

DOINGWHATWORKS



SAMPLE MATERIAL

Making the Transition: How Exempli Middle Eighth-Grade Graduates Are Doing in CPS High Schools

Chicago Public Schools, Illinois

Nicholas Montgomery, Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago (Spring 2008)

Topic: Dropout Prevention

Practice: Data Systems

This sample report shows schools the types of data that they can use to determine whether students are on track to graduation. Being on track at the end of the freshman year is predictive of whether students will graduate from high school or not. Using reports generated from Chicago Public Schools' data system, principals can examine data for five years after elementary school to determine students' on-track rate to graduation. Principals can track performance over time for such indicators as course failure and freshman grade point average (GPA). As principals become familiar with data from this sample report, they can analyze their schools' data. To learn more about the way schools can use reports from a data system, listen to two audio interviews: *Two or More Core F's in Grade 9, Won't Graduate Anytime* and *Taking Action Based on Freshman Indicators*.

Individual School Report

Exempli Middle

Spring 2008

Making the Transition

How Exempli Middle Eighth-Grade Graduates Are Doing in CPS High Schools

Nicholas Montgomery



INSIDE THIS REPORT

Exempli Middle Students Leaving Eighth Grade in 2002

66% GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL IN FIVE YEARS

32% DROPPED OUT

2% WERE STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL

by the end of the 2006 – 2007 school year



CONSORTIUM ON
CHICAGO SCHOOL RESEARCH
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Nicholas Montgomery, Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago (Spring 2008) Making the Transition: How Exempli Middle Eighth-Grade Graduates Are Doing in CPS High Schools

Making the Transition

How Exempli Middle Eighth-Grade Graduates Are Doing in CPS High Schools

Helping elementary graduates make a successful transition to high school has become a new priority for CPS schools. This customized research offers you the objective data needed to make informed decisions about improving these transitions. This report tracks the high school experiences of your school's *eighth-grade* graduates in CPS. You can see at a glance how well these students have done after making the big transition from elementary to high school — a tough time for many students.

The main indicator that we use in this report is the “freshman on-track” rate. Freshmen are on-track if they have accumulated five full-year credits and have no more than one semester F in a core class (for definitions of other terms, see the “Key Terms” section at the end of this document).

Being “on-track” at the end of freshman year is highly predictive of whether students will graduate from high school or not. Students who are on-track at the end of freshman year are about *four times* more likely to graduate from high school than students who are not on-track. Even students who are academically strong at the end of eighth grade can falter in freshman year. At the same time, if weaker students have a successful freshman year, they also are very likely to graduate from high schools.

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On-Track to Graduation

The information on the following two pages tracks Exempli 2002 eighth-grade graduates for five full years after elementary school, through Spring 2007 (this is the most recent five-year high school graduation data available). As the figure and table make clear, being “on-track” at the end of freshman year is highly predictive of whether students will graduate from high school or not. These data can also assist in addressing questions such as:

- Are Exempli graduates on-track in ninth grade?
- Does the ninth-grade performance of Exempli graduates relate to how well they do throughout high school?
- Are Exempli graduates completing high school as expected?

Section Contents

Exempli Students’ Progression through High School (page 4)

The top row of the figure on page 4 shows how many students were on-track to graduate, how many were off-track, how many had dropped out, and how many left CPS during their freshman year. Each subsequent line shows how the 2002 cohort progressed in each following year, with most graduating after the fourth year and others graduating in the fifth year.

The upper table on page 4 shows the numbers that correspond to the figure. The lower table shows the on-track, off-track, graduation, and dropout rates. We show these separately because the on- and off-track rates exclude students who attended charter high schools or left CPS, while the graduation and dropout rates only exclude those students who left CPS.

On-Track to Graduation

How do Exempli students progress through high school?

