

More CPS graduates going on to college

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The number of Chicago public school graduates going on to college is on a steady uptick, rising from 44 percent to 46 percent to 48 percent over the last three years, CPS officials revealed Wednesday.

Even so, the college enrollment rate of CPS grads is still well below the national average of 64 percent, a target the system hopes to eventually hit, said Greg Darnieder, CPS head of post-secondary programs.

"We know there are pockets of our kids who have tremendous ability who are not going to college," Darnieder said.

Last year, more than half of CPS female graduates enrolled in college by November, compared with only 45 percent of male ones, data showed. Latino males were least likely to go on to college (36.7 percent did so in 2006); Asian females were most likely (78.1 percent).

More also made it into tougher schools, with 66.4 percent of 2006 grads entering four-year colleges vs. 64 percent the year before.

The University of Illinois at Chicago once again was the No. 1 CPS destination, absorbing 6.8 percent of all college-bound CPS grads.

Picking up steam was the even more selective U. of I./Urbana, which went from No. 4 to No. 3 in popularity. It got 6.4 percent of last year's grads, up from 5.7 percent.

DePaul University also moved up, from the No. 11 to the No. 10 destination. Brian Spittle, DePaul's assistant vice president for enrollment management, said he's seeing more CPS grads enter DePaul with honors, Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate classes.

As a result, CPS grads have slightly better one-year retention and six-year DePaul graduation rates, Spittle said.

CPS officials conceded that a small part of the 2006 college enrollment boost may have been due to the addition of Robert Morris College to the tracking system. About 200 CPS graduates enrolled in Morris last year who would not have been counted in past years.

WHERE THE GRADS GO

TOP 10 COLLEGE DESTINATIONS OF CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS CLASS OF 2006

College	No. of students enrolled	% of total CPS class
1. University of Illinois at Chicago	564	6.8
2. Northeastern Illinois University	551	6.6
3. University of Illinois at Urbana	528	6.4

