

## Chapter 10: Graduation

This chapter will focus on students in their final year by exploring the provincial pass rate and the type of diploma earned. The provincial and gender percentages are based on the performance of all students in the province. When results are reported at the district level, the figures in this chapter only report four districts. The pass rate and graduation status of students in the CSF, private, First Nations and other schools are not included in the figures due to the low number of students.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the senior high school program is made up of three levels: Level I (Grade 10), II (Grade 11), and III (Grade 12). The program is structured on a course credit basis. While in high school, students accumulate credits for each course they successfully complete. In order for students to graduate, students must earn a minimum of 36 credits in a variety of subject areas. However, the majority of high school students complete 14 credits each year for a total of 42 credits. If a student does not earn enough credits to graduate, they have the option of returning to school as a fourth year (Level IV) student.

### Pass rate (2009/10)

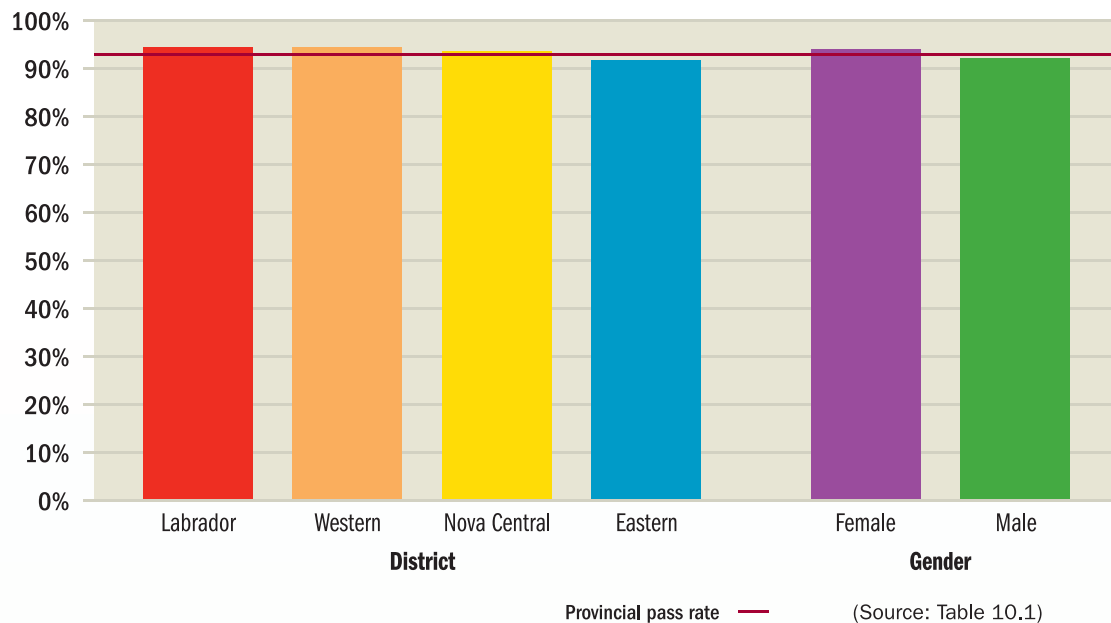
The pass rate is a provincial measure used to describe the number of students graduating from high school. It is calculated by dividing the actual number of graduates by the number of eligible<sup>6</sup> graduates in a given school.

As shown in Figure 10.1, the majority of students who were eligible to graduate actually did. In 2009/10, the provincial pass rate was 92.2%. At the district level, the pass rate ranged from a low of 91.4% in the Eastern school district to 94.0% in Labrador. The female pass rate was slightly higher than the male (93.1% vs. 91.4%).

<sup>6</sup> Eligible graduates include students who have completed a minimum of 22 credits and are attempting sufficient and appropriate credits to graduate.



