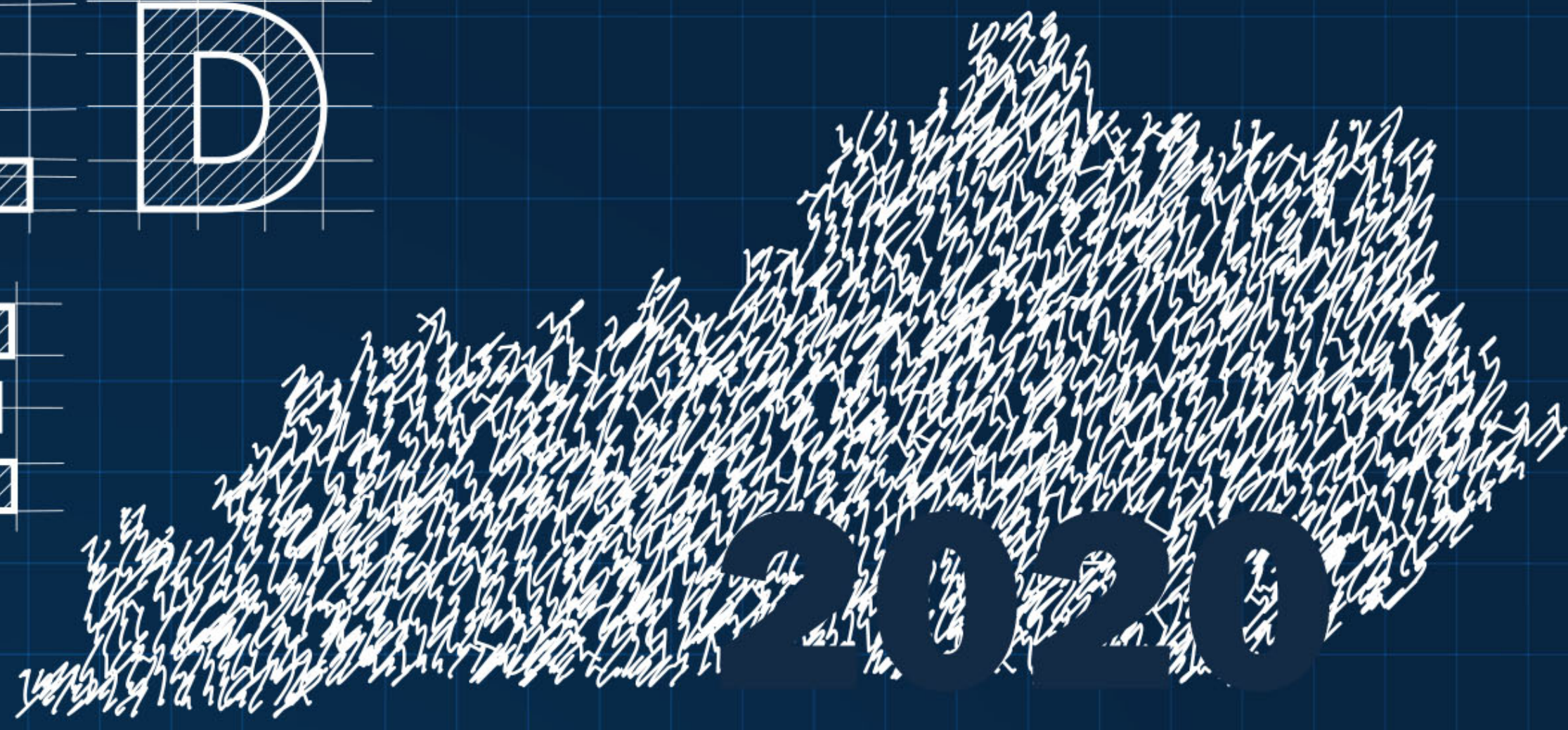




# BIG BOLD FUTURE

Kentucky's National Rankings Report



## Getting Kentuckians on a path to a larger life through education

With the release of this report, the Prichard Committee launches a new approach to measuring Kentucky's progress in pursuit of a "path to a larger life" for more Kentuckians – with educational excellence at the core. We have chosen 12 indicators that allow us to see Kentucky from multiple angles: comparing our progress relative to other states, seeing trends over multiple years, and identifying areas where urgent attention is needed. Together, **these indicators allow us to present a vision of a Big, Bold Future where every Kentuckian can thrive, contribute to, and benefit from our shared progress as a state.**

Individually, each indicator tells a story about the success of our policies and practices. Collectively, the indicators we have chosen in this report tell us if Kentucky is on the path to a big, bold future for all Kentuckians.

Our indicators track that vision across four age groups:

- For the youngest Kentuckians, we're checking for healthy births, incomes above 200% of poverty, and preschool participation.
- In their school years, students lay the foundations for a life of learning. Fourth-grade reading proficiency, eighth-grade math proficiency, and high school graduation are our indicators.
- Beyond high school, adult success calls for further learning and preparation. Accordingly, we're tracking enrollment in postsecondary education and graduation rates. We're showing rates for Kentucky's public two-year and public four-year institutions separately.
- Finally, across adult experience, we're looking for indications of success and participation. Educationally, we're looking at adults 25 to 64 who hold associate degrees or higher. Economically, we're tracking median income, and socially, we're using voter turnout as a gauge of citizen engagement.

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## Closing the digital divide is a prerequisite for progress.

Closing the digital divide for students, families, and communities is paramount for Kentucky to truly embrace a big bold future of education excellence and economic opportunity. Research demonstrates access to the internet is increasingly a necessity for communities' innovation and productivity, as well as students' and families' ability to be fully engaged and maximize their quality of life. No student, no family, no household in Kentucky should be left behind due to lack of this basic infrastructure. Moving many of the indicators on these pages requires universal access to adequate broadband



High speed internet access

42

Rank Among 50 States

82% of Kentuckians had access to broadband internet in 2018.



## Early Childhood

Babies with healthy birth weight

**37**

Rank Among 50 States

91% of babies born in Kentucky had a healthy birth weight in 2018.

Children above 200% of poverty

**39**

Rank Among 50 States

55% of Kentucky children were above the federal poverty level in 2018.

Preschool participation (Ages 3-4)

**37**

Rank Among 50 States

44% of Kentuckians ages 3 and 4 were enrolled in public or private preschool in 2018.

