate of enrollment, **2002:6, 2003:7**

First grade, **2001:8, 2001:9, 2002:SA2–SA13, 2003:9**. *See also* Kindergarten

First year at college, **2001:xxxi–xxxii, 2001:xxxiv**

Foreign-born children, **2003:4, 2003:6**. *See also* Immigrants/Immigration

Foreign languages
 courses taken in high school, **2001:xli, 2003:24, 2003:25**
 immersion programs, **2002:SA6, 2002:SA7**
 requirements for high school graduation, **2002:SA18, 2002:SA19**
 subject expertise of elementary/secondary teachers, **2003:28**

Fourth grade, **2002:13**
 geography performance, **2003:13**
 history performance, **2003:14**
 international comparisons of reading literacy, **2003:10**
 mathematics performance, **2003:11, 2003:12, 2004:11**
 poverty levels among school-aged children, **2004:5**
 reading performance in, **2004:9**
 writing performance in, **2004:10**

Four-year institutions, **2001:58, 2004:38**. *See also* Postsecondary education
 average expected family contribution for tuition, **2004:SA26–SA27**
 average price of attending, **2004:38**
 debt burden of college graduates, **2004:38**
 distance education courses, **2004:32**
 and distance education courses, **2001:49**
 enrollment patterns, **2004:SA5, 2004:SA6**
 enrollment rates, **2001:xxxiii, 2001:5, 2003:5, 2003:18**
 expectations for high school seniors, **2001:19**
 expected family contribution (EFC) for college costs, **2004:SA12**
 faculty at, **2001:47**
 faculty tenure at, **2003:35**
 financial aid to students, **2004:37**
 first-generation students enrolling in, **2001:xx, 2001:xxx**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

Four-year institutions—*continued*

grants to undergraduates, 2004:SA15, 2004:SA17

mathematics taken in high school affecting enrollment in, 2001:xxvi, 2001:xxviii

net price for, 2002:44, 2003:43

net price for after grants, 2004:SA18, 2004:SA19

net price for after grants and loans, 2004:SA22, 2004:SA23, 2004:SA24

nontraditional undergraduate students at, 2002:SA27, 2002:SA28–SA29

paying for, 2001:25

Pell grants to undergraduates, 2004:SA16

persistence in attaining a degree at, 2001:27, 2002:23, 2003:20, 2004:19

persistence of nontraditional undergraduates at, 2002:SA33, 2002:SA34

preparation for enrollment, 2001:xxiii, 2001:xxx (See also Preparing for college)

remedial coursework at, 2001:29, 2004:18, 2004:31

stopouts, 2001:xxxii, 2001:xxxiv

student loans for, 2004:SA20

students with disabilities at, 2003:34

students with Pell Grants, 2002:24, 2003:23

technology used at, 2001:48

time to completion for bachelor's degree, 2003:21

transferring from 2-year institutions, 2003:19

transferring to 2-year institutions, 2002:SA36

tuition/fee increases, 2004:SA2

tuition/fees for, 2004:SA8, 2004:SA9

undergraduate diversity at, 2003:32

undergraduate enrollment, 2002:5, 2002:21, 2002:22, 2004:6 (See also Undergraduate students)

France, 2001:32

expenditures for education, 2002:41, 2003:40, 2004:36

reading literacy in, 2002:9, 2003:10

Free or reduced-price lunch programs. *See* School lunch programs

Freshman undergraduates, 2004:31. *See also* Undergraduate students

Full-day kindergarten, 2003:SA2, 2003:SA7–SA11, 2003:SA12. *See also* Kindergarten increase in enrollment in, 2004:3

Full-time enrollment at postsecondary institutions, 2001:xxxiii, 2002:5, 2004:1. *See also* Enrollment, postsecondary education graduate students, 2001:6, 2003:7 undergraduate students, past and projected, 2001:5, 2003:5, 2004:6

G

Gangs at schools, 2003:31

Gender, 2001:31

adult education participation, 2003:8

annual earnings of young adults, 2004:14

annual income, 2002:16

beginning teachers, 2003:29

community service of young adults, 2001:16

degrees earned by women, 2001:30

differences in values of high school seniors, 2001:20

distance education, 2002:38

English and foreign languages courses taken in high school, 2003:25

enrollment rates in college, 2001:5, 2001:26, 2003:18

expectations for education, 2001:19

faculty at postsecondary institutions, 2002:39

fourth-grade reading performance, 2002:7

graduate enrollment, 2002:6, 2003:7

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

Gender—*continued*

- international comparisons for the transition to postsecondary education, **2004:17**
 - international comparisons of reading performance, **2002:9**
 - mathematics and science coursetaking in high school, **2002:27, 2004:22**
 - mathematics performance through elementary/secondary level, **2001:12, 2003:11, 2004:11**
 - principals in elementary/secondary schools, **2004:26**
 - reading habits of adults, **2001:15**
 - reading performance through elementary/secondary level, **2004:9**
 - reading skill gains in kindergarten, **2003:SA4–SA5**
 - and salary parity, **2001:xxxviii, 2001:18**
 - and school violence, **2001:44**
 - science performance through elementary/secondary level, **2001:13, 2002:12**
 - student victimization, **2003:31**
 - undergraduate enrollment, **2002:5, 2003:5, 2003:32, 2004:6**
 - writing performance through elementary/secondary level, **2004:10**
- General Education Development (GED), **2002:SA26, 2003:27, 2004:16**
- Geographic regions. *See* Regional distributions
- Geography, **2003:13**
- Geometry, **2001:24, 2003:11**. *See also* Mathematics
- coursetaking by high school students, **2004:21**
- Germany, **2001:32, 2001:36**
- civic performance, **2002:15**
 - expenditures for education, **2002:41, 2003:40, 2004:36**
 - reading literacy in, **2002:9, 2003:10**
- Gifted and talented students, **2002:SA6, 2002:SA7**

- Goals for education. *See* Expectations for education
- Grade-level studies. *See also* Age/Age comparisons
- absenteeism, **2002:17**
 - civic activities, **2003:16**
 - civic knowledge performance, **2002:15**
 - fourth-grade reading performance, **2002:7**
 - geography performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:13**
 - history performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:14**
 - international comparisons of mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
 - kindergarten through 1st-grade reading and mathematics skills, **2001:8, 2001:9**
 - mathematics performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:11**
 - quality of teaching in 8th-grade mathematics, **2001:36**
 - teacher preparation for mathematics and science, **2001:43**
 - twelfth-grade efforts, **2002:18**
- Grade-point average (GPA), **2001:xxxv**
- Grading students, **2001:46**
- Graduate degrees
- attendance and employment patterns, **2001:6**
 - earned by women, **2001:30, 2004:20**
 - educational expectations of 10th-graders, **2004:15**
 - principals in elementary/secondary schools holding, **2004:26**
 - work-related adult education, participation in, **2004:7**
- Graduate students, **2001:59**
- distance education, **2002:38**
 - first-generation college students enrollment, **2001:xxxviii**
 - foreign-born students, **2003:6**
 - rate of enrollment, **2002:6, 2003:7**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

