



## The Educational Pipeline for Hispanic Students in Georgia

Hispanics are expected to become the largest minority group in the U.S. by 2005 when they reach 13 percent of the population.<sup>1</sup> By 2050, Hispanics are projected to make up one-quarter of the U.S. population. How has the Hispanic population in Georgia increased? How has this increase influenced the educational pipeline, particularly for postsecondary enrollment and graduation? This fact sheet addresses these questions and provides basic information on Georgia's Hispanic population and their representation in the educational pipeline.

- Georgia's Hispanic population grew from 101,379 in 1990 to 429,976 in 2000, an increase of 324 percent. Georgia's total population increased 26 percent during that same time period.<sup>2</sup> The U.S. Census estimated that the Hispanic population was undercounted in 1990 in Georgia by 7.1 percent.<sup>3</sup> However, some demographers believed that the true number of Hispanics in Georgia was more significantly undercounted.
- According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates, Georgia's Hispanic population grew to roughly 517,000 in 2002, about 6 percent of the total population.<sup>4</sup> Georgia's Hispanic population experienced the largest percentage increase (19 percent) in the nation from 2000 to 2002.<sup>5</sup>
- In 2002, individuals of Mexican origin accounted for 63 percent of the Hispanic/Latino population in Georgia.<sup>6</sup>
- In 2000, Hispanics accounted for nearly 20 percent or more of the population in three Georgia counties: Whitfield (22.1), Echols (19.7), and Hall (19.6). At 64,137, Gwinnett was the county with the largest number of Hispanic residents in 2000.<sup>7</sup>
- In the 2001-02 school year, Hispanic students accounted for 5.5 percent of the total enrollment in grades K-12 and 5.8 percent of pre-kindergarten enrollment.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics*, NCES, U.S. Department of Education, 2003; citing Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> 1990 and 2000 Census of Population and Housing, SF3 Data Set, Tables P012 and P7.

<sup>3</sup> [www.census.gov/dmd/www/pdf/underga.pdf](http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/pdf/underga.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Estimates of the Total Population of States by Race and Hispanic Origin: July 1, 2002; citing Internet Tables STCH-EST2002-04 and STCH-EST2002-03 and the Population Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce press release, September 18, 2003.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2002 American Community Survey Tabular Profile.

<sup>7</sup> *The 2002 Georgia County Guide*, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, College of Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Georgia, Athens, GA.

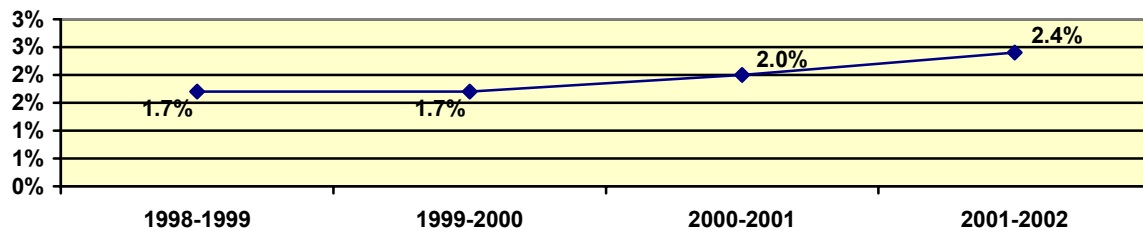
<sup>8</sup> Georgia Department of Education, 2001-2002 Georgia Public Education Report Card.

- Hispanic children were overrepresented among retained students (kept in the same grade for another year) in the 2001-02 school year. That year, 6.1 percent of public school students retained in Georgia were Hispanic.<sup>9</sup>
- In 1999, 1,016 Hispanic students graduated with a diploma from Georgia public high schools. That number increased to 1,618 in 2002.<sup>10</sup>

### High School Completion

As Figure 1 shows, Hispanics account for a small, but growing percentage of students who graduate from Georgia high schools with a diploma.

**Figure 1**  
**Percent of Georgia Public High School Graduates Who are Hispanic**



Source: Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Public Education Report Cards, 1998-1999--2001-2002.

