



STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: February 3, 2021  
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads  
Route To: School Principals, Data Coordinators, Attendance Officers  
From: Peggy McDonald, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner  
Division of Student Services  
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### **Updated School Register Guidance and Guidance for Reporting Student Absences and Calculating Chronic Absenteeism – February 2021 Update**

Per *N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.1*, district boards of education and private agencies that provide educational services by means of public funds must carefully and accurately track enrollment and attendance for all students in a school register. The School Register Summary (SRS) is collected every June. The SRS application is a web-based data collection available in the New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) [Homeroom](#) web portal. To assist in completing the SRS, the NJDOE has updated the [School Register Guidance](#) for the 2020-2021 school year. Maintaining accurate enrollment and attendance data for every student is essential, not only for the early detection of students at risk of falling behind in school, but also for school accountability, district accountability, and district funding.

Questions concerning the School Register should be directed to [SRSHELP@doe.nj.gov](mailto:SRSHELP@doe.nj.gov).

NJDOE *Guidance for Reporting Student Absences and Calculating Chronic Absenteeism* was first issued in May 2017 after chronic absenteeism was identified as New Jersey's accountability indicator of school quality in the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) [State Plan](#). This guidance has since been updated in response to [Executive Order No. 175 \(EO 175\) \(2020\)](#), which articulates requirements for instruction in school year 2020-2021. The revised [Guidance for Reporting Student Absences and Calculating Chronic Absenteeism](#) provides updates to attendance reporting to reflect EO 175 and the three new data fields related to attendance that were added to the data collection system NJ SMART for school year 2020-2021. This guidance intends to enhance attendance data quality in New Jersey public schools and districts.

Accurate data enable schools and districts to intervene early to identify students at risk of chronic absenteeism. Chronic absenteeism can be remedied by engaging families, leveraging staff mentors for student support, utilizing data early and often, and providing a school culture and climate that encourages students to come to school every day. When a concern is identified, there are many actions that schools can take to reverse the trend. To assist districts in improving student attendance, a companion document, [Strategies for Addressing Chronic Absenteeism](#), is available on the NJDOE's Attendance, Truancy, and Chronic Absenteeism [webpage](#).

Questions may be directed to [Attendance@doe.nj.gov](mailto:Attendance@doe.nj.gov).

c: Members, State Board of Education  
Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D., Acting Commissioner of Education  
NJDOE Staff  
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