



By the Class of 2020, **WE WILL** increase by **50**% both the graduation rate of Tacoma Public Schools

students and those who complete a college degree or technical certificate.

Success will require measuring and closing gaps in access, opportunities and achievement for all students from cradle to college and career.



Community-Built Goal Cradle to College and Career

Bold. Ambitious. Measurable.

In 2010, Tacoma launched a community-wide movement to improve the future of every child, from cradle to college and career, by increasing graduation rates for high school and college. That same year, just 58% of students completed high school within the extended graduation time frame of five years, as measured by the State of Washington.

Alarms sounded throughout the community. The urgency was clear. Over the next two years, hundreds of stakeholders came together—parents and educators, business and labor, youth and community service, neighborhoods and local government, early learning and higher education, civic and philanthropy, and communities of faith. In 2012, a bold Tacoma-built goal was forged.

Over and over, Tacomans spoke of the potential in every child. A vision of shared responsibility for student success. That is how the *Graduate Tacoma!* movement was born. Our focus is to help every child achieve success—from cradle, to college and career.

More than two-thirds of the experiences and learning opportunities that shape a child's life occur outside the classroom. *Graduate Tacoma!* is taking a community-wide approach to ensure that

children have access and opportunities for quality learning.

Together, we must collaborate and align resources to effectively achieve our SHARED COMMUNITY-BUILT GOAL:

By the class of 2020, **WE WILL** increase by **50%** both the graduation rate of Tacoma Public Schools students and those who complete a college degree or technical certificate. Success will require measuring and closing gaps in access, opportunities and achievement for all students from cradle to college and career.



Our focus is to help EVERY CHILD achieve success—from cradle, to college and career.

Collective Community Impact

Cradle to College and Career

Committing to our Shared Goal

To help EVERY CHILD reach his or her full potential, regardless of income or background, we must look at development and education comprehensively. It's not enough to simply focus on what happens from kindergarten to high school graduation. Learning begins in the cradle, spans K-12, and continues on to college and career. As a community, we need to support students when and where they need us throughout their development.

Using Data to Inform Better Decisions

With more than 150 community partners, parents, and education stakeholders we chose eleven student indicators to measure progress from early childhood developmental screening through graduation from college or technical school. Stakeholders also adopted six community indicators to assess how well we are ALL supporting student success.

Collaborating and Aligning Together

We rely on our schools to prepare our children with core academic competencies, but helping every child achieve his or her full potential extends well beyond the school day. Programs and services for young people have served our community for generations. What is different is how the organizations providing youth services are working together, in an effort to achieve a greater collective impact in reaching our community-adopted measures. *Graduate Tacoma!* has three networks of community organizations actively working to improve student achievement by focusing on: Early Learning & Reading; Out-of-School & Summer Learning; and Going to College.

The synergistic success that ensues when organizations abandon a silo mentality and align their resources to achieve more powerful results is what we call our *Collective Impact*. This is the driving strategy behind the *Graduate Tacoma!* movement.









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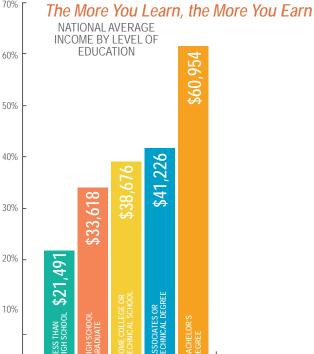
Building and strenthening Tacoma's community-wide movement to help every student achieve success from cradle to college and career.

Community-Wide Approach

Helping Every Child—Cradle to College & Career

Every child is unique and will have different developmental and learning needs to reach his or her full potential. It takes all of us working together to see that our children develop successfully through each stage of life and are prepared for success in their career pursuits.

- Learning starts early. Every child's fundamental development and learning potential begin long before he or she ever sets foot in a classroom.
- More than two-thirds of a student's life is spent outside the classroom.
 Opportunities for personal development and access to learning during this time play an essential role in his or her capacity to absorb and retain what is taught in school.
- The more you learn, the more you earn. Facts are facts. Two-thirds of all future jobs will require a college education.



