STANDARDS BASED REPORT CARDS FOR K-2

To help facilitate the transition to the new Kansas Standards in English and Math, the Diocese of Wichita has decided to change to a standards-based report card for kindergarten through second grade. The new report card, and immediate access through the parent portal of PowerSchool, will provide parents with a more detailed outline of the expectations in each of the core academic areas.

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<th>Grading Scale</th>
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<tr>
<td>Exceeds Standard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meets Standard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approaches Standard</td>
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<td>Academic Warning</td>
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<td>Not yet assessed</td>
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**Frequently Asked Questions**

1. **How is the standards based report card different from the traditional letter grade system?**

   Letter grades are calculated by combining how the student performed on assignments and tests, how much participation and effort a student puts in, and how the student is doing compared to national or local norm over a specific grading period. A letter grade tells you how a student is doing in a class overall but does not necessarily tell you how he/she is doing with regard to specific skills. Hopefully a standards based grade card will give you a better idea of your child’s strengths and weaknesses in those specific skills.

   For example, assume that Johnny’s class is learning to recite the alphabet. If Johnny knew 7 letters (25%) on August 27, 13 letters (50%) on September 4, 20 letters (75%) on September 11, and 26 letters (100%) on September 18; his traditional grade would be a 62.5% (F). Using a standards based report card, Johnny’s report card would show MS (Meets Standard) because as of the end of the nine week the teacher can report, “Yes. Johnny can recite the entire alphabet.”

2. **When I login to PowerSchool, I see two tabs (GRADES AND ATTENDANCE and STANDARDS). Which tab should I be looking at?**

   You should be looking at the **Standards** tab. This will show you how your student is doing overall on each standard and substandard.

   If you click on the **Grades and Attendance** tab you will be able to see how your student did on an individual assignment, but there is a warning: IGNORE PRECENTAGES. Every assignment will have a score of 100%, 75%, 50%, or 25%. This percentage has no direct correlation to how your student did on the assignment; however PowerSchool is a database so we must enter a number somewhere. Since there are four categories (ES, MS, AS, AW) then each one is worth 25%, thus the percentages you see. Please remember the percentage is not relevant, the ES, MS, AS, AW is what is reflective of your students work.
3. Isn’t an Exceeds Standards (ES) the same as an A, and a Meets Standards (MS) the same as a B or C?
No. Exceeding Standards is NOT equivalent to an A. If your student knows everything in the standards and can demonstrate it consistently they will earn a MS because they have met the standard. A student who has earned all MS’s on their grade card is completely ready for the next grade level. An ES is for students who are working above grade level. If the Standard asks for a student to “Count to 120” and they count to 500, then they have ES. Or if the standard is “Describe the connections between two pieces of information found in two texts on the same topic” and they not only find the obvious connections but make additional in depth connections, they might earn an ES (Exceeds Standards).

4. Is it possible to earn an Exceeds Standard (ES) on every standard?
No. Many standards cannot be exceeded. Either your child meets it or they don’t. “Recite the Our Father” cannot be exceeded. There is no way to recite the Our Father in an extraordinary way. Similarly, “Distinguishes short vowel sounds” cannot be exceeded. There are a finite number of short vowel sounds. There are no additional vowel sounds to identify. Therefore, it is not possible for even the most gifted child to earn all ES’s. The lack of ES’s is not a cause for concern. For an ES, teachers are generally going to look at the next grade standards to see if your student is already mastering the standard that are required in the next grade level.

5. Should I be concerned if my child has earned several Approaches Standards (AS) by the end of the first semester?
Probably Not. Approaches Standard means your child is making normal progress towards meeting this standard but just has not gotten there yet. If the standard is “Count to 120” and at the end of the 1st semester your student can count to 100 but gets confused after that, your student would receive an AS on that standard because they have not mastered it yet. But there is no reason to believe your child won’t meet that standard by the end of the year. Approaches Standards is a natural progression of learning. If they have earned an AS, it is appropriate to ask your teacher what you can do at home to help them meet the standard but it is not necessarily a cause for concern. If your student earns an Academic Warning (AW), that means the teacher feels they are not making adequate progress and without further intervention may not meet that standard by the end of the year. Repeated AW’s throughout the nine weeks is a cause for concern.

6. I look on PowerSchool and most of the standards are blank. Should I be concerned that my teacher is not following the curriculum?
No. The common core standards are extensive and are meant to be taught throughout all four nine week periods. Therefore, on average, 75% of the standards will be blank during any given nine weeks period. The teacher should address all the standards at some point during the year, but not all at the same time.

In addition, not every assignment or class activity is going to appear in PowerSchool. A standards based system is meant to provide parents with information on whether students have met a standard, not to report on every activity a student participates in while learning that standard. Especially in Kindergarten, where there are many activities that lead up to mastering a standard, there might not be a lot of “grades” entered early in the year.

7. My student earned a MS the first three quarters but earned an AS the last quarter, does that mean they are falling behind their peers?
No. Each quarter is independent. The fourth quarter grade is just a reflection of work done in the fourth quarter not a “final” grade for the year. Work done in all four quarters needs to be examined to get a true picture of how your child did for the year. There are no “final” grades on a standards based report card.