## K-12 Students

4th grade reading proficiency

**26**

Rank Among 50 States

35% of Kentucky public school 4th graders scored proficient or above on 2019 NAEP tests.

8th grade math proficiency

**39**

Rank Among 50 States

29% of Kentucky public school 8th graders scored proficient or above on 2019 NAEP tests.

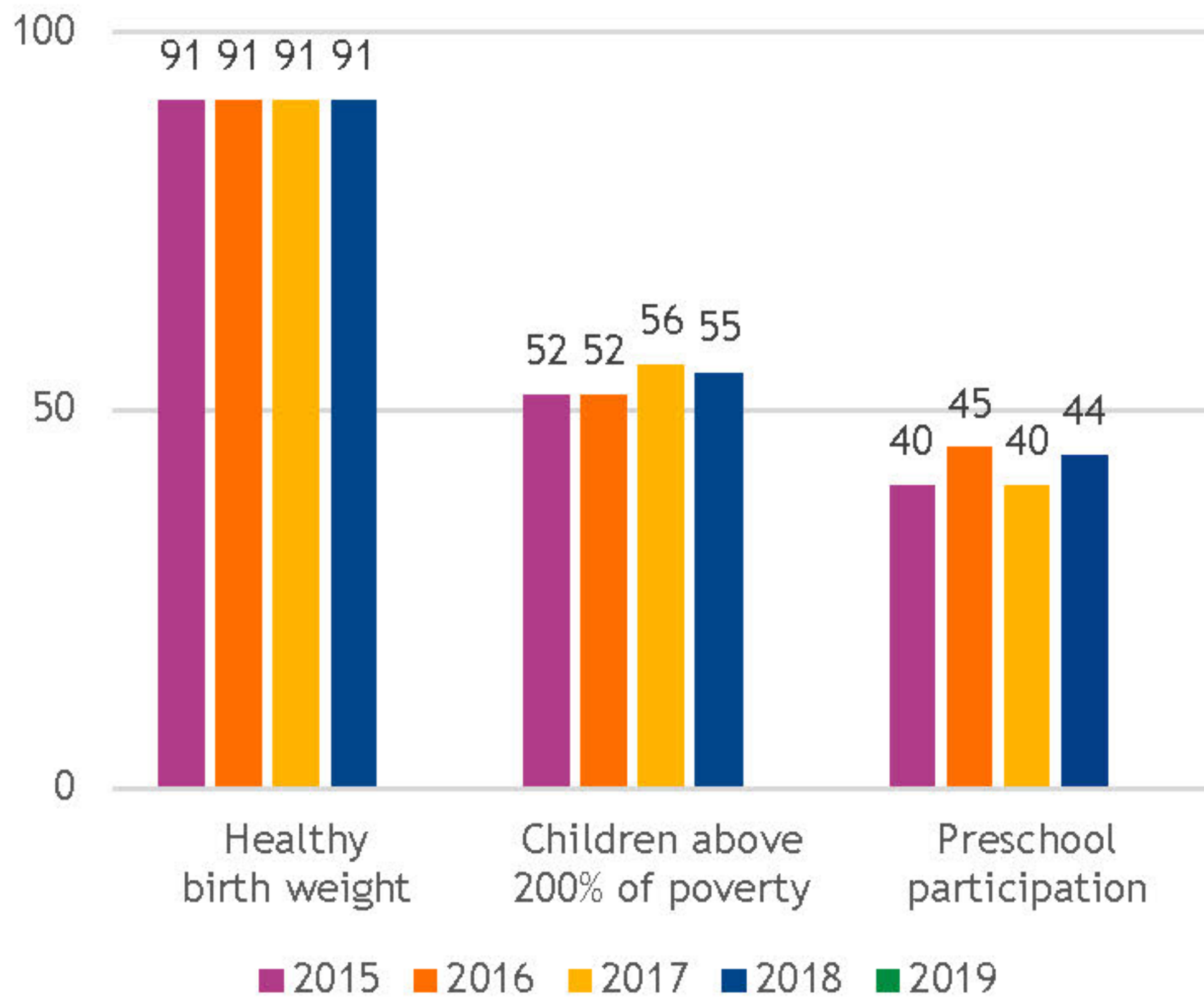
High school graduation

**3**

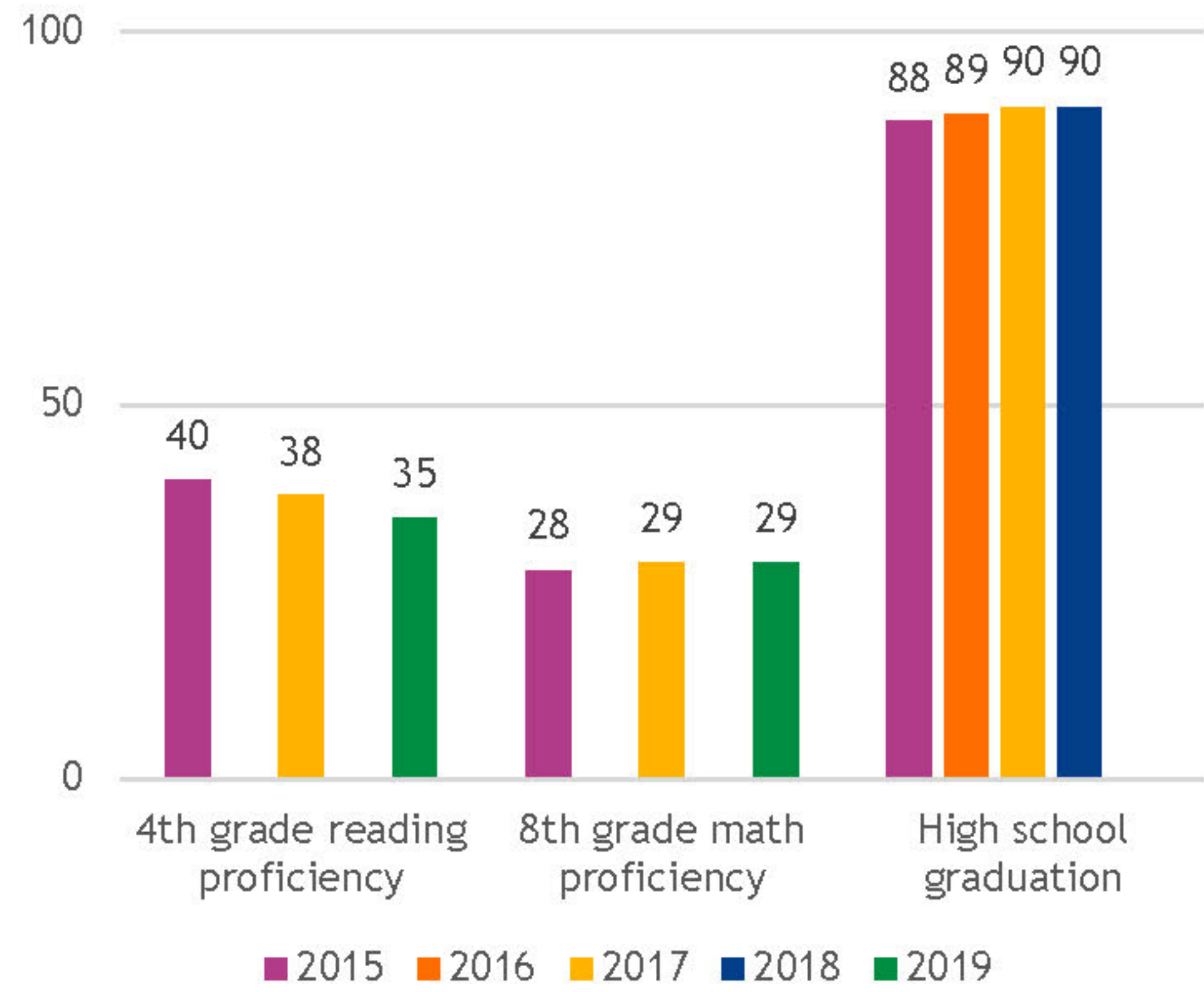
Rank Among 50 States

90% of Kentucky students who started high school in 2014 earned regular high school diplomas by 2018.

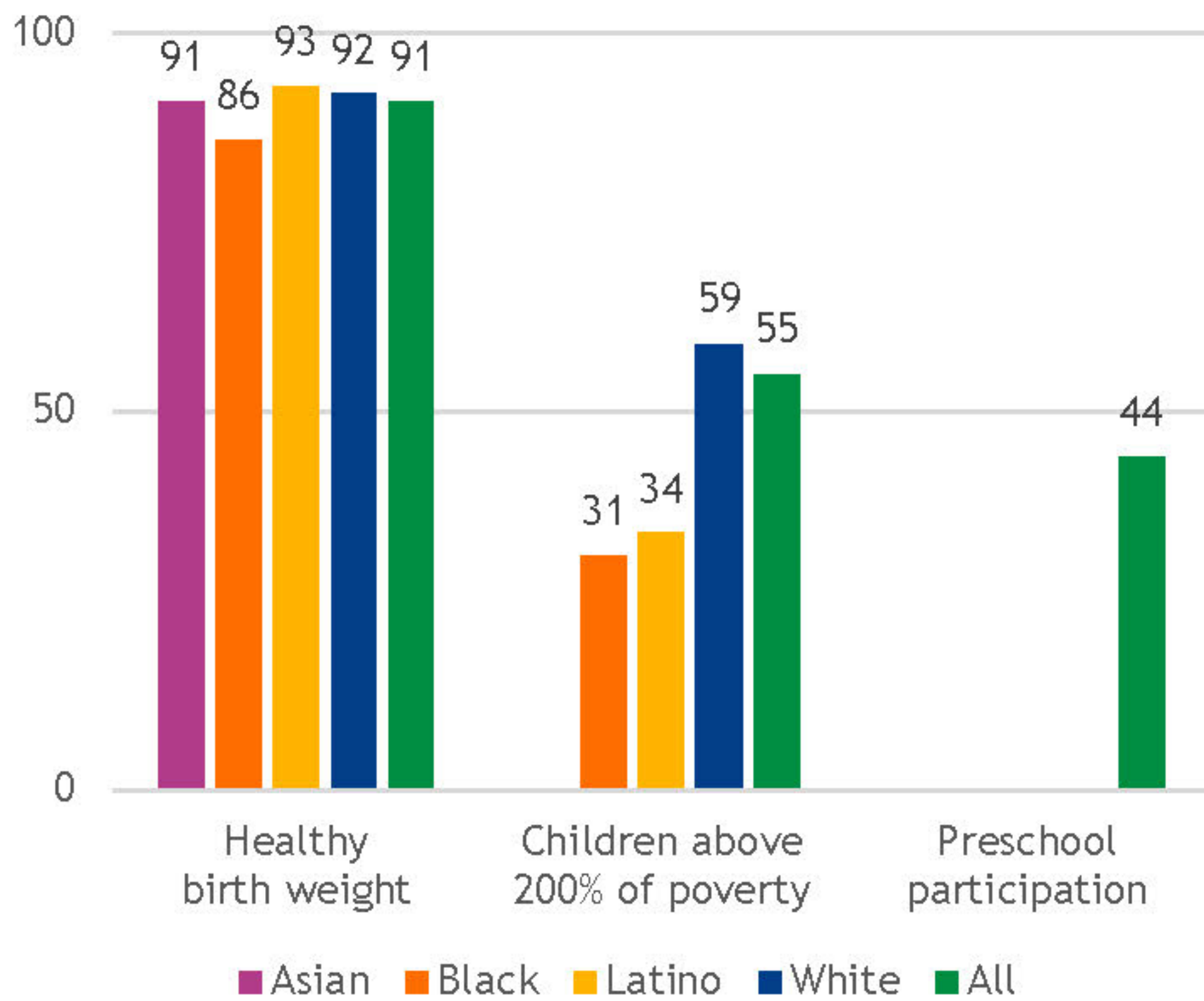
### Trends (Percent)



