

## 1.2 Nebraska High School Graduates Who Go to College in Nebraska

### **Increase the proportion of Nebraska high school graduates who pursue their postsecondary education in Nebraska.**

The analysis of college continuation rates, summarized in the previous section of this report, revealed that the estimated proportion of Nebraska high school graduates who attended degree-granting institutions in Nebraska within a year of high school graduation increased from 50.0% in fall 2002 to 54.5% in fall 2006. Over the same four-year period, the percentage who attended out-of-state institutions increased from 11.6% to 12.2% for a total college continuation rate of 66.7% in fall 2006.

While monitoring and increasing Nebraska's college continuation rates is important, another approach to increasing college enrollment in Nebraska that was recommended by the 2003 LR 174 Higher Education Task Force is to increase the proportion of Nebraska high school graduates who pursue their postsecondary education in their home state, rather than going out of state to college.

The data required to monitor the proportion of Nebraska high school graduates who go to colleges and universities in Nebraska or other states are collected every two years through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) maintained by the National Center of Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education. **The latest available data were collected in fall 2006 and compared to 2002 baseline data in the *2008 Nebraska Higher Education Progress Report*. Since data collected in fall 2008 will not be available until mid-2009, the analysis of data reported in 2008 is repeated in this section of the 2009 report with some additional comments for clarification.** Findings based on the 2008 data will be published in the *2010 Nebraska Higher Education Progress Report*.

The best available estimate of the proportion of Nebraska high school graduates who pursue their postsecondary education in Nebraska is the number of students with Nebraska residency who enroll at Nebraska degree-granting institutions as first-time freshmen within a year of graduating from high school, compared directly to the number who go out of state to college. Consequently, this section provides a detailed analysis of the numbers and percentages of Nebraska high school graduates who attended Nebraska and out-of-state, degree-granting institutions as first-time freshmen within 12 months of graduating from high school between fall 2002 and fall 2006.<sup>1</sup>

Nebraska-resident, first-time freshmen who start college at Nebraska or out-of-state degree-granting institutions more than 12 months after they graduated from high school are also of interest. However, since there is no way of knowing exactly when they received their diplomas from Nebraska or out-of-state high schools, these students are considered separately in the analysis reported in this section.

Data reported by non-degree-granting schools are excluded from the following analysis because the residency data reported by the non-degree-granting institutions in Nebraska were not as complete or consistent as the data reported by the degree-granting institutions in 2002 or 2004. See Explanatory Note A6.1 in Appendix 6 for more information on the collection and limitations of the data analyzed in this section.

<sup>1</sup>For the purposes of IPEDS reporting, first-time freshmen are defined to be degree-seeking students. Students who are taking courses for credit but who are not seeking degrees are not (or should not) be included in first-time freshmen cohorts.

**Changes in the Number of Nebraska-Resident, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Degree-Granting Institutions by Length of Time Since High School Graduation**

- Between fall 2002 and fall 2006, there was an increase in the number of Nebraska-resident, first-time freshmen who attended degree-granting institutions within one year of high school graduation. But there was a much larger decrease in the number of first-time freshmen who enrolled in college more than a year after they graduated from high school, as shown in Table 1.2.1. As a result, total enrollment of Nebraska-resident first-time freshmen at degree-granting institutions decreased by 7.5% over the four-year period.

**Table 1.2.1  
Nebraska-Resident, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Degree-Granting  
Postsecondary Institutions Classified by Length of Time Since High School Graduation  
Fall 2004 and Fall 2006 Compared to Fall 2002<sup>1</sup>**

Where Students Enrolled as First-Time Freshmen	Number and Percentage of Nebraska-Resident First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Nebraska and Out-of-State Postsecondary Institutions						Change in the Number and Percentage of Students Since Fall 2002	
	Fall 2002		Fall 2004		Fall 2006		n	%
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Graduated during the 12 Months Prior to College Enrollment	13,346	67.4%	13,565	72.6%	14,133	77.1%	787	5.9%
Graduated More than 12 Months Prior to College Enrollment	6,461	32.6%	5,128	27.4%	4,189	22.9%	-2,272	-35.2%
Total	19,807	100.0%	18,693	100.0%	18,322	100.0%	-1,485	-7.5%

