

# Increase in Hispanic high school graduation rate

Proportionately more young Hispanic adults are completing high school and fewer are dropping out than were doing so a decade ago, according to an analysis of enrollment trends by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Among Hispanic 18- to 24-year-olds, 22 percent were not enrolled in high school and lacked a high school diploma or equivalent in 2008, compared with 34 percent in 1998.

These statistics come from a new analysis, School Enrollment in the United States: 2008, which examines a number of trends among the U.S. population enrolled in school. The analysis focuses particularly on the issue of enrollment below modal grade, resulting from students being held back or made to repeat a grade.

Among Hispanics who had been enrolled in high school in October 2007, 5 percent reported being out of school with no diploma or equivalent in October 2008, compared with 6 percent for blacks. The percentage for non-Hispanic whites was 2 percent, and for Asians it was 4 percent. The percentage of Asians who left school without a high school diploma is not statistically different from the percentage of non-Hispanic whites, blacks and Hispanics.

Fourteen million Hispanics were enrolled in schools at all levels in 2008 out of a total enrollment of 76 million students across the United States. The Hispanic portion of all students (18 percent in 2008) increased by 5 percentage points from a decade earlier (13 percent in 1998).

Nineteen percent of students ages 6 to 17 were enrolled at a grade level that is lower than the typical grade for their age in 2008, often referred to as "below modal grade." The below

modal grade rate for Hispanic students was the same as for the white-alone, non-Hispanic population.