

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has continued to have a significant impact on the way the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) was able to measure school performance and student achievement for both the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 School Performance Reports. While some data that was missing in 2019-2020 will be available again for 2020-2021 (e.g. chronic absenteeism data), other data continues to remain unavailable or look different from prior years. The NJDOE also recognizes that our existing data can't begin to measure the hard work and perseverance of the students, families, educators and community members during the past two years. While some data may be missing, the NJDOE emphasizes how important it is to use the available data in the reports, along with other information collected directly within districts and communities, to start conversations, identify gaps in information, and find ways to address the impacts of COVID-19 and ensure all students receive the support that they need.

This document will give an overview of what data is known to be missing or impacted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting assessment cancellations, federal waivers, state executive orders, and other national changes. These changes may have impacted districts, schools, student groups, and grade levels in disproportionate ways. Additionally, individual districts may have had other issues as a result of COVID-19 that may have impacted their results or data quality for the 2020-2021 school year. For all these reasons, we encourage school communities, this year more than ever, to reach out to their districts to see how COVID-19 may have impacted the data for their district and use caution in comparing data in the 2020-2021 School Performance reports to prior or future years.

How to Use this Guide

The following pages of this document provide the status of each data element in the reports along with additional notes. The status field uses the following key:

Symbol/Status	Explanation
	The data elements are available and there is no known systematic issue that would impact the data for the 2020-2021 school year
	The data elements are fully or partially available but there may be some impact as a result of COVID-19. Review notes for more details. Use caution in comparing results for 2020-2021 to prior or future years.
	The data elements are not available or will not be reported for the 2020-2021 school year.

Notes will appear directly in the 2020-2021 School Performance Reports and the [School Performance Reports Reference Guide](#) as well.

Data Element Status and Notes

Section of the Reports	Data Elements	Status for 2020-2021	2020-2021 Notes
Demographics	Enrollment and Demographics		n/a
Student Growth	Median Student Growth Percentiles		The New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) was cancelled in both spring of 2020 ¹ and 2021. As a result, student growth percentiles were not calculated for 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 and this data is not available.
Academic Achievement	Statewide Assessment Participation and Proficiency – English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science		The New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) was cancelled both spring of 2020 ¹ and 2021.
Academic Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Participation English Language Proficiency Test (ACCESS for ELLs) – Participation and Performance 		The DLM and ACCESS for ELLs assessments were administered in spring 2021 in-person only, not remotely, and participation rates may have been lower than in previous years. As a result, 2020-2021 results may not be comparable to prior or future years.
Academic Achievement	Progress toward English Language Proficiency (ELP)		Due to the cancellation of the ACCESS for ELLs assessment in 2019-2020 ¹ and a federal accountability waiver ² , ELP data is not available for 2020-2021.

¹ [March 2020 federal waiver](#): Approved by the United States Department of Education (USED) on March 27, 2020

² [March 2021 federal waiver](#): Approved by USED on March 26, 2021

Section of the Reports	Data Elements	Status for 2020-2021	2020-2021 Notes
College and Career Readiness	PSAT, SAT, and ACT Participation and Performance	!	National administrations of the SAT, PSAT, and ACT were cancelled from spring 2020 through fall 2021 and some test centers had limited testing capacity. As a result, 2020-2021 results may not be comparable to prior or future years.
College and Career Readiness	Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Enrollment and Performance	!	College Board introduced changes for the spring 2021 administration of the AP exams. Students may have taken the assessment in-person or instead taken the digital version and the College Board also offered three test sessions for each subject to allow for social distancing. Additionally, the written components of the IB assessments were not able to be administered in the 2020-2021 school year. The IB program developed a reliable and valid score based upon the required assessed work during the two years of the courses to determine a final grade.
College and Career Readiness	Dual Enrollment		n/a
College and Career Readiness	Career and Technical Education (CTE) Participants and Concentrators		n/a

Section of the Reports	Data Elements	Status for 2020-2021	2020-2021 Notes
College and Career Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured Learning Experiences Work-Based Learning Participation 		n/a
College and Career Readiness	Industry-Valued Credentials		Due the COVID-19 pandemic, many high school students were not able to take the Technical Skills Assessments (TSA), which are end-of-program assessments for Career and Technical Education programs, in spring 2021. This may have impacted the number of industry-valued credentials earned during the 2020-2021 school year.
College and Career Readiness	Course Participation (Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and History, World Languages, Computer Science)		n/a
College and Career Readiness	Seal of Biliteracy		Graduation assessment requirements were waived for any 12th grade student who had not yet met the graduation assessment requirements, but had met all credit, curriculum, and attendance requirements for graduation. ¹ As a result, the Seal of Biliteracy requirement to demonstrate English language proficiency by meeting the graduation assessment requirements was also waived for any students who had not yet met the requirements.
College and Career Readiness	Visual and Performing Arts Participation		n/a

