



High School Completion Status, Exit Code, Graduation and Dropout Rates

Utah State Board of Education | Data and Statistics Training

May 16, 2019



PR (Promoted) Exit Code

- **Promoted to the next grade or otherwise expected to return the next year under the same LEA's responsibility**
- Alternative to blank or null for student information systems which require an explicit exit code at year end — a placebo for such systems
- Use only for students through Grade 11; with seniors, another exit code or, more commonly, a high school completion status code will be needed
- Not required by USBE; use when necessary or helpful, although explicit coding of “missing” data is generally a good idea
- Targeted for implementation by May 31, 2019



Five Ultimate Outcomes

- Eventually, every student who enrolls in a public high school in Utah is classified in one of five ways at the time their cohort is expected to graduate with respect to their high school completion status:
 - **Graduate**
 - **Dropout**
 - **Other Completer**
 - **Continuing Student**
 - **Excluded (transferred out of public system)**
- The new RA code introduces an exception to this (more later)

Cohort Graduation and Dropout Rates

- ▶ Cohort Graduation Rate:
 - ▶ $\frac{\text{Graduates}}{\text{Graduates} + \text{Dropouts} + \text{Other Completers} + \text{Continuing Students}}$
 - ▶ The denominator represents the cohort
- ▶ Cohort Dropout Rate:
 - ▶ $\frac{\text{Dropouts}}{\text{Graduates} + \text{Dropouts} + \text{Other Completers} + \text{Continuing Students}}$
- ▶ Because Other Completers and Continuing Students are excluded from the Dropout count, these two rates do not add to 100%



Other Rates

- ▶ **Event** (Single Year) Dropout Rate

- ▶ How many students who started (entered during) the school year dropped out?
- ▶ Calculated by USBE

- ▶ **Status** Rate (Prevalence):

- ▶ How many persons are high school (or college) graduates at a point in time?
- ▶ Published by the Bureau of the Census from their own survey data



Graduates:

High School Completion Status Codes

- GA = **Alternate Diploma** (only for Special Ed 1% students)
- GC = **Carnegie Units** (via Adult Education)
- GM = **Military** (waiver when otherwise impossible to complete on time because of timing of moving and difference in requirements)
- GR = **Regular graduate**
- GQ = Completed **Advanced Math** Requirement



Early Graduates: Exit Codes

To generate funding, an **Early Graduate exit code must be associated with one of the five Graduate codes** in the High School Completion Status field

- 11 = Grade 11 (or earlier)

All the rest refer to Grade 12

- Q1 = 1st quarter

- Q2 = 2nd quarter

- Q3 = 3rd quarter

- T1 = 1st trimester

- T2 = 2nd trimester



OG = Other Graduate Exit Code

- ▶ To handle miscellaneous situations where early graduation does not apply
- ▶ Must be associated with one of the five Graduate codes or one of three Other Completer codes (G3, CT, AO)



Other Completers:

Neither graduate nor dropout

- AO = **Aged Out** (only for Special Ed students)
- CT = **Certificate of Completion** (according to LEA requirements)
 - This is probably the best option if student exits with an associate's degree but not a diploma
- G3 = Graduate based on **IEP requirements** (contrast with GA)
- GG = Graduate based on **passing GED**
 - Treated as Other Completer in graduation rate denominator
 - Excluded from dropout rate denominator



Continuing Students:

Not counted as dropouts

- HE = Transferred to Higher Education
- UC = Transferred to Utah System of Technical Colleges



Continuing Students:

Who may become dropouts # 1

- ▶ If one of the following codes is **attached to the last known record of a student, that is, the student does not reappear in the state system by September 30 of the following school year**, the student will be treated as a dropout
- ▶ RA = **Retained** senior on path to an Alternate Diploma
- ▶ RT = Retained senior (excluded from graduation rate denominator for accountability)
 - ▶ Unlike the new PR code, “continuing” in this case means continuing beyond Grade 12, that is, the year the student’s cohort was expected to graduate



Continuing Students:

Who may become dropouts #2

- ▶ TD = **Transferred** to another school within LEA
- ▶ TS = Transferred to another LEA within the state
- ▶ TT = Transferred to another track within the school
- ▶ TN and TR are also included here but the first should be retired and the second is redundant with TS



Dropped Out: Even if they return to the same school the next year # 1

- AE = **Transferred to Adult Education** (more later)
- DO = Dropped Out
- EX = Expelled
- GE = **Exited to take GED**
 - GG should not be used unless evidence is provided that the student actually passed



Dropped Out: Even if they return to the same school the next year #2

- ▶ **GP = Graduation pending**

- ▶ Use only when student — almost always a 12th grader — is expected to complete graduation requirements during the summer prior to September 30

- ▶ Must submit an S1-X update or historical change request to change status to graduate

- ▶ UN = Unknown

- ▶ WD = Withdrew



Transferred to Adult Education: Complication # 1

- ▶ *The issue discussed on this and the following slide has not yet been definitively resolved; contact Aaron.Brough@schools.utah.gov for the latest information.*
- ▶ Sending a student to adult ed does not necessarily make the student a dropout for the sending LEA
- ▶ Enrolling the student in adult ed does not necessarily make the receiving LEA responsible for the eventual outcome
- ▶ A student who simply leaves the public K12 system and enrolls in adult education is a dropout and should be given an exit code of AE,
 - ▶ But there's an exception when a public school continues to **"monitor"** the student's progress in the adult ed program



Transferred to Adult Education: Complication #2

- ▶ An example is a **cooperative arrangement** between a public school district and a community based organization or another public school district that provides adult ed for students referred directly by the district. The **referring district remains accountable** and counts as dropouts the referred students who do not complete the adult ed program; the **receiving CBO or district is not accountable** for the student's eventual high school outcome.
- ▶ A recent specific example in Utah occurred when an IEP team determined that it was in the best interest of a transitioning student to enroll in adult education
- ▶ In this case, a student coded AE might be treated as an Other Completer instead of a Dropout; a new code in the Resident Status field would indicate the different context of interpretation
- ▶ Adapted from [EDFacts File Specification 032 – Dropouts v15.0](#) (p. 5)



Excluded: Must be supported by written documentation

- **“Excluded” from denominator (measure of size of cohort)**
- CH = Transferred from charter to home school (redundant with TH)
- DE = Died
- FE = Participated in foreign exchange (Foreigner coming or American going)
- TC = Transferred out of country
- TH = Transferred (from district) to home school
- TO = Transferred out of Utah to another state
- TP = Transferred to private school
- WM = Withdrew for medical reasons
- WP = Withdrew from preschool



U.S. Dept. of Education Office of Inspector General Audit

- ▶ Among findings, USBE did **not** have sufficient processes to ensure that:
 - ▶ Students identified as graduates by LEAs met state graduation requirements
 - ▶ LEAs maintained adequate documentation for students removed from cohort, that is, excluded from denominator — this was the greater concern
- ▶ [Calculating and Reporting Graduation Rates in Utah](#) (November 27, 2018)



Adequate Documentation #1: Federal Guidance

- ▶ [ESSA High School Graduation Rate Non-Regulatory Guidance](#) (Jan 2017)
 - ▶ “Before a student is removed from a cohort [assigned one of the codes above], a[n] ... LEA must have written confirmation that [the] student has transferred” (B-11)
 - ▶ “If, after multiple attempts, an LEA cannot obtain official written confirmation that a student has transferred out ... the student may *not* be removed from the cohort” [assigned one of the codes above] (B-16; emphasis added)
- ▶ Details on application in Utah:
 - ▶ Transfer Student Documentation (Compliance) Audit
 - ▶ [Guide for Agreed Upon Procedures Engagements for Local Education Agencies](#) (May 2018; p. 9ff)



