

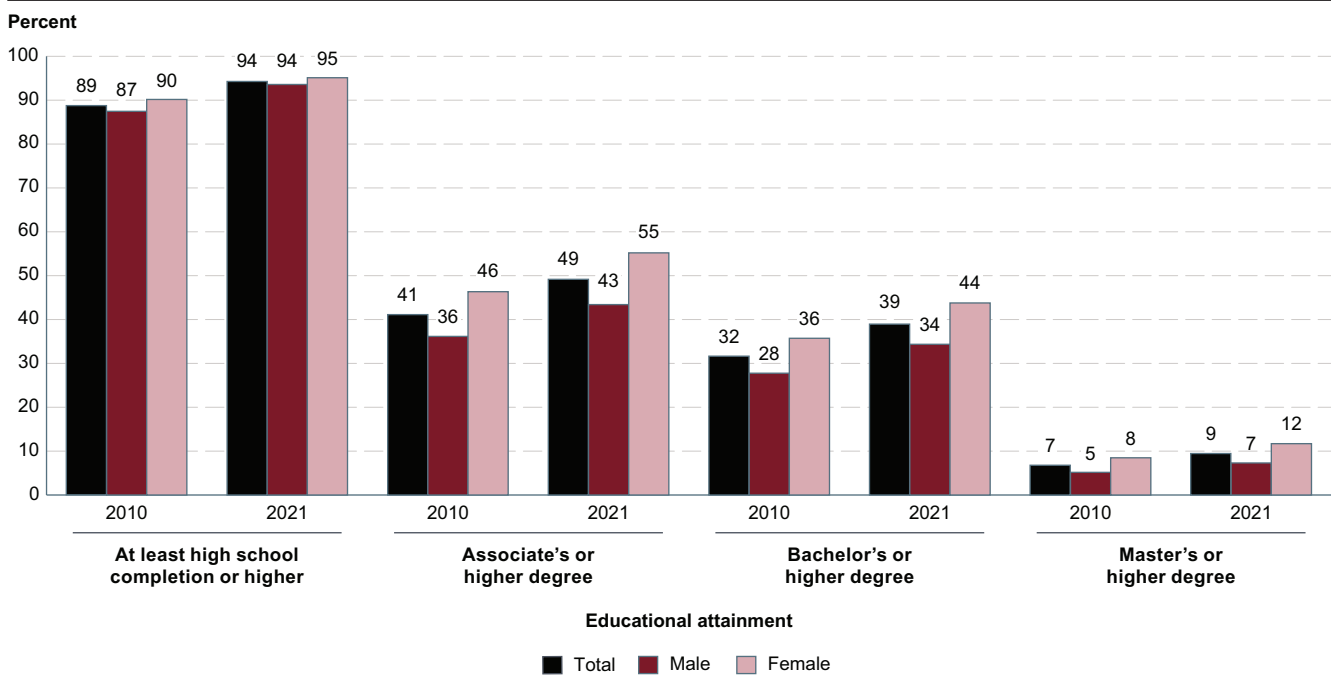
Educational Attainment of Young Adults

Between 2010 and 2021, the percentage of Hispanic 25- to 29-year-olds who had completed at least high school increased by 19 percentage points from 69 percent to 88 percent. The gap in educational attainment rates between White and Hispanic 25- to 29-year-olds narrowed for those who had completed at least high school and for those who were at the level of an associate's or higher degree.

Educational attainment is the level of education completed by the time of the survey (reported here as at least high school completion,¹ an associate's or higher degree, a bachelor's or higher degree, or a master's or higher degree). Between 2010 and 2021,² educational attainment rates among 25- to 29-year-olds increased at each attainment level. During this period, the percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who had completed at least high school increased from 89 to 94 percent, the percentage

with an associate's or higher degree increased from 41 to 49 percent, the percentage with a bachelor's or higher degree increased from 32 to 39 percent, and the percentage with a master's or higher degree increased from 7 to 9 percent. Although educational attainment rates increased over this period for both males and females and among most racial/ethnic groups, attainment gaps persisted in 2021.

