

For the U.S. to regain the top ranking in the world for college degree attainment, Latinos will need to earn 6.2 million degrees by 2030.¹

EAST FACTS

STATE RANKING:

Colorado had the **8th largest Latino population** in the U.S.

K-12 POPULATION:

In Colorado, **32%** of the K-12 population was **Latino**.²

POPULATION:

In Colorado, **22%** of the population was **Latino**.³

MEDIAN AGE:

The median age of **Hispanics** in Colorado was **29**, compared to **41** for White non-Hispanics.⁴



ENROLLMENT:

In Colorado, **17%** of Hispanics (ages 18 to 34) were enrolled in higher education, compared to **24%** of White non-Hispanics.⁵

DEGREE ATTAINMENT:

In Colorado, **24%** of Hispanic adults (25 and older) had earned an associate degree or higher, compared to **57%** of White non-Hispanic adults.⁶

Hispanic Adults = 2.4 of 10



White Adults = 5.7 of 10

To reach the degree attainment goal by 2030, the U.S. can: 1) close the equity gap in college completion; 2) increase the number of degrees conferred; and, 3) scale up programs and initiatives that work for Latino and other students. The following is a framework for tracking Latino degree attainment in the U.S.

ENROLLING: Top 5 Institutions (Hispanic Undergraduates) in Colorado, Fall 2018

	Institution	Sector	Grand Total	Hispanic Total	% Hispanic
1	Metropolitan State University of Denver	Public, 4-year	19,437	5,599	29%
2	University of Colorado Denver/Anschutz Medical Campus	Public, 4-year	16,443	4,198	26%
3	Front Range Community College	Public, 2-year	18,880	3,932	21%
4	University of Colorado Boulder	Public, 4-year	30,159	3,677	12%
5	Colorado State University-Fort Collins	Public, 4-year	25,962	3,616	14%

ASSOCIATE DEGREES: Top 5 Institutions Awarding to Hispanics in Colorado, 2017-18

	Institution	Sector	Grand Total	Hispanic Total	% Hispanic
1	Front Range Community College	Public, 2-year	1,880	240	13%
2	Pikes Peak Community College	Public, 4-year	1,802	235	13%
3	Aims Community College	Public, 2-year	560	197	35%
4	Community College of Denver	Public, 4-year	765	187	24%
5	Pueblo Community College	Public, 4-year	684	186	27%

BACHELOR DEGREES: Top 5 Institutions Awarding to Hispanics in Colorado, 2017-18

	Institution	Sector	Grand Total	Hispanic Total	% Hispanic
1	Metropolitan State University of Denver	Public, 4-year	3,081	660	21%
2	University of Colorado Boulder	Public, 4-year	5,674	579	10%
3	Colorado State University-Fort Collins	Public, 4-year	4,982	543	11%
4	University of Colorado Denver/Anschutz Medical Campus	Public, 4-year	2,392	360	15%
5	University of Northern Colorado	Public, 4-year	1,929	301	16%

NOTE: We use the terms Latino and Hispanic interchangeably in this factsheet.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis using U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), 2018 Fall Enrollment, Graduation Rates Survey and Institutional Characteristics Survey.

Colorado Equity Gap in Degree Completion

Closing the equity gap in college completion can be tracked by the 4 measures shown below. Alone, none of these measures capture the entire “story” of equity in degree completion. However, in combination, they provide a useful picture of the equity gap in degree attainment between Hispanic and White non-Hispanic cohorts in a single year.

Graduation Rate — Total percentage of students who graduated within 150% of normal time for first-time, full-time freshmen. This incorporates students that graduated in 3 years at two-year institutions, or in 6 years at four-year institutions.

Transferred to Another Institution — Percentage of students that transferred to another institution. (Only incorporates students who have transferred out from an institution and did not complete a degree.)

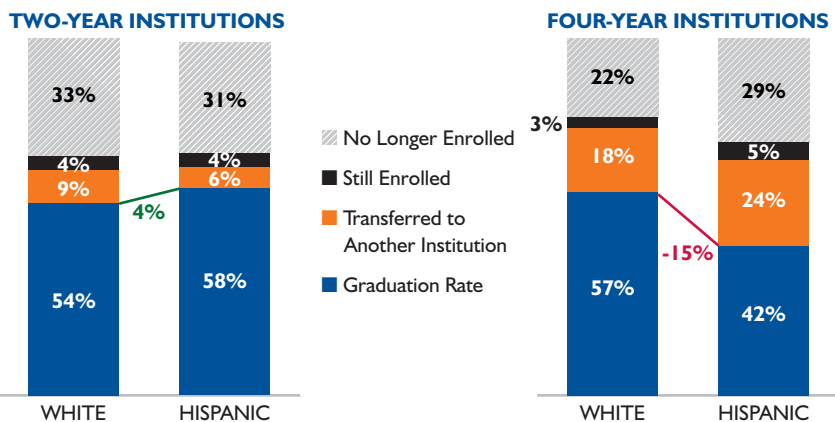
Still Enrolled — Percentage of students that are still enrolled at the point of 150% normal time to completion.

