

# **Pennsylvania Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook**

**May 1, 2003**

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9.1, 9.2, and 10.1)

**for State Grants under Title IX, Part C, Section 9302 of the Elementary and  
Secondary Education Act (Public Law 107-110)**



**U. S. Department of Education  
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Washington, D.C. 20202**

## **Instructions for Completing Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook**

By January 31, 2003, States must complete and submit to the Department this Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook. We understand that some of the critical elements for the key principles may still be under consideration and may not yet be final State policy by the January 31 due date. States that do not have final approval for some of these elements or that have not finalized a decision on these elements by January 31 should, when completing the Workbook, indicate the status of each element which is not yet official State policy and provide the anticipated date by which the proposed policy will become effective. In each of these cases, States must include a timeline of steps to complete to ensure that such elements are in place by May 1, 2003, and implemented during the 2002-2003 school year. By no later than May 1, 2003, States must submit to the Department final information for all sections of the Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook.

### **Transmittal Instructions**

To expedite the receipt of this Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook, please send your submission via the Internet as a .doc file, pdf file, rtf or .txt file or provide the URL for the site where your submission is posted on the Internet. Send electronic submissions to [conapp@ed.gov](mailto:conapp@ed.gov).

A State that submits only a paper submission should mail the submission by express courier to:

Celia Sims  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave., SW  
Room 3W300  
Washington, D.C. 20202-6400  
(202) 401-0113

## **PART I: Summary of Required Elements for State Accountability Systems**

### **Instructions**

The following chart is an overview of States' implementation of the critical elements required for approval of their State accountability systems. States must provide detailed implementation information for each of these elements in Part II of this Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook.

For each of the elements listed in the following chart, States should indicate the current implementation status in their State using the following legend:

- F:** State has a final policy, approved by all the required entities in the State (e.g., State Board of Education, State Legislature), for implementing this element in its accountability system.
- P:** State has a proposed policy for implementing this element in its accountability system, but must still receive approval by required entities in the State (e.g., State Board of Education, State Legislature).
- W:** State is still working on formulating a policy to implement this element in its accountability system.

**Summary of Implementation Status for Required Elements of  
State Accountability Systems**

<b>Status</b>	<b>State Accountability System Element</b>
<b><u>Principle 1: All Schools</u></b>	
F	1.1 Accountability system includes <i>all schools and districts in the state</i> .
F	1.2 Accountability system holds <i>all schools to the same criteria</i> .
F	1.3 Accountability system incorporates the <i>academic achievement standards</i> .
F	1.4 Accountability system provides <i>information in a timely manner</i> .
F	1.5 Accountability system includes <i>report cards</i> .
P	1.6 Accountability system includes <i>rewards and sanctions</i> .
<b><u>Principle 2: All Students</u></b>	
F	2.1 The accountability system includes <i>all students</i>
F	2.2 The accountability system has a consistent definition of <i>full academic year</i> .
F	2.3 The accountability system properly includes <i>mobile students</i> .
<b><u>Principle 3: Method of AYP Determinations</u></b>	
F	3.1 Accountability system expects <i>all student subgroups, public schools, and LEAs to reach proficiency by 2013-14</i>
F	3.2 Accountability system has a method for determining whether <i>student subgroups, public schools, and LEAs made adequate yearly progress</i> .
F	3.2a Accountability system establishes a <i>starting point</i> .
F	3.2b Accountability system establishes <i>statewide annual measurable objectives</i> .
F	3.2c Accountability system establishes <i>intermediate goals</i> .
<b><u>Principle 4: Annual Decisions</u></b>	
F	4.1 The accountability system <i>determines annually the progress</i> of schools and districts.

**STATUS Legend:**

F – Final state policy

P – Proposed policy, awaiting State approval

W – Working to formulate policy

**Principle 5: Subgroup Accountability**

F	5.1	The accountability system <i>includes all the required student subgroups</i> .
F	5.2	The accountability system holds <i>schools and LEAs accountable for the progress of student subgroups</i> .
F	5.3	The accountability system includes <i>students with disabilities</i> .
F	5.4	The accountability system includes <i>limited English proficient students</i> .
F	5.5	The State has determined the minimum number of students sufficient to yield statistically reliable information for each purpose for which disaggregated data are used.
F	5.6	The State has strategies to protect the privacy of individual students in reporting achievement results and in determining whether schools and LEAs are making adequate yearly progress on the basis of disaggregated subgroups.

**Principle 6: Based on Academic Assessments**

F	6.1	Accountability system is based <i>primarily on academic assessments</i> .
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**Principle 7: Additional Indicators**

F	7.1	Accountability system includes <i>graduation rate for high schools</i> .
F	7.2	Accountability system includes an <i>additional academic indicator for elementary and middle schools</i> .
F	7.3	Additional indicators are valid and reliable.

**Principle 8: Separate Decisions for Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics**

F	8.1	Accountability system holds students, schools and districts separately accountable for <i>reading/language arts and mathematics</i> .
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**Principle 9: System Validity and Reliability**

F	9.1	Accountability system produces <i>reliable decisions</i> .
F	9.2	Accountability system produces <i>valid decisions</i> .
F	9.3	State has a plan for addressing <i>changes in assessment and student population</i> .

**Principle 10: Participation Rate**

F	10.1	Accountability system has a means for calculating the <i>rate of participation</i> in the statewide assessment.
F	10.2	Accountability system has a means for <i>applying the 95% assessment criteria to student subgroups and small schools</i> .

**STATUS Legend:**

F – Final policy

P – Proposed Policy, awaiting State approval

W– Working to formulate policy

## **PART II: State Response and Activities for Meeting State Accountability System Requirements**

### **Instructions**

In Part II of this Workbook, States are to provide detailed information for each of the critical elements required for State accountability systems. States should answer the questions asked about each of the critical elements in the State's accountability system. States that do not have final approval for any of these elements or that have not finalized a decision on these elements by January 31, 2003, should, when completing this section of the Workbook, indicate the status of each element that is not yet official State policy and provide the anticipated date by which the proposed policy will become effective. In each of these cases, States must include a timeline of steps to complete to ensure that such elements are in place by May 1, 2003, and implemented during the 2002-2003 school year. By no later than May 1, 2003, States must submit to the Department final information for all sections of the Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook.

**PRINCIPLE 1. A single statewide Accountability System applied to all public schools and LEAs.**

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>1.1 How does the State Accountability System include every public school and LEA in the State?</p>	<p>Every public school and LEA is required to make adequate yearly progress and is included in the State Accountability System.</p> <p>State has a definition of “public school” and “LEA” for AYP accountability purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The State Accountability System produces AYP decisions for all public schools, including public schools with variant grade configurations (e.g., K-12), public schools that serve special populations (e.g., alternative public schools, juvenile institutions, state public schools for the blind) and public charter schools. It also holds accountable public schools with no grades assessed (e.g., K-2).</li> </ul>	<p>A public school or LEA is not required to make adequate yearly progress and is not included in the State Accountability System.</p> <p>State policy systematically excludes certain public schools and/or LEAs.</p>

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Pennsylvania’s accountability system includes every public school and local educational agency (LEA), with a goal of 100% of all students, schools, and LEAs reaching proficiency by 2013-2014. This system builds upon Chapter 4 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code, which is the site of the State Board of Education’s regulations governing academic standards and assessments, which became final in 1999. *See 22 Pa. Code § 4.1 et seq.* The stated purposes of Chapter 4 are to establish rigorous academic standards and assessments to facilitate the improvement of student achievement, and to provide parents and communities a measure by which school performance can be determined. *22 Pa. Code § 4.2.*

Pennsylvania has also developed a system for assessing achievement of these standards. This system is known as the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). The

PSSA includes reading and mathematics assessments for students in grades 3- 8 and 11; science assessments for students in grades 4, 8, and 11; and writing assessments for students in grades 5, 8, and 11. A small number of students take the State's alternate assessment (the PASA), rather than the PSSA, when their IEPs so stipulate. The State is in process of developing an alternate assessment based on modified academic achievement standards. The state also assesses students in ESL programs by employing an English language proficiency assessment.

Pennsylvania's accountability system produces Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) decisions for all public schools and LEAs as well as reports of progress toward Performance Index targets. For purposes of this discussion, public schools include charter schools, full-time comprehensive area vocational technical schools, and publicly funded schools under private or non-profit management. LEAs include public school districts. Students who are assigned by a school or district to receive their educational services outside their attendance area will have their scores attributed to the attendance area school and district for purposes of reporting and accountability; those who change schools voluntarily will be attributed to the school and district they are attending.

A "feeder school" approach is used to hold accountable schools that do not administer statewide assessments because of their grade configurations. This feeder school approach, which was implemented beginning in 2003, involves determinations based on student-level (rather than school-level) aggregated data. Beginning in 2006, feeder schools were identified as K-2, K-1, 1-2, 1 only, 2 only, 9-10, 9 only, and 10 only. Because we do not track the specific schools into which these students feed, we use the district-wide results of the grade into which these students feed. For example, if the district's third grade meets the performance target in both math and reading, every K-2, K-1, 1-2, 1 only, and 2 only feeder school in the district is identified as having made AYP. If the district's third grade fails to meet one or both performance targets, every feeder school noted above is identified as not making AYP. Districts have the opportunity to offer other evidence to have the status of a feeder school changed. Guidance in determining a change of status for a feeder school could include such factors as the school's or schools' non-PSSA standardized test scores, if any; other academic achievement indicators, including teacher-prepared academic tests; and assessments indicating percentage of students below grade level.