- Grants and scholarships, 2003:42, 2004:SA2, 2004:SA28
 balance with loans, 2004:SA23, 2004:SA25
 from colleges and universities, 2004:SA4, 2004:37
 cost of attending college, 2002:44, 2003:43
 net price of tuition after, 2004:SA18, 2004:SA21–SA25, 2004:SA29n, 2004:13
 as part of financial aid package to students, 2004:SA14–SA18
 Pell Grants, 2002:24, 2003:23
 percentage of undergraduates receiving, 2004:SA15
- Great Britain, 2001:32, 2001:57. *See also* United Kingdom of Great Britain
- Greece
 civic participation, 2003:16
 civic performance, 2002:15
 expenditures for education, 2003:40
 reading literacy in, 2002:9, 2003:10
- Gross domestic product (GDP), 2001:57, 2002:41, 2003:40, 2004:36
- Guidance counselors, 2004:27
- Guns at schools, 2003:31
- H**
- Half-day kindergarten, 2003:SA2, 2003:SA7–SA11, 2003:SA12. *See also* Kindergarten
 full-day kindergarten compared to, 2004:3
- Handicapped students. *See* Disabilities, students with
- Head Start, 2001:1
- Health of population, 2002:14, 2004:12
 illness causing absenteeism, 2002:17
 learning amongst kindergartners affected by, 2003:SA6
- Health professions, degrees in, 2003:33
- Higher education. *See* Postsecondary education
- Higher Education Act (1965), 2004:SA3, 2004:SA28n, 2004:1
- Higher Education Act (1972 reauthorization), 2004:SA4
- Higher Education Amendments (1992), 2004:SA5, 2004:SA10
- Highly selective postsecondary institutions, 2004:30
- High school education, 2001:31. *See also* Educational attainment; Elementary/secondary education
 completion rates by race/ethnicity, 2002:25
 dropout rates, 2002:19
 earnings of young adults affected by, 2004:14
 graduation rates, 2001:xxi, 2001:23
 graduation requirements, 2004:21
 guidance counselors in public elementary/secondary schools, 2004:27
 health affected by, 2004:12
 international comparisons, 2001:32
 “out-of-field” teachers, 2004:24
 parents attaining, 2001:4, 2003:2
 size of schools, 2003:30
 twelfth-grade interest in school, 2002:18
- High School Transcript Study of 1998, 2002:SA2–SA3, 2002:SA19
- Hispanics
 child care, 2003:38, 2004:33
 community service of young adults, 2001:16
 dropout rates for high school, 2001:23, 2002:19, 2003:17, 2004:16
 early literacy activities, 2003:37
 educational attainment, 2001:31, 2002:25
 elementary/secondary enrollment, 2002:3, 2004:5
 employer financial aid for adult education, 2003:44
 English and foreign languages courses taken in high school, 2003:25

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

Hispanics—*continued*

enrollment in public schools, 2001:3
 enrollment rates in college, 2001:26, 2002:20, 2003:18
 faculty at postsecondary institutions, 2002:39
 family characteristics of, 2003:2
 geography performance through elementary/secondary level, 2003:13
 graduate enrollment, 2002:6, 2003:7
 history performance through elementary/secondary level, 2003:14
 kindergarten enrollment, 2004:3
 language spoken at home, 2003:4
 mathematics and science coursetaking in high school, 2002:27, 2004:22
 mathematics performance through elementary/secondary level, 2001:12, 2003:11, 2003:12, 2004:11
 parental satisfaction with schools, 2001:55, 2002:40
 parents' level of education, 2001:4
 and poverty, 2002:11
 prekindergarten programs, participation in, 2004:2
 preprimary enrollment, 2001:1, 2002:1
 in private schools, 2002:SA8
 public charter schools, 2002:30
 reading and mathematics achievement through 3rd grade, 2004:8
 reading habits of adults, 2001:15
 reading performance through elementary/secondary level, 2001:10
 reading skill gains in kindergarten, 2003:SA4, 2003:SA11
 school choice, 2001:41, 2002:29
 science performance through elementary/secondary level, 2001:13, 2002:12
 status dropout rates for high school, 2004:16

Hispanics—*continued*

student victimization, 2003:31
 undergraduate enrollment, 2003:32
 voting participation, 2003:15
 work-related adult education, participation in, 2004:7
 writing performance through elementary/secondary level, 2004:10
 young adults not in school or working, 2004:13
 History performance, 2003:14
 Home activities, 2001:52
 after school, 2003:38
 for children entering kindergarten, 2003:36
 early literacy activities, 2003:SA2, 2003:SA5, 2003:SA11–SA12, 2003:37
 fourth-grade reading performance, 2002:7
 language spoken at home, 2003:4
 Homeschooling, 2004:25
 Homework, 2001:21, 2001:22, 2003:38
 Hong Kong
 civic performance, 2002:15
 instructional activities in 8th-grade mathematics, 2003:26
 mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
 reading literacy in, 2003:10
 Honors courses, 2001:xli–xlii, 2003:24
 Humanities courses, 2004:30
 Human rights organizations, 2003:16
 Hungary, 2001:57
 civic performance, 2002:15
 expenditures for education, 2002:41, 2003:40, 2004:36
 mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
 reading literacy in, 2002:9, 2003:10

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with "SA" (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

- I**
- Iceland
 reading literacy in, **2002:9, 2003:10**
 transition to postsecondary education, **2004:17**
- Immigrants/Immigration
 elementary/secondary school enrollment, **2001:2, 2003:1, 2004:4**
 foreign-born students in postsecondary education, **2003:6**
 language spoken at home, **2003:4**
- Income. *See also* Poverty levels; Salaries
 annual earnings of young adults, **2004:14**
 enrollment in postsecondary education, **2002:21**
 faculty at higher education institutions, **2001:49, 2002:39**
 family, **2001:25**
 affecting health, **2002:14, 2004:12**
 cost of attending college, **2001:58, 2002:44, 2003:43, 2004:SA11** (*See also* Expected Family Contribution (EFC) for college costs)
 dropout rates affected by, **2004:16**
 enrollment in different types of postsecondary institutions, **2004:SA6**
 enrollment rates in college affected by, **2001:26**
 federal grants for postsecondary education, **2003:42**
 financial aid to students affected by, **2004:SA5, 2004:37** (*See also* Financial aid to students)
 and first-generation students, **2001:xxxi**
 grants to undergraduates, **2004:SA15**
 influencing parental satisfaction with schools, **2001:55, 2002:40**
 net price for college after grant money, **2004:SA19**
 net price for college after grants and loans, **2004:SA22, 2004:SA25**
- Income—*continued*
 family—*continued*
 and parental involvement, **2001:54**
 student loans for postsecondary education, **2004:SA20, 2004:SA21**
 first-generation college students, **2001:xxxvii–xxxviii**
 kindergarten enrollment affected by, **2004:3**
 low-income students enrolling in college, **2004:SA6**
 poverty levels, **2001:56, 2002:4**
 students with Pell Grants, **2002:24, 2003:23**
 young adults, **2001:18, 2002:16**
- Indonesia, mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
- Inservice training for teachers, **2002:SA13**
- Institutional aid to postsecondary students, **2004:SA4, 2004:SA17, 2004:SA18**
- Instructional methods, **2001:48**. *See also* Faculty; Teachers/Teaching
 international comparisons for 8th-grade science class, **2004:23**
 principals' involvement with, **2002:SA15–SA16**
 private elementary/secondary schools, **2002:SA6–SA7, 2002:SA11–SA12**
 reading skill gains for kindergartners, **2003:SA8–SA9**
- Interest rates for student loans, **2004:38**
- Internal Revenue Service, **2004:38**
- International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), **2002:15, 2003:16**
- International comparisons
 civic participation, **2003:16**
 civic performance, **2002:15**
 educational attainment, **2001:32**
 expenditures for education, **2001:57, 2003:40, 2004:36**
 instructional activities in mathematics, **2003:26**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

International comparisons—*continued*
 instructional activities in 8th-grade science classes, **2004:23**
 reading literacy, **2002:9**, **2003:10**
 science and mathematics, **2001:43**, **2002:13**
 transition to postsecondary education, **2004:17**

