

# Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation and Completion Calculation Guidance for Districts and Schools

Mississippi Department of Education,  
Office of Accountability and  
Office of Technology and Strategic Services

Version Date: April 2019

## Contents

Background/History .....	3
Mississippi Code related to Graduation .....	3
Definitions of Graduate, Completer, Still Enrolled, and Dropout .....	3
Assignment of Cohort Rates to Districts and Schools .....	4
Data Requirements.....	5
Student Demographic Information.....	5
Student Enrollment Information.....	5
District and School Demographic Information .....	6
Identification of Students in a Cohort Group.....	6
Entering a Cohort .....	7
Determining Student Status .....	8
Final status indicators.....	8
MSIS Indicators: Translation for Verification and Calculation files .....	9
Data Verification Process .....	10
MSIS Cohort Reports .....	10
Withdrawing Students from the Cohort .....	11
Required Documentation.....	11
School Attendance Officers .....	12
Review of Graduation Rate Calculations .....	13
Cohort Rate Calculations .....	14
Removing Students from the Cohort.....	14
Denominator.....	15
Numerator.....	15
Rate Calculations.....	15
Reporting of Graduation Rates .....	16
Glossary of Terms.....	16
Resources .....	17

## Background/History

Graduation rates are an indicator used in determining the success of high schools. This rate reports how well schools are performing in helping students achieve the rigorous high school curriculum standards established by the Mississippi State Board of Education (SBE). The graduation rate is the percentage of students who have successfully earned a regular high school diploma within four years of entering the ninth grade. The State Board of Education's Strategic Plan is intrinsically connected with graduation rates, particularly Goal Two: *Every Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career*.

## Mississippi Code related to Graduation

In recent years, the Mississippi Legislature has focused heavily on dropout prevention. Districts/schools with a graduation rate of less than 80% are required to develop a plan for increasing opportunities for students to successfully complete requirements for earning a high school diploma [Miss. Code Ann. §37-16-7(1)(c)]. Mississippi Code Ann. §37-16-11 outlines the requirements for special diplomas or certificates of completion. Mississippi Code Ann. §37-17-6(5)(iii) establishes the four-year graduation rate as an accountability criterion for schools and districts. The four-year rates are also required by Miss. Code Ann. §37-21-9(d) to be reported annually: *Report annually to the Mississippi Legislature on the graduation and dropout rates based on Grades 7 through 12 and Grades 9 through 12 cohort groups, statewide and by district*. In addition to use for accountability, reporting, and dropout prevention plans, graduation rates are also used as a criterion for identifying schools for recognitions such as the National Blue Ribbon Schools program.

## Definitions of Graduate, Completer, Still Enrolled, and Dropout

Mississippi follows the definition of a high school graduate as outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations: 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1). This section of the law defines a **graduate** as a student who receives a "regular high school diploma" at the conclusion of the student's fourth year in high school, before the conclusion of his/her fourth year in high school, or during the summer session immediately following his/her fourth year in high school. The four-year period begins the first time the student enrolls in 9<sup>th</sup> grade (or peer grade equivalent for ungraded students). Section §200.19(b)(1) later defines a regular high school diploma as a standard high school diploma awarded to students that is fully aligned with the State's academic content standards. This definition does not include a general education development certificate (GED), certificate of attendance, or any alternative certificate(s) awarded by the State. Currently, Mississippi offers four pathways for earning a regular high school diploma, as outlined in Appendix A of the current edition of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*. Students earning a diploma through any of the following options within the allowable four-year window will be considered as a graduate in the graduation rate calculation:

- Standard Diploma (Appendix A-2) (Ending with incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders of 2017-2018)
- District Option Standard Diploma (Appendix A-1) (Ending with incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders of 2017-2018)
- Career Pathway Diploma (Appendix A-3) (Ending with incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders of 2016-2017)

- Mississippi Early Exit Diploma (Appendix A-4) (Ending with incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders of 2017-2018)
- Traditional Diploma (Appendix A-6) (Beginning with incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders of 2018-2019)
- Traditional Diploma with Endorsements (Appendices A-7, A-8, and A-9) (Beginning with incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders of 2018-2019)
- Alternate Diploma (Appendix A-10) (Beginning with incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders of 2018-2019)

Students earning an Alternate Diploma as outlined in Appendix A-10 prior to reaching the maximum age for services as provided under section 612(a)(1) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will be considered a graduate in the cohort to which they are assigned. Students on track to earn an Alternate Diploma may have their cohort assignment adjusted if they continue beyond the fourth year of their original cohort.

