Department of Research and Evaluation
AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) in Austin Independent School District

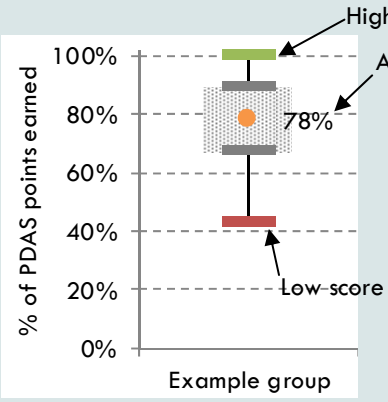
INTRODUCTION

Administrators in the Austin Independent School District (AISD) have used the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS)[1] to evaluate teachers in AISD since 1994. Until 2011–2012, teachers new to the profession and new to the district generally were evaluated each year for 3 consecutive years, followed by evaluations every third year. Other teachers were evaluated on 3-year cycles according to contract renewal timelines, with some exceptions.[2] Beginning in 2011–2012, all teachers were evaluated each year. This report describes the distribution of PDAS scores for each level, for novice teachers, and longitudinally. In addition, this report describes the relationship between PDAS and student growth (see Appendix A for methodology).

OVERVIEW OF 2011–2012 PDAS SCORES IN AISD

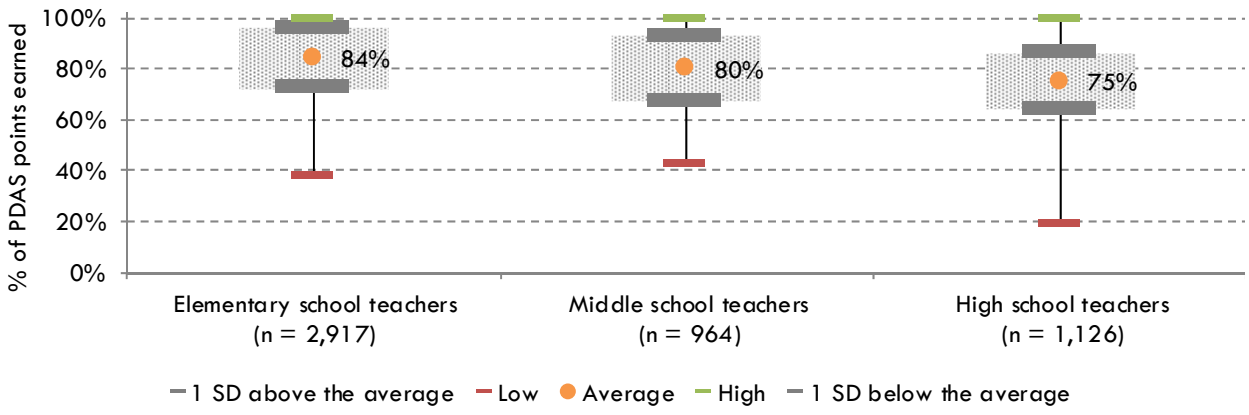
PDAS scores differed by level, with the highest mean scores for teachers at the elementary level, followed by those at the middle and high school levels (Figure 1). Scores varied more and included slightly lower ratings at the high school level than at the elementary and middle school levels. The range of total scores was similar for elementary and middle school teachers; however, mean scores were lower for middle school teachers than for elementary teachers on each domain and overall (Figures 2 and 3).

Interpreting Figures in This Report



The gray box shows the range of 1 standard deviation (SD) around the average. Approximately 16% of teachers scored above and 16% scored below this range.

Figure 1. Average and Range of the Percentage of PDAS Points Teachers Earned, by School Level, Spring 2012



Source. 2011–2012 PDAS
Note. SD = standard deviation

[1] For more information see http://www4.esc13.net/pdas/

[2] Teachers with certification by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards were exempted from evaluation for 5 years, and administrators could evaluate other teachers any year at their discretion.

