



Frequently Asked Questions Archdiocese of Washington Standards Based Report Cards

What is a standard?

A standard is a statement about learning and expectations for students. In a standards-based classroom, the content and skills on which a student is evaluated or assessed are directly connected to the standard. Students know what they are going to learn and how they will need to demonstrate an understanding, ownership, of that knowledge or skill set. Our schools use the Archdiocese of Washington Academic Standards in all subject areas from Pre-Kindergarten to eighth grade.

What is standards-based teaching and learning?

In a standards-based classroom, teachers assess student progress to inform instruction. They use many different types of assessments and provide ongoing feedback to students to enable them to meet the learning target or standard. Four essential questions in a standards-based classroom are:

What do students need to know, understand and be able to do? How will we teach effectively to ensure students learn? How will we know that students have learned? What do we do when students don't learn or reach proficiency before expectation?

What is a standards-based report card?

A standards-based report card lists the most important skills/concepts students should learn in each subject at a particular grade level. It sends a clear, identifiable message about what a student understands and is able to do. A standards-based report card is designed to inform parents about their child's progress toward specific learning standards.

How does a teacher assess learning in a standards-based classroom?

In a standards-based classroom, a student's grade reflects their achievement only. Attitude, effort, and behavior, which can misinterpret a student's knowledge and skills set, are reported separately. Averages are not used as teachers use only the most current data to determine a student's grade. All work is directly related to a standard. Teachers use rubrics, which are scoring guides that explain what a standard looks like in student-friendly language. The rubrics allow students to know exactly what they need to do to demonstrate proficiency. In a standards based classroom, teaching and learning is a seamless as one informs the other.

How does a standards-based report card communicate a student's learning?

A standards-based report card has three areas: Process, Product and Progress. Process refers to how your child is learning, not what your child is learning. This section of the report card is called "Social Development and Work Habits." Product focuses on the student's knowledge and skills at a particular point in time. Teachers determine product grades by evaluating student products class work, tests, quizzes, portfolios, performances, and journals), observations of students, conversations with students, and other culminating demonstrations of learning. The report card has six product or achievement levels. Progress refers to the student's learning gains. It focuses on how far a student has grown over a particular period of time rather than a student's status at the end of a grading period. Teachers use the comments section of the report card to report on a student's progress.

What do the product indicators (EE, ME, AE, NE, X and *) mean?

Standards Scale	Description of Student Achievement Levels
EE Exceeds the grade level expectations at this time	Consistently demonstrates unusually high performance of grade level concepts and skills. A student earning an “ EE ” independently uses and applies knowledge in ways that demonstrates higher level thinking skills.
ME Meets the grade level expectations at this time	Consistently meets and applies grade level concepts and skills. A student earning an “ ME ” demonstrates expected understanding of grade level skills and concepts with limited errors and requires minimal support.
AE Approaching the grade level expectations at this time	Approaching toward expected understanding of grade level concepts and skills. A student earning an “ AE ” is beginning to, and occasionally does, meet the grade level standard, but requires frequent teacher assistance.
NE Not approaching the grade level expectations at this time	Shows limited/inconsistent application of grade level concepts. A student earning an “ NE ” is currently not meeting the grade level standard. The student has very limited knowledge and great difficulty applying the key concepts and performing the processes and skills for the grade level indicators. A significant amount of teacher assistance is required. If a student earns an “ NE ,” use the comments section to make recommendations for improvement or to schedule a conference.
X Not assessed at this time	A standard may not be assessed in each quarter. If a standard is not assessed during the reporting period, an “ X ” should be recorded.
* See attachment	Modifications or an Individual Catholic Education Plan must be noted on a report card. Teachers should put an asterisk * in the appropriate subject area. In consultation with your school’s resource teacher, a narrative response describing the student’s achievement and progress should be provided to the parents.

While the standards are goals for the year, each reporting period score should reflect the quarter’s standards and rubrics. Performance indicators identify a student’s achievement level at that point in time – at the end of the quarter. Because the work within a quarter will change each quarter, a student may earn an ME in the second quarter but earn an AE in the third quarter for the same standard. It is important to remember that even if a student met the standard in the second quarter, they would still be provided opportunities to demonstrate a higher level of accomplishment later in the year through re-checks for understanding and challenging learning tasks. In a rubric-based system, multiple measures are provided to demonstrate proficiency on an ongoing basis.

Sources: Developing Standards-Based Report Cards by Thomas R. Guskey and Jane M. Bailey; Transforming Classroom Grading by Robert J. Marzano; a Repair Kit for Grading and How to Grade for Learning by Ken O’Connor, and Fair Isn’t Always Equal by Rick Wormeli.