

Draft Comparison Analysis
Jan 18th, 2018

In this report we outline how the Pathways in Education’s California charters schools—collectively referred to here as the *OFY/OFL Schools*—compare on a number of outcome variable against two comparison groups. The first comparison group, which we call the *Match Comparison* group, is a set of 37 other California charter schools that are also independent study schools with the mission to serve students that are at high-risk of academic failure and dropping out of high school before graduation. These school may or may not have been included in the California list of Alternative School Accountability Model (ASAM) schools for 2016-17¹ and are not associated with and juvenile justice facilities. The second group, which we collectively refer to as *ASAM or ASAM-like* schools, were either included on the 2016-17 ASAM school list or were non-ASAM charter schools found to have a mission to serve high-risk student populations.² The ASAM or ASAM-like group of schools consists of a total of 846 schools—788 2016-17 ASAM schools and 68 ASAM-like schools.

All outcomes analyzed for this report were obtained from either the California Department of Education’s web based data download files or from the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress research files.

Results: SBAC Outcomes

First we reviewed the average performance on the Smarter Balance mathematics and English language

Table 1. Comparative Outcomes on the 2015, 2016, and 2017 SBAC Assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics									
Assessment	OFY/OFL Schools			Matched Comparison Schools ^a			1617 ASAM & ASAM-like Schools ^b		
	Number of Schools	Avg. Pct Met or Exceeded	Avg. Pct. Not Met	Number of Schools	Avg. Pct Met or Exceeded	Avg. Pct. Not Met	Number of Schools	Avg. Pct Met or Exceeded	Avg. Pct. Not Met
2015 SBAC									
ELA	11	37%	23%	32	19%	50%	583	13%	60%
Math	11	6%	70%	32	4%	83%	581	2%	88%
2016 SBAC									
ELA	10	37%	26%	35	21%	48%	602	15%	58%
Math	10	6%	69%	35	4%	80%	601	2%	87%
2017 SBAC									
ELA	11	33%	34%	35	23%	46%	559	14%	59%
Math	11	7%	71%	34	5%	80%	555	2%	89%

a. Matched Comparison Schools are California schools that are serve similar student populations (as part of their mission) that are also independent study charter schools, but that are not associated with a juvenile detention center.

b. This group includes schools that were on the 1617 ASAM list published by CDE, filtering out alternative schools of choice that did not appear (by review of the schools' websites) to serve high risk students as part of the mission. It also include schools that are known to serve similar student populations to OFY/OFL, but had opted not to apply for ASAM status in 1617.

¹ ASAM schools were originally defined in 20xx as a set of schools that either met a specific school type (e.g., community day schools, continuation schools, schools within juvenile facilities, and the like) or where non-traditional charter or public schools of choice. Initially this group of schools were held accountable to a different set of academic standards than traditional schools. However, the ASAM program was defunded in 20xx and, therefore, ASAM schools were no longer held accountable to the alternative accountability system. Without the incentive to become an ASAM school, not many new schools applied for the ASAM status. As ASAM policy did not require a school to re-apply, schools already on the ASAM list remained on the list unless they requested to be removed.

