

GRADUATION IN APS
UNDERSTANDING THE COHORT REPORT

The cohort status report presents information about a graduating class. To complete this type of study, each beginning freshman class is identified as a cohort. The cohort is named for its anticipated graduation year. So the freshmen entering school in 2001 are considered to be the Cohort of 2005. Sometimes a cohort study is referred to as a schools “holding power”.

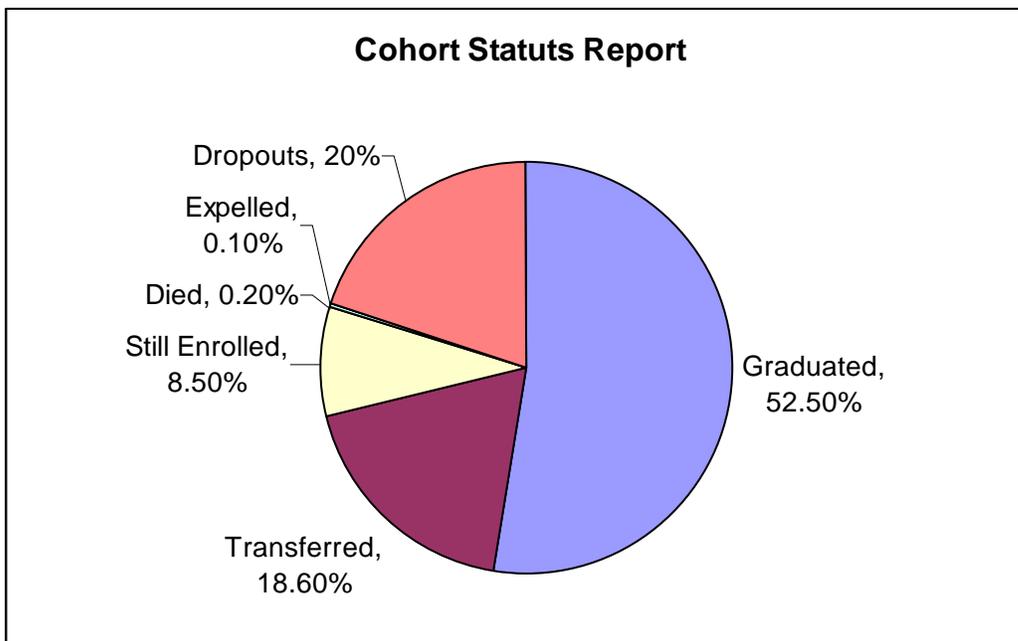
This group or cohort of students is studied through out their four years of school. At the end of the four years, each student’s status is recorded and reported for the cohort study.

The cohort captures and presents six different statuses for students in the graduation class of 2005:

Graduated	Transferred out of APS	Expelled
Still Enrolled	Dropped Out	Death

There are so many different statuses for students in a graduating class that it seems easier just to talk about graduation and dropout. However, it is important NOT to use a simple subtraction strategy to calculate one of these rates from the other.

It is inaccurate to assume that the graduation rate subtracted from 100% yields a dropout rate. Students who have not graduated may still be enrolled in APS. Some of those students have transferred out of APS and have continued their education in a different school district. There is a portion of these students who have dropped out. But that figure must be calculated as each status is calculated. For example, the graduating class of 2005 started with 6625 students.



EDUCATION WEEK
EDITORIAL PROJECT IN EDUCATION

The Editorial Project in Educational Research Center (EPE) released the first report on graduation in June 2006. The report presents data for the 2002-2003 school year for all 50 states in addition to data from the 50 largest school districts in the nation. A more recent study was published in June 2007.

This report highlights the accuracy of the APS Cohort report.

The EPE estimated APS graduation rate at 52% for the class of 2002-2003 and a 60.8% rate in the most recent study for the graduating class of 2003-04.

The APS true cohort method shows a **52.2%** graduation for the same period out of a total of 6843 students in the cohort; and a rate of 52.9% for the next year studied by the EPE project.

The EPE project estimates that the national cohort dropout rate is about 30%, about 10% higher than the APS rate for the same time period.

Both the EPE method and the APS method carry with them one caution. You cannot assume a dropout rate can be calculated based on 100% minus the 52% graduation. Students at the end of four years can be still enrolled or have transferred out of APS. These students can make up as much as 30% of the cohort.

PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT GRADUATION STATISTICS

The state currently uses a senior completion rate to meet minimum requirements of NCLB.

For each district, the state captures students who are 12th graders on the 40th day (denominator) and determines their graduation status on the last day of the school year (numerator). A percent of students who graduated is calculated.

Two attribution strategies for this method need consideration:

- If a student is enrolled on the 40th day at an APS school, transfers to another NM school and graduates, that student is removed from the 40-day count at the APS school and considered a graduate for the new school.
- If a student is enrolled on the 40th day at an APS school, transfers to another NM and then drops out of school, the student is considered a dropout for the APS school.

This method is used only as a temporary strategy until universal ID numbers are in place for all public school students. Then NM will move to a cohort method.

The New Mexico Public Education Department reported a graduation of 86.85% for the 2005 ratings based on the 2004 graduating class in the Albuquerque Public School District.

For the 2006 ratings, using this same method described, NM PED reported an 86.86% graduation rate for the APS graduating class in 2005.

School	PED Graduation Rate For 2005-06 Seniors	PED Graduation Rate for 2004-05 Seniors
Albuquerque	77.35%	89.81%
Cibola	90.07%	90.34%
Del Norte	88.43%	91.22%
Eldorado	94.71%	96.74%
Highland	81.90%	88.03%
La Cueva	95.08%	92.48%
Manzano	89.31%	92.17%
Rio Grande	79.38%	77.56%
Sandia	92.93%	94.66%
Valley	90.33%	90.65%
West Mesa	82.80%	64.29%