High School Graduation FAQs

This document answers frequently asked questions related to the NJ SMART High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile and Graduation Appeals process.

Contents

Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates

1. ***Question: When did the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) begin using the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) methodology?***

    Answer: The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) began using the adjusted cohort graduation rate methodology in 2011, which all states are required to use for reporting per federal requirements.

2. ***Question: What is a graduation cohort?***

    Answer: A graduation cohort is a group of students who entered 9th grade during the same school year. In New Jersey, all first-time 9th graders are assigned to a cohort. During high school, the cohort is adjusted each year to add verified transfers in and subtract verified transfers out.

    The adjusted cohort is the group of students who remain in the cohort after these adjustments are made. Any students who drop out during high school and any students who are still enrolled remain in the adjusted cohort for graduation rate calculations.

3. Question: How is the adjusted cohort graduation rate calculated?

Answer: The adjusted cohort graduation rate measures how many of the students who entered ninth grade end up graduating. New Jersey measures and reports on four-year, five-year, and six-year adjusted cohort graduation rates.

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.

It is important to note that this is only a change to how graduation rates are calculated for federal reporting. It does not affect requirements to earn a diploma or the type of diploma that the State awards to students with disabilities.

As a result of these changes, the NJDOE began calculating two versions of the adjusted cohort graduation rate starting with 2021 graduation rates. The "federal version" aligns with 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.

To be included as a graduate in the federal version of the graduation rate, students must have met state course requirements and local attendance requirements for graduation. Additionally, students must meet the graduation assessment requirements in place based on the year they are graduating, regardless of their graduation cohort. This means that a student in Cohort 2022 who graduates in five years during the 2022-2023 school year (between September 1, 2022 and August 31, 2023) must meet the graduation assessment requirements for the class of 2023, not the class of 2022 graduation assessment requirements.

Districts identify students who did not meet the state course requirements and/or the attendance requirements due to an exemption or modification in their IEP using the NJ SMART SID Management IEP Graduation Course Requirement and IEP Graduation Attendance fields, respectively. Districts identify how students have met the state graduation assessment requirements using the NJ SMART SID Management ELA and Math Graduation Pathway Indicators.

Students with disabilities who do 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

<mark>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.</mark>

<mark>See the New Jersey Graduation Assessment Requirements page for details about the graduation assessment requirements by graduating class.</mark>

State Version:
The cohort status of "Graduated" will be assigned to any student with a School Exit Withdrawal Code of "L".

The numerator includes students with a cohort status of "Graduated".

The denominator includes all students in the adjusted cohort at the time of the calculation. This includes students with following cohort statuses:
- Graduated
- On-Track Continuing
- Off-Track Continuing
- Dropout
- Active Student: Status Unknown
- Transfer Out – Unverified

Federal Version:
The cohort status of "Graduated" will be assigned to any students who have a School Exit Withdrawal Code of "L" and do not have any of the following:
- IEP Graduation Course Requirement equal to 1
- IEP Graduation Attendance fields equal to 1
- ELA Graduation Pathway Indicator equal to M
    - <mark>This only applies to students who graduated with the class of 2022 (between September 1, 2021 and August 31, 2022) because there are no graduation assessment requirements for students graduating with the class of 2023.</mark>
- Math Graduation Pathway Indicator equal to M
    - <mark>This only applies to students who graduated with the class of 2022 (between September 1, 2021 and August 31, 2022) because there are no graduation assessment requirements for students graduating with the class of 2023.</mark>

The above values in these fields indicate that a student did not meet the state course requirements, attendance requirements, and/or assessment requirements for graduation by utilizing a modification or exemption in their IEP.

Students who have a School Exit Withdrawal Code of "L" and also have a value of 1 in either the IEP Graduation Course Requirement or IEP Graduation Attendance fields will be assigned to a cohort status of Graduated (State Calculation Only). <mark>Additionally, if any students graduated with the class of 2022 and they had a value of M in either the ELA Graduation Pathway Indicator or Math Graduation Pathway Indicator fields, they will also be assigned a cohort status of Graduated (State</mark>

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The numerator includes students with a cohort status of "Graduated." It will not include students with a cohort status of "Graduated (State Calculation Only)."

