# Reading a No Child Left Behind 'school report card'

state's standardized test)

PSSA test results by group

PSSA test participation rates by group

• Percentage of "highly qualified" teachers

• The school's "AYP/School Improvement Status."

by Benjamin Herold and Paul Socolar

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires school districts to provide data about school performance in the form of a "school report card." It reports how well each school performed in reaching targets set under the law.

Below is a sample card for a Philadelphia school for the 2002-03 school year.

At press time, School District officials were uncertain when the 2003-04 report cards would be published or what the format would be. But the school report card will continue to include the six charts shown here, showing results on the school performance measures tracked by the state as required by the No Child Left Behind law:

#### Report cards are sent home to parents and are also available on the School District's website.

To request a copy of your school's NCLB report card, contact the school or the School District's Office of Accountability at 215-299-7461.

To find your school's NCLB report card on the Web, visit:

http://phila.schoolnet.com/outreach/philadelphia/avpschoolreports

Or follow the link to NCLB report cards on the School District's home page: www.phila.k12.pa.us

To find your school on the website, you must know its region.

#### Chart 4: Why are attendance/graduation rates listed?

• School attendance or graduation rate (for the prior year)

Under NCLB, schools are also expected to meet other performance standards that are not based on PSSA scores. Attendance and graduation rates are considered to be good measured of school success. All schools that have a class of graduating seniors are expected to graduate at least 80 percent of students, or to show improvement in the graduation rates. All schools that do not have a class of graduating seniors are expected to have a daily attendance rate of at least 90 percent for all students, or to show improvement in attendance.

Test score results by grade for the PSSA (the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, the

Chart 4 shows the average percentage of students attending daily or the percentage of students graduating. School District and state results are available for comparison.

## Chart 1: What does "proficient" mean and why is it important?

Students who scored "proficient" or better on the PSSA are considered to have done a satisfactory job or better. They have shown that they understand the skills included in Pennsylvania's academic standards and can display those skills when asked. "Advanced" is the highest possible score on the test.

Under No Child Left Behind, schools are supposed to prepare all of their students well enough to score "proficient" by 2014. In order to meet "adequate yearly progress" towards this goal, schools were expected to have 35 percent of students score proficient or better in math and 45 percent in reading in 2003 and 2004. Teachers are expected to "teach to proficiency" - that is, to cover the skills included in Pennsylvania's academic standards - for all students, at a pace that will get through all of the material in a school year.

In the circled columns, Chart 1 shows what percentage of the school's students scored proficient or better in each tested grade, for math and for reading. Results are shown for 2001-02 and for 2002-03. District and state results are available for comparison.

## Chart 5: How do I know if my child's teacher is "highly qualified"?

Under NCLB, schools are expected to place a "highly qualified" teacher in every classroom for core subjects by 2006. In Pennsylvania, a "highly qualified" teacher must be either fully certified or "intern-certified" by the state for the subject area the teacher is assigned to teach. Intern-certified means that the teacher has a bachelor's degree, is currently enrolled in a certification program, and has passed the state licensing tests in basic skills and in the content area he or she is teaching.

Parents must be notified if a student does not have a "highly qualified" teacher. Studies show that the least-qualified teachers more often end up in the highest-poverty schools and in the schools that have the highest proportion of students of color. Research also shows that having fully certified teachers makes a difference in student achievement.

Chart 5 shows the percentage of teachers at the school who met the state's definition of "highly qualified." For comparison, it reports the percentage of highly qualified teachers in the District and state overall and also in other high-poverty districts.



