

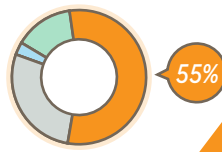
# THE PROGRESS INDEX

MEASURING SHARED PROSPERITY  
IN WASHINGTON STATE

# EDUCATION



# EDUCATION

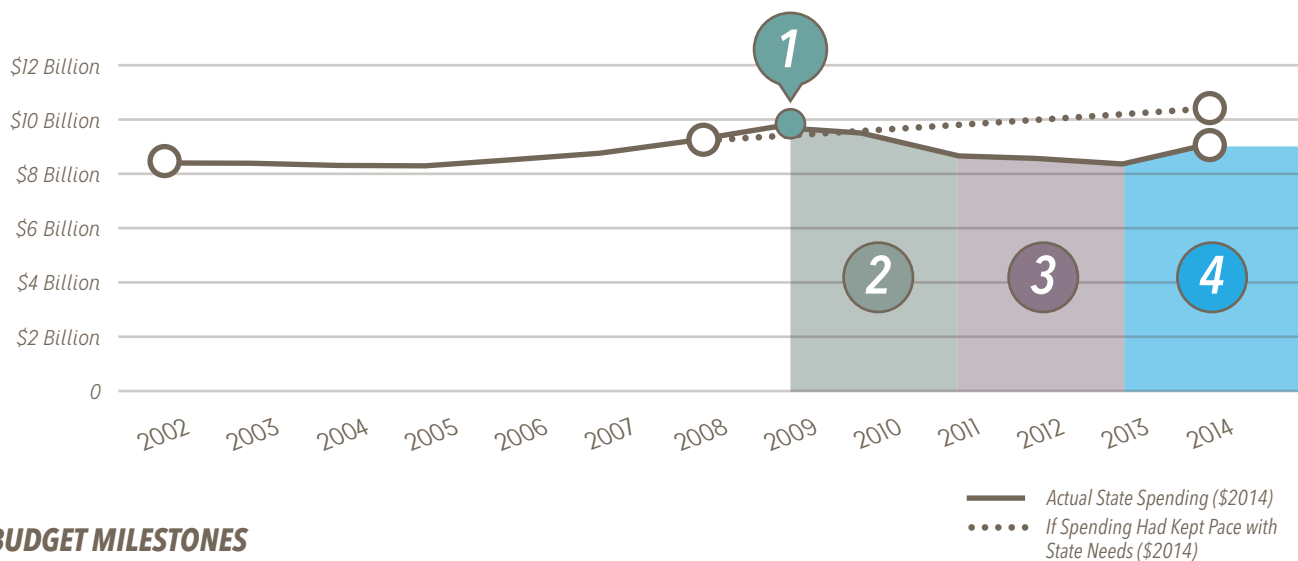


Washington state should have a world-class system for all students, with high-quality teachers, curriculum, and enrichment activities throughout early learning, K-12, and higher education.

## BUDGET SNAPSHOT INVESTMENTS IN EDUCATION

Washington state invests 55 percent of its total operating revenue on early learning, K-12, and higher education. Spending on education is slightly higher than 2002 levels (Figure 6), but lower than in 2008 before the economic downturn (solid line). Had spending on education kept pace with pre-recession growth, it would be 14 percent (\$1.3 billion) higher than it is currently (dotted line).

**FIGURE 6:**  
**STATE INVESTMENTS IN EDUCATION HAVE FALLEN BEHIND BY \$1.3 BILLION**  
State funding + federal stimulus funding, WA, 2002-2014



### BUDGET MILESTONES

- 1** 2009: The 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) injects over \$1.4 billion into education investments. If not for ARRA funding, cuts to early learning, K-12, and higher education would be significantly worse.
- 2** 2009-2011: Funding for higher education is dramatically reduced, resulting in the second-largest tuition increase in the nation at four-year colleges since the start of the recession.
- 3** 2011-2013: Washington State Supreme Court rules in *McCleary v. State* that Washington state is not fulfilling its paramount duty to provide a basic education for children. Lawmakers must invest at least \$4.5 billion by 2018 to comply with the ruling. A \$1 billion down payment is made toward fulfilling requirements under *McCleary v. State*.
- 4** 2013-2015: 2014 marks the sixth year in a row that teachers go without a cost-of-living increase.

