



# Elementary Report Card

TK-6<sup>th</sup>

## Parent Handbook



**Amador County Unified School District**

**Amador County Office of Education**

## What is the purpose of the elementary report card?

The purpose of the elementary report card is to communicate student progress to parents/guardians, students, and other staff. The report card documents student performance over a period of time and provides feedback regarding strengths and concerns. Learning is measured against California's rigorous, academic standards. Progress is determined through multiple measures (assessments, student artifacts, observations, etc.) It is not the intent of the report card to report on every aspect of learning that occurs in the classroom.

Reporting student progress is an essential part of the communication and partnership process between home and school. Parents and students should have information that accurately reflects a student's level of performance and progress in meeting academic standards. The information that is included on the report card and the accompanying documents should enable parents to best support their children at home.

The report card is just one way of learning about your child's progress in school. Conferences with the teacher, along with samples of your child's work, can add to your understanding of your child's performance in school.

## Why did Amador County Unified School District revise the elementary report card?

In 2010 the State Board of Education adopted new rigorous academic standards for California. In the following years, ACUSD has worked to implement aligned curriculum, instructional materials, assessments, and beginning in the 2018-19 school year, an elementary report card based on the new standards.

ACUSD's goal is to improve student achievement for all students in every classroom every day. Research supports standards-based grading and reporting as a basis of communication that will help students learn more effectively through better feedback for teachers, students, and parents.

# How does the traditional letter grade system compare with standards-aligned grading?

## What is standards-aligned grading?

Standards-based grading communicates how students are performing on a set of clearly defined learning targets called standards. The purpose of standards-based grading is to identify what a student knows, or is able to do, in relation to pre-established learning targets, as opposed to simply averaging grades/scores over the course of a grading period, which can mask what a student has learned, or not learned, in a specific unit.

## How does standards-aligned grading differ from traditional grading?

Unlike traditional grading systems, a standards-based grading system measures a student's mastery of grade-level standards by prioritizing the most recent, consistent level of performance. Thus a student who may have struggled at the beginning of a unit, when first encountering new material, may still be able to demonstrate mastery of key content/concepts by the end of a trimester. In a traditional grading system, a student's performance for an entire trimester is averaged together. Early quiz scores that were low would be averaged together with more proficient performance later in the course, resulting in a lower overall grade than current performance indicates.

Standards-aligned report cards separate academic performance from work habits and behavior in order to provide parents a more accurate view of a student's progress in both academic and behavioral areas. Variables such as effort, participation, timeliness, cooperation, attitude and attendance are reported separately, not as an indicator of a student's academic performance.

## How are my child's marks determined?

A student's performance on a series of assessments will be used to determine a student's score on a number of standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Practice assignments and homework are just that, practice, and thus should serve primarily as a source of feedback and instructional support for both students and teachers.

It may be helpful to compare the two scoring methodologies. Traditional grading is easy to spot because it typically involves:

- Simple letter grades
- Assessments based on teacher-defined criteria
- A single overall grade per student based on a combination of related and unrelated assessments of skills, knowledge, performance and conduct over a period of time

The main advantages of this method are simplicity and professional freedom. However, it results in a very limited measure of a student's abilities. The A on a child's report card might thrill the parents, but this grade obviously doesn't convey any precise information. Standards-based grading overcomes this problem. The essential qualities of standards-based grading involve:

- Rubrics with meaningful labels
- Assessments based on standards
- Multiple scores per student: one for each standard that reflects the student's ability related to the standard at a certain moment in time

## How does the report card help parents?

Standards-based report cards enable parents to receive accurate information based on cumulative student progress throughout the marking period. In addition, they promote more detailed and meaningful conversations at parent/teacher conferences, allow for careful and precise monitoring of student achievement, and reflect grade-level standards and expectations so parents gain a complete idea of student's progress.

### **What are other useful resources?**

These guides, created by the PTA and Greater Schools, detail grade level expectations in mathematics and English Language Arts. They also include ways you can support your child.

<http://downloads.capta.org/edu/ccss/ParentGuideBundle.pdf>

<http://www.cgcs.org/Page/244>

## What are the non-negotiable principles of standards-based scoring?

1. Focus on Achievement - other factors will be reported separately (21st Century Successful Practices)
2. Not everything is included in the reported achievement level - For example, daily schoolwork, projects, or homework may not be considered when determining a student's achievement to be recorded on the standards-based report card. Teachers look at student's performance on these activities to monitor student learning, identify strengths and weaknesses, and plan for future instruction.
3. Standards-Based Achievement is not based on averages - The final achievement mark on the standards-based report card represents the learning level at the end of an instructional unit. Students are not penalized for mistakes made at the beginning of the learning process.

