

Grandville Public Schools

Parent Guide to Report Cards, Kindergarten – 3rd Grade



REPORT CARD UPDATE

STANDARDS-BASED REPORT CARDS

There are four essential components of a standards-based system:

1. The content standards as outlined by the State of Michigan and District Standards that describe what a student should know and be able to do at an identified point in time.
2. The standards-based curriculum that a teacher uses to ensure that classroom instruction targets these standards.
3. The variety of assessments and learning experiences that a teacher uses to measure learning and the extent to which a student has met each standard.
4. The communication tool that allows a teacher to report a student's progress toward meeting standards three times throughout the school year.

A standards-based report card is not new to our lower elementary level, Y5/K through 3rd grades. This report card update does have a few important changes:

- Standards reported more closely align with adopted and recently modified State content standards.
- Annual assessment and benchmark information, such as DIBELS, and NWEA MAP, has been added to communicate a clear picture of student progress and performance in one report.

CHANGES IN OUR K – 3 REPORT CARDS

Our updated Kindergarten – 3rd Grade report cards are aligned to the adopted Michigan State Standards and reflect updates in our curriculum and instruction.

Parents will find:

1. Category titles and descriptors reflecting the State of Michigan (based on the Common Core Standards) and District standards.
2. Grading keys reflecting student progress toward state and district standards (3 – 1 scale).
3. Learning behaviors reflecting student skills necessary to be a successful life-long learner.

EXPLANATION AND GUIDE TO REPORT CARD CONTENT

DIBELS Reporting, Kindergarten – 3rd Grade

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) are a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills from kindergarten through sixth grade. They are designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of early literacy and early reading skills.

DIBELS are comprised of seven measures to function as indicators of phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency with connected text, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. DIBELS were designed for use in identifying children experiencing difficulty in acquisition of basic early literacy skills in order to provide support early and prevent the occurrence of later reading difficulties.

Our elementary schools all use the DIBELS measures to assess student progress beginning in Y5/kindergarten through 3rd grade. Students are screened three times a year to check progress on grade level appropriate skills. Results are used to provide additional instructional support where necessary. DIBELS scores are reported as *Core*, *Strategic Support*, and *Intensive Support*.

NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP), 2nd & 3rd Grades

NWEA is an achievement test in Mathematics and Reading that is taken on the computer, with just one question at a time displayed. The test automatically adjusts in difficulty, according to student performance on each question answered. This way each test is individualized for each student. Students participate in NWEA math and reading testing three times a year: fall, winter and spring. Students set goals for performance growth following each testing session.

Teachers analyze test scores in order to...

- plan instruction, collaboration and instructional/academic support
- set growth targets for students
- monitor student progress and growth
- assess student strengths and weaknesses
- customize “next steps”

MAP scores are reported as RIT scores and percentiles. The RIT scale measures student achievement and growth. It is an equal-interval scale, like feet and inches, so scores can be added together to calculate accurate class or school averages. The scores make it possible to follow a student’s educational growth from year to year. The percentile (%) shows student performance compared to a sample of same grade

students across the country. The 50th% is used as *typical* performance for a student in each grade level.

Performance Key Grading Scale

Student performance on standards will be reported on a scale of 1 – 3 as follows:

- 3 – Meeting or exceeding expectation or standard consistently and independently.
- 2 – Progressing as expected toward the expectation or standard or mastering the standard at expected grade level performance.
- 1 – Limited progress or proficiency on the expectation or standard.

Students earning a 3 in standards, as noted, meet or exceed understanding and mastery of the standard quickly and independently. This learning reflects application of knowledge and demonstrates higher level thinking skills. Typically few students perform at this level.

A 2 reported for a standard is expected progress and demonstration of understanding and mastery of a standard, skill and content. This may come with a normal level of teacher support and re-teaching, where a student still shows mastery of the standard. A 2 is the goal for all students. A report card full of 2's, therefore, represents the expected grade level performance.

Reporting a 1 for a standard indicates that a student has still not met a grade level standard. This indicates a student has made limited progress and continued intervention and support is required from both teachers and parents.