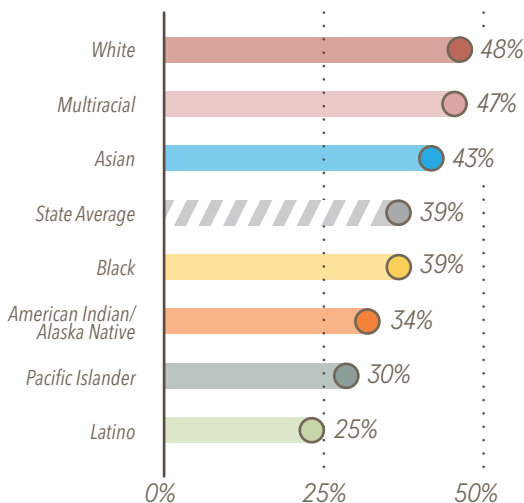
Source: Budget & Policy Center analysis of LEAP data

Notes: Spending adjusted for inflation in \$2014. Estimated spending calculated using a 3.6% growth rate. See full methodology for more information on estimated spending.

## ARE CHILDREN ENTERING KINDERGARTEN WITH THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO SUCCEED THROUGHOUT SCHOOL?

**FIGURE 7:  
EVIDENCE OF THE OPPORTUNITY GAP SEEN EARLY  
FOR MANY CHILDREN OF COLOR**

Percent of children prepared for kindergarten in all six areas of readiness by race and ethnicity, WA, 2014-2015



Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2014-2015 WA KIDS data. Six areas of readiness are social-emotional, language, cognitive, literacy, math, and physical.

Note about data: Disaggregated data is presented to provide a preliminary understanding of disparities by race and ethnicity. On its own, this data tells a limited story about the populations it represents. We encourage users of this data to engage with communities of color to develop a more accurate and meaningful understanding than the data allow.

Growing evidence suggests that high-quality early learning is essential for child development and to prepare children for future success in school.<sup>[8]</sup> In Washington state (Table 3):

- Forty-one percent of 3- and 4-year-olds (four of every 10) are enrolled in preschool.
- While long-term data on kindergarten readiness is emerging, the most recent data suggest that there is room for improvement in preparing children for kindergarten. This is especially true for young children of color, who face early obstacles in life and are less likely to be prepared for kindergarten than their peers (Figure 7).

**TABLE 3:**

**EARLY LEARNING: KEY INDICATORS OF PROGRESS<sup>[9]</sup>**

Percent of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in preschool

\*

41%  
(2008)

41%  
(2012)

Percent of children prepared to enter kindergarten in all six areas of readiness

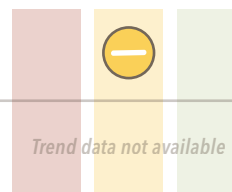
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39%  
(2014-15)

(social-emotional, language, cognitive, literacy, math, and physical)

**ARE WE MAKING PROGRESS?**

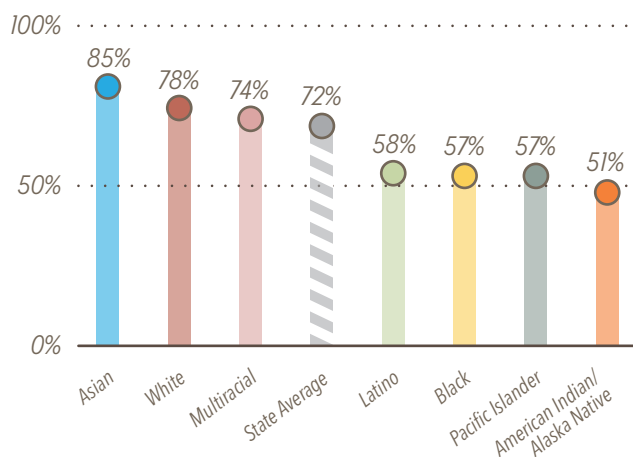


\*Data not available or not comparable to subsequent years

# ARE K-12 STUDENTS MEETING KEY MILESTONES FOR ACHIEVEMENT AND GRADUATING ON TIME?

Meeting milestones for achievement in reading and math are important for future success in school and life. Graduating on time from high school increases a student’s chances of success in adulthood, including attending college and joining the workforce. In Washington state (Table 4):

**FIGURE 8:**  
**ACHIEVEMENT GAP EVIDENT BY 3RD GRADE**  
Percent of students in 3rd grade meeting reading standards by race/ethnicity, WA, 2013-2014



Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2013-2014 Measurements of Student Progress (MSP) 3rd grade reading data.

