



UTAH SCHOOL REPORT CARD FAQ



This document is designed to help schools, parents, and communities navigate the 2019-2020 [Utah School Report Card](#) and to answer frequently asked questions (FAQs) about unique circumstances affecting education in the 2019-2020 school year and the resulting impact on school accountability.

Q. WHAT IS THE UTAH SCHOOL REPORT CARD?

- A** The Utah School Report Card is just one piece of information that, when combined with other information, shows how schools and districts are performing in multiple areas. It is designed to give parents, caregivers, community members, educators, and policymakers transparent information about school performance, to both celebrate successes and identify areas for improvement. The state’s education community experienced unprecedented conditions during 2019-2020 due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Although the 2019-2020 Report Card is heavily impacted by COVID-19-related school soft closures and the education landscape of Spring 2020, the goal of the Report Card remains - to ensure high expectations and equitable outcomes for all Utah students.

Q. WHAT DECISIVE ACTIONS AFFECTED THE SCHOOL REPORT CARD?

- A** As a result of state-wide school building closure, the Utah State Board of Education made the [decision](#) to forego certain statewide tests in Spring 2020. The U.S. Department of Education also granted an Assessment and Accountability [waiver](#) to states in March 2020, suspending federal requirements to administer Spring statewide tests, but which still required states to meet certain public reporting requirements. With the cancellation of testing in Spring 2020, the data that feeds into several measures on the report card are not available this year, and thus Report Card for 2019-2020 will look notably different from prior years. Each area will be noted with explanations in this guide.

Q. HOW HAS THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL REPORT CARD BEEN IMPACTED BY COVID-19?

- A** Each year, The School Report Card shows student performance for the prior school year. This edition of the report card shows the available information for school year 2019-2020. Schools were not required to administer Utah’s state tests, including RISE, Utah Aspire Plus, ACT, Acadience Reading, and alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities during the spring of 2020. As a result, in the absence of assessment data, the accountability data associated with these assessments is also absent from the Report Card. “NA” is displayed where data are not applicable or unavailable.



Q. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED ON THE 2019-2020 REPORT CARD?

A Without Spring 2020 assessment data available to calculate school accountability, the Report Card will not report any assessment, achievement, or growth data, and individual ratings for accountability indicators will not be displayed. State legislation suspended assigning overall letter grades for schools, and schools will not receive points for any accountability indicators as they do in a typical year. The U.S. Department of Education Assessment and Accountability Waiver also suspended the ranking of schools for 2019-2020 and the identification of low performing schools for Comprehensive and Targeted Support and Improvement.



Q. WHAT IS INCLUDED ON THE REPORT CARD FOR 2019-2020?

A This edition of the Utah Report Card will provide the data that is available for 2019-2020. Information about high school graduation rates, college and career readiness course taking, postsecondary enrollment, and consistent attendance are included. Utah was able to complete all WIDA ACCESS testing for English Learners prior to the school closure, so English Learner Progress information is made available. In addition, much of the usual demographic and enrollment data will be published, along with schools' self-reported indicators. Information about teacher experience has been added as a new addition to school profiles.

Not Reported for 2019-2020	Reported for 2019-2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement Indicator – Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment results for RISE, Utah Aspire Plus, and alternate assessments • Growth Indicator • Growth of the Lowest 25% Indicator • ACT Performance • Assessment Participation Rates • Early Literacy for grades 1-3 • School Letter Grades • Comparisons to the State and district • Performance of student groups • Progress toward State Long-Term Goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Learner Progress Indicator • Graduation Rate for the 2019 graduating cohort • Readiness Coursework for the 2019 graduating cohort • Post-Secondary Enrollment for the 2019 graduating cohort • Consistent Attendance • Self-Reported Indicators (optional for schools) • Teacher experience (New) – Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher experience • Teacher retention • Percentage of teachers teaching with emergency credentials or teaching outside of their field/certification



INTERPRETING 2019-2020 REPORT CARDS

Q. WHAT CAUTIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN WHEN INTERPRETING THE DATA?

- A** The data provided on the Report Card for 2019-2020 can be considered as generally reliable indication of school performance in the areas that are report, however the unprecedented conditions placed on schools in Spring 2020 warrant some caution when interpreting the information. Consistent Attendance, for example, is dependent on how individual schools or districts chose to report student attendance while under remote learning conditions, and therefore should be interpreted with appropriate caution.



