



Illinois Education Research Council

College Readiness and Choice: The Longitudinal Study of the Illinois Class of 2002

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Why Study the College Readiness and College-Going Patterns of Illinois' High School Graduates?

- Illinois has just strengthened its high school graduation requirements for the future, and this study provides evidence on where we are now.
- The preparedness of Illinois' high school graduates impacts their future opportunities. It also is related to the roles and responsibilities of our state's institutions of higher education.
- Illinois provides access to postsecondary education by relying more heavily than many other states on out-of-state enrollment and enrollment in-state in the private sector. This study will tell us what sorts of high school graduates are choosing which enrollment options, and how enrollment and college readiness relate to degree completion.



Some Introductory Statistics:



Illinois places in the middle of states with regard to college going.

Immediate college continuation rate **57%**

National rank **22nd**

Source: Postsecondary Education Opportunity, November 2004. 2002 data



Combining in-and out-migration, Illinois ranks #2 in the net out- migration of freshmen

	<u>Rate</u>	<u>National Rank</u>
% of Illinois-resident freshmen who enrolled in state	75%	34th
% of freshmen in Illinois institutions coming from out of state	13%	45th

Source: *Postsecondary Education Opportunity, October, 2004. 2002 data*



Illinois provides less access through its public four-year sector than most other states

Where Illinois Freshmen Enroll In-State	<u>Percent</u>	National <u>Rank</u>
Public 2-year institutions	40%	15th
Public 4-year institutions	38%	42nd
Private institutions	22%	6th
	<hr/> 100%	

Source: Generated from Postsecondary Education Opportunity database containing Fall 2002 IPEDS aggregate public and private institutionally reported data



The IERC Study



College Readiness and Choice: The Longitudinal Study of the Illinois Class of 2002

The IERC is undertaking a unique longitudinal study of a cohort of a state's public high school graduates.

- We are using ACT data (both test scores and background questionnaire information) first collected through PSAE in 2001 – so the study includes nearly all of Illinois' public high-school class of 2002, not just those who are college bound.
- We are using a national database of college-enrolled students to understand access to and persistence in different types of colleges nationwide. We plan to follow the cohort for six years.
- The results that I am presenting today are for the class of 2002 from Illinois' public high schools (N=113,660).



IERC College Readiness Index

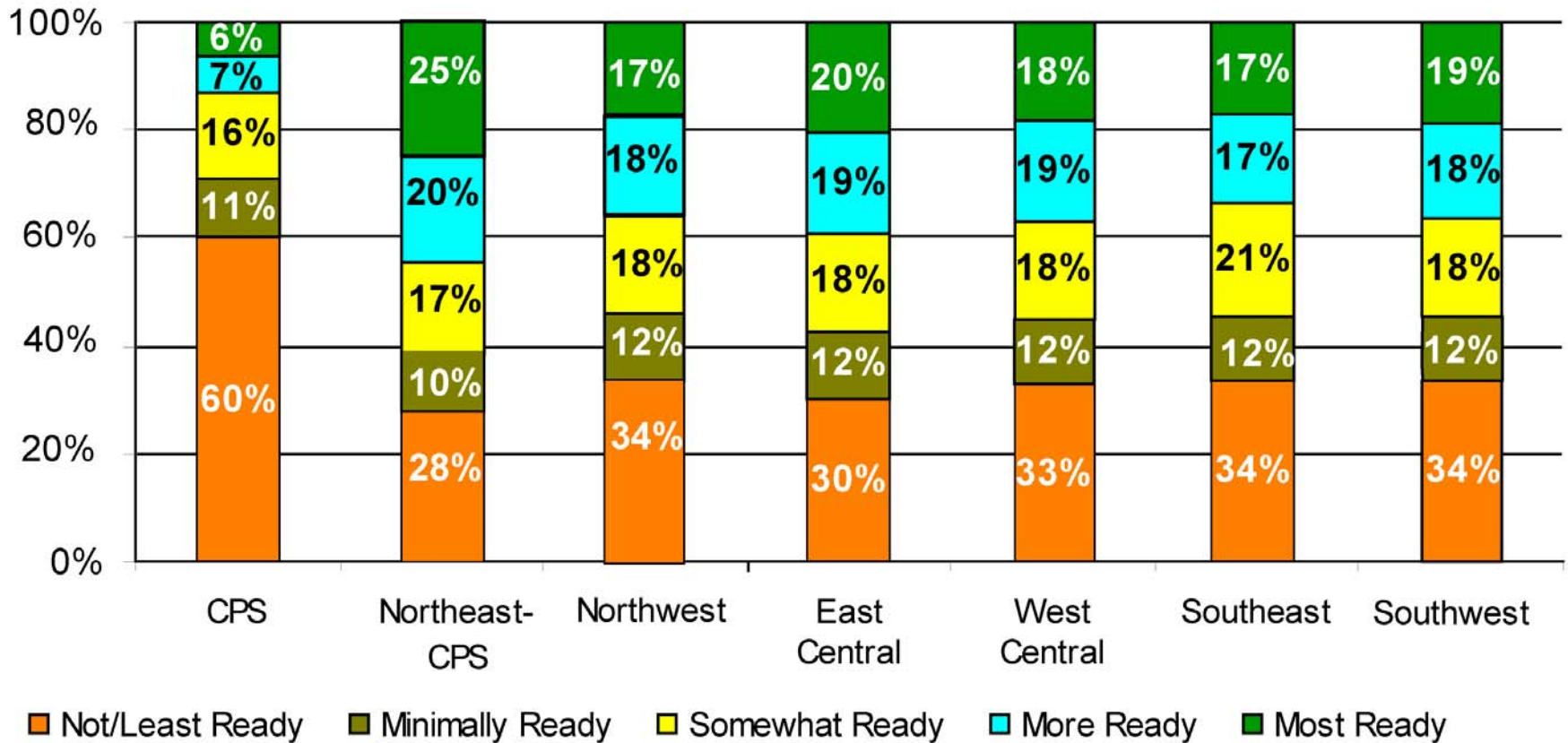
Distribution of the Class of 2002

Not/Least Ready	34%	
Minimally Ready	11%	}
Somewhat Ready	17%	
More Ready	17%	}
Most Ready	20%	

- Roughly a third of the Class of 2002 are not/least ready for college, about a third are partially ready, and about a third are college ready.*



