

**Milford Exempted Village School District**  
**Standards Based Grading Family Guide**

Milford Exempted Village School *Standards-Based Grading Family Guide* is designed to serve as a resource for families that includes information about standards-based grading practices and reporting. You can access that information here on this site, or download a PDF version of that document here. Both resources include:

- An overview of Standards-Based Grading
- The benefits of Standards-Based Grading
- The purpose of the report card
- Our Proficiency Scale
- Our Grading Guidelines
- FAQ's

**An Overview of Standards-Based Grading**

A standards-based grading approach focuses on what a student knows and is able to do to show mastery of a learning goal. It measures how well a student understands the material they are learning and how they are progressing towards their learning goals. These learning goals are based on a specific set of standards that students need to meet for each grade level and are the standards noted on the report card.

As teachers work with students, they are continually gathering evidence to determine what each student has learned and how that student is progressing towards the end-of-year expectations. The standards-based grading approach allows teachers to design lessons that give students multiple opportunities, if needed to demonstrate mastery of a standard.

**Benefits of Standards-Based Grading**

<b>Traditional Grading Practices</b>	<b>Standards Based Grading Practices</b>
Subjects are noted on the report card with an overall grade.	Subjects are noted with identified priority standards and a score for each standard. This helps you know what your student is specifically learning.
Grades reflect an averaging of scores to determine a letter grade for a subject area.	Grades reflect the level of proficiency on various standards for each subject area. This helps you know specific areas of strength and areas for growth.
Grades are calculated using an averaging system--the worst grades averaged with the	Emphasizes the most recent assessments more heavily to demonstrate learning that has

best.	occurred and does not penalize the student for the learning process.
Letter grades reflect an individual teacher's expectations, student effort and achievement.	Numerical values indicate mastery of the grade-level priority standards.
Often includes things like extra credit, work habits and attitude contributing to the overall grade.	Separates academic performance from work habits/personal development.

### **The Purpose of the Report Card**

The report card is a tool to strengthen our partnership in support of your child's learning. It is used to describe a student's academic achievement and progress towards end-of-the year learning goals. The report card can be used to celebrate student success and guide improvements. Milford's teachers are responsible for teaching all of Ohio's Learning Standards, but there are certain priority standards that teachers will report to parents on a regular basis. These standards are critical for student success at that particular grade level, and tend to cross content areas, span grade levels, and/or are skills that are considered crucial building blocks for lifelong learning.

Students will receive progress reports each quarter. It is important to remember that the first quarter will entail many baseline assessments and introductory lessons, and that the priority standards on the report card are end-of-year learning goals. Each quarter, the report card will note a score or proficiency rating to reflect the progress of a student's mastery of the standard taught. These ratings are not a comparison of one student to another, but are a measure of the student's work toward mastering the end-of-year standard. If there is no score, that simply means that standard was not a standard assessed that quarter.

In a separate section of the report card, a section devoted to personal development and work habits will reflect your child's progress in those areas. Comments will also be provided to provide greater insight into your child's academic progress.

### **Proficiency Scale**

4	The student exceeds end-of-year grade level standard expectations. The student independently uses and applies knowledge in ways that consistently demonstrate higher level thinking.
3	The student consistently and independently demonstrates meeting and understanding the end-of-year grade level standard.

2	The student is progressing toward achieving the end-of-year grade-level standard.
1	The student is not demonstrating independent progress toward the end-of-year grade level standard.

## Grading Guidelines

Guideline #1 - Teachers will only include scores that relate to the achievement of the grade-level standards priority standards

Guideline #2 - Students will have retake opportunities with the goal of reaching a “3” on priority standards by the end of the year and to demonstrate continued growth throughout the school year.

Guideline #3- Teachers will use district-developed rubrics to monitor the students' progress towards specific priority standards.

Guideline #4 - Students with an IEP or 504 Plan will receive allowable accommodations on assessments to give an accurate picture of progress on the standards.

## FAQ's

1. Why did we move to standards-based grading? Why don't we just go back to the traditional way?

A standards-based approach allows parents and students to understand more clearly what is expected of students and how to help them be successful in their learning. It tells us what students have actually learned by measuring a student's progress on grade level standards. Rather than receiving an overall grade for a subject, parents will see ratings for specific skills their child needs to know to reach grade level standards. For example, a reading grade in Kindergarten involves skills such as recognizing letter sounds, identifying letters, understanding what was read, recognizing parts of a book, etc. A student may be able to successfully read all of their letters and letter sounds, but may experience difficulty understanding what was read. This is important information for parents and teachers and it is often hidden within one overall letter grade.

Traditional grading also includes subjective factors like attendance, effort, and attitude, which might influence the grade positively or negatively. In a standards based approach, these behaviors are reported separately in order to portray a more accurate report of student progress. A standards-based system also focuses on the most recent, consistent level of

performance. Traditional grading systems use averaging to calculate grades, which often penalizes students for the learning process.

2. How are the proficiency levels defined, and what do they mean?

The proficiency scale provides information about whether a student is independently and consistently exceeding, meeting, progressing or below the standard's expectations. These ratings are not a comparison of one another, but are a measure of the student's work against the standard.

3. How will each teacher determine how to give a 4,3,2 or 1? (How can I be sure that my child is being scored fairly and consistently?)

Grade level teams are working together to ensure a consistent approach in determining these ratings by developing Mastery Rubrics for each of the priority standards on the report card. These rubrics outline the criteria for each of these ratings for each standard on the report card.

4. What do teachers do when a student is not meeting the learning goals of the priority standards?

Teachers will provide students with additional opportunities for reteaching. Teachers will also continue to differentiate for students based on what the student needs. This approach will provide us another measure to ensure we are meeting the needs of ALL of our students.

5. What about students who are meeting or exceeding grade level expectations before the end of the year on a standard?

Teachers are working to provide enrichment and challenge for these students as we always have. This may take the form of enrichment assignments, higher level questioning, extension to higher grade level material, projects, etc. The standards based approach allows us to identify students who may need this extension or enrichment much earlier than in a traditional grading system.

6. How do accommodations affect students with IEP's or 504's?

Accommodations (e.g., extended time, alternative response) should not affect the way a learner is graded because the learning goals and standards remain the same.