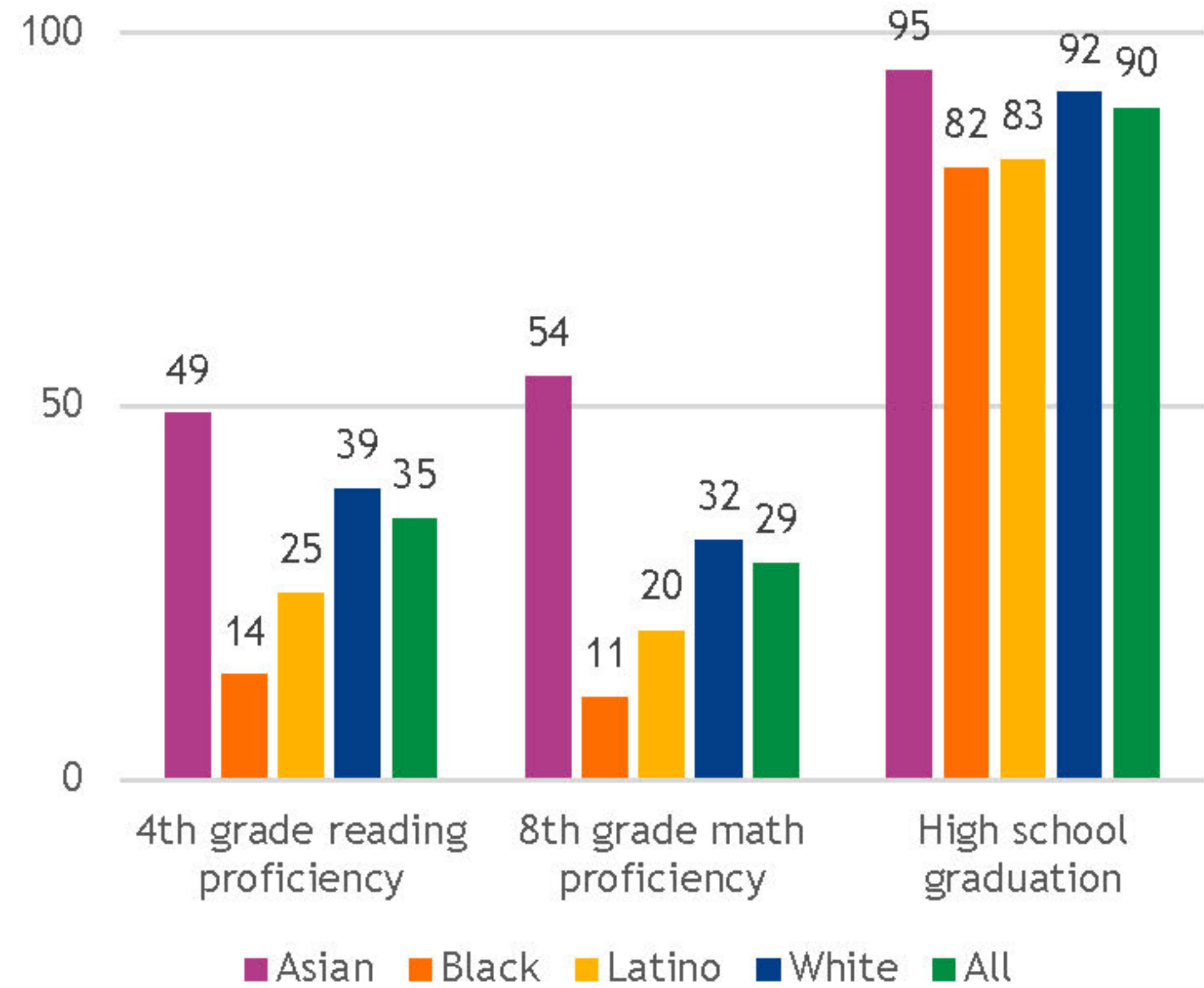
### Trends (Percent)



### Groups (Percent)



### Groups (Percent)



## Higher Education

Postsecondary enrollment (18-24)

**40**

Rank Among 50 States

46% of Kentuckians ages 18-24 were enrolled in postsecondary education in 2018.

Graduation from 2-year institutions

**19**

Rank Among 50 States

In 2018, the 3-year graduation rate for students at 2-year institutions was 31%.

Graduation from 4-year institutions

**32**

Rank Among 50 States

In 2018, the 6-year graduation rate for students at 4-year institutions was 52%.

## Quality of Life

Associate degree or higher (25-64)

**44**

Rank Among 50 States

35% of working age Kentuckians had attained an associate degree or higher in 2018.

Voter turnout

**25**

U.S. Ranking

54% of voting age Kentuckians participated in 2018 elections.

