

Introduction

This document addresses frequently asked questions (FAQs) about Wisconsin accountability, with specific emphasis on the Accountability Report Cards for the 2016-17 school year. For the most part, the 2016-17 report card structure is similar to that from 2015-16. While the format and content of the report cards themselves remains mostly the same, there are notable differences in the 2016-17 report cards. Changes to the 2016-17 report cards from previous years include:

- A special data caution (noted with ^) is used when both the Overall score and the Growth score have changed positively or negatively by 10 or more points as compared to the 2015-16 Accountability Report Card.
- Test Participation has been removed from the Student Engagement Indicators.
- Adjusted comparison years used in statewide Closing Gaps scores to match available data at the school or district level.
- District growth score calculations aligned with school calculations.
- Many schools in the [Private School Choice Program](#) (“Choice Schools”) receive an overall rating
- Some Choice Schools will receive two types private school report cards: the Private School - Choice Students Report Card and the Private School - All Students Report Card.

Some of these changes may, for some districts and schools, result in noticeable changes in report card scores from last year.

Score Volatility

Why do some report cards have a ^ carrot symbol?

Schools and districts that have a 10-point or greater score fluctuation in both their Overall and Growth scores as compared to the 2015-16 report card, will see the ^ special data caution on the front page. The 10-point change can be in either direction but needs to be present in both Overall and Growth. 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 ^ to encourage the reader to review the 2016-17 report card with caution. It is unclear whether the amount of change in scores is reflective of the actual amount of change in school/district performance, or a symptom of statistical volatility.

What is causing the scores to fluctuate?

The Growth (value-added) priority area had the largest average score change of the four priority areas on the report card, and is the largest driver of average change in Overall Score between years. While variation is inherent to value-added methodologies, a change in statewide assessment – from Badger to Forward – contributed to some of the volatility in the value-added scores. Additional years of Forward

test data should partially mitigate this issue. Intensifying these score fluctuations is variable weighting, which places more weight on school and district Growth scores as rates of economically disadvantaged students (ECD) increase. Both value-added and variable weighting were legislated under 2015 Act 55.

How should we interpret report cards with the ^ caution?

Because the ^ notes outlier changes in scores, a cautious approach to report card interpretation is needed. The report cards reveal important trends in student performance, including those that have the ^ caution. While the amount of change in accountability and growth scores is larger than expected, the fact that there is some kind of change in student performance is clear. In other words, the direction of change is not in question but the magnitude of that change is unclear (because value-added and variable weighting are amplifiers).

In the following Student Achievement table, we see that this school has more students in the Advanced, Proficient and Basic performance levels – and most importantly, fewer in the Below Basic category – as compared to 2015-16.

Student Achievement		Total Score: 41.5/100								
		English Language Arts Achievement Score: 22.1/50								
Performance Level	Points Multiplier	2014-15			2015-16			2016-17		
		Students		Points	Students		Points	Students		Points
		Count	Percent		Count	Percent		Count	Percent	
Advanced	1.5	22	6.0%	33	4	1.1%	6	11	2.8%	36.5
Proficient	1.0	76	20.8%	76	81	21.5%	81	83	21.4%	83
Basic	0.5	118	32.2%	59	139	36.9%	69.5	151	38.9%	75.5
Below Basic	0.0	150	41.0%	0	153	40.6%	0	143	36.9%	0
Total Tested	-	366	100.0%	168	377	100.0%	156.5	388	100.0%	175

Mathematics Achievement Score: 19.5/50										
Performance Level	Points Multiplier	2014-15			2015-16			2016-17		
		Students		Points	Students		Points	Students		Points
		Count	Percent		Count	Percent		Count	Percent	
Advanced	1.5	13	3.5%	19.5	1	0.3%	1.5	13	3.4%	19.5
Proficient	1.0	65	17.7%	65	59	15.7%	59	74	19.1%	74
Basic	0.5	116	31.6%	58	134	35.6%	67	145	37.5%	72.5
Below Basic	0.0	173	47.1%	0	182	48.4%	0	155	40.1%	0
Total Tested	-	367	100.0%	142.5	376	100.0%	127.5	387	100.0%	166

The notable reduction of students scoring Below Basic, especially in mathematics, is important to highlight. It could point to a successful curricular or instructional change, and should be understood by the school and parents alike so the success can be replicated and/or deepened through the school. As such, report cards with the ^ special data caution contain critical information that ought not be dismissed.

