

Telling the Whole Truth (or Not) About High School Graduation

New State Data

Analysis by The Education Trust, December 2003



Few education issues are as fundamental as making sure all students leave the K-12 system with a basic certification of knowledge and skills. And few issues are as heart-wrenching as the reality for young people who drop out of the system without even a high school diploma.

When we look at the academic pipeline nationally, we see that four years after starting high school almost *one million* students had not graduated.¹

What is happening to these young people? It's vitally important for states to be as thorough and accurate as possible when determining and reporting who is successfully graduating from their schools and who is not. Only when everyone knows the scope of the problem can states responsibly shape policies and target resources to the schools and students with the greatest need.

For this reason, all schools, districts, and states are required to report to the public about the academic progress of all students, including high school graduation rates.² This reporting, called for in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), is shining a bright light on overall achievement in public schools and exposing the gaps that separate low-income

and minority students from their peers. In this way, NCLB is focusing the attention of educators, parents, and policymakers on those areas of public schooling that need to improve. This reporting also serves as the basis for the accountability required by the law, under which schools and districts are not considered successful unless they are successful with all groups of students.

States were required to report disaggregated graduation rates to the U.S.

“Differences in the ways states define “graduation rate” not only result in wide variations in the data but, in many cases, significantly understate the problems that schools and students are facing.”

Department of Education on September 1, 2003. There were no rewards or penalties attached to this information, no sanctions or financial consequences for states if their numbers fell above or a below a certain level. Rather, this data was intended to provide an honest accounting of students' progress through the educational system and baseline information for establishing future gradua-

tion rate targets. The September 1 filings represented an opportunity for states to take stock and look forward.

Our analysis of the September 1 state reports shows that some states seem to have seized this opportunity to provide an honest picture of high school graduation among their young people. By doing so, these states have taken a crucial step toward improving graduation rates among all students.

But many others have let this opportunity pass. Some states didn't report any data at all, and many didn't report it disaggregated by student group. Several cited an inability to collect this data,—data that is a crucial part of the K-12 picture, data that is required by a law passed almost two years ago. Others have reported data that differs greatly from the minimum graduation rate calculation required by NCLB. Instead, their calculation methods portray a rosier picture in their states than external sources suggest.

We applaud those states that have taken the opportunity provided by the September 1 filings to report an accurate picture of high school graduation. But the fact that so few have is cause for great concern. Not only does it signal unwill-

ingness or inability on the part of states to provide their citizens with an honest accounting of where they stand on this important issue, it also signals that many states are not ready to do what is needed to assure that all students leave high school with a diploma in hand.

For its part, the U.S. Department of Education has not provided the leadership and enforcement that would have produced better data. The Department is responsible for giving clear guidance to the states on exactly what information constitutes a reliable graduation rate. But states looking to the Department for this direction found conflicting messages.

The Department is also responsible for ensuring that states are, in fact, complying with these important requirements. But thus far states have flouted them, failing to report data or reporting misleading data with no consequence. The Department's inaction is sending a strong message about priorities, one that is at odds with the priorities expressed in the law.

Why are graduation rates important?

Everyone agrees that a high school diploma is a minimum requirement to fully participate in the modern economy. The failure to obtain a diploma has profound social and economic consequences for students, their families, and their communities. High school dropouts face significantly reduced employment and earnings prospects: they are 15% less likely to be employed and earn almost 30% less than their diploma- or GED-holding peers.³ Additionally, they are more likely to rely on public assistance and to end up in prison.⁴

Getting a complete accounting of high school graduation is crucial for making sound education policy decisions to improve it. Yet, year after year we find that the tracking and reporting of gradu-

ation data is often inconsistent in some schools, districts, and states, and non-existent in others. Developing the data systems necessary to accurately track students over time is both expensive and time consuming, and many states and districts have not made the investment.

Those that have tracked graduation rates have employed a variety of methods, resulting in data that is often unreliable and rarely comparable. Some states compare the number of students enrolled in the 9th grade to the number who graduate four years later, while others look only at the percentage of students who start the 12th grade and eventually obtain diplomas. Some include students who receive alternative diplomas and GEDs, while others include only those students who receive a standard diploma.

The lack of reliable data about the problem becomes a significant barrier to solutions, particularly when the unreliable data sugarcoats the extent of the real problem. As an advocate for minority students recently said:

“We want to see the real numbers. That’s the only way we’ll know how much we need to improve.”⁵

What does NCLB require?

