

2022 BRIDGE TO COMPLETION

Understanding the College Access and
Success Ecosystem for Metro Nashville
Public Schools Students



Nashville
Public Education
FOUNDATION

HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE SINCE 2002

A photograph of a city skyline at sunset, with a prominent skyscraper and its reflection in water. The sky is filled with soft, golden clouds, and the water in the foreground shows a clear reflection of the buildings and the sky. The overall color palette is warm and monochromatic, dominated by shades of orange and yellow.

While the format of Bridge to Completion is evolving, our commitment to providing relevant data to drive **INCLUSIVE, SUPPORTIVE, AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICES and POLICIES** remains.

REFLECTIONS

This year's Bridge to Completion report marks the fifth year of partnership between the Nashville Public Education Foundation and the Tennessee College Access and Success Network to track and analyze Nashville's college-going data.

This report has helped change the way our city sees postsecondary success and how the entire community plays a role in supporting our public school graduates. Since 2018, the data and recommendations from the Bridge to Completion reports have contributed to multiple new initiatives, such as the Nashville Goes to College online tool, the Nashville Grad program at Nashville State Community College, and the Better Together partnership between Nashville State and Metro Nashville Public Schools. We are grateful for all those who helped contribute to this report and have taken up the task of improving college-going and postsecondary success for our city's students.

Since 2018, we have also seen data indicative of the many challenges facing our public school graduates. COVID-19 both introduced and exacerbated barriers that hindered students' postsecondary opportunities and access, contributing to widening equity gaps that continue to grow even as the peak of the pandemic appears to be behind us. It is imperative that we continue to recognize the lasting impact of COVID-19 on our students, families, schools, and the data we see in this year's report, with particular attention to the fact that students of color are experiencing declining college-going at nearly double the rate of their white peers.

The importance of analyzing college-going data goes far beyond an analysis of how our high schools are preparing students; it is representative of the health of our city in general. How we prepare our students for success after high school, in addition to other citywide indicators such as transportation, housing affordability, infrastructure, and economic opportunities, indicates our city's priorities. We have the potential to be a city that demands excellent opportunities for our students after high school, and we all have a role to play in making that happen.



Katie Cour
President and CEO
Nashville Public Education Foundation



We are deeply grateful to Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) for the data gathering they provided for this report, without which it would not exist. It takes great courage to give an outside entity your data and let them reflect it back to you. We hope this report helps illuminate how hard MNPS employees work every day to create greater success for Nashville's public school students.

This work builds on the work in four previous Bridge to Completion reports that would not have been possible without the dozens of professionals across K-12, higher education, community organizations, local government, business, and philanthropy who lent their expertise. In addition, this report would not be possible without the support of the Mayor's office and the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, which has provided a grant to support the Bridge to Completion series for the last four years.

If readers are interested in viewing this and previous Bridge to Completion reports online, they can do so at:
<https://nashvillepef.org/resources-college-access-and-success/>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Tennessee College Access and Success Network (TCASN) is a nationally recognized, statewide nonprofit organization whose mission is to increase the number of Tennesseans with a postsecondary credential and foster a culture of college-going across the state. TCASN works to remove barriers to higher education, promote college persistence, and increase postsecondary completion. Focus is on connecting leaders, advocating for access and completion, and increasing the capacity of individuals and institutions to produce successful and equitable outcomes for underrepresented students. TCASN's team has decades of collective expertise spanning state government, federal college access programs, urban and rural initiatives, curriculum design, and the nonprofit sector. Questions can be directed to executive director, Bob Obrohta at bobrohta@tncollegeaccess.org.



BRIDGE TO COMPLETION | 2022

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NOTE TO READER

For the purposes of this report, **the term “college” refers to any formal training after high school, including technical certification, associate degree, and bachelor’s degree programs.** The phrase “college-going” refers to college enrollment, usually college enrollment immediately following high school graduation.

Information presented within this report is the most complete picture available of how MNPS students navigate college after graduation, through college completion. As is often the case in education, data is not perfect; however, observation across the multiple data sources was consistent with not only one another, but also national trends. As an example, data on college enrollment does not include Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs). TCATs are not included in the National Student Clearinghouse data. Historically, for MNPS graduates, TCATs represent an additional 1% of enrollment.

Readers often ask about students who join the military after graduation. As a policy, branches of the United States military do not provide nor share recruitment and enlistment numbers by school districts or individual school. MNPS does not have a method of tracking this information, which is consistent with nearly every school district nationally. High school profiles for most of the high schools in the district are included at the end of this report. District data presented is inclusive of all Metro Nashville high schools, including four high schools not profiled due to their unique structure and/or population served: Metro Nashville Virtual School and the three Simon Academies located at Hickory Hollow, Old Cockrill, and Opry Mills.



Improving college-going and postsecondary success for Nashville's students.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The responsibility of the college completion pipeline lies with the entire community. This report represents as much about what happens to students after they have left the school district, as it does about what happened to them while they were in it. Persistence and completion occur well after the student has left the school district and enrolled in college. While a student's secondary education influences what happens throughout the pipeline, a multitude of other factors and systems also play a role in how a student's postsecondary journey plays out. The completion pipeline, sometimes referred to as a P16 or P20 pipeline (Pre-K through employment), says as much about social issues of race, poverty, state policies, economic policies, citizenship status, higher education, college affordability, housing, food insecurity, etc. as it does about academics and schools.

The damage caused by COVID-19 has stifled attempts to improve college-going and completion for every community, not just Nashville. A substantial number of students have pivoted away from the postsecondary pathway, and it is too soon to determine what this will mean for the future of postsecondary enrollment and to what extent students will pivot back.



In the past five years the Bridge to Completion reports have analyzed over a decade of postsecondary data and interviewed hundreds of professionals – educators and counselors from nearly every high school, school and central office leaders, community-based organizations, and higher education experts.

Like previous Bridge to Completion reports, this report looks at college access and success for MNPS graduates and shares data on college access and success outcomes. Like our previous reports, **THIS REPORT WILL ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

- Are students enrolling in college?
- Where did they enroll?
- Once enrolled in college, did students persist from year to year?
- Did students complete a degree?
- How does the pipeline to a degree look different for MNPS graduates of different races and ethnicities?
- How does MNPS compare to similar school districts, the state, and the nation?

FINDINGS



FINDINGS

67%

Steps Towards College

↓ DOWN 14%



COVID-19 appears to have dramatically shifted students' post-high school intentions as **14% fewer high school graduates took steps towards college**, such as filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).ⁱ



Melt Rate

35%

While still high, students who began the college admissions process but did not complete **fell from last year's all-time high of 42%**. This is likely due to a combination of fewer students beginning the college process, as well as interventions designed by the district, local community-based organizations, and higher education institutions to reduce melt.ⁱⁱ

44%

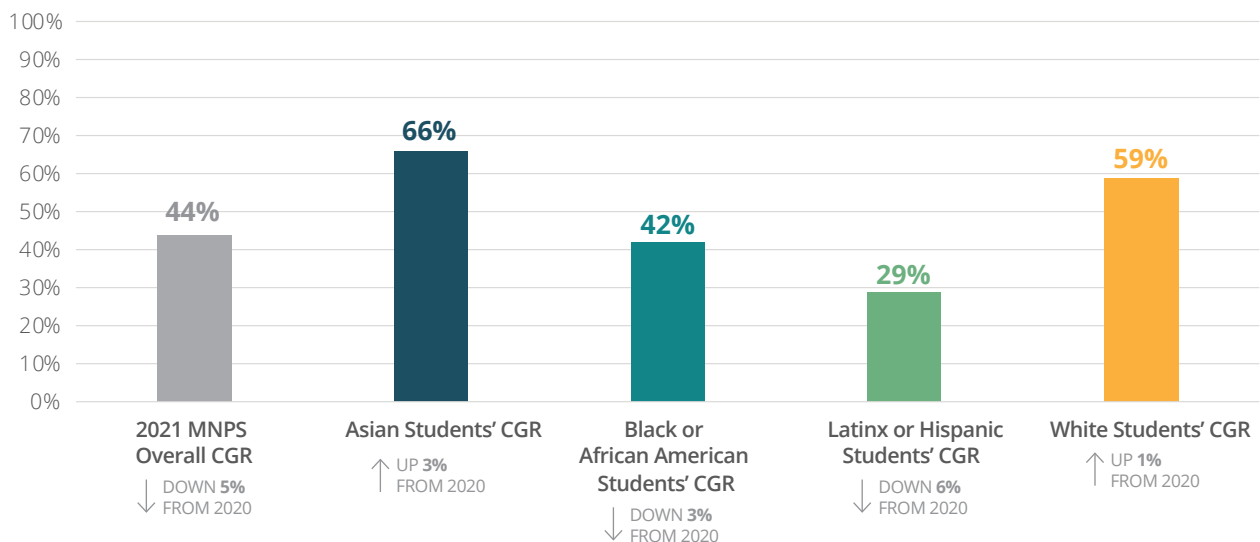
↓ DOWN 5%

2021 College-Going Rate

The district's 2021 college-going rate (CGR) **declined by 5% from 2020**. The college-going rate is now at its lowest point in over a decade. Since the start of the pandemic, all but two high schools have experienced losses, and in many cases double-digit losses.ⁱⁱⁱ

College-Going Equity Gaps:

2021 COVID losses are specific to Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx students and are more than double the losses experienced by white students since the start of the pandemic. White and Asian students' college-going, while not returning to pre-COVID levels, has rebounded - increasing in 2021. The equity gap in college-going by race is now larger than it has ever been for both Black/African American students (-17 percentage points) and Latinx students (-30 percentage points).



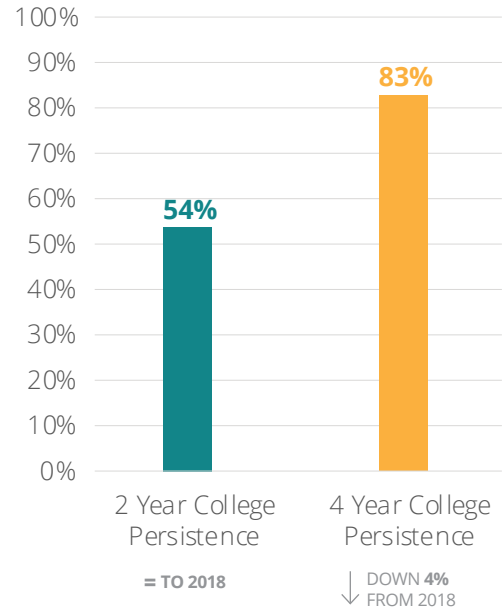
FINDINGS

73%



1st to 2nd Year College Persistence Class of 2019

Persistence for the class of 2019 was better than our early estimates from the 2020 Bridge to Completion report, **as four-year college persistence held from 2018.**^{iv}



27%

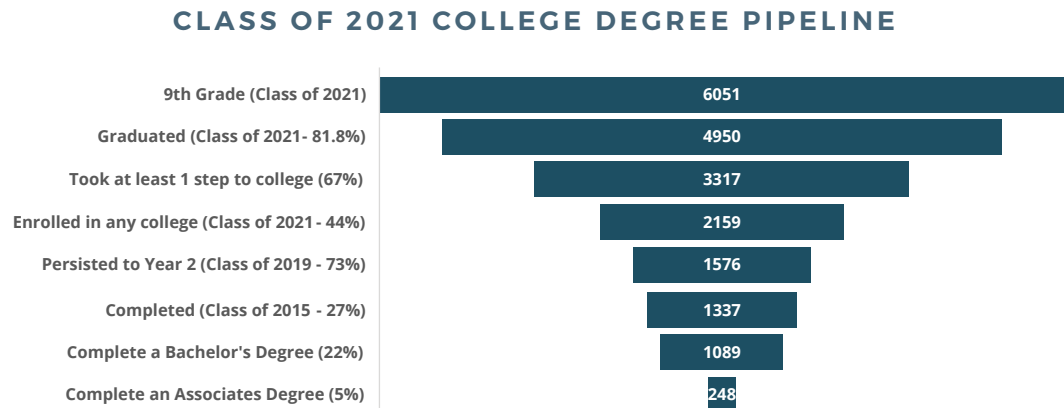


6 Year College Completion - Class of 2015

College completion held from the previous year (27%) and has now **maintained or increased for a fourth consecutive year.** The mix of degrees has changed, with 22% of completers receiving a bachelor's degree (20% previous year) and 5% receiving an associates degree (7% previous year).^v

FIG. 1 College Access and Completion Predictive Pipeline^{vi}

Figure 1 provides a visualization for the class of 2021, beginning when students were in the ninth grade, predicting how many will complete a degree.





RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Recommendation 1:

Nashville leaders should formally create and invest in a citywide college completion initiative and report on annual metrics of success.

2

Recommendation 2:

State leaders should reform tuition and financial aid policies to be more inclusive and supportive of low-income students and students of color.



ZZZ

AAA

YES

HUNTER
wait for me
The Wild at Heart
NO FIXED ADDRESS
A NIGHT DI
HORIZONS
WILDCAT
THE REST OF US
KEEPER
THE SCOUR

JAMES PATTERSON
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COLLEGE ACCESS & COMPLETION:

Data for Graduates
of Metro Schools

College Access and Success for MNPS Graduates

COLLEGE GOING: This section provides key highlights and updates of data that have changed since last year’s Bridge to Completion report and presents data that explores college access and success for MNPS graduates by race and ethnicity, and income.

Reflections on Community Efforts to Support the COVID Class of 2020

MNPS, Nashville State Community College (NSCC), and community-based organizations (CBOs) understood early in the pandemic that college enrollment for the Class of 2020 was crashing. And, like every other community in the country, it did. **Immediate fall enrollment dropped by 8.3%, for a CGR of 47% from the November 2020 enrollment count.**^{vii}

In early Fall 2020, the education systems and CBOs began meeting, sharing data, and creating alternative programming, in attempts to identify and re-engage students with postsecondary plans and continue engaging them in the Spring 2021 term. **This collaboration proved successful, driving the final 2020 CGR up to 49% (+2%) as additional first-time students enrolled for the Spring 2021 semester.**^{viii}



2021 College Enrollment 44%

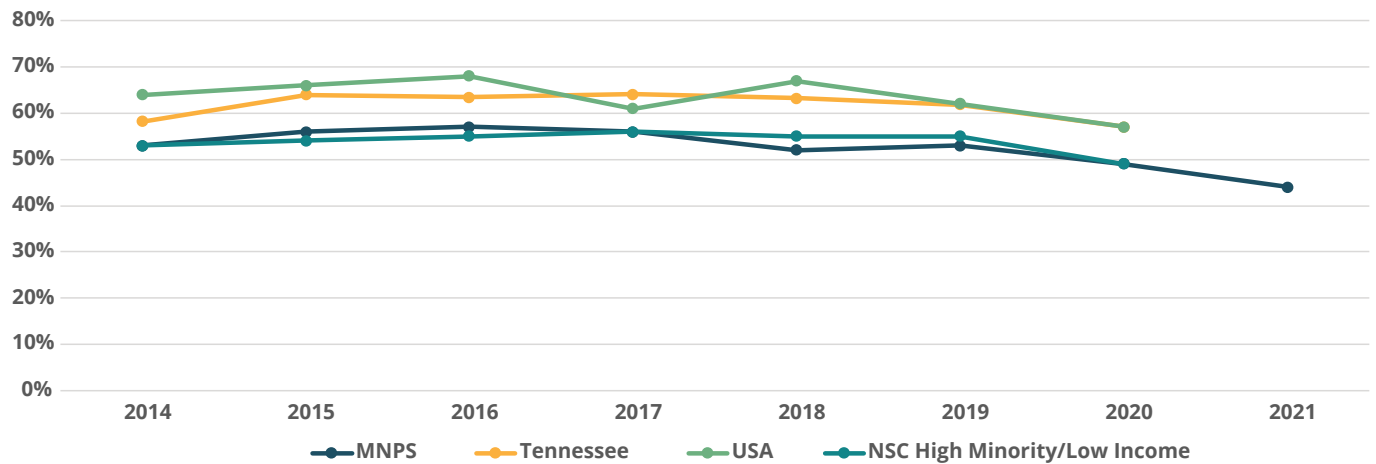
The Class of 2021, both nationally and at MNPS, **spent most of their senior year in virtual instruction**. With the pandemic raging throughout the second half of 2020 and into 2021, college access professionals anticipated college enrollment would continue to decline as it had in 2020. Early signs included a downward trend of real-time FAFSA completion numbers, a key indicator of future enrollment, early in the 2020-21 academic cycle. Low FAFSA completion, coupled with virtual school and a limited ability to connect with and support students led to a **significant drop of 5.0 percentage points in college-going for the MNPS class of 2021, bringing the total pandemic loss to -9%.**^{ix}

The pandemic decline continues to drive MNPS college enrollment to the lowest point since at least 2010, and mimics

declines in similar high minority/low-income school districts across the country. We expect to see a similar trend when the 2021 national data is made available (Figure 2).

Thirty percent of students enrolled at an undergraduate college (4-year) and 14% chose a community college (2-year), a shift from the previous year. **Undergraduate enrollment declined by 9 percentage points, while community college enrollment increased by 6 percentage points.** Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs) do not participate in the National Student Clearinghouse and are not included in the data set. Traditionally, TCATs represent an additional 1% of enrolled students and will be identified by TDOE in future counts.^x

FIG. 2 MNPS, TENNESSEE, AND NATIONAL COLLEGE ENROLLMENT: (2014-2021)^{xi}



	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
MNPS	53%	56%	57%	56%	52%	53%	49%	44%
Tennessee	58%	64%	63%	64%	63%	62%	57%	
USA	64%	66%	68%	61%	67%	62%	57%	
NSC High Minority/Low Income	53%	54%	55%	56%	55%	55%	49%	

College Enrollment by HIGH SCHOOL

The COVID pandemic has impacted nearly every high school, with only a few showing no loss (Figure 3).^{xii} Thirteen high schools have experienced double-digit losses. No high school was immune, as even the academic magnet high schools (Hume-Fogg, Martin Luther King Jr., and East Magnet) were impacted. Both Hume-Fogg and Martin Luther King Jr. high schools dropped below 90% CGR and are the lowest recorded CGRs for the schools in over a decade. East Nashville High School has fallen below 60%, a decline of -21 percentage points. East, with over four times the population of low-income students and three times more Black students than either Martin Luther King Jr. or Hume-Fogg, is more representative of the two student populations most impacted by the pandemic.

As in healthcare, food shortages, digital access, skills gaps, and employment, COVID has magnified the impact of social inequities across system and college access is not immune. High schools with the lowest college enrollment

rates are serving both high populations of low-income students and students of color. Last year was the first time high schools have reported CGRs below 30%. At that time, there were three. Today, MNPS has six high schools with CGRs below 30%.

Regardless of school type, race and income remained the predictive factors for college-going with one anomaly: the Academy at Hickory Hollow. The Academy at Hickory Hollow, an alternative high school, reported a CGR of 33%. The high school enrolled students at higher rates than a number of the cluster high schools, seeing a gain of ten percentage points since the start of the pandemic. Previously, the Simon Academies (Hickory Hollow, Old Cockrill, Opry Mills) were not recognized in the list due to their unique academic structure and mission. This year, however, it is important to recognize an alternative structure making positive gains where others have struggled.



