Texas Education Agency

Leaver Reporting and Documentation Requirements and Best Practices

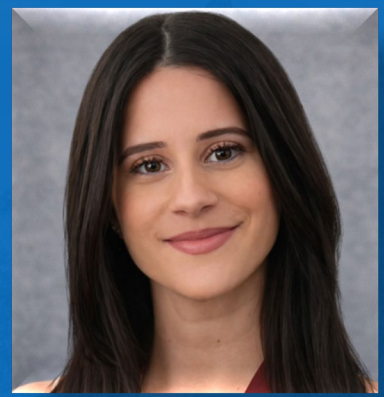
Self-Reported Data Unit
Office of Governance

Today's Presenters



Dr. Brittany Wright

Principal Director
Self-Reported Data Unit



Stephanie Reis

Annual Data Validation Supervisor
Self-Reported Data Unit

TEA®
Texas Education Agency

Mission Statement

Texas Education Agency

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Office of Governance

Proactively support school systems, keep students safe, and uphold Texas education law with integrity, objectivity, and excellence

Agenda

- SRDU Overview
- Leaver Reporting Requirements
- Compliance Review Findings
- Leaver Reporting Processing Change
- Recommended Local Actions
- Contact Information

Self-Reported Data Unit (SRDU)



SRDU supports **multiple data-driven systems** and **TEA program areas** by analyzing TSDS PEIMS data as well as reviewing Performance-Based Monitoring (PBM) data validation indicators

We work to **improve the quality** of self-reported data the agency receives from LEAs through:

- **Collaborating with LEAs** to bring them into compliance and/or to establish better local practices for data reporting and any related practices (e.g., program implementation, maintenance of records); and
- **Collaborating with TEA program areas** to ensure LEAs have access to the information and tools necessary to establish better local practices and accurately report data to the agency

Compliance Reviews

- **Compliance reviews** are issued whenever data anomalies or concerns have been identified that necessitate a closer review of an LEA's data reporting and programmatic policies and procedures
- Compliance review letters are sent to the superintendent via email and **request documentation and other information** by a particular deadline
- SRDU reviews response to determine whether the LEA is in compliance with all relevant state and federal laws, rules, and regulations related to the review
- SRDU will work with LEAs to help bring them into compliance, if necessary
- SRDU also issues **local audit requests** to LEAs – encourage them to review agency guidance, evaluate their policies and procedures, and ensure compliance with all statutory requirements

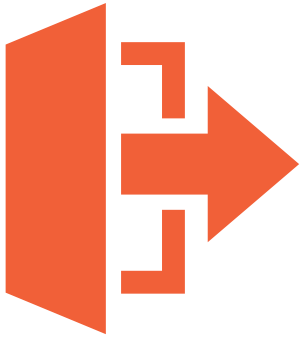
Leaver Records Data Validation & Complaints

- Leaver data concerns are identified through the **Leaver Records Data Validation (LRDV) system**, internal data analyses and monitoring, or external complaints
  - Concerns regarding potential falsification or manipulation of PEIMS data can be submitted using the agency's General Complaint Form

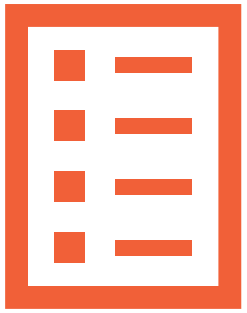
- LRDV system is being refreshed; compliance reviews directly tied to LRDV indicators will resume in 2027 and will apply to 2025–26 school year leavers
  - TAA - Leaver Records Data Validation Updates

Leaver Reporting Requirements

Texas Education Data Standards



Leaver records, which provide information about why a student in attendance in a given school year did not return to school within the school start window the next fall, **are required to be submitted for all leavers** with few exceptions



Furthermore, districts **must document** the withdrawal of students **and maintain** on file the appropriate paperwork associated with student withdrawals. **Documentation is required for all leaver reasons**, except ExitWithdrawType ‘98’

