



Attendance

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Compulsory School Age Requirements

Updated by Melodye Bush

Last Updated June 2010

Summary

Compulsory school attendance refers to the minimum and maximum age required by each state in which a student must be enrolled in and attending public school or some equivalent education program defined by the law.

The vast majority of states include an added clause providing for pupils to be released from compulsory attendance requirements upon graduation of high school, regardless of their age.

Arizona, Vermont and Wyoming all exempt children from compulsory attendance requirements upon completion of the 10th grade.

Five states – Virginia, South Dakota, Nevada, Maryland and Connecticut – **allow the minimum compulsory age to be extended by at least one year if the parent(s) obtain a waiver from their assigned school.**

Nearly half of all states allow children ranging from age 14 to 18 to be exempt from the compulsory attendance requirement if they meet one or more of the following stipulations: are employed, have a physical or mental condition that makes the child's attendance infeasible, have passed the 8th-grade level, have their parents' permission, have the permission of the district court or the local school board, meet the requirements for an exit interview, or have arranged alternative education such as vocational or technical school. Endnotes are provided for Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts and Virginia as examples of such legislation.

Part I: Age Ranges

Minimum compulsory age and corresponding number of states:

- Age 5: 8 states and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands
- Age 6: 24 states and American Samoa
- Age 7: 16 states
- Age 8: 2 states

Maximum compulsory age and corresponding number of states:

- Age 16: 19 states and the Virgin Islands
- Age 17: 11 states
- Age 18: 20 states and the District of Columbia, American Samoa, and Puerto Rico

State/Territory	Requirement	Citation
(Shaded line indicates change)		
Alabama	7-17	ALA. CODE § 16-28-3
Alaska	7-16	ALASKA STAT. 14.30.010
Arizona	6-16 or completion of grade 10	ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 15-802, §15-802-D-2
Arkansas ¹	5-17	ARK. STAT. ANN. § 6-18-201
California	6-18	CAL. EDUC. CODE § 48200
Colorado	6-17	COLO. REV. STAT. § 22-33-104
Connecticut ²	5-18	CONN. GEN. STAT. § 10-184
Delaware	5-16	14 DEL. CODE ANN. §2702
District of Columbia	5-18	D.C. CODE ANN. § 38-202
Florida	6-16	FLA. STAT. § 1003.21
Georgia	6-16	GA. CODE ANN. § 20-2-690.1
Hawaii	6-18	HAW. REV. STAT. § 302A-1132
Idaho	7-16	IDAHO CODE § 33-202
Illinois	7-17	105 ILL. COMP. STAT. ANN. 5/26-1
Indiana ³	7-18	IND. CODE ANN. § 20-33-2-6; § 22-33-2-9(B)
Iowa	6-16	IOWA CODE §299.1A
Kansas	7-18	KAN. STAT. ANN. § 72-1111
Kentucky	6-16	KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 159.010
Louisiana ⁴	7-18	LA. REV. STAT. ANN. § 17:221
Maine	7-17	ME. REV. STAT. ANN. § TIT. 20A, § 3271
Maryland	5-16	MD. CODE ANN., EDUC. § 7-301
Massachusetts ⁵	6-16	MASS. REGS. CODE TIT. 603, § 8.02 MASS. GEN. LAWS ANN. CH. 76 § 1
Michigan	6-18	MICH. STAT. ANN. § 380.1561
Minnesota	7-16	MINN. STAT. § 120A.22
Mississippi	6-17	MISS. CODE ANN. § 37-13-91
Missouri	7-17	MO. REV. STAT. § 167.031
Montana ⁶	7-16	MONT. CODE ANN. § 20-5-102
Nebraska	6-18	NEB. REV. STAT. ANN. § 79-201
Nevada	7-18	NEV. REV. STAT. ANN. § 392.040
New Hampshire ⁷	6-18 (effective 7/01/09)	N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 193.1
New Jersey	6-16	N.J. REV. STAT. §18A:38-25
New Mexico	5-18	N.M. STAT. ANN. § 22-8-2; § 22-12-2; § 22-8-2 m(3)
New York ⁸	6-16	N.Y. EDUC. LAW § 3205
North Carolina	7-16	N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-378
North Dakota	7-16	N.D. CENT. CODE § 15.1-20-01
Ohio	6-18	OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3321.01
Oklahoma	5-18	70 OKLA. STAT. TIT, 70, § 10-105
Oregon	7-18	OR. REV. STAT. § 339.010
Pennsylvania	8-17	PA. STAT. ANN. § 13-1326
Rhode Island	6-16	R.I. GEN. LAWS § 16-19-1
South Carolina ⁹	5-17	S.C. CODE ANN. § 59-65-10
South Dakota	6-18 (effective 7/01/09)	S.D. CODIFIED LAWS § 13-27-1
Tennessee ¹⁰	6-17	TENN. CODE ANN. § 49-6-3001 (C)(1)
Texas ¹¹	6-18	TEX. EDUC. CODE ANN. § 25.085
Utah	6-18	UTAH CODE ANN. § 53A-11-101
Vermont	6-16 or completion of grade 10	VT. STAT. ANN. TIT. 16 § 1121
Virginia ¹²	5-18	VA. CODE ANN. § 22.1-254
Washington	8-18	WASH. REV. CODE § 28A.225.010
West Virginia	6-17	W. VA. CODE § 18-8-1
Wisconsin	6-18	WIS. STAT. § 118.15
Wyoming	7-16 or completion of grade 10	WYO. STAT. ANN. § 21-4-102

