STANDARDS-BASED GRADING

Bringing Clarity to Your Child's Academic Growth

WHAT IS STANDARDS-BASED GRADING?

At Otsego Public Schools, we believe families are essential partners in helping students succeed. Providing families with clear, accurate, and meaningful information about your child's academic strengths and areas for growth will give you the tools to support your child's education.

To give families a better understanding of what their children know and can do, our elementary schools began transitioning to Standards-Based Grading in the spring of 2026. Standards-Based Grading is designed to show how a student is progressing toward grade-level appropriate state and district learning standards. This approach gives students a clearer understanding of what they are expected to learn, helps them take ownership of their progress, and gives families a better picture of their child's strengths, areas for growth, and learning throughout the school year.

As we move forward together, holding students accountable to rigorous standards, we want to share more about what you can expect as we continue to implement Standards-Based Grading in classrooms district-wide in Young 5's through 5th Grade.

STANDARDS-BASED LEARNING PROGRESSION

1 = Developing foundational skills to meet grade-level expectations:

Your child is still developing the basic skill in this area. They receive extra support and practice to help them grow.



2 = Progressing toward grade-level expectations:

Your child understands the skill, but still needs support to do it consistently. At times, they require reminders, prompts, or extra guidance to complete tasks accurately.



3 = Meeting grade-level expectations:

Your child accurately and independently demonstrates this skill.



CLARITY. GROWTH. SUCCESS!

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STANDARDS-BASED GRADING

Frequently Asked Questions

WHY CHANGE THE GRADING SYSTEM?

The system was changed to give families a clearer and more accurate picture of what their child knows and can do. Standards-Based Grading focuses on specific skills and learning goals, helping students understand what they are learning, where they are making progress, and where they may need additional support.

IS A 3 THE SAME AS AN A?

No, the **1, 2, 3** grading scale cannot be translated to a letter grade. A **3** means that your child is meeting grade-level expectations for that skill. This is a positive thing! A **1** or a **2** simply means that your child will receive additional support to help them fully master the skill.

WHAT DOES A 1 OR A 2 MEAN FOR MY CHILD?

Learning is a process, especially when introduced to a new skill. A **1** or **2** simply tells us where your child is starting. It helps teachers target instruction, provide extra support, and guide your child toward mastering the standard over time. It is normal for students to move from a **1** to a **3** throughout the year as they develop greater proficiency of the standard.

HOW IS INSTRUCTION ORGANIZED AND MEASURED ACROSS THE SCHOOL YEAR?

English Language Arts and Math standards are typically taught over multiple trimesters, while most Science and Social Studies standards are addressed and completed within a single trimester.

HOW DOES THE TEACHER DECIDE ON A SCORE?

Teachers consider classroom practice, assessments, progress checks, and daily observation. They look for evidence of what your child currently understands and can do independently; not just one test or assignment.

WHAT ABOUT MY CHILD'S NON-ACADEMIC SKILLS?

Things like work habits, behavior, and participation are essential to your child's success, but they are reported separately from academic grades. This ensures your child's academic score clearly reflects what they know and can do, while work habits highlight their classroom engagement. (See the sample report card to view where these habits are listed.)

REMEMBER: LEARNING IS A *JOURNEY*, NOT A *RACE*.

A score determines where your child is right now... NOT their potential. Families and teachers will work together to celebrate your child's growth and plan the next steps.



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REPORT CARDS

Sample Report Card

Otsego Public Schools

Attendance Summary By Term:

Tri1		Tri 2		Tri 3		Total	
Absent	Tardy	Absent	Tardy	Absent	Tardy	Absent	Tardy
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

ACADEMIC/PERSONAL SKILLS KEY

3 - Meeting grade level expectations - Your child accurately and independently demonstrates this skill.

2 - Progressing toward grade level expectations - Your child understands the skill but still needs support to do it consistently. At times, they require reminders, prompts, or extra guidance to complete tasks accurately.

1 - Developing foundational skills to meet grade level expectations - Your child is still developing the basic skills needed for success to complete these tasks. They are receiving extra, targeted support and practice to help them grow.

MC - Modified Curriculum

Blank - Not Assessed This Trimester

SBG - FIFTH GRADE

	Term		
	Tri 1	Tri 2	Tri 3
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS			
READING - FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS			
RF.5.3a Reads longer, unfamiliar words by using letter sounds, word parts, and syllables in context and out of context.		3	3
RF.5.4a Reads grade-level text with purpose and understanding.	2	3	3
RF.5.4c Uses clues from the text to find clues to understand words and rereads to improve accuracy and understandings.	2	2	3
READING - LITERATURE			
RL.5.1 Use quotes from a text when explaining and inferring what the text says or means.	2	2	3
RL.5.2 Determines the theme of a story or passage from details in the text, including how characters respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic and summarizes the text.		2	3

SBG - FIFTH GRADE

	Term		
	Tri 1	Tri 2	Tri 3
READING - INFORMATIONAL TEXT			
RI.5.1 Uses quotes from a text when explaining and inferring what the text says.	2	2	2
RI.5.2 Determines two or more main ideas of a text, explains how they are supported by key details, and summarizes the text.		2	2
RI.5.4 Determines the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.	2	3	3
RI.5.8 Explains how an author uses reasons and evidence to support parts of a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).		2	2
WRITING			
W.5.1 Writes opinion pieces on topics or texts with reasons and evidence to support their thoughts.			3
W.5.2 Writes informative texts to explain a topic and share ideas and information clearly.	1	2	3
W.5.3 Writes narratives to create real or imagined experiences or events using a variety of techniques, details, and order.	1	2	2
MATH			
OPERATIONS & ALGEBRAIC THINKING			
5.OA.1 Uses parentheses, brackets, or braces to solve numerical expressions.	2	3	3
NUMBERS & OPERATIONS IN BASE TEN			
5.NBT.5 Multiplies multi-digit whole numbers with the standard algorithm.		2	2
5.NBT.6 Divides up to four-digit dividends and two-digit divisors to find the quotient. Shows and explains the calculation by using equations, rectangular arrays, and/or area models.		2	2
NUMBERS & OPERATIONS - FRACTIONS			
5.NF.1 Adds and subtracts fractions with unlike denominators (including mixed numbers) by replacing given fractions with equivalent fractions in such a way as to produce an equivalent sum or difference of fractions with like denominators.			3

SAMPLE REPORT CARD KEY

1. **Skills Key: These indicators outline the levels of the learning progressions and are used to report progress and achievement on standards.**
2. **Michigan State Standard: The code identifies the official Michigan State Standard, followed by a clear description of the specific skill your child is learning and being assessed on.**
3. **Trimester Score: The student's score will be recorded for each standard that has been taught and assessed for that trimester.**
4. **Blank box: If the box remains blank that skill was not assessed during that trimester.**