High school graduation rates are an integral part of the accountability provisions of NCLB. They are included in the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) formula for high schools and districts alongside indicators of student proficiency in reading and mathematics.⁶

Many critics of school accountability for student learning have contended that such pressure will lead to increased drop-out rates. This concern has been so widespread it begins to be characterized as an unavoidable consequence of accountability. As one reporter described it, “Given the pressure on schools to

show good results, it is understandable that principals would have little interest in holding on to low-performing students.”⁷

But such assertions don’t account for the fact that NCLB has built-in protections against educators “pushing out” their low-performing students in order to shore up test scores. Indeed, the law requires educators to account for whether all students are graduating from high school. There are, admittedly, ways around this requirement, ways to re-code or re-classify their numbers to hide the fact that students are leaving school without diplomas. But such actions represent unprofessional and unethical choices on the part of educators, not inevitable “unintended consequences” of accountability.

NCLB requires every state to report their graduation rates for all high school students, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, low income status, disability status, English language proficiency, gender, and migrant status. Graduation rate calculations must be made according to:

- 1) The percentage of students, measured from the beginning of high school, who graduate from high school with a regular diploma (not including an alternative degree that is not fully aligned with the state’s academic standards, such as a certificate or GED) in the standard number of years; or
- 2) Another definition, developed by the state and approved by the U.S. Department of Education, that more accurately measures the rate of students who graduate from high school with a regular diploma. State definitions must avoid counting dropouts as transfers.

Inexplicably, the specific language that the Department used on the state September 1 data submission form does not

match the language in the NCLB regulations. While the law clearly asks for a graduation rate based on students who began high school, the U.S. Department of Education submission form instead asked for:

The percentage of students, *measured from the beginning of the school year* [emphasis added], who graduate from public high school with a regular diploma...

The Department's sloppiness has caused a great deal of confusion about defining graduation rates and has opened a loophole big enough for states to hide thousands of kids. States that strictly follow the language of the application form could technically be in compliance by reporting graduation rates based only on 12th graders, ignoring the fate of students who drop out in the 9th, 10th, or 11th grades. While no state can, in good faith, report such a rate, the Department is at fault for overlooking this inconsistency and for failing to fulfill its leadership responsibility to states, districts, schools, and, ultimately, students.

What did the states report?

Given the contradictory guidance states got from the federal government, it shouldn't come as a surprise that the self-reported graduation rate data varies greatly among states. The reports also reveal some other troubling trends.

Most troubling is the fact that some states failed to provide any information at all. This is inexcusable. For many years, states have routinely reported student enrollment and demographic data to the U.S. Department of Education for inclusion in the Common Core of Data. These reports provide information about the number of students enrolled at each grade level disaggregated by student group. At the very least, states should be

able to produce a reasonable graduation snapshot by using the data they already have to compare enrollments at the beginning of high school to graduates four years later.

Of those states that did report data, we found a significant range in the reported graduation rates, from a high of 97% in South Dakota to a low of 63.7% in Nevada. Surely there are differences in graduation rates between the states, but given the wide variation in what states have reported, we question to what extent these differences are a function of reality, and to what extent they are a function of the ways states have chosen to represent reality. A closer examination indicates that the differences in state definitions and methodologies not only result in wide variations in the data but, in many cases, significantly understate the problems that schools and students are facing.

Experts in the field have long used the U.S. Department's Common Core of Data to calculate national and state graduation rates. Jay Greene of the Manhattan Institute is one of the most widely cited among these experts. His state-level graduation rate calculations are used by such policy organizations as the Education Commission of the States and the Alliance for Excellent Education.⁸

Greene's methodology relies on Common Core enrollment data and diploma counts. It is comparable to the definition described in NCLB in that it uses a "cohort" definition, comparing the number of students in each racial/ethnic group who are enrolled in the 9th grade to the number of students in those groups who receive a regular diploma four years later. The calculations account for state population changes, as well as for the tendency of 9th grade students to be held back more than students in other grades.

We have compared the graduation rates from states' September 1 reports to Greene's calculations in order to provide

an external check of the accuracy of the states' NCLB reports.⁹ We show the result in Table 1 on page 3. Please note that the state-reported data is from 2001-02 while the Greene's figures are from 2000-01. Given that graduation rates generally do not change significantly from year-to-year, the one-year difference does not preclude this comparison. The states are ranked by the size of the difference between the two rates.

