



River Forest SD 90

2025 5Essentials Report

The 5Essentials School Reports for the State of Illinois are derived from 20 years of research on improving schools. The raw data for these reports are based on a comprehensive core of more than 80 student and 150 teacher questions compiled into 22 measures of school climate and practice and formed into five essentials. As measured by the Illinois 5Essentials Survey, those five essentials are leading indicators of school improvement. The power of 5Essentials comes from their prediction of school success, the intuitiveness of the overall framework components (Instruction, Environment, Leaders, Teachers, and Families), and the reliability of the survey measures.

As detailed in the seminal book, *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago*, UEI researchers determined that there are five essential supports for school success. These “5Essentials” detail the perspectives and processes central to the delivery and support of student learning.

The 5Essentials framework as measured by our survey instruments is a leading indicator of school performance now and predictive of the future. Data from over 650 schools (elementary and high schools) have found our survey measures to predict many aspects of student and school success, before and after controlling for school type, demographic composition, test scores, and socio-economic status. Our principal indication of the power of the 5Essentials is that University of Chicago analysis of two natural experiments spanning a total of 15 years each found that they mattered considerably: Schools strong in 3-5 Essentials were 10 times more likely to improve student learning substantially compared to schools weak in 3-5 Essentials. This evidence came from over 400 elementary schools representing the best and worst in Illinois. Following those natural experiments, we have found our survey measures reliably predict school success on a variety of outcomes for both high school and elementary schools, including:

- ITBS improvement
- ISAT value-add
- EXPLORE to ACT gains
- EXPLORE to PLAN gains
- PLAN to ACT gains
- Attendance rates
- College enrollment
- High school graduation
- Freshman grades
- Teacher mobility
- Grades in college-preparatory classes

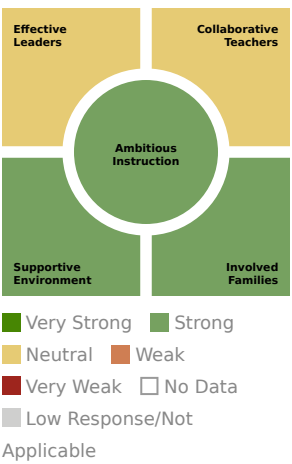
References:

(Bryk, et al. 2010)(Selected by Education Next as one of the best education books of the decade: <http://educationnext.org/the-best-books-of-the-past-decade-according-to-ed-next-readers/>)
(Bryk, et al. 2010); (Easton, Ponisciak and Luppescu 2008); (Easton, Ponisciak and Luppescu 2008); (Allensworth, Correa and Ponisciak 2008); (Bryk, et al. 2010); (Roderick, Nagaoka, et al. 2008); (Allensworth and Easton 2007); (Allensworth and Easton 2007); (Allensworth, Ponisciak and Mazzeo 2009); (Allensworth, Nomi, et al. 2009); (Montgomery, Allensworth and Correa 2010)

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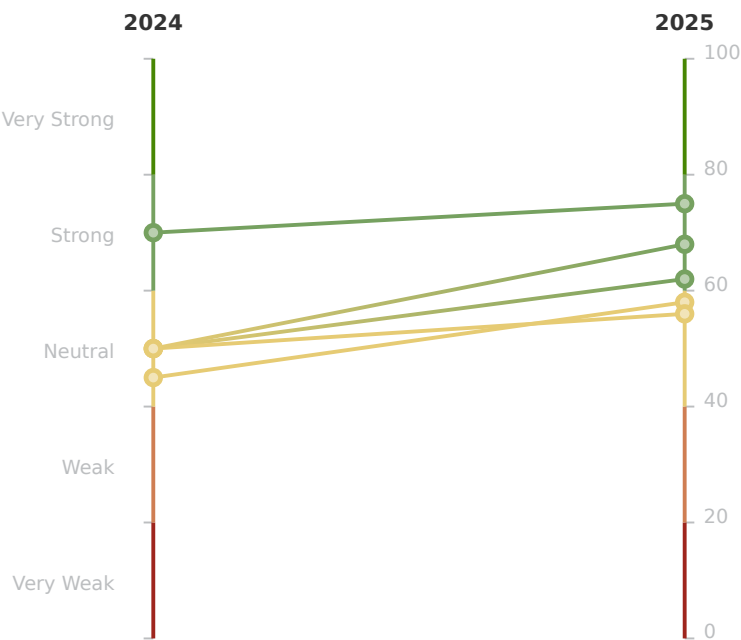
Overall	2
Involved Families	3
Supportive Environment	4
Ambitious Instruction	5
Effective Leaders	6
Collaborative Teachers	7

