



Steve Barnette
Superintendent

Engage. Inspire. Prepare.

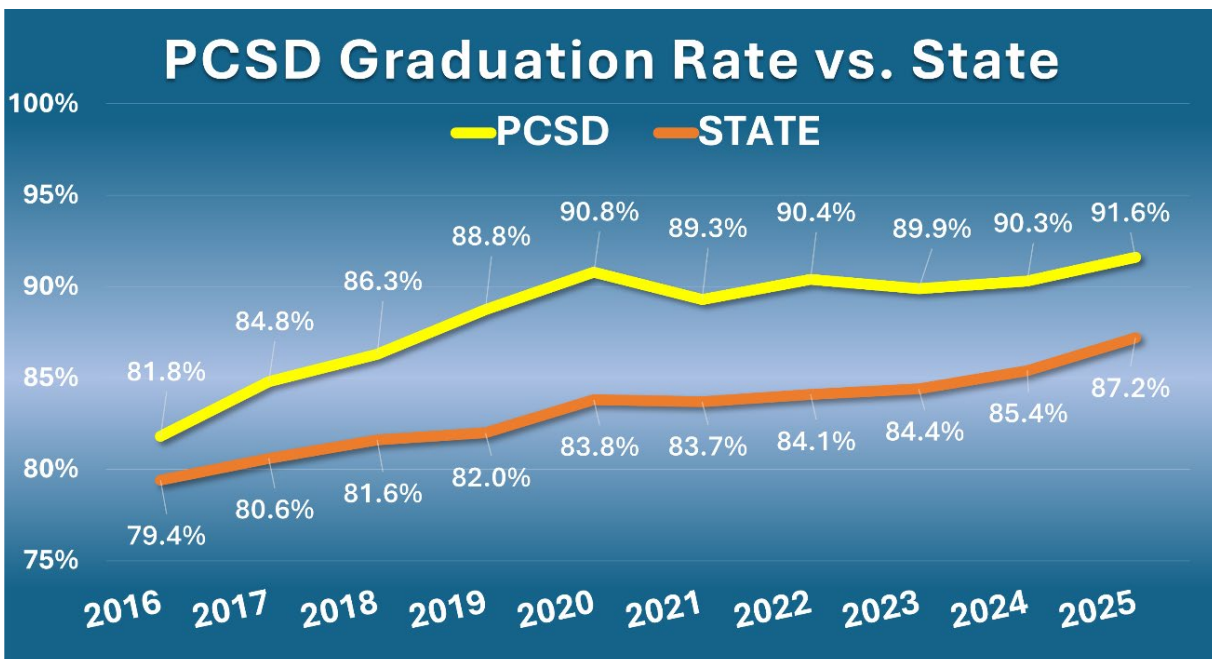
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 29, 2025

PCSD's Graduation Rate Climbs to Highest Mark in History

Paulding County School District's Class of 2025 has boosted the school district's graduation rate to a record high! The school district's five high schools achieved an average graduation rate of 91.6 percent, according to data released by the Georgia Department of Education. PCSD's 2025 graduation rate increased 1.3 percent, easily topping the 87.2 percent average graduation rate of all school districts in Georgia and surpassing PCSD's previous all-time high graduation rate of 90.8 percent in 2020. Additionally, three high schools – North Paulding High School, Paulding County High School, and South Paulding High School – all attained the highest graduation rates in school history.

Impressively, of the 11 metro-Atlanta school districts with the largest graduation classes*, the Paulding County School District's graduation rate ranked 4th highest. These rankings are a remarkable achievement for a low-wealth school district. While PCSD's graduation rate ranks 4th among the largest metro school systems, the district's local revenue per pupil ranks 10th among the same group, 38 percent below the average local revenue per pupil. Despite this financial disparity, Paulding County students outperform their peers statewide. Compared to our large neighboring districts (Cobb, Cherokee, and



Douglas), Paulding’s graduation rate was, on average, 1.0 percent higher, while our revenue per pupil was lowest. Over the last 10 years, PCSD’s graduation rate has increased by a remarkable 9.8 percentage points.

