

**EDUCATION INDICATORS** look at the quantity, quality and distribution of education in your area. Many have said that investments in education are the new keys, along with investment in health to economic development. Demographic indicators include student drop-out rates, educational attainment, basic requirement test scores in reading and math, student-teacher ratio, special student populations represented through free reduced price lunch, limited English proficiency, and special education. While much of the data will focus on K-12 education, communities will also want to explore learning opportunities presented throughout the life cycle.

Each fall, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) produces a **School Report Card** for every public school and public school district throughout the state. The report card is generated from information provided to ISBE by school districts, and includes information about the district's/school's demographics, standardized test scores and finances, among other topics.

Here are some links specific to Adams County:

- [Payson CUSD1 2012 School Report Card](#)
- [Liberty CUSD2 2012 School Report Card](#)
- [Central CUSD3 2012 School Report Card](#)
- [Unity CUSD4 2012 School Report Card](#)
- [Quincy School District 172 2012 School Report Card](#)
- Adams County Compiled Report Card 2010-2011
- Adams County Compiled Report Card 2011-2012

**National Center for Educational Statistics** This website has multiple purposes relating to the access and use of school district demographic information. This website provides access to information about school district demographic resources developed under the sponsorship of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education. The website enables users to directly access school district geographic and demographic data.

<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/>

**Illinois Interactive Report Card** Federal reforms under the No Child Left Behind Act focus on reading and math performance, but it's good to look at scores on all tests at your child's school. The database below features comprehensive data for each public school district in Illinois, including: test results, student and teacher demographics, funding information, salary information, and No Child Left Behind information.

<http://iirc.niu.edu/>

The **Illinois Standards Achievement Test** is the main test given to Illinois elementary and middle school students, showing how well children are performing in five subjects. Students in Grades 3, 5 and 8 take reading, math and writing tests; students in Grades 4 and 7 take the science and social science ISAT.

<http://www.isbe.net/assessment/isat.htm>

The **Prairie State Achievement Examination** is given to 11th-graders at Illinois high schools. It tests students in five subjects: reading, math, writing, science and social science.

<http://www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm>

The most important thing is to see what percentage of students met or exceeded standards on the tests. A 40 percent passing rate is required this year on state reading and math tests, or a school will be labeled as failing. The passing rate is the combination of test scores that met or exceeded standards.

*Exceeding standards* is the best rating. It means students have advanced knowledge and skills, allowing them to creatively solve problems and evaluate results. *Meeting standards* means a student is proficient in knowledge and skills in the subject tested, and can effectively apply those skills to solve problems. The *below standards* category means students have basic knowledge and skills in a subject, but they still have gaps in learning. The worst rating is *academic warning*, which means students have major gaps in learning and can't effectively apply knowledge and skills.

It's also helpful to look at the *previous years' passing rates* to see if your school's scores are improving or declining, and in which areas. You can also see how your school compares to overall *school district scores*, which incorporate performance from all schools in the district. *State averages* tell you how your school compares to schools across the state.

There's also a wealth of information available on other subjects, such as demographic information about students, average experience and salary levels of teachers at your school, and financial data on how much your school spends per pupil.