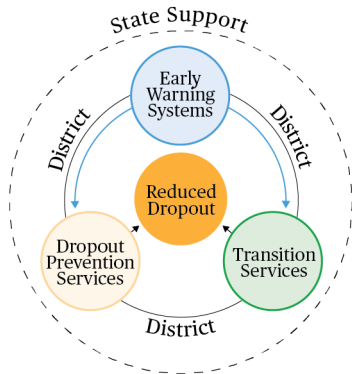# State and District Strategies to Reduce Dropouts

National Center for Education Evaluation

The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) encourages states and districts to support students' transitions from one level of schooling to the next to reduce the risk of their dropping out. This Snapshot presents findings from recent national surveys, which suggest that most states and districts are providing some types of transition and dropout prevention services, such as individualized career plans to help students identify and work toward their long-term goals and course offerings to help students who have fallen behind get back on track for graduation. However, many fewer states and districts have early warning systems designed to proactively identify the students most at-risk and in need of services and target such services.

Why this Topic

More than half a million students nationwide dropped out of high school in 2018.[i] These students are at greater risk of unemployment, incarceration, and poor health than their peers who graduate.[ii] Since 2002, the federal government has sought to promote high school graduation by requiring states to use graduation rates as a performance measure in school and district accountability systems.[iii] With the passage of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) in 2015, Congress further required states to describe their plans to work with districts to help students transition to middle or high school to reduce dropout rates.[iv]

This Snapshot describes how states and districts are addressing the problem and provides a foundation for future impact evaluations of efforts to reduce dropouts as required by Congress.[v] For example, states and districts may offer a range of services to directly prevent dropout or indirectly prevent it by smoothing students' transitions from middle to high school. They may also use data from early warning

systems to target those services. Understanding which strategies are used might help education officials learn from each other and identify approaches that could be evaluated more rigorously in the future.

The information in this Snapshot comes from a study of ESSA implementation during the 2017-18 school year. At that time, states were still transitioning to ESSA requirements.[vi] Therefore, the strategies described in this Snapshot may reflect only a starting point for ways dropout prevention may be implemented under ESSA.

Data and Analysis

The data are from surveys of states and school districts in 2018 that included questions about (1) strategies to support students in transition to the next schooling level, (2) services and programs to help students at risk of dropping out, and (3) access to student-level data to identify students at risk of dropping out.[vii] All 50 states and the District of Columbia responded to the state survey. A nationally representative set of 713 school districts were asked to

complete the district survey, of which 96 percent responded.[viii] Responses to survey questions were tallied across all responding states and districts to provide a national picture.[ix]
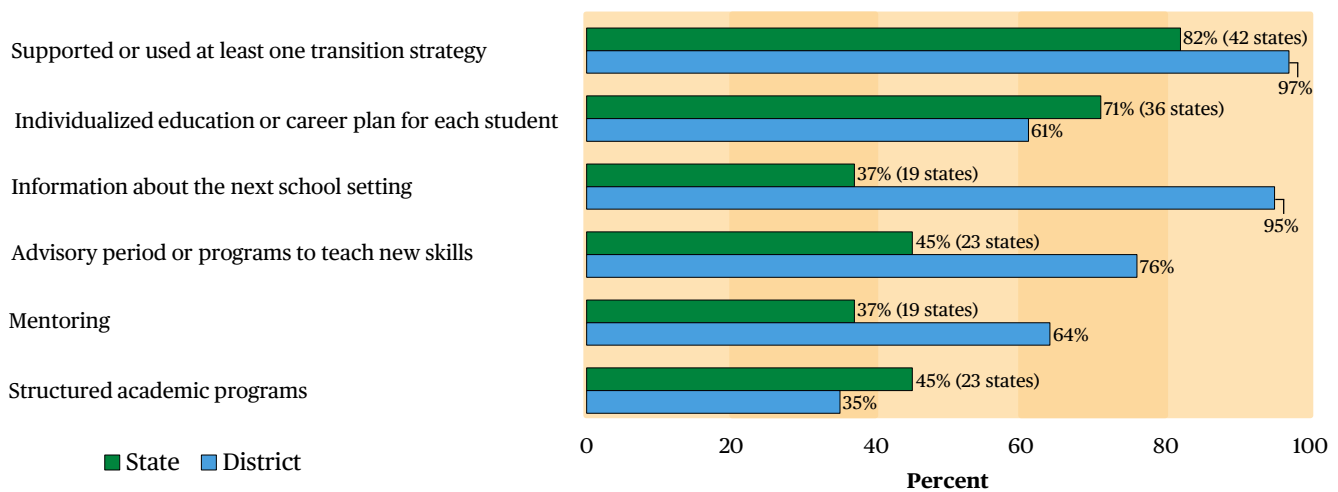
Key Findings

States most commonly supported individualized student plans as a transition strategy while districts favored information-sharing.

