

Graduation Appeals User Guide

Annually, local education agencies (LEAs) report which students graduated during the previous school year to the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). That information, along with other student information, is used to calculate the graduation rates that are used for reporting and accountability purposes.

To ensure that the graduation data used for reporting and accountability is as accurate as possible, LEAs are able to appeal to update graduation-related data in the August graduation snapshot. All appeals are reviewed by the NJDOE, and if appeals are approved, the updated data will be used in the calculation of the final official graduation rates used in all reporting and accountability.

For the 2024-2025 school year graduation rates, the graduation snapshot occurred in NJ SMART on August 29, 2025. The snapshot data was then loaded into the New Jersey Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (NJSLEDS) for LEAs to review. The graduation appeals process for 2024-2025 is available in NJSLEDS.

Timeline

Date	Timeline
July 2, 2025	LEAs begin inactivating 2024-2025 graduates (after June 30, 2025 snapshot) in NJ SMART.
August 29, 2025	Deadline to inactive 2024-2025 graduates (NJ SMART Graduation Snapshot)
October 28, 2025	Preliminary Graduation snapshots available in NJSLEDS NJSLEDS Graduation Appeals period opens
November 21, 2025	Deadline for LEAs to submit graduation appeals.
November-December 2025	NJDOE finalizes all graduation appeal decisions.
January 2026	Final Official Graduation Snapshot data and graduation rates are available to review in NJSLEDS, inclusive of all approved appeals.

The timeline for the 2024-2025 graduation review and appeals period is later than usual due to the transition from NJ SMART to NJSLEDS. The NJDOE expects that the graduation process will resume the typical timeline, with preliminary graduation rates released and appeals opening in September, for the 2025-2026 process.

Appeals Guidelines

The appeals process has changed for the 2024-2025 school year due to the transition from NJ SMART to NJSLEDS; however, LEAs have the opportunity to submit appeals for the same types of changes that they requested in NJ SMART in previous years.

Before filing appeals, LEAs are expected to upload corrected data in their NJSLEDS Student Management submission, except for cases where the data that needs to be corrected is based on a calculated data field, such as cohort year or overall student group. The NJDOE may not approve appeals if the corrected data has not been updated in NJSLEDS Student Management.

Appeals can only be submitted for students in selected cohort years. For 2024-2025, LEAs may only submit appeals for students in cohorts 2022 through 2028.

Each appeal must be made at the individual student level. This means, an LEA must indicate which data should be corrected for each individual student; they cannot just appeal the overall graduation rate. Documentation may be required for appeals, depending on which data elements the LEA is requesting to change.

The NJDOE reviews each appeal individually on a rolling basis. LEAs should monitor the decisions in NJSLEDS during the appeals period because the NJDOE may request additional information or documentation to help determine the outcome of an appeal request. LEAs will receive an email notification if an appeal is declined or if edits are required. LEAs are responsible for providing additional information by the appeals deadline.

Data that Can be Appealed

LEAs will have the opportunity to request appeals for any student data that impacts the calculation of graduation rates. This includes:

1. Cohort
2. Most recent gender or race/ethnicity
3. Overall student group status (Economically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities, Multilingual Learners, Students Experiencing Homelessness, Students in Foster Care, Military-Connected students, and Migrant students)
4. School Status
5. School Exit Date
6. School Exit Withdrawal Code
7. ELA and Math Graduation Pathway Indicators
8. In-District Placement
9. IEP Graduation Course and Attendance Requirement flags
10. Resident, Receiving, and/or Attending CDS codes

In addition to requesting changes to the data elements listed above, LEAs can also submit appeals to merge two or more SID records or to remove a student from their graduation data. The latter should only be used if a student record was submitted in error, and it is not possible to solve the issue by correcting other data elements.

The following tables describe each data element that can be appealed, how it is used in the calculation of graduation rates, how to appeal the data, and if there are documentation requirements to when requesting a that type of appeal

Table 1: Cohort Appeal Requirements

Topic	Details
Description of Field	Cohort years are assigned to students the first time they are uploaded to the system (NJ SMART or NJSLEDS) with a high school grade level of 9, 10, 11, or 12.
How it is used to	Cohort year determines in which graduation rate a student is included. For example, a student with a cohort of 2025 would be included in the graduation rates for Cohort 2025, regardless of the year that they graduate.
How to review data	To understand how a student was assigned to a given cohort, the LEA should review historical data submissions to NJ SMART.
How to request an appeal	In the Graduation Appeals Submission Template, the CurrentCohort will be populated with the student's current assigned cohort year. To request a change to a student's cohort, enter a Y in the AppealCohort field and put the requested cohort in the RevisedCohort field. Do not change the value in the CurrentCohort field, or you will receive an error.
Appeal requirements	Cohort is a calculated field, so LEAs cannot change it on their own. If the appeal is approved, the NJDOE will update the student's cohort assignment in NJSLEDS.
Documentation requirements	Documentation is required for these types of appeals. The district must provide a copy of the student's transcript showing which grades the student was enrolled in each year.

