NCES Common Core of Data Public-Use Local Education Agency Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08

File Version 1a

ies NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Institute of Education Sciences

NCES Common Core of Data Public-Use Local Education Agency Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08

File Version 1a

October 2010

Robert Stillwell
National Center for
Education Statistics

Robert Stillwell
Project Officer
National Center for
Education Statistics

CCD
COMMON CORE OF DATA

ies NATIONAL CENTER FOR
EDUCATION STATISTICS
Institute of Education Sciences

U.S. Department of Education
Arne Duncan
Secretary

Institute of Education Sciences
John Q. Easton
Director

National Center for Education Statistics
Stuart Kerachsky
Acting Commissioner

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the primary federal entity for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data related to education in the United States and other nations. It fulfills a congressional mandate to collect, collate, analyze, and report full and complete statistics on the condition of education in the United States; conduct and publish reports and specialized analyses of the meaning and significance of such statistics; assist state and local education agencies in improving their statistical systems; and review and report on education activities in foreign countries.

NCES activities are designed to address high-priority education data needs; provide consistent, reliable, complete, and accurate indicators of education status and trends; and report timely, useful, and high-quality data to the U.S. Department of Education, the Congress, the states, other education policymakers, practitioners, data users, and the general public. Unless specifically noted, all information contained herein is in the public domain.

We strive to make our products available in a variety of formats and in language that is appropriate to a variety of audiences. You, as our customer, are the best judge of our success in communicating information effectively. If you have any comments or suggestions about this or any other NCES product or report, we would like to hear from you. Please direct your comments to

> NCES, IES, U.S. Department of Education
> 1990 K Street NW
> Washington, DC 20006-5651

October 2010

The NCES Home Page address is http://nces.ed.gov.
The NCES Publications and Products address is http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch.

This publication is only available online. To download, view, and print the report as a PDF file, go to the NCES World Wide Web Publications and Products address shown above.

Mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations does not imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

Suggested Citation

Stillwell, R. (2010). *NCES Common Core of Data Public-Use Local Education Agency Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08 (NCES 2011-310).* U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: Retrieved [date] from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch.

Content Contact

Robert Stillwell
(202) 219-7044
robert.stillwell@ed.gov

Contents

Appendixes

List of Tables

I. Introduction

This document provides information about the Common Core of Data (CCD) Public-Use Local Education Agency (LEA) Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08. The CCD Public-Use LEA Dropout and Completion Data File is one of several data files released through the CCD nonfiscal survey system. This file contains district-level counts of students who drop out of or complete public high school.

The CCD nonfiscal surveys consist of data submitted annually to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) through the Education Data Exchange Network (EDEN) by state education agencies (SEAs) in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the four outlying areas (American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands), the Department of Defense (DoD) dependents schools (overseas and domestic), and the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). In order to provide data comparable across states, NCES staff and representatives of the SEAs have worked since the 1950s to develop and accept common data items and definitions. The data are edited by the U.S. Census Bureau and maintained in machine-readable datasets by NCES and are used to produce general-purpose publications and specialized reports. The principal users of CCD nonfiscal data are the federal government; the education research community; state and local government officials, including school boards and local education agency (LEA) administrators; and the general public.

This documentation for the CCD Public-Use LEA Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08 contains information on CCD dropout and completion reporting methodology, as well as information on the data file itself. There are five appendixes, as follows:

- **Appendix A. Record Layout** gives the variable names and labels of the data items discussed throughout the documentation, as well as their locations in the data file.

- **Appendix B. State-wide Item Non-Response** presents information pertaining to item non-response.

- **Appendix C. Value Distribution Table** presents the minimum, maximum, and mean value of each numeric variable, and the number of districts for which data are missing, not applicable, and suppressed. Data tables are provided for high school completers, dropouts, and enrollment base fields by LEA.

- **Appendix D. Dropout Reporting Practices and Guidelines** presents the instructions given to SEAs for reporting dropouts to NCES.

- **Appendix E. Computation Instructions** provides the data user with information on the computation of enrollment base fields (used as the denominator to calculate dropout rates) and the computation of dropout and completion rates in NCES data reports.

II. The CCD Public-Use LEA Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08

A. Sources of Data Used to Construct the File

The CCD Public-Use LEA Dropout and Completion Data File is constructed from data collected through the CCD nonfiscal surveys: the Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey and the Local Education Agency Universe Survey. In addition to dropout and completion counts, the file contains the membership counts and enrollment bases that can be used in calculating dropout and completion rates.

The numbers of high school diploma recipients, other high school completers, and the dropout counts are taken from the LEA Universe Survey. Membership counts, including those used as the denominator for the Average Freshmen Graduation Rate (AFGR) and those used in the dropout rates, are taken from the Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey data files. The grade-level membership data were aggregated to the LEA level.

B. Data Collection Methods

All states reported their dropout and high school completer data for 2007–08 during the collection of CCD data through the Department of Education's EDEN system. The District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands also reported their data through EDEN. The Bureau of Indian Education, Department of Defense, American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands reported their data through the CCD online data collection system maintained by the U.S. Census Bureau and Kforce Government Solutions.

