

VIRGINIA EDITION

The Economic State of **Black Men and Boys** in the Commonwealth of Virginia

ANNUAL RESEARCH REPORT • AUGUST 2026

What happens to Black men and boys happens to Virginia



Dr. Wes Bellamy

Executive Director, John Mercer Langston Institute
Chair, Department of Political Science and Public Administration
Virginia State University

In conjunction with the Virginia Alliance for Black Men and Boys

CONTENTS

What Is in This Report

Section	Page
From the Institute · Why This Report Exists	3
At a Glance · Virginia in Twelve Numbers	5
At a Glance · Three Findings Moving in the Other Direction	6
How to Read This Report	7
Executive Summary	8
Introduction · Why Black Men and Boys Must Be Seen in Virginia Data	10
Chapter One · Population and Definitions	11
Chapter Two · The Education Pipeline	12
Chapter Three · Work, Earnings, and Ownership	17
Chapter Four · Household Security	19
Chapter Five · Health, Safety, and Justice	21
Chapter Six · Regional Variation — and What Virginia Cannot Yet Measure	23
Chapter Seven · Institutional Action — and the Evidence Gap	24
Chapter Eight · Ten Priorities	26
Chapter Nine · The Accountability Scorecard	29
Chapter Ten · A Virginia Research Agenda	30
Conclusion · What This Report Asks of the Commonwealth	31
Methods and Sources	32
Notes · Numbered Sources	36

FROM THE INSTITUTE

Why This Report Exists

Nearly 776,000 Black men and boys live in Virginia. They teach in its schools, move its freight, staff its hospitals, wear its uniforms, run its barbershops and its budgets. They are 8.8 percent of the Commonwealth and nearly half of its Black population.¹

Virginia's public reports cannot tell you how many Black men are in its prisons.

The reason is not that race and sex go unrecorded. The Department of Corrections records and publishes both — but in separate tables: 54.3 percent Black, and 93.7 percent male. Multiplying those figures would produce something that looks like an answer and is not one. The men at that intersection are in the records. They are absent from the public tabulation.²

That is the pattern this report was written to name. Apprenticeship reporting does it. Several state dashboards do it. The federal prisoner series does it for every individual state in the country. Agencies collect race and sex on the same record, then publish them as if they described two separate populations, and the people who live at the crossing point disappear from public view.³

Several of the most consequential gaps in this report are solvable without launching a new survey. In corrections, apprenticeship, and other administrative systems, the immediate need is a race-by-sex extract from records the Commonwealth already maintains. Other questions — especially regional estimates and longitudinal education-to-workforce outcomes — will require additional analysis or data linkage. This report distinguishes between the two, and says which is which every time it names a gap.

We publish this because policy follows measurement. A Commonwealth that cannot count a population cannot set a target for it, cannot fund a program against it, and cannot be held to account for it. When a school division reports that its suspension rate improved, that statement does not tell us whether conditions improved for Black boys unless Black-boy results are reported directly. When a workforce board reports that apprenticeship registrations grew, the same is true.

This report is not a deficit narrative

The evidence does not support a story of failure, and this report does not tell one. A larger share of employed Black men work in the public sector than of employed White non-Hispanic men. Black-male college enrollment at SCHEV-reporting institutions is up nearly a quarter in four years. Broadband subscription in households headed by Black men is effectively at parity with the White non-Hispanic rate. Those are assets, and they appear here alongside the gaps.

What the evidence supports is narrower and harder: Virginia has substantial Black male participation in its economy, unequal access to its highest-return pathways, unequal exposure to its worst outcomes, and — in several systems that matter most — no public ability to see any of it.

Read this report three ways

Policymakers and agency leaders should read it as a scorecard — specific, sourced indicators against which their own institutions can be measured, year over year. Educators, workforce leaders, coaches, pastors, and community organizations should read it as evidence supporting what they encounter every day, and as material for making that case to funders and decision-makers. Black men and boys, and the families who raise them, should read it as an honest account of the Commonwealth they are navigating — not as a verdict on their ability or their ambition.

This is the first edition in an annual series. Each year, the Institute will update these indicators, identify which institutions acted, and report whether the measurable conditions improved.

Nobody is coming to save us. This report exists so that the agencies who can close these gaps have no excuse not to.

AT A GLANCE

Virginia in Twelve Numbers

Every figure below is labeled with the population it actually measures. Full sourcing, margins of error, and the complete 26-measure scorecard appear in the methods section.

775,539

Black men and boys in Virginia, 2024
(ACS direct estimate, ±10,471)

174,153

Black boys under 18, 2024 (ACS direct
estimate, ±6,642)

21.3% → 10.1%

Black boys' share of male public-school
enrollment, versus their share of male
AP enrollment, 2021–22

3.0×

Black-boy out-of-school suspension rate
relative to White boys (15.9% vs 5.2%),
2021–22

152,494

Instructional days Black boys lost to out-
of-school suspension in one school year

37,405

Black men enrolled at SCHEV-reporting
institutions, Fall 2025 (headcount, not a
resident rate)

76.5%

Black men employed, ages 25–64,
against 83.1% of White non-Hispanic
men

\$60,915

Median earnings, Black men working full
time year round — 71.4% of the White
non-Hispanic male median

54.9%

Homeownership among households
headed by Black men, against 76.1% of
White non-Hispanic male householders

51.7%

Renter households headed by Black
men paying 30% or more of income for
housing

14.0×

Black-male homicide rate relative to
White non-Hispanic males (33.7 vs 2.4
per 100,000), 2024

Not published

Black-male share of Virginia's prison
population — race and sex are tabulated
separately

Sources: 2024 ACS one-year Virginia PUMS (population, employment, earnings, housing); 2021–22 Civil Rights Data Collection (school access and discipline); SCHEV E02 (enrollment); CDC WONDER final 2024 Underlying Cause of Death (homicide); VADOC Management Information Summary FY2025 (prison tabulation). Full citations in the notes.

The twelfth figure is the argument of this report. Eleven measures above describe conditions. The last describes what Virginia's current publication practices do not provide about a population the Commonwealth incarcerates.

AT A GLANCE

Three Findings Moving in the Other Direction

A report that catalogued only deficits would have to leave these out. All three are direct or administrative measures, and all three run counter to the expected story.

1 • Black-male college enrollment rose 23.8 percent in four years

Black-male fall headcount at SCHEV-reporting institutions grew from 30,211 in 2021 to 37,405 in 2025 — 7,194 more students. The reported headcount increased substantially. The series does not, by itself, establish how much of that increase reflects Virginia residents, online enrollment, or changes in institutional reporting.⁴

2 • Awards to Black men rose 14.5 percent

Credentials conferred on Black men rose from 5,995 in 2020–21 to 6,865 in 2024–25. Doctorates more than doubled and short-term awards under one year nearly doubled. These are awards counts, not cohort completion rates — the distinction matters, and this report keeps it. SCHEV-reporting institutions conferred more credentials on Black men than four years earlier.⁵

3 • Black men have a higher public-sector employment share

An estimated 24.0 percent of employed Black men ages 25–64 work in the public sector, against 20.6 percent of employed White non-Hispanic men. Federal employment alone accounts for an estimated 12.4 percent of employed Black men. This measure compares the share of each group's employed population working in government; it is not a comparison against population share. That is an asset, and because it is concentrated, public-sector contraction would pose disproportionate employment risk for Black men.⁶

One measure sometimes cited as an advantage is not one. Broadband subscription among households headed by Black men is 95.9 percent against 95.3 percent for White non-Hispanic male householders — a difference of 0.6 percentage point with overlapping uncertainty. This report treats that as effective parity, not as a Black-male advantage. Subscription also does not establish affordability, speed, device quality, or digital skill.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

One Rule Governs Every Figure Here

This report uses the newest official dataset that permits direct identification of Black males in Virginia. When newer data do not cross race and sex, they are presented only as broader context and are never characterized as a Black-male finding.

That rule has a cost. It means this report sometimes prints a 2021–22 figure when a 2024–25 figure exists, because the newer product cannot identify Black boys. It means several questions a reader will want answered are marked as gaps instead. The alternative — estimating Black men by multiplying a Black share against a male share — produces numbers that look authoritative and describe nobody.

Four labels, applied to every finding

Label	Meaning
Direct estimate	A Virginia race-by-sex estimate calculated from person- or household-level records.
Administrative count	An official enrollment, completion, discipline, or program count reported by a Virginia or federal agency.
Broader-population context	A Black-only or male-only measure that is informative but is not represented as a Black-male finding.
Data gap	A consequential measure for which current public data do not provide the needed intersectional tabulation.

Three distinctions this report does not blur

- Person measures describe individuals — employment, earnings, education, insurance, disability. Household measures describe occupied housing units classified by the race and sex of the reference person, and are never labeled as individual wealth.
- Enrollment is not completion, and awards counts are not cohort completion rates.
- Survey estimates carry margins of error; administrative counts do not, but they carry reporting rules, suppression, and coverage changes instead. A value shown as 76.5% ± 1.5 points means the 90 percent confidence interval runs from about 75.0 to 78.0.

Full definitions, universes, source currency, the complete measure list, and numbered notes appear in the methods section at the back. They are placed there deliberately: the institutional story comes first.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Virginia Can Now See More of Its Black Male Economic Pipeline

An estimated 775,539 Black men and boys lived in Virginia in 2024 — 8.8 percent of the Commonwealth and 48.2 percent of its Black-alone population. That population includes 174,153 boys under 18 and 82,879 young men ages 18–24. These are direct ACS microdata estimates, not constructed shares.

The central finding is not that Virginia lacks data. It is that the data are fragmented across systems and, when assembled correctly, reveal a consistent pattern: substantial participation alongside unequal access to the highest-return pathways and unequal exposure to economic and institutional risk.

