

# ***BUILDING A SYSTEM OF PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY***



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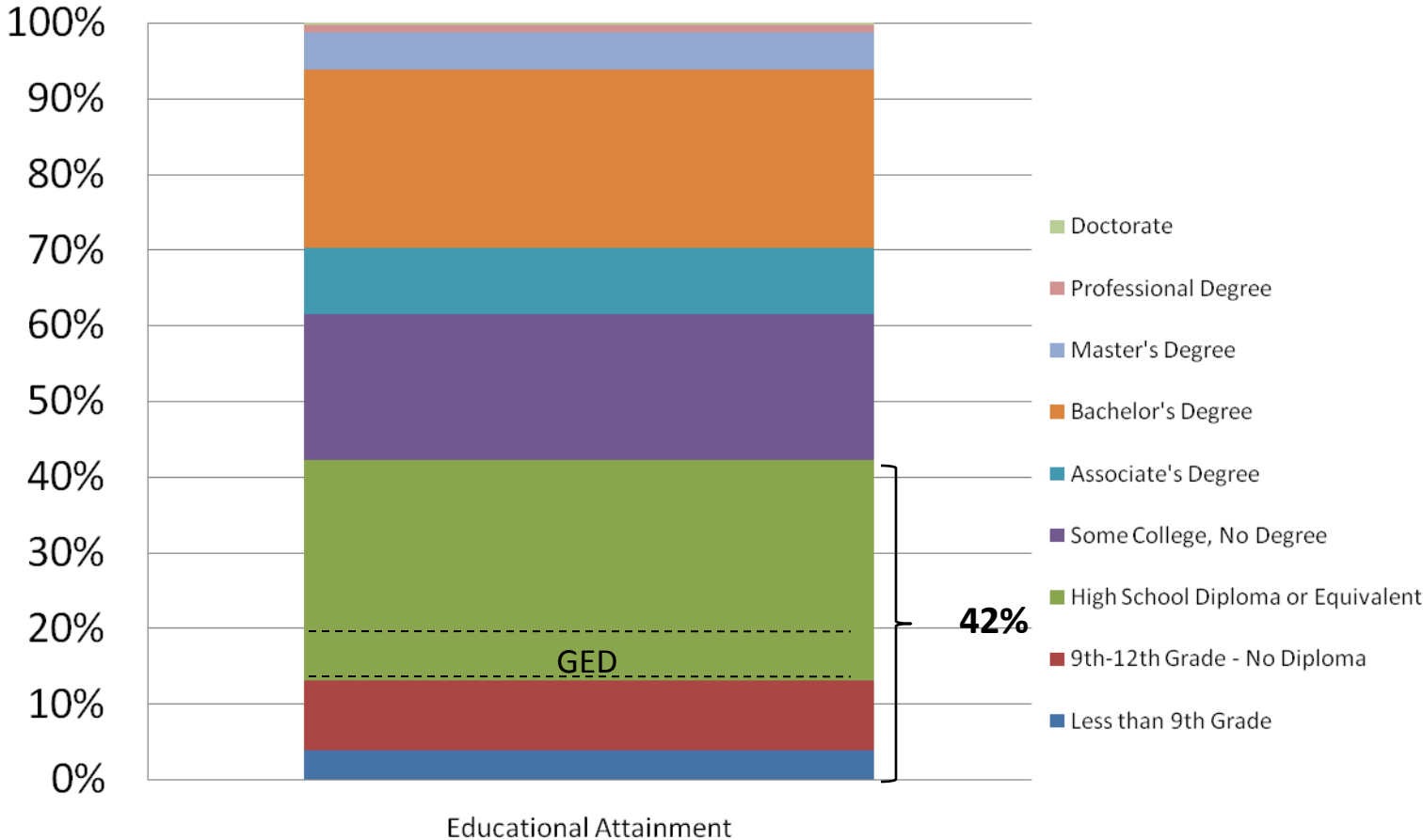
***June 21, 2011***

# What is the Challenge?

- The United States is increasingly failing to prepare young adults to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy
- We are falling behind in educational attainment AND youth employment

