



## STANDARDS BASED REPORT CARDS IN THE SANDWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS K-2

### Overview and Frequently Asked Questions and Answers, K-2

*The Sandwich Public Schools district first implemented a Standards Based Report Card in grades K-2 during the 2014-2015 school year. Our new report cards provide feedback about Educational Standards - what students should know, understand and be able to do by the end of the year.*

*Grades 3-6 Standards Based Report Cards will be launched during the 2016-2017 school year.*

*As you look at your child's report card, the first, most obvious change is the Performance Indicators*

#### Understanding the Performance Indicators

<b>M</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	The student shows mastery in the grade level expectations consistently and independently.
<b>P</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	The student is progressing toward meeting end-of-year grade level expectations.
<b>N</b>	<b>Not Yet</b>	The student is not YET demonstrating consistent progress toward the grade level expectations.
<b>NA</b>	<b>Not Assessed</b>	This standard is not assessed during this term. There is not enough evidence to assess student's progress although there is teaching to the standard.

A Standards-Based Report card uses academic performance indicators that are observable and objective. Teachers from across the district have met to create a rubric for each standard for each indicator. The rubrics will help teachers determine the appropriate indicator for each student's performance in each standard.

#### Explanation of the Performance Indicators:

- **Students who receive an M are completing the expected learning in that *end-of-the-year* grade level standard.** "Meeting" the standard does not mean that teaching and learning end; rather, it indicates that the student has reached a level of performance expected of grade level students for that standard with consistency, accuracy, independence and quality. Further instruction will focus on more complex problems, will offer more levels of challenge for the students to apply the standard and will provide more in-depth and critical thinking in that standard. As is true in current practice, teachers will continue to provide challenging learning tasks for students who meet the end-of-the-year standard.
- **Students who receive a P are progressing toward the standard**, showing a level of understanding that is typically/appropriately expected during the course of the school year.
- **Students who receive an N are still acquiring the prerequisite skills needed to understand the content of the grade level standards** or are not showing that they have acquired the skills. An "N" tells parents, student, and teachers that more teaching and learning is needed for this student in the standard.

Go to [www.sandwichk12.org](http://www.sandwichk12.org) to learn more. Click on the "Teaching and Learning" Tab across the top of the page. In the left column, go to "Standards Based Report Cards." You will find: an explanation of the standards by grade level; a further description of the Proficiency Levels; and copies of the Report Cards, annotated with the expectations for term-by-term grading. This document is also available on the website as "Overview and FAQs to accompany Report Cards." It will be updated to reflect additional Questions and Answers that arise as the new SBRCs are launched.

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**NA means that the standard was not assessed during the term.**

- There may have been teaching and learning in the standard but there was not the amount or the type of student work to assess the standard at that time.
- It is also possible that this standard is taught as a “Unit of Study,” and was not taught during this term but will be taught during another term.

**Keep in mind...**At the elementary level, there are three reporting periods. For the first two reporting periods, feedback is reported based on each student’s progress toward the year-end standards. The feedback for each reporting period is based on a student’s work **during** that period.

Students who receive “Progressing” as feedback for the first and second reporting periods are making consistent progress toward mastery of the year-end mastery standards.

Because the report card is based on the work done during each term, it is possible that a student’s work indicates he/she is **Progressing** toward the standards in the first term. During the second term, which as work becomes more complex, the student’s work might be **Not Yet** consistently progressing at a rate that would result in meeting the standards at the end of the year.

The final reporting period reflects a student’s achievement of all of the skills, strategies and concepts identified in the standards.

### **WHY CHANGE?**

The Sandwich Public Schools decided to implement a Standards Based Report Card for the following research-based reasons:

- A standards based report identifies essential standards that are to be learned at each grade level **by the end of the year**.
- It provides students, parents, and teachers with an accurate report of progress toward meeting each standard.
- Most importantly, a carefully developed grading system can help us improve student performance over time rather than simply label it at periodic intervals.
- Also – For many years, teachers been frustrated with trying to communicate student progress using Report Cards that did not reflect the teaching and learning happening in their classrooms.

***Every year, teachers have asked for new report cards. In the spring of 2012, it was determined that work would begin in the fall of 2013, with a goal to have new Report Cards for 2014-2015.***

***This Report Card is the result of years of work by teachers, administrators and curriculum coordinators. It was first shared at School Committee and PTA meetings at each school in the winter and spring of 2014.***

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## STANDARDS BASED REPORT CARDS IN THE SANDWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS K-2

### Frequently Asked Questions and Answers, K-2

#### What is a standards-based reporting system?

The standards-based reporting system is different from a traditional A, B, C or 1, 2, 3 system. It is based on a specific set of standards that students need to meet for each grade level. Report card “grades” are not a comparison of one student to another but rather a way to measure how well students are progressing in grade-level standards. Some have compared it to a GPS - we are clearly showing the destination, and each student’s progress along the route.

#### What are standards?

Educational standards are the **learning goals** for what students should **know, understand and be able to do** at each grade level. Educational standards help teachers ensure their students have the skills and knowledge they need to be successful, while also helping parents understand what is expected of their children. We are using the Massachusetts State Frameworks in ELA and Math; they are based on the Common Core State Standards. In Science, the Standards have been in flux - Massachusetts has recently adopted of the nationally created Next Generation Science Standards, and made modifications to make them the Massachusetts Science Standards.

#### Why are we using a standards-based report card?

Sandwich Public Schools made its last revision to the report card across K-8 18 years ago. Since that time, there have been changes in the district curriculum standards and the implementation of the Common Core State Standards/Massachusetts Frameworks in 2011. There has also been significant and wide-reaching research about the most effective ways to assess student learning and to provide feedback to students and families.

