

Cohort 2012 Four-Year Graduation Rates – State Results

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

The 2012 four-year cohort graduation rate is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{\# of students in cohort (denominator) who graduate in 4 years or less}}{\text{\# of 1st time entering 9th graders in 2008-09} - \text{transfers out/deaths} + \text{transfers in}}$$

The 2012 four-year cohort graduation rate for Massachusetts public high schools increased by 1.3 percentage points to 84.7 percent from 83.4 percent for the 2011 cohort. This represented the sixth consecutive year of an increase in the four-year rate and is, along with the 1.3% increase in 2011, the largest increase since the ESE began calculating a graduation rate in 2006. Many student subgroups also had increased four-year rates as compared to the 2011 cohort, including both Limited English Proficiency and Hispanic students, who had increases of 4.9 and 3.6 percentage points respectively. There are significant gaps in the graduation rates among subgroups. Specifically, among the race and ethnicity subgroups, there is a 24.2 percentage point difference between the highest and lowest groups, White and Hispanic students. However, this gap was reduced by 3.0 percentage points as compared to the 2011 cohort.

Additional critical findings of the report include:

- The dropout rate for the 2012 cohort was 6.9%, the lowest since the ESE began calculating cohort dropout rates in 2006.
- 5.8 percent of the 2012 cohort is still enrolled in high school.
- Hispanic males graduated at a rate that was 4.2 percentage points higher than the 2011 cohort and represented the largest increase among the ten largest race and gender combinations.
- Students receiving special education services graduated at a rate that was 3.0 percentage points higher than the 2011 cohort
- 59 percent of the students in the cohort who are still enrolled in a Massachusetts public school have met the requirements for their Competency Determination (CD)¹.
- 71 percent of school districts and 61 percent of high schools had a higher graduation rate than the state average of 84.7 percent.²

The following tables and graphs further summarize the results for the 2012 cohort. The results are based on data submitted by school districts through the Department's Student Information Management System.

¹ Students starting with the graduating class of 2010 are required to meet new standards to receive their Competency Determination (CD). A full explanation of the CD standards can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr30.html?section=03>.

² Graduation rates for all districts and schools can be found at: http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/gradrates.aspx

Table 1. Graduation Results for All Students and Student Subgroups³

	2012 Cohort # ⁵	Graduates		Non-Graduates ⁴				
		4-Year Rate	Difference from 2011	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer ⁶	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
All Students	73,479	84.7%	+1.3	5.8%	0.9%	1.6%	6.9%	0.1%
Female	35,911	87.7%	+1.2	4.2%	0.9%	1.5%	5.7%	0.0%
Male	37,568	81.8%	+1.3	7.3%	0.9%	1.8%	8.0%	0.1%
LEP ⁷	4,774	61.1%	+4.9	13.8%	5.4%	0.6%	18.9%	0.2%
Low Income	30,461	72.4%	+2.6	9.8%	1.7%	2.6%	13.2%	0.1%
Special Education	14,812	68.6%	+3.0	14.7%	2.2%	1.6%	12.8%	0.1%
High Needs ⁸	38,113	74.1%	+4.4	10.1%	1.7%	2.3%	11.7%	0.1%
African American	6,666	73.4%	+2.7	12.2%	1.7%	1.3%	11.3%	0.1%
Asian	3,743	89.5%	+1.8	5.0%	1.0%	0.6%	3.9%	0.0%
Hispanic	10,203	65.5%	+3.6	10.8%	2.7%	2.6%	18.1%	0.2%
Multi-race, Non-Hisp.	1,235	82.8%	+1.6	6.4%	1.1%	1.6%	8.1%	0.1%
Native American	192	70.3%	-5.9	9.9%	3.1%	4.7%	12.0%	0.0%
Pacific Islander	76	71.1%	-9.4	7.9%	1.3%	5.3%	14.5%	0.0%
White	51,364	89.7%	+0.6	3.9%	0.5%	1.5%	4.3%	0.1%
Urban	25,247	71.4%	+2.5	10.2%	1.9%	2.5%	13.9%	0.1%

³ Due to rounding, row percentages may not equal 100 percent.

⁴ 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 GED, are included in the GED category. Students are only reported in one category.

⁵ The cohort count is as of the end of 2011-12 school year. The status (e.g. graduate, enrolled) is updated as of October 1, 2012.

⁶ 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.

