

# The Performance and State Policies Of Higher Education in Washington: Insights from a Five-State Policy Review Project

Laura W. Perna  
Joni Finney  
Patrick Callan

With Assistance from:  
Michael Armijo, Jamey Rorison, Awilda Rodriguez

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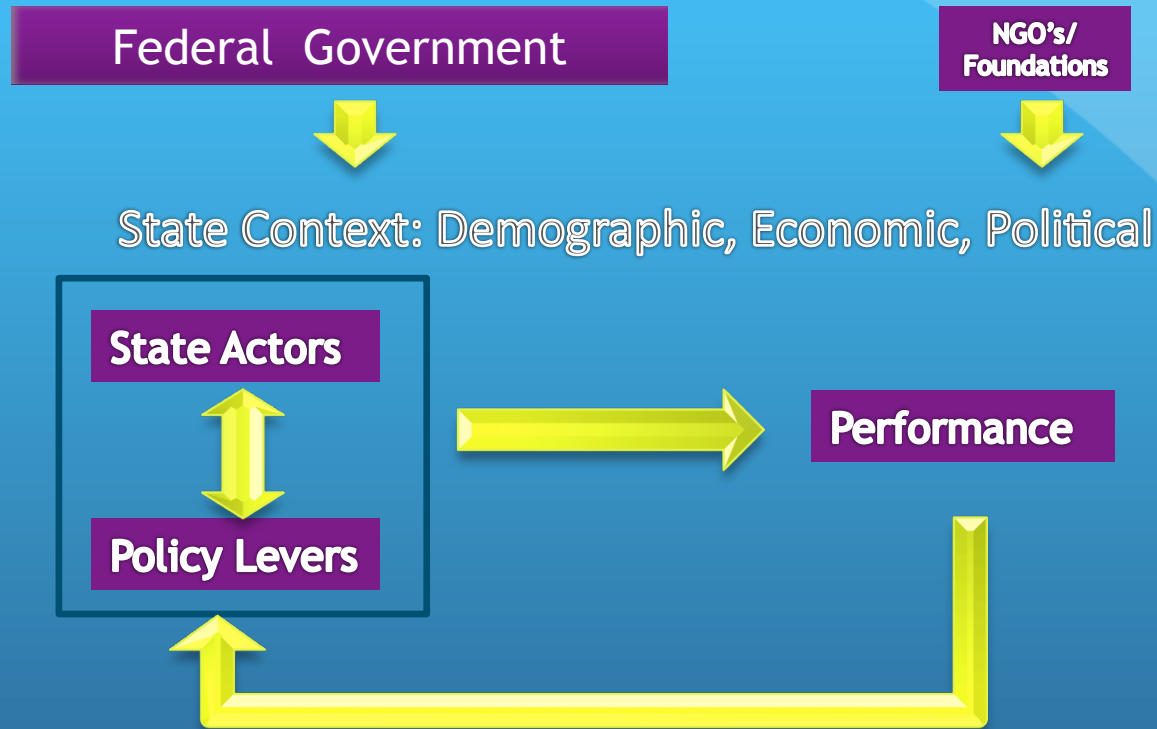
# What We Know about State Higher Education Performance

## *Measuring Up* - Biennial state-by-state report card

- Identifies state performance on indicators of:
  - ✓ Preparation
  - ✓ Participation
  - ✓ Completion
  - ✓ Affordability
  - ✓ Benefits
- Does not reveal:
  - Reasons for high or low performance
  - Reasons for changes in performance



# Conceptual Model



Overarching Research Question:  
What is the relationship between state policy and higher education performance?

# Research Questions

1. What is the performance of higher education? How has performance changed over time?
2. What is the context that informs higher education performance? How are aspects of context changing? How does the state context influence the policy options considered?
3. What policy levers have been used?
4. What is the relationship between policy levers and higher education performance?

# Methods: Case Study Research

## 5 States

- Georgia
- Illinois
- Washington
- Texas
- Maryland

## Data Sources

- Quantitative data
- Reports and documents
- Interviews

## Data Analysis

- Case study report for each state
- Cross-case analysis

## Number of Interviewees Per State

Perspective	GA	IL	WA	TX	MD
State Higher Education Leadership	18	13	22	9	14
State Political Leadership	4	5	8	10	4
Institutional Leadership	6	6	8	8	4
K-12 and P-16/P-20 Education Leadership	4	1	2	1	1
Business/Research/Philanthropic Leadership	1	1	4	2	1
Other Participants	3	3	4	4	1
TOTAL	36	29	48	34	25

## Increase in Degrees Required to Reach International Competitiveness Goals by 2020

Annual Increase in Degrees for 55% of 25- to 64-Year Olds to Have at Least an Associate's Degree

State	Current % of Adults with College Degrees	Annual Percentage Increase Required
Georgia	36%	10.0%
Illinois	41%	5.4%
Maryland	44%	5.1%
Texas	33%	11.5%
Washington	42%	6.2%
Total - U.S.	38%	7.9%

Source: Analyses by National Center for Higher Education Management Systems

# Roles of Different Sectors In The State's System of Higher Education

Distribution of Total 12-Month Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions:  
Fall 2008

State	Public 4- year	Public 2- year	Private NFP	Private For-Profit
Georgia	44%	35%	12%	10%
Illinois	17%	52%	20%	10%
Maryland	42%	41%	15%	2%
Texas	36%	51%	8%	5%
Washington	41%	47%	9%	3%
Total - U.S.	34%	39%	17%	10%