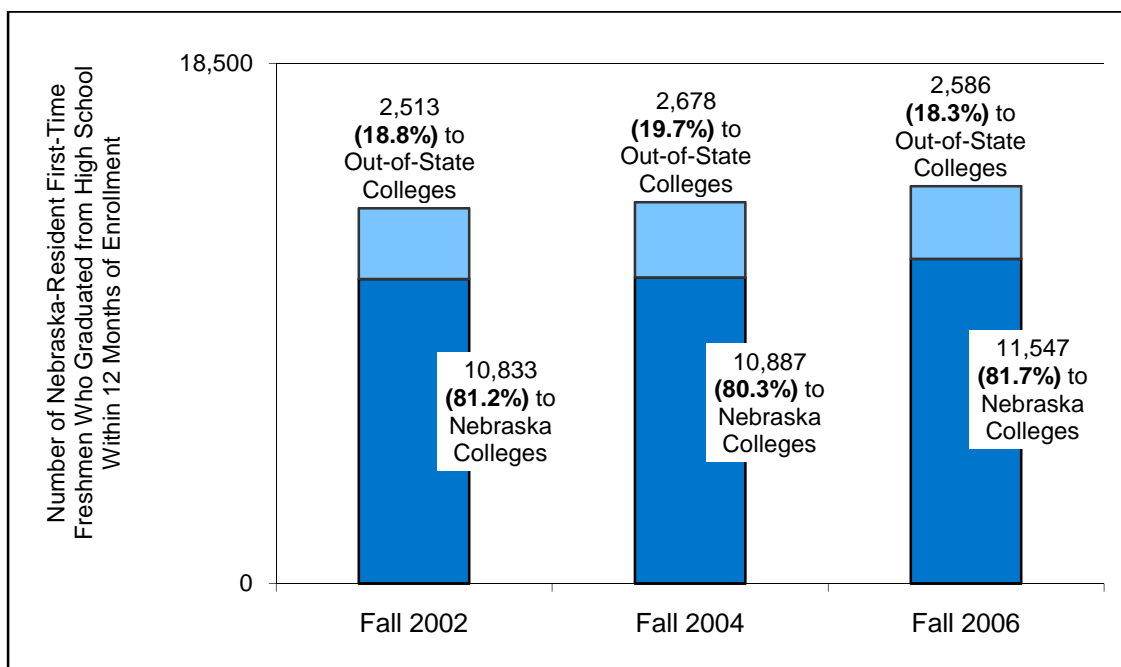
<sup>1</sup>Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, fall 2002, 2004 and 2006 IPEDS surveys. Includes full-time and part-time students.

**In-State and Out-of-State Enrollments of Nebraska-Resident, First-Time Freshmen Who Graduated from High School Within 12 Months of College Enrollment**

- The net increase of 787 students between 2002 and 2006, shown in [Table 1.2.1](#) on the preceding page, is attributable to an increase of 73 Nebraska-resident, first-time freshmen who enrolled at out-of-state degree-granting schools within 12 months of high school graduation and an increase of 714 students who pursued their postsecondary education at degree-granting institutions in Nebraska. (See [Table A6.1](#) in [Appendix 6](#) for supporting data.)
- As illustrated in [Figure 1.2.1](#) below, the enrollment increases between fall 2002 and fall 2006 resulted in a higher percentage of Nebraska-resident, first-time freshmen starting college in Nebraska, while a lower percentage pursued their postsecondary education out of state.

**Figure 1.2.1**

**Number and Percentage of Nebraska-Resident, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Nebraska and Out-of-State Degree-Granting Institutions Within 12 Months of Graduation from High School Fall 2002–Fall 2006<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup>Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, fall 2002, 2004 and 2006 IPEDS surveys. Includes full-time and part-time students. See [Table A6.1](#) in [Appendix 6](#) for supporting data.

