

# Study on the Accuracy of Graduation Data of Students with Disabilities in the LAUSD 2005-2006 School Year

Office of the Independent Monitor  
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## Introduction

This report presents the findings of a study of the accuracy of the District's data on the graduation of students with disabilities (SWD) in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). The study measures the accuracy of the District's data of SWD who graduated with a high school diploma in accordance with Outcome 3: Graduation Rate, of the Modified Consent Decree (MCD). The results of this 2005-2006 validation study were used by the Independent Monitor (IM) for determining whether the District met performance targets of Outcome 3. This data was also used to validate data associated with Outcome 4: Completion Rate.

This report also provides background on the development of the outcome targets, methodology of the study, findings, and implications.

## Background

The Modified Consent Decree includes two outcomes that are aimed at increasing the rate of students with disabilities that graduate with a diploma and/or complete high school. The outcomes are intended to increase the number of SWD completing high school while decreasing the number of SWD that drop out.

The outcomes are as follows:

### *Outcome 3: Graduation Rate*

*The District shall increase the number of grade 12 students with disabilities who receive diplomas based on the 2001-2002 data by at least % (no less than 42.01% of grade 12 students with disabilities) during the 2003-2004 school year, at least 5% (no less than 44.11% of grade 12 students with disabilities) during the 2004-05 school year, and at least % (no less than 46.32 of grade 12 students with disabilities) during the 2005-2006 school year. This outcome is based on current diploma requirements. If the State's diploma requirements change, the Independent Monitor shall meet with the parties and discuss the impact of the change and may revise the outcome if appropriate.*

### *Outcome 4: Completion Rate*

*The District's completion rate shall increase based on an increase in the number of students who graduate with a diploma, receive a certificate of completion, or aged out, as compared to the total number of students with disabilities who graduate with a diploma, receive a certificate of completion, age out, or drop out (grades 7-12).*

## *2002-2003 and 2003-2004 Graduation Rates*

Graduation data obtained during the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 school year, demonstrated considerable errors that raised concerns about the accuracy of the graduation data and its potential for overestimating graduation rates. During this time, graduation data was reported by schools based on the *Fall Survey*<sup>1</sup> submitted annually by schools and certified by school principals. Graduation data for the *Fall Survey* was primarily obtained from the District's secondary Student Information System (SIS) and was known by the District to overestimate the number of students receiving a diploma. The overestimation of students receiving a high school diploma was primarily a result of a default within the SIS database that automatically designates all students with a code of "withdrawal by culmination" or (L<sup>7</sup>), which is often associated by school personnel as students having graduated with a diploma. During the 2002-2003 and 2004-2005 school year, it appears that the graduation data reported by schools on the *Fall Survey* were primarily derived from data within the SIS system.

These concerns with the graduation data and data system were noted in the Independent Monitor's 2004-2005 report to the Superintendent and Board of Education<sup>2</sup> that raised concerns over the accuracy of the District's graduation data from the 2003-2004 school year. The report noted concerns with the accuracy of the District's graduation data as some schools reported higher number of SWD that had graduated with a diploma than their enrollment of 12<sup>th</sup> grade and post-graduate SWD. In one instance, a school without 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade students reported a large number (442) of students graduating with a diploma including 19 students with disabilities. The errors observed appeared to have been primarily a result of the default function within the SIS system.

In addition to concerns with the reporting of graduation data aforementioned, several additional factors contribute to the challenges of tracking student graduation and drop out rates. First, since compulsory education is not required for students above the age of majority, students may chose to withdraw from school completely without formal notification to schools. In addition, students may also withdraw to attend alternative high schools to complete their graduation requirements such as continuation or adult schools and often do not enroll. Until the 2005-2006 school year<sup>3</sup>, the District's data systems lacked the integration to allow schools to track and verify if students followed through with these alternative enrollments.

During the 2004-2005 school year, the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) revised the methodology for monitoring the rate of SWD that graduated with a diploma. The revised methodology required the District to develop a database that identified SWD with grade 12 status enrolled on, December 2, 2004. This was done to define a cohort of students that would serve as the population included in the monitoring of Outcome 3, thereby establishing a fixed population of students and reducing the potential for errors associated with student mobility.

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<sup>1</sup> The Fall Survey is an annual school survey used to collect school information including graduation outcomes from the previous year.

<sup>2</sup> See letter from C. Cohn dated July 22, 2005.

<sup>3</sup> During the 2005-2006 school year, all comprehensive high schools were connected to the Integrated Student Information System (ISIS) which connects secondary schools in an integrated database.

