

Frequently Asked Questions for eSchoolPLUS Pre-registration, Registration, and Withdrawal¹

All students in the pupil accounting system, eSchoolPLUS, should be rolled over to the next grade excluding 12th grade unless official documentation exists that the student is in another education setting.

Choice

A student **must be registered or pre-registered in the school of residence** before a Choice application can be submitted to a school in another district.

- If **before** the annual summer rollover, then the school should pre-register the student in eSchoolPLUS in the grade in which he or she would currently be attending.
 - (e.g., student enrolled in 6th grade in a private school in the 2007-08 school year and is submitting a Choice Application to a school district in 2008-09, then the district of residence would pre-register the student in the 6th grade if it is before the annual summer eSchoolPLUS rollover. An entering kindergartner would be pre-registered as PK if before the annual summer eSchoolPLUS rollover.)

Charter

A student must be registered or pre-registered in the school of residence to ensure the funding to the charter school is correct. Annually the charter school shall confirm with the parent, guardian, or Relative Caregiver that the address on file with the charter school is current and that the school of residence is correct. As with any other public school, a charter school may not withdraw a student without documentation that the student is enrolled in another Delaware public or nonpublic school; or there is documentation the student has relocated out of state.

Public School System

A student is entitled to attend school within the public school system from grades kindergarten through grade 12 and from ages 5 until their 21st birthday. (Special Education regulation allows for some students to begin receiving services as early as birth [see section on early childhood special education] and to potentially continue to receive special education through the school year in which the student turns 21.)

Public School System - Excerpts from 14 Del. Code Chapter 2:

§ 201. System of free public schools.

¹ This document is intended to provide clarification on how students should be coded in eSchoolPLUS. This document is not intended to provide the required actions a school or district must take in regard to the visiting teacher or truancy provisions in Title 14 of *Delaware Code*.

...The system of free public schools throughout this State shall be general and efficient.

§ 202. *Free schools; ages; attendance within school district; nonresidents of Delaware.*

...(a) The public schools of this State shall be free to persons who are residents of this State and who are age 5 years through 20 years inclusive when they are attending kindergarten through grade 12.

Compulsory Attendance

A student is **required** to attend school from ages 5 until his or her 16th birthday pursuant to 14 *Del. C. § 2702(1)*. A parent, legal guardian or Relative Caregiver may withdraw a student prior to graduation after the student's 16th birthday; however, the student will be considered a dropout and the school shall refer to the Dropout section of this document below to determine how the student should be coded in eSchoolPLUS. It is incumbent on the school to document the reason for student's withdrawal or exit from the school.

A student may withdraw himself or herself prior to graduation after he or she reaches the age of 18; however, the student will be considered a dropout and the school shall refer to the Dropout section of this document below and code the student accordingly.

Compulsory Attendance - Excerpts from 14 Del. Code Chapter 27, Section 2702:

(a) Except as otherwise provided, the following provisions are applicable to school attendance in this State:

...(1) Every person in this State who has legal custody, guardianship of the person, or legal control of a child between 5 and 16 years of age, including any person acting as a caregiver pursuant to the provisions of § 202(f) of this title, shall enroll the child in a public school in the school district of the person's residence.

...(2) Every person who has legal custody, guardianship of the person, or legal control of a student, including any person acting as a caregiver pursuant to the provisions of § 202(f) of this title, who is enrolled in a public school of this State shall send the student to the school each day of the minimum school term and to any academic improvement activities required by § 153 of this title.

...(3) Every student who is enrolled in a public school of this State shall attend the school each day of the minimum school term and any academic improvement activities required by § 153 of this title. A student who has been absent from school without a valid excuse for more than 3 school days in a school year is a truant. A truant and the parent of a truant are subject to the administrative procedures and court proceedings set out in subchapter II of this Chapter.

(b) For the purposes of this section, a child shall be considered 5 years of age if that child celebrates the child's fifth birthday according to the following schedule:

1993-94 school year Fifth birthday on or before November 30, 1993.

1994-95 school year Fifth birthday on or before October 31, 1994.

