



PARAMUS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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SEPTEMBER 2011



**STANDARDS-BASED
REPORT CARD**

Elementary (K-4)

**INFORMATIONAL
BROCHURE**

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REPORT CARD**
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What is a standards-based report card?

A standards-based report card highlights the most important skills students should learn in each subject at a particular grade level. In our elementary school learning environment, students receive marks that report student progress toward meeting content and performance standards three times a year. Benchmarks for each of the trimester marking periods are used to determine if the student is progressing toward the end-of-year standards.

What is a trimester marking period?

Our new standards-based report card is based on three marking periods (December, March, and June). Teachers will use marking period grading benchmarks to evaluate student progress. Benchmarks often change each trimester to reflect new standards and expectations for student growth. These benchmarks will provide consistency between teachers and schools because all teachers will be using the same district benchmarks.



What are the proficiency levels on the report card?

The proficiency level represents a student's progress on the report card. There are four categories, 1-4.

Earning a "4" means the student has advanced understanding and exceeds grade-level expectations. A student receiving a "4" demonstrates academically superior skills in that specific area. This student shows initiative, challenges himself or herself, and demonstrates this advanced knowledge at school. A "4" is difficult to obtain and indicates unusually high achievement.

Earning a "3" means the student has proficient understanding and meets grade-level expectations. We want all of our students to reach a level "3." A student receiving a "3" is right on track with our high academic expectations. A "3" is something to be celebrated!

Earning a "2" means the student has basic understanding and partially meets grade-level expectations. A student receiving a "2" understands the basic concept or skill, but has not yet reached the proficient level. A "2" should indicate to parents that their child may need some extra help or extra time to practice/understand that concept or skill.

Earning a "1" means the student has minimal understanding and does not meet grade-level expectations. A student receiving a "1" has academic delays according to our district standards, and interventions may be needed to learn and stay on track with district expectations.

Please keep in mind that these numbers are not indicators of a linear performance from trimester to trimester; rather, they are reflective of the goals of the current trimester. For example, your child may receive a "2" in a content skill in one trimester, but he/she may not automatically receive a "3" in that same content skill in the next trimester. This can be reflective of the natural progression of skills and curriculum benchmarks that developmentally change throughout the year.

We want parents to recognize that our teaching and assessments are directed at ensuring that all students have an opportunity to meet our curriculum standards. Different students progress at different rates, so standards may be met in varying amounts of time, with varying amounts of teacher support.



How do teachers determine proficiency levels?

Teachers determine which proficiency level your child has earned by using a report card benchmark. A report card benchmark outlines exactly what your child needs to know or be able to do to earn a 4, 3, 2, or 1 on the report card.

Throughout the trimester, teachers assess students. With the standards for that grade level in mind, they consider: knowledge of the child (How does this child learn best? In what way does this child communicate his/her learning?); evidence of student performance (work samples that have been collected, student performance on activities and assessments, teacher anecdotal notes); and, finally, knowledge of what the child is expected to know or be able to do (district curriculum and standards, report card benchmarks).

After going through this process, the teacher assigns a proficiency level for each line of the report card.

Will there still be conference opportunities available to discuss my child's progress?

Yes. We will continue with the usually scheduled parent-teacher conferences in the fall and spring.

Will parents be able to view the grading benchmarks?

The elementary report card benchmarks are available to parents and students. We want you to understand exactly what your child knows and is able to do. They can be viewed online at www.paramus.k12.nj.us; paper copies are available upon request at your child's school office.