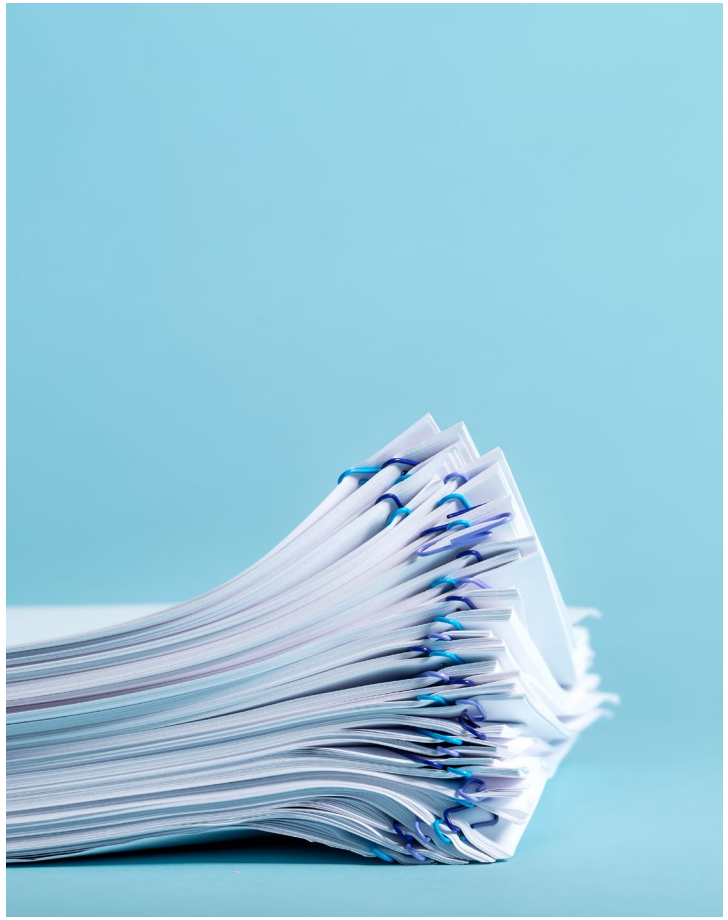
The PEIMS Leaver Data – Documentation Requirements in TWEDS provide:

- General reporting and documentation requirements
- Expanded definitions and uses for each ExitWithdrawType
- Specific documentation requirements for each ExitWithdrawType



Scan QR code to access the 2025-26 TWEDS Leaver Data Documentation Requirements!

