



Using PVAAS to Inform Individual Student Schedules and Academic Course Placement

Is it time to create student schedules and course placement decisions for the upcoming school year? If so, PVAAS student projections can help!

This resource explains the power behind the use of **individual student projections**. Also included are examples illustrating how PVAAS student projections, when combined with other data, provide an important source of data to inform course placement and scheduling decisions.

The following questions are addressed:

1. [What are PVAAS individual student projections?](#)
2. [What are the types of scheduling/course placement decisions that can be informed and enhanced with PVAAS individual student projections?](#)
3. [Why is it so important to consider PVAAS individual student projections along with other data sources when developing individual student schedules and course placement decisions?](#)

1. What are PVAAS individual student projections?

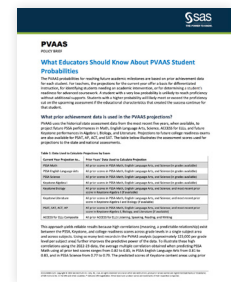
PVAAS projections provide the most likely outcome for a student when taking a future state assessment. Individual student projections are available for students in grade 4 and higher, with projections to the PSSA, Keystone exams, AP courses, and PSAT, SAT and ACT. PVAAS projections have been reviewed and approved by four different peer review panels and the US Government Accountability Office.

Which PVAAS Reports?

There are several PVAAS reports useful for informing student course placement/scheduling decisions. This resource focuses on two PVAAS projection reports:

1. Student Report and
2. Child Success Summary.

PVAAS projections, even for 3 years into the future, are more reliable at projecting future performance than the most recent state assessment score.



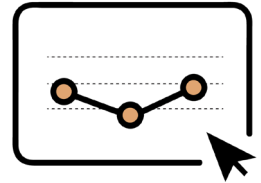
For more information, download [What Educators Should Know About PVAAS Student Probabilities \(PDF\)](#) >

<https://pvaas.sas.com/support/PVAAS-StudentProbabilities.pdf>

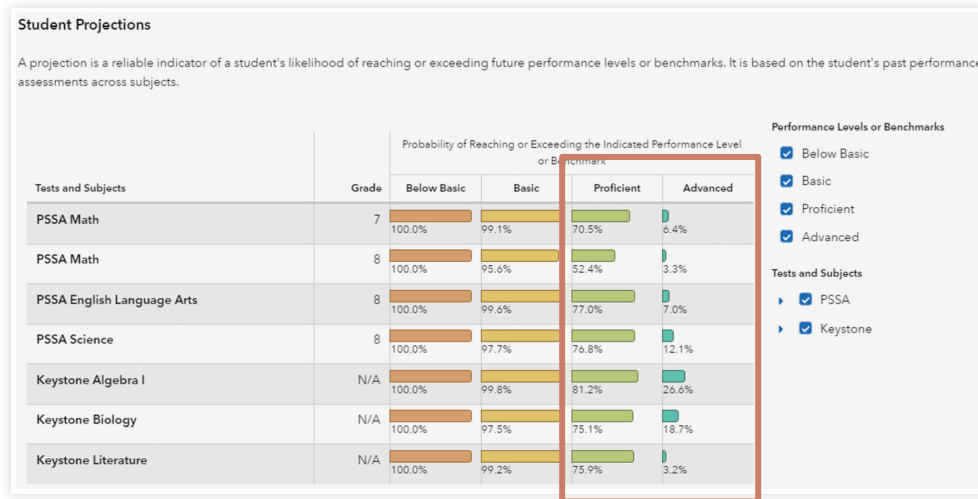


Student Report:

The PVAAS Student Report is helpful for teachers, administrators, school counselors and others involved with course placement and scheduling decisions. The PVAAS Student Report allows an educator to focus on an individual student by providing multiple filters and tabs that enable specific data views for analysis. This report is helpful to teachers, school counselors, and LEA/school administrators in that it allows the user to choose the performance level as well as the tests and subjects to obtain a student’s projection data.

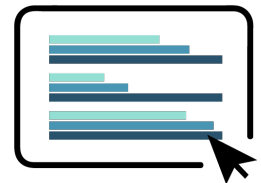


In the example below, the student has a 70.5% probability of scoring proficient or higher on the upcoming 7th grade PSSA Math assessment and less than a .4% likelihood of scoring advanced on that same assessment.

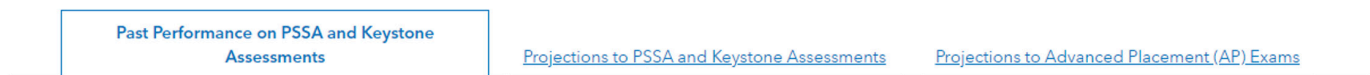


Child Success Summary:

The Child Success Summary is useful for school counselors, teachers, administrators and students and families. It is particularly helpful when working with students and families in that it provides a great deal of information in one place! Each student with sufficient testing history has an individual Child Success Summary report that provides historical achievement data as well as projections to upcoming assessments. LEAs can choose to share a student’s Child Success Summary with the student and his/her family.



