

Elementary Grading and Reporting Handbook



Where Excellence and Creativity Merge

2019-2020

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Introduction and Philosophy

Fayette County Public Schools believe student report cards should accurately report students' progress toward mastery of grade level standards. The primary purpose of grading is to communicate and provide feedback on student progress toward mastery of academic standards and learning and life skills.

Georgia, and every state in the nation, has clearly defined standards for learning. We follow [Georgia Standards of Excellence \(GSE\)](#), which are designed by content area to provide a consistent framework of grade level developmental expectations and ultimately prepare students for success in college and/or the 21st century workplace. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are aligned with the GSE. Evidence-based instructional practices and strategies for differentiated, innovative, and effective teaching and learning are based on the state adopted standards in support of a balanced curriculum for the whole child.

Beginning the 2018-2019 school year, a standards-based report card will be used in kindergarten and first grade. Second and third grade will use standards-based report cards beginning in the 2019-2020 school year. Fourth and fifth grade will continue to use the traditional report card during the 2020-2021 school year. This incremental plan will provide time for professional learning for faculty, effective communication to stakeholders, and monitoring of effectiveness.

Confidentiality Statement Regarding Student Grades

Student grades and reports are considered confidential student education records and are protected by the [Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)

FCBOE and Georgia DOE Rules and Policies

Grade Integrity Act of 2007 - OCGA - 20-2-989.20.

This Act enacts the "Grade Integrity Act of 2007," which provides that no classroom teacher shall be required, coerced, intimidated, or disciplined in any manner to change the grade of a student. The Act provides for the reporting of such conduct to the Professional Standards Commission as an ethics violation. The Act enacts O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-989.20. Effective July 1, 2007.

- No classroom teacher shall be required, coerced, intimidated, or disciplined in any manner by the local board of education, superintendent, or any local school administrator to change the grade of a student. This subsection shall not apply when a teacher has failed to comply with grading policies or rules adopted by the local board of education or written procedures established by an individual school that are applicable to the grading process, unless such policy, rule, or procedure would require a student be given a grade different than the actual grade achieved. A violation of this Code section shall constitute an ethics violation reportable to the Professional Standards Commission pursuant to Part 10 of this article.
 - Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to prevent a principal or other local school administrator from discussing the grade of a student with a classroom teacher.
 - Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to prevent a central office administrator, superintendent, or local school administrator from changing a student's grade. Any grade change made by a person other than the classroom teacher must be clearly indicated in the student's school records and must indicate the person responsible for making such grade change.
- Code 1981, § 20-2-989.20, enacted by Ga. L. 2007, p. 253, § 2/SB 9.

Reporting Scales

Kindergarten through Third Grades

The reporting scale for core content areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies consists of 4 performance levels.

4.0--Exceeding proficiency of the standard

3.0--Meeting proficiency of the standard

2.0--Developing proficiency of the standard

1.0--Beginning to demonstrate understanding of the standard

Fourth and Fifth Grades

Currently follow the traditional grading scale for core content areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

A - 90-100

B - 80-89

C - 71-79

D - 70

F - 69 or less

Other Codes for All Elementary Grades

* - Not formally assessed or introduced during this grading period

Used in Specials (Art, Music, PE and Technology) and Learning & Life Skills

S - Satisfactory

NI - Needs Improvement

Report Card Examples

Here are the links for the Standards-based Report Cards:

[Kindergarten](#)

[1st Grade](#)

[2nd Grade](#)

[3rd Grade](#)

Here is the link to the Report Card used for students in grades 4-5:

[Grade 04 - 05 Sample \(Previous Format\)](#)

Rubrics

Rubrics for Kindergarten and First Grade were developed the summer of 2018 to support teachers in reporting their students' proficiency of Kindergarten and First Grade Georgia Standards of Excellence in ELA, math, social studies and science. The Kindergarten and First Grade Rubrics were further refined during the spring of 2019. Rubrics for second and third grade were developed during the spring of 2019. Using the rubrics the scale of 1-4 will be determined. Here are the links to the revised rubrics:

- [Kindergarten Rubrics](#)
- [First Grade Rubrics](#)
- [Second Grade Rubrics](#)
- [Third Grade Rubrics](#)

Glossary of Terms

Word	Definition
Evidence	Proof of what students know and can do. Evidence is used to advance teaching and learning.
Formative Assessment	A variety of methods that teachers use to conduct in process evaluations of student comprehension, learning needs, and academic progress during a

	lesson, unit, or course. Formative assessments are for learning.
Proficiency	A high degree of competence or skill; expertise.
Rubric	A systematic scoring guideline to evaluate students' performance through the use of a detailed description of performance standards.
Summative Assessment	Used to evaluate student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined instructional period- typically at the end of a project, unit, course, semester, program, or school year.
Standard	(also called academic standards, content standards and curricula) are elements of declarative, procedural, schematic, and strategic knowledge that, as a body, define the specific content of an educational program.

