



EDUCATION



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Between 1995 and 2000, the supply of childcare, Head Start, and Pre-Kindergarten At-Risk program slots outpaced the population growth of zero-to-four year-olds. Despite this increase, the supply is only enough to enroll one out of three children.

In kindergarten through twelfth grades, there is a wide disparity in school district spending and academic achievement across the Chicago region. Large funding discrepancies influence, in part, the distribution of highly trained teachers across school districts, while districts with higher concentrations of low-income students tend to have lower achievement rates on standardized tests.



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SCHOOL READINESS



GOAL:

INFANTS AND TODDLERS IN ALL COMMUNITIES WILL BE PREPARED TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL.



INDICATOR 9-1 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Why Is This Important?

Research by educational experts shows that learning begins at birth, but access to our system of public education begins at the age of five for many children. The supply of educational programs for children between the ages of zero-to-four years old is an indicator of the Chicago region's commitment to promote access to quality educational opportunities for its youngest residents regardless of income.

The number of pre-school programs is also a proxy of our region's long-term economic attractiveness because employers depend on a workforce supply that is abundant, skilled, and educated. There are, of course, inequities in the quality of early care and education. Some programs are held to high standards for curriculum and/or teacher certification while others are not evaluated at all on these criteria.

How Is the Chicago Region Performing?

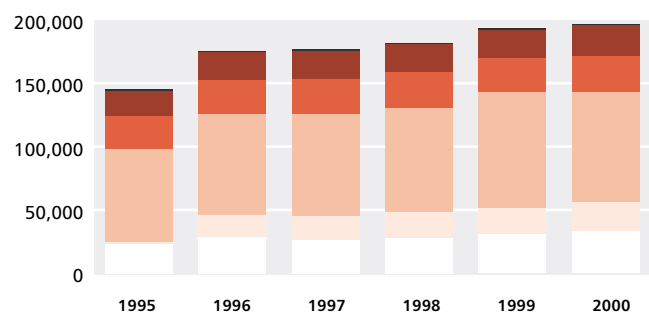
Between 1995 and 2000, the supply of childcare, Head Start, and Pre-Kindergarten At-Risk program slots in the Chicago region grew at a 4% annual rate, while the population of zero-to-four year olds, the principal recipients of these programs, dropped six-tenths of one percent (.6%) per year.

In 1995, the region's supply was sufficient to enroll one out of four children in this age group. By 2000, despite the increase in supply, the region could enroll only one out three children.

Between 1995 and 2000, the share of children potentially served by early childhood program slots increased in every country. Overall, Lake County had enough early childhood program slots for 36% of its residents between the ages of zero and 4 years old in 2000. Cook and DuPage counties were next with 33%, followed by Kane County (30%), McHenry County (29%), and Will County (23%).

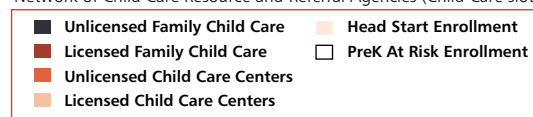
The Illinois State Board of Education Pre-Kindergarten program, a state-funded voluntary program designed for children who are deemed at risk of academic failure, experienced a 6% annual increase in enrollment between 1995 and 2000. Sixty percent of the region's elementary school districts offer this program, a 15% increase since 1995.

CHILD CARE, HEAD START AND PRE-K SLOTS GROW SLOWLY

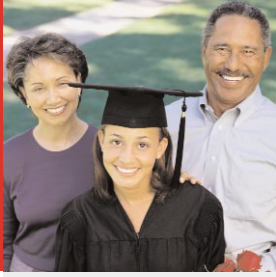


Enrollment in Head Start and Pre-K At-Risk Programs, and available day-time child care slots including family child care (home-based). Sum of all positions as a percentage of population 0 to 4 years.

