NJ School Performance Reports Frequently Asked Questions

The following are frequently asked questions and answers related to the School Performance Reports.

1) **If someone works at a district or school and has questions about the data in the School Performance Report, who should they reach out to?**
   a. Data to populate School Performance Reports is found in NJ SMART, the education data system of the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). The NJ SMART Helpdesk is available to answer any of your technical questions at 800-254-0295 or email the NJ SMART Helpdesk.

2) **Who has access to these reports through NJ SMART during the embargo period?**
   a. During the embargoed period, only districts have access to their reports. Access to the School Performance Reports is determined by each district's Homeroom Administrator. Please contact the district's Homeroom Administrator to formally request the addition of Performance Reports access to an existing NJ SMART account or to request an NJ SMART account to become a credentialed user.

3) **Following the embargoed period, where would the public go to view these reports?**
   a. The School Performance Reports were released by NJDOE through NJ SMART to districts on January 5, 2018 for an embargo period that ends on January 12, 2018. On January 12, 2018, the NJDOE will make the 2016-17 School Performance Reports, the database, and additional supplemental guidance available on the NJ School Performance Reports website.

4) **Where does the data reported in the School Performance Reports come from?**

Demographics:

Tables/ Graphs	Source(s)
Enrollment Trends by Grade Enrollment Trends by Student Group Enrollment by Racial and Ethnic Group PreK and K Full and Half Day Enrollment Trends by Full and Shared Time Enrollment by Home Language	NJ SMART End of Year data collection

Academic Achievement:

Tables/ Graphs	Source(s)
English Language Arts/Literacy Assessment – Participation and Performance Mathematics Assessment – Participation and Performance	NJDOE Title I All Tests files NJDOE Assessment files

Tables/ Graphs	Source(s)
English Language Arts/Literacy Assessment – Performance by Grade Mathematics Assessment – Performance by Grade/Test English Language Arts/Literacy Assessment – Performance Trends Mathematics Assessment – Performance Trends Alternate Assessment – Participation English Language Proficiency Test – Participation and Performance NJASK Science Assessment Performance NJASK Science Assessment Performance Trends Biology Assessment – Performance Biology Assessment – Proficiency Trends	
English Language Proficiency Test	ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 test files
National Assessment Education Progress (NAEP)	National Assessment Educational Progress (NAEP) Benchmark data

Student Growth:

Tables/ Graphs	Source(s)
Student Growth Student Growth by Performance Level Student Growth by Grade	NJ SMART SGP data NJDOE Title I All Tests files

College and Career Readiness:

Table(s)	Source(s)
PSAT/SAT/ACT – Participation PSAT/SAT/ACT – Performance	NJ SMART End of Year data collection SAT/ACT/PSAT Vendor data
AP/IB Coursework - Participation and Performance Dual Enrollment Coursework Participation AP/IB Courses Offered	NJ SMART End of Year data collection AP/IB Vendor data NJ SMART Course Roster submission
Visual and Performing Arts – Course Participation	NJ SMART End of Year data collection NJ SMART Course Roster submission
Career and Technical Education Participation Structured Learning Experiences Participation Industry-Valued Credentials Earned	NJ SMART End of Year data collection NJ SMART CTE submission NJ SMART Course Roster submission
Course Participation	NJ SMART Course Roster submission Seal of Biliteracy data

Grad/Postsecondary:

Table(s)	Source(s)
Graduation Rates Graduation Rate Trends	NJ SMART Graduation submission
Dropout Rate Trends	NJ SMART End of Year data collection
Postsecondary Enrollment Rates: Fall Postsecondary Enrollment Rates: 16 Month	National Student Clearinghouse data

Climate and Environment:

Table(s)	Source(s)
Chronic Absenteeism Days Absent Chronic Absenteeism by Grade	NJ SMART End of Year data collection
School Day	NJDOE Report Card data collection CDS System
Violence, Vandalism, HIB, and Substance Offenses	EVVRS data collection
Student Suspension Rate Student Expulsions	NJDOE Report Card data collection
Technology Readiness	NJTRAx survey data
Per-Pupil Expenditures (District Level)	Office of Finance data

Staff:

Table(s)	Source(s)
Teachers – Experience and Certifications Administrators – Experience (District Level) Teachers and Administrators – Level of Education Teacher and Administrators - One-Year Retention (District Level)	NJ SMART staff data collection
Student to Staff Ratios	NJ SMART staff data collection NJ NJ SMART End of Year data collection
Faculty Attendance	NJDOE Report Card data collection
Statewide Educator Equity Data	NJ SMART staff data collection NJDOE staff certification data NJ SMART End of Year data collection

