

Understanding  
New York State Accountability  
under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)  
2020-21 Accountability Statuses



New York State Education Department

Office of Accountability

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## Introduction

The following document provides answers to questions about the New York State Accountability System under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). In this document, unless stated otherwise, the term “school” refers to public schools registered by the New York State Board of Regents and public charter schools.

### 1. How will accountability statuses for the 2020-21 school year be determined?

Due to the unprecedented circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the New York State Education Department (SED, or the Department) applied for and was granted a waiver by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) to be exempt from administering and reporting standardized state assessments, calculating and reporting all accountability indicators except graduation rate, and making accountability status determinations for the 2020-21 school year using 2019-20 school year data.

As such, the accountability status of public schools and districts in New York State for the 2020-21 school year will be the same as it was for the 2019-20 school year. Also, 2018-19 school year results will be used in any instance for which 2019-20 school year results would have been used as part of the process of making 2021-22 school year accountability determinations. Therefore:

- Any district that was identified as a Target District in the 2019-20 school year will maintain that identification status in the 2020-21 school year.
- Any school that was identified as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) School or Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) School in the 2019-20 school year will maintain that identification status in the 2020-21 school year.
- There will be no progress determinations made based on 2019-20 school year data for identified Target Districts, CSI Schools, and TSI Schools; 2020-21 school year data will be used to make the second-year progress determinations.
- No schools will be identified as Recognition Schools in the 2020-21 school year.
- No new schools will be identified as being required to complete a Participation Rate Improvement Plan in the 2020-21 school year based on 2019-20 data.
- The 2021-22 school year results, rather than 2020-21 school year results, will be used to create the next list of Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools.

For more information, see the April 17, 2020 memorandum from Assistant Commissioner of the Office of Accountability, Jason Harmon, entitled “2019-20 Accountability Implications Based on April 2020 United States Department of Education Waivers and Changes to Commissioner’s Regulations §100.21 to Address the COVID-19 Crisis” available at <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/coronavirus/nysed-covid-19-memo-accountability-implications-usde-waivers-commissioner-regs.pdf>.

### 2. How will the graduation rate indicator for 2019-20 be used?

Counts of students in the graduation rate cohorts and the percentage of these students who graduated will be reported in the 2019-20 New York State Report Card and will be provided for informational purposes only.

### 3. How will graduation rate indicator cohort count and graduation rates be determined for the 2019-20 school year?

The cohorts used for reporting 2019-20 school year graduation rate accountability data are students who enter Grade 9 in the same school year or, for ungraded students with disabilities, attained the age of 17 in that same school year. On June 30<sup>th</sup> four, five, and six years after the students enter Grade 9 or turn 17, the students are considered part of the **4-Year Graduation Rate Total Cohort**, the **5-Year Graduation Rate Total Cohort**, and the **6-Year Graduation Rate Total Cohort**, respectively. On August 31<sup>st</sup> four, five, and six years after the students enter Grade 9 or turn 17, the State identifies students in the 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year graduation rate total cohorts who earned a Regents or local diploma. These students are counted as “graduates” when determining graduation rate. Dropouts are included in the graduation rate calculation as non-completers. Students who transfer to another school, are incarcerated, leave the country, or die are excluded.

The graduation rate is determined for each accountability subgroup by dividing the number of students in the cohort who earned a local or Regents diploma by August 31 by the number of students in the cohort as of June 30. Because August graduation data are not available typically until October, which is two months into the school year, graduation rate accountability data are lagged by one year. For example, for 2019-20 school year results:

- The 4-year graduation rate will be based on students enrolled on June 30, 2019 who entered Grade 9 in the 2015-16 school year (the 2015 4-Year Graduation Rate Total Cohort) and graduated as of August 31, 2019.
- The 5-year graduation rate will be based on students enrolled on June 30, 2019 who entered Grade 9 in the 2014-15 school year (the 2014 5-Year Graduation Rate Total Cohort) and graduated as of August 31, 2019.
- The 6-year graduation rate will be based on students enrolled on June 30, 2019 who entered Grade 9 in the 2013-14 school year (the 2013 6-Year Graduation Rate Total Cohort) and graduated as of August 31, 2019.

### 4. What is an accountability subgroup?

An accountability subgroup is a group of students who are assigned to a certain category based on their race/ethnicity, English language proficiency, disability status, or economic status. The accountability subgroups are: All Students, American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, White, Multiracial, Economically Disadvantaged, English Language Learner (ELL), and Students with Disabilities.

A student will always be classified as belonging to the All Students group and one of the racial/ethnic groups.

Students whose last enrollment record indicated that the student was an English language learner, student with a disability, or economically disadvantaged will be included in the English Language Learner, Students with Disabilities, or Economically Disadvantaged accountability subgroup, respectively.

