2016-17
State of Education
Report

PENNSYLVANIA

Introduction

The past few years have been challenging for public education. A nine-month state budget impasse, soaring pension costs, the adoption of common core academic standards, the enactment and soon to be implemented state plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act are just a few of the more recent developments which have all been accompanied by a greater emphasis on accountability to the public supporting the state's public schools.

The annual State of Education report is intended to be a barometer of not only the key indicators of public school performance, such as standardized test scores, but also the timely challenges that public schools are facing and how they are coping with them.

For the inaugural State of Education report, chief school administrators (CSAs) from school districts, career and technical centers (CTCs), and intermediate units (IUs)[1] were surveyed; information from publicly available data sources were compiled; and opinions from the public were obtained to gauge Pennsylvanians' perception of public education. While the goal of the report is to provide a high-level overview of some of the key indicators of the state of public education, some of the key challenges facing public education were further explored not only on a statewide basis, but by examining the responses and data for differences between rural, urban and suburban school districts. As integral pieces of Pennsylvania's public education system, responses and data related to issues impacting intermediate units and career and technical centers were also examined.

This year's report will establish a baseline which can be used moving forward to show changes and trends over time.

Some key findings from this year's report include these:

- The overwhelming challenge facing public schools is funding. More than 80% of all CSAs recognized budget pressures as one of their biggest challenges in the current and coming year.

- Higher poverty concentrations in urban and rural areas continue to be a monumental challenge to student achievement while taxpayers in suburban districts are being asked to contribute much more than the state to educating students in their districts.

- Finding teachers and substitute teachers, especially with certifications in science, math and various areas of special education is a problem for schools throughout the state.

- Public attitudes on public education are higher among parents and when asked about the schools in their own community, but not as high among non-parents and when asked about the public schools in the rest of the state.

- The investments Pennsylvania has been making in public education have been worthwhile. Pennsylvania is ranked in the top 10 for student achievement on several national math and reading assessments.

- More than half of all CSAs were confident that at least 90% of their graduates were ready for life after school.
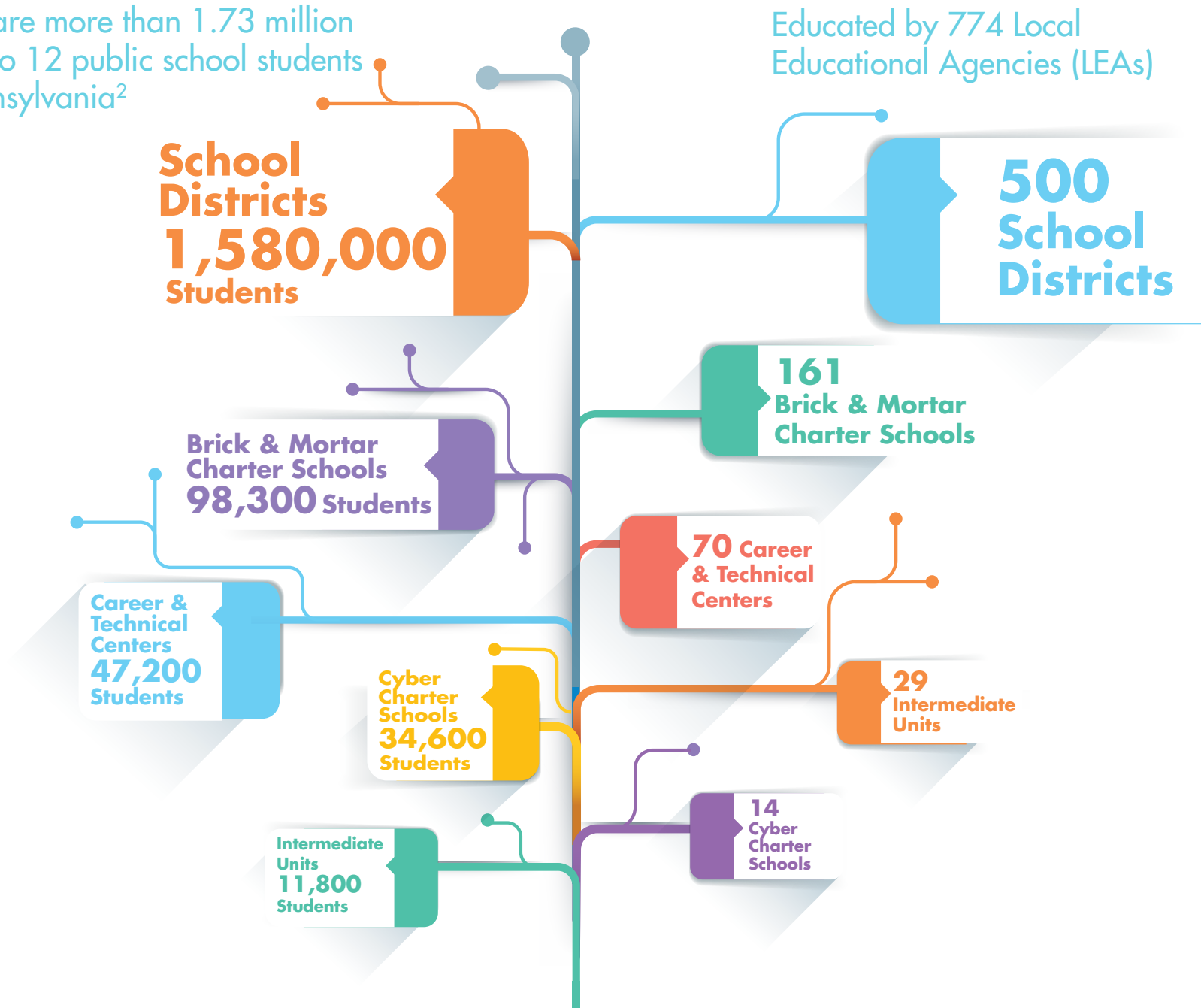
The data in this report is meant to be representational of the school entities within each group and Pennsylvania as a whole. However, due to the diversity and differences between school entities around the state, specific challenges or data points may not apply to all schools within a given group.

Pennsylvania's Public Education Landscape

A big picture look at the composition of Pennsylvania's public education system and its students.

There are more than 1.73 million pre-K to 12 public school students in Pennsylvania[2]

Educated by 774 Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)

School Districts 1,580,000 Students

500 School Districts

Brick & Mortar Charter Schools 98,300 Students

161 Brick & Mortar Charter Schools

Career & Technical Centers 47,200 Students

70 Career & Technical Centers

Cyber Charter Schools 34,600 Students

29 Intermediate Units

Intermediate Units 11,800 Students

14 Cyber Charter Schools

Community type classification of school districts in this report

School districts have been divided into either rural, urban or suburban classifications for comparison purposes in this report. See Appendix A for a complete listing of school districts in each community type.

How many school districts are in each community type?

Rural
245 SDs

Urban
28 SDs

Suburban
227 SDs

How many students are attending schools in each community type?

Statewide – 1,582,257 students were enrolled in school district schools in 2015-16.

Rural 26.4%
↓ 7.1% since 2010-11

Urban 20.8%
↓ 5.5% since 2010-11

Suburban 52.8%
↓ 2.0% since 2010-11

Spotlight on growing school districts[3]

Although enrollment has been decreasing statewide, 20% of school districts have seen an increase in enrollments in the last five years. An influx of new students can present serious challenges for a school district – stressing existing building capacities, staffing levels, transportation and other student services.

Percent with increasing enrollments
- Rural – 8.6%
- Urban – 21.4%
- Suburban – 32.2%

Largest enrollment increases
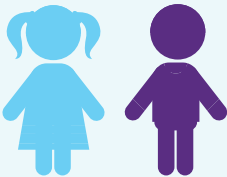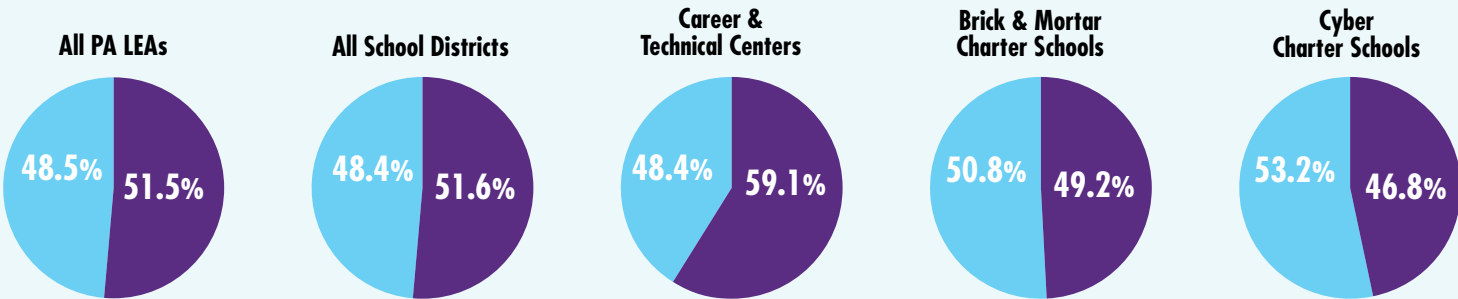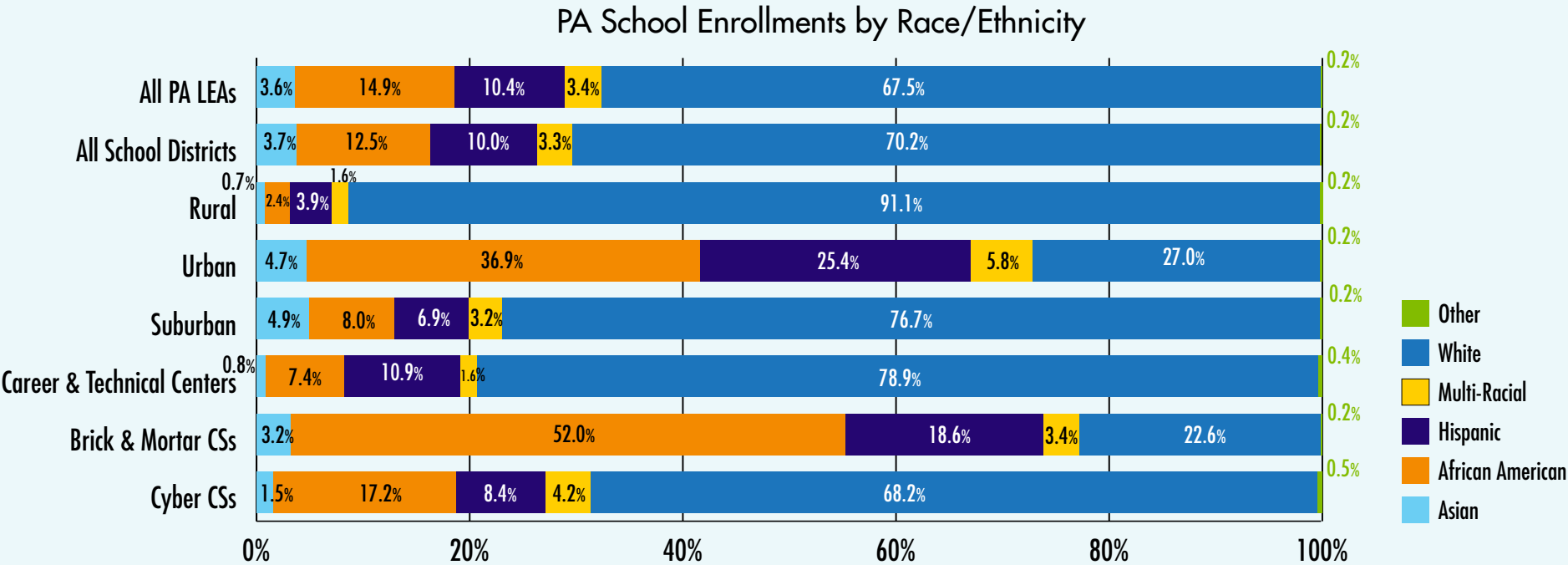1. South Fayette Twp – 20.5%
2. Lower Merion – 16.3%
3. Phoenixville Area – 13.5%
4. Avonworth – 11.0%
5. Camp Hill – 10.9%

Student demographics

Looking at the racial/ethnic and gender composition of Pennsylvania's public school enrollments shows the diversity among and between different school district community types as well as the type of public school.[4]

PA School Enrollments by Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	African American	Hispanic	Multi-Racial	White	Other
All PA LEAs	3.6%	14.9%	10.4%	3.4%	67.5%	0.2%
All School Districts	3.7%	12.5%	10.0%	3.3%	70.2%	0.2%
Rural	0.7%	2.4%	3.9%	1.6%	91.1%	0.2%
Urban	4.7%	36.9%	25.4%	5.8%	27.0%	0.2%
Suburban	4.9%	8.0%	6.9%	3.2%	76.7%	0.2%
Career & Technical Centers	0.8%	7.4%	10.9%	1.6%	78.9%	0.4%
Brick & Mortar CSs	3.2%	52.0%	18.6%	3.4%	22.6%	0.2%
Cyber CSs	1.5%	17.2%	8.4%	4.2%	68.2%	0.5%

Legend: Other, White, Multi-Racial, Hispanic, African American, Asian

All PA LEAs — 48.5% / 51.5%

All School Districts — 48.4% / 51.6%

Career & Technical Centers — 48.4% / 59.1%

Brick & Mortar Charter Schools — 50.8% / 49.2%

Cyber Charter Schools — 53.2% / 46.8%

Find further information at **www.psba.org**

Student Achievement

Public education should be measured by more than just standardized test scores. Today, public education provides countless opportunities for learning and growth beyond the traditional reading, writing and arithmetic to prepare students for life after school.
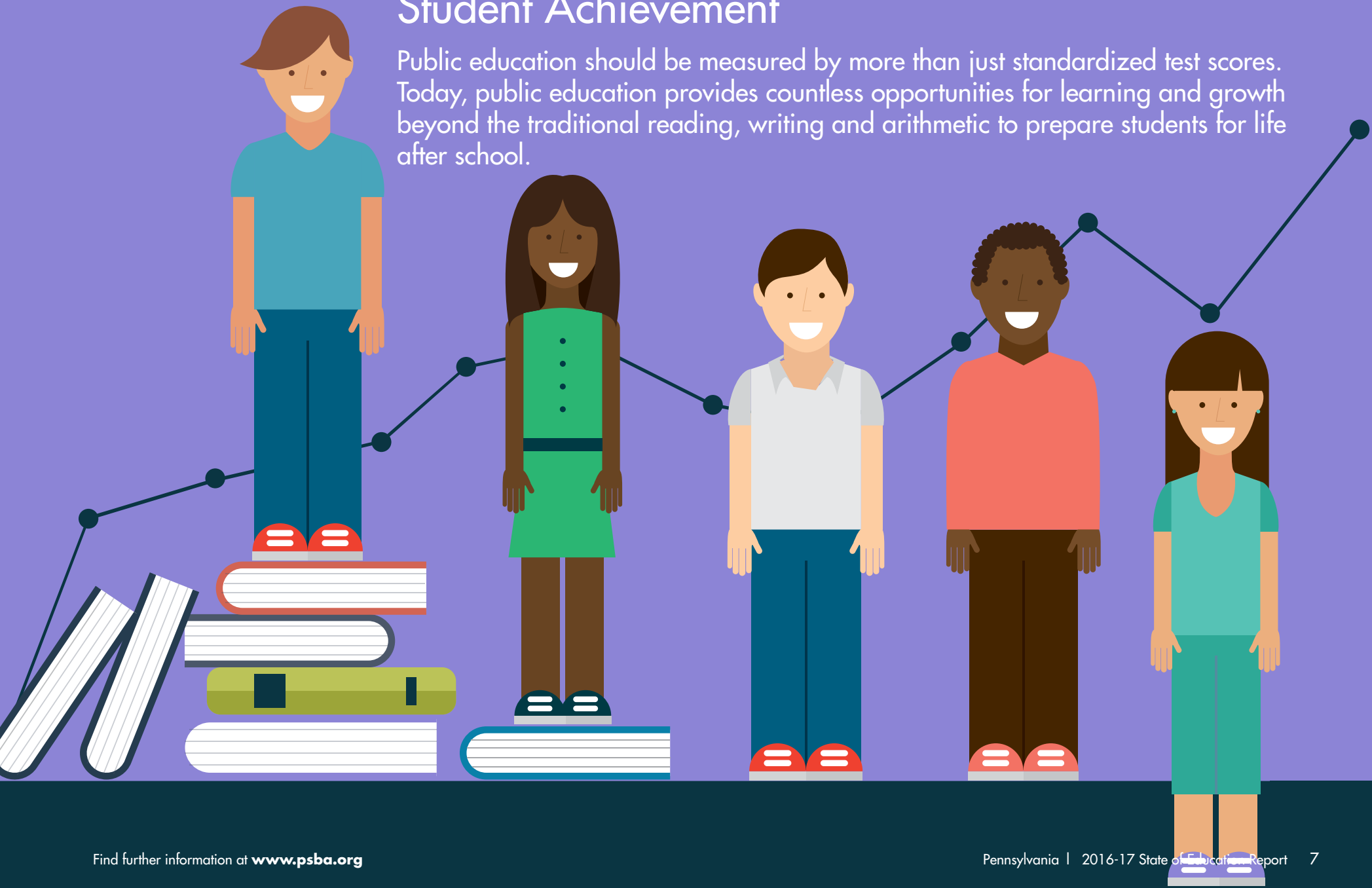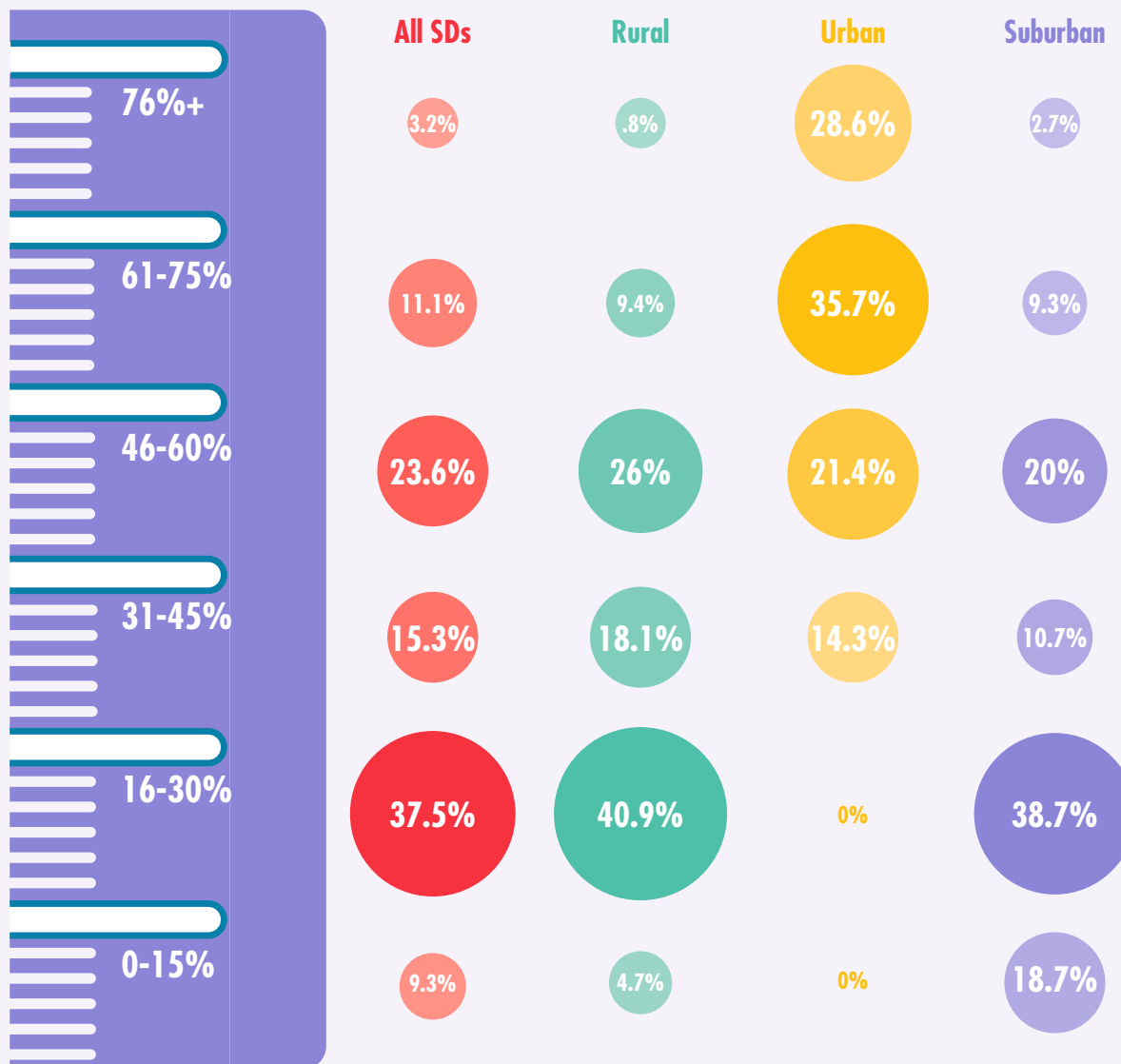
Student readiness for school

Student achievement starts with children entering school at the kindergarten or first-grade level ready to learn. Every survey response indicated that at least some students are entering school below the expected level of school-readiness. On a statewide basis, more than 1 in 3 school districts reported that the majority of students in their district are entering school below the expected level of school-readiness.

