

# Delaware

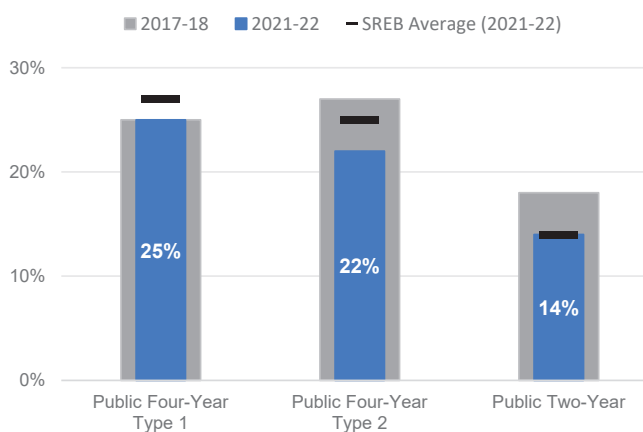
## College Affordability Profile

The Southern Regional Education Board convened a Commission on College Affordability in the South and published a report in 2016 emphasizing that affordability is a critical factor in both access to and completion of postsecondary education. In this year's SREB College Affordability Profiles, SREB examined data for the 2021-22 academic year, the most recent year that student financial aid and net price data are available. The data shows both positive and challenging aspects of college affordability in Delaware. While the state faces affordability hurdles at its public four-year institutions, the two-year institutions appear to be more accessible for students with stronger state support.

### Family Income Needed for Net Price at Public Institutions

In 2021-22, the percentage of family income required to pay for full-time students at public institutions in Delaware was lower than the SREB average for four-year institutions.

In 2021-22, families in Delaware needed, on average, 25% of their income to cover educational expenses for a full-time student at four-year Type 1 institutions and 22% at four-year Type 2 institutions. For two-year institutions, the average was 14% of family income.



U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files and Directory Files 2018 and 2022, 12-Month Enrollment Instructional Activity Files 2018 and 2022. American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples 2018 and 2022. Institutional sectors based on SREB-State Data Exchange categories.

The 11-percentage point gap between four-year Type 1 and two-year institutions indicates variation in affordability across institution types.

#### Key terms:

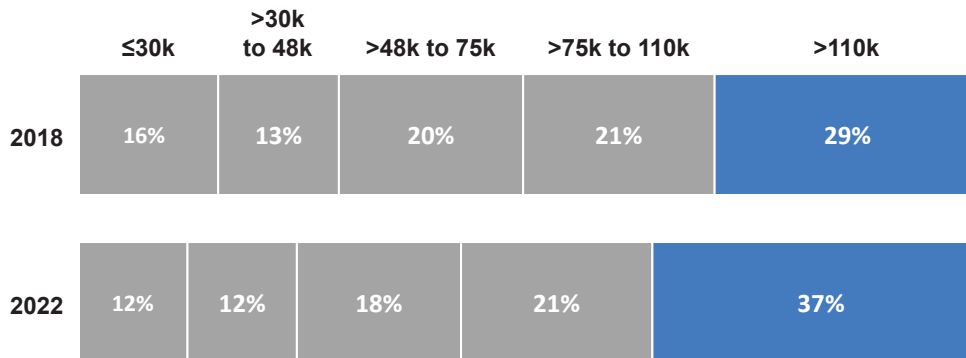
**Four-Year Institution Type 1:** Four-year institutions that awarded at least 30 doctoral degrees in five different areas.

**Four-Year Institution Type 2:** All other four-year institutions.

**Net Price:** Total cost of attendance (includes tuition, fees, room and board, and more) minus federal, state and local government, or institutional grant and scholarship aid.

## Distribution of Average Family Income

Students from families that made \$110,000 or more saw the most significant increase. The 25-percentage point gap between highest and lowest income groups in 2022 indicates growing economic disparities among postsecondary students in Delaware.