During the 2004-2005 school year, the District's Program Evaluation and Research Branch (PERB) collected graduation and completion data from schools and conducted a validation study to verify the accuracy of the District's data at a sample of schools. PERB presented its findings in a report to the OIM which reported a graduation rate of 49.4% and completion rate of 79.3% for SWD (See Attachment A). PERB's report notes similar concerns with the graduation data with schools reporting more students having graduated with diplomas than enrolled and schools reporting students with a diploma that received a certificate of completion.

### **OIM Study of the Accuracy of the District's Graduation Data 2005-2006**

Outcome 3 aims to increase the number of SWD graduating with a high school diploma to no less than 46.32%. To verify the accuracy of the District's graduation data for the 2005-2006 school year, the OIM conducted a validation study to verify the graduation status of all SWD identified as 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. This study seeks to identify sources of error within the data and establish an accurate graduation rate<sup>4</sup> for the 2005-2006 school year. The study consists of a verification of the District's data by visiting all schools that reported graduation data, and reviewing all available sources of data to obtain the most accurate outcome for each student.

#### *Data Collection of Graduation Rates by PERB*

To determine the graduation rates of students with disabilities, PERB provided all schools with a list of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade SWD enrolled as of December 2, 2005, and required schools to report the graduation and enrollment status of the each student by indicating whether a student had: completed the requirements of a diploma; graduated with the Chapman Exemption<sup>5</sup>; received a certificate of completion; aged out; dropped out; did not graduate but continued to be enrolled; and/or transferred to another district school, out of a district school or non-public school. Schools were also instructed to add any additional students that enrolled and graduated from their school during the 2005-2006 school year. Furthermore, schools were instructed to identify the source(s) used in reporting graduation data and principals were required to certify the accuracy of this information. Data was collected through October 2006, therefore allowing for student graduation through the end of the extended school year 2005-2006. Upon completion of the data collection, PERB provided the OIM copies of the graduation data as reported by schools. This data was then entered into a database developed by the OIM to determine graduation rates.

Based on the data submitted by schools to PERB for the 2005-2006 school year, the District reported a graduation rate of 42.18% for all 12<sup>th</sup> grade SWD. This graduation rate does not meet the required target of 46.32%; therefore the District did not meet the requirements of this outcome.

It is important to note that differences were observed between the population of SWD used by PERB and the OIM. PERB's population was discrepant by 101 students, as it contained 51 additional students than the OIM population, and did not contain 50 students that are present in the OIM's population. The verification of graduation data includes only those students identified

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<sup>4</sup> This graduation rate only reflects those SWD's enrolled on December 2, 2005 with 12<sup>th</sup> grade status.

<sup>5</sup> The Chapman Exemption refers to the waiver granted by the courts for students with disabilities that did not pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).

by the District's Information Technology Division (ITD) in the December 2, 2005 combined file, as agreed upon by the parties.

### *Sample/Population*

As noted earlier, due to difficulties with the accuracy of the District's graduation data the parties agreed to measure the graduation rate of SWD in the LAUSD by first obtaining a fixed student count of students identified as 12<sup>th</sup> graders receiving special education services in order to track whether these students graduated with a diploma. This cohort of students serves as the population for determining the graduation rate for the 2005-2006 school year. To ensure capturing all 12<sup>th</sup> grade SWD enrolled as of December 2, 2005<sup>6</sup>, a combination of the District's data systems was used by ITD to determine the population of students. This combined database was provided to both the OIM and PERB.

The population of students includes 4,001 students from 145 sites and all local districts. This includes 49 comprehensive high schools, 13 special education centers and 83 magnet, charter and options schools. The sample consists of 2,142 students (53.5%) eligible as SLD/SLI and 1,859 students (46.5%) with all other disabilities.

It is important to note and emphasize that the population of SWD only consists of those students identified as 12<sup>th</sup> grade SWD enrolled in a LAUSD school enrolled on December 2, 2005. Students that dropped out prior to December 2, 2005, or enrolled thereafter, are not included in this population, and are therefore not included in the number or percentage of SWD that graduated. In addition, the population of SWD includes students that are not considered diploma track and therefore it is assumed that the population does not have the potential for graduating all students with a diploma. However, student outcomes for non-diploma track students are counted for Outcome 4, which includes students that may have received a certificate of completion, aged out, or are still enrolled. Data on outcomes for non-diploma track students was also reported by schools and the accuracy of the data was verified by the OIM within this study.

### *Methodology*

To validate the accuracy of the District's graduation data for the entire population of 12<sup>th</sup> grade SWD, the OIM visited all of the District's schools that reported graduation data for SWD enrolled on December 2, 2005. The objective of the site visit was to review the various sources of data used by schools for reporting graduation data. This included reviewing: student transcripts in the SIS and cumulative files; registration cards; various data fields within the SIS; and, counselor/administrator records used for tracking student graduation requirements and issuance of a diploma.

