

## Post-Secondary Enrollment Trends in New York State

Prepared by Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities ([www.cicu.org](http://www.cicu.org)), Fall 2022

### Introduction

New York State is home to arguably the most robust higher education ecosystem in the world. More than one million students from every region of the state, every state in the union, and nearly every country earn their degrees in New York State. However, each institution is unique and each sector of higher education, public or private, has its own set of challenges, advantages, and opportunities.

New York State's colleges and universities are not immune to the factors negatively impacting enrollment across the state and the country, most recently the COVID-19 pandemic. While many colleges and universities experienced steady or increased enrollment over the past decade, many other institutions began to experience enrollment challenges long before the pandemic's first impact in fall 2020. In some cases, undergraduate enrollment fell, while graduate enrollment increased.

When the enrollment impact of the pandemic became clear in fall 2020, it revealed sharp declines across all sectors, and nearly all institutions. Fall 2021 showed a mix of enrollment recovery and continued decline. Early analysis of preliminary fall 2022 enrollment data signals a continuation of this blend of recovery and decline with variations across sectors and campuses.

This report is intended to highlight the enrollment trends and challenges before and since the pandemic and offer suggestions to make higher education more accessible. Increasing student aid and other student supports are among the potential solutions to mitigate enrollment losses — students are likelier to enroll in and graduate from college if they are confident that they can afford to pay for it.

### Key Findings<sup>1</sup>

- There are far fewer students enrolled in New York State's colleges and universities since fall 2011. Demographic trends, the pandemic, and changing attitudes about higher education are some reasons for the decline.
- Between fall 2011 and fall 2019 (pre-pandemic), statewide post-secondary enrollment declined by seven percent.
- Statewide enrollment fell by another seven percent between fall 2019 and fall 2021 – the years impacted by the pandemic.
- The total statewide decline between fall 2011 and fall 2021 was 14 percent – nearly 200,000 fewer students attending the state's colleges and universities.
- At New York State's four-year colleges and universities, there has been a decline of 26 percent in the number of students aged 25 and older since 2011.
- In fall 2011, the Independent Sector enrolled nearly half of students aged 25 and older. By fall 2021, the share has fallen to one-third.
- The number of high school students in New York State is projected to decline by four percent between fall 2021 and fall 2030.
- Between fall 2017 and fall 2021, there was a 70 percent increase in the number of Independent Sector students taking at least some distance education classes.
- Between fall 2011 and fall 2021, the Independent Sector experienced an increase of 13 percent in the number of students who identify as students of color.

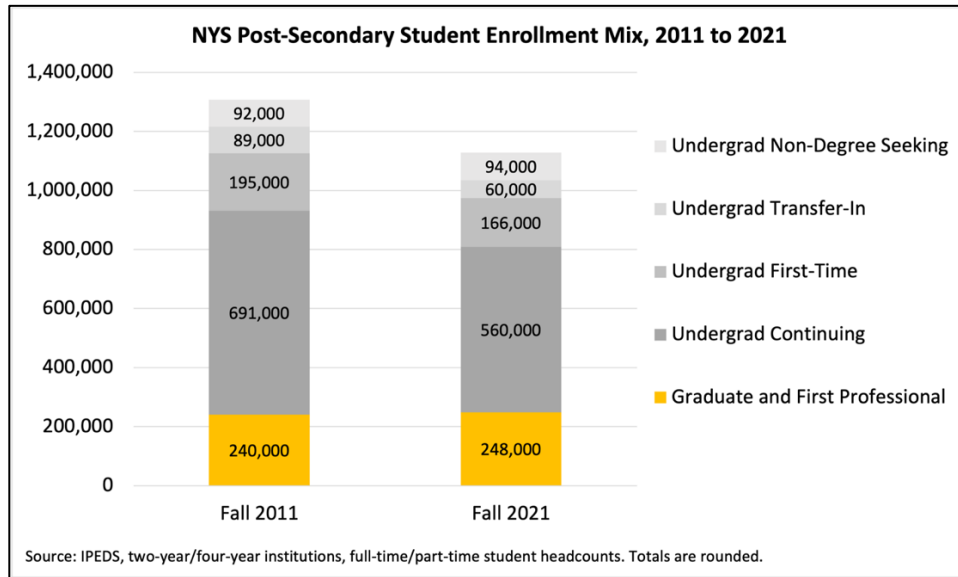
---

<sup>1</sup> The primary source for enrollment data used in this analysis is the Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) unless otherwise noted. Totals are rounded for clarity.

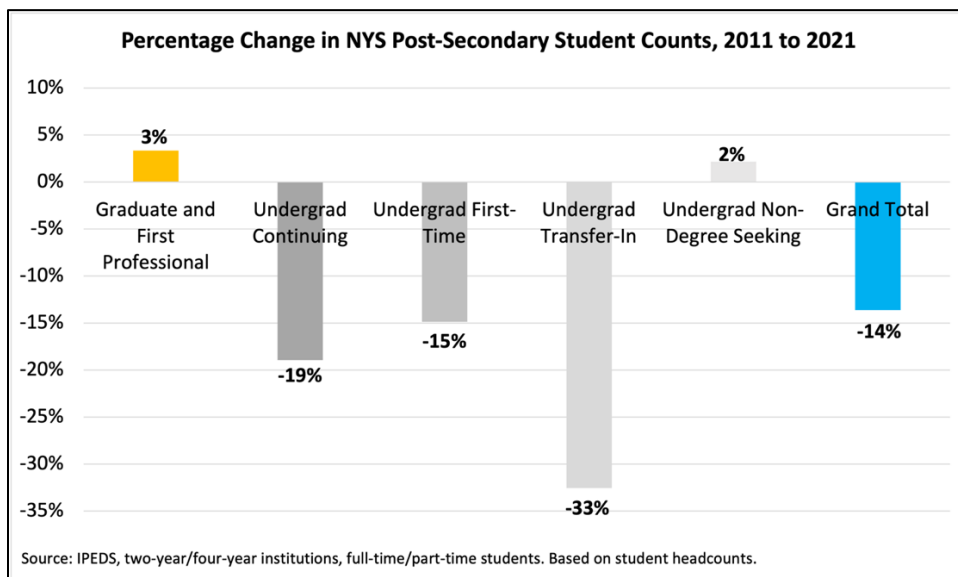
## How the Enrollment Mix has Changed

### Statewide 2011 to 2021

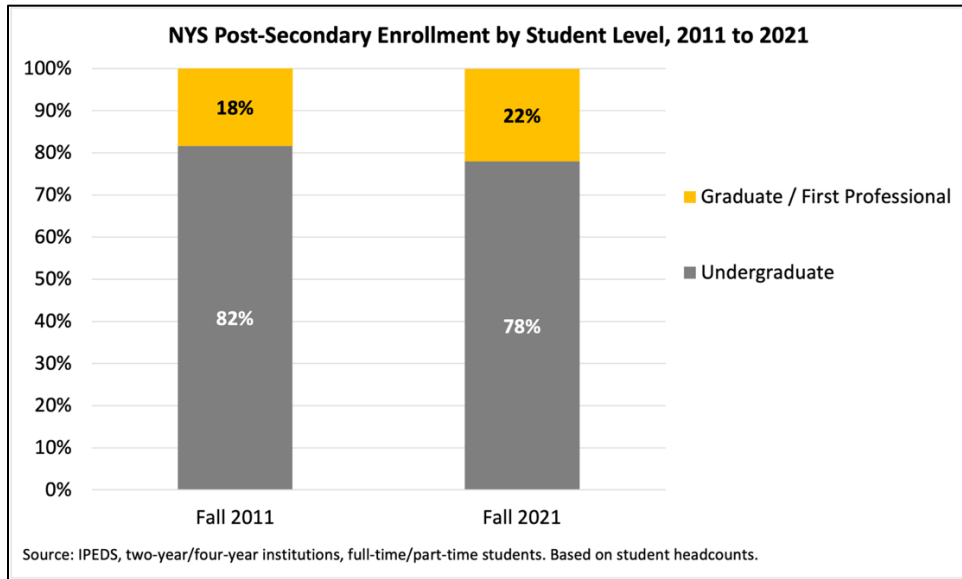
In 2011, there were 1.3 million students attending colleges and universities in New York State. In fall 2021, there were nearly 200,000 fewer students enrolled in the state's post-secondary institutions (1,307,000 in fall 2011 compared to 1,129,000 in fall 2021, a 14 percent reduction).



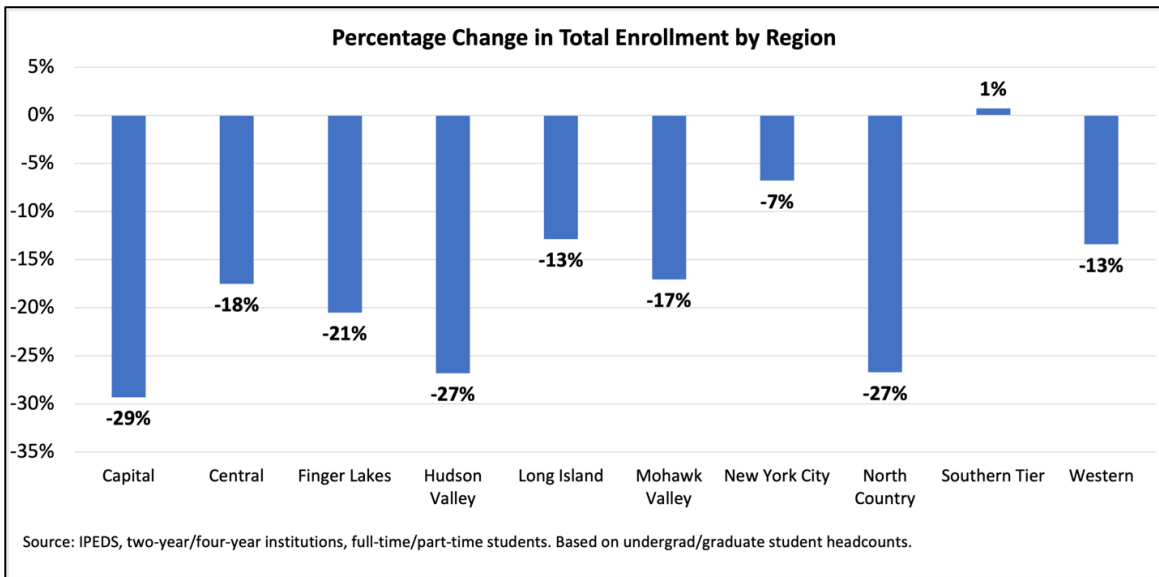
The enrollment decline occurred primarily among undergraduate students. There were 18 percent fewer undergraduates attending colleges and universities in fall 2021 compared to fall 2011. Graduate and first professional enrollment increased by three percent during that period.



The mix of undergraduate and graduate and first professional students shifted as well. Graduate students comprised 18 percent of total enrollment in fall 2011 and 22 percent of the total in fall 2021. Likewise, the undergraduate share fell from 82 percent in fall 2011 to 78 percent in fall 2021.

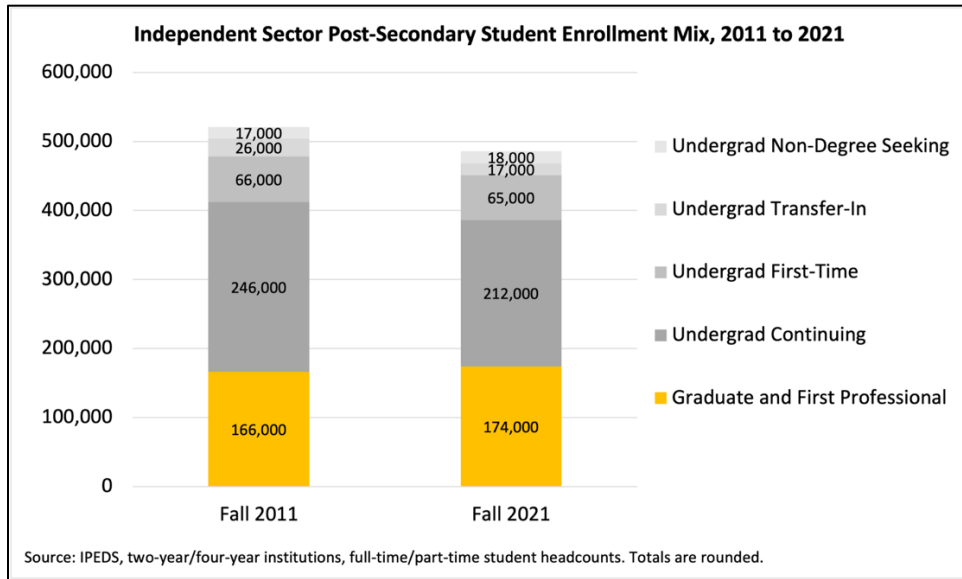


The enrollment decline occurred in nearly every region of New York State. The Southern Tier experienced a slight increase over the period, driven by a small number of institutions.

