Tracking Alaska's Students

By Jeff Hadland,
Economist

Measuring Alaska's secondary student performance

Not every young Alaskan takes the traditional path from secondary school to adult work life. The journey can be a bumpy one, with detours and deadends. And just as initial success doesn't necessarily lead to long-term success, failure in high school doesn't necessarily mean long-term failure. But what path is most likely to lead to success for Alaska's youth?

Many Alaska youth follow high school immediately with college[1] or training programs. Others drop out and then later earn a GED.[2] Others find success in employment without a degree. And some Alaska youth fail.

In order to better assess how Alaska's students are faring and to identify ways toward improvement, the Alaska departments of Labor and Workforce Development, and Education and Early Development have started new cooperative data collection and analysis systems.[3] Through that effort, we're able to track Alaska

[1] "College" and "postsecondary education" are used interchangeably throughout this article; they refer to two- or four-year colleges.
[2] GED stands for General Education Development.

[3] The cooperative data collection and analysis systems are part of a U.S. Department of Education drive to have states develop and maintain longitudinal data systems to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze and use education data, including individual student records. The data systems should help states, school districts, schools and teachers make data-driven decisions to improve student learning, and contribute to research on ways to increase student achievement and close achievement gaps.

1 Students Leaving School the First Year Versus Over Four Years
Students in grades nine to 12 in the 2004-2005 school year, Alaska

		What Happened to Students Over the Whole 2004-2008 Period[1]							
	Total	Earned GED[2]	Graduated or Earned GED[2]	Postsecondary Education in Alaska or in the U.S.[2]	Postsecondary Education in Alaska Only[2]	Military[2]	Employed in Alaska[3]	Alaska Total Wages[3]	Average Annual Wages[3]
Total	40,978	3,000	29,851	16,827	10,484	1,515	26,760	$361,096,801	$13,494
Graduated	6,609	42	6,438	3,154	1,868	338	4,232	$80,493,120	$19,020
Dropped Out	2,995	875	1,056	353	247	97	1,777	$22,223,361	$12,506
Ended Year as a 7th- to 12th-Grader and Was Expected to Return	28,388	1,665	21,112	12,844	8,053	961	19,071	$234,154,594	$12,278
Transferred to Another School	1,506	262	457	237	136	69	724	$8,300,555	$11,465
Other[4]	1,480	156	568	239	180	50	956	$15,925,171	$16,658
Number Employed in Alaska in 2009	26,760	2,044	20,490	11,885	8,732	n/a	26,760	n/a	n/a
Average Annual Wages in 2009	$13,494	$13,599	$14,366	$12,264	$13,866	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Note: The abbreviation "n/a" in these cases means not available.
[1] Based on the last exit type reported
[2] Student data as of November 2009
[3] Student data as of calendar year 2009
[4] "Other" includes students who completed school and received certificates for completion or attendance in lieu of high school diplomas; students who reached the maximum age (school age is 19 or younger); students who died; students still in high school, and students otherwise unaccounted for.
Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; Alaska Department of Education and Early Development; Alaska Department of Revenue, Permanent Fund Dividend Division

students through secondary and postsecondary education as well as through the world of work.

Since Alaska consistently ranks near the bottom in educational performance measures when compared to other states, there's a sense of urgency to identify solutions. An improved data system is a key part of this effort.

Which path is the one that will most likely lead to success? Just how successful are high school graduates versus dropouts? And how do long-term dropouts compare to those who earn their GED in Alaska, which should give them the equivalent of a high school diploma? To get a more complete profile of Alaska's youth, we have matched historical Alaska student records from the Department of Education[4] with Alaska GED, employment and wage data, along with Alaska and national postsecondary education information.

The 2004-2005 school year: a case study

Four years of Alaska student data were made available for data matching – the school years 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 – as part of the ongoing data sharing agreement between the departments of Labor and Education. The 2004-2005 school year was the earliest year for which high school student data were available.