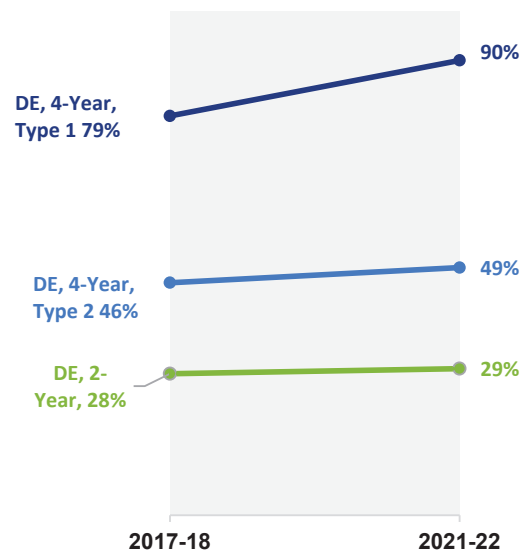
Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files and Directory Files 2018 and 2022.

## Income Required for Median Tuition and Fees at Public Colleges for Families Making Less Than \$30,000

The percentage of income required for median tuition and fees was higher at four-year institutions than two-year institutions in 2021-22 for Delaware families making less than \$30,000.

In 2021-22, families earning less than \$30,000 needed 90% of their income to cover median tuition and fees at four-year Type 1 institutions and 49% at Type 2 institutions. For two-year institutions, the percentage was lower, with families requiring 29% of their income to cover the median tuition and fees.

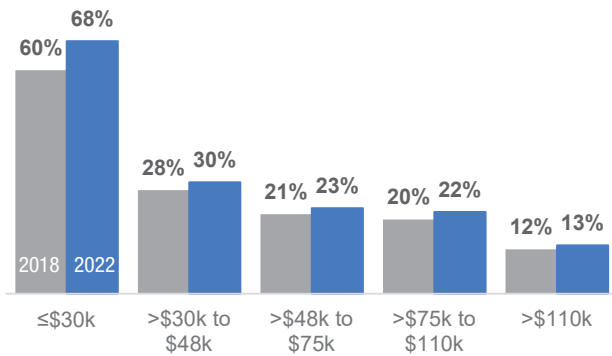
The 61-percentage point gap between four-year Type 1 and two-year institutions indicates severe disparities in accessibility. The dramatic increase for four-year Type 1 institutions suggests increased affordability challenges for the lowest income families at these institutions.



U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Charges Data Files and Directory Files 2018 and 2022, 12-Month Enrollment Instructional Activity Data Files 2018 and 2022. American Community Survey Public Use Micro Sample Files 2018 and 2022.

## Net Price as a Percentage of Income for Public Four-Year Type 1 Institutions

Delaware families in the lowest income category were the most affected by the increase in net price at four-year Type 1 institutions.



U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files and Directory Files 2018 and 2022, 12-Month Enrollment Instructional Activity Files 2018 and 2022. American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples, 2018 and 2022. Institutional types based on SREB-State Data Exchange categories.

In 2022, families making less than \$30,000 needed 68% of their income to cover educational expenses, while those earning over \$110,000 required 13%.

The 55-percentage point gap between highest and lowest income groups in 2022 indicates inequity in affordability.

The pattern shows worsening conditions across all income levels, with the lowest-income families experiencing the most significant burden.

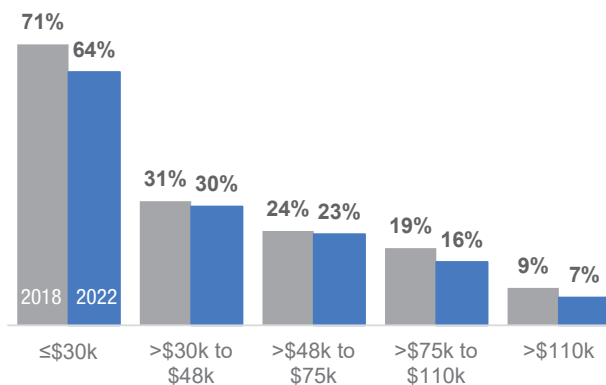
## Net Price as a Percentage of Income for Public Four-Year Type 2 Institutions

The percentage of income that Delaware families needed to pay for educational expenses at four-year Type 2 institutions decreased for all income categories from 2018 to 2022.

