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THE MONITOR

NEW SCHOOL REPORT CARD A REALITY

January 24, 2012 was a great day for Illinois School Reform and parent/family, school and community engagement as Governor Quinn signed **HB 605** redesigning the **Illinois State School Report Card**. **Illinois PTA** was ably represented at the signing by Immediate Past President Debra Strauss, who continues to represent our members on the P-20 Council where she currently serves as the co-chair of the Family, Youth and Community Engagement Committee.

Just over 7 months of work has culminated in a one-page (two sided) Illinois School State Report card that is cleaner, more "user-friendly" and designed so that parents/families and communities can better understand how a school, or district, is performing in three vital areas:

Student Outcomes,
Student Progress, and
The School Environment.

Spearheading this work was the Data, Assessment and Accountability Committee, assisted by the Family, Youth, and Community Engagement Committee, of the Governor's P-20 Council. Nearly 60 focus groups were organized around the state which gave parent/families, business, educators and other community members an unprecedented opportunity to provide input and feedback to the redesigned report card.

Families and communities will first see the redesigned card in the 2013-2014 school year.

As stated by Governor Quinn: "Every child in Illinois deserves access to a good, well-rounded education and we want every parent to know how their child's school is performing. Empowering parents and communities with this information increases accountability in our schools and allows us to better judge what works and what can be done better."

The redesigned report cards will include:

- School characteristics and student demographics (school enrollment; racial and ethnic background; number of low income students; per pupil expenditures);
- Curriculum information (availability of AP classes; availability of foreign language classes; school personnel resources; dual credit enrollment);
- Student outcomes (percentage of students meeting and exceeding state standards; graduation rates; percentage of college-ready students);
- Student progress (number of students entering kindergarten ready to learn; student growth measures; percentage of students entering high school on track for college or career); and
- School environment (teacher and principal retention; percentage of students and teachers with fewer than 10 absences; measures of school learning climate).

Tips for Local PTA Action

- Invite an administrator to a PTA meeting to preview the new school report card;
- Share this information with parents through PTA communications.