

MINNESOTA P-20 EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

Submitted by:
Steven J. Rosenstone, Chancellor
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities
Chair, Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership

*2013 Report
to the
Legislature*

Purpose

In 2009, legislation was enacted to formally codify the P-20 Education Partnership (formerly called the P-16 Education Council), to add four legislators to the membership, and to require an annual report be submitted to the governor and legislature each January. The report is to “summarize the partnership’s progress in meeting its goals and identify the need for any draft legislation when necessary to further the goals of the partnership to maximize student achievement while promoting efficient use of resources.”

The primary purpose of the 2013 report is two-fold:

- To inform the legislature of the work of the P-20 Partnership
- To provide information on a key educational issue facing Minnesota – the educational achievement gap

2011-12 Partnership Goals

Under the leadership of Chancellor Steven Rosenstone, the 28 members of the partnership agreed to focus on a single issue — the reduction and elimination of the achievement gap at all levels of education in Minnesota. Members arrived at this decision after extensive discussions and research in late 2011 and in the spring of 2012. In addition to the moral imperative, research revealed numerous and compelling demographic and economic realities:

- The Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, *Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018*, indicates that Minnesota will have the second highest need among all states for a well-educated workforce — 70% of all jobs in Minnesota will require a postsecondary credential to secure jobs that will provide a living wage and contribute to the economic vitality of our state.
- The U.S. is no longer a world leader in educational attainment; it has gone from first to middle-of-the-pack among industrialized nations in the percentage of young adults with a college degree. In international measures of mathematical proficiency, U.S. students place in the bottom quartile (PISA, 2003).
- Minnesota’s NAEP scores, while above the national average, are not among the highest-performing states.
- Minnesota’s current workforce is aging, and the greatest population growth will continue to be within communities of color. The population of the seven-county metro region increased by about 200,000 from 2000 to 2009, and 82% of the growth was in populations of color (State Demographer 2010). The Metropolitan Council forecasts that 100% of the population growth in the Twin Cities metro area over the next 25 years will be among people of color.

- In 2009, one in four elementary and secondary students statewide was a student of color. The growth in students of color is not limited to Minneapolis and St. Paul. Suburban school districts like Brooklyn Center and Richfield, and districts in Greater MN including Madelia, Pelican Rapids, Willmar, Worthington and Rochester have seen double digit increases in English language learner students (Minnesota Department of Education [MDE]).

Numerous studies and reports confirm Minnesota's children are no longer setting the national standards for achievement. What is more alarming is that the achievement gap between white children and children of color begins at a very early age; it persists and in many cases widens as children progress through the P-20 pipeline. The state that once prided itself on leading the nation in educational attainment and achievement is no longer in the top ten, twenty or even "above average." **Minnesota has one of the worst achievement gaps in the nation.** Some examples:

- The gap begins at an early age long before kindergarten. Numerous national and program studies have shown "at risk children" (who in Minnesota are disproportionately children of color) are more likely to be retained in the first grade, much more likely to need special education, less likely to be literate by the third grade, less likely to complete high school and get a good job, and more likely to commit a crime.
- Kindergarten is the gateway to Minnesota's current education system; a recent report on kindergarten readiness noted that statewide, 63% of white children met the readiness for school standard. In contrast, 57% of Black children and 41% of Hispanic and Asian children were deemed ready (Human Capital Research/MDE, 2011).
- On the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 4th grade assessment in math, Minnesota's white 4th graders ranked 15th nationally, while the state ranked 49th of 50 states in achievement for Hispanic students and 48th of 50 states for African American students (NAEP).
- Seventy-one percent of white seventh graders received proficient scores on the 2008 Minnesota reading test (MCA) compared to 37% of African American students (MDE, 2008).
- Of high school juniors who took the ACT in Minnesota, 63% of white students received proficient scores in math, compared to 21% of African American students.
- The four-year high school graduation rate in 2011 for white students was 84%; African American, American Indian and Hispanic students' rates were 49%, 42% and 51%, respectively, at or very near the lowest in the nation (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

Achievement gaps persist into postsecondary education:

- Students of color are less likely to attend a four-year college than their white peers. Sixty percent of white students attended a Minnesota four-year college or university, compared to 39% of African American students (MMEP, 2011).
- Of those that do attend a four-year institution, 63% of white students graduate in six years; 37% of students of color graduate in that same time (Measuring Up, 2008).