While some states, such as Nebraska, Wyoming, and Rhode Island, have self-reported data that closely resembles the federally collected data analyzed by Jay Greene, there are others, such as California, North Carolina, and Indiana, that show large differences. North Carolina, for example, reported a graduation rate of 92.4%, compared to Greene's 63%.

What accounts for these differences? In some states, it is clearly a matter of how "graduation rate" is defined. For example, officials from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction told the Education Trust that their graduation rate calculations were not based on the percentage of students who entered in the 9th grade and received a degree four years later, but on the percentage of diploma recipients who got their diploma in four years or less. In other words, students who drop out of high school are simply excluded from the calculations altogether. This means that, theoretically, if only 50% of students who enter 9th grade in North Carolina were to eventually obtain a high school diploma, but every one of those 50% did so in four years or less, then North Carolina would report a "graduation rate" of 100%.

Not only has North Carolina adopted a definition for the graduation rate that defies reason for NCLB reporting and accountability purposes, it has complicated the issue of public reporting by adopting a different definition for its own state report card. The report card calculation

Table 1: Graduation Rates

ALL	State Self Reported 01-02	Greene's calculations 00-01	Difference (in percentage points)
West Virginia	NA	84%	
Massachusetts	NA ¹	73%	
Louisiana	NA ²	70%	
North Carolina	92.4%	63%	29
Alaska	84.5%	64%	21
South Carolina	77.6%	57%	21
California	86.9%	67%	20
Connecticut	87.3%	70%	17
Indiana	91%	74%	17
Texas	82.8%	67%	16
Tennessee	75.7%	60%	16
Colorado	81.8%	68%	14
Oregon	79.5%	66%	14
Delaware	83.1%	70%	13
Michigan	86.03%	73%	13
Washington	79%	66%	13
New Hampshire	84.5%	72%	13
Maine	86.09%	74%	12
South Dakota	97%	85%	12
Illinois	85.2%	74%	11
Virginia	84.7%	74%	11
Maryland	84.69%	74%	11
Arkansas	85.1%	75%	10
New York	75%	65%	10
Wisconsin	90.83%	81%	10
Kentucky	80.7%	71%	10
New Mexico	76.6%	67%	10
Kansas	85.1%	76%	9
Hawaii	78.9%	70%	9
Florida	64.7%	56%	9
Missouri	82.5%	74%	9
Pennsylvania	86.4%	78%	8
Mississippi	72%	64%	8
Minnesota	87.9%	80%	8
Georgia	62%	56%	6
Ohio	82.8%	78%	5
New Jersey	88.65%	84%	5
Iowa	89.4%	85%	4
Montana	84.1%	81%	3
Vermont	82%	79%	3
Nevada	63.7%	61%	3
Arizona	70.8%	69%	2
North Dakota	90.6%	89%	2
D.C.	63.5%	63%	1
Rhode Island	71.4%	71%	0
Wyoming	77.2%	77%	0
Nebraska	84%	84%	0
Utah	86.1%	87%	-1
Idaho	77.08%	81%	-4
Oklahoma	68.8%	77%	-8
Alabama	³	66%	

NA - No data reported by state; ¹ Baseline graduation rates data for the 2002-03 ninth grade cohort to be available in 2007. ² MA will begin reporting graduation rates data using the NCLB definition in 2005-06. ³ Instead of reporting a graduation rate, Alabama reported an estimated four-year drop-out rate, 15.59%, as the graduation rate for all groups of students.

is based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Population Survey and reflects the responses of a sample of 18 to 24 year-olds when asked whether they hold a high school credential (either a high school diploma or an alternative credential, such as a GED or a certificate of attendance).¹⁰ Based on this definition, North Carolina reports an 85% high school completion rate for 2001-02.

North Carolina reports that it will have a data management system that will allow it to make graduation calculations according to the NCLB-required definition in place by 2005-06, and that the first public reporting of these new calculations will take place in 2006-07. Until then, it seems, schools and districts will bear no responsibility for the young people leaving school without even the most basic certification of knowledge and skills. Meanwhile, educators, parents, community members, and policymakers will be getting mixed signals about the progress of students through the education system, as the state provides graduation rate statistics that are conflicting, contradictory, and sometimes overstated.

The responsibility for this problem rests as squarely with the U.S. Department of Education as it does with the states. The Department's role does not end with the collection of data. It must ensure that states are complying with the definitional requirements of NCLB, that they are in fact accurately measuring the rate at which students graduate from high school with a regular diploma. And it must ensure that state calculations are accurate, complete, and accessible to the public.