Note about data: Disaggregated data is presented to provide a preliminary understanding of disparities by race and ethnicity. On its own, this data tells a limited story about the population it represents. We encourage users of this data to engage with communities of color to develop a more accurate and meaningful understanding than the data allow.

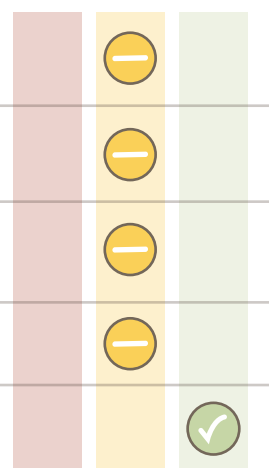
- Seven out of 10 students (72 percent) are meeting reading standards by the end of third grade, effectively the same as in 2008. The gap in achievement between students is evident by this time, with students of color much less likely than their peers to be reading proficiently (Figure 8). A critical benchmark is whether a child can read with proficiency by the end of third grade; it also influences the likelihood of graduating on time and attending college.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Just over half (56 percent) of students in 8th grade are meeting math standards. Students of color are significantly less likely than their peers to meet math proficiency standards (Figure 9). Because success in math is necessary for future success in the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields – fields that play a significant role in Washington state’s labor market – lower rates of math proficiency are of particular concern.<sup>[11]</sup>
- Three-quarters (77 percent) of high school students graduate within four years.
- The share of students having to take pre-college coursework is an indicator of how prepared they are for college.<sup>[12]</sup> Over half (57 percent) of students attending community college require pre-college level coursework, compared to 8 percent of students who enroll in four-year institutions.

**TABLE 4:**

**K-12: KEY INDICATORS OF PROGRESS<sup>[13]</sup>**

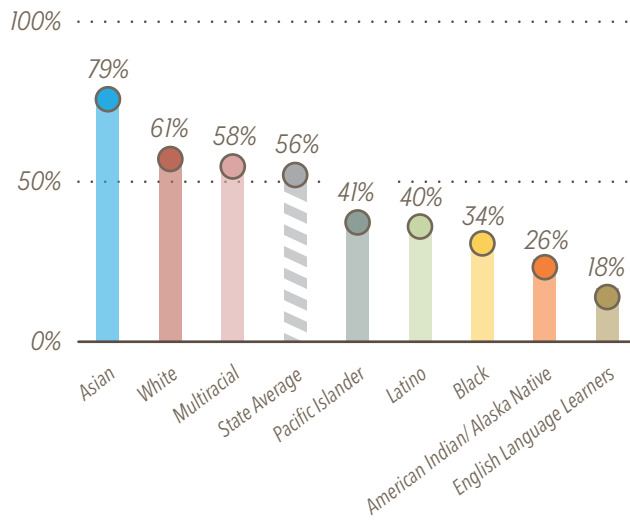
Indicator	Year	2007-08	2013-14
Percent of 3rd grade students meeting reading standards	*	71%	72%
Percent of 8th grade students meeting math standards	*	52%	56%
Percent of students graduating high school within four years		77% (2000-01)	77% (2013-14)
Percent of students at community and technical colleges (CTCs) and four-year public universities taking pre-college coursework	CTCs	59% (2007-08)	57% (2011-12)
	4-Year	13% (2007-08)	8% (2011-12)

**ARE WE MAKING PROGRESS?**



\*Data not available or not comparable to subsequent years

**FIGURE 9:**  
**ACHIEVEMENT GAP IS ESPECIALLY EVIDENT IN SUBJECTS LINKED TO SUCCESS IN STEM FIELDS**  
 Percent of students in 8th grade meeting math standards by race and ethnicity, WA, 2013-2014



Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2013-2014 Measurements of Student Progress (MSP) 8th grade math data.

Note about data: Disaggregated data is presented to provide a preliminary understanding of disparities by race and ethnicity. On its own, this data tells a limited story about the population it represents. We encourage users of this data to engage with communities of color to develop a more accurate and meaningful understanding than the data allow.

Progress on these milestones is in jeopardy, largely due to a broken revenue system that is unable to adequately fund not just K-12 education, but also all of the other investments children and families need to thrive. In *McCleary v. State*,<sup>[14]</sup> the Supreme Court ruled that Washington state is failing to fulfill our paramount duty to provide a basic education to all students.

