

High School Completion Update – Class of 2017

Key Findings

1. MMSD’s four-year completion rate increased to 84% for the Class of 2017, an increase of five percentage points over the prior year.
2. Part of the increase in completion rates is due to a change in how summer school graduates are recorded.
3. The rate of students not known to be continuing (conventionally regarded as a dropout rate) continues to decrease and fell below 5% for the Class of 2017.

This report includes high school completion rates for MMSD, updated for the Class of 2017.

Data & Methods

Please note that all data in this report is drawn from DPI’s data tools for school districts, which allow us to access student level completion data to merge with our own records. As a result, there may be minor discrepancies between this report and public content from DPI if their line-item data does not exactly match the information they publish.

In addition, MMSD’s conventions around reporting data for English Language Learners (ELLs) differ from those used in DPI reporting. All students have an English proficiency score on a scale from 1-7, with 7 representing a native English speaker, 6 representing a student formerly not proficient in English who has demonstrated proficiency, and levels 1-5 representing increasing levels of fluency short of full proficiency. DPI reporting includes students at 1-5, or those students who are Limited English Proficient (LEP). For our purposes, MMSD prefers to include level 6 as well to better represent success among the group of students learning English while enrolled as our students. Therefore, our reported ELL data will differ from DPI’s in noticeable ways.

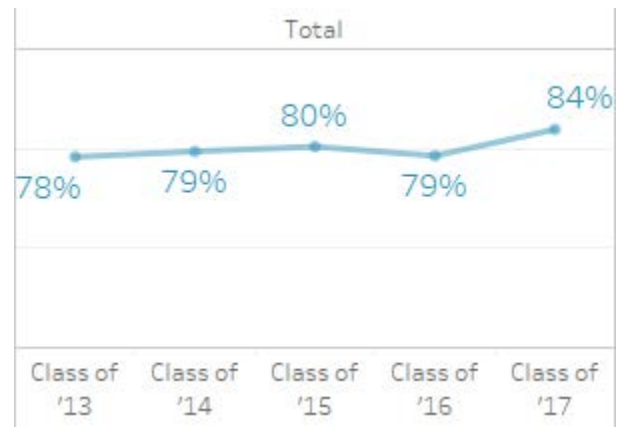
Finally, please note that because only MMSD’s four conventional high schools (East, La Follette, Memorial, and West) confer diplomas, we do not disaggregate graduation rates (nor does DPI calculate such rates) for Shabazz High, Capitol High, or any other programs.

All completion rates in this report reflect both conventional diplomas and alternative credentials and are organized by students’ expected four-year graduating class.

Findings

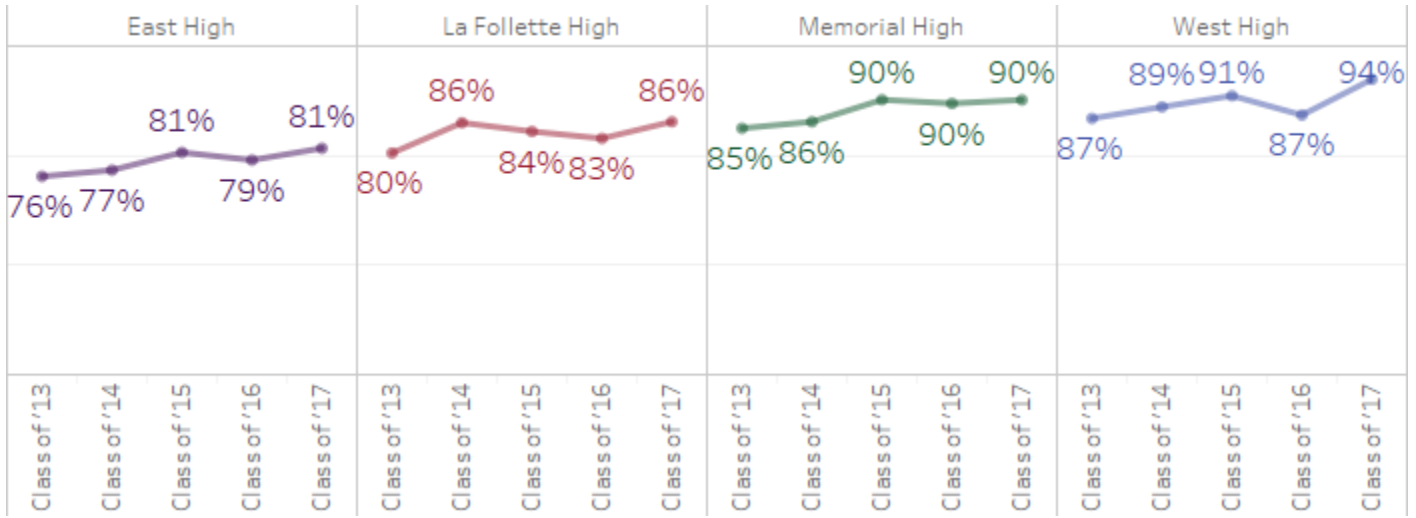
The graphic at right shows total four-year high school completion rates over the past five years. We see that completion rates reached a new high for the Class of 2017 at 84%, a five percentage point increase from the prior year.

