



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

July 22, 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents Education
FROM: Eric G. Mackey 
State Superintendent of Education
RE: Student Exit Interview
Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564

Each year, Alabama works toward a 100 percent graduation rate and a 0 percent dropout rate. Although we have not reached this Utopian goal, we work diligently on the processes to support student success. In an attempt to decrease the number of students who drop out of school and to increase the age of students that are required to attend public school, the Alabama Legislature passed Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564. This law amends several sections of the *Code of Alabama, 1975*, regarding mandatory school attendance and also adds Section 16-28-3.1.

Section 16-28-3 was amended to require every child between the ages of 6 and 17 years to attend public school, private school, church school, or be instructed by a competent private tutor for the entire length of the school term in every scholastic year.

Section 16-28-3.1 references the withdrawal from public school prior to graduation of a student if both of the following circumstances exist:

1. Written consent is granted by the child's parent or legal guardian.
2. An exit interview is conducted with the student and the student's parent or legal guardian.

The student who withdraws from school prior to receiving a diploma shall be provided information regarding the detrimental impacts and negative effects of early withdrawal from school. Additionally, information including available training, enrollment in the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) Adult Education and Skills Training programs through its non-traditional high school diploma options or high school equivalency options such as the General Educational Development (GED) diploma, and employment programs shall be provided where available. Other possible options and available community resources or programs should also be provided.

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City and County Superintendents of Education
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Attached is the Student Exit Interview Process document that has demonstrated a positive impact on hundreds of Alabama students. This document may be customized for your local education agency and found in its entirety on our website at www.alsde.edu by clicking on Prevention and Support Services/Dropout Prevention/Forms. Should a student fail to return to school without completing the official withdrawal process, attempts to contact the student and his/her parent or guardian should be documented on the Student Exit Interview form.

Should you have questions regarding the Student Exit Interview form or other aspects of the Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564, please contact Dr. Kay Atchison Warfield by email at kaw@alsde.edu or Ms. Kanetra Germany by email at kgermany@alsde.edu or by telephone at 334-694-4867.

EGM/KAW/TD

Attachment

cc: Grades 9-12 High School Principals

FY20-2115

The Student Exit Interview Process

Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564



July 2020

**Eric G. Mackey
State Superintendent of Education
Alabama State Department of Education**

The Student Exit Interview Process

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Overview

The **Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564** requires that students must attend school until the age of seventeen (17) and that a Student Exit Interview must be conducted in an attempt to resolve circumstances impeding a student from staying in school. This implementation guide supports consistency with directions for the Student Exit Interview process and facilitates a positive conversation among the student, parent/legal guardian, and advocates for student success. The conversation should address reasons the student is wishing to leave school with resolutions to enhance an academic/behavioral workable situation with graduating on time and/or serving as a productive citizen as the end result.

As a last attempt to provide wraparound support to the student and family, a packet of resources from the community agencies and partners should be shared with the student and parent/legal guardian. It is suggested that some form of follow-up be conducted to enlighten your school system as to what is happening to these students. The information ascertained during the Student Exit Interview process should be filed with the exit interview coordinator or the local education agency (LEA) designee and placed in the student's cumulative record at the end of the school year. An entry on the Student Exit Interview composite may serve as summary documentation.

To customize the Student Exit Interview process for your school system, Prevention and Support Services, Dropout Prevention Act Resources. [Click here for more information.](#)

The information on Student Exit Interview process is provided to you, for informational purposes only. It is not intended to constitute an offer of any financial product or service. Please contact your local education agency for more information.

Roles and Duties

Counselor/Exit Interview Coordinator: To ensure a uniform process throughout the school system, a counselor/exit interview coordinator (may be a counselor, graduation coach, or a lead teacher) has been **designated** to **coordinate** and **facilitate** these meetings.

Responsibilities

- Helps to ensure clear communication and uniform documentation of these effort.
- Ensures appropriate withdrawal procedures are completed in the Student Information System (SIS).
- Compiles and analyzes pertinent information related to dropouts in the school system, including demographics, reason(s) for dropping out, pertinent student history (attendance, academics, discipline, and health), successful interventions, unsuccessful interventions, and follow-up contacts with dropouts.

Principal, Faculty, and Other Designated Staff: principals, counselors, teachers, registrars, attendance/truancy staff, graduation coaches, and other school staff play a key role in this process and in the discussion that takes place during the exit interview.