- ***Most states supported, and nearly all districts used, strategies to help students transition to the next level of schooling.*** In 2018, 42 states (82 percent) reported providing or funding technical assistance to support at least one transition strategy, and 97 percent of districts reported using at least one transition strategy (Figure 1).[x]

- ***Individualized education or career plans for students was the most prevalent transition strategy backed by states.*** Thirty-six states (71 percent) reported they supported the process of creating individualized career or education plans that help each student identify long-term goals, the steps to achieve those goals, and track their progress. For example, Massachusetts has co-sponsored a workshop series to help schools implement MyCAP, a multi-year planning tool

which can start preparing students as early as sixth grade for academic, personal/social, and career success.[xi] Such plans were also used by more than half of all districts (61 percent), but were not as commonly used as some other strategies at that level.

- ***Among districts, sharing information with students and families about the next school setting was nearly universal.*** Ninety-five percent of districts reported using some version of the strategy. This included orientation events for students at their new school (91 percent), visits to the new school (86 percent), and teaching students about expectations in the next school setting (84 percent) (Appendix Table 1). In contrast, sharing information about the next school setting was among the transition strategies for which the fewest states provided or funded technical assistance (19 states, or 37 percent).

- ***Districts also frequently facilitated students' moves to the next school level by engaging them in advisory periods and mentoring.*** Seventy-six percent of districts reported using school advisory periods to teach skills for succeeding at the next school level (e.g., study skills, problem solving, social skills) and 64 percent reported offering mentoring by adults or peers to help students

Figure 1. State and district strategies to help students transition to the next level of schooling

Strategy	State	District
Supported or used at least one transition strategy	82% (42 states)	97%
Individualized education or career plan for each student	71% (36 states)	61%
Information about the next school setting	37% (19 states)	95%
Advisory period or programs to teach new skills	45% (23 states)	76%
Mentoring	37% (19 states)	64%
Structured academic programs	45% (23 states)	35%

■ State ■ District

Notes: 2017-18 survey of all states and the District of Columbia and survey of 683 (unweighted) or 17,031 (weighted) school districts. State support includes providing or funding technical assistance or training to support a transition strategy. Transition strategies in this exhibit are services to help students transition from elementary to middle school or from middle to high school. Information about the next school setting includes any of the following: orientation events, visits to the new school, or teaching students about new expectations in the next school setting. New skills include organizational, study, social, or emotional skills. Structured academic programs include summer bridge programs or transition-year academies. Mentoring includes adult mentors or student-to-student mentoring. Two states only supported other strategies not listed. The data for the individual survey items are available in Appendix Table 1.

settle in. These strategies were less commonly supported by states. Twenty-three states (45 percent) supported advisory periods and 19 (37 percent) supported mentoring.

- ***A minority of states and districts supported or used structured academic programs.*** Twenty-three states (45 percent) and 35 percent of districts reported supporting or using structured academic programs, such as summer bridge programs or transition year academies. Summer bridge programs provide academic remediation, social support, or orientation activities to prepare transitioning students for their freshman year of high school. Transition year academies provide high school freshmen with a supportive, more personalized learning environment by creating a separate, smaller unit within the school taught by a designated team of teachers.
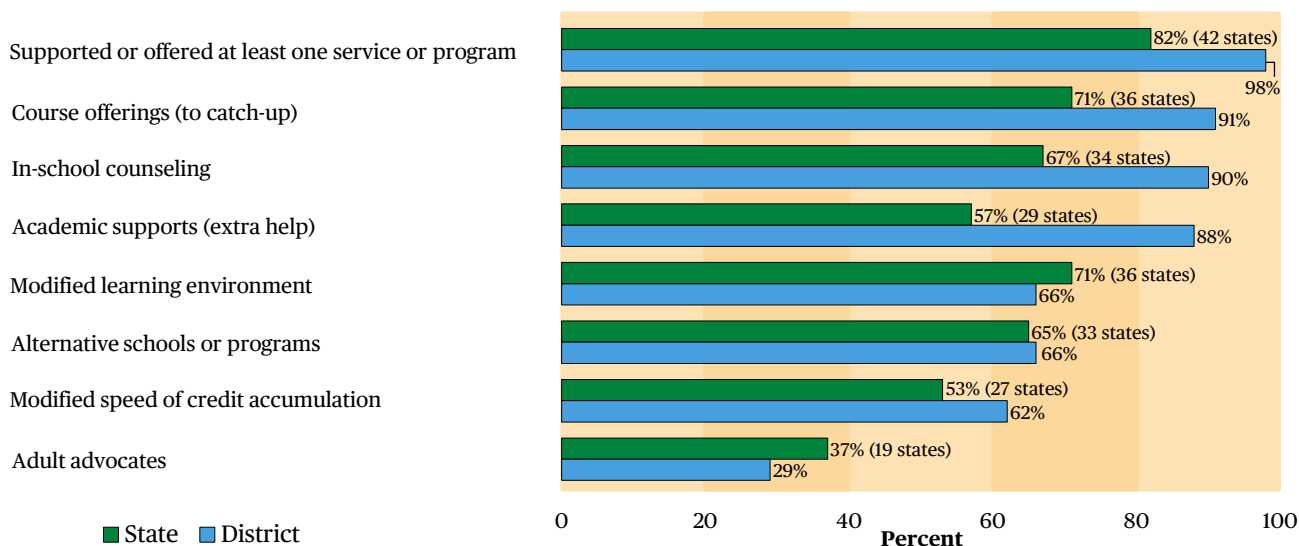
Catch-up classes, counseling, and extra academic help were among the more common approaches to high school dropout prevention.