C. Who Is a Dropout?

The CCD provides an event dropout number that represents the proportion of students dropping out each year. According to the CCD definition, a dropout is an individual who

1. was enrolled in school at some time during the previous school year;

2. was not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year;

3. has not graduated from high school or completed a state- or district-approved education program; and

4. does not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions: transfer to another public school district, private school, or state- or district-approved education program; temporary absence due to suspension or school-recognized illness; or death. See Appendix D for more details.

The following statements apply for the purpose of this definition:

- The school year is the 12-month period of time from the first day of school (operationally set as October 1), with dropouts from the previous summer reported for the year and grade in which they fail to enroll;

- Individuals who are not accounted for on October 1 are considered dropouts;

- A school completer is an individual who graduated from high school or completed a

state- or district-approved educational program upon receipt of formal recognition from school authorities. A state- or district-approved educational program may consist of special education and district or state-sponsored GED preparation.

See Appendix D for a further description of the dropout definition.

<u>Treatment of ungraded students in calculating dropout rates</u>—The dropout rate denominator is based on enrollments by grade. However, some states report ungraded students and/or ungraded dropouts (students who are not assigned a regular grade designation). Overall high school counts (grades 9 through 12 in aggregate) and rates include a proportion of ungraded students. Ungraded student enrollments are distributed into grades proportionally based on the graded enrollment within race/ethnicity and gender. These serve as the denominator for the high school event dropout rate. Ungraded dropouts are distributed into grades proportionally using the graded dropout counts within race/ethnicity and gender. These counts serve as the numerator for the high school event dropout rates. The grade, race/ethnicity, and gender detail is used to construct the overall dropout and enrollment counts, but is not presented separately on this file as part of the CCD disclosure analysis plan. For more details please see section on disclosure mitigation on page 6.

<u>Caution in interpreting the dropout rates</u>—There are two situations that cause problems in interpreting these LEA-level dropout counts and rates. The first is based on the difference between reporting levels for enrollment data and for dropout data. The enrollment data is reported at the school level whereas the dropout data is reported at the school district level. In some cases a state may not have been able to report enrollment data for all associated schools within a district. This may lead to an underrepresentation of the class size of the school district when compared to a complete reporting of the dropout count resulting in an inflated dropout rate for the district. If the opposite is true and a state reports dropouts for a district but neglects to include data for one or more schools within that district, a situation that would not be identifiable to NCES as that data is only reported at the district level, a deflated dropout rate would be the result. If either of these situations occurs frequently within a state it could affect the state-level rates.

Additionally, there is a difference in the time period that each of the two data elements are reported. The event dropout rates presented on this file are approximations and are not cohort rates. The enrollment data is reported early in the school year and is representative of the October 1st enrollment for that school year while the dropout data is cumulative across the entire school year and subsequent summer. Thus the dropout data is affected by in- and out-transfer and the enrollment data does not include any adjustments for transfer students. This issue is of greater importance at the school district-level where net transfer rates can be more polar than at the state-level where the net transfer rates are lower than many of the individual districts within that state.

D. Information on High School Completers and the Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate

For each record in the data file, the CCD Public-Use LEA Dropout and Completion Data File contains counts of regular diploma recipients, the Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR), enrollment data used to calculate the AFGR, and counts of other high school completers.

<u>What is a regular diploma</u>?—The CCD defines a regular diploma as the high school completion credential awarded to students who meet or exceed coursework and performance standards set by the state or other approving authority. There are differences in what a high school diploma represents across states. State and local policies can affect the numbers of diploma recipients reported. Some states award regular diplomas to all students who meet completion requirements, regardless of the extent to which these requirements address state or district academic standards. For example, some states have in-school GED programs that require fewer credit hours than a regular high school track, but lead to the award of regular diplomas. Other states award some form of alternative credential to students who meet some, but not all, requirements. For example, special education students who complete their individual education programs or regular education students in some alternative programs may receive a certificate of completion. As a result of different policies, students who receive a certificate of completion in one state might be awarded a regular diploma in another.

<u>Calculating the AFGR</u>—The AFGR is the number of regular diploma recipients in a given year divided by the average of the membership in grades 8, 9, and 10, reported 5, 4, and 3 years earlier, respectively. For example, the denominator of the 2007–08 AFGR is the average of the 8th-grade membership in 2003–04, 9th-grade membership in 2004–05, and 10th-grade membership in 2005–06. Ungraded students are prorated into these grades. Averaging these three grades provides an estimate of the number of first-time freshmen in the class of 2004–05 freshmen in order to estimate the on-time graduation rate for 2007–08.

<u>Treatment of ungraded students in calculating the AFGR</u>—The AFGR denominator is based on enrollments by grade. However, some states report ungraded students (students who are not assigned a regular grade designation). To adjust for this, the data for ungraded enrollment counts were redistributed across grades in proportion to the graded enrollment of the state, based on the race/ethnicity and gender of the ungraded students and the race/ethnicity and gender of the graded students (where this information was available). The redistributed counts of ungraded enrollments were added to the reported enrollment counts for the 8th, 9th, and 10th grades. In this procedure, the ungraded enrollment is subtracted from the total enrollment to get the total graded enrollment; the reported enrollment in each grade is used to compute the proportion of graded students in each grade; these proportions are multiplied by the count of ungraded students to allocate the ungraded students across the individual grades; and the counts of ungraded students allocated to each grade are added to the reported enrollments by grade. Ungraded enrollments account for approximately 1 percent of enrollments each year.

