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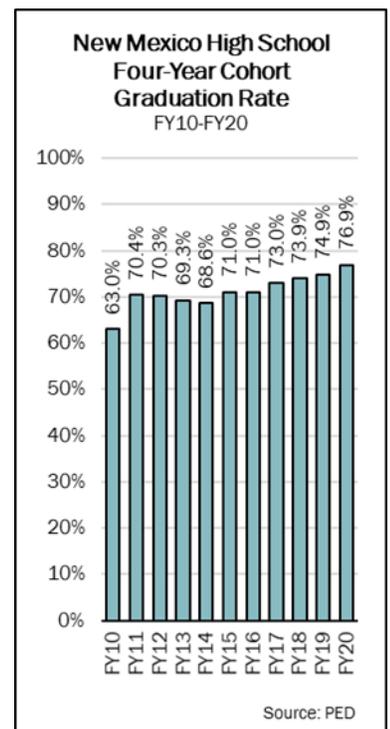
## Dropout Prevention and Recovery

### Defining High School Dropout

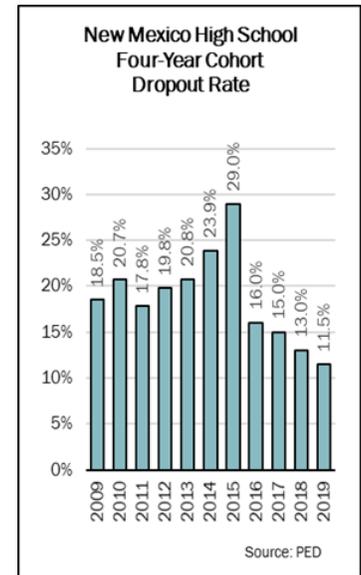
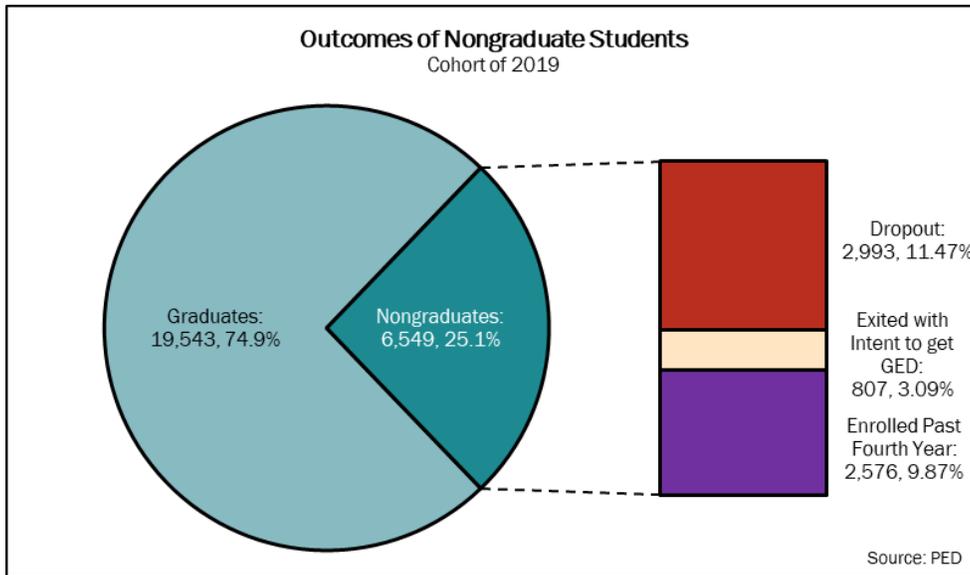
- Nationally and at a state level, the high school dropout rate is calculated as the percentage of people ages 16 to 24 years old who are not enrolled in school and lack a high school diploma or a graduate equivalency degree (GED).
- The New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) categorizes non-graduates in four ways:
  - Still Enrolled:** Students who are continuing high school past a fourth year.
  - Exit Out:** Students who have exited with an intent to get a GED or other vocational credential.
  - Status Unknown:** Students who have dropped out or whose whereabouts are unknown.
  - Certificate:** Students who have completed coursework, but did not pass an exit exam. *Note:* This status illustrates what happens when students have completed all coursework for a high school diploma, but do not meet competency requirements to pass an exit exam, or otherwise demonstrate competency in all academic subjects, per state statute.
- The category of “status unknown” above represents the “true” dropout rate.

### Graduation and Dropout Rates

- New Mexico’s high school graduation rate for the four-year cohort of 2021 was 76.8 percent, indicating 24.2 percent of students did not graduate in four years in 2021.
- This does not mean 24.2 percent of students dropped out, but it does indicate that nearly a quarter of students either continued enrollment past a fourth year of high school, exited out with the intent to get a GED or other credential, completed coursework but did not demonstrate competency, or truly did drop out.
- Data from PED for the four-year cohort of 2019 (most recent available), during which the graduation rate was 74.9 percent, indicates 25.1 percent of students did not graduate in four years.



- For the cohort of 2019, among the 25.1 percent of non-graduates, 11.47 percent dropped out, 3.09 percent exited with the intent to get a GED, 9.87 percent enrolled past a fourth year, and less than 2 percent completed coursework, but did not pass an exit exam.



## Costs of High School Dropout

- Both individuals and societies experience significant costs when students do not graduate from high school. Research from the National Governor’s Association (NGA) estimates each student that does not graduate costs the public more than \$200 thousand over the course of their lifetime.
- Several [research](#) studies show students who do not complete high school are more likely to be unemployed, earn lower wages, engage in criminal activity, have poor health, and require public assistance.

## Strategies to Address High School Dropouts

- High school dropout prevention, reengagement, and recovery requires a systemic approach and is addressed through a combination of programs, services and initiatives. A 2017 practice guide from the Institute for Education Sciences (IES) has identified four evidence-based strategies to address and prevent high school dropout.

### IES Practice Guide Summary: Preventing Dropout in Secondary Schools

Recommendations and Corresponding Levels of Evidence

Recommendation	Levels of Evidence		
	Minimal Evidence	Moderate Evidence	Strong Evidence
1. Monitor the progress of all students, and proactively intervene when students show early signs of attendance, behavior, or academic problems.	◆		
2. Provide intensive, individualized support to students who have fallen off track and face significant challenges to success.		◆	
3. Engage students by offering curricula and programs that connect schoolwork with college and career success and that improve students’ capacity to manage challenges in and out of school.			◆
4. For schools with many at-risk students, create small, personalized communities to facilitate monitoring and support.		◆	

Source: Institute for Education Sciences

