

Florida’s High School Cohort

2020-21 Graduation Rate

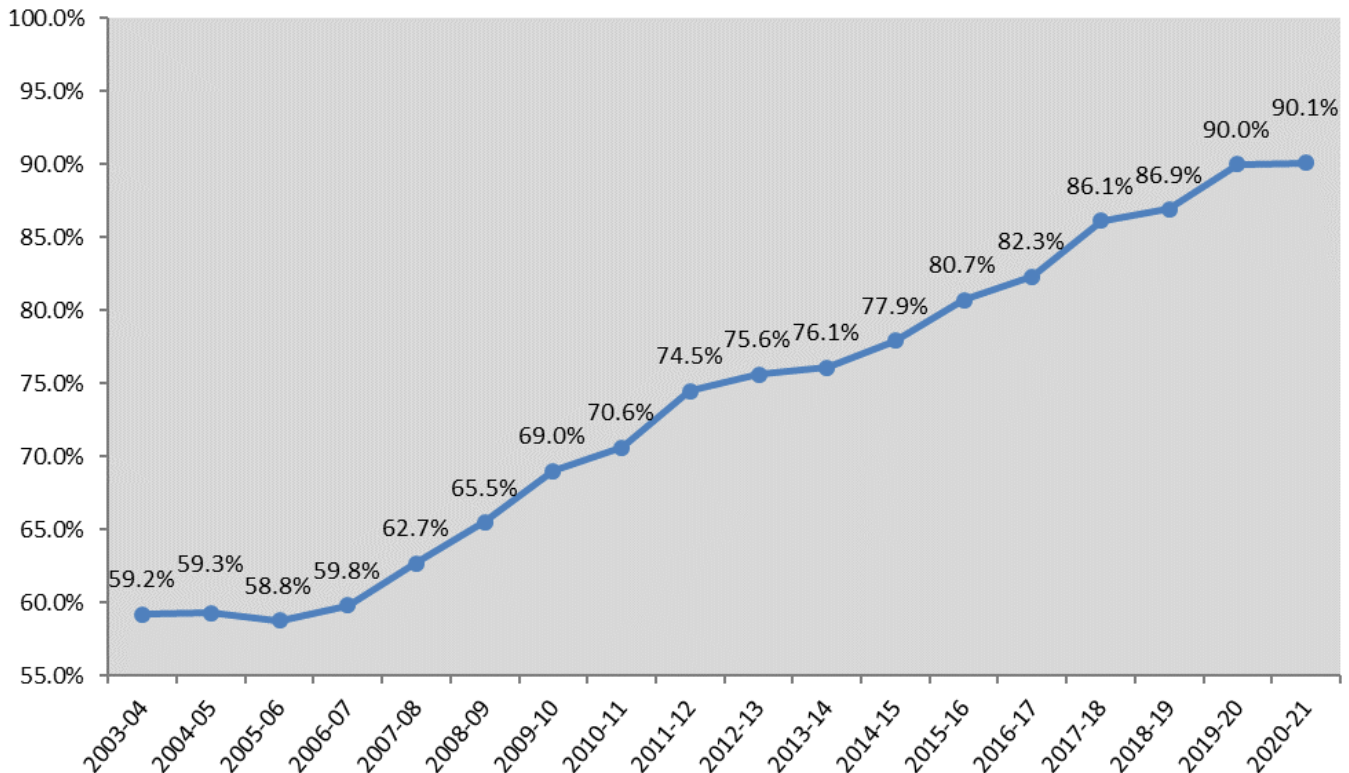
February 2022

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Florida’s high school graduation rate increased by 0.1 percentage points over the last year and has increased significantly during the past eighteen years. The rate rose from 59.2 percent in 2003-04 to 90.1 percent in 2020-21, which is a 30.9 percentage-point increase. Figure 1 below shows the trend in graduation rates from 2003-04 through 2020-21. When comparing the 2019-20 and 2020-21 graduation rate to prior years, it is important to note that pursuant to [Florida Department of Education Emergency Order No. 2020-EO-1](#) and [Florida Department of Education Emergency Order No. 2021-EO-02](#), students in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 graduating classes were exempt from statewide, standardized assessment requirements stipulated in s. 1003.4282, F.S. Approximately 8.5% of the 2020-21 graduating class graduated with this exemption, and 7.1% of the 2019-20 graduating class graduated with this exemption.

