



NAVIGATING
PARADISE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT'S
STANDARDS-BASED REPORT CARD

1ST-5TH
PARENT HANDBOOK

Why did Paradise Unified School District revise the elementary report card?

In 2010, the State Board of Education adopted new, rigorous academic standards for California. In the following years, Paradise Unified School District has worked to implement aligned curriculum, instructional materials, and assessments, and beginning in the year 2017-18, an elementary report card based on the new standards.

PUSD's goal is to improve student achievement for all students in every classroom, every day. Research supports standards-based grading and reporting as a basis of communication that will help students learn more effectively through better feedback for teachers, students, and parents.

What is standards-based grading and how does it differ from traditional grading?

Standards-based grading communicates how students are performing on a set of clearly defined learning targets called standards. The purpose of standards-based grading is to identify what a student knows, or is able to do, in relation to pre-established learning targets.

Unlike a traditional grading system, a standards-based grading system measures a student's mastery of grade-level standards by prioritizing the most recent, consistent level of performance. Thus a student who may have struggled at the beginning of a unit, when encountering new material, may still be able to demonstrate mastery of key content/concepts by the end of the trimester.

In a traditional grading system, a student's performance for an entire trimester is averaged together. Early quiz scores that were low are averaged together with more proficient performance later in the course, resulting in a lower overall grade than the student's current performance indicates.

Standards-based report cards separate academic performance from general learner outcomes in order to provide parents with a more accurate view of a student's progress in both academic and behavioral areas. Variables such as responsibility, participation, effort, and attendance are reported separately, not as an indicator of a student's academic performance. It may be helpful to compare the two scoring methodologies.

Traditional grading is easy to spot because it typically involves:

- Simple letter grades
- Assessments based on teacher-defined criteria

- A single overall grade per student based on a combination of related and unrelated assessments of skills, knowledge, performance, and conduct over a period of time.

The main advantages of this method are simplicity and professional freedom. However, it results in a very limited measure of a student's abilities. The 'A' on a child's report card might thrill parents, but this grade doesn't convey any precise information. Standards-based grading overcomes this problem.

The essential qualities of standards-based grading involve:

- Rubrics with meaningful labels
- Assessments based on standards
- Multiple scores per student: one for each standard that reflects the student's ability related to the standard at a certain moment in time

What is the purpose of the standards-based elementary report card?

The purpose of the standards-based elementary report card is to provide direct feedback to parents/guardians, students, and other staff regarding student progress towards the year-end standards that have been established by the California State Standards per grade level.

Reporting student progress is an essential part of the communication and partnership process between home and school. Parents and students should have information that accurately reflects a student's level of performance and progress in meeting academic standards. The information that is included on the report card and the accompanying documents should enable parents to best support their children at home.

The report card is one way of learning about your child's progress in school. Conferences with your student's teacher, along with samples of your child's work, can add to your understanding of your child's performance in school.

What are the non-negotiable principles of standards-based scoring?

1. Focus on student achievement – Other factors will be reported separately.
2. Not everything is included in the reported achievement level – Teachers look at a student's performance on activities, such as daily schoolwork and projects, to monitor student learning, identify strengths and weaknesses, and plan for future instruction.

3. Standards-based achievement is not based on averages – The final achievement mark on the standards-based report card represents the learning level at the end of an instructional period. Students are not penalized for mistakes made at the beginning of the learning process.

How will student progress/performance be reported?

To be accurate and fair in reporting both student progress and achievement, teachers use a proficiency scale to report individual progress with the standards in English Language Arts and mathematics.

Four levels of progress are noted using a numeric marking system (numbers 1-4). The descriptor that coincides with each number is most important. The descriptors indicate the level of the individual student's skill acquisition, as well as the confidence/independence with which the student performs the standard.

When using this standards-based report card, it's important to note that a performance mark of 3 is the expected goal for students, which indicates that the student is meeting the requirements of the academic standards for his/her grade level. A performance mark of 4 indicates student performance is significantly above grade level expectations.

