

# **A Longitudinal Study of Illinois High School Graduates with Disabilities: A Six-Year Analysis of Postsecondary Enrollment and Completion**

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**Illinois Board of Higher Education**

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# Context of the Current Study

- Nearly all degree granting postsecondary institutions enroll students with disabilities (Raue, 2011)
  - 700,000 students with disabilities enrolled in postsecondary during AY 2008, half at community colleges.
  - Largest categories were specific learning disabilities and ADD/ADHD.
- Growing enrollments of students with disabilities in postsecondary education (Newman et al, 2010)
  - The rate of enrollment doubled from 1990 to 2005 from one-quarter to one-half.
  - Students with disabilities less likely to enroll overall, but were more likely to enroll at a community college or in a vocational program than same-age peers.
  - Less likely to graduate or complete a program overall, but more likely to complete a community college degree.

# The Current Study

- Who is included in the cohort
  - 113,135 public high school students who took the Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE)/ACT in the Spring of 2001 and indicated that they will be graduating in 2002.
- Who is not included in this cohort
  - Private high school graduates
  - Out-of-State high school graduates that migrated to Illinois higher education institutions

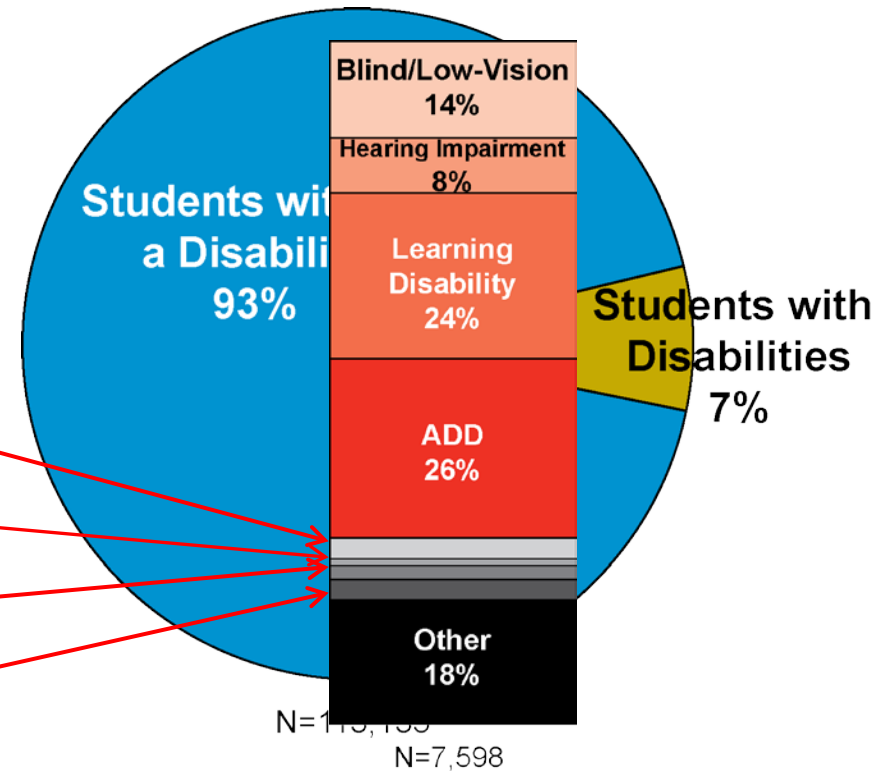
# Research Questions

1. To what extent do students with disabilities differ from students without disabilities regarding key demographic factors?
2. What are the differences between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of their postsecondary enrollment and degree completion patterns?

# How Disability was Defined in the Current Study

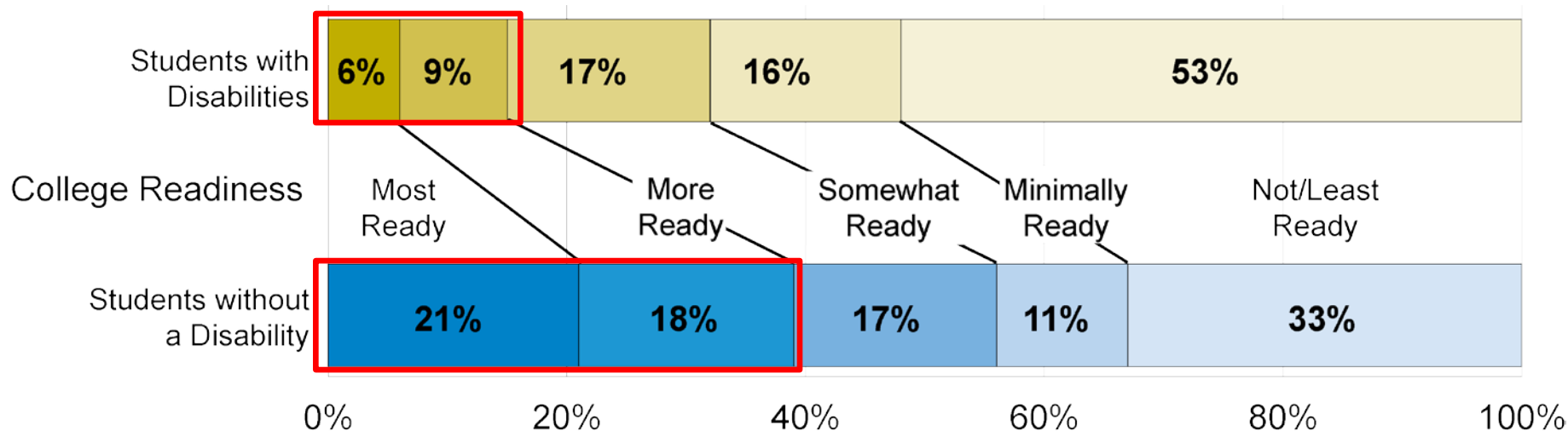
8. Please respond to this item only if you have a physical or diagnosed learning disability. Mark the **one** choice that most closely describes your situation.