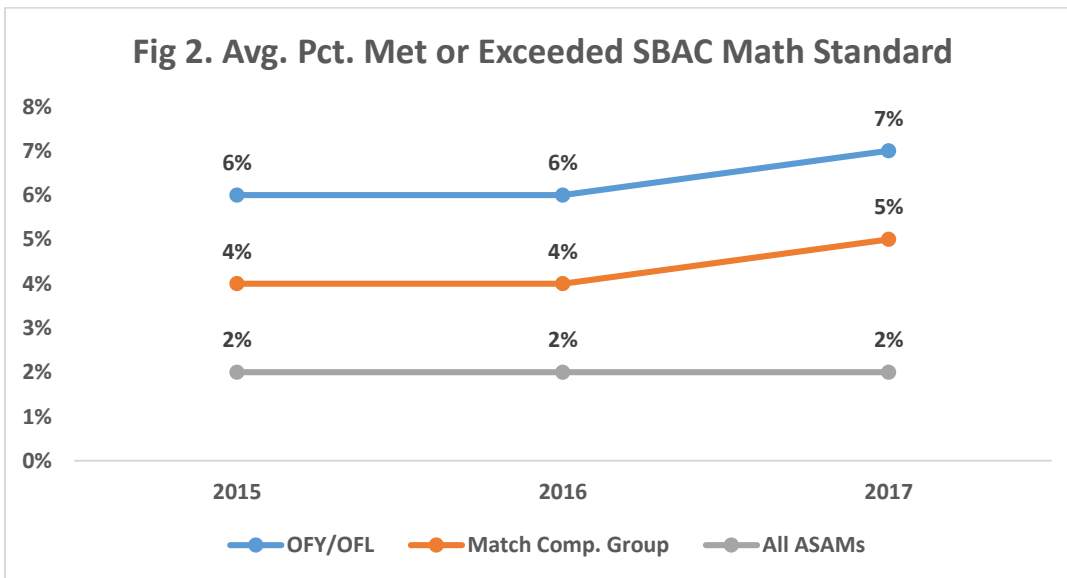
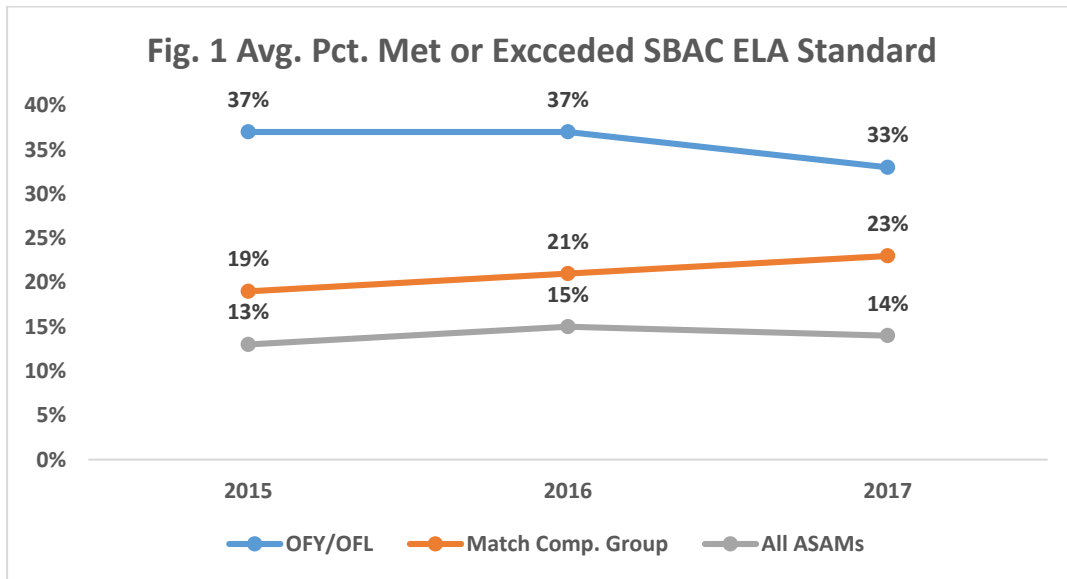
² Momentum Strategy & Research reviewed the schools’ website for mission statements and enrollment criteria to determine whether the school served students that are similar to those targeted by the OFY/OFL charter schools.

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arts assessments. Table 1 summarizes the average percent of student to meet or exceed standard, as well as the average percent of students that did not meet standard over three years, 2015, 2016, and 2017.

Across all three years, OFY/OFL's average percent of students to meet or exceed standard exceeds the average of the two comparison groups, in both ELA and mathematics. Figures 1 and 2 show the overall trend for all three groups of schools in ELA (Figure 1) and mathematics (Figure 2).



In addition, results show that a smaller percentage of OFY/OFL students, on average, did not meet standard compared to both the Matched Comparison Schools and the ASAM or ASAM-like schools. Again, this finding was consistent across all three years and in both ELA and mathematics.

Results: Cohort Outcomes

In many states where statewide alternative accountability systems exist (such as Colorado and Ohio) the alternative schools are held accountable to cohort graduation rates beyond the 4-year cohort. Other states, like Texas and Nevada,³ utilize a graduation index score that incorporates not only graduation rates (both on-time and extended year) but also other types of completion (such as GEDs or adjusted diplomas) as well as students that remain enrolled in the public education system.

Using data from California's cohort outcome files for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 cohort we looked at a number of cohort outcomes for OFY/OFL and the two comparison groups. Figure 3 first looks at the average on-time (i.e., 4-year cohort) graduation rates for the three groups of schools. Here we see that the average graduation rates of the OFY/OFL charter schools fall below those of both the matched comparison schools and the ASAM and ASAM-like schools.