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<sup>6</sup> A December 2, 2005 student count was selected for the following reasons: This count coincides with the Title I student count required by federal law; the CASEMIS count of students with disabilities required by the State of California; maximizes the number of students enrolled; and, attempts to avoid capturing SWD promoted to 12<sup>th</sup> grade after the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, as these students would not have sufficient time to graduate during the 2005-2006 school year.

An instrument was developed by the OIM for validating graduation data for each school (See Attachment B). The instrument contained all students with 12<sup>th</sup> grade status enrolled on December 2, 2005, and included the student's identification number, date of birth and eligibility code. Six options were included for verification to capture the outcome of each student (i.e. graduated with a diploma, received a certificate of completion, aged out, dropped out, transferred to a district school, out of district/within state, out of state, non public school, dropped out or unknown). Using the data reported by schools, the instruments contained the outcome as reported by schools above the corresponding verification box on the instrument. For instance, if a school had reported that a student graduated with a diploma, "YES" was indicated above the verification box marked "Diploma". If the school presented evidence of a student receiving a diploma, the box was checked to indicate a match. If the school reported a different outcome than a diploma for the student, such as having received a certificate of completion the corresponding box was marked. In addition, a comment section was provided for each student for additional relevant information.

To verify graduation data, schools were requested to provide student cumulative records, transcripts (cumulative or SIS) indicating graduation status, an ID 99 report from the SIS that shows the SIS exit codes for all students (L<sup>2</sup>, L<sup>7</sup>, L<sup>8</sup>, etc) and any counselor logs or records that show evidence of student outcomes. Schools were also asked to have personnel available with access to the SIS system, preferably an administrator or counselor.

Graduation with a diploma was verified if the cumulative records indicated graduation with a diploma with the accompanying principal certification as evidenced by a signature or official school stamp. In some instances graduation was verified from the SIS system using the graduation requirement screen (TR04) indicating that the student met all of their requirements and the minimum of 230 cumulative credits. For students that received certificates of completion, the cumulative records and the 421 field (non-standard exit) of the SIS was used to verify issuance of a certificate. In some instances schools reported the most accurate data source as counselor logs or databases, whereby this source of data was used to verify graduation and/or certificate of completion. Lastly, if conflicting information was observed multiple sources and fields within the SIS were used to verify the graduation outcomes for SWD.

For students that were reported as having transferred to another LAUSD school or out of the district, information was obtained regarding their subsequent school of enrollment. For students that were reported as having continued enrollment, verification of enrollment was obtained from their class schedule (CL54) screen within the SIS.

To capture the outcomes of all SWD within the population, additional 12<sup>th</sup> grade students with disabilities added by schools as having graduated, were cross-referenced within the OIM database containing the December 2, 2005 population of SWD.

### *Data Analysis*

Upon completion of data collection, data was entered into the database developed by the OIM. Data obtained from the validation study was entered with the data reported by schools for comparison and to determine errors within the data. Since the population of students was

observed, the graduation rate of students with disabilities reported by the OIM is considered the actual graduation rate of SWD for the 2005-2006 school year.

The graduation rate was determined as agreed upon by the parties, and is as follows:

- Numerator includes grade 12 SWD receiving a diploma or passing the High School Proficiency Exam/GED for the 2005-06 school year.
- Denominator includes grade 12 SWD enrolled December 2, 2005 excluding SWD who left LAUSD to another California public school (L<sup>3</sup>), California nonpublic school (L<sup>4</sup>) or school outside of California (L<sup>5</sup>) after December 2, 2005.

As noted above, students that have left the District are removed from the population for determining the graduation rate. Therefore, the analyzed sample excludes 153 students that left the LAUSD and consists of 3,848 SWD (Table 1).

**TABLE 1. Analyzed Sample by Local District**

Local District	Total Grade 12 SWDs	Left the District L3, L4, L5	Total Students in Analyzed Sample	Percent of Analyzed Sample
1	781	28	753	100%
2	411	15	396	100%
3	645	20	625	100%
4	406	11	395	100%
5	623	29	594	100%
6	254	13	241	100%
7	305	9	296	100%
8	575	28	547	100%
Adult School	1		1	100%
	4,003	153	3,848	100%

## Findings

The graduation validation study had two primary goals. The first was to determine the actual graduation rate of SWD within the District by conducting site verification of student outcomes; the second was to identify error rates associated with the data as reported by schools, and identify sources of error.