- ***Most states supported and nearly all districts offered services or programs to help students at risk of dropping out get back on track for graduation.*** Forty-two states (82 percent) supported, and 98 percent of districts used, at least one service or program (Figure 2 and Appendix Table 2a).

- ***Opportunities for students to retake failed classes were among the most common approaches to dropout prevention.*** Thirty-six states (71 percent) provided funds or assistance to encourage opportunities for students to retake courses to catch up, and 91 percent of districts provided these options.

- ***In-school counseling was another common approach to dropout prevention, particularly among districts.*** Thirty-four states (67 percent) supported with resources, and 90 percent of districts offered, counseling services to encourage students to stay in school. For example, Colorado awards grants to help districts increase their school counseling services with the goal of improving graduation rates.[xii] Districts in the state may use these funds to hire additional licensed school counselors and for professional development on providing career awareness and postsecondary preparatory services.

Figure 2. State and district services and programs that serve students at risk of dropping out

Notes: 2017-18 survey of all states and the District of Columbia and survey of 683 (unweighted) or 17,031 (weighted) school districts. This figure is limited to districts with at least one middle or high school grade. It excludes districts with elementary grades only (24 districts unweighted, 656 weighted). The district percentage for alternative schools or programs is limited to districts with high school grades (566 unweighted and 12,069 weighted). State support includes providing or funding technical assistance or training to support a service or program. Course offerings include remediation classes, credit recovery courses or programs, or summer school to prevent grade retention. Academic supports primarily include tutoring, but also guided study halls or academic support periods, or after-school programs for students at risk of dropping out. Modified learning environments include a flexible school day, smaller learning communities, smaller class size, or transitional 9th grade. Modified speed of credit accumulation includes decelerated curriculum or accelerated credit accumulation. The data for the individual survey items are available in Appendix Table 2a. Appendix Table 2b provides additional information about state and district educational options for students to decrease the risk of dropping out.

- ***Many states supported, and most districts provided, extra help with coursework for at-risk students.*** Twenty-nine states (57 percent) supported and 88 percent of districts offered academic supports, such as tutoring, study halls, and after-school help, for at-risk students.

- ***At least half of states and districts supported alternative or modified learning environments or curriculum.***[xiii] Thirty-six states (71 percent) provided or funded technical assistance on modifying the learning environment, and 66 percent of districts offered at least one modification. These modifications could include a flexible school day (e.g., shortened school day, evening classes, Saturday classes), smaller class sizes, or learning communities that aim to provide a more personalized learning experience. Thirty-three states (65 percent) supported, and 66 percent of districts provided, alternative school options to address the needs of at-risk students that are not met in regular schools, such as individualized or flexible schedules, enhanced social services, or child care. Twenty-seven states (53 percent) and 62 percent of districts provided opportunities for accelerated credit accumulation (e.g., opportunities to test out of course requirements) or decelerated curriculum
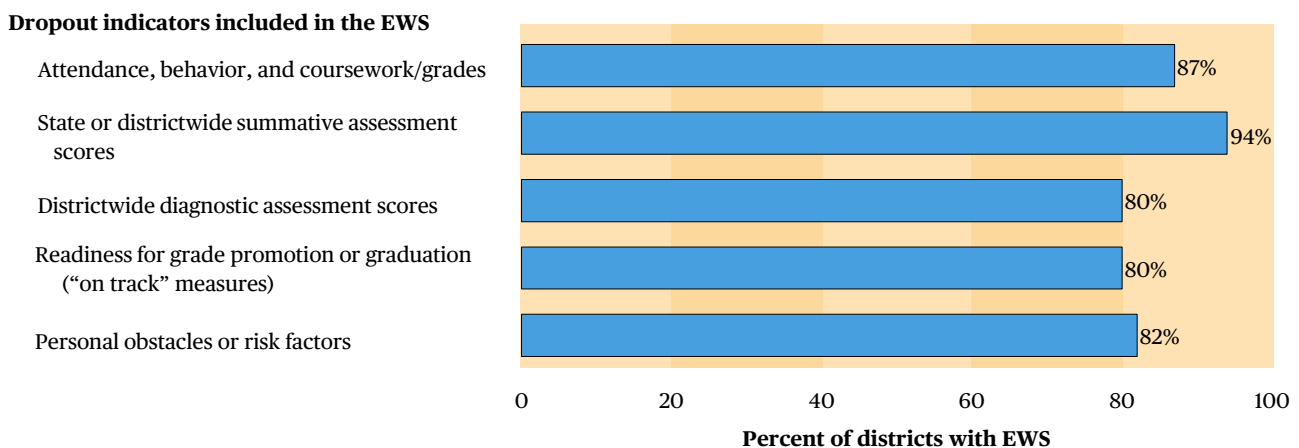
(e.g., taking Algebra I over two school years instead of one school year) to at-risk students.