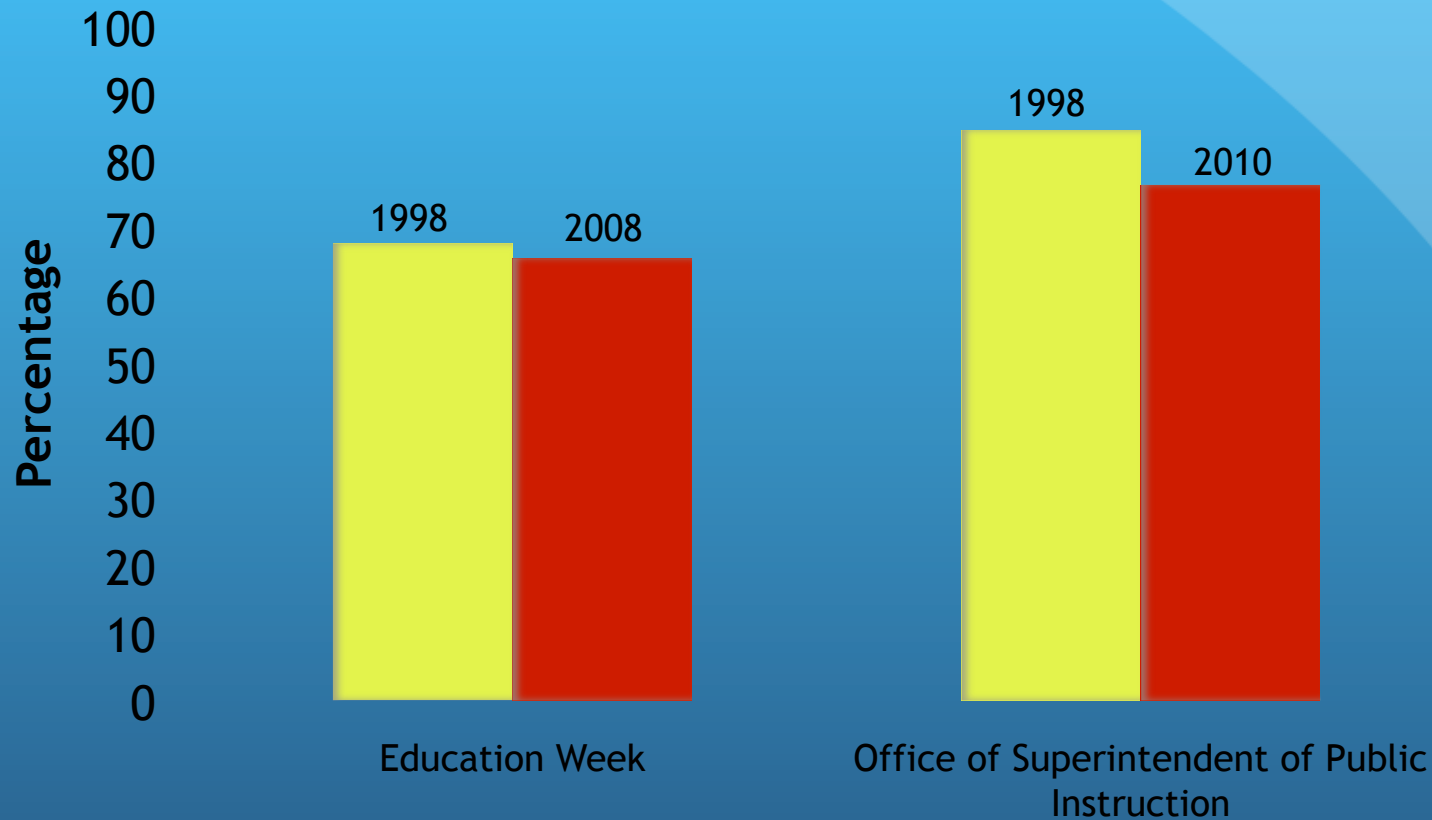
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 2010*



# Higher Education Performance in Washington

- Improvement, but below top-performing states in preparation and participation
- Leading state in bachelor's degree completion, but low bachelor's degree production
- Gaps in performance:
  - Lower outcomes for Hispanics and Blacks
  - Regional differences in higher education access