DPI encourages exploration of priority area data for all schools, and especially for schools that fall within the parameters for the ^ symbol. In particular, in the Student Achievement priority area, examining the student count over time for each of the four performance levels is one of the best ways to understand and use report card data.

Variable Weighting for Poverty

How are the Priority Areas weighted for poverty?

As of the 2015-16 report cards, a new weighting formula went into effect, which adjusts the weighting of the Student Achievement and Growth Priority Areas to account for the percentage of economically disadvantaged (ECD) students in the school or district. Generally, the higher the proportion of ECD students, the greater the weight assigned to Growth and the lesser to Achievement, and vice versa. You can see how the variable weighting adjusts based on the percent ECD by using the weighting calculator located here (https://oea-dpi.shinyapps.io/variable_weighting_app_17/).

What effect will variable weighting have on my school's score?

There are a variety of reasons why report card scores may change, but generally speaking, schools with ECD rates above 35% that have higher growth than achievement scores will likely have higher overall scores, compared to when calculations weighted growth and achievement equally. Schools with ECD above 35% that have higher achievement scores than growth scores will likely see a lower overall score, compared to when calculations weighted growth and achievement equally.

How is the economically disadvantaged (ECD) percentage used in variable weighting calculated?

The ECD percentage is calculated from ECD data captured at the time of the WISEdash Assessment Demographics Snapshot. Only students who were enrolled on the Third Friday of September are included in this percentage. All students, including those participating in the Community Eligibility Program (CEP), if applicable to a school, must have their Economically Disadvantaged Status reported in their Student Information System (SIS). See the [WISEdata Economically Disadvantaged/Food Services Eligibility](#) page for more information.

Growth

How has the Growth calculation changed?

As of the 2015-16 report cards, the Growth Priority Area calculation is based on a value-added model produced outside of DPI. Growth is no longer based on Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs), which were calculated from student-level growth scores. Instead, it is now a school-based growth measure based on value-added scores. As with the SGPs, value-added scores measure how rapidly students are gaining knowledge and skills from year to year, focusing on the pace of improvement in student performance. Specifically, value-added calculations are designed to identify and measure the difference between expected growth and actual growth for a group of students. The value-added approach is explained in more detail in the Technical Guide, accessible from the [accountability resource](#) page.

How does District Growth compare to School Growth for schools within a particular district?

District Growth measures the academic progress of all students in a district, giving each student equal weight in the calculation. As such, District Growth is not a simple averaging of the School Growth scores of the schools within the district. Doing so would give more weight to smaller schools and less weight to larger schools. In order for each student in a district to contribute equally to a District Growth score, the district is treated as one large school in the District Growth calculation.

Can I compare Growth scores for the same school or district across different Report Card years?

No. Prior to 2015-16, the report cards used SGPs for Growth calculations, which are not comparable to value-added Growth scores. Additionally, due to small refinements to the current value-added model, Growth scores for 2015-16 and 2016-17 should not be compared. In 2015-16 the district's performance was compared to other districts in determining their value-added score. This is no longer done; instead, districts are treated as one big school and placed on the school distribution to determine their value-added score.

Why did the name of this Priority Area change?

In prior years, this Priority Area was named "Student Growth." In order to reflect the nature of this Priority Area more accurately, in 2016-17 the name has changed to "School Growth" for schools and "District Growth" for districts. This change is meant to capture the purpose of the indicator: to measure how student achievement as a whole is changing among all students in a school or district. Note that in the Private School – Choice Students Report Card, School Growth only refers to students participating in the Choice program. On the Private School – All Students Report Card, the School Growth Priority Area measures growth among all students in a Choice school.

Closing Gaps

How have the Gaps calculations changed?