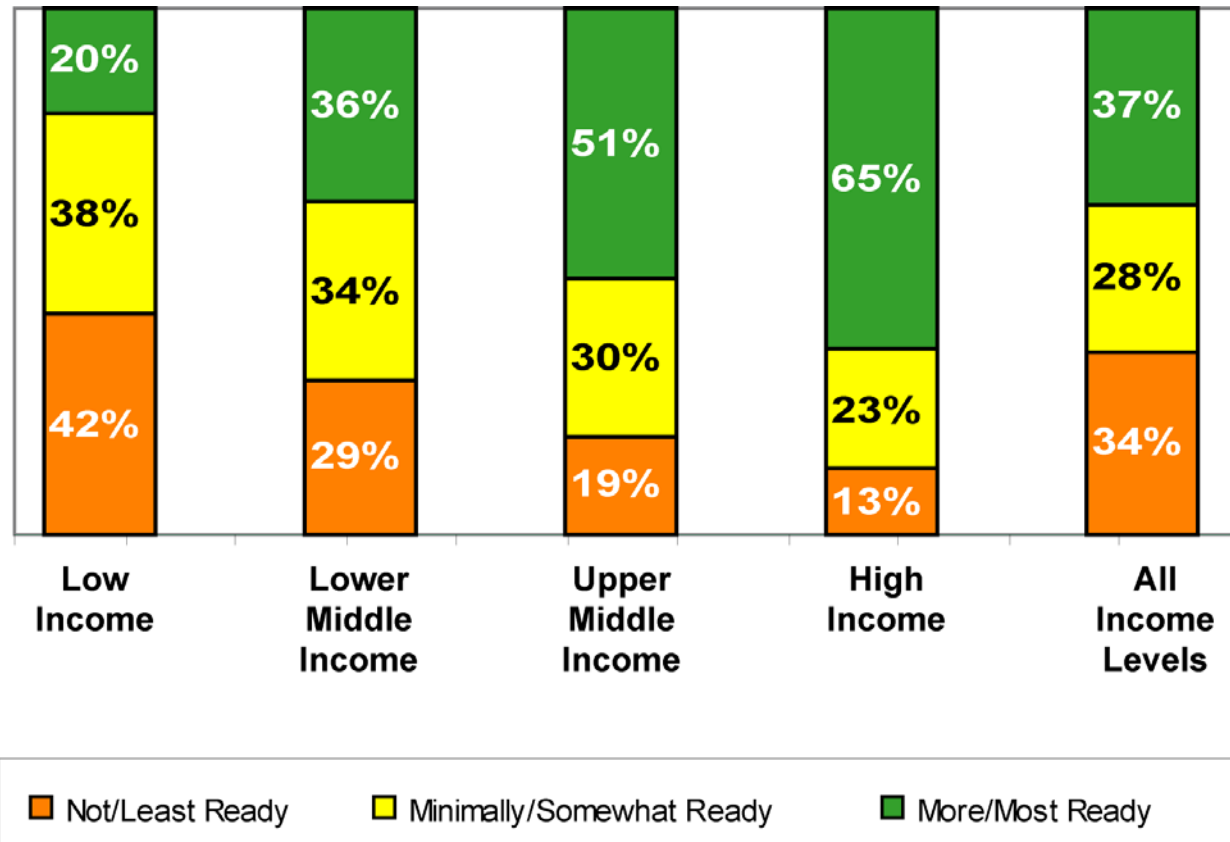
Readiness by Region of High School



- *Students in most regions have quite similar readiness patterns. CPS has a weaker distribution, and the Northeast-CPS has the strongest.*
- *College readiness is an issue across the state.*