By 2018, the state must find at least an additional \$4.5 billion to adequately fund K-12 education for our children.<sup>[15]</sup> On top of that investment, lawmakers need to boost salaries for teachers in order to attract and retain quality educators.

Fulfilling requirements under the *McCleary* decision is essential to making progress on education in Washington state. However, ensuring all students make educational progress will require more. Too many of Washington state's children, especially those of color, face barriers to opportunity early in life – way before they enter kindergarten – that lead to the gap in achievement between students during their K-12 years. Kids need more than just K-12 to reach their full potential in life. Funding for investments outside of basic education that help level the playing field – such as early learning, affordable housing, health and human services, child welfare, and higher education – should not be starved to meet the Supreme Court's ruling.

## CAN ASPIRING STUDENTS ACCESS AND AFFORD HIGHER EDUCATION?

The higher education system is critical in building Washington state’s workforce and equipping adults of all ages with the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to compete in a 21st century economy. Giving all Washingtonians the opportunity to attend college at an affordable price reaps returns to the economy in the form of an educated, skilled, job-ready workforce (Table 5). In Washington state:

- Six out of 10 students graduating from high school immediately enroll in college. Students from Asian backgrounds are the most likely to immediately enroll in college after high school graduation (82 percent), followed by White (61 percent), Multiracial (60 percent), Black (59 percent), Latino (48 percent), and American Indian and Alaska Native students (43 percent) (Figure 10).
- Washington state has reduced its investment in higher education, making tuition less affordable over the last five years. At four-year universities, the share of revenue from student tuition has increased from 38 percent to 62 percent; at community and technical colleges (CTCs), it has increased from 25 percent to 35 percent. Depending on a student’s racial and ethnic background, attending one of Washington state’s four-year universities can be a major strain on household finances – it can take between 15 percent and 26 percent of their household income (Figure 11).
- As tuition has increased, so has student debt and the number of Washingtonians applying for the State Need Grant (SNG), which provides tuition assistance based on income level. From 2008 to 2013, average student debt rose from \$19,780 to \$24,418, and the share of students applying for the SNG and not receiving it jumped to 30 percent from 7 percent.

**TABLE 5:**

**HIGHER EDUCATION: KEY INDICATORS OF PROGRESS<sup>[16]</sup>**

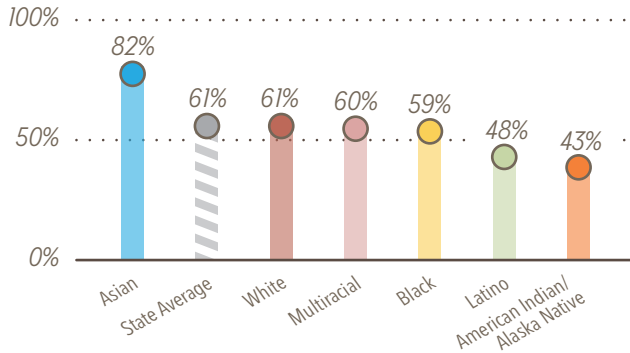
**ARE WE MAKING PROGRESS?**

Indicator	Year	2000	2008	2013/2014	Progress Status
Percent of students immediately enrolling in college after graduating from high school	*		63% (2007-08)	60% (2010-11)	Yellow (Stagnant)
Share of revenue for public higher education that comes from student tuition	CTCs	17% (2000)	25% (2008)	35% (2014)	Red (Declining)
	4-Year	37% (2000)	38% (2008)	62% (2014)	Red (Declining)
Average student debt to attend higher education		\$17,415 (2000)	\$19,780 (2008)	\$24,418 (2013)	Red (Increasing)
Share of students applying for State Need Grant who did not receive it		5% (2000)	7% (2008)	30% (2014)	Red (Increasing)

\*Data not available or not comparable to subsequent years

**FIGURE 10:  
MANY STUDENTS OF COLOR ENROLL IN COLLEGE  
FOLLOWING HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION**

Percent of high school graduates who immediately enroll in college, WA, 2011-2012

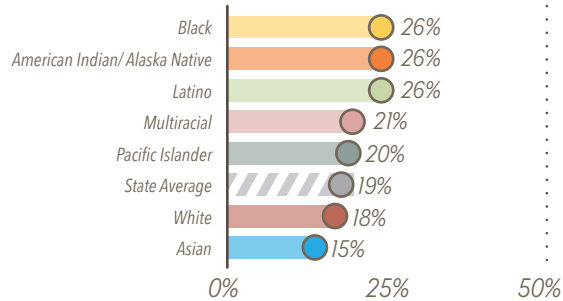


Source: Education Research & Data Center

Note about data: Disaggregated data is presented to provide a preliminary understanding of disparities by race and ethnicity. On its own, this data tells a limited story about the population it represents. We encourage users of this data to engage with communities of color to develop a more accurate and meaningful understanding than the data allow.

