

SIXTH EDITION

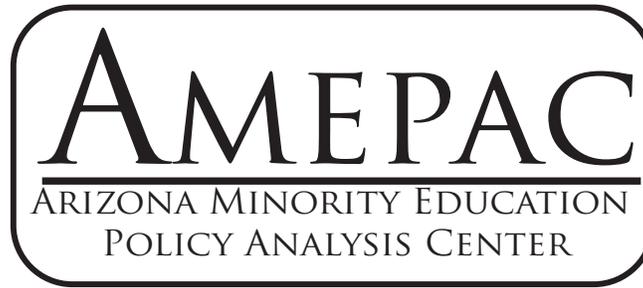
ARIZONA MINORITY STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT 2016

THE TRANSFORMATION
CONTINUES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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The full 2016 report, along with tables and additional data for Arizona's 14 counties are available at highered.az.gov/amepac.



PHOTO BY KARINA PUGA

INTRODUCTION

The Arizona Minority Education Policy Analysis Center (AMEPAC) is a policy center of the Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education. Through studies, AMEPAC’s mission is to stimulate constructive statewide discussion and debate about improving Arizona minority students’ early awareness, access, and achievement throughout the educational attainment process. Our vision is that all Arizona students succeed in higher education as a result of quality research that shapes policy on critical issues.

AMEPAC is proud to provide policymakers, educators, and the public with this 6th edition of the Minority Student Progress Report titled *The Transformation Continues: Minority Student Progress Report 2016*. The report provides a current “snapshot” of the educational achievement of minority students in Arizona, from pre-k through postsecondary education. In addition, trend analyses of key educational indicators are also provided to give readers a sense of how the status of minority education in Arizona has changed over time.

In helping readers understand how best to use the findings described in this report, it is important to clarify that the study does not provide an analysis of why minority educational disparities remain. The focus of the report is to provide comprehensive and accurate baseline and trend data which identify and reveal the type, extent, and significance of educational attainment disparities during the time periods reported. In some cases the data are provided for a single year, but in other cases data are provided for up to a 20 year period. The most current data available were used to provide information for this report; however, these years vary throughout the report due to the most current information available through state and national databases. The data sources are listed at the end of the report and are noted in each of the figures and data tables. We encourage readers to use the report’s findings to stimulate important discussions that lead to policy solutions in a dynamic and ever changing environment. This report will be most useful to leaders who recognize and appreciate the complexity of these issues, and who value the critical role that education plays in improving the lives and well-being of all Arizonans.

REPORT OVERVIEW

This 6th edition of the report is presented in four major sections. Section one provides a summary of key demographic data drawn from the U.S. Census about the state of Arizona. Section two draws upon data from the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to provide summaries of key educational indicators. This section includes trend analyses of student enrollments in Arizona schools by racial/ethnic background. In addition, we present data regarding the number and proportion of students who are English Language Learners (ELL), enrolled in special education, and who receive free or reduced lunch. We also show data summarizing pass rates on Arizona’s Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) tests.

Section three draws upon data from the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR), the College Board, the American College Testing (ACT) service, and the community college districts in the state to provide information regarding the extent to which Arizona students are “college ready.”

The fourth section draws upon data from the United States Department of Education’s Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to summarize 20-year trends in enrollments

and completions for all postsecondary institutions in Arizona. Moreover, these trend data are provided for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students enrolled in postsecondary institutions in Arizona.

READING THE REPORT

As readers review the report, it is important to understand the conventions used throughout its many charts and graphs. In the interest of conserving space, providing clarity, and maintaining consistency, a code has been employed throughout the report for presenting race/ethnicity categories. The report uses the same color for each category (although the same color may be used for unrelated categories) and employs a shorthand legend. At right is a key for understanding the legend and color scheme. It is important to note the importance of language and terminology when discussing matters of race and ethnicity. The terminology used in this report follows the guidelines established by the White House Office of Management and Budget before 1997.

