

FAQS

School Progress Report on Education and Equity (SPREE) 2020-2021

What is the School Progress Report on Education and Equity (SPREE)?

The SPREE is the School District of Philadelphia's new report on school performance and progress over time. It is being released for the first time to reflect the 2020-2021 school year and provides information on how schools – and groups of students within schools – are performing against the Board of Education's Goals and Guardrails. It also compares school performance against goals that the state has set for school performance.

What is the SPREE Lite? How does the report differ for the 2020-2021 school year?

For the 2020-2021 school year, the District is producing the "SPREE Lite." This is a shorter version of the standard report that looks different from how the report will look in future years.

The 2020-2021 report looks different because many of the normal measures are not available for reasons like:

- Statewide changes to requirements to participate in state assessments due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Data that is not yet collected for either District or Charter schools (e.g., participation in co-curricular activities)
- Data that charter schools have not been historically asked to collect or report on (e.g., within-year math assessments, the percentage of students participating in visual or performing arts)

As a result, the SPREE Lite will differ from the full SPREE in the following ways:

- Instead of receiving one of four category labels for each metric (see page 2), schools will receive a "Meeting" or "Not Meeting" label based on whether they met the annual target for the metric.
- Schools will not receive an overall Level between 1 and 6 (see page 3). Instead, the cover page of the SPREE Lite will have a table that shows whether the school was "Meeting" or "Not Meeting" the annual target for each metric for which we have data.
- The SPREE Lite will not include pages to show school performance in the areas of Reading & English Language Arts (ELA) or Math & Science. This is because we do not have data for the metrics in these areas. Instead, the SPREE Lite will only show school performance on some of the applicable metrics in the areas of College & Career and Climate, Culture, & Opportunity, for which we have data.

What are the Board's Goals and Guardrails?

During the 2020-2021 school year, the Board of Education established five goals related to student performance and four guardrails that outline the conditions necessary for student success.

The five goals focus on:

1. Reading performance in grades 3-8
2. Reading performance in grade 3
3. Math performance in grades 3-8
4. Algebra, Biology, and Literature performance in grade 11
5. Industry preparation for Career and Technical Education (CTE) students

The four guardrails focus on:

1. Welcoming and supportive schools
2. Enriching and well-rounded school experiences
3. Partnering with parents/family members
4. Addressing racist practices

The Board has set targets for expected performance on all of these measures by the 2025-2026 school year. It also monitors progress on the Goals and Guardrails throughout the academic year.

How does the SPREE differ from the School Progress Reports (SPR)?

The SPR was the School District of Philadelphia’s previous tool for understanding school performance and was produced for school years 2012-2013 to 2018-2019. An end-of-year report for 2019-2020 that included some measures from the SPR was released, but no SPR was released for 2019-2020 due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The SPR measured performance on key metrics aligned to the Superintendent’s Action Plan 2.0. While many of the metrics from the SPR are included on the SPREE, the SPREE measures performance against and progress towards annual target values. The SPREE also more explicitly incorporates measures of equity – both at the schoolwide and metric levels – while the SPR included measures and scores only related to schoolwide performance.

The SPREE also includes many more unscored measures to provide additional context about student and school performance while keeping the focus squarely on measures aligned to state and local goals.

How do schools perform relative to each other on the SPREE?

The SPREE focuses on how a particular school is performing against the annual targets for student performance on state and local goals. These annual targets generally increase over time. The SPREE also focuses on how a school’s performance has changed from the previous year, and how a school is performing for the different groups of students that it serves. The SPREE is not focused on showing how schools are performing compared to each other. However, users can identify comparison schools using the demographic or performance data available on [School Profiles](#) or the [Open Data](#) webpage.

How does the SPREE account for students who are learning English or students who receive special education services?

Many of the measures on the SPREE are displayed separately for student groups, including students who are learning English and those who are receiving special education services. For these measures, the school has the same target for all student groups – that is, the school performance is expected to reach the same levels for the different groups of students that it serves.

In most years, SPREE also will include an overall rating of the school’s performance for each student group served. This rating provides a sense of whether a school is meeting its targets and improving for a specific group of students.

Are students enrolled in alternative education programs included in the SPREE?

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 and do not count toward their neighborhood school’s performance. Their performance is reflected in the [Alternative Education Progress Reports](#) (AEPR) released for each alternative program.

How is the SPREE scored?

For each scored metric on the SPREE, a school will receive one of four ratings:

- **Meeting and Improving** – meeting the current year’s performance target and improving from the previous year’s performance
 - A school that is already meeting the 2025-2026 target for a metric receives a label of “Meeting”, regardless of improvement from the previous year.

