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**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PAPER**

**Identifying and Reporting Dropouts for Grades PK-12  
School Year 2008-2009**

**Purpose and Contents**

The purposes of this technical assistance paper are:

- to provide a summary of compulsory school attendance enforcement requirements, including the provisions of *Learnfare*, the *Rilya Wilson Act*, and Drivers License reporting.
- to help districts accurately report the number of dropouts by listing the reporting responsibilities of district and school staff in relation to tracking and reporting students who drop out of school.
- to suggest ways to verify the number of dropouts.
- to identify the withdrawal codes classified as dropout codes.
- to provide guidance on the Student Exit Interview process.
- to provide answers to some frequently asked questions.

This technical assistance document contains the following sections:

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## Introduction

A school district's dropout rate is one of the most important indicators of school success in providing appropriate and challenging education for all students. The personal, social, and economic consequences of students not completing high school are enormous.

Accurate dropout statistics are necessary to build reliable historical information, evaluate the effectiveness of supplemental academic instruction and dropout prevention programs, measure the achievement of state goals, and report district and state dropout rates appropriately. Aggressive follow-up on students who have been assigned dropout withdrawal codes will provide more accurate information and can effectively reduce school and district dropout rates and improve graduation rates.

It is important to note that Florida's accountability program for measuring adequate yearly progress (AYP) of students at the high school level under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation includes the graduation rate as an indicator. Because the graduation rate is so closely tied to the measurement of AYP, it is critical that each district properly utilize withdrawal codes to accurately reflect the circumstances under which students leave the district.

The Florida School Indicators Report (<http://data.fldoe.org/fsir/>) and NCLB School Public Accountability Reports (<http://doeweb-prd.doe.state.fl.us/eds/nclbspar/index.cfm>) include dropout rates as indicators. In addition, graduation rate is a key performance measure in the K-20 Education Strategic Plan required by section 1008.31, Florida Statutes.

Finally, districts have responsibilities related to attendance reporting that are linked to interagency obligations with the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) for monitoring *Driver Licenses*, and with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) through both the *Learnfare Program* and the provisions of the *Rilya Wilson Act*.

## School Attendance Requirements

### ***Compulsory School Attendance & Declaration of Intent to Terminate Enrollment***

Pursuant to section 1003.21, Florida Statutes, regular school attendance is required between the ages of six and 16 and permitted at the age of five. A student who has attained the age of 16 and has not graduated is subject to compulsory attendance until the student completes and files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the district school board. The declaration must acknowledge that leaving school will likely reduce the student's earning potential and must be signed by the student and the parent. The school district must notify the student's parent or legal

guardian that a declaration of intent to leave school has been filed in accordance with section 1003.21(1)(c), Florida Statutes.

### ***Exit Interview & Student Survey***

Section 1003.21, Florida Statutes, also stipulates that a student's guidance counselor or other school personnel must conduct an exit interview with the student to determine the reason(s) the student has decided to terminate school enrollment and what action(s) could be taken to keep the student in school. The student must further be informed of opportunities to continue his or her education in a different environment, including but not limited to, adult education and GED Test preparation. Additionally, the student must complete a survey in a format prescribed by the Department of Education to provide data on students' reasons for terminating enrollment and the actions taken by schools to keep students enrolled. The prescribed format for the Student Survey can be found at: <http://www.fldoe.org/family/dropout/pdf/FLDropoutSurvey.pdf>.

The Department provides a format that district personnel may choose to utilize when conducting the Exit Interview. The Exit Interview format can be found at: <http://www.fldoe.org/family/dropout/pdf/ExitInterviewForm.pdf>.

### ***Attendance and Recordkeeping***

The Legislature finds that poor academic performance is associated with nonattendance and that school districts must take an active role in promoting and enforcing attendance as a means of improving student performance. Sections 1003.26 and 1003.27, Florida Statutes, respectively, address the enforcement of school attendance and the court procedures and penalties relating to compulsory school attendance. In addition, the Department of Education provides a Handbook on Attendance and Recordkeeping to assist districts in implementing proper procedures for reporting attendance. A copy of the Handbook may be found at: <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/dataweb/atdm2007.pdf>.

### ***Learnfare***

*Learnfare Program* eligible students must be reported to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) if identified by the school as either a habitual truant or dropout (section 414.1251, Florida Statutes). This report to DCF could result in a reduction of temporary cash assistance to eligible parent(s). *Learnfare Program* participants who receive temporary cash assistance for their eligible dependent child or eligible teenager may have the assistance reduced if the student is identified as either a habitual truant or a dropout.

### ***The Rilya Wilson Act***

The *Rilya Wilson Act* (section 39.604, Florida Statutes) requires that the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or the community-based care lead agency notify operators of licensed early education or child care programs, including school district programs,

when designated children are enrolled in their program. These measures are designed as an additional safeguard to insure the safety of children between the ages of three and kindergarten entry age who are under court-ordered protective supervision or in the custody of the Family Safety Program of DCF or a community-based care lead agency.

Children that meet the requirements established in the law will only be permitted to withdraw from a school district-operated program with written approval from the Family Safety Program of DCF or the community-based care lead agency.

The provisions of the *Rilya Wilson Act* apply to all school district-operated early education or care programs including school readiness programs, district-operated Head Start programs, Title I prekindergarten programs, prekindergarten programs for children with disabilities, programs serving the children of parents enrolled in the Teen Parent Program, district-operated “for pay” child care programs, and Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education programs.

It is the intent of the Department of Education that school districts report each unexcused absence or seven consecutive excused absences of children covered by this Act and enrolled in a district-operated early education or child care program to local staff of the Family Safety Program of DCF or the community-based care lead agency by the end of the business day following an unexcused absence or following the seventh consecutive excused absence. Consistent with the requirements in the Act, DCF or the community-based care lead agency will conduct a home visit upon receiving two consecutive reports of unexcused absences or a report of seven consecutive excused absences.