The denominator includes all students in the adjusted cohort at the time of the calculation. This includes students with following cohort statuses:

- Graduated
- Graduated (State Calculation Only)
- On-Track Continuing
- Off-Track Continuing
- Dropout
- Active Student: Status Unknown
- Transfer Out – Unverified

4. Question: Does this change require districts to report graduates differently in NJ SMART?

Answer: No, districts should continue to report any students who earn a state-endorsed diploma with a School Exit Withdrawal Code of "L" ("Graduation").

Additionally, it is important to note that this is only a change to how graduation rates are calculated for federal reporting; it does not affect requirements to earn a diploma or the type of diploma that the State awards to students with disabilities.

5. Question: How can I select whether I want to see the "state version" or the "federal version" of the adjusted cohort graduation rate?

Answer: Under the Required Parameters for the NJ SMART High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile Report, there is an option for Calculation Type. The dropdown will allow you to select between "state calculation" and "federal calculation."

6. Question: Which version of the adjusted cohort graduation rate will be reported?

Answer: The NJDOE reports both versions of the adjusted cohort graduation rate. The "federal version" is used for all federal reporting and for ESSA school accountability. The "state version" is also included, along with the "federal version," in the School Performance Reports.

7. Question: Why was this changed to the federal version of the adjusted cohort graduation rate?

Answer: USED conducted a Performance Review of the NJDOE's compliance with federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requirements in October 2019. The final performance report from USED determined that the NJDOE needed to make changes to the methodology used to calculate the adjusted cohort graduation rate beginning with the 2020-2021 school year.

As noted in #3 above, additional changes were implemented in the 2021-2022 school year to exclude students who have not met the graduation assessment requirements in the federal calculation. This change was not implemented in the 2020-2021 school year because the graduation assessment requirements for Class of 2021 graduates were waived under Executive Order 214.

Under P.L. 2022, c.60, there is no graduation assessment requirement for any student who is expected to graduate with the class of 2023, so in the federal calculations for 2022-2023, no students who graduated between September 1, 2022 and August 31, 2023 will be excluded for not meeting graduation assessment requirements.

8. *Question: How are student groups defined for reporting adjusted cohort graduation rates?*

   Answer: The NJDOE reports adjusted cohort groups by the following student groups:
   - Gender
   - Race/Ethnicity
   - Economically Disadvantaged Students
   - Students with Disabilities
   - English Language Learners
   - Homeless Students
   - Migrant Students
   - Students in Foster Care
   - Military-Connected Students

   Prior to 2020-2021, all student groups were based on a student's status when they entered the cohort, typically in grade nine. Beginning in 2020-2021, all student groups, except for Gender and Race/Ethnicity, will be based on a student's overall status since entering the cohort. This means that if a student was reported in that student group at any time in high school, the student will be considered as part of that student group for reporting purposes. Gender and Race/Ethnicity will continue to be determined based on entering status. This change was made based on updated guidance from USED.

Cohort Assignment

9. *Question: How are students assigned to a cohort in NJ SMART?*

   Answer: Students are assigned to a graduation cohort in NJ SMART the first time they are uploaded into the NJ SMART system in a high school grade level (grades 9 through 12) and captured on an Official SID Management Snapshot. Districts can see all students assigned to each cohort in the NJ SMART High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile Report.

10. Question: How are cohorts assigned to students who transfer into the state after ninth grade (e.g. a student who transfers to New Jersey from out-of-state in tenth grade)?

Answer: Students will be assigned to whichever cohort they would have joined in 9th grade. For example, if a student entered the NJ SMART system as a 10th grader in October of 2019, that student would have been assigned to the 2022 cohort.

