



Elementary Report Card Handbook

A Guide to Reporting Student Progress

Grades K–6

*Simsbury Public Schools
Simsbury, Connecticut*

Dear Parents or Guardians,

The elementary report card is an important part of the Simsbury Public Schools' commitment to fostering effective communication between home and school. The elementary report card is designed to communicate a comprehensive picture of how your child is performing in school. This performance reflects the progress and effort demonstrated with the specific knowledge and skills that are being taught in the classroom. Supplemental information and examples of your child's work are available for further discussion during conferences.

The comprehensive reporting system is an ongoing conversation between teachers, students, and their families. The information shared reflects a summary of the student's performance as compared to grade-level expectations. Communication between home and school is essential to support the progress that students make toward demonstrating proficiency with the curriculum taught in the Simsbury Public Schools.

The Elementary Report Card Handbook—A Guide to Reporting Student Progress outlines the essential elements of reporting progress to parents/guardians and students. It also provides a description of the grading criteria used in each subject area, as well as an explanation of the anecdotal comments written by teachers. Furthermore, the handbook provides a narration of the areas reported on the report card.

Communicating Progress to Parents/Guardians

Student progress is reported to parents/guardians in a variety of ways throughout the year. The aim is to communicate effectively how each student is developing, both individually and according to district expectations, as the student advances through the elementary grades. The report card is just one component of the reporting process. The combined process will help parents/guardians and students understand the skills and topics introduced by subject matter, together with the expected level of performance for each grade level.

The elements of the reporting process include:

- Report Cards
- Conferences
- Telephone conferences
- Curriculum information meetings
- Written and verbal communication from the teacher
- Newsletters
- Samples of student work
- State and district assessments

Formal opportunities for parent/teacher communication throughout the year include:

- **September** - Open House/Parent Night
- **November** - Report Card and conference
- **March** - Report Card and conference
- **June** - Final Report Card

Student Evidence That Determines Grades

As students work toward achieving grade level expectations in all curricular areas, teachers carefully consider a student’s performance in all academic areas including art, music, and physical education by examining their performance on a collection of work over time and on classroom-based assessments.

Description of Grading Criteria

SUBJECT AREA GRADES

E **Excels at grade level expectations for this marking period.**

- Demonstrates advanced thinking and understanding of skills.
- Masters and applies knowledge and skills that lead to consistent, high quality work.
- Requires no support to complete work.

M **Meets grade level expectations for this marking period.**

- Demonstrates solid and consistent understanding of skills.
- Applies knowledge and skills that lead to quality work that meets grade level expectations.
- Requires minimal support to complete work.

A **Approaching grade level expectations for this marking period.**

- Demonstrates partial and/or inconsistent understanding of skills.
- Requires additional reinforcement and practice of skills to produce work that is near grade level expectations.
- Requires regular support to complete work.

B **Below grade level expectations for this marking period.**

- Demonstrates minimal understanding of skills.
- Requires additional instruction and practice of skills; work produced is below grade expectations.
- Requires additional time and significant support to complete work.

NA **Not addressed or assessed at this time.**

EFFORT GRADES

It is the belief of the Simsbury Public Schools that effort creates achievement. We foster this underlying belief by communicating these clear expectations to students. All students will:

- Work to his or her own ability.
- Complete homework assignments on time.
- Complete class work in a reasonable amount of time.
- Contribute to class discussions.
- Demonstrate active participation in all learning activities.
- Take initiative for his or her own learning.

Effort grades are evaluated on a three-point scale:

C = **Consistent**

The student consistently and independently meets expectations.

I = **Inconsistent**

The student inconsistently meets the expectations and requires moderate assistance and redirecting.

NI = **Needs Improvement**

The student rarely meets the expectations and requires considerable assistance and redirecting.

WORK HABITS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

All of the items evaluated in this category are directly observable by the teacher and represent a child's behavior over the course of the marking period. Work and social habits are evaluated on a three-point scale:

WORK HABITS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (Cont.)

C = **Consistent**

The student consistently and independently meets expectations.

I = **Inconsistent**

The student inconsistently meets the expectations and requires moderate assistance and redirecting.

NI = **Needs Improvement**

The student rarely meets the expectations and requires considerable assistance and redirecting.

COMMENTS

Written comments on the report card provide an anecdotal supplement of the grades reflected by the student's performance.

The comments may reflect:

- A general statement of academic progress, as well as personal and social development;
- Specific strengths;
- Areas for growth; and
- The identification of goals for future learning.

Teacher comments are written in an effort to create a comprehensive picture and foster understanding of the progress and learning needs of each student. The report card presents a comprehensive view of a child's performance, which makes the need for extensive comments less necessary. Parent/teacher conferences also provide an additional opportunity for parents/guardians to talk about their child's strengths and areas for growth.

