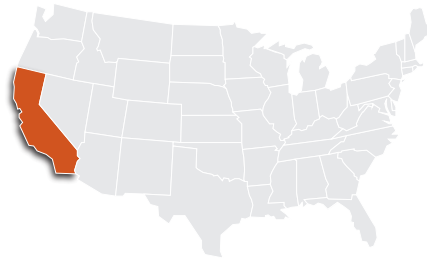


# The State of Higher Education in California

## AVERAGE WON'T DO



### *How is California Performing on Key College Measures?*

California's future is directly linked to our ability to educate our residents and sustain a competitive workforce. Our community colleges and universities have provided the opportunity for millions of Californians to succeed, but our future is at risk. Industries in which California is considered a leader—technology, healthcare, agriculture, biotechnology, aerospace, and entertainment—are dependent upon an educated workforce yet, according to estimates in other studies, we are on track to be 2.3 million college degrees and certificates short of meeting the workforce demands of our economy by 2025.<sup>1</sup>

An economically and socially vibrant California requires dramatic gains in the preparation of students for college, access to an affordable college education, college-going rates, and college completion. When compared to the rest of the nation, on most of these measures California performs no better than average. Even more troubling, serious gaps across regions of the state and among racial/ethnic groups exist. This is simply unacceptable. California has never aspired to be just average. California can excel in higher education once again if, and only if, we have a plan for turning things around.

This brief, prepared by the Campaign for College Opportunity, highlights some of the key findings of *Average Won't Do: Performance Trends in California Higher Education as a Foundation for Action* by the Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy, as well as findings from other sources where noted.

Category	California's Current Performance	10-Year Trend
<b>Preparation</b> <i>How prepared are students for college-level work?</i>	worse than most states	↑
<b>Affordability</b> <i>How easily can families pay for college?</i>	average	↓
<b>Participation</b> <i>How many students are going to college?</i>	better than most states	↔
<b>Completion</b> <i>How many students earn a certificate or degree?</i>	average	↔
<b>Benefits</b> <i>What are the benefits of a college degree to students and the state?</i>	better than most states	↔
<b>Finance</b> <i>How well financed are our colleges and universities?</i>	average	↔

Source: Moore, Colleen, Connie Tan, and Nancy Shulock. (2014). *Average Won't Do: Performance Trends in California Higher Education as a Foundation for Action*. Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy—California State University, Sacramento, CA

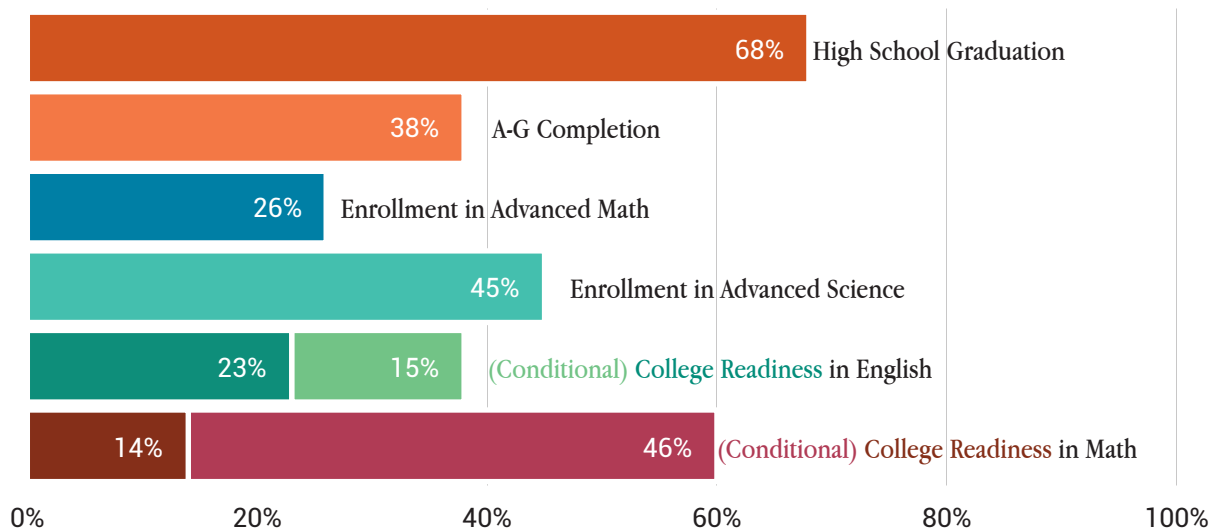
<sup>1</sup> California Competes. (2012). *The Road Ahead: Higher education, California's promise, and our future economy*. San Francisco, CA. Retrieved from [http://californiacompetes.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/CaCompetes\\_Report\\_Final-2.pdf](http://californiacompetes.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/CaCompetes_Report_Final-2.pdf).

