November 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We have had a wonderful Fall at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (school/district)! We are excited about \_\_, \_\_, and \_\_. As a learning community, we are continually looking to improve \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (school). One source we use to reflect on our strengths and areas for improvement is student performance data. This year we add accountability reporting to our performance data. Our accountability report card is called the *Private School – Choice Students Report Card*.

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) generates Accountability Report Cards for all publicly funded schools and districts in the state. Report cards for private schools participating in the Private School Choice Program were first required for the 2015-16 school year. Choice schools did not receive any score or ratings on last year’s accountability report card, since DPI only had a single year of data available for Choice students, and the report cards require multiple years of data to produce a score. As such, 2016-17 is the first year that private schools participating in the Choice Program can receive overall scores or ratings.

Our school has received a *Private School – Choice Students Report Card* that focuses only on students participating in the Choice program. (We have also opted to receive a separate *Private School – All Students Report Card*, which includes all students in our school). This (These) report card(s) can be found online at: <http://dpi.wi.gov/accountability/report-cards>.

The Report Cards are intended to help schools see a clear picture of how well schools are preparing students to be ready for their next educational step – including the next grade level, graduation, college, and careers. Like the public school report cards, the private school report cards report on performance across four priority areas:

* **Student Achievement** proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics on the annual state assessments
* **School Growth** measured by year-to-year progress in ELA and math achievement
* **Closing Gaps** in performance between specific student groups (comparing English language learners, low-income students, students with disabilities, and members of a racial or an ethnic group with their peers)
* **On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness** showing reliable predictors of how many students are on-track to graduate from high school and student readiness for post-high school success

Unlike public schools, Choice schools will not receive ratings related to graduation rates because these rates require four years of data to calculate. This affects component scores within the Closing Gaps and On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness priority areas. Schools are also evaluated on their level of student engagement – chronic absenteeism rates and dropout rates – when available.

Scores for the priority areas are aggregated into an overall accountability score, from 0 to 100. This score is displayed in the top left corner of the School or District Report Cards. It is important to note that the 0 to 100 accountability score is not a “percent correct” measurement. The score is primarily based on our performance last year, the 2016-17 school year, across the four priority areas. Schools that did not have sufficient data to calculate an accountability score or rating will see “NR-Data” in the top left corner. This can occur if there are too few choice students in the school.

Based on its score, a school receives one of five rating categories, from *Fails to Meet Expectations* to *Significantly Exceeds Expectations*, as well as corresponding one to five stars.

DPI produces two versions of each Report Card: a one-pager labeled “School Report Card” and 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. I have included the one page School Report Card for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (school) here as well.

Please feel free to contact me with questions as they arise. I look forward to working with you to make 2017-18 a successful school year for your child!

Sincerely,

(name and contact information of principal/administrator)