KINDERGARTEN GRADES

Kindergarten has a unique grading system to reflect the early learning goals of students. Teachers carefully consider a student’s performance by examining his/her success based upon a collection of work over time and on classroom-based assessments.

Description of Grading Criteria

S – Secure

- Demonstrates solid and consistent understanding of skills.
- Applies knowledge and skills that lead to quality work that meets grade level expectations.
- Requires minimal support to complete work.

D – Developing

- Demonstrates partial and/or inconsistent understanding of skills.
- Requires additional reinforcement and practice of skills to produce work that is near grade level expectations.
- Requires regular support to complete work.

H – Having Difficulty

- Demonstrates minimal understanding of skills.
- Requires additional instruction and practice of skills; work produced is below grade level expectations.
- Requires additional time and significant support to complete work.

Guiding Principles

Most children served in the Simsbury Public Schools will receive report cards that reflect progress toward *District Grade Level Performance Expectations* that will require no modification to standard grade reporting practices.

1. Participation of students with disabilities (SWD) in general education classes is determined by the Planning and Placement Team meeting (PPT) and in concert with the requirements of educating students in the least restrictive environment (LRE).
2. Students with disabilities should be held to the same academic standards and graded in the same manner as students without disabilities, unless otherwise noted by the PPT.
3. The PPT shall document on the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) any accommodations and/or modifications to the content, expectations, standards, and grading practices for SWD placed in a general education class.
4. The PPT, under requirements of the LRE, is obligated to support SWD in accessing the general education curriculum. The PPT must consider adaptations to the general education classroom that will allow a student to be successful. These adaptations can be made to the physical environment, curriculum, teaching strategies and/or assessment procedures. These adaptations are identified as either accommodations or modifications.

Accommodations

Accommodations are changes made to the instructional/assessment procedure(s) in order to provide a student with equal access to curriculum and an equal opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills without fundamentally altering the content or the performance criteria.

Therefore, accommodations do not change or modify the standard(s) or grading criteria required for students.

Accommodations may include, but are not limited to, any of the following:

- Presentation format and/or procedure
- Response format and/or procedure
- Instructional strategies
- Time/scheduling
- Environment/building/furniture alterations
- Specialized adaptive equipment/technology

Modifications

Modifications are substantial changes in what a student is expected to learn, know, and demonstrate. Modifications fundamentally alter the course content for a student and therefore, change the performance criteria. ***Such changes can only be made by the PPT or other formal school meeting inclusive of building and/or program administrator and the parent(s)/guardian(s).*** Students in this grade-reporting category are required to be at a minimum of two years below the standards of their typical peers, and represent a very small percentage of SWD.

Modifications may include one or more of the following:

- Instructional level
- Content requirements
- Performance criteria
- Changes to an assessment that will alter what is being assessed

The report card of a student with modifications will reflect progress toward district performance standards defined in the IEP.

Modified Report Card—Description of Grading Criteria

An asterisk (*) will be placed in the white box identifying content area(s).

SUBJECT AREA GRADES

E Excels targeted expectations for this marking period.

- Demonstrates solid and consistent understanding of skills.
- Masters and applies skills independently/with minimal support.
- Exhibits quality work consistently.

M Meets targeted expectations for this marking period.

- Demonstrates improved understanding of skills.
- Applies skills to assigned work consistently with some support.
- Produces good work consistently when given some level of guidance/support.

A Approaching targeted expectations for this marking period.

- Demonstrates some understanding of skills.
- Requires additional reinforcement and practice of targeted skills.
- Skills are beginning to develop with regular support.

B Below targeted expectations for this marking period.

- Demonstrates minimal understanding of skills.
- Requires extensive support and review/reteaching of targeted skills.
- Requires more time to develop understanding of skills.

NA Not addressed at this time.

Special Populations

Although all students are held to the same academic standards in the district, there are unique cases where students do not qualify for special education services and need a modified curriculum. Students in this grade-reporting category typically fall two or more years below the standards of their typical peers or are unable to comprehend the academic expectations.

In such cases, specific learning goals must be set by a specialized team (teacher, principal, or other appropriate interventionist). Goals will be shared with parents/guardians and placed in the student's cumulative file.

When completing a report card for students whose program is modified, teachers will utilize an asterisk in each content category that is modified, and then rate progress according to the modified grading key. A narrative report will accompany report cards when students are working in alternate grade level curriculum or when significant adjustments or modifications have been made. Specific goals and data, including evidence of growth in learning, will be included in all narrative reports.

If you have any questions on the material
contained in this handbook, please contact:

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