The most commonly cited reasons children are not ready to enter school were lower than expected reading and math skills and a lack of communication/social skills.
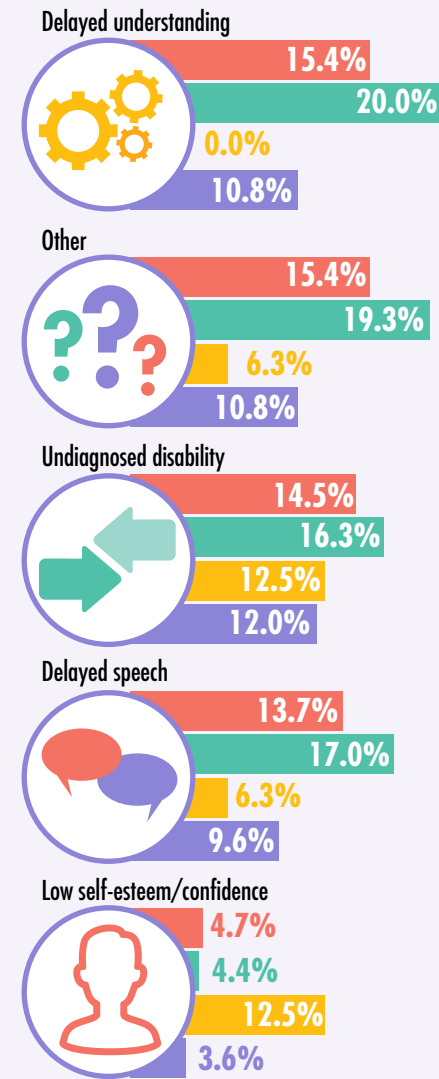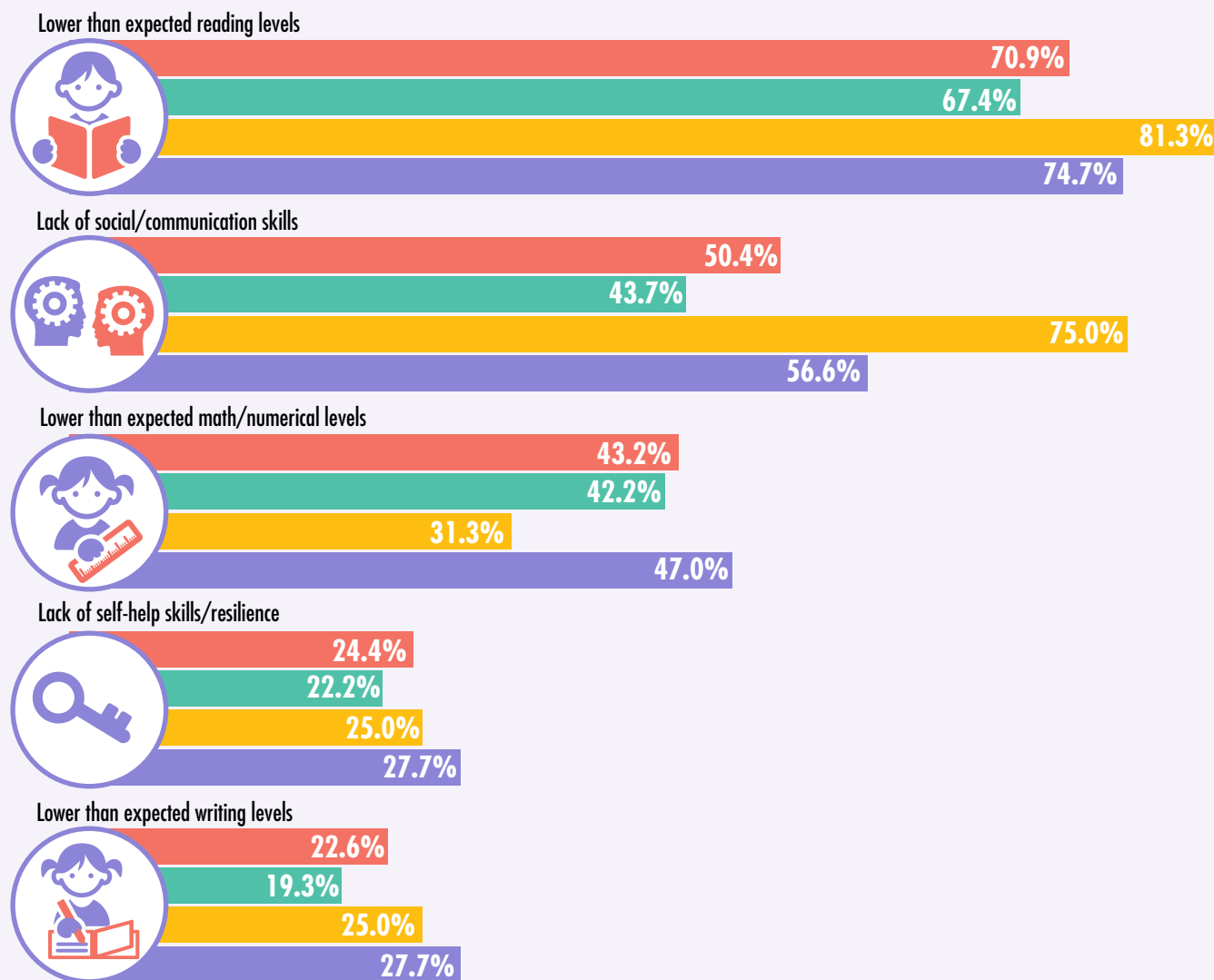
In your opinion, what percentage of students join your schools at the kindergarten or first-grade level below the level of school-readiness you would expect?

Percentage of students below expected school-readiness level

	All SDs	Rural	Urban	Suburban
76%+	3.2%	.8%	28.6%	2.7%
61-75%	11.1%	9.4%	35.7%	9.3%
46-60%	23.6%	26%	21.4%	20%
31-45%	15.3%	18.1%	14.3%	10.7%
16-30%	37.5%	40.9%	0%	38.7%
0-15%	9.3%	4.7%	0%	18.7%

Find further information at **www.psba.org**

In your opinion, what are the most common reasons that children are not at the expected kindergarten or first-grade readiness level?

Legend: All SDs | Rural | Urban | Suburban

Lower than expected reading levels
- All SDs: 70.9%
- Rural: 67.4%
- Urban: 81.3%
- Suburban: 74.7%

Lack of social/communication skills
- All SDs: 50.4%
- Rural: 43.7%
- Urban: 75.0%
- Suburban: 56.6%

Lower than expected math/numerical levels
- All SDs: 43.2%
- Rural: 42.2%
- Urban: 31.3%
- Suburban: 47.0%

Lack of self-help skills/resilience
- All SDs: 24.4%
- Rural: 22.2%
- Urban: 25.0%
- Suburban: 27.7%

Lower than expected writing levels
- All SDs: 22.6%
- Rural: 19.3%
- Urban: 25.0%
- Suburban: 27.7%

Delayed understanding
- All SDs: 15.4%
- Rural: 20.0%
- Urban: 0.0%
- Suburban: 10.8%

Other
- All SDs: 15.4%
- Rural: 19.3%
- Urban: 6.3%
- Suburban: 10.8%

Undiagnosed disability
- All SDs: 14.5%
- Rural: 16.3%
- Urban: 12.5%
- Suburban: 12.0%

Delayed speech
- All SDs: 13.7%
- Rural: 17.0%
- Urban: 6.3%
- Suburban: 9.6%

Low self-esteem/confidence
- All SDs: 4.7%
- Rural: 4.4%
- Urban: 12.5%
- Suburban: 3.6%

PSSA and Keystone Exam results

The annual Pennsylvania System School Assessments (PSSA) and Keystone Exams are standards-based assessments in the subjects of English, math and science which are intended to measure a student's proficiency in each subject area. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 3 through 8 is assessed in English language arts and math and every Pennsylvania student in grades 4 and 8 is assessed in science. Keystone exams are designed to be taken at the end of courses in literature, algebra and biology to measure a student's proficiency.[5]

Grade 4

Fourth grade is an important milepost in a student's education. By fourth grade students are using reading skills to learn and master other subjects, working more independently and beginning to cultivate research and critical thinking skills that will be critical to their educational success.

2016 Grade 4 PSSA - % Advanced or Proficient[6]

	All PA LEAs	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban
English Language Arts	58.7%	60.6%	60.9%	34.7%	70.1%
Math	46.6	48.9	49.0	24.5	57.9
Science	76.2	78.1	82.7	52.2	85.4

Grade 8

Eighth grade is another important point in a student's education. By eighth grade students are being exposed to more difficult coursework and forming the successful study habits that will help them transition to and succeed in high school.

2016 Grade 8 PSSA - % Advanced or Proficient[7]

	All PA LEAs	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban
English Language Arts	58.4%	61.1%	60.0%	37.9%	68.6%
Math	31.2	33.6	31.4	15.9	40.0
Science	57.7	60.3	62.8	33.1	67.4

> " I remain hopeful that our state will discontinue the PSSAs which have created a cookie cutter/assembly line approach to teaching. "
>
> - Survey Respondent

Spotlight on English Language Learners

Limited English proficiency has been shown to contribute to lower achievement on standardized tests and higher dropout rates. To alleviate the difficulties English Language Learners (ELLs) experience, school entities are required by state and federal law and regulations to provide ELLs with an educational program and academic supports that are intended to facilitate a student's achievement of English language proficiency as well as established academic standards.

There were approximately 52,000 ELLs enrolled in Pennsylvania's public schools in 2015-16 and like national trends, urban school districts have the highest concentration of ELLs.[9]
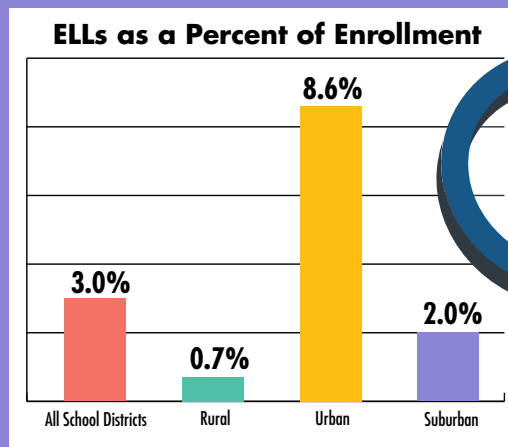
Keystones

By the end of a student's high school career, most students are expected to have mastered the necessary skills and subjects to be prepared for life after graduation – whether that is college, a career or a productive member of society.

2016 Keystone Exams – % Advanced or Proficient 2016[8]

|	All PA LEAs	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban
Literature	76.8	79.9	80.0	62.7	84.6
Algebra I	68.2	72.3	73.1	50.8	78.0
Biology	65.8	69.7	71.0	44.7	76.0

> "Judging and ranking schools on standardized test scores and Keystones kills cities. It scares parents. Every real estate app ranks the district and neighborhood school. Parents are afraid to move into the cities because they think the schools are not good."
>
> - Survey Respondent

ELLs as a Percent of Enrollment

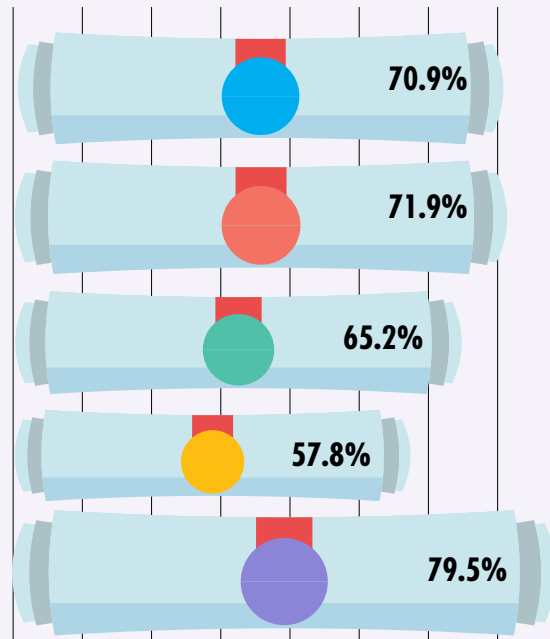| All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban
3.0%	0.7%	8.6%	2.0%

Graduation and college bound rates

Graduation and college bound rates are strong for public schools across Pennsylvania. Almost 87% of students are graduating from traditional public high school in four years and nearly 89% are graduating in five years.[10] While rural school districts have a graduation rate above 90%, only 65% of those students are enrolling in a two- or four-year college upon graduation.[11] This could be partially explained by students in rural areas focusing primarily on career-focused coursework as evidenced by having a higher percentage of students enrolled in a partnering career and technical center.[12] Another challenge being confronted by urban school districts is preventing dropouts[13] and encouraging and empowering their students to attend college.

Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates

Rate	District
84.8%	All PA LEAs
86.9%	All School Districts
90.5%	Rural
68.7%	Urban
91.9%	Suburban
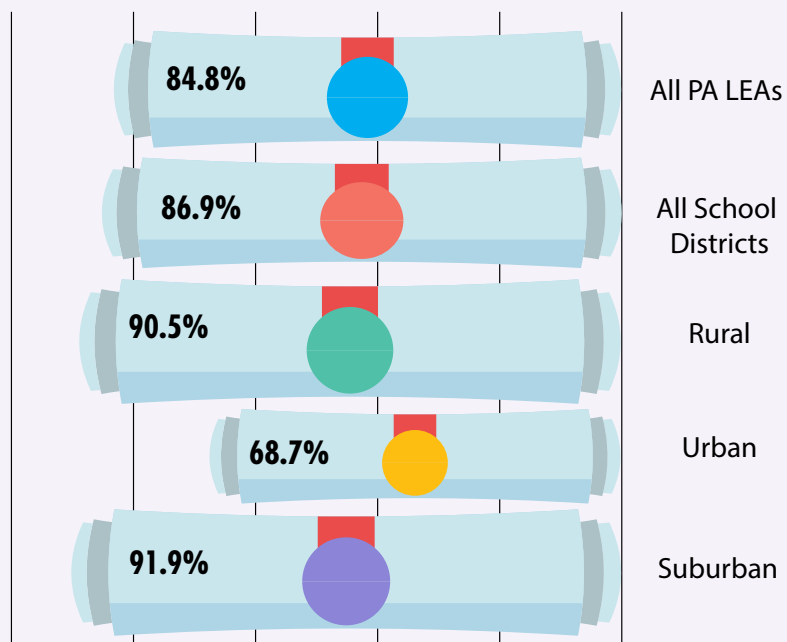
Percent of Students College Bound

Rate	District
70.9%	All PA LEAs
71.9%	All School Districts
65.2%	Rural
57.8%	Urban
79.5%	Suburban

Almost **87%** of students are graduating from traditional public high school in four years.

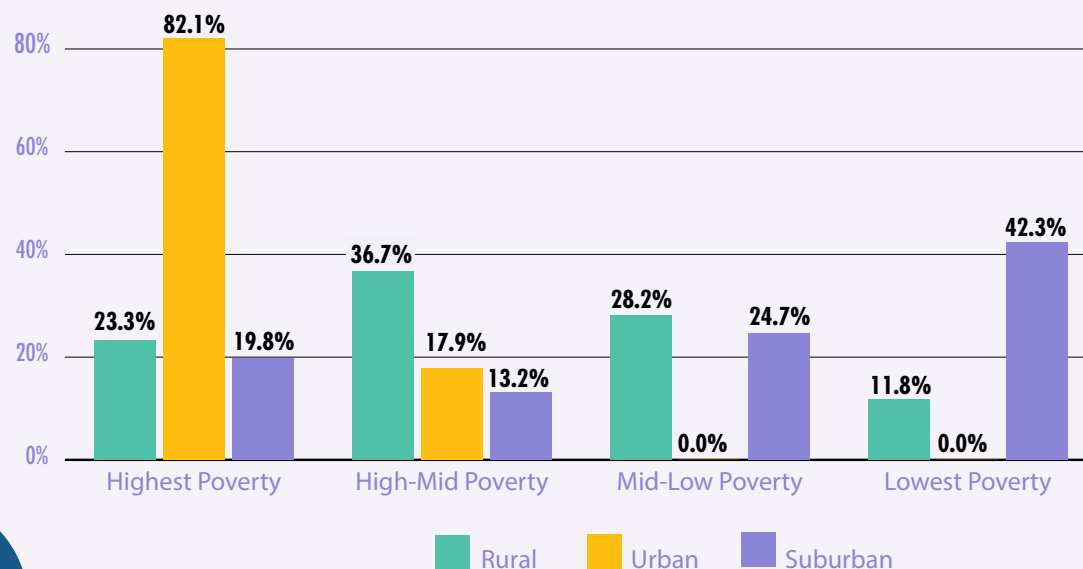# Spotlight on poverty's impact on student achievement

Research has shown poverty to have a clear impact on academic achievement. In Pennsylvania, the difference between those school districts with high poverty rates and those with low poverty rates is pronounced.

In the School Finances section, the differences in revenues and spending per student between the high and low poverty school districts will be examined.
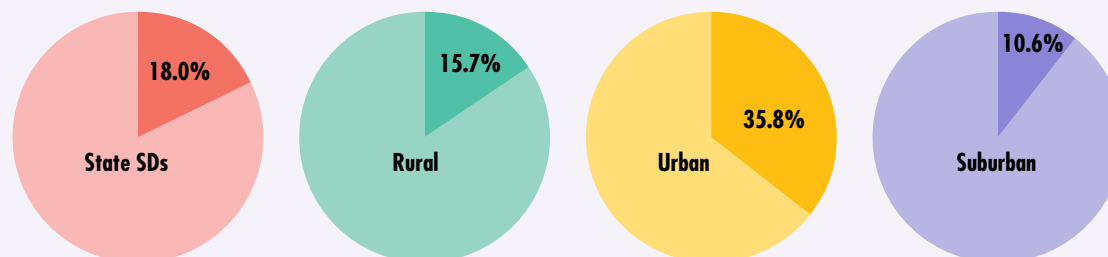
Poverty is concentrated primarily in urban and rural school districts. All 28 urban school districts and 147 rural school districts are in the highest or next highest poverty quartiles.

Percentage of School Districts within Poverty Quartiles[14]

	Highest Poverty	High-Mid Poverty	Mid-Low Poverty	Lowest Poverty
Rural	23.3%	36.7%	28.2%	11.8%
Urban	82.1%	17.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Suburban	19.8%	13.2%	24.7%	42.3%

■ Rural ■ Urban ■ Suburban

Percent of children ages 6-17 in acute poverty[15]

State SDs 18.0%

Rural 15.7%

Urban 35.8%

Suburban 10.6%

Find further information at **www.psba.org**

Whether looking at proficiency or state assessments, graduation rates or college entrance rates, there is a dramatic difference between the highest and lowest poverty school districts.

Academic Achievement Indicators – Highest vs. Lowest Poverty School Districts

Legend:
- Highest Poverty Quartile
- Lowest Poverty Quartile

Indicator	Highest Poverty Quartile	Lowest Poverty Quartile
ELA Grade 4	39.7%	77.1%
Math Grade 4	28.3%	65.4%
Science Grade 4	59.2%	89.9%
ELA Grade 8	42.0%	75.3%
Math Grade 8	18.2%	47.4%
Science Grade 8	39.3%	74.0%
4 Yr Graduation Rate	75.4%	94.7%
College Bound	59.7%	83.3%

Percent advanced or proficient (ELA Grade 4 through Science Grade 8)
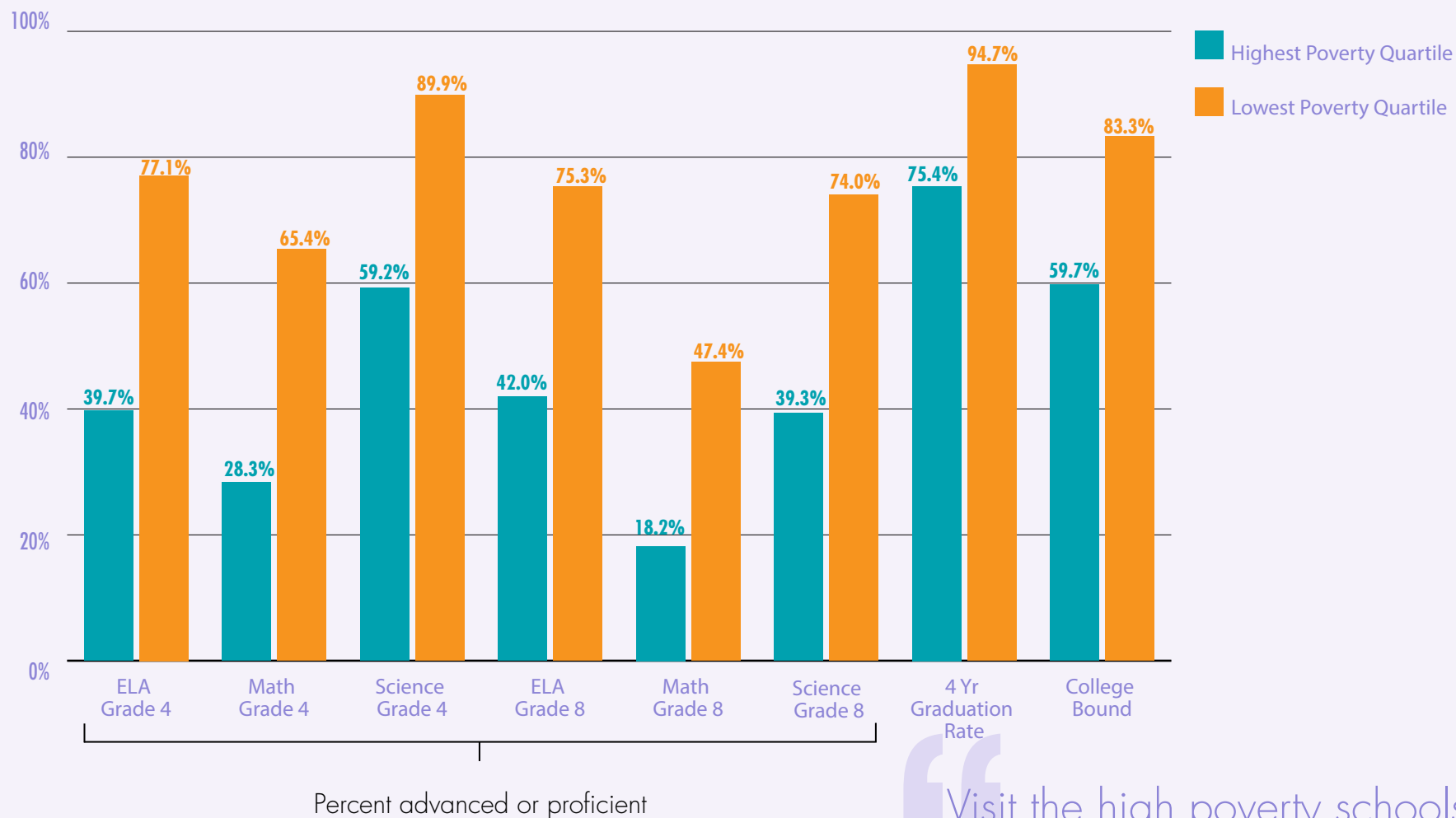
"Visit the high poverty schools and see how things are working.

- Survey Respondent

Readiness for life after school

The goal of public education is to prepare students for their future as college students, members of the workforce, and/or active and engaged citizens. More than half of responding chief school administrators were confident that at least 90% of their graduates are ready for the next steps in their lives and three-quarters were confident that at least 80% of their graduates were ready.

Critical thinking/problem solving was the most important skill for graduates to leave school with among school districts and career and technical centers while intermediate units, recognizing that many of their students have special needs, rated a number of different skills highly in order to prepare their students for the activities of daily life.

"
Public schools are producing well-prepared, well-rounded students.
- Survey Respondent
"

In your opinion, what percentage of graduates from your school(s) are ready for life after graduation?

