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Research Brief

Standards Based Report Cards

Question:

What have schools have tried?
Who are schools doing it?

Summary of Findings: With the increased focus on standards-based education, more and more states, districts and school are becoming interested in standards-based grading and report cards. Hawaii, for example, is a state that is working hard on its “Standards Implementation Design” (SID), including standards-based report cards. Additionally, Maine statute sets forth these general requirements:

There is a need for assessment information at both state and local level to measure progress and ensure accountability regarding the system of learning results, which must be accomplished through a comprehensive system of local and state assessment, involving multiple measures to determine what each student knows and is able to demonstrate regarding the standards of the system of learning results. [20-A MRSA section 6201]

As a component of Maine’s Local Assessment System, schools have the need to report student progress as it relates to the four (4) performance levels as defined by the Maine Education Assessment (4th, 8th, & 11th grade testing):

1. Does not meet the standard;
2. Partially meets the standard;
3. Meets the standard; and
4. Exceeds the standard.

Although standards-based report cards are not required, it is a logical next step. It seems that many jurisdictions across the country are phasing in standards-based report cards, beginning with the elementary grades and then adding the middle schools and high schools in later years. But most of those jurisdictions seem to still rely on proficiency testing for high school students, even though more and more high schools seem to be exploring standards-based report cards.

Online Resources:

High School Report Cards. ERIC Digest.

Boston, Carol;

This Digest summarizes trends in grading practices and introduces issues related to standards-based reporting. A large majority of schools use a traditional grading system, and many teachers have a great deal of autonomy in making decisions about grades. Given the latitude that teachers have in developing grading policies and differences in curriculum across schools, districts, and states, it is not



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surprising that there may be disconnects between students' grades and student achievement as measured by test performance. One possible way to find out if an "A" at one school represents the same level of achievement as an A at another school is to compare student performance on end-of-course examinations. Fifteen states now use end-of-course examinations. Most states have embraced standards-based education, and it might be possible to make grades reflect the progress students have made toward the standards. Report cards that combine traditional grades and information about progress toward standards are also an option. K. Marzano describes such an approach and also recommends that teachers reorganize their grade books around standards by allocating columns to standards rather than to assignments and tests. Some current classroom grading practices are thought to be detrimental to the goals of standards-based education. It is essential that clear information be provided about how far along each child is in mastering specific knowledge and skills that all are expected to learn.

ERIC #:ED481815

http://www.eric.ed.gov:80/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?_nfpb=true&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=%22report+cards%22&ERICExtSearch_Operator_2=and&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_2=eric_metadata&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=eric_metadata&ERICExtSearch_SearchCount=2&ERICExtSearch_PubDate_From=0&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_1=standards-based&ERICExtSearch_Operator_1=and&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_1=eric_metadata&ERICExtSearch_PubDate_To=2004&_pageLabel=RecordDetails&objectId=0900000b801b5c26

Grading and Reporting Student Progress in an Age of Standards.

Trumbull, Elise, Ed.; Farr, Beverly, Ed.;

The essays in this collection offer a comprehensive analysis of the challenges of communicating effectively about student achievement. Discussions of concepts related to grading and reporting progress are mixed with practical advice.

ERIC #:ED447177

http://www.eric.ed.gov:80/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?_nfpb=true&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=%22report+cards%22&ERICExtSearch_Operator_2=and&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_2=eric_metadata&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=eric_metadata&ERICExtSearch_SearchCount=2&ERICExtSearch_PubDate_From=0&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_1=standards-based&ERICExtSearch_Operator_1=and&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_1=eric_metadata&ERICExtSearch_PubDate_To=2004&_pageLabel=RecordDetails&objectId=0900000b8012c33c

How To Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards. 2nd Edition.

O'Connor, Ken;

This book presents guidelines to help teachers design and conduct grading practices that help students feel in control of their own academic success. Each chapter presents purposes and key elements of the guideline and examines the bottom line. At the end of each chapter, a reflective activity asks readers to think about the guideline and its importance and meaning to them. Three appendixes include a



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glossary, guidelines for grading in standards based systems, and a proposed grading policy

ERIC #:ED464084

http://www.eric.ed.gov:80/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?_nfpb=true&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=%22report+cards%22&ERICExtSearch_Operator_2=and&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_2=eric_metadata&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=eric_metadata&ERICExtSearch_SearchCount=2&ERICExtSearch_PubDate_From=0&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_1=standards-based&ERICExtSearch_Operator_1=and&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_1=eric_metadata&ERICExtSearch_PubDate_To=2004&pageLabel=RecordDetails&objectId=0900000b80070a92

Hawaii:

Standards-Based Curriculum and Student Report Cards

Hawaii Department of Education

Ten elementary schools are testing Hawaii's new report card format. Implementation in elementary schools begins in School Year 2006-07 with middle and high schools to follow in subsequent years. The new format tells parents how children are performing in relation to the content standards. Parents will receive two types of reports twice a year: a two-page mid semester progress report and a four-page status report at the end of each semester. High schools will maintain the traditional letters; however, the grades will reflect proficiency: "C" denotes proficiency in a majority of the standards, "B" represents meeting all standards and an "A" is awarded for attaining proficiency above the standards. <http://militaryfamily.k12.hi.us/seminar/reportcards.htm>

Standards-based report cards offer fair grading

By Andrew Stercho

In response to the call for standardized grading, high school students will be experiencing the new system beginning in the 2007-08 school year. They will be forced to adapt to all of the changes that are sure to accompany it. This trend began years ago when it was realized that letter grades were very subjective. An "A" in one school may not mean the same as another. It was agreed upon that standards-based grading would be an adequate solution to this problem. The new method would ensure that teachers cover certain topics and that students learn necessary material. In theory, education will be constant throughout all schools that employ it. <http://www.mililanihs.k12.hi.us/TTIMES/ttimespagetwo.htm>

Hawaii Standards based Report Cards Resources site

<http://reportcard.k12.hi.us/public/resources.htm>

Standards-Based Education in Hawaii

Hawaii Standards based Report Cards site

<http://reportcard.k12.hi.us/>



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95-1200 Meheula Pkwy.
Mililani, HI 96789
Phone: 808.627.7747
FAX: 808.627.7375
<http://www.mililanihs.k12.hi.us/>

Schools using Standards-based Report Cards (not all High Schools)

Piscataquis Community High School
9 Campus Drive,
Guilford, Maine 04443
Telephone: (207) 876-4625
<http://www.sad4.com/PCHS/index.html>

The Mt. Diablo Unified School District
http://www.mdusd.k12.ca.us/mdusd/c_and_i/report-cards.html

Travis Unified School District
http://www.travisusd.k12.ca.us/travisusd/tusd/Administration/Departments/Educational_Services/SBRC/Downloads.asp

Woodland Joint Unified School District
http://www.wjUSD.k12.ca.us/report_cards.htm

Santa Monica-Malibu Unified District
<http://www.smmusd.org/edservices/sbrc.html>

Pacific School District
<http://www.pacificasd.org/curriculum/reportCard.htm>

West Contra Costa Unified School District
<http://www.wccusd.k12.ca.us/professionaldevelopment/Parentsguide.htm>

Other School-based Resources:

Standards-Based Report Cards: A tool for districts to report on student progress in a traditional format with new standards-based measures

Corpus Christi Independent School District

Corpus Christi Independent School District's (CCISD) standards-based report cards, used at all grade



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levels, are easy-to-understand reports of student progress that merge traditional grading systems with new measurements on standards achievement. The report card is formatted with places to report on two measures and give brief information about standards. The top of the report card contains places for traditional letter or numerical grades. The bottom of the report card contains space for indicators of student achievement on performance standards. The back of the report contains abbreviated descriptions of the standards listed by subject and grade.

http://www.publicengagement.com/resources/standards/oldstandards/reporting/rep_reportcard.htm

Grading & Reporting

Supporting Documents

MCPS Bulletin Article: Grading & Reporting

"Standards-based grading and reporting implementation begins"

This school year begins the first phase of a five-year plan for implementing a new standards-based grading and reporting policy for Montgomery County Public Schools. The new grading and reporting practices are designed to be fair and meaningful and support rigorous performance and achievement standards for all students. During the 2004-2005 school year, high schools will participate in discussions to understand what will happen during the 2005-2006 school year when they begin to implement the new grading and reporting policy. Discussions will relate to academic grades, learning skills, homework, effort, participation, extra credit, late work and attendance.

http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/info/grading/documents/supporting/bulletin_sept.shtm

Products Related to Standards-based Report Cards:

PowerSchool

<http://www.apple.com/education/powerschool/>

WebGrader

<http://www.webgrader.com/whatsnew.asp>

Progression software from Abante

Abante Systems, INC.

<http://www.abante.com>

Excelsior's Pinnacle Plus assessment management system

<http://www.gradebook.com/solutions/sbrc.htm>

Report Cards Plus Skills/Standards Module

<http://www.redikersoftware.com/report-cards-software/skills-standards.html>



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Objective Analyst

Standards based assessment software measures student performance against curriculum objectives

<http://www.objectiveanalyst.com/overview.asp>

Date: 6/6/2005

Submitted By: Mike Muir, Maine Center for Meaningful Engaged Learning

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