

1.1 Definition of Dropouts

Dropouts

For purposes of this collection, a dropout is defined as a student who:

1. was enrolled in school at some time during the school year and was **not** enrolled on October 1 of the following school year, **or**
2. was **not** enrolled on October 1 of the school year although was expected to be in membership (i.e., was not reported as a dropout the year before), **and**
3. has **not** graduated from high school or completed a state or district–approved educational program, **and**
4. did **not** meet any of the following exclusionary conditions:
 1. transfer to another public school district, private school, or state– or district–approved educational program;
 2. temporary school–recognized absence due to suspension or illness; or
 3. death.

For the definition above, the following applies:

- The phrase “graduated from high school or completed” means individuals who graduated from high school or completed some other education program that is approved by the state or local education agency.
- The phrase “state or district-approved education program” means one that leads to the receipt of formal recognition of completion from school authorities. It may **INCLUDE** special education programs, home-based instruction, and programs administered by a secondary education agency (but **NOT** adult or postsecondary education) leading to a GED-based diploma or some other certification differing from the regular diploma. Programs recognized as legitimate by the state are considered approved even if the public education system does not directly administer them; home schooling and charter schools are examples of such programs.
- In determine whether the exclusionary condition of “transfer to another ...” applies SEAs may confirmed by a method selected by the state or school district. A transcript request, withdrawal notice signed by a parent that includes assurances the student will be enrolled elsewhere, and the like are acceptable. States are discouraged from accepting hearsay reports or unsubstantiated statements of intent from departing students.

How do I handle students who transfer to adult education?

Students who enroll in adult education programs are counted as dropouts **unless the elementary/secondary school system remains responsible for the student**. The intent of this guideline is to ensure that students who do not complete a program, and for whom the district no longer takes responsibility, are counted as dropouts.

- Transferring to an alternative education setting, if it is part of the elementary/secondary education system, is not considered dropping out. For example, students enrolled in elementary/secondary education in prisons, hospitals, “store front” locations or other nontraditional locations are not dropouts

if the program is part of the elementary/secondary system. This means that a student who enrolls in a school-operated program for high-risk students **is not a dropout**, even if the program is preparing the student to take the GED examination.

- A student who leaves the public elementary/secondary school and enrolls in adult education **is a dropout**. The exception is when the public school system monitors the student's enrollment and reports the student as a dropout if the student drops out of the adult program. An example is a cooperative arrangement between a public school district and a local technical institute that provides GED preparation for students referred directly by the district. The district counts as dropouts the referred students who do not complete the GED study program.
- Students who drop out during the 2007-08 school year but who have obtained a completion credential, such as a GED-based diploma or certificate of completion, on October 1, 2008 are **NOT** reported as dropouts for SY 2007-08.

How do I count early college admissions students?

An early college admissions student (i.e., one who transfers to a postsecondary program leading to a baccalaureate or associate's degree) is **NOT** a dropout.

How do I count students that completed 12th grade but did not complete all graduation requirements?

Students who fail to meet some graduation requirements, and who leave school without a diploma or other credential, are dropouts even if they have completed the 12th grade.

How do I count students that have left the United States?

Students who leave the United States are not considered to be dropouts even if the school district cannot document the student's subsequent enrollment in school.

How can I determine if the student is a dropout?

The following chart summarizes how to determine if a student is a dropout:

A Student Who:	Dropout?
Graduated or received some other recognized credential, such as a certificate of attendance or GED.	No
Only attended summer school in this school district (i.e., was not enrolled during the regular school year).	No
Left school without diploma or other certification after passing age up to which the district was required to provide a free, public education.	Yes
Died.	No
Is gone; status is unknown.	Yes
Moved to another district in this or some other state, not known to be in school.	Yes
Moved out of the United States, enrollment status not known.	No
Transferred, enrolled in another public school, a private school, or charter school.	No

Transferred, enrolled in home schooling.	No
Transferred, enrolled in early college (baccalaureate or associate's program).	No
Is in an institution that is NOT primarily academic (military, possibly Job Corps, corrections, etc.) and offers a secondary education program.	No
Is in an institution that is NOT primarily academic (military, possibly Job Corps, corrections, etc.) and does not offer a secondary education program.	Yes
Is NOT in school but known to be planning to enroll late (e.g., extended family vacation, seasonal work).	No
Is NOT in school but known to be ill, verified as legitimate.	No
Is NOT in school but known to be ill, NOT verified as legitimate.	Yes
Is NOT in school but known to be suffering long-term illness and NOT receiving education services (residential drug treatment, severe physical or mental illness).	No
Is NOT in school but known to be suspended or expelled and their term of suspension or expulsion is NOT yet over.	No
Is NOT in school but known to be suspended or expelled and their term of suspension or expulsion is over.	Yes
Is NOT in school but known to be expelled with NO option to return.	Yes
Is NOT in school but known to be expelled and enrolled in another school and/or district.	No
Is in a nontraditional education setting, such as hospital/homebound instruction, residential special education, correctional institution, community or technical college where the program is administered by an agency that is considered a special school district or extension of a regular school district.	No
Is in a nontraditional education setting, such as hospital/homebound instruction, residential special education, correctional institution, community or technical college where the program is an off-campus offering of regular school district.	No
Is in a nontraditional education setting, such as hospital/homebound instruction, residential special education, correctional institution, community or technical college where the program is classified as adult education that is not approved, administered or tracked by a regular school district.	Yes