As of the 2016-17 report cards, the Closing Gaps Priority Area calculation adjust the number of years of statewide comparison data that is used. A minimum of three consecutive years of data is required, and up to five years of data are used when available, for both the target group within the school and for the statewide comparison groups. For schools and districts with a target group that doesn't have all five possible years — they have three or four years of data — the Gaps calculation has been adjusted to use the same time span as the schools' in the statewide comparison group's slope. In other words, the statewide comparison group calculation adjusts based on the number of consecutive years of data available for the school or district.

For example, if the school or district has three years of data for their economically disadvantaged (ECD) target group, the statewide comparison group's trend is limited to the same three years, even though five years are available for the statewide non-ECD comparison group. In such cases, the report card will display NA for the restricted years for the statewide comparison group.

Choice School Report Cards

How do the 2016-17 Report Cards for Choice schools differ from those in 2015-16?

DPI first produced report cards for private schools participating in the Private School Choice Program in 2015-16. These report cards were required in state law (2015 Wisconsin Act 55) for schools with at least 20 students participating in the Choice program. However, because 2015-16 was the first time that Choice schools reported accountability data to DPI and at least two years of data are required for report card calculations, these schools were assigned an overall score of "Not Rated" ("NR"). The 2016-17 accountability report cards will be the first year these schools have multiple years of data available, so they will receive ratings and an overall score.

Do Choice schools receive two report cards?

Per state law, all Choice schools with at least 20 voucher students will receive a *Private School – Choice Students Report Card*. Choice schools also have the option to report data for all students in the school to receive the additional *Private School – All Students Report Card*. As such, report cards for private schools participating in a Choice program will reflect one of two scenarios:

1. If the school submits data for only those students attending under the Choice program, the school’s Report Card will be based solely on those students [*Private School–Choice Students Report Card*].
2. If the school submits data for all students at the school, those attending under the Choice program and non-Choice students, the school will receive two report cards [*Private School–Choice Students Report Card*, which includes only Choice students—and *Private School–All Students Report Card*, which includes all students in the private school].

My school did not opt to receive a *Private School - All Students Report Card* last year but did so this year. Why does this year’s report card have a rating of “NR - DATA”?

Schools opting into receiving a *Private School - All Students Report Card* need to submit a minimum of two consecutive years of data to DPI for their non-Choice students before an overall rating can be issued. If your school opted in to receiving a *Private School - All Students Report Card* for this year but did not do so last year, the report card will receive a “NR - DATA” rating (see below) due to the lack of sufficient data required to calculate an Overall Accountability Score. Once two years of data for non-Choice students have been received, an Overall Accountability Score and rating would be calculated.

Have the names of Choice school report cards changed?

Yes, slightly. As referenced above, the two Choice school report cards are named the “*Private School – Choice Students Report Card*” and the “*Private School – All Students Report Card*.” These names were adopted in 2016-17 with the intent of producing greater clarity between the two types of Choice school report cards. The 2015-16 report cards referred to these as the “Choice Pupil Report Card” and “Private School Report Card,” respectively. Additionally, other documentation used at DPI regarding the Private School Choice Programs and WISEdata has been using the old names. Efforts are underway to adopt the new naming convention across DPI. The crosswalk below may be of assistance during this transition time.

New Name	Old Name	Data Reflects	Type
Private School – Choice Students Report Card	Choice Pupil Report Card	Only those students attending the school via the Private School Choice Program; report card is based solely on those students	Required

Private School – All Students Report Card	Private School Report Card	All students at the school, regardless of participation in Private School Choice Program	Optional
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Please note that although these report cards have “Private School” in their name, they only pertain to schools participating in the Private School Choice Program; no other private schools receive report cards.

How are Choice school report cards similar/different from report cards for public schools?