Data Source: National Census Bureau of Labor & Statistics

It all adds up. Total lifetime earnings with a high school diploma are \$1.2 million compared to \$2.1 million with a college degree.

Annual earnings will be 39% HIGHER with a college degree and DOUBLE with a Master's degree compared to those who finish their education at high school.



- Higher Education Boosts Prosperity. Preparing children for high school graduation and college or technical school affords them the knowledge and skills to succeed in the workplace. This boosts the quality of life and the economic vitality we all desire for our great city.
- 21st Century Jobs. Washington is among the top five states in the country demanding a highly educated workforce. By 2018, it's predicted more than two-thirds of all jobs in Washington State will require some college or post-secondary education. Currently, our state is importing college-educated workers, but through this community approach, our youth will complete the necessary education to fill these jobs themselves.

Hundreds of community members are actively engaged in the Graduate Tacoma! movement.



Informed Decision-Making and Collective Action

Transparent and Community-Wide

Together with parents, community and education stakeholders, Tacoma adopted a set of common measures tied to student success. These were established to help measure and close gaps in access, opportunities and achievement throughout a child's life—from cradle, to college and career.

To help track how our children are progressing, Tacoma Public Schools is aligned with the *Graduate Tacoma!* movement in providing data, so the entire community can measure progress of these student indicators.

Stakeholders are also exploring how to collect uniform data about student learning and development outside the classroom. Analyzing student data enables parents and educators, business and labor, youth



More than 700 community members attended **Graduate Tacoma's** Back-to-School event.

and community service, neighborhoods and local government, early learning and higher education, civic and philanthropy, and communities of faith to understand how to focus programs and services in ways that contribute to student achievement.

It will take sustained commitment and hard work to achieve our community-wide goals for high school and post-secondary graduation rates by 2020.

Power of Partnership: More than 150 Strong and Growing

Together with an ever-increasing number of Community Partners (see page 34), Graduate Tacoma! is aligned with Tacoma Public Schools to increase student achievement. This diverse group of partners understands that the Graduate Tacoma! goals and strategies for successful education begin long before a student steps into a classroom.

Strategically aligning support systems to wrap around the moments our children spend in school will be essential to achieving our high school graduation and post-secondary completion goals.



By the Numbers



29,288 STUDENTS

Changing Demographics

Ethnic background of Tacoma students

The majority (55%) of Tacoma's students identify as students of color, a contrast from 2002 when

56% of Tacoma's

students identified as white.





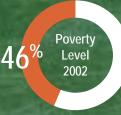
56% WHITE

2002

45% WHITE

2014

Poverty On the Rise



Poverty Level 2013-14

District Poverty Higher Than State Average Students that qualify for free and reduced lunch



63%

State

46%

Of the District's 57 schools, 28 are significantly affected by poverty and receive additional federal funding.

In some schools, as high as 97% of the student body receives meal assistance.



Special Education

Special Education Participation, 2014

Hola!

Hello!

English Language Learners (ELL)

Over 9% of students district-wide are currently transitioning from their native language to English.

Across schools this ranges from a low of 1% of students to high of 40%.





Tacoma Public Schools

The rich diversity of Tacoma is reflected in the 55% majority of students of color and 45% white. This contrasts with 42% students of color and 58% white statewide. Tacoma Public Schools, the third largest in Washington, serves more than 29,000 children from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Nearly two-thirds of students in the district are impacted by poverty with more than 63% who qualify for free and reduced lunch. It's difficult for kids to focus on academics when they are homeless or hungry.

Every Student. Every Day.

Academic Acceleration

Research shows students who are challenged and provided academic support successfully complete high school better prepared for college and careers. A year ago, the Tacoma School Board adopted an innovative new policy to automatically enroll high school students in more rigorous Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or College-in-the-high-school classes, if they have proven successful in a lower class or get a qualifying score on a standardized test.

Thanks to training and hard work by teachers, students jumped from 37% to 57% of high school juniors and seniors taking at least one rigorous advanced class. Several community partners are supporting this effort with tutoring and mentoring.

The District received a \$50,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to help students succeed in these classes.

Tacoma Whole Child Initiative: New Model for Behavior

In an innovative new approach, the District trained teachers and staff from 27 schools—including bus drivers—how to set school-specific positive behavior expectations and to reinforce them by "catching" kids behaving well.

