



2012-13 School and District Report Cards Frequently Asked Questions

This document provides answers to key questions regarding the 2012-13 School and District Report Cards. Further questions may be directed to oeamail@dpi.wi.gov.

New for the 2012-13 Report Cards

Both District Report Cards and School Report Cards will be released for the 2012-13 school year. In comparison to the 2011-12 inaugural report cards, some changes have been made to the methodology used to produce report card calculations. Therefore, please note that some score differences between 2011-12 and 2012-13 *may* be due to calculation changes, not due to actual change in student performance. A summary of calculation changes is below.

Student Engagement Indicator Changes

The **Absenteeism Rate and Dropout Rate** Student Engagement Indicators will now include both a one-year calculation and a three-year calculation, mirroring the Test Participation Indicator. Schools and districts that meet the goal based on either the one-year or three-year calculation will not receive a deduction.

For **Absenteeism Rate**, students must have been enrolled for at least 45 days (increased from 20 days), to be included in the calculation.

Priority Area Changes

In **Student Achievement**, non-tested students are not included in calculations. The denominator includes only tested students that were enrolled for the full academic year (FAY) in the school or in the district, for school or district report cards, respectively.

In **Closing Gaps**, we will now compare the rate of improvement of a school's or district's target group to the rate of improvement of the state comparison group. This change is implemented for all schools and districts, not just schools that do not meet the minimum cell size for a comparison group. In other words, all schools or districts that have at least 20 students in a target subgroup (non-white racial/ethnic groups, economically disadvantaged, English learners, or students with disabilities) will receive a score based on the improvement over time for that target group compared to the state comparison subgroup (white, non-economically disadvantaged, English proficient, or students without disabilities, respectively).

AMO Changes

Graduation or Attendance will be reported in the School Report Card in the AMO section. Both will be reported in the District Report Card. Also, non-tested students are not included in the AMO calculations. The denominator includes only tested students that were enrolled for the full academic year (FAY) in the school, for school report cards, or for the FAY in the district for district report cards.

Where can I get more information on the 2012-13 changes?

See the "What's New" document for more details on changes to the 2012-13 report cards.

Absenteeism & Attendance Calculations

Do excused absences count against a student's attendance rate?

Report card attendance rates are based upon ISES data collections. ISES does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. However, please note the following: Students who participate in district-supervised educational services off school grounds (such as field trips) should be counted in actual attendance time. A student who misses school for an excused reason, such as illness, should be considered absent *unless* that student is receiving district-supervised educational services while out of school. The district is responsible for recording and reporting accurate attendance data that conform to state and local laws. For guidance on how to properly code excused and unexcused absences, please see the Attendance Collection and Reporting page.

How is the Absenteeism Rate calculated on the report card?

The absenteeism rate is the proportion of students in a school or district that are chronically absent. A student is considered chronically absent when their attendance rate is 84.0% or less. DPI looks at the individual attendance rate of any student that is enrolled in the school or district for at least 45 days at any time during the school year. The 45 days do not have to be consecutive. The number of chronically absent students divided by the total number of students enrolled for 45 or more days during the year determines the school's or district's Absenteeism Rate. Starting in 2012-2013, the absenteeism deduction is based upon both the one-year calculation and a three-year calculation. If one or both of the rates meet the goal of a school or district absenteeism rate below 13% then no points are deducted.

How are students who enroll multiple times in the same school year counted in attendance and absenteeism calculations?

Only unique students are counted in the report card calculations. For example, if a student enrolled in Example School at the start of the 2010-11 school year for 45 days, exited the district, and then enrolled again in Example School two months later, that student's attendance rate (actual days divided by their total possible days) and absenteeism rate would be calculated based on the sum of the student's two enrollment periods during the 2010-11 school year at Example School.

Graduation Calculations

How are graduation rates used in the Report Card calculations?

Graduation rates are part of the On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness and Closing Gaps Priority Areas, and the Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs). Two graduation rates are used within the report card: the 4-Year Cohort Rate and the 6-Year Cohort Rate. Cohort rates are defined as the percentage of students starting high school together who graduate within a certain time period.