**FIGURE 11:  
THE COST OF HIGHER EDUCATION IS ESPECIALLY  
SIGNIFICANT FOR MOST PEOPLE OF COLOR**

Public 4-year, in-state tuition and fees as a share of median household income by race and ethnicity, WA, 2013-2014



Source: Budget & Policy Center analysis of 2008-2012 American Community Survey Integrated Public-Use Microdata Series ([www.ipums.org](http://www.ipums.org)) and the College Board's "Trends in College Pricing 2014." Data downloaded January 7, 2015, at <http://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing>.

Note about data: Disaggregated data is presented to provide a preliminary understanding of disparities by race and ethnicity. On its own, this data tells a limited story about the population it represents. We encourage users of this data to engage with communities of color to develop a more accurate and meaningful understanding than the data allow.

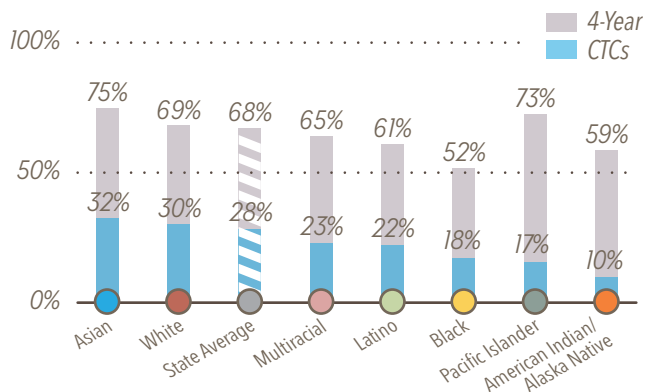
## IS OUR HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM MEETING EMPLOYER DEMAND?

Washington state needs educated workers in high-demand fields to keep our region globally competitive. In addition, attending college and acquiring a credential or degree can mean higher earnings throughout life, as well as a greater likelihood of permanent economic security. In Washington state (Table 6):

- The share of 25- to 34-year-olds with an associate degree or higher has increased from 40 percent to 43 percent over the last five years. While people of color enroll in postsecondary education at similar rates as their peers, they are less likely to complete their degrees. This leaves a large (and growing) segment of the state population unqualified for certain high-demand, well-paying jobs (Figure 12)
- There are currently not enough graduates with the degrees and skills employers are looking for to fill the competitive jobs that will drive a 21st century economy. Currently, there is an 11 percent undersupply of graduates for jobs that require associate degrees, and a 31 percent undersupply for those that require bachelor's degrees (Figure 13).

**FIGURE 12:  
COLLEGE COMPLETION RATES ARE LOWER FOR  
MANY STUDENTS OF COLOR**

Cohort graduation rates at public universities and community and technical colleges (CTCs), WA, 2010-2011