Figure 1. Percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds, by educational attainment and sex: 2010 and 2021



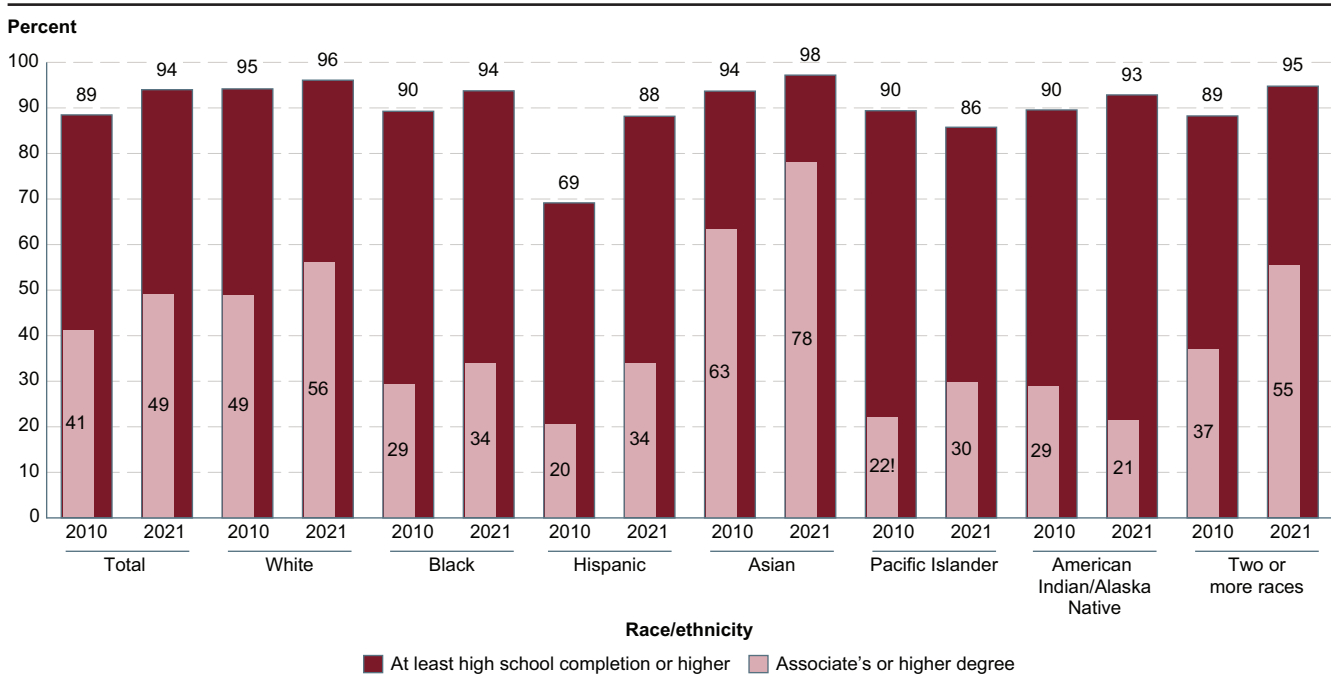
NOTE: Data were collected in March of each year and are based on sample surveys of the noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities); data include military personnel who live in households with civilians, but exclude those who live in military barracks. High school completion includes those who graduated from high school with a diploma as well as those who completed high school through equivalency programs, such as a GED program. Caution should be used when comparing 2021 estimates to those of prior years due to the impact that the coronavirus pandemic had on interviewing and response rates in 2021. For additional information about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Current Population Survey data collection, please see <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar21.pdf>. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded data.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2010 and 2021. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2021*, table 104.20.

Between 2010 and 2021, educational attainment rates increased for both female and male 25- to 29-year-olds across all attainment levels. During this period, attainment rates were generally higher for females than for males.