State/Territory	Requirement	Citation
(Shaded line indicates change)		
Am. Samoa	6-18	ASCA 16-3-16.0302
Puerto Rico	5-18	3 P.R. LAWS ANN. § 143B
Virgin Islands	5-16	V.I. CODE ANN. TIT. 17, § 82

Notes:

¹ Arkansas: "Any parent, guardian, or other person residing within the state and having custody or charge of any child may elect for the child not to attend kindergarten if the child will not be age six on September 15 of that particular school year."

² Connecticut: "The parent or person having control of a child five years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is six years of age and the parent or person having control of a child six years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is seven years of age."

³ Indiana: An individual is required to stay in school until he or she: graduates; is between 16 and 18 and meets the requirements for an exit interview; or reaches at least 18 years of age. Withdrawal before 18 requires parent/guardian's and principal's written permission.

⁴ Louisiana: "A child between the ages of seventeen and eighteen may withdraw from school prior to graduation if both the following circumstances exist: (a) The written consent of his parents, tutor, or legal guardian. (b) An exit interview is conducted where the student and his parent, tutor, or legal guardian provide written acknowledgment that withdrawal from school shall likely reduce the student's future earning potential and increase the student's likelihood of being unemployed in the future. During such exit interview, a student who is withdrawing from school shall be given information that has been prepared and supplied by the Louisiana Workforce Commission regarding available training and employment opportunity programs, provided such information is available."

⁵ Massachusetts: "Every child between the minimum and maximum ages established for school attendance by the board of education, except a child between fourteen and sixteen who meets the requirements for the completion of the sixth grade of the public school as established by said board and who holds a permit for employment in private domestic service or service on a farm, under section eighty-six of chapter one hundred and forty-nine, and is regularly employed thereunder for at least six hours per day, or a child between fourteen and sixteen who meets said requirements and has the written permission of the superintendent of schools of the town where he resides to engage in non-wage-earning employment at home, or a child over fourteen who holds a permit for employment in a cooperating employment, as provided in said section eighty-six, shall, subject to section fifteen, attend a public day school in said town, or some other day school approved by the school committee, during the number of days required by the board of education in each school year, unless the child attends school in another town, for said number of days, under sections six to twelve, inclusive, or attends an experimental school project established under an experimental school plan, as provided in section one G of chapter fifteen, but such attendance shall not be required of a child whose physical or mental condition is such as to render attendance inexpedient or impracticable subject to the provisions of section three of chapter seventy-one B or of a child granted an employment permit by the superintendent of schools when such superintendent determines that the welfare of such child will be better served through the granting of such permit, or of a child who is being otherwise instructed in a manner approved in advance by the superintendent or the school committee."

⁶ Montana: requires that a child shall remain in school until the latter of either the child's 16th birthday or the date of completion of the work of the eighth grade.

⁷ New Hampshire: The superintendent, may grant waivers upon proof that the pupil is 16 years of age or older and has an alternative learning plan for obtaining either a high school diploma or its equivalent. This law takes effect July 1st, 2009.

