

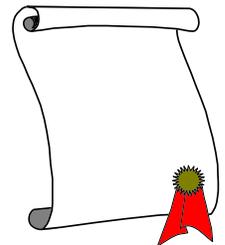
Lit Scan

Facts & Figures from the Colorado Literacy Research Initiative

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GED GRADUATES EQUAL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES IN ENTRANCE TEST SCORES & COLLEGE GPA'S --BUT STOP SHORT OF BACHELOR'S DEGREES



How do high school graduates and GED graduates perform differently in higher education? Data from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's Student Information System answers this question. This study employs data on over 1200 GED graduates and a sample of over 1200 high school graduates who first enrolled at a Colorado institution of higher education in 1986. Further data on their academic careers from Fall 1986 through Spring 1995 is included.



GED Graduates Excel In Language Skills

GED graduates appear to be more testwise than their high school graduate counterparts. GED students do better overall on the SAT tests, because they excel in the verbal test.

- GED graduates earned higher average composite SAT scores than their high school counterparts (982 vs. 957).
- High school graduates excelled over their GED counterparts in the math test (514 vs. 498), but GED graduates excelled over their high school counterparts in the verbal test (485 vs. 443).

GED Graduates Motivated to Enroll

GED graduates appear to be more motivated students than their high school counterparts, enrolling in classes more often in the second and third years of their academic careers.



- High school and GED graduates are equally likely to be enrolled the first year (30 percent).
- GED graduates are more likely than high school graduates to be enrolled the second and third years (24 vs. 15 percent).
- High school graduates are more likely than GED graduates to be enrolled in subsequent years (e.g., 12 vs. 10 percent).



Both Groups Earn Nearly Equal Grade Point Averages

GED graduates hold their own with high school graduates, earning equally high grade point averages at Colorado institutions of higher education.

- There is virtually no difference between the grade point averages of high school graduates and GED graduates at Colorado institutions of higher education (mean 2.9, median 3.0).
- This relationship holds up throughout the undergraduate careers of these students. GED graduates who pursue advanced degrees earn negligibly lower GPAs than their high school graduate counterparts, but the difference is insignificant (e.g., 3.0 vs. 3.1).

GED Graduates Earn Fewer Degrees

Despite being equally well equipped as they enter higher education and despite earning comparably high grade point averages, GED graduates are less likely than high school graduates to earn college degrees and more likely to stop with specialized associate's degrees (rather than bachelor's degrees).

- Three out of 10 high school graduates earn a degree.
- Two out of 10 GED graduates earn a degree.
- High school graduates tend to earn bachelor's degrees, while GED graduates tend to earn specialized associate's degrees.

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