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Graduation and Dropout Statistics Annual Report

2012–13

Authorizing legislation: [RCW 28A.175.010](#)

(<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.175&full=true#28A.175.010>)

Assessment and Student Information

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Executive Summary

Graduation and dropout rates are important indicators of the status of K–12 education in Washington State. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) prepares an annual graduation and dropout report that includes information for all students as well as the sub-categories of students represented within the Washington State Report Card.

Graduation rates are calculated using the “adjusted cohort rate” methodology. Students are placed in a group – or cohort – based on the year they enter ninth grade for the first time. The calculation adjusts for students who transfer into a Washington public high school for the first time and join a cohort. Students are removed from the cohort if they transfer out of public school in Washington.

The adjusted cohort method tracks individual students over time and does not rely on estimates. It generally aligns with what most people think of as a graduation rate: Among a group of students who started high school together, what percent graduated in four (or five) years?

The methodology is mandated by the U.S. Department of Education. Results are produced for both four-year and five-year cohorts of students.

Washington’s four-year graduation rate is 76.0 percent for students who entered ninth grade for the first time in 2009–10. We commonly call this the Class of 2013. The rate is a decrease of 1.2 percent from the Class of 2012, which had a four-year graduation rate of 77.2 percent.

The five-year graduation rate, for students who entered ninth grade for the first time in 2008–09, is 78.8 percent. This is almost the same as the previous year, when the five-year rate was 78.9 percent.

Following are Washington’s current four- and five-year graduation rates, listed by student group:

Student group	4-year	5-year
American Indian	52.5%	58.5%
Asian	84.1%	85.8%
Pacific Islander	62.3%	69.6%
Black	65.4%	67.7%
Hispanic	65.6%	70.0%
White	79.4%	81.8%
Two or More Races	76.2%	88.5%
Special Education	54.4%	62.4%
Limited English	50.4%	60.2%
Low income	64.6%	69.8%
Migrant	62.3%	68.6%
504 Plan	75.1%	81.3%
Homeless	45.1%	52.6%
Foster Care	36.6%	48.1%
Female	79.9%	82.0%
Male	72.3%	75.7%

Introduction

Purpose

Under the guidelines of state law, RCW 28A.175.010, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is required to report annually on the educational progress of public school students in Grades 9–12. Federal guidelines provided by the U.S. Department of Education, issued under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), require all states to determine adjusted cohort graduation results for students. To meet the state and federal reporting requirements, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction prepares an annual report summarizing the enrollment activity of students in high school Grades 9–12.

Definitions

Adjusted Cohort: A group of students identified as beginning ninth grade in a specified year. Students are included in the cohort based on when they first enter ninth grade, regardless of their expected graduation year. The cohort of entering ninth graders is “adjusted” for transfers in and out of high school through the next four and five years.

Dropout: A student who leaves school for any reason, except death, before completing school with a regular diploma or transferring to another school with a known exit reason. A student is considered a dropout regardless of when dropping out occurs (i.e., during or between regular school terms). A student who leaves during the year but returns during the reporting period is not considered a dropout.

Graduate: A student who earns a high school diploma, a high school diploma with modifications allowed under a student’s Individualized Education Plan, or an Associate’s Degree from a community or technical college.

For information about data collection, calculations, and verification, please see the 2011–12 report which details the graduation formulas.

Graduation Rates

Results for Adjusted Four-Year Cohort

The adjusted four-year cohort graduation rate is calculated using the group of students identified as entering ninth grade for the first time in 2009–10 and who are reported as graduates by the end of 2012–13.

Table 1: Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (four-year)

Student Group	<i>Received high school diploma</i>	<i>Graduated w/ Associates Degree</i>	Total All graduates	Adjusted Cohort	Adjusted 4- Year Cohort Rate
All students	60,170	305	60,475	79,528	76.0%
Amer. Indian	664	3	667	1,270	52.5%
Asian/Pac Islander (Combined)	5,386	15	5,401	6,581	82.1%
<i>Asian</i>	5,011	15	5,026	5,979	84.1%
<i>Pacific Islander</i>	375	0	375	602	62.3%
Black	2,488	9	2,497	3,819	65.4%
Hispanic	8,753	20	8,773	13,373	65.6%
White	39,783	246	40,029	50,401	79.4%
Two or More Races	3,096	12	3,108	4,80	76.2%
Special Education	4,785	0	4,785	8,804	54.4%
Limited English	2,211	0	2,211	4,383	50.4%
Low income	24,928	103	25,031	38,727	64.6%
Migrant	1,270	1	1,271	2,040	62.3%
504 Plan	2,484	6	2,490	3,315	75.1%
Homeless	1,835	2	1,838	4,076	45.1%
Foster Care	242	0	242	661	36.6%
Female	31,112	215	31,327	39,194	79.9%
Male	29,058	90	29,148	40,334	72.3%

