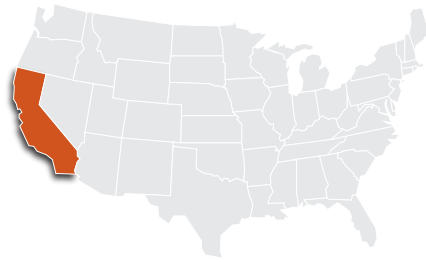


# The State of Higher Education in California

## AVERAGE WON'T DO



### *Regional Profile — Upper Sacramento Valley* *Counties of Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Plumas, Sierra, and Tehama*

California's future is directly linked to our ability to educate our residents and sustain a competitive workforce. Our community colleges and universities have provided the opportunity for millions of Californians to succeed, but our future is at risk. Industries in which California is considered a leader—technology, healthcare, agriculture, biotechnology, aerospace, and entertainment—are dependent upon an educated workforce yet, according to estimates in other studies, we are on track to be 2.3 million college degrees and certificates short of meeting the workforce demands of our economy by 2025.<sup>1</sup>

An economically and socially vibrant California requires dramatic gains in the preparation of students for college, access to an affordable college education, college-going rates, and college completion across all regions. **While the Upper Sacramento Valley region of California performs only average on measures of college preparation and readiness, it has better performance on measures of college participation and completion—the region boasts the highest completion rates in the state. Still, the Upper Sacramento Valley has one of the lowest rates of higher educational attainment and, not surprisingly, per capita income.**

When compared to the rest of the nation, California performs no better than average in preparing and graduating students from college. Even more troubling, serious gaps across regions of the state and among racial/ethnic groups exist. This is simply unacceptable. California has never aspired to be just average. California can excel in higher education once again if, and only if, we have a plan for turning things around.

California's Current Performance	Category	Upper Sacramento Valley Compared to California <sup>2</sup>
worse than most states	Preparation <i>How prepared are students for college-level work?</i>	average
better than most states	Participation <i>How many students are going to college?</i>	better than the state average
average	Completion <i>How many students earn a certificate or degree?</i>	better than the state average
better than most states	Benefits <i>What are the benefits of a college degree to students and the state?</i>	worse than the state average

Source: Moore, Colleen, Connie Tan, and Nancy Shulock. (2014). *Average Won't Do: Performance Trends in California Higher Education as a Foundation for Action*. Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy—California State University, Sacramento, CA.

This brief, prepared by the Campaign for College Opportunity, highlights Upper Sacramento Valley regional key findings from the full report, *Average Won't Do: Performance Trends in California Higher Education as a Foundation for Action*, by the Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy, as well as findings from other sources where noted.

<sup>1</sup> California Competes. (2012). *The Road Ahead: Higher education, California's promise, and our future economy*. San Francisco, CA. Retrieved from [http://californiacompetes.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/CaCompetes\\_Report\\_Final-2.pdf](http://californiacompetes.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/CaCompetes_Report_Final-2.pdf).

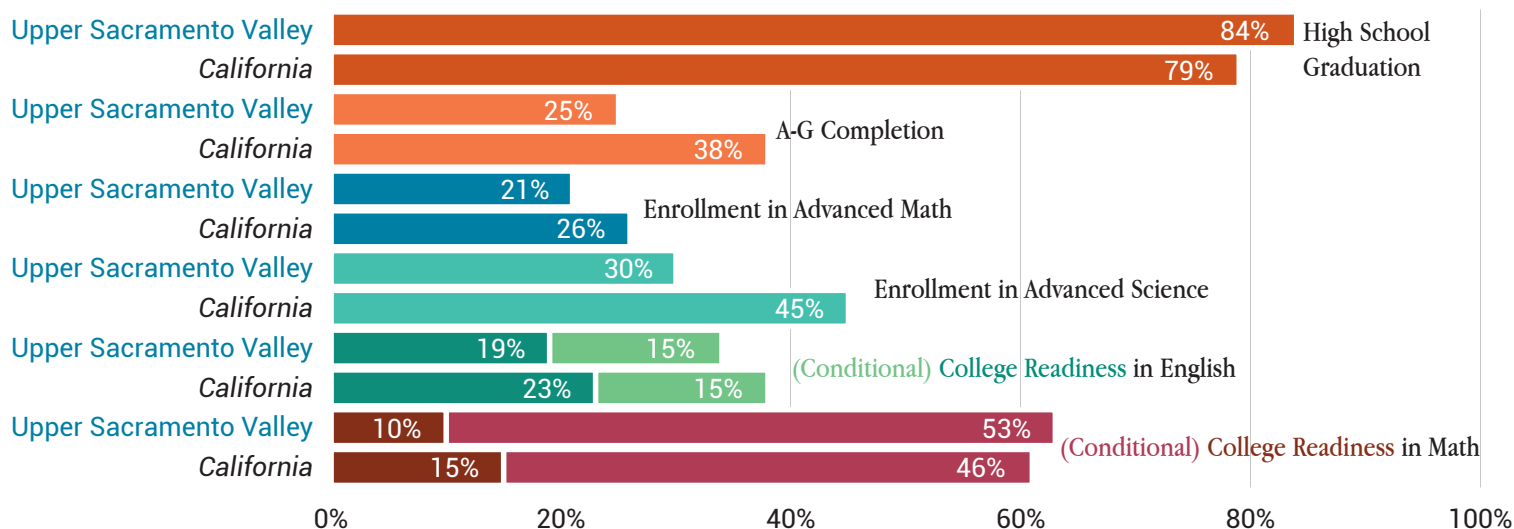
<sup>2</sup> California's performance compared to other states was prepared by IHELP while the comparison between the Upper Sacramento Valley to California was made by the Campaign for College Opportunity.