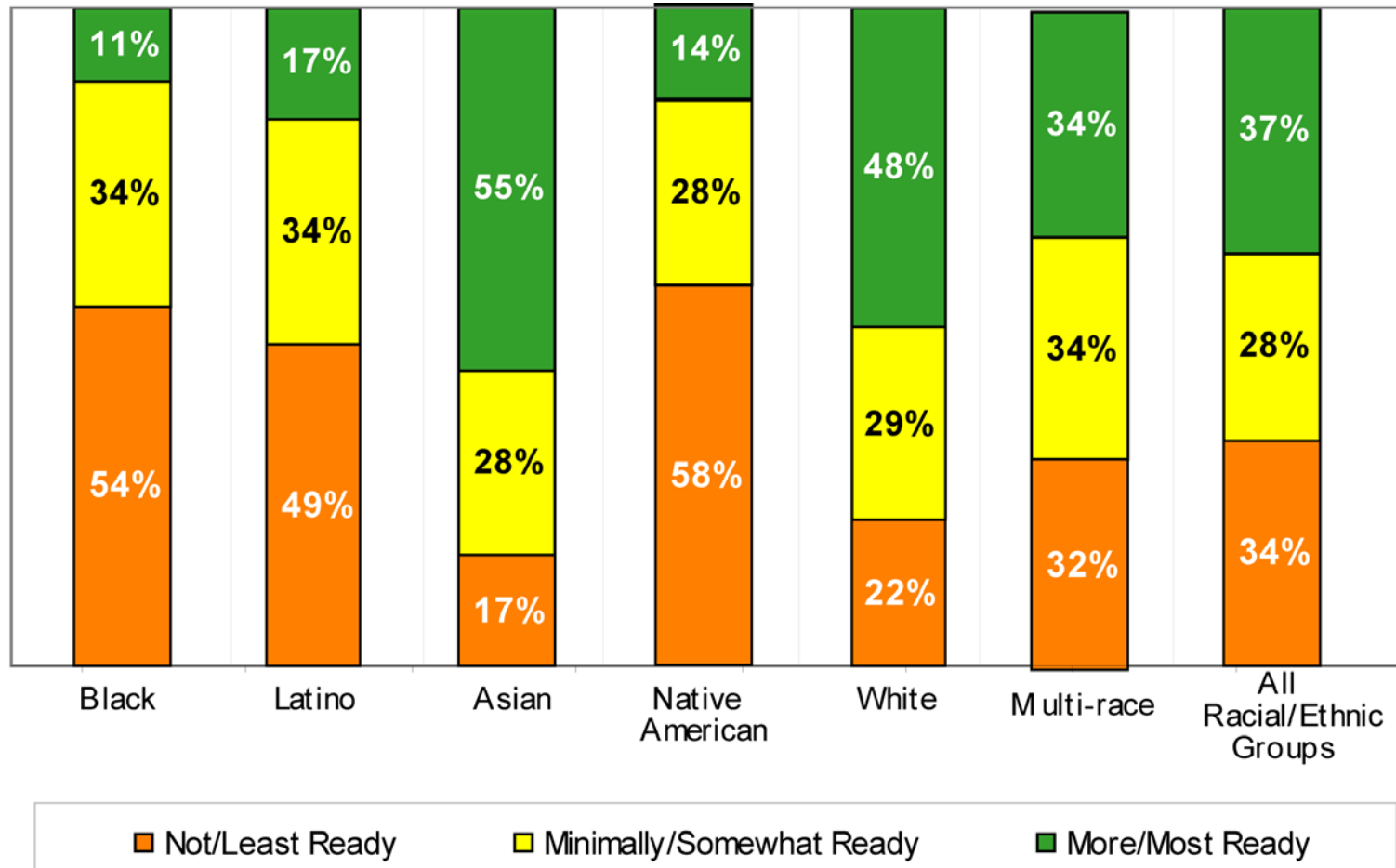
Readiness by Family Income Quartiles



- *Students from different family income groups are finishing high school with very different levels of college readiness.*



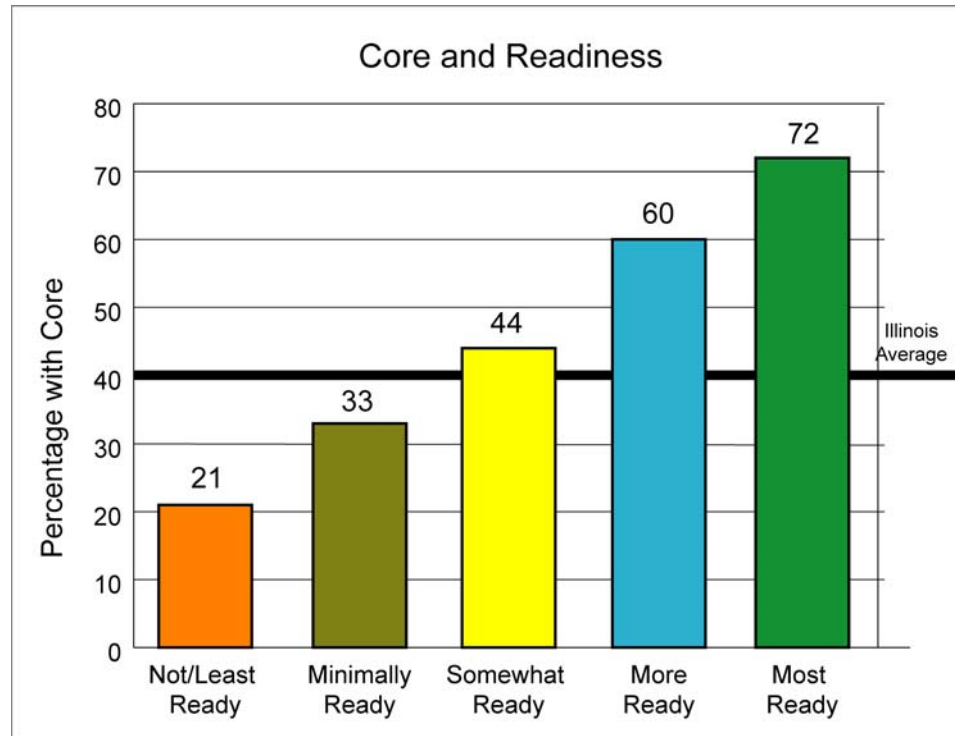
Readiness by Race/Ethnicity



•Students from different racial/ethnic groups are finishing high school with very different levels of college readiness.



Percent Taking ACT-Recommended Core Courses by Readiness



- *Taking the ACT-recommended core (which exceeds the new Illinois high-school graduation requirements) is strongly related to college readiness.*
- *In other analyses, we find that taking the recommended number of courses provides less of a readiness boost for many non-Asian minorities.*



Math, School Teacher Quality Index and Readiness

- **Taking higher level math courses (i.e. beyond Algebra II) is strongly related to readiness for college.**
- **More than half of students in each racial/ethnic group (with the exception of Native American) reported taking a math course beyond Algebra II, and each group benefited from moving up the math ladder.**
- **Taking these courses in schools with a higher teacher quality index* (TQI) provides an additional readiness boost. This is especially true for minority students.**
- **However – access to higher TQI schools is not equally distributed across race/ethnicity – 45% of black students and 24% of Latinos are in lowest quartile TQI high schools versus 9% of white students and 7% of Asians. (24% of black students, 10% of Latino and Native American students, and 1% of Asian and white students in lowest 10% TQI schools).**
- **These findings add a new dimension to understanding the differences in readiness of students by race/ethnicity.**
- ***See IERC 2005-1 for details of the IERC's Teacher Quality Index.**