FIG. 3 2021 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT BY HIGH SCHOOL

High School	2021 CGR	2020 CGR	2019 CGR	3 Year Gain/Loss 2019-2021
Intrepid College Prep *	94%	NA	NA	NA
Hume-Fogg	85%	91%	92%	-7%
Martin Luther King, Jr.	84%	91%	94%	-10%
Middle College *	78%	82%	78%	0%
Hillsboro	66%	69%	70%	-4%
Nashville School of the Arts	65%	72%	66%	-1%
Lead Academy **	65%	67%	63%	2%
Nashville Big Picture *	61%	62%	77%	-16%
Stem Prep	58%	76%	73%	-15%
East Nashville	56%	63%	77%	-21%
KIPP Nashville Collegiate **	53%	58%	76%	-23%
Lead Academy Southeast **	53%	NA	NA	NA
Hillwood	50%	48%	55%	-5%
John Overton	47%	48%	54%	-7%
Republic	46%	65%	73%	-27%
Knowledge Academy *	46%	44%	65%	-19%
MNPS	44%	49%	53%	-9%
Cane Ridge	39%	49%	48%	-9%
Antioch	34%	40%	47%	-13%
Academy at Hickory Hollow	33%	17%	23%	10%
Whites Creek	31%	31%	38%	-7%
McGavock	29%	39%	47%	-18%
Pearl-Cohn	29%	30%	39%	-10%
Hunters Lane	28%	31%	38%	-10%
Stratford	26%	42%	45%	-19%
Maplewood	25%	32%	33%	-8%
Glenclyff	22%	29%	39%	-17%
Academy at Old Cockrill **	15%	21%	23%	-8%
Academy at Opry Mills **	15%	30%	18%	-3%

* Graduating classes <50 students

** Graduating classes <100 students



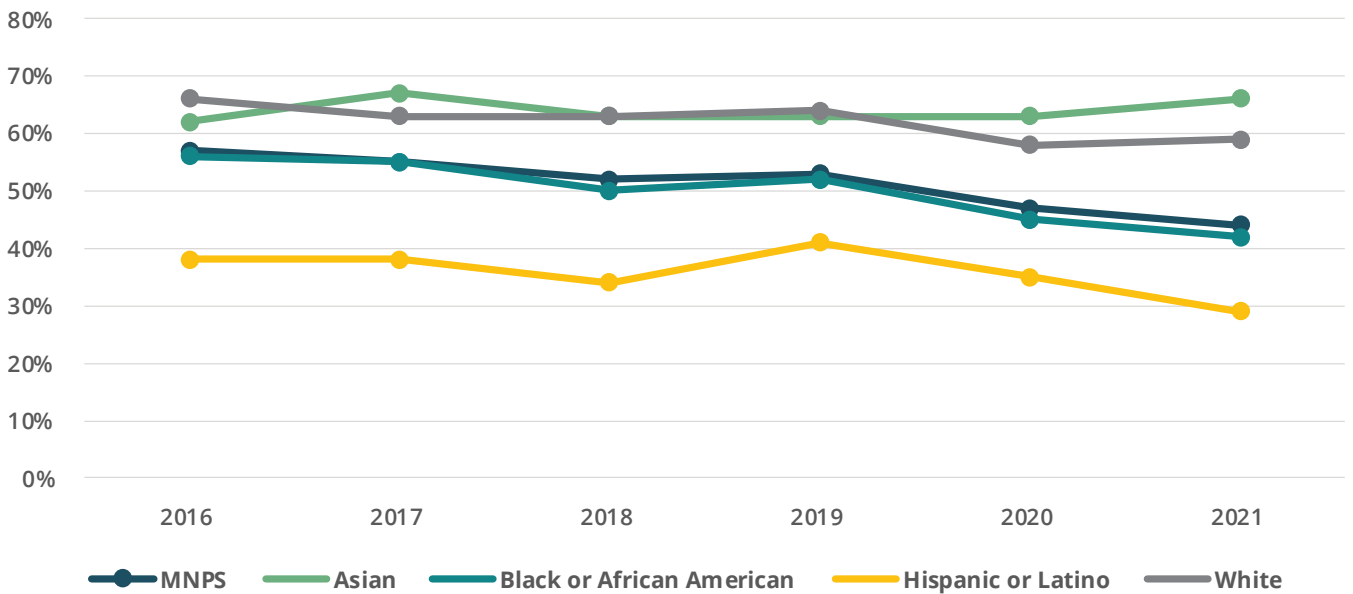
College Enrollment by **RACE AND ETHNICITY**

Whereas last year's report illustrated significant reductions in college enrollment across all races and ethnicities, COVID losses are now specific to Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx students and are more than double the losses experienced by white students since the start of the pandemic. White and Asian student college-going, while not returning to pre-COVID levels, has rebounded - increasing in 2021. The equity gap in college-going by race is now larger than it has ever been for both Black/African American students (-17 percentage points) and Latinx students (-30 percentage points).

MNPS is a majority minority district; students of color make up over 70% of the district.^{xiii} While data by race and ethnicity are critical in illuminating equity gaps, the data have limitations for a district as diverse as MNPS (Figure 4). Nashville is a city with a large international community and more than 120 languages spoken - mapped against seven federal race and ethnicity categories. In particular, the city is home to a large Middle Eastern community, including the largest Kurdish community in the United States as well as a large population of newly arriving Afghan refugees.^{xiv} This group is likely identifying as white when selecting a race or ethnicity from the federal categories depicted in Figure 6.^{xv} In addition, Black students from Middle Eastern and North African countries are categorized with African Americans, yet we know the experience of these students in our schools is uniquely different from that of African American students.



FIG. 4 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT BY RACE OR ETHNICITY 2016-2021



	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	GAP
MNPS	57%	55%	52%	53%	47%	44%	NA
Asian	62%	67%	63%	63%	63%	66%	7%
Black or African American	56%	55%	50%	52%	45%	42%	-17%
Hispanic or Latino	38%	38%	34%	41%	35%	29%	-30%
White	66%	63%	63%	64%	58%	59%	NA

College Enrollment by INCOME

This report uses Tennessee’s strict definition of Economically Disadvantaged (ED) when reporting college enrollment by income.^{xvi} 62% of the 2021 graduating class meets Tennessee’s ED criteria.^{xvii} In other words, at least 62% of MNPS families with a student graduate in 2021 live below the poverty line (family of 4 = \$34,450 per year) **AND** have filed for federal assistance such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), referred to as direct certification. Yet the number of ED students that MNPS serves is much higher. This 62% does not include low-income students who were ineligible for SNAP benefits (such as undocumented students) or did not have the support to navigate the benefit program’s complicated bureaucracy (such as students experiencing homelessness). In previous reports, using Pell grant data, we have estimated the number of low-income students to be closer to 80%.^{xviii}

While, at minimum, 62% of all 2021 students are ED, only 36% of these students enrolled in college.^{xix} There are numerous factors that contribute to low-income college enrollment rates: academic preparation, affordability, housing, transportation/commuting, and simply navigating the college bureaucracy are but to name a few. ED students often

disproportionately enroll at community colleges, as is the case in Nashville where the top attended college is Nashville State Community College (NSCC). Of all students at NSCC, 69% are ED. ED students make up 57% of all community college students combined (Nashville State, Volunteer State, Motlow State, and Columbia State Community Colleges).^{xx}

State policies that do not address MNPS income demographics depress the college-going rate for low-income students. The lack of a tuition equity policy for undocumented students renders these students ineligible for state financial aid and seriously restricts dual enrollment opportunities, FAFSA completion, and CGR, as all undocumented students are required to pay out-of-state tuition costs. Additionally, the newly proposed school funding formula, Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA), ties school funding to key performance indicators like successful dual enrollment course completion, industry credential attainment, and FAFSA completion. **Without a state tuition equity policy, MNPS could experience financial consequences as many of these postsecondary opportunities are not financially plausible for many, if not most, undocumented students.**

As discussed in previous reports, all comparable cities with higher college-going rates include tuition equity– in some cases also providing state financial aid to undocumented students.^{xxi} Given that a substantial number of MNPS students are undocumented and cannot afford to pay out-of-state tuition, the city will struggle to increase its CGR, as long as undocumented students are excluded from participation.

All low-income students would benefit from state scholarship policy reforms, as aid to this group of students is limited by state scholarship designs. The TN Promise Scholarship is a last dollar scholarship. ED students do not receive any of the \$30M annual state scholarships that are provided through the TN Promise Program.^{xxii} Given that at least 62% of students are confirmed ED, and estimates rise as high as 80%, at least three, and more likely four out of 5 MNPS graduates are not eligible for Promise dollars.

As we have recommended in all four previous reports, state scholarship requirements should be revised to be more inclusive of low-income students. Other state promise initiatives across the country have addressed this inequity. For example, some states have established a “middle dollar,” design – allowing low-income students to hold onto their Pell grant to cover non-tuition related expenses. Other states have capped family income maximums – unlike in Tennessee where over 5% of the Promise dollars go to families making over \$200K.^{xxiii}

62%

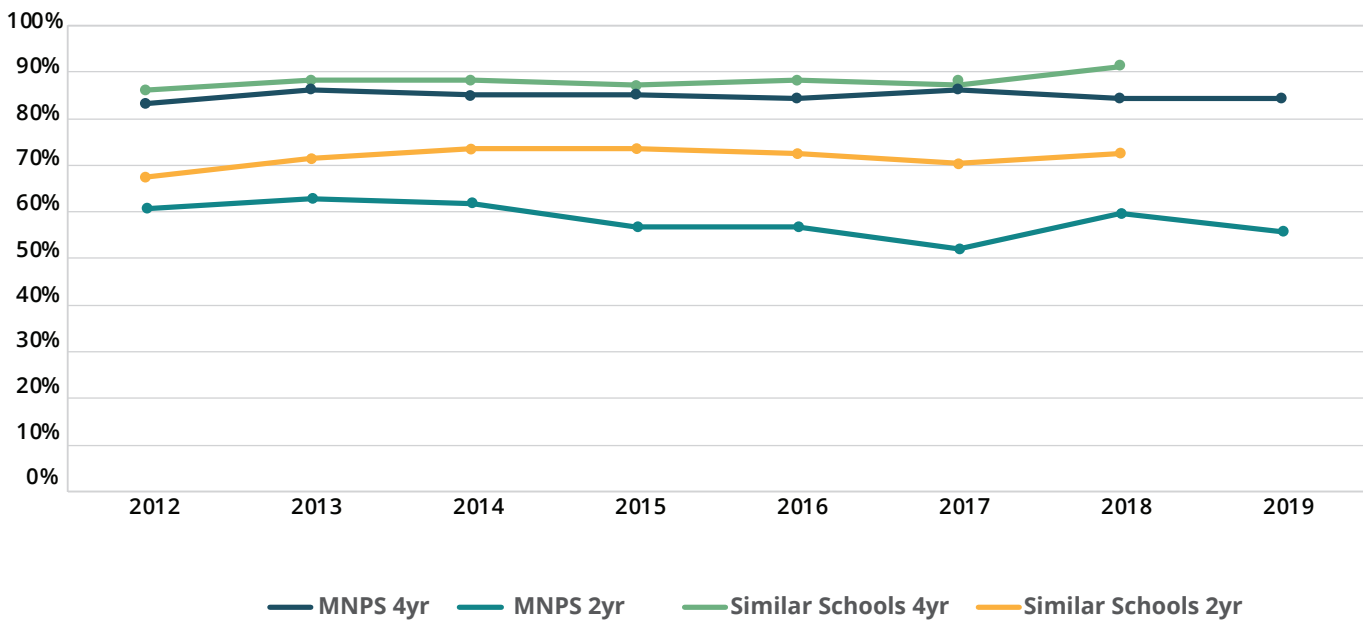
OF 2021 GRADUATING CLASS LIVE BELOW THE POVERTY LINE



College Retention 73%

On a positive note, retention rates (the percent of college students returning for their second year of college) did not decline as far as previously expected. Retention and persistence data always lag by a year. Due to COVID-19, 2019 persistence data is included for the top twenty-five institutions in last year's report to understand what might happen to retention.^{xxiv} While community college retention did fall by 4 percentage points, undergraduate retention data did not fall as expected (Figure 5). Given that higher percentages of low-income students attend community colleges, it is likely the community college rates reflect low-income students being hit harder by the pandemic and would mirror national trends.

FIG. 5 COLLEGE RETENTION RATES FOR MNPS AND SIMILAR SCHOOLS BY INSTITUTION TYPE (2012-2019) ^{xxv}



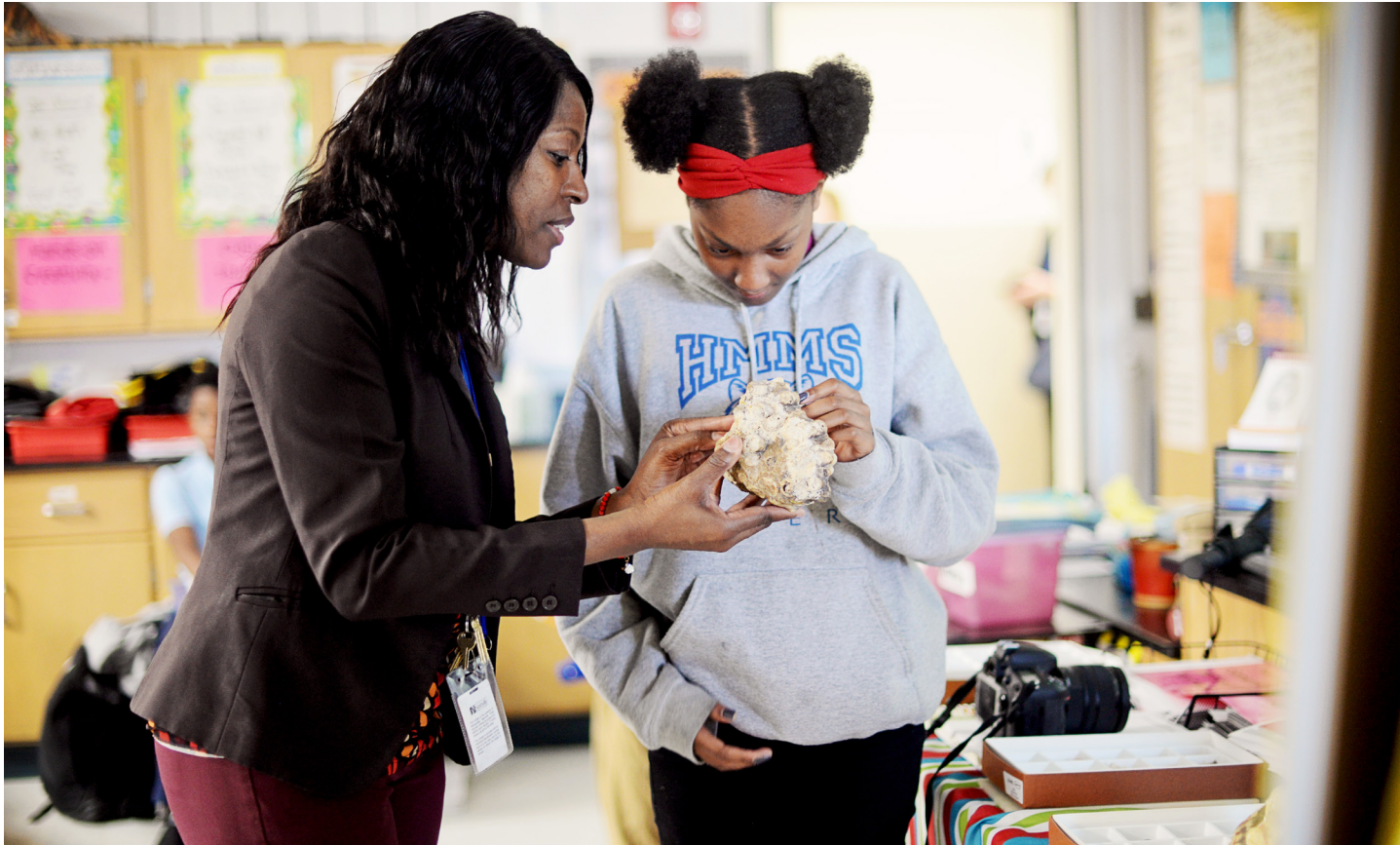
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
MNPS 4yr	82%	85%	84%	84%	83%	85%	83%	83%
MNPS 2yr	59%	61%	60%	55%	55%	50%	58%	54%
Similar Schools 4yr	85%	87%	87%	86%	87%	86%	90%	
Similar Schools 2yr	66%	70%	72%	72%	71%	69%	71%	

Retention by Race and Ethnicity

For 2019, white and Asian students continue to have higher retention rates than both Black and Latinx students. Both Black and Latinx students did not persist at comparable rates and the gaps continued into 2019 (Figure 6).^{xxvi}

FIG. 6 FIRST TO SECOND YEAR RETENTION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

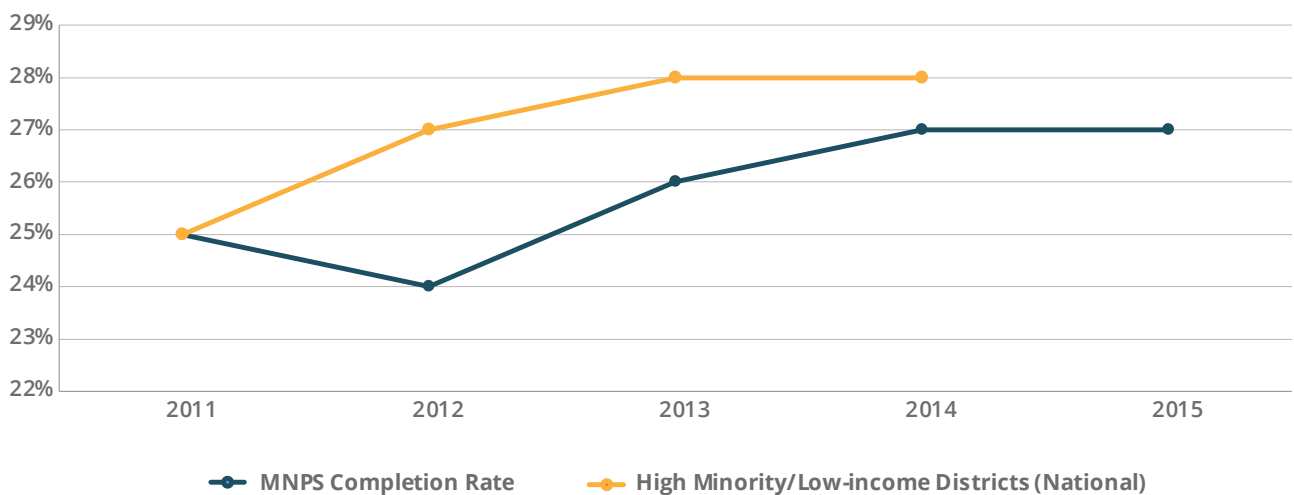
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
MNPS	79%	76%	74%	73%	73%	75%	73%
Asian	92%	83%	88%	85%	90%	83%	85%
Black or African American	74%	72%	67%	66%	65%	67%	66%
Hispanic or Latino	77%	70%	79%	78%	77%	76%	76%
White	84%	82%	79%	78%	79%	83%	79%



College Completion

National Student Clearinghouse data calculates college completion using a six-year period. For this reason, the most recent completion rate accessible is for the class of 2015. **College degree completion was a stable 27% for the class of 2015.**^{xxvii} Of the class of 2015, 22% of high school graduates earned degrees at four-year colleges and 5% earned degrees from two-year colleges in this six-year period.^{xxviii} This mix is different than the 27% that made up the class of 2014 where 20% earned a bachelor’s degree, and 7% earned an associate degree. Degree completion is similar when compared to peer districts nationally (Figure 7).

FIG. 7 DEGREE COMPLETION COMPARED TO SIMILAR SCHOOL DISTRICTS



Degree Completion by Race and Ethnicity

Completion rate gaps expanded for Black students from -14 percentage points for the Class of 2014 to -18 percentage points for the 2015 class. **White MNPS graduates are nearly twice as likely to complete a degree as Hispanic or Black MNPS graduates (Figure 8). The degree gap is now wider than at any time since we have been tracking the data.**

FIG. 8 MNPS DEGREE COMPLETION (CLASS OF 2015)

Class of 2015	6 Year Completion Rate	Difference from MNPS Avg.	Degree Gap
Asian	38.0%	11.0%	0.0%
Black	20.0%	-7.0%	-18.0%
Hispanic	20.0%	-7.0%	-18.0%
White	38.0%	11.0%	NA
MNPS	27.0%	NA	NA

College-Going and Completion Pipelines

Throughout this report we have tried to show that the pipeline for Nashville public school students is no different (sometimes the same) for students in similar high minority/low-income school districts from across the country. Nashville is no better, or worse. However, the issue is not one of comparison as much as it is whether the current pipeline is acceptable, and if not, what should be done to improve opportunities for students.

Responsibility for college completion lies not only with the college, but the entire community. These charts represent as much about what happens to students after leaving the school district, as they do about what happened to them while they were in it. Persistence and completion occur well after the student has left the district and enrolled in college. While what occurs when a student was in secondary education impacts what happens throughout the pipeline, a multitude of other factors and systems also play a role in how a student's postsecondary journey plays out. The P20 pipeline (Pre-K through employment) says as much about social issues of race, poverty, state policies, economic policies, citizenship status, higher education, college affordability, housing, food insecurity, etc. as it does about academics and schools.