- Blind or low-vision (not correctable  
with prescription lenses) ..... 1
- Hearing impairment ..... 2
- Learning disability ..... 3
- Attention deficit disorder ..... 4
- Other neurological impairment ... 5
- Require wheelchair access ..... 6
- Other orthopedic impairment ..... 7
- Multiple disabilities ..... 8
- Other disability..... 9



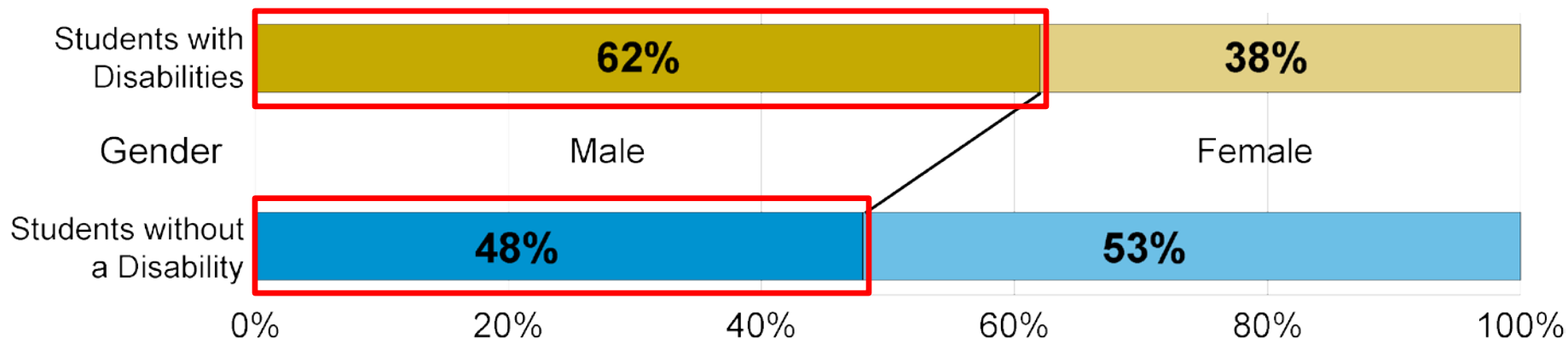
# Students with disabilities had overall characteristics that would suggest a lower likelihood of postsecondary enrollment and degree completion.

► They were significantly less likely to be college ready



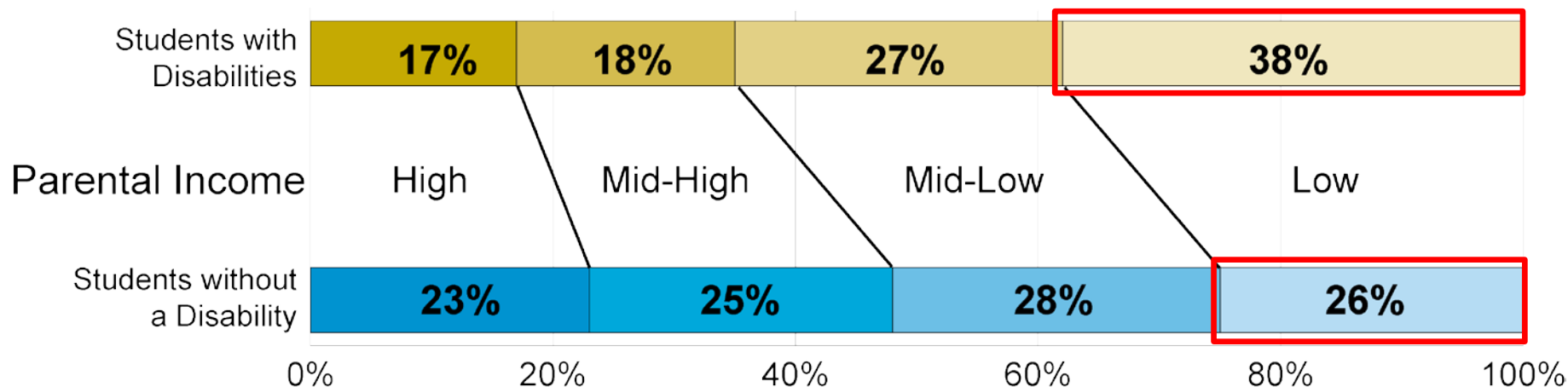
**Students with disabilities had overall characteristics that would suggest a lower likelihood of postsecondary enrollment and degree completion.**

