



School Performance Reports: Data Quality Guidance

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The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) releases annual [School Performance Reports](#) that include a wide variety of data. Much of the data in the reports is based on data reported by local education agencies (LEAs). Before the School Performance Reports can be used to have meaningful conversations about school performance, it is critical to make sure that the data in the reports is accurate. This guide provides key deadlines, sources of data, checklists for reviewing data quality, and links to additional resources to help LEAs review their data and make sure it is as accurate as possible.

Resources

The NJDOE provides many resources to help understand the data in the School Performance reports. These include:

- [School Performance Reports Reference Guide](#): This document provides detailed information about all the data in the reports, sources, and how data is calculated.
- [School Performance Reports Frequently Asked Questions](#): This document answers frequently asked questions about the School Performance Reports.
- [Data Sources Spreadsheet](#): This spreadsheet lists all the data in the School Performance Reports with the source of the data and relevant timelines.
- [Course Roster Submission Guidance](#): This document explains how data from the NJ SMART Course Roster Submission is used for reporting data in the School Performance Reports.

The School Performance Reports include data from the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability system. Details about how data for the ESSA Accountability system is calculated and used for identifying schools for support can be found on the [NJDOE Title I Accountability webpage](#).

The NJDOE has resources for understanding how graduation rates are calculated, which includes a Graduation Data Quality checklist, on the [Graduation and Postsecondary webpage](#).

Much of the data in the School Performance Reports comes from data that LEAs report in NJ SMART. The [NJ SMART Resources & Trainings webpage](#) provides many resources and important information about the NJ SMART system. Any questions about NJ SMART can be directed to the NJ SMART help desk by calling (800) 254-0295 or emailing njsmart@pcgus.com.

Statewide assessment resources can be found on the [NJDOE Assessment webpage](#). LEAs should review key dates documents for all statewide assessments. LEAs must ensure data is accurate before the reported deadlines in each of the associated assessment systems:

- [PearsonAccess^{next} \(PAN\)](#) for the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) and New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA)
- [WIDA Assessment Management System \(AMS\)](#) for the ACCESS for ELLs assessment
- [Kite Educator Portal](#) for the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessment

Key Data Deadlines

The following table provides key deadlines for data submissions used for the School Performance Reports. The exact dates may change yearly, so the dates shown in Table 1 are approximate. For example, if the SMID fall snapshot date of October 31 falls on a weekend, the deadline will be the closest business day. In most cases, data cannot be corrected after reported deadlines, so it is important for LEAs to ensure that all data is accurate and error-free by the given deadline.

Table 1: Key School Performance Reports Data Deadlines

Date	Deadline	Data
October 31	NJ SMART SMID Management Fall Snapshot	Staff data
Early April	Clean-up deadline for NJGPA in PAN	NJGPA results
Mid-April	CDS Update Window	School start/end times, instructional time, contact information.
Early May	Clean-up deadline for ACCESS for ELLs in the WIDA AMS	ACCESS for ELLs results
Late May	Clean-up deadline for DLM in the Kite Educator Portal	DLM results
Early June	Clean-up deadline for NJSLA in PAN	NJSLA results
August 3*	NJ SMART End-of-Year SID Management Snapshot	Student enrollment, demographics, attendance data
August 3	NJ SMART Course Roster Submission deadline	AP/IB and dual enrollment course participation, structured-learning experiences, course participation
August 3	NJ SMART CTE Submission deadline	CTE program participation, work-based learning, industry-valued credentials
Mid-August	Homeroom Student Safety Data System (SSDS) deadline	Incidents/offenses, police notifications, HIB incidents, disciplinary removals
August 31	NJ SMART Graduation Snapshot	Graduation rates and pathways
Early October	NJ SMART Graduation Appeals Deadline	Graduation rates and pathways
Mid-October	NJTRAx Update Deadline	Device Ratios
Mid-November	ESSA Accountability Profile Review	ESSA Accountability Data
November 20	NJ SMART Performance Reports Submission deadline	School and district narratives

*The NJ SMART End-of-Year SID Management snapshot will occur on August 2 for the 2023-2024 school year. Starting with the 2024-2025 school year, the end-of-year snapshot will change to June 30.