Overall, River Forest SD 90 are **well-organized** for improvement on average.



The 5Essentials

How is River Forest SD 90 performing on each of the 5Essentials in 2025?



Essentials	Performance Across Years		
	2024	2025	
Involved Families	70	75	Strong
Supportive Environment	50	68	Strong
Ambitious Instruction	50	62	Strong
Effective Leaders	45	58	Neutral
Collaborative Teachers	50	56	Neutral

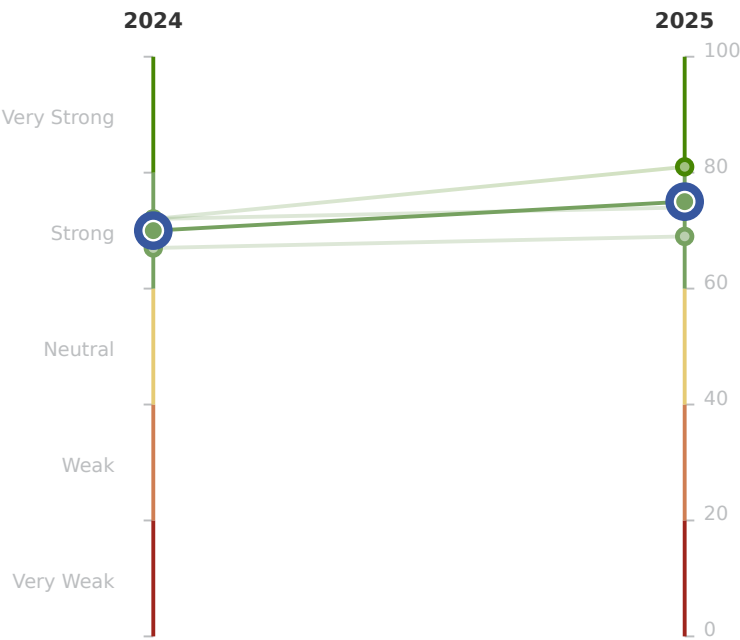
Involved Families

How is River Forest SD 90 performing on Involved Families?

In schools with Involved Families, the entire staff builds strong external relationships. Such schools:

- see parents as partners in helping students learn,
- value parents' input and participation in advancing the school's mission, and
- support efforts to strengthen its students' community resources.

Performance on essential and its underlying measures



Measures	Performance Across Years		Respondent
	2024	2025	
Parent Influence on Decision Making in Schools	72	81	Teacher
Parent Involvement in School	72	74	Teacher
Teacher-Parent Trust	67	69	Teacher

