



For Immediate Release:

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Contact: Kelly Donnelly 860.713.6525

More Students Graduating in Connecticut

Graduation Rates Increased Over Two Percent in 2012 with Some Subgroups Showing Greater Gains

(HARTFORD, CT)—Governor Dannel P. Malloy, joined by Commissioner of Education Stefan Pryor at the annual Back to School meeting for Superintendents, announced today that for the third consecutive year, Connecticut’s cohort graduation rate showed an increase, as the 2011-12 rate increased by 2.1 percentage points from the prior year. Almost all subgroups evidenced increases, with students eligible for free lunch, students eligible for reduced lunch, Hispanic students, and English Language Learners (ELL) all registering annual gains greater than three percent.

“There is no doubt that the goal of improving our public schools is one that will be won over the long term,” said Governor Malloy. “But three consecutive years of increases in the graduation rate is a great thing, one for which all of our state’s educators should be proud. This is proof that when we invest in our children and our teachers, we can and will achieve success.”

“Success in college and career begins with a high school diploma,” said Commissioner Pryor. “We’re pleased that the rate of high school completion is growing, and that it has especially increased for lower income students. We must continue this positive trend and, at the same time, ensure that students are graduating with the tools and skills they need to succeed. Under the Governor’s leadership and working with the General Assembly, we’ve increased funding and support to our districts as they work to build upon these improvements.”

Students eligible for reduced-priced school lunch and those eligible for free lunch demonstrated the largest subgroup graduation rate increases of 7.0 percent and 5.9 percent, respectively. The graduation rate for Hispanic students increased 4.4 percentage points, while the rate for black students increased 1.8 percent points. The 2011-12 rates also show that 3.3 percent more English language learners and 2 percent more special education students graduated in 2011-12 than did in 2010-11.

Despite these gains, significant gaps persist. The data indicated a 26.5 percent difference between students eligible for free lunch and those ineligible for lunch subsidies – Connecticut’s largest gap related to a single subgroup factor. Just 54.2 percent of Hispanic males and only 57.6 percent of Black males who are eligible for free lunch graduated high school within four years.

Graduation rates are calculated according to the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate method, which was developed by the National Governors Association and is considered to be the most precise method. These rates represent the percentage of students who graduated with a regular high school diploma in four years or less. It is based on individual student level data, excludes 9th grade repeaters, late graduates, and accounts for transfers in and out of the graduating class over the four-year period.

