

Georgia Public Policy Foundation Report Card for Parents

2004 Spring Edition

Middle School

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The 2004 Georgia Middle School Report Card for Parents

Overview

The Georgia Public Policy Foundation's *Report Card for Parents* is primarily designed to give parents information about their schools. It also provides valuable information for discussions that will help parents make informed decisions about the quality of public education in Georgia.

The testing and evaluation of Georgia's children generates an enormous amount of statistical data. The *Report Card for Parents* transforms this mountain of data into an understandable ranking of Georgia's public schools. The *Middle School Report* is a numerical ranking of 447 public schools.

The *Report Card*: a) analyzes the factors most important to parents, b) reduces statistical information to a concise and understandable form, and c) presents information about Georgia's elementary, middle and high schools that is accessible and easily comprehensible.

Want more information?
Make sure your next stop is

www.gppf.org

This year's web version of the *Report Card for Parents* includes more in-depth data and all new features such as improved interactive reporting, side-by-side comparisons, customized comparisons, geographic searches and much more.

The primary measure of student achievement in the report is the average of the percentage of students passing the reading and math sections of the 2003 Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT). This average is referred to as the Achievement Score.

Because there is a strong link between poverty and test scores (the higher the poverty rate, the lower the test scores), the report includes two other criteria *for information purposes only*. The first is the poverty rate — the percentage of students in each school who qualify for the federal free/reduced price lunch program. The second is a poverty index that measures how well a school is performing relative to its poverty

rate. (See pgs. 3-5 for a detailed explanation.) All information in the report is from the 2002–2003 school year.

Don't Forget.....
The Georgia Report Card for Parents
is available for Elementary,
Middle and High School

How Parents Can Use This Report

To judge the quality of their children's schools, parents must have quality information about academic performance. Student achievement is the touchstone for evaluating the success of all education efforts. To improve public education for all students we must know whether students are progressing every year. For the vast majority of parents, assessing the quality of a school can often be a difficult task with unfamiliar terms and voluminous data. This report serves to provide parents with the simple facts which will aid in the assessment of the education received by their children. In this *Report Card*, schools are ranked by clear, objective results, and parents are presented with a statistically reliable, annual measurement of student progress.

It is important to remember that many factors affect a school's performance. Any questions or concerns arising from this report should first be discussed with teachers, principals and local school board members before drawing definitive conclusions.

We believe parents should become actively involved in their schools and resist being passive, uninformed consumers. The information in this report should be used to open a dialogue between parents, teachers, administrators, elected officials and civic organizations.

For more detailed information, contact:

- Your school
- Georgia Department of Education at (404) 656-2800
- The Governor's Office of Student Achievement at (404) 463-1150
- Georgia Public Policy Foundation at (404) 256-4050

“... every school in order to be effective needs a specific, coherent, and well-conceived curriculum, plus sound tests that indicate how well that curriculum has been taught and learned.”

E. D. Hirsch, Jr.
Professor of Education and
Humanities, University of Virginia
Core Knowledge Foundation

Definition of Terms

Achievement Score. Average of:

- The percentage of students in the school that meet or exceed standards in reading on the eighth-grade CRCT.
- The percentage of students in the school that meet or exceed standards in math on the eighth-grade CRCT.

Percentage Exceeding Standards. Average of:

- The percentage of students in the school that exceed standards in reading on the eighth-grade CRCT.
- The percentage of students in the school that exceed standards in math on the eighth-grade CRCT.

Poverty Rate. The percentage of students eligible to receive free/reduced-price lunch provides an indicator of the poverty level of the students attending the school.

Poverty Index. Measures how well a school is performing relative to its poverty rate. A score above zero indicates better than expected performance, below zero indicates lower than expected performance, and zero indicates that the school is performing as expected.

High Poverty Schools (P). Schools with poverty rates significantly higher than the state average. Schools with poverty rates higher than 75 percent received this designation. Significance was determined mathematically using one standard deviation as the benchmark.

High Limited English Proficiency Schools (L). Schools with a percentage of students with low English proficiency significantly higher than the state average. Schools with a percentage of students with low English proficiency higher than 9 percent received this designation. Significance was determined mathematically using one standard deviation as the benchmark.

High Disability Schools (D). Schools with a percentage of students with disabilities significantly higher than the state average. Schools with a percentage of students with disabilities higher than 20 percent received this designation. Significance was determined mathematically using one standard deviation as the benchmark.

State Rank. The rank is determined by the achievement score. The percentage exceeding standards serves as a tiebreaker. If both of these criteria are equal, there is a tie and the schools are listed with equal rank in alphabetical order by school name.

MIDDLE SCHOOL Quick Scan

Schools in Report: 447

Achievement Score:

Average: 71.4

High: 100

Low: 0

Percentage

Exceeding Standards:

Average: 29

High: 75.6

Low: 0

There is a high correlation between poverty rates and test scores. In fact, using statistics, it is possible to predict test scores based upon a given poverty rate. Using this prediction as the standard of comparison, the predicted test score compared to the actual test score gives an indication whether a school is underperforming or overperforming given their level of poverty.

