A Goal Monitoring Conversation:

PPS 3rd Grade Mathematics



Dr. Wayne N. Walters & Leadership Team

November 2026

Pittsburgh Public Schools

Students first
Always, in all ways.

3rd Grade Mathematics Goal Monitoring Agenda



Tonight, you will hear about:

- Our 3rd Grade Math Goal and Why It Matters
- Where We Are: Student Performance and Progress
- What We Are Learning from the Data
- 2026–27 Strategies for Improvement
- How We Will Monitor Progress

Goal – 3rd Grade Mathematics Proficiency

What?

By June of 2027, 42.98% of students in grade 3 will be proficient on the state's PSSA and PASA Mathematics assessment. At the end of the 24-25 school year, 40.7% of third-grade students were proficient, establishing the baseline for our 5-year goal of achieving 49.82% proficient/advanced by 2030.

Why?

Third grade represents a critical juncture in students' mathematical development. During this year, students transition from foundational number sense to more complex applications, including solving real-world and mathematical problems involving multiplication, division, fractions, and multi-step reasoning. It also marks the first year when students participate in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) for Mathematics. The 2024–25 results establish the baseline for our five-year Grade 3 Math goal. As we monitor progress toward this goal, we will use multiple measures of student performance and implementation to identify strengths, areas requiring improvement, and differences in outcomes across student groups.

How?

PA Classroom Diagnostic Tool (CDT), K-2 Interim Assessments

3

A Complete Picture of Mathematics Proficiency

No single assessment tells the whole story.

We use multiple measures to understand where students are and how to support their growth.

NEW for 2026–27

Grades K–2

Curriculum Interim Assessments

Measure progress toward the grade-level standards taught through the curriculum.

- **3 times per year**
  Tracks growth across the school year
- **Replaced 3 of the end-of-unit assessments**
  Takes no extra instructional time
- **Focuses on taught skills**
  Students are not tested on content they have not yet seen

Grades 3–8

Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT)

An online tool used 3 times during the school year to show what students know and where they need support.

- **Pinpoints skills**
  Shows strengths and gaps by math skill area
- **Adaptive and untimed**
  Questions adjust to each student's level
- **Immediate results**
  Teachers see reports as soon as students finish

Grades 3–8

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

The state's annual math test, given each spring, measuring grade-level standards.

- **Once a year**
  A year-end check of grade-level learning
- **Four performance levels**
  Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, Advanced
- **Used for accountability**
  Results are reported for schools and the state

Building Toward Grade 3: K–2 Interim Goals

Interim assessment schedule and Grade 3 math goal for 2026–27

Kindergarten

Interim Math Assessments

Baseline
Set after Assessment 1 (early December 2026)

1. **11/24/26** — Replaces Unit 2
2. **2/3/27** — Replaces Unit 4
3. **4/29/27** — Replaces Unit 7

Grade 1

Interim Math Assessments

Baseline
Set after Assessment 1 (early December 2026)

1. **11/2/26** — Replaces Unit 2
2. **2/8/27** — Replaces Unit 4
3. **5/5/27** — Replaces Unit 7

Grade 2

Interim Math Assessments

Baseline
Set after Assessment 1 (early December 2026)

1. **12/1/26** — Replaces Unit 3
2. **2/1/27** — Replaces Unit 5
3. **5/6/27** — Replaces Unit 8

Grade 3

PSSA/PASA Math
% proficient or advanced

Baseline (2024–25)
40.7%

2026–27 Goal
42.98%

Important: K–2 baselines will be set after the first interim assessment in early December 2026.

K–2 interim assessments give early indicators of progress toward the Grade 3 math accountability measure.