Connecticut 2012 Cohort Graduation Rate

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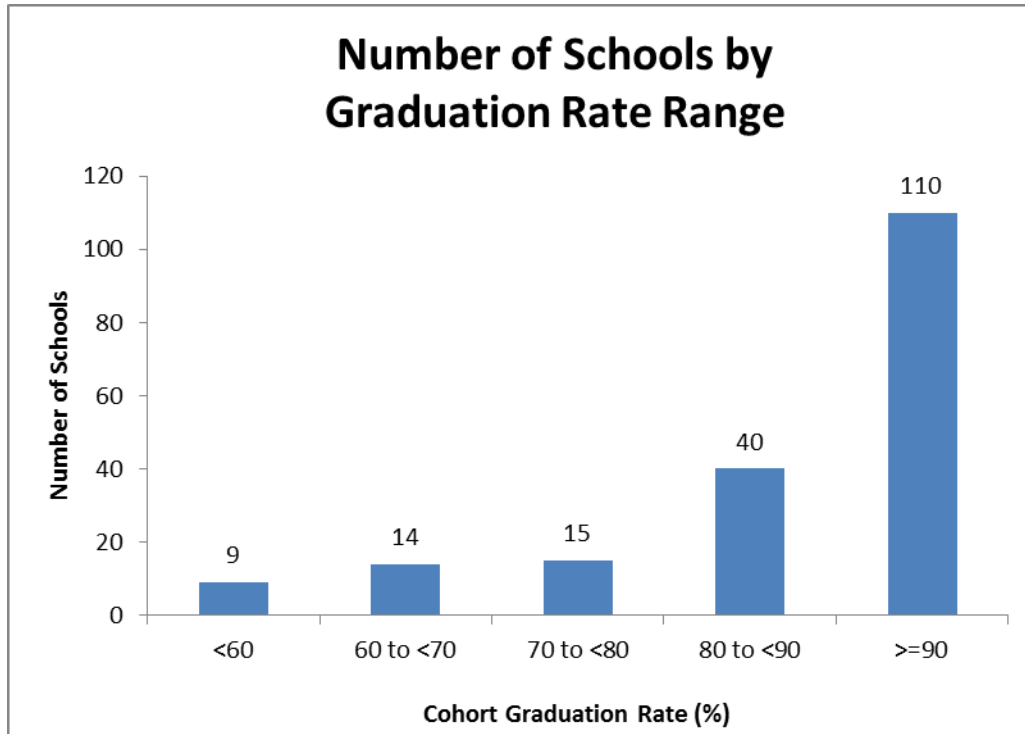
Category	2012 Cohort Count (N)	Graduates		Non-Graduates		
		4-Year Graduation Rate (%)	Difference from 2011 (%)	Still Enrolled (%)	Certificate of Attendance (%)	Other (%)
All Students	43,883	84.8	+2.1	5.4	**	9.8
Hispanic	7,457	68.6	+4.4	9.6	**	21.8
Non-Hispanic	36,426	88.2	+1.9	4.5	**	7.3
Indian or Alaskan Native	245	84.5	N/A	4.5	**	11.0
Asian	1,579	91.9	-0.3	4.1	**	4.0
Black	5,968	73.0	+1.8	10.1	**	16.9
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	20	95.0	N/A	5.0	**	0.0
White	28,155	91.3	+1.9	3.3	**	5.4
Two or More Races	459	83.4	N/A	6.1	**	10.5
Male	22,344	81.5	+1.9	7.2	**	11.3
Female	21,539	88.3	+2.3	3.6	**	8.2
ELL	2,026	62.7	+3.3	12.2	**	25.1
Non-ELL	41,857	85.9	+2.1	5.1	**	9.0
Eligible For Free Lunch	12,371	66.6	+5.9	10.7	**	22.7
Eligible For Reduced Lunch	3,718	83.5	+7.0	6.3	**	10.1
Not Eligible For Lunch	27,794	93.1	+2.9	2.9	**	4.0
Special Education	5,952	64.4	+2.0	19.8	**	15.7
Non-Special Education	37,931	88.0	+2.6	3.1	††	8.8

Source: Public School Information System

District and School Graduation Rates

The 2012 cohort graduation rate for students enrolled in 10 of the 30 Alliance Districts with the lowest performance (i.e., the Educational Reform Districts¹) was 66.3 percent (N=7,646). For students in the 20 remaining Alliance Districts², the graduation rate was 81.0 percent (N=7,411) while the rate for students in all other districts statewide was 90.7 percent (N=28,826).

Of the 188 high schools in this cohort analysis with 6 or more students in the cohort, 110 (58.5 percent) have a cohort graduation rate that is greater than or equal to 90 percent; 38 high schools (20.7 percent) reflect a cohort graduation rate that is less than 80 percent (see chart below).



The cohort graduation rate is an important indicator in Connecticut’s new accountability system that was approved by the U.S. Department of Education in May 2012. The ultimate target graduation rate for schools in this accountability system is 94 percent; 67 of the 188 schools (35.6 percent) attained this target rate with the 2012 cohort.

Four-year cohort graduation rates by district and school are available at the following Web sites:

District: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/evalresearch/cohortgradbydistrict2012.xls>

School: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/evalresearch/cohortgradbyschool2012.xls>

¹ The ten Educational Reform districts are Bridgeport, East Hartford, Hartford, Meriden, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Norwich, Waterbury, and Windham.

² The 20 remaining Alliance Districts are Ansonia, Bloomfield, Bristol, Danbury, Derby, East Haven, East Windsor, Hamden, Killingly, Manchester, Middletown, Naugatuck, Norwalk, Putnam, Stamford, Vernon, West Haven, Winchester, Windsor, and Windsor Locks.

