

For immediate release  
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### **2014 NC High School Graduation Rate Highest in State History**

Since 2006, the first year the state reported a four-year cohort graduation rate, the percentage of students graduating from high school in four years or less has risen 15.5 percentage points – from 68.3 percent to 83.8 percent.

North Carolina's 2014 graduation rate of 83.8 percent is the highest recorded in the state's history. Macon County's current graduation rate is 88.2%.

The rise in graduation rates has occurred alongside changes that have led to more challenging standards and assessments and increased graduation requirements.

State Superintendent June Atkinson praised educators, students and their families for remaining focused on graduation as a goal. "In today's world, graduating from high school is a minimum requirement for students who hope to be competitive in the workplace. Congratulations to our students for their hard work.

"We will continue to focus efforts on boosting this rate at the state, local and school levels so that every student graduates from high school prepared to succeed," she said.

Students today are required to earn more course credits – a minimum of 22 – than prior groups of students were required to earn. Students who entered high school before 2009 had to successfully complete at least 20 credits to qualify for graduation. In addition, students today are expected to complete mathematics through Math III, or the equivalent of Algebra II, as a minimum.

Requirements for high school graduation have been gradually increasing over the past 20 years. Today, graduates must earn at least 22 credits as follows: English (four credits); Mathematics (four credits, through Math III plus a fourth math); Science (three credits); Social Studies (four to include Civics and Economics, World History, American History I: Founding Principles and American History II or AP US History); Health and Physical Education (one credit); six electives (which can include world languages, Career and Technical Education, JROTC, arts or other courses).

"A top priority of the State Board of Education is to ensure that high school diplomas are meaningful and aligned with the skills and knowledge that students need in college and in careers," said Board Chairman Bill Cobey. "It is good news that students are reaching higher standards and graduating in higher numbers as well."

While the minimum number of required course credits is 22 for high school graduates, many students earn more than the minimum. Most high schools operating on a block schedule or

modified block schedule offer students the opportunity to earn up to eight course credits per year.

In addition to the four-year cohort graduation rate, North Carolina also reports a five-year cohort graduation rate. The five-year cohort graduation rate for 2014 is 84.9 percent.

As in past years, graduation rates by subgroups of students varied (see below). Female students posted a higher graduation rate than male students. Asian students had the highest rate and students who are considered limited English proficient had the lowest rate. The variation of graduation rates by subgroup ranges from 51.8 percent to >95 percent, signaling that efforts to address graduation rates need to be specifically targeted to particular student needs.

**4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate – State of North Carolina  
Results by Subgroup (2010–11 Entering Ninth Graders for 2014)**

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>2014 Denominator</b>	<b>2014 Numerator</b>	<b>2014 Percent</b>	<b>2013 Percent</b>
All Students	109,869	92,106	83.8	82.5
Male	55,933	44,874	80.2	78.6
Female	53,936	47,232	87.6	86.6
American Indian	1,629	1,292	79.3	77.3
Asian	2,732	2,497	91.4	89.9
Black	30,010	23,933	79.8	77.5
Hispanic	12,034	9,304	77.3	75.2
Two or More Races	3,819	3,157	82.7	81.5
White	59,550	51,838	87.0	86.2
Economically Disadvantaged	47,895	37,334	77.9	76.1
Limited English Proficient	2,615	1,355	51.8	48.8
Students With Disabilities	10,381	6,687	64.4	62.3
Academically Gifted	18,219	-	>95	>95

Subgroup information is based on data collected when a student is last seen in the cohort. The table reflects data as of Aug. 28, 2014.