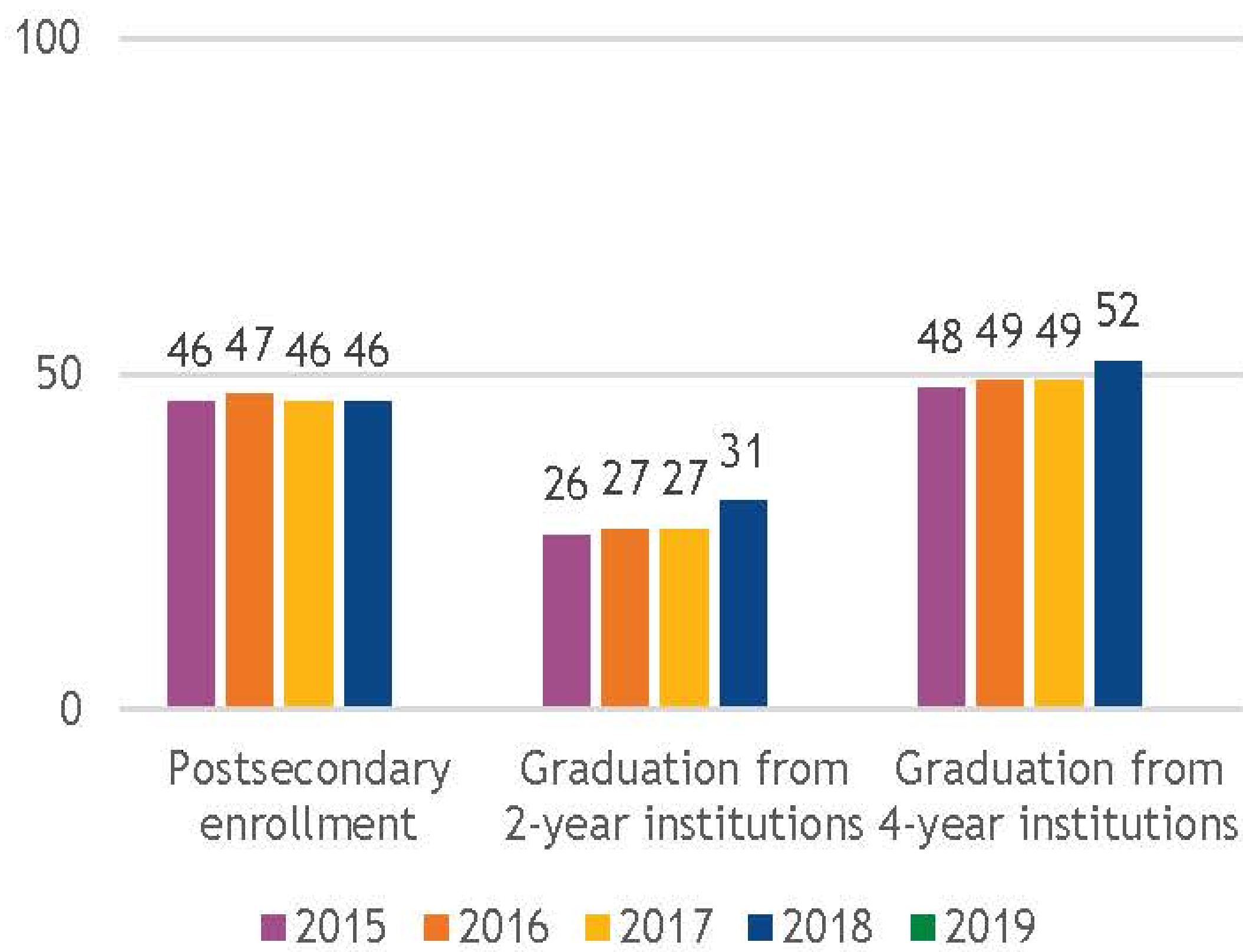
Median household income

**44**

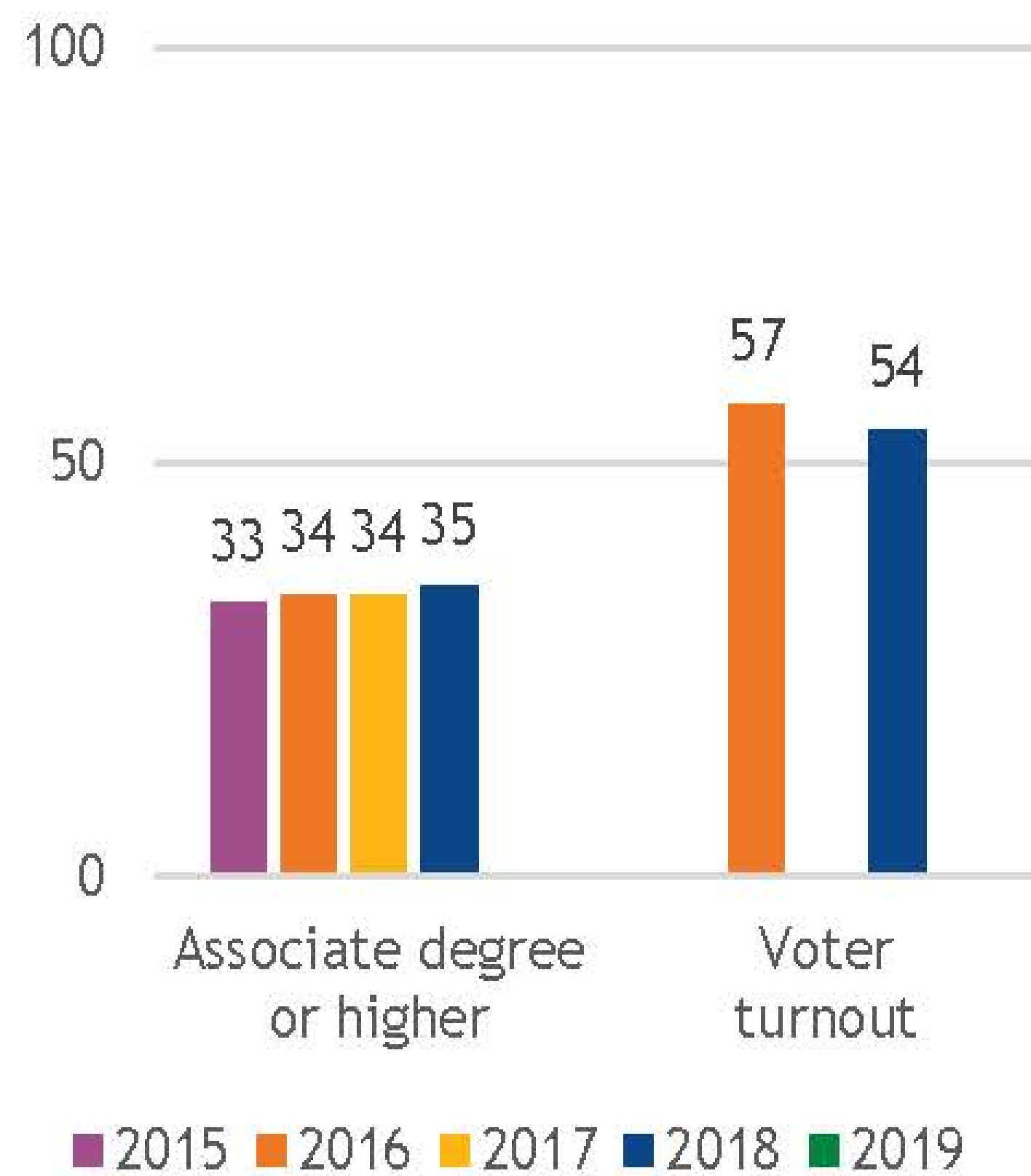
Rank Among 50 States

The median household income for a KY family was \$50,247 in 2018.