► **They were significantly more likely to be male**



# Students with disabilities had overall characteristics that would suggest a lower likelihood of postsecondary enrollment and degree completion.

- They were more likely to be within the low income category



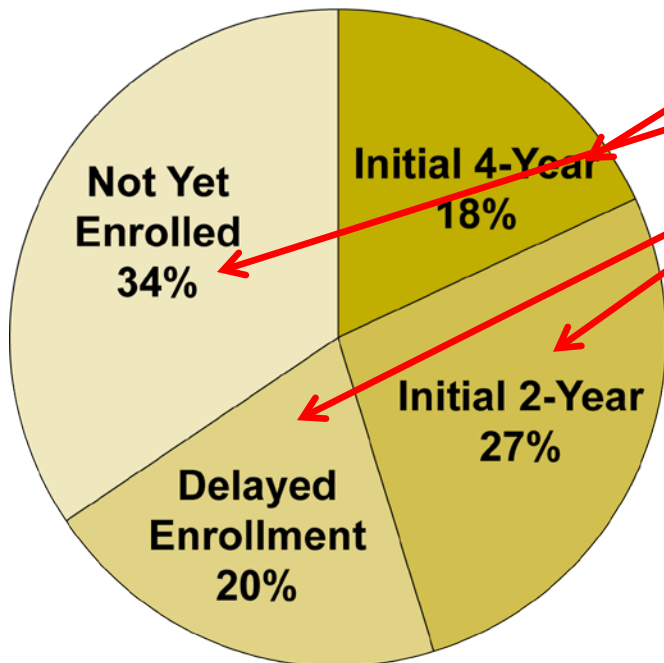


A high proportion of students with disabilities are enrolling in college (66%)

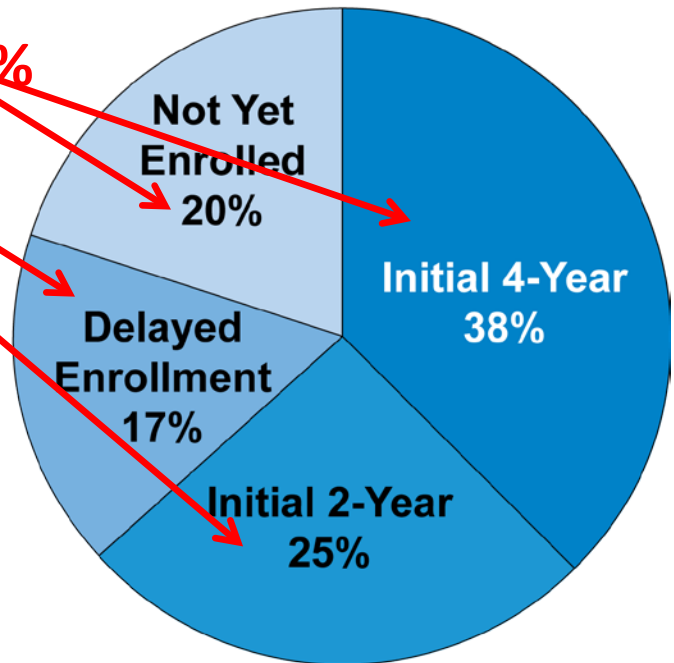
Students with disabilities were:

