

WINTER 2013


STATE OF THE WORKFORCE: EDUCATION

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*We are change agents who
create solutions for business,
workforce, and community
challenges to promote economic
vitality in the Southwest
Michigan region.*



Section Summary

-  The K-12 education system plays a critical role in preparing students for the workforce. However, filling jobs vacated by retirees, keeping up with new technologies, and meeting the talent needs of employers increasingly requires education after high school. Postsecondary certifications, associate's degrees, and bachelor's degrees will continue to be in particularly high demand.

The region's attainment of high school diplomas is on pace with state and national levels for the population ages 25 and older. However, the share of Southwest Michigan residents who hold bachelor's degrees or higher continues to lag behind Michigan and the United States. This could pose problems over the next five years as baby boomers retire and the number of jobs requiring a four-year college education increases.

As for current students, Van Buren County is above the state average in all student proficiency metrics. Berrien County students surpass the state's marks for high school testing, while the county's elementary students fall below Michigan's measures. Cass County students show the exact opposite: elementary students exceed state averages, but high school students fall short on proficiency measures. The good news for all three counties is that there are robust career and technical education programs offered, particularly in Van Buren County.

Table of Contents

Berrien County Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over, 2012	5
Cass County Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over, 2012	6
Van Buren County Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over, 2012	7
Berrien County Bachelor’s Degrees by Major, 2012	8
Cass County Bachelor’s Degrees by Major, 2012.....	10
Van Buren County Bachelor’s Degrees by Major, 2012.....	12
Literacy Rates, 2003	14
Berrien County Career Technical Education (CTE) Programs, 2013 - 2014.....	14
Cass County Career Technical Education (CTE) Programs, 2013-2014	15
Van Buren County Career Technical Education (CTE) Programs, 2013-2014.....	15
STATE OF MICHIGAN SCHOOLS DASHBOARD	
State of Michigan Schools Dashboard, 2012-13	16
BERRIEN COUNTY SCHOOLS DASHBOARDS	
Berrien RESA (All Berrien School Districts) Dashboard, 2012-13.....	16
Benton Harbor Area Schools Dashboard, 2012-13.....	17
Benton Harbor Charter Schools Dashboard, 2012-13.....	17
Berrien Springs Public Schools Dashboard, 2012-13.....	18
Brandywine Community Schools Dashboard, 2012-13	18
Bridgman Public Schools Dashboard, 2012-13	19
Buchanan Community Schools Dashboard, 2012-13.....	19
Coloma Community Schools Dashboard, 2012-13.....	20
Countryside Academy Dashboard, 2012-13.....	20
Dream Academy Dashboard, 2012-13.....	21
Eau Claire Public Schools Dashboard, 2012-13	21
Galien Township School District Dashboard, 2012-13.....	22
Hagar Township School District #6 Dashboard, 2012-13	22
Lakeshore School District Dashboard, 2012-13	22
Mildred C. Wells Preparatory Academy Dashboard, 2012-13	23
New Buffalo Area Schools Dashboard, 2012-13	23
Niles Community Schools Dashboard, 2012-13.....	24
River Valley School District Dashboard, 2012-13.....	24
Sodus Township School District #5 Dashboard, 2012-13	25



