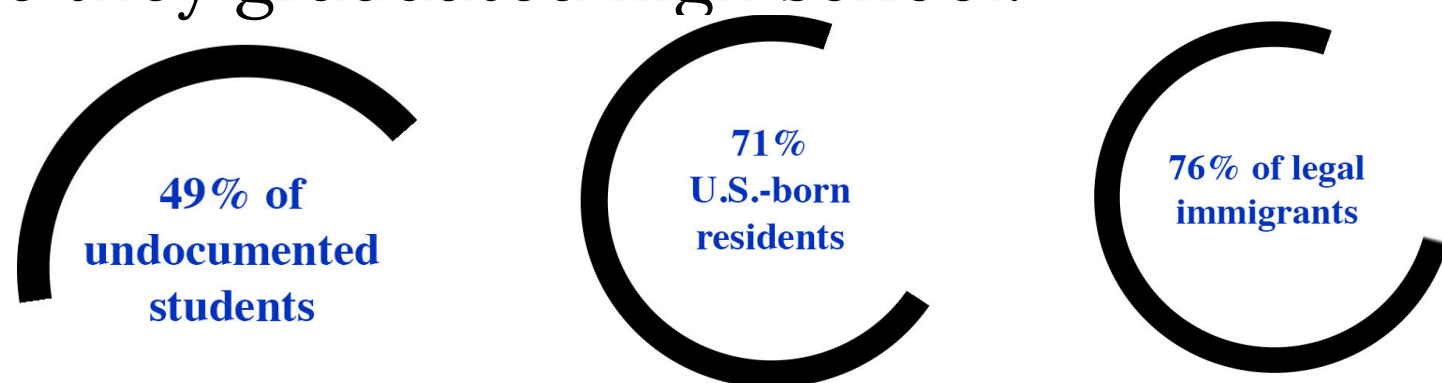


College Education for Undocumented Students

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What happens after high school graduation?

In 1982, the *Plyler v. Doe* Supreme Court case permitted undocumented children to attend K-12 public education in the United States (Parkhouse & Freeman, 2017). However, the case failed to discuss what would happen to these students once they graduated high school.



On a national level, this percent of 18-24 year olds have attended or are currently enrolled in college (Parkhouse & Freeman, 2017).

Why are few undocumented students attending college?

There are many factors that affect undocumented students' college attendance in North Carolina, one of them being the inability for students to pay out-of-state tuition, since they are regarded as nonresidents (Gonzales 2010).

❓ "North Carolina neither allows nor denies in-state tuition for undocumented students," (Parkhouse & Freeman, 2017). Due to the lack of a formal policy, schools have opted to not give students in-state tuition. **"Out-of-state tuition is three to seven times more expensive than in-state tuition,"** (Gonzales, 2010). These students tend to be from low-income households (Gonzales, 2010), which heavily affects their ability to pay this increased price tag.



Additionally, these students often attend "high-poverty, low-achieving school districts," (Gonzales, Heredia & Negron-Gonzales, 2015).

Furthermore, students' families are not familiar with the college process in the United States (Gonzales, 2010).



Lastly, undocumented students wonder if the cost of college will be worth the expenses due to their limited job opportunities if they do decide to attend (Parkhouse & Freeman, 2017).

"If you're the average undocumented family, your parents or people are probably working for minimum wage. I'm not going to be able to pay it off, so I shouldn't bother" - Parkhouse & Freeman, 2017.

How would this benefit North Carolina?

In-state tuition has shown to increase the rate of college enrollment. This will result in an increase in upward mobility (Flores, 2010).

"Research has found that students benefiting from in-state tuition are faring better than students in states without legislation," (Gonzales, 2010).

What can we do?

- ➔ In-state tuition must be made available for undocumented students.
Many believe that giving in-state tuition to undocumented immigrants will cost the United States more. However, according to a research done by Dr. Stella Flores, and cited in the article by Parkhouse & Freeman, "in-state tuition policies do not necessitate additional state funding" (Parkhouse and Freeman, 2017).
- ➔ More resources must be accessible for students to be able to navigate the college admission process.
Research has shown that when students form a strong bond with teachers and other school officials, they better understand and persevere through college applications (Gonzales, 2010). Gonzales claims, "**Without access to school resources, many of these students fall through the cracks,**" (2010).
Furthermore, since Latinx (a more inclusive term for the Latin community) immigrants tend to go to low-income schools (Gonzales et al., 2015), not all of them are able to take AP courses, which are critical when applying to colleges (Gonzales, 2010).
- ➔ We can allow undocumented students to be eligible for state financial aid.
New York City passed Senate bill S. 1250 in 2019, allowing undocumented students to obtain state financial aid (Goldbaum, 2019). The bill affected 146,000 students (Goldbaum, 2019). **North Carolina has roughly 30,000 undocumented students** (Parkhouse & Freeman, 2017) who have a more difficult time going to college due to the high cost. Allowing them to receive state financial aid will have similar positive effects as seen in New York.

This issue has been seen in the NC government before...

- ✗ April, 2005: HB 1183 proposed that undocumented students could receive in-state tuition. It failed.
 - ✗ March, 2015: SB 463 proposed in-state tuition, once again. It's stalled in committee.
 - ✗ April, 2015: HB 689 tried to give in-state tuition to undocumented students who "acquired a high school diploma or GED from a North Carolina school, and had fulfilled the university admission requirements." It has yet to pass.
 - ✗ May, 2016: HB 1081 proposed a similar criteria as the last one, except it added that students must have a 2.7 GPA. It has yet to pass.
- University of Michigan, 2018.

"Even though I've lived here for like most of my life, ever since I was four. I started school here so how can you change this? It seems ridiculous"
- Parkhouse & Freeman.

Objections

"I believe that in-state tuition should only be for those who pay taxes!"

A large amount of undocumented families pay taxes! They do so by using their ITIN which stands for "Individual Taxpayer Identification Number," (Olivas, 2009). This is used by those who do not have social security numbers to file taxes (Olivas, 2009).

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