

**Strategic Issues:**

- Idaho attempted to reorganize the structure of the state educational boards in the early 1990s. Public primary and secondary schools, as well as postsecondary institutions, are now governed by the same education board. Although a measure was passed in 1993 creating two boards for public schools and postsecondary institutions, it was later found unconstitutional by the state Supreme Court. Separation of these two education entities will require a state-wide referendum.

**Summary**

- Critical Challenge:** Idaho had high rates of high school graduation compared to other states in the 1990s, but it fell far behind the national average at each interval in the decade in the rates of college enrollment by high school graduates.
- System Issues:** The state has not invested sufficiently in need-based grants. In addition, the state was more reliant on four-year colleges and had a less well developed two-year system than the national average. Structural changes may be needed, along with better coordination of state finance strategies, to improve college access.
- Opportunity:** Improvement in need-based grants would improve high school graduation and college enrollment rates. Grants at the equity standard would have enabled 3,000 students to graduate from high school and 11,000 additional students the opportunity to attend college.

**Access Indicators***High School Graduation Rates* (Table 12.1)

High school graduation rates in Idaho declined throughout the decade. In 1992, the graduation rate was over 81%, but over the last eight years of the decade, it fell to 77%. Despite the falling rates, Idaho's high school graduation rates were a minimum of ten percentage points above the national average at every interval of the decade.

*College Enrollment Rates* (Table 12.1)

As with high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates in the state declined during the decade. In 1992, 49% of high school graduates attended some type of postsecondary institution. However, while Idaho's high school graduation rates were well above the national average, its college enrollment rates ranged from five to twelve percentage points behind the national average over the decade.

**State Demographics***State Demographics* (Table 12.2)

Poverty rates within the state generally declined throughout the decade. From 15% in 1992, the poverty rate fell to 13% in 2000. Hispanics are not only the state's largest minority, but its fastest-growing, expanding from 6% in 1992 to 7% in 2000. The percentage of Idaho residents with a bachelor's degree or higher fluctuated little, from 19% in 1992 to 20% in 2000. As with other states, the personal income per capita increased throughout the decade from \$21,053 in 1992 to \$23,727 in 2000.

*System Composition* (Table 12.3)

A majority of Idaho residents attended four-year institutions for their postsecondary education. Public two-year institutions became more popular among postsecondary students, increasing from 11% in 1992 to 14% in 2000. Private institutions enrolled 21% of the system total in 2000.

### **Financial Indicators**

#### *Financial Capacity* (Table 12.4)

Idaho residents were taxed at slightly higher rates than the national averages. Throughout the decade, Idaho residents were taxed at least a percentage point higher than the national average. Tax rates in the state decreased from 9% in 1992 to 8% in 1998 and 2000.

#### *Educational Revenue* (Table 12.5)

With the exception of 1996, state and local appropriations to the public postsecondary system increased throughout the decade, and the appropriations were consistently above the national average at all time points in the decade. In 1994, Idaho appropriated \$685 more than the national average to its public postsecondary system. However, in 2000, Idaho appropriated only \$153 more than the national average.

#### *Tuition and Fees* (Table 12.6)

Consistent with the trend of most states, in-state tuition and fees increased throughout the decade. In 1992, Idaho institutions charged students \$1,819 for tuition and fees. By 1996, the amount increased to \$2,174 and four years later in 2000, students were charged \$2,558. Nevertheless, Idaho's tuition and fees remained below the national average.

#### *Need-based Grants* (Table 12.6)

Need-based grants were not heavily funded in Idaho as evident by the average grant of \$16 to \$27 at various points in the decade. The average need-based grant decreased since 1994 to a decade-low of \$16 in 2000. The average state need-based grant was at least \$322 lower than the national average at every two-year interval of the decade.

#### *Non-need Grants* (Table 12.6)

As was the case with need-based grants, non-need grants were relatively low compared to the national average, and the gap became increasingly larger as the decade progressed. Throughout the decade, the average non-need based grant fluctuated between \$8 and \$10. In 2000, the average non-need grant in Idaho was \$104 less than the national average.

### **Projections**

#### *Coordinated System of Grants* (Table 12.7)

Had Idaho increased its need-based grant aid, given tuition charges, 300 more students would have graduated from high school, an increase of two percentage points. Of the state's high school graduates, 1,100 more students would have attended postsecondary institutions in the state.

#### *Federal Grant Program Prospectus* (Table 12.7)

In addition, had the federal government provided incentives for Idaho to provide adequate grant aid equaling one-quarter of the tuition on top of current state aid, 300 more high school students would have graduated, an increase of two percentage points. College enrollment would have increased by 1,100 students, representing an increase of six percentage points from the current college continuation rate.