Gender Equity in Education

A Data Snapshot

This data snapshot highlights several differences in educational opportunities between males and females from prekindergarten through higher education. The information herein, gathered from a variety of education data sources, shows that—despite the enormous progress made in ensuring equal educational opportunities since the passage of Title IX in 1972—much work remains if we are to achieve full gender equity among our nation's students.

The U.S. Census Bureau's data on the percentage of young children participating in preschool programs offers insights into gender differences in access to educational programs in the early years. The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), transformed last year, now captures more elementary and secondary data on educational access and opportunities for boys and girls than ever before. The newly revamped CRDC reveals girls' advances in particular science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) courses, while shedding light on continuing disparities in access to important courses like physics and AP math. The new CRDC data also provide a lens on school climate and on the bullying and sexual harassment girls and boys too often endure. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) provides insights into closing of gaps in postsecondary enrollment and degree attainment while also highlighting important gaps in STEM fields. And data reported to the Office of Vocational and Adult Education at the U.S. Department of Education reveal gender disparities in programs related to particular career pathways.

Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC)

Explore equity and educational opportunities for boys and girls in elementary and secondary schools across the nation with new data from the 2009 CRDC.

- To access the new CRDC data for schools in the sample, visit: http://ocrdata.ed.gov.
- For the 2011-12 school year, the CRDC will be conducted universally to include every school in the nation.

**CRDC data in this document, while covering about 85% of the nation's public school students, are not intended to be an estimation of national data.*

Demographics

Prekindergarten

A snapshot of 2009-10 NCES data shows the composition of students enrolled in prekindergarten.

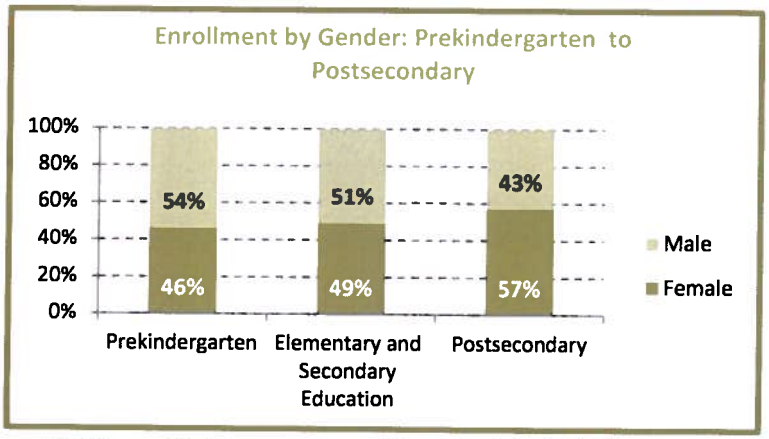
- Girls represent 46% of the 1.1 million students enrolled in prekindergarten.
- Data from the U.S. Census Bureau also shows that, in October 2010, 38% of 3-, 4- or 5-year-old males participated in nursery school programs, compared to 36% of girls of the same age.

Elementary and Secondary Education

- Girls represent 49% of students in elementary and secondary education.

Higher Education

- 57% of students in postsecondary education are women.



Source: Common Core of Data, 2009-10; Digest of Education Statistics, Table 195

Gifted & Talented Education

Since 1976, girls enrolled in gifted and talented education programs have outnumbered boys enrolled.

- In 2009, 8.1% of girls participated in gifted and talented education programs, compared to 7.4% of boys.

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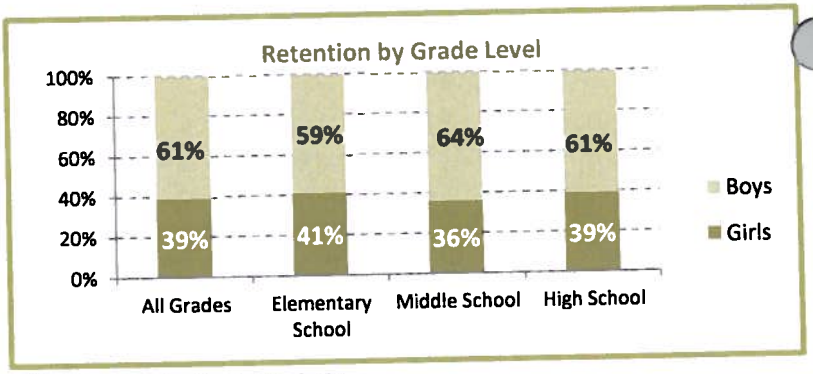
Student Retention