Results for Adjusted Five-Year Cohort

The adjusted five-year cohort graduation rate is calculated using the group of students identified as entering ninth grade for the first time in 2008–09 and who are reported as graduates by the end of 2012–13. The table below shows the adjusted cohort five-year rate as well as the four-year rate for the same cohort. The difference between the two columns represents the percentage of the cohort who graduated in their fifth year of high school.

Table 2: Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (five-year)

Student Group	<i>Received high school diploma</i>	<i>Graduated w/ Associates Degree</i>	Total All graduates	Adjusted Cohort	Adjusted 5-Year Cohort Rate	(2012) Adjusted 4- Year Cohort Rate
All students	63,757	198	63,955	81,156	78.8%	77.2%
Amer. Indian	820	0	820	1,401	58.5%	56.8%
Asian/Pac Islander (Combined)	5,683	13	5,696	6,767	84.2%	82.5%
<i>Asian</i>	5,216	13	5,229	6,096	85.8%	84.4%
<i>Pacific Islander</i>	467	0	467	671	69.6%	64.5%
Black	2,717	1	2,718	4,012	67.7%	67.1%
Hispanic	9,273	13	9,286	13,266	70.0%	66.7%
White	42,324	161	42,485	51,922	81.8%	80.4%
Two or More Races	2,940	10	2,949	3,759	88.5%	78.1%
Special Education	5,781	2	5,783	9,269	62.4%	57.6%
Limited English	2,883	1	2,884	4,792	60.2%	53.9%
Low income	26,426	58	26,484	37,945	69.8%	66.2%
Migrant	1,594	4	1,598	2,331	68.6%	62.5%
504 Plan	2,324	1	2,325	2,861	81.3%	78.1%
Homeless	2,321	3	2,324	4,421	52.6%	*
Foster Care	309	1	310	644	48.1%	41.6%
Female	32,606	122	32,728	39,899	82.0%	80.7%
Male	31,151	76	31,227	41,257	75.7%	73.7%

* Homeless graduation rates were not calculated prior to 2013.

Dropout Rates

Results for Adjusted Four-Year Cohort

Students identified as entering ninth grade for the first time in 2009–10 and who are reported as dropouts within the four-year timeframe are reported in the year in which they dropped out.

Table 3: Adjusted Cohort Dropouts (four-year)

Student Group	Dropouts Year 1	Dropouts Year 2	Dropouts Year 3	Dropouts Year 4	Total Dropouts	Adjusted 4-Year Cohort Dropout Rate
All students	691	1,106	2,517	5,991	10,305	13.0%
Amer. Indian	24	42	87	171	324	25.5%
Asian/Pac Islander (combined)	55	76	97	330	558	8.5%
<i>Asian</i>	47	70	73	248	438	7.3%
<i>Pacific Islander</i>	8	6	24	82	120	19.9%
Black	53	72	142	427	694	18.2%
Hispanic	211	273	580	1,444	2,508	18.8%
White	325	599	1,481	3,297	5,702	11.3%
Two or More Races	19	44	130	322	515	12.6%
Special Education	54	136	388	1,043	1,621	18.4%
Limited English	125	141	241	598	1,105	25.2%
Low income	380	747	1,900	4,447	7,474	19.3%
Migrant	37	37	106	255	435	21.3%
504 Plan	6	23	83	267	379	11.4%
Homeless	48	87	332	803	1,270	31.2%
Foster Care	11	22	81	161	275	41.6%
Female	321	518	1,106	2,491	4,436	11.3%
Male	370	588	1,411	3,500	5,869	14.6%

Results for Adjusted Five-Year Cohort

Students identified as entering ninth grade for the first time in 2008–09 and who are reported as dropouts within the five-year timeframe are reported in the year in which they dropped out.