Responsibilities

Principal

- Develops and implements successful intervention plans by using the problem-solving team approach.
- Ensures students and parents/legal guardians that the school/system is strongly committed to helping students succeed in academic and behavioral endeavors and future careers.

Faculty or Designated Staff

- Completes the _____ **School System** Exit Interview Referral form with the student's parent/legal guardian.
- Forwards the information to the exit interview coordinator or the person designated in the LEA for review prior to the student exit interview.
- Meets with student and his/her parent/legal guardian when the student is attempting to withdraw or to specifically drop out.
- Advises the student and parent/legal guardian of the requirements of the **Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564**, including change in age of dropout and written consent of parent/legal guardian, and the requirement that they attend an exit interview to be scheduled by the exit interview coordinator.
- Advises the student and parent/legal guardian that a student's driver's license may be suspended by the Alabama Department of Public Safety until age nineteen (19) if they drop out.
- Shares specific interventions implemented and recommendations for new interventions with the student and parent/legal guardian.

Required Documentation for the Student Exit Interview Process

Student Exit Interview Referral Form:

- Secures parent/legal guardian signature acknowledging change in Alabama law in the event they do not attend the scheduled exit interview.
- Secures parent/legal guardian signature acknowledging potential suspension of student's driver's license due to him/her dropping out of school.
- Verifies current telephone number and mailing address for scheduling the exit interview.

Student Exit Interview Form:

- Provides a guide for discussion during the interview.
- Secures pertinent information for the LEA and by the Alabama State Department of Education.
- Secures signatures from all attendees.
- Ensures discussion specific to school-based interventions and community resources that are available to assist the student and/or family.
- Documents the decision made by the student and parent/legal guardian.

Sample Letters to Parent/Legal Guardian:

- Provides parent/legal guardian and school/system with written documentation regarding date, time, and reason for exit interview.
- Letters are sent by certified mail. Two (2) sample letters have been included for both scenarios:
 - Students who officially attempt to withdraw (see original – “to withdraw to drop out”).
 - Students who leave school without notice (no shows).

Suggested Student Exit Interview Composite:

- Tracks student(s) exit interviews and dropout data related to:
 - Grade
 - Age
 - Pertinent history (retentions, academics, attendance, discipline, and health)
 - Socio-economic issues
 - Reason for leaving school
 - Interventions provided
 - Disposition of exit interview
 - Family contacts to ensure attempted follow up is in a composite format

Individual Student Exit Interview Folders:

Individual folders for each student are maintained by the exit interview coordinator or school designee to include the following:

- Copy of the **Exit Interview Referral Form**.
- Correspondence with family (telephone calls, copy of certified letter, mail receipt, etc.).
- Summary information secured from staff and student information system (academics, attendance, and discipline).
- Copy of **Student Exit Interview Form**.

These folders and the Student Exit Interview Composite are required as evidence during the Alabama Comprehensive Monitoring process.

Graphic Illustration of Student Exit Interview Process

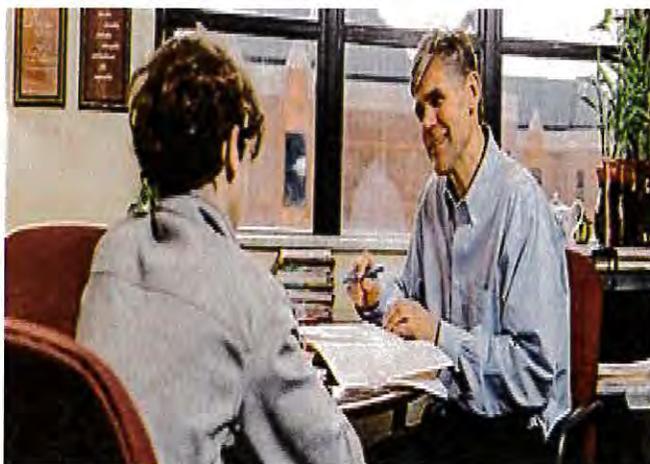
Prior To Student Exit Interview

A variety of resources are provided to our students to discourage the decision to drop out of school. All students and parent/legal guardians arriving to the school to withdraw/drop out will be encouraged and counseled to reconsider. If a student and parent/legal guardian insist on signing a withdrawal form, the following tasks will be performed to begin the Student Exit Interview process:



Student and Parent/Guardian

- Enter front office of the school to acknowledge intention to withdraw (drop out).
- Receive counsel by school staff to discourage withdrawal.



