



NJDOE News

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Commissioner Librera Announces Release of 2004 School Report Cards

Commissioner of Education William L. Librera today announced the release of the 2004 New Jersey School Report Cards. The school report cards contain detailed statistical profiles of all public schools in the state. The state-mandated annual reports enable members of the public to gauge their school's educational progress.

"New Jersey legislated an annual accountability report for each school well before the *No Child Left Behind Act* was passed," said Acting Governor Richard J. Codey. "People in our communities have been able to track the progress of their children's schools through the NJ School Report Card for the last decade."

"By law, we are required to produce the annual NJ School Report Card, so that parents and interested citizens can review statistics about their local schools and evaluate whether the schools are providing their students with a high-quality education in a cost-effective way," said Commissioner Librera. "The reports also show how well each school is doing in meeting the requirements of the Core Curriculum Content Standards and the state's goal of having all children able to read by the end of third grade."

The school report card information is arranged under five categories – school environment, student information, student performance indicators, staff information, and district/charter financial information. Each year, the department makes adjustments to the data fields to accommodate new federal mandates or to clarify the information that is presented in the report.

There are several minor changes to the data fields in the 2004 School Report Card as follows:

- Addition of NJASK 3 assessment results;
- Expulsions expressed in numbers rather than percentages;
- Inclusion of revenue sources for charter schools;
- Elimination of two categories of post-graduation plans – undecided and unknown;
- Elimination of three charter school fields – length of school year, parent involvement programs, and student participation; and
- Faculty turnover rates for all school types, not just charter schools as in the past.

The reports released today are the tenth to be produced under the 1995 state law that standardizes much of the information and requires its annual distribution. They also represent the 14th time New Jersey has issued a report on its public schools, since the first report cards were distributed in 1989. Report cards are produced for all elementary and secondary schools, as well as vocational schools, special education schools, charter schools, and Special Services School Districts.

Commissioner Librera expressed appreciation to local school district personnel for their cooperation in supplying data for the statistical profiles. The school report card is on the department's Web site at <http://education.state.nj.us/rc/>