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To: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Public Schools
Principals of Public Schools
BOCES Superintendents
BOCES Principals
Leaders of Charter Schools

From: Marybeth Casey, Assistant Commissioner *Marybeth Casey*
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Subject: Update: Student-Level Digital Access Data Collection

Date: May 2022

This memo provides updated information on the new student digital access data collection in the Student Information Repository System (SIRS) for public school districts, BOCES, and charter schools for the 2021-22 school year.

Memos dated [June 8, 2021](#), [September 7, 2021](#), and [January 7, 2022](#) provided information on this new data collection. The [June 8, 2021 memo](#) urged districts to enter data on the level of access to devices and broadband internet students have in their place(s) of residence into the Student Information and Repository System (SIRS) as soon as possible.

The Department recognizes and commends schools, districts, and BOCES for their continued efforts to obtain this data. It has been brought to the attention of the Department that the system requirement that all records be 100% complete has prevented many schools from being able to submit large quantities of data. In response to requests, the Department will now allow partial responses to the digital access data collection beginning May 2022.

All schools, districts, and BOCES are expected to submit any data previously collected, even if the record is partially complete, and should continue to report digital access data throughout the 2021-22SY data collection.

While we share in the hope that the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic is behind us, digital learning will be part of New York State's future. It is, and will continue to be, imperative that districts, BOCES, charter schools, and the New York State Education Department

have, and maintain, an updated, accurate, complete picture of the state of digital access to computing devices and broadband internet for each individual student.

To support schools, districts, and BOCES in digital equity initiatives, the Department has worked with its [Digital Learning Advisory Council](#) to create a [Digital Equity Readiness Checklist](#). This optional resource provides districts and schools with ideas, suggestions, and resources to help as they work to improve digital equity for their students.

In addition, the Department encourages schools, districts, and BOCES to visit the [NYS Library's Digital Equity website](#), which includes additional resources such as the [NYS Digital Equity Portal](#), reports including [Achieving Digital Equity in New York: An Outline for Collaborative Change](#), links to live and recorded virtual events, and a link to sign up for the [Department's Digital Equity listserv](#).

In circumstances where obtaining information from a student's parent or guardian has proven difficult, the Department encourages schools, districts, and BOCES to consider accepting responses from individuals with knowledge of the answers, such as older students, or, in limited cases, the classroom teacher. In addition, schools, districts, and BOCES are allowed to obtain responses from parents or guardians over the phone or through other communication channels, and are allowed to explain the questions in family-friendly terms to better ensure responses are accurate. In circumstances where a student has more than one residence or be in a situation where they may access instruction from more than one location, the school should report the data for the location with the least degree of access.

For assistance with Digital Equity data collection via SIRS, please contact your local Regional Information Center (RIC) or Big 5 Level 1 Reporting Center. For questions about reporting data in SIRS, please contact the Office of Information and Reporting Services [Data Support](#).

As always, we thank you for all that you do for the children of New York.