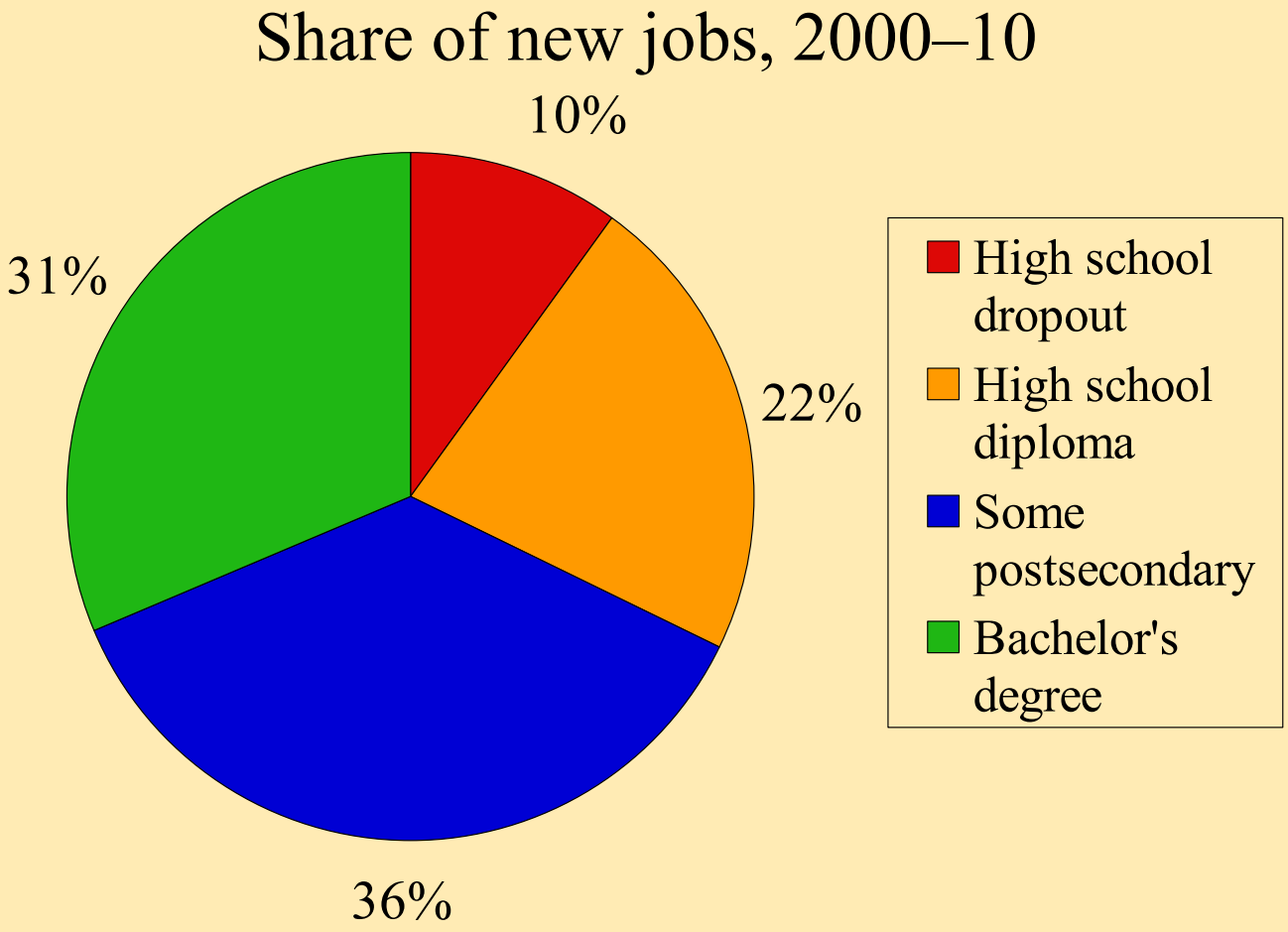
# American Diploma Project

- Partnership of Achieve, Inc.; The Education Trust; and the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.
- Partnered with Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Nevada and Texas.
- Involved wide variety of K–12, higher education and business representatives.
- Created end-of-high-school benchmarks to convey the knowledge and skills graduates will need to be successful in college and the workplace.
- Key finding: Unprecedented convergence of skills required for success in college and work.