Documentation Requirements

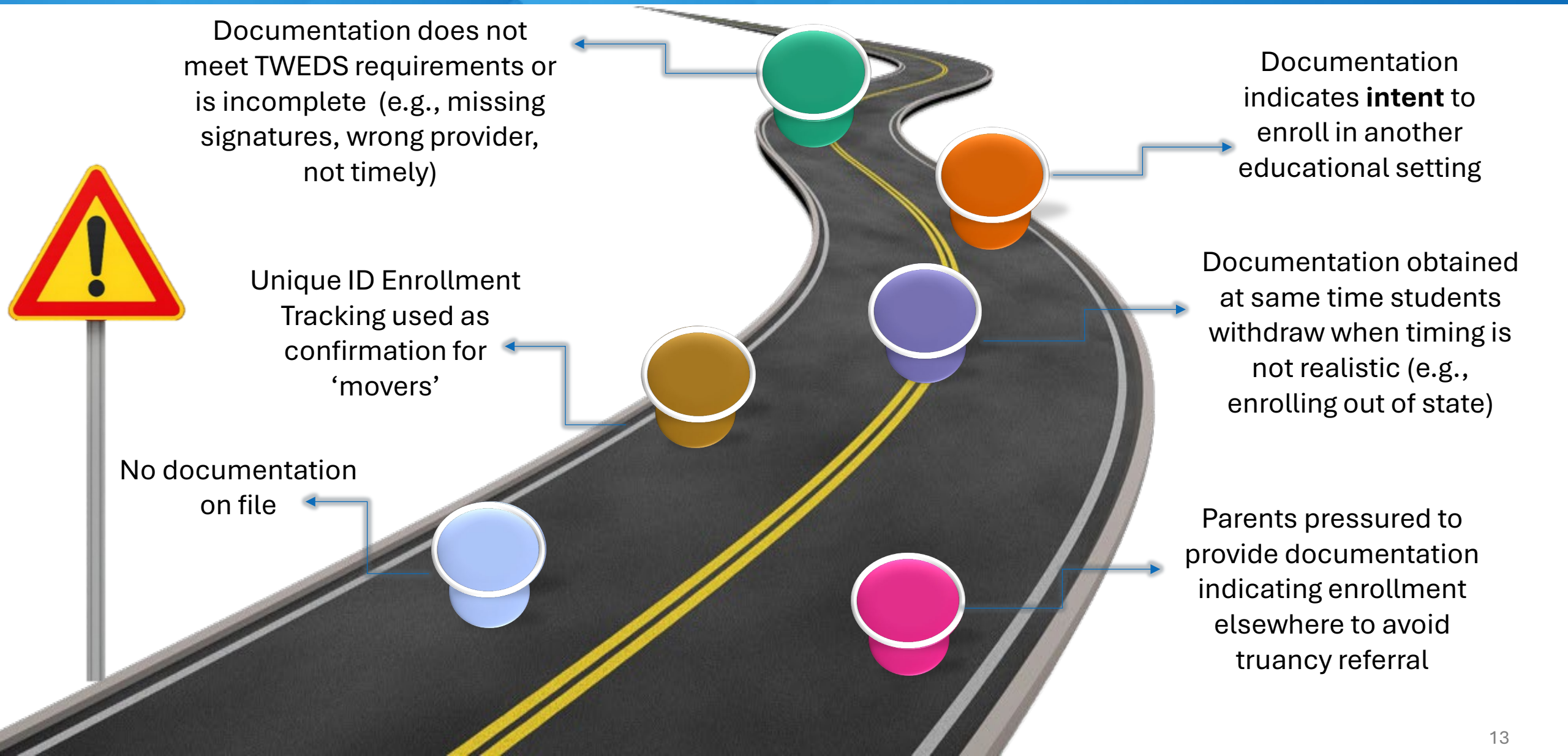


Supporting Documentation must be:

- ✓Reflective of the reported leaver reason
- ✓Timely
- ✓Written (even oral statements)
- ✓Signed and dated
- ✓From an appropriate source
- ✓Maintained on file

Compliance Review Findings

Common Documentation Issues (Roadblocks)



Documentation does not meet TWEDS requirements or is incomplete (e.g., missing signatures, wrong provider, not timely)

Documentation indicates **intent** to enroll in another educational setting

Unique ID Enrollment Tracking used as confirmation for 'movers'

Documentation obtained at same time students withdraw when timing is not realistic (e.g., enrolling out of state)