Sources: Illinois State Board of Education (Pre-K At-Risk), U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Region V (Head Start), and Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (Child Care slots)



EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

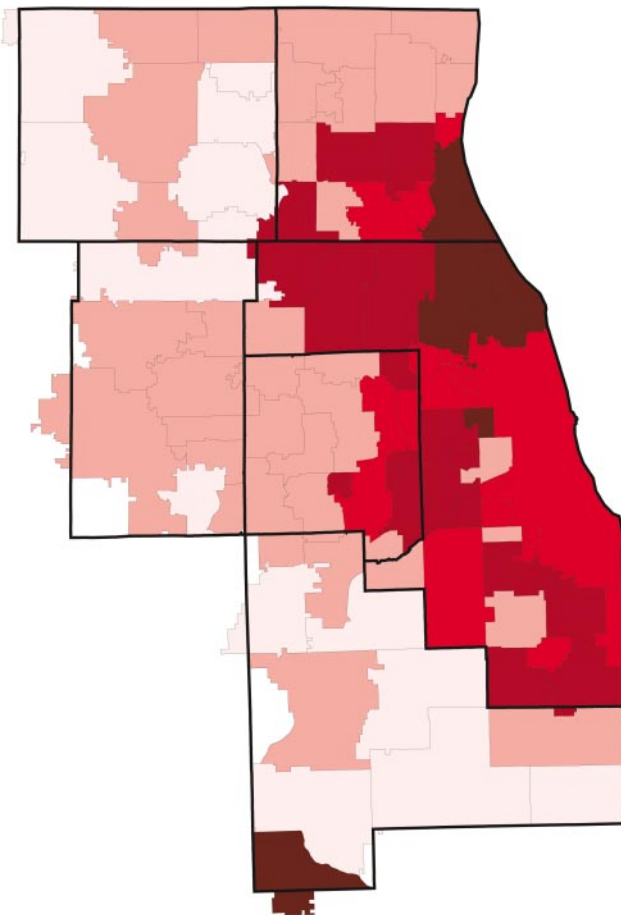


GOAL:

RESIDENTS WILL GAIN THE KNOWLEDGE AND LIFE SKILLS REQUIRED TO SURVIVE IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

INDICATOR 10-1. EDUCATION SPENDING

EDUCATION EXPENDITURES UNEQUAL IN THE REGION



Operating Expenditure Per Pupil in Chicago Area Unified and High School Districts, 2000-2001



Why Is This Important?

Per pupil spending is an indicator of the Chicago region's commitment to provide its children with the knowledge and life skills necessary to improve their social and economic mobility. These expenditures vary across the region, raising social equity issues particularly when there is some correlation between spending and academic achievement.

Variations in per pupil spending alone do not explain the wide divergence in academic achievement among public schools. Instead, education spending is a necessary element in a complex formula that also includes: home and family factors, teacher qualifications, class size, personal responsibility, health and nutritional care, parental involvement, community support, quality school buildings and supplies, and skilled administrators.

How Is the Chicago Region Performing?

Significant per pupil spending disparities exist among high school and unified school districts across the Chicago region. High spending North Shore school districts like New Trier in Cook County (\$10,566 per pupil,) and Township High School 113 in Lake County (\$13,366 per pupil) outpaced the City of Chicago (\$8,074) by at least 31% in 2000. The median spending per pupil in high school and unified school districts in the Chicago region was \$9,448 in 2000.

Since property taxes are the primary source of public school funding in Illinois, spending inequity exists in



part because of a wide variation in assessed property values. Regional differences in property values can translate into large discrepancies in the amount of resources a community can commit to education. For example, the tax base available for education in one portion of the North Shore (Roundout Elementary School District #72) is over 38 times higher than the tax base in Harvey, located in southern Cook County.

This means that homeowners living in school districts like Harvey have to tax themselves at a higher rate just to maintain minimal levels of spending for schools. In 2000, for instance, the top 20 school districts with the highest per pupil spending tax themselves at only \$1.64 per \$100 of assessed value for education, while the bottom 20 districts, including Harvey, had to tax themselves at \$4.85 per \$100 of assessed value.

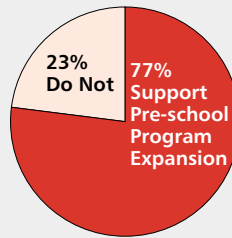
This indicator also suggests that revenue capacity influences the distribution of trained teachers in public education. In 2000, 63% of public school teachers employed by the region's school districts in the top-third of spending per pupil held at least a master's degree. Alternatively, less than half the teachers employed by school districts in the bottom two-thirds held advanced degrees.

