

Elementary

Standards-Based Report Card

Parent Guide





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This guide is designed for you, the parent or guardian of a Ferguson-Florissant School District elementary student, to help you understand how student progress is reported from Kindergarten through Fifth Grade. Grades for students will be based on achievement of the Missouri Learning Standards, which specify what students should know and be able to do.

Are you interested in learning more about Standards Based Learning and Grading? Scan the QR code below with your phone's camera to access the FFSD Standards Based Learning Canvas course!



To access on your computer, go to <https://fergflor.instructure.com/courses/21958>

Standards-Based Grading

Rationale Statement

The Ferguson-Florissant School District uses a standards-based grading and reporting system for Kindergarten through fifth grade. Standards-based grading measures student learning of the standards which are aligned with district curriculum, and state academic standards. The grades are based on the ability of a student to apply content knowledge and skills in and/or across content areas based on well-defined course objectives.

Standards-Based Grading (Grades K-5):

- All assessments are linked to learning standards
- Uses a 1, 2, 3, 4 grading system
- Grades are based upon most current mastery of the learning standards. Grades are not averaged.

Standards-Based Grading: What it is NOT...

- A one-time test
- An interim test (Benchmark, Quarterly, Midterm, Final, etc.)
- Unknown expectations
- Factoring extra credit, attendance, bonus points
- Focused on completion of assignments

Standards-Based Grading: What it IS...

- Indicates what students know and are able to do
- Measures a student's progress towards proficiency
- Indicates if a student has reached mastery
- Teachers give a variety of assignments and assessments
- Is authentic to the learning experiences of students, based on complex tasks, not rote memory
- Involves a demonstration of proficiency, not a guess on a multiple-choice test



Frequently Asked Questions

What are Standards?

Standards are designated from the State of Missouri and are statements that provide a clear description of the skills your child should know and be able to do at his/her grade level. They describe what to teach, not how to teach.

What is Standards-Based Grading?

Standards-Based Grading is different from a traditional A, B, C system. It is based on a specific set of standards that students need to master for each grade level.

What are the benefits of using a Standards-Based Report Card?

Standards-based grading offers many benefits. These benefits include:

- Providing a clear communication and expectations regarding student progress toward yearly learning standards that is accurate, fair, specific, and timely;
- Separating work habits and behavior from academic skills;
- Shifting the focus toward mastery of essential learning standards and away from the accumulation of points toward a grade on a report card;
- Encouraging students to reflect on and take responsibility for their own learning; and
- Providing more targeted instruction based on student strengths and weaknesses.

How do the scores on the Standards-Based Grading report card compare to traditional letter grades?

The most obvious difference that families will notice, in grades 3-5. The numbers represent the level to which a student has progressed toward a certain part of the standard.

- The 1-4 scale should not be compared to the A-F scale in any way. There is no correlation between the two scales, but rather a different way to think about grading.
- A mark of a '3' shows that your child is demonstrating a solid understanding of what is being taught. This is considered proficiency.
- Subject area skills and knowledge are separated and scored individually in order to provide more information.

How do I understand the report card my child brings home? (K-5)

Proficiency scores are not and cannot be related to a traditional grade. When a parent sees proficiency scores on a report, they should consider that the goal of that report is to give them information regarding how their student is performing as measured against content standards. Parents can still contact teachers and principals directly when they have questions, they can look at the scales on the district website, or they can look at the legend on the report card.

How do students earn a 4?

In order to score a 4, a student would have to show learning that goes above and beyond the criteria for the grade level expectation. It would reflect advanced understanding of content and/or excellence in demonstration or communication of knowledge, process or skills. This student shows initiative, challenges himself or herself, and demonstrates this advanced knowledge at school. Realistically, a small percentage of students will regularly score 4s on summative assessments the first time. A 4 is difficult to obtain and indicates unusually high achievement.

How are students with learning disabilities or English language learning needs affected by standards based grading?

Students with an IEP, 504, or English language learning needs will continue to receive the accommodations they are eligible to receive, and they will continue to receive appropriate support and/or interventions. Teachers will report how they are performing as measured against content standards. All students benefit from having well developed lesson plans, quality instruction, and assessment that informs instruction and provides meaningful, accurate feedback regarding their learning.

My student used to make high grades but doesn't now.

Similar to the answer about grade inflation, the grade reflects the students' progress towards standards. Under the traditional system, grades reflected a combination of ability and compliance. SBG provides a more accurate representation of what a student knows and is able to do.

Why does SBG use most recent assessment scores in determining course grades?

Every student starts with a certain amount of background knowledge, some accurate and some not, related to a learning standard. Through assessments teachers are able to determine students' level of achievement of the learning standards. Since the goal is to document each student's level of achievement based on the learning standards. Averaging all scores throughout the semester dilutes the information, underestimates the students' ending performance, and corrupts the determination of whether or not the student has achieved the standards.

Helpful Vocabulary

Learning Goal These are standards based goals that students will work towards becoming proficient in throughout the year. Each learning goal is represented on the report card, but may not be assessed in each quarter.

Proficiency Scales Proficiency scales articulates the learning progression for each Learning Goal. Learning progressions describe how students' understanding of a topic develops over time. These scales are based on end of year expectations. The '3' on a proficiency scale indicates that a student is performing at the desired level for the end of their current grade level.

Assessment Evidence Assessments are the opportunities that are provided for students to demonstrate their learning around a specific Learning Goal. These opportunities may take the form of a traditional test, or can be a more authentic experience (such as a performance event, discussion, conference, etc.).

Proficiency Scale

The proficiency scale shows how your student's performance compares to clearly defined grade-level standards and criteria. The grade-level standards and criteria are based on the Missouri Learning Standards. Each of these scales are based on end of the year proficiency expectations. The levels of the proficiency scales are:

- 4 The student makes in-depth inferences or applications that go beyond level 3. Students that earn a 4 have exceeded the expectation based on what was taught.
- 3 The student has achieved the learning goal and has demonstrated their understanding in a consistent and independent manner.
- 2 The student is gaining understanding of the concepts, skills, and processes the standard requires, but has not been able to consistently demonstrate proficiency.
- 1 The student is just starting to understand the concepts, skills, and processes the learning goal requires and needs consistent support.