

Graduation Appeals User Guide

User Guide to High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile

Introduction

In 2011, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) began using the adjusted cohort formula to calculate graduation rates, in accordance with federal requirements. This method utilizes NJ SMART data to calculate rates for schools, districts, and the State.

Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, the NJDOE was required to make changes to the methodology used to calculate the adjusted cohort graduation rate for federal reporting and accountability purposes. The United States Department of Education (USED) determined that the NJDOE must only include students who receive a diploma that is fully aligned with the state's standards, meaning they have met the state course requirements, local attendance requirements, and, depending on the year of graduation, the state graduation assessment requirements. This means that students with disabilities who did not meet some or all graduation requirements because of a modification or exemption in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) may not be counted as graduates in the calculation of the adjusted cohort graduation rate used for federal reporting and accountability purposes.

As a result, the NJDOE began calculating two versions of the adjusted cohort graduation rate starting with 2021 graduation rates. The "federal version" aligns with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requirements and [USED guidance](#) and is used for federal reporting and ESSA school accountability. The "state version" uses the same methodology used prior to 2021 and reflects all students who receive a state-endorsed diploma.

Students with disabilities who did not meet all the graduation requirements for their year of graduation because of modifications or exemptions in their IEPs will not be included in the graduates count (the numerator) when calculating the "federal version" of the adjusted cohort graduation rate, but they will still be included in the adjusted cohort (the denominator) for the calculation.

Districts can use the High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile to view both the "federal" and "state" versions of the adjusted cohort graduation rate.

High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile

NJ SMART's High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile is available on the District Report tab. It enables districts to view their 4-Year, 5-Year, and 6-Year graduation rates as well as track cohort statuses of their high school students. Like all NJ SMART District Reports, the High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile is designed to display a rich array of student information at a high level, making it easy to recognize patterns that may require further analysis. These profiles include multiple types of data that might otherwise exist in separate reports or data systems, allowing users to compare and analyze trends across various categories of information.

Graduation Appeals User Guide

Sample Report: High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION COHORT STATUS PROFILE (SA) 1

[State Snapshot or LDM]; [Snapshot Date] (Generated: [Generated Date])

[Graduation Rate]

[CDS Perspective]

[District Name]

[School Name(s)]

4 Year Graduation Cohort: [Cohort Year]

Student Characteristics	Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate % = $\frac{[\text{Graduated}]}{[\text{Adjusted Cohort Count}]}$	Adjusted Cohort Count		Graduated		Transfer Out - Unverified		On-Track Continuing		Off-Track Continuing		Dropout		Excluded From Cohort
		# of Students	% of Total	# of Students	% of Total	# of Students	% of Total	# of Students	% of Total	# of Students	% of Total	# of Students	% of Total	
Total Students	94.6%	424	100.0%	401	94.6%	1	0.2%	5	1.2%	11	2.6%	6	1.4%	19
School														
9C1V8AAU1EW08SV1VRJ97	95.2%	420	99.1%	400	95.2%	1	0.2%	2	0.5%	11	2.6%	6	1.4%	19
Cannot be determined	25.0%	4	0.9%	1	25.0%			3	75.0%					
Grade Level														
Grade 9		1	0.2%									1	100.0%	3
Grade 10		3	0.7%			1	33.3%			2	66.7%			5
Grade 11		1	2.6%							9	81.8%	2	18.2%	7
Grade 12	98.0%	409	96.5%	401	98.0%			5	1.2%			3	0.7%	4
Entering Gender														
Female		195	45.1%			1	0.5%	191	97.9%	1	0.5%	2	1.0%	16
Male	0.9%	219	50.7%	2	0.9%	1	0.5%	202	92.2%	11	5.0%	3	1.4%	15
Missing		18	4.2%					16	88.9%	1	5.6%	1	5.6%	1
Entering Race/Ethnicity														

LID	SID	First Name	Last Name	DOB	School Name	Grade Level	Entering Gender	Entering Race/Ethnicity	Entering Lunch Status	Overall Lunch Status	Retained Last Year
506142	1268601888	Ucnbib	Aabpamnaacgca xj	02/03/2004	9C1V8AAU1E W08SV1VRJ9 7	12	Missing	Eomnzbz	Missing	Y	N
808154	3193813950	Brgpzus	Aahfsqdzixbaaxj	10/17/2003	9C1V8AAU1E W08SV1VRJ9 7	12	M	Bknelaog	N	Y	N
200110	6079652252	Doyhgghy	Aakbh	12/01/2003	9C1V8AAU1E W08SV1VRJ9 7	12	F	Bknelaog	N	N	N
1807902	2667002696	Dfbgdo	Aamka	10/18/2003	9C1V8AAU1E W08SV1VRJ9 7	12	M	Oapqa	N	N	N
706185	9120648710	Xaaf	Aaqth	10/16/2002	9C1V8AAU1E W08SV1VRJ9 7	12	M	Oapqa	N	N	N

**Enrollment profile
Assessment profile**

Graduation Appeals User Guide

Profile Description

1 **Profile Header** displays the profile name, whether it is an Official Snapshot or Local Data Mart profile, chosen school year, date that the profile was generated, calculation type, accountable or attending perspective, district name, school name(s), and 4 Year Graduation Cohort year.

2 **4 Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate** is calculated from the following equation:

$$\frac{\text{Graduated}}{\text{Adjusted Cohort Count}}$$

The students who are included in the graduated count (the numerator) will differ depending on whether the federal or state calculation is selected.

