

additional learning opportunities to enable all students an opportunity to reach proficiency.

What does the “Characteristics of a Successful Learner” section represent?

Work habits and skills students bring to the learning environment are critical to a student’s long-term success. The elementary report card identifies 14 characteristics of a successful learner:

- *Accepts responsibility of own actions and the consequences that accompany them
- *Applies previous knowledge to new situations
- *Asks thoughtful questions to further learning
- *Cooperates with others while learning
- *Critiques the reasoning of others respectfully
- *Explains answers and adjusts thinking with reflection and feedback
- *Follows the expectations of adults, the classroom, and the school
- *Learns independently when given a task
- *Makes productive use of learning time
- *Perseveres in learning situations
- *Seeks information and help when needed
- *Selects appropriate learning tools strategically
- *Takes responsibility for assigned tasks
- *Takes risk to further learning

All teachers evaluate the 14 characteristics with a “+” for Consistently, or a “-” for Inconsistently. Please emphasize with your child the importance of productive work and study habits.

Interest/effort in content areas is also reflected with a “+” or “-“ on the report card.

When should parents expect the reports?

The elementary standards-based report card is issued three times a year. The first trimester report card is shared at parent/teacher conferences in November. The second trimester report card is sent home in March. Parents keep the report card and sign/return the envelope to the classroom teacher to confirm that it was received and reviewed. The third trimester

report card is sent home with each child on the last day of school. A second parent/teacher conference is held for kindergarten students during the spring. *(This is the same trimester reporting schedule used in previous years.)*

An additional communication tool to inform parents of their child’s progress towards proficiency of end-of-year standards, are mid-trimester progress reports. They are sent home in October, January and April.

How can parents support their children at home?

An advantage to the new standards-based system is that it provides more specific information to parents for working with their child on identified areas and supporting the school’s efforts in educating students to reach or exceed mastery of the standards. Coupled with on-going discussions with the child’s teacher, the new reporting system provides parents with a closer look at the concepts and skills each student is working on in his or her grade level.

It is our goal the new reporting system helps set a clear direction toward developing students who consistently demonstrate the characteristics of a successful learner.

For more information on the State Standards and specific grade-level skills and concepts, please visit our District website: www.bsd7.org



Bozeman School District Elementary Report Card Informational Guide

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Overview

This guide explains Bozeman School District's new elementary standards-based grading and reporting procedures.

Why a new elementary report card?

The Bozeman School District created a new elementary standards-based report card after adopting the new Montana Math & English Language Arts (ELA) State Standards. In collaboration with parents and teachers, a new report card was designed to stimulate on-going conversation among teachers, parents, and students about what is expected of students in a rigorous academic program.

The report card serves as one communication tool to inform parents of their child's progress towards goals outlined in the standards. It is used to:

- communicate achievement status on end-of-year standards to students, families, and teachers;
- provide information that students can use for self-evaluation and growth; and
- encourage student growth and progress in learning.

Bozeman School District's faculty and administration are dedicated to providing ongoing information regarding the progress of all students. We value the vital role of families in students' learning and encourage communication with your child's teachers.

What are the Standards?

The Montana Office of Public Instruction endorses a standards-based educational system. Montana's current Math & ELA State Standards help to define the knowledge and skills students should attain during their K-12 education in the 21st century. The core elements are reflected on the report card. Parents will receive information regarding specific grade-level skills and concepts associated with each standard.

How does a teacher evaluate a child's performance?

In standards-based classrooms, the focus is on a student's performance toward meeting end-of-year goals for each standard. Each trimester provides students multiple opportunities to practice, attain, and demonstrate proficiency of standards. Through the identification of clear learning goals, a student's knowledge and skills are measured on a continual basis, stretching students to perform at their highest level of potential. Teachers collect evidence of a child's achievement through observations, examination of a student's work, discussions, projects, performance tasks, quizzes, and multiple assessments.

How is academic achievement noted on the report card?

The report card is based on specific subject area standards relating to the knowledge and skills students should attain by the **end** of the school year. Symbols are used to indicate a student's progress or achievement toward meeting or achieving each standard:

- IV **Exceeds Grade Level Standards**
- III **Meets Grade Level Standards**
- II **Working Towards Grade Level Standards**
- I **Inconsistent Growth Towards Standards**
- NA **Not Assessed at This Time**

It is important to note the IV, III, II, I reflect progress towards **end**-of-year expectations for each standard. For example, a II at the first or second trimester indicates a student is on track to meeting the standard. Effort grades are given separately from achievement.

Why are grades not used on the report card?

In a standards-based learning environment, the emphasis is on learning and continual progress. In order for students to develop a clear sense of what they know and what they need to know, children need to be aware of how they are doing. A letter or percentage grade identifies how a student is performing on average, but does not provide feedback that fosters mastery learning or the intrinsic motivation to learn and grow in a specific skill area. A standards-based report card emphasizes "learning" over "earning."

What happens when a student reaches proficiency?

Instruction for all students is differentiated in a standards-based system. Teachers work with all students to motivate and educate them to develop to their highest potential. When a student is proficient in all of the skills and concepts related to an end-of-year standard, the teacher provides differentiated instruction to move a student to deeper levels of understanding. The work completed and the ongoing communication with the teacher serves to clarify the growth of a student.

What if a child never reaches proficiency?

The standards on the grade-level report card represent **end-of-year** goals or where a student is expected to be at the end of the school year. Each student is provided with supports "along the way" in order to help him or her meet the standards. Advantages of a standards-based report card are it provides the current teacher with a clear roadmap in planning and provides a better understanding of the rate of skill development. The school may recommend

