



UNDERSTANDING CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

The Academic Performance Score for a school is based upon indicators that define a high performing school. Many data elements contribute to the academic score – one of which is *Closing the Achievement Gap*.

Closing the Achievement Gap in the Pennsylvania School Performance Profile is measured for two groups of students:

- All Students – defined as all students enrolled for a full academic year taking the PSSA, PASA, or Keystone Exam.
- Historically Underperforming Students – defined as a non-duplicated count of students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English Language Learners enrolled for a full academic year taking the PSSA, PASA, or Keystone Exam. If a student is in more than one of the individual groups (e.g., special education and English Language Learner), s/he is only included in the Historically Underperforming Student group one time – a non-duplicated count. This group is not a cohort but rather students currently in the building meeting the definition during the reported year.
- For both groups of students, *Closing the Achievement Gap* will be calculated for each of the assessed subjects (Mathematics/Algebra I, ELA/Literature, and Science/Biology). The achievement gap is determined by comparing the baseline percent of students who are proficient or advanced to the goal of 100% proficiency. For the 2013-14 SPP and thereafter, closing the achievement gap data/results will be included for Science/Biology. Closing the achievement gap data/results will not be included for Mathematics/Algebra, Reading/Literature, and Writing in 2013-14 or 2014-15. As Pennsylvania is transitioning to more rigorous standards and assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, closing the achievement gap data/results will not be reported until 2015-16. For Mathematics/Algebra I and ELA/Literature, the assessments in 2014-15 will serve as the baseline year for establishing the achievement gaps. The first measure of success in closing these gaps will be available for 2015-16 reporting. Since Writing will be included as part of ELA, separate Writing closing the achievement gap data/results will not be reported.

Once the achievement gap is determined, schools are measured on the success in closing that gap.

- The benchmark for success is defined as closing one-half of the achievement gap over a six year period.
- This success rate is measured annually; if a school is on track or exceeding the cumulative rate needed to close the gap, a performance measure of 100 is earned.
- If a school has closed 80% of the cumulative rate needed to close the gap, a performance measure of 80 is earned.
- A school not making any progress in closing the gap or even widening the gap earns a performance measure of zero.
- Closing the gap is cumulative. For example, if the annual goal is to increase the percentage of students proficient or advanced by 5 percentage points and the school improves by 6 points in year 1 and 4 points in year 2, it earns a performance measure of 100 in year 1 and year 2.

CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP ILLUSTRATION

The Historically Underperforming Student group earned 40% Proficient or Advanced in the baseline year.

- Achievement gap = 60% (100 – 40).
- One-half of the achievement gap is 30%. (Closing one-half of the achievement gap over a six-year period)
- Over six years, the school must increase by 5 percentage points each year of the six-year period to meet the goal. (30/6 = 5 percentage points).
- The performance measure is based upon percent of annual goal met. For example:
 - 5 or more percentage point increase (meeting or exceeding 100% of the annual goal) = 100
 - 4 percentage point increase (meeting 80% of the annual goal) = 80
 - 3 percentage point increase (meeting 60% of the annual goal) = 60
 - 2 percentage point increase (meeting 40% of the annual goal) = 40
 - 1 percentage point increase (meeting 20% of the annual goal) = 20
 - No increase or decline = 0
- The annual goal closure is cumulative, i.e., if the school improves scores by 6 percentage points in year 1 and 4 percentage points in year 2, it earns a performance measure of 100

Proficient/Advanced 100%

TO CALCULATE THE GAP: Subtract Proficient/Advanced from 100

Proficient/Advanced (40%)	Achievement Gap (60%) (100 – 40)
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TO CLOSE THE GAP: Must increase 5 percentage points annually each year for six years

Proficient/Advanced (40%)	Closing the Achievement Gap Six-Year Goal (30%)	Achievement Gap Yet To Be Closed (30%)
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- Year 1 – 45% (5 percentage points increase)
- Year 2 – 50% (5 percentage points increase)
- Year 3 – 55% (5 percentage points increase)
- Year 4 – 60% (5 percentage points increase)
- Year 5 – 65% (5 percentage points increase)
- Year 6 – 70% (5 percentage points increase)