# PREPARATION

*The Upper Sacramento Valley performs at about the state average*

- According to California’s Department of Education, high schools in the Upper Sacramento Valley graduate 84% of students within four years, the third-highest rate in California. For comparison, Orange County has the highest high school graduation rate at 86%.
- The share of high school graduates who complete the A-G requirements in the Upper Sacramento Valley (25%) is 13 percentage points lower than the state average and is the third-lowest rate across the 14 regions in the state.
- The Upper Sacramento Valley ranks 8th and 11th among the 14 regions in the state for the share of high school students enrolled in advanced math and science courses, respectively.
- College readiness rates in the Upper Sacramento Valley region are close to the state average—approximately two-thirds of high school juniors tested are still not ready for college English and 37% are not ready for college math.

## College Readiness of High School Students



Sources: High school graduation rates are taken from the California Department of Education while all other data points are from *Average Won't Do*.

Notes: High school graduation rates are for the 2011-12 academic year. A-G completion is a share of 2012 high school graduates. A-G is a sequence of courses that are the minimum requirement to be eligible to attend a California State University or University of California. Enrollment in advanced math is a share of 11th-12th grade enrollment in the 2011-12 academic year. Enrollment in advanced science is a share of 11th-12th grade enrollment in the 2011-12 academic year. *The first percentage (darker color) in the (conditional) college readiness measures indicates that a student is college-ready; the second percentage (lighter color) indicates that a student is conditionally ready (see below for further information).* College and conditional college readiness in English is a share of 11th graders taking the Early Assessment Program exam in 2013. College and conditional college readiness in math is a share of 11th graders taking the Early Assessment Program exam in 2013. *Measures are drawn from different years due to availability of data.*

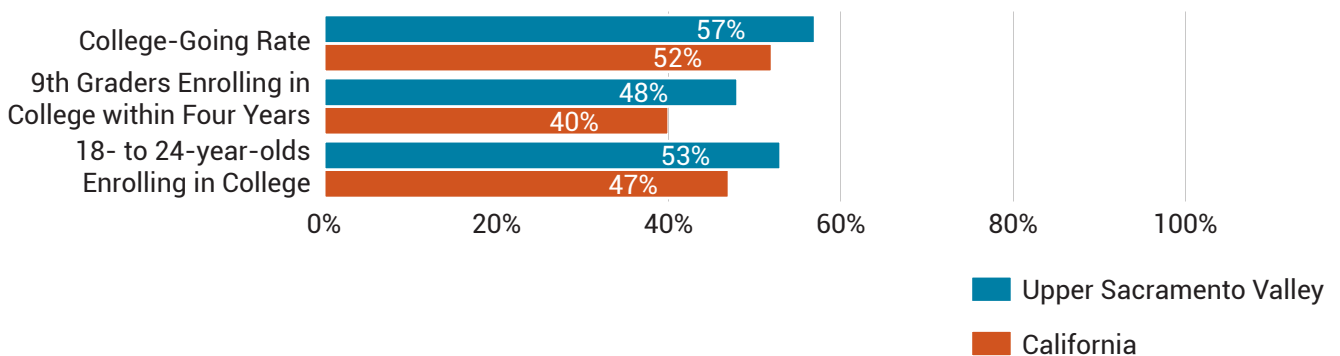
The Early Assessment Program (EAP) is a program of the California State University (CSU) system in which high school juniors have the option of completing some additional items on California Standardized Tests (CST) to determine their college readiness. Students who are determined to be college ready according to the EAP exam are allowed to enroll in college-level coursework without further assessment tests upon enrollment in the CSU. Students who are determined to be “conditionally” ready will not be required to take further assessment tests at the CSU as long as they take specified courses in their senior year or earn a specific score in the relevant subject on a national standardized test (SAC, ACT, or AP).