St. Joseph Public Schools Dashboard, 2012-13 25

Watervliet School District Dashboard, 2012-13..... 26

CASS COUNTY SCHOOLS DASHBOARDS

Lewis Cass ISD (All Cass School Districts) Dashboard, 2012-13 26

Cassopolis Public Schools Dashboard, 2012-13 27

Dowagiac Union School District Dashboard, 2012-13..... 27

Edwardsburg Public Schools Dashboard, 2012-13 28

Marcellus Community Schools Dashboard, 2012-13 28

VAN BUREN COUNTY SCHOOLS DASHBOARDS

Van Buren ISD (All Van Buren School Districts) Dashboard, 2012-13 29

Bangor Public Schools Dashboard, 2012-13 29

Bloomington Public School District Dashboard, 2012-13 30

Covert Public Schools Dashboard, 2012-13 30

Decatur Public Schools Dashboard, 2012-13 31

Gobles Public School District Dashboard, 2012-13 31

Hartford Public Schools Dashboard, 2012-13 32

Lawrence Public Schools Dashboard, 2012-13..... 32

Lawton Community School District Dashboard, 2012-13..... 33

Mattawan Consolidated School Dashboard, 2012-13..... 33

Paw Paw Public School District Dashboard, 2012-13..... 34

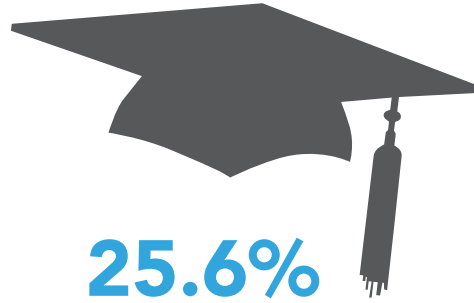
South Haven Public Schools Dashboard, 2012-13 34

Berrien County Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over, 2012



87.9%

**High School Grad
or Higher**



25.6%

**Bachelor's Degree
or Higher**

Highest Level Attained	Berrien County	Michigan	United States
Population 25 and Over	107,322	6,621,018	208,731,498
Less than 9th Grade	4.1%	3.2%	5.8%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	8.0%	7.6%	7.9%
High School Graduate or Equivalent	31.6%	30.6%	28.0%
Some College, No Degree	22.4%	23.9%	21.3%
Associate's Degree	8.3%	8.7%	8.0%
Bachelor's Degree	15.0%	16.0%	18.2%
Graduate or Professional Degree	10.6%	10.0%	10.9%
High School Graduate or Higher	87.9%	89.2%	86.4%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	25.6%	26.0%	29.1%

Source: 2012 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates

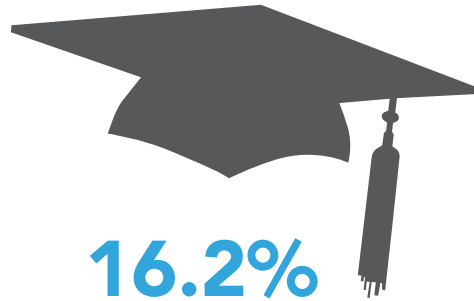


Cass County Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over, 2012



87.3%

High School Grad
or Higher



16.2%

Bachelor's Degree
or Higher

Highest Level Attained	Cass County	Michigan	United States
Population 25 and Over	36,126	6,570,917	204,348,469
Less than 9th Grade	2.9%	3.5%	6.1%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	9.8%	7.9%	8.3%
High School Graduate or Equivalent	37.7%	30.9%	28.4%
Some College, No Degree	24.0%	24.1%	21.3%
Associate's Degree	9.4%	8.4%	7.6%
Bachelor's Degree	11.2%	15.6%	17.7%
Graduate or Professional Degree	5.0%	9.7%	10.5%
High School Graduate or Higher	87.3%	88.6%	85.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	16.2%	25.3%	28.2%

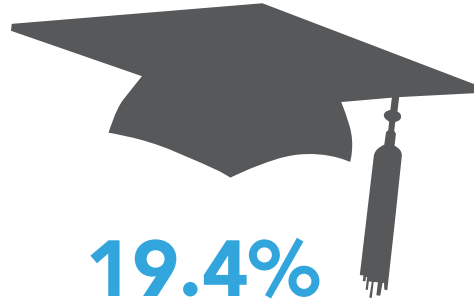
Source: 2011 American Community Survey, 3-Year Estimates

Van Buren County Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over, 2012



84.3%

High School Grad or Higher



19.4%

Bachelor's Degree or Higher

Highest Level Attained	Van Buren County	Michigan	United States
Population 25 and Over	51,071	6,621,018	208,731,498
Less than 9th Grade	6.4%	3.2%	5.8%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	9.3%	7.6%	7.9%
High School Graduate or Equivalent	34.5%	30.6%	28.0%
Some College, No Degree	22.0%	23.9%	21.3%
Associate's Degree	8.4%	8.7%	8.0%
Bachelor's Degree	12.8%	16.0%	18.2%
Graduate or Professional Degree	6.6%	10.0%	10.9%
High School Graduate or Higher	84.3%	89.2%	86.4%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	19.4%	26.0%	29.1%

Source: 2012 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates

If you'd like to gain access to the full report,
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