⁸ New York: Both New York City and Buffalo require minors to attend school from the age of 6 until the age of 17. Each district in the state is authorized to require minors between 16 and 17 who are not employed to attend school. The board of education of the Syracuse city school district is authorized to require minors who are five years of age on or before December first to attend kindergarten instruction.

⁹ South Carolina: In South Carolina, kindergarten is mandatory. However, state statutes permit parental waiver for kindergarten at age five.

¹⁰ Tennessee: "A parent or guardian who believes that such parent's or guardian's child is not ready to attend school at the designated age of mandatory attendance may make application to the principal of the public school which the child would attend for a one semester or one year deferral in required attendance."

¹¹ Texas: School districts may require persons who voluntarily enroll in school or voluntarily attend school after their 18th birthday to attend school until the end of the school year.

¹² Virginia: "For a student who is at least 16 years of age, there shall be a meeting of the student, the student's parents, and the principal or his designee of the school in which the student is enrolled in which an individual student alternative education plan shall be developed in conformity with guidelines prescribed by the Board..."

Part II: Statutory Excerpts

Alabama – "Every child between the ages of **7** and **16**"

Alaska – "Every child between **7** and **16** years of age"

American Samoa – " . . . the age of **six** through **eighteen**"

Arizona – "Every child between the ages of **6** and **16** years . . ." or " . . . has completed the high school course of study necessary for completion of grade ten as prescribed by the State Board of Education . . ."

Arkansas – " . . . age **5** through **17** years on or before September 15th of that year...."

California – "Each person between the ages of **6** and **18**"

Colorado – "Every child who has attained the age of **6** years on or before August 1st of each year and is under the age of **17** years"

Connecticut – " . . . a child **five** years of age and over and under **eighteen** years of age"

Delaware – " . . . a child between **5** years of age and **16** years of age"

District of Columbia – " . . . a minor who has reached the age of **5** years or will become **5** years of age on or before December 31st of the current school year . . . until the minor reaches the age of **18** years."

Florida – "All children who have attained the age of **6** years or who will have attained the age of **6** years by February 1 of any school year or who are older than **6** years of age but who have not attained the age of **16** years"

Georgia – " . . . between their **sixth** and **sixteenth** birthdays"

Hawaii – " . . . all children who will have arrived at the age of **6** years, and who will not have arrived at the age of **18** years, by January 1 of any school year"

Idaho – " . . . any child resident in this state who has attained the age of **7** years at the time of commencement of school in his district, but **not the age of 16** years"

Illinois - " . . . any child between the ages of **7** and **17** years"

Indiana – " . . . the individual becomes **7** years of age until . . . reaches at least **16** years of age but who is less than **18** years of age and the requirements under subsection (j) concerning an exit interview are met enabling the individual to withdraw from school before graduation; or . . . the individual reaches at least **18** years of age"

Iowa – "A child who has reached the age of **6** and is under **16** years of age by September 15"

Kansas – " . . . any child who has reached the age of **7** years and is under the age of **18** years"

Kentucky – "... any child between the ages of **6** and **16** ... A child's age is between **6** and **16** when the child has reached his 6th birthday and has not passed his 16th birthday. ... "

Louisiana – "... from that child's **seventh** birthday until his **eighteenth** birthday ... "

Maine – "Persons ... who are at **7** and under **17** years of age ... "

Maryland – "... each child who ... is **5** years old or older and under **16** ... "

Massachusetts – "Each child must attend school beginning in September of the calendar year in which he or she attains the age of **six**." (Language for the maximum age found in MASS. GEN. LAWS ANN. 76 § 1.)

Michigan – "... a child from the age of **6** to the child's **16th** birthday ... "

Minnesota – "... every child between **7** and **16** years of age... A parent may withdraw a child under the age of 7 from enrollment at any time."

Mississippi – "... a child who has attained or will attain the age of **6** years on or before September 1 of the calendar year and who has not attained the age of **17** years on or before September 1 of the calendar year... and any child who has attained or will attain the age of 5 years on or before September 1st and has enrolled in a full-day public school program."

