

Public High School Graduation Rates

In school year 2008–09, more than three-quarters of public high school students graduated on time with a regular diploma.

This indicator examines the percentage of public high school students who graduate on time with a regular diploma. To do so, it uses the *averaged freshman graduation rate* (AFGR)—an estimate of the number of regular diplomas issued in a given year divided by an estimate of the averaged enrollment base for the freshman class 4 years earlier. For each year, the averaged freshman enrollment base is the sum of the number of 8th-graders 5 years earlier, the number of 9th-graders 4 years earlier (when current-year seniors were freshmen), and the number of 10th-graders 3 years earlier, divided by 3. The intent of this averaging is to account for the high rate of grade retention in the freshman year, which adds 9th-grade repeaters from the previous year to the number of students in the incoming freshman class each year.

Among public high school students in the class of 2008–09, the averaged freshman graduation rate was 75.5 percent; that is, just over 3 million students graduated on time (see table A-32-1). Wisconsin had the highest graduation rate, at 90.7 percent. Fifteen other states had rates of 80 percent or more (ordered from high to low): Vermont, Minnesota, North Dakota, Iowa, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, Montana, South Dakota, Idaho, Pennsylvania, Kansas, and Maryland. Nevada had the lowest rate, at 56.3 percent. Seven other states and the District of Columbia had graduation rates below 70 percent (ordered from high

to low): Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, South Carolina, New Mexico, the District of Columbia, and Mississippi.

The overall AFGR was higher for the graduating class of 2008–09 (75.5 percent) than it was for the graduating class of 1990–91 (73.7 percent). However, from school year 1990–91 to 1995–96, the overall averaged freshman graduation rate decreased from 73.7 percent to 71.0 percent. In terms of changes by state, there was an increase in the graduation rate in 30 states and the District of Columbia from school year 1990–91 to 2008–09. In 1 state (Vermont) the rate increased by more than 10 percentage points; in 6 others (Louisiana, Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, Tennessee, and Wisconsin) and the District of Columbia, rates increased by more than 5 percentage points. The graduation rate decreased from 1990–91 to 2008–09 in 20 states (Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Carolina, South Dakota, Washington, and Wyoming), with decreases of greater than 5 percentage points occurring in New Mexico (5.3 percent), Wyoming (6.0 percent), and Nevada (20.7 percent).



Table A-32-1

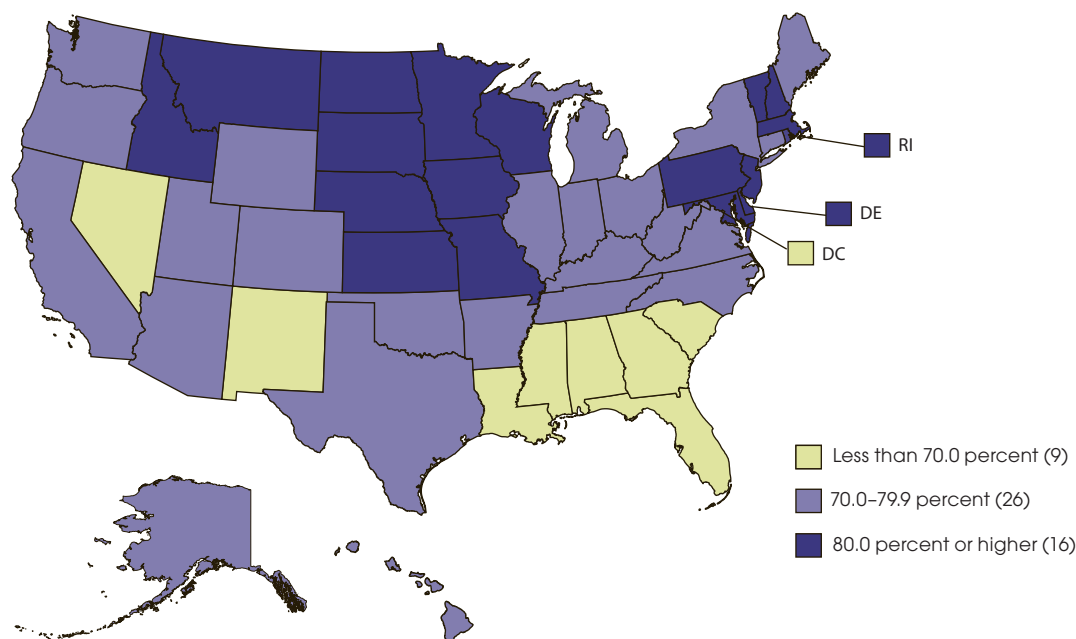
Glossary: *High school, High school diploma, Public school*