Differences between the attainment rates for females and males overall (also referred to in this indicator as the gender gap) were also observed by race/ethnicity³ in 2021. Where gender gaps existed in 2021, they favored female 25- to 29-year olds over their male peers. Specifically, the White gender gap was 1 percentage point at the attainment level of at least high school completion, 13 percentage points at the associate’s or higher degree level, 9 percentage points at the bachelor’s or higher degree

level,⁴ and 7 percentage points at the master’s or higher degree level. The Black gender gap was 15 percentage points at the associate’s or higher degree level and 12 percentage points at the bachelor’s or higher degree level. The Hispanic gender gap was 4 percentage points at the attainment level of at least high school completion, 9 percentage points at the associate’s or higher degree level, and 8 percentage points at the bachelor’s or higher degree level.⁵ Additionally, a gender gap was observed for those of Two or more races at the bachelor’s or higher degree level (23 percentage points). However, there was no measurable gender gap at any attainment level in 2021 for either those who were Asian or those who were American Indian/Alaska Native.⁶

Figure 2. Percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who had completed at least high school and who had completed an associate’s or higher degree, by race/ethnicity: 2010 and 2021



! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 and 50 percent.
NOTE: Data were collected in March of each year and are based on sample surveys of the noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities); data include military personnel who live in households with civilians, but exclude those who live in military barracks. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. High school completion includes those who graduated from high school with a diploma as well as those who completed high school through equivalency programs, such as a GED program. Caution should be used when comparing 2021 estimates to those of prior years due to the impact that the coronavirus pandemic had on interviewing and response rates in 2021. For additional information about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Current Population Survey data collection, please see <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar21.pdf>. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded data.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2010 and 2021. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2021*, table 104.20.

In 2021, the percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who had completed at least high school was lower for those who were Black (94 percent) than for those who were White (96 percent) and Asian (98 percent). Additionally, the percentage was lower for those who were Hispanic (88 percent) than for those who were Black, of Two or more races (95 percent), White, and Asian.

Between 2010 and 2021, the percentages who had completed at least high school increased for those who

were Asian (from 94 to 98 percent), White (from 95 to 96 percent), Black (from 90 to 94 percent), and Hispanic (from 69 to 88 percent). In addition, the percentage was higher in 2021 than in 2010 for those of Two or more races (95 vs. 89 percent), although there was no consistent pattern of change throughout the period. The percentages who were Pacific Islander (86 percent) and American Indian/Alaska Native (93 percent) who had completed at least high school in 2021 were not measurably different from the corresponding percentages in 2010.

