

Idaho Graduation Rate 2013/2014

Talking Points

Background

In October 2008, the U.S. Dept. of Ed. (USDOE) introduced into the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Act, regulations to establish an accurate measure of calculating high school graduation rate. The aforementioned regulation established a uniform definition of graduation rate, so graduation rates could be compared across states. This “uniform and accurate” definition of graduation rate is based on a four-year adjusted cohort of students.

What is a cohort?

Under this new calculation, students are expected to earn a regular high school diploma in four years. Students are placed in a graduation cohort based on when they first enroll in high school in the ninth grade. With each cohort expected to graduate within four years of entering the ninth grade, students in the 2013-14 cohort would have entered the ninth grade in 2010-11. Federal guidelines do allow for students who have transferred out of state, emigrated, or died to be removed from the calculation (adjusted out), as long as federally approved, official documentation is provided.

What is the adjusted four-year cohort graduation rate and how is it calculated?

Per the final federal regulations, a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is defined as: The number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who entered high school four year earlier, while adjusting for transfer students, those student who emigrated or are deceased.

The following formula provides an example of the four-year graduation rate for the cohort entering 9th grade for the first time in the fall of the 2010-2011 school year and graduating by the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

$$\frac{\text{Number of cohort members who earned a regular high school diploma by the end of the 2013-2014 school year}}{\text{Number of first-time 9th graders in fall 2010 (starting cohort) plus students who were part of the cohort who transferred in, minus students who transferred out, emigrated, or died during school years 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014}}$$

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How was Idaho’s graduation rate calculated for the 2012-13 school year?

The graduation rate for SY 2012-13, for Idaho schools and districts, was calculated by taking the number of graduates for the current school year (2012-13), divided by the number high school graduates for the school year, plus the number of dropouts in the past four years (2009-10 through 2012-13); see equation below.

$$\frac{\text{Number of graduates at the end of the 2012-2013 school year}}{\text{Number of high school graduates plus the number of student dropouts in the past four years (2009-10 through 2012-13)}}$$

Number of high school graduates plus the number of student dropouts in the past four years (2009-10 through 2012-13)

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Can the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate be compared with historical calculations?

No; please be aware that historical district and/or school graduation rates cannot be compared with the 2013-14 adjusted cohort graduation rate for the following reasons:

- Over the last several years, there was a gradual increase in required documentation to remove a student from the current year graduation rate. Beginning in 2013-14, the only documentation allowed is to prove that the student is a transfer, emigrant, or deceased.
- There was a drastic change in calculation from the old equation to the adjusted cohort graduation rate calculation, which may cause inflation in non-graduates. With this change:
 - Students who graduate with a GED now count as non-graduates with their adjusted cohort, instead of being removed from the equation altogether.
 - Students who graduate at a date beyond their cohort are now counted as non-graduates with their adjusted cohort, instead of being removed from the equation until they graduate.
 - Students who are in a special education program and graduate under adapted guidelines are now counted as non-graduates with their cohort.

Please Note: These changes have occurred due to new federal guidance and cannot be disputed when calculating the adjusted cohort graduation rate.

Additional Information:

For additional information on the adjusted cohort graduation rate, please visit:

<http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/assessment/accountability.htm>

For a comparison of states based on the adjusted cohort graduation rate, please visit:

http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR_2010-11_to_2012-13.asp

For additional information on your local high school's adjusted cohort graduation rate, please visit Idaho's Report Card: <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/reportCard/>

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