A high school **completer** is defined as a student earning an alternative certificate that is fully aligned to the State’s content standards. Alternative certificates include the occupational diploma (Appendix G of the current edition of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*) (Ending with incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders of 2016-2017), GED, and certificate of attendance. Only those students earning a GED through the local school district’s alternative education program are considered completers. Students earning a GED while participating in programs outside of the local school district are considered dropouts in the calculation. (Note: The MDE is exploring options for including community-college-based GED programs in the calculation of the completer rate.) Students who have successfully completed all of the Carnegie unit requirements for graduation but have not met the requirement for passing all of the end-of-course, subject area assessments or meeting an option in lieu of passing the assessments as provided in Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 3, Ch. 36, R. 36.4 and R. 36.5 and Appendix A-5 of the current edition of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards* are also considered completers.

Students classified as **still enrolled** are those who have re-enrolled in school for a fifth year in order to complete requirements for earning a standard diploma or alternative certificate. Students in this category must have been enrolled in a Mississippi public school district during the first period of the academic year immediately following the end of the four-year cohort window.

**Dropouts** are those students who leave school without earning a diploma/alternative certificate or legitimately transferring to an accredited public or non-public school program resulting in a high school diploma. Students transferring to a community-based GED program are considered as dropouts.

### **Assignment of Cohort Rates to Districts and Schools**

All districts and schools who serve students enrolled in 12<sup>th</sup> grade will be assigned annual cohort rates for graduation, completion, still enrolled, and dropout. Cohort rates are based on the final dispositions of students who entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade four years prior. Since the data used in rate calculations are not finalized until the following fall semester, the calculation and reporting of rates are lagged one year.

Middle schools (or secondary level schools that do not contain 12<sup>th</sup> grade) will not be assigned a graduation rate. Though students may be placed in a cohort while enrolled in a middle school, the school will not have an official graduation rate assigned/reported.

## Data Requirements

Student demographic and educational data are captured in the Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS) on a monthly basis. This system is used to track students throughout their duration in the K-12 Mississippi public school system. The data captured through MSIS are used in identifying students to be placed in the cohort and final disposition of the students. The indicators identified below are generated from MSIS in order to calculate graduation rates and to determine subgroup reporting requirements.

### Student Demographic Information

The Student Demographic data elements are used in determining students' placement in a cohort and student subgroup. Each of the data elements below (with the exception of the Student Identifier) are based on the data reported during month eight of the fourth year of the cohort window. If month eight data are not available, the most recent data on record are used.

Data Element	Description
Student Identifier	Student's unique nine-digit MSIS identification number
Student First Name	First name of the student
Student Last Name	Last name of the student
Student Middle Initial	Middle initial of the student, if available
Date of Birth	Date of birth of the student
Bio-physiological Gender	Sex of the student
Race	Race/Nationality of the student
Economically Disadvantaged Status	Economically disadvantaged (free and reduced lunch) status of the student
Student with Disability Status	Disability status of the student
Significant Cognitive Disability Status	Significant cognitive disability status of the student
English Learner Status	English learner status of the student
Migrant Status	Migrant status of the student

### Student Enrollment Information

Student enrollment data is collected for each of the 36 months of enrollment (nine months per academic year) during the four-year cohort window. The data capture the last enrollment or withdrawal record of the month to determine where a student was enrolled for calculating graduation rates. The data are used to identify student membership in a cohort group and to assign students to a district and school based on where students were enrolled during the four-year window. Students are assigned to the school and district of longest enrollment during the four-year cohort window. If a student has equal enrollment in two or more districts and/or schools, the student will be assigned to the school and district of final enrollment.

