Date: July 17, 2024

To: Local Education Agency Leads

Route To: School Business Administrators, Web User Administrators, Principals and School Leads

From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services

Deadline: August 2, 2024, 5 p.m.

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

The annual NJ SMART End of Year SID Management Snapshot will be taken on August 2, 2024 at 5 p.m. Additionally, the NJ SMART Course Roster and CTE Submissions are currently open for their official windows and will close on August 2, 2024 at 5 p.m. The data that local education agencies (LEAs) submit to SID Management and the Course Roster and CTE Submissions will be used for reporting in the 2023-2024 School Performance Reports; it is important that all records are current and error-free by the August 2 deadline.

Key actions

Before the August 2 deadline, LEAs must review all data submitted in NJ SMART SID Management. SID Management is the management system that establishes unique identification numbers for all students and compiles the demographic data of all students. LEAs must ensure that students are assigned the correct resident, receiving, and attending county, district, and school (CDS) codes (see NJ SMART Reporting Responsibilities for more details) and that the correct number of students is reported. The data submitted through the August 2 Snapshot of SID Management will be used to report on, among other metrics:

- Enrollment by grade level;
- Student race/ethnicity;
- Student populations (e.g., economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, multilingual learners);
- Student to staff ratios; and
- Attendance

Data submitted in the Course Roster Submission is used in the School Performance Reports to report on:

- Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses;
- Dual-enrollment coursework;
- Structured-learning experiences (SLEs); and
- Course participation in Math, Science, Social Studies, World Languages, Computer Science, and Visual and Performing Arts

For more information on how course roster data is used for reporting, see the New Jerey Department of Education's (NJDOE's) School Performance Report – Course Roster Submission Guidance.

Data submitted in the CTE Submission is used in the School Performance Reports to report on career and technical education (CTE) information, including:

- CTE participant and concentrator rates;

- CTE program enrollment;
- Work-based learning; and
- Industry-valued credentials earned

The NJDOE has created a new School Performance Reports: Data Quality Guidance resource, which is available on the NJDOE School Performance Resources webpage (under District Resources). This resource provides key data deadlines, sources of data, checklists for reviewing data quality, and links to additional resources to help LEAs review their data and make sure that the data that will appear in School Performance Reports is as accurate as possible.

Attendance Data

Attendance data that LEAs submit in NJ SMART SID Management is used to calculate chronic absenteeism rates. Chronic absenteeism rates are reported in the School Performance Reports, used as an indicator of school quality in New Jersey's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability system, and included as an indicator in the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC), so it is important for LEAs to ensure that attendance data is complete and accurate for all students.

LEAs are encouraged to finalize attendance data in SID Management as soon as possible. The NJDOE is currently reviewing attendance data in SID Management and may contact LEAs if there are identified issues in the data. Updating data early allows the NJDOE to identify potential issues and work with the LEA to correct the data, if needed, before the August 2 deadline.

LEAs should ensure that:

- Data reported in the Number of Days Present, Number of Days Absent, and Number of State Excused Absences fields are accurate and capture all days that students were enrolled during the 2023-2024 school year.
  - For a student who was enrolled for the entire school year, the total cumulative days in membership (Number of Days Present + Number of Days Absent + Number of State Excused Absences) should be at least 180 days.
- Attendance data is reported for all students who attended the LEA during the school year.
  - This includes students who entered or exited the district mid-school year and are inactive at the end of the school year. Even if a student was already reported as inactive in the SID Management Fall Snapshot or only attended for a single day, the student's record(s) should be reported for the end of the year snapshot with attendance data that reflects their total days in membership.
- The Number of Days Absent field includes all absences, including excused absences, with the exception of State-excused absences.
  - The Number of State Excused Absences field should only include absences that fall under the seven allowable reasons for a state-excused absence.
- LEAs are reporting attendance data for all students for whom they are responsible for reporting data.
  - This includes students who attend approved private schools for students with disabilities (APSSDs) or special services districts.

In NJ SMART, the SID Management Page includes a new "Attendance Report" under Monitoring Links. This report makes it possible for LEAs to export all their relevant attendance data variables and easily check whether their attendance data is complete.

For additional guidance, please see the NJDOE's Reporting Student Attendance and Determining Chronic Absenteeism Rates resource.

Additional Reminders: Inactivating 2023-2024 Graduates
The NJ SMART SID Management window to inactivate 2023-2024 graduates and students who transferred out opens on August 5, 2024 and closes on August 30, 2024. Data submitted by the August 30, 2024 deadline will be used to report on Graduation Rates in the School Performance Reports.
The NJDOE reports two versions of graduation rates:

- **State version**: Includes all students who earn a state-endorsed diploma as graduates (in the numerator) in the calculation.
- **Federal version**: Includes only students who earned a state-endorsed diploma and met the state course, local attendance, and, depending on the year of graduation, assessment graduation requirements; pursuant to federal rules, the federal version does not include students with disabilities who receive a state-endorsed diploma but instead met alternate requirements specified in their IEPs.

State regulations allow the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team of a student with disabilities to exempt a student from graduation requirements or modify the requirements that a student must meet in order to graduate. ESSA does not allow students who have not met the state's graduation assessment, course, or attendance requirements (i.e., because those requirements were specifically waived in the student's IEP) to be included as graduates in the graduation rates used for federal reporting and accountability. As such, students with disabilities who earn a state-endorsed diploma but have not met all the graduation requirements because of modifications or exemptions in their IEPs are counted as graduates in the state version of the graduation rate but are not counted as graduates in the federal version of the graduation rate. The adjusted cohort (denominator) is the same for both the state and federal versions of the graduation rate.

The NJDOE uses the IEP Graduation Course Requirement and IEP Graduation Attendance fields in SID Management to identify students with disabilities who did not meet the state course and/or local attendance requirements, respectively. The ELA and Math Graduation Pathway Indicator fields in SID Management are used to identify students with disabilities who did not meet the state graduation assessment requirements but instead met alternate requirements specified in their IEPs. The graduation assessment requirements for the Class of 2024 are available on the NJDOE Graduation Requirements webpage. LEAs should ensure that these fields are accurate and error-free by the August 2, 2024 deadline.

In August, LEAs will be able to view both the state and federal versions of the graduation rate by using the NJ SMART High School Graduation Cohort Profile District Reports.

Contact information
Contact the NJ SMART help desk at (800) 254-0295 or njsmart@pcgus.com with any questions about NJ SMART submissions. Additional resources and trainings for NJ SMART submissions are available under Documents for Download and eLearning Videos & Webinars. Contact reportcard@doe.nj.gov with any questions about School Performance Reports.

c: Members, State Board of Education
   NJDOE Staff
   Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
   Garden State Coalition of Schools
   NJ LEE Group