⁷ The limited English proficient, special education, and low income 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.

⁸ High Needs subgroup includes students categorized as any of the following as of October 1, 2011: 1) Low Income, 2) Limited English Proficient, 3) Students with Disabilities, as well as students categorized as Limited English Proficient during the prior two school years (2010-11 and/or 2009-10).

Table 2. Graduation Results for Race/Ethnicity Groups by Gender

	2012 Cohort #	Graduates		Non-Graduates				
		4-Year Rate	Difference from 2011	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
African American Female	3,254	79.0%	+2.1	9.0%	1.8%	1.1%	9.1%	0.0%
African American Male	3,412	68.2%	+3.4	15.2%	1.6%	1.6%	13.3%	0.2%
Asian Female	1,876	90.9%	+1.6	4.6%	1.0%	0.4%	3.1%	0.0%
Asian Male	1,867	88.1%	+1.9	5.5%	1.0%	0.7%	4.7%	0.1%
Hispanic Female	5,032	69.9%	+3.0	9.1%	3.0%	2.5%	15.3%	0.1%
Hispanic Male	5,171	61.3%	+4.2	12.5%	2.4%	2.8%	20.8%	0.3%
Multi-race Female	636	85.7%	+0.9	4.7%	1.6%	1.6%	6.3%	0.2%
Multi-race Male	599	79.6%	+2.2	8.2%	0.5%	1.7%	10.0%	0.0%
Native American Female	94	76.6%	-5.4	4.3%	3.2%	6.4%	9.6%	0.0%
Native American Male	98	64.3%	-4.0	15.3%	3.1%	3.1%	14.3%	0.0%
Pacific Islander Female	38	76.3%	-8.7	2.6%	0.0%	7.9%	13.2%	0.0%
Pacific Islander Male	38	65.8%	-10.4	13.2%	2.6%	2.6%	15.8%	0.0%
White Female	24,981	92.3%	+0.8	2.5%	0.4%	1.3%	3.5%	0.0%
White Male	26,383	87.3%	+0.4	5.3%	0.5%	1.7%	5.0%	0.1%

Table 3. Graduation Results for Students Receiving Special Education Services by Gender

		Graduates		Non-Graduates				
	2012 Cohort #	4-Year Rate	Difference from 2011	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
Special Ed. Female	5,532	71.9%	+3.3	12.7%	2.6%	1.5%	11.3%	0.0%
Special Ed. Male	9,280	66.7%	+3.0	15.9%	2.0%	1.6%	13.7%	0.1%

Table 4. Graduation Results for Low-Income Students by Gender

		Graduates		Non-Graduates				
	2012 Cohort #	4-Year Rate	Difference from 2011	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
Low-Income Female	14,915	77.0%	+2.6	7.6%	1.9%	2.5%	11.0%	0.1%
Low-Income Male	15,546	68.1%	+2.8	11.9%	1.6%	2.8%	15.3%	0.2%

Table 5. Graduation Results for High Needs Students by Gender

		Graduates		Non-Graduates				
	2012 Cohort #	4-Year Rate	Difference from 2011	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
High Needs Female	17,737	78.1%	+4.6	7.8%	1.8%	2.2%	10.0%	0.1%
High Needs Male	20,376	70.6%	+4.2	12.2%	1.6%	2.4%	13.1%	0.2%

Table 6. Graduation Results for Limited English Proficient Students by Gender

		Graduates		Non-Graduates				
	2012 Cohort #	4-Year Rate	Difference from 2011	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
LEP Female	2,309	63.5%	+3.1	12.8%	5.7%	0.5%	17.4%	0.1%
LEP Male	2,465	58.8%	+6.3	14.7%	5.2%	0.6%	20.3%	0.3%
LEP in Original Cohort	3,000	64.9%	+5.5	11.6%	3.7%	0.7%	19.0%	0.2%
LEP Entered Cohort after 10/1/08	1,774	54.5%	+2.5	17.5%	8.5%	0.5%	18.9%	0.2%

Table 7. Graduation Results for Race/Ethnicity by Limited English Proficient Status