These categories, while implemented within the U.S. Census starting in 2000, were not fully implemented in the Department of Education reporting structure until 2010. For this reason, many educational institutions do not have data for the newest race categories from the 1997 standards: “Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander” or “Multiracial” until after 2010. In an effort to standardize terms throughout this report, which includes data from before 1997 and after 2010 (trend data presented in this report often start as early as 1994 and end as late as 2014), the decision to use pre-1997 categories was made. This means that those individuals who would be classified as “Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander” or “Asian” in the post-1997 categories will be classified as “Asian Pacific Islander” in this report because that is how the data were reported prior to 2010 when many of the OMB’s 1997 guidelines were fully implemented. Data for individuals who are classified as “Multiracial” are only provided post-2009, in most cases, because these data were not collected until that year.

AMEPAC realizes that there are many ways in which individuals may choose to identify their racial or ethnic heritage, and the decision to use these terms is not meant to reflect any ideological or political preference. This report relies completely on data provided from numerous institutions, and as such is limited to the reporting categories they use.

RACE / ETHNICITY CATEGORY CODES

● AI	AMERICAN INDIAN
● AP	ASIAN / PACIFIC ISLANDER
● B	BLACK
● W	WHITE
● H	HISPANIC
● UK	UNKNOWN RACE
● M	MULTIRACIAL
● AZ	ARIZONA
● NR	NON-RESIDENT ALIEN (INTERNATIONAL STUDENT)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PHOTO BY PRISCILA MATEI

INTRODUCTION

In the previous version of this report, we reported that in 2004 students of color had become the majority of students enrolled in Pre-k through 12 schools in Arizona and that Hispanics had surpassed Whites as the largest group of students enrolled. Moreover, trend analyses indicated that the representation of students of color was steadily increasing over time. Our analyses in this edition of report document that these trends have continued in the two years since we released the 2013 edition of the report.

The introduction to the 2013 AMEPAC report cited evidence from the Morrison Institute for Public Policy's 2012 report, "Dropped? Latino Education and Arizona's Economic Future," to establish the critically important connection between education and workforce development. In its report, the Morrison Institute warned that "Arizona is at risk of becoming a second-tier state, educationally and economically" (p. 5). Given the trends documented in our previous report and the findings of our current report, we believe that this admonition has even greater significance today.

This edition of the report details trends in demographics and education in Arizona, which shape the context for the state of Arizona. Selected data from the P-12 and higher education sectors are highlighted to provide information about some of the significant educational challenges and opportunities that face our state. These are not comprehensive analyses of all of the relevant data, but rather are intended to be "snapshots" that provide insight into the key educational and public policy challenges Arizona faces.

ARIZONA DEMOGRAPHICS

Arizona's population is comprised of a larger proportion of Hispanics and American Indians than the nation as a whole. The state is becoming increasingly Hispanic, especially among younger age cohorts, where, as of 2014, Hispanics comprised the largest group of students enrolled in pre-K through 12 classrooms.

As of 2013, 27 percent of Arizonans over the age of 25 have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher, 8 percent have completed an associate's degree, 25 percent have completed at least some college, 25 percent have obtained a high school diploma or equivalent, and 14 percent of Arizonans have not obtained a high school diploma.

In 2013, the median household income for Arizonans was \$49,774 compared to the U.S. median household income of \$53,046. Across the state, 18 percent of Arizonans lived below the poverty threshold with poverty levels higher among American Indians (39%), Hispanics (28%), Blacks (25%) than among Asian Americans (13%) or Whites (11%).

P-12 EDUCATION

As we previously stated, minority students became the majority in Arizona Schools in 2004 and their representation has continued to grow at a steady rate. More Hispanics are enrolled in Arizona schools at all grade levels than students from any other racial/ethnic group. For the first time in this year's report, we tracked the enrollment of students by school type. Notable in these findings is the fact that enrollment of students in charter schools in Arizona has steadily increased from 12 percent in 2010 to 15 percent in 2014.