Poverty is a significant factor:

- Some argue that it is not race but socio-economic status that is the driver of these inequities. The reality in Minnesota is that persons of color are far more likely to live in poverty. In 2007, one in five white students were eligible for free and reduced lunch; in contrast, three in four black students were eligible (MMEP, 2010).
- A recent report found children who have lived in poverty and are not reading proficiently in 3rd grade are three times more likely to dropout or fail to graduate from high school than those who have never been poor (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2011).

Achievement gaps continue into the workplace with white workers' salaries more than double those of workers of color (MN Compass, Wilder Research, 2010).

Our plan of action

Our fact gathering phase concluded in May, 2012 with a seminar led by Dr. Ronald Ferguson, Harvard economist and researcher on the achievement gap. Many members read his book, *Toward Excellence with Equity: An Emerging Vision for Closing the Achievement Gap* in advance of his visit to Minnesota. Dr. Ferguson's research-based approach to eliminating the achievement gap focuses on the important roles and actions of five groups: parents, teachers, peers, the community and business. Only when all five groups are working in sync and applying proven effective practices and policies, great strides can be made in the achievement gap. Dr. Ferguson noted groups like the P-20 Partnership that include representatives from these key sectors and span education pre-K through college and entry into the workforce have the best chance of success.

As the P-20 leadership team discussed its role and history both internally and with Dr. Ferguson, we concluded that the P-20 Partnership was uniquely positioned to address the achievement gap because the partnership includes all the levels and sectors of education, public and business interests, and is built on a strong foundation of trust and mutual respect among members. The partnership's legislative charter further strengthens its role in proposing policy and advocating for educational quality.

Results to date

The partnership began to focus its work in September, 2012 on understanding each of the transition points between education sectors and identifying best practices within or across sectors that will increase student success and reduce the achievement gap.

The partnership reviewed a white paper from Commissioner Casselius, Director Pogemiller and Chancellor Rosenstone suggesting an approach to better align high school outcomes and postsecondary readiness expectations. The partners expressed support for better alignment in assessment and testing between high school and college. Better indicators of achievement and readiness would not only ensure that high school students are ready for college, but would provide more opportunities for high school students to begin college when they are ready. For some students, that means more remedial work in high school; for others it means engaging in more postsecondary/dual credit opportunities while still in high school.

The partnership reviewed the work to date on the \$40,000,000, five-year federal Race to the Top grant focused on early childhood education. The joint ownership and involvement of three agencies representing the many facets of child and family life — the Departments of Education, Health, and Human Services was viewed as a model for increased cooperation and collaboration within the many stakeholders in the P-20 Partnership. The partners voiced support for increased resources to ensure that all children have quality child care and/or preschool opportunities.

The achievement gap spans all the levels of education and the transitions from one level to another. The points of transition are critical to student success and the Partnership is uniquely positioned to address these transition points. In 2013, the Partnership will review best practices and transition issues from elementary to secondary education and from college to work. Individual members of the Partnership also will share plans and strategies for eliminating the achievement gap, encouraging their peers to review and critique those plans. The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities has volunteered to be the first to share its plan to eliminate the achievement gap and will ask other partners for feedback.

The Partnership has received updates on the development and implementation of the Minneapolis- and St. Paul-focused organization *Generation Next*. It is patterned after a successful initiative called *Strive*, originating in Cincinnati, Ohio. Several of the P-20 partners also serve on the *Generation Next* board, and University of Minnesota President, Eric Kaler, is one of the co-chairs. Both organizations are interested in working together to achieve the synergy that can come from their varied yet complimentary missions.

The Partnership will develop a series of policy and other recommendations in advance of the 2014 legislative session. Those recommendations will be included in the report to the legislature in January 2014.

Progress on the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data system (SLEDS)

Access to more and better data on students, especially as they move from one sector of education to another or from school to work is critical, and SLEDS can be an important tool in improving student success and reducing the achievement gap. These data can help us identify students and the places where they are particularly at risk. It can also help us identify programs, practices or interventions that help (or hinder) student success. Armed with that information, educators, parents, students and policymakers can make better informed and timely decisions and choices.

The P-20 Partnership continues to provide oversight to the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDS). During the past year, the final year of the federal grant support for the establishment of the system, the project has gone from concept to implementation. The first set of data was loaded into the new system in fall 2012. Among the first reports to be developed was a statewide analysis of following up on several high school graduating classes.

