



2004 SCHOOL REPORT CARD

Exceptional learning in a respectful and supportive environment



School report cards matter

Our job is to give your child the skills he or she needs to succeed in school and to help give all our students a foundation for success in life. Every child has unique and precious talents that will flourish in a setting of respect, support, challenge and excellence. The School Report Card enclosed is prepared by the State of Illinois and compares your school to other schools throughout the district and state along many dimensions—student achievement, finances, demographics and more—and is one of the ways we see how well our schools are doing. As always, some of the best ways for you to assess school performance are to visit your child's classroom, talk to your child's teacher, attend school events, volunteer in the school and contact us right away if you have concerns. You are always welcome in our buildings!

—Dr. Jack Barshinger
Superintendent

Assessment data helps us make sure all students succeed



Old shoes inspire students to write from a new point of view.



Team-building brings students together.

As you review the school report card, remember that meaningful assessment is one part of a dynamic and creative learning process that connects each child to an exciting, expanding world of exploration and growth.



Kindergartners collect data from different types of seeds, such as those from apples, peppers, oranges and avocados.



First graders release newly hatched butterflies after weeks spent studying their development.



School and community celebrate diversity.



Hundreds of district families learn about volunteering through WatchDOGS.

What we can learn from our scores

Our teachers deliver excellent instruction and our students learn well. The chart below gives an overview of state and district results. Here are some things to remember about test score interpretation:

- ▶ Long-term learning trends provide the most meaningful information about district performance. Our results for the last five years are generally high and stable but we have room for improvement.
- ▶ Individual results help teachers understand each student's learning needs.
- ▶ Every year we test a different group of students with a different test, so year-to-year grade-level comparisons must be made with caution.
- ▶ In D41, a few missing tests can skew overall results—this is one reason we urge parents not to schedule vacations or appointments for test days (see upcoming test dates on back cover). The main reason we want every child tested is that the assessments provide valuable information we use to improve student learning.

ISAT Subject	Illinois Meets & Exceeds	District 41 Meets & Exceeds	Illinois Academic Warning	District 41 Academic Warning
3rd reading	65.0%	84.0%	7.0%	2.0%
3rd math	79.0%	93.0%	7.0%	2.0%
3rd writing	64.0%	72.0%	5.0%	3.0%
5th reading	61.0%	83.0%	2.0%	0.0%
5th math	72.0%	92.0%	3.0%	0.0%
5th writing	70.0%	91.0%	4.0%	0.0%
8th reading	67.0%	87.0%	2.0%	0.0%
8th math	54.0%	80.0%	6.0%	1.0%
8th writing	64.0%	80.0%	5.0%	2.0%
4th science	68.0%	85.0%	6.0%	3.0%
4th social science	61.0%	83.0%	10.0%	3.0%
7th science	74.0%	93.0%	1.0%	2.0%
7th social science	59.0%	79.0%	2.0%	1.0%
4th fine arts	72.0%	90.0%	4.0%	1.0%
7th fine arts	70.0%	84.0%	6.0%	2.0%
4th phys ed	65.0%	85.0%	5.0%	2.0%
7th phys ed	62.0%	80.0%	6.0%	2.0%

News from the state on testing and NCLB

Illinois uses the standardized assessments (ISAT, IMAGE, and IAA) to determine compliance with the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The state records student data in eight categories (White, Black, Hispanic, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Special Education, Economically Disadvantaged, and Limited English Proficiency); the goal of NCLB is to close achievement gaps among groups; all groups must show annual improvement with all children meeting standards in reading and math by 2014. Also, schools are required to test a minimum of 95% of their students in all groups. Missing the mark in these areas can mean a school will not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and may experience various sanctions.



Following are changes that will be introduced in the 2005-2006 school year:

- ▶ Students will be tested in reading and math every year in grades 3 through 8.
- ▶ The state assessments in writing and social science will be eliminated. However, D41 will continue its focus on these areas and will use district-wide assessments to improve student learning in these subject areas.
- ▶ Certification requirements for teachers and aides become stiffer and schools must notify parents of any non-compliance.

The D41 Teaching, Learning & Accountability Team

Recently, District 41 restructured to put all facets of student learning together on one team—the Teaching, Learning and Accountability team. Our students represent a diverse range of learning styles and needs, and the TLA team is working with others in the district to align our curriculum at all levels with what we know is vital for students to learn and be able to do. We provide leadership, resources, training and collaborative opportunities to our building leaders and teachers so we can reach our goal of every child reaching their maximum capacity.

Improving learning for every student



Here in District 41, we use the report card data in many ways, always with the goal of improving student learning for every child.

