

MAKING THE CASE FOR MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN UTAH

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University
with slides from Pam Perlich, University
of Utah

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Highlights

- Utah is in the midst of an unprecedented economic, demographic, and cultural transformation that has its origins in national and international trends. The cumulative impact of these trends is that Utah, along with the rest of the nation, will continue to become much more diverse in many ways, including age, culture, language, nativity, race, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomics.
- Two major population trends driving changes are 1) the continued arrival of record numbers of young, working-age

Utah's Demographic Transformation: A View into the Future

Pamela S. Perlich, Senior Research Economist

Introduction

Utah, along with the rest of the nation, is in the midst of an extraordinary demographic transformation which has far from run its course. The confluence of four major trends continues to dramatically reshape the size and composition of the national and

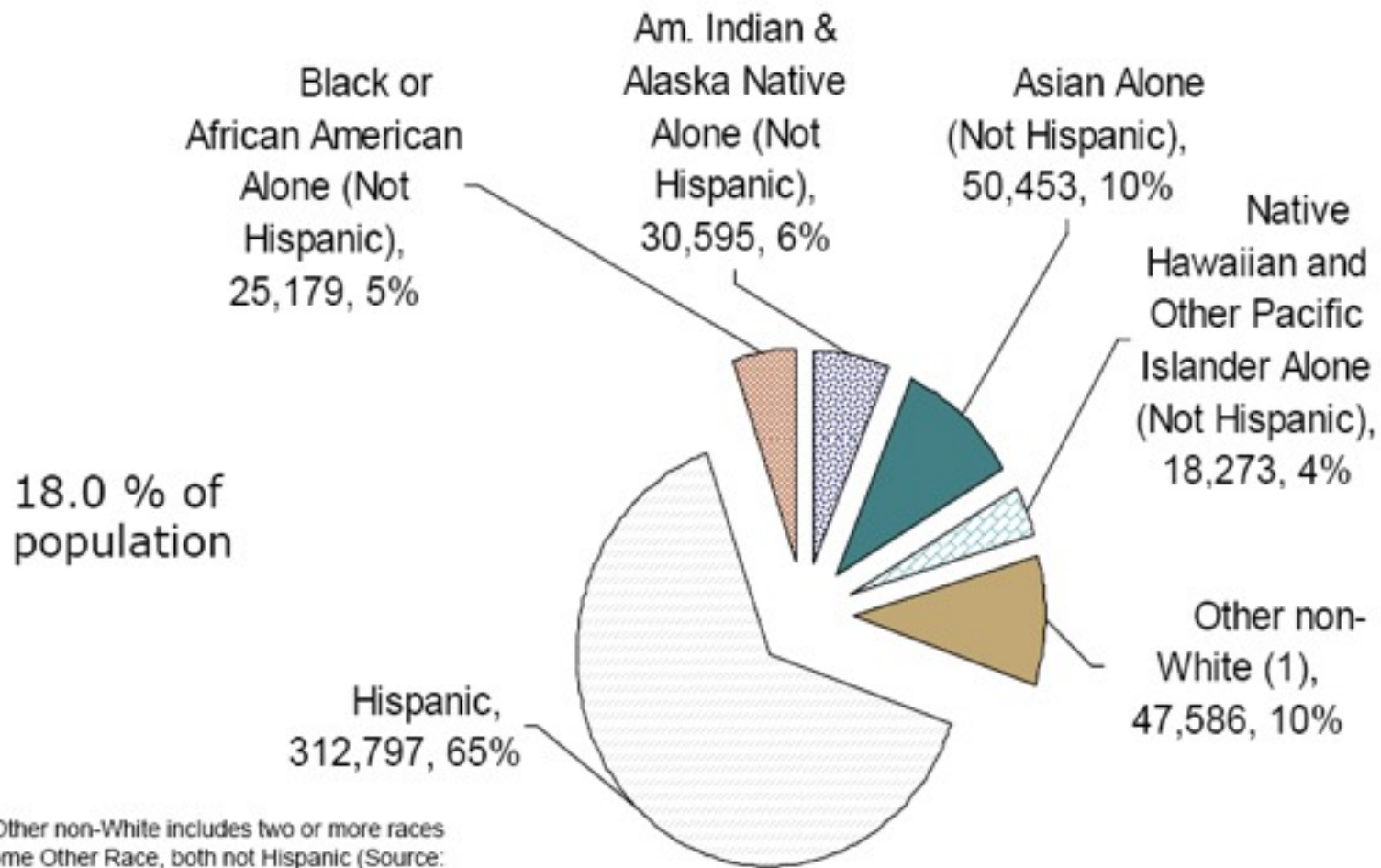
Utah's Minority Population: 2007

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Utah's Minority Population: 2007

