BENDING THE TRENDS: ADDRESSING ENROLLMENT CHALLENGES

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)

Legislative Advisory Committee Meeting

2022

9/27/2022
Immediate college enrollment following high school graduation, by percentile of district poverty and FAFSA completion status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Highest Poverty Quintile</th>
<th>Second Quintile</th>
<th>Third Quintile</th>
<th>Fourth Quintile</th>
<th>Lowest Poverty Quintile</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAFSA</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>94.5%</td>
<td>97.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No FAFSA</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
<td>51.1%</td>
<td>83.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHY FAFSA COMPLETION MATTERS SO MUCH
WHY FAFSA COMPLETION MATTERS SO MUCH
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School Class</th>
<th>National FAFSA Completion Rate</th>
<th>Year-Over-Year FAFSA % Change</th>
<th>National First Fall Enrollment Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
<td>+1.9%</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
<td>-0.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>-3.7%</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
<td>-4.8%</td>
<td>???</td>
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</table>

FAFSA COMPLETION IS THE CANARY IN THE COAL MINE
Year-Over-Year Percent Change in FAFSA Completions, Class of 2022 High School Seniors, Through July 1, 2022

Year-Over-Year % Change in FAFSA Completions


4.6%
On average, **Western states** are below average by percentage of seniors completing, but many Western states saw **above-average year-over-year changes** in their number of completions for the class of 2022.
Looking at the charts below, it’s clear that for the class of 2022 many Western states saw strong year-over-year gains (on the left), but are still largely concentrated on the bottom by percent of seniors completing (on the right). For larger, more readable rankings, visit FormYourFuture.org

### Year-over-year percent change in FAFSA completions through 9/9/22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>17.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>5.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mississippi</td>
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<td>4.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>North Dakota</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>South Dakota</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>-3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### % of seniors completing a FAFSA through 9/9/22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>% of Seniors Completing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>68.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Idaho</td>
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<td>Hawaii</td>
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<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

[FormYourFuture.org](https://FormYourFuture.org)
For the high school class of 2022, Western states saw the second-largest year-over-year gains by U.S. Census region.
Despite those year-over-year (relative) gains, it’s clear that **Western states** have a lot of room to grow in terms of absolute FAFSA completion performance.
Unfortunately, this lagging FAFSA completion performance is consistent with a five-year trend.

<table>
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<th>State</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
<th>2021-22</th>
<th>2022-23</th>
<th>Average</th>
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<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>48</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Class of 2020 enrollment outcomes were grim, and inequitably distributed.

The high school class of 2020’s immediate fall postsecondary enrollment fell nearly 7%, but declines were inequitable. High schools with more students of color and students from low-income backgrounds saw larger decreases.

Percent Change in Immediate Fall Enrollments by High School Characteristics, Classes of 2019 and 2020

Overall
-6.8% Fall 2019  -11.4% Fall 2020
-6.1%

High Poverty
-1.5%  -1.6%

Low Poverty
-1.4%  -2.9%

Low Income
-0.8%  -10.7%

Higher Income
-1.9%  -4.6%

High Minority
-0.9%  -9.4%

Low Minority
-2.0%  -4.8%

Urban
-1.8%  -7.5%

Rural
-1.6%  -7.5%

Suburban
-1.3%  -6.1%
Undergraduate enrollment declines were particularly steep at community colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Public 4yr</th>
<th>Private nonprofit 4yr</th>
<th>Private for-profit 4yr</th>
<th>Public 2yr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public 4yr</td>
<td>-3.5%</td>
<td>-0.5%</td>
<td>-1.6%</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public 2yr</td>
<td>-14.4%</td>
<td>-6.1%</td>
<td>-9.4%</td>
<td>-18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private nonprofit 4yr</td>
<td>-2.8%</td>
<td>-2.3%</td>
<td>-2.4%</td>
<td>-3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private for-profit 4yr</td>
<td>-2.6%</td>
<td>-2.2%</td>
<td>-2.6%</td>
<td>-9.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [https://ncan.org/](https://ncan.org/)
In the fall 2021 semester, Western states were indistinguishable from their peers by year-over-year change.
NCAN’s State Policy Levers for Postsecondary Pathways Project

