

# Standards-Based Grading and Reporting

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It is our hope that you find this Guide for Standards-Based Grading beneficial. An academic *standard* is a statement developed to describe what all students should know (*content*) and be able to do (*skills*) in academic subjects like reading, writing, math, science, social studies, etc. Clear learning standards keep the focus on student achievement.

The standards-based report card is a tool to accurately communicate to parents and guardians the progress that their child is making on learning the essential standards for each grade level, from kindergarten through eighth grade. The standards on the report card were identified by district teachers as the foundational knowledge and skills students need to master in order to be successful in the next grade level.

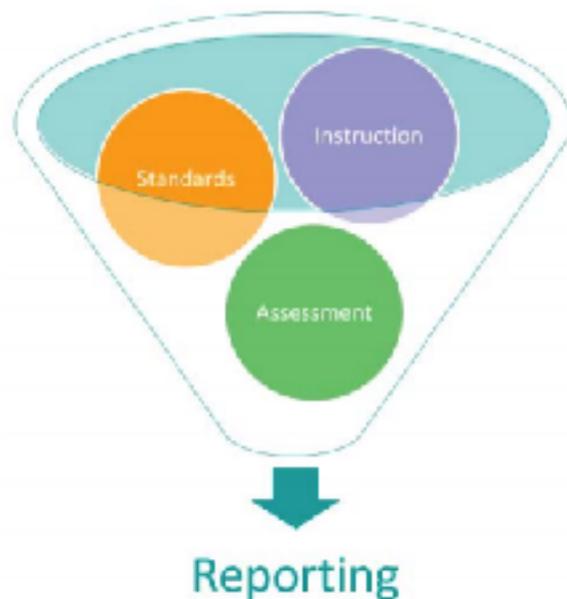
The shift from traditional grading practices has many benefits for students, teachers, and parents. A standards-based grading system measures a student's proficiency on grade-level standards. A student who may have struggled at the beginning of a unit when learning new material may still be able to demonstrate mastery of key content and concepts by the end of a grading period. A traditional grading system averages a student's achievement data with other factors, such as work habits.

## Components of a Standards-Based System

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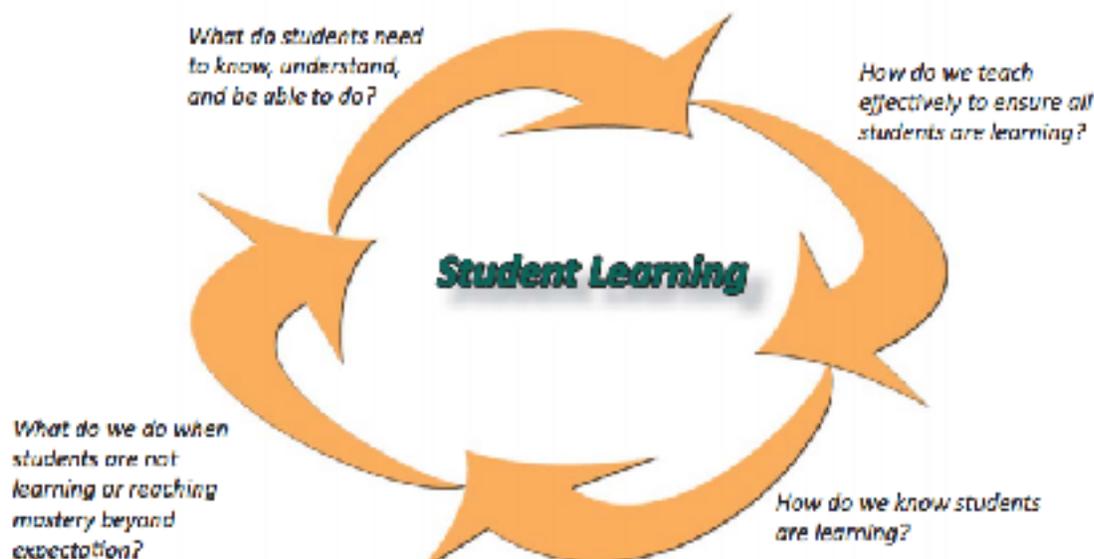
There are four essential components of a standards-based system:

- The **standards** that describe what a student should know and be able to do at a given grade-level
- The **instruction** a teacher uses to ensure that classroom teaching targets these standards
- The **assessment** that a teacher uses to measure learning and the extent to which a student has met the standards
- The **standards-based report card** that allows a teacher to communicate accurately a student's progress towards meeting standards at critical junctures throughout the school year



# Continuous Cycle of Teaching and Learning

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## Step 1: What do students need to know, understand, and be able to do?

Grade level standards are clear, measurable learning goals that empower students. Standards clearly articulate what students should know and be able to do in order to advance to the next level of learning.

### Key Ideas:

- Standards help teachers, parents and student to understand the content and skills necessary to be successful at the next grade level.
- Student engagement and motivation increase when students know what is expected and clearly understand the standards.

## Step 2: How do we teach effectively to ensure all students are learning?

Teachers use data as the starting point for conversations about teaching and learning. Rock Island-Milan School District teachers use instructional methods based on best practices. Teachers work together (Professional Learning Communities) using data to differentiate instruction based on the needs of the students. For example, teachers provide additional support for students who have trouble learning or extend and enrich instruction for students who demonstrate mastery of standards.

### Key Ideas:

- Teachers differentiate the learning experience for students who need it
- Students receive intervention or enrichment to meet their individual needs.

### Step 3: How do we know students are learning?

In a standards-based system, teachers continually monitor a student's academic progress through observation, daily work, and ongoing formative assessments. This continuous cycle of teaching and learning is the process by which teachers determine how to best meet the needs of their students.

Near the end of the quarter, teachers use a student's most recent scores to determine their overall ratings for a standard. Standards-based grading recognizes a student's most recent rating is more representative of their current mastery level of a standard.

#### Key Ideas:

- Teachers carefully review a student's growth in their mastery of the standards to determine the rating for the report card.
- Teachers may re-assess if the body of evidence is inconsistent.
- Only standards that have had adequate instruction and assessment will be rated on the report card.

### Step 4: What do we do when students are not learning or reaching mastery beyond expectation?

Knowing where a student is in the progress toward meeting the standards is crucial for planning and carrying out classroom instruction. A standards-based system gives teachers more information about the student's progress on each academic learning goal. Teachers can respond quickly with timely feedback and interventions designed to support student learning. Students that are not yet proficient on grade level standards will continue to work toward proficiency and will have multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency throughout the academic year. Teachers promote a culture of continuous improvement for every learner, using data to inform instruction.

#### Key Ideas:

- Students learn at different rates. That's OK! Becoming proficient on a standard may take more time or less time for some students.
- The proficiency level on the report card will reflect a student's current progress. Proficiency can change at different times of the year as students grow or are challenged.
- Teachers may also re-assess if a student's proficiency level has changed due to intervention or enrichment.

## Rock Island-Milan Report Card Details

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<u>K-8 Academic Scale</u>	<u>K-6 Habits for Success</u>	<u>Junior High Work Habits</u>
<b>4 Exemplary Understanding</b> (Exceeding the Target)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I respect others' rights, feelings and property</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I demonstrate effort, commitment, and perseverance</li></ul>
<b>3 Proficient Understanding</b> (On Target)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I accept responsibility for my own behavior</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accountability</li></ul>
<b>2 Developing Understanding</b> (Progressing Toward the Target)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I demonstrate self-control</li><li>• I organize self and materials</li><li>• I follow directions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participation/Effort</li><li>• Preparation/Organization</li></ul>
<b>1 Does Not Understand</b> (Not Progressing to the Target)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I use time effectively to produce quality work</li><li>• I complete assigned homework</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Respect</li></ul>