

# 2022 Graduation Cohort Protocol

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## Section 1: Document Intent and Overview

This document helps districts navigate the graduation rate calculation, verification, and reporting process. Graduation rate calculations require the transformation of many data points. This document outlines the cohort process timeline, withdrawal code guidance, and specific steps districts should take at each stage of the process.

Certain situations fall outside the scope of this document. For more resources and guidance regarding appeals and change requests, please access the “Instructions” page of the [Cohort application](#). Please direct your questions and feedback on improving these resources to [TNEd.Graduates@tn.gov](mailto:TNEd.Graduates@tn.gov).

### 1.1 Background and Calculations

Federal law requires students to count in graduation rate calculations based on the year in which they first entered grade 9. Graduation rates are calculated using the U.S. Department of Education’s four-year adjusted cohort formula listed below.

$$\text{Graduation Rate} = \frac{\text{Number of students who graduated in four years plus a summer}}{\text{Number of students in graduating cohort}} * 100$$

The *number of students who graduated in four years plus a summer (# of graduates)* is defined as the number of students who earn a **regular diploma** or an **alternate academic diploma**,<sup>1</sup> including completion types 1, 8, 11, 12, or 13,<sup>2</sup> within four years and a summer of entering grade 9 for the first time.

The *number of students in the graduating cohort (# in graduating cohort)* is defined as the number of students entering grade 9 for the first time four years prior, removing withdrawn students and adding students who join that cohort in later years. For example, a student who enters grade 10 in a Tennessee public school for the first time in the fall of 2019 would be placed into the 2018 cohort, expected to graduate in spring 2022.

Applying these definitions to the 2022 graduating cohort, the cohort includes students who entered grade 9 during the 2018-19 enrollment period. The graduates are students who completed high school in 2022 with completion types 1, 8, 11, 12, or 13 by the end of summer in 2022. **It is crucial for districts to be actively engaged in the cohort process as the graduating cohort data will be utilized for the ACT<sup>3</sup> participation calculation and the subsequent determination for the Ready Graduate<sup>4</sup> status.** Once the data are finalized by the end of the cohort process, data related to the graduating cohort are final and cannot be appealed afterwards.

Dropout rates reflect the number of dropouts divided by the number of students in the graduation cohort, rounded to one decimal place. Dropouts include students who:

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<sup>1</sup> Students entering grade 9 in 2018-19 qualify for this diploma if they participate in the alternate assessment and meet certain [criteria](#).

<sup>2</sup> Please consult [EIS Appendix](#) for completion codes and appropriate documentation to support each completion code.

<sup>3</sup> ACT participation rate = number of students who graduated in four years plus a summer with a valid ACT score / number of students who graduated in four years plus a summer\*100

<sup>4</sup> Ready Graduate = number of students who graduated in four years plus a summer meeting Ready Graduate criteria / number of students in the graduating cohort\*100

- Have withdrawal codes of 0<sup>5</sup>, 1, 3, or 4 (see withdraw codes in [Section 3](#)) and did not receive a regular diploma, **or**
- Have neither a withdrawal code nor completion type<sup>6</sup> and were not enrolled in a Tennessee public school as of Oct. 1 of the following school year after the anticipated graduation year of their cohort, **or**
- Have neither withdrawal nor completion data, but have withdrawal codes of 0, 1, 3, or 4 in the most recent enrollment of the following school year.

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<sup>5</sup> For more information, please reference the services for minors' [policy](#) for those students enrolling in an adult education program.

<sup>6</sup> This also includes students with completion type 5, as this completion type indicates students did not earn a completion document of any kind. Please consult [EIS Appendix J](#) for more information.

## Section 2: Timeline

The graduation rate process occurs in four phases. **Phase I** - Districts will report and correct student information and upload required documentation. **Phase II** - Districts will report summer graduates and appeal the inclusion of certain students. **Phase III** - Districts will review appeals decisions and preliminary graduation rates. **Phase IV** - Districts will review final graduation rates before they are published on the State Report Card.

The timeline below highlights the key dates and tasks for each phase of the graduation rate process.