School districts and DCF district/region staff should work together to establish procedures to implement the requirements of this Act in coordination with local Early Learning Coalitions and licensed early education and care providers to ensure the safety of children attending school district-operated early childhood programs.

### ***Drivers License Reporting***

Section 322.091, F.S. was enacted to reduce truancy and ensure that schools respond in a timely manner to student non-attendance. This statute requires minors to attend school in order to maintain their driving privileges. The school district must report to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) the names, birth dates, gender and social security numbers of minors who attain the age of 14 and accumulate 15 unexcused absences in a period of 90 calendar days, or who are withdrawn from school using one of the withdrawal codes used to calculate the dropout rate.

Schools must notify students and parents that filing a declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment will initiate action by DHSMV as follows: licensed minors will lose their driving privilege unless they comply with attendance requirements and unlicensed minors may not apply for a license until relevant attendance requirements are satisfied or the student reaches the age of 18 years.

If a student's record has been transmitted in error to the DHSMV, the principal or designee will submit a letter on school letterhead indicating the student's record should not have been transmitted to the department.

Additional information on Driver's License Reporting can be found at:  
[www.fldoe.org/ese/tap-home.asp](http://www.fldoe.org/ese/tap-home.asp)

## Definitions

### *Dropout*

Section 1003.01(9), Florida Statutes, defines a dropout as a student who meets any one or more of the following criteria:

- The student voluntarily removes himself or herself from the school system before graduation for reasons that include but are not limited to
  - marriage
  - having failed the statewide student assessment test and thereby not receiving any of the certificates of completion.
- The student has not met the relevant attendance requirements of the school district pursuant to State Board of Education rules.
- The student was expected to attend a school but did not enter as expected for an unknown reason.
- The student's whereabouts are unknown.
- The student has withdrawn from school but has not transferred to another public or private school or enrolled in any vocational, adult, home education, or alternative educational program.
- The student has withdrawn from school due to hardship, unless the withdrawal has been granted under the provisions of section 322.091, Florida Statutes, court action, expulsion, medical reasons, or pregnancy.
- The student is not eligible to attend school because of reaching the maximum age for an exceptional student program in accordance with the district's policy.

Students assigned one of the following Withdrawal Codes are considered as high school dropouts if they are enrolled in grades 9 through 12 at the date of their withdrawal.

- DNE – Did not enter school as expected for unknown reasons.
- W05 – Leaves voluntarily with no intention of returning.
- W13 – Withdrawn due to court action.
- W15 – Withdrawn due to nonattendance.
- W18 – Withdraws due to medical reasons.

- W21 – Expelled from school.
- W22 – Student’s whereabouts are unknown.
- W23 – Withdraws for a reason not covered by other withdrawal codes.

Detailed definitions and notes regarding all Withdrawal Codes are contained in Appendix B (p. 18).

### ***Habitual Truant***

As defined in section 1003.01(8), Florida Statutes, a habitual truant is:

- a student who has accumulated 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or consent of the student’s parent or legal guardian, and
- who is not exempt from attendance by virtue of being over the age of compulsory school attendance; by meeting criteria in sections 1003.21 or 1003.24, Florida Statutes; or by meeting the criteria for any exemption specified by law or rules of the State Board of Education.
- Such a student must have been the subject of the activities specified in sections 1003.26 and 1003.27, Florida Statutes, without resultant successful remediation of the truancy problem before being dealt with as a “child in need of services” according to the provisions of Chapter 984, Florida Statutes.

### ***Dropout Rate***

The dropout rate for a school is the unduplicated count of students in grades 9-12 with a valid dropout withdrawal code divided by the total number of grade 9-12 students who were enrolled in the school at any time during the school year, including students who did not enter as expected (DNEs).

## **Data Reporting**

### ***Automated Student Database Reporting***

Each student’s entry and withdrawal into a Florida public school is reported to the Department of Education as per the requirements of the Automated Student Database. Specific reporting instructions are located at the following web site: .

<http://www.fldoe.org/eias/dataweb/default.asp>

The data elements used to report this information are:

- *Withdrawal Code, PK-12;*
- *Certificate of Completion, Type;*
- *Diploma Type;* and
- *Withdrawal Reason.*

The chart below displays valid withdrawal codes for each of the data elements for 2008-09.

<b>Data Element</b>	<b>Valid PK-12 Withdrawal Codes</b>	<b>Survey 5 Reporting Format</b>
Withdrawal Code, PK-12	DNE, W01, W02, W3A, W3B, W04, W05, W06, W6A, W6B, W07, W08, W8A, W09, W10, W12, W13, W15, W18, W21, W22, W23, W24, W25, W26, W27, WFA, WFB, WFT, WFW, WGA, WGD, WPO	Prior School Status/Student Attendance
Certificate of Completion, Type	W08, W8A, W09	Student End of Year Status
Diploma Type	W06, W6A, W6B, W07, W10, W27, WFA, WFB, WFT, WFW, WGA, WGD	Student End of Year Status
Withdrawal Reason	DNE, W01, W02, W3A, W3B, W04, W05, W12, W13, W15, W18, W21, W22, W23, W24, W25, W26, WPO	Student End of Year Status

These elements are used for determining the status of students for the purpose of calculating graduation and dropout rates as well as for many other analyses.

Specific entry and withdrawal codes are located in the Automated Student Data Base Appendixes A (PK-12) and B (Adult) at:

[http://www.fldoe.org/eias/dataweb/database\\_0809/appenda.pdf](http://www.fldoe.org/eias/dataweb/database_0809/appenda.pdf)  
[http://www.fldoe.org/eias/dataweb/database\\_0809/appendb.pdf](http://www.fldoe.org/eias/dataweb/database_0809/appendb.pdf)

***Data Integrity Monitoring Process***

Dropout data to be reported using the withdrawal reason element on the Student End of Year Status record format should be confirmed by each school and district before transmission to DOE. Edits can be run on the records by the district prior to transmission. After the records are transmitted, revisions should be made through an on-line or batch update process during the allowed period after transmission.

