

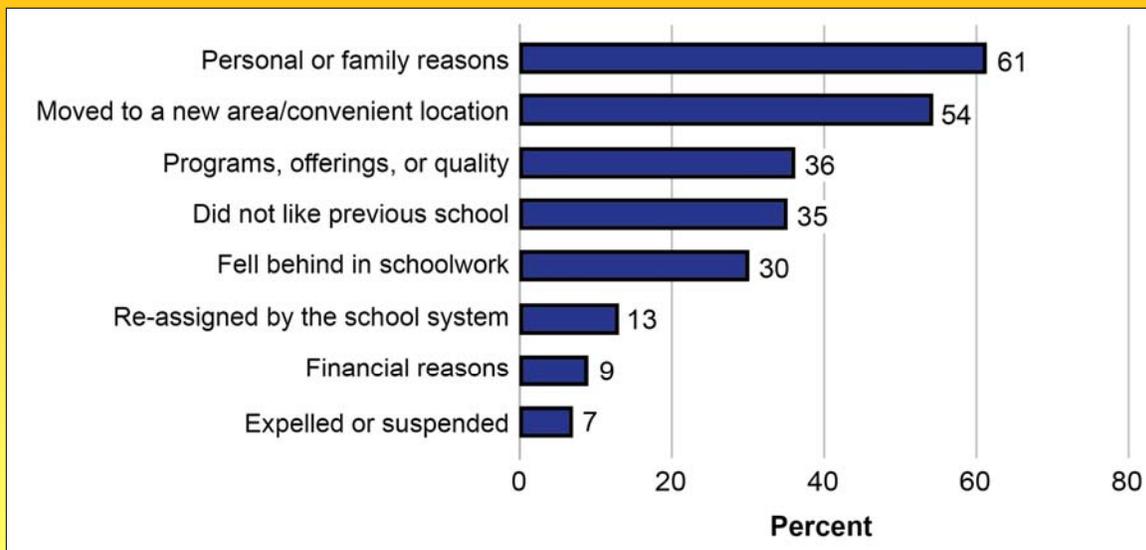
Reasons High School Students Change Their Educational Setting

This report is based on data from the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HLS:09), a nationally representative, longitudinal study of more than 23,000 ninth-graders in 2009. The cohort was surveyed again in spring 2012 when most students were in the eleventh grade. The 2012 survey included questions about whether students had left their base-year school and asked the reasons why. This Data Point focuses on the 11.5 percent of students in the HLS:09 cohort who reported that they changed their educational setting by transferring schools or becoming homeschooled between the time they were surveyed in 2009 and the time they were surveyed in 2012.

What are the self-reported reasons that students change their educational setting?

High school students leave school through various means: dropping out, transferring to another school, becoming homeschooled, or graduating. While 2.7 percent of students dropped out between 2009 and 2012¹, many more students changed their educational setting. Though there may be differences between students who transfer and students who become homeschooled, both groups share a key similarity: continuing to pursue their education.

FIGURE 1. Of fall 2009 ninth-graders who changed their educational setting, the percentage who reported various reasons in spring 2012



NOTE: Students could select more than one reason for transferring or becoming homeschooled; therefore, percentages sum to more than 100.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HLS:09) First Follow-up Public-Use Data File (NCES 2014-358).

- The most frequently cited reasons for changing an educational setting were personal or family reasons (61 percent) and moved to a new area (54 percent) (**Figure 1**).
- School-initiated reasons (including reassignment by the school system and expulsion or suspension) were among the least cited reasons for transferring or becoming homeschooled. Of fall 2009 ninth-graders who changed their educational setting, 13 percent cited school district reassignment, and 7 percent cited expulsion or suspension (**Figure 1**).

Data in this report are from the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HLS:09), a nationally representative sample survey. To learn more, visit <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/hsls09/>. For questions about content or to view this report online, go to <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019123/>.