Phase	Estimated Dates	Tasks to be Completed
I	January 31, 2022–July 1, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request removal of students from the cohort (e.g., duplicate students, students in middle school, students who never attended, students in the wrong cohort, etc.) (see <a href="#">Cohort Change Instructions</a> for more guidance).</li> <li>Correct/submit withdrawal codes and upload required documentation for withdrawn students. Guidance can be found in <a href="#">Section 3</a>.</li> <li>Document early graduates with withdrawal code 12 and appropriate completion type, date, and period.</li> <li>Submit completion information to EIS.</li> <li>Reconcile enrollments with receiving schools for students withdrawn using codes 3 or 4 and for whom there is no subsequent enrollment in EIS.</li> </ul>
II	July 18–Aug. 5, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report summer graduates in EIS.</li> <li>Submit appeals only for appealable situations.</li> <li>Upload required documentation for seniors withdrawing since the last week of Phase I <b>only</b>.</li> </ul>
III	Aug. 22–Sept. 2, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit appeals for summer graduates.</li> <li>Review preliminary graduation rates published in the Cohort application.</li> </ul>
IV	Sept. 14, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All data are final.</li> <li>Districts review final graduation rates prior to data being released in data downloads or State Report Card.</li> </ul>

## Section 3: Withdrawal Code Guidance

### 3.1 Column Definitions

In the Cohort application, the “WITHDRAWAL REASON” column reflects students’ withdrawal codes. The “STATUS” column indicates whether the department approved (1) or denied (2) the document the district submitted. For more information regarding values included in the file, please reference our [Cohort File Layout](#).

### 3.2 Documentation Submission and Review

Federal law only allows students to be removed from the cohort if they enroll in another program that awards regular diplomas. The department will deny documentation that does not meet the requirements listed in the table below.

The department updates Cohort application data nightly during Phase I. Districts must correct withdrawal codes or other data in EIS and wait until the correction loads in the Cohort application before uploading documentation.

The table below describes the different withdrawal codes, processes for documentation review, and requirements for supporting documentation.

Withdrawal Code	Description	Cohort Action	Requirements/Details of Adequate Supporting Documentation
00	Dropout, under 18	Included in cohort; counted as dropout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Districts changing this withdrawal code must submit adequate documentation for the new withdrawal code as outlined in this document.</li> </ul>
01	Dropout, 18 and over	Included in cohort; counted as dropout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Districts changing this withdrawal code must submit adequate documentation for the new withdrawal code as outlined in this document.</li> </ul>
02	Transferred to a state institution with an education program culminating in a regular high school diploma	Excluded from cohort <b>only if</b> adequate documentation is provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer must be to an approved DCS school or institution (please consult the list of <a href="#">DCS-approved schools</a>); <b>AND</b></li> <li>Written acknowledgement on official letterhead from an administrator at the state institution that the student is receiving educational services that culminate in a regular high school diploma.</li> <li>Please note: An age waiver signed by DCS <b>does not</b> meet requirements for use of this withdrawal code.</li> </ul>
03	Transferred to another Tennessee public school district	Included in cohort until receiving school reports subsequent enrollment in EIS; otherwise, counted as dropout if there is no subsequent enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sending school collaborates with the receiving school to report subsequent enrollment in EIS. Receiving school enrollment must be entered in EIS.</li> </ul>
04	Transferred to and enrolled in another school in the same district	Included in cohort until receiving school reports subsequent enrollment in EIS; otherwise, counted as dropout if there is no subsequent enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sending school collaborates with the receiving school to report subsequent enrollment in EIS. Receiving school enrollment must be entered in EIS.</li> </ul>

