# 2022 Dashboard Technical Guide: GRADUATION RATE INDICATOR

A Grades Nine through Twelve Indicator



Prepared by the California Department of Education

Available on the CDE California School Dashboard

and System of Support Web Page at:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/dashboard>

**December 2022**

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### About this Mini-Guide, Resources, and Contacts

#### About this “Mini-Guide”

In prior years, the Dashboard Technical Guide was offered as one large downloadable file consisting of over 260 pages. Beginning with the 2022 California School Dashboard (Dashboard), the guide has been divided into multiple sections (or mini-guides) to allow viewers to download only the topics of interest. However, to ensure that you do not **miss important information and business rules** pertaining to the entire Dashboard, we encourage you to review as many of these mini-guides as possible:

* Access the full guide through the California Department of Education (CDE)2022 Dashboard Technical Guide web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardguide22.asp>.

#### Resources

* The new **Graduation Rate Indicator** **web page** (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardgrad.asp>) offers all resources related to this state indicator.
* The **Dashboard Communications Toolkit** (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardtoolkit.asp>) was developed to support local educational agencies (LEAs), parents and communities bring the 2022 Dashboard closer to home.
* The **Dashboard Resources** web page (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardresources.asp>) contains general and technical information, tools for educators, translations, and downloadable data files.

#### Contacts

Questions about:

* State Indicators (Academic, College/Career, Chronic Absenteeism, English Learner Progress Graduation Rate, and Suspension Rate), contact the Analysis, Measurement, and Accountability Reporting Division by email at [Dashboard@cde.ca.gov](mailto:Dashboard@cde.ca.gov).
* Logging onto the Dashboard, registering as a LEA Dashboard Coordinator, uploading local indicators into the Dashboard, and the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), contact the Local Agency Support Systems Office (LASSO) by e-mail at [lcff@cde.ca.gov.](mailto:lcff@cde.ca.gov.)
* California’s System of Support (Differentiated Assistance and Comprehensive School Support), contact the System of Support Office (SSO) by e-mail at [CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov](mailto:CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov).
* California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS), contact the CALPADS-CSIS Service Desk at [calpads-support@cde.ca.gov](mailto:calpads-support@cde.ca.gov).

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### 2022 Dashboard

#### Requirement to Restart Accountability

For the past two school years (2019–20 and 2020–21), the accountability requirements for California were waived or adjusted due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education communities. However, the requirements to hold LEAs and schools accountable for student outcomes have resumed with the 2021–22 school year and the release of the 2022 Dashboard.

Due to the restrictions imposed by Assembly Bill 130, the CDE is required to **only** report **current year data** (or **Status**) for the 2022 Dashboard. Therefore, unlike in prior years, the 2022 Dashboard **does not** display the difference from prior year (also known as Change) and performance level colors. With the reporting of Status only for the 2022 Dashboard, performance levels are reported using one of five Status levels (ranging from Very High, High, Medium, Low, and Very Low). These levels are reported for all state indicators except for the College/Career Indicator, and the data are based on information submitted by LEAs to the CDE for students enrolled during the **2021–22 school year.** (Next year, Change and performance level colors will be reported within the 2023 Dashboard.)

With the adjustment to report only Status levels on the 2022 Dashboard, the design of the Dashboard cannot display the typical color gauges (i.e., Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, and Blue). Instead, the CDE has revised the design of the Dashboard to reflect Status Only by using “cell phone bars” to reflect the five Status levels. Refer to Figure 1 below and refer to [Appendix A](#AppendixA) for the descriptive text.

**Figure 1: Five Status Levels Represented through “Cell Phone Bars”**



### Introduction

#### What is this Indicator?

The Graduation Rate Indicator is one of several state indicators that the CDE reports on the Dashboard (<http://www.caschooldashboard.org/>). It represents the percentage of students who graduate high school within a specified timeframe. While a high school graduation rate typically reflects whether students – who are part of a four-year cohort – graduated within four years, the graduation rate for the Dashboard also includes the count of fifth-year graduates. This inclusion was approved by the State Board of Education (SBE) in July 2019 to provide schools the opportunity to demonstrate progress and success with students who may need additional time to earn a regular high school diploma (e.g., students with disabilities and English learners).

**Who counts as a graduate?** For a student to be counted as a graduate, the student must receive a regular high school diploma.

The requirement to use a regular diploma as criteria for the Graduation Rate Indicator is based on a federal mandate and guidance provided through an audit by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General. Therefore, students who pass or complete all other high school equivalency tests, such as the GED, California High School Proficiency Examination, Special Education Certificate of Completion, and adult education diplomas are not counted as graduates.

#### Who is Held Accountable for this Indicator?

***All*** LEAs and schools with students enrolled in ***grade twelve*** that also have **30 or more students in the denominator of the combined four -and five-year graduation rate** will be held accountable for this indicator. **“**Accountable” means that the data will be used to determine LEAs and schools eligible for support (i.e., Differentiated Assistance at the LEA level and Comprehensive Support and Improvement/Additional Targeted Support and Improvement at the school level).