Although it's early in the process, preliminary results are encouraging. Everyone in these schools now knows what positive behavior means. They use the same language to describe it, they reward it and they celebrate it. Early results from the first 13 schools indicate teachers have more time to concentrate on teaching and there is a more positive sense of community that inspires kids to be engaged at school. At Mt. Tahoma, tardies plummeted and total discipline has dropped significantly over the past two years.

Instructional Facilitator in Every School

High expectations aren't exclusive to students. Instructional facilitators in each school serve as coaches to improve teaching in each classroom, encourage the use of research-based and collaborative practices, and help teachers tailor instruction to meet the needs of each student.

Steady ProgressRecord Graduation Rates

Gains Made in Every Racial Demographic

Tacoma's 4-year on-time graduation rate for the Class of 2014 hit a record high since the State of Washington began tracking in 2003. Over the past three years, graduation rates for Tacoma students completing high school within the standard four years have risen 10 percent. What is even more impressive is that these increases have taken place in every Tacoma high school and the rate has gone up across every ethnic demographic. Equally impressive are the gains made among students living in poverty, where an increase in the graduates qualifying for free and reduced lunch has gone up by more than 10 percent. These are encouraging signs. Through focused leadership, relentless dedication by educators, and the collective action of our community, we are making a difference in the lives of Tacoma students.

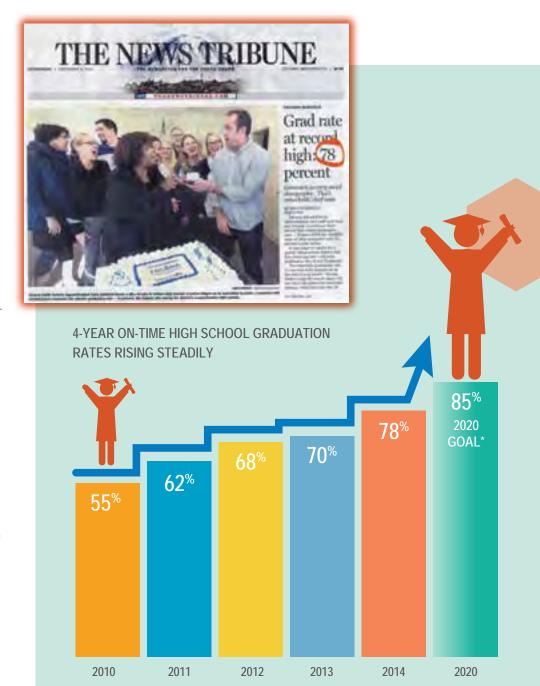
Every year since 2010 has shown steady progress in the 4-year on-time graduation rate—from 55% in 2010 to 78% in 2014.

Still a Long Way to Our Goal

Just as the climb up a mountain grows steeper and steeper near the top, we know the challenges will increase as we get closer to the the District's 85% goal for 4-year on-time graduation and the community's 50% increase goal to 87% for 5-year extended graduation.

In the pages and data that follow, you will find stories of inspiration and success, and gain a better understanding of the challenges we must address together in the years ahead.

While we are excited by the steadily increasing percentage of our young people who are graduating from high school and the growing number of those who are going on to pursue higher education each year, we must be relentless in achieving our bold and ambitious community goal by 2020.





Our 2014 high school graduation rates were

TACOMA'S HIGHEST since the State of Washington

began tracking more than a decade ago.

Building a Strong Foundation for Learning Early Screening

A child's capacity to learn is influenced by many factors.
Long before a child takes part in organized education, parents, family and friends play a vital role helping to develop the key building blocks that lay the foundation for learning.

A leading local practice, Pediatrics Northwest, P.S., screens all patients during their 9-, 18- and 24-month checkups using the nationally recommended Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). This standardized screening assesses each child's development in five important areas: communication, gross motor, fine motor, personal/social, and problem-solving.

Importantly, this opens up conversations with parents about their child. It provides an opportunity to discuss concerns they may have about development in any of the 5 areas and how best to address them.

