

NBHS graduation rate increases to highest level since state began recording; Annual dropout rate down to 3.5%



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“Excellence is within reach,” Superintendent says as she commends students as well as educators and community members who champion student persistence as dropout rate decreases and graduation rate climbs

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) today released its annual data on graduation and dropout rates across the state. As New Bedford High School began its turnaround plan, the dropout rate has decreased and the graduation rate increased. The graduation rate at New Bedford High School is the highest recorded since the DESE

began measuring graduation rates in 2006.

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Some of the outcomes for New Bedford High include:

- The four-year dropout rate decreased by more than seven percentage points at NBHS – from 21.2 percent in 2013 to 13.9 percent in 2014.
- The annual dropout rate decreased to 3.5 percent in 2014, down from 4.2 in 2013 and a high of 7.4 percent in 2008 and 2009.
- The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (students who have attended NBHS from freshman through senior year) increased by more than four percentage points at NBHS – from 66.2 percent in 2013 to 70.3 percent in 2014, the first time since 2006 reached above 70 percent. In 2010, the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate was 61.4 percent.
- The graduation rate is about 10 percentage points higher than it was just four years ago in 2010.

Superintendent of Schools Pia Durkin praised high school students and educators for the positive changes.

“I’m very proud that our students have achieved the highest graduation rate in eight years,” said Superintendent Durkin. “This news is very encouraging and very affirming and points to the strategies we are using in recognizing that every single student counts. Our students are staying in school and earning their diplomas in four years, a reflection of the fact that the culture at New Bedford High School is focused on achieving excellence from all students.”

“This is a result of the connections that students build with educators and a reminder that relationships matter,” said the Superintendent. “New Bedford knows that excellence is within reach. Ensuring that all students stay on course to graduate in four years and have the support they need to catch up when they fall behind is directly related to keeping our students in school. Behind every successful student is someone encouraging them or cheering them on – a parent, a teacher, a coach, a neighbor, or a community member who believes that student can do better. There is much work to be done on the road of continuous improvement but this is very encouraging news.”

Mayor Jon Mitchell said, “A major goal of our efforts to reform the school system is to increase graduation so that all children have the chance to succeed later in life. Today’s announcement is proof that our efforts have gained traction and are creating better opportunities for our children.”

Acting Headmaster Bernadette Coelho said, “I’m very pleased that we’re continuing to make progress. This is a major step toward our ultimate goal, which is to ensure no student drops out of school and every student has a solid educational plan. These results are owed to a lot of hard work by students and by staff at NBHS reaching out to one student at a time.”
