UNDERSTANDING CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

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

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

- **All Students** – defined as all students enrolled for a full academic year taking the PSSA/Keystone Exam
- **Historically Underperforming Students** – defined as a non-duplicated count of students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English Language Learners enrolled for a full academic year taking the PSSA/Keystone Exam. If a student is in more than one of the individual groups (e.g., special education and English Language Learner), s/he is only included in the Historically Underperforming Student group one time – a non-duplicated count. This group is not a cohort but rather students currently in the building meeting the definition during the reported year.

For both groups of students, *Closing the Achievement Gap* is calculated for each of the PSSA/Keystone subjects (Mathematics/Algebra I, Reading/Literature, Writing, and Science/Biology). The achievement gap is determined by comparing the baseline percent of students who are proficient or advanced to the goal of 100% proficiency. The baseline year has been established as the 2012-2013 school year; thus, there will be no Closing the Achievement Gap scores for 2012 – 2013. Closing the Achievement Gap scores will be reported for the first time in 2013 – 2014.

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

- The benchmark for success is defined as closing one-half of the achievement gap over a six year period.
- This success rate is measured annually; if a school is on track or exceeding the cumulative rate needed to close the gap, a score of 100 is earned.
- If a school has closed 80% of the gap, a score of 80 is earned.
- A school not making any progress in closing the gap or even widening the gap earns a score of zero.
- Closing the gap is cumulative, i.e., if the annual goal is exceeded one year and not met the following year, the gain is calculated on a cumulative basis.
The historically underperforming student group earned 40% proficient or advanced in the baseline year.

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

**TO CALCULATE THE GAP:** Subtract proficient/advanced from 100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficient/Advanced</th>
<th>Achievement Gap (60%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(40%)</td>
<td>(100 – 40)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TO CLOSE THE GAP:** Must increase 5 percentage points each year for six years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>45% (5 percentage points increase)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>50% (5 percentage points increase)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>55% (5 percentage points increase)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>60% (5 percentage points increase)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>65% (5 percentage points increase)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>70% (5 percentage points increase)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>