Withdrawal Code	Description	Cohort Action	Requirements/Details of Adequate Supporting Documentation
05	Transferred out of state	Excluded from cohort <b>only if</b> adequate documentation is provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written records request from receiving out-of-state public or private high school, <b>OR</b></li> <li>Written acknowledgement on official letterhead from an administrator at the receiving school confirming enrollment, <b>OR</b></li> <li>Official records/transcripts from the receiving out-of-state public or private high school</li> <li>If a student has moved out of the country, written confirmation from the parent or a school administrator's documented conversation with the parent will be accepted if any of the above three types of documentation are unavailable.</li> <li>For foreign exchange students, a copy of the official exchange program paperwork reflecting the year of participation on exchange agency letterhead.</li> </ul>
06	Transferred to and enrolled in a non-public school in Tennessee	Excluded from cohort <b>only if</b> adequate documentation is provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written records request from receiving non-public school; <b>OR</b></li> <li>Written acknowledgement on official letterhead from an administrator at the receiving school confirming enrollment</li> <li>*The <a href="#">list of non-public schools</a> is located in the Cohort application.</li> </ul>
07	Withdrawal due to permanent illness or incapacitation where no return to school is anticipated and the withdrawal is considered permanent	Included in cohort; counted as dropout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This withdrawal code should only be used for students who are so sick or incapacitated (in the written opinion of a physician licensed by the State Board of Medical Examiners) that no return to school is anticipated and the withdrawal is considered permanent.</li> </ul>
08	Deceased	Excluded from cohort <b>only if</b> adequate documentation is provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An obituary or funeral program.</li> <li>Official written documentation, such as a death certificate, is <b>not</b> necessary.</li> </ul>
09	Deleted	Included in cohort; counted as dropout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Districts changing this withdrawal code must submit adequate documentation for the new withdrawal code as outlined in this document.</li> </ul>
10	Withdrawal to home school	Excluded from cohort <b>only if</b> adequate documentation is provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Official Intent to Home School form<sup>7</sup></a> must be signed by the parent or guardian.</li> </ul>
11	Court-ordered placement or other government-mandated placement, such as jail or prison	Included in cohort; counted as dropout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written copy of the court order or judgment decision should be kept on file with the district.</li> </ul>

<sup>7</sup> This form may be used for home school students both in Tennessee and other states.

Withdrawal Code	Description	Cohort Action	Requirements/Details of Adequate Supporting Documentation
12	Early graduates who receive a regular high school diploma in less than four years	Included in cohort; counted as graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early graduates require <b>both</b> withdrawal code 12 <b>AND</b> a completion type with a graduation date in EIS.</li> </ul>
13	Permanent dismissal from TN voluntary pre-K program	Not applicable to cohort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The program must provide the state with a written request and justification for permanent dismissal of any child from Tennessee's voluntary pre-K program. No student should be permanently dismissed without consultation and agreement between the grantee and the Tennessee Department of Education.</li> </ul>
15	TEIS transition, non-eligible for special education services	Not applicable to cohort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student assigned to grade P3 who are transitioning from Tennessee Early Intervention Services may be withdrawn due to non-eligibility for special education services.</li> </ul>
16	Permanent withdrawal of students with disabilities (SWD) who received a completion document but remained in school (up to age 22) under the Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) provision	Only included in the graduation rate of <b>one</b> cohort based on year entered grade 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This code only applies to SWD who were included in a prior cohort's graduation rate and returned to school after previously receiving a special education completion document.</li> </ul>
17	Transferred to and enrolled in out-of-state online school	Excluded from cohort <b>only if</b> adequate documentation is provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written records request from the online school; <b>OR</b></li> <li>Written acknowledgement on official letterhead from an administrator at the online school confirming enrollment</li> <li>Withdrawal code 17 should <b>only</b> be used for students who withdraw from traditional bricks-and-mortar schools to enroll in a school in which the content is delivered via the Internet and the school location is not in Tennessee.</li> </ul>



### 3.3 Other Codes and Situations

The table below outlines additional codes or situations that may appear in the Cohort application. Please review the documentation required for the actions described. Please consult the [Cohort Change Instructions](#) for more guidance for scenarios that require submitting a Cohort Change Request.

Withdrawal Code	Description	Cohort Action	Requirements/Details of Adequate Supporting Documentation
14	Withdrawn under public school choice (Title 1, part A, Section 1116)	Included in cohort unless receiving school reports subsequent enrollment in EIS; counted as dropout if there is no subsequent enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sending school collaborates with the receiving school to report subsequent enrollment in EIS. Receiving school enrollment must be entered in EIS.</li> </ul>
<i>none</i>	Student's year entered grade 9 is not for the current cohort	Included in other cohort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the student has withdrawn, please use the appropriate code and upload supporting documentation, if applicable.</li> <li>• Please submit a <a href="#">Change Request Worksheet</a> if the student's data were incorrect and s/he should count in the current cohort.</li> </ul>
<i>none</i>	The student has no withdrawal code, however the student transferred to another Tennessee public school	Included in cohort; counted as dropout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district must withdraw the student using code 3 and work with the receiving school to report the student's subsequent enrollment in EIS.</li> </ul>
<i>none</i>	The student never showed up for school on the first day of grade 9; the school has never served the student and has no knowledge of where she/he went.	Included in cohort unless districts confirm the student never attended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Districts must submit a <a href="#">Change Request Worksheet</a> with a letter on letterhead from a school or district administrator that confirms the student(s) in question never attended school during grade 9 or higher in the district.</li> </ul>