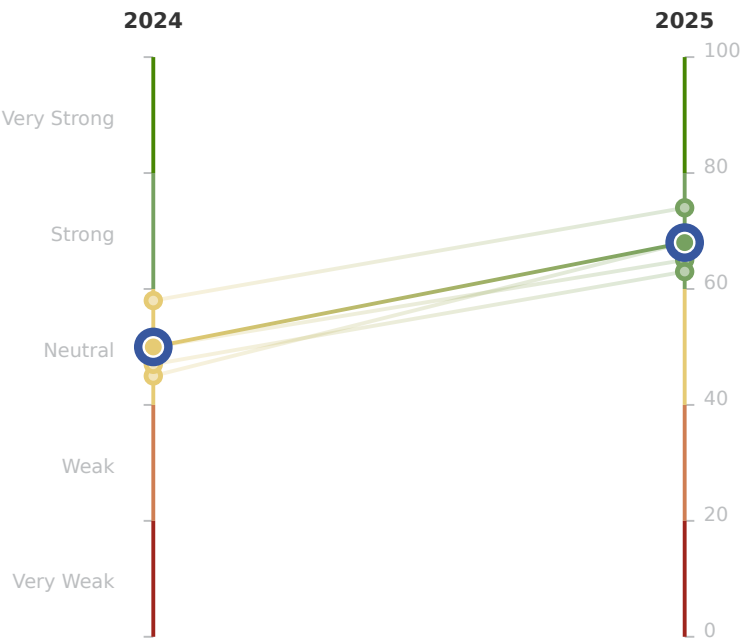
Supportive Environment

How is River Forest SD 90 performing on Supportive Environment?

In schools with a Supportive Environment, the school is safe, demanding, and supportive. In such schools:

- students feel safe in and around the school,
- they find teachers trust-worthy and responsive to their academic needs,
- all students value hard work, and
- teachers push all students toward high academic performance.

Performance on essential and its underlying measures



Measures	Performance Across Years		Respondent
	2024	2025	
Safety	58	74	Student
Academic Personalism	45	68	Student
Peer Support for Academic Work	50	65	Student
Student-Teacher Trust	47	63	Student

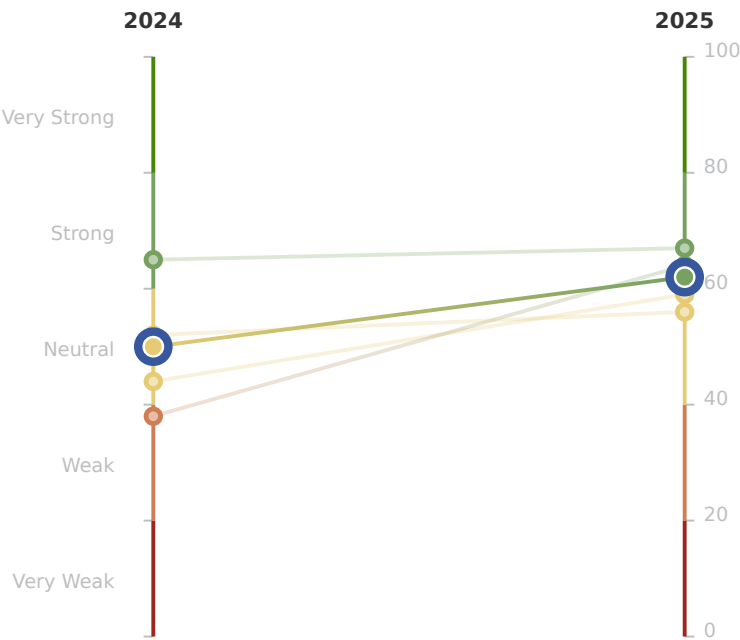
Ambitious Instruction

How is River Forest SD 90 performing on Ambitious Instruction?

In schools with strong Ambitious Instruction, classes are challenging and engaging. The instruction is clear, well-structured, and encourages students to build and apply knowledge. When combined with a supportive environment, Ambitious Instruction has the most direct effect on student learning. It is:

- well-defined with clear expectations for student success,
- interactive and encourages students to build and apply knowledge,
- well-paced (not measured), and
- aligned across grades (not measured).

Performance on essential and its underlying measures



Measures	Performance Across Years		Respondent
	2024	2025	
Quality of Student Discussion	65	67	Teacher
English Instruction	38	64	Student
Academic Press	44	59	Student
Math Instruction	52	56	Student