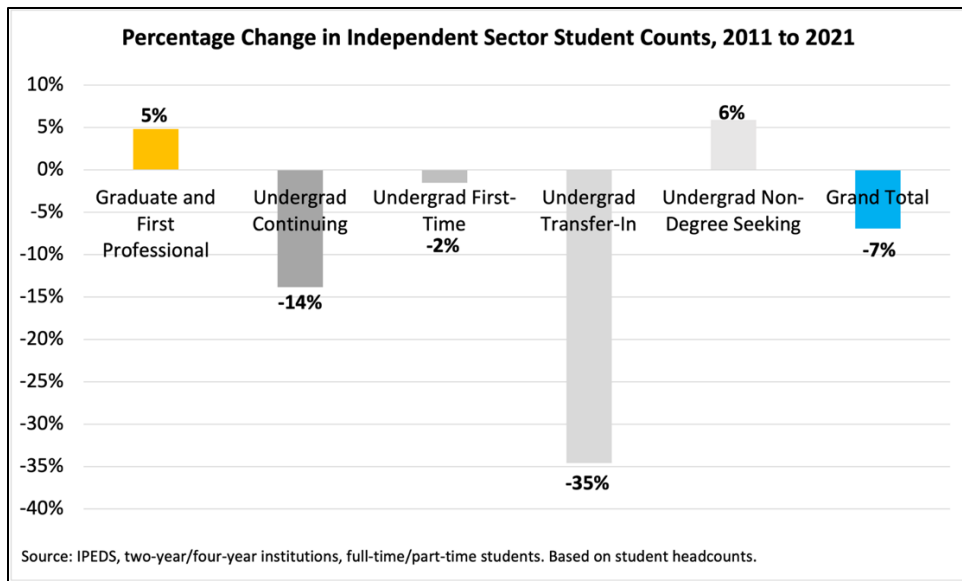


### Independent Sector 2011 to 2021

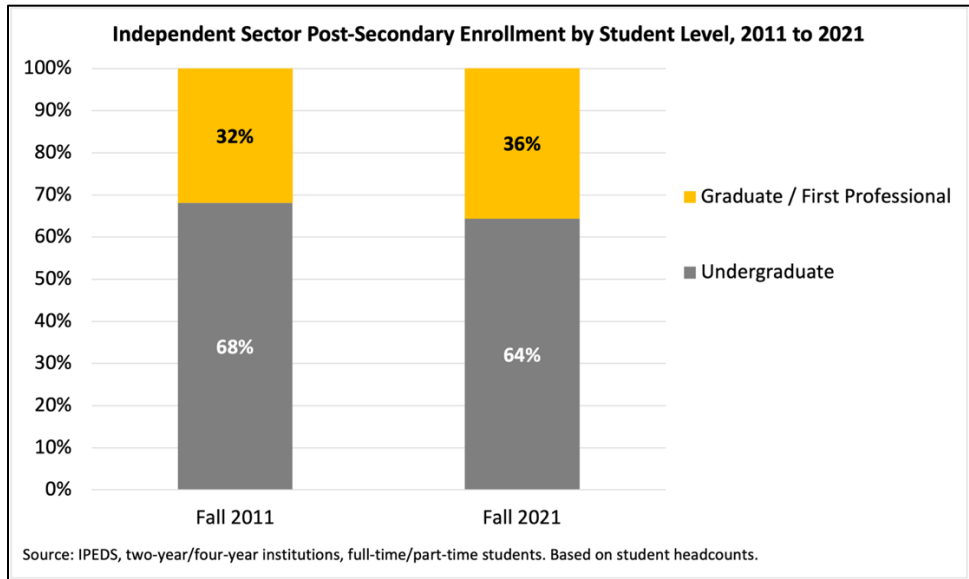
In 2011, there were 521,000 students attending private, not-for-profit colleges and universities in New York State. In fall 2021, there were nearly 36,000 fewer students enrolled in the state's Independent Sector institutions (521,000 in fall 2011 compared to 485,000 in fall 2021, a 7 percent reduction).



The enrollment decline in the Independent Sector occurred primarily among undergraduate students. There were 12 percent fewer undergraduates attending independent colleges and universities in fall 2021 compared to fall 2011. Graduate and first professional enrollment increased by five percent during that period (166,000 to 174,000).

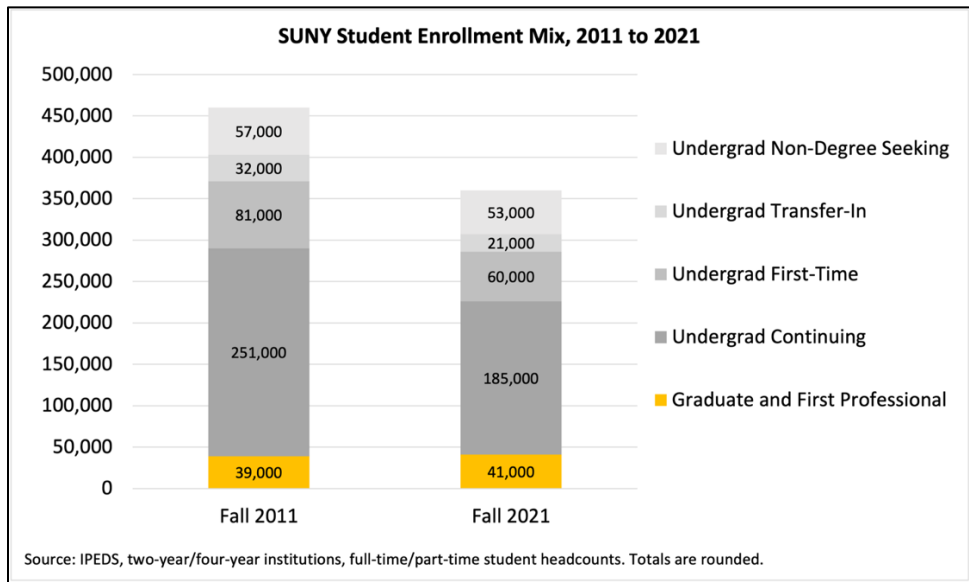


The mix of undergraduate and graduate and first professional students shifted as well. Graduate students comprised 32 percent of total Independent Sector enrollment in fall 2011 and 36 percent of the total in fall 2021. Likewise, the undergraduate share fell from 68 percent in fall 2011 to 64 percent in fall 2021.

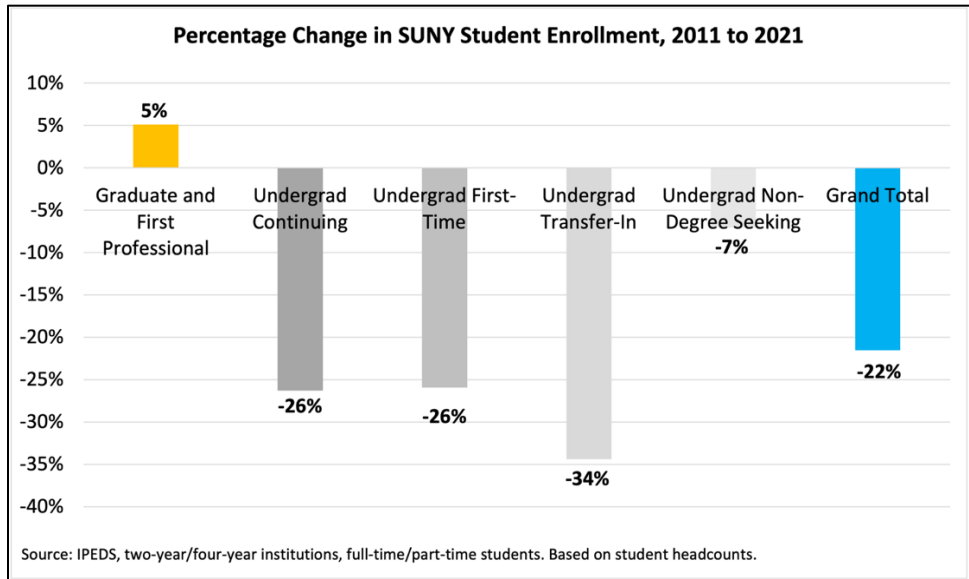


**SUNY 2011 to 2021**

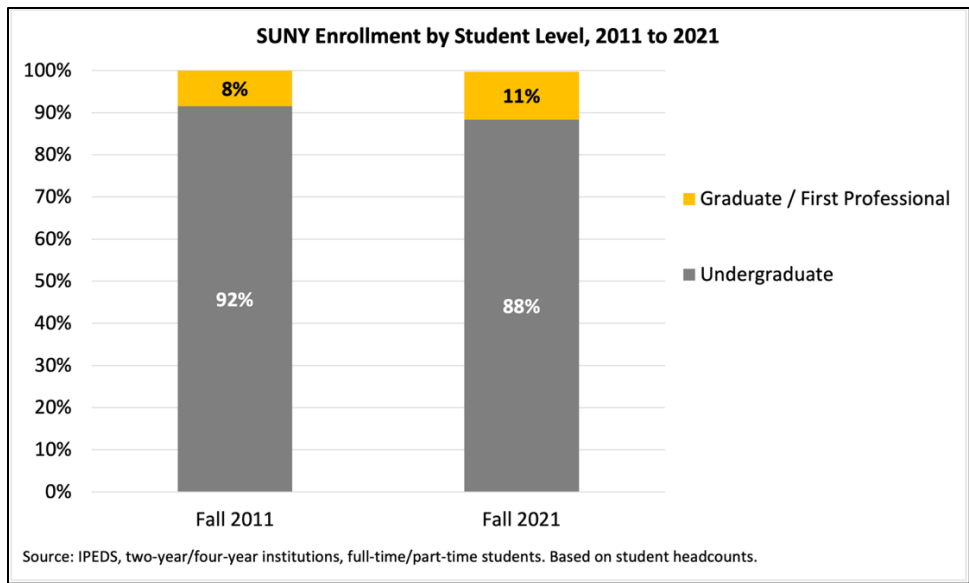
In 2011, there were 460,000 students enrolled in SUNY’s two-year and four-year/graduate colleges and universities. In fall 2021, there were nearly 100,000 fewer students enrolled in SUNY institutions (460,000 in fall 2011 compared to 361,000 in fall 2021, a 22 percent reduction).



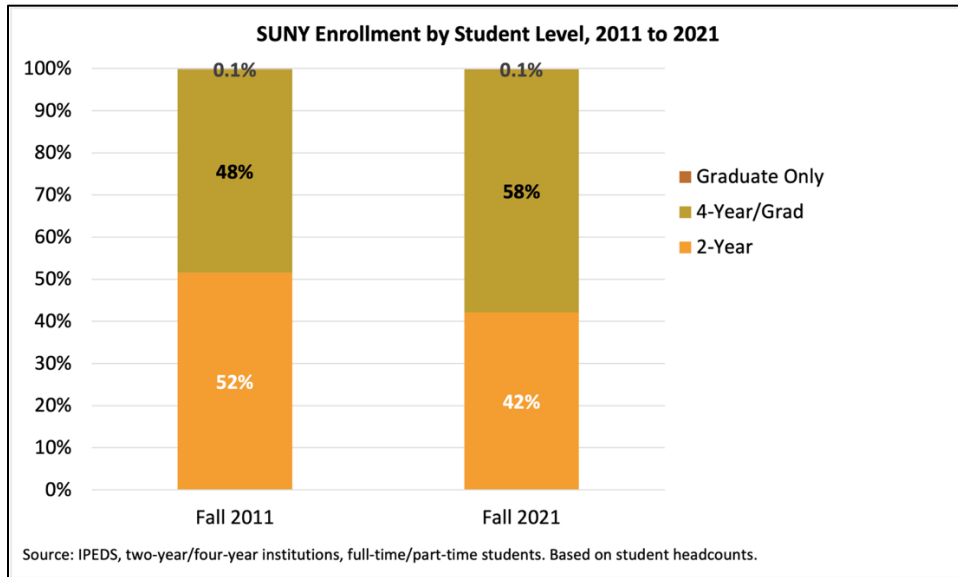
SUNY’s enrollment decline occurred primarily among undergraduate students. There were 24 percent fewer undergraduates attending SUNY colleges and universities in fall 2021 compared to fall 2011 (421,000 in 2011 compared with 319,000 in 2021). Graduate and first professional enrollment increased by five percent during that period (39,000 to 41,000).



