



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

DC School Report Card and STAR Framework Frequently Asked Questions for Parents & Families

The DC School Report Card gives DC families a look into all public schools in the District. Built in partnership with parents and families, this tool is a step toward a more transparent, equitable educational system into the District of Columbia, helping us put students at the center of critical decision-making. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), DC's state education agency, has led the development of the DC School Report Card as part of federal requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Starting in early December 2018, you can find the DC School Report Card at DCSchoolReportCard.org.

Why did OSSE develop the new DC School Report Card?

We frequently hear from families and community members that they are looking for accessible and transparent information about all public schools in the District of Columbia, both DC Public Schools and public charter schools. For the first time, the DC School Report Card will provide that information.

In addition, DC along with all other states is required to create annual school report cards under the federal [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#). OSSE worked with school leaders, families, advocates, content experts, and members of the community to design a DC School Report Card that meets the new federal requirements and also provides families with transparent, accessible information they want to know about our public schools. We know that that this information can be a powerful tool for advocating for your school and understanding more about how your school is doing.

How was the DC School Report Card developed?

Historically, school report cards have not been built in partnership with the people who will use them most: parents and families. This time, OSSE wanted to make sure we were working with the community to create a tool that allowed transparent access to data.

Between September 2017 and August 2018, we heard more than 4,000 responses from parents and families, school leaders, and community members to determine what [data to include in the DC School Report Card](#), and [how to make the report card as user-friendly as possible](#). Throughout the process, we have remained committed to serving the needs of students and families, to ultimately provide them with easy access to easy-to-understand data that both addresses their needs and also meets the federal requirements mandated by ESSA.

What information will I find on the DC School Report Card?

Parents and families, along with the broader DC community, expressed a desire for both academic and non-academic information, which is why each school's DC School Report Card includes over 150 data elements about the school such as information about parent and family engagement, extracurricular activities, teacher experience attendance, safety and discipline, school program offerings, and more. In the chart below you can see which information is included in each section of the report card website.

The DC School Report Card also includes the [School Transparency and Reporting \(STAR\) Framework](#), a system that includes multiple types of data and information for all groups of students in a school, and results in a 1 to 5 star rating for each school. This rating will help celebrate successes among schools, allow educators and policymakers focus resources on schools that need the most help to improve, and inform families and the community about how DC's public schools are doing.

School Profile	STAR Framework	Academic Information	School Environment
<p>Shows basic information about the school, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades served• School hours• Principal name• Message from the School• STAR Rating• Parent organization• School demographics• Programs and activities	<p>Details of the School Transparency and Reporting Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The STAR Framework shares information about the performance of public schools in the District in multiple areas and highlights the performance of student groups in the school.	<p>Detailed look at academic performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students at level 3+ and 4+ on PARCC• Student growth on PARCC (ES/MS)• SAT performance• Participation and performance on AP and IB exams• Graduation rate• English proficiency for English learners	<p>Factors that contribute to school environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily attendance• Chronic absenteeism• Safety and discipline• Re-enrollment• Teacher experience level• Health Staffing information

The site will also allow you to explore public schools in the District using an interactive mapping feature and search tool. You will be able to search for schools with specific programs or attributes, sort by location, and compare side-by-side up to three schools of your choosing.

How can parents and families use the DC School Report Card?

Parents and families will be able to learn more about their current school quickly and easily on an interactive user-friendly website, which will help families engage more deeply with their child's school, or to help families who are choosing a school to determine the best fit for their child. With a wide range of inputs, from teacher qualifications to after school programs and activities, the DC School Report Card will be the best first step for families learning more about educational options for students across the District.

Families might use the DC School Report Card to:

- Learn important logistical and programmatic information about the school, including its location, nearby public transportation options, and programs and extra-curricular activities available.
- Understand how students in their child's school grew year over year on the PARCC assessment.
- Understand the levels of experience of the teachers employed at the school.
- View information about how the school is serving different groups of students equitably, such as students with disabilities, English learners, and students who are at-risk.
- Learn about areas where the school could improve and work with educators and other families to advocate for resources in that area.
- For families searching for a new school, begin learning about the public school options that are the best fit for their child.

