

Graduation Rates and Definitions

Rate Name	GCS¹ Rate	S.C. Rate	Rate Definition
<p>National Governor’s Association (NGA) Also used for the State Report Card and AYP² reporting.</p> <p><i>Rate definition not currently used in all states.</i></p>	73.3% (2008)	74.9% (2008)	<p>A four-year cohort graduation rate that divides four-year graduates earning regular diplomas by first-time ninth graders four years earlier adjusted for transfers. Due to the current capacity of our statewide data system, it uses locally collected data. The cohort is based on only those students high schools are able to track.</p> <p>See the next page for more information on the National Governor’s Association rate.</p>
<p>National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES)</p> <p><i>Rates established for all states and 100 largest school districts in the nation using this definition.</i></p> <p>National Rate: 74.7% (2005)</p>	62.9% (2005)	60.1% (2005)	<p>The Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR) provides an estimate of the percentage of public high school students who graduate on time—that is, 4 years after starting 9th grade—with a regular diploma. The rate uses aggregate student enrollment data to estimate the size of an incoming freshman class and aggregate counts of the number of diplomas awarded 4 years later.</p> <p>The incoming freshman class size is estimated by summing the enrollment in 8th grade for 1 year, 9th grade for the next year, and 10th grade for the year after and then dividing by 3. The averaging is intended to account for higher grade retentions in the 9th grade.</p>
<p>Diplomas Count (EdWeek)</p> <p><i>Rates established for all states and school districts in the nation using this definition.</i></p> <p>National Rate: 69.2% (2006)</p>	51.6% (2006)	66.3% (2006)	<p>The Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) represents graduating from high school as a process rather than a single event. Specifically, it captures the four key steps a student must take in order to graduate - three grade-to-grade promotions (9 to 10, 10 to 11, and 11 to 12) and ultimately earning a diploma (grade 12 to graduation).</p> <p>The formula below illustrates the CPI formula for calculating graduation rates. The class of 2002-03 is used as an example.</p> $\text{CPI} = \frac{10\text{th graders-fall } 03}{9\text{th graders-fall } 02} \times \frac{11\text{th graders-fall } 03}{10\text{th graders-fall } 02} \times \frac{12\text{th graders-fall } 03}{11\text{th graders-fall } 02} \times \frac{\text{Graduates-spring } 03}{12\text{th graders-fall } 02}$

¹Greenville County Schools

²Adequate Yearly Progress, No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

National Governor's Association (NGA) Graduation Rate Compact

In 2005, all 50 state governors made a commitment to voluntarily implement a common formula for calculating their states' high school graduation rates by signing the National Governors Association (NGA) Graduation Counts Compact. Twenty states now report that they use the Compact formula to calculate their high school graduation rate and publicly report the data. In use since 2007, South Carolina was one of the first states to implement the NGA rate. Five more states plan to report the Compact rate later in 2009, eight more in 2010, and 12 more in 2011. The rate is defined as the following:

A standard four-year, adjusted cohort graduation rate using the following formula: Graduation rate = [on-time graduates in year x] ÷ [(first-time entering ninth graders in year x – 4) + (transfers in) – (transfers out)]

Graduates are those earning high school diplomas. Students earning modified diplomas, such as a special education diploma, count as graduates if the modified diploma is the standard that the state and the school system set for the student in an individualized education plan, for example. The graduation rate then is a measure of on-time completion, with most students, but not all, expected to finish in four years.

Students earning high school credentials by passing General Educational Development (GED) tests are not considered graduates for the purpose of this definition. Students receiving a certificate of completion or other alternative to a diploma, including special education students who receive a non-diploma credential, also are not graduates for this purpose. States are encouraged to include such students in complementary completion rates.

Special education students and recent immigrants with limited English proficiency may need more time to complete high school diploma requirements; they *may be placed in different cohorts early in high school to allow for those differences*. To ensure the exceptions are used appropriately, states should establish guidelines and standards for schools and districts to follow. In addition to transfers, the denominator can also subtract deceased students. Incarcerated students should be counted as transfer students as they move out of and back into the system.