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## **EDUCATION SECRETARY PHILLIPS RELEASES 2003 PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT REPORT**

HARRISBURG: (AUG. 12) Secretary of Education Vicki L. Phillips today released the 2003 Academic Achievement Report, a comprehensive look at school progress on key performance indicators: proficiency in reading and math by school and subgroup, attendance in grades K-8, and high school graduation rates.

Pennsylvania's accountability system is shaped by the mandates of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation signed into law by President George Bush. This is the first report issued under the new requirements.

"This report gives us a snapshot of where we are and the progress we need to make in order to reach the NCLB goal of 100% of students proficient by 2014," said Secretary Phillips. "The results show that we have schools in every part of Pennsylvania doing well and schools in every part of Pennsylvania that need help in reaching these new expectations."

The report contains the names of all Pennsylvania public schools and whether or not they have met the requirements of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) required by the Pennsylvania accountability system. Adequate Yearly Progress is the minimum level of improvement that schools, districts and the state must make each year toward achieving the state academic standards.

Of the Pennsylvania schools listed in the report, 1,346 have met AYP. Twelve schools are classified as Making Progress. There are 1,031 schools that did not make AYP for the first year, regarded as a Warning year. These schools have another year to meet their targets.

The 246 schools listed as being in School Improvement I, are in their second year of not reaching AYP. There are two schools in School Improvement II, 10 schools in Corrective Action I, the third consecutive year of not attaining AYP goals and 139 schools in Corrective Action II.

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If districts believe the AYP determination is in error, they may appeal on their schools behalf. There is a 30-day window for schools to appeal and receive a response from PDE. Schools are evaluated based on grades 5, 8 and 11 PSSA math and reading scores, participation rates on the PSSA; attendance rates at the elementary and middle levels; and graduation rates at the secondary level. The AYP targets for 2003 are: 35% of students proficient in reading and 45% proficient in math; 95% participation on the PSSA; and an improvement in attendance/graduation rates.

These targets apply not only to schools, but districts, student groups (including major racial categories, low-income students, students with disabilities and English Language Learners). AYP targets will gradually increase and grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> will be tested by 2007 – 2008 in math, reading and science.

Schools meeting targets for two consecutive years will receive rewards and recognition. If a school does not meet AYP, consequences and assistance will be provided to help schools meet its targets. The first year of not meeting AYP, schools are given warning status and will have another year to achieve the targets. Schools can use this opportunity to examine and modify their improvement strategies. If schools do not make AYP for two consecutive years, they will be placed into School Improvement I, making students eligible for school choice.

An escalating set of consequences will be taken if the school continues to miss its AYP goals, up to and including a change of governance.

“Our goal is to have increasingly fewer schools in the Needs Improvement categories. In partnership with districts and IUs, we plan to work with schools and districts in a variety of ways to help them get on the right track and stay on the right track.” Phillips said. “We intend to stand side by side with our schools to ensure they realize the potential we believe rests in every classroom, every teacher and every one of our students,” she said.

For more information regarding the 2003 Academic Achievement Report, please see <http://www.state.pa.us/pas>

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