

SMCPS Parent's Guide to Standards Based Reporting Pre-K – 3rd Grade



Rationale for Standards-Based Progress Report

The purpose of a progress report is to provide parents, teachers, and students with more accurate information about students' progress towards meeting specific content standards. By monitoring the standards listed on the progress report, parents and teachers will know if students are mastering the skills needed at each grade level. As a result, parents will have access to additional information in regards to what their child should know and be able to do by the end of each grade level. The Standards-Based Progress Report highlights the most important content and skills students should learn in each subject at the end of a particular grade level.

Elementary Level Philosophy on Reporting to Parents

St. Mary's County Public Schools believes that the progress report will provide parents with the information on how their child is progressing on the critical content of grade level standards, knowledge, and skills; it will also focus on behaviors that support learning. The progress report will be a tool which facilitates communication between home and school.

The comprehensive reporting system is a conversation between teachers, students, and their families. The information shared reflects a summary of the student's performance as compared to grade-level expectations. Communication between home and school is essential to support the progress that students make toward demonstrating the proficiency with the curriculum taught in St. Mary's County Public Schools.

Question & Answer

How are Standards-Based progress reports different from traditional report cards?

On many traditional report cards, students receive one grade for each subject: reading, math, science, and so on. On a standards-based progress report, each of these subject areas is divided into a list of skills and knowledge that students are responsible for

learning. Students will receive a separate proficiency level score for each report card descriptor.

The proficiency levels indicate a child's progress towards meeting **end of grade-level standards**. The student's proficiency level is reported separately from his/her effort. With the standards-based reporting system, students are evaluated more objectively by focusing on consistent grade-level standards. The letter grades used in traditional report cards are a more subjective reflection of individual teacher's expectations for student effort and achievement.

How will my child's work be assessed?

Student work is routinely analyzed. Checklists, rubrics, narratives, observations etc. may be used to assess each student's progress.

What are the proficiency levels on the progress report?

The proficiency level represents a student's progress in the content areas. There are three categories: Strong Command (SC), Partial Command (PC) and Not Yet (NY).

Earning "SC" means the student has proficient understanding in a specific area, consistently grasps and applies key concepts, processes, and skills independently, and successfully meets stated grade-level standards. A student receiving "SC" is meeting the end of the year expectations. "SC" is something to be celebrated.

Earning "PC," partial command, could mean a few things for your child:

- A student could be making expected progress but still have components of the goal that have not been taught at the reporting time. This student is on track.
- A student's performance may have not yet reached the level of consistent application. The student may require modeling, reinforcement or support from time to time. This student is also at partial command.

The details of your child's proficiency will be indicated through the teacher's narrative.

Earning "NY" means the student is not grasping key concepts, processes and essential skills of stated grade-level standards. This is an area of concern that requires support and interventions may be needed to learn and stay on track with county expectations.

An "NA" indicates that none of the standards that fall within the report card descriptor have been taught at the time of reporting.

Please keep in mind that students will receive "SC" when they have successfully met the end of the year goal. Different students progress at different rates, so standards may be met in varying amounts of time, with varying amounts of teacher support. The

goal is for all students to achieve “SC” in the stated grade-level standards by the end of the school year.

How does a teacher determine my child’s proficiency level?

Throughout each marking period, teachers assess students using both formative and summative assessments. With the standards for that grade level in mind, they consider:

- **Knowledge of the student** - How does the child learn best and in what way does the child communicate his/her learning?
- **Evidence of student performance** - This would include work samples that have been collected, student performance on activities and assessments, and observations.
- **Knowledge of what the child is expected to know or be able to do** - The teachers have a strong understanding of expectations as stated in the grade-level standards.

What are Learner Characteristics and how are they determined?

Learner Characteristics are the skills related to the characteristics of a successful student. Learner Characteristics are observed by the teacher. These behaviors impact learning and are reflective of the student’s current behaviors and work habits within the classroom.

How do effort and homework impact my child’s proficiency level?

Student effort and homework completion do not equate to evidence of student learning. Even though effort and homework completion are not reflected in the progress report proficiency levels, it is essential that students demonstrate appropriate effort and complete their homework. Homework completion and student effort are important *learner characteristics*.

What can I do to help my child?

Standards-based progress reports provide detailed information about how your child is doing in each subject area. You will be able to see which specific skills your child is doing well with and which skills your child needs to strengthen. Discuss with your child’s teacher what resources are available to use at home to encourage your child’s progress.

Listed below are some strategies to use at home:

Pre-K—2:

- Complete assigned daily homework. Homework is an indication of what your child is currently working on in the classroom and an opportunity to practice.
- Read with your child every day.
- Encourage your child to tell you about his or her day.
- Try to create a quiet place for your child to study.
- Visit the library.
- Play games. Word games, counting games, “guess who/what” games, etc...
- Look for word problems in real life... If you open a new carton of a dozen eggs and you use four eggs to cook breakfast, close the carton and ask your child how many eggs are left.
- When shopping at the grocery store, discuss which item is the best buy. Determine how much money the sale item saves.
- Create opportunities for conversation to help develop your child’s confidence in expressing thoughts and ideas. Give them conversation starters such as “what do you think would happen if...”

Glossary of Terms

Accommodations - changes in the materials or procedures which do not change the standards but allow students to learn within the framework. Examples: time, setting, level of support, calculator, scribe, word processing, sensory items, visual schedules

Assessment - ongoing process by which teachers gather data to determine a student’s progress relative to a standard.

- **Formative Assessment** – ongoing information about a student’s progress in learning (homework, quizzes, conferencing, logs, journals, drafts, observations, exit slips)
- **Summative Assessments** - end of unit information determine what students have learned (end of unit tests, reading benchmarks, math critical content mastery assessments, performance tasks, projects, final writing pieces.)

Differentiated Instruction - the way in which a teacher anticipates and responds to a variety of student needs in the classroom towards a specific grade-level standard. Teachers may differentiate content (what is being taught), the process (how it is taught), and the product (how students demonstrate their learning.)

Mastery - a student has met or exceeded targets for a given learning goal in a content area or grade level

Modifications - individualized changes made to the content and performance expectations for students. Modifications change the standard or intended learning outcomes. Examples: quantity of work, type of output, alternate goals

Objective - a specific skill of a standard that is assessed

Proficiency Level - demonstration of a student's progress towards a given standard or skill measured based on a rubric towards mastery

Rubric - a scoring tool used to rate a student's performance relative to the degree at which a standard has been met

Standard - a statement that identifies the skill or concept that a student should know and be able to achieve at each grade level – broad learning area

Standard Indicator for Reporting Progress - Used on the standards based report card to indicate a student's level of understanding and performance

- **Strong Command of the Standards** - consistently grasps and applies key concepts, processes, and skills and successfully meets stated grade-level standards
- **Partial Command of the Standards** - beginning to grasp and apply key concepts, processes, and skills and progressing toward stated grade-level standards
- **Not Yet** - not grasping key concepts, processes, and essential skills and an area of concern that requires support

