



Standards Based Reporting : Frequently Asked Questions

What is a standard?

- Educational standards are the learning goals for what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade level.

What is Standards-Based grade reporting?

- A standards-based report card informs parents of the most important skills/concepts students should learn in each subject area at a particular grade level.
- It is designed to give parents a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their child's learning

How Does Standards-Based Grading Differ From Traditional Grading?

- On a traditional report card, students receive one grade for reading, one for math, one for science and so on. On a Standards-Based report card, each of these subject areas are further expanded by a list of skills and knowledge students are responsible for learning during each grade level.
- Standards-Based report cards provide a separate measure of progress for each indicator. Thus, providing parents a more detailed insight of their students' progress and what they have actually learned and know.
- For example:** In traditional grading, the student's performance for the whole quarter would be averaged and early quiz scores that were low would be averaged together with performance later in the course resulting in a lower grade. In standards based grading, a student who reaches proficiency would be reported proficient and the performance scale would reflect the current level of mastery.

The Benefits of Standards-Based Grading

For Students:

- Learning targets are clearly defined and aligned with state standards.
- Students are offered multiple opportunities and ways through which to demonstrate proficiency
- Students monitor their own progress toward the achievement of specified targets
- Specific feedback on progress helps build self-esteem, pride, and motivation for students

For Parents and Caregivers:

- Report card grades are less mysterious and have more meaning
- Parents are aware of exactly what their child knows, is able to do, and next steps for progress
- Parents know in what areas their child needs more support
- Parents are empowered to increase their child's confidence and help their student set goals

For Teachers:

- Teachers know exactly where students stand in their progress toward learning targets and what support needs to be provided
- Teachers have aligned expectations and standards
- Assessment results help teachers differentiate instruction to provide extra support, additional learning activities, or extension activities to better meet students where they are

Q. Why use Standards Based reporting?

A. On a traditional report card, students receive one grade for reading, one for math, one for science and so on. On a Standards-Based report card, each of these subject areas are further expanded by a list of skills and knowledge students are responsible for learning during each grade level. Standards-Based report cards provide a separate measure of progress for each indicator. Thus, providing parents a more detailed insight of their students' progress and what they have actually learned and know.

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Q. Why not have a Standards-Based system as an additional reporting component to the traditional report card?

A. Traditional grading for elementary level students does not communicate to parents what teachers want them to know about their child's strengths and weaknesses. The elementary level is based on a developmental model where learning is valued as a process. Traditional letter grades and Standards-Based rubrics do not assess in the same way and therefore are not compatible with one another.

Q. How can my child exceed the standards?

A. Exceeding is **not** the equivalent of an A on a traditional report card. **For example:** if a student received A's on every math test during the marking period, he or she would probably receive an A on a traditional report card. If those math tests measured only the concepts fourth graders are expected to master, those A's would be the equivalent of meeting the standard on a Standards-Based report card; the student is doing what he or she should be doing very well, but not necessarily more. Standards-Based report cards encourage students to demonstrate their ability to apply skills and knowledge beyond grade level expectations. Performance is characterized by self-motivation and the ability to apply skills with consistent accuracy, independence, and a high level of quality.