<u>Caution in interpreting the AFGR</u>—Although the AFGR was selected as the best of the available alternatives, several factors make it fall short of a true on-time graduation rate. First, the AFGR does not take into account any imbalances in the number of students moving in and out of the nation or individual states over the high school years. As a result, the averaged freshman class is at best an approximation of the actual number of freshmen, where differences in the rates of transfers, retention, and dropping out in the three grades affect the average. Second, by including all graduates in a specific year, the graduates may include students who repeated a grade in high school or completed high school early and thus are not on-time graduates in that year.

While the AFGR is a reasonable proxy at the aggregate national or state level, the potential effects of three factors should be taken into account when interpreting the results for individual states. First, if more high school students moved out of a population than transferred in during the high school years, the number of graduates in the numerator would be smaller and the

estimated graduation rate would be lower than the actual on-time rate for that group of freshmen. On the other hand, if more high school students moved into a population than moved out during this 4-year period, the number of graduates in the numerator would be increased and the estimated on-time graduation rate would be higher than the actual rate for that group of freshmen. This can lead to estimated graduation rates of more than 100 percent for small groups; such cases have been adjusted to 100 percent in this data file.

Second, including the estimate of 8th-graders from the previous year in order to remove the effect of freshmen who were retained (and, thus, are not first-time freshmen) ignores the fact that in some cases there may be a real change in the number of 8th-graders relative to counts of 9th-graders due to transfers between public and private schools. If more students transfer to public schools at this point, using a count of 8th-graders that does not include those students would serve to artificially decrease the estimated number of 9th-graders and, as a result, increase the graduation rate for that class. Conversely, if more students were to transfer out of public schools between the 8th and 9th grades, using the 8th-grade count that includes students leaving the population would artificially increase the estimated number of 9th-graders and, in turn, decrease the graduation rate.

Third, there may be a tradeoff between the adjustment for retentions and grade-specific differences in the number of dropouts. The use of the 10th-grade enrollment count also helps to dampen the effect of 9th-grade retentions, but ignores the fact that 9th-grade dropouts result in a smaller 10th-grade population. Excluding these 9th-grade dropouts lowers the estimate of freshmen and, as a result, increases the graduation rate.

What is an "other high school completer"?— The CCD defines an other high school completer as a student who has received a certificate of attendance or other certificate of completion in lieu of a diploma during the previous school year and subsequent summer school. Other high school completer credentials are not awarded in every state. See section F. Comments About the Data Items for a list of states that do not award other high school completer credentials.

E. Comments About the Data File

Data users should be aware of certain characteristics of the data file.

Methodology—Data for the CCD Public-Use LEA Dropout and Completion Data File are provided to NCES by officials in each SEA. Since it is understood that LEAs have already provided information to SEA officials in conjunction with established administrative records systems, it is not the policy of CCD survey staff to contact local personnel to verify data except in unusual circumstances. Certain edits are performed by CCD survey staff and referred to SEA respondents for resolution. It is CCD policy to accept the judgment of the respondent unless there is a clear conflict or unacceptable inconsistency.

Undercoverage and vertical consistency—Although CCD coverage of traditional public schools and school districts (those schools and districts typed as regular[1]) is virtually 100 percent, the same cannot be said for publicly funded education outside of traditional settings and organizations. The CCD asks states to report all free public education in the state regardless of

---

[1] Regular school districts are operated by a local authority and offer instruction to students within their service areas. They exclude local supervisory unions, regional education service agencies, state and federally operated school districts, and other agencies that do not fall within these groupings.

who administers the schools or districts. However, there are states that do not report schools and districts that are administered by state organizations other than SEAs (such as health and human services or corrections departments). Unreported schools may include those for the deaf and blind, university lab schools, and other schools not covered by the authority of the SEA.

Accuracy of data—The degree of rigor with which SEAs verify their dropout data is not uniform. Agencies that collect dropout and membership data through student-level record systems are better able to verify students' enrollment status than are agencies that collect aggregate reports of dropouts from schools or districts. NCES requires SEAs to confirm or amend any numbers that appear considerably out of line with other states' data or with data from previous years. However, NCES does not audit a state's dropout or completion data except where explicitly stated in the previous section and in response to the disclosure mitigation procedures discussed in the following section.

Precautions to prevent disclosure of individuals who drop out of school or fail to graduate—The data file has undergone disclosure risk analysis to eliminate the possibility of the data being used to identify individuals who dropped out of school or those who did not receive a diploma at the end of the 12th grade. Each record was examined individually, in combination with the other records in the file, and across reporting levels due to the hierarchical nature of the CCD collections.