<b>Data Element</b>	<b>Description</b>
Academic Year	
Month	
District ID	Unique four-digit district identification number assigned by the State
School ID	Unique seven-digit school identification number assigned by the State
Enrollment Date	Date the student enrolled in the school
Grade	Grade level in which the student was enrolled
Withdrawal Date	
Withdrawal Type	
Promotion/Graduate Type	

### **District and School Demographic Information**

The data elements below are used in determining which districts and schools should be assigned a graduation rate.

<b>Data Element</b>	<b>Description</b>
District ID	Unique four-digit district identification number assigned by the State
District Name	Name of the district
Previous Year District Grade Configuration	Grade levels served by the district during the previous academic year
Current Year District Grade Configuration	Grade levels served by the district during the current academic year
School ID	Unique seven-digit school identification number assigned by the State
School Name	Name of the school
Previous Year School Grade Configuration	Grade levels served by the school during the previous academic year
Current Year School Grade Configuration	Grade levels served by the school during the current academic year

### **Identification of Students in a Cohort Group**

A student enters a cohort once a student enrolls in 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time. Students who are ungraded (*i.e.*, enrolled in Grades 56, 58, or 78) are placed in a cohort based on their peer age. Once a student is placed in a cohort group, the student remains in the cohort regardless of whether the student repeats or skips a grade level during the four-year period. Students who enter a Mississippi public school in a grade higher than 9<sup>th</sup> grade (or peer grade equivalent higher than 9<sup>th</sup> grade) are placed in the same cohort as their peer group. A student transferring from a

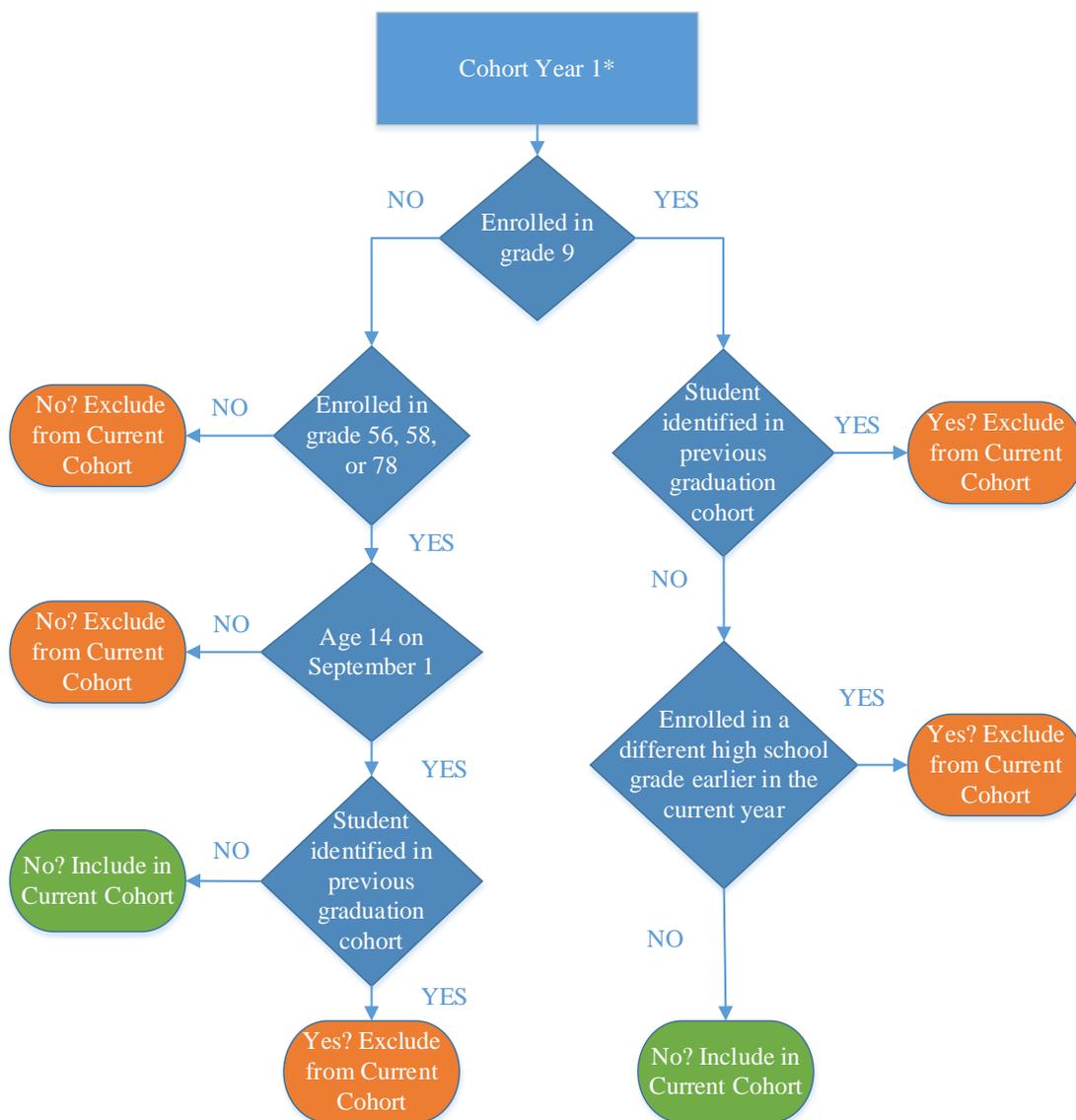
private/non-public school to a Mississippi public school in Grades 10, 11, or 12 will be placed in the same cohort group as the current students in Grades 10, 11, or 12.

