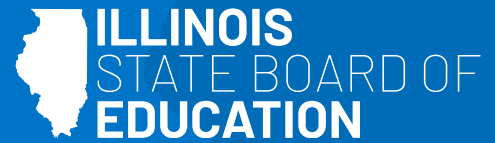




2025 ILLINOIS REPORT CARD

TELL YOUR STORY OF STUDENT SUCCESS



How to Tell Your Story

The 2025 Illinois Report Card provides an opportunity for each school and district to tell its story – but what does that mean? Each school will receive a new Annual Summative Designation in 2025, as federally required. This guide shows how you can foster deeper conversations about what your designation means and engage your stakeholders in your school improvement efforts.

1. Who needs to know?

Identify your target audiences – the primary groups of people who influence the success of your school improvement efforts, such as:

- Teachers, principals, and school staff – primary change agents for student success and key messengers to parents and families
- School board members – oversee personnel, budgets, and policies
- Media – provide information to the broader community
- Parents and families – partners in their children's education and in school improvement
- Students – empowered to own their learning
- Community partners and businesses – support school initiatives

2. What is the most important thing for people to know or understand?

Consider these questions and then choose your top three key messages.

- What questions will our target audiences ask about our data and designation? What do they care about?
- How can we explain the new, right-sized proficiency benchmarks and their stronger alignment to college and career readiness expectations?
 - [View the Communications Toolkit.](#)
- Do they know what the designation means? Check out these fact sheets:
 - [Annual Summative Designations](#)
 - [Multiple Indicators of Student Success](#)
- What does our data say about our strengths and areas for growth? Because the state has recalibrated its proficiency benchmarks to reflect a truer picture of student learning and readiness, 2025 proficiency rates should not be compared to prior years. Instead, your story of progress over time should focus on metrics that allow for apples-to-apples comparisons, such as the Student Growth Percentile, graduation rates, and chronic absenteeism, comparing 2025 data to 2024 and 2019 (pre-pandemic).
- What have we invested in improving over the past year? What instructional changes have we implemented? How can we use our Student Growth Percentile data to demonstrate progress? (*Note: SGP is not affected by the recent proficiency benchmark changes and is the best measure for year-over-year academic comparisons*).
- What do we do now?

Consider these scenarios to help communicate your Annual Summative Designation.

Potential Scenario	Suggested Messaging
Targeted to Comprehensive	Our school improvement efforts did not produce the results we were hoping for in the prescribed timeline, but we have so much to be proud of. The new designation gives us more funding and learning opportunities and expands our ability to take a more holistic approach.
Comprehensive to Intensive	Our school improvement efforts did not produce the results we were hoping for in the prescribed timeline, but we have so much to be proud of. The new designation does not instigate any radical changes. It allows us to build on our successes and build momentum toward what's working with some additional supports from the state. Your partnership, feedback, and ideas are more important than ever.
Exiting School Improvement Status	Our designation this year is cause for celebration. We are proud to have sustained learning gains and to exit School Improvement Status. Your partnership was invaluable every step of the way.
Exemplary to Commendable	The change in our designation is not cause for concern. We have so much to proud of. A new visual on the Illinois Report Card helps to explain the data behind the summative designation and shows just how close we were to the Exemplary category.
Commendable or Exemplary with Low Proficiency Rates	The designation recognizes more than just proficiency rates. We excelled in [low chronic absenteeism/supporting student growth /high graduation rates/other indicator(s)], which are excellent measures of our school's positive impact. A visual on the Illinois Report Card helps to explain the data behind the summative designation. Additionally, as of this year, the state's new, more accurate proficiency benchmarks provide a truer picture of student success and college and career readiness.
Commendable or Exemplary but still in School Improvement Status	We are proud of our designation this year and have much to celebrate. We will continue in School Improvement Status for a full four-year cycle. With your partnership, we can sustain these gains.

You may also want to remind your school community that the Illinois State Board of Education is in the midst of a redesign of the accountability system, so these designations and indicators will change starting next year.

3. How can we share information?

Decide what channels work best for communicating with your key audiences.

- Draft talking points for senior leaders
- Prepare visuals to share data and explanatory resources with target audiences
- Host a special meeting with teachers to celebrate gains and discuss potential opportunities and areas for improvement
- Translate important documents into all languages spoken by your school community
- Issue a press release
- Craft your narrative to appear alongside your designation on the Illinois Report Card website
- Share your highlights on social media
- Create short videos to share data
- Host a media call to share your highlights with reporters and answer questions
- Create a presentation for your board members
- Host a town hall or Facebook Live for families and community partners; highlight a program that aligns to your key messages
- Send surveys to families, students, and teachers to gauge their understanding and solicit their feedback and ideas
- Publish a blog post, publish it on your school website and send the it home as a letter to families and staff
- Utilize email and text messaging to share information with families
- Use the marquee or create signs/posters to celebrate gains inside and outside of the school building

4. When should we communicate?

Build a timeline.

- Check your designation and explore your data in MyIRC Educator Preview throughout the month of October to start preparing messages and materials in advance. Keep in mind that the designation is preliminary and not final until Oct. 30.
- ISBE will share the designations and other Report Card data with media under embargo Oct. 24. Consider sharing a press release or pitching a media interview with local reporters under embargo at this time. "Under embargo" means confidential and not to be published or discussed publicly until a certain date, in this case, until 9 a.m. Oct. 30.
- The designations and other Report Card data are published on the Illinois Report Card at 9 a.m. Oct. 30. Prepare to send external-facing communications to your target audiences.