► ~~Significantly less likely to be enrolled in college~~

Students with Disabilities



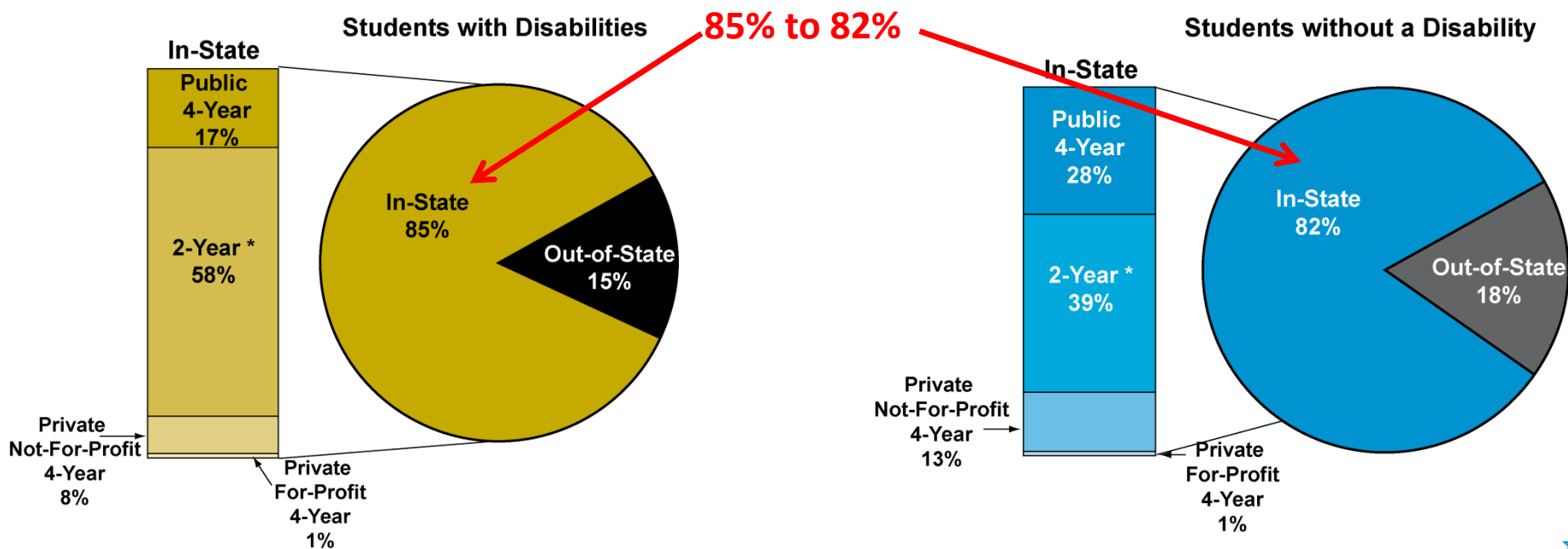
Students without Disabilities



13% to 16%  
20% to 17%  
27% to 25%

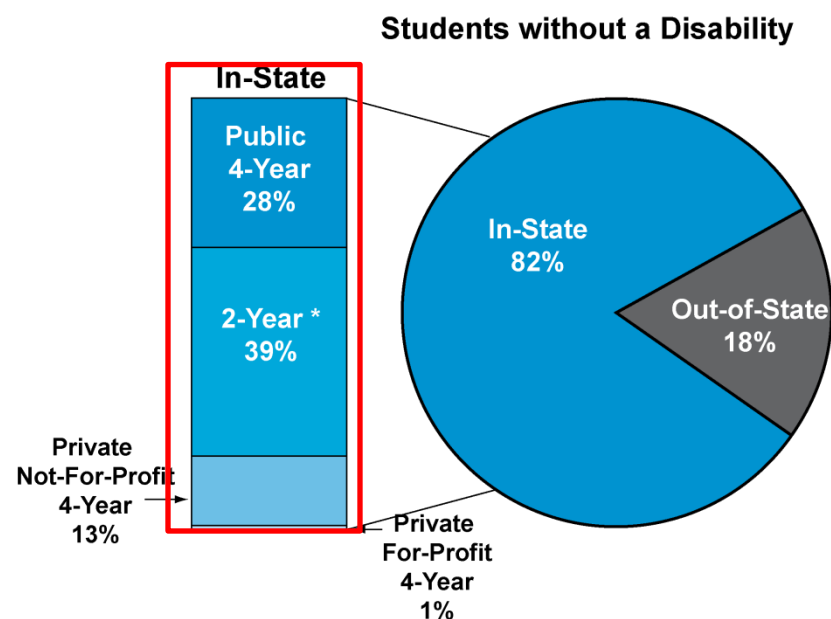
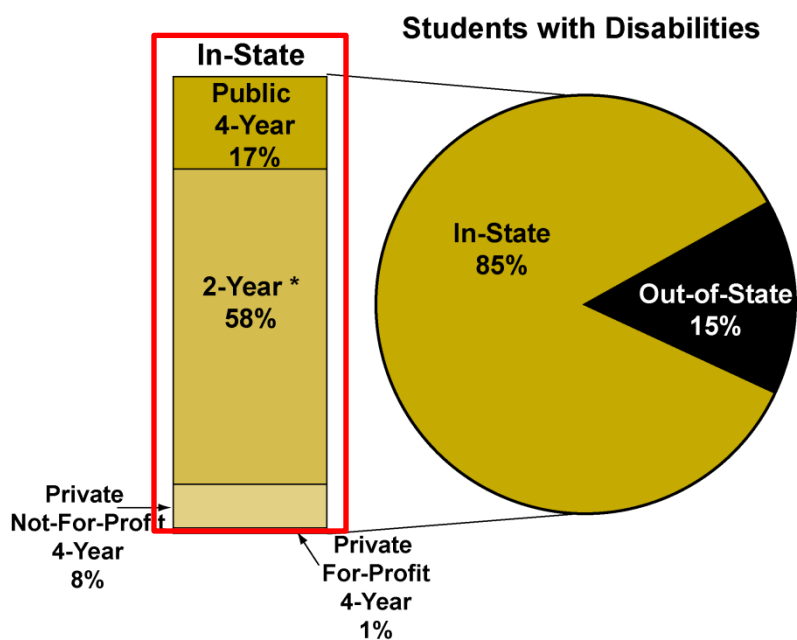
# Sector-Among those initially enrolling after high school graduation, students with disabilities were:

## ► Slightly more likely to stay in-state

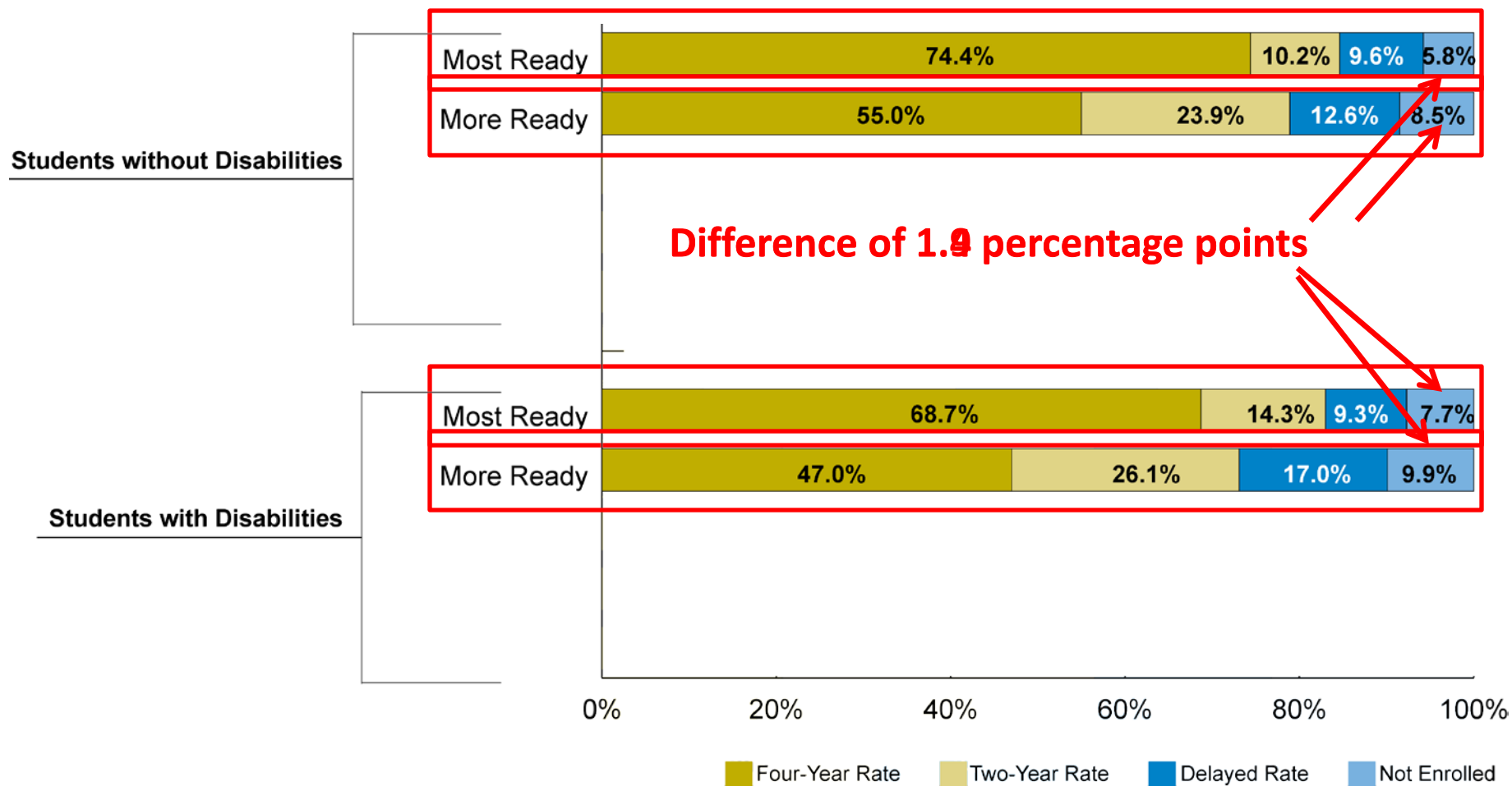


## Sector-Among those initially enrolling after high school graduation, students with disabilities were:

- More likely to utilize in-state public 2-yr and 4-yr schools rather than private institutions