## Section 4: Phase I

### 4.1 Required Actions

The first phase of the 2021-22 graduation cohort process closes on **July 1, 2022**. The department updates Cohort application data nightly during Phase I. Districts must enter or update withdrawal codes or other data in EIS and wait until the correction loads (the next day) in the Cohort application before uploading documentation. Therefore, the last date for districts to enter and update data is by **5 p.m. CT on June 30, 2022**. By that time, districts must enter and update the following information to the Cohort application through extracts from their SIS packages or through the Cohort application itself:

1. Completion information,
2. Withdrawal information, and
3. Remove non-cohort students as needed

During phase I, the other major task is to remove students with inaccurate YE9 code that is generated by the department based on student enrollment record. Once YE9 code is assigned, the value remains fixed until a cohort change request is made. During Phase I, district shall review student records and verify data in SIS, EIS, and Cohort application carefully to make sure students are correctly assigned to the right cohort. If errors are found, districts shall submit a cohort change request to the department at [TNEG.Graduates@tn.gov](mailto:TNEG.Graduates@tn.gov). Please consult the [Cohort Change Instructions](#) and the [Change Request Worksheet](#) for specific instructions regarding timeline and process.

Sometimes, during the data review process, districts may find students with more than one student ID. A cohort change request shall be submitted to resolve the issue. First, districts shall reach out to request out to DT support ([DT.Support@tn.gov](mailto:DT.Support@tn.gov)) to merge the IDs; then, submit a change request to [TNEG.Graduates@tn.gov](mailto:TNEG.Graduates@tn.gov) following the instructions and guidance provided in the [Cohort Change Instructions](#) and the [Change Request Worksheet](#).

The last date for the districts to upload all relevant and appropriate supporting documents is by **5 p.m. CT on July 1, 2022**. Any data that remain incorrect and any documents not uploaded by **5 p.m. CT on July 1** will be ineligible for appeal during Phase II. The following sections detail the specific steps and potential pitfalls for districts to consider as they submit completion and withdrawal information to ensure data are as accurate as possible.

#### 4.1.1 Submitting Completion Information

Completion information submitted from districts' SIS packages must contain the following pieces of information in order to be accepted into EIS and into the Cohort application.

1. Completion document type (e.g., 1 for regular education diploma, 3 for special education diploma, 11 for regular education diploma with foreign language waiver, etc.)
2. Completion date
3. Completion period

EIS will return an error if a submitted completion date falls outside of the date parameters of the student's enrollment (e.g., a completion date of 6/11/2022 for an enrollment that ends on 5/29/2022 will return an error and the student will consequently **not** be counted as a graduate if the error remains uncorrected). The only instance in which a completion date may postdate a student's enrollment end date is if the completion period is listed as "SU" for summer, indicating that the student graduated after the official end of the school year and before the start of the following year. Please consult the [EIS site](#) for more information.

#### 4.1.2 Submitting Withdrawal Information and Supporting Documentation

Withdrawal information submitted from districts' SIS packages must contain a withdrawal reason and a withdrawal date. Please note that students are only **eligible** to be removed from the cohort if they have a withdrawal code of 02, 05, 06, 08, 10, or 17 **and** the district uploads adequate supporting documentation **before the Phase I deadline**, which is **5 p.m. CT on July 1, 2022**. In other words:

1. No students are automatically removed from the cohort (with the exception of students who have a withdrawal code of either 03 or 04 who **also** have a subsequent enrollment in EIS in another district or school, respectively).
  - a. Please note that students with withdrawal codes of 03 or 04 and **without** subsequent enrollments in EIS will count as non-graduates in the district and school in which they were last enrolled. The department encourages districts to reach out to the receiving district and/or school for more information in such cases.
2. Students with withdrawal codes of 02, 05, 06, 08, 10, or 17 will **only** be removed from the cohort if they:
  - a. Have correct withdrawal information submitted **before the Phase I deadline AND**
  - b. The district uploads documentation through the Cohort application that satisfies the requirements for the corresponding withdrawal code (for more information about what constitutes adequate supporting documentation, please consult [Section 3](#)).