College Going in AY 2002-2003



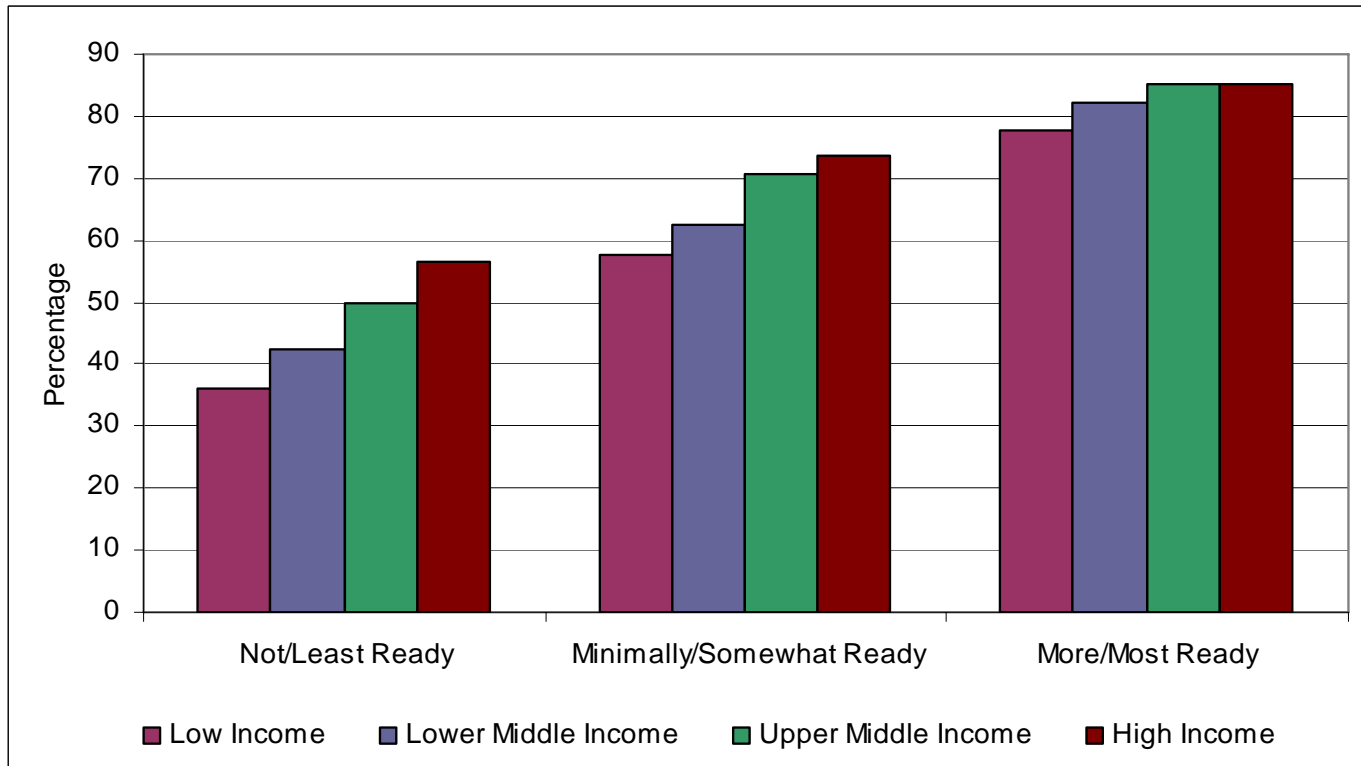
Class of 2002's College-Going by Readiness

Readiness Index	% to College In 2002/03
Not/Least Ready	43%
Minimally Ready	58%
Somewhat Ready	69%
More Ready	79%
Most Ready	84%

- *College-going is strongly related to readiness.*
- *More than two in five not/least-ready students continue immediately into postsecondary education.*



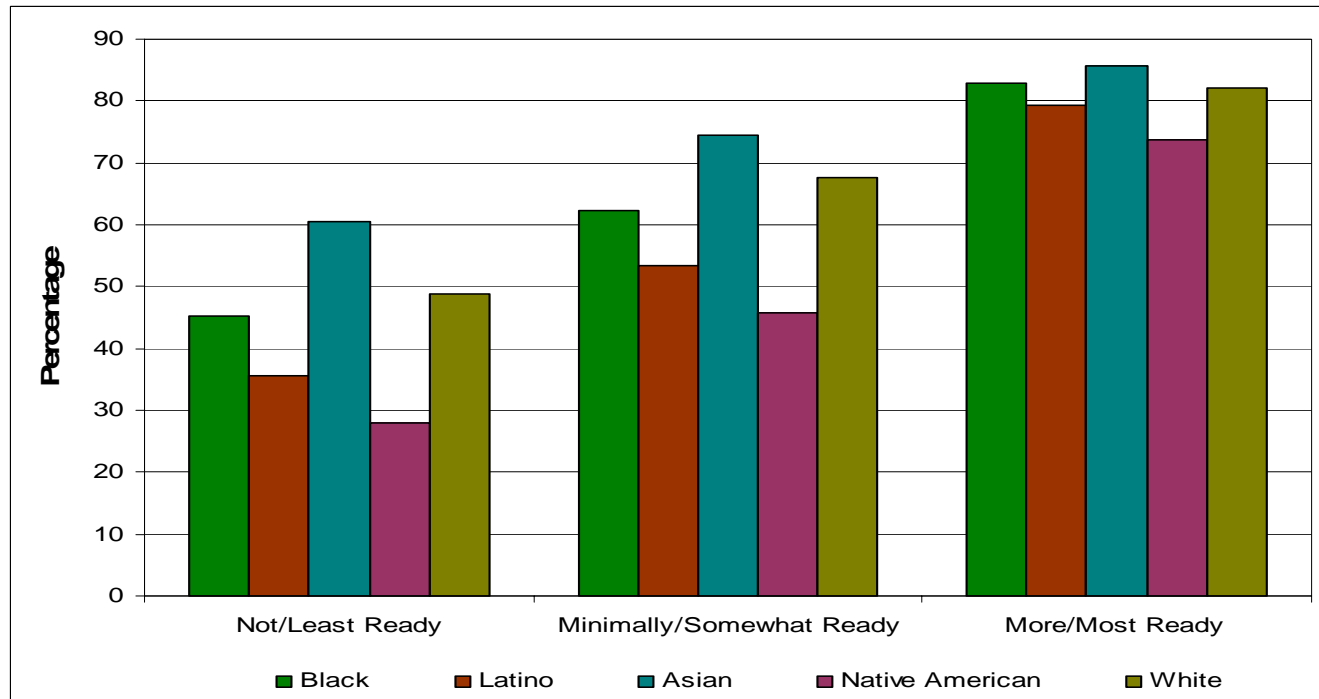
Class of 2002's College-Going Rate by Family Income and College Readiness, AY 2002-2003



- *Family income is most strongly related to college going for not/least-ready students*
- *The relationship of family income to college going weakens as readiness increases.*



Class of 2002's College Going Rate by Race/Ethnicity and College Readiness, AY 2002-2003



- *At each readiness level, Native American students are least likely to continue to college, followed by Latino and black students.*
- *College-going rates for black students are approaching those of white students when readiness is taken into account.*
- *College-going rates for more/most-ready students are more similar among the racial/ethnic groups.*