Accountability:

Table(s)	Source(s)
Accountability Indicator Scores and Summative Rating Accountability Summary by Student Group	NJDOE Title I data *ESSA* accountability state plan (targets)

Narrative:

Table(s)	Source(s)
Narrative text by category	NJDOE narrative collection

5) What does a *, **, or an N mean in a table in the report?

   a. New Jersey developed guidelines to protect student privacy under the federal Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA). New Jersey's Data Privacy Rules document or the School Performance Reports Reference Guide provide more information about data privacy rules.

      i. A * indicates that data was available for too few students to report the given information, or the data represents a small percentage of students. Data is not displayed because it could potentially identify individual students.

      ii. A ** indicates that data was not available for the minimum 20 students in order for a student group to be included in New Jersey's Every Student Succeeds Act (*ESSA*) accountability system. This will only appear in sections of the report related to *ESSA* accountability.

      iii. An N indicates that no data was available to report. This happens when there are no students enrolled in a particular student group or if no data was submitted by the district.

6) What is the difference between the "Detail" and "Summary" School Performance Reports?

   a. The "Summary" School Performance Reports are new for 2016-17 and were designed to provide parents, educators, and communities a high-level, one-page summary of how well a school or district is performing and preparing students for college and careers. The "Detail" School Performance Reports contain a more detailed set of school performance data to present a comprehensive picture of school performance. The "Detail" reports correspond to the School Performance Reports that were provided in prior years.

7) Where does the data reported in the Narrative section of the School Performance Reports come from and why would some Narratives not include certain categories?

   a. The Narrative section was added for the first time in the 2016-17 School Performance Reports to allow schools and districts the opportunity to share highlights, achievements, and other important information about programs, activities, and services that are offered in their own words. This replaces the school and district narrative letters provided in prior year reports. Schools and districts were able to choose the categories that they wanted to include in their reports, so the reports only show the categories where information was provided.

8) Why would the school enrollment on the reports be different from what a district submitted to NJ SMART or the enrollment data on the NJDOE website?

   a. There are two district submissions that are relevant to school enrollment: Student Identification (SID) and State, which occur annually in the fall and end of school year. The school enrollment is taken from the NJ SMART End of Year Snapshot. If a record was in error, the NJDOE is unable to put it into a grade, but the NJDOE includes it in the total. A school can pull an extract out of NJ SMART based on attending County, District, School codes (CDS), which will give an idea of where a problem occurred. Also be aware that if a student is exited before the End of Year Snapshot, he/she will not show in the table.

   Enrollment data reported on the NJDOE website is based on fall enrollment.

9) What does Ungraded (UG) mean on the Enrollment by Grade table?

   a. Ungraded (UG) represents the count of students who were enrolled but spend less than 39% of their time in general education. These students would have Program Type

Codes of 18-33 & 38. If you have any questions about Program Type Codes, please review the NJ SMART SID Management Student Data Handbook.

10) **Were first-year English Language Learners (ELLs) exempt from taking the PARCC English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and mathematics tests?**
   a. First-year ELL students were exempted from taking the ELA section of PARCC, but still required to take the mathematics section.

11) **How was the schoolwide PARCC assessment data calculated in the Academic Achievement section, and why does it differ from district reports and the results on the Academic Achievement by grade level or end-of-course test data?**
   a. There are several reasons why PARCC assessment data reflected in the Academic Achievement section may differ from reports. First, PARCC assessment results in the School Performance Reports are based on Title I accountability and take into consideration a student's Time in School (TIS). If a student has been enrolled in the school for less than 1 year (TIS=Y), then the student is not included in the schoolwide calculation.

   Second, PARCC assessment results in the School Performance Reports are based on a student's accountable school and not the attending school. A student's accountable school is the school responsible for their test results, and a student's attending school is the school they actually attend. For most students, the accountable and attending school are the same, but in some cases they may be different. For example, for students attending approved private schools for students with disabilities, their accountable school would be the public school they would otherwise attend.

   Last, students in grade 11 are excluded from school-level performance data because many students have already completed the math sequence by grade 11, and students in grade 11 that take AP or IB English are exempt from taking the PARCC ELA grade 11 assessment.