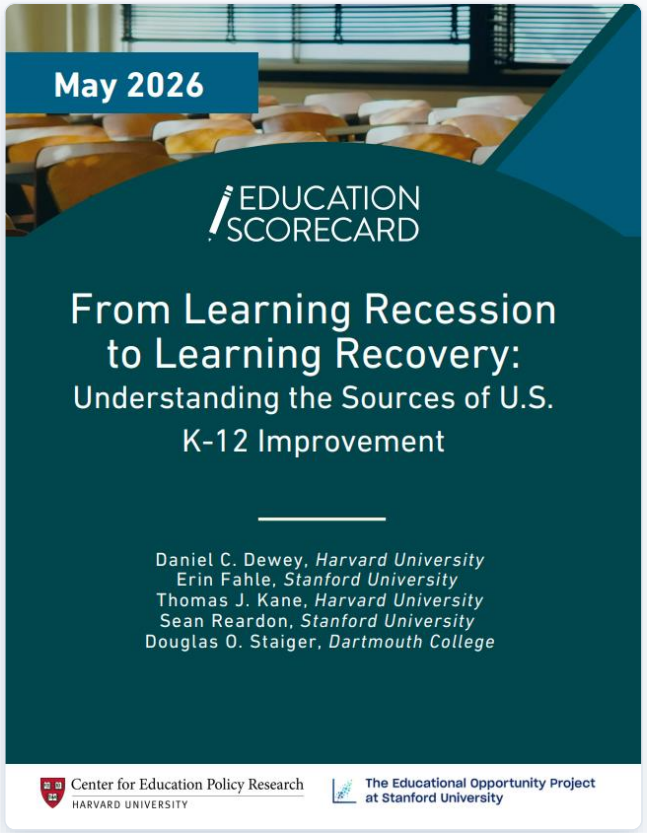
Student Performance Data: PSSA/PASA (2024-2025), and CDT 2025-2026

Pittsburgh Public Schools

Students first

Always, in all ways.

National Recognition: District on the Rise in Math



Pittsburgh Public Schools has been named one of the nation's 2024–25 "District on the Rise"

Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University · Education Scorecard

Nationally — 448 districts across the U.S. recognized in math, reading or both — from 5,000+ districts in 38 states

In Pennsylvania — 11 Pennsylvania districts recognized for math growth — PPS among them

What It Means — **PPS math achievement rose faster than its most similar districts**, matched on size, income and demographics

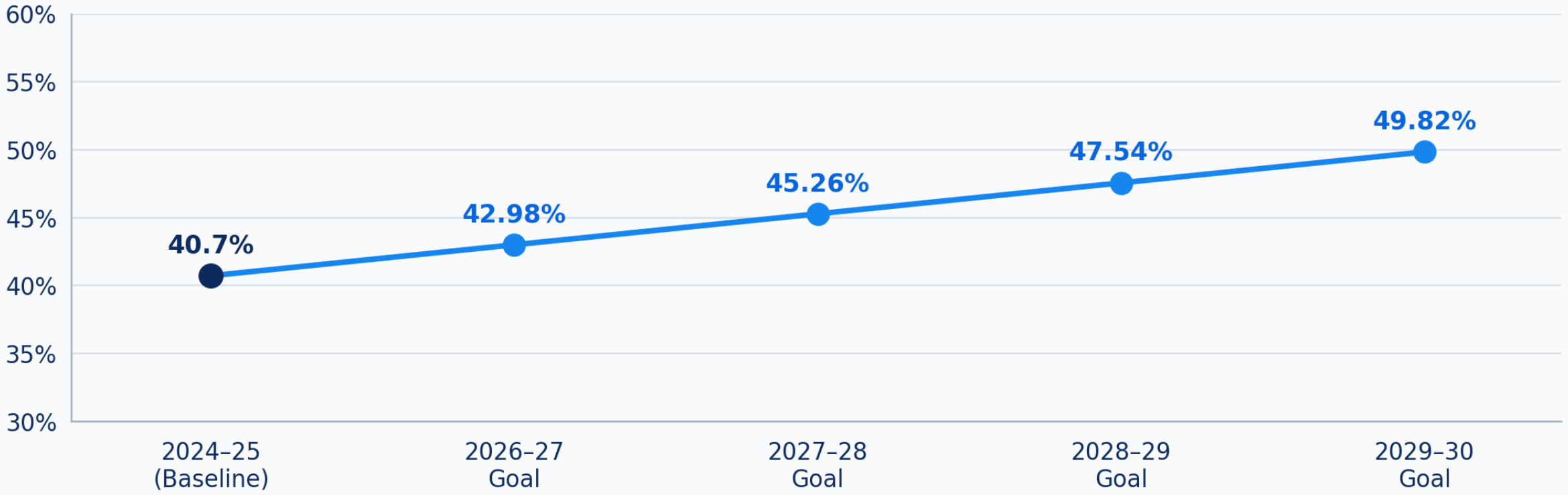
PPS math growth is outpacing similar districts — recognized at the national level.