Table 2: Most Recent Gender or Race/Ethnicity Requirements

Topic	Details
Description of Field	LEAs report a student's gender, ethnicity, and race categories in student management.
How it is used to	A student's most recently reported gender, ethnicity, and race categories are used to determine a student's gender and race/ethnicity student groups for the purpose of graduation rate calculations.
How to review data	LEAs can review a student's gender and race/ethnicity categories for the purposes of graduation rate calculations using the Graduation Student Level Report in NJSLEDS. They can also review the Gender, Ethnicity, and Race fields in the most recent snapshot data.
How to request an appeal	In the Graduation Appeals Submission Template, the Gender and Race fields will be populated with the student's most recent values. To request a change to a student's gender, enter a Y in the AppealGender field and change the value in the Gender field to the requested gender option. To request a change to one or more of the student's ethnicity or race fields, enter a Y in the AppealRaceEthnicity and update the ethnicity and/or race fields to the requested value (Y or N).
Appeal requirements	LEAs must upload corrected student data to NJSLEDS Student Management prior to submitting an appeal.
Documentation requirements	No documentation is required, but the NJDOE may request specific documentation if needed to determine the outcome of the appeal.

Table 3: Overall Student Group Category Appeal Requirements

Topic	Details
Description of Field	The overall student group categories reflect whether a student was reported as a member of a student group at any time since entering the cohort (typically since 9 th grade).
How it is used to	A student's overall student group status for Economically Disadvantaged, Student with Disabilities, Multilingual Learners, Migrant Students, Students Experiencing Homelessness, Students in Foster Care, and Military-Connected Students are used to calculate student group graduation rates.
How to review data	LEAs can review a student's overall student group categories using the Graduation Student Level Report in NJSLEDS. Check the students in each group to make sure that the information is correct. They can also review historical submission data to review what was reported while the student was in high school.
How to request an appeal	In the Graduation Appeals Submission Template, the seven overall student group fields will be populated with the calculated status. To request a change to any of the overall student group categories, enter a Y in the AppealOverallStudentGroupStatus field and change the value in the appropriate overall student group fields to the requested status (Y or N).
Appeal requirements	The overall student group categories are calculated fields, so LEAs cannot change them on their own. If the appeal is approved, the NJDOE will update the student's overall student group status in NJSLEDS.
Documentation requirements	No documentation is required, but the NJDOE may request specific documentation if needed to determine the outcome of the appeal.

Table 4: School Status, School Exit Date, and School Exit Withdrawal Code Appeal Requirements

Topic	Details
Description of Field	A student's school status indicates whether a student was active or inactive in each school. If a student was inactive, the school exit date and school exit withdrawal code indicate when and why the student exited. If a student is active, the school exit date and school exit withdrawal code fields should be blank.
How it is used to	The school status, exit date, and school exit withdrawal code are used to determine a student's cohort status, such as Graduated, On-track, Dropout, or excluded from cohort.
How to review data	LEAs can review a student's cohort status, along with the values for most recent school status, exit code, and exit withdrawal code using the NJSLEDS Graduation Student Level Report. Check the students included in each cohort status to make sure it is correct. Review the School Exit Withdrawal Codes and Graduation Cohort Status Overview resource to understand how the different school exit withdrawal codes are used to determine cohort status.
How to request an appeal	In the Graduation Appeals Submission Template, the SchoolStatus, SchoolExitDate, and SchoolExitWithdrawalCode fields will be populated with the most recent value. To request to change one or more of these fields, enter a Y in the

Topic	Details
	AppealSchoolStatus, AppealSchoolExitWithdrawalCode, and/or AppealSchoolExitWithdrawalCode fields, and then change the value in the corresponding SchoolStatus, SchoolExitDate, and/or SchoolExitWithdrawalCode fields to the requested value.
Appeal requirements	Prior to submitting an appeal, LEAs must update the relevant fields in NJSLEDS Student Management. If the appeal is to change status from inactive to active, LEAs must update the student's Status to A and change the school exit date and exit withdrawal code to blank. If the appeal is to change status from active to inactive, LEAs must update the School Status to I and provide a valid school exit withdrawal code and school exit date. An error may occur if the submission upload does not have an exit date or school exit withdrawal code for an inactive student, or if the exit date and school exit withdrawal code fields are populated for an active student. Make sure that if the appeal includes a request to change a student's student exit withdrawal code to L that the ELA and Math Graduation Pathway indicators are updated if necessary to indicate how the student met the graduation assessment requirements. Changes to those fields must be included in the appeal, as well. The NJDOE will not accept appeals that request a graduation date after August 31, 2025, or a transfer date after July 1, 2025. If a student was enrolled through the end of the 2024-2025 school year, they will remain accountable based on where they attended in 2024-2025. If they transferred out of that school after the school year ended, accountability will transfer to the new district for 2025-2026 graduation data. Only students that graduated by August 29, 2025 will be considered a graduate for the 2024-2025 school year. Any student who graduated after August 29, 2025, will be considered a graduate for the 2025-2026 school year.
Documentation requirements	If the appeal is to change a student's status from inactive to active, no documentation is required. If the appeal is to change an inactive student's exit date only (not changing status or exit code), LEAs must provide a copy of the student's transcript showing the corrected exit date or other documentation that includes the updated exit date. If the request includes a change to a student's school exit withdrawal code, then the required documentation is dependent on which school exit withdrawal code is requested: L (Graduated): A district diploma and/or district transcript that shows the student's graduation date. Only students that graduate prior to August 31 of a given year will be included as graduates for the preceding school year. Transfers to other public schools or state agencies:

Topic	Details
	T2 (another public school in the district), T4 (public school outside the district), T6 (JJC/DOC institution), T7 (DCF institution), T10 (JDC for incarceration), TA (adult high school), TC (charter school), TD (choice school), TR (renaissance school): • A student records request form from the receiving district; • A transfer card return receipt; or • Written confirmation from the receiving school of the student's enrollment on official letterhead showing that a student has transferred to another school or educational program that culminates in the award of a state-endorsed high school diploma. Note: A transfer card filled out by the district a student is transferring from will not be accepted as documentation. Transfers outside of New Jersey public schools: T3 (nonpublic school within the state), T8 (out of the state or country), T9 (parental instruction), TP (private facility): • Documentation from the receiving school of the student's enrollment on official letterhead; or • Documentation from the student's parent or guardian that indicates the student has transferred to a school outside of the state or country. Dropout Codes (D1, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7, D8, D9, D10, D11) and PPE (parentally placed exited): • No documentation is required, but the NJDOE may request specific documentation if needed to determine the outcome of the appeal.

Table 5: ELA and Math Graduation Pathway Appeal Requirements

Topic	Details
Description of Field	The ELA and Math Graduation Pathway fields indicate how a student met the graduation assessment requirements for ELA and Math, or the reason why a student did not graduate.
How it is used to	The ELA and Math Graduation Pathway fields are used for reporting pathway data in the School Performance Reports. The pathway fields are also used in the calculation of the federal graduation rate. Students with an ELA and/or Math pathway of M (Alternate requirements specified in IEP) cannot be included as graduates (the numerator) when calculating the federal graduation rate.
How to review data	LEAs can review a student's ELA and Math graduation pathways using the NJSLEDS Graduation Student Report. Check that the pathways are correct for all students and that a pathway of M is only used if a student with disabilities did not meet the graduation assessment requirements due to a modification or exemption in their IEP.
How to request an appeal	In the Graduation Appeals Submission Template, the ELAGraduationPathwayIndicator and MathGraduationPathwayIndicator fields will

Topic	Details
	be populated with the most recent value. To request to change one or both fields, enter a Y in the AppealPathwayIndicators field and then change the value in the ELAGraduationPathwayIndicator and/or MathGraduationPathwayIndicator fields to the requested value.
Appeal requirements	Prior to submitting an appeal, LEAs must update the student's ELA and/or Math Graduation Pathway fields in NJSLEDS Student Management. Review the validation rules in the Graduation Appeals Submission handbook to make sure the requested pathway values are valid for the given school exit date and school exit withdrawal code.
Documentation requirements	No documentation is required, but the NJDOE may request specific documentation if needed to determine the outcome of the appeal.

Table 6: In-District Placement Appeal Requirements

Topic	Details
Description of Field	The In-District Placement field indicates the reason for the placement when a student is attending a school that is not their resident school within the district.
How it is used to	The In-District Placement field is used to determine a student's accountable school. If a student has an in-district placement of SPECED, ML, ALTREC, or ADULT, then the accountable school will typically be the resident school, instead of the attending school.
How to review data	LEAs can review a student's in-district placement value and their accountable school using the NJSLEDS Graduation Student Report. Check that all students who attend specialized programs outside of their resident school are correctly reported, and that accountable school is correctly assigned.
How to request an appeal	In the Graduation Appeals Submission Template, the InDistrictPlacement field will be populated with the most recent value. To request to change this field, enter a Y in the AppealInDistrictPlacement field and then change the value in the InDistrictPlacement field to the requested value.
Appeal requirements	Prior to submitting an appeal, LEAs must update the student's InDistrictPlacement field in NJSLEDS Student Management.
Documentation requirements	No documentation is required, but the NJDOE may request specific documentation if needed to determine the outcome of the appeal.

Table 7: IEP Graduation Course and Attendance Appeal Requirements

Topic	Details
Description of Field	The IEP Graduation Course Requirement field indicates whether a student with a disability did not meet the state course requirement component of the NJDOE graduation requirements because of a modification or exemption in their IEP.

Topic	Details
	The IEP Graduation Attendance field indicates whether a student with a disability did not meet the local attendance requirement component of the NJDOE graduation requirements because of a modification or exemption in their IEP.
How it is used to	The IEP Graduation Course and Attendance fields are used in the calculation of federal graduation rates. Students with a value of 1 (student did not meet requirements) in either field cannot be included as graduates (the numerator) when calculating the federal graduation rate.
How to review data	LEAs can review a student's reported values for the IEP Graduation Course and IEP Graduation Attendance fields using the NJSLEDS Graduation Student Report. Check that all students with a value of 1 in these fields did not meet the associated requirements.
How to request an appeal	In the Graduation Appeals Submission Template, the IEPGraduationCourseRequirement and IEPGraduationAttendance fields will be populated with the most recent values. To request to change one or both fields, enter a Y in the AppealIEPFields field and then change the value in the IEPGraduationCourseRequirement and/or IEPGraduationAttendance fields to the requested value.
Appeal requirements	Prior to submitting an appeal, LEAs must update the student's IEP Graduation Course Requirement and/or IEP Graduation Attendance fields in NJSLEDS Student Management.
Documentation requirements	Documentation is required for these types of appeals. If the appeal request is to change a field's value from 2 (did meet) to 1 (did not meet), the following documentation must be submitted: - Sections of the student's IEP that address course and attendance requirements along with the first page of the IEP that includes signatures from the IEP team and the date. - Please do not upload the entire IEP, if possible, and if multiple pages are being submitted, indicate in the request where to find the relevant information. If the appeal request is to change a field's value from 1 (did not meet) to 2 (did meet), the following documentation must be submitted: - A district transcript with evidence that the student has met the course and/or attendance requirements (depending on which field is being appealed).

