2024-25 Technical Guide to Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Summative Ratings and the Identification of Schools in Need of Support and Improvement

New Jersey Department of Education

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Introduction

ESSA and New Jersey's ESSA State Plan

The mission of the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is to support schools, educators, and districts to ensure all of New Jersey's 1.4 million students have equitable access to high-quality education and achieve academic excellence. New Jersey's ESSA accountability system helps the NJDOE identify what schools and local education agencies (LEAs) need more support with making sure all students are prepared for postsecondary success.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was passed in December 2015 with bipartisan Congressional support. It replaced the No Child Left behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 and reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. As part of the reauthorization, all states were required to develop a state plan.

New Jersey's initial ESSA State Plan was approved by the United States Department of Education (USED) in 2017. In December 2023, an updated redlined amended version of the 2017 ESSA State Plan was approved by USED. The redlined version reflected changes related to the 2019 New Jersey Performance Review Report and corrective action plan, revisions made per the COVID-19 State Plan Addendum, and revisions made as the result of a 2017 USED Migrant Education Program monitoring and corrective action plan.

In 2024, the NJDOE reviewed and revised the 2017 ESSA State Plan in consultation with cross-agency staff, researchers, and New Jersey stakeholders. The amended 2024 ESSA State Plan was approved by USED on May 27, 2025. For more details about the ESSA State Plan and revisions, see the NJDOE ESSA State Plan webpage.

New Jersey's ESSA State Plan describes how the state will identify which schools need the most comprehensive and targeted support and how the state will then provide the support in a differentiated manner. As part of this process, ESSA requires states to meaningfully differentiate how schools are performing and to identify schools in need of support and improvement. Identifying schools in need of the most support is just one of many steps in ensuring New Jersey students receive the high-quality education they deserve. For more information, see the NJDOE ESSA webpage.

New Jersey's ESSA state plan lays out a plan for the NJDOE to identify schools for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) and additional targeted support and improvement (ATSI) for low performing student groups every three years. The NJDOE last identified schools in January 2024, so the next identification will not occur until January 2027 and will be based on data from the 2025-26 school year. Therefore, there is no identification in these categories this year, and the NJDOE is not releasing cut-scores or identifying whether schools met the criteria for identification in these categories. The NJDOE is releasing the underlying data for each indicator and the calculated indicator scores and summative scores for LEAs to use, along with additional accountability progress data released in the School Performance Reports, in monitoring progress and improvement across all accountability indicators.

States are required to annually identify schools for targeted support and improvement (TSI) for consistently underperforming student groups.

Using this Guide

This technical guide provides schools, LEAs, and the public with a transparent explanation of the methodology used to identify schools in need of comprehensive or targeted support and improvement. This guide contains separate sections for each type of support with an overview and a methodology section. The methodology section was written so that a data specialist can follow the steps and replicate the results using specialized software. Each step is followed by a "Looking at the Data" section that walks the reader through the accompanying comprehensive and targeted worksheet files, found on the NJDOE Accountability page, allowing nontechnical readers to understand the identification process.

The accountability worksheet files include school and student group-level data that is released by the NJDOE annually in the ESSA Profiles, also available on the NJDOE Accountability page.
The data is also released to parents, community members, and other stakeholders through the New Jersey School Performance Reports. The 2025 ESSA Profiles Companion Guide provides details on how each of the indicators in the accountability system is calculated.

Data in the accountability worksheet files is limited to include data for regular schools and full-time vocational schools that are currently operational. USED defines a regular school as "a public elementary/secondary school that does not focus primarily on vocational, special, or alternative education, although it may provide these programs in addition to a regular curriculum," including charter schools. A vocational school is defined as "a school that focuses primarily on providing secondary students with an occupationally relevant or career-related curriculum, including formal preparation for vocational, technical, or professional occupations." Students who attend alternative programs, such as a special services district, will be included in the accountability results at their resident school or district.

Values in the chronic absenteeism data columns in the worksheet files differ from the data in the Accountability Profiles because the worksheets reflect non-chronic absenteeism rates (i.e., the chronic absenteeism rate subtracted from one hundred). This was necessary to align chronic absenteeism with the other data elements, in which a higher number reflects higher performance.

