SCHOOL PROGRESS REPORT

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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What is the need for the School Progress Report (SPR) given the State's School Performance Profile (SPP)?
The SPR differs from the SPP in ways that reflect the District's unique goals and priorities. More specifically, the SPR:

- Is constructed to be a more actionable tool;
- Places greater weight on student growth than absolute achievement;
- More fairly evaluates school performance through the inclusion of peer and city rankings;
- Redefines and expands upon the domains and metrics included in the SPP;
- Does not include extra credit points.

Is it fair to compare schools serving students with varying levels of entering achievement?
The SPR includes information from the State-adopted Average Growth Index (AGI) as a way to understand whether students in a school are making progress, regardless of the level at which they were performing when they entered the building. By assigning greater weight to the Progress domain, the District has ensured that schools can attain strong results on the SPR regardless of the incoming performance of the students they serve.

Additionally, the peer group rankings represent a deliberate approach to comparing schools in a more equitable way.

Is it fair to compare schools serving different populations of students?
The SPR uses both city and peer group rankings to compare schools. While the city ranks compare all schools of the same grade configuration to each other, the peer group rankings indicate how a given school is performing relative to other schools serving a similar student demographic.

How are peer groups determined?
Schools were placed into peer groups composed of schools with the same grade configurations and similar student demographics. School-level characteristics used to identify peer groups include poverty, ethnicity, special education status, and limited English proficiency status.

More information on peer groups is available at philasd.org/spr.

Are schools in the same peer groups each year?
Peer groups are adjusted annually based upon school-level characteristics for the corresponding school year.

Is there information on which schools are included in each peer group?
A school's peer group is listed at the top of its SPR. A full list of the schools included in each peer group is located at the end of the SPR User Guide, available at philasd.org/spr.

Are charter schools included in the same peer groups as District schools?
Charter schools are included in the same peer groups as District schools. Identification of peer groups for charter schools is based upon

the same school-level characteristics as those for District schools.

How does the City Rank differ from the Peer Rank?
The City Rank indicates how a school's performance compares to the performance of all other schools of the same grade configuration. The Peer Rank provides additional context by ranking schools of the same grade configuration within a subset of schools most similar in student demographics.

How are disability types accounted for in the SPR?
The absolute scoring methodology reflects the District's belief that all students, regardless of circumstance or disability, should be held to the same standards of academic excellence. The achievement scores include results from both the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and the Pennsylvania Alternative System of Assessment (PASA). However, in order to fairly account for large variances in student populations, each school also receives relative performance indicators in the form of peer rankings for both the overall and domain scores.

Do alternative education students contribute to neighborhood school performance?
Students in alternative education programs (programs for out-of-school youth, students who are significantly at risk for dropping out, and students who are subject to disciplinary transfer or expulsion) are excluded from the calculation of all metrics.

How is growth measured for exams given in non-consecutive grade levels, like the Keystone Exams?
For non-consecutive exams like the Keystone Exams, AGI is calculated by subject (Algebra I,

Biology, and Literature). Students receive predicted scores based on the performance history of similar students, and these predicted scores are compared to students' actual scores to estimate growth. A student must be enrolled for a Full Academic Year and have results for at least two prior assessments to count towards a school's score.

What is a floor? What is a target?
The floor is the score that schools must achieve in order to begin earning points for a metric. The target is the score that schools must achieve in order to earn 100% of the points possible for a metric. Floors and targets may differ across report types; details are available in the appendix of the SPR User Guide.

Were floors and targets held constant for the 2015-2016 SPR?
In most cases, floors and targets are the same as they were in the SY 2014-2015 SPR. In some places, floors and targets were adjusted to align with State expectations or in response to feedback from content experts. Specifically:
- The target for the "ACCESS for ELLs: % 4.5 or Above" metric in the Achievement domain was lowered from 50 to 30; and
- The floors for Student and Parent/Guardian Survey metrics were lowered from 50 to 0.

What is the relationship between a metric score and the tier for that metric?
Tiers are not based on metric scores but on the percent of points earned for a metric.

The percent of points earned is calculated based on where a school's metric score falls relative to the floor and target:

- A tier of **Model** indicates that a school has earned 75% or more of possible points for a metric;
- A tier of **Reinforce** indicates that a school has earned 50-74% of possible points for a metric;
- A tier of **Watch** indicates that a school has earned 25-49% of possible points for a metric;
- A tier of **Intervene** indicates that a school has earned less than 25% of possible points for a metric.

For example, for the ACCESS Proficiency metric, the floor is 15% and the target is 30%. A school with a metric score of 20% earns 33% of possible points [(20% - 15%)/(30%-15%)], and so receives a tier of **Watch** for this metric.

Does every report have 100 possible points?

No; the number of possible points varies by school on the applicability of specific metrics. The points allocated to any metric that is not applicable or where there is an insufficient number of students are deducted from the total possible points.

For example, the "Graduation Rate" metric applies to the High School report, but would not apply to those high schools that did not serve grade 12 in SY 2015-2016.

What are the minimum and maximum scores on the SPR?

Overall and domain scores are the percentage of possible points earned by a school (i.e., number of points earned divided by the number of possible points). Therefore, the minimum and maximum scores are 0% and 100%, respectively.

For example, a school that is eligible for 95.5 points and earns 42 points receives an overall SPR score of 44% (42.0/95.5).

