



# Fact Sheet on the CPS Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rate

## **What is the difference between the 2015 method and the prior method?**

Under both the 2015 method and the prior method, verified out-of-district transfers (e.g., students who move to another school district) are removed from the calculation. However, starting in 2015, CPS increased the rigor of reviewing transfer verification information to ensure accuracy. When transfer documentation was found to be invalid (e.g., improper code) or incomplete, the student was not counted as a verified transfer but was counted as a non-graduate and added back into the calculation. As a result, cohorts in years 2011-2014 are larger using the 2015 method.

## **What is the CPS Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rate?**

The five-year cohort graduation rate follows a group of students who enter Chicago Public Schools (CPS) as freshmen and calculates the percent of these students who graduate within five years after their freshman year. For example, the 2016 rate tracks ninth grade students who started in CPS in the 2011-12 school year and graduated from CPS by August of the 2015-16 school year.

## **How is the rate calculated?**

The rate is calculated by dividing the number of students from an adjusted ninth grade cohort who graduated over the five year time period by the total number of students in that cohort.

## **Who is included in the adjusted ninth grade cohort?**

This cohort includes all CPS 9<sup>th</sup> graders who:

- Were active in either semester of their ninth grade year, *and*
- Were in ninth grade for the first time, *and*
- Did not permanently transfer out of CPS during the five years following their freshman year (verified transfers).

## **Who is counted as a graduate?**

- Students who received traditional diplomas

## **Who is *not* counted as a graduate?**

- Students who dropped out
- Students who were still actively enrolled in CPS as of the end of the fifth year after their freshman year
- Verified transfers out of CPS
- Unverified transfers

## **What is an unverified transfer?**

An unverified transfer is a student who left a CPS school and was entered into the district's student information system as a transfer (either to another CPS school or to a school outside of CPS), but for whom enrollment in the new school has not yet been confirmed. If a student is still in this status at the end of the school year in which the transfer was supposed to take place, s/he is converted into a dropout.



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### Example Calculation

School A had 725 ninth grade students enrolled during the 2011-12 school year. Twenty of these were repeating the ninth grade. Twenty-five of them transferred out of CPS and were verified in a new school during the five years following the 2011-12 school year. The adjusted ninth grade cohort for this school was:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Cohort}_{9^{\text{th}} \text{ adj.}} &= 725 - 20 - 25 \\ &= \mathbf{680 \text{ students}}\end{aligned}$$

During the five years following the 2011-12 school year, 286 of these 680 students dropped out and 364 graduated. Of the remaining 45 students, 5 were unverified transfers as of August 2016, and twenty-five were still enrolled in CPS as of the end of the 2015-16 school year. School A's Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rate in 2016 was:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Graduation Rate}_{5\text{-year cohort}} &= 364 / 680 \\ &= \mathbf{53.5\%}\end{aligned}$$