



[Rebecca Klein](mailto:Rebecca.Klein@huffingtonpost.com) Rebecca.Klein@huffingtonpost.com

The Achievement Gap In High School Graduation Rates Appears To Be Narrowing

Posted: 03/16/2015 1:31 pm EDT Updated: 03/16/2015 3:59 pm EDT



Even though significantly more white and Asian/Pacific Islander students are graduating from high school than their Hispanic, black and American Indian peers, achievement gaps in this area still appear to be closing.

Data released Monday by the U.S. Department of Education shows that the high school graduation rates for Hispanic, black, white, American Indian and Asian/Pacific Islander students all increased between the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years. However, the rate of growth for some groups has been faster than for others, making it so the graduation rate gap between white students and black, Hispanic and American Indian students has narrowed over time.

The release of this data comes a month after the [DOE announced that national high school graduation rates](#) had reached a historic high. During the 2012-13 school year, 81 percent of American students graduated from high school in four years.

“America’s students have achieved another record-setting milestone,” Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said in a statement last month. “We can take pride as a nation in knowing that we’re seeing promising gains, including for students of color.”

Monday’s announcement outlines the specific gains achieved by students of color.

“The hard work of America’s educators, families, communities and students is paying off. This is a vital step toward readiness for success in college and careers for every student in this country,” Duncan said in a statement. “While these gains are promising, we know that we have a long way to go in improving educational opportunities for every student -- no matter their ZIP code -- for the sake of our young people and our nation’s economic strength.”

The graph below shows what graduation rates looked like for each subgroup in 2012-13.

On Monday, President Barack Obama [met with leadership](#) from the Council of the Great City Schools, a coalition that represents urban school districts throughout the country, about pressing education issues, including a rewrite of the No Child Left Behind Act. In the meeting, Obama reportedly cited these high graduation rates as evidence that his administration's school initiatives are working.

Duncan also [addressed members of the organization](#) on Sunday at their annual legislative conference, according to Education Week.

"You could have said, 'stop, this is too hard... our kids can't do this' for whatever reason," Duncan said in reference to the group's work to improve graduation rates. "You hear that, sadly, from other groups. [You] never hear that from here. And if we can continue to accelerate the pace of change, think what that means for our kids, and our families, and our communities, and our cities, and, ultimately, for our nation."