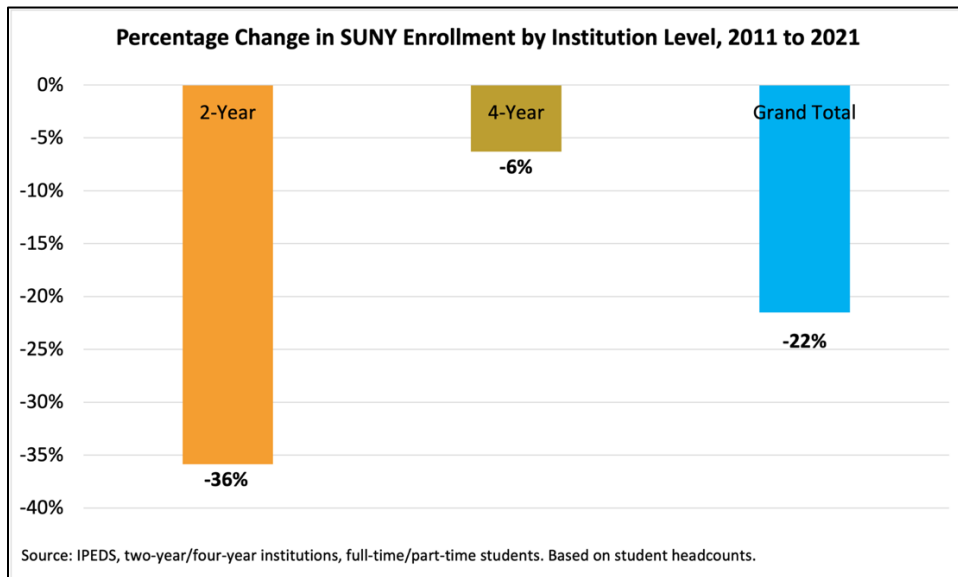
The mix of undergraduate and graduate and first professional students shifted as well. Graduate students comprised eight percent of total SUNY enrollment in fall 2011 and 11 percent of the total in fall 2021. The undergraduate share fell from 92 percent in fall 2011 to 88 percent in fall 2021.



SUNY’s two-year colleges accounted for more than half of total enrollment in fall 2011 (52 percent). By fall 2021, two-year colleges enrolled only 42 percent of SUNY’s students due to a decline of 85,000 students.

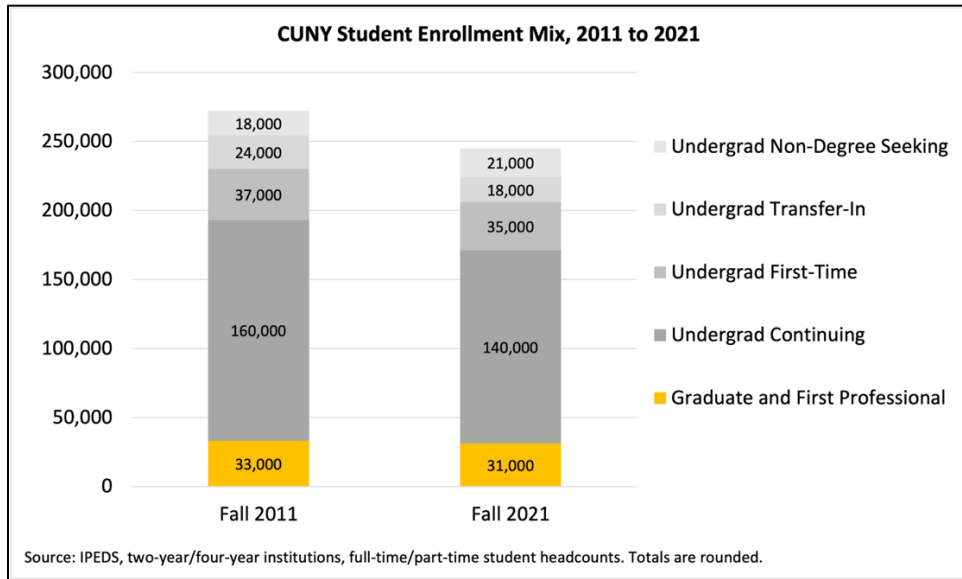


Enrollment at SUNY’s four-year/graduate colleges and universities fell by six percent over the same period.

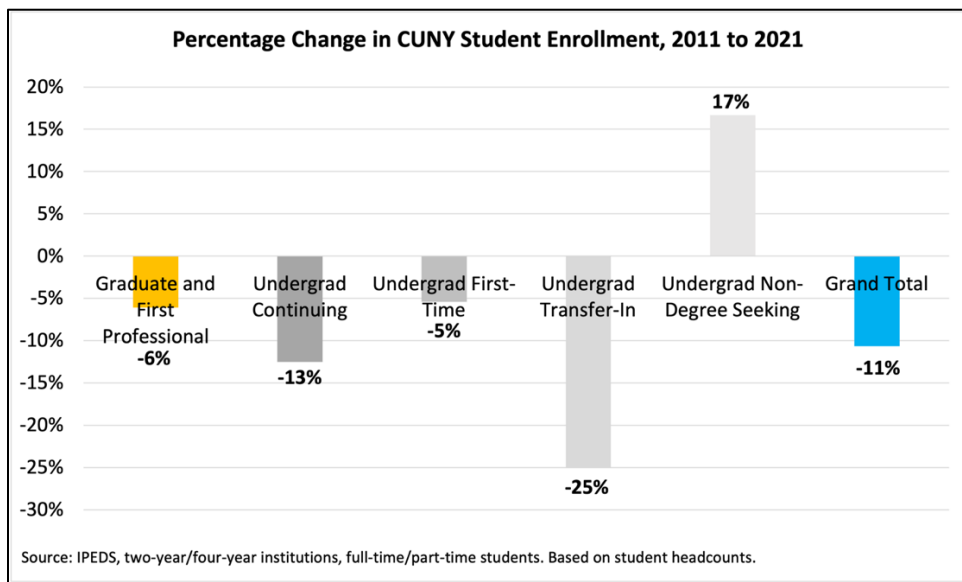


#### CUNY 2011 to 2021

In 2011, there were 272,000 students enrolled in CUNY’s two-year and four-year/graduate colleges and universities. In fall 2021, there were nearly 30,000 fewer students enrolled in CUNY institutions (272,000 in fall 2011 compared to 243,000 in fall 2021, an 11 percent reduction).

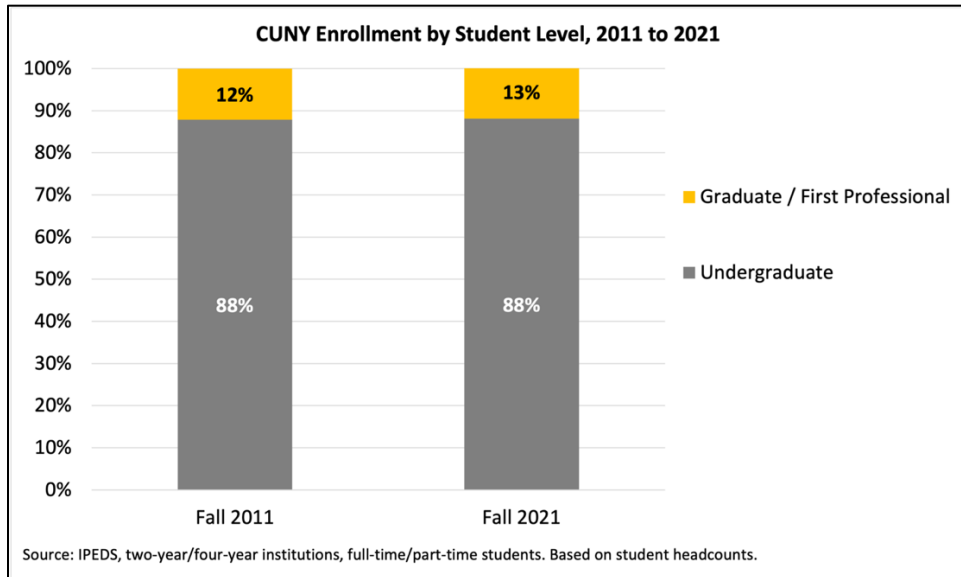


CUNY’s enrollment decline occurred primarily among undergraduate students. There were 10 percent fewer undergraduates attending CUNY colleges and universities in fall 2021 compared to fall 2011 (239,000 in 2011 compared with 214,000 in 2021). Graduate and first professional enrollment decreased by six percent during that period (33,000 to 31,000).

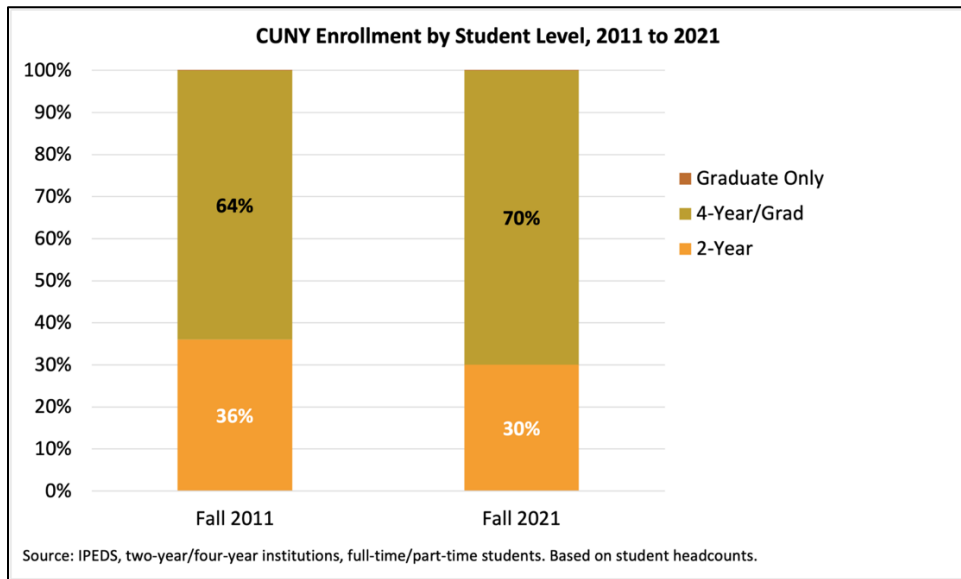


The mix of undergraduate and graduate and first professional students remained consistent at CUNY colleges and universities between fall 2011 and fall 2021. Undergraduates comprise 88 percent of the student population.

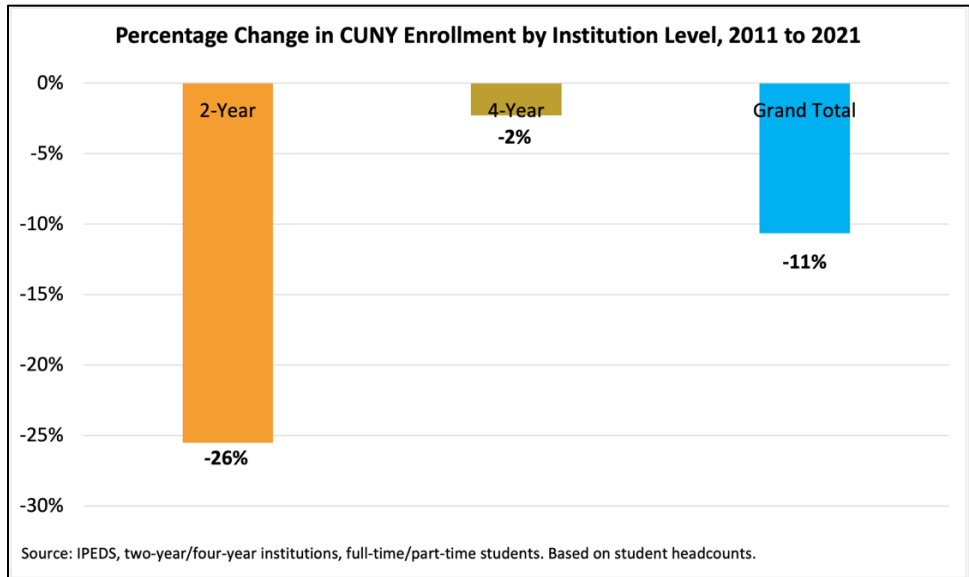




CUNY’s two-year colleges accounted for 36 percent of total enrollment in fall 2011. By fall 2021, two-year colleges enrolled 30 percent of CUNY’s students due to a decline of 25,000 students.

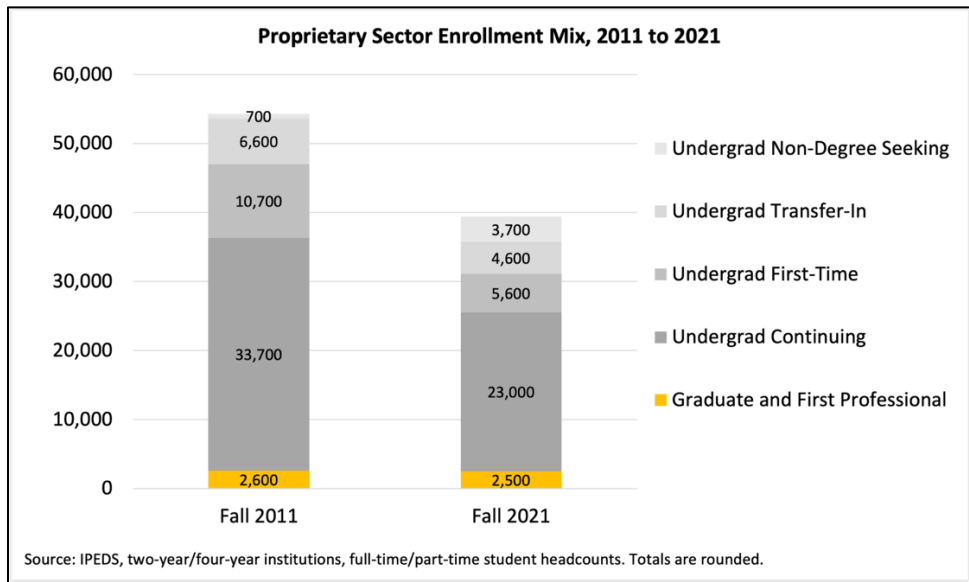


Enrollment at CUNY’s four-year/graduate colleges and universities fell by two percent over the same period.