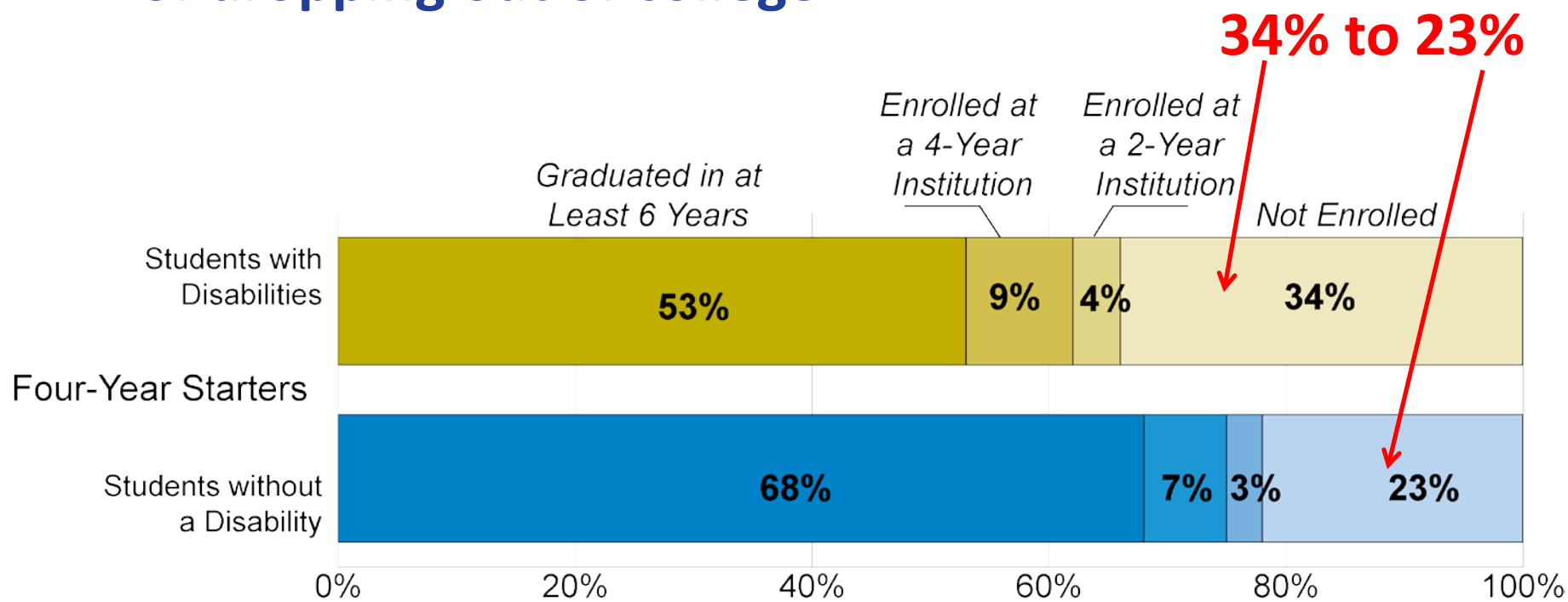


# Differences in overall enrollment were fairly minimal at the top of the college readiness index



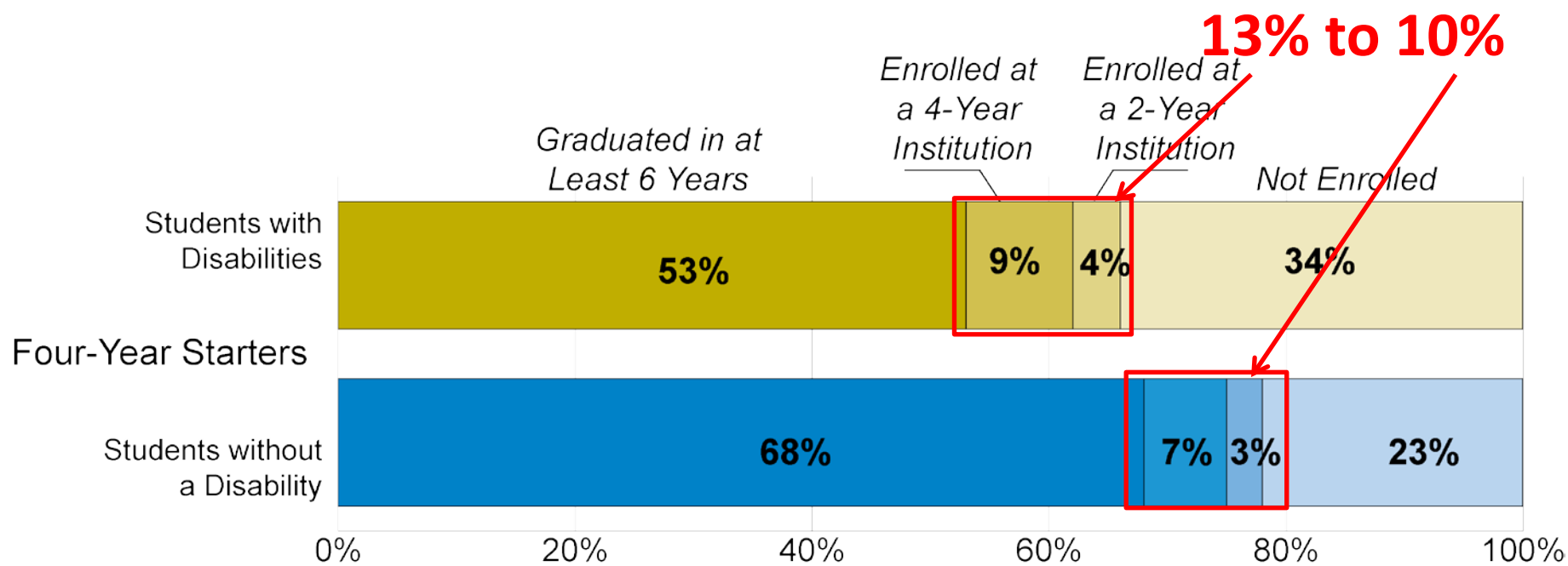
# There were large differences between the two groups in terms of end of study status.

