

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why are all elementary schools in Washington County Public Schools adopting a new standards based report card?

During the 2013-2014 school year, the Common Core State Standards will be fully implemented in every school. These standards provide clear and consistent understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers.

WCPS have recognized that the current elementary school report card is not aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Therefore a standards based report card has been designed.

2. What is the purpose of a standards based report card?

The purpose of a standards based report card is to provide parents, teachers, and students with more accurate information about students' progress towards meeting the specific content standards. By monitoring the standards listed on the report card, parents and teachers will know if students are mastering the skills needed at each grade level. In addition, parents will have access to additional information in regards to what their child should know and be able to do by the end of each grade level.

3. What is the difference between a letter grade and a performance descriptor?

Traditional report cards usually assign one grade for reading, one for math, one for science, etc. On a standards based report card, each of the content areas is divided into a list of skills (standards) and knowledge that students are responsible for learning. The standards based report card will note if a child is exceeding, meeting, progressing toward, or making limited or no progress toward the standard.

Will my child still receive a letter grade?

Letter grades will be issued during the 2013-2014 school year in the areas of Reading/Comprehension, Writing/Communication, Math, Social Studies, Science, Art, Music, Physical Education, and Library Media.

4. Where can I access additional information about these changes?

There are many websites that provide detailed information including www.mdk12.org and www.corestandards.org. In addition, WCPS has developed a website with additional resources for families (<http://wcpreportcard.weebly.com>) Your child's teacher is also a great resource for information. During parent-teacher conferences, ask to see samples of your child's work. Talk to his or her teachers about whether the work samples meet or exceed the standard, or how your child could have done a better job on the assignments. Ask how you can help your child improve or exceed the standards in various subjects and what resources are available outside of the classroom.