**Figure 10.1: Provincial and district pass rates (2009/10)**



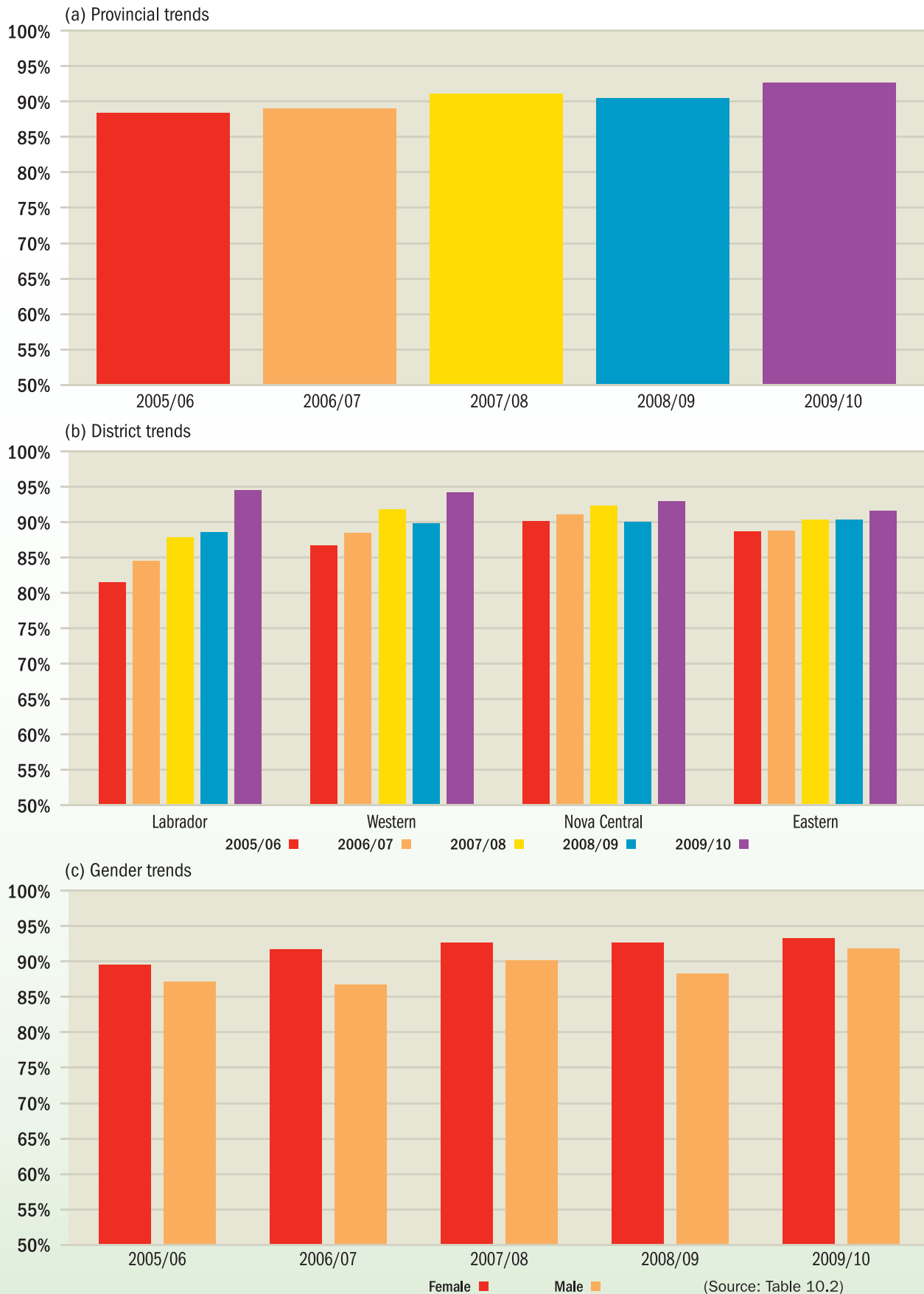
### Trends in provincial and district pass rate (2005/06-2009/10)

With the exception of 2008/09, the provincial pass rate gradually increased from 88.1% in 2005/06 to 92.6% in 2009/10 (see Figure 10.2a).

At the district level, Labrador is the only district where the pass rate increased every year between 2005/06 to 2009/10. It also showed the greatest increase between 2005/06 and 2009/10, where the pass rate increased by 12.8%. In the Western district, the pass rate increased every year with the exception of 2008/09. The Western district showed an increase of 7.3% between the 2005/06 and 2009/10 pass rates. Between 2005/06 and 2008/09, there was little variability in the pass rates seen in the Nova Central and Eastern school districts with approximately 3.0% separating the high and low rates. However, the 2009/10 pass rate was higher in each of the districts compared to the previous year (see Figure 10.2b).