After selecting only student records in the 2004-2005 school year, 40,978 Alaska students in grades nine through 12 were matched with the subsequent three years of school year information and other administrative data through calendar year 2009 to determine each student's near-term and longer-term education and employment outcomes.

School districts assigned an exit code from the Department of Education's list of 14 different codes to each student based on the last reported exit for the school year. About 70 percent of the students were assigned a code indicating

[4] Throughout this article, references to simply the "Department of Education" are to the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development.

What They Were Doing in 2007-2008
Grades nine to 12 in 2004-2005, Alaska

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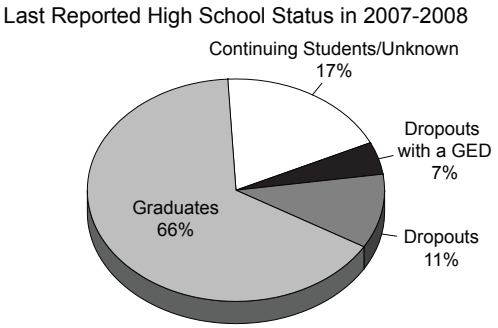


Sources: Alaska Department of Education and Early Development; Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

they ended the year enrolled and were expected to return the following year. (See Exhibit 1.) The two other large categories of students were those who graduated and those who dropped out of school.

While the status of the students at the end of the 2004-2005 school year is important, the final reported exit status during the four-year period – from 2004 through 2008 – for the 2004-2005 students is also important. It shows what happened to the ninth-graders from 2004-2005, and it provides additional data on the students' college and employment choices. Longer-term data give a clearer picture of the long-term success or failure of Alaska's youth, and that drives an interest in collecting this information at the national level.

Though many students reported as continuing students in the 2004-2005 high school student population dropped out of school, many of those dropouts ultimately earned a GED or returned to school and got their high school diploma. Almost 66 percent (26,938) of the students earned a regular high school diploma or graduated another way[5] in Alaska.

While there were 3,046 dropouts and students who reached the usual maximum allowable age[6]

[5] Graduating another way includes earning a diploma under a waiver, graduating the prior summer or passing the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination. A student must pass the three sections of the HSGQE to receive a diploma in the state of Alaska.

[6] Nineteen is the usual maximum age to attend high school in the state. Alaska statute allows students older than that at the discretion of the school district's governing body.

3 Status of the Students as of the 2007-2008 School Year and 2009
Students who were in grades nine to 12 in the 2004-2005 school year, Alaska