**Less than 30 Students:**

* While the Dashboard does report data (i.e., Status) for **11 to 29 students**, it is not used to determine eligibility for LEA and school support and are reported for informational purposes only. Note that in these instances, a Status level (i.e., “cell phone bars”) is not displayed on the Dashboard.
* Both Status and Status levels (i.e., “cell phone bars”) are not displayed on the Dashboard for **less than 11 students** to protect these students’ privacy and therefore LEAs, schools, and student groups with less than 11 students are not held accountable.

For more information on who is held accountable, please view the Introductory section for this guide “California’s Accountability System and the Dashboard,” which is available on the CDE 2022 Dashboard Technical Guide web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardguide22.asp>.

##### Modified Dashboard Alternative School Status (DASS) Graduation Rate

**Beginning with the 2022 Dashboard, DASS schools will receive the combined four-and five-year graduation rate**, and this rate will be **used to determine eligibility for Differentiated Assistance** at the LEA-level and Comprehensive Support and Improvement **(CSI)** and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement **(ATSI)** at the school-level.

In prior years, the DASS graduation rate was used for accountability for DASS schools. However, this is no longer allowable due to concerns raised by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) regarding California’s use of a DASS modified graduation rate and academic indicator on the Dashboard. The ED issued a subsequent decision in August 2022 to decline a waiver request from the SBE of the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to allow for continued use of the DASS graduation rate.

**Please note** thatthis denial affects the requirements under **federal law** (ESSA). **State law**, as provided by the California *Education Code* Section 52052(d) continues to permit the use of the DASS program and reporting of data separately for alternative schools. Therefore, the CDE will:

* Continue to produce and display the one-year DASS graduation rate, however it will be limited for informational purposes only on the 2022 Dashboard and the School Dashboard Additional Reports (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dbadditionalrpts.asp>).
* Continue to seek and recommend opportunities to the SBE to display DASS data in a prominent manner on future Dashboards and in other public reporting of data, such as the CDE’s web reporting system, DataQuest. The reporting of these data is critical to LEAs who support at-promise students in alternative school settings.

Further information in regards to the use of DASS for accountability can be accessed through the August 2022 SBE Memorandum at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/aug22memogad01.docx> and through the September 2022 SBE Agenda Item at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr22/documents/sep22item03.docx>.

#### What is the Data Source?

Graduation data are reported in the CALPADS by LEAs and schools. Specifically, these data are extracted from the CALPADS Operational Data Store (ODS) immediately after the close of the CALPADS End-of-Year (EOY) 3 data collection.

#### Differences between DataQuest and Dashboard

##### Four-Year Cohort (DataQuest) versus Combined Rate (Dashboard)

In DataQuest, the four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) is reported for all comprehensive high schools, DASS schools, charter schools, and non-charter schools. When students first enroll in grade nine, they become part of the denominator of a four-year graduation rate. The ACGR is the number of students who graduate from high school in four years with a regular high school diploma, divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class.

In contrast, the Dashboard reports a combined four- and five-year graduation rate, which includes only those students who graduate in four or five-years with a traditional high school diploma:

* Fourth-year graduates from the most current graduation class (e.g., students in the Class of 2022), and
* Fifth-year graduates from the prior graduation class (e.g., students in Class of 2021 who graduated as fifth-year seniors at the end of 2022).

As noted earlier, all schools, including DASS schools, receive the combined four-and five-year graduation rate.

**Five-Year Graduation Rate**

In DataQuest, the five-year graduation rate is a comprehensive calculation of students graduating within five years of starting grade nine.

* The numerator is the number of students from the previous year’s four-year cohort who graduate, with a regular high school diploma, within five years. It also includes students who transfer from another entity and graduate in their fifth year.
* The denominator is the number of students who form the previous year’s four-year graduation cohort and includes any fifth-year graduates who transfer in from another entity. It is possible for a student to be in two cohorts. A student who, in the fifth year, transfers from the final four-year cohort school will be added to the cohort of the receiving school or district *ONLY* if the student graduates in year five; however, the student will remain in the cohort of the sending school regardless of the outcome in year five.

In the Dashboard, the five-year rate is reported for *informational purposes only*.

* For the school level rate, the numerator is the number of students from the previous year four-year cohort who graduate from high school within five years with a regular high school diploma. This number also includes any cohort student who transfers from another entity during the selected year and ultimately graduates in year five.
* The denominator is the number of students who form the previous four-year adjusted cohort for the graduating class, and any cohort student transferring from another entity in year five who subsequently graduates. It is possible for a student to be in two cohorts. Students who transfer from their final four-year cohort school or district to another school or district in year five will be added to the cohort of the receiving school or district *ONLY* if they graduate in year five and will remain in the cohort of the sending school regardless of outcome in year five.

