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EARNINGS GROWTH BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY
DATA USERS GROUP

Background

- Constant growth across education
  - BLS wage index
  - Others
- Vary by education?

Data Source

Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)

The Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) files enable data users to create custom estimates and tables, free of charge, that are not available through ACS pretabulated data products. The ACS PUMS files are a set of records from individual people or housing units, with disclosure protection enabled so that individuals or housing units cannot be identified.

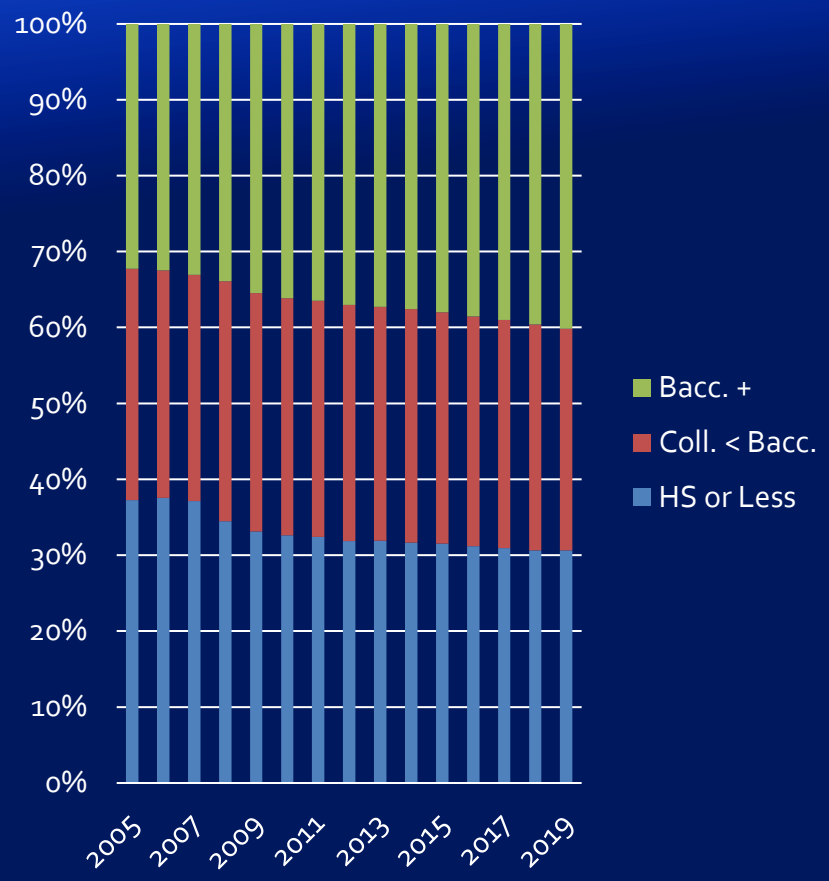
Download Understanding and Using the American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample Files [PDF - 4.6 MB]

The Census Bureau produces ACS 1-year and 5-year PUMS files. These files are accessible using the microdata access tool on data.census.gov and the Census Bureau's FTP site. Only selected geographic areas are identified in the ACS PUMS, including Region, Division, State, and Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs). Of these, PUMAs are the most detailed geographic areas available.

Check out our handbook, Understanding and Using the ACS PUMS Files, to learn more about working with PUMS files. Additional user resources are available under "Related Information."