	All SDs	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs
100%	5.5%	3.8%	0%	9.1%	14.6%
90-99%	49.5%	48.9%	25.0%	54.5%	43.9%
80-89%	24.5%	31.3%	33.3%	11.7%	24.4%
70-79%	12.7%	10.7%	8.3%	16.9%	9.8%
60-69%	1.8%	1.5%	0%	2.6%	0%
50-59%	4.1%	3.1%	8.3%	5.2%	7.3%
<50%	1.8%	0.8%	25.0%	0%	0%
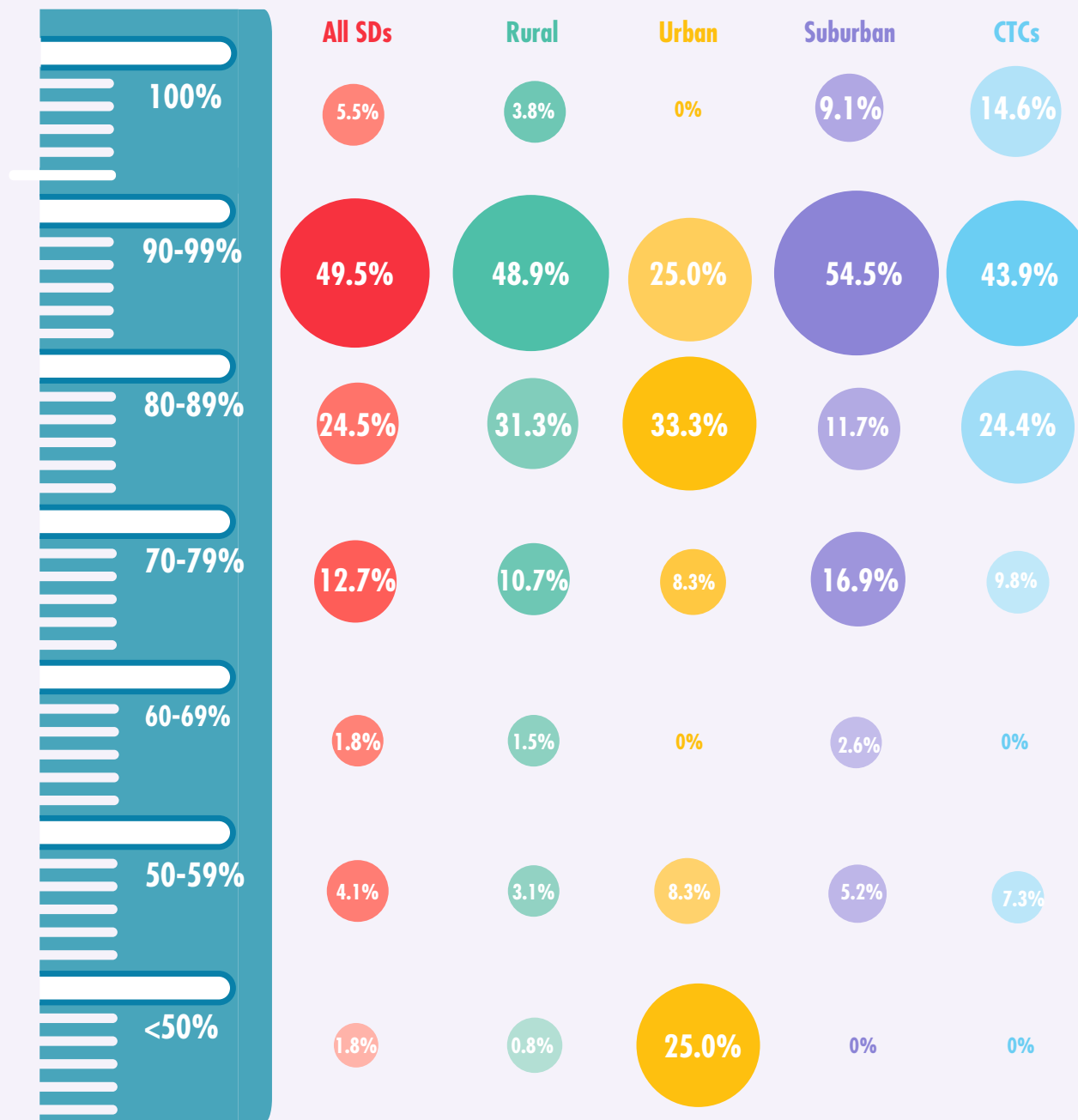
What are the most critical skills necessary for life after graduation?

Legend: All SDs | Rural | Urban | Suburban | CTC | IU

Critical thinking/problem solving
- All SDs: 89.7%
- Rural: 86.7%
- Urban: 100.0%
- Suburban: 92.8%
- CTC: 93.2%
- IU: 50.0%

Reading comprehension
- All SDs: 36.8%
- Rural: 37.8%
- Urban: 56.3%
- Suburban: 31.3%
- CTC: 25.0%
- IU: 30.0%

Financial literacy/budgeting
- All SDs: 34.2%
- Rural: 38.5%
- Urban: 18.8%
- Suburban: 30.1%
- CTC: 27.3%
- IU: 20.0%

Social/Communication
- All SDs: 33.8%
- Rural: 29.6%
- Urban: 50.0%
- Suburban: 37.3%
- CTC: 25.0%
- IU: 50.0%

Self-help/resilience
- All SDs: 31.2%
- Rural: 32.6%
- Urban: 18.8%
- Suburban: 31.3%
- CTC: 34.1%
- IU: 45.0%

Independent learning
- All SDs: 24.4%
- Rural: 25.9%
- Urban: 12.5%
- Suburban: 24.1%
- CTC: 15.9%
- IU: 15.0%

Teamwork
- All SDs: 22.2%
- Rural: 20.0%
- Urban: 37.5%
- Suburban: 22.9%
- CTC: 31.8%
- IU: 15.0%

Planning/time management
- All SDs: 21.4%
- Rural: 21.5%
- Urban: 0.0%
- Suburban: 25.3%
- CTC: 22.7%
- IU: 0.0%

Other
- All SDs: 2.1%
- Rural: 3.0%
- Urban: 0.0%
- Suburban: 1.2%
- CTC: 6.8%
- IU: 25.0%

National perspective – how Pennsylvania stacks up to the rest of the country

Pennsylvania students were consistently ranked in or near the top 10 nationally on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) examinations for reading and math in 2015.[16]

	PA National Rank
4th Grade Reading	Tie 7th
4th Grade Math	Tie 9th
8th Grade Reading	Tie 6th
8th Grade Math	Tie 13th
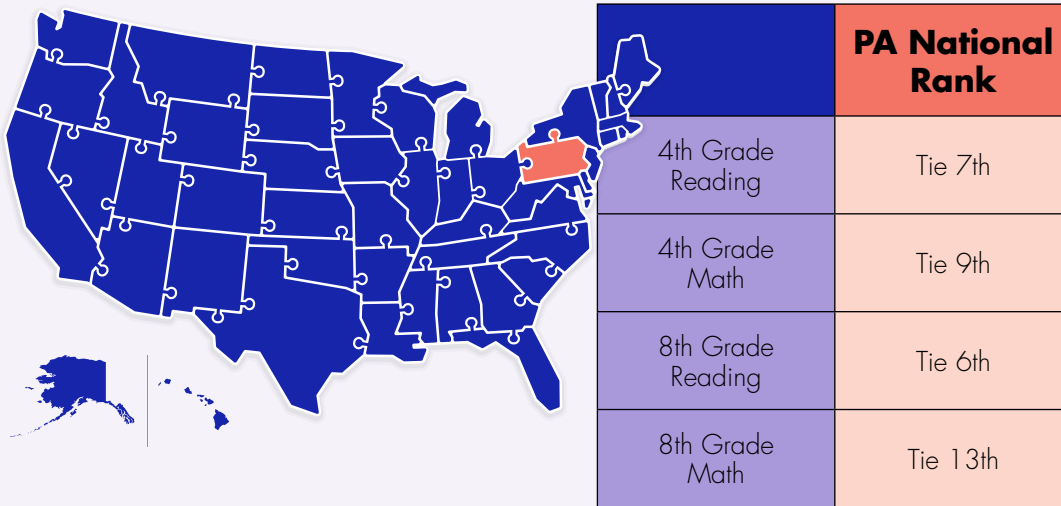
Pennsylvania also maintains a higher four-year cohort graduation rate and a higher percentage of students moving on to college immediately following high school than the national average.[17]

Graduation and College Bound Rates

4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate: PA 84.8%, US 83.2%
Percent College Bound: PA 70.9%, US 69.2%

PA / US
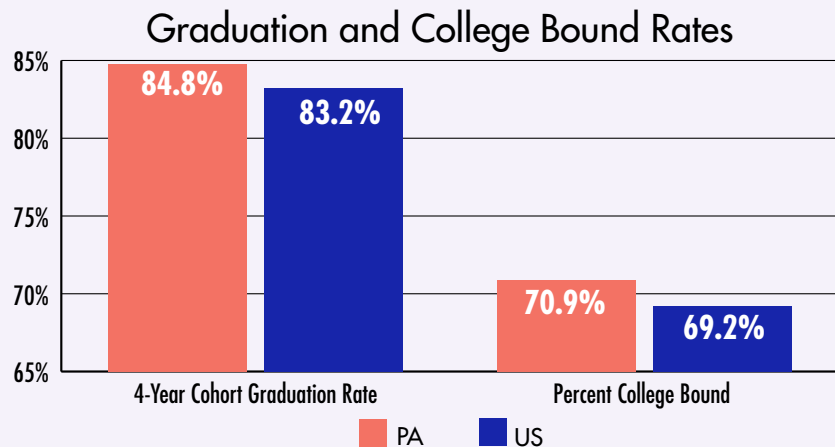
2015 NAEP% Advanced or Proficient – PA vs US

	PA	US
4th Grade Reading	42%	35%
4th Grade Math	45%	39%
8th Grade Reading	40%	32%
8th Grade Math	37%	32%

PA / US

Find further information at **www.psba.org**
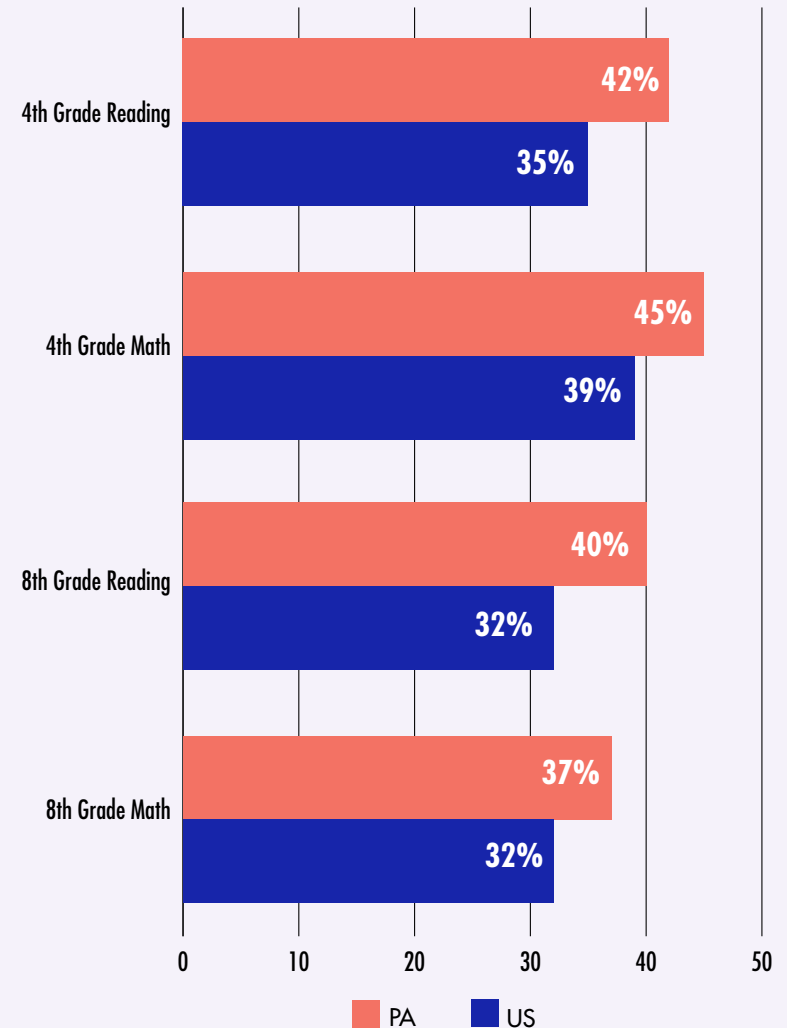
Special education

In 2014-15, 15.6% of students in Pennsylvania received special education programs and services.[18] The most common disabilities being specific learning disabilities, speech/language impairments and other health impairments. The vast majority of students (more than 85%) were able to be educated in their regular classrooms more than 40% of the time.

Disability	Percentage
Specific Learning Disability	44.2%
Speech/Language Impairment	14.4%
Other Health Impairment	13.4%
Autism	9.7%
Emotional Disturbance	8.7%
Intellectual Disability	6.7%
Multiple Disabilities	1.1%
Hearing Impairment	1.0%
Visual Impairment	0.4%
Orthopedic Impairment	0.3%
Deaf-Blindness	0.3%
Traumatic Brain Injury	0.03%

Placement	Percentage
In regular class more than 80%	62.2%
In regular class between 79-40%	23.3%
In regular class less than 40%	9.5%
Separate private placement	2.7%
Separate public placement	1.6%
Private residential placement	0.4%
Public residential placement	0.2%
Home/Hospital bound	0.2%

"Public education is not prepared to deal with the rising levels of special education costs for autistic students."

- Survey Respondent

Spotlight on school safety and discipline[19]

Students need a safe school environment in order to learn and reach their full potential. As reported on the 2015-16 PA Safe Schools Report, the number of reported incidents per 100 students were as follows:

- All School Districts – 2.73
- Rural – 2.09
- Urban – 5.60
- Suburban – 2.02

Students also need to be present to learn.

Average truancy rates
- All School Districts – 7.5%
- Rural – 6.9%
- Urban – 18.9%
- Suburban – 6.8%

Out-of-school suspensions and expulsions
- All School Districts – 137,901
- Rural – 17,459
- Urban – 73,989
- Suburban – 46,453

Similar to the trends in educational environment, almost 90% of special education students were provided educational programs, supports and services for under $25,000 per student while less than 1% of students required supports and services costing more than $75,000 per student.

Per Student Special Education Expenditures

- Category 1 (< $25,000) — 89.9%
- Category 2 ($25,000-$49,999) — 7.6%
- Category 3A ($50,000-$74,999) — 1.8%
- Category 3B (> $75,000) — .8%
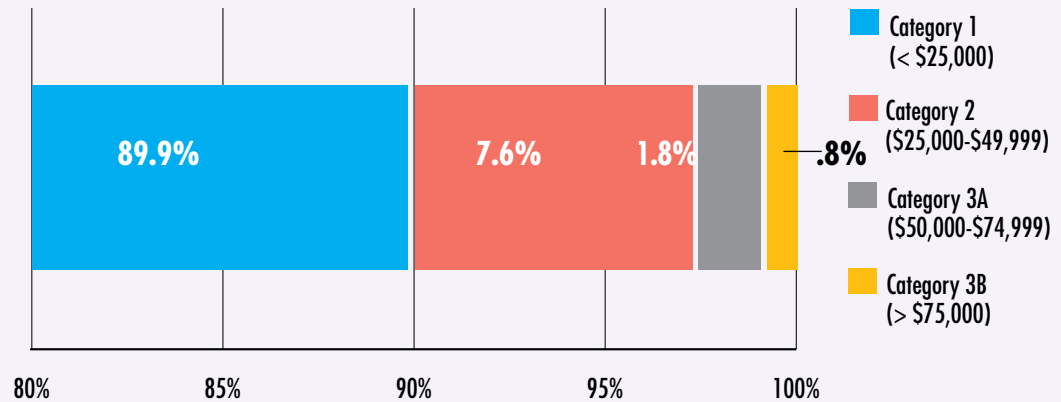
In terms of educational outcomes for students in special education, more than 72% of students with disabilities were able to graduate from high school with a diploma.

Students Exiting Special Education

- Graduated with HS diploma — 72.3%
- Dropped out — 9.9%
- Transfer to regular education program — 9.8%
- Moved — 7.1%
- Reached maximum age — 0.6%
- Passed away — 0.3%

Find further information at **www.psba.org**
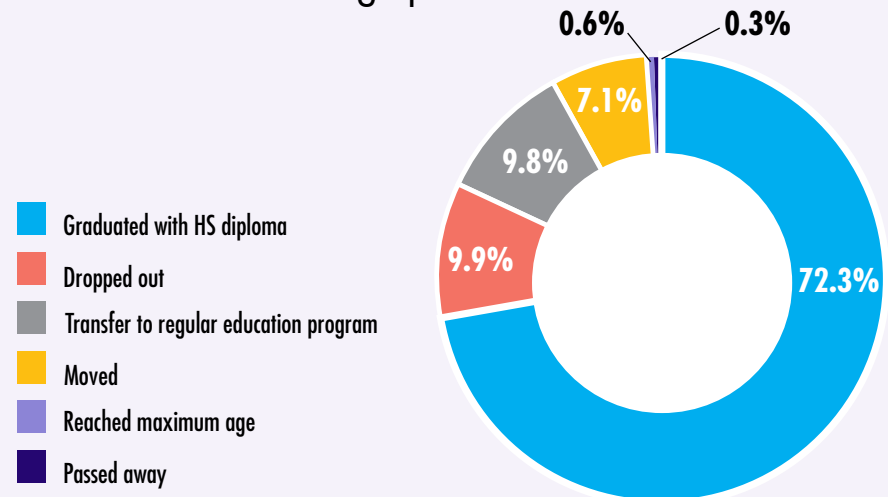
Academic and extracurricular opportunities

A well-rounded education includes not only academic opportunities in art, music and traditional classroom learning options, but also the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school and study real things and processes through learning experiences outside the traditional classroom setting.

Learning in today's public schools goes well beyond the regular classroom curriculum. Students have the opportunity to benefit from participating in a wide range of extracurricular activities which not only teach important values such as teamwork and sportsmanship, but also allow students to explore various activities and interests.

Which of the following academic opportunities are offered in your schools?

	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs
Art classes	99.6%	100.0%	100.0%	98.8%	n/a
Music classes	98.3%	97.7%	100.0%	98.8%	n/a
Field trips	95.8%	94.7%	92.9%	98.8%	97.8%
Dual enrollment or other college credit granting program	95.4%	95.4%	85.7%	96.4%	82.2%
Advanced Placement (AP) classes	91.7%	87.8%	92.9%	97.6%	n/a
Adult education programs (CTCs Only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	82.2%
School-approved student projects (CTCs Only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	80.0%
District-operated cyber program(s)	75.4%	77.1%	78.6%	71.1%	n/a
Job shadowing	62.5%	64.1%	50.0%	62.7%	82.2%
Summer school	60.8%	57.3%	78.6%	63.9%	n/a
Work study	54.6%	50.4%	50.0%	59.0%	97.8%
Engineering classes	45.8%	35.9%	57.1%	57.8%	n/a

Which of the following extracurricular opportunities are offered in your schools?

	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs	IUs
School clubs/ student organizations	98.3%	97.8%	94.1%	100.0%	88.9%	22.2%
School band/ orchestra/ choir	97.1%	95.6%	94.1%	100.0%	n/a	11.1%
Interscholastic athletics	96.7%	96.3%	88.2%	98.9%	n/a	n/a
School dances/ social events	95.8%	95.6%	94.1%	96.6%	40.0%	16.7%
Theatre/drama	92.5%	91.2%	82.4%	96.6%	n/a	16.7%
Academic competition groups	89.6%	86.8%	82.4%	95.4%	80.0%	88.9%
Class trips	89.2%	89.7%	100.0%	86.2%	75.6%	27.8%
Intramural/club sports	59.6%	50.7%	58.8%	73.6%	11.1%	n/a

Career and technical education achievement

Students enrolled in a career and technical center or program are engaged in a career-focused curriculum that usually culminates with an industry specific assessment or exam. More than 8 out of 10 students taking one or more of these assessments are achieving either at the competent or advanced level.

Industry Standards-Based Competency Assessments – Average % Competent or Advanced[20]

Comprehensive CTCs	88.0%
School Districts and Occupational CTCs	84.5%
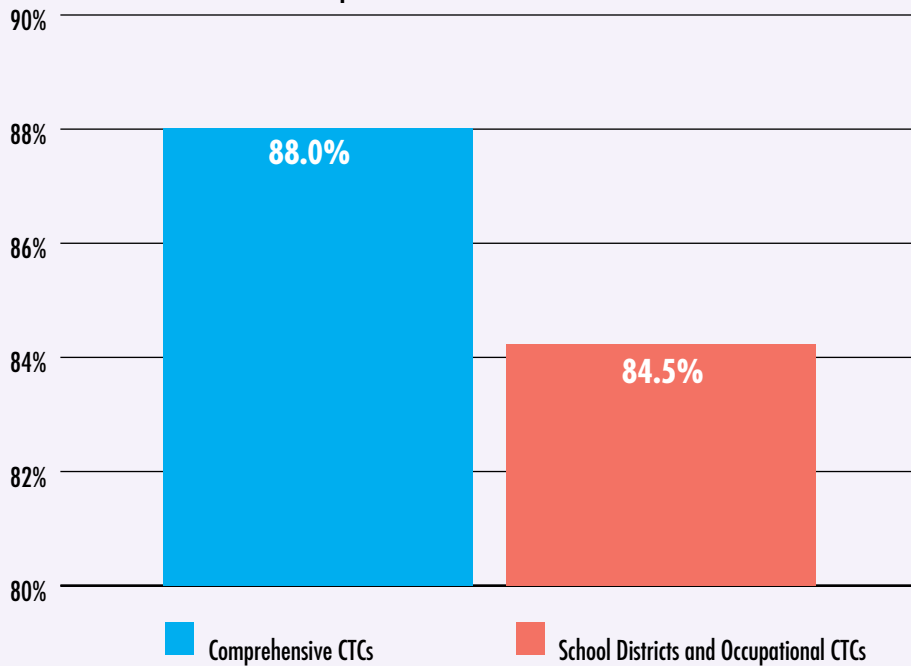
Average NOCTI Performance Scores for Pennsylvania[21]

Automotive Mechanics	93.1%
Building Construction Occupations	88.3%
Child Care	93.0%
Collision Repair	91.9%
Commercial and Advertising Arts	84.3%
Computer Systems Networking	95.0%
Cosmetology	92.9%
Criminal Justice	95.5%
Culinary Arts	87.8%
Electrical Power Transmission	92.9%
Electronics Technology	90.0%
Health Assisting	96.7%
Production Agriculture	77.7%
Web Design	76.0%
Welding	86.0%

" CTE education is critical in the development of our local and state economy. More support needs to be funneled to our secondary CTE schools. "
- Survey Respondent

Find further information at **www.psba.org**

Intermediate units

Pennsylvania's 29 intermediate units provide indispensable programs and services to their participating school districts that go well beyond special education.

Which of the following programs and services are offered by your intermediate unit?

