



PUERTO RICO
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**PUERTO RICO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:
STRATEGIC PLAN (2017-2020)**

#todoporlosniños

Draft – Working Version: November 2017





OVERVIEW

Throughout the last decade, Puerto Rico's Department of Education (PRDE) has encountered longstanding challenges which have resulted on students' low academic performance. Some of these challenges include: fragmented and bureaucratic organizational structure, highly politicized "top-down" practices, poor data quality and limited use of data in decision making, ineffective methods for classifying schools and evaluating professional performance, non-strategic approaches to fiscal and human capital management and continuous shifts in academic improvement strategies.

In order to address the longstanding academic achievement needs of students in Puerto Rico, reduce the size of the system, make better use of resources and increase autonomy of regional leaders, PRDE has undertaken a comprehensive restructuring initiative. This will be a locally driven reform. By weighing local interests and idiosyncrasies in education practices we can better apply a structured planning process and improve outcomes, while at the same time empowering the community to participate in these changes.

As identified by the Plan Para Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico urgently needs an education system that can meet the challenges of a society in constant evolution, immersed in global processes and dynamics that can both benefit and impact it, while assuring that the whole child is being educated.

This plan presents the overarching strategy that will guide the Department's efforts to transform the status-quo and gear the system towards a new enriched, comprehensive and meaningful reality in the years to come.



MISSION

Guarantee that every student in Puerto Rico is fully prepared to live a meaningful personal life after high school, thrive in its career, participate in the public sphere and contribute to the wellbeing of its community, through the provision of effective learning opportunities that expand each student's knowledge and enhance their cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal skills.

VISION

Puerto Rico will have a first-rate educational system, with an efficient and effective management and governance structure that promotes the rational use of resources, regional autonomy, educational innovation and the delivery of excellent quality services.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SYSTEM WE STRIVE FOR

In Puerto Rico education policy making will be evidence-based, and comprehensive, reliable, and expedient monitoring, evaluation and accountability systems will play a critical role informing decision-making. Students will be both participants and agents of relevant, meaningful, and transformative learning experiences, in and out of school, adapted to their particular needs, in challenging yet safe, healthy and supportive environments, that guarantee that every one of them succeeds. Principals will be positive leaders in their communities and will secure the adequate conditions that enable schools to truly become 21st century learning communities. Teachers will be adequately recruited, prepared and supported to foster student learning using innovative instructional approaches, based on hands-on experiences to solve real world problems, and geared towards the development of the whole child. Administrative and support staff will actively contribute to the wellbeing of the school communities by providing services of excellence. Families and local communities will support the learning experience of every student, and will also be empowered to demand the best results from their local civil servants. Overall, the Department of Education will be the major contributor in the education of present and future generations of students, that will become tomorrow's professionals, citizens, and economic, social, political and cultural leaders that will bring about the longstanding transformation that Puerto Rico and the world need.



PRDE GOALS

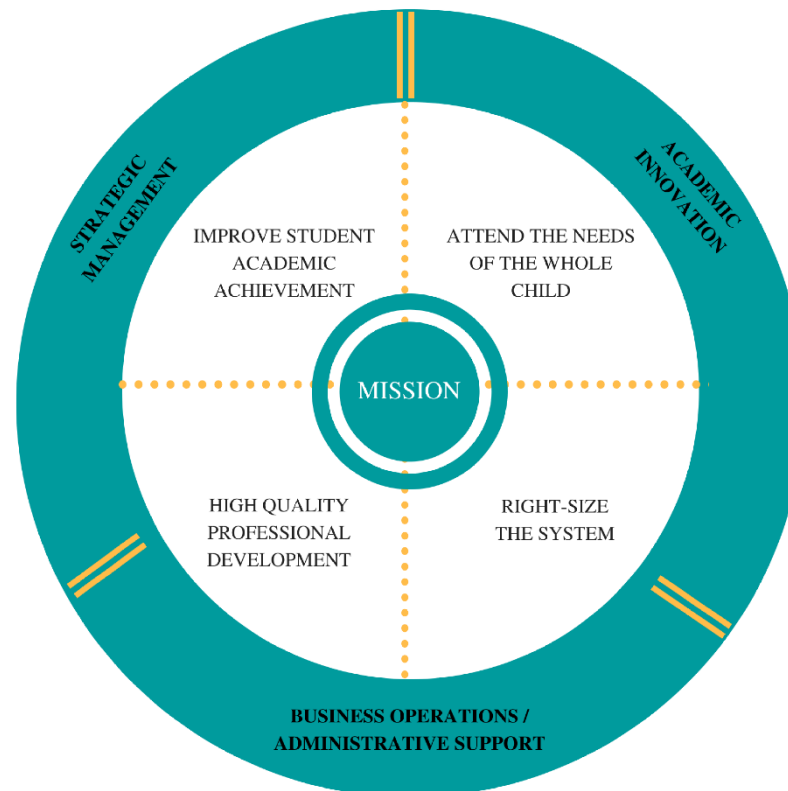
To guarantee the delivery of its mission and the accomplishment of the vision entailed in this plan, PRDE has identified four main goals that will guide the efforts of all its endeavors in the next years. These goals will serve both as guideposts and criteria through which to assess the advancement of the Department's work.

