

GRADING

The Somers Point School District is proud to introduce the Standards-Based report card for Grades K – 2 in the 2016-2017 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 according to the New Jersey Standards. This new report card will benefit students, teachers, and parents/guardians.

What is Standards-Based grade reporting?

A Standards-Based grade reporting system is designed to inform parents about their child's progress toward achieving specific learning standards. The New Jersey Standards establish high and challenging performance expectations for all students. They describe what students should know and be able to do, and serve as the basis for the Somers Point Schools' curriculum, instruction and assessment model.

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 children are making towards specific content indicators at each grade level. 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.

How does the Standards-Based report card compare to the traditional letter grade system?

Standards-Based report card reporting is different from traditional letter grade reporting. Letter or numerical 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 or numeral grades do not tell parents which skills their child has mastered or where 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 weakness and encourage all students to do their best.

How can your child exceed the Standards?

Another change for students is understanding the concept of exceeding the Standard. Exceeding is not the equivalent of an A on a traditional report card. For example, if a first grader received A's on every math test during the marking period, he or she would probably receive an A on a traditional report card. If those math tests measured only the concepts first graders are expected to master, those A's would be the equivalent of meeting the standard on a Standards-Based report card; the student is doing what he or she should be doing very well, but not necessarily more. Standards-Based report cards encourage students to demonstrate their ability to apply skills and knowledge beyond grade level expectations. Performance is characterized by the ability to apply skills with consistent accuracy, independence, and a high level of quality.

Won't the entire grade level receive the same grades, mostly Meeting the Standard and Approaching the Standard?

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 Approaching the Standard (AS) indicates the student is progressing toward the standard. Once a student demonstrates thorough understanding of concepts and skills with a performance characterized by the ability to apply skills with accuracy and quality, he or she would receive a Meeting the Standard (MS). This move from an AS to an MS can take place at any point during the school year and is very student specific. Once a student demonstrates he or she meets the standard, they can then consistently demonstrate their ability to apply a thorough in-depth knowledge of basic and extended concepts and skills with performance characterized by self-motivation and the ability to apply skills with

consistent accuracy, independence and a high level of quality. This would result in an Exceeding the Standard (ES). This again is very student specific and can occur at any time during the school year.

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.

How do you expect parents to explain to their children why they did not get an ES?

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 AS while learning a new skill or concept is appropriate. A score of MS demonstrating mastery is to be celebrated. A score of ES indicates a strength being recognized that is above and beyond the grade level expectations.

Kindergarten – After the first quarter, conferences will be held. A formal report will be sent home in Jan, April and June.

1st and 2nd grade – Interim Reports and a formal report will be sent home quarterly with conference after the first quarter.

3rd & 4th grade – Interim Reports and a formal report will be sent home quarterly with conference after the first quarter. Grades are based on 33% from Projects, 33% from quizzes/tests and 33% from homework/class work/notebooks/participation/lab experiments. The report will identify your child with the following scale for the major subjects and special areas. The High Honor Roll is awarded to those receiving all A's in all subjects with possibly one B in special area subjects. Honor Roll is awarded to those receiving all A's and B's in academic subjects and in special area subjects.

A 90-100% B 80 – 89% C 70 -79% D 60-69% F 50 – 59%

5th - 6th grade - Interim Reports and a formal report will be sent home quarterly with conference after the first quarter. Grades are based on 70% projects/tests, 20% quizzes, class work and 10% homework. The formal report will identify your child with the following scale for the major subjects and special areas. A numeric Merit Grade (1-4) is recorded to indicate participation, effort and preparedness. The Principal's List is awarded to those that have A's in all academic and special area subject with 1's for the Merit Grade. The High Honor Roll is awarded to those receiving all A's in all subjects and one B in in special area subjects with 1 or 2 for a Merit Grade. Honor Roll is awarded to those receiving all A's and B's in academic subjects and in a special area subjects with 1 or 2 for a Merit grade. A Personal Management Award is awarded to those receiving all 1's for Merit grades regardless of Academic grades.

A+ 99-100% A 94-98% A- 92-93%

B+ 90-91% B 86-89% B- 84-85%

C+ 82-83% C 77-81% C- 75-76%

D+ 73-74% D 70-72% D- 68-69%

F 67 % and below

Each student will be permitted to re-do any summative assignment two times in each marking period at the discretion and convenience of the teacher one week after the original assignment. No work will be permitted to

be redone the last week of the grading period. The two grades will be averaged for the new grade. A parent or guardian has to sign the original test or project rubric. There will be no extra credit, bonus points or grades on a curve.