Program/Service	Percentage
Comprehensive planning assistance	100%
Curriculum development services	100%
Early intervention program(s)	100%
Extended school year (ESY) services	100%
Information technology support	100%
Professional development	100%
Data collection and reporting	95%
Emergency/Safety planning or preparedness	90%
Health insurance consortium	90%
Job training, work study, or other school-to-work transition programs	90%
Joint/Cooperative purchasing	90%
Educator evaluation	85%
Intermediate unit operated cyber program(s)	85%
School-based ACCESS program administration	85%
Head Start or other Pre-K program(s)	75%
Human resource services	75%
Translation/Interpreter services	70%
English as a Second Language program(s)	65%
Gifted education program(s)	65%
Pregnant/Parenting student educational program(s)	65%
Adult education program(s)	60%
Alternative/Disruptive youth program(s)	60%
Grant writing services	50%
Career and technical education programs	25%
Dual enrollment or other college credit granting program(s)	25%

> Intermediate units can save school districts a great deal of money while providing efficiencies in provision of service.
> - Survey Respondent

The Challenges

What chief school administrators had to say about the biggest challenges being faced in public education today and in the future.

$$E=mc^2$$

Find further information at **www.psba.org**
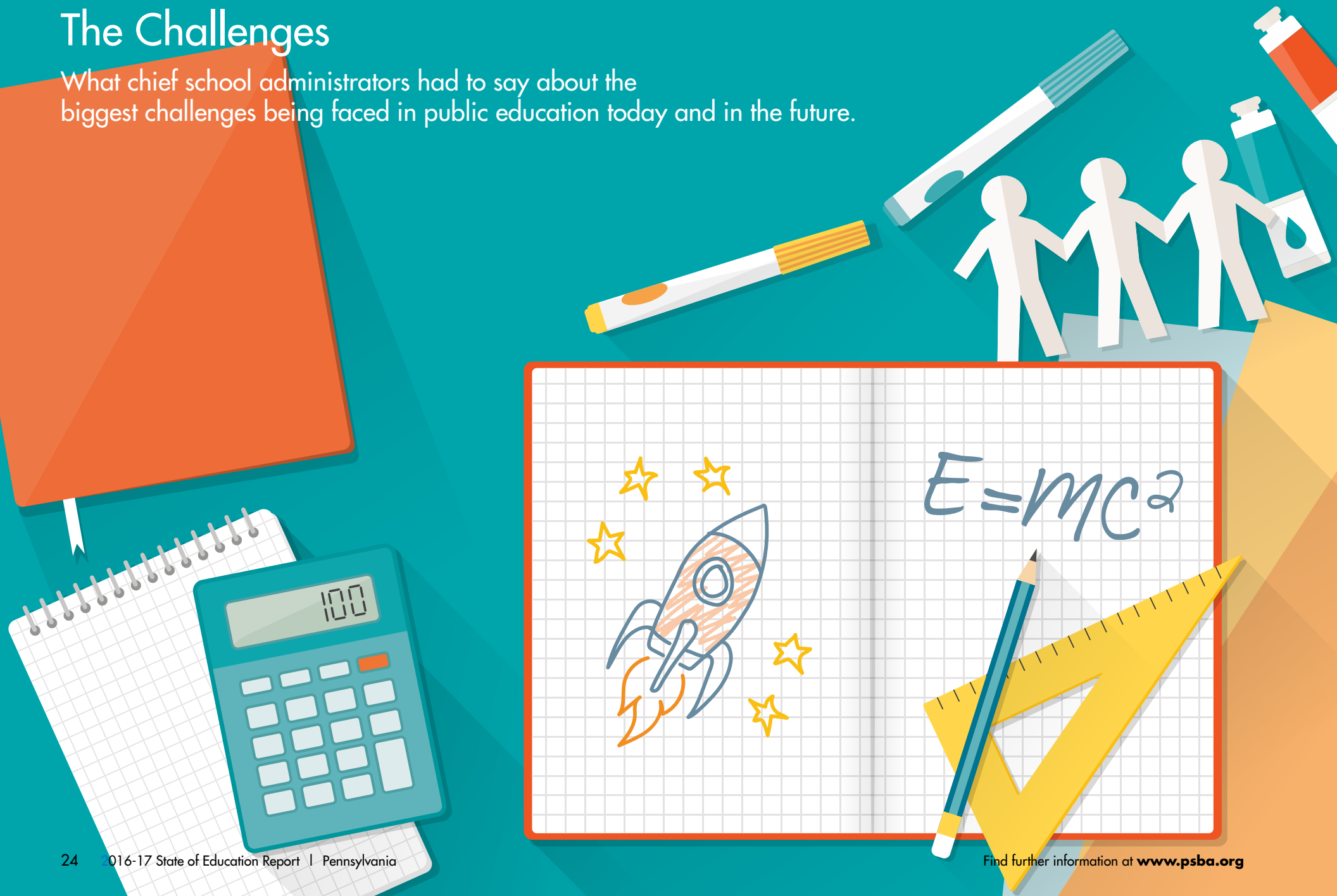
Current challenges

Percentage of chief school administrators who found the following areas the most difficult to manage **over the last year.**

	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs	IUs
Budget pressures/lack of funding	84.0%	83.7%	88.9%	83.7%	55.6%	95.2%
Bargaining issues	31.9%	31.9%	22.2%	33.7%	15.6%	42.9%
School construction/maintenance	20.2%	23.5%	16.7%	23.5%	13.3%	9.5%
Preparing for or administering standardized tests	19.5%	19.1%	16.7%	20.4%	8.9%	4.8%
Curriculum requirements	19.5%	20.6%	27.8%	16.3%	8.9%	0.0%
Other	17.5%	17.7%	11.1%	18.4%	17.8%	28.6%
Teacher evaluations	17.1%	15.6%	16.7%	19.4%	26.7%	14.3%
Social media issues	16.0%	17.7%	16.7%	13.3%	17.8%	0.0%
Decreasing enrollment	13.2%	19.1%	5.6%	6.1%	17.8%	0.0%
Teacher recruitment/retention	9.3%	9.9%	22.2%	6.1%	13.3%	38.1%
School employee training requirements	8.9%	10.6%	11.1%	6.1%	8.9%	4.8%
Managing/dealing with parents/public	7.8%	5.7%	5.6%	11.2%	6.7%	0.0%
Teacher workload	5.1%	5.0%	11.1%	4.1%	17.8%	9.5%
Principal/Administrator recruitment/retention	5.1%	2.8%	22.2%	5.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Increasing enrollment	3.5%	0.7%	0.0%	8.2%	4.4%	0.0%
IDEA and state special education requirements (IUs Only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	23.8%
Relations with participating school districts (CTCs and IUs Only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	11.1%	9.5%
Student recruitment/quotas (CTCs Only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	15.6%	n/a

Future challenges

Chief school administrators' biggest expected challenges **over the next year.**

	All School Districts	**Rural**	**Urban**	**Suburban**	**CTCs**	**IUs**
Budget pressures/lack of funding	86.4%	85.8%	88.9%	86.7%	53.3%	100.0%
Bargaining issues	38.9%	40.4%	33.3%	37.8%	17.8%	28.6%
School construction/maintenance	25.7%	24.1%	16.7%	29.6%	15.6%	4.8%
ESSA implementation	24.1%	23.4%	33.3%	23.5%	4.0	38.1%
Curriculum requirements	14.4%	18.4%	11.1%	9.2%	13.3%	0.0%
Preparing for or administering standardized tests	12.8%	12.1%	16.7%	13.3%	8.9%	4.8%
Decreasing enrollment	11.7%	17.7%	0.0%	5.1%	15.6%	4.8%
Other	10.5%	12.1%	5.6%	9.2%	13.3%	28.6%
Teacher recruitment/retention	9.7%	8.5%	33.3%	7.1%	11.1%	33.3%
Teacher evaluations	9.3%	9.2%	0.0%	11.2%	20.0%	0.0%
Social media issues	8.2%	7.1%	0.0%	11.2%	11.1%	4.8%
School employee training requirements	7.8%	6.4%	11.1%	9.2%	6.7%	4.8%
Teacher workload	6.6%	5.7%	11.1%	7.1%	11.1%	9.5%
Managing/dealing with parents/public	6.2%	5.0%	5.6%	8.2%	2.2%	0.0%
Increasing enrollment	5.1%	0.7%	0.0%	12.2%	6.7%	4.8%
Principal/Administrator recruitment/retention	4.3%	2.8%	16.7%	4.1%	6.7%	0.0%
IDEA and state special education requirements (IUs Only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	19.0%
Student recruitment/quotas (CTCs Only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	24.4%	n/a
Relations with participating school districts (CTCs and IUs Only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	17.8%	4.8%

Of the biggest challenges facing public schools, chief school administrators said:

"We have been able to provide a top-notch quality education to our students until this point. We have been forced to cut instructional staff, programs, and critical instructional supplies in order to prepare for the difficult financial road ahead. We desperately need additional funding in order to keep up with the state mandates, PSERS contributions, general building maintenance issues, training requirements for the PA Core implementation, as well as new instructional supplies in order to teach PA Core. We also struggle to maintain technology systems.

…the challenge will be – can we continue to prepare our learners to be future ready as opposed to test ready.

Managing to remain in compliance with all of the unfunded mandates has been a continuous struggle. Budget pressures/lack of funding - continuing to attempt to save enough money to pay for PSERS while allocating enough funds to revamp curriculum and provide professional development for staff… in addition to attempting to keep up with building maintenance issues.

Building a budget with little to no tax increase.

Changing public perception of CTCs. The need to create a rebranding of CTC in PA.

We do not have the financial resources to do everything we are expected to do. We are well aware of what is required to meet state standards, but we are not able to afford the needed resources especially considering the needs of our population.

Balancing the educational imperatives needed for all students vs. the required standardized state and national testing demands.

Never-ending report/data submission requirements.

Poverty/equity combined with increasing social, educational and emotional needs of students and our community.

Our building needs are going to be the most difficult to manage. With little ability to generate funds through our tax base our school buildings security system, phone systems as well as intercom systems are antiquated at best and we need to replace.

Retirement /PSERS costs. This has led to increased use of staffing services to control costs which, in turn, has created challenges with staff retention, and service quality.

Due to budget tightening, existing staff are asked to shoulder a significant increase in workload in an effort to satisfy the burdensome reporting requirements from PDE.

Addressing our budget deficit is far and away our biggest challenge."

School Finances

A closer look at where education revenue comes from, how education dollars are spent and the biggest financial challenges facing public schools.

Find further information at **www.psba.org**

Financial impacts and challenges

The monumental budget and funding challenges public schools are facing warrant a closer look. When asked to select the biggest sources of budget pressure for their school(s), chief school administrators identified several key pressures most impacting their school(s).

Top seven sources of budget pressures (based on all school districts)

Pension costs

All SDs	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTC	IU
84.7%	88.1%	56.3%	84.7%	82.2%	100%

Charter school tuition payments

All SDs	Rural	Urban	Suburban
66.1%	65.9%	81.3%	63.5%

Inadequate state funding
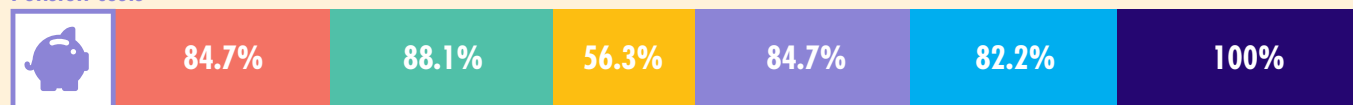
All SDs	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTC	IU
52.5%	52.6%	56.3%	51.8%	28.9%	70.0%
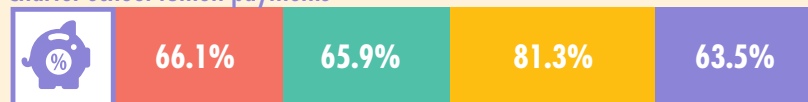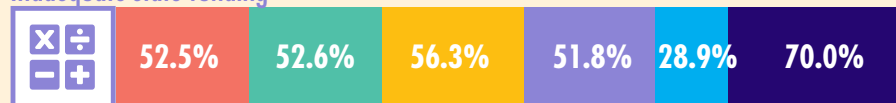
Health insurance increases

All SDs	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTC	IU
50.4%	56.3%	43.8%	42.4%	73.3%	50.0%

Special education costs

All SDs	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTC	IU
41.5%	40.0%	31.3%	45.9%	11.1%	50.0%

Salary increases
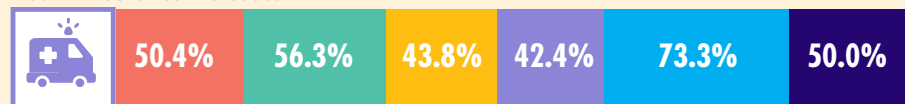
All SDs	Rural	Suburban	CTC	IU
17.8%	14.8%	25.9%	44.4%	5.0%
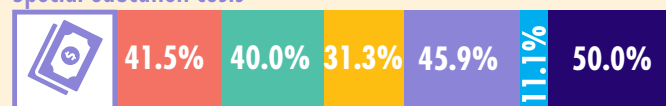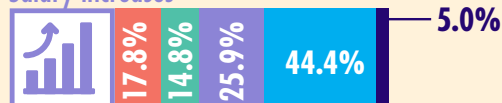
Construction/Renovation projects

All SDs	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTC	IU
16.1%	11.1%	25.0%	22.4%	20.0%	5.0%

Legend: All SDs | Rural | Urban | Suburban | CTC | IU

Sources of budget pressures (continued)

	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs	IUs
Not increasing local property taxes	12.7%	9.6%	18.8%	16.5%	n/a	n/a
Facilities maintenance	9.3%	8.1%	12.5%	10.6%	22.2%	10.0%
Low or no fund balances	8.9%	6.7%	18.8%	10.6%	20.0%	10.0%
Transportation	5.5%	6.7%	6.3%	3.5%	n/a	20.0%
Other	4.7%	5.2%	0.0%	4.7%	6.7%	10.0%
Impact of enrollment changes	4.2%	3.7%	6.3%	4.7%	11.1%	20.0%
Technology upgrades/ initiatives	1.3%	1.5%	0.0%	1.2%	11.1%	15.0%
Enrollment quotas (CTCs Only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	11.1%	n/a

When asked how their schools were dealing with those budget pressures, chief school administrators reported taking, the following actions as a result of budgetary/funding issues **in the current fiscal year.**

IUs	CTCs	Suburban	Urban	Rural	All School Districts	
57.9%	35.1%	81.0%	78.6%	73.7%	76.6%	Draw from Fund Balance
n/a	n/a	77.4%	71.4%	72.2%	74.0%	Raise local property taxes
57.9%	37.8%	53.6%	42.9%	62.4%	58.0%	Reduce Staffing/# of Positions
31.6%	16.2%	47.6%	71.4%	32.3%	40.3%	Increase Class Sizes
n/a	n/a	20.2%	21.4%	34.6%	28.6%	Combine/Share Programs/Services
68.4%	16.2%	22.6%	50.0%	27.1%	26.8%	Reduce Programs/Services
15.8%	10.8%	31.0%	42.9%	21.8%	26.4%	Eliminate Course Offerings
n/a	13.5%	20.2%	7.1%	18.0%	18.2%	Require Student Activity Fees
n/a	n/a	19.0%	21.4%	12.8%	15.6%	Use/Request an Act 1 Exemption
31.6%	0.0%	16.7%	14.3%	5.3%	10.0%	Borrow
5.3%	2.7%	7.1%	7.1%	3.0%	4.8%	Close/Consolidate Schools
10.5%	18.9%	6.0%	0.0%	4.5%	4.8%	Other
84.2%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Greater Focus on Revenue Generating Programs/Services (IU Only)
n/a	32.4%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Reduce Equipment/Supplies to Students/Faculty (CTC Only)

Chief school administrators reported taking, or anticipated taking, the following actions as a result of budget funding issues **in the next fiscal year.**

	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs	IUs
Draw from Fund Balance	74.7%	77.7%	64.3%	71.6%	29.3%	40.0%
Raise local property taxes	72.9%	69.2%	78.6%	77.8%	n/a	n/a
Reduce Staffing/# of Positions	47.6%	54.6%	57.1%	34.6%	17.1%	40.0%
Increase Class Sizes	43.6%	37.7%	64.3%	49.4%	14.6%	25.0%
Combine/Share Programs/Services	28.0%	33.1%	21.4%	21.0%	n/a	n/a
Reduce Programs/Services	28.0%	27.7%	35.7%	27.2%	29.3%	35.0%
Eliminate Course Offerings	23.6%	21.5%	42.9%	23.5%	4.9%	10.0%
Require Student Activity Fees	18.2%	19.2%	14.3%	17.3%	14.6%	n/a
Use/Request an Act 1 Exemption	17.3%	12.3%	42.9%	21.0%	n/a	n/a
Borrow	8.9%	4.6%	21.4%	13.6%	2.4%	20.0%
Close/Consolidate Schools	6.7%	6.9%	7.1%	6.2%	2.4%	5.0%
Other	4.0%	3.1%	7.1%	4.9%	14.6%	20.0%
Greater Focus on Revenue Generating Programs/Services (IU Only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	90.0%
Reduce Equipment/Supplies to Students/Faculty (CTC Only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	51.2%	n/a

Chief school administrators were also asked if their schools would be cutting or postponing any of the programs, services or activities they offer.

	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs	IUs
Staffing levels	51.7%	54.3%	53.8%	46.4%	12.9%	42.9%
Building maintenance/upgrades	50.6%	47.6%	38.5%	58.9%	41.9%	64.3%
Professional development opportunities for teachers/administrators	42.5%	41.9%	38.5%	44.6%	29.0%	21.4%
Curriculum materials/books/supplies	39.1%	39.0%	53.8%	35.7%	25.8%	50.0%
Technology/Equipment upgrades	33.9%	39.0%	30.8%	25.0%	41.9%	78.6%
Field trips	27.6%	29.5%	23.1%	25.0%	29.0%	35.7%
Academic programs/course offerings	24.1%	18.1%	46.2%	30.4%	0.0%	14.3%
Transportation services	10.9%	8.6%	15.4%	14.3%	n/a	21.4%
Student support services	10.3%	8.6%	23.1%	10.7%	6.5%	7.1%
Kindergarten/Pre-K	10.3%	9.5%	7.7%	12.5%	n/a	28.6%
Other	8.6%	5.7%	15.4%	12.5%	22.6%	21.4%
Interscholastic athletics	7.5%	9.5%	15.4%	1.8%	n/a	n/a
Summer school	4.0%	3.8%	7.7%	3.6%	3.2%	7.1%
Language classes	3.4%	1.0%	23.1%	3.6%	n/a	n/a
School clubs	2.3%	1.0%	7.7%	3.6%	3.2%	0.0%
Dual enrollment offerings	1.7%	1.9%	0.0%	1.8%	3.2%	7.1%
School band/orchestra/choir	1.7%	1.0%	15.4%	0.0%	n/a	n/a
AP/IB classes	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	n/a	n/a
School dances/social events	0.6%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%

"Inadequate state funding seriously hampers the ability of public schools to provide an appropriate education for all students." - Survey Respondent

Find further information at **www.psba.org**

Revenues

School districts received slightly less than $27.6 billion in revenue in 2014-15 which was a 5.2% increase over 2013-14. Revenue comes from four primary sources – local sources such as local property taxes, state sources such as state budget line items like basic education funding, federal sources such as federal programs to educate students with disabilities, and other sources such as issuing bonds.[22]

Amount and Source of Revenue

$14.4 B
Suburban: $9.85 (Local), $3.86 (State), $0.21 (Federal), $0.45 (Other)

$6.3 B
Urban: $2.69 (Local), $3.05 (State), $0.44 (Federal), $0.08 (Other)

$7.0 B
Rural: $3.34 (Local), $3.12 (State), $0.16 (Federal), $0.33 (Other)

X-axis: $0, $3, $6, $9, $12, $15 — Billions

Legend:
- Local
- State
- Federal
- Other
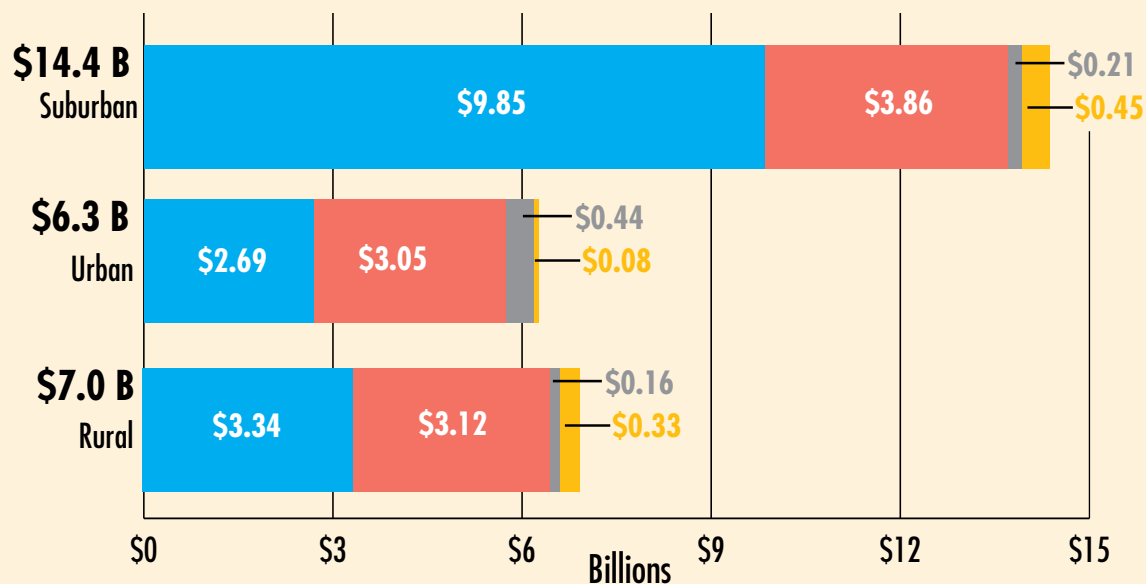
Revenue Sources as a Percentage

Rural
- 2.4% (Federal)
- 4.7% (Other)
- 44.9% (State)
- 48.1% (Local)

Urban
- 7.1% (Federal)
- 1.3% (Other)
- 48.7% (State)
- 43.0% (Local)

Suburban
- 1.5% (Federal)
- 3.1% (Other)
- 26.8% (State)
- 68.6% (Local)

All School Districts
- 3.0% (Federal)
- 3.1% (Other)
- 36.3% (State)
- 57.6% (Local)
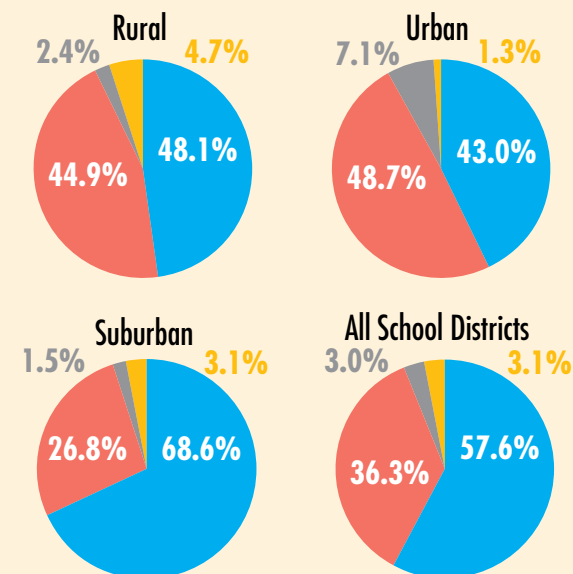
With the responsibility of educating more than 52% of the students in the state, suburban school districts are also collecting more than 52% of the state's education revenues. However, suburban school districts are raising most of that revenue through local sources. In fact, revenue from local sources are more than 2.5 times those from state sources for suburban districts.