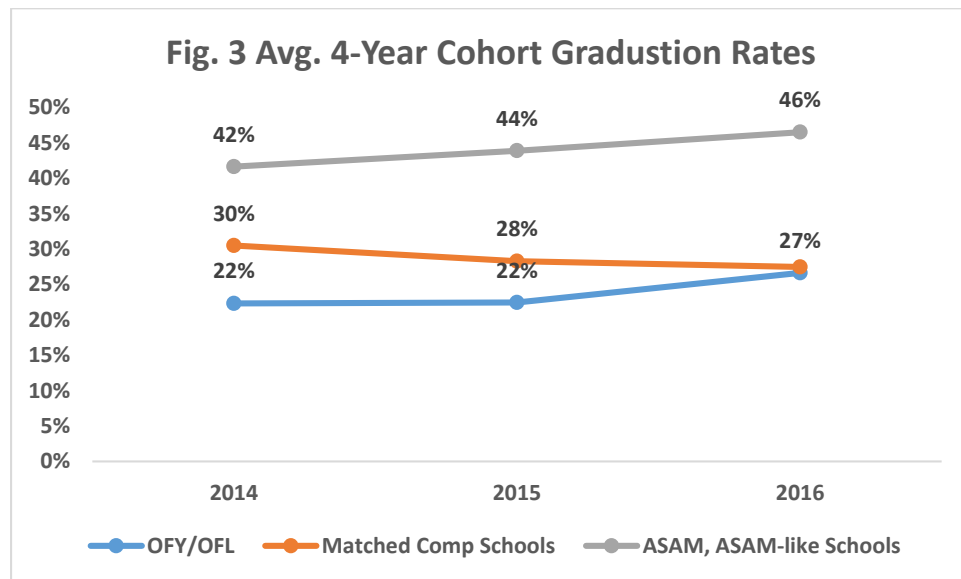
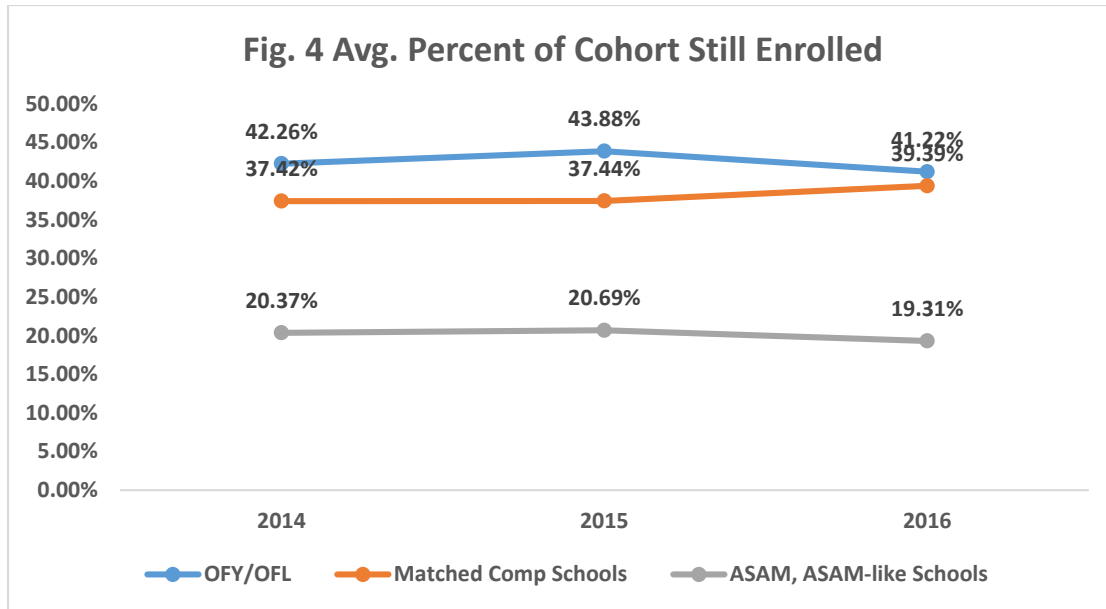


Figure 4 summarizes the average percentage of the cohorts that remain enrolled in the schools after year 4 has ended. Here we see that, for both the OFY/OFL schools and the Matched Comparison schools, a large proportion of students that did not graduate by the end of their 4th high school year remain enrolled in the schools