Girls consistently had a higher pass rate than boys. Each year, the female pass rate was between 1.8% and 4.7% higher than the male pass rate (see Figure 10.2c).

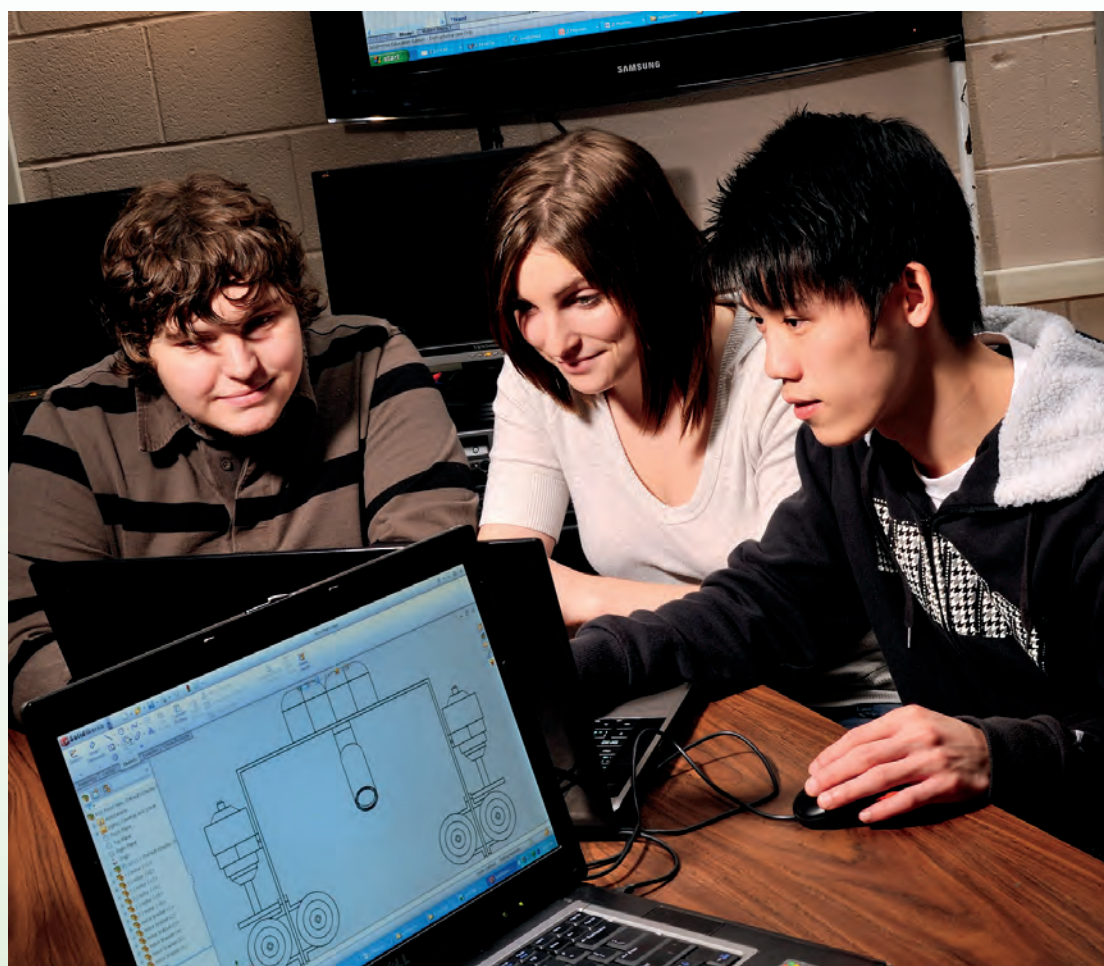
**Figure 10.2: Pass rate trends (2005/06-2009/10)**