Schools are evaluated to determine if they meet the criteria for comprehensive support and improvement, additional targeted support and improvement, and targeted support and improvement. While a school may meet the criteria across multiple categories, the school's overall status for the upcoming school year will be determined in the following order [Note: This was not an identification year for CSI and ATSI. Schools were only identified for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) for the 2026-2027 school year]:

1. Any schools meeting criteria for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) will be identified for CSI status.
2. Any schools meeting criteria for additional targeted support and improvement (ATSI) that did not meet CSI criteria will be identified for ATSI status.
3. Any schools meeting criteria targeted support and improvement (TSI) that did not meet CSI or ATSI criteria will be identified for TSI status.

Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)

CSI Definition

The following schools will be identified for comprehensive support and improvement:

1. Title I schools with summative scores at or below the bottom fifth percentile of Title I schools;
2. High schools with four-year federal graduation rates at or below 67 percent; and
3. Title I schools that have been identified for additional targeted support and improvement (ATSI) for a low performing student group for three or more consecutive years and have not met the exit criteria to exit status.

Schools are typically identified for comprehensive support every three years. [Note: This is not an identification year for CSI status, so identification status is not included in the workbook. This methodology is included for reference only.]

CSI Methodology

The methodology for calculating the summative score by which schools are identified for comprehensive support and improvement using the standard identification methodology is as follows:

1. **Determine school configuration.**

   Each school configuration type has unique requirements. School configuration is derived based on the following criteria. Schools will be identified as a:

   a. Mixed configuration school (Mixed) if:
      i. Data is available for at least five of the following seven indicators: four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, six-year graduation rate, English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency, math proficiency, ELA growth, and math growth, and
      ii. Data is available in each of the following three areas: graduation rate, academic performance, and academic progress;

   b. Elementary/Middle school (Elementary) if:
      i. The school does not have a four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, or six-year graduation rate, and
      ii. Has at least three of the following four data elements: ELA proficiency, math proficiency, ELA growth, and math growth;

   c. High school (High) if
      i. The school does not have ELA growth or math growth, and
      ii. Has at least three of the following four data elements: ELA proficiency, math proficiency, four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, and six-year graduation rate, and
      iii. Data is available in each of the following two areas: graduation rate, and academic performance.

   Schools with fewer than three academic indicators (i.e., four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, six-year graduation rate, ELA proficiency, math proficiency, ELA growth, and math growth) are not included in the standard identification process but will instead be reviewed through an alternate methodology. Schools will be included in the calculation of individual indicator scores for which they have data available, and configuration will be

determined based on available data and grades served. See the alternate methodologies section of this document for more information about the methodologies used.

In cases where grades nine through 12 are split across multiple high schools (e.g., a school with grades 9-10 and a school with grades 11-12), the schools will be linked and treated as a single unit for school accountability purposes. In this case, the combined school will be evaluated based on the standard identification methodology.

Looking at the Data

In the Comprehensive file, Summative worksheet, Columns A through C contain school identifiers. Column D indicates the type of methodology used. Schools with "Standard Identification" in this column will follow the standard methodology covered in this guide. Columns E through L contain school data for the total student group from the 2025 ESSA Profiles.

An indicator is included only if data was available for at least 20 students. The data in columns E through N was used to derive the school configuration based on the criteria detailed above in Step 1. The school configuration is shown in Column O.

2. Convert scores to *z*-scores, within configuration

To facilitate accurate comparisons within each school configuration (i.e., Elementary, High School, and Mixed) and across student groups, the indicators for each student group under consideration (the total student group and nine student groups) are converted to *z*-scores. A *z*-score is a standardized score that indicates how many standard deviations an element is from the mean. The indicators are ELA proficiency, math proficiency, ELA growth, math growth, four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, six-year graduation rate, progress toward English language proficiency (ELP), chronic absenteeism, and high school persistence. If a school is missing a data point (e.g., data is available for fewer than 20 students), the missing value is disregarded when the values are converted to *z*-scores.

When calculating the *z*-scores, all race/ethnicity groups are combined to calculate the standardized z-score. For the economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and total student groups, the *z*-scores are calculated separately for each student group.

In general, *z*-scores are calculated within a school configuration. However, for graduation rate, the *z*-scores are calculated across all schools with graduation rates with both High and Mixed configurations since only high schools have graduation rates. Similarly, for growth, the *z*-scores are calculated across all schools with growth data with both Elementary and Mixed configurations since only elementary and middle schools have growth data.