¹ [Executive Order 214](#): signed by Governor Phil Murphy on January 11, 2021

Section of the Reports	Data Elements	Status for 2020-2021	2020-2021 Notes
Graduation and Postsecondary	Graduation Rates	!	<p>Graduation assessment requirements were waived for any 12th grade student who had not yet met the graduation assessment requirements, but had met all credit, curriculum, and attendance requirements for graduation.¹ Additionally, the requirement to report on status in meeting annual ESSA targets was waived for 2020-2021.² As a result, annual targets and status in meeting those targets are not reported for Cohort 2020 4-year and Cohort 2019 5-year graduation rates.³</p>
Graduation and Postsecondary	Graduation Pathways	!	<p>Graduation assessment requirements were waived for any 12th grade student who had not yet met the graduation assessment requirements, but had met all credit, curriculum, and attendance requirements for graduation.¹</p> <p>As a result, the pathway option of "Requirements waived under Executive Order 214" has been added for 2020-2021 to count these students.</p>
Graduation and Postsecondary	Dropout Rates	!	<p>While dropout data is available for 2020-2021, it is unclear how the pandemic and changes to state and local policies may have affected dropout rates for the 2020-2021 school year.</p>

¹ [Executive Order 214](#): signed by Governor Phil Murphy on January 11, 2021

² [March 2021 federal waiver](#): Approved by USED on March 26, 2021

³ NJDOE uses prior year graduation rates for accountability purposes

Section of the Reports	Data Elements	Status for 2020-2021	2020-2021 Notes
Graduation and Postsecondary	Postsecondary Enrollment	!	The National Student Clearinghouse has reported that undergraduate enrollment is down nationwide compared to the same time last year. As a result, caution should be used in comparing this year's results to prior or future years.
Graduation and Postsecondary	Apprenticeship		This is a new data element for the 2020-2021 reports.
Climate and Environment	Chronic Absenteeism and Days Absent	!	<p>The requirement to report status in meeting annual ESSA targets for 2020-2021 was waived.¹ As a result, NJDOE will not report state averages and whether state averages were met for 2020-2021.</p> <p>Because the number of days students spent in in-person and remote learning environments during the school year differed, the NJDOE recommends caution in comparing 2020-2021 attendance data between schools and districts and to prior or future school years.</p>
Climate and Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence, Vandalism, HIB, and Substance Offenses • Police Notifications • Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) Investigations • Student Disciplinary Removals 	!	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, discipline data for the 2020-2021 school year may not be comparable to prior or future school years and NJDOE recommends caution in making comparisons.

¹ [March 2021 federal waiver](#): Approved by USED on March 26, 2021

Section of the Reports	Data Elements	Status for 2020-2021	2020-2021 Notes
Climate and Environment	School Day	!	The start and end times in this table may reflect standard hours for in-person instruction. These hours may have been adjusted due to remote or hybrid instruction schedules.
Climate and Environment	Device Ratios	✓	n/a
Staff	Experience and Education	✓	n/a
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student to Staff Ratios • Staff Counts 	✓	n/a
Staff	Demographics	✓	n/a
Staff	Retention	✓	n/a
Staff	Statewide Educator Equity Data (state report only)	!	The information for ineffective teachers in this table is typically based on evaluation data from the prior school year, but certain components of education evaluation requirements were waived for the 2019-2020 school year, so data for ineffective teachers is not available. ¹
Per-Pupil Expenditures	Per-Pupil Expenditures by Source	✓	n/a

¹ [Executive Order 117](#): signed by Governor Phil Murphy on April 7, 2020

Section of the Reports	Data Elements	Status for 2020-2021	2020-2021 Notes
Accountability	ESSA Status Schools Identified as Requiring Comprehensive or Targeted Support	!	<p>The ESSA requirement to identify schools for Comprehensive and Targeted Support and Improvement was waived for both the 2020-2021¹ and 2021-2022² school years. Any school that was identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement during the 2019-2020 school year for support during the 2020-2021 school year will retain the same status for the 2021-2022 school year and continue to receive support and interventions from the NJDOE.</p> <p>All currently identified schools will be eligible to exit status at the end of the 2022-2023 school year.</p>
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESSA Accountability Progress (2019-2020 and 2020-2021 data) • Accountability Indicator Scores and Summative Ratings • Accountability Summary by Student Group 	✘	The requirement to calculate indicator scores, summative scores, and progress toward long-term goals and interim progress was waived for both the 2019-2020 ¹ and 2021-2022 ² school years. This data will not be included in the 2020-2021 reports.
Narrative	District Narratives	✔	n/a

¹ [March 2020 federal waiver](#): Approved by the United States Department of Education (USED) on March 27, 2020

² [March 2021 federal waiver](#): Approved by USED on March 26, 2021