



## Understanding Michigan's Cohort Graduation and Dropout Rates

The release of graduation rates for the class of 2008 marks the second time that Michigan has used a cohort four-year graduation rate. In order to comply with the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001*, Michigan moved to an accountability system in which a graduation rate includes only "on-time" graduates who earn regular diplomas within four years of entering high school. This calculation meets the guidelines provided by the National Governors Association (NGA) Graduation Counts Compact and the United States Department of Education (USED) for calculation of such rates. As more and more states implement the cohort methodology standard, state-to-state comparisons will become more meaningful.

The formula for the calculation of 2008 graduation rates is possible because school districts have been tracking the enrollment of individual students since those students first enrolled in the 9th-grade in the 2004-2005 school year and reporting that data to the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI). The gathering of this information at a statewide level allows CEPI to help districts adjust enrollments to reflect "transfers in" and "transfers out" of the district, as well as students who exit from the public education system itself, over the course of four years.

2008 marks the first year that new five-year graduation and dropout rates are calculated for students in the 2007 cohort. The graduation rate includes the students who were categorized as "off-track" at the end of four years and graduated in the fifth year with a regular high school diploma.

### The Cohort Four-Year Graduation and Dropout Rates

#### **How is the 2008 cohort four-year graduation rate determined?**

The 2008 cohort four-year graduation rate is calculated by tracking individual students who enrolled for the first time in 9th-grade in the 2004-2005 school year. These students are assigned to the 2008 cohort. Using the cohort method allows the state to more accurately track student movement over time. It accounts for students who leave school during one year and return in another, and it can account for students who are retained in a grade but stay in school and graduate later than their classmates.

The total number of students who were identified as first-time 9th-graders in fall 2004 formed the initial 2008 cohort. Students who transferred into the state, district, or building at any time during the four-year period were added to the initial group. For students who moved within the public schools, student records were updated to reflect the correct district and building location. These students were considered "transfers out" of the district/building they left and "transfers in" to the district/building they entered. Students who exited the public school system entirely (out of state, to non-public school, or home school) or became deceased at any time during the four-year period are considered "exempt" and removed from the cohort.

To calculate the 2008 cohort four-year graduation rate, all students are placed into one of four categories:

1. On-track graduated - completed high school with a regular diploma in four years or less
2. Other completer - earned a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, other certificate, or reached the special education maximum age

3. Off-track (graduated & continuing) - completed high school with a regular diploma in more than four years, or did not complete high school in four years and are still continuing in school
4. Dropout - left high school permanently at any time during the four-year period, or whose whereabouts are unknown

**Calculating the 2008 cohort four-year graduation rate**

A student is counted toward the graduation rate of the final building or district that the student attended during the four-year period. "On-track graduated" is counted as the numerator and divided by the total count of all categories. The total of the categories is the 2008 Cohort Total. Students who transferred in are included as students with one of the four categories for that building/district and students who transferred out have been included in another public entity's rates, if the students have been located.

$$\frac{\text{On-Track Graduated}}{\text{2008 Cohort Total}}$$

**How is the 2008 cohort four-year dropout rate determined?**

**There is no national standard for calculating cohort four-year dropout rates.** Michigan has chosen to maintain consistency by using the cohort methodology recommended by NGA and USED to calculate this rate as well.

The 2008 cohort four-year dropout rate is calculated by tracking individual students who enrolled for the first time in 9th-grade in the 2004-2005 school year (assigned to the 2008 cohort) and left high school permanently at any time during the four-year period prior to receiving a regular diploma, GED, or other completion certificate.

A dropout rate is not equivalent to subtracting the graduation rate from 100 percent because that method would count students who are an "other completer" or "off-track continuing" as dropouts, which they are not. Other completers are students who earned a GED, certificate, or reached the special education maximum age. Students in the off-track continuing category are those who did not complete high school in four years and are still continuing in school.