During Survey 5 processing, edits are performed on withdrawal reason codes submitted on the Student End of Year Status records in order to confirm that they are valid codes. Reject reports are produced automatically during Survey 5 processing, and validation and exception reports are available on request. Other reports can be requested for use in verification of dropout data.

The DOE Education Information and Accountability Services staff is available for technical assistance and may be contacted at (850) 245-0400.

## **District Responsibilities**

Districts should develop dropout reporting policies and procedures that include the specific designation of responsibilities, a consistent system for assigning withdrawal codes, and the development or revision of a district procedure manual for distribution. Responsibility for overseeing district dropout data collection and verification should be assigned to one person. It is required by law that school districts train those individuals who have responsibility for assigning record keeping codes so that the appropriate assignment of those codes, transfer of student records, and reporting are accurate and uniform. Responsibility should be designated for follow-up on students coded DNE (Did Not Enter) and migrant student dropouts to see if the students have enrolled in other schools in the district, in other districts, in community colleges, or in other states. General Educational Development (GED) testing program staff should be contacted for the names and identification numbers of students who have enrolled in preparation for taking or who have taken the GED Tests to see if there is a dropout student identification match.

### ***District School Board***

Each district school board must establish an attendance policy that includes the required number of days each school year that a student must attend and the number of absences and tardies after which a statement explaining the absences and tardies must be on file at the school. Each school district must determine if an absence or tardy is excused or unexcused according to the established school district policy. When a student is continually sick and repeatedly absent from school, the student must be under the supervision of a doctor in order to receive an excuse. The doctor's statement should confirm that the student's condition requires absence for more than the number of days permitted by the district school board policy.

Section 1003.02, Florida Statutes, authorizes district school boards to establish policies that require referral to a school's child study team for students with fewer than five (5) absences in thirty (30) days or ten (10) absences in ninety (90) days and allows school district attendance policies, including accumulated tardies and early departures, to be recorded as unexcused absences .

### ***District Superintendent***

Pursuant to section 1003.26, Florida Statutes, school attendance enforcement is the responsibility of the district superintendent of schools. This responsibility includes the recommendation to the school board of a policy that ensures a timely response to every unexcused absence or absence for which the reason is unknown. The policy must include the following requirements:



- Schools must contact the parent after each unexcused absence to obtain the reason for the absence and to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused based on the district's attendance policy.
- The school is required to refer specific students to the school child study team to determine if a pattern of non-attendance is developing and, if so, to meet with the parent and student.
- If the initial meeting with the parent does not correct the non-attendance issue, the child study team is required to implement certain interventions to resolve the problem. This section of Florida law also states that the interventions by the child study team may include the superintendent filing a petition in truancy court pursuant to section 984.151, Florida Statutes.
- If the truancy is unresolved, the superintendent shall refer the case to the case staffing committee (section 984.12, Florida Statutes) and may also file a truancy petition if appropriate. If a parent refuses to cooperate with interventions, the superintendent may seek criminal prosecution against the parent in certain situations.

The school district superintendent or designee is required to transmit electronically, in a timely manner, to DHSMV the names of the students, dates of birth, gender, and, if available, social security numbers of all students between the ages of 14 and 18 who accumulate 15 unexcused absences in a period of 90 calendar days and students between the ages of 14 and 18 that are withdrawn from school with a withdrawal code that is calculated in the dropout rate.

### ***District Dropout Prevention Coordinator***

Dropout prevention programs are the district coordinator's main responsibility. The coordinator should assist in developing the district dropout data collection policy and the procedures manual for distribution. As part of the district procedures, an agreement with local community colleges to provide information on students entering the community college prior to high school graduation would be helpful in locating dropouts.

The dropout prevention coordinator is also responsible for analyzing dropout data for the district. Accurate record keeping is one essential way to improve the reported graduation rate and reduce the reported dropout rate. Questions that may arise are as follows:

- In what grade is the largest percentage of dropouts occurring?
- What programs are currently in place to focus on dropout prevention?
- Are there programs that need to be developed to address the needs of potential dropouts?
- Are attendance-related withdrawal codes appropriately assigned?

### ***District Information Services Staff and Program Staff***

Technical staff and program staff should ensure that dropout data are reviewed for accuracy before being transmitted to the DOE. A program should be developed so that every 10 to 20 school days, lists of dropouts by specific withdrawal codes and total numbers of dropouts for each school center and for the district are available for follow-up. The district may want to develop an automated tracking system that would provide a means of flagging the records of withdrawn students when their paperwork is requested and sent to another school district, private school, juvenile justice facility, or another state. Additionally, a procedure should be in place so that requests for transfer of student records will be forwarded to schools.

### ***District GED Chief Examiner or Designee***

This administrator should ensure that students aged 16 to 19 who enroll in GED Test programs or apply for the GED Tests are enrolled or registered by Student Number Identifier, Florida; social security number; and last school attended. On a monthly basis, a list of these students should be sent to the last school attended.

### ***Adult General and Career Education School Personnel***

The staff member responsible for registering students in adult general and vocational schools should enroll them by Student Number Identifier, Florida; social security number; and last school attended. As soon as possible, that information should be communicated to the last school attended. The adult education counselor or program representative at the receiving school should contact the school counselor from the sending school to establish communication regarding the student and other pertinent information. It is helpful for this process if adult general and vocational programs have computers that are online with the school district database.

## **School Responsibilities**

Schools play a critical role in ensuring that accurate records are maintained. Accurate recordkeeping requires that the person responsible for assigning and revising withdrawal codes be well trained.