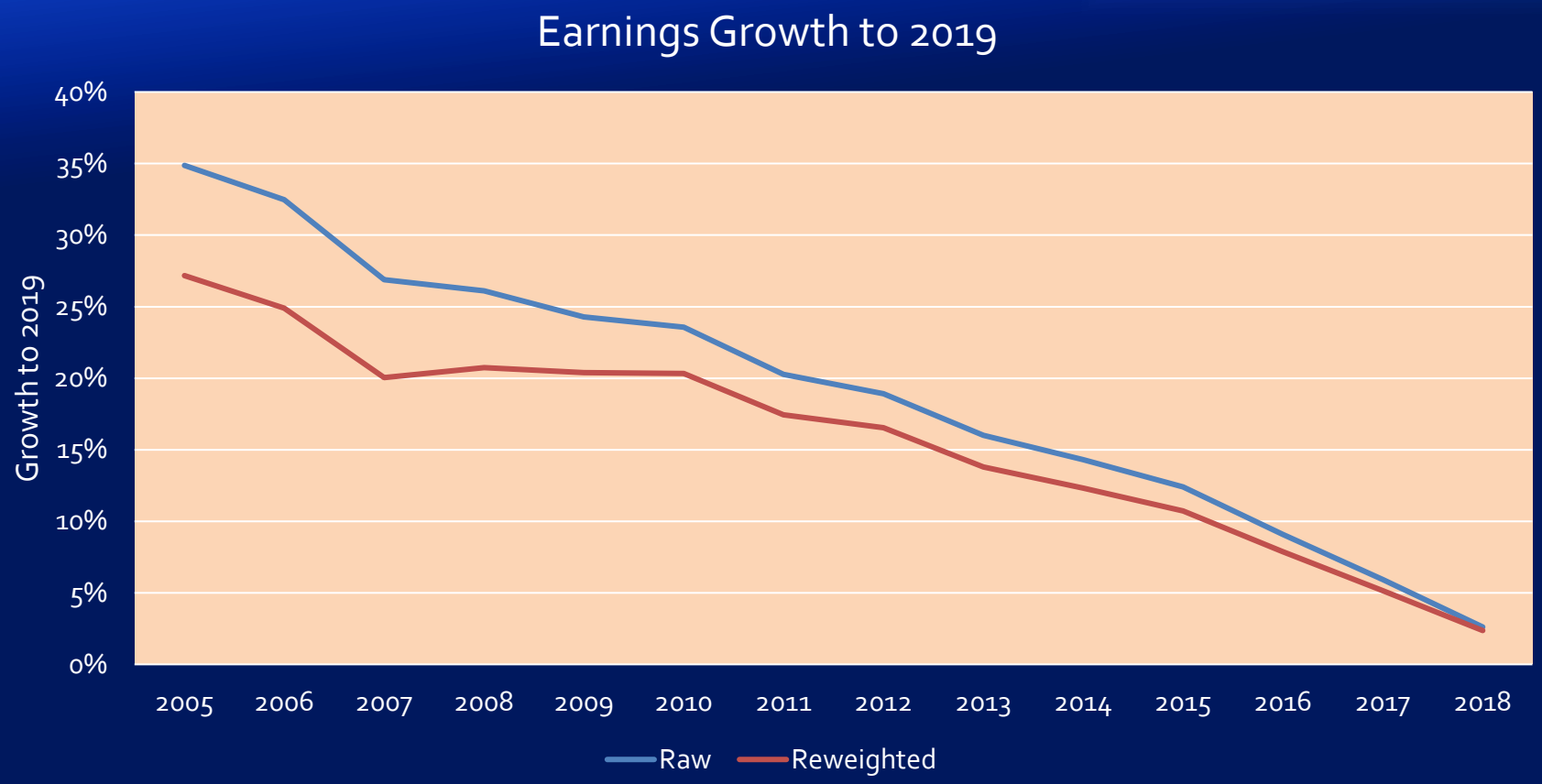
- ACS PUMS 2005-19
- Education levels
  - High school or less
  - College, less than baccalaureate
  - Baccalaureate and above
- Other factors
  - Gender
  - FTYR
  - Wage only or self-employed
  - Age groups*

