



Parent's Guide

For the

Revised Elementary Progress Reports

Kindergarten through Sixth Grade

2011-2012

Board of Education

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I Hear, I Forget

I See, I Remember

I Do, I Understand

Chinese Proverb

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Report Card Committee

Jenny Allison, Teacher, Jefferson
Bettina Becker, Parent
Deb Belleau, Teacher, Jefferson
Eric Bright, Teacher, CMS
Chad Burgett, Principal, Carl Sandburg
Jill Davidson, Teacher, Jefferson
Alyson Davis, Teacher, Carl Sandburg
Terry Diss, Principal, Mark Twain/Ashmore
Jerry Esker, Board Member
Pam Evans, Teacher, Jefferson
Cindy Goodchild, Teacher, Jefferson
Barb Haddock, Teacher, Carl Sandburg
Kristen Holly, Library/Media, Carl Sandburg
Trisha Ingram, Teacher, Carl Sandburg
Emily Jacobs, Teacher, Mark Twain
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Cheryl McKee, Teacher, Mark Twain
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Deb Poffinbarger, Principal, Jefferson
Tony Reeley, Parent
Kim Sherwood, Teacher, CMS
Ginger Stanfield, Teacher, Jefferson
Holly Storm, Teacher, Mark Twain/Ashmore
Janette VanMeter, Teacher, Carl Sandburg
Todd J. Vilaro, Assistant Superintendent

Dear Parent/Guardians,

There have been numerous state and federal initiatives and requirements placed upon local school districts in recent years. While some of these have brought some frustrations, others have prompted improvements in the ways we help students learn and grow.

The Charleston CUSD #1 is always searching for those ways to improve learning for all and to help our students best prepare for a successful life after they leave our schools. As a part of that search, our administrators, teachers, parents, and others have worked together over the past three years to create revised elementary school report cards.

Initially implemented as a “standards-based progress report” and used for the first time in our district during the 2010-2011 academic year for elementary grades kindergarten through 4th, progress reports have been revised based upon input from our parents and teachers. The new progress reports for the 2011-2012 academic year blend traditional letter-grade and standards-based practices into a “hybrid” format. The revised reports are intended to provide a subject area letter grade, long-understood by parents, as well as additional information about a student’s academic achievement for each subject area, aligned to the *New Illinois Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core*. Our expectation is that the new reporting tools will provide you with better information about your child’s overall academic performance, as well as information about the acquisition of specific skills. To that end, we have an obligation to provide as much information as possible to help you understand the new progress reports.

This parent’s guide has been designed to help ensure that we communicate as clearly and comprehensibly as possible about the revised progress reports. If you have additional questions about the progress reports, your child’s teacher or your school’s principal will welcome your call. If questions still remain, I would welcome your call at 639-1002. We value our partnership in working together to provide the best educational services for our youth.

Yours in education,

Todd J. Vilardo
Assistant Superintendent

The Development of Revised Report Cards: A Timeline

Fall 2008	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elementary Curriculum Council set a goal to revise K-6 report cards 2. Report Card Committee was formed 3. Report Card Committee met, reviewed Board Policies & School Code, researched reporting methods, and pursued a standards-based progress reporting tool
Winter 2008-09	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report Card Committee developed 1st draft of SBPR and parent brochures 2. PowerPoint presentation to all teachers to explain purpose of SBPR 3. Report Card Committee submitted revisions to 1st draft of SBPR
Spring 2009	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SBPR drafts shared with all teachers 2. Committee members sought input from grade level colleagues 3. Curriculum Council made SBPR recommendation to Superintendent
Late Spring 2009	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report Card Committee presented SBPR research to School Board 2. Superintendent recommended an additional year to prepare the community and continue development of SBPR
Summer 2009	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report Card committee met to develop timeline for continued development
Fall 2009	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report Card committee reviewed and revised development timeline 2. Presentation made to parents at each school's Open House 3. Report Card Committee members discussed SBPR with CMS