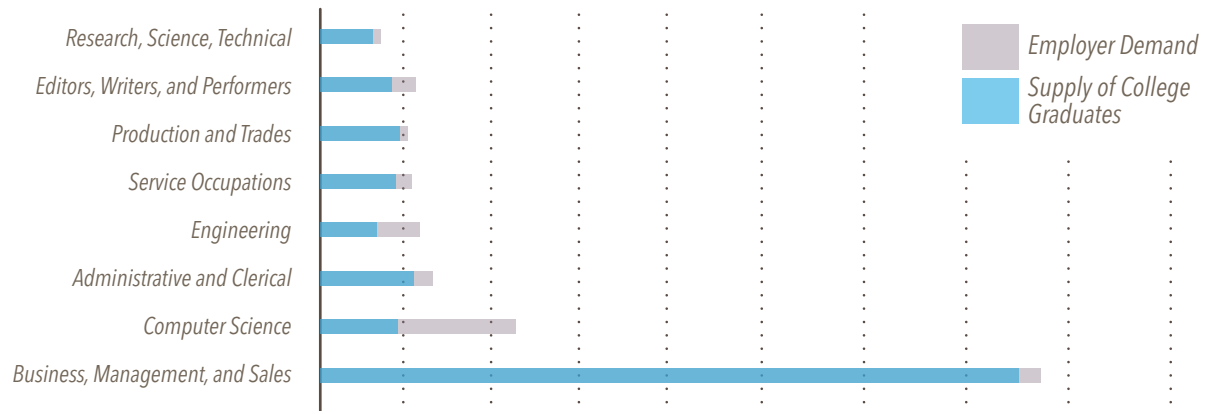


Source: Washington Student Achievement Council. Four-year data is based on six-year graduation/completion rates for a cohort that started in 2005. CTC data based on two-year completion rates for cohort that started in 2008.

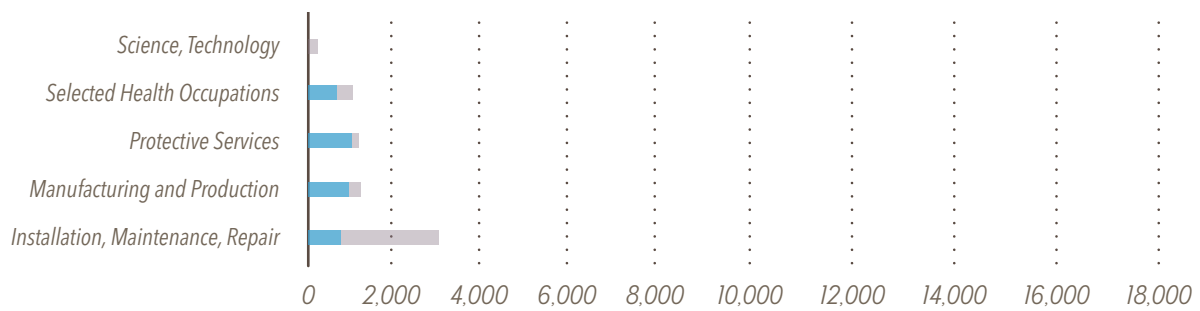
Note about data: Disaggregated data is presented to provide a preliminary understanding of disparities by race and ethnicity. On its own, this data tells a limited story about the population it represents. We encourage users of this data to engage with communities of color to develop a more accurate and meaningful understanding than the data allow.

**FIGURE 13:**  
**THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF CURRENT GRADUATES TO MEET EMPLOYER DEMAND IN MANY COMPETITIVE FIELDS**  
 Current supply of college graduates compared to employer demand, by occupation and degree type, WA, 2012

SUPPLY AND DEMAND IN FIELDS REQUIRING A BACHELOR'S DEGREE



SUPPLY AND DEMAND IN FIELDS REQUIRING AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE/CERTIFICATE



Source: Washington Student Achievement Council, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. "A Skilled and Educated Workforce 2013 Update."  
 Note: Competitive field refers to occupations that require more advanced training than is typically required for entry-level positions.

**TABLE 6:**

MEETING EMPLOYER DEMAND: KEY INDICATORS OF PROGRESS<sup>(17)</sup>

ARE WE MAKING PROGRESS?

Share of 25- to 34-year-olds with an Associate of Arts (AA) degree or higher		38% (2000)	40% (2008)	43% (2013)		
Undersupply of graduates to fill future competitive-level jobs:	Mid-level (AA degree/certificate + experience)	*	*	11% (2012)		Trend data not available
	Bachelor's degree or higher	*	*	31% (2012)		Trend data not available

\*Data not available or not comparable to subsequent years



## *HOW WASHINGTON CAN MAKE PROGRESS ON EDUCATION*

- Invest in affordable, high-quality early learning to support children's social, cognitive, and academic development and prepare them for success in school and beyond.
- Provide a high-quality basic education to all students by adequately funding Washington state's K-12 system under the McCleary ruling – including enough money to give teachers a raise so schools can retain and attract the most-talented educators.
- Increase state funding for Washington state's colleges and universities so all Washingtonians can afford to attend college without taking on an unmanageable amount of debt.
- Expand opportunities for all students to get a higher education by expanding successful programs like the State Need Grant and the College Bound Scholarship program, and develop strategies to attract and retain students of color for high-demand fields.
- Work with employers to identify sector-based strategies to fill jobs in competitive fields.