



## PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOL PERFORMANCE PROFILE

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

#### Introduction

---

The Pennsylvania School Performance Profile (SPP) is an integral part of the Educator Effectiveness System (teacher and principal evaluation). As an online site, the SPP provides a school level academic score for public schools, including charter and cyber charter schools, and full-time comprehensive career and technical centers.

#### General Questions

---

**1. What is the purpose of the School Performance Profile?**

The PA School Performance Profile is designed to serve several purposes:

- Provide a building level academic score for educators as part of the Educator Effectiveness System as required by 24 P.S. § 11-123 – Act 82 - 2012
- Provide information used in determining federal accountability status for Title I schools as required by the Federal Elementary and Secondary Act, section 111(h)(1) and (h)2
- Inform the public of the academic performance measures of each school, including comprehensive career and technical centers, and cyber charter and charter schools in Pennsylvania
- Offer a resource for LEAs to communicate and compare performance, analyze performance indicators as related to achievement, and encourage best practice
  - Employ as an analysis tool to inform goal setting, planning, and allocating resources to improve student achievement
  - Compare performance to local schools
  - Compare performance to schools with similar demographics
  - Communicate performance to various constituencies

**2. What role does the School Performance Profile play in Educator Effectiveness?**

Act 82 of 2012 addresses the evaluation of the effectiveness of professional employees and temporary professional employees. The School Performance Profile academic performance score comprises 15% of each classroom teacher and principal/school leader and 20% for each non-teaching professional's Educator Effectiveness final rating.

**3. What is the source of the data used in the SPP?**

All data originates from PDE's authoritative data sources such as Data Recognition

Corporation, Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction, Bureau of Special Education, Bureau of Career and Technical Education, Education Names and Addresses (EdNA), Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS), SAS, Inc., the College Board, and ACT, Inc.

**4. Is the School Performance Profile (SPP) replacing Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)?**

With the approval of Pennsylvania's ESEA Flexibility Waiver, AYP is no longer the federal accountability measure. The SPP provides an academic performance score for all schools while waiver designations are designed for Title I schools only.

**5. How frequently will the School Performance Profile be released?**

The Pennsylvania School Performance Profile will be released annually each fall.

**6. How will educators be trained to use the PA SPP website?**

Intermediate units across the state have been trained by PDE and have provided introductory training to LEAs. PDE will continue to conduct informational sessions around the state as well as offer statewide webinars. Updates will be provided to IUs who will then communicate with their LEAs.

**7. Will individual educator performance ratings be made available to the public?**

The PA School Performance Profile is designed to provide a building level score. No educator specific data or individual performance data are included in the SPP.

**8. Are charter schools included in the School Performance Profile?**

Yes, charter schools are included in the SPP and receive an academic performance score based upon its grade configuration.

## **Data Elements and Calculations**

---

**9. What is included in the School Performance Profile?**

- Fast Facts for districts and schools include such specifics as enrollment, number of schools, average years of educational experience, and geographic size of district. Student enrollment for the district and schools is also displayed by ethnicity as a percent of overall enrollment. Links to related agencies, such as career and technical centers and intermediate units are displayed as well as links to supplemental reports.
- The Scoring tab provides an explanation of the factors that contribute to the academic score.
- The Academic Performance tab displays the school's academic score, academic performance fast facts, the academic performance elements and performance measures, and the federal accountability designation, as applicable.
- The Compare tab offers options to select schools for comparison – whether in the same LEA or schools in other LEAs across the state.
- The School Supports tab, when fully operational, will provide specific improvement

strategies directly related to the elements of the SPP.

**10. How are school scores calculated?**

The PA School Performance Profile will provide a quantitative academic score based upon a 100-point scale, using the following source data, when available:

Indicators of Academic Achievement 40% (44% for CTCs)

- Percent Proficient or Advanced on Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)/Pennsylvania's Alternate System of Assessment (PASA/Keystone Exams in Mathematics/Algebra I, Reading/Literature, Science/Biology, and Writing
- Percent Competent or Advanced on industry certification exams [NOCTI (a job ready assessment for career and technical center students) and/or NIMS (National Institute for Metalworking Skills certification)]
- Percent Proficient or Advanced on PSSA/PASA grade 3 reading
- SAT/ACT College Ready Benchmarks

Indicators of Closing the Achievement Gap – All Students 5% (3% for CTCs)

- Percent of required gap closure met in Mathematics/Algebra I, Reading/Literature, Science/Biology, and Writing

Indicators of Closing the Achievement Gap – Historically Underperforming Students 5% (3% for CTCs)

- Percent of required gap closure met in Mathematics/Algebra I, Reading/Literature, Science/Biology, and Writing for historically underperforming students (economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, students with disabilities)

Indicators of Academic Growth / PVAAS (40%)

- The PVAAS growth index representing the school's impact on the change in academic achievement levels of groups of students from year-to-year in each of the assessed content areas.