# PARTICIPATION

*The Upper Sacramento Valley performs better than the state average*

- The Upper Sacramento Valley has the fourth-highest college-going rate: 57% of high school graduates in the region immediately enroll in college after graduation. For comparison, the Central Coast boasts the highest rate in the state at 69% and the Inyo-Mono region has the lowest rate at 17%.
- Approximately 48% of 9th graders enroll in college within four years but 53% of 18- to 24-year olds are enrolled in college. This could indicate that students in this region are attending college but might take some time off after graduating from high school.

## College Participation, 2012

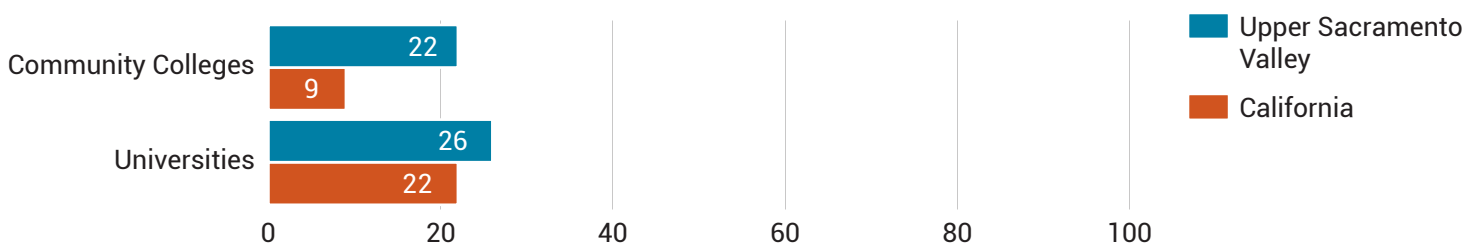


# COMPLETION

*The Upper Sacramento Valley performs better than the state average*

- Community colleges located in the Upper Sacramento Valley awarded a certificate or degree to 22 out of 100 enrolled undergraduates in 2012. This is the highest rate in the state. For comparison, the next-highest rate is 12 in the San Diego/Imperial region. This significantly higher rate can be explained by the number of certificates awarded in agricultural production and protective services that take less than one year to complete.
- Twenty-six baccalaureate degrees are awarded for every 100 students from the Upper Sacramento Valley who enroll in four-year public universities. This figure is also the highest in the state.