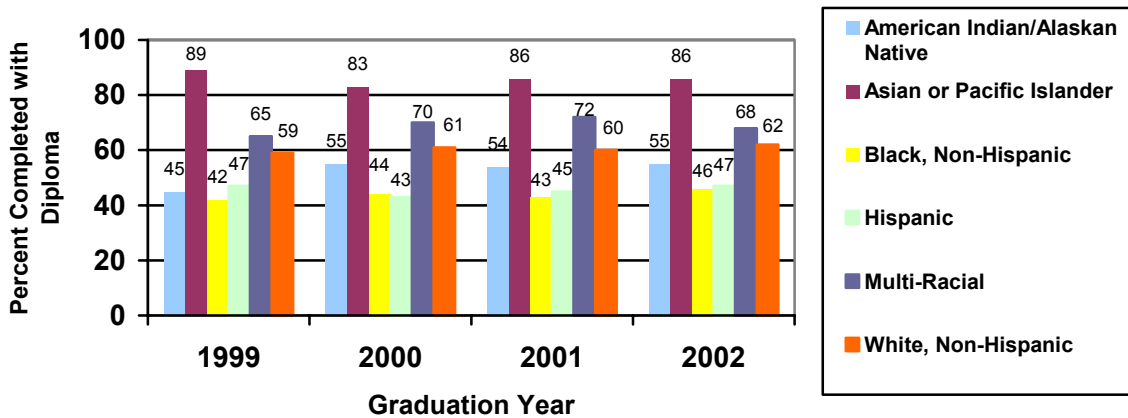
In 2002, the high school completion rate (the ratio of high school graduates to ninth graders four years earlier) was 47 percent. Although the number of Hispanic students entering and graduating from Georgia public high schools increased between 1999 and 2002, the completion rate did not. As shown in Figure 2, the completion rate for Hispanic students dropped in 2000, but rebounded by 2002.

Figure 2 also shows that between 1999 and 2002 the percent of Hispanic students completing high school with a diploma was similar to that of Black students, but less than that of White, Asian, and Multi-Racial students.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Public Education Report Card for school years 1998-1999 through 2001-2002.

**Figure 2**  
**Georgia Public High School Completion Rates**  
**by Race/Ethnicity: 1999-2002**



Source: Georgia Department of Education, Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Data Collection System, Office of Technology Services and Georgia Public School Report Cards, 1998-99 through 2001-02.

Note: These completion rates are calculated by dividing the number of students entering ninth grade by the number of students graduating with a diploma four years later.

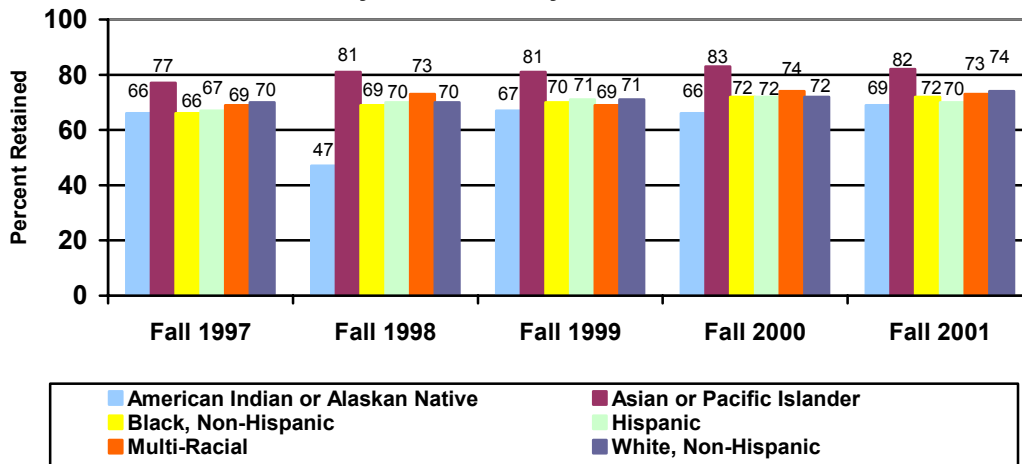
Hispanic students accounted for 2.3 percent of the 28,916 first-time freshmen, recent high school graduates enrolled in the University System of Georgia in Fall 2002.<sup>11</sup>

As Figure 3 shows, the institution-specific one-year retention rate for first-time, full-time Hispanic students in the University System of Georgia was 70 percent for Fall 2001, higher only than the rate for American Indian/Alaskan Native (69 percent) students. Asian students had the highest retention rate, 82 percent, followed by White, Non-Hispanic (74 percent), Multi-Racial (73 percent), and Black, Non-Hispanic (72 percent) students.

