

This document provides answers to key questions the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has received regarding School Report Cards made available for the first time in Fall 2012. Further questions may be directed to oeaemail@dpi.wi.gov.

ISES Data Used in Report Cards

The scores and supplemental data provided in the School Report Card 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 report cards that were released in SAFE and on the public website are preliminary. DPI has a 30 day review period to address possible data errors that schools identify. Schools must complete an Inquiry Form and submit supporting evidence for the change.

Districts have multiple opportunities throughout the ISES data collection timeline 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.

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

No. If coded and reported correctly to DPI, excused absences do not count against a student's attendance rate. Students who participate in district-supervised educational services off school grounds (for example, field trips) are 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 conforms to state and local laws. For guidance on how to properly code excused and unexcused absences, please see the Attendance Data & Reporting page and the answers to frequently asked attendance questions

How is the Absenteeism Rate calculated on the report card?

The absenteeism rate is the proportion of students in a school that are chronically absent. A student is counted as chronically absent when their attendance rate is 84.0% or less. DPI looks at the individual attendance rates of any student that is enrolled in the school for at least 20 days at any time during the school year. The 20 days do not have to be consecutive. The number of chronically absent students divided by the total number of students enrolled for 20 or more days during the year determines the school's Absenteeism Rate.

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 20 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.

Ratings & Scores

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

Your Priority Area scores may not add up or average to your overall score. 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 all 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.

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. A separate standard setting would need to be conducted for each Priority Area to create appropriate rating categories for each area.

To inform local conversations, state comparison scores are provided to provide context to individual Priority Area and component scores; they represent the state average for schools with 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.

What does a "Not Rated" determination mean for my 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, 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 who are rated as Meets Few Expectations or Fails to Meet Expectations?

At this time the school report cards are a public report of school performance. The State Superintendent will put forward a budget request for a statewide system of support, one that provides resources to assist schools that Meet Few or Fail to Meet Expectations in implementing reforms. The budget request will also include resources to support the dissemination of best practices in schools exceeding

expectations. In the meantime, there are a variety of existing supports that schools can access through their CESAs and the Wisconsin RtI Center.

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.

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

No. State comparison scores are not used to determine your overall score. The School Report Card includes a column that provides a state comparison for each school. Comparisons are based on one of five broad grade bands: K-5, 6-8, 9-12, K-8, and K-12. Schools are assigned to the most comparable 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.

State comparisons are shown only to provide context and do not factor into a school’s accountability score or category.

My school has an ‘NA’ for one or more Priority Areas scores. Is this a data error? Does this hurt our score?

Scores are only calculated for components and priority areas that meet the cell size of 20 students. If a particular score says ‘NA’ on the report card, it simply means there is not enough data to calculate that score. The weighting and scoring in the accountability index are designed to account for schools that do not have every component or priority area—lacking one part does not inherently advantage or disadvantage your score.

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, although average scores will be slightly lower if participation rates are lower. 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.

WINSS Data not Matching Report Cards

Why doesn'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. WINSS data is redacted; you are viewing secure data. This applies to Secure Preliminary Report Cards only.
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. 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.

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

Do the new AMOs lower expectations for students? What happens if a school misses an AMO?

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—and report progress on the AMOs annually. Using 2011-12 data, AMOs were recently reset to move all schools in the state to the levels of those schools currently performing at the 90th percentile in the state within six years. That is, by 2016-17, the expectation is for all schools to have all student groups reach 50% reading proficiency and 65% mathematics proficiency. Currently, with the new college and career ready cut scores, Wisconsin's proficiency rate is 36% in reading and 48% in mathematics. This means that, as a state, we need to increase our reading proficiency by 14 percentage points and mathematics proficiency by 17percentage points by 2017.

All students and each subgroup are expected to make annual improvement toward reaching that level of performance in six years, with a minimum 1% improvement each year. This assures that top-performing subgroups continue to make progress. 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. The six-year goals reflect dramatic increases in performance for most subgroups. Indeed, the AMOs represent higher expectations for our students.

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.