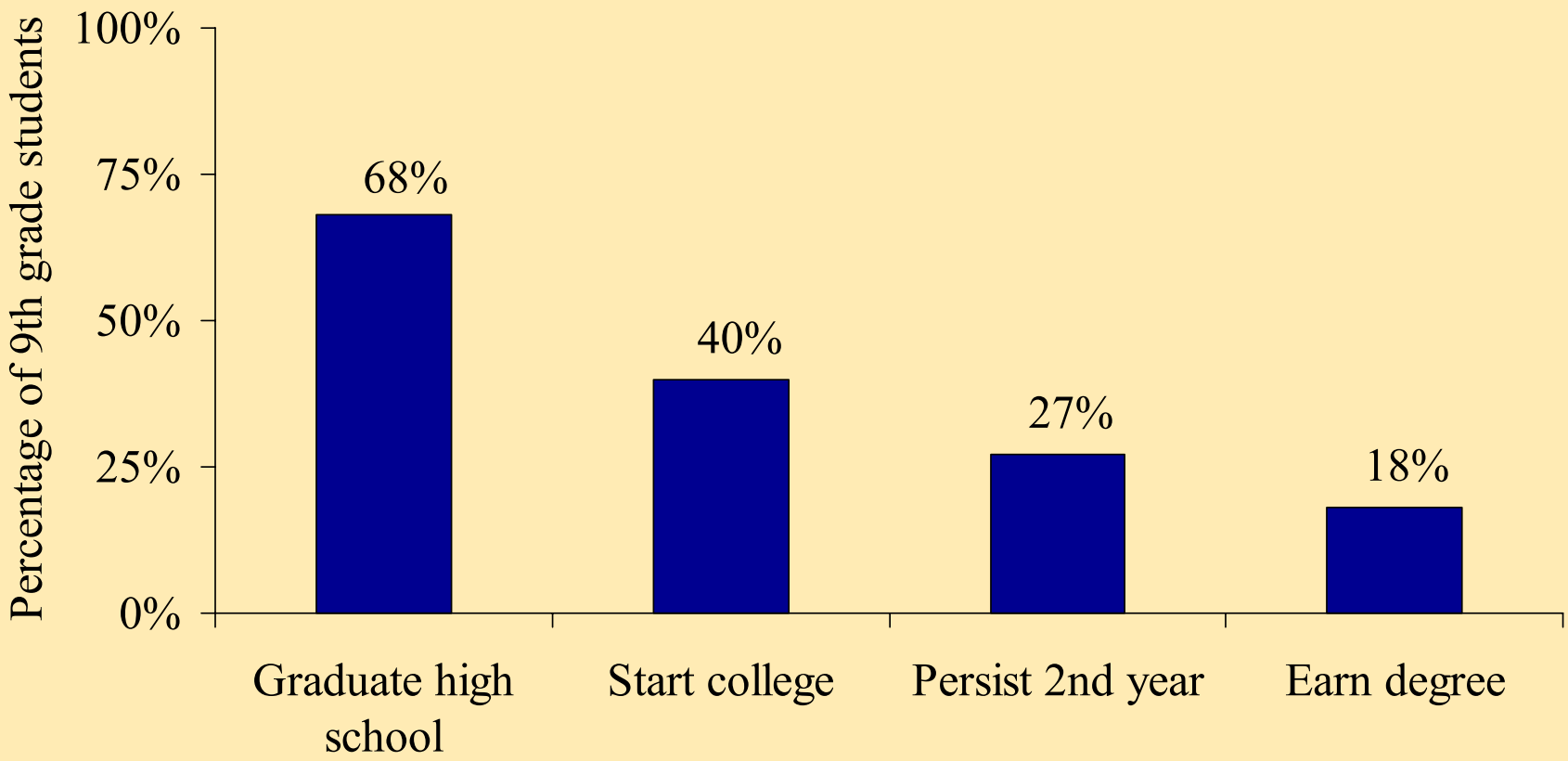
# A high school diploma is not the last educational stop required




- Jobs that require postsecondary education will make up more than two-thirds of new jobs.