When viewing an individual student’s Child Success Summary, the viewer sees three tabs:



Each of these tabs provides very specific achievement information, illustrating the child’s past performance on statewide assessments, his/her projections to upcoming state assessments, and projection to AP exams. The user can toggle back and forth to view the relevant information.



STOP AND THINK: Are scheduling/course placement decision-makers in your LEA/school aware of and knowledgeable of the PVAAS Student History report and the Child Success Summary report?



2. What are the types of scheduling/course placement decisions that can be informed and enhanced using PVAAS individual student projections?

Typically, planning a student’s schedule and/or course placement requires consideration of the following:

1. Is the student in need of additional supports, i.e. intervention or enrichment services?
2. What academic courses should the student take in the upcoming year?
3. Should the student be considered for advancing more quickly through the typical academic pathways?

Here are some example questions related to each of these three categories:

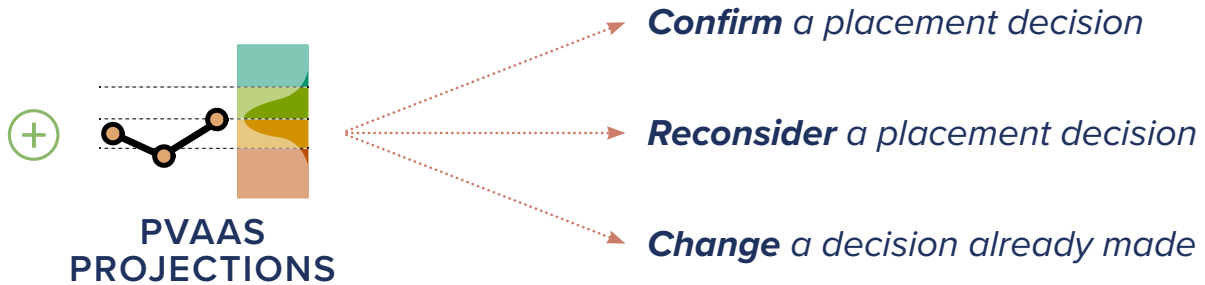
Intervention/Enrichment Supports	Course Placement	Advanced Course Decisions
Should the student be scheduled for intervention next year in (subject)?	What math course in the math pathway best fits the student’s needs?	What AP course(s) are potential “fits” for the student?
Should student (name) be scheduled for enrichment next year in (subject)?	In what grade should the student take the Keystone Algebra course?	Should the student be enrolled in an Honors course in (subject)?
In which classroom (teacher) or section should this student be placed?	What does the student’s achievement history and PVAAS projection data indicate for college and career planning?	



STOP AND THINK: *What questions does your LEA/school have that mirror those in the chart? Do you have additional questions?*

3. Why is it so important to consider PVAAS individual student projections along with other data sources in the student scheduling and course placement process?

PVAAS projections, even for 3 years into the future, are more reliable at projecting future performance than the most recent state assessment score. Whether you have already made a placement decision or are still determining a placement, individual student projections can add a piece of data that may impact the student course placement planning. It may help to confirm a placement decision, indicate a need to rethink a decision, or even change an existing decision.



In considering the use of PVAAS individual student projections and/or enhancing their use, it is first important to identify how course placement/scheduling decisions are typically made in your LEA/school. Typically, these decisions are made by analyzing individual student data points, such as:

- Last PSSA/Keystone performance level
- Historical PSSA/Keystone data
- Grades, current and historical
- Recommendation from teacher(s)
- History of placement in intervention/enrichment
- Local benchmark and/or diagnostic assessment results
- Family/parent makes a request
- Self-selects courses of interest
- Other data?



STOP AND THINK: How does your LEA/school currently make student course placement and scheduling decisions?



NEXT: Let's look at some examples of how adding student projections to the data sources has the potential to inform and enhance the academic placement scheduling decisions for individual students.

(The purpose of these examples is not to provide the answer to this situation, but to indicate how using PVAAS projection data may change and/or enhance the conversation relative to academic scheduling.)

Example #1: Intervention/Enrichment Supports

Esther is currently enrolled in 4th grade.

Placement Question: *Should Esther be considered for ELA intervention services in her upcoming 5th grade year?*

The data illustrated shows two decision making charts, with the first chart showing the school's traditionally used data sources and the second chart adding the student's PVAAS projection data.