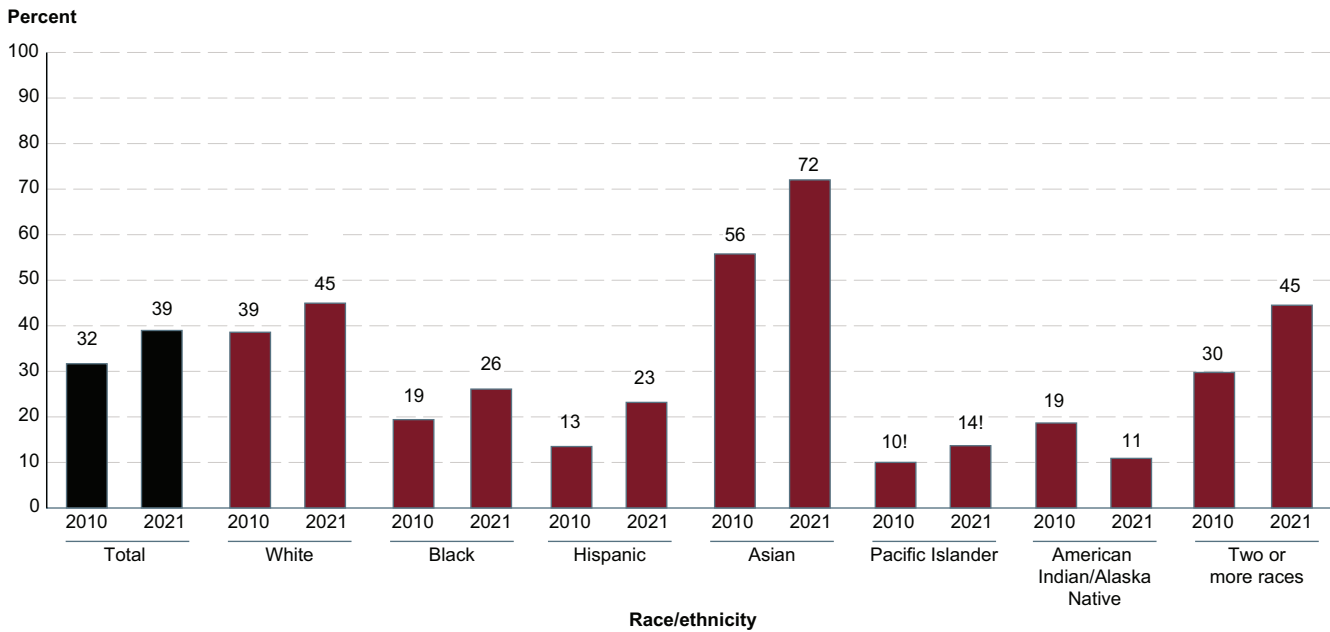
Between 2010 and 2021, the percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who had completed at least high school generally remained higher for those who were White than for those who were Black or Hispanic. However, the White-Hispanic attainment gap for those who had completed at least high school narrowed from 25 to 8 percentage points between 2010 and 2021. This narrowing of the gap was primarily due to the increase in the percentage of those who were Hispanic who had completed at least high school. In contrast, the White-Black high school completion gap in 2021 (2 percentage points) was not measurably different from the corresponding gap in 2010 (5 percentage points).

Although there is a less than 10-percentage-point difference across racial/ethnic groups in the percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who had completed at least high school in 2021, there are larger differences in the percentages who go beyond high school to earn a postsecondary degree. The percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who attained any postsecondary (associate's or higher) degree was at least 22 percentage points higher for those who were Asian (78 percent) than for those of any other racial/ethnic group in 2021. In addition, the percentages were more than 20 points higher for those who were White (56 percent) and of Two or more races (55 percent) than for those who were Hispanic (34 percent), Black (34 percent), Pacific

Islander (30 percent), and American Indian/Alaska Native (21 percent).

From 2010 to 2021, the percentages who had attained an associate's or higher degree increased for those who were Asian (from 63 to 78 percent), White (from 49 to 56 percent), Black (from 29 to 34 percent), and Hispanic (from 20 to 34 percent). In addition, the percentage was higher in 2021 than in 2010 for those of Two or more races (55 vs. 37 percent), although there was no consistent pattern of change throughout the period. The percentages of those who had attained an associate's or higher degree in 2021 who were American Indian/Alaska Native or Pacific Islander were not measurably different from the corresponding percentages who had attained an associate's or higher degree in 2010.

The gap between the percentages of White and Black 25- to 29-year-olds who had attained an associate's or higher degree in 2021 (22 percentage points) was not measurably different from the corresponding percentage gap in 2010. The gap between the percentages of those who had attained an associate's or higher degree who were White and Hispanic narrowed over this period (from 28 to 22 percentage points).

Figure 3. Percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who had completed a bachelor's or higher degree, by race/ethnicity: 2010 and 2021

! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 and 50 percent.