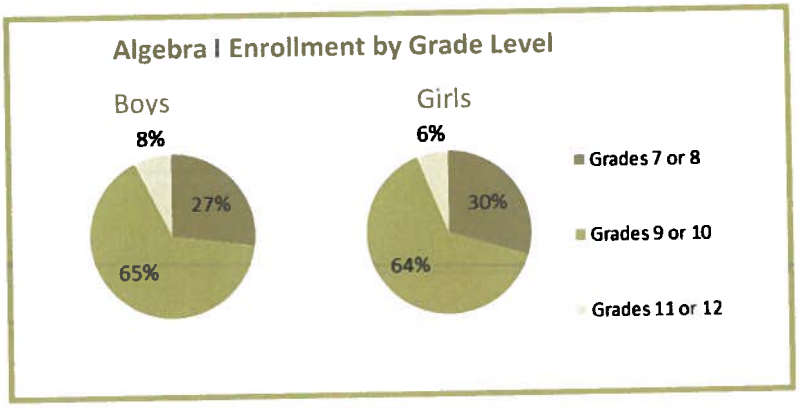
Retention by Grade Level

Girls are less likely than boys to be held back one year. Girls represented 39% of students retained across all grade levels and only 36% of middle school students (grades 6-8) retained in 2009-10.



Source: Civil Rights Data Collection, 2009-10

Algebra I



Source: Civil Rights Data Collection, 2009-10

Algebra I Enrollment by Grade Level and Gender

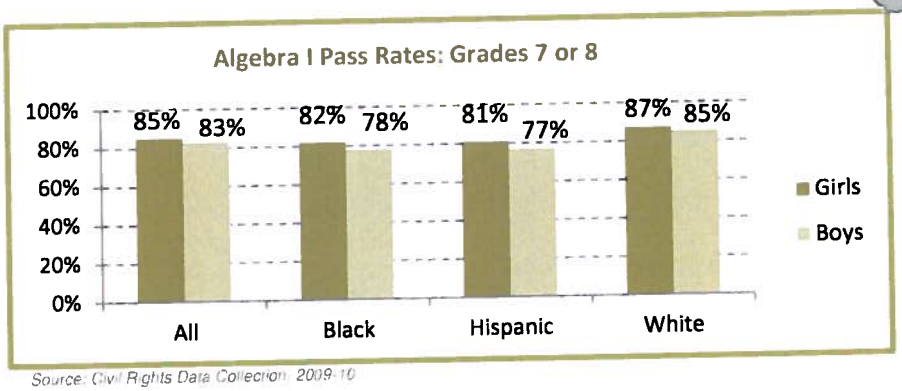
30% of the girls taking Algebra I did so in grades 7 or 8, compared to 27% of boys.

- A greater percentage of the girls in 7th or 8th grade (20%) are taking Algebra I compared to boys (18%).

Algebra I Pass Rates (Grades 7 or 8) by Race and Gender

The data reveal that students who take algebra in earlier grades pass the course at high rates.

- The CRDC shows that girls of every race/ethnicity are passing at a higher rate than their male peers.

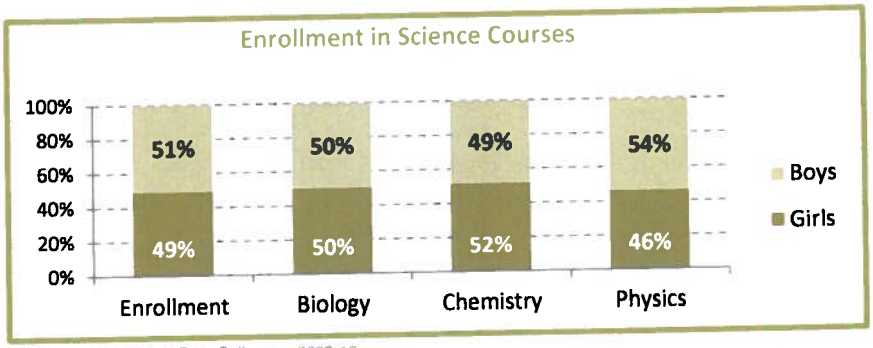


Source: Civil Rights Data Collection, 2009-10

High School Science Courses

Enrollment in Science Courses by Gender

Girls are evenly represented in biology and outnumber boys in chemistry, but are underrepresented in physics.



Source: Civil Rights Data Collection, 2009-10

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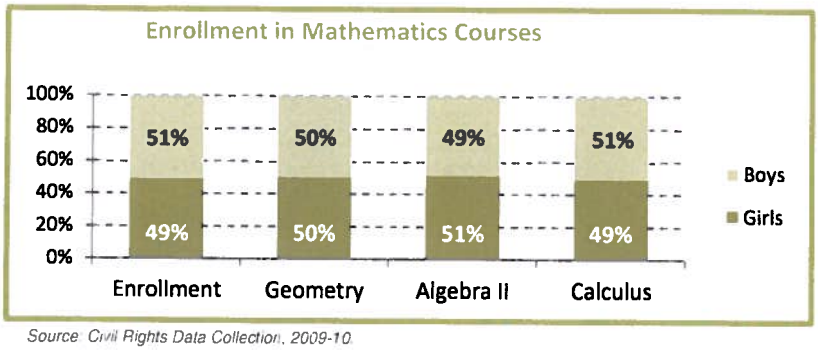
High School Math Courses



Source: Civil Rights Data Collection, 2009-10.

