

2026 Graduation Rate: Internal Analysis



FCS Climb Continues: Reaching New Heights Year After Year

Overview

The Class of 2026 brought Fulton County Schools (FCS) to a new high, achieving a **record graduation rate of 93.4 percent** and continuing the district's upward climb in student success. With more than 9 out of every 10 students graduating on time, this achievement reflects students' persistence and the steadfast support of educators, families, and school communities. It also represents the collective impact of districtwide efforts to strengthen student achievement, engagement, and readiness for life after high school. Most importantly, the record rate represents thousands of students reaching new heights as they move toward college, careers, military service, and other postsecondary opportunities.

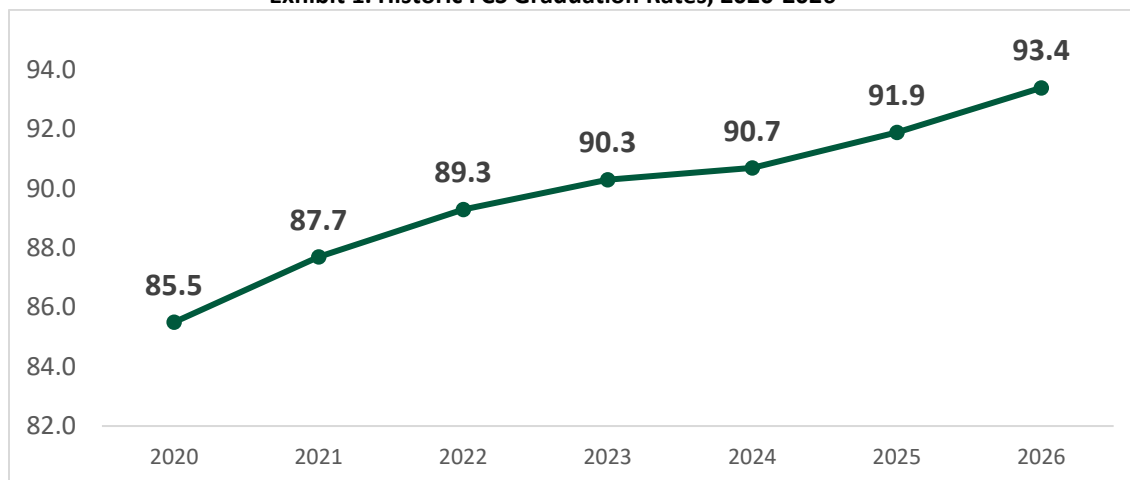
Understanding the Calculation

Georgia's four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate follows a group of students beginning in ninth grade and adjusts the cohort as students transfer in or transfer out, emigrate, or pass away. The rate is the percentage of students in the adjusted cohort who earn a regular high school diploma within four years.

FCS District Progress

FCS reached a record graduation rate of 93.4 percent in 2026, continuing a seven-year rise from 85.5 percent in 2020. After first surpassing 90 percent in 2023, the district sustained its momentum with a **1.5 percentage point increase in 2026**. The overall 7.9 percentage point gain reflects meaningful, sustained progress in helping more students stay on track and graduate on time.

Exhibit 1. Historic FCS Graduation Rates, 2020-2026



School-Level Graduation Rate

The district's overall graduation rate reflects the distinct trajectories of its individual school communities. Table 1 presents graduation rates from 2020 through 2026, allowing recent changes to be considered alongside longer-term patterns. Among the 21 schools with reported rates in both 2025 and 2026, **14 improved and two maintained their performance**, while **five experienced declines**. Across the seven-year period, several schools sustained consistently high graduation rates, while others achieved substantial gains that contributed to the district's continued progress. The expanded view also shows that progress has not been uniform, with some schools experiencing fluctuations or recent declines. Together, these results highlight sustained excellence, meaningful transformation, and opportunities for focused support to ensure that progress reaches students across every school.