		Student Status[1]						Students Who Earned a GED[2]	
	Total Students	Number of Dropouts	Percentage of Dropouts	Number of Graduates	Percentage of Graduates	Number of Other[3] Students	Percentage of Other[3] Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students
Total	40,978	6,281	15.3%	26,938	65.7%	7,759	18.9%	3,000	7.3%
Graduates	26,938	0	0.0%	26,938	100.0%	0	0.0%	87	0.3%
Dropouts with a GED	1,919	62	3.2%	0	0.0%	1,857	96.8%	1,919	100.0%
Last grade level as of the 2007-2008 school year:									
Ninth grade	1,206	561	46.5%	0	0.0%	645	53.5%	216	17.9%
10th grade	2,206	1,043	47.3%	2	0.1%	1,161	52.6%	528	23.9%
11th grade	4,179	1,872	44.8%	155	3.7%	2,152	51.5%	992	23.7%
12th grade	33,378	2,804	8.4%	26,781	80.2%	3,793	11.4%	1,263	3.8%
Grade n/a[4]	9	1	11.1%	0	0.0%	8	88.9%	1	11.1%
Postsecondary education:									
No	24,151	5,550	23.0%	12,038	49.8%	6,563	27.2%	2,348	9.7%
Yes	16,827	731	4.3%	14,900	88.5%	1,196	7.1%	652	3.9%
Region[5] of last school in the 2004-2008 period:									
Mat-Su	4,753	601	12.6%	3,124	65.7%	1,028	21.6%	374	7.9%
Fairbanks	5,576	942	16.9%	3,575	64.1%	1,059	19.0%	493	8.8%
Northern Region	1,836	373	20.3%	1,023	55.7%	440	24.0%	135	7.4%
Balance of Interior Region	1,478	294	19.9%	802	54.3%	382	25.8%	136	9.2%
Southwest Region	2,492	495	19.9%	1,377	55.3%	620	24.9%	157	6.3%
Anchorage	15,149	2,316	15.3%	10,338	68.2%	2,495	16.5%	944	6.2%
Gulf Coast Region	4,742	497	10.5%	3,380	71.3%	865	18.2%	343	7.2%
Southeast Region	4,492	619	13.8%	3,171	70.6%	702	15.6%	328	7.3%
Region n/a[6]	460	144	31.3%	148	32.2%	168	36.5%	90	19.6%
Sex:									
Female	19,841	2,669	13.5%	13,722	69.2%	3,450	17.4%	1,113	5.6%
Male	21,137	3,612	17.1%	13,216	62.5%	4,309	20.4%	1,887	8.9%
Race:									
White	24,481	2,941	12.0%	17,512	71.5%	4,028	16.5%	1,675	6.8%
African-American	1,704	331	19.4%	953	55.9%	420	24.6%	102	6.0%
Hispanic	1,389	262	18.9%	845	60.8%	282	20.3%	97	7.0%
Asian	2,637	354	13.4%	1,820	69.0%	463	17.6%	94	3.6%
American Indian	616	124	20.1%	348	56.5%	144	23.4%	65	10.6%
Alaska Native	9,565	2,153	22.5%	5,136	53.7%	2,276	23.8%	924	9.7%
Other	586	116	19.8%	324	55.3%	146	24.9%	43	7.3%

Note: Some students fall into multiple categories, so percentages in rows and columns don't equal 100 percent.

[1] Student data as of the 2007-2008 School Year.

[2] Student data as of November 2009.

[3] "Other" includes students who completed school and received certificates for completion or attendance in lieu of high school diplomas; students who reached the maximum age (school age is 19 or younger); students who died; students still in high school, and students otherwise unaccounted for.

[4] Students who were last reported as dropouts.

in grades nine through 12 reported in 2004-2005, twice that number, a total of 6,281 of the 40,978 students in 2004-2005, ultimately dropped out of school or reached the maximum school age by school year 2007-2008. That means more than 15 percent of all students in grades nine through 12 in the 2004-2005 school year dropped out of high school by 2008. But that isn't the end of the story for dropouts.

The numbers of people who get their Alaska GED aren't incorporated into official graduation rates, but those numbers are a crucial piece of information in determining overall student outcomes. (See Exhibit 2.) The good news is that nearly half the students who ultimately dropped out received a GED. Overall, 29,851 (72.8 percent) of the 2004-2005 students earned a regular Alaska high school diploma or GED by 2009. Those figures, however, don't include high school education outcomes for students who left the state.

Dropout and graduation rates varied considerably by gender, race and geographic area.

