

Status Dropout Rates

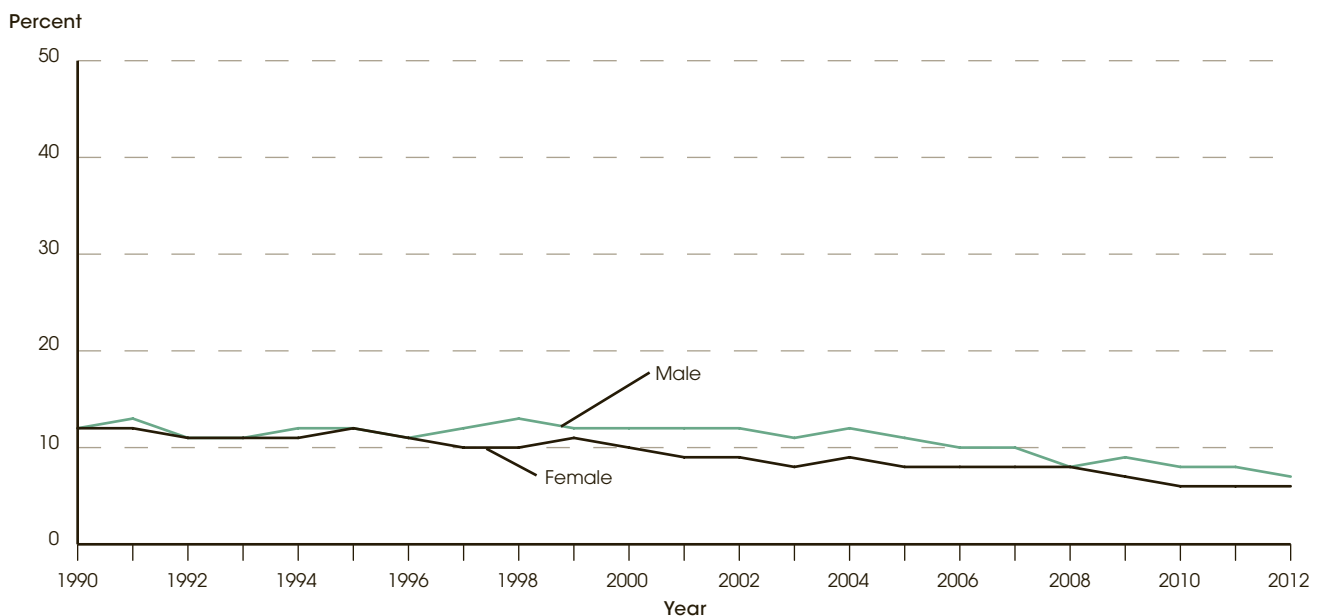
The status dropout rate decreased from 12 percent in 1990 to 7 percent in 2012, with most of the decline occurring since 2000. The number of years of school that high school dropouts completed increased from 1990 to 2012. The percentage of dropouts with less than 9 years of schooling accounted for 18 percent of status dropouts in 2012, compared with 29 percent in 1990.

The *status dropout rate* represents the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and have not earned a high school credential (either a diploma or an equivalency credential such as a General Educational Development [GED] certificate).¹ This rate is different from graduation rate measures that reflect the percentage of students earning a regular diploma within 4 years of entering high school. Status dropouts are no longer

attending school (public or private) and do not have a high school level of educational attainment. Based on data from the Current Population Survey, the status dropout rate decreased from 12 percent in 1990 to 7 percent in 2012, with most of the decline occurring after 2000 (when it was 11 percent). However, there was no measurable difference in the rate between 2011 and 2012.

¹ In this indicator, status dropout rates are estimated using both the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the American Community Survey (ACS). CPS data have been collected annually for decades, allowing for the analysis of detailed long term trends, or changes over time, for the civilian, noninstitutionalized population. ACS data, available from 2006 to 2011, cover individuals living in group quarters, including those in institutionalized and noninstitutionalized settings, and can provide detail on smaller demographic groups.

