

E-message #2 Statewide Assessment Measures

Re: Future Ready PA Index

Colleagues,

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) is committed to providing regular updates on the implementation of its recently approved Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Consolidated State Plan and the Future Ready PA Index, a comprehensive, public-facing school progress report that increases transparency around school and student group performance.

Each indicator within the Future Ready PA Index was selected based on extensive feedback from stakeholders across the commonwealth, along with careful evaluation of the practices and systems that tie to continuous school improvement.

As outlined in the Future Ready update that was shared on March 9, indicators fall into three main categories:

1. Statewide Assessment Measures
2. On-Track Measures
3. College and Career Ready Measures

Consistent with the state's ESSA plan, a subset of indicators, drawn from all three categories, will be utilized in federal accountability determinations and in identifying schools for additional support.

This message provides additional detail on the first category: Statewide Assessment Measures. These measures include:

- **Percent Proficient or Advanced on PSSA/Keystone Exam (English Language Arts/Literature, Mathematics/Algebra I, and Science/Biology)**
- **Meeting Annual Growth Expectations (PVAAS) (English Language Arts/Literature, Mathematics/Algebra I, and Science/Biology)**
- Percent Advanced on PSSA/Keystone Exam (English Language Arts/Literature, Mathematics/Algebra I, and Science/Biology)

Indicators listed in bold above will be utilized in federal accountability determinations; for these indicators, PDE will utilize two years of data to ensure the strongest possible evidence for school improvement designations.

A detailed description of indicators, including data element descriptions and measurement rules, follows.

**Percent Proficient or Advanced on PSSA/Keystone Exam
(English Language Arts/Literature Mathematics/Algebra I, and Science/Biology)**

This performance measure represents the percentage of all students, enrolled for a full academic year, scoring Proficient or Advanced on the:

- Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) in grades 3 through 8;
- Keystone end of course exams (for federal accountability, Pennsylvania reports students' best score to date by 11th grade); and
- Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) in grades 3 through 8 and 11.

Beginning in 2017-18, federally-required provisions for assessment participation may influence proficiency calculations. It is important to note that there will be no change in how proficiency rates are calculated for schools that exceed 95 percent participation; in these cases, proficiency will be calculated based on the performance of tested students only. However, where participation rates fall below 95 percent, each subsequent non-tested student must be designated as non-proficient.¹

Specifically, the formula for calculating Proficiency or Advanced is based on the higher of the following:

of students listed in the denominator who achieved proficient or advanced on the statewide assessment
95% of students enrolled in the school on the last day of the respective testing window

OR

of students listed in the denominator who achieved proficient or advanced on the statewide assessment
of test takers among students enrolled in the school on the last day of the respective testing window

Once proficiency rates are calculated, performance will be displayed in the context of two targets as required by the state's ESSA Plan:

- I. Statewide Interim Target – Under ESSA, every state was required to set long-term goals for student achievement. Pennsylvania's goal is to reduce, by half, the statewide percentage of non-proficient students on state assessments by the end of the 2029-30 school year. This timeline will allow academic planning and programming to support a cohort of students across the full span of their public education experience, from kindergarten through 12th grade. Statewide Interim Targets represent the annual gain required to close these gaps.
- II. Individual School Improvement Target – Every school will be assigned an Individual School Target for English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science, derived from the same calculation as the statewide goal – the difference between expected 2029-30 school year performance and current performance, divided by the 13 years in between.

To ensure transparency in public reporting, Future Ready will designate each school's academic performance as follows:

Schools will be scored in one of three color-coded ranges:

- **BLUE** for a school whose performance Meets or Exceeds Statewide 2030 Goal
- **GREEN** for a school whose performance meets Statewide Interim or School Improvement Target
- **RED** for a school whose performance does not meet either the statewide Interim or the School Improvement Target.

Student Group Scores

ESSA requires states to disaggregate achievement and other data by student group, including economically disadvantaged students, English learners, students receiving special education services, and major racial and ethnic groups. Pennsylvania celebrates this facet of the law and has designed its accountability system to ensure maximum transparency around student group performance. Within each school, the performance of any student group that meets the minimum group size of 20 will be calculated and depicted as described above.

¹ For more information on ESSA-required participation rates, please view a webinar provided by PDE on January 30, 2018: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPIWKVDkqII>

Meeting Annual Growth Expectations (PVAAS) (Mathematics/Algebra I, Science/Biology, and English Language Arts/Literature)

The Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS) is a statistical analysis of Pennsylvania state assessment data and provides Pennsylvania districts and schools with growth data to add to achievement data. This lens of measuring student learning provides educators with valuable information to ensure they are meeting the academic needs of their students. Growth of groups of students is an indicator of the academic performance of a school.

PVAAS answers two basic questions about the performance of a school:

1. Did each group of students make growth in ELA (Grades 4-8), math (Grades 4-8), and science (Grades 4 and 8)?
2. Did each group of students make growth in the Keystone content areas (Algebra I, Literature, and Biology)?

The PVAAS Academic Growth Score presents the school's impact on the change in academic achievement levels of groups of students from year-to-year in each of the state assessed content areas.

The PVAAS Growth Index will be converted to a 50-100-point scale for each of the following state assessed content areas for ALL students and each applicable subgroup ($N \geq 20$):

- English Language Arts: PSSA English Language Arts and Keystone Literature
- Science: PSSA Science and Keystone Biology
- Math: PSSA Math and Keystone Algebra I

The calculation of this Indicator is the same as past years, except for a change in the N count to 20 students. For more information on the PVAAS indicator, visit the PVAAS site: <https://pvaas.sas.com>.

The scoring for the PVAAS Academic Growth Score will be designated on the dashboard as follows:

- **BLUE** = Exceeds the Standard Demonstrating Growth
- **GREEN** = Meets the Standard Demonstrating Growth
- **RED** = Did Not Meet the Standard Demonstrating Growth

The PVAAS Academic Growth scaled scores and scoring of the measures will be displayed for the All Student Group as well as the ten subgroups.

Percent Advanced on PSSA/Keystone Exam (Mathematics/Algebra I, Science/Biology, and English Language Arts/Literature)

Beyond proficiency calculations, it is important to recognize advanced levels of academic achievement. While not a federal accountability indicator, the Future Ready PA Index will report the percentage of all students scoring Advanced on a state assessment.

This performance measure represents the percentage of all students, enrolled for a full academic year, scoring Advanced on the:

- Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) in grades 3 through 8;
- Keystone end of course exams (for federal accountability, Pennsylvania reports students' best score to date by 11th grade); and
- Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) in grades 3 through 8 and 11.

For more information on the above or to read previously sent e-messages, visit PDE's Future Ready PA Index website: <http://www.education.pa.gov/Pages/Future-Ready-PA.aspx>.

Over the next few months, the Department will continue to feature and provide more details on one or more of the indicators. Next week's **Future Ready PA Index e-message** will focus on the Chronic Absenteeism and Grade 3 Reading/Grade 7 Mathematics Early Indicators of Success.

Questions or comments on the Future Ready PA Index can be sent to ra-edfuturereadypa@pa.gov.

We look forward to this important work with all of you as we continue to move forward for the betterment of Pennsylvania's students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew Stem". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Matthew S. Stem
Deputy Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education
Pennsylvania Department of Education