No documentation on file

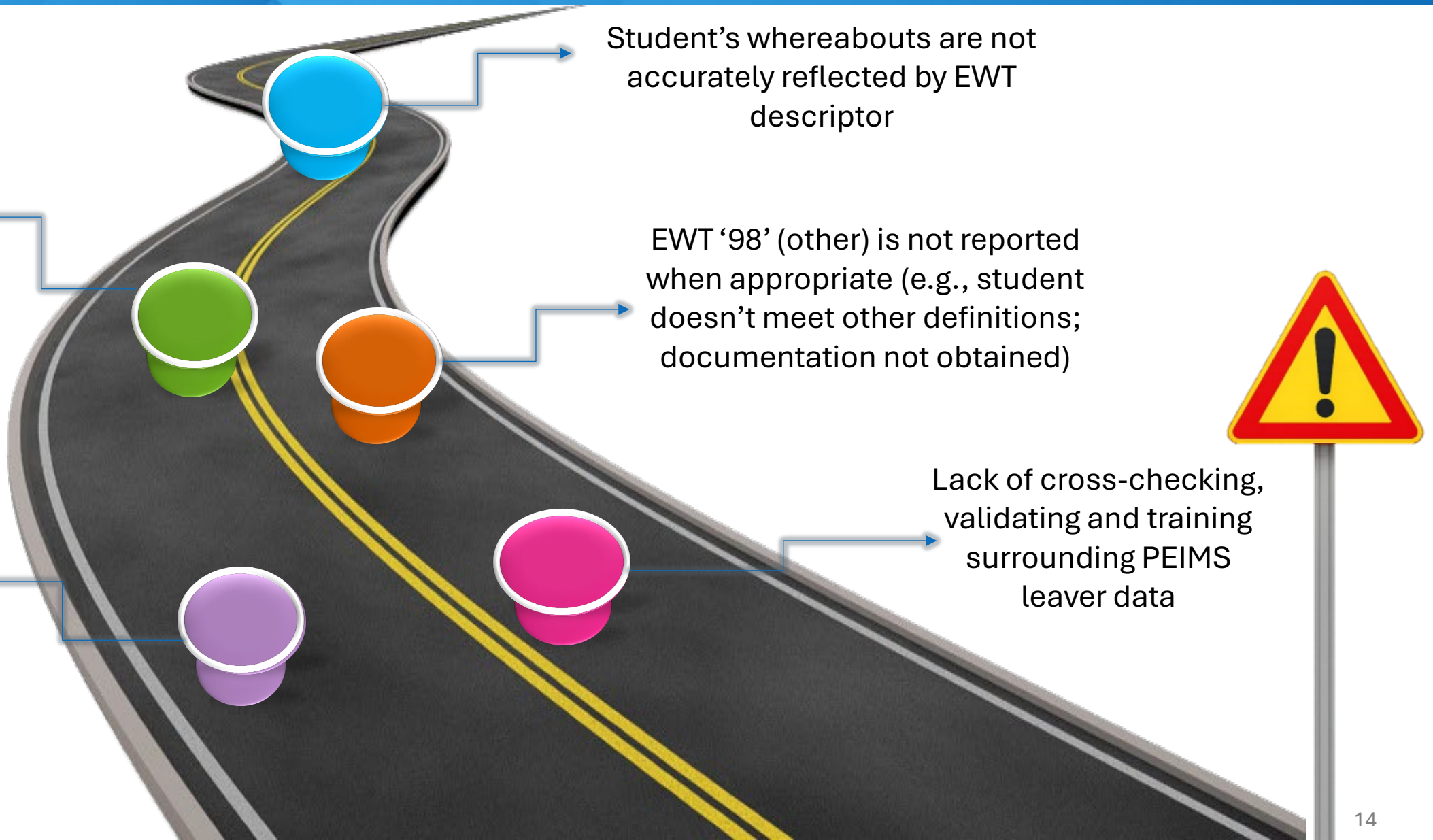
Parents pressured to provide documentation indicating enrollment elsewhere to avoid truancy referral

Common Reporting Issues

Student's whereabouts are not accurately reflected by EWT descriptor

Use of local codes without crosswalk to state-approved codes

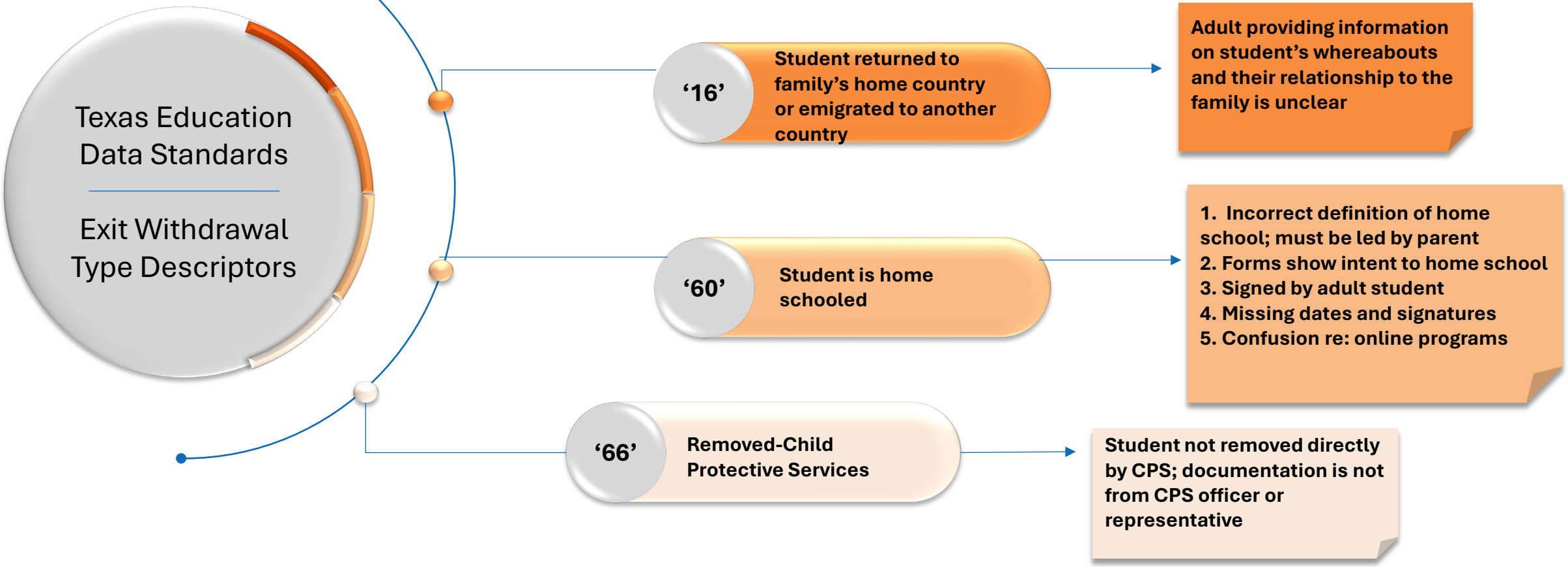
EWT '98' (other) is not reported when appropriate (e.g., student doesn't meet other definitions; documentation not obtained)