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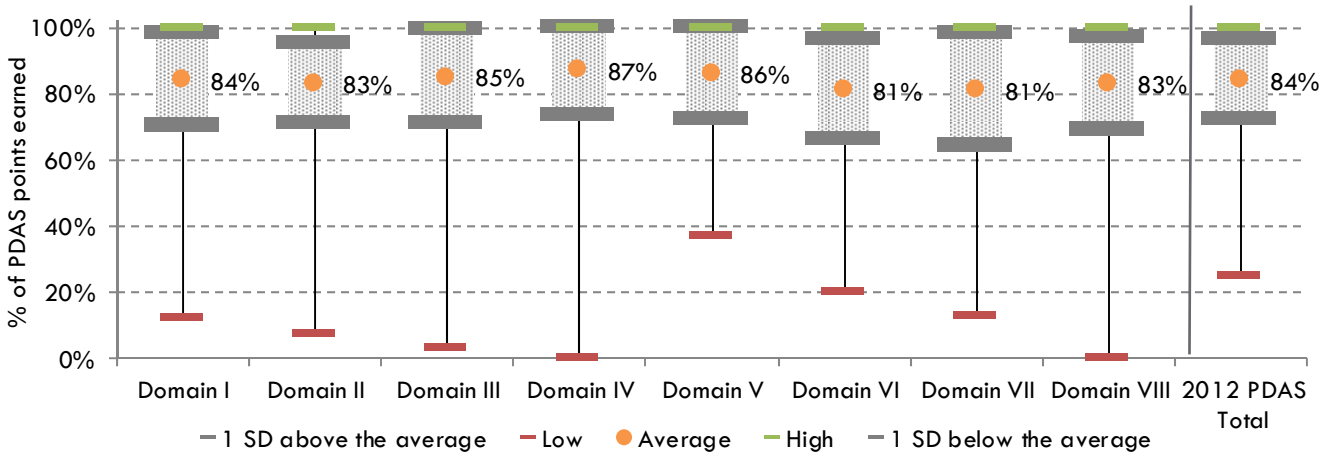
Results for elementary school teachers. Elementary teachers earned, on average, 81% or more of all possible points on each PDAS domain and 84% overall (Figure 2). Scores were concentrated above 64% for each domain. Some teachers did, however, earn scores less than a standard deviation below the mean (i.e., below the gray box shown around the mean). Scores ranged most widely for Domains IV (Management of Student Discipline, Instructional Strategies, Time/Materials) and VIII (Improvement of All Students' Academic Performance), which included scores from 0% to 100%. Scores were least varied for Domain V (Professional Communication).

Figure 2. Average and Range of the Percentage of PDAS Points Elementary School Teachers Earned (*n* = 2,917), by Domain and Overall, Spring 2012

