



District of Columbia  
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

# Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) Policy Guide

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## Executive Summary

### Summary of the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

The guiding principles for the determination of a cohort graduation rate are summarized below:

1. The cohort graduation rate will be calculated for the state and every school and sector that issues regular high school diplomas.
2. All high school-aged students with a valid enrollment signified by a valid entry code in their SIS will be assigned to a cohort.
3. All students with a valid enrollment in grades 9 through 12 in a public school in DC will be assigned to the ninth grade cohort of the regular high school diploma-granting school at which they had their most recent valid enrollment.
4. Only students who transfer to another regular high school diploma-granting school either in DC or another state, move out of the country, transfer to home-schooling either in DC or another state, or who die, permanently incapacitated, or is presented on the Missing Child Clearinghouse and who provide valid documentation of such will be removed from a school's or sector's cohort.
5. Local education agencies (LEAs) may submit documentation.
6. A student's cohort designation shall not be reassigned after its initial determination in instances when the student has been included in the calculation of the adjust cohort graduation rate for that cohort year.
7. Only students attaining a regular high school diploma within four years are counted as graduates in the four-year cohort graduation rate. Students attaining a regular high school diploma in more than four years will be counted as graduates in either the five-year or extended-year cohort graduation rate.
8. The graduation rate will be calculated for major racial and ethnic student groups, as well as the limited English proficient, students with disabilities, and at-risk student groups.
9. For each student, LEAs must perform an annual certification of the three data elements that comprise the ACGR calculation (First Ninth Grade Year, Responsible School, and Outcome) through Data Validation and through Metric Calculation Confirmation (MCC).

## Introduction

### Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate in the District of Columbia

On Oct. 29, 2008, the US Department of Education finalized rulemaking that established a uniform graduation rate calculation required for all states. In December 2010, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) issued guidance which provided a framework for understanding the rules established by the US Department of Education pertaining to the calculation of the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) and its implementation. This guidance document builds upon previous versions and serves as the sole local guidance for the graduation rate calculation.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) signed into law on Dec. 20, 2015, formalized the definition of high school graduation rate in federal education law. Please see Appendix A for the relevant text of this legislation.

LEAs in the District of Columbia are expected to help in the preparation of the ACGR by:

1. Reading and understanding this guidance document and the [2019 DC School Report Card and STAR Framework Technical Guide](#);
2. Fully implementing current entry and exit codes as stipulated by OSSE in the [OSSE Entry and Exit Guidance](#);
3. Fully implementing attendance codes as stipulated by OSSE in the [2019-20 School Year LEA Data Collection Template](#);
4. Resolving demographic conflicts as stipulated by OSSE in the [LEA Membership Tracker: Demographic Conflicts Management Guidance](#);
5. Maintaining record of student's first ninth grade year and submitting this record through the Automated Data Transfer (ADT) as part of the student's record;
6. Maintaining, as described below, full documentation for student outcomes:
  - a. Student credentials (regular high school diplomas and IEP Certificates of Completion)
  - b. Student exits from the state educational system (exit codes 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944)
7. Submitting and verifying data per (2), (3) and (4) via the Exit Management System in accordance with the timelines set by the [Data Validation](#), [Exit Management](#), and Metric Calculation Confirmation (MCC) initiatives; and
8. Performing an annual certification of final graduation rates through the Data Validation Adjusted Cohort Sheet and through MCC (Extended Years Graduation, Four-Year ACGR, and Five-Year ACGR).

### Purpose of Document

This document serves the following purposes

1. Defining the ACGR;
2. Clarifying the steps taken by OSSE in collaboration with LEAs to identify the ninth-grade cohort;
3. Outlining the process for identifying student outcomes; and
4. Specifying the documentation that LEAs are required to maintain and submit to OSSE to verify student outcomes.

## Definitions

The following definitions will help readers understand terminology used in the explanation of how the ACGR is calculated.

### School Year

According to [§ 38–201. Definitions](#): “School year” means the period from the opening of regular school programs, typically in September, until the closing of regular school programs, typically in June.

### Stage 5 Enrollment

A stage 5 enrollment refers to when a student registers and enrolls in the District of Columbia public school system either for the first time or re-enters the DC public school system from another state, a private school in the District or from home schooling. Once a student receives a stage 5 enrollment code, the LEA must take attendance for the student and provide appropriate services for students with disabilities. (see [OSSE Entry and Exit Guidance](#) for more information)

### Adjusted Cohort

The adjusted cohort is a group of students who enter and exit high school after the beginning of the entering cohort’s first year in high school, up to and including in grade 12.<sup>1</sup> Practically speaking, an incoming class of ninth graders comprise a “cohort” that is subsequently “adjusted” by adding any students who enter the DC public school system at a later point during the ninth grade year or at any point during the next three years and subtracting any students with a validated exit from the DC public school system during that same period.<sup>2</sup>

### State Programs Cohort

The state programs cohort includes students who transfer to the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) or Maya Angelou New Beginnings, and students that only ever enroll in DYRS, Youth Services Center (YSC), or C.H.O.I.C.E Academy (CHOICE). Students who transfer to DYRS become members of the “state” cohort because DYRS is a regular high school diploma-granting institution. Students who transfer to the IYP, YSC, or CHOICE remain on the cohort of their most recent previous regular high school diploma-granting school because IYP does not grant a regular high school diploma. The state programs cohort is not included in any adjusted cohort graduation calculations. However, the state is responsible for tracking the outcomes for these students because they receive publicly-funded educational services.