- Students with disabilities were at a much higher risk of dropping out of college



# There were large differences between the two groups in terms of end of study status.

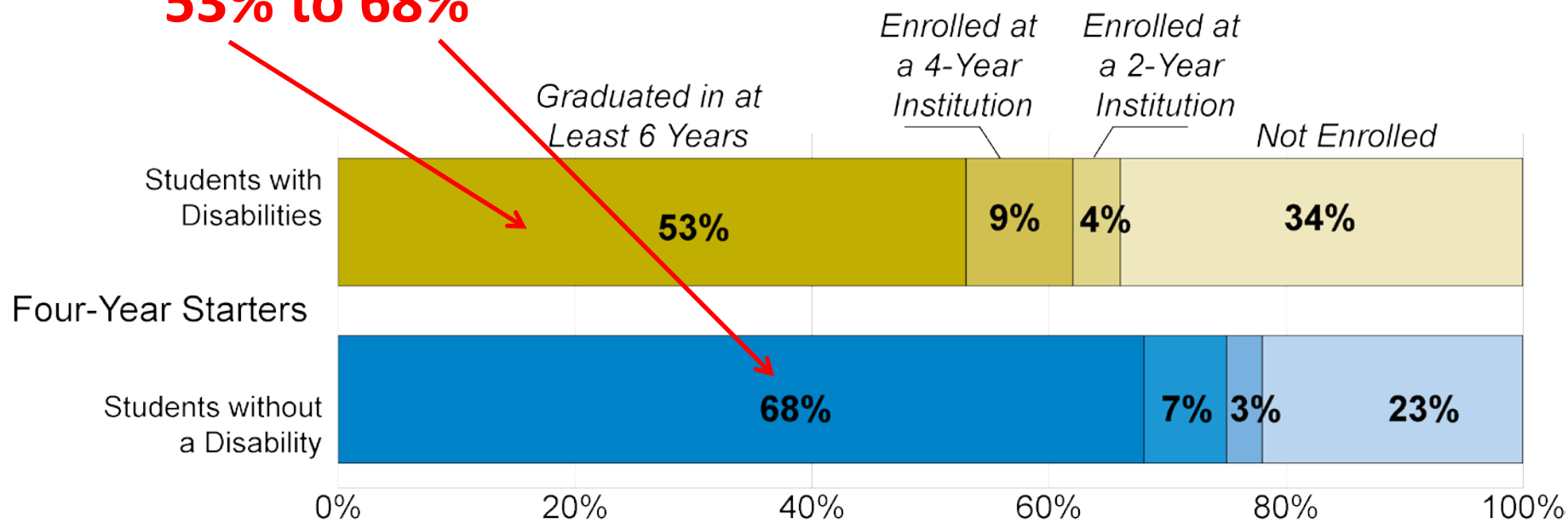
- A higher proportion of students with disabilities were still enrolled at the end of the study