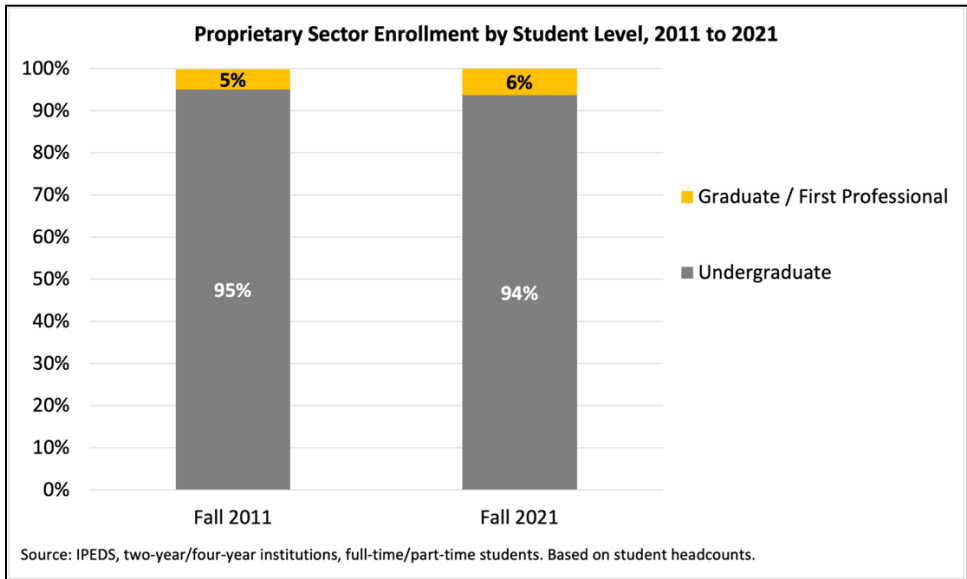


### Proprietary Institutions 2011 to 2021

In 2011, there were 54,400 students enrolled in two-year and four-year/graduate for-profit colleges and universities. In fall 2021, there were 15,000 fewer students enrolled in these institutions (54,400 in fall 2011 compared to 39,400 in fall 2021, a 28 percent reduction).



As with other sectors, the enrollment decline occurred primarily among undergraduate students. There were 29 percent fewer undergraduates attending proprietary colleges and universities in fall 2021 compared to fall 2011 (51,700 in 2011 compared with 36,900 in 2021). Graduate and first professional enrollment comprises only about five percent of total enrollment at proprietary institutions and remained steady between 2011 and 2021. Notably, non-degree-seeking student enrollment increased significantly over this period, growing from 700 students in 2011 to more than 3,700 in 2022.



## The Pandemic's Impact on Enrollment

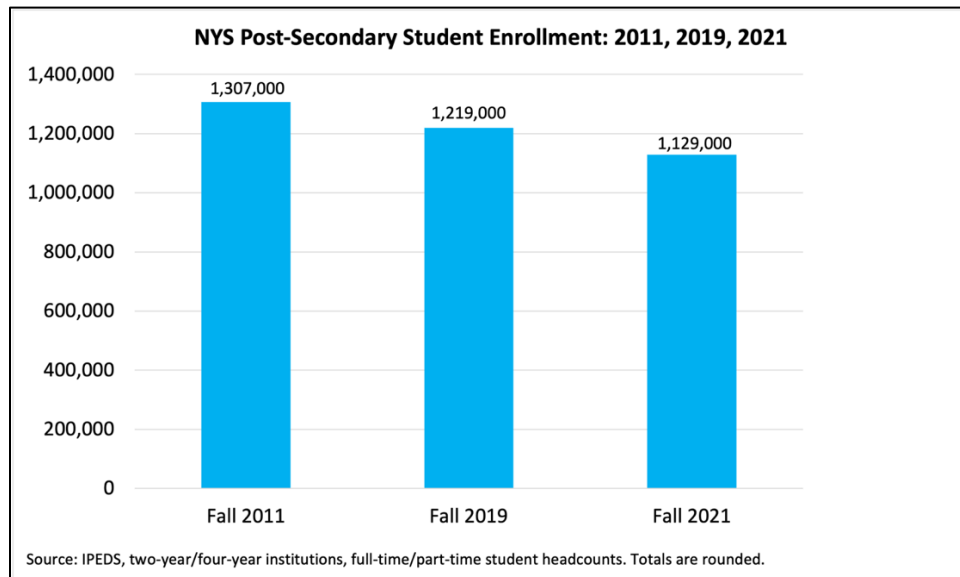
### New York State 2019 to 2021

Many factors influence post-secondary enrollment in New York State: geographic trends, state and federal policy decisions, and state and national economic conditions to name a few. The COVID-19 pandemic had an immediate negative impact on all sectors of higher education enrollment.

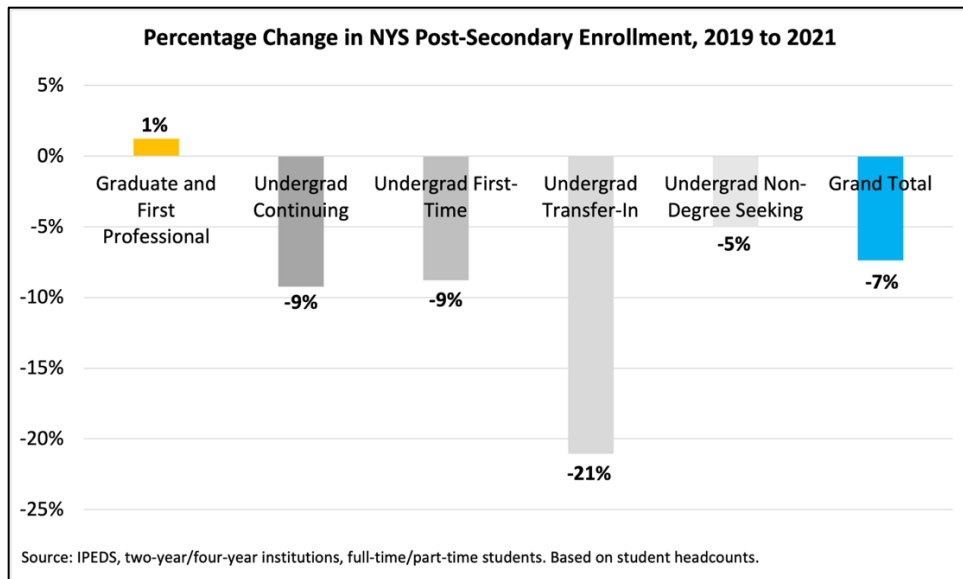
Total college and university enrollment fell by seven percent between fall 2011 and fall 2019 (a reduction of 88,000 students). Factors such as fewer high school students, national population shifts, and changing attitudes about higher education played a significant role in the reduction of college students in the state through fall 2019.

The onset of the pandemic in early 2020 led to a rapid transition to online learning across all sectors of higher education. By fall 2020, the initial toll on enrollment became apparent. Between fall 2019 (pre-pandemic) and fall 2020 (the first full term during the pandemic) total college and university enrollment in New York State fell by four percent, or by 54,000 students. Between fall 2020 and fall 2021 (the second academic year of the pandemic) enrollment across the state fell by another 36,000 students.

The total decline in post-secondary enrollment between fall 2019 and fall 2021 was 90,000 students. In the two years of the pandemic, the state lost as many students as were lost between fall 2011 and fall 2019.



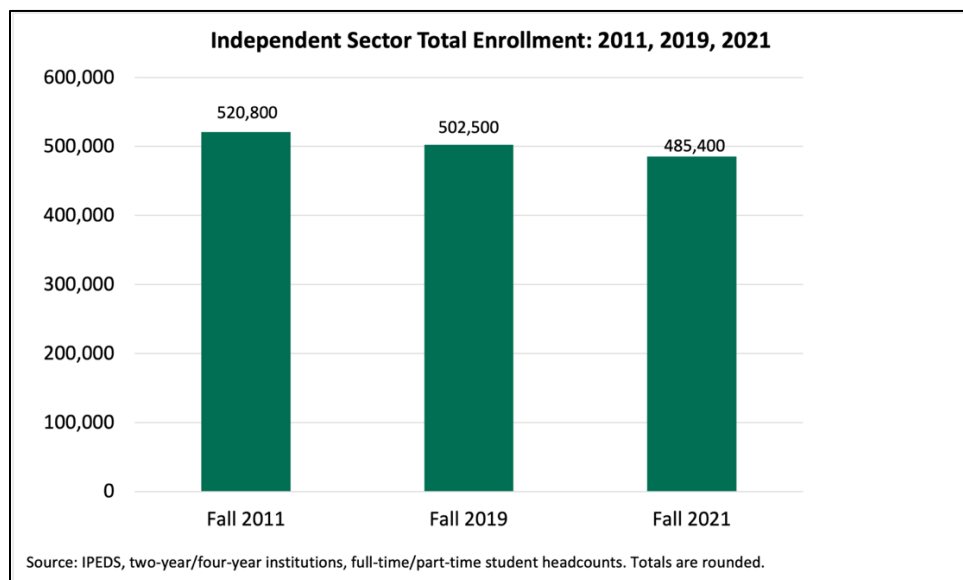
The net impact of the pandemic on total enrollment was a seven percent reduction, including a 10 percent reduction in undergraduates and a slight increase in graduate and first professional students (up by one percent).



### Independent Sector, 2019 to 2021

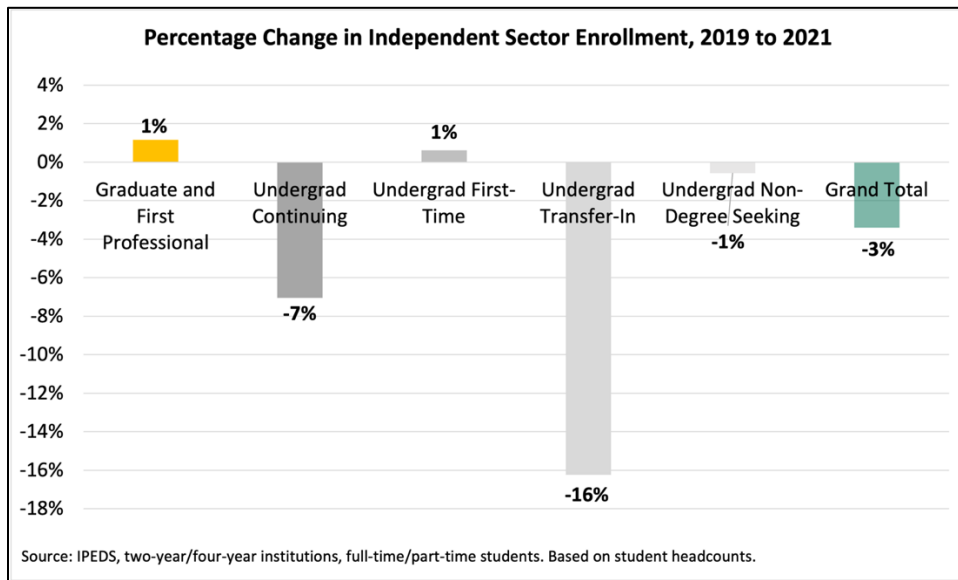
After a sharp decline in fall 2020, early indications are that total enrollment across the sector may be stabilizing through fall 2022. However, each institution is different and some still face enrollment challenges.

- Between 2011 and 2019 (pre-pandemic), total enrollment in the sector fell by four percent (520,800 in 2011 to 502,500 in 2019).
- The pandemic-fueled decline from 2019 to 2020 was significantly steeper than prior years. Between fall 2019 and fall 2020, aggregate enrollment at private, not-for-profit colleges in New York fell by 4 percent (502,500 in fall 2019 to 481,600 in fall 2020), equaling the total enrollment decline of the prior eight years.
- Leading into the pandemic's second year, the enrollment decline stabilized between fall 2020 and fall 2021, gaining 1 percent (481,600 to 485,400).
- Early indications of fall 2022 enrollment data for the sector suggest a continuation of the sector-wide stabilization that began in fall 2021 driven by some institutions, but also further challenges for others.<sup>2</sup>
- The net change in aggregate enrollment since the pandemic began is a 3 percent reduction between fall 2019 and fall 2021 (502,500 to 485,400).