For the first time in this year's report, we present data on students who receive free or reduced lunch. Between 2010 and 2014 the number of students who received free or reduced lunch increased

dramatically by 12 percent. Nearly three quarters (72%) of American Indian students receive free or reduced lunch followed by Hispanic students (66%), Black students (62%), White students (42%), and Asian Pacific Islander students (26%).

School dropout rates have remained constant over the past few years. The highest dropout rates in 2014 were among American Indian students (7%), Hispanic students (4.1%), Black students (4%), Whites (2.5%), and Asian Pacific Americans (less than 1%). Since 2008, three quarters of Arizona students graduate from high school within four years of entering high school. While more than 8 in 10 Asian Pacific Americans (85%) and Whites (83%) graduate within four years, about 7 in 10 Blacks (70%) and Hispanics (69%) and 6 in 10 (61%) American Indian students graduate within four years of entering high school.

English Language Learners in Arizona have decreased dramatically over the last ten years, from 161,136 in 2004 to 66,275 in 2014, due to changes in the AZELLA (Arizona English Language Learner Assessment) proficiency test allowing for ELL students to be classified as proficient even when the student was not. Recent trends show similar decreases (from 76,325 in 2010 to 66,275 in 2014). As would be expected given their large representation in Arizona schools, the majority of ELL students are Hispanics.

The number of Arizona students enrolled in special education increased by 3 percent between 2010 and 2014. As in previous years, Black and American Indian students are more likely to be enrolled in special education than are students from other racial/ethnic groups while Asian Pacific American students are least likely to be in special education.

As noted in the 2013 report, AIMS test scores show persistent discrepancies in pass rates between Asian Pacific American, and Whites (who pass at higher rates) and American Indians, Blacks, and Hispanics (who pass at much lower rates). There has been no improvement in pass rates on the mathematics and science portions of the AIMS tests. In fact, only 4 in 10 high school students pass the AIMS science test and just over 6 in 10 students pass the AIMS mathematics test. As in the past, the consequences of not passing the AIMS test for students are severe—making it virtually impossible for them to enroll in courses that they need to become eligible for admission to one of the state’s public universities because they must enroll in classes that prepare them to retake the AIMS test in order to meet high school graduation requirements.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Access to postsecondary education is a function of admissions requirements and the preparation that students receive. Trend data reveal little improvement in eligibility rates between 2009 and 2014 as university eligibility rates for students across Arizona

remain very low. Students in urban areas of the state are more likely than students from other areas in the state to meet ABOR eligibility requirements; yet, only half of students in Maricopa and Pima counties are eligible for admission to a state university. Fewer than four in ten students from other counties in the state are university eligible. There are clear gaps in university eligibility by racial/ethnic groups as White and Asian Pacific American students show much higher eligibility rates than do American Indian, Black and Hispanic students. Most students in Arizona, six in ten, do not demonstrate the necessary proficiency in mathematics. Moreover, four in ten students show deficiencies in the science and language requirements.

Standardized tests, advanced placement (AP) courses, and dual enrollment courses play a significant role in college access in Arizona. Similar to findings from the 2013 report, there is less disparity in the proportion of students from different racial/ethnic groups who took the ACT than those who took the SAT. While Whites comprise 40 percent of Arizonans between 15 and 17 years of age, they make up 57 percent of SAT takers and 38 Percent of ACT takers in the state. The number of students who took the ACT increased by 6,000 students between 2011 and 2014.

Mean SAT scores for all Arizona students dropped between 2011 and 2014. There is a significant gap between mean SAT scores of White and Asian Pacific American students compared to American Indian, Black, and Hispanic students in the state. Mean ACT scores have remained stable since 2010. Asian Pacific American and White students tend to score significantly higher than American Indian, Black and Hispanic students in the state.

Nearly 8 in 10 Arizona students fail to meet College Readiness Benchmark Scores established by the ACT in all four subject areas (English, Reading, Mathematics, and Science). While 39 in 100 Asian Pacific American students and 35 in 100 White students meet the Benchmarks in all four subject areas, only 9 in 100 Hispanic students, 7 in 100 Black students, and 4 in 100 American Indian students meet all four benchmarks.

