

# **JYMS - Parent Guide To Standards Based Grading**

*At JYMS, we envision a student-friendly report card with clearly defined learning targets aligned to high quality, balanced assessments that will bridge our elementary and high school grading formats. Our Standards-Based Report Card seeks to provide meaningful feedback so both students and parents can track student progress toward mastery of key academic concepts, reflect upon strengths and weaknesses, and identify multiple pathways to deeper learning.*

## **What is standards-based grading?**

Standards-based grading communicates how students are performing on a set of clearly defined learning targets called standards. The purpose of standards-based grading is to identify what a student knows, or is able to do, in relation to pre-establish learning targets, as opposed to simply averaging grades/scores over the course of a grading period, which can mask what a student has learned, or not learned, in a specific course.

## **How does standards-based grading differ from traditional grading?**

Unlike with traditional grading systems, a standards-based grading system measures a student's mastery of grade-level standards by prioritizing the most recent, consistent level of performance. Thus a student who may have struggled at the beginning of a course, when first encountering new material, may still be able to demonstrate mastery of key content/concepts by the end of a grading period.

In a traditional grading system, a student's performance for an entire quarter is averaged together. Early quiz scores that were low would be averaged together with more proficient performance later in the course, resulting in a lower overall grade than current performance indicates.

Standards-based report cards separate academic performance from work habits and behavior in order to provide parents a more accurate view of a student's progress in both academic and behavioral areas. Variables such as effort, participation, timeliness, cooperation, attitude and attendance are reported separately, not as an indicator of a student's academic performance.

## **How are my child's marks determined?**

A student's performance on a series of assessments (both formative and summative) will be used to determine a student's overall grade in a course. Practice assignments (homework) are just that, practice, and thus should serve primarily as a source of feedback and instructional support for both students and teachers. Scores on practice assignments should not be used as a major component of a student's academic grade. Teachers may require students to complete all of their practice work prior to allowing them to take, or retake, an assessment.

### **Will my student still receive teacher comments on their report card?**

Yes. Individualized feedback is an essential component of standards-based grading. Effective feedback is a more useful source of information than simply assigning a numeric value or letter grade to student work.

### **What will each of the numbers in the 4 point scale represent?**

A score of (4) would indicate that a student exceeds a standard by consistently demonstrating an advanced level of understanding and/or the ability to apply their knowledge at a higher level.

A score of (3) would indicate that a student has independently achieved the standard. The student demonstrates mastery of the standard.

A score of (2) would indicate that a student is developing an understanding of a standard, but still may be in need of additional instruction and/or support.

A score of (1) would indicate minimal understanding of a standard. The student shows limited evidence of understanding the standard.

### **How should a student/parent view student grades now that the system of A-F has been replaced by a 4 point scale? What is considered to be an A in the new grading system?**

You cannot really compare a traditional grading system to standards-based grading. It is like comparing “apples to oranges”. Standards-based grading identifies a standard and indicates whether or not a student is meeting the standard at a given point in the school year. A score of (3) is defined as meeting grade level standards and indicates that a student has demonstrated mastery of the skills that were expected to be learned by that point in the grading period.

### **Is it possible to achieve a grade of 4?**

Yes it is. However, a score of (4) indicates performance that is consistently above what is expected for mastery at that point in the school year. Level 4 work would indicate a much deeper understanding of a standard, the ability to apply that knowledge, make connections and extend learning beyond the targeted goal.

### **If a student is being accelerated in any grade level/subject area with above grade level standards or materials, is that student required to get a 4 on his report card?**

By definition, level 4 work reflects higher order thinking, application, connection and extension of targeted goals. While being instructed above grade level is not required in order to achieve a (4), students who are taught above grade level have consistently shown mastery of a subject at their current grade level. Achieving a (4) does not preclude a teacher from suggesting areas for improvement in the comment section of the report card. Receiving a (4) does not guarantee that a student's performance would remain at that level across all reporting periods, or for all course standards.

### **If a student receives 1's all year, does that mean the student will be retained?**

Intervention classes are in place at Jack Young Middle School to support learners who are behind in math and reading. If a student receives 1's or 2's, it means his/her work is not yet meeting grade level standards. A number of academic interventions will be offered to those students who are struggling to meet the established standards. Grade level retention is not a practice that is generally supported by research.