Revenue per student

The sizable difference in local revenues for suburban school districts also translates into higher revenues per student.[23]

| Rural	Urban	Suburban	All School Districts
$15,866	$14,906	$16,518	$15,966

Spotlight on property taxes

Property taxes are the single largest source of local revenue for school districts in the state. In total, school districts collected more than $12.2 billion in property taxes in 2014-15 which accounted for 44.5% of all school district revenues.[24] With a significantly higher local share of revenue than their rural or urban counterparts, suburban school districts are reliant primarily on property taxes to generate local revenue.

School district revenue from property taxes

All School Districts
44.5%

Rural
36.1%

Urban
26.1%
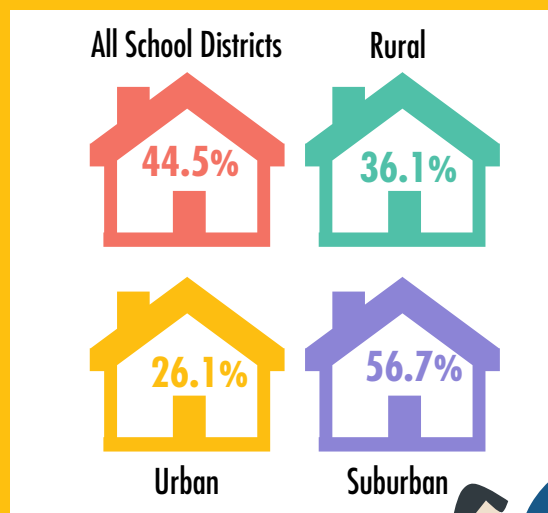
Suburban
56.7%

Residents in suburban school districts are also sending more of their personal income to school property taxes.

Percent of personal income going toward property taxes[25]

3.7% — All School Districts
3.6% — Rural
3.1% — Urban
4.0% — Suburban
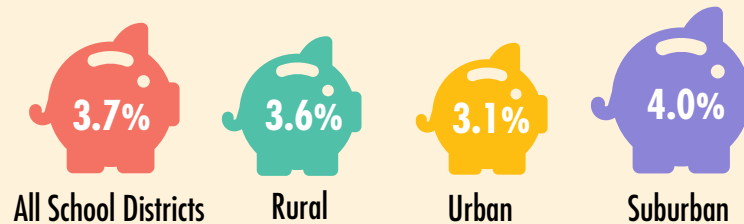
Largest percent of personal income to property taxes

1. East Stroudsburg Area – 12.8%
2. Pocono Mountain – 12.7%
3. Wallenpaupack Area – 11.6%
4. Jim Thorpe Area – 9.9%
5. Chichester – 8.9%
6. Delaware Valley – 8.9%
7. Stroudsburg Area – 8.7%
8. Western Wayne – 8.2%
28. Harrisburg City – 5.9% (highest urban district)

For most school districts, 2017-18 will yet again bring increases to local property taxes. While the vast majority of increases will be at or below the Act 1 Index of 2.5%, in some districts, the increase will be higher.

What will be your anticipated property tax increase for 2017-18?

	Rural	Urban	Suburban	State SDs
More than Act 1 index of 2.5%	10.9%	30.8%	17.5%	14.5%
Equal to Act 1 index of 2.5%	36.7%	30.8%	37.5%	36.7%
Less than Act 1 index of 2.5%	37.5%	23.1%	28.8%	33.5%
No increase	14.8%	15.4%	16.3%	15.4%

Find further information at **www.psba.org**
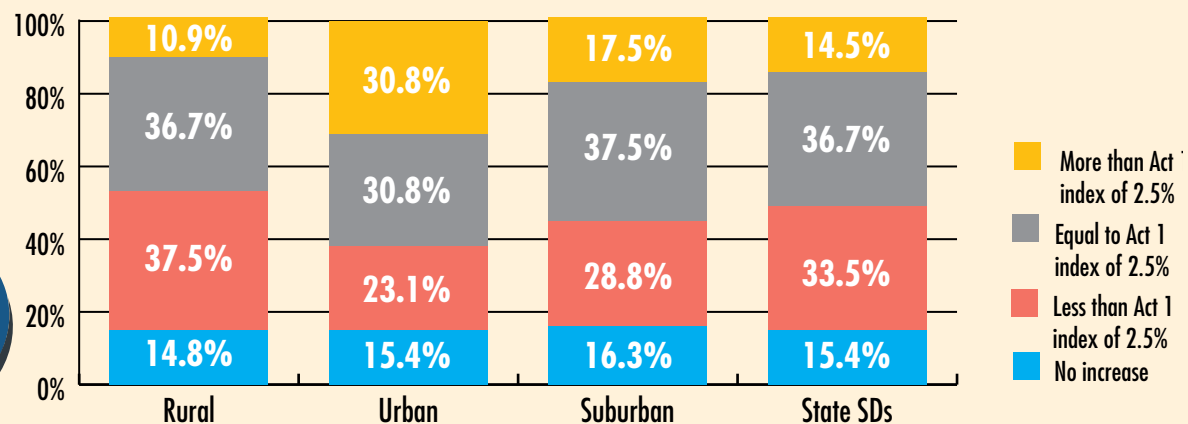
Expenditures

School districts spent slightly less than $27.4 billion in 2014-15 which was a 4.8% increase over 2013-14.[26] Specific expenditures will be examined next, but first, a high-level overview of how school districts are spending their money.

	Instruction	Debt Service and Other Financing Uses	Administrative Services	Operation & Maintenance of Facilities	Instructional Support Services	Student Transportation	Fund Transfers	Student Activities	Student Health Services	All Other Uses
$27.4 B All School Districts	58.3%	9.1%	7.9%	7.7%	5.4%	5.0%	3.5%	1.5%	1.1%	0.4%
$6.9 B Rural	55.3%	9.2%	8.3%	7.8%	5.6%	5.9%	4.4%	2.0%	1.1%	0.4%
$6.1 B Urban	65.0%	8.3%	7.2%	7.6%	4.2%	4.2%	1.5%	0.8%	1.0%	0.2%
$14.4 B Suburban	56.9%	9.4%	8.0%	7.7%	5.9%	5.0%	4.0%	1.7%	1.1%	0.3%

Legend:
- Instruction
- Debt Service and Other Financing Uses
- Administrative Services
- Operation & Maintenance of Facilities
- Instructional Support Services
- Student Transportation
- Fund Transfers
- Student Activities
- Student Health Services
- All Other Uses

Expenditures per student

Like the differences in revenue per student, suburban school districts also spent more per student than rural or urban school districts.[27]

Rural	Urban	Suburban	All School Districts
$15,764	$14,578	$16,517	$15,855

Pensions

School district pension costs more than quadrupled between 2009-10 and 2014-15 and are predicted to continue to rise and stay at historically high levels for years to come. For the 2017-18 school year, school districts will be required to pay 32.57% of all salaries to the Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) in retirement contributions (compared to 21.4% in 2014-15).[28] Because of the climb in employer contribution rates, pension costs have grown to consume more than 8.5% of school district budgets.[29]
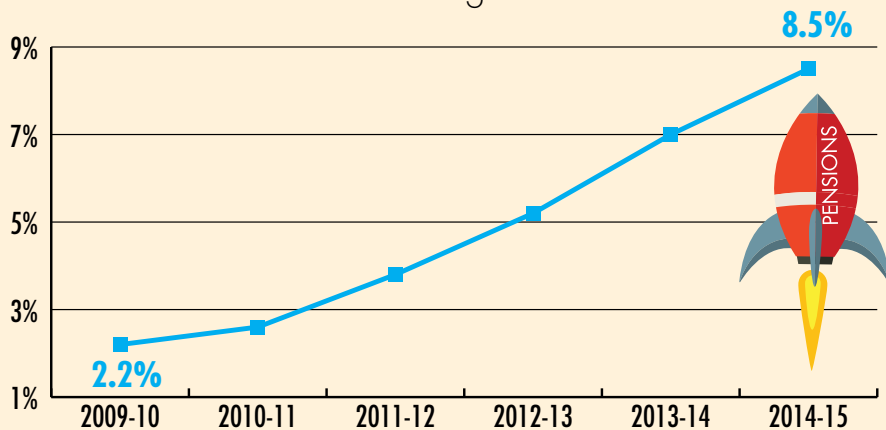
Charter school tuition payments

When a student chooses to enroll in a charter school, the school district of residence is required to send a tuition payment to the charter school. In 2014-15, 7.5% of students in the state were enrolled in a charter school which corresponded to school districts spending 5.4% of their budgets on charter school tuition payments.[30] Charter school enrollments and subsequent payments are highest in urban school districts.
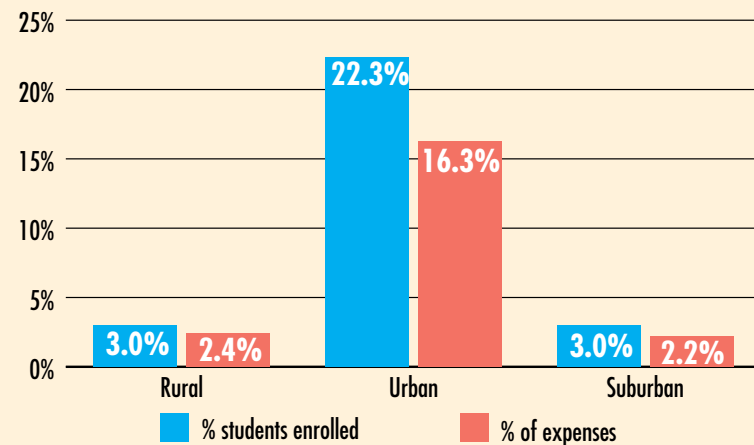
Largest percent of budget consumed by charter school payments:
1. Chester-Upland – 46.1%
2. Philadelphia City – 26.1%
3. Midland Borough – 22.8%
4. Wilkinsburg Borough – 21.4%
5. Sto-Rox – 20.6%
6. York City – 18.1%
15. Oxford Area – 9.6% (highest rural district)

Transportation expenses

Transportation, if provided, can be among a school district's highest mandatory expenses. In total, school districts spent 5.0% of their budgets to transport students to and from school or to and from other academic and extracurricular events.

Rural school districts, with their greater square mileage to cover and greater distribution of students, have the highest portion of budgets dedicated to transportation.[31]

5.9% Rural   **4.2%** Urban   **5.0%** Suburban
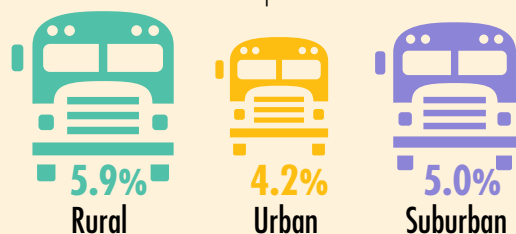
Students per square mile[32]

Rural	Urban	Suburban	All School Districts
12.5 (35,462 mi²)	414.5 (1,010 mi²)	97.3 (8,833 mi²)	38.0 (45,306 mi²)

Fund balances

A school district's reserve funds, or fund balance, can be crucial to helping school districts pay for emergency repairs, keep taxes down or keep school doors open in the event state funding stops. A school district's unassigned fund balance is money held in reserve which can be used for any reason as opposed to committed or assigned fund balances where funds are held and intended for specific purposes.

What is the average unassigned fund balance for school districts (as a percentage of total expenditures)?[33]

6.3% All School Districts   **9.2%** Rural   **3.6%** Urban   **6.1%** Suburban
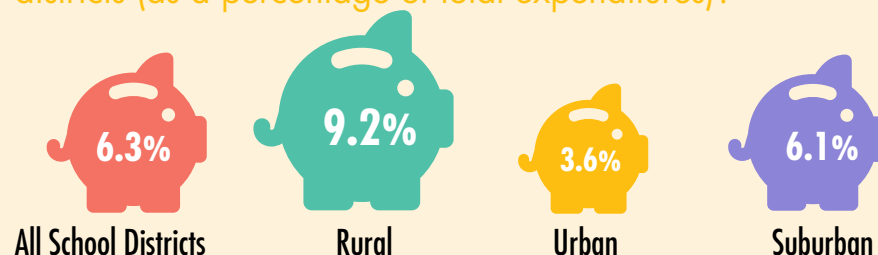
How many school districts have $0 or a negative unassigned fund balance?

35 All School Districts   **12** Rural   **6** Urban   **17** Suburban
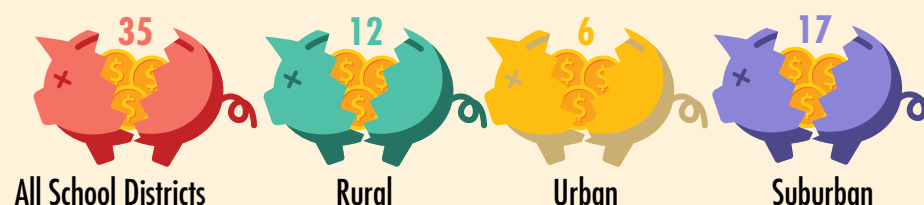
> "The pension crisis truly needs to be addressed. We are diverting over $2,000,000 away from our students due to pensions." - Survey Respondent

Spotlight on poverty – Part 2

Like the differences between the highest and lowest poverty school districts in standardized test scores, there are also significant differences in revenue and expenditures per student between the lowest and highest poverty school districts. The school districts in the lowest poverty quartile are able to generate, and thus spend significantly more per student than the districts in the highest poverty quartile.
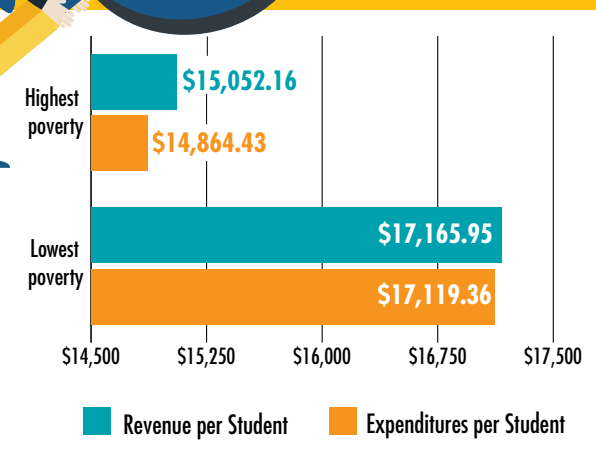
National perspective – how Pennsylvania stacks up to the rest of the country

Pennsylvania is ranked in the top 5 nationally for reliance on local revenue to fund education whether looking at 2014 financial data from the U.S. Census Bureau or the National Center for Educational Statistics.[34]
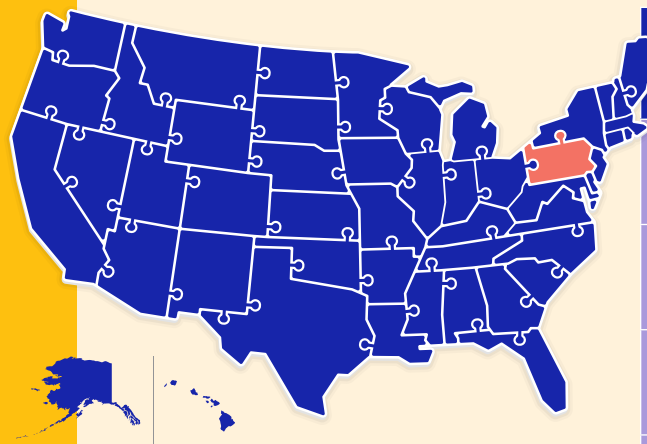
REVENUE	PA National Rank
State share of revenue - NCES	44th
Local share of revenue - NCES	5th
State share of revenue - Census	46th
Local share of revenue - Census	4th

Pennsylvania is ranked either 11th or 12th nationally when looking at current expenditures per student.[35]

EXPENDITURES	PA National Rank
PA Rank - NCES	11th
PA Rank - Census	12th

Chart

Highest poverty
- $15,052.16 (Revenue per Student)
- $14,864.43 (Expenditures per Student)

Lowest poverty
- $17,165.95 (Revenue per Student)
- $17,119.36 (Expenditures per Student)

Axis: $14,500 | $15,250 | $16,000 | $16,750 | $17,500

Legend:
- Revenue per Student
- Expenditures per Student

Find further information at **www.psba.org**

State and Local Shares of Revenue

	State-NCES	Local-NCES	State-Census	Local-Census
US	36.9%	56.2%	37.2%	56.3%
PA	46.2%	45.0%	46.7%	44.7%

Legend: ■ PA ■ US

Current Expenditures per Student

	NCES	Census
PA	$13,824	$13,961
US	$11,066	$11,009

Legend: ■ PA ■ US
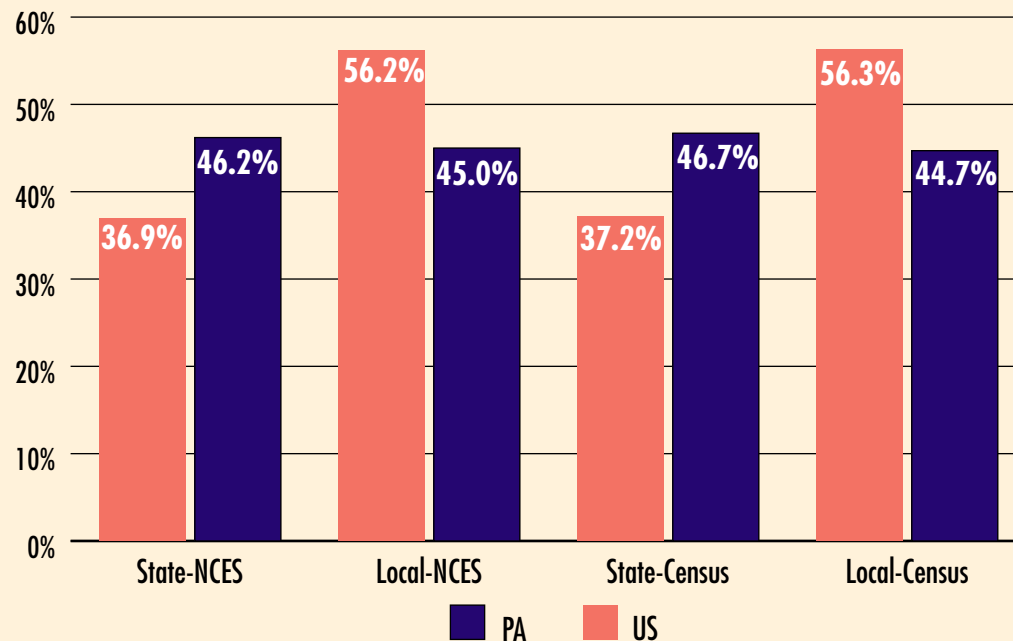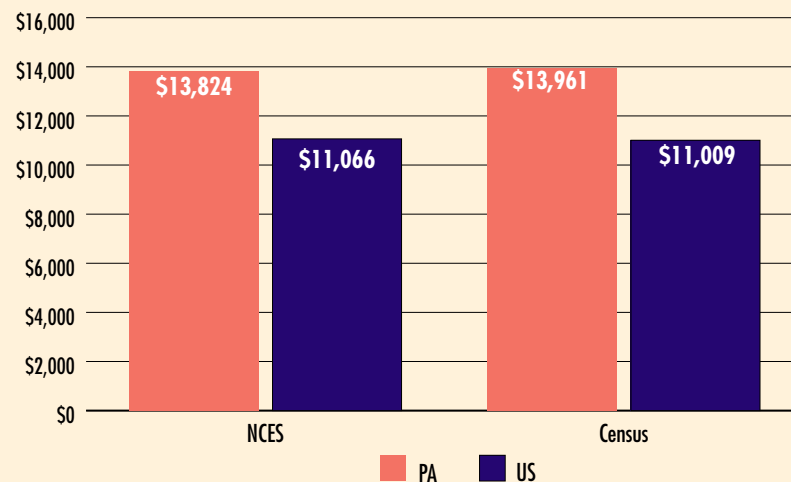
"We need more financial support to keep up with the changing times. I feel our district does a great job preparing our students. The state has to address the pension crisis and the cyber school problem. If these two areas were addressed, it would be easier, as a district, to find additional monies that would be placed towards enhancing education opportunities."

- Survey Respondent

Staffing and Recruitment

Finding and keeping classrooms filled with quality teachers is one of the biggest priorities and challenges for public schools.

When asked about the biggest recruiting challenges over the next two years, chief school administrators reported being most concerned with finding both substitute and full-time classroom teachers, but there were also several other areas of concern reported across the state and within each category of school entity. Finding quality applicants with the needed certifications were the top reported challenges to recruiting teachers.

Which of the following roles are you concerned about recruiting over the next 12-24 months?

	All SDs	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs	IUs
Substitute teachers	70.1%	68.8%	66.7%	72.6%	66.7%	35.0%
Classroom teachers	41.8%	40.6%	50.0%	42.1%	53.3%	55.0%
School nurses	26.7%	26.1%	33.3%	26.3%	11.1%	20.0%
Instructional aides	23.9%	25.4%	22.2%	22.1%	33.3%	60.0%
Administrative positions	21.9%	14.5%	33.3%	30.5%	13.3%	75.0%
Building principals	21.1%	20.3%	33.3%	20.0%	6.7%	45.0%
Support staff (secretarial, maintenance, cafeteria, etc)	20.7%	21.7%	11.1%	21.1%	20.0%	20.0%
Other	12.4%	10.1%	27.8%	12.6%	4.4%	50.0%
Supervisory positions	6.0%	3.6%	11.1%	8.4%	2.2%	60.0%
N/A - recruiting is not an issue	7.6%	8.0%	0.0%	8.4%	8.9%	0.0%
Counselors	5.6%	5.8%	5.6%	5.3%	0.0%	15.0%
Physical/Occupational Therapists (IUs Only)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	50.0%

What is the biggest challenge when recruiting teachers?

	All SDs	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs	IUs
Quality of applicants	30.4%	26.3%	27.8%	36.8%	23.3%	0.0%
Finding applicants with appropriate certification	20.8%	19.0%	22.2%	23.2%	20.9%	35.0%
Fewer applicants	20.4%	23.4%	33.3%	13.7%	18.6%	30.0%
School budget for salaries	10.8%	12.4%	0.0%	10.5%	25.6%	15.0%
N/A – recruiting is not an issue	9.6%	10.2%	11.1%	8.4%	4.7%	5.0%
School location	3.2%	5.1%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	10.0%
Instructional subject area	2.0%	1.5%	0.0%	3.2%	2.3%	0.0%
Other	2.0%	2.2%	0.0%	2.1%	4.7%	5.0%
School reputation	0.8%	0.0%	5.6%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%

"With the drop in teacher certifications over the last two years in Pennsylvania, there is an overall concern with the future pool of teaching candidates. - Survey respondent

When asked which areas of certification have been most difficult to hire, chief school administrators responded that science, math, special education and various areas of vocational certification were the most difficult to find/hire.

