

new york minute

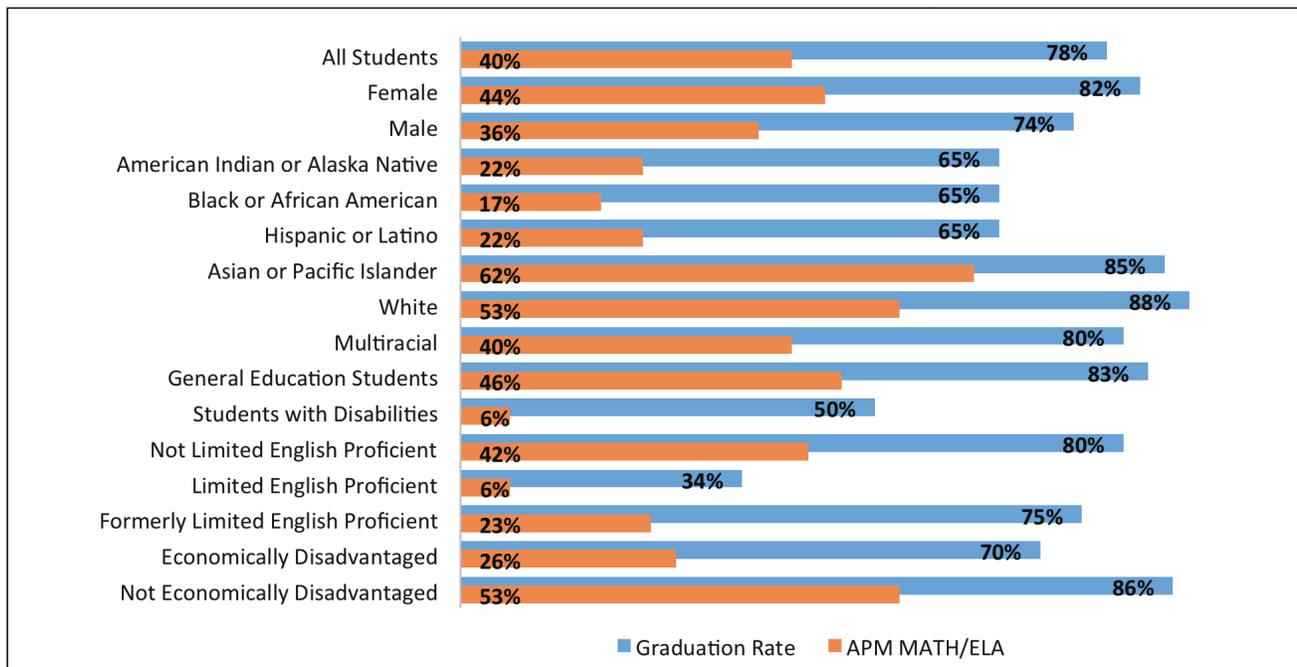
ISSUE NUMBER 70/NOVEMBER 2015

Are NYS high school graduates “college & career ready”?: Patterns by student characteristics

by Jan Vink and Robin Blakely-Armitage, Cornell University

Graduating from high school is an achievement. But as societal and workforce needs change, traditional graduation requirements may not be sufficient preparation for college and/or the workforce as, analytical and collaborative demands have increased. New York State (NYS) recently created an Aspirational Performance Measure (APM) intended to better assess college and career readiness by establishing a more rigorous standard for student achievement in English Language Arts and Math¹. However, rates of APM achievement are significantly below overall graduation rates, suggesting that a large proportion of graduates may not be prepared for the next phase of life. While the 2015 NYS public high school graduation rate was 78%, only 40% of students were deemed “college and career ready” according to the APM. The gap is particularly striking when characteristics such as ethnicity, disability status, English proficiency, and economic status are considered. For example, while 62% of Asian public school students meet the APM standard (though 85% graduate), only 17-22% of Black, Hispanic, and Native American students meet the APM standard (65% graduate). On average, economically disadvantaged students have worse outcomes than non-poor children, and students with disabilities and/or limited English proficiency fare even worse. In our January 2016 issue, we will examine geographic patterns of the APM, by school district type, resources and “need” status.

NYS Public School Graduation Rates and APM, 2014/15 School Year, by student characteristics



Source: NYSED: <http://data.nysed.gov/gradrate.php?year=2015&state=yes>

¹ Students can graduate with passing scores (65%) on the English and Mathematics Regents examinations, but achieving APM requires a passing rate of 80% on a Mathematics Regents exam and 75% on the English Regents Exam as of June of the student 4th year of high school in addition to a high school diploma. With new Common-Core based Regents examinations, students must score 4s on both English and Math exams.