Figure 1. Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by sex: 1990 through 2012



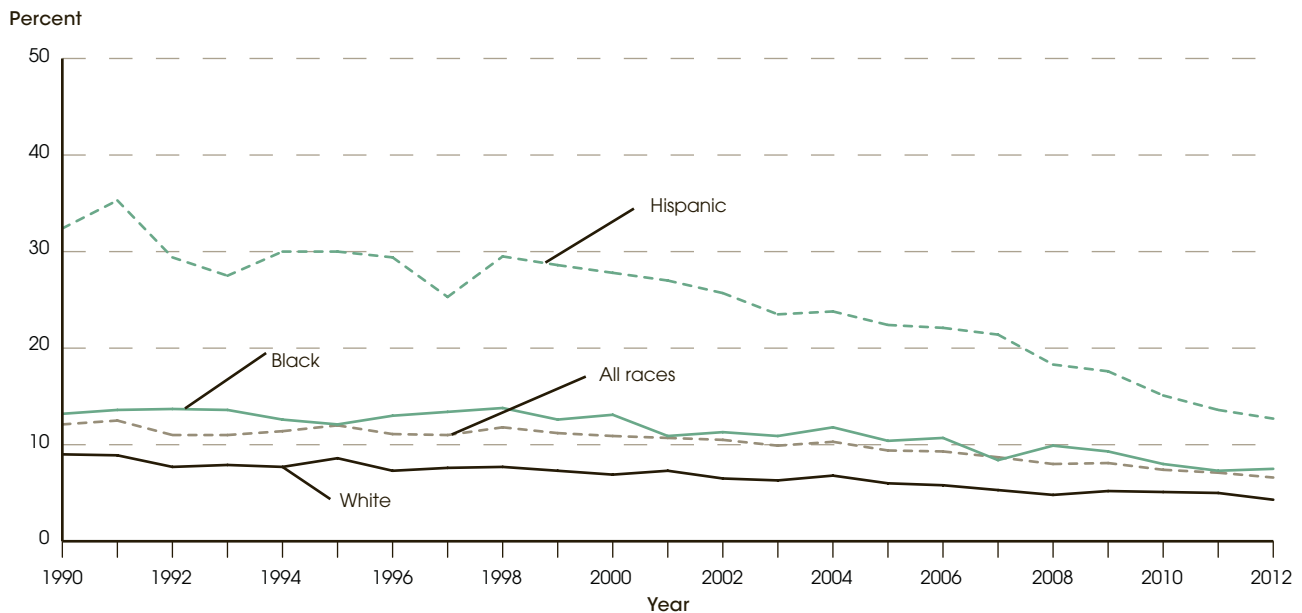
NOTE: The "status dropout rate" represents the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and have not earned a high school credential (either a diploma or an equivalency credential such as a General Educational Development [GED] certificate). Data are based on sample surveys of the civilian noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons in prisons, persons in the military, and other persons not living in households. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1990 through 2012. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 219.70.

For more information, see the Reader's Guide and the Guide to Sources.

Between 1990 and 2012, the male status dropout rate declined from 12 to 7 percent, with most of the decline taking place after 2000 (when it was 12 percent). For females, the rate declined from 12 percent in 1990 to 10 percent in 2000 and then continued to decline to 6 percent

in 2012. In 1997 and later years, the status dropout rate was higher for males than for females. For example, in 2012 some 7 percent of males were status dropouts, compared with 6 percent of females.

Figure 2. Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity: 1990 through 2012