# PREPARATION

*California performs worse than most states*

- California's high school graduation rate is 68%, ranking 37th among the states.
- More than 60% of high school graduates do not complete the A-G course sequence, rendering them ineligible for the state's four-year public universities.
- On each proficiency measure of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) standardized test, three-fourths of 8th graders scored below proficiency.
- One-third of 9th graders fail to complete high school within four years.

## College Readiness of High School Students



Notes: High school graduation rates are for the 2008-09 academic year.

A-G completion is a share of 2012 high school graduates.

Enrollment in advanced math is a share of 11th-12th grade enrollment in the 2011-12 academic year.

Enrollment in advanced science is a share of 11th-12th grade enrollment in the 2011-12 academic year.

*The first percentage (darker color) in the (conditional) college readiness measures indicates that a student is college-ready; the second percentage (lighter color) indicates that a student is conditionally ready (see below for further information).*

College and conditional college readiness in English is a share of 11th graders taking the Early Assessment Program exam in 2013.

College and conditional college readiness in math is a share of 11th graders taking the Early Assessment Program exam in 2013.

*Measures are drawn from different years due to availability of data.*

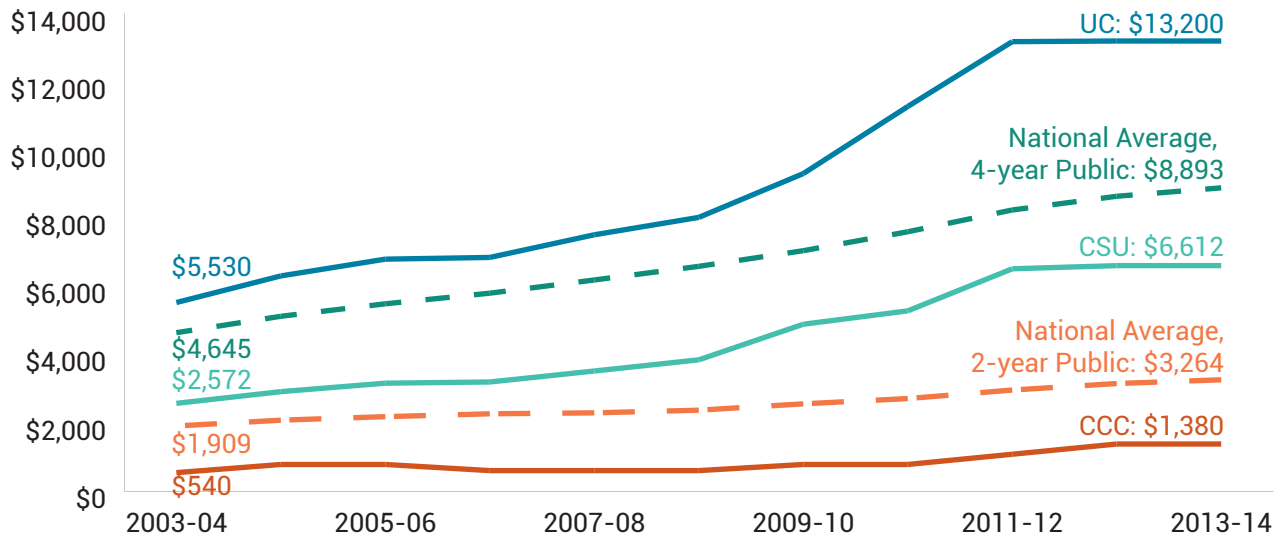
The Early Assessment Program (EAP) is a program of the California State University (CSU) system in which high school juniors have the option of completing some additional items on California Standardized Tests (CST) to determine their college readiness. Students who are determined to be college ready according to the EAP exam are allowed to enroll in college-level coursework without further assessment tests upon enrollment in the CSU. Students who are determined to be "conditionally" ready will not be required to take further assessment tests at the CSU as long as they take specified courses in their senior year or earn a specific score in the relevant subject on a national standardized test (SAC, ACT, or AP).