- As illustrated in [Figure 1.2.2](#), the increase in the percentage of recent Nebraska high school graduates who pursued their postsecondary education in their home state is attributable to the fact that all of the higher education sectors attracted more of these students in fall 2006 than in fall 2002, with the exception of the for-profit degree-granting schools, which enrolled 24 fewer Nebraska-resident students in fall 2006 than in fall 2002. Specifically, enrollments of Nebraska-resident first-time freshmen increased as follows:

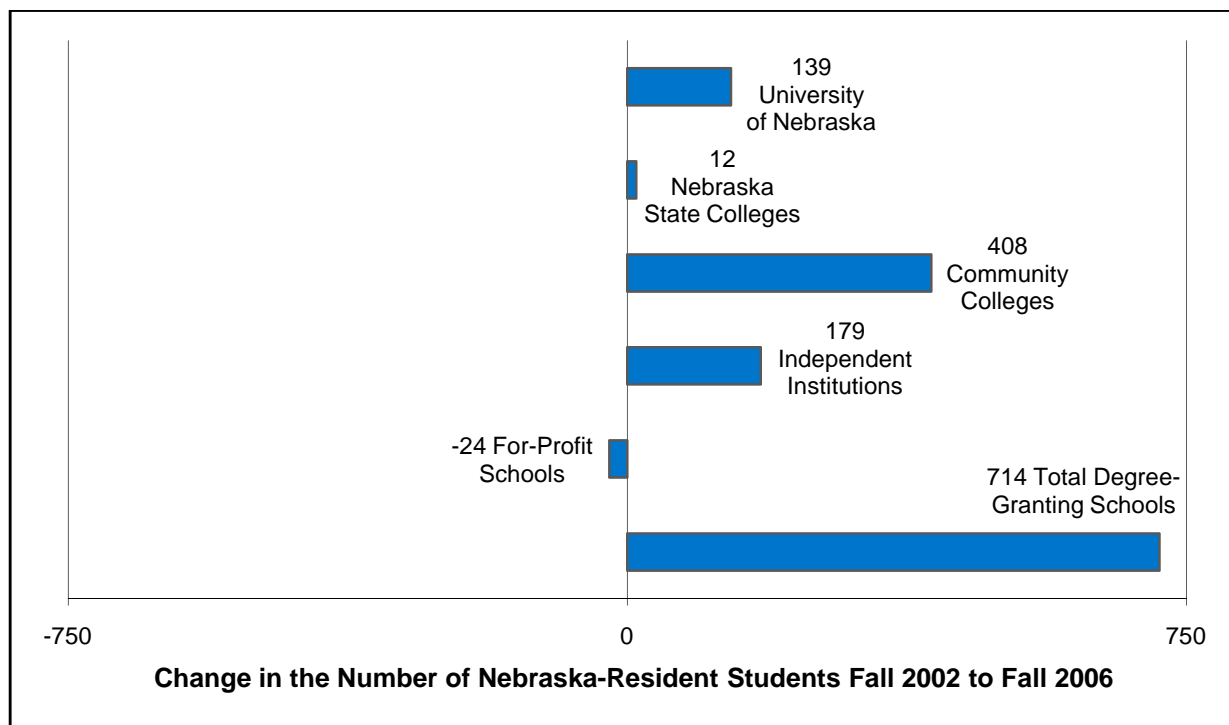
University of Nebraska	up 2.6%	5,313 in 2002 to 5,452 in 2006
Nebraska State College System	up 1.4%	880 in 2002 to 892 in 2006
Nebraska Community Colleges	up 14.0%	2,918 in 2002 to 3,326 in 2006
Nebraska independent institutions	up 11.2%	1,600 in 2002 to 1,779 in 2006
For-profit degree-granting schools	down 19.7%	122 in 2002 to 98 in 2006

See [Table A6.2](#) in [Appendix 2](#) for supporting data, including 2004 enrollments.

- As mentioned previously, out-of-state, degree-granting schools attracted only 73 more first-time freshmen from Nebraska in fall 2006 than in fall 2002, resulting in a net decrease in the percentage of recent high school graduates who went out of state to pursue their postsecondary education.
- See the *Fall 2006 Nebraska Report on the Residence and Migration of First-Time Freshmen* for detailed information on the out-of-state colleges and universities attended by Nebraska-resident first-time freshmen. This report is available on the Coordinating Commission Web site, [www.ccpe.state.ne.us](http://www.ccpe.state.ne.us).