Table 8: Resident, Receiving, and Attending CDS Code Appeal Requirements

Topic	Details
Description of Field	The resident, receiving, and attending CDS codes indicate the county, district, and school where the student resides, where they are received in a sending/receiving relationship, and where they attend, respectively.
How it is used to	The CDS codes are used in the determination of the accountable school for a student.
How to review data	LEAs can review a student's reported values for the resident, receiving, and attending CDS codes, as well as the calculated accountable school, using the NJSLEDS Graduation Student Report. Check that all fields are correct for all students.
How to request an appeal	In the Graduation Appeals Submission Template, the resident/receiving/attending county, district, and school codes will be populated with the most recent values. To request to change one or more of these fields, enter a Y in the AppealCDSCodes field and then change the values in the resident/receiving/attending county, district, and school code fields to the requested values.
Appeal requirements	Prior to submitting an appeal, LEAs must update the student's resident, receiving, and/or attending fields in NJSLEDS Student Management.
Documentation requirements	No documentation is required, but the NJDOE may request specific documentation if needed to determine the outcome of the appeal.

Table 9: SID Merge Appeal Requirements

Topic	Details
Description of Field	A student's state identification number (SID) is a unique number assigned and maintained by the NJDOE that is unique for each student over time and across districts.
How it is used to	If a student has more than one SID assigned, either within the same district, or across districts, then the student will be incorrectly included more than once in graduation rate calculations, so it is essential that students are assigned to one unique SID.
How to review data	LEAs should review their student data using the Graduation Student Report to make sure students are only included once. Additionally, LEAs should review students with a cohort status of Transfer Out Unverified. If students enrolled in another public school district, the LEA should work with the receiving district to identify the new SID so that an appeal can be requested to merge the two records.
How to request an appeal	In the Graduation Appeals Submission Template, identify the record that needs to be merged with another record. This should be the record that will be removed from

Topic	Details
	the system, not the record with the SID that will remain in the system. Enter a Y in the AppealSIDMerge field and enter the SID of the record that this record should be merged with and should remain in the system in the SIDtoMergeKeep field.
Appeal requirements	LEAs cannot correct this information directly; this must be done through either an appeal request or a help desk request.
Documentation requirements	No documentation is required, but the NJDOE may request specific documentation if needed to determine the outcome of the appeal.

Table 10: Student Removal Requests

Topic	Details
Description of Field	A district's graduation data will include any student who is accountable to your district and is either still enrolled, graduated from your district, or transferred or dropped out of your district and was never reported as enrolled by another district. Some students will have a cohort status of "Excluded from Cohort", which means they are not included in the adjusted cohort and will not be included in graduation rate calculations.
How it is used to	If a district believes a student was included in their data in error, they can use this type of appeal to flag these cases. This type of appeal should only be used if it is not possible to solve the issue by correcting other data elements. If you submit this type of appeal and we determine that you really need to request an appeal to correct other data, we will request that you update the appeal appropriately.
How to review data	LEAs should review their student data using the Graduation Student Report to make sure the correct students are included and that students have the correct cohort status and accountable school.
How to request an appeal	In the Graduation Appeals Submission Template, enter a Y in the AppealRemoveStudent field.
Appeal requirements for NJSLEDS Student Management	LEAs should provide very clear details in the description of their request to indicate why they believe that a student should be removed.
Documentation requirements	No documentation is required, but the NJDOE may request specific documentation if needed to determine the outcome of the appeal.

How to Download the Graduation Appeals Submission Template

To submit graduation appeals, users must navigate to the Graduation Appeals page, which can be found by selecting Appeals from the top menu of NJSLEDS and selecting Graduation Appeals.

Selecting Graduation Appeals will take you to the Appeals Summary page, which will show any appeals that have already been submitted. To download records for the Graduation Appeals Submission, click the “Download Graduation Appeals Submission Template” link at the top right of the page.



Appeals Summary

(Data last refreshed on 10/16/2025, 10:46:27 AM)

[Download Graduation Appeals Submission Template >](#)

Appeals Category	# of Appeals
All Appeals	20
In Review	19

The Graduation Appeals Submission Template page provides student records in the format required for the Graduation Appeals Submission. This allows you to download the Graduation Appeals Submission template with prepopulated student data. Filters on the left side of the screen allow you to filter by CurrentCohort, SID (StateIdentificationNumber), first or last name, school status, school exit date, and other fields.

Once you have filtered for a student or students that require an appeal, use the Export option at the top right of the page to export a CSV file with the filtered group of students.

