

NBHS Graduation Rate Increases to Highest Level in 10 Years at 70.9%

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) today released its annual data on graduation and dropout rates across Massachusetts.

New Bedford High School's 2016 four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate has increased to 70.9%, the highest in the 10 years that the state has officially documented graduation rates for all districts. The 2015 four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate was 67.8%, and it has increased from a low of 61.4% in 2010.

Importantly, among key subgroups the graduation rate has increased and the four-year adjusted dropout rate has decreased. Most prominently, English Language Learners' graduation rate rose by 25.1 percentage points, from 35.5% in 2015 to 60.6% in 2016. The graduation rate for students with disabilities increased by 18.5 percentage points, from 32% in 2015 to 50.5% in 2016.

The four-year dropout rate, which had remained steady the past two years, declined by 1.9 percentage points from 13.9% in 2015 to 12% in 2016 – down by about one third from 2013, when it stood at 21.2%.

Some of the outcomes for New Bedford High include:

- The four-year dropout rate has decreased by about 9 percentage points at NBHS – from 21.2% in 2013 to 13.9% in 2014 and now to 12% in 2016.
- The four-year graduation rate is about 10 percentage points higher than it was just five years ago in 2010.



Superintendent Pia Durkin said New Bedford High School's focus on all students is what has led to the increase in the graduation rate, which can be measured across various subgroups.

"New Bedford High School educators continue to focus on every student's potential and ability to succeed, and that is evident in the graduation rate for 2016," said Superintendent Durkin. "Students across the spectrum – whether they are English Language Learners, students with disabilities, high needs or low income students, white or Latino – are graduating at a higher rate in New Bedford than in the last 10 years. These subgroups are now showing success in graduating at higher rates, success that has eluded these students historically for years. This is the direct result of the pathways and programs that have been put in place, and more importantly the hard work of educators who believe in our students, and who work with them to accomplish all that they can. New Bedford High School must and will continue to improve, as our students and teachers have proved is possible."

Mayor Jon Mitchell said, "Improving the graduation rate is a key goal of reforming our school system. New Bedford Public Schools continue to improve and the reform effort is providing more opportunities for our children to succeed after high school."

Headmaster Bernadette Coelho said, "Our job is to prepare every New Bedford student for graduation and for success after graduation, and we continue to work with all students to ensure that they are graduating and ready for college and other opportunities. I'm proud of our students and our staff for their hard work and continued progress. Every student matters, and we know that with a plan, every student can and will succeed."