## Certificates and Degrees Awarded per 100 Undergraduates, 2012

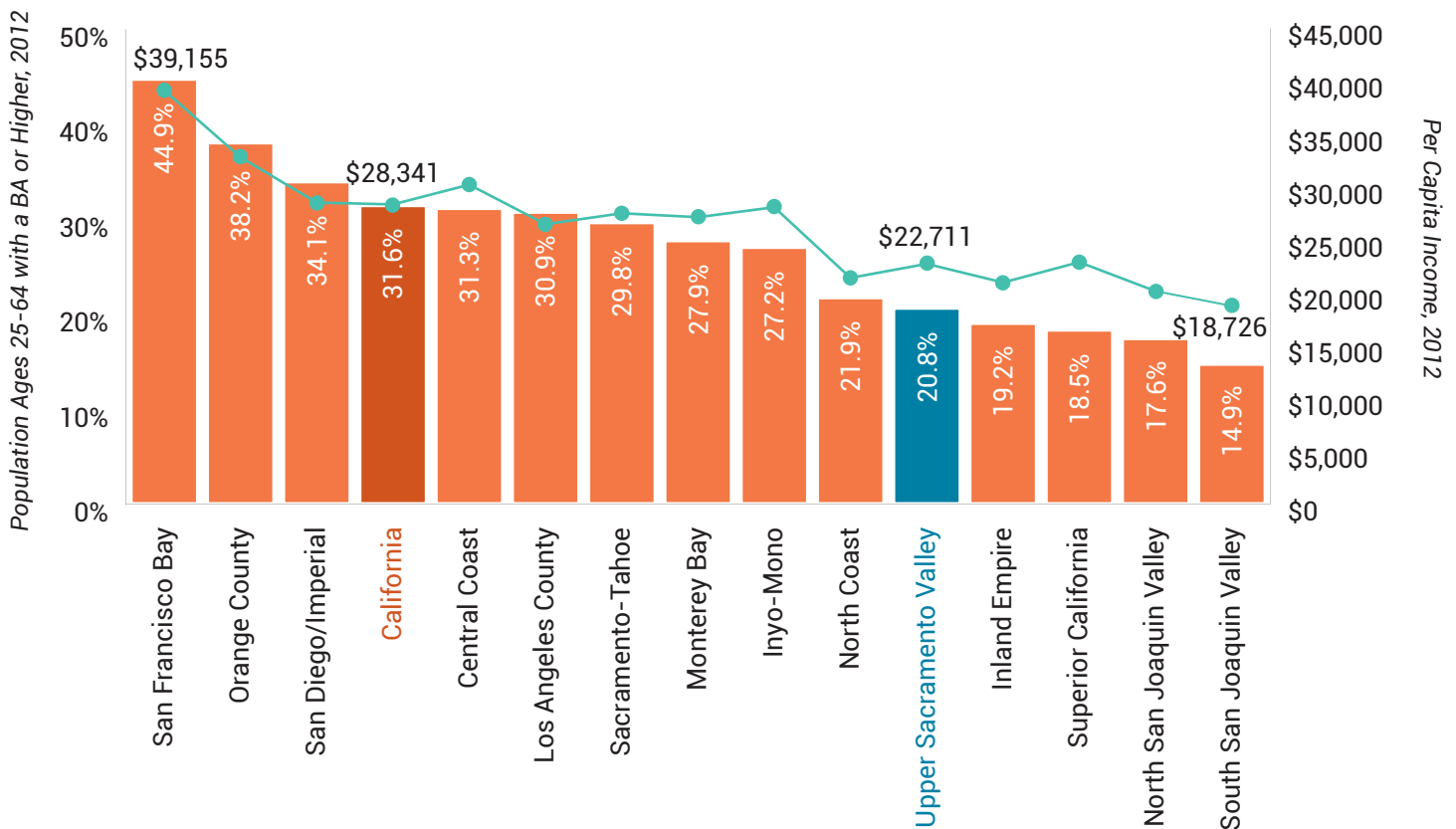


# BENEFITS

*The Upper Sacramento Valley performs worse than the state average*

- Almost 21% of the working-age population in the Upper Sacramento Valley has a bachelor's degree or higher—this is more than 10 percentage points lower than the state average of about 32%.
- Not surprisingly, per capita income in the Upper Sacramento Valley (\$22,711) is substantially lower than the state average of \$28,341.

## Educational Attainment and Per Capita Income by Region, 2012



About 1 in 5 people in the Upper Sacramento Valley have a bachelor's degree

# A NOTE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AFFORDABILITY AND FINANCE IN CALIFORNIA

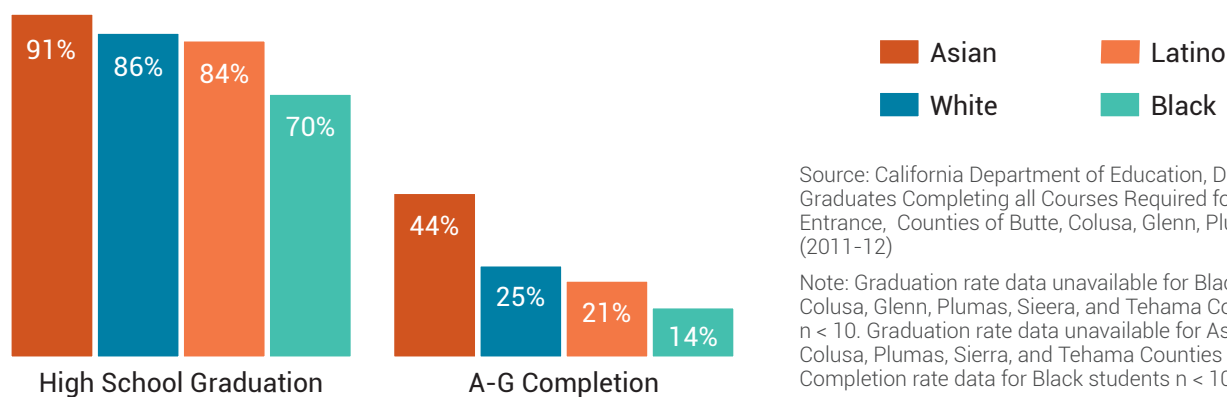
- Tuition and fee increases have been on the rise. In the last decade, UC tuition has risen at a rate of 139% and CSU tuition at a rate of 157%, in comparison to the national rate of 91%.
- California Community Colleges fees are still only 42% of the national average for two-year public colleges. But the cost of living in California is much higher compared to other states, resulting in a higher-than-average cost to community college students, and requiring a larger share of family income to pay for college.
- The number of federal student loan borrowers in California increased by 75% from 397,497 in 2003-04 to 696,349 in 2011-12 while the number of undergraduates increased by only 10% during that same period.<sup>1</sup>