Using the most recent data available from various graduating classes and data sources, we can visualize the college pipeline. Persistence and completion numbers have not varied over the past five years.



College-Going and Completion Pipelines

Using the most recent numbers as a marker, the following graphs provide an accurate representation for what to expect for the Class of 2021 (Figures 9 – 13).

FIG. 9 ESTIMATED COLLEGE COMPLETION PIPELINE - ALL 2021 STUDENTS

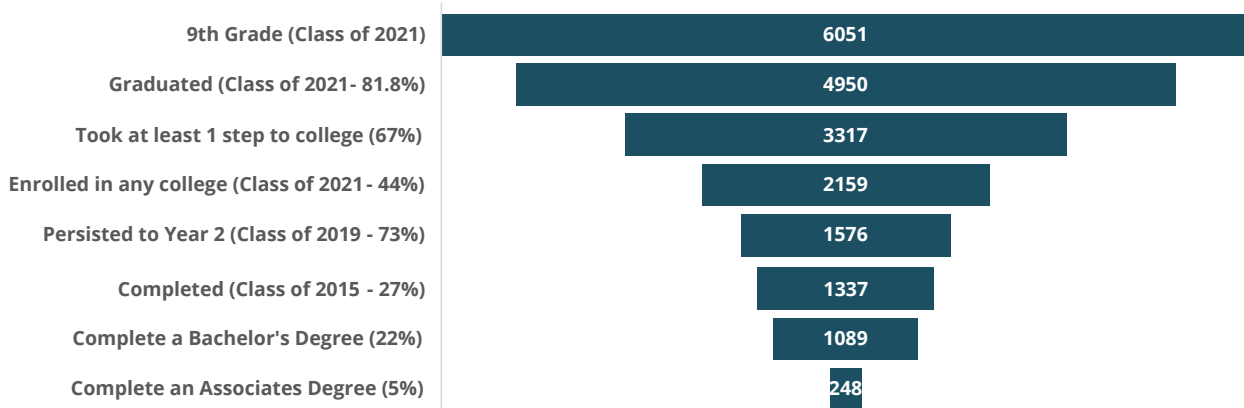


FIG. 10 ESTIMATED COLLEGE COMPLETION PIPELINE - 2021 BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS



FIG. 11 ESTIMATED COLLEGE COMPLETION PIPELINE - 2021 HISPANIC/LATINX STUDENTS

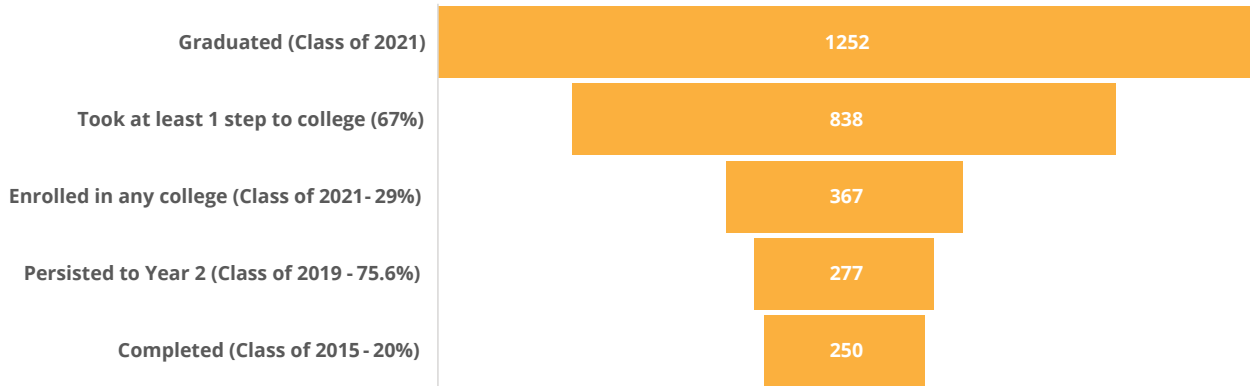


FIG. 12 ESTIMATED COLLEGE COMPLETION PIPELINE - 2021 WHITE STUDENTS



FIG. 13 ESTIMATED COLLEGE COMPLETION PIPELINE - 2021 ASIAN STUDENTS



1

Recommendation 1:

Nashville leaders should formally create and invest in a citywide college completion initiative and report on annual metrics of success.

Improving college completion is not so much a question of knowing what works but rather having the political will to maintain momentum and sustain what leads to successful student outcomes.

Previous reports identified “pockets of excellence,” where the college access ecosystem had come together (secondary, postsecondary, corporate, philanthropy, and community-based organizations) and had substantial impact on improving college-going rates for a group of students or a school.^{xxx} This ecosystem is fragile because these pockets of excellence were heavily dependent on finite resources, resulting in temporary gains without sustainable resources being invested. The success was short-lived and fleeting, more akin to bursting bubbles than pockets.

Current completion efforts such as the MNPS/NSCC initiative Better Together are working towards closing leakage points and securing the transition points, or “hand-offs,” between various parts of the two systems. The early success of NSCC’s Nashville GRAD program shows the possibilities of what can happen when public/private partnerships address the needs of low-income students and students of color – doubling completion rates for GRAD students.^{xxx} These efforts provide a glimpse into what should be a much larger campaign – one more inclusive of other stakeholders including community-based organizations, the wider higher education community serving the Nashville population, private sector, and other diverse voices.

Building on the foundation of these collaborative initiatives, we renew our call for Nashville to formally create a more expansive and inclusive college completion initiative that would:

- » Define a college completion goal, reported annually
- » Ensure a guaranteed college access experience for every MNPS high school student that includes 1-1 meetings with a college access professional (both internal and external to MNPS) throughout high school
- » Provide targeted college success supports from high school through college completion to address racial and economic equity gaps
- » Award first dollar college success scholarship for each MNPS graduate
- » Create a shared data system between college access service providers and the school district.

Budget estimates to design and sustain a best practice model such as GEAR UP are around \$16 million annually for high school students (\$800 per student).^{xxxii} Half of these resources would be dedicated to supporting higher education and community-based organizations providing direct services as part of the larger strategy. Additional funding would be required to expand supports to middle school, often cited as a best practice. Expansion of career exploration and exposure into middle school is a key component of building this systemic strategy.

2 Recommendation 2:

State leaders should reform tuition and financial aid policies to be more inclusive and supportive of low-income students and students of color.

Nashville will be unable to recognize our most ambitious college completion goals without state policy reform. Continued advocacy for both tuition equity and TN Promise reform is necessary. Without a tuition equity policy, undocumented students will continue to be disenfranchised in their pursuit of postsecondary education. The recommendation from previous reports to support the 2020 and 2021 Tennessee Comptroller’s Office of Research and Education Accountability (OREA) options for reforming TN Promise to better serve

low-income students and students of color extends to this report.^{xxxii} We agree with OREA’s recommendations that the Promise program requirements should “more closely resemble those of other public scholarships... and could allow the Tennessee Promise scholarship to cover some or all nonmandatory fees, books, tools, or supplies. This could apply to Promise students, or certain students based on financial need, residence in certain geographic areas of the state, enrollment in high-demand programs, or some combination of the three.”^{xxxiii}

MNPS HIGH SCHOOL PROFILES

BRIDGE TO COMPLETION | 2022



Antioch High School

Economically Disadvantaged Students

36.6%

English Learners

33.2%

Black or African American Students

34.9%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

43.1%

Average ACT Composite

16.5

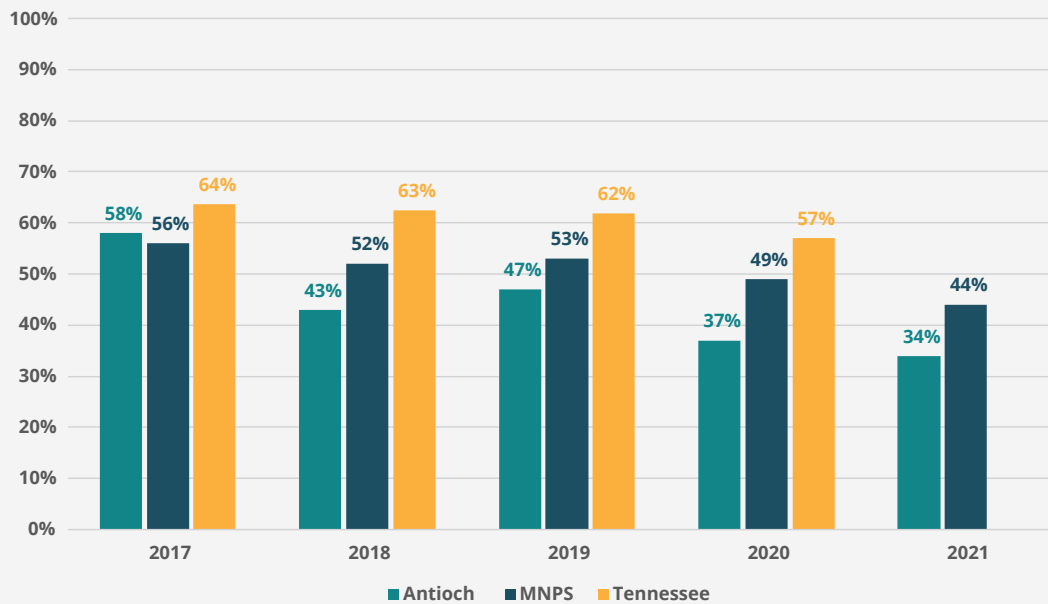
College Completion Rate

31.0%

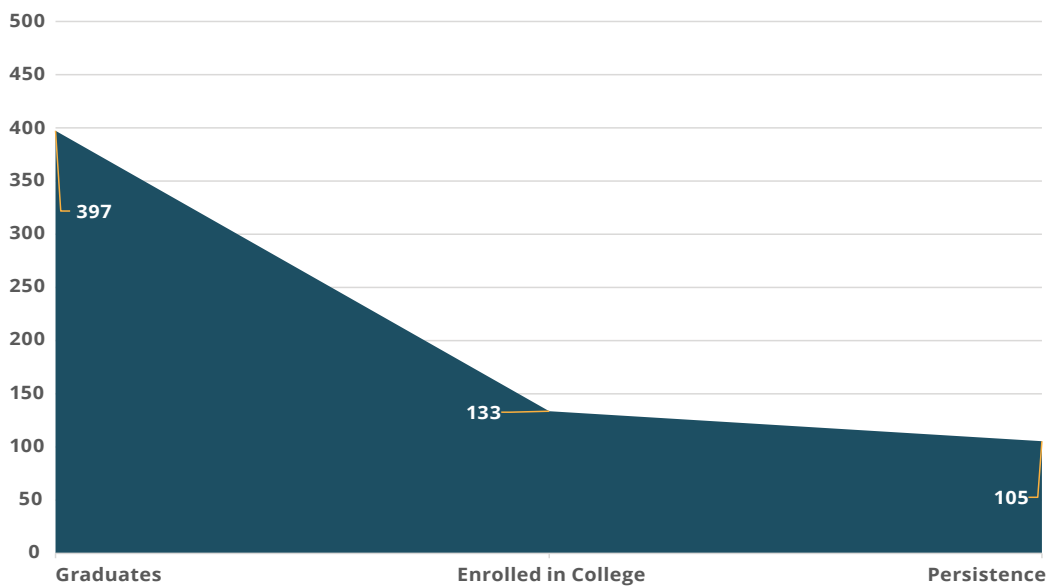


1,853
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Cane Ridge High School

1,782
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)



Economically Disadvantaged Students

36.8%

English Learners

30.4%

Black or African American Students

40.0%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

35.1%

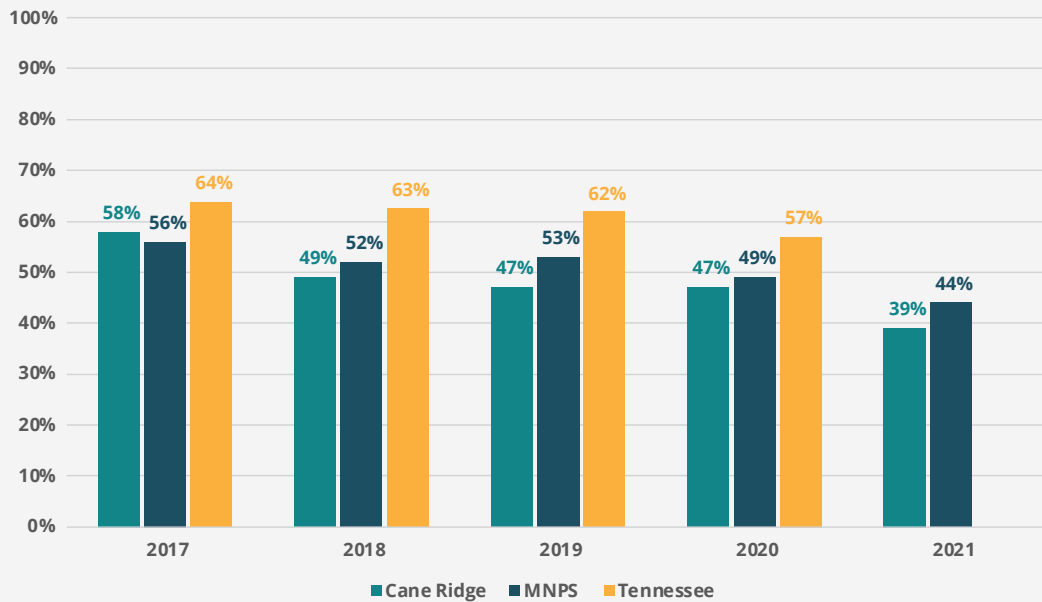
Average ACT Composite

16.7

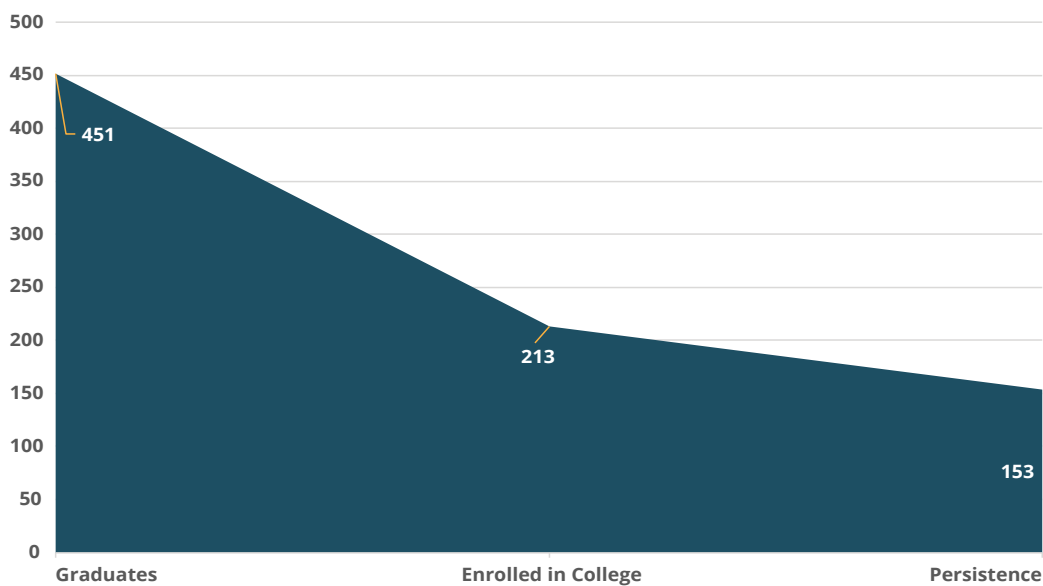
College Completion Rate

25.0%

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



East Nashville Magnet High School

Economically Disadvantaged Students

42.8%

English Learners

Data Not Reported

Black or African American Students

94.0%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

Data Not Reported

Average ACT Composite

17.8

College Completion Rate

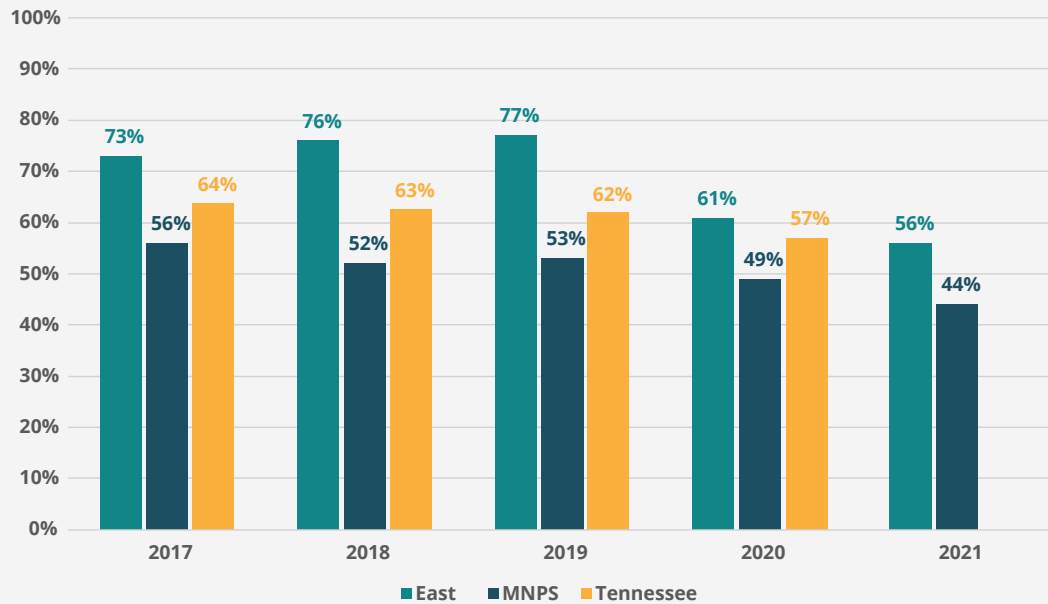
33.0%



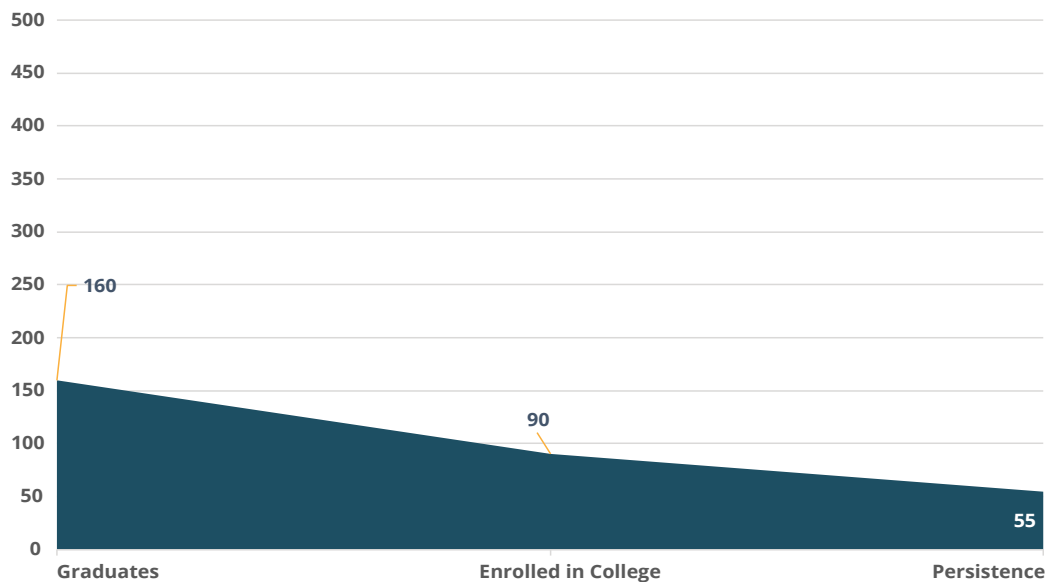
654

NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



1,027
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
 (2020-21 School Year)