# High School Graduation Rates In Washington Have Declined

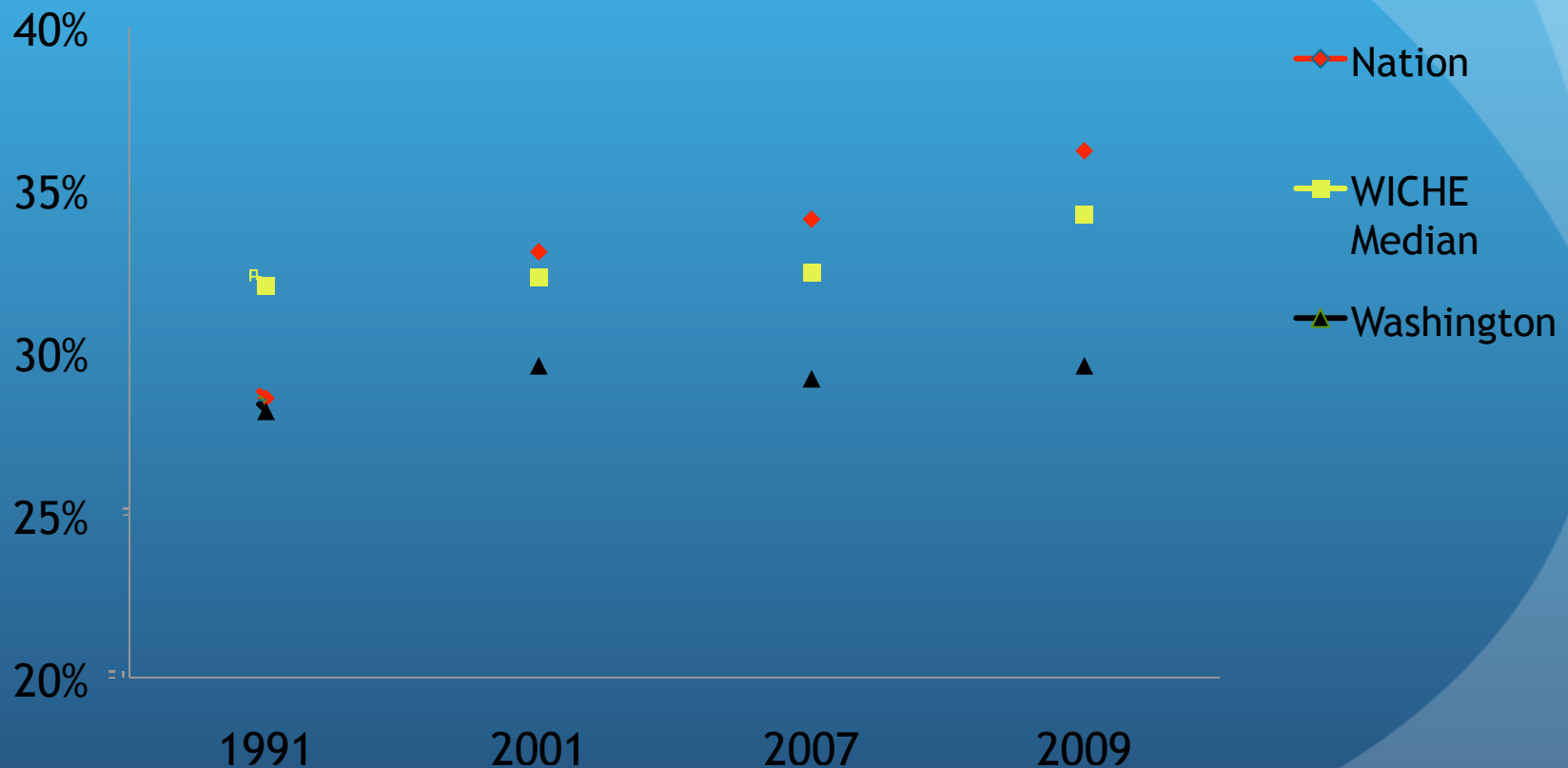


Sources: *Education week*, "Diplomas Count 2011" (Bethesda, MD: 2011),  
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/dc/index.html>

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction  
<http://www.k12.wa.us/dataadmin/>

# College Participation in Washington Is Virtually Unchanged

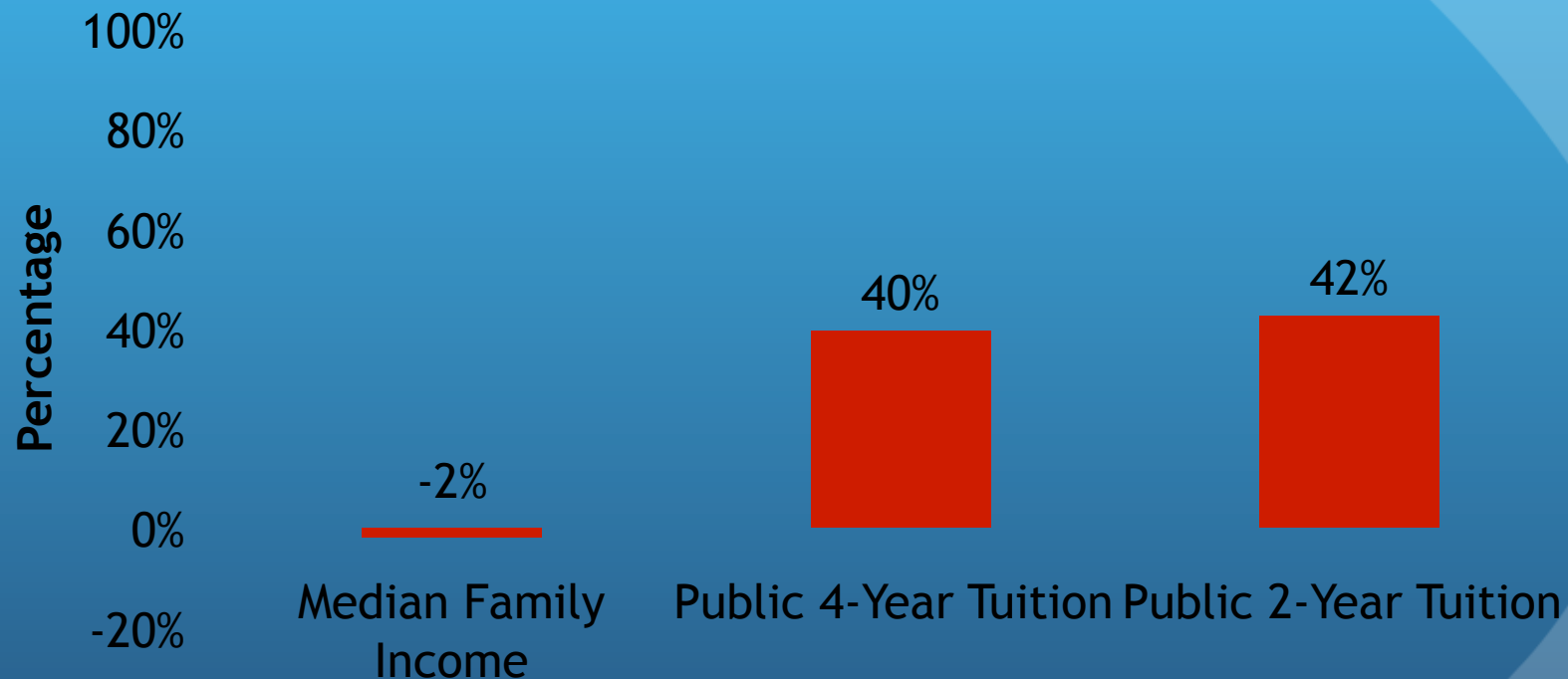
Percent of 18 to 24 year olds enrolled in college



Source: NCHEMS, "Percent of 18 to 24 year olds enrolled in college," 2011, <http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=104>, accessed November 5, 2011.

