



DC SCHOOL REPORT CARD

Get to know DC Schools. Start here.



DC SCHOOL REPORT CARD DISCUSSION GUIDE

This discussion guide will help you understand the key metrics on the DC School Report Card and provide you with some guiding questions to help you learn more about DC schools.

DCSchoolReportCard.org



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DC MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR



WHAT IS THE DC SCHOOL REPORT CARD?

The DC School Report Card gives families a look into all public schools in the District of Columbia. Built in partnership with parents and families, this tool is a step toward a more transparent, equitable DC education system, with students at the center of critical decision-making.

A school report card is a tool that provides you with information about a school, and helps you understand how well a school is doing or where it needs more support. All states, including DC, are required by a federal law called the [Every Student Succeeds Act or ESSA](#) to create family-friendly report card websites. The DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), DC's state education agency, worked with families and educators to build the DC School Report

Card, hearing feedback from thousands of families, educators, and community members. While the report cards are federally required, OSSE knew that they must also be helpful for the families and community members using them to engage in their child's school.

This discussion guide will help you understand the key metrics in the DC School Report Card, why they are important for families to know, and some questions to ask as you are exploring schools in the District or learning more about your school. Still have questions? Visit our resource sections for families and educators at DCSchoolReportCard.org, or send us an email at DCSchoolReportCard@dc.gov.

WHAT INFORMATION DOES THE DC SCHOOL REPORT CARD INCLUDE?

The DC School Report Card provides more than 150 data points to help parents understand how a school is doing with its all of its students, in addition to helpful information about the school itself, including academic programs, the closest public transportation routes, extra-curricular options, the best contact person for parents and families, and more.

The DC School Report Card will help you answer some of the most crucial questions about our schools. It was designed to provide families with critical information to advocate for their schools and to ask questions about how schools are doing.

All of these data points can be accessed from the Report Card's four main sections:



School Profile: The profile provides an overview of a school. It includes information such as location and contact information, grades served, parent contact person at the school, student population, school offerings, and logistical information (e.g., hours of operation and transportation options).



Academic Performance: You can explore student achievement and growth on multiple measures, including state assessment performance, English language proficiency, college readiness metrics, and graduation rates. See page 4 of this guide for more information.



School Environment: The School Environment page provides information about the school's attendance rates, including chronic absenteeism, re-enrollment, student mobility, safety and discipline, teaching and health staff, and early learning classroom environment. See page 7 of this guide for more information.



STAR Framework: Every school's performance is rated by the School Transparency and Reporting (STAR) Framework. Schools receive a rating from one to five stars, five being the highest. OSSE reports STAR Ratings annually. See page 11 for more information.





STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

This page shows how students at the school or within the local education agency (LEA) performed on the state assessments for English language arts, math, and science. This includes how many students scored at each performance level and how student performance compares across DC.



What is measured?

- State assessment performance in English language arts
- State assessment performance in math
- State assessment performance in science



Why is this important?

- Performance on state assessments indicates if students are meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations.
- Ultimately, it shows if students are on track to be ready for the next grade and for college and career pathways after high school.



Questions to ask:

- How are different student groups performing at this school?
- How are schools similar to this school performing? What are they doing differently?
- What instructional changes at the school will be implemented to address performance and/or achievement gaps?

STUDENT GROWTH

This page shows how students in DC are improving on the state assessments for English language arts and math. Median growth percentile shows how much students grew on that state assessment compared to others across the country taking similar tests in the same grade. Median growth percentiles between 40 and 60 represent typical growth. Growth to proficiency shows how fast students are progressing toward meeting or exceeding expectations on the state assessment within five years.



What is measured?

- State assessment performance growth in English language arts, both compared to students in the same academic range, and toward meeting or exceeding expectations.
- State assessment growth in math, both compared to students in the same academic range, and toward meeting or exceeding expectations.



Why is this important?

- All students should be making progress in every subject, every year. Making progress towards proficiency is the expectation of families and the community.
- We want to understand how much a school is helping their students grow, both compared to their peers, and toward the ultimate goal of college and career readiness.



Questions to ask:

- How are students at this school growing compared to others?
- Are there some student groups who are growing faster than others?
- What instructional changes at the school will be implemented to address learning gaps?

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

This page shows whether students in DC are participating in college and career readiness opportunities, such as Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams, and how they are performing on these and on the SAT.



What is measured?

- Advanced Placement (AP) participation and performance
- International Baccalaureate (IB) participation and performance
- SAT performance



Why is it important?

- Schools must prepare their students for education and work after high school.
- The opportunity to experience college-level coursework and earn college credits corresponds to future success in post-secondary education.



Questions to ask:

- Do students have equitable access to experiences and are they able to participate in college-level coursework?
- How do students at this school perform on AP and IB exams compared to other students in the District?
- How do students at this school perform on the SAT compared to other students in the District?