Education Distribution

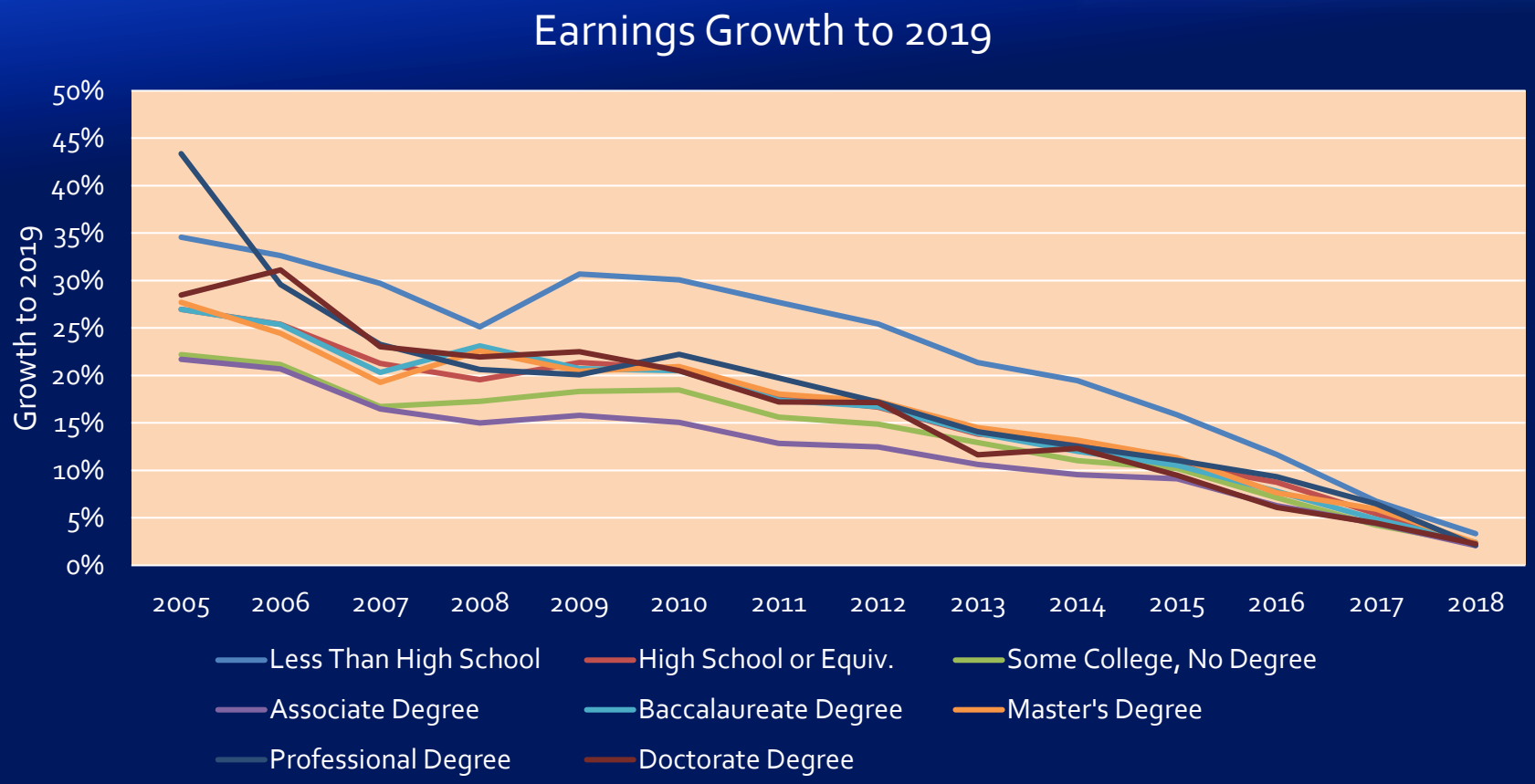


- High School or less
  - 38% in 2005
  - 32% in 2019
- Baccalaureate +
  - 32% in 2005
  - 39% in 2019
- Impacts overall growth rate