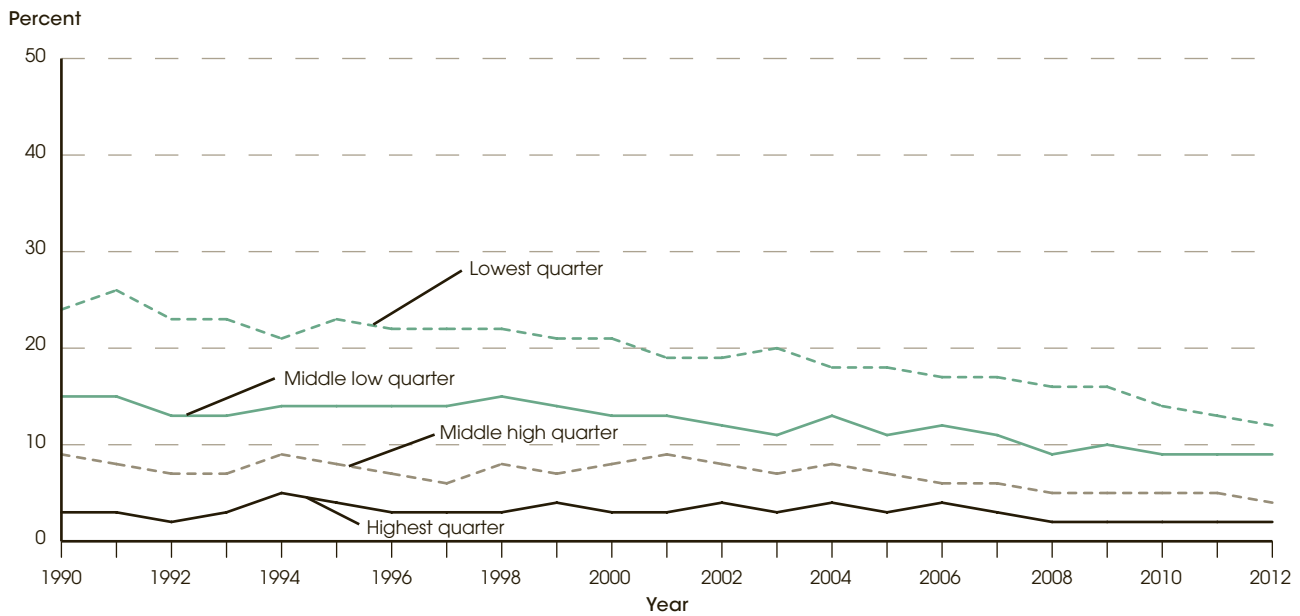


NOTE: The "status dropout rate" represents the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and have not earned a high school credential (either a diploma or an equivalency credential such as a General Educational Development [GED] certificate). Data are based on sample surveys of the civilian noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons in prisons, persons in the military, and other persons not living in households. Data for all races include other racial/ethnic categories not separately shown. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1990 through 2012. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 219.70.

In each year from 1990 to 2012, the status dropout rate was lower for Whites than for Blacks and Hispanics. During this period, the rate for Whites declined from 9 to 4 percent; the rate for Blacks declined from 13 to 8 percent; and the rate for Hispanics declined from 32 to 13 percent. As a result, the gap between Whites and Hispanics narrowed from 23 percentage points in 1990 to 8

percentage points in 2012. While the rates for both Whites and Blacks declined during this period, the gap between the rates in 1990 was not measurably different from the gap between the rates in 2012. The White-Black gap did narrow between 2000 and 2012 (from 6 percentage points to 3 percentage points).

Figure 3. Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by income level: 1990 through 2012