Other Academic Indicators (10%)

- Cohort graduation rate
- Promotion rate
- Attendance rate
- Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) or college credit
- PSAT/PLAN Participation

Extra Credit for Advanced Achievement (up to 7 points)

- Percent Advanced on PSSA/PASA/Keystone Exams in Mathematics/Algebra I, Reading/Literature, Science/Biology, and Writing
- Percent Advanced on industry standards-based competency assessments [NOCTI (a job ready assessment for career and technical center students) and/or NIMS (National Institute for Metalworking Skills certification)]

- Advanced Placement achievement (scores 3 or higher) and International Baccalaureate achievement (scores 4 or higher)

Scores are calculated based upon defined weighted data elements. If a school has insufficient data to calculate a representative score, the display area will reflect that circumstance and adjust total points accordingly.

The Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) is included when applicable.

Closing the achievement gap performance measures will only be included in the 2013-14 SPP for Science/Biology. Closing the achievement gap performance measures for English Language Arts (ELA)/Literature and Mathematics/Algebra I will be included in the 2015-16 SPP as 2014-15 will serve as the baseline year for establishing these achievement gaps.

The 2013-2014 SPP will be the last year for Writing as an independent performance measure on the SPP. The factors/weightings associated with Writing performance measures will be added to the ELA/Literature factors/weightings.

**11. How were the academic data elements chosen? How was the weighting for each data element determined?**

Teams of educators, statisticians, and psychometricians analyzed research to identify factors that define high performing schools. Data elements are linked to research related to high achieving schools.

**12. For AYP calculations, schools had to have an N count of 40. What is the minimum number (N) count for the SPP?**

The minimum count for the SPP measures is a count of 11. The intent is to represent as many students as possible. When calculating at the school level and particularly for subgroups, 40 is a large number. The smaller numerical threshold for schools allows for the inclusion of more subgroup populations in a school; thereby including subgroups that might otherwise not be represented.

**13. How are Historically Underperforming Students identified?**

This category replaces the various subgroups previously identified for purposes of AYP. With an N count of 11, Historically Underperforming Students are defined as a non-duplicated count of students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English Language Learners enrolled for a full academic year taking the PSSA/PASA/Keystone Exams. If a student is in more than one of the individual groups (e.g., special education and English Language Learner), s/he is only included in the Historically Underperforming Student group one time – a non-duplicated count. This group is not a cohort but rather students currently in the building meeting the definition during the reported year.

**14. How is Closing the Achievement Gap calculated?**

Closing the Achievement Gap will be calculated for each of the PSSA/PASA/Keystone Exam subjects (Mathematics/Algebra I in 2015-16, ELA/Literature in 2015-16, and Science/Biology in 2013-14). The achievement gap is determined by comparing the baseline percent of students who are proficient or advanced to the goal of 100% proficiency. The benchmark for success is defined as closing one-half of the achievement gap over a six-year period.

Closing the achievement gap performance measures will only be included in the 2013-14 SPP for Science/Biology. Closing the achievement gap performance measures for English Language Arts (ELA)/Literature and Mathematics/Algebra I will be included in the 2015-16 SPP as 2014-15 will serve as the baseline year for establishing these achievement gaps.

(See Closing the Achievement Gap handout for more detail.)

**15. Can you explain how Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and college credit are calculated?**

If a school offers any combination of International Baccalaureate (IB), college credit or AP courses covering the four core academic areas (Mathematics, English Language and Literature, Life and Physical Science, Social Sciences and History), it is awarded a maximum performance measure (100). (three core academic areas = 75, two core academic areas = 50, one core academic area = 25)

**16. How is student mobility factored into a school's score?**

In calculating Proficient/Advanced related to academic achievement, students must be in school by October 1 and stay in the school through the PSSA/PASA/Keystone Exam testing date in order to be attributed to a school.

**17. How will Keystone Exams impact calculations in PVAAS?**

For PVAAS reporting, Keystone Exam scores will be included in the PVAAS growth measure of students in the class of 2014, 2015, and 2016 only if they were enrolled in a Keystone course. One exception - if a student was enrolled only in the fall semester, not enrolled in the spring semester, and only has a spring test score, the spring test score will be included in the PVAAS growth measure. For the class of 2017 and thereafter, all Keystone exam results will be included in the PVAAS growth measure.

PVAAS reporting of the Keystone Exams is included in the School Performance Profile (SPP). Each Keystone Exam area is included in that PVAAS subject area for the SPP.

