

The Relationship between *i-Ready Diagnostic* and the 2022 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

Curriculum Associates Research Brief | February 2023

Research Overview

i-Ready Diagnostic and the 2022 PSSA are highly correlated—with an average spring correlation of **.81** for English Language Arts (ELA) and **.81** for Mathematics.

About the Students Included in the Study

Curriculum Associates conducted a large-scale study on the relationship between the *i-Ready Diagnostic* and the 2022 PSSA for Grades 3–8 in ELA and Mathematics, the primary grades in which *i-Ready* is used in Pennsylvania for which there is a state summative assessment in place. Students came from a total of 9 school districts, one of which is a charter agency (see Table 1). The school districts were selected for participation in the study specifically to be representative of the state in terms of factors such as urbanicity, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (using National School Lunch Program as a proxy). See the appendix for more information on the sample.

Table 1. Demographic Information for Pennsylvania Districts in Study

District	Schools Participating	Location	Total Enrollment	% National School Lunch Program	% English Language Learners ¹
1	13	City (13)	7,000–7,499	100%	10%
2	9	Suburb (9)	6,000–6,499	30%	<5%
3	1	Suburb (1)	4,000–4,499	100%	5%
4	5	Suburb (5)	2,500–2,999	50%	<5%
5	5	Suburb (5)	2,500–2,999	25%	<5%
6	3	Suburb (3)	2,000–2,499	20%	<5%
7	3	Suburb (3)	2,000–2,499	50%	5%
8	4	Rural (2), Town (2)	1,000–1,499	45%	*
9	2	Rural (2)	1,000–1,499	45%	5%
Average of Participating Districts²				60%	5%
Average across All Districts in the State²				52%	4%

Note: Demographic data are available at the school and district level and may not precisely describe the study sample. District-specific statistics are provided as ranges or rounded to the nearest five percent in order to ensure the anonymity of participating districts.

¹Data on English language learners is only available at the district level.

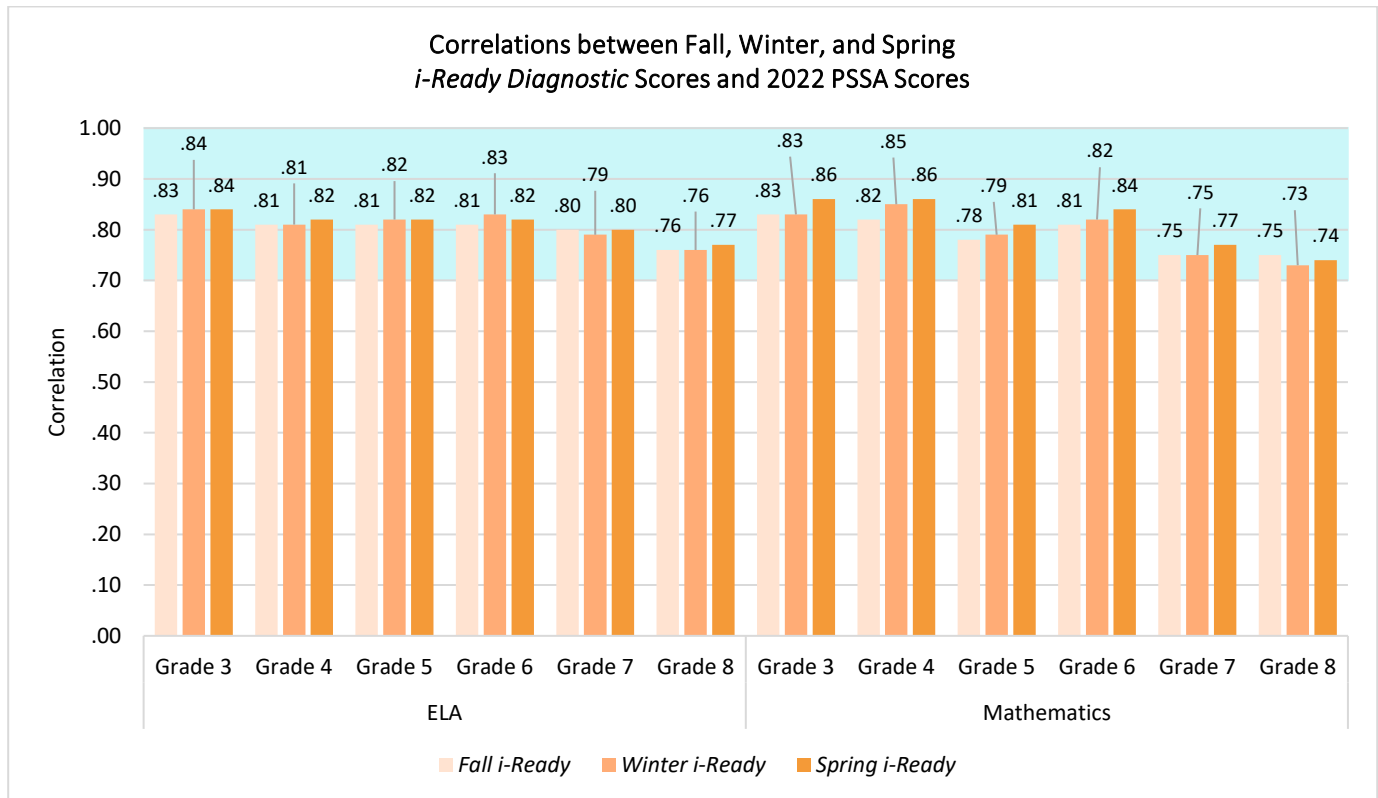
²Weighted averages.

