

# Virginia's Cohort Report

## *Accounting for the Status of All High School Students in Virginia and Supporting School Improvement*

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# The Cohort Report

- The report is the culmination of years of work in building Virginia's longitudinal data system and the investment and support of the General Assembly and two governors.
- In a 2006 report to the Governor and General Assembly, the Board of Education recommended reporting cohort-dropout rates in the context of other information, such as graduation rates, the percent of students who stay in school, and completion rates.

# The Cohort Report

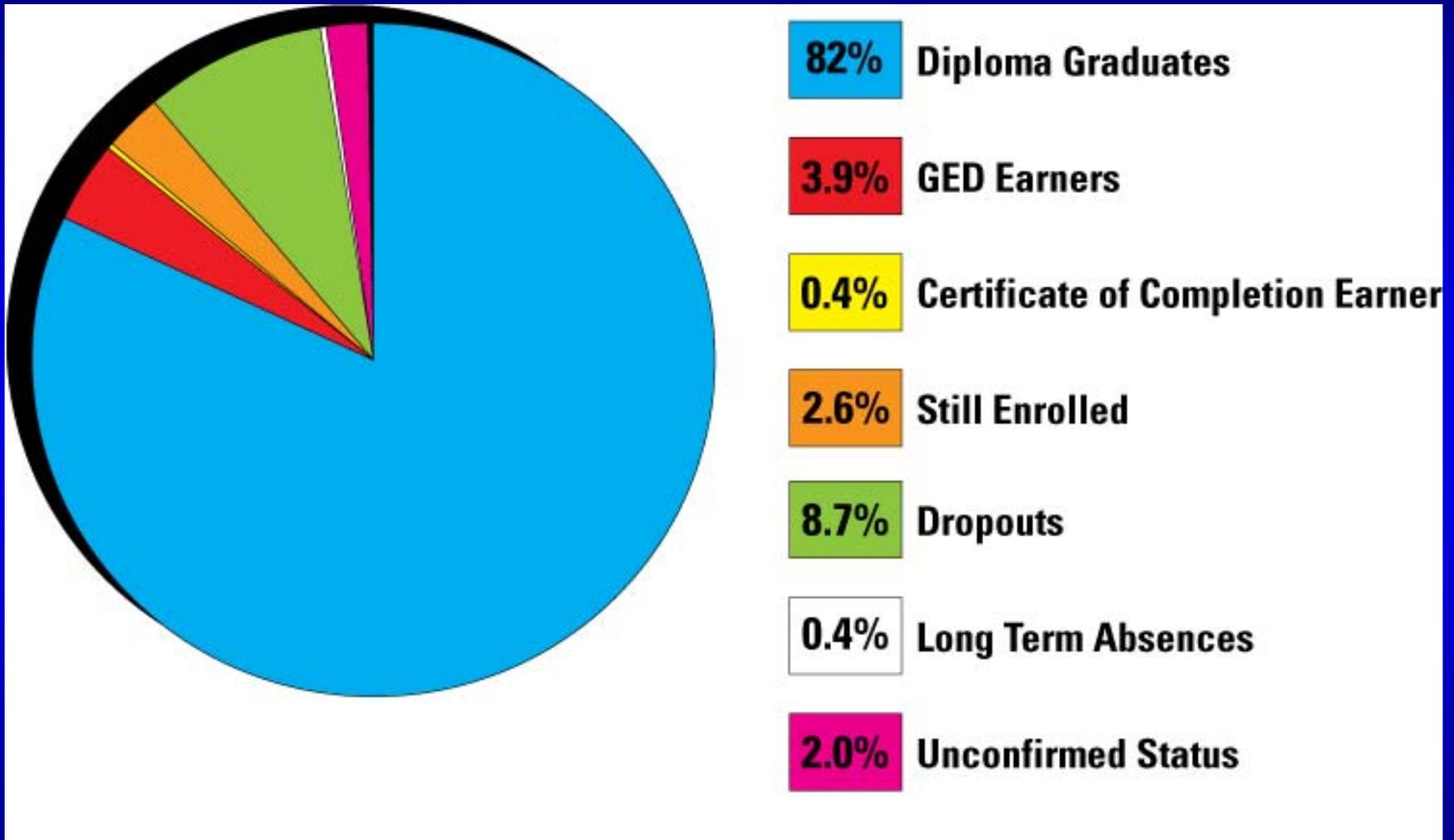
- The cohort report is a single source of information documenting the status of students who entered the ninth-grade for the first time in 2004 and were scheduled to graduate in the spring of 2008 (i.e., adjusted cohort of students).
- The cohort report uses longitudinal data to account for all students in the adjusted cohort just before they begin the next school year.

