Current Policy

Title 28
EDUCATION

Part LXXXIII. Bulletin 111—The Louisiana School, District, and State Accountability System

Chapter 6. Graduation Cohort, Index, and Rate

§603. Determining a Cohort for a Graduation

A. A cohort of students is all students who entered 9th grade for the first time in the state of Louisiana in a given academic year.

B. Each cohort of students will be tracked for four years, from entry as first-time ninth graders through four academic years. Transitional ninth graders will enter automatically the first-time ninth grade cohort in the year after enrolling in transitional ninth grade.

C. Students who exit Louisiana's Student Information System (SIS) system in fewer than four years for legitimate reasons shall not be included in the cohort's graduation index calculations.

1. For graduation cohort calculations, exit codes 07, 10, 14, 16, and 20 from §611 are legitimate, along with any special codes created to deal with natural disasters.

2. Beginning with accountability decisions made in fall 2010 (using 2009 grad data), the only legitimate leavers from a cohort are those who;

a. transfer from Louisiana K-12 public education to a diploma awarding school or program;

b. emigrate to another country;

c. are deceased.

3. Specific documentation is required for students to be considered legitimate leavers.

a. The only acceptable documentation for transfers to other diploma awarding schools or programs is a request for student records from the qualifying school or program, or a letter from an official in the receiving school or program acknowledging the students enrollment. The documentation must be clearly dated before October 1 following the student's exit from the Louisiana Student Information System (SIS). The LDE can, during data certification and audits, require proof that the school or program is recognized as a "diploma awarding" by the state in which it is located.

b. Documentation for a student transfer to home school is a school withdrawal form with parent signature and an LDE letter of approval to the parent, both dated before October 1 following the student's exit from the Louisiana SIS.

c. Students who emigrate to another country must be documented with a statement signed by a parent or a request for student records.

d. An obituary or a letter from a parent is sufficient documentation for a deceased student.

4. The LDE shall maintain and post on the LDE website a list of schools that are considered "non-diploma awarding."

5. A school is classified as "non-diploma awarding" if it:

a. awards fewer than five regular diplomas a year for two consecutive years; or

b. enrolls fewer than 10 twelfth graders for a full academic year for each of two consecutive years.

c. the LDE can grant exceptions to these rules for new schools and schools with small populations upon district request if it can be determined that no circumvention of accountability consequences will occur. The district is responsible for providing any data requested by the LDE.

D. Students that LEAs exit from a school or the LEA using anything other than legitimate leaver codes or those codes indicating completion of a high school course of study must subsequently appear in the Student Information System or they shall be considered dropouts from the state, LEA and school.

E. Students with no high school records in the Louisiana SIS who transfer from a home school, non-public school, or another state into a Louisiana school on or before October 1 of their-eleventh grade year will enter the "on-time" cohort at the students' assigned grade level. Students with existing Louisiana public high school records will re-enter their original cohort.

F. Students transferring within the public school system in Louisiana will remain in their same cohort.

1. Students transferring within an LEA on or before October 1 of their cohort's fourth year will be included in the calculation of the graduation index at the school into which they transfer and complete their fourth year of high school.

2. Students who exit their high school for more than 45 calendar days during their fourth year shall not be included in that high school's grad cohort calculation.

G. Students who graduate or complete high school in fewer than four years will be included in the cohort in which they started 9th grade.

H. Any student who exits K-12 education to enter a school or program that does not award a high school diploma shall be considered a dropout in graduation cohort calculations.

I. All students (excluding those defined in C), regardless of entry or exit dates, are included in the state-level cohort.

J. Students who exit K-12 education and enroll in adult education shall earn points for their school and LEA only if a GED is awarded by October 1 of the following academic year. Otherwise, the student shall be considered a dropout.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 17:10.1.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, LR 32:1024 (June 2006), amended LR 33:424 (March 2007), LR 33:2031 (October 2007), LR 35:2312 (November 2009), LR 36:2242 (October 2010), LR 36:2840 (December 2010), LR 38:3108 (December 2012), LR 40:1316 (July 2014).