A school is not authorized to withdraw a student from enrollment due to nonattendance as long as the student attends school, even if the student attends sporadically. When a student is withdrawn from enrollment without documented, good faith efforts to satisfy state intervention and enforcement requirements (sections 1003.26 and 1003.27, Florida Statutes), the school's actions are in direct conflict with the intent and provisions of these state attendance laws and related mandates. Specifically, these mandates include attendance required to maintain driving privileges and services upon referral to child-in-need-of-services (CINS) providers. A student may only be withdrawn from

school due to nonattendance (W15) after all procedures outlined in sections 1003.26 and 1003.27, Florida Statutes, have been followed.

Withdrawal code W23 (withdrawn due to other reasons) should not be used unless all other avenues have been exhausted and the district specifically approves its use.

### ***School Principal***

The principal or designee must monitor the accuracy of the withdrawal data being entered and assure that the data that are entered on the district database are reviewed for accuracy. In order to follow up on the whereabouts of all students who have been assigned a dropout code, the principal should designate a staff member to obtain a report every 10 to 20 school days on these students. Principals are strongly encouraged to assign the responsibility for dropout exit interviews to a school counselor, assistant principal, or other appropriate staff member. The principal or designee shall notify the district school board of all students between the ages of 14 and 18 who accumulate 15 unexcused absences in a period of 90 calendar days or who have withdrawn from school with a withdrawal code that is calculated in the dropout rate.

### ***School Registrar/Person Responsible for Enrollments***

When a new student registers, the school registrar or other person responsible for enrollments should obtain the student's correct Student Number Identifier, Florida; social security number; and last school attended. The previous district should be informed of the student's enrollment as soon as possible.

The FASTER system should be used to send a request to the previous district for a new student's records.

### ***School Data Processing Clerk***

When a school receives a request for the records of any previously enrolled student, the data processing or records clerk should always check the student's withdrawal code, delete an inappropriate dropout or withdrawal code, and enter the correct code. This person is a vital link between the attendance and guidance departments. If a student was reported using code DNE at the beginning of the school year and there is verification of the student's attendance at another school, the clerk should enter the correct withdrawal code.

### ***Student Support Services Staff - Follow-up Activities***

School counselors are in an ideal position to intervene and offer alternatives to students who are at risk of dropping out of school. The school counselor must work closely with other educators to identify potential dropouts and with community resource providers to identify programs for individual planning to meet students' academic, educational, and

career needs. The school counselor is expected to provide referrals to specialized support services and should provide consultation and support to students and the parents of students who are considering terminating school enrollment.

The 2006 Florida Legislature amended section 1003.21, Florida Statutes, to require school counselors of students terminating school enrollment or other school personnel to conduct an exit interview with the student to determine the reasons for the student's decision to terminate school enrollment and the actions that could be taken to keep the student in school. This section of law also requires that the student be informed of opportunities to continue his or her education in a different setting, including adult education and GED test preparation; and complete a survey, in a format prescribed by the Florida Department of Education, to provide data on the student's reasons for terminating enrollment and the actions taken by schools to keep students enrolled.

Students should be notified that if they are transferring from the public school to another program (GED, community college, alternative school), an interruption of educational services might lead to suspension of their driver's license. Therefore, students should be advised to continue enrollment in school until the new educational program begins.

For students who are considering terminating school enrollment, the exit interview is the most appropriate forum to offer advisement on educational alternatives as well as make students and parents aware of sanctions related to nonattendance. For example, possible sanctions for students who withdraw from school with a dropout withdrawal code include but are not limited to potential **loss of driving privileges** and possible **reduction of temporary cash assistance** for eligible *Learnfare Program* participants.

*The school counselor, school social worker or other designated staff* should also assist parents in obtaining needed services for their child through a referral and follow-up process and should serve as liaison between the school and community to assist the student and parent in efforts to maintain meaningful educational opportunities.

*The school social worker, the school's attendance staff, or other designee* should document all school-based interventions, including but not limited to contacting the parent after each unexcused absence, meeting with the parent to resolve attendance issues, and referring the student to the child study team for additional intervention. In accordance with procedures outlined in the district attendance policy, the school social worker may become actively involved in the school's problem solving and intervention efforts. This participation is designed to assist the school with resolving attendance issues and may include home and school communication, referral to community service provider(s), and facilitation of other district attendance intervention strategies (e.g., truancy court).

Relevant information on a student/family should be documented and shared immediately with appropriate school staff to confirm the accuracy of student withdrawal codes, identification numbers, social security numbers, and previous school(s) attended.

## **Locating Dropouts**

Two tools are provided by the Bureau of Education Information and Accountability Services to assist schools and school districts in locating students who have left a school.

### ***Student Locator Program***

The Student Locator program is part of the DOE Information Database On-line System in the Student Component Menu (option 25) located at North West Regional Data Center (NWRDC) in the CICS production system. Each district Information Services office can access this browse-only program and use it to look for students coded as dropouts.

The user enters the student's last name, birth date and gender and the Student Locator program lists all students in the DOE Automated Student Database who match this information. A soundex system is used on the student's last name to expand the students listed to catch different spellings of the last name.

Students enrolled in a Florida public school anytime during the last two years are listed. Items included are the student number identifier, grade level, district number, and school numbers. If a district determines that the student who withdrew is located in another district, the district should amend the student's withdrawal code to reflect the appropriate status. This strategy has proven successful in reducing calculated dropout rates.

To assist districts who wish to automate, at least partially, the task of looking up new students in the Student Locator System, a file, DPS.DISTRICT.GQ.F61976.Y08092, is now available that contains all the records on the Student Locator table. Districts may download this file from NWRDC and use selected criteria (e.g., last name, gender, date of birth) to search the file programmatically to locate new students' prior schools and student identification numbers.

### ***Student Dropout Match Information***

One of the best ways to follow up on students who were identified as dropouts but who may be enrolled in other districts is to use the Department's Student Dropout Match reports. Three times a year the Department extracts the records of those PK-12 students who have been identified as dropouts, including those coded DNE, from the Prior School Status/Student Attendance format. The Department matches these records with enrollments statewide. The names of students who have been matched and the location of their re-enrollment are available for retrieval by school districts.

