

Introducing your child's new Standards-Based Report Card

A Guide for Families



MADISON METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT



Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are excited to announce that beginning in the 2016-17 school year, the Madison Metropolitan School District will be using a new *standards-based report card* for all elementary students.

The new, standards-based report cards will be helpful in many ways:

- They provide a better and more accurate communication tool for families.
- They align to the district's curriculum and classroom expectations.
- They focus on your child's strengths and successes.
- You will know exactly how your child is doing based on the standards. You will learn which big ideas and concepts your child has learned and also what work still needs to be done to make sure they are ready for the next grade level.
- You will learn your child's progress toward meeting Social Emotional Learning standards like managing emotions, having empathy for others, establishing positive relationships and making responsible decisions.
- They also report on Spanish proficiency for students in Dual Language Immersion (DLI) programs.

Rather than giving number grades (1-4), K-5 teachers will be reporting on your child's progress toward grade-level expectations, or standards, that they should meet by the *end of the school year*.

The new performance indicators are:

(E) Emerging - (Dv) Developing - (M) Meeting - (Ex) Exceeding

Teachers will use the following performance indicators to report progress:

	Ex Exceeding	Student consistently exceeds grade-level expectations for the end of the year.
	M Meeting	Student consistently meets grade-level expectations for the end of the year.
	Dv Developing	Student is developing understanding and is approaching grade-level expectations for the end of the year.
	E Emerging	Student begins to show initial understanding of grade-level expectations for the end of the year.
		Not assessed at this time

The new report cards also feature new sections where teachers will report on:

- Your child's progress toward becoming a proficient reader based on their mastery of "foundational skills" in reading.
- English Language Development, if your child's native language is not English.
- Spanish proficiency, if your student is in a Dual Language Immersion or Developmental Bilingual Education program.

Following this letter, you will find more detailed information about the new standards-based report cards.

We expect families to have questions, and we invite you to contact your child's teacher or school principal with yours. You can also find more details about the new report cards at mmsd.org/report-cards.

About the standards on your child's new report card

Each semester, your child's teacher will report put on the standards covered during that grading period, depending on the content being taught. They may include:

- Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, Literacy and Math
- Content standards in the academic areas of Social Studies, Science, Physical Education, Visual Arts, Music and Strings (5th grade)
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) standards
- Spanish proficiency levels (students in Dual-Language Immersion, or DLI, and Developmental Bilingual Education, or DBE, programs)
- Spanish Language Arts (students in DLI and DBE)
- English language development (students whose native language is not English)

Reporting on your child's foundational skills in reading

Report cards will also now report on a set of five skills that the Common Core State Standards have identified as the foundation for becoming a proficient reader:

- Print Concepts
- Phonological Awareness
- Phonics
- Word Recognition
- Fluency



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Thoughtful Assessment with the Learner in Mind, Jan Chappuis, Educational Leadership, March 2014.

Research/reports:

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Videos/websites/blogs:

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Ken O'Connor: Effective Grading Practices http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGcjhaQuXK8&list=PLz9k3neEdN4jUliuTKpVQ3_JL1cwiM8VM&index=21

Marzano: Standards-based Reporting and Formative Assessment http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNGajRP41nA&list=PLz9k3neEdN4jUliuTKpVQ3_JL1cwiM8VM

Wormeli: How Much Should Homework Count? <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nMJ-vEI4WB8>

Frequently asked questions about new standards-based report cards

How is the new standards-based report card different from the previous report card?

The new report cards will show progress of what your child knows or what they are able to do in relation to year-end grade level expectations. The previous report card was not up-to-date with district standards.

How will I know my child is making progress toward the year-end expectations?

We report student learning along a continuum. A score of "Developing (Dv)" shows your student is on-track toward the end-of-year expectations according to what has been taught during each grading period. A score of "meeting" shows that your student has met the end-of-year expectations. A score of "exceeding" shows your student has met the year-end expectations and is working toward the next grade level.

How do teachers determine scoring indicators?

In the classroom, your child is showing what they know and understand through tasks. For each grading period, teachers collect and review evidence of student learning to determine how well the student is progressing to end-of-year expectations. Evidence may include student work samples, observations made in the class, and other activities which help teachers monitor and report on your child's understanding of the grade-level standard.

Is Exceeding (Ex) the same as an A?

No. Exceeding (Ex) is not the equivalent of an A. Exceeding means that the student not only met the end-of-year expectations but was able to apply that learning in other settings and is beginning to work on the next grade level expectations.

In addition to the report card, what are some other ways the teacher will share what my child is learning in each reporting period?

Teachers communicate what students in their classroom are learning through a variety of ways. Some examples are classroom newsletters, homework, emails, phone calls, websites and notes to parents. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher for additional information about your student's learning and progress.

What happened to the "Child as a Learner" section that was included in traditional report cards?

Skills related to Child as a Learner are now reported through our district behavior standards, the Social Emotional Learning Standards (SEL). SEE BELOW for more details.

What is Social Emotional Learning (SEL)?

