

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

*Michigan's Economic Turnaround:
A Look at Women and Families*

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Educational Attainment: what the data tells us

1986-2006 - High School "Credential" Nationally

18 to 24 Yr Olds	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
1986	80.0%	84.1%
1996	79.9%	83.3%
2006	79.2%	85.1%

Source: American Council on Education, Minorities in Higher Education, 23rd Status Report (2008)

Educational Attainment: what the data tells us

1986 - 2006 - High School Credential Nationally

<u>18 to 24 Yr Olds</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
1986		
White	81.2%	84.9%
African American	72.3%	80.1%
Hispanic	57.4%	62.8%
1996		
White	86.3%	88.6%
African American	72.1%	79.1%
Hispanic	54.8%	60.5%
2006		
White	85.0%	88.8%
African American	72.0%	81.1%
Hispanic	63.4%	73.4%

Educational Attainment: what the data tells us

State of Michigan

Center for Educational Performance & Information

2004 - 2005 *High School Graduation Rate (4 years)*
87.67%
High School Dropout Rate
3.29%

2005-2006 *High School Graduation Rate (4 years)*
85.75%
High School Dropout Rate
3.79%

Educational Attainment: what the data tells us

“Too Many Girls Are Dropping Out of School”

(When Girls Don't Graduate We All Fail: A Call to Improve High School Graduation Rates for Girls. Nat. Women's Law Center (2007)

- 1 in 4 girls overall do not finish high school
- Dropout rates are even greater for female students of color

Source: EPE Research Center, *Diplomas Count: Ready for What?*
Education Week, June 2007

Educational Attainment: what the data tells us

2003-2004 Dropout Rates for Girls in Michigan

Of the 43 States for which data available,
Michigan was 32nd with a dropout rate
for girls of 29%

National Women's Law Center (2007), *When Girls Don't
Graduate, We All Fail*. p. 6

Educational Attainment: what the data tells us

Consequences of High Dropout Rate

- Unemployment
 - Employment prospects are worse than those of their male counterparts
- Low earnings over the life of employment
- Poor health and less access to health coverage
- Greater likelihood that children less likely to graduate from high school

Educational Attainment: what the data tells us

■ HOWEVER!

- The data also tells us that MOST COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE WOMEN

■ HOWEVER!

- Significant numbers of young women choose non-science, non-technology, non-engineering, and non-mathematics for their major course of study as they move into higher education

Educational Attainment: what the data tells us

- Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) are widely regarded as critical to the national economy
- Expanding and developing the STEM workforce is a critical issue for government, industry leaders, and educators.

Educational Attainment: what the data tells us

- *“Women’s representation in science and engineering declines further at the graduate level and yet again in the transition to the workplace.”*

Educational Attainment: what the data tells us

- *“Despite the tremendous gains that girls and women have made in education and the workforce during the past 50 years, progress has been uneven, and certain scientific and engineering disciplines remain overwhelmingly male.”*

AAUW, Why So Few? Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (February 2010)

The Research Informs Us On...

- The impact of stereotypes and learning environments on girls, especially in STEM education
- Changes in recruiting and retention practices in higher education are necessary
- Bias, often unconscious affects progress in scientific and engineering fields (“this is not a field that women generally do well in” or “they don’t have the quantitative aptitude to do well in the field”)

What the Research Tells Us

- Women working in STEM fields tend to have higher earnings than do other women in the workforce, although a gender pay gap exists in STEM occupations as in other fields
- More can be done to encourage girls and women to pursue 21st Century fields in demand by employers

What the Research Tells Us

CONCLUSIONS

- **Reverse high school dropout rates**
- **Counteract Stereotypes & Bias (conscious and unconscious)**
- **Cultivate girls achievement and interest in science and engineering**
- **Continue to create supportive environments on college and university campuses for women**

Thank You!

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