Table 1. School-Level Graduation Rates, 2020-2026

School	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2025 vs. 2026
Alpharetta HS	96.5	93.2	96.9	96.3	97.9	98.4	96.8	-1.6
Banneker HS	76.9	82.4	82.8	82.8	81.4	84.6	86.2	1.6
Cambridge HS	98.2	97.5	98.1	97.1	96.7	97.4	97.6	0.2
Centennial HS	88.6	91.0	93.5	93.4	93.8	95.3	95.5	0.2
Chattahoochee HS	96.2	98.2	96.6	95.9	97.3	97.0	99.1	2.1
Crescent HS	80.5	84.4	88.5	90.4	89.2	92.2	94.7	2.5
FAVE	--	--	--	64.0	74.4	67.8	81.3	13.5
FCS Innovation Academy	--	--	--	--	98.2	99.8	99.7	-0.1
Global Impact Academy	--	--	--	--	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.0
Hapeville Career Academy	94.0	94.2	91.9	93.1	94.9	97.5	96.7	-0.8
Independence HS	30.3	26.1	17.0	28.8	53.5	67.9	78.9	11.0
Johns Creek HS	97.3	97.3	96.6	97.9	96.9	97.1	98.6	1.5
Langston Hughes HS	85.3	86.7	85.3	90.1	92.5	94.3	93.7	-0.6
Milton HS	96.9	96.1	97.1	95.9	95.9	96.2	97.3	1.1
North Springs HS	91.9	94.5	92.1	90.9	92.1	94.9	92.0	-2.9
Northview HS	96.1	98.3	97.2	99.6	98.5	98.0	98.7	0.7
Riverwood HS	89.9	93.5	97.5	96.9	98.8	97.1	97.3	0.2
Roswell HS	88.3	91.7	93.6	92.2	92.3	93.5	93.5	0.0
Skyview HS	9.7	2.9	8.5	24.3	23.8	32.2	37.3	5.1
The Promise Career Institute	--	--	--	--	--	--	98.0	--
Tri-Cities HS	84.3	89.1	89.2	87.0	86.7	86.1	89.5	3.4
Westlake HS	94.8	95.5	92.8	91.4	93.2	91.9	95.0	3.1
District	85.5	87.7	89.3	90.3	90.7	91.9	93.4	1.5

School-Level Stories

The districtwide results reflect several distinct stories across FCS high schools. Some schools achieved substantial long-term gains, others maintained consistently high performance, and several experienced changes that show progress is not always linear. The following sections highlight the most notable patterns across the seven years of data while also recognizing important movement in 2026.

Schools Gaining Momentum

Several schools achieved gains that meaningfully changed their graduation trajectories across the seven-year period.

Independence High School demonstrated the largest long-term gain among schools with seven years of data, rising from 30.3 percent in 2020 to 78.9 percent in 2026. This **48.6-point increase** includes an **11.0-point gain in the most recent year** and marks four consecutive years of improvement since 2022.

Skyview High School increased from 9.7 percent in 2020 to 37.3 percent in 2026, representing a **27.6 percentage point gain over seven years**. Although its path included periods of decline, the school has gained 13.0 points since 2023, including a **5.1-point increase in 2026**.

Director of Charter Schools Andrea Cooper Gatewood placed Skyview's progress in the context of the students it serves:

"For an alternative high school serving students who have faced significant barriers to graduation, the 5.1-point increase in 2026 reflects continued momentum while highlighting the opportunity for further growth."

Creekside High School rose from 80.5 percent in 2020 to 94.7 percent in 2026, a **14.2-point increase** that moved the school firmly into the 90 percent range. The school also gained **2.5 points in the most recent year**.

Principal Dr. Terrell Awak connected Creekside's progress to the school's culture, relationships, and systems of student support:

"At Creekside High School, our mantra, 'Your Path. Your Pursuit. Your Tribe.' is more than a slogan. It reflects our commitment to ensuring every student has a clear pathway to graduation, the support to pursue their goals, and a community that believes in their success. Over the past seven years, Creekside's graduation rate has increased from 80.5% to 94.7%, including a 2.5-point gain in the most recent year and an overall increase of 14.2 points, reflecting the impact of intentional systems and collective effort. As an AVID National Demonstration School, we have built a culture of high expectations, strong relationships, and student-centered supports that help every scholar succeed. Through tools such as the Cohort Tracker, developed by Fulton County Schools' Strategy and Data Team, and the dedicated efforts of our counseling department and graduation coach to closely monitor student progress toward graduation, we are able to identify needs early and provide timely interventions. While we are proud of this achievement, we remain focused on strengthening these systems and supports so that every student is prepared to thrive in college, career, and life."

Banneker High School increased from 76.9 percent in 2020 to 86.2 percent in 2026, a **9.3-percentage-point gain**. After a period of relatively stable performance and a decline in 2024, the school returned to upward movement with gains in each of the past two years.

A Strong Starting Point

The Promise Career Institute reported a **graduation rate of 98.0 percent in 2026**, establishing an impressive initial benchmark for the school. While prior-year comparisons are not available, this result provides a strong foundation for future graduating classes.

