

## **How are the adjusted cohorts used in determining the graduation rate?**

Let's next take a look at how adjusted cohorts are used to determine the graduation rate. The four year adjusted cohort graduation rate is determined by dividing the number of cohort members who graduate in four or fewer years by the total number of students in the adjusted cohort at the end of 4 years. Using the previous example, if there were 100 students in the adjusted cohort, and 80 graduates for the cohort, then 80 divided by 100 would give us a graduation rate of 80%.

Let's take a look at the graphs and tables that report adjusted cohort graduation rates. This will also give us an opportunity to discuss the differences between the 3-Year, 4-Year, and 5-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates. This graph shows the 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate for two different cohorts in one high school — the Class of 2010 and the Class of 2009. The horizontal stacked bar graph shows the number of students in that cohort who graduated during each of the four years. No students graduated in year 1 or year 2 in either of the two cohorts for this school. If there were graduates in year 1, they would be represented by a blue bar and graduates in year 2 would be represented by a red bar. The green bar represents students who graduated in year 3 and the yellow bar represents students who graduated in year 4. Since the high school program is designed for four years, it is no surprise that the yellow bar is the dominant bar. However, as we see in this high school's data, a few students completed their high school graduation requirements by the end of year 3.

Below the graph you can see a table with the number of graduates (or Diplomas Earned) divided by the number of students in that adjusted cohort. For example, the Class of 2010 had 4 students graduate in year 3 and 333 in year 4. The total number of graduates for the 4 year adjusted cohort for the Class of 2010 was 337. This number is divided by the total number of students in the adjusted cohort at the end of year 4 to calculate the 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate for that class. Thus, the class of 2010 had a 4-Year Adjusted Graduation Rate of 81.4%.

By making different choices above the graph, you can also drill down into this data to see the graduation rate of subgroups, including racial subgroups, special services subgroups and male and female subgroups.

The same basic calculation is used to determine the 3 and 5 year adjusted rates. A 3-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate uses the number of students in that cohort who graduated by the end of year 3 as the numerator and the total number in the cohort as of the end of year 3 as the denominator to calculate the graduation rate. In this school, 4 out of 420 students in the class of 2010 graduated in year 3. So 4 divided by 420 gives us a 3-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate of .95%. On the other hand, the 5-Year rate uses the cumulative number of students in that cohort who have graduated by the end of Year 5 as the numerator and the total number in the cohort as of the end of year 5 as the denominator in calculating the graduation rate. In this school the class of 2009 added 25 additional graduates in year 5 bringing the total number of graduates to 337 of the 411 students in the adjusted cohort group. 337 divided by 411 gives us a 5-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate of 82%.