

# PARENT GUIDE TO STANDARDS BASED GRADING

In the Platte County R-3 School District, we believe student achievement occurs through clearly defined standards and authentic learning opportunities. We strive to provide accurate, meaningful, and timely feedback to both students and parents throughout the learning process. Reporting of student achievement reflects student progress toward mastery of key academic concepts and identifies multiple pathways to deeper learning.

## *What is standards-based grading?*

Standards-based grading communicates how students perform on a set of clearly defined learning targets called standards. The purpose of standards-based grading is to identify what a student knows, or is able to do, in relation to those learning targets - as opposed to simply averaging grades/scores over the course of the grading period, which can mask what a student has learned or not learned.

## *Why standards-based grading?*

Standards-based grading reports what students should know and be able to do within each content area at each grade level. The real-time monitoring of student performance reflects a more accurate picture of student achievement. Additional reasons for standards-based grading include:

- Other methods of grading do not accurately indicate what a student knows and is able to do.
- Students will be able to explain what they learned or did not learn, rather than recite a percentage.
- It can benefit all learners - students who struggle and students whose learning is accelerated. Students' progress towards standards can assist staff in determining intervention or enrichment opportunities.
- Parents are provided information on specific standards while receiving meaningful feedback.

## *How does standards-based differ from traditional grading?*

A standards-based grading system measures a student's mastery of grade-level standards by prioritizing the most recent, consistent level of performance. A student who may have struggled at the beginning of a content or course when first learning new material may still be able to demonstrate mastery of key content/concepts by the end of the school year.

In traditional grading systems, a student's performance for an entire quarter is averaged together. Early quiz scores that were low would be averaged together with more proficient performance later in the course, resulting in a lower overall grade than current performance indicates. Standards-based report cards also separate academic performance from work habits/behavior in order to provide parents a more accurate view of a student's progress in both areas. Effort, participation, cooperation, and attendance are reported separately, not as a part of academic performance.

## *How are my student's "grades" determined?*

A student's performance on a series of assessments will be used to determine overall mastery, much as it has in the past. The difference will be reporting of mastery levels indicated by a number scale instead of letters ("3" instead of "B"). Levels of achievement will be clearly defined using standards-based scoring guides. Practice assignments and homework will serve primarily as a source of feedback and instructional support for both students and teachers rather than "grades."



## What are the levels of mastery and what do they represent?

4+	In addition to 4.0 performance, in-depth inferences and applications with partial success.
Score 4	The student exhibits no major errors or gaps in the learning goal (complex ideas and processes). A level 4 indicates proficiency on grade level learning targets. Meets Standards.
3+	No major errors or gaps in 3.0 content and partial knowledge in 4.0 content.
Score 3	The student exhibits no major errors or gaps in the simpler details and processes. Demonstrates standard using simpler skills, content, and/or explanations.
2+	Partial understanding of the 2.0 content with major errors or gaps in 3.0 content.
Score 2	With help, a partial understanding of the 2.0 content and some of the 3.0 content. Demonstrates standard with support.
1+	With help, a partial understanding of the 2.0 content and none of the 3.0 content.
Score 1	Even with help, no understanding or skill demonstrated. Does not demonstrate standard, even with significant support

## What will the report card look like?

The report card will seek to provide meaningful feedback so both students and parents can track progress toward mastery of key academic concepts, as well as reflect upon strengths and weaknesses. Although many topics have been introduced during first quarter, only a select few have been assessed to show student progress towards mastery on grade level standards.

TERM	T1	T2	T3	T4
Days Absent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

4 Meets standards  
 3 Demonstrates standard using simpler skills, content, and/or explanations  
 2 Demonstrates standard with support  
 1 Does not demonstrate standard, even with significant support  
 + Added to a 4,3,2 or 1 indicates the student is nearing the next level  
 \* Not assessed  
 + Meets Expectations  
 - Does not meet Expectations

Additional Services  
 Y- Yes student received additional services  
 CA- Communication Arts  
 MA- Math  
 SP - Speech  
 LA- Language

Communicating what your child knows and is able to do is the purpose of the grade card.  
 Your child's teacher collects data throughout the year. This data is used in determining your student's progress in meeting the grade level standards. The report card should help you realize your child's growth over the course of the year. If you have concerns about your child's progress we encourage you to talk to your child's teacher.  
 Your dedication to your child's education cannot be measured. Thank you for partnering with our school to help your child succeed, together we can make a positive difference.

Your child's quarterly progress will be noted in the corresponding Term (T) column.

MATH Objectives	T1	T2	T3	T4
<b>EFFORT</b>				
Effort	4	4	4	4
<b>NUMBERS &amp; OPERATIONS</b>				
Addition	*	3+	4	4
Subtraction	*	3+	4	4
Multiplication	*	*	3	4
Division	*	*	4	4
Fluent Computation: Multiplication and Division	2	3	3	4
Place Value	*	3	3	4
Decimals	*			
Fractions	*	*	3	3
Fractions - Addition/Subtraction	*	*	*	4



### **Will my student still receive teacher comments on his/her report card?**

Yes. Individualized feedback is an essential component of standards-based grading. Effective feedback is a more useful source of information than simply assigning a numeric value or letter grade to student work. A goal of using standards-based grading is to improve communication between students, parents, and teachers regarding student achievement.

### **How will I access my student's report card?**

Families who have an email on file with the district will receive the student report card as a PDF through email. Families who do not have access to email will receive a paper copy. Double check with your child's building regarding distribution of paper copy report cards.

### **Where can I find more information regarding the learning targets for my student?**

We encourage all parents to be informed regarding the academic content and concepts students will learn each year in school. Information on grade-level learning targets can be found on the Platte County R-3 website at the following link: <http://www.plattecountyschooldistrict.com/Page/3428>.

In addition to reporting your child's progress on grade level learning targets, teachers will report your child's reading progress. This progress will be noted as "Instructional Reading Level" under the "Reading" section of the Report Card. In addition, teachers will comment with the Instructional Guided Reading Letter Level so you can help your child set attainable reading goals.

<b>PCR3 Instructional Text Level Expectations for Reading</b>				
These Instructional Level Expectations for Reading are in alignment with Fountas & Pinnell and our neighboring school districts in the Kansas City Metropolitan Area.				
<b>SBG Reporting Scale</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>End of 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter</i>	<i>End of 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</i>	<i>End of 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</i>	<i>End of 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</i>
<i>Kindergarten</i>		B	C	D
<i>First Grade</i>	D	F	H	J
<i>Second Grade</i>	J	K	L	M
<i>Third Grade</i>	M	N	O	P
<i>Fourth Grade</i>	P	Q	R	S

### **What if I have additional questions?**

Please visit with your child's classroom teacher about learning targets and standards-based grading during your scheduled fall conference, as well as with the building principal.

You may also contact the District Office:

**Dr. Alicia K. Wilson**  
Director of Academic Services  
816-858-5420