- For the **On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness Priority Area**, the graduation score is an average of the 4-Year Cohort Rate and the 6-Year Cohort Rate.
- In the **Closing Gaps Priority Area**, the graduation rate gaps calculation for 2012-13 is based only on the 4-Year Cohort Rate. This is because multiple years of data for the 6-Year Cohort Rate do not yet exist. In the future, graduation rate gaps calculations will be based on both 4-Year and 6-Year Cohort Rates.
- **AMOs** are reported in three ways:
 - The 4-Year Cohort Rate in the current year
 - An average of the 4-Year Cohort Rate over the current and previous year

- The 6-Year Cohort Rate for the current year

Dropout Calculations

Are expelled students counted as dropouts in the dropout rate calculation?

Expelled students will be considered dropouts, like other exited students, when they are not receiving services. This can happen in two situations:

1. After permanent expulsion
2. After a temporary expulsion when a student does not return to school when eligible to do so.

ISES Data Used in Report Cards

The scores and supplemental data provided in the School and District Report Cards are based upon certified Individual Student Enrollment System (ISES) data and Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS) results, both of which have already been verified by districts. DPI relies on accurate data collection and reporting from schools and districts in order to accurately calculate accountability scores and ratings. Districts that discover that their ISES or WSAS data are incorrect may submit an errata letter; contact oeaemail@dpi.wi.gov for details on that process.

I noticed that the data on my report card was incorrectly reported to DPI. Can I submit the correct data to DPI and have my report card updated to reflect the new data?

The secure report cards released in SAFE are preliminary. The release of the secure School and District Report Cards initiates a review and inquiry process to address possible data errors that schools or districts identify. Additionally, in 2013, we implemented a new Deduction Inquiry Process, preceding the release of the secure report cards, for schools and districts whose preliminary calculations showed that they may receive a Student Engagement Indicator deduction. Schools or districts that identify possible errors in their data submission should complete an Inquiry Form (found on the Report Card homepage: [Report Card Inquiry Form](#)) and provide supporting evidence for the change.

Districts have multiple opportunities during the ISES data collection timeline and WSAS Record Editing System window to verify and make corrections to their data. Please check with your ISES Coordinator to ensure that all data are correctly collected, verified, and submitted in accordance with DPI guidelines going forward. This will help to ensure that data on subsequent School and District Report Cards are accurate.

WINSS Data not Matching Report Cards

Why don't the data on the School Report Card (secure or public) match WINSS?

There are three reasons why report card data will not match WINSS:

1. If you are viewing secure report cards, you are viewing secure, non-redacted data. WINSS data, however, is public data and thus subjected to redaction rules that ensure student privacy.
2. WINSS reading and mathematics achievement data through 2011-12 do not reflect the new, college and career ready cut scores used for the WKCE, whereas report card data do reflect the new cut scores. Proficiency rates (percentages of students scoring Proficient or Advanced) were higher under the prior WKCE proficiency cut scores.
3. The report card is generated from DPI's Longitudinal Data System (LDS), not from WINSS. Occasionally, student records will be updated or corrected by districts or DPI after WINSS data are finalized; the updates are reflected in the LDS, but not in WINSS.
4. Report card data may have been altered through an inquiry process.

WISEdash Data not Matching Report Cards

Why don't the data on the School Report Card match WISEdash?

There are 3 reasons why report card data will not match WISEdash:

1. The report card uses demographic variables associated with WSAS testing. WISEdash is a dynamic platform which updates its demographics with new data when it becomes available. This means WISEdash demographics are updated with ISES Year End data when it becomes available and may not match the report card demographics.
2. A very small subsample of student test data—for which we know the school but not the student—is included in the report cards for accountability purposes but is not included in WISEdash.
3. Report card data may have been altered through an inquiry process.

Grade Configuration not Matching Report Cards

Why doesn't our School Report Card match our grade configuration?

Current grade configurations may not match the School Report Card, which is based on the 2012-13 configuration reported to DPI. Please note that in accordance with federal policy, new schools are those that change four or more grades.

This year's report card not matching last year's report card

Score differences between last year and this year may be due to calculation changes, not due to actual change in student performance. The 2012-13 report cards incorporate some calculation changes (see above). When reporting multiple years of data, prior year scores are recalculated according to the updated methodology in the current report card only (2012-13). As such, last year's report card (2011-12) may not match this year's.

Ratings & Scores

Why don't the Priority Area scores add up or average to the overall score?