Some of this increase is due to a change in how summer school graduates are classified. Prior to the Class of 2017, students earning a credential during the summer immediately following their fourth year of high school did not count as having graduated within four years. Starting with the Class of 2017, they do count as four-year graduates. We estimate that this change only accounts for a portion of the five percentage point increase (around 3.6 percentage points). For more discussion, see the Appendix.



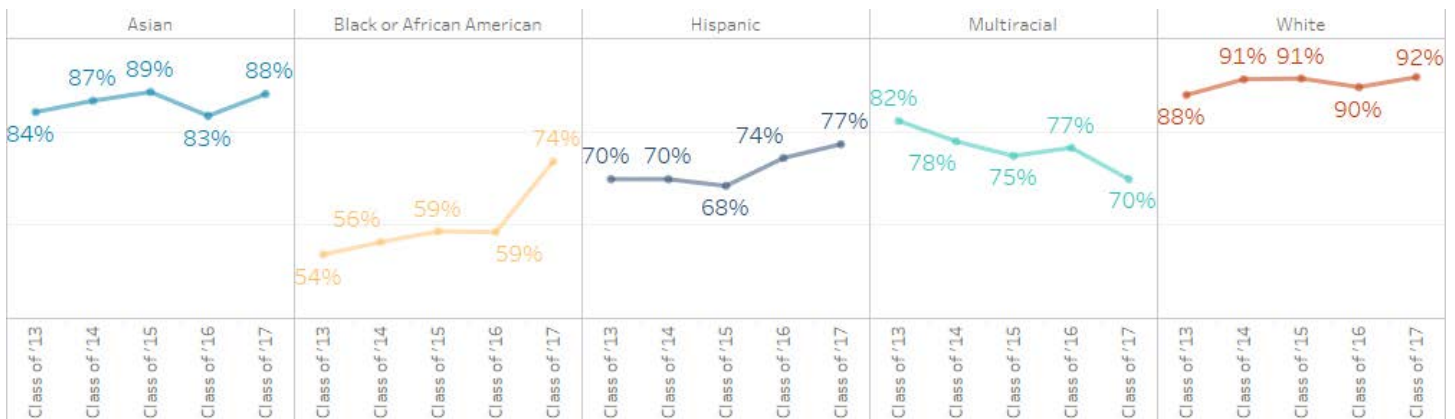


The next graphic shows four-year completion rates by high school.

