



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: April 28, 2026
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: School Business Administrators, Web User Administrators, Principals,
School Leads
From: Kimberly A. Murray, Ed.D., Acting Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services

NJSLEDS Attendance Reporting for the 2025-2026 School Year

To support accurate accountability reporting, this memo outlines key requirements and timelines for LEAs to update and review student attendance data in New Jersey Statewide Longitudinal Data System (NJSLEDS) ahead of the **June 30, 2026, 5 p.m. deadline** for the end-of-year snapshot.

Local educational agencies (LEAs) report student attendance data through NJSLEDS Student Management. The data is used by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) to calculate the chronic absenteeism rates for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability system, the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC), and the New Jersey School Performance Reports. To ensure the accuracy of data used in these accountability systems and reports, LEAs must ensure that student attendance data are reported for all students in NJSLEDS and that the data are complete and error-free.

Key Actions for Attendance Data Collection

LEAs should regularly update attendance data in NJSLEDS Student Management from now until the end of the school year rather than rush all updates between the last day of school and the end-of-year snapshot, which is a short window. NJDOE will monitor and review data and flag potential issues prior to the June 30 snapshot. Many issues flagged by the NJDOE each year prior to the end-of-year snapshot result from LEAs not reporting updated attendance data that reflects the school year to date. LEAs with attendance data that have not been updated will be asked to review and update their data.

Starting in May and continuing through the end of June, the NJDOE plans to send outreach reports to LEAs through county offices, identifying potential issues and areas for review in attendance data. The NJDOE requests that LEAs update attendance information in NJSLEDS Student Management **with current data** by May 15 to ensure the outreach reports are based on current information. LEAs can review their current attendance data using the NJSLEDS Student List report.

The NJDOE is working to make additional attendance reports available in NJSLEDS in future years, but for 2025-2026, additional data may be provided through NJDOE Homeroom to assist LEAs in reviewing their attendance data. More information will be shared in May.

Review Process

The NJDOE will be reviewing the following information starting at the end of May:

1. Cumulative Days in Membership
 - a. The cumulative days in membership is equal to the sum of the number of days present, the number of days absent, and the number of state-excused absences.
 - b. LEAs may be asked to review their data under the following circumstances:
 - i. A high percentage of students do not have the expected number of days in membership based on the current date and their school entry and exit dates;
 - ii. The average total days in membership for the district is lower than expected;
or
 - iii. Students are reported with 180 days or more in membership prior to the end of the school year.
2. Number of Days Absent
 - a. This field should reflect the total number of days students were absent during the school year, including all unexcused and locally excused absences, but excluding state-excused absences.
 - b. LEAs may be asked to review their data if the average percentage of days absent for students is very high or very low, or if a high percentage of students have zero reported days absent.
3. State Excused Absences
 - a. This field should reflect the number of days that students were absent for a state-excused reason. The seven allowable types of state-excused absences are listed in the NJSLEDS Student Management handbook.
 - b. LEAs may be asked to review their data if students have a very high number of state-excused absences.
4. Missing attendance data
 - a. LEAs are required to report attendance for all students in grades PK-12 who were enrolled in a school for at least one day during the school year. This includes students who attend outside of the LEA and students who are not active at the end of the school year but were enrolled for at least one day during the school year.
 - b. LEAs may be asked to review their data if there are students reported by the LEA with no attendance data.
5. Estimated Chronic Absenteeism Rates
 - a. The NJDOE will calculate estimated chronic absenteeism rates for K-12 students reported by the LEA.
 - b. LEAs may be asked to review their data if estimated chronic absenteeism rates are very high, very low, or significantly different from 2024-2025 rates.

Please note that an LEA may have no errors in NJSLEDS but still be flagged for review during this outreach. These flags do not mean that the data is necessarily wrong, it just means that the data is above or below certain thresholds that the NJDOE has established to prompt a review of the data.

