ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRESS REPORT

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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What is the purpose of the Alternative Education Progress Report (AEPR), and how is it different from the District's School Progress Report on Education and Equity (SPREE)?

The AEPR is the School District of Philadelphia's tool for understanding the performance of its alternative programs across multiple dimensions, from academic achievement to college and career readiness.

The AEPR differs from the SPREE in ways that reflect the unique structures and goals of alternative programs. More specifically, the AEPR:
● Includes different performance metrics designed to be more relevant to the types of alternative programs being evaluated;
● Is scored using different performance expectations and methods; and
● Uses different terminology to categorize program performance.

How does the performance of alternative programs compare to that of traditional schools receiving an SPREE?

Alternative programs cannot be compared to traditional schools using scores from the AEPR and SPREE. Scores from the AEPR reflect how programs are performing relative to performance targets established in program contracts; schools receiving the SPREE are assigned levels based on the number of metrics meeting annual targets or showing improvement in

alignment with the Board of Education's Goals and Guardrails.

Additionally, while many metrics on the AEPR appear to align with those on the SPREE, the AEPR metrics are often calculated using different definitions and business rules and are scored using different performance expectations.

What are the different AEPR types?

There are five different report types of the AEPR, each intended to evaluate performance on metrics that are most relevant to the type of program and its unique purpose:
● AEDY – for Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth programs that serve students who have committed serious Code of Conduct violations and assist such students with transitioning back to non-disciplinary schools.
● Accelerated – for programs that serve students who are overage and under-credited and assist them in getting back on track.
● Continuation – for programs that serve middle grade students in need of smaller school settings that provide intensive academic and social supports.
● Dual Enrollment – for programs that allow students to earn credits towards their high school diploma and a college degree simultaneously.
● Adult Diploma – for programs that serve students who are older than 17 (no upper age limit), have earned some high school credits, and are not enrolled in a regular day school.

How are schools' overall scores calculated on the AEPR?

The overall score reflects the percentage of metrics for which the program met or exceeded

performance targets that were mutually agreed-upon, by SDP and the program provider. Contracted providers adhere to the targets outlined in their contract.

How are overall scores grouped into categories?

Due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, overall scores were not calculated for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Overall categories are based on the percentage of targets for which schools met or exceeded expectations.
- A label of **Excelling** indicates that a school has met 75% or more of targets;
- A label of **Achieving** indicates that a school has met 50-74% of targets;
- A label of **Approaching** indicates that a school has met 25-49% of targets;
- A label of **Underperforming** indicates that a school has met less than 25% of targets.

How are the four metric performance tiers – Exceptional, Target, Near Target, and Did Not Meet – determined?

These categories are relative to the metric-level performance targets established during the most recent round of contract negotiations with contracted alternative providers in summer 2017.

Three performance categories – "Unacceptable", "Target/Mid-Range", and "Exceptional" – are explicitly included in the program contracts. For the AEPR, the "Unacceptable" category has been divided into two categories:
- Near Target – within 20% of the Target score.
- Did Not Meet – more than 20% from the Target score.

For example, the target for Credit Accumulation in Accelerated programs is 75%. Consequently,

in order to receive a Near Target rating for that metric, a program must have a score of at least 60% for the Credit Accumulation metric:

[75% - (75% * 20%)) = 60%]

The cut-points required for each tier and program type can be found in Appendix B of the AEPR User Guide.

What are the minimum and maximum scores on the AEPR?

The overall score is the percentage of targets for which the program met or exceeded expectations. Therefore, the minimum and maximum scores are 0% and 100%, respectively.

Is there more information on how each metric is calculated?

Yes. The AEPR User Guide, available on the District Performance Office's website, explains which program types receive which metrics, how those metrics are calculated, and which students are included in each metric. Further information about metric calculations is available in the AEPR Business Rules document.

Where does the demographic information on the front page come from?

Information on Black/Hispanic students and English learners was taken from the District's Student Information System. Information on low-income students was taken from the District's Food Services data (for programs served by the District's Food Services department) or the Pennsylvania Department of Education's [Community Eligibility Provision webpage](#) (for programs not served by the District's Food Services department). The remaining demographic information was self-reported by programs.

Keep in mind that the demographic information may underreport true rates for several reasons, including:

- Students may not be eligible for the benefits that classify them as low-income or for receipt of special education services due to age or other factors;
- Schools were not required to track information on whether students were pregnant or parenting, justice-involved, or homeless and so may not be able to provide a full count;
- Students may not wish to identify themselves to their school as falling into one or more of these demographic categories.

How does the demographic information on the front page factor into a school's score?

The demographic information does not factor into a school's score or performance expectations. It is presented to provide an overview of the types of students served by that program.

Why don't some alternative programs have an AEPR?

Justice programs, such as Pennypack House School and the Philadelphia Juvenile Justice Services Center School, do not receive an AEPR because these programs operate under especially unique circumstances; consequently, limited academic data is available and limited climate data is applicable to these contexts.

How are survey metrics scored?
The AEPR contains several survey metrics that use data from the SY 2020-2021 District-Wide Parent & Guardian Survey and the SY 2020-2021 District-Wide Student Survey:

- Parent/Guardian Survey: Climate Rating, for Accelerated and AEDY programs
- Student Survey: Climate Rating

- Student Survey: College and Career Rating

The Parent/Guardian Participation Rate is also reported for Accelerated and AEDY programs, but this is not a scored metric. This participation rate represents the percentage of households from which parents/guardians of K-12 students completed the survey. A separate parent or guardian response is highly encouraged for each student enrolled at the school.

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).

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 (ORE), 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 survey construct (e.g., Climate) that contain clear positive and negative options, such as "strongly agree" or "strongly disagree."

More information on the surveys, including responses to individual survey items, is available on the https://dashboards.philasd.org/extensions/district-wide-surveys/index.html#/.