Source: Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University & Educational Opportunity Project, Stanford University, Education Scorecard, May 2026

Grade 3 Math: Baseline and Future Goals

Percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on PSSA/PASA Math

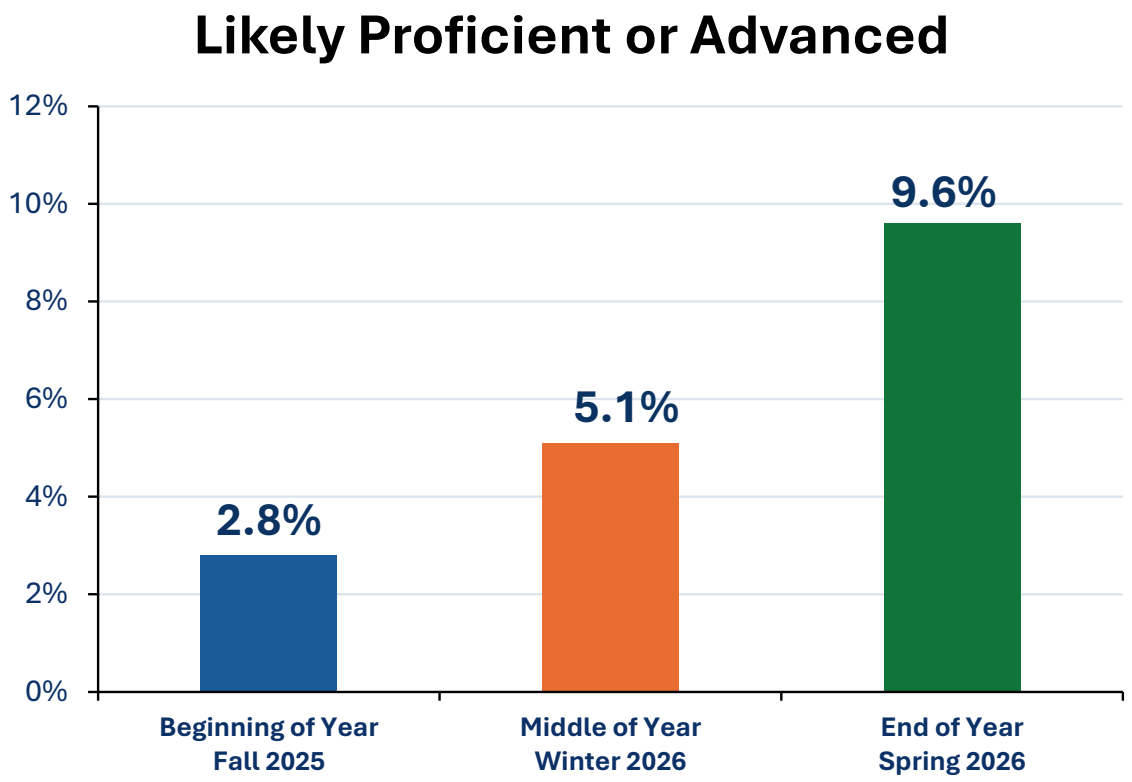
Baseline (Actual) | **Future Goals** (2026–27 through 2029–30)



Our goal is to increase the percentage of third-grade students scoring proficient or advanced on PSSA/PASA Math from 40.7% in 2024–25 to 49.82% by 2029–30.

Grade 3 CDT Math Performance

Percentage of students likely proficient or advanced throughout the school year



Understanding the CDT Results

1 Performance improved across each assessment window.

Likely proficient or advanced increased from 2.8% in fall to 5.1% in winter and 9.6% in spring, a gain of 6.8 percentage points.