## How is my child assessed and how will parents/guardians know if their child is performing on grade level?

Students are assessed using multiple techniques. These may include but are not limited to rubrics, observation, performance tasks, application, paper and pencil tasks as well as various summative assessments. Summative assessments occur after the learning has taken place. They measure student achievement, or mastery of standards, at a point of time. Summative assessments determine the knowledge, skills, and understanding students have achieved as a result of classroom practice and instruction. Student achievement on the most recent summative assessments is given greatest priority when determining overall student achievement in that skill/area. Summative assessment is the product.

Students learn at different rates and in different ways. Performance expectations increase every trimester, and student performance ratings can change as well. Student performance levels represent the student's performance at the time that the teacher marks their report card. It is not unusual for a child to have a range of ratings (4,3,2,1)

Remember, a mark of "3" indicates that a student is consistently performing on grade level and meeting grade-level expectations with independence and excellence. With high and challenging expectations, a "3" is exactly where a competent student should be. "Getting a 4" shows what a student knows and applies to new and higher-level situations that exceeds what is explicitly taught in class. The "3" is the top for the grade level and should be celebrated as such.

## How will student progress/performance be reported?

To be accurate and fair in reporting both student progress and achievement, teachers use a proficiency scale to report individual progress with the standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

Four levels of progress are noted using a numeric marking system (numbers 1-4). The descriptor that coincides with each number is most important. The descriptors indicate the level of the individual student's skill acquisition, as well as the confidence/independence with which the student performs the standard.

When using this "standards-based" report card, it is important to note 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. A mark of "4" indicates student performance is significantly above grade level expectations.



# How will student progress/performance be reported? (continued)



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## Academic Growth for Trimester Standards Rubric

ACADEMIC GROWTH FOR TRIMESTER STANDARDS	
Exceeds	4 (+/-)
Meets	3 (+/-)
Approaching	2 (+/-)
Minimal Progress	1 (+/-)
Not Assessed	NA
Modified Instruction (IEP)	*

Marks	Indicators
<p><b>4</b> <b>Exceeds</b></p> <p><i>significantly above grade level expectations</i></p>	<p>Students achieving at the Exceeds level demonstrate superior academic performance, application or student habits. Work that is exceeding indicates an in-depth understanding or exemplary display of the skills and concepts included in California's rigorous, academic standards. The student's performance exceeds what is taught in class.</p> <p>These students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate broad in-depth understanding of complex concepts and skills</li> <li>• make abstract, insightful, complex connections among ideas beyond the obvious</li> <li>• provide extensive evidence for inferences and justification of solutions</li> <li>• demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge and skills effectively and independently by applying efficient, sophisticated strategies to solve complex problems</li> <li>• communicate effectively and thoroughly, with sophistication</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b> <b>Meets</b></p> <p><i>meeting the requirements of the academic standards for his/her grade level</i></p>	<p>Meets indicates a solid understanding or display of the skills and concepts included in California's rigorous academic standards. This is the accepted grade-level performance, application, or level of student habits.</p> <p>These students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can extend their understanding by making multiple meaningful connections among important ideas or concepts and provide supporting evidence for inferences and justification of solutions</li> <li>• apply concepts and skills to solve problems using appropriate strategies</li> <li>• communicate effectively</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b> <b>Approaching</b></p>	<p>Students achieving at the Approaching level demonstrate marginal academic performance, application or student's habits. Approaching indicates a partial understanding or display of the concepts and skills included in the California's rigorous, academic standards. Students achieving at this level are approaching acceptable performance but have not yet achieved it.</p> <p>These students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make simple or basic connections among ideas, providing limited supporting evidence for inferences and solutions</li> <li>• apply concepts and skills to routine problem-solving situations</li> <li>• communicate in limited fashion</li> </ul>
<p><b>1</b> <b>Minimal Progress</b></p>	<p>Students achieving at the Minimal Progress level demonstrate academic performance that is significantly below grade level expectations. Below basic work indicates a need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve even a basic understanding or display of the skills included in the California's rigorous, academic standards.</p>
<p><b>NA</b> <b>Not Assessed</b></p>	<p>By the end of the year all standards should be taught or assessed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the 18-19 pilot year, 21<sup>st</sup> Century and Math Practices will not be reported the 1st Trimester.</li> <li>• Formal academic assessments for TK-2<sup>nd</sup> Science and Social Studies will not be reported for the 18-19 school year.</li> </ul>
<p><b>*</b> <b>Modified Instruction (IEP)</b></p>	<p>Modified instruction indicates that a student with an IEP receives academic strategies and supports that change what the student is taught or expected to do in school.</p>

# Why are effort marks important?

Effort is a predictor of future success. Effort is demonstrated when a student tries hard even after experiencing failure, stays committed to goals and projects (long term), keeps working hard even when s/he feels like giving up, and stays committed to work until it is completed.