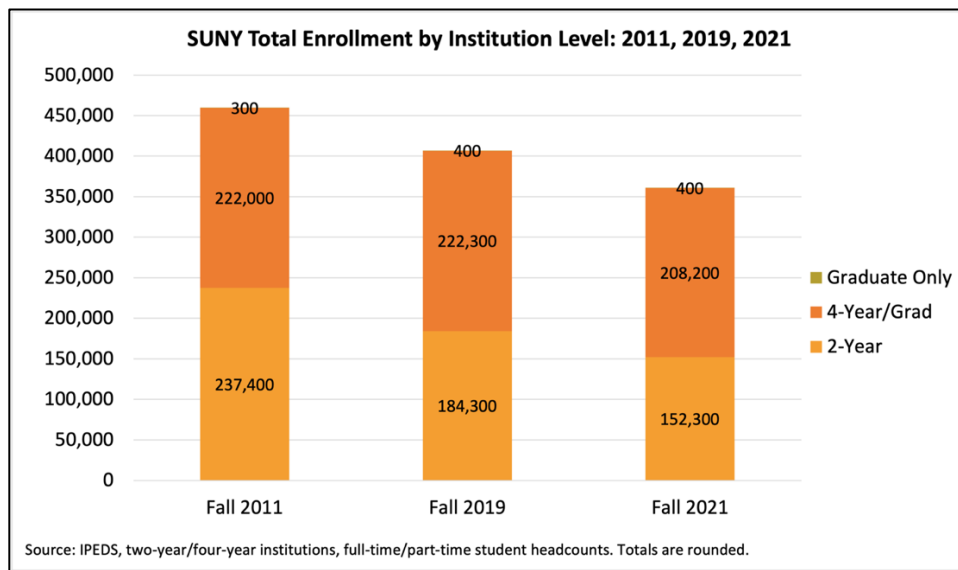
<sup>2</sup> CICU Fall 2022 Preliminary Enrollment and Workforce Survey

- The pandemic-related decline is driven mostly by undergraduate students. Graduate and first-professional enrollment between 2019 and 2021 increased by 1 percent (172,100 to 174,100).
- Undergraduate enrollment fell by 6 percent between fall 2019 and fall 2021 (330,300 to 311,300).

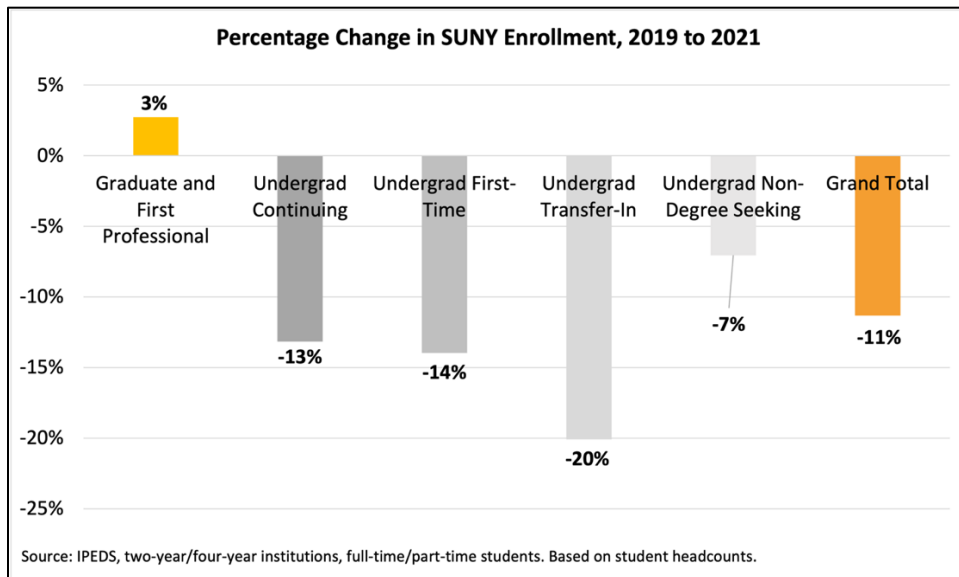


### SUNY, 2019 to 2021

After a five percent decline in total enrollment between fall 2019 and fall 2020, SUNY’s enrollment fell by another six percent in fall 2021. The decline was more pronounced at the two-year colleges, where the total enrollment of the pandemic was a net decline of 17 percent (32,000 fewer students enrolled).

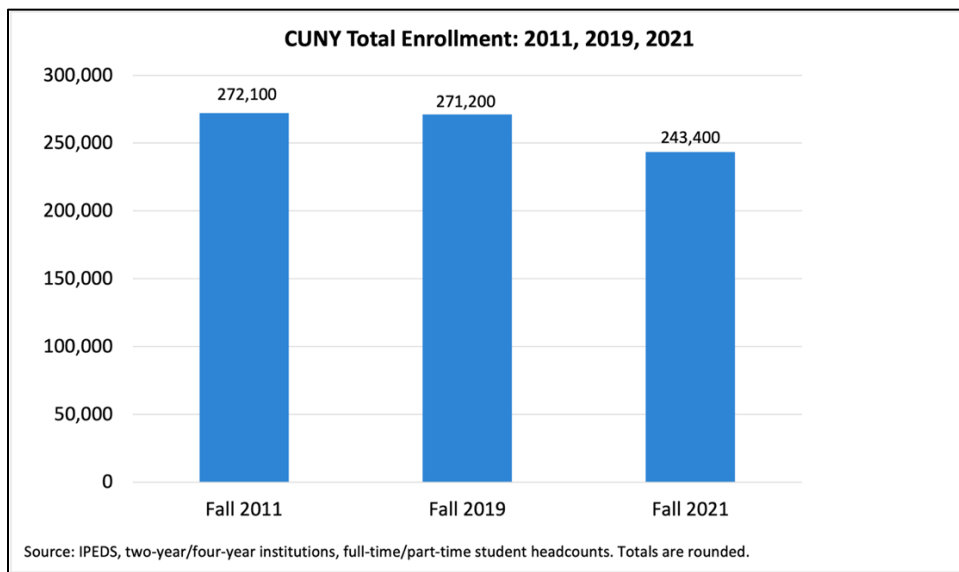


Overall, SUNY had 46,000 fewer students in fall 2021 compared to fall 2019, a decline of 11 percent. However, the decline was at the undergraduate level as SUNY’s graduate student enrollment increased by three percent during the pandemic.

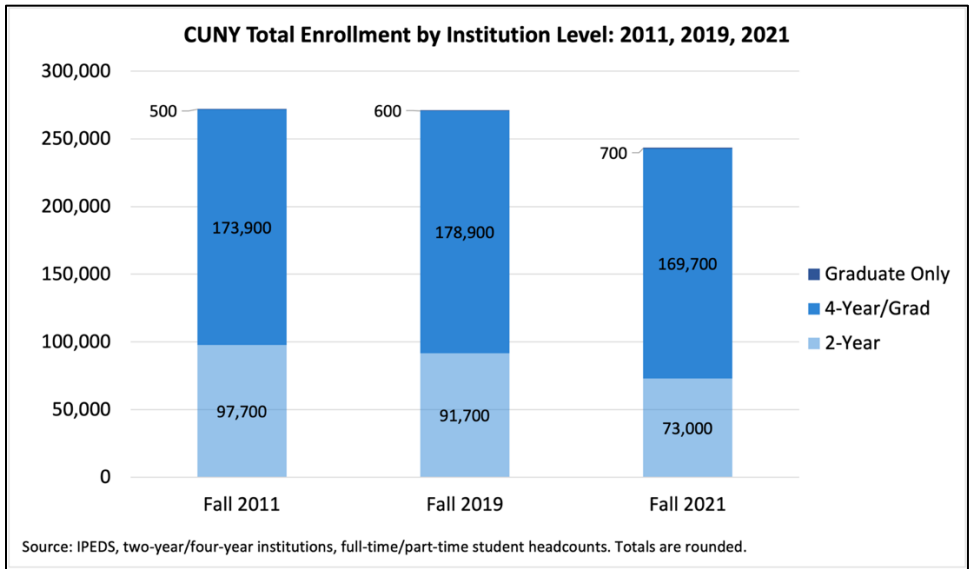


### CUNY, 2019 to 2021

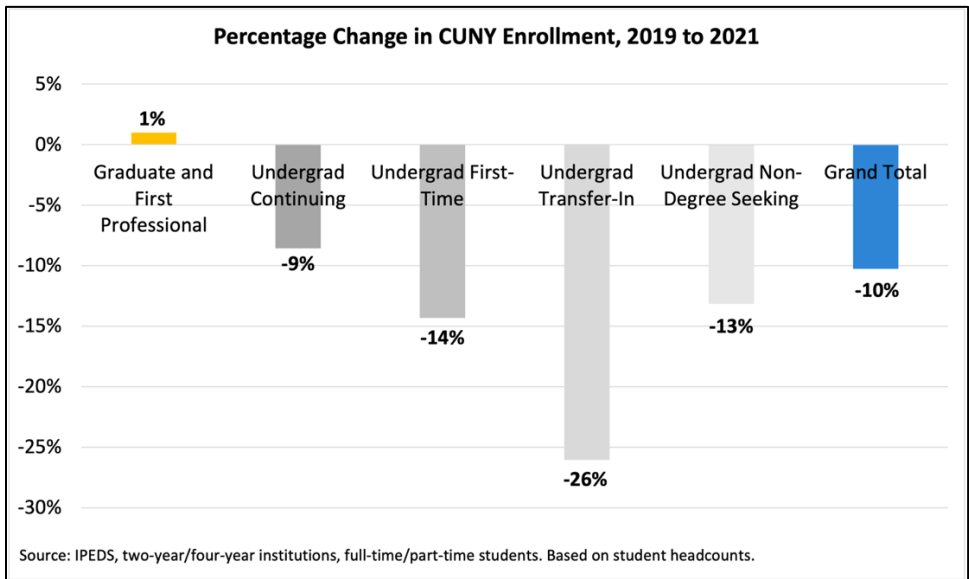
Between 2011 and 2019, CUNY’s total enrollment was relatively stable (272,100 in fall 2011 and 271,200 in fall 2019). CUNY experienced a decline of four percent between fall 2019 and fall 2020 due to the pandemic.



CUNY’s enrollment fell by another seven percent in fall 2021. The pandemic’s impact was more severe at the two-year colleges, where net enrollment fell by 20 percent between fall 2019 and fall 2021 (a reduction of nearly 19,000 students enrolled).



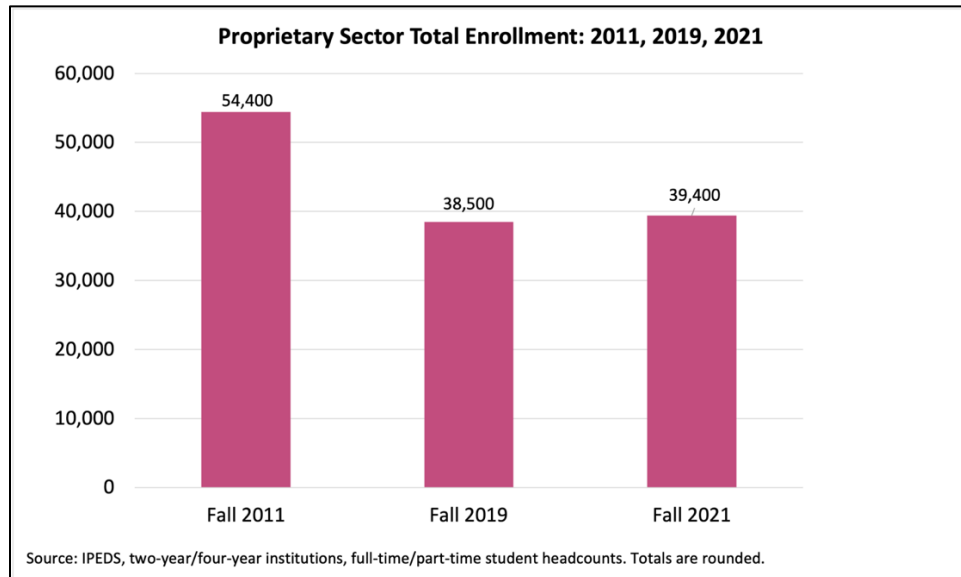
Overall, CUNY experienced a 10 percent decline in enrollment between fall 2019 and fall 2021.





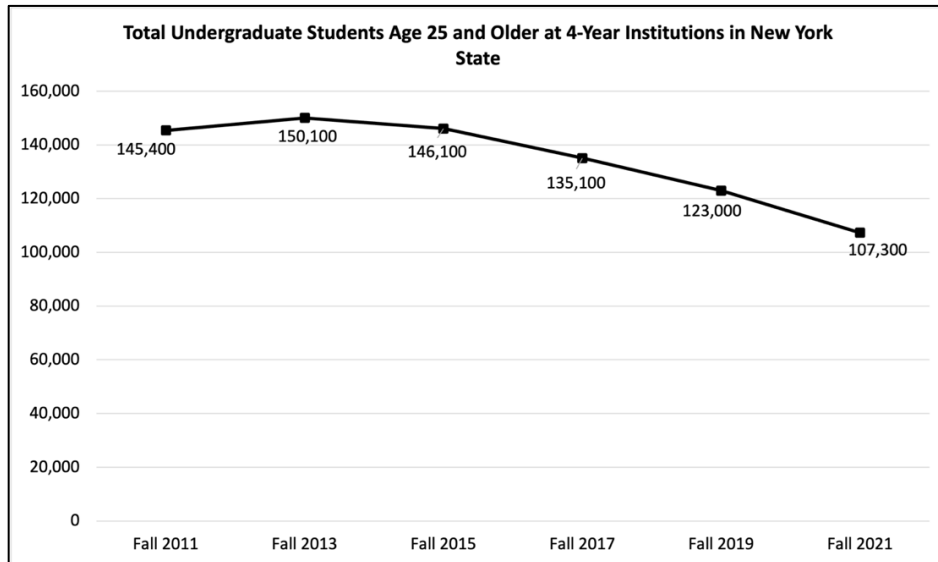
### Proprietary, 2019 to 2021

Proprietary colleges lost nearly 30 percent of total student enrollment between 2011 and 2019. During the pandemic, after an initial decline of five percent between fall 2019 and fall 2020, the sector experienced a boost of enrollment, growing by eight percent between fall 2020 and fall 2021, mainly among non-degree seeking undergraduate students. Overall the proprietary sector experienced a two percent gain between fall 2019 and fall 2021.