1. Improve student academic achievement
2. Attend to the needs of the whole child, not just academics
3. Access to high quality professional development for teachers and principals
4. Right size the system for better use of resources, immediate response and effective problem solving

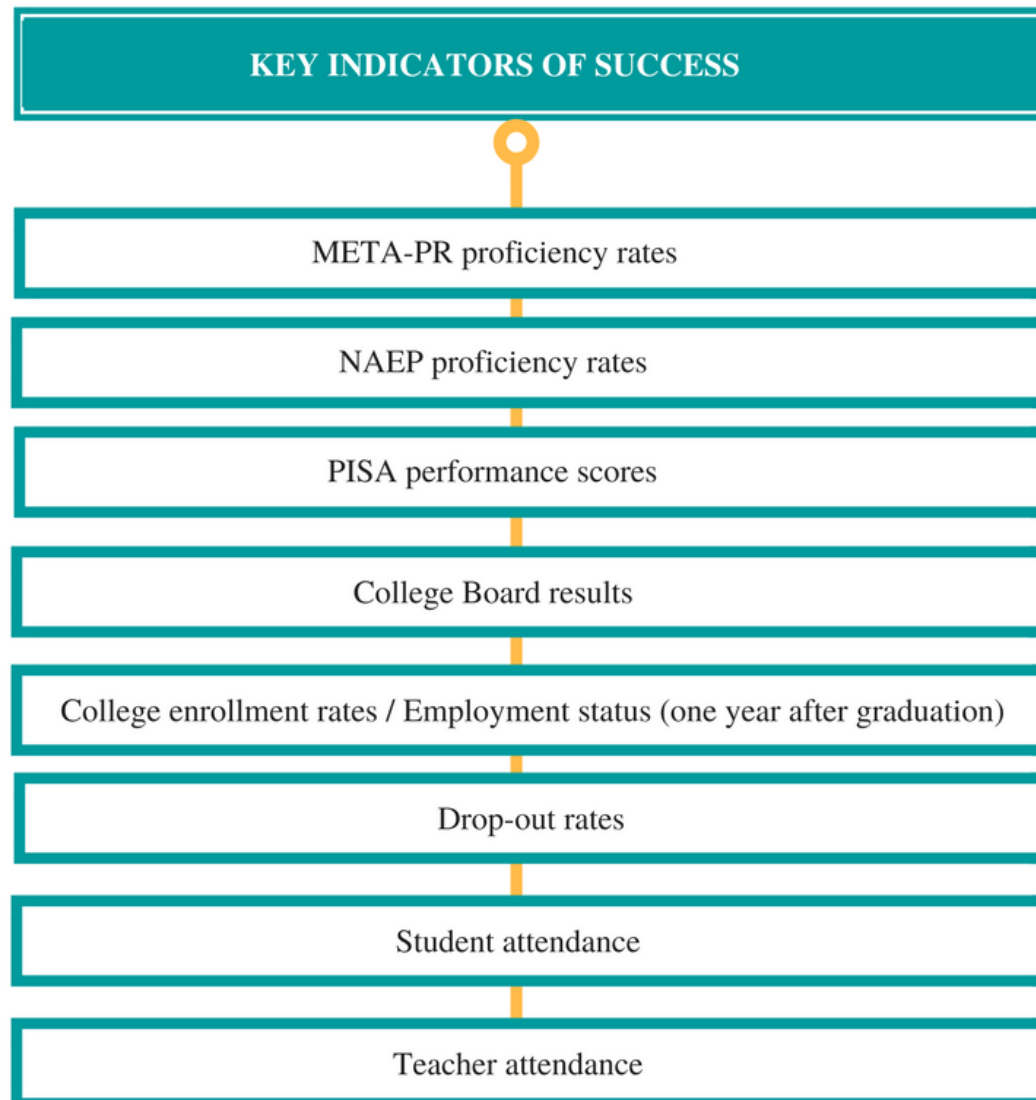
CORE VALUES

- Innovation
- Excellence
- Accountability and Transparency
- Leadership and Coresponsibility
- Equity

STRATEGIC PLAN: COMPONENTS



KEY INDICATORS OF SUCCESS – COMPLYING WITH OUR MISSION



PILLAR 1: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

What will it look like?

