



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

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To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: Principals and School Leads, School Business Administrators, Web User Administrators
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services

2024 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Accountability Process Updates

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) presented an overview of the 2024 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability process in a [broadcast on October 2, 2024](#). As outlined in that broadcast, the accountability process for fall 2024 followed the framework described in New Jersey's 2017 ESSA State Plan. At that time, the proposed amendments to the ESSA State Plan had not yet been finalized or submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (USED) for approval. However, New Jersey submitted its amended 2024 ESSA State Plan to USED on December 9, 2024. This broadcast serves as an update on the 2024 accountability process.

The annual targets outlined in the proposed 2024 ESSA State Plan were revised and re-developed with the input of stakeholders to ensure that the schools identified for targeted support and improvement for the 2025-2026 school year are those with student groups in the most need of support. As a result, the NJDOE will use the academic achievement, graduation rate, and progress toward English language proficiency targets from the proposed 2024 ESSA State Plan as the targets for the 2023-2024 school year. The status of meeting these targets for the 2023-2024 school year will inform which schools are identified for and will exit from targeted support and improvement for the 2025-2026 school year. These annual targets are different from the targets that were shared with local education agencies (LEAs) in the 2024 ESSA Profiles on [October 30](#). The NJDOE is currently implementing only the changes to long-term goals and annual targets for the 2024 process. The NJDOE will provide updates on the implementation timeline for any additional changes as they become available.

Updated Annual Target Methodology

For academic achievement and graduation rates, the amended plan outlines changes to the methodology used to establish long-term goals and annual targets. Long-term goals will be set for six years in the future, instead of 14 years, and baselines will be based on 2022-2023 assessment data and Cohort 2022 graduation rates. Annual targets will initially be established as the amount of yearly improvement required to reach the long-term goal in six years, equally divided across the six years. However, each year the remaining annual targets will be reviewed and adjusted if the prior year's target was not met to set a more realistic trajectory to reach the long-term goal.

For graduation rate, the amended long-term goals will use Cohort 2022 as a baseline for both four-year and five-year graduation rate long-term goals, since that was the first year in which both changes to the calculation of the federal graduation rate were implemented and graduation assessment requirements were in place. The NJDOE uses lagged graduation rate data for the ESSA Accountability process, so Cohort 2022 five-year rates are being used for the 2024 process, which means that five-year annual targets will start with Cohort 2023 next year. As a result, only amended targets for four-year graduation rate will be used. There will be no targets used for five-year graduation rates for the 2024 accountability process.

For progress toward English language proficiency, the amended long-term goal and annual targets are based on 2022-2023 baseline data. The methodology used is the same as that established in the 2017 plan, with a one percentage point annual increase and the long-term goal representing a six-percentage point increase over six years.

A spreadsheet showing the current and amended targets for each school and LEA can be found on the [NJDOE Accountability webpage](#) under 2024 Accountability Data in the School & District Accountability section of the page.

Updated ESSA Profiles

The NJDOE has updated the 2024 ESSA Profiles with the amended targets for ELA and math proficiency, progress toward English language proficiency, and graduation rates so LEAs can view their updated targets and status in meeting targets. The only data points that have changed in the updated profiles are the targets and status fields. The performance fields have not changed. The targets for chronic absenteeism and student growth will remain the same.

The 2024 ESSA Profiles may be accessed through the [ESSA Data folder](#) in Homeroom. LEA and school administrators will need to log into this folder to access the profiles. The data in the 2024 ESSA Profiles continues to remain embargoed for internal LEA review only. Therefore, the information contained in the profiles may not

be shared with the media or public until it is released by the NJDOE through the 2023-2024 School Performance Reports.

The ESSA Companion Guide that is available under resources in the ESSA Homeroom folder has also been updated with information about the amended targets and how they were calculated.

Contact information

For any questions, please contact the NJDOE's Office of Performance Management at performancemanagement@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
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