# College Affordability in Washington Has Declined

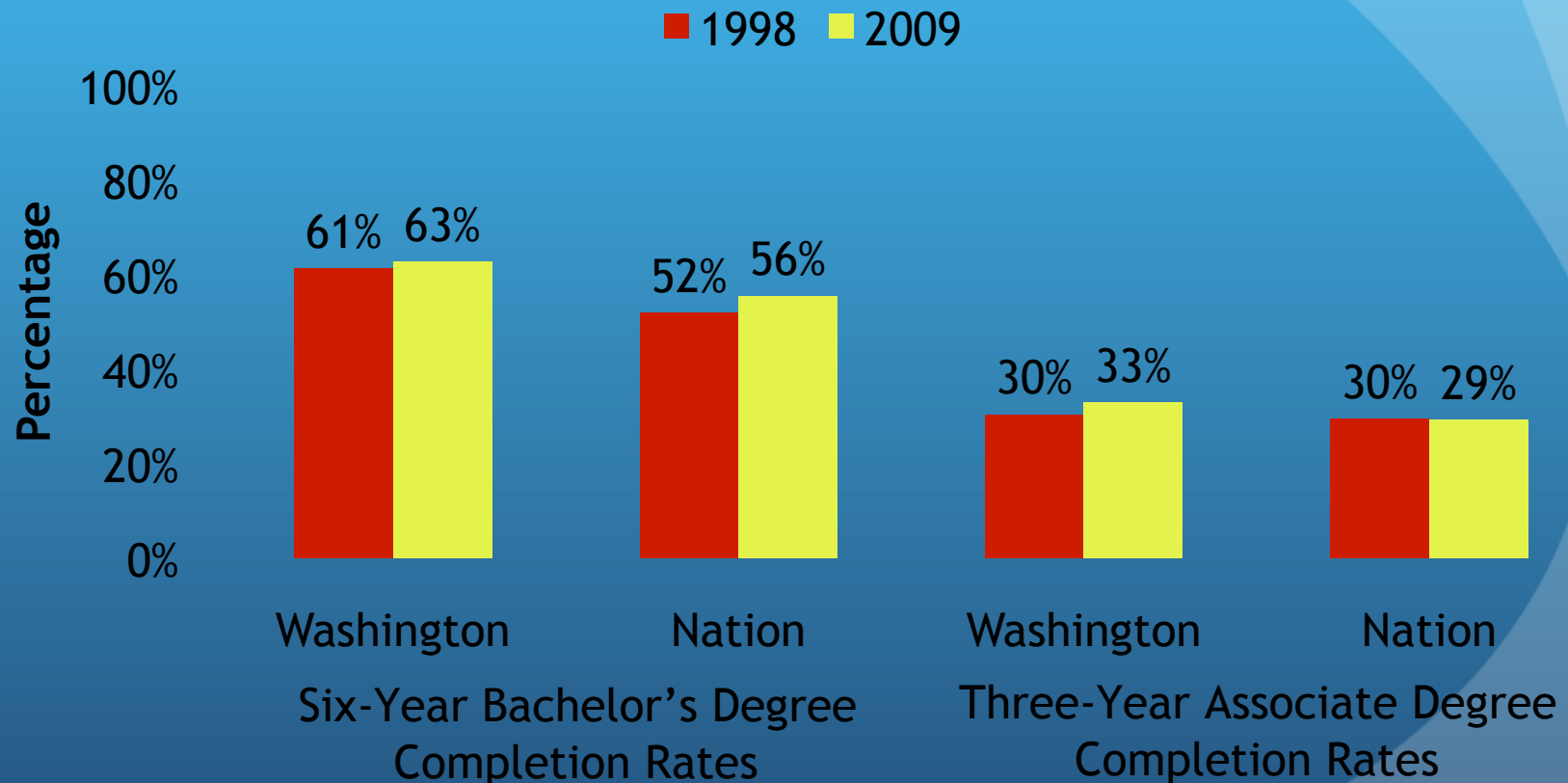
Change in Constant Dollars, 1999 - 2009



Source: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (2011). *Affordability and transfer: Critical to increasing baccalaureate degree completion*. San Jose, CA: Author.