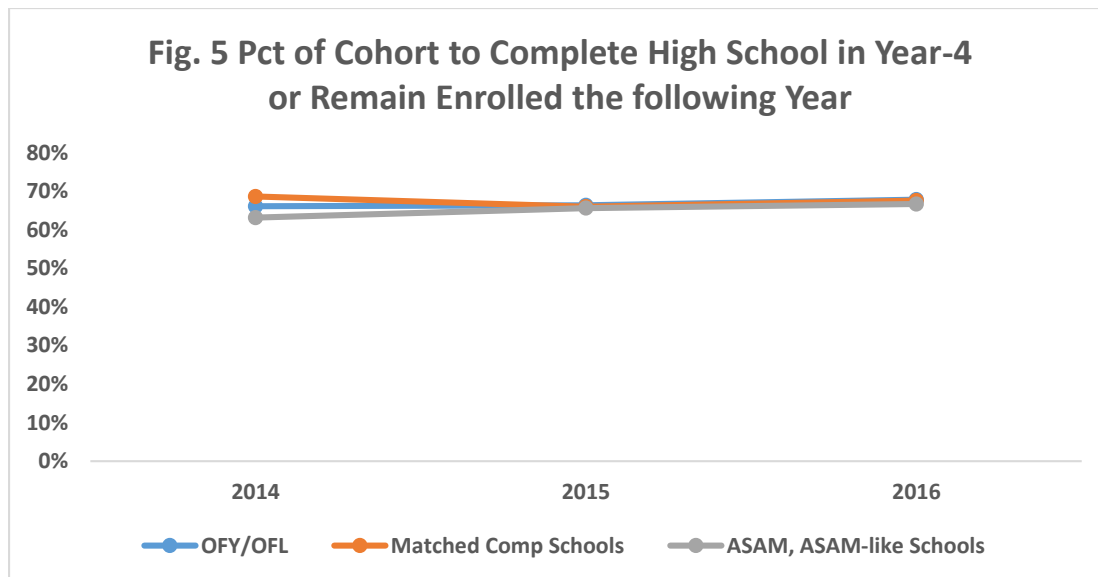
³ Nevada has published a draft of the alternative accountability system that is currently under development.

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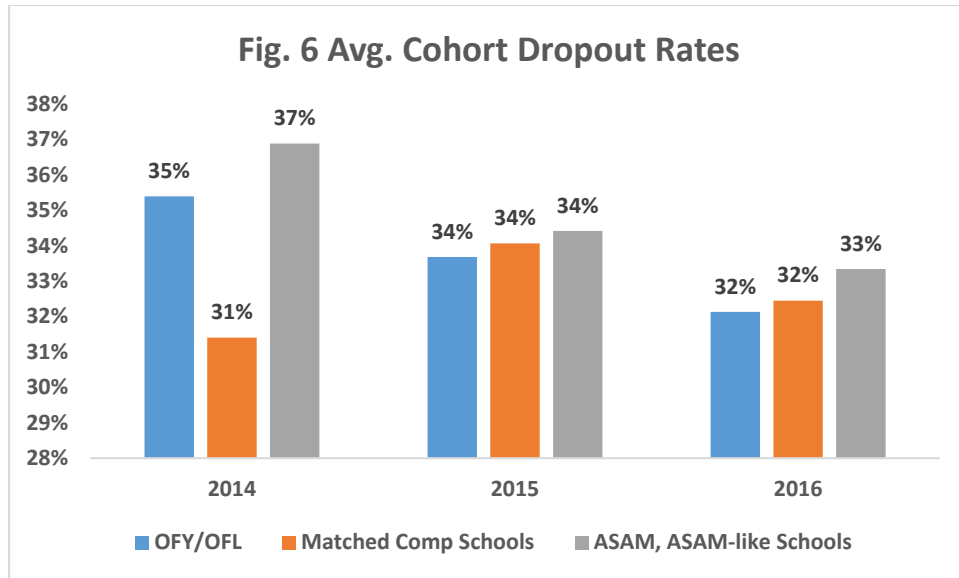


By combining the proportions of students to graduate with their cohort and the proportion that remains enrolled in the school we see that the overall outcome is very similar across the three groups. (See Figure 5). On average between 65 and 68 percent of cohorts either complete high school in their 4th year of high school or they remain enrolled the following year.



Which also means that the cohort dropout rates of the three groups are similar (Fig 6), with the OFY/OFL school averages at or slightly better than the two comparison groups in 2015 and 2016, and slightly better than one of the two groups in 2014.

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1. Definitions Used in Producing Cohort Outcome Data

The definitions and business rules used to develop the four-year adjusted cohort and to calculate the graduation rate are sourced from the U.S. Department of Education's *High School Graduation Rate - Non-regulatory Guidance, December 22, 2008* (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/hsgrguidance.pdf>).

1.1. Adjusted Cohort

The four-year adjusted cohort forms the basis for calculating graduation rates, dropout rates, and other related rates. The cohort is the group of students that could potentially graduate during a four-year time period (grade 9 through grade 12). The four-year adjusted cohort includes students who enter 9th grade for the first time in the initial year of the four-years used for the cohort. This cohort is then adjusted by:

- Adding students who later transfer into the cohort during grade 9 (year 1), grade 10 (year 2), grade 11 (year 3), and grade 12 (year 4); and
- Subtracting students who transfer out, emigrate to another county, or die during the four-year cohort period.

