

**Graduation and Dropout Process (GAD)
New 4-year Cohort Graduation Rate Calculation Effective
(Effective Beginning with 2006-2007 School Year)**

The 2006-2007 graduation rates will be calculated by tracking individual students who first enrolled in ninth grade in fall 2003, and graduated four years later with a regular diploma. Continuing students who were not reported as diploma recipients were recorded for accountability purposes as “off-track.”

This new calculation attempts to provide a more accurate rate to assist schools, districts, and the state in developing education policies and, ultimately, help greater numbers of students to succeed in school and earn a diploma. In addition, the method meets the accountability requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the national standards set forth in the National Governors Association (NGA) *Graduation Counts Compact*. The GAD (Graduation and Dropout) application will be open in April 2008 and 2009 for exit code changes or extensions prior to final calculations.

In the future, beginning Fall, 2008 Exit Status Codes will be audited as a normal course of the “pupil” membership audits. School Districts/PSAs will be required to provide documentation to support the use of the Exit Status Codes. These audits, completed as a part of the pupil membership audits, will determine the appropriate status code that can be used for purposes of the GAD calculation.

For 2008 and 2009 only, ISD Pupil Accounting Auditors are required to conduct an audit of exit code changes for the 2007 and 2008 GAD application. Supporting documentation will be necessary to justify code change requests. Copies of the documentation will be required to meet this standard. See Table B”

Why was it important for the state to adopt a new process?

- ♦ A solid high school education is essential for success in college, job training, and the 21st century workforce improving Michigan’s chances at economic success.
- ♦ Michigan has always made it a priority to lower the dropout rate and help as many students as possible earn a diploma that truly signifies readiness for college/training and the workforce.
- ♦ The first step in improving the state’s high schools is to collect and report accurate data on how many students graduate in four years and how many never graduate at all.
- ♦ With more accurate information, we can generate stronger more effective policies and, ultimately, help greater numbers of students to succeed in school and earn a diploma. Prior calculations were based on estimates and a formula using retention rates.
- ♦ More accurate data also will provide a basis to determine which reforms are most effective.
- ♦ Until now, every state has had its own way of deciding which students to count as graduates or dropouts. This new formula will, for the first time, provide a standard measurement and make state-to-state comparisons feasible.
- ♦ This new formula recommended by the National Governor’s Association is simple and straightforward. It calculates the graduation rate by counting all first-time entering ninth graders and then looking to see how many of them graduate four years later, with allowances made for the numbers of students who transfer into and out of the system.

What changes can we expect with the release of the 2006-07 data?

- ♦ The first step is to have the data. This data will give us a clearer picture of the dropout issues, which will help us to make better decisions as to where we invest our resources.
- ♦ The old and new formulas are very different and will yield substantially different results.
- ♦ Given that this new formula only allows students who graduate in four years to be counted, the reported state graduation rate may actually decline initially. At a local level, reported graduation rates will vary from district to district. It is important to note that Michigan is seeking a plan amendment to allow for a five-year cohort calculation.

What happens next?

- ♦ **It is important to review the attached timeline so that you are prepared for the following steps:**
 - Review and request **corrections of your exit code status** for appropriate students (submitted to CISD); districts will also be able to seek **extensions** (longer graduation cohort) for certain students (submitted to MDE) or link UICs (submitted to CEPI).
 - Be prepared to objectively review your data and **determine the impact** that will have on your school district and high school(s). See the attached process document to determine some key areas to attend.
 - **Discuss this change** with appropriate Administrative Team members as well as data review individuals so they have an understanding of the “Big Picture” (this may well impact your High School AYP, Choice applications, community perceptions, etc.).
 - It is **critical for data entry individuals to understand** the use of correct exit codes and the new required documentation to support those codes as well as to be aware of UIC identification and linking UICs of transferring students.
 - Understand **ISD auditors will be required to audit and approve any exit changes** made in April to the GAD application.
 - **Link to MAISA/MASA GAD Toolkit:**
<http://www.michiganedusource.org/GradRatesToolkit.htm>

Methodology:

This new method calculates the graduation rate beginning with incoming freshmen in Fall 2003 and tracks these students over the subsequent 13 SRSD submissions. It is important to remember that the UIC is key to tracking these students in and out of your cohort. Students are put into categories for rate computation (some of these categories are exempt from the calculation – e.g.: LEP, migrant). **The 2006-07 cohort data will be released in July or August and this is your only opportunity to correct any data prior to release.** Districts will also have an opportunity to review the next cohort release in 2009 before a new protocol is implemented.

