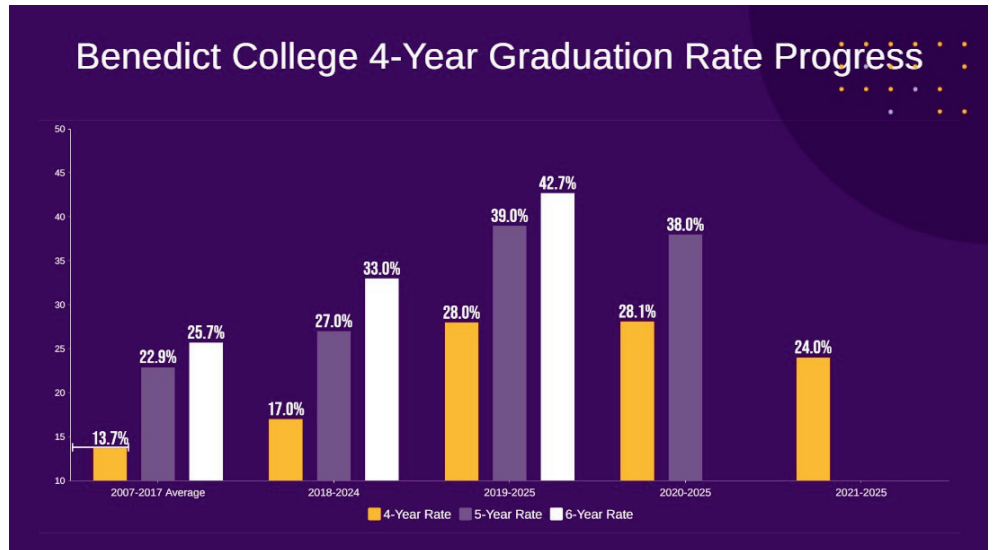


# Benedict College Significantly Increases the 4-year Graduation Rates from 2018 to Present

## Executive Summary

Benedict College has made tremendous strides in improving 4-year student graduation rates over the past eight years. Strategic enhancements in academic policies, programs, and student support have produced a remarkable 104% increase in the 4-year graduation rate - rising from a mean of 13.7% for the decade spanning 2007–2017, to 28% for the 2019–2023 cohort. Continued progress is evident, with the 2020–2024 4-year graduation rate reaching 28.1%, representing a 105% increase from the baseline, and the 2021–2025 cohort achieving 24%, a 75% increase from the same baseline - even amid the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.



The slight dip observed for the most recent cohort can be attributed to the pandemic’s disruption of academic continuity and student progression. Nonetheless, the overall trend demonstrates sustained institutional improvement and the effectiveness of student-centered strategies.

### Key policy reforms included:

- raising admissions standards,
- replacing effort-based grading with learning-outcome-based assessment,
- and strengthening satisfactory academic progress requirements

Academic program adjustments streamlined general education requirements from **60 to 30–31 credits**, effectively **shortening the time-to-degree**. Additionally, the College implemented a comprehensive tuition reset, **reducing tuition costs by 26%** to enhance affordability and access.



During the COVID-19 pandemic, Benedict College expanded virtual academic support, improved student communication, engaged in course-sharing programs, and strategically leveraged CARES Act funding to support vulnerable students.

The 2019-2023 cohort's 28%, 2020-2024 cohort's 28.2% and the 2021-2025 4-year cohort's 24% graduation rates compare favorably to national and state averages for Black students. Even the 2021-2025 cohort's 24% rate - an outlier due to COVID-related challenges - represents an 75% increase from the 13.7% baseline.



This consistent upward trajectory underscores the success of initiatives launched in 2017 to strengthen student achievement. With continued investment and support, Benedict College is well positioned to sustain these gains, further enhance student success, and continue transforming lives - one graduate at a time.

The 4-year graduation increases at Benedict College cohorts - 28% for 2019–2023, reflect sustained institutional progress and student achievement. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the national average 4-year graduation rate for Black students is 29.7% across all institutional types. As a Historically Black College serving a student body largely composed of low wealth (85% Pell dependent), first-generation students of color, Benedict College’s performance is particularly impressive.

Still more impressive is the fact that according to NCES, the national average 6-year graduation rate for Black students across all institution types is 40%. Accordingly, Benedict's 6-year rate for the 2021-25 cohort **exceeds the national average by 2.7%**

On the institutional level, the current 4-year rate is higher than Benedict's average 5-year graduation rate for the past decade (22.87%) and the three-year mean (2019-23, 2020-24; 2021-25) exceeds the average 6-year rate for the past decade (25.7%). **Clearly, we are moving the needle in a positive direction.**

Baseline: 2007-2017 (4-Year) Graduation Rate 13.7% (Average)	4-Year Rate	5-Year Rate	6-Year Rate
2007-2017 Average - Baseline	13.7%	22.87%	25.7%
2018 -2024 Cohort	17.0%	27.0%	33.0%
2019 -2025 Cohort	28.0%	39.0%	42.7%
2020 -2025 Cohort	28.1%	38.0%	N/A
2021 -2025 Cohort	24.0%	N/A	N/A

Percentage Increase from Baseline 2007-2017	4-Year Rate	5-Year Rate	6-Year Rate
2018 -2024 Cohort	24.1%	17.9%	28.4%
2019 -2025 Cohort	104.4%	70.3%	66.1%
2020 -2025 Cohort	105.1%	65.9%	N/A
2021 -2025 Cohort	75.2%	N/A	N/A