# AFFORDABILITY

California's performance is average

- California has one of the lowest average student loan amounts in the nation at \$20,269, but it is increasing.<sup>1</sup>
- California ranks 14th in grant aid to low-income students.
- Tuition/fees at the University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), and California Community Colleges have increased substantially over the past decade.
- In the last decade, UC tuition has risen at a rate of 139% and CSU tuition at a rate of 157%, in comparison to the national rate of 91%.
- California Community Colleges fees are still only 42% of the national average for two-year public colleges. But, the cost of living in California is much higher compared to other states, resulting in a higher-than-average cost to community college students, and requiring a larger share of family income to pay for college, that is not subsidized by state grants.

## Average Annual Tuition/Fees for Resident Undergraduate Students



Notes: The National Average, 4-year Public values include both broad-access institutions like the CSU and research institutions like the UC.

UC rates include systemwide tuition and the average campus-based fees.

CSU rates include systemwide tuition for more than 6 units and the average campus-based fees.

CCC rates represent the total fee for a full-time load of 30 units.

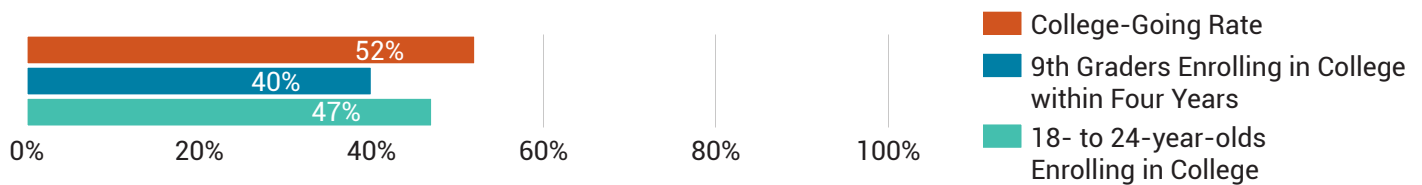
<sup>1</sup> The Institute for College Access and Success. College InSight <http://college-insight.org/#spotlight/go&h=41376019f164f7231465f657085b519a>.

# PARTICIPATION

*California performs better than most states*

- California has high levels of participation among traditional-age college students compared to other states.
- California ranks 5th in the share of older students who enroll in postsecondary education and 25th in the percentage of 9th graders who enroll in college within four years.
- Significant budget cuts caused huge declines in the number of college students—2009 saw the lowest rates of college going in 25 years.
- Large gaps in the rates of students going to college exist between racial/ethnic groups and regions, with gaps as high as 28 percentage points.

