

## SCHOOL AND DISTRICT REPORT CARDS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

***Q: Why have the report cards been redesigned?***

A: The school and district report cards have been redesigned to reflect changes to Oregon's educational system so that parents and community members are provided with the most current, relevant, and important information about their school and districts. The new report cards allow schools and districts to better tell their unique stories in a more visual and user-friendly way.

***Q: Who decided what changes to make to the report cards?***

A: The redesign of the school and district report cards is the result of a broad-based effort which gathered feedback from parents, community members, educators, and stakeholders from around the state. Last fall, a 17-member Report Card Steering Committee was convened to make recommendations on the design, content, and rating methodology of the new report cards. This committee gathered feedback on the redesign from over 130 parents, teachers, and administrators around the state via in-person focus groups. Additionally, online surveys generated over 2,000 responses from around the state. The Report Card Steering Committee used this feedback to inform their recommendation on changes to the key elements, layout, and focus of the report cards. The final recommendations were adopted by the State Board of Education this spring.

***Q: How do the new report cards differ from the old ones?***

A: The most immediately recognizable difference between the report cards is that, for the first time, the reports are in color. Additional new features include: a letter from the principal/superintendent, an enhanced school/district profile with demographic charts, information on the curriculum and learning environment, and, at the high school level, additional outcome data including a five-year completer rate, percent of freshmen on track to graduate, and percent of students going on to college.

***Q: Do the new report cards provide a rating for schools?***

A: Yes, the new report cards provide two overall school ratings. One rating compares the school to all others in the state. The other rating compares the school to other schools with similar student demographics.

***Q: How are schools rated?***

A: The ratings are based on the new accountability system that Oregon developed as part of the federal flexibility waiver. The new system has a much greater focus on student learning and growth and uses multiple measures to rate schools. For high schools these measures include academic achievement, academic growth, subgroup growth, graduation rates, and subgroup graduation. For elementary and middle schools the first three measures are used. Schools receive an overall rating of Level 1 through 5 based on how well they are doing in each of these areas.

The rating that compares a school to other schools with similar student demographics provides parents and community members with another perspective on achievement at the school. The rating is based on a comparison that takes into account the school's percent poverty, mobility, students of color, and English learners. Schools are rated as below average, about average, or above average as compared to other schools that share these similar student demographics.

***Q: What do the school ratings of Level 1 through 5 mean?***

A: Schools receive an overall rating of Level 1 through 5 based on their students' growth, performance, and outcomes. Level 1 schools represent the bottom 5% of schools. Level 2 schools represent the next lowest 10%. Level 3 makes up the next 30% of schools. Level 4 represents the largest share of schools, those that fall between 44% and 90% of schools. Level 5 represent the top 10%.

***Q: Where does the data used in the new report cards come from?***

A: Data for these report cards come from a variety of sources. The achievement data come from state testing results. Graduation and outcome data is provided to the state by districts as part of annual data collections. Student demographic data is collected as part of the annual student enrollment collections. Some of the new elements of the report cards are submitted specifically for this report including the superintendent/principal letter, the freshman on track data, and the information on curriculum and learning environment.

***Q: What do blank sections on the report card mean?***

A: Many sections of the report cards are filled from data collected throughout the year as part of regular data collections. However, districts were required to submit some additional pieces of information for this report (letter, curriculum info, etc.). This information was required to be submitted in both English and Spanish. If the information was not submitted, or was not submitted in both languages, those sections were left blank on the report card.

***Q: Will each school and district in the state distribute a report card?***

A: Yes. Each school and district in the state is required to provide parents or guardians with a copy of their report card. Districts must distribute these report cards by January 15. These report cards can be distributed in either a hard copy or electronic format.

***Q: Why is some of the data in the report cards different from other data on the Oregon Department of Education website?***

A: There are two main differences you might notice between data on the report cards and previously published data. The test results published in September include data from all students enrolled on the first school day in May (regardless of how long they have been in the school). The report cards, since they are an accountability measure, only include test results for students who have been enrolled in the school for at least half of the school year since these are the students for whom the school had the greatest opportunity to impact learning. Another difference is in the English Learner (EL) category. In the report cards, we report on all students who were ever identified as English Learners rather than just those currently or recently receiving services. This gives schools credit for the learning and growth of their formerly EL students. This differs from other ODE reports.

***Q: How do I get a copy of the new school and district report cards?***

A: You can access a copy of any of the school or district report cards on the Oregon Department of Education website at: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/data/reportcard/reports.aspx>