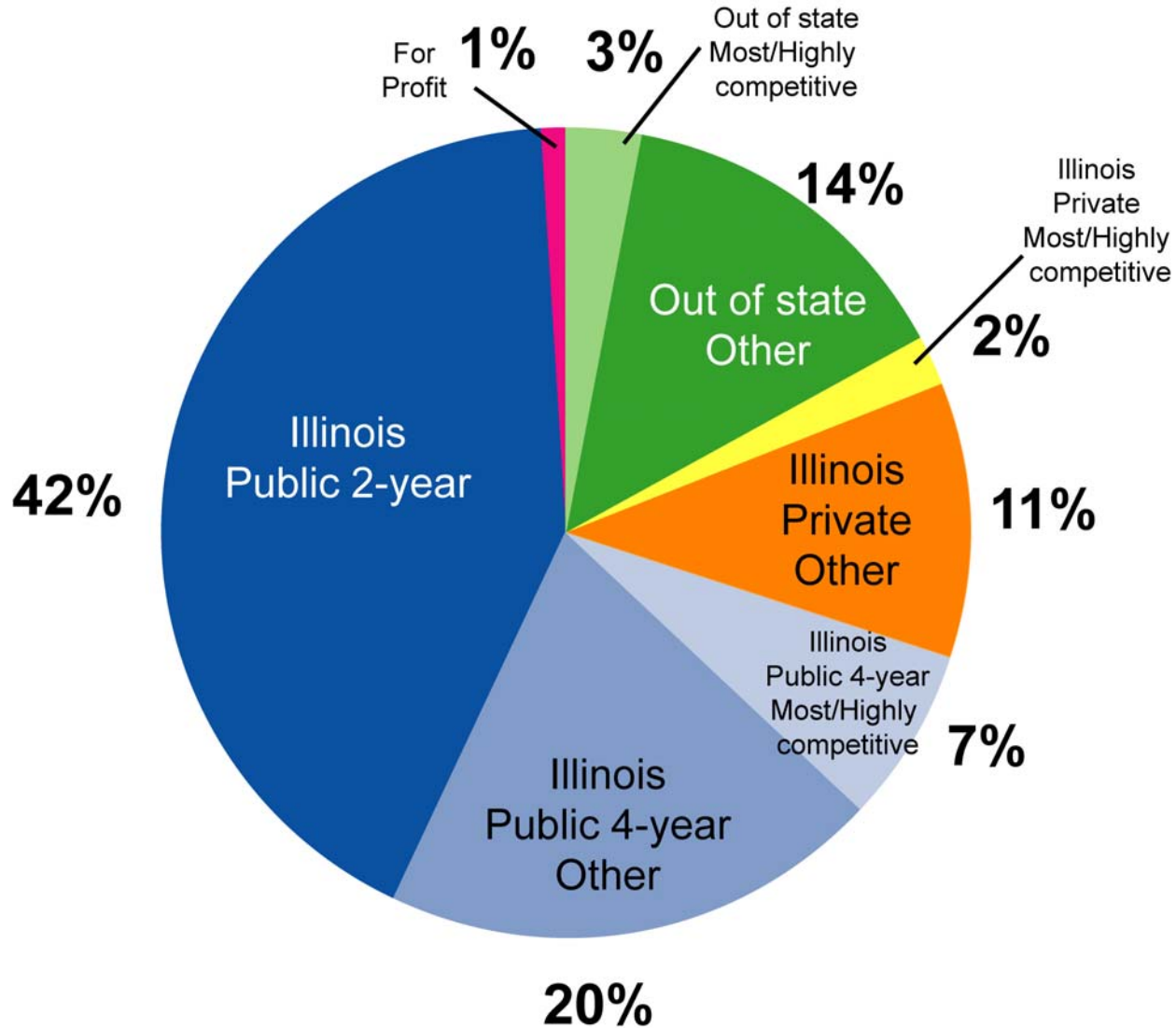


Where the Class of 2002 Went to College in 2002-2003



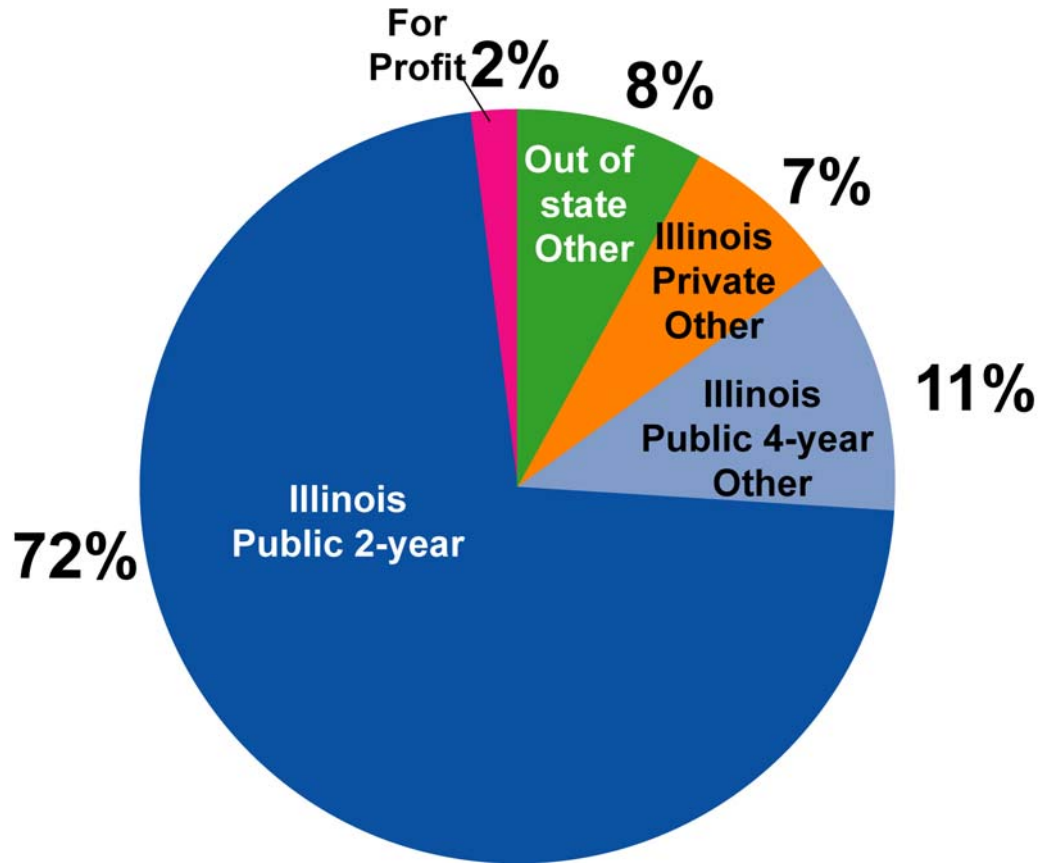


Class of 2002's First College Type, AY 2002-2003





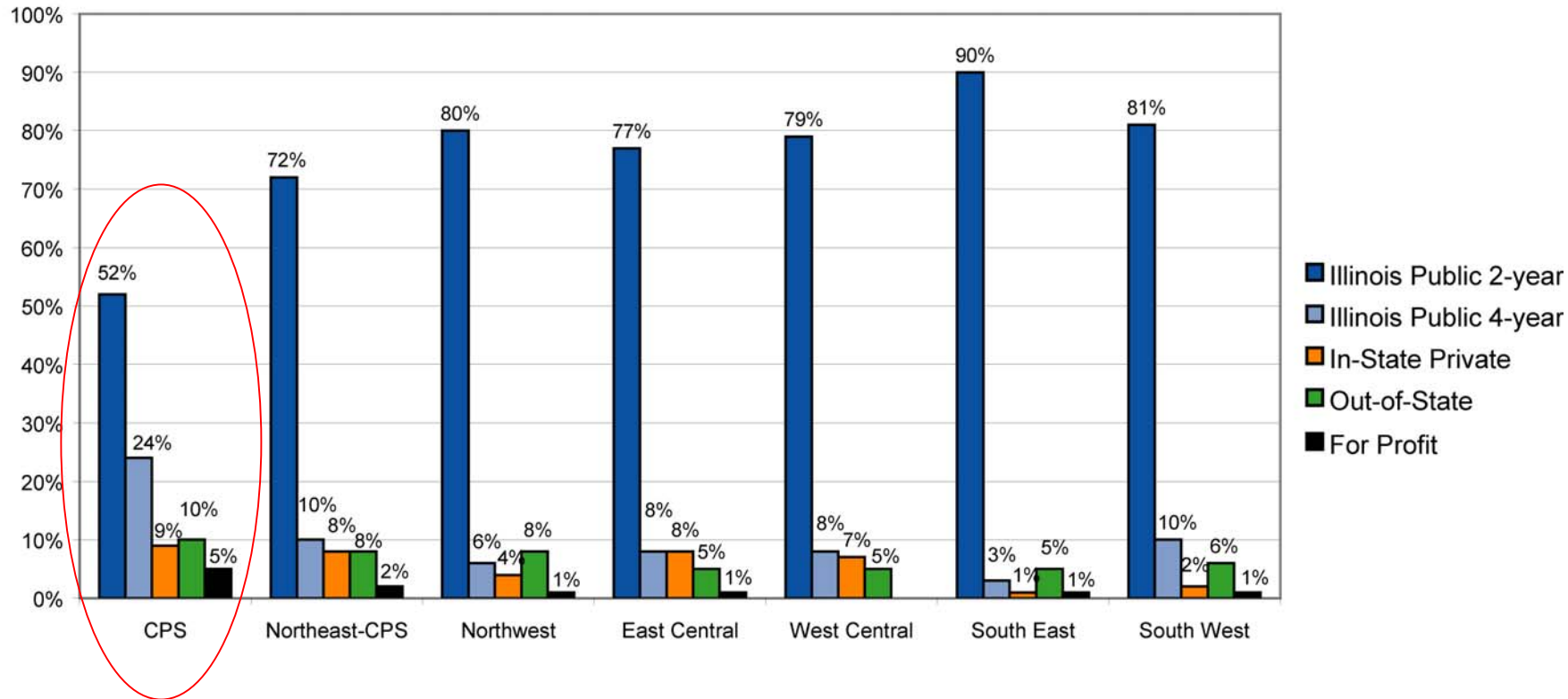
First College Type of Not/Least-Ready Students Who Went to College in AY 2002-2003