- ***In contrast, a minority of states and districts reported using adult advocates.*** Adult advocates are typically used to provide or coordinate more intense, individualized supports for students at risk of dropping out. Only 19 states (37 percent) and 29 percent of districts supported or provided adult advocates.

Less than half of all districts had an early warning data system to inform dropout prevention efforts.

- ***Forty-one percent of districts reported having an early warning system ([Appendix Table 3a](#)).***[xiv] Early warning systems (EWS) are designed to monitor student behavior and proactively identify individuals who may be at risk of dropping out, and thus inform and target dropout prevention efforts. For example, a district's EWS might use student attendance, behavior data, course grades, demographics, and other data to calculate a dropout probability for high school students. Counselors, school administrators, and student services staff might regularly meet to review the data for the highest risk students and match these students with targeted supports.[xv] Early warning

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Figure 3. Types of student-level data in district early warning systems (EWS)

Dropout indicators included in the EWS

Indicator	Percent of districts with EWS
Attendance, behavior, and coursework/grades	87%
State or districtwide summative assessment scores	94%
Districtwide diagnostic assessment scores	80%
Readiness for grade promotion or graduation ("on track" measures)	80%
Personal obstacles or risk factors	82%

Percent of districts with EWS

Notes: 2017-18 survey of 683 (unweighted) or 17,031 (weighted) school districts. This figure is limited to districts with an early warning system (EWS) and at least one middle or high school grade. It excludes districts without an EWS (338 districts unweighted, 9,581 weighted) as well as districts with elementary grades only (24 districts unweighted, 656 weighted). Examples of personal obstacles include homelessness and the number of address changes. The data for individual survey items are available in Appendix Table 3a along with equivalent information for districts without EWS. Appendix Table 3b provides this information for states.

systems may be an important part of a broader effort to decrease chronic absenteeism and course failure and thereby reduce dropouts and potentially increase high school graduation rates.[xvi]

- ***Most districts included student attendance, behavior data, and course data in their early warning system.*** Eighty-seven percent of districts with an EWS reported that they included all three of these indicators in their system (Figure 3).[xvii, xviii] Research suggests these three indicators strongly predict which students are likely to drop out.[xix]

- ***Other common indicators included assessment scores and composite "on track" measures.*** Ninety-four percent of districts with an EWS included summative assessment scores, and 80 percent included districtwide diagnostic assessment scores in their calculations of which students are at risk. Eighty percent reported having "on track" measures of readiness for grade promotion or graduation. Such measures may include information about credits accumulated or how well courses taken align with the coursework required for graduation or promotion. A similar percentage of districts included data in their EWS about personal obstacles or risk factors, such as homelessness or frequent address changes (82 percent).

- ***An additional 55 percent of districts reported having a student-level data system (****[Appendix Table 3a](#)****).*** These districts did not identify the system as an EWS to help identify at-risk students.[xx] The remaining four percent of districts reported not having any student-level data system.

