

#SaveAIMHigh: Talking Points

The AIM High College Graduation Rate is **39%**; a **550% increase** over the CPS Graduation Rate.

AIM High is Unique and Effective

1. **All students are eligible** to participate in AIM High;
 - Including those who would not meet high academic requirements
 - Including those who have IEPs and 504 Plans
2. **Students participate in AIM High for a minimum of 8 years**; from 9th grade into careers
3. **Students are supported throughout college**; most “College Success” programs only follow their students into sophomore year of college.
4. **AIM High uses College Graduation Rate to measure success**; most other programs use Persistence Rate. The only true measure of success is the College Graduation Rate.
 - a. Persistence Rate is the standard metric used by funders and organizations to assess whether efforts to increase college graduation rates among underserved kids are effective. Unfortunately it is a misleading milestone because *persistence does not predict graduation*. It is not uncommon for the Persistence Rate to be more than **50** percentage points higher than Graduation Rate (A couple of years ago, CPS’ College Graduation Rate was 6% and the Persistence Rate was 70%.)
5. **We provide emergency funding** to college students; colleges won’t let students register for classes if they owe any money. Low-income students are leaving colleges in droves because of unexpected fees they can’t pay. AIM High has prepared for that and regularly keeps students in school when this happens to them.
6. **We build confidence and college-survival skills**; AIM High is the longest-running Chicago-based college persistence and graduation program. We are constantly learning what it takes for the unique demographic of low-income , minority students to finish college, and evolving the program to meet their needs. Confidence, resilience, hard work, a vision of the future, and a willingness to ask for help are key.
7. **Students who have Invisible Differences also receive college access and success support**; Invisible Differences are neurobehavioral disorders, learning disabilities and mental health disorders but are NOT intellectual disabilities. These students are going to college, but their graduation rate is very low compared to their peers who do not have Invisible Differences.

We are winning, but we haven’t won...YET!

<i>If you care about...</i>	<i>AIM High is necessary because...</i>
Social Justice	The gap in college graduation rates between students who come from low-income families and those who comes from high-income families is stunning and disgraceful. The issue isn’t talent; it’s opportunities.
The Economy	People who are poor are not able to be fully contributing citizens and are often a burden on society instead. Education is the best-path out of poverty.
Business Outcomes	Businesses want a diverse talent pool. Currently there are not enough people of color who have college degrees to fill the need businesses have identified. Students who have Invisible Differences have an affinity for STEM, without a college degree however, they won’t be able to fill the empty STEM roles.
Violence Prevention & Community Development	Mentoring is an evidence-based, effective violence reduction and prevention weapon. Educational attainment within communities also reduces violence and promotes economic development.

<https://www.youcaring.com/saveaimhigh>

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