- Overall, 2-year institutions provide access to postsecondary education for almost three quarters of not/least-ready college-goers.



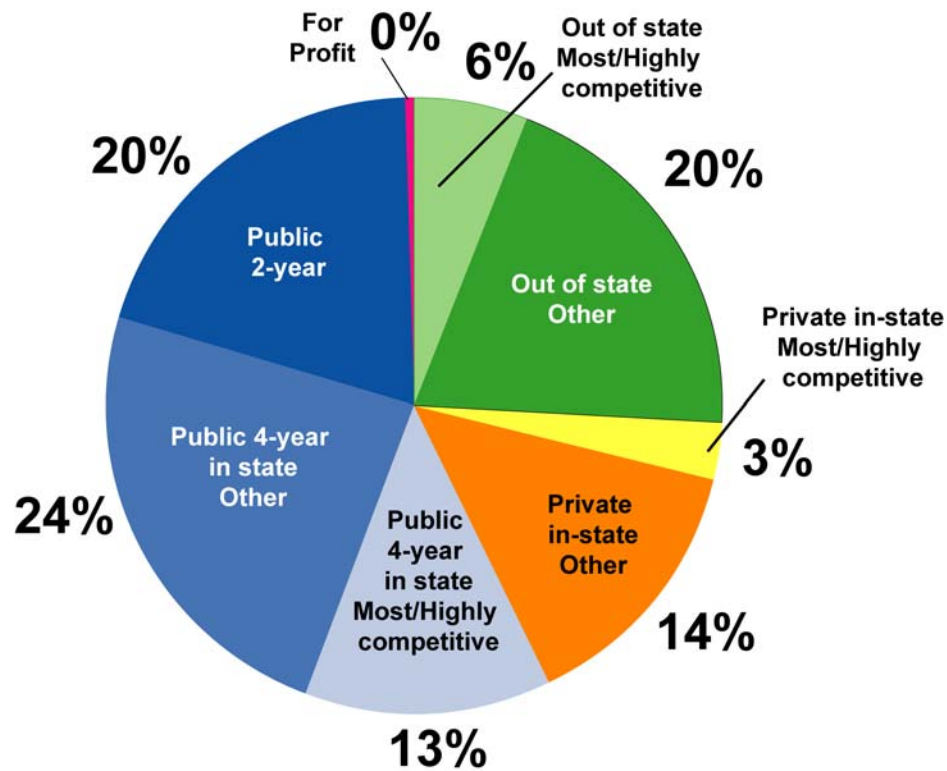
College-Choice Patterns by Region for Not/Least-Ready Students



