

Arapahoe County Demographic Highlights 2021 – Educational Attainment by Commissioner District

In December, the U.S. Census Bureau released data from the American Community Survey for places as small as census tracts. Annual surveys are the basis for these data but, for small areas, the Bureau accumulates five years of data before they release new information. Therefore, the new release is based on surveys collected from 2017 to 2021. I will refer to this as 2021 data even though it represents a five-year dataset. The demographic highlight series will use these data to report on subareas of Arapahoe County. The next several highlight reports will use the County Commissioner districts as the reporting units.

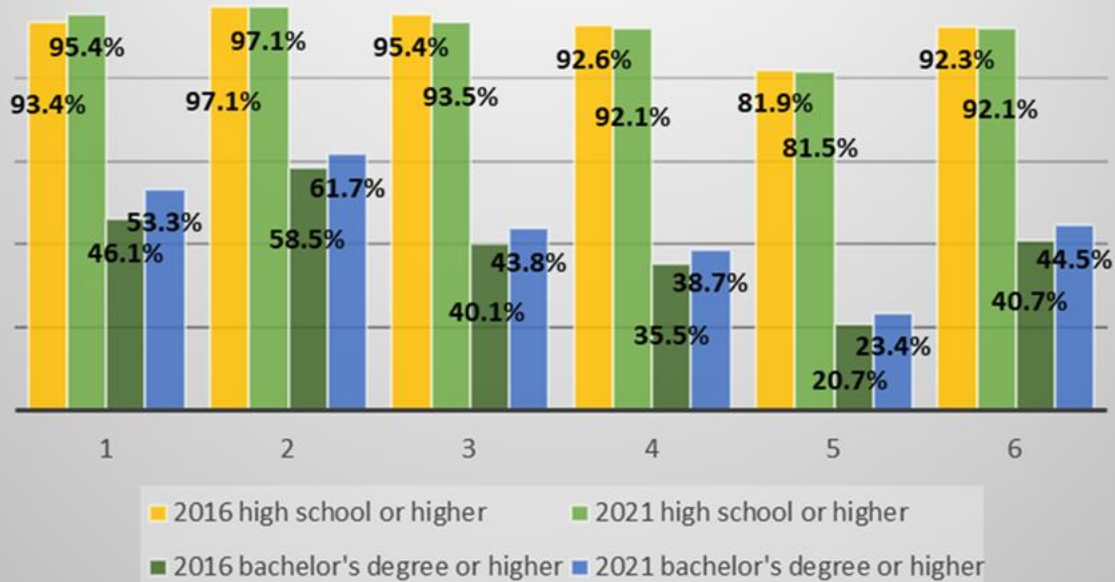
Economic development experts like to quote the educational attainment statistics for Colorado because of the high percentages of college graduates in the state. This highlight looks at the 2021 information on educational attainment for the populations aged 25 and over in the County Commissioner Districts. The table below summarizes the 2021 data for various attainment groups. The colors emphasize the district with the highest percentage in dark green and the district with the lowest percentage in dark yellow with shading in between. For example, District 2 has the highest percentages of persons with bachelor's degrees and with graduate or professional degrees. District 5 had the highest percentages for all of the groups with high school graduates or less. It is interesting that about one-fifth of the population in the County and in four of the five commissioner districts have some college but no degree. This would seem to be a great market for community colleges.

	Less than 9th grade	9th to 12th grade, no diploma	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	Some college, no degree	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or professional degree
District 1	1.6%	3.1%	17.6%	18.2%	6.2%	33.3%	20.0%
District 2	1.0%	1.9%	12.2%	16.3%	6.9%	35.7%	26.0%
District 3	2.8%	3.7%	19.8%	20.3%	9.7%	28.1%	15.6%
District 4	3.3%	4.7%	21.7%	21.5%	10.2%	25.3%	13.4%
District 5	10.0%	8.5%	27.6%	21.3%	9.2%	15.9%	7.5%
County	3.6%	4.3%	19.7%	19.5%	8.4%	27.8%	16.6%

The statistic of most interest to economic developers is the percentage of college graduates. The chart below shows that percentage as well as the percentage of high school graduates for each district for both 2016 and 2021. For the County and all of the districts, the percentages of college graduates have increased between 2016 and 2021. Only District 5 has a percentage of the population with at least a high school diploma below the County figure (81.5 compared to 92.1 percent). District 2 (61.7 percent) and District 1 (53.3 percent) have higher rates of college graduates than the County (44.5 percent). District 1 has shown the most improvement in college graduates, adding 7.2 percentage points to the 2016 rate.

The County figures are slightly higher than the Colorado figures. Those details were covered in a previous highlight.

Educational Attainment, 2016 and 2021 by District



The ACS provides several tables with more detail about educational attainment. Using one of those tables, we can estimate the median income by district and by educational attainment. (Statistically, this is the average value for the median incomes in the tracts within a district.) While income rises with education, significant increases occur with bachelor's degrees and again with graduate degrees. Districts 1 and 2 had much higher median incomes for those with less than a high school degree, more than \$11,000 higher than the low value of \$30,700 in District 4.

	Less than high school graduate	High school graduate	Some college or associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or professional degree
District 1	\$ 45,004	\$ 42,136	\$ 42,602	\$ 66,117	\$ 87,729
District 2	\$ 41,284	\$ 41,694	\$ 52,602	\$ 81,259	\$ 100,460
District 3	\$ 36,991	\$ 45,225	\$ 53,230	\$ 70,836	\$ 83,712
District 4	\$ 30,661	\$ 37,033	\$ 40,886	\$ 51,802	\$ 60,288
District 5	\$ 31,314	\$ 35,268	\$ 40,596	\$ 52,530	\$ 54,112