### First Ninth Grade Year (FNGY)

The first year in which a student attended the ninth grade. Each student may have only one first ninth grade year. By law, every high school-aged student (up to 22 years old) either attending or publicly funded to attend a regular high school diploma-granting DC public or public charter school must be assigned a first ninth grade year.<sup>3</sup>



**OSSE will not accept First Ninth Grade Year changes for students previously included in ACGR public reporting.**

### Regular High School Diploma

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<sup>1</sup> 34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(1)(ii)

<sup>2</sup> 20 U.S.C. §§ 6311(h)(1)(C)(iii)(II) and 7801(25)

<sup>3</sup> 34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(1)(ii)

US Department of Education guidance concerning ACGR specifies that under 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1)(iv), a “regular high school diploma” means the standard high school diploma awarded to students in a state that is fully aligned with the state’s academic content standards and does not include a GED credential, certificate of attendance, or any alternative award. The term “regular high school diploma” also includes an “advanced diploma” that is awarded to students who complete requirements above and beyond what is required for a regular high school diploma.

### State Diploma

Those residents who pass the test of GED™ or successfully complete the requirements of the National External Diploma Program (NEDP) will provide these residents with a state-issued diploma. In reviewing relevant federal and local law, OSSE determined that the regulatory requirements of the US Department of Education (34 C.F.R. § 200.19), and the local regulations that established the state diploma (5-A DCMR, 2201 *et seq.*) both make it clear that a state diploma provided for passing the GED or successfully completing the NEDP shall not be included in the District’s calculation of the ACGR.

### Nonpublic School

“Nonpublic special education school or program” means a privately owned or operated preschool, school, educational organization, or program, no matter how titled, that maintains or conducts classes for the purpose of offering instruction, for a consideration, profit, or tuition, to students with disabilities.

(B) The term “nonpublic special education school or program” shall not include a privately owned or operated preschool, elementary, middle, or secondary school whose primary purpose is to provide educational services to students without disabilities, even though the school may serve students with disabilities in a regular academic setting.<sup>4</sup>

### Cohort Responsible LEA and School

The Cohort Responsible School is the last degree-granting school that the student attended. The Cohort Responsible LEA is the last degree-granting LEA that was responsible for providing educational services to the student.

### Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for DC public or public charter schools is the percentage of students in a cohort who graduate with a regular high school diploma within four years of their First Ninth Grade Year. The cohort is adjusted for both entries into and exits out of the state as well as for transfers into and transfers out of the school from or to another DC public or public charter school.

### Five-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

The five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for DC public or public charter schools is the percentage of students in a cohort who graduate with a regular high school diploma within five years of their First Ninth Grade Year. The cohort is adjusted both for entries into and exits out of the state as well as for transfers into and transfers out of the school from or to another DC public or public charter school.

### Transfer

A *transfer into* an LEA or school cohort occurs when a student enters a regular high school diploma-granting DC public or public charter school after previously being enrolled as a first-time ninth grader at a different DC public or public charter school, up to and including enrollment at any point during twelfth grade or its equivalent (e.g., enrollment as an adult in a regular high school diploma-granting school).

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<sup>4</sup> 5-A 28 DCMR § 2899

A *transfer out* of an LEA or school cohort occurs when a student exits a regular high school diploma-granting DC public or public charter school and enrolls in another regular high school diploma-granting DC public or public charter school. A student who has been retained and remains enrolled in a DC public or public charter school, enrolls in a GED program, or leaves school for any other reason must remain in his or her ninth grade adjusted cohort (i.e., must be included in the denominator of the graduation rate for that cohort).<sup>5</sup>

### Outcome

The outcome is a student’s educational status at the time of graduation rate calculation. For example, for the five-year ACGR, a student’s outcome would be his or her educational status as of August of five years after his or her first ninth grade year. District of Columbia Public Schools is responsible for submitting its complete list of graduates for the respective school directly to OSSE. Public charter LEAs are responsible for submitting their complete list of graduates to the DC Public Charter School Board, who, in turn, will submit a complete list of graduates for the respective school year to OSSE. All certified graduate lists are due to OSSE no later than the Tuesday after Labor Day.

In calculating the ACGR, students that earn a regular high school diploma will be counted as graduates. Students that do not earn a regular high school diploma (including individualized education program, IEP, certificate recipients and State Diploma recipients) or do not exit the state educational system (exit codes 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944) will remain on their responsible LEA and school’s cohort and will be considered a non-graduate.<sup>6</sup> All possible outcomes for ACGR public reporting are included in the table below. For a list of possible ACGR outcomes, see Table 1.

Table 1. Possible ACGR Outcomes

Outcome	Definition	Included in ACGR Calculation	Counts as Graduate or Non-Graduate
<b>Graduate</b>	The student graduated with a regular high school diploma.	Yes	Graduate
<b>Enrolled at a Regular High School Diploma-Granting Entity</b>	The student did not graduate with a regular high school diploma and is enrolled in a regular high school diploma-granting LEA at the start of the school year following their graduation year.	Yes	Non-Graduate

<sup>5</sup> 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1)(ii)(B)(2)

<sup>6</sup> OSSE disaggregates student outcomes by “enrolled” and “enrolled at non-regular high school diploma-granting entity” in order to provide educators and policy makers with more robust information on the alternate paths which students take to graduation. However, for purposes of the ACGR calculation, only students with the outcome of “graduate” are included in the numerator, while students in the adjusted cohort – regardless of outcome – are included in the denominator.

<b>Enrolled at a Non-Regular High School Diploma-Granting Entity</b>	The student is enrolled in a non-regular high school diploma-granting school at the start of the school year following their respective graduation year.	Yes	Non-Graduate
<b>Other Credential</b>	The student received an Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Certificate or State Diploma.	Yes	Non-Graduate
<b>Educationally Disengaged</b>	The student did not graduate with a regular high school diploma certificate, did not earn an IDEA Certificate, State Diploma, and is not currently enrolled in a LEA.	Yes	Non-Graduate
<b>Exited the Ninth grade Cohort</b>	The student was removed from their ninth grade cohort with a valid exit code (1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944)	Excluded from ACGR Calculation	Excluded from ACGR Calculation

## Calculation of the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

As described below, the ACGR calculation requires three data elements for each student: First Ninth Grade Year, Responsible School, and Outcome. (Please see *Definitions* above for descriptions of these data elements).