Also as Figure 3 shows, the institution-specific one-year retention rate for first-time, full-time Hispanic USG students increased from 67 percent in 1997 to 72 percent in 2000, but dropped to 70 percent in 2001. Retention rates for Asian/Pacific Islander and Black, Non-Hispanic students experienced similar changes, increasing through 2000 and then dropping or remaining stable in 2001. Retention rates for White students remained stable through 1998, but increased in 2001. Retention rates for American Indian students decreased through 1998, but rebounded in 2001. Retention rates for Multi-Racial students fluctuated from year to year.

<sup>11</sup> The data are from the 2002 Fall Semester Enrollment Report, which is based on the University System of Georgia Student Information Reporting System (SIRS).

**Figure 3**  
**Institution-Specific One-Year Retention Rate for First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen by Race/Ethnicity: Fall 1997 to Fall 2001**



Source: USG by the Numbers, which is based on the University System of Georgia Student Information Reporting System (SIRS), 2003.

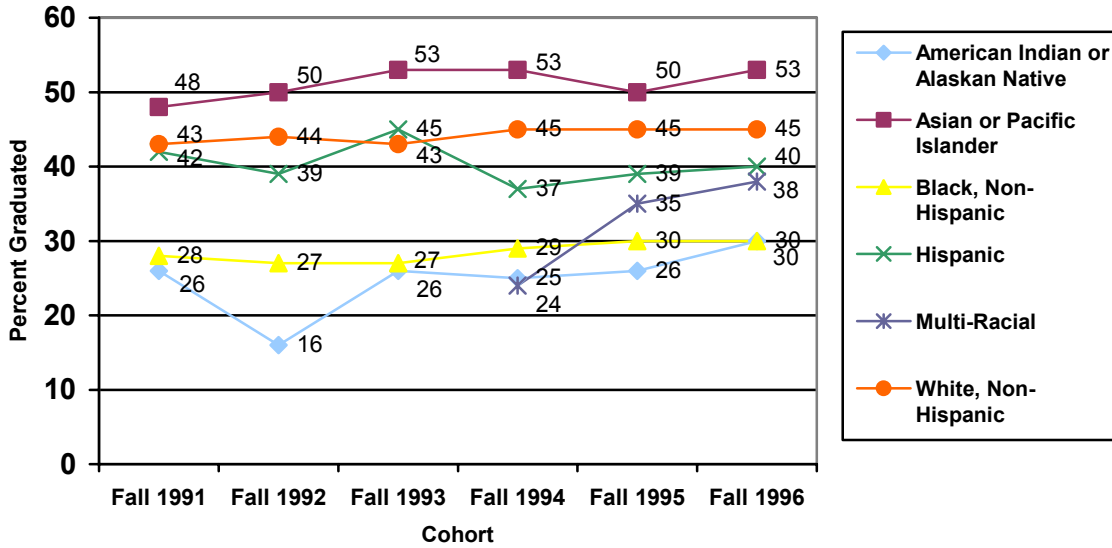
In Fall 2002, Dalton State College was the Georgia public college or university with the largest percentage of Hispanic students, 5 percent, or 208 students. Also in that year, Hispanic students accounted for 3.7 percent of the student enrollment at Southern Polytechnic State University (138), Gainesville College (153), and Georgia Perimeter College (648).<sup>12</sup>

As Figure 4 shows, the bachelor’s degree six-year graduation rate for Hispanic first-time, full-time students in the University System of Georgia increased from 42 percent in 1997 to 45 percent in 1999. After a drop to 37 percent in 2000, that figure has risen to 40 percent in 2002.