Data from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), “Local Education Agency (School District) Universe Survey”, 2020–2021 v.1a. (obtained from <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pubagency.asp>), represent 2020–2021 data, which was the most recent full dataset available from NCES at the time of the study. An asterisk (*) signifies that NCES has recorded the data as missing, not available, or not reported data items.

Correlation Results

Across all grades and in both subjects, results provide evidence for the strong correlation between *i-Ready Diagnostic* and the PSSA (see Figure 1). Specifically, spring correlations for ELA ranged from .77 for Grade 8 to .84 for Grade 3, and spring correlations for Mathematics ranged from .74 for Grade 8 to .86 for Grades 3 and 4. These correlations, **all surpassing the .70 standard generally considered to be strong in education research**, provide evidence of a substantial relationship between *i-Ready Diagnostic* and the PSSA.

Figure 1



Why Correlations Matter

Correlations are one of the most commonly used and widely accepted forms of validity evidence. Correlations demonstrate that when students score high on one assessment, they also tend to score high on the other, and similarly, when students score low on one assessment, they also tend to score low on the other. A high correlation between two assessments provides evidence that the two assessments are measuring related constructs.

Appendix

The sample included more than 15,000 students, with between 680 and 2,387 students per grade for ELA for the spring *i-Ready* assessment and between 1,400 and 3,043 students per grade for Mathematics for the spring *i-Ready* assessment (see Table 2). These students took both the *i-Ready Diagnostic* and the PSSA during the 2021–2022 school year. For the purposes of this study, *i-Ready Diagnostic* scores were included only if the student indicated that the test was taken completely in school.

Table 2. Sample Sizes for Correlations

	ELA			Mathematics		
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring
Grade 3	2,329	2,289	2,380	2,959	2,899	3,033
Grade 4	2,304	2,257	2,362	2,918	2,858	2,977
Grade 5	2,369	2,271	2,387	2,997	2,879	3,043
Grade 6	1,377	1,293	1,399	1,897	1,780	1,934
Grade 7	715	687	709	1,526	1,251	1,493
Grade 8	711	593	680	1,400	1,284	1,400

Table 3 shows the percentage of students in each race/ethnicity group from the study samples. In both the ELA and Mathematics samples, we have strong representation from students of different racial/ethnic groups.

Table 3. Race/Ethnicity Information for Sample of Pennsylvania Students in this Study

	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black	Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Two or More Races	White
ELA	.1%	3.1%	20.4%	.1%	12.8%	3.5%	60.0%
Mathematics	.1%	3.7%	23.7%	.1%	13.2%	5.4%	53.8%