Enrollment in Math Courses by Gender

Girls are equitably represented in rigorous high school math courses.
Across the CRDC sample:

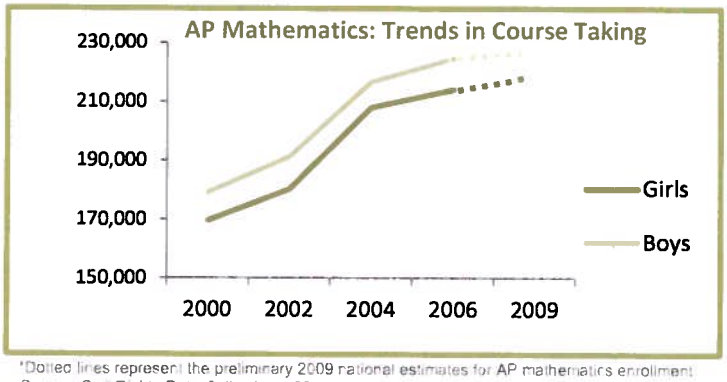
- 1.4 million girls are enrolled in geometry.
- 1.1 million girls are enrolled in Algebra II.
- 200,000 girls are enrolled in calculus.

Advanced Placement (AP) Access and Success

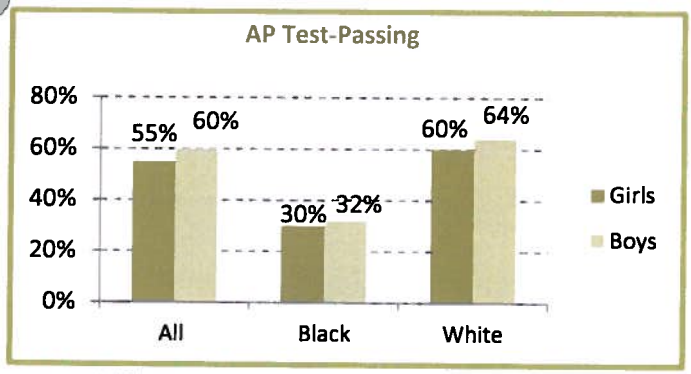
AP Enrollment by Gender

Girls outnumber boys in enrollment in AP science, AP foreign languages, and several other AP subjects.

- In AP mathematics (calculus and statistics), however, boys have consistently outnumbered girls by up to 10,000 students.



*Dotted lines represent the preliminary 2009 national estimates for AP mathematics enrollment.
Source: Civil Rights Data Collection, 2009-10.



Source: Civil Rights Data Collection, 2009-10.

AP Test-Passing by Gender and Race

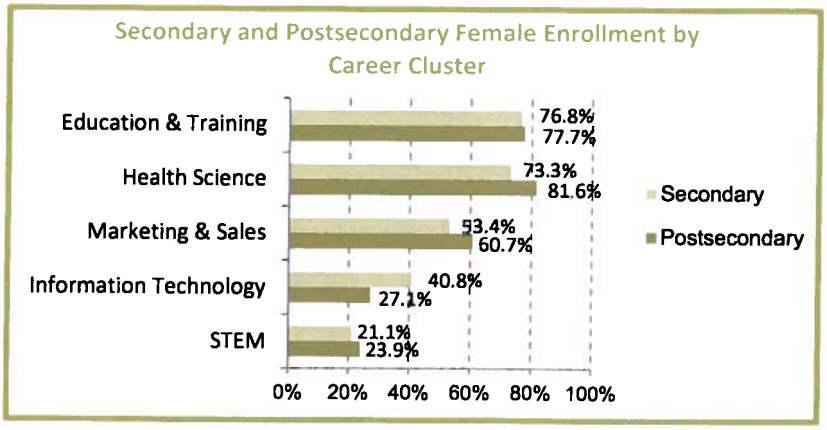
Boys take AP tests and pass AP tests at a higher rate than girls. In fact, 73% of boys enrolled in an AP course took an AP exam, compared to 70% of girls.

- 60% of boys passed an AP exam, compared to 55% of girls.
- Both white and African-American girls are passing AP tests at a lower rate than male peers.

Career and Technical Education

Despite women's gains in some nontraditional fields as a whole, the rate of female enrollment in certain career clusters remains at persistently low levels.

