

Lincoln Public Schools

Standards-based Report Cards: Frequently Asked Questions

What is a “standards-based” report card?

- ◆ A standards-based report card connects student achievement to local, state and/or national standards for every subject area.
- ◆ Two kinds of expectations are described in the standards-based report card:
 - indicators for effort, social development and work habits or “Growth as a Learner,” which are central to a student’s success in all areas
 - academic standards in each subject area.
- ◆ This report card is longer than traditional report cards because it lists the most important concepts and skills that students should learn at a grade level during the course of a school year. It can be thought of as a year-long “learning map” of what students should know and be able to do as the year progresses.

What is the purpose of standards-based report cards?

- ◆ A standards-based report card provides parents and students with a detailed picture of a student’s achievement relative to what is expected at the grade level.
- ◆ The report card also indicates the frequency of a student’s performance on behaviors that are important to effort and promote growth and success as a learner.
- ◆ The depth and breadth of the report card conveys what the teachers, school, and district value in student learning.

Why are we using a standards-based report card?

- ◆ When teachers align instruction with standards and make student learning targets clear, students know more specifically what they are expected to know and do.
- ◆ When students know clearly what is expected, they can be more strategic in their efforts to achieve.
- ◆ Standards-based reporting separates effort from achievement so students get specific feedback on their actions as a learner and they get clear information on their level of achievement.
- ◆ The standards-based report card gives parents detailed information so they have greater knowledge about what is expected at school when they discuss learning with their children.

What are the “standards” and where do they come from?

- ◆ The standards for this school district are described in the Lincoln Learning Expectations (www.lincnet.org/curriculum).
- ◆ They are derived from state and national standards in every subject area.
- ◆ Each report card descriptor can be traced directly to Key Outcomes in our Lincoln Learning Expectations.

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How does standards-based reporting differ from traditional letter grade reporting?

- ◆ In standards-based reporting, the level of detail breaks down traditional categories into more specific areas of learning. For example, instead of a single grade for “English,” scores for skills in language, reading, and writing are reported.
- ◆ Student performance is rated on 4 point scale rather than reported by letter grades.
- ◆ The standards-based scoring scale describes individual progress on standards whereas traditional letter grades tend to indicate how a students’ performance compares to that of classmates.
- ◆ Scores for a standards-based report card are based on mastery at the end of a learning period rather than averaging grades earned throughout a learning period.

How is my child’s performance rated?

- ◆ To report on academic achievement, student performance is rated on a four point scale. The scale is organized as follows:
 - **3** is the target for all students because it indicates a strong proficiency for the concept or skill and meets expectations for the end of a learning period.
 - **2** shows that some progress is evident but the student is “not yet” at full proficiency for a given concept or skill at that time of year.
 - **1** indicates that the student is performing below grade level and may require assistance.
 - **4** means that a student’s achievement has exceeded the grade level expectations because the work in a given area has depth, was done with independence, and exhibits a high level of sophistication.
- ◆ To report on growth as a learner, the scale rates frequency of behaviors that contribute to successful learning: *Consistently, Often, Sometimes, Infrequently*. Students are expected to exhibit these learning behaviors often and we expect them to grow to “consistently” in all areas by the end of a school year.

How is a standards-based report card scored throughout the school year?

- ◆ Students are scored on the level of achievement they have reached by the end of each trimester. The scores indicate the progress expected for that time of year.
- ◆ Sometimes, a report card descriptor receives the score “NA.” This means “Not Assessed” and the concept or skill will be assessed later in the year. By the end of a school year, every descriptor will have at least one score; many will have more than one.

**More Frequently Asked Questions will be published as the year progresses –
Watch the district website!**