



Board Goal: Academic 1.1

Date Adopted/Last Revised: October 1, 2015

- 1.1 The graduation rate will increase by 2% per year until 95% is attained at which it will not drop lower.

I interpret graduation rate to mean: the same as the definition from the Colorado Department of Education: The graduation rate is a cumulative or longitudinal rate which calculates the number of students who actually graduate as a percent of those who were in membership and could have graduated over a four-year period. The rate is calculated by dividing the number of graduates by the membership base. The membership base is derived from the end-of-year count of eighth graders four years earlier and adjusted for the number of students who have transferred into or out of the district during the years covering grades 9 through 12. Graduation rates are calculated based on high school graduates only. A graduate is a student who completed locally-defined requirements for graduation. If a student is not considered a graduate by the local board of education, then he/she is not included in the graduation rate calculation.

I interpret completer rate to mean: the same as the definition from the Colorado Department of Education: The Completer Rate is a cumulative or longitudinal rate which calculates the number of students who graduate, receive certificates or other designations of high school completion. It is also calculated as a percent of those who were in membership and could have graduated or completed over a four-year period (i.e., from Grades 9-12). Completer rates are calculated based on all students who are graduates, plus those who are not considered graduates but receive another certificate or designation of high school completion.

Achievement of Goal 1.1: Graduation

Data Reported

Graduation rate is calculated based on October count and graduation data, according to a formula followed by the Colorado Department of Education “Rules for the Administration of Colorado Data Reporting for School Accreditation.”

This report on the expectations of the board through Goal 1.1 presents historical graduation rate data as the goal requires an increase in the graduation rate over time. Graduation rate calculation has been revised by the Colorado Department of Education.

Beginning with the 2010 graduating class, Colorado began calculating a four-year graduation rate, a five year, a six year and a seven-year graduation rate. Colorado has maintained that

calculation structure. The formula and methodology are based on the standards set by the National Governors Association “Graduation Counts Compact.”

Colorado defines “on-time” graduation as students who graduate from high school four years after entering ninth grade. In addition to this 4-year rate, the state calculates 5-,6-, and 7- year graduation rates. The state also calculates corresponding completion rates, which include graduates along with students who are determined to have completed high school upon receipt of a GED or some other form of certification.

For the purposes of this report, we have included multiple years of graduation data, also with completion data so that the impact of the changing criterion in 2005 can be clearly seen. Complete graduation and dropout statistics for the state can be found on the Colorado Education Statistics and Data website: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/gradcurrent> and on the CDE District Dashboard <http://www2.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/dish/dashboard.asp>

Graduation

Table 1: School District 27J Total Four Year Graduation Rate

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Colorado Graduation Rate %	75.4	76.9	77.3	77.3	78.9	79
Total 27J Graduation Rate %	71.5	79.2	79.8	76.7	77.5	77.4
Bolt %			40.0	56.3	56.2	75
Brighton Heritage Academy %	9.7	14.0	29.1	17.0	19.8	14.4
Brighton High School %	73.8	81.7	82.4	77.5	78.7	81
Eagle Ridge Academy %	77.8	92.7	88.0	89.0	90.3	98
Prairie View High School %	79.6	82.9	83.5	80.9	86.1	84.3

Increases at Bolt, and Brighton High School were offset by decreases at Prairie View High School, and Brighton Heritage Academy. The net result was that in 2017 the state of Colorado increased its graduation rate by .01% and School District 27J decreased its 4 year graduation rate by .01%. Despite the slight decrease 27J schools have not varied much in the past 6 years.

- Despite the drop in graduation rate at Prairie View High School, that school did register the second highest graduation rate in the past five years and the second highest graduation rate of our district schools. The end result is that both district managed comprehensive high schools and charter school Eagle Ridge Academy demonstrated graduation rates above the Colorado State average.
- Brighton High School increased in each of the last three years.
- Bolt Academy had the highest graduation rate in its school's history at 75% and this percentage is the 2nd highest online school in the state of Colorado.

Table 2 shows our graduation rates in comparison to the state and other Adams County districts, beginning with the largest county cohort, Adams 12 Five Star Schools, to the smallest county cohort in Bennett 29J. In most instances, we compare ourselves to the Adams County school districts in the metropolitan area.