Seven (7) Regional Local Education Agencies (LEA's) will be established and fully operational in Puerto Rico. This will reduce bureaucracy and increase administrative efficiency. Authority, roles, and responsibilities of the central and regional level will be clearly defined and aligned to advance educational opportunity and guarantee the wellbeing of students and their communities. Regional and local autonomy will improve accountability and empower local stakeholders. LEA's will benefit from managing their own budgets, having more leverage to act upon their schools, and make informed decisions to improve education. Moreover, funds will be easily allocated to serve the needs of specific areas. A coherent and relevant academic message will be shared thanks to the development of academic plans tailored to serve the needs and interests of the particular schools and communities that integrate each LEA.

The overhaul of the organizational structure will be accompanied by initiatives to recruit, prepare, and develop local talent that will execute the responsibilities of the new leadership structure.

A legislative agenda that will allow to bring more options and innovation into the system, and that will benefit students, families and local communities by providing better tailored services and improving the quality of education will be advanced.

PRDE's Strategic Plan and its Consolidated State Plan (ESSA), alongside the establishment of long-term goals and the use of a cohesive monitoring and evaluation system will continue to inform and align system-wide efforts, while allowing for regional autonomy to thrive.

➤ How will it happen?

Lines of Action	Strategies
1.1. Governance and Management Structure	1.1.1. Create Regional LEA's
	1.1.2. Strengthen accountability at all levels of the system
	1.1.3. Consolidate schools
1.2. System Operations	1.2.1. Ensure implementation of evaluation systems
	1.2.2. Implement metric driven operations
1.3. Legislative Agenda	1.3.1. Formalize the reforms
	1.3.2. Allow for more options and innovation
1.4. ESSA – Consolidated State Plan	1.4.1. Set and monitor long term goals
	1.4.2. Redesign the school accountability system
	1.4.3. Advance school improvement

How we will measure progress?		
Strategies	Metrics	Alignment with PRDE's Goals
Create Regional LEA's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of Regionals turned into LEA's ▪ % of Regionals' leadership structure adapted to the new vision 	4
Strengthen accountability at all levels of the system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accountability index score * ▪ Quality of performance evaluations ▪ Follow-up and consequences of evaluation reports 	1, 2, 4
Consolidate schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of targeted schools consolidated 	4
Ensure implementation of evaluation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of M&E reports per system with satisfactory findings 	4
Implement metric driven operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Availability, reliability and relevance of data ▪ Measure of use of metrics at different levels of the system 	1, 2, 3, 4
Formalize the reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of laws / reforms drafted, approved and passed 	1, 2, 3, 4
Allow for more options and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of innovations brought into the system 	1, 2, 3, 4
Set and monitor long term goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of goals achieved/year 	1
Redesign the school accountability system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compliance with ESSA school accountability requirements 	1
Advance school improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESSA implementation monitoring report ▪ Rate of schools implementing School Improvement Plans (DEE) 	1, 2, 3

Metrics identified with a (*) need to be operationalized by the PRDE / Methodology under construction.

PILLAR 2: ACADEMIC INNOVATION

> What will it look like?

Students in Puerto Rico will participate in and lead dynamic and effective educational experiences, based on the application of knowledge and creation of solutions to real world problems following the approach of project based learning. The specific needs, interests and preferences of students will be attended thanks to the implementation of differentiated instruction and the opportunity to engage in peer to peer learning activities. Technology will be used to expand the availability of instructional resources, allow for better planning, transform the concept of learning, provide alternative learning opportunities and allow instruction to be driven by data.


Academic focus will be placed in STEM, Bilingual Education, Analytical Thinking, and Entrepreneurship and Globalization. To attend the needs of the whole child initiatives to nurture socioemotional skills, implement innovative and alternative mechanisms to manage discipline, develop and apply restorative justice processes and mechanisms, and engage family members in supporting students' learning experience will be designed and adequately executed.

Guaranteeing that Puerto Rican students are able to read at grade level will be one of PRDE's priorities. To ensure that a strong literacy foundation is developed, students will be served with innovative early literacy programs and interventions. Strictly following our mission, students will have the skills, tools and support to pursue their desired goals after graduating from high school.

