



Dr. Brian Otott
Superintendent

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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PCSD Graduation Rate Climbs Again! Tops 90 Percent for First Time

Continues to Exceed, Outpace State Average

The Paulding County School District's four-year graduation rate climbed to 90.8 percent in 2020, an increase of two percentage points over last year and seven percentage points higher than the state average, according to data released by the Georgia Department of Education. According to PCSD records, this is the first time PCSD's graduation rate has topped 90 percent. The state measures both a four-year and a five-year graduation rate as part of each school district's CCRPI (College and Career Ready Performance Index) calculation. PCSD's five-year graduation rate in 2020 is 91.7 percent.

According to the data, the statewide average four-year graduation rate is 83.8 percent in 2020, and Paulding County School District students exceeded that average by seven percentage points, after topping the state average by 6.8 percentage points last year. Even as the state graduation rate has risen each of the last six years, Paulding students have managed to widen the gap by increasing PCSD's graduation rate at a faster pace.

"I am extremely proud of the growth our students have shown over the last six or seven years," said Superintendent Dr. Brian Otott. "These results are truly a community-wide effort. It is a credit to our parents for committing to being involved and actively monitoring their children's academic progress. It is a credit to our students for believing in themselves and putting in the work. And it is a credit to our teachers and district staff for their dedication to the idea that literacy drives student success, and that teaching students to read and write effectively will help them succeed in school and in their future endeavors."

The data released by the state also indicates four of PCSD's five high schools (East Paulding HS, Paulding County HS, North Paulding HS and South Paulding HS) showed improvement over 2019 in the percentage of students graduating within four years, and all four now have graduation rates above 90 percent. Hiram High School's 2020 four-year graduation rate of 87.8 percent

represents a slight decline of less than one percentage point, but the school's five-year graduation rate jumped from 86.9 percent in 2019 to 93.3 percent in 2020.

"There are multiple factors that have helped boost the Paulding County School District's graduation rate over the last several years," said Dr. Susan Browning, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning. "For one, having all of our high schools use the block schedule model for the last four years has exposed our students to more courses and more opportunities to earn credits. I also believe the literacy initiatives we have implemented over the last several years are having an impact and are helping to ensure more students are prepared for high school by the time they reach the ninth grade."

In 2018, PCSD was the largest statewide awardee when it received a \$4.5 million grant from the Georgia Department of Education to introduce literacy initiatives at 18 schools throughout the district. In 2020, PCSD was again the largest grant awardee and will receive \$19.5 million over the next five years to expand literacy initiatives at the district's remaining 15 schools.