Significantly more students took Advanced Placement (AP) courses in Arizona in 2014 (57,161) than they did in 2011 (42,982). White students were more than twice as likely to enroll in AP courses as Hispanics were to enroll. Asian Pacific American students (7 in 10) and White students (6 in 10) were much more likely to obtain a score of 3 or higher on their AP tests than were American Indian (3 in 10), Black (4 in 10), and Hispanic students (4 in 10). In 2014, 22,888 high school students enrolled in dual enrollment courses through a community college in the state. About 7 in 10 of these students did so in the Maricopa Community College District. About three quarters of the dual enrollment courses taken were academically focused while one quarter were vocationally focused.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

In 2014, 454,759 students (undergraduate, graduate, and professional) were enrolled in a postsecondary institution in the state of Arizona. Nearly half of these students were enrolled at a public community college in the state and about one third were enrolled in one of the state's three public universities.

2014 UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENTS

Just over half of undergraduates were enrolled at a public, two year college while 3 in 10 undergraduates were enrolled at a public university. Between 1994 and 2014, the enrollment of undergraduates in public two-year colleges in Arizona increased by about 31 percent from 158,382 students in 1994 to 209,053 students in 2014. The proportional enrollment of Whites decreased during this time period while the proportional enrollment of Hispanics, Blacks, American Indians, and Asian Pacific Americans increased. Between 1994 and 2014, undergraduate enrollments at private, for-profit, four-year institutions increased by 320 percent from 7,844 to 33,115.

PELL GRANT RECIPIENTS

Undergraduate enrollments grew across all sectors between 1991 and 2010. The for-profit sector demonstrated the greatest proportional growth in undergraduate. Between 2010 and 2013, the proportions of first time, full time (FTFT) Pell grant recipients enrolled at public four year and two year institutions increased. The proportion of FTFT students at Arizona's public universities receiving Pell grants increased from 29 percent in 2010 to 32 percent in 2013. The proportion of FTFT students at Arizona's public two year institutions receiving Pell grants increased from 47 percent in 2010 to 54 percent in 2013.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRANSFER RATES

Arizona's public community colleges are the major access point for students into higher education in the state given that over half of all undergraduates are enrolled in a community college. Moreover, the community colleges are the primary entry point into higher education for American Indian, Black, and Hispanic students in Arizona.

Recent analyses conducted by the Arizona State System for Information on Student Transfer (ASSIST) show that fewer than 3 in 10 "transfer eligible" students actually transfer to one of the state's three universities within 6 years of enrolling in community college.

REMEDIAL EDUCATION

Although data on remedial education are difficult to obtain due to a lack of a statewide coordinating entity for community colleges, reports provided by Maricopa Community College District (MCCD) provide some insight on the status of remedial

education in Arizona. Of the 14,389 2013 high school graduates who attended MCCD the year following their graduation, 49 percent enrolled in a college level English course, 22 percent enrolled in a pre-freshman (remedial) English course, and 29 percent did not enroll in an English course in their first year following high school graduation. Of the 2013 high school graduates attending MCCD, 31 percent enrolled in a college level math course, 23 percent enrolled in an intermediate level math course, 18 percent enrolled in a pre-intermediate (remedial) algebra course, and 28 percent did not enroll in a math course in their first year following high school graduation.

2013 UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

The majority of the 28,722 bachelor's degrees awarded in the state came from the public universities (70%). The remainder came from the private, for profit sector (27%) and the private, not for profit sector (3%). At the state's three public universities, most bachelor's degrees were awarded to White students (67%) followed by Hispanic students (17%), Asian Pacific American students (6%), Black students (3%) and American Indian students (2%).

2013 UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE TRENDS

The number of Associate's degrees awarded increased significantly between 1994 (8,813) and 2013 (23,016) with the majority coming from Arizona's public, two year institutions. The number of bachelor's degrees granted in Arizona increased by 50 percent between 1994 and 2013 from 15,236 to 22,950. The six year graduation rates at the University of Arizona and Arizona State University have slowly increased for the entering cohorts between 1998 and 2007 (from 57% to 61% at the U of A and from 55% to 58% at ASU). However, the six year graduation rate has remained steady during this time period at Northern Arizona University (about 50 %).