There are a relatively few charter schools that do not administer statewide assessments because of their grade configurations. Because these schools do not necessarily feed into any particular district, we will determine their AYP status based on their other academic indicator: graduation rate for those charter schools that have a graduating class (e.g., a 12<sup>th</sup> grade only school) or attendance rate for those charter schools that do not have a graduating class (e.g., K-2).

Section 4.61 (a)(1) of the regulations requires that the results of the State assessments (for each LEA and school) must be reported as required by federal and state law. As explained in Section 1.5 of this Workbook, Pennsylvania's General Assembly recently amended the Public School Code of 1949 (School Code) to merge the reporting

requirements of Section 4.61 (School Profiles) with those of NCLB. Results for districts and schools can be found at [www.paayp.com](http://www.paayp.com). Additionally, Pennsylvania produces report cards for all LEAs with the information posted on this same website.

Finally, as explained in Section 1.6 of this workbook, rewards, assistance, and sanctions are a part of Pennsylvania's accountability system, and will be based upon AYP decisions. All schools and districts receive rewards and sanctions based on their AYP performance. Currently, sanctions beyond school improvement planning fall only to those schools receiving Title I funds. However, PDE is working with the state General Assembly to develop legislation that includes non-Title I schools in all NCLB sanctions and rewards.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
1.2 How are all public schools and LEAs held to the same criteria when making an AYP determination?	All public schools and LEAs are systematically judged on the basis of the same criteria when making an AYP determination.  If applicable, the AYP definition is integrated into the State Accountability System.	Some public schools and LEAs are systematically judged on the basis of alternate criteria when making an AYP determination.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

All public schools and LEAs are held to the same criteria when making AYP decisions. The AYP criteria includes the proportion of students scoring at or above the proficient level in reading and in mathematics. Pennsylvania has designated and defined terms to describe student performance (“performance level descriptors”), all of which are discussed in Section 1.3 of this workbook. These terms, which were recommended by the Department of Education and approved by the State Board of Education are: advanced, proficient, basic and below basic. (22 Pa. Code § 4.51(b)(4)). The term “proficient” means “satisfactory academic performance indicating a solid understanding and adequate display of the skills included in Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards.” See 31 *Pennsylvania Bulletin (Pa. B.)* 2763 (May 26, 2001).

With the exception of new schools, AYP criteria also includes (beginning in 2002-2003) attendance and graduation rate indicators, with an expectation that educational units will either meet a goal of 90% on attendance or 80% on graduation rate, or show improvement over the previous year. A participation rate of 95% is required to meet AYP. Subgroups, schools, and LEAs must meet all criteria in order to make AYP.

Attendance and graduation rates for current year AYP are previous year attendance and graduation data. In the case of a new school, no previous year’s data exists; therefore, attendance and graduation are excluded as AYP criteria the first year a new school is in existence. A new school can be created if two or more schools combine and the result is a change in the original population of at least 50%, or the result is a change in grade configuration of at least two tested grades. For example, two K-5 schools in an LEA combine, and the population of the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade increases from 50 students in each school to 100 students in the newly combined school; or a K-5 school changes its configuration to become a K-8 school.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>1.3 Does the State have, at a minimum, a definition of <i>basic</i>, <i>proficient</i> and <i>advanced</i> student achievement levels in reading/language arts and mathematics?</p>	<p>State has defined three levels of student achievement: <i>basic</i>, <i>proficient</i> and <i>advanced</i>.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Student achievement levels of <i>proficient</i> and <i>advanced</i> determine how well students are mastering the materials in the State's academic content standards; and the <i>basic</i> level of achievement provides complete information about the progress of lower-achieving students toward mastering the <i>proficient</i> and <i>advanced</i> levels.</p>	<p>Standards do not meet the legislated requirements.</p>

#### STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Section 4.51 (b) (4) of the regulations of the State Board of Education specifies that Pennsylvania's four student performance levels shall be: advanced, proficient, basic and below basic. Furthermore, this section directs the Pennsylvania Department of Education, in consultation with educators, students, parents and citizens, to develop and recommend to the State Board for its approval specific criteria for advanced, proficient, basic and below basic levels of performance. The Department understood the need for clearly defined levels of performance and created a "draft" version of definitions that was sent to more than 1700 educators, business leaders, professional education associations, and parent associations. Based upon the feedback that these individuals and groups provided, the Department created definitions for the four performance levels so that the specific criteria for each level could now be identified. These definitions are as follows:

- Advanced: Superior academic performance indicating an in-depth understanding and exemplary display of the skills included in Pennsylvania's Academic Standards;
- Proficient: Satisfactory academic performance indicating a solid understanding and adequate display of the skills included in Pennsylvania's Academic Standards;

<sup>1</sup> System of State achievement standards will be reviewed by the Standards and Assessments Peer Review. The Accountability Peer Review will determine that achievement levels are used in determining AYP.

- Basic: Marginal academic performance, work approaching, but not yet reaching, satisfactory performance, indicating partial understanding and limited display of the skills included in Pennsylvania's Academic Standards; and
- Below Basic: Inadequate academic performance that indicates little understanding and minimal display of the skills included in Pennsylvania's Academic Standards.

Section 4.21(k) of the regulations provides that students who have not achieved proficiency in reading and mathematics by the end of grade 5, as determined on State assessments, shall be afforded instructional opportunities to develop knowledge and skills necessary to perform at the proficient level. Section 4.51 (e) provides students who did not achieve a level of proficiency in the eleventh grade assessment with an additional opportunity to do so in grade 12.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
1.4 How does the State provide accountability and adequate yearly progress decisions and information in a timely manner?	<p>State provides decisions about adequate yearly progress in time for LEAs to implement the required provisions before the beginning of the next academic year.</p> <p>State allows enough time to notify parents about public school choice or supplemental educational service options, time for parents to make an informed decision, and time to implement public school choice and supplemental educational services.</p>	Timeline does not provide sufficient time for LEAs to fulfill their responsibilities before the beginning of the next academic year.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Every public educational entity and LEA is evaluated annually for AYP, based on a spring testing cycle and the end-of-year graduation and attendance indicators from the previous school year. Beginning in 2003, schools and LEAs received preliminary AYP determinations in August. Beginning with the 2006 release of assessment results, preliminary AYP determinations were available in July. The NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress report for each public school entity includes preliminary AYP status based upon that entity’s academic achievement, shows detailed numerical calculations, and delineates consequences / impacts consistent with a single accountability system. The July notification provides sufficient time for the LEAs to notify parents and fulfill their other responsibilities prior to the opening of school, and also provides an opportunity for schools and LEAs to review the data and the AYP determinations before they are finalized.

If an AYP appeal results in a decision, prior to the start of classes, that a school initially identified as not making AYP based on the preliminary data has made AYP, any school improvement or corrective action steps that had been initiated as a result of the preliminary decision, including school choice, will be rescinded. If such a decision is made after the start of classes, any students who have chosen to attend another school as a result of the preliminary classification may continue to do so for that year under the same conditions as if the school had not made AYP.

During the past several years, the Department has made significant strides in decreasing the time period for returning PSSA results. Prior to 2000, PSSAs were administered in February-March and results were returned to schools in October. In 2000, tests were administered in April and results were returned by the end of August. In 2002, 11<sup>th</sup> grade student results were sent to districts by July 15. In 2003, all student scores were delivered by July 15. Due to validation of cut scores to determine performance levels, AYP results for 2005 were sent to districts August 15. In 2006, we returned to a mid-July preliminary AYP release date, and we delivered preliminary AYP data in 2007 in mid-July, also. In 2008, preliminary (pre-appeal) AYP results will be posted July 1, ensuring final determinations for all schools/LEAs prior to the start of the new school year. When students' PSSA score reports are received, schools are then responsible for delivering a copy of the score report to the parents or guardians.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
1.5 Does the State Accountability System produce an annual State Report Card?	<p>The State Report Card includes all the required data elements [see Appendix A for the list of required data elements].</p> <p>The State Report Card is available to the public at the beginning of the academic year.</p> <p>The State Report Card is accessible in languages of major populations in the State, to the extent possible.</p> <p>Assessment results and other academic indicators (including graduation rates) are reported by student subgroups</p>	<p>The State Report Card does not include all the required data elements.</p> <p>The State Report Card is not available to the public.</p>

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Pennsylvania produces an annual state report card, which was modified to fully incorporate the NCLB requirements. For several years, Pennsylvania used its “School Profiles” as a vehicle to keep citizens informed about its schools. These profiles, which were available at [www.paprofiles.org](http://www.paprofiles.org), provided information about many subjects, including student achievement. When NCLB was enacted, it was necessary to make some adjustments to the profiles (e.g., the addition of data disaggregated by subgroup) to ensure consistency between State and federal reporting requirements. The General Assembly responded by passing House Bill 204, which is referred to as the State and School Report Card Bill (Act No. 153 of 2002, signed into law on December 9, 2002).

This new law essentially incorporates the reporting requirements of the NCLB into the Pennsylvania School Code of 1949 (School Code), expressly delineating the responsibilities of the State, as well as those of each LEA, charter school, cyber charter school, intermediate unit and area vocational technical school. It effectively transforms the school, LEA and state “profiles” into “report cards” and is more “user-friendly” since State and federal requirements now appear in one section of the School Code. Report card information can now be found at [www.paayp.com](http://www.paayp.com). Additionally, Pennsylvania produces report cards which are posted on the [www.paayp.com](http://www.paayp.com) website. The law requires the Department to issue guidelines concerning the collection and submission of data in order to ensure continued compliance with federal and State mandates, but the

Department lacks sufficient personnel to ensure compliance; therefore, the Department is assured of compliance since it creates all the school and district Report Cards.

