Dropout and Federal Graduation Rates 2013-2014

The District conducts two kinds of dropout analyses every year. The **cross-sectional** analysis of student dropouts examines dropout rates among students enrolled in various grades at one point in time. A **longitudinal** analysis, also conducted annually, tracks a group of students in the same grade or cohort over a period of several years. Each method of analysis addresses a different aspect of how many students are dropping out of school. This research brief provides information on the cross-sectional and longitudinal dropout rates and longitudinal graduation rates for 2013-2014.

Dropout Definitions

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) currently defines a dropout as a student who: (1) voluntarily removes himself or herself from the school system before graduation; (2) has not met the relevant attendance requirements of the school district, or the student's whereabouts are unknown; (3) has withdrawn from school but has not transferred to another public or private school; (4) has withdrawn from school because of hardship; or (5) is not eligible to attend school because of reaching the maximum age for an exceptional student program. Rates depicted in this brief reflect the withdrawal codes pertaining to these outcomes as recorded by school site personnel.

Cross-Sectional Analysis and Dropout Rate

The methodology used to determine cross-sectional dropout rate divides the number of students in grades 9 through 12 who are classified as dropouts by the total number of students in grades 9 through 12 in attendance at any time during the school year. The cross-sectional dropout rate is expressed as a percentage of the membership for the entire school year. The dropout rate for 2013-2014 across grades 9-12 was 2.6 percent. Table 1 includes a breakdown of the rates by grade and across grades for 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. The observed cross-sectional dropout rates are slightly higher in 2013-2014 across almost all grade levels and overall.

Table 1
Cross-Sectional Dropout Rates for 2012-2013 and 2013-2014

Grade	2012-2013			2013-2014		
	2013 All Year Membership	No. of Dropouts	Dropout Rate	2014 All Year Membership	No. of Dropouts	Dropout Rate
9	30,212	645	2.1%	30,962	742	2.4%
10	29,257	592	2.0%	29,258	619	2.1%
11	26,786	521	1.9%	27,589	589	2.1%
12	26,290	1,049	4.0%	26,693	1,026	3.8%
9 - 12	112,545	2,807	2.5%	114,502	2,976	2.6%

Cross-Sectional Rate by Gender

Table 2 includes a breakdown of the rates by gender and grade for 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Consistent with previous local and national findings, female students were categorized as dropouts/truants less frequently than were male students. Specifically, the rate for 2013-2014 for female students in grades 9-12 was 2.2 percent. The rate for 2013-2014 for male students in grades 9-12 was 3.0 percent.

Table 2
Cross-Sectional Dropout Rates for 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 by Gender

Grade	Female		Male	
	2012-2013	2013-2014	2012-2013	2013-2014
9	1.7	2.1	2.5	2.6
10	1.7	1.9	2.3	2.3
11	1.5	1.8	2.3	2.4
12	3.3	2.9	4.7	4.8
9 - 12	2.0	2.2	2.9	3.0

Cross-Sectional Rate by Ethnic/Racial Background

White, Non-Hispanic and Hispanic students were categorized as dropouts less frequently than were Black, Non-Hispanic students (Table 3). In examining the rate for White, Non-Hispanic students, it can be seen that the dropout rate for this group was 2.1 percent for grades 9-12 for 2013-2014. For Hispanic students, the rate was 2.2, and for Black, Non-Hispanics, the rate was 3.9. As can be seen, there was a decrease in the dropout rate for Black, Non-Hispanic students at all grade levels. The largest decrease was seen in 12th grade Black, Non-Hispanic students. The cross-sectional dropout rate for these students decreased from 6.9 percent in 2012-13 to 5.1 percent in 2013-14.

Table 3
Cross-Sectional Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity

Grade	White, Non-Hispanic		Black, Non-Hispanic		Hispanic	
	2012-2013	2013-2014	2012-2013	2013-2014	2012-2013	2013-2014
9	1.2	2.2	3.4	3.3	1.8	2.2
10	1.3	1.9	4.1	3.6	1.4	1.7
11	1.1	1.6	3.8	3.7	1.4	1.7
12	2.8	2.6	6.9	5.1	3.0	3.6
9 - 12	1.6	2.1	4.5	3.9	1.9	2.2

Cross-Sectional Dropout Rates for Exceptional Student Education Programs

In keeping with the State's practice, the dropout rate for students in Exceptional Student Education programs was calculated using the grade 9-12 total membership from the End of Year Survey. This includes any grade 9-12 student who was in membership at any time during the year or its associated summer session.

