

# MAKING THE GRADE

EFFECTIVE TEACHING IN  
EVERY CLASSROOM



## Student Testing Highlights a Troubling Shortfall in Teacher Evaluations

For hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvania public school students, the arrival of spring also marks a new season of statewide testing. These students will devote several days to taking the Pennsylvania Systems of School Assessments – or PSSAs – so teachers and parents can find out what our students know and where they need help to improve academically.

And once again, the PSSA results are likely to highlight a troubling gap between student performance and teacher effectiveness – a gap that raises serious questions about the adequacy of Pennsylvania’s system for evaluating educators.

In [the 2010-11 school year](#), 28 percent of students who took the PSSAs scored below grade level in reading and 24 percent scored below grade level in math. Yet that same year, nearly every teacher – [99.5 percent](#) – was rated as doing a “satisfactory” job educating our kids.

How can that be?

It’s because Pennsylvania lacks a meaningful, statewide system for evaluating teachers, and existing school district-based evaluations too often fail to take student achievement into account when determining a teacher’s job performance.

We can fix this flaw. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is working on a new teacher evaluation system that makes student performance one of several measures of a teacher’s effectiveness. As part of the evaluation, teachers would receive the support and feedback needed to improve, much the same way we provide help to struggling students.

Stay tuned for more updates from **Making the Grade: Effective Teaching in Every Classroom.**

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Grade” ...](#)

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*Making the Grade: Effective Teaching in Every Classroom* is Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children’s project designed to create awareness about the importance of an effective teacher in every classroom and advance the public policies required to assure every child benefits from effective teaching every school day.

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Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children  
116 Pine Street, Suite 430  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

717-236-5680 – 800-257-2030

[www.papartnerships.org](http://www.papartnerships.org)