### **How will I know if my child needs help?**

Receiving a 1, 2, \* or IE (insufficient evidence) on a grade report/report card can be a sign that a student is in need of extra support in the areas where they are receiving low marks. This is one benefit of a standards-based report card, areas in need of support are clearly evident.

### **How will honor roll be determined?**

The traditional concept of an Honor Roll does not easily match up with standards-based grading. A committee has been formed to develop the criteria for academic recognition. It is our intention to recognize and acknowledge the academic accomplishments of JYMS students, as well as those who consistently display good citizenship/work habits.

### **What is a Citizenship Report Card?**

The Citizenship Report Card will indicate a student's ability to meet pre-established behavioral guidelines in the areas of respect, responsibility and work habits. All students will receive a citizenship grade, which is separate from their academic grade. See the Sample Citizenship Report Card on the next page.

### **How will a standards-based report card impact determining athletic eligibility?**

In the absence of a GPA (which will not be generated with a standards-based report card), athletic directors will be able to determine co-curricular eligibility based on grade reports from teachers indicating which students are not performing up to expectations in their academic classes and/or those who consistently struggle to meet established behavioral expectations. These reports address WIAA compliance guidelines and help identify students who may be in need of additional support.

### **Where else in the area is standards-based grading being implemented?**

It is important to note that our elementary schools have been utilizing a four point grading system for several years, so it will not be new to the majority of our families. It is also under study, or already implemented, in a number of school districts in the area, including elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools.

# Jack Young Middle School

## Sample Citizenship Report Card

In order to provide a more accurate and comprehensive picture of what an individual student is capable of, the student's academic progress will be reported separately from their behavior. An individual student's Citizenship Grade describes their ability to meet school-wide behavioral expectations, including work ethic, work habits, dispositions and attitudes. Reporting Citizenship grades separately from academic grades allows teachers to identify and address specific behavior issues that may impact student learning.

Outstanding	Proficient	Improvement Needed
<b>O</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>I</b>
The student's behavior serves as a model for peers at JYMS.	The student's behavior is consistent with JYMS citizenship expectations.	The student's behavior is inconsistent with JYMS citizenship expectations and needs improvement.

Definitions:

The student **respects** peers, staff, and school property.

- Displays a positive attitude
- Uses good manners
- Uses appropriate language
- Cooperates with others
- Handles materials/supplies with care

The student is **responsible** and prepared to learn.

- Brings necessary materials for class
- Arrives to class on time
- Stays on task
- Cleans-up properly after class activities

The student displays productive **work habits**.

- Uses class time effectively to complete work
- Completes work outside of class when necessary
- Makes up absent work in a timely manner

## Sample Citizenship Rubric

	<b>O</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>Respect</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Displays a positive attitude</li> <li>● Uses good manners</li> <li>● Uses appropriate language</li> <li>● Cooperates with others</li> <li>● Handles supplies and materials with care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Usually displays a positive attitude</li> <li>● Typically uses good manners</li> <li>● Uses appropriate language</li> <li>● Routinely works well with others</li> <li>● Usually handles supplies and materials with care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sometimes displays a negative attitude</li> <li>● Sometimes displays poor manners</li> <li>● Sometimes uses inappropriate language</li> <li>● Sometimes has difficulty working well with others</li> <li>● Sometimes does not use materials as intended</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Brings necessary materials for class</li> <li>● Arrives to class on time</li> <li>● Stays on task</li> <li>● Cleans up properly after activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Usually brings materials to class</li> <li>● Usually arrives to class on time</li> <li>● Usually is on task</li> <li>● Usually cleans up properly after activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Has trouble coming to class prepared</li> <li>● Has trouble arriving to class on time.</li> <li>● Has trouble staying on task</li> <li>● Rarely cleans up properly after activities</li> </ul>
<b>Work Habits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Uses class time effectively to complete work</li> <li>● Completes work outside of class on time when necessary</li> <li>● Makes up absent work in a timely manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Only needs occasional prompting in order to complete work</li> <li>● Is missing no more than (1) assignment and/or has no more than (2) late assignments</li> <li>● Has turned in all absent work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Needs frequent prompting in order to complete work</li> <li>● Is missing more than (1) assignment and/or has turned in more than (3) late assignments</li> <li>● Failed to turn in absent work</li> </ul>