**Inclusion of Charter Schools**

In DataQuest, charter schools are included in their authorizer’s report, although they can be filtered out. In contrast, charter schools are treated as LEAs under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and are therefore not included in their authorizer’s report for the Dashboard.

**District of Residence Rule**

For the Dashboard, the data outcomes for students with disabilities (SWDs) are “sent back” to their district of residence. Therefore, the district where the student geographically resides is held accountable for their graduation outcomes and that data is included in the district of residence’s Graduation Rate Indicator. On the other hand, DataQuest does not apply the district of residence rule.

For further information on this rule, see the section of “Application of the District of Residence Rule” in the next section below.

### Graduation Rate Rules

#### What’s New Since the 2019 Dashboard?

Because the last reporting of the Graduation Rate Indicator occurred with the 2019 Dashboard, this section identifies changes for this indicator on the 2022 Dashboard. (Note that in 2020 and 2021, the graduation rate data were released for informational purposes within the CDE School Dashboard Additional Reports web site.)

##### ALL LEAs and Schools, including DASS Schools, Receive the Combined Four- and Five-Year Rate

As mentioned earlier, due to the ED’s denial of California’s use of modified methods for DASS schools for accountability, the combined four- and five-year graduation rate is applied to all schools, including DASS schools. Therefore, this combined rate is also applied at the LEA-level whereas in the past, the LEA received a blended rate consisting of the combined four-and five-year rate plus the DASS graduation rate.

##### Continued Application of the District of Residence Rule

Students with disabilities (SWDs) often receive services outside of the district where the student geographically resides if the district – also known as the *district of special education accountability (DSEA)* – is unable to provide the full range of special education services that the student requires. In these instances, the DSEA will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with another LEA or county office of education so that the services can be provided to the SWDs.

To ensure that the DSEA (which receives federal funding—under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—for their SWDs) is held accountable for the outcomes of their students, all SWD results are “sent back” to the DSEA and included in the DSEA’s 2022 Dashboard. This means that the DSEA is held accountable for all the data generated by the student (e.g., assessment results, suspensions, absences, graduation, and course completion).

This rule has been applied since the 2020 reporting of the graduation rate data on the CDE School Dashboard Additional Reports web site. For more information about this rule, refer to the Changes to the District of Residence Rule for Students with Disabilities flyer posted on the CDE web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/documents/districtresidencerule.pdf>.

##### Small Student Populations and Three-by-Five- Colored Tables – Not Applied for 2022

In prior Dashboard reporting years, a separate methodology was applied to LEAs, schools, and student groups with small student populations as they had more Red (or Blue) performance levels compared to LEAs and schools with large student populations. This separate methodology—known as the “Three-by-Five”—removes both the “Increased Significantly” and “Declined Significantly” **Change levels** thereby limiting the large swings in the **Change data** that can be triggered by just a few students.

Because the Three-by-Five methodology is founded on the removal of the “Increased Significantly” and “Declined Significantly” Change levels, this methodology **will not be applied** for the 2022 Dashboard as Change is not calculated this year. This methodology will be applied next year as Change will be calculated and used to determine performance level colors for the 2023 Dashboard.

#### Which Students Are Included in the Graduation Rate?

The premise of the combined four-and five-year graduation rate is to use the four-year cohort graduation rate as the base but provide additional credit for any graduates from the previous year’s cohort (i.e., students who graduate in their fifth year).

Example of Combined Four-and Five-Year Graduation Rate

Emerald High School has 100 students in the Class of 2022 (the four-year graduation cohort). Of these 100 students, 95 graduated within four years (i.e., by the end of the 2021–22 school year).

Also in 2022, five students from the previous year’s four-year graduation cohort (Class of 2021) graduated at the end of the school year. These five students are counted in the combined four-and five-year graduation rate.

***Numerator:*** Total number of graduates:

95 graduates (Class of 2022) + 5 graduates (Class of 2021 who graduated in 2022) = 100

***Denominator:*** Sum of the 2022 four-year graduation cohort and the additional five-year graduates from the previous year’s cohort*:*

100 (Class of 2022 cohort) + 5 (Class of 2021 fifth year graduates) = 105

***Combined rate*** ***is***:

100 *divided by* 105 = 0.9523 or 95.2 percent

##### Denominator

As noted above, two sets of students are included in the denominator of the combined graduation rate:

1. **SET ONE: Students in the current four-year graduation cohort.** A student becomes a part of a graduation cohort, or high school graduating class, when the student first enrolls in grade nine. Students are placed in a cohort regardless of which school they enroll in. Once a student enters grade nine, the student remains in that cohort and is expected to graduate within four years. For the 2022 Dashboard, the four-year graduation cohort is the Class of 2022. These are students who enrolled in grade nine in 2018–19 and met the inclusion rules (see these rules below).
   * Note that any student who transfers in from out-of-state, a private school, or a different country – as grade nine, grade ten, grade eleven, or grade twelve – are included in the cohort.
2. **SET TWO: Students who graduated in five years from the prior graduating class.** The second set of students included in the denominator of the combined four-and five-year graduation rate are those who enrolled in grade nine in 2017–18 (as part of the Class of 2021) and earned a high school diploma by the end of their fifth year in 2021–22. Note that these students must meet the inclusion rules identified below to be included in the denominator.