Student Information System (SIS) Defaults

The NJDOE requests that LEAs review the default settings in their student information systems (SIS) to ensure that the attendance data submitted in NJSLEDS Student Management reflects the period between the first day of school and the last day attendance was recorded in the SIS. A key issue the NJDOE has identified over the past several years occurs when reported cumulative days in membership are equal to or greater than 180 prior to the end of the school year. For example, if an LEA is exporting attendance data through the end of January and the school year started at the beginning of September, students should have a maximum of approximately 100 cumulative days in membership.

There should be no students reported with 180 days total in membership before the end of the school year. If your SIS defaults to reporting attendance data through the end of the school year or defaults to 180 days present, your attendance data will not be representative of your students' attendance at the time of submission. This is an issue because it does not allow attendance data to be accurately reviewed throughout the school year. It also means that if absences are not entered or updated for a student, the student's attendance rate will be 100% by default.

Out-of-District Student Attendance

LEAs must report attendance data for all students they report in NJSLEDS Student Management, including students who attend schools outside of the LEA. This may include students who attend an approved private school for students with disabilities (APSSD), a special services district, an educational services commission, or other types of programs in other districts. **While attendance is generally tracked by the attending LEA, the reporting LEA is responsible for submitting the attendance data of their out-of-district students in NJSLEDS.**

If there is not a process in place for receiving attendance data for students attending outside the LEA, the NJDOE recommends that LEAs coordinate with the attending LEAs to ensure a plan exists to receive the data prior to June 30 so it can be included in the June 30 snapshot. The NJDOE realizes that in most cases, this data may not be updated until after the end of the school year. If your LEA cannot obtain attendance data for an out-of-district student, please make sure that the reported days present and days absent are both 0, as a failure to do so may result in invalid attendance and chronic absenteeism rates. However, LEAs should make all possible efforts to obtain attendance data for all out-of-district students, and the NJDOE will be flagging LEAs that report students missing attendance data during the outreach period.

Attendance Data for Inactive Students

LEAs are required to report attendance for all students in grades PK-12 who were enrolled in the LEA for at least one day during the 2025-2026 school year. Students who are not active at the end of the school year, but were enrolled for at least one day during the 2025-2026 school year, must be included in an LEA's Student Management submission records for the end-of-year snapshot with attendance that reflects all days for which the students were enrolled. Students who were enrolled for zero days during the 2025-2026 school year are not required to be included in Student Management submission records for the end of year snapshot. All inactive student records should have a SchoolExitDate in Student Management, and the attendance data in the records should be reflective of the time they were enrolled at the school for the 2025-2026 school year.

Resources

The NJDOE [Reporting Student Attendance and Determining Chronic Absenteeism Rates document](#) explains the fields in NJSLEDS and how they should be reported. Additional resources for addressing student absenteeism and chronic absenteeism can be found on the [NJDOE Student Attendance webpage](#).

The [NJSLEDS Student Management User Resources page](#) includes the [Student Management Data Handbook](#), where the attendance data field definitions can be reviewed, and an [Attendance Field Guidance](#) document.

Additionally, review the [NJSLEDS Trainings and Webinars webpage](#) to register for Student Management: Attendance webinars. Attendance webinars will be held on May 5 and June 9 at 1:00 p.m. The NJSLEDS team will also offer a Live Q&A attendance session on June 2 at 10 a.m., which will allow LEAs to drop in to ask questions and get real-time support. No registration is required for the Live Q&A sessions. Downloadable webinar presentations from past webinars can also be found on the Trainings and Webinars page.

Contact Information

Contact the Office of Performance Management at performancemanagement@doe.nj.gov with any questions regarding attendance outreach or the use of NJSLEDS data for accountability and reporting. Contact the NJSLEDS Help Desk using the [NJSLEDS Help Desk Web Form](#) or by phone at 609-376-3970 with any questions about submitting data in NJSLEDS. Contact attendance@doe.nj.gov for questions about attendance policy.