ENDNOTES

[i] This number is the number of event dropouts. Event dropouts are the number of 15- to 24-year-olds in grades 10 through 12 who dropped out between one October and the next (e.g., the 2017 data refer to 10th- through 12th-graders who were enrolled in October 2016 but had dropped out by October 2018). Source: De Brey, C., Snyder, T.D., Zhang, A., and Dillow, S.A. (2021). *Digest of Education Statistics 2019* (NCES 2021-009). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved March 11, 2021 from https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch. This Snapshot presents the number of event dropouts, rather than the number of status dropouts. The event dropout measure better aligns with the dropout prevention strategies described in the Snapshot, which are geared toward preventing students currently in school from dropping out. This is the population of students reflected in an event dropout number. This differs from status dropout, which is the number of individuals in a given age range (16-24) who are not in school and have not earned a high school diploma or alternative credential. See Appendix Figure 1 for national trends in the event dropout rate for 1997 through 2018.

[ii] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Office of Occupational Statistics and Employment Projections. 2020. *Unemployment Rates and Earnings by Educational Attainment*. Retrieved Aug. 25, 2021. https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/unemployment-earnings-education.htm; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, *2019: ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables* (S2602: Characteristics of the Group Quarters Population by Group Quarters Type (3 Types) and S1501: Educational Attainment). Retrieved November 16, 2020. https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/subject-tables/; National Center for Health Statistics. (2018*). Respondent-Reported Prevalence of Heart Disease, Cancer, and Stroke Among Adults Aged 18 and Over, by Selected Characteristics: United States, Average Annual, Selected Years 1997-1998 through 2016-2017*. Retrieved Sept. 9, 2020. https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/2018/013.pdf

[iii] For example, under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, Adequate Yearly Progress included graduation rates as a separate measurable annual objective for continuous and substantial improvement (defined as the percentage of students who graduate from secondary school with a regular diploma in the standard number of years) and required the inclusion of these rates in annual report cards.

[iv] ESSA renewed emphasis on graduation rates by automatically classifying public high schools with graduation rates of less than 67 percent among the lowest-performing schools in the state that are targeted for comprehensive support and improvement. In addition, as part of their accountability systems, states must establish "ambitious" long-term goals for student achievement, including high school graduation rates, and set a timeline for meeting these goals. ESSA also requires states to describe in their state plans how they will work with districts to provide "effective transitions of students to middle grades and high school to decrease the risk of students dropping out" (Title I, Part A, Section 1111(g)(1)(D) of the *Every Student Succeeds Act*).

[v] ESSA, Title IX, Section 9208.

[vi] The U.S. Secretary of Education approved states' ESSA plans between August 2017 and September 2018. Therefore, states' plans to work with districts to help students transition from one level of schooling to the next to reduce dropout rates may not have been fully in place during the 2017–18 school year.

[vii] The surveys were administered as part of the National Center for Education Evaluation's Study of Implementation of Title I/II-A Program Initiatives, which is more generally documenting the implementation of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act's* Title I and Title II-A programs over time. Additional details about the sampling methods and survey instruments can be found in the study's Supplemental Volume. The state survey included questions about providing or funding technical assistance or training to support transition or dropout prevention strategies, programs, or services. The district survey included questions about use of transition strategies, and offering dropout prevention programs or services.

[viii] The Snapshot is based on the 683 completed surveys. After weighting, they represent the population of school districts (n=17,031).

[ix] For the purpose of discussion, responses to two or more survey items were often combined. The data for the individual survey items are available in the Appendix.

[x] Although ESSA requires states to describe how they will work with districts, nine states did not report supporting a transition strategy. These states may not have implemented their plans by 2018, when the data were collected.

[xi] https://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/ccr/mycap/

[xii] Colorado funds several competitive grant programs to support dropout prevention/interventions including Colorado's School Counselor Corps Grant Program (SCCGP). https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/schoolcounselorcorps

[xiii] See Appendix Table 2b for information about additional educational options offered by districts to students to decrease the risk of students dropping out, as well as whether states required or recommended these options.

[xiv] These databases may also be known as an early warning indicator system, early warning intervention and monitoring system, or early indication tool.

[xv] Example based on district practices described in the Forum Guide to Early Warning Systems. National Forum on Education Statistics. (2018). Forum Guide to Early Warning Systems (NFES2019035). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. https://ies.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=NFES2019035

[xvi] There have been a number of studies of dropout prevention interventions that include early warning systems (e.g., https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED573814, https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED566904, https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ780922). However, dropout prevention efforts are multifaceted, and it is difficult to attribute measured effects to any one component of the overall intervention.

[xvii] Corresponding state-level information is available in Appendix Table 3b. Those data are provided for the reader's convenience, but are not discussed here since districts, rather than states, are more likely to be the users of these data to identify individual students at risk of dropping out.

