



2019-2020 New Jersey School Performance Report: FAQ

The following are frequently asked questions (FAQ) and answers related to the School Performance Reports.

1. Why are some data elements or tables not included in the 2019-2020 School Performance Reports?

Due to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and resulting school closures and cancellations of statewide assessments, some data is not available for the 2019-2020 school year.

On March 24, 2020, USED approved the NJDOE's [request](#) ("March 2020 waiver") to waive statewide assessment, accountability, and reporting requirements under ESSA¹ for the 2019-2020 school year due to COVID-19.

As a result of this waiver, the following data elements will not be included in the 2019-2020 School Performance Reports:

- Statewide assessment participation and performance (NJSLA, DLM, ACCESS for ELLs);
- Student growth data;
- Chronic absenteeism rates;
- Progress toward English language proficiency;
- ESSA Summative ratings or indicator scores; and
- Status in meeting annual targets or standards for ESSA indicators.

NJDOE is aware that other data elements may be impacted by COVID-19 school closures, cancellation of national assessments, and remote instruction/learning. Please pay attention to notes throughout the 2019-2020 reports that explain where there may be concerns about data quality, comparability issues with prior or future data, or where data may not be available or may be altered for 2019-2020.

For a summary explaining the impact of COVID-19 on the data in the 2019-2020 School Performance Reports, see our new [Impact of COVID-19 on Data Availability](#) document.

2. Where can I view the School Performance Reports?

Visit the [New Jersey School Performance Reports website](#) to see the most recent School Performance Reports, school reports for prior years, the database and additional resources.

3. Are Spanish versions of the reports and resource documents available?

Spanish versions of the detailed and summary reports, as well as most resource documents, can be found on the [New Jersey School Performance Reports website](#). After you search for a school or district, you will have the option to run Spanish versions of the Detailed and Summary reports below the English versions. There will also be links to Spanish versions of the resource document at the bottom of the page.

Additionally, there is a Google "Translate" option on the top right of the website that can be used to translate the reports into multiple languages.

¹ ESEA Sec. 1111(b)(2), (d)(2)(C)-(D), (h)(1)(C)(i)-(vii), (h)(1)(C)(xi)

4. Where does the information in the School Performance Reports come from?

Districts submit most of the data in the School Performance Reports through NJ SMART. This includes:

- Enrollment and Demographics
- Course Participation
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) data
- Graduation and dropout rates
- Discipline data
- Staff data
- School and district narratives

Other data comes directly from testing vendors or outside organizations:

- Statewide assessment data (New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA), Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM), ACCESS for ELLs)
- PSAT, SAT, and ACT information
- Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exam information
- Postsecondary Enrollment rates

For details on where all report data come from, see the [Performance Report Data Sources](#) document that provides details on every data element in the reports, where it comes from, and when it is collected. Additionally, the [New Jersey School Performance Reports Reference Guide](#) provides information on how data elements are calculated and the source of data in the reports.

5. What do the symbols (*, **, N, †) in the reports mean?

These symbols help the NJDOE protect student privacy. New Jersey developed guidelines to protect student privacy under the federal Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA). [New Jersey's Data Privacy Rules or the School Performance Reports Reference Guide](#) provide more information about data privacy rules.

- * indicates that data was available for fewer than 10 students or the data represents a small percentage of students. There may be some additional cases where the data was kept private because the data could be used to potentially identify individual students.
- ** indicates that data was not available for a minimum of 20 students, the required number for a student group to be included in New Jersey's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability system. This will only appear in sections of the report related to ESSA accountability.
- N indicates that no data was available to report. This happens when there are no students enrolled in a particular student group or if no data was submitted by the district.
- † indicates that there is a table specific note below the table.

6. What is the difference between the “Detailed” and “Summary” School Performance Reports?

The “Summary” School Performance Reports were designed to provide parents, educators and communities a summary of how a school or district is performing and preparing students for college and careers relative to the state. The “Summary” reports are available starting with the 2016-2017 reports.

The “Detailed” School Performance Reports contain more specific and detailed information about schools and districts to present a comprehensive picture of school performance. The “Detailed” reports are available for all school years from 2011-2012 to present.

