

A PORTRAIT OF

NEW YORK CITY 2018

WELL-BEING IN THE FIVE BOROUGHES AND THE GREATER METRO AREA



EDUCATION IN NEW YORK CITY

Consider this fact: New York City performs better than the country as a whole on the Education Index—5.45 compared with 5.17 (out of 10). But the city’s overall performance is split: a higher percentage of New York City adults hold bachelor’s and graduate degrees than adults nationally, but the city is also home to a larger share of adults who did not graduate high school, nearly one in five.

Education is one of three areas, along with health and standard of living, that make up the American Human Development Index, used to measure the well-being of New Yorkers in *A Portrait of New York City*. The Education Index is calculated using two indicators: school enrollment for children and young adults ages 3 to 24 and educational degree attainment for adults 25 and over.

Education is a means to a host of desirable ends. People with higher levels of education earn more and are less likely to be unemployed than those whose formal educations ended with high school; they are also concentrated in higher-paying occupations that tend to be more interesting and engaging and to offer better working conditions, greater societal respect, more autonomy, and more extensive benefits. Earnings move in lockstep with educational attainment, with bachelor’s degree holders earning about double, on average, what high school graduates earn, and those with professional degrees earning one and half times what college graduates take home.

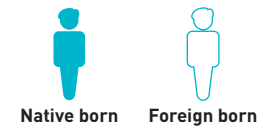
Education Index by BOROUGH in NYC

	EDUCATION INDEX	HIGHEST DEGREE ATTAINED				SCHOOL ENROLLMENT
		Less than high school	High school diploma	Bachelor's degree	Graduate degree	
NEW YORK CITY	5.45	19.1%	44.1%	21.7%	15.1%	78.6%
Manhattan	7.21	13.0	26.2	32.0	28.8	76.6
Staten Island	5.97	10.2	57.2	17.8	14.7	82.1
Brooklyn	5.31	19.4	45.7	21.0	13.9	78.7
Queens	5.10	19.5	49.2	20.3	11.0	79.6
Bronx	3.74	29.4	51.2	12.8	6.6	77.4

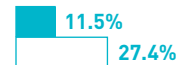
STRIKING FINDINGS IN EDUCATION FROM A PORTRAIT OF NEW YORK CITY

- **VARIATIONS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY:** White New Yorkers have the highest rates of bachelor's degree attainment and graduate degree attainment, followed by Asian New Yorkers, black New Yorkers, and Latino New Yorkers.
- **SOCIAL CAPITAL IMPACTS:** More socioeconomically disadvantaged Asian subgroups, such as less-educated Chinese and Vietnamese immigrants, benefit from the institutions, norms, achievement "mindset," and knowledge networks established by more affluent and settled Asian groups. The gap in degree attainment between black and white adults in New York City is a lingering modern-day manifestation of past discrimination as well as the result of present-day bias. The parents of today's black adults were denied access to a range of educational, employment, and residential options, limiting their educations and earnings, which in turn served to curtail their children's eventual educational outcomes.
- **ROLE OF IMMIGRATION:** 41.7 percent of Latino immigrants did not complete high school, compared to 24.1 percent of US-born Latino residents. Immigrants from Mexico are less likely to hold college degrees than the average adult living in Mexico or in the United States. Thus, their children start further down the education ladder and face a steeper climb. Mexico does not have the same sort of infrastructure of after-school and weekend programs that prepare students for specific exams and admissions tests that exist in many Asian countries, and thus did not import this model to the United States.
- **GEOGRAPHY MATTERS:** Three in every ten adults over the age of 25 in the Bronx lack a high school diploma, a basic requirement for nearly any job that pays a decent wage. In Manhattan, the rate is almost half, with 13 percent of adults over the age of 25 lacking a high school diploma.
- **OPPORTUNITY HOARDING:** One way that affluent parents keep their children from moving down the economic ladder is opportunity hoarding; four in ten people who were in the top fifth of the income distribution as children remain there as adults. Affluent parents are able to ensure that their children attend high-quality schools while also enrolling them in many stimulating extracurricular activities, opportunities that are commonly not available to lower-income students and parents.

Adults Without a High School Diploma



ALL



Asian



Black



Latino



White



POLICY LEVERS FOR CHANGE

- **SOCIETAL BENEFITS TO INVESTING IN EDUCATION:** Higher levels of educational attainment are associated with less crime, lower incarceration rates, and greater civic engagement, political participation, tolerance of difference, and support for the rights of others. Investing in high-quality early education yields a lifetime of benefits to children, their families, and society as a whole.
- **RETHINK SCHOOL CHOICE:** School choice has left many children behind, particularly students from low-income black and Latino neighborhoods in the Bronx and Central Brooklyn, in schools from which others have fled, and these children end up learning alongside others who share their socioeconomic disadvantages. The link between neighborhood conditions and school quality that school choice was supposed to break is still strong, and such children need the very best schools we as a society can provide them; today, they get the worst ones.

Click [here](#) to read *A Portrait of New York City 2018*. For more information, visit www.measureofamerica.org.