The Special Education program will guarantee all eligible students, age 3 to 21, receive a free and adequate (in the least restrictive alternative) education. Students in the program will be prepared to make a successful transition into adult life, thanks to the adaptation of the prevocational and vocational curriculums and the availability of a new high school certificate. Reasonable accommodations and professional services will guarantee that Individualized Education Programs (IEP) at each school serve each student's needs.

A talent pipeline will be set up and PRDE will secure the conditions that allow academic innovation through the successful implementation of programs geared towards the recruitment, training and retention of effective personnel.

➤ How will it happen?	
Lines of Action	Strategies
2.1. Instructional Innovation	2.1.1. Differentiated instruction 2.1.2. Integration of technology 2.1.3. Project Based Learning
2.2. Use of Technology	2.2.1. Change the concept of learning as limited to 4 walls of a classroom 2.2.2. Provide students with learning opportunities outside of the school day 2.2.3. Data driven instruction
2.3. Early Literacy	2.3.1. Promote home based reading 2.3.2. Classroom Libraries 2.3.3. In-school Tutoring*
2.4. College and Career Readiness	2.4.1. Developing of 21st Century Skills 2.4.2. Work Based Learning
2.5. Special Education	2.5.1. Transition to adult life 2.5.2. Strengthen and improve the individualized education Programs 2.5.3. Guarantee availability and use of adequate resources
2.6. Student, Family and Community Services	2.6.1. Nurturing socioemotional skills 2.6.2. Cooperative discipline / Restorative justice 2.6.3. Family engagement
2.7. Professional Development & Instructional Leadership	2.7.1. Leadership Academies 2.7.2. Professional Development 2.7.3. Learning Communities

 How we will measure progress?		
Strategies	Metrics	Alignment with PRDE's Goals
Differentiated instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % teachers using student data to inform instruction 	1
Integration of technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % teachers using technology to enhance learning experiences 	1
Project Based Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % teachers implementing project based learning regularly in the classroom/school 	1
Change the concept of learning as limited to 4 walls of a classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average teacher survey* response on conceptions of learning Reports with satisfactory findings on instructional innovation in schools 	1
Provide students with learning opportunities outside of the school day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of students participating in out of school learning opportunities 	1
Data driven instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of teachers using student level data to plan learning and provide feedback 	1
Early Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % K-2 students reading on grade level 	1
College and Career Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of occupational experiences completed % of students taking college entrance exams 	1

Metrics identified with a (*) need to be operationalized by the PRDE / Methodology under construction

Transition to adult life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of special education students continuing studying after leaving the program ▪ % of special education students working one year after leaving the program 	1, 2
Strengthen and improve the individualized education programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of students being served with adequate accommodations ▪ Performance evaluation results for special education teachers/assistants ▪ Average parent survey* response on satisfaction with the delivery of the program 	1, 2
Guarantee availability and use of adequate resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of special education classrooms with the necessary materials ▪ % of special education teachers with the necessary materials 	1, 2
Nurturing socioemotional skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average measure of student intrapersonal and interpersonal skills (e.g. grit) self-reporting survey results* 	2
Cooperative discipline / Restorative justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rate of discipline incidents per school ▪ % of students suffering from bullying 	2


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average student climate survey* response on justice management in school 	2
Family engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average Family Engagement Index Score * ▪ Average parent climate survey* response on participation and inclusion 	1, 2
Leadership Academies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of school principals trained ▪ % of principal turnover ▪ Average score on performance evaluations / school management index* 	3
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % teachers trained ▪ % principals trained ▪ Number of regional staff / principals / teachers earning certifications 	3
Learning Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of learning communities stablished ▪ Number of innovations / outcomes / products generated by the learning communities 	3


PILLAR 3: BUSINESS OPERATIONS / ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

> What will it look like?

PRDE will achieve efficiency and sustainability in the administration and management of resources by optimizing the use of funds, improving the accounting system and streamlining and implementing improved school maintenance procedures. The PRDE financial position will be strengthened not only by adapting to the fiscal constraints that Puerto Rico faces and complying with the saving targets set upon it, but also by increasing the availability of funds coming from the federal level and private donors.

A win-win approach to the establishment of strategic alliances and the development of a consistent message to advocate for the continuous financial support of PRDE's mission will guarantee that system-wide reform efforts are sustained and that the overall goals of this strategic plan are met.