Looking at the Data

In the Comprehensive file, there are separate worksheets for each of the ten indicators. On each indicator worksheet other than Progress Towards ELP, columns A through C contain school identifiers and column D contains the school's configuration (from step 1). Columns E through N contain the schools' actual values of the indicator from the 2025 ESSA Profiles for each of the nine student groups and the total student group. Data for an indicator is only included if the data was available for at least 20 students. Columns O through X contain the *z*-score conversions of the data from columns E through N.

The format of the worksheet for the Progress toward English Language Proficiency ("ELP") indicator differs slightly from the rest because this indicator is only used for the multilingual learner student group and the total student group. Therefore, the ELP worksheet contains only ten columns. Columns A through D mirror those of the other indicators. Columns E through F contain the schools' actual values of the indicator from the 2025 ESSA Profiles for the multilingual learner student group and the total student group only. Columns G and H contain the *z*-score conversions of the data from columns E and F.

3. Calculate indicator scores

For each indicator:

a. Calculate the average student group *z*-score for each indicator by totaling the nine student group z-scores and dividing by the number of student groups with *z*-scores.
   i. Any student groups that had data for fewer than 20 students will not have a *z*-score and will not be included in this average.

b. Average the *z*-score for the total student group with the average student group *z*-score.
   i. If there is no average student group *z*-score the *z*-score for the total student group will be used in place of this average. This would occur if no student group had data for at least 20 students or for the ELP indicator, which is not calculated for student groups other than the multilingual learner student group.

c. Convert this average to a percentile ranking, by configuration, and round to the nearest hundredth.
   i. For graduation rate, the percentile ranking is calculated across the High and Mixed configuration schools combined, instead of individually within the High and Mixed configurations.
   ii. For ELA and math growth, the percentile ranking is calculated across the Elementary and Mixed configuration schools combined, instead of individually within the Elementary and Mixed configurations.

d. This percentile is the final indicator score.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**

On each indicator worksheet other than Progress Towards ELP in the comprehensive file, column Y contains the sum of the student group *z*-scores from columns O through W. Column Z contains the count of student groups. Column AA contains the average student group *z*-score. Column AB contains the average of the average student group *z*-score (column AA) and the total student group *z*-score (column X). Column AC is the percentile ranking of column AB, by configuration. As previously noted, the worksheet for the ELP indicator has fewer columns, and the indicator score is in column I, not column AC.

4. Look up weights for each indicator

Weights are determined based on school configuration and whether the ELP indicator is available. Weights for each school configuration are provided in the following three tables (Tables 1–3):

Table 1: Elementary/Middle School Weights

Indicator	Weight (ELP missing)	Weight (ELP available)
ELA Growth	0.25	0.20
Math Growth	0.25	0.20
ELA Proficiency	0.175	0.15
Math Proficiency	0.175	0.15
ELP	n/a	0.20
Chronic Absenteeism	0.15	0.10

Table 2: High School Weights

Indicator	Weight (ELP missing)	Weight (ELP available)
ELA Proficiency	0.175	0.15
Math Proficiency	0.175	0.15
Four-Year Graduation Rate	0.25	0.20
Five-Year Graduation Rate	0.125	0.10
Six-Year Graduation Rate	0.125	0.10
ELP	n/a	0.20
Chronic Absenteeism	0.15	0.10
HS Persistence	n/a	n/a

Table 3: Mixed Configuration School Weights

Indicator	Weight (ELP missing)	Weight (ELP available)
ELA Growth	0.15	0.125
Math Growth	0.15	0.125
ELA Proficiency	0.125	0.10
Math Proficiency	0.125	0.10
Four-Year Graduation Rate	0.15	0.125
Five-Year Graduation Rate	0.075	0.0625
Six-Year Graduation Rate	0.075	0.0625
ELP	n/a	0.20
Chronic Absenteeism	0.15	0.10
HS Persistence	n/a	n/a

These weights apply only to schools falling under the standard identification. See the alternate methodology section for information about weights used under other methodologies.

Looking at the Data

The indicator scores from column AC of each indicator worksheet (column I on the ELP worksheet) have been copied to columns P through Y on the Summative worksheet. Columns Z through AI contain the weights for each indicator (some weights were adjusted; see next step). If a school was reviewed through an alternate methodology, except for Combined High Schools, no weights will appear on the Summative tab.