**Calculating the 2008 cohort four-year dropout rate**

To calculate the 2008 cohort four-year dropout rate, all students are placed into the same categories used to determine graduation rates: on-track graduated, other completer, off-track continuing, and dropout. "Dropouts" is counted as the numerator and divided by the total count of all categories. The total of the categories is the 2008 Cohort Total:

$$\frac{\text{Dropouts}}{\text{2008 Cohort Total}}$$

**Understanding the 2008 cohort four-year graduation and dropout rate report**

The 2008 cohort four-year graduation and dropout rate report contains buildings/districts when students are educated in any high school grades (9th-12th) or when their ages are 14 or older (i.e., students who are eligible to graduate from high school). There are two calculation rules that may result in building rates not summing to district rates, and district rates not summing to state rates:

1. **Court-Ordered Facilities:** Buildings in which students who have been ordered by the court to attend are not included in the district's rate, only the building rate. This method prevents a district from being held accountable for the performance of students who would normally not be present in the district, while still allowing for accountability for the building that provides the public education.
2. **"Count Dates":** Michigan collects data on students twice a year on "count dates" (one day in September and one in February) for the purposes of calculating state school aid payments and for required state and federal reporting. Students attending on count day are reported as continuing in the district during a fall or spring submission. Accommodations are made for students who do attend school but were absent on count day (e.g., if a child has an excused absence on count day, he/she must return within 30 school days; if an unexcused absence occurs, the student must return in 10 school days, etc.). In order to ensure that the graduation rate calculation aligns with the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE) full academic year requirement outlined in the Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook, students must be in attendance in a building for at least two count dates (consecutive or not) to be included in that building's calculation. Students must be in attendance at a district for at least one count date to be included in a district's calculations. Students who are enrolled but did not attend on the count dates within the district are only counted in the state rate.

Count Dates Present	Accountability
0	State rate only
1	District and State
2 or more	Building, District and State

### **Reading the 2008 cohort four-year graduation and dropout rate report**

The graduation and dropout report includes data for the state, every district, and every building from which students can graduate/dropout and is divided into eleven columns:

**Table 1**

Column Name	Column Definitions
District/Building Name (Code)	This is the alphabetical listing, beginning with local education agencies (LEAs), public school academies (PSAs), and then intermediate school districts (ISDs) included in the report. The district-level data are identified in shaded rows. The buildings that comprise the district appear below the district name in non-shaded rows that are slightly indented.
First Time 9th Grade in Fall 2004	Total number of students who were identified as first-time 9th-graders in fall 2004, which was the group of students who initially formulated the 2008 cohort.
(+) Transfers In	Total number of students who transferred into the state, district, or building cohort at any time during the four-year period and remained there.
(-) Transfers Out & Exempt	Total number of students who transferred out of the district, building, or public school system cohort (out of state, to non-public school, or home-school) at any time during the four-year period and did not return. Deceased students are also exempt.
Cohort	Total number of students in the 2008 cohort for the state, for each district, and for each building after adjustments were made for transfers in, transfers out, and exempt students.

Column Name	Column Definitions
On-Track Graduated	Total number of students in the 2008 cohort who completed high school with a regular diploma in four years or less.
Dropouts (Reported & MER)	Total number of cohort students who left high school permanently at any time during the four-year period, or whose whereabouts are unknown (MER; missing expected records).
Off-Track Continuing	Total number of cohort students who did not complete high school in four years and are still continuing in school.
Other Completer (GED, etc.)	Total number of cohort students who earned a GED, other certificate, or reached the special education maximum age.
Graduation Rate	The percentage, calculated as On-Track Graduated divided by the 2008 Cohort, of the total number of students in the 2008 cohort who completed high school with a regular diploma in four years or less.
Dropout Rate	This is the percentage, calculated as Dropouts divided by the 2008 Cohort Total, of the total number of students in the 2008 cohort who left high school permanently at any time during the four-year period, or whose whereabouts are unknown (MER; missing expected records).