12) **Does the PARCC assessment data include both fall and spring PARCC administrations?**
   a. Yes, PARCC assessment results include both fall and spring PARCC administrations.

13) **How was the SAT participation/performance calculated?**
   a. SAT participation/performance is based on 12th graders taking the SAT assessment in the 2016-17 or 2015-16 school year. This calculation was adjusted to give better information on the percentage of 12th graders who take the test before graduation. This is similar to how SAT participation and performance was calculated in the School Performance Reports prior to the 2015-16 school year.

   This is different from the way SAT information was reported in the 2015-16 School Performance Reports. Due to the changes the College Board (administrators of SAT) made to the SAT test sections in March 2016, the NJDOE needed to modify the way the SAT participation/performance was calculated and reported for the 2015-16 school year School Performance Reports.

   SAT participation in the 2016-17 reports is calculated by taking the number of 12th graders who took the SAT test during the 2015-16 or 2016-17 school years and dividing by the total end-of-year enrollment for grade 12.

SAT performance data in the 2016-17 reports is calculated based on the test scores of 12th graders who took the SAT test during the 2015-16 or 2016-17 school years.

Additionally, any SAT test taken prior to the March 2016 administration was scored on the old SAT test's 2400 point scale. For the 2016-17 School Performance Reports, all old SAT test scores were converted to reflect the new SAT test's 1600 point scale, using the concordance tables supplied by the College Board. As it was done in years past, for students who participated in multiple administrations of the SAT, the 2016-17 School Performance Reports reported their highest score for the reading and writing section and for the math section.

14) **How was PSAT participation/performance calculated? What does it mean that the benchmarks vary by grade?**
   a. PSAT calculations for the 2016-17 School Performance Reports were adjusted to only include students taking the PSAT 10 and PSAT NMSQT tests in the 2016-17 school year. This calculation was adjusted because the PSAT 10 and PSAT NMSQT use the same test, but the PSAT 8/9 uses a different test. PSAT calculations in the 2015-16 School Performance Reports included students taking the PSAT 8/9 test as well.

   PSAT participation in the 2016-17 reports is calculated by taking the number of students taking the PSAT 10 and PSAT NMSQT tests in the 2016-17 school year and dividing by the total end-of-year enrollment for grades 10 and 11. Students typically take the PSAT 10 in grade 10 and the PSAT NMSQT in grades 10 or 11.

   PSAT performance in the 2016-17 reports is calculated based on the test scores of students taking the PSAT 10 and PSAT NMSQT during the 2016-17 school year.

   College Board has defined separate benchmarks for grades 10 and 11, so there is not a single benchmark for this test like there is for the SAT or ACT. Students are identified as scoring at or above the benchmarks based on their grade level.

15) **How was ACT participation/performance calculated?**
   a. ACT participation/performance is calculated similarly to the SAT. The 2016-17 School Performance Reports show participation and performance based on 12th graders taking the test regardless of the school year when they took the ACT. Therefore, if a student took the ACT as a high school senior, junior, sophomore, or freshman, he/she will be included in the ACT participation/performance data.

16) **How was chronic absenteeism information calculated?**
   a. A student is considered chronically absent if he/she is not present (referred to as "Cumulative Days Present") for 10% or more of the days in which he or she is enrolled at a school during the school year (referred to as "Cumulative Days in Membership").

   Each student's absentee rate is calculated as the total "Cumulative Days in Membership" minus "Cumulative Days Present" divided by "Cumulative Days in Membership." If a student's absentee rate is equal to or greater than 10%, the student is chronically absent. The school or district chronic absenteeism rate is calculated by taking the number of chronically absent students and dividing by the total number of students in grades K-12 enrolled at the school or district. Refer to the Guidance for Reporting Student Absences and Calculating Chronic Absenteeism for more information.

For the three tables in the Chronic Absenteeism section, students are included in the calculations only if they meet the following criteria: (a) they were enrolled in the school at the end of the school year; (b) they were enrolled at the school for 45 or more days; and (c) they were in grades K to 12.

Chronic absenteeism is calculated based on a student's accountable school, not attending school. In about 95% of all cases, the attending and accountable school are the same but there are rare instances where the accountable school may not be the attending school. For example, a student attending an approved private school for students with disabilities will have his or her attendance reported by the public school he or she would otherwise attend. If a student cannot be assigned to an accountable school for any reason, the student will be assigned to a district and included in a district report but not in an individual school report.

