



Standards-based Assessment and Reporting: Frequently Asked Questions

People are familiar with letter grades- the A,B,C,D, and F. Those grades measure how well students do in comparison with their classmates. The key distinction in Standard-Based Assessment and Reporting is that it measures how well an individual student is performing according to the expectations for his or her grade level, not the work of the other students. There is no “grading on a curve” with SBAR.

1. What is standards-based assessment and reporting?

Standards-based assessment and reporting more accurately measures how a student is progressing toward meeting state and district education standards. The measurements of the individual child are then reported to parents.

In other words, the standards tell teachers, parents and students what the students are supposed to be learning, and standards-based assessment and reporting tracks how well the student is achieving those skills.

Standards-based assessment is used to help every student understand where he or she is in relation to meeting standards so they can improve. It is based on the belief that every child can learn given the right support and opportunity.

2. What is the purpose of the standards-based report?

The purpose of the standards-based report is to provide more detailed feedback to parents about their children’s progress. The report allows parents and students to understand more clearly what is expected of students and how to help them be successful academically, socially and emotionally.

3. Why is this happening now?

About 200 teachers in the Anchorage School District are participating in the 2008-2009 pilot program to “try on” the new reporting system. This has been a grass-roots effort in the ASD, with teachers providing the momentum. According to the Six-Year Plan this is the way the ASD will eventually be measuring student success in grades K-8.

4. Why do we need to change?

The No Child Left Behind Act and Alaska Standards-Based Assessments have set targets for learning that all students must achieve. The new reporting system is designed to provide parents, teachers and students with more feedback regarding instruction and student achievement in relation to those standards.

5. What will the new report card look like?

The grading marks will no longer be A, B, C, D or F. The new report will use a 4-0 system to indicate proficiency levels on grade level expectations. The number 4 is advanced, 3 is proficient, 2 is making progress towards proficiency, 1 is making progress only with help, 0 is defined as even with help, no understanding or skill is demonstrated.

6. What will be included in each subject area as a standard?

Each subject has a fairly specific list of criteria. The same criteria are modified as students go from one grade level to the next, because more is expected of them. When specific problems arise, the standards will show parents, students and teachers just where a student may need extra help.

7. What does a standards-based classroom look like?

Communication: Clear expectations are communicated to the teachers, students, and parents.

Clarity: Grades are meaningful for students and parents. Academic achievement is in relation to academic expectations. Assessment comes from a variety of measures over time.

Consistency: Grading practices are consistent within the school.

Congruence: Grades are aligned districtwide with curriculum and assessment. Standards and curriculum alignment are promoted vertically and horizontally.

8. How will teachers find the time to assess all content areas with rubrics?

Assessment and instruction are more alike than different. Multiple assessments occur before, during and after instruction and each provides feedback. The technology interface provided for SBAR will actually lessen time spent on clerical tasks and allow for more focused attention to the needs of individual students.