#### School District of Philadelphia

School Name Region:

Managed By: School District

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) School Report Card 2002-2003

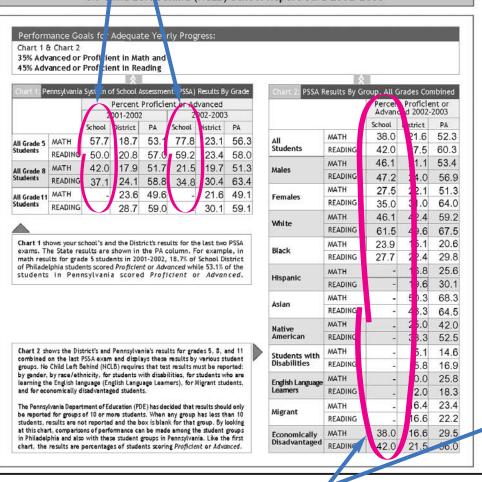


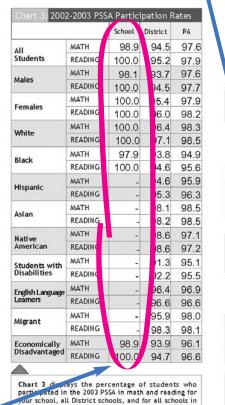
# School District of Philadelphia

School Name Region:

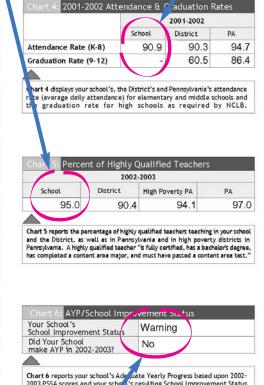
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No Child Left Behind (NCLB) School Report Card 2002-2003





PA. Participation rates are shown for all students, as well as for each student group. "Extended absence" is the most common reason for a student not participating.



2003 PSSA scores and your school's resulting for the current year (2003-2,04). School I on and support as required by NCLB. The the level of school interve ovides information about the types of support sed upon their School Improvement Status.

## Charts 2 & 3: Why is the information broken down by racial and other groups?

Under NCLB, schools must report all information for the entire school and for specific identified subgroups of students. This is known as "disaggregating" data. Schools must disaggregate their data so that people can determine if all groups of students are performing to expectations.

In Pennsylvania, all subgroups of 40 or more students (broken down by race, ethnicity, low-income status, disability status, migrant student status, and limited English proficiency status) are expected to meet the same proficiency standards. At least 95 percent of students from all subgroups (and from the entire school) are required to take the PSSA for the school to make adequate yearly progress.

In the circled column, Chart 2 shows what percentage of the school's students scored proficient or better for each group in the school population, for math and then for reading. Different proficiency rates show the gaps in test score performance between different groups in the school's population.

Chart 3 shows what percentage of the school's students participated in testing for each group in the school population, for math and for reading. On both charts, School District and state results are available for comparison.

## Chart 6: What does "AYP/School Improvement Status" mean?

Each year, your school's PSSA scores, participation rates, and attendance or graduation rate determine if your school made "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) under NCLB. Your school's AYP/School Improvement Status (Met AYP, Warning, School Improvement, etc.) is determined by whether it made AYP targets this year and by what its status was last year. See pages 13-16 to find out your school's status and for more information about "making AYP."

Your school's AYP/School Improvement Status tells whether or not it is considered in need of improvement and what consequences it may face. If your school is in Corrective Action, it could mean that your school is going to be expected to overhaul its staff, change its curriculum, and/or become a charter school. Parent and staff involvement is required in planning those changes. If your school is in School Improvement or Corrective Action, you may be entitled to extra money for tutoring and/or to send your child to a different school. To obtain information from the School District about your school's status and your rights, call Marie Bonner (215-299-3408) or Paula Cruz (215-299-1719).

Chart 6 shows the school's status and whether or not it achieved state targets for making AYP.



Benjamin Herold is a researcher at Research for Action. Paul Socolar is editor of the Philadelphia Public School Notebook. This page was developed as a joint project of the Notebook and Research for Action's "Learning from Philadelphia's School Reform" project and is reprinted with permission from the Notebook. Volume 12, No. 2, page 28 WINTER 2004-2005