Students Who Graduated or Earned a GED[1]				Postsecondary Education[2]				Employment and Wages As of Calendar Year 2009			
Number of Dropouts Who Earned a GED[4]	Percentage of Dropouts Who Earned a GED[4]	Number Who Were Graduates or Who Earned a GED	Percentage Who Were Graduates or Who Earned a GED	Number Who Were in Any State	Percentage Who Were in Any State	Number in Alaska	Percentage in Alaska	Number Employed in Alaska	Percentage Who Were Employed	Total Annual Wages	Average Annual Wages
1,919	30.6%	29,851	72.8%	16,827	41.1%	10,484	25.6%	26,760	65.3%	$361,096,801	$13,494
0	0.0%	26,938	100.0%	14,900	55.3%	9,204	34.2%	18,642	69.2%	$269,446,162	$14,454
1,919	0.0%	1,919	100.0%	426	22.2%	332	17.3%	1,317	68.6%	$18,209,201	$13,826
130	23.2%	216	17.9%	95	7.9%	51	4.2%	510	42.3%	$4,723,046	$9,261
323	31.0%	530	24.0%	279	12.6%	154	7.0%	1,055	47.8%	$10,826,027	$10,262
640	34.2%	1,145	27.4%	627	15.0%	395	9.5%	2,413	57.7%	$27,666,902	$11,466
825	29.4%	27,959	83.8%	15,826	47.4%	9,884	29.6%	22,776	68.2%	$317,865,641	$13,956
1	0.0%	1	11.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	66.7%	$15,185	$2,531
1,493	26.9%	14,322	59.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	14,875	61.6%	$215,338,026	$14,477
426	58.3%	15,529	85.1%	1	0.0%	10,484	62.3%	11,885	70.6%	$145,758,776	$12,264
193	32.1%	3,468	73.0%	1,780	37.5%	1,173	24.7%	3,019	63.5%	$45,012,936	$14,910
347	36.8%	4,054	72.7%	2,455	44.0%	1,724	30.9%	3,624	65.0%	$54,037,102	$14,911
78	20.9%	1,156	63.0%	405	22.1%	330	18.0%	1,330	72.4%	$17,128,817	$12,879
99	33.7%	935	63.3%	476	32.2%	363	24.6%	978	66.2%	$14,143,785	$14,462
103	20.8%	1,526	61.2%	586	23.5%	466	18.7%	1,773	71.1%	$16,961,002	$9,566
614	26.5%	11,272	74.4%	6,830	45.1%	4,012	26.5%	9,751	64.4%	$134,850,086	$13,829
209	42.1%	3,713	78.3%	2,168	45.7%	1,333	28.1%	3,074	64.8%	$41,499,425	$13,500
229	37.0%	3,494	77.8%	2,044	45.5%	1,013	22.6%	2,922	65.0%	$34,146,955	$11,686
47	32.6%	233	50.7%	83	18.0%	70	15.2%	289	62.8%	$3,316,695	$11,476
739	27.7%	14,801	74.6%	9,181	46.3%	5,734	28.9%	13,176	66.4%	$156,061,884	$11,844
1,180	32.7%	15,050	71.2%	7,646	36.2%	4,750	22.5%	13,584	64.3%	$205,034,918	$15,094
1,059	36.0%	19,133	78.2%	11,818	48.3%	6,960	28.4%	15,733	64.3%	$225,428,980	$14,328
62	18.7%	1,050	61.6%	598	35.1%	322	18.9%	955	56.0%	$12,326,349	$12,907
71	27.1%	942	67.8%	541	38.9%	374	26.9%	907	65.3%	$13,520,260	$14,907
71	20.1%	1,914	72.6%	1,159	44.0%	726	27.5%	1,697	64.4%	$23,827,924	$14,041
43	34.7%	413	67.0%	188	30.5%	114	18.5%	387	62.8%	$5,267,093	$13,610
591	27.5%	6,033	63.1%	2,346	24.5%	1,874	19.6%	6,716	70.2%	$75,816,889	$11,289
22	19.0%	366	62.5%	177	30.2%	114	19.5%	365	62.3%	$4,909,306	$13,450

[5] These are the same economic regions regularly discussed in *Trends*, with two differences: the Anchorage/Mat-Su Region is broken into the Municipality of Anchorage and the Mat-Su Borough and the Fairbanks North Star Borough is separated out from the Interior region.
[6] The abbreviation "n/a" in this reference means that the data aren't available because the school location wasn't coded correctly for the 460 students.
Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; Alaska Department of Education and Early Development; Alaska Department of Revenue, Permanent Fund Dividend Division

Females graduated from high school at a rate nearly seven percentage points higher than males, 69.2 percent versus 62.5 percent, but the gap narrowed to three percentage points when GEDs were included as males were more likely to obtain a GED than females. (See Exhibit 3.)

