

Exhibit B

Each state reports graduation rates to the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) each year to comply with the *No Child Left Behind Act*. The USDOE is permitting states to use their own rate calculations until 2011. In addition, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) publishes a cohort-based, estimated graduation rate — the Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR) — for all states by dividing the number of graduates in a year by the approximate number of ninth-graders four years earlier. *Education Week* also estimates progress toward graduation with a “Cumulative Promotion Index” (CPI), which measures student progress from grade to grade.

None of these rates is perfect. An NCES task force has recognized the AFGR as the best available rate for comparing states. But it does not account for mobility of students from state to state. In 2011, all states will be required to use the USDOE-prescribed cohort-based calculation that accounts for all high school students for four years. This rate will require an advanced student-data system that SREB states began developing several years ago and most should have in place by 2011. States currently using cohort-based rates believe that these rates are more accurate than either the CPI or AFGR.

High School Graduation Rates in SREB States			
	State-Reported Graduation Rates Class of 2008	Cumulative Promotion Index Class of 2007	Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate Class of 2008
United States	Not Applicable	69	75
SREB median	— ¹	65	73
Alabama	83 ²	63	69
Arkansas	68 ³	69⁴	76
Delaware	82 ²	65	72
Florida	73 ³	62	67
Georgia	75 ²	58	65
Kentucky	85 ²	72	74
Louisiana	66 ³	57	64
Maryland	85 ²	74	80
Mississippi	87 ²	63	64
North Carolina	70 ³	58	73
Oklahoma	76 ²	72	78
South Carolina	75 ³	55	60 ⁵
Tennessee	82 ²	66	75
Texas	79 ³	65	73
Virginia	80 ³	70	77
West Virginia	84 ²	72	77

Notes: The SREB median is the average of the two SREB middle states.

State rates that exceed the national rate are shown in **bold**.

¹ Because individual state rates are not calculated the same way, it is not appropriate to report an SREB median rate.

² These states report graduation rates to the USDOE using a **lever rate**. Lever rates compare the number of students who leave high school with a diploma to the number of all students who leave for any reason, including dropouts.

³ These states report graduation rates to the USDOE using a **cohort rate**. Cohort rates compare the number of students who earn a diploma with the number of ninth-graders who entered high school four years earlier.

⁴ Arkansas’s CPI exceeded the national rate by one-half point (69.3 percent compared with 68.8 percent).

⁵ South Carolina’s AFGR could not be calculated by the USDOE due to insufficient diploma-count data. The rate listed is the average of the previous three years.

Sources: National Center for Education Statistics, *Education Week’s Diplomas Count 2009*, and state departments of education as reported to the USDOE.