The cohort file is developed after the verification of the summer activity data by school attendance officers during the Fall of the academic year following the end of the cohort window.

## **Entering a Cohort**

The full graduation cohort is constructed using the following rules:

- Year 1: Students entering the cohort for the first time at the beginning of the starting year for the cohort
  - All students entering Grade 9 for the first time at any time during Year 1
  - All 56/58/78 students age 14 on September 1<sup>st</sup> of Year 1
  - CHECK to ensure the following:
    - Students did not enroll in Grades 10, 11, or 12 prior to entry into Grade 9 during Year 1, and
    - All students above were not in an earlier cohort.
- Year 2: Add students entering Grade 10 at any time during Year 2.
  - All students entering Grade 10 for the first time at any time during Year 2
  - All 56/58/78 students age 15 on September 1<sup>st</sup> of Year 2
  - CHECK to ensure the following:
    - students did not enroll in Grades 9, 11, or 12 prior to entry into Grade 10 during Year 2, and
    - All students above were not in an earlier or later cohort.
- Year 3: Add students entering Grade 11 at any time during Year 3.
  - All students entering Grade 11 for the first time at any time during Year 3
  - All 56/58/78 students age 16 on September 1<sup>st</sup> of Year 3
  - CHECK to ensure the following:
    - students did not enroll in Grades 9, 10, or 12 prior to Year 3 entry into Grade 11, and
    - All students above were not in an earlier or later cohort.
- Year 4: Add students entering Grade 12 at any time during Year 4.
  - All students entering Grade 12 for the first time at any time during Year 4
  - All 56/58/78 students age 17 on September 1<sup>st</sup> of Year 4
  - CHECK to ensure the following:
    - students did not enroll in Grades 9, 10, or 11 prior to Year 4 entry into Grade 12, and
    - All students above were not in an earlier or later cohort.



\*For each Cohort Year, the grade in the first decision box (*i.e.*, Enrolled in grade 9) will change accordingly (*i.e.*, Year 2, grade 10; Year 3, grade 11; Year 4, grade 12).

## Determining Student Status

### Final status indicators

At the end of the four-year tracking period, the entire set of MSIS data pertaining to the student will be examined chronologically (from the earliest available recorded events to the latest) and any “final disposition” events will be identified. Final disposition events captured by the system include dropouts, documented transfers out-of-state, documented transfers to a non-public school, death, and school completion (regular diploma, occupational diploma, special education certificate of attendance, GED earned through the district’s alternative education program, and school completion without passing all required end-of-course subject area assessments or meeting an option in lieu of passing the assessments as provided in Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 3, Ch.

36, R. 36.4 and R. 36.5 and Appendix A-5 of the current edition of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*. Transfers within the public school system are not considered transfer events.

### MSIS Indicators: Translation for Verification and Calculation files

Codes used in MSIS, such as those below, are “translated” for the verification files and graduation rate calculations for simplicity.

