

**STATE OF IOWA**

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**POSTSECONDARY  
READINESS REPORTS**

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**SUMMARY 2021**

# SUMMARY 2021

This document represents a summary of statewide findings from the Iowa Postsecondary Readiness Reports. The PRRs provide Iowans information on postsecondary enrollment patterns, remedial course-taking rates, and postsecondary retention and award rates that can be connected to every public high school in Iowa. The Postsecondary Readiness Reports connect data from the Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Board of Regents. Reports by school are available at the following website: (<https://educateiowa.gov/postsecondaryreadiness>).

The PRRs provide a statewide portrait of Iowa high school graduate readiness for postsecondary education in a variety of areas including arts, sciences, engineering, or workforce-bound career and technical education programs. The reports provide local results to help guide Iowa school improvement.

## KEY FINDINGS

- 57.9 percent of Class of 2020 Iowa public high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary education in the fall immediately following high school graduation. This is a drop of 4.2 percentage points from the Class of 2019's enrollment rate of 62.1 percent, a drop impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 47.7 percent of high school graduates of the class of 2014 earned some type of postsecondary award within six years of high school graduation.

## POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT

**57.9** percent of Class of 2020 Iowa public high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary education in the fall immediately following high school graduation. This is a drop of 4.2 percentage points from the Class of 2019's enrollment rate of 62.1 percent, a drop impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This decline is in-line with national trends reported by National Student Clearinghouse,

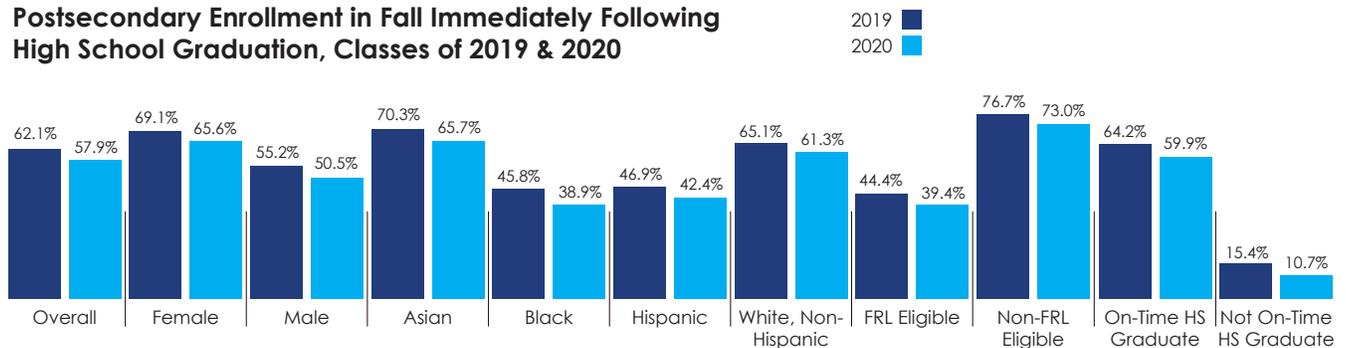
which reported a 4.0 percentage point drop between the Class of 2019 and the Class of 2020 (from 60.5% to 56.5%, respectively)\*.

Gaps exist in enrollment rates for students from diverse backgrounds and students who face economic challenges. These student groups also experienced larger enrollment declines than their peers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL), students whose first language is not English, students

in special education, and black and Hispanic students enroll in postsecondary institutions at a lower rate than the state average.

There is also a large gap in enrollment rates between students who graduate from high school on-time and those who do not. While it defaults to showing data for all students, the PRR allows the filtering of outcomes by on-time high school graduation status across all reports.