International Socioeconomic Index (ISEI), **2002:9**

Internet usage in education, **2001:39**
 distance education, **2002:SA32**, **2002:38**
 (*See also* Distance education)
 used by faculty, **2001:48**

Iran
 mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
 reading literacy in, **2003:10**

Ireland, **2002:9**

Israel
 mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
 reading literacy in, **2003:10**

Italy, **2001:32**
 civic performance, **2002:15**
 mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
 reading literacy in, **2002:9**, **2003:10**

J

Japan, **2001:57**
 educational attainment, **2001:32**
 instructional activities in 8th-grade mathematics, **2003:26**
 instructional activities in 8th-grade science classes, **2004:23**
 quality of mathematics lessons in, **2001:36**
 reading literacy in, **2002:9**
 transition to postsecondary education, **2004:17**

Jordan, mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**

K

Kindergarten, **2001:8**, **2001:9**, **2001:37**, **2003:SA2–SA13**. *See also* Preprimary education

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998–99, **2004:8**
 full-day vs. half-day, **2003:SA2**, **2003:SA7–SA11**, **2003:SA12**, **2004:3**
 home activities of children entering, **2003:36**
 reading and mathematics proficiency in, **2003:9**
 reading skill gains in, **2003:SA2–SA6**
 time spent on reading activities and skills, **2003:SA9–SA11**

Korea, **2002:9**
 expenditures for education, **2002:41**, **2003:40**, **2004:36**
 mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
 transition to postsecondary education, **2004:17**

Kuwait, reading literacy in, **2003:10**

L

Laboratory activities, **2004:23**

Labor market outcomes, **2001:xxxvii–xxxviii**

Language spoken at home, **2003:2**, **2003:4**
 as risk factor, **2004:8**

Latch-key children, **2001:53**, **2004:33**

Latinos. *See* Hispanics

Latvia
 civic performance, **2002:15**
 mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
 reading literacy in, **2002:9**, **2003:10**

Law degrees, **2001:6**

Learner outcomes. *See* Outcomes of education

Learning disabilities, **2002:28**, **2003:34**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

- Leisure reading. *See* Reading
- Letter recognition, 2003:SA2, 2003:SA3–SA4, 2003:SA5, 2003:SA6, 2003:SA7, 2003:SA10
- Liberal arts, degrees in, 2003:33
- Liechtenstein, reading literacy in, 2002:9
- Lifelong learning (adult education), 2003:8, 2003:44
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
- beginning teachers teaching students with, 2003:29
 - in larger high schools, 2003:30
 - in private schools, 2002:SA9, 2002:SA10
 - teachers' professional development, 2002:33
 - testing accommodations for, 2004:9, 2004:11
- Literacy, 2001:15, 2001:52. *See also* Reading
- as goal for principals, 2002:SA16
 - international comparisons, 2002:9
- Lithuania
- civic performance, 2002:15
 - mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
 - reading literacy in, 2003:10
- Loans to students for college, 2001:59, 2003:42, 2004:38. *See also* Student loans
- Local sources of revenues, 2002:43, 2003:41
- Luxembourg, reading literacy in, 2002:9
- M**
- Macedonia
- mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
 - reading literacy in, 2003:10
- Mainstreaming students with disabilities, 2001:40, 2002:28
- Malaysia, mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
- Marriage, 2004:29
- Master's degrees, 2001:30, 2004:20, 2004:26
- Mathematics, 2001:xli, 2001:xlii
- affecting transition to college, 2002:22
 - and college enrollment, 2001:xxvi–xxviii, 2001:24, 2003:22
 - coursetaking by undergraduate students, 2004:30
 - coursetaking in high school, 2002:SA5, 2002:26, 2002:27, 2004:21, 2004:22
 - instructional activities in 8th grade, 2003:26
 - international comparisons, 2001:36, 2002:13
 - in kindergarten through 1st grade, 2001:8, 2001:9, 2003:9
 - “out-of-field” teachers teaching, 2004:24
 - performance through elementary/secondary level, 2001:12, 2003:11, 2003:12, 2004:11
 - private vs. public school achievement, 2002:SA18, 2002:SA19, 2002:SA20
 - quality of content, 2001:36
 - remedial coursework in postsecondary education, 2001:29, 2004:18, 2004:31
 - subject expertise of elementary/secondary teachers, 2003:28
 - teachers' preparation for, 2001:43
 - with vocational education, 2001:35
- Medical degrees, 2001:6
- Merit-based financial aid to students, 2004:SA2, 2004:37. *See also* Financial aid to students; Grants and scholarships
- Metropolitan areas, 2001:56. *See also* Urbanicity
- Mexico, 2001:57
- expenditures for education, 2002:41, 2003:40, 2004:36
 - reading literacy in, 2002:9
 - transition to postsecondary education, 2004:17
- Middle schools, 2003:28, 2004:24. *See also* Elementary/secondary education

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

Midwestern region schools. *See* Regional distributions

Minorities. *See* Race/ethnicity

Moldova

mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**

reading literacy in, **2003:10**

Morocco

mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**

reading literacy in, **2003:10**

Mothers. *See also* Parents

expectation for student's attainment, **2002:SA21**

level of education, **2002:1, 2003:SA4, 2003:9**

enrollment of child in preprimary education, **2001:1**

reading and mathematics performance of child through 1st grade, **2001:8**

as risk factor for child, **2004:8**

Music

coursetaking by undergraduate students, **2004:30**

subject expertise of elementary/secondary teachers, **2003:28**

N

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), **2002:SA2**

comparison between private and public school students, **2002:SA17**

fourth-grade reading performance, **2002:7**
geography performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:13**

High School Transcript Study of 1998, **2002:SA2, 2002:SA19**

history performance through elementary/secondary level, **2003:14**

homework, **2001:21, 2001:22**

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)—*continued*

mathematics performance through elementary/secondary level, **2001:12, 2003:11, 2004:11**

poverty affecting achievement, **2003:12**

reading performance through elementary/secondary level, **2001:10, 2002:8, 2004:9**

science performance through elementary/secondary level, **2001:13, 2002:7**

writing performance through elementary/secondary level, **2004:10**

National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), **2002:14**

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), **2003:20**

National Commission on Excellence in Education, **2001:xlii**

National Education Goals Panel, **2001:15, 2001:16**

National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS), **2001:xviii, 2001:xix**

educational expectations, **2001:xxii**

postsecondary education persistence, **2001:xxx**

private school attendance, **2002:SA3, 2002:SA19**

proficiency test levels, **2001:xli**

National Health Interview Survey, **2002:14, 2004:12**

National Household Education Surveys Program, **2001:52**

National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), **2002:SA25, 2004:SA4**

National School Lunch Programs, **2002:7, 2002:12**. *See also* School lunch programs

National Student Loan Data Base, **2004:38**

“Near-poor,” **2004:13**

Need analysis for financial aid to students, **2004:SA6, 2004:SA7, 2004:SA8**

Federal Methodology for, **2004:SA25**

Stafford loan program, **2004:SA20**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