Source: Carnevale, Anthony P. and Donna M. Desrochers, *Standards for What? The Economic Roots of K–16 Reform,* Educational Testing Service, 2003.

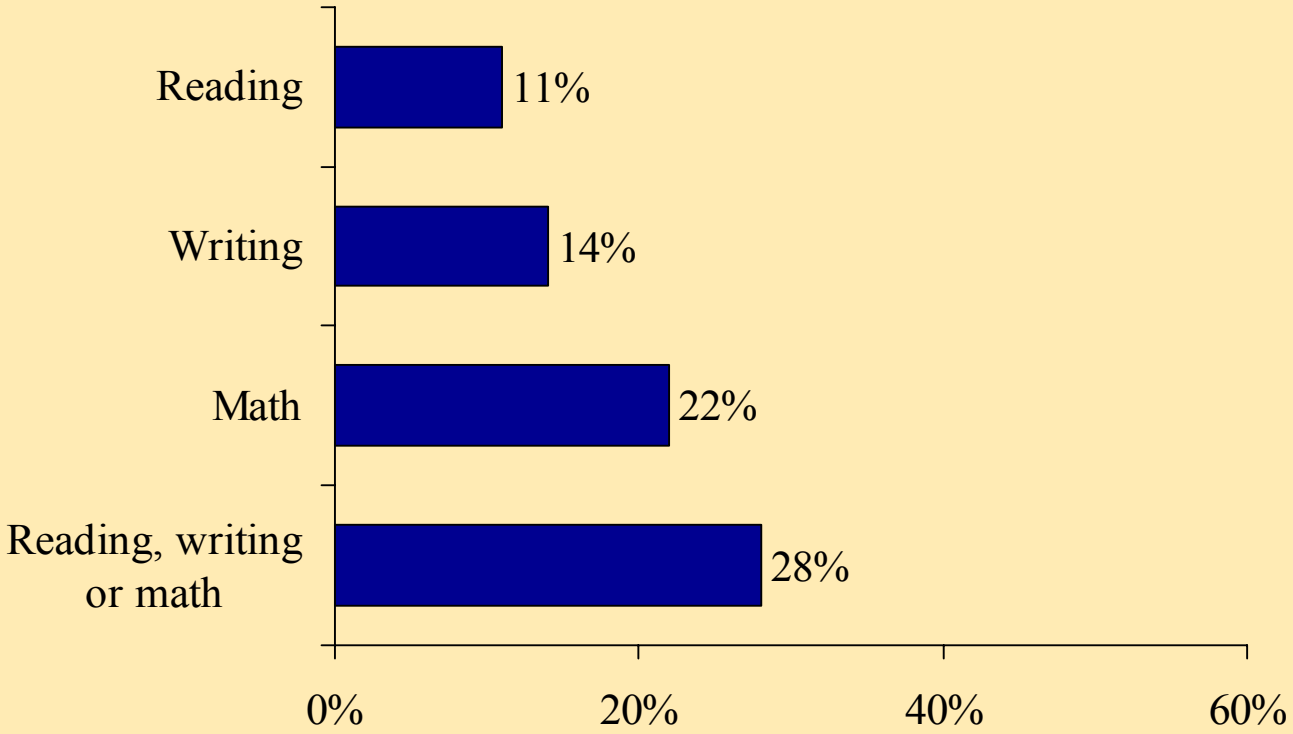
# Too many U.S. students drop out of the education pipeline




Source: National Center for Public Policy & Higher Education, *Policy Alert,* April 2004. Data are estimates of pipeline progress rather than actual cohort.

