

## **Standards-Based Grading**

For an increasing number of students, report cards with traditional letter grades are a thing of the past. Instead of A's and B's, their report cards might have 2's and 3's or unfamiliar letter grades like O and P. This new look is a result of standards-based grading, an approach in which students receive scores for meeting academic achievement related to academic standards.

### **What Is Standards-Based Grading?**

Standards-based grading, sometimes called proficiency grading, is a method for teachers to measure how students are doing in meeting the learning goals for their grade as determined by their state's standards. Learning targets, sometimes called "I can statements", are the academic skills your child should know or be able to do for his grade level by the end of the school year.

Standards-based report cards give a grade for each learning goal, so students receive multiple grades in each subject area. In 5th grade math, for example, you'll see the subject broken into several categories, such as Numbers and Operations, Algebra, Geometry and Measurement, and Data Analysis. Under each category, you'll see a list of math skills your child should be able to do, as well as a grade showing how your child is doing.

Non-academic skills such as behavior, work habits, etc —are graded separately to provide an accurate picture of your child's academic achievement. Behavior includes aspects like completing tasks on time, going to class prepared, and contributing positively to class discussions.

### **How Standards-Based Grades Differ From Traditional Letter Grades**

Providing grades for academic proficiency and work habits gives parents more information about the areas in which their child needs to improve than the traditional letter grading system. The traditional grading system combines many elements—test scores, quizzes, completed homework, classroom participation, coming to school on time, extra credit—and averages the semester's work into a percentage that correlates with a letter grade. One student might bring home a B because she did all the work, turned in all her homework, and participated in class but didn't quite understand the concepts. Another student might bring home a B because he aced all the tests and quizzes but didn't do any of the homework and didn't participate in class. Each student earns the same grade but for very different reasons, and the grade doesn't tell parents very much about what the student knows.

Because standards-based report cards separate the two, you can see if your child needs help with an academic concept or improve on their study habits. Both should be addressed. An overarching goal in education these days is to develop students who not only master academic content but also demonstrate attributes for successful learning beyond school.

## How Progress Is Measured

Schools vary in their report card scales and terminology, but often they use a four-part scale to denote levels of achievement with descriptors such as:

This is an early draft of the JCC elementary rubric that will be used for scoring student work and the system that will be used on the report cards. The staff will continue to refine and come up with a final draft by the end of the school year.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Beginning</b>	<b>Partially Meets</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Exceeds</b>
Student demonstrates minimal understanding of standard.	Student demonstrates partial understanding of standard.	Student demonstrates consistent understanding of standard.	Student exceeds understanding of standard.

4-Exceeds-exceeds understanding

3-Meets-demonstrates consistent understanding of standard

2-Partially Meets-demonstrates partial understanding of standard

1-Beginning-demonstrates minimal understanding of standard