Economically Disadvantaged Students

40.5%

English Learners

49.5%

Black or African American Students

20.2%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

61.0%

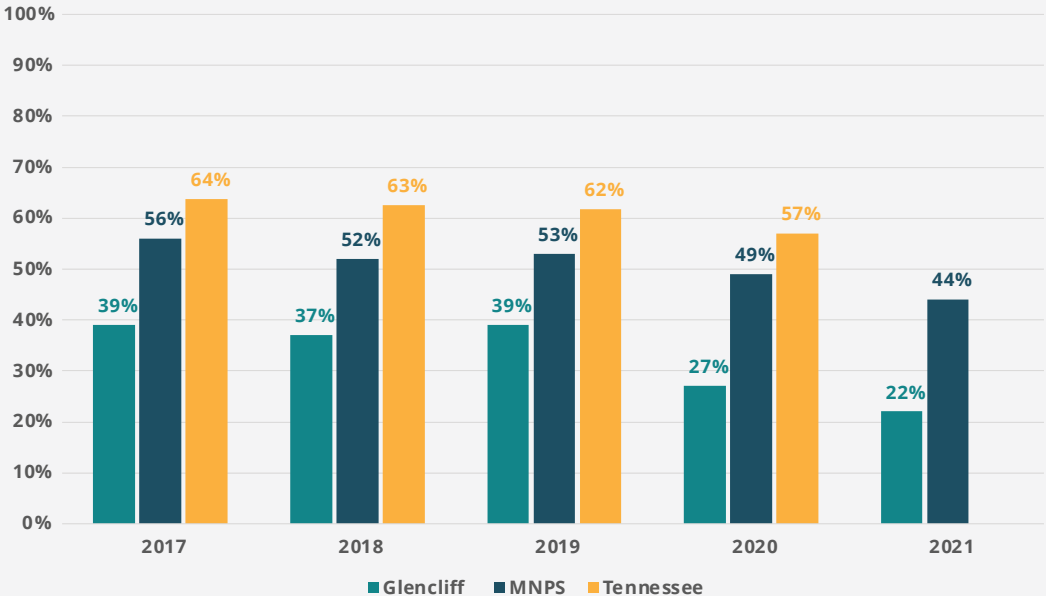
Average ACT Composite

16

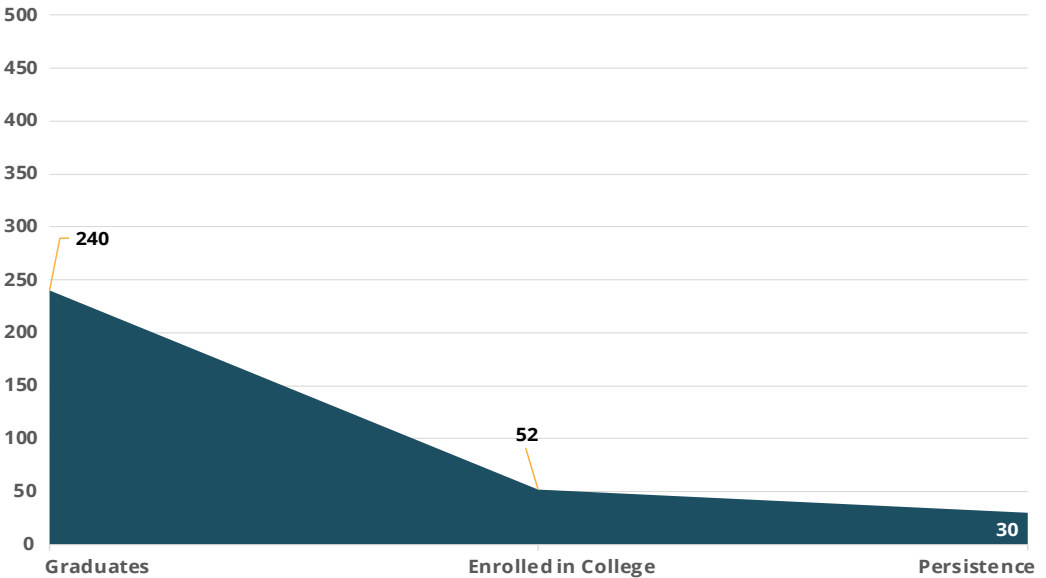
College Completion Rate

23.0%

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Hillsboro High School

Economically Disadvantaged Students

28.8%

English Learners

Data Not Reported

Black or African American Students

52.4%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

8.1%

Average ACT Composite

21.6

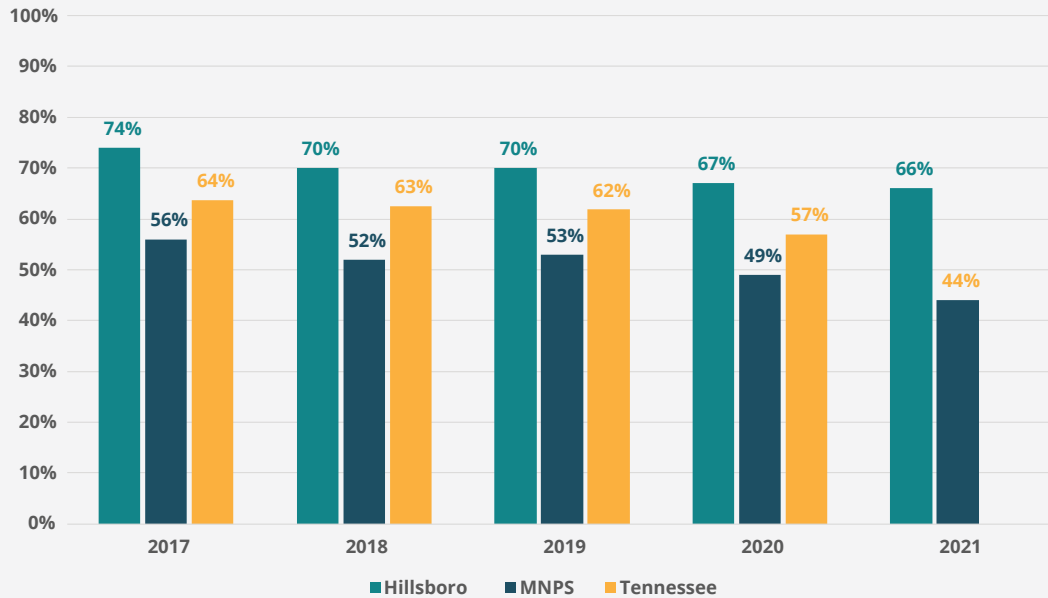
College Completion Rate

36.0%

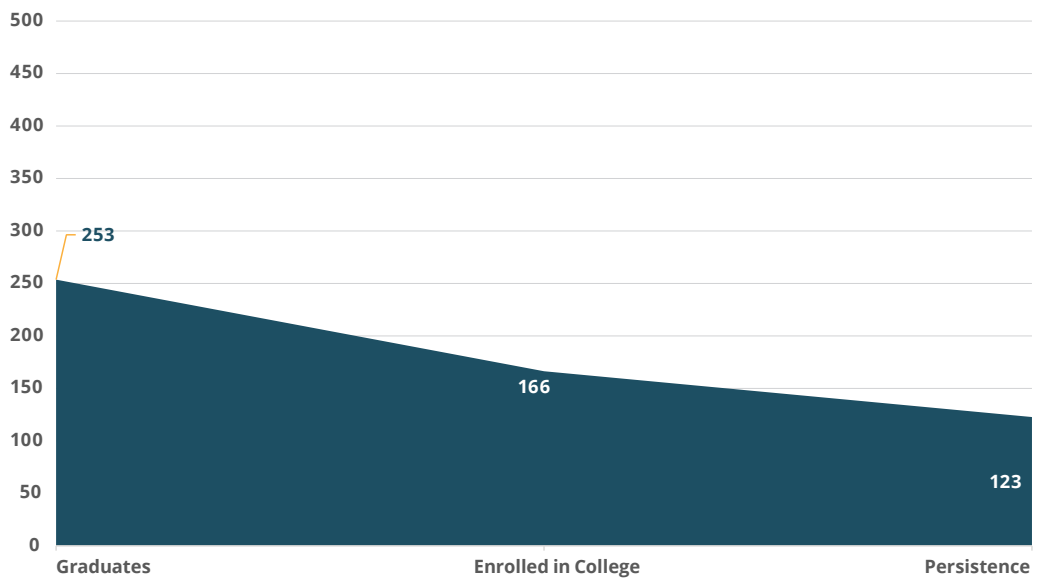


1,240
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



1,079
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)



Economically Disadvantaged Students

33.8%

English Learners

14.5%

Black or African American Students

35.5%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

18.2%

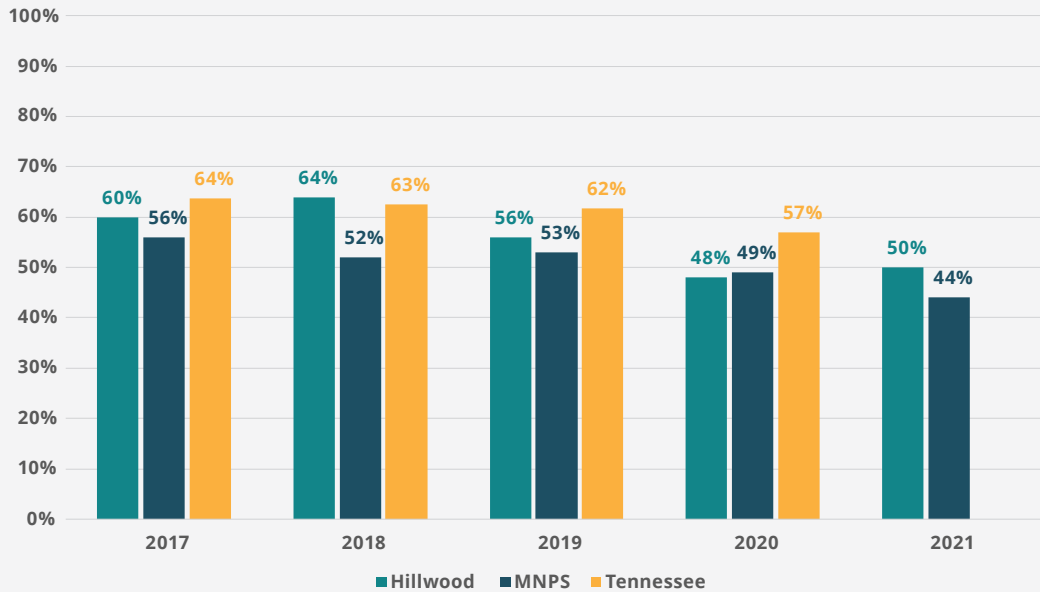
Average ACT Composite

17.4

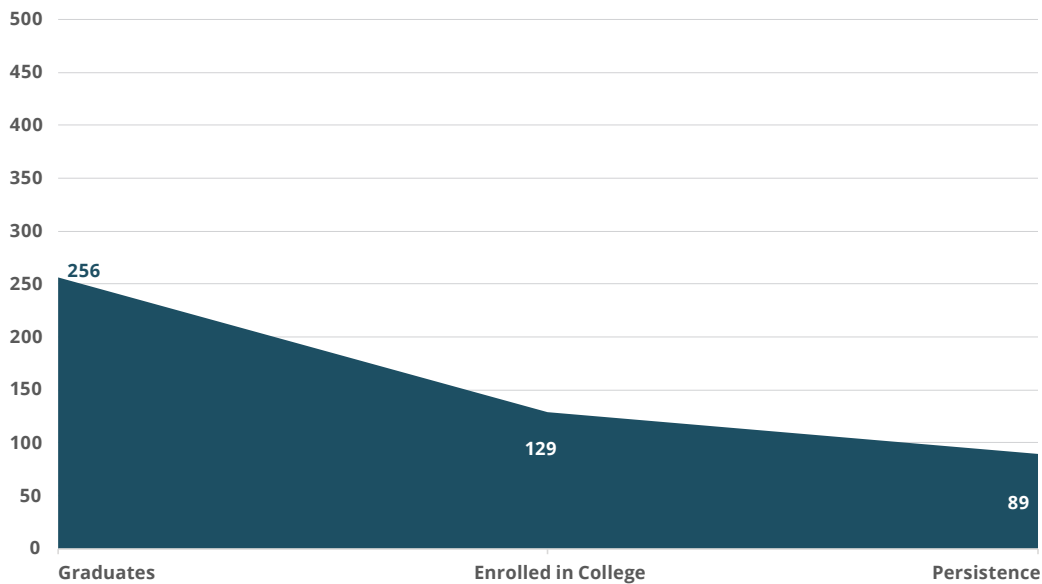
College Completion Rate

28.0%

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Hume-Fogg Magnet High School

Economically Disadvantaged Students

8.2%

English Learners

Data Not Reported

Black or African American Students

22.2%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

8.8%

Average ACT Composite

26.6

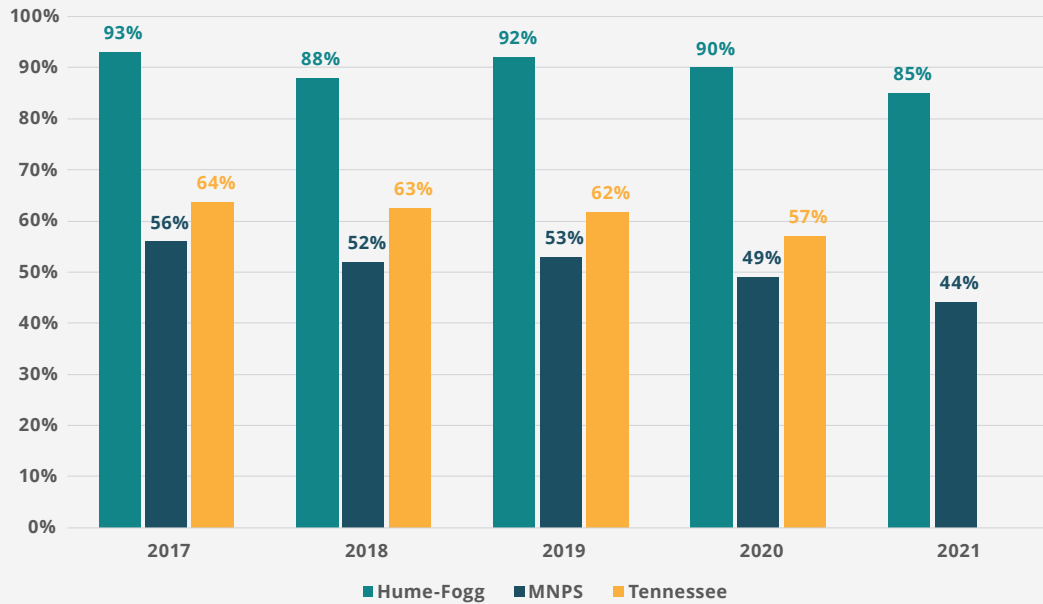
College Completion Rate

79.0%

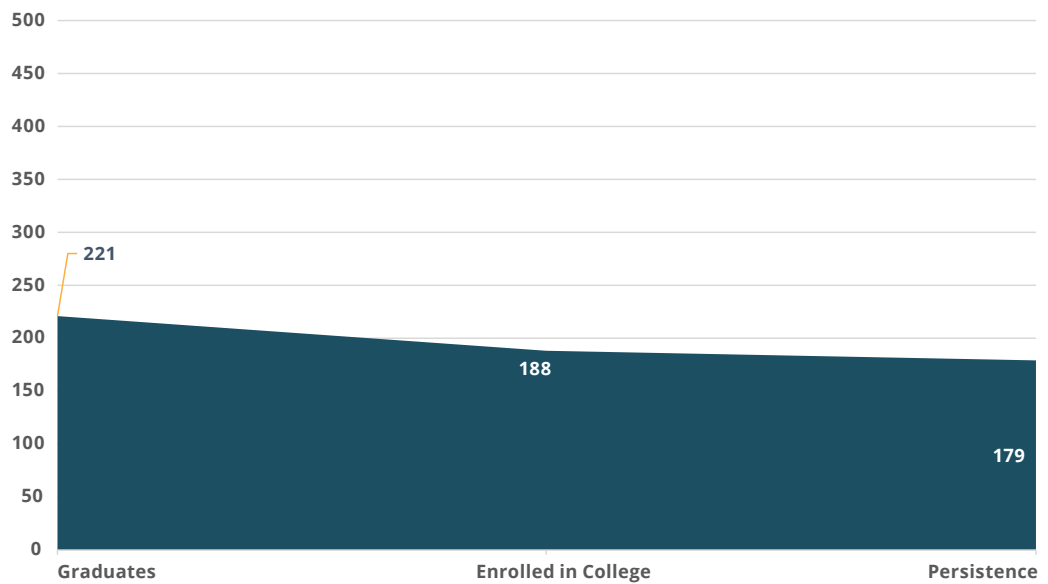


907
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Hunters Lane High School

1,330
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)



