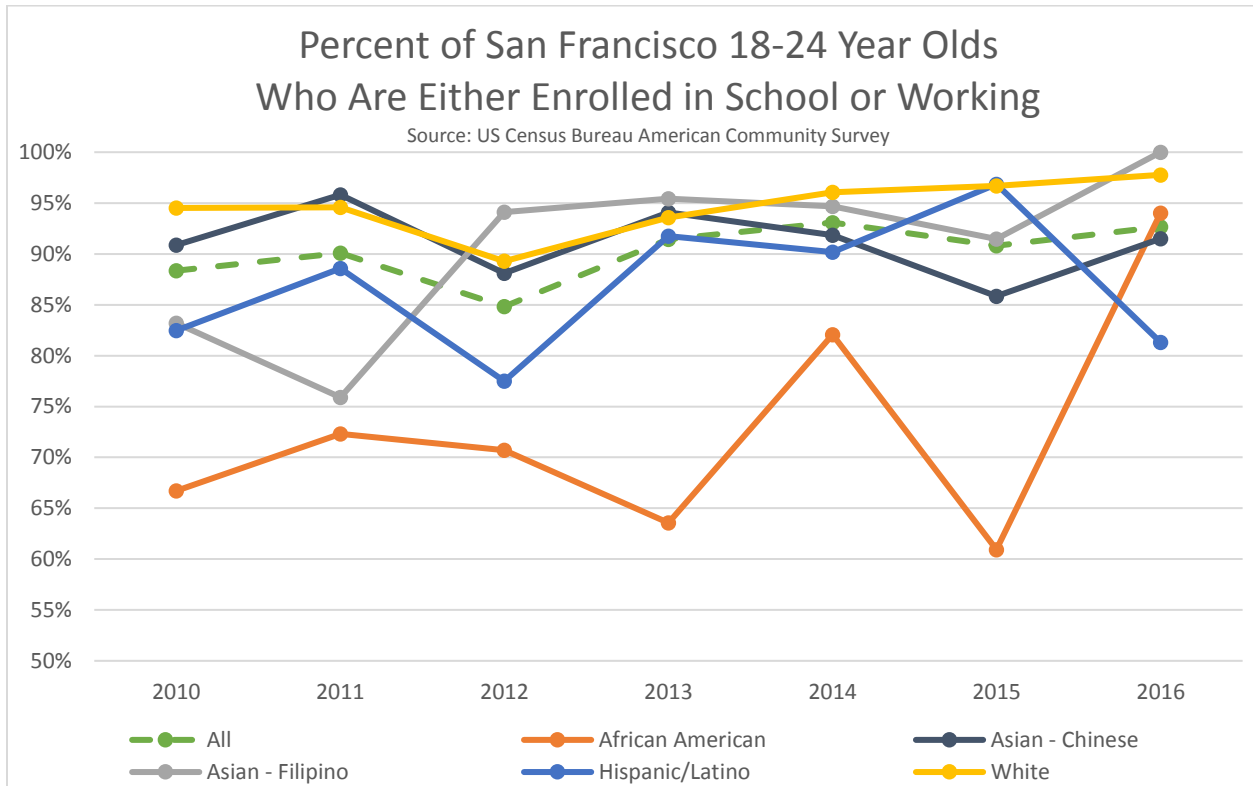


# Increase the percent of 18-24 Year Olds that are either Enrolled in School or Working



The above chart shows the percentage of 18-24 year olds in San Francisco who were either in school or working by race/ethnicity between 2010 and 2016.

## Data Definition & the San Francisco Trend line

This analysis uses one-year U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) estimates. ACS estimates are based on an ongoing survey completed by a sample of the United States population. Questions from the ACS on school attendance and employment status were used to estimate the percentage of youth 18-24 in San Francisco who identified themselves as either in school or working. The question asked to determine school attending was “At any time in the last 3 months, has this person attended school or college?” and the question asked to determine employment status was “Last week, did this person work for pay at a job” or “Last week, did this person do any work for pay, even for as little as one hour?”