17) How is the Faculty Attendance percentage calculated?
   a. Faculty covers teachers and other certificated, educational support services staff (any non-administrators who are certified). Faculty Attendance data is collected by the districts and sent to the NJDOE in the Report Card Submission through the homeroom application. School districts provide the NJDOE the total number of days faculty were present at school and the total number of possible days faculty should have attended school. The NJDOE calculates the Faculty Attendance percentage by dividing the total number of days faculty were present by the total number of possible days.

   Approved professional days, personal days, staff training days, bereavement days, jury duty, and absences are not counted against days present, and faculty members on long-term leave or disability are excluded from this calculation.

18) How were the indicators in the *ESSA* accountability system determined and how were the indicator scores and summative scores and ratings calculated?
   a. Throughout the 2016-17 school year, stakeholders from across the state collaborated with the NJDOE to develop, within the legal confines of *ESSA*, the *ESSA* accountability system that is reported on in the 2016-17 School Performance Reports. More information about New Jersey's approved *ESSA* State Plan is available on the NJDOE *ESSA* website.

   More information about how indicator scores and summative scores and ratings were calculated can be found in NJDOE's accountability resources.

19) How were the cut-offs for "excelling", "showing progress", and "needing improvement" in the Summary Reports determined?
   a. NJDOE reviewed *ESSA* accountability long-term goals, statewide averages, and the distribution of data for schools and districts across the state to determine the cut-off scores for ELA and Math statewide assessment results, chronic absenteeism rates, student growth for ELA and Math, and graduation rates for the 2016-17 Summary Reports.

   For each indicator, the cut-off for "excelling" was set to identify schools or districts that either have met the state's long term goals or are performing better than most of the state. The cut-off for "needing improvement" was set to identify schools that are behind most of the state.

20) Why might some data from district and school files not match the numbers on the Performance Report?

    a. Data in the School Performance Reports has been gathered from various collections and undergoes extensive matching requirements to ensure the most accurate metrics. In some cases, data will not be able to be accurately matched, and will result in an output which is different from what a district may expect.

    Data related to school accountability (PARCC performance, student growth, chronic absenteeism, and graduation rates) is reported based on the accountable school. School and district files may be based on attending school only.

    If you have any questions on how data is calculated, please review the New Jersey School Performance Reports Reference Guide or contact the NJ SMART Helpdesk.

21) Can corrections be made to the 2016-17 School Performance Reports?

    a. Most of the data included in the reports was submitted by districts through NJ SMART, and districts had the opportunity to review their data before the window closed for corrections. Corrections cannot be made to the 2016-2017 School Performance Reports. Districts are encouraged to thoroughly review their School Performance Reports during the annual embargo periods to flag concerns.

22) What can be done to ensure better data on future Performance Reports?

    a. Districts should work to report clean and accurate data for current and future data collections, such as the NJ SMART Submissions: SID Management, State Submission, Course Roster Submission, and CTE Submission; NJDOE Homeroom Report Card Collection and Staff Certification; and assessment registration.

    Example: The NJ SMART End of Year Data for the 2016-2017 School Performance Reports was pulled from the NJ SMART End of Year SID Snapshot and the State Submission. If a student was reported to SID Management as Active but not included in the State Submission, this student would not be included in the enrollment data of the Performance Reports. Districts need to ensure they are reporting every Active student to the State Submission, with the exception of Nonpublic and Preschool Referral students.

23) Does the NJDOE take feedback, suggested improvements, or requests for additional data for future reports?

    a. NJDOE welcomes public feedback. Please fill out our feedback survey or email the NJDOE Report Card.

24) Where can I find additional information about…

    Demographics and enrollment

    PARCC assessment

    DLM assessment (alternate assessment)

    ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 English Language Proficiency test

    NJASK Science assessment data

    Biology assessment data

    Student Growth Percentiles (SGP)

PSAT/SAT data

ACT data

Advanced Placement (AP) courses/tests

International Baccalaureate (IB) courses/tests

Dual Enrollment

New Jersey Student Learning Standards

Seal of Biliteracy

Visual and Performing Arts

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Structured Learning Experiences (SLE)

Graduation rates

Dropout rates

Postsecondary Enrollment

Attendance/Absenteeism data

Length of school day

Suspensions and expulsions

Violence, Vandalism, and Substance Abuse

New Jersey Digital Learning and Assessment

New Jersey User Friendly Budgets

NJDOE Finance District Report Search

Staff Certification

New Jersey's *ESSA* state plan