In several systems reviewed here, the missing intersection appears to result from public tabulation practice rather than from the absence of underlying demographic fields. Corrections, apprenticeship, and several state dashboards publish race and sex as separate marginal distributions, so the population at the intersection vanishes even when the underlying records contain both fields. That pattern is not unique to Virginia; the federal prisoner series reports rates by state and sex, and by state and race, but not by both together for any individual state in the tables reviewed here. Naming that practice is part of this report's contribution, because it identifies gaps that can be closed by extraction rather than by new collection.

The pipeline in six findings

- School access is unequal. Black boys were 21.3 percent of male public-school enrollment in the 2021–22 CRDC, but 10.1 percent of male AP participants, 11.5 percent of male gifted participants, and 10.0 percent of male dual-enrollment participants. These are representation comparisons, not causal estimates.
- Exclusion is concentrated. The reported out-of-school suspension rate was 15.9 percent for Black boys and 5.2 percent for White boys — a 3.0-to-1 rate ratio. Black boys lost 152,494 school days to out-of-school suspension, 7.4 days per suspended student.
- Reported postsecondary enrollment is rising. Black-male fall headcount at SCHEV-reporting institutions grew from 30,211 in 2021 to 37,405 in 2025, a 23.8 percent increase. Awards rose from 5,995 in 2020–21 to 6,865 in 2024–25, a 14.5 percent increase. These are institutional headcounts, not Virginia-resident participation rates.
- Adult economic gaps remain large. Among ages 25–64, 76.5 percent of Black men were employed against 83.1 percent of White non-Hispanic men. Median earnings among full-time, year-round workers were \$60,915 and \$85,281 — a \$24,366 gap.
- Household security diverges. Homeownership was 54.9 percent among households headed by Black men and 76.1 percent among those headed by White non-Hispanic men. Median household income was \$77,159 against \$111,678.
- Health and safety risks are acute. Final 2024 CDC mortality data show an age-adjusted homicide rate of 33.7 per 100,000 for Black males in Virginia against 2.4 for White non-Hispanic males — a 14.0-to-1 ratio. Corresponding drug-overdose rates were 43.7 and 22.4. Among Black boys ages 0–17, 33 homicide deaths produced a crude rate of 16.2.

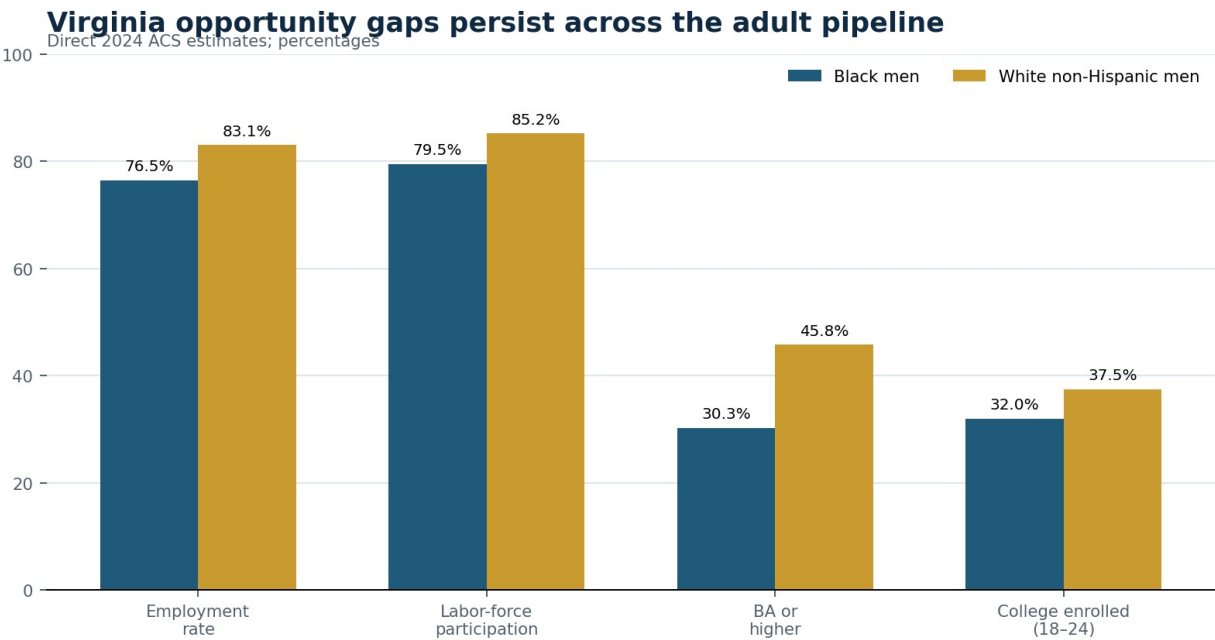


Figure ES-1. Virginia opportunity gaps across the adult pipeline. Direct 2024 ACS estimates.

Source: 2024 ACS one-year Virginia PUMS. Employment and education measures use the universes stated in the methods section.

What this report does not do

It does not treat household income as individual earnings. It does not call awards counts completion rates. It does not infer Black-male incarceration from separate Black and male percentages. And it does not treat a national aggregate as Virginia-specific evidence.

INTRODUCTION

Why Black Men and Boys Must Be Seen in Virginia Data

Virginia does not have a problem caused by Black men and boys. It has an opportunity and accountability problem: public systems narrow access, concentrate harm, and too often fail to publish the data needed to measure either one.

The measurement problem does not create every disparity documented here. It makes those disparities easier to overlook, harder to target, and more difficult to hold any institution responsible for correcting.

That claim is deliberately narrow, and this report tries to earn it rather than assert it. Every figure in the pages that follow comes from a source that crosses race and sex at the record level, or it is labeled as something else. Where no such source exists, the report says so and stops. That discipline costs the report several chapters' worth of statistics it could otherwise have printed.

What survives the discipline is a pipeline

It begins in Virginia's public schools. Black boys constitute 21.3 percent of male public-school enrollment but approximately 10 percent of male participants in Advanced Placement and dual enrollment, and 11.5 percent of male students identified as gifted. They are suspended out of school at three times the White-boy rate. The pipeline narrows early, particularly along pathways associated with advanced coursework, college credit, selective admission, and later credentials.

It continues into higher education, where the direction changes. Black-male fall headcount at Virginia's reporting institutions rose from 30,211 in 2021 to 37,405 in 2025. Awards rose alongside it. That is real movement, and it belongs in the same account as the gaps.

It arrives in a labor market where 76.5 percent of Black men ages 25 to 64 are employed against 83.1 percent of White non-Hispanic men, and where the men who work full time and year round earn a median of \$60,915 against \$85,281 — seventy-one cents on the dollar.

It ends, for too many, early. In 2024 the age-adjusted homicide rate for Black males in Virginia was 33.7 per 100,000. For White non-Hispanic males it was 2.4. That fourteen-to-one ratio is the most unequal number in this report by a wide margin, and it is an economic finding as much as a public-health one: it removes workers, fathers, students, and future earnings from Virginia families.

Each of those stages is measurable. Virginia measures some of them well, some of them late, and some of them not at all. The chapters that follow take each stage in turn, print what the Commonwealth can currently see, and name precisely what it cannot.

A note on framing

Disaggregating these numbers is not a competition with Black women, who carry their own well-documented burdens in income, wealth, and retirement security, and who enroll in and complete college at substantially higher rates than Black men. It is a discipline. An institution can improve an aggregate figure while losing ground with Black men, and look successful either way. Disaggregation is how that becomes visible, and visibility is the precondition for action.

CHAPTER ONE

Population and Definitions

Virginia’s Black-male population is large enough to demand direct analysis and diverse enough to resist a single narrative. The 2024 ACS estimates 775,539 Black men and boys living in the Commonwealth. Boys under 18 account for 174,153; adults 35–54 are the largest age segment at 209,341.⁷

Age	Estimate	90% MOE	Share of Black males
Under 18	174,153	± 6,642	22.5%
18–24	82,879	± 4,331	10.7%
25–34	108,605	± 5,112	14.0%
35–54	209,341	± 4,810	27.0%
55–64	92,694	± 2,035	12.0%
65+	107,867	± 2,269	13.9%

Table 1-1. Source: 2024 ACS one-year Virginia PUMS. Black or African American alone, male, regardless of Hispanic origin.

Two cohorts sit at the ends of the life course and require separate attention. Approximately 257,000 Black males under age 25 span childhood, adolescence, higher education, and the transition into work. The 200,561 who are 55 or older face retirement, health, and caregiving pressures. Policy built for one will not serve the other.

Definitions that prevent statistical error

The ACS headline population is Black or African American alone, male, regardless of Hispanic origin. The White comparator is White alone, non-Hispanic, male. The Civil Rights Data Collection and SCHEV use their own mutually exclusive race and ethnicity categories. Those conventions are printed alongside results rather than silently blended.

The report never estimates Black men or boys by multiplying a Black share by a male share. Every Black-male or Black-boy figure is drawn from a direct race-by-sex field or calculated from microdata records containing both variables.

What the baseline says

Virginia shows meaningful Black-male representation in public employment, federal employment, colleges, and high-skill industries. It also shows persistent gaps in educational access, employment, earnings, homeownership, and health security. The evidence rejects both a deficit-only story and a prosperity-by-aggregate story. Virginia contains large assets and large structural gaps at the same time.

CHAPTER TWO

The Education Pipeline

Virginia’s public schools enroll 135,757 Black boys. They are half of all Black students in the Commonwealth and 21.3 percent of all boys. That figure is not an estimate or a construction — the Civil Rights Data Collection records race and sex on the same student, so for this chapter, unlike several later ones, the population can simply be counted.⁸

Counting them reveals two sharply different patterns of access and treatment within the same statewide system.

Where the pipeline narrows

Black boys constitute 21.3 percent of male public-school enrollment but approximately 10 percent of male participants in Advanced Placement and dual enrollment, and 11.5 percent of male students identified as gifted.