Adequate Documentation #2: Transfer Student Audit

- ▶ “For each transfer student selected, determine whether official written documentation exists to support the LEA’s recorded exit code.
- ▶ “Official written documentation that a student transferred out may include several different types of documentation, such as:
 - ▶ a request for records from the receiving high school;
 - ▶ an approved application for home schooling or distance education;
 - ▶ evidence of a transfer that is recorded in a State’s data system; or
 - ▶ a letter from an official in the receiving school acknowledging the student’s enrollment.
- ▶ “Documentation must be in writing rather than a telephone conversation or other verbal communication with a parent, relative, or neighbor so that the transfer can be verified through audits or monitoring.” (AUP, 2018, p. 12)



Alternate Diploma #1: RA and GA Completion Status Codes

- ▶ Alternate diploma allowed under ESSA and governed by USBE ([R277-705.5](#)) in conformity to federal guidance ([Sections A14-A20](#))
 - ▶ **SCRAM record must indicate a 1% student**
- ▶ **RA:** “Retained senior on path to an Alternate Diploma”
 - ▶ **Contrast with RT** for students on path to a regular diploma
 - ▶ Triggers cohort reassignment
- ▶ **GA:** “State defined alternate diploma — Only for students with a significant cognitive disability, as defined by R277-705-2, who earned an alternate diploma, which is (1) standards-based and (2) aligned with state requirements for the regular high school diploma”
 - ▶ **Contrast with G3**, which is based on meeting IEP goals and does not qualify as a graduate
- ▶ **For more about the Alternate Diploma, contact: Lavinia.Gripentrog@schools.utah.gov, Tracey.Gooley@schools.utah.gov or Tanya.Semerad@schools.utah.gov**



Alternate Diploma #2: Cohort Reassignment

- ▶ **For each year the student ends as an RA, their cohort (year) is incremented by one;** for example:
 - ▶ Student begins 2019 school year in 2019 cohort and ends year with RA completion status
 - ▶ Student's cohort year is reset to 2020, and so on
- ▶ If you miss a student at year end, you can submit RA to update their status via a historical update request through the following September 30
- ▶ **Once a student is set on the RA path, there is no going back to a previous cohort to earn another type of diploma.**



Alternate Diploma #3: GA as Graduate

- ▶ **The only way an RA student can eventually be considered a graduate is to ultimately be coded as GA.**
- ▶ Any other graduation code (GC,GM,GR,GQ) will be reinterpreted as an Other Completer.
- ▶ Student is included in the 4-year rate calculation for the cohort in which they finally end up.



5-Year Graduation Rate #1: New Accountability Subindicator

- ▶ 5-year graduation rate becomes part of a high school's accountability score for first time this (2019) school year
- ▶ Graduation rate is lagged, so for 2019 accountability, the 4-year rate is based on the 2018 cohort, and the 5-year rate will be based on the 2017 cohort



5-Year Graduation Rate #2:

How It Works

- Identify 2017 nongraduates — students who are only in the denominator of the 4-year rate calculation — in each school
- Of that group, identify students who were graduates in 2018 in the same school; these are 5-year graduates
 - Ignore transfers in and out of the school
- Add the 5-year graduates to the 2018 numerator and denominator and recalculate
- **Score = (4-year rate * 22.5 points) + (5-year rate * 2.5)**
 - **5-year rate always equal to or greater than 4-year rate**
 - **Negligible impact on vast majority of schools**, accounting for slightly more than one-hundredth of one percent of maximum possible points (2.5/225)



Graduation Rate Reports via Data Gateway #1

Graduation Rate Preview

- Under **My Tools** header
- Based on upload of Year End UTREX into USBE Data Warehouse
- **Static**: Changes made via the S1-X record will not affect Preview report
- Broad access

Graduation Rate for Four (Five) Years

- Under **UTREX** header
- Based on most recently processed UTREX submission
- **Dynamic**: Changes made via the S1-X record will show up here
- Restricted access



Graduation Rate Reports: via Data Gateway #2

- ▶ We hope to:
- ▶ Provide a report specifically to help you track Alternate Diploma RA and GA students; and
- ▶ Expand educator access to 4-year and 5-year graduation rate reports by modifying role authorization