All patients are also screened for autism using the Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (M-CHAT) to identify children who would benefit from a more in-

depth appraisal. Well-child exams in the first years of life are ideal for the detection of problems with a child's development.



Developmental Screening

Young children have the best chance to catch up and enter school on par with their peers when we identify learning and physical delays early and provide the right support. Every child should be screened for vision, hearing, physical, cognitive, and emotional development before they enter kindergarten. To proactively ensure they are on track by kindergarten, screening should occur before age three so they can benefit from referrals to helpful developmental services.

AIMING HIGHER: Increase the number of children screened by age three. Increase the number of children screened by age five.

NOTE: A measure for this indicator will be set with the community This indicator will be measured and tracked in the future.

Early screening helps detect and address vision, hearing or developmental impairments that can affect a child's ability to learn.



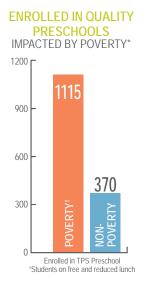
DID YOU KNOW? Tacoma Public Schools offers pre-school at 31 of its 35 elementary schools. In addition to Head State ECEAP, Title 1, Special Education and Montessori, the District offers a bilingual pre-school. In January 2015, TPS opened Willard Learning Center—the first of three planned hubs offering early learning resources.

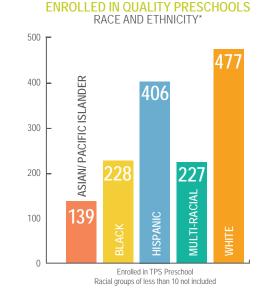
Quality Preschool

Research shows that preschool gives kids a chance to develop key social, emotional and academic skills that prepare them for kindergarten. Quality preschool experiences—whether located in schools or the community—can help get kids ready for kindergarten and have a lasting impact on success in school and life.

CHILDREN ENROLLED IN QUALITY PRESCHOOL PROVIDERS IN QUALITY TRAINING 1263 Baseline 2010-11 2013-14 Number of children enrolled in TPS preschool (includes Head Start, ECEAP, Title 1, Special Ed and Montessori) AIMING HIGHER: Increase the number of children attending Tacoma Public Schools or community child-care/

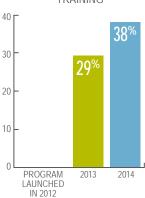






^{* 2014} Data Source: Tacoma Public Schools and Child Care Aware

QUALITY PRESCHOOL PROVIDERS IN QUALITY TRAINING*



Quality childcare helps children develop individual and interactive skills that prepare them for kindergarten.





Schools, Families, Community Help Kids Prep for Kindergarten

Hope is living proof, it's never too early to develop a child's love for reading.
Each day after preschool, the vivacious 4-year-old rushes to meet her "Mema," Eugenia, in the school library.

Eugenia said her granddaughter didn't use to enjoy having stories read to her and would refuse to sit still to listen. "Now," Eugenia told us with a smile, "Hope loves picking out stories for us to read together."

Through *Ready! Set, Read–Tacoma!*, a partnership between TPS and Communities in Schools Tacoma, any Tacoma parent with a child not yet in school can check out pre-school books at school libraries and participate in a weekly story hour.

"This is really great," Eugenia told us. "Books are expensive, so it's nice for her to be able to choose from different stories that she can take home."

All elementary—and even some middle and high schools—participate in the program, helping make the books accessible throughout the community. In a sampled study, children who participated in *Ready!*

Set, Read-Tacoma! showed more developed skills in all six areas of the WaKIDS (Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills) assessment than the district-wide average.



Ready for Kindergarten

Narrowing the achievement gap begins before kindergarten. While the state only funds half-day kindergarten, TPS provides free all-day kindergarten to ALL students, using local district funds to supplement the state allocation.

Tacoma is one of a handful of districts who assess every child through the *Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills* (WaKIDS). During the first two months of kindergarten, teachers observe each child and note demonstrated characteristics in six areas:

- Social-emotional
- Physical
- Cognitive
- Language
- Literacy
- Math

This assessment helps teachers identify and address each child's strengths and challenges. It also helps gauge how well all of us are preparing kids to succeed before they arrive for school.

