

April 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians and Members of the School Community,

I am writing to provide you information about the 2019-2020 New Jersey School Performance Reports, which were recently released and are available on the NJ School Performance Reports webpage at the New Jersey Department of Education [website](#) and [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 the 2019-2020 School Performance Reports. Some data is not available at all and other data, while available, may not look the same as it did in 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 this difficult year.

While this past year has been unlike any other, and 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. Also, the School Performance Reports can and should be used in conjunction with available school and district data to identify priorities for summer and school year programming 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 a new Impact of COVID-19 on Data Availability resource is available to summarize this information.

#### **Enhancements to the 2019-2020 School Performance Reports**

The 2019-2020 reports include changes that respond to stakeholder feedback collected over the last several years and during the COVID-19 pandemic. These changes include:

- **New report design** with improved visuals and new navigational tools
- **Additional data** about graduation cohorts to provide more information about students who do not graduate
- **New resources** to help explain the impact of COVID-19 on the availability of data in the reports
- **A new narrative field, "Learning During COVID-19"**, to give districts an opportunity to share information on how they responded to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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,

*Jeannine DeFalco*  
*Superintendent*