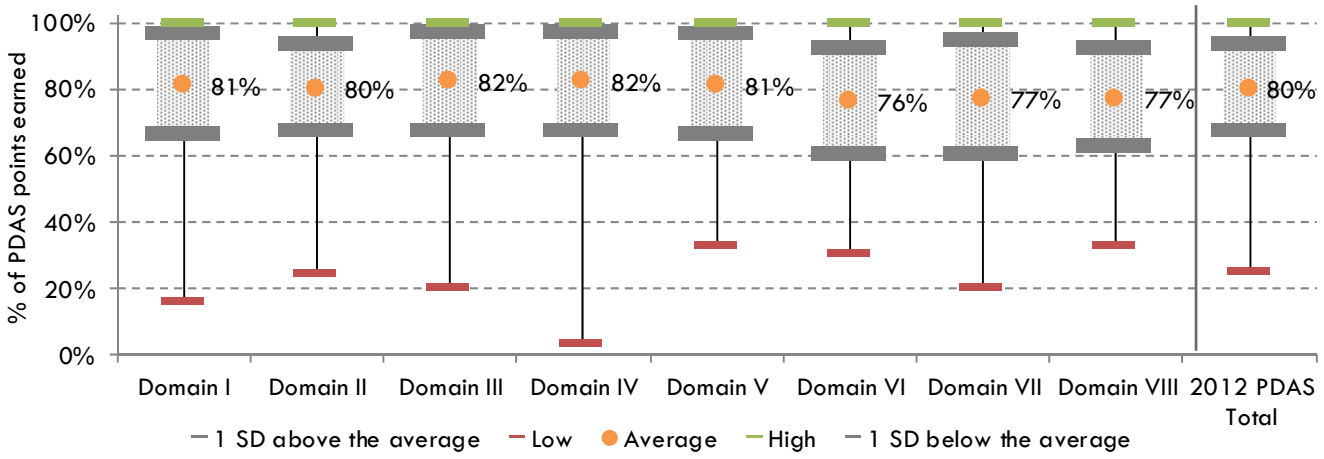


Domain I: Active, Successful Student Participation in the Learning Process
Domain II: Learner-centered Instruction
Domain III: Evaluation and Feedback on Student Progress
Domain IV: Management of Student Discipline, Instructional Strategies, Time/Materials
Domain V: Professional Communication
Domain VI: Professional Development
Domain VII: Compliance with Policies, Operating Procedures and Requirements
Domain VIII: Improvement of All Students' Academic Performance

Source. 2011–2012 PDAS
Note. SD = standard deviation

Results for middle school teachers. Middle school teachers earned, on average, 80% of possible points overall (Figure 3). Scores were concentrated above 60% for each domain. Some teachers, did, however earn scores less than a standard deviation below the mean. Scores ranged most widely for Domains IV (Management of Student Discipline, Instructional Strategies, Time/Materials) and I (Active, Successful Student Participation in the Learning Process), which included scores from 0% to 100%. Scores were least varied for Domains V (Professional Communication) and VIII (Improvement of All Students' Academic Performance).

Figure 3. Average and Range of the Percentage of PDAS Points Middle School Teachers Earned (*n* = 964), by Domain and Overall, Spring 2012

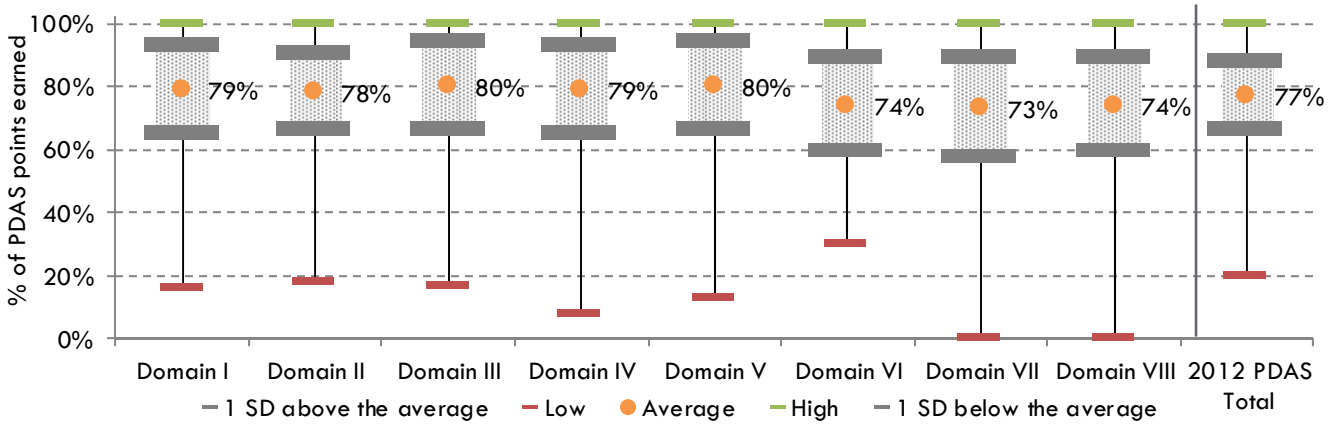


Domain I: Active, Successful Student Participation in the Learning Process
Domain II: Learner-centered Instruction
Domain III: Evaluation and Feedback on Student Progress
Domain IV: Management of Student Discipline, Instructional Strategies, Time/Materials
Domain V: Professional Communication
Domain VI: Professional Development
Domain VII: Compliance with Policies, Operating Procedures and Requirements
Domain VIII: Improvement of All Students' Academic Performance

Source. 2011–2012 PDAS
Note. SD = standard deviation

Results for high school teachers. High school teachers earned, on average, 73% or more of all possible points on each PDAS domain and 77% overall (Figure 4). Scores were concentrated above 57% for each domain. Some teachers, however, earned scores less than a standard deviation below the mean. Scores ranged most widely for Domains VII (Compliance with Policies, Operating Procedures and Requirements) and VIII (Improvement of All Students' Academic Performance), which included scores from 0% to 100%. Scores were least varied for Domain VI (Professional Development).