READY FOR KINDERGARTEN IN MULTIPLE DEVELOPMENTAL AREAS*

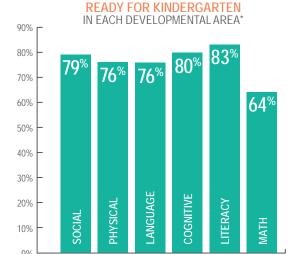


76% READY IN 4 OF 6 DEVELOPMENTAL AREAS

IN ALL DEVELOPMENTAL AREAS



AIMING HIGHER: Increase the percentage of incoming kindergartners who demonstrate the skills typical of a child entering kindergarten in all six areas, as measured through the WaKIDS assessment.



WaKIDS

*2014 Data Source: Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and Tacoma Public Schools

DID YOU KNOW? All 720 elementary classes have a Library. Last school year, every elementary classroom got its own library with about 800 books in each. Teachers were trained how to help students select "just right" books for their reading level to help instill a love of reading and equip students with critical reading skills.

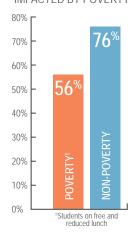
Third Grade Reading

Reading at grade-level by third grade is a nationally recognized indicator which research shows is fundamental to a child's future success in all subjects.

Why is this measure so important?

After third grade, instruction becomes much more text-based. Students who are not reading at grade-level are four times less likely to graduate from high school, in part, because they cannot keep up with more rigorous reading required in all classes.

THIRD GRADE READING AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL IMPACTED BY POVERTY*



Volunteers help students enjoy and advance in reading.

80%

70%

60%

50%

40% 30%

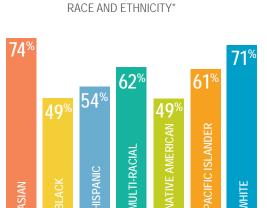
20%

THIRD GRADE READING AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL



AIMING HIGHER: Increase the percentage of third graders meeting the Washington State standardized test for third grade reading, currently the Measurement of Student Progress (MSP).

THIRD GRADE READING AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL



*2013-14 Data Source: Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction





Beating the "Summer Slide"

Most students lose the equivalent of two months of math computation skills over the summer months.

Low-income students, also lose about two months in reading achievement—while their middle-class peers make slight gains.

More than half of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can result from unequal access to summer learning opportunities. The consequences can significantly lower high school and college graduation rates among low-income students. To help overcome this "summer slide," Peace Community Center and the YMCA aligned resources with Tacoma Public Schools to provide 6-weeks of summer learning that included healthy doses of physical activities between course-work. More than 100 Jason Lee students invested in their own future by actively—and voluntarily—taking part in the Jason Lee Summer Academy.

"The physical activity helps me," Solé explained. "I just focus more. It's easier to read, to write, and to calculate math."

Academy participants reportedly made significant gains in reading and math by summer's end.

Sixth Grade Achievement

Research shows students who drop out of high school often start giving up on school in the sixth grade.

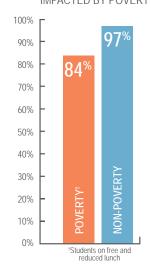
The transition into middle school is a challenging one. The sixth grade year—both academically and socially—offers an "early warning" about students who are becoming discouraged and disconnected.

SIXTH GRADE ACHIEVEMENT PASSING CLASSES

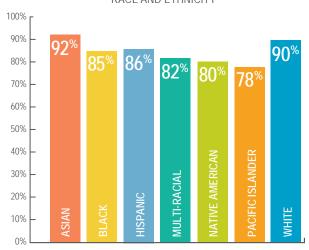


AIMING HIGHER: Increase the percentage of sixth graders who pass all, or all but one, of their classes.

SIXTH GRADE ACHIEVEMENT PASSING CLASSES IMPACTED BY POVERTY*



SIXTH GRADE ACHIEVEMENT
PASSING CLASSES
RACE AND ETHNICITY*

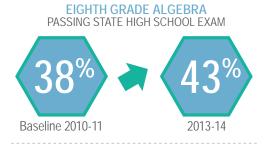


*2014 Data Source: Tacoma Public Schools

DID YOU KNOW? Electives & after-school clubs are prepping students for competition. More than 50 middle school students pursued electives in *Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement* (MESA) at First Creek. Six teams of classes, and an after-school club are all creating prosthetic arms to compete in the upcoming South Puget Sound MESA Day in March.

