



RIPON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 2018 Graduation Rate Press Release

For Immediate Release

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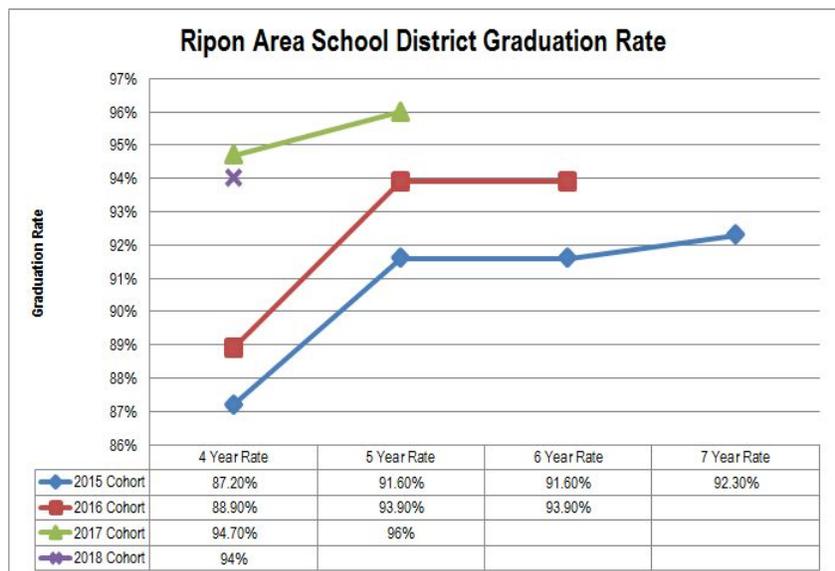
Ripon, WI - The Ripon Area School District is committed to ensuring that our students graduate from high school academically prepared as well as socially and emotionally competent. The four-year graduation rate of 94.0 for 2018 Ripon High School and Lumen Charter High School students exemplifies this commitment to excellence and places Ripon students well above the state rate of 89.6 percent.

“Graduation is to be celebrated because it improves students’ opportunities for better jobs, income, and further education, which contributes to life success,” noted State Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor. “Congratulations to the class of 2018. A high school diploma is a ticket to the future.”

The high school graduation rate counts only students who earn a regular diploma. Students are assigned to a cohort year when they first enroll in a Wisconsin public high school. Students who started high school in the 2014-15 school year are considered the class of 2018 or cohort 2018.

Graduating in four years or less is the standard for federal graduation rate reporting. However, Wisconsin’s Constitution guarantees young people the right to a public education from the ages of 4 to 20. Additionally, federal law requires educational services for students with disabilities, if needed, until the age of 21. Thus, Wisconsin has historically calculated five and six-year graduation rates to honor the additional time and effort of students who, due to illness or injury, personal or family events, or lifetime or temporary disabilities, need longer to complete their high school education. More recently, Wisconsin began reporting a seven-year graduation rate.

The five-year graduation rate for the RASD class of 2017 was 96.0 percent up from the four-year rate of 94.7 percent. The six-year rate for the class of 2016 was 93.9 percent up from the four-year rate of 88.9 percent. The seven-year rate for the class of 2015 was 92.3 percent up from 87.2 percent. Even after students leave the high school, staff continue to work with them to help them reach the important life milestone of high school graduation.



In looking at the trend data of various subgroups of students, Ripon Area School District remains above the state average in many areas. By race and ethnicity, notable graduation rate increases for Hispanic students of 9.1 points over five years compared to the state's 4.2 point increase is cause for celebration. The 2018 Hispanic cohort data reflects a 90.9 percent graduation rate compared to the 82.3 percent rate of this same subgroup at the state level. Students who are economically disadvantaged in the class of 2018 had a graduation rate of 83.8 percent compared to the state rate of 80.2 percent. An area that RASD will specifically focus on closing the gap is for students with disabilities. The 2018 cohort graduation rate of students with disabilities is 60.0 percent, which is 8.5 percent decrease below the state rate of 68.5 percent.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 emphasizes the need to ensure all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that provides special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living. Graduation from high school is an important step toward achieving successful post-school goals, and meaningful transition services are crucial. Reducing the dropout rates for students with disabilities will positively impact the gap in graduation rates between students with disabilities and students without disabilities.

Ripon Superintendent Mary Whitrock noted, "Because students with disabilities are allowed to stay in school until they are 21, often times, students do stay for an additional year or two. While our four-year cohort graduation rate is lower than the state, our district applied for and received a Transition Readiness Grant in the amount of \$32,000 to assist students with disabilities to reach their post high school goals including graduating from high school, securing employment, and being ready to live out on their own. The district will apply for the grant again next year."

"Current and historical graduation rate results reflect the high quality instruction RASD provides for all students," noted Curriculum Director Christine Damm. "Yet, administration and staff are committed to increasing this rate and closing any gaps between groups of students in the district. Improving access to post-secondary readiness options is one way to close our achievement gap and address equity issues in Wisconsin." Additional information about graduation rates is available on WISEdash, <https://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/>.