# **Education Quality in the U.S., States, and Metropolitan Areas: Data from the 2009 American Community Survey**

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## Elementary/Secondary Modal Grade

- Nationally, 82.6% of 6 to 13 year-olds were enrolled at the appropriate modal grade level.
- New York, California & Hawaii are among the states with the highest levels of modal grade compliance.
- States in the Southwest and far Northeast showed consistently high levels of modal grade enrollment, whereas states in the Southeast and Midwest displayed consistently lower levels.
- Of the 366 metro areas, 74 are statistically greater than the national average, while 97 are statistically lower.
- Kingston, NY, at 94.4%, has one of the highest levels of modal grade enrollment.



- Although this indicator displayed the least geographic variability across states, the Northeast and California once again emerge as relatively high performing areas, relative to the national average.
- Of the 366 metro areas, 62 are statistically greater than the national average, while 28 are statistically lower.
- Elmira, NY, at 76.2%, has one of the lowest percentages of high school attendees.



- the states with the highest levels of college attendees. • States in the South and Pacific Northwest stand out for
- their markedly low rates of college attendees. • Of the 366 metro areas, 103 are statistically greater than
- the national average, while 144 are statistically lower.
- Jacksonville, NC, at 8,5%, has one of the lowest levels of college attendance.
- Ithaca, NY, at 82.2%, has one of the highest levels of college enrollment.



- Of the 366 metro areas, 70 are statistically greater than the national average, while 194 are statistically lower. • Boulder, CO, at 60.7%, has one of the highest levels of
- college completers.

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**Overall Educational Quality** 

- Nationally, the overall educational quality score is 304.7 Massachusetts & New York are among the states with the highest levels of overall Educational Quality.
- Overall, states and metros in the Northeast stand out for their high educational quality scores. Similar patterns exist in areas of the Midwest, Rocky Mountains, and California.
- Of the 366 metro areas, 92 are statistically greater than the national average, while 165 are statistically lower.
- Low performing metro areas are prevalent in the South, particularly along the Mexico border, and specific parts of the Pacific Northwest.
- The range of values for overall educational quality score are 389.1 to 229.8.

## Summary

- Educational quality clearly varies across the country
- Despite high levels of variability across measures, some states stand out for their consistently high or low performance on most indicators.
- Connecticut and New Jersey are statistically higher than the national average for all six indicators.
- Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas are statistically lower than the national average for all six indicators.
- Similar results are observed at the metropolitan leve
- New York City. San Francisco, and Boston are among the metros with statistically higher rates than the national average for all six indicators.
- Elkhart, Indiana, Yakima, Washington, and Farmington, New Mexico are statistically lower than the national average for all six indicators.
- For the most part, states and metros with high percentages of college attendees display high percentages of college completers, which together appear to be positively linked to overall quality results.
- There are, however, some interesting exceptions to this rule. California, for example, displays relatively high levels of college attendance, but when analyzed against the national average, that state's level of college completion is not statistically significant from the U.S. average
- Analysis of Washington state shows a similar result. albeit in the opposite direction (i.e. low levels of college attendance, high levels of residents with degrees).

## What's Next?

- There are many additional factors that might logically account for, or correlate with, the geographic variation observed in this research.
- Future analyses will focus on correlation of other factors with overall education quality score, including:
- Quality levels in non-metropolitan areas
- Geographic variability in education funding – Local educational policies?
- Labor market factors like local occupational structures
- Your ideas for additional explanatory factors?

### Contact Information

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> This poster is released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion of work in progress. Any views expressed on methodological issues are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.













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