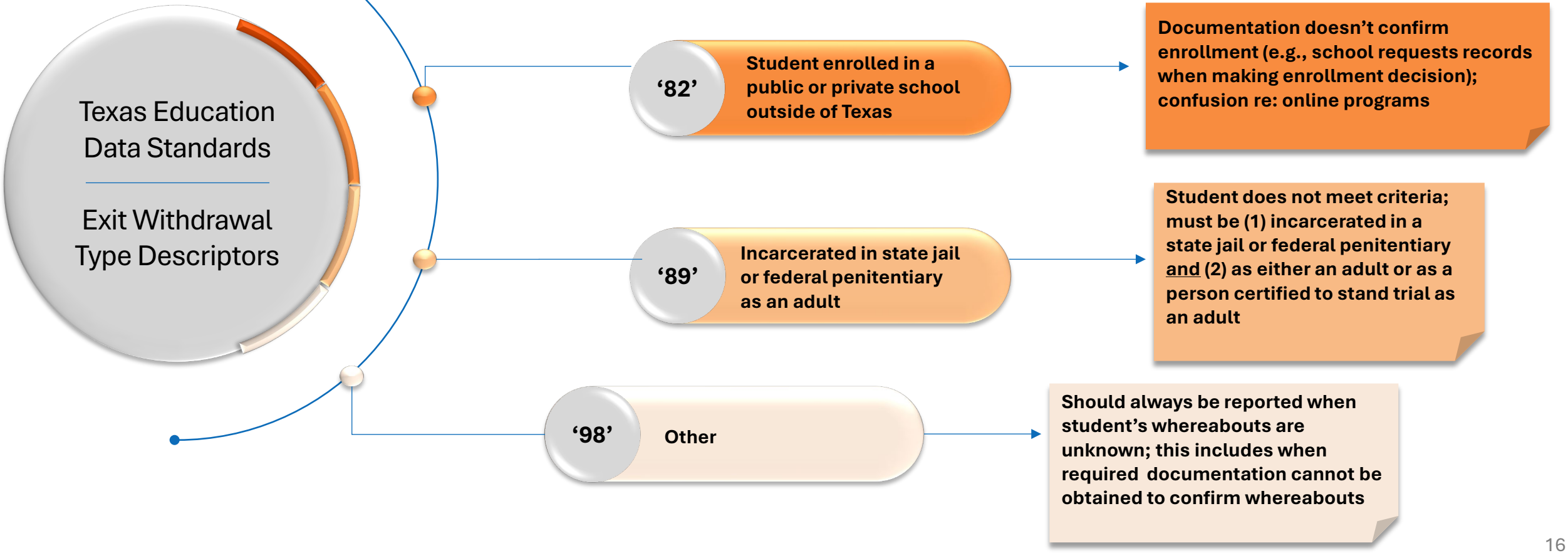
Lack of cross-checking, validating and training surrounding PEIMS leaver data

Failure to report leaver information for all leavers

Other Issues Across Frequently Reported Leaver Reasons



Other Issues Across Frequently Reported Leaver Reasons



Online Programs

When trying to determine whether an online program is a private school vs. home school, review the website to see:

- Does the program have instructors, instructional materials, and an academic calendar? *(likely a private school)*
- Does the program have an established curriculum and/or a required number of credits? *(likely a private school)*
- Does the program mention “homeschool” (not necessarily “school at home”) and/or does it emphasize parental involvement? *(likely a home school)*
- Is the diploma offered by the school similar to one offered by a Texas public school and sufficient to pursue post-secondary education? *(likely a private school)*

