



State of New Jersey

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 500
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

DAVID C. HESPE
Commissioner

February 2, 2016

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School and Renaissance School Project Lead Persons

FROM: Susan Martz, Chief Learning Supports and Specialized Services Officer/
Assistant Commissioner

SUBJECT: **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) 2015 Accountability Results**

To comply with its *Elementary and Secondary Education Act Flexibility Request*, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) annually distributes accountability data reports (called profiles) to districts. These profiles provide data on the district and school level regarding student participation in and performance on statewide assessments, graduation rate, and attendance (grades 3-8). The purpose of this memorandum is to advise you that the *Preliminary 2015 ESEA Accountability Profiles* for participation rate and performance are available for your review and to provide you with an opportunity to appeal. Additionally, this notification provides resources to support your efforts to increase participation rates for the 2016 statewide assessments and to prepare to communicate with the public and respond to inquiries once the data becomes public.

For your convenience, the profiles, all resources, templates, and forms mentioned in this letter are available at <http://www.nj.gov/education/title1/accountability/progress/15> (*ESEA Waiver Accountability* webpage).

Targets for Participation Rate and Performance

As part of the *ESEA Flexibility Request*, the U.S. Department of Education permitted any state administering new assessments in 2014-15 that were aligned to college and career ready standards to establish new baselines, to reset annual performance targets, and to allow its districts and schools to continue the same interventions used in the previous school year. As part of the transition to the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, enacted on December 10, 2015, states must continue implementing the provisions of their *ESEA Flexibility Request* until August 1, 2016.

Additionally, the *ESSA* continues to require states that receive funding under Title I, Part A to implement high quality assessments and to assess all children in designated grades. The

Preliminary 2015 ESEA Accountability Profiles include the total number of valid scores from New Jersey's state assessments and the percent of students meeting the performance standards by subgroup for each content area. Meeting the performance standards is defined as earning a performance level of 4 or 5 on the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) or scoring in the third or fourth performance category on the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessment for the identified content area. (The School Performance Reports, which will be released later this year, will include the percent of students meeting the standards for each subgroup along with the state average for comparison.) The participation rate data include the number of enrolled students, the percent not tested and whether the participation rate was met by subgroup. The profiles will be updated with the attendance and graduation data on or about March 1, 2016. The document entitled, *Understanding Your Annual ESEA Accountability Profiles*, which is available on the ESEA Waiver Accountability webpage, explains how the participation rate and performance are derived.

Availability of Data

Both the district and school profiles may be accessed on the ESEA Waiver Accountability webpage using the following login information that is case sensitive:



The information on this web site is **EMBARGOED**. *Therefore, districts may not share data with the media or the public until they are officially released by the NJDOE in the School Performance Reports.*

Actions

Districts and schools should analyze the student performance data to develop and/or continue implementation of appropriate instructional strategies and programs to assist struggling students and to promote participation in the state assessment.

• Performance

As approved in its *ESEA Flexibility Request*, the NJDOE has established a "Hold Harmless" year for the 2015-16 school year for performance, allowing districts and schools to continue the same interventions used in the 2014-2015. The Department may also use the 2014-2015 data as a baseline for determining long-term progress goals for all students and student subgroups. The NJDOE will consult with stakeholders for input on the components of a new accountability system for the 2016-17 school year that will be comprised of state assessment goals and other measures of student progress.

• Participation

For the current school year, districts and schools that did not meet the participation rate target of 95% for each subgroup are required to develop a board-approved corrective action plan, referred to as the *ESEA Accountability Action Plan - 2015 Participation Rate and Assurances*, to address factors leading to low student participation rates. Upon approval of the plan by the board of education, the district must fax a signed copy of the action plan assurances to its local county

office of education no later than Friday, March 4, 2016. The receipt of these assurances will confirm your district's continuing efforts to work with its low-performing students. action plan, individual handouts for parents and web links to NJDOE and other resources focusin To support your development of an action plan for participation rate, a toolkit, which includes a template for the action steps and the required assurance signature page, is posted on the ESEA Waiver Accountability webpage. The toolkit provides a step-by-step guide to develop your g on the content, use and value of state assessments. Districts are encouraged to share this resource with stakeholders as appropriate.

Appeals

Your district may file an appeal if:

- the district can document that there has been an error in the **NJDOE** calculation of the participation rate for any subgroup, that resulted in the district/school not attaining the participation rate target; or
- the district can document an error in the **NJDOE** calculation of the performance data.

For any appeal, the district must send a completed *ESEA 2015 Accountability Results Appeal Form*, along with any supporting documentation, to the address on the form, within by Friday, February 19, 2016. This form is available on the ESEA Waiver Accountability webpage.

The NJDOE will continue its tradition of stakeholder collaboration and technical assistance to help districts, schools, parents and all stakeholders succeed in using assessment data to drive student achievement. In the coming months, we will announce a series of information sessions with parents and families of student subgroups. Additionally, we will add resources to the toolkit as they become available.

If you have any questions regarding your district/school profiles, please contact the Office of Supplemental Educational Programs via e-mail at titleone@doe.state.nj.us or by phone at 609-943-4283. Thank you.

SM\sa\esea flexibility amo's\2015\csa_letter- 2015_preliminary_progress targets.docx

c: Members, State Board of Education
 Commissioner David C. Hespe
 Senior Staff
 Karen Campbell
 Anne Corwell
 Silvina Traba
 Diane Shoener
 Executive County Superintendents
 Executive County Business Officials
 Executive Directors for Regional Achievement Centers
 Garden State Coalition of Schools
 NJ LEE Group