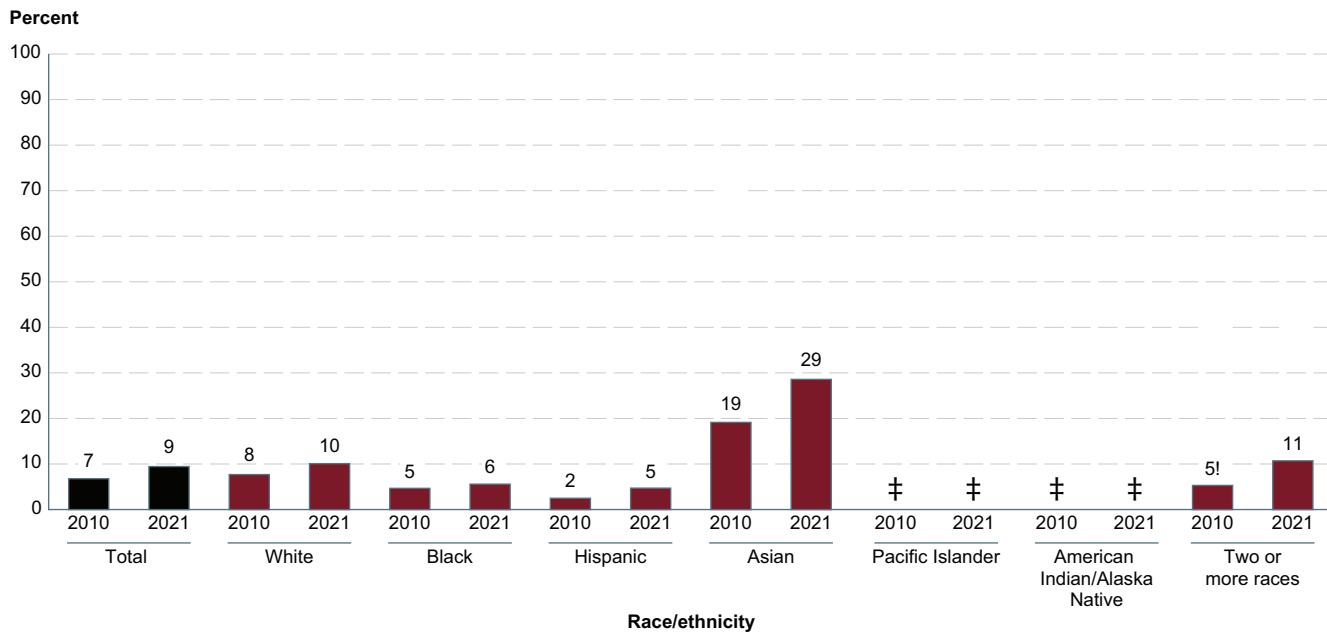
NOTE: Data were collected in March of each year and are based on sample surveys of the noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities); data include military personnel who live in households with civilians, but exclude those who live in military barracks. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Caution should be used when comparing 2021 estimates to those of prior years due to the impact that the coronavirus pandemic had on interviewing and response rates in 2021. For additional information about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Current Population Survey data collection, please see <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar21.pdf>. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded data. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2010 and 2021. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2021*, table 104.20.

Similar to the pattern for associate's degrees, the percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who had attained a bachelor's or higher degree in 2021 was higher for those who were Asian (72 percent) than for those of any other racial/ethnic group. The percentages were also higher for those who were White and of Two or more races (45 percent each) than for those who were Black (26 percent), Hispanic (23 percent), Pacific Islander (14 percent), and American Indian/Alaska Native (11 percent). The percentage was lower for those who were American Indian/Alaska Native than for those who were Hispanic or Black. The percentages of individuals at the bachelor's or higher degree level increased between 2010 and 2021 for those who were Asian (from 56 to 72 percent), White (from 39 to 45 percent), Black (from 19 to 26 percent), and Hispanic (from 13 to 23 percent). In addition, the percentage was higher in 2021 than in 2010 for those of Two or more races (45 vs. 30 percent),

although there was no consistent pattern of change throughout the period. The percentages of those who were American Indian/Alaska Native and Pacific Islander who had attained a bachelor's or higher degree in 2021 were not measurably different from the corresponding percentages who had attained a bachelor's or higher degree in 2010.

