While students across the state continue to graduate at higher rates, it is unclear how much of that increase is due to exemptions and/or regulatory changes.

**Overall change in graduation rate + graduation exemption use**

- **2018**: 64.5% Students who graduated without exemptions, 76.3% total graduation rate
- **2019**: 64.7% Students who graduated without exemptions, 71.0% total graduation rate
- **2020**: 59.2% Students who graduated without exemptions, 76.5% total graduation rate
- **2021**: 78.5% Students who graduated with exemptions, 78.5% total graduation rate

**Racial breakdown in use of exemptions**

- **American Indian**:
  - '18: 75%, '19: 79%, '20: 82%, '21: 75%
  - Students who graduated without exemptions: 65%, Students who graduated with exemptions: 82%

- **Asian**:
  - '18: 69%, '19: 76%, '20: 69%, '21: 69%
  - Students who graduated without exemptions: 79%, Students who graduated with exemptions: 82%

- **Black**:
  - '18: 93%, '19: 93%, '20: 93%, '21: 93%
  - Students who graduated without exemptions: 84%, Students who graduated with exemptions: 68%

- **Latinx**:
  - '18: 79%, '19: 79%, '20: 76%, '21: 73%
  - Students who graduated without exemptions: 52%, Students who graduated with exemptions: 68%

- **Multiracial**:
  - '18: 74%, '19: 72%, '20: 76%, '21: 68%
  - Students who graduated without exemptions: 33%, Students who graduated with exemptions: 35%

- **White**:
  - '18: 76%, '19: 76%, '20: 80%, '21: 77%
  - Students who graduated without exemptions: 80%, Students who graduated with exemptions: 84%
Graduation rate by subgroup: English language learners

- English language learner students who graduated without exemptions
- Not English language learner students who graduated without exemptions
- Students who graduated with exemptions

Graduation rate by subgroup: students with disabilities

- Students with disabilities who graduated without exemptions
- General education students who graduated without exemptions
- Students who graduated with exemptions

Graduation rate by subgroup: low-income students

- Low-income students who graduated without exemptions
- Not low-income students who graduated without exemptions
- Students who graduated with exemptions

Data on graduation rates from 2018-2021 are from publicly posted annual Graduation Rate Databases, which can be found at https://data.nysed.gov/downloads.php.

All graduation data in this brief refers to 4-year August graduation rates. Charts showing graduates include the following graduation outcomes: graduating with a Regents diploma, graduating with an Advanced Regents diploma, and graduating with a Local diploma. Our figures do not depict students who did not graduate with a diploma, including those who dropped out, remained enrolled, or earned a non-diploma credential or GED.

Data on graduation exemptions from SY 2019-20 are from publicly posted graduation exemption data, which were shared via press release in January 2021. This exemption data does not include subgroup breakdowns for SY19-20. This data can be found at http://www.nysed.gov/news/2021/state-educationdepartment-releases-2016-cohort-highschool-graduation-rates.

Data on graduation exemptions from SY2021-22 comes from unpublished data shared with The Education Trust–New York in response to a public records request.

Learn more at equityinedny.org