# 42% of 27-year Olds Have Only A High School Diploma or Less

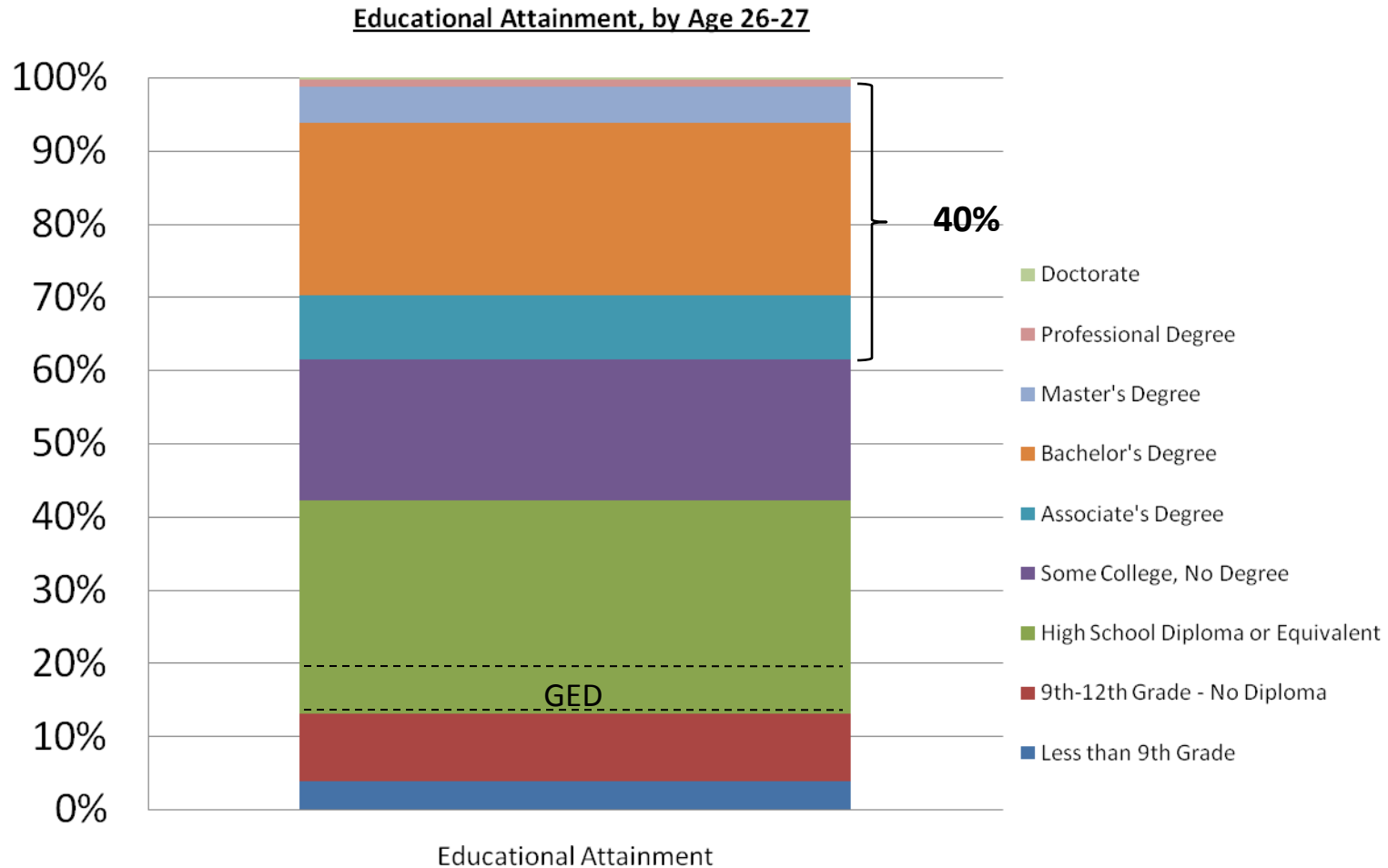
Educational Attainment, by Age 26-27



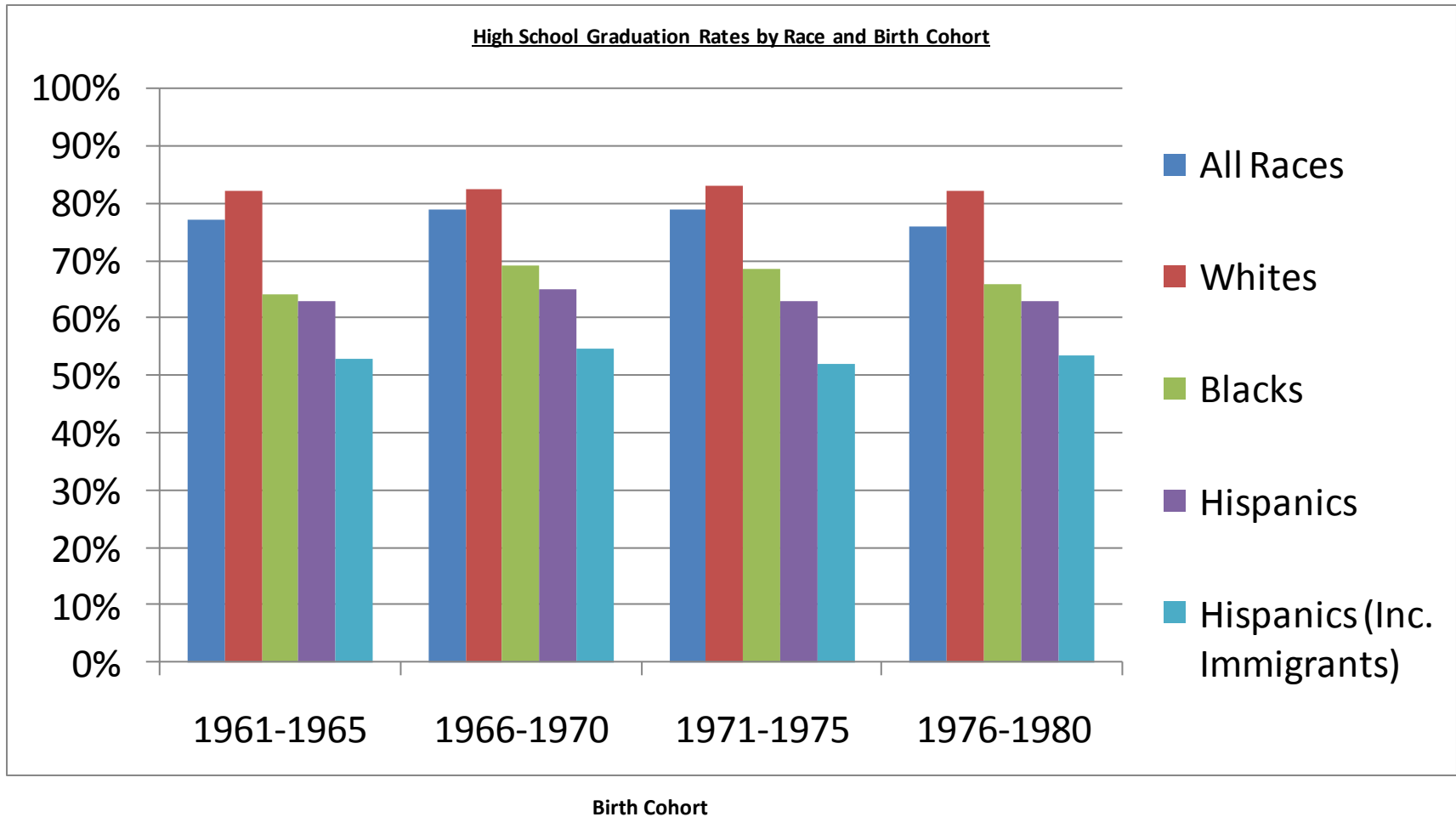
And ~6% of Those with Only a High School Degree Have a GED

Note: Represents data collected in surveys between 2006-2008; GED is approximation based on data from GED Testing Program  
 Source: US Census - Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2006-2008; GED Testing Program