### *Graduation Rate by OIM*

During the 2005-2006 school year, 42.52% of SWD enrolled as of December 2, 2005 graduated with a diploma (Table 2). Graduation rates by local district indicate that local district 2 and local district 4 have the highest rates of graduation for SWD (50.76% and 53.67%, respectively), while local district 7 (35.47%) and local district 8 (35.10%) have the lowest.

**TABLE 2. Number and Percentage of SWD that Received a Diploma, by Local District**

Local District	Total 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade SWDs	Received a Diploma	% Received a Diploma	Did Not Receive a Diploma	% Did not Receive a Diploma
1	753	328	43.56%	425	56.44%
2	396	201	50.76%	195	49.24%
3	625	257	41.12%	368	58.88%
4	395	212	53.67%	183	46.33%
5	594	243	40.91%	351	59.09%
6	241	98	40.66%	143	59.34%
7	296	105	35.47%	191	64.53%
8	547	192	35.10%	355	64.90%
Adult School	1	0	0.00%	1	100.00%
	3,848	1,636	42.52%	2,212	57.48%

*Outcomes for SWD not receiving a Diploma*

For those students that did not receive a diploma (57.48%), findings by outcome are provided below. Of all 12<sup>th</sup> grade SWD, 9.13% received a certificate of completion or aged out, while 30% demonstrated evidence of continued enrollment during the Fall 2006 semester (Table 3). Local district 8 shows the highest rate of students continuing (41.13%), while local district 6 (18.67%) and local district 4 (19.24%) had the lowest rate of continued enrollment.

**TABLE 3. Number and Percentage of SWD Receiving a Certificate of Completion/Aged Out or with Continued Enrollment, by Local District.**

Local District	Total 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade SWD	Received Certificate/Aged out	% Received Certificate/Aged out	Continued Enrollment	% Continued Enrollment
1	753	85	11.29%	248	32.93%
2	396	38	9.60%	94	23.74%
3	625	77	12.32%	181	28.96%
4	395	29	7.34%	76	19.24%
5	594	42	7.07%	197	33.16%
6	241	14	5.81%	45	18.67%
7	296	37	12.50%	85	28.72%
8	547	53	9.69%	225	41.13%
Adult School	1	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	3,848	375	9.75%	1,151	29.91%

Table 4 shows SWD that dropped out (11.38%) during the 2005-2006 school year. Local district 1 (6.91%), local district 2 (8.33%) and local district 8 (8.78%) demonstrate the lowest rates of student drop out, while local district 6 (29.05%) had the highest drop out rate of SWD. Students reported as having transferred to a school within LAUSD, outcomes were not reported by any other school for 249 students. As was noted in the methodology, schools were required to

include any additional SWD that enrolled in their schools that did not appear on the December 2, 2005 count, and report outcomes for those students. Since neither enrollment nor graduation outcomes could be verified for students reported as having transferred within LAUSD, 6.44% of all 12<sup>th</sup> grade SWD were counted as not having received a diploma.

**TABLE 4. Number and Percentage of SWDs that Dropped Out or Transferred within the District and Not Reported.\***

Local District	Total 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade SWD*	Dropped Out	% Dropped Out	Transferred within LAUSD- Not Reported	% Transferred within LAUSD- Not Reported
1	753	52	6.91%	40	5.28%
2	396	33	8.33%	30	7.55%
3	625	72	11.52%	39	6.23%
4	395	46	11.65%	32	8.04%
5	594	74	12.46%	38	6.34%
6	241	70	29.05%	14	5.81%
7	296	43	14.53%	26	8.78%
8	547	48	8.78%	30	5.43%
Adult School	1	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	3,848	438	11.38%	249	6.44%

\* Corrected Table name and totals (1-2-07)

#### *Error Rate of Graduation Data as Reported by Schools*

For the 2005-2006 school year, schools reported a total of 1,636 SWD as having graduated with a diploma. The validation study was able to verify graduation for 1,516 of these students. For the remaining 120 students, outcome information was obtained and is as follows: 53 dropped out; 11 were still enrolled; 41 received a certificate of completion/aged out; 4 left the District; and 11 transferred to another LAUSD school with no outcome reported. Therefore, data as reported by schools of students that received a high school diploma demonstrated an error rate of 7.33%.

Errors were also observed in the data for students that schools reported as not having received a diploma (2,053). Of these students, 101 actually received a diploma and 50 transferred out of the District resulting in their exclusion for determining the graduation rate. Therefore, data as reported by schools for students that did not receive a diploma demonstrated an error rate of 7.35%.

