FAQs

NEW SCHOOL REPORT CARD

October 2014, ISBE Division of Public Information

1. Q: What is the School Report Card?

   A: The Illinois State Board of Education annually releases a School Report Card that shows how each school, district and the state is performing on a wide range of educational goals. The Report Card was revised last year to be more user-friendly and to provide data on a wider range of indicators than our previous version.

2. Q: Where do I find the State, District or School Report Card?

   A: Go to: illinoisreportcard.com

   The School Report Card has three main components: a one-page (front and back) printout that provides the most important information clearly and accessibly; which delivers in-depth information with explanations of each indicator online; and detailed longitudinal data sets for approved educational research.

3. Q: Why did the Illinois State Board of Education revise the School Report Card?

   A: State and local education officials have long realized the importance of generating a more complete picture of student and school performance in order to inform and empower families and communities as they support their local schools. This overarching goal of increasing community engagement with improved information drove legislation in 2012 that laid the framework for the new Report Card design.


   A: In 2014, the School Report Card expands on previous reporting advancements (including student academic growth and information on academic, athletic, extracurricular and after-school programs and courses) to now include information and capabilities including:
   - Ability to compare schools
   - Number of freshmen on track for college readiness
   - College enrollment
   - Teacher retention
   - Principal turnover
   - Learning environment scores based on the 5Essentials Survey
5. **Q: How does the redesigned School Report Card benefit my school?**

   **A:** The redesigned School Report Card helps highlight each school’s strengths (such as special programs, college and career readiness, extracurriculars, or growth rate) while at the same time identifying potential areas for improvement. Clear, detailed and accessible information on academic performance, school climate and learning conditions will help inform local discussion and school improvement plans.

6. **Q: How does the redesigned School Report Card benefit my child?**

   **A:** The new School Report Card helps families learn more about their local schools with information on performance, growth, special programs and extracurricular activities. After reviewing results on the School Report Card, parents will be better equipped to talk to teachers and administrators about their child’s performance in school and ongoing efforts to improve student and schoolwide academic performance.

7. **Q: What is the origin of the data for the new School Report Card?**

   **A:** Most of the data reported on the School Report Card is collected by ISBE from school districts through data systems such as the state’s Student Information System and its new Employment Information System. Some data, such as information on extracurricular activities, is entered directly by principals on illinoisreportcard.com so that it can be kept up to date throughout the year. A few data elements, such as the percent of high school graduates enrolling in college, come from the new Illinois Longitudinal Data System.

8. **Q: Why can’t I find my child’s test scores?**

   **A:** Individual test scores are confidential by law, which protects your child’s privacy. Contact your child’s teacher for information about your child’s scores and academic progress. Schools typically release state test results in the fall, sometime between the first day of school and late October.

9. **Q: Will the School Report change in the future?**

   **A:** This is the first stage of an improved Report Card. The design may not change significantly but the State Board is dedicated to improving and reporting long-term data, paving the way for School Report Cards that offer student and school performance data from preschool to college.

10. **Q: Where can I send questions or comments about the School Report Card?**

    **A:** Please send any questions or comments about the website design, content or data to reportcard@isbe.net. Questions regarding technical problems with the www.illinoisreportcard.com website can be sent to irc@niu.edu.

11. **Q: When will the updated report card be made available to the public?**

    **A:** The new report card, updated with data from the 2013-2014 school year, will go live on October 31st, 2014. Administrators can preview their schools data before then by logging-in to their MyIIRC accounts.

12. **Q: Can you see student-level data on the post-secondary enrollment figures metric?**

    **A:** No, individual data are not posted to protect student privacy.
13. **Q: When can principals update the School Highlights page?**
   **A:** Principals can update their pages until the end of October, before it goes public, and can continue to making live updates once it is posted.

14. **Q: Will the same criteria (5 credits and no more than one F on core semester course) apply to all districts’ On-Track measure?**
   **A:** Yes

15. **Q: How is teacher turnover calculated? Will teacher attendance and proficiency measures be added?**
   **A:** Turnover data is based on building assignments, not classroom assignments. This is calculated from data submitted by school districts (using employee ID, etc.). No individual teacher information is posted.

16. **Q: How will ISAT data be incorporated with the new PARCC data on the Report Card?**
   **A:** PARCC will be represented independently from the ISAT data on the new Report Card, with a brand-new baseline being set for the PARCC data when standards are set in 2015.

17. **Q: Is there an explanation of the cut score changes w/ISAT?**
   **A:** Yes, only last two-years of ISAT scores are reported – tied to the new Illinois learning standards. Context is provided to the public regarding the changes in cut scores.

18. **Q: How will PARCC growth measures be calculated?**
   **A:** It will likely be calculated with a similar value table used currently for the ISAT data, but the precise methodology will be determined over the next year.

19. **Q: How will the Freshman-On-Track metric be measured on Report Card?**
   **A:** This will be the first year the On-Track measure will be reported alongside the graduation rate. In subsequent years, growth trends can also be published.

20. **Q: What if data found on the Report Card is not accurate?**
   **A:** The data on the Report Card goes through a thorough verification process, but if an error is spotted, ISBE can be notified at reportcard@isbe.net.

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