	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban
Science	51.2%	45.3%	61.1%	57.9%
Special education	44.0%	43.9%	38.9%	45.3%
Math	32.9%	27.3%	50.0%	37.9%
World languages	32.1%	31.7%	22.2%	34.7%
Technology	10.3%	7.9%	5.6%	14.7%
Vocational	9.1%	12.9%	16.7%	2.1%
Other	7.5%	11.5%	0.0%	3.2%
N/A – recruiting is not an issue	7.1%	7.2%	11.1%	6.3%
English as a Second Language (ESL)	6.0%	7.2%	5.6%	4.2%
Grades 4-8	5.2%	5.0%	5.6%	5.3%
Grades 7-12	4.8%	5.8%	5.6%	3.2%
English	2.0%	1.4%	5.6%	2.1%
Health/Physical education	0.4%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%

	CTCs
Technology/Computer science	20.0%
Other[36]	17.8%
HVAC	15.6%
N/A –recruiting is not an issue	15.6%
Automotive	13.3%
Welding	13.3%
Medical/Dental assistant	11.1%
Engineering	11.1%
Other Health-Related Areas	8.9%
Security/Law enforcement	8.9%
Carpentry	6.7%
Electrical	4.4%
Cosmetology	4.4%
Masonry	4.4%
Agriculture/Horticulture	4.4%
Plumbing	4.4%
Culinary/Food science	2.2%

	IUs
Special education – speech/language impaired	65.0%
Special education – visually impaired	45.0%
Special education – hearing impaired	35.0%
Autism spectrum disorders	25.0%
English as a Second Language (ESL)	15.0%
Science	10.0%
Vocational	10.0%
Other	10.0%
Math	5.0%
Technology	5.0%
N/A – recruiting is not an issue	5.0%

Number of teachers and administrators

Pennsylvania's public schools employed roughly 118,300 full-time classroom teachers and another 7,100 administrators in 2015-16.[37]

Number of classroom teachers

SDs – 105,053
CTCs – 1,998
IUs – 3,819
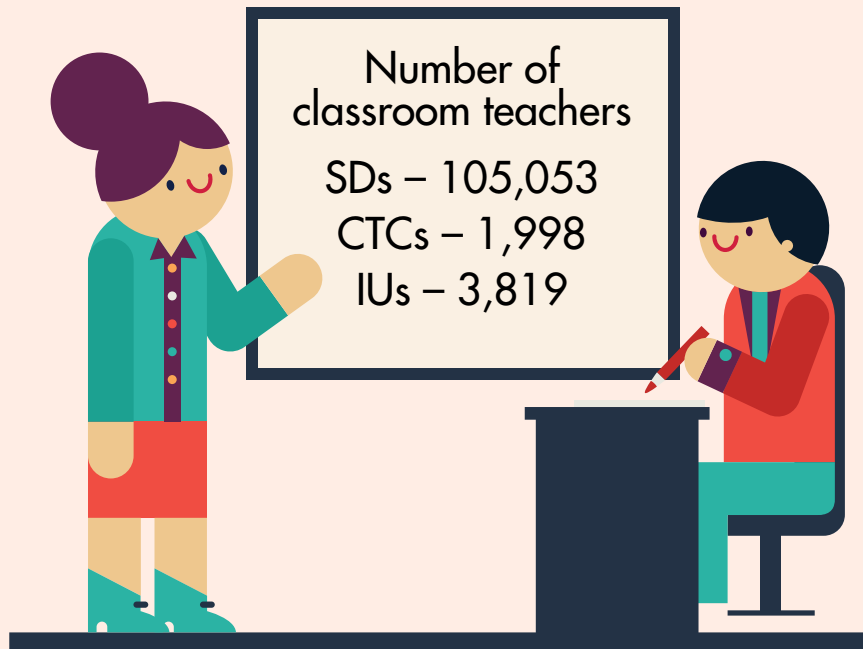
> " Too much time is taken from the students to complete the Act 82 survey (about eight hours for the principal and teacher per Act 82 form). As superintendent, I want my professionals with students, not pushing paper."
>
> - Survey Respondent

Student-teacher ratio[38]

State SDs **15** **16** All U.S. public schools[39]

CTCs **23**

Rural **14** **15** Suburban

17 Urban

Number of administrators

SDs – 5,926
CTCs – 200
IUs – 332

Administrator-student ratios

State SDs	Rural	Suburban	Urban	CTCs
267	**239**	**265**	**319**	**236**
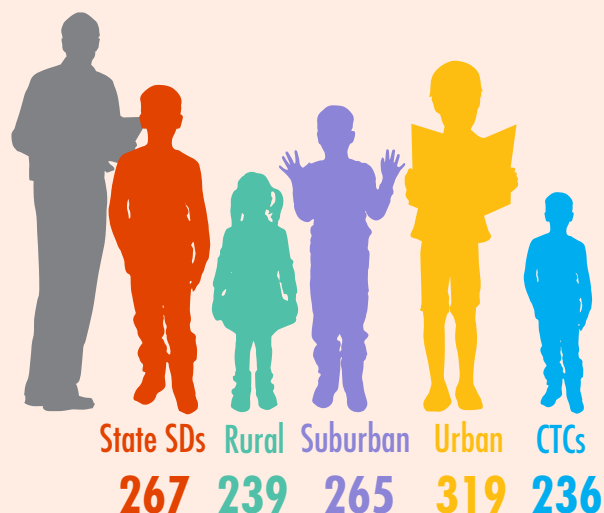
Substitutes

Substitute teachers help mitigate the disruptive impact on student learning caused by the absence of their regular teacher. When substitute teachers cannot be found, a principal may fill in or students in one classroom could be spread across other classes in the same grade for the day which may impact learning for all students in the grade.

Average Substitute Fill Rates

All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTC	IUs
81.5%	81.8%	74.4%	82.3%	77.1%	75.7%

With substitute teachers being one of the most difficult jobs to fill across the state, some school districts have turned to independent contractors to provide daily substitute teacher services.

Does Your School Entity Contract for Substitute Teacher Services?

	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTC	IUs
Yes	46.0%	36.2%	77.8%	54.3%	9.1%	57.9%
No	54.0%	63.8%	22.2%	45.7%	90.9%	42.1%

Staffing as an expense

School districts and career and technical centers spent nearly $11.3 billion on salaries and another $6.1 billion on employee benefits in 2014-15 which is up from $11.2 billion and $5.5 billion in 2013-14. Salaries and benefits represented 62.0% of all school district expenditures and 69.2% of all CTC expenditures in 2014-15.[40] This is money well spent because education is a human resource-focused industry and having experienced, dedicated staff is vital to student achievement.

62.7% **Rural**
52.0% **Urban**
65.9% **Suburban**
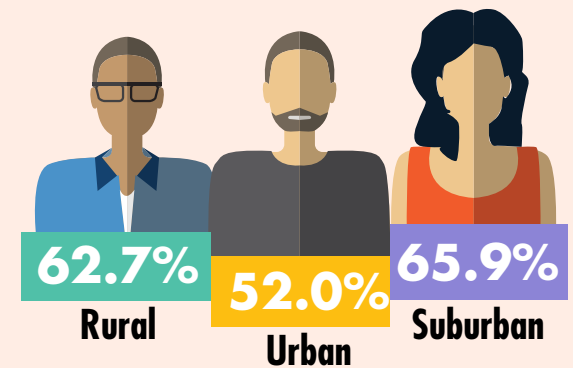
> "70% economically disadvantaged students mean that 7 out of 10 encounter significant learning/social emotional challenges upon entry into school. Substantial supports are required to provide sufficient academic and social growth opportunities. Supports in a people business mean people. Certified professionals other than classroom teachers — specialists, speech, special education, social work, behavior. Having these supports render promising results with most students. Sustaining those supports is an annual challenge for the district." - Survey Respondent

Average salaries for classroom teachers[41]

$66,124 — All School Districts
$59,740 — Rural
$65,676 — Urban
$69,673 — Suburban
$63,010 — CTCs
$60,134 — IUs
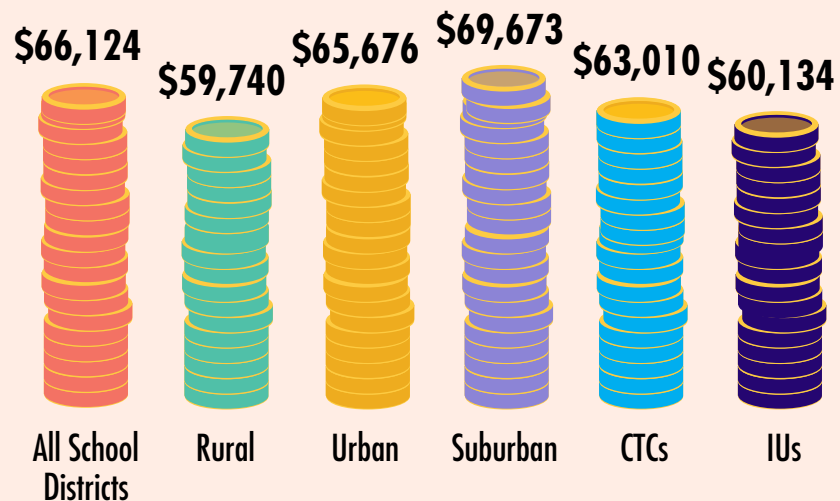
Average years of experience in education for classroom teachers

All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs	IUs
13.8	14.1	13.1	13.8	12.7	12.7
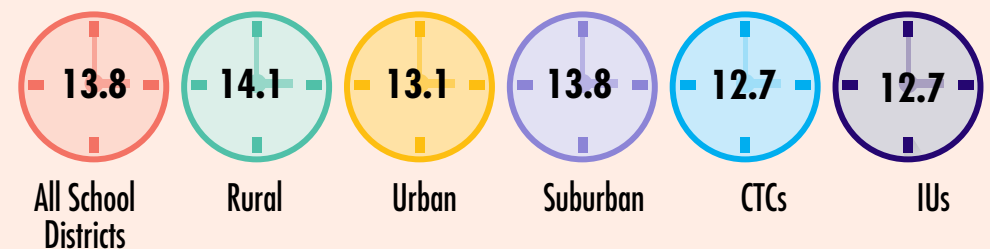
Class Sizes

Small class sizes have a direct impact on student achievement, but keeping class sizes down despite all of the budgetary and recruitment challenges schools are facing has been difficult.

Small class size is an educational strategy shown to increase learning for all students. But, with the increasing budget pressures and shortage of qualified teachers schools are facing, increasing class size is a strategy some schools have been forced into.

What is the average class size in your school district?

All School Districts

22.2	**23.7**	**22.7**
Elementary	Middle	High

Urban

25.3	**25.1**	**23.4**
Elementary	Middle	High

Rural

21.3	**22.9**	**22.0**
Elementary	Middle	High

Suburban

22.9	**24.5**	**23.6**
Elementary	Middle	High

The most common reasons cited by chief school administrators for increases in class size were budget issues and teaching vacancies that have not been filled.

If class sizes have been increasing in your schools, what are the reasons for the increase?

	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs
Budget issues	51.5%	53.0%	66.7%	47.1%	7.0%
N/A - Class sizes have not increased	33.6%	34.8%	22.2%	32.2%	39.5%
Teaching vacancies that have not been filled	23.2%	27.3%	27.8%	16.1%	0.0%
Increased enrollment	15.8%	9.1%	33.3%	23.0%	44.2%
Reduction in number of course offerings	14.5%	17.4%	27.8%	8.0%	9.3%
School consolidation	6.6%	7.6%	16.7%	3.4%	2.3%
Other	4.1%	2.3%	11.1%	5.7%	11.6%

While some school districts have their own career and technical centers or provide their own career and technical curriculum within their schools, most school districts participate in a regional career and technical center or area vocational technical school. The number of students a school district can send to the regional career and technical center or area vocational technical school can often be determined by the Articles of Agreement between the participating school districts.

Does your school's Articles of Agreement specify the number of seats/spots available to each participating school district?

9.1%
43.2%
47.7%

- Yes
- No
- N/A - We do not have Articles of Agreement/All of our students come from one school district
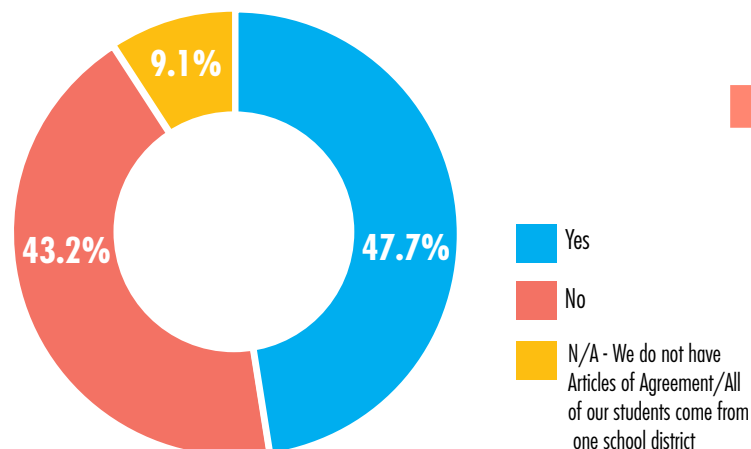
How are seats/spots allocated among participating school districts?

4.8%
9.5%
85.7%

- Evenly among the participating school districts
- Based on school district enrollment
- Other
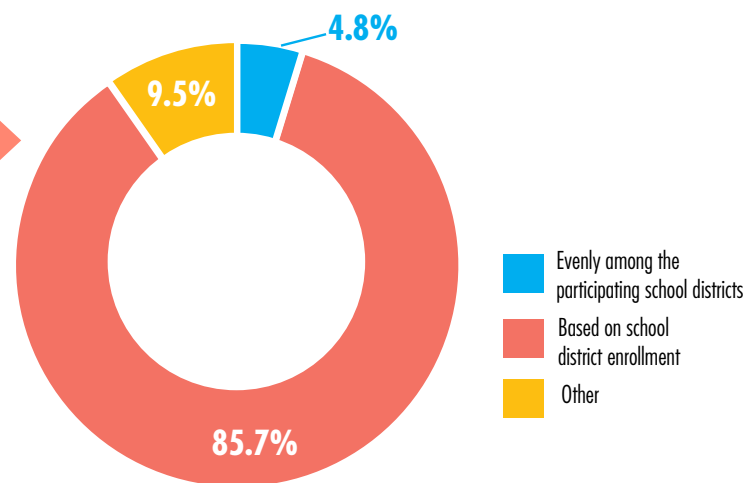
How many of the seats/spots available in career and technical centers are being utilized?

82.2%
Average
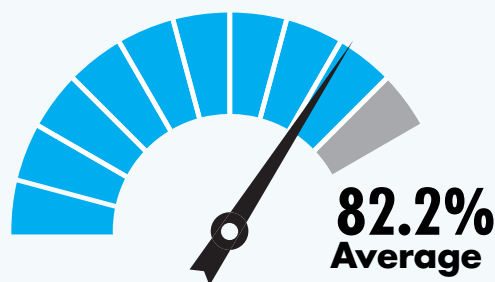
Average class size for career and technical centers

21 Students

School Buildings

School buildings are where most instruction takes place. School buildings can also be a source of community pride, a place for community events and one of the biggest expenses for the school community. As school buildings get older and need renovation or replacement however, chief school administrators have to deal with the monumental challenge of a school construction project.

Rural school districts reported having fewer school buildings per district despite covering a greater geographic area, indicating that they transport students to central locations which leads to higher transportation costs. Urban and suburban districts tend to have more school buildings per district, indicating that construction and renovation projects are dealt with more frequently. However, in all areas of the state chief school administrators reported that around 3 in 10 school buildings are in need of major renovations or replacement.

	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs
Average # of school buildings	4.6	3.5	8.8	5.8	2.0
Average % of school buildings in need of replacement or major renovation	32.8%	30.2%	34.6%	36.5%	40.6%

With all of the school buildings reportedly in need replacement or major renovation, it comes as no surprise that many chief school administrators also reported that they expect to construct a new school facility or undergo a major renovation within the next five years.

All School Districts

14.7%
41.6%
45.9%
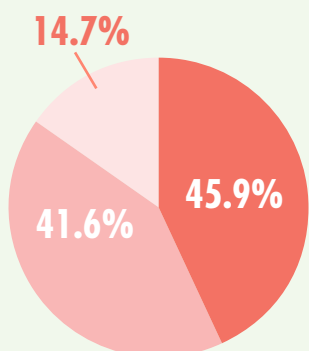
- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Rural

16.9%
50.8%
36.2%
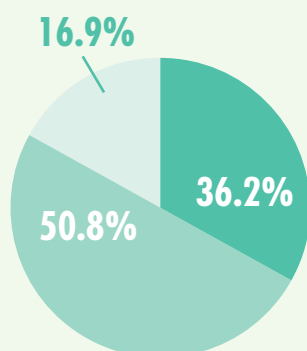
- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Urban

12.5%
37.5%
50.0%
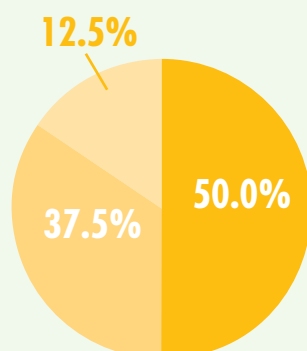
- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Suburban

11.8%
28.2%
60.0%
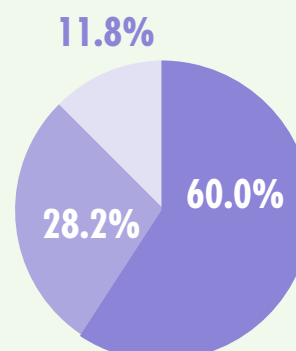
- Yes
- No
- Not sure

CTCs

6.8%
61.4%
31.8%
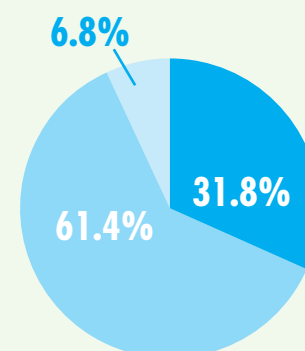
- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Aging school buildings can present a number of problems that can not only impact a school district's budget, but also student learning. Structural, mechanical, electrical and HVAC issues can be costly to repair while inadequate space can increase class sizes and outdated classrooms limit the innovative teaching methods that can be used to improve student achievement.

What is the biggest problem with school buildings?

	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs	IUs
Mechanical/ Electrical /HVAC issues	43.0%	46.4%	37.5%	38.8%	30.0%	30.0%
Other	20.4%	25.6%	18.8%	12.5%	17.5%	20.0%
Not suited to modern teaching/ technology	14.9%	12.0%	12.5%	20.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Structural issues	11.3%	10.4%	12.5%	12.5%	5.0%	10.0%
Inadequate space	10.4%	5.6%	18.8%	16.3%	37.5%	20.0%

With school construction and renovation projects easily among a school district's most expensive undertakings and the current budgetary challenges facing schools, financial considerations are by far the top obstacle to construction and renovation projects.

What is the biggest obstacle to school construction and renovation projects?

	All School Districts	Rural	Urban	Suburban	CTCs	IUs
Financial considerations	83.6%	83.1%	81.3%	85.0%	64.3%	65.0%
None	5.3%	6.9%	6.3%	2.5%	16.7%	10.0%
Support in the community for the project	4.0%	3.1%	6.3%	5.0%	11.9%	0.0%
Other	3.5%	14.4%	0.0%	2.5%	7.1%	0.0%
PlanCon	2.2%	2.3%	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Time needed for completion	1.3%	0.0%	6.3%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Support among participating school districts for the project	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	25.0%

Public Perception

Public attitudes on public education provide essential insight into how Pennsylvania public schools are doing for chief school administrators, educators, policymakers and school communities.[42]

Quality of education

Q: How would you rate the quality of education provided by each of the following? (% rated excellent or good)

A: Only 46% of Pennsylvanians rated the state's public schools as either excellent or good. That number jumps to 57% when asked about the public schools in their community. Parents had higher opinions of public schools than non-parents as well. Parents even rated the public schools in their community higher than the private or parochial schools in their community.

School type	Total	Parents	Non-Parents
Public schools throughout the US	38%	44%	36%
Public schools in PA	46%	55%	43%
Public schools in your community	57%	68%	53%
Public charter schools in your community (if any)	33%	38%	31%
Private schools in your community	60%	64%	58%
Parochial schools in your community	50%	48%	50%
Online cyber schools	24%	28%	22%

Legend: Total, Parents, Non-Parents
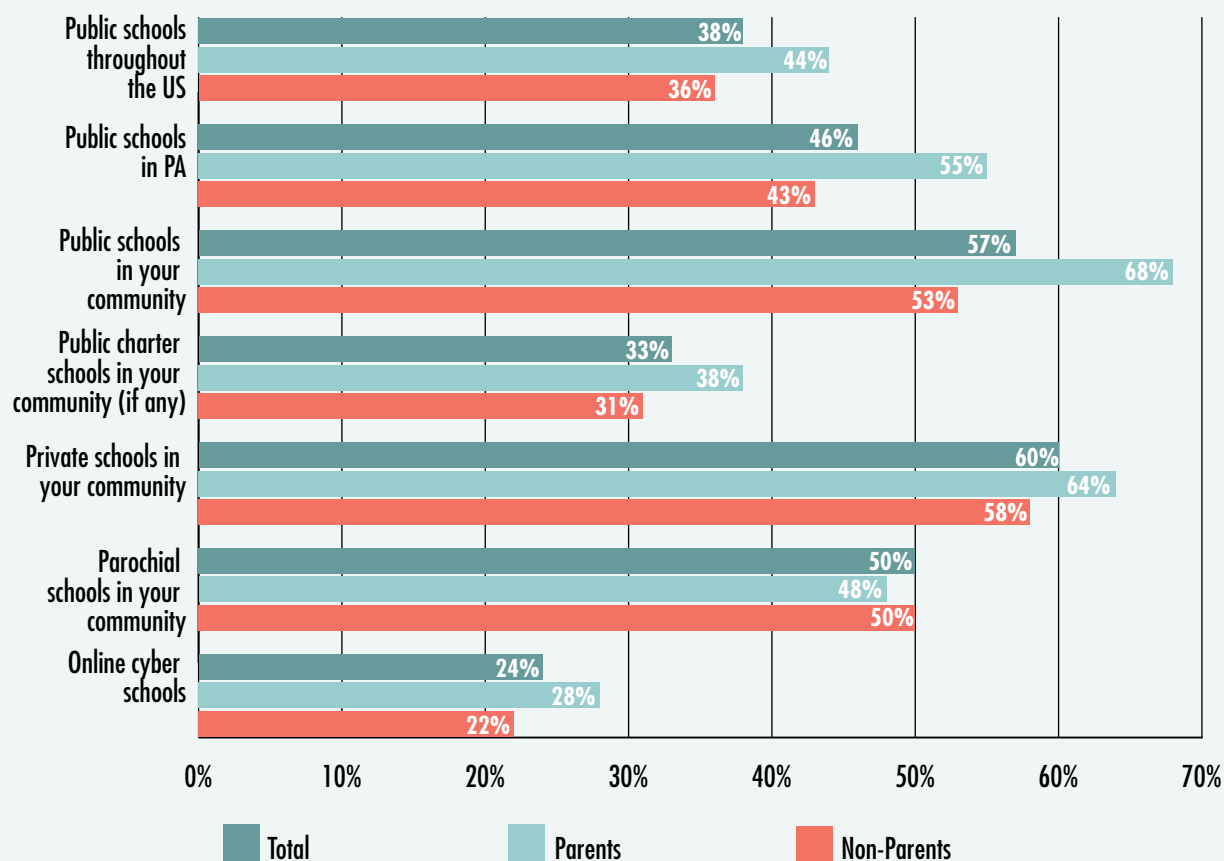
Top 5
important issues to Pennsylvanians

1. Growing the economy and creating jobs – 60%

2. **Improving the quality of public education – 42%**

3. Keeping taxes as low as possible – 41%

4. Reducing crime – 38%

5. Protecting the environment – 17%

Q: From what you know about public schools throughout the United States, how do you think the public schools in Pennsylvania compare to schools nationally?

