

South Kingstown Schools



A Family Guide to Standards-based Reporting for Grade 3

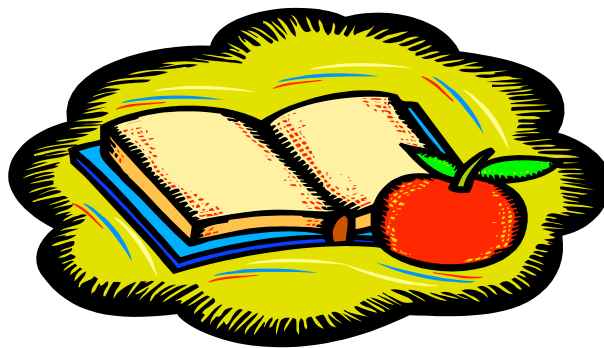
South Kingstown School Department Wakefield, Rhode Island

South Kingstown Schools Mission Statement

The mission of the South Kingstown School Department is to educate the children of South Kingstown, in partnership with families and community, so that each student becomes a responsible individual who possesses the knowledge and skills for full productive citizenship.

We believe that:

- Every human being has intrinsic worth and each individual must be provided opportunities to become a life-long learner
- A well-balanced development of mind, body and spirit is important so that the total individual can flourish
- All children want to learn and do so in a variety of ways
- Each student will have the resources necessary to discover and develop his or her potential. They will be provided with equal opportunity to develop, accept, and exercise personal responsibility.
- Collaboration among diverse people builds and strengthens community
- It is the shared responsibility of family, students, school personnel, and elected officials to work together to create a positive educational environment.



Why have we moved towards a standards-based reporting system?

A report card is an ongoing conversation between the teacher, the student, and the parent or guardian about what is expected of students and how to help them to be successful in a rigorous academic program. For this purpose to be accomplished, however, the reporting system must accurately mirror the instructional model that exists in the classroom. In the past, grades reflected not only what had been achieved academically, but also how students behaved or how they compared with classmates. Reporting systems did not reflect the academic standards and performance assessments that exist in today’s classrooms. Our instructional model has shifted away from a focus on basic skills and moved toward a deeper analysis of content that requires our students to think, plan, integrate, and construct. In this environment, the traditional grading system is inadequate.

Traditional Report Card	Standards-based Report Card
Subjects are listed by name	Major subjects are defined by curriculum or content standards and indicators
Letter grades (A – F) reflect an individual teacher’s expectations and student achievement with effort as a factor.	Numerical levels indicate mastery of the grade level standards. Achievement and effort are reported separately
Curriculum and instruction are teacher centered, textbook driven, and not necessarily aligned to the state standards	Curriculum and instruction are aligned with state and district standards
Grading is based on teacher determined criteria	Student work is compared to state and district criteria and student performance is measured against predetermined performance levels.

Explaining Standards...

Standards are specified learning goals applied to all students. They provide consistent and clearly defined targets for students, teachers and families to meet. Standards provide the basis for a compact between the district, the classroom, the child and parent/guardian about the expectations for all children. By defining students' academic responsibilities, standards by implication define the teaching responsibilities of the school.

At the heart of the standards movement is the belief that effort leads to ability. In other words, the harder students work, the closer they will come to achieving the standard. The standards movement strengthens the classroom ethic.

Additionally, standards provide clear expectations. Standards establish for all stakeholders what it is that students are expected to know and be able to do. Sustained effort over time should make it possible for all students to achieve these expectations because the standards always remain constant. The time needed to meet them, however, may vary from student to student.

In a standards-based classroom the focus is on student performance, not simply on taking quizzes and tests. Just as artists use portfolios to showcase their talent and a professional educator must first be a "student teacher," our students must be able to demonstrate their competencies through actual demonstrations, performances, and portfolios that show evidence of their learning.



Overview of the Progress Codes

To provide families with the most comprehensive view of their child’s performance, classroom teachers will be assigning three grades: one for achievement towards end of year standards, one for quarterly progress or improvement, and one for quarterly effort.

To examine each grade level standard in greater detail, visit the Rhode Island Department of Education web site at <http://www.ride.ri.gov/standards/default.htm>

Performance toward End of Year Standard	Descriptor
4 Exceeds end of year standard	The student consistently produces work that exceeds the standard
3 Meets the end of year standard	The student consistently meets the standard
2 Making adequate progress toward the standard	The student grasps and applies the key concepts and skills needed to achieve the standard this school year
1 Not making adequate progress / requires help	The student demonstrates limited skill in grasping and applying the key concepts and skills for this grade level
N/A Not assessed this quarter	Some concepts and skills are not assessed during a quarterly grading period

Quarterly Progress	Descriptor
++	Quarterly progress exceeds expectations
+	Quarterly progress is on level
-	Quarterly progress is below level or in need of improvement

Quarterly Effort	Descriptor
Excellent	The student’s effort this quarter has been outstanding
Satisfactory	Effort is on level
Needs Improvement	The student will need to work harder in order to reach the end of year standard.

Some student expectations for reading:

Last year, in grade 2, students were reading words with more than one syllable and they were paying attention to punctuation, such as commas and quotation marks. By the end of that grade, students were reading books such as *The Man Who Never Told the Truth* or *Blueberries for Sal*.

