

# 2020-2021 TSDS Web-Enabled Data Standards

## PEIMS Leaver Data - Leaver Reason Codes and Documentation Requirements

The Documentation Requirements by LEAVER-REASON-CODE table provides expanded definitions and specific documentation guidelines for each of the leaver reason codes listed in Code Table C162 of the Texas Education Data Standards (TEDS). The table is organized into the following broad categories of leavers:

- completed high school or high school equivalency program
- moved to other educational setting
- withdrawn by school district
- other

Leaver data is not submitted for students who enroll in other Texas public school districts or charters and students who obtain high school equivalency certificates at Texas examination sites by August 31. Students who move to other Texas public school districts are considered movers, not leavers. Documentation as described in this section is not required for movers; districts may wish to develop local policy on documentation for movers. The Unique ID Enrollment Tracking may be used to establish tentative local documentation that students are movers. The final determination of whether students are movers will be made by TEA.

Local policy in this section refers to a district or charter's leaver policies and procedures.

### General Documentation Requirements

Districts must document the withdrawal of students and maintain on file the appropriate paperwork associated with student withdrawals. Documentation is required for all leaver reason codes. Documentation requirements for leaver codes are provided in the Documentation Requirements by LEAVER-REASON-CODE section.

Documentation supporting use of a leaver reason code must exist in the district at the time the leaver data are submitted, i.e., no later than the PEIMS Submission 1 January resubmission date.

Timelines for establishing leaver reasons and obtaining documentation:

#### ***Students who leave during the school year.***

For students who leave during the school year, leaver reasons apply at the time of withdrawal, and documentation should be obtained at that time. For example, for students who are withdrawn by Child Protective Services (CPS), LEAVER-REASON-CODE 66, documentation would be obtained when the student is removed.

#### ***Students who fail to return in the fall.***

For students who fail to return the following fall, leaver reasons apply on the first day of school or its approximation, the school-start window. The school-start window is the period of time between the first day of school and the last Friday in September. Districts should use the LEAVER-REASON-CODE that most appropriately describes the student's whereabouts during the school-start window. For example, to use LEAVER-REASON-CODE 60 student withdrew from/left school for home schooling, a district would establish that a student was being home schooled at some point during the school-start window. The district could obtain the documentation to support the leaver code at any time up until the PEIMS Submission 1 resubmission date.

#### ***Students who were attending and were withdrawn under LEAVER-REASON-CODE 83 when the district discovered that the student was not entitled to public school enrollment in the district.***

LEAVER-REASON-CODE 83, not entitled to public school enrollment in the district, applies to students who are attending and are withdrawn by the district because the district discovers, when verifying enrollment information, that the student was not entitled to enrollment in the district because the student was not a resident of the district or was not entitled under other provisions of TEC §25.001 or as a transfer student. It is not for a student who was a resident and stops attending because he/she has moved out of the district.

This code is also used for those rare situations in which the student has not met the requirements under TEC §38.001 or a corresponding rule of the Texas Department of State Health Services for immunization, provisional enrollment, or exemption. Leaver reasons for LEAVER-REASON-CODE 83 apply at the time of withdrawal and documentation showing due process supporting the withdrawal should be obtained at that time.

### Signatures on Documentation

Documentation must be signed and dated by an authorized representative of the district. The district should have a written policy stating who can act as an authorized representative for purposes of signing withdrawal forms and other leaver reason documentation.

Withdrawal documentation should also be signed for the student by a:

- parent, or
- guardian, or
- responsible adult as recorded in school records, such as a foster parent or a probation officer, or
- qualified student. A qualified student is one who, at the time he/she stops attending school:
  - is married, or
  - is 18 years or older, or
  - has established a residence separate and apart from the student's parent, guardian, or other person having lawful control of the student.

An original signature is not required on withdrawal forms received in the district by fax. Withdrawal forms received by e-mail do not need to be signed by the parent/guardian or qualified student. Written documentation of oral statements made in person or by telephone by the parent/guardian or qualified student is acceptable documentation in some situations if it is signed and dated by the district representative.

## Evaluation of Documentation

Merits of leaver documentation are assessed at the time the documentation is requested during a data inquiry investigation. Determination of the acceptability of documentation is made by the professional staff conducting the investigation. These guidelines describe the most common types of documentation the investigator would expect to find supporting use of each leaver reason code. Other documentation that represents good business practice and shows a good faith effort on the part of the district to properly report leaver status will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## Completeness of Documentation

Withdrawal documentation shall be considered incomplete without a date, signature(s), and destination. Documentation will not be deemed insufficient when information is missing because the parent or parents refuse to provide information requested by the district. A district should document at the time of the conversation that the information was requested, and the parent refused to provide it. Appropriate documentation of a parent refusal to provide information includes the date, content of conversation, name of person with whom the conversation was conducted, and the signature of the school official verifying the conversation.

## Changing Leaver-Reason-Codes

Once a district meets the documentation standard that supports the leaver reason code used, the district is not required to obtain additional information on the student. Local policy will determine if an existing leaver reason code is updated for a student when additional information is received. The policy should be clearly stated in the district's published guidelines on leaver procedures. For example, if a district assigned LEAVER-REASON-CODE 60 *student withdrew from/left school for home schooling* for a student and later received a request for transcript information from a private school for the same student, the district may change the LEAVER-REASON-CODE to 81 *enroll in a Texas private school* but is not obligated to.