Staff Data (NJ SMART SMID Management)

Most of the staff data in the school performance reports is based on data reported by LEAs in the fall NJ SMART SMID Management snapshot. This data is used to report:

- Total numbers of teachers, administrators, and other staff members
- Student to staff ratios
- Teacher/administrator experience, level of education, retention, and demographics.
- Out-of-field teachers

Table 2: Common Staff Data Issues

Issue	Tips for checking or fixing data
All staff members are not reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAs should make sure that all staff members on their payroll and contracted personnel are reported in SMID Management. • LEAs can view the total number of staff members reported in NJ SMART.
Incorrect job codes are used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff members are categorized as teachers, administrators, and/or other staff types based on the job codes reported in SMID Management. • The NJ SMART Job Codes and Job Codes Subcategories document lists all available job codes that should be used. • If staff members have multiple roles or work at multiple locations, each job code and location should be reported. LEAs can report up to six different job codes/location combinations in SMID Management. • LEAs must ensure the appropriate job codes are used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teachers: 1000-2999, 4000, 4001 ○ Administrators: 0100-0600 ○ Librarian/Media Specialists: 0003, 3105 ○ Nurses: 0007, 0008, 3114, 3115 ○ Counselors: 0001, 0002, 3100, 3101 ○ Child Study Team Members: 0009, 0010, 0010, 3116, 3117, 3118 ○ School Psychologists: 0009, 3116 ○ School Social Workers: 0010, 3117 ○ School Assistance Coordinators: 0014, 3121 • Incorrect job codes can lead to a teacher being identified as out-of-field. Teachers can be flagged as out-of-field if their job code does not match their certification.

Student Data (NJ SMART SID Management)

Data from the SID Management end-of-year snapshot is used for all student enrollment reported in the school performance reports. This data is used to report:

- Total enrollment by grade, race/ethnicity, gender, and student group;
- Home language; and
- Attendance data, including chronic absenteeism.

Graduation data comes from the SID Management graduation snapshot, typically taken on August 31, and incorporates approved district appeals submitted by early October.

In addition to using the data for reporting in the school performance reports, data reported in SID Management is used to determine the accountable school for chronic absenteeism and graduation rates. This is based on a combination of fields, including the resident, receiving, and attending county, district, and school codes and in-district placement. Incorrect data in these fields can lead to students being attributed to the wrong school or district for accountability purposes.

Table 3: Common Student Data Issues

Issue	Tips for checking or fixing data
All students are not reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAs should make sure that all students are reported by the end-of-year snapshot. • Make sure June graduates are not inactivated prior to the end-of-year snapshot or they will not be included in enrollment totals. • LEAs can view the total number of students reported in NJ SMART.
Incorrect county, district, or school codes	LEAs should review the NJ SMART Reporting Responsibilities document, which outlines different scenarios and indicates which district should be reporting data in NJ SMART and which schools and districts should be reported as resident, receiving, and attending. This document also shows which school will be the accountable school for each scenario.
Incomplete or inaccurate attendance data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAs should ensure that the attendance reported through the total days present and total days absent reflects the total number of days the students were in membership for the school year. For most students, this should be around 180 days for the end-of-year snapshot. • Use the new Attendance Report in NJ SMART to review all relevant attendance data variables and check whether attendance is up to date.

Course Data (NJ SMART Course Roster Submission)

Data from the end-of-year NJ SMART Course Roster submission is used for all course data in the school performance reports. This data is used to report:

- Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) course participation
- Dual Enrollment course participation
- Structured Learning Experiences (SLE) participation
- Course participation by subject: mathematics, science, social studies and history, world languages, computer science, and visual and performing arts

The [NJ SMART School Performance Reports Course Roster Submission Guidance](#) gives specific guidance about how course roster data is used for the School Performance Reports. The following table outlines common errors or issues with Course Roster reporting.

