

Cover

CHAPTER FOUR REQUIREMENTS

***Standards, Assessments, Textbooks, and
Instructional Programs***



Summary of Chapter 4



PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Summary of Chapter 4 - Academic Standards and Assessment

Overview

Chapter 4 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code, titled “Academic Standards and Assessment,” establishes the requirements for academic standards, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and continuous improvement for all public schools in Pennsylvania, including charter schools.

The purpose of Chapter 4 is to ensure that all students are provided with standards-aligned instruction, equitable access to learning opportunities, and a system of assessment and improvement that supports student achievement.

Academic Standards

Schools must align curriculum and instruction to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards in all required content areas, including but not limited to:

- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Environment and Ecology
- Social Studies
- Arts and Humanities
- Health, Safety, and Physical Education
- Career Education and Work

Schools must ensure that instruction is vertically aligned across grade levels and that all students have equitable access to standards-based learning.

Curriculum and Instruction

Schools are required to provide planned instruction that:

- Is aligned to Pennsylvania Academic Standards
- Is research-based and developmentally appropriate
- Provides sufficient instructional time, scope, and sequence
- Addresses the needs of all learners, including students with disabilities, English Learners, gifted students, and students requiring academic intervention

Instructional programs must be documented and implemented consistently across classrooms.

Assessment System

Schools must implement a balanced assessment system that includes:

- State assessments as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Local benchmark, diagnostic, and formative assessments
- Processes for monitoring student progress and identifying learning gaps

Assessment results must be used to inform instruction, guide interventions, and support continuous improvement.

Student Performance and Continuous Improvement

Schools must use student performance data to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction
- Identify students in need of additional academic support
- Adjust instructional strategies and programs
- Address achievement gaps among student subgroups

Schools are expected to engage in ongoing, data-driven school improvement planning.

Promotion, Retention and Graduation (As Applicable)

Schools must establish clear and written policies regarding student promotion and retention that are aligned to academic standards and applied consistently.

For schools serving secondary grades, graduation requirements must be aligned to Pennsylvania standards and state assessment requirements.

Accountability and Assurance of Compliance

Schools must be able to demonstrate compliance with Chapter 4 through:

- Written curriculum documentation
- Instructional and assessment records
- Student performance data
- School improvement plans

Schools participate in Pennsylvania's accountability system and are subject to monitoring by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and charter authorizers.

Please Note: Chapter 4 does not prescribe specific curricula, textbooks, or instructional methods. Schools retain flexibility in how standards are taught and how requirements of Chapter 4 are met.

Assessment Plan



Annual Assessment Plan

Assessment	Grade Levels								
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP Assessments)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The NWEA MAP assessment is a computer-adaptive benchmark assessment developed by NWEA that measures student growth in reading and mathematics over time. MAP adjusts the difficulty of questions based on student responses and reports results using a RIT score, which shows where a student is on a learning continuum regardless of grade level. The assessment is typically administered three times per year (fall, winter, and spring) and is used to inform instructional planning, identify students in need of intervention or enrichment, and monitor academic growth as part of the school's MTSS framework. MAP is a local assessment and is not a state accountability test.

Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS)	✓	✓	✓	✓					
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The Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System is an individual, diagnostic reading assessment used primarily in the elementary grades to determine a student's instructional reading level. Through one-on-one reading conferences, teachers assess accuracy, fluency, comprehension, and reading behaviors using leveled texts and running records. Students are assigned a guided reading level (A-Z), which helps teachers plan small-group instruction, guided reading, and targeted literacy interventions. F&P BAS focuses on how students read and what strategies they use, making it a valuable instructional tool rather than a high-stakes or accountability assessment.

Pennsylvania State Systems of Assessment (PSSA) - Reading/ELA				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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PSSA English Language Arts (ELA) is the English Language Arts portion of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, administered annually to students in grades 3 through 8. The assessment measures student proficiency in reading, writing, and language skills aligned to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for English Language Arts. Students are assessed on their ability to read and analyze literary and informational texts, use evidence to support written responses, demonstrate command of vocabulary and language conventions, and apply writing skills in response to text-dependent prompts. The assessment includes multiple-choice, evidence-based selected-response, and constructed-response questions and is administered once per year during the spring testing window established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Results are reported using the performance levels of Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced and are used for state accountability, public reporting, and school performance evaluations.

Pennsylvania State Systems of Assessment (PSSA) - Math



PSSA Mathematics is the mathematics portion of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, administered annually to students in grades 3 through 8. The assessment measures students' understanding and application of Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Mathematics, including number sense and operations, algebraic thinking, geometry, measurement, data analysis, and problem solving. Students are required to demonstrate conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and the ability to apply mathematical reasoning to real-world and multi-step problems. The assessment includes multiple-choice and constructed-response questions and is administered once per year during the spring testing window established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Results indicate whether students are performing at the Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, or Advanced levels and are used for state accountability, school performance reporting, and charter school oversight.

Pennsylvania State Systems of Assessment (PSSA) - Science



PSSA Science is the science portion of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, administered to students in grades 4 and 8. The assessment measures student understanding of the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Science and Technology and Environment and Ecology, including life science, physical science, earth and space science, and scientific inquiry. Students are assessed on their ability to apply scientific knowledge, analyze data, interpret graphs and diagrams, and use evidence-based reasoning to explain scientific phenomena. The assessment includes multiple-choice and constructed-response questions and is administered once per year during the spring testing window established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Results are reported in the performance levels of Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced and are used for state accountability, school performance reporting, and program evaluation.

Textbooks/Programs



Textbooks and Instructional Programming	Reading/English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
Kindergarten	Into Reading	Eureka Squared	Savvas	Scholastic
First Grade				
Second Grade				
Third Grade				
Fourth Grade	EL		Amplify	TCI/Social Studies Alive
Fifth Grade				
Sixth Grade				
Seventh Grade				
Eighth Grade				

Curriculum and Program Review



NORTHWOOD ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

4-Year Curriculum & Instructional Program Cycle



Ongoing Continuous Improvement (All Years)

 <p>Data Meetings</p>	 <p>Resource Audits</p>	 <p>Parent & Student Feedback</p>	 <p>Professional Development</p>
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Tentative Curriculum and Program Cycle

Tentative Curriculum and Program Review Cycle

Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Review and Needs Assessment	Curriculum Revision and Design	Implementation and Professional Development	Evaluation, Monitoring, and Adjustments
New programming (if/when needed, will be purchased during either years two or three.			

Subject/Content Areas	School Years						
	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33
Math	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four			
Social Studies		Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four		
Reading/English Language Arts			Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	
Science				Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four