The report showed how many students went directly to college, how many enrolled in subsequent years, the number of graduates, and other information. Appendix A was taken from that report and is included here to provide an example of the kind of information that SLEDS can enable us to present. A second release of data will add data elements from national postsecondary enrollment and completion and workforce training participant data, allowing for improved reporting and analysis of both traditional and non-traditional education and workforce paths.

Through SLEDS, the higher education providers are developing a report for all high schools with information on their graduates one, four and six years after graduation. A group of high school principals were asked to review the concept and provide suggestions for additional information that would be useful to them; they are very supportive of this type of reporting.

Conclusion

The reduction and elimination of the achievement gap at all levels of education in Minnesota is an ambitious undertaking. It requires sustained attention and focus, but the P-20 Partnership believes it is the single most important education issue facing the state. Our future economic competitiveness and civic well-being requires a highly educated population that reflects the diversity of our population. Working in partnership, we can make that happen.

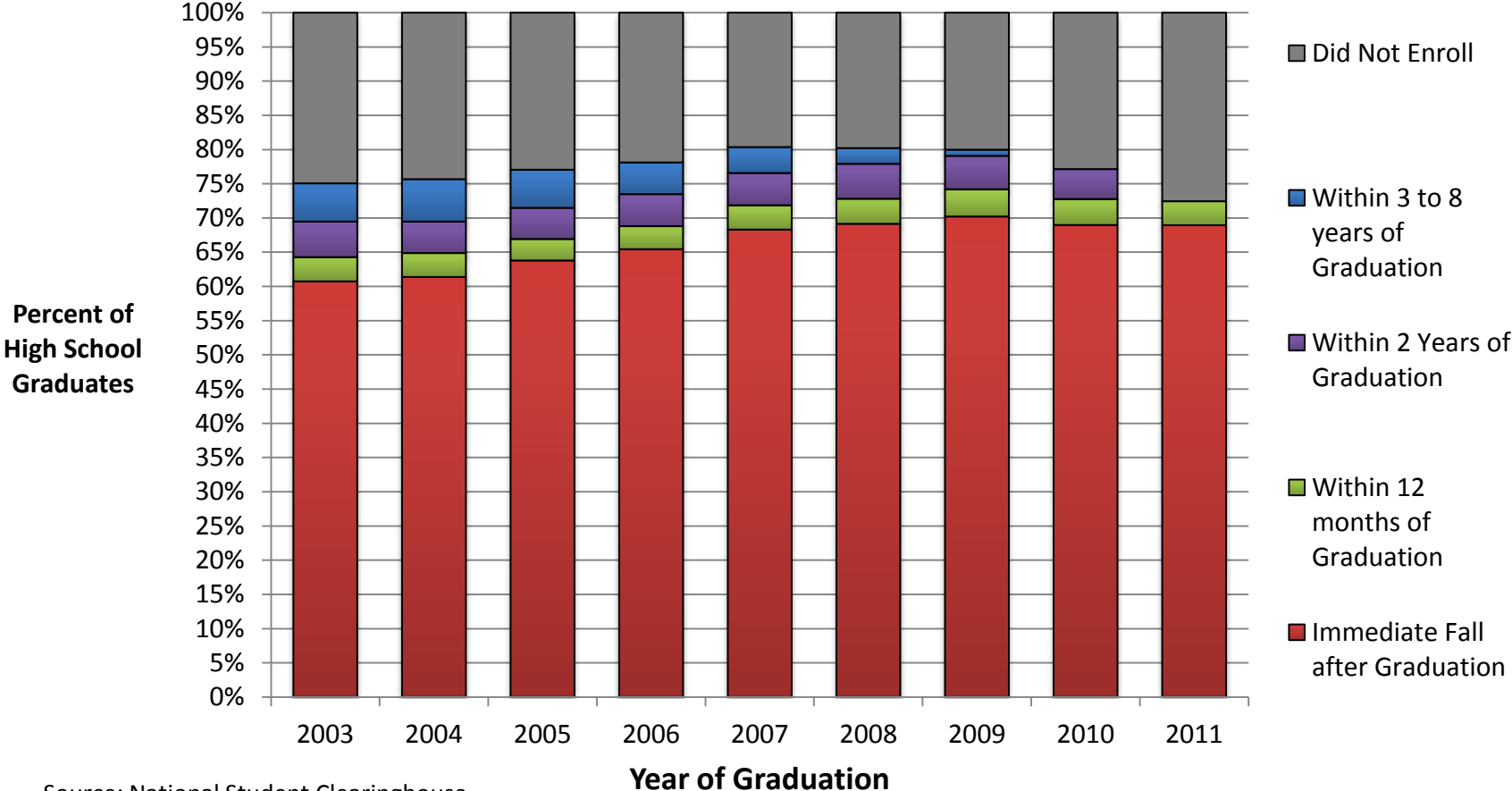
Transition in Leadership

Chancellor Rosenstone's two-year term as chair of the P-20 Partnership concludes in June, 2013, and by Statute rotates to Commissioner Cassellius for a two-year term beginning July 1, 2013.