As these data are being presented on a public data file at the school district level, the NCES Disclosure Review Board and CCD team has determined that presenting dropout and completion data by race/ethnicity and gender (and grade, in the case of dropouts) presented too large a disclosure risk. Dropout data presented on this file are reported in aggregate form, grades 9 through 12 combined. Completion data is reported separately for regular diplomas and other high school completers but is not disaggregated by race/ethnicity or gender.

This file has undergone perturbation. A perturbation is an adjustment to one or more counts in the file and is done to protect the identity of students. Only data fields containing dropout counts and high school diploma counts have been perturbed. In the case of perturbations done to dropout counts, the perturbation was necessary to prevent the disclosure of individual students who dropped out of school. In the case of perturbations done to regular high school diploma counts, the perturbation was necessary to prevent the disclosure of individual students who did not receive a regular high school diploma at the end of 12th grade. These changes were done in such a way as to minimize their impact on the analytical value of the data file. These perturbations were done to reduce the likelihood of disclosures on the CCD State Dropout and Completer Data File.

Data suppression has also been employed as part of the CCD disclosure mitigation plan. Dropout counts of 1, 2, or 3 have been suppressed. These counts are presented on the data file with the value -3. Dropout counts that exceed 3 less than the membership count have also been suppressed. These counts are represented on the file with the denoted value of -4. In order to prevent data users from backing out these suppressed values and determining the real value of the cell, complimentary suppression has also been employed. Any complementary suppression performed on the file is denoted with the same value as a missing count, -1. These suppressed cells are not distinguishable from the cells that contain missing values.

Suppression has also been employed to protect against the individual disclosure of anyone that did not receive a regular high school diploma following their 12th grade year. These, and the counter-suppressions made to protect the primary suppressions, are denoted as -1 on the data file. These suppressed cells are not distinguishable from cells that contain missing values.

Data values— All data elements are presented as reported by the state coordinator or have been filled with codes "-1," "-2," "M," or "N" by NCES. Descriptions of zero or other codes are listed below.

- 0: A zero value represents a report of no occurrences of a data element. A value was expected and measured, but zero cases were found in the category. (For example, a K–12 district having no 12th-graders would report "0.")

- M (or -1 for numeric values): A value of M (or -1) indicates that data are missing. A value was expected, but none was measured. (For example, a district that has at least one 12th-grader but cannot measure the number of 12th-graders would report "-1."). This value also denotes a suppressed high school diploma count or dropout count.

- N (or -2 for numeric values): A value of N (or -2) indicates that data are not applicable. A value was neither expected nor measured. (For example, an elementary school district would report "-2" for 12th-graders.)

- -3: A value of -3 indicates a dropout count of 1, 2, or 3. These cells have been suppressed such that the true value of the cell cannot be identified. All cells with a value of -3 have a plausible value of 1, 2, or 3.

- -4: A value of -4 indicates a dropout count that is equal to or exceeds the 3 less than the membership count. These cells have been suppressed such that the true value of the cell cannot be identified. All cells with a value of -4 have a plausible value of 3 less than the membership.

F. Comments About the Data Items

The CCD Public-Use LEA Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08 contains the following data items for each record: the school year for which the data are reported; the Federal Information Processing (FIPS) State Code; the NCES Assigned District Identification Code (LEAID); an aggregate count of dropouts in grades 9 through 12, including a prorated proportion of ungraded dropouts; a membership count for grades 9 through 12 in aggregate; a high school (grades 9 through 12) dropout rate; a count of regular high school diplomas awarded; the enrollment base associated with the AFGR; the AFGR; and a count of other high school completers. Data users should take note of certain conditions regarding each data item in the file, as follows:

(SURVYEAR) School Year. The school year in which students dropped out of school or graduated from high school (the 2007–08 school year is represented as "2007" in the data file). It is important to use this field when comparing dropout data from different files.

(FIPST). The Federal Information Processing (FIPS) state code. Please see Table 1 for a list of state codes and state names.

(LEAID). The NCES assigned LEA identification code is a 7 digit code that allows the linkage between this file and the CCD School and LEA Universe Files which contain data on district and school categorization, student counts, staff counts, address, and locale information. This file should be considered as a supplement to these files, not a stand-alone data file.

(TOTD912) High School Dropout Count. The dropout count is presented as an overall grade 9 through 12 count. This count is based on data collected at the school district level by grade, race/ethnicity, and gender. A proportion of the dropouts reported to the ungraded categories are included in the 9 through 12 aggregate counts based on the proportion of graded dropouts that are in grades 9 through 12. The high school dropout count is used as the numerator for the high school dropout rate.

(EBS912) High School Enrollment Count. The high school enrollment count serves as the denominator to calculate the high school dropout rate. The enrollment count has been aggregated to the LEA level from the associated schools that make up each LEA. This count includes the students reported for grades 9 through 12 and a proportion of the ungraded students equal to the proportion of the graded enrollment in a school district that is in grades 9 through 12. Appendix D describes the computation procedure.

(DRP912) High School Dropout Rate. The High School Dropout rate is the percent of students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 (and a proportion of the ungraded enrollment) that dropped out of school during the specified school year. This is an event dropout rate.

(TOTDPL) Regular Diploma Count. The regular diploma count is the total number of regular diplomas awarded in the specified school year. This serves as the numerator for the AFGR.