 How will it happen?	
Lines of Action	Strategies
3.1. Financial Planning and Management	3.1.1. Optimize use of funds
	3.1.2. Improve accounting systems
	3.1.3. New approach to contract practices
	3.1.4. Improved school maintenance
3.2. Federal Affairs	3.2.1. Improved use/spending federal funds
	3.2.2. Increased application for federal funds
	3.2.3. Compliant federal program implementation
3.3. Alliances	3.3.1. Stablish strategic partnerships
	3.3.2. Increase access to resources
	3.3.3. Improve public, civil society and private engagement in supporting education

 How we will measure progress?		
Strategies	Metrics	Alignment with PRDE's Goals
Optimize use of funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ROI / Policy & Program Cost-Effectiveness Analysis 	1, 2, 3, 4
Improve accounting systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ System performance* 	1, 2, 3, 4
New approach to contract practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of new contract practices set up and operating 	1, 2, 3, 4
Improved school maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average school maintenance costs ▪ Rate of compliance with school maintenance requests 	1, 2, 3, 4
Improved use/spending federal funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ROI / Policy & Program Cost-Effectiveness Analysis ▪ Compliance with spending targets 	1, 2, 3, 4
Increased application for federal funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of grant applications completed and submitted ▪ Number of grant applications awarded ▪ Nominal and percentage increase of federal funds available 	1, 2, 3, 4
Compliant federal program implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of federal program implementation reports* with satisfactory findings 	1, 2, 3, 4
Stablish strategic partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of potential allies contacted ▪ Number of alliances stablished ▪ Number of strategies/projects/initiatives being financed 	1, 2, 3, 4
Increase access to resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nominal and percentage increase in the availability of funds 	1, 2, 3, 4
Improve public, civil society and private engagement in supporting education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation rates* in stakeholder engagement activities 	1, 2, 3, 4

Metrics identified with a (*) need to be operationalized by the PRDE / Methodology under construction.



APPENDIXES

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

The Puerto Rico Department of Education submitted its Consolidated State Plan to the U.S. Department of Education following an extensive and meaningful consultation process with different education stakeholders.

For the first time in recent history, Puerto Rico has been successful in drafting a comprehensive and ambitious plan that will effectively help to close achievement gaps, increase equity, improve the quality of instruction, and guarantee that every student in Puerto Rico improves its educational attainment and is prepared for success in life after high school.

The Consolidated State Plan clearly presents the programs and initiatives that will support student learning and promote school improvement, all of which are aligned to the strategies and content included in other sections of this Strategic Plan.

In the plan, the PRDE included the following demanding yet attainable long-term goals:

- **Academic achievement**

Table 1: Proficiency rate by subject – Baseline, Interim Goals and Long Term Goal (All Students)

Subject	Baseline	Interim Goals				Long Term Goal
	2016-2017	2017 - 2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Spanish	49	55	61	67	73	80
Mathematics	33	41	49	57	65	73
English	42	49	56	63	70	77