Students who drop out during the four-year cohort period remain in the cohort, as well as students that complete 12th grade and exit the educational system without graduating. Students that take longer than four years to graduate or remain enrolled after four years are also included as part of the cohort.

Students are removed from the cohort when the last enrollment record during the cohort period includes any of the following student school exit category codes:

Exit Code	Description
E130	Died
T180	Transfer to a private school
T200	Transfer to a school outside of California
T240	Transfer out of the U.S
T260	Transfer to an adult education program
T280	Transfer to college
T310	Transfer to a health facility
T370	Transfer to an institution with a high school diploma program
T460	Transfer to home school program

The following types of student school exit transfer category codes may be used to remove a student from a school- or district-level cohort: (T160) Transfer to CA school regular; (T165) Transfer to CA school, disciplinary; or (T167) Transfer to CA school, referral. When a subsequent enrollment record is found for any T160, T165, T167 exits, the student is removed from the transferring district- and school-level cohort and added to the enrolling district- and school-level cohort. When a subsequent enrollment is not found and the last exit code is T160, T165, or T167, the student record remains in the original school- or district-level cohort and is treated as a "lost transfer" dropout.

- 1.2. Four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate** - The four-year graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of students in the four-year adjusted cohort who graduate in four years or less [with either a traditional high school diploma, an adult education high school diploma, or have passed the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE)] by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for that graduating class. The following formula provides an example of the four-year graduation rate for the cohort entering grade 9 for the first time in the fall of the year 1 of the cohort and graduating by the end of year 4 of the cohort period.

Number of cohort members who earned a regular high school diploma by the end of year 4 in the cohort
<u>divided by</u>
Number of first-time grade 9 students in year 1 (starting cohort) plus students who transfer in, minus students who transfer out, emigrate, or die during school years 1, 2, 3, and 4.

The following student school exit categories and student school completion status codes are used to identify high school graduates:

Exit/Completion Code	Description
E230/100	Graduated, standard high school diploma
E230/106	Graduated, CAHSEE mods & waiver for special education
E230/108	Graduated, CAHSEE special education exempt
E230/250	Adult education high school diploma
E230/330	Passed California High School Proficiency Exam

- 1.3. Four-year Adjusted Cohort Dropout Rate** - This is the rate of students that leave the 9-12 instructional system without a high school diploma, passing a high school equivalency exam (i.e., GED, HiSET, TASC), or special education certificate of completion and do not remain enrolled after the end of the 4th year. The formula is similar to the formula listed in 1.2, but the numerator is replaced with the number of students in the four-year cohort that dropped out by the end of year 4 of the cohort.

Any “last” enrollment record with an exit code other than those specified in 1.2 (Graduation Rate), 1.4 (HS Equivalency Passer Rate), 1.5 (Special Education certificate of completion rate), or 1.6 (Still Enrolled Rate), is counted in the dropout category. Note special handling for transfer codes T160, T165, and T167 described in 1.1 (Adjusted Cohort.)

- 1.4. Four-year Adjusted Cohort High School (HS) Equivalency Passer Rate** – This is the rate of students that leave the 9-12 instructional system without a high school diploma, but have passed a HS equivalency exam such as the General Education Development (GED) exam, the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) exam, or the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET).. The formula is similar to the formula listed in 1.2, but the numerator is replaced with the number of students in the four-year cohort that passed a HS equivalency Exam by the end of year 4 of the cohort.

The following student school exit category and student school completion status code are used to identify a HS Equivalency Exam passer:

Exit/Completion Code	Description
E230/320	Received a High School Equivalency Certificate (and no standard HS diploma)

- 1.5. Four-year Adjusted Cohort Special Education Certificate of Completion Rate** - This is the rate of special education students that leave the 9-12 instructional system without a high school diploma, but have completed requirements necessary to obtain a special education certificate of completion. The formula is similar to the formula listed in 1.2, but the numerator is replaced with the number of students in the cohort that received his/her special education certificate of completion by the end of year 4 of the cohort.

