

## Support policies that improve Student Achievement

PSEA envisions schools with comprehensive supports for children with special emotional, physical, and academic needs. We support expansions in learning opportunities with ties to real-world careers, and classrooms where learning is differentiated using well-developed diagnostic tools that inform instruction. We envision a time when every student has access to technology that is up-to-date and appropriately complements classroom learning.

From pre-k through their post-secondary years, Pennsylvania's students learn in some of the finest public schools in the nation. Educators are well-trained and highly motivated. Curriculum is strong, and achievement – measured by multiple indicators – is high and growing higher. But, as every educator knows, there is always room for improvement.

PSEA supports policies that will build on a foundation of successful teaching and learning in the Commonwealth's public schools, where *students are making progress*.

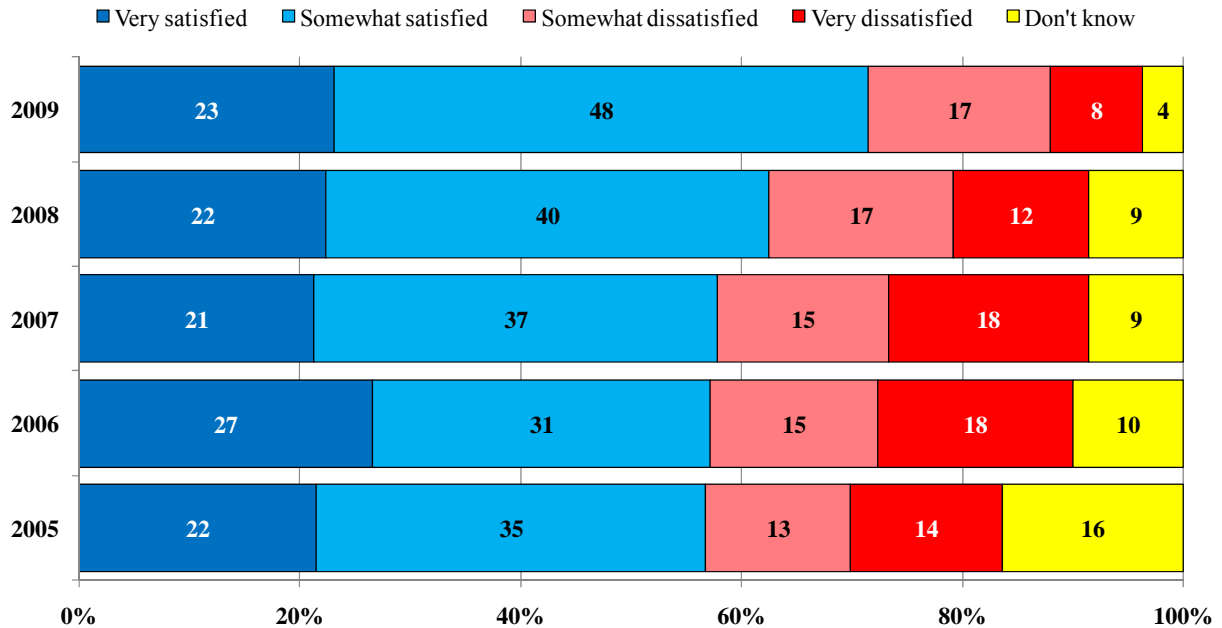


- A report released in August by the Center on Education Policy shows Pennsylvania students were the only students in the nation to make gains in all academic categories from 2002-2008.
- On National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests, Pennsylvania's students' reading and math scores are among the nation's best for fourth and eighth grades (the two years in which they are tested).
- More students plan to go to college than ever before – 70 percent of high school graduates plan to continue their education.

Nearly every one of Pennsylvania's 500 school districts now has at least one full-day kindergarten class, which research has shown to significantly boost achievement in higher grades. More students in more districts should have access to this opportunity. State

investments in smaller class sizes have meant that more than 6,000 students are in classes where educators can more closely focus on their learning needs. More children in more districts should have the opportunity for smaller classes.

## Pennsylvanians are increasingly satisfied with the public schools in their communities.



Source: 2005 – 2009 Terry Madonna Omnibus Polls

Pennsylvanians appreciate their schools' progress. A recent Omnibus Public Opinion Poll by Terry Madonna Opinion Research found a 71 percent public approval rating for public schools. This is a 14 percent increase over 2005 results. Still, with increased supports and research-based policies, we can do even better.

The comprehensive recommendations on the following pages provide a sound approach for implementing best practices and strategies to turn PSEA's vision into a reality.

(01/10)