(AFGEB) Enrollment Base for Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate. The AFGR enrollment base variable is used as the denominator in the calculation of the AFGR and represent estimates of the number of first-time freshmen in the class of 2004–05 freshmen in order to estimate the on-time graduation rate for 2007–08. See Appendix D for the computation procedure.

(AFGR) Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR). The AFGR is an estimate of the percent of students that began 9th grade four years earlier that graduated school with a regular high school diploma in the expected four-year time span.

(TOTOHC) Other High School Completers. Some states grant a certificate of attendance or completion in lieu of a diploma. Other high school completer credentials are not offered by the following states and jurisdictions: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, the Bureau of Indian Education, the Department of Defense Schools (overseas and domestic), American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Table 1.　State and other jurisdiction FIPS codes and abbreviations used in CCD datasets

State name/jurisdiction	FIPS [1]	Abbreviation [2]	State name/jurisdiction	FIPS [1]	Abbreviation [2]
Alabama	01	AL	Oregon	41	OR
Alaska	02	AK	Pennsylvania	42	PA
Arizona	04	AZ	Rhode Island	44	RI
Arkansas	05	AR	South Carolina	45	SC
California	06	CA	South Dakota	46	SD
Colorado	08	CO	Tennessee	47	TN
Connecticut	09	CT	Texas	48	TX
Delaware	10	DE	Utah	49	UT
District of Columbia	11	DC	Vermont	50	VT
Florida	12	FL	Virginia	51	VA
Georgia	13	GA	Washington	53	WA
Hawaii	15	HI	West Virginia	54	WV
Idaho	16	ID	Wisconsin	55	WI
Illinois	17	IL	Wyoming	56	WY
Indiana	18	IN			
Iowa	19	IA	Department of Defense		
Kansas	20	KS	dependents schools		
Kentucky	21	KY	(overseas)	58 [3]	DO
Louisiana	22	LA			
Maine	23	ME	Department of Defense		
Maryland	24	MD	dependents schools		
Massachusetts	25	MA	(domestic)	61 [3]	DD
Michigan	26	MI			
Minnesota	27	MN	Bureau of		
Mississippi	28	MS	Indian Education	59 [3]	BI
Missouri	29	MO			
Montana	30	MT	American Samoa	60	AS
Nebraska	31	NE			
Nevada	32	NV	Guam	66	GU
New Hampshire	33	NH			
New Jersey	34	NJ	Commonwealth of the		
New Mexico	35	NM	Northern Mariana		
New York	36	NY	Islands	69	MP
North Carolina	37	NC			
North Dakota	38	ND	Puerto Rico	72	PR
Ohio	39	OH			
Oklahoma	40	OK	U.S. Virgin Islands	78	VI

[1] Federal Information Processing Standards codes (01–78).

[2] U.S. Postal Service state abbreviation codes.

[3] Not official U.S. FIPS code. The state abbreviations for Department of Defense dependents schools (overseas) are AA, AE, and AP to indicate schools located in Asia, Europe, and the Pacific, respectively. For Department of Defense dependents schools (domestic) and Bureau of Indian Education schools, state abbreviations correspond to the state in which the school is located.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Federal Information Processing Standards, (1987). "Codes for the Identification of the States, the District of Columbia and the Outlying Areas of the United States, and the Associated Areas" (FIPS pub 5-2).

G. Special Characteristics of this File

Data users should be aware of the following special characteristics of the CCD Public-Use LEA Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08.

1. The reported data were examined to identify any instance in which the identity of an individual dropout might be disclosed when aggregated to the state level. To protect against the possibility of disclosure, data in some cells have been perturbed and/or suppressed. See "Precautions to prevent disclosure of individuals who drop out of school or fail to graduate" (page 6) for more information.

2. Unless confirmed as accurate by the state CCD coordinator, reports of zero dropouts for any LEA enrolling 400 or more students in grade 9–12 were changed to missing (-1).

III. User Guidelines for Processing the CCD Public-Use LEA Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08

A. File Characteristics

The CCD Public-Use LEA Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08 is provided in two file formats: a SAS file (dr07p1a.sas7bdat); and a tab-delimited ASCII text file (dr07p1a.txt). The first two characters of the file name indicate the type of file (dr = dropout and completer file), the third and fourth characters indicate the school year (07 = 2007–08), the fifth character, "p", indicates that this is a public release of the data file, and the sixth and seventh characters indicate the version number (1 = official release file, a = first version). The record layout (containing field name, field position, field length, field type, and field description) is located in Appendix A.

B. Linking This File to Other CCD Files

Data users can easily link this file to any other survey in the CCD Survey System. The FIPS codes provided on the file can be used as a direct link to any CCD data file reporting state-level data and the LEAID can be used as a direct link to other CCD School- and LEA-level data files. Data from the other non-fiscal and fiscal data files contain many useful items, including categorical information, address, contact, and locale data, and numbers of staff and enrollment data.

Users should note that the enrollment counts in this file may not match the enrollment counts in other CCD files because enrollment bases are derived from the Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey and ungraded students are prorated into grades for grade 9 through 12 aggregate reporting (see appendix D for information regarding the enrollment field calculations in the dropout file).