MSIS Code	MSIS Description	Verification and Calculation Status
T	Traditional Graduate	Graduate
C1	Completer-High School Diploma	Completer
OD	Occupational Diploma	Completer
O	Other Completer	Completer
C2	Completers-Other than High School Diploma	Completer
FL01	Summer Activity – Failed 1 ≥ End-of-Course Subject Area Assessments and Did Not Meet Options	Completer
G	GED (issued by the school district)	Completer
IS*, SA*	Still Enrolled	Still Enrolled
SD01-SD20	Summer Activity – [Reason for dropout] (SD indicates Summer Dropout)	Dropout
T7, ST07	Transfer to an approved community based GED Program (ST indicates Summer Transfer)	Dropout (Note: As of July 1, 2010, all GED recipients granted outside the public school district are considered dropouts for federal reporting.)
D	Dropouts	Dropout
Unknown Status	There is not a specific code in MSIS for students with an unknown status.	See the information below the table for more details. *
T4, ST04	Transfer to a nonpublic school in Mississippi	Removed from Cohort
T5, ST05	Transfer to another state or country	Removed from Cohort
T8, ST08	Transfer to home school	Removed from Cohort
Z1, SZ01	Deceased	Removed from Cohort

\*If a student’s status is unknown, a series of questions must be asked to determine how the student should be classified: Graduate, Completer, Still Enrolled, or Dropout.

1. Did the student receive a standard high school diploma from a Mississippi public high school during the four-year cohort window (*i.e.*, August 1 of Year 1 to July 31 of Year 4)? If yes, the student is a **GRADUATE**. Stop here. If no, move to next step.
2. Did the student receive a Mississippi Occupational Diploma, Special Education Certificate of Completion, GED from a Mississippi public high school, or successfully

meet all of the district's Carnegie unit requirements for graduation but failed to pass all required end-of-course subject area assessments or meet an option in lieu of passing the assessments as provided in Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 3, Ch. 36, R. 36.4 and 36.5 and Appendix A-5 of the current version of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards* during the four-year cohort window (*i.e.*, August 1 of Year 1 to July 31 of Year 4)? If yes, the student is a **COMPLETER**. Stop here. If no, move to next step.

3. Did the student enroll in school during the first reporting period immediately after the four-year cohort window closed? If yes, the student is **STILL ENROLLED**. Stop here. If no, the student is a **DROPOUT**.

## Data Verification Process

### MSIS Cohort Reports

Districts and schools are expected to review and confirm enrollment and completion data on a monthly basis as reported through monthly MSIS submissions. In order to assist districts and schools with this ongoing data review, a cohort report is available in MSIS under the Reports tab, Student Data dropdown, Cohort. Districts may generate a report of upcoming cohorts by school based on the school year of entry. Students reflected in the report are students assigned to the associated cohort academic year that are either currently enrolled in the school or were last enrolled in the school. It is the responsibility of the school/district of final enrollment to ensure that the final status of the student is correct, regardless of the final assignment of the student.

Annual District Timelines are published each school year and posted in the Documents section of the MSIS webpage (<https://www.mdek12.org/OTSS/MSIS>). Districts must meet deadlines to ensure that the data used in the graduation rate calculations are correct. As an example, the timeline for September and October of the 2018-2019 academic year is provided below:

#### SEPTEMBER

- Districts must submit Summer School Files (SSD files) by 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in September
- Districts must submit Initial Student Load Transaction files (ISL files) by noon September 30<sup>th</sup>
- Any adjustments to graduates and completers and promotions must be updated on the Update Student Grades screen (Update Promotion tab) by September 30<sup>th</sup>, prior to Month 1 files being sent to MSIS
- Each school must have MSIS IDs and ownership of all students before submitting the Month 1 file
- Districts should start submitting Month 1 Monthly Days Taught Data Transaction (MDT files) and Monthly Student Data Transaction (MSD files) on September 30<sup>th</sup>
- Districts must enter and approve all personnel data by September 30<sup>th</sup> (Public, Special, and Non-Public)
- Beginning September 1<sup>st</sup> Certification update for MSIS is run daily
- School Board member data is due to be updated no later than September 1<sup>st</sup>

#### OCTOBER

- Districts must submit/approve Month 1 Monthly Student Data Transaction (MSD

- files) by October 10<sup>th</sup>
- Summer Activity Deadline – October 26<sup>th</sup> by noon
- Districts must continue to update personnel data (Public, Special, and Non-Public)
- Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP) edits are run as districts are approved

## Withdrawing Students from the Cohort

The effective date of student withdrawal is the first day after the last day of attendance, if known; otherwise, the date of withdrawal is considered to be the date on which it becomes known officially that the student left the school/district.