2014 GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL ENROLLMENTS

About half of all graduate and professional students in Arizona are enrolled at one of the public universities in the state while just about four in ten are enrolled at a private, for profit institution. Finally, one in ten graduate and professional students in Arizona is enrolled at a private, not for profit institution. Whites are the group with the highest percentage of enrollments within each sector and make up nearly six of ten graduate students at public institutions and at private, not for profit institutions. International students make up about 2 in 10 of graduate and professional students enrolled at public institutions and 1 in 10 of graduate and professional students enrolled at private, not for profit institutions.

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL ENROLLMENT TRENDS

The growth in enrollment of graduate and professional students in the public four-year institutions increased by 11 percent, from 25,112 in 1994 to 28,031 in 2014. Small and steady increases in the proportional representation of students of color at the state's public institutions are evident between 1994 and 2014—with Hispanics increasing from 7 percent to 11 percent, Asian Pacific Islanders increasing from 3 percent to 5 percent, Blacks increasing from 2 percent to 3 percent, and American Indians increasing from 1 percent to 2 percent. At private, for-profit, four-year institutions in Arizona, graduate and professional enrollments increased by more than 200 percent from 4,565 in 1994 to 15,548 in 2014.

2013 GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL DEGREES

During 2013, fewer than half of the 12,466 master's degrees awarded in Arizona came from public institutions. About 43 percent were awarded by private for profit institutions and 10 percent were awarded by private, not for profit institutions. The proportion of degrees awarded to Hispanic, African American, and Native American students decreases significantly when compared to their representation among bachelor's and associate's degree recipients. At the public institutions, about 6 in 10 master's degrees were awarded to white students, 18 percent to international students, about 10 percent to Hispanics, 4 percent to Asian Americans, 3 percent to Blacks, and 2 percent to Native Americans. Arizona postsecondary institutions awarded 1,172 doctoral degrees in 2013.. The majority of these degrees were granted by the three Arizona public universities (65 percent). Private, for profit institutions awarded 34 percent of the doctoral degrees granted in 2013 while the private not for profits awarded about 1 percent of doctoral degrees. Institutions in the state of Arizona produced 1,667 professional degrees (allopathic medicine, osteopathic medicine, naturopathic medicine, pharmacy, law) in 2013. More than 4 in 10 of these degrees were awarded by the private, not for profit sector, another 4 in 10 were awarded by the state's three public universities, and about 2 in 10 by the private for profit institutions.

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL DEGREE TRENDS

The number of master's degrees awarded in Arizona increased by about 50 percent between 1994 (6,292 master's degrees awarded) and 2013 (9,298 master's degree). The number of doctoral degrees awarded in Arizona between 1994 and 2013 increased by 100 percent from 754 to 1,519. While Blacks received only 1 percent of doctoral degrees in 1995, they received 1 in 10 (10%) in 2013. The proportion of doctoral degrees awarded to Hispanics was very low relative to their representation in the state's population as only 5 percent of doctoral degrees awarded in 1995 and

6 percent were awarded to Hispanics in 2013. Asian Pacific Americans received about 6 percent of doctoral degrees in 1995 and 5 percent in 2013. The proportion of doctoral degrees awarded to American Indians was especially low at at 0.4 percent in both 1994 and 2013.

The percentages of Black (0% in 1995 and 2% 2013), Hispanic (6% in 1995 and 8% in 2013), and Native American students (0% in 1995 and 1% in 2013) who received degrees in allopathic medicine remained quite low between 1995 and 2013. The number of pharmacy degrees awarded in Arizona increased between 1995 and 2013 from 51 to 244. The percentages of degrees awarded to Blacks (2% in 1995 and 3% in 2013), Hispanics (6% in 1995 and 7% in 2013) and Native American (2% 1995 and 0% in 2013) students have remained low during this twenty year period.