2002 Eighth-Grade Graduates

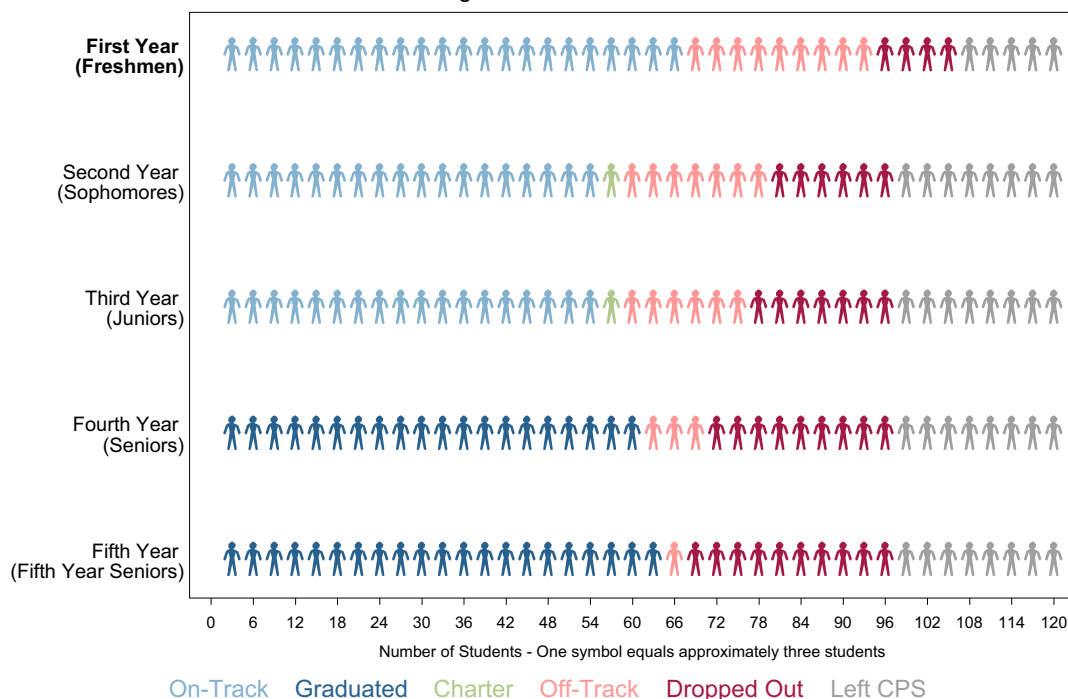


Table 1: Exempli 2002 Eighth-Grade Graduates' Progression through High School

	Total	On-Track	Off-Track	Charter School	Graduated	Dropped Out	Left CPS
First Year - 2002-2003	119	64	27	0	n/a	13	15
Second Year - 2003-2004	119	55	20	3	n/a	18	23
Third Year - 2004-2005	119	55	17	3	0	21	23
Fourth Year - 2005-2006	119	n/a	9	1	60	26	23
Fifth Year - 2006-2007	119	n/a	2	0	63	30	24

On-Track, Off-Track, Graduation, and Dropout Rates

	On-Track and Off-Track			Graduation and Dropout		
	Included in Calculation ¹	On-Track	Off-Track	Included in Calculation ¹	Graduation	Dropout
First Year - 2002-2003	104	62%	26%	104	n/a	13%
Second Year - 2003-2004	93	59%	22%	96	n/a	19%
Third Year - 2004-2005	93	59%	18%	96	0%	22%
Fourth Year - 2005-2006	n/a	n/a	n/a	96	63%	27%
Fifth Year - 2006-2007	n/a	n/a	n/a	95	66%	32%

¹ On-track and off-track rates exclude students who attended charter schools or left CPS. Graduation and dropout rates exclude students who left CPS.

Performance over Time

The previous two pages detailed what happened to a single group of Exempli eighth-grade graduates (the 2002 cohort) throughout high school. It should be clear that the first year of high school is highly predictive of whether a student will graduate or dropout (the freshman on-track rate for Exempli eighth-grade graduates is very close to the final graduation rate).

The following pages show how more recent cohorts of your eighth-grade graduates have each performed in their first year of high school. Starting with the Exempli class of 2002 and including each successive class through 2006, the graphs show the freshman on-track rates, GPAs, and the percentage of Exempli students who fail at least one semester of ninth-grade math, English, or both subjects. It is important to note that some of the students who fail one semester of math or English may still be on-track. It takes two semester Fs or a lack of credits for a student to be considered off-track.

These data can assist in addressing questions such as:

- Have freshman on-track rates improved, declined, or remained stable over time?
- How have Exempli graduates fared over time in comparison to the CPS average for eighth-grade graduates?
- Are Exempli graduates getting higher or lower grades in ninth grade?
- Are math and English failure rates for Exempli graduates changing over time?
- Are Exempli graduates more likely to fail both math AND English or only one of the subjects in ninth grade?

Section Contents

On-Track Rate over Time (page 6)

Course Failure over Time (page 7)

GPA over Time (page 8)

The figure on page 8 shows the distribution of freshman GPAs, another measure that is highly predictive of graduation. In CPS, nine in ten students with an A or B average and seven in ten students with a C average will graduate from high school within four years. In contrast, one in four of students with a D average will graduate, and not even one in twenty of students with an F average will graduate within four years (9% of 2006 Exempli graduates had an F average).

On-Track over Time

How does the freshman on-track rate change over time for Exempli graduates?
2002 to 2006 Eighth-Grade Graduates

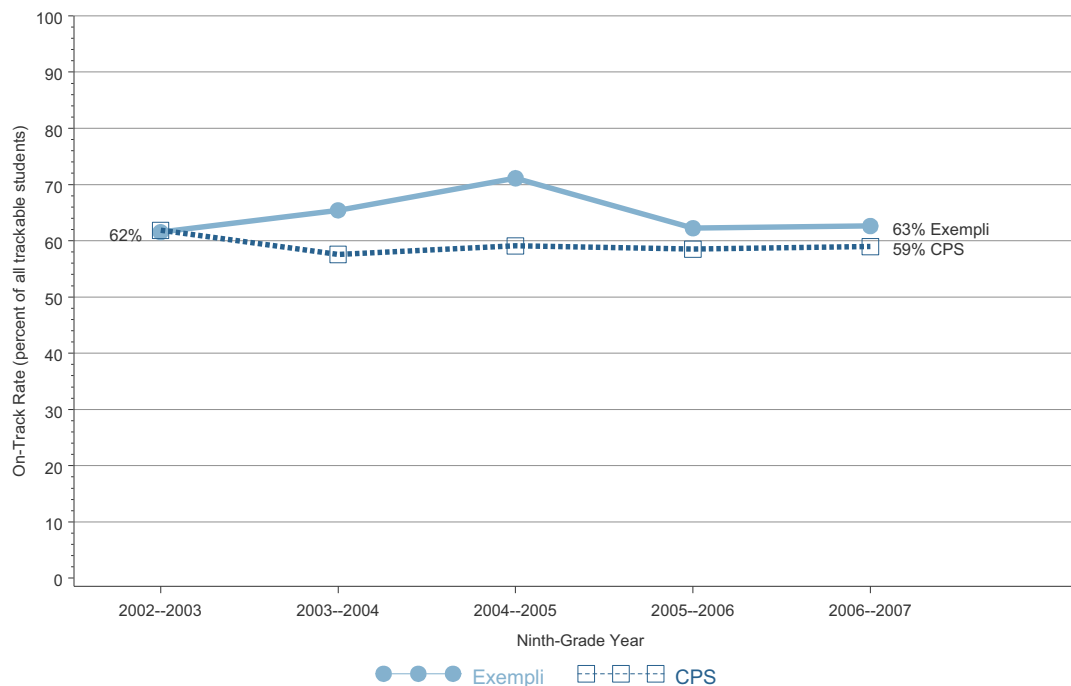


Table 2: Five Years of Freshman On-Track Rates for Exempli Graduates

Ninth-Grade Year	Total	Included in Calculation ¹	Exempli On-Track	CPS On-Track ²
2002–2003	119	104	64 (62%)	15,210 (62%)
2003–2004	123	107	70 (65%)	15,083 (58%)
2004–2005	126	97	69 (71%)	15,385 (59%)
2005–2006	119	98	61 (62%)	15,583 (58%)
2006–2007	113	99	62 (63%)	14,847 (59%)