As you review your data:

- ♦ High Schools should also be reviewing any students they might have had **transfer into or out of a current or previous Alternative Education Program** within the district.
- ♦ Remember, the GAD application will not show your Graduation and/or Dropout calculated rates – this is data upon which those rates will be calculated and released later this year.

- ♦ If you would like to see screen shots before you begin working with the application, see the Calhoun ISD PowerPoint.
- ♦ Extensions can be requested of MDE for only students with disabilities or in cases where medical illness or injury has caused a significant delay in graduation. The GAD application will provide additional information prior to making a request.

Recommendations in Reviewing GAD Report Information

(any changes necessary will be approved by the ISD, MDE (extensions) or CEPI (linking))

GAD Code	Description	SRSD Exit Code	Look For
M (red) MER	Missing Expected Record	19, 8	New UIC at another district; new UIC at your district; SRSD UIC application (to resolve) – pay particular attention to SRSD Exit Code 8
R (red)	Dropped – Report in SRSD	7, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18	Did any Exit Code 18 students receive their GED (and not so reported); potential UIC linking issues (duplicate UIC in your and other districts)
E (white)	Exempt Students	9, 12, 14, 15	Students not reported in SRSD with an exemption code but should be; districts should rely on add/drop reports, CA 60 requests (non-public or home school); may require exit code changes to ISD
C (yellow)	Off Track Continuing	1, 2, 3, 4	Districts should determine if these students would be eligible for a graduation extension (5 years – only if they will graduate in 5 years); look for summer or early graduates
C (green)	On Track Continuing	1, 2, 3, 4	If data accurate, these will be on track future graduates within their cohort
G (green)	On Track Graduated	1, 2, 3, 4	Compare with graduates listing; double check summer or early graduates
O (white)	Other High School Completers	5, 6, 20, 21	Be sure these students did not receive a high school diploma; if in receipt of GED be sure properly coded (improves dropout rate)

Key to reading your GAD Report:

- ♦ **M = Dropped – MER (red)**; this is a student that was dropped from your district as a transfer (Code 19 Expected to continue in the district or 8 Transfer) but this UIC was not picked-up by another district in Michigan. These would be counted as dropouts unless resolved or linked.
- ♦ **R = Dropped – Reported (red)**; this is a student that didn't show up anywhere else in Michigan and was reported as exited (Codes 7, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17 or 18). These would be counted as dropouts unless resolved or linked.
- ♦ **E = Exempt (white)**; the following students are exempt from GAD calculation rate computation (Codes 9, 12, 14 or 15).
- ♦ **C = Off Track – Continuing (yellow)**; not in correct grade for cohort; this student is neither calculated as a dropout or a graduate (Code 19)

- ♦ **C = On Track – Continuing (green)**; in the correct grade for cohort; this student is not a dropout and does count as a graduate (Code 19)
- ♦ **G = On Track – Graduated (green)**; in the correct grade for cohort; is not a dropout and is a graduate equal to their cohort year (Code 1, 2, 3 or 4)
- ♦ **O = Other High School Completer (white)**; GED and special education completers that are not defined as High School Graduates with a diploma; not a dropout but not a graduate (Codes 5, 6, 20 and 21)

It is important to remember, the GAD application will not provide you information about your rate calculations. This information will be released later this summer and for public release in August (proposed). The calculations will be made using the formulas below, so if you review your summary information and track your requests, you can get a pretty good idea of what your calculated rate will be.

Cohort =

$$\frac{\text{On track graduated students + on track continuing}}{\text{On track (graduated and continuing) + off track continuing + dropped (MER + Reported) + Other HS Completers (special education and GED)}}$$

Graduation Rate =

$$\frac{\text{Graduated students}}{\text{Cohort total - exemptions}}$$

Dropout =

$$\frac{\text{Dropped (MER + Reported)}}{\text{Cohort total – exemptions}}$$

Table A

**Planned Data Flow for Class of 2007 On-Time,
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate Used for High School Report Cards**

The calculations for the graduation and dropout rate and School Report Cards are complex conclusions utilizing multiple sources of input and data to be compiled. The associated timeline and the definitions below will show level coordination and time required by the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs).