# About 40% of 27-Year Olds Have Earned an AA Degree or Higher



# Despite decades of Reforms, High School Graduation Rates Have Not Changed Significantly Over Time



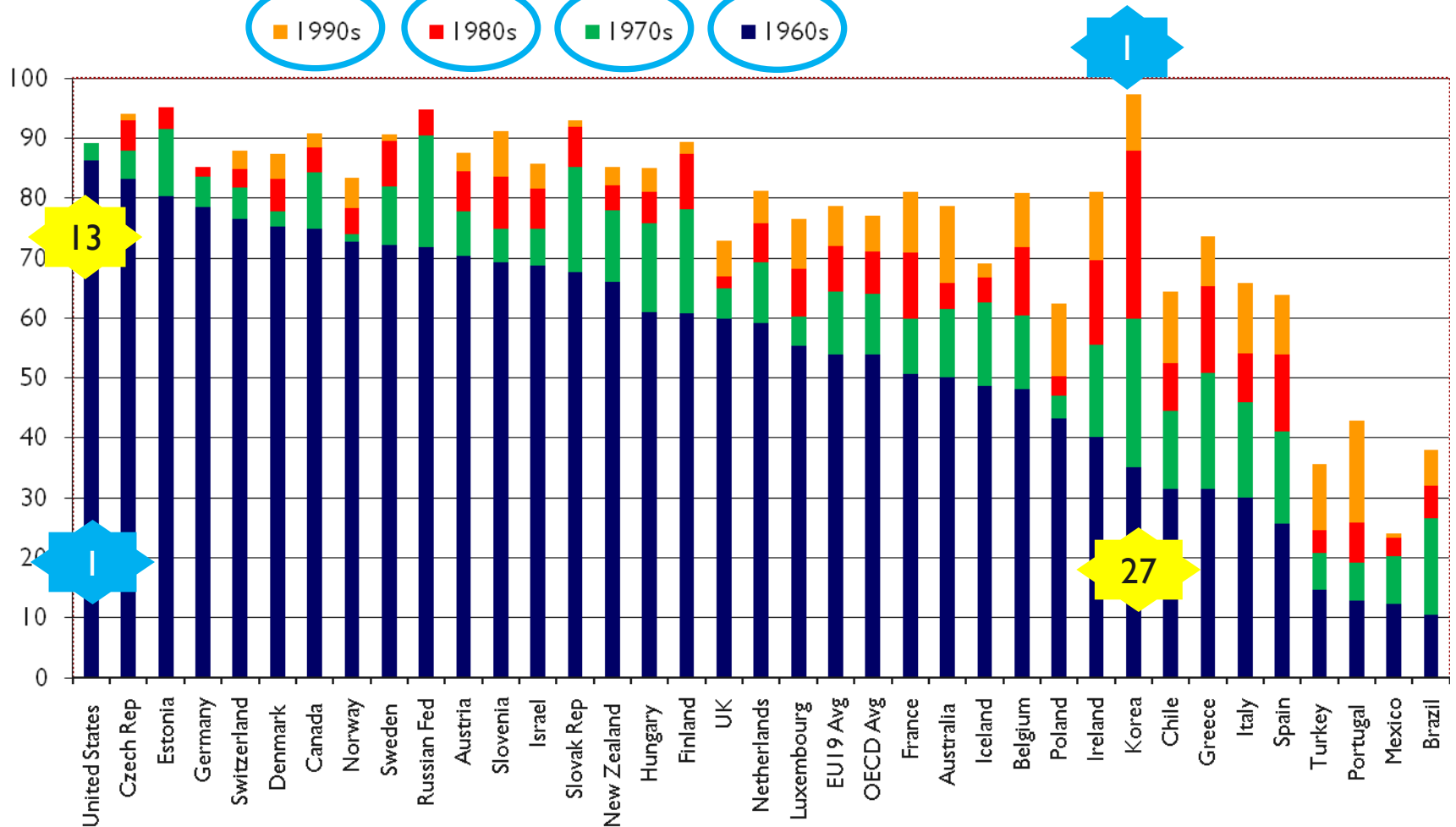
Note: Does not include GED recipients. Unless indicated, does not include recent immigrants. Rates are for age group of 20-24 or 25-29 dependant on their age at the time of census

Source: Heckman and LaFontaine, "The American High School Graduation Rate: Trends and Levels" (2007); USCensus IPUMS