1995-96 school year Fifth birthday on or before September 30, 1995.

1996-97 school year Fifth birthday on or before August 31, 1996.

Subsequent school years Fifth birthday on or before August 31 of the respective year.

Local school authorities may grant exceptions to the above schedule for entry into school if they determine that such exception is in the best interest of the child.

(c) The following provisions shall be applicable to the administration of subsection (a) of this section in regard to compulsory attendance in the kindergarten for a child age 5 years:

...(1) If a child is a resident of the State at the time of that child's eligibility for admission to the kindergarten at age 5, the parents, guardian or legal custodian of that child may request that school authorities evaluate the child's readiness for attendance and may request a delay of 1 year in that attendance. However, admission to first grade will be authorized only after school authorities evaluate the child's readiness for attendance.

...(2) If a child was not a resident of the State at the time of that child's eligibility for admission to the kindergarten at age 5, the parents, guardian or legal custodian of that child may request that school authorities evaluate the child's readiness for attendance and on the basis of that evaluation authorize admission to grade 1.

Dropout

For purposes of compulsory attendance, only a parent, guardian or Relative Caregiver may withdraw a student prior to graduation; however, the student must be at least 16 years of age to be withdrawn. The school shall refer to the criteria below to determine if the student must be considered a "dropout". The reporting (current) year for dropouts is considered the 12 month period beginning with the first day of school and ending the day before the beginning of the next school year.

Definition of Dropout: An individual who **either**:

1. Was enrolled at the **end** of the **previous** school year but did not attend any days of the **current** school year **and does not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions**:
 - Graduated from high school or completed a state or district-approved educational program; or
 - Transferred to another public school district, private school, or state- or district-approved education program with Official Documentation on file;
 - Moved out of state with Official Documentation on file; or
 - Deceased.

OR

2. Was enrolled and attended at the beginning of the **current** school year and was withdrawn by parent, legal guardian or Relative Caregiver at age 16 or older, or was withdrawn by self after 18th birthday **and does not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions**:
 - Graduated from high school or completed a state or district-approved educational program; or
 - Transferred to another public school district, private school, or state- or district-approved education program with official documentation on file;

- Moved out of state with official documentation on file; or
- Deceased.

Criteria for being identified as a dropout in the current school year dropout report:

1. A student who completed the **previous** school year and who did **not** reach his or her 16th birthday by the beginning of the **current** school and did not attend any days of the **current** school year is considered “dropout underage” from the receiving school. This student should be coded in eSchoolPLUS as **Dropout-Underage**. This underage dropout should have a withdrawal date that is the same as the entry date (i.e., first day of school of the reporting year).
2. A student who completed the **previous** school year and who did reach his or her 16th birthday by the beginning of the **current** school and did not attend any days of the **current** school year is considered “dropout-truancy” from the receiving school. This student should be coded in eSchoolPLUS as **Dropout-Truancy**. This dropout should have a withdrawal date that is the same as the entry date (i.e., first day of school of the reporting year).
3. If a student has moved and there is no official documentation that he or she has transferred to another school, he or she is counted as a dropout and code in eSchoolPLUS as **Dropout-Underage** or **Dropout-Truancy** depending on age.
4. A student who transfers to James H. Groves Adult High School during the current school year and is not in attendance (enrolled) by **September 30** of the next school year, is counted as **Dropout-Academic** from the home school.
5. A student who transfers to James H. Groves Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs during the current school year is counted as **Dropout-Academic** from the home school.
6. An expelled student is counted as a dropout if he or she does not return at the end of the disciplinary period. This student should be coded in eSchoolPLUS as **Dropout-Behavior**.
7. A school leaver who has joined the military is counted as a dropout. This student should be coded in eSchoolPLUS as **Dropout-Military**.
8. A school leaver who has joined Job Corps is counted as a dropout. This student should be coded in eSchoolPLUS as **Dropout-Employment**.
9. A student withdrawn because of truancy is counted as a dropout. This student shall be coded in eSchoolPLUS as **Dropout-Underage** or **Dropout- Truancy** depending on age. (A student with an **active** truancy case with the Justice of the Peace Court shall not be withdrawn from eSchoolPLUS.)