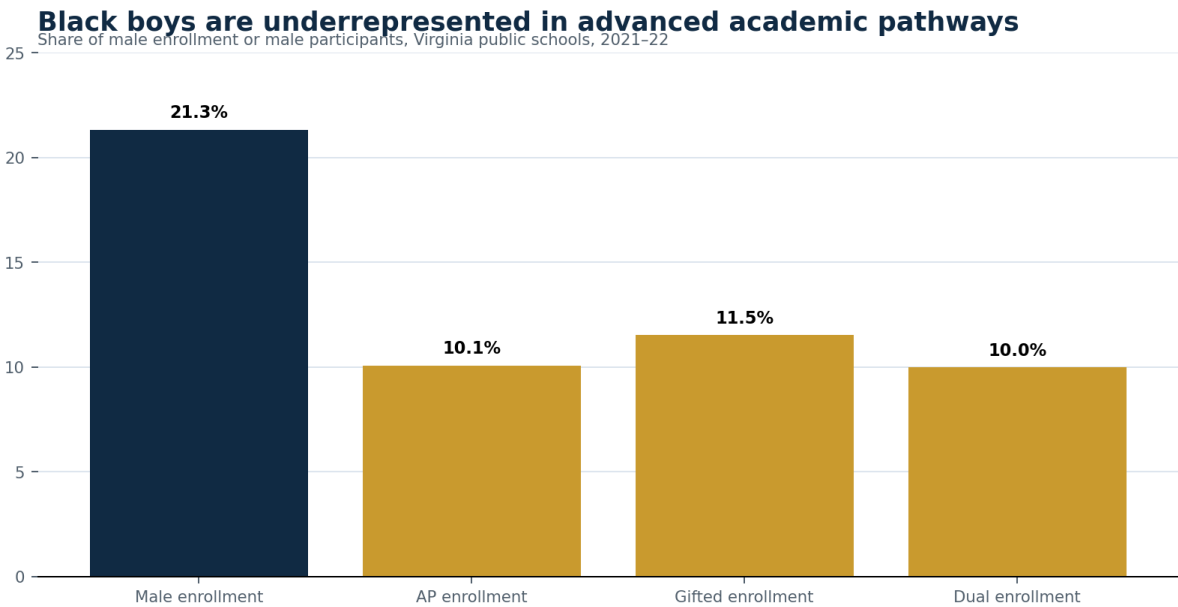


Figure 2-1. Black boys are underrepresented in advanced academic pathways. Share of male enrollment or male participants, Virginia public schools, 2021-22.

Source: 2021-22 Civil Rights Data Collection, Virginia. Grade mix differs across programs; the comparison is descriptive.

The counts beneath those shares are set out below. Figure 2-1 shows the proportions; Table 2-1 gives the participant and enrollment totals from which they are calculated.

Measure	Black boys	All male students
Male public-school enrollment	135,757	637,169
Advanced Placement enrollment	3,632	36,083
Gifted enrollment	9,694	84,254
Dual enrollment	1,663	16,688

Table 2-1. Source: 2021-22 Civil Rights Data Collection, Virginia. Counts are administrative totals reported by schools.

Relative to their share of male enrollment, Black boys’ representation in these three programs runs between 0.47 and 0.54 — roughly half, in all three, with striking consistency. Three programs with different eligibility rules, gatekeepers, and grade configurations produce strikingly similar

representation ratios. These data do not establish why. But the repetition across AP, gifted, and dual enrollment indicates that the result is not confined to a single program, which means no single program is the fix.⁹

Where exclusion concentrates

The second pattern runs the other way. Where Black boys are underrepresented in advancement, they are overrepresented in removal.

Measure	Black boys	White boys	Comparison
One or more out-of-school suspensions	20,712	15,059	15.9% vs 5.2%; 3.0×
Law-enforcement referrals	2,067 (15.8/1,000)	2,616 (9.1/1,000)	1.7× rate
School-related arrests	76 (0.58/1,000)	43 (0.15/1,000)	3.9× rate

Table 2-2. Source: 2021–22 Civil Rights Data Collection, Virginia. Rates are calculated on enrollment in schools that reported the corresponding measure, which is smaller than statewide enrollment; dividing these counts into the 135,757 figure will not reproduce the rates shown. Negative CRDC codes were excluded under the public-use codebook as missing, suppressed, or not applicable, so these totals may understate events.

The raw counts are closer than the enrollment populations would suggest: 20,712 Black boys and 15,059 White boys received one or more out-of-school suspensions, even though White boys represented a much larger enrollment population. Expressed as rates, a Black boy in a Virginia public school was three times as likely to be removed from it.

Black boys lost 152,494 instructional days to out-of-school suspension in a single school year — 7.4 days for every Black boy suspended, nearly a week and a half of instruction.¹⁰

Lost instructional time is not merely a discipline statistic. Repeated absence from instruction can compound through course placement, credit accumulation, graduation, postsecondary access, and ultimately employment and earnings.

What the state can and cannot currently see

Two limits on this chapter should be stated plainly.

The first is vintage. These figures come from the 2021–22 collection, the newest public source that crosses race and sex on these measures. The Office for Civil Rights collected 2023–24 data and expected to publish public-use files in 2026; as of August 25, 2026, the Department of Education lists the 2021–22 data product but not a 2023–24 public-use product. This report keeps the older direct measure and labels it rather than substituting a newer statistic that cannot identify Black boys.¹¹

The second is Virginia’s own reporting. The Department of Education publishes far more current products — 2024–25 Fall Membership, SOL results, the 2023–24 Gifted Annual Report. None yielded a stable statewide race-by-sex extract in the source files used here. That is a publication gap, not permission to infer Black-boy values from Black-only or male-only totals.¹²

Academic performance context

Virginia’s 2024 NAEP reading results show a substantial fourth-grade gap between Black and White students. The published group scores round to 199 and 222; NCES calculates the reported gap using unrounded estimates, yielding approximately 22 points. Sixteen percent of Black fourth-graders scored at or above NAEP Proficient, against 38 percent of White fourth-graders. NAEP is race-specific academic context and does not identify Black boys separately.¹³

Postsecondary enrollment and awards

Reported Black-male enrollment and awards are rising

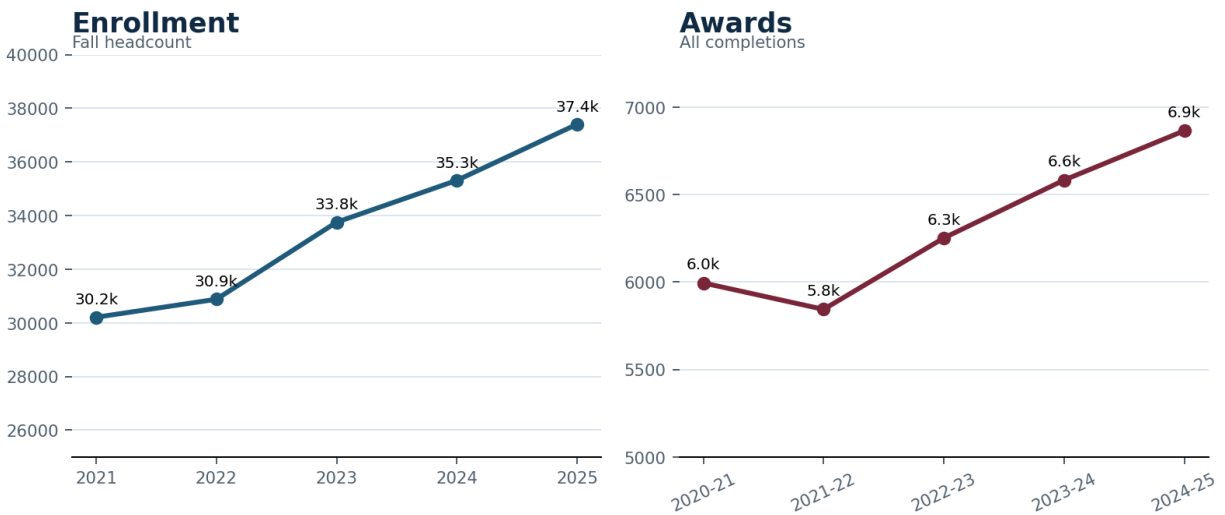


Figure 2-2. Reported Black-male enrollment and awards are rising. SCHEV E02 fall headcount and C05 awards.

Source: SCHEV E02 and C05. Counts are not rates and may include online and out-of-state students enrolled at reporting institutions.

Black-male fall headcount at SCHEV-reporting institutions increased by 7,194 students from 2021 to 2025. Yet Black men were 37.7 percent of Black enrollment in Fall 2025, against 61.9 percent for Black women and 0.3 percent unknown or unreported gender. These counts include reporting institutions’ online and out-of-state students and should not be generalized as a Virginia-resident enrollment rate.¹⁴

Term	Black men	Black women	Men's share of Black enrollment
Fall 2021	30,211	52,319	36.6%
Fall 2022	30,881	51,433	37.4%
Fall 2023	33,754	55,554	37.7%
Fall 2024	35,313	58,411	37.5%
Fall 2025	37,405	61,423	37.7%

Table 2-3. Source: SCHEV E02 Fall Headcount Enrollment, Fall 2021 through Fall 2025.

Where those students are enrolled

Four Virginia HBCUs present in SCHEV’s E02 institution list — Virginia State, Norfolk State, Hampton, and Virginia Union — enrolled 5,526 Black men, or 14.8 percent of statewide Black-male enrollment at reporting institutions. Virginia University of Lynchburg does not appear in the E02 list and is not included in that calculation. Liberty University’s large online and out-of-state enrollment means institution counts should not be read as Virginia-resident counts.¹⁵

Institution	Black men, Fall 2025
Liberty University	6,069
Northern Virginia Community College	3,421
Old Dominion University	2,665
George Mason University	2,242

Institution	Black men, Fall 2025
Virginia Commonwealth University	2,052
Virginia State University	1,921
Tidewater Community College	1,748
Norfolk State University	1,746
ECPI University (For-Profit)	1,380
Virginia Tech	1,155
Hampton University	1,056
Regent University	1,053
J Sargeant Reynolds Community College	861
Virginia Union University	803
Brightpoint Community College	792

Table 2-4. Source: SCHEV E02, Fall 2025. Institution counts are not Virginia-resident counts.