The percentage of teachers with advanced degrees is one measure of a school district's ability to attract and retain a dedicated and skilled faculty. The lower percentage of teachers with advanced degrees in districts with low levels of per pupil spending may have been reflected in the Chicago Sun-Times analysis of the testing of more than 67,000 Illinois teachers taking the Basic Skills and subject matter tests between 1998 and 2001.

The newspaper reported that students in the state's highest-poverty, highest-minority, and lowest-performing schools are about five times more likely to be taught by teachers who failed at least one basic certification test than other students. Students in Chicago public schools were three and one-half times more likely than suburban students to encounter teachers who failed at least one certification test. Against a statewide average of less than 8 percent, the newspaper found almost 20 percent or more of the teachers in five districts had failed at least one of the tests. Four of the five

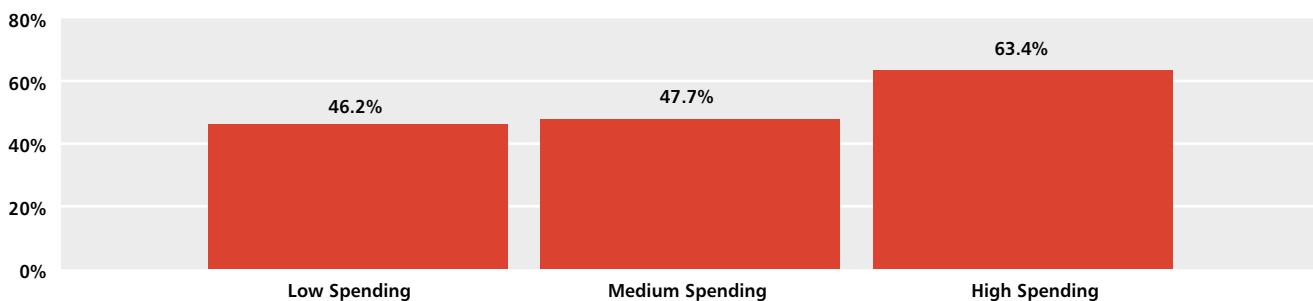
districts – Cicero, Chicago, Ford Heights and Harvey – are in our six-county region.

WHAT PEOPLE IN THE REGION ARE SAYING...



77% of the residents surveyed would prefer a state officeholder who would expand pre-school programs supported by public money so all children under six could access early learning over an officeholder who would maintain current standards so that only the neediest can qualify for such programs.

HIGHER SPENDING SCHOOL DISTRICTS ATTRACT MORE TEACHERS WITH ADVANCED DEGREES



Percentage of teachers with a masters degree, by school district operating expenditure per pupil category. Source: Illinois State Board of Education

INDICATOR 10-2. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Why is this Important?

This indicator measures student progress in meeting state educational standards. A region that cannot prepare its students for productive lives and good jobs will find itself in decline. Businesses will not invest where the workforce is ill-prepared and families will not be attracted to an area where the schools cannot provide a good education.

How is the Chicago Region Performing?

The best indicators of public school students' performance are the Illinois State Achievement Tests (ISAT), given statewide to elementary students since 1999, and the Prairie State Achievement Test (Prairie State), given statewide to 11th graders beginning in 2001. Both are base line tests that evaluate what students should know at different grade levels.

The most recent ISAT results indicate that for 8th graders attending school within the 6-county region, excluding the City of Chicago, 72% met or exceeded state standards for reading in 2001. Thus, 28% of those students failed to meet state standards.

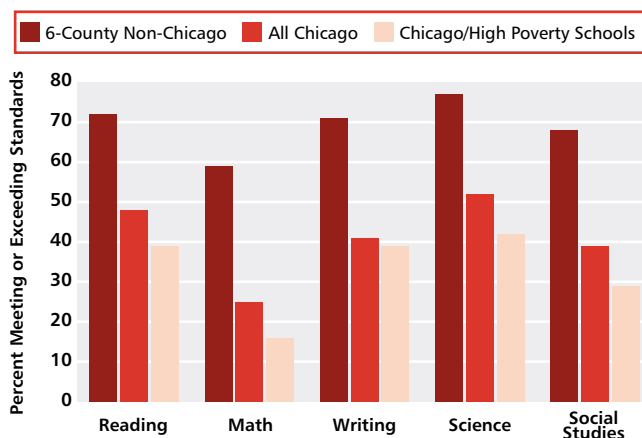
In the Chicago Public Schools, 48% of 8th graders met or exceeded ISAT reading standards. In the 300 City of Chicago schools where 90% to 100% of the students are eligible for the school lunch program, only 39% of students met or exceeded ISAT reading standards on average.