A: Nearly 30% of respondents view Pennsylvania's public schools as better than public schools in the country while only 18% view Pennsylvania's public schools as worse.

Pie chart:
- PA schools are much better: 4%
- PA schools are somewhat better: 25%
- PA schools are about average: 43%
- PA schools are somewhat worse: 14%
- PA schools are much worse: 4%
- Not sure: 10%
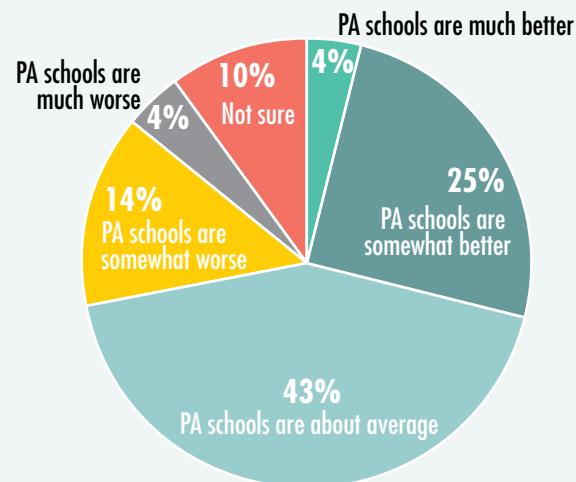
Value for taxes paid

Q: Thinking about the taxes you pay to support the public school system in your community, how would you rate the value you receive for the taxes paid?

A: Much like the opinions on the quality of public education, over half of the parents surveyed rated the value of the taxes paid to support their local public schools as either excellent or good. That number dropped to 37% when asked to non-parents.

Bar chart — Value for taxes paid:

	Total	Parents	Non-Parents
Excellent value	7%	13%	5%
Good value	34%	40%	32%
Not so good value	31%	26%	33%
Poor value	20%	18%	21%
Not sure	8%	3%	9%

Endnotes
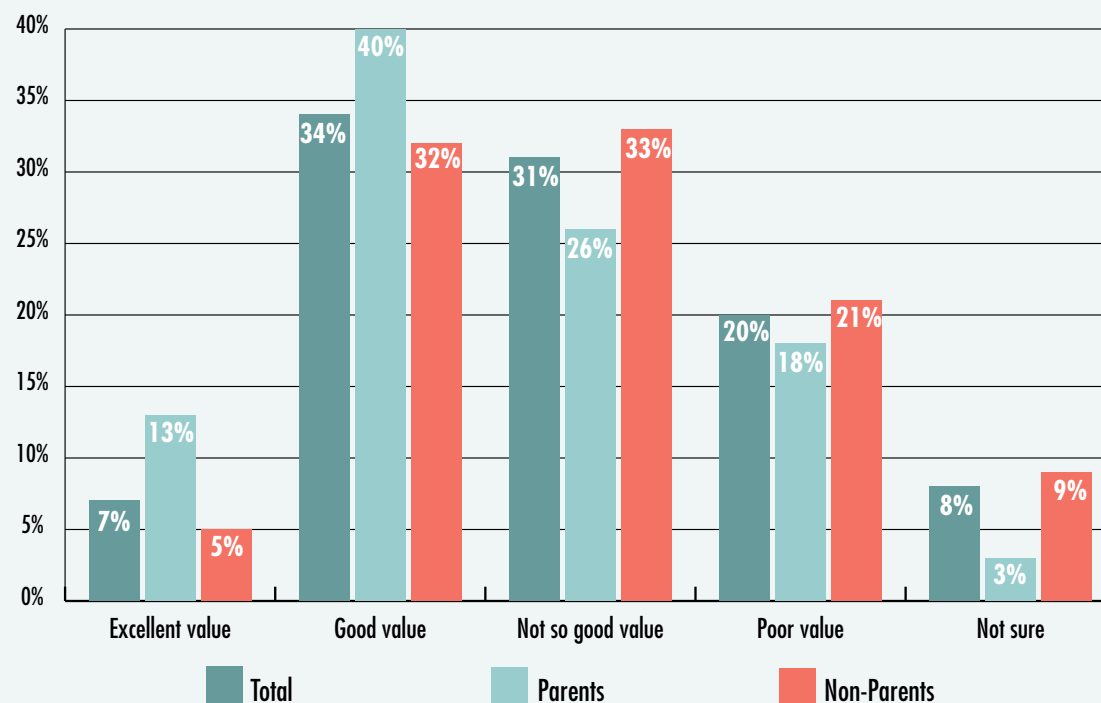
1. Survey invitations were emailed on December 6, 2016, to 584 chief school administrators and when the survey was closed on January 11, 2016, 321 responses were received for a total response rate of 55%. Response rates within each community type/classification are as follows: intermediate units – 21 of 28 (75.0%); career and technical centers – 45 of 62 (72.6%); school districts – 255 of 494 (51.6%); rural – 140 of 243 (57.6%); urban – 18 of 28 (64.3%); suburban – 97 of 223 (43.5%).

2. Enrollments based on Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Oct 1, 2015 enrollment snapshot by LEA unless otherwise noted. There may be some overlap between school districts, career and technical centers and intermediate units. Intermediate unit enrollment does not include Philadelphia (IU 26) and Pittsburgh (IU 2) because enrollments in those intermediate units is included with the home school districts. Career and technical center enrollment does not include students enrolled in a career and technical program provided by their home school district due to unavailability of the data. PDE enrollment snapshots available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/Enrollment%20Reports%20and%20Projections.aspx.

3. For this section, growth is measured by increases in the number of students enrolled in district schools as reported in the annual PDE Oct 1 enrollment snapshot and not by Average Daily Membership (ADM).

4. Complete and accurate student demographic data was not available for intermediate units in PDE data. Gender breakdown for each school district community type not shown because the results were not significantly different than the state average for all school districts.

5. Trend data for PSSA exams will not be shown in this year's report due to changes in the PSSA made in 2015 as a result of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education's adoption of the Pennsylvania Common Core Standards and subsequent changes made to the PSSA tests and cut scores.

6. Scores shown are for all students except for students with IEPs and ELLs. 2016 PSSA School Level English Language Arts, Math, and Science Proficiency Results by Grade Level and School Total. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/PSSA/Pages/default.aspx

7. Scores shown are for all students except for students with IEPs and ELLs. 2016 PSSA School Level English Language Arts, Math, and Science Proficiency Results by Grade Level and School Total. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/PSSA/Pages/default.aspx

8. Scores shown are for all students. 2016 Keystone Exams - Best Score Results grade 11. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/Keystone-Exams-Results.aspx

9. 2015-16 LEP Student Counts by LEA by School. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/English-as-a-Second-Language.aspx. National ELL data is available: https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgf.asp.

10. 2014-15 4 year cohort graduation rates and 5 year cohort graduation rates. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/Cohort-Graduation-Rate-.aspx.

11. 2014-15 graduates by public school. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/Graduates.aspx.

12. 4.3% of students from rural school districts were enrolled in a partnering CTC while 2.8% of urban and 2.7% of suburban students were enrolled in a partnering CTC.

13. The dropout rate for urban school districts was 3.8% as compared to 0.9% for rural school districts and 0.7% for suburban. The overall dropout rate for all PA school districts was 1.3%. Dropouts by Public School 2014-15. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/Dropouts.aspx.

14. To establish poverty quartiles, school districts were ranked and then divided into 4 equal groups based on the percent of children ages 6-17 living in acute poverty as used in the 2016-17 Basic Education Funding Formula.

[15] Acute poverty percentages based on American Community Survey 5 year estimates from the US Census Bureau Ratio of Income to Poverty by Age Group. Available: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml.

[16] National Assessment of Educational Progress State Profiles for Pennsylvania. Available: https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/.

[17] NCES Common Core of Data - Public high school 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR). Available: https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR_RE_and_characteristics_2014-15.asp. Recent high school completers and their enrollment in 2-year and 4-year colleges. Available: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/tables/dt16_302.10.asp?current=yes.

[18] There was no significant difference between rural, urban and suburban special education rates. For all but special education expenditures, 2014-15 Special Education Statistical Summary. Available: https://penndata.hbg.psu.edu/PublicReporting/StatisticalSummary/tabid/2546/Default.aspx. For special education expenditures, A Report of Expenditures Relating to Exceptional Pennsylvania Students February 2016. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Special%20Education/Pages/Act-16—Reporting-of-Expenditures-Relating-to-Exceptional-Students.aspx.

[19] Safe School Historical Comparison Report for 2015-16. Available: https://www.safeschools.state.pa.us/.

[20] Percentage of students competent or advanced derived from School Performance Profile data.

[21] National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) 2016 Pennsylvania State Averages. Available: http://www.nocti.org/State-Customized-PA.cfm. NOCTI exams also include a written component. Written component scores are generally lower than scores on the performance component of the NOCTI.

[22] 2014-15 Annual Financial Reports for revenues. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Teachers%20-%20Administrators/School%20Finances/Finances/AFR%20Data%20Summary/Pages/AFR-Data-Detailed-.aspx.

[23] Student counts for revenue per student are based on ADM to match more closely the data released by PDE.

[24] Local revenues - current and interim property taxes (revenue codes 6111 and 6112). Property taxes also represent 77.3% of all local revenue.

[25] 2014-15 Current and Interim Real Estate Taxes divided by 2014 Adjusted Personal Income. Average adjusted personal incomes per household - rural $53,550, urban $43,714, suburban $84,046.

[26] 2014-15 Annual Financial Reports for expenditures by function. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Teachers%20-%20Administrators/School%20Finances/Finances/AFR%20Data%20Summary/Pages/AFR-Data-Detailed-.aspx.

[27] Student counts for expenditures per student are based on ADM to match more closely the data released by PDE.

[28] PSERS employer contribution rate for 2017-18 and selected prior years. Available: http://www.psers.pa.gov/About/PFR/Pages/default.aspx.

[29] Retirement contributions (object code 230) divided by total expenditures.

[30] Tuition to Pennsylvania Charter Schools (object code 562) divided by total expenditures.

[31] Transportation services (function code 2700) divided by total expenditures.

[32] Values taken from 2016-17 Basic Education Funding formula – Sparsity-size ratio calculations.

[33] 2014-15 Annual Financial Reports for general fund balance. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Teachers%20-%20Administrators/School%20Finances/Finances/AFR%20Data%20Summary/Pages/AFR-Data-Detailed-.aspx.

[34] Rankings do not include Washington, D.C. due to a lack of a state source of funding. US Census Bureau - Public Education Finances: 2014. Report number G14-ASPEF, Table 5. Available: http://www.census.gov/govs/school/. National Center for Education Statistics Digest of Educational Statistics Revenues for Public Elementary and Secondary Schools by Source of Funds and State: Table 235.20. Available: https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d14/tables/dt14_235.20.asp.

[35] Rankings do not include Washington, D.C. to ensure consistency in rankings. US Census Bureau - Public Education Finances: 2014. Report number G14-ASPEF, Table 11. Available: http://www.census.gov/govs/school/. National Center for Education Statistics - Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2013–14 (Fiscal Year 2014).

Report number NCES 2016-301, Table 5. Available: https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2016301. Current expenditures include instruction, instruction-related, support services, and other elementary/secondary current expenditures, but exclude expenditures on capital outlay, other programs, and interest on long-term debt.

[36] Responses in the "other" category included machining, business accounting, drafting, diesel technology and advertising arts.

[37] 2015-16 Professional Staff Summary Report – state averages. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/Professional-and-Support-Personnel.aspx

[38] Student counts for teacher/administrator to student ratios are based on PDE Oct 1, 2015 enrollment snapshot by LEA.

[39] National teacher student ratio - National Center for Education Statistics - Public and private elementary and secondary teachers, enrollment, pupil/teacher ratios, and new teacher hires. Table 208.20. Available: https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_208.20.asp

[40] 2014-15 Annual Financial Reports for expenditures by object level (objects 100 and 200); both as amounts and divided by total expenditures.

[41] Calculated from 2015-16 Professional Personnel Individual Staff Report. Available: http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/Professional-and-Support-Personnel.aspx

[42] The information in this section is based entirely on the results of an online survey of Pennsylvania residents asking for opinions on public education. The survey was designed and conducted by the Prime Group, LLC of Washington, D.C., in consultation with PSBA. The survey was conducted online using a double opt-in, volunteer research panel with a census-representative sample of 1,023 Pennsylvanians.

Urban

Includes both large and small urban areas. In this group there is typically no space for new construction except through urban renewal-type programs. The State Department of Labor and Industry has defined the area as the center of *a labor market area*. It serves as the economic center of an area or region which is characterized by commercial, industrial employment, a retail/wholesale trade center or medical service center. Population density would generally be high and would include municipalities classed as cities. These areas may also be characterized by disproportionate numbers of poor, elderly and minorities. Urban areas are generally noted for a high percentage of tax exempt properties.

Urban
28 SDs

School District	County
Duquesne City SD	Allegheny
McKeesport Area SD	Allegheny
Pittsburgh SD	Allegheny
Wilkinsburg Borough SD	Allegheny
Reading SD	Berks
Altoona Area SD	Blair
Butler Area SD	Butler
Greater Johnstown SD	Cambria
Carlisle Area SD	Cumberland
Harrisburg City SD	Dauphin
Chester-Upland SD	Delaware
William Penn SD	Delaware
Erie City SD	Erie
Scranton SD	Lackawanna
Lancaster SD	Lancaster
New Castle Area SD	Lawrence
Lebanon SD	Lebanon
Allentown City SD	Lehigh

School District	County
Wilkes-Barre Area SD	Luzerne
Williamsport Area SD	Lycoming
Sharon City SD	Mercer
Norristown Area SD	Montgomery
Bethlehem Area SD	Northampton
Easton Area SD	Northampton
Philadelphia City SD	Philadelphia
Pottsville Area SD	Schuylkill
Washington SD	Washington
York City SD	York

Appendix A
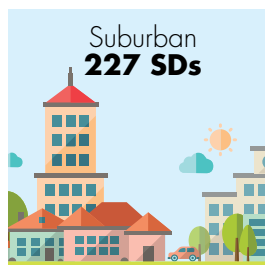
Suburban

Suburban
227 SDs

Includes both large and small areas. Generally includes boroughs, townships and cities surrounding the core economic entity. This group would generally be part of *a labor market area* as defined by the State Department of Labor and Industry. This group may have room for new construction of housing or business activity. There may be a core business area or shopping mall, but is primarily residential in nature. Residents of this type of area generally commute to another area for employment. This area may have some tax exempt properties, but the amount of exempt property is a small percentage of the total tax base.

School District	County	School District	County	School District	County
Allegheny Valley SD	Allegheny	Penn Hills SD	Allegheny	Hopewell Area SD	Beaver
Avonworth SD	Allegheny	Pine-Richland SD	Allegheny	Midland Borough SD	Beaver
Baldwin-Whitehall SD	Allegheny	Plum Borough SD	Allegheny	New Brighton Area SD	Beaver
Bethel Park SD	Allegheny	Quaker Valley SD	Allegheny	Riverside Beaver County SD	Beaver
Brentwood Borough SD	Allegheny	Riverview SD	Allegheny	Rochester Area SD	Beaver
Carlynton SD	Allegheny	Shaler Area SD	Allegheny	Antietam SD	Berks
Chartiers Valley SD	Allegheny	South Allegheny SD	Allegheny	Boyertown Area SD	Berks
Clairton City SD	Allegheny	South Fayette Twp SD	Allegheny	Conrad Weiser Area SD	Berks
Cornell SD	Allegheny	South Park SD	Allegheny	Daniel Boone Area SD	Berks
Deer Lakes SD	Allegheny	Steel Valley SD	Allegheny	Exeter Twp SD	Berks
East Allegheny SD	Allegheny	Sto-Rox SD	Allegheny	Fleetwood Area SD	Berks
Elizabeth Forward SD	Allegheny	Upper Saint Clair SD	Allegheny	Governor Mifflin SD	Berks
Fox Chapel Area SD	Allegheny	West Allegheny SD	Allegheny	Kutztown Area SD	Berks
Gateway SD	Allegheny	West Jefferson Hills SD	Allegheny	Muhlenberg SD	Berks
Hampton Twp SD	Allegheny	West Mifflin Area SD	Allegheny	Wilson SD	Berks
Highlands SD	Allegheny	Woodland Hills SD	Allegheny	Wyomissing Area SD	Berks
Keystone Oaks SD	Allegheny	Leechburg Area SD	Armstrong	Hollidaysburg Area SD	Blair
Montour SD	Allegheny	Aliquippa SD	Beaver	Bensalem Twp SD	Bucks
Moon Area SD	Allegheny	Ambridge Area SD	Beaver	Bristol Borough SD	Bucks
Mt Lebanon SD	Allegheny	Beaver Area SD	Beaver	Bristol Twp SD	Bucks
North Allegheny SD	Allegheny	Big Beaver Falls Area SD	Beaver	Centennial SD	Bucks
North Hills SD	Allegheny	Central Valley SD	Beaver	Central Bucks SD	Bucks
Northgate SD	Allegheny	Freedom Area SD	Beaver	Council Rock SD	Bucks

Suburban
227 SDs
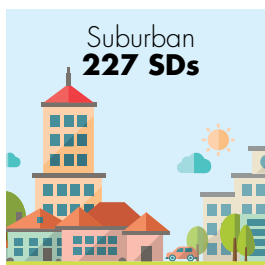
School District	County
Morrisville Borough SD	Bucks
Neshaminy SD	Bucks
New Hope-Solebury SD	Bucks
Pennridge SD	Bucks
Pennsbury SD	Bucks
Quakertown Community SD	Bucks
Mars Area SD	Butler
Seneca Valley SD	Butler
Central Cambria SD	Cambria
Ferndale Area SD	Cambria
Richland SD	Cambria
Westmont Hilltop SD	Cambria
State College Area SD	Centre
Avon Grove SD	Chester
Coatesville Area SD	Chester
Downingtown Area SD	Chester
Great Valley SD	Chester
Kennett Consolidated SD	Chester
Owen J Roberts SD	Chester
Phoenixville Area SD	Chester
Tredyffrin-Easttown SD	Chester
Unionville-Chadds Ford SD	Chester
West Chester Area SD	Chester
Camp Hill SD	Cumberland
Cumberland Valley SD	Cumberland
East Pennsboro Area SD	Cumberland
Mechanicsburg Area SD	Cumberland
Shippensburg Area SD	Cumberland
Central Dauphin SD	Dauphin
Derry Twp SD	Dauphin

| School District	County
Middletown Area SD	Dauphin
Steelton-Highspire SD	Dauphin
Susquehanna Twp SD	Dauphin
Chichester SD	Delaware
Garnet Valley SD	Delaware
Haverford Twp SD	Delaware
Interboro SD	Delaware
Marple Newtown SD	Delaware
Penn-Delco SD	Delaware
Radnor Twp SD	Delaware
Ridley SD	Delaware
Rose Tree Media SD	Delaware
Southeast Delco SD	Delaware
Springfield SD	Delaware
Upper Darby SD	Delaware
Wallingford-Swarthmore SD	Delaware
Fairview SD	Erie
Harbor Creek SD	Erie
Iroquois SD	Erie
Millcreek Twp SD	Erie
North East SD	Erie
Laurel Highlands SD	Fayette
Chambersburg Area SD	Franklin
Greencastle-Antrim SD	Franklin
Waynesboro Area SD	Franklin
Indiana Area SD	Indiana
Abington Heights SD	Lackawanna
Carbondale Area SD	Lackawanna
Dunmore SD	Lackawanna
Mid Valley SD	Lackawanna

School District	County
Old Forge SD	Lackawanna
Riverside SD	Lackawanna
Columbia Borough SD	Lancaster
Conestoga Valley SD	Lancaster
Donegal SD	Lancaster
Elizabethtown Area SD	Lancaster
Ephrata Area SD	Lancaster
Hempfield SD	Lancaster
Lampeter-Strasburg SD	Lancaster
Manheim Twp SD	Lancaster
Penn Manor SD	Lancaster
Warwick SD	Lancaster
Ellwood City Area SD	Lawrence
Neshannock Twp SD	Lawrence
Shenango Area SD	Lawrence
Union Area SD	Lawrence
Annville-Cleona SD	Lebanon
Palmyra Area SD	Lebanon
Catasauqua Area SD	Lehigh
East Penn SD	Lehigh
Northern Lehigh SD	Lehigh
Parkland SD	Lehigh
Salisbury Twp SD	Lehigh
Southern Lehigh SD	Lehigh
Whitehall-Coplay SD	Lehigh
Dallas SD	Luzerne
Greater Nanticoke Area SD	Luzerne
Hanover Area SD	Luzerne
Hazleton Area SD	Luzerne
Pittston Area SD	Luzerne

Suburban
227 SDs
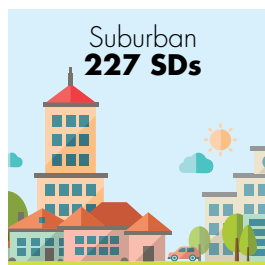
School District	County
Wyoming Area SD	Luzerne
Wyoming Valley West SD	Luzerne
Loyalsock Twp SD	Lycoming
South Williamsport Area SD	Lycoming
Farrell Area SD	Mercer
Grove City Area SD	Mercer
Hermitage SD	Mercer
Mercer Area SD	Mercer
Sharpsville Area SD	Mercer
East Stroudsburg Area SD	Monroe
Stroudsburg Area SD	Monroe
Abington SD	Montgomery
Bryn Athyn SD	Montgomery
Cheltenham Twp SD	Montgomery
Colonial SD	Montgomery
Hatboro-Horsham SD	Montgomery
Jenkintown SD	Montgomery
Lower Merion SD	Montgomery
Lower Moreland Twp SD	Montgomery
Methacton SD	Montgomery
North Penn SD	Montgomery
Perkiomen Valley SD	Montgomery
Pottsgrove SD	Montgomery
Pottstown SD	Montgomery
Souderton Area SD	Montgomery
Springfield Twp SD	Montgomery
Spring-Ford Area SD	Montgomery
Upper Dublin SD	Montgomery
Upper Merion Area SD	Montgomery
Upper Moreland Twp SD	Montgomery

School District	County
Upper Perkiomen SD	Montgomery
Wissahickon SD	Montgomery
Nazareth Area SD	Northampton
Pen Argyl Area SD	Northampton
Wilson Area SD	Northampton
Shamokin Area SD	Northumberland
Shikellamy SD	Northumberland
Delaware Valley SD	Pike
Windber Area SD	Somerset
Oil City Area SD	Venango
Titusville Area SD	Venango
Canon-McMillan SD	Washington
Charleroi SD	Washington
Peters Twp SD	Washington
Ringgold SD	Washington
Trinity Area SD	Washington
Belle Vernon Area SD	Westmoreland
Burrell SD	Westmoreland
Franklin Regional SD	Westmoreland
Greater Latrobe SD	Westmoreland
Greensburg Salem SD	Westmoreland
Hempfield Area SD	Westmoreland
Jeannette City SD	Westmoreland
Kiski Area SD	Westmoreland
Monessen City SD	Westmoreland
New Kensington-Arnold SD	Westmoreland
Norwin SD	Westmoreland
Penn-Trafford SD	Westmoreland
Central York SD	York
Dallastown Area SD	York

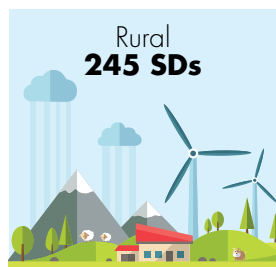| School District	County
Dover Area SD	York
Hanover Public SD	York
Northeastern York SD	York
South Eastern SD	York
South Western SD	York
West Shore SD	York
West York Area SD	York
York Suburban SD	York
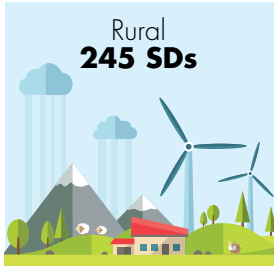
Rural

Rural
245 SDs

Includes areas where the economic emphasis is agricultural or recreational. Population density is low. There may be small pockets of development such as a borough or village, but is typically open space. Infrastructure such as sewer and water does not serve the entire area. In these areas, large proportions of tax exempt property would generally be for public parks, game lands or forest.

