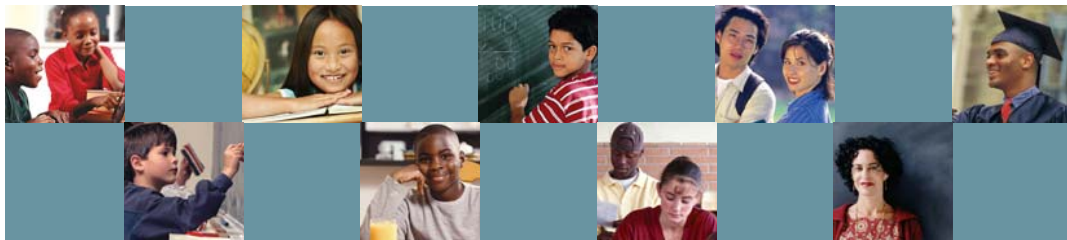


the condition of education 2006



INDICATOR 23

Postsecondary Expectations of 12th-Graders

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2006*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2006*, visit the NCES website (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.sap?pubid=2006071>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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Student Attitudes and Aspirations

Postsecondary Expectations of 12th-Graders

In 2004, some 51 percent of low-socioeconomic status (SES) 12th-graders expected to earn a bachelor's degree or attend graduate school, compared with 66 percent of middle-SES seniors and 87 percent of high-SES seniors.

In 2003–04, some 69 percent of high school seniors expected to attain a bachelor's degree or higher (34 percent expected to attain a bachelor's as their highest degree, while 35 percent expected to continue to graduate or professional school). Another 18 percent expected some postsecondary education but less than a bachelor's degree (see supplemental table 23-1). The rest either expected not to go beyond high school (5 percent) or did not know (8 percent).

Students have increased their expectations for postsecondary education in the last couple of decades. Overall, the proportion who expected to attain a bachelor's as their highest degree increased from 19 percent in 1981–82 to 34 percent in 2003–04. The percentage who expected to attend graduate school more than doubled, from 16 to 35 percent over the 22 years.

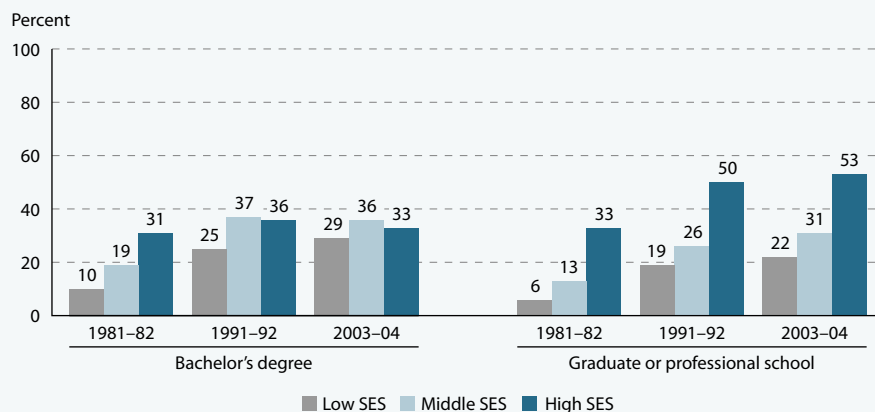
Educational expectations varied by students' socioeconomic status (SES). In 2003–04, for example, students from middle- or high-SES families were more likely than those from low-SES families to expect to earn a bachelor's degree as their highest degree (36 and 33 percent,

respectively, vs. 29 percent). In addition, high-SES seniors were more than twice as likely as their low-SES peers to expect to attend graduate school (53 vs. 22 percent).

While expectations for attainment grew among seniors of all SES levels, the gaps between low- or middle-SES seniors and their high-SES peers decreased over the 22-year period. The proportion of low-SES seniors who expected to earn a bachelor's degree or attend graduate school increased from 16 to 51 percent. The rate increased from 33 to 66 percent among middle-SES seniors, and from 64 to 87 percent among high-SES seniors.

Students' expectations for attending graduate school in 2003–04 were positively related to their academic preparation and experiences, including mathematics coursetaking and proficiency, never repeating a grade, and taking college entrance examinations (see supplemental table 23-2). For example, 15 percent of seniors whose highest mathematics course was geometry or lower expected to attend graduate school, compared with 52 percent of those who studied trigonometry, precalculus, or calculus.

EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS: Percentage of 12th-graders who expected to attain a bachelor's degree or attend graduate/professional school, by family socioeconomic status (SES): 1981–82, 1991–92, and 2003–04



NOTE: The SES variable is a composite based on parents' educational attainment, occupations, and family income. See supplemental note 7 for more detail about SES variable construction in the three datasets.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond Longitudinal Study of 1980 Sophomores (HS&B-So:80/82), "First Follow-up, Student Survey, 1982, Data Analysis System"; National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS: 88/92), "Second Follow-up, Student Survey, 1992"; and Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:02/04), "First Follow-up, Student Survey, 2004"; previously unpublished tabulations (October 2005).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Note 7
Supplemental Tables 23-1, 23-2



Postsecondary Expectations of 12th-Graders

Table 23-1. Percentage of 12th-graders who expected to attain various levels of education, by family socioeconomic status (SES), sex, and race/ethnicity: 1981–82, 1991–92, and 2003–04

Family SES, sex, and race/ethnicity	High school or less			Some college			Bachelor's degree			Graduate or professional school			Do not know		
	1981–82	1991–92	2003–04	1981–82	1991–92	2003–04	1981–82	1991–92	2003–04	1981–82	1991–92	2003–04	1981–82	1991–92	2003–04
Total	20.5	5.0	5.0	35.8	23.9	18.1	19.2	34.2	33.5	15.8	31.4	35.0	8.7	5.4	8.4
Family SES¹															
Lowest quarter	34.1	10.6	9.6	37.9	37.7	27.4	10.0	24.9	28.8	6.3	18.6	22.0	11.6	8.3	12.1
Middle two quarters	19.1	5.1	5.0	40.7	27.1	19.8	19.5	36.6	35.6	13.3	25.8	30.8	7.5	5.4	8.8
Highest quarter	6.2	1.3	1.3	24.8	9.0	7.4	30.7	36.0	33.4	33.3	50.0	53.2	5.0	3.7	4.6
Sex															
Male	24.4	6.3	6.9	33.6	24.3	20.6	18.3	33.9	34.4	15.5	29.1	28.8	8.1	6.4	9.4
Female	16.7	3.7	3.1	37.9	23.4	15.6	20.1	34.5	32.7	16.1	33.8	41.2	9.3	4.5	7.4
Race/ethnicity²															
White	20.3	5.1	4.7	35.0	23.9	17.3	20.7	35.5	35.1	16.1	30.7	35.9	7.9	4.9	7.0
Black	17.1	4.3	5.0	40.8	21.8	18.8	15.1	31.6	32.1	15.2	35.3	35.3	11.7	6.9	8.8
Hispanic	29.0	5.8	6.4	35.7	28.8	23.1	12.4	29.1	28.2	11.0	28.4	28.8	11.9	7.9	13.5
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.7	2.7	2.5	29.3	18.2	10.4	22.5	34.0	32.7	35.2	40.3	47.6	6.3	4.7	6.9
Males, by race/ethnicity²															
White	23.4	6.4	6.7	32.5	24.1	19.8	20.1	35.0	36.1	16.4	28.8	29.1	7.6	5.7	8.4
Black	23.3	4.1	6.7	41.3	26.6	22.3	12.7	33.7	34.6	12.1	27.0	28.4	10.7	8.6!	7.9
Hispanic	34.9	7.8	7.9	32.7	25.7	26.3	10.8	27.3	28.4	11.0	28.4	22.4	10.6	10.9	15.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	7.4!	3.9!	3.8	31.2	19.8	12.7	22.8	32.7	34.0	31.0	39.0	41.8	7.6!	4.7	7.8
Females, by race/ethnicity²															
White	17.2	3.7	2.7	37.4	23.6	14.8	21.3	36.0	34.1	15.8	32.6	42.8	8.3	4.1	5.6
Black	11.6	4.6	3.5	40.4	17.4	15.4	17.3	29.6	29.8	18.1	43.0	41.8	12.5	5.4	9.6
Hispanic	22.6	3.9	5.1	38.9	31.8	20.1	14.2	30.8	28.0	11.0	28.4	34.9	13.2	5.1	12.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	5.8!	1.5!	1.0!	27.1	16.5	7.9	22.1	35.5	31.2	40.1	41.8	54.0	4.9!	4.8	5.8

! Interpret data with caution (estimates are unstable).

¹ The SES variable is a composite based on parents' educational attainment, occupations, and family income. See *supplemental note 7* for more detail about SES variable construction in the three datasets.