The State Report Card, which provides information at the State level, is also published at [www.paayp.com](http://www.paayp.com) . To ensure that the citizens are aware of the opportunity to review the Report Card, the General Assembly requires the Pennsylvania Department of Education to inform the public of the availability of the report card prior to publication.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF <i>NOT</i> MEETING REQUIREMENTS
1.6 How does the State Accountability System include rewards and sanctions for public schools and LEAs? <sup>2</sup>	<p>State uses one or more types of rewards and sanctions, where the criteria are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set by the State;</li> <li>Based on adequate yearly progress decisions; and,</li> <li>Applied uniformly across public schools and LEAs.</li> </ul>	State does not implement rewards or sanctions for public schools and LEAs based on adequate yearly progress.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Pennsylvania accountability system includes rewards, assistance, and sanctions for public schools and LEAs that are entirely aligned with NCLB. The rewards, assistance, and most sanctions apply to every public school and LEA in the Commonwealth. PDE is currently working with the state Legislature to develop accountability legislation that would further align NCLB with the state accountability system, including sanctions for non-Title I schools and districts.

**Rewards for Distinguished Local Education Units**

State law provides for schools and LEAs to be designated as distinguished, and given recognition if they meet or exceed their annual AYP targets for two consecutive years for all students and for all measurable subgroups. Keystone Awards are presented to both Title I and non-Title I schools and districts that meet this goal.

**Assistance and Sanctions for Schools Not Making AYP**

State law provides assistance and sanctions for schools which have failed to meet AYP criteria for two or more consecutive years in the same subject. After two consecutive years of not meeting AYP, schools are put into a school improvement cycle; after two

<sup>2</sup> The state must provide rewards and sanctions for all public schools and LEAs for making adequate yearly progress, except that the State is not required to hold schools and LEAs not receiving Title I funds to the requirements of section 1116 of NCLB [§200.12(b)(40)].

more consecutive years of not meeting AYP, they are put into a corrective action cycle. The assistance for schools includes school improvement planning, improvement support teams, distinguished educators, Intermediate Unit services, and local improvement grants to support educational units in addressing issues which have been obstacles to student progress.

In the 2005-06 school year, PDE implemented two new initiatives to further provide support to low-performing schools. The Distinguished Educator program provides a team of experts that works with identified districts for up to two years to help build the capacity to improve student achievement. Second, PDE provides funding to all Intermediate Units (IUs) to provide school improvement services to districts with schools in Improvement or Corrective Action. The IU school improvement program also includes funding to help all districts and schools utilize existing PDE improvement tools such as assessment anchors and data dialogues. IUs meet with all districts that have schools in Improvement or Corrective Action and use various tools to identify and provide targeted services based on the district's unique individual needs. Finally, funding is provided to Intermediate Units to partner with those districts that have teams of Distinguished Educators. Sanctions for not meeting AYP range from school and district improvement planning to corrective action requirements consistent with NCLB.

### **Assistance and Sanctions for School Districts not making AYP**

Under the Pennsylvania Accountability System and the *No Child Left Behind* law, school districts in Pennsylvania are expected to meet the *Adequate Yearly Progress* (AYP) performance targets, just like individual schools and the state as a whole. Districts that do not meet their AYP targets receive designations that follow the same pattern as individual schools, namely:

- A district that did not meet its AYP targets the first year receives a **Warning** designation. The Pennsylvania Department of Education does *not* require a formal response from the district; however, the district is encouraged to address the area(s) of concern in a deliberate manner to avoid slipping into the next category.
- A district that did not meet its AYP targets for two or three consecutive years receives a **District Improvement** designation. Each district in this category is required to prepare a district improvement plan to address the underlying causes of poor performance.
- A district that did not meet its AYP targets for four or more years receives a **Corrective Action** designation. Each district in this category falls within PDE's intensive intervention-and-assistance programs, tailored to address the barriers to achievement in each district. In addition, the district is required to develop a Corrective Action District Improvement Plan.
- Additional information can be found on the PDE website at <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/pas/cwp/view.asp?a=3&Q=106039&pasNav=|6336|&pasNav=|6336|>

**PRINCIPLE 2. All students are included in the State Accountability System.**

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF <i>NOT</i> MEETING REQUIREMENTS
2.1 How does the State Accountability System include all students in the State?	<p>All students in the State are included in the State Accountability System.</p> <p>The definitions of “public school” and “LEA” account for all students enrolled in the public school district, regardless of program or type of public school.</p>	Public school students exist in the State for whom the State Accountability System makes no provision.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

All public school students are included in NCLB accountability regardless of program or type of public education entity, except for those students excused due to medical emergency. A medical emergency is defined as a recent physical or mental diagnosis that renders a student incapable of participating in the assessment. When students have been placed in educational settings other than their attendance area by their home school and/or LEA, their scores will be attributed for purposes of reporting and accountability to their home school and district.

All students in the Commonwealth are required to participate in the state assessments, with the exception of those granted a religious exemption under state law. However, these students do count towards the participation rate for determining AYP. The assessments are accommodated for students with special needs, and these accommodations were recently reviewed and expanded to ensure the most valid possible assessment for every student.

There is currently a Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) designed for students with the most severe cognitive disabilities whose IEP specifies that the PSSA is not appropriate. The department is also exploring the possibility of an alternative assessment for English Language Learners who have recently arrived in the country. In 2005, PDE developed a side by side Spanish language Math test as an accommodation for ELL students. ELL assessments are discussed further in Section 5.4.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
2.2 How does the State define “full academic year” for identifying students in AYP decisions?	<p>The State has a definition of “full academic year” for determining which students are to be included in decisions about AYP.</p> <p>The definition of full academic year is consistent and applied statewide.</p>	<p>LEAs have varying definitions of “full academic year.”</p> <p>The State’s definition excludes students who must transfer from one district to another as they advance to the next grade.</p> <p>The definition of full academic year is not applied consistently.</p>

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Pennsylvania has adopted a definition of the term “full academic year” for purposes of identifying students in AYP decisions. A student is enrolled for a “full academic year” if the student is enrolled from October 1 of the academic year to the close of the testing period. This definition was determined following a careful review process, which involved consideration of the definitions used by other states, comments provided by the Committee of Practitioners, and questions raised by representatives of the U.S. Department of Education at a meeting, with a delegation from Pennsylvania, held on December 18, 2002.

Pennsylvania’s Information Management System will capture a student’s date of enrollment. To ensure that the definition is applied consistently throughout the State, the Department has instituted uniform procedures for the collection of data at both the school (or educational entity) and LEA levels. Collecting these data at both levels has enabled Pennsylvania to make consistent and accurate decisions, relative to AYP, for all students. Even if a student has not been enrolled in a particular school for the full academic year, that school remains responsible for administering the statewide assessment to that student, as Pennsylvania requires that all students participate in the assessment (unless religious exemptions apply- see Section 2.1).

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>2.3 How does the State Accountability System determine which students have attended the same public school and/or LEA for a full academic year?</p>	<p>State holds public schools accountable for students who were enrolled at the same public school for a full academic year.</p> <p>State holds LEAs accountable for students who transfer during the full academic year from one public school within the district to another public school within the district.</p>	<p>State definition requires students to attend the same public school for more than a full academic year to be included in public school accountability.</p> <p>State definition requires students to attend school in the same district for more than a full academic year to be included in district accountability.</p> <p>State holds public schools accountable for students who have not attended the same public school for a full academic year.</p>

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The accountability system properly includes mobile students. Schools, LEAs and educational entities are accountable for mobile students in the same manner as they are for other students. The “full academic year” criteria are applied to all students. In Pennsylvania, it is not uncommon for students to move from one school to another within the same district during an academic year. In these instances, the school in which the student is enrolled at the time of the assessment bears responsibility for test administration; however, the district, rather than the school, will be accountable for the student’s performance. Pennsylvania has implemented an Information Management System which will allow longitudinal student tracking through the assignment of a secure ID. This system was first implemented during the 2007-08 testing year.

**PRINCIPLE 3. State definition of AYP is based on expectations for growth in student achievement that is continuous and substantial, such that all students are proficient in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than 2013-2014.**

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF <i>NOT</i> MEETING REQUIREMENTS
3.1 How does the State's definition of adequate yearly progress require all students to be proficient in reading/language arts and mathematics by the 2013-2014 academic year?	The State has a timeline for ensuring that all students will meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement in reading/language arts <sup>3</sup> and mathematics, not later than 2013-2014.	State definition does not require all students to achieve proficiency by 2013-2014.  State extends the timeline past the 2013-2014 academic year.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Pennsylvania accountability system, and its definition of adequate yearly progress, requires that all students be proficient in reading/language arts and mathematics by 2013-2014, based on an assessment participation rate of 95% or more, overall, and for each measurable subgroup.

<sup>3</sup> If the state has separate assessments to cover its language arts standards (e.g., reading and writing), the State must create a method to include scores from all the relevant assessments.