**Figure 1.2.2**

**Changes in the Numbers of Nebraska-Resident, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Nebraska Degree-Granting Institutions Within 12 Months of Graduation from High School Fall 2006 Compared to Fall 2002<sup>1</sup>**

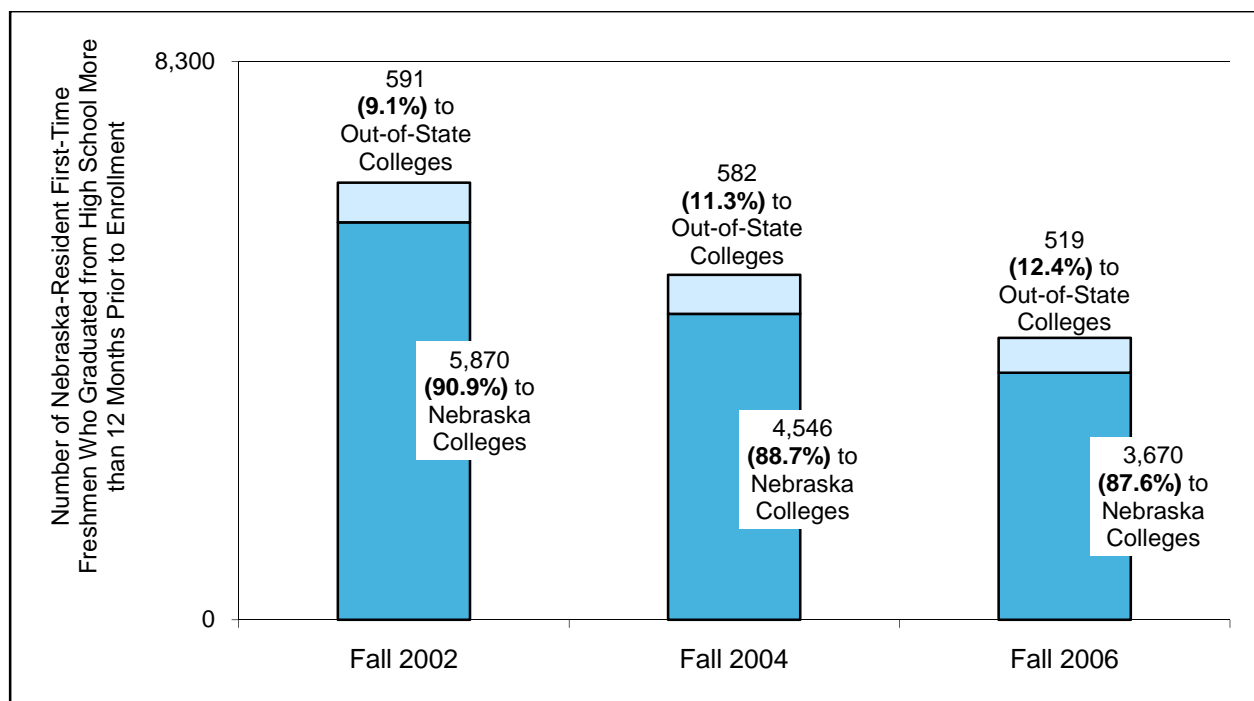


<sup>1</sup>Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, fall 2002 and fall 2006 IPEDS surveys. Includes full-time and part-time students. See [Table A6.2](#) in [Appendix 6](#) for supporting data.

**In-State and Out-of-State Enrollments of Nebraska-Resident, First-Time Freshmen Who Graduated from High School More than 12 Months Prior to College Enrollment**

- Between fall 2002 and fall 2006, there was a significant decrease in the number of first-time freshmen with Nebraska residency who started their postsecondary studies at degree-granting institutions in Nebraska more than a year after they graduated from high school. Specifically, 2,200 fewer of these freshmen attended Nebraska colleges in fall 2006 than in fall 2002, a decrease of 37.5%.
- In contrast, during the same two-year period, only 72 fewer first-time freshmen from Nebraska went to out-of-state colleges more than 12 months after graduating from high school. (See [Table A6.3](#) in [Appendix 6](#) for supporting data.)
- As shown in [Figure 1.2.3](#), the net effect of these enrollment decreases was that a lower percentage of the students who graduated from high school more than a year before college enrollment attended Nebraska postsecondary institutions in fall 2006 than in fall 2002, while a higher percentage chose to go out of state, even though the number of students who attended out-of-state schools decreased from 591 to 519, or 12.2%.