## 5. How many records must be in a subgroup for a graduation rate to be determined for a school or district?

The number of records that there must be in a subgroup in a school or district for a graduation rate to be determined for that subgroup for an accountability indicator is typically 30, with a few exceptions.

<b>Student Cohort</b>	<p><b>4-Year</b> Graduation Rate Cohort as of August 31<sup>st</sup> of the prior reporting year</p> <p><b>5-Year</b> Graduation Rate Cohort as of August 31<sup>st</sup> of the prior reporting year</p> <p><b>6-Year</b> Graduation Rate Cohort as of August 31<sup>st</sup> of the prior reporting year (prior year = “lagged” year)</p>
<b>N-Size</b>	30
<b>Application</b>	<p><b>Single-Year:</b> If the number of students in an individual 4-, 5-, or 6-year cohort for a subgroup is <math>\geq 30</math>, those students are included in the Graduation Rate Index for that subgroup.</p> <p><b>Two-Year Combined:</b> If the number of students in an individual 4-, 5-, or 6-year cohort for a subgroup is <math>&lt; 30</math>, the students in the cohort in the current year lagged cohort are added to the students in the prior year lagged cohort for that subgroup, and the two-year combined students are included in the Graduation Rate Index for that cohort and subgroup.</p> <p><b>Former ELLs:</b> For the ELL subgroup, former ELLs are added to the number of students in the ELL subgroup in the current year if the number of former ELLs in the current year is less than 50% of the sum of current year ELLs and former ELLs.</p> <p><b>Former Students with Disabilities:</b> For the Students with Disabilities subgroup, former Students with Disabilities are added to the Students with Disabilities subgroup in the current year if the number of Students with Disabilities in the current year is <math>\geq 30</math>.</p> <p><b>Small Subgroups:</b> If a subgroup <math>\geq 30</math> students in a graduation rate cohort, but <math>&lt; 30</math> students in other graduation rate cohorts, a level is NOT determined for the graduation rate cohort that has <math>&lt; 30</math> students, as the graduation rate results for the cohort with <math>\geq 30</math> students can be used to determine the Graduation Rate Level for the subgroup.</p> <p><b>Small N:</b> If the Performance N (1 year if <math>\geq 30</math> in current year or 2 years if <math>&lt; 30</math> in current year but <math>\geq 30</math> for 2 years) is <math>\geq 30</math> AND all 4-, 5-, AND 6-year Graduation Rate Cohorts <math>N &lt; 30</math>, computation is done for 4-, 5-, and 6-year Graduation Rates using the 2-year <math>N \geq 15</math>. If only one or two of these cohorts has a 2-year <math>N \geq 15</math>, Graduation Rates are calculated only for those cohorts that have a 2-year <math>N \geq 15</math>. For example, if the 4-year cohort <math>N = 15</math> but the 5-year =14 and the 6-year <math>N=14</math>, only a Graduation Rate for the 4-year cohort using the 15 students in that cohort is computed.</p>

## 6. How are Pathways in Technology (P-TECH) students included in the graduation rate indicator?

P-TECH students reported in SIRS with a program service code of 4026 (NYS P-TECH Program) or 4027 (NYC P-TECH Program) and a Reason for Ending Enrollment code of 0065 (Fulfilled HS Graduation Requirement for Extended Integrated HS Program) are counted as graduates. P-TECH students must also be reported with an appropriate Credential Earned Code in SIRS for them to be counted as a graduate.

## Definitions of Terms

**All Students:** All students enrolled in a school or district, regardless of ethnicity, ELL status, disability status, or economic status.

**American Indian/Alaska Native:** Student reported as having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

**Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander:** Student reported as having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands, or the Indian subcontinent, including Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

**Black or African American:** Student reported as having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

### **Cohort (Graduation Rate):**

- The Four-Year Graduation Rate Cohort consists of students who entered Grade 9 (or ungraded students with disabilities who turned 17) four years prior to the reporting year.
- The Five-Year Graduation Rate Cohort consists of students who entered Grade 9 (or ungraded students with disabilities who turned 17) five years prior to the reporting year.
- The Six-Year Graduation Rate Cohort consists of students who entered Grade 9 (or ungraded students with disabilities who turned 17) six years prior to the reporting year.

Data for these cohorts are captured as of June 30 of the fourth, fifth, and sixth school year (respectively) after the school year in which the cohort first entered Grade 9. Data for these cohorts are lagged by a year.

The following students ARE NOT included in the graduation rate cohort:

- students whose last regular enrollment record indicates that the student transferred to another school or district (as applicable);
- students who transferred to home schooling by a parent or guardian;
- students who transferred to a postsecondary school prior to earning a diploma;
- students who were prior graduates from outside the United States and enrolled without documentation from their previous school;
- students who left the United States or its territories;
- students who transferred to a prison or juvenile facility; and
- students who are deceased.

