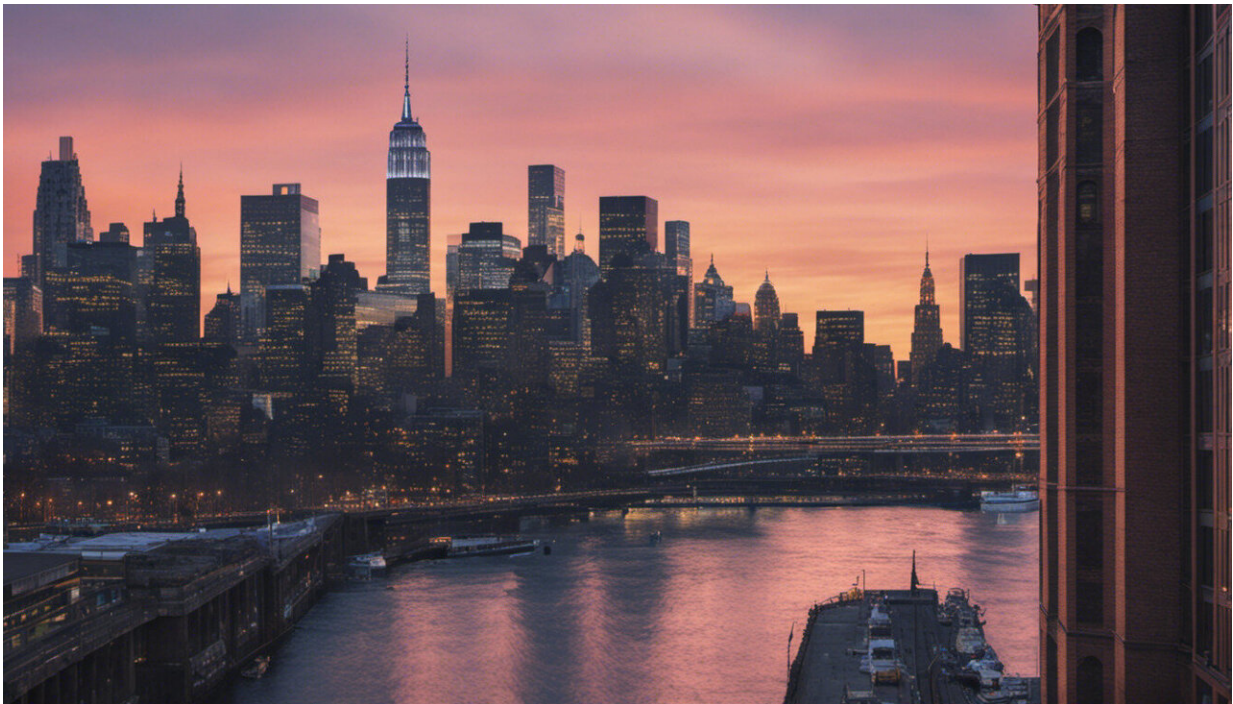


# New report explores NYC students' pathways into and through college

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Credit: AI-generated image ([disclaimer](#))

A new report from the Research Alliance for New York City Schools gives a first look at patterns of college enrollment, persistence, and completion for New York City high school students.

"It is rare to be able to track students' trajectories through high school

and post-secondary education," said James J. Kemple, executive director of the Research Alliance. "This is the first such study focused on New York City, and it has revealed some encouraging signs, as well as areas in need of greater attention. The findings provide a strong foundation for learning more about the barriers that limit some students' [college](#) access and success."

New York City's progress in reducing high school dropout rates and boosting graduation rates is well documented. But with a [high school diploma](#) no longer guaranteeing job opportunities, policymakers, educators, and families are increasingly focused on helping students reach and succeed in college. The new report from the Research Alliance examines pathways into and through college and explores factors that may shape students' post-secondary outcomes.

Key findings of the study include:

- New York City's high school graduation rates have improved substantially, with 70 percent of students who entered high school in 2008 graduating within four years, up from 58 percent for those starting high school in 2002. Concurrently, rates of immediate [college enrollment](#) have also gone up: 45 percent of students who entered high school in 2008 enrolled in a two- or four-year college right after graduation, up from 35 percent among those starting high school in 2002.
- Students attending two-year colleges, particularly CUNY community colleges, have driven the growth in college enrollment. This finding is consistent with national trends showing increasing proportions of [high school graduates](#) attending community colleges.
- While academically prepared students (those who earned the more rigorous Advanced Regents diploma) were significantly more likely to enroll in college, one in five still didn't pursue post-

secondary education right after graduation. This suggests that barriers other than academics, such as cost and trouble navigating the system, may interfere with college enrollment, even for the strongest students.

- Few college-going students - just 36 percent of those who started college in 2006 - earned a two- or four-year degree within four years. The researchers observed slow and steady attrition from college across eight semesters, suggesting that students need support throughout college, not just early on. Students with stronger high school credentials and those at four-year colleges (particularly selective colleges) were more likely to stay enrolled and complete college on time.

"The findings suggest that both high school preparation and supports offered in college make a difference in college outcomes," said Vanessa Coca, a research fellow at the Research Alliance and the report's author. "We're eager to learn more about the conditions and experiences that shape students' access to and success in college."

The researchers stress that the report is an initial look at college enrollment and completion among New York City [high school students](#). The findings raise many important questions, which the Research Alliance plans to address in future studies.

**More information:** [steinhardt.nyu.edu/research\\_al...  
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Provided by New York University

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