Eighth Grade Algebra

Algebra is one of the first opportunities for students to demonstrate higher level thinking skills needed for advanced classes and college. Students who successfully complete Algebra 1 in eighth grade are able to take more college prep classes, more math and science classes in high school and are more likely to choose to attend college. And, they achieve one of Washington State's graduation requirements, before they even enter high school.



AIMING HIGHER: Increase the percentage of eighth graders who pass the state's high school graduation requirement for algebra.

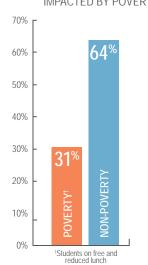
Expecting More

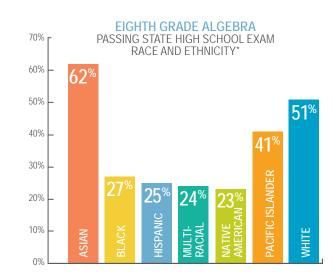
Students in Tacoma Public Schools are challenged to take algebra earlier than in many other school districts. This higher standard underscores the expectations our schools and our community have established for students, along with support and resources to meet this standard. While current algebra test scores for Tacoma's eighth graders lag behind communities in which students take the course in high school, the District and our community partners are committed to creating a culture of high expectations. Taking algebra in eighth grade not only helps keep students on track for graduation, it helps prepare them to reach their full potential as they pursue a post-secondary education and builds confidence for success in college and career.

Successfully completing algebra in eighth grade enables students to take more rigorous math in high school and expand college opportunities.



EIGHTH GRADE ALGEBRA PASSING STATE HIGH SCHOOL EXAM IMPACTED BY POVERTY*







Big Brothers Big Sisters One Student. One Hour. Once a Week.

When Kylee transitioned from middle school to Stadium High School, a special friend re-entered her life.

One Student. One Hour. Once a
Week. A new program piloted through a
partnership between Tacoma Public Schools and Big
Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound provides mentors
for school-identified ninth graders to help ease the
often challenging transition between middle and high
school.

Kylee and Marcia, who were matched years ago through Big Brothers Big Sisters, were reunited as part of the program at Stadium. The friendship provides more than an opportunity to check in on homework assignments. It's a time when Kylee shares some of her dreams for the future.

"If I keep my grades up over the next couple of years, I could go to France to study for a quarter," the exuberant freshman shared. Kylee is focused on keeping her grades up to realize her dream.

"A mentor helps build necessary self-confidence for young students to be successful and reach the goal of high school graduation and preparation for post-secondary training," said Amy R. Mack, President and CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound.

Stadium freshmen—Jasmine, Kylee and Sondra—are participating in a pilot mentorship program.

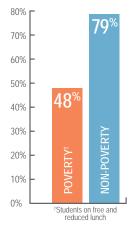
Ninth Grade Achievement

The transition from middle school to high school can be difficult for many students. Every grade begins to count toward graduation requirements, and hopefully college. Students who fail classes in the ninth grade fall behind in their credits, making it harder to graduate on time with their class. New Common Core Standards are intended to strengthen overall graduation requirements and call for students to earn specific credits each year of high school.

Data shows students who complete ninth grade academically ready to move up to tenth grade are more likely to graduate from high school in four years.

NINTH GRADE ACHIEVEMENT

PASSING ALL CLASSES (OR ALL BUT ONE)
IMPACTED BY POVERTY*



*Data Note: In this measure, passing grades include: A, B, C, D, Pass, Credit, Satisfactory and Withdrawal Pass. *2014 Data Source: Tacoma Public Schools

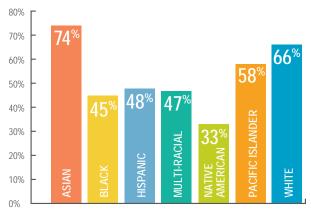
NINTH GRADE ACHIEVEMENT PASSING ALL CLASSES (OR ALL BUT ONE)



AIMING HIGHER: Increase the percentage of ninth graders who pass all, or all but one of their classes.