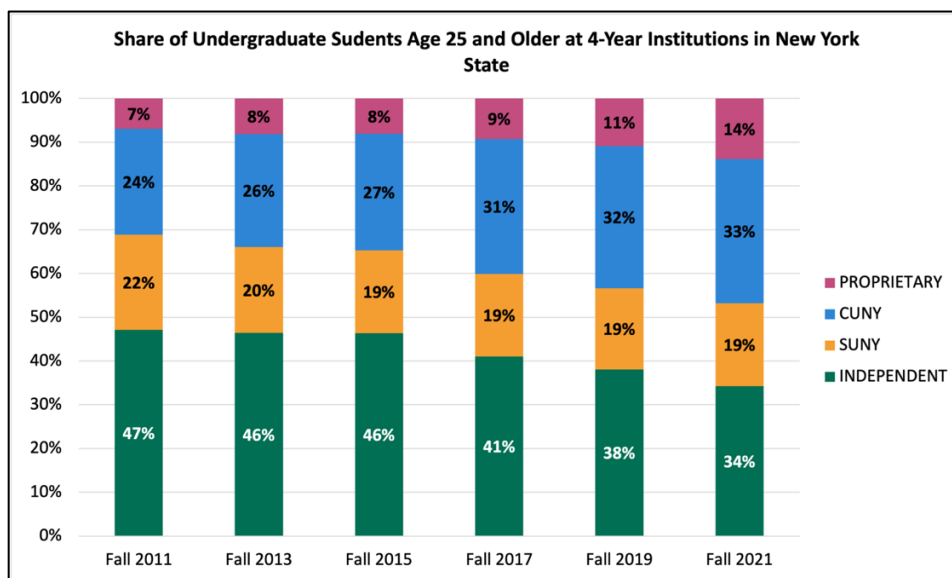
## Age of Undergraduates at Four-Year Institutions in New York State

In New York State, there are more than two million adults aged 25 and older who attended college, but do not have a degree.<sup>3</sup> Since 2011, there has been a 26 percent decline in the number of enrolled undergraduate students aged 25 and older in New York State’s four-year institutions. In 2011, there were 145,000 undergraduate students enrolled in the state’s four-year colleges and universities. By 2019 (pre-pandemic), there were 123,000, a decline of 15 percent. The pandemic resulted in a further decline of 16,000 students (a 13 percent decline). The net result is nearly 40,000 fewer undergraduate students in this age group through fall 2021.



The losses occurred at Independent Sector and SUNY institutions. Between 2011 and 2019, independent institutions experienced a decline of 22,000 students aged 25 and older (a decline of 32 percent), while SUNY’s decline was 9,000 students (a 28 percent decline).

In addition, the Independent Sector’s share of these students fell from nearly half in 2011 (47 percent) to about one-third in 2021 (34 percent). SUNY’s share fell from 22 percent to 19 percent over the same period. CUNY and proprietary institutions gained market share of these students. CUNY’s share grew from about one-quarter to one-third (24 percent to 33 percent), and the proprietary institutions’ share doubled from seven percent in 2011 to 14 percent in 2021.



<sup>3</sup> Source: U.S. Census, Educational Attainment, American Community Survey, 2021

## First-time Students and States of Origin

In 2018, prior to the pandemic, 56,000 first-time students who had completed high school within the prior 12 months attended New York State’s independent colleges and universities. This includes 31,000 from New York State, and 25,000 from other states. Of the students from other states, nearly two-thirds of them come from seven states: New Jersey, California, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Texas.

Origin State	First-time Student Total in Fall 2018	Public High School Graduation Rate in 2018-19 <sup>4</sup>
New York	30,800	83%
New Jersey	4,600	91%
California	3,000	85%
Massachusetts	2,600	88%
Connecticut	2,100	89%
Pennsylvania	2,000	87%
Florida	1,200	87%
Texas	1,000	90%
Other States	8,700	
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,100</b>	

In 2020, during the pandemic, the number of first-time students decreased, but the origin states remained the same. Approximately 51,000 first-time students who had completed high school within the prior 12 months attended New York State’s independent colleges and universities. This includes 28,000 from New York State, and 23,000 from other states. As was the case in 2018, of the students from other states, nearly two-thirds of them come from seven states: New Jersey, California, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Texas.

Origin State	First-time Student Total in Fall 2020	Public High School Graduation Rate in 2019-20 <sup>5</sup>
New York	28,300	85%
New Jersey	4,100	92%
California	2,600	86%
Massachusetts	2,300	93%
Connecticut	1,900	93%
Pennsylvania	1,800	90%
Florida	1,100	92%
Texas	1,000	94%
Other States	8,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,000</b>	

In 2019, the average high school graduation rate in the United States was 86 percent.<sup>6</sup> Every state has its own graduation requirements. See Appendix A for a complete list of graduation rates by state.

<sup>4</sup> Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Consolidated State Performance Report, 2018–19

<sup>5</sup> Source: U.S. News & World Report

<sup>6</sup> Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education 2022* (reflects 2018-19 graduation rates)

## High School Trends

Since 2011, the number of high school students enrolled in public high schools in the U.S. has increased by five percent (14.7 million in fall 2011 to 15.4 million in fall 2021). However, the number of high school students enrolled in public high schools across the country is projected to fall by three percent between 2021 and 2030 (15.4 million in 2021 to 15 million in 2030). In the Northeast, the projected decline is five percent by 2030 (2.45 million in 2021 to 2.34 million in 2030). New York State is projected to have four percent fewer high school students by 2030, after having experienced a five percent decline between 2011 and 2021. The projections are beginning to reflect the trend that Americans are having fewer children.<sup>7</sup> See Appendix B for New York State county data including Independent Sector enrollment, TAP recipients, and high school graduation rates.

The states that send the most recent high school graduates to New York State's independent colleges and universities are projected to have five percent fewer students enrolled in public high schools collectively by 2030 (6.74 million in fall 2021 compared to 6.43 million in fall 2030, a reduction of 311,000 students).<sup>8</sup>

Origin State	Public High School Students in Fall 2021	Public High School Students in Fall 2030 (Projected)	Percentage Change 2021 to 2030 (Projected)
New York	801,000	769,000	-4%
New Jersey	426,000	421,000	-1%
California	1,956,000	1,792,000	-8%
Massachusetts	293,000	285,000	-3%
Connecticut	163,000	157,000	-4%
Pennsylvania	592,000	545,000	-8%
Florida	874,000	823,000	-6%
Texas	1,637,000	1,639,000	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,741,000</b>	<b>6,430,000</b>	<b>-5%</b>

See Appendix C for a complete list of projections by state.

Recently released test scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (also known as the nation's report card), indicate steep declines in math and reading proficiency in grades four and eight among nearly all demographic groups.<sup>9</sup> The recent declines are related to the pandemic and the missed time in the classroom and/or lack of quality online learning. The disruption in education for these cohorts will reverberate for several years, as poor performance at this level can be a predictor of lower high school completion and post-secondary participation.

The national math proficiency score for fourth graders is 36 percent and the reading score is 33 percent. For eighth graders the average math score is 26 percent, and the reading score is 31 percent.

State Proficiency Levels in Math and Reading, 2022	Math 4th Grade	Math 8th Grade	Reading 4th Grade	Reading 8th Grade
New York	28%	28%	30%	32%
New Jersey	39%	33%	38%	42%
California	30%	23%	31%	30%
Massachusetts	43%	35%	43%	40%
Connecticut	37%	30%	35%	35%
Pennsylvania	40%	27%	34%	31%
Florida	41%	23%	39%	29%

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/05/upshot/americans-are-having-fewer-babies-they-told-us-why.html>;

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/11/19/growing-share-of-childless-adults-in-u-s-dont-expect-to-ever-have-children/>

<sup>8</sup> Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics

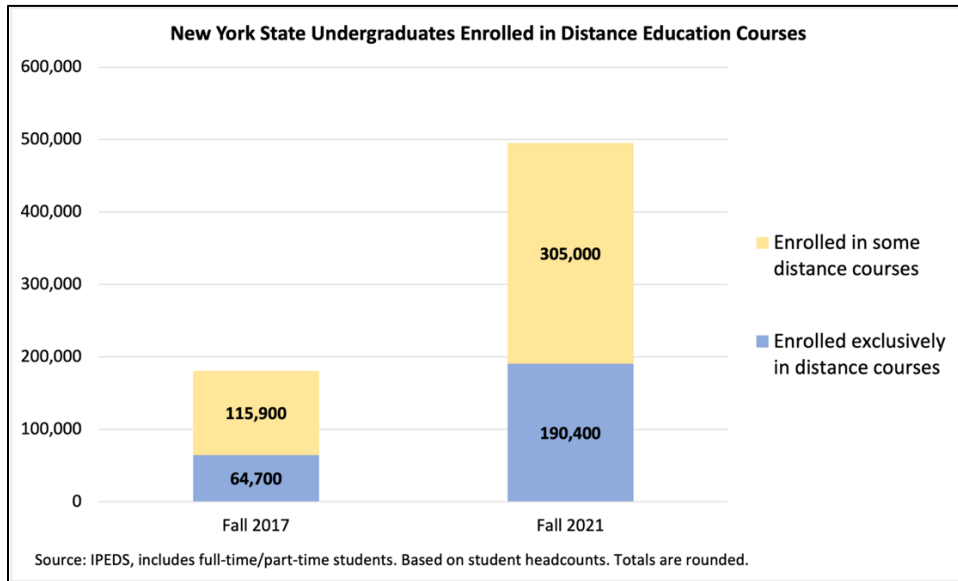
<sup>9</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/24/us/math-reading-scores-pandemic.html>

<b>State Proficiency Levels in Math and Reading, 2022</b>	<b>Math 4th Grade</b>	<b>Math 8th Grade</b>	<b>Reading 4th Grade</b>	<b>Reading 8th Grade</b>
Texas	38%	24%	30%	23%
<b>National average</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>31%</b>

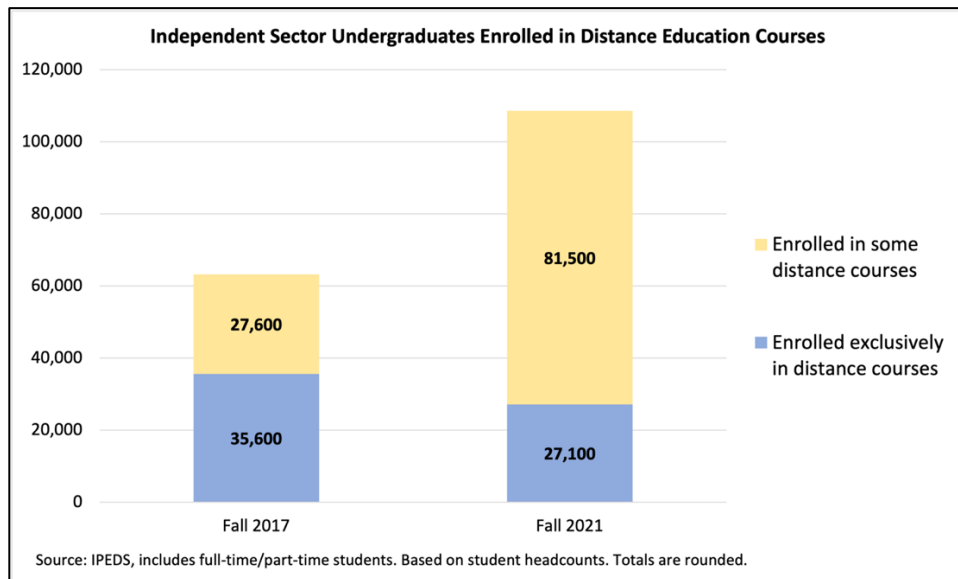
See Appendix D for a complete list of scores by state.