C. Guidelines for Using the Flat ASCII Data File

When using the flat ASCII data file, care should be taken to label the identification number variables (e.g., FIPST) as character fields. This is necessary in order to retain the leading zero in many of the identification numbers which is necessary when merging these data with other files. This can be accomplished in Excel by using the 'Import Wizard' to select the ID fields and set them as text fields.

APPENDIX A. Record Layout

Appendix A. Record Layout
NCES Common Core of Data Public-Use Local Education Agency Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08

Number of Variables = 10
Number of Observations = 18,090

The file contains data for school year 2007–08 sorted by the NCES Local Education Identification Number (LEAID). "AN" and "N" indicate alphanumeric and numeric data, respectively. Data presented in this release are available in two formats—SAS datasets (.sas7bdat) and tab-separated values text files (.txt). An asterisk (*) in the order column indicates that the field has one explicit decimal place.

Variable name	Order	Data Type	Description
SURVYEAR	1	AN	Year Corresponding to Survey Record
FIPST	2	AN	Two Digit State FIPS Code
LEAID	3	AN	NCES Assigned Local Education Agency Identification Number
TOTD912	4	N	Total Dropouts, Grades 9 through 12
EBS912	5	N	Dropout Enrollment Base, Grades 9 through 12
DRP912	6	N	Dropout Rate, Grades 9 through 12
TOTDPL	7	N	Total Diploma Count
AFGEB	8	N	Total AFGR Enrollment Base
AFGR	9	N	Total Average Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR)
TOTOHC	10	N	Total Other High School Completion Certificate (OHC) Recipients

Appendix B. State-wide Item Non-Response and State Specific Notes

<u>State-wide Item Non-Response</u>—Maine, South Carolina, the Department of Defense Dependents Schools, the Bureau of Indian Education, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, American Samoa, and Guam did not report completion data for the 2007–08 school year.

The Department of Defense Dependents Schools, the Bureau of Indian Education, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands did not report dropout data for 2007–08. Puerto Rico reported dropout counts that would have resulted in dropout rates below 1 percent, an unreasonably low rate for any state or jurisdiction, and were thereby suppressed. Vermont suppressed any dropout count below 10 prior to submitting data to the CCD. This resulted in more missing data than available data. Because of their suppression the CCD has suppressed all dropout data for the state of Vermont.

For the 2007–08 collection dropout data, it was not always possible to distinguish true zero counts of dropouts from missing data (see section E., Data values, for more information about zero counts and missing data.) NCES identified all districts with zero reported dropouts and a 2007–08 student membership in grades 9–12 of 400 or more students. These zero values of dropouts were changed to missing except in cases for which the state CCD coordinator confirmed that there were zero dropouts for the district. NCES also identified all districts with 20 or more student enrolled in grade 12 and zero reported diplomas. These zero values for diplomas were changed to missing unless the state CCD coordinator confirmed the reported zero.

APPENDIX C. Value Distribution Table

Appendix C. Value Distribution Table
NCES Common Core of Data Public-Use Local Education Agency Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08

Table C–1   Value distribution for numeric variables: School year 2007–08

Variable name	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Missing (-1)	Not Applicable (-2)	Suppressed Low count (-3)	Suppressed High count (-4)
TOTD912	0	36160	62.6	262	5812	2378	45
EBS912	0	274832	1198.6	25	5417	0	0
DRP912	0	162.69993	4.5	262	5978	2378	45
TOTDPL	0	43365	252.8	913	5395	0	0
AFGEB	0	71482	328.2	36	6714	0	0
AFGR	0	161.499939	81.0	551	6788	0	0
TOTOHC	0	3465	17.4	2788	12025	0	0

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "NCES Common Core of Data Public-Use Local Education Agency Dropout and Completion Data File," School Year 2007–08, Version 1a.

APPENDIX D. Dropout Reporting Practices and Guidelines

APPENDIX D. Dropout Reporting Practices and Guidelines
NCES Common Core of Data Public-Use Local Education Agency Dropout and
Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08

Definition of Dropouts

Dropouts
For purposes of this collection, a dropout is defined as a student who:
1. was enrolled in school at some time during the school year and was **not** enrolled on October 1 of the following school year, **or**
2. was **not** enrolled on October 1 of the school year although was expected to be in membership (i.e., was not reported as a dropout the year before), **and**
3. has **not** graduated from high school or completed a state or district–approved educational program, **and**
4. did **not** meet any of the following exclusionary conditions:
   a) transfer to another public school district, private school, or state– or district–approved educational program;
   b) temporary school–recognized absence due to suspension or illness; or
   c) death.