Designated School Staff

- Initiates withdrawal steps if student and parent/guardian insist on withdrawing.
- Submits all forms (SE Referral Form) to the exit interview coordinator to review.
- Maintains copies for individual Student Exit Interview Folders.





Exit Interview Coordinator

- Prepares and mails certified letter to schedule Exit Interview to the parent/guardian.
- Secures any additional information needed from designated school staff regarding attendance, discipline, academics, special needs, and prior interventions.
- Conducts Student Exit Interview.
- Records information in the Student Information System (SIS).
- Records information on the Student Exit Interview Composite.

It is very important that the school administration supports the efforts of the above-designated school staff and student exit interview coordinator to ensure **prompt communication and participation** from the faculty.

Graphic Illustration of Student Exit Interview Process

Day of Student Exit Interview

A student exit interview is scheduled at a time that ensures the availability of school staff that is most familiar with the student's history and the administrative staff that has authority to support plans of intervention.



Student and Parent/Guardian

- Arrive at designated time and place for the student exit interview.
- Welcome parent/legal guardian in meeting where the team has gathered to conduct the student exit interview.
- Participate in the discussion throughout the meeting.



Exit Interview Coordinator

- Facilitates the student exit interview meeting.
- Introduces all individuals and begins the meeting with an overview regarding the student's current situation and past intervention.





Exit Interview Team

Exit Interview Coordinator, principal, teachers, counselor, graduation coach, central office staff representative(s), special education staff, and Juvenile Court representative (if invited).

- Proposes, develops, and encourages potential options of interventions to support the student back on track with education.



Exit Interview Coordinator

- Enters all pertinent information in the Alabama State Department of Education SIS platform.
- Follows appropriate withdrawal steps in the SIS platform.
- Provides the student and parent a packet of educational and community resources as additional wraparound support.
- Verifies all contact information.

School System Alabama Student Exit Interview Referral Form

Student Name	Student ID #	Date of Birth
Grade	School	Date of Referral

Student's reason(s) for dropping out of school:

Failed High-Stakes Test	Employment	Attendance Issues
Behavior Problems	Needed at Home	Student-Staff Relations
Physical/Mental Illness	Relationship with Fellow Students	Language Difficulty
Marriage	Academic Difficulties/Credit Loss	Entered Military
Harassment/Bullying	Parental Influence to Dropout	Teen Mom/Dad
Disliked School Experience	Other (please specify)	

Interventions attempted by school staff:

Problem-Solving Team	Credit Recovery
School Counselor	Remediation/Tutoring
Advisory Team Staff	Graduation Coach
504 Services	ELL
Special Education	Truancy Officer
Referral to Community Providers (please specify)	
Other (specify)	

Please forward brief information regarding these and other interventions to exit interview coordinator by fax for discussion during exit interview appointment.

To Be Completed by Parent/Legal Guardian

My signature below acknowledges that I have been advised of the importance of my child staying in school and the negative consequences of early withdrawal. I have also been advised that Alabama state law requires written consent for my child to drop out of school and requires my attendance at an exit interview scheduled by the _____ School System. I am also aware that state law allows the Alabama Department of Public Safety to suspend my child's driver's license should he/she drop out of school.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____ **Telephone Number(s)** _____

Mailing Address: _____

Student Exit Interview Form
Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564

School Year _____

School System: _____ Date: _____

School: _____

Student Name: _____
First Middle Last

Student Grade: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Student ID Number: _____

Participants of the Student Exit Interview:

<input type="checkbox"/> Failed High-Stakes Test	<input type="checkbox"/> Harassment/Bullying	<input type="checkbox"/> Relationship with Fellow Students	<input type="checkbox"/> Student-Staff Relations
<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Dislike of School Experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Academic Difficulties/Credit Loss	<input type="checkbox"/> Language Difficulty
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical/Mental Illness	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment	<input type="checkbox"/> Parental Influence on Dropout	<input type="checkbox"/> Teen Mom/Dad
<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage	<input type="checkbox"/> Needed at Home	<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance Issues	
	Other _____		

- _____ Discussed the student's reason(s) for dropping out of school.
- _____ Discussed intervention strategies previously provided by school faculty/staff (referral form attached).
- _____ Provided information regarding the negative impacts of not receiving a high school diploma, which seriously affects future employment and earning potential.
- _____ Explained other negative consequences such as losing his/her driver's license.
- _____ Discussed other options and opportunities provided through school programs or classes.
- _____ Provided information for other available community programs.
- _____ Explained other possible educational opportunities for students such as private school, church school, private tutor, community college, or GED.