X Graduation Appeals Submission Template								Export
CurrentCohort	CurrentCohort	StateIdentificationNumber	FirstName	LastName	DateOfBirth	SchoolStatus	SchoolExitDate	
2025	2025	1234567890				I	20250624	
StateIdentificationNumber	2025	1234567891				I	20250624	
(All)	2025	1234567892				I	20231026	
FirstName	2025	1234567893				I	20250624	
(All)	2025	1234567894				I	20250624	

How to Populate the Graduation Appeals Submission Template

The Graduation Appeals Submission Template download will have all the current data for the selected students prepopulated. Within the template, there are 13 appeal indicators that you should use to flag which field(s) you are appealing: AppealCohort, AppealSIDMerge, AppealGender, AppealRaceEthnicity, AppealOverallStudentGroupStatus, AppealSchoolStatus, AppealSchoolExitDate, AppealSchoolExitWithdrawalCode, AppealInDistrictPlacement, AppealPathwayIndicators, AppealIEPFields, AppealCDS Codes, and AppealRemoveStudent. If you are appealing the values associated with these fields, you must enter a Y in the corresponding appeal indicator fields and then update the appropriate fields for that type of appeal. Review the requirements tables for each type of appeal in the Data that Can Be Appealed section of this document, which includes a row labeled “How to request an appeal”. This provides details of what should be updated in the submission template for each type of appeal.

In addition to populating the appeal indicators and updating the data to the requested values, you must provide information in the DescriptionOfRequest, ContactName, ContactPhone, and ContactEmail fields. An error will occur if these fields are not populated.

The DescriptionOfRequest should contain a concise description of the requested changes and why the change is needed. This should include any information that you think the NJDOE would need to help evaluate the appeal.

The Contact Name, ContactPhone, and ContactEmail fields should indicate who the NJDOE should contact if additional information is needed. The email address in the NJSLEDS system will be used by default for any system generated messages, but if the person who could answer questions about the appeal is different from the person who is uploading the submission document, please make sure that these contact fields indicate the person who can answer questions about the appeal.

The DocumentationAttached field should indicate whether the LEA will be uploading documentation for the appeal. Review the requirements tables for each type of appeal in the Data that Can Be Appealed section of this document, which includes a row labeled “Documentation Requirements” to determine whether documentation is required for each appeal. If you plan to upload documentation for a student, enter a “Y” in the DocumentationAttached field. This will indicate to the NJDOE that you are planning to upload documentation. Please note, you may still upload documentation even if you did not enter a Y in the DocumentationAttached field.

Once you have updated the appropriate appeal indicator fields, updated the data to the requested values, and entered your description and contact information, make sure that your file only includes records that require an appeal. If there are records included that do not have a requested appeal, you should delete those records from your submission template. An error will occur if you upload a student record to the Graduation Appeals Submission that does not have a requested appeal included. Make sure to save your file in CSV format, not as an Excel file. An error will occur if you try to upload an Excel file.

How to Upload Graduation Appeals

Once you have finished populating and saved the Graduation Appeals Submission template, it is time to upload your submission file. Navigate to the Submission Upload screen in NJSLEDS and select Graduation Appeals from the Submission Type dropdown.



Choose the Submission Type

Select the Submission type you would like to upload from the drop-down menu below. Add any comments you would like to make and select Next.

* Submission Type

Graduation Appeals

Comments

Enter your comments

Next

After clicking Next, you will come to the Upload the Submission File page. You can either click Upload File to select a file from your computer or drag and drop the completed Graduation Appeals Submission template CSV file in the box. After the file is uploaded, it will take you to the Submission History page, where you can review the status of your file. Right after you upload the file, the status will be “In Process” while the file is processing and it may take several minutes for the file to process. Once that is completed, the Status will show as Processed and you should receive an email notifying you that your upload has been processed. The email will give you a summary of how many records were uploaded, how many were valid, and how many had errors.

Once the file is processed, you can review the status of individual records by selecting Submission Records from the top menu and selecting Graduation Appeals from the dropdown.


Department Of Education

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Submission History List View

Submission History
Recently Viewed

File Name	Submission Type	Record Count
Graduation Appeals Submis...	Graduation Appeals	
Graduation Appeals Submis...	Graduation Appeals	38

CTE
Graduation Appeals
Performance Report
Special Education
Staff Course Roster
Staff Management
Staff Vacancy
State Assessment Registration
Student Course Roster
Student Management

	Warnings	Status
		In Process
0		Processed

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The Graduation Appeals Submission Records page will show all Graduation Appeals Submission records that have been uploaded to NJSLEDS. The last column on the page will show the Record Status for each record, which indicates whether the record was Valid or an Error. If you have records in Error, click the Error Report option at the top right to review the specific Error Type and the Data Element that caused the error for each student. Review the Common Errors section of this document for some of the most common types of errors and how to fix them.

Once you identify the errors and make the corrections in your Graduation Appeals Submission Template, you can re-upload a new file with just the corrected records.

How to Upload Documentation and Officially Submit Appeals

Once all appeal records are uploaded and corrections have been made, you will need to upload documentation, if needed, and then officially submit your appeals so the NJDOE can begin their review.

To review your uploaded appeals and upload documentation, navigate back to the Graduation Appeals Summary page (select Appeals -> Graduation Appeals from the top menu.) The Graduation Appeals Summary page will show all valid appeals that have been uploaded, and all records will have an initial Record Status of Not Submitted. The NJDOE cannot see appeals that have a status of Not Submitted. Appeals records that are in error will not appear on the Graduation Appeals Summary page.

To review an individual student’s appeal and/or upload documentation, click on a SID in the Current Graduation Appeals section. This will take you to the Student Appeals Details page. This allows you to review what you have uploaded along with the status of the appeal. This is also the page where you can upload supporting documentation for your Not Submitted records.

