

For Immediate Release

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Report Cards Released For Parental Choice Programs

Highlight - Majority of Highest Performing Schools in Milwaukee in Choice Program

The first statewide report cards were issued for private schools in the Parental Choice Programs today. The data reflect the performance of the 2016-17 school year. Overall, the results showed modestly higher performance for the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP) and Racine Parental Choice Program (RPCP) than their Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) and Racine Unified School District (RUSD) peers. For the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP), however, the sample size of schools with data is too small to garner programmatic evaluation.

The data show that in Milwaukee, of the fifteen schools that were rated in the highest category, Significantly Exceeds Expectations, eleven of those schools were in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. These results are based on data from only students enrolled in the choice program.

“For all publicly-funded students in Milwaukee, 11 of the 15 highest category schools are private schools in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program,” Jim Bender, President of School Choice Wisconsin, said. “There need to be more schools in this category throughout all sectors, but it is promising that these schools are already demonstrating success.”

The RPCP also shows promise with strong scores in student growth and with the majority of schools rated as meeting or exceeding expectations.

There are minimum requirements on student enrollment in testable grades in order to have enough data to calculate a score. For many schools with small choice enrollments in the WPCP, this did not happen. Over time, however, as enrollments increase and more data becomes available, they will be issued a report card. Similarly, a school must have been in the program for two consecutive years in order to receive a score. As there has been an influx of new schools joining the WPCP in the last few years, many schools will receive their first state report card next year.

The data required for the report cards are collected through a vendor-approved Student Information System. All publicly-funded students have the same data reported. The standards for creating a report card are the same for public, charter and private schools. Additionally, the report cards are weighted on academic growth and proficiency scores based on the level of poverty in a school; the higher the poverty, the more emphasis on growth.