Roughly 85 percent of Black-male enrollment at reporting institutions sits outside the four HBCUs in the E02 list, concentrated in large public four-year institutions, the community college system, and private and for-profit providers. The comparison worth making is not HBCU against PWI as a value judgment. It is institution-level performance on identical measures: enrollment count and share, first-year persistence, six-year completion, time to degree, debt at exit, and post-completion earnings. Counts must travel with rates. A strong completion percentage at an institution enrolling few Black men is not evidence of sector performance, and the suppression threshold below which no rate is published should be fixed in advance and applied to every institution alike.

Awards by credential level

Credential	Black-male awards, 2024-25	Change since 2020-21
Short award, under 1 year	699	+94.2%
Short award, 1-2 years	231	-30.8%
Associate	1,096	-0.6%
Bachelor's	2,882	+4.2%
Master's	1,125	+16.1%
Doctorate	380	+140.5%
All awards	6,865	+14.5%

Table 2-5. Source: SCHEV C05 Completions. Awards counts, not cohort completion rates.

The six credential rows sum to 6,413, which is 452 short of the total. The residual comprises 306 post-baccalaureate awards, 134 first-professional awards, nine post-master's awards, and three awards longer than two but shorter than four years. The growth in short awards and doctorates is notable, but a policy judgment requires data on field, time to degree, debt, transfer, persistence, and labor-market outcomes.¹⁶

G3 and workforce-aligned credentials

In Fall 2024, SCHEV reported 754 Black men in G3 programs across the Virginia Community College System — 19.6 percent of 3,843 male G3 students. G3 covers designated programs in early childhood education, health care, information technology, public safety, and skilled trades. This direct count should become the starting point for tracking persistence, credential completion, apprenticeship entry, and wages.¹⁷

Trade and apprenticeship: a measurable data gap

No current public Virginia source reviewed for this edition supports a statewide Black-male trade or registered-apprenticeship outcome. This report labels that a data gap rather than producing a synthetic estimate from separate race and sex percentages.

The gap is technically solvable. RAPIDS contains race, ethnicity, and sex on individual apprentice records, but public Virginia summaries report these characteristics separately. Two adjacent sources also report different active-apprentice totals — 12,698 and 15,503 — for overlapping reporting frames. Until the responsible agencies reconcile the universe, date, and missing-demographic rate, neither total can support a Black-male estimate.¹⁸

Pathway	Minimum extract	Owner / source	Current status
Registered apprenticeship	Registration, completion, cancellation, occupation, wages	USDOL RAPIDS; Virginia Works	Fields exist; direct state tabulation not published
Secondary CTE	Concentration, completion, work-based learning, credentials	VDOE; regional technical centers	Direct race-by-sex reporting is feasible
Industry credentials / licensure	Attempts, pass rates, licenses, record-history barriers	DPOR; credentialing bodies	Demographic collection is inconsistent
G3 / short-term credentials	Completion, placement, wages at 6, 12, and 24 months	SCHEV; VCCS; wage match	Direct enrollment count; outcomes unavailable
Reentry-linked training	Enrollment, credential, eligibility, employment after release	VADOC; workforce boards; DPOR	Cross-system record match required

Table 2-6. Status assessments reflect public products reviewed for this edition. No Virginia trade or apprenticeship outcome in this edition is represented as a Black-male finding.

CHAPTER THREE

Work, Earnings, and Ownership

Three of every four Black men in Virginia between 25 and 64 are working. That is the first fact, and it should be said before any gap, because the deficit framing that dominates discussion of Black male employment is not what the Virginia data show.

The second fact is that the gap is real and it is largest where it costs most — not in whether men work, but in what the work pays.

Indicator	Black men	White non-Hispanic men	Gap
Employment-to-population, 25–64	76.5% ± 1.5 pp	83.1% ± 0.6 pp	–6.6 pp
Labor-force participation, 25–64	79.5% ± 1.3 pp	85.2% ± 0.6 pp	–5.7 pp
Unemployment, 25–64	3.8% ± 0.8 pp	2.5% ± 0.3 pp	+1.3 pp
FT/YR median earnings, 25–64	\$60,915 ± \$528	\$85,281 ± \$2,221	–\$24,366
Poverty, 18–64	9.6% ± 1.2 pp	7.3% ± 0.5 pp	+2.3 pp
Bachelor's or higher, 25–64	30.3% ± 1.5 pp	45.8% ± 0.9 pp	–15.5 pp
Uninsured, 18–64	11.4% ± 1.1 pp	7.0% ± 0.4 pp	+4.4 pp
Disconnected youth, 16–24	14.3% ± 3.2 pp	8.3% ± 1.1 pp	+6.0 pp

Table 3-1. Source: 2024 ACS one-year Virginia PUMS. Margins of error are 90 percent. Universes are stated in the methods section.

The full-time, year-round earnings gap is \$24,366, meaning Black men’s median is 71.4 percent of the White non-Hispanic male median. Work intensity is held constant for that comparison — every man in it works at least 35 hours a week, at least 50 weeks a year. Occupation, industry, education, geography, tenure, and experience are not held constant, and this report does not claim the residual is discrimination.¹⁹

Public employment is an asset and an exposure

An estimated 24.0 percent of employed Black men ages 25–64 worked in the public sector, against 20.6 percent of employed White non-Hispanic men. Federal employment alone accounted for an estimated 12.4 percent of employed Black men. Virginia’s federal, military-adjacent, state, and local public sectors are therefore central to Black-male economic security, and public-sector contraction would pose disproportionate employment risk for Black men.

Occupation and industry

Occupation group	Black men	White NH men	Gap
Management, business, science, and arts	38.3%	52.2%	–13.9 pp
Production, transportation, and material moving	25.3%	12.1%	+13.2 pp
Service	15.1%	9.6%	+5.5 pp
Sales and office	11.9%	12.1%	–0.2 pp
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance	9.3%	13.9%	–4.6 pp

Table 3-2. Source: 2024 ACS one-year Virginia PUMS, employed civilians ages 25–64. Columns sum to 100 percent subject to rounding.

These groupings are broad. Future analysis should examine detailed occupations, wages, union coverage, schedule stability, injury risk, and automation exposure.

Industry	Black men	Black share	White NH male share
Transportation and warehousing	38,750	12.8%	4.3%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	34,287	11.3%	15.1%
Public administration	33,881	11.2%	11.5%
Manufacturing	31,901	10.5%	10.8%
Retail trade	24,687	8.1%	8.8%
Administrative support and waste management	20,014	6.6%	4.0%
Construction	19,803	6.5%	11.0%
Health care and social assistance	18,973	6.3%	4.7%
Educational services	16,975	5.6%	6.3%
Accommodation and food services	15,447	5.1%	2.9%

Table 3-3. Source: 2024 ACS one-year Virginia PUMS. Shares are of each group's employed population, not of the industry.

Transportation and warehousing employs an estimated 38,750 Black men — 12.8 percent of employed Black men against 4.3 percent of White non-Hispanic men. That concentration creates leverage for wage, procurement, and ownership strategy. It also concentrates exposure to scheduling volatility, injury, and technological change.

Entrepreneurship and ownership

Self-employment accounted for an estimated 7.7 percent of employed Black men ages 25-64, against 9.6 percent of White non-Hispanic men. Self-employment is not the same as ownership of an employer firm, and neither measure captures business revenue, payroll, survival, contracting, or capital access.²⁰

The annual scorecard should pair the individual self-employment rate with administrative measures of Black-male-owned employer firms, state and local procurement, loan approval and pricing, revenue bands, payroll, and five-year survival. Until owner-level race-by-sex data exist, this report does not substitute all Black-owned businesses or all male-owned businesses.

CHAPTER FOUR

Household Security

The ACS housing analysis identifies an estimated 273,531 occupied Virginia households headed by Black men. These are household outcomes classified by the race and sex of the reference person. They are not individual wealth estimates, and they do not describe every household containing a Black man.²¹

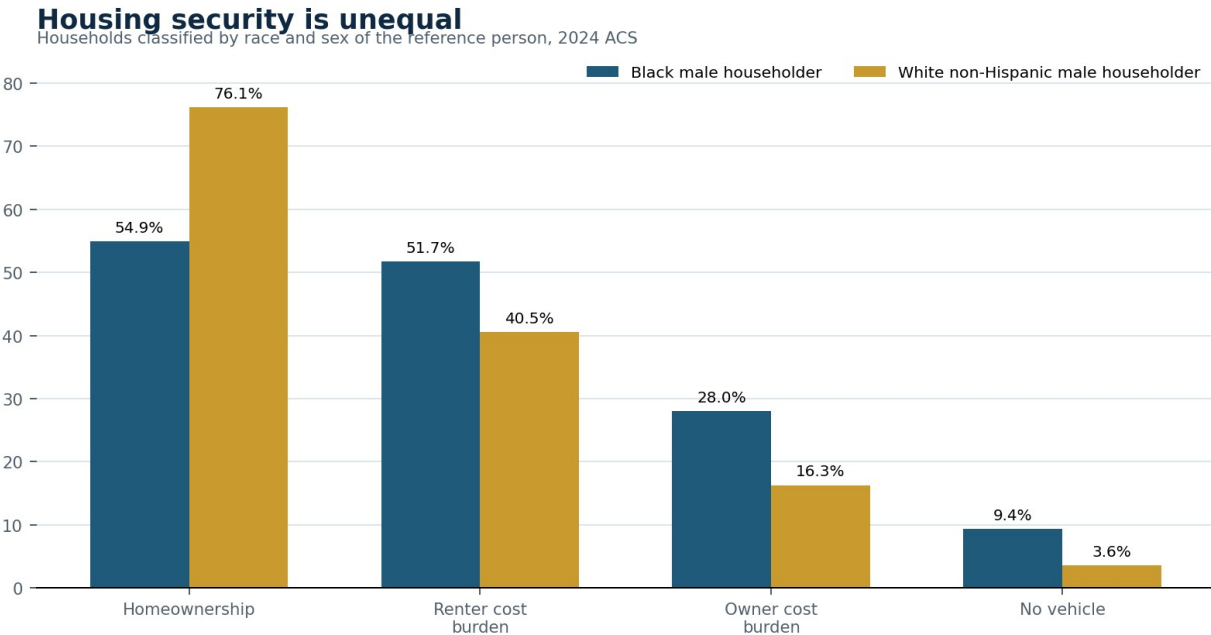


Figure 4-1. Housing security is unequal. Households classified by race and sex of the reference person, 2024 ACS.