11. Question: Will a student's cohort change if they are retained and repeat the same grade, skip a grade, or graduate early?

Answer: No, once a student is assigned to a cohort, they will remain in that cohort.

If a student is retained and repeats a grade, the cohort status will become "Off-Track Continuing" while still enrolled until the student graduates. If a student graduates early, their cohort remains the same. For example, if a student in Cohort 2023 graduates in June 2022, that student will remain in Cohort 2023 and will be included in the four-year graduation rate for 2023 cohort. That student will not be included in the graduation rate for the 2022 cohort.

12. Question: Can I change a student's cohort year?

Answer: The student's cohort year can only be changed if the student was incorrectly assigned to the wrong cohort year. The SID Management system would need to reflect that the student belonged in a different cohort year. For example, the student's assessment record should clearly show that the student completed grade-level assessments that align to a different cohort year.

A student's cohort year can only be changed through the graduation appeals process after the NJDOE has confirmed that the student was incorrectly assigned.

Cohort Status

13. Question: Which students should be marked as graduates?

Answer: Only students who earn a state-endorsed diploma by August 31st should be marked as a graduate (School Exit Withdrawal Code of "L"). A state-endorsed diploma is awarded to students who meet state course requirements, state attendance requirements, and state graduation assessment requirements.

Students with disabilities who earn a state-endorsed diploma but did not meet the state course requirements, state attendance requirements, and/or state assessment requirements because of a modification or exemption in their IEP should continue to be marked as graduates in NJ SMART. Changes to federal graduation calculations do not impact how districts should report these students.

14. Question: My district inactivated a student as a dropout but then the student was activated in another district. Will this student still count as a "Dropout" for my district in graduation rate calculations?

Answer: No, NJ SMART will recognize the student as active in a new district and they will no longer be considered a dropout in graduation calculations.

15. Question: Are students who become "Off-Track Continuing" in another district and then transfer into our district included in our graduation rate even though they were not in our district when they were retained?

Answer: Yes, they will count as off-track in your district. Graduation cohort statuses are based on a four-year expected timeline of graduation for each student and are updated based on student progress through grade levels. "On-Track / Off-Track Continuing" statuses are not affected by transferring to a new school.

16. Question: Are students who transfer out-of-state considered "Transfer Out – Unverified" since those students will not be reactivated on another district's register in NJ SMART?

Answer: A verified transfer to an out-of-state school will count as "Excluded from Cohort" and the student will be subtracted from your school's cohort count (i.e., your district is no longer responsible for the student with respect to this calculation). Districts should make sure to use a School Exit Withdrawal Code of "T8" ("Transfer out of the state or country") for students who transfer outside of New Jersey.

17. Question: How are students who graduate early (e.g. in three years) accounted for in graduation rate calculations?

Answer: As long as students are exited with a School Exit Withdrawal Code of "L", they will be counted as graduates for their cohort (i.e., the cohort they were assigned in 9th grade) in the four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rate.

18. Question: Is a "Status Unknown" student included in graduation rate calculations?

Answer: Yes, if you have active students with "Cohort Status Unknown" statuses at the time that the graduation rate is calculated, they will be included in your adjusted cohort count (i.e., in the denominator of the graduation rate calculation).

19. Question: How do we report students who are staying for post-graduate work and how are they included in graduation rate calculations?

Answer: Students who meet graduation requirements and receive a state-endorsed diploma should be exited as graduates ("L") in the year in which they have met the requirements and the diploma is issued.

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If a student is participating in an approved Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) program and will continue in the program to earn an associate degree after a high school diploma is earned, the student should be exited as a graduate ("L") when they meet the high school graduation requirements and the School Exit Date should be based on when the diploma was issued. Similar to other graduates, P-TECH students who have received their high school diploma but are still enrolled as they work towards their associate degree should be reported as inactive through the Fall Snapshot after they graduate high school. After the Fall Snapshot, the student's inactive record can be removed, and the student should no longer be reported in NJ SMART. Participating districts will receive additional guidance on how to share information with NJDOE about students continuing in the program and completing associate degrees.

