

High School Graduation Rate

DEFINITION

High school graduation rate is the number of 2007 graduates divided by the estimated size of the twelfth grade class had no students dropped out.

SIGNIFICANCE

High school graduation is the minimum requisite for college and most employment. The path to high school graduation begins early; research indicates that children who attend high-quality preschool programs are more likely to graduate from high school.¹

Several factors contribute to a student's decision to leave school: repeating one or more grades, failing one or more subjects in 9th grade, ongoing patterns of absenteeism or tardiness, suspensions, poor grades, poor achievement on tests, high mobility, and disengagement from school are linked to a student's likelihood of dropping out.^{2,3,4,5,6}

Student achievement and graduation rates can be improved for all students when schools have strong leadership, highly-qualified teachers, immediate intervention for struggling students, school environments that foster meaningful connections with adults, appropriate academic and social supports, improved communication with parents, a rigorous, engaging and

relevant curriculum, high expectations for achievement and adequate funding.^{7,8,9}

Adults without a high school diploma in Rhode Island are three and a half times as likely to be unemployed as those who receive a bachelor's degree.¹⁰ In Rhode Island in 2006, the median income of adults without a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) certificate was \$21,854 compared to \$29,360 for people with a high school degree or equivalent, and \$45,569 for those with a bachelor's degree.¹¹

High School Graduation Rates, 2003-2004	
	2003-2004
RI	71%
US	70%
National Rank*	31st
New England Rank**	6th

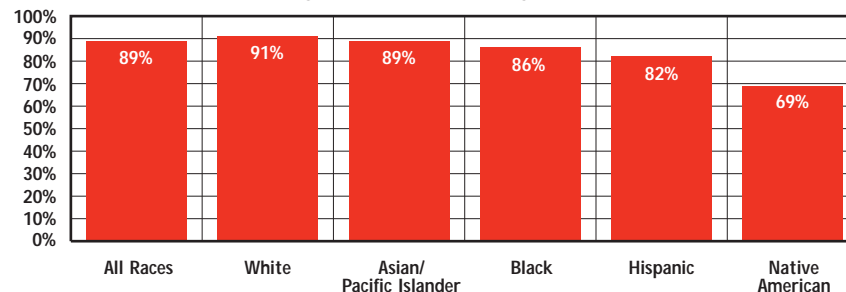
*1st is best; 50th is worst

**1st is best; 6th is worst

Source: Graduation Profile, 2003-2004. (June 2007).
Education Week: Diplomas Count. 26(40).

Diplomas Count uses the Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) method to calculate graduation rates. The CPI estimates the probability that a student in the ninth grade will complete high school on time (i.e. in four years) with a regular diploma. The CPI is currently the best measure available for cross-state comparisons of graduation rates.

High School Graduation Rates in Rhode Island
by Race & Ethnicity, 2007



Source: Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2006-2007 school year.

- ◆ **Minority students are substantially more likely than White students to drop out of school. Lower graduation rates in minority communities are mainly driven by higher poverty rates and lower rates of educational attainment among adults in the community.**^{12,13}
- ◆ **Poverty is strongly linked to the likelihood of dropping out. Nationally, low-income students are six times more likely to drop out than high-income students.**¹⁴ The core cities have an overall graduation rate of 81% compared with 93% in the remainder of the state.¹⁵
- ◆ **The 2007 Rhode Island graduation rate was 87% for males and 91% for females.**¹⁶ Nationally, female students drop out less often than males, but female dropouts are significantly more likely to be unemployed and to earn less on average than male dropouts from the same racial and ethnic group.¹⁷
- ◆ **Despite steady national increases in graduation rates of students with disabilities, they are still more likely to drop out of school than their non-disabled peers.**¹⁸ In Rhode Island, the high school graduation rate in 2007 for students with disabilities was 78%, compared to 89% statewide.¹⁹
- ◆ **National research has shown that English Language Learners are at greater risk for dropping out than students in other minority groups.**²⁰ Graduation rates for Rhode Island's English Language Learners enrolled in public schools will be available for the first time in 2008.

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Table 45.

