



Huntington Union Free School District

Standards Based Reporting

2013 - 2014

Elementary Teachers' Report Card Handbook

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Introduction to a Standards-based Reporting System

1. Report Card Alignment to CCLS

1.1 Standards

The New York State Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts and mathematics are the basis for which the report card has been constructed. In addition, the report card supports the New York State science and social studies standards that have been drafted to align with the CCLS. To view the detailed standards, teachers may use the EngageNY resources at www.engageny.org. All grade level coursework is tied to the standards. These standards are designed to prepare students for success in the work place and in post-secondary education.

1.2 Standards-based Instruction

In a standards-based classroom, students concentrate on true mastery of skills and content. Teachers focus on essential standards that every child must learn. All instruction is aligned to the standards. Teachers will present “learning targets” that are used to inform students of the goal(s) they must meet. Learning targets are clear and students are aware of the targeted outcomes for lessons. Teachers will provide multiple opportunities for students to meet the learning target(s).

1.3 Standards-based Assessment

Students in a standards-based classroom know what they need to learn at the start of a lesson through the presentation of learning targets. A learning target is the accessible outcome or object for a lesson, and it is based on a standard. Learning Targets are presented in the form of an “I can...” statement. For example, “I can answer questions using specific details from the text.”

A child will have more than one opportunity to demonstrate their progress toward the targeted standard. Informal and formal assessment is used to measure progress toward the target. Assessments can include projects, quizzes, tests, written work, presentations, and daily assignments. Students will have different types of assessment opportunities and will be assessed in a variety of ways.

1.4 Standards-based Reporting of Grades

Report card grades will reflect a student's performance toward a standard. Students may be:

- Working *beyond* grade level standards; excels
- Working *on* grade level standards; proficient
- *Not demonstrating the minimum* standards expected for the grade level
- Demonstrating *little evidence* of knowledge and skill for the grade level

Proficient students will have put in the work to demonstrate that they know the material, content, skills, and standard. Standards-based evaluation focuses on what a student knows – not how long it took to get there.

A student's work is measured against a standard, not other students' performance.

Students are evaluated on the development of the skills and knowledge needed to master the standard. It is measured by what they know and can do, rather than their completion of tasks.

Students' grades for academic achievement in subjects will reflect an accurate evaluation of what knowledge a student can demonstrate.

1.5 Guiding Tenants of Standard-based Grading:

- ✓ The New York State CCLS that describe what a student should know and be able to do at a given grade-level are the nexus for grading.
- ✓ The curriculum map for a subject is based on Common Core Learning Standards; this map is used to ensure that instruction targets the appropriate grade-level standards.
- ✓ Quality assessments and tasks are aligned to standards
- ✓ Clear rubrics are presented in advance of evaluation to ensure that students understand what is expected to perform at a proficient level
- ✓ Student progress is reported to both the students and their parents on a regular basis to communicate the child's progress toward meeting the standards. The report card is not the single method of reporting this progress.
- ✓ Standards-based instruction, grading, and reporting should be clear and meaningful to all parties involved – including parents and children.
- ✓ Grading should reflect academic standards. They should report what students know and are able to do based on a standard.

- ✓ Non-academic indicators are essential to understanding the whole child, but should be reported separately from academic grades. Effort, adherence to school or classroom rules, social interactions, etc. should be reported in the 'behaviors related to learning' section of the report card.

1.6 Standards-based Grading Practices versus Traditional Grading Practices

Standards-based Grading	Traditional Grading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only achievement, or performance related directly to NYS Common Core Learning Standards, is graded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades are a mix of achievement, attitude, effort, behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual performance is assessed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May include a combination of individual performance and group grades
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses assessments aligned to learning targets that are standards-based and specific to the grade-level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variation in assessment quality; assessments do not align directly to any Common Core Learning Standard for the grade-level.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning expectations (targets/objectives) are communicated to students prior to instruction and evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are unfamiliar with the learning targets that are assessed, or what mastery is expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods of assessing students are concrete and reflect student performance toward the standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are unsure of what measures will be used to arrive at a report card grade. Rubrics are often provided after work is evaluated – not before.