# College bound does not necessarily mean college ready

Percentage of U.S. first-year students in two-year and four-year institutions requiring remediation

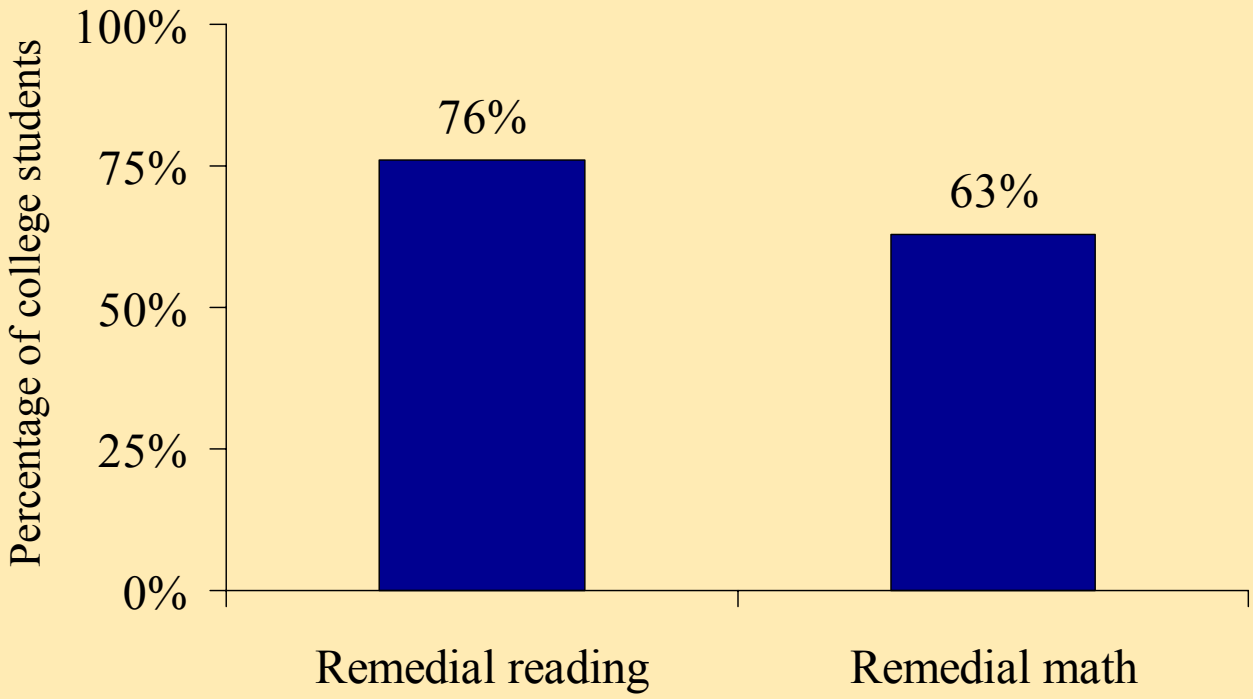



- Nearly three in 10 first-year students are placed immediately into a remedial college course.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *Remedial Education at Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions in Fall 2000,* 2003.