###### Denominator Inclusion Rules

The following students are **included** in the denominator of the combined graduation rate:

* **Has a grade** equal to 9, 10, 11, or 12. Note that students with these grade levels could include those in the Class of 2022. Graduates from the Class of 2021 most likely have a grade equal to 12.
* **Has a primary enrollment** (CALPADS enrollment status code 10) or a **short-term enrollment** (CALPADS enrollment status code 30)
* **Dropped out** during the last four-year period.
* **Transferred into** a school within a four-year period.
* **Lost transfers**. These are students who exited out of a school as a transfer, but never enrolled in another school by Fall Census Day.
* **Early graduates**. Students who graduate high school in less than four years are ***counted in the original cohort*** *in which they began*. For example, a student who entered grade nine for the first time in 2018–19 belongs to the Class of 2022. If the student graduated in 2020–21 (after three years in high school), the student would still be included in both the numerator and denominator for the Class of 2022 graduation rate (not for the Class of 2021) even though the student received a diploma a year early.
* **Transferred to an Adult Education Program or Community College**. Students who transfer to an adult education program or community college during their four or five-years of high school without earning a regular high school diploma are included in the cohort (denominator) and counted as other transfers (excluded from the numerator).

###### Denominator Exclusion Rules

Students are **excluded** from the combined rate if, during the four-year period, they have any of the following student exit category codes in CALPADS:

| **CALPADS Exit Category Code** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| E130 | Died |
| T180 | Transfer to Private School |
| T200 | Transfer to a High School Out of California |
| T240 | Transfer/Emigrated out of the U.S. |
| T310 | Transfer to a health facility |
| T370 | Transfer to an Institution with a High School Diploma Program |
| T460 | Transfer to home school program |

Some SWDs receive special education services specifically focused on the student’s transition from secondary education to career and college. These students who are marked with a “Y” in the “**Adult Age Students with Disabilities in Transition Status**” (field 1.34 from the Student Enrollment [SENR] file) are also excluded from the denominator of the combined rate.

###### August 15 Cut Off Date

For a student to be counted as a fourth-year graduate, the student must graduate by August 15. Fifth-year graduates must also graduate by August 15 to be counted as graduates in that year. See examples below:

* Sonya, a fourth-year student belonging to the Class of 2022 at Black Diamond High School earned her standard diploma on August 16, 2022, after finishing summer school. Because Sonya did not earn her diploma and graduate by August 15, 2022, she will not be counted as a four-year graduate for the Class of 2022. Rather, she will be counted as a fifth-year graduate in Black Diamond High School’s combined four- and five-year rate in the following year in 2023. Therefore, Sonya will be counted as a:
  + Non-graduate in the 2022 Dashboard (i.e., included in the denominator but excluded in the numerator) and
  + A fifth-year graduate in the 2023 Dashboard (i.e., included in both the numerator and denominator).
* Richard, a fifth-year high school student at Crystal High School earned his standard diploma on August 15, 2022. Because he graduated by August 15, he will be counted as a fifth-year graduate, and therefore, be included in both the numerator and denominator of Crystal High School’s combined four- and five-year rate for the 2022 Dashboard.

###### District of Residence

At the LEA-level **only,** SWDs may also be included in the denominator if they have a **District of Special Education Accountability (DSEA)** in the CALPADS SPED file (field #14.16). (This rule applies to **LEAs only.** All schools are held accountable for their SWDs.)

SWDs are included only if they meet the denominator inclusion rules identified in the section above.

* *Example:* Ruby Unified sent Amber, a grade twelve student, to Opal County Office of Education (COE) to ensure that she received appropriate Special Education services. Amber had been enrolled at Opal COE since grade nine and is in the Class of 2022. The DSEA field in CALPADS (SPED file; field #14.16) identified Ruby Unified as the DSEA. Because Amber is part of the four-year graduation cohort for the Class of 2022, she will be included in the denominator of Ruby Unified’s combined four- and five-year graduation rate. (If Amber graduates from Opal COE, she will also be included in the numerator of Ruby Unified’s combined four- and five-year graduation rate. If she does not graduate, she will be excluded from the numerator.)

Note that LEAs can confirm which of their SWDs’ data are (1) sent to other entities and (2) attributed to their LEA by another entity by requesting an extract that identifies which students are being sent or attributed based on the County-District Code in the DSEA field. This extract can be downloaded directly from CALPADS and is accessible by CALPADS LEA Administrators.