Source: 2024 ACS one-year Virginia Housing PUMS. Cost burden equals housing costs of at least 30 percent of household income.

Indicator	Black male householder	White NH male householder
Households	273,531 ± 9,422	1,090,747 ± 13,307
Homeownership	54.9% ± 2.1 pp	76.1% ± 0.8 pp
Median household income	\$77,159 ± \$3,091	\$111,678 ± \$2,058
Renter cost burden ≥30%	51.7% ± 4.1 pp	40.5% ± 1.9 pp
Severe renter burden ≥50%	22.7% ± 3.3 pp	17.8% ± 1.6 pp
Owner cost burden ≥30%	28.0% ± 2.6 pp	16.3% ± 0.8 pp
No vehicle available	9.4% ± 1.6 pp	3.6% ± 0.4 pp
Broadband subscription	95.9% ± 0.8 pp	95.3% ± 0.3 pp

Table 4-1. Source: 2024 ACS one-year Virginia Housing PUMS. Margins of error are 90 percent.

The homeownership gap is 21.2 percentage points. The median household-income gap is \$34,519, placing Black-male-headed households at 69.1 percent of the White non-Hispanic male-householder median. These measures describe household income and tenure — not net worth, debt, retirement assets, or inheritance — and are not labeled wealth anywhere in this report.

Why tenure and cost burden matter economically

- Homeownership influences exposure to rent shocks, residential stability, collateral access, and intergenerational transfer.
- Cost burden reduces the income available for food, transportation, education, health care, saving, and business formation. More than half of renter households headed by Black men are cost-burdened, and more than a fifth are severely so.
- Vehicle access matters in a state where many jobs, training sites, and health services are not reachable by reliable transit. Black male householders are more than twice as likely to have no vehicle.
- Broadband subscription is effectively at parity between the two groups, but subscription does not establish affordability, speed, device quality, or digital skill.

CHAPTER FIVE

Health, Safety, and Justice

A report about economic state must count survival. Earnings and credentials cannot be separated from overdose prevention, violence interruption, trauma treatment, transportation safety, and access to care.

Coverage and disability

Indicator	Black men	White NH men	Gap
Uninsured, ages 18-64	11.4% ± 1.1 pp	7.0% ± 0.4 pp	+4.4 pp
Disability, ages 18-64	13.3% ± 1.2 pp	11.5% ± 0.6 pp	+1.8 pp
Poverty, ages 18-64	9.6% ± 1.2 pp	7.3% ± 0.5 pp	+2.3 pp

Table 5-1. Source: 2024 ACS one-year Virginia PUMS. Margins of error are 90 percent.

These measures do not reveal whether care is affordable, timely, culturally competent, or geographically accessible, and they do not directly measure mental-health need or treatment. They do establish that employment and training strategy must account for coverage and disability.

Premature death

Final 2024 CDC WONDER mortality files provide direct Virginia results by race, sex, age, and cause. The table covers Virginia residents and compares Black or African American alone males of all Hispanic origins with White alone non-Hispanic males. All-age rates are age-adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population; the child-homicide rate is crude for ages 0-17.²²

2024 mortality measure	Black males: deaths; rate (95% CI)	White NH males: deaths; rate (95% CI)	Comparison
Unintentional injury	684; 79.6 (73.6-86.1)	1,736; 59.2 (56.4-62.2)	1.3× age-adjusted rate
Homicide	290; 33.7 (29.9-37.9)	60; 2.4 (1.8-3.1)	14.0× age-adjusted rate
Drug overdose	378; 43.7 (39.3-48.6)	577; 22.4 (20.6-24.4)	2.0× age-adjusted rate
Motor-vehicle traffic	183; 20.8 (17.8-24.2)	411; 14.6 (13.2-16.1)	1.4× age-adjusted rate
Child homicide, ages 0-17	33; 16.2 (11.2-22.8)	Fewer than 10; rate suppressed	Black-male rate is crude

Table 5-2. Source: CDC WONDER, final 2024 Underlying Cause of Death, Single Race. The 33 child-homicide deaths are a subset of the 290 all-ages Black-male homicide deaths, not an addition to them.

Two methodological differences make this series non-comparable to the 2023 OCME rates carried in earlier drafts: the universe expands from deaths under medical-examiner jurisdiction to all registered resident deaths, and the principal rates are age-adjusted rather than crude. Separately, final national data document a substantial decline in overdose mortality between 2023 and 2024. The earlier OCME figures and the final CDC WONDER results should be treated as different measures, not as a Virginia trend line.²³

The child-homicide crude rate uses the Vintage 2024 single-race postcensal estimate embedded in CDC WONDER, not the ACS microdata denominator reported in Chapter One. The two series are produced by different Census programs and differ materially for this cell — the CDC denominator is the larger of the two — so the rate should be read as published and not recomputed against the 174,153 figure.

These deaths are economic losses as well as health and safety losses. They remove workers, caregivers, students, income, and future earnings from Virginia families and communities. The figures do not by themselves identify causation; they identify urgent, measurable endpoints for prevention.

Incarceration: the gap that defines this report

VADOC reported that 54.3 percent of its June 30, 2025 inmate population was Black and 93.7 percent was male. Those are separate distributions. The public management summary does not cross race and sex, so it cannot answer how many incarcerated people were Black men or provide a Black-male incarceration rate. Multiplying 54.3 percent by 93.7 percent would be methodologically invalid.

The gap is not Virginia’s alone, and that is the more consequential finding. In Prisoners in 2023, the Bureau of Justice Statistics publishes imprisonment rates by jurisdiction and sex in one table and by jurisdiction and race in another, crossing the two only for the nation. No table reviewed for this report publishes a rate crossed by both race and sex for Virginia or for any other individual state. Releasing race and sex as separate marginal distributions is widespread in correctional statistics, and the public record cannot resolve the intersection as a result.

Current VADOC public measure	Result	Can it answer the Black-male question?
Race/ethnicity of inmate population	54.3% Black	No — sex is not cross-tabulated
Gender of inmate population	93.7% male	No — race is not cross-tabulated
Age distribution	5.4% ages 18–24; 24.1% ages 25–34	No — race and sex are not cross-tabulated
Direct Black-male count and rate	Not published in the summary	Data gap
Federal series (BJS), state level	Published by state × sex and by state × race	No — not crossed in the tables reviewed
Virginia male imprisonment rate	592 per 100,000 male residents, 2023	Partial — sex-specific, all races
National Black-male benchmark	1,862 per 100,000, 2023	Partial — national only, not Virginia

Table 5-3. Sources: VADOC Management Information Summary FY2025; BJS, Prisoners in 2023 — Statistical Tables, tables 4, 7, and 13.

Two verified benchmarks provide context for the unmeasured value. At yearend 2023, Virginia’s imprisonment rate was 592 sentenced prisoners per 100,000 male residents of all ages against 43 per 100,000 female residents, and 25,545 of the Commonwealth’s 27,442 sentenced prisoners were male. Nationally, BJS reports 1,862 per 100,000 non-Hispanic Black male residents against 341 for non-Hispanic White males. That national figure is not directly comparable to this report’s Virginia estimate, which counts Black-alone males regardless of Hispanic origin. A Virginia rate would require a VADOC numerator and a Census denominator harmonized on age range, Hispanic-origin treatment, reference date, racial definition, sentence status, and jurisdictional universe.²⁴

Record sealing and institutional capacity

Virginia’s record-sealing law took effect July 1, 2026. Implementation should be evaluated with race-by-sex measures of eligible records, petitions, automatic sealing, processing time, denials, fees, and later employment.²⁵

The Virginia Boys and Men Advisory Commission, created in Title 30, Chapter 70 of the Code of Virginia, is a statutory body positioned to request, review, and publicly report on this information, and to recommend additional reporting requirements to the General Assembly.²⁶

CHAPTER SIX

Regional Variation — and What Virginia Cannot Yet Measure

Every statewide figure in this report is an average across a Commonwealth that does not have a single economy. A Black man in Northern Virginia and a Black man in Southside are counted in the same estimates while facing different employers, different transit, different housing costs, and different distances to a hospital or a community college.

The regions are recognizable to anyone who works in Virginia: Hampton Roads, Northern Virginia, the Richmond-Petersburg corridor, Southside, Southwest Virginia, and the I-81 corridor. This report does not characterize the economy of any one of them, because doing so responsibly would require regional evidence this edition does not yet carry, and the same evidentiary standard applied everywhere else in this report applies here.

Naming the regions is not the same as measuring them. This report does not assign outcomes to any region, because it does not yet have estimates stable enough to support the claim.

One-year ACS microdata support statewide Black-male estimates. They do not support locality-level Black-male estimates with usable confidence intervals — the samples are too small once race, sex, age, and geography are crossed simultaneously. Producing defensible regional figures requires pooling several years of microdata, publishing the uncertainty alongside every estimate, and declining to rank localities whose intervals overlap.