Choice schools began reporting data to DPI for the first time in 2015-16. As a result, we have only two years of data for Choice students in 2016-17, impacting the features of report cards that rely on multiple years of data. Given these data limitations and the core value of treating all schools the same, the Private School – Choice Students and Private School – All Students Report Cards for 2016-17 differ from public school Report Cards in the following ways:

- Choice school Report Cards will not report graduation rates because these rates are based on cohorts and require four years of data to calculate. As such, high schools in the Choice program do not have Closing Graduation Rate Gaps component scores or Graduation Rate scores within the On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness Priority Area. This is similar to public schools that are very small and do not have enough data to produce Closing Graduation Rate Gaps or Graduation Rate scores within the On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness Priority Area.
- The Percent Choice Enrollment field in the School Information box on the front page only pertains to Choice schools that opt into the Private School - All Students Report Card. This field contains the percentage of a school’s students that are enrolled through the Choice program.
- Unlike most public school report cards, Choice school report cards do not have an associated District Report Card.

State Assessments

Which assessments are used in the report cards?

For the 2016-17 report cards, test participation and performance data will be included from the following assessments: Forward, Badger, ACT plus Writing, Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM), Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE), and Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for Students with Disabilities (WAA-SwD). Because the report cards use multiple years of data, multiple assessments are incorporated.

How are the high school assessments – the ACT, WorkKeys, ACT Aspire – used in the report cards?

Since the ACT plus Writing is a statewide assessment, it is used in the Student Achievement Priority Area (ACT was previously used in the On-Track Priority Area). WorkKeys and ACT Aspire results are not currently used in the accountability report cards.

How is participation and performance calculated for ELA on the ACT?

The ACT has three subtests that comprise the ELA score: reading, writing, English. Students who complete any two out of three ELA sections—reading, writing, English—are counted as ELA participants and will be included in all applicable ELA calculations for Student Achievement and Closing Gaps. This does not affect math calculations in any way.

If a student takes the ACT a second time, and scores better, do you factor their best score or the score from the statewide administration into the report cards?

For accountability purposes, only the score obtained from the statewide administration is used. This is the case because report cards reflect performance measured at a point in time and need to be standardized across the state.

Test Participation

Are test participation rates used in calculating Accountability Report Cards?

No. Test participation is no longer a Student Engagement Indicator, and test participation rates do not factor into the scoring of the Accountability Report Cards.

Note that test participation will, however, be a component of scoring in the new federal accountability system being developed in compliance with the Every Student Succeeds Act ([ESSA](#)), the reauthorized federal education law. The federal accountability system will coexist alongside the state accountability system; there will be separate federal reporting that includes test participation rates, but as indicated above, test participation is no longer part of the state Accountability Report Cards.

Are test participation data still included in the Report Cards?

Yes. Test participation rates are provided on the last page of report cards. These data are meant to be informative, specifically to inform subgroup analysis of test participation. These data have no impact on a school's or district's Overall Accountability Score.

Which students are exempt from the state assessment?

As in the past, a student may be exempt from participating in a test for the only two reasons: the student has experienced a medical emergency or the student is a recently arrived English learner (defined as having attended schools in the U.S. for 12 months or less). A student with a medical emergency may be eligible for exclusion from all tests. A recently arrived English learner is exempt from his/her first year English language arts exam only.

Absenteeism and Attendance Calculations

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

This depends on how the district reports attendance locally in their SIS. DPI reporting does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. So if the district reports the student as absent, then it is included as an absence in DPI calculations.

However, 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, see the Attendance Data Collection and Reporting page (<https://dpi.wi.gov/wise/data-elements/attendance>) and the [Answers to Frequently Asked Compulsory School Attendance Questions](#).

How is absenteeism rate calculated?

The absenteeism rate is the percent of students in a school or district that are chronically absent. A student is considered chronically absent when his or her attendance rate is 84.0% or less. To determine absenteeism rate, DPI looks at the individual attendance rate of any student who 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 or district absenteeism rate. The absenteeism deduction is based upon both a one-year rate and a three-year rate. If one or both of the rates meet the goal of a school or district absenteeism rate being below 13%, then no points are deducted. If the goal is not met, five points are deducted from the Overall Accountability Score.

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

Report card calculations are based on a student's total enrollment so each student is counted only once. For example, if a student enrolled in Example School at the start of the 2016-17 school year, exited the district and then enrolled again in the same Example School two months later, that student's attendance rate (days attended divided by their total days enrolled) and absenteeism rate would be calculated based on the sum of the student's two enrollment periods during the 2016-17 school year at Example School.