3 **Cohort Statuses (Columns):**

- **Adjusted Cohort Count** refers to the number of students in the final cohort, as adjusted by the number of incoming and outgoing transfers. In the context of this profile, your adjusted cohort count is comprised of: Graduated, Transfer Out- Unverified, Transfer In, On-Track Continuing, Off-Track Continuing, Status Unknown, and Dropout students.
- **Graduated** refers to students that have been exited from SID Management as graduates through the summer of the specified cohort year and whose cohort has been determined to be that year. The Graduated count differs based on whether the state or federal calculation is selected on the parameters page:
 - **State Level Report:** Student Exit Withdrawal Code: L
 - **Federal Level Report:** Student Exit Withdrawal Code: L, IEP Graduation Attendance <> 1, *and* IEP Graduation Course Requirement <> 1 *and, if School Exit Date is between September 1, 2021 and August 31, 2022 only*, Graduation Pathway Indicator for both Math and ELA <>"M"
- **Graduated (State Calculation Only)** will only appear in the federal level report. This status refers to students that have been exited from SID Management as graduates through the summer of the specified cohort year who did not meet the state course requirements, state attendance requirements, or, depending on the year of graduation, the state assessment requirements for graduation because of an exemption or modification to their IEP. These students have graduated, but they count as graduates only in the state version of the graduation rate calculation.
 - Student Exit Withdrawal Code: L
 - IEP Graduation Course Requirement = 1 OR IEP Graduation Attendance = 1 OR
 - If School Exit Date is between September 1, 2021 and August 31, 2022: ELA Graduation Pathway Indicator= M OR Math Graduation Pathway Indicator= M
- **Transfer Out – Unverified** refers to students that an LEA inactivated as Transfers but were never re-activated by

Graduation Appeals User Guide

another district or state institution. Thus, the student remains in the original district’s cohort and is considered a “non-graduate” in the graduation rate calculation. (A ‘Transfer Out’ is considered verified when another district/institution activates the student’s SID, thereby adding the student to its cohort)

- Student Exit Withdrawal Codes: T4, T6, T7, TC, TR, TD, TA
- **Transfer In** refers to *active* cohort students who transferred into your district and have been added to your adjusted cohort count. Students will have a temporary “Transfer In” status until the first State Submission subsequent to the transfer; at that time, the cohort status will be updated based on their submitted grade level.
- **On-Track Continuing** refers to *active* cohort students who are considered on-track to graduating in four years. Each State Submission, active students’ cohort statuses are updated based on their submitted grade levels; if student’s progress as expected through grade levels, they will remain “On-Track Continuing” until they exit as graduates.
- **Off-Track Continuing** refers to *active* cohort students who are not progressing through grade levels on time and are considered off-track to graduating in four years.
- **Active Students – Status Unknown** refers to *active* cohort students who were not submitted in the district’s most recent State Submission, and therefore their status is unknown.
- **Dropout** refers to students who have dropped out of school for various reasons.
 - Student Exit Withdrawal Codes: D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7, D8, D11
- **Excluded from Cohort Status** refers to exempt cases that are not included in your cohort and therefore do not factor into the graduation rate. The status of these students in your district is subject to audit by the NJ Department of Education.
 - Student Exit Withdrawal Codes: D9, T3, T8, T9, TP, PPE



Student Group Variables (Rows) can be clicked on to filter the population to the row category selected. This filter will allow the user to drill down to further examine each student group by clicking on the variable name within the profile. The available student group variables are:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ● School | ● Overall English Language Learner (ELL Status) |
| ● Grade Level | ● Overall Foster Status |
| ● Entering Gender | ● Overall Military-Connected |
| ● Entering Race/Ethnicity | ● Time in District |
| ● Overall Economically Disadvantaged (Lunch Status) | ● Students Retained List |
| ● Overall Special Education Status | ● Number of Days Not Present |
| ● Overall Migrant Status | ● Discipline |
| ● Overall Homeless Status | ● Program Enrollment |

Starting in 2020-2021, the Economically Disadvantaged, Special Education, Migrant, Homeless, English Language

Graduation Appeals User Guide

Learner, Foster, and Military-Connected status groups became based on overall status and not entering status. This means that students will be identified in these student groups if they were ever reported to be in these student groups since entering the cohort. This change is based on updated guidance from the United States Department of Education (USED). Gender and Race/Ethnicity will continue to be based on entering status.



Profile Features: The High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile presents a starting point for further data analysis and includes:

- Ability to view aggregate student counts from NJ SMART snapshot data across multiple years and submissions, disaggregated across multiple categories.
- Ability to drill down from aggregate counts to detailed Student Lists that summarize key data for students.
- Ability to drill down from Student Lists to detailed student Enrollment and Assessment Records that provide history and in-depth information from across various submissions for individual students.
- Ability to export all profiles into Excel for further analysis and printing.

Resources

Online training resources designed to assist LEAs in using the profiles are available on the Help and Support tab of the NJ SMART portal. Resources include an introduction video, instructions on how to access and read the profiles, FAQs, and a guided data analysis protocol.

In addition, NJ SMART hosts a series of webinars and on-demand eLearning videos to provide further assistance, including [High School Graduation](#) and [District Reports](#). For the current webinar schedule and to review other eLearning videos, please visit the eLearning Videos and Webinars section of the [Resources & Trainings](#) page.

The NJ Department of Education's [website](#) has more information regarding the development of the new high school graduation rate and a related list of FAQs for school districts.

For further information or assistance from NJ SMART, contact the Help Desk at 1-800-254-0295 or njsmart@pcgus.com.