- Need-based financial aid to students, **2004:SA2, 2004:37**. *See also* Financial aid to students
- NELS. *See* National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS)
- Netherlands
- instructional activities in 8th-grade mathematics, **2003:26**
 - instructional activities in 8th-grade science classes, **2004:23**
 - mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
 - reading literacy in, **2003:10**
- Net price of college attendance, **2002:44, 2003:43**. *See also* Cost of attending college
- New Basics curriculum, **2001:xliv**. *See also* Core curriculum (New Basics); Curriculum, high school
- New Zealand
- mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
 - reading literacy in, **2003:10**
 - transition to postsecondary education, **2004:17**
- Ninth grade, civic activities, **2003:16**
- Nonparental childcare arrangements, **2003:38, 2004:33**
- “Nonpoor,” **2004:13**
- Nonselective postsecondary institutions, **2004:30**
- Nontraditional undergraduate students, **2002:SA25–SA39**
- combining school and work, **2002:SA29–SA31**
 - definitions of, **2002:SA25–SA27**
 - distance education, **2002:SA31–SA32**
 - persistence after 3 years, **2002:SA32–SA34**
 - persistence and attainment after 5 years, **2002:SA34–SA38**
- Northeastern region schools. *See* Regional distributions
- Norway, **2001:57**
- civic performance, **2002:15**
 - reading literacy in, **2002:9, 2003:10**
 - transition to postsecondary education, **2004:17**
- Nursery schools, **2001:1**
- Nurses, **2004:28**
- 0**
- Occupational coursetaking, **2001:35**. *See also* Vocational education
- Occupations
- chosen by college students, **2001:xxxvii** (*See also* Field of study)
 - work-related adult education, participation in, **2004:7**
- Office of Special Education Programs, **2001:40**
- Opinion surveys
- parental satisfaction with school, **2001:41, 2001:55**
 - parents’ on children’s schools, **2002:40**
 - teachers’ on satisfaction with school, **2002:SA14**
 - twelfth-graders’ interest in school, **2002:18**
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), **2001:57**
- expenditures for education, **2002:41, 2003:40, 2004:36**
 - reading literacy international comparisons, **2002:9**
 - transition to postsecondary education, **2004:17**
- Outcomes of education, **2002:7–16, 2004:8–14**
- adult reading habits, **2001:15**
 - civics performance in elementary/secondary school, **2002:15**
 - community service participation in grades 6–12, **2001:16**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

Outcomes of education—*continued*

- earnings of young adults, 2001:18, 2002:16, 2004:13
- first-generation college students, 2001:xxxvii–xxxviii (*See also* First-generation college students)
- health issues, 2002:14, 2004:12
- international comparisons in mathematics and science, 2002:13
- mathematics performance in elementary/secondary education, 2001:12, 2003:11, 2004:11 (*See also* Mathematics)
- reading and mathematics through the 1st grade, 2001:8, 2001:9
- reading and mathematics through 3rd grade, 2004:8
- reading performance in elementary/secondary education, 2002:7, 2002:8, 2002:9, 2004:9 (*See also* Reading)
- science performance in elementary/secondary education, 2001:13, 2002:12 (*See also* Science)
- writing performance in elementary/secondary education, 2004:10
- youth neither enrolled nor working, 2004:13
- “Out-of-field” teachers, 2003:28, 2004:24
- Overcrowding in schools, 2001:45

P

- Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), 2004:SA18, 2004:SA23
- Parents, 2001:25. *See also* Families; Income, family
 - arrangements for after-school care for children, 2004:33
 - going to school while raising children, 2002:SA25, 2002:SA28, 2002:SA36
 - involvement with children’s education, 2001:xxvii–xxx, 2001:54, 2002:SA14, 2003:12

Parents—*continued*

- level of education, 2001:xviii–xli, 2001:4, 2003:2, 2004:29 (*See also* Students whose parents did not go to college)
 - college completion time for children affected by, 2003:21
 - college enrollment rate of their children affected by, 2001:26, 2002:20, 2003:18
 - participation of children in community service affected by, 2001:16
 - persistence of children at college affected by, 2002:23
 - preprimary education enrollment affected by, 2001:1, 2002:1
 - reading skills of kindergartners and 1st-graders affected by, 2001:8, 2003:9
 - as risk factor, 2004:8
 - opinions of children’s schools, 2002:40
 - satisfaction with school at elementary/secondary level, 2001:41, 2001:55
 - school choice, 2004:25
 - two-parent households, 2003:2
- Part-time enrollment at postsecondary institution
 - undergraduate students, 2004:6
- Part-time enrollment at postsecondary institutions, 2001:xxxiii, 2001:5, 2004:1
 - employment during, 2004:29
 - graduate students, 2001:6, 2003:7
 - nontraditional undergraduate students, 2002:SA26, 2002:SA27–SA28
 - undergraduate students, 2002:5, 2003:5
- Part-time faculty and staff at postsecondary institutions, 2001:50
- Paying for college, 2001:xxx, 2001:58, 2004:SA2–SA30. *See also* Cost of attending college
- Peer culture, 2001:20
- Peer-tutoring in kindergarten, 2003:SA9

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

- Pell grants, **2002:24**, **2004:SA16**, **2004:SA17**.
See also Grants and scholarships
 persistence of student receiving, **2003:23**
 Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (1992) changes to, **2004:SA29n**, **2004:12**
- Performance standards for students, **2002:SA13**, **2002:33**
 influence of principals on, **2004:26**
- Performing arts, degrees in, **2003:33**
- Persistence in education
 elementary/secondary education, **2001:23**, **2003:17** (*See also* Dropout rates)
 postsecondary education, **2001:xxx–xxxvii**
 after 5 years, **2001:xxxvi–xxxvii**, **2004:19**
 after 3 years, **2001:xxxiv–xxxvi**, **2001:27**
 characteristics of first-generation students, **2001:xxx–xxxi** (*See also* First-generation college students)
 employment affecting, **2004:29**
 first-year challenges, **2001:xxxi–xxxii**, **2001:xxxiv**
 high school curriculum affecting, **2002:23**
 nontraditional students, **2002:SA32–SA38**
 remedial coursework affecting, **2001:29**
 students with Pell Grants, **2002:24**, **2003:23**
 transfer students from community colleges, **2003:19**
- Philippines, mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
- Phonics, **2003:SA3**, **2003:SA6**, **2003:SA7**, **2003:SA10**
- Physical education
 coursetaking by undergraduate students, **2004:30**
 subject expertise of elementary/secondary teachers, **2003:28**
- Physics, **2004:21**
- Poland, **2001:57**
 civic performance, **2002:15**
 expenditures for education, **2002:41**
 reading literacy in, **2002:9**
 transition to postsecondary education, **2004:17**
- Policymaking in schools, **2002:SA11–SA12**, **2002:SA13**
- Political parties, **2003:16**
- Population, **2003:1**, **2004:1**
- Portugal
 civic participation, **2003:16**
 civic performance, **2002:15**
 reading literacy in, **2002:9**
- Postsecondary education, **2001:46–51**, **2002:35–39**, **2004:29–32**. *See also* Enrollment, postsecondary education; Four-year institutions; Private postsecondary institutions; Public postsecondary institutions; Students whose parents did not go to college; Two-year institutions
 access to, **2001:xviii–xxxvi**
 adult learning, **2001:7**
 cost of attending college, **2001:58**, **2004:SA2–SA30** (*See also* Cost of attending college)
 debt burden of college graduates, **2004:38**
 degrees earned by women, **2001:30**
 distance education, **2001:49**, **2004:32**
 employment while enrolled in, **2001:6**, **2004:29**
 expenditures for, **2002:41**
 faculty and staff, **2001:47**, **2001:50**, **2001:51**
 graduate enrollment, **2002:6**
 guidance counselors preparing students for, **2004:27**
 increase in enrollment in, **2004:1**
 instructional methods, **2001:46**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