5. Adjust indicator weights

When schools are missing indicator scores, the weights for each academic indicator are adjusted to evenly redistribute the weight of the missing data to the other available academic indicators. A school's academic denominator, ELP indicator, and chronic absenteeism indicator determine which adjustments are needed.

a. Generate the academic denominator by totaling the weight values for the academic indicators (i.e., ELA growth, math growth, ELA proficiency, math proficiency, four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, six-year graduation rate).
b. If one of the academic indicators is missing, the weights on the academic indicators are adjusted:
    i. If the ELP indicator is missing, and the academic denominator is below 0.85, adjust the weight for each academic indicator by dividing its current weight by the academic denominator and multiplying the result by 0.85.
    ii. If the ELP indicator is available, and the academic denominator is below 0.70, adjust the weight for each academic indicator by dividing its current weight by the academic denominator and multiplying the result by 0.70.
c. If the chronic absenteeism indicator is missing, the weights on academic indicators are adjusted. If adjustments were already made due to a missing academic indicator, start with the adjusted weights in this step.
    i. If both the ELP indicator and chronic absenteeism indicators are missing, adjust the weight for each academic indicator by dividing its current weight by 0.85.
    ii. If the ELP indicator is available but the chronic absenteeism indicator is missing, adjust the weight for each academic indicator by dividing its current weight by 0.875.

Looking at the Data

On the Summative worksheet, there is a weight-adjustment flag in column AJ. A "Y" value in this field indicates that there is a missing indicator score and columns Z through AI contain the adjusted weights, based on the rules above.

6. Generate summative scores

a. Multiply each indicator score by its respective weight to create a value for each indicator.
b. Add the values for all indicators together. This number represents the school's summative score out of one hundred points.

Looking at the Data

On the Summative worksheet, columns AK through AT contain the values obtained by multiplying each indicator by its respective weight. Adding these values together generates the summative score in column AU.

7. **Determine the cut scores used to identify schools in need of comprehensive support and improvement.**

   The cut scores are determined by identifying the fifth percentile for Title I schools, by school configuration.

   a. Within each school configuration, convert the summative scores of Title I schools only to percentile rankings.
   b. Identify the summative score of the school at the fifth percentile. This will be the cut score for the configuration.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**

This is not an identification year for CSI status and, as a result, cut scores are not provided. The methodology included below is for reference only.

8. **Identify schools in need of comprehensive support and improvement.**

   a. All Title I schools with summative scores at or below the corresponding cut score for their school configuration are identified for comprehensive support and improvement in the overall low-performing category.
   b. All high schools and mixed configuration schools, regardless of Title I status, with four-year federal graduation rates of 67 percent or less are identified for comprehensive support and improvement for low graduation rate.
   c. All Title I schools that have been identified for additional targeted support and improvement for three or more consecutive years that do not meet exit criteria to exit status will be identified for comprehensive support and improvement for chronically low performing student groups(s).

🔍 **Looking at the Data**

This is not an identification year for CSI status and, as a result, cut scores and identification status are not provided.

On the Summative worksheet, the summative score is in column AU and the Title I flag is in column AV.

9. **Calculate summative determinations.**

   The summative determinations are the percentile rankings of the summative scores. The summative determination, or ranking, provides a measure of how schools are performing across all indicators in the accountability system as compared to other schools in the state in the same configuration. For the calculation of the summative determination, schools are compared to both Title I and non-Title I schools.

   a. Convert summative scores to percentile rankings, by configuration, and round to the nearest hundredth.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**

On the Summative worksheet, the summative determination is in column AW. Summative determinations, or rankings, will only appear for schools reviewed under the Standard Identification and Combined High School methodologies.

Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI)

ATSI Definition

A school is identified for additional targeted support and improvement (ATSI) for a low-performing student group if it has one or more student groups with a summative score at or below the bottom fifth percentile of Title I schools (i.e., if the student group were its own school, its summative score would qualify for comprehensive support).

Schools are typically identified for additional targeted support every three years. [Note: This is not an identification year for ATSI status, so identification status is not included in the workbook. This methodology is included for reference only.]

ATSI Methodology

The following methodology is used to identify schools for additional targeted support and improvement for a low-performing student group:

1. **Determine school configuration for each student group.**

   School configurations are redefined for each student group. In most cases, student groups will have the same configuration as the school. However, some student groups may be missing data for an indicator even though it is available for the total school.

   For example, if a student group in a mixed configuration school has both proficiency data elements and both growth data elements, but does not have graduation rate data, this student group's performance is considered among the performance of elementary/middle schools because they have similar data elements available (i.e., if the student group were its own school, it would be an elementary/middle school).