² Black includes African American, Hispanic includes Latino, and Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin unless specified. Included in the totals but not shown separately are students who identified themselves as American Indian/Alaska Native or, in 2004, as more than one race.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond Longitudinal Study of 1980 Sophomores (HS&B-So:80/82), "First Follow-up, Student Survey, 1982, Data Analysis System"; National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88/92), "Second Follow-up, Student Survey, 1992"; and Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:02/04), "First Follow-up, Student Survey, 2004"; previously unpublished tabulations (October 2005).

Postsecondary Expectations of 12th-Graders

Table 23-2. Percentage of 12th-graders who expected to attain various levels of education, by education-related characteristics: 2003–04

Characteristic	High school or less	Some college	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or professional school	Do not know
Total	5.0	18.1	33.5	35.0	8.4
Mathematics skills test score					
Lowest quarter	11.9	31.4	26.4	16.2	14.1
Middle two quarters	3.6	18.7	36.5	33.1	8.1
Highest quarter	0.7	3.6	34.5	57.8	3.4
Highest mathematics course in high school					
Geometry or lower	12.4	33.1	24.0	15.0	15.5
Algebra II	4.2	21.9	38.4	26.4	8.9
Trigonometry, precalculus, or calculus	1.2	7.2	35.7	51.9	4.0
English language skills					
Fluent or very good	4.8	17.6	33.8	35.9	7.9
Less than very good	6.0	23.5	30.1	28.5	11.9
Ever held back					
Retained in any grade through grade 11	13.0	26.7	22.4	21.2	16.6
Never retained	4.2	17.3	34.6	36.3	7.6
College entrance requirements					
Sought information	1.9	16.8	37.1	39.1	5.0
Did not seek information	12.1	32.1	20.9	9.2	25.7
Took college entrance test					
Already took SAT/ACT	1.4	9.0	38.8	46.2	4.6
Plan to take it	4.4	31.3	32.0	18.7	13.6
Do not plan or not thought about it	18.1	38.7	16.5	9.9	16.8
Postsecondary schools applied to					
None	6.0	34.5	30.7	15.7	13.2
One school	1.2	20.4	37.9	34.0	6.5
Two to four schools	0.8	10.0	40.0	45.2	4.0
Five or more schools	0.3!	3.1	29.7	64.3	2.6

! Interpret data with caution (estimates are unstable).

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:02/04), "First Follow-up, Student Survey, 2004," previously unpublished tabulation (October 2005).

Postsecondary Expectations of 12th-Graders

Table S23. Standard errors for the percentage of 12th-graders who expected to attain a bachelor's degree or attend graduate/professional school, by family socioeconomic status (SES): 1981–82, 1991–92, and 2003–04

Family SES	1981–82	1991–92	2003–04
Bachelor's degree			
Low SES	0.89	1.21	1.17
Middle SES	1.01	0.84	0.72
High SES	1.31	1.17	1.01
Graduate or professional school			
Low SES	0.60	1.21	0.85
Middle SES	0.62	0.73	0.66
High SES	1.58	1.27	1.09

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond Longitudinal Study of 1980 Sophomores (HS&B-So:80/82), "First Follow-up, Student Survey, 1982, Data Analysis System"; National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88/92), "Second Follow-up, Student Survey, 1992"; and Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:02/04), "First Follow-up, Student Survey, 2004"; previously unpublished tabulations (October 2005).

Postsecondary Expectations of 12th-Graders

Table S23-1. Standard errors for the percentage of 12th-graders who expected to attain various levels of education, by family socioeconomic status (SES), sex, and race/ethnicity: 1981–82, 1991–92, and 2003–04

