

High School Graduation Rates Plummet Below 50 Percent in Some U.S. Cities

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WASHINGTON — Seventeen of the nation's 50 largest cities had high school graduation rates lower than 50 percent, with the lowest graduation rates reported in Detroit, Indianapolis and Cleveland, according to a report released Tuesday. The report, issued by America's Promise Alliance, found that about half of the students served by public school systems in the nation's largest cities receive diplomas. Students in suburban and rural public high schools were more likely to graduate than their counterparts in urban public high schools, the researchers said.

Nationally, about 70 percent of U.S. students graduate on time with a regular diploma and about 1.2 million students drop out annually. "When more than 1 million students a year drop out of high school, it's more than a problem, it's a catastrophe," said former Secretary of State Colin Powell, founding chair of the alliance.

The report found troubling data on the prospects of urban public high school students getting to college. In Detroit's public schools, 24.9 percent of the students graduated from high school, while 30.5 percent graduated in Indianapolis Public Schools and 34.1 percent received diplomas in the Cleveland Municipal City School District. Researchers analyzed school district data from 2003-2004 collected by the U.S. Department of Education.

To calculate graduation rates, the report estimated the likelihood that a 9th grader would complete high school on time with a regular diploma. Researchers used school enrollment and diploma data, but did not use data on dropouts as part of its calculation. Many metropolitan areas also showed a considerable gap in the graduation rates between their inner-city schools and the surrounding suburbs. Researchers found, for example, that 81.5 percent of the public school students in Baltimore's suburbs graduate, compared with 34.6 percent in the city schools.

In Ohio, nearly 83 percent of public high school students in suburban Columbus graduate while 78.1 percent in suburban Cleveland earn their diplomas, well above their local city schools. Ohio Department of Education spokesman Scott Blake said the state delays its estimates by a few months so it can include summer graduates in its calculations. Based on the state's methodology, he said Columbus graduated 60.6 percent of its students in 2003-2004, rather than the 40.9 percent the study calculated. By Ohio's reckoning, Columbus has improved each year since the 2001-2002 school year, with 72.9 percent of students graduating in 2005-2006, Columbus Public Schools spokesman Jeff Warner said.

Under the 2002 law, schools that miss progress goals face increasing sanctions, including forced use of federal money for private tutoring, easing student transfers, and restructuring of school staff. States calculate their graduation rates using all sorts of methods, many of which critics say are based on unreliable information about school dropouts. Under No Child Left Behind, states may use their own methods of calculating graduation rates and set their own goals for improving them. The research was conducted by Editorial Projects in Education, a Bethesda, Md., nonprofit organization, with support from America's Promise Alliance and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The alliance is based on a joint effort of nonprofit groups, corporations, community leaders, charities, faith-based organizations and individuals to improve children's lives.

1. Question one must be addressed and answered in appropriate paragraph form.
2. Create and solve a word problem compliant with seventh grade Math Georgia Performance Standards for **Numbers and Operations**: Absolute Value, Comparing, Adding, Subtracting, Multiplying, and Dividing Rational Numbers.
3. Create and solve a word problem compliant with seventh grade Math Georgia Performance Standards for **Geometric Figures**: Constructing Line Segments and Angles, Parallel and Perpendicular Lines, Congruent Triangles, Three-Dimensional Figures; Cross Sections of Three-Dimensional Figures.
4. Create and solve a word problem compliant with seventh grade Math Georgia Performance Standards for **Geometric Applications**: Translations, Dilations, Rotations, and Reflections; Transformation Coordinates; Similar Figures; Ratios and Scale Factors; Congruent Figures.
5. Create and solve a word problem compliant with seventh grade Math Georgia Performance Standards for **Algebraic Thinking**: Writing and Simplifying Algebraic Expressions; Adding and subtracting Linear Expressions; Defining Variables and Solving Equations; Solving Linear Equations, Plotting Points and Lines on a Coordinate Plane; Relations and Functions; Changing Variables; Patters and Proportional Relationships.
6. Create and solve a word problem compliant with seventh grade Math Georgia Performance Standards for **Data Analysis and Probability**: Collecting Data; Frequency Distributions; Mean, Median, and Mode; Range; Quartiles, and Inter-Quartile Range; Comparing Measures of Central Tendency; Pictographs, Histograms, and Bar Graphs; Line and Circle Graphs; Box-and-Whisker and Scatter Plots; Analyze Data.
7. Upon completion of this assignment, how far have we progressed through the 2007-08 series of *The Daughtry Times*? Express your answer as a fraction, decimal, percentage, and pie chart.
8. Complete *The Daughtry Times*® "Writing Guidelines" checklist on all questions requiring a written response. To ensure compliance, neatly label each component adjacent to your paragraph.
9. Complete *The Daughtry Times*® "Preliminary Reading Guidelines" checklist prior to reading the passage and clearly identify each essential component of the article (title, keywords in italics, etc.).
10. Using contextual clues only, explain the meaning of the italicized words: _____ and _____. Additionally, use each word in a sentence to demonstrate further comprehension.
11. In paragraph form, explain at least five legitimate and educational purposes behind *The Daughtry Times*®.