Graduation and Dropout Calculations

How are graduation rates used in Report Card calculations?

Graduation rates are used in two Priority Areas: Closing Gaps and On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness. Both the 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Rate and the 6-Year Adjusted Cohort Rate are used. The cohort rates are defined as the percentage of students starting high school in the same year who graduate within four or six years, respectively.

- 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 gaps calculation is an average of the 4-year and 6-year Closing Graduation Gap cohort scores.

Do Choice schools have graduation rates on the Report Cards?

No. Adjusted cohort graduation rates require at least four years of data in order to be calculated. Since only two years of data are available for Choice schools, no graduation rates are reported on the Private School – Choice Students and Private School – All Students Report Cards.

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

Yes, 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; and
2. After a temporary expulsion when a student does not return to school when eligible to do so.

Ratings and Scores

Why aren't the Priority Area scores averaged or added up to get the overall score?

By design, Priority Area scores may not add up or average to the 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. The weighting method is designed to account for differences in what can be measured in different schools, and at the same time, report an Overall Accountability Score that is comparable, as much as possible, across all schools.

There is an 'NA' for one or more Priority Area scores. Is this a data error? Does this lower the Overall Accountability Score?

No. NAs 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 or a component of a Priority Area. For example, a K-5 elementary school will never have graduation rates or 8th Grade Mathematics Achievement, so they will always receive an NA in these areas. Additionally, NAs 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 when the group size of 20 is met; this ensures accuracy and stability in our calculations, as very small subgroups are subject to fluctuations in scores that do not necessarily accurately reflect change in performance.

NAs do not inherently advantage or disadvantage a school or district. All schools and districts receive a report card, though not all schools or districts will have all data for every Priority Area. 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.

There is an asterisk (*) for one or more Priority Area 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 publicly reported measures, we only report metrics that meet a minimum group (or cell) size—20 students—in public reports. If metrics do not meet cell size, the data are redacted and an asterisk (*) is displayed for public reports.

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. Since the Overall Accountability Score represents a weighted average of the individual Priority Area scores, the Overall Accountability Rating Categories do not apply to these individual areas.

Can I compare individual Priority Area scores to state comparison scores?

State comparison scores are shown to provide context to individual priority area and component scores, to inform local conversations. 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 Accountability Score?

No. State comparison scores are not used to determine the Overall Accountability Score. State comparisons are shown only to provide context and do not factor into a school's accountability score or rating. Comparisons are based on one of six broad grade bands: K-5, K-8, K-12, 6-8, 6-12, and 9-12. Schools or districts are assigned to the most similar grade band and compared to all students statewide.

within that band. 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, even if the school or district itself does not have a score for it.

What does an “AR” rating mean?

A rating of AR - Alternate Rating is assigned to Alternate Accountability schools (see below). Public schools that do not have the data necessary to calculate standard report card scores must use a district-supervised self-evaluation process called [Alternate Accountability](#). Although these schools do not receive a starred rating, they will still receive a report card with an Alternate Rating of either “*Alternate Rating – Satisfactory Progress*” or “*Alternate Rating – Needs Improvement.*”

What does the “NR-DATA” rating mean?

The NR - DATA rating only applies to Choice schools and indicates that a school was not rated for one of three reasons: (1) the school submitted insufficient Choice enrollment data, inhibiting the ability to produce an Overall Score; (2) the school has less than 20 students, thereby not meeting the cell size requirement to produce an Overall Score; and (3) the school submitted data for only one of the two years required to produce a score, which applies to new Choice schools and Choice schools switching opt-in statuses for the Private School-All Students Report Card.

Foreign Exchange Students

How are foreign exchange students included in the Accountability Report Cards?

Foreign exchange students are expected to be working towards a diploma. Thus, a district or school is accountable for these students and their academic progress. Foreign exchange students will count towards attendance, achievement, and (in most cases) graduation rates.