GRADUATION RATE AND COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

The DC School Report Card measures graduation rate in three ways: the percentage of high school students who graduate in four years, the percentage of students who graduate in five years, and the percentage of students who graduate from high school with a diploma each year regardless of how many years it takes them. This page also shares the percentage of students enrolling in postsecondary education, including two-year and four-year institutions.



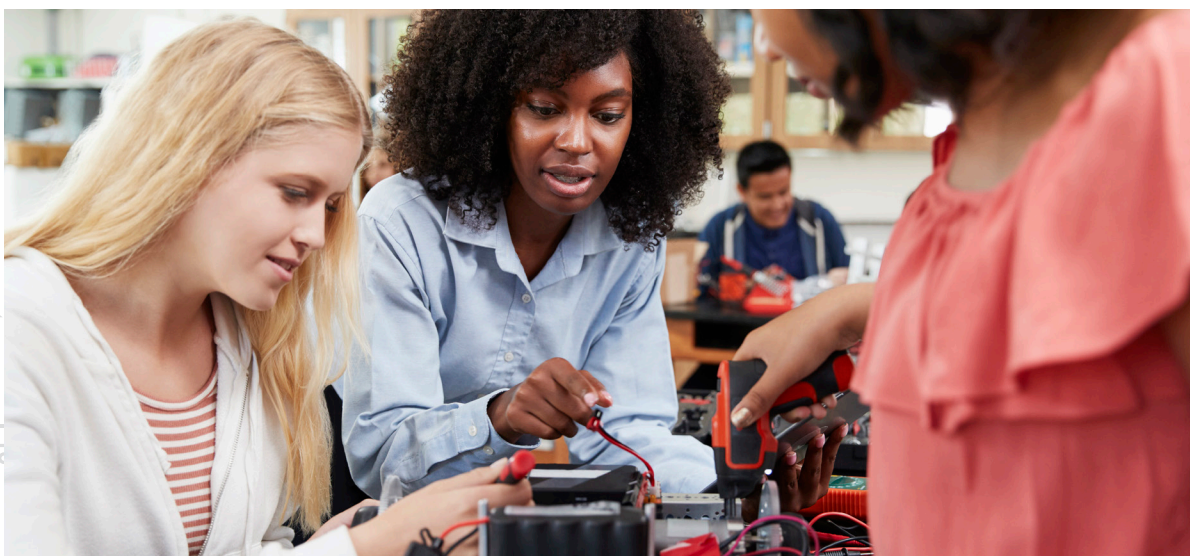
Why is this important?

- Many jobs and post-secondary education opportunities require the skills that are required to earn a high school diploma.
- Providing opportunities for students to persist and earn their high school diploma prepares them for future success in life.



Questions to ask:

- How does graduation rate vary by student group?
- How is the school supporting students who have previously been disengaged from school?
- How does enrollment in postsecondary education for this school compare to the District average?



ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

This page shows the progress at this school of English learners in learning to speak, listen, read, and write English.



What is measured?

- Progress on the ACCESS 2.0 for ELLs, an assessment for English learners that assesses proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing English.



Why is this important?

- Achieving proficiency in English sets students up for success throughout their education, as well as after high school.



Questions to ask:

- Are English learner students in the school making progress toward learning the English language?
- What supports are available to support students learning to speak, listen, read, and write in English?





SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

This section of the report card provides information about the school's daily attendance, chronic absenteeism, re-enrollment, student mobility, safety and discipline, teaching and health staff, and early learning classroom environment.

ATTENDANCE

This page provides details on attendance rates. This includes average daily attendance for all students, the percentage of students attending school 90 percent of the time or more and the school's growth in attendance rate.



What is measured?

- The percentage of students who attend school 90 percent of the time or more.
- Improvement in the percentage of students who attend school 90 percent of the time or more.
- The percentage of students who attend school daily, averaged across the entire school year.



Why is this important?

- Students must be in school to learn. Educational research shows that students who miss more than 10 percent of the school year (no matter the reason) are less likely to stay on track for high school graduation and eventual enrollment in postsecondary education. These students are considered "chronically absent." The DC School Report Card shows the inverse of this number - the percentage of students who are not chronically absent at the school as the percentage of students attending school for 90% or more of school days.



Questions to ask:

- Does this school have a high percentage of students who are chronically absent?
- Are attendance rates improving?
- What is being done to improve attendance rates?



STUDENT ENROLLMENT CHANGES

This page includes information about the number of students who leave or enter the school mid-year, and how many eligible students choose to re-enroll in the school. It also provides details on the rate of students entering and withdrawing from a school during the school year.



What is measured?

- Re-enrollment of eligible students year over year. Students who have graduated or moved to later grades are not included.
- Student mobility throughout the year shows the number of students who enter and exit the school by month.



Why is this important?

- Students and families who are satisfied with their school are less likely to enroll elsewhere. These numbers indicate whether families are making the choice to stay at the school.



Questions to ask:

- Does this school have a high percentage of students entering or leaving throughout the year?
- Does this school have a high percentage of eligible students choosing to re-enroll?
- Which schools have high re-enrollment and lower student mobility rates? Are they doing anything differently than schools with higher rates?