High School Graduation Rate, Rhode Island, 2007

SCHOOL DISTRICT	COMMUNITY CONTEXT						2007 GRADUATION RATE
	% CHILDREN IN POVERTY	% ADULTS COMPLETING HIGH SCHOOL OR HIGHER	NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED	% ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS	% MINORITY ENROLLMENT	% OF STUDENTS TAKING THE SAT	
Barrington	2%	92%	3,492	1%	5%	92%	96%
Bristol-Warren	7%	75%	3,479	3%	5%	58%	84%
Burrillville	8%	80%	2,571	0%	4%	57%	87%
Central Falls	37%	49%	3,491	24%	84%	30%	76%
Charlho	4%	88%	3,773	0%	4%	56%	93%
Coventry	6%	83%	5,635	0%	3%	61%	95%
Cranston	14%	79%	10,960	5%	23%	53%	93%
Cumberland	6%	81%	5,176	2%	8%	71%	93%
East Greenwich	3%	93%	2,407	0%	7%	88%	98%
East Providence	13%	71%	5,895	4%	21%	55%	94%
Exeter-W. Greenwich	4%	89%	2,047	1%	4%	61%	96%
Foster	8%	88%	300	0%	5%	NA	NA
Foster-Glocester	7%	87%	1,622	0%	3%	56%	96%
Glocester	9%	87%	676	0%	4%	NA	NA
Jamestown	3%	93%	501	1%	7%	NA	NA
Johnston	12%	78%	3,253	2%	15%	45%	82%
Lincoln	7%	82%	3,464	1%	7%	69%	96%
Little Compton	7%	91%	315	0%	3%	NA	NA
Middletown	6%	90%	2,415	2%	15%	65%	91%
Narragansett	6%	91%	1,532	0%	7%	74%	96%
New Shoreham	8%	95%	147	4%	11%	0%	100%
Newport	15%	87%	2,282	3%	47%	67%	82%
North Kingstown	6%	92%	4,536	1%	4%	75%	98%
North Providence	13%	77%	3,381	2%	19%	50%	97%
North Smithfield	5%	82%	1,886	1%	4%	78%	96%
Pawtucket	24%	66%	9,073	11%	55%	51%	78%
Portsmouth	3%	91%	3,034	0%	5%	77%	93%
Providence	37%	66%	25,190	16%	88%	58%	82%
Scituate	7%	87%	1,811	0%	2%	71%	89%
Smithfield	6%	85%	2,620	1%	4%	72%	96%
South Kingstown	4%	91%	3,848	1%	12%	82%	96%
Tiverton	5%	80%	2,123	0%	2%	66%	90%
Warwick	7%	85%	11,236	1%	8%	53%	89%
West Warwick	12%	76%	3,799	2%	16%	52%	81%
Westerly	6%	82%	3,436	2%	11%	64%	94%
Woonsocket	27%	64%	6,462	5%	40%	43%	82%
<i>Charter Schools</i>	<i>NA</i>	<i>NA</i>	<i>296</i>	<i>14%</i>	<i>45%</i>	<i>64%</i>	<i>89%</i>
<i>State-Operated</i>	<i>NA</i>	<i>NA</i>	<i>1,840</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>57%</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>94%</i>
<i>Core Cities</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>67%</i>	<i>50,297</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>68%</i>	<i>53%</i>	<i>81%</i>
<i>Remainder of State</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>83%</i>	<i>95,779</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>64%</i>	<i>93%</i>
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>16%</i>	<i>78%</i>	<i>148,212</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>59%</i>	<i>89%</i>

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

% of children in poverty is from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Small Area Income and Population Estimates, Children Ages 5-17, 2005. % of adults completing high school or higher is from Census 2000. All other data are from the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2006-2007 school year.

The 2007 graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of June 2007 graduates by the sum of the number of June 2007 graduates plus the number of grade 9 dropouts in 2003-04 plus the number of grade 10 dropouts in 2004-05 plus the number of grade 11 dropouts in 2005-06 plus the number of grade 12 dropouts in 2006-07.

Core cities are: Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick and Woonsocket.

NA: High school students in the community attend a regional school.

Independent charter schools reported for this indicator are BEACON Charter School and Blackstone Academy Charter. State-operated schools reported for this indicator are Davies Career & Technical High School, DCYF schools, The Metropolitan Regional Career & Technical Center, and Rhode Island School for the Deaf.

References

- ¹ Shore, R. (July 2005). *Reducing the high school dropout rate*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- ² Child Trends Data Bank. Division A: Educational achievement in *Clark youth development outcomes compendium*. (2001). Washington, DC: Child Trends.
- ^{3,8} Bridgeland, J., Dilulio, J., Jr. & Morison, K. (March 2006). *The silent epidemic: Perspectives of high school dropouts*. Washington, DC: Civic Enterprises, LLC, in partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
- ⁴ Viadero, D. (2006). Signs of early exit for dropouts abound. *Education Week Diplomas Count*, 25:41S, 20-22.
- ⁵ Sautner, B. (Ed.). (2001). Rethinking the effectiveness of suspensions. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 9(4), 210-214.

(continued on page 156)