7. Is there a way to see what has changed in this year’s School Performance Reports?

Each year, some data elements may be added or removed from the School Performance Reports based on federal or state requirements, stakeholder engagement, and data quality or data

availability. The [School Performance Reports Reference Guide](#) includes a data notes table at the end of each section that includes changes for the most recent reports.

8. Where does the data reported in the Narrative section of the School Performance Reports come from? Why do some Narratives not include certain categories?

Districts submit narrative information through the NJ SMART Performance Reports Data submission. This section gives schools and districts the opportunity to share highlights, achievements and other important information about programs, activities, and services that are offered in their own words. Schools and districts can choose the categories that they want to include in their reports, so the reports only show the categories where information was provided.

9. Why is the enrollment in the School Performance Reports different from the enrollment data on the NJDOE website?

The enrollment data in the School Performance Reports is based on the end-of-year NJ SMART SID Management snapshot which occurs at the end of June. The enrollment data on the [NJDOE website](#) is based on the fall NJ SMART SID Management snapshot that occurs in mid-October.

10. Why are student growth and assessment results from the 2019-2020 school year not included in the 2019-2020 School Performance Reports?

As described in #1 above, the federal waiver removed the requirement to administer statewide assessments and report on statewide assessment results for 2019-2020. Statewide assessments, including NJSLA, DLM, and ACCESS for ELLs, were cancelled in spring 2020 as a result of this waiver.

As a result, statewide assessment results for the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA), Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM), and ACCESS for ELLs assessments and related accountability measures are not available and will not be reported for the 2019-2020 school year. Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs) were also not calculated and will not be reported for the 2019-2020 school year.

11. Which students are included in SAT and ACT participation and performance results?

SAT and ACT participation rates represent the percentage of 12th graders that took the SAT or ACT at least once during high school. If a 12th grader took the test in 10th or 11th grade, they would be included in the participation rate.

For the performance results, if students took the SAT or ACT multiple times during high school, the most recent score is used. This aligns with College Board and ACT reporting practices.

Important note for 2019-2020: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, national administrations of the SAT and ACT were cancelled in the spring and summer of 2020. As a result, 2019-2020 participation and performance results may have been affected and NJDOE recommends using caution in comparing results for 2019-2020 to prior or future years.

12. How was PSAT participation and performance calculated? What does it mean that the benchmarks vary by grade?

The PSAT participation and performance results only include students taking the PSAT 10 and PSAT National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT) tests during the 2019-2020 school year. The PSAT 8/9 is not included because it is a different test.

PSAT participation is calculated by taking the number of students taking the PSAT 10 and PSAT NMSQT tests during the school year and dividing by the total end-of-year enrollment for grades 10 and 11. Students typically take the PSAT 10 in grade 10 and the PSAT NMSQT in grades 10 or 11.

College Board has defined separate benchmarks for grades 10 and 11 so there is not a single benchmark for this test like there is for the SAT or ACT. The benchmark each student is expected to meet is based on their reported expected graduation date.

Important note for 2019-2020: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, national administrations of the PSAT were cancelled in the spring and summer of 2020. As a result, 2019-2020 participation and performance results may have been affected and NJDOE recommends using caution in comparing results for 2019-2020 to prior or future years.

13. Why are attendance measures, including chronic absenteeism, not included in the 2019-2020 School Performance Reports?

As described in #1 above, the federal waiver removed the requirement to report on chronic absenteeism (New Jersey's ESSA indicator for School Quality and Student Success) for 2019-2020.

14. Is discipline data for 2019-2020 comparable to data from prior years?

Governor Phil Murphy signed [Executive Order 107](#) on March 21, 2020, which required all pre-K, elementary, and secondary schools to close and cease in-person instruction, which remained in effect through the end of the 2019-2020 school year. While discipline data is reported for the 2019-2020 school year, it may not be comparable to prior or future years and NJDOE recommends caution in making comparisons.

15. Are 2020 graduation rates comparable to graduation rates from prior years?

The federal waiver did not waive any requirements for reporting or calculating graduation rates for the 2020 cohort. However, [Executive Order 117](#), signed April 7, 2020 by Governor Phil Murphy, waived the [graduation assessment requirement](#) for any 12th grade student who was expected to graduate in the class of 2020 but, as of March 18, 2020, had not yet met the graduation assessment requirement. These students were still required to meet all other State and local graduation requirements, including but not limited to, credit, curriculum, and attendance requirements.

