

Reading a No Child Left Behind 'school report card'

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/aypschoolreports>

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.

- Test score results by grade for the PSSA (the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, the state's standardized test)
- PSSA test results by group
- PSSA test participation rates by group
- School attendance or graduation rate (for the prior year)
- Percentage of "highly qualified" teachers
- The school's "AYP/School Improvement Status."

Chart 4: Why are attendance/graduation rates listed?

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 measures 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.

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

Chart 1: Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Results By Grade

Grade	Subject	2001-2002		2002-2003		PA
		School	District	School	District	
All Grade 5 Students	MATH	57.7	18.7	53.1	77.8	23.1
	READING	50.0	20.8	57.0	59.2	23.4
All Grade 8 Students	MATH	42.0	17.9	51.7	21.5	19.7
	READING	37.1	24.1	58.8	34.8	30.4
All Grade 11 Students	MATH	-	23.6	49.6	-	21.6
	READING	-	28.7	59.0	-	30.1

Chart 2: PSSA Results By Group, All Grades Combined

Group	Subject	2001-2002		2002-2003		PA
		School	District	School	District	
All Students	MATH	38.0	21.6	52.3	-	-
	READING	42.0	27.5	60.3	-	-
Males	MATH	46.1	11.1	53.4	-	-
	READING	47.2	34.0	56.9	-	-
Females	MATH	27.5	22.1	51.3	-	-
	READING	35.0	31.0	64.0	-	-
White	MATH	46.1	42.4	59.2	-	-
	READING	61.5	49.6	67.5	-	-
Black	MATH	23.9	15.1	20.6	-	-
	READING	27.7	22.4	29.8	-	-
Hispanic	MATH	-	16.8	25.6	-	-
	READING	-	19.6	30.1	-	-
Asian	MATH	-	50.3	68.3	-	-
	READING	-	43.3	64.5	-	-
Native American	MATH	-	25.0	42.0	-	-
	READING	-	33.3	52.5	-	-
Students with Disabilities	MATH	-	15.1	14.6	-	-
	READING	-	15.8	16.9	-	-
Economically Disadvantaged	MATH	-	10.0	25.8	-	-
	READING	-	12.0	18.3	-	-
Migrant	MATH	-	16.4	23.4	-	-
	READING	-	16.6	22.2	-	-
Economically Disadvantaged	MATH	38.0	16.6	29.5	-	-
	READING	42.0	21.5	36.0	-	-

Chart 3: 2002-2003 PSSA Participation Rates

Group	Subject	School	District	PA
All Students	MATH	98.9	94.5	97.6
	READING	100.0	95.2	97.9
Males	MATH	98.1	93.7	97.6
	READING	100.0	94.5	97.7
Females	MATH	100.0	95.4	97.9
	READING	100.0	96.0	98.2
White	MATH	100.0	96.4	98.3
	READING	100.0	97.1	98.5
Black	MATH	97.9	83.8	94.9
	READING	100.0	84.6	95.6
Hispanic	MATH	-	4.6	95.9
	READING	-	15.3	96.3
Asian	MATH	-	8.1	98.5
	READING	-	8.2	98.5
Native American	MATH	-	8.6	97.1
	READING	-	8.6	97.2
Students with Disabilities	MATH	-	11.3	95.1
	READING	-	12.2	95.5
English Language Learners	MATH	-	96.4	96.9
	READING	-	96.6	96.6
Migrant	MATH	-	95.9	98.0
	READING	-	98.3	98.1
Economically Disadvantaged	MATH	98.9	93.9	96.1
	READING	100.0	94.7	96.6

Chart 4: 2001-2002 Attendance & Graduation Rates

Measure	2001-2002		
	School	District	PA
Attendance Rate (K-8)	90.9	90.3	94.7
Graduation Rate (9-12)	-	60.5	86.4

Chart 5: Percent of Highly Qualified Teachers

Category	2002-2003			
	School	District	High Poverty PA	PA
Percent of Highly Qualified Teachers	95.0	90.4	94.1	97.0

Chart 6: AYP/School Improvement Status

Measure	Status
Your School's School Improvement Status	Warning
Did Your School make AYP in 2002-2003?	No

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.