

# Success Academy South Bend

## Standards-Based Reporting Parent Guidebook 2022-2023

### What is a Standards-Based Approach?

Learning is an ongoing process and what matters is how much learning occurs, not when it occurs.

A standards-based approach focuses on what a student knows, not how long it takes to get there. It measures how well a student understands the material and how they are progressing on their learning goals. It is based on a specific set of standards that students need to meet for each grade level. Teachers use common assessments to determine what each student has learned and how that student is progressing towards end-of-year expectations. This approach builds consistent grading practices throughout the school.

The standards-based approach allows teachers to design instruction to give students multiple opportunities, if necessary, to demonstrate success, or provide extensions if students are already meeting their learning goals.

A standards-based approach also allows parents and students to understand more clearly what is expected of students and how to help them be successful in their learning. It provides better feedback to students, parents, teachers and administrators on what each student knows and is able to do based on academic standards and separately assesses the influence of work habits on student learning.

<b>Traditional</b>	<b>Standards-Based</b>
One grade is given per assessment, <u>even if many different standards are tested</u> .	Performance ratings are given <u>per standard</u> , even when assessments contain multiple standards.
Based on a percentage system. Criteria used to determine grades are not always clear.	Based on specific criteria by defining what it “looks like” to be successful on the standard. Rubrics are utilized for assessment feedback.

<p>Uses an uncertain mix of achievement, attitude, effort and behavior. Uses penalties</p>  <p>and extra credit that distort grades.</p>	<p>Measures only achievement, while behaviors are reported separately. No penalties or bonuses are given.</p>
<p>Everything goes in the gradebook, regardless of its purpose.</p>	<p>Selected common assessments are used for reporting progress with many opportunities to demonstrate growth.</p>
<p>Grades are calculated using an averaging system--the worst grades averaged with the best.</p>	<p>Emphasizes the most recent assessments more heavily to demonstrate learning that has occurred and does not penalize the student for the learning process.</p>
<p>The teacher calculates the grade and announces the decision to students.</p>	<p>The teacher discusses progress with students and provides feedback on learning goals throughout the learning process.</p>

### **Standards-Based Reporting**

Although teachers are responsible for teaching all the Indiana State Standards, there are specific standards that teachers will be reporting to parents on a regular basis. These are referred to as Power Standards and reflect the standards that are critical for student success. These standards tend to cross content areas, span grade levels and/or skills that are considered as crucial building blocks for future lifelong learning.

Students will receive progress reports each quarter. These reports will include levels of progress that communicate whether a student is performing above, at, or below the standards. These levels are not a comparison of one student to another, but are a measure of the student's work toward mastering the end-of-year standard.

## Reporting Skills for Success

While we believe that work habits and social development should not be factored into academic performance ratings, it is still very important to communicate progress on these skills to parents and students. We acknowledge that these skills are valued in the outside world and are essential for preparing students for college, careers and other post-school endeavors. By reporting Skills for Success as a separate category, teachers can communicate information to parents without distorting a student's progress on the Power Standards.

## Levels of Progress

Four levels of progress are noted on the report cards using a numeric marking system (4, 3, 2, 1, and N/A). A descriptor for each score is provided below:

<b>Distinguished (4)</b> Student independently understands and applies knowledge in ways that extend higher level thinking skills of the grade level standards.	<b>Proficient (3)</b> Student independently and consistently understands and demonstrates knowledge of key concepts, processes and skills to meet grade level standards.	<b>Developing (2)</b> Student is beginning to understand and apply key concepts, processes and skills. Progressing towards grade level standards.	<b>Needs Support (1)</b> Student does not yet understand key concepts, processes and skills necessary to meet grade level standards. Area of concern.	<b>Standard Is Not Assessed At This Time (N/A)</b> This standard is assessed later in the school year
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## Scoring

On a standards-based report card, a mark of "3" is the expected goal for students, which indicates that the student is meeting the requirements of the academic standards for his/her grade level. Marks of "3" and "2" both indicate that a student is working within the expectations of his/her grade level. The expectation is that most students will achieve a "3" by the end of the year for each grade-level standard. Learners are scored on their progress made toward mastery of those expectations set forth for each marking period.

\*\*A mark of "4" indicates that the student's progress is distinguished because s/he has demonstrated mastery in terms of knowledge, and s/he applies that knowledge in ways that

extend higher level thinking skills. Typically, very few students would be at this level of performance.

\*\*A mark of “3” indicates that the student’s progress towards end-of-year standards meets the district’s expectations at this time. For example, a student who scores a 30% on the unit math pretest and receives a high score, even a 100%, on the posttest has responded well to instruction and receives a “3”. This student has met the expectations independently and requires little to no adult support to demonstrate proficiency after instruction has been delivered.

\*\*A mark of “2” indicates that the student’s progression of skills and information is in the expected range, but s/he still requires support and assistance to meet the requirements of the academic standard for his/her grade level at this time.

