

Policy Audit: Who Makes Decision?

(This is Tool 13 from Grad Nation: A Guidebook to Help Communities Tackle the Dropout Crisis, Commissioned by America’s Promise Alliance)

Policy	Policy Determined By				
	State Legislature	District School Board	District Superintendent	School-Based Decision Makers	Other
Sets legal school leaving age					
Sets other conditions for leaving school legally					
Defines the codes and practices that are used in the data system to track students who exit high school with or without graduating					
Defines the pupil progression policy (promotion/retention) grades K to 8					
Defines the pupil progression policy (promotion/retention) grades 9 to 12					
Defines criteria for awarding high school credit per course, including summer school and credit recovery programs					
Defines “weights” for high school course grades					
Defines minimum GPA needed to participate in sports, extra-curricular activities, etc.					
Defines attendance and tardiness policies					
Defines relationship of attendance and tardiness policies to official “count” for daily membership					
Defines relationship of attendance, tardiness, and behavior marks to students’ grades					
Defines “truancy” (chronic, habitual, sanctions and supports)					
Defines conditions for in- and out-of-school suspensions					
Defines sanctions associated with in-school suspensions					
Defines sanctions associated with out-of-school suspensions					
Defines support for “off-track” students					
Defines conditions for assignment to juvenile justice system					
Defines age of eligibility for GED programs relative to legal age for leaving school					
Defines high school graduation requirements (courses and credits; examinations)					
Defines admission requirements for Career Center (course and credits; examinations)					
Defines admission requirements for two-year colleges (course and credits; examinations)					
Defines admission requirements for state four-year college and university system (courses and credits; examinations)					
Other important policies					

Policy Audit: Next Steps

What are the top five policies that would be most helpful to change the graduation rate?

Policy	Specific aspect of policy that should be reviewed	Action Steps for Graduation Matters Billings
Legal school leaving age		
Conditions for leaving school legally		
Defines the codes and practices that are used in the data system to track students who exit high school with or without graduating		
Pupil progression policy (promotion/retention) grades K to 8		
Pupil progression policy (promotion/retention) grades 9 to 12		
Criteria for awarding high school credit per course, including summer school and credit recovery programs		
“Weights” for high school course grades		
Minimum GPA needed to participate in sports, extra-curricular activities, etc.		
Attendance and tardiness policies		
Relationship of attendance and tardiness policies to official “count” for daily membership		
Relationship of attendance, tardiness, and behavior marks to students’ grades		
“Truancy” (chronic, habitual, sanctions and supports)		
Conditions for in- and out-of-school suspensions		
Sanctions associated with in-school suspensions		
Sanctions associated with out-of-school suspensions		
Support for “off-track” students		
Conditions for assignment to juvenile justice system		
Age of eligibility for GED programs relative to legal age for leaving school		
High school graduation requirements (courses and credits; examinations)		
Admission requirements for Career Center (course and credits; examinations)		
Admission requirements for two-year colleges (course and credits; examinations)		
Admission requirements for state four-year college and university system (courses and credits; examinations)		
Other important policies		