November 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We have had a wonderful Fall at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (school/district)! We are excited about \_\_, \_\_, and \_\_. As a learning community, we are continually looking to improve \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (school/district). One source we use to reflect on our strengths and areas for improvement is the School Report Card.

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) generates a School Report Card and District Report Card for every publicly funded school and district in the state. These public report cards can be found online at: <http://dpi.wi.gov/accountability/report-cards>. The Report Cards are intended to help schools and districts utilize performance data to target improvement efforts that ensure students are ready for their next educational step – including the next grade level, graduation, college, and careers.

The current **School Report Card is primarily based on last year’s performance, the 2016-17 school year.**  At the foundation of the report cards are four priority areas. Schools and districts receive a score for each priority area:

* **Student Achievement** proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics on the annual state assessments
* **School Growth** measured by year-to-year progress in ELA and math achievement
  + **Closing Gaps** in performance between specific student groups (comparing English language learners, low-income students, students with disabilities, and members of a racial or an ethnic group with their peers)
  + **On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness** showing reliable predictors of how many students are on-track to graduate from high school and student readiness for post-high school success

Schools and districts are also evaluated on their level of student engagement – chronic absenteeism rates and dropout rates – when applicable.

The priority area scores are aggregated into an overall accountability score, from 0 to 100. This score is displayed in the top left corner of the School or District Report Cards. It is important to note that the 0 to 100 accountability score is not a “percent correct” measurement. Based on its score, a school or district receives one of five rating categories, from *Fails to Meet Expectations* to *Significantly Exceeds Expectations*, as well as corresponding one to five stars.

Here’s some information we’d like to share from our school/district report card:

*[DPI recommends sharing priority area or student engagement indicator results before overall scores.]*

DPI has produced two versions of each Report Card: a quick one-pager labeled “School Report Card” and lengthier, detailed version labeled, “School Report Card Detail.” Both versions can be accessed online at <http://dpi.wi.gov/accountability/report-cards> along with resources that explain the report cards. I have included the one page School Report Card for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (school/district) here as well.

This year, across the state, there were larger than expected score changes in some school and district report cards. Because score fluctuations are larger this year, and more widespread than would be expected, a cautious approach to report card interpretation is needed. Larger than expected year-to-year score fluctuations are considered outliers and noted by ^ when a school or district has a 10-point or greater change (up or down) in both their Overall Score and Growth Score.

As you can see, our school/district was one of these schools/districts and has a ^ symbol next to its rating. It is unclear whether the change in scores is due to an actual change in our school/district’s performance.

Given that, I want to share some other data that helps illuminate some of our successes and helps pintpoint areas of focus in our school/district. Again, as DPI stresses, these report cards are just one source of information about our school. Here are some data that shows we are moving in the right direction.

[INSERT LOCAL DATA HERE.]

Please let me know your thoughts and questions as they arise. I look forward to working with you to make 2017-18 a successful school year for your child!

Sincerely,

(name and contact information of principal/administrator)