

High School Graduation Rate

DEFINITION

High school graduation rate is the number of 2004 graduates divided by the estimated size of the twelfth grade class had no one 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 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, ongoing patterns of absenteeism, suspensions, poor grades, and poor achievement on tests are linked to dropping out. Youth who move are more likely to drop out than those with stable housing.² Student achievement and graduation rates can be improved when schools have high expectations for all students; effective and up-to-date curricula and teaching methods; prepared and sufficiently supported teachers; strong home/school linkages; adequate accountability systems; and effective and equitable allocation of resources.³

Students can benefit from access to a broad range of community supports that address academic issues, health

problems, inadequate nutrition, neighborhood and family violence, and other factors that can disrupt school performance.⁴ Nationally, low-income students are six times more likely to drop out than high-income students.⁵

Youth who drop out of school are more likely to rely on public assistance as adults.⁶ In 2001, over half of the people over 25 who did not have a high school diploma or GED reported no earnings during that year.⁷ Also in 2001, adults without a high school diploma who found employment earned a median income of \$11,864 compared to \$19,900 for people with a high school degree or equivalent.⁸ Female dropouts are much more likely than male dropouts of the same racial or ethnic group to live in poverty.⁹

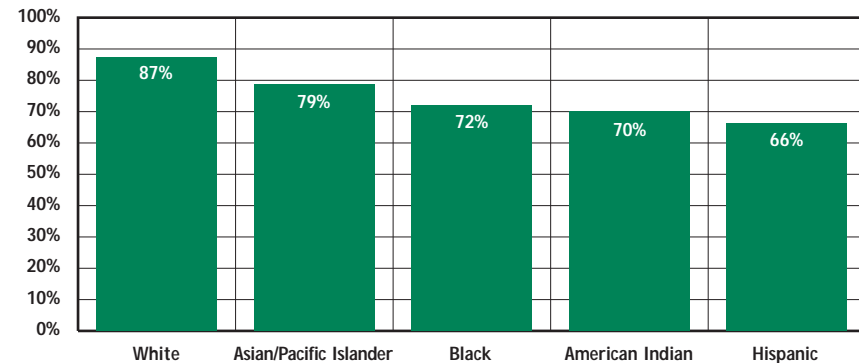
| Percent of Teens Who are High School Dropouts, Ages 16-19 | | |
|---|------|------|
| | 1996 | 2001 |
| RI | 11% | 10% |
| US | 10% | 9% |
| National Rank* | 29th | |
| New England Rank** | 6th | |

*1st is best; 50th is worst

**1st is best; 6th is worst

Source: *KIDS COUNT data book: State profiles of child well-being 2004*. (2004). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

High School Graduation Rates, by Race and Ethnicity, Rhode Island, 2004



Source: Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

◆ In 2004 in Rhode Island, 87% of White students, 79% of Asian Pacific Islander students, 72% of Black students, 70% of American Indian students and 66% of Hispanic students graduated from high school.¹⁰

◆ In Rhode Island and nationwide, Hispanic students have a lower high school graduation rate than non-Hispanic White students and non-Hispanic Black students.¹¹

◆ Hispanic male students in Rhode Island have a lower graduation rate (60%) than Black males students (69%), Asian Pacific Islander male students (77%), American Indian male students (77%) and White male students (85%).¹²

High School Graduation Rates for Children with Disabilities

◆ In Rhode Island, the high school dropout rate in 2002-2003 for students with disabilities was 26%.¹³

◆ Nationwide, more than 50% of students with emotional disturbances dropped out of school in 2000-2001, while 25% or less of students with other types of disabilities dropped out.¹⁴

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Table 40.