At the very least, the Department should require the publication of estimated graduation rates from the Common Core of Data in states with insufficient definitions or data collection systems. Doing so will signal to the states that the educational attainment of all students

is a priority, and will fulfill the public's right, and need, to know where states are on this issue. Thus far, the Department's silence on the non-compliant reporting practices of states like North Carolina has been deafening.

No matter how you define it, gaps still exist

Even in states that have overstated overall graduation rates, the reports reveal a persistent gap between the graduation rates of white students and those of their African American and Latino peers. These gaps are present regardless of the definition or methodology employed.

These graduation rate gaps have devastating consequences for minority students. If, for example, African American and Latino students in New York graduated from high school at the same rate as their white peers, that would mean approximately 37,000 additional minority students would graduate every year. The same calculation in Texas translates into over 20,000 more minority graduates, and over 25,000 more in California *every single year*.

Not only does the disaggregated data reveal significant gaps between white and minority students, it also suggests that some states have under-reported the size of these gaps. In the majority of states that reported disaggregated data, the difference between the self-reported graduation rate data and Greene's calculations was even wider for Latino and African American students than for the overall student population.

Tables 2 and 3 show those states with the largest discrepancy between their self-reported data and Greene's calculations.

	State Self Reported 01-02	Greene's calculations 00-01	Difference (in percentage points)
Delaware	71.2%	44%	27.20
Indiana	85%	59%	26
California	81%	56%	25
Connecticut	71.5%	47%	24.50
Maryland	85.84%	62%	23.84
Illinois	74.7%	53%	21.70
Wisconsin	74.98%	55%	19.98

	State Self Reported 01-02	Greene's calculations 00-01	Difference (in percentage points)
Indiana	88%	53%	35.0
Connecticut	78.6%	56%	22.6
Illinois	74.5%	53%	21.5
Hawaii	70.7%	51%	19.7

tions.

States were also supposed to report on graduation rates for students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency. These students have traditionally been among the most overlooked of all public school students.

The lack of data for these students is shocking. Only 21 states reported data for students with disabilities with graduation rates ranging from a high of 95% in South Dakota to a low of 29% in Florida. Only 15 states reported data for LEP students, even though they make up the fastest-growing population of students in nearly every state in the country. LEP graduation rates range from a high of 89%, again in South Dakota, to a low of 38% in New York. (See Appendix B)

That over half of the states are unwilling or unable to even report on how many of these students are completing high school is a glaring indication that we are not moving fast enough to end

this sad state of affairs. And the very low numbers in the states that reported indicate that there are significant challenges ahead to give these students the education they need.

A More Honest Picture

It cannot be said enough that the foundation of any successful long-term improvement strategy is good information. And we know that one of the areas in which the education system needs the most improvement is high school graduation.

Communities cannot make progress on this issue unless they know, without a doubt, which students start 9th grade and graduate four years later, and which do not. The sooner the states and the Department of Education move to make this information widely available, the sooner these communities can begin the hard work of ensuring every student leaves high school with a diploma in hand.