This report card also gives families a better understanding of where we are succeeding as a city and where our schools need additional support. It helps us understand how we can continue to champion the needs of students, regardless of their needs or background.

What information is included on the DC School Report Card to help families of students with disabilities?

Families will be able to view how a school is doing not only with all students in a school, but also with specific groups of students attending that school, including students with disabilities. For example, families can see growth on PARCC for just students with disabilities, or for other specific groups of students: students who are at-risk, English learners, and all racial/ethnic groups within a school. The DC School Report Card includes these types of breakdowns for most student outcomes-related metrics (e.g., graduation rate, access and performance on Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses, PARCC achievement, re-enrollment, etc.) The accessibility of this information about how all of our students are doing is an important part of the increased transparency requested by families.

Can I use the DC School Report Card to find schools that are within walking distance of my home or workplace?

Definitely! The DC School Report Card website will include a mapping feature that allows you to search schools near a specific address, and then filter or sort those schools by other characteristics you may be looking for in a school.

Can I view multiple schools at once on the DC School Report Card website?

Yes! The DC School Report Card will allow you to select up to three schools to add to a special "compare" feature. The compare feature shows you key information about the selected schools, including the grades served, total school enrollment, STAR Rating, before and after school care, parent

organization information, teacher experience, and school discipline data. OSSE included all of the elements most highly requested by families during an online survey available during spring and summer 2018 engagement.

Will the website be available in languages other than English?

The DC School Report Card website will be fully translated in Spanish. For speakers of other languages, including Amharic, Chinese, French, Korean and Vietnamese, OSSE will provide a translated step-by-step user guide to guide you through the website, and is translating other information about the DC School Report Card. Visit our website at osse.dc.gov/dcschoolreportcard to view all of our translated materials.

I don't have regular access to a computer or internet. How else can I use the DC School Report Card?

The DC School Report Card website will also work on smartphones, and will include all of the functional elements of the desktop site. In addition, each school will have a printable, one-page profile that includes key information about the school. These profiles will also be available in Spanish. OSSE is further working with partner organizations that serve families to ensure that there are places where families without internet or computer access can access the report card.

What's the difference between the DC School Report Card and My School DC, the common school lottery?

My School DC is the common lottery for families applying to and enrolling in public schools in the District of Columbia, Pre-K 3 through high school. The website features profiles for all schools participating in the lottery (more than 98 percent of public Pre-K-12 schools). In the 2018-19 school year, My School DC profiles will include the schools' STAR Rating and allow families to link to the DC School Report Card website.

The DC School Report Card includes information about all public schools in the District, regardless of lottery participation. The goal of the DC School Report Card website is to provide more accessible information about schools to all families in DC, whether they are choosing a new school, or engaging more deeply with their current school.

In addition to general information about a school such as address and principal name, the DC School Report Card will include student growth information, access to college-level coursework, attendance and re-enrollment information, school discipline and safety, and teacher information. The report card website will also include information about how groups of students in the school are doing – for example, families will be able to look at outcomes for students with disabilities on most of the data points included in the report card, in addition to the school overall.

My School DC and the DC School Report Card will include the same information about programs and activities available at the school, location, transportation, before and aftercare availability, and other school logistics.

What is the STAR Framework?

[The School Transparency and Reporting \(STAR\) Framework](#) is the accountability framework for public schools in the District of Columbia that uses common measures to show school performance for all students. It is comprised of a range of data points from multiple data sources and gives families, community members, and educators a way to understand school performance on an apples-to-apples system available for all public schools, both DCPS and charter.

