



Dear Parents and Guardians,

In the 2012-13 School Report Card released this week by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Nicolet remains an “Exceeds Expectations” school district, scored well above the state average in Student Achievement (83.9 vs. 67.5), and increased its score in the On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness priority area.

The DPI school report cards, which debuted last year, are intended to assist schools in assessing their strengths and weaknesses, and to assure that students who are graduating from high school leave college-and-career ready. The high school report cards address three main priority areas: Student Achievement, Closing Gaps, and On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness. The report card shows that the majority of Nicolet students continue to excel and that the school does an outstanding job of preparing students for both college and career.

However, Nicolet’s overall accountability score dropped from 81.3 to 75.6 due to the decline in its score for Closing Gaps—the measure that encourages schools to lift the performance of lagging student groups. In short, schools must close gaps between low achievers and high achievers. Even though we are ranked as exceeding expectations, our lower closing gaps score is unacceptable and does not meet the high standards of the Nicolet learning community. In the past, our few struggling learners were getting lost in the euphoria of our overall student achievement success. As evidenced by our Report Card data, this cannot continue.

Other standardized assessment data, such as the ACT and AP scores, indicates that we are moving students forward; yet, as I mentioned, some students are not excelling as quickly as others. We have to do a better job personalizing the learning experiences for each student and then ensure that students who are struggling receive timely and targeted interventions as we continue to advance the skills and knowledge of all our students. While it may be obvious to many, I feel compelled to say that when closing gaps, lowering the performance level of the high achievers is not an acceptable method for narrowing the difference. That is not the Nicolet way.

Last year, 69 percent of Nicolet students earned a college credit before they graduated, six perfect scores on the ACT college admission and placement exam were recorded, and the district was named one of the top Advanced Placement districts in the nation by the College Board. Clearly, Nicolet is an exceptional school. The DPI report card is just one tool Nicolet uses to measure performance. The report card is a valuable tool because, in our case, it illuminates the kids that are getting left behind. We welcome that accountability.

In the coming days and weeks, we will continue to analyze the metrics associated with the Report Card in an ongoing effort to improve learning outcomes for all students. Please know that in my short time here, I have developed a high level of confidence in the instructional capacity within our new administrative team, faculty and staff. Moving forward, I have no doubt we will leverage the obvious strengths within our school community and, ultimately, exceed expectations for all of our learners.

If you have any comments or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at Robert.kobylski@nicolet.us, or 414-351-7525. I look forward to hearing from you!

Yours in Education,

Dr. Robert Kobylski
Superintendent of Schools
Nicolet High School District