**As a result, while the U.S. once  
led the world in high school  
graduation rates, we now rank  
13<sup>th</sup>**

# School completion: Dramatic change in global skill supply

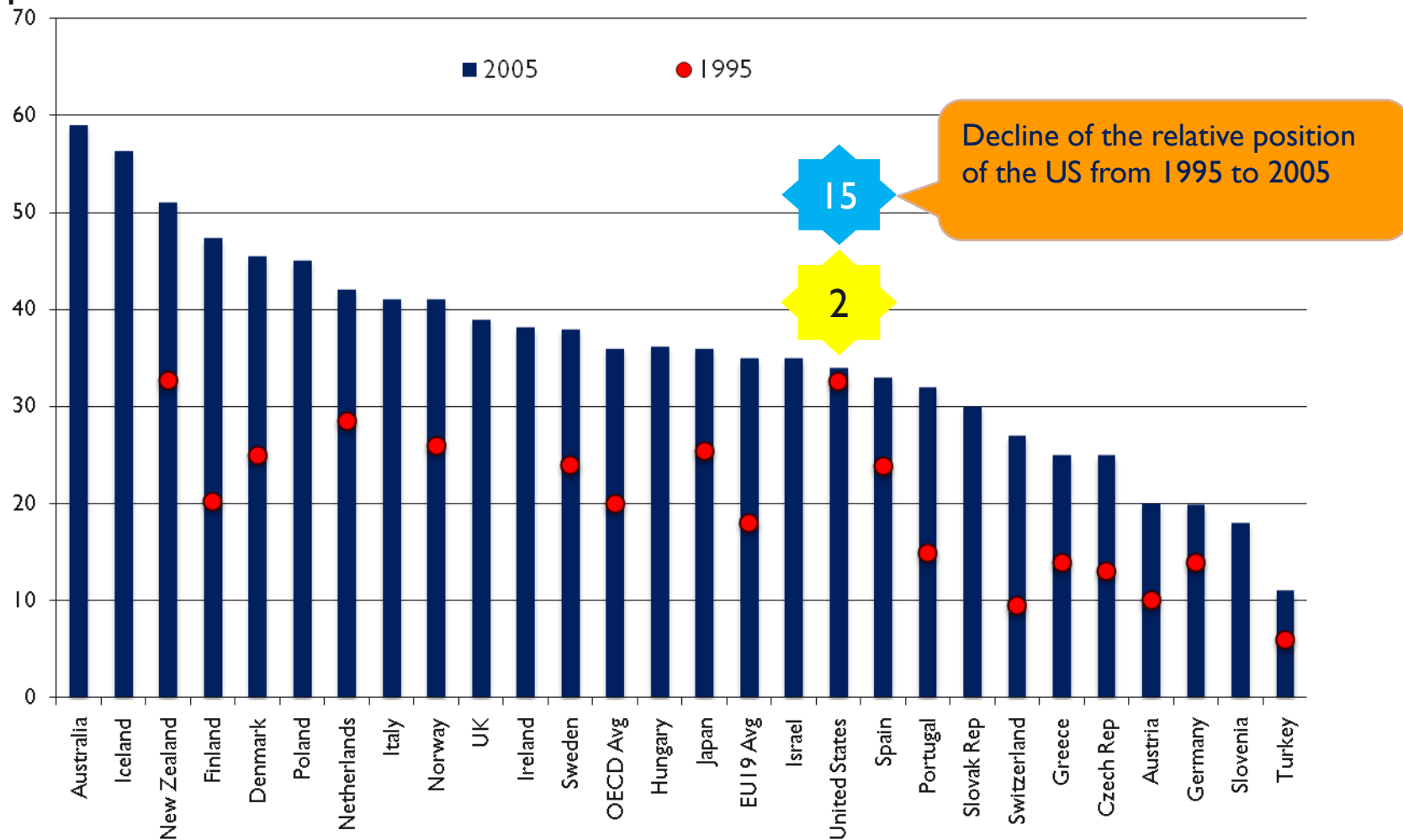
- U.S. rate has stagnated while most industrialized countries have improved.



Source: Schleicher (2007) based on OECD data. Approximated by percentage of persons with high school or equivalent qualifications in the age groups 55-64, 45-55, 35-44, and 25-34 years