Additional Information

▶ How should I interpret the ranking?

There are several ways to evaluate your school's ranking. First, look at the school's progress over time. Is the school improving or declining? Second, compare your school to other schools of similar size and poverty percentage. Finally, there is no substitute for personally visiting schools and talking to teachers, administrators, parents and students.

▶ How can I access additional information about my school?

All of the data in our reports, as well as much more data that could not be included in the reports, is available on our Web site (www.gppf.org). The Web site contains new and expanded features such as comparison reports, geographic searches and interactive queries. *Additional information includes district spending per pupil, enrollment, all test subjects and data disaggregated by gender, race/ethnicity, limited English proficiency, disability and socioeconomic status.*

▶ Why was my school not listed in this report?

In order to be included in this report, a school must have 2003 testing data for the 4th, 8th or 11th grade. For example, a school that just began operation this fall would not be included. NOTE: Stewart-Quitman Middle School was not included because math test scores were unavailable.

▶ Why is some information not available for my school?

Missing data may result if the school were able to administer the test or if fewer than 10 students participated in the test.

▶ Why are charter schools included in the report?

A charter school is a public school that is free from most state and local regulations, and in return for that freedom, the school must meet certain accountability standards that are defined in its charter.

▶ Why do we focus on test scores?

To improve public education for all students we must know whether students are learning every year. Well-made tests are an analytical tool, enabling teachers to diagnose students' weaknesses and parents to monitor the achievement gains of their children.

Notes on the Student Data

- Data was provided by the Office of Education Accountability, the Georgia Department of Education and the National Center for Education Statistics.
- "All Students" refers to all students who were tested.
- Test results for less than 10 students are not reported.
- Poverty rate is reported as the percentage of students eligible to receive free- or reduced-price lunches. This percentage is calculated by dividing the number of eligible students (as reported to the Department of Education in October 2002) by the total school enrollment (as reported by the October 2002 FTE count).
- The percentage of students with disabilities is based on the December FTE (full-time equivalency) count divided by the total enrollment from the Fall FTE count. The December FTE has been declared the official count of students with disabilities (special education) since that data collection is used to determine federal funding.
- The percentage of students with limited English proficiency is based on the 2003 Student Record.
- Enrollment represents the October 2002 FTE count.

Highest Ranking Schools



Elementary Schools

1.....	Muscogee County	Britt David Elementary Computer Aca.
2.....	Dekalb County	Kittredge Magnet School
3.....	Fayette County	Braelinn Elementary School
4.....	Fulton County	Crabapple Crossing Elementary School
5.....	Dougherty County	Lincoln Fundamental School
6.....	Dekalb County	Livsey Elementary School
7.....	Fulton County	Findley Oaks Elementary School
8.....	Atlanta City	Capitol View Elementary School
9.....	Fayette County	Peeples Elementary School
10.....	Forsyth County	Big Creek Elementary School
11.....	Cobb County	Tritt Elementary School
12.....	Atlanta City	Smith Elementary School
13.....	Fulton County	Lake Windward Elementary School
14.....	Atlanta City	Brandon Elementary School
15.....	Richmond County	Walker Traditional Elementary School

Middle Schools

1.....	Richmond County	Walker Traditional Elem. Computer Aca.
2.....	Richmond County	Davidson Magnet School
3.....	Dougherty County	Robert A. Cross Fundamental Middle
4.....	Gwinnett County	Alton C. Crews Middle School
5.....	Cobb County	Dickerson Middle School
6.....	Cobb County	Mabry Middle School
7.....	Fulton County	River Trail Middle School
8.....	Cobb County	Hightower Middle School
9.....	Cobb County	Dodgen Middle School
10.....	Fulton County	Webb Bridge Middle School
11.....	Fulton County	Northwestern Middle School
12.....	Fayette County	Rising Star School
13.....	Fulton County	Taylor Road Middle School
14.....	Ware County	Ware Magnet School
15.....	Cobb County	Simpson Middle School

High Schools

1.....	Richmond County	Davidson Magnet School
2.....	Richmond County	Johnson Magnet School
3.....	Muscogee County	Columbus High School
4.....	Ware County	Ware Magnet School
5.....	Union County	Woody Gap High/Elementary School
6.....	Chatham County	Savannah Arts Academy
7.....	Cobb County	Lassiter High School
8.....	Cobb County	Walton High School (CS)
9.....	Fayette County	Sandy Creek High School
9.....	Rockdale County	Salem High School
11.....	Gwinnett County	Brookwood High School
12.....	DeKalb County	DeKalb School of the Arts
13.....	Bryan County	Richmond Hill High School
14.....	Cobb County	Pope High School
15.....	Randolph County County	Randolph Clay High School