## College Participation, 2012

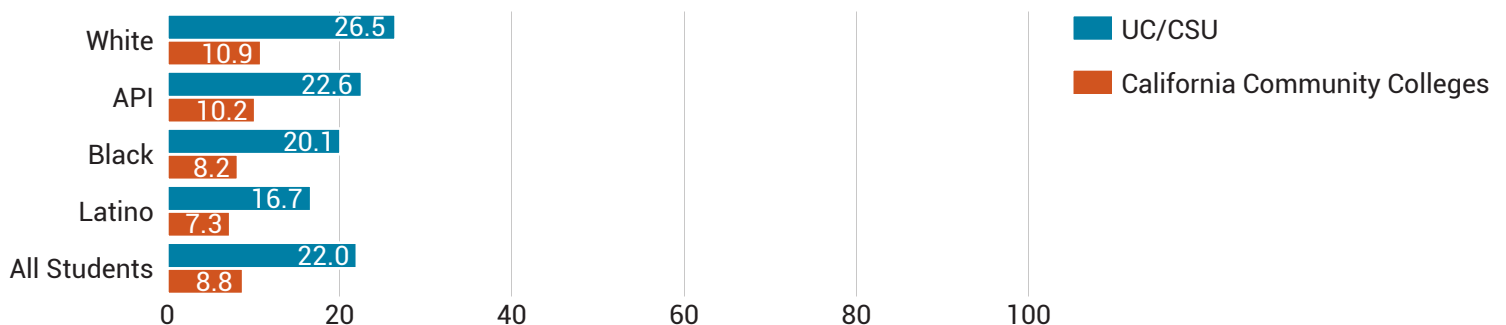


# COMPLETION

*California's performance is average*

- California ranks first in the share of freshmen who return as sophomores and has higher-than-average graduation rates for full-time, first-time students in two- and four-year colleges.
- However, California ranks among the lowest of the states in the number of credentials and degrees produced per 100 undergraduates at public two-year colleges.
- Within completion rates at the UC, CSU, and CCC are substantial differences among California regions, ranging from a high of 26 degrees per 100 undergraduates at UC/CSU in the Upper Sacramento Valley, to a low of 16.3 in the Inyo-Mono region.

