

## 2016 Graduation Rate Process Overview

This document attempts to provide an overview of the graduation rate process and calculations for the 2015-16 school year, as well as describing common situations districts face and ways to address them. This process includes an opportunity for districts to review their data and documentation thoroughly and to obtain additional support or to appeal allowable errors when necessary.

### Graduation Rate Calculation

The graduation rate is calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Graduation Rate} = \frac{\text{Number of graduates}}{\text{Number in graduating cohort}}$$

The *number of graduates* is defined as the number of students who earn a regular diploma, completion type 1, within four years of entering grade 9. Please note that these four years include any summer school terms, including the term after grade 12. The *number in the graduating cohort* is defined as the number of students entering grade 9 for the first time, four years prior, minus transfers out of the district and plus transfers into the district.

The graduation rate calculation is based on the U.S. Department of Education 4-year adjusted cohort formula based on the year in which students entered grade 9. For full details, please refer to the “USED Guidance” document located on the [Instructions](#) tab of the Cohort application.

### Phase I: February 16 – June 15

The major priorities for districts during Phase I, detailed below, are:

- To correct students in EIS and to upload required documentation,
- To upload remaining required documentation, and
- To report completion types in EIS.

#### Priority 1: Correcting Students in EIS and Uploading Required Documentation

Phase I is the **only opportunity** for districts to make corrections in EIS that will update automatically in the cohort. The Cohort application will be refreshed daily with any changes made in EIS that affect the cohort. **Once Phase I has closed, no more automatic updates will be made to the Cohort application.** Thus, requested and approved changes will not appear immediately in the Cohort application.

Please take this opportunity to review your cohort thoroughly and to make any necessary changes in your Student Information System **well in advance of the close of Phase I.** If you have changes that must be made directly through the EIS enhanced data entry platform, those also need to be made well in advance of the close of Phase I.

**It is the district’s responsibility to ensure the Cohort application has been updated, with all changes reported in EIS, before the close of Phase I.** If a district delays making changes until the end of Phase I, the district may not be able to verify those changes are reflected accordingly in EIS and in the Cohort application. The department therefore recommends that districts begin the process of updated student information and supporting documentation as close to the beginning of Phase I as possible.

Below is a list of common actions that may need to be taken in EIS before the close of Phase I:

- Duplicate student state IDs or students with more than one state ID
- Students withdrawn using codes 3, 4, or 14 for whom there is no subsequent enrollment in EIS
  - These situations must be reconciled with the receiving school, otherwise the student will remain in the original cohort
- Elementary or middle schools with cohorts, which usually results from an enrollment record for grade 9 that is not valid; thus enrollment needs to be updated with the correct grade assignment in EIS
- Completion type, date, and withdrawal code 12 required for early graduates
- Adjusting incorrect withdrawal codes
- Verify accurate reporting of student subgroup(s), as federal law requires state reporting of graduation rate disaggregated by subgroups

## Priority 2: Uploading Required Documentation

During Phase I, students whose information is accurate the Cohort application, districts may upload documentation for students with withdrawal codes that require supporting documentation. For more information regarding withdrawal code guidance and documentation, please refer to the “2016 Withdrawal Code Guidance” document located on the [Instructions](#) tab of the Cohort application.

Any change to a withdrawal code in EIS may change the documentation required to exclude the student from the cohort. That is, if a student’s withdrawal code is changed in EIS, the district must ensure that documentation for the new code, if required, is uploaded to the Cohort application.

For all remaining early graduates and upcoming spring graduates, the completion types and graduation rates must be reported in EIS well before the close of Phase I on June 15. After this date, no changes will be permitted to districts’ required documentation uploads.

Only one file may be uploaded per student. In cases in which a district has multiple pages of documentation, the district will need to create one file to be uploaded. If a district uploads more than one file, the most recently uploaded file will overwrite the previous file(s), and the department will only have access to the most recently uploaded file.

Phase I is the only opportunity to upload documentation required for students with specific withdrawal codes already in the cohort application. The cohort will be frozen at the end of Phase I, meaning no further changes in the district’s Student Information System and/or EIS will automatically update the cohort.

## Priority 3: Reporting Completion Types in EIS

For all remaining early graduates and upcoming spring graduates, completion types and graduation dates must be reported in EIS **well before the close of Phase I on June 15**. The department urges districts to begin this process at the start of Phase I to ensure that completion types and graduation dates are accurately reflected at the end of Phase I, as no completion types reported to EIS for spring graduates after that date will be reflected in the Cohort application.

## Phase II: July 25 – August 12

Phase II is the only window during which summer graduation completion types will be accepted. All summer graduation completion data must be received by the department no later than August 12, 2016. No submissions, including additional EIS data changes for recent summer graduates, will be accepted after this date.



During Phase II, required documentation may be uploaded for students in grade 12 who have withdrawn **since the last week of Phase I only** and for whom the update did not get reported in EIS in time to be reflected in the Cohort application. At this time, the department will only review documentation for withdrawals for students in grade 12 occurring after June 15. Any other documentation uploaded during Phase II that was required in Phase I will be denied automatically.

### **Phase III: August 29 – September 9**

The department will publish preliminary graduation rates on August 29 for districts to review. The department will conduct a webinar in May in order to disseminate guidance regarding the parameters for appealing audit decisions.

### **Phase IV: October 10**

The department will publish final graduation rates on October 10, 2016.