The STAR Framework uses multiple sources of data to measure school performance in the following areas:

- Academic Achievement: How students are performing on DC's state assessment for mathematics and English language arts, called the PARCC assessment, and SAT for high school students.
- Academic Growth: The STAR Framework includes two measures of academic growth on PARCC.
- English Language Proficiency: Growth of students who are English learners on the ACCESS for ELs assessment.
- Graduation Rate: The percentage of students graduating in four years and in five years
- School Environment: Multiple metrics, including how the school is reducing chronic absenteeism, re-enrollment in the same school from one year to the next, participation and performance on Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate tests, and graduation from high school over any number of years.

Each school receives a STAR Rating (ranging from 1 to 5 stars, with 5 being the highest). This rating allows educators and policymakers to celebrate areas of strong progress and performance, focus resources on schools and student groups within schools that need it the most, and help families clearly understand the performance of schools across the District.

How does the STAR Framework work?

The STAR Framework measures school outcomes across multiple areas, including both how a school is performing and how the school is growing and improving. Using academic and non-academic measures, schools earn points based on how well they are doing with their students as compared to all students across the city. Schools also earn points based on how well they serve students in the following student groups, by comparing these students' performance with students across the city within the same specific student groups:

- Students with Disabilities

- Students who are at-risk, defined as students who receive TANF or SNAP benefits, under the care of the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), who are certified as homeless by their school, or who are over-age and under-credited in high school
- English Learners
- Each Racial/Ethnic group

These points are combined to form the STAR Rating. Each school receives a STAR Rating ranging from 1 to 5 stars, with 5 being the highest.

Will all schools get a STAR Rating?

One of the exciting parts of the STAR Rating is that it will be available for both DC Public Schools and public charter schools, unlike previous systems. However, some schools will not receive a STAR Rating because of their grade configuration. For example, schools that serve only pre-K students don't have enough data points that apply to the age ranges they serve to receive a rating on the STAR Framework. Schools serving adult students that provide high school equivalency credentials such as the GED also will not receive a STAR Rating. Each public school in the District will have a profile on the DC School Report Card website even if it does not have a STAR Rating.

Is this the same as the charter rating system, the School Quality Reports, where schools are ranked Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3?

No. The DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB) publishes the School Quality Reports, sometimes called the performance management framework (PMF), for all charter schools in the city. There are key differences between the School Quality Reports and the STAR Framework. First, the STAR Framework provides common, comparable information for all public schools in the District, while the School Quality Reports are only for public charter schools. Additionally, the School Quality Reports have three levels (Tier 1, 2 and 3), with Tier 1 being the highest, and the STAR Framework has five levels, with 5 stars being the highest.

How much of the STAR Rating is based on test scores?

The STAR Framework takes into account that different types of schools need different types of measures to accurately capture school performance. For example, the high school framework, which includes graduation and other high school-only measures, is different than the elementary school framework, and therefore has a different percentage of points placed on PARCC and other assessments. For middle and elementary schools, 40 percent of the points in the STAR Rating are based on student growth in mathematics and English language arts (ELA), or how the school is helping students to improve. In addition, 30 percent of the points are from achievement on the PARCC, or how many students are approaching or on track for college and career readiness. In high school, academic achievement on DC's state assessment in math and ELA, and the SAT are 40 percent of the points.

However, education isn't all about test scores, so the STAR Framework also includes other measures, including school environment, the growth in English proficiency for English learner students, graduation rate, and access to rigorous and challenging coursework.

What do the STAR Ratings mean?

The STAR Rating for a school provides an overall view of how that school is doing with all students across multiple data points. It serves as a starting point, giving families and communities a clear look into multiple elements of school performance without needing to review multiple websites.

Because the STAR Framework includes multiple types of data, two schools may get the same rating but have different reasons for getting there – for example, one school may have earned a 3 star rating due to strong growth on the PARCC, but lower student PARCC performance and attendance, and another school with the same overall 3 star rating may have strong PARCC performance overall but not see the same outcomes for students with disabilities or English learners as other students.