For the definition above, the following applies:
- The phrase "graduated from high school or completed" means individuals who graduated from high school or completed some other education program that is approved by the state or local education agency.
- The phrase "state or district-approved education program" means one that leads to the receipt of formal recognition of completion from school authorities. It may **INCLUDE** special education programs, home-based instruction, and programs administered by a secondary education agency (but **NOT** adult or postsecondary education) leading to a GED-based diploma or some other certification differing from the regular diploma. Programs recognized as legitimate by the state are considered approved even if the public education system does not directly administer them; home schooling and charter schools are examples of such programs.
- In determine whether the exclusionary condition of "transfer to another …" applies, SEAs must confirm by a method selected by the state or school district. A transcript request, withdrawal notice signed by a parent that includes assurances the student will be enrolled elsewhere, and the like are acceptable. States are discouraged from accepting hearsay reports or unsubstantiated statements of intent from departing students.

How do I handle students who transfer to adult education?
Students who enroll in adult education programs are counted as dropouts **unless the elementary/secondary school system remains responsible for the student**. The intent of this guideline is to ensure that students who do not complete a program, and for whom the district no longer takes responsibility, are counted as dropouts.
- Transferring to an alternative education setting, if it is part of the elementary/secondary education system, is not considered dropping out. For example, students enrolled in elementary/secondary education in prisons, hospitals, "store front" locations or other nontraditional locations are not dropouts if the program is part of the elementary/secondary system. This means that a student who enrolls in a school-operated program for high-risk students **is not a dropout**, even if the program is preparing the student to take the GED examination.
- A student who leaves the public elementary/secondary school and enrolls in adult education **is a dropout**. The exception is when the public school system monitors the student's enrollment and reports the student as a dropout if the student drops out of the adult program. An example is a cooperative arrangement between a public school district and a local technical institute that provides GED preparation for students referred directly by the district. The district counts as dropouts the referred students who do not complete the GED study program.
- Students who drop out during the 2007-08 school year but who have obtained a completion credential, such as a GED-based diploma or certificate of completion, on October 1, 2008 are **NOT** reported as dropouts for SY 2007-08.

How do I count early college admissions students?
An early college admissions student (i.e., one who transfers to a postsecondary program leading to a baccalaureate or associate's degree) is **NOT** a dropout.

How do I count students that completed 12th grade but did not complete all graduation requirements?
Students who fail to meet some graduation requirements, and who leave school without a diploma or other credential, are dropouts even if they have completed the 12th grade.

APPENDIX D. Dropout Reporting Practices and Guidelines
NCES Common Core of Data Public-Use Local Education Agency Dropout and Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08

How do I count students that have left the United States?
Students who leave the United States are not considered to be dropouts even if the school district cannot document the student's subsequent enrollment in school.

How can I determine if the student is a dropout?
The following chart summarizes how to determine if a student is a dropout:

A Student Who:	Dropout?
Graduated or received some other recognized credential, such as a certificate of attendance or GED.	No
Only attended summer school in this school district (i.e., was not enrolled during the regular school year).	No
Left school without diploma or other certification after passing age up to which the district was required to provide a free, public education.	Yes
Died.	No
Is gone; status is unknown.	Yes
Moved to another district in this or some other state, not known to be in school.	Yes
Moved out of the United States, enrollment status not known.	No
Transferred, enrolled in another public school, a private school, or charter school.	No
Transferred, enrolled in home schooling.	No
Transferred, enrolled in early college (baccalaureate or associate's program).	No
Is in an institution that is **NOT** primarily academic (military, possibly Job Corps, corrections, etc.) and offers a secondary education program.	No
Is in an institution that is **NOT** primarily academic (military, possibly Job Corps, corrections, etc.) and does not offer a secondary education program.	Yes
Is **NOT** in school but known to be planning to enroll late (e.g., extended family vacation, seasonal work).	No
Is **NOT** in school but known to be ill, verified as legitimate.	No
Is **NOT** in school but known to be ill, **NOT** verified as legitimate.	Yes
Is **NOT** in school but known to be suffering long-term illness and **NOT** receiving education services (residential drug treatment, severe physical or mental illness).	No
Is **NOT** in school but known to be suspended or expelled and their term of suspension or expulsion is **NOT** yet over.	No
Is **NOT** in school but known to be suspended or expelled and their term of suspension or expulsion is over.	Yes
Is **NOT** in school but known to be expelled with **NO** option to return.	Yes
Is **NOT** in school but known to be expelled and enrolled in another school and/or district.	No
Is in a nontraditional education setting, such as hospital/homebound instruction, residential special education, correctional institution, community or technical college where the program is administered by an agency that is considered a special school district or extension of a regular school district.	No
Is in a nontraditional education setting, such as hospital/homebound instruction, residential special education, correctional institution, community or technical college where the program is an off-campus offering of regular school district.	No
Is in a nontraditional education setting, such as hospital/homebound instruction, residential special education, correctional institution, community or technical college where the program is classified as adult education that is **not** approved, administered or tracked by a regular school district.	Yes

APPENDIX E. Computation Instructions

COMPUTATION OF DROPOUT AND ENROLLMENT COUNT FIELDS

GRADE-LEVEL DROPOUT AND ASSOCIATED ENROLLMENT COUNTS: Grade-level dropout counts are reported at the school district level. Grade-level enrollment counts are reported at the school level. These enrollment counts are aggregated to the district level from the schools associated with each school district using the following formulas:

$$D_S = \Sigma\, D_D \quad \{\text{where } D_D >= 0 \text{ and } E_D >= 0\}$$
$$E_S = \Sigma\, E_D \quad \{\text{where } D_D >= 0 \text{ and } E_D >= 0\}$$
$$M_S = \Sigma\, E_D \quad \{\text{where } D_D < 0 \text{ and } E_D >= 0\}$$

$$\text{If } M_S / (E_S + M_S) > 0.2 \text{ then } D_S = -1 \text{ and } E_S = -1$$

D_S represents the state-level dropout count.
D_D represents the district-level dropout count,
E_D represents the district-level enrollment count,
E_S represents the state-level enrollment count,
M_S represents the enrollment count associated with missing dropout counts, and
-1 is the numeric representation of missing for NCES datasets.