The number of law degrees awarded by Arizona institutions increased by more than 100 percent from 281 in 1995 to 630 in 2013. About 68 percent of law degrees were awarded to white students in 1995, decreasing to 65 percent in 2013. The proportion of law degrees awarded to Hispanics in Arizona also decreased from 15 percent in 1995 to 9 percent in 2013. While decreases were also evident in the proportion of Asian Pacific Islanders (from 6% in 1995 to 5% in 2013) and Blacks (from 7% in 1995 to 5% in 2013), the proportion of Native American students earning law degrees remained stable from 1995 to 2013 (3%).

Policy Recommendations

The 2016 AMEPAC Minority Student Progress Report is the 6th edition of this report created to provide an examination of the educational achievement of minority students in Arizona. These findings of educational attainment for Arizona's student population have given us a sense of where we are and where we have been.

The data summarized in this report continue to demonstrate a troubling trend of a growing minority population with a major education attainment gap which results from a lack of access to important educational resources. A deeply troubling finding is that the educational achievement gap for minority (now majority) and low-income students in both urban and rural schools has not been erased.

This pipeline, which provides the workforce of Arizona's future, is losing too many students in the process. This has become a grave concern for the future economic health of our families and Arizona as a competitive economic power.

Foundational to minority student success, a large percentage of whom live in poverty is an infrastructure that ensures that we not only can track and analyze trends, but also put in place the strategies needed to give the best opportunity possible for academic growth and achievement to create a diverse and capable workforce. Therefore, it is imperative that we continue to gather relevant data, question our current education funding strategies, and explore ways to forge our collective efforts to solve the problems we face.

Based on the data presented in this report, we have taken a pragmatic approach and provided policy recommendations with a goal to close the achievement gap for minority (now majority) students. The recommendations provided in this report are based on various platforms for comparisons and analysis. We have relied on the help of experts in diverse fields to analyze and prioritize these recommended actions.

We encourage you to review and consider the recommendations from AMEPAC's 2013 Minority Student Progress Report: Arizona in Transformation before reading this report. We hope you will be able to use the rich data in this report to develop your own conclusions and recommendations for addressing the issues we highlight. We recognize that there are other policy stakeholders, agencies, and organizations in our state looking at our educational challenges as we move deeper into the 21st century. It is our hope that we can create a common vision with these partners

and collaborate to provide all students in Arizona an equal opportunity to succeed in pre-K-12 education, higher education, and the workforce.

PRE-K-12 EDUCATION

Ensure All Students Achieve a High School Diploma

- Modify high stakes requirements to include alternate pathways to a diploma.
- Provide resources to support all students' achievement of graduation requirements. While the graduation requirement for four years of math appears to be a barrier, employers and postsecondary educators alike, tell us that all students must have adequate math to be successful in postsecondary endeavors. Therefore, we must maintain high expectations for all Arizona students, and together with resources, provide what is needed to ensure their success.

Improve English Language Learners' Academic Success

The current approach leaves too many behind. There are other research-based approaches proven successful with ELL students.

- Analyze and strengthen entrance requirements to ELL services. Ensure that exit requirements enable proficiency in academic English for ELL students.
- Explore alternative approaches to structured English immersion. The 4-hour block limits ELL students from graduating because students do not have the time and facility with the language to take the coursework required for graduation.

Ensure Poverty Does Not Dictate the Level of Student Success

- Identify and/or refocus dedicated state-level funding streams to expand projects proven successful and increase the participation and success of lower socioeconomic students.

Ensure that Every Student Receiving a Diploma Is College and Career Ready and Is Prepared to Transition into Postsecondary Credit-bearing Courses or the Workforce

- Provide all students the opportunity for AP and dual enrollment; with appropriately trained teachers.
- Ensure access to and funding of technology to provide access to rural communities.

- Provide all students no cost/low cost classes for ACT/SAT test prep.
- Ensure that all students have exposure to Career and Technical Education (CTE) opportunities, including access to counselors trained in CTE and all postsecondary options.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Improve Transition by Decreasing the Number of Students Who Do Not Qualify for College-level Credit-bearing Courses

- Establish a K-12/Postsecondary education task force to explore current and future programs to reduce the need for remediation.

