The background features a large, faint seal of the State of Arizona. The seal is circular and contains the text "GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA" around the perimeter. In the center, there is a shield with a banner that reads "DITAT DEUS". Below the shield, the year "1912" is visible. The seal is set against a dark blue background with two diagonal lines, one yellow and one red, crossing each other.

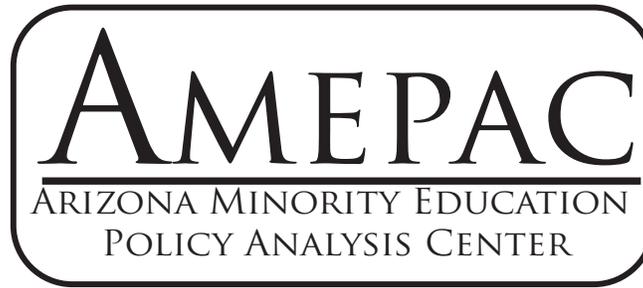
# ARIZONA MINORITY STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT 2013

ARIZONA IN  
TRANSFORMATION

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### INTRODUCTION

REPORT OVERVIEW.....	4
READING THE REPORT .....	5

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION .....	6
ARIZONA DEMOGRAPHICS .....	7
P-12 EDUCATION .....	7
COLLEGE ACCESS.....	8
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.....	8
Undergraduate Enrollments .....	8
Undergraduate Enrollment Trends.....	8
Graduate Enrollments .....	8
Graduate Enrollment Trends.....	8
Undergraduate Degrees .....	8
CONCLUSION .....	9

#### POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

P-12 EDUCATION .....	10
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.....	11



## INTRODUCTION

The Arizona Minority Education Policy Analysis Center (AMEPAC) is a policy center of the Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education. Through studies, AMEPAC's mission is to stimulate constructive statewide discussion and debate about improving Arizona minority students' early awareness, access, and achievement throughout the educational attainment process. Our vision is that all Arizona students succeed in higher education as a result of quality research that shapes policy on critical issues.

AMEPAC is proud to provide policymakers, educators, and the public with this 5th edition of the Minority Student Progress Report 2013: Arizona in Transformation. The report provides a current "snapshot" of the educational achievement of minority students in Arizona, from pre-k through postsecondary education. In addition, trend analyses of key educational indicators are also provided to give readers a sense of how the status of minority education in Arizona has changed over time.

In helping readers understand how best to use the findings described in this report, it is important to clarify that the study does not provide an analysis of why minority educational disparities remain. The focus of the report is to provide comprehensive and accurate baseline and trend data which identify and reveal the type, extent, and significance of educational attainment disparities during the time periods reported. In some cases the data are provided for a single year, but in other cases data are provided for up to a 20 year period. The most current data available were used to provide information for this report; however, these years vary throughout the report due to the most current information available through state and national databases. The data sources are listed at the end of the report and are noted in each of the figures and data tables.

We encourage readers to use the report's findings to stimulate important discussions that lead to policy solutions in a dynamic and ever changing environment. This report will be most useful to leaders who recognize and appreciate the complexity of these issues, and who value the critical role that education plays in improving the lives and well-being of all Arizonans.

## REPORT OVERVIEW

This 5th edition of the report is presented in four major sections. Section one provides a summary of key demographic data drawn from the U.S. Census about the state of Arizona.

Section two draws upon data from the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to provide summaries of key educational indicators. This section includes trend analyses of student enrollments in Arizona schools by racial/ethnic background. In addition, we present data regarding the number and proportion of students who are English Language Learners (ELL), classified as "gifted", and/or enrolled in special education. We also show data summarizing pass rates on Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) tests. Finally, we provide data on the racial/ethnic representation of teachers in Arizona schools, as well as the proportion of teachers who meet federal requirements for classification as "highly qualified teachers."

Section three draws upon data from the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR), the College Board, the American College Testing (ACT) service, and the two largest community college districts in the state to provide information regarding the extent to which Arizona students are "college ready."

The fourth section draws upon data from the United States Department of Education’s Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to summarize 20-year trends in enrollments and completions for all postsecondary institutions in Arizona. Moreover, these trend data are provided for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.

## READING THE REPORT

As readers review the report it is important to understand the conventions used throughout its many charts and graphs. In the interest of conserving space, providing clarity, and maintaining consistency, a code has been employed throughout the report for presenting race/ethnicity categories. The report uses the same color for each category (although the same color may be used for unrelated categories) and employs a shorthand legend. Below is a key for understanding the legend and color scheme.

