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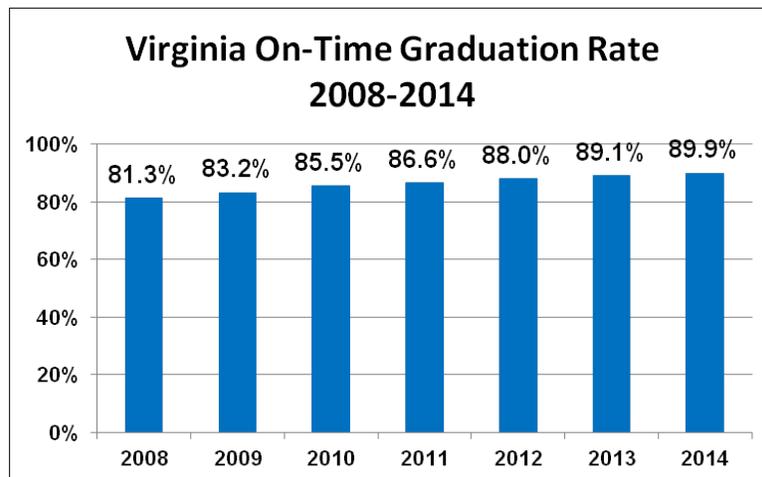
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Virginia On-Time Graduation Rate Nears 90 Percent

Nearly nine out of ten students who entered the ninth grade in the fall of 2010 earned a diploma within four years and more than 50 percent graduated with an Advanced Studies Diploma, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) reported today.

“For the first time since Virginia increased diploma requirements as part of the Standards of Learning reform, more than half of the students who entered the ninth grade together in a cohort graduated four years later after earning the commonwealth’s most rigorous high school credential,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Steven R. Staples said. “This watershed event in Virginia’s effort to increase college and career readiness is the result of the efforts of thousands of caring teachers, school counselors and other educators who encouraged students to raise their sights and accept new challenges.”

Of the 94,700 students in the class of 2014, 89.9 percent earned a Board of Education-approved diploma, compared with 89.1 percent of the 2013 cohort. On-time graduation has increased by 8.6 points since 2008, the first year VDOE reported graduation rates based on longitudinal student data fully accounting for student mobility, retention and other factors. During this same period, the state dropout rate fell to 5.4 percent, compared with 8.7 percent in 2008.

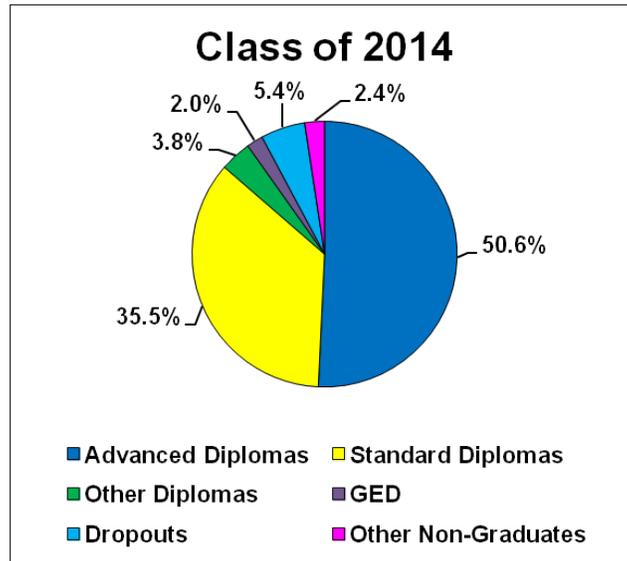


Of the students who entered high school as first-time ninth graders in 2010:

- 47,945, or 50.6 percent, earned an Advanced Studies Diploma (including International Baccalaureate), compared with 49.7 percent of the previous cohort.
- 33,633, or 35.5 percent, earned a Standard Diploma.
- 1,527, or 1.6 percent, earned a Modified Standard Diploma.
- 2,029, or 2.1 percent, earned a Special Diploma.
- 1,893, or 2 percent, earned a GED.
- 5,126, or 5.4 percent, dropped out, compared with 5.9 percent of the previous cohort

(more)

Students who earn GED certificates or complete high school without earning a diploma are not included as graduates in calculating graduation rates. Special Diplomas are available only to students with severe cognitive disabilities. The Modified Standard Diploma, which is also limited to students with disabilities, is being phased out.



State and local efforts to increase graduation rates among minority students continued to show results:

- The graduation rate for black students increased 1.3 points to 85.4 percent, while the dropout rate fell by more than a point, from 8.7 percent, to 7.6 percent. Since 2008, on-time graduation for black students has increased by 12.8 points.
- The graduation rate for Hispanic students increased by a tenth of a point to 83.4 percent, while the dropout rate rose by two-tenths of a point, to 11.9 percent. On-time graduation is up by 13 points for Hispanic students since 2008.
- The graduation rate for students with disabilities increased by 1.4 points to 87 percent and the dropout rate fell from 10.5 percent to 9.8 percent. Since 2008, the graduation rate for students with disabilities has increased by 5.9 points.

Of Virginia’s 327 high schools and combined schools with graduating classes, 187 achieved graduation rates higher than the state rate of 89.9 percent and 140 were lower. Of the 131 school divisions with high schools, 64 had graduation rates higher than the state’s, and 67 had rates that were lower.

The dropout rates of 190 schools were lower than the statewide rate, and the dropout rates of 137 schools were higher. Sixty-three school divisions had dropout rates lower than the state as a whole, and 68 divisions had dropout rates that were higher than the statewide rate.

Since 2011, high schools have had to meet an annual benchmark for graduation and completion to earn full accreditation under Virginia's Standards of Learning accountability program. Schools receive full credit for students who earn diplomas and partial credit for students who remain enrolled, earn GEDs or otherwise complete high school.

Five-Year Class of 2013 Graduates

VDOE also released new data for the class of 2013 showing that 870 students earned diplomas after returning for a fifth year of high school. Their achievement resulted in a Class of 2013 five-year graduation rate of 90.1 percent compared with a four-year rate of 89.1 percent.

[High school cohort reports for schools, school divisions and the commonwealth](#) are available for viewing and downloading on the VDOE website.

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