Consistency at the Highest Levels

Some schools are not simply reaching high levels of performance; they are **sustaining them year after year**. Across the full seven-year period, **Cambridge, Chattahoochee, Johns Creek, Milton, and Northview each maintained graduation rates above 95 percent**, demonstrating the consistency that results when strong systems and expectations become embedded within a school community. **Riverwood combined sustained performance with meaningful growth**, rising from 89.9 percent in 2020 to 97.3 percent in 2026. Schools with shorter histories are establishing similarly strong patterns. **Global Impact Academy achieved a perfect 100 percent graduation rate in each of its three reported years**, while **FCS Innovation Academy remained above 98 percent** during the same period. Together, these schools demonstrate that excellence is not defined by a single year of success, but by the ability to **sustain strong outcomes over time**.

Principal Michael Todd attributed Chattahoochee's achievement to the collective commitment of the school community and its focus on knowing, monitoring, and supporting each student:

"This achievement reflects the collective commitment of our students, families, teachers, counselors, and MTSS team to ensuring every student is prepared for success. A key factor in this accomplishment is our unwavering focus on truly knowing our students through strong relationships and ongoing support. Our counseling department meets individually with every 11th-grade student and their parents to review graduation plans, discuss post-secondary goals, and make any necessary adjustments to keep students on track for a successful senior year and graduation. The results are a testament to the collaborative efforts of the Chattahoochee staff to identify student needs, provide targeted supports, and create pathways for all students to succeed. As we look to the future, we are focused on our student subgroups of English Language Learners (ELL) and Special Education (SPED) with goals to strengthen our co-teaching models and student caseload advisement."

Rebounds and Changing Trajectories

Progress does not always follow a straight path, and examining performance over time makes those changes more visible. FAVE has gained **17.3 percentage points since its first reported rate in 2023**, despite a decline in 2025. Its 13.5-point increase to 81.3 percent in 2026 was the largest one-year gain in the district.

Former Principal Dr. Taylor Barton reflected on the attention, collaboration, and consistent monitoring that contributed to FAVE's improvement:

"Through the dedication of our counseling department, as well as the commitment of our teachers to make sure our students are successful, we were able to see an increase in our graduation rate. We paid careful attention to detail as far as what students needed credit-wise and consistently monitored student achievement data to ensure that we graduated as many students as possible."

Current Principal Damond Smith described how the school plans to sustain that momentum through proactive monitoring, early intervention, and stronger student support systems:

"As we move through the 2026-2027 school year, my focus is on sustaining that momentum through proactive monitoring, early intervention, and strong student support systems. My goal is not simply to maintain last year's gains, but to institutionalize the practices that contributed to our success. By focusing on attendance, cohort accuracy, early identification of at-risk students, and timely intervention, I believe FAVE is well-positioned to continue improving graduation outcomes and ensuring every student has a clear pathway to earning a diploma."

Westlake returned to 95.0 percent after fluctuating between 91.4 and 95.5 percent across the seven years. Tri-Cities also experienced variation but finished at 89.5 percent, **5.2 points above its 2020 rate**.

Principal Dr. Amanda Williams-Gorham connected Tri-Cities' achievement to the school's legacy and the collective commitment of its community:

“At Tri-Cities, graduation is more than a milestone; it is the continuation of our legacy. We are incredibly proud of our scholars and grateful for our entire school community, whose dedication and commitment help make this achievement possible.”

Trends Requiring Attention

Five schools experienced a decline from 2025 to 2026. North Springs recorded the largest decrease at 2.9 percentage points, followed by Alpharetta at 1.6 points, Hapeville Career Academy at 0.8 points, Langston Hughes at 0.6 points, and FCS Innovation Academy at 0.1 points. North Springs has experienced some variation over the seven-year period, with rates ranging from 90.9 percent to 94.9 percent. Its 2026 rate of 92.0 percent was nearly equal to its 2020 rate of 91.9 percent, but below its 2025 result.

The longer-term context provides important perspective on these recent declines. Alpharetta, Hapeville, Langston Hughes, and North Springs all remained at or above their 2020 rates in 2026, while Innovation Academy remained above its first reported rate in 2024. **Langston Hughes demonstrated the largest long-term gain among this group, increasing 8.4 percentage points from 2020 to 2026.** Even so, the recent shifts provide an opportunity to examine emerging trends, strengthen supports where needed, and prevent one-year declines from becoming sustained patterns.

Conclusion

The Class of 2026 graduation rate of **93.4 percent** represents both a record for Fulton County Schools and the continuation of a seven-year climb. Since 2020, the district has gained **7.9 percentage points**, with progress reflected in long-term school transformations, sustained high performance, and renewed momentum across several campuses. The next step is to build on what the seven-year data reveal by learning from schools demonstrating durable growth, preserving the practices supporting consistently strong outcomes, and providing focused assistance where results have declined or varied over time. Continued use of student-level data, early identification of students who need additional support, and collaboration among schools, families, and district teams will be essential to closing remaining gaps and ensuring that more students graduate prepared for their next opportunity.