About the To&Through Project

The To&Through Project integrates research, data, and professional learning to help more students get to and through high school and college.

In collaboration with educators, policymakers, and communities, the To&Through Project aims to significantly increase the percentage of Chicago Public Schools freshmen who graduate from high school and go on to earn a college degree, and to share the learning from Chicago with education stakeholders across the country.

- Research illuminating what matters most for students’ high school and college success
- Data guiding efforts to improve students’ attainment of key milestones
- Professional Learning translating research and data into improved practice

About the To&Through Project’s Data Insights

The University of Chicago Consortium on School Research (UChicago Consortium) has conducted decades of rigorous research based on hundreds of schools and tens of thousands of students to identify the factors that indicate and impact college success. This collection of data insights illuminates the UChicago Consortium’s most important discoveries about what fosters high school and college success and the attainment trajectory of Chicago Public Schools students.

Please visit toandthrough.uchicago.edu to learn more about the To&Through Project and the robust body of research behind this collection of data insights.
Why College Matters
A college education has grown more critical to success in the workforce

Of the 11.6 million jobs that have been added in the post-Great Recession economy, 99% have gone to workers with at least some college education.

A college education fosters greater health, wealth, and happiness

People who earn at least a 2-year college degree:

- Live an average of **7 YEARS LONGER**
- Earn at least **51% MORE**
- Are 26% more likely to be **“VERY HAPPY”**

There is a significant gap between CPS students’ college aspirations and attainment

In 2016–17, 69% of Chicago Public Schools freshmen aspired to earn a bachelor’s degree. Only 19% are projected to do so within ten years of starting high school.

The vast majority of high school students aspire to earn a bachelor’s degree, yet less than one in three will succeed.

Postsecondary Success: Key Levers for Improving College Graduation
A higher high school GPA increases the odds of making it through college

Graduation rates from 4-year colleges for CPS students by graduating high school GPA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GPA Range</th>
<th>Graduation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;2.0</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0–2.4</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5–2.9</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0–3.4</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5+</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The To&Through Online Tool. See: toandthrough.uchicago.edu/tool
GPAs — not ACT scores — are the strongest predictor of college graduation

Students with the SAME ACT SCORE RANGE of 21–23 graduate from college at very different rates depending on their high school GPAs:

- <2.0: 28%
- 2.0–2.4: 40%
- 2.5–2.9: 53%
- 3.0–3.4: 69%
- 3.5+: 77%

GPAs — not ACT scores — are the strongest predictor of college graduation

Students with the SAME ACT SCORE RANGE of 18–20 graduate from college at very different rates depending on their high school GPAs:

- GPA <2.0: 20%
- GPA 2.0–2.4: 26%
- GPA 2.5–2.9: 43%
- GPA 3.0–3.4: 59%
- GPA 3.5+: 73%

A strong college-going culture spurs steps toward college

Students who attend high schools with strong college-going cultures are 12% more likely to apply to college than students who attend high schools with weak college-going cultures.

A college’s overall graduation rate is a strong indicator of an individual student’s likelihood to graduate.

Similar students who choose a college with a higher institutional graduation rate are up to 4x more likely to graduate from college.

District Trends: The Attainment Trajectory of Chicago Public Schools Students
Chicago has made significant improvements in the past decade in students’ high school and college attainment.

- **Freshman OnTrack rate**: 61% in 2006 to 89% in 2017 (+28 pts)
- **High school graduation rate**: 57% in 2006 to 75% in 2017 (+18 pts)
- **2-year college enrollment rate**: 16% in 2006 to 19% in 2016 (+3 pts)
- **4-year college enrollment rate**: 33% in 2006 to 47% in 2016 (+14 pts)
- **4-year college graduation rate**: 46% in 2009** to 49% in 2016 (+3 pts)

*2016 is the most recent year of National Student Clearinghouse data available on CPS graduates.

**The National Student Clearinghouse changed the way they matched students’ high school data to their college graduation data for the class of 2003.
46 percent represents the proportion of the Chicago Public Schools class of 2003 who graduated from college in 2009, within six years of enrolling in college.

Chicago’s educational attainment has been catching up to the nation’s

- **High School Graduation Rate**
  - CPS 2017: 75%
  - Nation 2016: 84%

- **2-year College Enrollment Rate**
  - CPS 2016: 19%
  - Nation 2016: 25%

- **4-year College Enrollment Rate**
  - CPS 2016: 47%
  - Nation 2016: 46%

- **4-year College Graduation Rate**
  - CPS 2016: 49%
  - Nation 2016: 60%

Chicago’s 4-year college enrollment rate has risen across all races and genders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Male 2006</th>
<th>Female 2006</th>
<th>Male 2016</th>
<th>Female 2016</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BLACK</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>+14pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LATINO</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>+13pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>+12pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIAN</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>+10pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gaps in 4-year college enrollment between female and male graduates have widened

4-year college enrollment rates by race and gender, 2006 vs. 2016

**BLACK**
- 2006: 6% GAP
- 2016: 9% GAP

**LATINO**
- 2006: 5% GAP
- 2016: 11% GAP

**WHITE**
- 2006: 7% GAP
- 2016: 15% GAP

**ASIAN**
- 2006: 4% GAP
- 2016: 5% GAP

Over the past decade, CPS graduates’ enrollment in 4-year colleges increased while enrollment in 2-year colleges remained relatively flat.

Male and female graduates of every race have enrolled in 2-year colleges at roughly the same rate

Enrollment in 2-year colleges, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BLACK</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LATINO</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIAN</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While CPS graduates from across the socioeconomic spectrum enrolled in 2-year colleges at roughly the same rate, gaps remain in 4-year college enrollment.

Many CPS graduates who were academically qualified for college did not immediately enroll

Nearly 1 in 5 CPS graduates with a 3.0 or higher GPA did not immediately enroll in either a 2-year or 4-year college

More CPS graduates transferred from 4-year to 2-year colleges than from 2-year to 4-year colleges

16% of CPS graduates who enrolled immediately in two-year colleges transferred to four-year colleges, and 26% who immediately enrolled in four-year colleges transferred to two-year colleges.*

* Rates are within 4 years of high school graduation.

About 1 in 5 CPS graduates delayed entrance to college, but did eventually enroll within six years

Percentage of 2009 CPS graduates who enrolled in college within six years of graduating from high school

Of the ~1 in 5 CPS graduates who delayed entry to college but enrolled within six years, more started at 2-year rather than 4-year colleges.

26% of delayed enrollees

74% of delayed enrollees

More CPS graduates are enrolling immediately in a 4-year college and more are earning a bachelor’s degree within six years

College enrollees and graduates by high school graduation year, 2003–2016

Data archives of the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research
More CPS graduates have enrolled in 4-year colleges with institutional graduation rates above 50% over the past decade.

Percentage of immediate enrollees in colleges with six-year institutional graduation rates of 50% or higher.

2006: 58%
2016: 69%

Many 4-year Illinois colleges and universities have improved their graduation rates for underrepresented minority students.

Six-year underrepresented minority (URM) graduation rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>+9pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DePaul University</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>+15pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois State University</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>+7pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Illinois at Chicago</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>+13pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Illinois University</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>+2pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia College Chicago</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>+12pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Illinois University Carbondale</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>+3pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>