It is important to note the importance of language and terminology when discussing matters of race and ethnicity. The terminology used in this report follows the guidelines established by the White House Office of Management and Budget before 1997.

These categories, while implemented within the U.S. Census starting in 2000, were not fully implemented in the Department of Education reporting structure until 2010. For this reason, many educational institutions do not have data for the newest race categories from the 1997 standards: “Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander” or “Multiracial” until after 2010. In an effort to standardize terms throughout this report, which includes data from before 1997 and after 2010 (trend data presented in this report often start as early as 1991 and end as late as 2011), the decision to use pre-1997 categories was made. This means that those individuals who would be classified as “Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander” or “Asian” in the post-1997 categories will be classified as “Asian Pacific Islander” in this report because that is how the data were reported prior to 2010 when many of the OMB’s 1997 guidelines were fully implemented. Data for individuals who are classified as “Multiracial” are only provided post-2009, in most cases, because these data were not collected until that year.

AMEPAC realizes that there are many ways in which individuals may choose to identify their racial or ethnic heritage, and the decision to use these terms is not meant to reflect any ideological or political preference. This report relies completely on data provided from numerous institutions, and as such is limited to the reporting categories they use.

## RACE / ETHNICITY CATEGORY CODES

● AI	AMERICAN INDIAN
● AP	ASIAN / PACIFIC ISLANDER
● B	BLACK
● W	WHITE
● H	HISPANIC
● UK	UNKNOWN RACE
● M	MULTIRACIAL
● AZ	ARIZONA
● NR	NON-RESIDENT ALIEN (INTERNATIONAL STUDENT)



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PHOTO BY PRISCILA MATEI

## INTRODUCTION

In its 2012 report, *Dropped? Latino Education and Arizona's Economic Future*, the Morrison Institute for Public Policy described the important connection between education and the workforce, and issued an urgent warning that “Arizona is at risk of becoming a second-tier state, educationally and economically” (p. 5). This warning was based on demographic projections and the predicted economic effects of maintaining current educational and public policies. These projections are supported by the trend analyses of demographics and education in this report, which indicate a major racial and ethnic gap in education with regard to access and attainment—a gap that widens as educational attainment levels increase. Coupling these trends with the shift in demographics toward a majority-minority population in Arizona intensifies the challenges of education, particularly public higher education, to be an effective driver of economic growth.

Arizona has several growth populations that are salient both educationally and economically, including part-time students, adult learners, veterans, and Hispanics. Of critical, but not singular, importance is Arizona's Hispanic population, which comprises the majority of Arizona's minority population growth (Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 2012). Consequently, the gaps in educational outcomes between Arizona's Hispanics, Blacks, and American Indians and those of Whites and Asian Pacific Americans require remedy. In this respect, sustaining Arizona's educational status quo undermines the state's economic future by framing its growth populations as dispensable. However, according to AMEPAC's *To Learn And Earn* report, Arizona is not destined to be a second-tier state, economically, educationally, or otherwise if an “educonomy” perspective is adopted (AMEPAC, 2011). Public policy can greatly influence educational responses to growth populations that position Arizona for economic prosperity by purposefully leveraging the state's shifting demographics. Thus, the different choices available to Arizona in shaping its economic future all hinge on whether the state embraces its growth populations in ways that enhance their educational opportunities and experiences, and support them to become important assets for the future of the state.

The choices Arizona may make in developing its economic future correspond to a continuum of possibilities. On one end of this continuum, Arizona can resign itself to repeating past and current actions that devalue education and the state's minority populations, which will further jeopardize Arizona's economic future. On the other end, Arizona can choose to implement educational policies that signal a commitment to building an economically healthy Arizona. To what extent does/will public policy in Arizona reflect an understanding that an educated workforce is a prerequisite for economic health?

Within the next five years, over 60 percent of jobs in Arizona will require some form of education beyond high school (Carnevale, Smith & Strohl, 2010). Therefore, while educational attainment is dependent on all levels of education, higher education plays an increasingly important role as a gatekeeper of Arizona's economic future. There is some evidence that Arizona recognizes the economic value of higher education with its stated goal of increasing the number of bachelor's degrees awarded annually to at least 30,000 by 2020 (Arizona Board of Regents, n.d.; Arizona Ready, 2013). However, the 6-year graduation rate from 2009-2011 at ABOR institutions has remained relatively flat (Arizona Ready, 2013). So, while such a goal is a response to the assertion that “if past trends continue, Arizona

will fall short of the national average by about 220,000 college graduates” (Arizona Board of Regents, n.d., p.13), challenges remain.