   This step is necessary to ensure that the data for a student group is compared to other schools with similar data available. School configuration is derived for each student group based on the following criteria. Student groups will be identified as:

   a. Mixed configuration school (Mixed) if:
      i. Data is available for at least five of the following seven indicators: four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, six-year graduation rate, English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency, math proficiency, ELA growth, and math growth, and
      ii. Data is available in each of the following three areas: graduation rate, academic performance, and academic progress;
   b. Elementary/Middle school (Elementary) if:
      i. The school does not have a four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, or six-year graduation rate, and
      ii. Has at least three of the following four data elements: ELA proficiency, math proficiency, ELA growth, and math growth;
   c. High school (High) if
      i. The school does not have ELA growth or math growth, and
      ii. Has at least three of the following four data elements: ELA proficiency, math proficiency, four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, and six-year graduation rate, and

iii. Data is available in each of the following two areas: graduation rate, and academic performance.

Student groups with fewer than three indicators are not included in the standard identification process and will not have a summative score calculated. Student groups will be included in the calculation of individual indicator scores for which they have data available, and configuration will be determined based on available data and grades served.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**

In the *Targeted* file, there are separate worksheets for each student group. On any student group worksheet, Columns A through C contain school identifiers. Column D contains the Student Group name. Columns E through N contain the actual values of each indicator from the 2025 ESSA Profiles for the student group referenced in column D and the worksheet title.

Columns E through N were used to derive the student group's school configuration based on the criteria detailed above in Step 1. The student group's school configuration is reflected in Column O. This workbook only includes student group data for a school if there was data for at least 20 students. This means that some schools will not appear on all student group tabs.

If the student group does not have data for at least three indicators, column P will show "N" to indicate that a summative score was not calculated.

2. Calculate indicator scores for each student group.

Converting the scores for the indicators to percentiles provides a standardized measure across the different indicators.

a. Within each student group and each school configuration, convert the scores for each of the eight indicators (i.e., ELA proficiency, math proficiency, ELA growth, math growth, four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, six-year graduation rate, ELP, chronic absenteeism, HS Persistence) to percentile rankings.
    i. For graduation rate, the percentile ranking is calculated across the High and Mixed configuration student groups combined, instead of individually within the High and Mixed configurations.
    ii. For ELA and math growth, the percentile ranking is calculated across the Elementary and Mixed configuration student groups combined, instead of individually within the Elementary and Mixed configurations.
    iii. The ELP indicator applies only to the multilingual learner student group.
b. Round it to the nearest hundredth.
c. This value will be the student group indicator score for each indicator.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**

On each student group worksheet in the targeted file, the indicator scores are provided in columns Q through Z. These are the percentile rankings of the data in columns E through N. The Progress Toward ELP indicator score (column X) will be blank on all student group tabs except for the Multilingual Learners tab.

3. **Look up weights for each indicator for each student group.**

   Weights are determined based on a student group's school configuration and whether the ELP indicator is available for the student group. The same weights are used for student groups that were used at the school level.

   See step 4 in the Comprehensive Support and Improvement Methodology section of this guide for the weight tables for each student group configuration. The ELP indicator will only be available for the multilingual learner student group, so the second column in the tables will not apply to other student groups.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**

On each of the student group worksheets in the targeted file, Columns AA through AJ contain the weights for each indicator (some weights were adjusted; see next step).

4. **Adjust indicator weights.**

   When a student group is missing indicator scores, the weight for each academic indicator will need to be adjusted to evenly redistribute the weight of the missing data to the other available academic indicators. A student group's academic denominator, ELP indicator, and chronic absenteeism indicator tell us which adjustments are needed.

   a. Generate the academic denominator by totaling the weight values for the academic indicators (i.e., ELA growth, math growth, ELA proficiency, math proficiency, four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, six-year graduation rate)
   b. If one of the academic indicators is missing, the weights on the academic indicators will need to be adjusted:
      i. If the ELP indicator is missing, and the academic denominator is below 0.85, adjust the weight for each academic indicator by dividing its current weight by the academic denominator and multiplying the result by 0.85.
      ii. If the ELP indicator is available, and the academic denominator is below 0.70, adjust the weight for each academic indicator by dividing its current weight by the academic denominator and multiplying the result by 0.70.
   c. If the chronic absenteeism indicator is missing, the weights on academic indicators will need to be adjusted. If adjustments were already made due to a missing academic indicator, start with the adjusted weights in this step.
      i. If both the ELP indicator and chronic absenteeism indicator are missing, adjust the weight for each academic indicator by dividing its current weight by 0.85.
      ii. If the ELP indicator is available, but the chronic absenteeism indicator is missing, adjust the weight for each academic indicator by dividing its current weight by 0.875.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**

On each of the student group worksheets in the targeted file, there is a weight adjustment flag in column AK. If the weight adjustment flag shows "1", that indicates that the weights in columns AA through AJ were adjusted according to the rules above.