Missouri – "... a child between the ages of **7** and the compulsory attendance age for the district... Any parent, guardian or other person who enrolls a child between the ages of 5-7 years in a public school program of academic instruction shall cause such a child to attend the academic program on a regular basis." The school board of a metropolitan school district "... may adopt a resolution to establish a compulsory attendance age of **17** to take effect no later than the school year next following the school year during which the resolution is adopted." In all other cases, compulsory attendance shall mean "Seventeen years of age or having successfully completed sixteen credits towards high school graduation. The school board of a metropolitan school district for which the compulsory attendance age is 17 years may adopt a resolution to lower the compulsory attendance age to sixteen years; provided that such resolution shall take effect no earlier than the school year next following the school year during which the resolution is adopted. "

Montana – "... any child who is **7** years of age or older prior to the first day of school in any school fiscal year ... until ... the child's **16th** birthday ... "

Nebraska – "... a child is of mandatory attendance age if the child (i) will reach **six** years of age prior to January 1 of the then-current school year. ... and (iii) **has not reached eighteen** years of age."

Nevada – "... any child between the ages of **7** and **18** years..."

New Hampshire – "... any child at least **6** years of age and under **18** years of age ... "

New Jersey – "... a child between the ages of **6** and **16** years ... "

New Mexico – "... is at least five years of age prior to 12:01 a.m. on September 1 of the school year; ... until the school age-person is at least 18 years of age unless that person has graduated from high school or received a general educational development certificate."

New York – "... each minor from **6** to **16** years of age ... "

North Carolina – "... a child between the ages of **7** and **16** years ... "

North Dakota – "... child of an age of **7** years to **16** years. ... and if a person enrolls a child of age 6 in a public school, the person shall ensure that the child is in attendance for the entire school year."

Ohio – "A child between **6** and **18** years of age is 'of compulsory age'..."

Oklahoma – "... a child who is over the age of **5** years, and under the age of **18** years"

Oregon – "... all children between the ages of **7** and **18** years who has not completed the 12th grade. . . ."

Pennsylvania – "... not be later than at the age of **8** years, until the age of **17** years."

Puerto Rico – "... all children between the ages of five (**5**) and eighteen (**18**)"

Rhode Island – "Every child who has completed or will have completed **6** years of life on or before September 1st of any school year and has not completed **16** years of life"

South Carolina – "... the child or ward is **5** years of age before September first until the child or ward attains his **17th** birthday"

South Dakota – "... a child who is **6** years old by the first day of September and who has not exceeded the age of 18..."

Tennessee – "... any child or children between **six** years of age and **seventeen** years of age. . . ."

Texas – "... a child who is at least **6** years of age . . . and who has completed the academic year in which the child's **18th** birthday occurred"

Utah – "... a minor between **6** and **18** years of age"

Vermont – "... a child between the ages of **six** and **16** years" or "... has completed tenth grade . . . " or "... is excused by the superintendent or a majority of the school directors"

Virgin Islands – "All children shall commence their school education . . . in the calendar year in which they reach their **5th** birthday . . . until the expiration of the school year nearest their **16th** birthday"

Virginia – "... any child who will have reached the **fifth** birthday on or before September 30 of any school year and who has not passed the **eighteenth** birthday"

Washington – "... any child **8** years of age and under **18** years of age"

West Virginia – "Compulsory school attendance shall begin with the school year in which the **6th** birthday is reached prior to the first day of September of such year . . . and continue to the **16th** birthday."

Wisconsin – "... a child who is between the ages of **6** and **18** years old"

Wyoming – "... a child . . . whose **7th** birthday falls on or before September 15 of any year and who has not attained his **16th** birthday . . ." or "... completed the tenth grade"

Recent updates to this ECS StateNote have been made by Melodye Bush, Kyle Zinth, and Michael Colasanti.

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Overview

More than 150 years have passed since Horace Mann helped Massachusetts establish a statewide system of education that eventually led to the requirement that all children attend public school. In 1852, Massachusetts became the first state to pass compulsory school attendance laws, and by 1918, all states required children to receive an education.

Compulsory Education Requirements

Today, every state and territory requires children to enroll in public or private education or to be home-schooled. More than half—32 states—require students to begin their education by age 6. Some states' set their age requirements as low as age 5 and as high as age 8. All children are required to continue their education into their high school years, with 26 states setting the cutoff age at 16. The remaining states require students to stay in school through age 17 or 18.

Compulsory education laws vary greatly from state to state. While some states use a student's date of birth to determine the beginning and ending dates for compulsory education, other states require a student to begin school if he or she will turn 6 during the school year and require a student to remain in school until completion of the school year in which he or she turns 17. Four states—Arizona, Montana, Vermont and Wyoming—require students to remain in school through a specified grade. Most states allow parents to petition their local school board or principal for a waiver of these requirements under certain circumstances, such as enrollment in a vocational education program or an institution of higher education or early completion of required coursework.