¹This number excludes those Exempli students who left CPS or attended a charter school.

²This CPS rate only counts high school students who graduated from eighth grade in CPS.

Course Failure over Time

How do Exempli graduates perform in freshman math and English over time?

2002 to 2006 Eighth-Grade Graduates

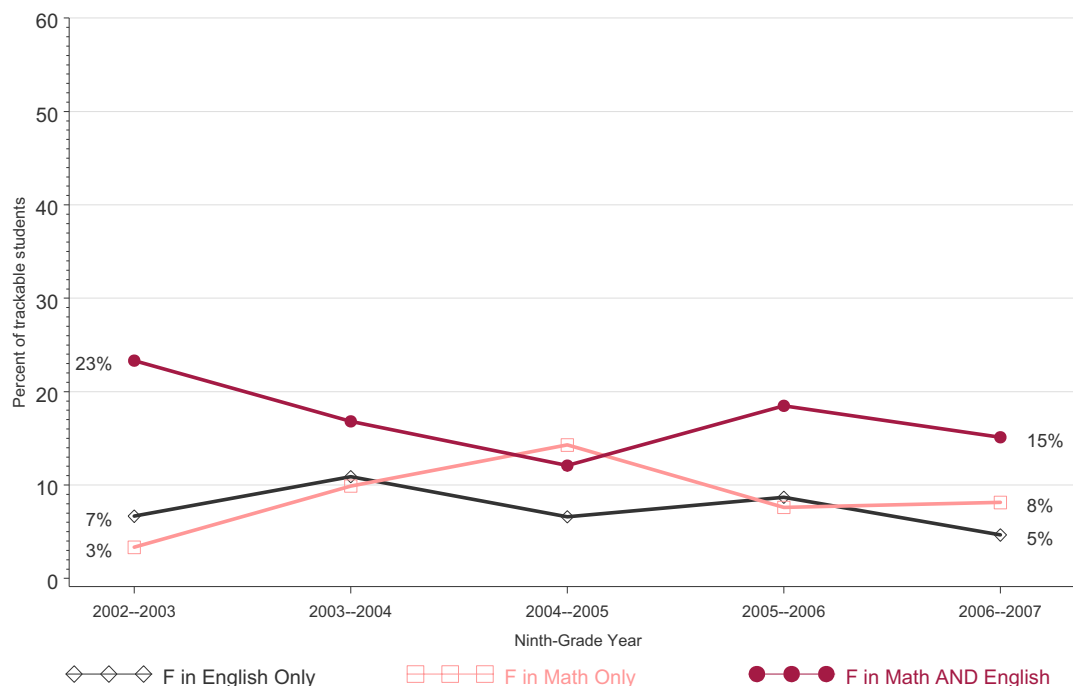


Table 3: Five Years of Freshman Math and English Failure Information for Exempli Graduates

Ninth-Grade Year	Total	Included in Calculation ¹	F in English Only	F in Math Only	F in Math AND English
2002–2003	119	90	6 (7%)	3 (3%)	21 (23%)
2003–2004	123	101	11 (11%)	10 (10%)	17 (17%)
2004–2005	126	91	6 (7%)	13 (14%)	11 (12%)
2005–2006	119	92	8 (9%)	7 (8%)	17 (18%)
2006–2007	113	86	4 (5%)	7 (8%)	13 (15%)

Note: Failures refer to semester failures, not full-year failures. It takes two semester failures to be considered off-track.

¹This number excludes those Exempli students who left CPS, attended a charter school, dropped out in their freshman year, or were missing grades.

GPA over Time

How do Exempli graduates perform in all their freshman courses over time?
2002 to 2006 Eighth-Grade Graduates