## Certificates and Degrees Awarded per 100 Undergraduates

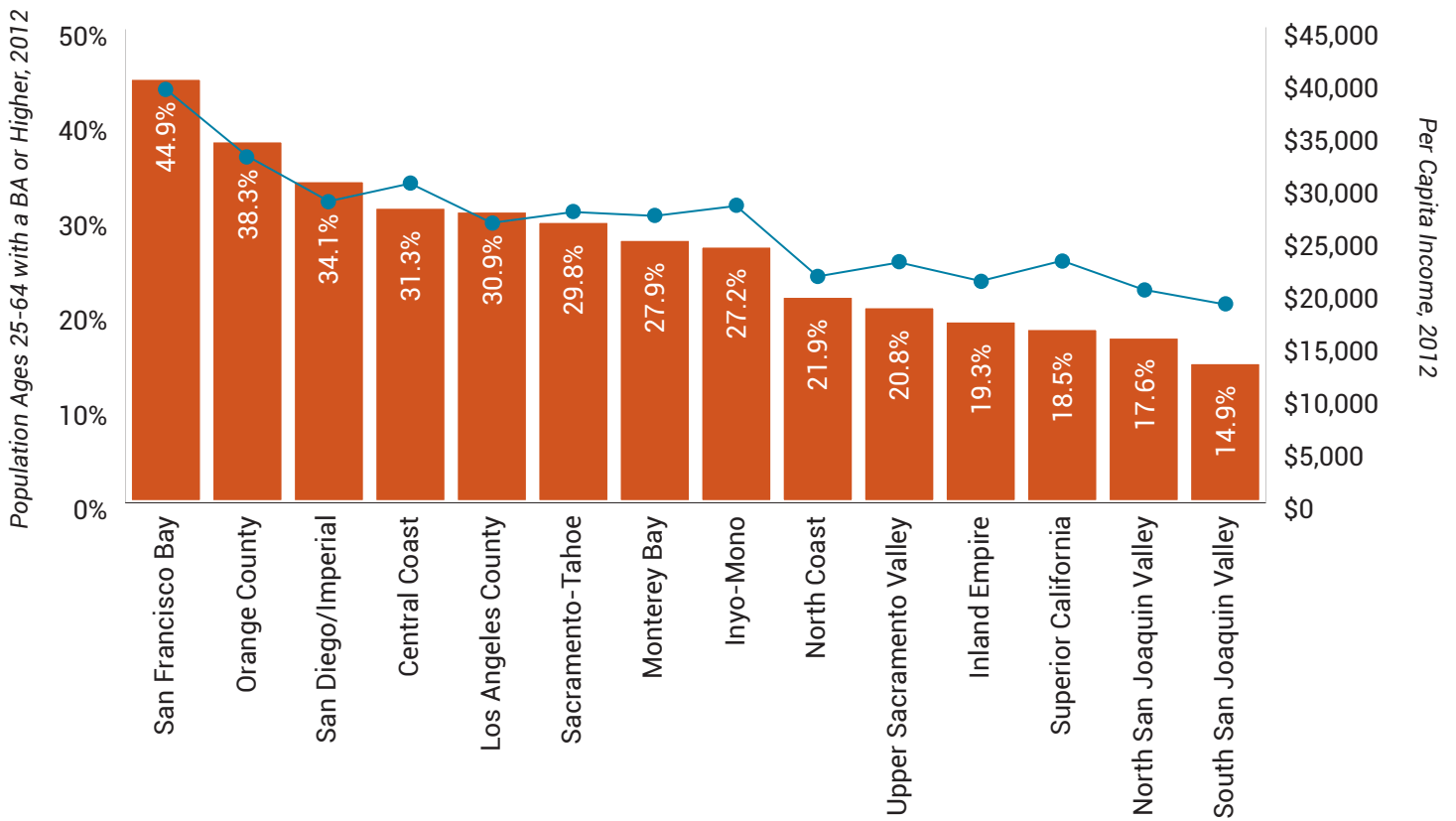


# BENEFITS

*California performs better than most states*

- In California, more than any other state, there is a huge personal economic benefit to getting a higher education degree.
- Older Californians (between age 35 and 64) are better educated than in other states, while younger Californians (between age 25 and 34) have average levels of educational attainment.
- As educational attainment drops, so does regional per capita income.

## Educational Attainment and Per Capita Income by Region

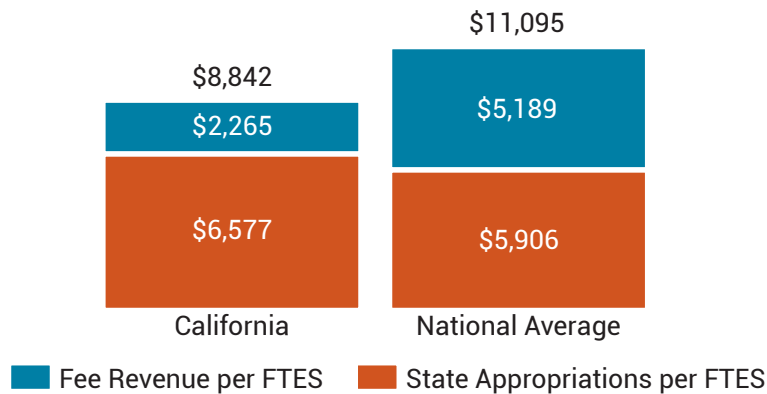


# FINANCE

California's performance is average

- California is about average when it comes to how much is appropriated for students at the statewide level. However, because tuition is so low in the community colleges, total revenue per student is among the lowest in the country.

## Funding for Higher Education, 2012



# CONCLUSION

Californians with higher education credentials experience higher than average earnings, reinforcing the enormous personal benefit of getting a college education. But California as a state, and all of us as its residents, benefit too. In fact, for every dollar invested in higher education, the state recoups \$4.50 through increased tax revenues and decreased social service costs.<sup>1</sup>

California used to be the epitome of quality, affordable, and effective higher education. Now, we have become mediocre. California's students are less prepared for higher education than those in most states. And too few actually walk across a college graduation stage. It's not surprising, therefore, that California is producing a generation less educated than previous ones.

Our policymakers and college leaders have more work to do to change these trends. Our charge to our state leaders is to create an actionable statewide higher education plan, and we are starting the process of developing one. *Average Won't Do* will be followed by a model public agenda, describing California's challenges and suggesting broad strategies for addressing them. When the Governor and Legislature act on such a plan, students will be more successful and we will all benefit. The time for action is now.

<sup>1</sup> Stiles, Jon, Michael Hout, and Henry Brady. (2012). *California's Economic Payoff: Investing in College Access & Completion*. Berkeley, CA. Retrieved from [http://www.collegecampaign.org/index.php/download\\_file/view/641/91/](http://www.collegecampaign.org/index.php/download_file/view/641/91/).

The Campaign for  
**College  
Opportunity**

*The report, Average Won't Do: Performance Trends in California Higher Education as a Foundation for Action, by the Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy (IHELP) at California State University, Sacramento was commissioned by the Campaign for College Opportunity. It examines California's performance in six higher education categories: preparation, participation, affordability, completion, benefits, and finance. This brief, prepared by the Campaign for College Opportunity, highlights some of the report's key findings as well as findings from other sources; the full IHELP report can be found on our website at [www.collegecampaign.org](http://www.collegecampaign.org).*

*The Campaign for College Opportunity is a California non-profit organization focused on a single mission: to ensure that the next generation of California students has the chance to attend college and succeed in order to keep our workforce and economy strong.*