<b>CRITICAL ELEMENT</b>	<b>EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS</b>
<p>3.2 How does the State Accountability System determine whether each student subgroup, public school and LEA makes AYP?</p>	<p>For a public school and LEA to make adequate yearly progress, each student subgroup must meet or exceed the State annual measurable objectives, each student subgroup must have at least a 95% participation rate in the statewide assessments, and the school must meet the State's requirement for other academic indicators.</p> <p>However, if in any particular year the student subgroup does not meet those annual measurable objectives, the public school or LEA may be considered to have made AYP, if the percentage of students in that group who did not meet or exceed the proficient level of academic achievement on the State assessments for that year decreased by 10% of that percentage from the preceding public school year; that group made progress on one or more of the State's academic indicators; and that group had at least 95% participation rate on the statewide assessment.</p>	<p>State uses different method for calculating how public schools and LEAs make AYP.</p>

## STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

### **Making AYP**

Consistent with NCLB's objective of ensuring that every child becomes proficient in reading and mathematics by 2013-2014, Pennsylvania has established annual measurable objectives to assess the AYP of every public school and LEA within the State. These objectives require that all students reach 100% proficiency by 2014. As indicated in Section 2.3 of this workbook, procedures have been developed to ensure that Pennsylvania properly accounts for its mobile students and that the requirement of a 95% participation rate is met. The annual measurable objectives and the requirement of a 95% participation rate apply to public schools and LEAs and all student subgroups therein. A school or LEA will be designated as in year 1 of School Improvement if, for the second consecutive year in the same subject, the school, LEA, or a measurable subgroup therein fails to meet AYP criteria.

Pennsylvania combines data across grades in individual schools within each subject area and subgroup, as permitted by Section 200.20(d)(2) of the federal regulations governing implementation of NCLB. In determining whether AYP performance criteria have been met, the accountability system calculates the most current year's data and, if needed, the average of that year with the previous year's data. The system also determines whether each educational unit, and each subgroup therein, has met the criteria for participation, and whether each educational unit has met the graduation and attendance criteria.

The accountability system includes all of the federally required student subgroups:

- All Students
- Students with Individualized Education Programs
- English Language Learners (Limited English Proficient students)
- Economically Disadvantaged Students (Determinations of status as "economically disadvantaged" are based upon free and reduced breakfast and lunch information).
- Major racial / ethnic subgroups:
  - White (Non-Hispanic)
  - Black / African American (Non- Hispanic))
  - Latino / Hispanic
  - Asian or Pacific Islander
  - Native American or Alaskan Native
  - Multiracial

### **Considered to Have Made AYP**

NCLB requires that every child become proficient in reading and mathematics by 2013-2014, and that all students make continuous and substantial progress. Pennsylvania's accountability system utilizes both the percent of students proficient in reading or mathematics method and the 10% reduction in non-proficient students method, as outlined in the legislation, effective with our determination of AYP status for the 2002-

2003 school year. Pennsylvania believes it is crucial that progress be measured in a way that is sensitive to academic growth all along the achievement scale. As a result, schools and districts can achieve AYP through an additional safe harbor by meeting their Pennsylvania Performance Index (PPI) targets. PPI is a continuous improvement measure that detects, acknowledges, encourages, and rewards changes across the full range and continuum of academic achievement – not limited solely to the proficient level.

### **District Level**

A district/LEA enters Improvement status when it does not make AYP for two consecutive years in the same subject area for the following grade spans: Elementary (3-5), Middle (6-8), and High School (9-12). In other words, a grade span meets the threshold for a subject if every measurable group/subgroup in that grade span meets its threshold, and a district will not enter school improvement if, for each subject, at least one of the three grade spans meets its overall threshold. The additional academic indicators at the district level are graduation rate and attendance rate. A district/LEA enters Improvement status if it fails to meet the additional academic indicators for two consecutive years. This process allows for better targeting of assistance to struggling districts while providing a modest reduction in the number of districts not meeting AYP.

### **AYP Status Confidence Intervals**

Pennsylvania applies confidence intervals to control for volatility due to sampling error in calculating current year performance and Safe Harbor. For current year performance, we use the standard error of the difference and then use a simple z-test to see if the observed difference falls outside of the 95% confidence interval. This approach is illustrated as follows<sup>4</sup>:

- The hypothesis tested in this case is, “the observed proportion is equal or larger than the target (population) proportion.”
- The formula for the z-test is: 
$$z = \frac{p - \pi}{\sqrt{\pi(1 - \pi)/n}}$$

Where  $\pi$  is the population proportion proficient (or in this case, the statewide target for proficiency) and  $p$  is the proportion proficient in the school or district.

The value of  $z$  is then compared with the critical value of  $z$  to determine if the observed difference is statistically significant. Testing this difference at the .05 probability, the value of  $z$  is compared with  $z_{\text{crit}}$  of -1.645<sup>(5)</sup>, and if the observed  $z$  is equal to or greater than -1.645, we can conclude that the observed proportion has achieved the AYP threshold.

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<sup>4</sup> For purposes of this procedure, an approximate standard error calculation will be used. Obviously, if the sample is small, the exact method should be used.

<sup>5</sup> This value of  $z_{\text{crit}}$  is for a one-tailed test, which we argue is the appropriate test for these analyses.

## Safe Harbor Confidence Intervals

For safe harbor we use the standard error of the difference in proportions. The same general rationale described above governing the use of the standard error prescribes the use of this alternative formula. In this case the controlled error rate is .75.

The approach for applying confidence intervals to safe harbor is as follows. P1 is the first observation; P2 is the target given the first observation ( $P2 = .9*P1 + 10\%$ ), i.e., the reduction of the non-proficient students by 10%. The formula for calculating the standard error then is  $SE = \sqrt{P1*(100-P1)/n + P2*(100-P2)/n}$ .

For example, school X enrolled 550 students in Year 1 and had 20% of its students performing in Reading at Proficient and Advanced, and in Year 2 enrolled 580 students and had 23% of its students performing at Proficient and Advanced in Reading. Using the formula above ( $P2 = .9*P1 + 10\%$ ),  $P2 = .9*20 + 10 = 28$ .

To calculate the standard error of this difference, we take the square root of  $((20*80)/550) + ((28*72)/580)$ . This equals the square root of (2.91 + 3.48), or 2.53. We then must adjust the error rate by the appropriate z-score or .68. We take 2.53 and multiply it by .68 (= 1.72). We add 1.72 to 23 (24.72) and compare this value to the target ( $P2 = 28$ ). Since 24.72 is less than the target (28), we can say with confidence that the AYP relative growth criterion has not been met by school X.

Note that this process is applied to all measurable subgroups and for Reading and Mathematics separately.

<b>CRITICAL ELEMENT</b>	<b>EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS</b>
<p>3.2a What is the State's starting point for calculating Adequate Yearly Progress?</p>	<p>Using data from the 2001-2002 school year, the State established separate starting points in reading/language arts and mathematics for measuring the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the State's proficient level of academic achievement.</p> <p>Each starting point is based, at a minimum, on the higher of the following percentages of students at the proficient level: (1) the percentage in the State of proficient students in the lowest-achieving student subgroup; or, (2) the percentage of proficient students in a public school at the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile of the State's total enrollment among all schools ranked by the percentage of students at the proficient level.</p> <p>A State may use these procedures to establish separate starting points by grade span; however, the starting point must be the same for all like schools (e.g., one same starting point for all elementary schools, one same starting point for all middle schools...).</p>	<p>The State Accountability System uses a different method for calculating the starting point (or baseline data).</p>

## STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

The starting points for AYP in reading/language arts and mathematics were calculated based on the 2001-2002 data. The Commonwealth established separate starting points in reading/language arts and mathematics for measuring the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the State's proficient level of academic achievement. Each starting point is based on the higher of the following percentages of students at the proficient level: (1) the percentage in the State of proficient students in the lowest-achieving student subgroup; or, (2) the percentage of proficient students in a public school at the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile of the State's total enrollment among all schools ranked by the percentage of students at the proficient level.

The starting points were 35% proficient for mathematics, and 45% proficient for reading.

<b>CRITICAL ELEMENT</b>	<b>EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS</b>
<p>3.2b What are the State's annual measurable objectives for determining adequate yearly progress?</p>	<p>State has annual measurable objectives that are consistent with a state's intermediate goals and that identify for each year a minimum percentage of students who must meet or exceed the proficient level of academic achievement on the State's academic assessments.</p> <p>The State's annual measurable objectives ensure that all students meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement within the timeline.</p> <p>The State's annual measurable objectives are the same throughout the State for each public school, each LEA, and each subgroup of students.</p>	<p>The State Accountability System uses another method for calculating annual measurable objectives.</p> <p>The State Accountability System does not include annual measurable objectives.</p>

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Commonwealth's annual measurable objectives for AYP are the same as the intermediate goals. (See Section 3.2c.) They include annual improvement in graduation rate for the high school level, and in student attendance for the elementary and middle levels.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
3.2c What are the State's intermediate goals for determining adequate yearly progress?	<p>State has established intermediate goals that increase in equal increments over the period covered by the State timeline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The first incremental increase takes effect not later than the 2004-2005 academic year.</li> <li>•Each following incremental increase occurs within three years.</li> </ul>	<p>The State uses another method for calculating intermediate goals.</p> <p>The State does not include intermediate goals in its definition of adequate yearly progress.</p>

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The technical assistance program of the State has resulted in an increase in the capacity of schools and LEAs to increase student performance. In addition, the combination of the AYP requirement of 95% participation, changes in state policy regarding participation of English Language Learners, and increasingly strict definitions of participation are expected to increase the proportion of traditionally low-scoring students who participate in the assessment program. The expectation was to have a short-run depressing effect on achievement scores over the initial years which would not be a valid representation of progress from the baseline year. For these two reasons, the intermediate goals require greater growth with each successive increment, and increments come more rapidly in later years.