Table 4
Cross-Sectional Dropout Rates for Exceptional Student Education Programs

Exceptional Student Education Program	2013-2014 All Year Membership	Dropout Rate
Total Excluding Gifted	12,368	4.4%

Cross-Sectional Dropout Rates for English Language Learners (ELL) Students

The dropout rate for grades 9-12 students classified as ESOL Levels 1-4 was 4.0 percent for 2012-2013. The cross-sectional dropout rate for ELL students in 2013-2014 across all grade levels was slightly lower, at 3.8 percent. This increase was consistent across all grade levels except the 12th grade level.

Table 5
Cross-Sectional Dropout Rates for LEP Students

Grade	2012-2013			2013-2014		
	All Year ESOL 1-4 Membership	No. of LEP Dropouts	LEP Dropout Rates	All Year ESOL 1-4 Membership	No. of LEP Dropouts	LEP Dropout Rates
9	4,085	182	4.5%	4,672	191	4.1%
10	3,291	82	2.5%	3,623	75	2.1%
11	2,795	77	2.8%	2,822	67	2.4%
12	2,065	154	7.5%	2,169	166	7.7%
9 - 12	12,236	495	4.0%	13286	499	3.8%

Longitudinal Federal Graduation Analysis and Dropout Rate

Starting in the 2011-2012 school year, the school grade accountability system for the State of Florida changed from using the National Governors Association (NGA) rate to the Federal Uniform Rate (FUR) for longitudinal analysis. The FUR is a more rigorous measure and generally results in lower graduation rates.

Both the NGA and Federal Uniform Rate are four-year adjusted cohort rate models. This means that the denominator consists of all students entering grade 9 for the first time four years prior to the year for which the rate is calculated, plus incoming transfers (ninth graders in the first year of the cohort, tenth graders in the second year of the cohort, eleventh graders in the third year of the cohort and twelfth graders in the fourth and final year of the cohort) **minus** adjustments to the cohort (exiting transfers and deceased students).

This report compares the most recent cohort group (the students who started 9th grade in October 2010 and who were normally scheduled to graduate in June 2014) with the cohort group from one year ago. The 4-year dropout rate for the 2013-2014 cohort group was 5.6 % and the 4-year graduation rate was 76.6% (Table 6). Both of these rates are slightly lower than the rates for last year. Not all students in the cohort complete the normal 4-year high school span as either graduates or dropouts. Students can complete high-school with Certificates of Completion (6.7% for this cohort) but are not considered as graduates in this analysis. Additionally, 6.9% of the cohort was still enrolled in school and may become part of an extended-path graduate designation in the future.

Table 6
Longitudinal Dropout and Graduation Rates

2012-2013				2013-2014		
Regular Students				**Regular Students**		
Graduates	19775	77.2%		Graduates	20238	76.6%
Dropouts	1636	6.4%		Dropouts	1477	5.6%
Non-Grad Completers	1634	6.4%		Non-Grad Completers	1782	6.7%
Continuing	1753	6.8%		Continuing	1814	6.9%
Cohort	25621	100.0%		Cohort	26426	100.0%

Longitudinal Rates by Ethnic/Racial Background

White, Non-Hispanic students had higher graduation rates than Hispanic students, who, in turn, had higher graduation rates than Black, Non-Hispanic students (Table 7). The percentage of graduates for White, Non-Hispanics improved slightly, while those for Hispanics and Black, Non-Hispanics were slightly lower.