# Most U.S. college students who take remedial courses fail to earn degrees

Percentage not earning degree by type of remedial coursework

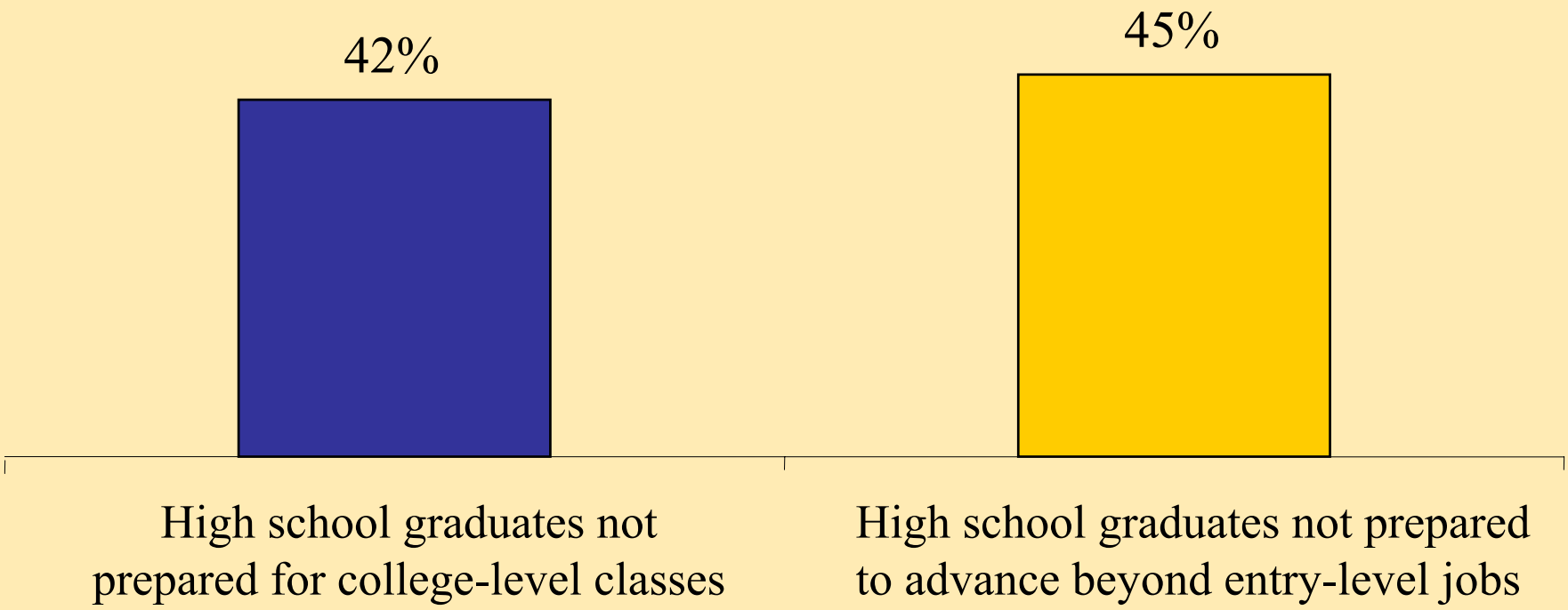



- Many college students who need remediation, especially in reading and math, do not earn either an associate's or a bachelor's degree.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education,* 2004.

# College instructors/employers agree that high school graduates lack preparation

Average estimated proportions of recent high school graduates who are not prepared




Source: Peter D. Hart Research Associates/Public Opinion Strategies, *Rising to the Challenge: Are High School Graduates Prepared for College and Work?* prepared for Achieve, Inc., 2005.

# Even blue-collar jobs require high-level skills

- Requirements for tool and die makers
  - Four or five years of apprenticeship and/or postsecondary training
  - Algebra, geometry, trigonometry and statistics

- Requirements for sheet metal workers
  - Four or five years of apprenticeship
  - Algebra, geometry, trigonometry and technical reading

Source: American Diploma Project, 2002.

# American Diploma Project

**What does it take to be prepared for postsecondary education and work?**

# Expectations are the same for both college & "good jobs"

- ADP found high degree of convergence

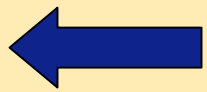
- The knowledge & skills that high school graduates will need in order to be successful in college are the same as those they will need in order to be successful in a job that
  - pays enough to support a family well above the poverty level,
  - provides benefits, &
  - offers clear pathways for career advancement through further education & training.

# Whether graduates are going to college or work, they need the same skills

**Machine Operator**
**Eastman Chemical Company**

*Required Skills:*

- **Add, subtract, multiply, divide and simplify rational expressions**
- Calculate and apply ratios, proportions and percentages to solve problems
- Recognize and solve problems using a linear equation and one variable
- Apply units correctly in expressions involving measurements
- **Determine the perimeter and the circumference of geometric shapes**



**College**
**Algebra**

*Required Skills:*

- **Add, subtract, multiply, divide and simplify rational expressions**
- Understand functional notation
- Solve systems of two linear equations in two variables
- Solve quadratic equations in one variable
- Graph a linear equation and quadratic function
- **Determine the perimeter and the circumference of geometric shapes**
- Represent geometric objects and figures algebraically

# ADP expectations ensure high school graduates are prepared to succeed

- In English, the benchmarks cover:
  - Language
  - Communication
  - Writing
  - Research
  - Logic
  - Informational text
  - Media
  - Literature
- In math, the benchmarks cover:
  - Number sense and numerical operations
  - Algebra
  - Geometry
  - Data interpretations, statistics and probability
  - Math reasoning skills

# To be college and work ready, students need to complete a rigorous sequence of courses

To cover the content in the ADP benchmarks, high school graduates need:

- In math:
  - Four courses
  - Content equivalent to Algebra I and II, Geometry, and a fourth course such as Statistics or Precalculus
- In English:
  - Four courses
  - Content equivalent to four years of grade-level English or higher (i.e., honors or AP English)

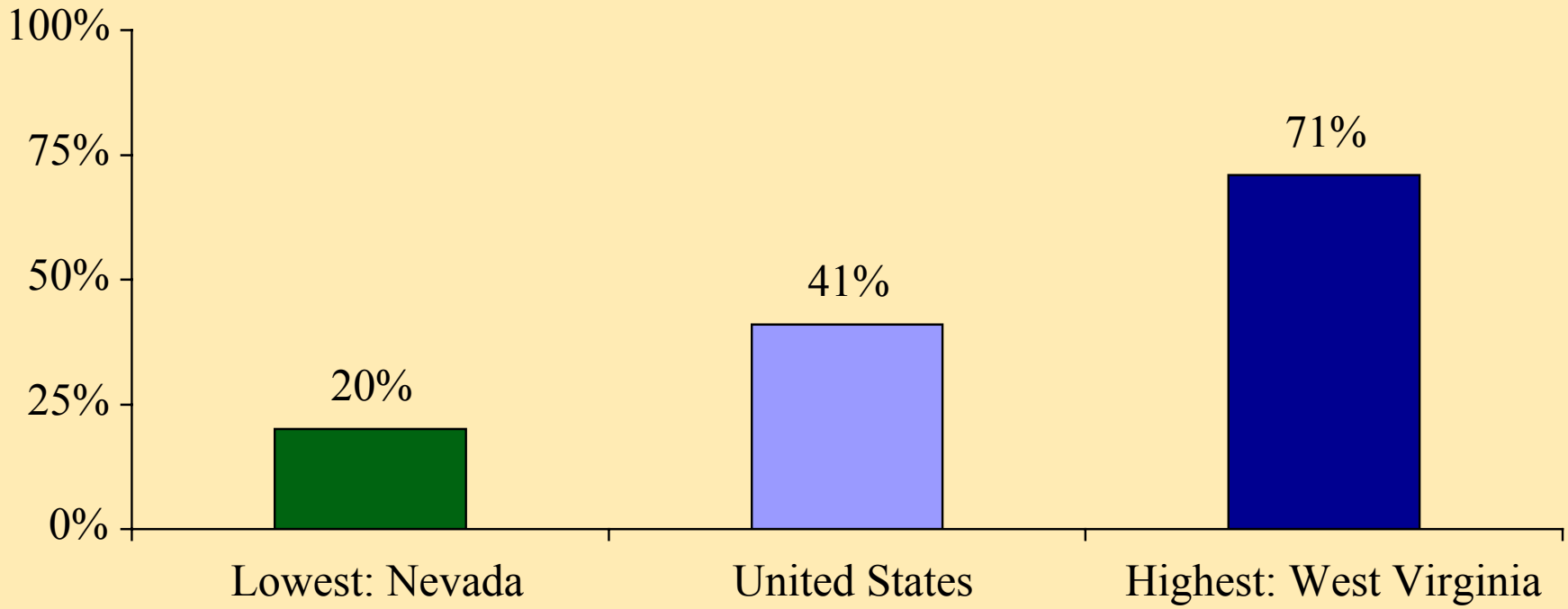
# American Diploma Project

**What do we actually expect of our high school graduates?**

- **Standards**