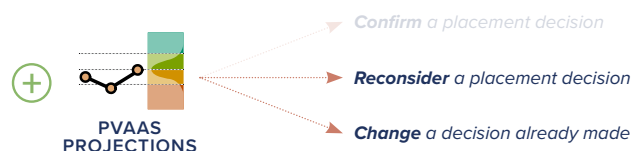


CHART #1	
PSSA - ELA, Grade 3	Proficient (borderline)
Acadience, Mid Yr Benchmark (Gr. 4)	High Strategic
Report card grades (ELA, Gr. 4)	A's
Teacher recommendation	Not recommended for intervention; student highly motivated, responds to classroom differentiation

Possible Decision: No 5th grade intervention needed, based on these data sources. Teacher recommendation and PSSA 3rd grade score support this decision.

CHART #2	
PSSA - ELA, Grade 3	Proficient (borderline)
Acadience, Mid Yr Benchmark (Gr. 4)	High Strategic
Report card grades (ELA, Gr. 4)	A's
Teacher recommendation	Not recommended for intervention; student highly motivated, responds to classroom differentiation
+ PVAAS Projection to Gr. 4 ELA PSSA	65% likelihood of achieving Proficiency or higher on gr. 4 ELA
+ PVAAS Projection to Gr. 5 ELA PSSA	50% likelihood of achieving Proficiency or higher on gr. 5 ELA

Possible Decision: With PVAAS projection data added to the data story, it is likely that the team may **reconsider and/or change** the decision, and schedule the student for ELA intervention in grade 5.





Example #2: Course Placement

Bennett is currently enrolled in grade 6 Honors Math. Bennett’s teacher is leaning towards a recommendation for Pre-Algebra but has come to the counselor and her department chair for further advice.



Placement Question: *Should Bennett be enrolled in 7th grade Pre-Algebra or Algebra I?*

Using data, let’s look at the contrast between the data typically used at his school to make the placement decision as well as what the data story looks like when PVAAS projection data is added.

CHART #1	
PSSA - Gr. 5 Math	Low Advanced
Mid Yr. Local Benchmark (Gr. 6)	On level
Grades (Honors Math 6)	Low B Average
Teacher recommendation	Pre-Algebra

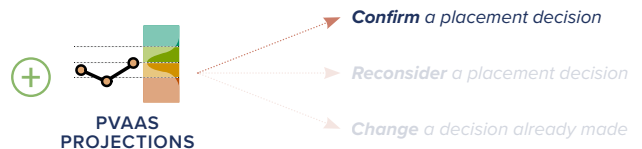
Possible Decision: With teacher leaning toward recommending Pre-Algebra and relying on report card grades, decision might be to **place in 7th grade Pre-Algebra instead of Algebra.**



STOP AND THINK: *How might the use of PVAAS individual student projections inform/enhance your academic placement scheduling decisions?*

CHART #2	
PSSA - Gr. 5 Math	Low Advanced
Mid Yr. Local Benchmark (Gr. 6)	On level
Grades (Honors Math 6)	Low B Average
Teacher recommendation	Pre-Algebra
+ PVAAS Projection to Gr. 6 PSSA Math	88% likelihood of reaching Proficient or higher
+ PVAAS Projection to Gr. 7 PSSA Math	74% likelihood of reaching Proficient or higher
+ PVAAS Projection to Algebra	79% likelihood of reaching Proficient or Advanced
+ Child Success Summary	72% likelihood of scoring a 3 or higher on AP English Language and Composition

Possible Decision: By adding the student’s PVAAS projection data for his current 6th grade year, then his 7th grade year, and then his Algebra projection, **the scheduling team confirms the 7th grade Pre-Algebra placement.**





Next Steps:

Whether it is brand-new to you to think about using PVAAS projections for academic placement scheduling decisions (along with other data), or you are reinforcing the use of this data, the following are next steps to consider taking with your team:

- **Ensure that team members have access to PVAAS projection data**, including teachers, counselors, and LEA/district and school administrators.
- **Provide professional learning opportunities** on how to interpret PVAAS projection reports and how to use them in individual student course placement/scheduling process.
- **Make a local decision as to if, when, and how** the PVAAS Child Success Summary report will be made available to students and families.
- **Determine and communicate importance and reliability** of PVAAS projections as one important piece of data that enhances the student course placement and scheduling process.
- **Form a committee to develop criteria** for course placement that includes PVAAS projections and provides weighting and appropriate balance of PVAAS projections along with other data sources.
- **Ensure that PVAAS projections are part of the induction/mentoring program.**
- ... and more! What other ways can you plan to integrate PVAAS projections into your student course placement decisions?

Visit pa.gov/education for additional resources on this topic.