Technical Notes

Ungraded students were allocated to individual grades proportional to each state's enrollment in those grades. Graduates include only those who earned regular diplomas or diplomas for advanced academic achievement (e.g., honors diploma) as defined by the state or jurisdiction. The 2003–04 national estimates include imputed data for New York and Wisconsin. The 2005–06 national estimates include imputed data for the District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina. The 2007–08 estimate for Maine includes graduates from semi-private schools. The 2008–09 national estimates include imputed data for California and Nevada. The

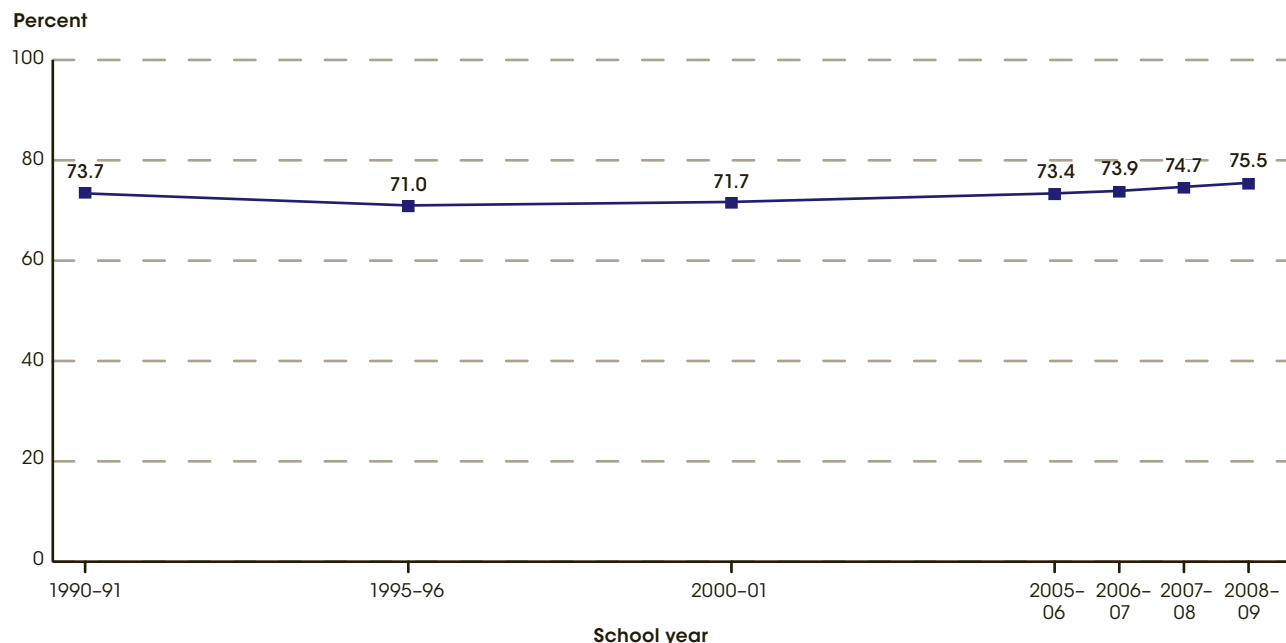
2008–09 imputations for individual states are constructed from the prior year's AFGR by race/ethnicity applied to the AFGR population base. By way of example, this computation results in an imputed overall AFGR for California that is minimally different from the prior year (0.2 percent), and the impact of the estimate on the U.S. value is also minimal. For more information on the Common Core of Data (CCD), see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*. For more information on measures of student progress and persistence, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*.