Some schools in Michigan offer 9th, 9th–10th, and 9th–11th-grade campuses, from which students do not graduate, and thus, do not have a cohort for a complete four years. The cohort total for the buildings that do not graduate students is determined by the number of students who were reported in attendance at the building for two or more count days who may have transferred out of the building but did not transfer out of the district by the time they were last reported. The number of dropouts reported from that building is divided by the number of students who attended the building for two or more count days at any point during the four years (potential dropouts) during the same time period. This total was only computed for buildings that did not report any graduates. To calculate which building is accountable for a student relative to dropout rates, here are some examples where the student attended for at least two count dates:

- If "**Student A**" dropped out while attending a 9th-grade building, the student would only be included in this building's dropout rate, as the student did not attend any 10th–12th-grade building.
- If "**Student B**" attended a 9th-grade building and continued on to a 10th–12th-grade building, but eventually dropped out, this student would be included in the 10th–12th-grade building's dropout rate.
- If "**Student C**" attended a 9th-grade building and continued on to a 10th–12th-grade building where the student was reported as off-track (graduated or continuing) or an other completer, this student would not be included in any building's dropout rate, as this student did not dropout.
- If "**Student D**" transferred into the district to a 10th–12th-grade building and dropped out, this student would only be included in the 10th–12th-grade building's dropout rate, as the student did not attend any 9th-grade building.
- If "**Student E**" attended a 9th-grade building and continued on to a 10th–12th-grade building, transferred to another district, and then dropped out, the previous district would not include this student in the dropout rate, because this student is included in the new district's dropout rate.

**Table 2**

Dropout Rate Accountable Entity for Non-Graduating Buildings					
	Building	Cohort Status	Building	Cohort Status	Accountable Building
Student A	9th-grade	Dropout	N/A	N/A	9th-grade
Student B	9th-grade	On-track or Off-track Continuing	10th–12th-grade	Dropout	10th–12th-grade
Student C	9th-grade	On-track or Off-track Continuing	10th–12th-grade	Off-track (graduated or continuing) or Other Completer	N/A
Student D	N/A	N/A	10th–12th-grade	Dropout	10th–12th-grade
Student E	9th-grade	On-track or Off-track Continuing	10th–12th-grade in another district	Dropout	10th–12th-grade in the other district

It is also important to know the difference between a one-year incidence/event rate and a cohort four-year rate. CEPI calculates both depending on reporting needs. These two calculations are very different numbers and measure very different things. The cohort four-year rate is calculated at the end of four years, whereas the event rate counts an event (e.g., dropouts) each year. If a student, for example, drops out of high school and returns, and then does this again during the four-year period, this student would not be counted as a dropout at the end of four years in the cohort rate (If they drop out again, they would be counted as a single dropout over the four-year period. If they return and complete high school, they would never be counted as a dropout). In the event rate, however, this student would be counted twice; once for each time this student dropped out.

### The Cohort Five-Year Graduation and Dropout Rates

2008 marks the first year that five-year graduation and dropout rates are calculated for students in the 2007 cohort. The graduation rate includes the students who were categorized as "off-track continuing" at the end of four years and graduated in the fifth year with a regular high school diploma. The new five-year graduation rate is calculated in the same manner as the four-year rate, with the addition of students who graduated in the fifth year (Off-track graduated) in the numerator. "On-track graduated" and "Off-track graduated" are the numerator and divided by the total of all categories (on-track graduated, off-track graduated, off-track continuing, other completer, and dropout). Transfers-in and out during that fifth year are accounted for as well. The total of the categories is the 2007 Cohort Total:

$$\frac{\text{On-Track Graduated} + \text{Off-Track Graduated}}{\text{2007 Cohort Total}}$$

The new cohort five-year dropout rate is calculated in the same manner as the four-year rate, with the addition of students who dropped out of high school in their fifth year. Transfers-in and out during that fifth year are accounted for as well. Remember, the 2007 cohort five-year rates count all students in the 2007 cohort at the end of five years; these rates are not just counting those students in the 2007 cohort who finished in the fifth year.

$$\frac{\text{Dropouts}}{\text{2007 Cohort Total}}$$

A building or district's cohort five-year graduation and dropout rates could be greater than, less than, or equal to the cohort four-year rates. There are four reasons for this variance: 1) extension requests that were granted for the 2007 cohort have been reversed based on new federal guidance placing 2008 cohort students back into the 2007 cohort, 2) total number of count dates in attendance, 3) the numerator changes, and 4) the denominator changes.