Table 2: Graduation Rate Percentage of Adams County Districts

	2013 Grad Rate (%)	2014 Grad Rate (%)	2015 Grad Rate (%)	2016 Grad Rate (%)	2017 Grad Rate (%)
Colorado	73.9	77.3	77.3	78.9	79
Adams 12 Five Star	73.7	73.9	77.7	80.6	83.6
School District 27J	79.2	79.8	76.7	77.5	77.4
Adams 50 Westminster	64.0	57.1	59.4	56.3	57.8
Adams 1 Mapleton	47.8	52.5	57.1	64.6	59
Adams 14 Commerce City	59.4	65.9	64.2	65.8	65.5
Strasburg	81.5	85.0	87.0	83.1	85.6
Bennett 29J	84.3	84.4	77.3	77.1	88.6

The smaller rural districts of Bennett and Strasburg do have the highest graduation rates in Adams County, and both of these smaller districts have a small number of students in the cohort group. Adams 12 Schools leads the larger area school districts in graduation rate. 27J Schools come in second, followed by Adams 14, and then Mapleton.

Table 3: 27J 4 Year Graduation Rate by Gender and Ethnicity by Percentage

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
All Students	79.2	79.8	76.7	77.5	77.4
All White Students	83.9	84.2	81.2	82.9	81
White Female	90.4	91.2	85.9	89.4	87
White Male	77.6	77.4	76.2	77	76
All Hispanic Students	72.8	74.7	71.2	70.9	73
Hispanic Female	79.4	78.0	78.7	76.7	78
Hispanic Male	66.5	71.1	64.3	64.9	70

Table 3 presents additional details of graduation rates of our diverse student population. Hispanic students make up our largest minority student population.

White students continue to graduate at a rate higher than Hispanic students. While the overall gap has narrowed slightly from 12.0% to 8.0%. This gap consistently seems to hover around 10.0%: 11.1 percentage points in 2013, 9.5 percentage points in 2014 and 10 percentage points in 2015.

Female students continue to outperform male students regardless of ethnicity. This has been a consistent trend over the past 5 years.

White Females outperform Hispanic Females by 9 percentage points, which is 3.7 percentage points less than it was in 2016. Hispanic Males made significant gains narrowing the gap between themselves and White males to just 6 percentage points.

Completion Rate

Beginning with the 2010 graduating class, Colorado began calculating a four-year, five-year, six-year and a seven-year graduation rate, along with a 5-, 6- and 7-year completer rate. The completion counts and rates include all students who graduate in 4-years with a regular diploma plus students who complete 4-years with a HSED or non-diploma certificate. It is important to note that graduates are included in the completer count and rate, therefore the completion counts and rates for any school or district will be greater than or equal to the graduation rate.

Students who were anticipated to graduate with the class of 2013 were permitted to continue to earn credits towards graduation and those who completed graduation requirements were reported in the Colorado Education Statistics data. In addition, students who completed graduation equivalency such as a GED exam were added to the graduation rate data and reported as 5, 6 and 7-year completion.

Table 4: School District 27J Total Four Year Completer Rate

	2016 Completer Rate %	2017 Completer Rate %
Colorado	87.6	88.3
Adams 12 Five Star	84.4	84.7
School District 27J	89.4	86.9
Adams 50 Westminster	82.2	76.3
Adams 1 Mapleton	67.4	76.0
Adams 14 Commerce City	75.8	77.7
Strasburg	82.2	96.2
Bennett 29J	91.3	90.5

In Table 4 we see that in 2016 School District 27J schools exceeded the Colorado Average and the 7-year completion rate surpassed Adams 12 Five Star School District in both 2016 and 2017.