What does an economically healthy state look like? There are several indicators of a state’s economic health, all of which are affected by educational attainment. Common indicators include industry growth and unemployment levels, which assume that strong economies have strong businesses dependent upon a skilled workforce. In the knowledge economy of today and tomorrow, a skilled workforce is synonymous with an educated workforce (AMEPAC, 2011). “Universities play a role here by disseminating practical knowledge to help advance Arizona industry, spinning off and attracting new companies, and producing graduates with the engaged and relevant experience which allows them to have a more immediate impact in those companies and in our communities” (Arizona Board of Regents, n.d., p. 29). As the level of educational attainment increases, so do individual and collective economic and social benefits, such as higher median and lifetime earnings and higher quality of life (Arizona Board of Regents, n.d.).

In a knowledge economy, higher levels of educational attainment fetch higher wages and benefits, which translate into higher median incomes, a stronger tax base, improved consumer spending ability, and lower poverty levels (AMEPAC, 2011; Arizona Board of Regents, n.d.; Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 2012). It also affects other societal welfare outputs, namely improved public services (like education) and decreased reliance on public benefits (like government assistance programs) (Arizona Board of Regents, n.d.; Morrison Institute for Public Policy, 2012). Consequently, states concerned with gaining, maintaining, and expanding a competitive economic advantage by developing a healthy economy understand the importance of acting now to maximize future educational attainment levels for all residents of the state. Although maximizing educational attainment is complex, at its base, it requires an understanding of the context in which such an objective is framed so that public policy may align accordingly.

This report details trends in demographics and education in Arizona, which shape the context for the state of Arizona. Selected data from the P-12 and higher education sectors are highlighted to provide information about some of the significant educational challenges and opportunities that face our state. These are not comprehensive analyses of all of the relevant data, but rather are intended to be “snapshots” that provide insight into the key educational and public policy challenges Arizona faces.

## ARIZONA DEMOGRAPHICS

Arizona’s population consists of a larger proportion of Hispanics and American Indians than the nation as a whole. Arizona is increasingly Hispanic, particularly

in the younger age categories, where, as of 2010, Hispanics are the largest group in kindergarten through second grade.

As of 2010, about a quarter of Arizonans over age 25 held a bachelor’s degree or higher, while less than 1 in 10 have completed an associate’s degree, about a quarter have completed some college, another quarter have obtained a high school diploma or equivalent, and less than 2 in 10 have less than a high school diploma. American Indians and Hispanics are more likely to have attained a high school diploma equivalent or less when compared to all other groups.

In 2010, the median household income for all Arizonans was \$50,448 compared to the U.S. median income of \$51,914. When disaggregated by race/ethnicity, American Indians in Arizona face the highest poverty rates (33.8%) followed by Hispanics (24.4%).

## P-12 EDUCATION

Since 2004, minority students in Arizona have become an increasing majority in P-12 education, with Hispanics comprising the largest proportion of minority students. Since 2011, the dropout rate has been rising with American Indians, Hispanics and Blacks at greatest risk of dropping out. Since 2004, the number of gifted and special education students has increased, while the number of English Language Learners (ELL) has decreased dramatically. Hispanics comprise the largest segment of ELL students, with growth in the proportion of Black ELL students. The number of gifted students has increased for all groups except American Indians, with Whites and Asian Pacific Americans much more likely to be designated as gifted. American Indians and Blacks are more likely (and Asian Pacific Americans much less likely) than other students to be in special education programs.

Arizona’s Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) is one way to measure educational outcomes. AIMS test scores show Asian Pacific Americans and Whites persistently pass at higher rates than American Indians, Blacks, and Hispanics. While pass rates for the mathematics and writing tests have decreased, they have increased for reading and science. Not passing the AIMS test can create barriers for students to enroll in courses needed to meet eligibility requirements for admission to one of the state’s public universities because they must retake AIMS to meet high school graduation requirements.