### The Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

Pursuant to federal regulations, the term four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is the number of students who graduate within four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for that graduating class.<sup>7</sup>

The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for DC public or public charter schools is the percentage of students in a cohort who graduate with a regular high school diploma within four years of their First Ninth Grade Year. The cohort is adjusted for both entries into and exits out of the state as well as for transfers into and transfers out of the school from or to another DC public or public charter school.

Thus, the final four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate calculation for the State Cohort for a given Cohort Year will look like this:

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<sup>7</sup> 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1)(i)(A)

$$\frac{\# \text{ Students in Adjusted Cohort who Earned a Regular High School Diploma as of August of } [\text{Cohort Year} + 4]}{\# \text{ First Time Grade 9 Students in Fall of } [\text{Cohort Year}] + \text{ Entries In} - \text{ Exits Out} - \text{ Emigrants} - \text{ Students who Passed Away}}$$

The denominator includes all entries into a given ninth grade cohort minus any valid exits from that ninth grade cohort as specified above. The numerator includes only the number of students earning a regular high school diploma in four years or fewer.

### The Five-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

The five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for DC public or public charter schools is the percentage of students in a cohort who graduate with a high school diploma within five years of entering high school. The cohort is adjusted for both entries into and exits out of the state as well as for transfers into and transfers out of the school from or to another DC public or public charter school.

Thus, the final five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate calculation for the State Cohort for a given Cohort Year will look like this:

$$\frac{\# \text{ Students in Adjusted Cohort who Earned a Regular High School Diploma as of August of } [\text{Cohort Year} + 5]}{\# \text{ First Time Grade 9 Students in Fall of } [\text{Cohort Year}] + \text{ Entries In} - \text{ Exits Out} - \text{ Emigrants} - \text{ Students who Passed Away}}$$

The denominator includes all entries into a given ninth grade cohort minus any valid exits from that ninth grade cohort as specified above. The numerator includes only the number of students earning a regular high school diploma in five years or fewer.



**If a student transfers to a different school or LEA within the state between the end of the fourth and fifth year following their first ninth-grade year, the student will be reported in the five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate of the regular high school diploma-granting school or LEA where the student was most recently enrolled as of the end of the fifth year following his or her first ninth-grade year; the student will be reported in the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate of the regular high school diploma-granting school or LEA where the student was most recently enrolled as of the end of the fourth year following his or her first ninth-grade year.**

### Reporting of the ACGR

The four- and five-year ACGR are reported publically, utilized in the calculation of the STAR Framework score, and utilized to designate schools for Comprehensive Support type 2. OSSE reports the adjusted cohort graduation rate, the non-graduates rate, and the state programs rate for each school and LEA, as well as for the state.

As detailed in OSSE’s State Plan, high schools that fail to graduate one third or more of their students will be designated for comprehensive support and improvement. This designation is assigned to schools where both their four and five-year ACGR fall below 67 percent. For more information regarding this designation please refer to the [DC State Education Plan](#).

Graduation rates are calculated by OSSE at the school, LEA, sector and state level. Graduation rates are reported publicly for major racial/ethnic student groups as well for students with disabilities, students who are English learners, and at-risk students.

### Student Race and Ethnicity

A student's race and ethnicity is determined through the use of previously validated demographic datasets (e.g., Data Validation, Demographic Certification, Enrollment Audit, PARCC student universe). Any students not found in previously validated datasets are assigned a race and ethnicity based on the most recent information available for that student in the Student Information System (SIS) of the Cohort Responsible LEA.

### Student Disability Status

A student is identified as a student with a disability if he or she ever received special education services between the start of the student's first ninth grade year and the end of the student's expected graduation year. For students who are high school-aged (age 14 and older) but were never assigned to grade 9, 10, 11, or 12, a student is identified as a student with a disability if he or she ever received special education services while he or she was age 14 or older.

A student's receipt of special education services will be determined by meeting one of the following criteria:

1. The student was identified in the Child Count audit as receiving special education services at any point between the start of the student's first ninth-grade year and the end of the student's expected graduation year.
2. The student was identified as receiving special education services in any supplemental payment data at any point between the start of the student's first ninth-grade year and the end of the student's expected graduation year.
3. The student was identified as receiving services through the Easy IEP system; specifically, the student had an IEP eligibility determination date that occurred at any point between the start of the student's first ninth-grade year and the end of the student's expected graduation year.
4. Students who exited special education status prior to their first ninth-grade year and were subsequently monitored to ensure academic progress at grade level will not be identified as having received special education services for the purposes of calculating the ACGR.

### Student English Language Status

A student's English learner (EL) status is determined through the use of previously validated datasets (e.g., Data Validation, Demographic Certification, and ACCESS testing). A student will be identified as EL in the ACGR student group calculations if the student was identified as EL or EL monitored in any aforementioned validated data source between the start of the student's first ninth-grade year and the end of the student's expected graduation year.

### Student At-Risk Status

A student is identified as at-risk for purposes of ACGR if he or she ever met the criteria for at-risk at any point between the start of the student's first ninth-grade year and the end of the student's expected graduation year.

A student's at-risk status will be determined by meeting one of the following criteria while enrolled in the state educational system:

1. The student was identified as homeless between the start of the student's first ninth-grade year and the end of the student's expected graduation year.
2. The student received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits between the start of the student's first ninth-grade year and the end of the student's expected graduation year.

3. The student received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits between the start of the student's first ninth-grade year and the end of the student's expected graduation year.
4. The student was under the care of Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) between the start of the student's first ninth-grade year and the end of the student's expected graduation year.
5. The student was one or more years overage for grade between the start of the student's first ninth-grade year and the end of the student's expected graduation year.

### Closed Schools

If a school closes at the end of a given school year, a graduation rate will be calculated for that school; the year of closure will be the final year for which a graduation rate will be calculated for that school. If a school closes mid-year, a graduation rate will not be calculated for that school; the year prior to closure will be the final year for which a graduation rate will be calculated for that school.