Appendix A: Graduation Rates

	White			Latino			African American		
ALL	State Self Reported 01-02	Greene's calculations 00-01	Difference (in percentage points)	Self Reported 01-02	Greene's calculations 00-01	Difference (in percentage points)	State Self Reported 01-02	Greene's calculations 00-01	Difference (in percentage points)
Alabama*	*	70.00%		*	I		*	59%	-43.41
Alaska	87.9%	68.00%	19.90	77%	60%	17.00	76.6%	64%	12.60
Arizona	79.5%			57.1%	M		63.4%	M	
Arkansas	NA	78.00%		NA	I		NA	69%	
California	92.2%	77.00%	15.20	81%	56%	25.00	77.1%	58%	19.10
Colorado	86.4%	74.00%	12.40	65.5%	47%	18.50	73.7%	56%	17.70
Connecticut	91.5%	77.00%	14.50	71.5%	47%	24.50	78.6%	56%	22.60
D.C.	86.8%	74.00%	12.80	NA	I		NA	I	
Delaware	NA			71.2%	44%	27.20	74.8%	58%	16.80
Florida	73%	61.00%	12.00	57.4%	48%	9.40	50.6%	47%	3.60
Georgia	69%	63.00%	6.00	49%	I		52%	46%	6.00
Hawaii	77%	64.00%	13.00	67.5%	64%	3.50	70.7%	51%	19.70
Idaho	NA			NA	M		NA	M	
Illinois	89.2%	84.00%	5.20	74.7%	53%	21.70	74.5%	53%	21.50
Indiana	92%	78.00%	14.00	85%	59%	26.00	88%	53%	35.00
Iowa	90.7%	87.00%	3.70	67.5%	I		71.4%	58%	13.40
Kansas	88.3%			63.6%	M		70.8%	M	
Kentucky	81.5%			73.7%	M		72.9%	M	
Louisiana	NA	76.00%		NA	74%		NA	62%	
Maine	NA	75.00%		NA	I		NA	I	
Maryland	88.45%	78.00%	10.45	85.84%	62%	23.84	77.29%	66%	11.29
Massachusetts	NA	78.00%		NA	49%		NA	65%	
Michigan	NA	78.00%		NA	53%		NA	56%	
Minnesota	91.3%	86.00%	5.30	59.1%	I		59.9%	I	
Mississippi	NA	68.00%		NA	I		NA	61%	
Missouri	84.2%	77.00%	7.20	75.2%	I		72.2%	58%	14.20
Montana	86.6%	85.00%	1.60	73.5%	I		66.7%	I	
Nebraska	88%	89.00%	-1.00	56%	I		55%	55%	0.00
Nevada	70.9%	69.00%	1.90	48.7%	I		47.8%	50%	-2.20
New Hampshire	84.6%			72%	M		75.9%	M	
New Jersey	93.34%			78.06%	M		78.12%	M	
New Mexico	82.2%	79.00%	3.20	74.8%	62%	12.80	69.2%	73%	-3.80
New York	87%	77.00%	10.00	50%	42%	8.00	53%	47%	6.00
North Carolina	96.9%			91.1%	M		92%	M	
North Dakota	92.9%	93.00%	-0.10	81.7%	I		82.4%	I	
Ohio	87%	82.00%	5.00	66.1%	61%	5.10	60.8%	52%	8.80
Oklahoma	NA	80.00%		NA	I		NA	66%	
Oregon	82.8%	69.00%	13.80	56.4%	43%	13.40	59.4%	50%	9.40
Pennsylvania	90.1%	83.00%		62%	49%	13.00	68.9%	58%	10.90
Rhode Island	71.4%	75.00%	-3.60	71.4%	56%	15.40	71.4%	63%	8.40
South Carolina	NA			74.8%	M		67.1%	M	
South Dakota	97%	88.00%	9.00	90%	I		91%	I	
Tennessee	81.2%			64.7%	M		59.3%	M	
Texas	88.2%	77.00%	11.20	75.7%	57%	18.70	79.8%	62%	17.80
Utah	88.4%	90.00%	-1.60	64.7%	I		64.8%	I	
Vermont	NA			NA	M		NA	M	
Virginia	87.3%	77.00%	10.30	73.7%	I		78.4%	64%	14.40
Washington	81.5%	69.00%	12.50	65.2%	48%	17.20	64%	53%	11.00
West Virginia	NA	85.00%		NA	I		NA	70%	
Wisconsin	94.58%	87.00%	7.58	74.98%	55%	19.98	59.87%	44%	15.87
Wyoming	79.4%	79.00%		61.1%	65%	-3.9	73.2%	I	

NA- No data reported by state

I- Insufficient data to calculate graduation rate

M- Missing racial group data

* Instead of reporting a graduation rate, Alabama reported an estimated four-year drop-out rate, 15.59%, as the graduation rate for all groups of students.

