



Northwest Territories High School Graduation Rate 2025

Graduating high school is more critical today than it was even a generation ago. More employers are looking for job candidates who have finished high school. Statistics across Canada indicate that there is a strong relationship between having a high school diploma and having a higher income.

The NWT uses a [Six-Year High School Graduation Rate](#), which reflects the Government of the Northwest Territories' philosophy that there are many paths to graduation beyond the traditional three-year time frame. The current Graduation Rate [methodology](#) allows students up to six years to graduate and ensures that all students, no matter their circumstances, have a chance to be counted in the graduation rate.

What the results tell us

In 2025, the Six-Year Graduation Rate for the NWT was 54% (Table 1). The Six-Year Graduation Rate has remained relatively stable over the last decade.

When we look at it by community type, regional centres had the highest graduation rate, at 64% (Table 1). The graduation rate in small communities was the lowest, at 40%. This is the first time in the last 10 years that Yellowknife did not have the highest graduation rate of the three community types. The trend of small communities having the lowest rate has held true for the last 10 years (Figure 1).

The gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students’ Six-Year Graduation Rates has remained around 30-40% (Figure 2).

Since the graduation rate allows students up to six years to complete high school, the group of students (cohort) represented in the 2025 rate started high school in the 2019-2020 school year. This means the COVID-19 pandemic and other unplanned events impacted years one through five of this cohort’s six-year completion window. The decrease in the graduation rate in Yellowknife may be a result of the events that have impacted the NWT in recent years. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) will continue to monitor this indicator for emerging trends.

Table 1: Six-Year High School Graduation Rate by Community Type* (2016-2025)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
NWT	57%	62%	57%	61%	58%	60%	56%	59%	59%	54%
Small Communities	40%	45%	44%	47%	43%	45%	38%	44%	44%	40%
Regional Centres	54%	65%	61%	53%	59%	55%	65%	57%	58%	64%
Yellowknife	73%	73%	66%	75%	69%	74%	67%	71%	71%	62%

**Regional centres include Inuvik, Hay River, and Fort Smith. Small communities include all NWT communities outside of regional centres and Yellowknife.*

Table 2: Six-Year High School Graduation Rate by Ethnicity (2016-2025)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Indigenous	46%	50%	47%	48%	46%	49%	42%	44%	45%	44%
Non-Indigenous	80%	84%	79%	84%	81%	81%	80%	87%	84%	78%

Figure 1: Six-Year High School Graduation Rate by Community Type (2016-2025)

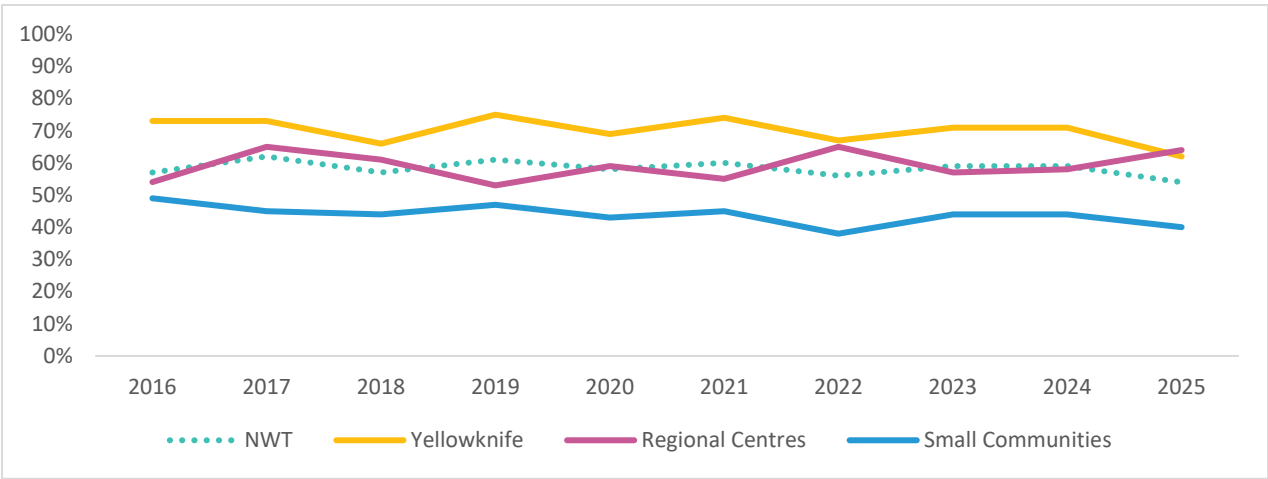
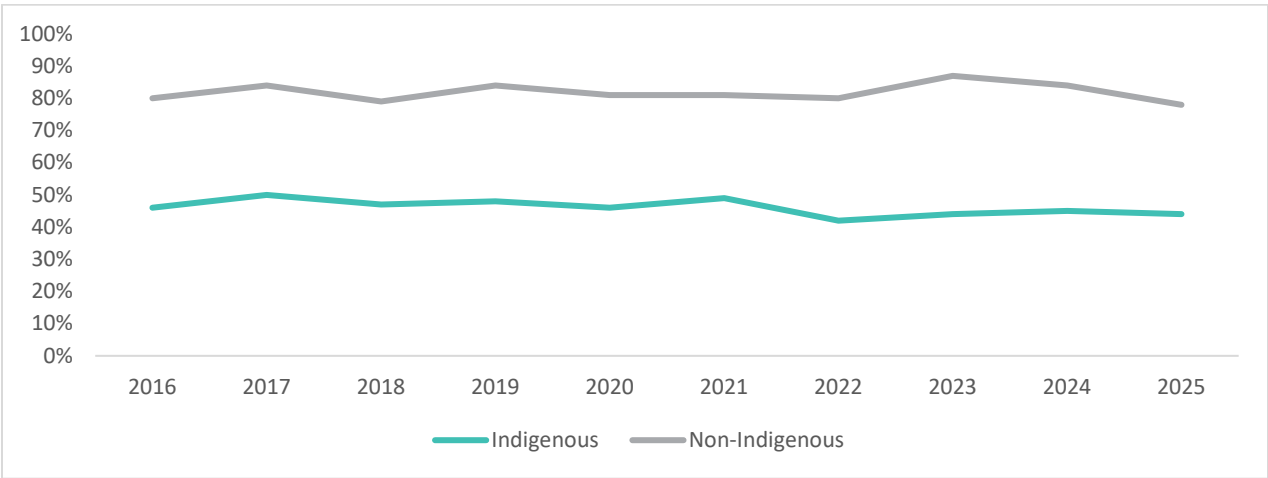


Figure 2: Six-Year High School Graduation Rate by Ethnicity (2016-2025)



In Summary

Graduation rates are important indicators of the overall effectiveness of the NWT education system. They are monitored annually and used to inform the Department’s strategic planning and actions to improve student outcomes.

Graduation rates will continue to be shared with education partners, Indigenous governments, and the public as ECE continues its work to improve student outcomes across the NWT.