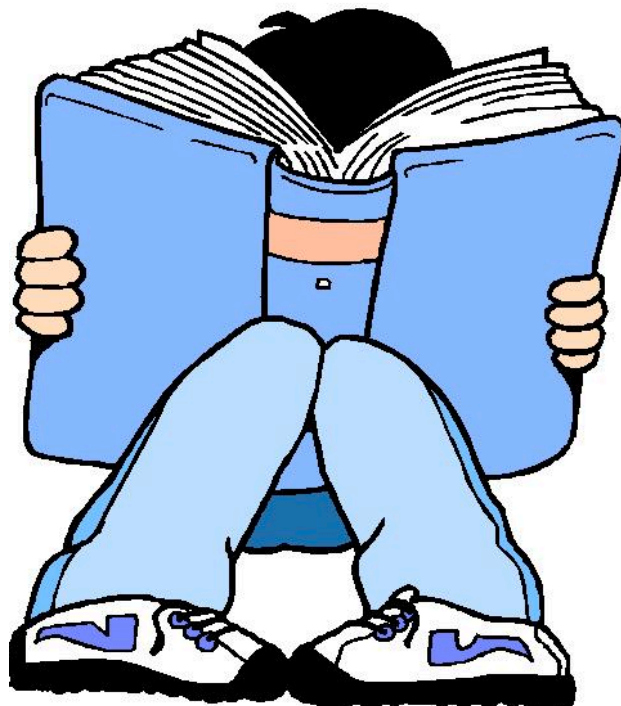




KCSD96

Standards-Based Elementary Grading and Reporting Handbook

Grades K-5



A Message from the Superintendent

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As District 96 schools continue to improve teaching and learning for all students, we know that parents and families are our most valuable partner. This is especially true as the District adopts new, more rigorous standards for what every child should know and be able to do in each subject area and grade level. The Common Core State Standards in Language Arts and Mathematics (www.corestandards.org) set high expectations for students, staff and schools. It is important to clearly communicate your child's progress toward these more rigorous expectations in Language Arts and Mathematics, as well as progress toward the learning targets in all other subjects. A standards-based report card provides a tool to accurately communicate the progress your child is making on learning the district-identified learning targets for each grade level and subject area from kindergarten through eighth grade. (<http://www.kcsd96.org/curriculum/curriculum-frameworks>)



These learning targets were identified by district teachers as the foundational learning that students need to master in order to be successful in the next grade level. The report card communicates whether or not a student is Extending, Mastering, Below or Well Below for each learning target. These performance descriptors are explained in more detail later in this document. The report card also provides information regarding Learner Characteristics (a sample report card is also included in the document for your reference).

The following K-5 Standard-Based Report Card Parent Handbook provides answers to frequently asked questions, a sample report card, and a description of the performance levels used in standards-based reporting.

I hope that you will find the Parent Handbook and the standards-based report card system helpful. Please contact Meghan Bird, Director of Teaching and Learning, at (847) 459-4260, ext. 8010, should you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Kathryn E. Sheridan
Superintendent of Schools



Components of a Standards-Based System

There are four essential components of a standards-based system including learning, teaching, assessment, and reporting:



1. The **Learning Targets** describe what a student should know and be able to do at a given grade level for each subject.
2. The standards-based **Curriculum** is a roadmap a teacher uses to ensure that **Instruction** focuses on the learning targets.
3. A teacher uses **Assessments** to measure learning and the extent to which a student has met the grade level content standards.
4. The standards-based **Report Card** allows a teacher to communicate accurately a student's progress towards meeting the learning targets at specific points in the school year. The standards-based report card completes our standards-based system.

Question 1: Why Standards-Based Grading and Reporting?

Research by experts in the field of education overwhelmingly assert that standards-based grading and reporting allows us to best align our instructional practices with how we report student learning.

From a student's perspective, grades need to be a clear and meaningful reflection of their learning. Students and families want an accurate picture of what the learner can do and where the student needs continued support. Grading and reporting aligned to specific standards, accompanied with ongoing assessment with feedback to students and parents, has been shown to significantly boost both motivation and achievement for students. In fact, research by Black and Wiliam (1998) and Hattie (2009) indicates that high quality formative assessment and feedback that is directly related to specific standards for learning have a powerful impact on student learning, showing an effect size on standardized tests that exceeds the impact of most known educational interventions.

In a standards-based model, student growth is most valued. Their mastery of targets is recorded over time, with the most recent evidence of learning having the most value. Thus, students are not penalized for not knowing content at the beginning of a course of study, as was past practice when overall course averages were applied.

Additionally, while students' academic achievement and Learner Characteristics are certainly related, they are different. We must be able to answer **Did the student master the standard?** as well as **How did the student go about doing the work?** By documenting student performance, we more accurately tell the story of the student as a learner.

When students make progress, they feel motivated, successful, and empowered. When they can also articulate their strengths and areas for growth related to both academic standards as well as Learner Characteristics, their potential becomes unlimited.

Question 2: What is the purpose of the Elementary report card?

The purpose of the District 96 elementary school report card is to clearly communicate student achievement of grade level specific learning targets and student Learner Characteristics.