Figure 32-1. Averaged freshman graduation rate for public high school students, by state or jurisdiction: School year 2008–09



NOTE: The averaged freshman graduation rate is the number of graduates divided by the estimated freshman enrollment count 4 years earlier. This count is the sum of the number of 8th-graders 5 years earlier, the number of 9th-graders 4 years earlier, and the number of 10th-graders 3 years earlier, divided by 3. Ungraded students were allocated to individual grades proportional to each state's enrollment in those grades. Graduates include only those who earned regular diplomas or diplomas for advanced academic achievement (e.g., honors diploma) as defined by the state or jurisdiction. Data for California and Nevada were imputed. For more information on measures of student progress and persistence, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*. For more information on the Common Core of Data (CCD), see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "NCES Common Core of Data State Dropout and Completion Data File," school year 2008–09, version 1a.

Figure 32-2. Averaged freshman graduation rate for public high school students: Selected school years 1990–91 through 2008–09



NOTE: The averaged freshman graduation rate is the number of graduates divided by the estimated freshman enrollment count 4 years earlier. This count is the sum of the number of 8th-graders 5 years earlier, the number of 9th-graders 4 years earlier, and the number of 10th-graders 3 years earlier, divided by 3. Ungraded students were allocated to individual grades proportional to each state's enrollment in those grades. Graduates include only those who earned regular diplomas or diplomas for advanced academic achievement (e.g., honors diploma) as defined by the state or jurisdiction. The 2005–06 national estimates include imputed data for the District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina. The 2007–08 estimate for Maine includes graduates from semiprivate schools. The 2008–09 national estimates include imputed data for California and Nevada. For more information on measures of student progress and persistence, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*. For more information on the Common Core of Data (CCD), see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "NCES Common Core of Data State Dropout and Completion Data File," school year 2007–08; 2008–09, version 1a; and "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 1990–91, Version 1b; 1995–96, Version 1b; 2000–01, Version 1b; 2005–06, Version 1b, and 2006–07, Version 1b.

Public High School Graduation Rates

Table A-32-1. Averaged freshman graduation rate for public high school students and number of graduates, by state or jurisdiction: Selected school years, 1990–91 through 2008–09