As we disaggregate the results in detail, we may learn that Jane does well on division but needs help on geometry, or that Joey struggles with reading comprehension. The state assessments are just part of our ongoing efforts to find out how well each student is learning so we can do a better job of teaching. Behind the numbers it's a simple story of doing right by every child.

—**Dr. John Correll**

Asst. Supt. for Teaching, Learning and Accountability

Assessment for Special Education Students



State assessments are a tool to help make sure we are acting in the best interests of all students, including those in Special Education.

We use the data to look at students' strengths and challenges as we ask ourselves where we need to take their learning in order help them reach their potential. We start with the students wherever they are and move forward. Our team is all about sharing talents, strategies and training—when you put it all together, you can do the best for the kids.

—**Jan Palmer**

Director of Special Education

Aligning Programs & Grants with strategic initiatives



D41 is looking to private and public grant funding to advance its educational programs and provide crucial student services. Many grant programs meet specific

education needs that most schools and districts cannot satisfy without external funds. With an organized, efficient team approach, we find funds to support a variety of projects and improvements that align with our curriculum and goals.

Developing and pursuing funding for new projects is a team effort to enhance learning opportunities for all students.

—**Lillie Abbott**

Director of Programs & Grants

District specialists help build instructional skills

Our job as district specialists is to work with the building leaders and faculty to define student needs and help make sure our schools deliver a range of instructional strategies and resources to maximize student learning. We work through col-

laboration to help the classroom teacher meet student challenges such as a child who has already mastered the math curriculum for the whole year by the end of September, a child who is a whiz with computer programs but struggles to write a clear paragraph, or a child who is academically able but unmotivated. What are the most effective instructional methods? The answer is, different approaches suit different situations and we all work together to find the right fit for every child.



Charles Accardi
Gifted Specialist



Judy Heller
Literacy Specialist



Linda Schweikhofer
Math Specialist

► Please visit www.d41.org to learn more about District 41 ◀

2004-2005 TEST DATES

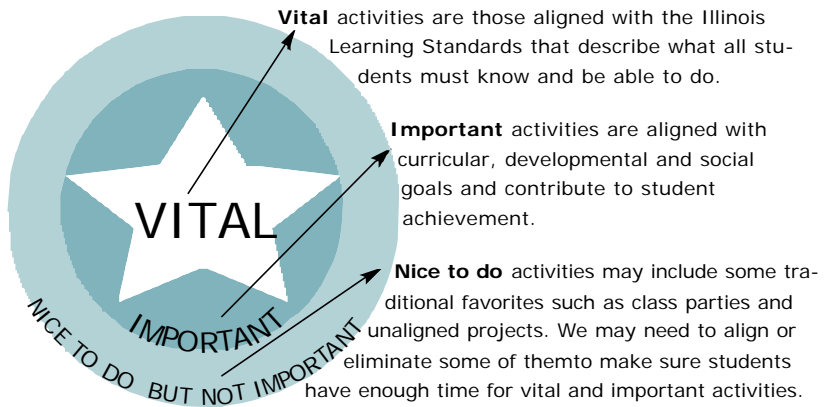
We work hard to make sure every student is tested. Please make sure your child is in school on test day and every day! State assessments provide important information to teachers about how each child is learning. Also, the NCLB law requires that we test a minimum of 95% of all students.

- ▶ **ITBS for grades 3 & 5:**
Week of January 24
- ▶ **ISAT & IMAGE:**
Week of March 7 (makeups week of March 14)
- ▶ **IAA: Ongoing on an individual basis**

In support of learning: a four-step process

We have 176 instructional days (two of which are used for conferences) each year in which to accomplish a great deal. Here's our basic process:

1. Determine what is vital for kids to learn (academic standards).
2. Find out what they know (assessment).
3. Deliver instruction in alignment with academic standards.
4. Respond to student challenges.



ASSESSMENTS: what we do and why we do it

Academic standards tell us what students need to know and be able to do. Assessment:

- Shows us what they have learned.
- Gives teachers information they use to meet student needs.

At right are the main assessments used in D41.

Assessment	Why we do it
Classroom assessment	Teachers assess academic progress, social development, curiosity, love of learning, creativity.
District assessment	Targeted assessments (often conducted by our specialists) help us evaluate individual students to better meet their needs.
ITBS	The Iowa Test of Basic Skills measures basic student achievement levels.
COGATs	Cognitive Ability Tests measure innate ability and potential.
IMAGE	Illinois Measure of Annual Growth in English is the state assessment for ESL and Bilingual students.
IAA	Illinois Alternative Assessment is a portfolio-style state assessment for students with significant disabilities.
ISAT	State assessment measures what students should know and be able to do by a particular grade level. They measure cumulative learning...for example, tests given in grade 3 measure learning from Kindergarten through third.



IMAGE, IAA AND ISAT measure D41's compliance to NCLB