\*\*A mark of “1” indicates that the student is not meeting the requirements of the grade level standard at this time. His/her instructional level is characterized as requiring maximum teacher support and differentiation/accommodations or even modifications.

\*\*A mark of “N/A” indicates that the standard has not been adequately introduced, covered, or assessed during the marking period. All standards on a grade-level report card will be addressed by the end of the school year.

### Students as Data Users

Our goal in standards-based grading is to provide students with the necessary scaffolds to increase student achievement and student motivation by providing students with specific feedback. The student friendly four-point scoring system is a tool that can be used with your child. Students can look at the chart and indicate their level of knowledge and comfort with the standards being learned. This tool allows the student to self-reflect on where they are in relation to meeting the standards introduced in the lesson.

4 	I'm cool with this and <b>I fully understand</b> what I need to do and I can complete the work all by myself. <b>I can explain it to others</b> and even help my peers understand! I can use what I know and <b>I can apply my knowledge</b> when learning about new concepts or when answering questions or solving problems.
3 	I am happy and feel proud to say that <b>I fully understand</b> what I need to do and <b>I can complete the work all by myself.</b>
2 	Yikes, this makes me a little nervous. <b>I don't fully understand</b> what I need to do and <b>I need some help to complete the work.</b>
1 	Oh no, not this! <b>I don't understand and I don't even know where to begin. I still need my teacher to sit with me</b> and show me what to do step-by-step.

## **Grading and Reporting: Guidelines at a Glance**

- Guideline #1 - Teachers will only include scores that relate to the achievement of standards.
- Guideline #2 - Teachers will use Success Academy guidelines to assign a progress rating on common assessments and progress reports.
- Guideline #3 - Students will have retake opportunities with the goal of reaching a “3” on Power Standards by the end of the year and to demonstrate continued growth throughout the school year.
- Guideline #4 - Teachers will use Success Academy developed common assessments and curriculum maps to guide instruction and assessment on standards.
- Guideline #5 - Teachers will use PowerSchool in grades K-5 as a communication tool for reporting to parents.
- Guideline #6 - Students with disabilities and/or ELL students will receive allowable accommodations on common assessments to give an accurate picture of progress on the standards.
- Guideline #7 - Success Academy language will reflect growth toward end-of-year expectations and align with standards-based reporting.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

Why did we decide to go to a standards-based approach? Can't we just go back to a traditional letter grading system?

A standards-based approach allows parents and students to understand more clearly what is expected of students and how to help them be successful in their learning. It tells us what students have actually learned by measuring a student's progress on grade level standards. Rather than receiving an overall grade for a subject, parents will see ratings for specific skills their child needs to know to reach grade level standards. For example, a reading grade in Kindergarten involves skills such as recognizing letter sounds, identifying letters, understanding what was read, recognizing parts of a book, etc. A student may be able to successfully read all of their letters and letter sounds, but may experience difficulty understanding what was read. This is important information for parents and teachers and it is often hidden within one overall letter grade.

Traditional grading also includes subjective factors like attendance, effort, and attitude, which might influence the grade positively or negatively. In a standards-based approach, these behaviors are reported separately in order to portray a more accurate report of student progress.

A standards-based system also focuses on the most recent, consistent level of performance. Traditional grading systems use averaging to calculate grades, which often penalizes students for the learning process.

For example, In traditional grading, the student's performance for the entire quarter would be averaged and scores that were low would be averaged together with proficient performance later in the quarter resulting in a lower grade. For comparison purposes, consider a runner training for a marathon. The training plan incrementally grows in length and the runner's time typically gets better and better. If we used a traditional grading system to give the runner a "grade," we would average the results on the day of the marathon with all of the training times leading up to that day. This would not be an accurate reflection of the runner's current level of performance because it is penalizing the runner for the training process. A standards-based approach does not penalize a student for the learning process because it focuses on the most recent results, similar to race day results after a long training process.

Explain why we are getting reports on the Power Standards and how can we be sure the students are getting a complete education?

Experts in the field have conducted research and determined we need 71% more time than we currently have available to teach all of the standards in depth. Some experts say it would take 22 years of education to teach them all. Grade level teams of teachers identified the Power Standards as those standards that are critical for student success. These standards tend to cross content areas, span grade levels and/or are skills that are considered crucial building blocks for future lifelong learning.

Teachers are still responsible for teaching all of the Indiana State Standards and have mapped out how they will teach these standards throughout the school year. By taking this approach, teachers are able to be consistent and focus on in-depth instruction and learning to ensure students leave each grade level with the foundational skills and content they need to be successful at the next level.

How are the levels of progress defined and what do they mean?

The levels of progress are based on research from experts in the field on standards-based reporting. The levels provide teachers and parents information about whether a student is performing at, above, or below the standards and expectations. These levels are not a comparison of one student to another, but are a measure of the student's work against the standard.