## Effort Rubric

EFFORT	
Exceeding Expectation	E (+/-)
Meeting Expectation	M(+/-)
Limited Progress	L (+/-)

Effort	Indicators
<b>Exceeding Expectation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always/consistently participates in group discussions and class assignments</li> <li>• Always/consistently turns in assignments on time</li> <li>• Always/consistently completes assignments</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting Expectation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually participates in group discussions and class assignments</li> <li>• Usually turns in assignments on time</li> <li>• Usually completes assignments</li> </ul>
<b>Limited Progress</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes/rarely participates in group discussions and class assignments</li> <li>• Sometimes/rarely turns in assignments on time</li> <li>• Sometimes/rarely completes assignments</li> </ul>

## Why aren't grades just averaged?

Because the purpose of standards-based reporting is to communicate what students know and are able to do, averaging does not necessarily present an accurate picture of where a student is in his/her learning.

A student who struggles in a class at the beginning of a trimester and receives poor scores, but who keeps working and by the end of the trimester can clearly demonstrate competence in the subject, should receive a score that reflects that competence. For example, it is a good thing that the decision as to whether a basketball team wins or loses a game is not determined based on the average of how they practice during the week. It is only the most recent evidence (or performance), the game, that counts!

Consider this example: There are two students, student A and student B. Student A comes to school fresh from summer camp and complacently strolls through the semester with these weekly scores: 80, 85, 85, 82, 85, 85, 85, 87, and 85. The average is not difficult to calculate, and student A happily settles for his "B".

Student B struggles initially with the skills and content, but improves over time, with additional practice. Her performance: 50, 60, 65, 70, 80, 85, 90, 90, and 90. Student B's average (mean) of a little over 75 will, depending on the grading scale, allow her to take home a C or D on her report card if the teacher is devoted to the average, even though any fair observer would note that she outperformed student A by the end of the semester.



# How are the report cards organized?

## Scoring Keys

**English Language Arts:**  
Scored: 1-4  
Effort: E, M, L

Student: \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

**3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Report Card**  
2018-2019  
SCHOOL NAME

ACADEMIC GROWTH FOR TRIMESTER STANDARDS	4 (1/4)	3 (1/4)	2 (1/4)	1 (1/4)
Reading Instruction				
Reading Comprehension				
Writing Progress				
Not Assessed				

INTERVENTION/SUPPORT	1	2	3	4
Intervention				
Support				
Other				

ATTENDANCE	1	2	3	4
Trimester				
School				
Totals				

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS - READING** T1 T2 T3

**READING EFFORT**

**Strategies**

- Ask and answer questions about the text
- Recognize text to include story elements
- Determine meaning of words and phrases
- Compare and contrast themes, topics and plots of stories
- Distinguish two points of view from that of narrator or character

**Informational Text**

- Ask and answer questions using evidence from the text
- Explain aspects main idea of a text, recognize details and explain how they support the main idea
- Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented by two texts on the same topic
- Determine main meaning of words and phrases
- Use text features
- Distinguish two points of view from that of the author

**Personal Narratives**

- Knows and applies general phonics and word-analysis skills in decoding words
- Reads accurately and fluently to support comprehension of

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS - WRITING** T1 T2 T3

**WRITING EFFORT**

**Writing**

- Write to inform or persuade and inform on effectively
- Write narratives, informative texts and opinion pieces
- Write narratives for a range of purposes and audiences
- Strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing
- Use technology to produce and publish writing
- Conduct short research projects to build knowledge about a topic
- Take notes and gather information from print and digital sources and from personal experiences

**TELEVISION AND ARTS** T1 T2 T3

**SPREADING AND LISTENING EFFORT**

**Speaking and Listening**

- Identify subjects and relevant details
- Participate in class and group discussions or debates for ideas
- Demonstrate ideas and supporting details of issues read aloud or presented in diverse media
- Create multimedia presentations that display in appropriate contexts
- Speak clearly with appropriate tone, volume, and pronunciation

**Intervention/Support Attendance**

**Math:**  
Scored: 1-4  
Effort: E, M, L

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## Science/History Social Science:

Scored: 1-4  
Effort: E, M, L

## P.E./Art/Music:

Effort: E, M, L

## 21st Century Successful Practices

Scored: A, S, R, NA

SCIENCE/HISTORY SOCIAL SCIENCE EFFORT	T1	T2	T3
Social Studies - Contemporary Change			
Communicates an understanding of and views on change, cause and consequence			
• Civics/Government			
• Economics			
• Geography			
• History			
SCIENCE EFFORT			
Science			
• Investigative Process			
• Life/Physical Science			
• Earth and Space Science			
• Engineering			
PHYSICAL EDUCATION/ARTS/MUSIC EFFORT			
Multi-effort			
ARTS/MUSIC EFFORT			
Art/Music			
Next Meeting Grade Level Standards			
Illustration			

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS**

TRIMESTER 1

TRIMESTER 2

TRIMESTER 3

TRIMESTER 4

Special Education Progress Overview

Trimester	1	2	3
Date			

DIAGNOSIS

Special Education Progress Overview

Trimester

Date

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**Teacher's Comments:**  
Trimester Specific

**SPED Progress on Goals Dates**

# What are the characteristics of a successful learner?

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Successful Practices Rubric

The Successful Practices are researched based on practices that can impact student success as much as academic attainment. The scale below is based on frequency of observing desired behaviors.