With this information, districts can correct their dropout data. If it is determined that a student who withdrew is located in another district, the student's withdrawal code should

be amended to reflect the appropriate status. The Department’s Bureau of Student Assistance will notify district dropout prevention coordinators of the availability of these records and encourage their participation in the student identification process as appropriate.

Districts should identify as “school officials with legitimate educational interest” those district- and school-based personnel who will have access to the Student Dropout Match reports and who will be responsible for subsequent report corrections. Select school personnel such as guidance counselors or truancy staff may have access to the Student Locator. The Student Locator is available via NWRDC using a software program such as Hummingbird to locate students who may have enrolled in other schools or districts by using last name, date of birth and gender. Those select persons may receive an ID that allows them access only to the Locator. District MIS Directors can request such a User ID for staff in a district.

***Timeline***

- Survey 2, October**                      Prior School Status/Student Attendance records are transmitted to DOE including students identified as DNE or dropouts from the beginning of the school year until the transmission date.
  
- November**                                DOE matches the district records with statewide enrollment records and makes reports available to districts.
  
- Survey 3, February**                    Prior School Status/Student Attendance records are transmitted to DOE for all students identified from the beginning of the school year until the transmission date.
  
- March**                                        DOE matches the district records with statewide enrollment records and makes reports available to districts.

In November and March, two reports and three or four files are available for retrieval.

<b>Data Set Name</b>	<b>Description</b>
DPSdd.GQ.F61993.Yyyyys	Report of Matched Dropouts in School Districts
DPSdd.GQ.F62293.Yyyyys	Report of Matched Dropouts in Community Colleges
DPSdd.GQ.F61943.Yyyyys	File of Matched Dropouts in School Districts
DPSdd.GQ.F62294.Yyyyys	File of Matched Dropouts in Community Colleges
DPSdd.GQ.F61657.Yyyyys	File of Non-matched Dropouts in School Districts
DPSdd.GQ.F62295.Yyyyys	File of Non-matched Dropouts in Community Colleges
*DPSdd.GQ.F70589.Yyyyys	File of Non-matched Students with W26 Withdrawal Code

*\*This data set is not available in November.*

**Survey 5, August** After the close of Survey 5, DOE matches the records of dropouts against data submitted by other districts during Surveys 5 and 6. Dropouts are identified using Prior School Status/Student Attendance records of students with dropout withdrawal codes.

The report and files listed below are available after the close of Surveys 5 and 6 processing in September.

<b>Data Set Name</b>	<b>Description</b>
DPSdd.GQ.F61993.Yyyys	Report of Matched Dropouts in School Districts
DPSdd.GQ.F61943.Yyyys	File of Matched Dropouts in School Districts
DPSdd.GQ.F61657.Yyyys	File of Nonmatched Dropouts in School Districts
DPSdd.GQ.F70589.Yyyys	File of Non-matched Students with W26 Withdrawal Code

The Dropout Match reports contain a list of students matched to the community college data and a list of students who exited to attend adult education matched to adult education students in the school districts. Students transferring to adult programs should be found during the Dropout Match process. Sometimes this will not happen in the first match of the year—following Survey 2 (October) reporting—but may occur in one of the following matches (Survey 3 in February or Survey 5 in September).

The match reports are sent following survey periods not prior to survey periods. Districts can provide updated information for “found” students via batch updates to the student data system.

Questions regarding the Dropout Match process should be referred to Education Information and Accountability Services at (850) 245-0400.

### ***Florida Automated System for Transferring Educational Records***

The Florida Automated System for Transferring Educational Records (FASTER) is an electronic mail system that is used to transfer student records between Florida public school districts, from Florida public school districts to Florida public community colleges and universities, and to the Department of Education. The sending district transmits student records to Northwest Regional Data Center where the records are retrieved by the requesting district or postsecondary institution. All school districts have been required to transfer student records electronically since December 1992. By using this system, districts can confirm the educational status of students identified as dropouts. The district must then correct the withdrawal codes based on these records.

## **Appendix A**

### **Entry (Re-entry) Codes for 2008-09**

#### **A. Original Entries into Florida Public Schools This School Year**

- E01 Any PK-12 student who was enrolled in a public school in this school district the previous school year.
- E02 Any PK-12 student whose last school of enrollment was a public school outside of this district, or in another state or territory.
- E03 Any PK-12 student whose last school of enrollment was a private school in any Florida school district, or another state or territory.
- E04 Any PK-12 student who is enrolling in a public school in this district after having been in home education in any Florida school district, or another state or territory.
- E05 Any student entering PK or KG for the first time.
- E09 Any PK-12 student who enters a Florida school district from a country other than the United States or a United States Commonwealth/Territory.

#### **B. Reentering into Florida Public Schools**

- R01 Any PK-12 student who was received from another attendance reporting unit in the same school.
- R02 Any PK-12 student who was received from another school in the same district.
- R03 Any PK-12 student who unexpectedly reenters a school in the same district after withdrawing or being discharged.



## Appendix B

### Withdrawal Codes for 2008-09

(Dropout codes are designated by an asterisk.)

**\* DNE - Any PK-12 student who was expected to attend a school but did not enter as expected for unknown reasons.**

This code is entered in the student's record only at the beginning of the school year. Withdrawal code DNE can be considered a **temporary code** until the whereabouts and educational status of a student are confirmed.

The following is an excerpt from the Florida Department of Education's Comprehensive Management Information System, *Automated Student Attendance Recordkeeping System* manual.

"For those students in grades PK-12 who are expected to enroll at the beginning of the school year and who do not return to begin the year, the district should carry the student on the class rosters for up to a period of ten (10) school days. If the student has not enrolled, the district must remove the student from the roll as of the first day of school by entering the withdrawal code DNE, recording the withdrawal date as of the first day of school, and deleting any attendance records associated with the student. The withdrawal record must be maintained for reporting to the Florida Department of Education.