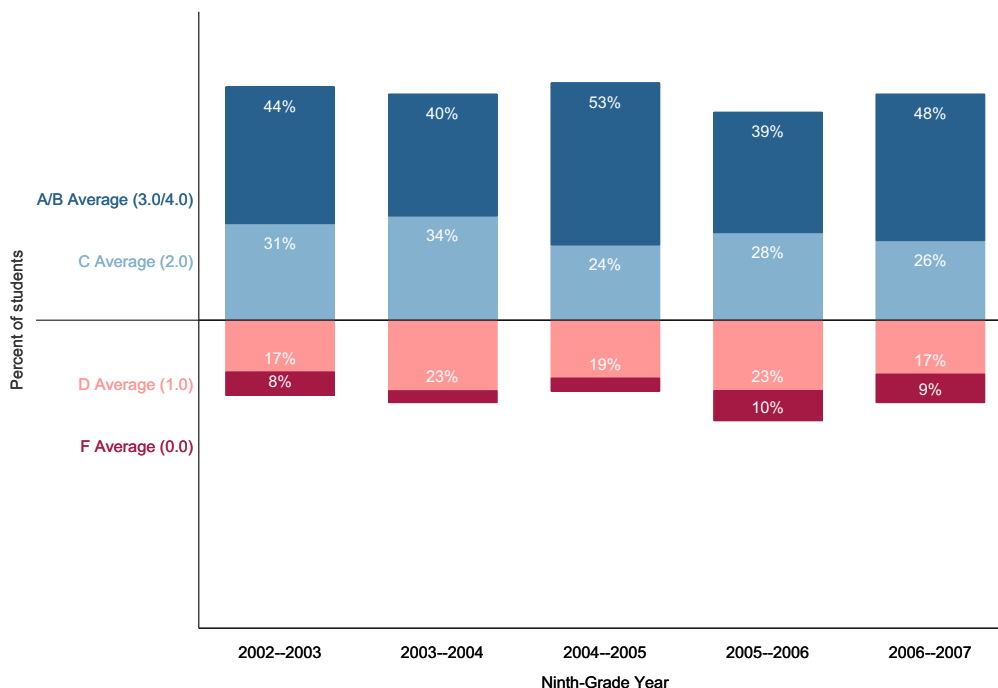


Table 4: Five Years of Freshman GPAs for Exempli Graduates

Ninth-Grade Year	Total	Included in Calculation ¹	A/B	C	D	F
2002–2003	119	90	40 (44%)	28 (31%)	15 (17%)	7 (8%)
2003–2004	123	101	40 (40%)	34 (34%)	23 (23%)	4 (4%)
2004–2005	126	91	48 (53%)	22 (24%)	17 (19%)	4 (4%)
2005–2006	119	92	36 (39%)	26 (28%)	21 (23%)	9 (10%)
2006–2007	113	86	41 (48%)	22 (26%)	15 (17%)	8 (9%)

Note: GPA is rounded to the nearest 1.0 (A = 4.0; B = 3.0; C = 2.0; D = 1.0; F = 0.0).

¹This number excludes those Exempli students who left CPS, attended a charter school, dropped out in their freshman year, or were missing grades.

On-Track Rates by High School Attended

The freshman on-track rates of your students can vary greatly depending on the high schools they attend. Focusing on the most recent ninth grade data available (Exempli 2006 graduates), we detail the freshman on-track rates by the high school attended on the next two pages. For comparative purposes, we also provide on-track rates by high school for the overall CPS population of graduating eighth-graders (page 12). The information on the following pages can address questions such as:

- What high schools do Exempli graduates attend?
- How many Exempli graduates are attending selective enrollment schools?
- Do the on-track rates of Exempli graduates differ by the high school attended?
- Are the high schools that most Exempli graduates attend meeting your expectations for moving students toward graduation?
- Are Exempli graduates exercising choice in selecting their high schools?
- Is the on-track rate for Exempli graduates at each high school (page 9) better, worse, or comparable to the average for CPS eighth-grade graduates at the same high school?

Note that we cannot track student performance in CPS charter high schools or after they leave CPS.

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On-Track by High School (page 10)

The figure on page 10 shows the CPS non-charter high schools where at least five Exempli 2006 graduates attended ninth grade. The schools are ordered by total enrollment, with schools having the highest enrollment at the top. For each school, the blue portion of the bar represents the number of students from Exempli who were on-track; the pink section of the bar shows the number of students who were off-track or dropped out as of the summer after ninth grade. To the right of each bar is the on-track rate for Exempli students in that school. The table on page 11 provides precise numbers as well as enrollment information for charter high schools.

CPS On-Track by High School (page 12)

The figure on page 12 displays on-track rates for CPS 2006 eighth-grade graduates by high school. The bars are ordered by on-track rate, with the school having the highest on-track rate at the top. Schools that enrolled at least one Exempli graduate are marked in blue.

Note: The on-track rate for each school may be different than the rates published by CPS. Discrepancies are likely due to two factors:

- *We treat students that are in non-charter high schools but missing transcript data as on-track in this report.*
- *These are on-track rates for students that were in a CPS school for eighth-grade. CPS published on-track rates typically include all freshmen, regardless of where they went for eighth grade.*

On-Track by High School

Are certain high schools better at keeping Exempli graduates on-track as freshmen?
2006 Eighth-Grade Graduates

