



PAYMON ROUHANIFARD  
SUPERINTENDENT

**CAMDEN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

201 N. FRONT ST, CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY 08102  
856-966-2000 • [www.camden.k12.nj.us](http://www.camden.k12.nj.us)

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Media contact:**

Brendan Lowe  
Division of Communications  
[blowe@camden.k12.nj.us](mailto:blowe@camden.k12.nj.us)  
c: 856-904-1693

## **Camden Graduation Rate Continues to Climb**

*Graduation rate up 15 points since 2012; dropout rate down 5 points over same period*

**Thursday, January 7, 2016** – Office of the Superintendent, Camden, NJ – Superintendent Paymon Rouhanifard joined educators, current students, and proud alumni this afternoon to announce that Camden’s graduation rate is continuing to increase while its dropout rate is continuing to decrease. Since 2012, Camden City School District’s graduation rate rose from 49 to 64 percent while the dropout rate fell from 20 to 15 percent.

Camden’s high schools are making progress faster than high schools in other cities across the State. For instance, the gap between Camden and Newark has fallen from 20 points to 6 points over the last four years (from 49 in Camden and 69 percent in Newark in 2012 to 64 percent and 70 percent, respectively, in 2015).

What’s more, all sub-groups of students are contributing to the progress. In particular, Latino students’ graduation rate has increased from 44 percent in 2012 to 66 percent in 2015, and special education students’ graduation rate has increased from 38 percent to 56 percent. Meanwhile, special education students’ dropout rate has fallen from 21 percent in 2012 to 11 percent in 2015.

“This hard-earned progress reflects the efforts of our students, staff, and families,” said Superintendent Rouhanifard. “At the same time, there’s more work still to do. We must continue to move urgently so that all of our students graduate from high school, and, more to the point, our students graduate with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in their next step.”

The District’s three magnet high schools—Brimm Medical Arts, Creative Arts Morgan Village Academy, and MetEast—have graduation rates for the Class of 2015 between 94-98 percent, which exceed the 2014 State average of 89 percent (the State has not yet released its 2015 average).

Woodrow Wilson High School’s graduation rate rose for the fourth straight year, increasing from 46 percent in 2012 to 63 percent in 2015.

From 2014 to 2015, Camden’s graduation rate rose from 62 percent to 64 percent, with 431 of the 678 members of the class of 2015 graduating in four years. The class of 2015 is defined as students who started 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2011 and were therefore expected to graduate in June or August of 2015. High school students who

reside in Camden but attend school outside of the District—for example, a student with disabilities who might attend a non-public school—are included in the District’s graduation rate.

Aside from the graduates, 13 percent of students are still enrolled in high school and are still well-positioned to graduate from high school. Fifteen percent of students dropped out, and nine percent of students transferred, but the students’ new school has not been verified.

The District is responsible for verifying transfers; the students whose transfers remain unverified cannot be removed from the District’s denominator, meaning the District’s graduation rate is even higher in practice. The District is providing professional development to schools to support increased tracking of students who transfer.

Students in the class of 2015 could graduate by passing both parts of the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA), both parts of the Alternative High School Assessment (AHSA), a portfolio of student work submitted to the state known as an appeal, or a combination of the above. Some special education students are also exempt from the state assessments. PARCC results were not part of the graduation requirement for students who graduated last year. Beginning this year, PARCC results are one of several options students will have to meet the assessment requirement for graduation.

Nearly one-third of the class of 2015—32 percent of students—graduated through the HSPA pathway. One percent of graduates earned their diploma through the AHSA pathway. Forty-nine percent of the class of 2015 graduated by passing a combination of HSPA or AHSA subject tests or through appeal (i.e., a portfolio of student work). Nineteen percent of graduates were exempt from the state assessments.

The District’s graduation rate includes Brimm Medical Arts High School, Camden High School, Creative Arts Morgan Village Academy, MetEast High School, and Woodrow Wilson High School. Charter high schools are not included; renaissance schools did not serve high school grades in 2014-15.

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*Contact Brendan Lowe from the Camden City School District Division of Communications at [blowe@camden.k12.nj.us](mailto:blowe@camden.k12.nj.us) or 856-904-1693 for interviews with Superintendent Rouhanifard.*