## Graduation status

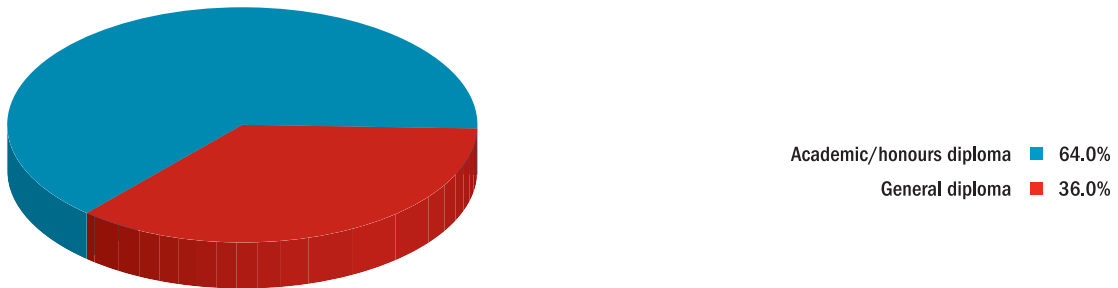
There are three types of diplomas students can earn upon graduation. Students receive an honours diploma upon graduation if they achieve an overall average of 80% in five subject areas (English, mathematics, science, social studies and an elective). Students graduate with an academic diploma if they meet the same criteria as the honours diploma but have a minimum mark of 50% in each of the required courses. A student is awarded a general high school diploma if the minimum graduation requirements are met but the requirements for an academic or honours diploma are not.

In 2009/10, the majority of students graduated from school with either an academic or honours diploma (see Figure 10.3a). This was the case for approximately two-thirds of the graduates. At the district level, the percentage of students graduating with an academic or honours diploma ranged from 53.4% in Labrador to 68.4% in the Eastern school district (see Figure 10.3b). As shown in Figure 10.3c, a higher percentage of girls graduated with an academic or honours diploma than boys (69.7% vs. 57.5%, respectively).

