

Freshman On-Track as a predictor of junior year achievement and outcomes

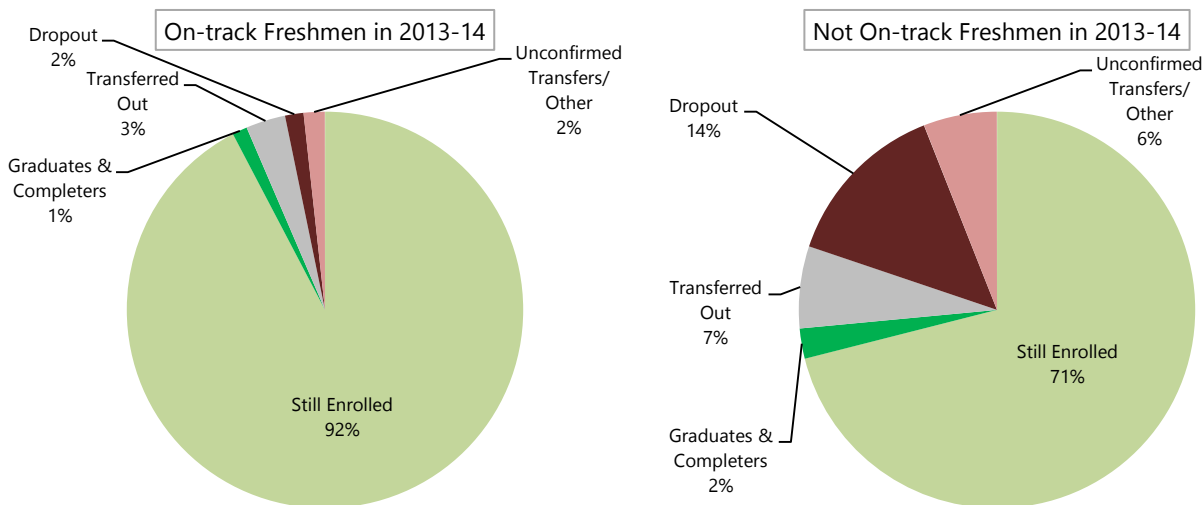
In 2013-14, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) first collected an indicator of whether students had earned 25% of the credits needed to graduate by the time they finished their first year of high school. A 2014-15 [follow up](#) on these students showed that those who were not on-track to graduate at the end of their freshman year were more than 16 times as likely to drop out by the end of their sophomore year, compared to those who were on-track. As this cohort advances into their junior year of high school, ODE continues to follow their progress.

	By the end of 2014-15		By the end of 2015-16	
	Dropouts	Risk Ratio	Dropouts	Risk Ratio
On Track 2013-14	0.3%	<i>ref</i>	0.8%	<i>ref</i>
Not On Track 2013-14	4.3%	16.8	8.7%	10.4
Regular Attender 2013-14 ¹	0.4%	<i>ref</i>	1.3%	<i>ref</i>
Not Regular Attender 2013-14	4.4%	9.9	8.4%	6.3
Regular Attender 2014-15	--	--	0.7%	<i>ref</i>
Not Regular Attender 2014-15	--	--	5.8%	8.5

The discrepancy in dropout rates shrank slightly between sophomore and junior year, but students who were not on-track as freshmen were still more than 10 times as likely to drop out by their junior year. Sophomore year dropout rates for the following class, students entering high school in 2014-15, showed a similar trend, with an almost 15-fold increase in sophomore dropout rates for this class.

Factoring in those dropout rates, as well as transfers out of Oregon public schools, 92.3% of on-track students were still enrolled by the beginning of their senior year of high school, compared to 70.8% of students who were not on-track.

