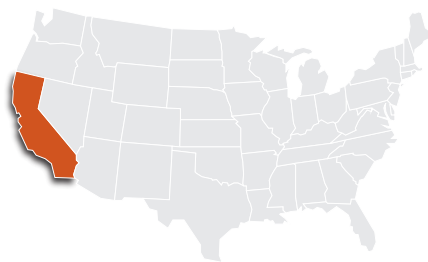


# The State of Higher Education in California

## AVERAGE WON'T DO



### Regional Profile — South San Joaquin Valley

Counties of Kern, Kings, and Tulare

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. **The South San Joaquin Valley region, part of California's Great Central Valley, consistently performs significantly worse than the state average on measures of college preparation, participation, and educational attainment and only average on college competition.**

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	South San Joaquin Valley Compared to California <sup>2</sup>
worse than most states	Preparation <i>How prepared are students for college-level work?</i>	worse than the state average
better than most states	Participation <i>How many students are going to college?</i>	worse than the state average
average	Completion <i>How many students earn a certificate or degree?</i>	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 South San Joaquin 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).

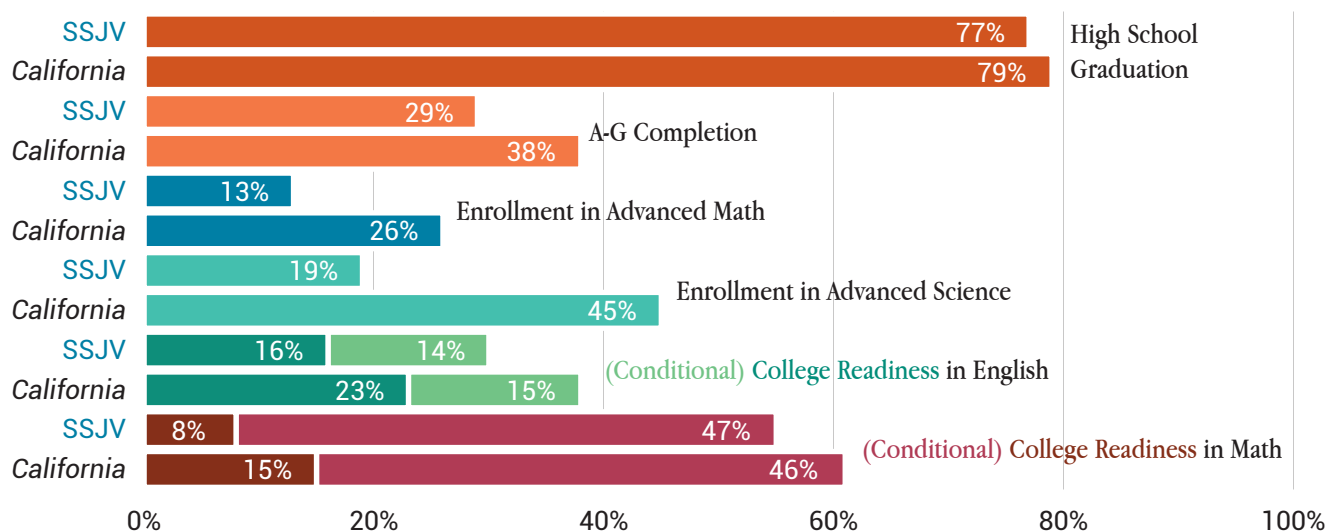
<sup>2</sup> California's performance compared to other states was prepared by IHELP while the comparison between the South San Joaquin Valley to California was made by the Campaign for College Opportunity.