Family SES, sex, and race/ethnicity	High school or less			Some college			Bachelor's degree			Graduate or professional school			Do not know		
	1981–82	1991–92	2003–04	1981–82	1991–92	2003–04	1981–82	1991–92	2003–04	1981–82	1991–92	2003–04	1981–82	1991–92	2003–04
Total	0.88	0.25	0.24	0.57	0.58	0.53	0.92	0.61	0.56	0.63	0.68	0.53	0.38	0.32	0.32
Family SES															
Lowest quarter	1.04	0.78	0.66	1.10	1.24	1.18	0.89	1.21	1.17	0.60	1.21	0.85	0.78	0.64	0.71
Middle two quarters	0.82	0.33	0.30	0.78	0.75	0.64	1.01	0.84	0.72	0.62	0.73	0.66	0.50	0.49	0.51
Highest quarter	0.83	0.24	0.22	1.44	0.68	0.55	1.31	1.17	1.01	1.58	1.27	1.09	0.57	0.48	0.45
Sex															
Male	1.05	0.39	0.41	1.07	0.75	0.68	1.21	0.83	0.76	0.98	0.94	0.71	0.50	0.51	0.42
Female	0.92	0.29	0.27	0.78	0.76	0.65	0.83	0.85	0.71	0.66	0.85	0.79	0.52	0.32	0.40
Race/ethnicity															
White	0.85	0.29	0.31	0.53	0.65	0.57	0.82	0.68	0.64	0.69	0.81	0.67	0.43	0.29	0.39
Black	1.50	0.71	0.65	1.91	1.61	1.37	1.88	2.14	1.35	1.25	2.12	1.52	1.11	1.73	0.75
Hispanic	2.46	0.84	0.80	2.16	1.95	1.33	1.20	1.61	1.30	1.56	1.60	1.26	1.43	1.06	0.91
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.77	0.72	0.51	3.52	2.26	1.33	3.74	2.31	1.76	4.44	2.36	1.82	1.62	0.87	0.74
Males, by race/ethnicity															
White	1.03	0.45	0.51	1.10	0.84	0.65	1.26	0.99	0.87	1.08	1.14	0.84	0.50	0.43	0.52
Black	2.44	0.88	0.97	2.64	2.90	1.92	1.47	2.86	1.83	1.41	2.76	2.14	1.65	3.11	1.01
Hispanic	3.64	1.58	1.20	3.01	2.28	1.70	1.74	2.22	1.91	1.80	2.42	1.81	1.47	1.68	1.44
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.35	1.31	0.84	4.36	2.76	1.96	4.48	3.14	2.80	4.18	3.12	2.72	2.52	1.01	1.18
Females, by race/ethnicity															
White	0.96	0.33	0.33	0.97	0.86	0.79	0.74	0.93	0.90	0.78	0.94	1.05	0.57	0.37	0.49
Black	1.67	1.12	0.83	2.38	1.63	1.60	2.87	2.72	1.67	1.59	3.11	1.72	1.48	1.18	1.17
Hispanic	2.85	0.72	0.87	2.97	2.89	1.65	1.55	2.32	1.79	2.06	2.00	1.85	2.61	0.95	1.10
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.89	0.57	0.35	5.58	3.19	1.55	4.43	3.29	1.98	6.13	3.20	2.58	1.66	1.31	0.90

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond Longitudinal Study of 1980 Sophomores (HS&B-So:80/82), "First Follow-up, Student Survey, 1982, Data Analysis System"; National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88/92), "Second Follow-up, Student Survey, 1992"; and Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:02/04), "First Follow-up, Student Survey, 2004"; previously unpublished tabulations (October 2005).

Postsecondary Expectations of 12th-Graders

Table S23-2. Standard errors for the percentage of 12th-graders who expected to attain various levels of education, by education-related characteristics: 2003–04

Characteristic	High school or less	Some college	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or professional school	Do not know
Total	0.24	0.53	0.56	0.53	0.32
Mathematics skills test score					
Lowest quarter	0.68	0.94	0.91	0.72	0.84
Middle two quarters	0.30	0.67	0.79	0.72	0.45
Highest quarter	0.16	0.41	1.22	1.20	0.37
Highest mathematics course in high school					
Geometry or lower	0.78	1.03	1.00	0.74	0.90
Algebra II	0.35	0.95	1.02	0.78	0.55
Trigonometry, precalculus, or calculus	0.16	0.45	0.87	0.87	0.33
English language skills					
Fluent or very good	0.23	0.52	0.58	0.58	0.34
Less than very good	1.24	2.48	2.13	2.19	1.27
Ever held back					
Retained in any grade through grade 11	1.28	1.33	1.32	1.41	1.40
Never retained	0.24	0.55	0.60	0.60	0.31
College entrance requirements					
Sought information	0.16	0.58	0.69	0.64	0.26
Did not seek information	2.46	3.69	2.75	2.20	2.90
Took college entrance test					
Already took SAT/ACT	0.18	0.45	0.66	0.66	0.29
Plan to take it	0.48	1.16	1.26	0.93	0.92
Do not plan or not thought about it	1.07	1.41	1.23	0.82	1.17
Postsecondary schools applied to					
None	0.52	1.18	1.10	0.65	0.75
One school	0.22	0.85	1.07	1.11	0.55
Two to four schools	0.17	0.54	0.88	0.94	0.35
Five or more schools	0.16	0.62	1.47	1.70	0.46

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:02/04), "First Follow-up, Student Survey, 2004," previously unpublished tabulation (October 2005).