< Graduation Appeals

Student Appeal Details:

Name:

SID:

LID:

Date of Birth:

Current Cohort: 2025

Student Info

Record Status: Not Submitted

Appeal Status:

Appeal Status

Appeal Submitted Date:

Appeal Modified Date:

Appeal Contact Info:

Description of Request:

Appeal Upload & Contact Info

Requested SID Merge: No

SID to Keep:

Name:

Current Accountable District/School:

SID Merge and Accountable School Info

Documentation:

Upload Files

Or drop files

Documentation Upload

Uploaded Documents:

Data Field	Graduation Snapshot Value	Appeal Value	Appeal	Current NJSLEDS Data
Current Cohort	2025	2025		n/a
Gender	F	F		F
Ethnicity	Y	Y		Y
Race American Indian	N	N		N
Race Asian	N	N		N
Race Black	N	N		N
Race Pacific	N	N		N
Race White	N	N		N

Current Graduation Data

Appeal Upload Data and Appeal Flags

Current NJSLEDS Student Management Data

The top of the Student Appeals Details page has general student info (name, IDs, date of birth), details about when the appeal was uploaded and/or modified with contact information, information on whether a SID merge was requested, and the student’s calculated accountable school. The top right of the page will show the student’s appeal status. Before appeals are submitted, they will have a Record Status of Not Submitted, and there will be no appeal status.

Below the general student and appeal information is the Documentation Upload section. To upload documentation for an individual student, either click Upload Files to select one or more files from your computer to upload or drag the files to the box. Once you’ve uploaded a file, it will be listed under Uploaded Documents. Not all appeals will require documentation. Review the Appeal Requirements tables in the “Data that Can Be Appealed” section of this guide to review whether documentation is required and, if so, what type of documentation will be accepted. Documentation upload section will be grayed out for records that have already been submitted.

Below the Documentation Upload section is where you can review, for each of the fields in the Graduation Appeals Submission Template, the value from the current graduation snapshot, the values that were uploaded in the Graduation Appeals Submission with the appeal indicator flags, and also the current value from NJSLEDS Student Management. You can use this screen to check whether you have updated NJSLEDS data to match what you have requested in the appeal.

At the bottom of the Student Appeals Details screen, you will see the Decision Notes and LEA Comment box. These will be empty before you submit your appeal records, but they may be used by NJDOE to communicate information about your appeal once they are being reviewed.

Once you have reviewed all the data in the appeal and uploaded documentation, if needed, you should click the Submit button at the bottom right side of the page to officially submit your appeal. This will change the Record Status of your appeal to “Submitted” and the Appeal Status will change to “In Review.”. Once the appeal is submitted, the NJDOE can now begin to review your appeal.

Decision Notes:

LEA Comments:

Previous Appeal

Next Appeal

Submit

Cancel

Alternatively, after reviewing your individual appeals and uploading documentation where required, you can return to the Appeals Summary page and submit multiple appeals at the same time.

Graduation Appeals

Current Cohort:

Select an option

Record Status:

Not Submitted

Appeal Status:

Select an option

☐	SID	First Name	Last Name	Date Of Birth	Current Cohort	Date Submitted	Record Status	Appeal Status
☐							Not Submitted	Edits Needed
☐							Not Submitted	

Previous

Page 1 of 1

Next

Submit

Export to Excel

You can either check the box for individual records using the boxes in the SID column, or you can click the box in the first row (to the left of SID), and that will check the box for all appeal records. Once you have checked the boxes, you can click the Submit button at the bottom right of the page to officially submit your appeal records.

Make sure that all documentation has been uploaded before you submit your appeal records. Once records have been submitted, you will no longer be able to upload documentation. If the NJDOE determines that additional documentation is needed after their review, they will change the Appeal Status of the record to Edits Needed, which will allow you to upload additional documentation. If you accidentally submit multiple records before uploading required documentation, please contact gradappeals@doe.nj.gov to request that Appeal Status be changed to Edits Needed to allow documentation to be uploaded.

How to Monitor Appeal Status

The NJDOE will be reviewing appeals on a rolling basis as soon as they are submitted. We encourage LEAs to submit appeals as early as possible during the appeals window so that if additional information or changes are needed, that can be completed before the appeals deadline. We also encourage LEAs to log in frequently to monitor the status of their appeals.

The Appeals Summary page shows a summary box at the top with the number of valid appeals that have been uploaded by status.

Appeals Summary  (Data last refreshed on 10/17/2025, 9:48:03 AM)	
Appeals Category ▼	# of Appeals ▼
All Appeals	22
In Review	19
Edits Needed	2
Approved	0
Declined	0
Not Submitted	0
Modified/Not Submitted	1

Below the summary box, the Current Graduation Appeals list shows all students that have been uploaded with valid appeals. This will not include any uploaded records that were in error. Those errors must be resolved before the appeals appear on your Current Graduation Appeals list. The Current Graduation Appeals list shows the SID, name, date of birth, current cohort, date the appeal uploaded or modified, the record status, and the appeal

status. If you have submitted a large number of appeals, they may appear on multiple pages. You can advance through the pages using the “Previous” and “Next” buttons at the bottom of the screen.