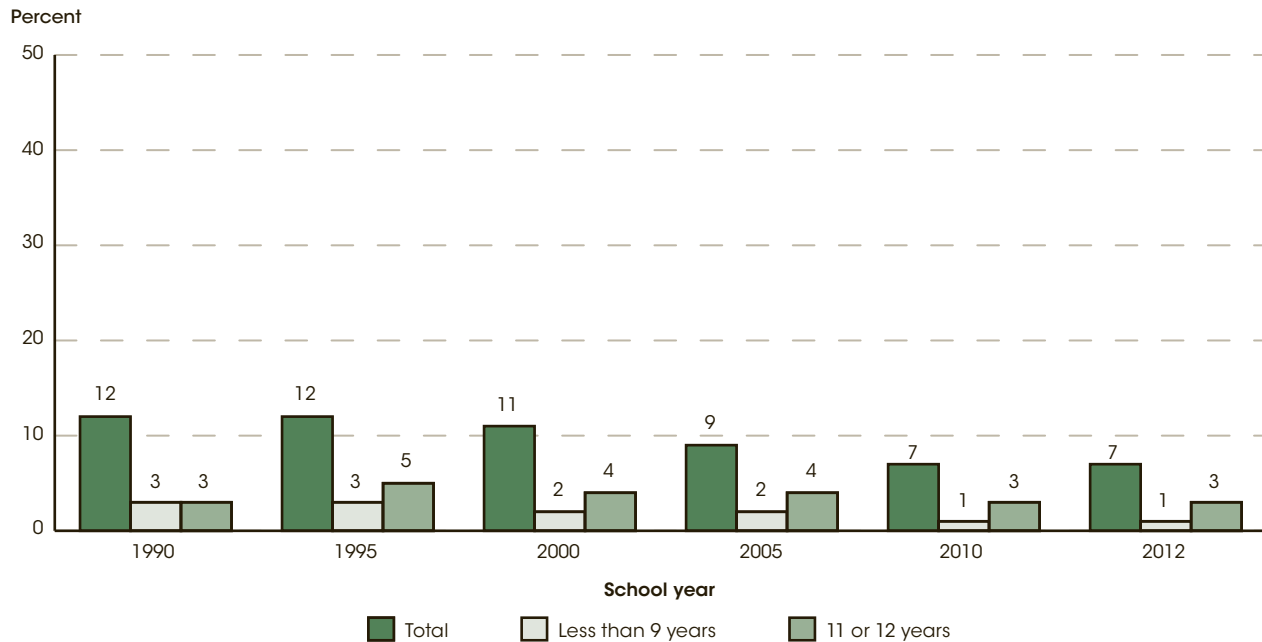


NOTE: The "status dropout rate" represents the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and have not earned a high school credential (either a diploma or an equivalency credential such as a General Educational Development [GED] certificate). The "lowest" quarter represents the bottom 25 percent of family incomes. The "middle low" quarter represents families between the 25th percentile and the median. The "middle high" quarter represents families with incomes between the median and the 75th percentile. The "highest" quarter represents the top 25 percent of all family incomes. Data are based on sample surveys of the civilian noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons in prisons, persons in the military, and other persons not living in households.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1990 through 2012. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 219.75

The status dropout rate also declined for young adults in low- and middle-income family groups between 1990 and 2012. Status dropout rates declined from 24 to 12 percent for those in families with the lowest incomes (the bottom 25 percent of all family incomes), from 15 to 9 percent for those in "middle low" income families (families with incomes between the 25th percentile and the median), and from 9 to 4 percent for those in "middle high" income families (families with incomes between the median and the 75th percentile). For those in the highest income families

(the top 25 percent of all family incomes), there was not a significant decline in the status dropout rate over time. From 1990 to 2012, the status dropout rates for those in the highest income families were consistently lower than the rates for those in the lowest income families. While differences remained, the gap in the status dropout rate between those in the highest and lowest income families narrowed from 21 percentage points in 1990 to 10 percentage points in 2012.

Figure 4. Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by years of school completed: Selected years, 1990 through 2012



