

Executive Summary: District and School Report Cards

Introduction

The Illinois School Report Cards were released on October 30th. This summary gives an overview of the District's performance compared to the previous two school years, as well as how each of the four schools performed during the 2024-2025 school year.

Last year's data reflects a major shift in how proficiency is measured. The State of Illinois lowered the proficiency cut scores for ELA and Math, resulting in a dramatic, on-paper increase in the district's proficiency rates. Conversely, the state raised the cut scores for Science in some grade levels, which coincides with a sharp drop in the district's reported science proficiency.

While the district has consistently maintained high graduation and 9th-grade-on-track rates, key opportunities for improvement lie in adapting to the new, more rigorous science standards and closing persistent achievement gaps that remain, even with the new ELA and math proficiency levels.

District Areas of Improvement & Positive Trends

- **Reported Gains in ELA and Math Proficiency:** The district's ELA and Math proficiency rates saw a major increase in the 2024-2025 report. This coincides directly with the state's decision to lower the proficiency cut scores for these subjects.
 - **ELA Proficiency (All Tests):** After rising from 34.7% in 2022-2023 to 39.0% in 2023-2024, the rate jumped to 58.0% in 2024-2025 under the new standards.
 - **Math Proficiency (All Tests):** The rate was 25.7% in 2022-2023 and 27.4% in 2023-2024, before rising to 42.9% in 2024-2025 with the new cut scores.
- **Stable and High Student Success Rates:** The district has consistently excelled at keeping students on track for graduation, a strength that is independent of state assessment changes.
 - **9th Grade On Track:** This metric has remained high at 95.2% (2022-23), 94.8% (2023-24), and 96.0% (2024-25).
 - **4-Year Graduation Rate:** The graduation rate is also consistently high, at 90.5% (2022-23), 89.9% (2023-24), and 91.1% (2024-25).
- **Modest Gains in Attendance:** Chronic absenteeism and truancy rates have seen slight improvements.
 - **Chronic Absenteeism:** The rate improved from 18.5% in 2022-2023 to 17.6% in 2024-2025.
 - **Chronic Truancy:** This rate has slowly declined from 5.6% (2022-23) to 5.1% (2024-25).

Opportunities for Improvement

The reports highlight several areas where the district faces significant challenges and opportunities for growth.

- **Meeting New, Higher Science Standards:** The most significant academic challenge is the sharp drop in science proficiency, which correlates with the state raising the cut scores in 2024-2025.
 - **Science Proficiency (All Tests):** After posting high rates of 65.5% (2022-23) and 60.7% (2023-24), the district's proficiency fell to 39.3% in 2024-2025 following the change in state standards. This presents a clear opportunity for curriculum and instruction alignment to meet the new, more rigorous expectations.
- **Closing Persistent Proficiency Gaps:** Even with the lowered bar for proficiency in ELA and Math, significant gaps remain for key student groups.
 - **Students with Disabilities:** In 2024-2025, proficiency for this group was 30.1% in ELA and 19.5% in Math, lagging far behind the district's overall rates of 58.0% and 42.9%, respectively.
 - **Low-Income Students:** This group's 2024-2025 proficiency was 46.2% in ELA and 26.7% in Math, also trailing the district average.
- **Declining Postsecondary Enrollment:** While the graduation rate is high, the percentage of graduates enrolling in college within 12 months has fallen. After a high of 65.2% in 2022-2023, the rate dropped to 57.5% in 2023-2024 and 57.3% in 2024-2025. This suggests an opportunity to strengthen college and career advising.
- **Addressing Chronic Absenteeism:** Although the rate has slightly improved, a chronic absenteeism rate of 17.6% (2024-25) remains a significant concern. This means nearly one in five students is missing 10% or more of the school year (18 days).

Summary of Individual School Report Cards

All four schools in Meridian CUSD 223 received a Commendable designation from the state. Here are some highlights from the individual school report cards.

Stillman Valley High School

- 2024 Overall Index Score: 80.94
- 2025 Overall Index Score: 86.10
- 4-Year Graduation Rate: 91.1%
- ELA Proficiency: 50.0%
- Math Proficiency: 43.8%
- Science Proficiency: 45.0%

- Chronic Absenteeism: 25.1%
- 9th Grade On Track: 96.0%

Meridian Junior High School

- 2024 Overall Index Score: 80.68
- 2025 Overall Index Score: 78.87
- ELA Proficiency: 72.3%
- Math Proficiency: 39.3%
- Science Proficiency: 39.6%
- Chronic Absenteeism: 18.8%
- 8th Graders Passing Algebra I: 27.9%

Monroe Center Grade School

- 2024 Overall Index Score: 60.32
- 2025 Overall Index Score: 64.15
- ELA Proficiency: 46.3%
- Math Proficiency: 46.3%
- Science Proficiency (5th Grade): 33.0%
- Chronic Absenteeism: 11.2%

Highland Elementary School

- 2024 Overall Index Score: 64.94
- 2025 Overall Index Score: 78.68
- Chronic Absenteeism: 13.0%

Summary

Recent state report cards show the district's focused academic strategies are yielding positive results. All four of the district's schools have earned a Commendable designation from the state, reflecting a consistent standard of excellence across the community. Meridian CUSD 223's commitment to empowering every student for success is evident in its forward trajectory and consistent, community-wide achievements.

A tremendous thank you is in order for the staff, families, board of education, community partners, and volunteers for making the Meridian CUSD 223 a tremendous district for the students of our community.