



2019 ILLINOIS REPORT CARD

TELL YOUR STORY ABOUT INVESTMENTS & STUDENT OUTCOMES

How to Tell Your Story

The 2019 Illinois Report Card provides an opportunity for each school and district to tell its story – but what does that mean? This guide shows how deeper conversations about fiscal and academic Report Card data can help you communicate your story.

1. Determine Your Target Audiences

Identify the primary groups of people who influence the success of your continuous improvement efforts, such as:

- Teachers and principals - trusted messengers to parents and families
- Parents and families - partners in their children's education and in school improvement
- Media - provide information to the broader community
- School board members and other local elected officials - set policies and priorities and oversee personnel and budgets
- Community partners and businesses - support school initiatives



2. Driving Questions to Inform Your Narrative

Write down answers to the questions below to see what connections and salient points arise. ISBE will send fact sheets over the next few weeks that explain the designations and indicators in the state's support and accountability system, the Illinois Quality Framework, and IL-EMPOWER.

- What are the goals and values of our school or district?
- What were the takeaways from our Illinois Quality Framework or other system needs assessment?
- How have we invested or planned to invest our Evidence-Based Funding and, if applicable, Title I 1003(a) School Improvement Grant?
- What do our new designation, changes in any achievement gaps, and growth in other indicators say about our progress?
- What does my site-based expenditure data say? Do academic outcomes appear to be related to resource allocation?
- What will our key audiences look for in our data? What questions will they have?





3. Identify Your Main Messages

Choose three takeaways you want your key audiences to know. Highlight:

- **One positive:** An indicator or group of indicators that have improved in relation to your goals and values
- **One area of growth:** Where you are focusing in the coming year and how your key audiences can engage
- **One investment:** How you are investing. Evidence-Based Funding to improve students' opportunities and outcomes

4. Tools to Share Your Story

Decide what channels work best for communicating with your key audiences.

- Draft talking points for senior leaders
- Issue a press release (template from ISBE coming soon)
- Share your highlights on social media
- Host a media call to share your highlights with reporters and answer questions
- Create a presentation for your board members
- Host a town hall for families and community partners; highlight a program that aligns to your key messages
- Publish a blog post and send the post home as a letter to families and staff (template from ISBE coming soon)