It is important to note that once a student is withdrawn, the district must code the student as a transfer or dropout adhering to the following:

- If a school district does not have official documentation (i.e., anything in writing that identifies the retrieving or requesting entity) at the time of the withdrawal, the student must be coded as a dropout until the appropriate documentation can be obtained.
- The district must complete a “Records Change” form that can be found on the MSIS web page to change the dropout to a transfer <https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/documents/MSIS/msis-record-change-of-documentation-form-district.pdf>.
- Students in high school that withdraw from a public school district cannot be removed from a cohort unless the student is coded as a transfer or withdrawn due to death.
- A transfer out of cohort can only occur when a student leaves a school and enrolls in another school (public, non-public/private, parochial, or home) or in an educational program that awards a regular high school diploma. According to 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1)(ii)(B)(2), a student who is retained in grade, enrolls in a General Educational Development (GED) program, or leaves school for any other reason may not be counted as having transferred out for the purpose of calculating graduation rate and must remain in the adjusted cohort.
- A student can be removed if a local education agency obtains written confirmation prior to coding the student as a transfer [34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1)(iv)].
- If a student moves to another public school within the State, that transfer can be officially documented in the student file and recorded in MSIS. The withdrawal entry should be entered prior to the enrollment entry in the other public school.

## Required Documentation

Verified Status	Supporting Documentation
Traditional Diploma Recipient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of the diploma.</li> <li>• Cumulative record of student with the diploma recorded.</li> </ul>

Verified Status	Supporting Documentation
Certificate of Attendance Recipient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of the certificate.</li> <li>• Cumulative record of student with the certificate recorded.</li> </ul>
Occupational Diploma Recipient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of the occupational diploma.</li> <li>• Cumulative record of student with the diploma recorded.</li> </ul>
District - Issued GED Recipient	Copy of the GED certificate with documentation that it was received from a Mississippi public high school.
Failing to meet all End-of-Course Subject Area Assessment Passing Scores or Options in Lieu of Passing	District policy outlining graduation requirements and records of student demonstrating student's fulfillment of the requirements.
Transfer To a Non-Public School	Request for records on letterhead from the receiving school or letter from receiving school that the student is enrolled and the date of enrollment.
Transfer Out-of-State/Out-of-Country	Request for records or enrollment verification on letterhead from the receiving school. Written documentation from family or foreign exchange program with withdrawal date is adequate <b>for out-of-country transfers only</b> .
Transfer to a State Special School	If the transfer is recorded in MSIS, a note indicating the transfer is sufficient. If the transfer is not recorded in MSIS, the transfer must be recorded on letterhead from the receiving school.
Transfer to Home School	Letter from the school attendance officer acknowledging transfer of student to home school.
Deceased	Obituary or death notice from local paper.

## School Attendance Officers

School attendance officers are provided for in Miss. Code Ann. §37-13-89 and are charged with the following duties:

- a) Cooperate with any public agency to locate and identify all compulsory-school-age children who are not attending school;
- b) Cooperate with all courts of competent jurisdiction;
- c) Investigate all cases of nonattendance and unlawful absences by compulsory-school-age children not enrolled in a nonpublic school;
- d) Provide appropriate counseling to encourage all school-age children to attend school until they have completed high school;
- e) Attempt to secure the provision of social or welfare services that may be required to enable any child to attend school;
- f) Contact the home or place of residence of a compulsory-school-age child and any other place in which the officer is likely to find any compulsory-school-age child

when the child is absent from school during school hours without a valid written excuse from school officials, and when the child is found, the officer shall notify the parents and school officials as to where the child was physically located;

- g) Contact promptly the home of each compulsory-school-age child in the school district within the officer’s jurisdiction who is not enrolled in school or is not in attendance at public school and is without a valid written excuse from school officials; if no valid reason is found for the nonenrollment or absence from the school, the school attendance officer shall give written notice to the parent, guardian or custodian of the requirement for the child’s enrollment or attendance;
- h) Collect and maintain information concerning absenteeism, dropouts and other attendance-related problems, as may be required by law or the Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement; and
- i) Perform all other duties relating to compulsory school attendance established by the State Department of Education or district school attendance supervisor, or both.