NINTH GRADE ACHIEVEMENT

PASSING ALL CLASSES (OR ALL BUT ONE) RACE AND ETHNICITY*



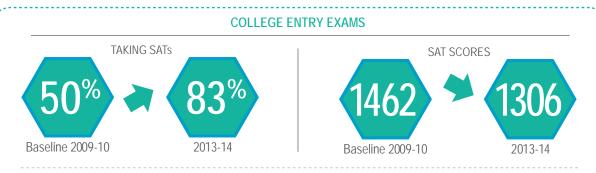


DID YOU KNOW? Athletes are also coached as leaders. Through *Captain's Council*, 55 student-athletes from more than 20 high school sports took part in leadership training funded in part by the Greater Tacoma Community Foundation. In addition to learning leadership skills, participants helped enhance partnerships between their schools.

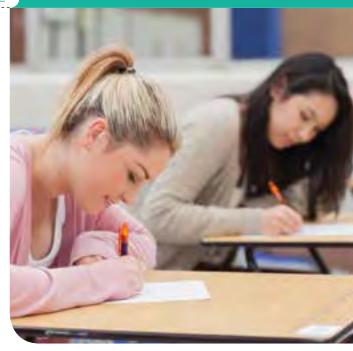
College Entry Exams

Preparing, participating, and scoring well on college entry exams is a key mile marker for getting into college. Beginning in 2013, TPS erased the cost barrier and paid the fees for every senior to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), one of the admission tests required by most colleges and universities. The test is given during the school day, eliminating student scheduling or transportation barriers. The District also offers free preliminary SAT (PSAT) testing to help prepare underclassmen for the SAT.

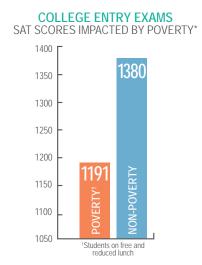
NOTE: National average score was 1,497 in 2014.

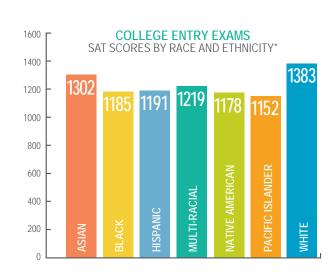


AIMING HIGHER: Increase the percentage of twelfth graders who take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT); Increase the average score on the SAT.











Every Student. Every Day.

Relentless focus on reaching each and every student is one of the biggest contributors to the significant increase in graduation rates last year. Closing the achievement gap remains a

focused effort with encouraging progress. Students impacted by poverty saw an increased graduation rate of over 10 percent. In addition, we saw to increases in every high school and among students from every racial demographic.

4-Year, On-Time High School Graduation Rate School Board Adopted Goal

In February, 2013 the Tacoma School Board adopted its own ambitious goal to increase the 4-year on-time graduation rate to 85% by 2020, as measured by the State of Washington. The State of Washington measures every school district the same way. Every student is tracked beginning in the ninth grade, until verified that they have either graduated, transferred, dropped out or continued on in high school beyond 4 years due to a lack of credits needed to graduate.





4-YEAR ON-TIME HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

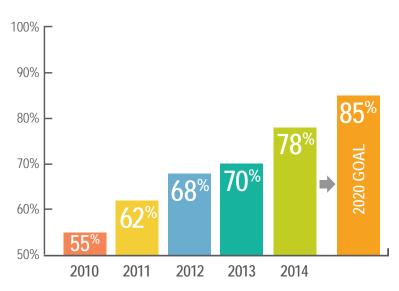


Baseline Class of 2010

Class of 2014

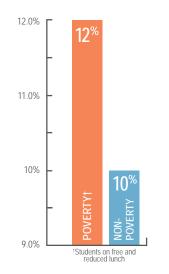
AIMING HIGHER: The Tacoma School Board adopted goal is to achieve a 4-year on-time graduation rate of 85% by 2020.

4-YEAR, ON-TIME HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE



4-YEAR, ON-TIME HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

CHANGE FROM 2012-14 IMPACTED BY POVERTY*



4-YEAR, ON-TIME HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

CHANGE FROM 2012-14 RACE AND ETHNICITY*