Economically Disadvantaged Students

45.6%

English Learners

24.4%

Black or African American Students

43.3%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

39.1%

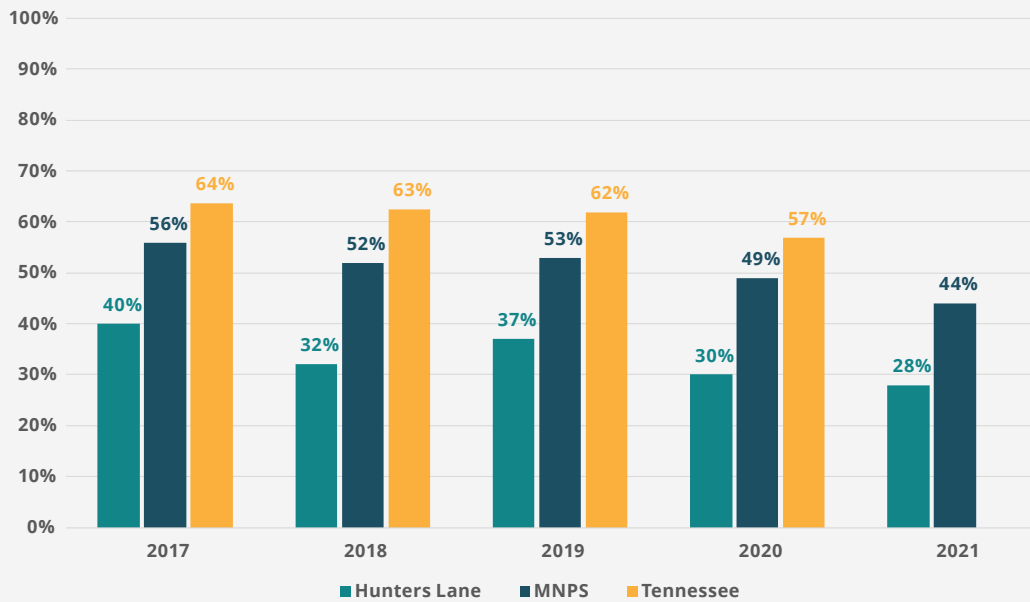
Average ACT Composite

16

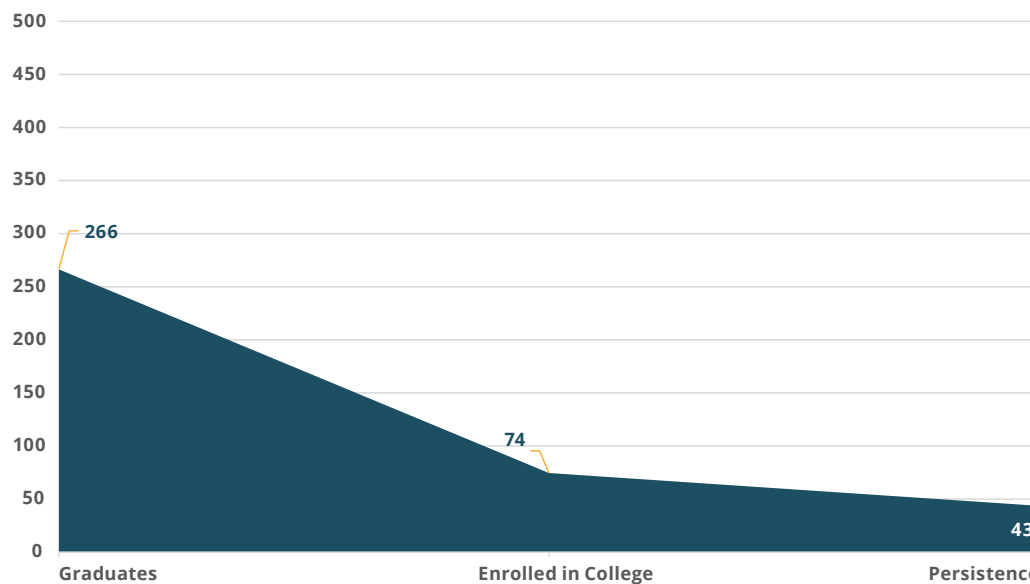
College Completion Rate

10.0%

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Intrepid College Prep

Economically Disadvantaged Students

33.6%

English Learners

51.2%

Black or African American Students

20.6%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

69.2%

Average ACT Composite

21

College Completion Rate

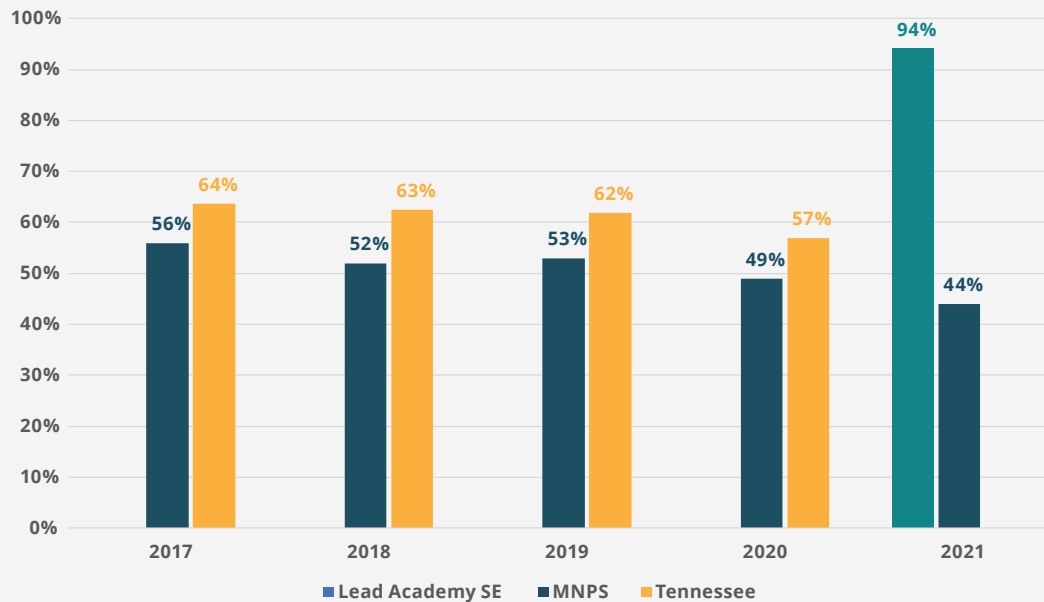
Data Not Reported



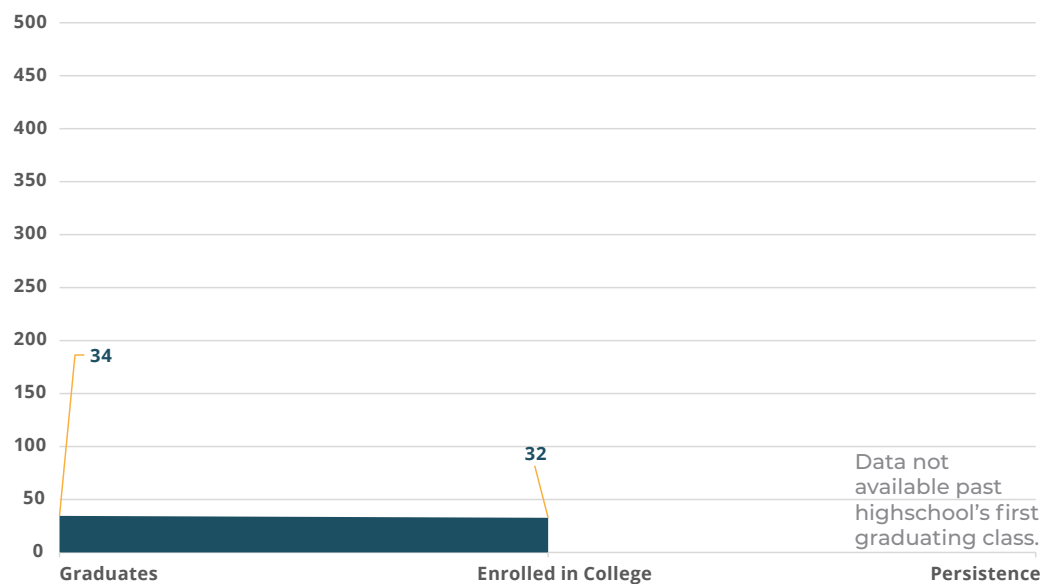
898

NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2021 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



John Overton High School

1,987
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)



Economically Disadvantaged Students

35.2%

English Learners

35.7%

Black or African American Students

20.5%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

42.5%

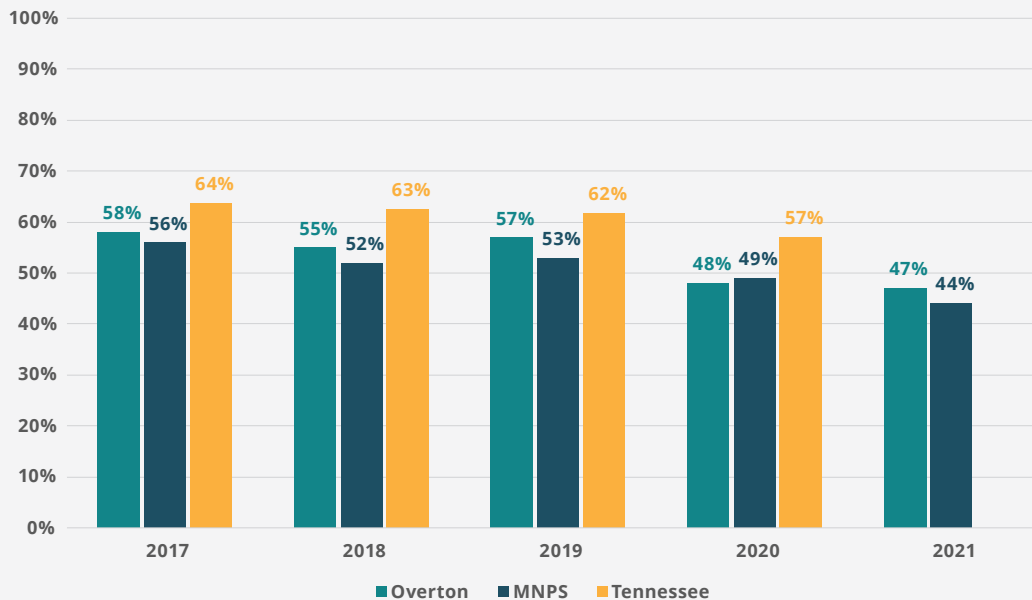
Average ACT Composite

17.5

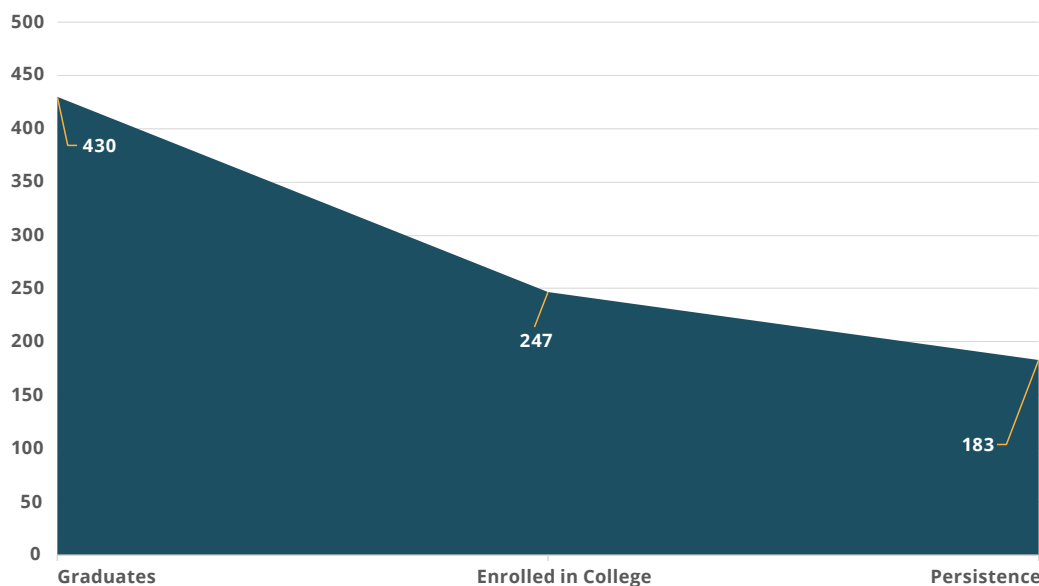
College Completion Rate

33.0%

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



KIPP Nashville Collegiate High School

Economically Disadvantaged Students

43.8%

English Learners

11.6%

Black or African American Students

63.9%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

31.3%

Average ACT Composite

21.3

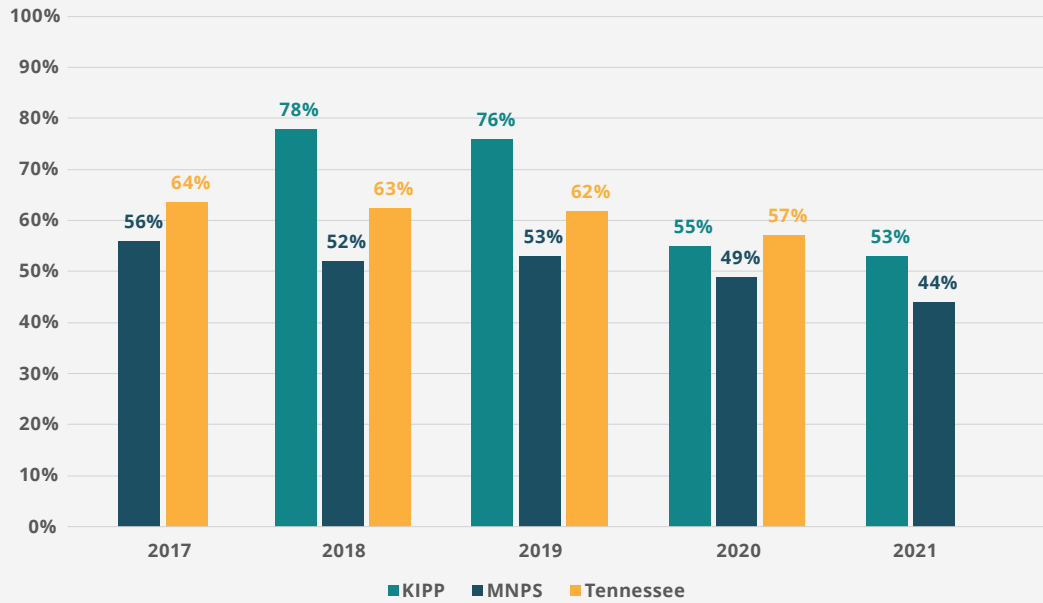
College Completion Rate

70.0%

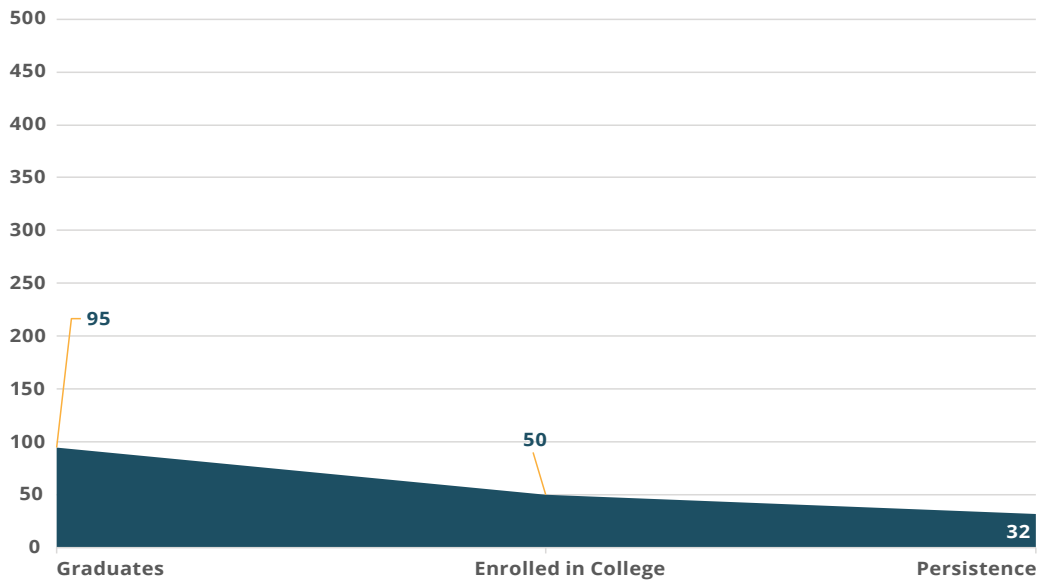


482
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Knowledge Academy

149
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)



Economically Disadvantaged Students

29.5%

English Learners

31.5%

Black or African American Students

36.2%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

45.0%

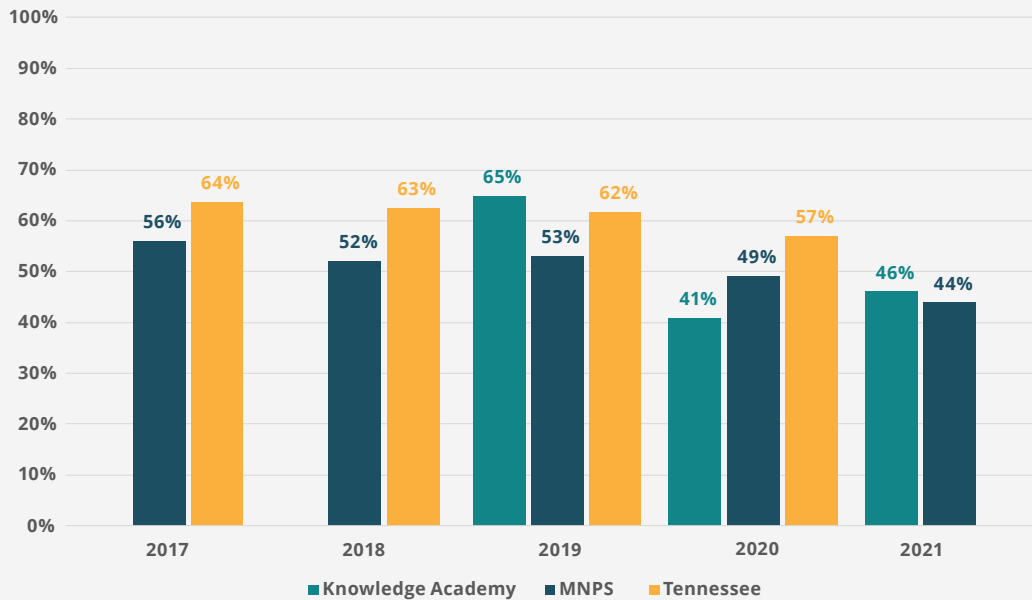
Average ACT Composite

18.2

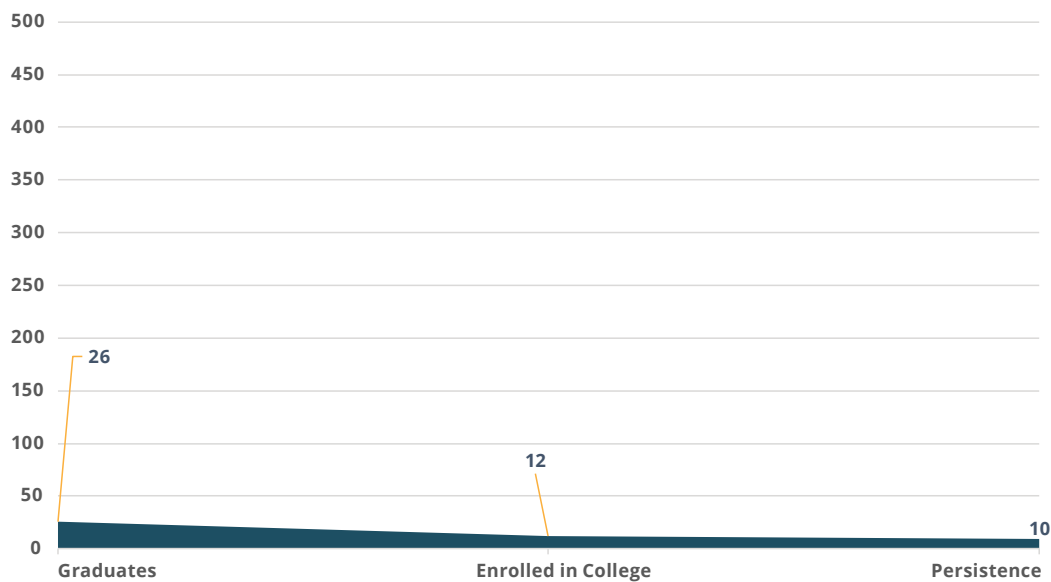
College Completion Rate

Data Not Reported

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



LEAD Academy High School

Economically Disadvantaged Students

46.5%

English Learners

40.2%

Black or African American Students

37.7%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

51.2%

Average ACT Composite

18.9

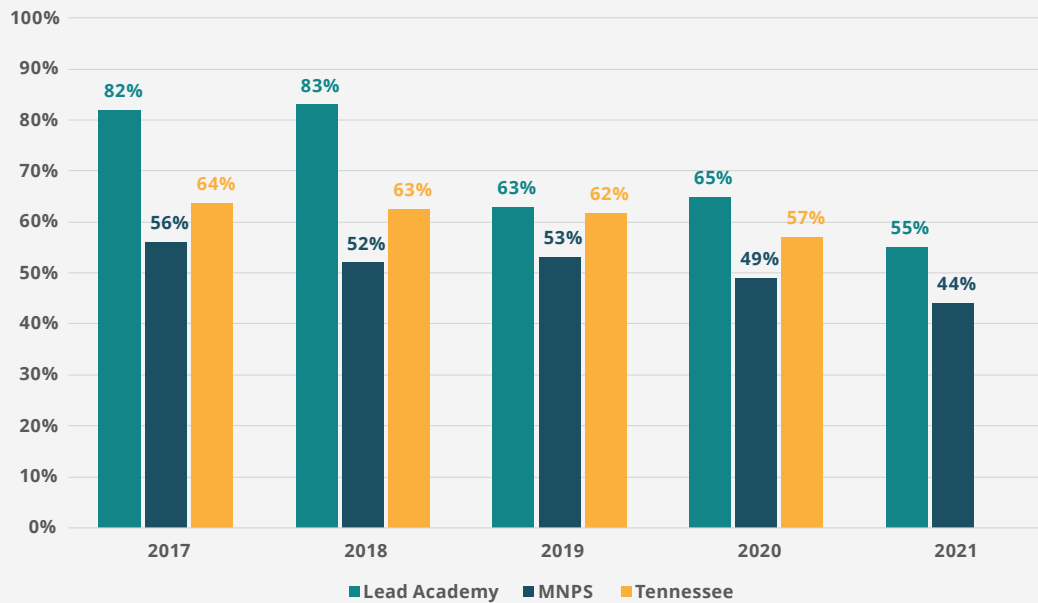
College Completion Rate

24.0%

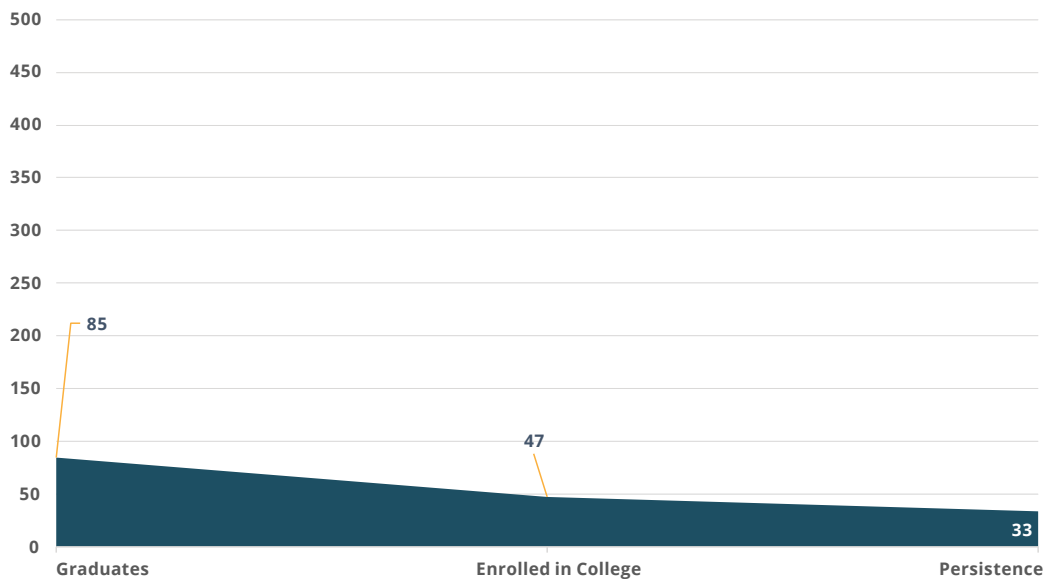


475
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



LEAD Southeast High School

879
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
 (2020-21 School Year)



