

Orange County Schools

A Parent Guide to the K-5 Report Card

1. Why did Orange County Schools revise the elementary report card?

There are several reasons Orange County Schools revised its elementary report card:

- The North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) will be changing effective with the 2012-2013 school year. The new standards referred to as the *Common Core and Essential Standards*, were approved by the State Board of Education during the 2010 school year.
- The revised report card was developed as a transition report card for the 2011-2012 school year. A new report card, reflecting the new standards will be implemented during the 2012-2013 school year.
- The transition report card will now provide parents with an **overall proficiency** for core academic subjects. The **overall proficiency** mark describes each student's level of proficiency with regard to the entire subject, while the accompanying skills areas will indicate a student's relative strengths and weaknesses within that core subject, i.e. reading.

2. What will change?

There will be two distinct changes:

- The K-2 grade span report card and the 3-5 grade span report card will be replaced by individual grade level report cards.
- The same performance levels (1-4) will be used, but the language that describes each level has been revised.

3. How will student progress/performance be reported now?

Orange County Schools will use four levels of performance to report progress. These are:

Level 4 - **Exceptional** (Exceeds expectations): Demonstrates the skill or understands concepts at a level exceeding expectations for this reporting period.

Level 3 - **Meets Standard** (Developing appropriately): Usually demonstrates the skill or understands concepts and meets expectations for this reporting period.

Level 2 - **Approaching Standard** (Beginning to develop): Sometimes demonstrates the skill or understands concepts and meets some expectations for this reporting period.

Level 1 - **Below Standard** (Needs to develop): Seldom demonstrates the skill or understands concepts and is not meeting expectations for this reporting period.

4. How will parents know if their child is performing on grade level?

Level 3 means that a student is consistently performing on grade level while Level 4 means that a student always performs at the "top" of grade-level expectations. A student might begin the year at a Level 1 or Level 2 on some sub categories of reading, writing, and mathematics; but, it is our expectation that all students will be performing at Level 3 by the end of the academic year.

5. Who sets the performance standards? Will they be district-wide?

The performance standards are tied to those of North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) so they are not only district wide but state wide as well. For more information about the NC Standard Course of Study, you may consult your child's teacher or the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) web site.

If you would like more information regarding the new state standards which will be taught in 2012-2013, please visit the district's website. Go to the Curriculum and Instruction tab and then look for the link on Common Core.

6. Does Level 4 equate to an "A" or a certain percent accurate?

While there is no mathematical/numerical formula to equate Level 4 to an "A" or "% accurate", Level 4 does mean that the student consistently completes grade-level work at the highest performance expectations.

7. If my child receives all Level 4's, does that mean that my child is performing above grade level or is gifted?

Not necessarily. These performance levels measure grade-level standards and grade-level expectations. What it means is that a student is consistently completing all work at the highest level of expectation for that grade. However, we continue to believe that it is our responsibility to challenge all students to meet their full potential and that we must differentiate instruction as well as content and processes to meet individual needs.

8. Are students with disabilities (SWD) held to "grade-level" standards on the Report card?

Yes. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) federal laws require each state, school district, and school to hold ALL students to grade-level standards. IDEA also dictates that SWD must be taught the grade-level curriculum. Modifications are made in the delivery of the content, not in the content itself. Exceptional Children's Program teachers will also report student's progress based on Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals separately from the Report Card with nine weeks progress reports.

9. Will teachers "give" numerical grades?

In the normal course of collecting evidence related to student progress, teachers will use a variety of methods to provide feedback to students. Some teachers will still give students numerical or letter grades on some of the daily work students complete. They may also give "happy faces" or some other mark to indicate that students meet expectations. Teachers will also use pre-determined scoring guides or rubrics to measure student performance.

10. How will parents receive the Report Cards?

Teachers will complete paper Report Cards which will be sent to parents/guardians in a white envelope each nine weeks. Parents/Guardians will keep the Report Card and sign the white envelope at the appropriate line and return ONLY the white envelope to the teacher.

11. What can parents do if they do not understand the changes to the Report Card?

Parents can ask for a conference with their child's teacher or they can talk with the school Principal or Director of Elementary Instruction for more detailed information.