In 2022, families making less than \$30,000 needed 64% of their income to cover educational expenses, while those earning over \$110,000 required 7%.

Although there have been slight improvements across all income brackets, a consistent pattern of the lowest income families faced disproportionately higher burdens.

The 57-percentage point gap between highest and lowest income groups in 2022 indicates persistent affordability challenges for lower-income families.



U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files and Directory Files 2018 and 2022, 12-Month Enrollment Instructional Activity Files 2018 and 2022. American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples, 2018 and 2022. Institutional types based on SREB-State Data Exchange categories.

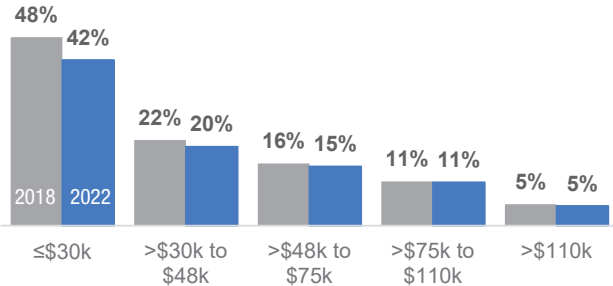
# Net Price as a Percentage of Income for Public Two-Year Institutions

The percentage of income that Delaware families needed to pay for educational expenses at two-year institutions decreased or remained stable for all income categories from 2018 to 2022.

Families making less than \$30,000 in 2022 needed 42% of their income to pay educational expenses. Families making over \$110,000 needed 5% of their income.

The 37-percentage point gap between highest and lowest income groups in 2022 indicates inequity in affordability of 2-year institutions.

While two-year institutions remain more affordable than four-year institutions, lower-income families face accessibility challenges.

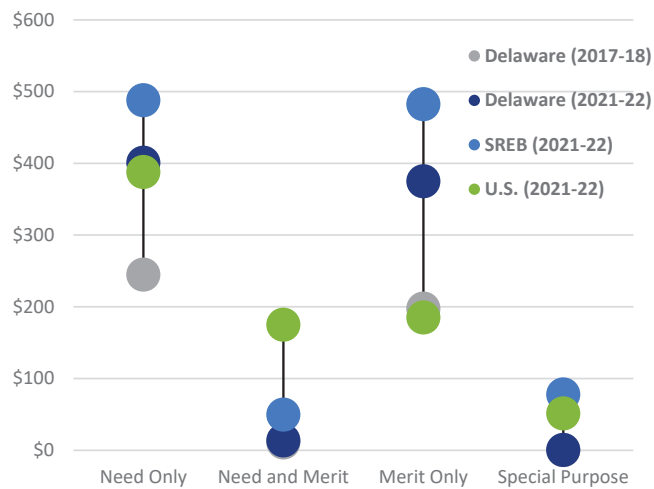


U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Student Financial Aid Files and Directory Files 2018 and 2022, 12-Month Enrollment Instructional Activity Files 2018 and 2022. American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Samples, 2018 and 2022. Institutional types based on SREB-State Data Exchange categories.

## State Financial Aid Per Student

Delaware awarded more need-based and merit-based aid in 2021-22 per full-time-equivalent student than the national average. Need-based, need and merit, merit-based aid increased from 2017-18 to 2021-22.

	Need Only	Need and Merit	Merit Only	Special Purpose
Delaware (2017-18)	\$245	\$11	\$197	\$0
Delaware (2021-22)	\$401	\$14	\$375	\$0
SREB (2021-22)	\$488	\$50	\$483	\$78
U.S. (2021-22)	\$388	\$175	\$185	\$51



Delaware has increased its financial aid per student across most categories from 2017-18 to 2021-22, but still lags behind SREB averages in all categories.

Delaware shows a strong focus on need-based and merit-only aid. The state spent \$401 on average per undergraduate FTE student on need-based aid in 2021-22. The state spent \$375, on average, per FTE for merit-based financial aid in 2021-22.

National Association of State Student Grant & Aid Programs 2018 and 2022 annual survey (results for public institutions only). U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Instructional Activity File, 2018 and 2022, and Directory File, 2018 and 2022.

