



**COLORADO SCHOOL DISTRICT 27J  
GOVERNING POLICY OF  
THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**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 can be clearly seen. Complete graduation and dropout statistics for the state can be found on the Colorado Education Statistics and Data website:

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/gradratecurrent> and on the CDE District Dashboard <https://www.cde.state.co.us/code/schooldashboard>

CDE Dropout Statistics can be found <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/dropoutcurrent>

## Graduation

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

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Colorado Graduation Rate %</b>	77.3	77.3	78.9	79	80.7	81.1
<b>27J Schools Graduation Rate %</b>	79.8	76.7	77.5	77.4	81.5	84.1
<b>Bolt %</b>	40.0	56.3	56.2	75	86.4	70.4
<b>Brighton Heritage Academy %</b>	29.1	17.0	19.8	14.4	30	31.7
<b>Brighton High School %</b>	82.4	77.5	78.7	81	83.1	88.2
<b>Eagle Ridge Academy %</b>	88.0	89.0	90.3	98	98.2	96.3
<b>Prairie View High School %</b>	83.5	80.9	86.1	84.3	88.3	89.5

Overall 27J Schools experienced a record high graduation rate and improvement three year trends from Prairie View High School, Brighton High School, and Brighton Heritage Academy.

**Table 2: Graduation Rate Percentage of Adams County Districts**

	<b>2014 Rate (%)</b>	<b>2015 Rate (%)</b>	<b>2016 Rate (%)</b>	<b>2017 Rate (%)</b>	<b>2018 Rate (%)</b>	<b>2019 Rate (%)</b>
Strasburg	85.0	87.0	83.1	85.6	86.2	89.3
Bennett 29J	84.4	77.3	77.1	88.6	87.2	87.8
<b>27J Schools</b>	<b>79.8</b>	<b>76.7</b>	<b>77.5</b>	<b>77.4</b>	<b>81.5</b>	<b>84.1</b>
Adams 12 Five Star	73.9	77.7	80.6	83.6	84.3	83.3
<b>Colorado</b>	<b>77.3</b>	<b>77.3</b>	<b>78.9</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>80.7</b>	<b>81.1</b>
Westminster Public Sc.	57.1	59.4	56.3	57.8	67.9	69.3
Mapleton 1	52.5	57.1	64.6	59	60.4	68.7
Adams 14 Commerce City	65.9	64.2	65.8	65.6	64.3	63.3

Table 2 shows 27J Schools graduation rates in comparison to the state and other Adams County school districts. Adams 12 Five Star is the largest comparative school district. Strasburg and Bennett represent the smallest cohorts of students in Adams County.

27J Schools moved up from 4<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> among Adams County school districts and has improved each of the past two years.

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

	2014 Rate (%)	2015 Rate (%)	2016 Rate (%)	2017 Rate (%)	2018 Rate (%)	2019 Rate (%)
<b>All Students</b>	79.8	76.7	77.5	77.4	81.5	84.1
<b>All White Students</b>	84.2	81.2	82.9	81	84.2	86.1
<b>White Female</b>	91.2	85.9	89.4	87	89.2	91.9
<b>White Male</b>	77.4	76.2	77	76	78.7	80.6
<b>All Hispanic Students</b>	74.7	71.2	70.9	73	78.7	81.2
<b>Hispanic Female</b>	78.0	78.7	76.7	78	83.5	87.5
<b>Hispanic Male</b>	71.1	64.3	64.9	70	74.4	74.9

Table 3 presents additional details of graduation rates of our diverse student population. Hispanic students make up our largest minority student population. On time graduation rates among minority students continues to show growth. The gap between Hispanic student graduation and White student graduation rates has narrowed to its smallest margin of 4.9%.

### **Completion Rate**

The completion rate includes all students who graduate with a regular diploma plus students who complete 4-years with a high school equivalent or non-diploma certificate. It is important to note that graduates are included in the completer rate, therefore the completion rates for any school or district will be greater than or equal to the graduation rate.

Completion Rate is a significant data point for 27J students. As we consider the significance of the 27J Mission of “*every child having a future*”, a diploma or its equivalent is a must. It is more important that a student obtains a diploma and is prepared for a future, than it is that they graduate on time. This will be especially true as we move to demonstrations with the class of 2021.

**Table 4: Completer rate seven years after entering high school.** A completer rate indicates how many students eventually graduated from high school or received a GED after the typical 4-year, on time, graduation rate.

	<b>2012-2013 Completer Rate %</b>	<b>2013-2014 Completer Rate %</b>	<b>2014-2015 Completer Rate %</b>	<b>2015-2016 Completer Rate%</b>
Strasburg	95.2	96.2	95.6	94.4
Adams 12 Five Star	84.4	84.7	87.6	90.3
<b>Colorado</b>	<b>87.8</b>	<b>88.3</b>	<b>88.4</b>	<b>89.1</b>
<b>27J Schools</b>	<b>89.4</b>	<b>89.5</b>	<b>87.4</b>	<b>87.8</b>
Bennett 29J	91.3	90.5	81.5	87.0
Adams 1 Mapleton	67.4	76	80.8	82.1
Westminster	82.2	76.3	77.2	75.5
Adams 14 Commerce City	75.8	77.7	76.6	75.9

Table 4 shows the 7-year completer rate for 2015-2016. We cannot calculate 7-year completer rate for any year more recent than 15-16, because 7 years has yet to pass. If you recall from Table 1, 27J's 4-year on time graduation rate was 77.5%, meaning that we successfully recovered and supported an additional 10.3% of students beyond that 4-year graduation rate.

