The United States has adopted a uniform system of measuring high school graduation rates, referred to as the “Cohort Four-Year Graduation Rate.” A cohort is a group of students that share the same expected graduation year. This date is assigned to a student upon entering the ninth grade for the first time and doesn’t change for a student once assigned.

Beginning this year, citizens all across America will be able to compare their state’s cohort four-year graduation rate with other states. This will be the first time the entire country will be using the same calculation for measuring high school graduation rates.

Nebraska has always had one of the best high school graduation rates in America. Currently, our statewide cohort four-year graduation rate is 85.77 percent.

Nebraska’s P-16 Initiative (preschool through college) has a goal of a 90 percent high school graduation rate for every high school in the state.

A 90 percent graduation rate is attainable because of our excellent public school system. Many high schools already exceed the 90 percent goal.

Among Class A Schools, Bellevue West, Lincoln Southwest, Millard North, Millard South, Millard West, Papillion-LaVista, and Papillion-LaVista South are already above 90 percent.

In Class B, Adams Central, Aurora, Bennington, Elkhorn High School, Grand Island Northwest, Gretna, Holdrege, Norris, Plattsmouth, Seward, Sidney and Waverly are above 90 percent.

The Class C-1 schools with a graduation rate above 90 percent are Ainsworth, Arlington, Ashland-Greenwood, Battle Creek, Boone Central, Broken Bow, Centennial, Centura, Cozad, David City, Fairbury, Fillmore Central, Gibbon, Gothenburg, Kimball, Milford, North Bend, O’Neill, Ord, Pierce, Platteview, Raymond Central, Sandy Creek, St. Paul, Syracuse, Tekamah-Herman, Valentine, Wahoo and Wayne.

In Class C-2, high schools exceeding the 90 percent graduation rate goal are Bayard, Blue Hill, Cambridge, Chase County, Crofton, Cross County, Doniphan-Trumbull, Dundy County, Elmwood-Murdock, Hershey, Homer, Humboldt-Table Rock, Laurel-Concord, Louisville, Malcolm, Neligh-Oakdale, Oakland-Craig, Palmyra, Perkins County, Plainview, Sutherland, Sutton, Tri County, Twin River, Weeping Water, Wilber-Clatonia, Wisner-Pilger, Wood River and Yutan.

There are 59 smaller schools that have 90 percent graduation rates — Alma, Amherst, Ansley, Arapahoe, Axtell, Bancroft-Rosalie, Bertrand, Bloomfield, Brady, Bruning-Davenport, Burwell, Callaway, Cedar Bluffs, Cedar Rapids, Chambers, Clarkson, Cody-Kilgore, Crawford, Creek Valley, Creighton, Deshler, Diller-Odell, East Butler, Elgin, Elm Creek, Elwood, Emerson-Hubbard, Eustis-Farnam, Exeter-Milligan, Freeman, Friend, Fullerton, Garden County, Harvard, Heartland Community, High Plains Community, Hitchcock County, Johnson-Brock, Leigh, Lewiston, Loomis, Loup City, Maxwll, McCool Junction, Mead, Meridian, Mullen, Newcastle, Osceola, Osmond, Palmer, Pawnee City, Rock County, Scribner-Snyder, Shelton, Sterling, Stuart, Wauneta-Palisade, and Wilcox-Hildreth.

(For privacy concerns, federal law does not allow graduation data to be reported publicly if a high school graduation class has 10 or less students.)

I am very pleased that so many Nebraska high schools are already exceeding the goal of a 90 percent high school graduation rate and next year I expect many more will achieve the 90 percent graduation rate goal.

If you would like to know your high school's graduation rate, go to our website at www.governor.nebraska.gov and click on the "column" icon.