Students who enroll in a Texas public school virtual program will be identified by TEA as movers, not leavers

Leaver Reporting Processing Change

Background

- LEAs are required to report the reason for withdrawal for students who leave the Texas public school system
- When students are not reported as required (i.e., underreported), they may not be actively recovered and re-enrolled
- Additionally, there are implications for graduation and dropout rate calculations used in the state accountability system



Policy Change



To address this non-compliance, **TEA will begin defaulting any missing required leaver records to ExitWithdrawType '98'** (*Other – reason unknown or not listed above*) starting with 2026-27 annual leavers

Impact on State Accountability

- This change will be reflected in the **2028 state accountability system** and will be applied to:
  - 2026-27 annual dropouts
  - Class of 2027 four-year cohort
  - Class of 2026 five-year cohort
  - Class of 2025 six-year cohort



This processing change impacts future data submissions *and* data that have already been reported to the agency

Appeals

- Since this change may impact accountability ratings, an LEA will have the opportunity to **submit an appeal**

- When submitting an appeal, an LEA **must be able to provide the required supporting documentation** outlined in TWEDS to validate that these students should not be classified as *ExitWithdrawType* '98'



Next Steps

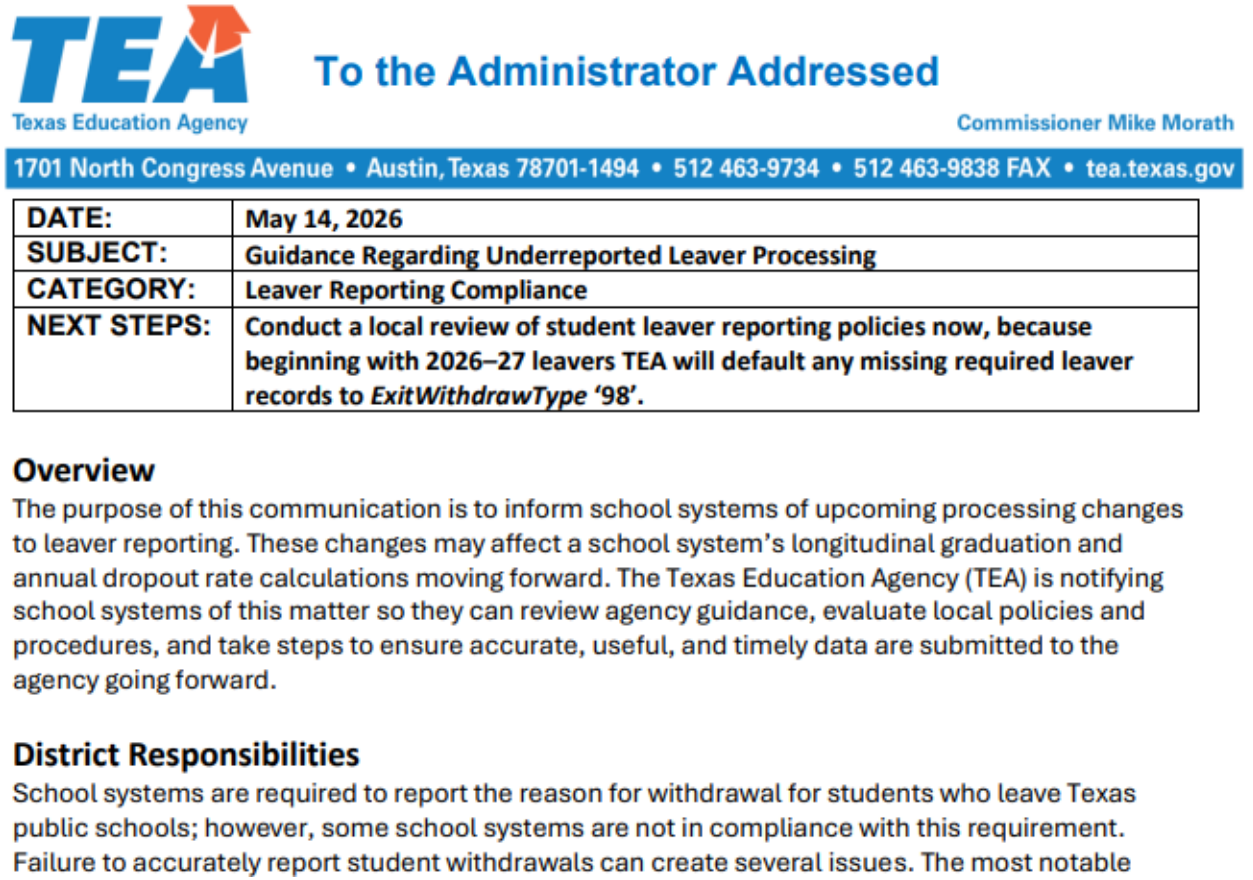
TEA strongly recommends school systems **conduct a local review** their PEIMS data reporting and validation policies and procedures to ensure accurate leaver reporting.