Appendix A
Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDS)
Sample of Analysis

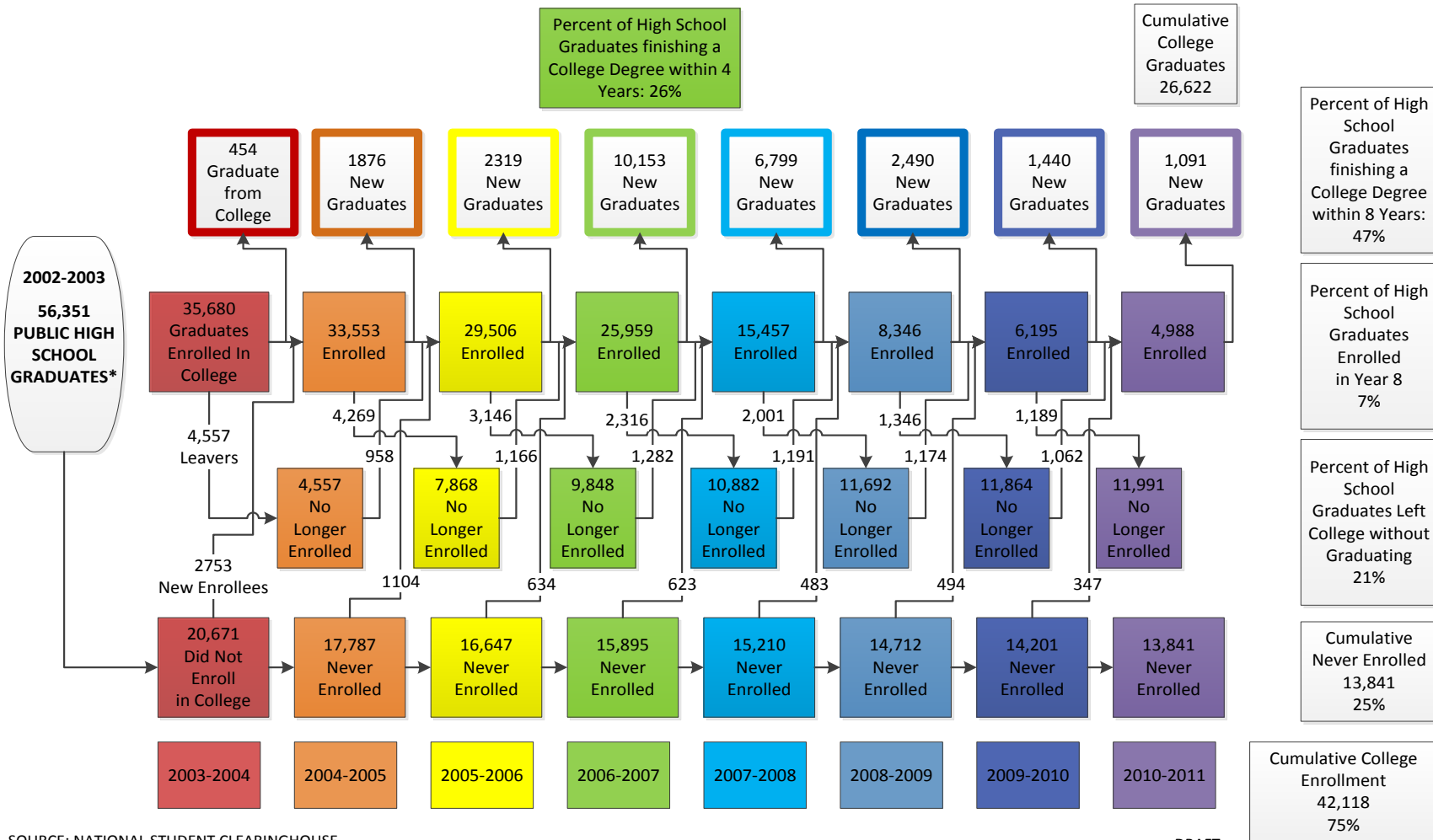
Timing of College Entry (as of 2011)