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Parent Survey conducted 5. Teacher Survey conducted 6. Report Card draft shared with all teachers again, for further input and revision recommendations
Winter 2009	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report Card Committee reviewed survey results 2. Report Card Committee reviewed teacher feedback & recommendations 3. Report Card committee members worked to revise documents, using teacher recommendations and comments from teacher and parent surveys
Winter 2010	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revised SBPR shared with all teachers 2. Committee members sought additional input and recommendations to consider for final draft of SBPR 3. Panel Forums provided for parents
January & February 2010	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report Card Committee reviewed final teacher feedback 2. Committee members revised and created final draft of SBPR 3. Presentation to School Board for action 4. Board approved of SBPR for use in grades K-4 during 2010-2011
Spring 2010	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report Card Committee developed action plans for implementation
Fall 2010	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SBPRs implemented in grades K-4
Spring 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parent Survey conducted 2. Teacher Survey conducted 3. Progress Reports revised by Report Card Committee
April 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation to School Board for action 2. Board approved of SBPR for use in grades K-6 during 2011-2012

Common Questions

Why is the Charleston CUSD #1 revising its report cards?

- According to Board Policy, the District must establish a system of grading and reporting academic achievement to students and their parents and guardians.
- The grading system must also determine when promotion requirements are met.
- The decision to promote a student to the next grade level must be based, in part, on successful completion of the curriculum.
- Since our curriculum is developed to align with the standards, and teachers are to assess the extent to which children successfully complete the curriculum, a report card that includes the standards may provide the best way to report a child's academic achievement.

Why base our local curriculum on the State's standards?

- According to Section 5/2-3.63 of the Illinois School Code, schools must "set student learning objectives which meet or exceed goals established by the State."
- Our District's curriculum has long been developed to align with the Illinois Learning Standards.
- Since the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) recently adopted the Common Core Standards, CUSD #1 has been revising its math and English language arts curriculum.
- For more information about the New Illinois Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core, visit the ISBE website at http://www.isbe.state.il.us/common_core/default.htm .

What other benefits do the revised progress reports provide?

- In general, the new progress reports can be a more accurate reflection of a child's learning and academic achievement, rather than merely a reflection of a child's attendance, behavior or other non-academic factors.
- As the standards become more familiar, achievement levels can be better understood.
- With the revised progress reports, parents will be able to see their child's specific strengths and specific areas needing improvement within each core area.
- Parents and teachers can use a common language about what students need in order to achieve learning goals, fostering the educator/parent partnership.
- For students, revised progress reports emphasizes self-assessment, promoting valuable goal-setting life skills.

What does a SBPR look like?

K-6 progress report are accessible on our district's website at

<http://www.charleston.k12.il.us/departments/curriculum-and-instruction.asp>

What student evidence determines grades?

At the beginning of each school year, your child's teacher will inform students about the grading system. The teacher will explain that grades (1) assess progress toward education goals and assist in the improvement of that progress, (2) will be given by the teacher, using his or her professional judgment, in an impartial and consistent manner, and (3) will reflect excessive, unexcused absences.

Teachers assess student achievement as demonstrated through such performance indicators as the following (these are not listed in order of importance):

1. Preparation of assignments, including completeness, accuracy, legibility, and promptness.
2. Contribution to classroom discussions.
3. Demonstrated understanding of concepts.
4. Application of skills and knowledge to new situations.
5. Organization, presentation, and content of written and oral reports.
6. Originality and reasoning ability when working through problems.
7. Accomplishment in class presentations and projects.
8. Performance on tests, quizzes, and final examinations.

When determining an achievement level, teachers consider the degree to which a student is able to demonstrate understanding and application of skills. Teachers may assess student's work based upon its quality, its quantity, student's application of skills, and their originality. A student's achievement level mark is intended to be an objective measurement of skills and knowledge.