Student Enrollment Status as-of October 2016 (Beginning of 4th year of High School)²

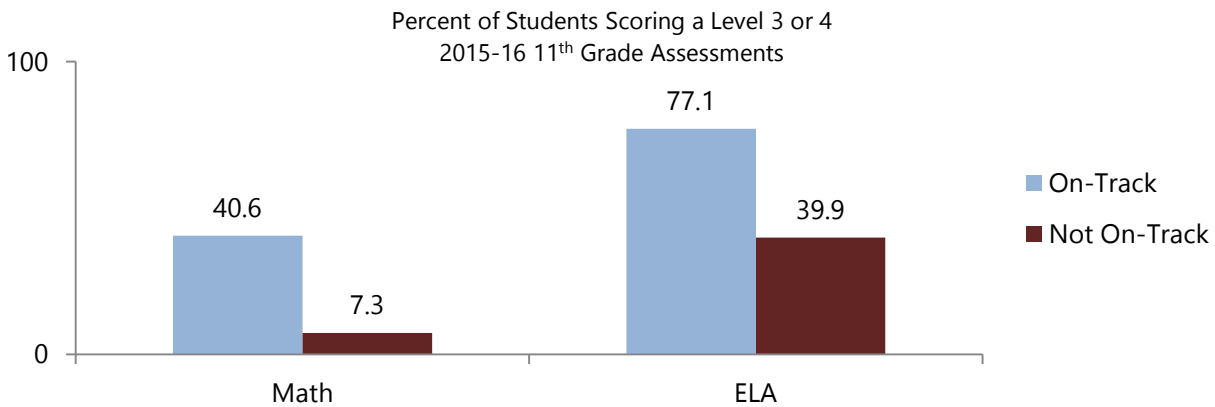


¹ Students attending more than 90% of their enrolled days.

² Includes some students as “dropouts” who will be counted as dropouts if they do not return or complete by the end of the 2016-17 school year, in addition to those counted as dropouts in the tables above. Unconfirmed transfers will likely be counted as non-completers once cohort graduation rates are finalized.

Assessment Results

Of the not on-track freshmen who persisted through May of their junior year, 88% took the Smarter Balanced English Language Arts assessment, and 86% took the Smarter Balanced Math assessment. This was a slightly lower participation rate than for on-track juniors (91% and 89%, respectively), but most students in both groups were assessed.



On-track students were nearly twice as likely to be meeting the standards in English Language Arts, and more than 5 times as likely to be meeting the standards in Math, as their not on-track counterparts were.

Alternative Education Placements

Students who were not on-track at the end of their freshman year were likely to be placed into alternative education in subsequent years³ (1.8% of on-track students, compared to 13.7% of students who were not on-track⁴). Excluding students who were already in in alternative education placements during their freshman year (of whom only 26% were on-track), alternative placements were also predictive of likelihood of drop out events.

		2015-16 Dropout Rate	Risk Ratio, compared to students: with the same on-track status	with the same alt. ed placement
On-track	No Significant Alternative Placement	0.8%	<i>ref</i>	<i>ref</i>
	Subsequent Alternative Placement	3.8%	5.0	<i>ref</i>
Not On-track	No Significant Alternative Placement	7.5%	<i>ref</i>	10.0
	Subsequent Alternative Placement	11.9%	1.6	3.1

Although alternative placements – which likely reflect additional risk factors not identified by the on-track indicator, in addition to representing a different instructional setting – were predictive of dropout risk in both groups of students, the effect was stronger for on-track students who are placed into alternative settings. Overall, on-track status was a stronger predictor than alternative placement of a student’s likelihood of dropping out, although students with both risk factors dropped out at nearly 16 times the rate of students with neither risk factor.

Students receiving special education services were more likely to be placed into alternative programs (3.5% for on-track students, 14.7% for off-track students), and were more likely than students without disabilities to drop out during their junior year. However, the disparity in rates based on alternative placement remains present even considering only students without disabilities.

³ Defined as students who had at least 30% of their enrollment, and at least 0.1 ADM, in a designated alternative school, or in an educational placement other than an accountable public school.

⁴ Not including students already in an alternative placement during their freshman year.