Federal regulations require each state to calculate a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, which includes standard diplomas but excludes GEDs, both regular and adult, and special diplomas. The U.S. Department of Education (USED) adopted this calculation method in an effort to develop uniform, accurate, and comparable graduation rates across all states. The USED required states to begin calculating the adjusted cohort graduation rate in 2010-11. This graduation rate is currently used in Florida’s school accountability system in the school grades calculation.

Figure 1: Florida’s Graduation Rates, 2003-04 through 2020-21



Florida’s graduation rate is a cohort graduation rate. A cohort is defined as a group of students on the same schedule to graduate. The graduation rate measures the percentage of students who graduate within four years of their first

enrollment in ninth grade. Subsequent to their enrollment in ninth grade, students who transfer out or pass away are removed from the calculation. Entering transfer students are included in the graduation rate for the class with which they are scheduled to graduate, based on their grade level when they enroll in the public school system. District-level graduation rates are provided in Table 3. School-level graduation rates are available online at <http://fldoe.org/accountability/data-sys/edu-info-accountability-services/pk-12-public-school-data-pubs-reports/students.stml>.

In the calculation, stringent guidelines are prescribed for not only the definition of a graduate, but also for the definition of a transfer. Students who transfer to adult education programs or are placed in jails/Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities remain with their Florida public high schools' cohorts.

How Does Florida's Graduation Rate Compare with Other States' Rates?

- The most recent graduation rates released on all states by USED are the 2018-19 federal graduation rates available at https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR_RE_and_characteristics_2018-19.asp. Florida's federal graduation rate in 2018-19 was ranked #20 in the nation (tied with Indiana and Kansas).¹ It is worth noting that Florida's most recent graduation rate exceeds the highest rate of any state during that year.
- Although the federal uniform graduation rate is calculated the same way by each state, states have different requirements for receiving a standard diploma, which means that the rates are not directly comparable from state to state.
- Florida's standard diploma is a rigorous credential for which standards and testing requirements have periodically increased. Because states have different criteria for awarding a standard diploma, comparing rates among states is problematic.

Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Gender

Florida's graduation rates vary by race/ethnicity, but four of the nine have increased their graduation rates. The subgroups with the largest percentage point increases over 2019-20 include American Indian or Alaska Native students (4.9 percentage points), and Black or African American students (0.5 percentage points).

Table 1: Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity, 2016-17 through 2020-21

Year	White	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	Asian	American Indian or Alaska Native	Two or More Races	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Total
2016-17	86.2%	74.8%	81.3%	93.2%	80.0%	83.1%	87.2%	82.3%
2017-18	89.0%	80.9%	85.1%	95.8%	80.1%	87.0%	89.2%	86.1%
2018-19	90.2%	81.5%	85.9%	95.6%	77.5%	88.2%	86.7%	86.9%
2019-20	91.7%	86.6%	89.5%	98.0%	84.1%	90.5%	90.5%	90.0%

¹ The graduation rate reported by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) may vary slightly from the rate reported by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) because the rate reported by FDOE accounts for students who attended schools that have closed during the 4-year tracking period, whereas the rate reported to NCES does not. In 2018-19, this represented a 0.3% difference (86.9% reported by FDOE vs. 87.2% reported by NCES).

Year	White	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	Asian	American Indian or Alaska Native	Two or More Races	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Total
2020-21	91.8%	87.1%	89.4%	97.5%	89.0%	89.9%	89.5%	90.1%

Table 2: Graduation Rates by Gender within Race/Ethnicity, 2016-17 through 2020-21

Year	White Female	White Male	Black or African American Female	Black or African American Male	Hispanic/Latino Female	Hispanic/Latino Male	Asian Female	Asian Male
2016-17	89.4%	83.1%	80.3%	69.4%	84.9%	77.8%	94.9%	91.4%
2017-18	91.4%	86.7%	86.1%	75.7%	88.4%	81.9%	96.6%	95.0%
2018-19	92.6%	87.9%	86.1%	77.0%	88.9%	82.9%	96.9%	94.4%
2019-20	94.1%	89.4%	90.7%	82.5%	92.5%	86.6%	98.7%	97.3%
2020-21	94.0%	89.7%	90.8%	83.4%	92.4%	86.4%	98.3%	96.8%