[xviii] These data also were collected by the majority of districts with a student-level data system, but no EWS (see Appendix Table 3a).

xix Because even students who previously performed well may slip off track during transition years, in addition to providing transition supports, dropout prevention experts and the research literature recommend monitoring school and student data to identify and respond to early signs of problems. They endorse the use of at least three early warning detection indicators already routinely collected: attendance, behavior, and course grades. Allensworth, E., Balfanz, R., Bruch, J., Dillon, E., Duardo, D., Dynarski, M., Furgeson, J., Jayanthi, M., Newman-Gonchar, R., Place, K., & Tuttle, C. (2017). *Preventing Dropout in Secondary Schools* (NCEE 2017-4028). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc
xx The survey asked: "During this school year (2017-18), does your district have access to an Early Warning system to help identify individual students who may be at risk for dropping out?"

Appendix

Data Collection Procedures

The data presented in this Snapshot come from state and district surveys administered between April and September of 2018 as part of the Study of Implementation of Title I/II-A Program Initiatives. See Supplemental Volume Chapter 1 (pp. 1-3 to 1-16) of the study's report for a more complete description of the sampling and weighting approach used in this study.

State Survey

The state survey, administered using an electronic, fillable PDF form, was sent to the chief state school officer in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The expectation was that different sections of the survey would be filled out by different state education agency staff members with the most direct knowledge. The survey had a 100 percent response rate.

District Survey

The district survey was based on a nationally representative sample of 722 school districts, including 545 local education agencies (LEAs, typically school districts) drawn from the 2011-12 National Center for Education Statistics' Common Core of Data (CCD) and 177 charter LEAs drawn from the 2016-17

CCD. The 177 charter LEAs were subsequently added to the original sample of 545 LEAs to more fully capture the experiences of charter districts and schools. The sample design accounted for districts' poverty status, size, geography (Census region, state), and urbanicity.
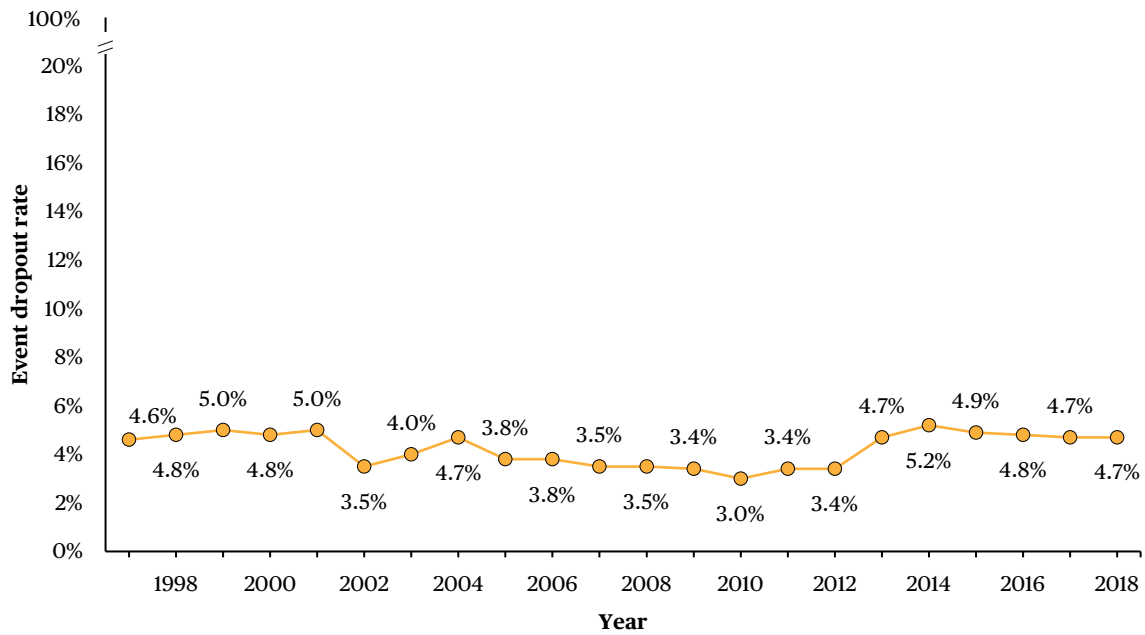
Nine sampled charter LEAs were not ultimately eligible for the survey because they had closed prior to the data collection. The web-based survey was sent to superintendents or their designees in the 713 school districts that remained eligible, and 683 surveys were returned for a response rate of 96 percent. Unless noted otherwise, the district level data presented in this Snapshot have been weighted to account for the sample design and survey nonresponse, and are nationally representative. More detail on data collection procedures can be found in Supplemental Volume Chapter 1 (pp. 1-12 to 1-13) of the study's report.