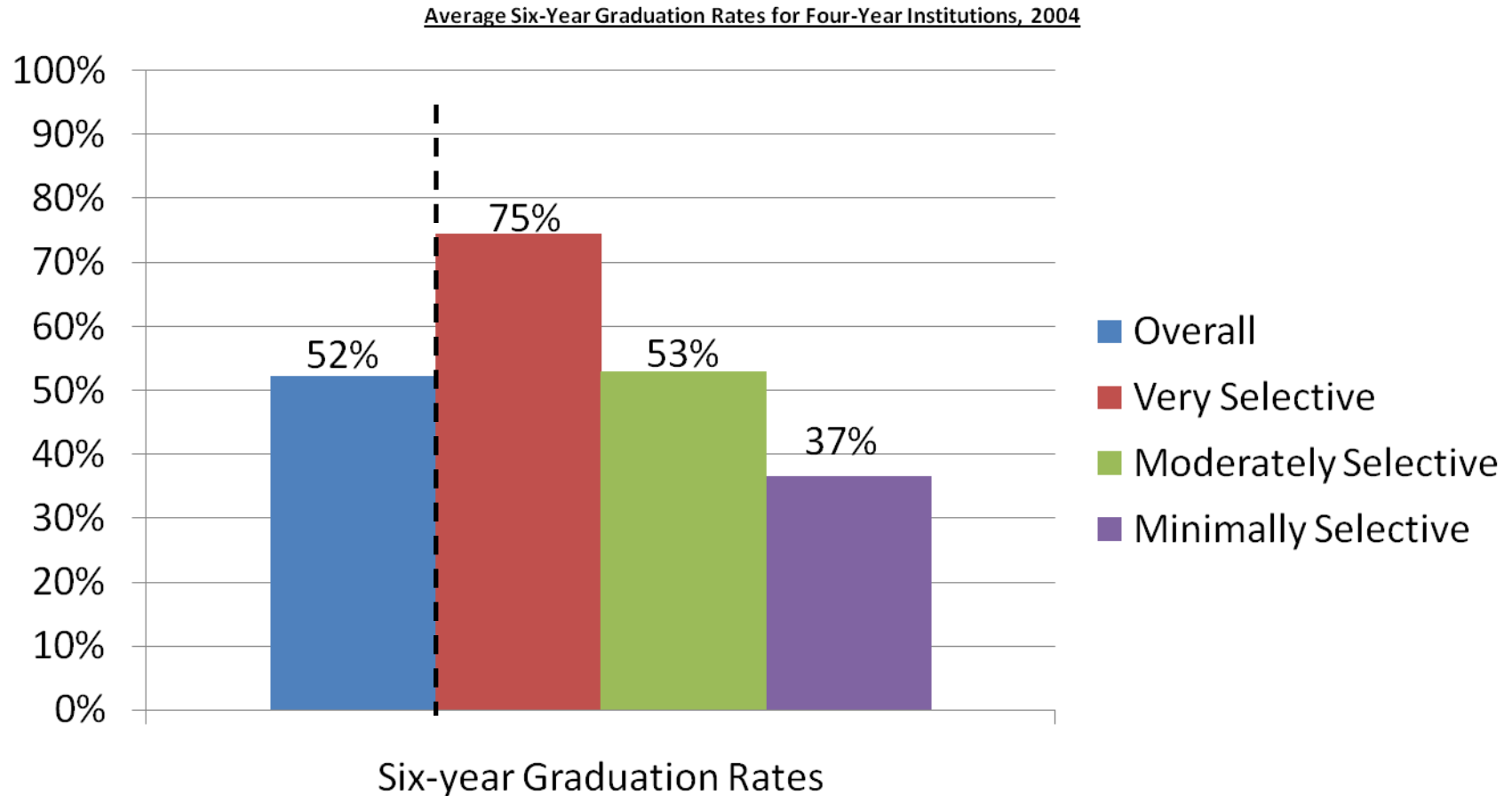
# College level graduation rates

- Even more alarming, U.S. college completion rates have stagnated while others have improved.



Source: Schleicher (2007) based on OECD data. Percentage of tertiary type A graduates to the population at the typical age of graduation.

