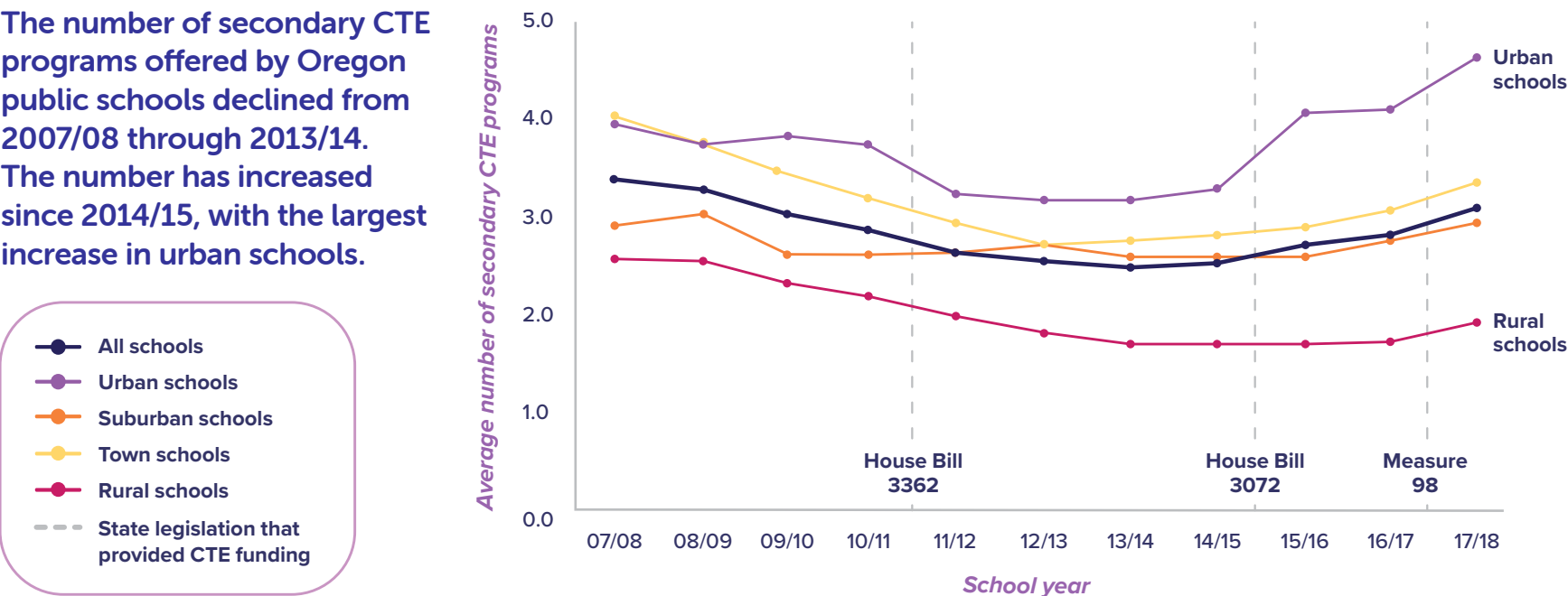


EXAMINING THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE

# Career and Technical Education at Oregon High Schools

In Oregon, career and technical education (CTE) programs aim to provide students with the skills needed to pursue advanced education and training and/or employment in high-wage, in-demand careers. Recently, Oregon has made significant investments in CTE, prompting stakeholders to request information on program offerings, participation, equitable access, and outcomes. In collaboration with the Oregon Department of Education and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, REL Northwest conducted a study to gather this information and better understand Oregon’s changing CTE landscape. Results are from data collected during the state’s implementation of the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV)*, which occurred from 2007/08 to 2017/18.

The number of secondary CTE programs offered by Oregon public schools declined from 2007/08 through 2013/14. The number has increased since 2014/15, with the largest increase in urban schools.