## A NOTE ON RACIAL/ ETHNIC DIFFERENCES

As the Campaign reported in our *State of Higher Education in California* series,<sup>2</sup> there are significant variations and gaps among rates of college preparation, participation, and completion across racial/ethnic groups.

- High school graduation rates in the Upper Sacramento Valley vary by about 20 percentage points across race/ethnicity. High schools within the Upper Sacramento Valley graduate 91% of Asian, 86% of White, 84% of Latino students compared to 70% of Black students.
- Even greater variation is seen across A-G completion rates though they remain low across the board: 44% of Asian students complete the A-G coursework required for admission to California's public four-year universities, compared to 25% of Whites, 21% of Latinos, and 14% of Blacks.
- Across the state, Latinos and Black students are less likely to attend four-year universities, tend to enroll in community colleges when they do pursue a higher education, and have lower rates of persistence and college completion.

### High School Graduation & A-G Completion by Race/Ethnicity, 2011-12



Source: California Department of Education, Dataquest, 12th Grade Graduates Completing all Courses Required for U.C. and/or C.S.U. Entrance, Counties of Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Plumas, Sierra, Tehama (2011-12)

Note: Graduation rate data unavailable for Black students in Colusa, Glenn, Plumas, Sierra, and Tehama Counties due to n < 10. Graduation rate data unavailable for Asian students in Colusa, Plumas, Sierra, and Tehama Counties due to n < 10. A-G Completion rate data for Black students n < 100.

<sup>1</sup> Campaign for College Opportunity. (2014). *Borrowing for College*. Retrieved from <http://www.collegecampaign.org/resource-library/our-publications/>.

<sup>2</sup> Campaign for College Opportunity. (2013). *State of Higher Education in California*. Retrieved from <http://www.collegecampaign.org/resource-library/our-publications/the-state-of-higher-education-in-california/>.

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# CONCLUSION

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Californians with a college education experience higher than average earnings, reinforcing the enormous personal benefit of getting a college education. But California as a state, and all of us as its residents, benefit too. In fact, for every dollar invested in higher education, the state recoups \$4.50 through increased tax revenues and decreased social service costs.

California's success depends on the success of every region in state. Though the Upper Sacramento Valley produces students with the highest completion rates in the state, only about two out of every ten adults has a baccalaureate degree or higher. The region faces the serious issue of "brain drain," a phenomenon that occurs when educated citizens leave the area for professional and economic opportunities elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> A sprawling section of the state, the Upper Sacramento Valley maintains its rural area economy and consistently has unemployment rates higher than the state average.<sup>2</sup> Improved coordination among a more diversified economy, workforce needs, and an educated citizenry is necessary to improve the well-being of both the economy and the residents of the Upper Sacramento Valley.

California used to be the epitome of quality, affordable, and effective higher education. Now, we have become mediocre. California's students are less prepared for higher education than those in most states. And too few actually walk across a college graduation stage.

Our policymakers and college leaders have more work to do to change these trends. We need our state leaders to create, and our college leaders to implement, an actionable statewide higher education plan that addresses the shortcomings outlined above. This plan must set goals for increasing rates of college preparation, college-going, and college completion along with establishing clear targets for closing the persistent gaps in educational attainment by race/ethnicity. When the Governor and Legislature act on such a plan, students will be more successful and we will all benefit. The time for action is now.

**When the Governor and Legislature act on  
a plan for higher education, students will  
be more successful and we will all benefit**

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1 Johnson, H. P., & Hayes, J. M. (2004). *The Central Valley at a crossroads: migration and its implications*. San Francisco: Public Policy Institute of California. Retrieved from [http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R\\_1104HJR.pdf](http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_1104HJR.pdf).

2 California Economic Summit. *Regional Economic and Demographic Snapshot: Butte*. Retrieved from <http://www.caeconomy.org/pages/next10-butte>.