- In 2009-2010, females made up less than 25% of participants in science, technology, engineering, and math programs nationally. (21% at the secondary level and 24% at the postsecondary level).



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 2009-10.

Gender Equity in Education

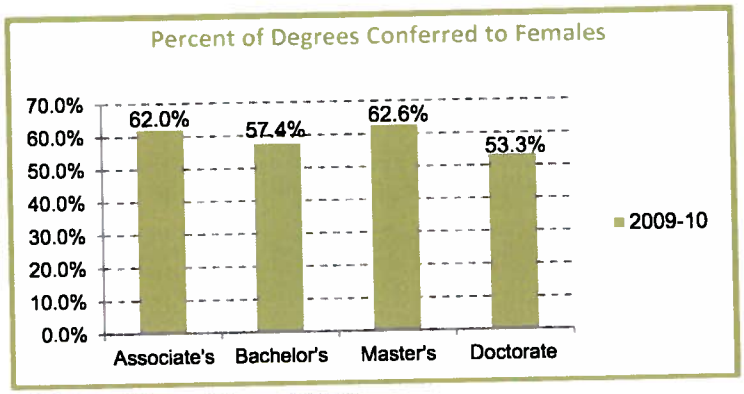
Postsecondary Education

Enrollment

Data from the Digest of Education Statistics reveal that in1972 females represented 43.1% of fall enrollment in degree-granting institutions, compared to 57.0% in 2010.

Postsecondary Degree Attainment

In 2009-10, females represented 57.4% of students receiving a bachelor's degree and 62.6% of students receiving a master's degree.



Source: Condition of Education, Table A-47-2

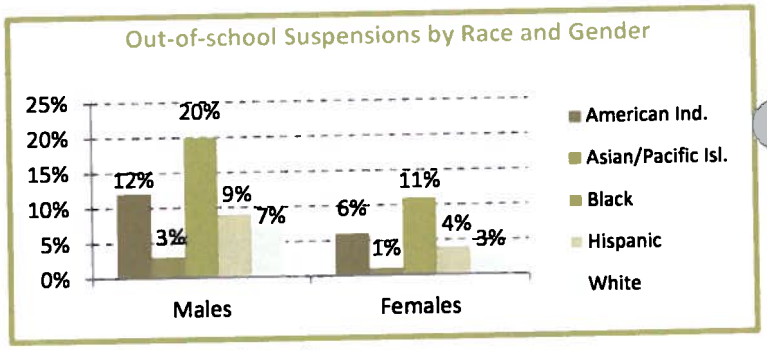
Degrees and Certificates in STEM Fields

Between 2000-01 and 2008-09, the number of degrees and certificates awarded in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields to women at degree-granting institutions increased by 5.9 percent. However, in 2008-09, 31.0% of the degrees and certificates in STEM fields were earned by women.

School Climate

Discipline Rates by Race and Gender

- Girls of all races are suspended out-of-school at lower rates than boys of the same race.
- However, African-American girls are suspended at higher rates than Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander and white boys.



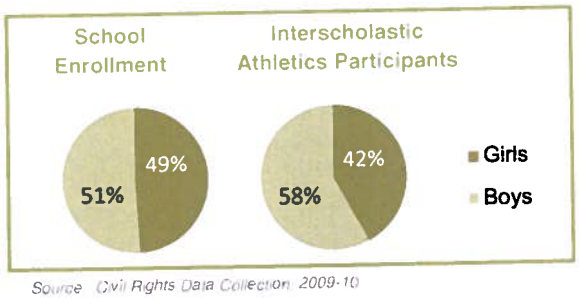
Source: Civil Rights Data Collection, 2009-10

Bullying and Harassment

- Girls represented 55% of the nearly 62,000 students in the sample reported to have been bullied or harassed on the basis of sex.
- Boys represented 79.6% of the 92,000 students in the sample disciplined for bullying or harassment on the basis of sex.

High School Sports

- Across the CRDC sample, girls represented 42% of the interscholastic athletics participants and 49% of enrollment in schools.
  - 35% of the schools offering interscholastic athletics reported a gap of 10 percentage points or more between the percentage of girls enrolled and the percentage of athletes who are girls.
  - 7% of the schools offering interscholastic athletics reported a gap of 20 percentage points or more.



Source: Civil Rights Data Collection, 2009-10

- Of the over 10,000 schools in the CRDC sample that offer single-sex interscholastic athletics, 57% offered fewer athletic teams for girls than boys.

DATA NOTES ABOUT THE CRDC ANALYSIS PRESENTED ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.ED.GOV/OCR/DOCS/GENDER-EQUITY-IN-EDUCATION-DATANOTES.PDF.
PLEASE CONTACT OCRDATA@ED.GOV TO REQUEST THE FULL CRDC DATASET.