- A school that does not have information from the previous year but that is meeting the current year's target receives a label of "Meeting."
- **Meeting but Not Improving** – meeting the current year's performance target but not improving from the previous year's performance
- **Not Meeting but Improving** – not yet meeting the current year's performance target, but improving from the previous year's performance
 - A school that does not have information from the previous year and is not meeting the current year's target receives a label of "Not Meeting."
- **Not Meeting and Not Improving** – not meeting the current year's performance target and not improving from the previous year's performance

Annual targets are consistent across schools and have been set for every year through 2025-2026; details on each of these targets are available in the SPREE User Guide and on the [District's SPREE webpage](#).

What does it mean to show improvement for a measure?

To be considered "Improving", a school must:

- Improve by at least 2 percentage points for percentage-based metrics like the PSSA or the graduation rate, which are on a scale of 0.0% to 100.0%,
- Improve by at least 0.1 points for survey metrics, which are on a scale of 0.0 to 10.0, or
- Improve by at least 1 category for PVAAS AGI measures. As explained later in these FAQs, the PVAAS AGI categories are +2.00 and higher, +1.00 to +1.99, -1.00 to +1.00, -1.99 to -1.00, and -2.00 and lower.

Why is data on whether a school improved not available?

For 2020-2021, there are no prior-year SPREE metric calculations to determine improvement.

In future SPREE reporting years, it is possible that data on whether a school improved may not be available for a few reasons, including:

- Measures that could not be calculated for the previous year due to specific circumstances, like COVID-related adjustments or school closures
- A small number of students who were eligible for the metric in the previous year (e.g., a school that had 15 English learners in the previous year would not have received a score for ACCESS Growth or for any of the English learner group metrics)
- Schools that were not open or were not eligible for a SPREE report in the previous year
- Charter schools that chose to participate in the SPREE for the first time

How are schools scored when the previous year's data is not available?

If the previous year's data is not available for a metric, the school receives a rating of either "Meeting" or "Not Meeting" depending on whether the school or student group is meeting the current year's performance target for the metric. The overall level is based on the number of metrics that a school is improving for *out of the number for which it has improvement data*, so a school that does not have the previous year's data for a specific metric will use a different count of metrics when looking at the percentage for which a school is improving.

What does my school's "level" indicate?

A school's level reflects the percentage of metrics for which a school met the annual target and the percentage of metrics for which a school is improving (regardless of whether a school is meeting/not meeting its target). Based on these values, a school is labeled as one of six levels:

- **Level 1** – meeting at least 67% of targets and improving for at least 50% of targets
- **Level 2** – meeting at least 67% of targets but improving for less than 50% of targets
- **Level 3** – meeting 34-66% of targets and improving for at least 50% of targets
- **Level 4** – meeting 34-66% of targets but improving for less than 50% of targets

- **Level 5** – meeting 0-33% of targets and improving for at least 50% of targets
- **Level 6** – meeting 0-33% of targets but improving for less than 50% of targets

For 2020-2021, no overall school levels were calculated due to limited data.

How were the targets for each of the measures set?

For measures that are based on the Goals and Guardrails, metric targets are the same as those that are being considered each year by the Board of Education.

For measures that are aligned to state goals, annual state targets – or District-created annual targets that put District performance on track to reach the state’s 2030 goals – were used.

Is there more information on how each metric is calculated?

In addition to the metric definitions provided in the SPREE User Guide, business rules for each calculation are on the [District’s SPREE 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.

How is the Economically Disadvantaged rate calculated, and why does it differ from similar information shared elsewhere?

The Economically Disadvantaged rate used on the SPREE and SPREE Lite show the percentage of students who are directly certified as receiving specific public benefits, like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, or Medicaid. For District schools, this information is received directly from the state.

Other District data sources, such as School Profiles, show the Community Eligibility Provision, or CEP, rate of students who are economically disadvantaged. This number multiplies the direct certification rate by 1.6 to provide a broader estimate of the percentage of students who are economically disadvantaged. The CEP rate is used by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to determine whether schools or school districts may provide free meals to all students, regardless of household income.

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

There are several reasons why the SPREE may display different information when compared to other sources, including:

- **Sample.** The SPREE sometimes reflects a different sample of students than other data sources, such as the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Future Ready Index (FRI) or a school’s internal information system. For example, the PSSA metrics on the SPREE 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 SPREE. For example, the First-Fall College Matriculation Rate displayed on the 2020-21 SPREE reflects the Fall 2021 enrollment of students who graduated in 2020-2021. However, the matriculation rate displayed on the FRI “lags” a year – that is, the matriculation rate on the 2020-2021 FRI reflects the enrollment of students who graduated in 2019-2020.
- **Definition.** Metrics on the SPREE may be calculated slightly differently than similar metrics available elsewhere. For example, the attendance metric on the SPREE reflects the percentage of students attending a certain percentage of days (e.g., 95% or more of instructional days), while an attendance calculation posted by a partner agency may reflect another calculation, like Average Daily Attendance.