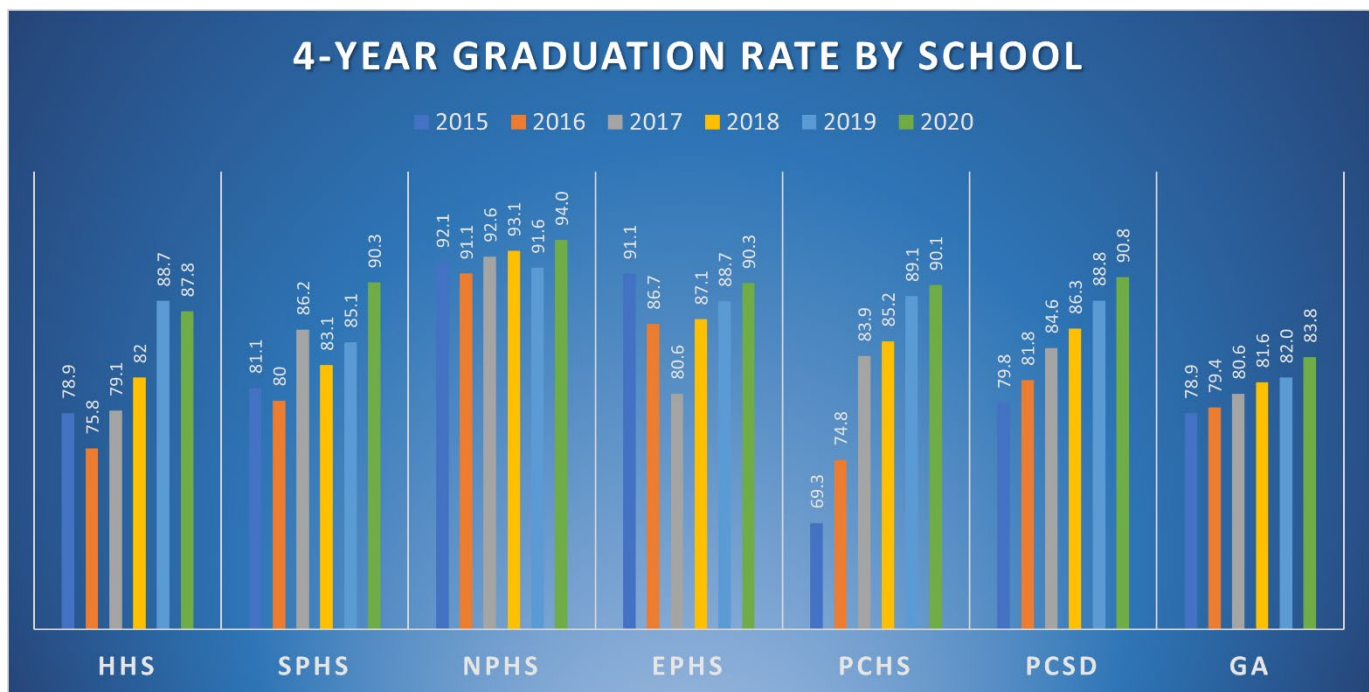
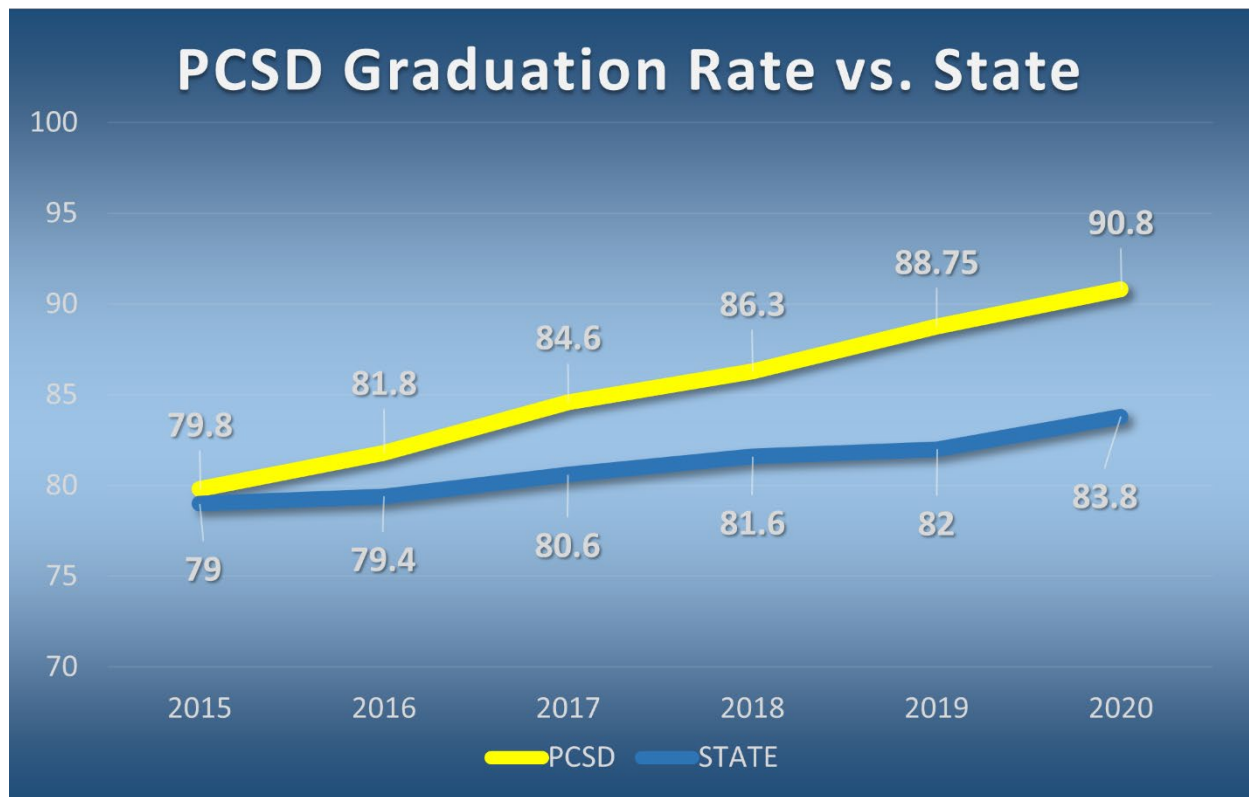
Georgia calculates the graduation rate using a formula known as the adjusted cohort rate which is required by the U.S. Department of Education. The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate defines the cohort based on when a student first becomes a freshman; it is calculated using the number of students who graduate within four years and includes adjustments for student transfers.

The Paulding County School District graduation rate has topped the state average for the past 10 years. Since 2012, the district's graduation rate has increased more than 15 percentage points. Also of note, of the 17 school districts in Georgia with a 2020 graduating class of more than 2,000 students, the Paulding County School District's graduation rate ranked 3rd (unchanged from 2019), and of the 23 school districts in Georgia with a 2020 graduating class of 1,000 students or more, the Paulding County School District's graduation rate ranked 5th (unchanged from 2019).

The GA Department of Education statewide press release with links to data tables can be found here: <https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/communications/Pages/PressReleaseDetails.aspx?PressView=default&pid=813>

(The charts on next page summarize PCSD data)

Press Inquiries Please Contact: PCSD Office of Public Information: communications@paulding.k12.ga.us



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
HIRAM HS	78.9	75.8	79.1	82.0	88.7	87.8
SOUTH PAULDING HS	81.1	80	86.2	83.1	85.1	90.3
NORTH PAULDING HS	92.1	91.1	92.6	93.1	91.6	94.0
EAST PAULDING HS	91.1	86.7	80.6	87.1	88.7	90.3
PAULDING COUNTY HS	69.3	74.8	83.9	85.2	89.1	90.1
PCSD	79.8	81.8	84.6	86.3	88.8	90.8
GA	78.9	79.4	80.6	81.6	82.0	83.8