Subgroup Graduation Rates and Gaps

Though the graduation rate increased for almost all subgroups from 2011 to 2012, significant gaps remain.

- The graduation rate of Hispanic students (68.6 percent) is 22.7 percent lower than that of White students (91.3 percent); the corresponding gap between Black/African American students (73 percent) and their White counterparts is 18.3 percent.
- The graduation rate for those eligible for free lunch (66.6 percent) is 26.5 percent lower than that of students not eligible for any lunch subsidies (93.1 percent).
- The graduation rate for English Language Learners (62.7 percent) is 23.2 percent lower than that of their non-ELL peers (85.9 percent).
- The graduation rate for students with disabilities (64.4 percent) is 23.6 percent lower than that of their non-disabled peers (88.0 percent).

Among Black/African American and Hispanic students eligible for free lunch, there are substantial differences in graduation rates between males and females (see table below).

**Graduation Rates by Gender for
Black/African American and Hispanic Students
Who are Eligible for Free Lunch**

	Male	Female
Black/African American	57.6%	76.4%
Hispanic	54.2%	68.4%

The graduation rates for Black/African American and Hispanic males from low-income families of 57.6% and 54.2% respectively are among the lowest subgroup graduation rates evidenced in these data.

Non-Graduates

15.2 percent of the total cohort (43,883) fails to complete high school in four years; this is down from 17.2 percent in 2011. The 15.2 percent of students who fail to graduate in four years was comprised of the following students:

- **Still Enrolled** in school (5.4 percent);
- non-completers who received a **Certificate of Attendance** (less than one percent); and
- **Other** which includes students who dropped out (including those who enrolled in an adult education program) OR transferred to postsecondary education OR transferred to another school district but never enrolled in that district OR have an unknown status (9.8 percent).

19.8 percent of all students with disabilities ages 18-21 are **still enrolled** in public education; they are either working to complete their requirements for a high school diploma or continuing their enrollment to maintain eligibility for transition services that are designed to help them move from high school into postsecondary activities.

Of the approximately 4,300 students in the **other** category, 1,671 (38.9%) had enrolled in adult education by October 2012, and 276 had earned a diploma through adult education.

Methodology and Documentation

Connecticut introduced the four-year cohort graduation rate with the graduating class of 2009. This approach was created when Connecticut and 49 other states signed an agreement with the National Governors' Association to develop a uniform system for tracking students. The four-year cohort graduation rate is calculated by tracking an individual cohort (or group of students) from their initial entrance into 9th grade through graduation with a regular high school diploma in four years or less. The calculation uses individual student-level data from the state's Public School Information System (PSIS) that was submitted by school districts and certified by Superintendents. For complete documentation regarding the cohort graduation rate, please see

Notes:

- With the exception of 2012 cohort count column which is a count of students, all remaining columns represent percentages. Row percentages may not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.
- A student is included in the ELL, special education, or free/reduced lunch subgroup, or any combination of them, if he/she was reported in that subgroup in at least one of the Public School Information System data collections over the course of his/her high school career.
- In reporting race/ethnicity, the student's last reported category is used.
- **Special Education** students who are still in school after four years but have earned the academic credits to graduate are included in the "still enrolled" column for this calculation.
- **The Cohort Count** is as of the end of 2011-12 school years.
- **Four-Year Graduation Rate** is the percentage of students who received a standard diploma within four years including early and summer graduates from the cohort.
- **Still Enrolled** means students were still in school after four years.
- **Certificate of Attendance credential** is awarded only to students with disabilities. Less than one percent of students with disabilities obtained certificate of attendance and the numbers are suppressed with double asterisk (**) denoting fewer than 20 counts; double plus (††) denotes not applicable.
- **Other category** includes students who dropped out (including those who enrolled in an adult education program) OR transferred to postsecondary education OR transferred to another school district but never enrolled in that district OR have an unknown status.

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