



Accountability Scorecards and Rankings 2013 District to Parent Template Communication

Everybody understands what the colors green, yellow and red represent.

Or do we?

In our day-to-day lives, we are conditioned to have a preconceived idea of what red, yellow and green colors represent - **think traffic signals**. And now, these are just a few of the colors the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is using to report the status of our state's public schools.

As a parent, we want you to have all of the information that you need in order to understand school accountability in Michigan and particularly at your child's school. We hope that the following guidance is helpful in building that understanding.

Previously, school accountability results were reported to the public through a report card containing a letter grade for each school and district. This year, there were changes in the legislation which impact how the state scores and ranks the performance of public schools based on state level tests.

Using newly adopted **College and Career Readiness** cut scores, MDE has developed a five-color code system for district and building-level Scorecards. In addition, MDE has also ranked schools on a Top-to-Bottom list, which may result in a specific school designation of Reward, Focus, or Priority.

The **Scorecard** color – which includes green, lime, yellow, orange and red - is intended to represent how students are performing on assessments by combining the percentage of students who score "proficient" in five tested subjects (reading, writing, math, science and social studies). The overall color is based on the proficiency of all students, plus the proficiency of each subgroup (any group of 30 or more students who share economic, ethnic, gender, or other characteristics).

Yellow scorecards are extremely common across the state, due to the number of additional factors that prevent a school from receiving a Green or Lime designation. As a common example, if a single subgroup is not on track to reach 85 percent proficiency or did not test over 95 percent of the population, then that one single subset of students will prevent a school or district from receiving a color higher than yellow.

In addition to a color designation, schools who test at least 30 full-year students also receive a percentile ranking on a **Top to Bottom list**. The ranking is based on student achievement, academic growth of all students and the gap between the highest and lowest scoring students in the school. The Scorecard color and the Top to Bottom Ranking are two separate measures that do not depend on each other.

Rankings compare public schools to every other public school in the state, according to a percentile. The percentile is not to be confused with a percent correct or a letter grade. For example, a school who ranks at the 65th percentile has out-scored 65% of the schools across the state.

The metrics used to determine the Top to Bottom Rankings are also used to determine Reward, Focus, and Priority schools. The simplest explanation of these three designations is that the top 5 percent of schools ranked are labeled “Reward” whereas the bottom 5 percent of schools ranked are labeled “Priority.”

West Ottawa Public Schools has four buildings labeled as **Reward** schools. These schools are in the top 5 percent in the State. These buildings are: Pine Creek Elementary, Lakewood Elementary, Lakeshore Elementary and Waukazoo Elementary.

The “Focus” school designation is a bit more complicated. West Ottawa Public Schools has five buildings designated as Focus schools: North Holland Elementary, Sheldon Woods Elementary, Woodside Elementary, Macatawa Bay Middle School and Harbor Lights Middle School. (See Table 1.)

- A building receiving a “Focus School” designation does not mean a student is in a low-performing school. In many cases, buildings that are designated as Focus schools have also met the required yearly progress. But an achievement gap exists between it’s top 30% and bottom 30% of students.
- Focus schools are making progress generally in terms of student achievement, but educators in Focus schools are expected to concentrate school improvement efforts on closing achievement gaps in order to help all children reach their learning potential.

Building	Label	Color	Rank
Glerum Elementary		Yellow	40
Great Lakes Elementary		Yellow	60
Harbor Lights Middle School	Focus	Yellow	34
Lakeshore Elementary	Reward	Yellow	95
Lakewood Elementary	Reward	Yellow	97
Macatawa Bay Middle School	Focus	Yellow	38
North Holland Elementary	Focus	Yellow	56
Pine Creek Elementary	Reward	Yellow	68
Sheldon Woods Elementary	Focus	Yellow	57
Waukazoo Elementary	Reward	Yellow	94
West Ottawa High School		Orange	62
Woodside Elementary	Focus	Yellow	19

- o Many Focus schools across Michigan will receive increased resources and attention because teachers and school staff know what goals need to be addressed and how to affect positive changes in the classroom for all students.

These buildings will concentrate their school improvement efforts on closing achievement gaps in order to help all children reach their learning potential. We will also examine our curriculum alignment to respond to the state's achievement expectations and the Common Core State Standards. Additionally, our professional development efforts will focus on enhancing our abilities close the achievement gap.

West Ottawa Public Schools does not have a building labeled as a Priority school. For more information on these rankings, please go to http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-22709_56562---,00.html.

Understanding Michigan's school accountability indicators can be confusing. If you would like a more detailed explanation, please contact Kent Henson, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction or plan to attend the following information night on Thursday, September 19, 2013 at the Administration Building at 1138 136th Avenue.

We thank you for your continued support and look forward to a great school year in 2013-2014.

Sincerely,



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