Districts should send new withdrawal codes and upload new documentation if students' withdrawal circumstances change. For example, districts should change the withdrawal code from 05 to 17 if they thought a student was transferring to an out-of-state public school and they consequently receive an enrollment confirmation from an out-of-state online school. These withdrawal changes will update in the Cohort application the following morning. Districts should then upload the appropriate supporting documentation.

#### 4.1.3 Requesting Changes to a Cohort

Starting in 2018-19, the department implemented a new process for requesting manual changes to cohort data (e.g., moving a student to a different cohort, requesting a student's exclusion outside of the process of withdrawal documentation submission, etc.). Districts must submit change requests according to the specific format and timeline outlined in the [Cohort Change Instructions](#).

#### 4.2 Potential Pitfalls and Data Errors

Common pitfalls and data errors in the graduation cohort process are listed below. This section explains how these situations might arise, how they will be reflected in the Cohort application, and the steps districts should take to resolve these errors.

The department recommends that all districts download their student-level cohort data to resolve discrepancies between their list of expected graduates and the list of students who will form the denominator of their graduation rate. Districts can download their student-level data by employing the following steps.

1. Navigate to the [Cohort application](#) or log in through Single Sign On.
2. Select the "User" option under "Logon As..." for the Cohort application.
3. Read the News and Timeline sections on the Instructions page of the Cohort application.
4. Click the checkbox that says "I agree / I acknowledge that I have read the news."
5. Click the "Show Data" button.
6. Click the "Download CSV File" link.

Districts should filter these files for included students<sup>8</sup> who have completion types other than 1, 8, 11, 12, or 13. These students will count against districts' graduation rates. Districts should compare these students to data in their SIS packages to ensure all students count correctly.

#### 4.2.1 Students Missing from Cohort

Occasionally, students are missing from the current cohort. This can happen for a couple of reasons:

1. Students' enrollment information may not have been loaded correctly in EIS.
2. Students are included in another cohort.

To resolve this, districts should first check that the student does not appear in another cohort. To do this, districts can change the dropdown field of "Graduation Cohort" on the Cohort Data page. If students appear in one of the other active cohort years, districts should email [TNEG.Graduates@tn.gov](mailto:TNEG.Graduates@tn.gov) providing confirmation (e.g., a transcript copy) of the first year the students entered grade 9. If students do not appear in any of the active cohort years but should be listed based on districts' data, please contact [TNEG.Graduates@tn.gov](mailto:TNEG.Graduates@tn.gov) using the Change Request Worksheet following the instructions found on the Cohort application.

#### 4.2.2 Students with Withdrawal Information but Missing Documentation

Any student who has an eligible withdrawal code (i.e., 02, 05, 06, 08, 10, or 17) and no corresponding documentation will remain in the cohort. Common situations may include but are not limited to: middle school cohort roll-over where a student never attended, students in other schools (elementary or middle), students receiving special education services, etc. As such, the department recommends that districts filter their student-level files by withdrawal reason to ensure they have uploaded documentation for all eligible students. **Please note that the department will automatically deny any documentation to remove students submitted after Phase I.**

### 4.3 Final Checks

As a final check, districts should ensure they can answer 'yes' to the following questions before the Phase I deadline.

1. Did the district submit completion information for all graduates and verify that the information loaded into the Cohort application?
2. Did the district submit withdrawal information for all applicable students and verify that the information loaded into the Cohort application?
3. Did the district upload documentation for all students with withdrawal codes of 02, 05, 06, 08, 10, and 17 that satisfies the requirements outlined in the guidance documents?
4. Did the district verify that the list of students in the Cohort application matches the list of expected graduates in the district's SIS package (i.e., there are no students who, by virtue of a data entry error, were entered into the incorrect cohort)?

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<sup>8</sup> Students are included in the cohort if: 1) they have a value of "Y" in the REVISED\_INCLUDED\_IN\_COHORT column, 2) they have a value of "Y" in the INCLUDED\_IN\_COHORT column and no REVISED\_INCLUDED\_IN\_COHORT column, 3) they have a value of "P" in the INCLUDED\_IN\_COHORT column and no value in the REVISED\_INCLUDED\_IN\_COHORT column, or 4) they have a value of "Y" in the INCLUDED\_IN\_COHORT column and either no value or a value of "Y" in the REVISED\_INCLUDED\_IN\_COHORT column.