Any student who has not transferred to another regular high school diploma-granting institution before the official date of the school's closure will remain in the cohort of the closed school until such time as the student enrolls in another regular high school diploma-granting DC public or public charter school; the student will remain in the ninth-grade cohort year to which he or she was previously assigned. Students attending a school which closes and who do not re-enroll in a regular high school diploma-granting school will be included in ACGR calculations at their respective LEA and at the sector and state levels.

### Identifying the Ninth Grade Cohort

The first step in calculating the Adjusted Cohort Graduate Rate for the District of Columbia is to determine the group of students who belong to each ninth grade cohort year. During the Data Validation process, LEAs verify all First Ninth Grade Year and Cohort Responsible LEA/School Indicator values for students on the LEA's cohort.

### Entries into a Ninth Grade Cohort

Every high school-aged student (up to 22 years old) either attending or publicly funded to attend a regular high school diploma-granting DC public or public charter school will have a single cohort year assigned to the student as follows:

- Using annual validated enrollment data, OSSE will assign each student attending a regular high school diploma-granting school to a ninth grade cohort.
- Any student with a valid Stage 5 entry code at any point in his or her ninth-, 10th-, 11th-, or 12-grade year(s) belongs to a cohort.
  - Any student with a verified enrollment according to the Annual Enrollment Audit or for whom a school or LEA has received funding will be assigned to a cohort.
  - Failure to meet residency requirements prior to a student's ninth-grade entry can result in that student not being assigned to a ninth-grade cohort; however, once a student has received educational services as a ninth, 10th, 11th or 12th grader and has therefore been assigned to a cohort, failure to meet residency requirements later in the student's academic career is not a valid cohort exit reason (please see section B-3a below).



**Students participating in exchange programs who are enrolled in a DC public or public charter school for one year or less are not included in an adjusted cohort. All exchange**

**students will remain assigned to a ninth grade cohort year for tracking purposes, but will not be included in the ACGR calculation for any school, LEA or the state.**

- Any student with a valid stage 5 entry code in the student’s 10th-, 11th- or 12th-grade year(s) who has received educational services as a 10th, 11th or 12th grade student will be assigned to cohort in a manner that assumes normal grade progression unless other evidence is provided of an alternative year of ninth-grade entry as per documentation requirements specified in the Documentation Requirements for Cohort Exits section below. For example, a student entering 10th grade in the 2010-11 school year belongs to the 2009-10 school year cohort.
  - For students who enter the DC public school system in the 10th, 11th or 12th grade, the year of their ninth grade entry must be determined using available data. If the transcript from the sending school is available, the year of first-time ninth-grade entry should be used. If the transcript from the sending school is not available, the year of first-time ninth-grade entry should be calculated based on current grade level.
  - Only a student who is exited as a “no-show” during his or her first 10th-, 11th-, or 12th-grade year in the state and does not re-enroll will be excluded from cohort assignment. Any student who receives educational services at any point during the student’s 10th-, 11th-, or 12th-grade year will be assigned to a cohort.
- All high school-aged students (up to 22 years old) attending a regular high school diploma-granting high school who are designated as “ungraded” or “adult” or “alternative” and have not been assigned a valid grade level will be assigned to a cohort using one of the following methods:
  - Previous grade progression: Students who have been assigned to grades K-8 but are ungraded or designated as adult when high school-aged will be assigned to a ninth-grade cohort year that assumes normal grade progression.
  - Age: All students age 14 on Oct. 1 of a given year, will be assigned to that cohort year.
  - IEP: Students will be assigned to the cohort year that corresponds to the designated year of Secondary Transition in the student’s IEP.
- Students whose first enrollment in a DC public or public charter school is more than five years after their first ninth grade year will be excluded from cohort assignment.
- For a list of student First Ninth Grade Year scenarios, see Appendix B.

### Cohort Responsible LEA and School

All students who have ever enrolled in an educational institution which offers a regular high school diploma or who have ever enrolled in the ninth, 10th, 11th or 12th grades are assigned a single responsible LEA and school in the calculation of both the four-year and five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate.

The responsible school is the *most recent* regular high school diploma-granting institution that the student attended as of the end of the school year corresponding to the calculation of the four- and five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate. See Appendix D for more information on how court involvement, transition institutions, adult education programs, and special education programs are treated for ACGR reporting.

### *Student Transfers between DC Public and Public Charter Schools in the State*

Once a student enters a given ninth grade cohort, there are only certain specific scenarios under which a student may be exited from that cohort.

However, student mobility within the DC public school system creates scenarios under which a student’s Cohort Responsible LEA and/or school may change between the time at which the student enters his or

her ninth grade cohort and his or her projected four- or five-year graduation year. The Cohort Responsible LEA and school correspond to the most recent regular high school diploma-granting institution that the student attended as of the end of the school year corresponding to the calculation of the four- and five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate. For more information on Cohort Responsible LEA and School transfer scenarios, see Appendix C.



**A transfer is different from an exit. “Transfers in” or “transfers out” of a LEA or school cohort refer to student movement between LEAs or DC public or public charter schools within the state for a given cohort year. In contrast, cohort exits refer to instances when students 1) enroll in a another regular high school diploma-granting school or educational program that is either not part of the DC educational system or funded by the DC educational system; 2) emigrate to another country; or 3) die or are permanently incapacitated.**

#### *Summer-only Enrollments*

If a student transfers regular high school diploma-granting LEAs or schools in the summer corresponding to the calculation of the four- and five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, that student shall remain on the Cohort Responsible LEA and/or school at which the student was enrolled as of May 31 in the respective school year.

#### *Students attending nonpublic schools*

All students who are enrolled in a nonpublic institution will be assigned to the cohort of the LEA responsible for educating that student.

