

SISD
K-1 Standards-based
Report Card Parent &
Teacher Guidebook



Goals of Our Standards-Based Grading System

As Sanger ISD continues to improve teaching and learning for all students, we know that parents and families are our most valuable partner. Like teachers, parents need accurate and meaningful information about student strengths and challenges to better understand and support student learning.

The Texas Essentials Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) or the state learning standards, are designed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and describe what each child should learn and be able to do at each grade level in all subjects by the end of the school year including Art, Music, Physical Education, and Technology Applications. The TEKS are written at each grade level and are developed in a way that one grade level leads to another; ensuring a strong foundation for future learning as the student progresses through each grade level. These standards set high expectations for students, staff, and schools. Achieving these career and college ready standards requires continuous progress monitoring and providing targeted support as needed. These state standards can be found on the TEA website at <https://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=6148>.

SISD uses a standards-based report card for students in kindergarten and first grade. The standards-based report card is helpful in many ways. First, it clarifies and reinforces consistent, high expectations for all SISD students and schools. Second, the report card helps teachers, students, and families focus on the TEKS throughout the school year while at the same time giving students an opportunity to receive help if they are not making adequate progress. Finally, and most importantly, the standards-based report card provides specific feedback on progress to the TEKS so students, families, and teachers can work together to set meaningful goals for growth.

Information on which big ideas and concepts each child has learned and what work is still needed for success in the next grade level helps ensure that your child receives additional support, at home and school, when needed. Parents will know which Knowledge & Skill Statement groups their child has learned and which skills their child needs to learn to be well-prepared for the next grade 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. Standards-based achievement is not based on numerical averages. The final achievement score on the standards-based report card represents the learning level demonstrated throughout the nine week period. Students are not penalized for mistakes made at the beginning of the learning process.

Frequently Asked Questions about Standards-Based Report Card

What is standards-based reporting?

Standards-based reporting involves determining each student's proficiency on the skills students should learn in each subject area of each grade level. In kindergarten through first grade, students receive scores that indicate their progress toward meeting the performance standards given by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). These state standards can be found on the TEA website at <https://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=6148>.

What is the difference between traditional grading and standards-based grading?

Traditional grading uses averaging of student work over time, and other student characteristics such as work habits, attendance, homework, and effort. Standards-based assessment focuses solely on a student's academic achievement and continued progress monitoring that indicates a true measure of the student's attainment of the grade level TEKS such as the ability to write a paragraph, or add and subtract whole numbers. Extraneous factors like work habits, attendance, homework, and effort are assessed and reported separately.

On a standards-based report card, subjects are divided into a list of knowledge and skills that students are responsible for learning. Students receive a separate score for each Knowledge & Skill Statement group. The scores on a standards-based report card are different from traditional letter grades. Traditional grading is often calculated by combining how well the student met his/her particular teacher's expectations, how he/she performed on assignments and tests, and how much effort the teacher believes was put forth. Traditional grades do not tell parents which skills their children have mastered or whether they are working below, at or above grade level. Parents can see exactly which learning objectives their child has mastered.

How will I know what standards are assigned for each nine weeks?

Scores based on academic learning standards are determined from the results of students' performance using multiple evidence of learning opportunities. Conclusions about overall performance for each standard on the report card is based on multiple data points gathered over that standard.

How will the teacher assess my child's progress?

In standards-based classrooms, the focus is on a student's performance over multiple opportunities. Teachers collect evidence of students' achievement through careful observation, examination of student's work, discussions, projects, performance tasks, and tests. Teachers record information about each child's progress on a frequent basis, analyze and compile this information, and use this data to evaluate a child's progress towards meeting grade level TEKS. The district has developed a set of criteria for each Knowledge & Skill Statement group on the report card. This criteria, in the form of rubrics, will help teachers evaluate the progress of your child's achievement at each marking period throughout the school year.

Which standards are reported on the standards-based report card?

All of the TEKS for each content area are *represented*, though not all are specifically *stated* on the report card. The TEKS are represented through the Knowledge & Skills Statement groups. To list all of the kindergarten or first grade TEKS for each content area on one report card would make the document excessively lengthy.

How is achievement identified on the report card?

A key to the proficiency levels is included on the report card. Student progress is only measured on concepts and skills that are assigned during a given grading period.

- **Mastery of Standard:** Earning a “3” means that the student has demonstrated independent achievement and mastery of all key concepts, vocabulary, processes, and skills of the grade level expectation. Our goal is that all of our students will reach level “3” by the end of the year. A student receiving a “3” is on track with district, grade-level expectations for a given nine week grading period.
- **Approaching Mastery of Standard:** Earning a “2” means that the student understands, grasps, and applies most key concepts, vocabulary, processes, and skills. A student receiving a “2” is making adequate progress toward full mastery of the assigned concepts. A “2” indicates a positive move toward mastery of grade level standards.
- **Beginning Progress Toward Standard:** Earning a “1” means that the student understands and grasps a few to some of the key concepts, vocabulary, processes, and skills related to the standard.
- **Not Assessed:** None of the Student Expectations (SEs) were taught within that particular nine week period. This will be denoted by a grayed out box if a concept is not addressed. Student progress is only measured on concepts and skills that are assigned during a given grading period.