Table 4: Adjusted Cohort Dropouts (five-year)

Student Group	Dropouts Year 1	Dropouts Year 2	Dropouts Year 3	Dropouts Year 4	Dropouts Year 5	Total Dropouts	Adjusted 5- Year Cohort Dropout Rate
All students	1,168	1,400	2,766	5,369	3,772	14,475	17.8%
Amer. Indian	68	61	83	180	120	512	36.5%
Asian/Pac Islander (combined)	93	114	141	310	215	873	12.9%
<i>Asian</i>	79	101	109	238	171	698	11.5%
<i>Pacific Islander</i>	14	13	32	72	44	175	26.1%
Black	113	114	157	361	303	1,048	26.1%
Hispanic	312	290	615	1,212	950	3,379	25.5%
White	536	763	1,672	3,028	1,980	7,979	15.4%
Two or More Races	29	51	98	277	202	657	17.5%
Special Education	122	181	470	880	720	2,373	25.6%
Limited English	158	188	269	520	448	1,583	33.0%
Low income	220	763	1,831	3,760	2,962	9,536	25.1%
Migrant	47	60	114	222	182	625	26.8%
504 Plan	0	18	57	187	135	397	13.9%
Homeless	64	89	301	666	630	1,750	39.6%
Foster Care	6	25	62	117	70	280	43.5%
Female	555	652	1,231	2,182	1,481	6,101	15.3%
Male	613	748	1,535	3,187	2,291	8,374	20.3%

Conclusion

At the direction of the U.S. Department of Education, Washington uses the adjusted cohort graduation calculation to track a single cohort of students over four or five years. This report summarizes the graduation rates following the 2012–13 school year.

The adjusted cohort method yields a 76.0 percent four-year graduation rate for the Class of 2013, students who first began ninth grade in 2009–10. This is slightly lower than the Class of 2012, which had a graduation rate of 77.2 percent. An additional 1.6 percent of students in the Class of 2012 graduated during their fifth-year of high school (2012–13) for a total five-year rate of 78.8 percent. The cumulative dropout rate, after four years, for students entering ninth grade in 2009–10 was 13.0 percent.

APPENDICES

Appendices A through G are available as electronic files under *Graduation and Dropout Statistics* at <http://www.k12.wa.us/DataAdmin/default.aspx>.

- Appendix A: State Level (2013 Adjusted Cohort 4-Year and 5-Year)
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Appendix H: Estimated Benefits from Changes in Washington State’s High School Graduation Rate

This appendix was prepared by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy. Estimate prepared February 2014.

The 2010 Legislature directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) to “calculate an annual estimate of the savings resulting from any change compared to the prior school year in the extended graduation rate.”¹

To produce this estimate, the Institute uses its economic model that assesses benefits and costs of public policies and outcomes. Monetary estimates are calculated for three perspectives: 1) benefits that accrue solely to high school graduates, 2) benefits received by taxpayers from having other people graduate from high school, and 3) any other measurable (non-graduate and non-taxpayer) monetary benefits. For technical details about the Institute model, visit <http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/TechnicalManual/WsippBenefitCostTechnicalManual.pdf>.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) calculates a five-year high school graduation rate, which includes students who take more than four years to graduate. In the 2011–12 school year, this graduation rate was 78.9 percent; in 2012–13, the rate was 78.8 percent, a decrease of 0.01 percentage points, representing 77 fewer graduates (see Exhibit 1).

¹ RCW 28A.175.010 (8)

Change in the Five-Year High School Graduation Rate in Washington State, 2011–12 to 2012–13

	Five-year Graduation Rate	Students in Cohort	Graduates (Rate * Cohort)
Actual graduates (2012–13 rate)	78.8%	81,156	63,955
Hypothetical Graduates (based on the 2011-12 rate)	78.9%	81,156	64,032
<i>Difference</i>	<i>-0.01%</i>		<i>-77</i>

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Using the Institute’s benefit-cost model, we estimate that the per-student monetary benefit associated with graduating from high school is \$514,862 (see Exhibit 2, next page).² The benefits accrue over an individual’s lifetime and the dollar amount is in net present value terms, in 2012 dollars.³

About half of the benefits go to the graduates themselves in the form of increased earnings, for which they pay taxes (represented as benefits to taxpayers). Graduating from high school is also associated with less crime. Additionally, individuals who graduate from high school are more likely to use private health care services but less likely to use publicly funded health care services.

For the 77 fewer graduates in 2012–13, the total estimated monetary benefit not realized is \$39.6 million.⁴

² This estimate is higher than the Institute’s 2013 estimate of the monetary benefits from graduating from high school. We have updated our estimates of labor market earnings and “spillover” economic growth (beyond an individual’s labor market earnings) associated with increased education in a society.

³ To calculate net present value, we use a .035 discount rate.

⁴ $77 \times \$514,862 = \$39,644,374$

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