All students who transfer from a Dependent Charter LEA to a nonpublic school will be assigned to the cohort of the responsible LEA (currently DCPS). These students will not be assigned to a Cohort Responsible school and will therefore only be included in the calculation of the graduation rate of the Cohort Responsible LEA to which they are assigned; students will not be included in a school-level graduation rate calculation.

All students who transfer from an Independent Charter LEA to a nonpublic will be assigned to the cohort of the sending charter LEA. These students will not be assigned to a Cohort Responsible school and will therefore only be included in the calculation of the graduation rate of the Cohort Responsible LEA to which they are assigned.

#### *Exits from a Ninth-Grade Cohort*

Exits from the ninth-grade cohort will only be granted for students in alignment with the exit codes listed in Table 2. OSSE’s Exit Management Application in alignment with the following exit codes:



**All students who are exited from a cohort will remain assigned to a ninth grade cohort year for tracking purposes. This is done to ensure that every high school-aged student in the DC public and public charter school system has been accounted for and to ensure that LEAs are not being asked to provide documentation for students who have already gone through the validation process for a cohort exit in a previous year.**

Table 2. OSSE Exit Management Valid ACGR Exit Codes

Code	Code Name	Usage Guidelines	Additional Guidance
1940	Exited state; exited to homeschooling or a public, private, or online regular high school diploma-granting school in a different state.	<p>This code should be used when a student leaves a DC public or public charter school and enrolls in school in another state.</p> <p>If the student is enrolling in a non-regular high school diploma-granting school or educational institution in another state, use exit code 1982.</p> <p>If the student transferred out of the country, use exit code 1941.</p>	<p>The school is responsible for providing documentation that the student has enrolled in school in another state; if documentation of enrollment cannot be verified, use exit code 1984.</p> <p>Under 34 CFR §300.323g (2), the sending LEA “must take reasonable steps to promptly respond to the request from the new public agency” for the child’s records. See also <a href="#">OSSE’s IEP Implementation for Transfer Students Policy</a> for more information on transfer requirements.</p>
1941	Exited to a school outside of the United States	This code should be used when the sending school has evidence that the student is transferring to a school outside of the United States or its territories.	The school is responsible for obtaining appropriate documentation of the exit from the student’s parents.
1942	Exited the state public school system to be home-schooled in the same state	This code should be used for students who transfer to home schooling and remain a resident of DC.	The LEA continues to be responsible for the child until the parent affirmatively revokes consent for services. Only students that are being home-schooled in DC should be exited using this exit code. See <a href="#">OSSE DC Homeschooling Program</a> for more information and policy. Students who exit to home-schooling in another state should be exited using exit code 1940.
1943	Exited the state public school system to attend a private school in the same state	This code should be used for students who leave the DC public school system to attend a private school in the same state; Exits to both religiously-affiliated and non-religiously-affiliated private schools should be captured using this code.	Students who will continue to receive special education services should be enrolled using code 1880.

1944	Died or is permanently incapacitated	This code must only be used for students who are deceased or permanently incapacitated either physically or mentally.	<p>A student whose doctor certified permanent withdrawal. This code should be used only for students who are extremely sick or incapacitated (in the opinion of a physician licensed by the State Board of Medical Examiners) that the student is not anticipated to return to school and the withdrawal is considered permanent. Students with a temporary medical condition should be kept enrolled and treated as Homebound Services and Hospital Instruction Homebound students.</p> <p>The LEA is responsible for obtaining appropriate documentation in the form of a letter from the parent, an obituary or a certificate of death</p>
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## Documentation Requirements for FNGY Changes and Cohort Exits

LEAs must provide appropriate documentation to exit a student from a ninth-grade cohort. LEAs should use OSSE’s Exit Management Application for exits that occurred during the current school year, and SLED’s Prior Year Exits module for prior year exits. LEAs should follow the steps below to review and resolve any data errors for first ninth grade year or Cohort Responsible LEA and School.<sup>8</sup>



**OSSE will not accept intra-district appeals (e.g., transfers to another District of Columbia public or public charter school). Students who have stage 5 enrollment at another diploma-granting school within DC will automatically be removed from the sending school’s cohort.**

For all students, in case of a data dispute or question, please submit a ticket through the OSSE Support Tool (OST) with the appropriate documentation. In the OST ticket, the Issue Type selected should be “ACGR” and the Issue Option Name should be “FNGY” or “Responsible School”. For a list of acceptable

<sup>8</sup> LEAs may submit the Assurances form by 5:00 pm ET on June 26, 2020 as outlined in the updated Data Validation Policy in place of the required documentation along with their OST ticket requesting changes. However, it is important to note that the LEA must then submit acceptable documentation on or before 5:00 pm ET on September 18, 2020 for all requested changes for which it initially provided Assurances forms. OSSE will revert any changes requested using Assurances forms for which LEAs provide insufficient or no documentation as of September 18, 2020.

documentation for changing a student’s first ninth grade year, see Table 3 below. For a list of acceptable documentation for exiting a student from a ninth grade cohort, see Table 4 below.



Please note that in some instances the student’s enrollment history may reflect an earlier First Ninth Grade Year than what is shown on the student transcript; if OSSE has an enrollment record indicating an earlier First Ninth Grade Year at a different school or LEA, the earlier First Ninth Grade Year will be assigned to the student.

Table 3. Acceptable Documentation: First Ninth Grade Year

Appeal Reason	Acceptable Documentation
<b>Student was exchange student and should not be assigned a First Ninth Grade Year.</b>	A transcript showing that the student was a foreign exchange student. Before accepting the documentation, OSSE will verify that the student was enrolled in a District school for no longer than one year.
<b>Student’s First Ninth Grade Year is prior to assigned First Ninth Grade Year.</b>	A transcript indicating the student enrolled in ninth grade in a year prior to their assigned First Ninth Grade Year.
<b>Student’s First Ninth Grade Year is after assigned First Ninth Grade Year.</b>	A transcript showing the student was enrolled in an earlier grade (e.g., seventh grade, eighth grade) during the assigned First Ninth Grade Year. OSSE will verify that the student was not enrolled in a high school grade during their First Ninth Grade Year at another District school before accepting the documentation.
<b>Student has not yet reached ninth grade.</b>	A transcript showing that the student was enrolled in an earlier grade (e.g., seventh grade, eighth grade) during or after the assigned First Ninth Grade Year. OSSE will verify that the student was not enrolled in a high school grade during their First Ninth Grade Year at another school before accepting the documentation.