School District	County	School District	County	School District	County
Bermudian Springs SD	Adams	Spring Cove SD	Blair	Palmerton Area SD	Carbon
Conewago Valley SD	Adams	Tyrone Area SD	Blair	Panther Valley SD	Carbon
Fairfield Area SD	Adams	Williamsburg Community SD	Blair	Weatherly Area SD	Carbon
Gettysburg Area SD	Adams	Athens Area SD	Bradford	Bald Eagle Area SD	Centre
Littlestown Area SD	Adams	Canton Area SD	Bradford	Bellefonte Area SD	Centre
Upper Adams SD	Adams	Northeast Bradford SD	Bradford	Penns Valley Area SD	Centre
Apollo-Ridge SD	Armstrong	Sayre Area SD	Bradford	Octorara Area SD	Chester
Armstrong SD	Armstrong	Towanda Area SD	Bradford	Oxford Area SD	Chester
Freeport Area SD	Armstrong	Troy Area SD	Bradford	Allegheny-Clarion Valley SD	Clarion
Blackhawk SD	Beaver	Wyalusing Area SD	Bradford	Clarion Area SD	Clarion
South Side Area SD	Beaver	Palisades SD	Bucks	Clarion-Limestone Area SD	Clarion
Western Beaver County SD	Beaver	Karns City Area SD	Butler	Keystone SD	Clarion
Bedford Area SD	Bedford	Moniteau SD	Butler	North Clarion County SD	Clarion
Chestnut Ridge SD	Bedford	Slippery Rock Area SD	Butler	Redbank Valley SD	Clarion
Everett Area SD	Bedford	South Butler County SD	Butler	Union SD	Clarion
Northern Bedford County SD	Bedford	Blacklick Valley SD	Cambria	Clearfield Area SD	Clearfield
Tussey Mountain SD	Bedford	Cambria Heights SD	Cambria	Curwensville Area SD	Clearfield
Brandywine Heights Area SD	Berks	Conemaugh Valley SD	Cambria	DuBois Area SD	Clearfield
Hamburg Area SD	Berks	Forest Hills SD	Cambria	Glendale SD	Clearfield
Oley Valley SD	Berks	Northern Cambria SD	Cambria	Harmony Area SD	Clearfield
Schuylkill Valley SD	Berks	Penn Cambria SD	Cambria	Moshannon Valley SD	Clearfield
Tulpehocken Area SD	Berks	Portage Area SD	Cambria	Philipsburg-Osceola Area SD	Clearfield
Twin Valley SD	Berks	Cameron County SD	Cameron	West Branch Area SD	Clearfield
Bellwood-Antis SD	Blair	Jim Thorpe Area SD	Carbon	Keystone Central SD	Clinton
Claysburg-Kimmel SD	Blair	Lehighton Area SD	Carbon	Benton Area SD	Columbia

Find further information at **www.psba.org**

Rural
245 SDs

School District	County
Berwick Area SD	Columbia
Bloomsburg Area SD	Columbia
Central Columbia SD	Columbia
Millville Area SD	Columbia
Southern Columbia Area SD	Columbia
Conneaut SD	Crawford
Crawford Central SD	Crawford
Penncrest SD	Crawford
Big Spring SD	Cumberland
South Middleton SD	Cumberland
Halifax Area SD	Dauphin
Lower Dauphin SD	Dauphin
Millersburg Area SD	Dauphin
Upper Dauphin Area SD	Dauphin
Johnsonburg Area SD	Elk
Ridgway Area SD	Elk
Saint Marys Area SD	Elk
Corry Area SD	Erie
Fort LeBoeuf SD	Erie
General McLane SD	Erie
Girard SD	Erie
Northwestern SD	Erie
Union City Area SD	Erie
Wattsburg Area SD	Erie
Albert Gallatin Area SD	Fayette
Brownsville Area SD	Fayette
Connellsville Area SD	Fayette
Frazier SD	Fayette
Uniontown Area SD	Fayette
Forest Area SD	Forest

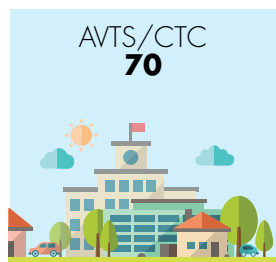| School District	County
Fannett-Metal SD	Franklin
Tuscarora SD	Franklin
Central Fulton SD	Fulton
Forbes Road SD	Fulton
Southern Fulton SD	Fulton
Carmichaels Area SD	Greene
Central Greene SD	Greene
Jefferson-Morgan SD	Greene
Southeastern Greene SD	Greene
West Greene SD	Greene
Huntingdon Area SD	Huntingdon
Juniata Valley SD	Huntingdon
Mount Union Area SD	Huntingdon
Southern Huntingdon County SD	Huntingdon
Blairsville-Saltsburg SD	Indiana
Homer-Center SD	Indiana
Marion Center Area SD	Indiana
Penns Manor Area SD	Indiana
Purchase Line SD	Indiana
United SD	Indiana
Brockway Area SD	Jefferson
Brookville Area SD	Jefferson
Punxsutawney Area SD	Jefferson
Juniata County SD	Juniata
Lakeland SD	Lackawanna
North Pocono SD	Lackawanna
Valley View SD	Lackawanna
Cocalico SD	Lancaster
Eastern Lancaster County SD	Lancaster
Manheim Central SD	Lancaster

School District	County
Pequea Valley SD	Lancaster
Solanco SD	Lancaster
Laurel SD	Lawrence
Mohawk Area SD	Lawrence
Wilmington Area SD	Lawrence
Cornwall-Lebanon SD	Lebanon
Eastern Lebanon County SD	Lebanon
Northern Lebanon SD	Lebanon
Northwestern Lehigh SD	Lehigh
Crestwood SD	Luzerne
Lake-Lehman SD	Luzerne
Northwest Area SD	Luzerne
East Lycoming SD	Lycoming
Jersey Shore Area SD	Lycoming
Montgomery Area SD	Lycoming
Montoursville Area SD	Lycoming
Muncy SD	Lycoming
Bradford Area SD	McKean
Kane Area SD	McKean
Otto-Eldred SD	McKean
Port Allegany SD	McKean
Smethport Area SD	McKean
Commodore Perry SD	Mercer
Greenville Area SD	Mercer
Jamestown Area SD	Mercer
Lakeview SD	Mercer
Reynolds SD	Mercer
West Middlesex Area SD	Mercer
Mifflin County SD	Mifflin
Pleasant Valley SD	Monroe

Rural
245 SDs
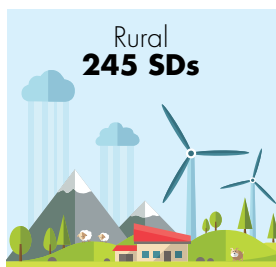
School District	County	School District	County	School District	County
Pocono Mountain SD	Monroe	Midd-West SD	Snyder	Bethlehem-Center SD	Washington
Danville Area SD	Montour	Selinsgrove Area SD	Snyder	Burgettstown Area SD	Washington
Bangor Area SD	Northampton	Berlin Brothersvalley SD	Somerset	California Area SD	Washington
Northampton Area SD	Northampton	Conemaugh Twp Area SD	Somerset	Chartiers-Houston SD	Washington
Saucon Valley SD	Northampton	Meyersdale Area SD	Somerset	Fort Cherry SD	Washington
Line Mountain SD	Northumberland	North Star SD	Somerset	McGuffey SD	Washington
Milton Area SD	Northumberland	Rockwood Area SD	Somerset	Wayne Highlands SD	Wayne
Mount Carmel Area SD	Northumberland	Salisbury-Elk Lick SD	Somerset	Western Wayne SD	Wayne
Warrior Run SD	Northumberland	Shade-Central City SD	Somerset	Derry Area SD	Westmoreland
Greenwood SD	Perry	Shanksville-Stonycreek SD	Somerset	Ligonier Valley SD	Westmoreland
Newport SD	Perry	Somerset Area SD	Somerset	Mount Pleasant Aresa SD	Westmoreland
Susquenita SD	Perry	Turkeyfoot Valley Area SD	Somerset	Southmoreland SD	Westmoreland
West Perry SD	Perry	Sullivan County SD	Sullivan	Yough SD	Westmoreland
Wallenpaupack Area SD	Pike	Blue Ridge SD	Susquehanna	Lackawanna Trail SD	Wyoming
Austin Area SD	Potter	Elk Lake SD	Susquehanna	Tunkhannock Area SD	Wyoming
Coudersport Area SD	Potter	Forest City Regional SD	Susquehanna	Eastern York SD	York
Galeton Area SD	Potter	Montrose Area SD	Susquehanna	Northern York County SD	York
Northern Potter SD	Potter	Mountain View SD	Susquehanna	Red Lion Area SD	York
Oswayo Valley SD	Potter	Susquehanna Community SD	Susquehanna	Southern York County SD	York
Blue Mountain SD	Schuylkill	Northern Tioga SD	Tioga	Spring Grove Area SD	York
Mahanoy Area SD	Schuylkill	Southern Tioga SD	Tioga		
Minersville Area SD	Schuylkill	Wellsboro Area SD	Tioga		
North Schuylkill SD	Schuylkill	Lewisburg Area SD	Union		
Pine Grove Area SD	Schuylkill	Mifflinburg Area SD	Union		
Saint Clair Area SD	Schuylkill	Cranberry Area SD	Venango		
Schuylkill Haven Area SD	Schuylkill	Franklin Area SD	Venango		
Shenandoah Valley SD	Schuylkill	Valley Grove SD	Venango		
Tamaqua Area SD	Schuylkill	Warren County SD	Warren		
Tri-Valley SD	Schuylkill	Avella Area SD	Washington		
Williams Valley SD	Schuylkill	Bentworth SD	Washington		

# Area Vocational Technical Schools/Career and Technical Centers

Comprehensive/Full-Day

AVTS/CTC	County
Bucks County Technical High School	Bucks
Carbon Career & Technical Institute	Carbon
Columbia-Montour AVTS	Columbia
Connellsville Area CTC	Fayette
Dauphin County Technical School	Dauphin
Jefferson County-DuBois AVTS	Jefferson
Lawrence County CTC	Lawrence
Lenape Technical School	Armstrong
West Side CTC	Luzerne
York County School of Technology	York

Occupational/Partial Day

AVTS/CTC	County
A W Beattie Career Center	Allegheny
Admiral Peary AVTS	Cambria
Beaver County CTC	Beaver
Bedford County Technical Center	Bedford
Berks CTC	Berks
Bethlehem AVTS	Northampton
Butler County AVTS	Butler
CTC of Lackawanna County	Lackawanna
Career Institute of Technology	Northampton
Central Montco Technical High School	Montgomery
Central PA Institute of Science & Technology	Centre
Central Westmoreland CTC	Westmoreland
Chester County Tech College High School	Chester
Clarion County Career Center	Clarion
Clearfield County CTC	Clearfield
Crawford County CTC	Crawford
Cumberland Perry AVTS	Cumberland
Delaware County Technical High School	Delaware
Eastern Center for Arts & Technology	Montgomery
Eastern Westmoreland CTC	Westmoreland
Erie County Technical School	Erie
Fayette County Career & Technical Institute	Fayette
Forbes Road CTC	Allegheny
Franklin County CTC	Franklin
Fulton County AVTS	Fulton
Greater Altoona CTC	Blair
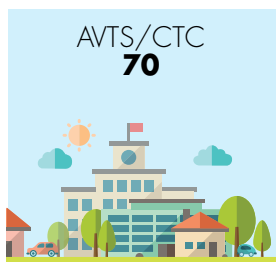
AVTS/CTC **70**

AVTS/CTC	County
Greater Johnstown CTC	Cambria
Greene County CTC	Greene
Hazleton Area Career Center	Luzerne
Huntingdon County CTC	Huntingdon
Indiana County Technology Center	Indiana
Keystone Central CTC	Clinton
Lancaster County CTC	Lancaster
Lebanon County CTC	Lebanon
Lehigh Career & Technical Institute	Lehigh
Lycoming CTC	Lycoming
McKeesport Area Tech Center	Allegheny
Mercer County Career Center	Mercer
Middle Bucks Institute of Technology	Bucks
Mifflin County Academy of Science & Tech	Mifflin
Mon Valley CTC	Washington
Monroe Career & Tech Institute	Monroe
North Montco Tech Career Center	Montgomery
Northern Tier Career Center	Bradford
Northern Westmoreland CTC	Westmoreland

AVTS/CTC	County
Northumberland County CTC	Northumberland
Parkway West CTC	Allegheny
Reading Muhlenberg CTC	Berks
SUN Area Technical Institute	Union
Schuylkill Technology Centers	Schuylkill
Seneca Highlands CTC	McKean
Somerset County Technology Center	Somerset
Steel Center for Career & Technical Ed	Allegheny
Susquehanna County CTC	Susquehanna
Upper Bucks County Technical School	Bucks
Venango Technology Center	Venango
Warren County AVTS	Warren
Western Area CTC	Washington
Western Montgomery CTC	Montgomery
Wilkes-Barre Area CTC	Luzerne

Find further information at **www.psba.org**

IUs
29

Intermediate Units

Intermediate Unit 1	Pittsburgh-Mount Oliver IU 2
Allegheny IU 3	Midwestern IU 4
Northwest Tri-County IU 5	Riverview IU 6
Westmoreland IU 7	Appalachia IU 8
Seneca Highlands IU 9	Central IU 10
Tuscarora IU 11	Lincoln IU 12
Lancaster-Lebanon IU 13	Berks County IU 14
Capital Area IU 15	Central Susquehanna IU 16
BlaST IU 17	Luzerne IU 18
Northeastern Educational IU 19	Colonial IU 20
Carbon-Lehigh IU 21	Bucks County IU 22
Montgomery County IU 23	Chester County IU 24
Delaware County IU 25	School District of Philadelphia, IU 26
Beaver Valley IU 27	ARIN IU 28
Schuylkill IU 29	

The Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) believes that the state of public education in the commonwealth is strong, but not without its challenges. School districts, career and technical centers, intermediate units and their boards of directors continuously strive to provide outstanding programs and services that prepare every student for life after school while struggling to find the money to pay for increasing mandated costs, find quality teachers, and put off important building renovations and technology and learning initiatives.

Too often the focus on public education is negative. The common refrain is that public schools are overspending and underproducing when in reality, Pennsylvania's public schools have consistently high rankings on national assessments, graduation rates close to 90% and more than 70% of students continuing on to a postsecondary education. All of this has occurred as required pension and charter school costs have more than tripled in the last few years, stealing precious resources away from classrooms.

In order to keep up with spiraling mandated costs, school districts have been forced to become less reliant on the state to fund education and more reliant on their local communities. While schools in more affluent communities have been able to keep up with increasing costs and still provide the educational services and supports students need to achieve, less affluent communities have not. PSBA believes that the state has the opportunity and obligation to provide schools with much needed relief from costly mandates and to provide public schools with adequate funding to make achievement and opportunities based less on where a student lives.

Nathan Mains
PSBA Executive Director

The Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators (PACTA) believes that the state of career and technical education in the state is strong and is serving both students and employers well. Our students are well prepared to enter the workforce immediately after high school and to continue their education. They perform well on end-of-program occupational assessments and earn a variety of industry credentials. Many graduate from high school with postsecondary credits earned through articulation agreements between secondary and postsecondary institutions.

There are, however, many challenges facing career and technical centers as they prepare students to support the economic growth of the commonwealth. The funding issues that are facing the rest of public education are also impacting career and technical schools. For example, pension costs are increasing at career and technical centers in the same way they are at school districts. Career and technical centers also face unique challenges in updating curriculum and equipment to meet industry standards. The vast majority of a career and technical center's budget is funded by the school districts which send students to the center. When school districts are facing funding issues it impacts the support they provide to career and technical centers and the number of students who they can afford to send to the center.
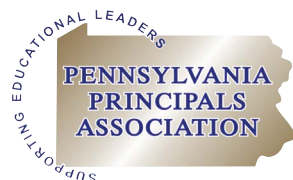
Career and technical centers are eager to serve more students and better support the employers of the state. Career and technical centers can only do so when the centers are adequately resourced and districts can afford to send all of the students who can benefit from career and technical education.

Jackie Cullen
PACTA Executive Director

The Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate Units (PAIU) is pleased to be a partner in the State of Education report. Professional staff at IUs are engaged with public schools every day in every corner of the commonwealth. Whether it is curriculum and instruction, special education, technology, business services or human resources, IUs are working to support students, schools and communities.

Because of the role IUs play in so many aspects of public education, we are in a unique position to assess the state of education in Pennsylvania. The exciting news is that communities remain committed to the quality of education in their local schools, school leaders are embracing innovation, educators are reinventing teaching and learning to be relevant to 21st century demands, and students are finding success.

At the same time IUs fully recognize the challenges schools face in ensuring children succeed in an environment where resources are often not sufficient, state and federal requirements often create burdens, and children and their families often need supports that are hard to find. IUs face these same realities.

If we measure both the successes and challenges of public education, we are in a better position to find solutions that will make a difference for children. Ultimately, this is why The State of Education Report is important and why PAIU is pleased to be a partner in the effort.

Tom Gluck
PAIU Executive Director

The PA Principals Association strongly believes in an effective and equitable educational system for all students. A strong educational system yields a vibrant community and a strong society. Now more than ever we must make sure that the investments in education are a top priority for Pennsylvania's current and future students.

The 2016-17 State of Education Report does a very nice job of highlighting some of the current challenges schools are facing and how they are coping with them. Since 2008, schools have faced dwindling state funding while costs in health care, pensions, charter schools and everyday expenses have escalated. Schools have cut programs and personnel at alarming rates to balance their budgets from one year to the next. The low-hanging fruit has been picked clean and many districts will face drastic budget shortfalls in the very near future. Now is the time to enact some long-lasting changes to deal with the challenges districts face such as fair funding, charter school costs, special education costs, pensions, health care and school construction to name just a few.

In spite of these challenges, our teachers and school leaders, day in and day out, continue to meet the needs of the learners under their care. They know and understand that every child deserves a quality education no matter where they live. However, these challenges are now having a profound impact on the teaching profession. We now face a teacher shortage crisis across the country. National estimates suggest that between 19%-30% of new teachers leave the profession within the first five years and that the number of individuals pursuing teaching as a career has declined dramatically from 719,081 in 2008-09 to 464,250 in 2013-14 (Learning Policy Institute, 2016).

We can no longer bury our heads in the sand and think that just the passage of time will solve our current issues. It will take all of us to meet these challenges head on in order to keep our public schools thriving. Pennsylvania has a rich tradition of quality education for our children and we have an obligation to protect that tradition as there is no greater resource than our children who deserve our very best efforts.

Paul M. Healey, Ph.D.
Executive Director, PA Principals Association
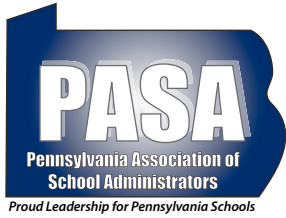
PASA Statement on the State of Education

Public education in Pennsylvania is performing extraordinarily well in challenging times. High school graduation rates are at an all-time high, and a greater percentage of students are attending postsecondary education than any time in our state's history. More students are taking rigorous courses at the high school level. Educators have increased expectations for students, and they are meeting the challenge through hard work and personal perseverance. Our professional educators are better trained than any time in our past and provided targeted professional development that positively impacts student achievement. Pennsylvania's public schools are among the highest performing in the nation on the National Assessment of Educational Progress Exams, also known as "The Nation's Report Card."

Although our public schools are educationally sound, they are financially unstable. For the past six years the vast majority of school districts have experience reduced state and federal revenues due to mandated costs such as retirement contributions that have increased at greater levels than state subsidies and federal grant dollars. This continued trend of net losses in state and federal funding has resulted in most public school districts raising local revenue through real estate taxes, cutting programs for students, reducing district personnel, or some combination of all three.

While political leaders and pundits will claim that our public schools are receiving more state funds today than in the past, they fail to explain that most of the new dollars that have been sent to school districts over the past few years have gone directly to mandated cost such as pension contributions and increased cyber-school costs, not to the classroom. PASA commends our public school leaders for the excellent work they have done in the face of overwhelming challenges. We will continue to work with policymakers and leaders to emphasize the imperative to provide the appropriate revenues needed to support our public schools and ensure our students are provided the education they need to be successful.

Mark D. DiRocco
PASA Executive Director

The Pennsylvania Public Education Foundation (PaPEF)

exists to support the ongoing success of school districts across the state through helping to provide professional development for school directors, and through creating opportunities that directly impact students' education in a positive way. As a champion for student success, PaPEF is pleased to partner in the release of the State of Education report. Pennsylvania's investments in public schools continue to show great return, despite ever-increasing mandates and other challenges. As funding deficits become more pronounced, it is more important than ever that we work together to bring awareness to these problems and innovation to solve them.

Every child should have access to adequately funded, high-quality education.

The report provides data outlining areas that need to be addressed to ensure students continue to receive effective, equitable education they need to succeed. As such, it is a valuable tool as we develop strategies to support our schools. A strong foundation for our students is a strong future for Pennsylvania.

Christina Griffiths
PaPEF Executive Director

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