School Attendance Officers work with districts/schools to verify the status of students at the beginning of each school year that are considered “no-shows.” This process should be utilized to further review and update the status of students in MSIS each September so that students who are not in attendance do not continue with an enrolled status in MSIS.

Additionally, School Attendance Officers must verify the final status of students during the review of Summer Activity data in October of each year. This is the final opportunity to review and update the official record in MSIS for the prior academic year. Once the Summer Activity period has been reviewed, verified and submitted to the MDE, the prior-year academic record is finalized and considered part of the permanent record to be used in the calculation of graduation rates.



## Review of Graduation Rate Calculations

Following the release of preliminary cohort rates, districts and schools are afforded an opportunity to submit requests for internal review, if the district believes that an error has been

made in the calculation of the rates. (Data submitted by the district in MSIS in prior academic years that have been finalized will not be changed during this process.) The request must include a clear description of the error believed to exist in the calculation of the rates or related data and submitted to the MDE Office of Accountability along with supporting documentation by the deadline established by the MDE. (The deadline for submission will be communicated along with the release of preliminary data.) Following this final review, cohort rates are submitted to the SBE.

## Final Review and Reporting Process



### Cohort Rate Calculations

The cohort rates for graduation are calculated based on the number of students in a cohort who earn a regular high school diploma within four years after entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time. This cohort-based method provides the rate at which students are completing high school on-time. In many cases, students do not spend the entire four-year period enrolled in the same school; therefore, students are assigned to the district and school of longest enrollment, based on monthly enrollment. In the event that a student is enrolled in more than one district or school for equal amounts of time, the student will be assigned to the district and school of final enrollment. The procedures below outline the processes involved in calculating the cohort rates.

### Removing Students from the Cohort

Adjustments are made to the full cohort group to account for those students who are deceased or transfer to other educational settings outside of Mississippi's public-school system including out of the country. These students may be removed from the cohort if the transfer is deemed valid. Districts must maintain appropriate documentation that a student's transfer is valid or legitimate. A valid transfer may include the following:

- Transfer to a Non-Public School
- Transfer to Home School
- Transfer to a School Outside of the State/Country

Students who transfer to a community-based GED program are not considered as valid transfers. Federal guidelines require students transferring to such programs to remain as members of the cohort group [34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1)(ii)(B)(2)].

The resulting list of students, referred to as the adjusted cohort, is used to determine the graduation, completion, still enrolled, and dropout rates. Each of these students will be classified as a graduate, completer, still enrolled student, or dropout for determining rates.

## **Denominator**

The denominator for all cohort rates is the sum of all students who are members of the adjusted cohort for the individual district, school, or state.

## **Numerator**

### *Graduation Rates Numerator*

The sum of students in the adjusted cohort of the individual school or district who received a regular high school diploma.

### *Completer Rates Numerator*

The sum of students in the adjusted cohort of the individual school or district who received an occupational diploma, GED (through the district's alternative education program only), certificate of attendance, or have successfully met all of the district's Carnegie unit requirements for graduation except for passing one or more of the end-of-course statewide subject area assessments or meeting an option in lieu of passing the assessment, as outlined in Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 3, Ch. 36, R. 36.4 and 36.5 and Appendix A-5 of the current edition of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*.

### *Still Enrolled Rates Numerator*

The sum of students in the adjusted cohort of the individual school or district who have enrolled in a Mississippi public school during month one of the fifth school year for the cohort in order to meet the necessary requirements for earning a regular high school diploma or alternative certificate.

### *Dropout Rates Numerator*

The sum of students in the adjusted cohort of the individual school or district who left school without earning a regular high school diploma/certificate or legitimately transferring out of the cohort.