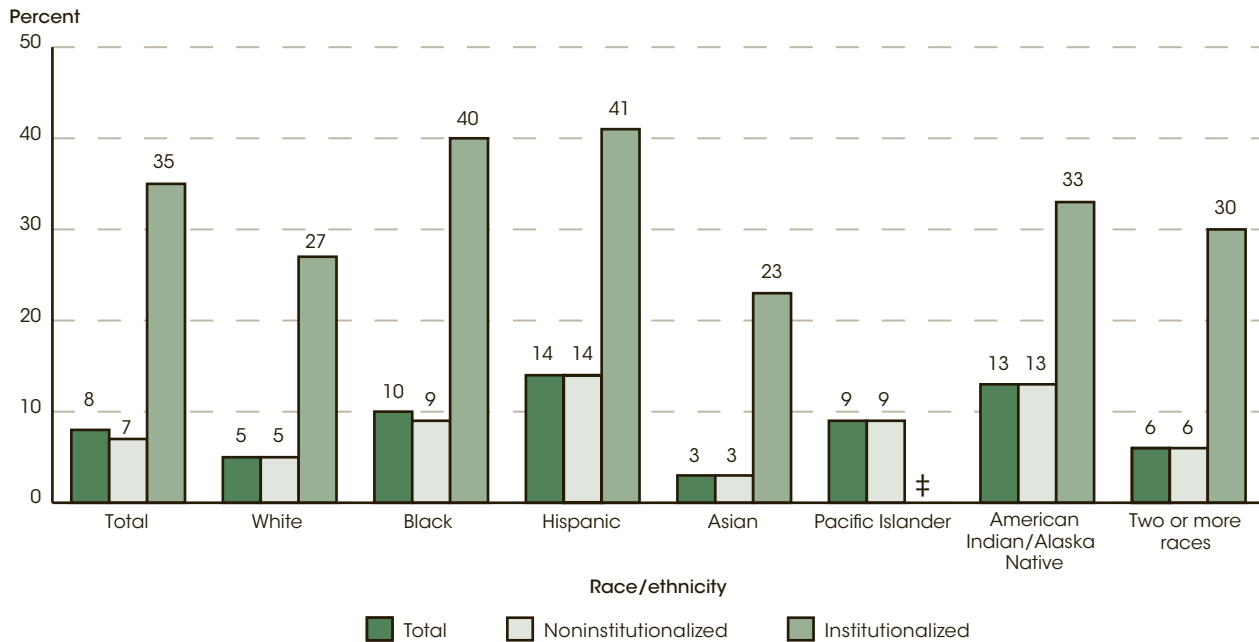
NOTE: The “status dropout rate” represents the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and have not earned a high school credential (either a diploma or an equivalency credential such as a General Educational Development [GED] certificate). Data are based on sample surveys of the civilian noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons in prisons, persons in the military, and other persons not living in households. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1990 through 2012. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 219.75.

The number of years of school that high school dropouts completed increased over the past few decades. Reflecting both the decline in the status dropout rate and the decrease in the percentage of dropouts with low levels of education, the overall percentage of the young adult population with less than 9 years of schooling decreased from 3 percent in 1990 to 1 percent in 2012.² This group, which essentially

had not attended high school, accounted for 18 percent of status dropouts in 2012, compared with 29 percent in 1990. From 1990 to 2012, the overall percentage of dropouts who had completed 11–12 years of school did not change significantly; it was 3 percent in 1990 and 2012. However, this group was a larger proportion of high school status dropouts in 2012 (50 percent) than in 1990 (26 percent).

² These percentages are calculated by multiplying the status dropout rate in a given year by the percentage of status dropouts in that year with less than 9 years of schooling. The derived statistic represents the overall percentage of dropouts with less than 9 years of schooling.

Figure 5. Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity and institutional status: American Community Survey (ACS) 2011



‡ Reporting standards not met. Either there are too few cases for a reliable estimate or the coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is 50 percent or greater.

NOTE: This figure uses a different data source than figure 2; therefore, estimates are not directly comparable to the 2011 estimates in figure 2. Noninstitutionalized group quarters include college and university housing, military quarters, facilities for workers and religious groups, and temporary shelters for the homeless. Among those counted in noninstitutionalized group quarters in the American Community Survey (ACS), only the residents of military barracks are not included in the civilian noninstitutionalized population in the Current Population Survey. The "status dropout rate" represents the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and have not earned a high school credential (either a diploma or an equivalency credential such as a General Educational Development [GED] certificate). Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity.