For complete steps on how to request and download the DSEA extract, please refer to the CALPADS User Manual District of Special Education Accountability (DSEA) Extract web page at <https://documentation.calpads.org/Extracts/DSEAExtract/#district-of-special-education-accountability-dsea-extract>. You can also review information on the DSEA in the CALPADS to Dashboard Handbook at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardresources.asp#handbookcalpads>.

##### Numerator

###### Numerator Inclusion Rules

Students are **included** in the numerator if they earn a high school diploma by the end of their fourth or fifth year of high school. The following exit categories and completion codes in CALPADS are used to identify graduates:

| **CALPADS Exit/Completion Code** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| E230/100 | Graduated, standard high school diploma |

###### Students Graduating Under Reduced Credits

*Education Code* allows for specific students to graduate under reduced credits (e.g., Assembly Bill 167, 216, 1806, and 2121). These students are counted in the numerator of the graduation rate if they received a diploma. Whether a student meets the graduation requirements is a function determined at the LEA-level. Therefore, as long as a student receives a standard diploma, the student is counted as a graduate.

###### Numerator Exclusion Rules

The following students are **NOT considered graduates and are EXCLUDED from the numerator** as they do not meet the federal definition of a “regular high school diploma”:

* **Special Education Certificate of Completion**: Students who earn this certificate are excluded from the numerator but included in the denominator.
* **High School Equivalency Certificate:** Students who earn a GED or HiSET are excluded from the numerator but included in denominator.
* **Adult Education High School Diploma: Students who receive an adult education diploma** are not counted as traditional high school graduates. These students are excluded from the numerator but included in the denominator.
* **California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE):** These students are excluded from the numerator but included in the denominator.

#### When Students Transfer, Who is Held Accountable?

All first-time grade nine students are included in a cohort. Once a student enters a cohort, they remain in that cohort. If the student moves to a different school or LEA, they are removed from the first school’s/LEA’s cohort and included in the second school’s/LEA’s cohort. Therefore, **the last school** where the student is enrolled is held accountable for the student’s graduation outcome.

Example of When a Student Transfers

In fall 2018, Maude enrolled in Garnet School as a grade nine student. Because she was a first-time grade nine student, Maude was included in the 2021–22 (Class of 2022) graduation cohort and expected to graduate in June 2022.

In summer 2021, Maude’s family moved to a different neighborhood. That fall, Maude enrolled in Onyx School for the 2021–22 school year and graduated with a diploma as a grade twelve student at the end of the year.

Because Maude moved, she is removed from the 2021–22 graduation cohort (denominator) for Garnet School and added to the 2021–22 graduation cohort for Onyx School. She is also included in the numerator because she graduated from Onyx with a regular diploma.

#### Calculation Formula for Status

**Graduation Rate Formula**

Total number of students in the **Class of 2022** who graduated in four years by earning a regular high school diploma +total number of students in the **Class of 2021** who graduated in five years by earning a regular high school diploma

**divided by**

Total number of students who entered grade nine for the first time in 2018–19 for the **Class of 2022** +total number of students in the **Class of 2021** who graduated in five years by earning a regular high school diploma

#### Status Cut Scores

Because **only** **Status** can be reported for the 2022 Dashboard, **only the Status cut scores** are applied to determine the **Status levels** for the 2022 Dashboard. Change cut scores are not applied. Change levels and performance level colors are not reported.

* To access the Status cut scores, please refer to the CDE Status Cut Scores for 2022 Dashboard web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/perfcutscores22.asp>.
* To access Status, Change and performance colors that were used in prior Dashboard reporting, please refer to the CDE 2019 Five-by-Five Colored Tables web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/fivebyfivecolortables19.asp>.

#### School Dashboard Additional Reports

Designed for educators, the School Dashboard Additional Reports (<https://www6.cde.ca.gov/californiamodel/>) offer information and data beyond what are reported on the Dashboard, including summarized views across all state indicators. Two reports specific to the Graduation Rate Indicator are the:

* **Graduation Rate Report:** This report displays the number and percentage of students included in the combined four-and five-year graduation rate and disaggregates the data to identify the number of fifth-year graduates.
* **2022 Status Placement Reports:** These reports help LEAs and schools quickly identify which one of the five Status levels all student groups achieved on the state indicator. It also does the same for all schools within an LEA.

#### Student Groups

To access student group definitions and the data used to determine the student groups for this indicator, please view the mini-guide titled “California’s Accountability System and the Dashboard,” which is posted on the CDE2022 Dashboard Technical Guide web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardguide22.asp>.

