

**Elementary Report Card Changes**  
**ISD 709**  
**Draft**

The Duluth Public School District is moving to standards-based grading and reporting at the elementary level. Standards-based grading is considered a best practice in education. Districts across the country are implementing standards-based grading and reporting systems. In Minnesota, many districts have moved to standards-based grading and reporting including: Austin, Bloomington, Edina, Minnetonka, Spring Lake Park, St. Cloud, and Wayzata.

At this time, secondary report cards and transcripts are unchanged.

*Q. What are Standards-based Report Cards?*

A. The Duluth Public School's standards-based elementary report card identifies the major learning goals that students will be expected to achieve within each subject area at each grade level. Levels of competency have been established for each goal, and your student's report card will reflect the progress he/she is making on each standard's criteria. A student's performance will be determined by a body of evidence including grade level work and assessments.

*Q. How are grades different on a Standards-based Report Card?*

A. The purpose of a standards-based report card is to communicate to parents how their students are progressing in relationship to academic standards. Academic standards are statements that describe what students should know and/or be able to do. All assignments and assessments are linked to the standards. The score students earn will reflect what students know and can do. Non-academic factors such as responsibility, effort, and attendance will not be factored in the score, but will be reported separately. Teachers determine students' progress based on a specific learning criteria. Scores are based on the student's work compared to the standards - not compared to other students in the class.

*Q. How will I receive information about my child's learning habits?*

A. The report card will contain a section titled Characteristics of Successful Learners. This section of the report card will provide information about behaviors that affect student learning. Examples of these behaviors include: Completes daily work, Works collaboratively, Follows directions, etc.,. Learning habits will be determined based on frequency: consistently, sometimes, rarely.

*Q. What is the scale that will be used to determine grades?*

*4 = Mastering* - The student's knowledge, understanding, and application of the

concepts, skills, and processes extends beyond the requirements of the standard.

*3 = Meeting* - The student has thorough knowledge, understanding, and application of the concepts, skills, and processes the standard requires.

*2 = Developing* - The student is gaining understanding of the concepts, skills, and processes the standard requires, but has not been able to consistently demonstrate the learning.

*1 = Beginning* - The student is just starting to understand the concepts, skills, and processes the standard requires and needs consistent support.

*Q. What if my child doesn't Meet the standard?*

A. Student's will be given multiple opportunities to meet the expectations set by the academic standards. Teachers will evaluate students' progress on the standards through formative and summative assessments. The majority of the report card score will be based on summative assessments.

- a. **Formative Assessments** - Formative assessments are opportunities for practice. Formative assessments provide teachers with information regarding each student's understanding of the lesson objective and help teachers provide feedback to students while they are learning the new material.
- b. **Summative Assessments** - After sufficient time for practice, students are assessed so they can show what they have learned. Summative assessments can include a wide variety of tasks including projects, tests, or performances.

*Q. When will I receive information on my student's progress?*

A. Your student's progress will be shared:

- a. Fall goal-setting report and conference (October)
- b. Semester formal report card and conference (January-February)
- c. Semester final report card (June)

B. Families are always welcome to contact their child's school with questions or concerns.

*Q. What if I have more questions?*

A. The curriculum department has developed a web-page specific to standards-based grading on the ISD 709 webpage. If you would like further information regarding standards-based grading and reporting, please call the Duluth Public School Curriculum Department at 218-336-8700 ext. 1138