- Not/least-ready students from CPS schools are more likely to enroll in a public 4-year institution than are students from other areas. While half enroll in a 2-year institution, one quarter enroll in a public 4-year institution.*



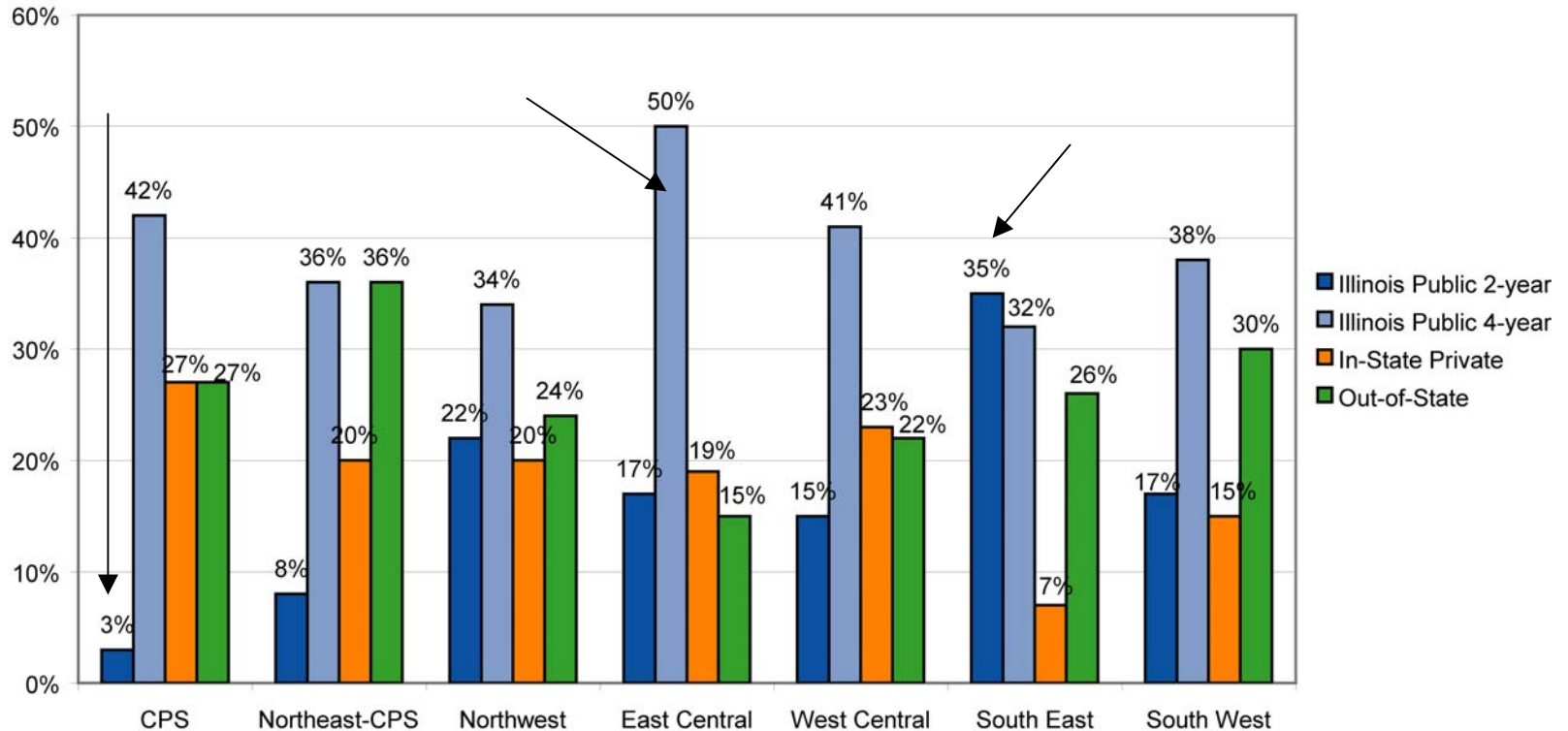
First College Type of More/Most-Ready Students Who Went to College in AY 2002-2003



- *More than one quarter of more/most-ready students leave Illinois for college.*
- *On the other hand, one in five more/most-ready students begin postsecondary education at an Illinois 2-year institution.*



College-Choice Patterns by Region for Most-Ready Students



- *The pattern of enrollment for the most-ready group of graduates is quite varied among the regions, reflecting the availability of types of institutions.*
 - *More than one in three in the southeast region enroll in a two-year institution.*
 - *In contrast, half of those in the east-central region enroll in an in-state, four-year institution.*