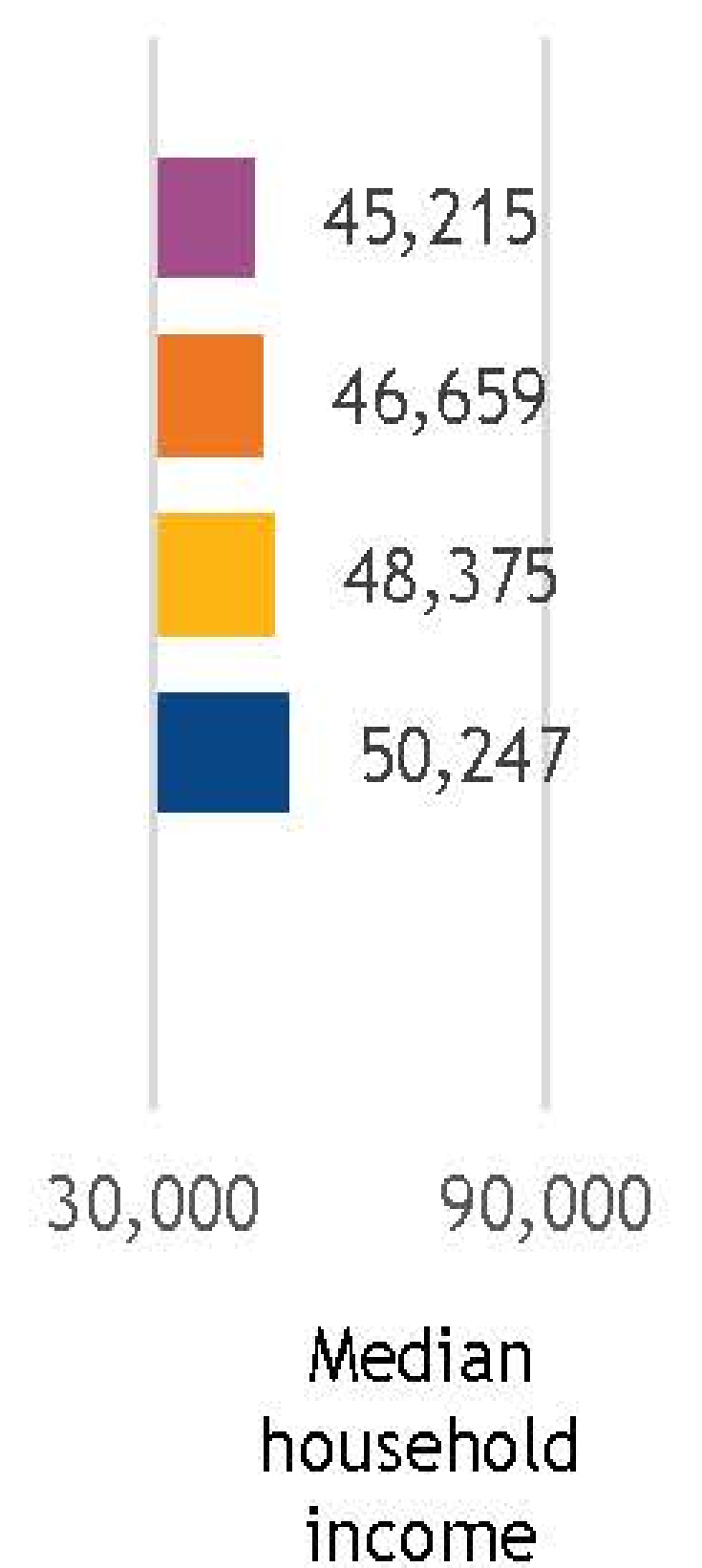
### Trends (Percent)



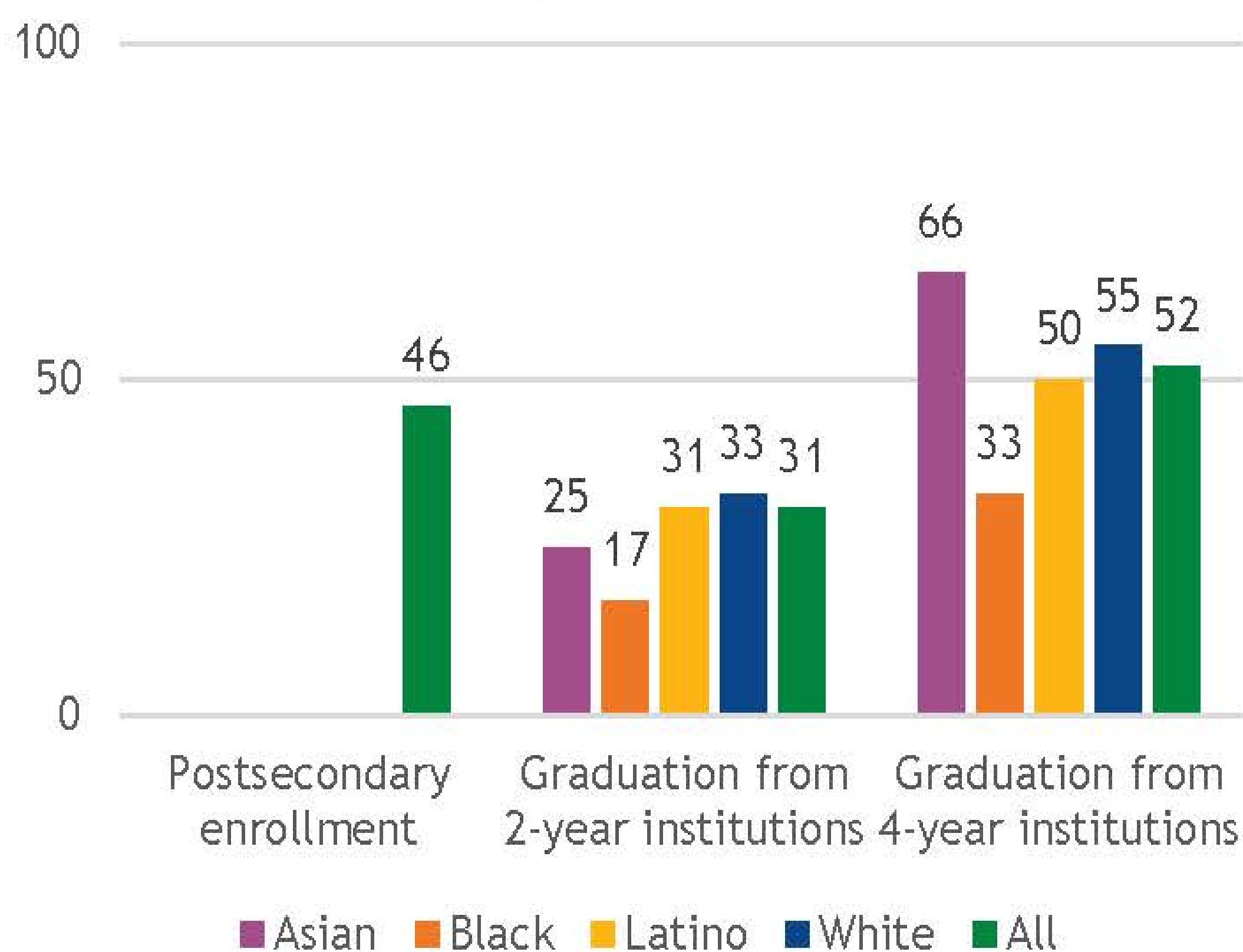
### Trends (Percent)



