## Cohort 2018 Four-Year Graduation Rates – State Results

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) calculates and reports graduation rates as part of overall efforts to improve educational outcomes for all students.

The 2018 four-year cohort graduation rate is calculated as follows:

# of students in cohort (denominator) who graduate in 4 years or less
[# of 1st time entering 9th graders in 2014-15] - transfers out/deaths + transfers in

The 2018 four-year cohort graduation rate for Massachusetts public high schools decreased by 0.5 percentage points to 87.8 percent from 88.3 percent for the 2017 cohort. While the four-year graduation rate for the 2018 cohort decreased, the percentage of the cohort still enrolled in a Massachusetts public high school increased by 0.5 percentage points when compared to the 2017 cohort. Students from the 2018 cohort still enrolled in high school will have an opportunity to be included in the five-year graduation rate.

There are significant gaps in the graduation rates among subgroups. Among the major race and ethnicity subgroup rates, there is a 20.5 percentage point difference between the highest and lowest, belonging to Asian and Hispanic students. This difference is 0.8 percentage points higher than in 2017.

Additional critical findings of the report include:

* The dropout rate for the 2018 cohort was 4.8 percent. This rate is the lowest since the ESE began calculating cohort dropout rates in 2006.
* 5.5 percent of the 2018 cohort is still enrolled in high school.
* The four-year graduation rate for English learners in the 2018 cohort increased by 0.7 percentage points as compared to English learners in the 2017 cohort.

**Table 1. Cohort Graduation Rates 2007-2018**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2007****Cohort** | **2008****Cohort** | **2009 Cohort** | **2010 Cohort** | **2011 Cohort** | **2012 Cohort** | **2013****Cohort** | **2014****Cohort** | **2015****Cohort** | **2016****Cohort** | **2017****Cohort** | **2018****Cohort** |
| **4-Yr Rate** | 80.9% | 81.2% | 81.5% | 82.1% | 83.4% | 84.7% | 85.0% | 86.1% | 87.3% | 87.5% | 88.3% | 87.8% |
| **5-Yr Rate** | 84.0% | 84.2% | 84.0% | 84.7% | 86.3% | 87.5% | 87.7% | 88.5% | 89.4% | 89.8% | 90.1% | N/A |

The following tables and graphs further summarize the results for the 2018 cohort. The results are based on data submitted by school districts through the Department's Student Information Management System.

###### Table 2. Graduation Results for All Students and Student Subgroups[[1]](#footnote-1)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Graduates** | Non-Graduates[[2]](#footnote-2) |
|  | 2018Cohort #1 | 4-Year Rate | Difference from 2017 | Still in School | Non-Grad Completer[[3]](#footnote-3) | HSEquiv. | Dropped Out | Expelled |
| All Students | 74,641 | 87.8% | -0.5 | 5.5% | 1.1% | 0.7% | 4.8% | 0.0% |
| Female | 36,567 | 90.3% | -0.4 | 4.2% | 1.2% | 0.7% | 3.7% | 0.0% |
| Male | 38,050 | 85.3% | -0.6 | 6.8% | 1.1% | 0.8% | 5.8% | 0.0% |
| EnglishLearner[[4]](#footnote-4) | 6,612 | 64.1% | +0.7 | 13.0% | 6.7% | 0.3% | 15.8% | 0.0% |
| Eco. Dis. | 28,083 | 78.4% | -0.6 | 9.1% | 2.2% | 1.3% | 9.0% | 0.0% |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 14,571 | 72.4% | -0.4 | 15.7% | 2.7% | 1.1% | 8.2% | 0.0% |
| High Needs[[5]](#footnote-5) | 37,019 | 78.0% | -2.0 | 10.2% | 2.2% | 1.2% | 8.5% | 0.0% |
| African American | 7,019 | 80.1% | +0.1 | 10.4% | 2.7% | 0.6% | 6.2% | 0.0% |
| Asian | 4,600 | 94.3% | +0.2 | 3.0% | 0.7% | 0.3% | 1.7% | 0.0% |
| Hispanic | 13,365 | 73.8% | -0.6 | 9.9% | 3.2% | 1.1% | 11.9% | 0.0% |
| Multi-race, Non-Hisp. | 1,910 | 86.5% | +1.3 | 6.6% | 0.9% | 1.0% | 4.9% | 0.0% |
| Native American | 151 | 83.4% | +2.0 | 4.6% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 7.9% | 0.0% |
| Pacific Islander | 82 | 90.2% | +11.9 | 4.9% | 2.4% | 0.0% | 2.4% | 0.0% |
| White | 47,514 | 92.2% | -0.4 | 3.8% | 0.4% | 0.7% | 2.9% | 0.0% |
| Urban | 25,108 | 77.7% | -0.2% | 9.4% | 2.6% | 1.2% | 9.2% | 0.0% |