SEL is a process for helping students and adults develop the social and emotional skills for life success. SEL teaches the skills we all need to manage ourselves, our relationships, and our work effectively. Examples of skills taught include recognizing and managing emotions, empathy for others, establishing positive relationships and making responsible decisions.

What are the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Standards?

The SEL standards describe the social emotional skills necessary for all children to achieve life success. These standards are organized similar to academic standards and include skills that describe what children should know and be able to do. At the elementary level the SEL standards are taught through a curriculum called Second Step and are reinforced throughout the school day. For more information you can visit mmsd.org/SEL.

Considerations for Students Receiving Special Education Services

How are students receiving special education services graded?

Decisions about grading are made collaboratively at the initial Individualized Education Program (IEP) development, and at least yearly after the initial IEP eligibility has been made.

Members of the IEP team review all of the grade-level standards and make a determination together about how to grade. In some instances, students with disabilities can be expected to meet the grade-level standards with no changes in how or what we teach, and they would be graded as any other student. In other instances, students can be expected to meet grade-level standards with additional supports and related services (called **“accommodations”**) provided by school staff. We discuss accommodations at IEP meetings, yet we do not show accommodations on the report card.

For some students with significant disabilities, it may be necessary for the IEP team to significantly change the skill level or content of the standard. In this case, the IEP team creates **“modifications”** for the standard which directly reflect the IEP goals. Teachers use an asterisk to show a modification has been made.

As key members of the IEP team, parents contribute to decision-making related to grading. Further, parents of students with disabilities can expect information about grades as frequently as students without disabilities receive them, and with the same kind of description. For additional information specific to your child, please see your child's general education teacher or case manager/special education teacher.

Considerations for Students Receiving Instruction in Spanish

My child's home language is not English. In English Language-only instruction or in Dual Language Immersion and Developmental Bilingual (DLI/DBE) programs, why does my child have an English Language Development score?

When other languages are spoken in a student's home, and they are learning in English-only classes, we focus on expanding their English skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) through English Language Development (ELD). When students are learning in dual language or bilingual programs, we focus on both languages (English and Spanish), and the ELD score shares information about their English development.

Teachers not only focus on speaking, listening, reading and writing, but they also support English Language Learner (ELL) students' language use within different subject areas. This is why you see an ELD score for the language of Math, Social Studies and Science, as well as English Language Arts.

My child is a native English speaker in a DLI program. Why does my child not have an ELD score?

In DLI classrooms, only English learner students are required by the state to have their English language skills assessed (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). One way teachers share information on an English learner student's growth in English is through the English Language Development (ELD) score.

My child is in a DLI or DBE program. Why does my child have two scores for Language Arts?

In Dual Language Immersion and Developmental Bilingual program, biliteracy develops over time, at different rates, and with a common end-goal of being able to read, write and speak in both Spanish and English. It is important to share the progress of your child's literacy development in both languages. It is typical to see some differences in English Language Arts and Spanish Language Arts skills as they both develop, depending upon your child's home language(s).

My child is in a DLI or DBE program. If instruction happens in two languages, why might there be only scores for English or Spanish for Math, Science or Social Studies during certain reporting periods?

While there is a score for both English and Spanish Language Arts each reporting period, your child's scores for math, science and social studies are reported in the language used to teach the content knowledge (i.e., an understanding of the subject matter) during the reporting period. Throughout the school year, or certain grade levels, math, science and social studies classes are taught in a combination of English and Spanish so that students develop language skills in both languages.

My child is in a DLI or DBE program. Why does my child have a score for Spanish Language Proficiency?

One of the goals of DLI and DBE is for our students to become bilingual. In order to support this goal, we need a way to track and share students' progress in Spanish language development with families.

My child is a native Spanish speaker in an English Language-only program. Why doesn't my child have a Spanish Language Proficiency grade?

Bilingual and Dual Language Immersion Programs are only available at some elementary schools in the district, and students are only enrolled with parent permission. If your child does not receive instruction in Spanish, they will not be assessed or evaluated in Spanish.

Grading Considerations for Students Identified as English Language Learners (ELLs)

How are students who are identified as English language learners graded?

English learners are graded the same as any other student. They are expected to meet grade-level standards aligned to the ELL student's Individual Plan of Service (IPS) with the additional supports and services provided by school staff. These supports are discussed when ELL Case Managers work with parents to develop the ELL student's Individual Plan of Service.

Are students who are identified as English language learners with very low English proficiency graded differently?

English learners with very low English proficiency (sometimes referred to as Newcomers) are graded the same as any other student. They are expected to meet grade-level standards aligned to the ELL student's Individual Plan of Service (IPS) with the additional supports and services as provided by school staff. These supports are discussed when ELL Case Managers work with parents to develop the ELL student's Individual Plan of Service.

In this case, due to the student's low English proficiency, they may initially have difficulty demonstrating their progress in English toward content standards for the grade level; however, our new grading descriptors allow teachers to grade them on their progress toward the standard. It is likely that as their English language proficiency improves, they will demonstrate more growth.