Postsecondary education—*continued*

- international comparisons, **2001:32**, **2001:57**
 - international comparisons of expenditures for, **2003:40**, **2004:36**
 - mathematics curriculum in high school affecting, **2001:24**
 - nontraditional undergraduate students, **2002:SA25–SA39** (*See also* Nontraditional undergraduate students)
 - Pell Grants, **2002:24**, **2003:23**
 - perceptions of college costs, **2001:25**
 - persistence in attaining a degree, **2001:27**, **2004:19** (*See also under* Persistence in education)
 - preparing for, **2001:xxii–xxx** (*See also* Preparing for college)
 - public support for, **2002:42**
 - remedial coursework affecting persistence, **2001:29**
 - remedial coursework provided, **2004:31**
 - tertiary-type A and B programs, **2004:17**
 - undergraduate students (*See also* Undergraduate students)
 - coursetaking by, **2004:30**
 - diversity among, **2003:32**
 - enrollment, **2001:5**, **2002:5**, **2002:20**, **2004:6**
- Poverty levels, **2001:56**, **2003:SA13n3**
- achievement test outcomes, **2003:12**
 - dropout rates affected by, **2004:16**
 - early literacy activities, **2003:SA5**, **2003:37**
 - educational attainment, **2003:22**
 - educational expectations of 10th-graders, **2004:15**
 - of elementary/secondary students, **2002:4**, **2004:5**
 - federal grants and loans to undergraduates, **2003:42**
 - full-day vs. half-day kindergarten, **2003:SA7**

Poverty levels—*continued*

- geography performance of elementary/secondary students, **2003:13**
 - health affected by, **2004:12**
 - history performance of elementary/secondary students, **2003:14**
 - home reading activities, **2003:36**
 - mathematics performance of elementary/secondary students, **2003:11**
 - “out-of-field” teachers, **2004:24**
 - prekindergarten programs, participation in, **2004:2**
 - preprimary education, **2002:1**
 - for private schools, **2002:SA9**
 - reading performance through elementary/secondary level, **2004:9**
 - reading skill gains in kindergarten, **2003:SA4**, **2003:SA11**
 - revenues for schools districts affected by, **2003:41**
 - as risk factor, **2004:8**
 - for school-aged children, **2003:2**
 - science performance of elementary/secondary students, **2002:12**
 - support staff at public elementary/secondary schools, **2004:28**
 - urbanicity, **2003:3**
 - young adults not in school or working, **2004:13**
- Prekindergarten programs, **2004:2**
- Preparing for college, **2001:xxii–xxx**
- application process, **2001:xxix–xxx**
 - at-risk students, **2002:22**
 - cost of attending college, **2001:xxx** (*See also* Cost of attending college)
 - expectations, **2001:xxiii**
 - first-generation students, **2001:xxxix** (*See also* First-generation college students)
 - guidance counselors, **2004:27**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

- Preparing for college—*continued*
- high school curriculum, **2001:xxiv–xxviii**, **2001:xxxiii**, **2002:23** (*See also* Curriculum, high school)
 - taking college entrance examinations, **2001:xxviii** (*See also* College entrance examinations)
- Preprimary education, **2001:37**. *See also* Early childhood education
- center-based early childhood care, **2001:53**
 - early literacy activities, **2003:37**
 - enrollment in, **2001:1**, **2002:1**, **2004:1**
 - home activities affecting reading skills, **2003:36**
 - prekindergarten programs at public schools, **2004:2**
 - reading and mathematics skills, **2001:8**, **2001:9**, **2003:9**
- Presidential elections, **2003:15**
- Principals, **2004:26**
- private schools, **2002:SA10**, **2002:SA14**, **2002:SA15–SA17**, **2002:SA21–SA22**
- Private elementary/secondary schools, **2002:SA2–SA24**. *See also* Catholic schools; Elementary/secondary education
- beginning teachers at, **2003:29**
 - characteristics of, **2002:SA3–SA7**
 - class size of kindergarten classes, **2001:37**
 - coursework completion, **2002:SA19**
 - curriculum and achievement at, **2002:SA17–SA19**
 - educational attainment of students, **2002:SA19–SA21**
 - English and foreign languages courses taken in high school, **2003:25**
 - enrollments, **2001:2**, **2002:2**, **2004:4**
 - by poverty level, **2002:SA9**
 - by race/ethnicity, **2002:SA8**
 - by region, **2003:1**
 - full-day vs. half-day kindergarten, **2003:SA7**
- Private elementary/secondary schools—*continued*
- instructional methods, **2002:SA6–SA7**
 - kindergarten enrollment, **2004:3** (*See also* Kindergarten)
 - mathematics and science coursetaking in high school, **2002:27**, **2004:22**
 - nonsectarian, **2002:SA3**, **2002:SA6**, **2002:SA11**, **2002:SA17**, **2002:SA19**
 - parental satisfaction, **2001:41**
 - principals, **2004:26**
 - religious but not Catholic, **2002:SA3**, **2002:SA6**, **2002:SA11**, **2002:SA17**, **2002:SA19**
 - school choice, **2002:SA2**, **2002:29**, **2004:25**
 - school climate, **2002:SA10–SA17**
 - student achievement, **2002:SA18**
 - student characteristics, **2002:SA7–SA10**
 - teachers at, **2002:SA11**, **2002:32**
- Private postsecondary institutions, **2001:27**, **2001:58**. *See also* Postsecondary education
- average expected family contribution for tuition, **2004:SA27**
 - average price of attending, **2004:SA10**
 - debt burden of college graduates, **2004:38**
 - distance education courses, **2004:32**
 - enrollment patterns, **2004:SA5**, **2004:SA6**
 - expected family contribution (EFC) for college costs, **2004:SA10–SA11**, **2004:SA12**, **2004:SA25–SA28**
 - faculty tenure at, **2003:35**
 - financial aid to students, **2004:SA4**, **2004:37** (*See also* Financial aid to students)
 - grants to undergraduates, **2004:SA15**, **2004:SA17**
 - net price for, **2002:44**, **2003:43**
 - net price for after grants, **2004:SA18**, **2004:SA19**
 - net price for after grants and loans, **2004:SA22**, **2004:SA23**, **2004:SA24**
 - nontraditional undergraduate students at, **2002:SA27**, **2002:SA28–SA29**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

- Private postsecondary institutions—*continued*
- Pell grants to students, 2002:24, 2003:23, 2004:SA16
 - persistence in attaining a degree, 2003:20, 2004:19
 - remedial coursework in, 2004:31
 - student loans for, 2004:SA20
 - students with disabilities at, 2003:34
 - time to completion for bachelor's degree, 2003:21
 - tuition/fee increases, 2004:SA2
 - tuition/fees for, 2004:SA8
 - undergraduate enrollment at, 2003:32
- Professional development for teachers, 2002:33
- Proficiency, subject
- mathematics in grade 4 and grade 8, 2004:11
 - reading in grade 4 and grade 8, 2004:9
 - writing, 2004:10
- Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), 2002:9
- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), 2003:10
- Projections
- elementary/secondary school enrollment, 2004:4
 - undergraduate enrollment in colleges, 2004:6
- Proprietary schools, 2004:SA5
- Protective services, degrees in, 2003:33
- Psychologists, 2004:28
- Public charter schools, 2002:SA2, 2002:SA22n2, 2002:30
- Public elementary/secondary schools, 2001:2, 2004:4. *See also* Elementary/secondary education
- alternative schools, 2003:27
 - beginning teachers at, 2003:29
 - class size of kindergarten classes, 2001:37
- Public elementary/secondary schools—*continued*
- compared to private schools, 2002:SA2–SA39 (*See also* Private elementary/secondary schools)
 - English and foreign languages courses taken in high school, 2003:25
 - enrollment, 2002:2, 2004:1
 - expenditures per student, 2001:56, 2003:39, 2004:35
 - full-day vs. half-day kindergarten, 2003:SA7, 2003:SA12 (*See also* Kindergarten)
 - funding for, 2002:SA2
 - guidance counselors in, 2004:27
 - kindergarten enrollment, 2004:3
 - mathematics and science coursetaking in high school, 2002:27, 2004:22
 - mathematics performance through elementary/secondary level, 2004:11
 - overcrowding in, 2001:45
 - prekindergarten programs at, 2004:2
 - principals, 2002:SA16, 2004:26
 - professional development of teachers, 2002:33
 - racial distribution in, 2001:3, 2002:3
 - reading performance through elementary/secondary level, 2004:9
 - revenues for, 2003:41
 - school choice, 2002:SA2, 2002:29, 2002:30, 2004:25
 - student/teacher ratios in, 2001:38
 - support staff at, 2004:28
 - teacher qualifications, 2002:32
 - teachers' preparedness to use computers and the Internet, 2001:39
 - writing performance through elementary/secondary level, 2004:10
- Public postsecondary institutions, 2001:27, 2001:58. *See also* Postsecondary education
- average expected family contribution for tuition, 2004:SA26–SA27