If at any time during the year a determination is made that the student has withdrawn for reasons other than DNE, the appropriate change must be made on the student's record. If a student enrolls in the district prior to day 11, the entry code on day 1 of the 180-day school year and any attendance information must be deleted and the appropriate entry code must be entered on the day the student enrolls. If a student enrolls in the district at a later time, the DNE code must be deleted and the appropriate entry code indicated on the first day that the student enters the district.

If another school system requests the student's record, the DNE withdrawal code must be replaced by the appropriate withdrawal code. The district must enter the withdrawal code on the first day of the current school year."

**W01 - Any PK-12 student promoted, retained, or transferred to another attendance reporting unit in the same school.**

- Examples:
1. Student changes grade levels or homerooms within the same school.
  2. Student transfers into a dropout prevention program within the same school.
  3. Exceptional education student has been expelled from school and is served in an alternative setting in the same school.

Note: Do not use this code for a student transferring within the same school into the adult program; use code W26.

**W02 - Any PK-12 student promoted, retained, or transferred to another school in the same district.**

- Examples:
1. Student withdraws from one public school within the district to enter another public school within the district.
  2. Student enters the Hospital/Homebound Program (unless the program is offered through the student's school, in which case use W01).
  3. Student enters an exceptional education or dropout prevention/alternative education program in another public school within the district.
  4. Student enters a program for pregnant or parenting students within the district at another school site.
  5. Student is sent by the Juvenile Court to a detention facility within the district.
  6. Exceptional education student who has been expelled from school enters an alternative setting at another school within the district.

**W3A - Any PK-12 student who withdraws to attend a public school in another district in Florida.**

- Examples:
1. Student withdraws to attend a public school in another district in Florida.
  2. Student is sent by the Juvenile Court to a state training school located in another district in Florida.
  3. Student enters the Job Corps or becomes a congressional page - places where educational programs are provided in Florida.
  4. Student withdraws to attend a K-8 Virtual School.

**W3B - Any PK-12 student who withdraws to attend a public school out-of-state.**

- Examples:
1. Student withdraws to attend a public school in another state.
  2. Student is sent by the Court to a facility and school or residential placement located in another state.
  3. Student enters the Job Corps or becomes a congressional page - places where educational programs are provided outside of Florida.

**W04 - Any PK-12 student who withdraws to attend a nonpublic school in- or out-of-state.**

- Examples:
1. Student is admitted to a private hospital and receives nonpublic school education.
  2. Student enrolls in a private or parochial school.

3. Student withdraws to attend a nonpublic school as a McKay Scholarship participant.

**\* W05 - Any student age 16 or older who leaves school voluntarily with no intention of returning.**

Note: This code must only be used for students 16 years of age or older who have filed the Intent to Terminate Enrollment Form.

**W06 - Any student who graduated from school and met all of the requirements to receive a standard diploma.**

**W6A - Any student who graduated from school and met all of the requirements to receive a standard diploma, based on the 18-credit college preparatory graduation option.**

**W6B - Any student who graduated from school and met all of the requirements to receive a standard diploma, based on the 18-credit career preparatory graduation option.**

**W07 - Any student who graduated from school with a special diploma based on option one - mastery of the Sunshine State Standards for a special diploma.**

**W08 - Any student who received a certificate of completion. The student met the minimum credits and local requirements, but failed to pass the state approved graduation test or an alternate assessment, or achieve the required GPA.**

Notes:

1. This does not prevent a non-disabled student from returning for a 13th year of educational services.

2. This does not prevent a student with disabilities from returning to receive educational services until age 22.

**W8A - Any student who met all of the requirements to receive a standard diploma except passing the state approved graduation test and received a certificate of completion and is eligible to take the College Placement Test and be admitted to remedial or credit courses at a state community college as appropriate.**

**W09 - Any student who received a special certificate of completion, is properly classified as an eligible exceptional education student, met applicable local requirements, and was unable to meet appropriate special state minimum requirements.**

Note: This does not prevent a student with disabilities from returning to receive educational services until age 22.

**W10 - Any student who completed GED Exit Option Model Program requirements, passed the GED Tests and the state approved graduation test, and was awarded a standard diploma.**

Explanation: Students who qualify for a GED Exit Option Model diploma must be enrolled in grade 10 or higher and meet all requirements of the GED Exit Option Model Program.

**W12 - Any PK-12 student withdrawn from school due to death.**

Explanation: If a student dies between the end of one school year and the start of the next school year (defined as between the last day of school and the day preceding the beginning of the next school year), the school must go back to the previous school year's record for the student and enter the W12 code and date of death. The student should be deleted from the new school year file. The death of a student in all other cases is to be entered as a W12 with the date of death. Following this procedure ensures that the deceased student will not be scheduled or counted during the new school year and that there will be no error in communications that could cause distress or embarrassment.

**\* W13 - Any KG-12 student withdrawn from school due to court action.**

Example: The court remands a student to an adult correctional facility.

Notes:

1. Code W13 should seldom be used. Follow-up should be provided for any student assigned to an adult correctional facility. If the educational program in the adult facility is provided by a local school district, the student should be coded W02 or W3A, as appropriate. If the educational program is provided by a community college or adult education facility, the student should be coded W26.
2. If a student who is not subject to compulsory school attendance elects not to participate in the educational program and files an Intent to Terminate Enrollment Form, the student should be coded W05.
3. Students committed to DCF or DJJ facilities, or sent to state training schools by the juvenile court are to be coded W02 or W3A, as appropriate.
4. Students detained by court action should not be withdrawn until notification is received by the appropriate district entity; e.g., the dropout prevention or student services office.

