



# INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Indiana State Board of Education  
**From:** Timothy Schultz, Deputy General Counsel, Assigned Hearing Officer  
**Date:** April 15, 2016  
**RE:** Randolph Southern School Corporation Grade Appeal

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### **Recommendation: Deny Randolph Southern School Corporation's Grade Appeal.**

This matter concerns Randolph Southern School Corporation's appeal of its 2014-2015 performance and improvement category grade ("grade") pursuant to 511 IAC 6.2-6-12 and IC 20-31-8-6. Randolph Southern states that its appeal is based on issues with graduation rate calculation.

Randolph Southern claims that its 2015 graduation rate does not accurately reflect the school's performance because the graduation rate calculation does not correctly include or waive students who obtain a Certificate of Completion pursuant to their Individual Education Plan ("IEP"). Graduation rate is defined in IC 20-26-13-6 as, "... the percentage of students within a cohort who graduate during their expected graduation year." While students who earn a Certificate of Completion are not considered graduates because they do not meet the requirements of IC 20-32-4-1 and 511 IAC 6-7.1-1, Randolph Southern claims that these students should not count against the school's graduation rate calculation. Pursuant to IC 20-26-13-10, four (4) year graduation rates are calculated using a five (5) step process that does not allow any exceptions for special education students earning Certificates of Completion.

Randolph Southern asserts that graduation rates are calculated incorrectly for several reasons, including: 1) the student never being on a graduation track, pursuant to the student's IEP; 2) the student never taking necessary graduation assessments or waiver criteria; and 3) what the school considers to be contradictory language in state and federal law.

511 IAC 6.2-6-12 and IC 20-31-8-6 limit the State Board's authority to appeals of a school's category placement based on certain criteria. Randolph Southern's appeal and subsequent claims relate to its 2015 graduation rate, which did not factor into its 2014-15 grade (graduation rate and CCR data are factored into school grades one year in arrears). Therefore, the issues raised are outside the State Board's statutory authority to consider at this time. If the graduation rate calculation affects the school's grade in the future, the State Board welcomes Randolph Southern to submit another appeal.

While Randolph Southern has pursued many avenues to fix an issue they see at their school, the State Board performance category appeal is not the correct one in this situation. For the reasons stated above, the State Board should deny this appeal.

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Emma Jay, Legal Intern  
Indiana State Board of Education

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Timothy Schultz, Deputy General Counsel  
Indiana State Board of Education

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