**Table 5: Completer rate seven years after entering high school per 27J School.**

	<b>2012-2013 7 Year Completion</b>	<b>2013-2014 7 Year Completion</b>	<b>2014-2015 7 Year Completion</b>	<b>2015-2016 7 Year Completion</b>
<b>Total 27J 7 Completion Rate</b>	89.4	89.5	87.4	<b>87.8</b>
<b>Bolt</b>		100	85.7	80.0
<b>Brighton Heritage Academy</b>	40.8	61.3	48.8	60.5
<b>Brighton High School</b>	89.2	90.5	89.1	88.5
<b>Eagle Ridge Academy</b>	98.1	88	98.9	97.8
<b>Prairie View High School</b>	94.6	92.7	91.6	92.8

Table 5: Prairie View High School exceeds a 90% completion rate for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row and Brighton Heritage Completion rate reaches 60%+ for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time in 4 years.

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

	<b>2012-2013 7-Year Completion Rate</b>	<b>2013-2014 7-Year Completion Rate</b>	<b>2014-2015 7-Year Completion Rate</b>	<b>2015-2016 7-Year Completion Rate</b>
<b>All Students</b>	89.4	89.5	87.4	87.8
<b>All White Students</b>	91.8	93	92	91.9
<b>White Female</b>	93.9	98	93.4	96.3
<b>White Males</b>	89.7	89	90.5	87.9
<b>All Hispanic Students</b>	86.2	85	82.2	82.7
<b>Hispanic Female</b>	90.1	88	89.1	86.9
<b>Hispanic Male</b>	82.5	81	75.9	78.3

**Dropout Rates for Alternative Education Campuses (AEC)** In the 2018-19 school year, there were 93 Alternative Education Campuses located in 47 local education agencies (districts, BOCES and CSI). At least 90% of the students served at AEC schools are considered at high risk of dropping out. These alternative programs play an important role in the successful graduation and completion of 27J Students.

**Table 7** Comparison of Drop-out Rates for Alternative Education Campuses in Adams County.

	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Innovations and Options</b>	29.6%	20.7%	16.8%	12.4%
<b>Westminster Public Schools Alternative Schools</b>	18.2%	17.2%	16.6%	13.5%
<b>Colorado School Dropout Rate All Alternative Schools</b>	<b>18.6%</b>	<b>18.3%</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>
<b>Adams 12 Five Star Alternative Schools</b>	12.4%	13.6%	11.6%	16%
<b>Mapleton Alternative Schools</b>	NA	NA	NA	27.7%
<b>Adams 14 Alternative Schools</b>	40.7%	35.3%	32%	31.9%

Credit to our alternative school, **Innovations and Options** which has decreased its dropout rate from 29.6% in 2016 to 12.4% in 2019. Innovations and Options has a lower dropout rate than the state average for Alternative Campuses for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row and the 2019 total is the lowest dropout rate of any alternative education campus (AEC) in Adams County.

The goals of this monitoring report ask that 27J increase graduation rates of our students by 2% every year until we reach 95%. 27J graduation rates increased from 81.5 to 84.1 in the past academic year.

**Conclusion: I report 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. GELL (Goal, Evidence and Learning Experiences and Learning Environment) provides our teachers, counselors, and administrators with an intentional planning frame. GELL aligns to our school improvement plans and our strategic efforts. Using this frame consistently has supported aligned efforts that are yielding 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 growth.

### **Supporting School Leadership**

Principals play a pivotal role in k-12 student achievement. A major reason why teachers stay in a school, or stay in teaching, relates to the support by the school leaders so that teachers can have a positive impact. Our leaders have had a positive influence to motivate teachers and students toward high expectations for all. They have also helped to identify and articulate high expectations for all. They are consulting with teachers before making decisions that affect teachers. They allocate resources, and develop, collect and review student data with teachers. Learning leadership is the most powerful incentive to stay in teaching and plays the most pivotal role in student achievement. 27J Schools continues to perfect managed autonomy, a site based management model with district resources focused on supporting school leadership and each school's unified improvement plan.

### **Effective Use of data**

The 27J Schools assessment and data team develops, implements, and sustains a balanced assessment system in order to provide evidence that will promote learning by empowering teachers and students through the use of data. The assessment results are utilized by district and school leaders to make intentional decisions about effectiveness of programs and instruction. Teachers utilize the results of assessments to make informed instructional decisions. Ultimately, through a process of continual improvement ensuring that all students are growing and learning so they are prepared for their future.

### **Focus on Core Beliefs: Every Student**

27J Schools strive to ensure that all students have equitable opportunities to take full advantage of their education. Increasing access generally demands that 27J Schools raise expectations for all students to meet or exceed grade level competencies. More than ever before, 27J Schools are seeking to remove any actual or potential barriers that might prevent students from equitable participation in high level courses or academic programs. Increasing access without support does not increase opportunities for students. 27J Schools strive to provide safe, healthy environments which not only support academic performance but also students' social emotional needs. Every student deserves the best, most supportive learning experiences, environments and instructional opportunities through being accountable for student learning.



### **Improving Academic Frames and Common Assessments**

In the past two years 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 GELL, 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.

### **Academic Planner, Graduation Pathways and Demonstrations**

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 GELL. A significant change in scheduling to insure that every student is enrolled in grade level courses and that successful completion of those courses results in a 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 clarity on learning opportunities for students through the academic planning process. A result of our new found clarity has been a dramatic increase in the number of students expressing interest in high level coursework and dramatic increases in the number of students participating in Industry and military assessments such as the ASVAB. 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 Teachers**

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 be. 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.