The following student school exit category and student school completion status codes are used to identify a special education student that received a special education certificate of completion:

Exit/Completion Code	Description
E230/120	Special Education certificate of completion

- 1.6. Four-year Adjusted Cohort Still Enrolled Rate** – This is the rate of students that remain enrolled in the 9-12 instructional system without a high school diploma after the end of the 4th year of high school. The student must meet either of the following criteria:
- The *Enrollment Status Code* of the enrollment records to be considered will include 10 – Primary; 30 – Short-term; 40 – Receiving specialized Services Only. Enrollment records with an *Enrollment Status Code* of 20 – secondary enrollment, will not be included.
 - The student was enrolled in school on Census Day in year 5 (either the student hadn't been exited or the exit date was after Census Day year 5)
 - The student exited a school after the end of the cohort period and before Census Day year 5 with a completer exit (i.e. high school graduate). These students are counted as still enrolled and not graduates since the graduation did not take place in year 4 of the cohort period. Students that exited during this time period that were not completers are counted as dropouts.

The formula is similar to the formula listed in 1.2, but the numerator is replaced with the number of students that are enrolled after the end of the 4th year.

2. Sources of Data

Student enrollment records, including exit dates and reasons are sourced from the CALPADS Operational Data Store (ODS).

3. Business Rules for Creating Cohort Outcome Data

3.1. School Rates

A graduation rate is created for any school that has grade 12 enrollment during year 4 of the cohort or any school that has at least one graduate in the numerator of the cohort graduation rate.

When a district enrolls students in a “district-office” program instead of a district school (using school code “0000000”), a pseudo-school record titled “0000000 District-office” is displayed along with the traditional schools in a district and cohort outcome data is displayed for this pseudo school.

When cohort data is found in a non-high school, the following criteria are used to screen out school-level data: 1) the highest grade level reported at a school during the 4th year is less than 9th grade; 2) or the school is not a traditional public school (not adult education); 3) zero high school graduates are reported; and 3) the cohort size at the school is less than ten students. If this criteria is met, data will not be included for the school.

3.2. District Rates

A graduation rate is created for any district that has grade 12 enrollment during year 4 of the cohort or any district that has at least one graduate in the numerator of the cohort graduation rate. (District rates will include NPS schools.)

3.3. School Grade Span

- Schools must have a grade 12 at some point during year 4 of cohort or have at least one graduate in the numerator of the cohort rate.
- Schools with a 9-12 grade-span will receive a four-year rate.
- Schools with a 10-12 grade span will receive a three-year rate.
- Schools with an 11-12 grade span will receive a two-year rate.
- Schools that only have a grade 12 will receive a one-year rate.

3.4 Retired Statewide Student Identifiers (SSIDs)

All RETIRED SSIDs are replaced with REPLACEMENT SSIDs.

3.5 Open Schools, New Schools, and Closed Schools

• School Must be Open on Census Day Year 4

A school must be open on *Census Day* during year 4 of the cohort to receive a cohort graduation rate for accountability.

• School Closures During Four-year Cohort Period

Any student level cohort outcome data associated with schools that close during year 1, 2, 3 or before Census day in year 4, including direct-funded charter schools, will have their student enrollment/exit data roll up to the district. Note: This is the only instance where a direct-funded charter school's cohort data are included in the authorizing LEA cohort data. See section 3.10 for more information about direct funded charter schools.

- **School Openings During Four-year Cohort Period**
Schools that opened during year 2, year 3, or year 4 of the cohort will have a graduation rate calculated if they have grade 12 enrollment in year 4 or at least one graduate in the numerator of the cohort graduation rate (see Processing Rule 3.3)
- **New Schools That Open After End of Four-year Cohort Period & Submit Cohort Period Student Exit Data**
If a school opens the July 1st on after the end of the cohort window (beginning of the 5th year) and inaccurately submits student enrollment/exit records prior to the school open date, the school's student records are removed from the cohort.

3.6 School Moved to a New School District During Four-year Cohort Period

The graduation rate is attributed to the LEA responsible for administering the school in year 4 of the cohort outcome.

Example 1: School 001 moves from *District A* to *District B* in year 4 of the cohort period. *District B* is responsible for administering school 001 in year 4. The cohort outcome data for school 001 is attributed to *District B*.

Example 2: School 002 moves from *District A* to *District B* in year 5 of the cohort period. *District A* is responsible for administering school 002 in year 4. The cohort outcome data for school 002 is attributed to *District A*.

Note that since enrollment/exit data in CALPADS is submitted for the prior year, this data may be associated with District B in CALPADS data. The exit enrollment/records are re-associated to the LEA responsible for administering the school in year 4 and the cohort outcome data are attributed to District A, even though District B is responsible for the school in Year 5.

Example 3: If a "new" school or direct funded charter opens between July 1 and August 14 in year 5 in a new school district and submits student exit records for year 4 of the cohort, their student exit records are rolled up to the county rate. The school and district will not receive a cohort rate, because the new district was not open during year 4.