###### Table 3. Graduation Results for Race/Ethnicity Groups by Gender

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Graduates** | Non-Graduates |
|  | 2018Cohort # | 4-Year Rate | Difference from 2017 | Still in School | Non-Grad Completer | HSEquiv. | Dropped Out | Expelled |
| African American Female | 2,289 | 83.8% | -0.9 | 8.3% | 2.7% | 0.4% | 4.8% | 0.0% |
| African American Male | 3,599 | 76.5% | +1.1 | 12.4% | 2.7% | 0.8% | 7.4% | 0.0% |
| Asian Female | 2,289 | 95.4% | -0.1 | 2.2% | 0.7% | 0.3% | 1.4% | 0.0% |
| Asian Male | 2,309 | 93.2% | +0.4 | 3.8% | 0.6% | 0.4% | 1.9% | 0.0% |
| Hispanic Female | 6,466 | 79.0% | -0.2 | 7.8% | 3.3% | 1.0% | 8.9% | 0.0% |
| Hispanic Male | 6,898 | 69.0% | -0.8 | 11.8% | 3.1% | 1.2% | 14.8% | 0.1% |
| Multi-race Female | 946 | 87.9% | -0.9 | 5.0% | 1.2% | 1.0% | 5.0% | 0.0% |
| Multi-race Male | 964 | 85.2% | +3.5 | 8.3% | 0.6% | 1.1% | 4.8% | 0.0% |
| Native American Female | 68 | 88.2% | +0.7 | 4.4% | 4.4% | 0.0% | 2.9% | 0.0% |
| Native American Male | 83 | 79.5% | +4.8 | 4.8% | 0.0% | 3.6% | 12.0% | 0.0% |
| Pacific Islander Female | 47 | 93.6% | +5.1 | 4.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 2.1% | 0.0% |
| Pacific IslanderMale | 35 | 85.7% | +13.6 | 5.7% | 5.7% | 0.0% | 2.9% | 0.0% |
| White Female | 23,332 | 93.9% | -0.3 | 2.7% | 0.4% | 0.6% | 2.4% | 0.0% |
| White Male | 24,162 | 90.6% | +0.5 | 4.8% | 0.4% | 0.7% | 3.4% | 0.0% |

**Table 4. Graduation Results for** **Students Receiving Special Education Services by Gender**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Graduates** | Non-Graduates |
|  | 2018Cohort # | 4-Year Rate | Difference from 2017 | Still in School | Non-Grad Completer | HSEquiv. | Dropped Out | Expelled |
| Students w/ Disabilities Female | 5,469 | 73.8% | -1.0 | 14.2% | 3.2% | 1.3% | 7.5% | 0.0% |
| Students w/ Disabilities Male | 9,095 | 71.5% | -0.2 | 16.6% | 2.4% | 1.0% | 8.6% | 0.0% |

**Table 5. Graduation Results for** **Economically Disadvantaged Students by Gender**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Graduates** | Non-Graduates |
|  | 2018Cohort # | 4-Year Rate | Difference from 2017 | Still in School | Non-Grad Completer | HSEquiv. | Dropped Out | Expelled |
| Eco. Dis. Female | 13,566 | 82.2% | -0.7 | 8.0% | 2.2% | 1.3% | 6.3% | 0.0% |
| Eco. Dis. Male | 14,509 | 74.9% | -0.4 | 10.8% | 2.2% | 1.2% | 9.5% | 0.0% |

**Table 6. Graduation Results for High Needs Students by Gender**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Graduates** | Non-Graduates |
|  | 2018Cohort # | 4-Year Rate | Difference from 2017 | Still in School | Non-Grad Completer | HSEquiv. | Dropped Out | Expelled |
| High Needs Female | 16,979 | 81.2% | -2.1 | 8.2% | 2.4% | 1.2% | 7.0% | 0.0% |
| High Needs Male | 20,027 | 75.2% | +1.8 | 11.8% | 2.1% | 1.2% | 9.7% | 0.0% |