## **Rate Calculations**

The cohort rate calculations are the numerator divided by the denominator. A rate is calculated for each status group: graduate, completer, still enrolled, and dropout. Adding the final values for the four rates for a single district/school together will total 100%.

## Reporting of Graduation Rates

Following the presentation of graduation rates to the SBE, the district-level data files are made available publicly through the MDE’s public reporting website. Each eligible district will have a graduation, completion, still enrolled, and dropout rate reported. The graduation and dropout rates are reported for each of the traditional student subgroups under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). (See listing of subgroups below.) All standard reporting practices of the agency are applied in the data release.

ESEA Student Subgroups:

- All Student Subgroup
- Economically Disadvantaged
- Students with Disabilities
- African American or Black
- Asian
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American
- Pacific Islander
- Two or More Races
- White
- Male
- Female
- Migrant
- Homeless
- English Learners

## Glossary of Terms

***Adjusted cohort:*** The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class. For any given cohort, students who are entering Grade 9 for the first time form a cohort that is subsequently “adjusted” by adding any students who transfer into the cohort later during the next three years and subtracting any students who transfer out, immigrates to another country, or dies during that same period. This is defined in federal regulation [34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1)(i)-(iv)].

***Certificate of Attendance:*** A special certificate of attendance or completion awarded to a student who meets all special requirements of the local school board for his exceptionality but is unable to meet the appropriate special state minimum requirements [Miss. Code Ann. §37-16-11].

***Completion Rate:*** The percent of students in the adjusted cohort who received an occupational diploma, GED (through the district’s alternative education program only), certificate of attendance, or have successfully met all of the district’s Carnegie unit requirements for graduation except for passing one or more of the end-of-course subject area assessments or meeting an option in lieu of passing the assessment, as outlined in Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 3, Ch.

36, R. 36.4 and 36.5 and Appendix A-5 of the current edition of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*.

**Dropout Rate:** The percent of students in the adjusted cohort who left school without earning a regular high school diploma/certificate or legitimately transferring out of the cohort.

**Full cohort:** A group of students that graduate over a four-year period, including both the students who were in Grade 9 at the beginning of the cohort period, as well as other students who enter public schools during the cohort period.

**GED:** General Education Diploma

**Graduate:** A student who received a regular high school diploma from a Mississippi public high school.

**Graduation Rate:** The percentage of students who received a regular high school diploma from a Mississippi public high school during the four-year cohort period.

**Occupational Diploma:** A Mississippi Occupational Diploma (MOD) is awarded to students having a disability as defined by the IDEA who meets all requirements of the MOD but is unable to meet the requirements for a standard high school diploma outlined in Miss. Code Ann. §37-16-7 and Miss. Code Ann. §37-16-11.

**Regular Diploma:** A diploma awarded to students who meet all the requirements of Miss. Code Ann. §37-16-7, as outlined in Appendix A of the current edition of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*.

**Still Enrolled Rate:** The percentage of students who have not yet received a diploma or certificate and have enrolled in a Mississippi public school during months one and/or two of the fifth school year for the cohort in order to meet the necessary requirements for earning a regular high school diploma or certificate.

**Transfer to Home School:** A student who exits public school in order to receive instruction at home, as validated by a certification from the School Attendance Officer.

**Transfer to Non-Public School:** A student who transfers from public school to a diploma-based program in a non-public school in Mississippi, as validated by a records request from the non-public school.

**Transfer Out-of-State/Country:** A student who transfers from a public school in order to attend an out-of-state school, as validated by a records request from the out-of-state school (public or private) or a student who emigrates out of the country.

## Resources

- Elementary and Secondary Education Act and related regulations [C.F.R. 200.37]

- Federal Graduation Rates Non-Regulatory Guidance
- Miss. Code Ann. §37-17-6
- Miss. Code Ann. §37-16-11 (Diploma types)
- Miss. Code Ann. §37-16-7 (Dropout Plans)
- Miss. Code Ann. §37-13-80 (Compulsory School Attendance)
- State Board of Education Policies (Chapter 36)
- *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*
- Mississippi State Accountability System Business Rules
- Mississippi Student Information Systems Manual