Restore and Create Student Financial Aid Programs that Support Increasing Underrepresented Populations in All Levels of Higher Education

- Restore state postsecondary scholarships and grants that provide incentives to accelerate graduation, thereby reducing loan debt and time-to-degree for first-generation and low income students, many of whom are students of color.

Increase the Number of Community College Students Successfully Transferring into a 4-Year Institution

The data indicate a tremendous opportunity to increase enrollments and transition community college students into colleges or universities for completion of a 4-year degree.

- Ensure that all students receive counseling and support in the areas of financial literacy, career options, and proper course of study.
- Ensure that all students entering a remedial or developmental education community college educational pathway with intentions to transfer to a four year institution have access to the academic support structures necessary to succeed.

Support the Community College System in its Role as the First Point of Enrollment in the Postsecondary System for Most Students in Low-Income Families

- Provide state funding for all community colleges.

Recruit and Retain Home-Grown Graduate Students in Arizona

- Provide incentives to postsecondary institutions to attract and retain Arizona students receiving graduate degrees and certificates to enhance the professional workforce in Arizona.

LIMITATIONS AND OTHER NEEDED STUDIES

Lack of a statewide longitudinal data system: Effective tracking, monitoring and reporting on student progress and promising practices are hampered without such a system. Creating a longitudinal, statewide data system has been a key focus of policy makers within the past decade. Millions of dollars and countless hours of time have been spent discussing, promoting and planning for such a system. It continues to be unfinished work.

Lack of common definition: One of the limitations in the data is remedial or developmental education in community colleges. Based on the data, the primary point of entry into postsecondary education is community college for a significant number of minority students graduating from high school. Rather than qualifying for university credit-bearing coursework, too many must enroll in remedial or developmental education tracks. Because definitions of remedial students vary from one institution to another, it is difficult to track like data on students across the state and we are unable to provide a clear state-wide picture of this student population. Therefore, AMEPAC will consider the topic of students in community college remedial or developmental education as a subject for further study in our next research.

Data on education funding: While the data in this report detail trends in demographics and education in Arizona, one also cannot ignore the importance of education funding to provide resources needed for serving the student population. Other reports dealing specifically with education funding and equity are germane to this issue and must be considered as funding affects everything from teacher recruitment, retention, and training to adequate resources for children and families in poverty.

CONCLUSION

Data on educational attainment show that students who graduate from postsecondary institutions with professional certifications and/or degrees tend to be the most economically successful. It is also these graduates who contribute the most to Arizona's economy. Minority students, now the majority of students in Arizona schools, are crucial to ongoing economic prosperity of our state because of the critical human capital that they provide. A highly qualified workforce is the best resource our state can offer for economic development.

In the 2013 report, we affirmed the warning from the Morrison Institute's Dropped report from 2012 that "Arizona is at risk of becoming a second-tier state, educationally and economically." Now, today, in 2016, Arizonans have an opportunity choice. We can resign ourselves to becoming that second-tier state or we can choose opportunity by collaborating with others to implement these recommendations in order to close the achievement gap.

ARIZONA IS IN THE MIDST OF A DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION.

Although our past has been illustrated with inequity and average achievement, our future is painted with quite a different brush. As Arizona solidifies itself as a majority minority state, we will be forced to focus our attention on how even the most underperforming students can enhance their educational outcomes for the greater benefit of all Arizonans.

This report illuminates the current status and trends of educational achievement in the State of Arizona from the beginning of the pipeline in elementary education through to graduate and professional school.

We encourage you to consider the 2013 Minority Student Progress Report before reading this sixth edition. We hope you will be able to use the rich data in these reports to develop your own conclusions and recommendations for addressing the issues we highlight.

Beyond this edition, there are additional data and resources available at the Arizona Minority Education Policy Analysis Center website: www.highered.az.gov/amepac