Implications of the First Transition Year

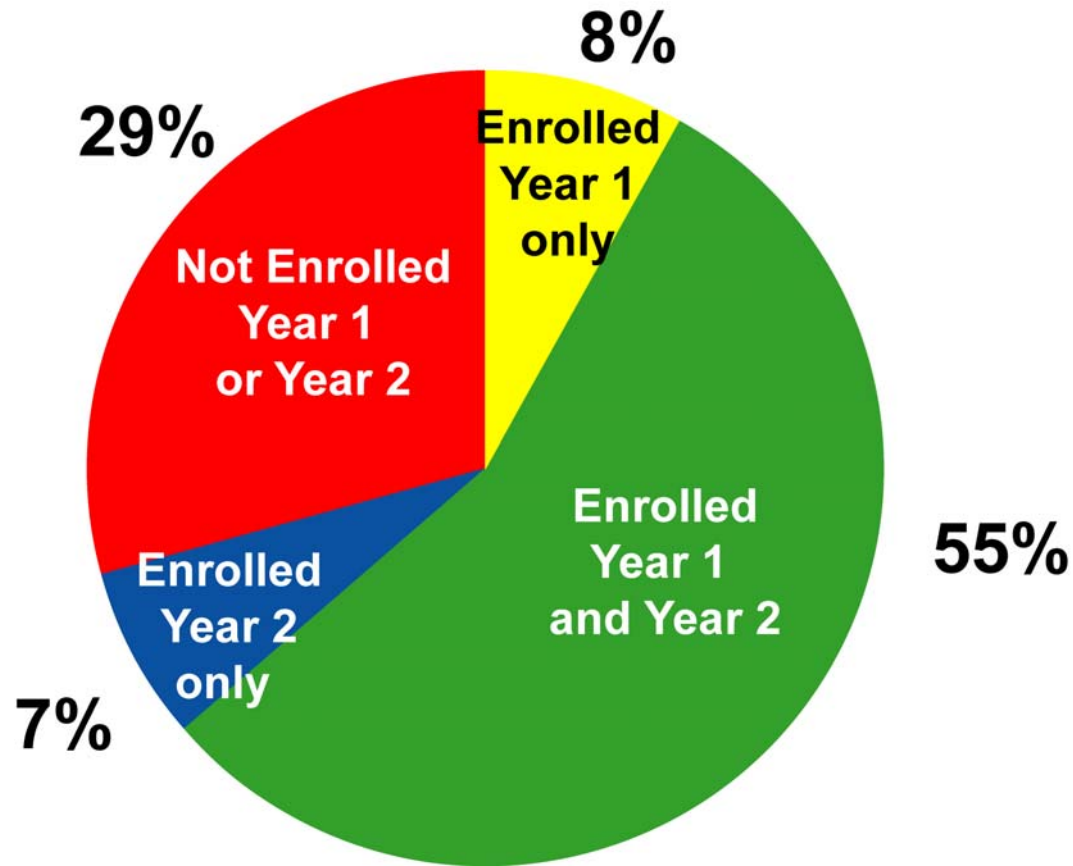
- **Large percentages of Illinois' high school graduates are going to college under-prepared for success. Community colleges provide access to postsecondary education for three out of four of the not/least-ready students who enroll in college immediately after high school.**
- **Less-ready non-Asian minorities and low income students are still less likely to enroll than less-ready Asian, white and higher income students.**
- **The differential distribution of types of colleges by region in Illinois influences enrollment patterns of those continuing into higher education at each level of readiness. Strong institutions (both 2-year and 4-year) are needed throughout the state to maximize the potential of Illinois' "human capital." Additional tracking will help us to assess whether there are positive or negative persistence consequences depending on where students first enroll.**



Starting, staying, moving, leaving – the second year of college enrollment



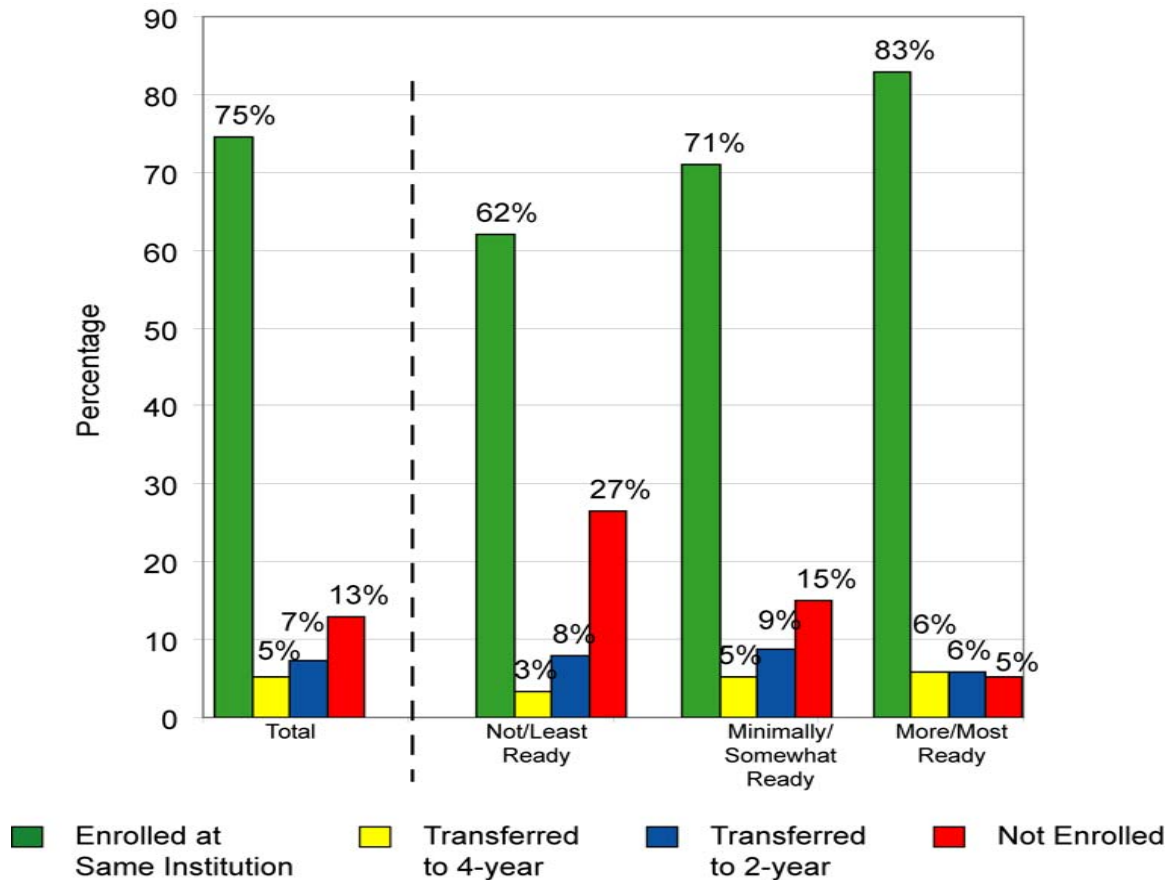
Second Year Status of the Class of 2002



- *By Year 2, 71% of the Class of 2002 had enrolled in postsecondary education (100%-29%).*



Second Year Status of 2002-2003 Starters by Readiness



- *87% of first-year enrollees were still enrolled, with 75% remaining at their first institution.*
- *Half of those who left enrolled elsewhere, with the majority transferring to 2-year institutions.*
- *Readiness again plays an important role in who remains enrolled and who transfers.*



Final Observations

- The IERC study demonstrates that high school preparation is a **critical challenge for schools across the state**. Raising graduation requirements is good start, but attention also needs to be focused on the **content of courses**.
- Academic preparedness is the **major critical component** to college access. It also strongly influences the type of institution attended, and continuation. All high school students benefit from being in higher quality schools, and access to such an education needs to be more equalized.
- We will be providing updates on this research as we follow the high school class of 2002 through college to graduation.



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