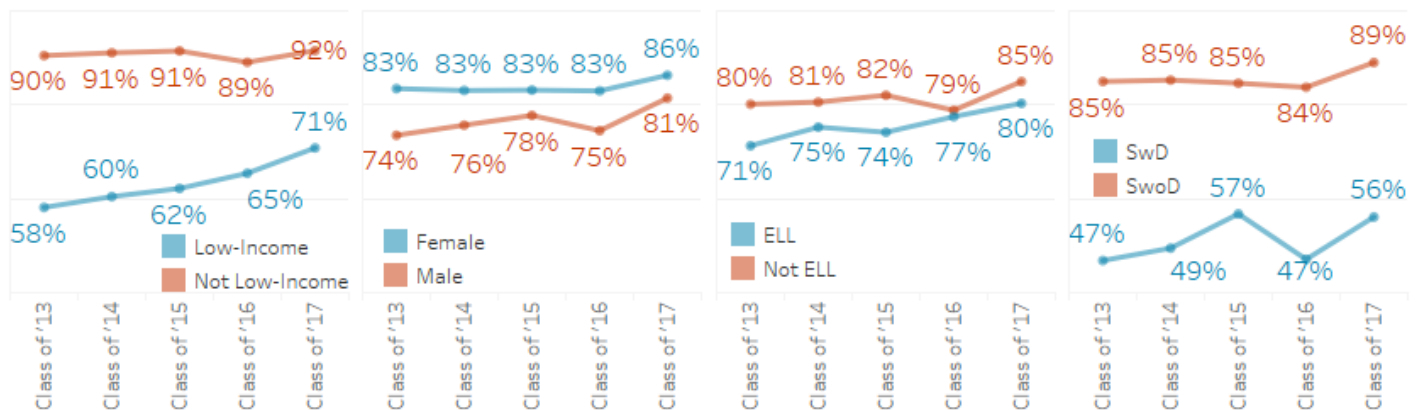


We see increases over time at each of our four conventional high schools.

The next graphic shows four-year completion rates by race/ethnicity.