The graduation cohort status for students in P-TECH programs will be calculated using the same methodology as used for all students in the cohort, and the graduation cohort will not be changed for students participating in a P-TECH program. Students in these programs will remain as graduated in the adjusted cohort calculation once they are captured as graduated on an official snapshot. If a student in a P-TECH program does not complete the graduation requirements and earn a diploma in four years, the student should remain as an active student in grade 12, similar to any student who does not earn a diploma in four years.

If students will be entering another type of post-graduate program or enrolling in continuing or adult education courses in the district, the students should no longer be reported to SID Management (please note that students who are continuing as postgraduates are not publicly funded).

20. **Question: What should I do if a student is included in my 2023 Cohort as "Transfer Out — Unverified" but they were assigned a new SID by another district?**

    Answer: You will need to contact the district that received the student and obtain the SID number that they submitted for the student. You should email the NJ SMART Help Desk with both SID numbers and request a SID merge. Once the SIDs are merged, the student will be removed from your "Transfer Out — Unverified" bucket.

NJ SMART Submissions

21. **Question: What do I need to submit to NJ SMART for my graduation rate report?**

    Answer: There is no separate graduation data collection in NJ SMART. Graduation rates are based on information that districts already submit to NJ SMART in SID Management. The most important thing to remember is to be timely in the inactivation of your high school students in NJ SMART. Students completing the school year in your district should remain "Active" in the system for the End of Year SID Management Snapshot. After the EOY Snapshot is taken, districts can begin inactivating their students (as appropriate). The deadline for inactivating students is August 31st. On August 31st, an official Graduation Snapshot is taken of SID Management to calculate four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rates.

22. Question: Can I change a student's School Exit Withdrawal Code if I inactivate a student in error?

Answer: Yes, with the exception of the School Exit Withdrawal Code of "L", you can change a student's School Exit Withdrawal Code in SID Management by submitting the student to SID Management with a District Status and School Status = Active and clearing all errors. Once the student record has been reactivated and is error-free, you can inactivate it with the updated School Exit Withdrawal Code. Please note that if you simply try to edit an inactive record by changing the Exit Code without first reactivating the student, the system will not register the change.

If students were incorrectly exited as graduated ("L") and captured as such on an official snapshot, a graduation appeal is required to change the student's status.

23. Question: Where can I view New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) and Foster Indicator data in NJ SMART?

Answer: You can access NJSLA and Foster Indicator data through the Student List within the District Reports page. To access District Reports, your NJ SMART account must have District Reports access. If you do not have this access, please contact your district's Homeroom Administrator.
- Navigate to the Reporting tab of the NJ SMART portal and select District Reports.
- Select Student List.
- On the Report Parameters page, use the dropdown menus to select the students who you wish to view by a variety of parameters such as School, Gender, Grade Level, and others.
- Click Run Report.
- The Student List will display any students who met your outlined parameters. You can click the Export to Excel link to download an Excel file with the students' data for analysis.

Special Education Students

24. Question: Will students who are eligible to receive special education services and programs until the age of 21 remain in my graduation cohort? Can I change their cohort year?

Answer: Students who are eligible to receive special education services and programs until the age of 21 are assigned to a graduation cohort using the same methodology used for all students. These students cannot be excluded from your cohort or assigned to a different cohort, per federal policy and guidance: High School Graduation Rate Non-Regulatory Guidance.

Students eligible to receive special education services and programs beyond the fourth year of high school are able to participate in commencement ceremonies with their graduation class and receive a certificate of attendance (*N.J.S.A.* 18A:7C-5.2). However, these students should not be marked as graduates until they receive a state-endorsed diploma by satisfactorily completing their IEP and meeting appropriate graduation requirements.

25. Question: How are students who are parentally placed in non-public schools (in order to receive special education services) included in the graduation rate calculation?