**\* W15 - Any KG-12 student who is withdrawn from school due to nonattendance.**

Note: Use this code for students who have left school with no intention of returning and after procedures outlined in sections 1003.26 and 1003.27, Florida Statutes, have been followed.

**\* W18 - Any KG-12 student who withdraws from school due to medical reasons.**

Notes: Do not use this code to withdraw a student for:

1. Hospital/homebound—use code W02.
2. Home education—use code W24.

**\* W21 - Any KG-12 student who is withdrawn from school due to being expelled.**

Example: Use this code for all expelled students.

Note: If a student who has been through the expulsion process is offered and accepts alternative placement, use W01 or W02, as appropriate. If the expelled student transfers to a non-public school, use code W04. If the expelled student transfers to another school district, use code W3A.

**\* W22 - Any KG-12 student whose whereabouts is unknown.**

Example: This code may be used for students who are withdrawn because they cannot be located. These students will be counted and reported as dropouts.

Note: Use this code for students for whom every effort has been made to locate them. Districts are strongly encouraged to use the Student Dropout Match Information reports and Student Locator System provided by the Department's Bureau of Education Information and Accountability Services to attempt to locate these students.

**\* W23 - Any KG-12 student who withdraws from school for any reason other than W01-W22 or W24-W27.**

Note: This code should not be used unless all other avenues have been exhausted and the district specifically approves its use. Students with disabilities who reach age 22 without receiving a standard diploma, special diploma, certificate of completion, or special certificate of completion should be assigned this withdrawal code. It is anticipated that the frequency of use for this code will be 3 percent or less statewide.

**W24 - Any KG-12 student who withdraws from school to attend a home education program.**

Note: Do not use this code for homebound/hospitalized students - use W01 or W02.

**W25 - Any student under the age of six who withdraws from school.**

- Examples:
1. Use this code for students who withdraw from prekindergarten, Head Start, teenage parent programs, and migrant programs that serve children under the minimum compulsory attendance age.
  2. Use this code for children who are served in prekindergarten programs and who are removed from the programs by a parent/guardian.

Note: Students under the minimum compulsory attendance age who appear as DNEs should be changed to code W25 after the first ten days of school.

**W26 - Any student who withdraws from school to enter the adult program prior to completion of graduation requirements.**

Notes:

1. If a student who is assigned code W26 does not enroll in the adult program during the school year, the student should be recorded in the appropriate category, i.e., W05, W15, or W22.
2. If a student is assigned code W26 and enrolled in the adult program but is no longer enrolled by the end of the school year, the student should be re-coded in the appropriate category by the last secondary school attended, unless the district has a justifiable policy regarding re-coding students who do not remain in a postsecondary program during the school year in which they withdrew.
3. This code also applies to those students who are provided programs through cooperative agreements with adult schools in an adjoining district, at a community college, or adult programs in other districts with which there is no cooperative agreement.
4. W26 should also be used when a student withdraws from school, takes and passes the GED test and is awarded a State of Florida Diploma (GED).

**W27 - Any student who graduated from school with a special diploma based on option two - mastery of employment and community competencies.**

**WFA - Any student who graduated from school with a standard diploma based on an 18-credit college preparatory graduation option and satisfied the state approved graduation test requirement through an alternate assessment.**

**WFB - Any student who graduated from school with a standard diploma based on an 18-credit career preparatory graduation option and satisfied the state approved graduation test requirement through an alternate assessment.**

**WFT - Any student who graduated from school with a standard diploma and satisfied the state approved graduation test requirement through an alternate assessment.**

**WFW - Any student with disabilities who graduated from school with a standard diploma and an FCAT waiver.**

**WGA - Any student in a GED Exit Option Model who passed the GED Tests, satisfied the graduation test requirement through an alternate assessment, and was awarded a standard diploma.**

**WGD - Any student who completed the GED Exit Option Model Program requirements, passed the GED Tests, but did not pass the state approved graduation test and was awarded a State of Florida diploma.**

**WPO - Any student who is withdrawn from school without receiving a standard diploma and subsequent to receiving a W07, W08, W8A, W09 or W27 during the student's year of high school completion.**

Note: The 1997 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that school districts provide a free and appropriate education to all students who have not reached the age of 22 and who have not earned a standard diploma. If a student with a disability graduates with a special diploma, a certificate of completion, or a special certificate of completion, the student may return to school until the student reaches 22 years of age or until he or she earns a standard diploma, whichever comes first. If the student returns to school and then withdraws without achieving an educational outcome beyond his or her current status, then the student should be reported using code WPO.

Under Florida law, a non-disabled student who earns a certificate of completion may choose to return to school for up to one additional year for remediation. If this student withdraws from school without earning a regular diploma, then he or she should be reported as WPO.

\* Students with codes designated with an asterisk are considered to have dropped out of school.

## Appendix C

### Questions and Answers

1. *What codes are to be used for dropouts?*

The following codes designate that a student dropped out of school: DNE (Did not Enter), W05, W13, W15, W18, W21, W22, and W23.

2. *What is the purpose of the Dropout Match Reports?*

The Dropout Match Reports provide districts information to help them locate students who have withdrawn. The report includes a list of all district students, coded as having dropped out of school, who have been reported as being enrolled in other schools, other districts, community colleges, or adult programs. Districts should review the reports and update local records appropriately when students are found enrolled in other schools.

3. *Who must be notified of dropouts?*

Dropouts are reported to the Florida Department of Education through the Automated Student Data System. Dropouts are also reported to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) for monitoring Driver's Licenses and to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) through both the *Learnfare Program* and the provisions of the *Rilya Wilson Act*.

4. *When are dropout match reports available?*

Dropout reports are available three times a year - following Survey 2 in November, following Survey 3 in March and following Survey 5 in September. Districts receive notification when the dropout match files are available.