2. Effective Elementary Grading Practices for Standards-based Reporting

2.1 Practices to be Considered for Grading:

The grading practices that are effective in a standard-based reporting system should be carefully planned to ensure that students will have ample opportunity to demonstrate their progress toward mastery of the Common Core Learning Standards for each reporting period.

A grading period is approximately 10 instructional weeks. Report card distribution dates are found on the HUFSD school calendar. Principals may collect report cards for review prior to the distribution date.

The following guidelines are strongly suggested to help create a system that evaluates students fairly and consistently across a grade level, from one classroom to another, and from one building to another.

2.2 Minimum Assignments Evaluated Each Quarter:

- A. Reading Literature/Informational Text (CCLS Reading Standards):** A minimum of 5 reading assignments should be evaluated in a marking period. This may include weekly assessment, unit assessments, constructed response items, etc.
- B. Writing (CCLS Reading Standards):** It is best to evaluate a minimum of 4 writing assignments in a marking period. The writing pieces evaluated can include those which have been through the entire writing process and 'on-demand' writing. Writing assignments can be a mixture of short responses, essays, journal entries, and short targeted paragraphs. The writing grade should reflect at least 80% of the content of the writing and the evaluation of grammar/conventions should not exceed 20% of the student's grade.
- C. Math:** It would be best practice to base student evaluation on a minimum of 5 math assignments. These may include class assignments, quizzes, exit tickets, and tests.
- D. Science:** A minimum of 4 assignments would be best to demonstrate a student's progress toward a particular standard. These may include class assignments, labs, experiments, projects, short research writing, quizzes, exit tickets, tests, etc.
- E. Social Studies:** A minimum of 4 assignments would be best to demonstrate a student's progress toward a particular standard. These may include class assignments, projects, short research writing, DBQ essays, quizzes, exit tickets, tests, etc.
- F. Homework in Any Subject:** Homework should strengthen and provide practice for skills/content taught in class. IF homework is included in a final grade, then it should count for NO MORE THAN 10% of the final grade.
- G. NOTE:** These are the minimum expectations. A teacher may give additional assignments, tests, quizzes, etc. depending on the subject area and the material being taught.

2.3 Formative and Summative Assessment

In a standards-based reporting system, both formative and summative assessments are used.

Formative Assessment	Summative Assessments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Used to guide instruction for individual students or for an entire class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Used to make a decision about student learning at the end of a prolonged unit of instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are tools that allow for teacher feedback and continued guided practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Results are based on known criteria and are often used for unit tests, research reports, projects, and final drafts of writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be conducted informally through teacher observations, questioning, or class assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Used after students have been given shorter formative assessments and opportunity to practice skills

2.4 Elementary Grading Scale Ranges

Student grades are best evaluated using a rubric with criteria for progress toward standards. If a grade is converted into a percentage, the following ranges should be used:

Performance Level	Percentage
4	93 - 100
3	80 - 92
2	65 - 79
1	64 and below

2.5 Using Plus and Minus with Rubric Grades

No grades are to be given using a plus or minus to indicate a range between the performance levels. Only the 4 performance levels on the academic key may be used. If the student's performance is slightly stronger or weaker than the performance level, that should be explained in the comment section along with factors that contribute to that level of performance.

2.6 Zero Policy

A grade of zero implies a total absence of learning. Missed tests or assignments, and work not turned in, do not offer data about a student's level of learning. Averaging zeros with other scores to calculate a final grade skews the score and results in an inaccurate picture of student achievement. Every effort should be made to have students make up tests and missing assignments. Research done by O'Connor (2002), Marzano (2000), and Guskey (2004) show that using grades as a punishment serves to de-motivate students.