2 Growth was uneven across student groups.

By spring, 22.9% of White students were likely proficient or advanced, compared with 2.5% of Black students, 4.0% with IEPs, 2.8% of English Learners, and 3.1% of economically disadvantaged students.

3 Growth is evident, but substantial needs remain.

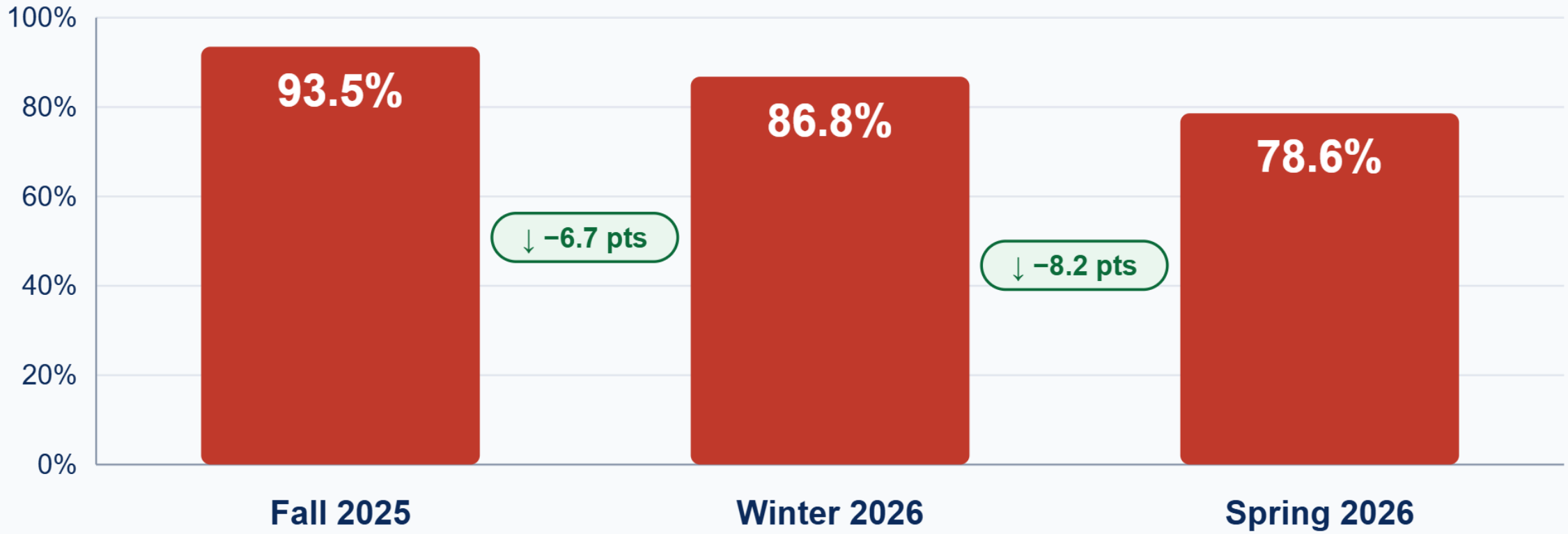
By spring, 78.6% remained in the lowest CDT range. Results call for stronger core instruction, targeted coaching, and focused support for students with the greatest needs.

Grade 3 students likely proficient or advanced increased from 2.8% in fall to 9.6% in spring, while 78.6% remained in the lowest CDT range.

