



Postsecondary Pathways

Students and their families need information on how high schools are preparing students for postsecondary pathways (i.e., two- and four-year college programs, workforce training) as well as students' outcomes. But in the seven years that the Data Quality Campaign has reviewed report cards from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, we have found that many states are still not providing this information at all—much less in ways that the public can find, use, and understand. States must prioritize collecting and sharing information about all of a student's potential postsecondary readiness opportunities and outcomes in ways that help them make the best decision for their futures.

In our review of 2022 report cards, we found:

Few states shared information on how their high schools are preparing students for postsecondary pathways—including data on whether students from these high schools have access to and participated in advanced coursework, dual enrollment, career and technical education (CTE), workforce credentials, and work-based learning. Information on how schools are preparing students for these pathways is important for students and families to understand and make decisions about students' education and workforce journeys.

- Only **18 states** included information on both participation in and completion of advanced coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses).
 - **31 states** included information on participation in advanced coursework. **Twenty-one of these states** broke down this information by at least some student demographic groups (e.g., gender, race, family income level).
 - **29 states** included information on completion of advanced coursework. **Seventeen of these states** broke down this information by at least some student groups.
- **32 states** reported dual enrollment data.
- Information on CTE, workforce credentials, and work-based learning opportunities was also scarce.
 - **15 states** reported data on participation in CTE and workforce credential programs, with only **10 states** breaking down this information by at least some student groups.
 - **26 states** reported completion data for CTE and workforce credential programs. Even fewer—**17 states**—shared this information broken down by at least some student groups.
 - **10 states** reported data on apprenticeship, internship, and work-based learning programs. **Six states** broke down this information by at least some student groups.
- **23 states** used composite indicators, which combine data for advanced coursework, dual enrollment, CTE, work-based learning opportunities, and often many other indicators (e.g., participation in the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, taking the ACT or SAT, or on-time graduation) into a single statistic. But these states did not provide the data separately so families could review information on individual programs or understand the college and career readiness pathways students took and their outcomes. While composite indicators can provide high-level takeaways, they can also disguise important distinctions in different students' pathways.





States provided limited information on high school graduates' postsecondary enrollment and outcomes.


And few shared employment outcomes data. Information on college and career options and outcomes helps students and their families make decisions about the pathways students will pursue after high school.

- **38 states** reported information on postsecondary enrollment. **Twenty-eight** of these states broke down this information by at least some student groups.
- **13 states** reported additional postsecondary information about the type of programs students enrolled in (i.e., two-year vs. four-year programs), and even fewer—**3 states**—shared this information broken down by at least some student groups.
- **Six states** reported information on students entering the workforce, but only **two states** broke down this information by at least some student groups.
- **Nine states** reported information on students who enlisted in the military, and only **two states** provided this information broken down by at least some student groups.
- **11 states** reported data on long-term postsecondary outcomes, which includes any information beyond postsecondary enrollment (e.g., data on students completing at least one year of coursework, persistence, and degree completion). **Five states** shared this information broken down by at least some student groups.
- **Three states** included the number of students filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), though **no state** shared this information broken down by at least some student groups.

Bright Spots

 **North Dakota's** report card directs families to resources with robust information about postsecondary pathways and outcomes, including information on postsecondary education options, where graduates are in the workforce, job openings over time, and insights into workforce needs statewide. This information is coupled with interactive visualizations about pathways that North Dakota students have taken to different careers based on their fields of study.

 **New Jersey's** report card includes information on a range of postsecondary options, including enrollment in two- and four-year programs, military enlistment, and workforce entry data (e.g., information about students entering an apprenticeship program). The report card also includes information on options during high school, including data on CTE programs, dual enrollment, and advanced coursework.

 **Michigan's** report card includes current graduation rate data as well as data on postsecondary enrollment and long-term postsecondary persistence and completion. The state's report card includes links to other resources where students and their families can find additional information.