Virginia performs fairly well in preparing its young people for college.
- Eighth graders perform well in math, science, and reading, but their scores in writing are fairly low.
- Only 87% of blacks have a high school credential, compared with 94% of whites.

College opportunities for Virginia residents are only fair.
- The likelihood of enrolling in college by age 19 is fairly high, but a low percentage of working-age adults are enrolled in higher education.
- Twenty-nine percent of black young adults are enrolled in college, compared with 42% of whites.

Higher education has become less affordable for students and their families.
- Poor and working-class families must devote 31% of their income, even after aid, to pay for costs at two-year colleges.
- Financial aid to low-income students is low. For every dollar in Pell Grant aid to students, the state spends 50 cents.

Virginia’s performance in awarding certificates and degrees relative to the number of students enrolled is only fair, but those who do attain a bachelor’s degree do so in a timely manner.
- Sixty-three percent of college students complete a bachelor’s degree within six years.
- However, only 47% of blacks graduate within six years, compared with 68% of whites.

A very large proportion of residents have a bachelor’s degree, but there are substantial gaps by ethnicity.
- Nineteen percent of blacks have a bachelor’s degree, compared with 38% of whites.
- If all racial/ethnic groups had the same educational attainment and earnings as whites, total annual personal income in the state would be about $16 billion higher.
This page reflects Virginia’s performance and progress since the early 1990s on several key indicators.

**PREPARATION**

The percentage of young adults in Virginia who earn a high school diploma has increased slightly since the early 1990s. High school completion is above the U.S. average but below the top-performing states.

**PARTICIPATION**

College enrollment of young adults in Virginia has improved substantially since the early 1990s. The state is slightly above the national average but below the top states in the percentage of young adults enrolled.

The enrollment of working-age adults, relative to the number of residents without a bachelor’s degree, has declined in Virginia—as it has nationally and in the best-performing states. The percentage attending college in Virginia is slightly below the U.S. average and below the top states.

**AFFORDABILITY**

The share of family income, even after financial aid, needed to pay for college has risen substantially. To attend public two-year colleges in Virginia, students and families pay less than the U.S. average but more than those in the best-performing states. To attend public four-year colleges, they pay close to the national average, which is more than those in the best states pay.

**COMPLETION**

The number of undergraduate credentials and degrees awarded in Virginia, relative to the number of students enrolled, has increased since the early 1990s. However, Virginia is below the U.S. average and the top states on this measure.

**BENEFITS**

The percentage of residents who have a bachelor’s degree has increased substantially in Virginia. The state is well above the U.S. average but slightly below the top states.

**PARTICIPATION**

The enrollment of working-age adults, relative to the number of residents without a bachelor’s degree, has declined in Virginia—as it has nationally and in the best-performing states. The percentage attending college in Virginia is slightly below the U.S. average and below the top states.

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*Key indicator for the category.