Kindergarten Enrollment

States and territories also set a minimum age for children to enroll in kindergarten, which is typically one or two years earlier than the compulsory education age. Every state or territory with a policy on this issue has established age 5 as the minimum age. However, six states—Colorado, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania—leave this decision up to local education agencies. In addition to the age requirement, each state also sets a date by which students must have attained the specified age in order to attend kindergarten. The cutoff dates range from August 1 in Indiana and Missouri to Jan. 1 in Connecticut and Vermont.

The School Age Debate

School attendance ages are often controversial. Many early childhood experts argue that if policymakers establish early cutoff dates for kindergarten, they should also establish aggressive school readiness programs to ensure students' success. Others argue that because there has been an increased emphasis on early childhood development and school readiness, we should continue to challenge children at a younger age. Some experts assert that age may be an arbitrary indicator or measure of a child's ability to succeed in school and should not be used at all. Others point out that when a state considers legislation, such as Nebraska, allowing younger children to enter kindergarten, policymakers must understand that there is likely to be a large increase in the number of children entering kindergarten during the first year of the new policy, thereby straining already tight school district budgets and increasing the need for teachers.

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The age through which students must attend school can also be controversial. To encourage more students to attend institutions of higher education and to decrease dropout rates, juvenile crime and teen pregnancy, some state legislatures have increased the school attendance requirement to age 17 or 18. Opponents are concerned about forcing students to be in the classroom against their will. They say that these students may become disruptive and may require teachers and principals to spend more time and resources disciplining such students for disruptive or violent behavior and truancy. They also point out that there probably will be a greater need for funding, teachers and classrooms for alternative education.

State Action

Many state legislatures continue to debate school attendance policies. During the 2005 legislative session, Indiana changed their kindergarten enrollment date from July 1st to August 1st. During the 2004 legislative session, at least seven states enacted legislation regarding compulsory education. Alaska extended the required school age for a child who is six years of age on or before Sept. 1 following the beginning of the school year, and who is under the age of 20 and has not completed the 12th grade. Illinois increased the compulsory school age from 16 to 17 years of age, with certain exceptions. Kansas and Kentucky will both, under specific circumstances, grant exemptions from compulsory attendance. Nebraska changed the mandatory ages for compulsory education beginning in the 2005-06 school year to age of 6 by Jan. 1 of the current school year through the age of 17, with certain exceptions. In New York, local school districts will have the power to require minors from 16 to 17 years of age to attend full time day instruction. Finally, Virginia strengthened the mechanisms for enforcement of the compulsory school attendance law.

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Thomas Obermeyer

From: Corazza, Peggy (EED) [peggy.corazza@alaska.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, November 09, 2010 2:45 PM
To: Thomas Obermeyer
Subject: Graduation Rate and Dropout Rate information
Attachments: Graduation Rate Fact Sheet.doc; Dropout Rate Fact Sheet.doc

Thomas,

As promised I have attached the Fact Sheets that we discussed. I find them most helpful for both the historical view and the explanation of the calculation. I hope to have the 2010 Dropout calculation ready next week.

Peggy Corazza
Data Manager
Assessment & Accountability
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Graduation Rates in Alaska Fact Sheet

The Graduation Rate is reported as a fraction. The numerator is the sum of the number of graduates receiving a regular diploma before June 30. The denominator is the sum of the number of graduates, plus the number of dropouts in grade nine three school years prior, plus the number of unduplicated dropouts in grade ten two school years prior, plus the number of unduplicated dropouts in grade eleven in the prior school year, plus the number of unduplicated dropouts in grade 12 during the current year, plus the number of grade 12 continuing students.

