



Our Vision: All students graduate and are prepared for a successful life.

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## Press Release

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### **2017-18 Salem-Keizer Graduation Rates Grow by Three Percentage Points** At 76.56 percent, 188 more students graduated from the previous year

**SALEM, Ore.** – More students than ever are walking across the stage to receive their diplomas in Salem-Keizer Public Schools. According to results released today from the Oregon Department of Education, Salem-Keizer’s graduation rate grew by more than three percentage points, and the dropout rate fell by .24 of a percentage point to 3.30. Coupled with the 133 students who earned their GEDs through alternative programs, 2,579 students completed high school in 2018.

The district’s graduation rate – 76.56 percent – is nearly three percentage points higher than last year’s graduation rate of 73.36 percent and is close to the statewide average of 78.7 percent. The graduation rate is based on a four-year cohort of students entering the ninth grade in the 2014-15 academic year. The dropout rate reports on students in grades 9-12 for the 2017-18 school year.

The most notable gains were at North Salem High, where the graduation rate grew by nearly 10 percentage points in one year. “Our staff worked relentlessly to keep students engaged in learning and motivated toward graduation,” said Principal Sara Leroy. Overall, 76.8 percent of the North Salem High Class of 2018 graduated.

McKay High also saw significant gains in graduation rates. “Nearly eight in 10 students at McKay graduated on time in 2018,” said Principal Rob Schoepper. “That represents significant commitment from our students, and it also speaks to the amount of work that a lot of parents, educators and community members put in to give our kids what they needed to be successful.”

The successes weren’t limited to North Salem and McKay – all of the district’s high schools celebrated the results. At Sprague High, the 90.7 percent graduation rate put the school above 90 percent for the first time and marks the third straight year that number has grown for the Olympians.

“We’ve been laser-focused on growth,” said High School Level Director Larry Ramirez. “How do we help our students who come to us with incredibly diverse backgrounds and experiences achieve more each year?”

SKPS is one of the most diverse districts in the state with students speaking 81 different languages. The graduation rate for Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders grew by nearly 15 percentage points from 2017. Forty percent of SKPS students identify as Hispanic or Latino, and the graduation rate among those students grew by almost four percentage points from the previous year.



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At the district's non-traditional programs, success is more than a graduation rate. At the Early College High School, the school's 97.73 percent graduation rate tells the story of 43 students who received unique education offerings and college credit through a partnership with Chemeketa Community College. In the Teen Parent Program, 52 percent of the class of 2018 graduated, but thanks to the additional supports, students have additional pathways to graduation. At Roberts High, 33 students earned diplomas and three earned modified diplomas, but another 109 students earned GEDs, meaning nearly half of the district's students with the most complex needs are completing school. Since reporting initial graduation numbers, administrators were able to confirm four additional graduates, bringing the school's graduation rate to 12.1 percent.

Of the district's 42,000 students, 16 percent receive special education services. "We continue to focus on creating strong educational opportunities for all of our students, particularly students whose paths may need unique supports," said McNary Principal Erik Jespersen. "At our school, we are very proud of the continued upward trajectory of our special education program. The four-year cohort graduation rate of students with special needs at McNary in 2016 was 57.5 percent. In 2017, it was 65 percent. In 2018, it was 76.74 percent - that's a 19.24-percentage-point-jump in the last three years and is 12 percentage points higher than the state average."

"To say we're incredibly proud would be an understatement," said Superintendent Christy Perry. "All the way from elementary to high school, we have thousands of educators who have dedicated themselves to helping our students achieve one thing: graduating school prepared for successful lives. Are we satisfied with where we are now? Absolutely not. But these results invigorate us because we know that what we're doing is truly working."

Career Technical Education (CTE), another district program, also played a significant role in helping students succeed in high school. More than 89 percent of students who participated in CTE graduated, and nearly 94 percent of CTE concentrators graduated. With the passing of the 2018 Bond Measure, CTE spaces at all comprehensive high schools as well at Roberts High will be expanded to provide more course offerings.

#### **Class of 2018 Fast Facts:**

- \$23,787,004 in scholarships earned
- 2,350 diplomas
- One adult high school diploma
- 120 GEDs (an additional 15 students from other classes also earned GEDs during the year)
- 15 alternative certificates
- 187 continuing enrollment



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### **Additional points of pride for comprehensive schools:**

#### **McKay – 77.49%:**

- Grew the graduation rate by more than four percentage points from last year

#### **McNary – 86.35%:**

- Located 10 students who transferred out of state but were included in the cohort, which would actually raise the graduation rate to 88.24 percent
- Five-year graduation rate increased from 89.44 percent to 91.45 percent

#### **North Salem – 76.8%:**

- Dropout rate reduced by more than half

#### **South Salem – 82.13%:**

- 40 students in the Class of 2018 graduated with the Seal of Biliteracy
- Graduation rates for economically disadvantaged students improved by nearly 4 percentage points
- Five-year completion rate increased by 3 percentage points
- Ninth grade on-track to graduate data increased by 3 percentage points

#### **Sprague – 90.77%:**

- Graduation rates for underserved races/ethnicities population grew by 8 percentage points
- Graduation rates for students receiving special education services grew by 4.5 percentage points
- Posted lowest dropout rate out of the six comprehensive high schools in SKPS

#### **West Salem – 91.54%:**

- At 91.54 percent, posted the highest graduation rate of a comprehensive high school in the district and grew by 4.5 points from 2017
- At .66 percent, the dropout rate has been consistently under 1 percent for the past five years
- The graduation rate for economically disadvantaged students – 85.63% – is the highest in five years
- Graduation rate for students with disabilities has grown 10 percentage points over the past 5 years

To view the full graduation rates from the Oregon Department of Education, [click here](#).

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*Led by Superintendent Christy Perry, Salem-Keizer School District 24J is the second-largest school district in the state of Oregon. Nearly 5,000 employees serve more than 42,000 students in 65 schools in the cities of Salem and Keizer.*