



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: August 17, 2022
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: School Business Administrators, Web User Administrators, Principals and School Leads
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services
Deadline: August 31, 2022, 5 p.m.

Action Required: Update and Review NJ SMART SID Management to Ensure Accurate Graduation Data for School Performance Reports and Accountability

The NJ SMART SID Management window to inactivate 2021-2022 graduates and students who transferred from your district is currently open, and the deadline is **August 31, 2022 at 5 p.m.**

SID Management is the management system that establishes students' unique identification numbers, compiles demographic data, and tracks graduation data and the pathways students use to meet the [graduation assessment requirements](#).

Data submitted by the August 31, 2022 deadline will be used to calculate 2022 school and district graduation rates, which includes four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rates. The data will also be used to report on the pathways students in the class of 2022 used to meet the graduation assessment requirements. This data will be reported in the 2021-2022 School Performance Reports in early 2023. For school and district accountability, graduation rates are lagged by one year, so the 2022 graduation rates will be included in the ESSA Accountability Profiles in fall 2023.

Changes to Graduation Calculations

As a reminder, the NJDOE was required to make changes to graduation rate calculations beginning in 2021 based on the United States Department of Education's (USED) FY 2019 Federal Performance Review Report. This change was outlined in an [April 28, 2021 broadcast](#). In 2021, the NJDOE began reporting two versions of the adjusted cohort graduation rate: a **state version** that includes all students that earn a state-endorsed diploma as graduates (in the numerator) in the calculation and a **federal version** that aligns with federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) guidance for calculating graduation rates.

In 2021, students with disabilities who did not meet either the state course and/or the local attendance requirements for graduation because of a modification or exemption in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) were not included as graduates (in the numerator) in the federal version of the calculation.

For students graduating with the class of 2022, the students with disabilities who did not meet state course, local attendance, or state graduation assessment requirements because of modifications or exemptions in their IEPs will not be included as graduates in the federal version of the calculation.

The NJDOE will use the IEP Graduation Course Requirement and IEP Graduation Attendance fields in SID Management to identify the students with disabilities who did not meet the state course and/or local attendance requirements, respectively. The ELA and Math Graduation Pathway Indicator fields will be used to identify the students with disabilities who did not meet the state graduation assessment requirements but instead met

alternate requirements specified in their IEPs. Districts should ensure that these fields are accurate and error-free by the August 31, 2022 deadline.

Importantly, please note that these changes to the graduation calculation for federal reporting do not affect the requirements to earn a diploma or the type of diploma that the State awards to students with disabilities. Additionally, they do not change how districts should report graduates in NJ SMART this summer.

NJ SMART District Reports

NJ SMART has several reports available under the District Reports section that districts should use to ensure that their graduation data is accurate. The **NJ SMART High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile** allows districts to review their four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rates. Districts can view both the state and federal versions of the graduation rate in this report using the calculation type parameter on the report page.

In particular, districts should review students who are included in the Transfer Out – Unverified category. These are students that a district inactivated as transfers but were never re-activated by another district or state institution. As a result, a district will still be accountable for these students and they will be considered as non-graduates in the graduation rate calculation. Districts should ensure that the correct School Exit Withdrawal code was used and/or work with the receiving district or state institution to verify the transfer.

The NJ SMART Graduation by Pathway Profile shows the number and percentage of students who were reported using each of the ELA and mathematics graduation pathways. Districts should review this to ensure that pathway data was reported accurately.

Graduation Resources

There are several graduation resources available that can support districts in reporting graduation data, explain how graduation rates are calculated, answer frequently asked questions, and describe how to use the associated district reports. These resources include:

- [Introduction to the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate Calculation in New Jersey](#)
- [User Guide to High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile](#)
- [NJ SMART Graduation FAQs](#)
- [Understanding Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates](#)
- [School Exit Withdrawal Codes and Graduation Cohort Status Overview](#)

[Additional resources and trainings](#) for NJ SMART submissions are available under Documents for Download and eLearning Videos & Webinars.

Required Graduation Reporting Reminder

New Jersey regulations (N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.2(f)) require districts to report graduation results annually to their district boards of education or charter school boards of trustees at a public meeting no later than September 30. Districts are required to report:

1. The total number of students graduating in the prior school year;
2. The number of graduates who met the graduation assessment requirements by:
 - a. Passing a substitute competency test;
 - b. The portfolio appeals process; and
 - c. Meeting alternate requirements specified in their IEPs; and
3. The number of 12th grade students who were denied graduation and how many of those students were denied solely due to failure to meet the graduation assessment requirements.

The information that districts report should align with the data that was submitted in NJ SMART SID Management by the August 31, 2022 deadline. If a district has submitted graduation appeals related to these measures that

have not been finalized by the end of September, districts may report the information that they have appealed with a note that it is pending approval by the NJDOE.

It is not required for districts to report on graduation rates at this time, however if districts choose to report on the preliminary adjusted cohort graduation rates that can be found in the NJ SMART High School Graduation Cohort Status Profiles to their local school boards, they should notify the public that the rates are preliminary and may be different from the final graduation rates that will appear in the 2021-2022 School Performance Reports. Final adjusted cohort graduation rates will be available in November, after the Graduation Appeals process is complete.

Reporting of Graduation Assessment Requirement Pathways for Students in the Class of 2023

On Tuesday, July 5, 2022, Governor Murphy signed P.L.2022, c.60 (ACS for A3196/S-2349), which requires the State Board of Education to administer the New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA) as a field test for the class of 2023. Guidance related to this legislation was provided in a [July 15, 2022 broadcast memo](#).

As a result of this recent legislation, there is no graduation assessment requirement for any student who is expected to graduate with the class of 2023. The graduation assessment requirements for the classes of 2024 and 2025 remain in place and are available for districts on the [Graduation Assessment Requirements webpage](#).

Starting fall 2022, the NJ SMART SID Management ELA and Math Graduation Pathway Indicators will have a new option of W (Class of 2023 per P.L. 2022, c.60: No graduation assessment requirements) that should be used for any students graduating between September 1, 2022 and August 31, 2023. If a 12th grader during the 2022-2023 school year is not expected to graduate by August 31, 2023, then the option of P (Denied graduation for any other reason) should be used. The values of W and P will be the only valid options for 12th graders during the 2022-2023 school year.

Additionally, the requirement to report on the ELA and Math Graduation Pathway Indicators for 11th graders will be removed for the fall snapshot since districts will not have the results of the NJGPA for 11th graders until the end of the 2022-2023 school year. These fields will be required for end-of-year snapshots only.

Contact Information

Contact the NJ SMART help desk at (800) 254-0295 or njsmart@pcgus.com with any questions about NJ SMART submissions. Contact reportcard@doe.nj.gov with any questions about School Performance Reports.

c: Members, State Board of Education
Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D., Acting Commissioner of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group