TEACHER AND HEALTH STAFF INFORMATION

This page includes information about experience levels for educators at this school. For DC Public Schools, it also includes information about certified and credentialed teachers. Additionally, the page includes information about part- and full-time health and clinical staff at the school.



What is measured?

- The percentage of teachers and school leaders at the school with varying levels of experience, including teachers with one year or less of experience, two to five years, six to 10 years, and more than 10 years.
- For DC Public Schools, the percentage of teachers who are “in-field” or who have a college major, certification, or an effective teacher evaluation designation in the subject they are teaching.
- For DC Public Schools, the percentage of teachers who hold a valid DC teaching certification.
- Whether the school has full- or part-time health staff in a variety of roles.



Why is this important?

- Families are interested in understanding how long their teachers and leaders have been in the field, and this measure shows how experienced teachers and leaders are at the school overall.
- Families are also interested in knowing whether their children will be able to access health services, such as a school nurse or a school psychologist, if needed.



Questions to ask:

- How long have teachers at this school been teaching?
- For DCPS schools, what percentage of teachers at this school have teaching credentials?

SCHOOL SAFETY AND DISCIPLINE

This page includes information about school safety and discipline, including the number of student suspensions and expulsions, and reported incidences of violence, bullying, and harassment at the school. These numbers are reported by the school to the US Department of Education and OSSE.

What is measured?

- The rate and count of suspensions for the school, both in-school and out-of-school.
- The rate and count of expulsions for the school.
- The number of students arrested in school-related incidents.
- The rate and count of incidences of violence, when those violent incidents resulted in a disciplinary action.
- The rate and count of incidences of bullying, when those bullying incidents resulted in a disciplinary action.
- The rate and count of incidences of harassment, when those harassing incidents resulted in a disciplinary action.

Why is this important?

- School safety is critically important to cultivating a positive school environment where students can learn. These numbers help families understand safety and discipline incidents that contribute to school climate and culture.

Questions to ask:

- Are the rates of school suspensions and expulsions higher or lower as compared to other DC schools?
- What is the school's policy around when they suspend or expel a student?
- What programs or policies does the school have in place to address bullying and harassment?



EARLY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

This page shares data on the quality of teacher-child interactions in pre-K classrooms in public schools throughout DC. The data is gathered through the CLASS instrument, a research-based tool for observing and assessing the effectiveness of classroom interactions in the pre-K classrooms, which is used to promote student development and learning.



What is measured?

- Pre-K attendance, Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support.



Why is this important?

- Research shows that high quality early childhood education is crucial to giving students an educational head start. The CLASS measure helps families to understand the quality of education in early learning classrooms.



Questions to ask:

- Are there areas of the CLASS measurements that are stronger than others for this school?
- What is the school doing to improve emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support for Pre-K classrooms?



STAR FRAMEWORK



The School Transparency and Reporting (STAR) Framework is DC's statewide school accountability system. The STAR Framework is used to evaluate the performance of all DC public schools, both DCPS and public charter schools. Schools receive a rating from one to five stars, with five being the highest. The STAR Framework uses multiple measures to calculate a school's overall performance and weights those areas differently for Elementary, Middle, High, and Alternative schools. Before the STAR Rating, families wanting a snapshot of how a school was doing had limited measures available to evaluate all public schools in DC. Generally, just state assessment performance and graduation rates were available. The STAR Framework helps families understand the school's performance with a more comprehensive set of measures.

STAR Framework data is used in a number of ways to support DC students, including celebrating schools with strong performance, planning for ways to help schools improve, and helping to start discussions about ways schools can better serve all students. Every three years, the schools in the bottom five percent of performance receive comprehensive support and funding from OSSE.

The school's overall STAR Rating is calculated by combining the school's performance of all students

in the school as well as groups of students: students with disabilities, students who are at-risk, English learners, and each racial or ethnic group (with more than ten students).

The STAR section of the DC School Report Card shows each metric in the STAR Framework compared to the DC average. These metrics are also reported in other sections of the school's report card. For example, performance on state assessments can also be found under Student Achievement. The STAR Framework section of the DC School Report Card site gives more in-depth detail and shows how the STAR Rating for the school was calculated. Families can view a breakdown of the STAR Rating by framework by looking at student group performance and individual metrics.



Questions to ask:

- What is the school's STAR Rating?
- What contributes to the STAR Rating? Where is the school doing well compared to other schools in the District? Where could it improve?
- How is the school doing with groups of students enrolled, such as students with disabilities? Is this performance stronger than the performance for all students in this group at other schools?





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LEARN MORE!

You can learn more about the DC School Report Card by visiting DCSchoolReportCard.org. The website also includes other resources about the DC School Report Card for families and educators such as an in-depth user guide, short videos explaining each section of the report card and STAR Framework, and more!

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Let us know at DCSchoolReportCard@dc.gov.



DCSchoolReportCard.org

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