Families who want to go beyond the STAR Rating itself can use the STAR Framework section of the DC School Report Card for each school to understand more about how the STAR Rating is calculated. We encourage you to go beyond the rating itself, both to understand the details of the data and metrics included, and to learn more about aspects of the school not captured in the STAR Framework or on the DC School Report Card.

What is chronic absenteeism? How is related to daily attendance?

[Research backs up](#) what educators know to be common sense: students must be in school to learn. If students miss more than 10 percent of their instructional time, they are considered “chronically absent,” and are at a greater risk of not being well-prepared to advance to the next grade, and ultimately to continue to college and meaningful career pathways. The report card includes two measures that address chronic absenteeism: the percentage of students at the school who are not chronically absent (in other words, who attend at least 90 percent of the time), and the school's growth in reducing chronic absenteeism. On the STAR Framework, the school receives points for the stronger of these two measures.

Average daily attendance (sometimes called in-seat attendance) is not the same as chronic absenteeism. While chronic absenteeism looks at each student's attendance, average daily attendance averages all of the students in the school over the entire school year. It is possible for a school to have high daily attendance, and still have an issue with chronic absenteeism – for example, if a few students in the school are very chronically absent. Both types of attendance measures are important to consider.

Why didn't OSSE include a growth measure for high schools?

The STAR Framework and DC School Report Cards for elementary and middle schools include two growth measures that assess how students have progressed on PARCC. To understand why this isn't currently possible for high schools, it helps to know more about PARCC.

In DC, the PARCC assessment is given to students in grades 3-8, and once in high school, as federally required. In DC, students take the Geometry and English II PARCC assessments. Unlike in grades 3-8, these assessments are tied to a high school course, which students take at different times. For example, some students take Geometry in grade 9, most take it in grade 10, but some may also take it in grade 11 or 12. Therefore, students take different pathways between the eighth grade test and the one they take in high school. Further, DC is a small state, with not many students, meaning the number of individual data points related to testing is even more limited than it might be in a larger state.

These data limitations meant OSSE was not able to calculate a growth measure that is statistically valid and reliable for the December 2018 launch of the DC School Report Card. However, OSSE believes that growth is important for high schools, and is committed to continuing to explore ways to define and include a PARCC growth metric in the future versions of the STAR Framework and DC School Report Card.

What does the teacher experience level included on the DC School Report Card mean? Why do you only show the percentage of teachers certified and in-field at certain schools?

OSSE heard from families that they wanted more information about the teachers working in their child's school. Based on this feedback, OSSE was able to add years of teacher experience, which reports the percentages of teachers at the school who have been teaching for 1 year or less, 2-5 years, 6-10 years, or more than 10 years. While this is not a measure of how long those teachers have been at that particular school (often called teacher retention), it does give families a look into the experience level and length of the professional career of the school's teachers.

While research has shown that how many years a teacher has been in the classroom matters – especially for teachers at the beginning of their careers – families should always consider the interactions and experiences they have had with their child's teacher.

In the District of Columbia, teachers at public charter schools are not required to be certified or in-field in order to teach per DC Code. The DC School Report Card therefore only provides this information for DC Public Schools.

Will OSSE consider adding teacher retention to the DC School Report Card?

OSSE has heard significant interest in having more information about teacher retention, teacher tenure, and other teacher information. To date, OSSE has not collected detailed information at the individual teacher level that can be included on the report card for all public schools. OSSE is considering ways to

meet the community's interest in more information about teachers, while balancing the burden of collecting and verifying additional data on school staff.

How does OSSE collect the data on the health staff at each school?

This information comes from the [Healthy Schools Act School Health Profiles](#). These Profiles are completed annually by each public school in the District. The information included on the DC School Report Card is from the prior school year (so, for the report cards released in 2018, the information is from the 2017-18 school year).

In DC, there are several health staffing initiatives managed by city government, with decisions about where to assign staff made by those agencies, not the schools themselves. For example, the DC Department of Health administers the school health services program, which provides school nurses, where the Department of Behavioral Health provides mental health services in a number of schools. Schools themselves may also choose to hire additional health staffing. All of these staff are reflected on the DC School Report Card.