Failure to prove DC residency is not a valid cohort exit reason. If a student is exited from a school due to failure to meet DC residency requirements, that student remains a member of the cohort at his or her previously responsible school and LEA. Non-residency does not eliminate the obligation of a school and LEA to determine whether the student is receiving continued educational services and to secure valid documentation to this effect, non-residency only eliminates the ability to provide educational services directly to the student under state non-residency policy.

Table 4. Acceptable Documentation: Cohort Exits

Outcome	Acceptable Documentation
<b>Exited the State Education System: Transferred to home-schooling in another state</b>	One of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter or form with parent signature. Note: email correspondence with a parent is not sufficient; a parent signature must be obtained.</li> </ul> Official transcript from home-school program.
<b>Exited the State Education System: Transferred to home-schooling in the same state</b>	OSSE Certified Home-Schooling List, Notice of Intent to Home School (filed with OSSE).

<p><b>Exited the State Education System: Enrolled in a high school diploma-granting institution in another state (public or private)</b></p>	<p>One of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ OSSE Enrollment Verification Form.</li> <li>○ LEA Enrollment Verification Form confirming date of enrollment at receiving school.</li> <li>○ Email correspondence from official school email accounts of the receiving school verifying the date of student enrollment or graduation in writing (must contain student first name, last name and date of birth as well as contact information of the school registrar or official).</li> <li>○ Request for records from the receiving school on official letterhead or from an official school email account indicating the date of student enrollment.</li> </ul> <p>Transcript from the receiving school.</p>
<p><b>Exited the State Education System: Enrolled in a high school diploma-granting private school in the same state</b></p>	<p>One of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ OSSE Enrollment Verification Form.</li> <li>○ LEA Enrollment Verification Form confirming date of enrollment at receiving school.</li> <li>○ Email correspondence from official school email accounts of the receiving school verifying the date of student enrollment or graduation in writing (must contain student first name, last name and date of birth as well as contact information of the school registrar or official).</li> <li>○ Request for records from the receiving school on official letterhead or from an official school email account indicating the date of student enrollment.</li> </ul> <p>Transcript from the receiving school.</p>
<p><b>Exited the State Education System: Moved to a foreign country</b></p>	<p>Letter or form with parent signature. Note: email correspondence with a parent is not sufficient; a parent signature must be obtained.</p>
<p><b>Died or is permanently incapacitated</b></p>	<p>One of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Letter from doctor.</li> <li>○ Death certificate.</li> </ul> <p>OSSE Death Verification Form.</p>
<p><b>Is listed as missing on Missing Child Clearinghouse</b></p>	<p>Missing Child Clearinghouse.</p>
<p><b>No ninth grade enrollment</b></p>	<p>Follow process for adjusting student’s First Ninth Grade Year.</p>

## Documentation Requirements for Coronavirus (COVID-19)

In light of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, OSSE understands LEAs have experienced trouble accessing records in their buildings. Where possible, LEAs should submit documentation in line with existing guidance. If this is not possible, LEAs may submit a [Change Assurance Form](#) (as an attachment) to serve as a documentation proxy in the Prior Year Exits (PYE) SLED module or as an OSSE Support Tool (OST) ticket. The Change Assurance Form is intended to provide a temporary reprieve for LEA appeals until real documentation can be submitted. In addition to the link provided, the Change Assurance Form can also be found in Appendix E.

Change Assurance Forms should be used to indicate a change is needed to the student's FNGY or exit code, while acknowledging the supporting documentation to verify those changes will be submitted on or before September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 5pm. Any documentation that LEAs submit via an Assurance Form that does not meet ACGR documentation requirements will be rejected, and the student will remain in the cohort as previously assigned. Table 3 and Table 4 provide examples of this acceptable documentation.

## Appendix A: Text of ACGR Definition in ESSA<sup>9</sup>

A) In general.--The term 'four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate' means the fraction--

i) the denominator of which consists of the number of students who form the original cohort of entering first-time students in grade 9 enrolled in the high school no later than the date by which student membership data is collected annually by State educational agencies for submission to the National Center for Education Statistics pursuant to section 153 of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9543), adjusted by--

I) adding the students who joined that cohort, after the date of the determination of the original cohort; and

II) subtracting only those students who left that cohort, after the date of the determination of the original cohort, as described in subparagraph (B); and

ii) the numerator of which—

I) consists of the sum of--

aa) the number of students in the cohort, as adjusted under clause (i), who earned a regular high school diploma before, during, or at the conclusion of--

AA) the fourth year of high school; or

BB) a summer session immediately following the fourth year of high school; and

bb) all students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in the cohort, as adjusted under clause (i), assessed using the alternate assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards under section 1111(b)(2)(D) and awarded a State-defined alternate diploma that is--

AA) standards-based;

BB) aligned with the State requirements for the regular high school diploma; and

CC) obtained within the time period for which the State ensures the availability of a free appropriate public education under section 612(a)(1) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and

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<sup>9</sup> 20 USC §7801(23)

II) shall not include any student awarded a recognized equivalent of a diploma, such as a general equivalency diploma, certificate of completion, certificate of attendance, or similar lesser credential.

## Appendix B: First Ninth Grade Year Scenarios

This appendix articulates frequently-occurring responsible LEA and school transfer situations.

### Scenario 1: First Ninth Grade Year

A student enrolls in degree-granting School A in ninth grade in the 2014-15 school year and transfers to diploma-granting school B in the 2015-16 school year. The student enrolls in ninth grade at school B in the 2015-16 school year. The student's First Ninth Grade Year is 2014-15.