5. **Generate summative scores for each student group.**

   For each student group:
   a. Multiply each indicator by its respective weight.
   b. Add them together.
   c. The sum represents the student group's summative score out of 100 points.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**
On the student group worksheets in the targeted file, the values obtained by multiplying each indicator by its respective weight are contained in columns AL through AU. Adding these values generates the student group summative score in column AV.

6. **Identify schools in need of additional targeted support and improvement for low-performing student groups.**

   The cut scores that were used to identify schools for comprehensive support and improvement will be used to identify schools in need of additional targeted support and improvement for low-performing student groups. Any student group with a summative score at or below the cut score for the given configuration is identified as a low-performing student group. See step 7 in the Comprehensive Methodology section of this guide to see how the cut scores were determined for each configuration.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**
This is not an identification year for ATSI status and, as a result, cut scores and identification status are not provided.

7. **Identify chronically low performing student groups.**

   Any Title I school that has been identified for additional targeted support and improvement for low-performing student groups for three or more years that has not met the criteria to exit status will be identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement for Chronically Low Performing Student groups. This is not an identification year for ATSI and, as a result, no school will be identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement for Chronically Low Performing Student groups.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**
This is not an identification year for ATSI status and, as a result, no school will be identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement for Chronically Low Performing Student groups.

Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI)

TSI Definition

Schools will be annually identified for targeted support and improvement for consistently underperforming student groups if one or more student groups:

1. Missed interim targets for all available indicators for two consecutive years, and
2. Performed below the state average for all available indicators for two consecutive years.

Schools are identified annually using the methodology outlined in the following section.

TSI Methodology

The following methodology is used to identify schools for targeted support and improvement for consistently underperforming student groups:

1. **Determine if a student group will be included.**

   Consistent with the methodology used to calculate school and student group scores, the NJDOE will only review a student group for targeted support and improvement for consistently underperforming student group status if there is sufficient data for review. Student groups will be identified as:

   a. Mixed configuration school (Mixed) if:
      i. Data is available for at least five of the following seven indicators: four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, six-year graduation rate, English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency, math proficiency, ELA growth, and math growth, and
      ii. Data is available in each of the following three areas: graduation rate, academic performance, and academic progress;
   b. Elementary/Middle school (Elementary) if:
      i. The school does not have a four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, or six-year graduation rate, and
      ii. Has at least three of the following four data elements: ELA proficiency, math proficiency, ELA growth, and math growth;
   c. High school (High) if
      i. The school does not have ELA growth or math growth, and
      ii. Has at least three of the following four data elements: ELA proficiency, math proficiency, four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, and six-year graduation rate, and
      iii. Data is available in each of the following two areas: graduation rate, and academic performance.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**
On each student group tab in the targeted file, the student group's configuration can be found in column O. If the student group has an "N" in column P, then the student group would not be reviewed for targeted support and improvement because sufficient data was not available.

2. **Determine if all targets were missed for two consecutive years.**

   Using the Met Target (Academic Achievement, Graduation Rate, and Progress toward English Language Proficiency), Met Standard (Academic Progress), and Met State Average (Chronic Absenteeism) flags in the 2023-24 School Performance Reports and 2025 ESSA Profiles (found on ESSA Accountability page under School & District Accountability data), student groups that missed all targets for a student group for both 2023-24 and 2024-25 are identified. The "No Improvement", "Progress, Target not Met", and "Target Not Met" statuses are counted when identifying missed targets. The following target statuses count as meeting targets:

   a. Academic achievement: "Met Target", "Met Target with Confidence Interval applied", and "Met Goal"
   b. Academic growth: "Met Standard" and "Exceeds Standard"
   c. Graduation rate: "Met Target" and "Met Goal"
   d. Chronic absenteeism: "Met State Average"
   e. Progress toward English language proficiency: "Met Target", "Met Target with Confidence Interval applied", and "Met Goal"

3. **Determine if identified student groups are below the state average.**

   Any student groups that missed targets for 2023-24 and 2024-25 must also be below the state average to be identified as a consistently underperforming student group.