My student attends school that serves a population of students who have alternative educational needs. How are these types of schools included in the STAR Framework?

Providing different types of school options to meet the needs of young people is important, and OSSE wanted to make sure that the STAR Framework accounted for this special role. OSSE worked closely with the group of schools designated as “alternative” to devise a framework that met the unique needs of those schools and their students. OSSE believes that this system should ensure that alternative schools are held to a comparable level of rigorous standards as the traditional system.

Alternative schools include schools that serve students who have dropped out and are returning to school, or had difficulties in traditional school settings, may serve students who are older than the traditional high school student, or are schools specifically serving students with disabilities or other groups of students with special educational needs.

The STAR Framework for this group of schools reflects some of the same areas as the traditional STAR Framework, including academic achievement and growth, English language proficiency, and chronic absenteeism measures. However, the alternative STAR Framework also includes measures around secondary completion for students with disabilities receiving a high school completion certificate, successful 8th to 9th grade promotion for middle schools, how well the school re-engages students who have dropped out, and five-year graduation rate.

Does the STAR Framework mean that some schools will close? What about charter schools?

OSSE believes that by sharing information about school performance and investing resources, we can work with schools, educators, and communities to improve the quality of education across our city.

The Every Student Succeeds Act requires that all states, including DC, identify the schools that need the most help and support, which OSSE has defined as the bottom 5 percent of schools on the STAR Framework. For these schools, OSSE is investing \$11 million over three years to support school improvement, approximately \$1 million per school. Schools must write plans for how they will work to improve, and must involve families at the school and the community in the development of those plans.

If after three years (with an optional additional year for schools who are showing some improvement), the identified schools have not made meaningful improvement, OSSE will ask for community input on a plan to help the school. School closure is not named in either the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, or in the plan for school improvement that OSSE submitted to the US Department of Education.

DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB) is the charter school authorizer in the District, and makes decisions about reviewing, renewing and revoking charters for public charter schools, and DC's ESSA plan does not change PCSB's oversight role or authority.

When will the new DC School Report Card be available?

The DC School Report Card will launch in early December 2018 at DCSchoolReportCard.org. Get the most up-to-date information by [visiting our website](#) and signing up for email alerts. You can also email DCSchoolReportCard@dc.gov.

How do I suggest additions to the DC School Report Card, or provide other feedback?

We would love to hear from you! If you have questions or suggestions, please email us at DCSchoolReportCard@dc.gov. We want to continue to make the DC School Report Card better and more useful for families, educators, and the community, and will consider feedback for improvements in future years.

Where Can I Get More Information?

To learn more about the DC School Report Card, visit: osse.dc.gov/dcschoolreportcard. Want to sign up for updates or still have questions? Email us at DCSchoolReportCard@dc.gov

What does it mean if the school's performance on a metric is outside the shaded performance area in the STAR Framework?

Schools receive points for each metric in the STAR Framework. Each metric and each student group within that metric has a different floor and target, based on how other students in the same grade span and same student group from public schools in DC perform. The green shaded area on the STAR Framework tab demonstrates the range between the performance floor and performance target for that metric. Most floors and targets in the STAR Framework are set at the 10th and 90th percentile of performance. Schools must reach the "floor" to receive points in the STAR Framework for that measure, and will receive a percentage of the points available depending on where they score within the green possible scoring range.

All points are earned on the range in the green shaded area. If a school has a student group that is

performing above the “target,” it means that the school is receiving all of the possible points for that metric. For example, the target for scoring 4 or above on PARCC is different for each student group in the school. The target for the school’s students in elementary school who are at risk is 38.51 percent scoring 4 or above on PARCC. So, if 38.52 percent of an elementary school’s students who are at risk score a 4 or above on PARCC, the school will receive all of the possible points for that metric. Conversely, if a school has a student group that is performing below the “floor,” the school will receive zero points for that metric.