“I am extremely proud to see our schools reach the highest graduation rate in our district’s history,” said Superintendent Steve Barnette. “Our vision is to ensure all students are prepared for success today and tomorrow, and our job is to make sure those students meet the requirements and earn the credits needed to graduate on time. The students deserve a great deal of credit, as do the teachers and administrators who have worked tirelessly to support them.”

Mr. Barnette often emphasizes that the most important aspect of graduation is the quality of education students receive. “While the number and percentage of graduates is certainly important, the value of the PCSD diploma they earn is even more important. We are committed to ensuring that every Paulding County graduate possesses the academic and life skills necessary to succeed in college or technical school, their future career, or military service.”

According to the Teaching and Learning Division, the significant increase in graduation rates can be attributed to initiatives from the PCSD Strategic Plan. These initiatives focus on academic growth and achievement, creating safe and effective learning environments, promoting college and career readiness, and ensuring students are prepared to succeed following graduation. Associate Superintendent Tiffany Frachiseur, who leads the Teaching & Learning Division, stated, “Our high schools have done an excellent job increasing the number of students enrolled in rigorous, college-level courses through Advanced Placement and dual-enrollment programs. Not only has enrollment in advanced courses increased, but standard college readiness measures—such as Advanced Placement and SAT scores—indicate that our graduates are well-prepared for their futures.”

Additionally, PCSD high school students are prepared to read and comprehend materials they will encounter post-graduation. “Our high school students exceed the target median score for college and career readiness. Not only are our graduation rates high but our graduates have the academic and reading skills necessary to succeed.”

Four of PCSD’s five high schools topped the state average and showed improvement over 2024. As mentioned, North Paulding, Paulding County, and South Paulding high schools all set record high marks for their respective schools. As a district, the Paulding County School District graduation rate has topped the state average for the past 15 years.

Paulding County Board of Education Chair Deborah Collett noted that PCSD’s impressive graduation rate reflects a community commitment to educational success. “We are tremendously proud of our students, families, and educators for achieving a record-high graduation rate across our district,” she said. “Even as one of Georgia’s lowest-wealth districts, this milestone reflects our entire school community’s unwavering dedication and commitment.”

Georgia calculates the graduation rate using a formula known as the adjusted cohort rate, which the U.S. Department of Education requires. The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate defines the cohort based on when a student first becomes a freshman. It is calculated using the number of students who graduate within four years and includes adjustments for student transfers. The state measures four-year and five-year graduation rates as part of each school district’s CCRPI (College and Career Ready Performance Index) calculation. PCSD’s five-year graduation rate for 2025 is 92.0 percent, also the highest in PCSD history.

The GA Department of Education statewide press release with links to data tables can be found by clicking [here](#).

*MORE 2025 GRADUATION RATE DATA SUPPORTING DATA
CAN BE FOUND ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE:*



Georgia Department of Education 2025 Four-Year Graduation Rate – Large Metro Districts*				
	System Name	Graduation Class Size	Total Graduated	Graduation Rate
1	Forsyth County	4,370	4,239	97.0
2	Fulton County	7,934	7,294	91.9
3	Cherokee County	3,481	3,194	91.8
4	Paulding County	2,717	2,489	91.6
5	Douglas County	2,312	2,098	90.7
6	Atlanta Public Schools	3,423	3,097	90.5
7	Henry County	4,203	3,773	89.8
8	Cobb County	9,574	8,535	89.2
	All Georgia Systems	142,094	123,910	87.2
9	Clayton County	4,131	3,566	86.3
10	Gwinnett County	15,931	13,604	85.4
11	DeKalb County	6,962	5,665	81.4

*Districts with more than 25,000 students within a 50-mile radius of Atlanta