Table 5: Seven Year Completion Rate by High School

	2016 7 Year Completion	2017 Base	2017 7 Year Completion
Colorado 7 Year Completion Rate	87.8	60,366	85.3
Total 27J 7 Completion Rate	89.4	943	89.5
Bolt	No report	5	100
Brighton Heritage Academy	40.8	62	61.3
Brighton High School	89.2	454	90.5
Eagle Ridge Academy	98.1	25	88
Prairie View High School	94.6	397	92.7

Looking deeper into the 7-year completion rate gives us reason to celebrate. Prairie View High School's 7-year completion rate in 2016 approached 95% and last year maintained a rate above 92%. Not far behind is Brighton High School's 7-year Completion rate of 90.5% and its female completion rate of 95%. Bolt had a perfect 7-year Completion rate of 100% although with only

5 students reporting the number is not statistically significant. The same is true for Eagle Ridge Academy who graduated so few students in 2012 and 2013 that a small number of non-graduates caused the unusual 88% in their 7-year data. Their current 4-year on time rate of 98% can only yield a higher rate in the future.

Alternative high school Brighton Heritage Academy often does not see students enroll until later in their academic career, when a student is more likely to be behind in credit completion, causing the low graduation rate, however, their 7-year completion rate has increased to 61.3%.

Table 6: 27J 7 Year Completion Rate by Gender and Ethnicity by Percentage

	2016 7-Year Completion Rate	2014-2017 Base	2017 7-Year Completion Rate
All Students	79.2	943	86.9
All White Students	83.9	432	93
White Female	90.4	227	98
White Males	68.4	237	89
All Minority Students	74.7	479	84
Hispanic Female	79.4	210	88
Hispanic Male	66.5	196	81

Table 6 shows more reasons to celebrate success. White female students in 27J schools completed at a rate of 98% and all White students at a 93%. Hispanic Females improved by more than 10% and by 14.5% for Hispanic Males.

Conclusion: Non-compliance

Action Steps to Improve Graduation Rates:

The Thinking Classroom

Since 2012 27J schools have pursued the Thinking Classroom as a conceptual framework for an ideal classroom. This concept was expanded to include GEL (Goal, Evidence and Learning activities) and, as a coordinated effort, align with our teacher evaluation system and school improvement plans. The result has yielded consistent graduation results that are comparable to the state average for the past 5 years along with consistent 7 year completer results which show encouraging statistics. Students are completing high school, but not within the desired 4 years.

At the same time that teachers through our system were setting instructional and professional goals and looking at data for improvements through GEL, elementary schools began a process of establishing and then using curriculum frames and common assessments which clearly articulate grade level expectations and provided data for classroom instruction. Our goal is to see grade level expectations established K-12 to insure we have a system which does not “short change” students by perpetuating low expectations.

Increase Clarity and Informing the Academic Frames

In the past year the curriculum framework teams have aligned the 27J school classroom expectations with high school standards and the SAT. School year 2017-2018 marked the first year, that in addition to The Thinking Classroom and GEL, that high school teachers have used curriculum frames and common assessments aligned to grade level expectations to inform their instruction. High School teachers began realignment of their curriculum around new grade level curriculum frames to insure that students who pass their coursework also meet high academic expectation. In 2018 we will continue to see more teachers re-evaluating their teaching and planning not only with grade level expectations, but also with new graduation requirements. The frames will provide more data to inform instruction through common assessments. The goal for the Thinking Classroom is to move beyond graduation and to inform learners who are prepared for our communities in the year 2038 is now becoming a reality.

Academic Planner

Through evaluation of our Academic Planner we discovered that some of our students were on a pathway to successful course completion, but not skills development. Students did not share in GEL. A significant change has been to affect real change in scheduling to insure that every student is enrolled in grade level courses and that successful completion of those courses results in successful demonstration of academic standards. This along with a technology change beginning in 2018, now places academic planning into the hands of our counselors, parents, teachers, administrators and students to continue the academic planning process. Further refinement of the system in 2018 will clarify goal setting, evidence of success and provide for clarity on learning opportunities for students through the academic planning process will yield better results. Through better planning and coordination, we will move successful completion of high school from a 5, 6 or 7-year plan to a 4 year on time graduation for every student.

Investing in Teacher Development

We know that changing course requirements and clarifying standards in our curriculum is not enough. We must hire, retain and train our teachers to be the best teachers they can. To complete this process, we continue to develop the implementation plan for The Thinking Classroom and have rearranged time and professional development to place more resources in the hands of our teachers.

While this global end goal is focused on the improvement of 4-year graduation rates, we know that without improving the entire K-12 learning system, those graduation rates would be short lived. We expect to see incremental gains over the next 3 years in graduation rates and student learning results.