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Dear Parents, Guardians and Members of the School Community,

I am writing to provide you information about the 2020-2021 New Jersey School Performance Reports, which were recently released and are available on the NJ School Performance Reports webpage at [www.njschooldata.org](http://www.njschooldata.org).

The School Performance Reports reflect the New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) commitment to providing parents, students and school communities with a large variety of information about each school and district. These reports can be used as a tool to help evaluate whether all students have equitable access to high quality education. We encourage you to use these reports to:

- **Learn more** about your school and district
- **Start conversations** with school community members and ask questions
- **Engage** with school communities to identify what schools are doing well and where they can improve

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the way the NJDOE was able to measure school performance and student achievement in both the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 School Performance Reports. While some data that was missing in 2019-2020 will be available again for 2020-2021 (e.g. attendance data), other data continues to remain unavailable or look different from prior years. The NJDOE also recognizes that our existing data can't begin to measure the hard work and perseverance of the students, families, educators, and community members during the past two years.

The NJDOE believes that it is critical to use the available data in the reports, along with other information collected directly within districts and communities, to start conversations, identify gaps in information, and continue to find ways to address the impacts of COVID-19 and ensure all students receive the support and resources that they need. The School Performance Reports can and should be used in conjunction with available school and district data to identify priorities for upcoming year planning and the use of state and federal dollars.

Notes are included throughout the School Performance Reports to explain where data is missing or impacted by COVID-19 and an updated [Impact of COVID-19 on Data Availability resource](#) is available to summarize this information.

### **Enhancements to the 2020-2021 School Performance Reports**

The 2020-2021 reports include changes that respond to stakeholder feedback, updated federal and state requirements, and the COVID-19 pandemic. These changes include:

- **New career and college readiness data** including Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and dual enrollment participation by student group and work-based learning participation;
- **Expanded staff data** including staff counts and information about teachers by subject area, as requested by stakeholders;

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- **New apprenticeship data** that shows how many students register in apprenticeship programs after high school graduation; and
- **Links to additional data** such as Start Strong assessment results and opportunity to learn data, which includes information about learning environments and device data during the 2020-2021 school year.

The NJDOE continues to seek public input on ways to improve future reports. Please complete the [School Performance Report feedback survey](#) or email [reportcard@doe.nj.gov](mailto:reportcard@doe.nj.gov) with feedback and suggestions.

Thank you,

*Edythe B. Austermuhl, Ed. D.*

Superintendent