

St. Francis School District Letter to Parents

November 2016

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Our school year is off to a great start! We are excited about our efforts towards building highly effective instructional experiences for all students, advancing initiatives with kinder and more compassionate schools, and growing district capacity with technology. As a learning community, we are continually looking to improve student achievement in the St. Francis 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) creates a School Report Card and District Report Card for every publicly funded school and district in the state. These report cards can be accessed online here: <http://dpi.wi.gov/accountability/report-cards>. The Report Cards are intended to help all schools and districts utilize data on specific measures to target improvement efforts to ensure students are ready for the next educational step – including the next grade level, graduation, college, and careers.

The current **School Report Card, based on the 2015-16 school year**, looks a bit different than in the past due to changes required by the legislature. The overall idea for how report cards work is the same. 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 state assessments
- **Student Growth** measured by year-to-year improvements in 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** is a measurement using reliable predictors of high school graduation and potential post high school success

The priority area scores are then 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. The score is primarily based on our performance last year, the 2015-16 school year, across the four priority areas.

Schools and districts are also evaluated on their level of student engagement – test participation rates, chronic absenteeism rates, and dropout rates when applicable. 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 one to five stars. The St. Francis School District received an overall School Accountability Score of 70.4, which is at *Meets Expectations*.

Here is some additional information we would like to share from our St. Francis School District report card:

Given the changes required by the legislature, many school and district scores changed as compared to the last report card. The changes include a weighting formula to account for poverty when priority area scores are combined into the overall score; a new method of calculating student growth; and the use of Forward Exam data, the third state test in three years. These changes impacted all schools and districts

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in the state. For the St. Francis School District, it meant our score increased slightly as compared to the last report card from the 2013-2014 school year.

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 the St. Francis School District here for information purposes.

Again, as DPI stresses, these report cards are just one source of information about our schools. Given that, our district has other indicators, such as MAP and STAR that helps illuminate some of the successes and areas for future progress in our schools and district.

Please let me know your thoughts and questions as they arise. I look forward to working with you to make 2016-17 a successful school year for your child!

Sincerely,

Blake A. Peuse
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