

District Name
Address
City, State Zip

District logo or letterhead

Dear _____ School Parent,

Enclosed are the latest report cards for your child's school, and for our school district. As the superintendent of _____ School District, I welcome the opportunity to share information on the progress we're making to improve student achievement for every child in our district.

The report card includes both state and federal progress ratings. The state's rating is called the School Report Card Overall Rating." The federal rating is called adequate yearly progress or AYP. Both ratings are included in the Oregon Department of Education report.

State report cards began with the 1999 Oregon Legislature passing a law requiring every public school to receive a report from ODE about how it is performing. The cards include an overall performance rating as well as information on student test scores, school expenditures, school staff, attendance and other factors.

Report cards are a great opportunity for us to share our progress. All of us in the district – teachers, administrators, support staff and school board members – are committed to using these reports to help tailor our programs to meet the needs of our students.

Please review the enclosed information, and if you have questions, contact your child's school principal. Working together, we can help our children become the best educated citizens in this nation and the world.

Sincerely,

Superintendent

_____ School District

The Oregon Rating System

Schools can receive one of five overall ratings: Exceptional, Strong, Satisfactory, Low, or Unacceptable. Districts receive overall federal ratings of “Met” or “Not Met” adequate yearly progress (AYP) as required by the No Child Left Behind Act.

Overall state ratings are based on ratings in four areas: School Characteristics, Student Behavior, Student Performance and Improvement.

School Characteristics is based on the percentage of eligible students participating in the statewide assessments. If less than 89.5 percent of eligible students participated, the school automatically receives an Unacceptable rating, regardless of its performance in the other component areas. If 89.5 percent to 94.4 percent of eligible students participated in the assessments, the school receives a maximum overall rating no better than Low. If 94.5 percent or more of eligible students participated in the assessments, the school receives an overall rating based on an average of Student Behavior, Student Performance and Improvement components.

Student Performance is based on student performance on statewide assessments during the two most recent school years. ODE omitted results of reading and math assessments at grades 4, 6, and 7 from the calculation of student performance in 2005-2006 AYP and report card rating formulas, but not from 2006-2007 ratings. For elementary and middle school, results for Reading and Math Knowledge and Skills assessments contribute 50% each to the total student performance ratings. For high schools, Reading and Math Knowledge and Skills each contribute 39% and Writing contributes 22%.

Student Behavior for elementary and middle schools is based on student attendance rates over the two most recent school years. Student behavior for high schools averages student attendance rates and dropout rates. Because of the delay in compiling final dropout information, high school dropout rates used in the calculation lag one year behind the two most recent school years. High schools do not receive separate ratings for attendance and dropout; the two measures are combined into Student Behavior.

Improvement is based on changes over a four-year period in performance on statewide assessments, attendance rates and dropout rates.

The federal rating system

ODE includes AYP rating for schools and districts on the front of each state report card. The back page details the data used to achieve the rating: whether students met academic standards in the last two years of statewide tests, whether test participation was at the required 94.5 percent, and whether required attendance or graduation levels were met. This information is broken out by student group.

Other helpful data

All school report cards include information on teacher training and experience. High school report cards also include SAT scores. District report cards list schools and their ratings; student performance districtwide; and information on ethnicity, graduation rate and staff.

Low or unacceptable ratings

Schools that receive low or unacceptable ratings must file revised improvement plans with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the school board and the school’s 21st Century Schools Council. ODE provides resources to help low performing schools.

Why we receive these report cards

In 1999, the Oregon Legislature passed a law requiring ODE to issue annual report cards for individual schools and districts and what must be included in them. The State Board of Education is responsible for adopting rating criteria, and the state Superintendent of Public Instruction assigns the ratings. ODE solicited feedback from educators, parents and the community during the report-card-development process. These school report cards are part of a national trend toward fuller accountability, and most states now issue them. The No Child Left Behind Act passed by Congress in 2001 required states to produce performance reports.