



If you would like more information, please contact your child's teacher.

Parents may find the standards and examples at www.teksresourcesystem.net.

Please join your child's teacher at our Academic Parent Teacher Team meetings (APTT) to receive specific assessment data regarding your child's progress and learn ways you can help at home.

APTT dates for 2016-2017:

PreK: November 9th, March 8th

Kindergarten: October 25, February 7, April 25

First Grade: September 20, January 24, April 25

Helping Parents Understand Standards-Based Report Cards

In Lytle ISD, report cards are issued 4 times per year (every 9 weeks). Progress reports are sent home at the midpoint between the 9 week grading periods. Our report card is based on standards established by the state of Texas called TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). The purpose of this report card is to communicate student progress toward achieving these end of year objectives. A standards-based report card:

- provides a clear message to parents about which skills and concepts students know and are able to demonstrate in relation to established state standards
- helps teachers and students focus on identified end-of-year expectations from the very beginning of the year, giving students a direction for their learning
- aligns instruction and assessment with standards
- creates a higher level of consistency and continuity in assessing among teachers and across grade levels

Why are we hearing so much about standards?

Teaching and learning should be aligned with state standards. Our curriculum (what we teach) is developed, and our textbooks and materials (what we use to teach) are purchased with standards as the guiding influence.

Success for schools in Texas is determined by their students' performance on the STAAR in grades 3 and up. These "measures of success" are published annually in the School Report Card and include schools' and districts' progress towards achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). These assessments are based upon the Texas standards (TEKS).

What is a standards-based assessment?

Standards-based assessment is based on the belief that every child can learn given adequate instruction and opportunity for practice. It allows teachers to accurately communicate achievement of learning targets or benchmarks to students and parents, as well as providing information to plan for instruction.

State learning standards inform teachers, parents, and students what skills and content students should learn at varying points in their educational experience. Developing assessments and report cards based upon learning standards measures how well students are acquiring skills and knowledge relative to those established standards. Standards-based assessment is used to help every student understand where he or she is in relation to meeting standards so they can improve.

By aligning curriculum, assessment and student report cards to standards, teachers measure student learning against consistent, established criteria. This is different from traditional assessment and reporting, which gives a single letter or number grade for broad subject categories. A standards-based report card puts the emphasis on learning, rather than on a comparison between and among students.

What is the difference between traditional and standards-based assessment?

Traditional assessment uses averaging of student work over time, and other student characteristics such as work habits, attendance, homework, and effort. Standards-based assessment focuses solely on a student's academic achievement and continued mounting evidence that indicates a true measure of the student's attainment of learning targets (such as the ability to write a paragraph, or add and subtract whole numbers). Extraneous factors like work habits, attendance, homework, and effort are assessed and reported separately.

In standards-based assessments, reporting is based more upon the progress toward mastery of learning targets or standards than "traditional" assessment. Subject areas are broken down further into big ideas and learning targets that students need to learn or master. Each target is assessed. Scores from activities that are provided solely for practice are not reflected. The influence of positive and consistent work habits on student learning is reported separately from achievement.

On traditional report cards, students receive one grade for reading, one for math, one for science and so on. On a standards-based report card, subjects are divided into a list of knowledge and skills that students are responsible for learning. Students receive a separate mark for each standard.

The marks on a standards-based report card are different from traditional letter grades. Letter grades are often calculated by combining how well the student met his/her particular teacher's expectations, how he/she performed on assignments and tests, and how much effort the teacher believes was put forth. Letter grades do not tell parents which skills their children have mastered or whether they are working below, at or above grade level.

Standards-based report cards will provide more consistency between teachers over the years than traditional report cards, because all students are evaluated on the same grade-appropriate skills. Parents can see exactly which learning objectives their child will have mastered.

Do the performance descriptors on the report card correlate with letter grades?

No, the following performance descriptors are used to indicate a student's progress in meeting academic learning standards.

MS (Met Standard)

The student has met the standard for end of year expectations.

AP (Approaching)

The student is approaching end of year expectations and has met expectations for material taught this nine weeks.

SW (Still working)

The student is still working toward understanding the standard and requires some assistance from the teacher.

IS (Increased support)

The student is struggling with the standard and needs increased support at home and at school.

How does standards-based assessing effect student motivation?

When students can clearly see the learning goals/purpose for each activity and connect the outcomes of those activities to actions that are within their control, motivation improves. In other words, when students can see that the level and amount of work they contribute to a learning activity is directly related to the outcome, they will be empowered and encouraged to work hard.

How does a standards-based report card improve teaching and learning?

Knowing where the students are in their progress toward meeting standards-based learning objectives is crucial for planning and carrying out classroom instruction. Teachers teach to the needs of each student. Standards-based assessment gives teachers more information about each student's progress in meeting the level of proficiency required by each standard. In addition, teachers share the standards with students and parents, helping them to better understand the learning that needs to take place.