



## **7 Things to Know about Standards Based Learning Scoring & Reporting at KMS**

### **1. Grades reflect student learning of academic standards.**

Academic Standards are statements that describe what students should learn. We have standards for every elementary grade and subject and for every course in grades k - 8. Standards guide instruction and help teachers, parents, and students know what is most important for students to learn. All assignments and assessments are linked to standards. We believe that scores should represent what students know and have learned. Therefore, scores are based on a student's achievement of the standards. Non-academic factors such as responsibility, effort, and attendance will not be counted in the score; information about these areas will be shared through report card comments, conferences, and other communication between school and home.

### **2. Standards-based grading & reporting provides students, parents, and teachers with detailed information about student learning.**

In our standards-based grading and reporting system, scores show how well a student meets the expectations of our district curriculum standards. Our goal is to provide parents with more information about their child's progress on our curriculum standards than would be found on a traditional report card or in a traditional grade book. Our standards-based system provides detailed information about a student's achievement on the reporting standards for each subject or course. Detailed information about student learning is on the report card; this information will be in the electronic grade book - Powerschool. Providing more detailed information allows parents and students to understand more clearly what learning is expected at each grade level or in each course. With this understanding, parents will be better able to guide and support their child's learning in specific areas.

### **3. We use a different grading scales in our classes at KMS.**

**KMS report cards use a 4-0 scale.** Students receive a mark on the report card for each reporting standard.

- 4 = Advanced - Exceeds expectations on grade level standards.
- 3 = Proficient - Meets expectations on grade level standards.
- 2 = Nearing Proficient - Partially meets expectations on grade level standards.
- 1 = Novice - Does not meet expectations on grade level standards.
- 0 = Insufficient Evidence.

The marks of 4 - 0 used in scores K-8 should not be compared to letter grades used in grades 9-12. The marks represent a student's level of achievement on the academic standards for his or her grade level; they are not meant to rank students, but rather to provide more specific information at which level a student is working. The marks simply describe a student's achievement towards meeting grade level standards.

### **4. Scores are based on an individual student's achievement of the standards.**

Similarly, grades are based on the student's work compared to the standards – not compared to other students in the class.

Group work is a commonly used – and very effective – strategy to increase student learning. We encourage collaborative work in our classrooms and we expect that each member of a group has responsibility to demonstrate their own learning. When students work in collaborative groups and are assigned group projects that are graded, their scores will reflect their individual learning – not the work of the entire group.

**5. Assessment of learning AFTER instruction is more heavily weighted than the practice work that is completed during the learning process.**

We want to give students the opportunity to show what they have learned after instruction, after they've had lots of time to practice. Teachers gather two kinds of evidence of student learning: formative assessment and summative assessment.

**Formative Assessment**

Formative assessment can be thought of as “academic practice.” Practice is important because it allows students to receive feedback while they are learning new material. Formative assessment provides students opportunities to practice skills and standards to help make learning permanent. Think of this as “learning along the way.”

**Summative Assessment**

Summative assessment can be thought of as a measure of “academic achievement.” This is the work students do to show what they know after they have had time to learn and practice. Summative assessments can include a wide variety of tasks, such as projects, tests, or performances.

**6. The report card is only one component of our standards based grading & reporting system.**

Teachers will provide students and parents with information about achievement throughout each trimester. This feedback may take several forms, including the following:

- **Report cards:** Issued at the end of each trimester, report cards show academic grades based on standards.
- **Online grade reports:** All middle school teachers use our electronic grade book to record grades for individual tasks and assessments. These reports are available on a password-protected Web site (Powerschool) that may be accessed by parents and students on any Web-enabled computer.
- **Conferences:** All schools schedule conferences in the fall. Teachers and parents may request additional conferences through the team meeting process to discuss student progress and/or concerns, as needed.
- **Informal methods:** Teachers may use a variety of informal methods to report achievement to students and parents, such as telephone calls, e-mail, notes home, observation records, and feedback sheets.
- **Parents are encouraged to talk to their child's teachers about specific questions concerning grades.**

**7. Standards-based instruction, grading and reporting is considered a “best practice” in education.**

Standards-based instruction is considered a "best practice" in education. There has been rapid growth of standards-based grading & reporting in school districts across the country. In addition, standards-based grading and reporting are widely known in established, rigorous academic programs in elementary schools and beyond. For example, Advanced Placement (A.P.) courses use a five-point rubric for scoring national assessments (5= Extremely well qualified, 4= Well qualified, 3= Qualified, 2= Possibly Qualified, 1= No recommendations). Similarly, the International Baccalaureate Program (I.B.) uses a seven-point rubric for scoring, as well as a matrix of performance. According to Dr. Thomas Guskey, an expert in the areas of grading, reporting, & assessment, it should be noted that colleges and universities are more interested in the rigor of the curriculum that their students have experienced, than the grading system. Districts across the country are using standards-based grading & reporting systems.