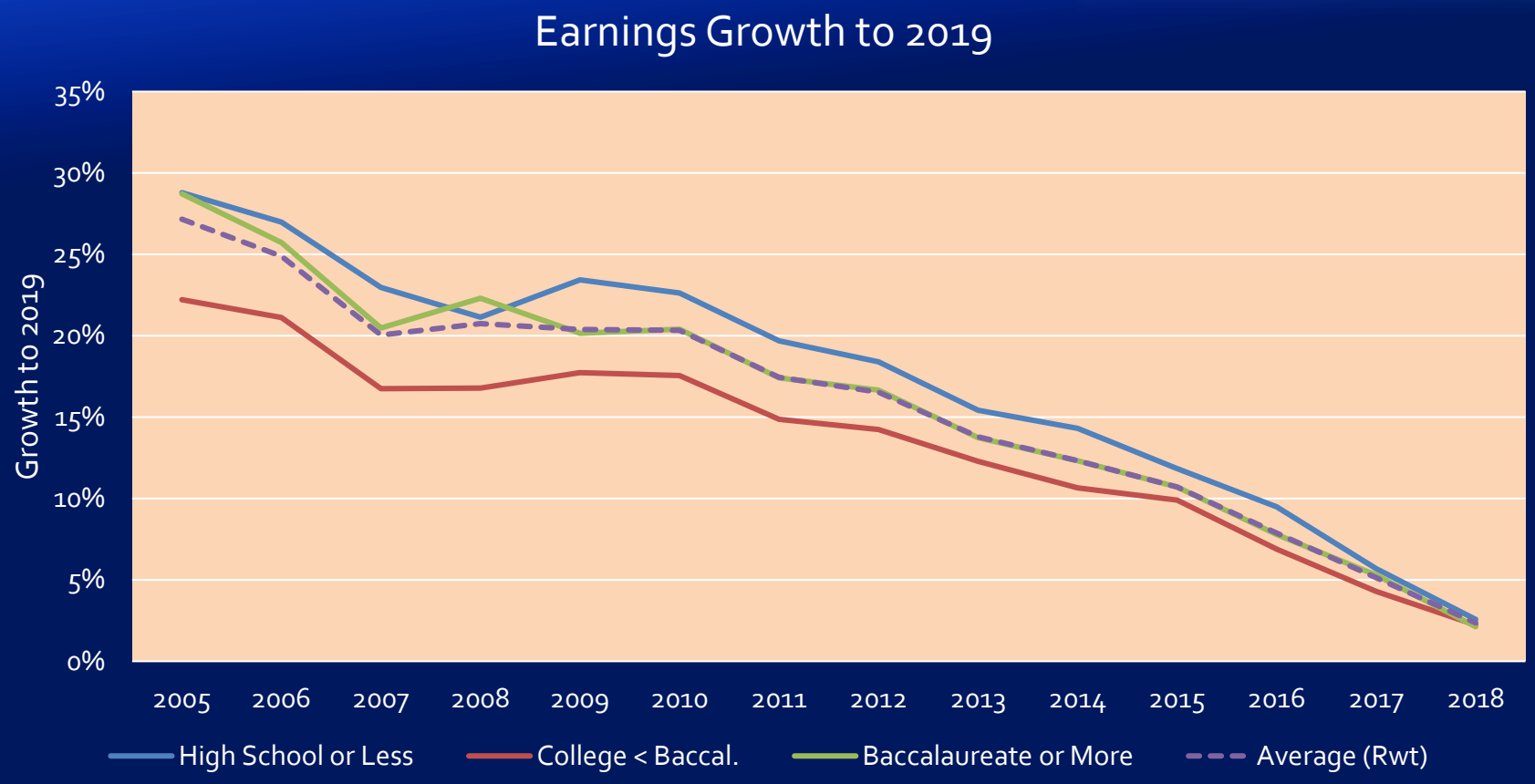
Reweighted Growth Rates



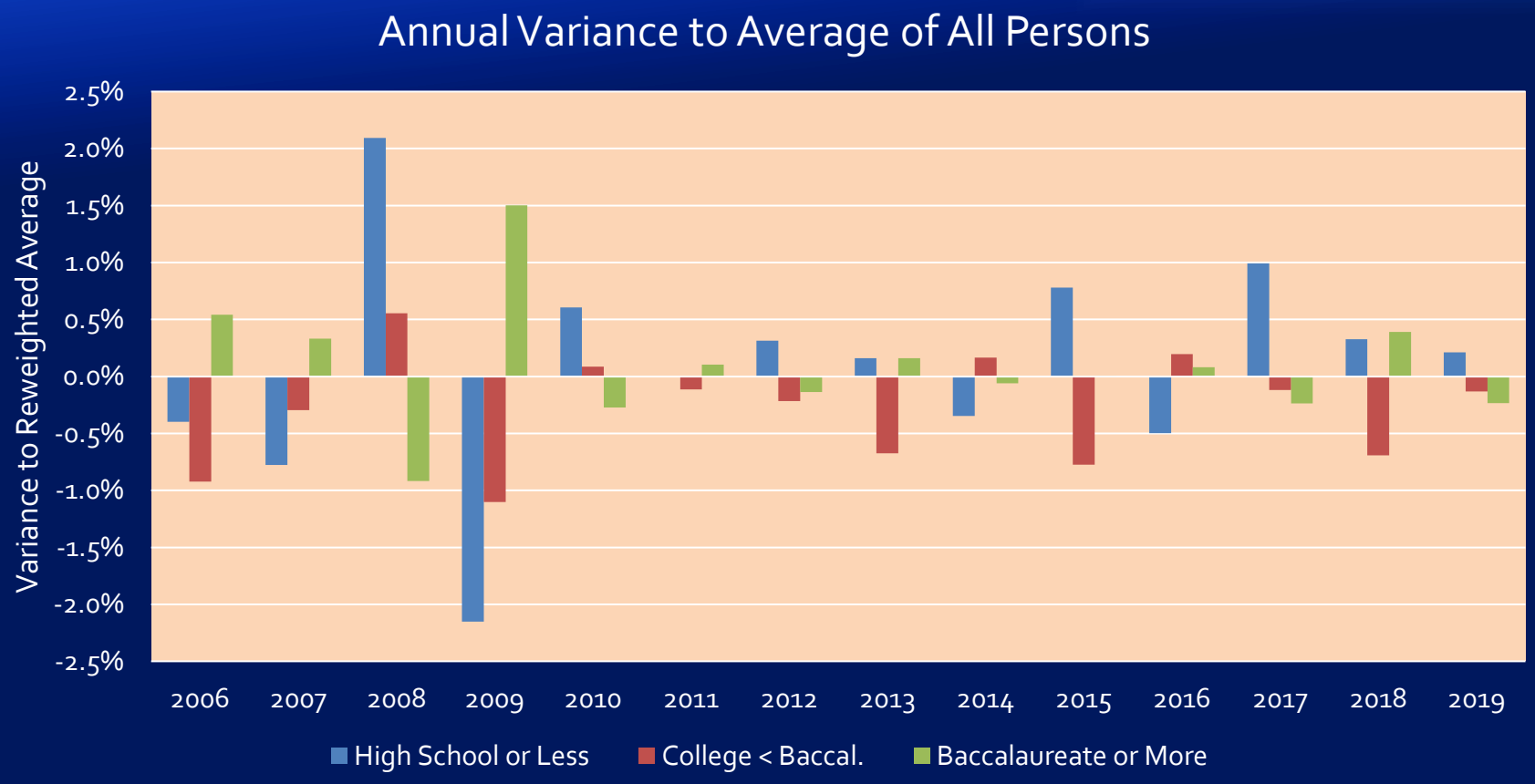
Initial Results



Summary Education Levels



Annual Growth vs Average