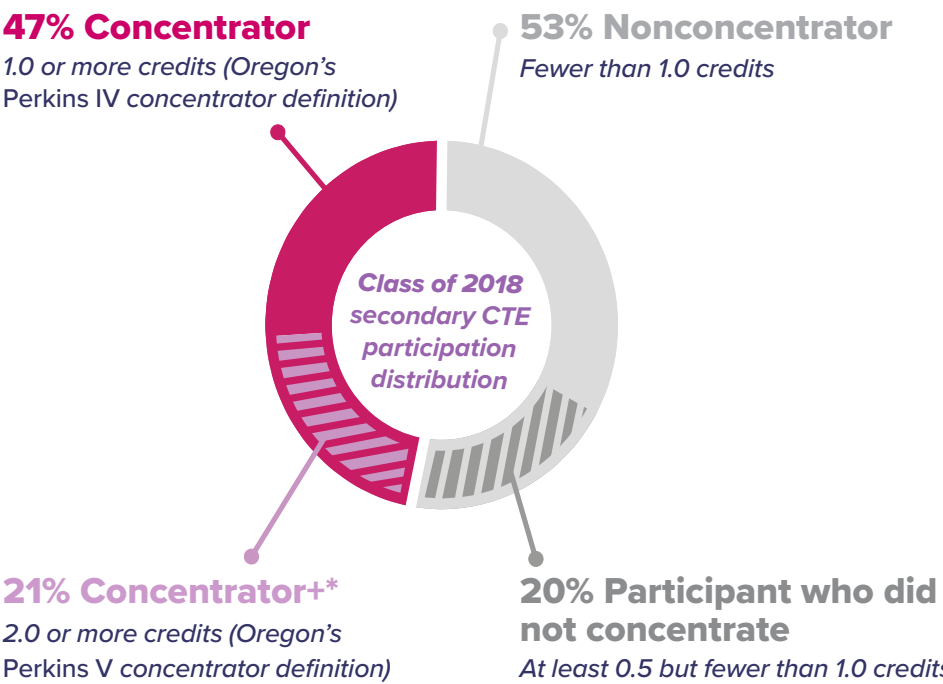


## Approximately half of secondary students concentrated in a CTE program ...

In this report, secondary students were classified as CTE concentrators or nonconcentrators (based on the amount of CTE credits earned in a single program) to examine depth of experience in CTE.

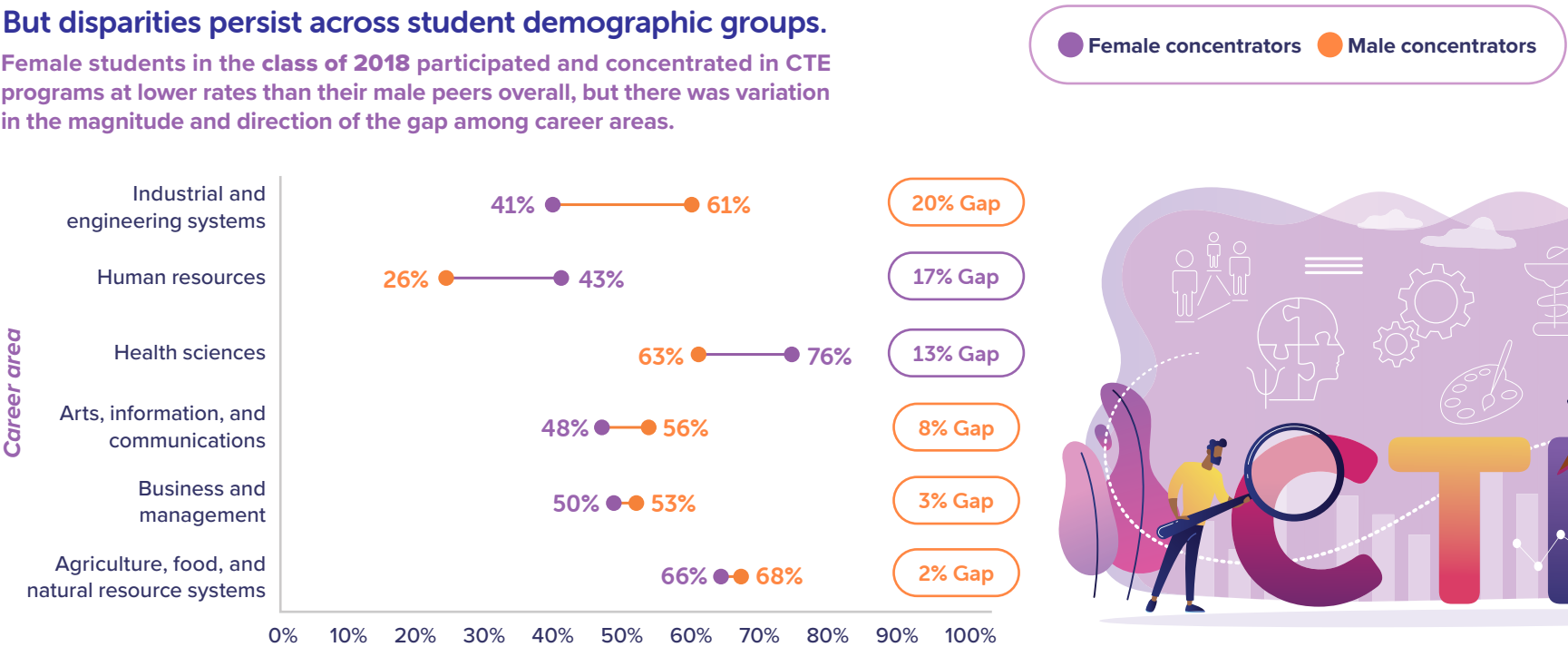
Within nonconcentrators, some students participated in CTE (earning at least 0.5 credits) but did not earn enough credits to be considered a concentrator.