Blank Scores and Unmeasured Standards

As noted on the learning key within the report card, there will be standards that are left blank through the first and second trimesters. Standards that have not yet been taught and assessed are left blank. This is particularly evident with standards that target specific skills and is especially prevalent in the math section of the report card.

There are some skills in reading, like *Reads texts of appropriate complexity for the grade level* (paraphrased) and in math, such as *Clearly communicates mathematical*

thinking, that are ongoing skills and will be reported for each trimester. These scores can vary by trimester, as well, based on expected progress throughout the school year. Other skills cannot be reported until the specific topic, content or strategy is taught and assessed.

Standards-Based Report Cards Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Standards-Based grade reporting?

A Standards-Based grade reporting system is designed to inform parents about their child's progress towards achieving specific learning standards. The Michigan College and Career Readiness Standards establish high and challenging performance expectations for all students. They describe what students should know and be able to do, and serve as the basis for the Grandville Public Schools' curriculum, instruction and assessment model.

2. Why was the report card changed to the Standards-Based report card?

The report card was changed to provide more information to parents about student progress on the Michigan College and Career Readiness Standards. The reporting of standards is not new for our lower elementary school report cards, but changes to state standards required an update to make our reporting accurately reflect our instruction, assessment and learning.

3. What is the purpose of the Standards-Based report card?

The purpose of the Standards-Based report card is to provide feedback that is more detailed to parents regarding the progress their children are making towards specific content indicators at each grade level. This report card allows parents and students to understand more clearly what is expected at each grade level. With this understanding, parents will be better able to guide and support their child helping him/her to be successful in a rigorous academic program.

4. How does the Standards-Based report card compare to the traditional letter grade system?

Standards-Based report card reporting is different from traditional letter grade reporting. Letter or numerical grades are often calculated by combining how well the student met a teacher's expectations, how the student performed on assignments and tests, how much effort the teacher believes the student put in and how the student is doing in comparison to classmates. Letter or numeral grades do not tell parents which skills their child has mastered or where he or she is working at grade level. The Standards-Based report card measures how well an individual student is doing in relation to the grade level standards, not the work of other students. This will give parents a better understanding of their child's strengths and weakness and encourage all students to do their best.

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

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 development model where learning is valued as a process. Traditional letter and numerical grades and Standards-Based rubrics do not assess in the same way and therefore are not compatible to one another.

6. Won't the entire grade level receive the same grades, mostly 2's?

Learning is a process and it should be expected that repeated exposure and experiences are necessary to gain ownership of new skills and strategies. An assessment score of 2 indicates the student is progressing as expected toward the standard for standards that are ongoing and indicates mastery of a standard when it has been completed. It is possible for a student to earn a 2 early in the year and drop to a 1 later in the year if they do not demonstrate expected progress on standards. It is also possible for a student to earn a 1 or 2 early in the year and move to a 2 or 3 later, if they demonstrate improvement. When a student demonstrates higher level knowledge or ability with a standard or skill, they can earn a 3. 3's are earned with performance characterized by self-motivation and the ability to apply skills with consistent accuracy, independence and a high level of quality.

7. My child has an IEP. How will he or she be assessed?

There are modifications and accommodations in your child's IEP to support his or her progress on grade level standards as assessed on a Standards-Based report card.

8. Does this new system place more emphasis on daily interactions between teacher and student as opposed to standardized scores?

Neither traditional nor Standards-Based report cards rely solely on standardized test scores. A major characteristic of elementary assessment has always been the daily interaction throughout the process of learning. Standards-Based report cards better provide for in-depth communication on the continuum of learning.

9. How do you expect parents to explain to their children why they did not get a 3?

It is important that parents and teachers have honest conversations with students. Some concepts and skills are more difficult to grasp than others, but given time and motivation, students can continually challenge themselves. Attitudes are contagious and it is important that adults involved convey to the child that learning is a process that needs to be respected. A score of 2 demonstrating mastery is to be celebrated. A score of 3 indicates a strength being recognized that is above and beyond the grade level expectations.