1. In the 2007 Graduation/Dropout Review and Comment Application (GAD), extensions for special circumstances could be requested that removed students from their cohort and placed them into the next cohort. This functionality in GAD was disabled and reversed for 2007 cohort students. These students are now added back into the 2007 cohort, which increases the denominator and these students' final disposition (either off-track graduate or dropout) is reflected in the numerator.
2. The total number of count dates a student is in attendance also impacts the difference between the four-year and five-year rates. Students who, in their fifth year, now meet the minimum number of count dates in attendance will be included in that district's and/or building's rates. For example, if a 2007 cohort student was at a building for one count date in the 2006-2007 school year, that student was counted in the district rate only. If, in the student's fifth year, that off-track student attended for another count date in the same building, that student is now reflected in the denominator of the building's five-year rates.
3. Students who have since received their standard diploma are now included in the numerator as five-year graduates. Likewise, students who have dropped out in the fifth year are included in the numerator for the five-year dropout rate.
4. According to the federal regulations released in 2008, states cannot freeze cohorts. Once a cohort has graduated, the cohort total (the denominator used in the graduation and dropout rates) cannot be "locked" at that total. The cohort total must remain "open" to allow accountability to be placed with the correct entity for students who attend high school beyond the fourth year.

**Table 3**

<b>Graduation and Dropout Rate Change Examples</b>				
	<b>4-Year Rate</b>	<b>5-Year Rate</b>	<b>Rate Change</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Graduation Rate	97%	97%	Remains the same	No off-track continuing students graduated in the fifth year (numerator does not change) and no off-track continuing students transferred in or out (denominator does not change)
	97%	99%	Increases	Off-track continuing students graduated in the fifth year
	97%	95%	Decreases	Off-track students transferred into the district/building or met the minimum number of count dates in the fifth year and are still continuing (increases the denominator)
Dropout Rate	5%	5%	Remains the same	No off-track continuing students dropped out in the fifth year (numerator does not change) and no off-track continuing students transferred in or out (denominator does not change)
	5%	7%	Increases	Off-track continuing students dropped out in the fifth year
	5%	3%	Decreases	Off-track students transferred into the district/building or met the minimum number of count dates in attendance in the fifth year and did not drop out (increases the denominator) or former dropouts complete high school (decreases the numerator)

**Reading the 2007 cohort five-year graduation and dropout rate report**

The 2007 cohort five-year graduation rate report includes data for the state, every district, and every building from which students graduate, and is divided into eleven columns:

**Table 4**

<b>Column Name</b>	<b>Column Definitions</b>
District/Building Name (Code)	This is the alphabetical listing, beginning with local education agencies (LEAs), public school academies (PSAs), and then intermediate school districts (ISDs) included in the report. The district-level data are identified in shaded rows. The buildings that comprise the district appear below the district name in non-shaded rows that are slightly indented.
First Time 9th Grade in Fall 2003	Total number of students who were identified as first-time 9th-graders in fall 2003, which was the group of students who initially formulated the 2007 cohort.
(+) Transfers In	Total number of students who transferred into the state, district, or building cohort at any time during the five-year period and remained there.
(-) Transfers Out & Exempt	Total number of students who transferred out of the district, building, or public school system cohort (out of state, to non-public school, or home-school) at any time during the five-year period and did not return. Deceased students are also exempt.
Cohort	Total number of students in the 2007 cohort for the state, for each district, and for each building after adjustments were made for transfers in, transfers out, and exempt students.
On-Track + Off-Track Graduated	Total number of students in the 2007 cohort who completed high school with a regular diploma in four years or less, plus those who completed high school with a regular diploma in the fifth year.
Dropouts (Reported & MER)	Total number of cohort students who left high school permanently at any time during the five-year period, or whose whereabouts are unknown (MER; missing expected records).
Off-Track Continuing	Total number of cohort students who did not complete high school in five years and are still continuing in school.
Other Completer (GED, etc.)	Total number of cohort students who earned a GED, other certificate, or reached the special education maximum age.
Graduation Rate	The percentage, calculated as On-Track Graduated + Off-Track Graduated divided by the 2007 Cohort, of the total number of students in the 2007 cohort who completed high school with a regular diploma in five years or less.
Dropout Rate	This is the percentage, calculated as Dropouts divided by the 2007 Cohort Total, of the total number of students in the 2007 cohort who left high school permanently at any time during the five-year period, or whose whereabouts are unknown (MER; missing expected records).