**Table 7. Graduation Results for English Language Learner Students by Gender**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Graduates** | Non-Graduates |
|  | 2018Cohort # | 4-Year Rate | Difference from 2017 | Still in School | Non-Grad Completer | HSEquiv. | Dropped Out | Expelled |
| ELLFemale | 3,036 | 69.5% | +1.3 | 10.6% | 7.9% | 0.4% | 11.6% | 0.0% |
| ELLMale | 3,575 | 59.6% | +0.1 | 14.9% | 5.7% | 0.3% | 19.4% | 0.0% |
| ELL in Original Cohort | 3,799 | 69.2% | -1.9 | 10.7% | 5.1% | 0.4% | 14.5% | 0.0% |
| ELL Entered Cohort after 10/1/14  | 2,813 | 57.3% | +4.4 | 16.0% | 8.9% | 0.2% | 17.6% | 0.0% |

**Table 8. Graduation Results for Race/Ethnicity by English Language Learner Status**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Graduates** | Non-Graduates |
|  | 2018Cohort # | 4-Year Rate | Difference from 2017 | Still in School | Non-Grad Completer | HSEquiv. | Dropped Out | Expelled |
| African American ELL | 1,330 | 70.2% | +0.4 | 13.5% | 8.1% | 0.2% | 7.9% | 0.0% |
| African American Non-ELL | 5,689 | 82.4% | +0.2 | 9.7% | 1.4% | 0.7% | 5.7% | 0.0% |
| Asian ELL | 692 | 85.8% | +1.0 | 7.7% | 2.3% | 0.1% | 4.0% | 0.0% |
| Asian Non-ELL | 3,908 | 95.8% | -0.3 | 2.2% | 2.2% | 0.4% | 1.3% | 0.0% |
| Hispanic ELL | 3,950 | 56.5% | +2.0 | 14.4% | 7.3% | 0.5% | 21.4% | 0.0% |
| Hispanic Non-ELL | 9,415 | 81.1% | -0.8 | 8.0% | 1.5% | 1.4% | 7.9% | 0.0% |
| Multi-race ELL | 32 | 78.1% | +11.4 | 12.5% | 3.1% | 0.0% | 6.3% | 0.0% |
| Multi-race Non-ELL | 1,878 | 86.7% | +1.1 | 6.5% | 0.9% | 1.1% | 4.8% | 0.0% |
| Native American ELL | 12 | 50.0% | -- | 8.3% | 16.7% | 0.0% | 25.0% | 0.0% |
| Native American Non-ELL | 139 | 86.3% | +3.5 | 4.3% | 0.7% | 2.2% | 6.5% | 0.0% |
| Pacific-Islander ELL | 6 | 100% | -- | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Pacific Islander Non-ELL | 76 | 89.5% | +6.4 | 5.3% | 2.6% | 0.0% | 2.6% | 0.0% |
| White ELL | 590 | 75.6% | +1.0 | 9.0% | 5.1% | 0.2% | 10.2% | 0.0% |
| White Non-ELL | 46,924 | 92.4% | -0.4 | 3.7% | 0.3% | 0.7% | 2.8% | 0.0% |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Graduates** | Non-Graduates |
| High Schools Attended | 2018Cohort # | 4-Year Rate | Difference from 2017 | Still in School | Non-Grad Completer | HSEquiv. | Dropped Out | Expelled |
| One School | 54,837 | 91.4% | +0.0 | 3.6% | 1.0% | 0.5% | 3.5% | 0.0% |
| Two Schools | 16,428 | 82.1% | -2.3 | 8.5% | 1.3% | 1.2% | 6.9% | 0.0% |
| ThreeSchools | 2,674 | 58.7% | -5.8 | 21.5% | 2.6% | 2.6% | 14.5% | 0.0% |
| Four or More Schools | 702 | 42.3% | -2.3 | 30.2% | 2.7% | 4.6% | 20.2% | 0.0% |