### Postsecondary Enrollment in Fall Immediately Following High School Graduation, Classes of 2019 & 2020



\*National Student Clearinghouse. (March 2021). High School Benchmarks: COVID-19 Special Analysis Update & Correction. Retrieved from [https://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021\\_HSBenchmarksCovidReport.pdf](https://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021_HSBenchmarksCovidReport.pdf)

## REMEDIAL COURSEWORK

The Postsecondary Readiness Reports provide information about the preparedness of Iowa high school students in the key content areas of English and mathematics. Students who are not ready for college-level coursework are usually placed into remedial classes (called “developmental courses” at colleges and universities). The Iowa Department of Education defines remedial classes as those that fall below the 100 level (e.g., Math 50). However, the process for placing students into remedial classes varies by college. For example, at Iowa’s public universities, remedial math is required if a placement test indicates a student is not ready for college-

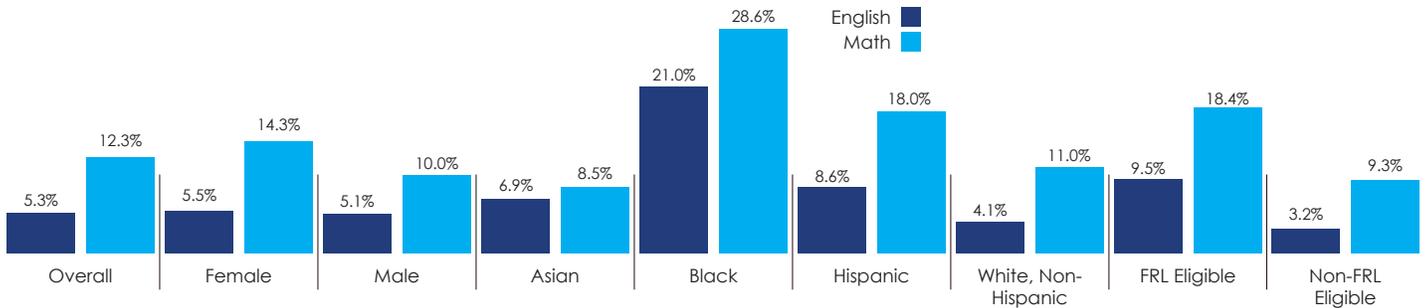
level algebra. Many community colleges also use placement tests, but they may or may not require students to take remedial classes. Regardless of placement test availability or their results, students may enroll in remedial classes at will. Remedial class credits do not count toward a degree and usually must be completed prior to attempting college-level coursework.

The Postsecondary Readiness Reports provide rates at which students enroll in remedial math and/or English courses in the first year after high school graduation. Remedial course-taking data in this report are shown only for students who attended an Iowa public

community college or university. Data are not available for students who attend a postsecondary institution outside of Iowa or private in-state higher education institutions.

**Note:** Some Iowa community colleges are implementing alternative methods of remediation, such as co-requisite courses or supplemental instruction where support is integrated into a regular class and not taken as a separate course. In addition, some Iowa high schools are offering math or writing transitional coursework for high school seniors to reduce the need for remediation at the community colleges. These schools are creating articulation agreements with community colleges that align high school and college coursework, assess readiness with diagnostic tests, and create interventions through meaningful course taking. Together, these new delivery models could impact developmental rates in areas where they are in place.

### Iowa Public HS Graduates Who Enrolled in an Iowa Public College and Took Remedial Classes Within 1 Year of HS Graduation



\*Data based on the average of the Classes of 2017-2019

## POSTSECONDARY RETENTION AND AWARDS

The PRRs also provide postsecondary enrollment and award trends beyond the first year after high school graduation. The figure to the right shows 47.7 percent of Iowa students from the class of 2014 received a postsecondary award within six years after graduation. For each year after high school graduation, every student is grouped into one of the categories defined below:

- **No Enrollment Found:** Students who did not match any postsecondary enrollment or receive any postsecondary award in the given year or previous years
- **No Longer Enrolled, No Award:** Students who enrolled in a previous year, but not in the given year and have received no award
- **Enrolled:** Students who enrolled in the given year
- **Award:** Students who received any postsecondary award (i.e., degree, certificate, diploma, etc.) in the given year or a previous year