The record status options are:

- **Submitted:** This indicates that the appeal has been submitted by the LEA.
- **Not Submitted:** This indicates that either the record was uploaded by the LEA and not yet submitted, or it can also mean that the NJDOE has assigned an Appeal Status of “Edits Needed”.
 - The Not Submitted total in the appeals summary box will just be the total records that the LEA has not yet submitted, the records that have been assigned “Edits Needed” status will be counted in the Edits Needed box.
- **Modified/Not Submitted:** This indicates that the LEA has modified the appeal after the initial upload. This status lets the NJDOE know that the record has changed.

The appeal status options are:

- **In Review:** This is the default status of appeals after they have been submitted and before the NJDOE has made a decision.
- **Approved:** This means that the NJDOE has approved the requested appeal.
- **Declined:** This means that the NJDOE has denied the requested appeal.
- **Edits Needed:** This means that the NJDOE has reviewed the requested appeal and determined that either the requested appeal needs to be edited, or additional information or documentation is required.

Filters are available to filter by Current Cohort, Record Status, or Appeal Status. There is also a search bar where you can type in a SID, a first or last name, or a date of birth to search for individual students. This list can be exported to Excel, if needed, by using the “Export to Excel” button at the bottom right corner of the screen.

If appeals are approved, the Appeal Status will change to Approved. If the appeal status is set to “Declined” or “Edits Needed”, you will receive an email notification. Since the vast majority of graduation appeals are approved, we are not sending email notifications for each approved appeal in order to not overload your inboxes.

If an appeal is declined or set to “Edits Needed”, the NJDOE will enter notes in the “Decision Notes” field letting the LEA know why the appeal was declined, what edits are needed to the appeal, or whether additional documentation is required. You can review the “Decision Notes” field by clicking a SID on the Current Graduation Appeals page, which takes you to the Appeals Detail page. The “Decision Notes” section is at the very bottom of the page. If the required changes are more complicated, the NJDOE may reach out directly to the LEA using the contact information provided in the Graduation Appeal Submission upload to provide more information to the LEA about what changes are needed.

Decision Notes: Please upload a transcript showing the exit date.	LEA Comments:
Previous Appeal Next Appeal Submit Cancel	

If an LEA has appeals in “Edits Needed” status and the LEA does not update the appeal or provide additional information to the NJDOE before the appeals deadline, the NJDOE may change the final status of the appeal to “Declined.” Please make sure updates are made as soon as possible if the appeal status changes to “Edits Needed”. If you are not clear about what needs to be edited, please contact gradappeals@doe.nj.gov.

How to Modify or Update Appeals in NJSLEDS

If an LEA needs to upload additional appeals after uploading their initial Graduation Appeals Submission file, additional files can be uploaded with the new student records.

If an LEA needs to modify an appeal that has already been uploaded or submitted, upload a new Graduation Appeals Submission file with the modified student appeal record. Make sure that the new uploaded record includes the full appeal, including the original changes and the new changes. When you upload a new file, it will overwrite the previous appeal, so the new file should include everything you are requesting to change.

Only include new or modified appeals in the subsequent upload files. If you upload records to Graduation Appeals Submission that have already been uploaded, with no changes, you will receive an error for those records. In the Error Report, these records will appear with an Error Type of “Not Modified” and the description of the error will say “You have uploaded a record that does not include any changes from the previous upload. The originally uploaded appeal will remain in the system and will not be modified. You do not need to resolve these types of errors because the originally uploaded appeal will remain in the system and will not be modified. The error is shown so you can make sure that you did not intend to modify those records. To avoid these errors, only include modified or new appeals when uploading subsequent files to the Graduation Appeals Submission file.

If the NJDOE only indicates that additional documentation is needed, it is not required to upload a new Graduation Appeals Submission file. If the appeal is in Edits Needed status, you can go to a student’s Student Appeal Details page by clicking on a SID on the Current Appeals page (Appeals -> Graduation Appeals). If you realize you need to upload documentation and the appeal is still “In Review”, you can email gradappeals@doe.nj.gov to request that the status be changed to “Edits Needed” so the documentation upload is activated.

LEAs can use the LEA Comment box to add notes for the NJDOE to indicate that they have updated the appeal record or added new documentation. Make sure to click the Submit box after adding an LEA comment to make sure it is saved.

If you upload an appeal and later determine that the appeal was submitted in error or you no longer need to submit an appeal for a student, you can delete an appeal record by uploading a new GraduationAppealsSubmission file with a “D” in the DeleteRecord. Once this file is uploaded, the existing appeal record will be deleted from the

system. Note, this will only delete the appeal record. It is not to delete a student from your graduation cohort data. If you are requesting to remove a student from your graduation cohort who was uploaded in error, you need to use the `AppealRemoveStudent` field.

Common Errors and How to Resolve Them

This section will highlight some of the common errors with the Graduation Appeals Submission and how LEAs can resolve these errors.

Duplicate Records

If you need to appeal multiple fields for a student, make all the changes within one record. Do not put the changes in multiple rows. If you upload a file with multiple rows for the same SID, you will receive a Duplicate error.

Changing data without updating the appeals indicator

When populating your Graduation Appeals Submission template, you must both put a “Y” in the appeal indicator field and also provide the requested value for the appealed field. For example, if you need to update the ELA Graduation Pathway indicator, you must put a “Y” in the `AppealPathwayIndicators` field and modify the value in the `ELAGraduationPathwayIndicator` field. If you put a “Y” in the `AppealPathwayIndicators` field and don’t modify the `ELAGraduationPathwayIndicator`, or modify the `ELAGraduationPathwayIndicator` and leave the `AppealPathwayIndicators` blank, you will receive an error when you upload your Graduation Appeals Submission template. In the error report, these types of errors will appear with Level = Field and Error Type = Validation. The Data Element will indicate which field failed the validation rule, and the description will provide the details.

