

## INTRODUCTION

Ashburnham-Westminster Regional Public Schools is pleased to introduce a revised standards-based report card for grades K–5 for the 2015/2016 school year. Our district’s elementary report card committee worked hard to produce a document that would more accurately reflect your child’s progress.

This report card provides accurate and meaningful information to parents and guardians—particularly information about student strengths and challenges in performing to high expectations—so you are able to better understand and support student learning. We believe the report cards are a positive step in communicating grade-level expectations for student learning. The report card provides valuable information on your students performance in relation to the standards and also provides information on your child's work habits, behavior and effort.

This Parent Information Guide provides information about the report card, including a description of proficiency levels, frequently asked questions and additional background information.

As the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional Public Schools continues to improve teaching and learning for all students, we hope you will find the Parent Information Guide and the revised standards-based report card system helpful as

## Scoring Scales

Standards-based reporting separates information about student’s growth in social development and work habits from his or her actual achievement of specific concepts or skills. Therefore, we layout the report card in two parts and use two different scales.

### Learner Behaviors Indicator Key

3 All or most

2 Developing

1 Improvement

### Academic Skill Indicator Key

4 Advanced understanding of grade level skills and concepts. Performance is characterized by a high quality of consistency and

3 Secure understanding of grade level skills and concepts. Performance is characterized by consistent success and independent

2 Developing understanding of grade level skills and concepts with support

1 Limited understanding of grade level skills and concepts.

N/A Not assessed at this time.

## How is a standards-based report card scored throughout the year?

The descriptors on the report card are the most important learning targets for the entire school year. The scores on the report card represent the status of learning done at the end of each trimester. Expectations to meet standards often increase through the year. A “3” in the first term means meeting a standard in December but a student may have to demonstrate a higher level of achievement to maintain a “3” in March. For example, a report card math descriptor might be:

*“Uses appropriate techniques, tools and units in making measurements of length, weight, angles, areas, perimeter and volume.”*

Students would be scored at the end of the first trimester on all components but perimeter and volume, which would be studied later in the year. For some items, teachers may mark “N/A” (not assessed) because these items were not taught during the term. By the end of the school year, every item in the report card will receive at least one score; many items will have scores each term.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why do we need a revised report card?

The purpose of this new reporting system is to provide parents more detailed information regarding the progress their child is making regarding specific academic learning standards as they are reflected in the curriculum revision.

### How does a standards-based report card differ from the traditional report card?

Letter grades are generally a measure of how well a student is doing compared to his or her classmates. Our indicators relate to how well a student is meeting a particular grade level standard.

### Where do the standards come from?

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has adopted grade level standards in all subject areas. The most recently adopted standards are the Common Core State Standards for math and English Language Arts (2011). MA standards can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html>.

### What is the difference between benchmarks and standards?

Standards are the end-of-the-year expectations. In order to monitor progress throughout the year toward mastering the standards, we have created benchmarks at the end of trimester 1 and 2. These benchmarks indicate which subset of skills should be obtained at the end of each term to measure whether or not a child is on schedule to meet the end-of-year standard.

## Frequently Asked Questions continued

### What will be done if my child does not meet the standards?

Standards-based instruction allows us to specifically identify areas where students need more time and support. Instruction is not designed around specific standards tends to reflect general strengths and weaknesses. Often, key skill areas may be missed.

### How will standards-based teaching, learning and grading motivate my child?

Your child will begin to see over time that working hard, acquiring new knowledge and trying new things is learning. In traditional grading systems many students do their work for the extrinsic reward of an A, and do not challenge themselves further.

### How will students receiving special education services be graded?

Special education students are also given the elementary Standards-Based Report Card. In accordance with the law, documentation of progress specific to IEP goals and objectives will be reported to parents on IEP progress report forms each trimester.

### How will students receiving English Language Learner (ELL) support be graded?

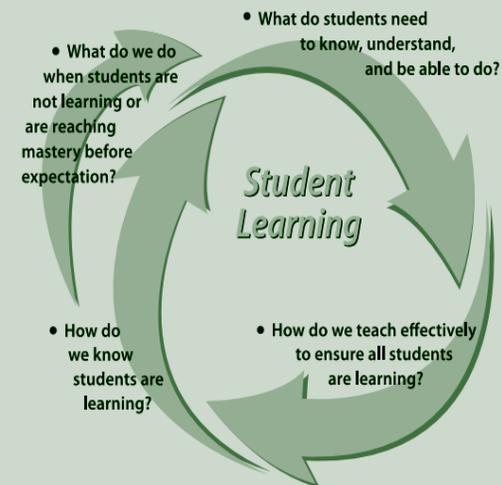
English Language Learners are also given the elementary Standards-Based Report Card. The ELL teacher will provide a progress report each trimester.



Ashburnham-Westminster Regional  
Schools

## What is Standards-Based Grading?

### Continuous Cycle of Student Learning



Parent Information Guide

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