

STANDARDS-BASED REPORT CARDS

Staunton Community Unit School District #6



The Staunton School District is proud to move towards a Standards-Based report card for Grades K-3 for the 2021-2022 school year. The change to a Standards-Based report card comes from the belief that our previous report card did not fully communicate what students are expected to know and be able to do as set forth in the Common Core State Standards. This new report card will benefit students, teachers and parents/guardians. It will allow students to be more aware of what is expected of them. It will provide parents 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. We look forward to working together to provide your child with the knowledge and tools to be successful and to reach his or her fullest potential.

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 Common Core State Standards establish high and challenging performance expectations for all students. The standards describe what students should know and be able to do, and they serve as the basis for Staunton's curriculum, instruction and assessment model. The Common Core Standards can be found at www.corestandards.org

2. **Why was the report card changed to the Standards-Based report card?** The report card is being changed to provide more information to parents about student progress on their understanding and mastery of end-of-the-year skills. On a traditional report card, 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 further expanded by a list of skills and knowledge students are responsible for learning. Students receive a separate mark for each skill being assessed that quarter.

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 child is making. 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. **Parents already know what letter grades mean. Why change to another system?**

The standards-based report card gives more information than traditional letter grades and reports how well the student is progressing towards achieving the standards expected for his/her grade level. Letter 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 grades do not tell parents which skills their child has mastered or whether 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 weaknesses and encourage all students to do their best.

5. What other neighboring districts are transitioning to a standards-based report card? Bethalto, Collinsville, Triad, Highland and Alton are making the transition to a standards-based report card. Many other districts are moving in that direction as well. Quite a few districts across the nation have had standards-based report cards in place for several years.

6. What kind of reporting system will be used in grades 4-12?

The grading at the middle and high school will remain a letter grade-based system. With the transition to Common Core State Standards, many teachers have begun instruction and assessment with the new standards in mind.

7. Isn't a "3" just another way of saying the student earned an "A"?

One of the biggest differences between a traditional letter-grade report card and a standards-based report card is assessing what students have "learned" not "earned" based on very clear and specific expectations. An "A" is an average of the points earned on tests, quizzes, assignments, homework, extra credit, class participation, attendance, learning behaviors, and so on but does not tell us what the student has really learned and achieved in terms of standards-based expectations for a specific grade level.

8. Won't the entire grade level receive the same grades, mostly 2's and 3'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 towards the standard. Once a student demonstrates a thorough understanding of concepts and skills he or she would receive a 3. This move from a 2 to a 3 can take place at any point during the school year and is very student specific. The standards are end-of-the-year expectations.

9. What does a student need to do in order to achieve a "3"?

This requires a shift in how we look at and measure student progress and achievement. Instead of asking, "What do students need to do in order to earn an A?" we need to ask, "How can students demonstrate and apply skills or standards at their grade level?" This also requires a change in how we assess or measure student progress and achievement of the standards. Instead of asking how much do tests and quizzes count towards a student's final grade average, teachers are rethinking the role and purpose of assessment by asking what assessment evidence will I use to determine student growth towards mastery of standards.

10. 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. A pound sign (#) will indicate that your student's performance of that standard is detailed on the accompanying progress report regarding their IEP goals.

11. Will standard based report cards have any effect on the standardized test the students will take?

Neither traditional nor standards-based report cards align perfectly with any sort of standardized test that students take beginning in 3rd grade. Standards based report cards better provide for in-depth communication and are more performance based which allow

students to show they understand and can apply skills in a variety of ways. The state of Illinois has shifted to the PARCC examination. The PARCC exams are based on the Common Core State Standards—also adopted by Illinois and are fully implemented.

12. What if students don't get all 3's on their report card?

Some students may be upset when they don't receive all 3's. 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 while learning a new skill or concept is appropriate. A score of 3 by the end of the school year demonstrates a thorough understanding of the skill or standard and is to be celebrated.