The intermediate goals are shown below in Table 1.

**Table 1 – Intermediate Goals Math and Reading**

Assessment	Math	Reading
<b>2002</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>45</b>
2003	35	45
2004	35	45
<b>2005</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>54</b>
2006	45	54

<b>2007</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>2008</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>63</b>
2009	56	63
<b>2010</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>2011</b>	67	72
<b>2012</b>	78	81
<b>2013</b>	89	91
<b>2014</b>	100	100

Table 2 below indicates the number and percent of schools that would score below the stepped thresholds of 2002, 2005, and 2008, based upon the 2002 data and assuming no further growth.

**Table 2**  
**Number of Schools Below NCLB Thresholds**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Step</b>		
	<b>2002</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Elementary</b>	371	600	902
<b>Middle</b>	172	246	385
<b>Secondary</b>	166	314	484
<b>Total</b>	709	1160	1771
<b>Percent</b>	25.7%	42.1%	64.2%

Notes:

1. 2757 schools in data base
2. Secondary = schools having grade 11
3. Middle = schools having grade 8, with or without grade 5
4. Elementary = schools having only grade 5

**PRINCIPLE 4. State makes annual decisions about the achievement of all public schools and LEAs.**

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF <i>NOT</i> MEETING REQUIREMENTS
4.1 How does the State Accountability System make an annual determination of whether each public school and LEA in the State made AYP?	AYP decisions for each public school and LEA are made annually. <sup>6</sup>	AYP decisions for public schools and LEAs are not made annually.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

AYP decisions for each public school and LEA are made annually. Based on the AYP goals described in section 3.2b, each year, each of these entities receives a preliminary AYP report (including the preliminary decision of whether the entity has made AYP for that particular year). The AYP reports include AYP status, show detailed numerical calculations, and delineate the resulting consequences / impacts consistent with NCLB requirements for a single accountability system. We have developed a system where there are opportunities for districts to check and edit their AYP data. These opportunities were established to eliminate the need for districts to engage in the appeals process when the only correction required is a data correction. We will maintain a 30 day appeals window.

<sup>6</sup> Decisions may be based upon several years of data and data may be averaged across grades within a public school [§1111(b)(2)(J)].

**PRINCIPLE 5. All public schools and LEAs are held accountable for the achievement of individual subgroups.**

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF <i>NOT</i> MEETING REQUIREMENTS
5.1 How does the definition of adequate yearly progress include all the required student subgroups?	<p>Identifies subgroups for defining adequate yearly progress: economically disadvantaged, major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency.</p> <p>Provides definition and data source of subgroups for adequate yearly progress.</p>	State does not disaggregate data by each required student subgroup.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Pennsylvania measures the AYP of the following:

- All Students
- Students with Individualized Education Programs
- English Language Learners (Limited English Proficient students)
- Economically Disadvantaged Students (Determinations of status as “economically disadvantaged” are based upon free and reduced breakfast and lunch information).
- Major racial / ethnic subgroups:
  - White (Non-Hispanic)
  - Black / African American (Non- Hispanic))
  - Latino / Hispanic
  - Asian or Pacific Islander
  - Native American or Alaskan Native
  - Multicultural

Note: Data identifying members of these subgroups are supplied by school personnel.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
5.2 How are public schools and LEAs held accountable for the progress of student subgroups in the determination of adequate yearly progress?	Public schools and LEAs are held accountable for student subgroup achievement: economically disadvantaged, major ethnic and racial groups, students with disabilities, and limited English proficient students.	State does not include student subgroups in its State Accountability System.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The Commonwealth has collected and reported these disaggregated subgroup data since 2000. The schools and LEAs are held accountable for the performance (specifically the achievement of or failure to achieve AYP) for each of the relevant subgroups: all students, major racial ethnic groups, economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English Language Learners. The achievement calculations (percentage of students performing at the proficient level and above), safe harbor determinations, and PPI calculations are computed for each of these groups in an identical manner.

As discussed in Section 3.2, a district/LEA enters Improvement status when it does not make AYP for two consecutive years in the same subject area for the following grade spans: Elementary (3-5), Middle (6-8), and High School (9-12). In other words, a grade span meets the threshold for a subject if every measurable group/subgroup meets its threshold, and a district will not enter school improvement if, for each subject, at least one of the three grade spans meets its overall threshold. The other academic indicators at the district level are graduation rate and attendance rate. A district/LEA enters Improvement status if it fails to meet the additional academic indicators for two consecutive years. This process allows for better targeting of assistance to struggling districts while providing a modest reduction in the number of districts not meeting AYP.

The only change required for complete alignment between Pennsylvania’s existing requirements and this requirement of NCLB was the redesign of the testing demographic data collection form to capture the demographic characteristics required to determine the non-participation rate of each subgroup.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
5.3 How are students with disabilities included in the State's definition of adequate yearly progress?	<p>All students with disabilities participate in statewide assessments: general assessments with or without accommodations or an alternate assessment based on grade level standards for the grade in which students are enrolled.</p> <p>State demonstrates that students with disabilities are fully included in the State Accountability System.</p>	<p>The State Accountability System or State policy excludes students with disabilities from participating in the statewide assessments.</p> <p>State cannot demonstrate that alternate assessments measure grade-level standards for the grade in which students are enrolled.</p>

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Pennsylvania includes all students with disabilities in the accountability system. Pennsylvania's statewide assessment is required for ALL students in public educational entities including: all public schools, Intermediate Regional Educational Units, Charter Schools, State Owned Schools, Career and Technical Schools, Private Residential Rehabilitative Institutions, Approved Private Schools, and Juvenile Detention Facilities. A wide variety of valid accommodations are offered to ensure equal access to the PSSA for students with disabilities.

Additionally, the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) has been specifically designed for those students with the most severe cognitive disabilities whose IEP teams have determined that the PSSA is not appropriate. The administration of this assessment is based upon six rigorous criteria and is aligned to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards. The students that participate in the PASA are included in the accountability system at the LEA and school level. Consistent with recent NCLB regulations, these students will be among the up to 1% limit on the number of proficient or advanced scores based on alternate achievement standards that may count as proficient or advanced for AYP purposes.

Pennsylvania was approved to measure district AYP by the performance of grade spans; thus, the 1% cap rule will be applied to each grade span. The total number of students in the 3-5 grade span, the 6-8 grade span, and the 9-12 grade span will equal the total number of tested students in the district; however, Pennsylvania does not report at the district total level, but rather at the grade span total level.

Pennsylvania utilized the new 2% alternate assessment flexibility offered by USDE for the 2005 AYP cycle. For those schools and districts that did not make AYP solely on the basis of their special education subgroup, Pennsylvania adjusted the proficiency rate of this subgroup by adding a 14% proxy for the 2005 school year. The actual percent proficient was reported to parents and the public with a notation where the proxy was utilized. Because Pennsylvania did not develop and administer a modified alternate assessment in 2007 (due to the delay in the release of the federal regulations for this assessment) we utilized the proxy flexibility provided by USDE. In 2008, Pennsylvania will again use the proxy, though for 2008 the proxy is 13%, due to the decrease in the percent of special education students. Pennsylvania is in the process of developing an alternate assessment with modified achievement standards.

All assessments are based upon the grade level academic content standards in which the student is enrolled. Pennsylvania does not have nor is it constructing “out-of-level” testing. Reporting and accountability are also commensurate with the test administration. (For example, results of students with disabilities are reported and accountable at the grade level in which they participated.) The results of students with disabilities are “counted” in the same manner as all other students; there are no adjustments to scores.

Beginning in 2007, the calculation of IEP students’ results was performed two ways: 1) Calculate for students with a current IEP and 2) calculate for students with a current IEP plus students who exited an IEP within the past two years. Since IEP students exit the IEP subgroup once they no longer require special services, schools/districts may have difficulty demonstrating improvements on state assessments for the IEP subgroup. Accordingly, Pennsylvania will allow districts and schools to include students who exited an IEP for up to two additional years. The two-year period begins from the date the student exits the IEP.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
5.4 How are students with limited English proficiency included in the State's definition of adequate yearly progress?	<p>All LEP student participate in statewide assessments: general assessments with or without accommodations or a native language version of the general assessment based on grade level standards.</p> <p>State demonstrates that LEP students are fully included in the State Accountability System.</p>	LEP students are not fully included in the State Accountability System.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Pennsylvania defines a Limited English proficient student (English Language Learner [ELL]) as a student who is not born in the United States or whose native language is other than English and comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; or ii) is a Native American or Alaska Native who is native resident of the outlying areas and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on such an individual's level of English proficiency; or iii) is migratory and whose language is other than English and comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language and whose difficulties may deny such individual the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English or to participate fully in our society. LEP/ELL exited students are defined as students who are no longer receiving ESL services.

Limited English proficient (LEP/ELL) students are included in the overall accountability system as follows. An option exists for LEP/ELL students in their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools. LEP/ELL students in their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools are not required to participate in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Reading Assessment; however, if they do participate, their performance level results will not be included in the AYP calculations for the school/district, but will be included in PSSA participation rate calculations for reading. LEP/ELL students in their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools must participate in the PSSA Mathematics assessment but will not have their scores and corresponding performance level used to determine AYP status. Their participation is counted in calculating the participation rate for the mathematics assessment.