Why are numerical grades not used?

A numerical grade tells the student and parent how well he or she performed on average in a broad area such as reading or math. A standards-based report card measures how well the individual student is doing in relationship to each grade level TEKS or learning goal. This gives parents a better understanding of their child’s strengths and weaknesses and encourages all students to do their best.

What is the expected score for students?

Typically students will earn a “1” on a topic prior to earning an “2” or a “3”. Learning is progressive. Certain grade-level expectations, such as counting forward and backward from 1 to 20, are presented in increments that become progressively complex. A kindergarten student will be taught to count forward from 1 to 5 at the beginning of the year. Later, the level of difficulty of the numbers increases to 10, and students are expected to count forward and backward. The level increases until the student counts forward and backward from 1 to 20. During the continuum of learning, the student might receive a “2” to show that he/she is on track with district expectations for that nine week period, although the student has not yet completely mastered the entire standard.

How is proficiency reported for Special Education students or students with 504 Plans?

No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regulate assessment practices for students who are classified with a disability or are in need of specially designed instruction. Special education students must be graded using the same grading system as all other students and their academic program must be aligned to the state’s academic standards. The Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee determines, what, if any, accommodations and/or modifications are needed for the student to meet the standards. The ARD Committee aligns each annual goal to the appropriate standards and monitors progress throughout the school year.

Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) must be provided with the same opportunity to receive grades in relation to expectations for grade level standards. Since special education students are a heterogeneous group with various disabilities which impact learning, some may not achieve certain grade-level standards without special services and supports. For students with accommodations, the content of the standard remains the same, but the method for learning and demonstrating mastery of a standard may be adjusted.

Modifications, on the other hand, can mean changing the standard itself, identifying standards that are fundamentally related but also developmentally appropriate. The Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee (ARD) make decisions regarding what content areas, if any, require modifications of the grade level standards. The adaptations should be about student achievement, and they should result in grades that communicate clear, interpretable information to students and parents. For all students with an IEP, a supplemental progress report is provided that identifies how students are performing on appropriately challenging learning tasks as outlined in the goals and objectives of their IEP.

How is proficiency reported for Emergent Bilingual students?

Students are assessed at their current grade level using the appropriate grade-level standard based report card. During parent conferences, teachers will discuss with parents the child’s current level of English proficiency and the child’s opportunity to learn the content and/or ability to demonstrate the appropriate grade-level standards.

Why is attendance recorded on a standards-based report card?

State law requires official documentation of attendance in a student's permanent record. Since the report card is an official record for the student, attendance is recorded each nine weeks on the student's report card. A pattern of absences significantly impacts student learning, so this section adds to the overall picture of a student's progress.

How will I know that my child is ready for the next grade at the end of the year?

District policy states that a student in kindergarten or first grade shall be promoted to the next grade level based on significant mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for language arts and mathematics.

Discussing Student Performance

Some parents, having grown up receiving numerical grades or letter grades, may at first struggle with discussing academic performance and a standards-based report card with their child. Teachers regularly discuss learning standards with students in the classroom and may sometimes refer to those standards as “I can” statements, learning goals, or learning objectives. When introducing a concept or teaching a lesson, teachers will identify the targeted standard. For example, the teacher may say, “The learning target for this unit is to identify essential attributes of three-dimensional figures.”

When asked, your child should be able to discuss what their learning goals for the day were. Your child should know what goals or standards they have met, and the goals or standards he or she is working to meet. Each student should also be able to discuss what they need to do in order to be able to meet a goal. For example, to read more fluently, the student needs to cluster parts of text together rather than saying each word separately and choppy with extra pause in between words.

The goal over time is for the student to show mastery of the grade-level TEKS or *Mastery of Standard (3)*. While this is the goal over time, a student may not have mastery of the content until later in the school year. Students may receive a mark of *Approaching Mastery of Standard (2)* while they progress to mastering the grade level TEKS. When a skill or concept is first introduced, it is common that a student may not be able to fully demonstrate understanding or apply that knowledge. It is not uncommon for a student to receive a mark of *Beginning Progress Toward Standard (1)* on work based upon newly introduced skills or concepts, or skills and concepts which the student still needs additional practice.

Standards may evolve in rigor and expectation to greater levels of difficulty throughout the year. Students who receive *Mastery of Standard (3)* for a grading period, may receive *Beginning Progress Toward Standard (1)* or *Approaching Mastery of Standard (2)* on the same Knowledge & Skills Statement group in subsequent reporting periods if the complexity of the TEKS has increased and the student has not yet mastered the new level of expectation. The goal is for students to earn *Mastery of Standard (3)* by the end of the school year. Earning a rating of *Mastery of Standard (3)* is an achievement to be celebrated.

Students who have Individual Education Plans (IEP's) are provided feedback on their progress related to the grade level TEKS as outlined in the student's IEP and determined by their ARD.