**Figure 1.2.3**  
**Number and Percentage of Nebraska-Resident, First-Time Freshmen Enrolled at Nebraska and Out-of-State Degree-Granting Institutions More than 12 Months After Graduation from High School**  
**Fall 2002–Fall 2006<sup>1</sup>**

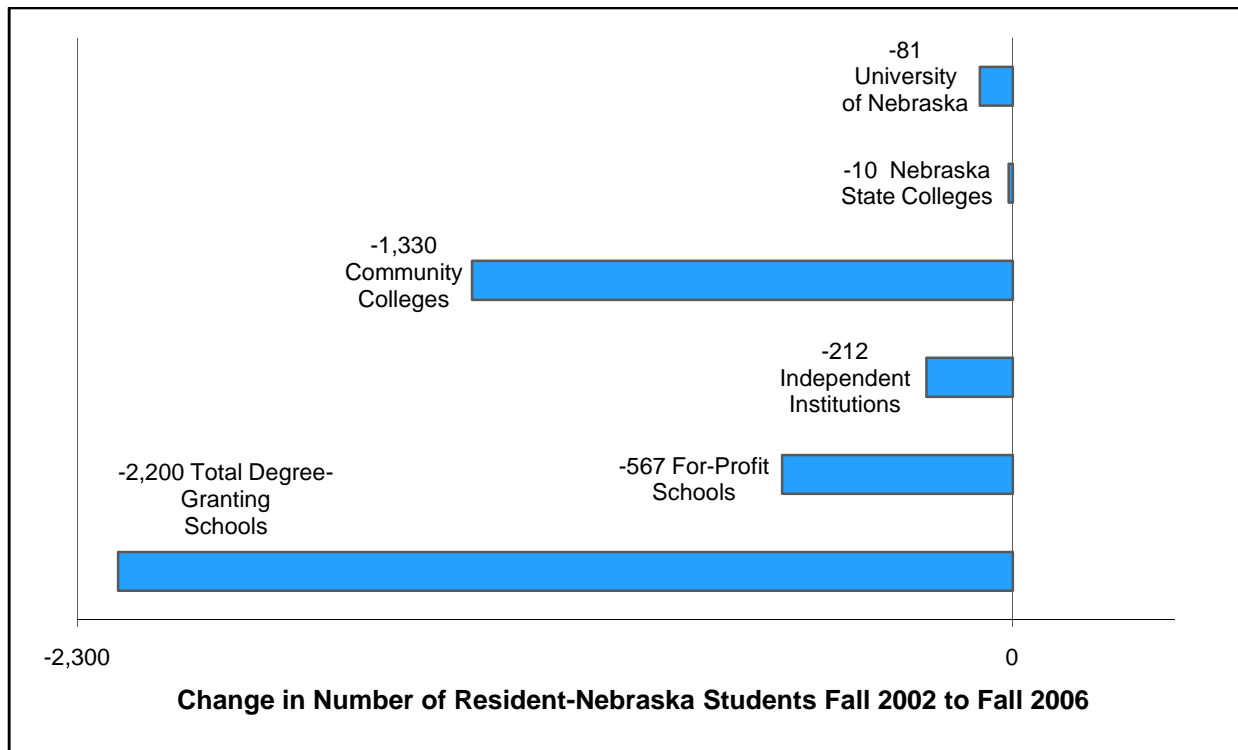


<sup>1</sup>Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, fall 2002 and fall 2006 IPEDS surveys. Includes full-time and part-time students. See [Table A6.3](#) in [Appendix 6](#) for supporting data.