# Washington Is a National Leader in Bachelor's Degree Completion Rates

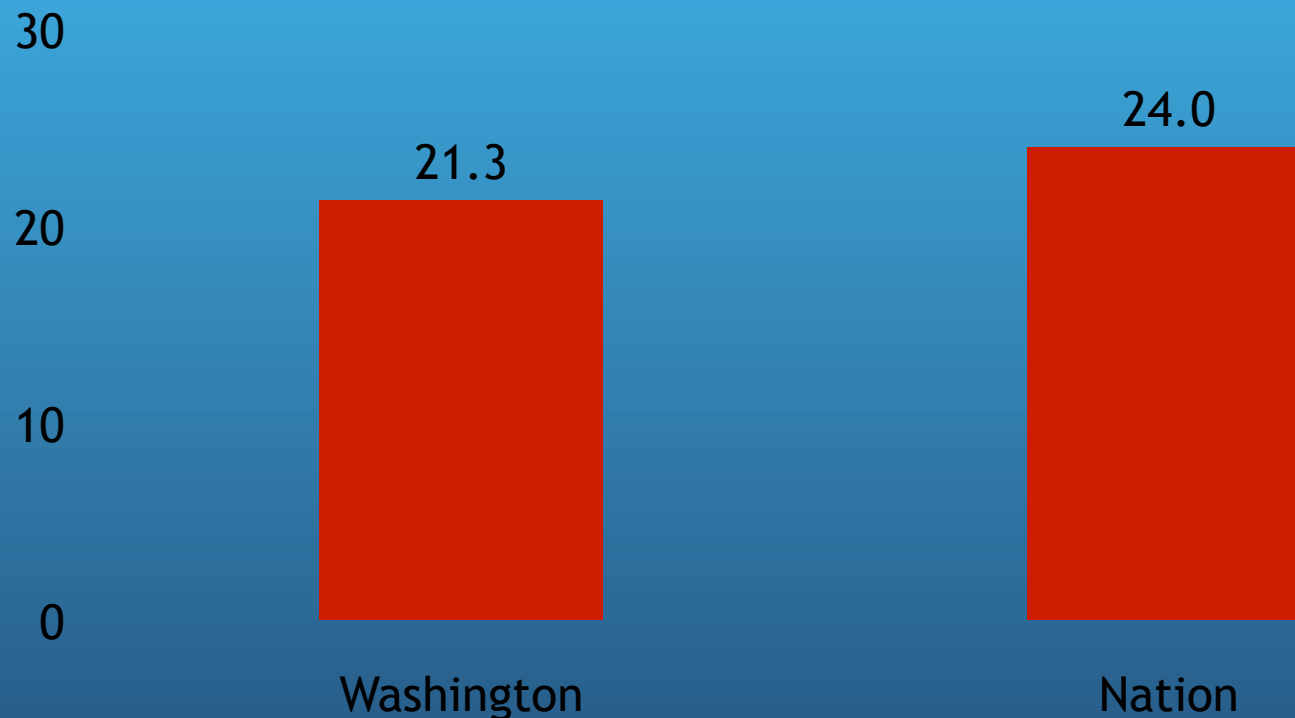
Change in Completion Rates, 1998 to 2009



Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, [www.higheredinfo.org](http://www.higheredinfo.org)

# But: Washington Lags Other States in Bachelor's Degree Production

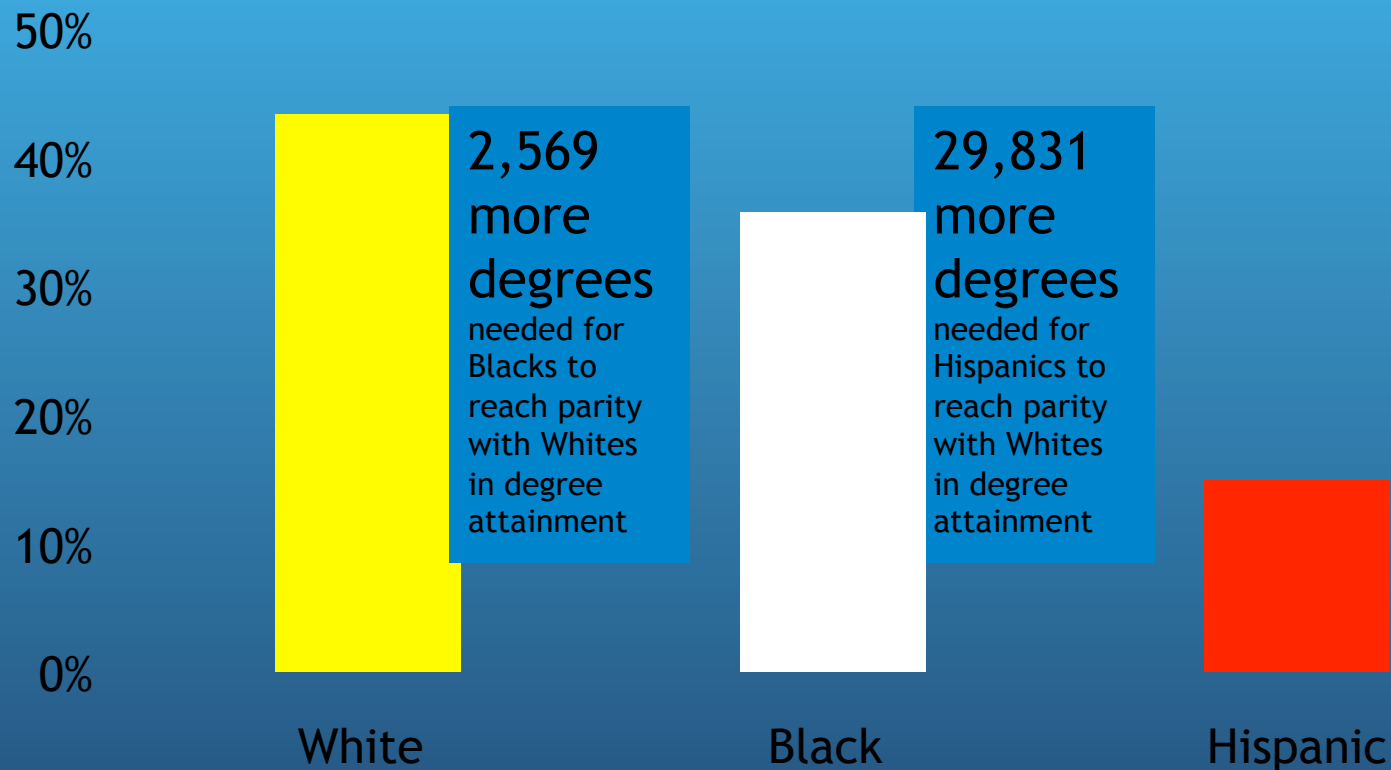
Number of Bachelor's Degrees Produced Per Capita,  
2005-06



Source: Washington HECB, *Key facts about higher education in Washington* (Olympia, WA: 2010) <http://www.hecb.wa.gov/keyfacts/index.asp>.