Dates	Task	Description
July 2007	1.	LEA submission of end-of-year (EOY) data for the Single Record Student Database (SRSD). <i>Roles: SRSD Authorized User</i>
July – Sept. 2007	2.	LEA resolution of student records by Unique Identification Codes (UICs). <i>Roles: UIC Resolver</i>
Sept. 2007	3.	CEPI creates a snapshot of resolved EOY SRSD data.
Nov. 2007	4.	LEA submission of fall data for the Single Record Student Database (SRSD). <i>Roles: SRSD Authorized User</i>
Nov. 2007 – Feb. 2008	5.	LEA resolution of student records by Unique Identification Codes (UICs). <i>Roles: UIC Resolver</i>
Feb. 2008	6.	CEPI creates a snapshot of resolved fall SRSD data.
Feb. – Mar. 2008	7.	CEPI compiles 16 previously submitted SRSD data sets and calculates initial graduation and dropout rates to populate the Graduation/Dropout Review and Comment Application (GAD).
March 2008	8.	Students take the Michigan Merit Exam (MME). Student scores in 2008 will be factored into the 2007-08 School Report Card calculation.
March 2008	9.	The new Cohort Application will be pilot-tested by LEAs using GAD data.
April 4, 2008		MPAAA/CEPI/MDE GAD Workshop in Lansing (www.mpaaa.org)
April 1, 2008	10.	LEAs review their data in the GAD Application and request changes. <i>Roles: GAD Authorized User</i>
April 21, 2008		NOTE: the UIC linking application will be disabled. Be sure to make all linking requests directly to CEPI through the application.
May 2008	11.	MDE reviews and approves one-year cohort extension requests within the GAD application.
May 2, 2008	13.	Local District request window closes.
May, 2008	12.	ISDs audit exit status and “review and approve” exit status change requests within the GAD application. Approve/Deny window closes 5/31/08 <i>Roles: ISD PAA Auditors</i>
June 2008	15.	GAD data, once reviewed and adjusted by the LEAs, are compiled by CEPI.
June 2008	16.	MDE takes data from GAD and MME to calculate School Report Cards.
July 2008	17.	LEAs are provided a window to review and appeal School Report Cards. <i>Roles: LEA/PSA Superintendent</i>
Aug. 2008	18.	MDE adjusts School Report Cards based on LEA review.
Aug. 2008	19.	MDE publishes final School Report Cards.

ACCEPTABLE EXIT STATUS DOCUMENTATION

Exit Status	Definition	Allowable Documentation
01, 03, 03, 04, 05, 06, 20, 21	Graduated or completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official transcript or diploma. • Official alpha list of graduates/completers from the student management software which includes pupil's name, UIC, date of birth and SRSD completion status. Sorted by building, then by completion status then by pupil's last name.
09	Moved out of state.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for the pupil's records (on official letterhead) from an out of state school, • Pupil withdrawal form signed by the parent/guardian or qualified student and authorized district representative indicating where pupil is moving or name of school district the pupil will attend. • Written contemporaneous documentation of an oral statement by the parent/guardian or qualified student signed & dated by an authorized district representative (can be a log.) • Written contemporaneous documentation of an oral statement by a neighbor, parent's employer or colleague or other adult that would have knowledge of the family's move (can be a log.)
12	Deceased	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation from student management software that student is listed as deceased in the software. • Obituary, other newspaper article. • Program from the funeral/memorial service. • Written statement from the parent or guardian. • Death certificate.
14	Enrolled in home school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written parental statement. • Pupil withdrawal form signed by the parent/guardian or qualified student indicating pupil is being home schooled. • Written contemporaneous documentation of an oral statement by the parent/guardian or qualified student signed and dated by an authorized district representative (can be a log.) • Parental record request. • Statement by attendance officer (truancy officer.)
15	Enrolled in non-public school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written request for the pupil's records from a nonpublic school. • Pupil withdrawal form signed by the parent/guardian or qualified student indicating name of nonpublic school the pupil will attend. • Written contemporaneous documentation of an oral statement by the parent/guardian or qualified student signed and dated by an authorized district representative (can be a log.)

Calhoun ISD Client Districts

GAD Application Results - 2007 Cohort

District: _____

We reviewed the exit status fields (in MER and Reported) and (choose one)

- made no changes to the exit fields
- changed exit fields for _____ (number) students. **For each change we have attached a hard copy of the GAD application screen and the required supporting documentation.**

 We have asked for the one-year extensions for the following number of students in the specific categories.

LEP: _____ students

Special Education: _____ students

Medical Emergency: _____ students

- No extensions were requested.

 We asked that records for _____ (number) students be linked.

- No links were requested.

Form prepared by: _____ (print name)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Telephone number: _____

Number of staff working on GAD _____

Number of hours spent working on GAD _____

COMPLETE AND RETURN FORM (with applicable supporting documentation - see table B) TO Nicole Snyder at Calhoun ISD, NO LATER THAN MAY 2, 2008.

FOR DOCUMENTATION FOR FIVE STUDENTS OR LESS, YOU MAY FAX TO 269-781.8792. FOR MORE THAN FIVE STUDENTS, PLEASE BRING OR SEND VIA REMC Mail to CISD