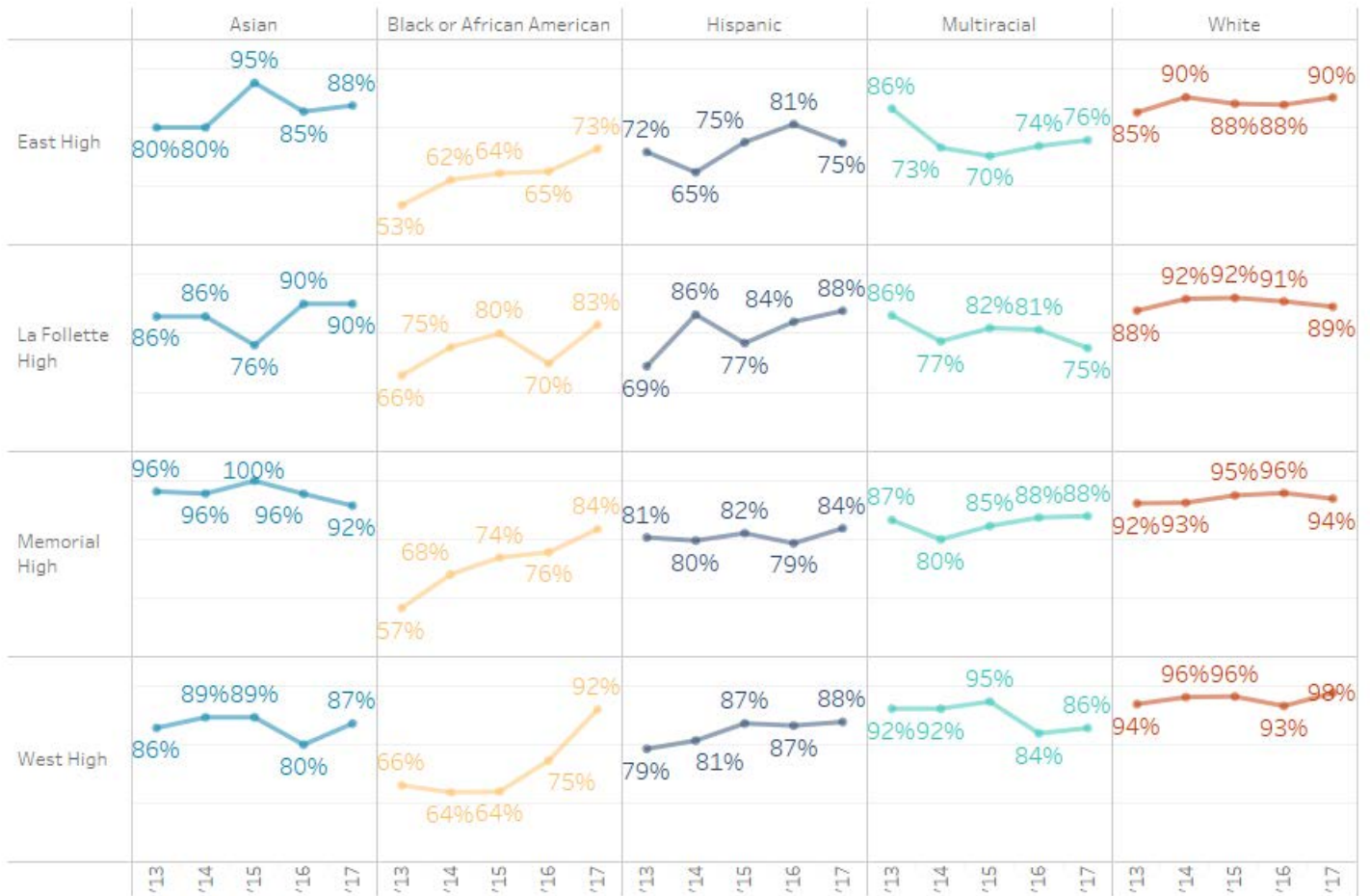


The next graphic shows four-year completion rates for other demographic breakouts: by income, gender, ELL status, and disability status (read left to right).



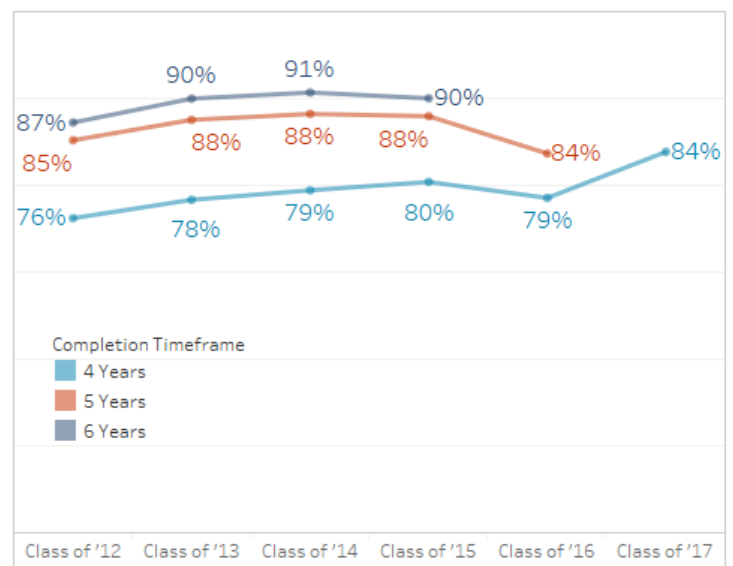


The graphic below shows four-year completion rates by conventional high school and race/ethnicity.



Among the many notable changes presented above are an increase in graduation rates of nearly 30 percentage points for African-American students at West High over the past two years, and improvements at all four conventional high schools of at least 17 percentage points for African-American students from the Class of 2013 to the Class of 2017.