- Keystone Algebra I will be included in the PVAAS Mathematics reporting section of a school's SPP.
- Keystone Literature will be included in the PVAAS Reading reporting section of a school's SPP.
- Keystone Biology will be included in the PVAAS Science reporting section of a

school's SPP.

There may be some schools (e.g., 7-12 school) that have PVAAS reporting for PSSAs and Keystone Exams in the same subject area (Example: PSSA Math and Keystone Algebra I. They would both be included in that PVAAS Mathematics/Algebra I growth reporting for the SPP.)

**18. Why is grade 3 reading a separate data element in the calculation?**

Research reveals that reading proficiently by the end of third grade can be a “make-or-break” benchmark in a child’s educational development. Academic success, as defined by high school graduation, can be predicted with reasonable accuracy by knowing a child’s reading skills by the end of third grade

**19. How does a school determine whether or not it is meeting its annual target in Closing the Achievement Gap?**

The six-year target will be defined in the baseline year, 2012-2013 for Science/Biology and 2014-15 for Mathematics/Algebra I and English Language Arts (ELA)/Literature; as each year progresses, the annual cumulative closure will be calculated. As long as a school is meeting the overall closure, it will be defined as meeting its annual target.

## **Extra Credit for Advanced Achievement**

---

**20. What is the rationale for extra credit?**

Extra credit for students demonstrating advanced performance is designed to recognize schools for their efforts in promoting excellence. Although established proficiency acknowledges satisfactory performance, it is important to recognize advanced levels of academic achievement.

**21. How is Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) achievement calculated?**

A school can earn up to two additional points (Extra Credit for Advanced Achievement) for performance based upon the percent of students earning 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam and/or 4 or higher on at least one IB exam. This is based upon the number of students in the grade 12 cohort – not the number of tests taken. It does not matter when students take the test. A student scoring 3 or higher on more than one AP exam is only counted as one student achieving the benchmark. A student scoring 4 or higher on more than one IB exam is only counted as one student achieving the benchmark.

## **Building Level Scores**

---

**22. Does a school receive an academic performance score in its first year of operation?**

A school will receive a score for the first year of operation based upon first year data. Scores are published in the fall following the reported year. While some data elements may not yet be available for that school, the available data elements will be used to create a score. A school must have at least 25 possible points to receive a score.

**23. Is a school score calculated each year based upon the prior year's data?**

For most measures, data from the current year reported is used; however, due to availability, previous year data is used for graduation rate, promotion rate, and attendance rate.

For the Keystone achievement results in the SPP, keep in mind that Keystone Exam scores are banked, and it is the 11<sup>th</sup> grade cohort that is used in the calculation of the achievement data. Best banked scores are used in the calculation of the achievement data: proficient/advanced, closing the achievement gap, and extra credit for advanced achievement.

**24. What if a school does not have one or more data elements included in the performance measures?**

Some school configurations may not have each data element included within a specific factor area. The calculation of the score is adjusted accordingly; i.e., the calculation only includes the data elements that are possible for a school to earn. While a grade 6-8 school will have academic performance data in mathematics, reading, science, and writing, a grade 6 only school will only have mathematics and reading performance data. The academic score will only reflect those subjects tested in the school. For elements not applicable to a school, the points for each particular element are nulled out and the total possible points decrease accordingly.

**25. Do part time and full time Career and Technical Centers (CTC) receive scores?**

Part time CTCs will display Fast Facts only because academic instruction in the core content areas occurs in the students' home schools; thus, the attribution for these students is with the home schools. Full time comprehensive CTCs have Fast Facts and receive an academic performance score.

## **Communicating the School Performance Profile**

---

**26. How might a district or school use this data?**

The SPP is a resource for LEAs to communicate and compare performance, analyze performance indicators as related to achievement, and encourage best practice. Potential applications include the following:

- Employ as an analysis tool to inform goal setting, planning, and allocating resources to improve student achievement
- Compare performance to local schools
- Compare performance to schools with similar demographics
- Communicate performance to various constituencies

**27. How might a parent use this data?**

Parents can use the information on this website to examine the performance of their local schools. They can also compare the performance of their school to other schools across

the state.

**28. There are many qualitative factors beyond the data presented in the SPP. How can schools communicate that data?**

While PDE can only report on statewide data currently collected, LEAs are encouraged to use their websites to provide other important facts and considerations which may more fully inform the public of school/district programs and initiatives. Such factors as arts offerings, athletic and other extra-curricular activities, and special programs and courses beyond what the SPP details may present a broader picture of the school.

## **Questions**

---

**29. Who can I contact if I have questions?**

Questions about the Pennsylvania School Performance Profile may be sent to [ra-paprofile@pa.gov](mailto:ra-paprofile@pa.gov)