# PREPARATION

*The South San Joaquin Valley performs worse than the state average*

- According to California’s Department of Education, high schools in the South San Joaquin Valley graduate 77% of students within four years—the third lowest rate among the 14 regions across the state.
- The share of high school graduates who complete the A-G requirements in the South San Joaquin Valley (29%) is nine percentage points lower than the state average (38%). For comparison, 46% of high school graduates in the San Francisco Bay complete A-G coursework.
- The South San Joaquin Valley ranks last and second-to-last among the 14 regions across the state for the share of high school students enrolled in advanced math and science, respectively.
- The South San Joaquin Valley is ranked in the bottom half among the state’s regions for college readiness. Approximately 70% of 11th graders are not ready for college English and almost half 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.*

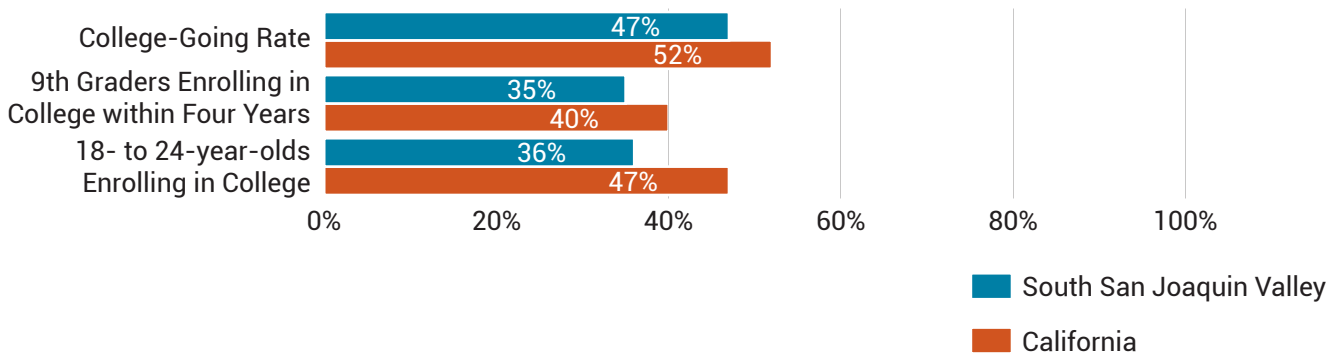
The Early Assessment Program (EAP) is a program of the California State University (CSU) system in which high school juniors have the option of completing some additional items on California Standardized Tests (CST) to determine their college readiness. Students who are determined to be college ready 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 South San Joaquin Valley performs worse than the state average*

- Almost 47% of South San Joaquin Valley high school graduates immediately enroll in college after graduation—5 percentage points lower than the state average.
- Slightly more than one out of every three 9th graders enrolls in college within four years (35%) and only 36% of 18- to 24-year olds are enrolled in college. For comparison, students 18- to 24-years old in the Central Coast enrolled in college at a higher rate than any other region in the state (54%).

## College Participation, 2012

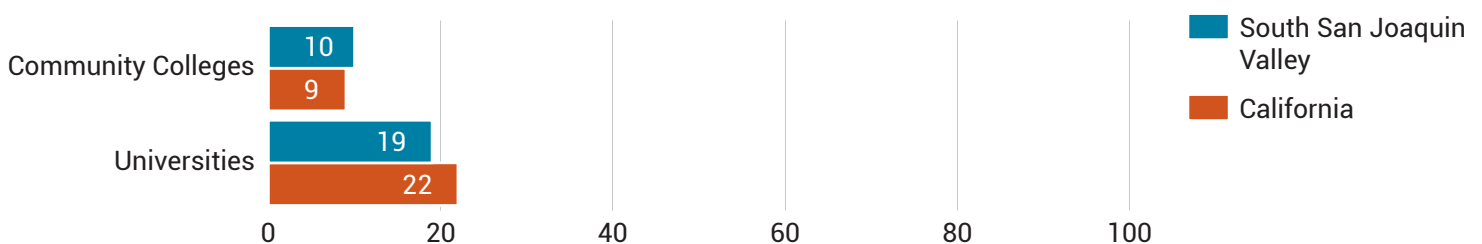


# COMPLETION

*The South San Joaquin Valley performs at about the state average*

- Community colleges located in the South San Joaquin Valley awarded a certificate or degree to almost 10 out of 100 enrolled undergraduates in 2012.
- Almost 19 baccalaureate degrees are awarded for every 100 students from the South San Joaquin Valley who enroll in four-year public universities; this is lower than the state average of 22.

