

Springfield Public Schools

November 2013

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Our report card is aligned to the newly adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and reflects updates in our curriculum and instruction to address the CCSS. Springfield Public Schools has transitioned our standards-based report to reflect the implementation of the CCSS.

Highlights to a standards-based report card:

- Titles and descriptors tied directly to the CCSS.
- Grading key correlates to student progress in meeting the standards (4-1 scale).
- Non-academic indicators – **Behaviors That Support Learning** (4-1 scale).
- Learning goals are clear. Teachers concentrate on teaching essential standards that every student must learn. Each lesson taught is connected to a standard and progress is monitored toward meeting the learning targets.

What is a standards-based report card?

A standards-based report card lists the most important skills students should learn in each subject at a particular grade level.

The marks on a standards-based report card are different from traditional letter grades. Letter grades are often calculated by combining how well a student met his/her particular teacher's expectations, how he/she performed on assignments, tests, and how much effort the teacher believes they put in. Letter grades do not inform parents which skills their child has mastered or whether they are working at grade level.

Why is a standards-based report card important?

With PARCC www.parcconline.org assessments approaching, a standards-based report card provides parents and students with specific information about how they are progressing and targets where they need to improve.

The new report card clearly defines the standards to parents. Parents know exactly what their child should be able to do. The report card is based directly on the standards, although not every standard is listed on the report card. Parents are directed to view standards in each strand www.corestandards.org along with the report card.

How will a standards-based report card affect my child?

Understanding the concept of "advanced" or "exceeding standards", is critical to interpreting your child's progress. Advanced is not necessarily the equivalent of an A on a traditional report card. For example, if a fifth-grader received A's on every math test during the semester, she would probably receive an A on a traditional report card. If those math tests measured only the concepts fifth graders are expected to master, those A's would be the equivalent of "proficient" on a standards-based report card; the student is doing what he should be doing, but not necessarily more.

A standards-based report card provides teachers the opportunity to modify their lessons and offer students chances to go beyond "grade level."

A standards-based report card is beneficial in keeping teachers and parents focused on student learning goals from the very beginning of the year.

How will parents interpret the skills outlined in their child's report card? Each skill is measured and aligned to the Board approved curriculum and teacher created curriculum maps that specifically outlines and identifies expectations for each skill at that time in the year.

Standards are for the end of the year. In the first two marking periods grades reflect the pace at which students are moving toward standards. A "3" in November does not mean your child has already met standards, but is on track in meeting them by the end of the year. A "3" in June means your child has met the year-end standards.

(4) Indicates a student has advanced understanding and exceeds grade level expectations. It demonstrates academically superior skills in that specific area.

(3) Indicates a student has proficient understanding of grade level expectations and is on track with high academic expectations.

(2) Indicates a student has basic understanding of concepts and skills. This student is progressing towards meeting grade level expectations.

(1) Indicates a student has minimal understanding and does not meet grade level expectations. Their performance is inconsistent and requires additional guidance and support.

(Blank) Indicates these standards have not been addressed at this time. However, these standards will be introduced before the end of the school year.

We hope you have found this information to be helpful. We look forward to informative discussions on your child's progress. For additional parent information on the Common Core State Standards, please visit our website at www.springfieldschools.com. See Student & Parent Resources and click Instruction/Curriculum/Assessments for updates.

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"You need to go wholeheartedly into anything in order to achieve anything worth having" ~ Frank Lloyd Wright