   The target used for the academic progress indicator is based on a state standard. Any student group that did not meet the state standard is below the state average. The annual targets for chronic absenteeism are defined based on the state average, so any student groups that did not meet those targets are below the state average.

   The annual targets for academic achievement and graduation rates were developed individually for each school and student group based on baseline 2022-23 proficiency rates and baseline Cohort 2022 graduation rates, so it is possible that a student group missed the annual target for these indicators but still performed above the state average. The state averages used for 2024-25 are:

   a. 2024-25 ELA federal proficiency rate: 53.0%
   b. 2024-25 Math federal proficiency rate: 42.0%
   c. Cohort 2024 four-year federal graduation rate: 87.7%
   d. Cohort 2023 five-year federal graduation rate: 91.8%
   e. Cohort 2022 six-year federal graduation rate: 87.0%

   Any student groups that missed all targets for 2023-24 and 2024-25 and were below the state averages for academic achievement and graduation rate for 2024-25 for all available indicators are identified as consistently underperforming student groups.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**

On the Summary tab of the targeted file, the status for TSI identification for each of the nine student groups is summarized in columns D through L. The column for each student group shows Yes if that group missed all annual targets for 2023-24 and 2024-25 and was below the state average. Column M shows whether any student groups in each school were identified as consistently underperforming student groups. If a school met the criteria for TSI, column N lists the names of the student group(s) that were consistently underperforming.

Alternate Methodologies

As noted above, schools with fewer than three academic indicators (i.e., four-year graduation rate, five-year graduation rate, six-year graduation rate, ELA proficiency, math proficiency, ELA growth, and math growth) and schools with exactly three academic indicators of which only graduation rate data is available are not included in the standard identification process but are instead reviewed through an alternate methodology.

Indicator scores are still calculated using the methodologies covered in the comprehensive support and improvement section of this guide for the indicators where data was available. However, instead of using summative scores to determine if schools require comprehensive support and improvement, an alternate methodology is used. The alternate methodology used when a summative score cannot be calculated is based on the available data and the grades served by each school. [Note: This is not an identification year for CSI status, so alternate methodologies were not used to identify schools for support. This methodology section is included for reference only.]

🔍 **Looking at the Data**
On the Summative worksheet in the comprehensive file, the identification methodology is contained in column D. Any school with an identification methodology that is not "Standard Identification" or "N/A – Not an Identification Year" was reviewed using an alternate methodology.

Modified Summative Score

For schools where either ELA or math proficiency data was available, but there was no graduation rate or growth data, a modified summative score is calculated using available data (i.e., ELA proficiency, math proficiency, ELP, and chronic absenteeism). [Note: This is not an identification year for CSI status, so the Modified Summative Score worksheet is not included in the workbook. This methodology is included for reference only.]

1. **Determine school configuration and calculate indicator scores.**

   The calculation of the school configuration, *z*-scores, and indicator scores follows the same methodology outlined in the Comprehensive Support and Improvement methodology above. This means schools in this category are still compared to all other schools with the same configuration when calculating *z*-scores and indicator scores, not just schools using this alternate methodology.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**
This is not an identification year for CSI status and, as a result, the Modified Summative Score worksheet is not included in the workbook.

2. **Determine the weights for each indicator.**

   Since growth and graduation data was not available, the weights used to calculate the modified score were adjusted to distribute the weights across proficiency, ELP, and chronic absenteeism. The weights used to calculate the modified summative score are provided in the following table (Table 4).

Table 4: Modified Summative Score Weights

Indicator	Weight (ELP missing)	Weight (ELP available)
ELA Growth	n/a	n/a
Math Growth	n/a	n/a
ELA Proficiency	0.425	0.35
Math Proficiency	0.425	0.35
Four-Year Graduation Rate	n/a	n/a
Five-Year Graduation Rate	n/a	n/a
Six-Year Graduation Rate	n/a	n/a
ELP	n/a	0.20
Chronic Absenteeism	0.15	0.10
HS Persistence	n/a	n/a

🔍 **Looking at the Data**

This is not an identification year for CSI status and, as a result, the Modified Summative Score worksheet is not included in the workbook.

3. Generate modified summative scores.

a. Multiply each indicator score by its respective weight to create a value for each indicator.
b. Add the values for all indicators together. This number represents the school's modified summative score out of 100 points.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**

This is not an identification year for CSI status and, as a result, the Modified Summative Score worksheet is not included in the workbook.