Now in 3rd grade, the goal is to have students read and comprehend a wider range of grade appropriate materials – both fiction and non-fiction. At the beginning of the school year, students in grade 3 might be reading books such as: *Freckle Juice* by Judy Blume or *Laura's Ma* by Laura Ingalls Wilder. In non-fiction, they might read *Space Stations* by Cheryl Ryan. At the end of grade 3, students would be reading books such as: *Pippi Longstocking* by Astrid Lindgren or *The Mouse and the Motorcycle* by Beverly Cleary.

To meet the 25 book standard, students making adequate progress toward this end of the year goal would be reading 5 or 6 books by the end of the first quarter and about 15 books by the end of April.

Some student expectations for writing:

In grade 2 students began to write sentences of varying lengths. They even began to learn about paragraphs. The excerpt below comes for a 2nd grade essay that met the end of year standards in writing:

All the things we do in school are fantastic but my favorite is reading because I'm a phenominal reader and I injoy how you can spend time doing a quiet thing. (spelling errors were part of the student's essay).

Now in grade 3, students begin to recognize and use various ways to lead into writing. They begin to understand that their word choice can create a mental image for the reader. Now the use of adverbs and adjectives, even metaphors and similes, becomes more frequent.

The excerpt below comes from a 3rd grade essay that exceeded end of year standards in writing:

Please no! Not homework on the last week of school. Oh my gosh! Injustis! Why none? Why none! Cause, us the kids will promise to be on our best behaivor if there's none. No talking at unappropriate times, fooling around or "flying a million miles away." Also no shouting, speaking without being called on or out of turn and bad replies to so called boring work. You'll only have to say directions once and we'll do it. (spelling errors were part of the student's essay).

The excerpt below comes from a 3rd grade essay that met end of year standards in writing:

I believe that students should not have homework on the last week of school. For example, students have already had a lot of work. We need a break to relax. Furthermore, I think that students will know summer is nearing. We'd be thinking about it not even able to pick up a pencil!

Some student expectations for social studies:

Our social studies program is theme based and addresses the following social studies strands: history, culture, geography, civics and economics.

Grade 3 students study South Kingstown in relation to other communities. Students at this grade level will listen to historical stories and compare daily life in the past to the present. They will learn about the roles people in the community have and will identify people of different ages, cultural backgrounds, traditions and careers and how they contribute to the community.

Some student expectations for science:

Our elementary science program uses a kit-based approach to address the science standards. This approach enables students to explore first hand how things work. Gems-Net (Guiding Education in Math and Science Network) kits help students to construct their own knowledge of scientific principles and concepts and make these part of the way he/she sees the world and makes decisions.

Each kit addresses inquiry skills, concepts and communication and specific grade level expectations in science. To learn more about the Gems-Net kits, visit their web site – <http://espo.gso.uri.edu/~robp/GEMSNET/parent.html>

Grade 3 students may use kits on sound, water, and plant growth and development.

Some student expectations for math:

There are four math strands that students study each year. They are number and operations, geometry and measurement, functions and algebra and data, statistics and probability. At the elementary level, all four are addressed, but more than 50% of a child's work will be in number and operations.

Grade 3 students will expand on the concepts learned in grade 2 and will also:

- ∞ Solve two and three digit addition and subtraction problems
- ∞ Solve one digit by one digit multiplication problems
- ∞ Solve division problems with single digit divisors
- ∞ Collect and organize data and draw conclusions about the question or hypothesis being tested.
- ∞ Measure perimeter and area.

South Kingstown uses Everyday Math to support its mathematics curriculum. This program provides multiple exposures to a topic with frequent opportunities to review and practice the skills. A Grade Level Expectation may be introduced in September but mastery of that skill may not be assessed until June.

For additional information on our math program, go to the district math page for parents: <http://fc.skschools.net/elementarymath/Parent%20Resources>

Some student expectations for unified arts:

Our elementary students take classes in art and music and the curriculum in these two areas is based on the national standards. Students at each grade level have an opportunity to learn creative expression and to share their learning through school and community presentations.

From kindergarten to grade 5, all students have library class. This program is also based on the national standards and it prepares our students to be successful information seekers and users in our rapidly changing world.

Finally, all of our students also take part in a physical education program. This supports our wellness policy and promotes healthy schools and healthy lives.

This is just a brief summary of grade level expectations for grade 3. Again, to learn more about the content your child will study please visit the Rhode Island Department of Education website: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/standards/default.htm>



What are Learner Qualities?

A reporting system should provide parents with a complete picture of their child as a learner. Parents expect to know where their child is academically, but it is also important for them to have feedback on their child's social development and work habits. This information allows parents to develop a clearer picture of their child as a learner, and it also helps parents to target improvement efforts where they are needed. These learner qualities, or life skills, impact academic achievement and help to prepare students for a successful future. Learner qualities represent habits of mind as well as habits of life.

Overview of the Progress Codes for Learner Qualities

4	Consistently	The student consistently and independently demonstrates the skills needed to be successful at this grade level
3	Usually	The student generally demonstrates the skills needed to be successful at this grade level
2	Sometimes	The student occasionally demonstrates the skills needed to be successful at this grade level
1	Seldom	The student seldom demonstrates the skills needed to be successful at this grade level