# Outcomes Are Lower for Blacks and Hispanics than Whites in Washington

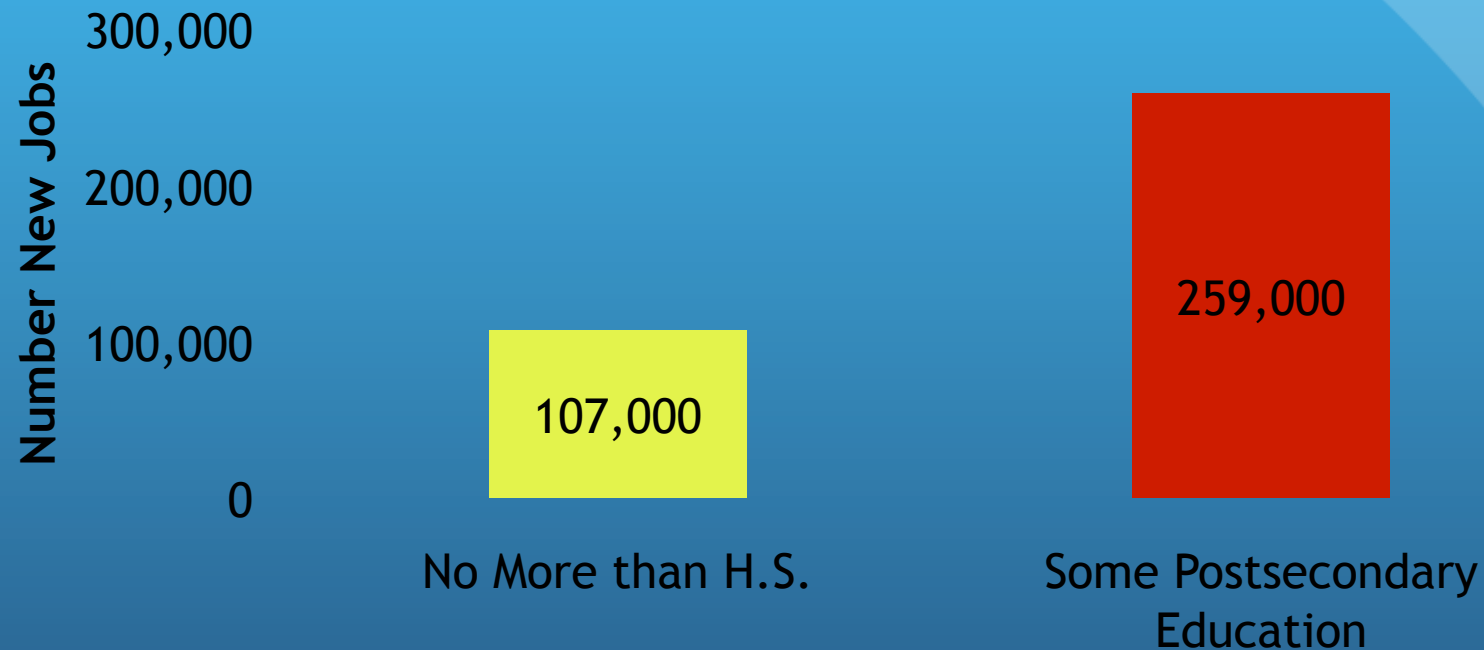
Percentage of Adults in Washington With at Least an Associate's Degree, 2007



Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, [www.Higheredinfo.org](http://www.Higheredinfo.org)

