

## Graduation and Dropout Rates in Alaska Fact Sheet

The **graduation rate** methodology reflects a federal mandate requiring all 50 states to use a uniform graduation rate that is to be reported for all public high schools in the country. This rate, known as the *Four Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate*, was first implemented in Alaska with the 2010-2011 school year. All 50 states were required to utilize the new adjusted cohort graduation rate for accountability purposes starting with the 2011-2012 school year.

Under this new methodology a cohort graduation year is assigned to each ninth grade student in the fall of their initial entry. The expectation of the adjusted cohort graduation rate is that the student will graduate within four years. For example, a student who entered ninth grade in the 2013-2014 school year would be considered part of the 2016-2017 graduation cohort group. A student may be added to the cohort as a transfer into the public school system or removed from the cohort upon transfer to an education program with a secondary school diploma track. A deceased student would also be removed from the cohort group.

A graduate is defined as a student who has received a regular diploma from a state or district approved education program, as evidenced by receipt of a secondary school diploma from school authorities. This does not include a student who receives a certificate of achievement or a GED.

The Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate is calculated as follows: the numerator is the count of graduates within the cohort who receive a regular diploma on or before June 30. The denominator is the count of all students assigned to the cohort.

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Graduation Rate*</b>	<b>Graduate Count**</b>
2004-2005	61.4%	6,905
2005-2006	61.6%	7,361
2006-2007	63.0%	7,666
2007-2008	62.6%	7,855
2008-2009	67.5%	8,008
2009-2010	67.4%	8,245
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2010-2011	68.0%	8,064
2011-2012	69.6%	7,989
2012-2013	71.8%	7,861
2013-2014	71.1%	7,668
2014-2015	75.6%***	8,253***
2015-2016	76.1%****	8,108****
2016-2017	78.2%	8,385

**NOTE:** There is often confusion between graduation rates and dropout rates. Dropout rates are event rates meaning they are calculated across a single year. The graduation rates are measures of cohort groups across four years. Dropout rates are calculated by dividing the total number of students dropping out of public school, in grades 7-12, by the October 1 enrollment count for all students in grades 7-12. Graduation rates and dropout rates are calculated independent from each other and are not the inverse of each other. Also, a student counted as a dropout in one reporting year may be counted as a dropout in another year.

\* Prior to the 2010-2011 school year the graduation rate calculation utilized the methodology below:

*The Graduation Rate is reported as a fraction. The numerator is the sum of the number of graduates receiving a regular diploma before June 30. The denominator is the sum of the number of graduates, plus the number of dropouts in grade nine three school years prior, plus the number of unduplicated dropouts in grade ten two school years prior, plus the number of unduplicated dropouts in grade eleven in the prior school year, plus the number of unduplicated dropouts in grade 12 during the current year, plus the number of grade 12 continuing students.*

\*\* Graduate count represents any student who graduated with a regular diploma during the school year (July 1-June 30). This number differs substantially from the count of graduates in the four-year cohort, as used in the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate calculation.

\*\*\* The High School Graduation Qualifying Examination (HSGQE) was removed as a graduation requirement on July 1, 2014. The 2014-2015 cohort group is the first to be affected by this change. Also, the count of 2014-2015 graduates includes any student who received a Certificate of Achievement during the 2013-2014 school year and received a retroactive diploma during the 2014-2015 school year because of the HSGQE repeal.

\*\*\*\* A valid score on a College and Career Ready Assessment (CCRA) was removed as a graduation requirement on June 30, 2016. This led to a one-day sunset (on June 30, 2016) on which students who had not received a valid CCRA score could be issued a diploma.

The **dropout rate** methodology is defined in state regulation by **4 AAC 06.895(i)(3)**:

[F]or grades 7-12, the dropout rate is a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of students who have dropped out in the current school year, and the denominator of which is the number of students enrolled in grades 7-12 on October 1 of the current school year...

A student is not considered a dropout if his or her departure was due to the completion of a state- or district-approved education program; transfer to a public school, private school, or state- or district-approved education program; temporary absence caused by suspension, illness, or medical condition; or death. A student in pursuit of a General Educational Development (GED) certificate is considered a dropout, as defined by the National Center for Education Statistics.

A student who drops out multiple times during a school year is only counted once in the dropout rate numerator.

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Dropout Rate</b>	<b>Dropout Count (Grades 7-12)</b>
2004-2005	6.0%	3,791
2005-2006	5.8%	3,642
2006-2007	5.5%	3,434
2007-2008	5.2%	3,232
2008-2009	5.2%	3,146
2009-2010	5.0%	2,990
2010-2011	4.7%	2,779
2011-2012	4.8%	2,830
2012-2013	4.0%	2,364
2013-2014	4.0%	2,303
2014-2015	3.7%	2,141
2015-2016	3.9%	2,268
2016-2017	3.5%	2,003