If gaps are identified that may be contributing to underreported leavers, TEA encourages school systems to **take immediate local corrective actions**.

LEAs are **not** expected to share their findings from any local reviews with TEA at this time.

Communications to the Field

- School systems that are most likely to be impacted by this change received letters on March 31st
- A 'To The Administrator Addressed' (TAA) with the same information was published on May 14th
- **All school systems are strongly encouraged to read this TAA!**



Texas Education Agency

To the Administrator Addressed

Commissioner Mike Morath

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DATE:	**May 14, 2026**
SUBJECT:	**Guidance Regarding Underreported Leaver Processing**
CATEGORY:	**Leaver Reporting Compliance**
NEXT STEPS:	**Conduct a local review of student leaver reporting policies now, because beginning with 2026–27 leavers TEA will default any missing required leaver records to *ExitWithdrawType* '98'.**

Overview

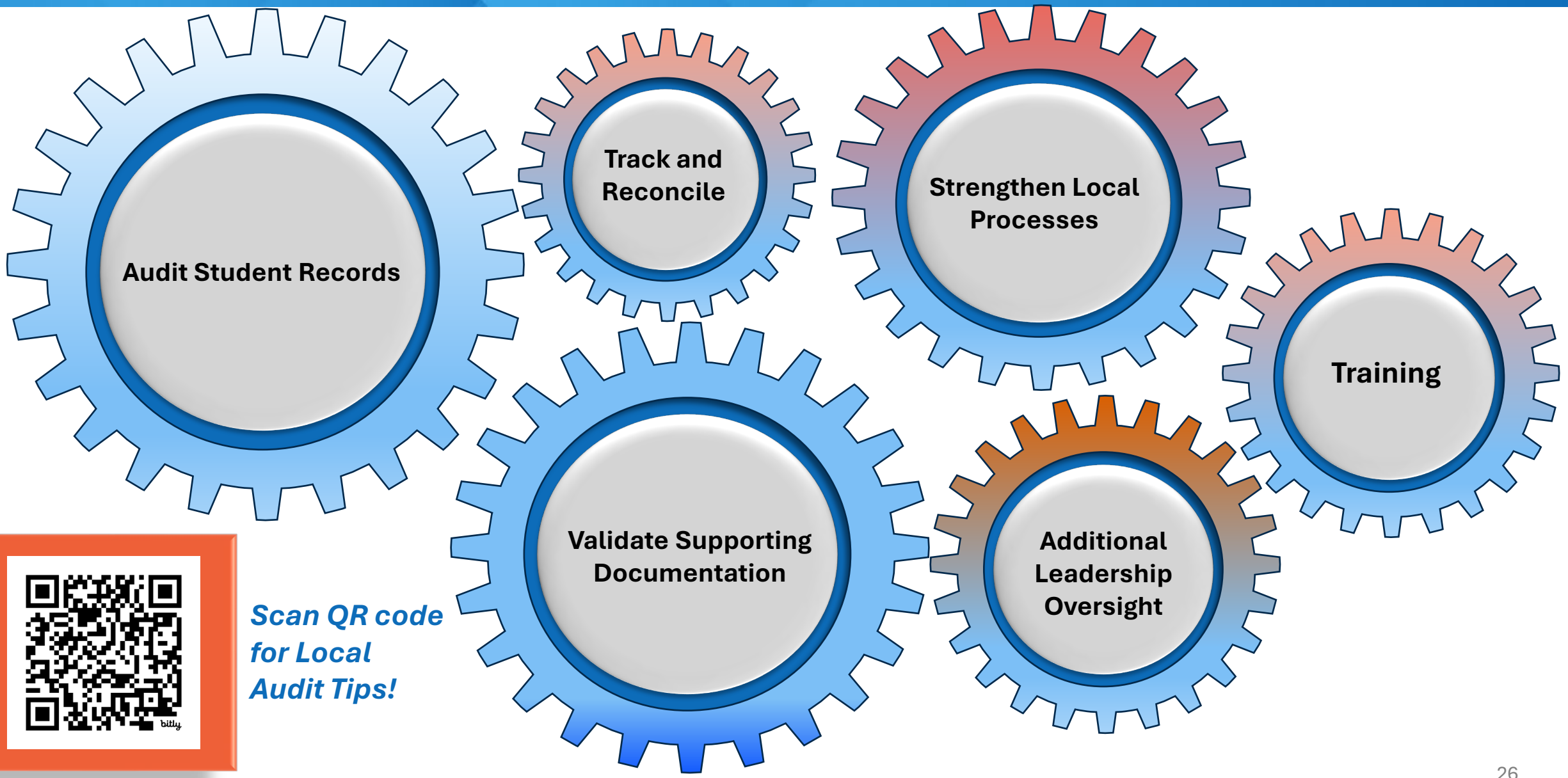
The purpose of this communication is to inform school systems of upcoming processing changes to leaver reporting. These changes may affect a school system's longitudinal graduation and annual dropout rate calculations moving forward. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is notifying school systems of this matter so they can review agency guidance, evaluate local policies and procedures, and take steps to ensure accurate, useful, and timely data are submitted to the agency going forward.

