

OPEN DOORS

“Many of us struggle in large comprehensive high schools. Many of us are dealing with personal issues or family tragedies that have impacted our ability to succeed in high school. We understand.

Willie Stewart Academy is an open doors program within Tacoma Public Schools for students who have dropped out of high school, lack credits to graduate on time, or have family or job needs that preclude them from attending a traditional high school. Students ages 17-21 work to earn diplomas or GEDs with support from Certificated Teachers in each subject, case managers, a social worker, and a Career Guidance Specialist.

A case manager meets with each student as they arrive at Willie Stewart Academy to create an individual learning plan. This plan enables our students to work at their own pace with support from certified teachers. Our approach to education is blended learning, where we combine online work with in-person support and instruction. Students attend one or two sessions a day from 9:30am-12pm and/or 12:30-3pm. Schedules are tailored to individual needs.

In addition, students who need support in non-academic areas will be supported by our community partners, providing services that include: mental health counseling, anger management, housing, career counseling, support groups, food and clothing, and job internships.

Where there are few resources for students beyond the age of 18 as well as beyond the fourth year of high school, Willie Stewart Academy fills an important gap.

We are named after Mr. Willie Stewart, an icon in the community who worked for 36 years within the Tacoma School District as a teacher, principal, district administrator, and Tacoma School Board member.”



Janet Hopkins is a careers specialist and teacher at Willie Stewart Academy.

HIGH SCHOOL

5-YEAR EXTENDED GRADUATION

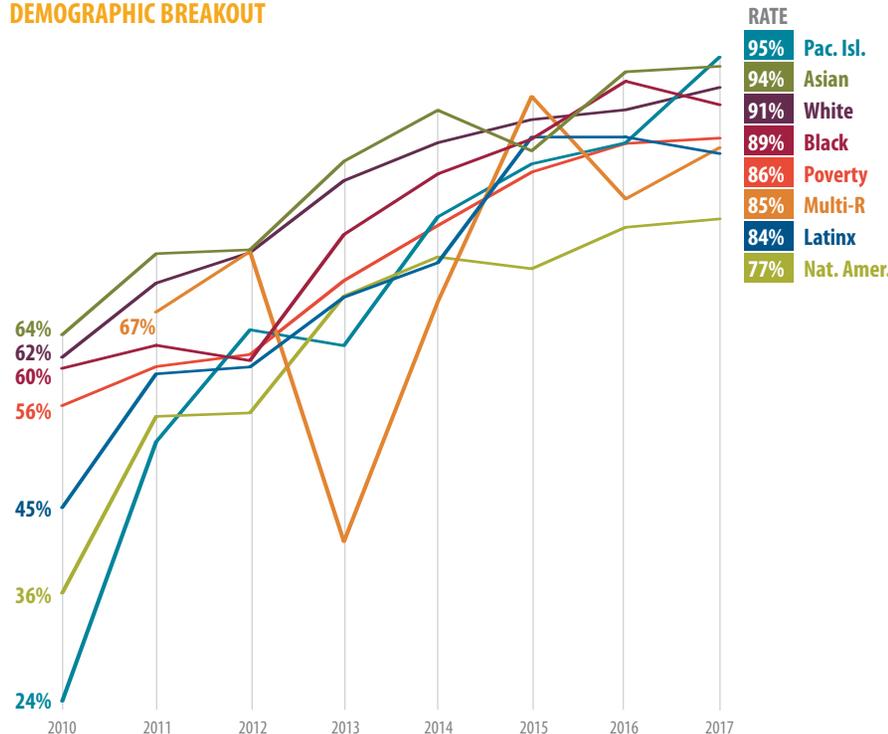
The five-year extended graduation rate for Tacoma’s Class of 2017 remains at a solid 89.6 percent. Like on-time graduation rates, we are continuing to shift the scales and surpass our 2020 goal.

Despite a slight dip in our progress toward closing gaps for all students of color, Pacific Islander students reached a high point in graduation this year. This group realized an overall 10 point increase in graduation from 2016, reaching 95 percent!

Reducing Barriers

Meanwhile, at 79 percent, the five-year extended graduation rate for students experiencing homelessness in Tacoma has remained at a critical standstill for the last three years. The dramatic growth in four-year rates for this group and lack of growth in five-year rates might indicate that young homeless adults are losing access to resources after they turn 18. We know that ending the cycle of poverty is much more than a housing problem. Without a high school diploma or GED, these young adults are 3.5 times more likely to experience homelessness again later in life compared to their peers who completed high school. Moving forward, it is vital that we continue to work towards removing barriers that compound the impact of unstable housing.

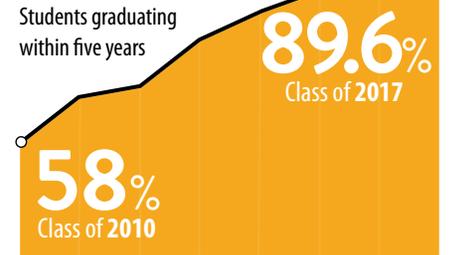
DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKOUT



Data Source: Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

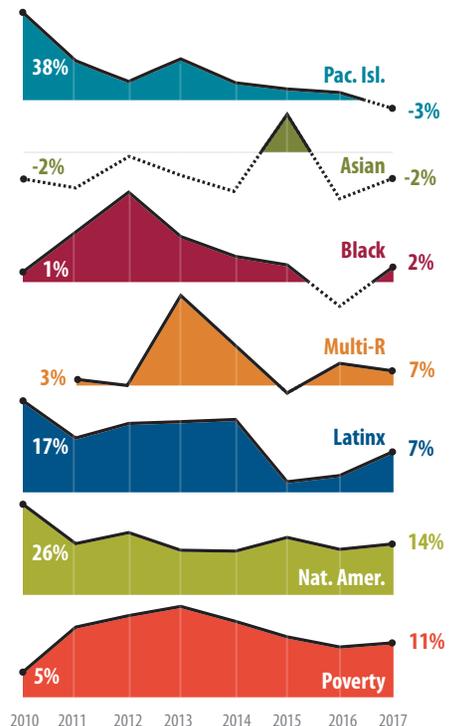
DATA TRENDS

BASELINE TO CURRENT



AIMING HIGHER GOAL: Increase the five-year extended high school graduation rate by 50 percent — to 87 percent by the Class of 2020.

MULTI-YEAR GAPS Represents the increase or decrease in the achievement gap between students of color and White students and between students in poverty and those not in poverty, baseline to current.



Note: Gap measures don't perfectly match demographics due to rounding to the nearest percent.