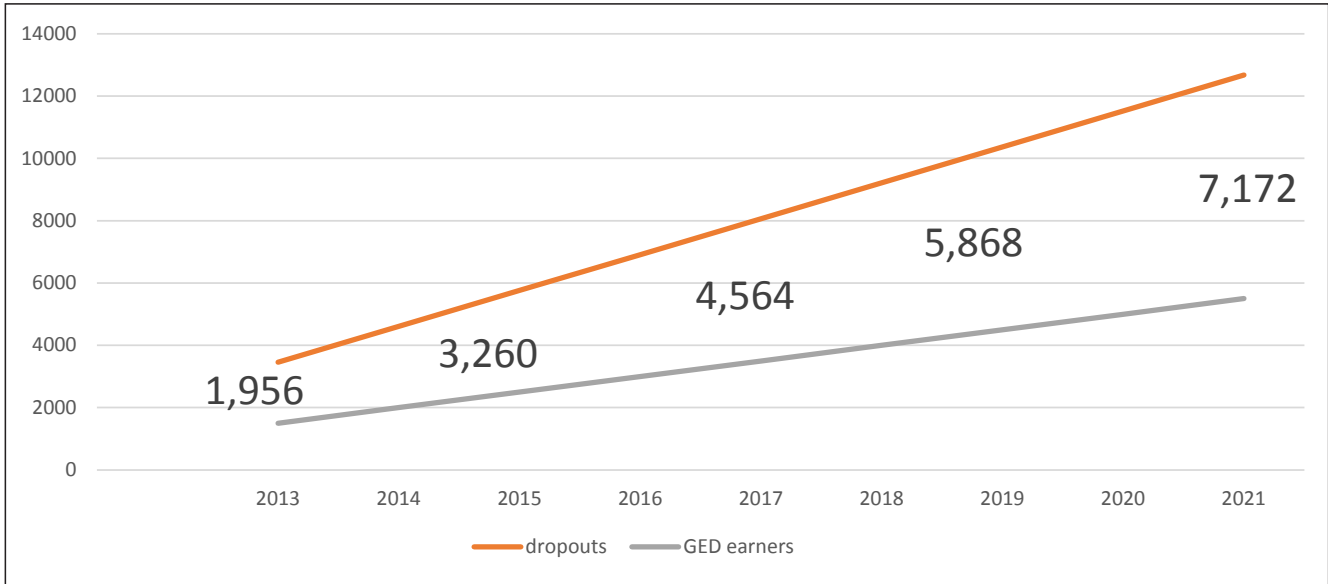


An Increasing Number of Americans Lack a High School Diploma

The Scope:

Aggregate Student Dropouts Less GED Earners

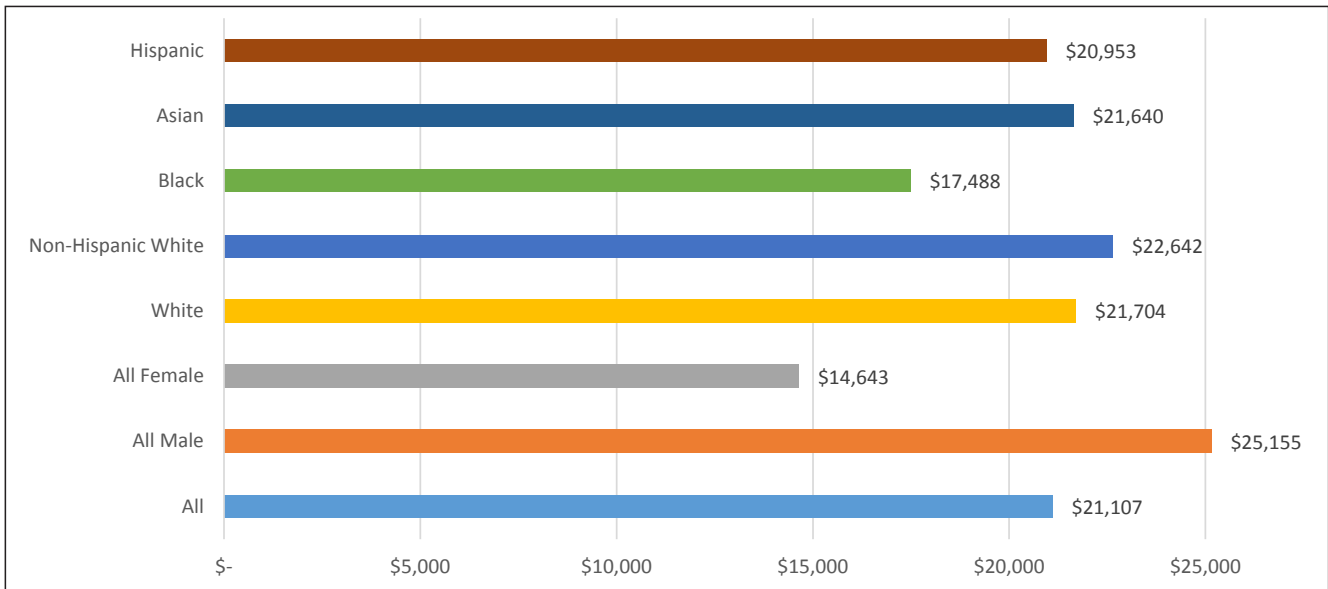


Based on Education Research Center's 2011 Dropout Rates, *Education Week*, and the 2011 Annual Statistical Report on the GED Test

In his most recent State of the Union Address, President Obama called for America to once again lead the world in college graduates by the year 2020. His challenge was received enthusiastically and much of the subsequent educational debate has centered on how to realize this vision. However, for far too long an ever increasing population of Americans have gone unnoticed once they have left school: former high school dropouts. Today, there are an estimated 39 to 40 million people without a high school diploma, and that number is growing. In fact, if current dropout rates, as well as rates at which candidates take and pass the GED or an equivalent assessment persist, over 7 million more people will not earn a high school credential by 2021. The impact of this national failure is evident and increasingly severe: high unemployment and low-wages are virtually a lifelong sentence for most people without a diploma.

The Result:

Mean Earnings of Workers 18 Years and Over Without a High School Diploma in 2011



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Current Population Survey, 2011