- **Course-taking requirements**
- **Assessments**

# Only four in 10 high school students complete a college- and work-ready math curriculum

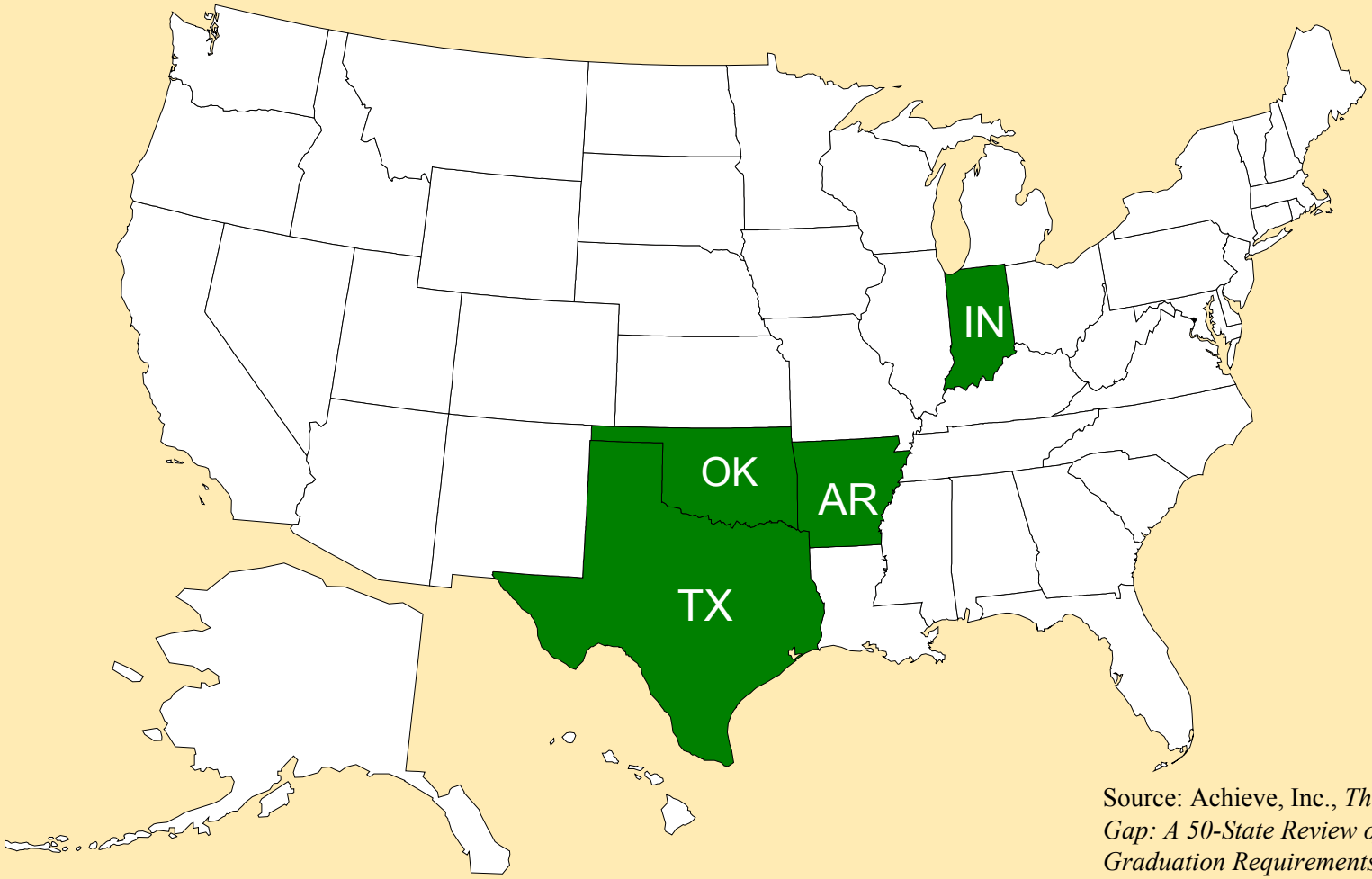
Taking a math course beyond Algebra II* by graduation (2002)




*Trigonometry or Precalculus.

Source: Council of Chief State School Officers, *State Indicators of Science and Mathematics Education 2002,* 2003, p. 27.