5. *If a student is "Expelled with Services" by School Board Action and enters an Alternative Education program to receive instructional services, what withdrawal code should be entered?*

The student should be reported with a W02 withdrawal code at the school the student was "expelled" from and an R02 re-entry code upon entry into the alternative education school in the district.

6. *If a student is "Expelled with Services" by School Board Action but **does not** enter the assigned Alternative Education program to receive instructional services, what withdrawal code should be entered?*



The district must attempt to locate the student and enter the appropriate withdrawal code based on where the student is found. If the student is found to have enrolled in a private school, W04 should be reported.

For example, a student is assigned to an Alternative Education program after being Expelled with Services. The “Expelled” school would enter a W02. However, the student never attends the “Alternative” school. The district attempts to locate the student with no luck. The “Expelled” school should change the W02 to W22 (whereabouts unknown) because the student could not be located.

- 7. If a student is coded W15 (Non-attendance) at the end of a school year and then the student returns in October the following school year but drops out of school again, what withdrawal code is to be reported?*

The student should be coded with the appropriate dropout withdrawal code the second year even if the student had received a dropout withdrawal code the prior school year.

- 8. If a student is coded DNE (Did Not Enter) at the beginning of the year but returns to school later in the year, what entry code should be reported for the student?*

Report codes E01, E02, E03, E04, or E09 as appropriate according to the student’s last school of enrollment.

- 9. How should a student be reported if the withdrawal code is W26 (Entered Adult Education) but there is no evidence that the student enrolled in an adult program?*

The W26 withdrawal code should be replaced with the appropriate dropout code.

- 10. How should a student be reported if the student dropped out of school, but later passed the GED without enrolling in an adult program?*

The withdrawal code reported by the high school should be changed to W26 (Adult Education) even if the student did not attend any classes at the adult school.

- 11. If a student is withdrawn with a W22 (Whereabouts Unknown) and later returns to the district and receives instruction, how should this student be coded?*

If the school verifies that the student had, in fact, been attending school elsewhere during the time away from the district, then the W22 dropout code should be updated to an appropriate withdrawal code (W3A, W3B, or W04) for instruction outside the district. The student should be coded with an entry code of E02, E03, E04, or E09.

If the student received **no** intervening instruction but returns to school, the student should be coded with an R03 re-entry code but the W22 withdrawal code should remain.

12. *Is there a place on the DOE website to find the file format for each of the dropout match files?*

The dropout match file formats are available by accessing DPS.DISTRICT.FORMAT.Yyyyy at North West Regional Data Center. Select the file number for each dropout match file, e.g. F62213. The file format/layout is the same for all dropout match files. This information is not available on the web.

13. *When Survey 2 files were downloaded there were no problems except with F70589 (File of Non-matched Students with W26 Withdrawal Code). Why will this file not download?*

F70589 is not produced for Survey 2. This file includes data from the Workforce Development Information System (WDIS) that is not available for Survey 2 processing, but is available for use following Surveys 3 and 5.

14. *There are graduation codes on the second line of F62293 (Report of Matched Dropouts in Community Colleges). What do these mean?*

The graduation codes in report F62293 are:

- A - Regular Certificate
- B - Special Certificate
- C - Regular High School Diploma
- D - Special High School Diploma
- E – High School GED
- X – Unknown
- Z - N/A

15. *When is it appropriate to withdraw a student for nonattendance?*

School districts must take an active role in promoting and enforcing attendance. Section 1003.26, F.S. stipulates that each district school superintendent be responsible for enforcing school attendance of all students subject to compulsory school age in the school district and supporting enforcement of school attendance by local law enforcement agencies. This responsibility includes recommending policies and procedures to the district school board that require public schools to respond in a timely manner to every unexcused absence, and every absence for which the reason is unknown, of enrolled students. The policies must provide that public schools track unexcused absences and contact the home in the case of an unexcused absence or absence for which the reason is unknown. Legislative findings and research show that early intervention in school attendance problems is one of the best strategies in reducing truancy and a student's risk of dropping out.

Therefore, a school is not authorized to withdraw a student from enrollment due to nonattendance (W22) as long as the student attends school even if the student attends

sporadically. A student may only be withdrawn from school due to nonattendance (W15) after all intervention procedures outlined in sections 1003.26 and 1003.27, Florida Statutes have been followed. Withdrawal **due to other reasons** (W23) should not be used unless all other avenues have been exhausted and the district specifically approves its use. For further information, see the Attendance Recordkeeping Handbook at the following link: <http://www.fl DOE.org/eias/dataweb/atdm.pdf>.

*16. What is the process for conducting an exit interview and collecting a student survey?*

Section 1003.21, F.S., requires that the student's guidance counselor or other school personnel must conduct an exit interview to determine the reasons for the student's decision to terminate school enrollment. Additionally, the student must complete a survey in a format prescribed by the Department of Education to provide data on the student's reasons for terminating enrollment and actions taken by schools to keep students enrolled. Schools should establish and adopt procedures for conducting the exit interview and collecting the student surveys.

In the case of students who indicate a desire to enroll in adult education (for which the student is to be withdrawn with code W26), it is advisable for school personnel to collect a student survey in the event that the student has to be re-classified as a dropout during Survey 5 reporting.

*17. How should a student be reported on the end of year format if the student withdraws to attend an Adult Education program and the student earns a diploma?*

Students withdrawn to Adult Education should have two end of year records submitted if the student receives an Adult High School Diploma (W43 or W52) or State of Florida Diploma (GED-W45).

- One record will be for Grade Level PreK-12 with the Withdrawal Reason code of **W26** code (Adult Education).
- The second record will be for **Grade Level 30** with a Diploma Type code of W43, **W45** or **W52**.

*18. How should a student be reported on the end of year format if the student withdraws to attend an Adult Education program and the student does not earn a diploma?*

The student who withdraws to attend an Adult Education program will be submitted with a Withdrawal Reason of W26 on the Student End of Year format. There will be only one end of year record submitted. This record will be for Grade Level PreK-12.