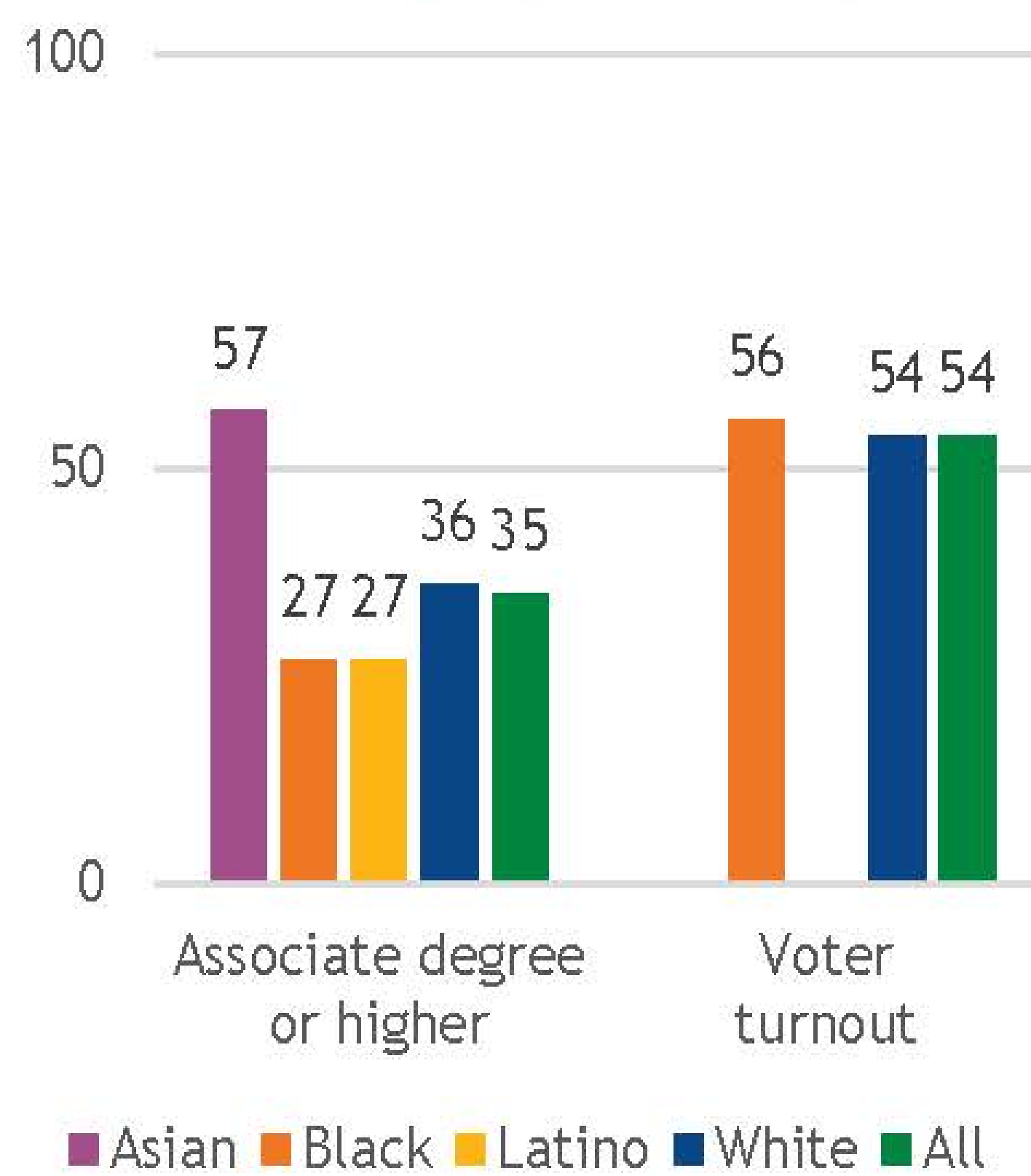
### Trends (\$)