Survey Content

The surveys pertained to states' and districts' activities during the 2017-18 school year. The full set of survey questions can be found in Supplemental Volume Chapter 3 of the study's previous report.[1]

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[1] The survey questions and definitions used for this Snapshot were informed by the National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, 2010-11 District Survey on Dropout Prevention Services and Programs; the U.S. Department of Education, Policy and Program Studies Service briefs based on the National Survey on High School Strategies Designed to Help At-Risk Students Graduate (https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opepd/ppss/reports-high-school.html); and the U.S. Department of Education, What Works Clearinghouse Dropout Prevention Practice Guides 2008 (NCEE 2008-4025) and 2017 (NCEE 2017-4028) available from: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc

Appendix Figure 1. **National percentage of 15- to 24-year-olds enrolled in grades 10 through 12 who dropped out (event dropout rate[1]): 1997 through 2018**

[1] The event dropout rate is the percentage of 15- to 24-year-olds in grades 10 through 12 who dropped out between one October and the next (e.g., the 2017 data refer to 10th- through 12th-graders who were enrolled in October 2016 but had dropped out by October 2017). Dropping out is defined as leaving school without a high school diploma or alternative credential such as a GED certificate.

Notes: Data are based on sample surveys of the civilian noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons in the military and persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities). This Snapshot presents the event dropout rate, rather than the status dropout rate (another common measure of dropout). The event dropout rate better aligns with the dropout prevention strategies described in the Snapshot, which are geared toward preventing students *currently* in school from dropping out. This is the population of students reflected in event dropout data. This differs from the status dropout rate, which is the percentage of individuals in a given age range (16-24) who are not in school and have not earned a high school diploma or alternative credential.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October, 1972 through 2018. As reported in De Brey, C., Snyder, T.D., Zhang, A., and Dillow, S.A. (2021). *Digest of Education Statistics 2019* (NCES 2021-009). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved March 11, 2021 from https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch.

Appendix Table 1. State and district strategies to help students transition from elementary to middle school or from middle to high school: 2017-18

Strategy	State (N)	District (%)
Supported or used at least one transition strategy	**42**	**97**
Transition strategies supported or used:		
Individualized education or career plan for each student	**36**	**61**
Information about the next school setting	**19**	**95**
Orientation events	18	91
Teaching students about new expectations	13	84
Visits to the new school	12	86
Advisory period or programs to teach new skills	**23**	**76**
Social/emotional skills	21	66
Organizational or study skills	19	62
Mentoring	**19**	**64**
Adult mentors	18	50
Student-to-student mentoring	9	48
Structured academic programs	**23**	**35**
Summer bridge program	20	31
Transition-year academies	15	12
Some other strategy	**3**	**8**
Number of states/Number of districts	**51**	**17,031**
Number of districts (unweighted)	**n.a.**	**683**

n.a. = not applicable.

Notes: 2017-18 survey of all states and the District of Columbia and survey of 683 (unweighted) or 17,031 (weighted) school districts. State support includes providing or funding technical assistance or training to support a transition strategy. Supported or used at least one transition strategy means the state or district reported supporting or using at least one of the strategies listed in the table. The other bolded strategies are composites and include all states or districts that used or supported any of the (indented) strategies listed beneath them. For example, information about the next school setting includes states and districts that supported or used orientation events, teaching students about new expectations, or visits to the new school. Two of the three states that reported supporting some other strategy reported only supporting strategies other than those listed above.

Appendix Table 2a. State and district services and programs that serve students at risk of dropping out: 2017-18

Service or program	State (N)	District (%)
Supported or used at least one service or program	**42**	**98**
Dropout prevention strategies supported or used		
Course offerings (to catch-up)	**36**	**91**
Remediation classes	31	72
Credit recovery courses/programs	31	70
Summer school to prevent grade retention	30	65
In-school counseling	**34**	**90**
Academic supports (extra help)	**29**	**88**
Tutoring	28	73
Guided study hall/academic support period	19	65
After-school programs for students	n.a.	48
Modified learning environment	**36**	**66**
Flexible school day	25	35
Smaller learning communities	25	29
Smaller class size for students	20	47
Transitional 9th grade	18	15
Alternative schools or programs	**33**	**66**
Modified speed of credit accumulation	**27**	**62**
Accelerated credit accumulation	24	48
Decelerated curriculum for any course	10	31
Adult advocates	**19**	**29**
Some other service or program	**5**	**9**
Number of states/Number of districts	**51**	**16,375**
Number of districts (unweighted)	**n.a.**	**659**

n.a. = not applicable or the question was not asked in the state survey.