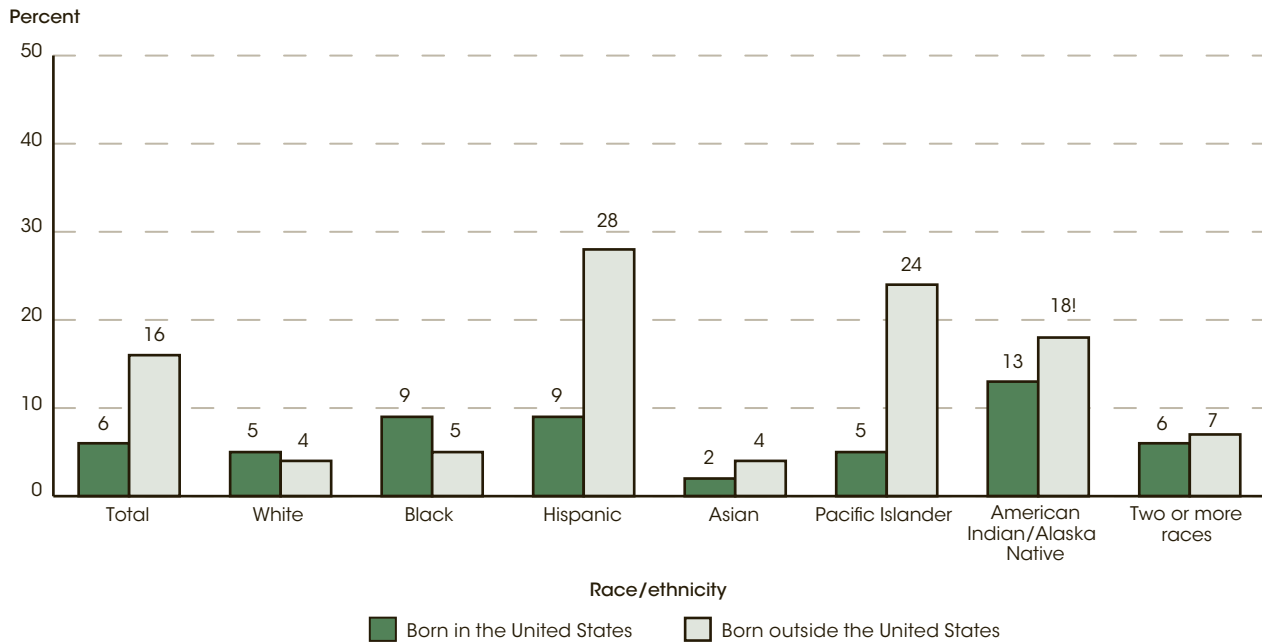
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 2011. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 219.80.

Based on data from the American Community Survey, which includes those living in institutional and noninstitutional³ living quarters, the status dropout rate in 2011 was lower for Asians (3 percent) and Whites (5 percent) than for those of two or more races (6 percent), Pacific Islanders (9 percent), Blacks (10 percent), American Indians/Alaska Natives (13 percent), and Hispanics (14 percent). In 2011, the status dropout rate was 7 percent

for those living in households and noninstitutionalized group quarters and 35 percent for those in institutionalized group quarters, such as prisons and residential health facilities. This pattern of higher dropout rates for those in institutionalized settings was consistent across all racial/ethnic groups with measurable rates for those in institutionalized settings (that is, all except for Pacific Islanders).

³ Noninstitutional group quarters include college and university housing, military quarters, facilities for workers and religious groups, and temporary shelters for the homeless.

Figure 6. Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds in the noninstitutionalized group quarters and household population, by race/ethnicity and nativity: American Community Survey (ACS) 2011



! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 and 50 percent.
 NOTE: This figure uses a different data source than figure 2; therefore, estimates are not directly comparable to the 2011 estimates in figure 2. United States refers to the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Northern Marianas. The "status dropout rate" represents the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and have not earned a high school credential (either a diploma or an equivalency credential such as a General Educational Development [GED] certificate). Noninstitutionalized group quarters include college and university housing, military quarters, facilities for workers and religious groups, and temporary shelters for the homeless. Among those counted in noninstitutionalized group quarters in the American Community Survey (ACS), only the residents of military barracks are not included in the civilian noninstitutionalized population in the Current Population Survey. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 2011. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 219.80.

In 2011, Hispanics, Asians, and Pacific Islanders born in the United States had lower status dropout rates than did their counterparts born outside of the United States, whereas U.S.-born Blacks had higher status dropout rates than did their foreign-born counterparts. Among all racial/ethnic groups, Pacific Islanders and Hispanics had

the largest difference in status dropout rates by nativity (both at 19 percentage points). The dropout rates were 5 percent for native-born Pacific Islanders and 9 percent for native-born Hispanics, compared with 24 and 28 percent for their counterparts born outside of the United States.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, tables 219.70, 219.75, and 219.80

Glossary: Dropout, GED certificate, High school diploma, High school equivalency certificate