**Four-Year Graduation Cohort Determination**

**Determining First-time Ninth Graders**

After identifying current 9th-grade students from the most recent Single Record Student Database (SRSD) data, these students are then located for previous reporting in prior SRSD submissions. If

these students are reported in grades lower than 9th-grade or not located at all, then they are determined to be first-time 9th-graders. Since the State of Michigan has no data on students before their arrival, students who transfer into the state and are reported by the Michigan school district as 9th-graders are deemed first-time 9th-graders regardless of their status in their previous residence. Students who transfer into the state as 10th through 12th-graders are placed in the appropriate cohort as if they are on track for completion in four years, along with their classmates.

**Calculating the Estimated Graduation Year/Cohort Year (EGY)**

To calculate the EGY, grade and exit status are considered. Below is a chart of the exit status code definitions:

**Table 5**

<b>Exit Status Code</b>	<b>Exit Status Definition</b>	<b>Cohort Status Category</b>
01	Graduated from general education with a regular high school diploma	Graduated
02	Graduated from general education with a regular high school diploma and applied to a degree-granting college or university	Graduated
03	Graduated from an alternative program with a regular high school diploma	Graduated
04	Graduated from general education with a regular high school diploma and applied to a non-degree granting institution	Graduated
05	Completed general education with an equivalency certificate (GED)	Other Completer
06	Completed general education with other certificate	Other Completer
07	Dropped out of school	Dropout
08	Enrolled in another public school district in Michigan	If not located, Dropout; if located, Continuing in new district
09	Moved out of state	Exempt
10	Expelled from the school district (no further services)	Dropout
11	Enlisted in military or Job Corps prior to completion	Dropout
12	Deceased	Exempt
13	Incarcerated	Dropout
14	Enrolled in home school	Exempt
15	Enrolled in non-public school	Exempt
16	Unknown	Dropout
17	Placed in a recovery or rehabilitative program	Dropout
18	Left Adult Education	Dropout
19	Expected to continue in the same school district	On-track Continuing or Off-track Continuing, depending on EGY
20	Received Special Education certificate of completion and exited the K-12 system	Other Completer
21	Special Education - Reached maximum age and exited the K-12 system	Other Completer
40	Graduated from a Middle College with both a high school diploma and an Associates Degree or other advanced certificate	Graduated

Exit Status Code	Exit Status Definition	Cohort Status Category
41	Graduated from a Middle College with only a high school diploma	Graduated
42	Graduated from another district	If not located, Dropout; if located, Graduate in new district

Here are some examples of an EGY with an exit status code of 19:

- If "**Student A**" was reported in 8th-grade in the end-of-year (EOY) June 2004 SRSD Submission, a cohort year is not calculated because that student has not reached high school yet. If that same student is then reported in the fall 2004 submission as retained in 8th-grade, a cohort year is still not determined. Likewise, if this student was reported in the EOY 2005 submission in 8th-grade, a cohort year will still not be determined, as the student has yet to reach high school. If that same student is then reported in fall 2005 as a first-time 9th-grader, the student is assigned to a graduation cohort year of 2009 and is considered on-track.
- If "**Student B**" was reported in 8th-grade in the EOY 2004 submission, a cohort year is not calculated because that student has not reached high school yet. If that student is then reported in the fall 2004 submission as retained in 8th-grade, a cohort year is still not determined. If that same student is reported in the EOY 2005 submission as a first-time 9th-grader, the student is assigned to a graduation cohort year of 2008. If the student is reported in 9th-grade in the fall 2005 submission, the student is now off-track. Note that the student would have to be reported as a 10th-grader in the fall 2005 submission to be considered on-track (See "**Student C**" example in the table below).
- If "**Student D**" was reported in 8th-grade in the EOY 2004 submission, a cohort year is not calculated because that student had not reached high school yet. If that same student is then reported in the fall 2004 submission as a first-time 9th-grader, the student is assigned to a graduation cohort year of 2008 and considered on-track. If the student is reported in the fall 2005 submission as retained in 9th-grade, the cohort year remains 2008, but now the student is considered off-track.
- If "**Student E**" was reported in 8th-grade in the EOY 2004 submission, a cohort year is not calculated because that student had not reached high school yet. If that same student is then reported in the fall 2004 submission as a first-time 9th-grader, the student is assigned to a graduation cohort year of 2008 and considered on-track. If the student is reported in the fall 2005 submission in 10th-grade, the cohort year remains 2008 and the student remains on-track.
- If "**Student F**" was reported in the EOY 2005 submission as a first-time 9th-grader (transferred into Michigan from out of state, from home school, or from non-public school), the student is assigned a graduation cohort year of 2008 with the rest of the on-track 9th-grade cohort members and is considered on-track. Note that all first-time transfer students are placed in the appropriate cohort for the on-track students reported with the same grade.