That is a commitment for the next edition rather than a finding in this one. The Institute will publish pooled multi-year regional estimates for employment, earnings, homeownership, and cost burden, with suppression rules fixed in advance and applied uniformly, and will pair them with sourced regional labor-market descriptions. Until then, readers should treat every figure in this report as a Commonwealth average and should not assume it describes their locality.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Institutional Action — and the Evidence Gap

This report is an unflinching account of where public systems are failing to measure and where unequal outcomes persist. That should not be mistaken for a claim that the trend is fixed. Institutions are acting. What this chapter shows is how little of that action Virginia can currently verify.

Inclusion here requires a specific standard, because a list of well-intentioned programs is not evidence. Each entry names the institution, the action taken, and the stage of evidence — whether it documents an institutional commitment, an implemented program, or a measured outcome. Those are different things, and only the third is a result.

A national institutional commitment

Morgan State University established a Presidential Task Force on the State of Black Male Enrollment to study causes and drive institutional response. That is a documented commitment by a major institution to treat Black-male enrollment as its own measurable responsibility rather than as a component of an aggregate. Morgan State has not yet reported an outcome, and this report does not present the task force as one.²⁷

Evidence stage: institutional commitment. Out of state.

A Virginia implemented program

The BlackPrint Leadership Institute, held July 30, 2026 at the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center in Charlottesville, was a full-day leadership institute for young Black men combining mentorship, civic engagement, and postsecondary exposure. It is a Virginia program, it was delivered, and its participants were Black boys and young men specifically rather than a broader group.²⁸

Evidence stage: implemented program; outcomes not evaluated. Operated by the publisher of this report.

What Virginia still cannot verify

Virginia may have school divisions, colleges, and workforce programs producing measurable progress for Black men and boys, but this edition could not identify those outcomes through a consistent statewide public reporting system.

That is the same publication gap documented in every preceding chapter, arriving from the opposite direction. Earlier chapters showed that Virginia cannot see where Black men and boys are falling behind. This one shows that Virginia also cannot see where they are gaining ground, or which institutions are responsible. An institution cannot be recognized for closing a gap that was never measured.

One widely circulated enrollment figure was considered for this chapter and excluded. Alabama A&M University reported that male students constituted approximately 42 percent of a recent incoming class. That is a male measure covering students of all races, not a Black-male measure, and under the rule stated at the front of this report it cannot be presented as a finding about Black men. It is recorded here as broader-population context, and as an illustration of how easily the two are conflated.²⁹

The absence of a longer Virginia list is not evidence that Virginia institutions are not succeeding. It shows that the Commonwealth lacks a consistent statewide public mechanism for identifying which institutions are succeeding.

The Institute invites Virginia institutions with documented Black-male outcomes — named measure, named population, reported source — to submit them for consideration in the next edition, and will apply the same standard used above.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Ten Priorities

Each priority below carries four fields. Action states what should be done. Owner names the institution responsible. Evidence states what kind of claim this is — a measurement requirement, an extraction requirement, or a policy recommendation this report has not independently evaluated. Success states how anyone would know whether it happened.

A publication requirement and an evaluated intervention are not the same kind of claim, and this report does not present them as such.

Priority 1 • Publish a Black-boy K-12 dashboard

Action. Publish an annual statewide dashboard following enrollment, chronic absence, AP, gifted and dual-enrollment access, discipline, law-enforcement referrals, school-related arrests, graduation, and postsecondary transition — all reported directly by race and sex.

Owner. Virginia Department of Education.

Evidence. Publication requirement, not a program evaluation. Feasibility is established: the federal CRDC already produces these cross-tabs from records Virginia schools supply.

Success. A public dashboard exists within one reporting cycle, with documented suppression and denominator rules, and is refreshed annually without a gap in vintage.

Priority 2 • Reduce exclusionary discipline

Action. Set and publish division-level targets for the Black-boy out-of-school suspension rate, the Black/White rate ratio, instructional days lost, and repeat suspension.

Owner. VDOE with school divisions.

Evidence. The disparity is directly measured. Specific discipline-reform interventions are not evaluated in this report, and this priority does not endorse a particular model.

Success. The Black-boy suspension rate and the rate ratio both decline, and instructional days lost fall below the 152,494 baseline established here.

Priority 3 • Track college pathways, not just headcount

Action. Report Black-male application, admission, yield, first-year persistence, transfer, stop-out, time to degree, debt at exit, and completion — by institution, on identical measures, with a suppression threshold fixed in advance.

Owner. SCHEV with public and participating private institutions.

Evidence. Institutional recommendation; not independently evaluated here. The underlying enrollment and awards data are already reported by race and gender.

Success. Every reporting institution publishes counts alongside rates on the same measure set, enabling year-over-year comparison at the institution level.

Priority 4 • Make G3, CTE, and apprenticeship outcomes visible

Action. Produce one governed extract reporting registrations, active apprentices, completions, cancellations, occupations, and entry and completion wages by race and sex, together with the share of records missing either field.

Owner. SCHEV and Virginia Works, with USDOL RAPIDS.

Evidence. Extraction and reconciliation requirement. Demographic fields already exist in RAPIDS; two adjacent sources currently report conflicting active-apprentice totals that must be reconciled before any estimate is published.

Success. A single reconciled active-apprentice universe is published, with a quantified missing-demographic rate, and a Black-male apprenticeship figure becomes reportable for the first time.

Priority 5 • Measure and narrow employment and earnings gaps

Action. Report Black-male employment, unemployment, full-time year-round earnings, occupation, industry, and public-sector hiring annually, and set published targets against the gaps documented in this report.

Owner. Virginia Works with employers and state agencies.

Evidence. Measurement and accountability proposal. The gaps are directly measured, but this report does not evaluate specific employer or workforce interventions and does not claim to have isolated the cause of the earnings gap.

Success. The 6.6-point employment gap and the \$24,366 earnings gap are published annually against the 2024 baseline, with a named owner for each.

Priority 6 • Build Black-male ownership measures

Action. Develop owner-level measures of Black-male-owned employer firms covering revenue bands, payroll, procurement participation, loan approval and pricing, and five-year survival.

Owner. SBSB and VEDP with participating lenders.

Evidence. New measurement requirement. Owner-level race-by-sex business data do not currently exist for Virginia; the self-employment rate reported here is not a substitute.

Success. A Black-male employer-firm baseline is published for the first time, and state procurement participation becomes reportable by race and sex.

Priority 7 • Make housing security measurable and accountable

Action. Track and publish homeownership, cost burden, foreclosure, eviction, down-payment assistance participation, and mortgage pricing for households headed by Black men.

Owner. DHCD with VHDA and housing partners.

Evidence. Measurement proposal. Tenure and cost-burden measures are direct ACS estimates; foreclosure, eviction, and mortgage-pricing measures require administrative linkage not established here.

Success. The 21.2-point homeownership gap and the 51.7 percent renter cost-burden rate are published annually against the 2024 baseline.

Priority 8 • Treat overdose and homicide as economic policy

Action. Publish Black-male deaths and rates by age, region, and mechanism, and report the reach of prevention and interruption programs against those figures.

Owner. Virginia Department of Health with localities.

Evidence. Direct mortality measurement is established through CDC WONDER. Specific prevention interventions are not evaluated in this report.

Success. Age- and region-specific Black-male mortality is published annually using consistent definitions, and the 33.7 homicide rate and 43.7 overdose rate are tracked against the 2024 baseline.

Priority 9 · Make justice data intersectional

Action. Publish race-by-sex-by-age counts across custody, supervision, admissions, releases, sentence length, disciplinary action, program participation, credential completion, and post-release employment.

Owner. VADOC with DCJS and the Compensation Board.

Evidence. Extraction requirement, not new collection. The demographic fields exist in the underlying records; the gap is publication. This is the most tractable major gap in the report.

Success. A Black-male incarceration count and rate are published for the first time, harmonized with a Census denominator on age, Hispanic-origin treatment, and reference date.

Priority 10 · Issue an annual Commonwealth scorecard

Action. Publish a single annual scorecard carrying, for every indicator, a baseline, a trend, a named agency owner, a target, a data-quality rating, and the action taken since the prior edition.

Owner. Virginia Boys and Men Advisory Commission.

Evidence. Institutional recommendation. The statutory body already exists under Title 30, Chapter 70 of the Code of Virginia and is positioned to request, review, and publicly report on agency data and to recommend additional reporting requirements to the General Assembly.

Success. A scorecard is published annually with a named owner for every indicator and a public record of which agencies acted.

CHAPTER NINE

The Accountability Scorecard

A useful scorecard is not a list of aspirations. Every indicator needs a defined population, numerator, denominator, year, geography, source, statistical quality rule, agency owner, and next release date. The first annual edition should lock the measures below before setting targets.

Domain	Indicator family	Owner / source	Cadence	Readiness
K-12 access	Black share of male AP, gifted, dual enrollment	CRDC / VDOE	Annual	Requires disaggregation
K-12 exclusion	OOS suspension rate and days lost	CRDC / VDOE	Annual	Requires disaggregation
Postsecondary	Enrollment, persistence, awards by level	SCHEV	Annual	Already collected
Work	Employment, unemployment, FT/YR earnings	ACS PUMS	Annual; 3-year pooled for regions	Already collected; small-sample limitation for regions
Households	Homeownership, income, cost burden	ACS PUMS	Annual; pooled for regions	Already collected; small-sample limitation for regions
Health / safety	Overdose, homicide, motor-vehicle deaths	CDC WONDER; VDH	Annual	Already collected
Justice	Custody and supervision count and rate	VADOC / DCJS / SCB	Quarterly and annual	Requires disaggregation
Trade pathways	Apprenticeship registrations, completions, wages	RAPIDS / Virginia Works	Annual	Requires disaggregation
Business	Black-male employer firms, procurement, credit	SBSD / VEDP	Annual	New collection
Education → work	Credential to employment and wage outcomes	SCHEV / Virginia Works	Annual	Requires linkage

Table 9-1. Readiness classifications reflect public products reviewed for this edition.