Teachers are an important element in P-12 education. Teachers of color are dramatically underrepresented in classrooms, and schools with minority student populations are predominately taught by White teachers. Less than half of all Arizona teachers meet federal guidelines for designation as highly qualified teachers, and teachers of color are more likely to achieve the highly qualified designation than White teachers.

## COLLEGE ACCESS

Access to postsecondary education is partially a function of admissions requirements and preparation. University eligibility rates for students across Arizona are quite low. Students in urban areas are more likely than other students to meet ABOR eligibility requirements; yet, only half of high school graduates from Pima and Maricopa counties are eligible. Looking at eligibility by gender and race/ethnicity, female, White, and Asian Pacific American students have higher eligibility rates than males, Blacks, American Indians, and Hispanics. The majority of students do not demonstrate the necessary proficiency for mathematics, while over 6 in 10 fulfill the science and language requirements. Furthermore, eligibility requirements may not align with graduation requirements. For example, many school districts do not require two years of foreign language, an eligibility requirement that over a quarter of high school graduates do not meet.

Standardized tests, advanced placement (AP), and dual enrollment also play a major role in college access in Arizona. SAT participation for Whites has increased over the last 10 years, and there is a significant gap in mean composite SAT score between White and Asian Pacific American students and that of Hispanics, Blacks and American Indians. The mean SAT score for males is higher than females, particularly in mathematics. Over the past few years, critical reading scores have been on a downward trajectory. Excluding Asian Pacific American and White students, about 8 out of 10 Arizona students fell short of meeting all four ACT college readiness benchmarks, with racial/ethnic disparities most pronounced in the mathematics and science readiness benchmarks. In 2011, 42,982 Arizona students took AP exams, most of whom were White. While more females than males took the exams, a greater proportion of males scored a 3 or higher than did females. Dual enrollment is another gateway to college. Over 8 in 10 students who enroll in dual enrollment do so through the Maricopa Community Colleges District (MCCD) and Pima Community College (PCC), where they take, on average, two classes. Whites make up the greatest proportion of dual enrollment students at MCCD and PCC, followed by Hispanics.

## POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

### UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENTS

In 2010, 481,260 students (undergraduate, graduate, and professional) were enrolled in postsecondary institutions in Arizona. Public two-year colleges, followed by public four-year institutions enrolled the largest number of students. Whites have the largest representation at each type of institution and in each level (undergraduate, graduate, or professional). In 2010, undergraduate

enrollments showed that Hispanics and American Indians comprise a larger proportion of enrollments at for-profit two-year colleges and Asian Pacific Americans are most represented in public universities. The majority of all American Indian, Asian Pacific American, Black, and Hispanic students are enrolled at public two-year institutions.

### UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT TRENDS

Undergraduate enrollments grew across all sectors between 1991 and 2010. The for-profit sector demonstrated the greatest proportional growth in undergraduate enrollments; but, public institutions enrolled the greatest number of students. Black and Asian Pacific American undergraduate student enrollment increased at public universities, while the proportional enrollment of Hispanics doubled.

At for-profit four-year institutions, the representation of Blacks nearly tripled. At public two-year colleges, the proportional enrollments of Hispanics, Blacks, American Indians and Asian Pacific Americans all increased while that of Whites decreased.

For-profit, two-year institutions saw the biggest proportional increase in enrollments among Hispanic students, which more than doubled.

### GRADUATE ENROLLMENTS

In 2010, more than half of all graduate and professional students were enrolled at one of the state's public universities. While Hispanics and American Indians had a higher proportion of enrollments at public universities, Asian Pacific Americans had a higher percentage of enrollments at not-for-profit institutions. A significant proportion of Black students were enrolled at for-profit institutions. Institutions tended to draw a significant proportion of graduate students from other countries.

### GRADUATE ENROLLMENT TRENDS

Between 1991 and 2010, graduate and professional enrollments show that Whites and international students continue to comprise the greatest proportional enrollments at public universities with evidence of small, steady gains in the proportional representation of all students of color. The most notable changes in graduate enrollments at private four-year institutions include a decrease in Hispanics and large increase in Asian Pacific Americans. There was a dramatic 400 percent increase in graduate and professional enrollments at for-profit four-year institutions, where the proportional enrollment of Hispanics, Asian Pacific Americans, and American Indians decreased, but that of Blacks more than doubled.

### UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

In 2010, of the 25,801 bachelor's degrees and 10,730 master's degrees awarded in Arizona, the vast majority

were awarded by public four-year institutions, followed by for-profit and not-for-profit institutions. Of students who reported their racial/ethnic background, most bachelor's degrees were awarded to Whites, followed by Hispanics. Public four-year institutions awarded the most degrees to Asian Pacific Americans, and for-profit four-year institutions awarded the most degrees to Black students.

### UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE TRENDS

From 1991-2010, Arizona saw growth in the number of all types of degrees awarded. Much of the increase in associate's, bachelor's and master's degrees can be attributed to growth of the for-profit sector. Although the proportion of Whites receiving associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees has decreased, they continue to receive the most postsecondary degrees.

The proportion of associate's degrees awarded to Hispanics reached a high in 2002 and has since been steadily decreasing, but the proportion awarded to Blacks reached a low in 2004 and has risen since 2005. Meanwhile, the proportion of Hispanics receiving bachelor's degrees peaked in 2001, and American Indians similarly reached a high in 2002. The percentage of bachelor's degrees awarded to Blacks increased, and there is slow growth in the proportion of bachelor's degrees awarded to Asian Pacific Americans. Further, the three public universities have all shown increases in their six-year graduation rates from 2002 to 2011, yet only 61 percent graduated in the highest year. Asian Pacific Americans and White students tend to have the highest six-year graduation rates, while American Indians consistently have the lowest.

### GRADUATE DEGREES

At public institutions, most master's degrees were awarded to White and international students. At not-for-profit institutions, the proportion of master's degrees awarded to international students is substantially higher, and lower for Hispanics and American Indians. Blacks at for-profit institutions received proportionally more master's degrees than at any other type of institution, but international students were awarded substantially fewer degrees.

The three public universities granted most of the 1,172 doctoral degrees and 1,102 professional degrees. Whites comprised the majority of doctoral degree recipients, followed by international students. Substantially fewer doctoral degrees were awarded to Hispanics, Asian Pacific Americans, Blacks, and American Indians. Whites also made up a large proportion of professional degree recipients at all types of institutions. Not-for-profit institutions awarded a higher proportion of professional degrees to Asian Pacific Americans and substantially fewer to American Indians.

### GRADUATE DEGREE TRENDS

The number of master's degrees awarded has increased dramatically, especially after 2004. The proportion of master's degrees awarded to Blacks has increased with greatest growth beginning in 2005. There was little change in the proportion of degrees awarded to Hispanics, Asian Pacific Americans and American Indians.

The number of doctoral degrees awarded grew, with the most dramatic increases starting in 2006. Blacks showed large gains in the proportion of doctoral degrees awarded, beginning in 2006. Hispanics also showed some gains, yet the proportion of doctoral degrees awarded to American Indians remained low. In a finding that differs from the national trends, there is a downward trend in the past few years in the proportion of international students awarded doctoral degrees in Arizona.

The proportion of Blacks, Hispanics and American Indians who received degrees in allopathic medicine remained quite low, with the greatest gain occurring among Asian Pacific Americans.

The number of degrees awarded in osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, and law increased. More than three quarters of osteopathic degrees were awarded to White students, while none were awarded to American Indians and only three were awarded to Blacks. In any given year, Hispanics received no more than 7 percent of osteopathic degrees while Asian Pacific Americans received between 6.6 percent and 25.6 percent.

In terms of pharmacy degrees, the percentage of degrees awarded to Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians is consistently low. While the percentage of pharmacy degrees awarded to White students dropped, the proportion awarded to Asian Pacific Americans more than doubled.

Although the proportion of law degrees awarded to Hispanics, Asian Pacific Americans and American Indians rose, there is a dramatic decrease in the proportion of law degrees awarded to Blacks.

### CONCLUSION

Whether examining P-12 or postsecondary education, it is clear that there is an educational gap between Arizona's minority and majority students. Evidence of this gap is found in access, enrollment, and outcome measures across educational levels. The shifting demographic profile of Arizona's growth populations toward a majority that is minority has already occurred in lower grades and amplifies the implications and consequences of allowing such gaps to continue for individuals, communities, and our state. Based on the findings presented in this report, AMEPAC offers policy recommendations for ways in which Arizonans can work toward closing these educational gaps, and commit to an economically healthy Arizona.

# Policy Recommendations

With over 50 pages of charts and explanations, and 33 pages of tables following this section, it is safe to say there are a lot of data in this report. In this section, the Arizona Minority Education Policy Analysis Center (AMEPAC) outlines some key policy recommendations for the State of Arizona using the data provided in the report.