Table 4: Common Course Data Reporting Issues

Issue	Tips for checking or fixing data
All courses are not reported	Make sure all courses are reported for all students in grades Kindergarten through 12.
Incorrect SCED Codes are used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NJDOE uses the SCED codes reported to determine the types of courses and how courses will be reported in the School Performance Reports. • Use the NJ SMART SCED Course Code List to see all available SCED codes for reporting and determine the most appropriate code for each course. • Use the NJ SMART School Performance Reports SCED Course Mapping List to see how each SCED code will be used for reporting in the School Performance Reports.
Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) SCED codes are not used	Use the NJ SMART School Performance Reports SCED Course Mapping List to identify which course codes should be used for AP or IB courses. Only courses indicated as AP/IB in that mapping will be included in AP/IB course participation totals.
Dual Enrollment courses not reported correctly	Students taking college-level dual enrollment courses should be reported with a Course Type of “C” in the NJ SMART Student Course Roster submission. Only students with at least one course type of “C” will be included in the dual enrollment participation totals.
SLE courses not reported	Students participating in structured learning experiences (SLEs) during the school year must be reported with a corresponding Workplace Experience SCED code. These SCED codes are flagged in the NJ SMART School Performance Reports SCED Course Mapping List.

Assessment Data

While the scores from each assessment come from the individual testing vendors, the underlying student level data used for assessment reporting and accountability is based on data that districts report in both NJ SMART and the corresponding assessment systems.

The accountable schools and the student groups to which students are attributed are based on data that districts report in the assessment systems. The number of students registered for each assessment determines the denominator used for calculating participation rates.

The timelines for LEAs to review and correct data in the assessment systems vary by assessment and administration. LEAs should make sure to review all communications related to assessments and the key timelines documents available on the assessment webpage. Mandatory trainings are held each year for District Test Coordinators (DTCs) and educator resources are provided that explain data cleanup activities: [NJSLA/NJGPA Resource Center](#), [DLM Resources](#), [WIDA Resources](#) (ACCESS for ELLs)

Table 5: Common Assessment Data Errors

Issue	Tips for checking or fixing data
Students were registered in error and not cleaned up (e.g., students registered for NJSLA who will take the DLM assessment, students enrolled in the first year of a two-part Algebra I course who were registered for the Algebra I assessment in error)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If students not required to take an assessment were registered in error, the LEA must update the information in the appropriate assessment system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See the guidance for each system for the steps needed to unenroll/unregister/delete/exit students. • Use the “Who Must Test” section of the Test Coordinator Manual to understand which students are required to register and take assessments each year. If you have questions, contact the appropriate state assessment coordinator for guidance.
Incorrect accountable school reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAs must indicate the student’s testing and accountable location in the assessment system. Use the NJ SMART Reporting Responsibilities document to determine a student’s accountable district and school. • Use the PAN operational report “Students where Accountable District/School is different from Testing District/School” to review students who are testing in the LEA but not listed as accountable to the LEA and make sure that the accountable information is correct. • Use the PAN operational report “(For Accountable Organization) Students where Accountable District/School is different from testing district/school” to review students who are listed as accountable to the LEA but are not testing at the LEA. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If a student is reported as accountable to your LEA incorrectly by another LEA, it is your LEA’s responsibility to contact the testing LEA to correct the information prior to the clean-up deadline.

Narrative Data (Performance Reports Submission)

Data from the NJ SMART Performance Reports submission, which has an annual deadline in November, is used for all school and district narrative data in the reports, as well as social media information.

Table 6: Common Performance Reports Submission Errors

Issue	Tips for checking or fixing data
Separate district and school level narratives are not submitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAs should submit data separately for each school in the district and the LEA itself. • In districts with only one school or for charter schools, the LEA may have the same information at the school and district level, but separate rows must be submitted for the school and the district to populate the narrative sections in both the school and district reports.
Facebook or X (formerly Twitter) links do not work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAs should report the entire web address for their Facebook or X (formerly Twitter) page so that the School Performance Reports can link directly to the webpage. • Make sure that the full web address is reported and not just the handle/username (i.e., @schoolabc).
Formatting issues or symbols in the narrative fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts should avoid using bullets and formatted text in the narrative fields as this can result in formatting issues and symbols appearing in the text. • Use the “Sample Reports” option in NJ SMART after your data has been updated to preview how the data will appear in the Performance Reports and make sure there are no formatting issues or symbols.