Readiness classification

- Already collected — the measure can be produced from existing public data without new work.
- Requires disaggregation — the fields exist in the records; the agency must publish them crossed by race and sex.
- Requires linkage — the measure needs privacy-protective matching across two or more systems.
- Small-sample limitation — the measure is available statewide but needs pooled years and suppression rules for sub-state geography.
- New collection — the underlying data do not currently exist and must be gathered.

CHAPTER TEN

A Virginia Research Agenda

The gaps named throughout this report are not equally hard to close. Sorting them by what each actually requires is the difference between an agenda and a wish list.

The distinction matters for how agencies should be asked. Producing a cross-tab of fields an agency already maintains is a different request from funding a new survey — though it is not costless, and it still requires governance, validation, privacy review, and suppression rules.

Tier one • Extraction from records Virginia already maintains

- A VADOC race-by-sex-by-age extract covering custody, supervision, admissions, and releases.
- Current VDOE Black-boy graduation and chronic-absence data in a stable statewide race-by-sex format.
- RAPIDS race-by-sex apprenticeship participation and completion for Virginia, with the competing active-apprentice totals reconciled and the missing-demographic rate quantified.

These do not require a new survey. They principally require governance, extraction, validation, privacy review, and publication using records Virginia already maintains.

Tier two • Analysis of existing data

- SCHEV applications, yield, retention, stop-out, debt, transfer, and post-exit destinations by institution.
- Black-male business ownership and state procurement participation at the owner level.
- Pooled multi-year ACS regional estimates for employment, earnings, homeownership, and cost burden, published with uncertainty and without ranking localities whose intervals overlap.

Tier three • Privacy-protective record linkage

- Education-to-workforce linkage measuring credentials, employment, wages, and sector mobility over time.
- Reentry linkage connecting VADOC programming and credential completion to post-release employment and earnings.
- Record-sealing implementation analysis covering eligible records, petitions, automatic sealing, processing time, denials, fees, and later employment.

The standard for the next edition

More numbers are not enough. The next edition should be more current, more intersectional, more geographically precise, and more accountable — without becoming less honest about uncertainty. Every major gap should carry a named public owner and a dated next action.

CONCLUSION

What This Report Asks of the Commonwealth

Virginia can see more of its Black male economic pipeline than it could before this report was assembled, and less than it needs to.

What it can see is a population of nearly 776,000 that works, enrolls, owns, serves, and pays taxes at scale; that has added more than seven thousand students to its reported college enrollment in four years; whose employed men work in the public sector at a higher rate than employed White non-Hispanic men. And a population whose boys are half as likely to sit in an advanced course and three times as likely to be suspended out of school; whose men earn seventy-one cents on the dollar among men meeting the same full-time, year-round work threshold; whose households own homes at 54.9 percent against 76.1 percent; and whose age-adjusted homicide rate is fourteen times that of White non-Hispanic males.

What it cannot see is how many Black men are in its prisons, how many are in its apprenticeships, how many of its Black boys graduated last spring, and how any of these figures differ between Hampton Roads and Southwest Virginia. Those are not unknowable quantities. In most cases the records exist and the tabulation does not.

This report does not claim that a tabulation failure caused a homicide rate or an earnings gap. It claims something more specific and more actionable: that Virginia's current publication practices make a population of 776,000 people harder to see at exactly the points where accountability would attach. Corrections publishes race. Corrections publishes sex. The men at the intersection are in the records and absent from the public tabulation.

Every priority in this report has a named owner. Every gap has been sorted by what it would actually take to close. The Institute will publish this again next year, with the same measures, and will report which agencies acted.

Nobody is coming to save us. What this requires now is institutions willing to be measured against it — and a Commonwealth willing to publish what it already knows.

Stronger Men. Stronger Boys. Stronger Virginia.

METHODS AND SOURCES

Definitions, Universes, and Reproducibility

This section carries the technical apparatus that governs every figure in the report: which datasets were used, what period each describes, which can identify Black males directly, and what the resulting estimates can and cannot support.

Source currency

Two dates matter for every figure and are distinguished throughout: the period the data describe, and the date the dataset was released or accessed. The 2024 ACS microdata were released in December 2025 and remain the newest official Census microdata capable of supporting direct Virginia race-by-sex estimates; the Census Bureau has not set a release date for the 2025 one-year estimates. A 2024 reference year therefore reflects the current state of the official record, not a delay in this analysis.

Source	Reference period	Released / accessed	Direct Black-male capability
ACS Public Use Microdata Sample	Calendar 2024	Dec 2025	Yes — race and sex crossed at the person level
Civil Rights Data Collection	School year 2021–22	Jan 2025	Yes — race and sex crossed by school
SCHEV E02, C05, E61	Fall 2025; 2024–25 awards	Accessed Aug 2026	Yes — race and gender reported together
NAEP Reading, grade 4	2024 administration	2025	Race-specific only; used as academic context
Virginia OCME Annual Report	Calendar 2023	2025	Yes — retained as supplemental jurisdictional context
CDC WONDER, final mortality	Calendar 2024	Jan 2026	Yes — state by race, sex, age, and cause
VADOC population report	FY2025, ending June 30, 2025	Accessed Aug 2026	No — race and sex published separately
BJS Prisoners series	Yearend 2023	Sept 2025	National only; not crossed by state
RAPIDS; Virginia Apprenticeship Council	FY2025	Accessed Aug 2026	No — race and sex published separately

Table A-1. Where a newer dataset exists but cannot cross race and sex, this report keeps the older direct measure and states the vintage rather than substituting a broader statistic.

ACS person microdata

Source: 2024 ACS one-year Virginia Person PUMS. Black men are records with RAC1P=2 (Black or African American alone) and SEX=1, regardless of Hispanic origin. The comparator is RAC1P=1, HISP=1, SEX=1 (White alone, not Hispanic, male). Person weights produce estimates; 80 replicate weights produce 90 percent margins of error using the successive-difference replication formula.

- Employment and labor-force measures: ages 25–64; civilian employment status from ESR.
- Full-time, year-round earnings: civilian employed adults ages 25–64 (ESR=1 or 2), at least 35 usual weekly hours, at least 50 weeks worked, and positive person earnings (PERNP), adjusted with ADJINC.
- Education: ages 25–64. College enrollment: ages 18–24. Disconnected youth: ages 16–24, neither enrolled nor employed.
- Public-sector, federal-government, and self-employment shares: employed ages 25–64.

ACS housing microdata

Source: 2024 ACS one-year Virginia Housing and Person PUMS. Occupied housing units are classified by the race and sex of the reference person. Housing weights and replicate weights produce estimates and 90 percent margins of error. Results are labeled households headed by Black men — not outcomes for all Black men.

Civil Rights Data Collection

Source: 2021–22 CRDC school-level public-use files, filtered to Virginia. Direct Black-male fields were summed across Virginia schools. Enrollment denominators use direct race-by-sex fields. Negative public-use codes were excluded under the CRDC codebook as missing, suppressed, or not applicable; because suppression can vary by measure, reported administrative totals may understate events. Discipline and school-policing rates use enrollment in schools that reported the corresponding measure. Because not every school reports every measure, that denominator is smaller than the statewide race-by-sex enrollment count used for the access indicators, and the two should not be divided into one another.

SCHEV

E02 fall headcount was queried with rows=Gender and columns=Race/Ethnicity. C05 was queried for completions by race/ethnicity and gender. E61 supplied G3 enrollment. Enrollment counts may include out-of-state and online students and should not be labeled Virginia residents. Awards counts are not cohort completion rates.

Agency administrative reports

CDC WONDER: final 2024 Underlying Cause of Death, Virginia resident geography, male sex, Single Race 6, year 2024. Black results use Black or African American alone regardless of Hispanic origin; the comparator uses White alone, non-Hispanic. Unintentional injury and homicide use injury-intent categories; drug overdose combines unintentional, suicide, homicide, and undetermined drug-poisoning categories; motor-vehicle traffic uses the injury-mechanism category. All-age rates are age-adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population with 95 percent confidence intervals. Child homicide uses single-year ages 0–17 and a crude rate.

All CDC WONDER rates use the Census Bureau Vintage 2024 six-single-race postcensal July 1 population estimates embedded in that system as denominators. This is the single-race series, not the older four-category bridged-race file. Those estimates are produced by a different program than the ACS microdata used for the population chapter and differ for some race-age-sex cells, so CDC rates and ACS population counts are reported side by side but must not be divided into one another.

VDH OCME 2023 data are retained only as supplemental context because the OCME jurisdictional universe differs. The VADOC Management Information Summary provides current race and gender distributions separately and does not support a direct Black-male incarceration rate.

The full measure list: 26 Virginia indicators

The complete scorecard referenced in the front matter. Margins of error accompany survey estimates; administrative counts are reported without them.