Thus, performance levels of every LEP/ELL student enrolled in the school for the full academic year, except those in their first year of enrollment in a US school, are included in the school's count. The results of LEP/ELL students enrolled in different schools within the district during the academic year are counted in the LEA's results, and the results of LEP/ELL students enrolled in more than one district in Pennsylvania are counted in the State's results.

LEP/ELL students may have difficulty demonstrating improvements on state assessments for the LEP/ELL subgroup. Accordingly, Pennsylvania will allow districts to include students who have attained English proficiency as determined by the WIDA ACCESS annual state-required English Language Proficiency assessment in the LEP/ELL subgroup for up to two additional years. The two-year period begins from the date the student exits the ESL program as determined by the state required criteria.

Except as described above, all LEP/ELL students are required to take the statewide assessment and will receive results regardless of the duration of their enrollment in particular schools. Pennsylvania does not currently have native language versions of its statewide assessments, although we have developed and use a side by side Spanish language exam for Math as an accommodation. Otherwise, LEP/ELL students take the English version of the assessment (based on grade-level standards) with or without accommodations.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
5.5 What is the State's definition of the minimum number of students in a subgroup required for reporting purposes? For accountability purposes?	<p>State defines the number of students required in a subgroup for reporting and accountability purposes, and applies this definition consistently across the State.<sup>7</sup></p> <p>Definition of subgroup will result in data that are statistically reliable.</p>	<p>State does not define the required number of students in a subgroup for reporting and accountability purposes.</p> <p>Definition is not applied consistently across the State.</p> <p>Definition does not result in data that are statistically reliable.</p>

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The challenge in determining the minimum number of students in a group for accountability purposes is to include a maximum number of schools and groups while at the same time assuring the reliability and validity of the decisions that result. Numerous studies have demonstrated that even at a group size of 100 or 200, there is substantial risk of identifying groups as not making AYP on the basis of chance rather than real underperformance. Furthermore, that risk increases when a school or LEA has multiple subgroups. However, setting minimum N's as high as 100 has the effect of eliminating large numbers of schools, as well as subgroups, thereby perpetuating the damage that is caused by lack of accountability. In determining an appropriate minimum N for accountability in Pennsylvania, the Department sought to make a decision that is sound from an educational point of view through close examination of the data about the schools in this state. We were guided by two underlying principles:

- Every school must be included in the accountability system; no school is immune to the requirement for adequate yearly progress because of small size
- The accountability of subgroups at the school and/or LEA level should be maximized, consistent with reliable and valid accountability decisions.

Based on these principles and the data below, the Pennsylvania minimum N for subgroups is 40 students. However, no school will be excluded from the analysis. For schools with an N below 40, the department will use two or three years of data in making AYP calculations if available, and will use a confidence interval. These schools will meet the same accountability requirements as schools with an N greater than forty. However, each school is held accountable each year, even if the total N for the available data is below 40. The chart below depicts the number of schools with N sizes less than

<sup>7</sup> The minimum number is not required to be the same for reporting and accountability.

40. The use of confidence intervals is also used for schools with multiple subgroups which exceed the minimum N, since the risk of false identification increases with each additional subgroup.

### School Size

The range of school enrollments in Pennsylvania is very large. Table 1 indicates the range of school enrollments in the currently tested grades.

<b>Number and Percent of schools at or below various N's</b>						
<b>N</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>		<b>Grade 8</b>		<b>Grade 11</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>20</b>	67	<b>4%</b>	19	<b>2%</b>	23	<b>4%</b>
<b>30</b>	162	<b>10%</b>	41	<b>5%</b>	36	<b>6%</b>
<b>40</b>	265	<b>16%</b>	59	<b>7%</b>	49	<b>8%</b>
<b>50</b>	452	<b>27%</b>	78	<b>10%</b>	67	<b>10%</b>
<b>75</b>	892	<b>52%</b>	151	<b>19%</b>	127	<b>19%</b>
<b>100</b>	1272	<b>75%</b>	234	<b>29%</b>	197	<b>30%</b>
<b>150</b>	1566	<b>92%</b>	379	<b>47%</b>	317	<b>49%</b>
<b>200</b>	1630	<b>96%</b>	505	<b>63%</b>	403	<b>62%</b>
<b>250</b>	1663	<b>98%</b>	598	<b>75%</b>	479	<b>73%</b>
<b>300</b>	1682	<b>99%</b>	691	<b>86%</b>	533	<b>82%</b>
<b>350</b>	1694	<b>99%</b>	736	<b>92%</b>	571	<b>87%</b>
<b>400</b>	1697	<b>100%</b>	767	<b>96%</b>	594	<b>91%</b>
<b>500</b>	1701	<b>100%</b>	788	<b>99%</b>	620	<b>95%</b>
<b>600</b>	1702	<b>100%</b>	795	<b>99%</b>	634	<b>97%</b>
<b>700</b>	1703	<b>100%</b>	799	<b>100%</b>	645	<b>99%</b>
<b>800</b>	1703	<b>100%</b>	799	<b>100%</b>	649	<b>99%</b>
<b>1000</b>	1703	<b>100%</b>	799	<b>100%</b>	652	<b>100%</b>

Given the proportion of enrollments below the N's of 30, 40, and 50, it is clear that any of these N's is bound to exclude significant numbers of schools. Thus, the Department will use two years of data in calculating AYP for schools below the N of 40.

### Impact of N's of Various Sizes

The displays below show the impact of use of different minimum N's in two ways: 1) the number and % of schools and districts in which various subgroups are excluded at different minimum N's; 2) a projection of the number and % of schools and districts that would be identified as not making AYP based solely on subgroup scores, at different N's.

## Exclusion from Accountability Calculations

### Number of Schools Excluded from the Accountability Analysis

Elementary, Middle, and Secondary

**Table 2**

<b>Minimum N</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Native Am</b>	<b>IEP</b>	<b>LEP</b>	<b>Low-Income</b>
30	152	291	343	185	152	0	1303	92	742
40	255	463	427	219	167	5	1513	100	965
50	447	668	482	236	181	5	1626	104	1125
75	900	1090	588	270	187	5	1702	105	1376
100	1316	1395	652	281	192	5	1715	107	1496

\* Minimum number of students enrolled to be included in AYP calculations but not less than 10.

All analyses based upon “regular”, AVTS, Charters, and state owned schools (2760 school buildings).

**Percent of All Schools Excluded from the Accountability Analysis**  
Elementary, Middle, and Secondary

**Table 3**

Min N*	School	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native Am	IEP	LEP	Low-Income
30	5.5%	10.5%	12.4%	6.7%	5.5%	0.0%	47.2%	3.3%	26.9%
40	9.2%	16.8%	15.5%	7.9%	6.1%	0.2%	54.8%	3.6%	35.0%
50	16.2%	24.2%	17.5%	8.6%	6.6%	0.2%	58.9%	3.8%	40.8%
75	32.6%	39.5%	21.3%	9.8%	6.8%	0.2%	61.7%	3.8%	49.9%
100	47.7%	50.5%	23.6%	10.2%	7.0%	0.2%	62.1%	3.9%	54.2%

\* Minimum number of students enrolled to be included in AYP calculations but not less than 10.

All analyses based upon “regular”, AVTS, Charters, and state owned schools (2760 school buildings).

Appendix C displays the same information for the district level.

**Identification Rates at Different N’s**

The analysis summarized below for grades 5, 8, and 11 includes only schools whose outcomes for the school year 2001-2002 were above the NCLB starting points, and which had a 95% participation rate. Thus, these data simulate the number of schools who would be identified as not making AYP solely on the basis of their subgroup disaggregations. Tables 4 and 5 break out the school identification data by subgroup at various N’s.

**Table 4**

**Number of Schools Not Meeting AYP Criteria Due Solely to Subgroup(s) Results**

<b>Reading</b>				
<b>Group/Minimum size</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>
White	2	2	2	2
Hispanic	1	2	5	8
African Am	9	19	30	45
Asian	0	0	0	0
Native Am	0	0	0	0
IEP	7	41	111	257
LEP	0	0	1	2
Econ disadv	48	136	202	279

**Table 5**

<b>Math</b>				
<b>Group/Minimum size</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>
White	2	2	2	2
Hispanic	1	2	4	8
African Am	10	22	33	48
Asian	0	0	0	0
Native Am	0	0	0	0
IEP	6	40	106	244
LEP	0	0	1	2
Econ disadv	41	120	174	237

- 1) Starting points – thresholds – of 35% in math and 45% in reading were used in this analysis.
- 2) Some schools have more than one disaggregated group which is below AYP starting points
- 3) Analyses performed on public schools only including Charters, AVTS, and state owned schools.

### **Identification of Multiple Subgroups**

The risk of chance identification is additive with each additional group, schools with more than one subgroup meeting the criterion number have a significantly higher risk of inaccurate identification. Table 6 summarizes the proportion of schools with multiple subgroups at each N's of 30, 40, and 50.