**Table 9. Graduation Results for Non-Mobile and Mobile Students[[6]](#footnote-6)**

##### Table 10. Competency Determination (CD) Status for Select Non-Graduate Groups

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Still in School**  | **Dropped Out[[7]](#footnote-7)**  |
|  | Number | CD | No CD | Number | CD | No CD |
| All Students | 4,136 | 53.8% | 46.2% | 1,754 | 63.6% | 36.4% |
| Female | 1,528 | 53.1% | 46.9% | 721 | 64.6% | 35.4% |
| Male | 2,605 | 54.1% | 45.9% | 1,029 | 62.7% | 37.3% |
| English Language Learner | 858 | 39.6% | 60.4% | 289 | 28.0% | 72.0% |
| Econ Dis. | 2,830 | 51.4% | 48.6% | 1,289 | 60.9% | 39.1% |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 2,287 | 41.4% | 58.6% | 598 | 54.7% | 45.3% |
| High Needs | 3,761 | 50.3% | 49.7% | 1,496 | 60.0% | 40.0% |
| African American | 730 | 52.6% | 47.4% | 171 | 57.9% | 42.1% |
| Asian | 138 | 51.4% | 48.6% | 49 | 75.5% | 24.5% |
| Hispanic | 1,319 | 48.3% | 51.7% | 589 | 45.7% | 54.3% |
| Multi-race, Non-Hisp. | 127 | 55.9% | 44.1% | 56 | 67.9% | 32.1% |
| Native American | 7 | 28.6% | 71.4% | 6 | 50.0% | 50.0% |
| Pacific Islander | 4 |  |  | 0 |  |  |
| White | 1,811 | 58.4% | 41.6% | 883 | 75.8% | 24.2% |

##### Table 11. Distribution of Graduation Rates in the Aggregate for Districts[[8]](#footnote-8)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **2018 Four-Year****Graduation Rate** | **Number of Districts** | **Percentage of Districts** |
| < 50% | 8 | 2.6% |
| 50 - <60% | 3 | 1.0% |
| 60 - <70% | 4 | 1.3% |
| 70 - <80% | 25 | 8.3% |
| 80 - <85% | 31 | 10.3% |
| 85 - <90% | 42 | 13.9% |
| 90 - <95% | 87 | 28.8% |
| 95 – 100% | 102 | 33.8% |
| Total | 302 | 100.0% |

##### Table 12. Distribution of Graduation Rates in the Aggregate for Schools[[9]](#footnote-9)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **2018 Four-Year****Graduation Rate** | **Number of Schools** | **Percentage of Schools** |
| < 50% | 35 | 9.1% |
| 50 - <60% | 12 | 3.1% |
| 60 - <70% | 12 | 3.1% |
| 70 - <80% | 29 | 7.5% |
| 80 - <85% | 25 | 6.5% |
| 85 - <90% | 53 | 13.7% |
| 90 - <95% | 79 | 20.5% |
| 95 – 100% | 141 | 36.5% |
| Total | 386 | 100.0% |

1. Due to rounding, row percentages may not equal 100 percent. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In the reporting of aggregate results, students are included in the first column (from left to right) for which they qualify. For example, students who dropped out or were expelled, but earned a high school equivalency, are included in that category. Students are only reported in one category. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Non-Grad Completer includes 1) students who earned a certificate of attainment, 2) students who met local graduation requirements but the district does not offer certificates of attainment, and 3) students with special needs who reached the maximum age (22) but did not graduate. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The English language learner, special education, and economically disadvantaged subgroups include all students that were reported in those categories at least once in high school. Students can be counted in more than one group. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. High Needs subgroup includes students categorized as any of the following as of October 1, 2018) Economically Disadvantaged, 2) English language learner, 3) Students with disabilities, as well as students categorized as an English language learner during the prior two school years (2015-16 and/or 2017-18). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Mobility refers to the number of different high schools that the student attended within the Commonwealth. Students who never moved or moved in from another state or a private school and attended one public high school in Massachusetts are represented in the “One School” row. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Only includes still enrolled students and cohort dropouts that attempted the 10th grade ELA and Mathematics test at least once. This represents a change from previous reports where all dropouts regardless of test status were included in the analysis. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Includes districts with at least six students in the cohort. District analyses include charter schools, regional school districts and vocational/technical high schools. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Includes schools with at least six students in the cohort [↑](#footnote-ref-9)