With respect to math performance, 59% of the 8th graders in the 6-county area (outside of Chicago) met or exceeded ISAT standards. Twenty-five percent of the City of Chicago students met or exceeded those standards. On average, only 16% of the City of Chicago students at schools with 90% to 100% poverty levels met or exceeded standards.

The Prairie State test results measure how well the State's 11th graders perform. In reading, for example, 63% of 11th graders from regional schools other than the City of Chicago met or exceeded the state reading standards. Thirty-six percent of students from the City of Chicago met or exceeded Prairie State reading standards. On average, only 18% of the students from City schools with 90% to 100% poverty levels met or exceeded those standards.

Because 11th graders have reached or passed the age at which they may lawfully drop out of school, the

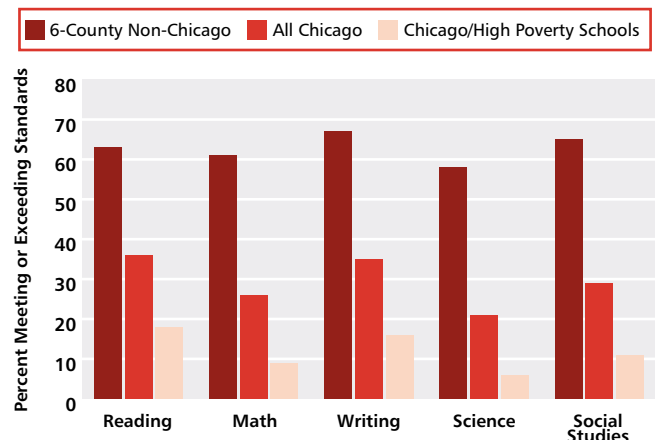
SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



This graph shows eighth graders meeting or exceeding state reading, math and writing standards and seventh graders meeting or exceeding science and social studies standards on the ISAT.

Source: The Civic Committee of The, Commercial Club of Chicago.

ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



This graph shows eleventh graders meeting or exceeding state standards on the State Achievement Test.

Source: The Civic Committee of The Commercial Club of Chicago.



Prairie State results only measure the performance of those students that have chosen to stay in school. About one third of the students entering high school in Chicago drop out before graduation.