GED/Community College information was provided to student. Yes No
 Will student take the GED? Yes No Uncertain
 If yes, where does he/she plan to attend? _____

I acknowledge that I have been advised of the importance of staying in school to receive my high school diploma.

I acknowledge that I have been advised of the importance of my child staying in school and keeping my child in school to receive his/her high school diploma.

Student Signature: _____
 Address: _____

 Email: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____
 Signature: _____
 Telephone: _____
 Email _____

Exit Interview Participants:

Name: _____ Position: _____ Signature: _____
 Name: _____ Position: _____ Signature: _____
 Name: _____ Position: _____ Signature: _____
 Name: _____ Position: _____ Signature: _____

For a student who failed to return to school or did not officially withdraw, describe attempts to contact the student and his/her parent or guardian.

Attendance/Tuancy Officer _____ Signature _____ Date _____

I acknowledge that an exit interview was conducted and the student and the student's parent or legal guardian have been advised that withdrawal (dropping out) from school shall likely reduce the student's future earning potential and increase the student's likelihood of being unemployed in the future.

Principal _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Sample Letter to LEA Staff

TO: High School Principal(s)
High School Counselor(s)
High School Registrar(s)

FROM: LEA Superintendent

RE: Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564–Procedures for Implementation

Recently you received information concerning the Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564. The intent of the Act is to decrease the number of students who drop out of school and to create an exit process that discourages students from making this decision. The exit process should provide the student and his/her parent/legal guardian assistance in developing a plan. Please use the following procedures in implementing this Act:

1. The effective date of the Act is **August 1, 2009**, and is applicable to all **currently** enrolled students as of the 2020-2021 school year.
2. Students requesting a **Certificate of Exemption**, as defined on page _____ of the Student Code of Conduct Handbook, should be referred to the appropriate LEA office to begin this exemption review process.
3. A student exit interview, including the completion of the Student Exit Interview Referral form and a graduation plan, must be conducted for each student who indicates he/she is withdrawing from school and discontinuing his/her high school education (dropping out). It is recommended the interviews include the student, the student's parent/legal guardian, school administrator, counselor, and dropout prevention supervisor, or student advocate. The dropout prevention supervisor is available to assist you with the exit process **and** provide assistance with student interventions for students at risk of dropping out.
4. A copy of the Student Exit Interview Referral Form and graduation plan must be maintained with the school principal.
5. Information packets will be distributed to each high school to use with students during the exit interview process **and** for the purpose of counseling students who are at risk of dropping out. This packet will include:
 - a. Information regarding the detrimental impacts and negative effects of dropping out.
 - b. Information on developing a graduation plan to stay in school.
 - c. Information on school-to-work training programs, Alabama SUCCESS Education and Career Planning, and enrollment in postsecondary adult basic education programs.

Sample Letter to LEA Staff

TO: High School Principal(s)
High School Counselor(s)
High School Registrar(s)

FROM: LEA Superintendent

RE: Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564–Mandatory Procedures for Implementation

Recently you received information concerning the Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564. The intent of the Act is to decrease the number of students who drop out of school and to create an exit process that discourages the student from making this decision. The exit process should provide the student and his/her parent/legal guardian assistance in developing a plan for graduation. Please use the following procedures in implementing this act:

1. The effective date of the act is **August 1, 2009**. It is applicable to all **currently** enrolled students.
2. Students requesting a **Certificate of Exemption** as defined on page ____ of the Student Code of Conduct Handbook should be referred to the **LEA office of Prevention and Support Services** to begin the review process.
3. A **student exit interview**, including the completion of the Student Exit Interview Referral form and a graduation plan, must be conducted for each student who indicates he/she is withdrawing from school and discontinuing his/her high school education. Interviews should include the student, his/her parent/legal guardian, school administrator, counselor, and others to complete the exit interview team. To manage this process, the following day has been designated for each high school to schedule the student exit interviews. _____, **exit interview coordinator or LEA designee**, will contact your school each week to be advised of the conference times in order to attend the student exit interview meetings.