Priority Area scores may not add up or average to the overall score, by design. In order for the accountability index to be fair to all schools the weighting method is more complicated than simply averaging Priority Area scores. Not all schools have every component within or across the four Priority Areas. For example, we cannot measure growth in high schools because the WKCE is not administered in 9th or 11th grade. The third grade reading and eighth grade mathematics measures in the On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness Priority Area apply only to schools with those grades. The weighting method is designed to account for differences in what we can measure in different schools to create an Overall Accountability Score that is comparable across all schools. The weighting method is described in detail in the Technical Guide.

Can I apply the Overall Accountability Ratings to individual Priority Area scores?

No. The Overall Accountability Rating Categories are specific to the Overall Accountability Score only. In order to establish the cut points for the accountability rating categories, a process called a standard setting was held. That process evaluated only the Overall Accountability Scores. As a result, it is inappropriate to use the rating categories as descriptors of individual Priority Areas since a separate standard setting was not conducted for each Priority Area.

To inform local conversations, state comparison scores are shown to provide context to individual Priority Area and component scores; they represent the state average for the stated grade configuration. Schools can compare their Priority Area scores to those state averages but should not compare individual Priority Area scores to the Overall Accountability Ratings.

Are the state comparison scores used to determine the overall score?

No. State comparison scores are not used to determine the overall score. State comparisons are shown only to provide context and do not factor into a school's accountability score or category. The School Report Card includes a column that provides a state comparison for each school. Comparisons are based on one of six broad grade bands: K-5, K-8, K-12, 6-8, 6-12, and 9-12. Schools are assigned to the most similar grade band for comparison. The comparison scores given for a grade band treat all Wisconsin students within those grades as if they were one giant school; data for these statewide sets of students are used to calculate the comparison scores. Every priority area and component that applies to a particular grade band is shown for the comparison score, even if the school itself does not have a score for it.

There is an asterisk (*) for one or more Priority Areas scores on the report card. Is this a data error? Does this lower the overall score?

No. Asterisks do not represent data errors nor do they lower overall scores; asterisks represent redacted data. In order to protect student privacy and to assure stability in our publically reported measures, we only report metrics that meet cell size, 20 students, in public reports. If metrics do not meet cell size, the data is redacted and an asterisk (*) is displayed for public reports.

There is an 'NA' for one or more Priority Areas scores. Is this a data error? Does this lower the overall accountability score?

No. "NA's" do not represent data errors nor do they lower overall scores. An "NA" is shown when a school does not have data for a Priority Area. For example, K-5 elementary schools will never have graduation rates or 8th Grade Mathematics Achievement, so they will always receive an "NA" in these areas. Additionally, "NA's" are displayed when a school or district does not have enough students in total or in a subgroup to make a calculation. Calculations are only made in certain situations like closing gaps when the

cell size of 20 is met; this ensures a level accuracy and stability in our calculations as very small subgroups are subject to broad fluctuations in scores. All schools and districts receive a report card. The weighting and scoring in the Accountability Index are designed to account for schools or districts that do not have every component or Priority Area. That is, lacking one part does not inherently advantage or disadvantage a score. This intentional design acknowledges that not all schools or districts will have all data for every Priority Area.

What does a “Not Rated” determination mean for a school?

A school may be described as “Not Rated,” when DPI does not have enough data for the school to reliably determine an accountability score and category. This could be because the school is new, or too small, has no tested grades, or because it is an alternative program. “Not Rated” is not a negative description of a school—it describes a lack of data, not a lack of quality.

What specific supports or interventions will be required of schools or districts that are rated as Meets Few Expectations or Fails to Meet Expectations?

At this time the School and District Report Cards are a public report of school performance. Future legislation may specify specific interventions or consequences related to performance on the School or District Report Cards, but that has yet to be determined. In the meantime, schools and districts in search of resources to support local improvement efforts may access a variety of existing supports through their CESAs, the Wisconsin Rtl Center, and the Department of Public Instruction.

Some Title I schools have been designated as Focus or Priority schools under a separate, federally mandated formula. These schools are receiving supports and interventions from the Title I and School Support Team at the Department of Public Instruction. Information about Title I Focus and Priority schools may be found.

Why are the scores on the District Report Card different than the School Report Card scores for schools within the same district?