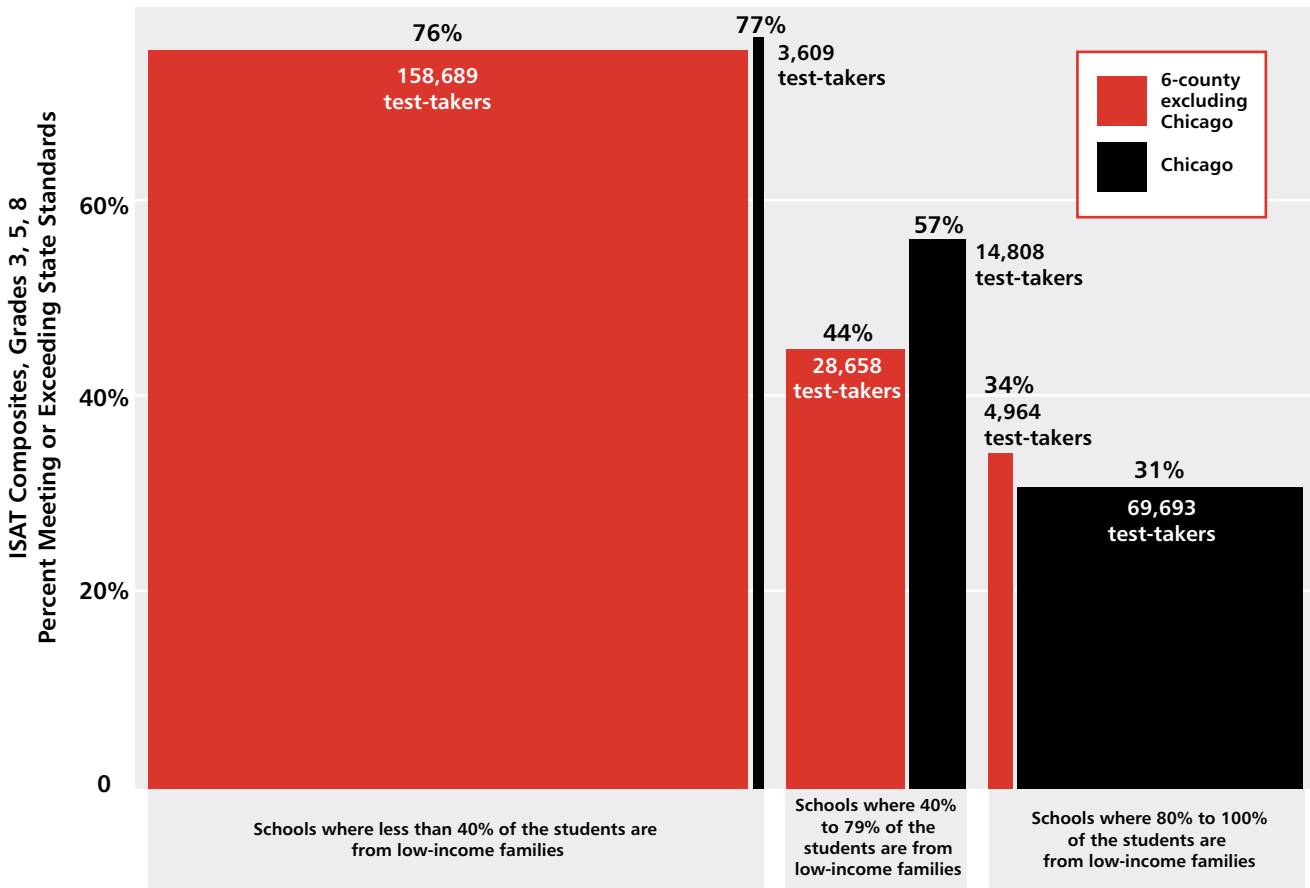
When looking at overall averages, test results from Chicago schools are not as high as those from the remainder of schools in the 6-county region. However, when the data are disaggregated by income levels, an entirely different story emerges. In schools with comparable levels of poverty, average scores for students in the City of Chicago are about the same or better than average scores for students in the rest of the region.

For example, when looking at composite ISAT scores for math and reading at grades 3, 5, and 8, in schools where between 40% and 80% of the children are

eligible for the school lunch program, 57% of the students from the City of Chicago met or exceeded state standards compared to 44% in the remainder of the region. In schools with high concentrations of poverty, where 80% to 100% of the students are eligible for school lunch programs, the Chicago performance is slightly less than the performance of comparable schools in the suburbs, 31% vs. 34%.

In the State of Illinois as a whole, only about 30% of public school students qualify for free or reduced price school lunch programs. In the City of Chicago, 86% of students qualify for these programs. Across the state and region, school performance and student drop-out rates are strongly correlated with family income levels. There is, however, significant performance variation among individual schools within every income range.

CITY/SUBURBAN SCHOOLS WITH HIGH POVERTY LEVELS HAVE LOWER SCORES



The column widths in each of the three categories graphically represent the number of student test-takers in each category. This includes 192,311 from 1,134 schools in the 6-county region excluding the City of Chicago and 88,110 test-takers from 491 schools in Chicago. Students are defined as "low-income" if they qualify for free or reduced price lunch.

Source: The Civic Committee of The Commercial Club of Chicago





INDICATOR 10-3. GRADUATION RATE

Why Is This Important?

Graduation rates for the Chicago region are a leading indicator of our region’s economic attractiveness.

Employers need a continuous supply of educated and trained employees.

It is also a measure of an individual’s access to opportunity because failure to complete high school is a significant barrier to a secure job with advancement potential.

How Is the Chicago Region Performing?