**Table 6**

<b>Percent of Schools with One or More Subgroups</b>						
<b>Number of Subgroups</b>	<b>N=30</b>		<b>N=40</b>		<b>N=50</b>	
	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>
<b>1</b>	73.4	72.9	81.2	79.5	87.7	87.4
<b>2</b>	22.0	23.1	15.4	17.7	10.5	10.9
<b>3</b>	4.1	3.6	2.7	2.1	1.9	1.7
<b>4</b>	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.7		

Appendix D provides the N's upon which these figures were based.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
5.6 How does the State Accountability System protect the privacy of students when reporting results and when determining AYP?	Definition does not reveal personally identifiable information. <sup>8</sup>	Definition reveals personally identifiable information.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Pennsylvania’s statewide testing databases contain no student identifiable information. On the basis of a State regulation protecting student confidentiality, there is no reporting (in either school-level or public reports) of information concerning disaggregated groups of fewer than 10 students. *See* 22 Pa. Code 4.51(c).

Student level results are provided to the district superintendent or Chief Academic Officer via a secure website, and the superintendent or Chief Academic Officer cannot access the website without a password. As indicated in Section 2.3, Pennsylvania recently implemented an Information Management System which will allow the state to track students through the use of a secure ID.

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<sup>8</sup> The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits an LEA that receives Federal funds from releasing, without the prior written consent of a student’s parents, any personally identifiable information contained in a student’s education record.

**PRINCIPLE 6. State definition of AYP is based primarily on the State’s academic assessments.**

<b>CRITICAL ELEMENT</b>	<b>EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS</b>
6.1 How is the State’s definition of adequate yearly progress based primarily on academic assessments?	<p>Formula for AYP shows that decisions are based primarily on assessments.<sup>9</sup></p> <p>Plan clearly identifies which assessments are included in accountability.</p>	Formula for AYP shows that decisions are based primarily on non-academic indicators or indicators other than the State assessments.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Pennsylvania’s accountability system is based primarily on academic assessments; apart from PSSA and PASA reading and mathematics assessments, the only other indicators of AYP are graduation rates and student attendance rates, consistent with the requirements of NCLB. All PSSA test questions are specifically mapped to an academic content curricular area. [Please note that Section 4.51(b) of the State Board of Education’s regulations expressly prohibits the adoption of academic standards or assessment questions that require students to hold or express particular attitudes, values or beliefs. 22 Pa. Code § 4.51(b). Thus, Pennsylvania assessments measure academic performance only.] For additional information, please refer to the Assessment Handbooks accompanying this document for further details (also at the Department’s website: [www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us), under “K-12 schools – Assessment Handbooks”).

In 2008, Pennsylvania administered a science assessment to grades 4, 8 and 11 that measures both content and inquiry; however, science assessment results will not be used in AYP calculations. Approximately 400,000 students participated in the first operational science assessment.

<sup>9</sup> State Assessment System will be reviewed by the Standards and Assessments Peer Review Team.

**PRINCIPLE 7. State definition of AYP includes graduation rates for public High schools and an additional indicator selected by the State for public Middle and public Elementary schools (such as attendance rates).**

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF <i>NOT</i> MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>7.1 What is the State definition for the public high school graduation rate?</p>	<p>State definition of graduation rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calculates the percentage of students, measured from the beginning of the school year, who graduate from public high school with a regular diploma (not including a GED or any other diploma not fully aligned with the state's academic standards) in the standard number of years; or,</li> <li>• Uses another more accurate definition that has been approved by the Secretary; and</li> <li>• Must avoid counting a dropout as a transfer.</li> </ul> <p>Graduation rate is included (in the aggregate) for AYP, and disaggregated (as necessary) for use when applying the exception clause<sup>10</sup> to make AYP.</p>	<p>State definition of public high school graduation rate does not meet these criteria.</p>

<sup>10</sup> See USC 6311(b)(2)(I)(i), and 34 C.F.R. 200.20(b)

## STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Pennsylvania's accountability system includes the graduation rate, measured over time by comparing the number of students receiving a regular high school diploma in a given year against the total number of students entering that ninth grade class four years earlier. Schools and LEAs which either improve their graduation rate from the previous year, or are at or above the 80% rate, will meet the criterion.

Pennsylvania uses the NCES calculation methodology for graduation rate, both in the aggregate and, when necessary, disaggregated. This calculation method utilizes the number of graduates that have earned a standard diploma in the numerator divided by the number of graduates and recipients of non-standard diplomas plus dropouts from the current year and the previous three years in the denominator.

Pennsylvania plans to fully adopt the NGA graduation rate calculation by 2010.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
7.2 What is the State's additional academic indicator for public elementary schools for the definition of AYP? For public middle schools for the definition of AYP?	<p>State defines the additional academic indicators, e.g., additional State or locally administered assessments not included in the State assessment system, grade-to-grade retention rates or attendance rates.<sup>11</sup></p> <p>An additional academic indicator is included (in the aggregate) for AYP, and disaggregated (as necessary) for use when applying the exception clause to make AYP.</p>	State has not defined an additional academic indicator for elementary and middle schools.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Pennsylvania has selected child attendance rates as its additional academic indicator for elementary and middle school students. Specifically, child attendance rate is calculated by taking the “average daily attendance” divided by “average daily membership.” In essence, the calculation sums the days that the student was both enrolled at the district and actually present in the district.

There is considerable academic support for the proposition that a strong correlation exists between attendance and academic performance. In reaching its decision to use child attendance rates as the additional indicator of AYP, Pennsylvania considered the following:

- Research shows that a young child’s regular attendance in school and in the classroom is indicative of his/her overall achievement. Relevant discussions focus on time, time on task, and engaged time (Woolfolk, *Educational Psychology* (1995);
- No other variables are as uniformly collected (by formula) and meaningful;
- The Committee of Practitioners and the Stakeholders Group recommend that child attendance rates be used to fulfill that requirement; and
- The Department’s internal data show that attendance is directly related to academic achievement on the Statewide assessments.

Schools and LEAs which either improve their attendance rate from the previous year, or are at or above the 90% level, will meet the criterion.

<sup>11</sup> NCLB only lists these indicators as examples.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
7.3 Are the State's academic indicators valid and reliable?	<p>State has defined academic indicators that are valid and reliable.</p> <p>State has defined academic indicators that are consistent with nationally recognized standards, if any.</p>	<p>State has an academic indicator that is not valid and reliable.</p> <p>State has an academic indicator that is not consistent with nationally recognized standards.</p> <p>State has an academic indicator that is not consistent within grade levels.</p>

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

**Test Scores**

The accountability system is entirely founded upon Pennsylvania's academic content standards and Assessment Anchor Content Standards. The system represents the traditional concept of content validity relative to assessment construction, as all assessments are based on and linked to the Assessment Anchor Content Standards. There is no out-of-grade-level testing. Reliability is a measure of consistency of the scores. The closer the reliability coefficient is to one, the more reliable the test. The reliability coefficients are .93, .94 and .95 for the grade 5, 8, and 11 mathematics assessment and .90, .93 and .93 for the reading assessment at those grades, respectively.

Inter-rater agreement is another important factor in reliability. Ten percent of the student responses to the open-ended items were scored by two raters. The correlation between the scores of both raters is at or above .85 on the open-ended tasks for both reading and math. Standard errors, which are calculations of the scores' probable range, from the 2001 statewide assessment are as follows:

	<b>5<sup>th</sup> grade</b> <b>Std. Error</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> grade</b> <b>Std. Error</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> grade</b> <b>Std. Error</b>
Math Scaled Score Building Mean	2.53	3.80	4.54
Math Scaled Score District Mean	2.22	3.58	4.07
Reading Scaled Score Building Mean	2.61	4.18	4.60
Reading Scaled Score District Mean	2.30	3.89	4.07

The number of buildings, means, and standard deviations are also displayed below.

<b>Grade 5</b>	<b>Buildings</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Math Scaled Score Building Mean				
1827	1303.86	2.53	108.244	
Math Scaled Score District Mean				
1827	1302.70	2.22	94.947	
Reading Scaled Score Building Mean				
1826	1303.63	2.61	111.393	
Reading Scaled Score District Mean				
1826	1304.14	2.30	98.342	
Valid N (listwise)				
1826				

<b>Grade 8</b>	<b>Buildings</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Math Scaled Score District Mean	918	1284.98	3.58	108.354
Reading Scaled Score Building Mean				
917	1277.48	4.18	126.721	
Reading Scaled Score District Mean				
917	1278.89	3.89	117.898	
Valid N(listwise)				
917				

<b>Grade 11</b>	<b>Buildings</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Math Scaled Score Building				

Mean			
714	1261.12	4.54	121.344
Math Scaled Score District Mean			
715	1267.54	4.07	108.930
Reading Scaled Score Building Mean			
714	1259.72	4.60	122.921
Reading Scaled Score District Mean			
715	1265.80	4.07	108.808
Valid N (listwise)			
714			

### Other Indicators

As explained in Section 7.1 of this Workbook, Pennsylvania’s method of calculating graduation rates is the method recommended by NCES. This method is widely accepted and regarded as valid and reliable. As noted previously, Pennsylvania has adopted child attendance rates as its additional indicator of AYP for elementary and middle school students. Pennsylvania’s prior experience in using the designated means of calculating attendance rates (that described in Section 7.2), and using this indicator as part of a state rewards system, supports the proposition that the selected method of calculation is also valid and reliable.

