



Blue Ridge CUSD#18
411 N. John Street, Farmer City, IL 61842
Phone: 309 928-9141
#br_u_knighted

November 2, 2023

The annual summative designations on the IL School Report Card have been released and we are very pleased to share that all three Blue Ridge CUSD#18 buildings have received a Commendable designation! For those who would like to dig deeper into how designations are calculated, please refer to the Enhanced Summative Designation document created by the IL State Board of Education (ISBE). It is linked for you here: <https://5il.co/287bd>.

I would also invite you to take time on the IL School Report Card site, which can be found here: <https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/>. You can type in Blue Ridge CUSD 18 and from there, you can look at either district level data, or data specific to each of our three buildings.

Of special note this year, when reviewing school level data, you can click on Accountability, then Summative Designation to find a new graphic that displays the various components that make up the overall index score. Building level highlights include:

- Schneider Elementary- ELA growth and Math proficiency
- BRIJHS- ELA growth and ELA proficiency
- BRHS- ELA proficiency and graduation rate

Overall, the state reports strong progress in students' recovery from the pandemic – with increased proficiency rates and the highest graduation rate in 13 years. Major increases in the English language arts proficiency were noted, along with an encouraging, yet comparatively smaller, increase in the math proficiency rate. That said, proficiency rates remain below pre-pandemic levels and chronic absenteeism remains alarmingly high, indicating more work must be done to ensure full academic and social-emotional recovery from the pandemic.

In terms of how Blue Ridge continues to address social-emotional recovery, I'm pleased to share that each of our buildings have implemented regular social-emotional lessons during the school day, with K-6 lessons being delivered daily, 7th-8th grade lessons delivered several times per week, and high school lessons delivered monthly.

In terms of academic recovery, I'll take this opportunity to remind you about our i-Ready program that was piloted last school year and fully implemented this year. Students in grades K-10 and students with disabilities in grades 11-12 have taken benchmark assessments already this year in reading and math through i-Ready. These assessments assist teachers by providing individualized learning paths and growth goals for each student as well as student groupings and lesson plans that will help teachers meet current instructional needs within their classroom. We know that there are still learning gaps that exist



Dr. Hillary Stanifer, Superintendent
Mr. Brian Easter, BRHS Principal Mrs. Mary Diener, BRHS Interim Assistant Principal
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due to interrupted instruction during the pandemic and we are pleased to have the i-Ready program as a tool to help meet those individualized needs. If you hear your student speaking of i-Ready, please encourage them to view the program as an opportunity to get caught up on content in which their benchmark assessment has shown an area of needed growth. Catching up may not feel like fun, but it will make grade level content much more accessible, therefore classroom instruction will be a much more positive experience. If your student speaks about their learning path being too easy, please stress with them that trying their hardest on each benchmark assessment is the best way to have the most meaningful learning path material. The benchmark assessment is adaptive and works to create a personalized learning path that is most appropriate, as long as the student gives his/her best effort. If a student chooses to do less than their best on a benchmark assessment, the result is a learning path that is not the most helpful for the student, often causing them to lose interest in the program overall, which is unfortunate. Students will benchmark again this winter. We're hopeful to see half of each student's growth goal obtained by that point in the school year.

I hope that you join us in celebrating the academic growth that is captured on our IL School Report Card. We are very pleased with the progress and we will continue to work the systems that we've built to address current social-emotional learning needs and to fill in academic gaps, with the overall goal of continuing to increase our proficiency scores.

When we work together to Embrace, Engage, Equip, and Empower our students, staff, parents, and the community, we all succeed! Thank you for your partnership!

Respectfully,

Dr. Hillary Stanifer



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