**Table 6**

<b>Academic Year Change Examples</b>										
	<b>SRSD EOY 2004</b>		<b>SRSD Fall 2004</b>			<b>SRSD EOY 2005</b>		<b>SRSD Fall 2005</b>		
	Grade	Cohort Year	Grade	Cohort Year	Cohort Status	Grade	Cohort Year	Grade	Cohort Year	Cohort Status
Student A	8	N/A	8	N/A	N/A	8	N/A	9	2009	On-track
Student B	8	N/A	8	N/A	N/A	9	2008	9	2008	Off-track
Student C	8	N/A	8	N/A	N/A	9	2008	10	2008	On-track
Student D	8	N/A	9	2008	On-track	9	2008	9	2008	Off-track
Student E	8	N/A	9	2008	On-track	9	2008	10	2008	On-track
Student F	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	9	2008	10	2008	On-track

The initially calculated EGY of a first-time 9th-grader is that student's cohort year (the year in which the student must graduate to be considered an on-track four-year graduate). If, in later submission cycles, the EGY is calculated to a later year than his/her cohort year, the student is then considered off-track (see Appendix A for individual student level history examples). To assign the estimated graduation year/cohort year based on exit status during the four-year period, here are some examples that illustrate the initial assignment of estimated graduation year/cohort year, based on exit status:

- If a student's exit status is 19 and the student is in grade 9, 10, 11, or 12, the student is classified as continuing in school.
- If a student's exit status is 1, 2, 3, or 4 and the school year ending year (e.g., the 2006-2007 school year has an ending year of 2007) is used to submit the exit status, the exit date of the student must be before the fall count date of the next school year (e.g., 2007/08) to be included in the 2007 graduation year. If the exit date is submitted after the fall count date, then the EGY for the student is recalculated to 2008.
- If a student's exit status is not 1, 2, 3, or 4 and the student's grade is 9, 10, 11, or 12, the grade will be used to determine EGY.
- If a student's exit status is not 1, 2, 3, or 4 and the student is not in grade 9, 10, 11, or 12 (rather, in an ungraded setting), the calculated age-to-grade conversion formula, used by the Michigan Department of Education for assessment purposes, determines EGY.

**Calculating the Cohort Status**

The most recently reported exit status by the accountable entity is used to designate a student as graduated, completed, continuing in school, dropout, or exempt. Six categories of students are considered when determining cohort status:

1. On-track graduated - completed high school with a regular diploma in four years or less
2. Other completer - earned a GED, certificate, or reached the special education maximum age
3. Off-track graduated - completed high school with a regular diploma in more than four years
4. Off-track continuing - did not complete high school in four years and are still continuing in school
5. Dropout - left high school permanently at any time during the four-year period, or whose whereabouts are unknown
6. Exempt - transferred out of the public school system (out of state, to non-public school, or home-school) or are deceased

**Table 7**

Status	Corresponding Exit Status	EGY Condition
On-track graduated	1, 2, 3, 4, 40, 41, or 42	EGY is ≤ the cohort year
Other completer	5, 6, 20, or 21	N/A
Off-track graduated	1, 2, 3, 4, 40, 41, or 42	EGY is > the cohort year
Off-track continuing	19	EGY is > the cohort year
Dropout (Reported & MER)	7, 8*, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19*, or 42*	N/A
Exempt (transfer out)	9, 12, 14, 15 or residency codes: 4, 7, 8, or 15	N/A

\* If exit status codes 08, 19, or 42 are used, these usually do not count as a dropout. These are only given a dropout status if the student record is not reported by the new district (08), by the same district (19), or by the graduating district (42) in the subsequent collection. These indicate a missing expected record (MER) and the whereabouts of the student are unknown.