Criteria for not being counted as a dropout:

1. A student who receives a diploma or in the case of a special education student a district or charter school issued “Certificate” should not be reported as a dropout.
2. A student who transfers to another public or private school should not be reported as a dropout. **Documentation of transfer needs to be preserved.**
3. A student who moves out of state should not be reported as a dropout. **Documentation of the move needs to be preserved.**
4. A students who dies should not be reported as a dropout.
5. A school leaver who is in a correctional institution or other state agency placement should not be counted as a dropout.

Dropout Reason Codes

The following dropout reason codes have been incorporated into Exit/Withdrawal codes for eSchoolPLUS:

Dropout-Academic	Dropout-Transportation
Dropout-Behavior	Dropout-Language
Dropout-Dislike experience	Dropout-Marriage
Dropout-Economic	Dropout-Military
Dropout-Employment	Dropout-Needed at home
Dropout-Curriculum	Dropout-Pregnancy
Dropout-Childcare	Dropout-Religion
Dropout-Truancy	Dropout- Underage

The student can be withdrawn/exited from eSchoolPLUS with the appropriate code provided there is documentation to support the withdrawal and selected code.

Truancy

As noted above, a student is **required** to be enrolled in school from age 5 through his or her 16th birthday. The **truancy** provisions apply to any student enrolled in any grade K through 12 regardless of age. This includes a student who has reached his or her 16th birthday, enrolled, and who has not reached the age of majority (18) at which time he or she could withdraw without parental consent.

A student with an **active** truancy case with the Justice of the Peace Court shall **not** be withdrawn from eSchoolPLUS. The district/charter school may only withdraw a student if documentation exists that supports the withdrawal. Such documentation may include:

- 1) an Order dismissing truancy charges entered by a court;
- 2) parent withdrawal after student's 16th birthday*; or
- 3) student self withdrawal upon reaching his or her 18th birthday*

or

4) a student has enrolled but does not attend and **all** of the procedures below have been completed

For K-12 students:

- a. Following the 10th day of unexcused absence by the student, the school, or the building principal shall immediately notify the parent/guardian and a visiting teacher shall visit the student's home. In the case when the home is vacant or occupied by another family this will be noted by the visiting teacher.

- b. Following the 15th day of unexcused absence by the student, the student's parent/guardian shall be notified by certified mail to appear at the school within 10 days for a conference. In the case when the family was not present at the "10 day visit", this letter should be sent certified with a 5 day non-receipt request. Upon receipt of the non-receipt request go to step c. below
- c. Following the 20th day of unexcused absence the school, after checking for enrollment in home school, private/parochial school, and no verified home address in order to refer the case for prosecution, the student can be removed from enrollment.

Note: The contact provision at 10 days is the maximum. Districts are encouraged to start this process earlier.

Any student withdrawn because of truancy will be considered a dropout and the school shall code the student in eSchoolPLUS as **Dropout-Underage** or **Dropout- Truancy** depending on age.

*This is assuming there are no outstanding truancy charges against the student or parent, legal guardian or Relative Caregiver.

Transitional Programs and Schools

A student who is placed in any of the following transitional programs or schools shall be enrolled in eSchoolPLUS in his or her home school or charter school:

- Delaware Adolescent Program, Inc. (DAPI);
- Consortium Discipline Alternative Programs (CDAP);
- Interagency Collaborative Team Placement;
- Department of Services to Children, Youth & Their Families (DSCYF) programs;
- or
- Any other transitional program or school.

The home school or charter school should keep students placed in transitional programs/schools enrolled in eSchoolPLUS as active students, set to a Z calendar with an Outside Agency "OA" attendance code. If the home school or district does not have the appropriate documentation from the transitional program or school that the student is returning prior to November 1st then the student's Unit Count Status (Needs) field shall be set to "Do Not Include in Unit Count" on the eSchoolPLUS DOE Unit Count (District) screen.