Moving Grade 3 Students Out of Red, 2025–26

Percentage of students scoring in the Red range

Fall, Winter, and Spring CDT Math administrations · about 1,358 students



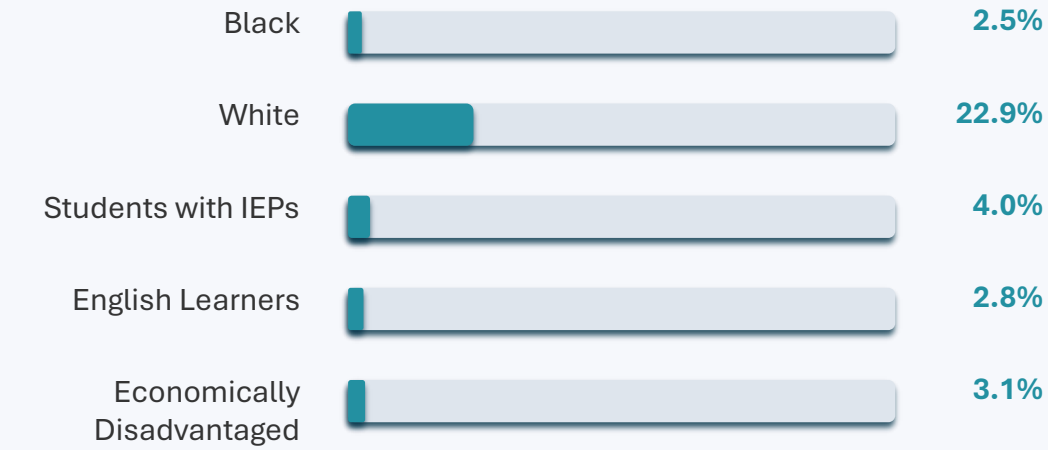
Students in the Red range dropped from 93.5% in Fall to 78.6% in Spring, a decrease of 14.9 percentage points, or about 200 students moving out of Red.

Who Is Experiencing Different Outcomes?

Spring 2026 Grade 3 CDT Math results show substantial differences across student groups.

Likely Proficient or Advanced

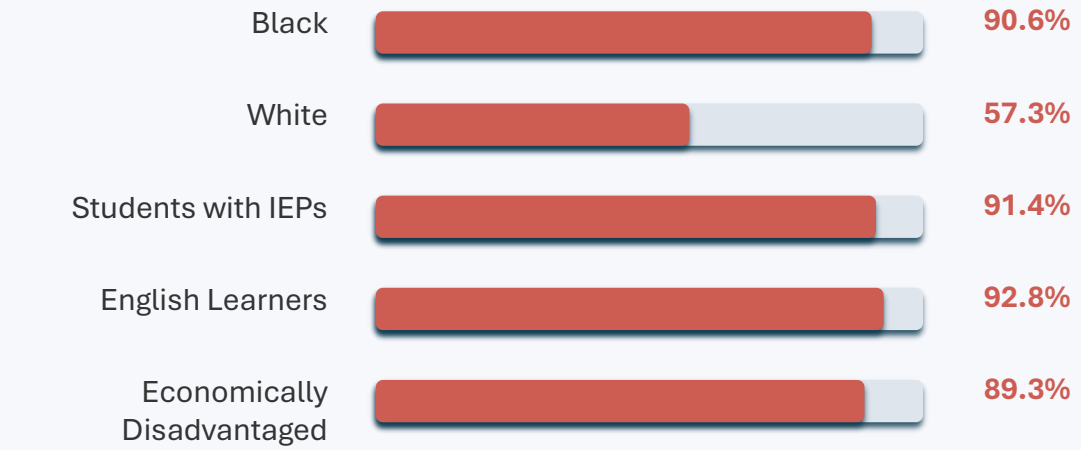
Percentage of students — Spring 2026



All Grade 3 students: 9.6%

Lowest CDT Performance Range

Percentage of students — Spring 2026



All Grade 3 students: 78.6%

Although all student groups demonstrated improvement from fall to spring, substantial differences in mathematics performance persisted and widened across groups.

Celebrating Grade 3 CDT Growth, 2025–26

★ Significant Growth · These schools outpaced their own typical growth this year

- ★ Brookline
- ★ Colfax
- ★ Grandview
- ★ Spring Hill
- ★ West Liberty

Growth Across the District · Every school that grew in Green and above, Fall to Spring

Allegheny	Arsenal	Banksville	Beechwood	Brookline	Colfax
Concord	Dilworth	Faison	Fulton	Grandview	Greenfield
Liberty	Lincoln	Linden	Manchester	Mifflin	Miller
Minadeo	Montessori	Morrow	Phillips	Roosevelt	Spring Hill
Sunnyside	Weil	West Liberty	Westwood	Whittier	Woolslair

Thank you to every Grade 3 team helping more students reach Green and above!