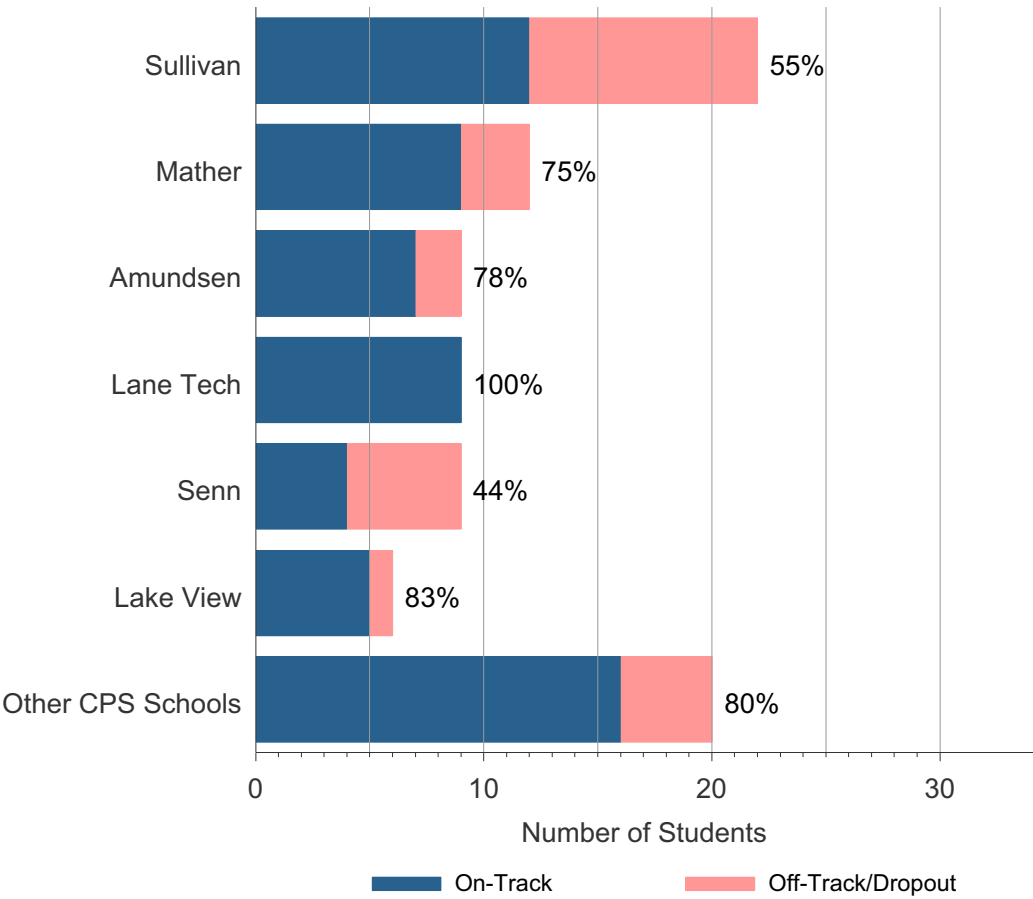


Table 5: Freshman On-Track Rates by High School for Exempli 2006 Graduates

High School	Number of Students	Number On-Track	Percent On-Track
Sullivan	22	12	55%
Mather	12	9	75%
Amundsen	9	7	78%
Lane Tech	9	9	100%
Senn	9	4	44%
Lake View	6	5	83%
No Show ¹	12	0	0%
Other CPS Schools	20	16	80%
Included in Calculation	99	62	63%

Students without On-Track Information			
Other CPS Charter Schools ²	2	n/a	n/a
Left CPS	12	n/a	n/a

Note: Schools with fewer than five Exempli students are not shown here. Instead, those students are grouped into the “Other CPS Schools” and “Other CPS Charter Schools” categories, which are shown only if each has at least one student.

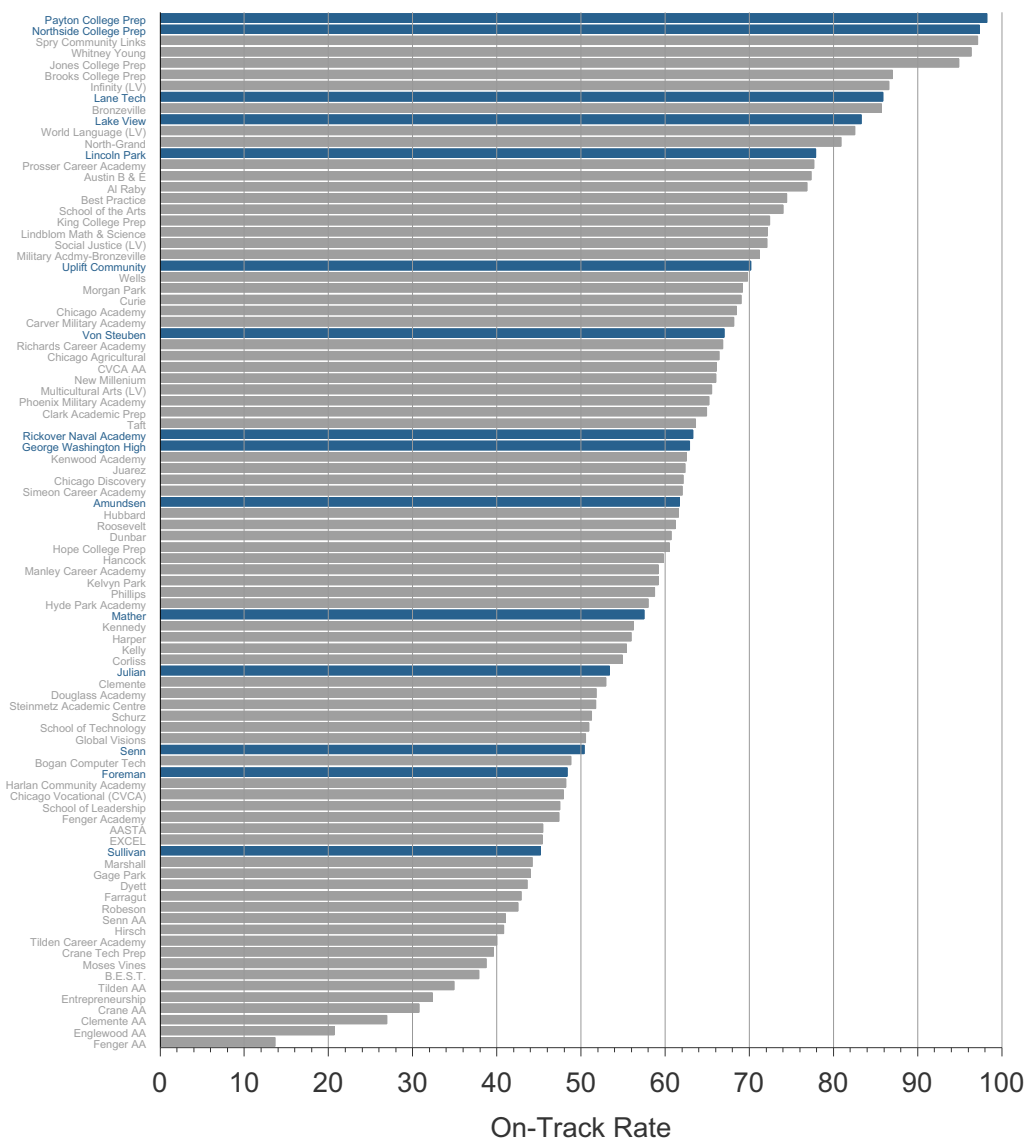
¹ ‘No shows’ are students who did not show up for high school in the Fall after eighth grade and did not transfer out of CPS. They are considered dropouts, but we have not counted them against any high school’s on-track rate here.