No Longer Enrolled — Percentage of students that are no longer enrolled at the point of 150% normal time to completion.

DEGREE OUTCOMES

At two-year institutions, Hispanics’ graduation rate was **4%-points higher** than that of their White non-Hispanic peers in Colorado.

At four-year institutions, Hispanics’ graduation rate was **15%-points lower** than that of their White non-Hispanic peers in Colorado.



*Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

NOTE: Outcomes shown are for students at two-year institutions who started in Fall 2015, and for students at four-year institutions who started in Fall 2012.

Source: *Excelencia in Education* analysis using the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2018 Graduation Rates Survey and the Institutional Characteristics Survey.

Examples of What Works for Latino Students

There are institutions showing success in enrolling, retaining, and graduating Latino students. The following are examples of programs across the country with evidence of effectiveness in serving Latino students nominated for Examples of *Excelencia*.

The Cal-Bridge Program at the California State Polytechnic University Pomona in California was a 2019 Example of *Excelencia*. Cal-Bridge, founded in 2014, is a partnership between 9 University of California (UC) institutions and 16 California State University (CSU) campuses to address the national shortage of underrepresented minority (URM) PhDs in the fields of physics and astronomy. The primary goal of Cal-Bridge is to increase the annual number of 80 PhDs attained

by URM students nationally by 50%. Cal-Bridge provides: 1) financial support of up to \$10,000 per year based on need, 2) intensive, joint mentoring by CSU and UC faculty, 3) professional development workshops, and, 4) access to a wide variety of summer research opportunities. In the first three years (2014-2017), 95% (19 of 20) Cal-Bridge Scholars enrolled in or will be enrolling in top Physics of Astronomy PhD programs after graduation. Of these, 11 are Latino scholars, including 4 Latinas.

For more information on institutional programs improving Latino student success in higher education, access *Excelencia in Education’s* Growing What Works database at <http://www.edexcelencia.org/growing-what-works>

1 Projections to 2030: *Excelencia in Education*. (2020). Ensuring America’s Future: Benchmarking Latino College Completion to 2030. *Excelencia in Education*. Washington, D.C.

2 K-12 Population: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

3 Population: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

4 Median Age: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

5 Enrollment: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

6 Degree Attainment: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

Nationally, Latino student enrollment and degree completion continues to increase. However, different patterns emerge within each state. For example, Latinos in Colorado graduate at a higher rate than their White peers at Colorado's two-year institutions. However, Colorado lags in Latinos' degree completion and overall degree attainment.

Population overview

Colorado has a large and young Latino population and has the eighth largest Latino population in the U.S. While 22 percent of the overall population is Latino, 32 percent of students in K-12 education are Latino. Furthermore, the median age for Latinos is 29, compared to 41 for White non-Hispanics. As more Latino students enter higher education, policymakers at the state and institutional level should keep in mind that they'll have an increasingly young, Latino, first-generation population.

Where Colorado leads

Significantly more Latinos are enrolling in public institutions in Colorado. Four of the top five institutions enrolling Latino undergraduates are public, four-year institutions, and one is a public, two-year institution. The top five institutions enroll between 3,600 and 5,600 Latino students, much higher than enrollment in other states. Additionally, all top five institutions enrolling Latinos are also among the top five awarding associate degrees and bachelor's degrees to Latinos in Colorado. At two-year institutions, Latinos are graduating at a higher rate than their White peers—58 percent and 54 percent, respectively, one of the few states in the country where this happens.

Where Colorado lags

In Colorado, equity gaps exist in degree attainment overall among adults. Almost a third of Latino students in Colorado who begin higher education do not complete. Statewide, only 24 percent of Latino adults have an associate degree or higher, compared to 57 percent of White non-Hispanic adults. Moreover, at four-year institutions, Latino students have a graduation rate 15 percentage points lower than White students—42 percent and 57 percent, respectively. Closing the degree attainment gap in Colorado will require policies that help the many Latino students entering higher education on their path to completion.

What comes next?

State policies to increase Latino student success should keep in mind the profile of Latino students and adjust to meet their needs. Colorado has a young and growing Latino population that is significantly more likely to enroll in a public, four-year institution. While some public, two- and four-year institutions are contributing to the success of Latinos in Colorado, degree attainment is not reflective of their enrollment. Opportunities exist for two- and four-year institutions in Colorado to help more Latino students attain a postsecondary degree.

Examples of institutional efforts to meet students' needs can be seen within the Seal of *Excelencia*. The Seal is a national certification for institutions intentionally SERVING Latino students through data, practice, and leadership.