For students reported by schools as having transferred out of the District (127), the validation review was able to obtain outcomes for 37 students with 8 having graduated with a diploma and 2 received a certificate of completion/aged out. The discrepancies for students that were reported by schools as having left the District show an error rate of 29.1%.

Overall, errors were observed within the graduation data as reported by schools. However, these errors had minimal impact on the overall graduation rate with schools reporting 42.18% of SWD graduating with a diploma, and the actual graduation rate obtained by the OIM at 42.52%.

### *SIS Data System and Practices for Documenting and Reporting Graduation Data*

Although the validation study was specific to students with disabilities, it should be understood that the review and observations of the District's data system and procedures for documenting and reporting graduation are not limited to SWD.

Overall, the quality of the graduation data appears to have improved due to the requirements and increased documentation of the Chapman Exemption which allowed students with disabilities to apply for a waiver to graduate with a diploma if they did not pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). It also appears that the quality of the graduation data benefited from the data collection efforts and methodology associated with this outcome as it appears to have required considerable coordination and collaboration amongst counselors and staff to collect data. Although there does not appear to be a uniform practice for documenting and reporting graduation data, it is noted that the quality of the graduation data varies by school and the documentation practices employed at each school.

The District's secondary SIS data system is inconsistent for reporting graduation data primarily due to a default within the system that automatically designates a code of L<sup>7</sup> to all students identified as 12<sup>th</sup> graders, meaning they are students withdrawn by culmination<sup>7</sup>. This default creates two primary errors. First, since the system defaults all students as withdrawn by culmination, the system will overestimate the number of students who graduate with a diploma and/or receive a certificate of completion if the system is not updated by schools and appropriate codes are entered for all students. In addition, the L<sup>7</sup> code is assigned to all students who receive a diploma or a certificate of completion without any indicator to differentiate whether it was a diploma or certificate of completion. Furthermore, school personnel tend to associate the L<sup>7</sup> code as graduating with a diploma, thereby reporting students that received a certificate of completion as having graduated with a diploma. This was evidenced in the graduation data provided by schools as the data reported contained 46 students whose primary disability is mental retardation (MR) as having graduated with a diploma. Although it is possible that students with MR may graduate with a diploma, it is more likely that they received a certificate of completion. Based on the observations of the validation study, this appears to be the case. Second, the secondary SIS system also includes a default for students that did not pass the CAHSEE designating them with an L<sup>8</sup> code, or "Unknown". The L<sup>8</sup> code also is given to students that are considered non-grads or dropouts. This may also contribute to inaccuracies as some students were reported as L<sup>8</sup> or dropouts that actually graduated with a diploma under the Chapman Exemption. Furthermore, the system does not appear to report graduation codes consistently within the system. In some instances, the SIS contained multiple codes for students. For instance, some students that did not pass the CAHSEE were assigned an L<sup>8</sup> code in one field, and an L<sup>7</sup> code in another because

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<sup>7</sup> This default may be overridden by schools if a qualifier code is entered for individual students, such as students that will be retained.

they graduated with the Chapman Exemption which waives the CAHSEE requirement for students with disabilities.

The SIS often did not contain the most updated graduation requirements for students. In many instances the graduation requirement field within the SIS would indicate students were lacking required credits for graduation, while school personnel reported the student had met all of their requirements and graduated with a diploma. In some instances, this was verified by the students cumulative file transcripts, while others the accurate record of graduation was a counselor's graduation log. Schools also reported that the SIS system does not automatically apply some course credits for SWD therefore the SIS system did not reflect that the student met all of their requirements until these courses were manually applied by school personnel. This is of concern as in some instances students lacked minimal credits for graduation and had been coded as dropouts or unknowns within the system. Furthermore, we observed instances where students were lacking considerable number of credits for graduation within the SIS, and were reported as graduates with a diploma by counselors and/or had evidence of having received a diploma on the cumulative file transcript.

Lastly, it appears that some schools do not consider the SIS as the most accurate source for verifying graduation data. Some schools report that a student's cumulative file transcript is the most accurate source, while others rely on individual logs or databases maintained by counselors as the most accurate source. This appears to be primarily due to a disconnect between counselors' records and the entry and maintenance of data within the SIS system<sup>8</sup>. As mentioned above, inaccuracies are noted when schools rely solely on the SIS data for reporting graduation, as it may be the case for schools that reported students with MR as graduating with a diploma that may have actually received a certificate of completion.