Although we have many recommendations, we trust there are many more that you and other key policy stakeholders will generate with the rich data presented in this report. We encourage you to read the recommendations included in the next few pages as a starting point for the necessary educational policy discussions Arizona must continue to have throughout the State.

## P-12 EDUCATION

**GOAL: Develop the cultural competency of Arizona teachers so they are prepared to educate all of Arizona's students.**

### 1. Increase ESL Endorsements.

Increase language requirements for teachers in the form of a mandatory English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsement to benefit teachers' understanding of how English Language Learner (ELL) students learn and how to meet their needs. Continued emphasis must be placed on providing ELL services that ensure students' proficiency in Academic English, as the current ELL level of English is inadequate for long-term academic and workforce success.

The data examined in this research show that although ELL students have been decreasing overall, language continues to be a barrier to effective learning. Arizona teachers must be equipped to interact in ways that reach ELL students, who are disproportionately minority, especially because the largest proportion of ELL students are from Arizona's growing Hispanic population. A mandatory ESL endorsement signals a commitment to such interaction that, coupled with working toward proficiency in Academic English, may position ELL students for greater academic success as well as enhanced workforce opportunities.

### 2. Increase Teacher Diversity.

Increase the number of students in the pipeline for teacher preparation programs who will be culturally competent to deliver quality education to all Arizona students. Strategies include:

- Increase the number of students of color enrolled in teacher preparation programs through focused agreements between community colleges and universities.
- Provide incentives to students to go into high-need subject areas and/or high-need schools through a state-level system of debt forgiveness exchanged for work in these areas and/or communities.
- Encourage "grow your own" programs (pathway programs for employees, students and community members) especially in schools nested in communities of color.
- Explore teacher exchange programs as a short term solution to the scarcity of teachers of color.

Because research shows that teachers of color are underrepresented yet critical to quality through such measures as achieving highly qualified designations, a systematic approach is essential to producing culturally competent teachers.

### 3. Enhance Teachers' Cultural Competency.

Provide quality, culturally competent professional development for Arizona teachers. Strategies include:

- Provide continuous professional development for educators especially during the transition to the Arizona Common Core Standards.
- Develop approaches to broaden inclusion of students of color in gifted programs. Of particular concern is providing training to help teachers identify students for these programs.
- Ensure appropriate safeguards to classify special education students, including appropriate teacher training to meet the needs of all students and to avoid over-referral of students of color to special education services.

This research indicates that cultural competency is a pervasive weakness as revealed through the disparities in different student population referrals to specialized education services (Gifted, ELL, Special Education). Training and professional development of teachers may build cultural competency in ways that help to reduce these disparities.

## POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

**GOAL: Decrease educational attainment disparities, especially for Arizona's growth populations.**

### 1. Reduce racial/ethnic disparities.

Set concrete goals to close disparities between students of color and White students in the state as well as “adult” populations in both workforce and education success. Strategies may include:

- Request that the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) and each Arizona community college governing board set goals for graduation rates and completion of associate's degrees and certificates for each specific race/ethnicity group with the aspiration of reaching parity.
- Require that all postsecondary institutions use the same methods/formulas for calculating the retention rate for all first-year students by race and ethnicity; inclusive of full-time (12+ credit hours) and part-time (between 6 and 11 credit hours) status.
- Adopt best practices to identify “adult” students (over age 24) who have completed some college but who have not earned a degree, and work with these students to help them complete their degree. Developing private/public partnerships with employers may help to identify these “adult” students.

Clarity of goals and the streamlining of practices may aid in improving transparency and accountability of postsecondary institutions with regard to Arizona's growth populations. Growth populations are central to Arizona's economic health, so parity in educational access and attainment is essential.

### 2. Restore and create financial aid programs.

Restore state postsecondary scholarships and institute programs to accelerate graduation as incentives for participation in postsecondary education and to reduce loan debt on first-generation and low-income students, many of whom are students of color.

This report shows that a large portion of Arizona's growth populations are first-generation students who are also likely to grow up in poverty, so financing postsecondary education through need-based state postsecondary scholarships is especially important in providing fiscal access to further participation for academically prepared students for whom state financial investment is crucial. Additionally, these growth populations are more likely to begin their education in community colleges, so programs that accelerate graduation and ease transfer through

the articulation and applicability of credits can aid in reducing time to degree, increase educational attainment levels, and improve the financial costs associated with postsecondary attendance and completion.