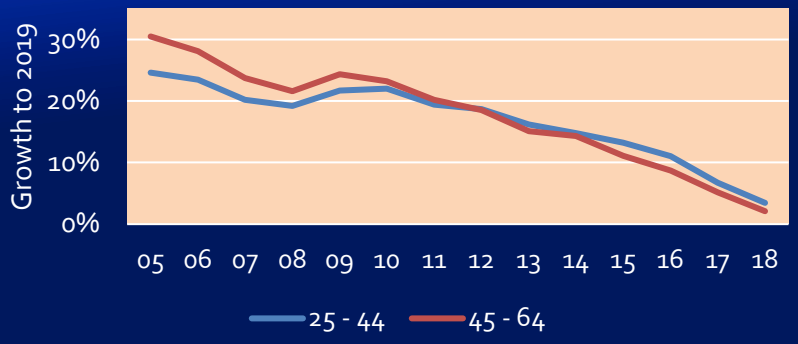


Age Impact

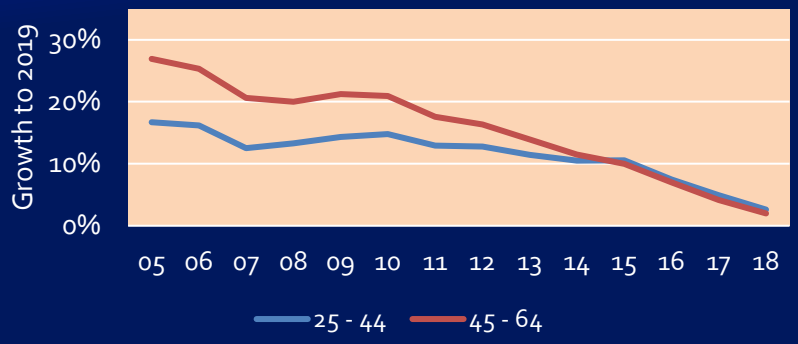
Earnings Growth to 2019
Growth to 2019
40%
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
25 - 44
45 - 64