Understanding the Report Card Performance Marks

4 – Exceeding Standard: Student shows an in-depth understanding that goes beyond the grade level standard or instruction given.

Students exceeding a standard:

- demonstrate a broad, in-depth understanding of complex concepts and skills
- make abstract, insightful, and complex connections among ideas beyond the obvious
- provide extensive evidence for inferences and justification of solutions
- demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge and skills effectively and independently by applying efficient, sophisticated strategies to solve complex problems
- communicate effectively and thoroughly with sophistication

3 – Meeting Standard: Student consistently meets grade level standard and expectation during this reporting period.

These students:

- can extend their understanding by making multiple meaningful connections among important ideas or concepts and provide supporting evidence for inferences and justification of solutions

- apply concepts and skills to solve problems using appropriate strategies
- communicate effectively

2 – Progressing Toward Standard: Student is progressing toward grade level standard and expectation during this reporting period.

These students:

- make simple or basic connections among ideas, providing limited supporting evidence for inferences and solutions
- apply concepts and skills to routine problem solving situations
- communicate in limited fashion

1 – Not Meeting Standard: Student is not meeting grade level standard and expectation during this reporting period.

X – Grade level performance standard was not assessed during this reporting period

How does the standards-based report card help parents?

Standards-based report cards enable parents to receive accurate information based on cumulative student progress throughout the marking period. In addition, they promote more detailed and meaningful conversations at parent/teacher conferences, allow for careful and precise monitoring of student achievement, and reflect grade-level standards and expectations allowing parents to gain a complete idea of student progress.

How is my child assessed and how will parents/guardians know if their child is performing on grade level?

Students are assessed using multiple techniques, which may include but are not limited to rubrics, observation, performance tasks, application, and paper and pencil tasks, as well as various summative assessments. Summative assessments occur after the learning has taken place and measure student achievement, or mastery of standards, at a specific point in time. Summative assessments determine the knowledge, skills, and understanding students have achieved as a result of classroom practice and instruction. Student achievement on the most recent summative assessments are given greatest priority when determining overall student achievement in that skill or area.

The Paradise Unified School District standards-based report card indicates either how a student is performing on the standards mastery expectations for that particular point of the year or how a student is performing on end of the year mastery expectations. The determination is made by the teacher. The purpose of the report card is to communicate how

a student is performing throughout the year and the goal is for all students to be at a level 3 by the end of the school year.

Remember, a performance mark of 4 is earned when a student applies his/her prior knowledge to new and higher-level situations that exceeds what is explicitly taught in class. A performance level of 3 is the grade level expectation.

What are other useful resources?

The guides below, created by the PTA and Greater Schools, detail grade level expectations in English Language Arts and mathematics. They also include ways you can support your child.

[National PTA Parent Guide Bundle K-12](http://downloads.capta.org/edu/ccss/ParentGuideBundle.pdf)

(<http://downloads.capta.org/edu/ccss/ParentGuideBundle.pdf>)

[Council of Great City Schools Roadmaps](https://www.cgcs.org/Page/244)

(<https://www.cgcs.org/Page/244>)

NEW! General Learner Outcomes (GLOs)

General Learner Outcomes (GLOs) are the over-arching (all-embracing) learning goals of standards-based learning for all students in all grade levels. The six GLOs listed below provide recognition of moral and social skill building within the academic setting. General Learner Outcomes go beyond academic achievement to engage students in a genuine understanding of how they contribute to their learning and school environment. Additionally, GLOs allow our students, families, and staff to have a common language to give and receive genuine and empowering feedback.

GLO #1 - Self-Directed Learner

GLO #2 - Community Contributor

GLO #3 - Complex Thinker

GLO #4 - Quality Producer

GLO #5 - Effective Communicator

GLO #6 - Effective and Ethical User of Technology