

Guidance for Assessing Crisis-Related Academic Disruption

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of education, certain students encounter crises that substantially disrupt their academic progress. A crisis, in this context, refers to a sudden, unforeseen event or series of events that produce a profound emotional, psychological, or physical impact on a student. These crises can be personal, familial, or community-based, and their repercussions can extend far beyond the immediate circumstances, significantly affecting the student's ability to engage with their academic responsibilities.

UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES AND SUPPORT NEEDS FOR DROPOUT PREVENTION AND RECOVERY STUDENTS

[Ohio Administrative Code 3301-102-10](#) defines a **dropout prevention and recovery school (DOPR)** in one of the following ways:

(1) Any community school that operates a drug recovery program in cooperation with a court; or

(2) Any community school in which the majority of students are enrolled in a dropout prevention and recovery program operated by the school that meets the following criteria:

(a) The program serves only students not younger than sixteen years of age and not older than twenty-one years of age; (Effective September 30, 2025, the majority of students in a community school designated as a dropout recovery school must be ages 14-21. Effective July 1, 2027, a community school designated as a dropout recovery school will serve only students ages 14-21.)

(b) The program enrolls students who, at the time of their initial enrollment, either, or both, are at least one grade level behind their cohort age groups or experience crises that significantly interfere with their academic progress such that they are prevented from continuing their traditional programs.

All dropout prevention and recovery schools should work with their legal counsel to determine how they will define and approach a “crisis” as defined in [OAC 3301-102-10](#).

Some examples that you may want to review with your counsel could include the following:

Personal Crises

Personal crises may include severe illness, mental health challenges, or traumatic experiences such as abuse or natural disasters. These situations can lead to a considerable decline in a student's academic performance due to absences, difficulty concentrating, and emotional distress.

Familial Crises

Familial crises encompass events such as the death of a family member, parental divorce, or financial hardship. The stress and instability caused by these events can result in a lack of support at home, increased responsibilities for the student, and a diminished capacity to focus on their studies.

Community Crises

Community crises include widespread events like economic downturns, political unrest, or public health emergencies. These crises can create an environment of uncertainty and fear, impacting not only the affected students but also their peers, educators, and entire communities.

ACADEMIC IMPACTS

The academic impacts of such crises are, at times, difficult to measure. Students may experience a drop in grades, a loss of interest in schoolwork, and higher rates of absenteeism. They might also struggle with completing assignments, participating in class, and keeping up with their peers. These symptoms may lead the student to explore enrollment in one of Ohio's dropout prevention and recovery schools.

To address these challenges, your school's comprehensive support system may include services such as on-site counseling services, academic accommodations, and flexible learning options. These services create a supportive and empathetic environment where students feel safe and comfortable expressing their need for help.

Recognizing and defining the experiences of students who have faced significant crises is necessary to assist with your enrollment guidelines as a dropout prevention and recovery school. By understanding the breadth and depth of these impacts, school staff and governing authority members can ensure their enrollment policy is well defined, and resources are available to meet the individual needs of these resilient students to overcome their challenges and succeed academically.

As always, the Department recommends that individual schools and their sponsors consult with their legal counsel when developing local policies.