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Note: Other non-White includes two or more races and Some Other Race, both not Hispanic (Source: BEBR Analysis of Bureau of Census and Utah Population Estimates data.)

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Minority Contribution to Utah Population and School Enrollment Growth: 2000 to 2007

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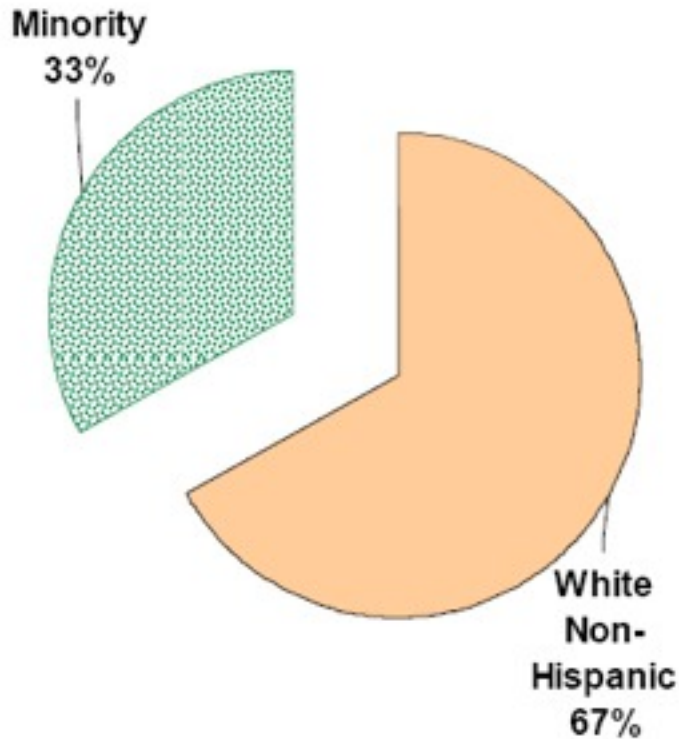
Source: Bureau of Economic and Business Research Analysis of U.S. Bureau of the Census, Utah Population Estimates Committee, and USOE data.

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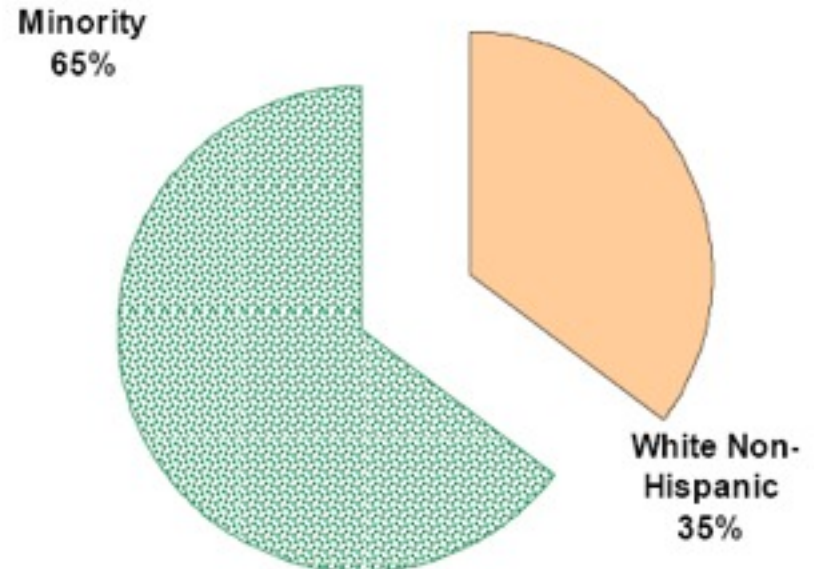
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Population Growth



Enrollment Growth



Source: Bureau of Economic and Business Research Analysis of U.S. Bureau of the Census, Utah Population Estimates Committee, and USOE data.