Word in Standard	Definition	Evidence and Support
Demonstrate	to describe, explain, display or illustrate through examples	Write, draw, label, tell, think-pair-share, act out, portray, sing with detail, can be with own words
Describe	tell or show with written or spoken words and or drawings; point out facts or details	Write, draw, label, tell, think-pair-share, act out, portray, sing with detail and appropriate vocabulary
Explain	to make clear or understandable to others; make plain	Write, draw, label, tell, think-pair-share, act out, portray, sing with detail, can be with own words, argument, claim, give evidence
Explore	to investigate, study, or analyze	Match characteristics of liberty, freedom, brotherhood, pride with the meanings of the 2 songs, <i>America the Beautiful</i> and <i>My Country Tis of Thee</i>
Identify	establish as particular by noting individual features or characteristics in isolation	Draw, label, match, tell, think-pair-share, act out, portray, or sing
Locate	find some specific information	Point, label, draw, tell, think-pair-share, show, or sing
Model	something that is made to be like another thing	Draw, perform, or create physical depiction
Read	to learn from what one has seen or found in writing or printing	Pictures, words, diagrams, timelines (sequencing), symbols, use language of the standards

Additional Resource- [Teaching the Critical Vocabulary of the Common Core](#) by Marilee Sprenger

Progress Reports

Progress reports are sent home in the middle of each grading period, every 4 1/2 weeks for students in fourth and fifth grades. They provide parents with valuable information about a student's progress toward mastery of the standards. Progress reports promote ongoing communication between schools and families and help support the education of each student. During the 2019-20 school year, Kindergarten through third grade students will not receive the traditional progress report like students in fourth and fifth grades receive. However, teachers are expected to communicate with parents regarding academic progress at the 4 ½ week point through communication folders, email, phone calls, and/or Infinite Campus.

Grading Guidelines

Reassessment

Providing students with opportunities to retake assessments and redo activities is sound educational practice that is in the best interest of our students. We recognize that all students learn at different rates and should be granted opportunities to correct mistakes.

To demonstrate mastery of a standard, reassessment opportunities are expected. The following are guidelines for re-assessing students on a standard(s):

- The reassessment opportunity should occur within a reasonable timeframe determined by the teacher.
- The student must demonstrate that more learning has taken place.
- If multiple attempts (2-4) are not successful, the student may need instructional interventions to help address a concern.
- These opportunities eliminate the need for extra credit.

Zeros

Assigning zeros for missing or incomplete work is not a part of the standards-based classroom. Students are evaluated using a scale of mastery towards a standard. Grades are based on clear criteria and rubrics and trends within a collection of evidence that indicates the most recent level of mastery. If a student shows a pattern of not turning in work, the teacher should communicate with parents before the report card is issued.

Late Work

Late work is defined as any assignment that is not submitted on its due date, with the exception of make-up work for absences or approved school activities. Failure to turn in work on time should be reflected in the Learning and Life Skills section of the report card instead of assigned to a content-area standard. For students who have chronic issues with turning in late work, the teacher needs to communicate with parents and administration. This student may benefit from additional support resources such as a referral to the RTI process and/or the school counselor.

Extra Credit

Extra credit does not play a viable role in a standards-based classroom. If an extra credit assignment is offered, it must be purposeful, reasonable, and applicable to the curricular objectives, and available for all students.

Students should not be allowed to do minimal tasks/activities to make up points due to failure to turn in compositions, take a test, etc. This would not reflect where the student falls on the continuum towards mastery of the standard.

Make-up Work for Absences

Students shall be expected to make up assignments and tests after absences. Students will be given a minimum of one day to make up work for each day they are absent (excused or unexcused), with exceptions made due to severe or prolonged illness. Please apply professional judgment and ensure communication with students and parents to insure expectations are in place.