### *Additional Findings*

The validation study found instances where schools exited students with moderate to severe disabilities under the age of 22, without exercising the option of issuing a certificate of completion. In these instances, students were designated a code of L<sup>8</sup>, indicating their status is unknown or the student dropped out. The study also found instances where schools issued diplomas to students with moderate to severe disabilities based on the student having met the 230 credit requirement and Chapman exemption, regardless of their program of study. In one instance, a student with a moderate to severe disability graduated with a diploma ranked 20<sup>th</sup> in their class, despite participation in an alternative special education curriculum. Overall, differences were noted in how schools apply the various completion options for students with moderate to severe disabilities.

An area of concern is the low number of schools that reported additional students that enrolled after December 2, 2005. This affects the number of students which were reported as having transferred schools within the District that may have actually graduated. In many occasions, schools reported students transferred to LAUSD adult schools; however, the District did not collect graduation data from these schools. Although the secondary SIS system lacks the

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<sup>8</sup> Counselors often reported maintaining students' cumulative records as part of their responsibilities, and indicated that they were not responsible for the data entry and maintenance of the SIS system.

integration necessary to track students that transferred to another LAUSD school, the ISIS system should facilitate the tracking of these students and further improve the quality of the data. However, it is important that the inclusion of additional 12<sup>th</sup> grade students with disabilities be emphasized in the future to ensure an accurate reflection of student graduation outcomes.

Finally, there appears to be differences in the graduation rates by local districts and comprehensive high schools. A review of graduation rates by comprehensive high schools indicates that there is a large range between the graduation rates of schools with some schools graduating only 15% of their SWD while others graduate as many as 87.5% (See Attachment C).

## **Implications**

Despite the validation of the accuracy of the District's graduation data and the determination of an actual graduation rate for the purposes of the MCD, it is important to note that the overall graduation rate of SWD may be considerably lower since a number of students may have dropped out prior to their 12<sup>th</sup> grade promotion and/or the December 2, 2005 count. To better track graduation outcomes for all students including SWD, the District should consider conducting a similar data collection of student outcomes using a longitudinal approach.

Although the errors found within the data reported by schools did not have a significant impact on the District's performance with the target associated with Outcome 3 of the MCD, these errors may have considerable implications for students that may have met the graduation requirements and did not receive a diploma, or students considered drop outs within the District's data system that actually received a diploma.

The District should consider reviewing and revising the policies and procedures for documenting and maintaining student graduation data to ensure uniform practices are implemented within the District. This should include an examination of the existing SIS data system as well as the capacity of the ISIS system for reporting student outcomes and tracking student mobility. The District should also review the policies and procedures for issuing a certificate of completion for non-diploma track students with disabilities that complete school by either aging out or that met alternative requirements for completion, and ensure that schools utilize this option accordingly.

Lastly, it is important to note that the District needs to carefully examine factors that may be contributing to the low rate of graduation for students with disabilities. As was noted in the findings, there appear to be considerable differences in the graduation and drop out rates by local districts and schools. The District should consider conducting a comprehensive review of these schools which may provide insights into the practices and programmatic differences that may be contributing to the school performance.

**CALCULATION OF OUTCOMES 3 AND 4:  
GRADUATION AND COMPLETION RATES OF STUDENTS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

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## Background

As part of the Modified Consent Decree, the Independent Monitor requires that schools provide accurate graduation and non-standard exit data for students with disabilities. Specifically, in the 2004-05 year-end report, the Independent Monitor stated:

For the 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years, I will be unable to determine the District's performance on Outcomes 3 (Graduation) and 4 (Completion) unless the District provides my office with a student-level report from the principal of each comprehensive high school on the number of special education graduates.

As a result, the Program Evaluation and Research Branch (PERB) initiated a data collection effort in which comprehensive high schools were required to validate individual student level graduation, completion, and other non-standard exit data for grade 12 students with disabilities enrolled in December of the 2004-05 school year.

For grade 12 students with disabilities who were not enrolled in comprehensive high schools (options schools, special education centers), fall survey data was used to determine the number of IEP diplomas and certificates of completion. The number of grade 12 students with disabilities enrolled in December of the 2004-05 school year served as the denominator for these schools.

## Calculations

In determining LAUSD's Outcome 3 performance for 2004-05, PERB calculated Outcome 3 and 4 performance based on the methodology established by the Office of the Independent Monitor. It used combined individual student data from principal verified lists and aggregate counts from fall survey data.

*Outcome 3 calculation:*

$$\frac{\text{Grade 12 SWDs receiving a diploma (verified by comprehensive high school principal) + \text{Number of IEP graduates reported in the fall surveys of other schools with grade 12 SWDs}}{\text{Grade 12 SWDs enrolled December 2, 2005 excluding students with L}^3, \text{L}^4 \text{ and L}^5}$$

PERB used these same data combined with annual dropout files to calculate the completion rates for Local Districts and LAUSD.