4. Determine the cut scores used to identify schools in need of comprehensive support and improvement.

States are required to identify at least five percent of Title I schools for comprehensive support and improvement. The cut scores used for the modified summative methodology were determined by identifying the fifth percentile for Title I schools.

a. Determine how many Title I schools must be identified to identify at least five percent of Title I schools.
b. Identify the cut-score needed to identify at least five percent of Title I schools.

🔍 **Looking at the Data**

This is not an identification year for CSI status and, as a result, the Modified Summative Score worksheet is not included in the workbook.

5. Identify schools in need of comprehensive support and improvement.

d. All Title I schools on the Modified Summative tab with a summative score at or below the cut-score determined in step 4 above are identified for comprehensive support and improvement in the overall low-performing category.

Looking at the Data
This is not an identification year for CSI status and, as a result, the Modified Summative Score worksheet is not included in the workbook.

Elementary School Linking

Elementary schools in which no grade level is assessed under the state's academic assessment system, e.g., schools serving only grades PK through two, did not have any proficiency or growth data available. These schools are linked to their respective receiving schools that have assessed grade levels and are treated as a single unit for school accountability purposes.

The schools that these elementary schools are linked to are based on where students attend after leaving the PK–2 school. These schools may be linked to one or multiple receiving schools, depending on the enrollment patterns in the district. [Note: This is not an identification year for CSI status, so the Elementary School Linking worksheet is not included in the workbook. This methodology is included for reference only.]

1. **Determine linked receiving school.**

   Historical NJ SMART enrollment data is used to determine where students attend after enrolling in the PK–2 elementary school. Schools are linked to either one or multiple schools in the district that offer grade levels that are assessed (starting with grade 3).

Looking at the Data
This is not an identification year for CSI status and, as a result, the Elementary School Linking worksheet is not included in the workbook.

2. **Identify schools in need of comprehensive support and improvement.**

   If any of the linked elementary schools are identified for comprehensive support and improvement, the PK–2 elementary school will be identified for comprehensive support and improvement as well.

Looking at the Data
This is not an identification year for CSI status and, as a result, the Elementary School Linking worksheet is not included in the workbook.

Combined High Schools

If high school enrollment in a district is split between two high schools, with one school serving grade nine (i.e., proficiency data is available) and another school serving grade 12 (i.e., graduation rate data is available), data for the two schools was combined and the schools were treated as a single unit for school accountability purposes.

High schools that have graduation data available but no proficiency data and cannot be linked to another school with proficiency data will be identified for comprehensive support and improvement if they have either a four-year federal graduation rate of 67% or lower or a five-year federal graduation rate of 68% of lower. [Note: While this is not an identification year for CSI status, data was still combined, where appropriate, for all calculations, summative scores, TSI identification, etc.]

Looking at the Data

In the Comprehensive file, Summative worksheet, column D indicates the identification methodology. If two high schools in the district were combined, a combined school record will appear with school code (column C) showing "999" and the identification methodology will show "Combined High School". The data in this record represents the combined data for the two schools. A separate combined profile for the combined schools was provided in the 2025 ESSA Profiles, along with the individual data for the two schools. This combined school would have been evaluated following the standard methodology for Comprehensive support and improvement identification. If the combined school met the criteria to be identified for comprehensive support and improvement, then both high schools will be identified for comprehensive support and improvement.

If the identification methodology is "Graduation Only High School," a school will be identified for comprehensive support and improvement if the 4-Year graduation rate (column I) is 67% or lower or the 5-Year graduation rate (column J) is 68% or lower. A status of "Overall Low Performing (CSI)" will be listed in the ESSA Status (Overall Identification) column (column AY). [Note: This is not an identification year for CSI status and, as a result, column AY is not included in the workbook.]

Comprehensive Review

If a school cannot be reviewed through the standard methodology or any of the alternate methodologies listed above, the school will be reviewed based on a comprehensive review of all available data. This may include ELP data, chronic absenteeism data, data for other indicators if data is available but for fewer than the required twenty students, and other data available for the school or district. The status of the school will be determined by the NJDOE. [Note: This is not an identification year for CSI status, so the Comprehensive Review worksheet is not included in the workbook. This methodology is included for reference only.]

Looking at the Data

This is not an identification year for CSI status and, as a result, the Comprehensive Review worksheet is not included in the workbook.