

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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What is the purpose of the School Progress Report (SPR), and how is it different from the State's Future Ready Index (FRI)?

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

The SPR differs from the State's FRI in ways that reflect the District's unique goals and priorities. The SPR:

- Is designed to be a more actionable tool;
- Places greater weight on student growth than absolute achievement; and
- Redefines and expands upon the domains and metrics included in the FRI.

Is it fair to compare schools serving students with varying levels of prior 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 first entered the building. By assigning greater weight to the Progress domain, the District has also ensured that schools can attain strong results on the SPR regardless of the incoming performance of the students they serve.

Additionally, the three-year trend on the cover page provides insight into how a particular school has performed with similar students over time.

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

The SPR focuses on how a particular school has performed over time – whether the school has improved student outcomes – as opposed to how it is performing relative to other schools.

However, users can identify comparison schools using the demographic data available on [School Profiles](#) or the [Open Data](#) webpage. Users can also view SPR peer groups in the Appendix of the [SPR User Guide](#).

Schools with the highest overall score for their report type are designated as City Leaders on the cover of their individual reports.

How does the SPR account for students with special needs?

The District holds its schools accountable for providing academic excellence to all students. The achievement scores include results from both the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and the Pennsylvania Alternative System of Assessment (PASA).

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

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.

What is a floor? What is a target?

On the SPR, a floor is the minimum score a school must achieve in order to begin earning points for a given metric. The target is the score a school must achieve in order to earn all possible points for that 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 2018-19 SPR?

For all metrics, floors and targets are the same as they were in the 2017-18 SPR.

How are SPR metric points calculated?

Schools earn points for SPR metrics based on where they fall relative to the floor and target for that metric.

SPR metric points are calculated according to the following formula:

$$\text{Metric points earned} = (\text{Score} - \text{Floor}) / (\text{Target} - \text{Floor}) \times \text{Points Possible}$$

For example, for the ACCESS Proficiency metric, the floor is 5% and the target is 15%. There are 1.5 possible points for this metric. If 12% of English learners at a school met the ACCESS Proficiency benchmark, the school would earn:

$$\text{Percent of points: } (12\% - 5\%) / (15\% - 5\%) = 70\%$$

$$\text{Points earned: } 70\% \times 1.5 = \mathbf{1.05} \text{ out of } 1.5$$

What is the relationship between a school's score and its tier?

Tiers are based on the percentage of points earned (out of points possible) for a metric, domain, or overall score.

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

Does every report have 100 possible points?

No; the number of possible points varies by school based 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 2018-19.

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?

The SPR is comprised of four scored domains: 1) Achievement, 2) Progress, 3) Climate, and 4) College and Career. Together, performance in these domains make up a school's overall SPR score, but their weights in the overall score differ. 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%

How does the SPR measure growth for exams given in non-consecutive grade levels, like the Keystone Exams or the PSSA Science exams?

For 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 (i.e., continuously enrolled from October 1 through the end of the testing window) and have results for at least two prior assessments to count towards a school's score.

For fourth-grade science, the state considers having data from the third-grade PSSA ELA and Math assessments sufficient to produce a predicted score.

More details on how student growth is calculated are available from [the state's PVAAS website](#).

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 are 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 when compared to other sources, including:

- **Sample.** The SPR sometimes reflects a different sample of students than other data sources, such as the FRI 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 2018-19 SPR reflects the Fall 2019 enrollment of students who graduated in 2018-19. However, the matriculation rate displayed on the FRI "lags" a year – that is, the matriculation rate on the 2018-19 FRI reflects the enrollment of students who graduated in 2017-18.
- **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 an attendance calculation posted by a partner agency may reflect another calculation, like Average Daily Attendance.

How has the SPR changed?

The 2018-19 SPR has evolved in the following ways from prior years:

- It includes **revised educator effectiveness metrics** to align with data reported to the state for state and federal accountability purposes; and
- It includes a **revised parent/guardian survey participation rate** to reflect the percentage of households responding.

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 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 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 choose to participate in the SPR.

Which charter schools participated?

This year's release includes approximately 99% of all eligible charter schools operating in 2018-19 – 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 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 our 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 33% of students emphasize the importance of demonstrating progress among students who may be falling behind. Equity is also reflected in the ACCESS proficiency and growth metrics.

How are survey metrics scored?

The SPR contains five survey metrics that use data from the 2018-19 District-Wide Parent & Guardian Survey and the 2018-19 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 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.

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%, while 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 0-100%. The ratings are presented as the percentage of most positive responses. Meeting the minimum participation threshold does not guarantee points for these metrics.

Which questions are included in the survey metrics?

The [Office of Research and Evaluation](#) develops the survey metrics and 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” or “strongly disagree.” 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 their prior-year and current-year performance on statewide assessments (the PSSAs and Keystones).

The Pennsylvania Department of Education categorizes AGI values as follows:

-2.01 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

Schools that have an AGI metric score of 2.00 or higher (dark blue in PVAAS reporting) receive all of the possible points for that metric on the SPR (100% - Model).

Schools that have an AGI metric score between -1.00 and +1.99 (green and light blue in PVAAS reporting) receive a portion of the possible points for that metric on the SPR. AGI scores between -1.00 and +0.99 (green in PVAAS reporting) receive 1-49% of possible points on the SPR (Intervene and Watch). AGI scores between +1.00 and +1.99 (light blue in PVAAS reporting) earned 50-99% of possible points on the SPR (Reinforce and Model).

Schools that have an AGI metric score of -1.00 or lower (red and yellow in PVAAS reporting) receive no points for that metric on the SPR (0% - Intervene).