

Looking At The ISSUES

Stark
Education
Partnership
inc.

January 18, 2008



What is Our Real College-Going Rate?

For the first time in history, more Stark County residents are enrolled in college or graduate school than in high school. Further, that college enrollment appears to have increased by 39% over 2002... – ISSUES, October 12, 2007

The college-going rate – it's a statistic that increasingly drives programs and policies both in Stark County and Ohio. That statistic most commonly used is the number of high school seniors who directly enter Ohio colleges and universities the fall following their graduation. In Stark that rate is about 49%; for the state, 52.8%.¹

Is this our real college-going rate? A new report by the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) says no. One reason is delayed entry students, those students who sit out for a year or more before enrolling in college. While such non-traditional students can be any age, the report, *College Enrollment Patterns of Ohio First Time Freshmen*² raises substantial questions about using the standard college-going rate reported in state high school transition reports.³

Here is what the report found about Ohio's enrollment patterns:

- More than 27% of first time college freshmen in Ohio for fall 2006 were delayed entry students - students entering college more than one year after graduating from high school.

Delayed entry is one issue impacting the college-going rate, and another concern is how many students go out of state to attend college.

- The report found that only 84% of those students who go directly to college after high school stay in state.

Data used in the report came from the federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Students are not tracked to district of origin as in OBR's high school transition reports. Findings may, or may not, be representative of Stark County.

What we do know for present is that the number of Stark residents of all ages enrolled in college is increasing and that given these findings our college-going rate is probably over 60%. Yet, we also know that 48,412⁴ over age 25 once started but have not completed college. With the county goal of 80% college going closer in sight, the challenge may increasingly be one of persistence, finishing a degree.

Looking At The Week

Two Schools of Distinction in Stark County

“For the second time in three years, the Ohio Department of Education named Hoover High in North Canton a school of distinction. One other Stark school..., Marlboro Elementary in the Marlinton Local School District, ... also achieved the honor.”

“State Superintendent Susan Tave Zelman announced the awards Wednesday at the Ohio Special Education Leadership Conference in Columbus. The department administers the program to recognize schools whose students, including those with disabilities, achieve high academic performance.”

Go to <http://www.cantonrep.com/index.php?ID=395682&Category=9&subCategoryId=0> to read the complete Canton Repository article.

¹ Based on figures for the class of 2004 to allow for state comparisons used in this report.

² The full report may be downloaded at: <http://regents.ohio.gov/perfrpt/index.php>

³ These reports, *Making the Transition from High School to College in Ohio* are also available by year at: <http://regents.ohio.gov/perfrpt/index.php>

⁴ U.S. Census 2006 American Community Survey at: http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saif/main.html?_lang=en