# Only 4 states require Algebra II

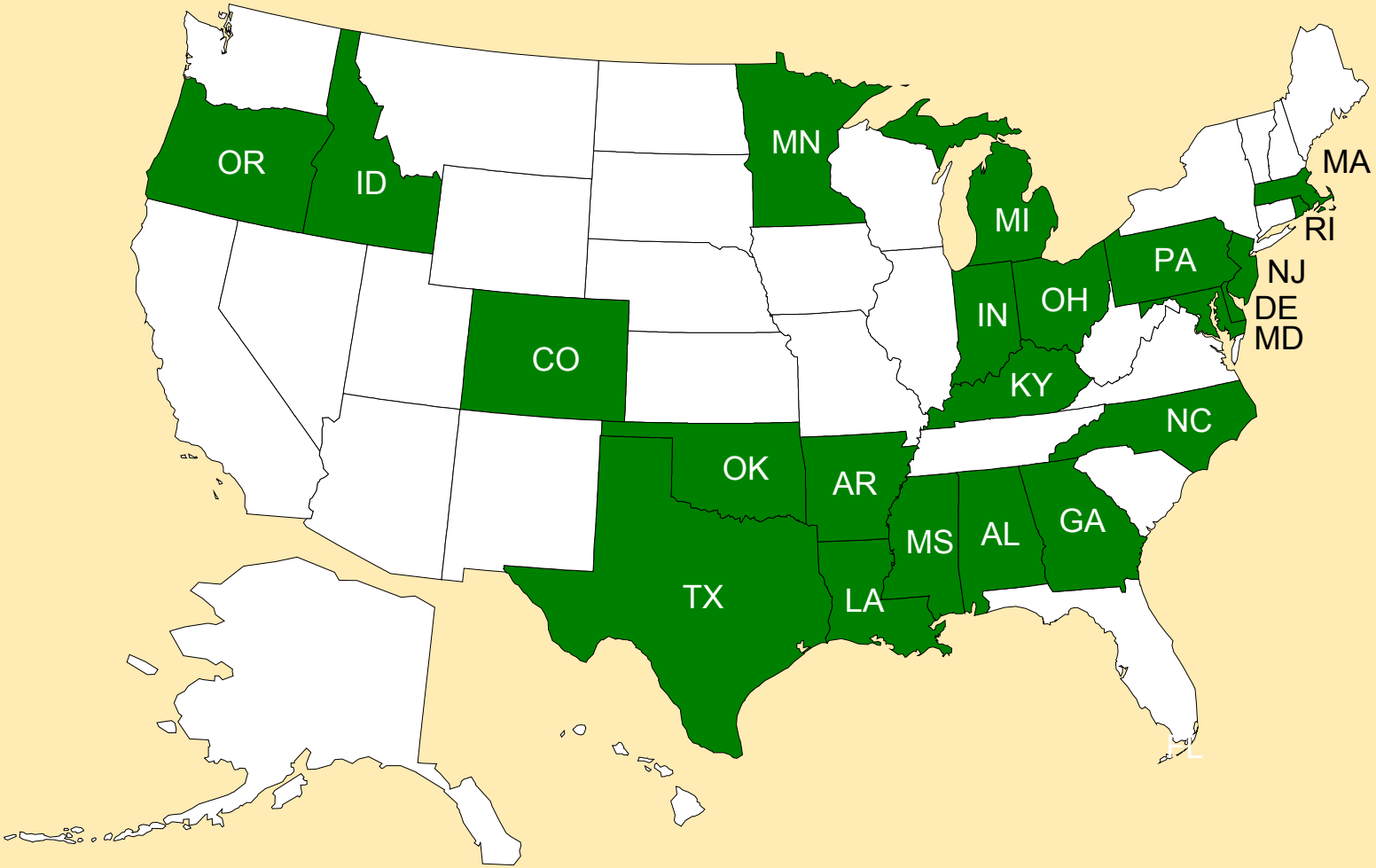



Source: Achieve, Inc., *The Expectations Gap: A 50-State Review of High School Graduation Requirements,* 2004.

# Closing the expectations gap:

# The American Diploma Project Network

# ADP Network: 22 states committed to improving student achievement



# Closing the expectations gap requires states to take action

- Align high school standards and assessments with the knowledge and skills required for success in postsecondary education and work.
- Require all students to take a college- and work-ready curriculum to earn a high school diploma.
- Administer a college- and work-ready assessment, aligned to state standards, to high school students so they get clear and timely information and are able to address critical skill deficiencies while still in high school.
- Hold high schools accountable for graduating students who are college ready, and hold postsecondary institutions accountable for their success once enrolled.

For more information,
please visit Achieve, Inc., on the Web at

http://www.achieve.org