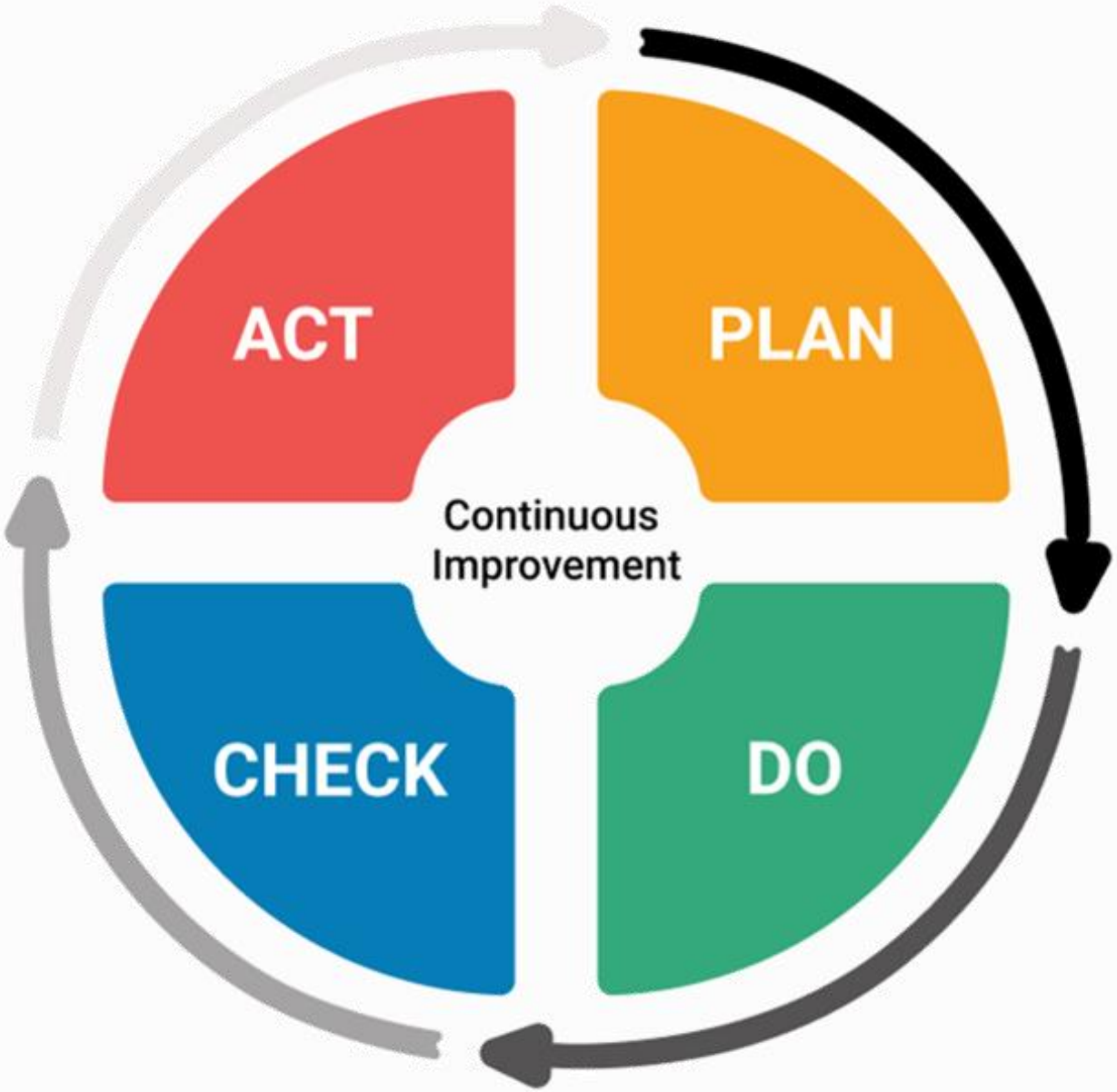
Our 2026-2027 Strategy

Pittsburgh Public Schools

Students first

Always, in all ways.