Students are expected to take the state assessments for their particular grade, so 11th graders, for example, would be required to take ACT plus Writing, which factors into achievement and proficiency calculations. Foreign exchange students are factored into a district or school’s attendance rate and all other aspects of the Report Card that apply to students in their grade.

How do foreign exchange students affect the graduation rate?

Foreign exchange students with F type visas count towards a school and district’s graduation rate. However, foreign exchange students attending under a J-1 visa are not factored into graduation rate calculations, as per federal guidance. (Students attending under J-1 visas will still affect other areas of the Accountability Report Card.)

For all foreign exchange students, Visa Type should be coded in your SIS. If unknown, Visa Type must be submitted as F type. It is therefore important for schools to record the correct visa type of all foreign exchange students. See the WISEdata Exit Types page for more information:

<https://dpi.wi.gov/wise/data-elements/exit-types>.

Report Card Data

Why might my score change during the preliminary release of the secure report cards?

Scores can – and often do – change between the first preliminary secure release and the updated preliminary secure release. This is due to the report card inquiry process, and any manual corrections that may result from the process. Each year schools and districts that identify incorrect data on their initial preliminary report card have a window of time, the report card inquiry, to notify OEA and submit evidence substantiating the correction requested.

In particular, state comparison scores used in Closing Gaps calculations may change between the preliminary and final secure releases due to manual corrections that other schools and districts made, regardless of whether or not the school in question initiated an inquiry themselves. Here's an example of how one district's scores and corrections can impact other schools and districts in the state.

- A district could have misidentified students as not economically disadvantaged (non-ECD) when they should have been marked as economically disadvantaged (ECD). During the secure release, upon review of their preliminary report card, the district uncovers the misidentification and submits an inquiry to OEA with data from their local SIS that shows a large number of students were inaccurately coded as non-ECD. This group of students should be marked as ECD. Once the evidence is received by OEA, we include the corrected ECD data in the accountability index. This is a manual corrections process that only applies to report card data completed by OEA. The district's data will not be changed elsewhere (e.g. WISEdash).
- After the inquiry window closes and all of the manual corrections data have been incorporated, OEA generates an updated run of the preliminary report cards for all schools, not just those that initiated inquiries. These updated preliminary report cards are typically available a few days in advance of the public (and final) report card release.
- Because this district had many students miscoded, their corrected data actually changed the performance of the ECD subgroup as a whole – at the district and the state. As such, the performance trend of the ECD group within the district and the non-ECD group in the state underlying the Closing Gaps scores in the updated preliminary report card are more accurate.

The intent of the preliminary release is to diagnose and correct data inaccuracies. Emphasis on the **preliminary** nature of the data is key. Having a secure release window with an inquiry process allows the report cards as a whole to be more accurate. While it can be confusing to schools and districts when they see scores change, especially when they haven't opened an inquiry with OEA, it is important to understand some of the scoring in the report cards depends not only on the performance of other districts but also the accuracy of other district's data.

Where do the data used in report cards come from?

For all public schools, public school districts, and private schools in the Private School Choice Program, DPI relies on accurate data collection and reporting through [WISEdata](#) and WSAS test results in order to accurately calculate accountability scores and ratings. Beginning in the 2016-17 school year, all data reporting for public schools and districts was done through WISEdata. School participating in the Choice program began reporting through WISEdata in 2015-16. Additionally, some of the data elements for public schools and districts come from data from prior years, which were collected through ISES. The resource titled [Data-at-Glance](#) lists where each element of the report card is pulled from in a visual guide. This can be downloaded from the [accountability resources](#) page.

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

Excel files that contain the data from the first page of the report cards are provided. These Data Download files are available at <http://dpi.wi.gov/accountability/report-cards>.

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 this?

DPI relies on accurate data collection and reporting from schools and districts in order to accurately calculate accountability scores and ratings. The data used in the report cards are based upon data already verified by districts.

- Districts and Choice schools have multiple opportunities during the WISEdata collection timeline and assessment window to verify and make corrections to their data. Please check with your WISEdata Coordinator to ensure that all data are correctly collected, verified, and submitted in accordance with DPI guidelines going forward.