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with "SA" (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Public postsecondary institutions—*continued*

- average price of attending, 2004:SA10
 - debt burden of college graduates, 2004:38
 - distance education courses, 2004:32
 - enrollment patterns, 2004:SA5, 2004:SA6
 - expected family contribution (EFC) for college costs, 2004:SA12
 - faculty tenure at, 2003:35
 - financial aid to students, 2004:37
 - grants to undergraduates, 2004:SA15, 2004:SA17
 - net price for, 2002:44, 2003:43
 - net price for after grants, 2004:SA18, 2004:SA19
 - net price for after grants and loans, 2004:SA22, 2004:SA23, 2004:SA24
 - nontraditional undergraduate students at, 2002:SA27, 2002:SA28–SA29
 - Pell grants to students, 2002:24, 2003:23, 2004:SA16
 - persistence in attaining a degree, 2004:19
 - persistence towards a bachelor's degree at, 2003:20
 - remedial coursework in, 2004:31
 - student loans for, 2004:SA20
 - students with disabilities at, 2003:34
 - time to completion for bachelor's degree, 2003:21
 - tuition/fee increases, 2004:SA2
 - tuition/fees for, 2004:SA8
- Pupil/teacher ratios, 2001:38

Q

- Qualifications of teachers, 2001:42. *See also* Teachers/Teaching
- Qualifying for college, 2001:xxv, 2001:xli.
See also Preparing for college

R

Race/ethnicity

- adult education, 2003:8
- beginning teachers, 2003:29
- child care, 2001:38, 2001:53
- child care after school, 2004:33
- class size of kindergarten classes, 2001:37
- community service of young adults, 2001:16
- dropout rates, 2001:23, 2002:19, 2003:17, 2004:16
- early literacy activities, 2003:37
- educational attainment, 2001:31, 2002:25
- elementary/secondary enrollment, 2002:3, 2004:5
- employer financial aid for adult education, 2003:44
- English and foreign languages courses taken in high school, 2003:25
- enrollment rates in college, 2001:26, 2002:20, 2003:18, 2003:32
- faculty at postsecondary institutions, 2002:39
- and family environment, 2003:2
- full-day vs. half-day kindergarten, 2003:SA7
- geography performance through elementary/secondary level, 2003:13
- graduate enrollment, 2002:6, 2003:7
- history performance through elementary/secondary level, 2003:14
- kindergarten enrollment, 2004:3
- mathematics and science coursetaking in high school, 2002:27, 2004:22
- mathematics performance through elementary/secondary level, 2001:12, 2003:11, 2003:12, 2004:11
- “out-of-field” teachers, 2004:24
- parental involvement in schools, 2001:54

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

Race/ethnicity—*continued*

- parental satisfaction with schools, **2001:55**, **2002:40**
- parents' level of education, **2001:4** (*See also* Parents)
- and poverty, **2002:11**
- prekindergarten programs, participation in, **2004:2**
- preprimary education, **2001:1**, **2002:1**
- principals in elementary/secondary schools, **2004:26**
- in private schools, **2002:SA7–SA9**
- public charter schools, **2002:30**
- reading and mathematics achievement through 3rd grade, **2004:8**
- reading habits of adults, **2001:15**
- reading performance through elementary/secondary level, **2001:10**, **2002:8**, **2004:9**
- reading skill gains in kindergarten, **2003:SA4**, **2003:SA11**
- school choice, **2001:41**, **2002:29**, **2004:25**
- and school violence, **2001:44**
- science performance through elementary/secondary level, **2001:13**, **2002:12**
- status dropout rates for high school, **2004:16**
- student victimization, **2002:34**
- voting participation, **2003:15**
- work-related adult education, participation in, **2004:7**
- writing performance through elementary/secondary level, **2004:10**
- young adults not in school or working, **2004:13**

Reading

- Black-White achievement gap, **2002:8**
- early literacy activities, **2003:37**
- family activities encouraging, **2001:52**, **2003:36**
- fourth-grade performance, **2002:7**

Reading—*continued*

- international comparisons, **2002:9**, **2003:10**
 - in kindergarten through 1st grade, **2001:8**, **2001:9**, **2003:SA2–SA13**, **2003:9** (*See also* Kindergarten)
 - leisure, **2001:15**, **2001:22**
 - performance through elementary/secondary level, **2001:10**, **2002:8**, **2004:9**
 - private vs. public school achievement, **2002:SA18**
 - remedial coursework in postsecondary education, **2001:29**, **2004:18**
 - remedial coursework provided for undergraduate students, **2004:31**
- ### Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (1992), **2004:SA2**, **2004:38**
- changes to the federal financial aid system, **2004:SA3**
 - Pell grants, **2004:SA16**, **2004:SA29n**, **2004:12**
 - Stafford loan program, changes to, **2004:SA19–SA20**
- ### Recognition of letters and words, **2003:SA2**, **2003:SA3–SA4**, **2003:SA5**, **2003:SA6**, **2003:SA7**, **2003:SA10**
- ### Regional distributions
- elementary/secondary school enrollment, **2001:2**, **2001:3**, **2002:2**, **2003:1**, **2004:4**
 - full-day vs. half-day kindergarten, **2003:SA7**
 - kindergarten enrollment, **2004:3**
 - overcrowding in schools, **2001:45**
 - poverty levels among school-aged children, **2002:4**, **2003:3**
 - prekindergarten programs at public schools, **2004:2**
 - public alternative schools, **2003:27**
 - race/ethnicity in elementary/secondary schools enrollment, **2002:3**
 - school choice, **2002:29**, **2004:25**
 - sources of revenue for elementary/secondary education, **2002:43**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