### Scenario 2: First Ninth Grade Year

A student enrolls in diploma-granting School A in ninth grade in the 2013-14 school year after being enrolled in a Maryland school for ninth grade in the 2011-12 school year. The student's records indicate the student was not enrolled during the 2012-13 school year. The student's First Ninth Grade Year is 2011-12.

### Scenario 3: First Ninth Grade Year

A student enrolls in diploma-granting School A in 10th grade in the 2014-15 school year. The student does not have any previous educational records available. The student's First Ninth Grade Year is the 2013-14 school year.

### Scenario 4: First Ninth Grade Year

A student enrolls in diploma-granting School A in 10th grade in the 2016-17 school year after having being enrolled in a Maryland school for ninth grade in the 2012-13 school year. The student has "no cohort" because the student first enrolled in a DC school more than four years after his or her First Ninth Grade Year.

### Scenario 5: First Ninth Grade Year

If a student transfers to diploma-granting school or LEA within the state between the end of the fourth and fifth year following their first ninth-grade year, the student will be reported in the five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate of the regular high school diploma-granting school or LEA where the student was most recently enrolled as of the end of the fifth year following his or her first ninth-grade year; the student will be reported in the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate of the regular high school diploma-granting school or LEA where the student was most recently enrolled as of the end of the fourth year following the student's first ninth-grade year.

## Appendix C: Responsible LEA and School Scenarios

This appendix articulates frequently-occurring in-state transfer and nonpublic students' responsible LEA and school transfer scenarios.

### Scenario 1: Transfers in-state

A student enrolls in diploma-granting School A in ninth grade in the 2011-12 school year and transfers to degree-granting school B in the 2012-13 school year. The student graduates from degree-granting school B in the 2014-15 school year (four-year graduation). The Cohort Responsible School is diploma-granting school B.

### Scenario 2: Transfers in-state

A student enrolls in diploma-granting School A in ninth grade in the 2012-13 school year after being enrolled in a Maryland school for ninth grade in the 2011-12 school year. The student transfers to diploma-granting school B in the 2014-15 school year. The student transfers to and graduates from diploma-granting school C in the 2015-16 school year (five-year graduation based on first ninth-grade entry in Maryland in the 2011-12 school year). The Cohort Responsible School is diploma-granting school C.

### Scenario 3: Transfers in-state

A student enrolls in diploma-granting School A in ninth grade in the 2011-12 school year. The student transfers to diploma-granting school B in the 2012-13 school year and repeats ninth grade. The student graduates from diploma-granting school B in the 2015-16 school year (five-year graduation). The Cohort Responsible School is diploma-granting school B. The student is counted as a non-graduate in the calculation of the four-year ACGR and as a graduate in the calculation of the five-year ACGR for diploma-granting school B.

### Scenario 4: Transfers in-state

A student enrolls in diploma-granting School A in ninth grade in the 2011-12 school year and transfers to diploma-granting School B in the middle of the 2012-13 school year. The student attends School B for two months and then stops attending school. The student's whereabouts are unknown as of graduation in the 2014-15 school year. The Cohort Responsible School is diploma-granting school B.

### Scenario 5: Transfers in-state

A student enrolls in diploma-granting School A in ninth grade in the 2011-12 school year. At the end of the 2011-12 school year, the student notifies diploma-granting School A of his intention to enroll in diploma-granting school B at the start of the 2012-13 school year. The student does not enroll in either school in the 2012-13 school year and the student's whereabouts are unknown as of graduation in the 2014-15 school year. The Cohort Responsible School is diploma-granting school A.

### Scenario 6: Transfers in-state

A student enrolls in diploma-granting School A in ninth grade in the 2011-12 school year. At the end of the 2011-12 school year, the student notifies degree-granting School A of his intention to enroll in diploma-granting School B at the start of the 2012-13 school year. The student enrolls in non-diploma-granting School D during the 2012-13 school year. The Cohort Responsible School is diploma-granting school A.

### Scenario 7: Transfers in-state

A student enrolls in diploma-granting School A in ninth grade in the 2011-12 school year. At the end of the 2011-12 school year, the student notifies diploma-granting School A of his intention to enroll in diploma-granting school B at the start of the 2012-13 school year. The student does not enroll in either school in the 2012-13 school year. The student enrolls in diploma-granting school C for three months during the 2013-14 school year; this enrollment is not captured by the Enrollment Audit, but the LEA completes a stage 5 enrollment for the student and enrolls the student using a valid entry code. The student's whereabouts are unknown as of graduation in the 2014-15 school year. The Cohort Responsible School is diploma-granting school C.

### Scenario 8: Transfers in-state

A student enrolls in diploma-granting School B in 10th grade in the 2011-12 school year. The student transferred into diploma-granting School B from diploma-granting School A, located in Maryland. In the middle of the 2012-13 school year, the student enrolls in diploma-granting School C for two weeks (Stage 5 enrollment); the student then notifies diploma-granting School C that he is moving back to Maryland to re-enroll in diploma-granting School A. However, diploma-granting School C is unable to verify that the student enrolled in school in Maryland. The Cohort Responsible School is diploma-granting School C.

### Scenario 9: Transfers in-state

A student enrolls in diploma-granting School B in 10th grade in the 2011-12 school year. The student transferred into diploma-granting School B from diploma-granting School A, located in Maryland. In the middle of the 2012-13 school year, the student notifies diploma-granting School B of his intention to enroll in diploma-granting school C and completes paperwork to this effect. School C requests the student record from School B and completes a stage 4 enrollment for the student. The student then notifies School C that he is moving to Maryland to re-enroll in diploma-granting School A. However, diploma-granting School C is unable to verify that the student enrolled in school in Maryland. The Cohort Responsible School is School B. (Note: School B may also try to obtain records from diploma-granting school A in Maryland but would need to secure such records in order to have the student removed from their cohort.)

