



Michigan
Office of the Auditor General
REPORT SUMMARY

Performance Audit
High School Graduation and Dropout Rates
Center for Educational Performance and
Information
Department of Management and Budget

Report Number:
07-181-05

Released:
September 2006

Federal, State, and local educational agencies have identified high school graduation and dropout rates as one of the key indicators of school performance and student success. The Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) is responsible for calculating an annual graduation and dropout rate for each high school, each district, and the State in compliance with nationally recognized standards.

Audit Objective:

To assess the accuracy of high school graduation and dropout data used by CEPI in its calculation process.

Audit Conclusion:

We concluded that high school graduation and dropout data used by CEPI in its calculation process was not accurate. Our assessment disclosed three material conditions related to verification of data accuracy, data evaluation and validation, and correction of Single Record Student Database (SRSD) data (Findings 1 through 3).

Material Conditions:

CEPI did not have the authority to review high schools' records and the authority to withhold State aid payments for inaccurate reporting or for failure to report graduation and dropout data (Finding 1).

CEPI had not developed sufficient reasonableness checks and verification techniques to help identify inaccuracies in

high school graduation and dropout data prior to using the data to calculate graduation and dropout rates (Finding 2).

CEPI had not developed procedures to correct errors in SRSD data submitted by high schools (Finding 3).

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Audit Objective:

To evaluate the effectiveness of CEPI's process for calculating high school graduation and dropout rates.

Audit Conclusion:

We concluded that CEPI's process for calculating high school graduation and dropout rates was moderately effective. We noted reportable conditions related to detection of computer program errors and training and instruction for high schools (Findings 4 and 5).

Reportable Conditions:

CEPI had not developed sufficient edit checks and error reports to ensure that its

computer programs were executing properly (Finding 4).

CEPI did not provide high schools with sufficient detailed instructions regarding reporting requirements for migrant education students and midterm promotions. Also, CEPI should develop alternative training and instruction methods to address significant data quality issues that exist at the high schools. (Finding 5)

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Agency Response:

Our audit report contains 5 findings and 6 corresponding recommendations. CEPI indicated that it agrees with all 6 recommendations and will comply with them.

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A copy of the full report can be obtained by calling 517.334.8050 or by visiting our Web site at: <http://audgen.michigan.gov>



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