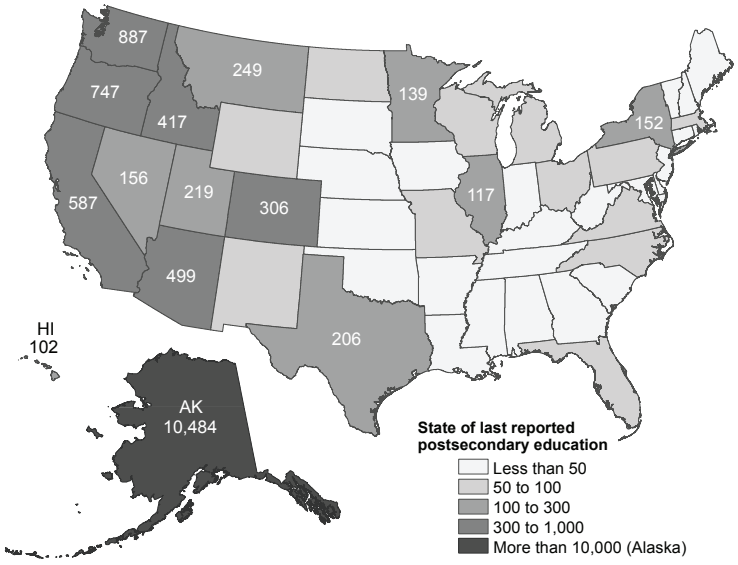
Alaska Natives had the lowest graduation rate, 53.7 percent, while whites had the highest at 71.5 percent. Nearly 10 percent of the Native students earned their GED by 2009, though, bringing their total graduation or GED rate to 63.1 percent.

Graduation rates were highest in the Gulf Coast region of Alaska and lowest in the Interior region. Ten percent of the students from the Interior region earned their GEDs.

Postsecondary education

More than 40 percent of high school students in the 2004-2005 school year had some college by

4 Where Alaskans Go to College
U.S., November 2009



Sources: Alaska Department of Education and Early Development; Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; National Student Clearinghouse

July 2009, and despite their young age, just over 1 percent, or 547 students, completed a degree or certificate program by then. Just over 62 percent of the students with some college were last reported as having attended a college in Alaska rather than outside the state.

Which students had the highest and lowest rates of postsecondary education? Women led men (46.3 percent versus 36.2 percent) and whites led Alaska Natives (48.3 percent versus 24.5 percent).

Natives had the lowest college participation rate of any of the racial groups – 24.5 percent of the students had some college through November 2009. Native women had a 10-percentage point advantage over Native men (29.4 percent versus 19.8 percent), mirroring the overall gender difference across all groups.

Native women still had a lower college participation rate than the 46.3 percent rate for all women.

The college participation rates were highest for students who last attended high schools in the Denali Borough, and Wrangell-Petersburg and Valdez-Cordova census areas.

Roughly 62 percent of the college participation was last reported in an in-state school. Out-of-state college students most recently attended colleges in the Western states, including Washington, Oregon, California and Arizona. (See Exhibit 4.) A longer-term follow-up of those students will allow us to determine how many return to Alaska to look for work.

Employment and earnings

Nearly two-thirds of the 2004-2005 high school students were employed in Alaska in 2009 and they earned $361 million in wages.[7] High school graduates had slightly higher average earnings than GED recipients ($14,454 versus $13,826). High school graduates earned about a third more than those who dropped out of school and didn't get a GED. (See Exhibit 5.)

High school graduates had a 10-percentage point advantage in employment rates in 2009 over those students who dropped out of school and didn't get more education. Dropouts, excluding those who ultimately received a GED, were employed at a 59.4 percent rate in 2009.

Students with some college were employed in Alaska at a higher rate than other students in 2009, but they earned less than the average for all former students. That may be due to less time on the job because of time spent in class and the increased likelihood of working and attending school out-of-state at least part of the year. Wage data from other states aren't included in the Alaska average earnings measure.