### Scenario 10: Non-public Schools

A student enrolled in dependent Charter School A in fall of the 2011-12 school year. During the spring of the 2011-12 school year, the student transfers to non-diploma-granting nonpublic institution B. Because Charter School A is dependent, DC Public Schools (DCPS) becomes the responsible LEA for the student. DCPS may submit documentation that nonpublic institution B is non-diploma-granting to OSSE. If such documentation is reviewed and approved by OSSE, the student will remain on the cohort of dependent Charter School A.

### Scenario 11: Non-public Schools

A student enrolled in dependent Charter School A in the fall of the 2011-12 school year. During the spring of the 2011-12 school year, the student transfers to diploma-granting non-public institution B. Because Charter School A is dependent, DCPS becomes the responsible LEA for the student.

### Scenario 12: Non-public Schools

A student enrolled in independent Charter School A in the fall of the 2011-12 school year. During the spring of the 2011-12 school year, the student transfers to nonpublic institution B. The student remains on the cohort of charter school A irrespective of whether or not the nonpublic institution B is diploma-granting.

## Appendix D: Juvenile Justice, Alternative, Special Education, and Online Programs Reporting

This appendix articulates how OSSE will report on juvenile justice institutions, alternative education programs, and special education programs for ACGR purposes.

- *Court Involvement:* Students who transfer to the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) or Maya Angelou New Beginnings become members of the “state” cohort. Students who transfer to DYRS become members of the “state” cohort because DYRS is a regular high school diploma-granting institution. Students who transfer to the Incarcerated Youth Program (IYP) remain on the cohort of their most recent previous regular high school diploma-granting school because IYP does not grant a regular high school diploma.
- *Transition Institutions:* Students who transfer to Youth Services Center (YSC) or C.H.O.I.C.E. Academy (CHOICE) will remain on the cohort of their most recent previous regular high school diploma-granting school because YSC and CHOICE do not grant a regular high school diploma.
- *Adult Education Programs:* Students who transfer to an education program that does not award a regular high school diploma (currently Academy of Hope, Briya PCS, Carlos Rosario International PCS, Community College Preparatory Academy, The Family Place, LAYC Career Academy, Maya Angelou Young Adult Learning Center, The Next Step PCS, and Youth Build PCS), will remain on the cohort of their most recent previous regular high school diploma-granting school because these schools do not offer a regular high school diploma.
- *Special Education Programs:* Students who transfer to non-regular high school diploma-granting special education schools (currently River Terrace Education Campus and St. Coletta PCS) remain on the cohort of their most recent previous regular high school diploma-granting school because these schools do not grant a regular high school diploma. Students that only ever enroll in a special education program are excluded from all ACGR reporting.
- *Online-only Regular High School Diploma Granting Institutions:* Students who transfer to accredited online-only regular high school diploma granting institutions, including Penn Foster, should be exited from the state using exit code 1940.
- All students who never enroll in a regular high school diploma-granting institution and only ever enroll in DYRS, IYP, YSC or CHOICE will become members of the “state” cohort.

## Appendix E: Change Assurance Form Documentation

### Student Characteristics Data Change Assurance Form

**DOCUMENT PURPOSE:** The Student Characteristics Data Change Assurance Form should be used by local education agencies (LEA) to assist with resolving changes to student characteristics indicators within the SY19-20 Data Validation Qlik application. This form can accompany or be used in place of verification documentation used to support changes in the SY19-20 Data Validation Qlik application.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** In order to request a change in a student's characteristics data, LEA/School staff should:

1. Complete the Change Assurance Form.
2. Sign the Change Assurance Form.
3. To update a student's Exit Management or Prior Year Exits record, submit this form in appropriate module in SLED.
4. To update the remaining student changes below, open an [OSSE Support Tool](#) ticket.
  - a. Upload the Change Assurance Form as an attachment in the ticket.

### Student Characteristics Data Change Assurance Form

This form establishes that a discrepancy in student records exists in the SY19-20 Data Validation Qlik application. The corrections are noted below.

Required: Write in in the student's identifying information.

Unique Student Identifier (USI): _____
Student's Local Identifier: _____
First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
LEA Name: _____
LEA Code: _____

If the data record change corrects a student's exit code, select the box and provide a reason below. View the [Entry and Exit Guidance](#) for the list of exit codes.

<input type="checkbox"/> Exit/ Withdrawal Code:
Corrected exit code value: _____
Corrected reason: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Check the boxes below to identify the data element(s) the LEA is verifying should be changed, as well as the corrected values:

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Homeless:</b>	Corrected value:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Homeless Student-Nighttime Residence:</b>	Corrected value:	<input type="checkbox"/> Doubled Up	<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel/Motel
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sheltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unsheltered
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Homeless Student-Unaccompanied Youth:</b>	Corrected value:	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied Youth	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Unaccompanied Youth
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>EL Indicator:</b>	Corrected value:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>New to US:</b>	Corrected value:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Military Family:</b>	Corrected value:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grade Level:</b>	Corrected value:	<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment and Report Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Longest Enrolled Grade	
	Corrected value:	<input type="checkbox"/> PK3 <input type="checkbox"/> PK4 <input type="checkbox"/> KG <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6	
		<input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> UG <input type="checkbox"/> Adult	

**Free and Reduced Meal Status (FARMS):**

Corrected value:  Free     Reduced     Paid

**First Ninth Grade Year:**

Corrected value:  2014-2015     2015-2016     2016-2017     2017-2018     2019-2020

**Cohort Responsible LEA/school:**

Corrected value: \_\_\_\_\_

Corrected reason: \_\_\_\_\_

**LEA explanation of correct values (required):** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Corrected value must be in alignment with the values in the most recent LEA Data Collection Template.*

By submitting this form, I am assuring that access to the supporting documentation resides at the school building, and I will submit the hard copy of the supporting documentation upon the return to the school building.

LEA Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_