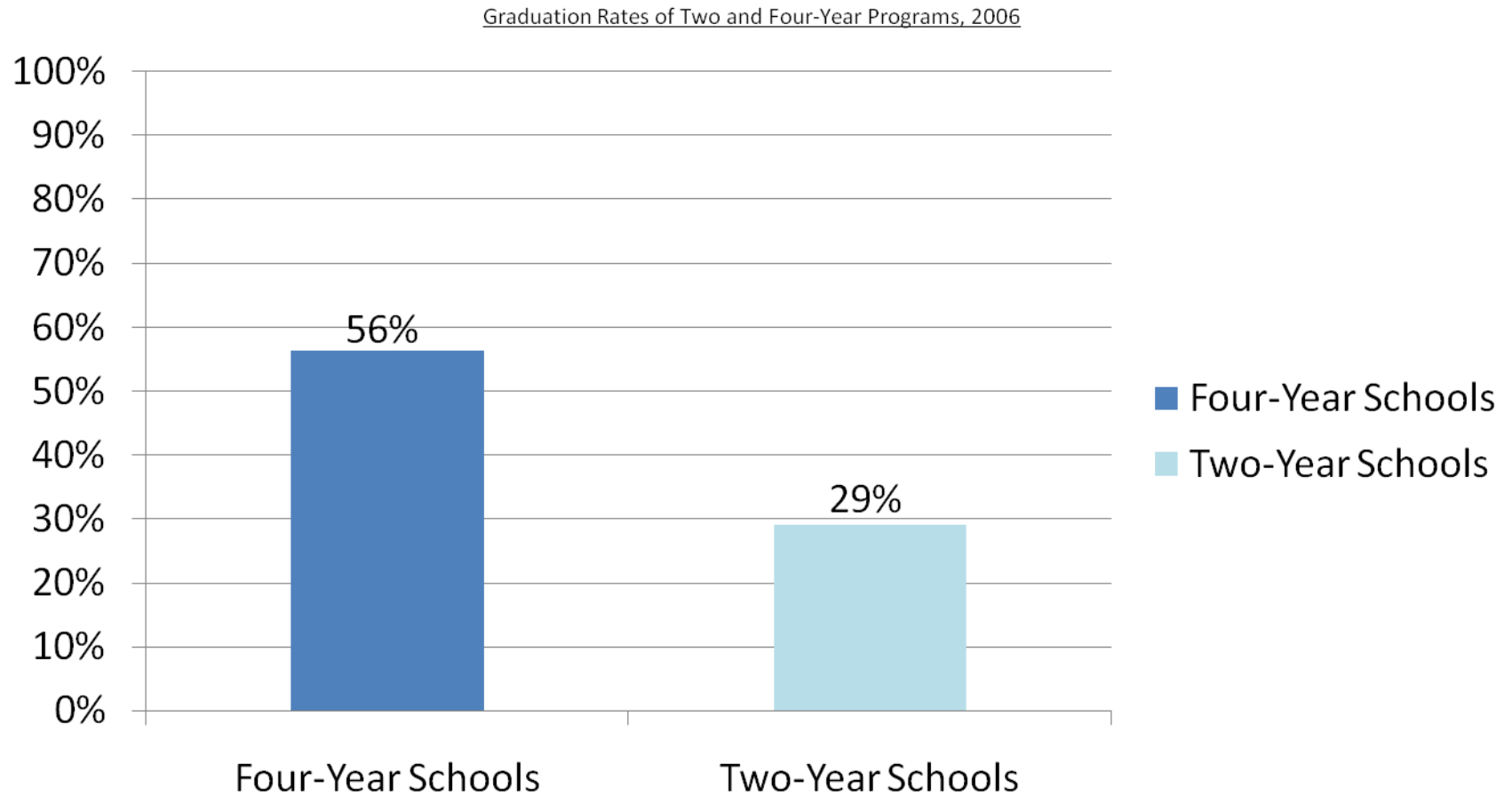
- Only about 50% of students complete a four-year degree in six years and rates vary dramatically by the selectivity of institution



*Note:* Graduation rates are based on freshmen who enroll in the fall of a specified year, who have never attended college before, who attend full-time when they begin and who intend to complete a degree. On average 71% of admitted freshmen fell into this category. Selectivity scale is based on Carnegie Classifications, which is based on number of applicants, number of students admitted, ACT and SAT scores, whether test scores were required, and whether the school was open admissions

*Source:* NCES - IPEDS, "Placing Graduation Rates in Context" (2006), Table 6

- And completion rates at two-year institutions are much lower than at four-year schools



Note: Two-year schools have a three year graduation window. Four-year schools have a six-year window

Source: Higher Ed Info – NCES/IPEDS Graduation Survey

# Key Elements of a Regional Pathways System

## Powerful Leadership that Proclaims, Supports and Sustains a Strong Mandate

Chairs and Top Executive Officers from:  
Major Businesses, Leading Civic Organizations, Colleges and Universities,  
State and Local Government Officials, Philanthropies



## Private or Quasi-Public Intermediary Organization(s) as Major “Engines”

Tasks: map the system to identify gaps, document, track and monitor performance for support and accountability, elicit youth perspectives, maintain a youth registry, . . .