Question 3: What are the performance descriptors in standards-based reporting?

When reporting student learning in a standards-based system, the following terms are used when considering progress toward academic learning targets:

4.0 EXTENDS

In addition to the “Mastery” criteria, the student demonstrates more complex learning that goes beyond what was explicitly taught. This category may not apply to some targets.

3.0 MASTERY

The student shows mastery of the target as listed in the grade-level Curriculum Framework. The student grasps and applies the key concepts, processes, and skills for the grade level. This is the expectation for students.

2.0 BELOW

The student is beginning to, and occasionally does, demonstrate understanding of the target as listed in the grade-level Curriculum Framework. The student is able to grasp and apply some of the key concepts, processes, and skills but produces work that contains errors and may need additional support at times to be successful.

1.0 WELL BELOW

The student has made little progress toward mastering the target as listed in the grade-level Curriculum Framework. The student is working on concepts, processes, and skills leading to grade-level work. The student needs additional support and practice to show progress toward grade-level expectations.

Note: To access the Curriculum Framework for each grade level, please visit:

<http://www.kcsd96.org/curriculum/curriculum-frameworks.cfm>

Learner Characteristics:

Behaviors that promote learning, including Learner Characteristics and Effort, heavily impact a student’s ability to meet academic standards. However, you will see on the report card, evidence of a student’s ability to meet academic standards is separate from their demonstration of behaviors that promote learning. It is our goal to encourage student success by identifying strengths and areas of improvement in their work, setting goals around what needs to be learned and continuously working towards improvement. The following scale is used for Learner Characteristics:

- 4.0 The student consistently and independently meets expectations.
- 3.0 The student frequently meets expectations with minimal assistance.
- 2.0 The student occasionally meets expectations and requires moderate assistance and redirection.
- 1.0 The student rarely meets expectations and requires considerable assistance and redirection.

**Question 4: How will students' learning be reported?*****During the trimester...***

- Each assignment or assessment will be linked to a specific learning target (or targets if more than one applies) throughout the course of the trimester.

At the end of each trimester...

- Student mastery of each academic target will be reported on the scale outlined above (E, M, B, W). Their mastery of targets is recorded over time, with the most recent evidence of learning having the most value.
- Some targets may repeat over multiple trimesters. Some targets may only be reported on for one trimester.

A portion of a report card is provided below for Literacy. Some targets may have an (NE) after the target. This means that the target is Not Extendable.

Literacy									
Literature				T1	T2	T3	Writing		
Answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.							T1		
Answer inferential based questions to demonstrate understanding of a text referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. (NE)							T2		
Recount stories, including fables, folktales, or myths from diverse cultures							T3		
Explain how the central message, lesson, or moral from stories, fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures is conveyed through key details in the text.									
Describe characters in a story (traits, feelings, or motivations).									
Explain how a character's actions contribute to the sequence of events.									
Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters.									
							Vocabulary		
							T1		
Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.							T2		
Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix is added to a known word.							T3		
Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known suffix is added to a known word.									
Distinguish the literal and nonliteral meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g. take steps)									

A portion from the Learner Characteristics and Effort section of the report card is provided below:

Learner Characteristics	T1	T2	T3
Completes class assignments on time.			
Returns completed homework assignments on time.			
Listens attentively.			
Follows directions.			
Is organized.			
Is responsible.			
Is considerate of others.			
Actively participates in class.			
Understands and follows school rules.			
Works effectively in a group.			
Writes legibly.			
Uses class time productively.			
Shows self-control.			

Question 5: Special Education Students

District 96 maintains high expectations for all learners. Students who receive special education services are provided accommodations and/or modifications, in accordance with their IEPs, to help them achieve grade level targets. The use of accommodations and/or modifications will be indicated on students' report cards. Some students participate in special programming that utilizes a modified curriculum. These students receive an alternate report card.

Question 6: Limited English Proficiency Students (LEP)

District 96 maintains high expectations for all learners. Students who qualify for services due to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) may be provided with accommodations and/or modifications to help them achieve grade level targets. The use of accommodations and/or modifications will be indicated on students' report cards. A small number of students with very limited English skills will be provided a narrative report card.

Question 7: How do students react to this system?

Our experience has been that students are highly motivated for continued learning and growth with this system. Students know what is expected of them. They know some targets may be easy for them and some may be more challenging. They are excited when they have shown mastery of a challenging target. They know their teachers will help them with additional time and support for continued growth.

Question 8: What can parents/guardians do?

Parents/Guardians are an important part of their child's education. Parents/Guardians can ask their children specific questions about the targets that they are working on. Parents/Guardians should review student work that comes home to see their child's growth. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to be in regular contact with their child's teacher if there are any concerns about their child's performance. Attending the scheduled Parent Teacher Conferences in the Fall and Spring are important ways to connect home and school.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about District 96's Reporting System for our elementary students. We believe that this report card will provide you accurate and detailed information about your child's learning. We know that your child's classroom teacher is the best source of additional information regarding your child's progress.

Please do not hesitate to contact them if you have additional questions.

If you have additional questions about the reporting system, please see your building principal or contact Meghan Bird, Director of Teaching and Learning, at (847) 459-4260, ext. 8010.