Economically Disadvantaged Students

35.2%

English Learners

53.5%

Black or African American Students

18.0%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

46.9%

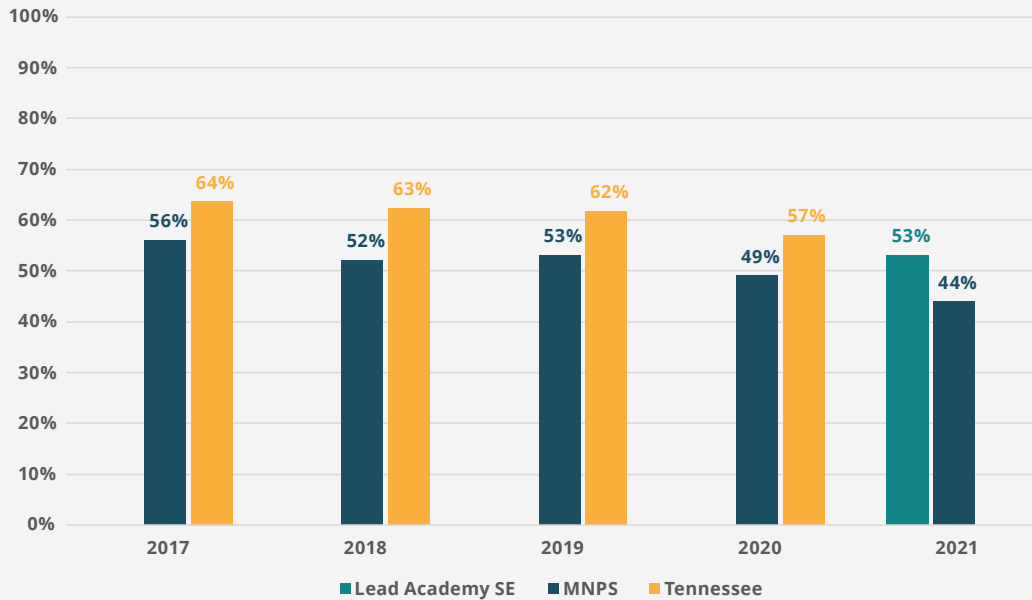
Average ACT Composite

Data Not Reported

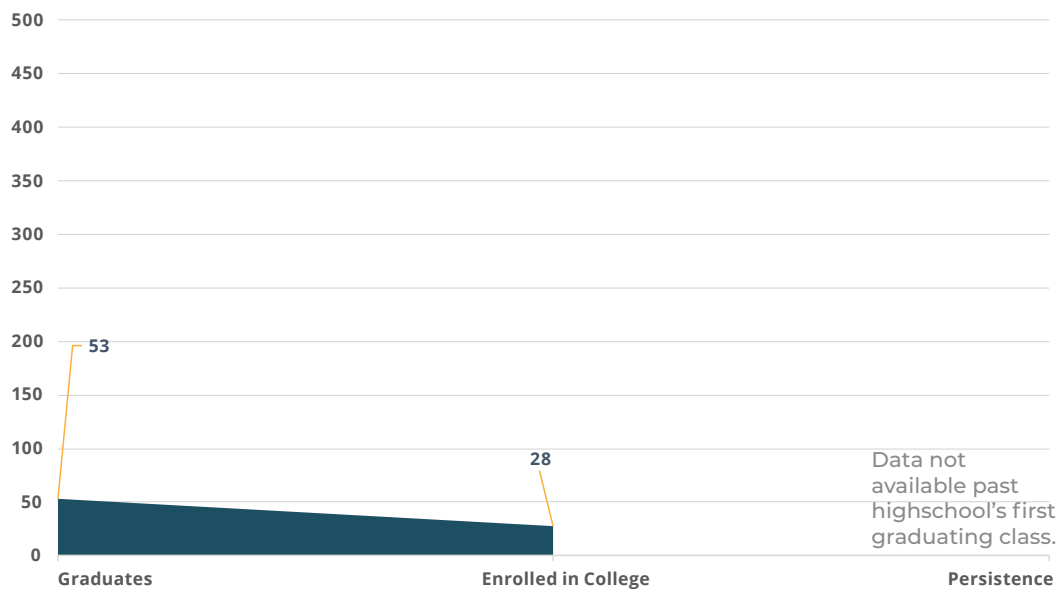
College Completion Rate

Data Not Reported

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2021 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Maplewood High School

Economically Disadvantaged Students

61.2%

English Learners

21.5%

Black or African American Students

68.5%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

22.5%

Average ACT Composite

14.7

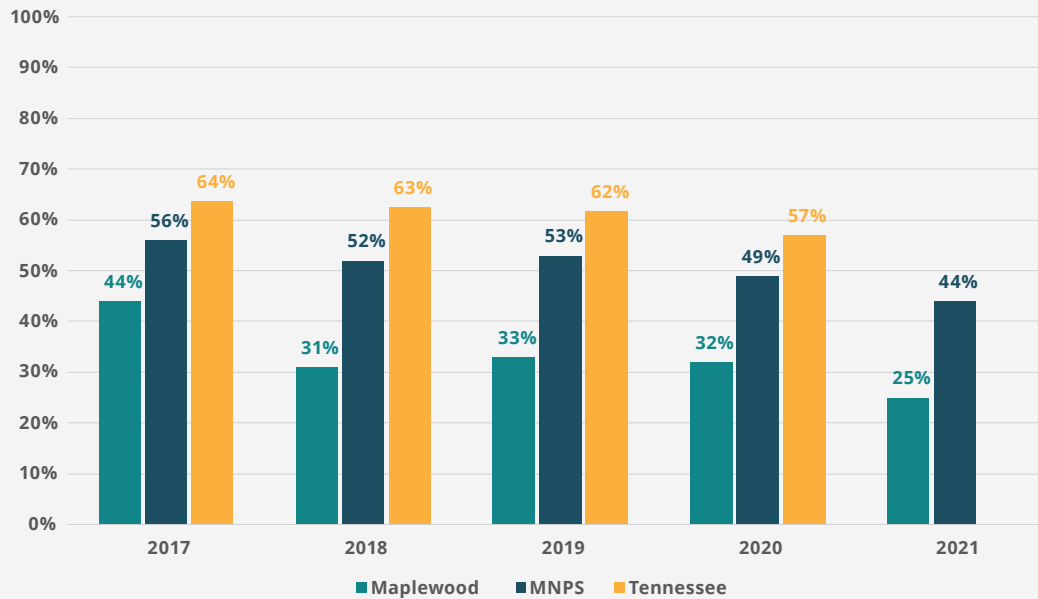
College Completion Rate

6.0%

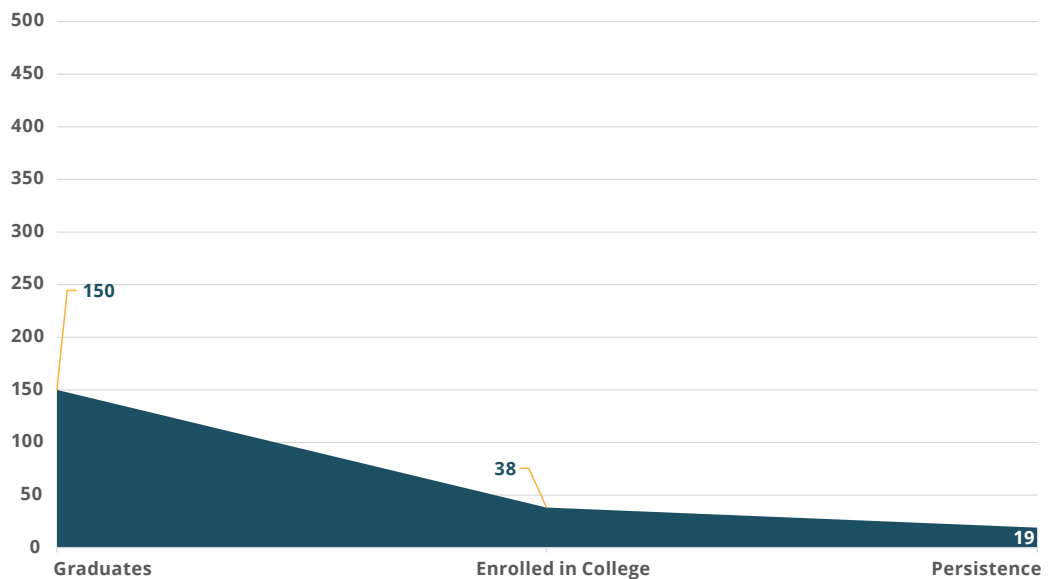


726
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



2,124
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)



Economically Disadvantaged Students

38.6%

English Learners

10.8%

Black or African American Students

41.5%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

19.7%

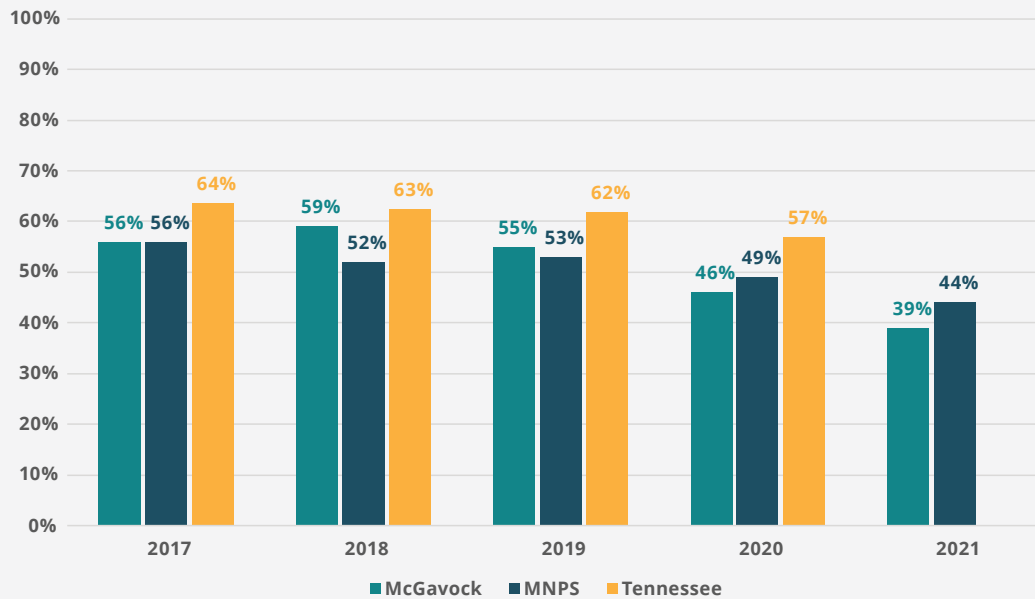
Average ACT Composite

18.6%

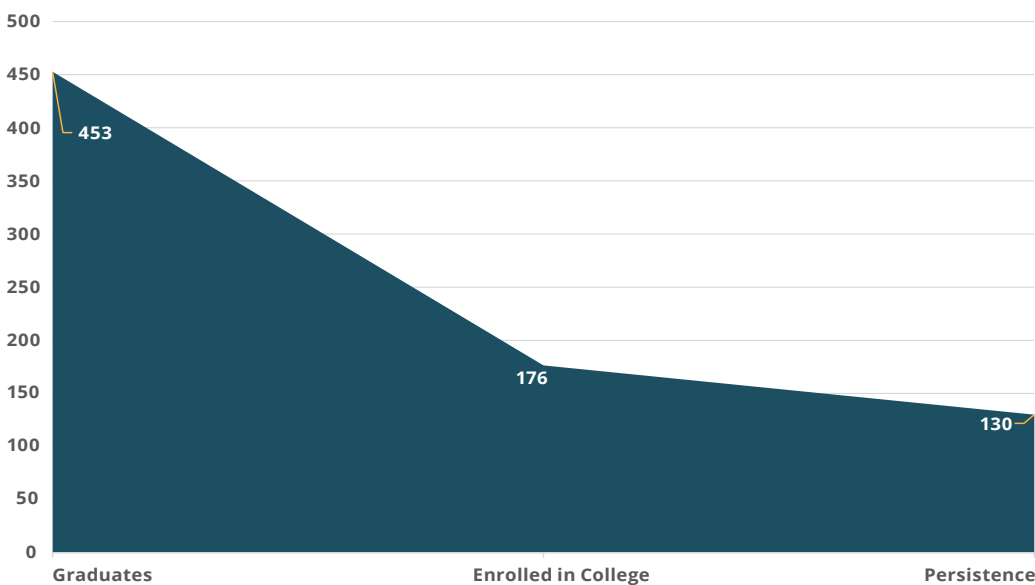
College Completion Rate

21.0%

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Middle College High School

Economically Disadvantaged Students

25.6%

English Learners

5.6%

Black or African American Students

46.9%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

11.3%

Average ACT Composite

Data Not Reported

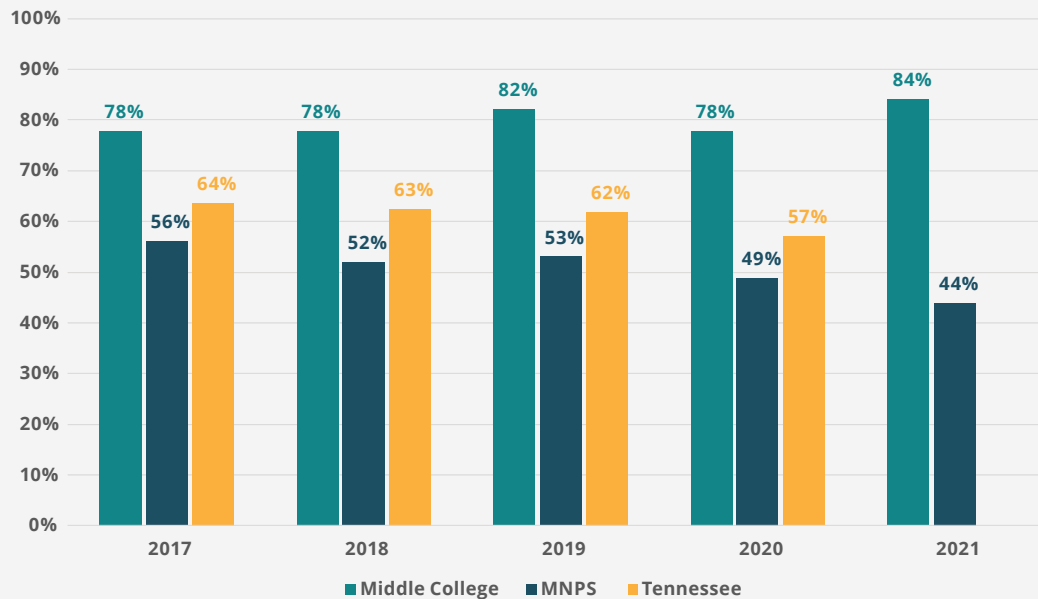
College Completion Rate

Data Not Reported

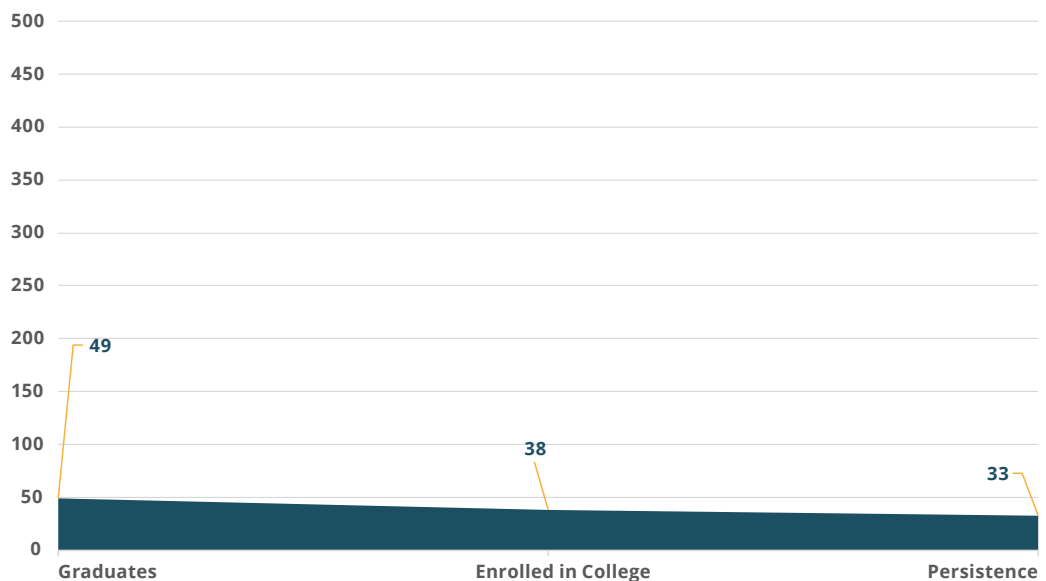


160
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Martin Luther King Jr. Magnet School

1,274
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)