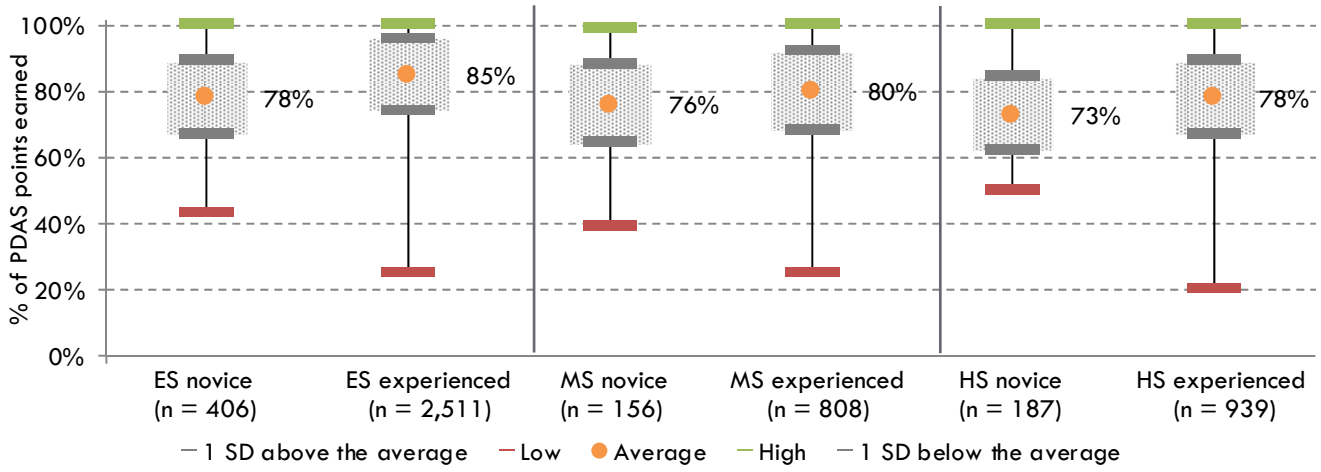
Figure 4. Average and Range of the Percentage of PDAS Points High School Teachers Earned (*n* = 1,126), by Domain and Overall, Spring 2012



Source. 2011–2012 PDAS
Note. SD = standard deviation

Results for novice teachers. Novice teachers earned fewer points, on average, than did more experienced teachers at each level. However, scores were more varied for experienced teachers than for novice teachers (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Average and Range of the Percentage of PDAS Points Novice and Experienced Teachers Earned, by School Level, Spring 2012



Source. 2011–2012 PDAS
Note. SD = standard deviation
ES = elementary school, MS = middle school, HS = high school

LONGITUDINAL PDAS SCORES

A subset of 2,335 elementary, middle, and high school teachers had PDAS scores from both Spring 2012 and Spring 2011. The correlation between PDAS from year to year is presented in Table 1 for each level. Results suggest a moderate relationship between scores from one year to the next. Score ranges suggest a similar pattern of PDAS ratings over time for high school teachers, but a greater range of ratings in Spring 2012 than in the previous year for elementary and middle school teachers (Figure 6). However, the mean and standard deviations of PDAS scores were similar each year for all levels.

