

Academic and Science Indicators Participation Rate Calculation for the Dashboard



The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires all states to test at least 95 percent of all students and student groups in English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics. It also requires states to factor the participation rate into their accountability systems, which, for California, is the Academic Indicator. The Academic Indicator is based on the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and the California Alternate Assessments (CAAs) for ELA and mathematics. Though there is no federal requirement to test at least 95 percent of all students on the California Science Test or the CAA for Science, the California State Board of Education chose to enact a minimum participation rate for all local educational agencies (LEAs), schools, and student groups across the state. Therefore, the ELA, mathematics, and science assessments require at least 95 percent of all students are tested.

For any LEA, school, or student group with less than 95 percent of students tested, ESSA requires a penalty to be applied to the Academic Indicator and the SBE requires a penalty to be applied to the Science Indicator. To meet these requirements, California assigns the Lowest Obtainable Scale Score (LOSS) to each student needed to bring the participation rate of the LEA, school, and/or student group to 95 percent. The LOSS assigned to each of these students who did not test will be used in calculating the Distance from Standard (DFS) or Science Points (SPs). Note that the assignment of a LOSS for the students who did not test occurs only when the California Department of Education (CDE) calculates the California School Dashboard (Dashboard) Academic and Science Indicators. Students who did not test **will not** receive a LOSS on their individual California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) student score reports or in the CAASPP Student Score Data File.

2025 Dashboard Participation Rate Calculation

The 2025 methodology calculates the number of students needed to bring the participation rate of the LEA, school, or student group to 95 percent. Each of these students will be assigned the following DFS or SPs score based on their assessment:

- ELA: 333 points below standard
- Mathematics: 348 points below standard
- Science: 0 SPs

Example Unified LEA Using 2025 Participation Rate Penalty Calculation for ELA

LEA Information	Participation Rate Penalty Methodology
Number of students enrolled during the testing window in grades three through eight and grade eleven at the Unified LEA who are eligible to participate in the ELA summative and alternate assessments	355 students

LEA Information	Participation Rate Penalty Methodology
Number of testing students needed to meet the 95 percent participation rate target	338 students ($355 \times 0.95 = 337.25$ rounded to 338)
Number of students tested Tested students' DFS before the penalty	268 students 4,355 points
Difference between number of students needed to meet 95 percent and number of students tested	70 students (338 students needed minus 268 students tested)
Participation rate penalty calculation	Each of the 70 students will be assigned a LOSS and receive a DFS of 333 points below standard (DFS for ELA) $70 \times (-333) = -23,310$ penalty
Adjusted DFS calculation	4,355 (DFS without penalty) $-23,310$ (participation rate penalty) = $-18,955$
Final DFS calculation	$-18,955 \div 338$ (number of students needed to meet 95 percent target) = -56.08 The LEA's DFS is rounded to -56.1 points from Achievement Level 3 Standard Met

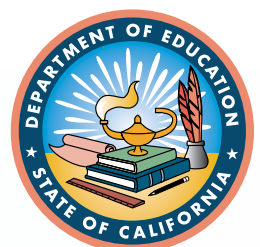
Example Middle School Using 2025 Participation Rate Penalty Calculation for Science

School Information	Participation Rate Penalty Methodology
Number of students enrolled during the testing window in grade eight at the middle school who are eligible to participate in the science summative and alternate assessments	225 students
Number of testing students needed to meet the 95 percent participation rate target	214 students ($225 \times 0.95 = 213.75$ rounded to 214)

School Information	Participation Rate Penalty Methodology
Number of students tested	189 students
Tested students' SPs before the penalty	10,017 SPs
Difference between number of students needed to meet 95 percent and number of students tested	25 students (214 students needed minus 189 students tested)
Participation rate penalty calculation	Each of the 25 students will be assigned a LOSS of 0 SPs
Final SPs calculation	$10,017 \div 214$ (number of students needed to meet 95 percent target) = 46.81 The school's SPs are rounded to 46.8 SPs

For more information, please visit the [CDE California School Dashboard and System of Support web page](#).

Contact the Analysis, Measurement, and Accountability Reporting Division by email at dashboard@cde.ca.gov.



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