

JIM NED CISD
STANDARDS BASED REPORT CARD

FIRST GRADE
PARENT HANDBOOK



“Why ...would anyone want to change current grading practices?

The answer is quite simple: grades are so imprecise that they are almost meaningless.”

- Robert Marzano

Standards-Based Reporting Overview

What is a Standard?

Because of student mobility, Texas has adopted curriculum standards that are to be used in all the state's public schools. The current standards, which outline what students are to learn in each course or grade, are called Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The standards are adopted by the State Board of Education, after extensive input from educators and other stakeholders.

Below is the link to current standards:

www.tea.texas.gov/academics/curriculum-standards/teks/texas-essential-knowledge-and-skills

What is Standards-Based Instruction?

In a standards-based classroom, student focus is on true mastery of skills and content. Teachers plan and implement lessons based on standards that every student must learn. Instruction is aligned to the standards in all content areas.

What is the purpose of Standards-Based Reporting?

The purpose of a Standards-Based Reporting system is to provide detailed feedback to parents, students, and teachers regarding the progress being made toward specific learning standards at a given grade level. A standards-based report provides parents and students with a clearer understanding of what is expected in school and how to partner with them to achieve maximum success.

How does a standards-based system differ from a letter grade system?

Traditional letter grades typically include a combination of three elements: academic achievement based upon student work exhibits or products, the process or development of work habits, and the level of progress. The combination of these three elements makes letter grades subjective and less accurate in conveying students' achievement in the elementary grades. The standards-based system measures how well individual students are doing solely in relation to identified standards. This information provides parents, teachers, and students an understanding of what an individual student has mastered and what they need to continue to work toward learning. Standards identify students' specific strengths and weaknesses providing information to help generate a plan for continued growth.

What are the benefits of a standards-based system?

1. Based upon recognized standards for learning (TEKS).
2. Defines the knowledge and skills students should master at each grade level.
3. Establishes clear learning goals for the school year.
4. Promotes consistent communication among teachers.
5. Uses a common language for instruction across all grade levels.
6. Identifies learning patterns and trends over the course of a student's elementary school career.
7. Supports current educational and learning-based research.

“If parents want to give their children a gift, the best thing they can do is to teach their children to love challenges, be intrigued by mistakes, enjoy effort and keep on learning.”

--Carol Dweck

Standards-Based Reporting Research

Why should Jim Ned CISD move to a standards-based reporting system?

The change to a Standards-Based reporting system comes from the belief that our previous report card and reporting system did not fully communicate what students are expected to know and be able to do as set forth in the state standards. This new reporting system will benefit students, teachers and families. It will allow students to be more aware of what is expected of them. It will provide families with a more detailed outline of the expectations in each of the major academic areas. We believe that your understanding of what is expected of your child and how well he or she is progressing towards the goals at his or her grade level is very important and that the standards-based reporting system will assist in this endeavor.

What Principles Guide Standards-Based Progress Reporting?

- The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills State Standards (TEKS) describe what a student should know and be able to do at a given grade level.
- Quality assessments and learning tasks are aligned to the standards.
- Clearly designed teacher rubrics are presented in advance of evaluation to ensure that students understand what is expected to perform at a proficient level.
- Student progress is reported to both students and parents regularly to communicate movement towards achieving the standards.
- Standards-based instruction, grading, and reporting should be clear and meaningful to all stakeholders involved---including student and parents.
- Grading should reflect academic standards. Grades should be a direct reflection of what students know and are able to do based upon a given standard.
- Learning behaviors are essential to understanding the progress of the whole student. These behaviors should be reported separately from academic grades. Effort, compliance to school or classroom rules, social interactions, etc. should be reported within the Citizenship section of the report card.

How will teachers evaluate student achievement over the course of a grading period?

Within standards based classrooms, student performance is evaluated on a continual basis. Progress is monitored through observation, work products, and assessments including, but not limited to, portfolios, unit tests, discussions, projects, district assessments, presentations, small group time, one on one time, and daily work. Teachers measure learning against standards and then use these measures to guide and direct subsequent instruction. This on-going cycle of teaching and assessing allows students to move along a natural continuum of learning including challenges or additional support.

How will a standards-based reporting system motivate my student?

Standards-based reporting systems provide students with opportunities to take personal responsibility and satisfaction in their learning. As a student becomes involved in the learning process, knowing their own strengths and needs, the students can work with teachers and parents to set and meet meaningful goals and ultimately experience success. As students continue to gain an understanding of a standards-based reporting process, they will gain a clearer insight into their learning style and needs. This insight will set them up for future success on their educational journey.

Standards-Based Reporting System

How frequently will progress be shared?

Every nine weeks students will receive a standards-based report card. During the fifth week of each nine-week reporting period, students will receive a progress report if it is needed.

What will a student's grades look like on the new Standards-Based Report Card?

Grading will be based upon Main Categories on the Report Card:

1. Academics: Reading and Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies
2. Specials: Computers, Music, and Physical Education
3. Work Habits
4. Citizenship

Report Cards for will reflect a student's performance toward standards, not a numerical comparison to other students.