## Distance Education

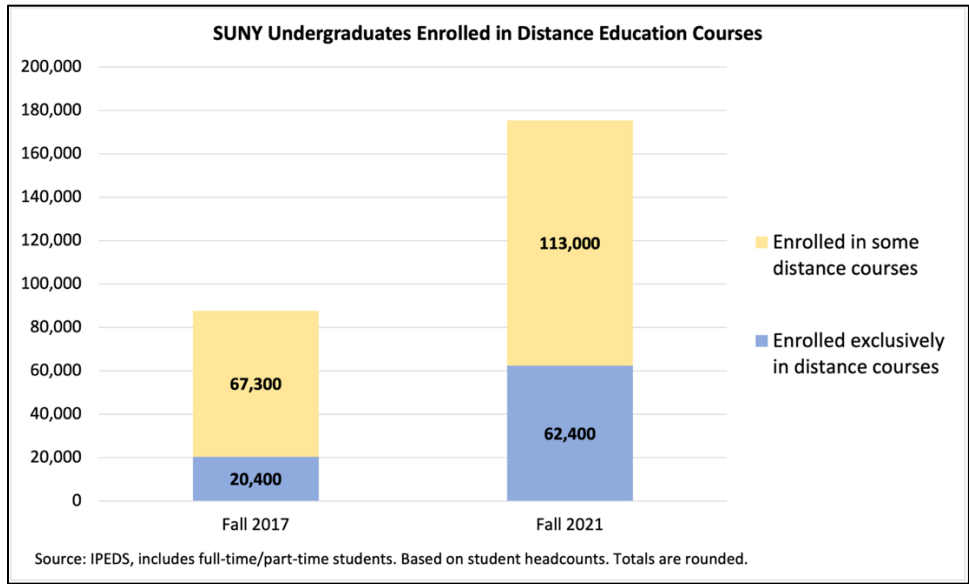
In 2017, most colleges and universities that enrolled undergraduates in New York State offered at least some programs or courses through distance education. In fall 2017, 181,000 undergraduates (18 percent of all undergraduates in the state) were enrolled either exclusively or partially in distance courses. By fall 2021, due to the onset of the pandemic in spring 2020, 495,000 students (56 percent of total undergraduates) were enrolled either exclusively or partially in distance courses – nearly three times as many students in 2017. This shift occurred as the number of undergraduates enrolled in the state declined by roughly 12 percent (1 million to 880 thousand).



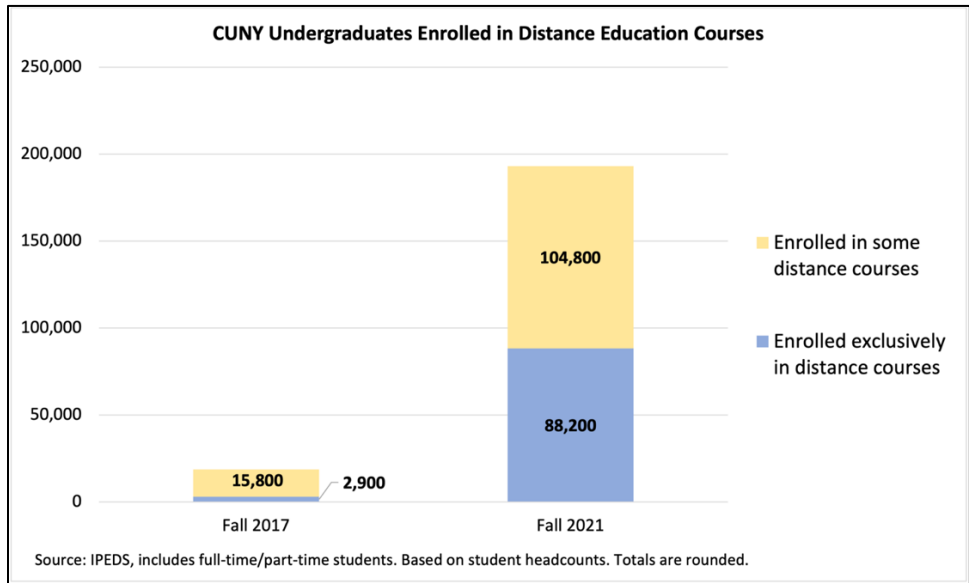
In the Independent Sector, the number of students taking all, or some distance courses increased by more than 70 percent between fall 2017 and fall 2021 (63,000 to 109,000).



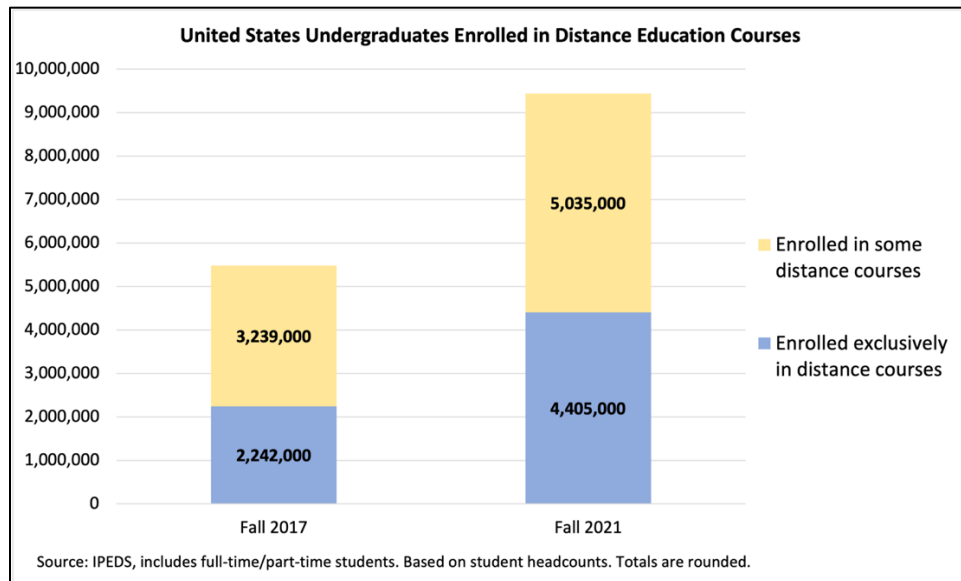
At SUNY, the number of undergraduate students taking at least some distance courses doubled between fall 2017 and fall 2021 (88,000 to 175,000).



At CUNY, the number of undergraduate students taking at least some distance courses was approximately ten times higher in fall 2021 compared to fall 2017 (19,000 to 193,000).



Across the United States, the number of undergraduate students enrolled in distance courses has increased by more than 70 percent (5.5 million to 9.4 million). Even as the number of undergraduates enrolled has fallen by eight percent due largely to the pandemic.



Since 2017, there has also been an increase in the number of undergraduate students aged 18-24 enrolled in large, national, online colleges and universities.<sup>10</sup> At these institutions the 18–24-year-old undergraduate population has increased by 55 percent since fall 2017 (82,600 to 128,000). This is in line with a recent national study, which indicated that younger students are considering health factors, family responsibilities, full-time work, and cost as they decide on post-secondary education options.<sup>11</sup>

In addition, the general perception of quality of an online education is increasingly seen as being on par with traditional in-person instruction.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> We analyzed the top 25 online institutions in fall 2021 and defined them as follows: 5,000 or more undergrads enrolled fully or partially in distance courses; of the distance students, 90% must be enrolled exclusively in distance courses; undergrad distance enrollment must be at least 90% of total undergrad enrollment; and out-of-state undergrad distance students must be at least 50% of exclusive distance enrollment.

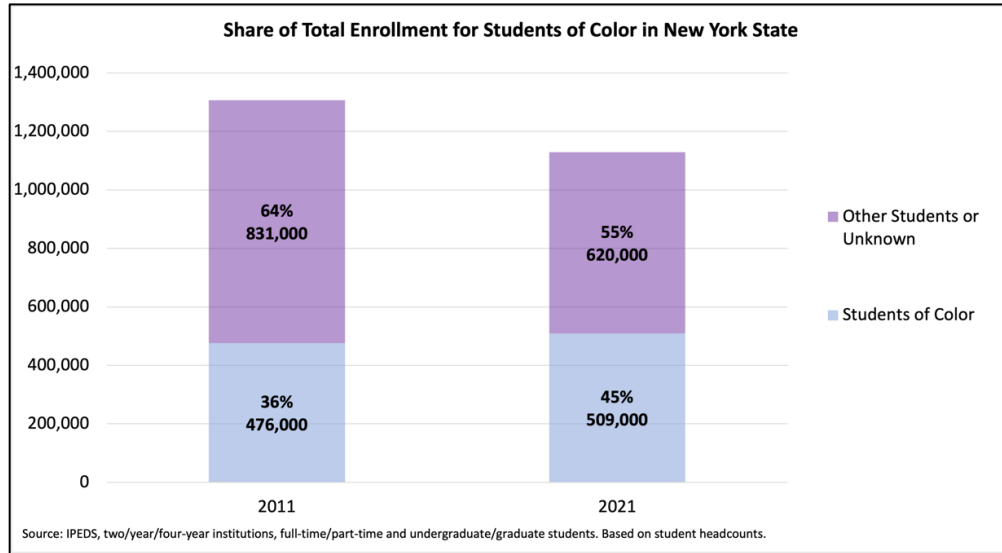
<sup>11</sup> <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2022/10/14/more-traditional-age-students-enroll-fully-online-universities#.Y0lj0nbGkcs.link>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/varying-degrees-2022/executive-summary>

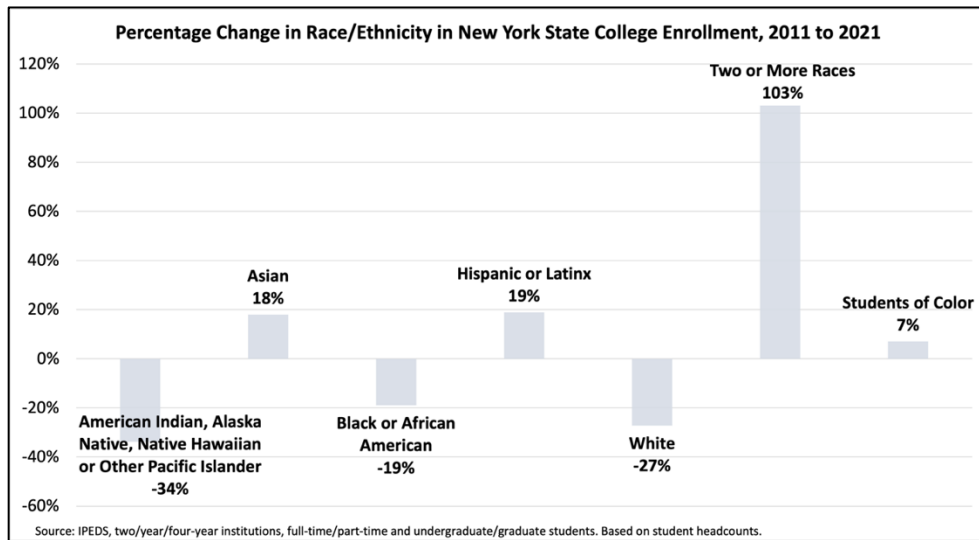


## Race and Ethnicity

In fall 2011, there were 476,000 students of color<sup>13</sup> enrolled in New York State’s colleges and universities. These students represented 36 percent of total enrollment (476,000 of 1.3 million). In fall 2021, despite an overall enrollment decline of 14 percent (200,000 fewer students enrolled), the number of students of color enrolled increased to 509,000, a seven percent increase since fall 2011. In fall 2021, students of color comprised 45 percent of all students.



However, the increase in this group was driven mostly by Asian and Hispanic or Latinx students. The Asian student population increased by 18 percent (105,000 in fall 2011 to 124,000 in fall 2021). The Hispanic or Latinx population increased by 19 percent (174,000 in fall 2011 to 207,000 in fall 2021). The Black or African American student population declined by 19 percent (173,000 in fall 2011 to 140,000 in fall 2021).



Independent colleges and universities experienced an increase of 13 percent in enrollment of students of color between fall 2011 and fall 2021 (an increase from 150,000 to 169,000). As a percentage of total enrollment, students of color increased from 29 percent in fall 2011 to 35 percent in fall 2021.

At SUNY, there was an increase of 16 percent in enrollment of students of color over the decade (113,000 in fall 2011 to 130,000 in fall 2021). Students of color grew from 24 percent of total enrollment in 2011 to 36 percent in 2021.

<sup>13</sup> Students from the U.S. who identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or multiracial.

In fall 2011, CUNY had a more diverse student population than either the Independent Sector or SUNY. CUNY enrolled 181,000 students of color in fall 2011 (two-thirds of total enrollment) and experienced a modest increase of two percent by fall 2021, growing to 185,000 students of color, or three-quarters of total enrollment.

Proprietary institutions experienced a steep reduction in the number of institutions and the number of students enrolled over the past decade. These institutions are educating fewer students in total, but their collective share of students of color as a percentage of total enrollment increased from 58 percent in fall 2011 to 62 percent in fall 2021.

According to a recent study<sup>14</sup>, a majority of Americans support efforts to make college more affordable and equitable for more people, including students of color. There is broad agreement among Americans that obtaining a college degree leads to a more well-rounded, healthy, and engaged citizenry.

---

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.publicagenda.org/newsroom/new-public-agenda-report-americans-question-the-value-of-higher-education/>

## Recommendations

A recent study<sup>15</sup> suggested that in addition to a demographic decline in college-aged students, other factors influence students' decisions on whether to attend college. For example, reasons cited for dropping out or not attending include concerns about cost and debt, concerns about perceived stress and pressure of college, indecision on a career path, the return on an investment in a college education, the need to care for a child or family member, and opportunities to work and earn money in the near-term.

Despite the concerns, Americans still believe that higher education is important to build long-term financial stability and that the return-on-investment is worthwhile. According to a recent survey, nearly 60 percent of Americans feel that government spending on higher education must increase to make it more affordable.<sup>16</sup>

The goals of these proposals are to increase degree attainment, increase enrollment, and induce more graduates in key workforce fields.