### School and LEA Examples

#### Example 1: Lapis Lazuli High School

(A comprehensive high school serving students in grades 9–12)

###### Step 1: Determine the Denominator

At the end of the 2021–22 school year, this school had:

* 300 students in the four-year cohort who entered grade nine in 2018–19 (Class of 2022). The school also had 25 students who transferred in and entered the four-year cohort (Class of 2022) as grade ten, eleven, or twelve students. Of these 325 students:
  + All of them had either a primary enrollment (CALPADS enrollment code 10) or short-term enrollment (CALPADS enrollment code 30)
  + 2 students had a “Y” in the Adult Age Students with Disabilities in Transition Status field
* 3 fifth-year students from the Class of 2021 graduated at the end of the 2021–22 school year with a standard diploma. All students had a primary enrollment.

To determine the denominator, first review the enrollment records. Because the rate only includes students with primary and short-term enrollments, all 325 students in the Class of 2022 and the three fifth-year graduates in the Class of 2021 can be counted. Next, because two of the 325 students in the Class of 2022 were SWDs with a “Y” in the “Adult Age Students with Disabilities in Transition Status” field, these students are excluded. Therefore, the denominator of the rate is:

(325 students in the Class of 2022 – 2 students with “Y” in Adult Age Students with Disabilities in Transition Status) + (3 fifth-year graduates from the Class of 2021) = **326**

###### Step 2: Determine the Numerator

Of the 326 students in the denominator:

* 310 four-year cohort students received a standard diploma
* 3 fifth-year students received a standard diploma
* 2 received a GED (four-year cohort students)
* 7 received a Special Education Certificate of Completion (four-year cohort students)

Because only students who receive a standard diploma can be counted as graduates, based on the information above, the numerator is:

310 (Class of 2022 with standard diploma) + 3 (fifth-year students in the Class of 2021 with standard diploma) = **313**

###### Step 3: Determine the Graduation Rate or Status

The school’s calculated 2021–22 combined four- and five-year graduation rate or Status is:

313 (Step 2) ***divided by*** 326 (Step 1) = 0.9601 or **96.0%.**

###### Step 4: Determine the Status Level

The school’s Status level is determined using the **Status cut scores** identified on the CDE Status Cut Scores for 2022 Dashboard web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/perfcutscores22.asp>. Based on the school’s graduation rate of 96.0 percent, the school has a **Status level of High**, which is highlighted with a thick purple border in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Graduation Rate Cut Scores and Status Levels**

| **Status Level** | **Cut Scores** |
| --- | --- |
| **Very High** | 95.0% or greater in Current Year |
| **High** | 90.5% to less than 95.0% in Current Year |
| **Medium** | 80.0% to less than 90.5% in Current Year |
| **Low** | 68.0% to less than 80.0% in Current Year |
| **Very Low** | Less than 68.0% in Current Year |

#### Example 2: Sunstone DASS Academy

(A DASS high school serving students in grades 9–12)

###### Step 1: Determine the Denominator

Because the U.S. Department of Education denied California’s use of the DASS graduation rate for accountability, beginning with the 2022 Dashboard, all DASS schools receive the combined four- and five-year graduation rate.

At the end of the 2021–22 school year, this school had:

* 85 students in the four-year cohort who entered grade nine in 2018–19 (Class of 2022). The school also had 5 students who transferred in and entered the four-year cohort (Class of 2022) as grade ten, eleven, or twelve students. Of these 90 students:
  + All of them had either a primary enrollment (CALPADS enrollment code 10) or short-term enrollment (CALPADS enrollment code 30)
  + 2 students had a “Y” in the Adult Age Students with Disabilities in Transition Status field
* 3 fifth-year students from the Class of 2021 graduated at the end of the 2021–22 school year with a standard diploma. All students had a primary enrollment.

To determine the denominator, first review the enrollment records. Because the rate only includes students with primary and short-term enrollments, all 90 students in the Class of 2022 and the three fifth-year graduates in the Class of 2021 can be counted. Next, because two of the 90 students in the Class of 2022 were SWDs with a “Y” in the “Adult Age Students with Disabilities in Transition Status” field, these students are excluded. Therefore, the denominator of the rate is:

(90 students in the Class of 2022 – 2 students with “Y” in Adult Age Students with Disabilities in Transition Status) + (3 fifth-year graduates from the Class of 2021) = **91**

###### Step 2: Determine the Numerator

Of the 91 students in the denominator:

* 65 four-year cohort students received a standard diploma
* 3 fifth-year students received a standard diploma
* 2 received a GED (four-year cohort students)
* 1 earned the CHSPE (four-year cohort students)
* 3 received a Special Education Certificate of Completion (four-year cohort students)

Because only students who receive a standard diploma can be counted as graduates, based on the information above, the numerator is:

65 (Class of 2022 students with standard diploma) + 3 (fifth-year students from the Class of 2021 with standard diploma) = **68**

###### Step 3: Determine the Graduation Rate or Status

The school’s calculated 2021–22 combined four- and five-year graduation rate or Status is:

68 (Step 2) ***divided by*** 91 (Step 1) = 0.74725 or **74.7%.**

###### Step 4: Determine the Status Level

The school’s Status level is determined using the **Status cut scores** identified on the CDE Status Cut Scores for 2022 Dashboard web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/perfcutscores22.asp>. Based on the school’s graduation rate of 74.7 percent, the school has a **Status level of Low**, which is highlighted with a thick purple border in Table 2 on the following page.