Table 7
Longitudinal Dropout and Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity

2012-2013											
White				**Hispanic**				**Black**			
Graduates	2010	85.9%		Graduates	13005	78.7%		Graduates	4372	69.2%	
Dropouts	107	4.6%		Dropouts	918	5.6%		Dropouts	605	9.6%	
Non-Grad Completers	66	2.8%		Non-Grad Completers	1089	6.6%		Non-Grad Completers	464	7.3%	
Continuing	103	4.4%		Continuing	953	5.8%		Continuing	688	10.9%	
Cohort	2341	100.0%		Cohort	16535	100.0%		Cohort	6320	100.0%	

| 2013-2014											
White				**Hispanic**				**Black**			
Graduates	2088	87.6%		Graduates	13376	77.8%		Graduates	4372	68.2%	
Dropouts	83	3.5%		Dropouts	903	5.3%		Dropouts	483	7.5%	
Non-Grad Completers	57	2.4%		Non-Grad Completers	1137	6.6%		Non-Grad Completers	567	8.8%	
Continuing	93	3.9%		Continuing	992	5.8%		Continuing	717	11.2%	
Cohort	2384	100.0%		Cohort	17187	100.0%		Cohort	6412	100.0%	

Summary

Cross-Sectional Dropout Analysis

•	The cross-sectional dropout rate for 2013-2014 for grades 9-12 was 2.6%. This was essentially unchanged from the cross-sectional dropout rate for 2012-2013.

•	Consistent with previous local and national findings, female students were categorized as dropouts less frequently than were male students. Specifically, the rate for male students for 2013-2014 was 3.0 percent (grades 9-12). The rate for female students was 2.2 percent (grades 9-12).

•	White, Non-Hispanic students and Hispanic students were categorized as dropouts less frequently than were Black, Non-Hispanic students. Specifically, the 2013-2014 rate for White, Non-Hispanic students was 2.1 percent (grades 9-12); for Hispanic students the rate was 2.2 percent (grades 9-12); and for Black, Non-Hispanic students the rate was 3.9 percent (grades 9-12).

Longitudinal Graduation Analysis and Dropout Rate

• The longitudinal 4-year dropout rate for the 2010-2014 cohort group was 5.6 percent. The longitudinal 4-year graduation rate for the 2010-2014 cohort group was 76.6 percent, a slight decrease from the 77.2 percent of the 2009-2013 cohort.

• The longitudinal 4-year 2010-2014 dropout rate for White, Non-Hispanic students was 3.5 percent; for Hispanics students the rate was 5.3 percent; and for Black, Non-Hispanic students the rate was 7.5 percent. These represent substantial improvements over the rates from the previous cohort group.

Longitudinal Federal Graduation Rate

Graduation Rate / Longitudinal Cohort Group

2012-2013	2013-2014
77.2	76.6
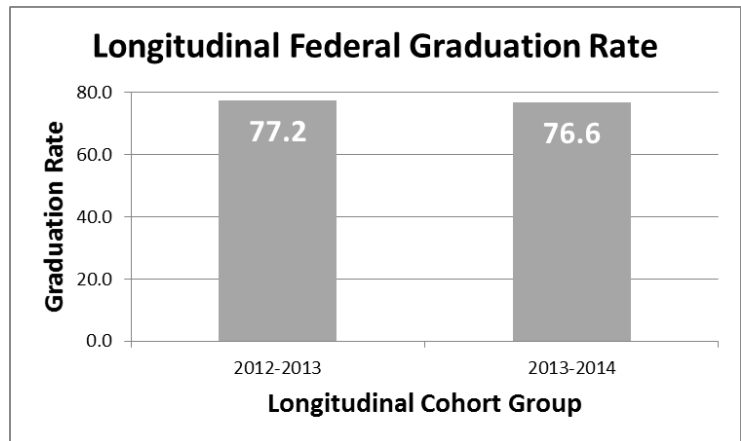
The longitudinal 4-year 2010-2014 graduation rate for White, Non-Hispanic students was 87.6 percent; for Hispanic students the rate was 77.8 percent; and for Black, Non-Hispanic students the rate was 68.2 percent.

The cross-sectional (or single-year) method and the longitudinal (or multi-year) method examine data at different points in time and may yield different conclusions depending on the method used. Furthermore, the methodology for defining the cohort group and calculating the dropout and graduation rates is subject to slight modification from year to year. A longitudinal methodology is generally preferred over cross-sectional analysis since the former is less susceptible to temporary fluctuations over time.