How does OSSE collect and check the data for accuracy that is displayed on the DC School Report Card? Do schools get an opportunity to review the data before it is displayed?

Making sure that data and information included on DCSchoolReportCard.org are correct is a top OSSE priority. Prior to publishing the DC School Report Card in December 2018, leaders from each local education agency (LEAs, i.e., DC Public Schools and public charter organizations) reviewed and verified the accuracy of all data elements on the DC School Report Card for each school. This review included items included in the STAR Framework as well as the information on each school’s profile page, such as school program offerings. OSSE shared the final metrics with LEA leaders three weeks before the release of the report card website in early December, and with principals two weeks prior to the public release.

The STAR Framework data and elements on the Academic Performance and School Environment pages reflect school performance from the most recent completed school year and are updated each year when the annual report cards are released. Some information, however, can change throughout the year – such as a principal’s name, school programming or extra-curricular activities. For these metrics, schools have the opportunity to update by several of the elements on the School Profile at different points throughout the year. The first update is scheduled for the end of January 2019.

The DC School Report Card shows attendance data that is different than what I see from My School DC and the annual enrollment audit. Why is that?

The number on each school’s profile on the DC School Report Card, as well as enrollment totals for the DC report and each LEA report are based on total number of students served during the 2017-18 school year (not the current 2018-19 school year). These are also the counts of students used for other student outcomes metrics on the report card, such as graduation rate, PARCC performance, PARCC growth, and others. Because the report card captures outcomes for all students served by a school during the preceding school year, it is different than the enrollment number captured through the annual enrollment audit, which provides information about the number of students enrolled at a given point in time. My School DC reports the enrollment audit number for enrollment. For more information about enrollment for schools and LEAs, we encourage you to explore the attendance metrics available on the DC School Report Card.

How often is the information on the DC School Report Card updated?

The DC School Report Card is released annually with information for the preceding school year. In 2019, OSSE will release report cards for the 2018-19 school year. Information that may change more frequently – such as principal or parent organization contact name, school programs, or other information on the school profile page – may be updated by the school through their local education agency (i.e. DCPS or Charter leadership) during regularly scheduled update windows. Updates to the site will be made periodically throughout the year, but not more frequently than once per month by OSSE. Due to when data is available and allowing for enough time for school leaders to review and verify their data, the DC

School Report Card will be released annually near the end of the calendar year.

What should I do if I see something on the DC School Report Card website that seems incorrect?

Let us know! If you see something that you know to be out of date or that seems incorrect, please send us an email at DCSchoolReportCard@dc.gov. Or, you can speak to your school to ask them to update the information with OSSE.

Many of the metrics show the DC Average as a point for comparison. Is this a full citywide average of all grades or just the same grades of the school being viewed?

When the DC average is listed as a comparison point, it includes all students attending public schools citywide that are possible to include in the metric. For example, DC Average for the Students with Disabilities in 90 percent Attendance includes the attendance of all students with disabilities in grades K-12 at public schools in DC.

How can I learn how to use the DC School Report Card website?

OSSE built DCSchoolReportCard.org in partnership with thousands of parents, families and community members who provided feedback to help the site be as user-friendly as possible. While we hope that using the site is intuitive, we also have created written materials to help you navigate the site. Check out OSSE's DC School Report Card user guide, brochure on the School Transparency and Reporting (STAR) Framework, and introductory videos on the report card and STAR Framework.

If you'd like to tell us what you think of the report card now, please take our short [DC School Report Card Survey](#) by **Friday, Feb. 15, 2019**.

Will families receive information about their child's school automatically, or will they have to seek it out?

The DC School Report Card is now available, and families can view the results for their child's school by going to DCSchoolReportCard.org and entering the name of their child's school in the search bar on the landing page. Many schools are also planning to send home a letter to families or host a parent and family night to discuss the DC School Report Card and STAR Rating.