

Frequently Asked Questions: Maryland Report Card

Q: What is the Maryland Report Card?

A: The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has developed a new accountability report card designed to measure the success of schools and identify areas for improvement. The Maryland Report Card, the state's new accountability system, measures school and school district performance. It provides information to educators, parents and the public about each school and paves the way for improvement. Through a strong accountability system, stakeholders gain an understanding of how schools are doing and where support is needed in order for those schools to perform better.

Q: Why was the Maryland Report Card created?

A: The Maryland Report Card was developed in response to the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a federal law that seeks to ensure public schools provide a quality education for all children. Under ESSA, each state is required to submit a plan detailing how the law will be implemented, including how it will hold schools accountable for student performance. Some parts of the accountability system are required by law—for example, all high schools, nationwide, are accountable for their graduation rate. The law also allows states to choose components of the accountability system that are important to its students and stakeholders.

Q: How did Maryland develop the new accountability system?

A: Maryland created its accountability system over the past 18 months. The State Board of Education, MSDE staff, superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, community leaders, advocacy groups and other stakeholders worked together to create an accountability system that measured relevant, actionable aspects of school performance. The State plan was approved by the U.S. Department of Education in early 2018.

Q: What does the Maryland Report Card measure?

A: The Maryland Report Card is designed to measure school success in several ways, including state test results in English Language Arts and math; postsecondary readiness; progress of English learners in achieving English language proficiency; graduation rate; and students with access to and earning credit for a well-rounded curriculum. In future years, the Maryland Report Card will also include science and social studies achievement (grades 5 & 8 and grade 8, respectively), and the results of a student/educator climate survey. Based on these performance indicators, the state will give each school a percentile rank, a total earned points percent and a star rating, on a scale of 1 to 5 stars.

Primary schools that only serve students in prekindergarten through Grade 2 will not receive a star rating.

Q: What are the components of the Maryland Report Card?

A: The Maryland Report Card is based on four major indicators for elementary and middle schools:

- Academic Achievement - 20%
- Other Academic - 35%
- English Language Proficiency - 10%
- School Quality/Student Success - 35%

There are five major indicators for high school:

- Academic Achievement - 30%
- Graduation Rate - 15%
- English Language Proficiency - 10%
- Readiness for Postsecondary Success - 10%
- School Quality/Student Success - 35%

Q: How does a school earn points?

A: Each indicator consists of one or more measures, which consist of various components. For example, at the elementary level under the school quality and student success indicator, the state will be looking at attendance rates, percentage of 5th grade students enrolled in science, social studies, fine arts, physical education and health.

At the high school level, under the readiness for postsecondary success, the state will be evaluating the percentage of students who are on track in 9th grade and earning at least 4 credits in courses such as English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and/or World Languages..

Q: How is a school's "final score" determined?

A: The School Report Card presents each school's "final score" in three ways. First, the "total earned points percent" is the total number of points earned by the school, divided by the total possible points. For example, a school that earned 55 points out of a possible 85 would receive a "total earned points percent" of $55/85$ or 65 percent. Second, a school will get a "star rating," which is a convenient way of expressing the "total earned points percent." A school that earned 65 percent of its possible points would have four stars. Third, a school will be given a percentile rank, which describes how that school performed in comparison to other schools. For example, an elementary school in the 80th percentile

means the school performed equal to or higher than 80 percent of other Maryland elementary schools on the indicators in the school accountability system.

Q: Where can I find more information about the Maryland Report Card?

A: Visit the Maryland Report Card website (www.MdReportCard.org) and look up the School Report Card for your child's school.