The percent of San Francisco 18-24 year olds who were either in school or working has seen an overall increase from 88% in 2010 to 93% in 2016, despite drops in 2012 and 2015. Racial disparities persist however, particularly among African American young people. In 2015, 61% of African American 18-24 year olds were enrolled in school or working compared to 97% of their White counterparts. Though in 2016, 94% of African American 18-24 year olds were in school or working, lessening the gap between them and their white counterparts to 4%, it remains to be seen whether that increase will be sustained

in future years. While data is available for individual racial and ethnic groups, it is not available for other populations identified in the DCYF Community Needs Assessment (CNA) including those with disabilities, justice-involved young people, and those who lack right-to-work documentation due to citizenship status.

### Story Behind the Curve

On average, between 2011 and 2015, approximately 6% of individuals aged 18-24 in San Francisco lacked a high school diploma.<sup>i</sup> Youth lacking these basic educational credentials face severely limited employment opportunities, earning potential, ability to enter postsecondary education, and therefore ability to reside and thrive in San Francisco. Youth without a high school diploma or GED are overrepresented in the justice system, with 80% of youth ages 18-25 in San Francisco's Adult Probation Department Transitional Age Youth (TAY) unit lacking a high school diploma or GED.<sup>ii</sup>

While there is no single explanation for why youth are not engaged in school or working, factors that contribute to lower rates of engagement in school or work include: living in poverty; family living arrangement and parental characteristics; living with a disability; needing to care for a child or other family caretaking responsibilities; citizenship or documentation status; mental illness and/or substance abuse; involvement with the justice system; historical biases in hiring and education systems; and housing insecurity.

### Policy and Practice Shifts in San Francisco

While there are many barriers to engaging in work and school for youth, an improved local and national economy and large number of local programs and policies that assist young people have provided opportunities for youth in San Francisco to further their education and/or enter the workforce. The following are some highlights of these policies and programs.

**Mayor's Youth Jobs+.** In January 2012, the Obama Administration launched the Summer Jobs+ challenge through the White House Council on Community Solutions to create employment opportunities for low-income and disconnected youth throughout the country. In response, Mayor Ed Lee launched San Francisco's Summer Jobs+ initiative challenging city government, community providers and private sector employers to provide paid training and employment opportunities to 5,000 youth in the summer of 2012. This initiative has grown and evolved to become the Mayor's Youth Jobs+ initiative, providing jobs and training opportunities throughout the year.<sup>iii</sup>

**DCYF and OEWD Programs.** DCYF and City & County of San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) has expanded opportunities for youth. Subsidized employment opportunities gave many young people the opportunity to earn money that would have not traditionally been ready for competitive employment. Many of these programs also provide job readiness training, career exploration and work-based learning opportunities, educational and postsecondary support and transition planning and support needed to complete high school and enter into young adulthood.

**Bridge to Success.** In 2010, San Francisco received a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to increase postsecondary completion rates under their Communities Learning in Partnership strategy. San Francisco's initiative was a partnership between the City, the San Francisco Unified School District and City College of San Francisco, which became known as Bridge to Success. Bridge to Success helped to initiate several policy changes and practices to address specific points in student's trajectories that lead them off track, and facilitate a smoother transition from high school to postsecondary. Policy changes

included priority enrollment for SFUSD students in City College of San Francisco (City College) math and English courses, better use of data, alignment of math/English coursework between SFUSD high schools and City College, a Summer Bridge Program, and supported transition to City College and San Francisco State University, among others. Although funding for this initiative has ended, SFUSD and CCSF continue to coordinate on policies and practices that increase enrollment and retention.<sup>iv</sup>

## Factors that Negatively Impacted College Attendance

**Cost of Attendance at California's Public Colleges and Universities.** Increases in tuition across California's public four-year universities have increased concerns about the affordability of a college education, especially for those with the lowest incomes. In-state full tuition at the University of California and California State University has risen more dramatically than at other public universities in other states over the past decade.<sup>v</sup>

**City College of San Francisco Accreditation Issues.** In 2012, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) announced plans to revoke City College's accreditation. The resulting legal and political actions left the school's accreditation status in limbo for more than five years. Between 2012 and 2016 there was a 26% decrease in student enrollment, which resulted in a reduction of college income, cuts to faculty, classes and programs. While the accreditation issues are likely not the sole cause for reduced enrollment, it is surely a contributing factor. As of January 2017, ACCJC announced that CCSF would retain its accreditation for another seven years.<sup>vi,vii</sup>