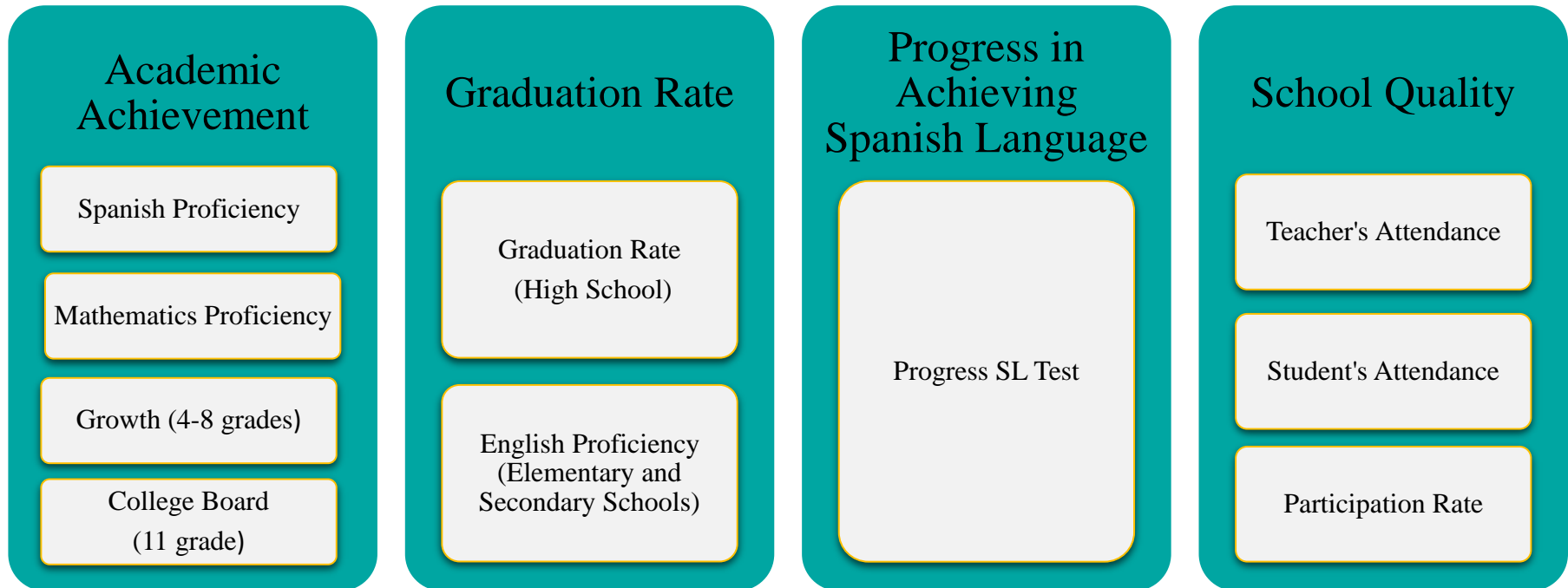
- **Graduation rate**

Table 2: Graduation rate – Baseline, Interim Goals and Long Term Goal (All Students)

	Baseline	Interim Goals				Long Term Goal
Subject	2016-2017	2017 - 2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Adjusted Graduation Rate	75	78	81	84	87	90

Another meaningful content of the Consolidated State Plan is its school accountability system. The PRDE constructed the framework to assess school performance based on four elements: coherence, comprehensiveness, freedom from bias and fairness. Consequently, it identified indicators under the following overarching categories: student academic achievement, graduation rate, progress in achieving English language proficiency, and other indicators of school quality.

Diagram 1: PRDE’s School Accountability Model



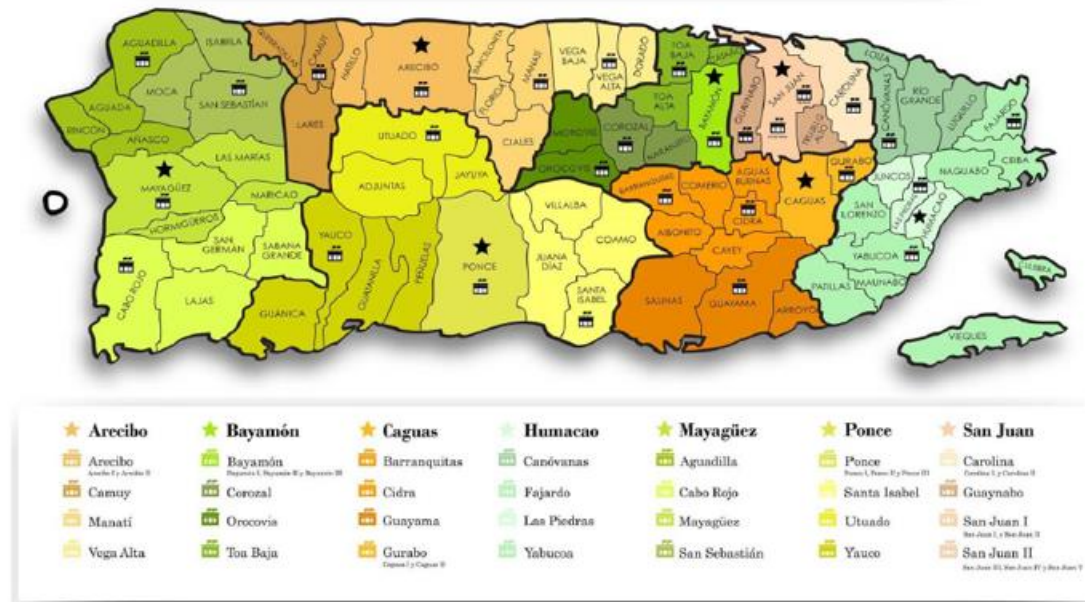
PRDE’s accountability system has been designed to factor in academic and non-academic indicators, aiming to assess the performance of schools in the system following an integral approach. In such a way, the system helps to promote mutually targets and to align stakeholders’ incentives. Its primary purpose is to serve as a tool for school improvement, decision-making and the promotion of equity in student outcomes; consequently, it plays a critical in the advancement of the strategies and achievement of the goals proposed in this Strategic Plan.