If the student does not return at the end of the transition period and has not graduated, the student shall be considered a dropout and coded in eSchoolPLUS as Dropout-Underage or Dropout-Truancy depending on age.

Birth to Pre-Kindergarten

Parents as Teachers

Families with children birth through three may be eligible for Parents as Teachers (PAT). PAT is a home-based parent education program that focuses service on first time families.

School districts serve as grantees for PAT. The following school districts are currently grantees: Christina, Lake Forest (DECC), and Polytech. The students are entered into eSchoolPLUS. (There is a separate code for early childhood programs like ECAP and PAT.)

Head Start/ Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP)

A child ages birth to entry into kindergarten may be eligible for placement in certain programs or placements.

Parents need a copy of the child's original birth certificate – most programs are looking for children to be of a certain age by August 31st of the year they enter a program. For instance, the ECAP is targeted for four year olds. So a program will be looking for a child to be 4 by 8/31st. For Head Start, some programs provide services for children beginning at age 3. In addition, there are two Early Head Start programs that offer services to children living with families with low incomes – ages birth to 36 months.

Most school district programs ask for proof of residency for enrollment in K-12 programs. Enrollment in Head Start or ECAP does not require proof of residency. School districts can not ask for a child's social security numbers.

A child enrolled in a state Head Start or ECAP program shall be entered in the Head Start/ECAP database. All four year old children in Head Start and ECAP are entered into eSchoolPLUS. (There is a separate code for early childhood programs like ECAP and PAT.)

Children with Disabilities - Early Childhood Special Education Programs

Early childhood special education services are available for children with disabilities before kindergarten. Some children are able to begin services as early as birth. Delaware regulations make services available for four distinct groups of children beginning at birth:

- 1) Children identified as Autistic, Deaf Blind, Hearing Impaired/Deaf, and Visually Impaired/Blind.
- 2) Children identified as developmentally delayed, intellectually disabled (moderate intellectual disability or severe intellectual disability), orthopedic impairment, preschool speech delayed, or other health impairment can begin services at their third birthday.
- 3) Children identified as intellectually disabled (mild intellectual disability), learning disabled, or emotionally disturbed can begin services from their fourth birthday.

4) Children participating in the Birth to Three program (Part C) as children with identified disabilities and then transitioning to the public school system, through an interagency agreement between the Delaware Department of Education and the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, can begin to receive early childhood special education services in September, as early as two years eight months of age, as long as they turn three by December 31st of the year they transition.

Contact each program for further information.

All children should be enrolled in eSchoolPLUS at the district of residence once they have been identified and an Individual Education Program (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) has been developed and signed by the parent and school district or program.

Kindergarten

As noted in the Compulsory Attendance section of this document, Delaware Law states that a child age 5 by August 31st must be enrolled in kindergarten except as otherwise provided in that section.

Current law states a school district must offer at least a half day program for a total of 440 hours. A school district may be providing full day kindergarten to all or select students. The student should be coded in eSchoolPLUS based on the type of kindergarten program he or she is attending (i.e. half day or full day). For a student attending a choice or charter school, the home school is responsible for providing the choice or charter school with funding that is equivalent to the type of program (i.e. half day or full day) the home school offers.

A charter school must offer the kindergarten program (i.e. half day or full day) outlined in its charter. The student should be coded in eSchoolPLUS accordingly.

Early Admission to Kindergarten

A provision in Title 14, Chapter 31, Section 3101 of state law allows a school district to provide educational services to a child identified as "gifted or talented" as young as 4 (years of age).

Please note that a local school district is not obligated to have an early admission's program and is only obligated to provide education services to a child beginning at kindergarten at age 5 years as of August 31st. It is a local school district decision to use the early admission policy.

Students transferring from out of state or from a Delaware nonpublic school (private or homeschool) to a Delaware public school

A district is responsible for determining grade and program placement for a student transferring from an out of state or a nonpublic school (private or homeschool) to a public school. If a student was in the Delaware public school system at any time, the student's original unique identification number shall be reactivated.

It is very important that a school or district not withdraw a student or code a student inactive without supporting evidence.