Homework

The purpose of homework is to promote high-quality student learning and achievement. Homework is an out-of-classroom learning experience assigned by a teacher to enhance student learning. It is to target specific learning outcomes, reinforce standards taught in the classroom, and provide practice in specific skills.

When assigning homework, teachers will ensure that students are provided with sufficient information and direction to complete the homework assignments independently, and that the assignments are not excessive for its intended purpose. A good rule of thumb is to multiply the grade x 10 to approximate the right amount of

minutes per night for students. (ex. 20 minutes for 2nd grade). In addition, homework is not to be assigned as a discipline consequence.

When students routinely do not complete and/or turn in their homework, the following suggestions may help the teacher support the student:

- Call the parents and request a conference. Parental support is essential for a good education. Explain your problem and ask for their help.
- Be sure that you have provided enough in-class practice before you assign homework. Students may attempt the assignment if they feel they can be successful.
- Refer students to the counselor.
- It is extremely important to assign major assignments in smaller chunks so those steps are due at various times. In this way you can monitor progress.
- Let students know the purpose of the homework - why are you assigning it. Let them know that you care about their progress.
- Conduct individual student conferences.
- Never assign homework as a punishment.

For grades 4-5, generally, all homework during a nine weeks period should not comprise more than 5% of the nine weeks average.

Grading in Special Programs

Early Intervention Program

No child receiving Early Intervention Program (EIP) services will be penalized for missing regular classroom instruction while attending an EIP resource class. A child will not be required to miss recess, exploratory classes, or other functions to complete work. The purpose of EIP is to provide small group reading and math interventions to close any academic achievement gaps in those areas. The content of the standard remains the same, but the method for learning and demonstrating mastery of a standard may be differentiated.

ESOL Program

It is important to consider the services and support in place to ensure that ELs are developing social and academic language proficiency and that ELs are able to

effectively participate in all academic standards. It is imperative that teachers use the **WIDA Can Do Descriptors** and each student's proficiency level in English in lesson planning and making accommodations for ELs. The WIDA Can Do Descriptors may be accessed on the WIDA website (www.wida.us). These descriptors will assist teachers in providing appropriate instructional scaffolding to ensure the academic content is comprehensible at each student's level of proficiency in English.

In addition, all EL student grades need to reflect their linguistic accommodations and modifications determined by the annual initial teacher meeting and Testing Participation Committee (TPC) documentation. ELs should not have failing grades (in our traditional grade reporting) due to their inability to speak English. Teachers should be aware of their student's level of English proficiency and keep a list of language proficiency levels, Can Do Descriptors, and required accommodations in data binders.

When using Standards-Based Report Cards please report accurately the student's level of mastery of standards based on their current performance. [Accommodations provide access to content standards.](#) If mastery is demonstrated using appropriate ESOL accommodations, students would not be restricted from a score of 3: meeting proficiency of the standard.

Grading Guidelines for New Arrivals/Non-speakers: The grading/reporting system does not have to be applied to students who enter the USA with no understanding of English until grading/reporting is a meaningful measure of their learning. The classroom teacher places an * (not formally assessed) on report card in all or some of the academic areas and adds a brief appropriate comment. When necessary, this grading substitute may be used instead of grading in content areas for one calendar year from the date the student enrolled in a US school. All attempts should be made through planning and instruction to ascertain that students have adequate support. ELs should not have failing grades due to their inability to speak English. Teachers must recognize the processes and features of second language acquisition by working closely with the ESOL teacher.

Gifted Program

Guidelines for Interface between Regular Classroom and Gifted Programs

No child receiving gifted services will be penalized for missing regular classroom instruction while attending gifted/enrichment class. A child will not be required to miss recess, exploratory classes, or other functions to complete work.