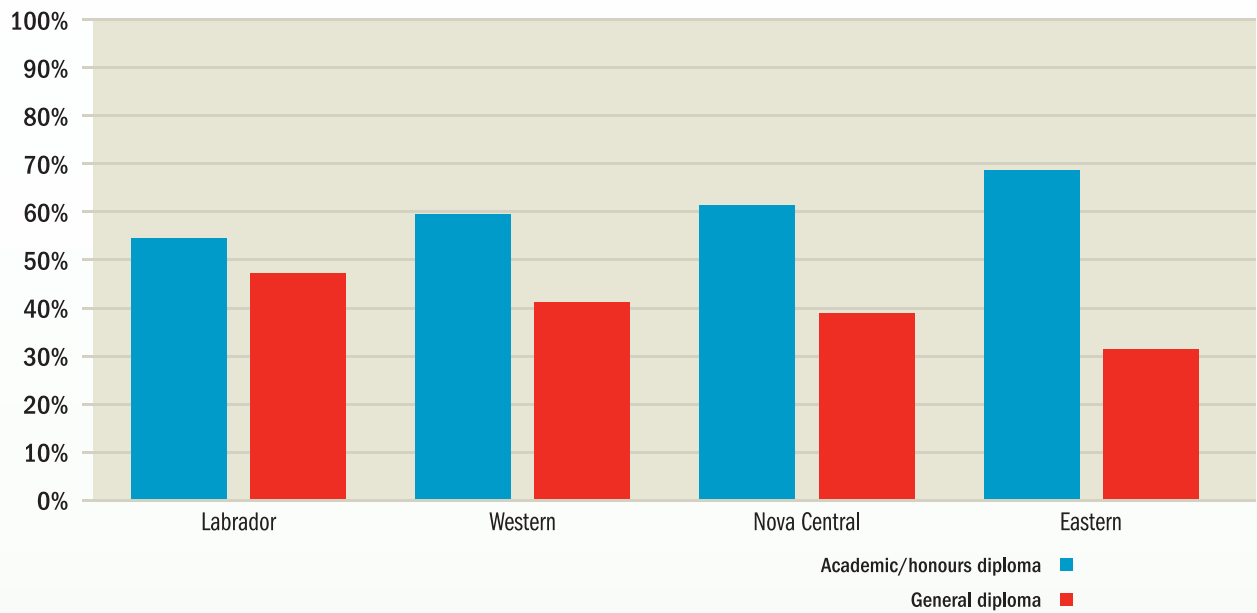


**Figure 10.3: Graduation status (2009/10)**

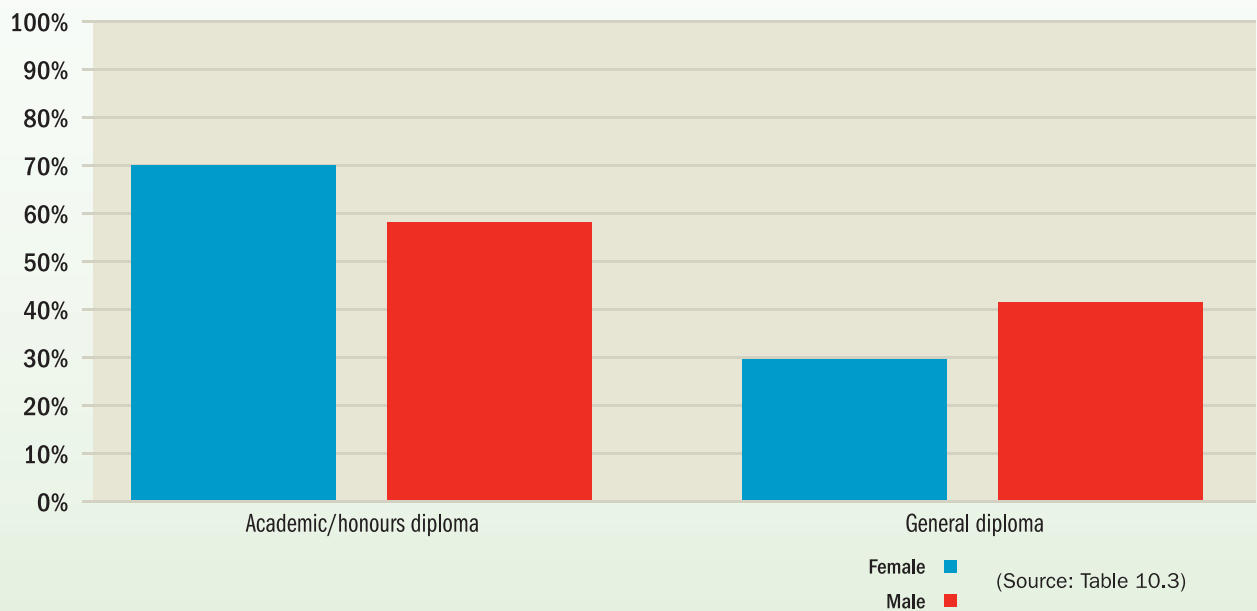
(a) Provincial



(b) District



(c) Gender



(Source: Table 10.3)

## Trends in student graduation status (2005/06-2009/10)

There has been little change in the percentage of students earning an honours or academic diploma over the past five years. With the exception of 2007/08, approximately 64% of students leave school with this type of diploma. In 2007/08, the percentage was 60.7% (see Figure 10.4a)

At the district level, the percentage of graduates with an academic or honours diploma has remained somewhat stable over the past five years. However, there was two years that stand out.

- During 2007/08, the percentage of students with an academic or honours diploma in the Labrador, Western and Eastern school districts dropped slightly from 2006/07 and rebounded in 2008/09. This did not occur in the Nova Central district.
- In Nova Central, there was little variation in the percentage of students between 2005/06 and 2008/09. In 2009/10, the percentage of students with an academic or honours diploma increased by 7.3%. This was the largest year to year change seen in any of the districts (see Figure 10.4b).

The percentages of males and females with an academic or honours diploma remained stable. Each year, a higher percentage of girls earned an academic or honours diploma compared to boys. However, this gender gap is closing. In 2005/06, there was 13.9% separating the percentage of males and females with an academic or honours diploma. By 2009/10, this difference was reduced to 12.1% (see Figure 10.4c).



**Figure 10.4: Percentage of students graduating with honours or academic status (2005/06-2009/10)**