**Committee on Special Education (CSE):** The committee that makes educational and testing decisions for students with disabilities.

**Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) School:** Schools for which the All Students group is in the bottom 5% of all schools, high schools for which the All Students group a 4-year total cohort graduation rate that is less than 67% and the 5-year and 6-year total cohort graduation rates are not 67% or above. CSI identifications are based upon the performance of the All Students group and are made every three years, beginning with determinations for the 2018-19 school year based on 2017-18 school year results. CSI schools are schools for which the All Students group meets the criteria for identification, or for which the All Students group 4-year total cohort graduation rate is less than 67% and the 5-year and 6-year total cohort graduation rates are not 67% or above. Schools may be removed from preliminary CSI identification upon a finding by the Commissioner of extenuating or extraordinary circumstances.

**Economically Disadvantaged:** Students who participate in, or whose family participates in, economic assistance programs, such as the Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Programs; Social Security Insurance (SSI); Food Stamps; Foster Care; Refugee Assistance (cash or medical assistance); Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC); Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP); Safety Net Assistance (SNA); Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA); or Family Assistance: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). If one student in a family is identified as economically disadvantaged, all students from that household may be identified as economically disadvantaged.

**English Language Learner:** A student who, by reason of foreign birth or ancestry, speaks or understands a language other than English and speaks or understands little or no English, and requires support to become proficient in English and is identified pursuant to Section 154.2 of New York State's Commissioner's Regulations. Students who are not ELL in the current year but were ELL in one or more of the previous three years are called "former ELLs."

**ESSA:** Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, 20 U.S.C. sections 6301 et seq. (Public Law 114-95, 129 STAT. 1802).

**Foreign Exchange Students:** Foreign exchange students are students from another country who are attending U.S. schools as part of a foreign exchange program. These students are NOT included in accountability calculations. These students must be correctly coded as foreign exchange students to be excluded from these calculations.

**Good Standing (District):** Districts that do not have any schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) or Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and have not been identified for the low performance of an accountability group by a set of identification criteria.

**Good Standing (Schools):** Schools that are not identified as CSI or TSI schools.

**Graduate (for Graduation Rate):** Students in the Graduation Rate Total Cohort who earned a Regents or local diploma by August 31 of the reporting year.

**Hispanic or Latino:** Student reported as belonging to, identifying with, or regarded in the community as Hispanic or Latino, regardless of whether the student also considers themselves to belong to, identify with, or is regarded in the community as belonging to an American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, Black or African American, or White races.

**Homebound Students:** Homebound students (also known as home-tutored students) fall into two categories: a) students who remain enrolled in a school but are provided temporary instruction in the home; and b) students who are unable to attend school for the remainder of the school year because of a physical, mental, or emotional illness or injury substantiated by a licensed physician or, for students with disabilities, are placed in homebound instruction by the CSE and are instructed at home or in a hospital by a tutor provided by the district of responsibility. Students who remain enrolled in a school are included in the school's and the district's accountability calculations. Students who do not remain enrolled in a school but remain enrolled in a district are included in the district's accountability calculations.

**Home-Schooled Students:** Home-schooled students are those who are educated by their parents or guardians and are not the educational responsibility of a school or district. Home-schooled students are not included in accountability calculations. These students must be correctly coded as home schooled to be excluded from these calculations.

**Multiracial:** A student reported as belonging to more than one racial/ethnic group.

**Recognition School:** A school in Good Standing that has been recognized by the Commissioner for high performance.

**Students with Disabilities:** Students classified by the Committee on Special Education as having one or more disabilities. Students who are not classified as students with disabilities in the current year but were classified as students with disabilities in one or more of the previous two years are called “former students with disabilities.”

**Target District:** Districts that have at least one school identified as CSI or TSI schools or that have been identified for the low performance of one or more accountability groups at the district level. Districts may be removed from Target District identification upon a finding by the Commissioner of extenuating or extraordinary circumstances.

**Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) School:** TSI identifications are based upon the performance of the accountability subgroups, not the All Students group. These subgroups are: American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific islander, White, Multiracial, English Language Learner, Students with Disabilities, and Economically Disadvantaged. TSI schools are schools for which any accountability subgroup meets the criteria for identification for two consecutive years. For the 2018-19 school year, a school may also be identified as TSI if the school was in Priority School or Focus School accountability status in the 2017-18 school year and if any of the school’s accountability subgroups meet the TSI criteria. Schools may be removed from TSI identification upon a finding by the Commissioner of extenuating or extraordinary circumstances.

**White:** A student reported as having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.