• Provision student-level FAFSA completion data to local education agencies
• Use statewide National Student Clearinghouse contracts to provision postsecondary outcomes data
• Implement universal FAFSA policies that increase FAFSA completion
• Designate a state-level agency, initiative, or campaign with responsibility for college and career readiness programming
• Shift state financial aid programs toward need-based, rather than merit-based, awards
• Increase the share of states’ budgets invested in higher education
• Allow DREAMers to access in-state state tuition and/or state grant aid programs
• Expand dual enrollment policies to increase high school students’ early access to college coursework
BENDING THE TRENDS: ADDRESSING ENROLLMENT CHALLENGES

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)

Legislative Advisory Committee Meeting 2022

9/27/2022
HI! I’M GLAD TO BE HERE

Bill DeBaun
Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives
National College Attainment Network
debaunb@ncan.org
NCAN WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO

NCAN pursues its mission by building network capacity, advocating for policy solutions, and supporting systems change.

**Build network capacity**

Bolster the skills and competencies of college access and success leaders and practitioners through professional development, news from the field, data, and tools.

**Advocate for policy solutions**

Advocate for equitable college completion rates by amplifying a range of policy solutions, mobilizing members, and leveraging student voice.

**Support systems change**

Help school districts, higher education institutions, and other community stakeholders to adopt effective strategies for students.
FAFSA COMPLETION AS THE CANARY IN THE COAL MINE FOR POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT
Year-Over-Year Percent Change in FAFSA Completions, Class of 2022 High School Seniors, Through July 1, 2022
% Change in FAFSA Completion Year-Over-Year by Selected Characteristics

**By School Income Level**
- Low Income: 9.1%
- Higher Income: 2.2%

**By Concentration of Students of Color**
- High Minority: 9.0%
- Low Minority: 1.5%

**By Geographic Locale**
- City: 6.9%
- Suburb: 3.4%
- Town: 3.6%
- Rural: 3.9%
## AVERAGE SENIOR CLASS FAFSA COMPLETION % BY U.S. CENSUS REGION, DIVISION, THROUGH 9/9/22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Region</th>
<th>Avg % Completion</th>
<th>Census Division</th>
<th>Avg % Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
<td>East North Central</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>West North Central</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>58.0%</td>
<td>Middle Atlantic</td>
<td>60.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New England</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>60.8%</td>
<td>East South Central</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>South Atlantic</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
<td>Mountain</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On average, Western states are below average by percentage of seniors completing, but many Western states saw above-average year-over-year changes in their number of completions for the class of 2022.
Looking at the charts below, it’s clear that for the class of 2022 many Western states saw strong year-over-year gains (on the left), but are still largely concentrated on the bottom by percent of seniors completing (on the right). For larger, more readable rankings, visit FormYourFuture.org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year-Over-Year Percent Change in FAFSA Completions Through 9/9/22</th>
<th>% of seniors completing a FAFSA through 9/9/22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the high school class of 2022, **Western states** saw the second-largest year-over-year gains by U.S. Census region.
Western states saw a substantial bounce back for FAFSA completions among low-income high schools (>50% FRPL) for the high school class of 2022, on par with national gains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Higher Income</th>
<th>Low Income</th>
<th>22-23: Pct_Chg_Agg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>-0.3%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consistent with overall and high school income-level gains year-over-year, **Western states** saw the second largest increase in FAFSA completions by high school locales in the class of 2022.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Midwest</th>
<th>Northeast</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Midwest</th>
<th>Northeast</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.5%</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suburb</th>
<th>Midwest</th>
<th>Northeast</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Midwest</th>
<th>Northeast</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-1.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Despite those year-over-year (relative) gains, it’s clear that **Western states** have a lot of room to grow in terms of absolute FAFSA completion performance.
Unfortunately, this lagging FAFSA completion performance is consistent with a five-year trend.