		Graduates		Non-Graduates				
	2012 Cohort #	4-Year Rate	Difference from 2011	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
African American LEP	1,004	66.4%	+4.1	15.9%	5.7%	0.2%	11.7%	0.1%
African American Non-LEP	5,662	74.7%	+2.6	11.5%	1.0%	1.5%	11.2%	0.1%
Asian LEP	771	77.3%	+4.3	10.6%	3.2%	0.3%	8.4%	0.1%
Asian Non-LEP	2,972	92.7%	+1.1	3.6%	0.4%	0.7%	2.7%	0.0%
Hispanic LEP	2,452	52.0%	+6.5	14.8%	6.3%	0.9%	25.7%	0.3%
Hispanic Non-LEP	7,751	69.8%	+3.5	9.6%	1.6%	3.2%	15.7%	0.2%
Multi-race LEP	32	40.6%	-15.0	18.8%	15.6%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%
Multi-race Non-LEP	1,203	83.9%	+1.9	6.1%	0.7%	1.7%	7.6%	0.1%
Native American LEP	10	70.0%	+12.9	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Native American Non-LEP	182	70.3%	-6.6	9.9%	3.3%	4.9%	11.5%	0.0%
Pacific-Islander LEP	6	66.7	+6.7	16.7	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%
Pacific Islander Non-LEP	70	71.4%	-10.4	7.1%	1.4%	5.7%	14.3%	0.0%
White LEP	499	70.7%	+3.7	9.2%	3.6%	0.4%	16.0%	0.0%
White Non-LEP	50,865	89.9%	+0.6	3.9%	0.4%	1.6%	4.2%	0.1%

Table 8. Graduation Results for Non-Mobile and Mobile Students⁹

		Graduates		Non-Graduates				
High Schools Attended	2012 Cohort #	4-Year Rate	Difference from 2011	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
One School	61,681	87.7%	+0.5	4.7%	0.9%	1.2%	5.4%	0.1%
Two Schools	10,225	72.0%	+4.2	10.2%	1.2%	3.4%	13.0%	0.1%
Three Schools	1,273	49.6%	+8.0	18.8%	1.3%	5.2%	24.9%	0.2%
Four or More Schools	300	32.2%	+5.1	21.7%	1.0%	7.3%	32.0%	0.7%

⁹ 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.

Table 9. Competency Determination (CD) Status for Select Non-Graduate Groups

	Still in School			Dropped Out ¹⁰		
	Number	CD	No CD	Number	CD	No CD
All Students	4,233	59.2%	40.8%	6,261	27.7%	72.3%
Female	1,495	55.1%	44.9%	2,578	28.3%	71.7%
Male	2,738	61.4%	38.6%	3,683	27.2%	72.8%
LEP	658	48.3%	51.7%	932	10.4%	89.6%
Low Income	2,986	61.0%	39.0%	4,821	24.2%	75.8%
Special Education	2,179	41.3%	58.7%	2,124	22.2%	77.8%
High Needs	3,861	56.0%	44.0%	5,322	25.0%	75.0%
African American	813	57.6%	42.4%	838	17.2%	82.8%
Asian	189	61.4%	38.6%	167	22.2%	77.8%
Hispanic	1,106	56.1%	43.9%	2,114	17.4%	82.6%
Multi-race, Non-Hisp.	79	65.8%	34.2%	120	28.3%	71.7%
Native American	19	73.7%	26.3%	32	34.4%	65.6%
Pacific Islander	6	33.3%	66.6%	15	46.7%	53.3%
White	2,021	61.0%	39.0%	2,975	38.1%	61.9%

Table 10. Distribution of Graduation Rates in the Aggregate for Districts¹¹

2012 Four-Year Graduation Rate	Number of Districts	Percentage of Districts
< 50%	5	1.7
50 - <60%	6	2.1
60 - <70%	8	2.8
70 - <80%	33	11.4
80 - <85%	32	11.0
85 - <90%	53	18.3
90 - <95%	78	26.9
95 - 100%	75	25.9
Total	290	100

¹⁰ Includes students that dropped out prior to the administration of the 10th grade MCAS.

¹¹ Includes districts with at least six students in the cohort. District analyses include charter schools, regional school districts and vocational/technical high schools.

Table 11. Distribution of Graduation Rates in the Aggregate for Schools¹²

2012 Four-Year Graduation Rate	Number of Schools	Percentage of Schools
< 50%	38	10.2
50 - <60%	11	3.0
60 - <70%	19	5.1
70 - <80%	41	11.1
80 - <85%	37	10.0
85 - <90%	57	15.4
90 - <95%	83	22.4
95 – 100%	85	22.9
Total	371	100

¹² Includes schools with at least six students in the cohort