Women earned about 78 percent as much as males in 2009. And although Native employment rates were much higher than average at 70.2 percent, Natives had the lowest average wage and salary earnings of all demographic groups – $11,289. Students from the Fairbanks and Mat-Su regions had the highest average earnings ($14,911 and $14,910, respectively).

[7] Earnings and occupation data are derived from quarterly reports submitted by every employer subject to state unemployment insurance laws. Those who are not subject to unemployment insurance laws include self-employed workers, fishermen, federal workers and uniformed military, and elected and appointed officials. See the Methodology section for more detail.

Native women had a slight employment rate advantage over Native men (71.0 percent versus 69.5 percent), but Native men earned about $800 more a year than Native women ($11,696 versus $10,882).

Fish harvesting provides a source of income for many young workers, but those data aren't included in Alaska wage and salary employment figures. A little more than 3 percent of the former students had a fishing crew license in 2009.

But for some areas, fishing is much more important than for other areas. For instance, about 42 percent of the Petersburg students had a fishing crew license.

Military activity is also not included in Alaska wage and salary data, but it is available from administrative records. Based on a match with national data, nearly 4 percent of students were in the military in 2009.

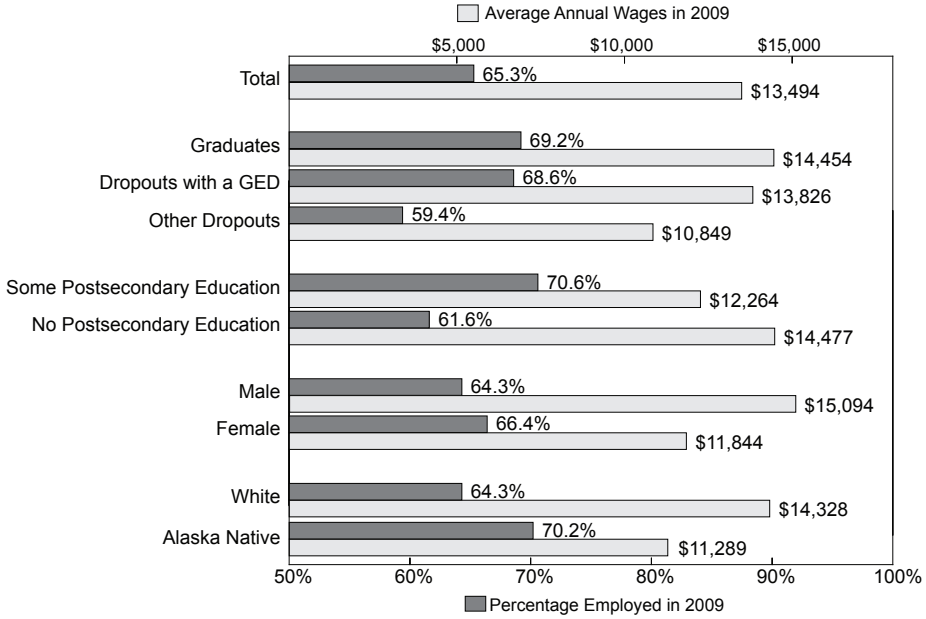
Men (5.9 percent) were more likely to join the military than women (1.3 percent) and students who dropped out and got a GED were more likely to be in the military than other former students. Natives were half as likely as other racial groups to join the military.

Occupation

Looking at the occupation of each worker, which employers provide to the Department of Labor each quarter,[8] employed former high school students were most likely to work as retail sales workers, food and beverage workers, construction workers and administrative support workers in 2009, regardless of whether they were high school graduates or dropped out of school. Many of those jobs require limited education and work experience.

The young workers with the highest average earnings were employed in construction and oil-

The Percentage Employed in 2009[1] 5
Grades nine to 12 in 2004-2005, Alaska



[1] Based on selected categories
Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Dropout and graduation rates: percentages of students versus the rates

The percentage of students who graduate from high school or drop out of high school used in this report aren't directly comparable to the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development's official graduation and dropout rates.

