

Pennsylvania

School Management	C	
Finance	C	
Staffing: Hiring & Evaluation	C	
Staffing: Removing Ineffective Teachers	A	
Data	C	
Pipeline to Postsecondary	D	
Technology	C	
State Reform Environment	?	
Gold Stars		

School Management. Pennsylvania does an average job managing its schools in a way that encourages thoughtful innovation. The state has below-average academic standards, and 92% of teachers report that routine duties and paperwork interfere with teaching. However, the state sanctions low-performing schools and rewards high-performing or improving ones.

Finance. Overall, Pennsylvania earns a middling grade in this category. The state gets very low marks for the simplicity of its state funding mechanism, but it receives a very strong score for the online accessibility of its financial data. However, it does not have a performance pay program for teachers.

Staffing: Hiring & Evaluation. Pennsylvania receives an average mark for its teacher hiring and evaluation system. Five percent of teachers enter the profession through an alternative certification program, compared with the national average of 13%. But Pennsylvania requires incoming teachers to pass basic skills and subject-knowledge tests.

Staffing: Removing Ineffective Teachers. Pennsylvania earns an excellent mark on the ability to remove poor-performing teachers from the classroom. Sixty-one percent of principals report that tenure is a barrier to removing poor-performing teachers, which is 11 percentage points below the national average. In addition, only 5% of principals report that resistance from parents is a barrier to dismissal. Still, 64% of principals say that teacher unions or associations are a barrier to the removal of ineffective teachers.

Data. Pennsylvania gets an average mark for its state data system. Although the state does not publicly report college remediation data, it does have a teacher-identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students.

Pipeline to Postsecondary. Pennsylvania receives a below-average mark for its efforts to improve college and career readiness. Fifty-seven percent of its schools report offering dual-enrollment programs, which allow students to earn high school and college credits simultaneously. That is 8 percentage points below the national average of 65%. In addition, only 59% of Pennsylvania schools report offering work-based internships.

Technology. Pennsylvania receives an average grade in this category. While the state requires technology testing for teachers, it has not established a virtual school. The state also needs to significantly improve how it evaluates its return on investments in technology.

State Reform Environment. There are few reliable state-by-state data on local education advocacy and research efforts—a reflection of the lack of overall commitment to this issue. As a result, we are unable to issue a meaningful grade. However, Pennsylvania supports common academic standards.