Q. WHAT DATA WAS NOT IMPACTED BY THE CONDITIONS OF SPRING 2020?

- A** Other data, such as graduation rate, readiness coursework, and postsecondary enrollment, are reflective of students in the 2018-2019 graduating cohort who were not impacted by COVID-19. Utah was also able to complete all WIDA ACCESS testing for English Learners prior to the statewide school soft closure, so the English Learner Progress Indicator is reported as it is in a typical year to promote equity and opportunity for English Learners.

Q. WHY DO MANY ELEMENTS ON REPORT CARD SHOW 'ND', 'NA', OR 'N<10'?

- A** In cases where assessment data is not available to calculate a piece of information, NA indicates that the element is not applicable. Similarly, ND indicates that there is no data available. N<10 indicates where there are fewer than 10 individuals in a group and the data is suppressed to protect personally identifiable information.

Q. WHY ARE SELF-REPORTED INDICATORS MEANINGFUL IN 2019-2020?

- A** Schools may choose to describe up to two additional pieces of information about how their school is supporting students. In this reporting year, where state assessment data is absent from Report Cards, the self-reported indicators may add more value than ever. Self-reported indicators are optional but can provide the opportunity for schools to highlight successful practices, programs, and provide rich information to their school community. LEA Assessment Directors can assist schools to upload these additional indicators should the school choose to do so.

Q. WHAT CAN BE EXPECTED FOR 2020-2021?

- A** 2020-2021 presents many unknowns, and learning is occurring in a wide variety of ways - most of which are much different than our traditional idea of what school looks like. The effects of COVID-19 will continue to reach every corner of our state. The Utah State Board of Education is hopeful that the conditions for schools will stabilize, Spring assessments can be administered to students as planned, and Report Cards can provide more information to stakeholders in the new future. The USBE has created [resources and a three-phase path to recovery](#) to support students and families and create educational success in the near- and long-term.



ADDITIONAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY?

- A** The [Utah Accountability Technical Manual](#) describes the accountability system purpose, the method for calculating each indicator, and provides more information about the Utah School Report Card. It can be found on the Utah State Board of Education's [Assessment and Accountability Resources](#) website. It is important to note that the manual describes the Utah Accountability System as it operates in a typical school year for the purpose of documentation and reference. This FAQ guide describes the unique circumstances and impacts for the 2019-2020 Report Card.

Q. HOW SHOULD STAKEHOLDERS INTERPRET ENGLISH LEARNER PROGRESS?

- A** The English Learner Progress measure shows the percentage of students learning the English language and have made adequate progress or reached English proficiency in the areas of listening, reading, speaking, and writing on the WIDA ACCESS assessment. Adequate progress targets for English Learners are set for each student based on where they started and how long they have been in school. These adequate progress targets are defined in the [Accountability Technical Manual](#) on page 20.

Q. MY STUDENT TOOK THE ACT IN 2020. WHY IS ACT NOT REPORTED?

- A** Utah made great effort to give all 11th graders in the state the opportunity to take ACT in 2020, either during the regular testing window or by providing vouchers for national test dates during the Summer or Fall. However not all students took the ACT in 2020. Reporting ACT performance for only those students who took the ACT would be misrepresentative and open to misinterpretation. The decision was made to leave ACT performance off the Report Card and allow schools to interpret and use their own data locally, where they have a better understanding of their own context.

Q. WHY IS SOME DATA AVAILABLE FOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN POSTSECONDARY READINESS?

- A** Some high school indicators are calculated using lagged data collected from the prior year's graduating cohort. These include Graduation Rate, Readiness Coursework, and Postsecondary Enrollment. This data is published on the 2019-2020 report card because the graduating cohort from 2018-2019 was unimpacted by school closures and COVID-19. The [Accountability Technical Manual](#) describes these indicators in detail on p. 21-23. Looking forward, the USBE plans to closely examine the impact of COVID-19 conditions on these measures for students who graduated during the pandemic.