A **graduate** is defined as a student who has received a regular diploma from a state- or district-approved education program, as evidenced by receipt of a secondary school diploma from school authorities. Any student who receives a diploma under a waiver from the competency examination required under AS 14.03075 (a), as specified by the state board is considered to be a graduate. This does not include an individual who:

- receives a certificate of completion;
- receives a certificate of attendance;

The statewide Graduation Count has increased significantly over the last five years.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Graduation Rate</u>	<u>Graduate Count</u>
2004	62.9%	7,290
2005	61.4%	6,905
2006	61.6%	7,361
2007	63.0%	7,666
2008	62.6%	7,855
2009	67.5%	8,008
2010	67.7%	8,245

The Alaska Native/American Indian Graduation Rate has shown improvement over the same five year time period:

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Graduation Rate</u>	<u>Graduate Count</u>
2004	46.1%	1,327
2005	43.2%	1,233
2006	45.1%	1,442
2007	51.2%	1,689
2008	48.1%	1,523
2009	55.4%	1,508
2010	55.4%	1,616

Please note that the new Graduation Rate required by the Final Title 1 Regulations under NCLB will use a different calculation. The new Graduation Rate, also known as the Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Rate, will follow an actual group of students across four

years of high school. Alaska will no longer be incorporating prior years' counts of dropouts to calculate the Graduation Rate.

Dropout Rates in Alaska Fact Sheet

The Dropout Rate is computed by dividing the number of dropouts in the current school year by the number of students enrolled in grades 7-12 on October 1 of the current school year. School year is defined as the 12-month period beginning with July 1 and ending June 30.

A **Dropout** is defined as a student who was enrolled in the district at some time during the school year and whose enrollment terminated. This does not include an individual who:

- graduated from high school or completed a state or district approved education program, as evidenced by receipt of formal recognition from school authorities;
- transferred to another public school, private school or state or district approved education program;
- is temporarily absent due to suspension;
- is absent due to illness or medical condition;
- died.

The statewide Dropout Rate has decreased as well as the number of dropouts for three consecutive years:

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Dropout Rate</u>	<u>Dropout Count (Grades 7-12)</u>
2005	6.0%	3,791
2006	5.8%	3,642
2007	5.5%	3,434
2008	5.2%	3,232
2009	5.2%	3,146

The Alaska Native/American Indian Dropout Rate has not reflected the proportionate decrease over the same time period:

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Dropout Rate</u>	<u>Dropout Count (Grades 7-12)</u>
2005	8.2%	1,276
2006	8.4%	1,333
2007	8.3%	1,299
2008	8.5%	1,224
2009	8.5%	1,172

In 2007-2008 Alaska showed a wide range in difference with district by district comparisons of Dropout Rates. Four districts reported 0 dropouts. Two districts reported over 25% Dropout Rates. Both districts with the highest rates, Delta/Greely School District and the Nenana City School District, had a large percentage of dropouts reported in the statewide correspondence schools.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employment Standards Administration

February 10, 2009

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Employment Related Provisions in State Compulsory School Attendance Laws - January 1, 2009

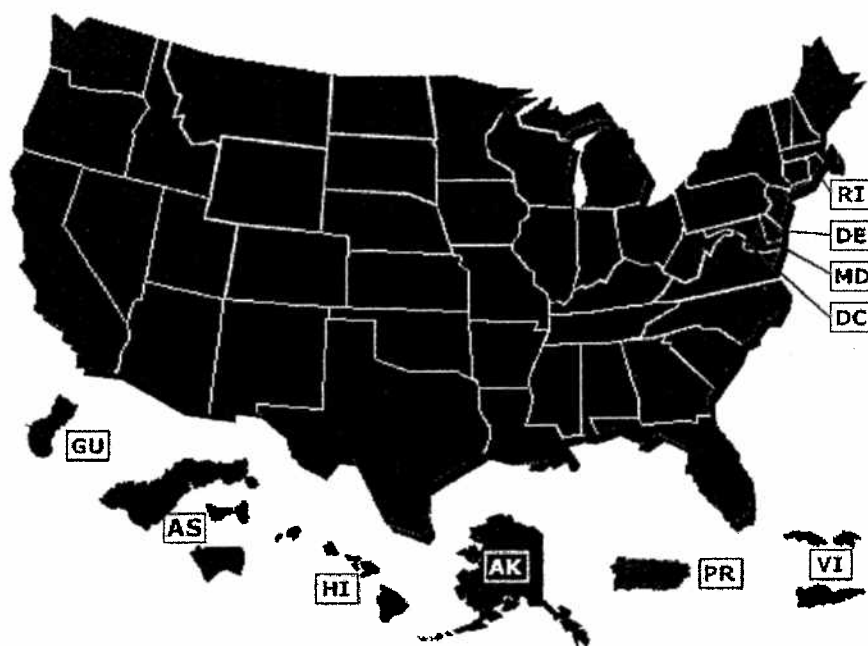


Table of Employment Related Provisions in State Compulsory School Attendance Laws By State