- Rehabilitation Act (1973), **2003:34**
- Relatives of families. *See* Families
- Religious affiliation
 private elementary/secondary schools, **2002:SA3, 2002:SA4, 2002:SA5** (*See also* Catholic schools; Private elementary/secondary schools)
 school choice, **2002:29, 2004:25**
- Remedial coursework in postsecondary education, **2001:29, 2004:18, 2004:31**
- Repayment of school debt, **2004:38**. *See also* Student loans
- Research by postsecondary faculty and staff, **2001:51**
- Residency, length of, **2003:15**
- Retention of students, **2003:20**
- Retirement of faculty, **2003:35**
- Revenues for education, **2002:42, 2002:43**
 private elementary/secondary schools, **2002:SA2**
 for public school districts, **2003:41**
- Risk factors, **2001:52, 2002:22, 2003:SA13n4**. *See also* At-risk students
 reading skill gains in kindergarten, **2003:SA4, 2003:SA5**
- Romania
 civic performance, **2002:15**
 mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
 reading literacy in, **2003:10**
- Rural education, elementary/secondary expenditures, **2001:56**. *See also* Urbanicity
- Russia
 civic performance, **2002:15**
 mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**
 reading literacy in, **2002:9, 2003:10**
- S**
- Safety at schools, **2001:44**
- Salaries. *See also* Income
 college graduates, **2004:38**
 faculty at postsecondary institutions, **2001:49, 2002:39**
 first-generation college students, **2001:xxxvii–xxxviii**
 gender and, **2001:18**
- Scale scores, reading and mathematics achievement through 3rd grade, **2004:8**
- Scholarships and grants, **2003:42**. *See also* Grants and scholarships
 from colleges and universities, **2004:37**
 cost of attending college, **2002:44, 2003:43**
 Pell Grants, **2002:24, 2003:23**
- Scholastic Assessment Tests (SAT). *See also* College entrance examinations
 as preparation for college, **2001:xxii, 2001:xxviii**
 and teachers, **2002:31**
- School-based child care programs, **2004:33**. *See also* Child care
- School choice, **2001:41, 2002:29, 2002:30**
 private schools, **2002:SA2**
 public schools, **2004:25**
- School climate, **2001:44, 2001:45**
 private elementary/secondary schools, **2002:SA10–SA17**
 size of high school, **2003:30**
 student victimization, **2002:34**
 teachers in private schools, **2002:SA12, 2002:SA14–SA15**
- School lunch programs, **2002:7, 2004:5**
 beginning teachers teaching at schools with high percentage of, **2003:29**
 geography test scores, influence on, **2003:13**
 history test scores affected by, **2003:14**
 mathematics achievement affected by, **2003:11, 2003:12, 2004:11**
 as measure of poverty, **2004:9**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

- School lunch programs—*continued*
 prekindergarten programs, 2004:2
 in private schools, 2002:SA9, 2002:SA10
 science achievement affected by, 2002:12
 in smaller high schools, 2003:30
 student achievement, 2002:11, 2002:12
 teacher qualifications in schools with, 2002:32
 writing achievement affected by, 2004:10
- Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 2002:SA2
- School size, 2004:22
 overcrowding, 2001:45
 pupil/teacher ratios, 2001:38
- School-sponsored activities, 2001:16
- Science, 2001:xli, 2001:xlii
 coursetaking by undergraduate students, 2004:30
 coursetaking in high school, 2002:SA5, 2002:26, 2002:27, 2004:21, 2004:22
 instructional activities in 8th grade, 2004:23
 international comparisons of performance in, 2002:13
 “out-of-field” teachers teaching, 2004:24
 performance through elementary/secondary level, 2001:13, 2002:12
 private vs. public school achievement, 2002:SA18, 2002:SA19, 2002:SA20
 subject expertise of elementary/secondary teachers, 2003:28
 teachers’ preparation for, 2001:43
- Scotland, reading literacy in, 2003:10. *See also* United Kingdom of Great Britain
- Secondary education. *See* Elementary/secondary education
- Selective postsecondary institutions, 2004:30
- Seniors in high school, 2001:19, 2001:21, 2003:11
 geography performance, 2003:13
 history performance, 2003:14
- Sex. *See* Gender
- Singapore
 mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
 reading literacy in, 2003:10
- Single-parent household, 2004:8
- Skills for beginning reading, 2003:SA3–SA6
- Skipping school, 2002:17
- Slovak Republic
 civic performance, 2002:15
 mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
 reading literacy in, 2003:10
- Slovenia
 civic performance, 2002:15
 mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
 reading literacy in, 2003:10
- Social sciences
 coursetaking by undergraduate students, 2004:30
 subject expertise of elementary/secondary teachers, 2003:28
- Social studies
 coursetaking in secondary school, 2001:xli, 2001:xlii
 “out-of-field” teachers teaching, 2004:24
- Social workers, 2004:28
- Socioeconomic status (SES), 2003:22. *See also* Poverty levels
 educational expectations of 10th-graders, 2004:15
- South Africa, mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
- Southern region schools. *See* Regional distributions
- Spain
 expenditures for education, 2002:41, 2004:36
 reading literacy in, 2002:9

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

- Special education, **2001:40**
aides, **2004:28**
- Special instructional programs, **2002:SA6–SA7**
- Speech therapists, **2004:28**
- Sports, **2001:20**
after-school activities, **2004:33, 2004:34**
- Staff, **2004:27, 2004:28**. *See also* Faculty; Principals; Teachers/Teaching
- Stafford loan program, **2004:SA3, 2004:SA18–SA20, 2004:SA23, 2004:SA29n, 2004:1**
- State governments, **2002:43**
financial aid to students, **2004:SA4**
grants to undergraduates, **2004:SA16–SA18**
revenues to school districts from, **2003:41**
- Status dropout rates for high school, **2002:19, 2003:17, 2004:16**. *See also* Dropout rates
- Stopouts from postsecondary education, **2001:xxxii, 2001:xxxiv, 2001:27**. *See also* Dropout rates
nontraditional students, **2002:SA32–SA38** (*See also* Nontraditional undergraduate students)
- Student loans, **2001:59, 2003:42, 2004:SA2–SA4, 2004:SA18–SA21, 2004:SA28**. *See also* Financial aid to students
balance with grants, **2004:SA23, 2004:SA25**
cost of college attendance, **2002:44**
within financial aid system, **2004:SA6, 2004:SA7**
net price of college after grants and loans, **2004:SA21–SA25**
repayment, **2004:SA29n, 2004:15**
- Students whose parents did not go to college, **2001:xviii–xliii**
after college, **2001:xxxvii–xxxviii**
characteristics of, **2001:xix–xx, 2001:xxxix**
enrollment rates, **2001:xx, 2001:xxii**
- Students whose parents did not go to college—*continued*
persistence in postsecondary education, **2001:xxx–xxxvii** (*See also* First-generation college students)
preparing for college, **2001:xxii–xxx** (*See also* Preparing for college)
- Student/teacher ratios, **2001:38**
private schools, **2002:SA5, 2002:SA6**
- Student teaching, **2004:30**
- Student victimization, **2002:34**
- Subject expertise for elementary/secondary teachers, **2003:28**. *See also* “Out-of-field” teachers
- Surveys of opinions
parental satisfaction with school, **2001:41, 2001:55**
parents’ on children’s schools, **2002:40**
teachers’ on satisfaction with school, **2002:SA14**
twelfth-graders’ interest in school, **2002:18**
- Sweden, **2001:57**
civic performance, **2002:15**
expenditures for education, **2002:41, 2003:40**
reading literacy in, **2002:9, 2003:10**
transition to postsecondary education, **2004:17**
- Switzerland, **2001:57**
civic performance, **2002:15**
expenditures for education, **2002:41, 2003:40, 2004:36**
instructional activities in 8th-grade mathematics, **2003:26**
reading literacy in, **2002:9**
- T**
- Teachers/Teaching, **2002:31, 2002:32, 2002:33**. *See also* Faculty, postsecondary education
academic background, **2002:31**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