² We cannot calculate on-track for charter school students because we do not have their transcript data.

CPS On-Track by High School

Are certain high schools better at keeping CPS students on-track as freshmen?

2006 CPS Eighth-Grade Graduates



Enrolling Exempli students Not Enrolling Exempli students

Note: Schools marked as enrolling Exempli students enrolled at least one student from the Exempli eighth-grade class of 2006.

See page 6 for an explanation of why the on-track rates may be different from other published on-track rates.

On-Track Rates by Student Background

The freshman on-track rates of your students can vary greatly for different demographic groups (race, gender, education service receivers, and ISAT performance). The following pages detail the freshman on-track rates of Exempli 2006 eighth-grade graduates by each of these groups. For comparative purposes, we also provide on-track rates by subgroup for the overall CPS population of graduating eighth-graders. The information on the following pages can address questions such as:

- Is there a race or gender gap in freshman on-track rates for Exempli graduates?
- Do special education students from Exempli differ from their general education peers in their likelihood of graduating (i.e., freshman on-track rate)?
- Do Exempli graduates in each subgroup outperform or underperform their peers in CPS?
- Are Exempli graduates who meet/exceed standards on the ISAT on-track to graduate from high school?
- Do Exempli graduates in each subgroup meet your expectations for staying on-track to graduate?

Note that we cannot track student performance in CPS charter high schools or after students leave CPS.

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On-track by Race/Ethnicity (page 14)

On-track by Gender (page 15)

On-track by English Language Learner status (page 16)

On-track by Special Education Status (page 17)

On-track by ISAT Performance (page 18)

On-Track by Race/Ethnicity

Do Exempli graduates have different freshman on-track rates by race/ethnicity?

2006 Eighth-Grade Graduates

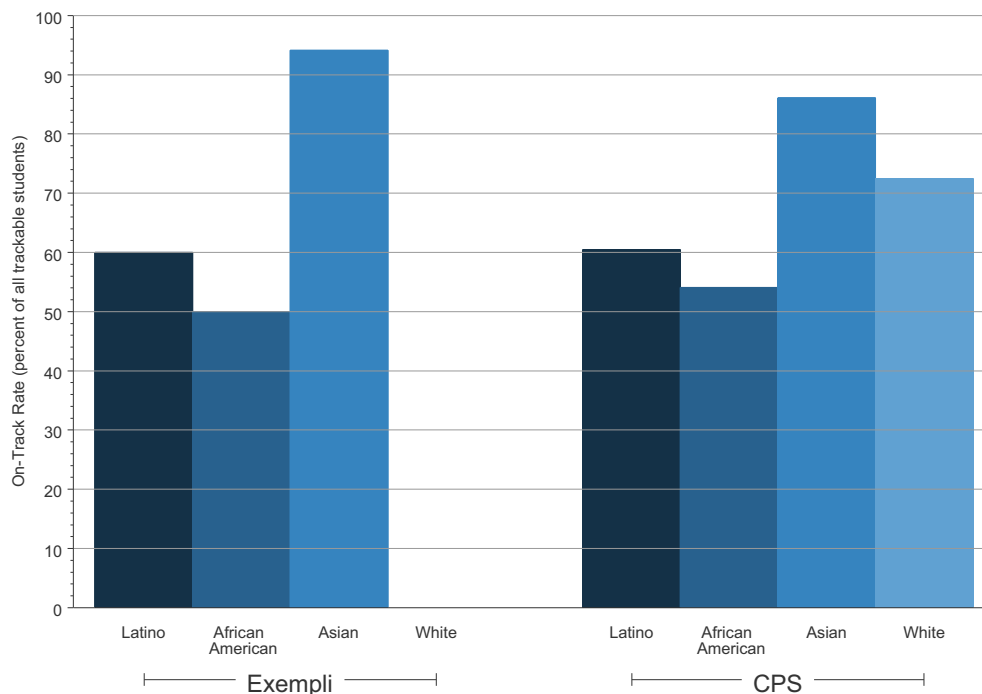


Table 6: Freshman On-Track Rates by Race/Ethnicity for 2006 Exempli Graduates

	Total	Included in Calculation ¹	Exempli On-Track	CPS On-Track ²
Latino	53	50	30 (60%)	5,582 (60%)
African American	34	26	13 (50%)	7,045 (54%)
Asian	19	17	16 (94%)	717 (86%)
White	7	0	n/a	1,485 (72%)

¹This number excludes those Exempli students who left CPS or attended a charter high school. Categories with fewer than ten students are not shown to maintain student confidentiality.

²This CPS rate only counts high school students who graduated eighth grade from a CPS school.

On-Track by Gender

Do Exempli boys and girls have different freshman on-track rates?