#### What will this do for my child?

- Your child will know what is expected in his or her learning.
- Teachers across the grade level will have the same understanding of what each child should know and be able to do at each grade level.
- You, as a parent/guardian, will understand the expectations and be able to provide support at home.

Where can I find out about the Common Core State Standards? [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)



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### **How are standards-based report cards different from traditional report cards?**

The performance indicators measure a child's progress toward mastery of the standards by prioritizing the most recent consistent performance, rather than averaging grades over a term. A child who struggled with a new concept at the beginning of a term may still be able to demonstrate mastery by the end of the term or year. With traditional grading, students were penalized if they struggled at the beginning of the term since the grades across the term all had equal weight.

The standards-based report cards provide more specific information than the traditional report cards. Each subject is now divided into the "strands" used in the Massachusetts Frameworks and list the skills or concepts that a child will learn.

### **Is it possible for my child to "drop" from one mark to another?**

Keep in mind that the level of difficulty for each standard will increase throughout the year. It is possible that a child is progressing at the beginning of the year, but as the rigor increases, may not be showing the same consistency of progress or may not be progressing independently on a particular standard. All children will continue to receive instruction on a standard no matter their performance level.

### **What data do teachers use to assign grades?**

Teachers evaluate student learning in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, classroom observations, class work, and both formal and informal assessments.

### **Will my student still receive teacher comments on their report card?**

Yes. Report cards are designed to communicate with parents. Effective feedback is an essential part of the communication and partnership between home and school.

### **How can I help my child?**

The subject areas are now divided into list of skills to be mastered. In the past your child may have received a "2" in math. With this grading system, the skill that your child needs to progress further in is clearly evident. Perhaps it is "Counting by 10s to 100." In your family, you are able to help your child with that particular skill in a variety of ways.

### **Why does my child not have any Ms first term?**

Keep in mind that the standards are end-of-year standards. Children are not expected to **master** concepts until the end of the year. Learning is a process and it takes time and repeated experiences to develop skills and concepts with accuracy and quality.



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### **What if my child doesn't have all M's by the end of the year?**

One of the benefits of a Standards Based Report Card is that each standard is associated with a Content Strand. (Each of the Strands is explained in the "Overview of the Standards" document on our website: [www.sandwichk12.org](http://www.sandwichk12.org) -go to the Parent Tab) The strands are consistent from year to year and teachers develop and build upon the previous year's standards within each strand. A student who is not an M by the end of the year will receive continued instruction in the Standard's Strand the following year. Because of the specificity of the Standards/Strands, each teacher knows which skill the student needs additional experience and instruction to master.

### **Does "NA" mean that the standard is not taught?**

NA stands for **not assessed** during a particular term. In most cases, the standard has been taught during the term, but not enough evidence has been gathered to fully assess the student's understanding of the concept.

In other cases, a particular standard may only be taught during a particular term. This happens when the content is delivered as a "Unit of Study" - focused work on particular parts of the curriculum for 4-6 weeks. Many science topics are taught through a Unit of Study, for example.

### **What if my child has an IEP?**

Children with Individualized Education Plans must be provided with the same opportunity as their peers. Student with IEPs will receive Progress Reports from the special educator as well as the report card from the classroom teacher.

### **How do I discuss the Standards Based report card with my child?**

It is important that parents and teachers have honest conversations with students. Some concepts and skills are more difficult to learn than others, and adults can support students by helping them to develop persistence and motivation to keep trying and challenging themselves. Attitudes are contagious and children look to the adults in their lives to set the tone around expectations. Communicating that "learning is a complex process that takes place over time" (as it says on the report card) and that every person has what it takes to impact their achievement and the accomplishment of goals will help every student – the ones who are progressing on a straight path toward mastery and those whose path is less straightforward.



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### **We reward our children for good grades. How will I motivate my children if there are no grades?**

It is a mind shift for everyone to think about report cards as pure information. The old, familiar system described grades as “being earned.” It was easier to connect grades with rewards.

With standards-based grading and reporting, students will see the specific things they need to do to meet the standards and will clearly see how to get there. Motivation, independence and a sense of personal learning responsibility increases in a standards-based system.

For families, your conversations about learning expectations will be more specific and measurable. And we would encourage you to think about the GPS Analogy - the standards are the destination and the report card tells you where students are in their journey.

### **Who created these report cards?**

A team of teachers, literacy coaches, curriculum coordinators and administrators started the work in the fall of 2013. All teachers in the district received comprehensive updates after every meeting of the Report Card Team. Agendas for meetings were distributed in advance and teachers who were not on the team attended meetings that were of particular interest to them.

**An important understanding behind the creation of the Standards Based Report Cards in Sandwich is reflected in the quote: “Learning is a complex process that takes place over time.”** Students do not take on knowledge or skill at the same rate, or the same way. Flexibility is important: we differentiate instruction and teach multiple ways to solve a math problem, to write a story, to set up an experiment. Teachers look for evidence of progress, knowing that some students need more experience with a skill or topic before they can show mastery. We believe in the principles of a Growth Mindset and believe that a student’s most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning, resilience, motivation, and productivity. (<http://mindsetonline.com/whatisit/about/>)

We encourage families to view a video that clearly illustrates the importance of feedback that is focused on growth, for all students – those who learn quickly and are high achievers as well as those who take longer to learn and struggle with learning achievement.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWv1VdDeoRY>