Teachers/Teaching—*continued*

- beginning, 2003:29
 - evaluation of, 2002:SA13
 - instructional practices in kindergarten, 2003:SA8–SA9
 - mathematics and science, 2001:36, 2001:43
 - “out-of-field,” 2003:28, 2004:24
 - preparedness in using computers and the Internet, 2001:39
 - in private schools, 2002:SA11–SA15, 2002:SA21
 - in public charter schools, 2002:30
 - qualifications of, 2001:42
 - ratios to students, 2001:38, 2002:SA5, 2002:SA6
- Technology in education
- elementary/secondary, 2001:39
 - postsecondary, 2001:48
- Television
- distance education, 2002:SA32, 2002:38
 - students’ use of time, 2001:22
- Tenth grade, 2004:15
- Tenure at postsecondary institutions, 2003:35
- Tertiary-type A and B programs, 2004:17
- Testing accommodations, 2004:9, 2004:11
- Tests. *See* Achievement tests; College entrance examinations
- Thailand, mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
- Third grade, reading and mathematics achievement, 2004:8
- Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), 2001:43
- activities in 8th-grade mathematics, 2003:26
 - compared to the TIMSS-Repeat, 2002:13
 - quality of mathematics lessons, 2001:36
 - Videotape Study of 8th-grade science classes, 2004:23
- Time, faculty use of, 2001:51

- Time, student use of, 2001:22
- Time to completion for bachelor’s degree, 2003:21
- Title I, 2004:28
- Title IV postsecondary institutions, 2004:31
 - distance education, 2004:32
- Trade schools, 2004:SA5, 2004:1
- Training for teachers, 2002:SA13
- Transfer students in postsecondary education, 2001:27, 2003:19, 2003:20
 - time to completion for bachelor’s degrees, 2003:21
- Transition to postsecondary education, 2001:25, 2001:26, 2002:20, 2002:21, 2002:22. *See also* Preparing for college
 - enrollment rates in college, 2003:18
 - international comparisons, 2004:17
- Tuition/fees for postsecondary education, 2001:58. *See also* Cost of attending college
 - efforts to fund postsecondary education, 2002:42
 - increases in, 2004:SA2
 - need analysis for student financial aid, 2004:SA8–SA10
 - net tuition after grants, 2004:SA18, 2004:SA19
 - net tuition after grants and loans, 2004:SA21–SA25, 2004:SA28
 - percentage distribution for undergraduates at 4-year institutions, 2004:SA9
 - perceptions of college costs, 2001:25
 - for types of institutions, 2004:SA8
- Tunisia, mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
- Turkey
 - mathematics and science performance, 2002:13
 - reading literacy in, 2003:10
 - transition to postsecondary education, 2004:17
- Twelfth grade, 2004:18

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Two-parent households, **2003:2**. *See also* Parents

Two-year institutions, **2001:58**. *See also* Postsecondary education

average price of attending, **2004:38**

distance education courses, **2001:49, 2004:32**

enrollment patterns, **2004:SA5, 2004:SA6**

enrollment rates, **2001:5, 2003:5, 2003:18**

expectations for high school seniors, **2001:19**

expected family contribution (EFC) for college costs, **2004:SA12, 2004:SA26**

faculty tenure at, **2003:35**

first-generation students enrolling in, **2001:xx, 2001:xxx, 2001:xxxiii**

grants to undergraduates, **2004:SA15, 2004:SA17**

net price for after grants, **2004:SA18, 2004:SA19**

net price for after grants and loans, **2004:SA22, 2004:SA23, 2004:SA24**

net price of attending college, **2002:44, 2003:43**

nontraditional undergraduate students at, **2002:SA27, 2002:SA28–SA29, 2002:SA38**

Pell grants to students, **2002:24, 2003:23, 2004:SA16**

persistence in attaining a degree, **2001:27, 2004:19**

remedial coursework at, **2001:29, 2004:18, 2004:31**

stopouts at, **2001:xxxiv**

student loans for, **2004:SA20**

students with disabilities at, **2003:34**

transferring to 4-year institutions, **2003:19, 2003:21**

tuition/fee increases, **2004:SA2**

tuition/fees for, **2004:SA8**

undergraduate diversity at, **2003:32**

undergraduate enrollment, **2002:5, 2002:21, 2004:6**

U

Undergraduate students, **2001:47, 2001:59**.

See also Postsecondary education

definition of financial dependence, **2002:SA39**

with disabilities, **2003:34**

distance education, **2002:38**

diversity of, **2003:32**

financial aid to, **2003:42, 2004:SA2, 2004:SA5** (*See also* Financial aid to students)

foreign-born students, **2003:6**

increasing enrollment for, **2004:6**

nontraditional, **2002:SA25–SA39** (*See also* Nontraditional undergraduate students)

rate of enrollment, **2002:5, 2002:21, 2003:5** (*See also* Enrollment, postsecondary education)

Unemployment, **2004:13**

United Kingdom of Great Britain, **2001:32, 2001:57**

civic performance, **2002:15**

mathematics and science performance, **2002:13**

reading literacy in, **2002:9, 2003:10**

Universities. *See* Four-year institutions; Postsecondary education

Urbanicity

expenditures for elementary/secondary education, **2001:56, 2003:39, 2004:35**

fourth-grade reading performance, **2002:7**

guidance counselors in public elementary/secondary schools, **2004:27**

poverty levels among school-aged children, **2002:4, 2003:3, 2004:5**

private elementary/secondary schools, **2002:SA3–SA4**

public alternative schools, **2003:27**

size of high schools, **2003:30**

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The year of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv) refer to page numbers in the Essay.

(Please note that some indicators from 2001, 2002, and 2003 may no longer appear in the Indicator List on The Condition of Education web site and can only be found in the Print Editions [PDFs].)

Index

Continued

V

- Violence at schools, 2001:44, 2003:31
- Visas, student, 2003:6
- Visual arts, degrees in, 2003:33
- Vocabulary gains, early childhood, 2003:SA2, 2003:SA3–SA4
- Vocational education, 2001:35
 - comparison between private and public schools, 2002:SA6, 2002:SA7
 - health affected by, 2004:12
 - not included as adult education, 2003:8
 - at public alternative schools, 2003:27
 - student aspirations, 2001:19
 - work-related adult education, participation in, 2004:7
- Volunteerism, 2001:16, 2001:54
 - international comparisons, 2003:16
- Voting participation, 2003:15

W

- Weapons in schools, 2001:44, 2003:31
- Web sites, 2001:48
- Western region schools. *See* Regional distributions
- Women, earning degrees, 2001:30, 2004:20. *See also* Gender
- Word recognition, 2003:SA3–SA4, 2003:SA6, 2003:SA7

- Work-based learning programs, 2002:SA6, 2002:SA7, 2004:7
- Working while attending school (postsecondary education), 2002:37, 2004:29. *See also* Employment status
 - affecting persistence in educational attainment, 2002:SA36, 2002:SA38
 - changes in last decade, 2003:32
 - distance education, 2002:38
 - nontraditional undergraduate students, 2002:SA25, 2002:SA26, 2002:SA29–SA31 (*See also* Nontraditional undergraduate students)
- Working while attending school (secondary education), 2001:21. *See also* Employment status
- Work-related education, 2003:44, 2004:7. *See also* Work-based learning programs
- Work-study programs, 2004:SA3
- Writing, 2004:10
 - remedial coursework provided for undergraduate students, 2004:31

Y

- Young adults
 - annual earnings of, 2004:14
 - not in school or working, 2004:13

Reference Numbers

This is a cumulative index for the 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 print editions of *The Condition of Education*.

The **year** of publication appears in bold type.

Arabic numerals (e.g., 2, 3, 4) following the year refer to Indicator numbers.

For 2002–2004:

References beginning with “SA” (e.g., SA2, SA3, SA4) refer to page numbers in the Special Analyses.

For 2001:

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