## Front Line Organizations that work with Young People

Elementary and  
middle schools



High  
Schools

Community &  
Four-Year  
Colleges

Independent  
Training  
Programs

Training  
Programs in  
Firms



**Post-Secondary Outcomes for Young Adults**

**Grades 5 and 6:** Employers enable employees to visit 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms where they tell their life stories, beginning when they were in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. Classrooms are visited multiple times during the school year by multiple visitors.

**Grades 7 and 8:** Field trips take students to adult employment sites and to go behind the scenes to see things they would otherwise seldom see or imagine. Information about careers are integrated into the core curriculum at school.

**Grades 9 and 10:** Employers delegate staff members to help schools provide career counseling. Young people in small groups visit employment sites that interest them. Career information gets embedded more deeply in school curriculum. Vocational options become routinely available in the high school curricula.

**Grades 11 and 12:** Options for combining work and learning expand greatly for students who want them. Employers provide loaned employees to supplement the career counseling that schools provide.

**Grades 13 and 14:** High quality workforce preparation programs in junior colleges and other institutions work closely with employers to help youth develop marketable skills, market knowledge and networks of contacts. Registries track youth for several years after training in order to document their experiences, diagnose the need for additional supports, and identify ways to refine the system.

**Grades 15 and 16:** Youth who chose to complete four-year degrees do so. Others combine work and learning or participate full-time in the adult world of work.

# TEN STRATEGIC THREADS OF A *PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY* STRATEGY

- 1. Leaders from Private, Nonprofit and Public Sectors who Combine Passion with Competence and High-Level, Elite Social Capital:** People with the name-recognition, skills and personalities to effectively cultivate not only a sense of urgency but also a sense of possibility, built on *belief in youth*, the *resource flows* that these leaders can influence and their *track records* of past accomplishment.

# TEN STRATEGIC THREADS OF A *PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY* STRATEGY

- 2. Instigators:** Individuals who work, often behind the scenes, to plant seeds of change and to propose and refine the ideas that effective leaders then promote.
- 3. Dedicated Staff:** Committed and talented people who do the day-to-day work (indicated below) inside the engines that drive the change process.

# TEN STRATEGIC THREADS OF A *PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY* STRATEGY

4. **Clear Central Themes:** compelling *facts and ideas* concerning the urgency of the work and **pertaining to the structures and routines to establish and maintain** inside an effectively operating system of *pathways to prosperity*; leaders work to establish these as a “common language” –*ever-present themes*—in the region.

## TEN STRATEGIC THREADS OF A *PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY* STRATEGY

- 5. Streamlined and Coherent “Curriculum” for the Change Process:** Materials that educate stakeholders concerning the central themes and do so in ways that support their work in the change process.

## TEN STRATEGIC THREADS OF A *PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY* STRATEGY

- 6. Organizational Structures and Personnel with Capacity to Teach and Motivate Adults:** Routines and structures inside various public, private and nonprofit institutions that help people to learn their roles—including but not limit to roles as teachers, trainers and supervisors—and feel motivated to play them effectively. **Institutional mechanisms for coaching, observing, and sharing that make it difficult for individuals to avoid the change process.**

# TEN STRATEGIC THREADS OF A *PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY* STRATEGY

- 7. Patient but Tough Accountability:** Tools and routines for monitoring practices and outcomes, targeting assistance where needed, sometimes replacing people or organizations that fail to improve.
- 8. Institutionalized Data Gathering on Young People:** Mechanisms for gathering and organizing data, including a regional registry for young people who chose to have their progress tracked and to benefit from associated information or counseling services.

# TEN STRATEGIC THREADS OF A *PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY* STRATEGY

## 9. **Data-Driven Decision Making and Transparency:**

Staffers are assigned to track, analyze and summarize key patterns. Using data from the regional registry and other sources, schooling status, job status, and academic or training credentials achieved are reported for several categories of young people.

Categories include age, years of formal schooling, disability status, English as a second language status, race/ethnicity, gender and perhaps others. The region publicizes strategic goals and tracks progress in visible ways.

# TEN STRATEGIC THREADS OF A *PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY* STRATEGY

**10. Community Involvement and Resources:** Leaders and participating organizations engage a broad range of stakeholders—including employers, school board members, colleges, other education and training organizations and parents—to contribute ambitiously to preparing young people for adulthood and building and maintaining better *pathways to prosperity*.

# SYSTEM DESIGN & BUILDING

Whose Responsibility?

What key structures? What key roles?

What's feasible?