The gap between the percentages of White and Black 25- to 29-year-olds who had attained a bachelor's or higher degree in 2021 (19 percentage points) was not measurably different from the corresponding gap in 2010. The percentage gap between those who were White and Hispanic who had attained a bachelor's or higher degree was 22 percentage points in 2021. Unlike the White-Hispanic gaps at lower levels of attainment, this gap was not measurably different from the gap in 2010.

Figure 4. Percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who had completed a master's or higher degree, by race/ethnicity: 2010 and 2021



! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 and 50 percent.
 ‡ Reporting standards not met. Either there are too few cases for a reliable estimate or the coefficient of variation (CV) is 50 percent or greater.
 NOTE: Data were collected in March of each year and are based on sample surveys of the noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities); data include military personnel who live in households with civilians, but exclude those who live in military barracks. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Caution should be used when comparing 2021 estimates to those of prior years due to the impact that the coronavirus pandemic had on interviewing and response rates in 2021. For additional information about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Current Population Survey data collection, please see <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar21.pdf>. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded data. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2010 and 2021. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2021*, table 104.20.

The percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who attained a master's or higher degree was higher for those who were Asian (29 percent) than for those of any other racial/ethnic group in 2021.⁷ In addition, the percentages were higher for those who were of Two or more races (11 percent) and White (10 percent) than for those who were Black (6 percent) and Hispanic (5 percent). From 2010 to 2021, the percentages who had attained a master's or higher degree increased for those who were Asian (from 19 to 29 percent), White (from 8 to 10 percent), and Hispanic (from 2 to 5 percent). The percentages of those who were Black and of Two or more races who had attained

a master's or higher degree in 2021 were not measurably different from the corresponding percentages who had attained a master's or higher degree in 2010.

The gap between White and Black 25- to 29-year-olds who had attained a master's or higher degree was 5 percentage points in 2021, and this gap was not measurably different from that in 2010. The gap between White and Hispanic 25- to 29-year-olds who had attained a master's or higher degree was also 5 percentage points in 2021 and not measurably different from the gap in 2010.

Endnotes:

¹ High school completion includes those who graduated from high school with a diploma as well as those who completed high school through equivalency programs, such as a GED program.

² Caution should be used when comparing 2021 estimates to those of prior years due to the impact that the coronavirus pandemic had on interviewing and response rates in 2021. For additional information about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Current Population Survey data collection, please see <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar21.pdf>.

³ Pacific Islander 25- to 29-year-olds are not included in this comparison because sample sizes in 2021 were too small to provide reliable estimates.

⁴ Throughout this indicator, details may not sum to totals because of rounding.

⁵ A gender gap was not observed at the attainment level of at least high school completion for those who were Black, nor was a gender gap observed at the master's or higher degree level for those who were Black or Hispanic.

⁶ American Indian/Alaska Native 25- to 29-year-olds who attained a bachelor's or higher degree and who attained a master's or higher degree are not included in this comparison because sample sizes in 2021 were too small to provide reliable estimates.

⁷ Pacific Islander and American Indian/Alaska Native 25- to 29-year-olds who attained a master's or higher degree are not included in this comparison because the sample sizes in 2021 were too small to provide reliable estimates.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2021*, table 104.20

Related indicators and resources: [Disability Rates and Employment Status by Educational Attainment](#) [*The Condition of Education 2017 Spotlight*]; [Educational Attainment](#) [*Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups*]; [International Educational Attainment](#); [Snapshot: Attainment of a Bachelor's or Higher Degree for Racial/Ethnic Subgroups](#) [*Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups*]; [Trends in Employment Rates by Educational Attainment](#) [*The Condition of Education 2013 Spotlight*]

Glossary: Associate's degree; Bachelor's degree; Educational attainment (Current Population Survey); Gap; High school completer; High school diploma; Master's degree; Postsecondary education; Racial/ethnic group