

Why Are Grades Not Used On The Report Card?

In a standards-based learning environment, the emphasis is on learning and continual progress. In order for students to develop a clear sense of what they know and what they need to know, children need to be aware of how they are doing. A letter or percentage grade identifies how a student is performing on average, but does not provide feedback that fosters mastery learning or the intrinsic motivation to learn and grow in a specific skill area. A standards-based report card emphasizes “learning” over “earning.”

What Happens When A Student Reaches Proficiency?

Instruction for all students is differentiated in a standards-based system. Teachers work with all students to motivate and educate them to develop to their highest potential. When a student is proficient in all of the skills and concepts related to an end-of-year standard, the teacher provides differentiated instruction to move a student to deeper levels of understanding. The work completed and the ongoing communication with the teacher serves to clarify the growth of a student.

What If A Child Never Reaches Proficiency?

The standards on the grade-level report card represent **end-of-year** goals or where a student is expected to be at the end of the school year. Each student is provided with supports “along the way” in order to help him or her meet the standards. Advantages of a standard-based report card are it provides the current teacher with a clear roadmap in planning and provides a better understanding of the rate of skill development. The school may recommend additional learning opportunities to enable all students an opportunity to reach proficiency.

How Can Parents Support Their Children At Home?

Standards-based report cards provide detailed information about how your child is doing in each subject. You will see whether students need extra assistance in certain areas or when they need to be challenged even more. By using these clearly defined standards, teachers and parents can work together to ensure that students succeed.

During parent-teacher conferences, ask to see samples of your child’s work. Talk to his or her teacher about whether the work samples are satisfactory, or how your child could have done a better job on the assignments. Ask how you can help your child improve or excel in various subjects and what resources are available to use outside the classroom to encourage his or her progress.

The National Parent-Teacher Association has created a “Parents’ Guide to Student Success” for each grade level that offers specific tips for how to support your child’s learning at home. These guides are available on our website under Important Information: jeffersonschool.net

Report cards are designed to communicate with parents – they should be helpful and easy to understand. If you have questions or concerns about your child’s report card, please contact us.

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Jefferson Elementary School

Standard Based Report Cards Information Guide



Overview

This guide explains Jefferson Elementary standards-based grading and reporting procedures.

Why A New Report Card?

The purpose of the new reporting system is to provide parents, teachers and students with more accurate information about students' progress toward meeting content standards. By monitoring the concrete skills and knowledge listed on the report card, we will know whether all students are being exposed to the same curriculum and learning what they should in each grade.

The new system should help us close the gap in achievement among different groups of students. Parents also will be more aware of what their children should know and be able to do by the end of each grade level.

What Are Content Standards?

Content Standards indicate what students should know and be able to do at each grade level by the end of the school year.

The Montana Office of Public Instruction endorses a standards-based educational system. Montana's current Math & English Language Arts State Standards help to define the knowledge and skills students should attain during their K-12 education in the 21st century. The core elements are reflected on the report card.

All Standards can be found online at:
<http://opi.mt.gov/Curriculum/CSI/>

How Are Standards-Based Report Cards different from Traditional Report Cards?

On many traditional report cards, 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 is divided into a list of skills and knowledge that students are responsible for learning. Students receive a separate mark for each standard.

The achievement marks indicate a child's progress toward meeting specific grade-level standards. The student's proficiency is reported separately from his or her effort.

With the new standards-based reporting system, students are evaluated more objectively according to consistent grade-level standards. The letter grades used in traditional report cards are a more subjective reflection of individual teachers' expectations for student effort and achievement.

How Does The New Report Card Measure My Child's Progress?

The report card is based on specific subject area standards relating to the knowledge and skills students should attain by the end of the school year. Numbers are used to indicate a student's progress or achievement toward meeting or achieving each standard:

4 – Exceeds: Exceeds Grade Level Standards

3 – Proficient: Meets Grade Level Standards

2 – Developing: Working Towards Grade Level Standards

1 – Emerging: Inconsistent Growth Towards Grade Level Standards

It is important to note the 4, 3, 2, 1 reflect progress towards end-of-the-year expectations for each standard. For example, a 2 at the first, second, or third quarter indicates a student is on track to meeting the standard. Effort grades are given separately from achievement in the "Learner Qualities" section.

How Does A Teacher Evaluate a Child's Performance?

In standard-based classrooms, the focus is on a student's performance toward meeting end-of-year goals for each standard. Each quarter provides students multiple opportunities to practice, attain, and demonstrate proficiency of standards. Through the identification of clear learning goals, a student's knowledge and skills are measured on a continual basis, stretching students to perform at their highest level of potential. Teachers collect evidence of a child's achievement through observations, examination of a student's work, discussions, projects, performance tasks, and multiple assessments

What Does The "Learner Qualities" Section Represent?

Work habits and skills student bring to the learning environment are critical to a student's long-term success. Each grade has a different set of qualities that were determined to be essential characteristics students needed to be a successful learner. Teachers reinforce these skills with each child, emphasizing the importance of strong work habits and positive social interactions. Most students will meet the standard for learner behaviors early in the school year.

Please emphasize with your child the importance of productive work and study habits.