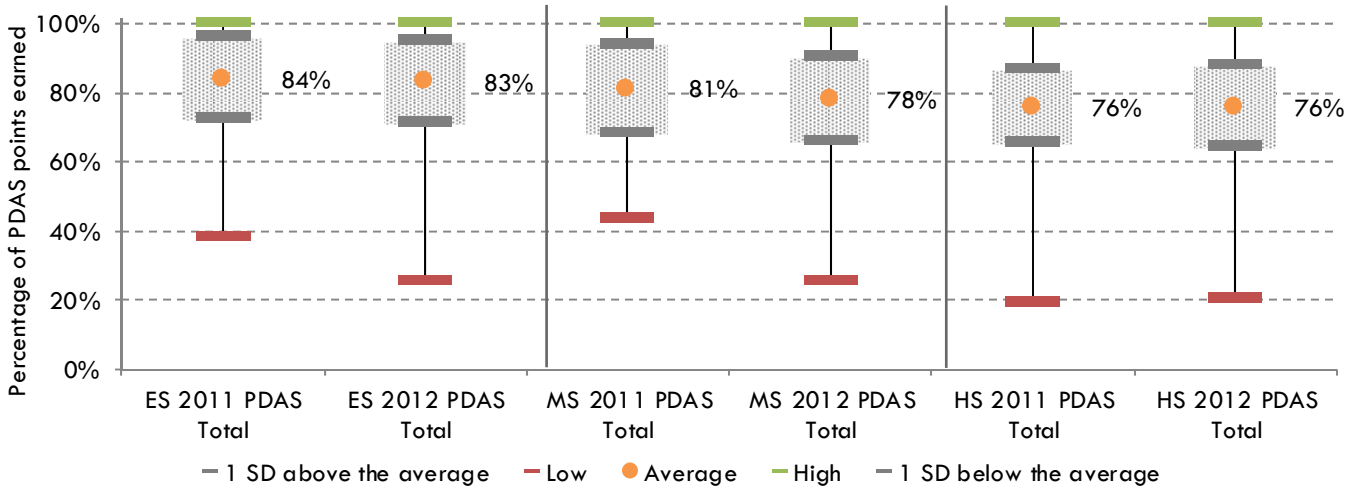
Table 1. Pearson's *r* Correlations Between Teachers' PDAS Scores, by School Level, Spring 2011 and Spring 2012

	PDAS 2012		
	Elementary	Middle	High
PDAS 2011	.66*	.54*	.63*
n	1,299	506	530

*$p < .01$

Source. 2010–2011 and 2011–2012 PDAS

Figure 6. Average and Range of the Percentage of PDAS Points Teachers With Data for Both Years Earned, by School Level, Spring 2011 and Spring 2012



Source. 2010–2011 and 2011–2012 PDAS
Note. SD = standard deviation
ES = elementary school, MS = middle school, HS = high school

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' PDAS AND EVAAS® STUDENT GROWTH SCORES

Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS®) growth scores indicating the extent to which their students demonstrated in growth relative to their peers in Texas (elementary and middle school) or in AISD (high school) were computed for teachers of students in reading/English language arts (ELA) and/or mathematics (math) in grades 4 through 9. Teachers' scores for up to 3 years were averaged to obtain the most stable estimates available for each teacher (see Appendix). Teachers' EVAAS student growth scores for math or reading/ELA and PDAS scores were available for a subset of teachers (n = 772 and n = 845, respectively). Correlations were performed to determine the extent to which teachers' appraisal and student growth scores were related (Table 2).