SYSTEM PROFILE – FAST FACTS¹

- Regions, school districts students and schools

For the 2017-2018 academic year, the Puerto Rico Department of Education is serving 346,096 students in 1,112 schools throughout 7 educational regions and 28 school districts.

**Puerto Rico Department of Education:
Regions and School Districts**



Legend: ★ Region (7) 🏫 District (28)

¹ All figures are reported as recorded before the hit of hurricanes Irma and Maria.



- **Staff**

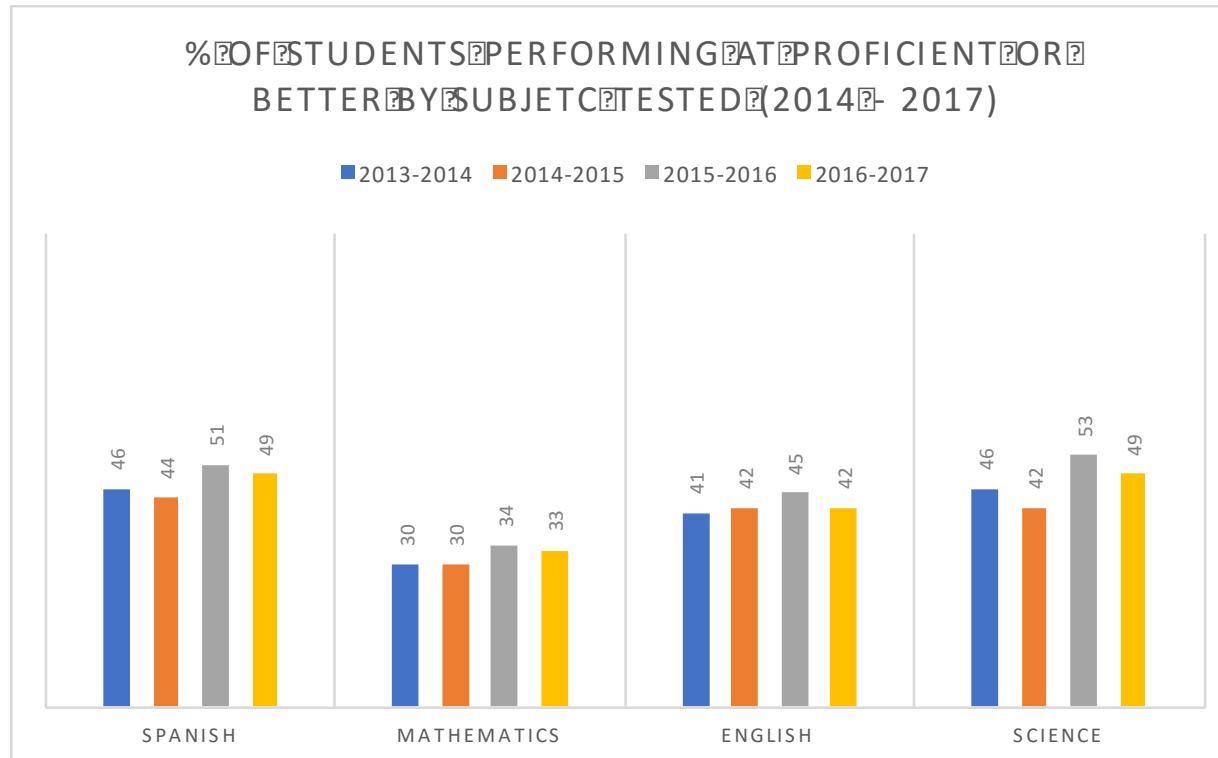
The PRDE personnel includes 29,071 teachers and 17,232 non-teaching staff. (including administrative personnel).

For the 2016-2017 teacher staff qualifications were the following:

Qualification	% of the teaching staff
Bachelor's degree	62.33%
Master's degree	30.59%
Doctorate/PhD degree	0.58%
College credits	5.08%
Unspecified	1.42%

- **Student outcomes²**

Island-wide student achievement (Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de Aprovechamiento Académico and META PR)