Economically Disadvantaged Students

12.2%

English Learners

Data Not Reported

Black or African American Students

37.0%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

10.7%

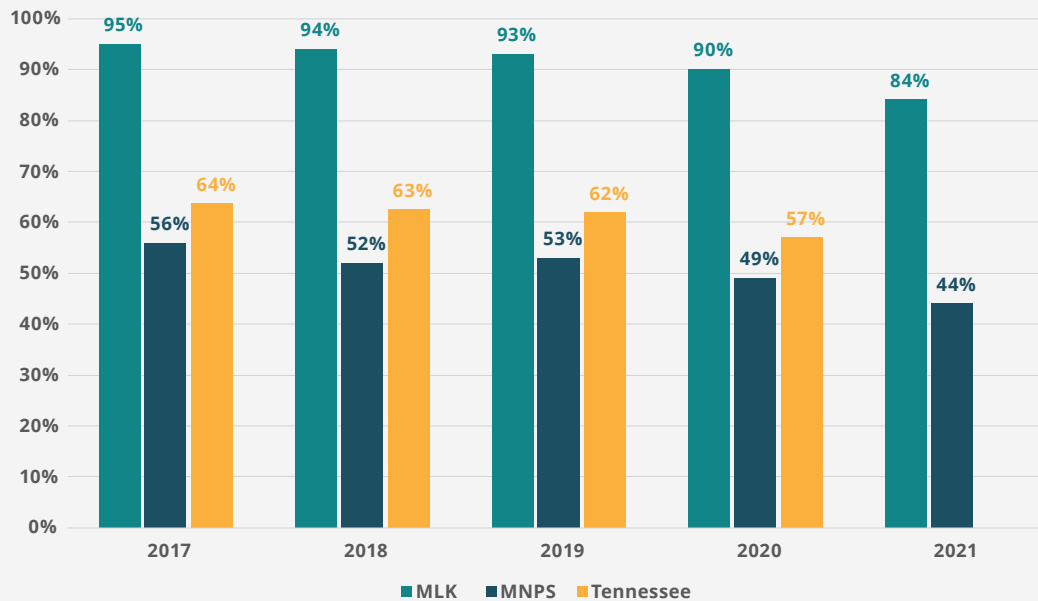
Average ACT Composite

25.9%

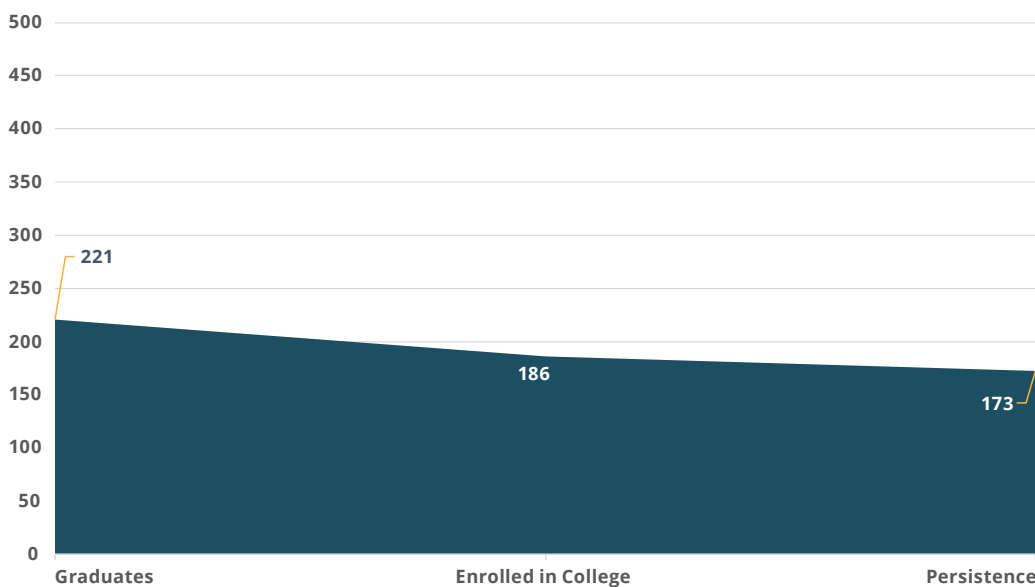
College Completion Rate

76.0%

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Nashville Big Picture

Economically Disadvantaged Students

35.3%

English Learners

Data Not Reported

Black or African American Students

74.4%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

7.7%

Average ACT Composite

17.2

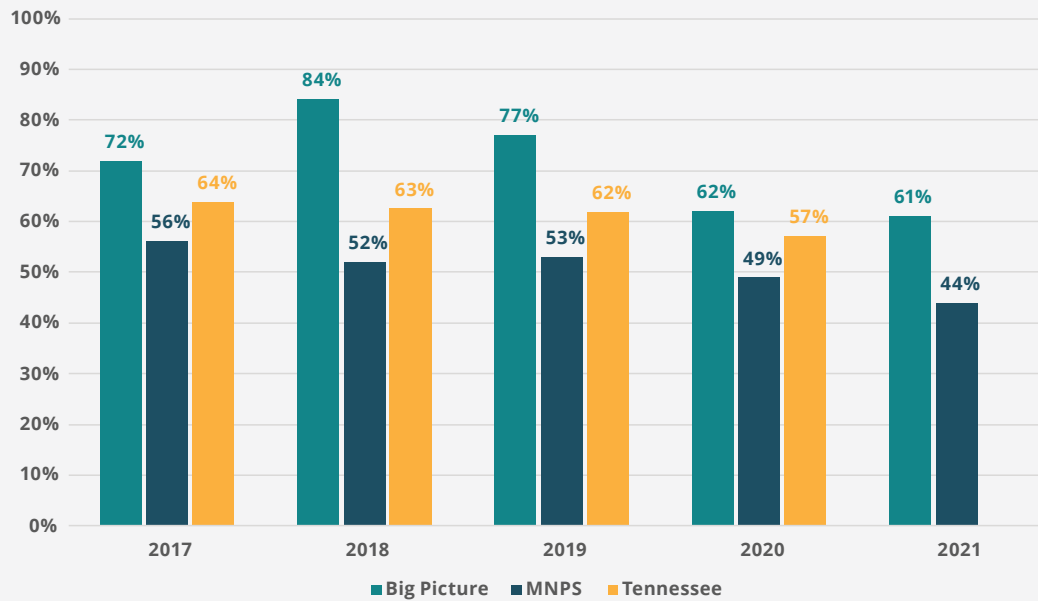
College Completion Rate

22.0%

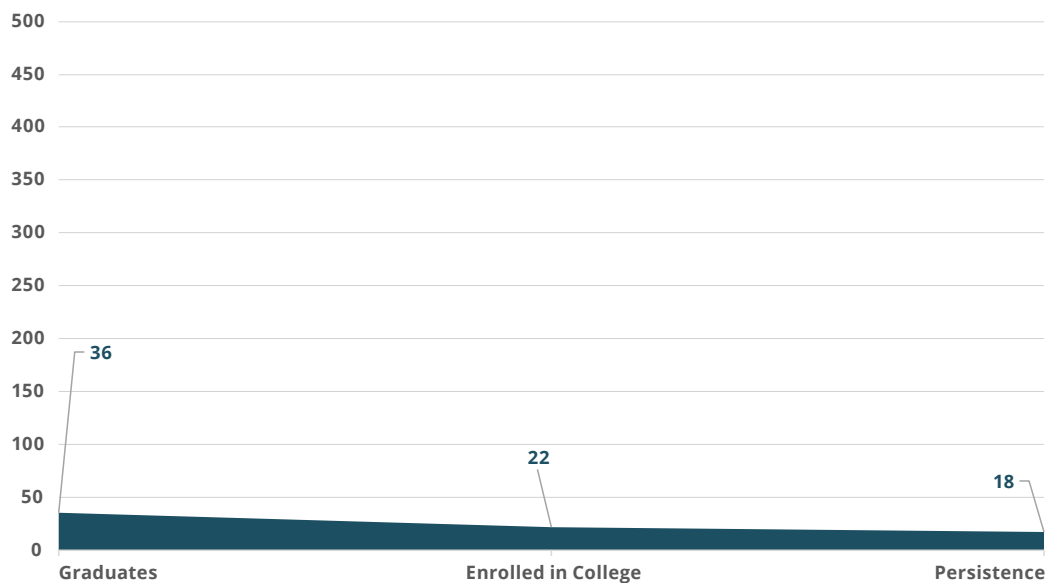


156
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Nashville School of the Arts

601
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)



Economically Disadvantaged Students

16.6%

English Learners

Data Not Reported

Black or African American Students

38.8%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

8.8%

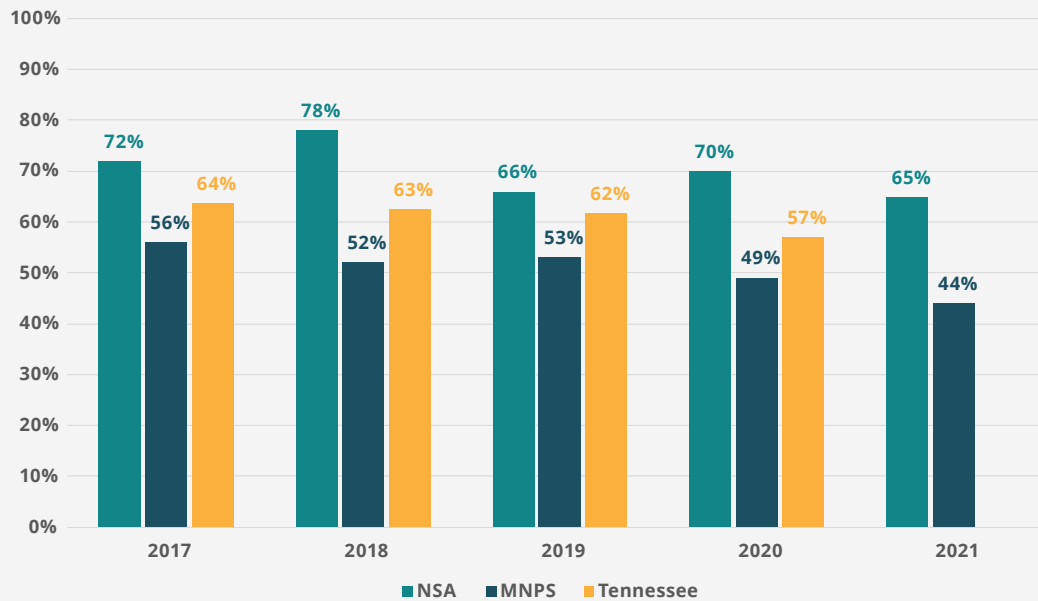
Average ACT Composite

21.6%

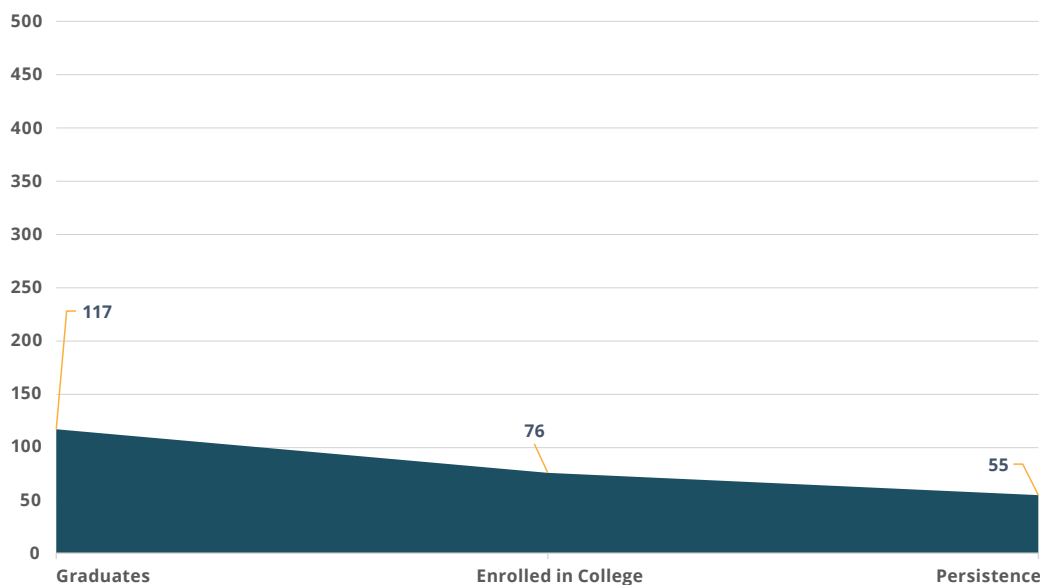
College Completion Rate

43.0%

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Economically Disadvantaged Students

75.5%

English Learners

Data Not Reported

Black or African American Students

93.0%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

Data Not Reported

Average ACT Composite

14.7

College Completion Rate

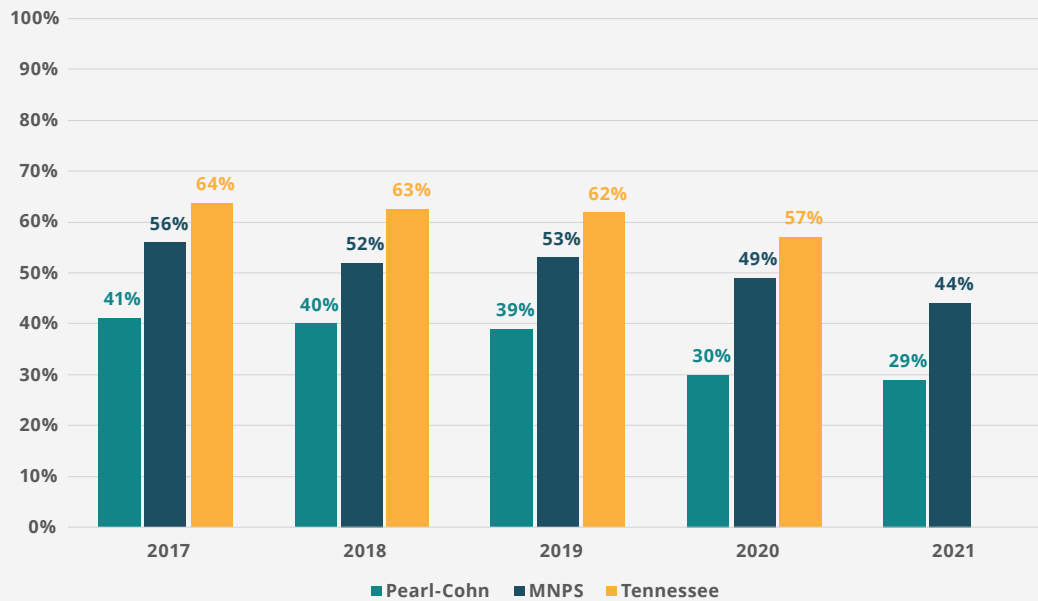
10.0%



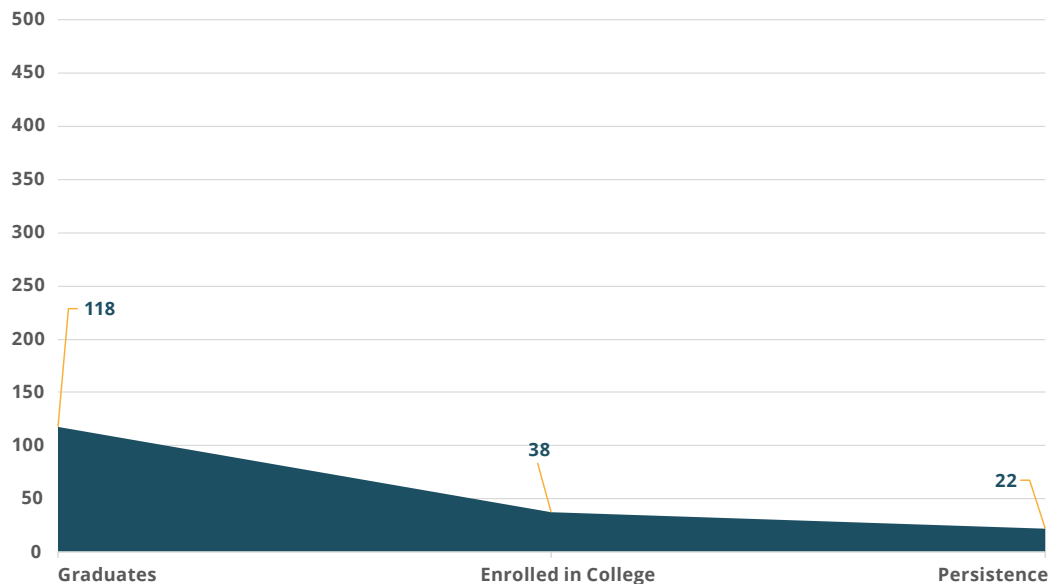
629

NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



649
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
 (2020-21 School Year)



Economically Disadvantaged Students

42.8%

English Learners

16.9%

Black or African American Students

52.9%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

39.0%

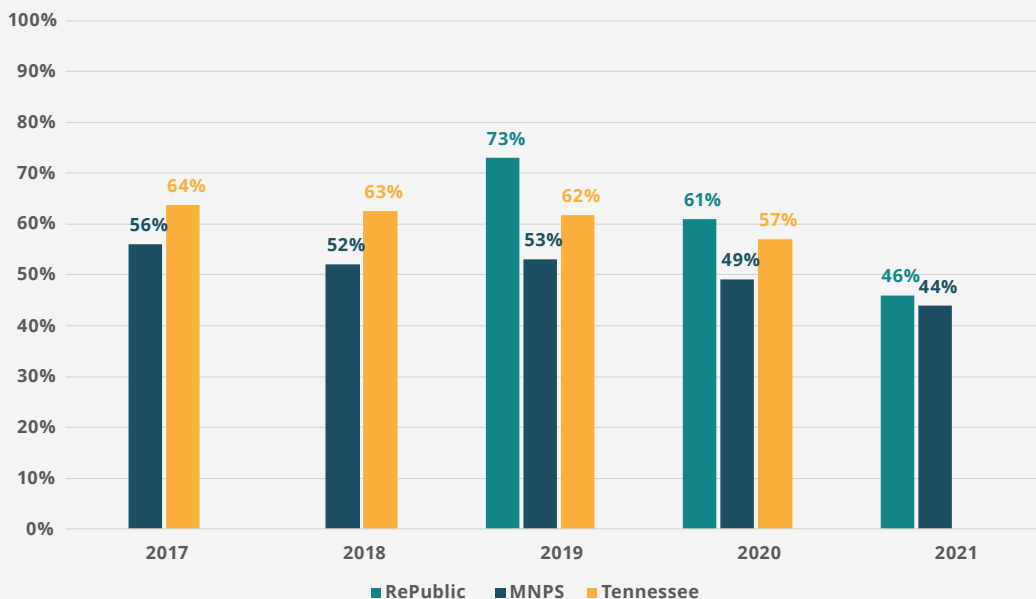
Average ACT Composite

20

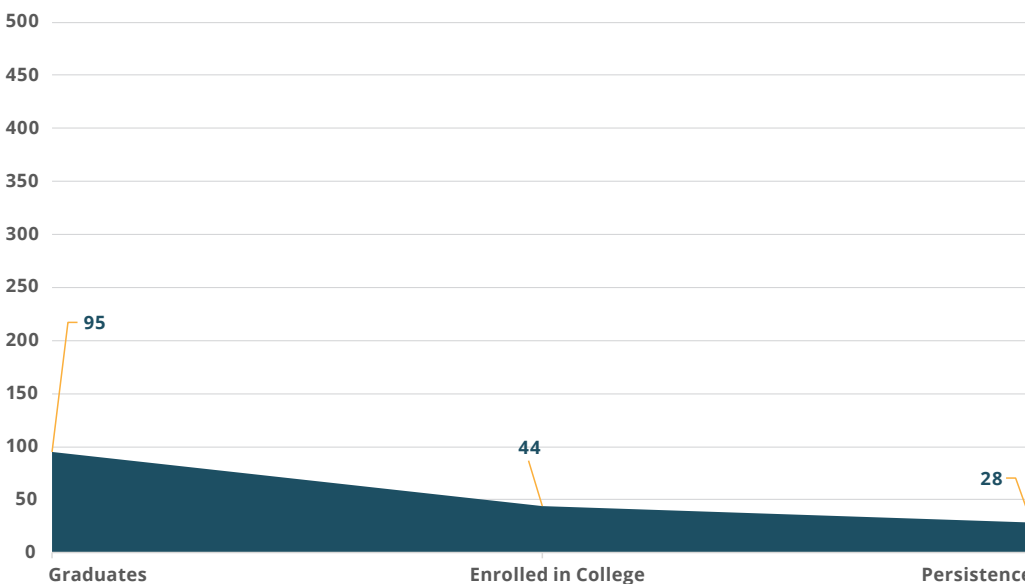
College Completion Rate

Data Not Reported

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



STEM Prep High School

Economically Disadvantaged Students

35.7%

English Learners

40.4%

Black or African American Students

19.5%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

54.6%

Average ACT Composite

20.3

College Completion Rate

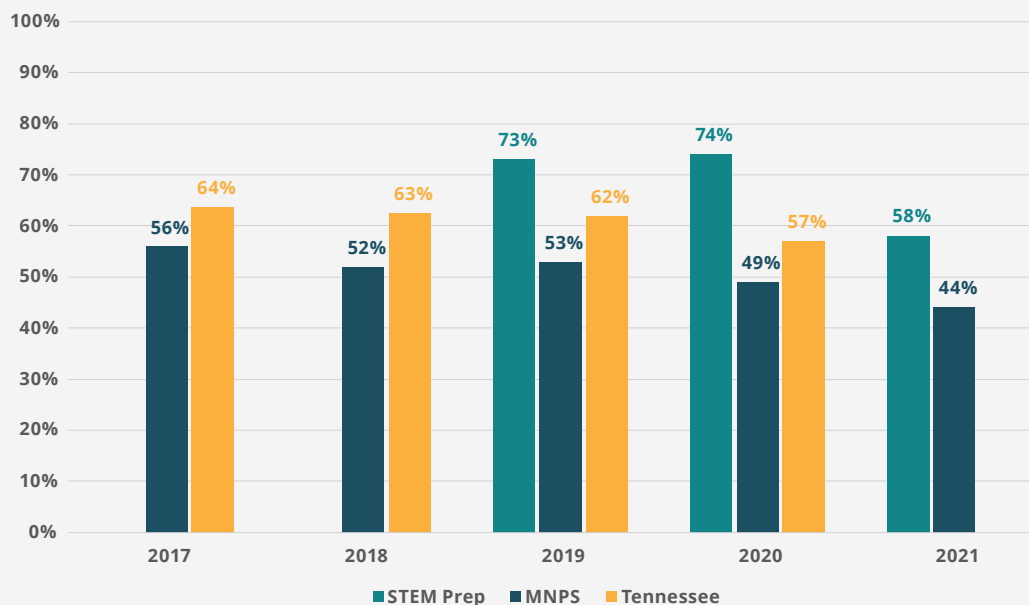
Data Not Reported



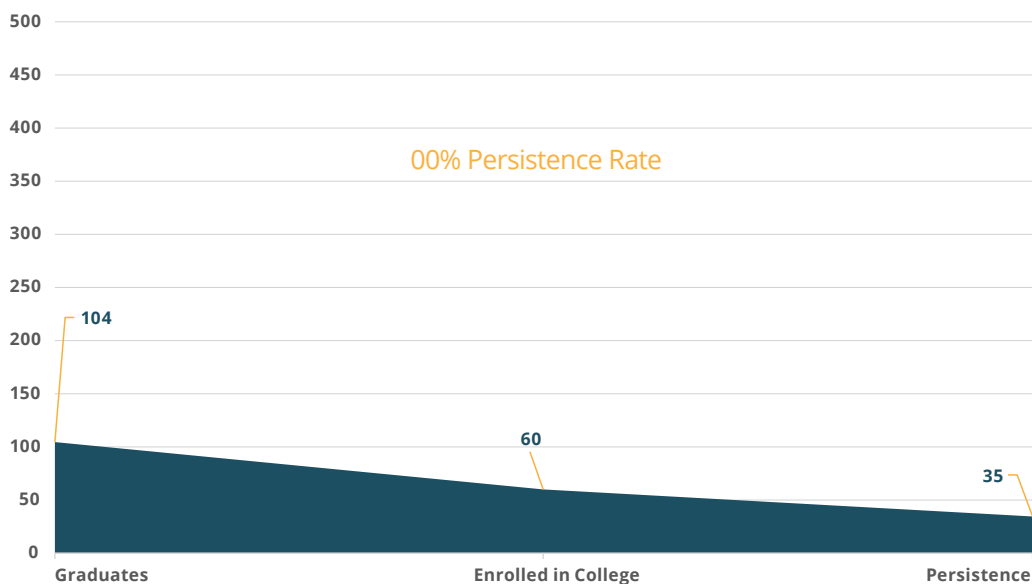
513

NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Stratford STEM Magnet High School

