

## **Standards-Based Report Card Information**

### **Why are we changing the report card?**

Evidence exists which reveals unprecedented gains in student learning resulting from appropriate formative grading practices. Standards-based grading occurs during the learning process providing information that can be used to inform and/or improve learning.

### **Aren't percentages more specific or detailed for parents?**

The letter grade "A" is very subjective depending on the teacher. Even if the report indicates an 89% in Reading, what does that tell you about the reading skills the child has mastered? Do you know how well they comprehend, read with fluency, or if they are reading at the expected level for their grade?

The major advantage of the new card is that it makes grading more objective, and thus more of a snapshot of where the student is in comparison with the state standards. The new report card is based on a curriculum continuum that outlines, on a quarterly basis, each of the skills that grade levels are working on. Working with the curriculum continuum assists teachers and students in using time more efficiently because students are working on concepts they have not mastered rather than sitting through lessons they already have mastered.

### **What will the new report card look like?**

It will have numbers instead of letter grades and learning standards listed for each area of study as well as work habits and social skills. Students receive marks that show how well they have mastered the skills at their instructional level. The number indicates student achievement as related to these skills. The marks indicate whether the student is advanced (4), proficient (3), basic (2) or minimal (1) for each standard (see attached chart with descriptors and indicators).

### **Are other schools doing this?**

As the No Child Left Behind law pushes schools and educators across the country to center their teaching on content and learning standards, report cards are beginning to look different. From Tennessee to Massachusetts to Hawaii, schools are pairing standards-based report cards with the standards-based teaching, and parents are getting more information about their students' achievement.

The data gathered for report cards is driving our instruction. Rubrics are used in assessing throughout the district. The report cards and our rubrics will have a common language, descriptors and indicators across grade levels and across the district.

### **Are we still teaching the kids responsibility with this new reporting format?**

Accountability for teachers and students is easier when goals related to where a student needs to go. Independence is encouraged and honored when students can set goals for learning according to the concepts they have yet to master.

### **Why does the system change back to letter grades in middle school and high school?**

Our goals at elementary include developing a love for learning and an understanding of the power each of our students has to choose to learn. Our Kids at Hope philosophy tells us, "All Children are Capable of Success, No Exceptions." Standards based reporting supports this philosophy.

Middle school is a time to begin to consider a career path and continue their love for learning while transitioning to high school expectations. High school is a time for students to build their grade point average. Colleges and universities currently use grade point average as criteria for enrollment. Letter grades support the middle school transition and the high school grade point average for transcripts.

### **How do I help my child be successful?**

Support their learning by always encouraging them to challenge themselves to set learning goals. Look at the report card and talk with your child's teacher about things you can be working on at home to enhance your child's understanding of the standards which they still need to master. Your interest in your child's learning creates in them an excitement for showing and sharing what they have accomplished. Then, of course, talk with your child often about how to solve problems, how to be a good citizen, what they would like to be when they grow up, and encourage them to continually explore new things that interest them.