**PRINCIPLE 8. AYP is based on reading/language arts and mathematics achievement objectives.**

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF <i>NOT</i> MEETING REQUIREMENTS
8.1 Does the state measure achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics separately for determining AYP?	<p>State AYP determination for student subgroups, public schools and LEAs separately measures reading/language arts and mathematics.<sup>12</sup></p> <p>AYP is a separate calculation for reading/language arts and mathematics for each group, public school, and LEA.</p>	State AYP determination for student subgroups, public schools and LEAs averages or combines achievement across reading/language arts and mathematics.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Pennsylvania measures achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics separately. Skills in these two content areas are assessed separately. Moreover, separate (but parallel) standard-setting procedures were used to determine the scaled scores that correspond to the specific performance levels (e.g., proficiency) for assessments in each content area. In addition, the disaggregations are constructed separately for mathematics and reading and NCLB accountability as well.

<sup>12</sup> If the state has more than one assessment to cover its language arts standards, the State must create a method for including scores from all the relevant assessments.

**PRINCIPLE 9. State Accountability System is statistically valid and reliable.**

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>9.1 How do AYP determinations meet the State's standard for acceptable reliability?</p>	<p>State has defined a method for determining an acceptable level of reliability (decision consistency) for AYP decisions.</p> <p>State provides evidence that decision consistency is (1) within the range deemed acceptable to the State, and (2) meets professional standards and practice.</p> <p>State publicly reports the estimate of decision consistency, and incorporates it appropriately into accountability decisions.</p> <p>State updates analysis and reporting of decision consistency at appropriate intervals.</p>	<p>State does not have an acceptable method for determining reliability (decision consistency) of accountability decisions, e.g., it reports only reliability coefficients for its assessments.</p> <p>State has parameters for acceptable reliability; however, the actual reliability (decision consistency) falls outside those parameters.</p> <p>State's evidence regarding accountability reliability (decision consistency) is not updated.</p>

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The reliability and validity of the AYP decision have undergone review by the Department, with the support of outside experts. We have increased validity and reliability in three ways. First, we judge AYP in a given year based on a subgroup's, school's, or LEA's two-year average or current test score, whichever is higher. Second, the use of the Pennsylvania Performance Index as part of the safe harbor provision described in Section 3.2, further increases reliability and validity, by ensuring that schools showing sufficient continuous progress across all performance levels to reach 100% proficiency by 2014 would not be misidentified as requiring sanctions. Third, Pennsylvania applies confidence intervals in making status and safe harbor determinations. Confidence intervals help control for "sampling error" associated with these determinations. They address the fact that a group of students tested in any particular year might not be representative of students in that school across years.

<b>CRITICAL ELEMENT</b>	<b>EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS</b>
9.2 What is the State's process for making valid AYP determinations?	State has established a process for public schools and LEAs to appeal an accountability decision.	State does not have a system for handling appeals of accountability decisions.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The use of minimum sample size rules, improvement indicators, cross-year averaging, and the use of confidence intervals in making AYP decisions increases validity and reliability. The process for making AYP decisions will begin with a preliminary notification of LEAs and schools of their AYP status and the data on which the determinations were based. We have recently developed a system where there are opportunities for districts to check and edit their AYP data. These opportunities were established to help eliminate the need for districts to engage in the appeals process when the only correction required is to data. A timeline will be available on our web site that describes the process for fixing student data before districts see their AYP designations. We will maintain a 30 day appeals window.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>9.3 How has the State planned for incorporating into its definition of AYP anticipated changes in assessments?</p>	<p>State has a plan to maintain continuity in AYP decisions necessary for validity through planned assessment changes, and other changes necessary to comply fully with NCLB.<sup>13</sup></p> <p>State has a plan for including new public schools in the State Accountability System.</p> <p>State has a plan for periodically reviewing its State Accountability System, so that unforeseen changes can be quickly addressed.</p>	<p>State's transition plan interrupts annual determination of AYP.</p> <p>State does not have a plan for handling changes: e.g., to its assessment system, or the addition of new public schools.</p>

### STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

With the addition of statewide assessments for grades 4, 6, and 7 in reading/language arts and math in 2005-06, it was necessary to engage in a standards-setting process to determine the criteria for performance levels for these grades, which is vital to maintain internal consistency within Pennsylvania's accountability system.

All new public schools will be brought into the accountability system as soon as they are part of the Department's official database (EdNA). Test scores will be followed in the context of school reconfigurations, merges, and schools receiving new school numbers. Changes in the assessment will only be undertaken on the basis that the achievement performance levels are equated to previous years and that approved by USDE. As indicated in section 1.2 of this workbook, a new school can be created if two or more schools combine and the result is a change in the original population of at least 50% or a change in grade configuration of at least two tested grades. For example, two K-5 schools in an LEA combine, and the population of the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade increases from 50 students in each school to 100 students in the newly combined school; or a K-5 school

<sup>13</sup> Several events may occur which necessitate such a plan. For example, (1) the State may need to include additional assessments in grades 3-8 by 2005-2006; (2) the State may revise content and/or academic achievement standards; (3) the State may need to recalculate the starting point with the addition of new assessments; or (4) the State may need to incorporate the graduation rate or other indicators into its State Accountability System. These events may require new calculations of validity and reliability.

changes its configuration to become a K-8 school. A superintendent's committee (already in place and operational in Pennsylvania) will serve as an integral part in reviewing the accountability system and recommending courses of action in addressing unforeseen changes. Additionally, the Department and the NCLB Committee of Practitioners will periodically review the assessment system, with the assistance of outside experts. This periodic review will ensure that changing needs are addressed across the state.

**PRINCIPLE 10. In order for a public school or LEA to make AYP, the State ensures that it assessed at least 95% of the students enrolled in each subgroup.**

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>10.1 What is the State's method for calculating participation rates in the State assessments for use in AYP determinations?</p>	<p>State has a procedure to determine the number of absent or untested students (by subgroup and aggregate).</p> <p>State has a procedure to determine the denominator (total enrollment) for the 95% calculation (by subgroup and aggregate).</p> <p>Public schools and LEAs are held accountable for reaching the 95% assessed goal.</p>	<p>The state does not have a procedure for determining the rate of students participating in statewide assessments.</p> <p>Public schools and LEAs are not held accountable for testing at least 95% of their students.</p>

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

Pennsylvania has a uniform procedure for calculating participation rates in statewide assessments. At the time that the PSSA is administered, Pennsylvania collects the demographic information (including the information required under NCLB’s reporting requirements) for all students enrolled in the school or other educational entity (including charter schools, career and technical schools, intermediate units, and juvenile facilities). For more specific information regarding the collection of demographic information, please refer to the “Personnel Use Form” that is included in the PSSA materials that are sent to schools. The term “all students enrolled” encompasses students who are absent on the date of the assessment and students who do not participate in the assessment (because of a religious objection, truancy or refusal). Thus, the denominator (in the calculation of the participation rate) is the entire universe of students enrolled in public schools and other public educational entities. The numerator (in the calculation of the participation rate) is the number of assessments that receive a score/performance level due to meeting the attempt logic. For example, a school may have 100 students enrolled, but only 95 of the enrolled students meet the attempt logic required to receive a score/performance level. Of the five that do not meet the attempt logic, one may have been absent without make-up, one may have refused to participate, one may have had an extended absence for the entire testing window, and two may have had a parental request for exclusion from the assessment. The resulting calculation for participation rate in this example would be 95 out of 100, or 95%.

<b>CRITICAL ELEMENT</b>	<b>EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS</b>
10.2 What is the State's policy for determining when the 95% assessed requirement should be applied?	State has a policy that implements the regulation regarding the use of 95% allowance when the group is statistically significant according to State rules.	State does not have a procedure for making this determination.

**STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

In all instances and with all public school entities, when a measurable disaggregated group is established (n=40) a participation rate as described in 10.1 is determined and all NCLB accountability consequences are implemented. Small schools are included with a separate public report, so long as the confidentiality threshold (n=10) exists; if not, those results are still included at that LEA level.

Pennsylvania regulations provide for only one exemption-- a parental request for exemption, based upon religious reasons. Pursuant to Section 4.4(d)(4) of the State Board of Education’s regulations, students whose parents make such requests are excused from the statewide assessment. Historically, the parents of fewer than one-half of one percent of students have requested religious exemptions. Students receiving these exemptions are not excluded from the total population (denominator) in calculating the participation rate.

## **Appendix A**

### **Required Data Elements for State Report Card**

#### **1111(h)(1)(C)**

1. Information, in the aggregate, on student achievement at each proficiency level on the State academic assessments (disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and status as economically disadvantaged, except that such disaggregation shall not be required in a case in which the number of students in a category is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.
2. Information that provides a comparison between the actual achievement levels of each student subgroup and the State's annual measurable objectives for each such group of students on each of the academic assessments.
3. The percentage of students not tested (disaggregated by the student subgroups), except that such disaggregation shall not be required in a case in which the number of students in a category is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.
4. The most recent 2-year trend in student achievement in each subject area, and for each grade level, for the required assessments.
5. Aggregate information on any other indicators used by the State to determine the adequate yearly progress of students in achieving State academic achievement standards disaggregated by student subgroups.
6. Graduation rates for secondary school students disaggregated by student subgroups.
7. Information on the performance of local educational agencies in the State regarding making adequate yearly progress, including the number and names of each school identified for school improvement under section 1116.
8. The professional qualifications of teachers in the State, the percentage of such teachers teaching with emergency or provisional credentials, and the percentage of classes in the State not taught by highly qualified teachers, in the aggregate and disaggregated by high-poverty compared to low-poverty schools which (for this purpose) means schools in the top quartile of poverty and the bottom quartile of poverty in the State.