Post Secondary Enrollment of Minnesota Public High School Graduates by Time Period of Enrollment and Year of Graduation



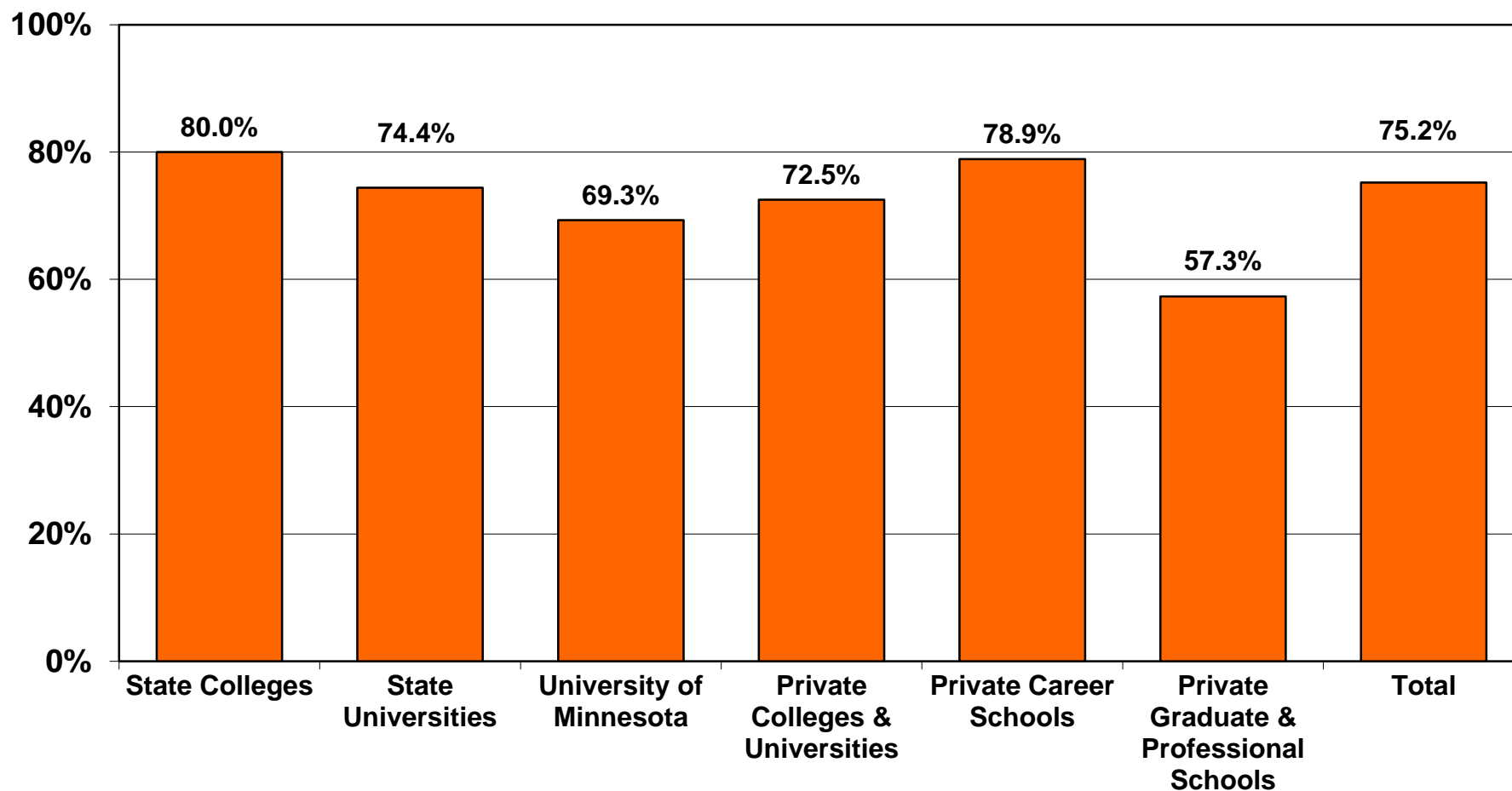
Source: National Student Clearinghouse

Post Secondary Pathways of Minnesota Public High School Graduates Class of 2003



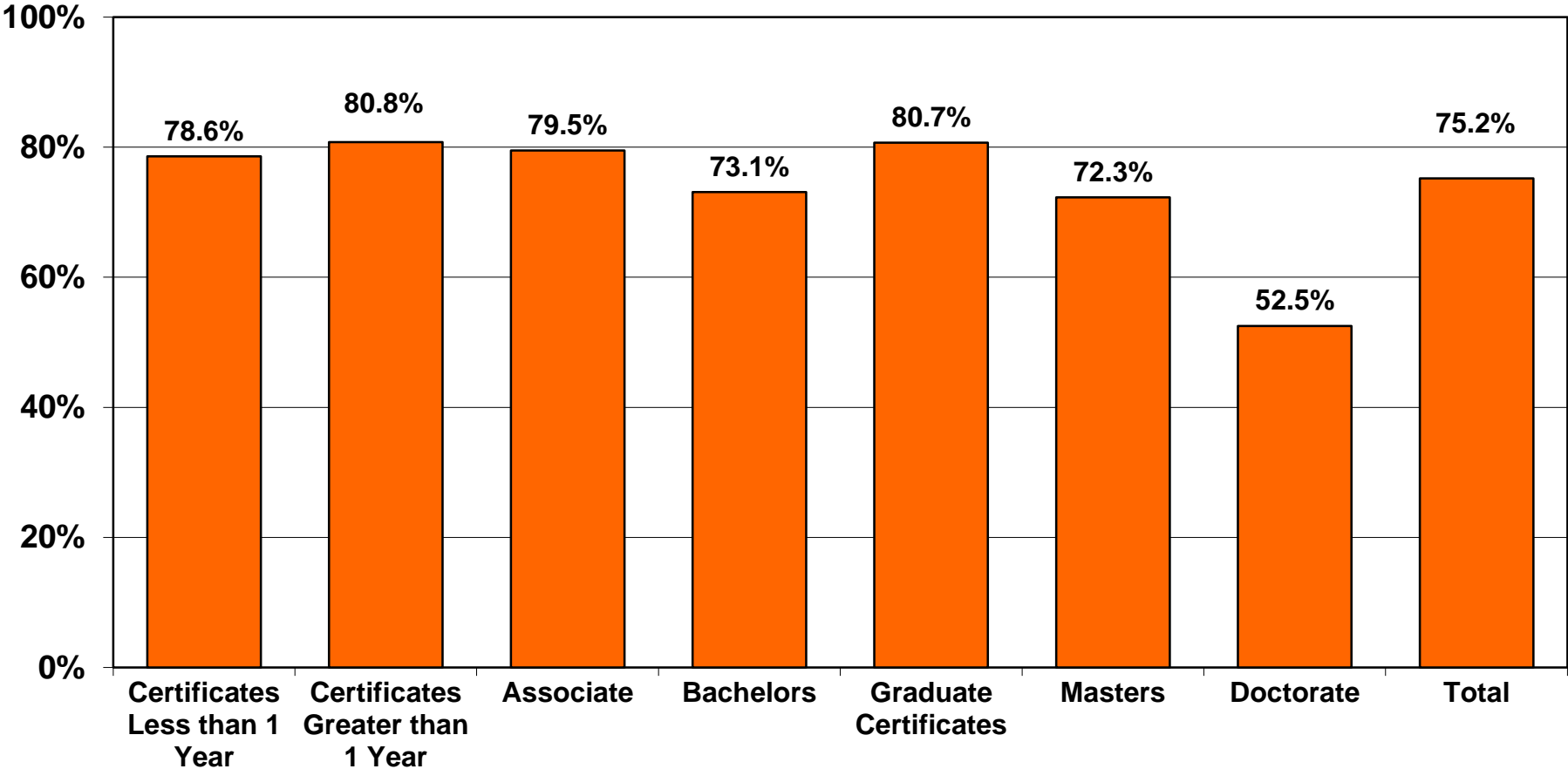
SOURCE: NATIONAL STUDENT CLEARINGHOUSE
*Data includes 95% of high school graduates

Employment of Recent College Graduates in Minnesota by Institution Type



Note: Includes 72,659 graduates of Minnesota institutions in 2009-10; excludes graduates of Walden University and Capella University. Employment data provided by DEED, includes Minnesota Employers covered by Unemployment Insurance and excludes Federal, Military, self-employed and those employed in other states.

Employment of Recent College Graduates in Minnesota by Degree Level



Note: Includes 72,659 graduates of Minnesota institutions in 2009-10; excludes graduates of Walden University and Capella University. Employment data provided by DEED, includes Minnesota Employers covered by Unemployment Insurance and excludes Federal, Military, self-employed and those employed in other states.

