# Discharge Reporting – 2014-15 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, 2015 the number of students in grades 6 through 12 who were discharged, transferred, or graduated during the 2014-15 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 2011 and completed their fourth year of high school in 2015.[[1]](#footnote-1) According to these data:

* 70.5% of the class of 2015 graduated within four years, as compared to 68.4% in 2014[[2]](#footnote-2)
* 9.0% of the class of 2015 dropped out, compared to 9.7% in 2014[[3]](#footnote-3)

Discharges Outside of New York City: The DOE also reportson discharges outside of New York City schools.[[4]](#footnote-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.4 According to these data:

The number of students discharged outside of New York City was 8,150 compared to 8,254 students in the class of 2014. The number of students discharged outside of New York City schools in the class of 2014 was the lowest number since the DOE began reporting discharges by cohort in 1996.

**Discharge Reporting Results for the 2014-15 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 2014-15 school year, and only includes discharge and transfer events that occurred during that school year. According to these data, during the 2013-14 school year:

* 11,723 students (2.2% of the 530,990 students enrolled in district schools) transferred between New York City public schools, including charter schools.
* 9,745 students (1.8%) were discharged outside of New York City public schools.
* 10,192 students (1.9%) dropped out or were discharged under other codes.

1. New York State cohort reports are available at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/GraduationDropoutReports. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This percentage represents August graduation rates. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
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. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Codes for confirmed discharges that remove a student from the graduation cohort include 08, 10, 11, 15, 20, and 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)