Age & Education

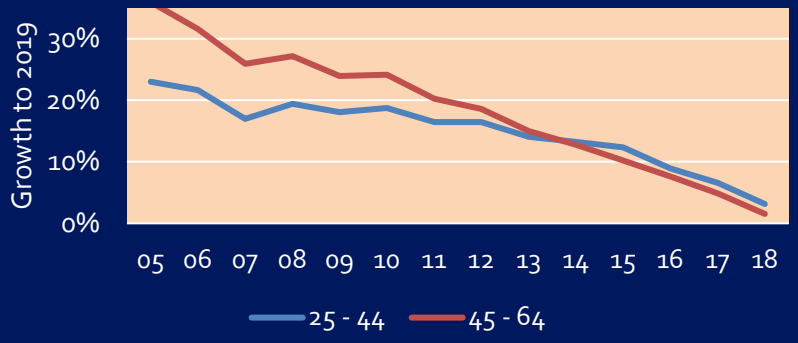
High School or Less



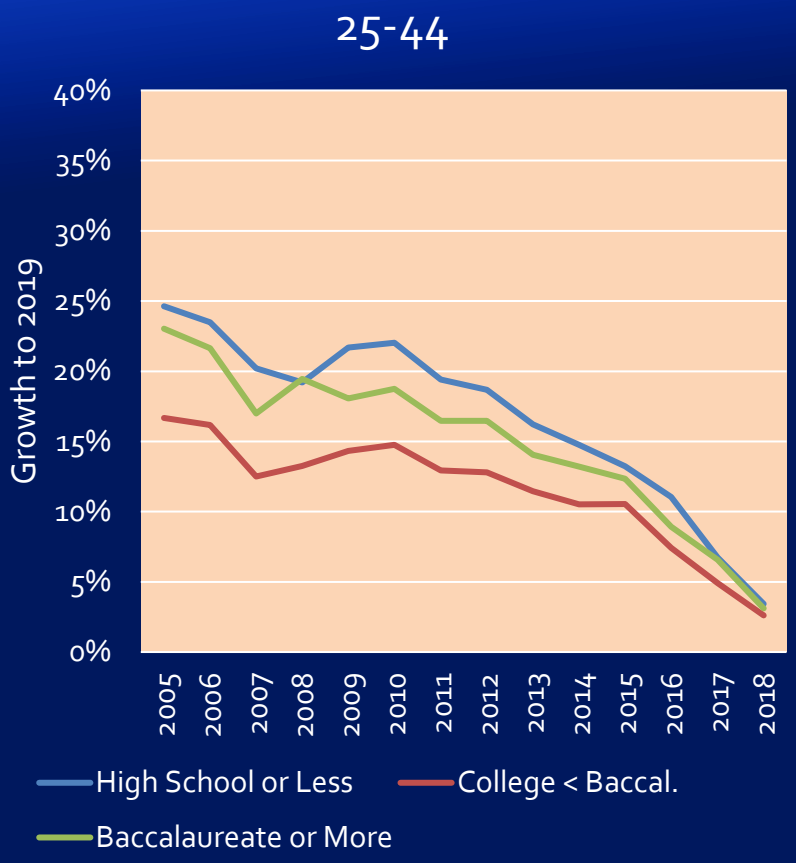
College, < Baccalaureate

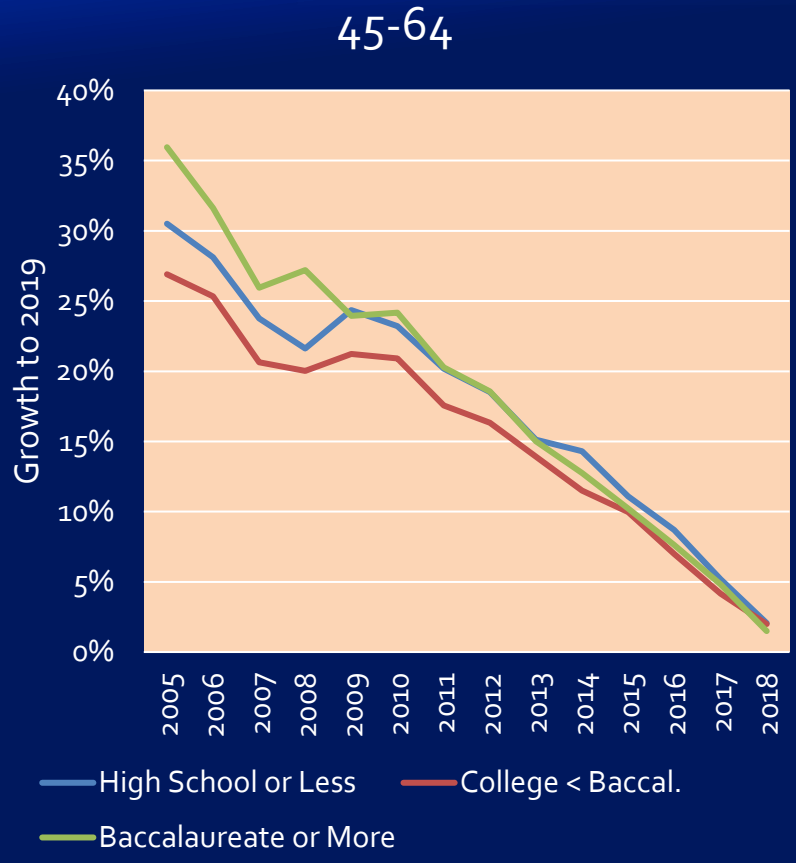


Baccalaureate or More

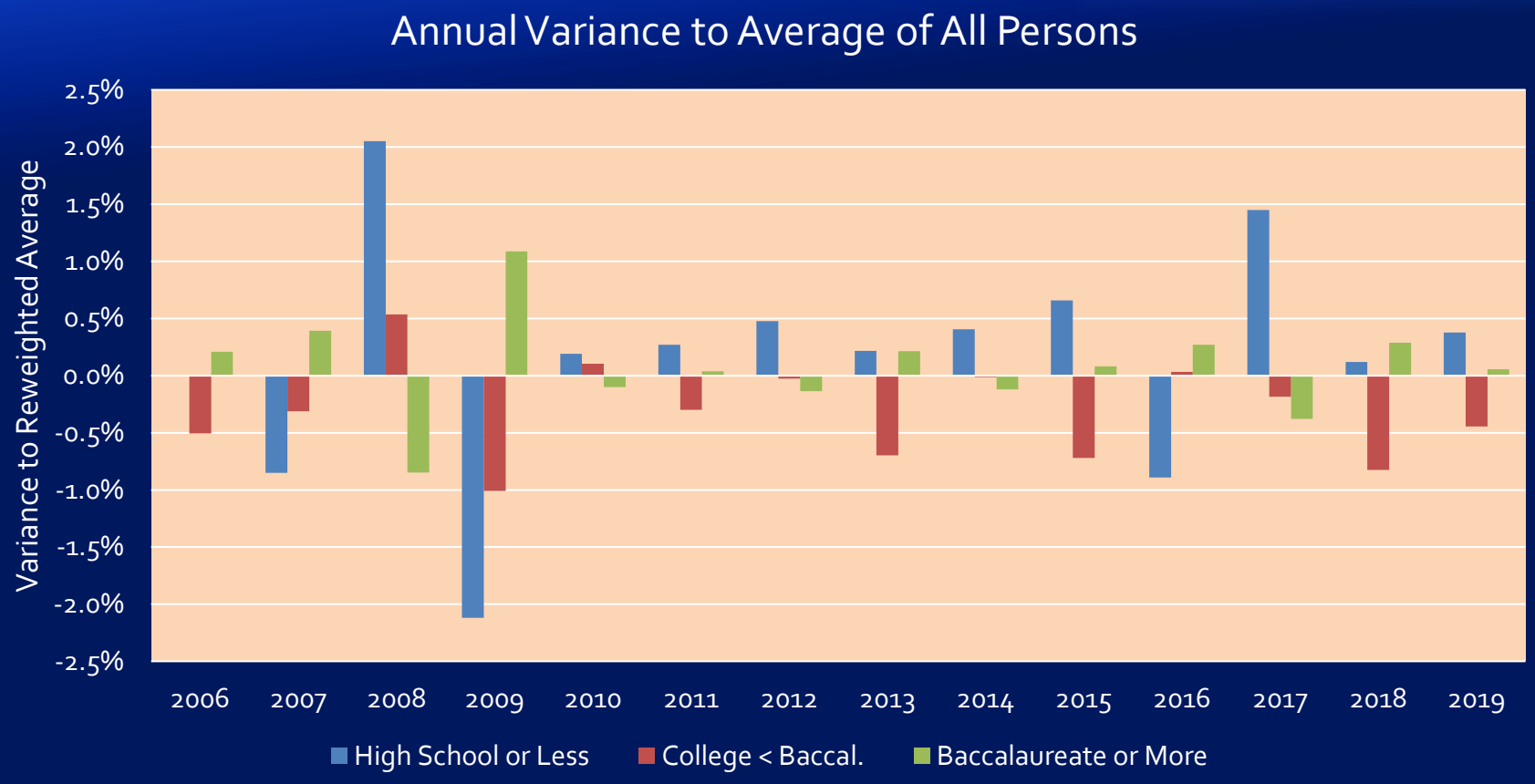


Age & Education, Continued



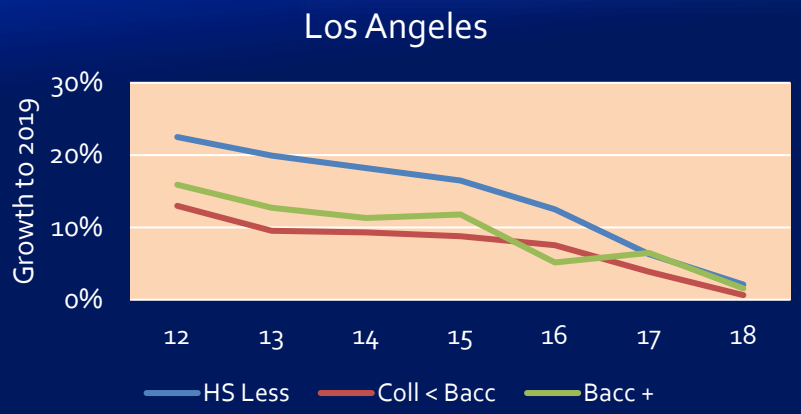