2006 Eighth-Grade Graduates

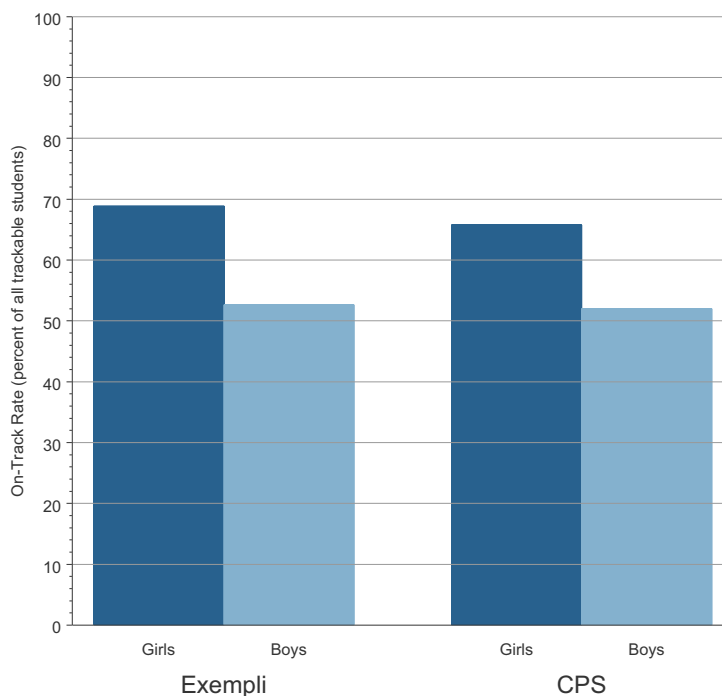


Table 7: Freshman On-Track Rates by Gender for 2006 Exempli Graduates

	Total	Included in Calculation ¹	Exempli On-Track	CPS On-Track ²
Girls	71	61	42 (69%)	8,392 (66%)
Boys	42	38	20 (53%)	6,455 (52%)

¹This number excludes those Exempli students who left CPS or attended a charter high school. Categories with fewer than ten students are not shown to maintain student confidentiality.

²This CPS rate only counts high school students who graduated eighth grade from a CPS school.

On-Track by ELL Status

Do Exempli English language learners have different freshman on-track rates?

2006 Eighth-Grade Graduates

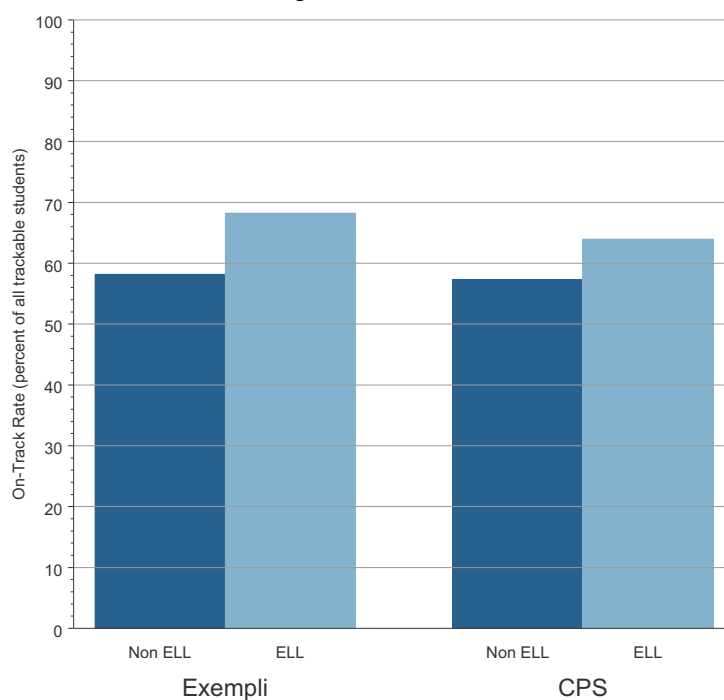


Table 8: Freshman On-Track Rates by English Language Learner Status for 2006 Exempli Graduates

	Total	Included in Calculation ¹	Exempli On-Track	CPS On-Track ²
Non ELL	67	55	32 (58%)	10,767 (57%)
ELL	46	44	30 (68%)	4,080 (64%)

Note: English Language Learners (ELL) are those students who were in a CPS bilingual program for at least two years at any point in elementary school.

¹This number excludes those Exempli students who left CPS or attended a charter high school. Categories with fewer than ten students are not shown to maintain student confidentiality.

²This CPS rate only counts high school students who graduated eighth grade from a CPS school.

On-Track by Special Education

Do Exempli special education students have different freshman on-track rates?

2006 Eighth-Grade Graduates

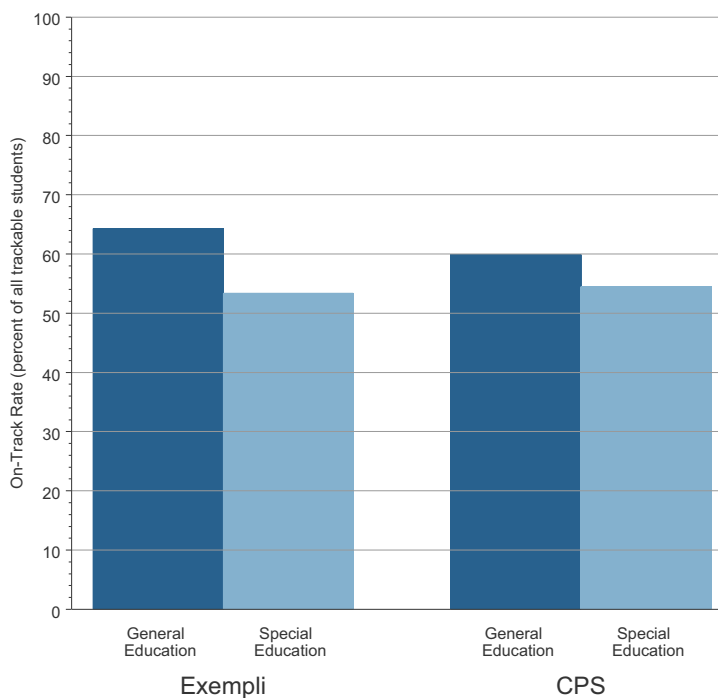


Table 9: Freshman On-Track Rates by Special Education for 2006 Exempli Graduates

	Total	Included in Calculation ¹	Exempli On-Track	CPS On-Track ²
General Education	96	84	54 (64%)	12,567 (60%)
Special Education	17	15	8 (53%)	2,280 (54%)

¹This number excludes those Exempli students who left CPS or attended a charter high school. Categories with fewer than ten students are not shown to maintain student confidentiality.