### **Determining Accountable School and District**

To determine accountability for a particular entity (building or district) at a specific point in time, several factors are considered. A building or district must be considered a qualifying school in order to be held accountable for a student. A qualifying school is a school that receives a Michigan High School Report Card, and excludes intermediate school district (ISD) schools, Career and Technical Education (CTE) entities, and Michigan Math/Science Center buildings. If these conditions are met, the building and district are held accountable. Additionally:

- If a student is reported in only one entity for a given SRSD collection cycle, then that is the accountable entity.
- If a student is reported in multiple entities in a collection, the entity in which the greater proportion of full-time equivalency (FTE) membership is reported is accountable.
- If an exit status for a student other than 08 or 19 (see table 5 above for exit status definitions) is reported, this is considered a terminating exit status and the process assigns accountability to the entity in which the terminating exit status was reported.
- If accountability still cannot be determined from multiple records, the entity that last had accountability retains accountability.
- Accountability status determined from the previous fall and/or spring school year count days is maintained for end-of-year (EOY) and the final fall SRSD submissions unless the EOY submission is a terminal exit status.

### **Data validation and appeals process**

The Graduation/Dropout Review and Comment Application (GAD) provided district staff the opportunity to view and request changes to graduation and dropout information on individual students. During the spring of 2009, districts' authorized users accessed the GAD to view their cohort members and requested: 1) changes to their exit statuses; 2) accountability re-points (changes which district or building is accountable for the student); 3) cohort year changes; and 4) linking of multiple students' Unique Identification Codes (UICs) where multiple codes existed for a single student. Exit status changes potentially resulted in cohort category changes for districts. Accountability re-points potentially resulted in another district or building being held accountable for a student. Cohort year change requests approved for certain students moved them from an incorrectly assigned cohort year to the correct one. District authorized users submitting UIC linking requests were able to identify and correct instances in which multiple UICs had been assigned to a single student at some point during the 16 SRSD data collection cycles.

The data used to calculate the graduation rates are audited. After the exit status data (which determines the current status of a student) comes to CEPI, it is loaded into the GAD and made available for review by authorized individuals in a district. After they review the data, it goes through an auditing process that is completed by intermediate school district (ISD) auditors, as identified in the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) audit manual. After the audit is completed, any final requests for changes to student records are reviewed and approved or denied by an ISD auditor based on evidence provided to support the request. For example, if a school asked to change a student reported previously as a dropout to a transfer out of state, the school had to provide evidence of that student's enrollment in the new district. Without sufficient evidence, a school's request for a student change was not approved.

In the 2007 GAD, extensions for special circumstances could be requested that removed students from their cohort and placed them into the next cohort. For example, students in the 2007 cohort receiving this one-year extension were moved into the 2008 cohort and are not reflected in the 2007 cohort categories. These extensions were allowed on a case-by-case basis. However, the fifth-year extension request is no longer available. According to federal regulations released in 2008, once a student has been placed into a cohort, the student cannot be moved from that cohort. Therefore, this functionality in GAD was disabled and reversed for 2007 cohort students. These students will be reflected in the 2007 five-year rate.

## **The 2008 Cohort Four-Year Subgroup Graduation and Dropout Report**

### **Reading the 2008 cohort four-year subgroup graduation and dropout report**

Subgroups are divided into 3 categories, and are not mutually exclusive. These categories are:

1. Gender - males and females
2. Race - American Indian or Alaska Native (AI/AN), Asian American, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (H/PI), White, Hispanic or Latino, and Multiracial
3. Program eligibility - economically disadvantaged, limited-English proficiency (LEP), migrant, and students with disabilities

The 2008 cohort four-year subgroup graduation and dropout rate report includes data for the state, every district, and every building that graduates students. The columns include:

**Table 8**

<b>Column Name</b>	<b>Column Definitions</b>
District Name	This is the alphabetical listing, beginning with the state, and followed by districts included in the report.
Building Name	This is the alphabetical listing of the buildings that make up the district.
Subgroup	Divided into three categories of gender, race, and program eligibility.
Cohort	Total number of students in the 2008 cohort for the state, for each district, and for each building after adjustments were made for transfers in, transfers out, and exempt students.
On-Track Graduated	Total number of students in the 2008 cohort who completed high school with a regular diploma in four years or less.
Dropouts (Reported & MER)	Total number of cohort students who left high school permanently at any time during the four-year period, or whose whereabouts are unknown (MER; missing expected records).