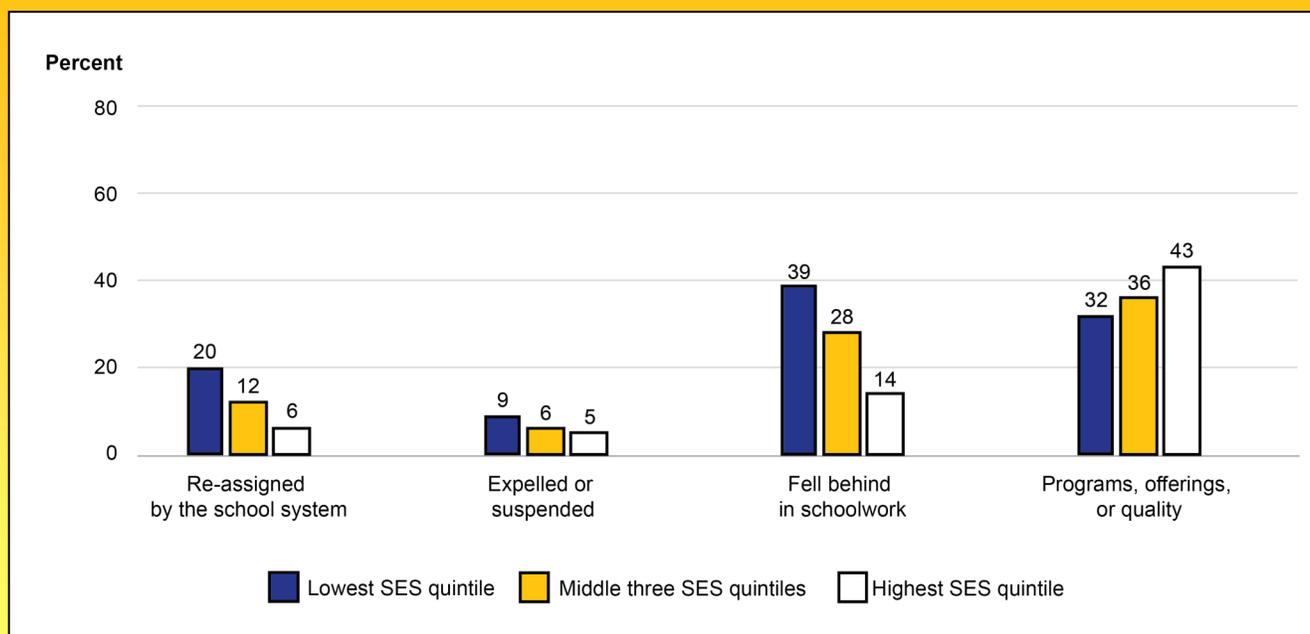
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Do student-reported reasons for changing their educational setting vary by socioeconomic status (SES)?

The figure below shows the extent to which students' self-reported reasons for changing their educational setting varied by socioeconomic status. These four reasons were selected for their relevance to education stakeholders, who may be better able to address in-school reasons such as expulsion and suspension than out-of-school reasons such as moving to a new area.

- Students in the lowest SES quintile reported changing their educational setting due to school district reassignment at a significantly greater frequency (20 percent) than students in the highest SES quintile (6 percent) **(Figure 2)**.
- Students in the lowest SES quintile reported changing their educational setting due to falling behind in schoolwork at a significantly greater frequency (39 percent) than students in the middle three SES quintiles (28 percent) or highest SES quintile (14 percent) **(Figure 2)**.

FIGURE 2. Of fall 2009 ninth-graders who changed their educational setting, the percentage who reported selected reasons in spring 2012, by socioeconomic status (SES)



NOTE: Socioeconomic status (SES) is a composite of the family's relative social position based on parents' education, occupational prestige, and family income. The lowest SES quintile is the lowest one-fifth (i.e., lowest 20 percent) of the SES distribution, and the highest SES quintile is the highest one-fifth (i.e., highest 20 percent). SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSL: 09) First Follow-up Public-Use Data File (NCES 2014-358).

Endnotes

¹ U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. NCES 2015-066. Early high school dropouts: What are their characteristics? Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2015066>.

This NCES Data Point presents information about education topics of current interest. It was authored by Allison LaFave, Emily Kelly, and Jacob Ford of AnLar. Estimates based on samples are subject to sampling variability, and apparent differences may not be statistically significant. All stated differ-

ences are statistically significant at the .05 level using a two-tailed Student's *t*-test. In the design, conduct, and data processing of NCES surveys, efforts are made to minimize effects of non-sampling errors, such as item response, measurement error, data processing error, or other systematic error.