## Student Borrowing at Public Institutions

In 2020-21, Delaware graduates borrowed more than the SREB average to earn degrees at all public institutions.

	Delaware 2015-16	Delaware 2020-21	SREB Average 2020-21	U.S. Average 2020-21
Four-Year Type 1	\$24,000	\$24,572	\$20,710	\$20,550
Four-Year Type 2	\$28,500	\$26,000	\$21,912	\$20,758
Two-Year	\$4,975	\$10,500	\$10,088	\$10,653

U.S. Department of Education, College Scorecard, 2016-17 and 2021-22. U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 12-Month Enrollment Instructional Activity Data Files 2018 and 2022 and Directory Files 2018 and 2022.

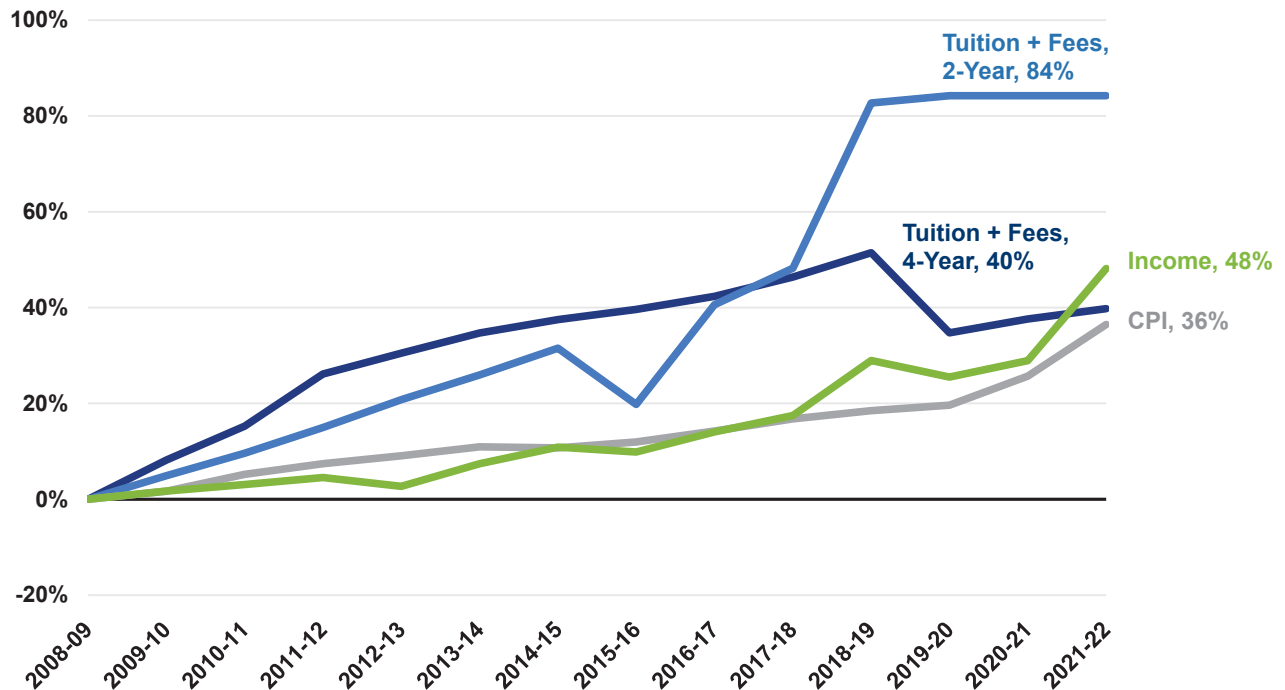
Graduates who sought a degree or certificate from four-year Type 1 universities in Delaware in 2020-21 borrowed, on average, \$24,572 and graduates of four-year Type 2 institutions borrowed \$26,000. These amounts were higher than the SREB and national averages in 2020-21. The average amount borrowed for four-year Type 1 institutions increased but decreased for four-year Type 2 institutions from 2015-16 to 2020-21.

Students at public two-year colleges borrowed, on average, \$10,500 in 2020-21. This amount more than doubled than the average amount over the five-year period, bringing them in line with regional and national averages. This suggests a significant shift in the affordability of two-year institutions in Delaware.