An important part of this revised progress report is being able to show students and their parents the progress that students are making toward completing the standards-aligned curriculum. Grade level standards describe the knowledge and skills that students are expected to master in a quarter (as indicated by benchmarks) or by the end of the school year.

Is a standards-aligned progress report an educational trend or something that will exist indefinitely?

- Not a new concept nationwide, particularly at the elementary grade levels, it is a relatively new concept for some in our school community. Having studied other districts' successes and shortcomings and researched practices that have seen effectiveness, our district has made the commitment to effectively implement revised progress reports that are standards-aligned, while also providing a traditional grades.
- The District expects that the new reporting tools will provide parents with better information about their child's overall academic performance, as well as information about the acquisition of specific skills.
- Our Board of Education will continue evaluate the effectiveness of the revised progress reports through the use of parent and teacher surveys.

- A survey of parents will provide information as to whether the revised progress reports provide better, more accurate information about their child's academic achievement and whether the revised report card is easy for parents to understand.
- A similar survey of teachers will provide information as to whether the revised progress report is a useful tool for teachers and, if not, what needs to be changed.

Are there problems with standards-aligned progress reports?

As with any new program, students and parents should expect some glitches in the first few years. Most researchers note that a school's first years of using standards-aligned progress reports are challenging for teachers as they deal with technical difficulties at the same time they were working to align their teaching and assessment with the new progress reports. Patience and understanding from parents and students go a long way when schools are working out bugs in a new program. Some schools that have implemented these new reporting tools have revised their standards-aligned progress report each year. In order to develop the best report cards possible, the Charleston CUSD #1 will continue to seek parental input as our progress reports are implemented and developed.

Why don't we see standards-aligned progress reports in middle or high school?

The district's current interest and focus lay with assessing the effectiveness and usefulness of new progress reports for elementary grade levels.

GLOSSARY

English Language Arts

Accommodations: Changes in how tests are given that do not significantly change what the test measures.

Examples might include changes in: test setting or timing, how answers are given, and how the test is presented.

Comprehension: The process of constructing meaning from written text.

Decoding: The process that a reader uses to recognize new words and meanings (e.g., phonics, word patterns, structural analysis, and context clues).

Explicit: When information is clearly stated in the text.

Fluency: The ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with smoothness and expression

Frustration reading level: A mismatch between instruction and what the individual is able to understand.

Genre: One of the categories based on form, style, or subject matter into which artistic works of all kinds can be divided. (examples: fiction, mystery, fables, fairy tales)

Graphic Organizers: Visual aids (e.g., Venn diagrams, webs, K-W-L) used to arrange information in an orderly manner.

Implicit: Information that is not specifically stated in the text but is implied or inferred

Independent reading level: When a student works independently without need of instructional support

Inference: Hints or clues in a story that let the reader “read between the lines” to draw conclusions or make judgments.

Instructional reading level: When instruction is comfortably matched to what an individual is able to understand.

Literary elements: A literary element (or element of literature) is an individual aspect or characteristic of a whole work of literature. (character, setting, plot)

Modifications: Substantial changes in what a student is expected to demonstrate; includes changes in instructional level, content, and performance expectations; may include changes in test form or format.

Phonemic Awareness: The ability to hear, identify, work with and control the individual sounds in spoken language.

Phonetics: The study of speech sounds and how they are spoken and written.

Phonics: Knowing that sounds and letters have a relationship; it is the link between what we say and what we can read and write.

Reader’s Workshop: An instructional model for reading that combines explicit instruction in reading strategies with opportunities for students to practice each reading strategy independently, with a peer, and in small groups.

The seven strategies are: 1. Making Connections 2. Visualizing 3. Making Inferences 4. Asking Questions 5.

Determining What Is Important 6. Synthesizing 7. Fix-up Strategies

Running Record: Method of recording miscues, or errors, in oral reading.

Vocabulary: The words we must know to communicate effectively.