Sample

School	Day for Exit Interview	Time
Gulf Shores High School	Monday	8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Foley High School	Monday	12:00 noon – 3:00 p.m.
Fairhope High School	Tuesday	8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Daphne High School	Tuesday	12:00 noon – 3:00 p.m.
Robertsdale High School	Wednesday	8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Spanish Fort High School	Wednesday	12:00 noon – 3:00 p.m.
Bay Minette High School	Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

4. A copy of the Student Exit Referral Form and graduation plan must be maintained with the school principal with the Student Exit Interview Folder until the end of the academic school year or Alabama Comprehensive Monitoring process.
5. Information packets will be distributed to each high school to use with students during the exit interview **and** for the purpose of counseling students who are at risk of dropping out. The packets will include:
 - a. Information regarding the detrimental impacts and negative effects of dropping out.
 - b. Information on developing a graduation plan to stay in school.
 - c. Information on school-to-work training programs, Alabama SUCCESS Education and Career Planning, and enrollment in postsecondary adult basic education programs

Please email the name of your designee responsible for compiling and scheduling the mandatory student exit interviews. Should you have additional questions, please contact _____, **designated person at LEA central office level, at** _____.

Sample Letter

Students Who Withdraw to Drop out

(Parent Address)

Dear (Parent):

On May 18, 2009, the Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564 was enacted. This law requires that every child between the ages of seven (6) and seventeen (17) shall be required to attend a public school, private school, church school, or be instructed by a competent private tutor. This law also requires that parents/legal guardians, of students age seventeen (17) and above must provide written consent for a student to withdraw from school and also attend a student exit interview scheduled by school staff.

We are writing to confirm that you are scheduled for this required student exit interview on _____ (date) _____ at _____ (time) _____ at the _____ (campus name and address) _____.

During this meeting we will discuss with you the detrimental impacts of early withdrawal from school, including financial consequences from future earning potential as well as the suspension of the student's driver's license by the Alabama Department of Public Safety. If you need any additional information or need to reschedule this meeting, please call me as soon as possible at _____ or email me at _____.

Sincerely,

Graduation Coach
Dropout Prevention Services
Or
LEA Designee

Sample Letter

Not Attending School but Did Not Officially Withdraw

(Student/Parent Names)

(Address)

Dear (Names):

On May 18, 2009, the Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564 was enacted. This law requires that every child between the ages of seven (6) and seventeen (17) shall be required to attend a public school, private school, church school, or be instructed by a competent private tutor. This law also requires that parents/legal guardians of students age seventeen (17) and above must provide written consent for a student to withdraw from school and also attend a student exit interview scheduled by school staff.

Our records indicate that the above student is not currently attending school in our system and has not completed an official withdrawal form to drop out or transfer to another academic setting. We are writing to confirm that we have scheduled you and your child for the required exit interview on (date) at (time) at (campus name and address). During this meeting we will discuss with you the detrimental impacts of dropping out of school, including financial consequences from future earning potential, the suspension of the student's driver's license by the Alabama Department of Public Safety, and interventions available to facilitate student success in school.

If you need any additional information or need to reschedule this meeting, please call me as soon as possible at _____ or email me at _____. If this student is now enrolled in another academic setting, living at another address, or employed full time, please advise us so we can reflect these changes in our records. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Dropout Prevention Services
_____ School System

Sample List of Contents for Community Resource Packet

The _____ School System has prepared a packet of educational materials and community resources for each student and parent/legal guardian who attends a student exit interview. This packet is updated periodically and includes a variety of information about local and regional resources to provide additional wraparound support.

Items included:

- _____ Department of Human Resources
- _____ Public Health Department
- _____ Juvenile Court
- _____ Community Mental Health Center
- Regional Counseling and Substance Abuse Resources
- _____ Health and Human Services Information Tool
- Alabama Joint Family Support Assistance Program for Military Families
- 2-1-1 Connects Alabama Resource Call Center
- Child Development Resources (Childcare for Teen Parents)
- JOB Corps
- Local and Regional Adult Education and GED Resources
- Alabama Career and Work Center
- Easter Seals Rehabilitation
- Social Security Administration
- Student Harassment Act, House Bill 216
- Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564
- Age Increase for Driver's License Due to Behavior Act 464
- Bridgewater Academy
- Early College Enrollment Program (ECEP)
- Resources on the Alabama Department of Education, Prevention and Support Services Section
- Financial Assistance to Attend College
- College Access Challenge Grant
- Helping Families Initiatives
- Family Service Centers
- Alabama Community College System (ACCS)

Continued from Previous Page

Student (continued)	Reasons for Withdrawal	Interventions Provided	Family Contacts by LEA Advisory Staff	Disposition of Exit Interview, Date and Resolution	Comments/Follow Up