

## Press Release

**Date:** November 19, 2010  
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### Re: Graduation Rates

More Sumter County students are graduating than ever before according to the latest numbers from the Florida Department of Education. Sumter's graduation rate improved to 86.9% during the 2009-10 school year, up 12.4 percentage points from the 2006 school year. The Sumter County School District's rate surpassed the state's average graduation rate of 79%. To calculate the graduation rate, the state used a formula recommended by the National Governor's Association, which includes standard and special diplomas but excludes all GED diplomas. The NGA rate replaces Florida's previous calculation, which included all GED diplomas and would result in an even higher graduation number.

In September of 2009, the Florida State Board of Education approved the state's new high school grading formula, which incorporates graduation rates into the grading of high schools. The NGA calculation replaced the state's old method of calculation because of a U.S. Department of Education mandate requiring states to adopt a uniform calculation method by the 2010-11 school year.

Sumter can credit the higher numbers to an intense focus encouraging more students to graduate. The focus includes computer-based credit recovery programs available at high schools, and test preparation programs to help students with the SAT and ACT college entrance exams, which can also be used as concordant scores comparable to FCAT for meeting the graduation requirements. The district also provides before and after-school remediation programs along with intensive reading courses during the regular school day. Superintendent, Rick Shirley said, "Sumter has the 13<sup>th</sup> highest graduation rate in the state- well done by all! Team members at both the school and district level work tirelessly to provide academic rigor in a nurturing environment to benefit our kids- and it shows! It could not happen without the total effort of staff and administrators at every level, the support of our community, community leaders, and parents, and the work of our School Board in supporting schools and making sound fiscal decisions that provide effective programs for students."

2010 Graduation Rates			
	NGA (National Governors Association)	NCLB (No Child Left Behind)	Florida's Regular Rate
Sumter	86.9%	84.0%	87.7%
State	79.0%	78.2%	80.7%