When students who are not intrinsically motivated are given zeros, instead of being made to complete their work, it allows them to avoid the accountability of demonstrating what they have learned. Furthermore, it teaches them to shrug off important responsibilities rather than taking steps to complete work that is

owed. If we do not have the student complete the work, teachers may be sending a message that the work was not important.

It is more beneficial to take steps that force students to complete the work. Of course this would include parent contact and completion of the work in a supervised setting, but it may also include small deductions in the grade that do not distort student motivation, rather than awarding a grade of zero.

2.7 Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are unethical behaviors that the district will not condone. Faculty members should report students who violate rules for academic honesty to the appropriate staff. If disciplinary action is required, the principal will handle the situation in accordance with the HUFSD Code of Conduct.

2.8 Academic Key for the Report Card with Details

The report card has an academic key that is aligned to the chart below. Please refer to the individual bullets for further definition of each performance level.

<u>Academic Performance Level Key</u>	
4	<p><u>Excels beyond grade level CCLS standards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student performance demonstrates a thorough understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level • Student demonstrates a deeper understanding of grade level standards • Student independently exceeds grade level standards
3	<p><u>Proficient in grade level CCLS standards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student performance demonstrates an understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level • Student demonstrates consistent application of skills • Student independently applies grade level standards
2	<p><u>Partially proficient in grade level CCLS standards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student performance demonstrates a partial understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level • Student is progressing in understanding, however, the skills are not yet mastered • Student needs assistance to apply grade level standards
1	<p><u>Well below proficient in grade level CCLS standards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student performance does not demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge or skills expected at this grade level • Student is working below grade level expectations • Student struggles even with assistance • Student needs continued support and intervention
N/A	<p>This mark indicates that the specific standard is not applicable as the standard is not addressed during this quarter. You should expect to see several N/As used in the first quarter especially during the earlier grades. This is because the entire curriculum cannot be taught at once. While some learning standards will be addressed throughout the entire year, others will be phased in as the school year progresses.</p>

2.9 Behavior Key for Report Card

The following chart is used to evaluate student behavior on the report card. Each behavior will be evaluated using the following criteria.

<u>Key for Behavior Indicators</u>	
4	Independently exhibits behavior without teacher prompting
3	Frequently exhibits behavior with minimal teacher prompting
2	Inconsistently exhibits behavior and often requires teacher prompting
1	Rarely exhibits behavior and frequently requires teacher prompting

2.10 Grading Practices for Students with ESL Services

English Language Learners will be graded by the general education teacher for English Language Arts if the majority of the instructional time is spent receiving instruction with the homeroom teacher of record.

The ESL teacher will provide the English Language Arts grade and associated comments if the student spends the majority of time outside of their homeroom classroom.

If the English Language Arts instructional time is split between ESL and the general education, then the homeroom teacher of record will prepare grades with input and data from the ESL teacher.

2.11 Grading Practices for Students with Disabilities

Accurate information on learning progress is essential for all students. The grading of students with disabilities within a general education classroom requires accurate information as well. In Core Content (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies), students should be evaluated according to the grade-level expectations.

Students who receive accommodations and complete grade-level work should not receive any penalty in grading and should be entitled to a full range of grades. Accommodations do not change the difficulty in the work and include such practices as extended time, more white space around text or math problems, enlarged print, changes in test formatting (i.e.: multiple choice rather than matching).

Modifications of the curriculum require changes to content, rigor, and grade-level standards. This type of change in instruction should be considered carefully. If a student has an IEP and work is modified, that should be discussed and noted where appropriate. In such cases, it is necessary to communicate to parents that curriculum is modified and the child will be evaluated according to the grade-level standards as required on the report card. In addition, parents should be informed that in grades 3 – 6, all students (except those evaluated with a NYS Alternative Assessment) will be evaluated on grade-level standards with limited testing accommodations. Progress on modified work can be described in the comment section of the report card. The report card provided to students with disabilities must be as truthful and meaningful as report cards provided to all other students.

