2016 Report Cards
How to prepare and distribute district and school report cards
Background information

- Report cards are important tools for sharing district and school information with families and the general public.

- The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requires districts to annually prepare and distribute district and school report cards to the parents/guardians of all children enrolled in district schools.

- Since 2007, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) has prepared district and school report cards that contain all federally required elements, and has made them available to districts and the general public via our School and District Profiles website.
Reporting requirements

- Report cards must include enrollment, teacher quality, assessment, and accountability data.

- In addition to the report cards themselves, federal law requires that certain information be communicated to families of children enrolled in all district schools. This information must include, at a minimum:
  - the accountability and assistance level of the child's school
  - the reason for the level designation, such as the aggregate or high needs groups not meeting cumulative progress and performance index (PPI) targets, and an explanation of what the level designation means
  - for Level 2-5 schools, an explanation of the school and/or district improvement activities the district has initiated to increase performance, and how parents/guardians can become involved in school and district improvement activities
  - for Title I schools, information about right-to-know requirements regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teacher(s)

ESE has developed a sample parent/guardian notification, available in 10 languages, that districts and schools may modify and use as a cover letter for the report card.
School report card overview

Page 1 contains:

- contact information
- school and district accountability and assistance levels, school percentile, and gap-narrowing information
- MCAS and/or PARCC achievement and growth data for the school, compared to similar schools in the district and the state
School report card overview

Page 2 contains data about the school, compared to similar schools in the district and the state:

- enrollment
- teachers and classrooms
- attendance
- discipline
- high school completion

Page 2 also includes space for districts or schools to provide additional information about the school (e.g., narrative, additional contact information, etc.)
District report card overview

The district report card overview is similar to the school report card overview, with a few exceptions:

★ Data in the district overview are reported for the district and the state as a whole and not by school type

★ The district overview is three pages in length and contains a list of each school’s accountability and assistance level.
Adding text to the overview

Users that have the Characteristics Administrator role for the school or district may add text using the Directory Administration (DA) tool in ESE’s Security Portal.

Helpful hints:

- Limit text to 900 characters, including spaces. Longer text may be cut off on the overview.
- Compose your information in a word processing program to check for spelling and grammar, then copy your text into the field in DA.
- Update this text as often as necessary. Changes will appear on the report card overview immediately!
Distribution requirements

- Schools and districts must make report cards available:
  - to parents/guardians;
  - on district and school websites; and
  - in local community centers.

- **School report card overviews** must be distributed to families of students enrolled in all district schools. The overview contains a link to the school’s complete online report card.

- **District report cards overviews and complete report cards** may be posted online and made available via alternative means.

- Districts and schools are encouraged to use ESE’s report card; however, if the district has an existing method of communicating this information to parents/guardians, it does not need to use the ESE format. Regardless of the format, the report card must contain all federally-required elements, including NAEP data.
Distribution requirements

Requirement 1: To parents/guardians

School report cards must be distributed to parents/guardians in at least one of the following ways:

★ Electronically*
  ★ Example: emailing a PDF copy of the report card overview and cover letter to parents/guardians, and including a link to the complete report card

★ By distributing hard copies to parents/guardians**
  ★ Example: giving the report card overviews to students to bring home in their backpacks
  ★ Example: presenting parents/guardians with a copy of the report card overview during parent-teacher conferences

★ Via U.S. mail**
  ★ Example: sending the report card overview and cover letter on its own or along with other important district or school notifications (e.g., newsletters, student report cards or progress reports)

NOTES:
*The district or school must ensure that electronic communications are standard practice and the preferred method of communication for its families. In addition, hard copies must be provided to those families who do not have access to the internet or to email.
**Printed copies of the report card overview must be provided. Providing only the website address does not fulfill the distribution requirement.
Distribution requirements

Requirement 2: On district and school websites

In addition to distributing report cards as described on the previous slide, the school and district should prominently display or link to report cards on its website(s)*

★ Example: the district posts a PDF version of both the district report card overview and complete report card to its website, or includes a direct links to both reports located on ESE’s School and District Profiles website

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*NOTE: Providing electronic access to report cards solely on the district or school website does not satisfy distribution requirements. The district should also prepare report cards for distribution in a manner consistent with Requirement 1 on the previous slide.
Distribution requirements

**Requirement 3: In local community centers**

Hard copies of both the report card overview and complete report card should be on record in public places where parents/guardians and other stakeholders have access to them:

- public libraries
- town or city hall
- parent centers
- community centers

Districts should reach out to local community centers to determine the best method for sharing this information at each location.
Accessing report cards – Option 1

Search for a report card or report card overview from the School and District Profiles website homepage.
Accessing report cards – Option 2

Step 1: Find the organization's profile on the ESE’s School and District Profiles website, and click the Accountability tab
Accessing report cards – Option 2

Step 2: Click on the 2016 Report Card Overview or 2016 Complete Report Card link that appears to the left of the district or school's accountability report.
Printing or saving reports

Use the icons to print the report or save a PDF version in order to prepare for distribution
Timeline

★ ESE released 2016 report cards in November 2016

★ For the 2016-17 school year, ESE asks that schools disseminate school report cards to families by the end of December 2016
   ★ Schools and districts may choose to distribute report cards to families along with other regularly scheduled material
Resources

Memorandum: Distribution of 2016 School and District Report Cards:

Sample Parent/Guardian Notification:

School and District Profiles:
http://profiles.doe.mass.edu

ESE’s Security Portal:
https://gateway.edu.state.ma.us
Questions?

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