Students whose graduation assessment requirements were waived as a result of Executive Order 117 are still counted as graduates in the 2020 graduation rate. Information on the percentage of students whose graduation assessment requirements were waived is included in the Graduation Pathways table in the Graduation section of the reports.

Which staff members are included in the teacher and administrator counts?

Districts submit staff data through the NJ SMART SMID Management and Staff Submissions. Staff data submitted as of the fall snapshot is used in the School Performance Reports.

Job codes are used to identify different staff member types:

- **Teachers:** 1000-2999, 4000, 4001
- **Administrators:** 0100-0600
- **Librarian/Media Specialists:** 0003, 3105
- **Nurses:** 0007, 0008, 3114, 3115
- **Counselors:** 0001, 0002, 3100, 3101
- **Child Study Team Members:** 0009, 0010, 0011, 3116, 3117, 3118

16. How were the indicators in the ESSA accountability system determined and how were the indicator scores and summative scores and ratings calculated?

Throughout the 2016-2017 school year, stakeholders from across the state collaborated with the NJDOE to develop, within the legal confines of ESSA, the ESSA accountability system that is reported in the School Performance Reports. See New Jersey's [approved ESSA state plan](#) for more information.

More information about how indicator scores and summative scores and ratings were calculated can be found in [NJDOE's ESSA accountability resources](#).

17. How is accountability data in the 2019-2020 School Performance impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the federal waiver?

As described in #1 above, the federal waiver removes the requirement to:

- Calculate indicator scores and summative scores for the 2019-2020 school year;
- Measure progress toward long-term goals and measures of interim progress for accountability indicators for the 2019-2020 school year; and
- Identify schools for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement during the 2020-2021 school year (based on 2019-2020 data).

As a result of the waiver, any school that was identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement during the 2019-2020 school year for support during the 2020-2021 school year will retain the same status for the 2021-2022 school year and continue to receive support and interventions from the NJDOE.

NJDOE is planning to submit a request to to USED for flexibility in implementing components of the ESSA accountability system for the 2020-2021 school year, as outlined in a [January 13 broadcast](#). This request includes shifting the timeline for identification and exit of schools from Comprehensive and Targeted Support and Improvement forward by one year. At the time the data was finalized for the 2019-2020 reports, this request is still pending approval by USED, so the reports do not include the year currently identified schools are eligible to exit status. Updated exit dates will be shared directly with districts when they are finalized. Check the [accountability resources](#) page for current information.

The 2019-20 Accountability Indicator Scores and Summative Ratings and Accountability Summary by Student Group tables will not be included in the report for 2019-2020 as these tables include indicator scores, summative scores, and progress toward long-term goals and those measures were waived under the federal waiver.

18. Who should I contact if I have questions or would like to provide feedback or suggested improvements to the report?

NJDOE welcomes public feedback. Please fill out our [feedback survey](#). You can also email reportcard@doe.nj.gov with feedback or any questions.

19. Where can I find additional information?

Click the links below to learn more about each of the topics listed:

- [ACCESS for ELLS 2.0 English Language Proficiency test](#)
- [ACT test](#)
- [Advanced Placement \(AP\) courses and tests \(College Board\)](#)
- [Attendance/Absenteeism data](#)
- [Career and Technical Education \(CTE\)](#)
- [Dynamic Learning Maps \(DLM\) alternate assessment](#)
- [Dropout rates](#)
- [Graduation Assessment Requirements](#)
- [Graduation rates](#)
- [International Baccalaureate \(IB\) courses and tests](#)
- [NJDOE Finance District Report Search](#)
- [National Student Clearinghouse \(postsecondary enrollment\)](#)
- [New Jersey Digital Learning and Assessment](#)
- [New Jersey's ESSA state plan](#)
- [New Jersey State Seal of Biliteracy](#)
- [New Jersey Student Learning Assessment \(NJSLA\)](#)
- [New Jersey Student Learning Standards](#)

- [New Jersey User-Friendly Budgets](#)
- [PSAT and SAT tests \(College Board\)](#)
- [Staff Certification and Induction](#)
- [Student Growth Percentiles \(SGP\)](#)
- [Suspensions and expulsions](#)
- [Violence, Vandalism and Substance Abuse reports](#)
- [Visual and Performing Arts](#)