

Kentucky's graduation rate among most improved in nation

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FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 10, 2013) – Gov. Steve Beshear praised the state's educators today for significantly raising the graduation rate among Kentucky students. The rate moved from 63.7 percent for the class of 2000 to 77.2 percent for the class of 2010 (the latest data available), an increase of 13.5 points and the third most improved among all states. During the same time the national graduation rate improved 7.9 percentage points to 74.7 percent.



The data is reported in a special issue of *Education Week* (a national publication that focuses on P-12 education) called "Diploma Counts." The report examines high school graduation and issues related to late-secondary schooling and the transition to postsecondary education and employment. The report can be viewed online at: www.edweek.org/go/dc13.

"In just 10 years, Kentucky has made significant progress in increasing the percentage of students who graduate from high school. It's taken a coordinated effort by teachers, administrators, parents, business leaders and community members to keep our students in school and on track for graduation," Beshear said. "A high school diploma is the gateway to postsecondary education and the workplace, leads to personal success and a more robust economy for all Kentuckians."

The upward trend in the graduation rate continues to be driven by strong improvements among minority students.

Public High School Graduation Rates – Class of 2010		
	KY	Nation
All Students	77.2	74.7
Male	76.6	71.9
Female	82.9	78.4
Asian	83.9	81.1
Latino	76.4	68.1
Black	73.7	67.7
White	79.3	79.6

"While we have shown drastic improvement in the graduation rate, we still have a long way to go," said Kentucky Education Commissioner Terry Holliday. "Our goal is that every student not only graduates from high school, but also graduates ready for college and career."

The report indicates that in Kentucky, more than 11,000 students in the class of 2013 will fail to earn a diploma. That translates into 64 students dropping out of high school each day – of which nearly 74 percent are white, 61 percent male and 72 percent are without a job.

“Senate Bill 97 will help keep these students in school by raising the compulsory school age to 18, once 55 percent of districts adopt the policy,” Beshear said. “It will be good for them and good for Kentucky to have these students working toward their diploma and a more productive life.”

“The governor, First Lady and Kentucky lawmakers have been huge advocates for students completing high school and we are grateful for their support,” Holliday said. “We must continue to work on keeping students in school and graduating them college/career-ready; we also must develop innovative strategies to return students who leave school without a diploma back to the education system.”

The Editorial Projects in Education Research Center uses the Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) to calculate graduation rates for the “Diplomas Count” report. The CPI represents the high school experience as a process rather than a single event, capturing the four key steps a student must take in order to graduate: three grade-to-grade promotions (9 to 10, 10 to 11 and 11 to 12) and ultimately earning a diploma (grade 12 to graduation). Each of these individual components corresponds to a grade-promotion ratio. Multiplying the four grade-specific promotion ratios together produces the graduation rate, the percent of public school 9th graders who will complete high school on time with a regular diploma.