Districts that discover that their data are incorrect may submit an errata letter to DPI. Additionally, if a district discovers an error prior to the public release of the final Accountability Report Cards – during the secure preliminary release, which is an opportunity for schools/districts to review their accountability scores and initiate an inquiry to address possible data errors – they can contact OEA (reportcardhelp@dpi.wi.gov) for details on the corrections process.

- Any data corrections made during the inquiry processes will not result in a change to WISEdata, WSAS, or ISES databases, as they are locked. While report card data may change if warranted, WISEdata, WSAS, and ISES data that are reported in WISEdash or on other DPI public reporting pages will not change, regardless of the evidence submitted during the inquiry process.

Student Data

Are only Full Academic Year (FAY) students' data included in calculations?

Metrics that rely on assessment results include FAY students only. These include Student Achievement, Growth, Closing Gaps, 3rd Grade ELA and 8th Grade Mathematics (from On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness). FAY status is not considered for any other report card calculations; in these cases – Graduation, Attendance and Dropout Rates – use “all students,” while Absenteeism uses all students enrolled for at least 45 days. FAY status for the school is used in the School Report Cards; FAY for the district is used in the District Report Cards.

Why do the race/ethnicity categories look different?

As of 2015-16, the report cards included seven groups in the race/ethnicity category (previously there were five groups). These groups are American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, White, and Two or More Races.

The change to seven groups had an effect on calculations in the Closing Gaps and On-Track (attendance rate only) Priority Areas as well as the Student Engagement Indicators. Additionally, data disaggregated by race/ethnicity is provided for the Student Achievement, Growth, and On-Track (graduation rate) Priority Areas for informational purposes only. For more information see <http://dpi.wi.gov/cst/data-collections/student/ises/data-collection/cd-ye-child-count-data-elements/race-ethnicity-faq>.

Who is included in the Limited English Proficient (LEP) subgroup?

The LEP percentage listed in the front-page School Information box is determined by the English Language Proficiency/Limited English Proficiency codes captured during the 2016-17 WISEdata Assessment Demographics Snapshot. LEP group determination for the Priority Areas also includes former limited English proficient (FLEP) students in the LEP subgroup. FLEP students are those who were formerly LEP but are now English proficient. The report cards count FLEP students in the LEP subgroup for the first two years they are English proficient. See the following WISEdata page for additional information on LEP students: <https://dpi.wi.gov/wise/data-elements/elp>.

Who is included in the former Limited English Proficient (FLEP) subgroup?

FLEP students are those who were formerly LEP but are now English proficient, those who received an ELP code 6 on the ACCESS for ELLs assessment. The report cards count FLEP students in the LEP subgroup for the first two years they are English proficient, essentially giving the school credit for these students reaching English proficiency.

FLEP counts that are used in the report cards are based on the Third Friday of September (TFS) data. If a student was assigned the ELP code of 6 prior to the TFS snapshot, she would be counted as a FLEP student in the TFS 2017-18 snapshot and would therefore be counted as a FLEP student for both the 2017-18 report card and the 2018-19 report card. If, however, a student is assigned an ELP code of 6 later in the school year, after the TFS snapshot, she would first be counted as a FLEP in the TFS 2018-19 snapshot and would be counted as a FLEP student in the 2018-19 and 2019-20 report cards.

Who is included in the “all students” group for Choice schools?

This depends on which version of the choice report card you are viewing:

- The *Private School – All Students Report Card* reports on all students in the private school, regardless of Choice program participation; therefore, the “all students” group for this report card corresponds to all students in the school for which a particular indicator applies.
- The *Private School – Choice Students Report Card* only reports on Choice students, so the “all students” group refers only to those Choice students and not to all students within the school.

Data Not Matching

Why don't the data on the report cards match WISEdash?

The report cards use demographic data, attendance and completion (graduation and dropout) data collected from various WISEdata snapshots. Districts have the opportunity to update student demographics throughout the year, up to the WISEdata Assessment Demographic Snapshot. Data collected at the time of a snapshot are considered locked, and are subsequently reported in WISEdash. These data are then used in the accountability report cards.