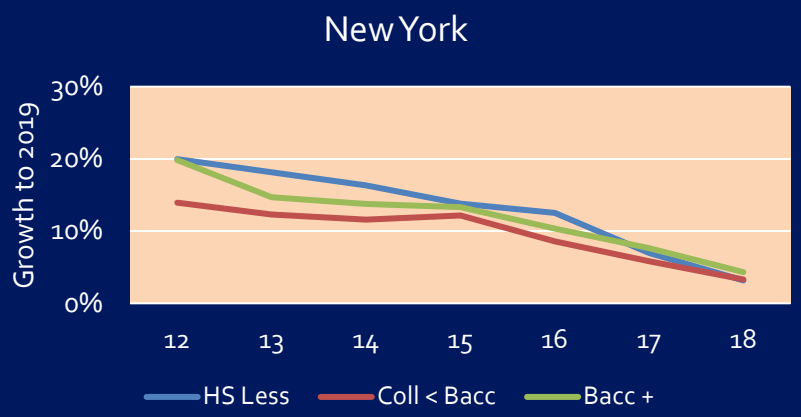
25-64 Annual Growth vs Average



Geographic Variance

- Examined top 5 CSAs
  - New York
  - Los Angeles
  - Chicago
  - Washington DC
  - San Francisco
- 2012-19 Only
- Varied results
  - LA, Chicago, NY similar to national
  - SF HS and Bacc little difference
  - DC early years only
- No conclusions





Conclusions

- Can't conclude disparity exists
  - Contradictory results by age
  - Inconsistent education impact
  - Short time period
  - Recessionary impact
- Disproportionate impact from isolated years
- Recent years lower variance
  - Lowest levels still higher
  - Mid-education lower
- 2020?