Jay P. Greene on High School Graduation Rates

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Citation

- Greene, J. P. (2001). High School Graduation Rates in the United States. Revised. New York: Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.
- Greene, J. P., & Winters, M. A. (2006a). The Effect of Residential School Choice on Public High School Graduation Rates. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 81(1), 14.
- Greene, J. P., & Winters, M. A. (2006b). Leaving Boys Behind: Public High School Graduation Rates. Civic Report No. 48. New York: Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.
- Greene, J., & Winters, M. (2005). Public High School Graduation and College-Readiness Rates: 1991–2002. New York: Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.
- Greene, J. P., & Winters, M. A. (2004). Pushed Out or Pulled Up? Exit Exams and Dropout Rates in Public High Schools. Education Working Paper 5. New York: Center for Civic Innovation at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.
- Greene, J. P., & Winters, M. A. (2002). Public School Graduation Rates in the United States. Civic Report. New York: Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.

Description

Jay Greene's work on graduation rates first gained public attention with the release of his 2001 report "High School Graduation Rates in the United States." Here, Greene introduced a new method for calculating graduation rates and presents his own results for each of the 50 states, for distinct racial and ethnic group breakdowns, and for the 50 largest school districts. Greene highlights problems with methods for calculating graduation rates being used by the states and federal agencies. These include the practice of counting alternative credentials like the GED as equivalent to a standard high school diploma and the use inaccurate self-reported data on educational attainment levels.

While rooted in a methodological critique, the import of Greene's work did not escape the notice of the broader education policy community. First of all, his findings suggest that high school graduation rates in the United States are lower than had previously been believed. Coming at a time when No Child Left Behind legislation emphasizes educational performance, Greene's work brought an even greater focus to the issue of high school graduation as a critical outcome indicator and predictor of future success.

In addition, Greene's calculations and the logic behind them raised serious methodological concerns regarding the quality of data reported by many states and federal agencies. Because states do not use a common methodology and some formulas in use have the effect of excluding cohorts of non-graduating students, it is very difficult to benchmark graduation rates by state or region.

Greene's body of work offers a model for widely disseminating research findings through means other than traditional peer-reviewed journals. Backed by a supportive institution (The Manhattan Institute) that helps disseminate his findings, Greene uses a variety of mechanisms such as press conferences, opinion editorials, radio and television interviews, and online resources to reach the public.

Greene is a Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute and founding head of the Department of Education Reform at the University of Arkansas. In addition to his work on graduation rates, Greene conducts research on such topics as school choice, accountability, and special education

For More Information

Research by Greene and his colleagues can be found online at www.manhattan-institute.org.