

The graduation Rate

Why is the reported Schott Foundation (1) graduation rate for black males in 2007-08 so different from what we report? They report 21% for Pinellas in 2007-08 and Florida DOE report it at 50.12%

The Schott Foundation attempts to compare all school districts in the nation in the same way and is thus limited to the type of data that is available for all districts. Basically, they use the number of graduates in 2007-08 and compare that to the **total** number of ninth graders four years previously in 2004-05. The total number of ninth graders includes first time ninth graders and retained students who were not promoted. This is the best data they can find to be consistent across all districts.

It should be noted that in 2004-05, Pinellas County had a strict promotion policy that resulted in thousands of students to be classified as ninth grades instead of tenth graders because they lacked enough credits as defined by policy. The chart below shows 12,006 ninth graders in 2004-05 but only 9,299 eighth graders the year before, an increase of 2,707. The promotion policy was changed in 2006 and beginning with the ninth grade class of 2007-08 the enrollment reflects essentially no retained ninth graders. The chart below shows 9,072 ninth graders in 2007-08 and 8,623 eighth graders the year before, an increase of only 443.

The chart below shows the official count enrollment for grades eight to twelve for 2001 to 2010. The official count occurs about 25 days after school starts.

Official Count	8	9	10	11	12	Graduates	9-12 Total
2000/01	8,531	12,533	8,823	6,642	4,860		32,858
2001/02	8,970	12,543	9,030	6,912	5,338	5,159	33,823
2002/03	9,242	12,880	9,045	7,006	5,704	5,570	34,635
2003/04	9,299	13,607	9,326	7,015	5,792	5,444	35,740
2004/05	9,229	12,006	10,164	8,020	6,108	5,384	36,298
2005/06	8,954	11,638	9,920	8,425	6,785	5,452	36,768
2006/07	8,623	10,927	9,856	8,488	6,895	5,906	36,166
2007/08	7,931	9,072	9,140	10,486	6,858	6,199	35,556
2008/09	8,225	8,332	8,958	9,803	7,466	6,523	34,559
2009/10	7,938	8,607	8,337	9,547	7,542		34,033

Graduation Rate Calculation in Florida

Florida uses a cohort graduation calculation that starts with a ninth grade class and then accounts for every student entering and leaving the district population. Students who transfer into the district population are added to the cohort by being included in the count of the class with which they were initially scheduled to graduate. For example, a 10th grader who transfers into the district will be included with the 4-year cohort of students who entered ninth grade for the first time during the previous year.

(1) <http://www.blackboysreport.org/>

Calculation of the graduation rate starts with a list of all students over the four years. This is called the Cohort or the Unadjusted Cohort. The Cohort includes all first-time ninth graders in the base year and then adds any students on the same schedule to graduate who transferred in during the four years. So for the class of 2008, this would include first-time ninth graders in 2004 2005, plus any students who transferred in during the four years.

Next, an Adjusted Cohort list is produced. These are the students that the district is responsible for. The Adjusted Cohort removes any students who transfer out with one of the following reasons:

- W3A – Withdraws to attend a public school in another district in Florida
- W3B – Withdraws to attend a public school out-of-state
- W04 – Withdraws to attend a private school
- W12 – Died
- W24 – Withdraws to attend Home education
- W26 – Withdraws to enter an Adult education program

Then, all the students in the adjusted cohort group are identified as either graduates, dropouts or not graduating. The graduation rate is then calculated by dividing the number of students graduating by the total number of students in the Adjusted Cohort group which would include graduates, dropouts and students not graduating.

Based on the Florida graduation rate calculation, Pinellas has increased the graduation rate for black students by 18.9% from 44.5% (2006-07) to 63.4% (2008-09). As a comparison the State has increased by 8% during the same time period (see chart below).

