

Pennsylvania Academic Review Feedback Summary

Introduction

The Pennsylvania Academic Review site was designed to promote awareness and understanding of our Eligible Content. The goal was to inform and seek feedback from Pennsylvania educators, parents, and other community members on the Eligible Content statements, their purpose, and value.

The site opened on October 22, 2014, with Grade 3 content available for review for both English Language Arts and Mathematics; Keystone Exam content standards were added on November 15, 2014. The site remains open for public feedback through January 15, 2015.

The summary provided here is a broad overview of the more than 20,000 responses received on the site. As noted below, all feedback will be collated and displayed on the public academic review site within the next few weeks.

Site Analytics

Through January 11, 2015, activity on the site was as follows:

- 5,189 people visited the site. This number reflects people who logged in to the site.
- 1,362 visitors left comments. This number includes people who left responses indicating that the Eligible Content should remain in its current format as well as those who indicated that it should be revised.
- 19,986 (unique) sessions occurred. (18,522 Pennsylvanians)
- The majority of those who identified their roles identified themselves as teachers (49%), parents (20%), and school administrators (12%).

English Language Arts was the most commented on subject for grades 3 – 7. In Mathematics, Grade 8 received the most comments.

Feedback Summary

While respondents were asked to provide actionable feedback relating to the Eligible Content statements themselves, the majority of the feedback centered on the content and quality of the sample test questions.

Respondents were asked to select one of two choices when reviewing an Eligible Content statement: *I Like this Eligible Content* or *I Don't Like this Eligible Content*. Overall results reflect 76% liked the Eligible Content while 23% did not like the Eligible Content.

If respondents determined that they did not like the Eligible Content, they were offered four choices. The numbers to the right of each response indicate the number of time that option was chosen.

- The statement should be broken up into several, more specific statements. (385)

Pennsylvania Academic Review Feedback Summary

- The statement should be in a different grade level. (3,972)
- The statement should be rewritten. (957)
- The statement should be deleted. (1,269)

It is noteworthy that the high number of recommendations to move a standard to a different (i.e., higher) grade level is mainly in Mathematics. There were changes that increased the rigor at the elementary level and revised the learning progressions to better prepare students for the post secondary and career ready pathway.

Overall, feedback related to the Eligible Content statements fell into one of the following categories:

- Too broad, i.e., too much content in a single statement. (Break up)
- Language was too abstract and vague. (Rewrite)
- Too difficult for the assigned grade level. (Change grade level)
- Not necessary (Delete)
- Level of difficulty should be lowered. (Rewrite)
- Concerns about the quantity of writing in Grade 3 (Rewrite)

While the survey was not designed for evaluation of sample test items, there are several noteworthy responses:

- Question did not appear to test the Eligible Content statement.
- Trick questions.
- Too much emphasis on word problems in Mathematics – reading test more than math test.
- Writing rubrics not in kid friendly language.
- Multi-step problems confusing.
- Concerns that math word problems not as realistic as they could be (e.g., 1/12 teaspoon in recipe).
- Simplify the questions.

Recommendations

Per the original proposal for the Eligible Content review, the next steps may be as follows:

- Post the feedback on the public site.
- Convene a panel of national experts, university, teacher, and parent representatives to review feedback and make recommendations to State Board.
- Convene State Board hearings across the state to share findings and recommendations.
- Revise content statements based upon review process and Secretary's recommendation.