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5 facts about Latinos and education PEW Research July 28, 2016

Educational attainment among U.S. Latinos has been changing rapidly in recent years, reflecting the group's **growth** in the nation's **public K-12 schools** and **colleges**. Over the past decade, the Hispanic high school dropout rate has declined and college enrollment has increased, even as Hispanics trail other groups in earning a bachelor's degree.

The issue of education is an important one for Hispanics. Roughly eight-in-ten (83%) cited education as **very important to their vote in the 2016 election**, ranking it alongside the economy, health care and terrorism as a top issue.

Yet, for many Hispanics, economic factors remain an obstacle to college enrollment. In a **2014 National Journal poll**, 66% of Hispanics who got a job or entered the military directly after high school cited the need to help support their family as a reason for *not* enrolling in college, compared with 39% of whites.

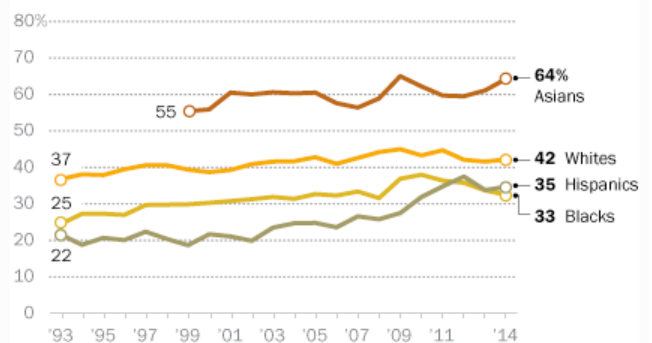
Here are five facts about U.S. Latinos and education:

1Over the past decade, the Hispanic high school dropout rate has dropped dramatically. The **rate reached a new low** in 2014, dropping from 32% in 2000 to 12% in 2014 among those ages 18 to 24. This helped lower the national dropout rate from 12% to 7% over the same time period – also a new low. Even so, the Hispanic dropout rate remains higher than that of blacks (7%), whites (5%) and Asians (1%).

2Hispanics are making big inroads in college enrollment. In 2014, 35% of Hispanics ages 18 to 24 were enrolled in a two- or four-year college, up from 22% in 1993 – a 13-percentage-point increase. That amounted to 2.3 million Hispanic college students in 2014. By comparison, college enrollment during this time among blacks (33% in 2014) increased by 8 percentage points, and among whites (42% in 2014) the share increased 5 points. Among Asians, 64% were enrolled in college in 2014, a nearly 9-point increase over 1999 (no data are available for Asians before 1999).

College enrollment by race and ethnicity

% of 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college



Notes: Blacks and Asians include the Hispanic portions of those groups. Whites include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau October Current Population Survey.

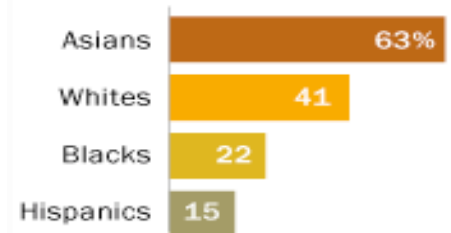
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3Even though more Hispanics are getting a postsecondary education than ever before, **Hispanics still lag other groups in obtaining a four-year degree.** As of 2014, among Hispanics ages 25 to 29, just 15% of Hispanics have a bachelor's degree or higher. By comparison, among the same age group, about 41% of whites have a bachelor's degree or higher (as do 22% of blacks and 63% of Asians). This gap is due in part to the fact that **Hispanics are less likely than some other groups** to enroll in a four-year college, attend an academically selective college and enroll full-time.

4Another reason why Hispanics lag in bachelor's degrees is that **nearly half who go to college attend a public two-year school, or community college, the highest share of any race or ethnicity.** By comparison, among college-goers, 30% of whites, 32% of Asians and 36% of blacks go to a community college.

College completion by race and ethnicity

% ages 25-29 with a bachelor's degree or more, 2014



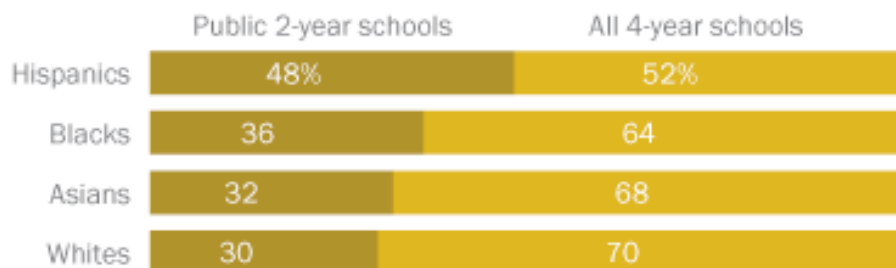
Note: Whites, blacks and Asians include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of the March Current Population Survey (IPUMS).

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Almost half of Hispanic college students attend public two-year schools

Postsecondary enrollment by race/ethnicity and school type, 2014



Notes: Enrollment includes students of all ages. Asians include Pacific Islanders. Whites, blacks and Asians/Pacific Islanders do not include Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race. Enrollment in private 2-year schools not shown.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education

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5Hispanics are significantly less likely than other groups to have student debt. About 22% of young Hispanic households (those headed by someone younger than 40) have student loans. The share is nearly twice as high among young white households (42%) and young black households (40%). This is because, despite growing college enrollment, young Hispanics are not as likely to go to college as some other groups. And among those who do, Hispanics are more likely than others to attend community colleges, which generally have lower tuition than four-year schools.

Note: This post was originally published on May 26, 2015 and has been updated to reflect new data.