## What Works: A Selection of Best Practices to reduce the percent of 18-24 year olds who are neither In School or Working

There is no single policy or program that will connect all youth to school or work. The following is a selection of practices identified by staff at DCYF with many years of experience supporting transitional age youth that have been shown to improve the likelihood that youth remain in school or find employment. However, the following list is by no means comprehensive, additional information on best practices in postsecondary completion are available in the corresponding scorecard and additional information on workforce development practices are available in the reports cited below.<sup>viii,ix,x</sup>

**Efforts to Support a College-Going Culture.** For students who are the first in their families to pursue a postsecondary education and youth from communities that lack successful educational role models, support and exposure to create a college-going culture and mindset allows them to see postsecondary education as a possibility.<sup>xi</sup> These young people need to develop both the social and academic skills necessary to succeed in a college environment. Additionally, early exposure to both career awareness and awareness of postsecondary options encourages retention of youth in postsecondary institutions. Understanding schooling and financial requirements, navigating the sequencing of coursework, understanding long-term outcomes of career choices will help students avoid misdirection and unneeded coursework.<sup>xii</sup>

**Opportunities for paid work and the use of financial incentives.** Paid work experience while in high school is often the first employment experience for youth and can provide a workplace context in which young people can apply what they are learning in the classroom. Paid work experience may also improve longer-term earnings by giving youth access to jobs with employer-provided training, the possibility of advancement, and exposure to new networks and adult role models. Wages from paid

work and financial incentives may address financial barriers that would otherwise prohibit youth from engaging in programming. Such incentives may also produce positive behavioral effects when tied to performance standards and milestones, encouraging youth to develop and practice learned skills.<sup>xiii</sup>

**Strong partnerships with business and other community stakeholders.** Successful workforce development programs have strong partnerships with employers and workplace partners that help to shape their education and training offering to respond to local labor-market demands. Effective programs engage employers not just in hiring young people, but in helping to shape curriculum and provide a range of career exploration and work-based learning opportunities for youth such as site visits, guest speakers, career mentoring and job shadows. Programs can also develop strong connections with businesses by providing supports to meet their needs such as training for supervisors of youth, onsite job coaching and resources to support quality work-based learning such as guidebooks and youth evaluations to ensure both the needs of youth and employers are being met.<sup>xiv</sup>

**Strong links between education, training, and the job market.** Education and training that are shaped by local labor market demands and employer involvement have the potential to produce strong employment outcomes for out-of-school youth. Focusing on specific industries makes it easier to find better local jobs and also enables youth to find a defined pathway toward a career with higher prospects for future mobility.<sup>xv</sup>

**Providing support services to address developmental needs of youth.** Successful programs address young people's barriers to participation. These barriers may include a young person's difficulties in meeting basic needs such as transportation, childcare, and food. Effective programs assess the needs of young participants and develop individualized plans for addressing their needs. Many of the young people who participate in employment and training programs live in relative poverty and face a myriad of life challenges on a daily basis, including housing instability, lack of adequate childcare, food insecurity, and threats to personal safety. Strategies such as case management, referrals to link participants to services in the community (health care and housing, for example), and assistance with childcare and transportation help young people who may need some additional support to be able to succeed in youth workforce programs.<sup>xvi</sup>

**Caring adult role models to support and supervise youth.** Young adults need role models to provide instruction on workplace culture, guidance on communication, and other soft skills needed for success in the workplace such as interpersonal skills, decision making skills, and lifelong learning skills. Program participants benefit from program staff and mentors who model positive social and workplace skills in their daily interactions with youth. Relationships with trusted and caring adults provides opportunities to guide career decision-making and shape appropriate workplace behavior.<sup>xvii</sup>

**Supported Transitions.** Providing comprehensive support to young people during key transitions in their lives has been shown to reduce some of the challenges associated with these transitions. Transition supports provide young people with early exposure to college and career options, skill building, mentoring, academic assistance, and assistance with applications and navigation of the education and workforce systems. Programs that provide comprehensive services around college entrance and college graduation ensure that youth are academically successful during key transitional periods. These programs often work best when youth are connected to programming for extended lengths of time. Many off-track students have difficulty completing their post-secondary education due to a misalignment between coursework.<sup>xviii</sup>

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