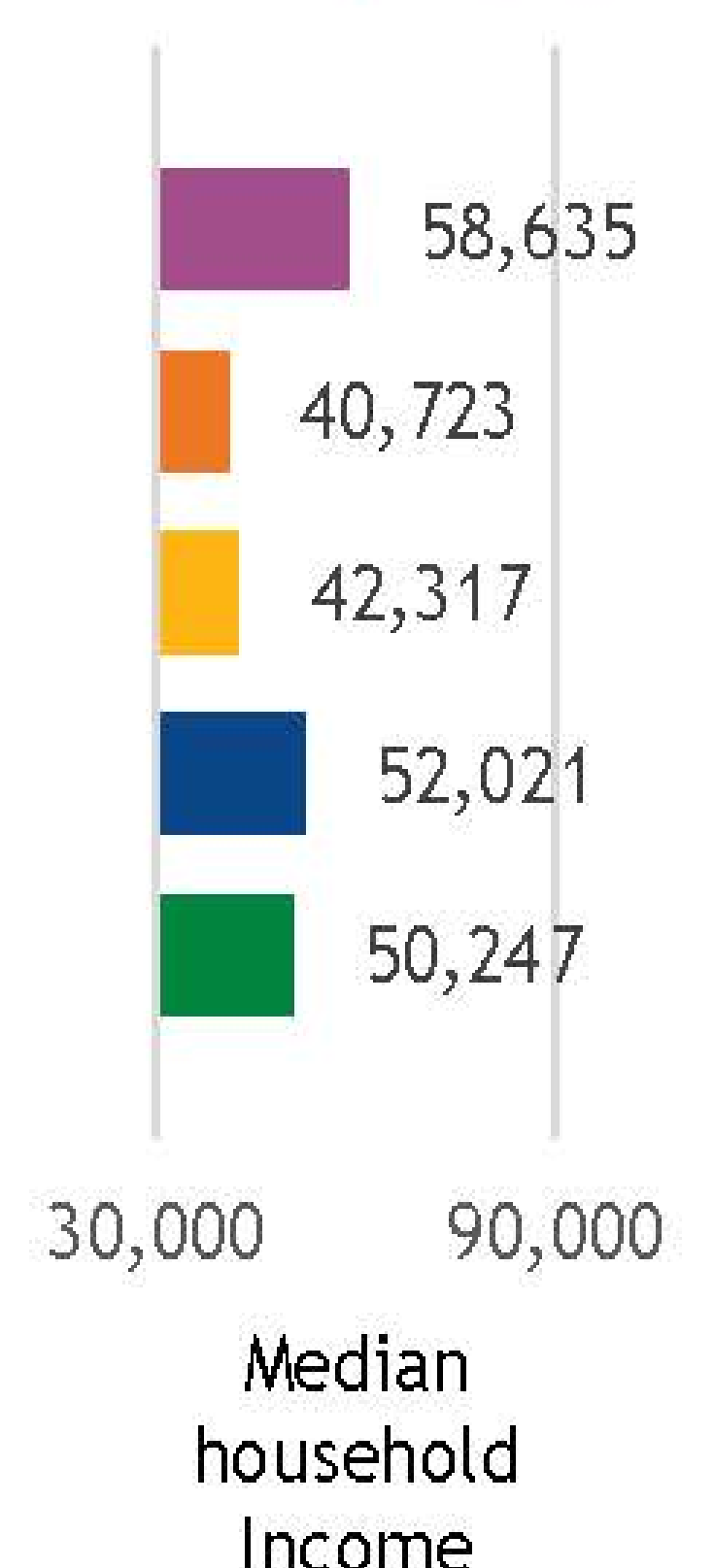
### Groups (Percent)



### Groups (Percent)



### Groups (\$)



## Continued from the front

This report builds on the baseline of the Prichard Committee's last decade of reporting and on two decades of mobilizing communities before that. Each report is, in fact, one slice of time in the midst of a long arc of progress.

From nearly four decades of focus we can say that:

- Kentucky has climbed from the bottom of the national rankings on key indicators of success in education.
- We still linger in the bottom quarter on far too many others.
- We have failed to deliver for African American students and families on each of these indicators and have important work ahead to serve Hispanic Kentuckians well.
- And, Kentucky still languishes 5th from the bottom of the nation for families living in poverty.

This Big, Bold Future: National Rankings Report is designed to build on our progress and to urge progress where we most need it – along that long arc.

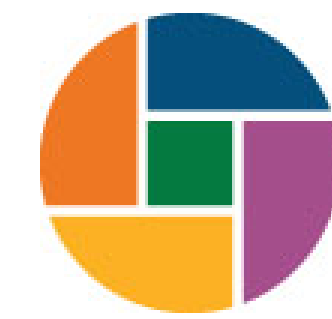
There are some bright spots in this data. Graduation rates for our high schools and our two-year postsecondary schools are in the top 20 for the nation. Reading proficiency and voter turnout are in the middle of the pack.

There are also points for grave concern. Our indicators for early childhood are all in the bottom third among the states, as are our eighth-grade math results, our postsecondary enrollment, our associate degree attainment, and our median household income. Our fourth grade reading results have dropped in recent years. Our results also show injustice and poor service to Black Kentuckians in every indicator with reported results by race, and important weakness in our delivery for Latino residents.





Education attainment is the core component of flourishing lives and a flourishing state economy. The charts in this report highlight outcomes, so we want to be clear that these outcomes improve with shared investment in the vision. Sustained citizen engagement, dedicated leadership at the state and local levels, adequate and equitable resources, and accountability for results must all be part of that investment package.

Releasing this report as we confront a global health pandemic, concerns about a protracted economic recession, and growing calls to remedy centuries-long racial injustices, the Prichard Committee is especially clear that many hands and many hearts must contribute to the work of building a big, bold future for Kentucky.

Each year, we will update this report and communicate our findings. When we come together with a shared vision and willingness to ensure progress, improvement is absolutely possible. The Prichard Committee commits to being an active leader in that progress.



## Sources

	<b>Babies with healthy birthweight</b>	100% minus percent low birthweight babies (kidscount.org)
	<b>Children above 200% of poverty</b>	100% minus percentage of kids living in households w/incomes below 200% of poverty (kidscount.org)
	<b>Preschool participation (3-4)</b>	American Community Survey results from census.gov, Table B14003, 1-year estimates
	<b>4th grade reading proficiency</b>	National Assessment of Education Progress results from nationsreportcard.gov
	<b>8th grade math proficiency</b>	National Assessment of Education Progress results from nationsreportcard.gov
	<b>High school graduation</b>	Four-year cohort rate from Common Core of Data at nces.ed.gov/ccd
	<b>Postsecondary enrollment (18-24)</b>	American Community Survey results from census.gov, Table B14003, 1-year estimates
	<b>Graduation from 2-year programs</b>	Graduation within three years of enrolling as a full-time student reported by nces.ed.gov/ipeds
	<b>Graduation from 4-year programs</b>	Graduation within six years of enrolling as a full-time student reported by nces.ed.gov/ipeds
	<b>Associate degree or higher (25-64)</b>	<a href="http://www.luminafoundation.org/files/advantage/document/stronger.nation/ten.year.attainment.trend.html">www.luminafoundation.org/files/advantage/document/stronger.nation/ten.year.attainment.trend.html</a>
	<b>Voter turnout</b>	<a href="http://www.census.gov/topics/public-sector/voting/data/tables.All.html">www.census.gov/topics/public-sector/voting/data/tables.All.html</a>
	<b>Median household income</b>	American Community Survey data from <a href="http://census.gov">census.gov</a> , Tables B19013, 1-year estimates
	<b>Internet access</b>	American Community Survey results from census.gov, Table S2801, 1-year estimates



**The Prichard Committee**  
Building a Groundswell  
for a Big, Bold Future

[prichardcommittee.org](http://prichardcommittee.org)