## Changes in Tuition and Fees, CPI and Family Income

A severe divergence between tuition and fees, family income and Consumer Price Index suggests decreasing affordability in Delaware between 2008-09 and 2021-22.

In recent years, tuition and fee levels at two-year institutions have remained high with minimal moderation. The affordability gap continues to widen as tuition increases outpace income growth by nearly 2:1, underscoring a severe decline in two-year college affordability in Delaware over this period.

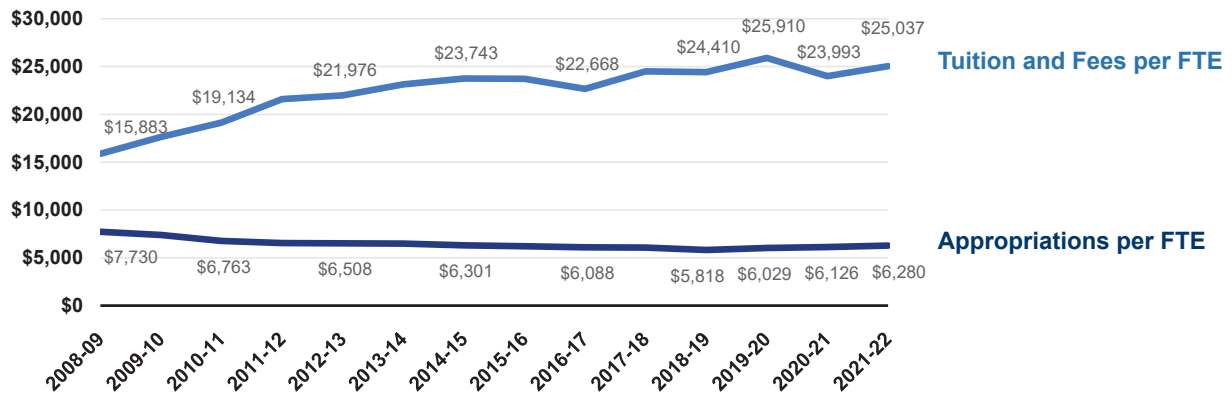


Consumer Price Index retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis: Bureau of Labor Statistics, South urban area, 2021. Tuition and fees retrieved from the U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Institutional Characteristics Files, 2008 to 2021. Median family income retrieved from the U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce, American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B19113, 2023.

## Dollars per FTE Student from State Appropriations and Tuition and Fees

Operational funds consisted mostly of tuition and fees for Delaware's public four-year institutions in 2021-22.

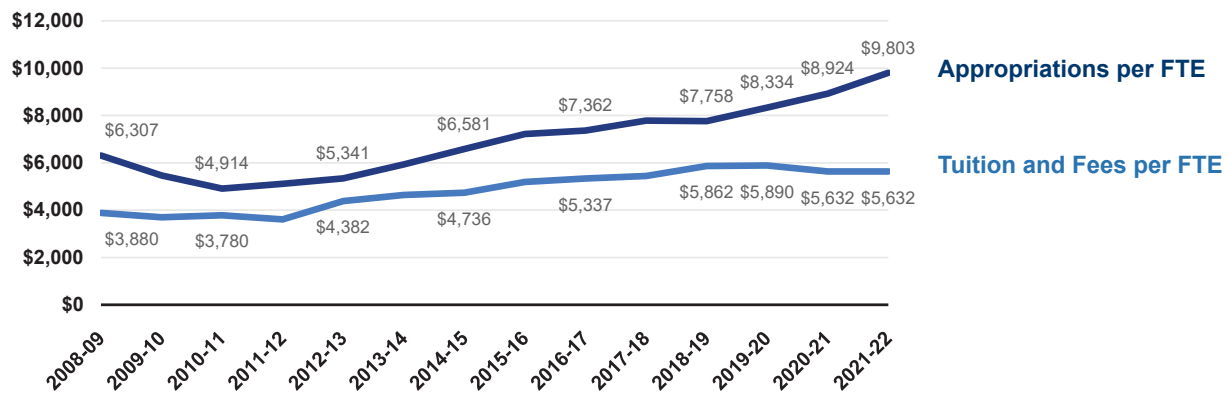
While tuition and fees increased by about 58% since 2008-09, state appropriations decreased by about 19%. By 2021-22, tuition and fees were nearly four times the level of state appropriations, reflecting a higher education cost structure heavily reliant on tuition and fees than state and local appropriations.