*Outcome 4 calculation:*

$$\frac{\text{Grade 12 SWDs receiving a diploma (as verified by principals of comprehensive high schools)} + \text{Number of IEP graduates and certificates of completion reported in the fall survey (for other schools with grade 12 SWDs)}}{\text{All SWDs in the numerator plus students grades 7 - 12 dropping out the 2005-06 school year}}$$

## Results

This methodology for 2004-05 resulted in the following Outcome 3 performance for LAUSD and its eight Local Districts. Attachment A provides Outcome 3 data for individual schools.

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of Grade 12 SWDs with Diplomas</b>	<b>Total Number of Grade 12 SWDs</b>	<b>Outcome 3 Percentage</b>
Local District 1	359	753	47.7%
Local District 2	312	528	59.1%
Local District 3	340	711	47.8%
Local District 4	239	370	64.6%
Local District 5	211	507	41.6%
Local District 6	131	206	63.6%
Local District 7	143	366	39.1%
Local District 8	239	563	43.2%
LAUSD	1,974	3,996	49.4%

This methodology for 2004-05 resulted in the following Outcome 4 performance for LAUSD and its eight Local Districts. Attachment B provides Outcome 4 data for individual schools.

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of SWDs with Diplomas</b>	<b>Number of SWDs with Certificates of Completion</b>	<b>Number of SWDs Aging Out</b>	<b>Number of SWDs Completing High School plus Grade 7-12 Dropouts</b>	<b>Outcome 4 Percentage</b>
Local District 1	359	94	32	564	86.0%
Local District 2	312	41	19	437	85.1%
Local District 3	340	60	37	608	71.9%
Local District 4	239	19	6	367	71.9%
Local District 5	211	31	21	381	69.0%
Local District 6	131	12	7	197	76.1%
Local District 7	143	50	26	308	71.1%
Local District 8	239	43	29	417	74.6%
LAUSD	1,974	350	177	3,279	76.3%

## Considerations

For both Outcome 3 and Outcome 4, PERB cross referenced the graduation and completion data validated by schools with annual dropout survey data. In some cases, principals added students to the lists they received. In these cases, PERB included all of these students in the denominator and in the numerator where appropriate, for the Outcome 3 calculation. In other cases, PERB found inconsistencies in the school-validated data that made problematic the calculation of Local District and LAUSD graduation rates. For example:

- Data for eight non-comprehensive, non-diploma granting high schools indicated graduating 59 students in 2004-05; upon contacting each school to verify the data entered, PERB updated these students to reflect their receipt of a certificate of completion rather than diploma.
- Data for 21 students identified as having aged out showed that only four were 22 or old as of September 30, 2005; PERB adjusted the non-standard exit data for the other 17 cases to indicate they had not aged out.
- Data for Granada Hills High School were made problematic due to fact that CASEMIS for the large charter school were not available at the time of the comprehensive high school data collection. Further, although 15 IEP graduates were reported in the fall survey data, only 5 grade 12 students with disabilities in 2004-05 were reported to the state.
- Data for seven small options schools reported graduating more students with disabilities than were enrolled in Grade 12 in December 2004.

To mitigate these identified data issues, PERB excluded Granada Hills High School data and data from the seven small, options schools that reported more special education graduates than Grade 12 special education students enrolled. This decision excludes 50 students from the numerator and 31 students from the denominator.

As agreed, data for the 2005-06 school year will be drawn from principal-verified lists for all schools with grade 12 students with disabilities (including comprehensive high schools, options schools, and special education schools).

Students with Disabilities  
Comprehensive High Schools Graduation with a Diploma – June 30, 2006

