TALKING POINTS

How the New Report Card Reflects a School’s Academic Performance, Climate and Learning Conditions

August 2014, ISBE Division of Public Information

No. 1 Ranking
- The Illinois School Report Card, which was unveiled last fall, was ranked No. 1 in the nation by the Education Commission of the States. Illinois was the only state to be scored in the top three by both parents and researchers.

- Parent testimonials from the Education Commission of the States include:
  - “Easily accessible.”
  - “Easy to navigate.”
  - “Provided directions as to how to navigate the page and was not overwhelming with data.”
  - “Had links to compare the school to district and state.”
  - “Very informative.”
  - “As a parent, I could find information that would be important to me when making decisions about schools. I felt like I got an understanding of the school without going there from what is on this site.”

Useful Information
- The Report Card provides information that can be used to guide school improvement efforts such as performance, learning environment, school programs and more through a simple At-a-Glance Report Card on illinoisreportcard.com. This system of physical and online reporting was designed from the ground up to provide parents, community members and the general public with a streamlined, visually fresh and easy-to-navigate format.

- The new Report Card also features academic courses, career development courses and programs, special programs of study, athletics, school awards, physical education, health and wellness and other programs and activities that make each school unique.
• The Report Cards reflect our state’s transition toward higher performance expectations at an earlier age and greater rigor in the classroom to make sure Illinois K-12 students are on track for success in college and careers.

New Features and Metrics
• The Report Card will have new features and metrics in 2014, including the ability to compare schools, the number of freshmen on track for college readiness, college enrollment, teacher retention, principal turnover, achievement gap data and learning environment scores based on the 5Essentials Survey.

• Student Academic Growth by elementary school and district shows how much academic progress students have demonstrated from one year to the next in reading and math, providing a more nuanced perspective on student performance than test scores would alone.

• As the Illinois State Board of Education makes the transition from its current assessment system to one that is fully aligned with the new Illinois Learning Standards, the measures of performance displayed on the report card will be further improved.

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