What are the weights allocated to each domain?

Domain weights are allocated by grade configuration as follows:

Elementary, K8, and Middle Schools
Achievement	30%
Progress	40%
Climate	30%

High Schools
Achievement	30%
Progress	40%
Climate	20%
College & Career	10%

Is there more information on how each metric is calculated?

In addition to the metric definitions provided in the SPR User Guide, business rules for each calculation have been posted on the District Performance Office's webpage. These rules are intended to provide a high-level overview of what goes into each metric, including the source of the data, which students are included in the calculation, and which schools are eligible for a metric.

Why might the metric scores on the SPR differ from similar information shared elsewhere?

There are several reasons why the SPR may display different information than other sources, including:
- **Sample**. The SPR sometimes reflects a different sample of students than other data sources, such as the SPP or a school's internal information system. For example, the PSSA metrics on the SPR reflect the performance of students who were enrolled for a Full Academic Year; an

individual school may be able to see results for all students who were assessed at the building, regardless of how long they were enrolled at the school.

- **Timing**. Other sources may look at a different time period than the SPR. For example, the First-Fall College Matriculation Rate displayed on the SY 2015-2016 SPR reflects the Fall 2016 enrollment of students who graduated in SY 2015-2016. However, the matriculation rate displayed on the SPP "lags" a year – that is, the matriculation rate on the SY 2015-2016 SPP reflects the Fall 2015 enrollment of students who graduated in SY 2014-2015.
- **Definition**. Metrics on the SPR may be calculated slightly differently than similar metrics available elsewhere. For example, the attendance metric on the SPR reflects the percentage of students attending 95% or more of instructional days, while the attendance metric on a school's profile page reflects Average Daily Attendance.

How has the SPR changed from the prior year?
The SPR has evolved and improved in the following ways:

- Expansion of the AP/IB Participation and Performance metric to include students' performance on NOCTI exams (technical assessments);
- Introduction of a new survey metric that measures high school students' college and career aspirations and knowledge;
- Consolidation of the Keystone First-Time Testers and Re-Testers rates into a single Keystone Proficiency rate;
- Inclusion of FAFSA Completion data, which was suppressed on the SY 2014-2015 SPR due to an inability to validate the data;

- Adjustment of the floors and targets for the survey climate ratings and the ACCESS Proficiency and Growth metrics to align with State policy and the recommendations of subject matter experts; and
- Design changes to the report template to include some contextual information and to make the data more reader-friendly.

Why do some schools have two SPRs?
The SPR evaluates student outcomes for specific grade bands. Thus, schools serving both lower and high school grades receive separate reports for each grade band so that outcomes for students may be evaluated separately.

For example, a school serving grades 5-12 receives both a Middle School report for grades 5-8 and a High School report for grades 9-12.

Why don't some schools have an SPR?
Alternative education schools and schools that serve a single grade level within a grade configuration do not receive an SPR. For example, YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School met all requirements to receive an SPR but was ineligible due to its limited grade span (grade 12 only) and unique school model.

Additionally, not all charter schools chose to participate in the SPR.

Which charter schools participated in the SPR?
This year's release includes approximately 98% of all eligible charter schools that were in operation in SY 2015-2016. Charter school participants value an apples-to-apples comparison of progress across all city schools and value the comprehensive and supportive view of school progress reflected in the SPR.

How does the SPR reflect the District's commitment to equity?

Several components of the SPR indicate the degree to which students, regardless of educational need, are being served equitably by our schools. For example, a credit metric for off-track students and AGI metrics measuring growth for the lowest performing 20% of students emphasize the importance of demonstrating progress among students who may be falling behind. Equity is also reflected in peer group comparisons and the ACCESS proficiency and growth metrics.

How are survey metrics scored?

The SPR contains five survey metrics that use data from the SY 2015-2016 District-Wide Parent & Guardian Survey and the SY 2015-2016 District-Wide Student Survey:

1) Parent/Guardian Survey: Participation Rate
2) Parent/Guardian Survey: Climate Rating
3) Student Survey: Climate Rating
4) Student Survey: College and Career Rating
5) Student Survey: Student Perception of Teacher Practice

The Parent/Guardian Participation Rate represents the percentage of parents/guardians of students in grades K-12 who complete the survey. A separate parent/guardian response is required for each student.

For the Parent/Guardian Climate Rating and the student survey metrics, a school receives a score of 0 if it does not meet the minimum participation threshold. The participation threshold for the parent/guardian survey is 10%.

The participation threshold for the student survey is the greater of 25% of all students in grades 3-12 or 50 (e.g., the participation threshold for a school that serves 100 students in grades 3-12 is 50, while the participation threshold for a school that serves 600 students in grades 3-12 is 150). Schools that receive more than one report have separate participation thresholds for each report type. If a school meets the participation thresholds, it receives a score on a scale of 0 to 100%.

Meeting the minimum participation threshold does not guarantee points for these metrics.

The ratings are presented as the percent of most positive responses.

Which questions are included in the survey metrics?

The survey metrics are developed by the Office of Research and Evaluation, which administers the District-Wide survey. While the specific questions included in a metric may change over time, the metrics generally include all questions from the relevant domain (e.g., Climate) that contain clear positive and negative options, such as strongly agree/strongly disagree.

More information on the surveys, including responses to individual survey items, is available at schoolsurveys.philasd.org.