### 3. Expand initiatives that work.

Extend existing tools up and down the age spectrum to enhance student and workforce success.

- Accelerate and extend the reach of Arizona's recently implemented Education Career Action Plan (ECAP) to include middle school, postsecondary education and early workforce years.
- Continue to expand current initiatives such as STEM, Move on When Ready, College and Career Readiness, and Pathways programs among Arizona's community colleges and universities.
- Integrate wrap-around social services (that ensure basic needs are met so that students may focus on education) into the educational process to increase success from preschool through graduate school.
- Expand/increase the participation of lower socioeconomic students in Advanced Placement (AP) courses and dual enrollment programs.

This research illustrates the need to systematically extend opportunities available to Arizona students, which will widen their individual, educational, and workforce opportunities and choices. Although the report distinguishes between levels of education in its analyses, a seamless transition between them and the workforce can increase participation and important educational and workforce outcomes.

### 4. Secure funding to continue innovation.

Identify and/or refocus a dedicated state-level funding stream to expand pilot projects proven successful at increasing the participation of lower socioeconomic students in programs such as dual enrollment, AP courses, and SAT and ACT at no cost to the students or their family.

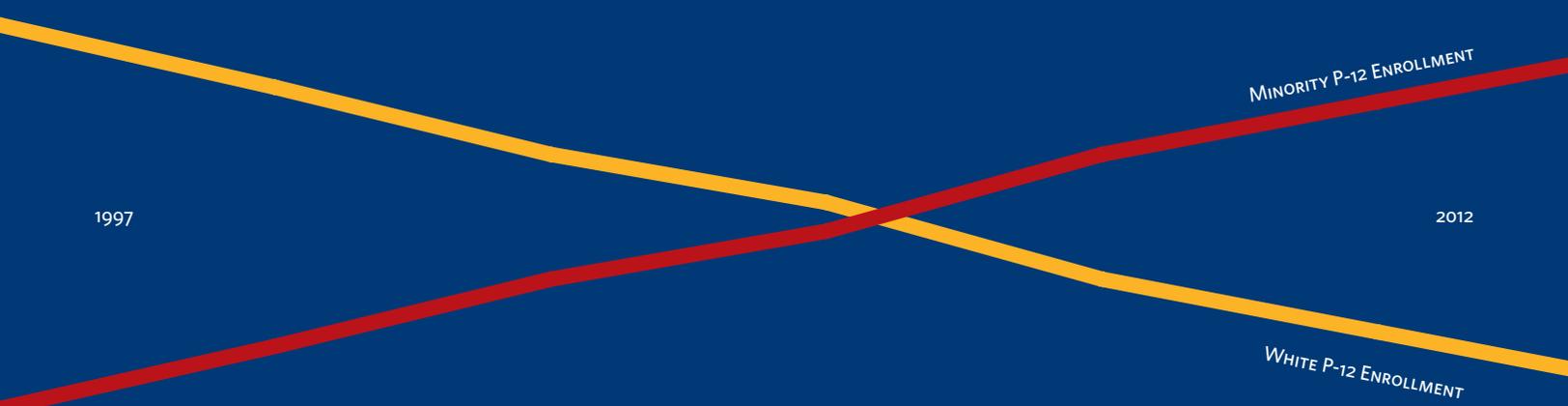
Arizona students from growth populations are less likely to participate in and/or be successful in these programs. However, this may be confounded by socioeconomic status, where a lack of financial resources translates into decreased opportunity and success. Therefore, it is dually imperative to expand established programs and develop new ones proven effective at closing the gap.

## ARIZONA IS IN THE MIDST OF A DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION.

Although our past has been illustrated with inequity and average achievement, our future is painted with quite a different brush. As Arizona solidifies itself as a majority minority state, we will be forced to focus our attention on how even the most underperforming students can enhance their educational outcomes for the greater benefit of all Arizonans.

This report illuminates the current status and trends of educational achievement in the State of Arizona from the beginning of the pipeline in elementary education thru to graduate and professional school.

The full report, and additional data and resources are available at the Arizona Minority Education Policy Analysis Center website: [www.amepac.org](http://www.amepac.org)



1997

2012

SEE FIGURE 8 IN THE REPORT  
FOR THE DETAILED CHART