The Department of Education uses a standard formula to calculate the graduation and dropout rates. Dropout rates are calculated as a one year event and are a ratio of dropouts to all students in grades seven through 12.

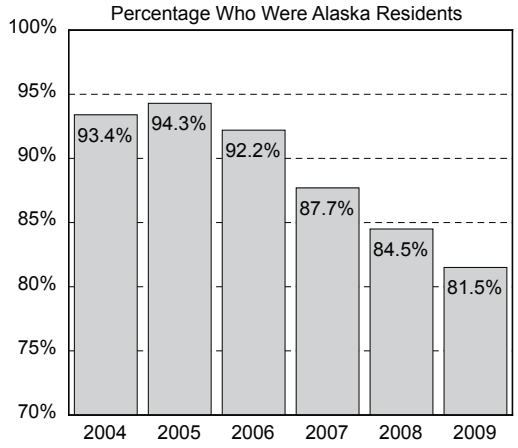
A student who ends a school year as a dropout is considered a dropout for the reference year regardless of whether he or she received a GED in a later year.

Because the dropout rates that the Department of Education calculates are based on one year's data and they include grades seven and eight – typically lower dropout years – those rates will be lower than the calculated rates in this report.

The Department of Education-calculated graduation rate takes into account total students from a reference year, continuing students and dropouts from that year, as well as dropouts from the three years prior to the reference year. For instance, the 2008 rate would be the total graduates for 2008 divided by (total graduates in 2008 + continuing students in 2008 + dropouts in 2008 + dropouts in 2007 + dropouts in 2006 + dropouts in 2005).

[8] See footnote No. 7.

6 Alaska Residency by Year[1]
Grades nine to 12 in 2004-2005



[1] According to applications for the Alaska Permanent Fund dividend
Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; Alaska Department of Revenue, Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend Division

related occupations including heavy equipment operators, roustabouts, plumbers and electricians.

Over the longer term, it's important to track the career path and performance of the students. Most high paying jobs require postsecondary education or training that has a high school diploma or equivalent as a prerequisite. Although recent graduates and dropouts both have modest incomes and both qualify for lower skilled jobs, over time, the graduates will have more opportunities and much higher incomes than dropouts.

Where are they now?

More than 81 percent of the students applied for an Alaska Permanent Fund dividend in 2009, showing that they lived in Alaska that year. (See Exhibit 6.) Given Alaska's historically high migration rates, the large percentage of the students who left Alaska isn't surprising.

Based on the most recent residence address in a combined 2008 and 2009 PFD file, about 70 percent of the students were living in the same borough or census area as they did when they were in high school. (See Exhibit 7.)

Although correspondence school locations don't necessarily indicate the residence of the student and muddy the data a bit, in general, students who went to high school in Anchorage and rural Alaska were much more likely to continue to live in those areas in 2009 than the rest of the state.

More specifically, the students who went to high school in the North Slope and Northwest Arctic boroughs, and the Nome, Wade Hampton and Bethel census areas were most

Methodology Notes

In addition to matching 2004-2005 student data with subsequent years of Alaska education data, the student file was matched with employment, wage and postsecondary education administrative databases including:

- Alaska GED recipient records from January 2002 through September 2009. Since many Alaska students receive GEDs, it's important to look at how students who get their GEDs compare with those who get high school diplomas.

  The wage record information is from quarterly reports that every employer subject to state unemployment insurance laws submits to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Wages, also called earnings, include each employee's wages, commissions, bonuses and other gratuities when paid in connection with the job. Those who aren't subject to unemployment insurance laws include self-employed workers, fishermen, uniformed military, and elected and appointed officials.

- National postsecondary education information for most schools in the country from the National Student Clearinghouse, a nonprofit agency that tracks student enrollment and degree verification. This data set includes continuing education student records for July 2007 through September 2009 and identifies the state where students' postsecondary education took place, what their majors were and if they earned degrees.

- Federal military and civilian employment information for 2007 through 2009. Federal military and civilian employment data aren't included in Department of Labor wage records because the employment isn't covered by Alaska unemployment insurance.