State	Age of Required School Attendance		Exemptions <u>1</u> / Employed		High School Graduate
	from	to	Age	Completion of Grade	
Alabama	7	16	legally and regularly employed under child labor law.	---	X
	3	21	permitted for special education students.		
Alaska	7	16	---	---	X
			14 with parental		

Arizona	6	16	consent and gainfully employed.	---	---
Arkansas	5	17 must complete school year.	---	---	X
California	6	18	---	---	X
Colorado	7	16	has current age and school certificate or work permit.	---	X
Connecticut	5	18	16 with parental consent.	---	---
Delaware	5	16	---	---	---
District of Columbia	5	18	children who are age 5 by September 30 are required to be enrolled in kindergarten.	---	---
Florida	6	17	may terminate attended at 16 with parental consent.	---	---
Georgia	6	16	---	---	X
Hawaii	6	18	15	---	X
Idaho	7	16	---	---	---
Illinois	7	17	employed and excused by school official.	---	---
Indiana	7	18	16 with consent of parent and principal. 14 if a parent agrees and State Labor bureau issues a certificate. must go back to school within 5 days of termination of employment for which certificate was issued.	---	X
Iowa	6	16	---	---	X
Kansas	7	18	17 or 16 with parental consent.	---	---
Kentucky	6	16	---	---	X
Louisiana	7	18 or 17 with parental consent.	---	---	X
Maine	7	17	15 or	9	X
Maryland	5	16	---	---	---
Massachusetts	6	16	14	---	---
Michigan	6	16	---	---	---
Minnesota	7	16	---	---	X

Mississippi	6	17	5 years of age if in public kindergarten.	---	---
Missouri	7	16	14	---	---
Montana	7	16 or completion of 8th grade, whichever is later.	---	---	---
Nebraska	7	18	14 and 16 with parental consent; special legislation for home schooling.	8 ---	X
Nevada	7	upper age limit has been changed to 18 unless the child has graduated from high school.	14 and excused by board of trustees. 14 if work is necessary for own or parents' support.	8 ---	X
New Hampshire	6	16 presently; however, effective July 2009, upper age limit will change to 18 or the student must have received diploma or qualifies for exception. With passage of NH House Bill 927, all districts are making plans to offer kindergarten.	---	---	---
New Jersey	6	16	---	---	---
New Mexico	5, or 8 if parents and school board agree	effective July 1, 2007, neither school districts or state chartered school districts shall excuse a student from attending school except as provided by law or for parent-authorized medical reasons.	---	---	X
New York	6	17 in cities with 4,500 or more population and union-free school districts, otherwise 16 if approved by local school board.	---	---	X
North Carolina	7	16	---	---	---
North Dakota	7	16	necessary to support of family.	---	X

Ohio	6	18	16 with parents' and superintendents permission.	---	X
Oklahoma	5	18 or 16 if excused by written joint agreement.	---	---	X
Oregon	7	18 or excused by district school board; 16 with consent of school administration and parent; 21 for a child with a disability.	16	---	X
Pennsylvania	8	17	16 if regularly engaged in employment with a certificate. 15 in farm work or domestic service in private home with permit. Or, 14 employed as above if completed elementary school with permit recommended by district superintendent of schools or principal of private school.	---	X
Rhode Island 2	6	18	16 with written parental consent. Dropout Prevention Act of 2007.	---	---
South Carolina	5	17	16 further attendance is determined by court to be disruptive, unproductive or not in best interest of child.	8th grade completed and employment is necessary for maintenance of home.	X
South Dakota	6	16 or completion of 8th grade if member of certain religious organizations. effective July 1, 2009, the upper limit of the compulsory age law changes to	---	---	---

		18.			
Tennessee	6	18th birthday.	---	local exemptions at 17th birthday for discipline problems.	X
Texas	6	18; person 18 years of age may enroll but failure to attend can result in permanent revocation if 5 or more unexcused absences occur in a semester. Students suspected of violating school attendance laws when apprehended must be taken into custody and delivered to their school campus.	---	---	---
Utah	6	18	16 and 8th grade completed. home schooled minors has exempt from attendance.	8th for employment purposes.	X
Vermont	6	16	15 and completed 6th grade and services needed for support of family.	---	---
Virginia	5	18	exempt any pupil with parent's consent along with that of principal or superintendent or a court which believes the minor cannot benefit from education at school.	---	X
Washington	8	18 16 and parent agrees that child should not be required to attend, or child is emancipated, or child has received certificate of competence.	16	---	X and age 16
West Virginia	6	16	---	---	X
Wisconsin	6	18	---	---	X