Answer: If the student was submitted to the most recent SID Management Snapshot with a NonPublic value of "REC" or "NREC," they will be categorized as "Excluded from Cohort." Please use the School Exit Withdrawal Code of "PPE" to inactivate all non-public students so that their cohort statuses will display as "Excluded from Cohort."

26. Question: What are the requirements to use code "M" (Alternate Requirements in the IEP) for the ELA and Math Graduation Pathway indicators?

Answer: This code can only be used for students who are currently determined eligible for special education and related services and have an IEP. It should only be used for students who did not meet the graduation assessment requirements by passing the statewide assessment or a substitute competency test or through the portfolio appeals process, but instead met alternate requirements specified in their IEPs.

Please note, districts should report a value of W (Class of 2023 per P.L. 2022, c.60: No graduation assessment requirements) for the ELA and Math Graduation Pathway Indicators for all students graduating with the class of 2023.

Accountable High Schools

27. Question: How is a student's accountable school or district determined when calculating graduation rates?

Answer: The assignment of a student's accountable school and district is based on the High School Graduation Accountable Rules User Guide on the NJ SMART Resources & Trainings page. The Accountable CDS Perspective is derived based on students' CDS Codes as submitted by districts; please refer to NJ SMART's Reporting Responsibilities document to ensure that all students' Attending, Receiving, and Resident CDS Codes are being reported correctly. A student's In-District Placement field, located in SID Management, is also used to determine their accountable school.

A school's Federal School Type, State School Type, Operational Status, and school grades from the CDS System also impact accountability designations. Districts should ensure that the information in CDS is up to date.

28. Question: The NJ SMART High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile has options to view graduation data by both the attending and accountable perspective. Which version will be used for public reporting of graduation rates?

Answer: All public reporting of graduation rates reflects the accountable perspective.

Graduation Appeal Requests

29. Question: Where do I go to appeal any graduation data?

Answer: Users should navigate to the "Graduation Appeals" page under the Reporting tab in the NJ SMART portal to make an appeal request. This page is available to any user with "District Reports" access, which should be requested through your Homeroom Administrator. On this page, you will be able to view a list of your "Cohort Students," click on an individual student's LID to drill down to the Student Details page, and submit an Appeal Request Form. In addition, you will be able to view a list of your "Appeal Requests" to track and monitor submitted requests. An appeal request can only be submitted when the Graduation Appeals period is open. Please review the NJ SMART Timeline for the current school year's Graduation Appeals open and close dates.

30. Question: The data in the Official Snapshot taken on August 31st regarding my High School Graduation Cohort Status profile is incorrect. Can I fix it?

Answer: Districts are encouraged to monitor and maintain their graduation data throughout the school year by using Official Snapshot and Local Data Mart (LDM) High School Graduation Cohort Status Profile. However, after the August 31st Graduation Snapshot data is released in September, a Graduation Appeals period opens for that year's four-year, five-year and six-year graduation rates. District users can submit appeal requests to the NJDOE for individual student records; each request is evaluated by an NJDOE official and decided upon. Any approved requests are incorporated into your LEA's Official Snapshot graduation data.

31. Question: Why is my appeal for a student who transferred out of my district after June 30th, 2023 being rejected?

Answer: If the student transferred after June 30th, 2023, then the student completed the 2022-2023 school year in your district and your district should remain accountable for that student in 2023 graduation rates. Appeal requests to remove students who transferred after June 30th will not be approved. Students who transfer to another district after the close of the 2022-2023 school year should not be reflected in the new district's graduation rate until 2024 rates are calculated.

32. Question: Why am I receiving an error message when I try to submit an appeal to request a cohort year change?

Answer: An appeal cannot be accepted if you are trying to change the cohort year to:
- the year that it is already set to; or
- a year that is too far in the future or too far into the past.

You must contact gradappeals@doe.nj.gov if you require a cohort year change that is too far into the future or too far into the past.

33. Question: Can I appeal a record for a student who graduated in Cohort 2020?

Answer: No, only cohort years 2021, 2022, and 2023 can be appealed.