## Section 5: Phase II

### 5.1 Required Actions

Phase II of the graduation cohort process allows districts to review and appeal the department's decisions as to which students will be included in graduation rate calculations. During Phase II, districts should pay special attention to students whose removal from the cohort was denied. These students show a value of "Deny" in the "Status/Comments" field. The department recommends that districts download their student-level data (please see [Section 4.2](#) for more information) and filter the worksheet for values of "Y" for the REVISED\_INCLUDED\_IN\_COHORT column. Please note that not all of these students may be appealed. More information regarding the appeal process and guidelines will be released in spring 2022.

#### 5.1.1 Summer Graduates

Districts should also submit completion information for summer graduates and verify that the data load correctly in the Cohort application during Phase II. Summer graduates must have a completion date **after** the Phase I deadline **and** a completion code of **SU**. Please note that completion information for summer graduates will not load into the Cohort application automatically from EIS<sup>9</sup>, as these data require a manual process. Please also note that the data will be updated manually each week even though the Cohort application may list the date the data were last updated as mid-June.

Districts can estimate their preliminary graduation rates during Phase II. Please note that these preliminary rates will not reflect any appeals the district have submitted. Districts can estimate their rates using the following steps.

1. Download the student-level file following the steps in [Section 4.2](#).
2. Remove any rows from the spreadsheet where the student has a value of "N" for the field of REVISED\_INCLUDED\_IN\_COHORT.
3. Remove any rows from the spreadsheet where the student has a value of "N" for INCLUDED\_IN\_COHORT and has a blank value (or a value of "N") in the field of REVISED\_INCLUDED\_IN\_COHORT.
4. Count the number of students who have a completion type of 1, 8, 11, 12, and 13.
5. Divide the number in step 4 by the number of students left in the spreadsheet after completing steps 2 and 3. This rate will be the preliminary graduation rate, though it will not reflect the results of any appeals that districts have submitted.

### 5.2 Potential Pitfalls and Data Errors

The most common complications during Phase II involve the submission of completion information for summer graduates. Due to the completion date for summer graduates often exceeding the date bounds of the enrollment, districts must list the completion period as "SU;" failure to do so will cause an error in EIS that will prevent the data from loading correctly into the Cohort application. Completion documents may have any date **prior to the Attendance Start** date of the following school year. However, **the End of Service Action** date must be **before the Attendance End** date of the school year in which the student is graduating. Also, summer graduates **should not** have a new enrollment for summer school. This will create an error and not allow for the student to be pulled from EIS into Cohort when manually updated. Please refer to [Section 4.1.1](#) for more details about submitting completion information.

### 5.3 Final Checks

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<sup>9</sup> Issues with EIS should be reported to the District Technology Help Desk at [DT.Support@tn.gov](mailto:DT.Support@tn.gov).

As a final check, districts should ensure they can answer all of the following questions affirmatively before the Phase II deadline.

1. Did your district submit completion information for all summer graduates and verify that information loaded into the Cohort application?
2. Did your district submit withdrawal information for all students who withdrew since the last week of Phase I **only** and verify that information loaded into the Cohort application?
3. Did your district submit appeals for applicable students following the appeals guidance and appeals instructions?

## Section 6: Phase III

### 6.1 Required Actions

During Phase III, districts should review and verify their preliminary graduation rates. Districts that wish to calculate their preliminary graduation rates may do so following the steps in [Section 5.1](#). Districts should also review the appeals response letters sent to directors in response to the submitted appeals. These letters detail the department's appeals decisions as well as provide process recommendations for ensuring that districts' graduation rate data are as accurate as possible.

### 6.2 Final Checks

As a final check, districts should ensure they can answer all of the following questions affirmatively before the Phase III deadline.

1. Did your district submit appeals for applicable students (i.e., students withdrawing since the last week of Phase I and summer graduates) following the appeals guidance and appeals instructions?
2. If your district submitted appeals, did your district review and retain the appeals response letter sent to your director of schools?

## Section 7: Phase IV

### 7.1 Required Actions

Phase IV serves the purpose of making the finalized cohort graduation rates available on the Cohort application for final review prior to data being published in the State Report Card and made available via Data Downloads. At this stage, all data are final.



## Section 8: Conclusion

We hope this guide helps navigate the graduation cohort process. Please feel free to provide feedback on this document or share any recommendations for support resources to [TNEducation@tn.gov](mailto:TNEducation@tn.gov). Thank you for your continuing efforts to ensure that your district's graduation rate data are as accurate as possible.