

Students with Disabilities Exiting School, 2007-08

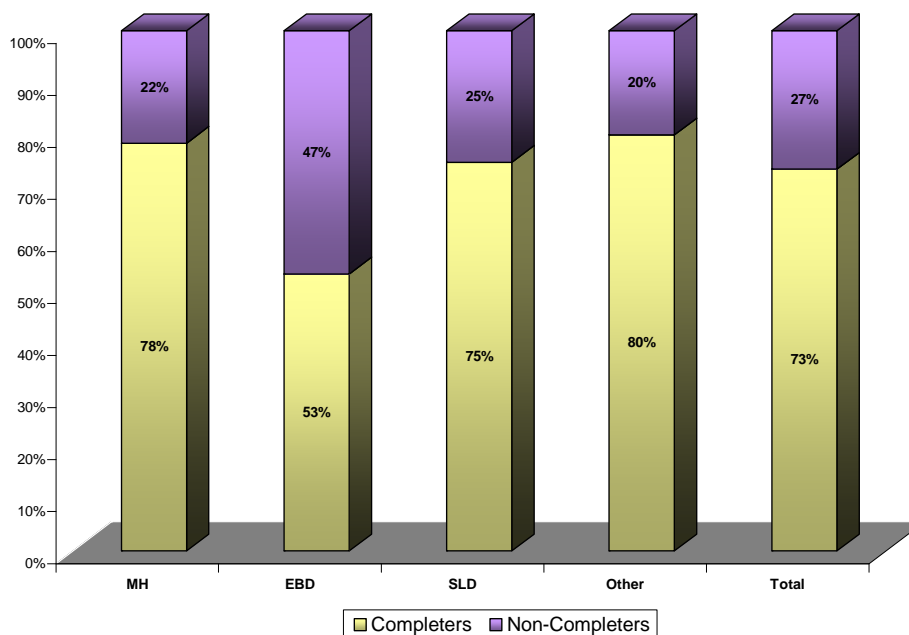
Background

- As required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Florida Department of Education reports annually to the federal government the number of students with disabilities, ages 14-21, exiting the K-12 education system.
- The data are derived from the PK-12 withdrawal codes reported by school districts at the end of each school year (survey 5).
- For the purposes of this brief, Florida students who exited as “completers” includes students who were awarded a diploma or certificate and students who exited as “non-completer” includes students who reached the maximum age of 22 without being awarded a diploma or certificate, dropped out of school, and students whose whereabouts are unknown.

2007-08 Exiters

- At the end of 2007-08, there were 23,878 students with disabilities reported as exiters. Of the total exiters, 17,526 (73%) students exited school with a diploma or certificate and 6,352 (27%) students exited as non-completers.
- Figure 1 displays the percentage of student completers and non-completers by disability. For purposes of this analysis, three major areas are shown: mentally handicapped (MH), which includes educable, trainable and profoundly mentally handicapped; emotionally/behaviorally disabled; and specific learning disabled (SLD). The category of Other includes speech and language impaired, visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, autistic, hospital/homebound, orthopedically impaired, dual sensory impaired, traumatic brain injured, and other health impaired.
- Exiters identified as learning disabled totaled 13,921, with 75% of exiters reported as completers, and 25% reported as non-completers.
- Of the 3,491 exiters identified as mentally handicapped, 78% were identified as completers, while 22% were identified as non-completers.
- Student exiters identified as emotionally/behaviorally disabled totaled 2,926, with 53% of those exiters reported as completers and 47% reported as non-completers.
- In the other category (3,540 students), 80% were reported as completers and 20% were reported as non-completers.

