

Direct Enrollment Data Digest

High School Graduate Outcomes, 2025

Direct enrollment refers to students who enroll in a college, university, community college, or trade school within the academic year following high school graduation (summer through the next spring).

Steady Direct Enrollment¹:

- **55% of the 2022–23 graduating class enrolled in a postsecondary institution** within a year of graduation, the same rate as 2021–22.
- This number remains **lower than pre-COVID levels** (59% in 2018–19).

55%
ENROLLMENT

Second-Year Enrollment (Persistence²) Rates Decline:

Fewer students are continuing into their second year of college:

- **Two-year institutions³:** Dropped from 62% to 58% (6% decrease).
- **Four-year institutions⁴:** Dropped from 88% to 86% (2% decrease).



More Students Choosing Washington Public Colleges:

While direct enrollment remained steady, the proportion of **students attending Washington public institutions grew**.

- **Two-year public colleges: 14% increase** in enrollment.
- **Four-year public colleges: 10% increase** in enrollment.



Direct Enrollment Trends by Sector

What kind of institutions did enrollees attend in the first year after graduation?
 Statewide || School: Statewide



To view more statewide, district, and school data, visit our **High School Graduate Outcomes Dashboard**:
<https://erdc.wa.gov/data-dashboards/high-school-graduate-outcomes>

Improved Reporting:

Updated data from the National Student Clearinghouse found new, previously unreported postsecondary enrollments. This update resulted in higher direct enrollment rates for previous graduating classes.

- Direct enrollment increased by 3% for the 2021–22 class and 4% for the 2020–21 class.
- Enrollment rates increased by 1% for the 2016–17, 2017–18, and 2018–19 graduating classes.

2025 Direct Enrollment Updates⁵

High School Graduation Year	2024 Dashboard	2025 Dashboard
2021–22	52%	55%
2020–21	51%	55%
2019–20	51%	54%
2018–19	58%	59%
2017–18	59%	60%
2016–17	60%	61%

The Fine Print:

¹Direct Enrollment is defined as having an enrollment record at a postsecondary institution at some point in the academic year following graduation, which is defined as the summer term immediately following graduation through spring term of the next calendar year. If a student enrolled at a two-year and a four-year institution in the year, they are categorized as a four-year enrollee.

²Persistence is defined as continued enrollment at any institution in the second year after high school graduation.

³Two-Year Community & Technical Colleges (CTCs) includes all Washington and out-of-state private and publicly funded two-year institutions. This uses the NSC data for private and out-of-state two-year institutions and the SBCTC data for the publicly funded two-year Washington institutions.

⁴Four-year Institutions includes all Washington and out-of-state private and publicly funded four-year institutions. This uses the NSC data for private and out-of-state four-year institutions and the PCHEES data for the publicly funded four-year Washington institutions.

⁵Cumulative direct enrollment rate for all institutional organizational levels.