2.12 Distinctions between Accommodations and Modifications

<u>Accommodations</u>	<u>Modifications</u>
Accommodations provide different ways for kids to take in information or communicate their knowledge back to you. The changes basically don't alter or lower the standards or expectations for a subject or test.	Prior to the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), the term "modifications" referred to changes in the delivery, content, or instructional level of district-wide or statewide tests for students receiving special education services. In effect, modifications resulted in lowering the expectations and standards by which these students were assessed. Beginning with IDEA 2004, the term "modification" is no longer used in relation to district-wide and statewide testing, because the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) mandates that students with specific learning disabilities be tested using the same standards as those used for non-learning disabled kids.
Example: Preferred Seating – allowing a student to sit up front during instruction.	Example: Changing a student’s list of spelling words to CVC words, while the class is working on words with Greek or Latin roots.
Example: Extended time or prompting to stay on task.	Example: Changing the instruction from 3 digit X 2 digit multiplication to mastering multiplication facts.

2.13 New York State Allowable Accommodations

A student with an IEP is entitled to specific accommodations. The accommodations provided in a classroom setting should **follow the student’s IEP**.

English Language Learners are also permitted accommodations for NYS testing. The NYS allowable accommodations are helpful with classroom assessment as well.

It is important to note some of the accommodations for all Grade 3 – 6 NYS Assessments. It is advisable to keep these in mind during instruction and classroom testing for students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

Details of NYS Accommodations for Students with Disabilities	Details of NYS Accommodations for English Language Learners
<p><u>ELA Only:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>No parts</u> of any <i>English Language Arts</i> test may be <u>read aloud</u> to a student if it is testing reading comprehension. 	<p><u>ELA Only:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>No parts</u> of any <i>English Language Arts</i> test may be <u>read aloud</u> to a student if it is testing reading comprehension. • <u>No parts</u> of any <u>ELA</u> test may be <u>translated</u> into a student’s native language since the test will measure the student’s ability to read and write the English language. • All answers to <i>English Language Arts</i> testing <u>must be written in English</u>. <p><u>Math/Science Only:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simultaneous use of English and translated editions of mathematics and science tests are allowed. • The student may use only a translated test in mathematics or science, based on the need of the student. • ELL students may write their responses to math and science tests in their native language.

Details of NYS Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Allowable Accommodations

ELA/Math/Science- IF indicated on the IEP :

- Time extensions are allowable
- Separate location is allowable (small group or individual administration)
- Braille editions of tests
- Large type editions of tests
- Increased spacing between test items
- Increase size of answer blocks/bubbles
- Reduce number of test items per page
- Multiple-choice items in vertical format with answer bubble to right of response choices
- Directions re-read more than the standard number of times
- Directions re-read for each page of questions
- Allow marking of answers in booklet rather than answer sheet
- Use of additional paper for math calculations
- On-task focusing prompts
- Provide breaks during exam period
- Use of a study carrel

Details of NYS Accommodations for English Language Learners: Allowable Accommodations

ELA/Math/Science for ELLs:

- Time extensions are allowable; use any reasonable extensions in accordance with best judgment about the needs of the ELL students.
- Separate location is allowable
- Use of a study carrel
- Directions re-read more than the standard number of times

3.1 Comments on a Standards-Based Report Card:

Comment space on the report card is limited to only 1500 characters. The comments on a report card should help explain or substantiate the evaluation that the student is receiving. Avoid generic comments that do not help parents, guardians, and other faculty to understand the child's progress.

Comments may be cut and pasted from a word document. Spell check will be available in the electronic report card.

Specificity of Comments: Comments are most helpful and meaningful to parents when they are specific to a child's learning and behavior.