There will be four levels of reporting for First grade:

- 1---***Does not meet grade level standard***: Student work demonstrates little evidence of knowledge and skill requiring additional teacher time and support for the grade level, (Including Concepts, Thinking Skills, Processes); not able to perform at grade level standard.
- 2---***Approaches grade level standard***: Student work demonstrates some evidence of knowledge and skill achievement on grade level standards, (Including Concepts, Thinking Skills, Processes); sometimes able to perform at grade level standard.
- 3---***Meets grade level standard***: Student work demonstrates consistent, accurate and independent achievement on grade level standards, (Including Concepts, Thinking Skills, Processes); mastery of standard at grade level expectations. A student receiving a 3 is right on track with our academic standards.
- 4---***Masters grade level***: Student work demonstrates consistent, accurate and independent achievement on *above* grade level standards, (Including Concepts, Thinking Skills, Processes); mastery of standard above grade level expectations.

Student grades for academic achievement in all subject areas will reflect an accurate evaluation of what knowledge a student demonstrates over the course of a marking period using a variety of measures.

Standards-based evaluation focuses on what a student knows-not how long it may have taken to them to get there.

Students are evaluated on the development of the skills and knowledge needed to show mastery of the standard.

Mastery is measured by what they know and can do, rather than their completion of tasks. (Task completion will be rated within the Work Habits portion of the Progress Report.)

2. Specials: Computer, Music, and Physical Education The study of the related arts is key in the development of the whole child allowing for the acquisition of technical and artistic knowledge and skills necessary for creative, expressive and artistic production.

3. Work Habits: Students need skills to be able to build strong independent work habits

4. Behavior: Students need to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

Standards-Based Reporting Grading

How do teachers assess student mastery?

Standards require students to understand more than just identified facts. Students must understand the concepts and demonstrate that understanding using the skills while learning the content. Teachers determine when a student achieves mastery by that student's performance on multiple, varied assignments and assessments using concrete indicators as on the 'Rubrics'.

Is the Standards-Based grading 4, 3, 2, 1 equivalent to traditional letter grading?

The 4, 3, 2, 1 Standards-Based scale is not synonymous with the A, B, C, D traditional grading scale. Grades and proficiency levels do not correlate with each other. Traditional grading systems average academic and non-academic factors over a marking period. Standards-Based grading measures a student's knowledge over time by reporting the most recent, consistent level of performance. Many times a student may struggle when a new concept is first introduced, but then after practice, the student is able to demonstrate a proficient level of performance by the end of the marking period or school year.

Is student behavioral progress assessed with achievement progress?

Effort and work habits are equally as important as academic learning. Within this document, achievement is reported through the Academics category. Observable behaviors, such as effort, attitude, collegiality, organization, and perseverance are documented separately in the Social Emotional Learning/Work Habits sections of the report card. Student work habits may also be communicated separately by your student's teachers as needed.

How do parents explain to their student why he/she has not received a 3?

Learning is a lifelong process. Many skills are at varying difficulty levels for mastery. This being said, given time, guidance, and motivation students can continually challenge themselves. While learning a new concept, a score of "2" (Approaching the Standard) is appropriate. A score of "3" (Meets grade level standard) is to be celebrated.

While measuring progress toward a grade level standard, can a score ever "go down"?

Yes. Student skills are expected to develop in sophistication and depth over the course of a school year. As concepts grow in complexity, expectations and evaluations also increase in complexity. For example: In First Grade Mathematics, students might be assessed on their

ability to “Compose and decompose numbers up to 120”. During the first grading period, they are expected to compose and decompose numbers only up to 20 to meet standard, but by the end of the school year, they are expected to compose and decompose numbers up to 120 to meet the standard. After the first quarter, the student is “Meeting grade level standard”. As the school year continues and the skill demands increase, the student’s abilities must consistently improve to maintain that “Meeting grade level standard” mark.

How will standards-based teaching, learning and assessing continue to challenge a student who is academically strong and in need of continued challenge?

In the classroom, our teachers have always been and will always continue to be focused on challenging students who are achieving grade level standards. Differentiation of instruction is routinely used by teachers to meet and extend student learning strengths and needs. In addition to differentiation, ongoing assessment of student achievement will continue to provide current input of student strengths and needs for teachers to modify instruction. To this end, these tools will further support the teacher’s ability to identify who has mastered the standards and who needs additional instruction and interventions.

Why are areas marked as gray sections during a particular marking period of the school year?

Shaded or non-graded areas on the Standards Based Report Card indicate that the concept/skill set identified within that competency area is not being formally assessed during this marking period.

What if students meet the standard before the end of the year?

If a student shows early “meets grade level standard”, the teaching and learning does not stop. The students who have met the standard can concentrate on more challenging work.

STANDARDS-BASED LEARNING PROGRESSION

1

Does not meet
grade level:

Not able to
perform at grade
level standard



2

Approaches
grade level:

Sometimes able to
perform at grade
level standard



3 (Target)

Meets
grade level:

Consistently able to
perform at grade
level standard



4

Masters
grade level:

Independently able to
perform above
grade level standard