- The 2009 Alaska Permanent Fund dividend applicant file to determine the students' Alaska residency and help show if they moved to another state.

Where the Students Were Living in 2009

Students who were in grades nine to 12 in the 2004-2005 school year, Alaska

7

Where the Students Went to School in the 2004-2005 School Year[1]	Number Who Lived in the Same Area as Their High School	Percentage Who Lived in the Same Area as Their High School	Number Who Lived Elsewhere in Alaska	Percentage Who Lived Elsewhere in Alaska	Number Who Lived Outside Alaska or Their Location was Unknown	Percentage Who Lived Outside Alaska or Their Location was Unknown	Total
Aleutians East Borough	45	63.4%	12	16.9%	14	19.7%	71
Aleutians West Census Area	83	55.3%	24	16.0%	43	28.7%	150
Anchorage Municipality	11,852	78.2%	731	4.8%	2,566	16.9%	15,149
Bethel Census Area	822	80.0%	153	14.9%	53	5.2%	1,028
Bristol Bay Borough	46	64.8%	14	19.7%	11	15.5%	71
Denali Borough	58	33.1%	91	52.0%	26	14.9%	175
Dillingham Census Area	299	82.6%	44	12.2%	19	5.2%	362
Fairbanks North Star Borough	3,656	65.6%	848	15.2%	1,072	19.2%	5,576
Haines Borough	80	74.1%	14	13.0%	14	13.0%	108
Juneau Borough	1,366	74.9%	133	7.3%	324	17.8%	1,823
Kenai Peninsula Borough	2,344	73.2%	348	10.9%	510	15.9%	3,202
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	591	70.4%	82	9.8%	167	19.9%	840
Kodiak Island Borough	544	61.6%	153	17.3%	186	21.1%	883
Lake and Peninsula Borough	104	72.7%	27	18.9%	12	8.4%	143
Mat-Su Borough	3,467	72.9%	595	12.5%	691	14.5%	4,753
Nome Census Area	595	81.8%	84	11.6%	48	6.6%	727
North Slope Borough	469	83.2%	62	11.0%	33	5.9%	564
Northwest Arctic Borough	432	79.3%	78	14.3%	35	6.4%	545
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area	201	53.2%	106	28.0%	71	18.8%	378
Sitka Borough	331	43.9%	309	41.0%	114	15.1%	754
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	105	65.6%	39	24.4%	16	10.0%	160
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	257	41.2%	260	41.7%	107	17.1%	624
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	416	63.3%	144	21.9%	97	14.8%	657
Wade Hampton Census Area	552	82.8%	94	14.1%	21	3.1%	667
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area	277	73.1%	40	10.6%	62	16.4%	379
Yakutat Borough	25	50.0%	17	34.0%	8	16.0%	50
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	292	43.0%	313	46.1%	74	10.9%	679
Location n/a[2]	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	460	100.0%	460
Total	29,309	71.5%	4,815	11.8%	6,854	16.7%	40,978

Note: "Area" in this exhibit refers to borough or census area.

[1] The boroughs and census areas are listed as they were in 2004-2005. Some of the boroughs and census areas have changed since then.

[2] The abbreviation "n/a" in this reference means the data aren't available because the school location wasn't coded correctly for the 460 students.

Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; Alaska Department of Education and Early Development; Alaska Department of Revenue, Permanent Fund Dividend Division

likely to continue living in those areas in 2009. Economic and cultural factors likely influenced their decisions to stay.

In summary

Although it's too soon to tell which students in high school in the 2004-2005 school year will achieve the greatest long-term success, the early results are in. Just because students may have dropped out early in high school, it doesn't mean they won't eventually graduate or obtain a GED.

Although more education and training generally means higher pay and a higher likelihood of employment in the long term, former students who pursued careers in construction or oil-related jobs earned the highest pay in 2009.

More definitive answers will come to light as we continue to track the students over time.