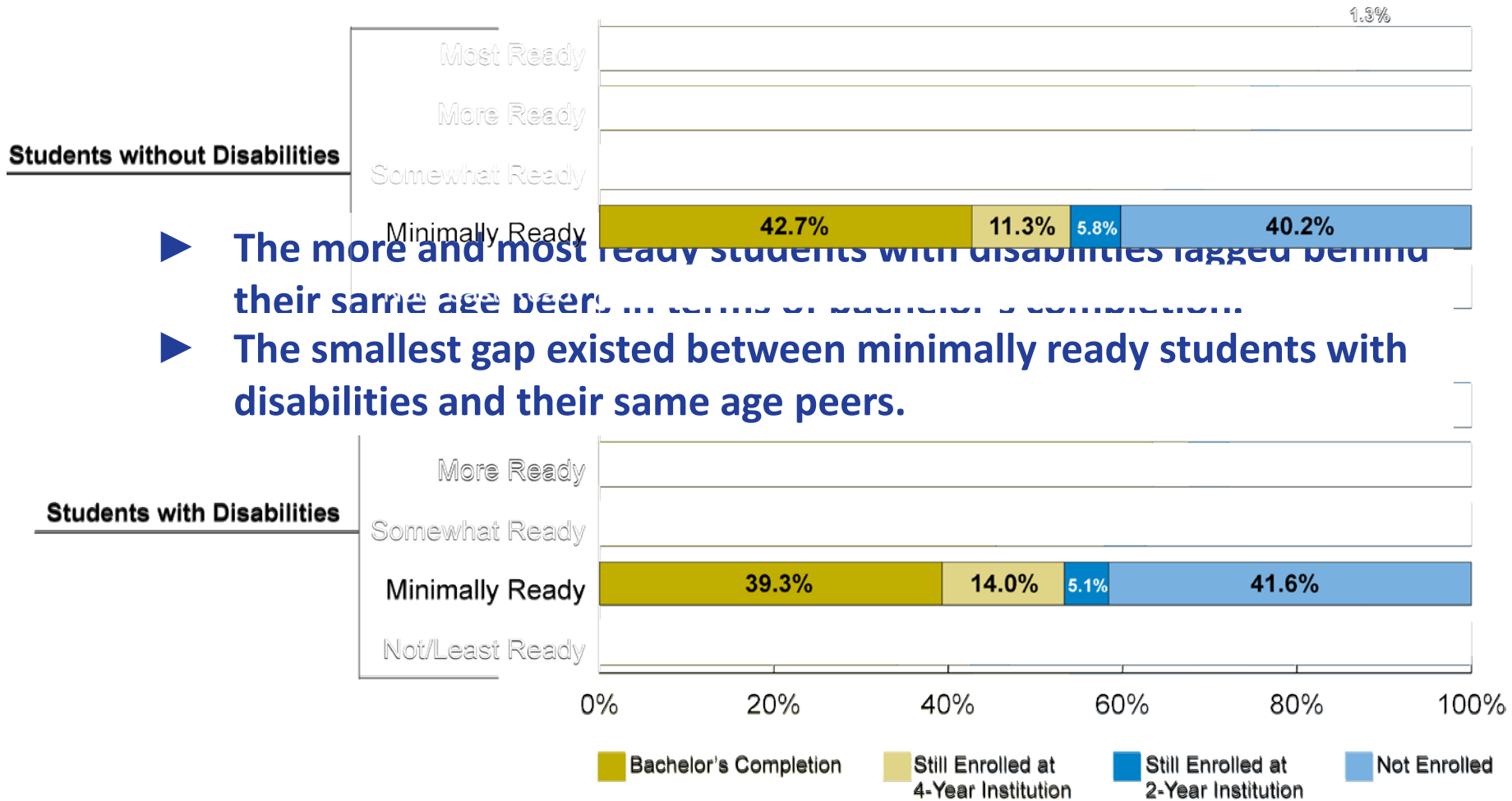
# There were large differences between the two groups in terms of end of study status.

- Students with disabilities were significantly less likely to complete a bachelor's degree in six years

**53% to 68%**



# Disability Status, College Readiness, and Bachelor's Completion





# **There were significant differences between the various disability subgroups in terms of the postsecondary outcomes.**

- Students with multiple disabilities and those in the other orthopedic category seemed to outperform other disability subgroups.
- This was in terms of basic enrollment and degree completion among four-year starters.
- In most measures, these students approximated and in some cases had higher completion/outcome attainment rates than students without a disability.
- The within group differences might be just as important as the between group differences.

# What is Needed?

- The Disabilities Advisory Committee wants to see:
  - Systematic data gathering on students with disabilities for establishing:
    - Benchmarks about enrollment, provision of accommodations, budget investments
  - Capacity to track student performance for students with disabilities regarding:
    - Persistence, retention, time-to-credential, completion

# Disabilities Advisory Committee

- Major Goal: Disability Metrics
  - Subgroup on Longitudinal Data System: inclusion of students with disabilities (classification system for types of disabilities). Brad Hedrick – UIUC
  - Subgroup on Annual Report template: development of new annual reporting in the URG. Inclusive of student demographics, budget/expenditures, provision of accommodations and unique campus features. Tom L. Thompson – Retired, Harper College

# Contact Information

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