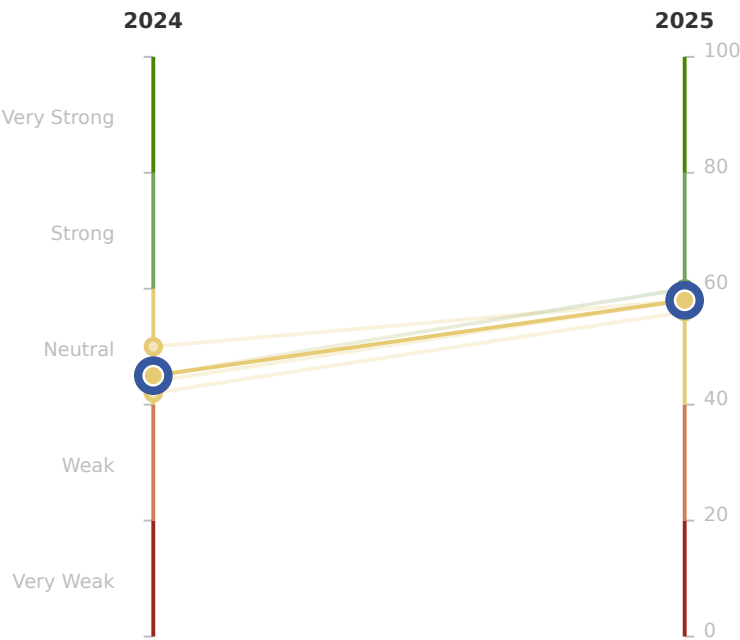
Effective Leaders

How is River Forest SD 90 performing on Effective Leaders?

In schools with Effective Leaders, principals and teachers work together to implement a shared vision. In such schools, people, programs, and resources are focused on a vision for sustained improvement. Leaders:

- practice shared leadership,
- set high goals for quality instruction,
- maintain mutually trusting and respectful relationships,
- support professional advancement for faculty and staff, and
- manage resources for sustained program improvement (not measured).

Performance on essential and its underlying measures



Measures	Performance Across Years		Respondent
	2024	2025	
Teacher-Principal Trust	45	60	Teacher
Program Coherence	44	58	Teacher
Teacher Influence	50	58	Teacher
Instructional Leadership	42	56	Teacher

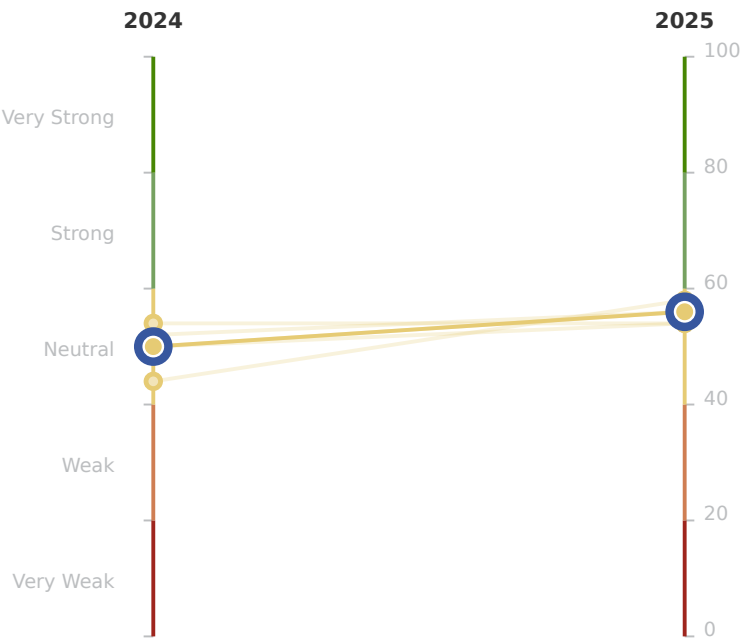
Collaborative Teachers

How is River Forest SD 90 performing on Collaborative Teachers?

In schools with strong Collaborative Teachers, all teachers collaborate to promote professional growth. In such schools, teachers are:

- active partners in school improvement,
- committed to the school, and
- focused on professional development.

Performance on essential and its underlying measures



Measures	Performance Across Years		Respondent
	2024	2025	
Quality Professional Development	44	58	Teacher
Collective Responsibility	50	56	Teacher
School Commitment	52	56	Teacher
Collaborative Practices	50	54	Teacher
Teacher-Teacher Trust	54	54	Teacher