# Importance of Improving Performance: Workforce Demands

**Projected Growth in Jobs in Washington By Level  
of Education Required: 2008 to 2018**

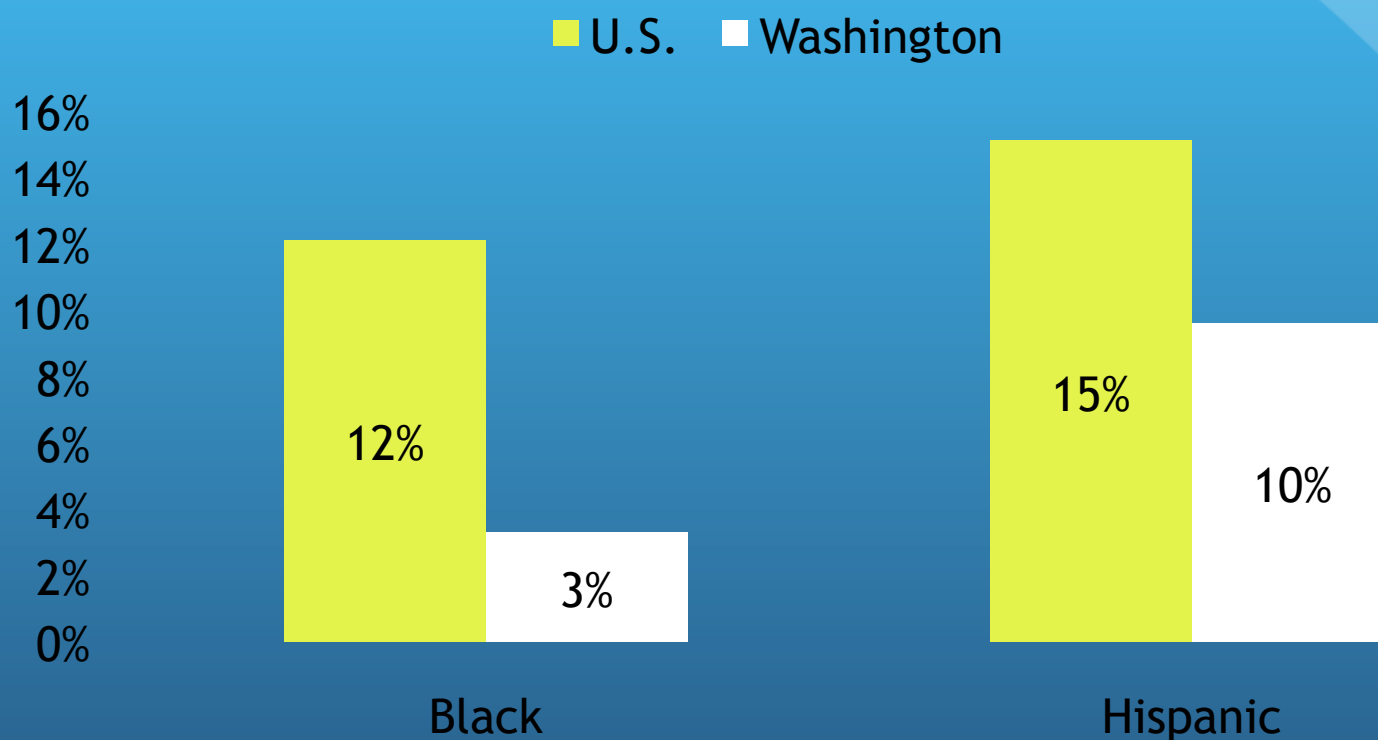


Source: Carnevale, A., Smith, N., & Stroh., J. (2010). *Help wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements through 2018*. Washington, DC: Georgetown Univ.



# Importance of Improving Performance: Demographic Characteristics & Trends

## Racial/Ethnic Composition of Population: 2009



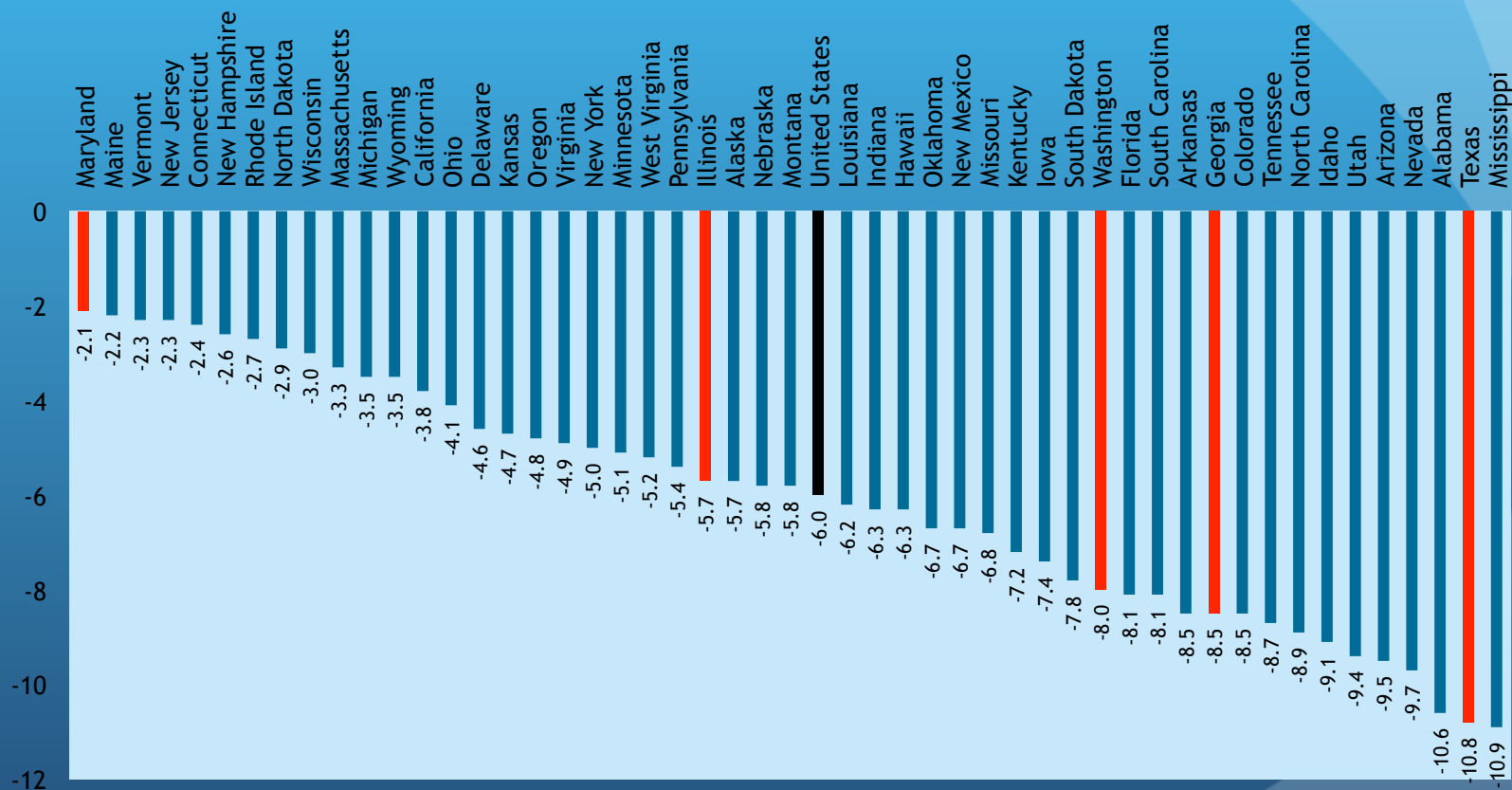
Source: U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Demographic and Housing Estimates, 2005-2009

# Challenge to Improving Performance: Fiscal Resource Constraints

- Severe declines in state revenues =  
Declines in higher education appropriations
- 2011-2013 budget reduces appropriations to public 4-year institutions by 24% over 2007-09 and assumes 20% increase in tuition
- Further cuts to 2011-13 biennium budget, given lower than expected state revenues
- State budget cuts will likely continue given projected structural deficits
- State residents have little appetite for increasing taxes

# Structural Budget Deficits = More Cuts

## Projected State and Local Budget Deficit as a Percent of Revenues, 2016



Source: Don Boyd, Rockefeller Institute of Government, 2009. Courtesy of Dennis Jones and Jane Wellman.