Strategy and Plan 26-27



- **Strengthen Curriculum-Based Professional Learning**
- **Strengthen K-2 Foundational Instruction and Targeted Support**
- **Strengthen Instructional Leadership and Accountability**

14

Strategy 1: Strengthen Curriculum-Based Professional Learning

Our professional learning journey since adopting Illustrative Mathematics

Across all years: Conducted non-evaluative math walks to assess curriculum implementation and to inform PL and coaching

2024–25 · Year 1
Launched the Curriculum

- Began Year 1 of Illustrative Mathematics, a new problem-based K–8 curriculum
- Offered unit unpacking sessions for every grade and every unit
- Introduced Math Language Routines and described how to build math identity through the curriculum in PD sessions
- Gave principals three curriculum-based sessions at LLI (Jan–Feb)
- Completed coaching cycles with every Grade 3 teacher; 93% of goals were met

2025–26 · Year 2
Sustained and Deepened

- Offered district-wide PD days (Aug, Nov, Jan) plus optional half-day sessions
- Focused sessions on acceleration, math community, and digital end of unit assessments in the ILC platform
- Increased leader learning through LLI, Network, and New Leader sessions
- Prioritized K–3 coaching

Fall 2026 · Year 3 begins
Used Data to Plan Year 3

- Facilitated Summer Leadership Readiness Sessions
- Completed beginning-of-year math walks to see where support is needed
- Identified curriculum-use gaps concentrated in K–2
- Began using curriculum-based interim assessments in K–2
- Increased accountability and monitoring of ILC assessments
- Shifted from universal training to differentiated support

2026–27 · Year 3
Differentiate, Coach, and Lead

- Differentiate teacher learning for newer and experienced teachers
- Use expert teachers to model and support others
- Use math walk data to target PD and coaching all year
- Refine principal learning at LLI to include the new Math RISE overlay and how to provide quality feedback

2+ years of sustained, curriculum-based professional learning, now shifting to differentiated support.

Strategy 1: Beginning-of-Year Math Walk Results

Percent meeting each indicator, Beginning of Year 2024 to 2026

	Grades K–8			Grade 3		
	BOY 2024	BOY 2025	BOY 2026	BOY 2024	BOY 2025	BOY 2026
Learning time focused on curriculum	58%	71%	**88% ↑**	66%	66%	**93% ↑**
Students share math thinking	23%	35%	**32% ↓**	32%	40%	**50% ↑**
Students use tools or manipulatives	30%	50%	**49% ↓**	32%	46%	**60% ↑**
Math Language Routines as intended	N/A	53%	**34% ↓**	N/A	65%	**40% ↓**
Lesson aligned to grade-level standards	66%	89%	**77% ↓**	81%	86%	**85% ↓**
Lesson targets all Aspects of Rigor	61%	70%	**68% ↓**	54%	63%	**75% ↑**
Problem-Based Design Structure*	10%	23%	**25% ↑**	16%	37%	**38% ↑**
Positive, Inclusive Community*	11%	29%	**26% ↓**	18%	40%	**40%**

2026 values: ↑ **green** = up from BOY 2025, ↓ **red** = down. * At the ‘Implementing’ level or higher. N/A = not measured.

Strategy 1: What Our Beginning-of-Year Math Walk Evidence Tells Us

1 Curriculum-focused learning time is our clearest win

K–8 rose from 58% to 71% to 88% over three BOY walks. Grade 3 reached 93%.

2 Grade 3 leads K–8 on all eight indicators

Biggest Grade 3 gains since last fall: curriculum-focused time (+27 pts), tools (+14), rigor (+12) and sharing thinking (+10).

3 Math Language Routines dropped sharply

K–8 fell from 53% to 34% and Grade 3 from 65% to 40% since last fall.

4 Problem-based design and community remain low

Problem-based design: 25% in K–8, 38% in Grade 3.
Community: 26% in K–8 (down from 29%), 40% in Grade 3.