*And ...*

# The Cohort Report

- The 2008 cohort report provides accurate baseline information about the percent of first-time ninth-grade students who graduate from, complete, drop out of or stay in school.
- Using a unique state testing identifier, the Department of Education follows individual students as they move from school to school and as they transfer in and/or out of the Virginia public school system.
- Cohort dropout rates reflect the number of students who drop out over the course of four years among a group of pupils who began the ninth grade together.

# Results from Virginia's 2008 Cohort Report



# Results from Virginia's 2008 Cohort Report

Subgroup	% Graduated On-Time	% Completed school on time	% Still Enrolled	% Dropout	% Long-term leave	% Unconfirmed status
All Students	82.1%	86.3%	2.6%	8.7%	0.4%	2.0%
Female	85.0%	88.4%	2.1%	7.4%	0.4%	1.7%
Male	79.2%	84.3%	3.1%	9.9%	0.4%	2.2%
Black	73.9%	78.0%	4.8%	12.6%	0.7%	3.9%
Hispanic	71.5%	75.2%	2.9%	19.9%	0.3%	1.6%
White	85.9%	90.4%	1.7%	6.3%	0.3%	1.3%
Asian	93.4%	94.5%	1.3%	3.6%	0.1%	0.5%
American Indian	75.7%	79.3%	5.0%	13.9%	0.0%	1.8%
Native Hawaiian	85.2%	89.8%	3.4%	4.6%	0.0%	2.3%
Other	90.5%	92.4%	1.8%	4.7%	0.1%	0.9%
Students with Disabilities	81.8%	86.4%	n/a	13.5%	0.0%	0.2%
Identified as Disadvantaged	70.6%	77.5%	4.7%	13.5%	0.7%	3.6%
Limited English Proficient	69.2%	72.0%	n/a	27.0%	0.0%	0.7%
Identified as Migrant	75.4%	80.7%	0.0%	15.8%	0.0%	3.5%
Homeless	60.2%	65.1%	10.6%	18.7%	2.0%	3.6%

# Cohort Dropout Characteristics

- Students in the cohort who repeated grades, attended multiple schools, and who were frequently absent were more likely to drop out:
  - 58.8 percent of the students in the cohort who dropped out repeated at least one grade during high school and 37.4 percent repeated their freshman year.
  - 42.2 percent of the students who dropped out were ninth and tenth graders aged 17-years old or older.
  - 30.5 percent of the dropouts attended two or more high schools before ending their high school careers compared with 14.6 percent of the students in the cohort who graduated.

*And ...*

# Cohort Dropout Characteristics

- 29.4 percent of the dropouts had attendance rates of less than 80 percent during the year before they exited school, compared with 2.1 percent of the students in the cohort who graduated.
- 65.2 percent of dropouts had attendance rates of less than 80 percent during their final year of school compared with 3.8 percent of graduates.

# Cohort Dropouts Each Year

- The percent of students in the 2008 cohort report who dropped out of school each year is about the same in each of grades 9-12.
  - 55 percent of the dropouts left school before the eleventh grade;
  - 26.9 percent dropped out during the ninth grade;
  - 28 percent dropped out during their sophomore year;
  - 24.4 percent dropped out during the eleventh grade; and
  - 20.7 percent dropped out as seniors.

# Using Data to Identify Challenges

- Accurate cohort rates identify school divisions, schools, and student subgroups in need of additional support to reach graduation goals.
- Student-level data can also be used to develop early-warning systems to identify students at risk of dropping out of high school.\*

*[http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/IssueBrief\\_EarlyWarningSystemsGuide\\_081408.pdf](http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/IssueBrief_EarlyWarningSystemsGuide_081408.pdf)*

*And ...*

# Using Data to Identify Challenges

- Divisions and schools can use information from early-warning systems to
  - target interventions that support students at risk of dropping out - while they are still in school - before they drop out\*
  - look for patterns and identify school-climate issues that may contribute to disproportionate dropout rates in a subset of high schools or within sub-populations of students.\*

*\*[http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/IssueBrief\\_EarlyWarningSystemsGuide\\_081408.pdf](http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/IssueBrief_EarlyWarningSystemsGuide_081408.pdf)*

# VDOE Data Tools in Development

- **Ninth-grade early-identification toolkit:**
  - Uses data to identify students in ninth grade at risk of not succeeding in high school.
  - Will include a user's guide and video including demonstrations of appropriate uses of the data.
  - Can be used as part of the Academic Review process for high schools that do not meet the Board of Education's recently adopted Graduation and Completion Index for school accreditation.

*And ...*

# VDOE Data Tools in Development

- **Watch list report for K-12:**
  - Will be available through Virginia’s Education Information Management System (EIMS)
  - Provides school and student level “flags” for
    - Attendance
    - SOL performance
    - Students two or more years overage for grade
    - Students who were retained.
- **Postsecondary enrollment data that can help schools understand who is and who is not moving on to postsecondary education.**

# VDOE Data Tools in Development

*This work is made possible  
by Virginia's sustained  
investments in longitudinal  
data systems & the school  
improvement process.*