

# Persistence to Complete

Social science research in education as well as in other fields has consistently shown that high school completion is a strong predictor of individuals’ future economic and societal opportunities. Consequently, we see high school graduation as a very important indicator of successful student learning.

Ordinarily, Grade 12 completion is reported in terms of a *graduation rate*. While *graduation rate* can be determined in several ways, this statistic is usually reported as the percentage of students who are members of a particular cohort who complete the requirements for high school graduation in the traditional length of time (i.e., 13 years – Kindergarten to Grade 12). However, given the complexity of students’ lives, many students require additional time to gather the number of credits required for Grade 12 standing.

Recognizing this complexity, Saskatchewan’s Ministry of Education developed a unique means of describing this phenomenon. Called *Persistence to Complete Grade 12*, it is measured by tracking the members of each year’s Grade 10 cohort through their secondary school for up to 8 years until they complete the requirements for Grade 12 graduation regardless of where they complete Grade 12 in the province.

The data show that a lower percentage of students in any given Grade 10 cohort in Saskatoon Public Schools completes Grade 12 in the “traditional” 3 year span between entry into Grade 10 and exit from Grade 12 as compared to provincial statistics. However, as the graphic below shows, Saskatoon Public Schools’s students do persist in their high school careers and the gap between our Grade 12 completion rate and that of the province is closed over the course of the 8-year period represented in the provincial tracking system. Additionally, our Grade 12 completion rates have been improving steadily as compared to the province to the point that a higher percentage of the students from the 2001 Grade 10 cohort completed Grade 12 than did in the province overall.

**Rates of persistence to complete Grade 12 (longitudinal)** \* Please note: The numbers in parentheses are the provincial comparisons

Grade 10 Start Year	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	6 Years	7 Years	8 Years	Not Enrolled	Still enrolled
1996	65.9 % (72.5%)	72.6% (77.1%)	74.9% (78.6%)	76.2% (79.3%)	76.6% (79.8%)	78.7% (81.3%)	20.9% (18.6%)	0.4% (0.2%)
1997	66.5% (72.0%)	74.0% (77.1%)	77.1% (78.4%)	78.1% (79.0%)	78.9% (79.5%)	81.3% (81.0%)	18.5% (18.8%)	0.3% (0.2%)
1998	65.5% (73.6%)	71.7% (77.9%)	74.3% (79.2%)	76.0% (80.2%)	76.9% (80.6%)	79.2% (82.0%)	20.5% (17.7%)	0.3% (0.3%)
1999	66.6% (79.1%)	72.5% (78.1%)	74.6% (79.4%)	76.8% (80.3%)	78.4% (81.1%)	80.2% (82.2%)	19.2% (17.4%)	0.6% (0.4%)
2000	68.4% (74.0%)	75.5% (78.4%)	78.2% (79.9%)	80.3% (81.0%)	81.5% (81.6%)	82.4% (82.4%)	17.3% (17.2%)	0.3% (0.4%)
2001	68.5% (73.1%)	75.5% (78.0%)	78.6% (79.8%)	80.4% (80.8%)	81.3% (81.4%)	82.4% (82.0%)	16.9% (17.4%)	0.6% (0.6%)
2002	67.4% (73.2%)	74.6% (77.8%)	77.1% (79.7%)	77.8% (80.5%)	78.8% (81.0%)	79.6% (81.5%)	19.7% (17.7%)	0.8% (0.7%)
2003	71.6% (73.9%)	77.2% (78.5%)	80.1% (80.5%)	81.4% (81.2%)	82.0% (81.6%)	82.4% (82.0%)	16.9% (17.1%)	0.8% (0.9%)
2004	69.3% (75.1%)	74.9% (79.0%)	76.7% (80.4%)	77.6% (81.3%)	79.2% (81.7%)		18.2% (16.3%)	2.7% (1.9%)
2005	71.3% (75.6%)	76.4% (79.7%)	78.6% (81.4%)	79.8% (82.2%)			15.0% (14.6%)	5.1% (3.3%)
2006	67.6% (73.8%)	73.8% (78.4%)	75.5% (80.1%)				15.2% (13.5%)	9.2% (6.4%)
2007	70.2% (74.5%)	75.8% (79.2%)					9.7% (9.2%)	14.4% (11.6%)
2008	70.9% (74.06%)						4.2% (4.4%)	24.1% (21.6%)

Analysis of Results:

- Overall, Saskatoon Public Schools' graduation rates tend to be within  $\pm 2\%$  of the provincial graduation rates when we look at the percentage of students who graduate at some point (after 8 years or more). Graduation rates have also improved over the last few years among these students.
- We find that students in Saskatoon Public Schools tend to take a longer period of time than the traditional 3 years between beginning Grade 10 and finishing Grade 12 to graduate.
- Saskatoon Public Schools strives to meet the needs of all youth and adults. As part of our commitment to these students, we provide school "re-entry" programs at Royal West and Nutana Collegiate. While many of these students were not necessarily enrolled in Saskatoon Public Schools during their Grade 10 year, the students at these and our other schools achieve their Grade 12 diplomas nevertheless. We see that as a great accomplishment both for the students and the Division.