

## More CPS grads heading off to college

### 'HUGE SIGN OF PROGRESS' | New numbers show 6.5% increase

May 13, 2008 BY [STEFANO ESPOSITO](#) Staff Reporter

"A huge sign of progress" is how Chicago Public Schools CEO Arne Duncan described new figures that show a 6½ percent increase in college enrollment of CPS graduates during the last four years, far outpacing the national rate for that period.

Nationwide, during the last four years, college enrollment has increased 0.5 percent, CPS officials said.

Chicago, however, still lags far behind the national average for college enrollment. Nationally, 67.2 percent of the class of 2007 continued on to college last fall. Chicago's rate was about 50 percent, CPS officials said; that's up from 44 percent in 2004.

"The fact that we're up --and we're dramatically outgaining the nation in every category -- is tremendously exciting news," Duncan said Monday. "I couldn't be more proud of the progress and of the direction of the trend. Having said that, we have a long way to go."

The numbers look even better for CPS students enrolling in more selective Big Ten schools. During the last four years, there's been about a 30 percent increase in enrollment at those schools here, according to National Student Clearinghouse figures to be released today.

Duncan attributed the across-the-board gains to a "huge district-wide focus" on getting students thinking and working toward going to college. Duncan and Mayor Daley were expected to discuss the figures today during a press conference at John Hope College Prep High School on the South Side.