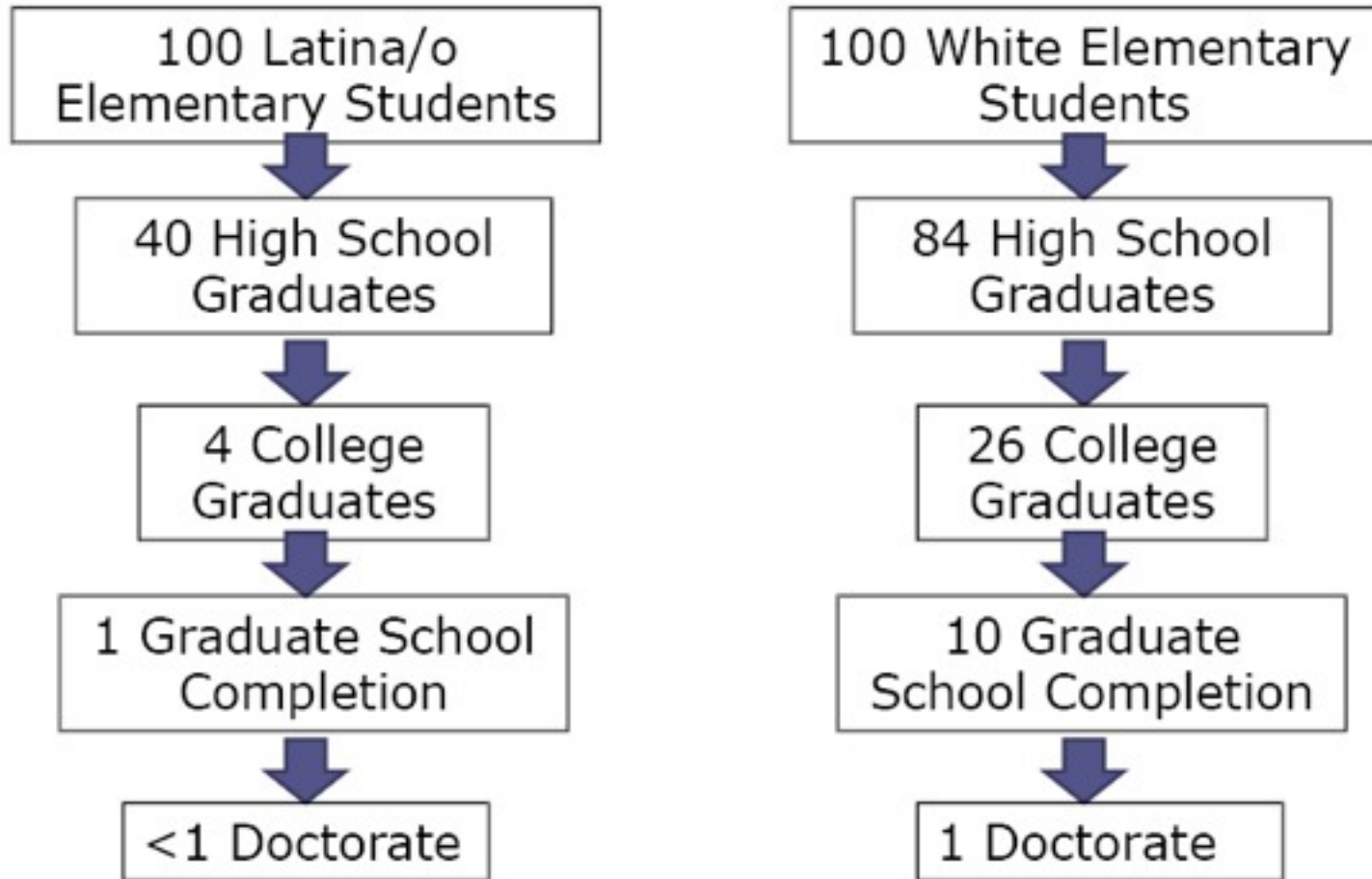
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Educational Transition Points