School	Local District	Grade 12 Students with Disabilities	Left the District	Transferred within the District - Not Reported	Dropped Out	Received a Diploma	% Receiving a Diploma	Did Not Receive a Diploma	% Not Receiving a Diploma
SOUTH GATE SENIOR HIGH	6	91	4	8	52	13	14.94%	66	85.06%
GARDENA SENIOR HIGH	8	50	3	4	10	16	34.04%	27	65.96%
FRANKLIN SENIOR HIGH	4	40	0	3	4	14	35.00%	23	65.00%
FREMONT SENIOR HIGH	7	23	1	1	3	8	36.36%	13	63.64%
SYLMAR SENIOR HIGH	2	56	2	5	10	20	37.04%	29	62.96%
JEFFERSON SENIOR HIGH	5	152	13	19	38	55	39.57%	65	60.43%
UNIVERSITY SENIOR HIGH	3	73	0	3	15	30	41.10%	40	58.90%
MANUAL ARTS SENIOR HIGH	7	44	1	11	8	18	41.86%	14	58.14%
JORDAN SENIOR HIGH	7	38	2	2	10	16	44.44%	18	55.56%
CHATSWORTH SENIOR HIGH	1	50	6	11	3	21	47.73%	12	52.27%
DORSEY SENIOR HIGH	3	59	0	10	10	29	49.15%	20	50.85%
GRANADA HILLS HIGH SCHOOL	1	15	1	3	1	7	50.00%	4	50.00%
LINCOLN SENIOR HIGH	5	64	2	6	5	31	50.00%	25	50.00%
NARBONNE SENIOR HIGH	8	65	3	5	11	32	51.61%	25	48.39%
BELMONT SENIOR HIGH	4	54	0	2	9	28	51.85%	24	48.15%
GARFIELD SENIOR HIGH	5	81	2	6	7	41	51.90%	32	48.10%
FRANCIS POLYTECHNIC SENIOR HIGH	2	78	3	8	2	39	52.00%	28	48.00%
HUNTINGTON PARK SENIOR HIGH	6	77	5	1	12	38	52.78%	33	47.22%
LOCKE SENIOR HIGH	7	46	1	5	6	24	53.33%	16	46.67%
FREMONT NORTH HIGH SCHOOL	7	27	1	0	11	14	53.85%	12	46.15%
SAN FERNANDO SENIOR HIGH	2	49	1	3	5	26	54.17%	19	45.83%
MONROE SENIOR HIGH	1	74	2	4	3	40	55.56%	28	44.44%
WILSON SENIOR HIGH	5	99	4	4	6	54	56.84%	37	43.16%
NORTH HOLLYWOOD SENIOR HIGH	2	48	0	3	3	28	58.33%	17	41.67%
ROOSEVELT SENIOR HIGH	5	98	1	2	13	57	58.76%	38	41.24%
HOLLYWOOD SENIOR HIGH	4	63	4	2	7	35	59.32%	22	40.68%
CRENSHAW SENIOR HIGH	3	56	6	6	5	30	60.00%	14	40.00%
BANNING SENIOR HIGH	8	61	3	6	6	35	60.34%	17	39.66%
VAN NUYS SENIOR HIGH	2	39	1	5	7	23	60.53%	10	39.47%
VENICE SENIOR HIGH	3	57	1	0	5	34	60.71%	22	39.29%
LOS ANGELES SENIOR HIGH	3	62	2	6	7	37	61.67%	17	38.33%
TAFT SENIOR HIGH	1	69	1	5	14	43	63.24%	20	36.76%
BELL SENIOR HIGH	6	58	3	2	6	35	63.64%	18	36.36%
BIRMINGHAM SENIOR HIGH	1	56	1	3	5	35	63.64%	17	36.36%

School	Local District	Grade 12 Students with Disabilities	Left the District	Transferred within the District - Not Reported	Dropped Out	Received a Diploma	% Receiving a Diploma	Did Not Receive a Diploma	% Not Receiving a Diploma
WASHINGTON PREP SENIOR HIGH	8	47	2	2	5	29	64.44%	14	35.56%
FAIRFAX SENIOR HIGH	4	52	0	2	5	34	65.38%	16	34.62%
SAN PEDRO SENIOR HIGH	8	68	5	7	3	43	68.25%	13	31.75%
CANOGA PARK SENIOR HIGH	1	27	1	3	1	18	69.23%	5	30.77%
HAMILTON SENIOR HIGH	3	67	2	3	16	45	69.23%	17	30.77%
CLEVELAND SENIOR HIGH	1	25	0	2	4	18	72.00%	5	28.00%
RESEDA SENIOR HIGH	1	58	4	1	5	39	72.22%	14	27.78%
GRANT SENIOR HIGH	2	44	4	2	3	29	72.50%	9	27.50%
WESTCHESTER SENIOR HIGH	3	31	1	2	1	22	73.33%	6	26.67%
MARSHALL SENIOR HIGH	4	78	2	3	11	56	73.68%	17	26.32%
CARSON SENIOR HIGH	8	48	1	2	3	35	74.47%	10	25.53%
PALISADES CHARTER SENIOR HIGH	3	33	0	0	3	25	75.76%	8	24.24%
EAGLE ROCK SENIOR HIGH	4	35	4	0	0	24	77.42%	7	22.58%
KENNEDY SENIOR HIGH	1	46	0	0	5	37	80.43%	9	19.57%
EL CAMINO REAL SENIOR HIGH	1	38	0	3	1	31	81.58%	4	18.42%
VERDUGO HILLS SENIOR HIGH	2	32	0	1	0	28	87.50%	3	12.50%