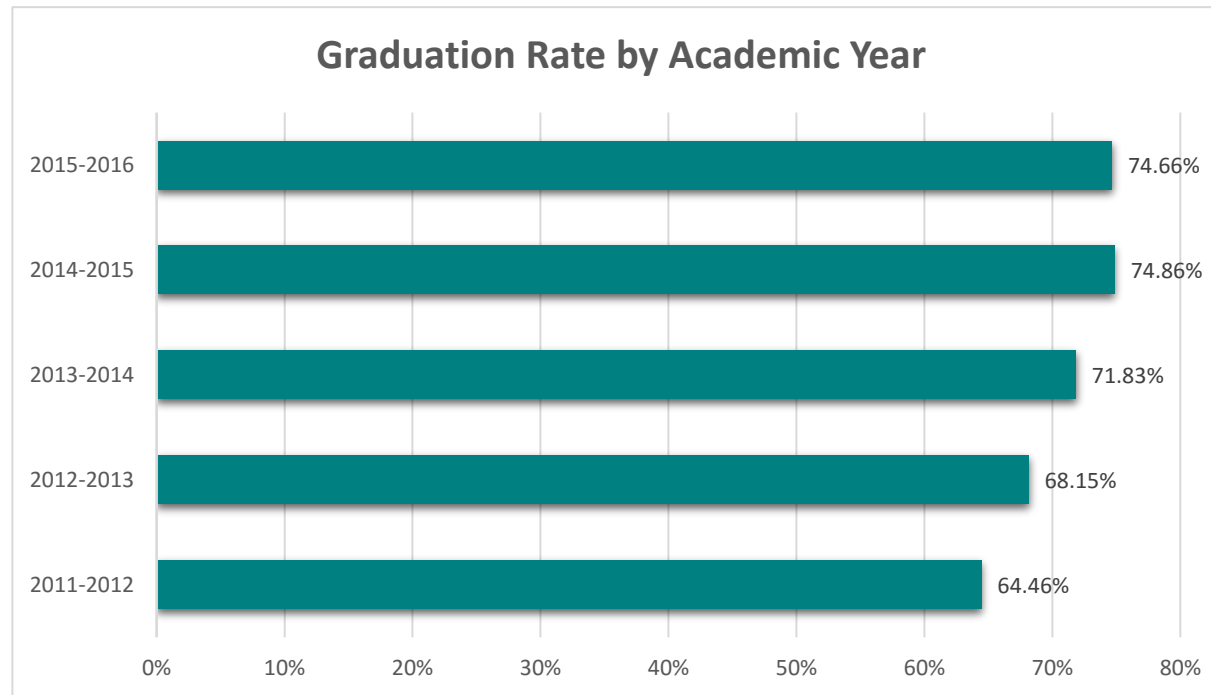
² We warn the reader of this plan to be cautious about the inferences drawn from the following section. Student achievement in Puerto Rico is assessed through standardized tests, that have changed and evolved through time. The *Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de Aprovechamiento Académico* (PPAA) were used until the 2014-2015 academic year, when the new META-PR assessment was introduced. Between the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic years META-PR had also some adjustments. This situation renders direct comparison of proficiency rates across years a difficult and risky task. We provide the figures just to provide the reader a general overview of system performance.



Meta-PR 2017: Achievement by grade and test

Grade	Test	% Proficient or Higher	Percentage Point Change (vs. Previous Year)
3	Spanish Language Arts	64%	0%
3	Mathematics	74%	-2%
3	English	55%	-3%
4	Spanish Language Arts	55%	+1%
4	Mathematics	62%	-3%
4	English	40%	-2%
4	Science	65%	-4%
5	Spanish Language Arts	50%	-2%
5	Mathematics	45%	-2%
5	English	44%	0%
6	Spanish Language Arts	43%	-6%
6	Mathematics	19%	-2%
6	English	44%	-6%
7	Spanish Language Arts	43%	-2%
7	Mathematics	10%	+1%
7	English	34%	-2%
8	Spanish Language Arts	43%	-3%
8	Mathematics	10%	0%
8	English	38%	-2%
8	Science	35%	-3%
11	Spanish Language Arts	44%	-1%
11	Mathematics	10%	+3%
11	English	42%	-4%
11	Science	45%	-7%

Graduation Rate: Island-Wide



- **Special Education**

About 144,336 students age 3 to 21 were served by the Associated Secretary of Special Education during the academic year 2016-2017, for about 39.5% of total enrollment.

- **Class sizes**

The teacher student ratio in Puerto Rico is 12:1 in sharp contrast to the U.S. mainland average of 16:1. Maximum class sizes have been set at 25 for grades K through 3 and at 30 for grades 4 through 12.

- **Budget & Per Pupil Expenditure**

The PRDE consolidated budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year is \$2,628,835,000.00 which amounts to a per pupil expenditure of \$7,502.45, of which schools receive \$3,692.13 for operational expenditures (equivalent to 49%).