Source: SREB-State Data Exchange

Operational funds consisted mostly of state and local appropriations for Delaware's public two-year institutions in 2021-22.

The data shows strong growth in state appropriations for two-year institutions, particularly after 2011. By 2021-22, appropriations significantly exceeded tuition by \$4,171, indicating strong state support for two-year institutions. Unlike four-year institutions, two-year institutions maintain a funding model where state support has grown while tuition increases have been more modest.



Source: SREB-State Data Exchange



## Delaware Fast Facts

**Postsecondary Enrollment:** According to 2021 fall enrollment, 54% of students in Delaware were enrolled in public four-year Type 1 institutions, 14% were enrolled at public four-year Type 2 institutions and 32% were enrolled in public two-year colleges.

**FAFSA:** As of July 5, 2024, Delaware's high school class of 2024 had a FAFSA completion rate of 55%, a 12% decrease from the rate on the same date in 2023.

**Federal Student Aid:** In 2021-22, 16% of students receiving any form of federal student aid were awarded Pell Grants, while 48% received federal student loans.

**Education Attainment:** In 2022, 50.5% of Delaware's working adult population (ages 25 to 64) held a postsecondary credential, placing the state 3.8 percentage points below the national average of 54.3%. This figure includes short-term credentials, which account for 4.7% of Delaware's credential attainment rate, including certificates and industry-recognized certifications.

**Workforce Needs:** By 2031, 65% of jobs in Delaware will require a postsecondary credential. Delaware ranks 37th among states in the percentage of jobs projected to require such credentials.

Postsecondary Enrollment: U.S. Department of Education, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems, 2022.

FAFSA: FAFSA Tracker – National, Retrieved November 2024. <https://national.fafsatracker.com/schoolView/8>.

Federal Student Aid: SREB analysis of National Center for Education Statistics student financial aid database, 2021-22.

Educational attainment: Lumina Foundation, A Stronger Nation, Retrieved November 2024. <https://www.luminafoundation.org/stronger-nation/report/#/progress/state/DE>.

Workforce Needs: Georgetown University, After Everything: Projections of Jobs, Education, and Training Requirements through 2031, Retrieved November 2024. <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/projections2031/>.

## Delaware Institutions by Type

### Public Four-Year Type 1

University of Delaware

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### Public Four-Year Type 2

Delaware State University

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### Public Two-Year

Delaware Technical Community College-Terry

## Notes

**Type 1** four-year institutions award at least 30 doctoral degrees in five different areas. **Type 2** includes all other four-year institutions. The **public two-year category** includes institutions that primarily award associate degrees; the list may include two-year institutions that award bachelor's degrees. The **technical college category** includes postsecondary institutions that offer programs of less than two-years duration below the baccalaureate level and occupational and vocational schools with programs that do not exceed 1800 contact hours. This profile does not report data for the technical college category if less than 3% of students are enrolled in this sector.

Institutions are listed as they were categorized in the 2021-22 Data Exchange Survey and if they submitted the data required for this profile.

This profile is based on data reported to IPEDS by institutions during the 2021-22 academic year. Some IPEDS surveys collect data for the prior academic year; for instance, the 2022-23 Student Financial Aid survey collected data for the 2021-22 academic year.

Institutions or states may have updated data previously reported, or adjusted methodology to calculate a statistic. As a result, some data in the current profile may differ from data reported in past Affordability Profiles for the same time period.

See the technical guide at <https://www.sreb.org/state-affordability-profiles> for detailed sources and explanatory notes.

*SREB College Affordability Profiles detail data and trends specific to each SREB state to assist policy-makers with decisions on postsecondary affordability and attainment. For additional resources, including recommendations of the Commission on College Affordability in the South and the SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, visit [SREB.org/Affordability](https://www.sreb.org/Affordability).*