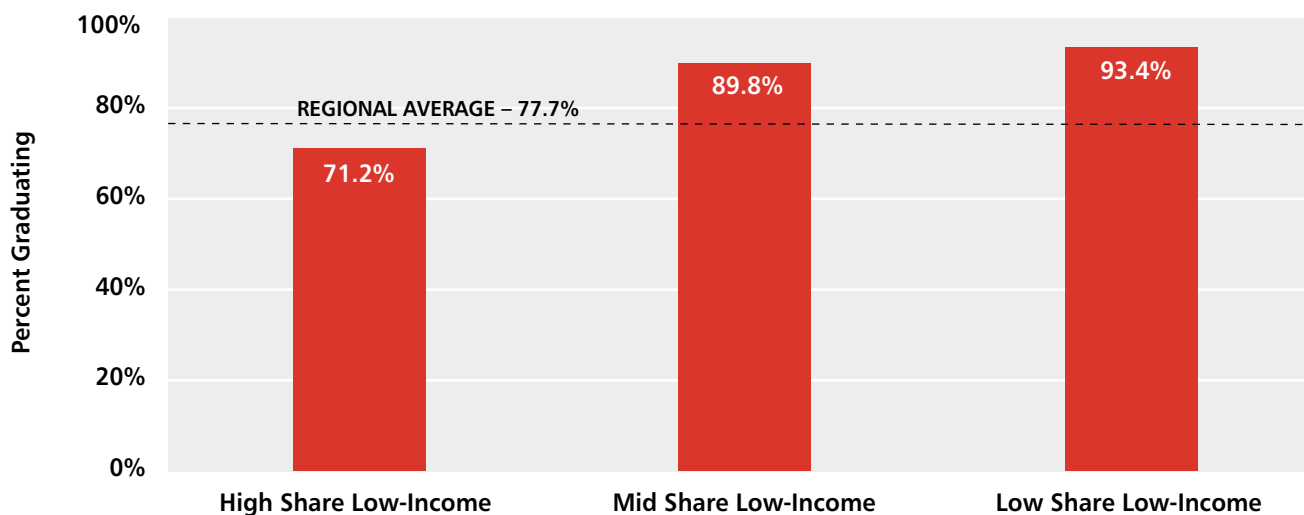
Nearly 78% of public high school students that entered high school in 1997 in the Chicago region graduated with their class in 2001, up three-tenths of one percent

(.3%) from 2000. DuPage County reported the highest graduation rate at 92%, while Cook County had the lowest rate at 72%. Nationally, the graduation rate was 74% in 1998, the last year for which data is available.

There is a positive correlation between household income levels and school district graduation rates in the Chicago region: rates rise as the district’s share of low-income households falls.

In 2001, school districts serving a low share of students from low-income households had a 22% higher graduation rate than schools with a relatively high share of students from low-income households.

DISTRICTS WITH MORE POOR STUDENTS HAVE LOWER GRADUATION RATES



Percentage of entering ninth grade students who graduate high school, by income group, in 2001. Low-income students are defined as students in families receiving public aid, or students eligible for free or reduced price lunch.

Source: Illinois State Board of Education

**INDICATOR 10-4.
ADVANCED DEGREES**

Why Is This Important?

The percentage of 25-29 year olds in the Chicago region who have earned an Associate’s degree or higher is a measure of the region’s economic attractiveness to employers that demand an educated and skilled workforce.

Education creates choice for individuals and choice can improve their quality of life. An estimated 40% of new jobs created through 2008 in the Chicago region will require at least an Associate’s degree. Nationally, the estimated share of new jobs requiring at least an Associate’s degree is 37%.

Educational attainment is also a proxy indicator of our region’s support for lifelong learning.

How Is the Chicago Region Performing?

The share of 25- to 29-year-olds in the Chicago region that held at least an Associate’s-level degree was 42% for the 1999-2001 average, down from its high of 47% in 1997. The region’s share is higher than the national average of 37%, but the gap is narrowing.

Educational attainment levels vary greatly by ethnicity. Eighty percent of Asian or Pacific Islanders between 25 and 29 years old held at least an Associate’s degree for the 1999-2001 average, compared to 54% of whites, 25% of African-Americans, and 11% of Latinos in that age group.

ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE ACHIEVEMENT GAPS PERSIST



Share of Chicago region residents ages 25-29 with educational attainment level at or above an Associate's degree, 1999-2001 three year average.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, March 1999-2001.