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## News Release

### State's graduation rate continues to improve

#### Dropout rate falls as more students staying in school

DENVER – Colorado's four-year graduation rate increased to 80.7 percent for the Class of 2018 that graduated last spring, continuing the steady upward trend over the last decade, according to data released today by the Colorado Department of Education.

The Class of 2018 had 2,540 more graduates than the Class of 2017 or 1.7 percentage points higher than the previous year. Colorado's high school graduation rate has increased a total of 8.3 percentage points since 2010, when the state made a change in how the rate was reported. Extended year rates for students taking five, six and seven years to graduate also have steadily improved.

"The continued improvement of our graduation rate is a testament to all the hard work being done in schools across the state by students, parents and teachers," said Colorado Education Commissioner Katy Anthes. "Coloradans know that graduating high school is an important first step to becoming a productive citizen. That is why we remain committed to supporting all historically underserved students so that all students can graduate ready for careers and college."

This year's rates include students who have qualified for graduation but are remaining in school to participate in the ASCENT program. ASCENT, which stands for Accelerating Students through Concurrent ENrollmentT, allows eligible students to take college courses during a fifth year of high school.

#### State dropout rate improves to an all-time low

The state's 2017-18 dropout rate is 2.2 percent, an all-time low. This is an improvement of 0.1 percentage points from the previous year. In total, the state saw 10,180 students in grades seven through 12 drop out last year - a reduction of 241 students from the previous year.

#### Graduation rates by ethnicity and race

More minority students are graduating within four years. The four-year graduation rate for minority students is 75.3 percent, an increase of 2.2 percentage points from the previous year. The table below breaks down the four-year graduation rate by race/ethnicity for the Class of 2018.

Race/Ethnicity	Graduation Rate	Graduates
American Indian	68.5%	378
Asian	90.3%	1,928



<b>Black</b>	<b>74.4%</b>	<b>2,417</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>73.4%</b>	<b>15,938</b>
<b>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</b>	<b>73.9%</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>Two or More Races</b>	<b>82.8%</b>	<b>1,879</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>85.3%</b>	<b>30,578</b>

#### **Graduation rates by gender**

Additionally, the statewide, four-year graduation rate for females was 84.6 percent (27,198 graduates), and the male graduation rate was 77.1 percent (26,042 graduates).

#### **Completion rate**

The completion rate combines all graduates with those who receive a certificate, a designation of high school completion, or a High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED). The Class of 2018 had a completion rate of 82.5 percent, which includes an additional 1,159 students who received a HSED.

#### **Giving students more time**

Colorado has been resolute in keeping students in high school who need more time to meet graduation requirements or who are participating in their high school's postsecondary program to earn college credit. Students can remain enrolled beyond their fourth year of high school to graduate in five, six or seven years after entering ninth grade.

Part of the increase in the graduation rate (0.8 percentage points) is students are participating in the ASCENT program who were recorded as graduates for 2017-18. The ASCENT program allows eligible students to remain enrolled in their districts for one additional year while completing classes at a local institution of higher education. In previous school years these students were not recorded as four-year graduates; instead, they were recorded as continuing and then graduating in their fifth year of high school upon completion of their ASCENT year.

A total of 9.1 percent (5,972 students) of students in the Class of 2018 remain enrolled and have the opportunity to graduate or complete in five, six or seven years from entering ninth grade.

For the Class of 2017, the five-year state graduation rate was 84.2 percent. The five-year completion rate was 86.5 percent. For the Class of 2016, the six-year state graduation rate was 85.6 percent. The six-year completion rate was 88.0 percent. For the Class of 2015, the seven-year graduation rate was 85.6 percent.



### **Tools to understand the numbers**

CDE has created interactive tools and maps to better illustrate how the graduation and dropout rates look across the state.

[Graduation statistics are available on this webpage.](#)

[Dropout statistics are available on this webpage.](#)

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### **Statewide four-year graduation rates**

#### **Class of 2018**

- 80.7%, 53,240 graduates

#### **Class of 2017**

- 79.0%, 50,700 graduates

#### **Class of 2016**

- 78.9%, 49,824 graduates

#### **Class of 2015**

- 77.3%, 47,784 graduates
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### **Statewide five-year graduation rates**

#### **Class of 2017**

- 84.2%, 53,834 graduates

#### **Class of 2016**

- 84.1%, 53,027 graduates

#### **Class of 2015**

- 83.3%, 50,955 graduates
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### **Statewide six-year graduation rates**

#### **Class of 2016**

- 85.6%, 53,936 graduates

#### **Class of 2015**

- 84.9%, 51,883 graduates
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### **Statewide seven-year graduation rates**

#### **Class of 2015**

- 85.6%, 52,314 graduates



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