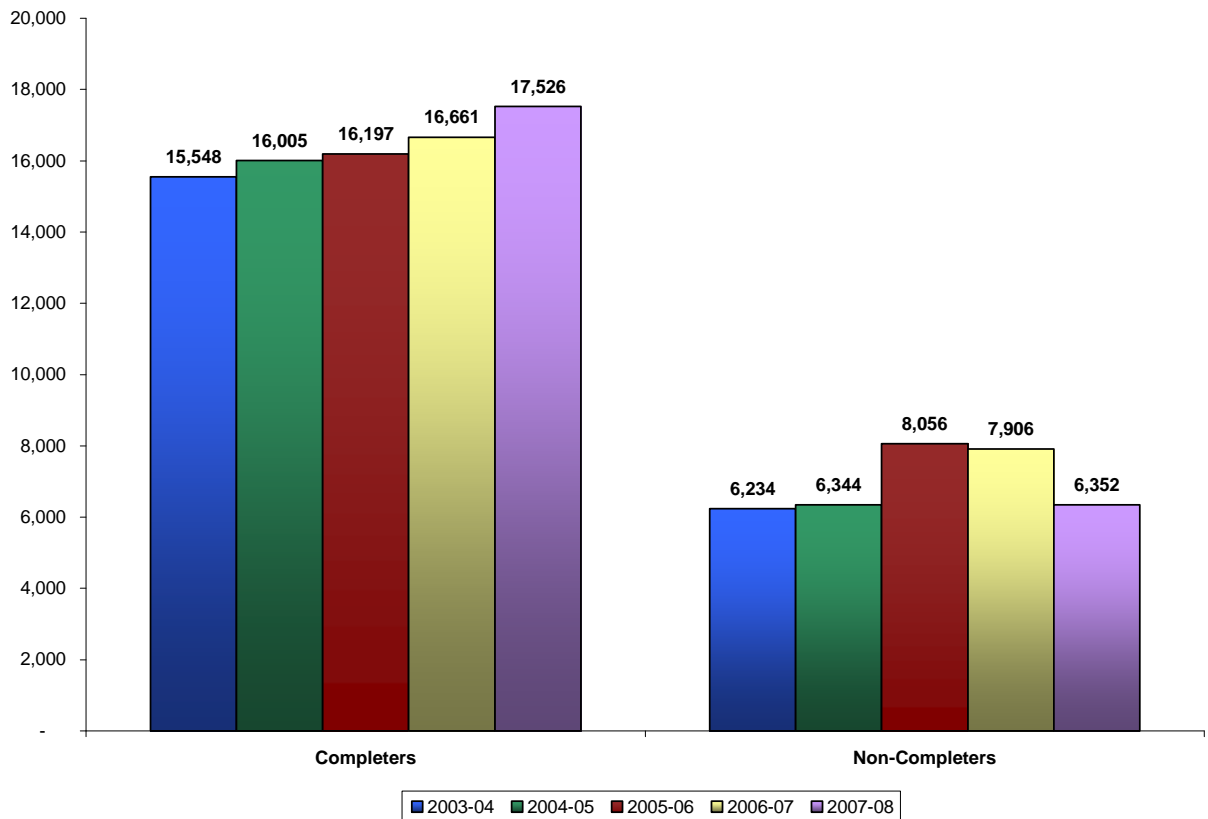
Figure 1: Percentage of Students with Disabilities Exiting School
As Completers or Non-Completers, 2007-08



Longitudinal Data

- Over the five-year period beginning 2003-04, the number of students with disabilities successfully completing school has steadily risen each year, as illustrated in Figure 2. Between 2003-04 and 2007-08 there was a 13% increase in the number of students reported as successfully completing high school.
- During this same five-year period, the number of students with disabilities who exited school as non-completers increased 29% from 6,234 in 2003-04 to 8,056 in 2005-06. From 2005-06 to 2006-07 there was a decrease of 2% in the number of non-completers from 8,056 to 7,906. This was followed by a decrease of 20% in the number of non-completers from 2006-07 to 2007-08.

Figure 2: Number of Students with Disabilities Exiting School as a Completer or Non-Completer 2003-04 through 2007-08



Source: Survey 5, 2003-04 through 2007-08