

Discharge Reporting – 2012-13 School Year

Background & Methodology

Local Law 42, enacted in 2011, requires the New York City Department of Education (DOE) to report to the New York City Council by June 30, 2014 the number of students in grades 6 through 12 who were discharged, transferred, or graduated during the 2012-13 school year. This document summarizes and explains the reported data.

This law requires the reporting of discharges and graduations that occur during one school year. The DOE ordinarily presents both types of events in the context of a high school graduation cohort – the group of students who entered 9th grade in the same year. Such cohort reporting reflects discharges that occurred at any time during the cohort’s four years of high school. Graduations and discharges are ordinarily reported by cohort because cohort reporting allows the DOE and the public to measure how well schools are fulfilling their purpose: educating all students who enter their school and preparing them to earn a high school diploma.

The data required by Local Law 42 reflects a snapshot of all students enrolled in a particular school year, regardless of the year they entered 9th grade. The data included in this reporting therefore differs significantly from most other graduation and discharge results reported by the DOE. As a snapshot of students at different stages of their educational careers, data reported by school year is less valuable than cohort reporting as a measure of New York City schools’ success in keeping students engaged and moving them to graduation.

Official, Publically Reported Graduation and Dropout Rates (for context)

Graduation and Dropout Rates: The New York State Education Department and the DOE recently reported outcomes for the cohort of students who entered 9th grade in 2009 and completed their fourth year of high school in 2013.¹ According to these data:

- 66.0% of the class of 2013 graduated within four years, as compared to 64.7% in 2012²
- 10.6% of the class of 2013 dropped out, compared to 11.4% in 2012³

Discharges Outside of New York City: The DOE also reports on discharges outside of New York City schools.⁴ A high school student with a confirmed discharge to a public or private school outside of the New York City school district is removed from a school’s graduation cohort.⁵ According to these data:

- The number of students discharged outside of New York City schools decreased slightly from 11,786 in the class of 2012 to 11,597 students in the class of 2013. The number of students discharged outside of New York City schools in the class of 2013 was the lowest number since the DOE began reporting discharges by cohort in 1996.

¹ New York State cohort reports are available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/GraduationDropoutReports>.

² This percentage represents August graduation rates.

³ Codes for dropouts and other accountable discharges include 02, 12, 21, 29, 35, and 39. In addition, codes 08X, 10X, and 11X are considered dropouts in order to align with state guidance. These codes reflect the subset of all discharges that indicate that a student has discontinued schooling without having obtained a diploma. Schools remain accountable for students discharged with these codes in their graduation cohort.

⁴ The number of students discharged outside New York City schools is included in the DOE’s annual report on its traditional cohort methodology, available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/GraduationDropoutReports/NYCTraditionalCalc.htm>.

⁵ Codes for discharges outside New York City school include 06, 08, 10, 11, 15, 20, and 25.

Discharge Reporting Results for the 2012-13 School Year

In contrast to the cohort reporting described above, the data required by Local Law 42 includes all students enrolled in grades 6 through 12 during the 2012-13 school year, and only includes discharge and transfer events that occurred during that school year.⁶ According to these data, during the 2012-13 school year:

- 15,438 students (2.9% of the 542,633 students enrolled in district schools) transferred between New York City schools.
- 10,988 students (2.0%) were discharged outside of New York City schools.
- 13,434 students (2.5%) dropped out or were discharged under other codes.

Revised Reporting Results for the 2011-12 School Year

Discharge reporting here for school year 2012-13 qualifies discharges “out of New York City” (codes 08, 10, and 11), counting them as “drop out” without proof of enrollment in a new school. This aligns with NYS guidance on discharges. Below, 2011-12 numbers are presented as they were reported last year⁷ and with this revised definition.

- In June 2013, NYCDOE reported that in 2011-12, 2.3% were discharged outside of NYC schools, and 1.7% dropped out or were discharged under other codes.
- Using the revised rules, in 2011-12, 2.2% were discharged outside of NYC schools and 2.5% dropped out or were discharged under other codes.

The table below summarizes the reported and revised numbers for the 2011-12 school year, as well as the numbers for the 2012-13 school year.

	2011-12 Reported Numbers	2011-12 Revised Numbers	2012-13 Numbers
Discharges Outside of NYC schools (#)	12,515	12,089	10,988
Discharges Outside of NYC schools (%)	2.3%	2.2%	2.0%
Dropped out or Discharged under Another Code (#)*	9,401	13,746	13,434
Dropped out or Discharged under Another Code (%)*	1.7%	2.5%	2.5%

⁶ Consistent with other school-year reporting, these results include students enrolled and events that occurred between October 31, 2011 and July 1, 2012.

⁷ The number of students who transferred between New York City Schools is not impacted by the revised definitions of codes 08, 10, and 11. These codes only impact rates of dropouts and discharges outside of NYC schools. In 2011-12, 2.9% of students transferred between New York City schools.