Domain	Indicator	Black-male / Black-boy result	Year	Source
Population	Black men and boys, all ages	775,539 ± 10,471	2024	ACS PUMS
Population	Black boys under 18	174,153 ± 6,642	2024	ACS PUMS
K-12	Out-of-school suspension rate	15.9% vs 5.2% White boys	2021-22	CRDC
K-12	Black share of male AP enrollment	10.1% (vs 21.3% of male enrollment)	2021-22	CRDC
K-12	Law-enforcement referrals	2,067; 15.8 per 1,000	2021-22	CRDC
College	Fall enrollment	37,405	2025	SCHEV E02
College	All awards	6,865	2024-25	SCHEV C05
College	G3 enrollment	754 Black men; 19.6% of male G3	2024	SCHEV E61
Work	Employment-to-population, 25-64	76.5% ± 1.5 pp	2024	ACS PUMS
Work	Labor-force participation, 25-64	79.5% ± 1.3 pp	2024	ACS PUMS
Education	College enrolled, 18-24	32.0%	2024	ACS PUMS
Work	Unemployment, 25-64	3.8% ± 0.8 pp	2024	ACS PUMS
Work	FT/YR median earnings	\$60,915 ± \$528	2024	ACS PUMS
Education	Bachelor's or higher, 25-64	30.3% ± 1.5 pp	2024	ACS PUMS
Youth	Disconnected, 16-24	14.3% ± 3.2 pp	2024	ACS PUMS
Work	Public-sector share	24.0% ± 2.1 pp	2024	ACS PUMS
Business	Self-employed share	7.7% ± 1.4 pp	2024	ACS PUMS
Households	Homeownership	54.9% ± 2.1 pp	2024	ACS PUMS
Households	Median household income	\$77,159 ± \$3,091	2024	ACS PUMS
Housing	Renter cost burden ≥30%	51.7% ± 4.1 pp	2024	ACS PUMS
Mobility	No vehicle available	9.4% ± 1.6 pp	2024	ACS PUMS
Health	Uninsured, 18-64	11.4% ± 1.1 pp	2024	ACS PUMS
Health	Disability, 18-64	13.3% ± 1.2 pp	2024	ACS PUMS
Safety	Fatal drug-overdose rate	43.7 age-adjusted per 100,000	2024	CDC WONDER
Safety	Homicide rate	33.7 age-adjusted per 100,000	2024	CDC WONDER
Justice	Current Black-male prison rate	Not publicly tabulated	2025	VADOC data gap

Table A-2. SCHEV enrollment and awards figures are administrative counts and therefore do not carry survey margins of error. The ACS college-enrollment margin of error is not carried in this edition.

Major limitations

- ACS one-year estimates support statewide analysis, but locality estimates require pooled years and suppression rules.
- Race and ethnicity categories differ across Census, CRDC, SCHEV, VDH, and VADOC; comparisons retain source-specific definitions.
- Reference years differ across chapters by design: 2021-22 for CRDC civil-rights indicators, 2024-25 or Fall 2025 for SCHEV, 2024 for ACS and final CDC mortality, and FY2025 for VADOC context.

- The BJS tables and public VADOC summaries do not publish a Virginia imprisonment rate crossed by both race and sex; the rates reported here give partial context but do not resolve it.
- Descriptive disparities do not establish the causal contribution of discrimination, preparation, geography, family resources, institutional practice, or policy.
- Current public data cannot support direct Black-male estimates of net worth, employer-business ownership, incarceration, mental-health need, or apprenticeship outcomes.
- Apprenticeship demographics exist in RAPIDS but are published for Virginia as separate sex and race distributions; the missing-value rate is unestablished, so no Black-male apprenticeship estimate appears here.
- Institution counts do not necessarily equal Virginia-resident counts; online programs and cross-border enrollment matter.
- This edition carries no sourced regional labor-market characterizations; Chapter Six names Virginia's regions but does not describe or rank their economies.

Reproducibility note

Direct ACS estimates were calculated from the Census Bureau's 2024 Virginia PUMS files using person or housing weights and all 80 replicate weights. The full-time, year-round median-earnings calculation was independently rerun on the civilian-employed universe and reproduced the published estimates: \$60,915 $\pm$ \$528 for Black men and \$85,281 $\pm$ \$2,221 for White non-Hispanic men at 90 percent confidence. CRDC, SCHEV, and CDC WONDER results follow the parameters specified above.

NOTES

Numbered Sources

Each number below corresponds to a superscript marker in the text. Access dates reflect the date each product was retrieved for this edition.

1. U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey one-year Virginia Public Use Microdata Sample. Direct estimate: 775,539 $\pm$ 10,471 at 90 percent confidence. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html> (accessed August 2026).
2. Virginia Department of Corrections, Management Information Summary, Annual Report for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2025. <https://vadoc.virginia.gov/media/pu2bazoc/management-information-summary-annual-report-for-fy-ended-063025.pdf> (accessed August 2026).
3. U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2023 — Statistical Tables (NCJ 310197), tables 4, 7, and 13. Imprisonment rates are published by jurisdiction and sex in one table and by jurisdiction and race in another; the two are crossed only for the nation. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/document/p23st.pdf> (accessed August 2026).
4. State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, E02 Fall Headcount Enrollment, queried with rows = Gender and columns = Race/Ethnicity, Fall 2021 through Fall 2025. <https://research.schev.edu/> (accessed August 2026).
5. SCHEV, C05 Completions by race/ethnicity and gender, 2020–21 through 2024–25 award years. <https://research.schev.edu/> (accessed August 2026).
6. 2024 ACS one-year Virginia PUMS, employed civilians ages 25–64, class-of-worker categories. Direct estimate: 24.0 percent $\pm$ 2.1 percentage points.
7. U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey one-year Virginia Public Use Microdata Sample. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html> (accessed August 2026). Age distribution calculated from person records with RAC1P = 2 and SEX = 1, using person weights and 80 replicate weights.
8. U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2021–22 Civil Rights Data Collection school-level public-use files, filtered to Virginia. <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov/data> (accessed August 2026). Direct Black-male fields were summed across Virginia schools; enrollment denominators use direct race-by-sex fields.
9. U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2021–22 Civil Rights Data Collection school-level public-use files, filtered to Virginia. <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov/data> (accessed August 2026). Representation indices are the Black-boy share of male participants divided by the Black-boy share of male enrollment.
10. U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2021–22 Civil Rights Data Collection school-level public-use files, filtered to Virginia. <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov/data> (accessed August 2026). Days lost are the sum of reportable school-day totals for students receiving one or more out-of-school suspensions.
11. U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection data products page. <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov/data> (checked August 25, 2026).
12. Virginia Department of Education, Data and Reports. <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/data-policy-funding/data-reports> (accessed August 2026).
13. National Center for Education Statistics, 2024 NAEP Reading State Snapshot: Virginia, Grade 4. <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/publications/stt2024/pdf/2024220VA4.pdf> (accessed August 2026). Broader-population context; not a Black-boy finding.
14. State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, research portal. <https://research.schev.edu/> (accessed August 2026). E02 Fall Headcount Enrollment, queried with rows = Gender and columns = Race/Ethnicity. Fall 2025 Black enrollment totaled 99,175 records, of which 347 reported unknown gender.
15. State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, research portal. <https://research.schev.edu/> (accessed August 2026). E02 institution-level Fall 2025 headcount.
16. State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, research portal. <https://research.schev.edu/> (accessed August 2026). C05 Completions by race/ethnicity, gender, and award level.
17. SCHEV, E61 G3 Enrollment by Race-Ethnicity, Gender, and Program Detail. https://research.schev.edu/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=Enrollment.E61_Report (accessed August 2026).
18. U.S. Department of Labor, Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Data System (RAPIDS), <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/data-and-statistics>; Virginia Works, Virginia Apprenticeship Council Annual Report 2024–25, <https://rga.lis.virginia.gov/Published/2025/RD840/PDF>; George Mason University Institute for Immigration Research, registered apprenticeship in Virginia RAPIDS-based analysis FY2025, <https://iir.gmu.edu/publications/registered-apprenticeship> (all accessed August 2026).
19. U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey one-year Virginia Public Use Microdata Sample. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html> (accessed August 2026). Full-time, year-round universe: civilian employed adults ages 25–64 with ESR = 1 or 2, at least 35 usual weekly hours, at least 50 weeks worked, and positive person earnings adjusted with ADJINC.

20. U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey one-year Virginia Public Use Microdata Sample. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html> (accessed August 2026). Self-employment share calculated on employed civilians ages 25-64 from class-of-worker categories. Direct estimate: 7.7 percent $\pm$ 1.4 percentage points.
21. U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey one-year Virginia Public Use Microdata Sample. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata.html> (accessed August 2026). Housing analysis uses the 2024 Virginia Housing and Person PUMS; occupied units are classified by the race and sex of the reference person, using housing weights and 80 replicate weights.
22. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC WONDER, final 2024 Underlying Cause of Death, Single Race. <https://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10-expanded.html> (accessed August 2026). Query parameters: Virginia resident geography, male sex, Single Race 6, year 2024. Unintentional injury and homicide use injury-intent categories; drug overdose combines unintentional, suicide, homicide, and undetermined drug-poisoning categories; motor-vehicle traffic uses the injury-mechanism category.
23. Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Annual Report 2023. <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/18/Annual-Report-2023.pdf> (accessed August 2026). Retained as supplemental jurisdictional context only.
24. U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2023 — Statistical Tables (NCJ 310197). <https://bjs.ojp.gov/document/p23st.pdf> (accessed August 2026).
25. Virginia State Crime Commission, Record Sealing in Virginia. <https://vscc.virginia.gov/sealing.asp> (accessed August 2026).
26. Code of Virginia §§ 30-454 and 30-456. The Commission’s statutory powers include studying, conducting research, preparing reports, making recommendations, and submitting an annual report. <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title30/chapter70/section30-454/> and <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title30/chapter70/section30-456/> (both accessed August 2026).
27. Morgan State University, “Morgan State University Forms Presidential Task Force to Address Decline in Black Male Enrollment,” January 2025. Evidence stage: institutional commitment; outcomes not yet reported.
28. John Mercer Langston Institute program records, BlackPrint Leadership Institute, July 30, 2026, Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, Charlottesville, Virginia. Evidence stage: implemented program; outcomes not evaluated. The program is operated by the publisher of this report.
29. Henri A. LaSane, “Black Male College Enrollment Is Falling. Here’s Why That Matters,” U.S. News & World Report, November 14, 2025, reporting figures provided by the institution; and Alabama A&M University enrollment announcement. Broader-population context: male students of all races. Not a Black-male finding.