Dear Family,

Every year, Pennsylvania public school students take tests in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science. In 2015, new assessments in ELA and math were developed to meet the more challenging demands of the PA Core Standards, which were adopted in 2013. The tests’ more rigorous standards were adopted to better prepare students to be successful in college, postsecondary training, or in the 21st century work force.

The Student Report you’ll receive explains how your child performed on the 2015-16 assessment. If your student did not take one of the tests, part of the report will be blank.

You can help your child grow academically by reviewing the PSSA results with him/her, looking at both strengths and opportunities for improvement, and by continuing to encourage his/her best effort in school. You may also find it helpful to speak with teachers.

Your contribution to your child’s education is critical, and I hope that the Department of Education, the commonwealth’s schools, and families can all work together to educate and prepare Pennsylvania’s next generation for postsecondary success.

Yours truly,

Pedro A. Rivera
Secretary of Education
Your student’s information.
Here you will find your student’s name, school, district, date of testing, and grade.

Report information and tools.
This section provides information about the PSSA and the student report, as well as resources to learn more about your student’s performances.

Your student’s PSSA results.
This section indicates your student’s performance level for the English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science assessments.

What do the Performance Levels mean?
This section provides a general description of the Pennsylvania Performance Levels. Student performance on the PSSA falls into four performance levels: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic.
5 What is your student’s Performance Level?
This indicates your student’s Performance Level for the given subject.

*Please Note: If your student was not tested because the subject is not applicable, “Not Applicable (NA)” will be displayed. If your student did not receive a score, “No Score (NS)” will be displayed.

6 What is your student’s score?
This indicates your student’s PSSA score for the given subject. Additionally, the arrow on the bar graph indicates where your student’s score falls within a performance level. The scores are organized by subject and appear on pages 2 and 3 of the Student Report.

Because each subject has its own individual scale, student’s PSSA scores should not be compared across tested subjects.

7 How did your student perform in each reporting category?
This indicates the total points possible and your student’s performance within each reporting category. The reporting categories are described on page 4 of the Student Report.

8 Strength Profile.
The Strength Profile provides you with an indication of your student’s performance within each of the reporting categories. The profile measure takes into account the difficulty of the items and can be used to help identify areas in which your student needs to improve and where he or she has performed more successfully.
Minimum/Maximum Scaled Scores.
The minimum and maximum scaled scores represent the minimum and maximum scores your child could have received on each assessment. Each PSSA test has a minimum score that stays the same across years. However, the maximum score for each test can vary depending on the difficulty of the test each year (a more difficult test in any given year will have a higher maximum score).

Standard Error of Measure.
This range reflects the standard error of measurement (SEM) for your student’s PSSA score. Specifically, it provides reasonable bounds for the range of scores that your student might receive if he or she took an equivalent version of the test. (That is, your student took a test that covered exactly the same content, but included a different set of items.) As an example, if the PSSA score was 1750 and the SEM band was 1700 to 1800, then your student would be likely to receive a score somewhere between 1700 and 1800 if a different version of the test had been taken.
Score Reporting Category Descriptions

This section of the Student Report contains the description of the reporting categories that were assessed on the PSSA. Reporting Categories are aligned to the state’s standards and used as a tool for instructional practices in schools.

Reporting categories will be different for each grade.

### Score Reporting Category Descriptions

#### English Language Arts

- **Key Ideas and Details**
  - Students refer to two ideas and details in passages to summarize important ideas or events, determine a theme or main idea, and draw on evidence from text to support overall inferences and understanding.

- **Craft and Structure**
  - Students demonstrate understanding of a passage by identifying points of view and how language and word choice enhance or detract from points of view, making connections within and between texts, referring to text features to support inferences, and analyzing use of evidence to support overall integration of literary aspects of text.

- **Vocabulary Acquisition and Use**
  - Students demonstrate understanding of vocabulary and figurative language in literature and informational texts.

#### Mathematics

- **Numbers and Operations in Base Ten**
  - Students develop number skills by understanding place value, order, or comparing numbers; order, or comparing numbers; order, or comparing numbers; order, or comparing numbers; order, or comparing numbers.

- **Numbers and Operations—Fractions**
  - Students develop number skills by understanding place value, order, or comparing numbers; order, or comparing numbers; order, or comparing numbers; order, or comparing numbers.

- **Operations and Algebraic Thinking**
  - Students perform operations using all four operations with whole numbers. They use drawings, equations, and symbols to represent percentages and draw conclusions. They also learn how factors and multiples relate to multiplication and division.

- **Geometry**
  - Students compare and classify two-dimensional shapes to better understand two-dimensional objects. They explore properties involving symmetry, visual and spatial reasoning, and use these properties to answer questions about size and relationships.

- **Measurement and Data**
  - Students use arithmetic operations to solve problems involving measurements and conversions with customary and metric units. They represent and interpret data using line plots, and they use fractions to interpret and calculate intervals.

#### Science

- **The Nature of Science**
  - Students use scientific skills to develop possible solutions for everyday problems. They plan and conduct fair and valid scientific investigations. They identify patterns and use models to help explain natural and human-made systems.

- **Biological Sciences**
  - Students evaluate species and functions of organisms, describe the ecological behavior of living systems, and recognize the interdependencies between humans and the natural world.

- **Physical Sciences**
  - Students demonstrate understanding of physical properties of matter and basic energy types and sources. They describe how energy can change form and apply the scientific principles of energy and motion.

- **Earth and Space Sciences**
  - Students identify and describe Earth's features and processes that change the environment. They recognize processes and changes associated with weather, climate, the atmosphere, and the Earth's surface.