34. Question: Will I be able to appeal if I forgot to inactivate my 12th graders before the August 31st Snapshot?

Answer: Yes. You will need to contact the NJ SMART Help Desk by calling (800) 254-0295 or emailing NJSMART@pcgus.com to obtain instructions for completing the Mass Appeals template.

35. Question: Can I appeal to remove a student from my cohort who is showing as dropped out, but the student received a state-issued diploma by passing a high school equivalency test?

Answer: No. For the purposes of calculating the adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR), under 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1)(iv), a "regular high school diploma" means the standard high school diploma awarded to students in a state that is fully aligned with the state's academic content standards and does not include a GED credential, certificate of attendance, or any alternative award. Therefore, a student who leaves school to obtain a state-issued diploma based on passing a high school equivalency assessment (i.e. GED, HISET, TASC) is counted as a dropout in NJ SMART. Please note that this reflects the Federal policy: High School Graduation Rate Non-Regulatory Guidance.

36. Question: How can I appeal a student who was submitted with the incorrect ELA Graduation Pathway Indicator and/or Math Graduation Pathway Indicator?

Answer: You should select Reason for Appeal G on the Graduation Appeals form and complete all required sections to change one or more Graduation Pathway Indicator for a student.

If you are appealing to change a student's status (Reason for Appeal A or B) and a change to the Graduation Pathway Indicators is also required, please select G for Reason for Appeal (2).

Please note, districts should report a value of W (Class of 2023 per P.L. 2022, c.60: No graduation assessment requirements) for the ELA and Math Graduation Pathway Indicators for all students graduating with the class of 2023. Appeals to change pathways for students graduating between September 1, 2022 and August 31, 2023 to a value other than W will not be approved.

37. Question: Do the graduation rates posted on the NJDOE website and in the New Jersey School Performance Reports reflect approved appeals?

Answer: Yes, approved appeals are applied to the August 31st Graduation Snapshot data available through the NJ SMART Graduation Profiles. This will match the data displayed on the NJDOE website and the School Performance Reports.

38. A student's In-District Placement value was incorrectly reported to the Snapshot and the student's Accountable School is incorrect. Can I appeal this record to assign the correct Accountable School?

Answer: Yes, you can appeal the record, but you will first need to update the student's record in SID Management to reflect the correct In-District Placement value. Once that is complete, you can then file an appeal and select option H (In-District Placement) as the reason for appeal.

39. Can I appeal a record with an incorrect value reported for IEP Graduation Attendance or IEP Graduation Course Requirement?

Answer: Yes, you can appeal the record, but you will first need to update the student's record in SID Management to reflect the correct values. Once that is complete, you can then file an appeal and select option J (Student's IEP Graduation Course Requirement or IEP Graduation Attendance is incorrect) as the reason for appeal.

40. Can I appeal a record with an incorrect value reported for a student group's Overall Value?

Answer: Yes, you can appeal the record. When you file an appeal, select option I (Student's Overall Values are incorrect (Lunch Status, English Language Learner Status, Special Education Classification, Migrant Status, Homeless Status, Foster Status, or Military Status)) as the reason for appeal. Since this is a calculated field based over multiple snapshots, you do not need to update the student's record in SID. However, if there is an error in the most recent snapshot that caused the incorrect value, the student's record in SID Management should be updated to reflect the correct values.

Graduation Appeals: Student Transfer Questions

41. Question: How are districts required to document transfers?

Answer: When NJDOE transitioned to the adjusted cohort graduation rate methodology, a memo was shared with districts that explained the importance of documenting transfers. The memo included a link to a form to keep on file for the documentation of transfers. This documentation is subject to audit by NJDOE.

Students who transfer from one public school district to another must have documentation of a transfer once the student ID (SID Number) is accepted by the receiving district. Other types of transfers will require a parent/guardian's signature and other specific documentation on file to verify the transfer, if applicable. Without the proper verification, the transfer must be classified as a dropout or a transfer out - unverified.

If districts request changes to a student's cohort status during the appeals period, districts may be required to provide documentation. Valid documentation requirements are outlined in the NJ SMART Graduation Appeals User Guide.

42. Question: I have a transfer card verifying that a student transferred to another public-school district in New Jersey; however, the student is still included in my district's cohort. Can I appeal?

Answer: Yes. You will need to contact the receiving district to determine if they uploaded the student. If this was not done, instruct them to upload the student immediately. It is also possible that the receiving district assigned the student a different state identification (SID) number. If so, you will need to acquire that SID number to submit an appeal so we can merge the two records.

43. Question: Why is my appeal being rejected by the NJ SMART system if he/she transferred to another NJ SMART submitting district?

Answer: For a student to be transferred, their current status in your district's SID Management must have a District Status and School Status of inactive. The student's current status in SID Management is likely active. In order to submit the appeal, the student must first be fully inactivated in SID Management.

44. Question: A student transferred out of my district to a school that is not a NJ SMART submitting district (e.g. a non-public school in New Jersey, a school outside the state or country, parental instruction, or a private facility). Will that student still be counted in my district's cohort? Can I appeal?

Answer: Yes, a student who transferred to a non-public school, a school outside the state or country, to parental instruction, or a private facility will still appear in your cohort in NJ SMART. However, if the appropriate exit code of T3 (transfer to nonpublic school within NJ), T8 (transfer out of state or country), T9 (transfer to parental instruction), or TP (transfer to private facility) was used, the student will be included in the "Excluded from Cohort" status and the student will not be included in graduation rate calculations.

If the student transferred to one of these types of schools and the wrong transfer code was used, you can appeal using Reason for Appeal B, but you will be asked to provide documentation to verify the request. Valid documentation requirements are outlined in the NJ SMART Graduation Appeals User Guide.

45. Question: Can I appeal a record for a student if I entered the incorrect School Exit Withdrawal Code of T4 (transfer to any public school outside the district and within NJ)?

Answer: Yes, but if you request exit code of T3 (transfer to nonpublic school within NJ), T8 (transfer out of state or country), T9 (transfer to parental instruction), or TP (transfer to private facility) you will need to provide documentation to verify the request. Valid documentation requirements are outlined in the NJ SMART Graduation Appeals User Guide.

47. Question: What transfer code should be used for a student transferring to an adult education program to pursue a state-issued diploma by passing a high school equivalency assessment (e.g. GED, TASC, HISET)? Can I appeal to remove the student from my cohort?

Answer: If a student leaves your district to attend an adult education program to pursue a state-issued diploma by passing a high school equivalency assessment (i.e. GED, HISET, TASC), a dropout code (D1-D8 or D11) should be used as the School Exit Withdrawal Code. These students will remain in your cohort and will be considered as dropout students. They cannot be appealed to be removed from your cohort.

If a student transfers to an adult high school program to pursue a locally-issued, State-endorsed high school diploma, then the TA School Exit Withdrawal Code should be used. The resident district should be submitting these students in NJ SMART and the students will remain in the resident high school's cohort.

48. Question: What transfer code should be used for a student transferring to an online high school program?

Answer: If a student leaves your district to attend an online high school program, a transfer code of T9 (Transfer to parental instruction) should be used as the School Exit Withdrawal Code. These students will be excluded from your cohort for graduation rate calculations. Districts should maintain documentation that includes a signed letter from the parent/guardian indicating that the student will be provided appropriate educational services.

49. Question: Why am I receiving an error that the School Exit Date is after August 31st?

Answer: A student's School Exit Date must be on or before August 31st to be considered a part of the August 31st Graduation Snapshot. Students who transferred or exited after August 31st are considered to be a part of the next school year and those changes do not impact the 4-year graduation rate for 2023 cohort, the 5-year graduation rate for the 2022 cohort, and the 6-year graduation rate for the 2021 cohort.