High School Graduation Rate, Rhode Island, 2004

| SCHOOL DISTRICT | COMMUNITY CONTEXT | | | | | | 2004 GRADUATION RATE |
|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| | % CHILDREN IN POVERTY | % ADULTS COMPLETING HIGH SCHOOL | NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED | % ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS | % MINORITY ENROLLMENT | % OF STUDENTS TAKING THE SAT | |
| Barrington | 2% | 92% | 3,434 | <1% | 4% | 86% | 93% |
| Bristol-Warren | 8% | NA | 3,688 | 3% | 4% | 64% | 76% |
| Burrillville | 5% | 80% | 2,590 | <1% | 3% | 66% | 93% |
| Central Falls | 36% | 49% | 3,734 | 28% | 79% | 39% | 75% |
| Charlho | 4% | NA | 3,863 | <1% | 4% | 51% | 90% |
| Coventry | 6% | 83% | 5,862 | <1% | 4% | 54% | 95% |
| Cranston | 8% | 79% | 11,222 | 4% | 18% | 55% | 88% |
| Cumberland | 3% | 81% | 5,349 | 2% | 7% | 62% | 93% |
| East Greenwich | 4% | 93% | 2,466 | 1% | 4% | 79% | 97% |
| East Providence | 9% | 71% | 6,386 | 4% | 19% | 54% | 84% |
| Exeter-W. Greenwich | 4% | NA | 2,204 | <1% | 4% | 67% | 95% |
| Foster | 6% | 88% | 369 | 0% | 5% | NA | NA |
| Foster-Glocester | 4% | NA | 1,693 | 0% | 1% | 57% | 95% |
| Glocester | 8% | 87% | 743 | 0% | 4% | NA | NA |
| Jamestown | 2% | 93% | 545 | 2% | 4% | NA | NA |
| Johnston | 9% | 78% | 3,285 | 1% | 9% | 59% | 90% |
| Lincoln | 6% | 82% | 3,649 | 1% | 7% | 77% | 97% |
| Little Compton | 1% | 91% | 327 | 0% | 0% | NA | NA |
| Middletown | 8% | 91% | 2,769 | 2% | 15% | 58% | 96% |
| Narragansett | 7% | 91% | 1,673 | 1% | 6% | 79% | 85% |
| New Shoreham | 8% | 95% | 151 | 4% | 15% | 88% | 100% |
| Newport | 22% | 87% | 2,826 | 4% | 42% | 66% | 82% |
| North Kingstown | 7% | 92% | 4,626 | 1% | 5% | 76% | 94% |
| North Providence | 9% | 77% | 3,473 | 2% | 17% | 47% | 87% |
| North Smithfield | 2% | 82% | 2,006 | <1% | 2% | 68% | 95% |
| Pawtucket | 21% | 66% | 9,654 | 9% | 51% | 47% | 65% |
| Portsmouth | 3% | 91% | 3,066 | 0% | 6% | 70% | 96% |
| Providence | 36% | 66% | 27,900 | 18% | 85% | 66% | 62% |
| Scituate | 4% | 87% | 1,817 | <1% | 2% | 72% | 95% |
| Smithfield | 4% | 85% | 2,710 | <1% | 2% | 72% | 95% |
| South Kingstown | 4% | 91% | 4,174 | 1% | 10% | 84% | 88% |
| Tiverton | 3% | 80% | 2,224 | 0% | 1% | 76% | 90% |
| Warwick | 7% | 85% | 11,993 | 1% | 6% | 59% | 89% |
| West Warwick | 15% | 76% | 3,710 | 2% | 13% | 49% | 72% |
| Westerly | 7% | 82% | 3,838 | 2% | 9% | 60% | 89% |
| Woonsocket | 27% | 64% | 6,928 | 4% | 36% | 45% | 72% |
| Charter Schools | NA | NA | 930 | 10% | 61% | NA | NA |
| State Operated | NA | NA | 1,314 | 3% | 50% | NA | NA |
| UCAP | NA | NA | 134 | NA | 85% | NA | NA |
| Core Cities | 30% | NA | 54,752 | 14% | 65% | 57% | 67% |
| Remainder of State | 6% | NA | 102,245 | 2% | 8% | 63% | 91% |
| Rhode Island | 15% | 78% | 159,375 | 6% | 29% | 61% | 83% |

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

% children in poverty is from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Small Area Income and Population Estimates, Children Ages 5-17, 2002. % 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, 2003-2004 school year.

The denominator for the indicator is the sum of 2004 graduates plus the number of grade 9 dropouts in 2000-01 plus the number of grade 10 dropouts in 2001-02 plus grade 11 dropouts in 2002-03 plus grade 12 dropouts in 2003-04.

NA: Community has a regional high school for which data does not exist or data is unavailable for the given school or schools.

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

References

- ^{1,2,4} Shore, R. (2003). *Reducing the high school dropout rate*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- ³ *Years of promise: A comprehensive learning strategy for America's children*. (1996). New York, NY: Carnegie Corporation of New York.
- ^{5,11} Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., & Chapman, C. (2004). *Dropout rates in the United States: 2001*. (NCES 2005-046). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- ⁶ Brown, B. (August 2001). *Teens, jobs, and welfare: Implications for social policy*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.
- ⁷ U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, March 2002, Table PINC-03.
- ⁸ U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, March 2002, Table 8.
- ⁹ Phillips, L. (1998). *The girls report: What we know and need to know about growing up female*. New York, NY: National Council for Research on Women.
- ^{10,12} Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2004.
- ¹³ *Improving outcomes for children with special needs*. (2003). Providence, RI: Rhode Island KIDS COUNT.
- ¹⁴ United States General Accounting Office. (2003). *Special education: Federal actions can assist states in improving postsecondary outcomes for youth*. (GAO-03-773). Washington, DC: U.S. General Accounting Office.