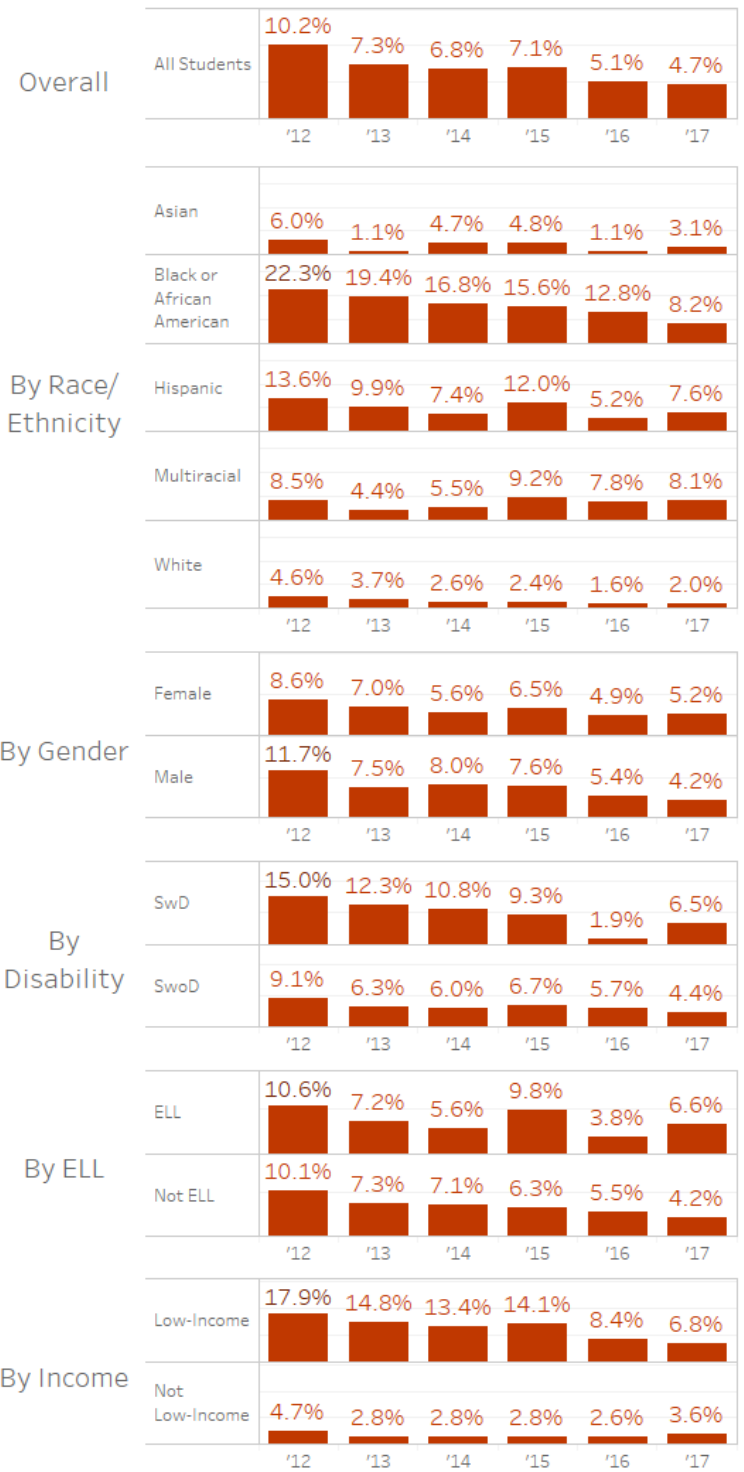
As a district, we also pay attention to the percent of students completing a diploma or other credential on alternative timelines. The graphic at right provides a history of completion rates within four, five, and six years. To see demographic breakouts of four, five, and six year completion rates, please access our [supplemental resource here](#).



The percent of students not known to be continuing reflects students who DPI designates as “not known to be continuing” in high school based on their most recent enrollment record. This figure is similar to a dropout rate and includes confirmed dropouts as well as students who were expected to enroll at another school but cannot be confirmed as enrolling elsewhere after leaving MMSD. The graphic at right shows the percent not known to be continuing after four years overall and by student group.

From this graphic, we see that the percent of students not known to be continuing continues to decrease overall and across groups. Particular highlights include the overall rate dropping below 5% for the first time in recent history, and the rate for African-American students dropping below 10% to 8.2% after a high of 22.3% in the Class of 2012.

Percent Not Known to be Continuing





Appendix: Summer School Graduates

As mentioned earlier, prior to the Class of 2017, students earning a credential during the summer immediately following their fourth year of high school did not count as having graduated within four years. Starting with the Class of 2017, they do count as four-year graduates.

To estimate the impact of this change on our completion rates, we can look at the number of students who received a diploma during the summer of 2017 after the main diploma awarding date of June 8, 2017. In total, there were 67 such students. Given a cohort size of 1,878, 67 students corresponds to approximately 3.6% of the graduating cohort.

Among those 67 students, 18 were African-American. Given a cohort of 353 African-American students, this corresponds to about 5.1% of the cohort, much less than the approximately 15 percentage point increase observed from year to year for African-American students.

The graphic below shows the graduate totals for the Class of 2017 by completion status and whether they earned their diploma during the summer.

	Completed		Did Not Complete
	Summer 2017 Diplomas	Other	Other
Asian	5 3.1%	136 85.0%	19 11.9%
Black or African American	18 5.1%	242 68.6%	93 26.3%
Hispanic	22 6.5%	241 70.9%	77 22.6%
Multiracial	3 2.2%	92 67.6%	41 30.1%
White	18 2.0%	792 89.7%	73 8.3%
Total	67 3.6%	1,508 80.3%	303 16.1%

Students not earning their diploma by the end of Summer of 2017 (the “Did Not Complete”) column above still have the opportunity to complete their diploma on a longer timeframe.