Wyoming	7	16	---	---	---
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1 Nearly all States exempt those whose physical or mental condition precludes attendance. Other exemptions not directly related to employment include those because of distance from school or school transportation; expulsion, suspension or determined to be disruptive; marriage; excused by court or judge; and receiving religious education.

2 The Dropout Prevention Act is a comprehensive program to have all the schools within the state make an attempt to keep students in school. There were no changes to the age limits for school attendance, but the establishment of a state-wide program is a major effort to prevent students from leaving school early - for any reason.

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This document was last revised in December 2008; unless otherwise stated, the information reflects requirements that were in effect, or would take effect, as of January 1, 2009.

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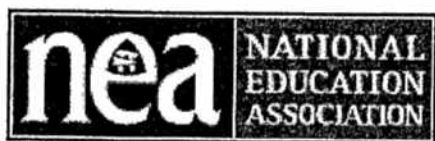
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NEA's 12-Point Action Plan for Reducing the School Dropout Rate

To address the nation's school dropout crisis, NEA has developed a 12-point action plan that includes the most promising actions supported by experience and data.

1. Mandate high school graduation or equivalency as compulsory for everyone below the age of 21. Just as we established compulsory attendance to the age of 16 or 17 in the beginning of the 20th century, it is appropriate and critical to eradicate the idea of "dropping out" before achieving a diploma. To compete in the 21st century, all of our citizens, at minimum, need a high school education.
2. Establish high school graduation centers for students 19-21 years old to provide specialized instruction and counseling to all students in this older age group who would be more effectively addressed in classes apart from younger students.
3. Make sure students receive individual attention in safe schools, in smaller learning communities within large schools, in small classes (18 or fewer students), and in programs during the summer, weekends, and before and after school that provide tutoring and build on what students learn during the school day.
4. Expand students' graduation options through creative partnerships with community colleges in career and technical fields and with alternative schools so that students have another way to earn a high school diploma. For students who are incarcerated, tie their release to high school graduation at the end of their sentences.
5. Increase career education and workforce readiness programs in schools so that students see the connection between school and careers after graduation. To ensure that students have the skills they need for these careers, integrate 21st century skills into the curriculum and provide all students with access to 21st century technology.
6. Act early so students do not drop out with high-quality, universal preschool and full-day kindergarten; strong elementary programs that ensure students are doing grade-level work when they enter middle school; and middle school programs that address causes of dropping out that appear in these grades and ensure that students have access to algebra, science, and other courses that serve as the foundation for success in high school and beyond.
7. Involve families in students' learning at school and at home in new and creative ways so that all families—single-parent families, families in poverty, and families in minority communities—can support their children's academic achievement, help their children engage in healthy behaviors, and stay actively involved in their children's education from preschool through high school.

graduation.

8. Monitor students' academic progress in school through a variety of measures during the school year that provide a full picture of students' learning and help teachers make sure students do not fall behind academically.
9. Monitor, accurately report, and work to reduce dropout rates by gathering accurate data for key student groups (such as racial, ethnic, and economic), establishing benchmarks in each state for eliminating dropouts, and adopting the standardized reporting method developed by the National Governors Association.
10. Involve the entire community in dropout prevention through family-friendly policies that provide release time for employees to attend parent-teacher conferences; work schedules for high school students that enable them to attend classes on time and be ready to learn; "adopt a school" programs that encourage volunteerism and community-led projects in school; and community-based, real-world learning experiences for students.
11. Make sure educators have the training and resources they need to prevent students from dropping out including professional development focused on the needs of diverse students and students who are at risk of dropping out; up-to-date textbooks and materials, computers, and information technology; and safe modern schools.
12. Make high school graduation a federal priority by calling on Congress and the president to invest \$10 billion over the next 10 years to support dropout prevention programs and states who make high school graduation compulsory.

For the Spanish version of this plan, see [El Plan de la NEA para Reducir el Abandono de los Estudios](#).

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