- I. Classwork (assignments done while students are in gifted)

- A. Gifted students will be apprised of material covered in the regular classroom while they are in gifted. Copies of handouts, worksheets, experiments, directions, etc. will be available upon students' return from gifted, but students will not be required to complete anything but 20% of the math work. Example: A teacher might place handouts on the gifted students' desks so they will see what they have missed upon return to the classroom and can ask for clarification or explanation.
 - B. Gifted students will be given the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency of any math work by completing approximately 20% of the class work assignments missed during their time in gifted and will receive full credit for the percent submitted if work is complete and correct. (Teachers should indicate those tasks which are most critical and comprise 20% of the work.)
 - C. Gifted students who are not able to demonstrate proficiency of 20% will be required to complete a larger percentage of the math work assignments to demonstrate full acquisition of skill and/or knowledge.
 - D. Gifted students will have two school days to complete math work assignments assigned during their time in gifted. Example: Work given on Tuesday would be due on Thursday of that week. Work given on Thursday will be due Monday of the following week.
- II. Homework
- A. Gifted students will be apprised of math assignments before the end of the day. Additional time should be allotted for gifted students to pick up or copy posted assignments. (Teachers are encouraged to make all assignments available. Students often choose to complete assignments that are interesting or are in their area(s) of strong interest. Students, however, may not be required to complete work in addition to the 20% assigned in math.) Example: John has gifted class on Tuesday from 8:00-2:00. He should pick up or copy his assignments before going to his gifted class (7:40-8:00). It will not always be possible to give the new assignments before gifted, but please attempt to do this as much as possible.

Special Education Program

Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) must be provided with the same opportunity to receive grades in relation to expectations for grade level standards;

this is a civil right. Since students with disabilities are a heterogeneous group with various disabilities which impact learning, some may not achieve certain grade level standards without special services and supports.

In some instances, students with disabilities can be expected to meet grade-level standards with no changes in how or what is taught, and they should be graded as any other student. In other instances, students can be expected to meet grade level standards with additional supports, called accommodations, provided by school staff. 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 differentiated. Accommodations are discussed and determined at the IEP meeting but are not shown on the report card. It should be noted in the teacher comments that the grade was achieved with accommodations in place.

For some students with significant cognitive disabilities, it is necessary for the IEP team to adapt or modify the grade level standards. These students receive instruction based on an *adapted curriculum* which provides access to grade level standards, and they are assessed on the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) rather than the Georgia Milestones Assessment System.

For all students with an IEP, a supplemental progress report is provided quarterly. For additional information specific to your child, please contact your child's special education case manager.

Section 504 Plans

Students with a 504 plan are expected to meet grade level standards with accommodations in place to support their learning. The content of the standard remains the same, but the method for learning and demonstrating mastery of a standard may be differentiated. Accommodations are discussed and determined at the 504 meeting but are not shown on the report card. It should be noted in the teacher comments that the grade was achieved with accommodations in place.

Parent Communication

Teachers are expected to facilitate and maintain ongoing effective communication with parents, especially regarding student progress. Teachers should provide specific comments, which provides explicit feedback for parents to use to support their child's growth.

Standards Based Report Card Parent Letter:

The communication between home and school is key to your child's education and success. Fayette County Schools utilize a standards-based reporting system for Kindergarten through Third Grade students as a way of communicating your child's learning and progress throughout the year.

What are standards?

The [Georgia Standards of Excellence](#) (GSE) guide what we teach (our curriculum). Our textbooks and materials are resources utilized to support academic instruction. In recent years, there have been revisions to the GSE which have raised the academic expectations for what our students should know and what they can do with what they know.

What is a standards-based report card?

Unlike traditional report cards, standards-based reporting measures students' knowledge of material by reporting the most recent, consistent level of performance on grade-level content standards. The standards-based report card is helpful in many ways. First, it clarifies and reinforces consistent, high expectations for all Fayette County Schools students. Second, the report card helps teachers, students, and families focus on the standards throughout the school year. Finally, and most importantly, this reporting format provides specific feedback on meeting the standards so students, families, and teachers can work together to set meaningful goals for growth.

How do I interpret the report card?

Students who consistently demonstrate mastery of standards through regular classroom instruction and assessment will receive a score of "3" (meets proficiency of the standards). **By the end of the school year, the expected performance level is a Level 3.** Students who consistently exceed proficiency of the standard may receive a score of 4 in a given area. There are select standards, such as identification of the 26

letters of the alphabet, that cannot receive a score of 4 due to the nature of the standard.

Score	Performance Level	Description
1	Beginning to demonstrate an understanding of the standard	I am starting to get it, but I am still confused.
2	Developing proficiency of the standard	I can do this with help or with an example in front of me.
3	Meeting proficiency of the standard	I can do this on my own without help.
4	Exceeding proficiency of the standard	I can apply and connect my learning in various ways.

Infinite Campus Resources

[K-3 Standards-based Grade Book Instructions](#)