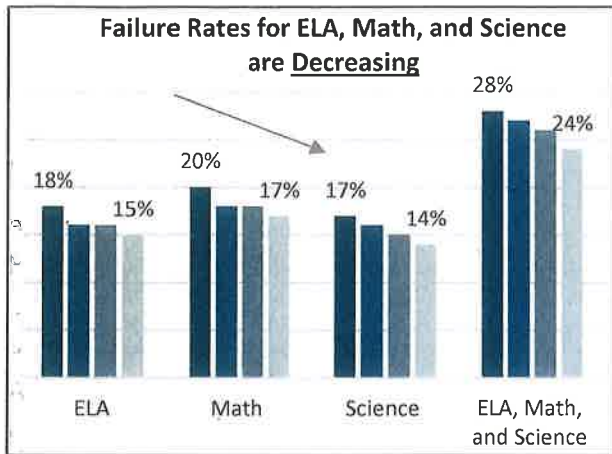


# 9th Grade Course Failure

*A Stronger Predictor of High School Graduation than Race/Ethnicity, Level of Poverty, or Test Scores\**



## Why are we Focusing on 9th grade Failure?

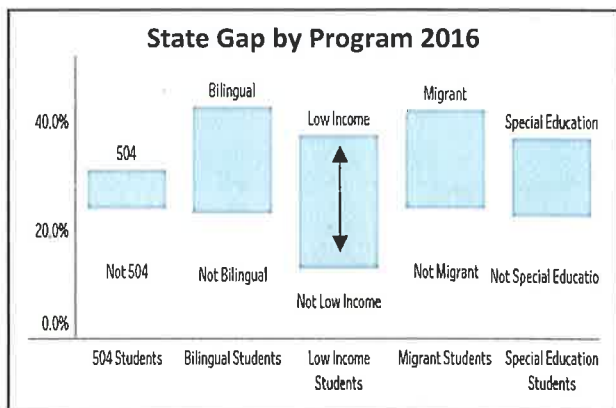
9th grade course failure is a primary early warning indicator for dropping out of high school. **Students on track at the end of their freshman year are 4 times more likely to graduate\***. Failure is a sign that the student is facing challenges that may be related to absenteeism, transportation, health issues, mental health or drug abuse, lack of parent support or supervision as well as in school issues such as bullying, lack of perceived relevance, or not feeling connected or valued.

## How do we Define 9th Grade Course Failure?

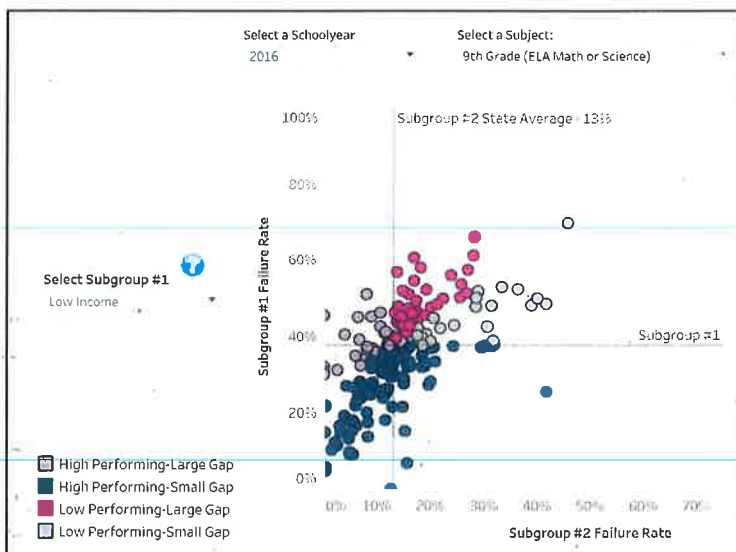
9th grade course failure is defined as the number of 9th grade students who earned less than the credits attempted in each subject.

## Who Does 9th Grade Course Failure Effect the Most?

9th grade course failure is particularly prevalent among students who are **low-income, students of color, and students with disabilities**. As a group, **American Indians and Alaskan Natives have a 49% failure rate** - the highest rate statewide.



Although the failure rate is going down, the opportunity gap remains consistent. For biggest gap is between low-income and non-low-income at 25%, with a **failure rate of 38% for low income students and 13% for non-low income students**.



## Successful Districts

**The Scatter Chart** puts districts into categories based on the state average for failure rate and by gap.

A district is high performing if they are below **the state average failure rate for low-income - 38%**.

A district has a small gap if the difference between low income and non-low income students is below the **state gap - 25%**.

**Roughly 50% of our districts are currently classified as high performing/low gap districts** for low income and non-low income for 9th grade course failure (blue).

## Contact Us

Are you addressing 9th grade course failure? Contact us and let us know what you are doing! [Kefi.Andersen@k12.wa.us](mailto:Kefi.Andersen@k12.wa.us)

*\*Preventable Failure. University of Chicago Consortium on School Research*

## Multi-Tiered Strategies to Prevent 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Course Failure: An Example from one School District

### Tier 3: Individual

- Unannounced home visits with door hangers for absentees
- One on One study time with class teachers whose classes they are struggling in / Check and Connect
- Required Learning Lab/ study hours to make up for incomplete credit

### Tier 2: Group

- Targeted Lunch Study Hall Hours / Flex Time
- Competency Based Credits and extended grade deadline to 20 days into next semester or school year

### Tier 1: Universal

- Staff shares the attitude **“We will not let a single student fail – our will is stronger”**
- Prepare for new students in January: identify Tier 2-3 and plan interventions.
  - Counseling staff holds interviews with parents to set up appropriate classes and teachers before school begins, connect to services, test reading
- Team up with the middle school to offer reading intervention classes so student is ready before entering high school
- Freshmen Academy: separates freshmen from the rest, reinforces study skills
- Connect students to the school: Link Crew, Day Long Freshmen Camp where they get to go to classes
- **“Inspect what you expect”** Track data for who’s struggling with attendance, behavior, and coursework each week and get interventions in place right away
- Standards Based Grading: missed deadlines don’t mean failing the assignment
- Strong teachers who volunteer to focus on Freshmen
- Start with freshmen but keep support going for 10-12th grade