Column Name	Column Definitions
Off-Track Continuing	Total number of cohort students who did not complete high school in five years and are still continuing in school.
Other Completer (GED, etc.)	Total number of cohort students who earned a GED, other certificate, or reached the special education maximum age.
Graduation Rate	The percentage, calculated as On-Track Graduated divided by the 2008 Cohort, of the total number of students in the 2008 cohort who completed high school with a regular diploma in four years or less.
Dropout Rate	This is the percentage, calculated as Dropouts divided by the 2008 Cohort Total, of the total number of students in the 2008 cohort who left high school permanently at any time during the four-year period, or whose whereabouts are unknown (MER; missing expected records).

## Appendix A

### Individual Student Level History Examples

The following examples show the final cohort category (status) of individual students based on their historical SRSD records. All example students end up counting toward the fictional Happy Valley Schools' rates.

#### On Track – Graduated: Pat Johnson

SRSD Cycle	District Name	Building Name	Grade	Expected Grad. Year	Cohort Year	Exit Status	Exit Date
EOY 2008	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	12	2008	2008	01	6/1/2008
Spring 2008	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	12	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2007	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	12	2008	2008	19	
EOY 2007	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	11	2008	2008	19	
Spring 2007	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	11	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2006	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	11	2008	2008	19	
EOY 2006	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	10	2008	2008	19	
Spring 2006	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	10	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2005	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	10	2008	2008	19	
EOY 2005	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	09	2008	2008	19	
Spring 2005	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	09	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2004	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	09	2008	2008	19	

#### On Track – Graduated as transfer-in: Pat Johnson

SRSD Cycle	District Name	Building Name	Grade	Expected Grad. Year	Cohort Year	Exit Status	Exit Date
EOY 2008	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	12	2008	2008	01	6/1/2008
Spring 2008	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	12	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2007	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	12	2008	2008	19	
EOY 2007	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	11	2008	2008	19	
Spring 2007	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	11	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2006	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	11	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2006	Old Community Schools	Old High School	11	2008	2008	08	8/25/2006
EOY 2006	Old Community Schools	Old High School	10	2008	2008	19	
Spring 2006	Old Community Schools	Old High School	10	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2005	Old Community Schools	Old High School	10	2008	2008	19	
EOY 2005	Old Community Schools	Old High School	09	2008	2008	19	
Spring 2005	Old Community Schools	Old High School	09	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2004	Old Community Schools	Old High School	09	2008	2008	19	

**Off Track – Continuing (retained in 11th grade): Pat Johnson**

SRSD Cycle	District Name	Building Name	Grade	Expected Grad. Year	Cohort Year	Exit Status	Exit Date
Fall 2008	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	12	2009	2008	19	
EOY 2008	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	11	2009	2008	19	
Spring 2008	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	11	2009	2008	19	
Fall 2007	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	11	2009	2008	19	
EOY 2007	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	11	2008	2008	19	
Spring 2007	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	11	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2006	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	11	2008	2008	19	
EOY 2006	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	10	2008	2008	19	
Spring 2006	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	10	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2005	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	10	2008	2008	19	
EOY 2005	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	09	2008	2008	19	
Spring 2005	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	09	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2004	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	09	2008	2008	19	

**Dropped – Reported: Pat Johnson**

SRSD Cycle	District Name	Building Name	Grade	Expected Grad. Year	Cohort Year	Exit Status	Exit Date
Spring 2007	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	10	2009	2008	07	12/14/2006
Fall 2006	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	10	2009	2008	19	
EOY 2006	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	10	2008	2008	19	
Spring 2006	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	10	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2005	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	10	2008	2008	19	
EOY 2005	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	09	2008	2008	19	
Spring 2005	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	09	2008	2008	19	
Fall 2004	Happy Valley Schools	Happy High School	09	2008	2008	19	