# Explanations for Performance in Washington

Lack of political commitment to implementing a statewide plan for higher education

Insufficient Strategies to Support Student Readiness for and Participation in Bachelor's Degree Programs

Decline in the strategic use of available fiscal resources to achieve statewide goals and priorities

# Theme 1: Lack of Political Commitment to Implementing a Statewide Plan for Higher Education

State Planning has Produced Little Change in State Policies

Attempts to Create Structural Changes in Governance Lack Clear Goals

# State Planning has Produced Little Change in State Policies

## Washington Learns: Recommendations issued 2006

- Legislature acted on 6 of 7 recommendations;
  - Did not act on recommendation to “provide high school students the opportunity to assess college readiness during the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade”
- Minimal impact on higher education

## 2008 Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education

- Criticized for lacking rigor, innovation, and solutions, and including unrealistic goals
- Limited implementation

Policy efforts reflect institutional and sector-based agenda rather than shared statewide perspective

# Attempts to Create Structural Changes in Governance Lack Clear Goals

## P-20 Council

- Created by Governor (2007) by executive order
- Short lived; no meaningful change in state policy

## Department of Education

- Would combine early learning, K-12- and higher education agencies in one cabinet level department
- Proposed by Governor (2011); rejected by Legislature

# Elimination of Higher Education Coordinating Board, effective July 2012

To be replaced by: Office of Student Financial Assistance and Council on Higher Education

Implying perceived ineffectiveness of HECB, the law states,

*The Legislature further intends to eliminate many of the policy and planning functions of the higher education coordinating board and rededicate those resources to the higher education institutions that provide the core, front-line services associated with instruction and research. Given the unprecedented budget crises the state is facing, the state must take the opportunity to build on the recommendations of the board and use the dollars where they can make the most direct impact.*

Source: State of Washington, "Engrossed second substitute Senate bill 5182," Chapter 11, *Laws of 2011*, Aug. 24, 2011, pp. 2-3, <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2011-12/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Law%202011/5182-S2.SL.pdf>



## Theme 2: Insufficient Strategies to Support Student Readiness for and Participation in Bachelor's Degree Programs

Insufficient Academic Preparation to Enroll in Four-year Institutions

Mismatch Between Population Distribution and Location of Public 4-Year Institutions

Disincentives for Four-Year Institutions to Enroll Transfer Students

Erosion of Community College Missions to Award Bachelor's Degrees in Applied Science

# Insufficient Academic Preparation to Enroll in Four-year Institutions

## Well-Regarded, Long-Standing Programs

- Running Start
  - Praised, but few low-income and minority students
- I-BEST program
  - Creates educational pathways for adult learners

## BUT: Lack of alignment of high school graduation requirements and college entrance requirements

- New high school graduation requirements to take effect for class of 2016
- New requirements do not ensure that students prepared to meet academic expectations of college

# Mismatch Between Population Distribution & Location of Public 4-Year Institutions

## Community colleges

- Geographically dispersed; primary point of access

## Branch campuses of research universities

- High cost
- Lower than expected enrollments

## University centers

- Small numbers participating

Most bachelor's degrees still produced by research universities (50%) and comprehensive institutions (39%)\*

\*Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2011b). Key facts about higher education in Washington 2011. Retrieved from <http://www.hecb.wa.gov/keyfacts/documents/RevisedBinder1-18-11.pdf>

# Disincentives for Four-Year Institutions to Enroll Transfer Students

Growth of transfer students puts pressure on the capacity and funding of four-year institutions

*We are trying to figure out how we work with the universities to expand capacity at the upper-division level. That is the pinch point in our state: upper division capacity, not freshman capacity [State Leader]*

## Erosion of Community College Missions to Award Bachelor's Degrees in Applied Science

- Small numbers awarded to date
- May distort community college mission

# Theme 3: Decline in the Strategic Use of Available Fiscal Resources to Achieve Statewide Goals and Priorities

Devolution of Tuition Setting Authority

Historic Commitment to Need-Based Student Financial Aid

State Funding to Incentivize Improved Performance

# Devolution of Tuition Setting Authority

Legislature historically controlled tuition increases for resident undergraduates

- 2007 Legislature limited increases to 7%
- For 2009-10 and 2010-11, tuition increases capped at 14%

2011 Legislature gave tuition-setting authority to public four-year institutions through 2014-15

# Historic Commitment to Need-Based Student Financial Aid

## Need-based aid:

- National leader in availability
  - 95% of all state financial aid to UGs need-based\*
  - Available for students at private institutions
  - Need-based State Work Study Program
- Availability recently challenged by budget shortfalls

## State mandate for institutional allocation of aid:

- Public four-year institutions must allocate share of tuition and fee revenues to need-based aid

## Alternative state aid program proposed

\*Source: Keeping college affordable: Annual report on state financial aid programs.

Retrieved from <http://www.hecb.wa.gov/news/newsreports/documents/09-10FAUpdate-FinalforBoardMtg.pdf>.

# State Funding to Incentivize Improved Institutional Performance

## Student Achievement Initiative

- Developed by community and technical colleges
- Designed to promote accountability, provide financial incentives to improve performance
- Perceived to increase credibility and political leverage of community college sector

## Performance funding for public four-year institutions

- Considered; not implemented
- “Performance reporting” system authorized by Legislature May 2011



# Conclusions For Washington

- Well-coordinated, well-respected community college system
- High bachelor's degree completion rates, but too few awarded
- Too few high school students academically prepared for and enroll in four-year institutions
- Plans to improve higher education performance, but not implemented
- Erosion of historical efforts to link appropriations, tuition, and financial aid and devolution of tuition-setting and policy-making to public four-year institutions
- Elimination of Higher Education Coordinating Board may limit policy leadership capacity to pursue a public agenda that is greater than institutional interests