Minnesota high schools do a good job of transitioning students into college. Approximately 66% of 2018 public high school graduates enrolled in college in the fall after graduation. Minnesota has one of the highest college participation rates, ranking 4th nationally (source: NCHEMS, 2018).

**WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE WHERE STUDENTS ATTEND COLLEGE?**

The primary factor is geography! Often the top college attended by graduates is the one closest to their high school. This indicates that local high school-college partnerships should be emphasized.

**HOW MANY CREDITS DO HIGH SCHOOL (HS) GRADUATES TAKE THEIR FIRST TERM?**

Minnesota defines full-time enrollment as 15 term credits. The federal definition of full-time is 12 term credits. The vast majority of Minnesota public high school graduates enrolling in college enroll for full-time at either the 15 credit level (55%) or the 12 credit level (31%)—a combined 86% of graduates enrolled. Minnesota graduates are starting college on track for timely completion.
Completing College

ARE HS GRADUATES STAYING IN AND COMPLETING COLLEGE?

Approximately 84% of graduates starting college were still enrolled or had successfully graduated as of their second year of college (16% of graduates enrolled in the first year left without a certificate or degree). By the fourth year of college, 69% were still enrolled or had graduated (a dropout rate of 31%). For Minnesota leaders seeking to maximize student success and meet emerging workforce demands, a college dropout rate of 31% is troubling.

HOW MANY HS GRADUATES COMPLETE COLLEGE?

A little over half of public high school graduates complete a certificate, diploma or degree by age 25; 55% of the class of 2011. Among 2011 graduates, 5% completed a certificate or diploma, 10% an associate degree; the remaining 39% a bachelor’s degree. Minnesota college graduates predominantly earn bachelor’s degrees.

Developmental Education

Developmental education refers to math, reading and writing courses that students take prior to enrolling in college credit-level classes in order to increase their likelihood of success in college-level work.

WHY DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION?

Enrollment in developmental education is a key measure for college readiness. The latest available data on SLEDS reports that only 20% of Minnesota’s class of 2017 enrolled in developmental education within two years of high school graduation. In addition, the rate of enrollment in developmental education declined over the most recent five-year period, from 27% for 2012 graduates to 19% for 2017 graduates. Preliminary data for 2018 shows the enrollment rate at 18%.

AT WHICH INSTITUTIONS ARE STUDENTS ENROLLING IN DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION?

Developmental education courses are predominantly taken at Minnesota’s public community and technical colleges (81%) or state universities (15%). Three percent of graduates enrolled in developmental education take such courses at the University of Minnesota (2%) or a private college (1%).

WHAT ELSE DO WE KNOW?

SLEDS provides a much richer picture of students enrolled in developmental education. In Minnesota, developmental education rates are higher among students of color, free and reduced priced lunch recipients, and students who do not speak English at home. Graduates who were not proficient on state accountability tests enrolled in higher rates in developmental education (40% of students not proficient in math; 42% of students not proficient in reading - class of 2016 preliminary data*), which means that students who struggle academically in high school are likely to struggle in college.

*Note: Classes prior to 2016 only include fall enrollment data.