District scores are calculated for an aggregated group of all students in the district, essentially treating the district as a big school. They are not based on individual school-level scores. Therefore, a district score may be based on a different, larger group of students than the school scores are. Specifically, two factors may alter the group of students represented on the District Report Card (from those on the School Report Cards) affecting the district Priority Areas and Overall Scores.

- **Cell Size.** More subgroups may meet cell size at the district level than at the school level warranting their inclusion in the District Report Card calculations.
- **FAY-D but not FAY-S.** Students who were not Full Academic Year (FAY) in the school and thus excluded from school-level calculations may be FAY within the district and included in the district calculations. Full Academic Year is equal to 9.25 months of continuous enrollment. For details on FAY status.

Will the detention school within my district be included in the scores on my District Report Card?

Certain schools house students who are in the justice system and are being held in county jails and juvenile detention centers. Those schools are held accountable for their entire student population including those students who are temporarily in their school due to involvement in the justice system. Please note, however, that some Priority Areas are based solely on students who have been enrolled for a Full Academic Year while others are not.

Some districts have schools whose entire populations are involved in the justice system. Districts are held accountable for these schools and their student populations will be in the district calculations. Again, note

that some Priority Areas are based solely on students who have been enrolled for a Full Academic Year while others are not.

Some juvenile offenders are also held in correctional facilities managed by the Department of Corrections. Districts will not be held accountable for students educated in correctional facilities run by the Department of Corrections.

How can I access the data displayed in the report cards?

Downloadable data files will be provided for each School Report Card and District Report Card. There will be two versions of these data files: secure and public.

- The secure versions of these download files will contain un-redacted data and will be available in SAFE (the Secure Access File Exchange). Because they may contain personally identifiable student data, they must be treated as secure files at all times. The secure data files in SAFE will contain data for each page of the secure report card.
- The public version of the data files—as was done last year—will contain redacted data to protect student privacy, and will be available on the Report Card webpage. The public versions will contain all of the data on the summary page of the report card (page 1 only).

Data in these files can be used for further analysis of student performance, in combination with local data, for school and district improvement planning purposes.

Multiple Pathways

The ACT is the college-readiness assessment used in the index. How will the On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness Priority Area change in the future?

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is committed to a multiple measures system that honors multiple pathways. When DPI has quality data from sources other than the ACT, we will consider how to include those measures in the accountability system. In the short-term we anticipate that—if the funding is allocated by the Legislature—the addition of ACT WorkKeys will help address career readiness in addition to the ACT Test. In the long-term, DPI is interested in collecting military readiness assessment data, workforce readiness indicators, and postsecondary enrollment and completion rates for the On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness Priority Area.

The ACT report card calculation is an average of ACT test participation and the percentage of students taking the ACT who score at or above college-ready benchmarks in reading, English, mathematics, and science. There is no point deduction for lower participation rates. It is important to note that DPI intentionally designed the system so that ACT, while important, represents a small portion of the overall index score. This was done for two reasons: first, not all students currently take the ACT, and second, to allow the system to grow to include other relevant measures in the future.

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

What are AMOs?

The US Department of Education requires states to establish ambitious but achievable Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)—annual goals for all students and subgroups in reading, mathematics, and graduation or attendance rate—and report progress on the AMOs annually. Using 2011-12 data, AMOs were

established to move all schools in the state to the levels of those schools performing at the 90th percentile in the state within six years. By 2016-17, the expectation is for all schools and districts to have all student groups reach 50% reading proficiency and 65% mathematics proficiency. Additionally, schools should have all students groups reach an 85% Graduation/Attendance Rate. (Graduation AMOs may also be met by showing a 2% increase in graduation rate.)

Do AMOs lower expectations for students?

The six-year goals reflect dramatic increases in performance for most subgroups. Moreover, the AMOs expect higher levels of growth for students performing at lower levels of achievement, consistent with Wisconsin’s goal of reducing the achievement gap between student groups. For more information about AMOs.

What happens if a school misses an AMO?

Title I schools that miss an AMO will need to assess their current Title I program efforts to ensure that they are addressing the needs identified by the AMO measure. In addition, these Title I schools should determine the effectiveness of their current interventions and the degree to which they are research based. The National RtI Center has a list of research-based interventions; to learn more about these.

[Updated September 3, 2013]