**\* Why are there two definitions for concentrator?**  
Under *Perkins V* (the reauthorization of *Perkins IV*), Oregon has developed a new definition of concentrator. Beginning in 2020/2021, students will need to earn 2 or more credits in a single program to reach concentrator status.

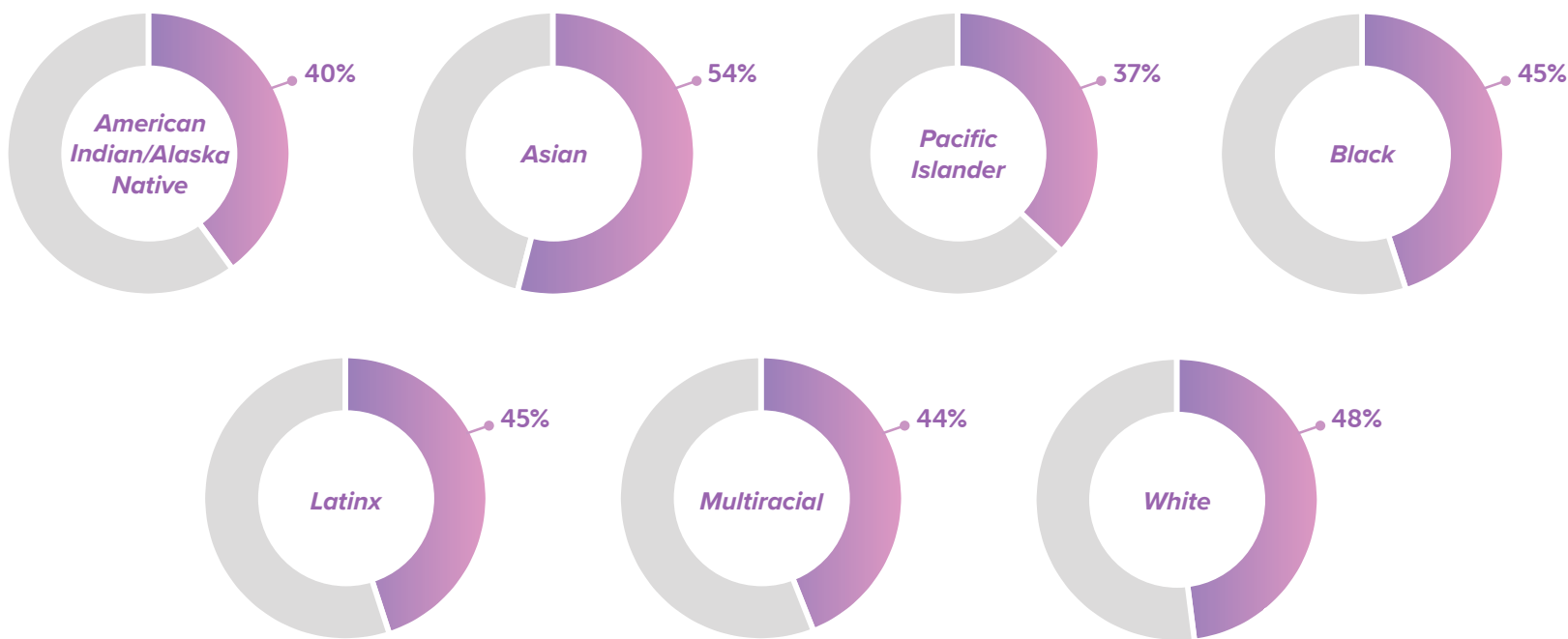


## But disparities persist across student demographic groups.

Female students in the class of 2018 participated and concentrated in CTE programs at lower rates than their male peers overall, but there was variation in the magnitude and direction of the gap among career areas.