How will each teacher determine how to assign a 1, 2, 3 or 4?

Grade level teams are working together to ensure a consistent approach in determining these levels. Teachers will evaluate learning in a variety of ways using classroom observations along with formative and summative assessments. The combination of these pieces of evidence, when reviewed with parents, provides a more detailed picture of student progress towards grade level expectations.

### What information will be in PowerSchool?

Teachers will use common assessments to determine what each student has learned and how that student is progressing towards end-of-year expectations. The results from these common assessments will be entered in PowerSchool for parents to access. Parents will then be able to see the progress on grade level Power Standards for each subject. Power Standards reflect the standards that are critical for student success across content areas or grade levels and in post-school experiences. Homework, in-class assignments, and other projects will not be entered for the 2022-23 school year because these are considered a risk-free chance for students to learn and progress.

### Will I get anything printed and sent home at the quarter?

Yes. Each quarter you will receive a progress report that defines whether your child is performing at, above, or below benchmark on standardized assessments completed that quarter.

### Is it possible for students to “drop” from one marking period to another?

It is important to note that the student does not necessarily drop a grade. The score is an indication of performance with expectations of difficulty that increases throughout the school year. In other words, the concepts increase in difficulty as the year progresses. Therefore, a student who demonstrates a score of “3” in the first quarter could earn a “2” in the second quarter when the rigor of the standard has been increased. This shift from a “3” to a “2” indicates the student understands the major elements of the concept but may need more development and more teacher support.

### How do I help my child “get a 4?”

A “4” is not equivalent to an “A”. Remember, a mark of “3” indicates that a student is meeting grade-level expectations with independence and excellence. With high and challenging expectations, a “3” is exactly where a student should be by the end of the year. “Getting a 4” is not about what *more* a student does. It is what a student knows, and at what level s/he applies what s/he knows to new and higher-level situations that extends thinking to a higher level of skill and application. A student who receives a “4” is characterized by self-motivation and the ability to apply skills with consistent accuracy, independence, and a higher level of quality.

### My child has an IEP. How will he or she be assessed?

There are modifications and accommodations in your child’s IEP to support his or her progress of the grade level standards as assessed on a standards-based report card. A lack of indicated progress on the report card could require further exploration of additional modifications and accommodations.

### How are English Language Learners (ELL) who are still acquiring English language speaking and literacy skills graded?

Students are assessed at their current level using the appropriate grade-level standards-based report card. During parent conferences, teachers will discuss with parents the following: the child’s

current level of English proficiency; the child's opportunity to learn the content and/or ability to demonstrate the appropriate grade-level standards.

What will teachers do when a student is not performing well?

Teachers will provide students with additional opportunities for practice. There will also be opportunities to focus on these standards during intervention each day. Teachers will also continue to differentiate for students as we have in the past. This approach will provide us another measure to ensure we are meeting the needs of ALL of our students.

What about the students who want to move beyond the standards?

Teachers are working to provide enrichment and challenge for these students as we always have. This may take the form of enrichment assignments, higher level questioning, extension to higher grade level material, projects, etc. Each student that performs at a level 3, indicating they are meeting end-of-year expectations on the common assessments, will have the opportunity for enrichment activities on specific standards. The standards-based approach will allow us to identify students who may need this extension or enrichment much earlier than in a traditional grading system.

If homework and practice do not count as part of the student's grade, how will we teach them the importance of this work and motivate them to turn it in?

When teachers return homework to students with a grade, most students put it in their backpack or binder and never look at it again. Imagine the enhanced learning opportunity for the student if instead, the teacher returned the homework with two or three meaningful comments rather than a grade.

As teachers, we realize that homework and practice tied directly to learning targets is an important component of student achievement. So when teachers use homework as a mechanism for extensive and timely feedback to the student, it conveys the message that homework is important and necessary.

Providing students with nonjudgmental written or verbal feedback enables teachers to assess student understanding and provides the student safe opportunities to practice--without judgment.

Why are we allowing students to turn in late work or re-do work without penalty? How does this teach responsibility and accountability?

In a standards-based system, the emphasis is on learning. When a student doesn't do the work, the inherent consequence is that he or she doesn't learn the content or practice the skill.

Rather than applying academic consequences by lowering a grade, teachers will be working with students to ensure the work is completed. By enforcing this behavior, students will be held accountable for work completion and will not be able to avoid this important responsibility.

When we do not allow a student to turn in late work or re-do work, we deny that student the opportunity to grow character traits that are vital to student achievement, such as perseverance and persistence.

If a teacher doesn't accept late work, the teacher sends the message that the assignment had little educational value. It's as if the teacher is saying, "It's okay if you don't do the work, and it's okay if you don't learn the content or skill." As professional educators working to prepare students to successfully navigate the 21st century world, we can no longer accept these messages.