School and District Contact Information (CDS Information System)

Data from the NJDOE County District School (CDS) Information System is used to populate the school and district names, addresses, phone numbers, websites, and principal and superintendent names and email addresses in the reports. CDS data is also used to report the school start and end times and instructional time reported in school-level reports.

The NJDOE pulls the final CDS contact information that will be used in the public release of the reports in February each year, prior to the embargoed release of the reports to LEAs. LEAs can update contact information in CDS at any time during the year, so LEAs should make sure that information remains up-to-date and accurate if leadership or other information changes. Unlike other data in the reports, the NJDOE will update contact information after the public release of the School Performance Reports if it is updated in CDS to ensure that accurate contact information is available for anyone using the reports. However, these changes cannot be made immediately, they are done at scheduled times after the release.

Table 7: Common CDS Errors

Issue	Tips for checking or fixing data
Principal and Superintendent information is not updated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal and superintendent names, titles, and emails should be updated throughout the year if there are changes. Common issues are updating the principal or superintendent name, but not the title or email address. Check data on the New Jersey School Directory page to make sure it is accurate.
Address not updated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure the location address for a school or district is not a P.O. Box or an intersection. The School Performance Reports display google maps of school locations and there will be an error if a valid address is not entered.
Missing or incorrect school grade levels of students served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The grade levels reported in CDS are used as the basis to determine which data will be reported in the School Performance Reports. (e.g., only schools with grade 12 will have graduation rates reported) Make sure all grades served for the given school year are reported. If school is growing or changing grades in the future, only report grades currently served for the given school year.
School Safety Specialist Not Reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School Performance Reports are required to report on whether a district has a school safety specialist. CDS is used to identify if a staff member in the district has been identified as the school safety specialist. Make sure each district has a School Safety Specialist contact identified in CDS.

Key NJ SMART Reports for Reviewing and Checking Data

Within NJ SMART, there are multiple district and operational reports that can help check data after it has been uploaded into the system. The [NJ SMART Data Availability Guide](#) provides an overview of district reports that are available and guiding questions to think about as you review the reports.

Table 8: District and Operational Report Examples

NJ SMART Report	Use to Check
School Profile Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment by Grade Level • Enrollment by Student Groups • NJSLA Assessment Results • Reported Attendance Data
High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall school and district graduation rates • State and federal graduation rates • Graduation rates by student group • Students who transferred out of the district but were not reported by another district (Transfer out unverified)
Attendance Report (new)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-level reported attendance data • Students whose attendance data may need to be updated because it does not cover the full school year. • Whether attendance has been submitted for all students who were enrolled in your district at any point during the school year, including students who only attended for part of the school year or are no longer active at the end of the school year.

Data Points of Contact

To ensure accurate data is reported across all data systems, it is important to know who within your LEA is responsible for reporting, checking, and cleaning up data for each submission and for each system. It may be the same person for all, or there may be multiple people for each submission. In either case, there may be opportunities to check data across systems to help make sure data is as accurate as possible.

For each submission, think about the source of the data, who is responsible for updating the data during the year, who is responsible for submitting/updating the data in the system, and who is checking and reviewing the data. The [NJ SMART Point of Contact list](#) and the template below can be used as a starting point to make sure that leadership in your district is aware of who is responsible for each data submission. This may also help identify where there are gaps due to turnover.

Table 9: Data Points of Contact Template

Data Submission/Review	Point(s) of Contact
NJ SMART/Homeroom Administrator	
NJ SMART SID Management (Students)	
NJ SMART SMID Management (Staff)	
NJ SMART Special Education	
NJ SMART Course Roster	
NJ SMART CTE Submission	
NJ SMART Performance Reports Submission (Narratives)	
Graduation Rates/Appeals	
Homeroom Student Safety Data System	
Assessment Registration and Clean-up	
NJTRAx Technology Readiness Tool	
CDS System	
ESSA School Accountability	
NJQSAC District Accountability	