5 Curriculum-use gaps are concentrated in K–2

K–2 has 21 of 41 teachers not using curriculum materials and 8 of 12 not teaching math. Kindergarten alone has 10.

Not teaching math: K–2: 8 · Grades 3–5: 4 · Grades 6–8: 0 (12 total)

Not using curriculum materials: K: 10 · 1st: 5 · 2nd: 6 · 3rd: 3 · 4th: 3 · 5th: 4 · 6th: 1 · 7th: 3 · 8th: 6 (41 total)

Strategy 1: Strengthen Curriculum-Based Professional Learning

Differentiated professional learning, evidence-based coaching, and principal support to strengthen consistent implementation of the mathematics curriculum.

What We Are Strengthening	Accountability and Action
Differentiated Teacher Learning Provide curriculum-based learning tailored to teachers' experience, including support for teachers new to Grade 3 mathematics and opportunities for experienced teachers to deepen practice.	Review participation and teacher feedback; use classroom evidence to identify additional learning needs and adjust support.
Data-Driven Coaching and Professional Learning Use mathematics walkthrough evidence to guide coaching and professional learning focused on curriculum implementation, mathematics language routines, and instructional practice.	Review math walkthrough trends, coaching logs, and teacher feedback; provide targeted support and conduct follow-up to assess changes in practice.
Instructional Leadership Development Continue curriculum-based learning for principals through LLI, with mathematics-specific look-fors and connections to the RISE rubric.	Use principal observations and feedback to monitor implementation; identify gaps and coordinate follow-up support with school leaders.

Implementation context: 33% of Grade 3 math teachers are new to teaching Grade 3 or mathematics this year.

Strategy 2: Strengthen K–2 Foundational Instruction and Targeted Supports

Strengthening early mathematics learning through cumulative interim assessments, responsive coaching, and systematic intervention

What We Are Strengthening	Accountability and Action
Cumulative Interim Assessments & Data Review Use cumulative interim assessments to evaluate taught skills with embedded professional learning time for teachers to analyze results and plan math workshop interventions.	Review interim assessment results and student work to identify learning gaps, plan instructional responses, and monitor student progress after adjustments.
Data-Driven K–2 Coaching & Growth Use interim assessment and mathematics walkthrough evidence to target individual and team coaching cycles for K-2 teachers focused on instructional gaps, pacing, and core curriculum implementation.	Review mathematics walkthrough evidence and coaching documentation; provide follow-up support and examine changes in instructional practice.
Systematic PSE Intervention Partner with the Program for Students with Exceptionalities (PSE) to implement screening and systematic mathematics intervention for K–2 students with IEPs.	Use the K–2 Math PSE Progress Monitoring Tracker to review intervention delivery and student response, and adjust supports based on evidence.

Strategy 3: Strengthen Instructional Leadership and Accountability

Building consistent expectations for mathematics instruction, monitoring, feedback, and follow-up

What We Are Strengthening	Accountability and Action
Instructional Leadership • Provide principals with a standardized mathematics overlay aligned to the RISE rubric. • Strengthen use of math walkthrough look-fors to monitor curriculum implementation and pacing.	• Principals use the mathematics overlay during observations and evaluations. • Review observation evidence and feedback to teachers; identify follow-up support.
Curriculum Implementation and Pacing • Strengthen consistent implementation of the District mathematics curriculum. • Use ILC pacing and DreamBox usage evidence to identify implementation needs.	• Review monthly curriculum pacing and usage reports. • Address pacing concerns and off-curriculum practices through feedback and targeted coaching.
Evidence-Based School Monitoring • Use math walkthroughs, usage reports, and coaching evidence to understand instructional implementation. • Monitor whether identified actions lead to improvements in practice.	• Examine multiple sources of evidence, not just completion or participation. • Identify specific improvement actions and conduct follow-up to assess implementation.
Central Office and School Alignment • Strengthen coordination between Curriculum and Instruction and the Office of School Performance. • Establish a consistent feedback loop for school leaders.	• Use quarterly cross-department check-ins to align expectations and support. • Coordinate principal feedback, professional learning, and targeted follow-up.


LET'S TALK