District Responsibilities

School systems are required to report the reason for withdrawal for students who leave Texas public schools; however, some school systems are not in compliance with this requirement. Failure to accurately report student withdrawals can create several issues. The most notable

Recommended Local Actions

Leaver Reporting Tips



Scan QR code for Local Audit Tips!

Recommended Local Actions

Strengthen Processes & Training

- Submit TIMS tickets promptly for questions about leaver reason definitions or documentation requirements
- Review and update local leaver manuals annually to align with current TEA requirements and agency best practices
- Provide annual training for staff on withdrawals, leaver reasons, documentation, and PEIMS reporting

Recommended Local Actions

Audit & Validate Student Records

- Implement data validation checks to ensure *ExitWithdrawType* is submitted for all leavers (except graduates, TxCHSE earners, or movers)
- Use TSDS Portal data validation reports in TEAL before final submission to identify missing leaver records
- Review local "mover" identification practices; update SIS local codes to state-approved TEDS codes if student doesn't enroll elsewhere
- Report *ExitWithdrawType* '98' when student whereabouts are unknown or required documentation cannot be obtained
- Verify students returning by TEA school-start window are reported with accurate *AsOfStatusFirstFridayOctober* descriptor

Recommended Local Actions

Documentation Requirements & Best Practices

- Ensure documentation meets TWEDS requirements: provider, signatures, dates, written vs. oral statements
- Collect required documentation separately from withdrawal process
- Obtain documentation shortly after withdrawal, do not wait until PEIMS submission window
- Do not pre-refill parent/guardian's name or other related information on the documentation
- Capture contact information for documentation provider for audit purposes

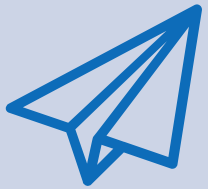
Additional Tips

- To review underreported students, access the **“Final Graduation and Dropout Information” reports in TEAL** through the Accountability application under the Research & Analysis tab
  - Updated reports were released on June 4, 2026
- LEAs are encouraged to reach out to independent parties, such as ESCs, to help with local audits and reviews.
- **ESCs may share common findings and recommended actions** from TEA’s compliance reviews and **assist LEAs in identifying similar issues** when reviewing their data and related policies and procedures
- Regularly check and update **AskTED** to ensure contact information for all district staff is up-to-date.

Contact Us



For questions related to **local audits, corrective actions, or compliance reviews**, email the Self-Reported Data Unit at DataComplaints@tea.texas.gov



For questions related to the **underreported processing change or leaver reporting and documentation requirements**, please contact the Research and Analysis Division at research@tea.texas.gov