State or jurisdiction	Averaged freshman graduation rate						
	1990–91	1995–96	2000–01	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
United States	73.7	71.0	71.7	73.4¹	73.9	74.7¹	75.5¹
Alabama	69.8	62.7	63.7	66.2	67.1	69.0	69.9
Alaska	74.6	68.3	68.0	66.5	69.0	69.1	72.6
Arizona	76.7	60.8	74.2	70.5	69.6	70.7	72.5
Arkansas	76.6	74.2	73.9	80.4	74.4	76.4	74.0
California	69.6	67.6	71.6	69.2	70.7	71.2	71.0
Colorado	76.3	74.8	73.2	75.5	76.6	75.4	77.6
Connecticut	80.2	76.1	77.5	80.9	81.8	82.2	75.4
Delaware	72.5	70.4	71.0	76.3	71.9	72.1	73.7
District of Columbia	54.5	49.7	60.2	65.4	54.8	56.0	62.4
Florida	65.6	62.3	61.2	63.6	65.0	66.9	68.9
Georgia	70.3	61.9	58.7	62.4	64.1	65.4	67.8
Hawaii	75.9	74.5	68.3	75.5	75.4	76.0	75.3
Idaho	79.6	80.5	79.6	80.5	80.4	80.1	80.6
Illinois	76.6	75.2	75.6	79.7	79.5	80.4	77.7
Indiana	76.9	73.6	72.1	73.3	73.9	74.1	75.2
Iowa	84.4	84.3	82.8	86.9	86.5	86.4	85.7
Kansas	80.8	77.1	76.5	77.5	78.8	79.0	80.2
Kentucky	72.9	71.3	69.8	77.2	76.4	74.4	77.6
Louisiana	57.5	61.7	63.7	59.5	61.3	63.5	67.3
Maine	80.7	73.7	76.4	76.3	78.5	79.1	79.9
Maryland	77.5	78.3	78.7	79.9	80.0	80.4	80.1
Massachusetts	79.1	78.0	78.9	79.5	80.8	81.5	83.3
Michigan	72.1	71.4	75.4	72.2	77.0	76.3	75.3
Minnesota	90.8	86.1	83.6	86.2	86.5	86.4	87.4
Mississippi	63.3	59.7	59.7	63.5	63.5	63.9	62.0
Missouri	76.0	75.0	75.5	81.0	81.9	82.4	83.1
Montana	84.4	83.9	80.0	81.9	81.5	82.0	82.0
Nebraska	86.7	85.6	83.8	87.0	86.3	83.8	82.9
Nevada	77.0	65.8	70.0	55.8	54.2	56.3	56.3
New Hampshire	78.6	77.5	77.8	81.1	81.7	83.3	84.3
New Jersey	81.4	82.8	85.4	84.8	84.4	84.6	85.3
New Mexico	70.1	63.7	65.9	67.3	59.1	66.8	64.8
New York	66.1	63.6	61.5	67.4	68.9	70.9	73.5
North Carolina	71.3	66.5	66.5	71.8	68.6	72.8	75.1
North Dakota	87.6	89.5	85.4	82.2	83.1	83.8	87.4
Ohio	77.5	74.5	76.5	79.2	78.7	79.0	79.6
Oklahoma	76.5	75.6	75.8	77.8	77.8	78.0	77.3
Oregon	72.7	68.3	68.3	73.0	73.8	76.7	76.5
Pennsylvania	79.7	80.0	79.0	83.5	83.0	82.7	80.5
Rhode Island	75.0	72.7	73.5	77.8	78.4	76.4	75.3
South Carolina	66.6	60.9	56.5	61.0	58.9	62.2	66.0
South Dakota	83.8	84.5	77.4	84.5	82.5	84.4	81.7
Tennessee	69.8	66.6	59.0	70.7	72.6	74.9	77.4
Texas	72.2	66.1	70.8	72.5	71.9	73.1	75.4
Utah	77.5	76.9	81.6	78.6	76.6	74.3	79.4
Vermont	79.5	85.3	80.2	82.3	88.5	89.3	89.6
Virginia	76.2	76.2	77.5	74.5	75.5	77.0	78.4
Washington	75.7	75.5	69.2	72.9	74.8	71.9	73.7
West Virginia	76.6	77.0	75.9	76.9	78.2	77.3	77.0
Wisconsin	85.2	83.6	83.3	87.5	88.5	89.6	90.7
Wyoming	81.1	77.7	73.4	76.1	75.8	76.0	75.2

See notes at end of table.

Table A-32-1. Averaged freshman graduation rate for public high school students and number of graduates, by state or jurisdiction: Selected school years, 1990–91 through 2008–09—Continued