Schools and districts that open an inquiry with the Office of Educational Accountability to correct inaccurate demographic or completion data on their report card would see the corrected data in their report card, but not in WISEdash as this correction process does not apply to data captured in WISEdata snapshots (the data remain locked for WISEdata and WISEdash purposes). In such cases, WISEdash data would not match report card data.

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

Current grade configurations for the 2017-18 school year may not match the School Report Card, which is based on the 2016-17 configuration reported to DPI. Please note that in accordance with federal policy, new schools are those that change four or more grades. For more information, see <https://dpi.wi.gov/cst/data-collections/school-directory/directory-data/school-code>.

District Report Cards

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-District but not FAY-School.** Students who were not Full Academic Year (FAY) in the school and thus excluded from school-level calculations that use WSAS results may be FAY within the district and included in the district calculations.

Starting in 2015-16, per state law, if a district includes a [virtual school](#) with a population that is more than 50% open enrolled, no students in the virtual school are to be included in the district report card calculations. In other words, virtual schools are excluded from district report card calculations if the virtual school's population is more than 50% open enrolled.

How are district deductions calculated?

The district is considered one big school, and the calculations for the Student Engagement Indicators, and possible deductions, follow the same rules as in the School Report Cards. Students attending schools participating in the [alternate accountability process](#) are also included in district report card calculations, and their data may affect district-wide scores, ratings, and deductions.

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

Certain schools educate 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 using WSAS results, are based solely on students who have been enrolled for a Full Academic Year (FAY) while others are not. As such, while students currently in the justice system are required to participate in state testing, their results would not be included in school or district calculations unless the student was enrolled in the school or district for the full academic year.

Some districts have schools whose entire populations are involved in the justice system. Districts are accountable for these student populations, which will be in the district calculations. Again, note that some Priority Area measures, those using WSAS results, are based solely on students who have been enrolled for a Full Academic Year while others are not.

Districts and schools are not accountable for students in correctional facilities run by the Department of Corrections.

Virtual Charter Schools District Report Card Exemption

How does data from virtual charter schools factor into District Report Cards?

Per state law (2015 Act 55), data for all students in virtual charter schools in which at least 50% of the students are attending under full-time open enrollment are excluded from District Report Card calculations. For virtual charter schools with less than 50% open enrollees, data from the school will be used for District Report Card calculations. This provision does not affect School Report Cards, which the virtual charter schools will continue to receive.

Alternate Accountability

Which schools participate in Alternate Accountability?

Schools that do not have the data necessary to calculate standard report card scores must use a district-supervised self-evaluation process called [Alternate Accountability](#):

- Schools with fewer than 20 full academic year (FAY) students enrolled in tested grades (3-8, and 11)
- Schools without tested grades (including K-2 schools)
- Schools exclusively serving at-risk students (must also complete At-Risk Designation Form)
- New schools

Will Alternate Accountability schools receive a report card?

Yes. Schools that do not have enough data to calculate a regular report card score participate in the Alternate Accountability process, a district supervised self-assessment using local data. These schools will receive a report card with an Alternate Rating of either “*Alternate Rating – Satisfactory Progress*” or “*Alternate Rating – Needs Improvement.*”

School Support

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 or district performance. With one exception, described below, state legislation does not dictate specific supports or interventions for schools. Schools and districts in search of resources to support local improvement efforts may access a variety of existing supports through their [CESAs](#), the [Wisconsin RtI Center](#), and the [Department of Public Instruction](#).

The sole instance of mandated intervention is for certain districts in the Fails to Meet Expectations (one star) rating category. This currently affects the Milwaukee Public School District (MPS) and districts with an enrollment of greater than 15,000 students that are also rated as Fails to Meet Expectations on the School Report Card. The Opportunity Schools and Partnership Program, created in [2015 Act 55](#), requires that a subgroup of schools that falls into the lowest report card category be removed from the eligible district and placed within the jurisdiction of another governing body. This governing body will oversee supports and interventions for the removed schools.

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 through the 2016-17 school year 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 here: <http://dpi.wi.gov/tss>.