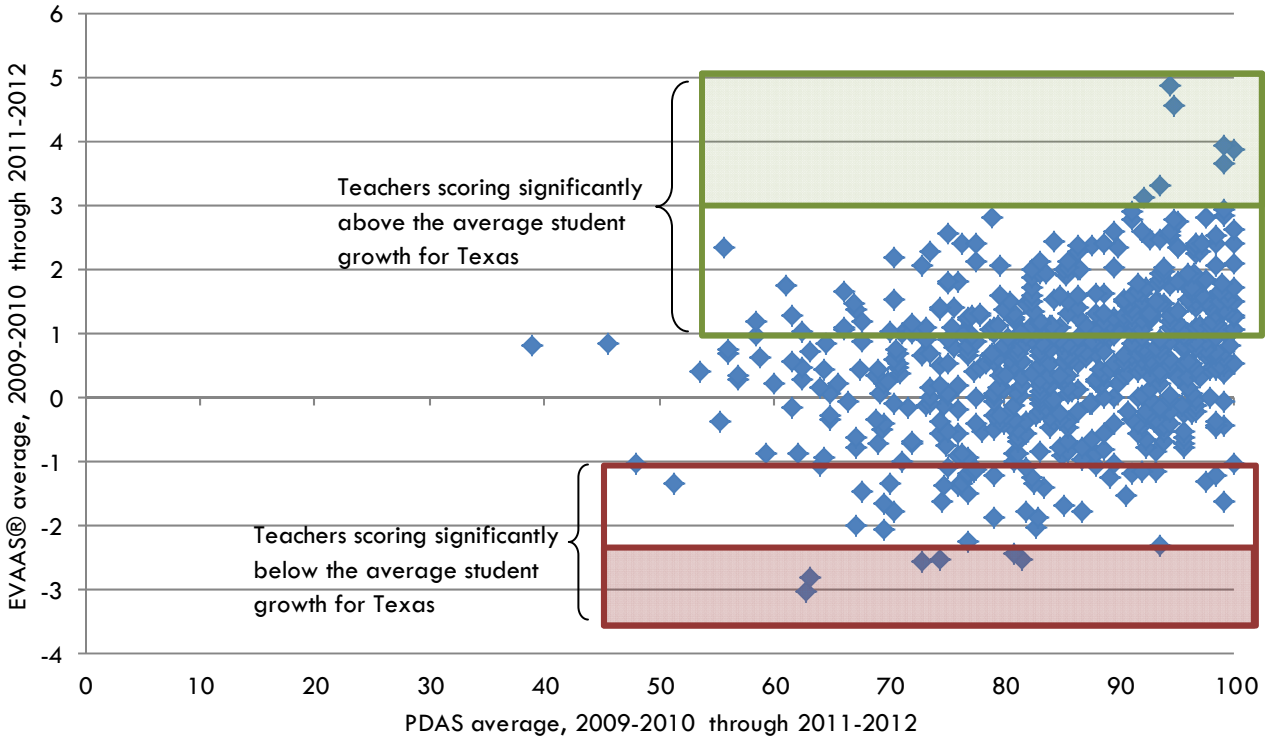
Table 2. Pearson's r Correlations Between 3-Year Average PDAS Scores and 3-Year Average EVAAS® Student Growth Scores for Teachers, by School Level

	EVAAS® Average, 2009–2010 through 2011–2012					
	Mathematics			Reading/English language arts		
	Elementary (grades 4–6)	Middle (grades 6–8)	High (grade 9)	Elementary (grades 4–6)	Middle (grades 6–8)	High (grade 9)
PDAS average, 2009–2010 through 2011–2012	.32**	.44**	.53**	.28**	.30**	.31*
n	532	177	63	615	179	51

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

Note. High school data include only 1 year of EVAAS® for 9th grade teachers in 2011–2012. Elementary and middle school data include 4th through 8th grade teachers with EVAAS® for 1 or more years from 2009–2010 through 2011–2012. PDAS averages may include 1, 2, or 3 years of data.

Figure 7. Scatterplot of 3-Year Average PDAS Scores and 3-Year Average Reading EVAAS® Student Growth Scores for Elementary Teachers



Source. 2009–2010, 2010–2011, and 2011–2012 PDAS and EVAAS
Note. Green shading = highest EVAAS scores, red shading = lowest EVAAS scores

Results indicate a weak-to-moderate relationship between the two measures of teacher performance, with slightly stronger relationships at the secondary levels than at the elementary level, and stronger relationships for math than for reading/ELA. The relationship between PDAS and EVAAS was weakest for elementary reading teachers (r = .28). Figure 7 shows that the elementary reading teachers with the highest average EVAAS scores (shaded in green) all earned an average of 92% of possible points on PDAS during the same time period, while those with the lowest average EVAAS scores (shaded in red) earned between 62% and 82% of possible PDAS points, on average. However, most teachers earned between 62% and 100% on PDAS.

The correlations between PDAS and EVAAS scores were similar for novice and experienced teachers within the elementary and high school levels, though the relationships between PDAS and EVAAS differed in magnitude for novice and experienced middle school teachers (Table 3). All correlations were in the weak-to-moderate range.