State or jurisdiction	Number of graduates						
	1990–91	1995–96	2000–01	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
United States	2,234,893	2,273,109	2,569,200	2,815,544¹	2,893,045	3,001,337¹	3,039,015¹
Alabama	39,042	35,043	37,082	37,918	38,912	41,346	42,082
Alaska	5,458	5,945	6,812	7,361	7,666	7,855	8,008
Arizona	31,282	30,008	46,733	54,091	55,954	61,667	62,374
Arkansas	25,668	25,094	27,100	28,790	27,166	28,725	28,057
California	234,164	259,071	315,189	343,515	356,641	374,561	372,310
Colorado	31,293	32,608	39,241	44,424	45,628	46,082	47,459
Connecticut	27,290	26,319	30,388	36,222	37,541	38,419	34,968
Delaware	5,223	5,609	6,614	7,275	7,205	7,388	7,839
District of Columbia	3,369	2,696	2,808	3,150	2,944	3,352	3,517
Florida	87,419	89,242	111,112	134,686	142,284	149,046	153,461
Georgia	60,088	56,271	62,499	73,498	77,829	83,505	88,003
Hawaii	8,974	9,387	10,102	10,922	11,063	11,613	11,508
Idaho	11,961	14,667	15,941	16,096	16,242	16,567	16,807
Illinois	103,329	104,626	110,624	126,817	130,220	135,143	131,670
Indiana	57,892	56,330	56,172	57,920	59,887	61,901	63,663
Iowa	28,593	31,689	33,774	33,693	34,127	34,573	33,926
Kansas	24,414	25,786	29,360	29,818	30,139	30,737	30,368
Kentucky	35,835	36,641	36,957	38,449	39,099	39,339	41,851
Louisiana	33,489	36,467	38,314	33,275	34,274	34,401	35,622
Maine	13,151	11,795	12,654	12,950	13,151	14,350	14,093
Maryland	39,014	41,785	49,222	55,536	57,564	59,171	58,304
Massachusetts	50,216	47,993	54,393	61,272	63,903	65,197	65,258
Michigan	88,234	85,530	96,515	102,582	111,838	115,183	112,742
Minnesota	46,474	50,481	56,581	58,898	59,497	60,409	59,729
Mississippi	23,665	23,032	23,748	23,848	24,186	24,795	24,505
Missouri	46,928	49,011	54,138	58,417	60,275	61,717	62,969
Montana	9,013	10,139	10,628	10,283	10,122	10,396	10,077
Nebraska	16,500	18,014	19,658	19,764	19,873	20,035	19,501
Nevada	9,370	10,374	15,127	16,455	17,149	18,815	19,904
New Hampshire	10,059	10,094	12,294	13,988	14,452	14,982	14,757
New Jersey	67,003	67,704	76,130	90,049	93,013	94,994	95,085
New Mexico	15,157	15,402	18,199	17,822	16,131	18,264	17,931
New York	133,562	134,401	141,884	161,817	168,333	176,310	180,917
North Carolina	62,792	57,014	63,288	76,710	76,031	83,307	86,712
North Dakota	7,573	8,027	8,445	7,192	7,159	6,999	7,232
Ohio	107,484	102,098	111,281	117,356	117,658	120,758	122,203
Oklahoma	33,007	33,060	37,458	36,497	37,100	37,630	37,219
Oregon	24,597	26,570	29,939	32,394	33,446	34,949	35,138
Pennsylvania	104,770	105,981	114,436	127,830	128,603	130,298	130,658
Rhode Island	7,744	7,689	8,603	10,108	10,384	10,347	10,028
South Carolina	32,999	30,182	30,026	34,970	35,108	35,303	39,114
South Dakota	7,127	8,532	8,881	8,589	8,346	8,582	8,123
Tennessee	44,847	43,792	40,642	50,880	54,502	57,486	60,368
Texas	174,306	171,844	215,316	240,485	241,193	252,121	264,275
Utah	22,219	26,293	31,036	29,050	28,276	28,167	30,463
Vermont	5,212	5,867	6,856	6,779	7,317	7,392	7,209
Virginia	58,441	58,166	66,067	69,597	73,997	77,369	79,651
Washington	42,514	49,862	55,081	60,213	62,801	61,625	62,764
West Virginia	21,064	20,335	18,440	16,763	17,407	17,489	17,690
Wisconsin	49,340	52,651	59,341	63,003	63,968	65,183	65,410
Wyoming	5,728	5,892	6,071	5,527	5,441	5,494	5,493

¹ The 2005–06 national estimates include imputed data for the District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina. The 2007–08 estimate for Maine includes graduates from semiprivate schools. The 2008–09 national estimates include imputed data for California and Nevada.

NOTE: The averaged freshman graduation rate is the number of graduates divided by the estimated freshman enrollment count 4 years earlier. This count is the sum of the number of 8th-graders 5 years earlier, the number of 9th-graders 4 years earlier, and the number of 10th-graders 3 years earlier, divided by 3. Ungraded students were allocated to individual grades proportional to each state's enrollment in those grades. Graduates include only those who earned regular diplomas or diplomas for advanced academic achievement (e.g., honors diploma) as defined by the state or jurisdiction. For more information on measures of student progress and persistence, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*. For more information on the Common Core of Data (CCD), see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "NCES Common Core of Data State Dropout and Completion Data File," school year 2007–08; 2008–09, version 1a; and "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 1990–91, Version 1b; 1995–96, Version 1b; 2000–01, Version 1b; 2005–06, Version 1b, and 2006–07, Version 1b.