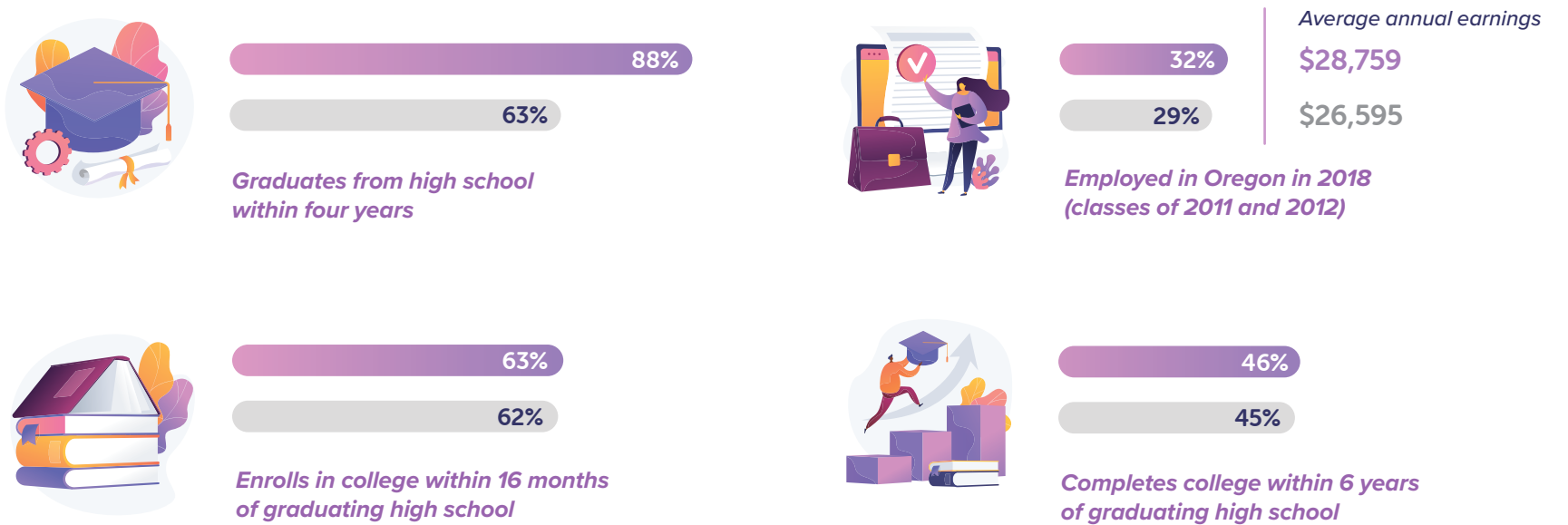


Concentration rates varied among groups defined by race/ethnicity.



There were also participation and concentration gaps for students who were economically disadvantaged, English learner students, and students who qualified for special education services.

CTE concentration was positively related to higher high school graduation rates and annual postsecondary earnings.



IMPLICATIONS FOR CTE LEADERS

- 1. Consider developing policies that help rural schools offer more CTE programs.
- 2. Investigate equity gaps in CTE concentration. Implications of these gaps will depend, in part, on the high school coursework or programs that students are taking instead of CTE courses.
  - a. Are there complementary patterns in other types of course-taking (e.g., Advanced Placement courses) for student demographic groups?
  - b. Do other programs (e.g., English learner-specific courses, special education courses) interfere with CTE scheduling?
  - c. Are there program of study-specific course requirements or prerequisites that may be a barrier for student demographic groups?
- 3. Recognize that the change in the definition of concentrator for Perkins V reduces the size of the group for which outcomes will be reported, but does not change its demographic makeup. In Oregon, stakeholders can use the information about equity gaps learned under Perkins IV as they transition to Perkins V.

Read the report: Arneson, A., Hodara, M., & Klein, S. (2020). *Career and technical education in Oregon: Exploring who participates in high school and the outcomes they achieve*. Portland, OR: Education Northwest, Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest. <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=ED607349>