### State Ranks by % of Seniors Completing a FAFSA On or About June 30, 2018-19 to 2022-23 Cycles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
<th>2021-22</th>
<th>2022-23</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MOVING ON TO THE ACTUAL GOAL: POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT
Undergraduate enrollments declined considerably in fall 2020 and 2021, especially for male students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Fall 2020</th>
<th>Fall 2021</th>
<th>Fall 2019 - Fall 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>-7.1%</td>
<td>-3.4%</td>
<td>-10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>-2.8%</td>
<td>-4.1%</td>
<td>-6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>-4.6%</td>
<td>-3.6%</td>
<td>-7.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [https://nscresearchcenter.org/stay-informed/](https://nscresearchcenter.org/stay-informed/)
Undergraduate enrollment declines were particularly steep at community colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Public 4yr</th>
<th>Private nonprofit 4yr</th>
<th>Private for-profit 4yr</th>
<th>Public 2yr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public 4yr</td>
<td>-3.5%</td>
<td>-0.5%</td>
<td>-1.6%</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>-1.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private nonprofit 4yr</td>
<td>-2.8%</td>
<td>-2.3%</td>
<td>-2.4%</td>
<td>-3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>-2.3%</td>
<td>-1.1%</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
<td>-3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>-2.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
<td>-3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private for-profit 4yr</td>
<td>-2.6%</td>
<td>-2.2%</td>
<td>-2.6%</td>
<td>-9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>-2.2%</td>
<td>-8.8%</td>
<td>-8.5%</td>
<td>-10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>-2.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td>-8.5%</td>
<td>-10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public 2yr</td>
<td>-14.4%</td>
<td>-0.1%</td>
<td>-9.4%</td>
<td>-18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>-0.1%</td>
<td>-7.4%</td>
<td>-6.0%</td>
<td>-13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>-9.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td>-6.0%</td>
<td>-14.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [https://nscresearchcenter.org/stay-informed/](https://nscresearchcenter.org/stay-informed/)
In line with those community college declines, we observe much steeper drops in associate’s degrees and undergraduate certificates.

**Figure 2. Enrollment Changes by Credential Type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credential Type</th>
<th>Fall 2020</th>
<th>Fall 2021</th>
<th>Fall 2019 - Fall 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Certificate</td>
<td>-8.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>-8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>-8.6%</td>
<td>-1.9%</td>
<td>-15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's</td>
<td>-1.3%</td>
<td>-3.2%</td>
<td>-4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Certificate</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Professional</td>
<td>-1.8%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [https://nscresearchcenter.org/stay-informed/](https://nscresearchcenter.org/stay-informed/)
Unfortunately enrollment declines persisted into spring 2022.

Source: Spring 2022, Current Term Enrollment Estimates, May 26, 2022 [https://nscresearchcenter.org/current-term-enrollment-estimates/]
In the fall 2021 semester, Western states were indistinguishable from their peers by year-over-year change.
WHAT IS IN THE REALM OF THE POSSIBLE FOR STATE POLICY AND PRACTICE TO SHIFT THESE TRENDS?
NCAN’s State Policy Levers for Postsecondary Pathways Project

- Provision student-level FAFSA completion data to local education agencies
- Use statewide National Student Clearinghouse contracts to provision postsecondary outcomes data
- Implement universal FAFSA policies that increase FAFSA completion
- Designate a state-level agency, initiative, or campaign with responsibility for college and career readiness programming
- Shift state financial aid programs toward need-based, rather than merit-based, awards
- Increase the share of states’ budgets invested in higher education
- Allow DREAMers to access in-state state tuition and/or state grant aid programs
- Expand dual enrollment policies to increase high school students’ early access to college coursework
There has been considerable attention on “Universal FAFSA” policies

NCAN Recommends that States:
• Require FAFSA completion for high school graduation through legislative or other policy vehicles.
• Include a robust opt-out system for students who are unable to access parental financial information, have undocumented parents, or whose parents allow them to abstain.
• Provide (at minimum) one full FAFSA cycle from the bill passing, or the item being administratively added to a list of requirements before the actual requirement takes effect.
• Make the change administratively, if high school graduation requirements do not live in statute.
• If not already in place, build and provide robust training and support through school counselors and/or college access advisers to ensure students are helped through the process.
• Provide regular data-sharing on completion to high schools and community-based organizations to allow for better-targeted FAFSA completion efforts.
Year-Over-Year % Change of FAFSA Completion in States Implementing Universal FAFSA vs Nationally, During First Implementation Year

% Change of Seniors Completing, on or About 6/30, Compared to Prior Year

- Alabama, 24.9%
- Illinois, 3.1%
- Louisana, 25.9%
- Texas, 25.9%

2018: 1.9%
2021: -4.8%
2022: 4.6%
REACH OUT ANY TIME!

Bill DeBaun
Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives
National College Attainment Network
debaunb@ncan.org