21 <sup>st</sup> CENTURY SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES	
Almost/Always	A
Sometimes	S
Rarely	R

Successful Practices	Indicators
Self-directed Learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exhibits a growth mindset</li> <li>Actively engages in own learning and shows perseverance and grit</li> <li>Tries hard even after experiencing failure</li> <li>Stays committed to goals and projects (long term)</li> <li>Keeps working hard even when s/he feels like giving up</li> <li>Stays committed to work until it is completed</li> </ul>
Community Contributor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborates cooperatively and clearly communicates to produce an outcome</li> <li>Values other people's strengths and learns from them</li> <li>Adapts to different groups and situations</li> <li>Is able to find solutions when disagreements arise</li> </ul>
Complex Thinker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates critical thinking and uses problem solving strategies</li> </ul>
Responsible Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizes self and materials, uses class time effectively, and produces quality work</li> <li>Stays focused and is able to resist distractions</li> <li>Listens to and follows direction</li> <li>Researches and completes individual assignments and group projects in a timely manner</li> <li>Plans and sets goals</li> <li>Comes to school/class prepared</li> <li>Sets priorities</li> </ul>
Effective Communicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates clearly and respectfully with students and adults</li> <li>Allows others to speak without interrupting</li> </ul>
Effective and Ethical User of Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates grade-appropriate technology skills ethically and effectively</li> </ul>
Global Citizen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates respect for and an openness to people, viewpoints, and opinions</li> <li>Uses kind words and tones</li> <li>Reciprocates by doing something nice for someone else</li> <li>Is aware of what other people have done for him/her</li> <li>Expresses appreciation (e.g. says "Thank You")</li> <li>Listens the first time</li> </ul>

*How Children Succeed*, Paul Tough

Adapted from *The 7 Habits of Happy Kids*, Sean Covey

Adapted from the *Framework for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning*, Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning

# How can I take an active role in my child's education?

The communication and partnership process between home and school is essential to student achievement. Parents, teachers, administrators, and students all play important roles in the success of this process. When one member of the team does not participate, the strength of the support system is jeopardized.

## Some ways parents can take an active role in their child's education:

- **Attend Parent Teacher Conferences.** These are held in October, however, a conference may be scheduled other times throughout the school year as needed.
- **Discuss grade level expectations with your student.** It is important that both parents and students understand the specific knowledge and skills to be mastered in each grade level.
- **Ask about the school day.** Expect more than just a one word response. Encourage details about what was learned, homework due, and upcoming events.
- **Go over homework with student.** It is also advantageous to go over any corrected papers or assessments.
- **Read together each evening.** Your child may also enjoy reading to a younger sibling. Enjoying the same book or selection several times should not be discouraged – this may help promote the practice of rereading difficult material to improve comprehension as well as instill a love of reading.
- **Help prepare for tests.** Going over information, worksheets, study guides, or rereading text is helpful and encourages good study habits. One suggestion is to have your child “teach” you what is to be tested. Remember - don't wait until the night before the test to study!
- **Send your child to school prepared with a positive attitude.** A restful night's sleep, good breakfast, completed homework, all needed supplies and papers, and of course encouragement help children get off to a good start each day!

## What is a good way to talk to my child about their report card?

Talking with your child about the report card can be a positive, productive experience. The following points may help:

- Plan to talk in a quiet place and time.
- Start with the good news. Talk about your child's successes first.
- For disappointing scores, ask questions so you and your child understand how a score was earned.
  - How difficult was the work?
  - Was extra help needed?
  - Would more active participation have made a difference?
- Ask for a parent-teacher-student conference if you need more information.
- Set realistic goals and make a plan for improvement.
- Work together and follow through on your plan.

## How does the TK-6 report card fit with jr. high and high school models of reporting student progress?

ACUSD's jr. high and high schools will continue to report out grades. This process will stay in place in order to stay aligned with our college and university system. They will also continue their practice of examining how students are succeeding at meeting essential skills in each of the subject areas. As always, enrichment and extra support opportunities will be provided for students based on their level of mastery at all grade levels.

The targeted learning and detailed reporting at the elementary level will help students grow and successfully transition into the jr. high and high school level.