²This CPS rate only counts high school students who graduated eighth grade from a CPS school.

On-Track by ISAT Performance

Do Exempli graduates have different freshman on-track rates by ISAT reading performance level?
2006 Eighth-Grade Graduates

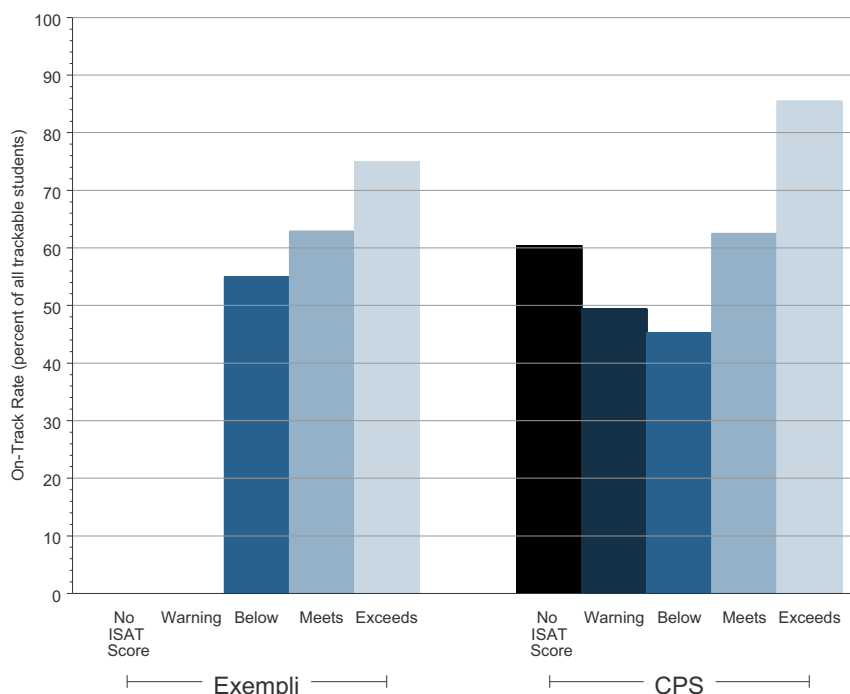


Table 10: Freshman On-Track Rates by ISAT Reading Performance for 2006 Exempli Graduates

	Total	Included in Calculation ¹	Exempli On-Track	CPS On-Track ²
No ISAT Score	6	0	n/a	985 (60%)
Warning	0	0	n/a	41 (49%)
Below	24	20	11 (55%)	2,926 (45%)
Meets	69	62	39 (63%)	9,901 (63%)
Exceeds	14	12	9 (75%)	994 (85%)

¹This number excludes those Exempli students who left CPS or attended a charter high school. Categories with fewer than ten students are not shown to maintain student confidentiality.

²This CPS rate only counts high school students who graduated eighth grade from a CPS school.

Key Terms

On-track

These students received no more than one semester F in a core course (English, math, social science, or science) during the school year and had enough credits to advance to the next grade on time (5 for freshmen, 11 for sophomores, and 17 for juniors). Credits earned in summer school are counted towards the credit total. Summer school failures are not counted towards off-track status.

Off-track

These students either received more than one semester F in a core course (English, math, social science, or science) during the school year or did not have enough credits to advance to the next grade on time. Students in CPS non-charter high schools who have not graduated by the end of their fourth year are considered off-track in their fourth year; the same is true for those who have not graduated by the end of their fifth year.

Charter school

We do not have any course-taking information on charter school students and are unable to provide on-track information. However, we can determine when they drop out, graduate, or leave CPS.

Graduated

Graduates are identified by a graduation code in the CPS student information system.

Dropped out

Dropouts are identified by a “leave-code” in the CPS student information system that identifies why a student is no longer enrolled. We use the same codes as the CPS Office of Research, Evaluation and Accountability to designate students as dropouts. In addition, we treat students attending alternative high schools as dropouts.

Left CPS

These students are no longer enrolled in a CPS high school in a given year and have a code in the CPS student information system that designates them as leaving CPS, usually for another public school district, a private school, a correctional facility, a residential institution, or to be home-schooled. Because schools are sometimes slow to update codes, we allow an extra semester to determine if an inactive student actually left CPS.

For More Information

Related CCSR studies

For more information on the on-track indicator and how it is related to graduation, see
The On-Track Indicator as a Predictor of High School Graduation
http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/content/publications.php?pub_id=10

For information on the freshman year and how students can stay on-track, see
What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public Schools
http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/content/publications.php?pub_id=116

For Principals

Principals have access to additional trend information in a report produced by the CPS Office of Research, Evaluation, and Accountability (REA). Go to <http://research.cps.k12.il.us/> or contact REA for more information.

Acknowledgements

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The Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) at the University of Chicago conducts research of high technical quality that can inform and assess policy and practice in the Chicago Public Schools. We seek to expand communication among researchers, policy makers, and practitioners as we support the search for solutions to the problems of school reform. CCSR encourages the use of research in policy action and improvement of practice, but does not argue for particular policies or programs. Rather, we help to build capacity for school reform by identifying what matters for student success and school improvement, creating critical indicators to chart progress, and conducting theory-driven evaluation to identify how programs and policies are working.