In addition, Figure 4 shows that the six-year graduation rates for Hispanic first-time, full-time students were lower than those of Asian and White students, but higher than those of American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black, and Multi-Racial students.

<sup>12</sup> University System of Georgia *Information Digest 2002-03*, SIRS.

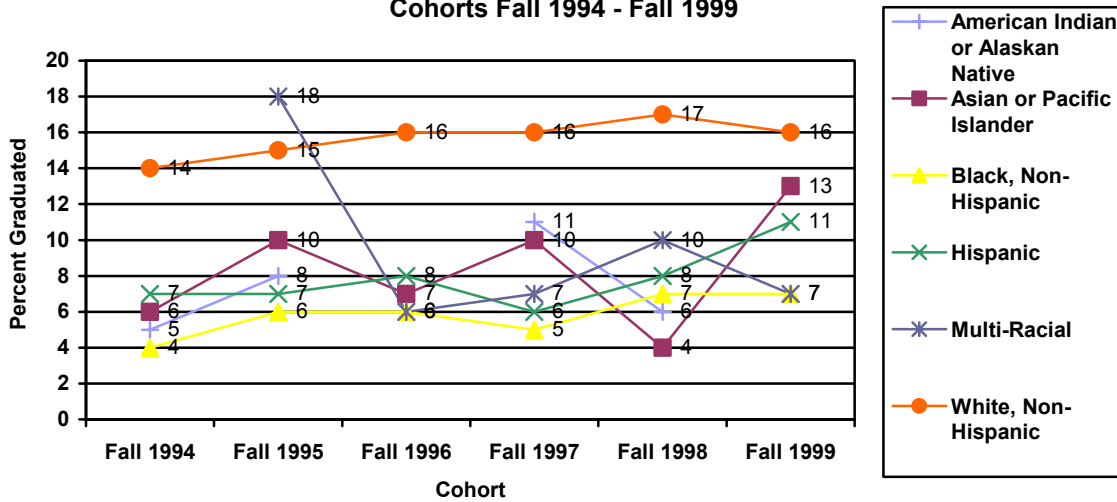
**Figure 4**  
**Bachelor's Degree Six-Year Graduation Rates**  
**First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen by Race**  
**Cohorts Fall 1991- Fall 1996**



Source: USG by the Numbers, which is based on the University System of Georgia SIRS, 2003.

As Figure 5 shows, the three-year graduation rate for Hispanic first-time, full-time freshmen pursuing associate degrees fluctuated, but experienced a net increase between 1997 (7 percent) and 2002 (11 percent).

**Figure 5**  
**Institution-Specific Associate's Degree Three-Year Graduation Rates**  
**First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen by Race**  
**Cohorts Fall 1994 - Fall 1999**



Source: USG by the Numbers, which is based on the University System of Georgia SIRS, 2003.

## Summary

According to NCES, Hispanics are expected to become the largest minority group in the U.S. by 2005. Georgia is unlikely to experience the same phenomenon in the near future because the state's African-American population is much larger than the Hispanic population (28 percent versus 6 percent in 2002).<sup>13</sup> However, Georgia's Hispanic population already exceeds the U.S. Census Bureau's most recent projections<sup>14</sup> and is expected to continue growing.

To maintain a well-educated workforce, Georgia must encourage all of its citizens, including Hispanics, to earn high school diplomas and, if possible, pursue postsecondary education. Some statistics suggest that Georgia should pay particular attention to Hispanic students as they work their way through the educational pipeline. For example, the percent of Hispanic students completing high school with a diploma is lower than other racial/ethnic groups except Blacks for the past couple of years. In addition, the six-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time Hispanic students seeking a bachelor's degree is lower than that of Asian and White students, although it is higher than other traditionally underrepresented groups. Finally, the three-year graduation rate for students seeking associate's degrees was lower for Hispanic students than for Asian/Pacific Islander or White students in 2002; however, that rate improved between 2000 and 2002.

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*"Creating a More Educated Georgia"*

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<sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2002 American Community Survey Change Profile for Georgia, Table 1.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Projections for States by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1995 to 2025.