- Comments may consist of two or three sentences explaining more precisely the emphasis of instruction during the marking period, adding detail to the report card description. The detail should help to enhance the understanding of a student's grades, or marks.
- Teachers should add comments that give specific detail regarding a student's progress toward a particular standard.
- Comments may also offer specific suggestions for helping a child at home with a standard that the child is struggling with at the end of a marking period.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **How will parents be informed of the changes to the report card?**
 - Parents will be notified via letter from me about the changes to the report card. There will be a video presentation created that will go on the HUFSD website that explains that changes and rationale behind the changes, which will be consistent with the Parent Handbook.

2. **Will Kindergarten report grades for the first quarter marking period?**
 - We will continue the same practice as before in terms of kindergarten report grades. We did not provide any grades only comments.

3. **Will comments be written for the first quarter marking period?**
 - Comments should be written for all students, at each grade level.

4. **How many characters are allowed in the comment space?**
 - The comment length is 1500 characters.

5. **Is there spell check for the comment area?**
 - Yes, teachers will be able to cut and paste from a Word document into the comments section.

6. **Can we cut and paste comments from a Word document into the comment space?**
 - Yes, teachers will be able to cut and paste from a Word document into the comments section.

7. **Can the comments be translated into other languages?**
 - No. However, details on the report cards such as the standards and the rubric (i.e. description of the levels) will be sent in Spanish to those households that are flagged in eSchool. The comments will be in the language typed by the teacher(s).

8. **Do we need to grade every element of the report card in the academic areas and the behavior areas?**

The report card should reflect the teaching that has occurred and the student's mastery, or lack thereof, with regard to the standards.

9. Can we use plus and minus with the academic grades?

- No. We need to remain consistent with the reporting parents will receive from New York State on the Individual Student Reports (ISRs).

10. Who will enter grades for special areas (art, gym, music, etc.)?

- The special area teachers will enter their own grades.

11. Where will the report cards be printed?

- At the building by someone designated by the building principal.

12. Will parents receive a hard copy of the report card and an electronic version?

- Initially, parents will only receive a hard copy of the report card.

13. Is the report card web-based or on the HUFSD server?

- The grades and comments teachers input into eSchool are transferred to another program called Edge, which then formats the report card for printing to tri-fold cardstock.

14. Will the report card be saved electronically on the web-based system for each quarter?

- Yes. The information will become a permanent part of the students' record housed in eSchool, just as it is at the secondary level.

15. When will report cards be due to the main office?

- A timeline will be provided as to when all grades must be submitted. Printing of report cards cannot begin until all grades have been submitted by classroom teachers and special area teachers.
- Once the report cards are printed, they will be given by class to the teacher for review. The practice of principal review will continue, therefore, report cards will not be folded in the main office.
- After principal review, teachers will put the report cards in the envelopes with other progress reports received from special area teachers (i.e. RtI Reading/Math and/or ESL)

16. Will we be able to access the report card to make changes after the report cards are printed?

- Yes.

17. Will we need to print out the 4th quarter report card and place a copy in the cumulative folder?

- Yes, but will be completed by main office staff.

Appendix: Academic Performance Report Card Key

<u>Academic Performance Level Key</u>	
4	<u>Excels beyond grade level CCLS standards</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student performance demonstrates a thorough understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level• Student demonstrates a deeper understanding of grade level standards• Student independently exceeds grade level standards
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N/A	This mark indicates that the specific standard is not applicable as the standard is not addressed during this quarter. You should expect to see several N/As used in the first quarter especially during the earlier grades. This is because the entire curriculum cannot be taught at once. While some learning standards will be addressed throughout the entire year, others will be phased in as the school year progresses.

Appendix: Behavior Indicators Report Card Key

<u>Key for Behavior Indicators</u>	
4	Independently exhibits behavior without teacher prompting
3	Frequently exhibits behavior with minimal teacher prompting
2	Inconsistently exhibits behavior and often requires teacher prompting
1	Rarely exhibits behavior and frequently requires teacher prompting