3.7 Charter Schools

- Direct funded charter schools are recognized as an LEA and receive their own school and district graduation rate. Direct funded charters school data will NOT be included in authorizing district roll-ups.
- Direct funded charter schools that are ASAM or COE administrated schools will receive their own school and district graduation rate. These schools will not be included in the authorizing district roll-ups.
- Statewide benefit charters are recognized as an LEA.
- State Board of Education approved charter schools are recognized as an LEA.
- All other types of charter schools will receive a school-level graduation rate and their data IS rolled up into district totals.
- Closed charter schools are processed under processing rule 3.5.

3.8. ASAM (Alternative Schools Accountability Model) Schools

ASAM schools that are not direct funded charter schools and not COE administered schools will receive the district-wide rate (e.g., the combined rate of all students in the district) if they have grade 12 enrollment or at least one graduate.

3.9. County Office of Education Administered Schools

County operated schools that are not direct funded charter schools will receive the countywide rate (e.g., the combined rate of all students attending districts in the county and in county operated schools) if they have grade 12 enrollment or at least one graduate.

3.10. State Special Schools

State special schools (i.e., schools for the deaf and blind) will receive the countywide rate (e.g., the combined rate of all students attending districts in the county and in county operated schools) if they have grade 12 enrollment or at least one graduate.

3.11. Subgroup Rates

Subgroup inclusion is determined by looking at program participation records for an SSID across 4 years of data. For example, if a student was designated as an English learner (EL) in year 1 in one SSID enrollment record, the student is counted in the EL subgroup, even if the student was not designated as an EL in any of the years 2, 3, or 4 of the cohort.

Subgroup rates are calculated for:

- Socioeconomically disadvantaged students
- Migrant education students
- English learners
- Special education students

3.12. Ethnicity/Race Categorization

- A multiple race category is included.
- A missing race and/or ethnicity category is included for DataQuest reporting only. For Accountability purposes, a missing race is reported in the school-wide-only graduation rate.

3.13. Redaction of Low N Data

- LEAs, schools, and student groups with less than 50 students in the denominator will not be accountable for graduation rates for AYP purposes.
- All LEAs, schools, and student groups will receive a published rate, unless the LEA, school, or student group contains less than 11 students - (DataQuest and AYP reports).

3.14. Early Graduates

Students that graduate early (in less than 4 years) are counted in their original cohort based upon their original first-time 9th grade year.

3.15. Date Range Used in Four-year Cohort

August 16th to August 15th inclusive is used to define an academic school year in order to include late summer graduates.

3.16. Enrollment Statuses Included in Four-year Cohort

- Student enrollment records with an *Enrollment Status* Code of 10-Primary are included for cohort processing.
- Student enrollment records with an *Enrollment Status* Code of 20-Secondary, are not included for cohort processing and are removed.
- Student enrollment records with an *Enrollment Status* Code of 30-Short-term, or 40-Receiving specialized Services Only, are not included for cohort processing and are removed UNLESS the enrollment record has one of the following Exit Codes (E130, T180, T200, T240, T260, T280, T310, T370, T460 or one of the following Exit Code/Completion Code combinations E230/100, E230/106, E230/108, E230/250, E230/330, E230/320, E230/120).

3.17. No-shows

There are three types of No-shows identified and each is handled differently for cohort processing.

- **Matriculating no-shows** – When the last exit found for a student is a matriculation exit (Exit code=E230 School Completion Status = 480), the student is counted as a dropout and attributed to the statewide totals.
- **No-show Dropouts** – When the last exit record found for a student has an exit date between 5/15 and 8/15 and has any of the following exit codes:
 - N420 – No show same school (Note this code is being retired on 6/30/14)
 - E155 – Year-end Enrollment Exit Same School
 - E150 – Mid-Year Enrollment Update
 - T160 – Transfer to California School
 - T165 – Transfer to California School - Specified Disciplinary Reasons
 - T167 – Transfer to California Alternative Education School

The student is counted as a dropout and attributed to the school that student exited from.

- **Pre-enrolled no-shows** – First time in school pre-enrollment records will not be used for cohort processing.

3.18. Districts and Independently reporting charter schools that did not certify CALPADS data

- Districts that do not certify their CALPADS data in year 4 of the cohort rate are assigned a zero graduation rate at the district-level and for each of their schools. Students identified in the district are included in the county-wide rate.
- Independently reporting charter schools (IRC) that did not certify their CALPADS data in year 4 of the cohort rate are assigned a zero graduation rate. An IRC can be either direct funded or not a direct funded charter school and are processed differently.
 - Students identified in an IRC that is a direct funded charter are included in the county-wide rate. These students will NOT be included in their authorizing district roll-ups.