Source: Octavio Vallalpando, University of Utah

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Overview

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- Utah context – different, but trending towards nation

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- A view into Utah's future – it is a New Day in Utah

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Education is Relational

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- “[W]e need to think relationally. That is, understanding education requires that we situate it in the unequal relations of power in the larger society and in the realities of dominance and subordination—and the conflicts—that are generated by these relations.
- Apple, M. (2010). Putting the “Critical” Back into Education Research. *Educational Researcher*, 39, 2, p. 152.

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Multicultural Education is Key

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- Students develop an understanding of
 - Utah in the global context
 - Appreciation for cultural and ethnic differences / similarities
 - Recognition of the common ground among cultures / people

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- Educators develop curriculum that addresses diverse needs
 - Linguistic diversity among students
 - Socioeconomic (dis)advantages
 - Achievement gap

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Zirkel, S. (2008). Teachers College Record
Volume 110, Number 6, June 2008, pp.
1147-1181.

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- The Influence of
Multicultural
Educational Practices on
Student
Outcomes and Intergroup
Relations

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- “[E]fforts directed at improving the achievement of underperforming students of color that do not deeply and directly address issues of race and ethnicity have been ineffective.”

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- “[A] strong, positive racial or ethnic identity is associated with higher levels of academic performance.”

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- “Opportunities for younger learners to specifically discuss issues of race and ethnicity in classrooms reveal that such discussions can lead to less stereotyping and prejudice.”

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- “[D]iscussions of race and ethnicity...have their powerful effect on students’ intellectual development in large part because they expand students’ conceptions of how knowledge is generated and the ways in which that perspective shapes that knowledge.”

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- “[S]trong, positive racial or ethnic identity is associated with greater achievement and commitment to academics among students of color. It is also the case that this same strong, positive racial or ethnic identity can serve to improve interethnic relations, in part because a strong racial or ethnic identity can help students to meet on a more equal footing.”

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- “Equity pedagogies are pedagogical innovations specifically designed to address issues of education equity... teaching techniques and methods that can address different learning styles and... facilitate educational achievements of lower performing students.” (SIOP, REACH, RTI, etc.)

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- “Specific techniques described as equity pedagogies are only effective when they are placed into a larger context of a changed understanding of the role of the social context in framing learning.”
- Education is relational—recognize issues of power relations and identity formation in the school context.

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- “Heterogeneous groups are most effective when: (1) the project undertaken...entails work that is actually best done by a groups; (2) the project is open-ended, without a clear “right answer,” but one that requires high-level work; and (3) teachers actively and effectively work to subvert or deconstruct status differences between students...to create conditions that foster positive interactions between group members—precisely the same conditions that lead to improvements in student learning.”

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- “Empowering school cultures generally has two components: schools that focus on building strong relationships among students and between students and teachers, and schools that focus on altering pedagogical and institutional practice in ways that address institutionalized racism...positive relationships with teachers have tangible benefits for student skill development and motivation, and this is particularly true for students of color.”

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- “A consistent finding that emerged from research on the influence of multicultural educational practices is that such practices do indeed improve the educational outcomes of students of color...However, the empirical research also demonstrates...[that] multicultural education practice also improves the learning, achievement, and engagement of all students—higher and lower achieving students, students of color and White students, lower and higher SES students.”

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- “[T]he evidence suggests that the goals of improved academic performance of students of color and good interethnic relations are linked, in that improvements in one lead to improvements in the other.”
- Back to Michael Apple’s point—“Education is relational...we need to think relationally.”

Cutri, R.M. (2010). Brigham Young University

Working Groups

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- brainstorm ways to use this information
- advocacy points for diverse students in Utah
- facts, implications, and suggestions that Utah NAME has for educators here in Utah.
- Create a resource for **Making the Case for Multicultural Education in Utah**—get specific to your area's needs
- Report back out to the whole group your big ideas

Cutri, R.M. (2010). Brigham Young University

Contact Information

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