- As illustrated in [Figure 1.2.4](#) below, all of the sectors of higher education in Nebraska experienced declines in the number of first-time freshmen who enrolled in college more than a year after high school graduation.
- The greatest decreases in the enrollment of first-time freshmen who started college more than a year after high school graduation were reported by the Nebraska community colleges and the for-profit schools. Together, the state’s six community colleges accounted for 60% of the total decrease of 2,200 students. Degree-granting schools in the for-profit sector accounted for another 26% of the total decrease. (See [Table A6.4](#) in [Appendix 6](#) for supporting data.)
- Nebraska’s community colleges have historically attracted, by far, the greatest share of the first-time freshmen who go to college more than 12 months after they graduate from high school. As a result, it is only logical that the colleges in this sector would be expected to experience the greatest changes if there is a general downward or upward trend in the enrollment of students in this cohort.

**Figure 1.2.4**

**Changes in the Numbers of Nebraska-Resident, First-Time Freshmen  
Enrolled at Nebraska Degree-Granting Institutions  
More than 12 Months After Graduation from High School  
Fall 2006 Compared to Fall 2002<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup>Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, fall 2002 and fall 2006 IPEDS surveys. Includes full-time and part-time students. See [Table A6.4](#) in [Appendix 6](#) for supporting data.

- Further analysis of the available data indicates that Southeast Community College alone accounted for 85% of the total decrease of 1,330 students shown for the community colleges in [Figure 1.2.4](#). Between fall 2002 and fall 2006, Southeast enrolled 1,137 fewer first-time freshmen who started college more than 12 months after they graduated from high school.

- Even with a substantial decrease in the number of older first-time freshmen enrolled at Southeast Community College, this institution has continued to attract a disproportionately high number of older, first-time freshmen. In fall 2002, Southeast accounted for 41% of all of the Nebraska-resident first-time freshmen who started college more than a year after high school graduation. In fall 2006, Southeast attracted 34% of the state's first-time freshmen in this cohort.
- Between 2002 and 2006, Mid-Plains Community College enrolled 259 fewer first-times freshmen who started college more than a year after high school graduation, and Metropolitan Community College and Northeast Community College reported decreases of 24 and 74 students in this cohort, respectively.
- Over the same four-year period, Central Community College experienced an increase of 112 Nebraska-resident, first-time freshmen who enrolled more than a year after high school graduation and Northeast also reported a comparable increase of 74 freshmen in this cohort.
- In spite of the significant decline in the number of older first-time freshmen who attended Southeast and Mid-Plains, the community colleges as a whole attracted an increased share of the "more than 12 months" first-time freshmen cohort between fall 2002 and fall 2006. In fall 2002, the state's six community colleges accounted for 68% of the Nebraska-resident first-time freshmen who enrolled in college more than 12 months after graduating from high school. In fall 2006, this percentage increased to 72%.
- In fall 2006, for-profit/career schools accounted for 14% of the first-time freshmen who enrolled at degree-granting colleges more than a year after high school graduation, but the for-profit schools accounted for 26% of the total decrease of 2,200 students shown in [Figure 1.2.4](#) on the previous page.
- Degree-granting for-profit schools enrolled 567 fewer older first-time freshmen in fall 2006 than they did in fall 2002. About 80% of this decline is attributable to reduced enrollments at the Omaha and Lincoln campuses of Kaplan University.<sup>1</sup>
- Why there was a significant decrease in the number of first-time freshmen who enrolled in college more than 12 months after high school graduation, especially at Southeast Community College, is not known. However, economic conditions, higher tuitions, and federal and state grant aid not keeping pace with increases in tuition and fees are three of the factors that may have adversely affected the enrollments of Nebraska residents who did not go to college immediately or soon after they graduated from high school.
- It also should be noted that the timing of the decreases in enrollment of "older" first-time freshmen varied by sector. About 46% of the total decrease in enrollments at the community colleges occurred between 2002 and 2004, while the remaining 54% was evidenced between 2004 and 2006. The independent institutions, on the other hand, experienced 91% of their enrollment decline between 2002 and 2004 and only 9% between 2004 and 2006. At the for-profit schools, 65% of the total decrease in enrollments occurred between 2002 and 2004, while 35% was evidenced between 2004 and 2006. In comparison, enrollment of "older" first-time freshmen at the University of Nebraska decreased between 2002 and 2004 and then increased between 2004 and 2006.

<sup>1</sup>Kaplan University was previously known as Hamilton College.