Table 3. Pearson's *r* Correlations Between 3-Year Average PDAS Scores and 3-Year Average EVAAS® Student Growth Scores for Novice and Experienced Teachers, by School Level

	EVAAS® average, 2009–2010 through 2011–2012					
	Mathematics			Reading/ELA		
	Elementary (grades 4–6)	Middle (grades 6–8)	High (grade 9)	Elementary (grades 4–6)	Middle (grades 6–8)	High (grade 9)
Novice PDAS average, 2009–2010 through 2011–2012	.29**	.28	.47	.19	.66**	.23
n	94	31	13	103	28	7
Experienced PDAS average, 2009–2010 through 2011–2012	.31**	.48**	.46**	.27**	.25**	.31*
n	438	146	50	512	151	44

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
Source. 2009–2010, 2010–2011, and 2011–2012 PDAS and EVAAS
Note. High school data include only 1 year of EVAAS for 9th grade teachers in 2011–2012. Elementary and middle school data include 4th through 8th grade teachers with EVAAS for 1 or more years from 2009–2010 through 2011–2012. PDAS averages may include 1, 2, or 3 years of data.

CONCLUSION

Overall, in 2011–2012 elementary teachers were rated highest on PDAS, followed by middle and high school teachers. Although the means and standard deviations of PDAS scores were similar in 2010–2011 and 2011–2012, scores varied more at the elementary and middle school levels in 2011–2012 than they did in the previous year. Despite similar means and standard deviations each year, correlations for PDAS scores from year to year were moderate, ranging from .54 at the middle school level to .66 at the elementary level. Thus, teachers experienced some movement among their peers from one year to the next. PDAS ratings may differ over time due to tendencies of different raters or due to actual changes in teachers' performance. Further examination of teachers who improved or declined significantly may reveal similarities with respect to their professional development, their school administrators, or other characteristics.

Novice teachers generally did not perform as well as did their more experienced peers on PDAS. However, it is noteworthy that some novice teachers performed as well as or better than teachers with more experience, and some experienced teachers performed worse than the novice teachers with the lowest scores.

Data suggest a weak-to-moderate relationship between 3-year averages of teachers' PDAS scores and EVAAS student growth scores for both novice and experienced teachers. Although student growth scores were computed only for a limited number of teachers, they may provide additional useful information about teachers' performance over time.

APPENDIX

Methodology. The PDAS includes scores for eight domains, each with different possible point totals. Possible point totals for the various domains range from 15 (Domain VII) to 45 (Domains II and VIII). Thus, meaningful comparisons of performance across domains were not possible with raw point totals. Additionally, possible point totals for Domain VIII differed for teachers new to the school and those who were a member of the school faculty the previous year. For these reasons, PDAS total scores were adjusted to reflect the same possible point total for all teachers (i.e., Domain VIII scores did not include points for veteran teachers who were awarded points based on the school's prior year state and federal ratings), and teachers' scores were converted to represent the percentage of possible points earned for each domain and overall.

To obtain a more reliable estimate of teachers' performance on PDAS for additional analyses, scores for 3 years (2009–2010, 2010–2011, and 2011–2012) were averaged. Due to the cycle of PDAS evaluation, average scores may contain 1, 2, or 3 years of PDAS scores. Scores were examined separately for each level to allow for comparisons of evaluation scores for elementary, middle, and high school teachers and to allow for examinations of PDAS scores in relationship to teachers' student growth scores. To obtain a more reliable estimate of teachers' performance on PDAS, scores for 3 years (2009–2010, 2010–2011, and 2011–2012) were averaged. Due to the cycle of PDAS evaluation, average scores may contain 1, 2, or 3 years of PDAS scores.

Student growth scores for the same 3 years were computed for teachers using the SAS EVAAS® methodology for measuring student growth on Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and/or State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR™) assessments. EVAAS scores incorporated prior student test data from school years 2007–2008 and beyond, and were computed for teachers of students in grades 4 through 9. Elementary and middle school teachers' scores reflected the number of standard errors a teacher's students performed above or below the average for Texas. Scores greater than 1 suggest a teacher performed at least one standard error above the mean for Texas; scores less than –1 suggest a teacher performed at least one standard deviation below the mean for Texas. High school teachers' scores reflected the number of standard errors the teachers' students performed above or below the average for AISD. To obtain the most stable estimate of teachers' student growth in reading/ELA and/or mathematics for our analyses, EVAAS scores were averaged across the 3-year period. Due to differences in methodology for computations across levels, results were analyzed separately for teachers at elementary, middle, and high schools.