

2026 Institutional Profile Survey (IPS) At-A-Glance

82.8% ▼ DOWN 4.1 PTS First-time NPTE pass rate, mean	14% ▼ DOWN 14 PTS Programs w/ zero faculty departures	\$75.3K – NEW METRIC Median in-state tuition + fees	13% ▼ IMPROVED PDs who can't negotiate budget	12.2 ESSENTIALLY FLAT Mean core faculty per program
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*Data is comparing 2025 and 2026 IPS results

Institution: 303 responses in 2025 and 2026; urban/suburban settings still dominate, with a slight shift toward suburban and rural in 2026. PTA co-location remains rare (<5%).

Program: Class size, enrollment, and program length held steady, but first-time NPTE pass rates fell (86.9% → 82.8%) and became more variable across programs (SD 10.1 → 14.9).

Clinical Education: Exxat and the Physical Therapist CPI remain the dominant technology and assessment tools; programs manage a huge, right-skewed number of clinical site agreements (median 339, mean 1,952).

Faculty: Core faculty counts stayed flat (12 per program), but zero-departure programs fell sharply, from 28% to 14%, and new questions flagged salary-disparity pressure as a retention risk.

Program-Level Autonomy: Most Program Directors report to a Dean or Chair; real influence is concentrated in allocating existing funds, not setting tuition or new-faculty salaries and budget-negotiation confidence declined.

Program Costs: Median in-state total tuition + fees is \$75.3K vs. \$124.9K out-of-state; a majority of institutions still charge differential tuition, and financial aid transparency varies widely.

Motions & Excellence Framework: Adoption of older ACAPT motions (108-week minimum, PT Clinical Education Glossary) is near-universal; newer guidance is more mixed, and self-ratings on Excellence Framework categories skew favorable.

YEARLY COMPARISON:

Metric	2025 IPS	2026 IPS	Change
NPTE first-time pass rate (mean)	86.9%	82.8%	↓ 4.1 pts
Programs w/ zero faculty departures	28%	14%	↓ 14 pts
Class size (mean)	52.3	52.0	≈ flat
Program length, weeks (mean)	125.0	122.4	≈ flat
Core faculty (mean)	12.3	12.0	≈ flat
PDs who can't negotiate a budget increase	21%	13%	↓ 8 pts

WHAT WE'RE WATCHING:

- **NPTE pass rates** are softening and more variable: first-time pass rates fell nearly 5 points and dispersion widened worth flagging to programs below the historical norm.
- **Faculty retention risk** is emerging: the share of programs with zero faculty departures dropped by half, and new survey items point to salary disparities with clinical practice as a driver.
- **Program-level financial control** remains limited: most Program Directors report to a Dean or Chair with authority concentrated at that level, though budget-negotiation confidence improved year over year.
- **Cost transparency** is uneven: differential in-state/out-of-state tuition is still the norm (≈\$50K gap), and financial aid information availability varies widely by institution.
- **Motion adoption** is strongest for established, longer-standing guidance; newer motions see more mixed uptake a potential opportunity for targeted member communication.