Why do some schools have two SPREES?

Because the Board of Education’s Goals are specific to particular grade levels, the SPREE 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 student outcomes may be evaluated separately. For example, a school serving grades 5-12 would receive a Middle School report (for grades 5-8) and a High School report (for grades 9-12).

Why don't some schools have a SPREE?

Alternative education schools, schools that serve a single grade level within a grade configuration, and charter schools in non-renewal status do not receive a SPREE. For example, YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School met all requirements to receive a SPREE but was ineligible due to its limited grade span (grade 12 only) and unique school model. Additionally, not all charter schools choose to participate in the SPREE.

Which charter schools participated?

This year's release includes approximately 99% of all eligible charter schools operating in 2020-2021 – or all but one eligible charter school. Charter school participants value an apples-to-apples comparison of progress across all city schools and value the comprehensive view of school performance and progress reflected in the SPREE.

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

The SPREE centers equity in several ways:

- **School Performance at the Metric Level for each Student Group Served.** The SPREE includes information on a school's performance and improvement on each measure disaggregated by student group (for example, state reading assessments).
- **Measures of Access and Opportunity.** Several metrics on the SPREE look specifically at whether different groups of students within a school have similar opportunities – for example, similar access to advanced courses.
- **School-Level Rating for Student Groups.** In addition to providing a schoolwide label based on performance and improvement, the SPREE assigns a separate label based on school performance and improvement for each student group.

Together, these components of the SPREE help to provide a picture of whether a school is successfully serving all of its students.

How are survey metrics scored?

The SPREE contains three scored survey metrics that use data from the 2020-2021 District-Wide Parent & Guardian, Student, and Teacher Surveys:

1. Instruction Score, incorporating responses from parents/guardians, students, and teachers
2. Climate Score, incorporating responses from parents/guardians, students, and teachers
3. Relationship Score, incorporating responses from parents/guardians

For the survey metrics, a school receives no score if it does not meet the minimum participation thresholds.

For the Instruction and Climate scores, a school must meet the participation thresholds for the student survey and at least one other respondent group (parents or teachers). Specifically, a school's student participation rate must be the greater of 25% of all students in grades 3-12 or 50 students (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), and either at least 10% of parents or 25% of teachers.

For the Relationship score, the school must have at least 10% of parents participating to meet the threshold. If a school meets the participation thresholds, it receives a "construct score" on a scale of 0.0-10.0. Meeting the minimum participation threshold does not guarantee that a school receives a rating of "Meeting" for these metrics.

Which questions are included in the survey metrics?

The Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE) develops the survey metrics and administers the District-Wide Survey. The specific questions included in a metric may change over time, but a copy of each year's survey is available on ORE's website. More information on the surveys, including responses to individual survey items, is available online.

What do the PVAAS AGI values measure, and how are those metrics scored?

The PVAAS AGI metrics measure whether students in a school are making growth from one year to the next, regardless of whether they entered the school year on, below, or above grade level. Students' growth is calculated for grades 4-8 and high school using students' prior-year and current-year performance on statewide assessments (the PSSAs and Keystones).

The Pennsylvania Department of Education categorizes AGI values as follows:

- -2.00 and lower (displayed as red in PVAAS reporting): Significant evidence that students did not meet the standard for PA Academic Growth
- -1.00 to -1.99 (displayed as yellow in PVAAS reporting): Moderate evidence that students did not meet the standard for PA Academic Growth
- -1.00 to +1.00 (displayed as green in PVAAS reporting): Evidence that students met the standard for PA Academic Growth
- +1.00 to +1.99 (displayed as light blue in PVAAS reporting): Moderate evidence that students exceeded the standard for PA Academic Growth
- +2.00 and higher (displayed as dark blue in PVAAS reporting): Strong evidence that students exceeded the standard for PA Academic Growth

On the SPREE, schools have a target of 2.00 or higher (dark blue in PVAAS reporting) for each year. Schools that have a score at or above this level receive a rating of "Meeting" or "Meeting and Improving", depending on the school's prior-year performance.

Schools that improve from one "category" to another – for example, from Yellow to Green – are identified as "Improving."

Schools that remain within the same color category are not considered to be improving.