Appendix B: Graduation Rates			
ALL	ALL STUDENTS State Self Reported 01-02	Students with Disabilities State Self Reported 01-02	Limited English Proficient State Self Reported 01-02
Alabama ¹	15.59%	15.59%	15.59%
Alaska	84.5%	NA	NA
Arizona	70.8%	NA	NA
Arkansas	85.1%	NA	NA
California	86.9%	NA	NA
Colorado	81.8%	75%	NA
Connecticut	87.3%	NA	NA
Delaware	83.1%	66.8%	79.7%
D.C.	NA	NA	NA
Florida	64.7%	29.5%	46.4%
Georgia	62%	30%	46%
Hawaii	78.9%	59.6%	58.3%
Idaho	77.08%	NA	NA
Illinois	85.2%	69.1%	69.9%
Indiana	91%	NA	NA
Iowa	89.4%	67%	NA
Kansas	85.1%	79.9%	NA
Kentucky	80.7%	NA	NA
Louisiana	NA	NA	NA
Maine	86.09%	NA	NA
Maryland	84.69%	74.63%	82.57%
Massachusetts	NA	NA	NA
Michigan	86.03%	NA	NA
Minnesota	87.9%	80.3%	66.7%
Mississippi	72%	NA	NA
Missouri	82.5%	64.4%	NA
Montana	84.1%	NA	NA
Nebraska	84%	NA	NA
Nevada	63.7%	NA	NA
New Hampshire	84.5%	NA	NA
New Jersey	88.65%	NA	NA
New Mexico	76.6%	58.6%	64.8%
New York	75%	55%	38%
North Carolina	92.4%	NA	NA
North Dakota	90.6%	NA	NA
Ohio	82.8%	77.8%	79.5%
Oklahoma	68.8%	NA	NA
Oregon	79.5%	67.8%	49.7%
Pennsylvania	86.4%	81.8%	75.7%
Rhode Island	71.4%	71.4%	71.4%
South Carolina	NA	NA	NA
South Dakota	97%	95%	89%
Tennessee	75.7%	NA	NA
Texas	82.8%	72.7%	53.4%
Utah	86.1%	NA	NA
Vermont	82%	NA	NA
Virginia	84.7%	NA	NA
Washington	79%	57.8%	NA
West Virginia	NA	NA	NA
Wisconsin	90.83%	NA	NA
Wyoming	77.2%	53.4%	NA

¹ Alabama reported an estimated four-year drop-out rate, 15.59%, as the graduation rate for all groups of students.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Calculations by the Education Trust using the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data and based on the average of 8th, 9th, and 10th graders 1997-99 compared to diploma recipients 2001.
- ² In addition to the graduation rates discussed in this report, the September 1 filings also reported information on drop-out rates, limited English proficient students, highly qualified teachers, high-quality professional development, qualified paraprofessionals, and persistently dangerous schools. For more information on highly qualified teachers, see *Telling the Whole Truth (Or Not): New State Data About Highly Qualified Teachers*, The Education Trust, December 2003.
- ³ For employment data see U.S. Census Bureau, *2001 Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 2001. Section 12.
<http://www.census.gov>
- For earnings data, see U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education 2002*, Indicator 16. <http://www.nces.ed.gov>
- ⁴ Greene, Jay. (November 2001). *High School Graduation Rates in the United States*. The Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.
- ⁵ Michael Clara, chair of the Coalition of Minorities Advisory Committee, as reported in "Too Many Dropouts 'Ethnic'," *Deseret Morning News*, December 8, 2003.
- ⁶ Unlike goals for student proficiency in reading and math, goals for graduation rates do not need to be raised over time. States can set whatever goals they want for graduation rates.
- ⁷ Lewin, Tamar and Jennifer Medina. (July 31, 2003). *The New York Times*, To Cut Failure Rate, Schools Shed Students.
- ⁸ See The Education Commission of the States, *Selected Research and Reading on Dropouts*, <http://www.ecs.org> and See the Alliance for Excellent Education, *The Graduation for All Act*, <http://www.all4ed.org/publications/GraduationForAll.doc>
- ⁹ Greene, Jay and Greg Forster. (September 2003). *Public High School Graduation and College Readiness Rates in the United States*. The Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.
- ¹⁰ North Carolina's State Report Card can be found at: <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src/stateDetails.jsp?Page=1&pYear=2001-2002>

Staff contributing to this report:

Kevin Carey, Senior Policy Analyst
 Patte Barth, Senior Associate
 Daria Hall, Policy Analyst
 Adelina Garcia, Policy Fellow
 Sandra Licón, Policy Fellow
 Ross Wiener, Policy Director
 Yun Yi, Policy Associate

© The Education Trust, 2003



About The Education Trust

The Education Trust, Inc. was created to promote high academic achievement for all students, at all levels—kindergarten through college. While we know that all schools and colleges could better serve their students, our work focuses on the schools and colleges most often left behind in plans to improve education: those serving African American, Latino, Native American and low-income students.

The Education Trust works side-by-side with policy makers, parents, education professionals, community and business leaders—in cities and towns across the country—who are trying to transform their schools and colleges into institutions that genuinely serve all students. We also bring lessons learned in local communities back to Washington to help inform national policy debates.