- Students identified in an IRC that is not a direct funded charter are included in their authorizing district roll-ups.

4. Errors in Cohort Data

- 4.1.** There is a potential for errors in the data used to calculate four-year adjusted cohort outcome rates. The four-year adjusted cohort outcome data are based upon student-level data collected through CALPADS. LEAs are responsible for submitting, reviewing, and certifying data submitted through CALPADS. Please note that LEAs may correct and resolve each of these potential errors, by submitting corrections to CALPADS. The following types of errors will adversely impact the accuracy of the four-year adjusted cohort outcome data:
- 4.2. Mis-assigned Statewide Student Identifier (SSID)** - If an LEA inadvertently requests a new SSID for a student that already has been assigned an SSID, the student will have more than one SSID. When the data are used longitudinally, the link between student records for that student are lost and the student may be reported as a dropout if the mis-assignment is not corrected. LEAs are notified of SSIDs that appear to have this type of problem and are given an opportunity to resolve the duplicate SSID. The threshold for LEA certification is less than 2% of this multiple identification problem.
- 4.3. Incorrect Identification of Student's Entry or Exit Grade-level and Year** - The four-year adjusted cohort is based on correctly identifying first time 9th grade students in year 1, 10th grade students in year 2, 11th grade students in year 3, and 12th grade students in year 4. Therefore, the adjusted cohort will be incorrect if a student's grade level enrollment, and/or exit year are incorrectly identified.
- 4.4. Incorrect Exit Code** - Each of the individual rates (graduation, dropout, still enrolled, HS Equivalency Exam passer, and special education certificate of completion) are dependent on the LEA correctly identifying the type of exit. Therefore, the individual rates will be incorrect if the type of exit was incorrectly identified. For example, if the type of exit was identified as a dropout exit, but the student actually enrolled in private school, the dropout rate will be overstated by one student.
- 4.5. Duplicate Completer Records** - When picking from multiple individual student completer outcome records for a single SSID, the record with the highest completion level is used regardless of exit date. For example if there are two outcome records for one SSID and one is a high school graduation and the other record is passing the GED, the High school graduation record is used. To break ties within the same category, use the earliest exit date. If there is also a tie with exit dates use enrollment status code in the following order: a) 10- primary, c) 30-short term, and d) 40-came back to take the CAHSEE, and if another tie exists, use earliest enrollment date.
- 4.6. Duplicate Outcome records** – when there are two (or more) outcome records (not completer outcome records for a student with the same exit date, the highest outcome record is used. If there is also a tie with exit dates use enrollment status code in the following order: a) 10- primary, c) 30-short term, and d) 40-came back to take the CAHSEE, and if another tie exists, use earliest enrollment date

5. Accountability Rules and Targets

- 5.1.** Graduation rate targets for the following year are published for all schools and districts and subgroups unless the district, school, or subgroup:

- has fewer than 50 students in the cohort,
- does not have any grade 12 enrollment or graduates, or
- did not certify their CALPADS data in year 4 of the cohort.

5.2. Graduation rates are for all schools and districts and subgroups are assigned a zero graduation rate if the LEA did not certify their CALPADS data in year 4 of the cohort.

5.3. Graduation rates are calculated and published for all schools and districts and subgroups unless the district, school, or subgroups:

- has zero students in the cohort and zero students graduated,
- does not have any grade 12 enrollment or graduates, or
- has less than 50 students in the cohort AND are either an ASAM or county administered school and are not a direct funded charter school.

5.4. Countywide graduation rates are assigned to:

- County offices of education overall and their subgroups when the cohort has 50 or more students in the cohort. (Note: The countywide cohort and county wide graduation counts are displayed for the COEs and their subgroups.)
- Schools that are run by county offices of education are not direct-funded charter schools when the cohort has 50 or more students in the cohort. (Note: subgroups in schools that receive the countywide graduation rate do not get a graduation rate and are not held accountable). (Note: the number in the cohort and the number that graduated are not displayed when schools receive the county wide rate.)
- State special schools (i.e., schools for the deaf and blind) when the cohort has 50 or more students in the cohort. (Note: the number in the cohort and the number that graduated are not displayed when schools receive the county wide rate.)

5.5. Districtwide graduation rates are assigned to:

- ASAM schools that are not ran by COEs or are direct funded charter schools and when the cohort has 50 or more students in the cohort. (Note: the number in the cohort and the number that graduated are not displayed when schools receive the district wide rate.) (Note: subgroups in schools that receive the districtwide graduation rate do not get a graduation rate and are not held accountable).