**Table 2: Graduation Rate Cut Scores and Status Levels**

| **Status Level** | **Cut Scores** |
| --- | --- |
| **Very High** | 95.0% or greater in Current Year |
| **High** | 90.5% to less than 95.0% in Current Year |
| **Medium** | 80.0% to less than 90.5% in Current Year |
| **Low** | 68.0% to less than 80.0% in Current Year |
| **Very Low** | Less than 68.0% in Current Year |

#### Example 3: Topaz Unified School District

(An LEA serving students in traditional, DASS, and charter schools from K–12)

###### Step 1: Determine the Denominator

At the end of the 2021–22 school year, based on all the students in the *traditional* and *DASS* schools (not charter schools), this LEA had:

* 3,380 students in the four-year cohort who entered grade nine in 2018–19 (Class of 2022). The district also had 20 students who transferred in and entered the four-year cohort (Class of 2022) as grade ten, eleven, or twelve students. Of these 3,400 students:
  + All of them had either a primary enrollment (CALPADS enrollment code 10) or short-term enrollment (CALPADS enrollment code 30)
  + 15 students had a “Y” in the Adult Age Students with Disabilities in Transition Status field
* 10 fifth-year students from the Class of 2021 graduated at the end of the 2021–22 school year with a standard diploma. All students had a primary enrollment.

Because the rate only includes students with primary and short-term enrollments, all 3,400 students in the Class of 2022 and the 10 fifth-year graduates in the Class of 2021 can be counted. Next, because 15 of the 3,400 students in the Class of 2022 were SWDs with a “Y” in the “Adult Age Students with Disabilities in Transition Status” field, these students are excluded.

However, before the denominator can be determined, the district of residence (or DSEA) must be considered.

###### District of Special Education Accountability

Because the District of Residence (or DSEA) rule is applied only at the LEA-level, it is critical to check if any SWDs are being “sent back” and attributed to Topaz Unified. After accessing the DSEA extract from CALPADS, there were 250 SWDs who were enrolled at Sapphire County Office of Education (COE) to receive their appropriate special education services and have been “sent back” to Topaz Unified as the DSEA. These students’ graduation data at Sapphire COE will be used to determine if they should be included in Topaz Unified’s graduation rate. For example:

* Chance was a grade twelve student in the Class of 2022 with a primary enrollment record who graduated with a standard diploma at Sapphire COE. His record also reflects the DSEA to be Topaz Unified. Because Chance had a primary enrollment record and was in the Class of 2022, his graduation outcome data is sent back to Topaz Unified and he is included in the denominator of Topaz Unified’s graduation rate. He is also included in the numerator because he graduated with a standard diploma.

After reviewing all 250 SWDs who were being sent back to Topaz Unified:

* 100 were students with primary enrollment, in the Class of 2022, and graduated with a standard diploma
* 5 were students with primary enrollment, in the Class of 2021, and graduated with a standard diploma as a fifth-year graduate
* 80 were students with a primary enrollment, in the Class of 2022, and graduated with a Special Education Certificate of Completion
* 65 were students with a primary enrollment in the Class of 2022 but did not graduate.

Based on the above information, all 250 students will be sent back or included in the denominator of Topaz Unified’s graduation rate. Therefore, the denominator of the rate is:

(3,400 students in the Class of 2022 – 15 students with “Y” in Adult Age Students with Disabilities in Transition Status) + (10 fifth-year graduates from the Class of 2021) + (250 students who are being sent back due to the DSEA) = **3,645**

###### Step 2: Determine the Numerator of the Graduation Rate

Of the 3,645 students in the denominator:

* 2,850 four-year cohort students received a standard diploma
* 10 fifth-year students received a standard diploma
* 12 received a GED (four-year cohort students)
* 7 earned the CHSPE (four-year cohort students)
* 35 received a Special Education Certificate of Completion (four-year cohort students)
* 100 DSEA students received a standard diploma (four-year cohort students)
* 5 DSEA students received a standard diploma (fifth-year students)
* 80 DSEA students received a Special Education Certificate of Completion (four-year cohort students)

Because only students who receive a standard diploma can be counted as graduates, based on the information above, the numerator is:

2,850 (Class of 2022 students with a standard diploma) + 10 (fifth-year students from the Class of 2021 with standard diploma) + 100 (DSEA students in the Class of 2022 with a standard diploma) + 5 (DSEA fifth-year students in the Class of 2021 with a standard diploma) = **2,965**

###### Step 3: Determine the Graduation Rate or Status

The LEA’s calculated 2021–22 combined four- and five-year graduation rate or Status is:

2,965 (Step 2) ***divided by*** 3,645 (Step 1) = 0.8134 or **81.3%.**

###### Step 4: Determine the Status Level

The LEA’s Status level is determined using the **Status cut scores** identified on the CDE Status Cut Scores for 2022 Dashboard web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/perfcutscores22.asp>. Based on the LEA’s graduation rate of 81.3 percent, the LEA has a **Status level of Medium**, which is highlighted with a thick purple border in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Graduation Rate Cut Scores and Status Levels**

| **Status Level** | **Cut Scores** |
| --- | --- |
| **Very High** | 95.0% or greater in Current Year |
| **High** | 90.5% to less than 95.0% in Current Year |
| **Medium** | 80.0% to less than 90.5% in Current Year |
| **Low** | 68.0% to less than 80.0% in Current Year |
| **Very Low** | Less than 68.0% in Current Year |

### Frequently Asked Questions

This section covers the most commonly asked questions about this indicator by LEAs.

* ***Question:* Does the combined four- and five-year graduation rate apply to both DASS and non-DASS schools?**

Yes. Because the U.S. Department of Education denied California’s waiver requesting the continued use of modified methods for DASS schools, beginning with the 2022 Dashboard, DASS schools no longer receive the DASS graduation rate. Rather, these schools receive the combined four- and five-year graduation rate and this rate is used to determine LEA and school support (i.e., Differentiated Assistance and CSI/ATSI).

* ***Question:* When a student transfers between two schools, is the student included in both schools’ graduation rate?**

No. Only the last school where a student is enrolled is held accountable for the student’s graduation status.

* ***Question:* I have several students who earned the GED. Are these students counted as graduates?**

No. The ED requires that only students who earn a standard diploma be counted as graduates.

* ***Question:* I have a fourth-year senior who is in the Class of 2022. The student attended summer school and graduated on August 15, 2022. Will this student be included in the graduation rate for the Class of 2022?**

Yes. Because August 15th is the cut-off date for students to be counted as a graduate, this student will be included as a graduate for the Class of 2022.

* ***Question:* Are grade 11 early graduates counted in the year that they graduate?**

No. These students are counted as graduates in the cohort that they belong to. For example, if the student was part of the Class of 2022 but graduated a year early in grade eleven, then this student will not be counted in the Class of 2021 but included as a graduate in the Class of 2022.

* ***Question:* Are students who transfer to an adult education program excluded from the denominator?**

No. Based on an audit by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General, students who transfer to an adult education program or community college during their four or five-years of high school without earning a regular high school diploma are ***included*** in the cohort (denominator). These students are also counted as other transfers and ***excluded*** from the numerator.

* ***Question:* If my graduation rate is 93.461%, does it get rounded up to the nearest tenth?**

Yes. In this instance, a graduation rate of 93.461 is rounded up to 93.5 percent.

* ***Question:* I have a student who moved in from another state and is in grade eleven. Will this student be placed in the cohort?**

Yes. The cohort is adjusted by adding any student who may transfer in from out-of-state, a private school, or a different country as grade nine, grade ten, grade eleven, or grade twelve.

* ***Question:* If, after four years, a student did not graduate, will the student be part of the denominator of the graduation rate at the end of the fourth year?**

Yes. For example, if the student enrolled in 2018–19 and did not graduate by 2021–22, the student will be included in the denominator in 2021–22 but excluded from the numerator because the student did not graduate. If the student receives a standard high school diploma in the following year (as a fifth-year senior), the student will be included in both the numerator and denominator of the combined rate in 2022–23 (i.e., 2023 Dashboard).

### Additional Local Data Sources

Another critical resource for LEAs is their own local data as it reflects an up-to-date picture of current students. Here is a local source that can be considered for use:

* On-track reports (graduation, a-g, etc.) for current twelfth grade students and students in grades nine through eleven.

### Appendix A: Descriptive Text for Images in Guide

**[Figure 1](#Figure1" \o "Anchor to Figure 1): Five Status Levels Represented through “Cell Phone Bars”**

The image shows five bar graphs lined up in a row with Status level descriptors underneath each graph. The left graph shows one of bars filled with purple with the remaining four bars in gray. Below this graph are the words “Very Low.” The next bar graph to the right shows two bars filled with purple with the remaining three bars in gray. Underneath this graph is the word “Low.” The middle graph shows three bars filled with purple with the remaining two bars in gray. Underneath this graph is the word “Medium.” The next bar graph to the right reflects four of the bars filled with purple with one bar in gray. Below this graph is the word “High.” And finally, the last bar graph to the right shows all five bars filled with purple with the words “Very High” below it. Underneath the Very Low bar graph are the words “Lowest Performance.” Underneath the Very High bar graph are the words “Highest Performance.” In between Lowest Performance and Highest Performance is a double-sided purple arrow.