



Our Vision: All students graduate and are prepared for a successful life.

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Salem-Keizer Public Schools' 2020-21 graduation rates remain stable, surpass statewide average

Four of the district's six comprehensive high schools had graduation rates above 90 percent in 2020-21

SALEM, Ore. – Graduation rates in Salem-Keizer Public Schools have remained stable as rates released today by the Oregon Department of Education show that eight in 10 students graduated in four years. More than 83 percent of students complete high school in four years, and 86 percent of students complete high school in five years, meaning they may pursue GEDs or extended diplomas.

The district graduation rate of 80.91 percent represents a gain of more than nine percentage points since 2016 and a decrease of 0.10 of a percentage point from the previous year.

The district's dropout rate of 1.44 percent continues to be below the state average of 1.8 percent and is an indicator of the work of educators across the district to keep students engaged during distance learning.

"It goes without saying that students are greatly impacted by the disruption to learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic," said Assistant Superintendent Iton Udosenata. "The ability for the Class of 2021 to not only have a graduation rate that is stable compared to the previous year, but also surpasses the statewide average is a true representation of the resiliency and dedication of students, staff and their families during this time."

The Class of 2021 is the first graduating class since the 2013-14 school year to surpass the statewide average for four-year graduation rates.

Notable gains for the SKPS Class of 2021 came from English Learner graduates, which improved by seven percentage points from the previous year. McNary High School's graduation rates increased by five percentage points, with all student groups with reportable data graduating at rates greater than 95 percent.

"Each of our educators have had an unwavering dedication and commitment to supporting their students and families throughout each and every change they have faced," said SKPS Director of High Schools Larry Ramirez. "At McNary High School, Principal Jespersen has taken our equity learning and put it into practice by bringing his whole team of educators at McNary High School together to ensure that each student gets the level of support they need to be successful."

The successes weren't limited to McNary High School – Sprague High, West Salem High, McNary High, South Salem High and Early College High all had graduation rates above 90 percent. North Salem High School grew its five-year graduation rate by 5.81 percentage points, surpassing the statewide average by nearly two percentage points. At McKay High School, four-year graduation rates for students who identify as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander or Multi-Racial increased by 8.09 percentage points and 10.12 percentage points respectively.

SKPS is one of the most diverse districts in the state, with students speaking 96 different languages. Forty-five percent of SKPS students identify as Hispanic or Latinx, and the graduation rate among those students has increased by nearly 10 percentage points since 2016 and continues to show improvement when compared to



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pre-pandemic data.

“Over the past several years, our district has implemented multiple strategies to provide intervention and necessary supports to students who have historically been underserved by our education system,” said Assistant Superintendent Olga Cobb. “We have seen repeatedly the positive impact that strong connections between students and staff have on student outcomes. Through the expansion of our team of community resource specialists, school counselors, social workers and specific advocates for student groups, we are seeing the impact of the [Student Investment Account](#) dollars in the lives of our students and their families.”

At the district’s non-traditional programs, success is more than a graduation rate. At the Early College High School, the school’s 92.31 percent graduation rate tells the story of 48 students who received unique educational offerings and college credit through a partnership with Chemeketa Community College. At Roberts High, 43 students graduated with a regular or modified diploma, 64 students completed an adult or extended diploma, and 60 students are continuing enrollment, meaning more than half of the district’s students with the most complex needs are completing or continuing to work toward completing school.

Of the district’s 42,000 students, 17 percent receive special education services. Graduation rates for students with disabilities grew by 0.39 of a percent districtwide and more than 18 percentage points since 2015-16.

“While there is much to celebrate in the graduation and completion rates for our students, we must acknowledge that the pandemic and the period of Comprehensive Distance Learning highlighted and exacerbated the inequities and challenges some students regularly face,” said Superintendent Christy Perry. “For example, during CDL, some students experiencing homelessness or poverty had to navigate a lack of reliable internet, reduced access to regular meals and limited learning materials, which all made it difficult to participate in a virtual school setting.”

Most groups of students saw a slight increase or decrease in their graduation rates, with Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students experiencing one of the greatest decreases of 6 percentage points in their four-year graduation rate.

“While we see these challenges reflected in graduation rates for some of our student groups, we also applaud our educators and program advocates who went to extraordinary lengths to keep students engaged in learning throughout the whole school year,” said Perry.

Class of 2021 Fast Facts:

- \$34,573,162 in scholarships earned
- 2,619 graduates with regular, modified diplomas or PostGraduate Scholars
- 80 students completed school with an extended or adult high school diploma
- 20 alternative certificates
- 135 students continuing enrollment

Additional points of pride for SKPS comprehensive high schools:

McKay - 80.81%

- The graduation rate has grown by more than 12 percentage points since 2014-15.
- Graduation rate above the statewide average.
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and multi-racial increased graduation rates by 8.09 percentage points and 10.12 percentage points respectively.



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- Graduation rates for English-Language Learners improved by 9.93 percentage points.

McNary – 96.23%:

- Highest graduation rate in the district with an improvement of 5.02 percentage points from the previous year.
- Graduation rate more than 15 percentage points higher than the state average.
- All student groups with reportable data graduated at rates greater than 95 percent.
- The dropout rate decreased to 0.58 percent.
- AVID Site of Distinction, with a goal of becoming an AVID Demonstration School.

North Salem – 77.71%:

- Five-year completer rate improved by 5.81 percentage points from the previous year with notable gains for English Learners and students who qualify for migrant services with improvements of 18.94 percentage points and 22.50 percentage points, respectively.
- Students experiencing homelessness grew graduation rates by 8.24 percentage points, surpassing the state average by nearly 10 percentage points.
- Students identifying as multi-racial improved graduation rates by 3.67 percentage points.
- The overall schoolwide dropout rate decreased from 2.55 percent to 1.76 percent.

South Salem – 92.09%:

- Saw a decrease of 0.48 of a percentage point from previous year, but still up more than 11 percentage points above the state average.
- English Learner students improved graduation rates by 22.22 percentage points from previous year.
- The five-year graduation rates for students with disabilities grew by 7.89 percentage points.
- Class of 2021 earned \$12,850,732 in college scholarships.

Sprague – 93.01%:

- Saw a decrease of 0.27 of a percentage point from the previous year, but still up more than 12 percentage points above the state average.
- English Learner students earned notable gains in graduation rates with an improvement of 32.73 percentage points from previous year.
- The graduation rate students with disabilities increased by 8.57 percentage points, more than 23 percentage points above the state average.
- The graduation rate for Former English Learners improved by 7.39 percentage points.

West Salem – 92.51%:

- Former English Learners improved graduation rates by 6.5 percentage points.
- Five-year cohort graduation rate increased from 92.63 percent to 93.98 percent.
- The graduation rates for Career-Technical Education students remain above 95 percent.
- Graduation rates for students who identify as Multi-Racial remain above 95 percent.

To view the full graduation rates from the Oregon Department of Education, [click here.](#)

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Led by Superintendent Christy Perry, Salem-Keizer School District 24J is the second-largest school district in the state of Oregon. Nearly 5,000 employees serve more than 41,000 students in 65 schools in the cities of Salem and Keizer.