## Certificates and Degrees Awarded per 100 Undergraduates, 2012

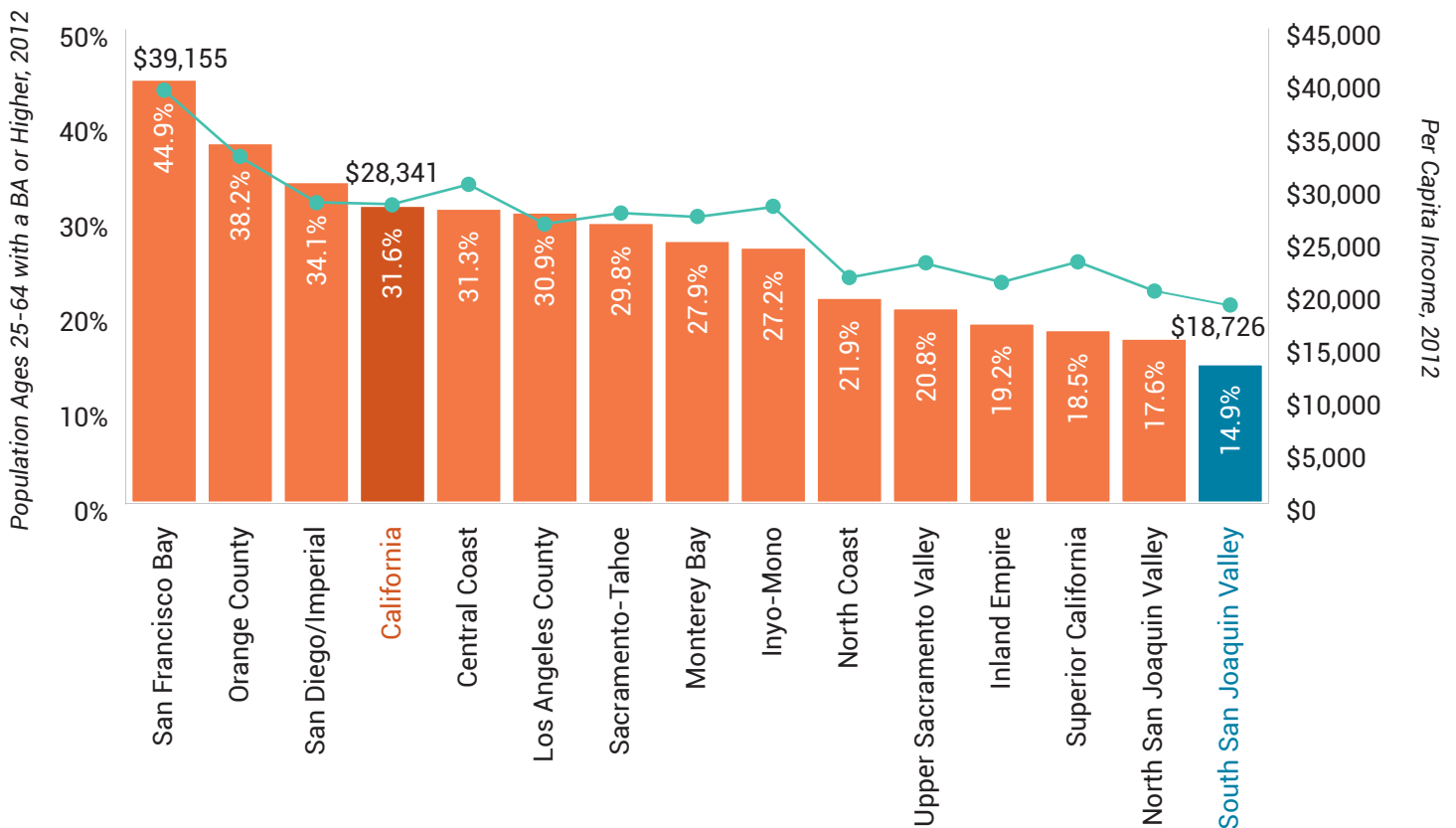


# BENEFITS

*The South San Joaquin Valley performs worse than the state average*

- Almost 15% of the working-age population in the South San Joaquin Valley has a bachelor's degree or higher. This is the lowest proportion in the state. For context, San Francisco Bay ranks first with 45% of the working-age population possessing a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Not surprisingly, per capita income in the South San Joaquin Valley (\$18,730) is also the lowest in the state.

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



The South San Joaquin Valley has the lowest rate of baccalaureate attainment in the state

# A NOTE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AFFORDABILITY AND FINANCE IN CALIFORNIA

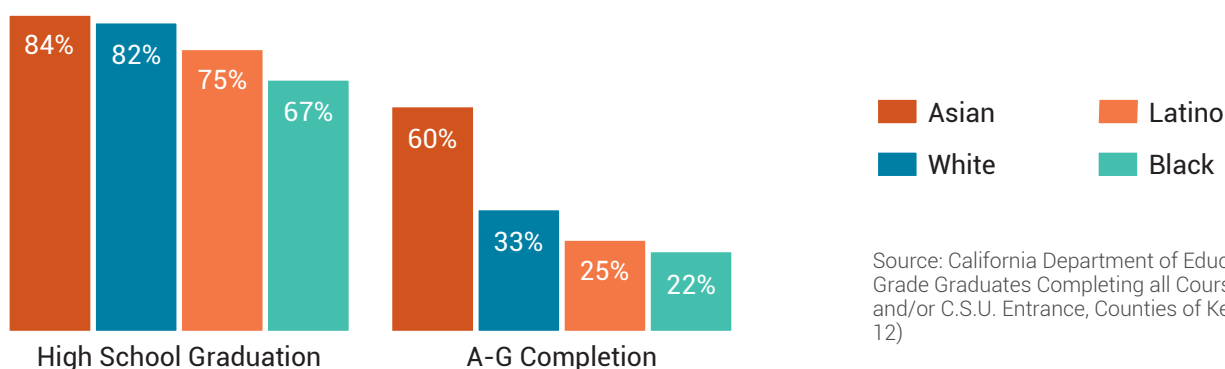
- Tuition and fee increases have been on the rise. In the last decade, UC tuition has risen at a rate of 139% and CSU tuition at a rate of 157%, in comparison to the national rate of 91%.
- California Community Colleges fees are still only 42% of the national average for two-year public colleges. But 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 schools within the South San Joaquin Valley graduate 84% of Whites and 82% of Asians, compared to 75% and 67% of Latino and Black students, respectively.
- About 60% of Asian students complete the A-G coursework required for admission to California's four-year universities compared to one-third of Whites, 25% of Latinos, and 22% 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 Kern, Kings, Tulare (2011-12)

<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. Mostly a rural area critical to California's agricultural economy, the South San Joaquin Valley is home to about 1.5 million California residents. Unfortunately, the region consistently ranks at or near the bottom of California's 14 regions on all metrics of college preparation, enrollment, and completion. As a result, the vast majority of adults in the South San Joaquin Valley do not have a college degree and the area is one of the poorer regions in the state. These discrepancies have serious implications, particularly as the region continues to be one of the fastest growing in the state<sup>1</sup>—40% of the South San Joaquin Valley population is under the age of 25 and 54% identifies as Latino.<sup>2</sup> We are not only failing a large portion of one particular racial/ethnic group but also failing a large share of California's future.

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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<sup>1</sup> California Department of Finance (January 2013). *New Population Projections: California to surpass 50 million in 2049*. Retrieved from [http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/projections/p-1/documents/Projections\\_Press\\_Release\\_2010-2060.pdf](http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/projections/p-1/documents/Projections_Press_Release_2010-2060.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2012). DP05: ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates.