

ACCOUNTABILITY



2024 Graduation Cohort Validation Process Fact Sheet

(The 2024 Graduation Cohort data is validated during the SY 2024–25, and these graduation rates are applied to the 2024–25 ESSA Accountability Model.)

OVERVIEW

Each year, the New Mexico Public Education Department asks all high schools to validate their graduation cohort membership and **exit outcomes** within the **PED Grad Cohort Portal**. Validated graduation cohort data is utilized within the state’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Accountability Model as schools are awarded points for their graduation rates.

GRADUATION DATA UTILIZED IN THE STATE’S ACCOUNTABILITY MODEL

- Longitudinal graduation data is publicly available on the [PED’s Graduation Data webpage](#).
- Graduation rates are one-year lagged in the state’s ESSA Accountability model.
 - The rates that are published in the current year are for the cohort that graduated by August 1 of the prior year. Therefore, the 2024 Graduation Cohort data is validated during the SY 2024–25 and applied to the 2024–25 ESSA Accountability Model.

The validation cohort process impacts the following ESSA Accountability Model indicator measures for annual school identification:

Accountability Measure	Definition	Calculation
Growth in 4-year Graduation Rate	The annual increase in the 4-year graduation rate over 3 years.	Slope of growth from n to n-3 years; if grad rate is over 90%, then all 4 points are allocated.
4-year Graduation Rate	Percent of students graduating within 4 years with a high school diploma.	For the 4-year cohort: Graduates / (Graduates + Non Graduates)
5-year Graduation Rate	Percent of students graduating within 5 years with a high school diploma.	For the 5-year cohort: Graduates / (Graduates + Non Graduates)
6-year Graduation Rate	Percent of students graduating within 6 years with a high school diploma.	For the 6-year cohort: Graduates / (Graduates + Non Graduates)

GRADUATION COHORT CONTEXT

- Definition of a cohort: A student is assigned to a cohort based on when the student enters 9th grade (e.g., a student who entered 9th grade in 2021 is a member of cohort 2025). The cohort continues for 5th and 6th years for all students even if a student graduates.
- A student must appear in at least one snapshot to be included in the cohort.

Cohort 2024 Validation	Cohort 2025 Validation	Cohort 2026 Validation	Cohort 2027 Validation	Cohort 2028 Validation	Cohort 2029 Validation
These students entered Grade 9 in SY 2020–21.	These students entered Grade 9 in SY 2021–22.	These students entered Grade 9 in SY 2022–23.	These students entered Grade 9 in SY 2023–24.	These students entered Grade 9 in SY 2024–25.	These students entered Grade 9 in SY 2025–26.
This cohort will be validated for use in the 2024–25 Accountability cycle.	This cohort will be validated for use in the 2025–26 Accountability cycle.	This cohort will be validated for use in the 2026–27 Accountability cycle.	This cohort will be validated for use in the 2027–28 Accountability cycle.	This cohort will be validated for use in the 2028–29 Accountability cycle.	This cohort will be validated for use in the 2029–30 Accountability cycle.



SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY UNITS

New Mexico's cohort graduation rate calculations are based on systems of **shared accountability** across schools and districts for students who change schools or districts during their high school career. This is the state's attempt to ensure that every public high school that a graduate has attended gets a portion of the credit for that graduation that is commensurate with the amount of time the student was enrolled.

New Mexico employs a Shared Accountability Units (SAU) system where schools are proportionally attributed credit based on the number of snapshots a student spent at the school. Transfer students that graduate with their cohort will contribute partial graduation credit to each school they attend. Only the school that is the last location of the student is responsible for updating the Outcome Code.

Example of How Shared Accountability Units Might Be Split Between Multiple Schools

Location snapshots are taken at the 40th-, 80th-, 120th-day, and EOY for each school year, creating a total of 16 (fewer if the student transfers in from out of state or private school). Here are some simplified examples of how this works with theoretical students from Pi High School (PHS):

Three different students' scenarios are described below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student A: Stays in the same high school through their academic years. 2. Student B: Splits their high school career across two high schools in the same district. 3. Student C: A non-graduate who starts their high school in one district, goes to a different district, and does not graduate with their cohort. 			
Scenario	Proportion For PHS	Proportion for District	Notes
Student A: Begins 9th grade at PHS, attends grades 9–12, and graduates from PHS on time (16 snaps).	1.00	1.00	Full Credit for Graduate; no application of SAUs.
Student B: Begins 9th grade at Epsilon HS, attends for grades 9 and 10, transfers to PHS for grades 11 and 12, and graduates from PHS on time (8 snaps).	0.50	1.00	PHS gets 50% of the credit for the graduate (Epsilon gets the other 50%), but the district gets full credit because both schools reside in the district; SAUs applied.
Student C: Begins 9th Grade at Delta HS (different district), spends 9th grade at Delta, transfers to PHS for grades 10, 11, and 12 and does not graduate on time (12 snaps).	0.75	0.75	PHS and its district get 75% of the responsibility for the non-graduate, and Delta HS and its district get the remaining 25%; SAUs applied.



UNIFIED COHORT 2024 VALIDATION PROCESS

In order to obtain the most accurate graduation rate, it is **strongly recommended** that districts and charter schools undertake a rigorous quality assurance validation process, as provided below.

Validation Process for LEAs

LEAs confirm (validate) cohort rosters for the 4-year graduation rate. These are cohort 2024 students who were 9th graders in the 2020–21 school year. The goal is to confirm that these students were at one time a part of the LEA during their high school tenure.

- The confirmation is done by comparing the PED's *Consolidated Outcome Report* in the [Grad Cohort Portal](#) with the LEA's local Student Information System (SIS).
- If a cohort change is required, LEAs must submit the [Cohort Correction form](#) into the Document library of the Grad Portal.

LEAs correct student exit outcomes – the code that depicts how the student leaves the school. For example, a student can graduate, move out of state, withdraw, or emigrate out of the country.

- Only for students who are listed as LastLocation=Y, LEAs must confirm the outcome code matches the local registrar records. If any outcomes found on the PED's *Consolidated Outcome Report* ([Outcome Codes here](#)) require updating, LEAs must log into the [Grad Cohort Portal](#).
- Upon review completion, LEAs must submit the [Validation Sign-Off form](#) into the Document Library of the [Grad Cohort Portal](#). Even if no changes were made, the form submission is required.

Example of an Exit Outcome Validation Process

The following is an example of an exit outcome validation process currently in use in some districts.

1. Examine the graduation cohort file provided by the PED located in the [Grad Cohort Portal](#) to ensure:
 - all schools are present,
 - the numbers of unique students in the file appropriately aligns with our internal counts,
 - and students have appropriate numbers of snapshots.
2. Match local SIS results to the PED file and assess for mismatches in outcome codes. Then:
 - make corrections to the PED data based on the data from the SIS;
 - in cases where codes need to be updated to WG/G, make sure that the date of that graduation falls within the on-time graduation parameters (by July 31 of the relevant year).
3. Using the revised outcome file, remove all the graduates and students who will not count against schools' graduation outcomes, leaving those records that negatively impact results, and break those data into individual school files.
4. Provide school registrars with the individual school files to check against internal school records, and to follow up on unknown outcomes via phone calls, etc., to families. The registrars should update the individual spreadsheets with any revised outcomes and return them to the district.
5. Final outcomes changes are uploaded into the graduation portal.
6. A final clean copy should be pulled by the district and saved for records.

The current list of state Outcome Codes for LEAs to utilize during Phase II is posted here: [Graduation Outcome Code Descriptions](#).