



RIPON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 2017 Assessment Data Press Release

For Immediate Release

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2016-17 school and district report cards released

Ripon, WI - Ripon Area School District earned four out of five stars on state report cards from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, issued for the 2016-17 school year. Based on the star rating, Ripon exceeds expectations for educating students. Report cards are issued based on four priority areas: student achievement in English language arts and mathematics, district growth, closing gaps between student populations, and measures of readiness for graduation and postsecondary success. DPI has produced two versions of each Report Card: a quick one-page version labeled "School Report Card" and a lengthier, detailed version labeled, "School Report Card Detail." Both versions can be accessed online at <http://dpi.wi.gov/accountability/report-cards> along with resources that explain the report cards.

The schools in the Ripon Area School District met, exceeded or significantly exceeded expectations. Murray Park Elementary and Ripon Middle School each received a four star rating, placing them in the exceeds expectations category. Quest and Catalyst Charter Schools received five star ratings, placing them in the significantly exceeds expectations category; while Ripon High and Lumen Charter High are meeting expectations. Barlow Park and Journey Charter Elementary Schools have alternative report cards and received satisfactory ratings. Ripon Superintendent Mary Whitrock noted, "These results demonstrate the high quality instruction all students in the Ripon Area School District receive from the exceptional staff in each of our schools. The Ripon School Board, administrators and staff are committed to continuing to provide high quality instruction to all students in the district. The district goals focus on raising achievement to ensure all students are ready for the world beyond our doors."

The report cards underwent major changes in 2015-16 that were part of Wisconsin Act 55, the 2015-17 state budget. Those changes include variable weighting to address the impact of poverty on student achievement, a new model for measuring student growth based on value-added methodology developed by the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the legislative requirement to change from the Badger Exam offered through the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium to the Forward Exam. Because report cards rely on multiple years of data for accurate reporting, the 2016-17 report cards include Forward Exam, ACT and Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) in 2015-16 and 2016-17; Badger Exam,

ACT and DLM in 2014-15; and Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts (WKCE) and Wisconsin Alternate Assessment- Students with Disabilities (WAA-SwD) in 2013-14 and prior years. Using data from different assessments in calculations, along with other legislated changes, makes comparisons of school and district performance to prior report card ratings inaccurate and inadvisable.

Christine Damm, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for the Ripon Area School District, stated, "While school and district report cards provide information to the community, they do not represent a full picture of the work happening at our schools. What these assessments do not measure is the success we are experiencing since the implementation of Balanced Literacy Instruction and Continuous Quality Improvement in math and literacy across the district. We have also adopted new science curriculum with standards that are rich in content and practice, arranged in a coherent manner across disciplines and grades to provide all students an internationally-benchmarked science education. Students are highly engaged in Project Lead the Way and FOSS modules to deepen their understanding of scientific ideas over time by engaging in practices that scientists and engineers actually use. In addition, more than 35 teachers and administrators participated in the Buck Institute's PBL 101 training this summer. The training provided participants with the knowledge and skills needed to design, assess, and manage rigorous, standards-based projects. Based on the recommendations of the Charter School Task Force, we provided training in Project Based Learning for teachers in our charter schools as well as our legacy schools in an effort to build upon research-based best practices for instruction. The incremental growth we are experiencing can be attributed in great part to the focused work of educators across the district on the Board of Education's Response to Instruction/Intervention (RtI) annual goal in literacy for the past five school years. We have added math to our district goals for Continuous Quality Improvement, while maintaining the goal for literacy instruction."

The overall assessment data and the district's four-star rating continue to guide our efforts towards continuous improvement. While RASD has proven to be among the top performing districts in the state, administration and staff are committed to rising above this level of excellence and continue to work toward meeting district goals for improvement. The overall results reflected on the district and school report cards reflect the high quality instruction and commitment to continuous improvement that RASD provides for all students. District staff look forward to working with parents and students to make 2017-18 a successful year for every child.

Any comments or suggestions, please contact Chrissy Damm at (920) 748-4687.

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