Table 2 Continued: Graduation Rates by Gender within Race/Ethnicity, 2016-17 through 2020-21

Year	American Indian or Alaska Native Female	American Indian or Alaska Native Male	Two or More Races Female	Two or More Races Male	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Female	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Male	Total Female	Total Male
2016-17	82.3%	77.6%	86.1%	79.8%	88.5%	85.6%	86.0%	78.6%
2017-18	85.7%	74.9%	88.7%	85.2%	89.9%	88.1%	89.3%	82.9%
2018-19	83.5%	72.5%	90.7%	85.4%	91.0%	82.6%	90.0%	83.9%
2019-20	88.2%	80.0%	92.9%	87.9%	92.6%	88.4%	92.9%	87.1%
2020-21	93.2%	85.5%	93.0%	86.8%	95.5%	84.8%	92.9%	87.4%

Table 3: Graduation Rates by District, 2016-17 through 2020-21

District	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
FLORIDA	82.3%	86.1%	86.9%	90.0%	90.1%
01 Alachua	82.7%	88.0%	88.5%	90.4%	86.6%
02 Baker	81.0%	75.5%	78.8%	84.5%	85.7%
03 Bay	78.0%	81.1%	82.5%	88.5%	90.2%
04 Bradford	78.9%	89.0%	87.7%	88.2%	85.0%
05 Brevard	85.9%	88.1%	88.3%	90.3%	90.6%
06 Broward	81.0%	84.3%	86.2%	89.4%	89.1%
07 Calhoun	80.9%	86.9%	87.9%	89.9%	93.1%
08 Charlotte	81.0%	87.6%	86.4%	90.4%	90.9%
09 Citrus	78.9%	84.1%	86.0%	87.1%	88.1%
10 Clay	88.4%	91.1%	91.9%	93.4%	92.7%
11 Collier	88.2%	91.9%	91.9%	92.2%	92.7%
12 Columbia	70.7%	88.4%	92.4%	95.4%	95.6%