Notes: 2017-18 survey of all states and the District of Columbia and survey of 683 (unweighted) or 17,031 (weighted) school districts. This table is limited to districts with at least one middle or high school grade. It excludes districts with elementary grades only (24 districts unweighted, 656 weighted). The district percentage for alternative schools or programs is limited to districts with high school grades (566 unweighted and 12,069 weighted). State support includes providing or funding technical assistance or training to support a service or program. At least one service or program means the state or district supported or offered at least one of the services or programs listed in the table. The other bolded rows are also composites and include all states or districts that used or supported at least one of the (indented) services or programs listed beneath them. For example, course offerings include states and districts that supported or offered one or more of the following: remediation classes, credit recovery courses/programs, or summer school to prevent grade retention.

Appendix Table 2b. Educational options required or recommended by states to decrease the risk of students dropping out and the percentage of districts that offered these options: 2017-18

Educational option	State Required (N)	State Recommended (N)	District offered (%)
Career and technical education (CTE)	12	34	88
Work-based learning (e.g., internships/apprenticeships)	3	44	76
Dual enrollment in postsecondary courses with a career/technical focus	0	46	75
Dual enrollment in postsecondary courses with an academic focus (e.g., English, Math, foreign languages)	2	45	84
Advanced Placement or other advanced-level coursework to connect school work with college	3	42	78
Online programs	4	39	80
Other	1	5	n.a.
Number of states/Number of districts	**51**	**51**	**12,069**
Number of districts (unweighted)	**n.a.**	**n.a.**	**566**

n.a. = not applicable.

Notes: 2017-18 survey of all states and the District of Columbia and survey of 683 (unweighted) or 17,031 (weighted) school districts. This table is limited to districts with any of grades 9 through 12. It excludes districts with elementary or middle school grades only (117 districts unweighted, 4,962 weighted). Unlike the services and programs in Appendix Table 2a, the survey did not ask states whether they provided or funded technical assistance or training to support these educational options. It instead asked whether the state required or recommended that districts offer these options as a strategy to decrease the risk of students dropping out.

Appendix Table 3a. Percentage of districts that reported various indicators on their early warning system (EWS) or on their student-level data system (SDS), by type of data system: 2017-18

Data system use and indicators	Percent of all districts	Percent of districts with:	
		EWS	No EWS, but an SDS
Student-level data system (SDS)[1]	96	41	55
Used to identify schools with high rates of students at risk of dropping out	38	61	23
Data system indicators			
Attendance, behavior/discipline, and courses taken/grades received	72	87	65
Attendance	94	98	97
Behavior/discipline information	80	93	76
Courses taken and grades received	79	90	76
State or districtwide summative assessment scores	87	94	89
Districtwide diagnostic assessment scores	77	80	80
Readiness for grade promotion or graduation ("on track" measures)	66	80	59
Personal obstacles or factors that put a student at high risk for dropping out (e.g., homelessness, number of address changes)	64	82	54
Number of districts	**16,375**	**6,794**	**8,957**
Number of districts (unweighted)	**659**	**321**	**322**

[1]For this row of the table, the percentage of districts with an EWS and the percentage of districts with no EWS, but an SDS are among all districts. In the remaining rows, the percentages for EWS and no EWS, but an SDS are among districts that have that type of system.

Notes: 2017-18 survey of 683 (unweighted) or 17,031 (weighted) school districts. This table is limited to districts with at least one middle or high school grade. It excludes districts with elementary grades only (24 districts unweighted, 656 weighted). In the table, districts were assigned to just one data system category. Although most districts with an EWS also reported a student-level data system, they are only counted in the EWS category. For these districts, only the indicators in their EWS were counted. Sixteen districts (624 weighted) reported having neither an SDS nor an EWS.

Appendix Table 3b.   Number of states that reported various indicators on their early warning system (EWS) or on their statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS), by type of data system: 2017-18

Data system type and indicator	Number of states	Number of states with:	
		EWS[1]	No EWS, but an SLDS
Student-level SLDS	47	16	31
Used to identify districts or schools with high rates of students at risk of dropping out[2]	21	12	9
Data system indicators			
Attendance, behavior/discipline, and courses taken/grades received	25	12	13
Attendance	39	15	24
Behavior/discipline information	32	15	17
Courses taken and grades received	36	12	24
State summative assessment scores	40	11	29
Readiness for grade promotion or graduation ("on track" measures)	13	6	7
Personal obstacles or factors that put a student at high risk for dropping out (e.g., homelessness, number of address changes)	31	13	18
Number of states	**51[3]**	**16**	**31**

[1] All states that reported an EWS also reported having an SLDS. This column only counts the indicators in the EWS.

[2] In the state survey, this question is only asked about SLDS. All states with an EWS have an SLDS.

[3] Four states reported having neither an SLDS nor an EWS.

Notes: 2017-18 survey of all states and the District of Columbia.