### *Reinvigorating TAP for the 21st Century*

New York State's Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) helps more than 200,000 New Yorkers earn a college degree annually. Unfortunately, that number has been declining for years. A fresh approach to TAP will allow the state to graduate more healthcare professionals, educators, and other highly skilled workers that our state desperately needs. It will also reduce student debt, and drive enrollment to New York's colleges and universities creating additional economic benefits for the state.

New York eliminated Grad TAP in 2010. Recreating the program will enable thousands of New Yorkers to get the education and skills they need to advance in their careers and bring those skills to the communities they call home. By granting TAP eligibility to New Yorkers pursuing specific, in-demand degrees we can recruit more teachers, mental health workers, and the trained engineers and scientists that will help power our state.

As we have shown, the number of adult learners in the state's colleges and universities has fallen by 26 percent over since 2011. TAP can also be used to bring New Yorkers back into the classroom to complete their degrees. More than two million New Yorkers have earned college credits but do not have a degree.<sup>17</sup> Remedial education is increasingly important for New York students, as the recently released National Assessment of Educational Progress test scores have shown. Increased TAP funding could help students get the remedial instruction they need to ensure degree completion.

There are significant racial disparities amongst degree attainment and amongst those with credits and no degree. Bringing this diverse population back into the classroom will help boost economic mobility and provide increased earnings for families. The state can do this by restoring renewed TAP eligibility to impacted New Yorkers. Restored TAP benefits will allow New Yorkers to reenroll and earn their degree.

### *Increase Federal Aid to New York by Requiring FAFSA Completion*

New York can increase the amount of federal aid that students receive by requiring the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to be filed by all high school students prior to graduation. This will increase post-secondary enrollment and reduce student debt.

More than \$3.75 billion in Pell Grants went unclaimed by American high school students last year alone. New York has the fourth most Pell students in the country, but only 64 percent of New York high school seniors have completed their FAFSA application this year. New York could boost FAFSA completion significantly by requiring students to fill out the FAFSA (or file a waiver) to graduate high school. When other states required FAFSA they saw immediate gains in completion and federal aid received by their students. Louisiana saw a 25 percent increase in FAFSA completion and Texas is seeing a 20 increase this year. A 20 percent increase in New York's FAFSA completion rate would make New York the #1 state in the country for FAFSA and bring in hundreds of millions in additional federal student aid.

---

<sup>15</sup> <https://usprogram.gatesfoundation.org/news-and-insights/articles/gates-foundation-probes-college-enrollment-decline>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/varying-degrees-2022/executive-summary>

<sup>17</sup> Source: U.S. Census, Educational Attainment, American Community Survey, 2021

**Appendix A**

## Average High School Graduation Rates by State

<b>State</b>	<b>Average Graduation Rate 2019-20</b>
Alabama	91%
Alaska	81%
Arizona	74%
Arkansas	88%
California	86%
Colorado	83%
Connecticut	93%
Delaware	86%
District of Columbia	77%
Florida	92%
Georgia	87%
Hawaii	86%
Idaho	87%
Illinois	87%
Indiana	89%
Iowa	94%
Kansas	91%
Kentucky	94%
Louisiana	83%
Maine	87%
Maine	85%
Maryland	83%
Massachusetts	93%
Michigan	89%
Minnesota	87%
Mississippi	88%
Missouri	92%
Montana	88%
Nebraska	92%
Nevada	87%
New Hampshire	88%
New Jersey	92%
New Mexico	78%
New York	85%
North Carolina	90%
North Dakota	93%
Ohio	90%
Oklahoma	87%
Oregon	84%
Pennsylvania	90%
Rhode Island	87%
South Carolina	86%
South Dakota	90%
Tennessee	90%
Texas	94%
Utah	90%
Vermont	81%
Virginia	93%
Washington	87%

<b>State</b>	<b>Average Graduation Rate 2019-20</b>
West Virginia	93%
Wisconsin	93%
Wyoming	82%

Source: U.S. News & World Report

**Appendix B**

## New York State County Data

<b>County</b>	<b>Undergrads From County Attending Independent Institutions in NYS</b>	<b>Percent TAP Recipients (Est)</b>	<b>TAP Dollars (Est)</b>	<b>High School Graduation Rate in 2021</b>
Albany	2,741	39%	\$3,075,448	89%
Allegany	320	54%	\$501,445	90%
Broome	775	52%	\$1,150,936	85%
Cattaraugus	574	53%	\$875,514	88%
Cayuga	492	46%	\$657,824	84%
Chautauqua	385	54%	\$594,620	85%
Chemung	453	46%	\$602,162	83%
Chenango	235	52%	\$350,881	86%
Clinton	254	46%	\$333,877	87%
Columbia	358	38%	\$389,828	87%
Cortland	257	49%	\$361,461	88%
Delaware	150	53%	\$227,667	74%
Dutchess	2,615	32%	\$2,418,742	87%
Erie	9,366	44%	\$12,001,758	89%
Essex	160	49%	\$225,243	91%
Franklin	253	55%	\$400,191	80%
Fulton	280	54%	\$433,149	82%
Genesee	379	43%	\$470,787	92%
Greene	280	49%	\$396,619	82%
Hamilton	18	45%	\$23,243	94%
Herkimer	406	48%	\$564,626	87%
Jefferson	619	50%	\$891,512	87%
Lewis	151	48%	\$207,000	88%
Livingston	472	45%	\$608,300	91%
Madison	690	44%	\$868,793	89%
Monroe	6,450	43%	\$8,064,094	88%
Montgomery	338	52%	\$502,782	86%
Nassau	19,599	23%	\$13,141,215	94%
New York	7,973	29%	\$6,721,426	82%
Bronx	9,376	65%	\$17,465,395	77%
Kings	13,622	41%	\$15,938,862	79%
Queens	15,094	37%	\$16,124,483	85%
Richmond	4,965	31%	\$4,485,815	85%
Niagara	1,774	48%	\$2,441,578	85%
Oneida	2,068	48%	\$2,839,030	87%
Onondaga	6,360	44%	\$8,022,817	87%
Ontario	965	40%	\$1,124,932	93%
Orange	3,592	33%	\$3,376,039	89%
Orleans	194	51%	\$283,105	91%
Oswego	642	47%	\$864,457	84%
Otsego	298	51%	\$440,599	86%
Putnam	1,303	26%	\$970,957	94%
Rensselaer	1,209	38%	\$1,332,447	89%
Rockland	3,862	27%	\$3,039,138	90%

<b>County</b>	<b>Undergrads From County Attending Independent Institutions in NYS</b>	<b>Percent TAP Recipients (Est)</b>	<b>TAP Dollars (Est)</b>	<b>High School Graduation Rate in 2021</b>
St. Lawrence	676	52%	\$1,012,264	85%
Saratoga	2,200	31%	\$1,934,424	92%
Schenectady	1,569	42%	\$1,878,574	86%
Schoharie	139	46%	\$183,145	90%
Schuyler	82	52%	\$121,694	89%
Seneca	191	53%	\$289,750	85%
Steuben	593	51%	\$864,534	90%
Suffolk	13,754	26%	\$10,282,978	91%
Sullivan	408	46%	\$538,258	82%
Tioga	242	44%	\$309,707	92%
Tompkins	627	46%	\$822,711	87%
Ulster	1,063	42%	\$1,289,690	87%
Warren	406	43%	\$499,079	85%
Washington	242	47%	\$330,039	84%
Wayne	693	44%	\$868,755	87%
Westchester	11,497	27%	\$8,882,377	91%
Wyoming	217	46%	\$289,359	92%
Yates	130	44%	\$166,606	82%

Sources: Enrollment and high school graduation rate from NYSED; TAP estimates use data provided by HESC

## Appendix C

### Public High School Students by State

State or Region	Public High School Students in Fall 2021	Public High School Students in Fall 2030 (Projected)	Percentage Change 2021 to 2030 (Projected)
<b>United States</b>	<b>15,448,669</b>	<b>14,992,000</b>	-3%
Northeast	2,454,891	2,338,300	-5%
Midwest	3,180,285	3,155,000	-1%
South	5,959,277	5,843,500	-2%
West	3,854,216	3,655,300	-5%
Alabama	220,009	227,600	3%
Alaska	38,274	40,700	6%
Arizona	364,592	380,100	4%
Arkansas	145,763	150,500	3%
California	1,955,753	1,792,000	-8%
Colorado	279,837	250,900	-10%
Connecticut	162,681	156,500	-4%
Delaware	44,059	46,600	6%
District of Columbia	19,968	26,600	33%
Florida	874,025	823,300	-6%
Georgia	538,157	493,200	-8%
Hawaii	52,433	51,300	-2%
Idaho	97,385	99,100	2%
Illinois	603,028	619,100	3%
Indiana	324,313	326,000	1%
Iowa	154,290	155,500	1%
Kansas	145,709	136,000	-7%
Kentucky	199,612	189,200	-5%
Louisiana	200,252	198,000	-1%
Maine	55,569	50,900	-8%
Maryland	271,062	280,500	3%
Massachusetts	292,743	285,200	-3%
Michigan	461,346	433,200	-6%
Minnesota	279,774	307,500	10%
Mississippi	130,920	102,600	-22%
Missouri	270,886	237,800	-12%
Montana	44,680	40,500	-9%
Nebraska	97,620	101,200	4%
Nevada	151,027	149,300	-1%
New Hampshire	55,306	47,500	-14%
New Jersey	425,852	421,000	-1%
New Mexico	101,224	84,500	-17%
New York	801,118	768,500	-4%
North Carolina	471,281	472,500	0%
North Dakota	33,447	37,400	12%
Ohio	504,951	509,500	1%
Oklahoma	200,181	210,000	5%
Oregon	181,963	176,600	-3%
Pennsylvania	591,917	544,600	-8%
Rhode Island	45,057	42,100	-7%
South Carolina	235,087	243,700	4%
South Dakota	41,700	45,600	9%
Tennessee	298,368	311,300	4%



<b>State or Region</b>	<b>Public High School Students in Fall 2021</b>	<b>Public High School Students in Fall 2030 (Projected)</b>	<b>Percentage Change 2021 to 2030 (Projected)</b>
Texas	1,637,030	1,638,600	0%
Utah	211,356	236,700	12%
Vermont	24,648	22,000	-11%
Virginia	396,137	368,200	-7%
Washington	346,768	325,800	-6%
West Virginia	77,365	61,100	-21%
Wisconsin	263,222	246,100	-7%
Wyoming	28,924	27,800	-4%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics

## Appendix D

### State Proficiency Levels on National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2022

State	Math 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Math 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Reading 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Reading 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
<b>National average</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>31%</b>
Alabama	27%	19%	28%	22%
Alaska	28%	23%	24%	26%
Arizona	32%	24%	31%	28%
Arkansas	28%	19%	30%	26%
California	30%	23%	31%	30%
Colorado	36%	28%	38%	34%
Connecticut	37%	30%	35%	35%
Delaware	26%	18%	25%	24%
District of Columbia	24%	16%	26%	22%
Florida	41%	23%	39%	29%
Georgia	34%	24%	32%	31%
Hawaii	37%	22%	35%	31%
Idaho	36%	32%	32%	32%
Illinois	38%	27%	33%	32%
Indiana	40%	30%	33%	31%
Iowa	40%	28%	33%	29%
Kansas	35%	23%	31%	26%
Kentucky	33%	21%	31%	29%
Louisiana	27%	19%	28%	27%
Maine	32%	24%	29%	29%
Maryland	31%	25%	31%	33%
Massachusetts	43%	35%	43%	40%
Michigan	32%	25%	28%	28%
Minnesota	41%	32%	32%	30%
Mississippi	32%	18%	31%	22%
Missouri	34%	24%	30%	28%
Montana	38%	29%	34%	29%
Nebraska	43%	31%	34%	29%
Nevada	28%	21%	27%	29%
New Hampshire	40%	29%	37%	33%
New Jersey	39%	33%	38%	42%
New Mexico	19%	13%	21%	18%
New York	28%	28%	30%	32%
North Carolina	35%	25%	32%	26%
North Dakota	40%	28%	31%	27%
Ohio	40%	29%	35%	33%
Oklahoma	27%	16%	24%	21%
Oregon	29%	22%	28%	28%
Pennsylvania	40%	27%	34%	31%
Rhode Island	34%	24%	34%	31%
South Carolina	34%	22%	32%	27%
South Dakota	40%	32%	32%	31%
Tennessee	36%	25%	30%	28%
Texas	38%	24%	30%	23%
Utah	42%	35%	37%	36%
Vermont	34%	27%	34%	34%
Virginia	38%	31%	32%	31%

<b>State</b>	<b>Math 4<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b>Math 8th Grade</b>	<b>Reading 4<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b>Reading 8th Grade</b>
Washington	35%	28%	34%	32%
West Virginia	23%	15%	22%	22%
Wisconsin	43%	33%	33%	32%
Wyoming	44%	31%	38%	30%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics; and The New York Times (<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/24/us/math-reading-scores-pandemic.html>)