13	Miami-Dade	80.7%	85.4%	85.6%	89.6%	90.1%
14	DeSoto	63.8%	60.9%	71.3%	84.6%	82.0%
15	Dixie	89.5%	96.9%	90.6%	89.8%	84.0%
16	Duval	80.8%	85.1%	86.5%	90.2%	89.6%
17	Escambia	79.5%	80.7%	84.8%	86.5%	87.0%
18	Flagler	81.1%	88.0%	88.7%	92.3%	91.2%
19	Franklin	74.6%	77.3%	70.6%	73.1%	74.4%
20	Gadsden	50.0%	66.1%	60.4%	77.1%	82.7%
21	Gilchrist	93.4%	87.3%	89.4%	90.1%	86.7%
22	Glades	81.5%	93.4%	91.4%	89.6%	78.5%
23	Gulf	84.7%	82.1%	83.6%	85.3%	86.5%
24	Hamilton	67.0%	73.5%	73.1%	87.0%	83.8%
25	Hardee	72.1%	80.2%	81.2%	91.4%	88.3%
26	Hendry	84.4%	83.8%	83.7%	90.4%	86.6%
27	Hernando	82.6%	87.6%	88.4%	91.7%	91.0%
28	Highlands	71.6%	77.2%	81.2%	83.3%	84.4%
29	Hillsborough	82.9%	85.8%	86.2%	88.8%	89.2%
30	Holmes	68.7%	77.1%	85.5%	93.4%	90.8%
31	Indian River	87.1%	92.0%	88.5%	93.4%	95.0%
32	Jackson	71.8%	79.2%	84.7%	91.0%	84.1%
33	Jefferson	53.7%	73.4%	62.7%	85.4%	81.8%
34	Lafayette	88.2%	97.4%	98.8%	97.7%	97.5%
35	Lake	77.8%	84.1%	86.8%	91.2%	90.6%
36	Lee	78.7%	82.8%	83.7%	88.5%	85.1%
37	Leon	88.6%	93.0%	92.4%	94.4%	94.0%
38	Levy	79.7%	87.0%	88.1%	89.6%	93.8%
39	Liberty	81.9%	77.0%	84.2%	87.2%	82.6%
40	Madison	76.7%	81.3%	82.5%	87.2%	88.2%
41	Manatee	81.1%	85.4%	83.2%	85.8%	85.1%
42	Marion	78.5%	81.8%	83.8%	87.1%	86.5%
43	Martin	83.9%	87.9%	87.4%	90.2%	94.1%
44	Monroe	79.2%	86.4%	86.0%	92.0%	91.5%
45	Nassau	90.9%	92.8%	92.3%	91.6%	93.4%
46	Okaloosa	86.2%	88.1%	87.9%	90.0%	92.2%
47	Okeechobee	71.7%	76.9%	75.8%	84.2%	85.1%
48	Orange	84.7%	88.9%	88.4%	90.4%	90.4%
49	Osceola	86.3%	89.3%	90.0%	90.7%	89.7%
50	Palm Beach	85.0%	87.2%	87.1%	90.2%	91.0%
51	Pasco	81.4%	86.7%	88.3%	89.9%	91.0%
52	Pinellas	82.9%	86.0%	88.4%	91.5%	92.0%
53	Polk	75.4%	80.4%	81.2%	86.5%	85.3%
54	Putnam	72.2%	84.8%	86.3%	90.1%	92.5%
55	St. Johns	90.9%	93.3%	94.3%	94.8%	95.0%
56	St. Lucie	90.1%	91.8%	90.4%	93.2%	94.5%
57	Santa Rosa	86.4%	88.7%	88.9%	90.3%	90.3%
58	Sarasota	85.7%	89.8%	89.4%	92.5%	91.0%
59	Seminole	88.6%	91.7%	92.8%	94.5%	95.5%
60	Sumter	85.3%	87.8%	87.2%	88.0%	91.0%
61	Suwannee	90.5%	96.2%	93.7%	91.3%	94.1%
62	Taylor	70.3%	87.7%	83.9%	92.8%	86.9%
63	Union	81.0%	84.1%	84.4%	79.6%	88.3%

District		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	FLORIDA	82.3%	86.1%	86.9%	90.0%	90.1%
64	Volusia	76.6%	78.7%	84.5%	87.7%	91.9%
65	Wakulla	86.7%	90.1%	91.6%	93.8%	95.5%
66	Walton	82.2%	86.8%	88.9%	91.5%	91.4%
67	Washington	77.8%	80.2%	80.5%	89.6%	87.9%
68	Deaf/Blind	48.3%	69.7%	84.1%	90.6%	96.8%
71	FL Virtual	67.3%	81.4%	87.7%	95.4%	95.9%
72	FAU Lab School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100%
73	FSU Lab School	98.7%	96.6%	99.3%	96.4%	98.7%
74	FAMU Lab School	89.3%	94.3%	89.7%	100.0%	98.0%
75	UF Lab School	98.2%	99.1%	98.1%	97.3%	100%

Notes:

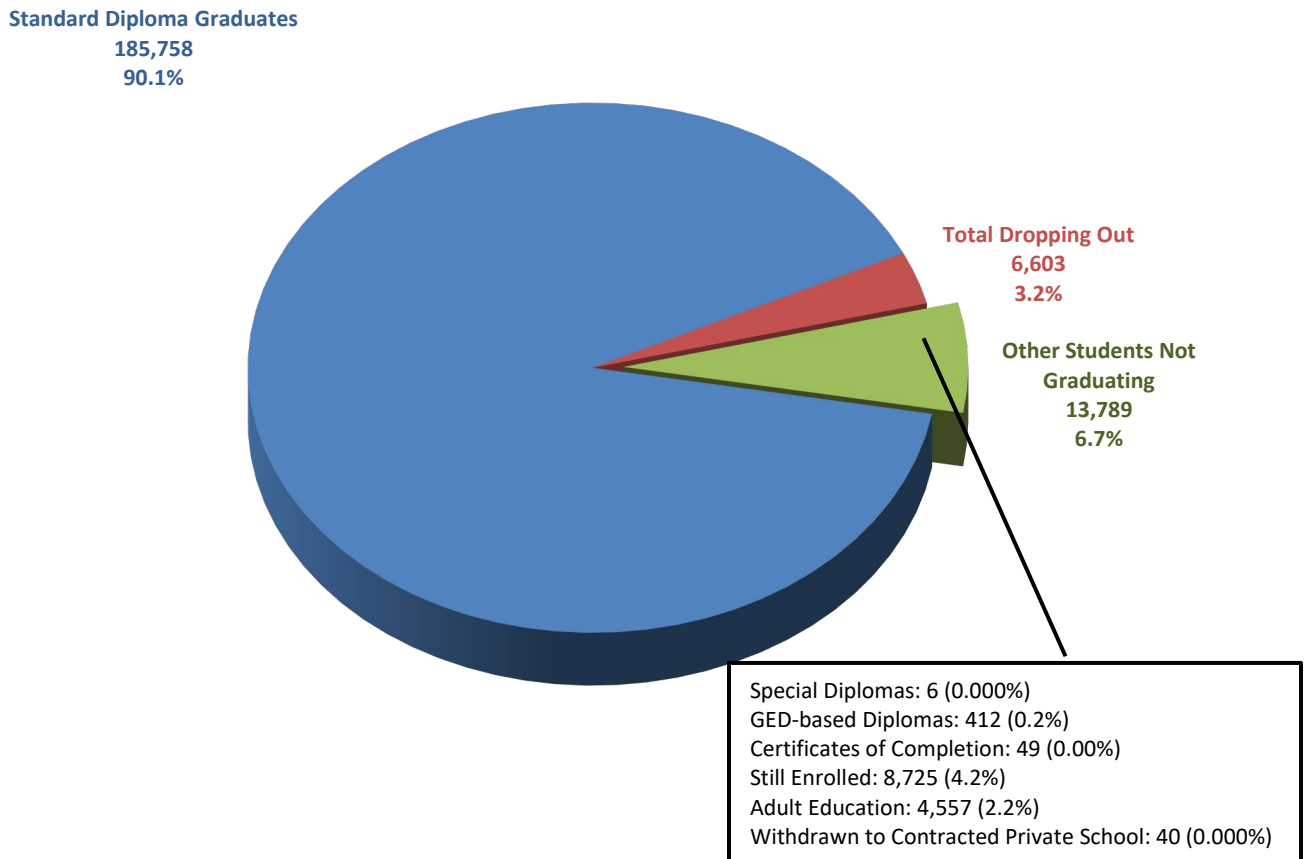
Source: 2020-21 Florida Department of Education (FDOE) cohort graduation data as of 2/08/22.

Withdrawal Status of All Students in the Graduation Cohort

Florida’s graduation rate is 90.1 percent, but that does not mean that 9.9 percent of students in the cohort are dropouts. Students in a cohort can be classified as graduates, dropouts, and nongraduates. Nongraduates include students who have been retained and are still in school, attending adult education, received certificates of completion, or received GED-based diplomas. Florida’s 2017 Legislature amended section 1008.34, Florida Statutes, so that high school students who transfer to a private school with which the school district has a contractual relationship are included in the 4-year adjusted graduation rate cohort of the last public high school they attended. These students are included in the percentage of nongraduates. Pursuant to [Florida Department of Education Emergency Order No. 2021-EO-02](#), students in the 2020-21 graduating class were exempt from statewide, standardized assessment requirements stipulated in s. 1003.4282, F.S., and students who did not meet one or both of the assessment requirements are included in the percentage of graduates if they met all other graduation requirements.

In Florida’s 2020-21 cohort, 3.2 percent of the students dropped out and 6.7 percent are still enrolled in school, attending adult education, earned a certificate of completion, earned a special diploma, earned a GED-based diploma, or withdrew to a contracted private school. Figure 2 illustrates the proportions of students in the 2020-21 cohort who graduated, dropped out, or did not graduate.

Figure 2: 2020-21 Cohort Outcomes by Withdrawal Categories



Note: Nongraduates include students who are still enrolled in school, attending adult education, earned a certificate of completion, earned a special diploma, earned a GED-based diploma, or withdrew to a contracted private school.



Florida Department of Education
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For questions regarding Florida's High School Cohort Graduation Rate, contact:

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