913
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)



Economically Disadvantaged Students

64.1%

English Learners

12.9%

Black or African American Students

69.2%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

12.4%

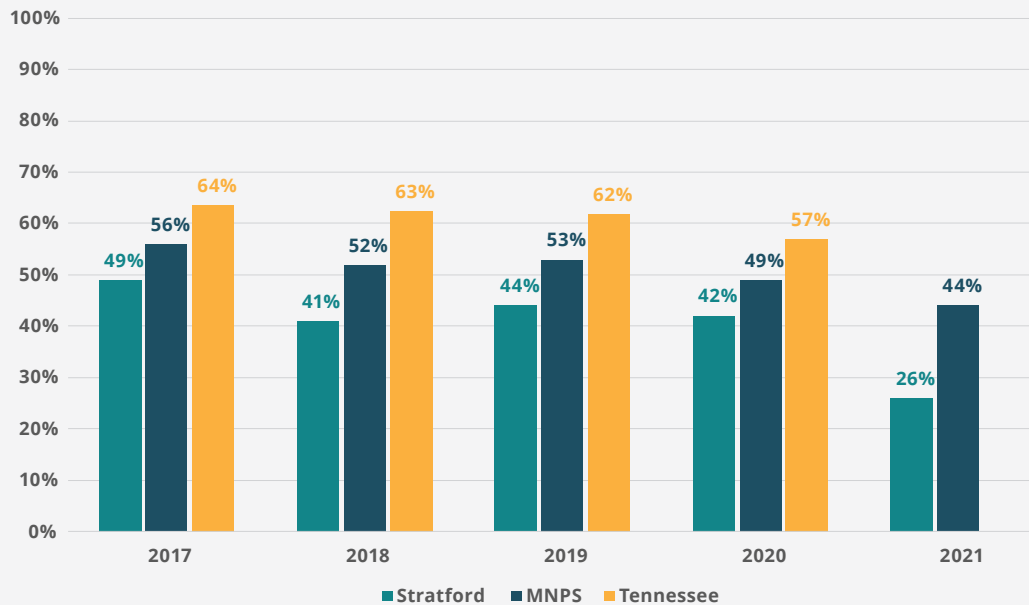
Average ACT Composite

17.4

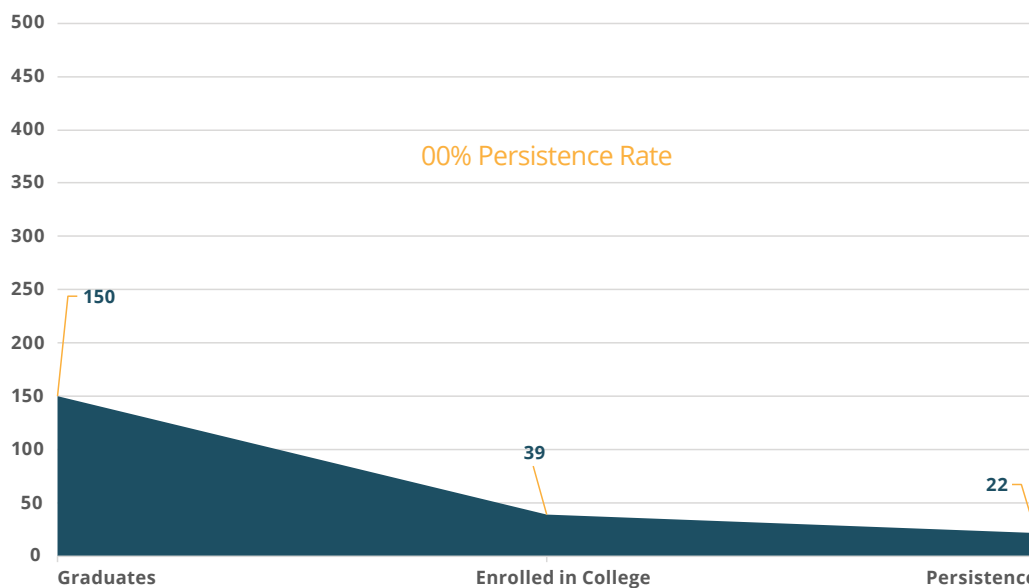
College Completion Rate

7.0%

COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



Whites Creek High School

Economically Disadvantaged Students

65.1%

English Learners

Data Not Reported

Black or African American Students

80.7%

Hispanic or Latinx Students

5.3%

Average ACT Composite

15.2

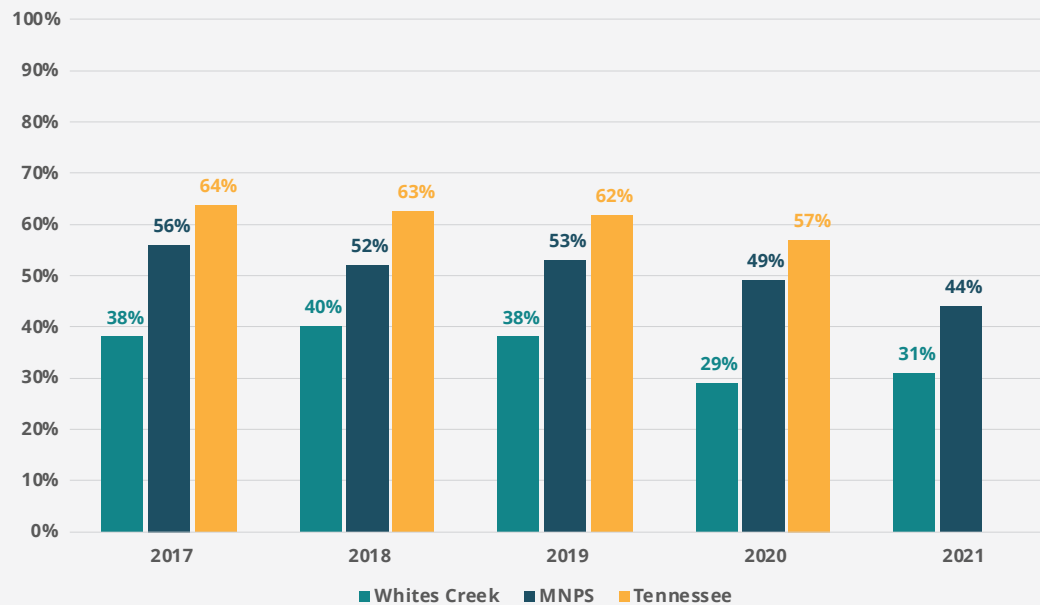
College Completion Rate

9.0%

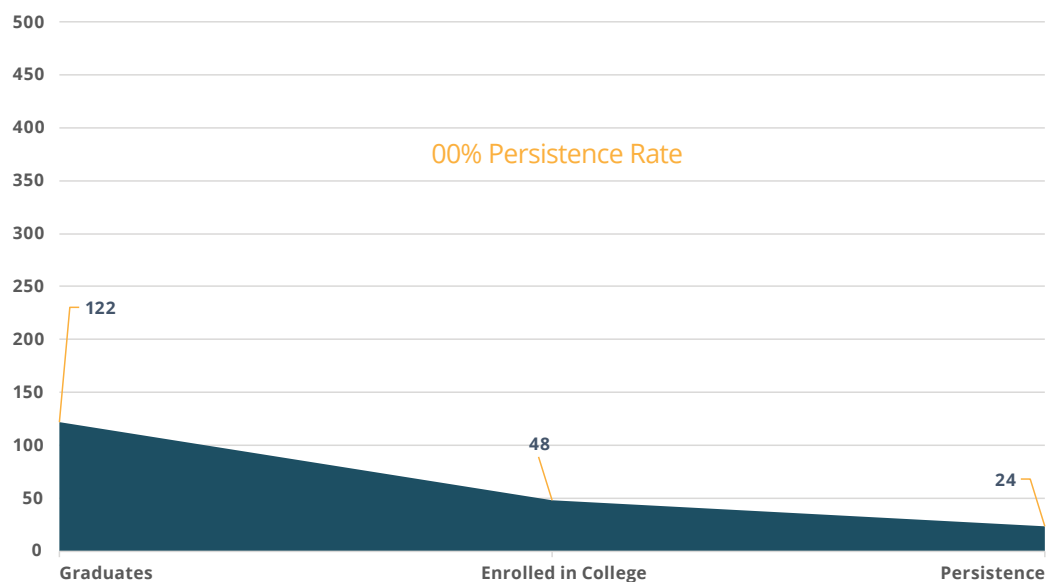


507
NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(2020-21 School Year)

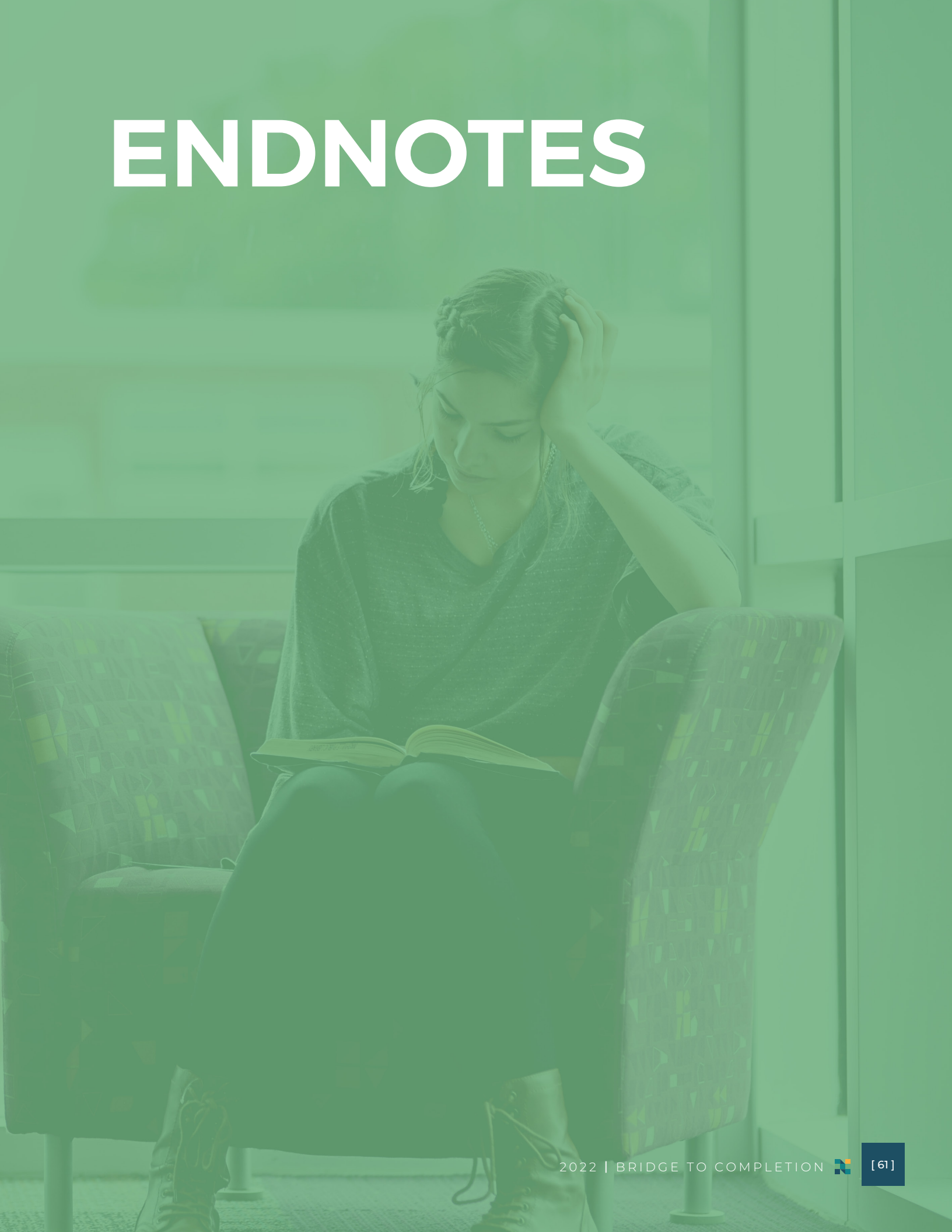
COLLEGE-GOING RATE OVER TIME



CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & PERSISTENCE



ENDNOTES



ENDNOTES

ⁱFAFSA Completion by High School and School District, 2021 Report, <https://studentaid.gov/data-center/student/application-volume/fafsa-completion-high-school>. Since FAFSA completion is a step in the admissions process, we use it to estimate the number intending to enroll in college.

ⁱⁱCalculation to estimate melt: 2021 MNPS CGR/2021 FAFSAs submitted by May 31, 2021.

ⁱⁱⁱCollege-going Rate data, National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker for High Schools provided by MNPS, data pulled 12/13/21

^{iv}The 2020 Bridge report estimated 2019 persistence by basing its estimate on the only available data that had been released at the time, the top 25 institutions where students enrolled. This most likely excluded a high percentage of private and out-of-state institutions where the likelihood of persistence is much higher. Similar to what happened nationally, MNPS experienced declines in community college students more than at 4 year institutions. NSC Student Tracker Top 25 Institutions MNPS data pulled 12/30/20

^vNSC Student Tracker data provided by MNPS 12/13/21

^{vi}Data on 9th grade students provided by MNPS. Data on high school graduation provided by Tennessean article on TDOE Report Card <https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/education/2021/11/30/tennessee-graduation-rate-drops-second-year-row-amid-pandemic/8744468002/>, 11/30/21. Data on college enrollment, persistence and completion from NSC Student Tracker data pulled 12/13/21

^{vii}2020 National Student Clearinghouse, MNPS Student Tracker Report

^{viii}College enrollment data is time sensitive and immediate enrollment numbers can occur at any time in the year post graduation. To accurately measure CGR, data is often pulled twice – in October and April of an academic year. Thus the reason for changing numbers. The 2% increase reflects more students going in the spring semester and is captured in the 2021 National Student Clearinghouse, MNPS Student Tracker Report

^{ix}2021 National Student Clearinghouse, MNPS Student Tracker Report, data pulled 12/13/21

^xTCAT data is identified by both the Tennessee Dept of Education (TDOE) and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC). At the time of this report, neither department had provided college-going data. In previous years, approximately 50 additional students immediately enrolled in a TCAT after graduation. The chart does not include any TCAT data from previous years in order to accurately compare the years.

^{xi}USA data taken from US Census data, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_302.10.asp, TN data provided by the 2021 THEC Higher Education Fact Book, https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/thec/bureau/research/other-research/factbook/Fact%20Book%202020-2021_Full%20Draft_Suppressed.pdf, MNPS data from the MNPS 2021 NSC Student Tracker Report, data pulled 12/13/21, High Minority/Low-income data pulled from NSC High School Benchmarks Report, Dec 2021, <https://nscresearchcenter.org/high-school-benchmarks/>

^{xii}Individual MNPS schools NSC Student Tracker Reports, data pulled 12/13/21

^{xiii}Black students 39.9%, Hispanic students 29.2%, Asian students 4.1%, White students 26.4%: TN State Report Card, data pulled, Jan 2022

^{xiv}Harper, J. (2013) "Nashville's New Nickname: Little Kurdistan." The Washington Times. February 23, 2013. Afghan refugees, <https://www.empowernashville.org/afghanistan/>

^{xv}Data on college enrollment by race and ethnicity from NSC provided by MNPS.

^{xvi}In 2015-16, the state of Tennessee's definition of economically disadvantaged changed in accordance with state law. Previously, Tennessee used eligibility for the National School Lunch Program as an indicator where the state now uses direct certification of benefits. Prior to the change, 75% of MNPS students were considered economically disadvantaged. Immediately after, the ED percentage dropped by nearly 20%. For federal purposes when the district reports on high school students being low-income, they can use a 1.6 multiplier to the Tennessee Department of Education's reported data which more reflects National School Lunch Program eligibility and is much higher. We found this most closely aligns with other measures of income status, including Estimated Family Contribution on the FAFSA and Pell grant eligibility, both considered standard markers of income status in higher education.

^{xvii}Manually calculated by TCASN, 2021 NSC disaggregated student data, data pulled 12/13/21

^{xviii}In the 2018 Bridge report, we analyzed TN Student Assistance Corporation FAFSA estimated family contribution (EFC) data. Using EFC as a measure, we could determine that 80% of students were Pell eligible and 60%+ students were what we call “full Pell,” eligible to receive the maximum Pell award.

^{xix}Manually calculated NSC disaggregated student data. Total number of ED students = 2,990. 1,063 are enrolled in college. Data pulled 12/13/21

^{xx}Manually calculated NSC disaggregated student data. Total number of ED community college students = 360. All community college students enrolled = 630. Of the NSCC part-time students (91), only 22 students are not ED.

^{xxi}2018 Bridge to Completion Report

^{xxii}TN Promise: An update on key evaluation metrics, TN State Comptroller Report, 2021, <https://comptroller.tn.gov/content/dam/cot/orea/advanced-search/2021/TNPromiseUpdate.pdf>

^{xxiii}TN Promise Evaluation, TN State Comptroller, 2020 <https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/research-and-education-accountability/publications/higher-education/content/tennessee-promise-evaluation.html>

^{xxiv}National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker, Top 25 Institutions attended by High School Class (2013-2020), data pulled by MNPS 12/30/20. Of the 88% of students identified as enrolled, they include all of the major institutions attended by MNPS students, including the top 4 community colleges (Nashville State, Volunteer State, Motlow State, and Columbia State). Of the 12% students not reported in the class of 2019, we believe they are most likely attending out-of-state undergraduate colleges and universities where 1-2 students may be attending.

^{xxv}NSC Student Tracker Report, data pulled 12/13/21. Data on persistence by institution type for similar schools uses data from NSC High School Benchmarks reports 2013-2019, publicly available on NSC’s website. Similar schools used are low-income high schools nationally, which have 50% or more students eligible for free and reduced price lunch.

^{xxvi}NSC Student Tracker Demographic Data provided by MNPS, data pulled 12/13/21

^{xxvii}NSC Student Tracker Six-year completion rate data provided by MNPS, data pulled 12/13/21

^{xxviii}2021 NSC Student Tracker, data pulled 12/13/21

^{xxix}2018 Bridge to Completion Report, p.25, <https://nashvillepef.org/bridge-to-completion/>

^{xxx}Nashville GRAD, <https://www.nsc.edu/admissions/nashville-grad>

^{xxxi}USDOE Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html>

^{xxxii}Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury, Office of Education Research and Accountability, 2020 and 2021, <https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/research-and-education-accountability/publications/higher-education/content/tennessee-promise-evaluation.html>

^{xxxiii}Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury, Office of Education Research and Accountability, 2020 and 2021, <https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/research-and-education-accountability/publications/higher-education/content/tennessee-promise-evaluation.html>

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