To correct this issue, make sure that the appropriate appeal indicators are populated with “Y” and that the values have been modified for any field where the appeal indicator = “Y”.

Out of Sync Errors

LEAs should only be uploading records that are downloaded through the Graduation Appeals Submission template. Additionally, LEAs should not change the values in the `CurrentCohort`, `StateIdentificationNumber`, `FirstName`, `LastName`, and `DateOfBirth` fields in the file they upload to the Graduation Appeals Submission. You will receive an out of sync error if you upload records for students that did not appear in the Graduation Appeals Submission or if you change the values in those fields.

If you are trying to submit an appeal for a student that is not appearing in your Graduation Appeals Submission, please reach out to gradappeals@doe.nj.gov. The Graduation Appeals Submission will only show students who were submitted by your district. If the student was also submitted by another district, the student may be appearing in the data for the other district.

Validation Errors: SchoolStatus, SchoolExitDate, SchoolExitWithdrawalCode

If you are appealing to change either `SchoolStatus`, `SchoolExitDate`, or `SchoolExitWithdrawalCode`, make sure that other fields have appropriate values or that you also appeal to change the other fields as well. There are validation rules in place that require if the `SchoolStatus` = I, then `SchoolExitDate` and `SchoolExitWithdrawalCode` cannot be blank. Similarly, if `SchoolStatus` = A, then `SchoolExitDate` and `SchoolExitWithdrawalCode` must be blank.

For example, if a student is currently active in the Graduation Appeals Submission template and you are appealing to inactivate the student. You should appeal to change the school status from “A” to “I”, but you will also need to appeal to add a valid SchoolExitDate and a SchoolExitWithdrawalCode. If your appeal only includes a request to change status from “A” to “I” but the SchoolExitDate and SchoolExitWithdrawalCode fields are blank, you will receive a validation error.

Validation Errors: ELA and Math Graduation Pathway Indicators

There are rules in place that check whether the values for ELAGraduationPathwayIndicator or MathGraduationPathwayIndicator are valid based on a student’s SchoolExitWithdrawalCode, SchoolExitDate, and OverallStudentswithDisabilitiesStatus. The pathway options for how students meet the graduation assessment requirements have changed over the last several years, so the valid options for these two fields depend on the students exit date. For example, the values of A, B, or C (which correspond to the NJSLA assessment) are only valid if a student has an exit date before 9/1/2022 since the NJSLA is no longer a valid graduation assessment pathway. Additionally, there were not graduation assessment requirements in place for the class of 2023, so if a student’s exit date is between 9/1/2022 and 8/31/2023, the ELA and math graduation pathway indicators must equal W.

There are also requirements in place that pathways must have certain values if a student is a graduate (SchoolExitWithdrawalCode = L). The ELA and Math graduation pathway indicators cannot be equal to O, P, or R if a student is a graduate, since the field must indicate how the student met the graduation assessment requirements.

The pathway indicator value of M (Alternate requirements specified in IEP) is only valid for students who have an IEP, so it is required that the student must have an OverallStudentswithDisabilitiesStatus of Y. If you are appealing to change a pathway indicator value to M and the OverallStudentswithDisabilitiesStatus = N, you will need to submit an appeal to change that field as well.

If you are submitting an appeal to change a student from a non-graduate to a graduate, make sure the student has appropriate values for the ELA and math graduation pathway indicators before uploading your file. If you are submitting an appeal to change a student’s SchoolExitDate, make sure that the ELA and math graduation pathway indicators have valid values.

If invalid values are requested for the ELA and Math Graduation Pathway Indicators based on the other data in the upload file, you will receive a validation error. Review the validation rules in the Graduation Appeals Submission Handbook to make sure you update all the appropriate fields.

Contact Information and Resources

If you need technical support using the NJSLEDS reports or Graduation Appeals Submission, please contact the NJSLEDS Help Desk at 609-376-3970 or helpdesk-sleds@doe.nj.gov. If you have general questions about what you need to appeal, the graduation data that appears in the Graduation Appeals Submission template, or decisions made by the NJDOE, please contact gradappeals@doe.nj.gov.

Multiple graduation resources are available on the [NJSLEDS High School Graduation User Resources webpage](#). Resources that may be particularly useful for the graduation appeals process are:

- Graduation Appeals Submission Handbook
 - Explains how to populate the Graduation Appeals Submission upload file and the validation rules used
- [School Exit Withdrawal Codes and Graduation Cohort Status Overview](#)
 - Explain how each exit withdrawal code is used to determine a student's graduation cohort status
- Graduation Data Quality Checklist
 - Provides suggestions of what you should review to help determine whether graduation appeals are needed
- Graduation Reports User Guide
 - Explains how to review your graduation data in NJSLEDS using the Graduation Student Report and the Graduation Cohort Profile to help determine whether graduation appeals are needed
- [Graduation Frequently Asked Questions](#)
 - There is a section of the FAQs specifically about Graduation Appeals and the types of requests that LEAs can submit.