The last operation is a test to determine if the available dropout data represents at least 80 percent of the total, state-level student population. This method ensures that any observation that contributes to a numerator for a state-level dropout rate also contributes to the denominator and vise-versa. D_S and E_S are both reported on the State Dropout and Completion Data File, M_S is not reported but is necessary for the calculation.

COMPUTATION OF DROPOUT RATE FIELDS

The following method is used to compute dropout rates in the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD) reports, unless otherwise noted:

$$Rg = Dg/Eg$$

where Rg = the grade 9–12 dropout rate (rounded to a single decimal place), Dg = the number of grade 9–12 dropouts, and Eg = the grade 9–12 enrollment.

COMPUTATION OF AVERAGED FRESHMAN GRADUATION RATE FIELDS

The Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR) is the number of regular diploma recipients in a given year divided by the average of the membership in grades 8, 9, and 10, reported 5, 4, and 3 years earlier, respectively. For example, the denominator of the 2007–08 AFGR was the average of 8th-grade membership in 2003–04, 9th-grade membership in 2004–05, and 10th-grade membership in 2005–06. Ungraded students are prorated into these grades. Averaging these three grades provides an estimate of the number of first-time freshmen in the class of 2004–05 in order to estimate the on-time graduation rate for 2007–08.

APPENDIX E. Computation Instructions
NCES Common Core of Data Public-Use Local Education Agency Dropout and
Completion Data File: School Year 2007–08

The following method is used to compute AFGRs in CCD reports, unless otherwise noted:

$$AFGR = \text{Regular Diplomas}_{(x)}/\text{mean}(8^{th}\text{-grade prorated enrollment}_{(x-4)}, 9^{th}\text{-grade prorated enrollment}_{(x-3)}, \text{ and } 10^{th}\text{-grade prorated enrollment}_{(x-2)})$$

where x = the school year for which diploma recipients were counted.

COMPUTATION OF AFGR AND DROPOUT RATE ENROLLMENT BASE FIELDS

Proration of ungraded students. Student membership data that comprise the denominator for the AFGR are taken from the CCD State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education data file. The membership data that were used to create the enrollment base (denominator) for the 2007–08 dropout rate are taken from the CCD Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey data file. The grade-level membership data were aggregated to the LEA level from schools associated with the LEA.

To compute enrollment base fields for both AFGRs and dropout rates, ungraded enrollment within each agency is redistributed across other grades in proportion to the graded enrollment. The following steps are used to prorate ungraded enrollments into graded enrollments:

1. Calculate the number of students in each grade (PK, KG, grade 1, …, grade 12) and the number of ungraded students by summing enrollments as reported by grade by race/ethnicity by gender. Enrollments are reported by grade by race/ethnicity by gender in one of five racial/ethnic categories (American Indian/Alaska Native; Asian/Pacific Islander; Hispanic; Black, non-Hispanic; and White, non-Hispanic) and one of three gender categories (male, female, and gender unknown).

2. Create a sixth race/ethnicity count of enrollments ("unreported race/ethnicity") by subtracting the totals calculated in step 1 from the reported grade total (e.g., total PK, total KG, total grade 1,…, total ungraded). (In the CCD, states can report students in a grade total without reporting the same students in a grade by race/ethnicity by gender category.)

3. Prorate ungraded American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Black, non-Hispanic, and White, non-Hispanic students into the graded enrollments by race/ethnicity by gender counts.

4. Prorate ungraded "unreported race/ethnicity" students into the "unreported race/ethnicity" counts by grade.

5. Calculate each grade's total prorated enrollment by summing prorated grade by race/ethnicity by gender counts for each of the five race/ethnicity categories and adding the prorated "unreported race/ethnicity" grade count.

Dropout enrollment base fields are composed of enrollment data from the same year as the dropout count (e.g., dropout enrollment base fields for school year 2007–08 dropouts are computed from school year 2007–08 enrollment data). AFGR enrollment base fields are an

estimate of first-time freshmen 4 years prior to the graduation count (e.g., the AFGR enrollment base field for school year 2007–08 is an estimate of first-time freshman in school year 2004–05). Therefore, to compute the AFGR enrollment base fields, the proration of ungraded students as described above is performed for 8th-grade membership in 2003–04, 9th-grade membership in 2004–05, and 10th-grade membership in 2005–06. Averaging these three grades provides an estimate of the number of first-time freshmen in the class of 2004–05 in order to estimate the on-time graduation rate for 2007–08.