



Louis T. Muenker, D.Ed.
Superintendent

November 3, 2009

Information to Parents and Guardians Regarding the November Elementary Report Cards

Dear Parent/Guardian,

A committee comprised of elementary teachers, counselors, and principals has been working on developing a standards-based report card for the elementary level. In short, a standards-based report card indicates a child's progress towards proficiency in the academic standards established by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This change in our report card is part of the Neshaminy School District's plan to improve instruction and related reporting practices in a manner consistent with current research and reflecting the best practices of school districts across the state. The Neshaminy School District expects to fully implement this new report card for the 2010-2011 academic year.

Recent changes to our assessment and instructional practices for Reading and Language Arts have provided the springboard for us to implement standards-based reporting practices for Reading and Language Arts. Therefore, you will notice some changes in how our elementary teachers will communicate your child's progress in Reading and Language Arts. The most immediate changes are noted below. Additional information on the specifics of the new report card will be provided to families prior to the distribution of 2nd marking period report cards.

Please know your child is continuing to receive instruction and assessment in Reading and Language Arts via our newly adopted programs; Super Kids (K-2), and Good Habits, Great Readers (3-5). Both programs reflect a "balanced literacy" approach, including whole-class instruction and guided reading (small reading groups). The manner in which teachers assess and report student achievement in Reading and Language Arts will be changing. As a result, you will notice a change in the upcoming report card.

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What will be different?

Teachers will conference with parents and guardians and provide insight on how their child is performing in Reading and Language Arts. Teachers will NOT be providing grades for Reading and Language Arts for the first marking period. As a result, the Reading and Language Arts portion of the report card will remain blank.

- Your child's Reading and Language Arts progress will be discussed with you during conference time.
- Core, district-wide assessments (DIBELS and/or DRA2) were administered in September and October to determine your child's strengths and needs. This data is being used to drive instruction during large and small group interactions.
- Math, Science, Social Studies, Work Habits, and Social Development will continue to be noted on the current report card using the same grading system used in previous years.

What happens during the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th marking periods?

- Teachers will continuously collect information related to your child's academic progress in all subject areas.
- Progress in Reading and Language Arts will be reported to you using a separate, standards-based report card addendum during the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th marking periods.
- The addendum (mentioned above) will be explained in detail in future communications with you.
- Generally speaking, the new Reading and Language Arts report addendum will look different, but will serve the same purpose as our current report cards. We expect the new reporting system to provide you with a better understanding of your child's performance.

Finally, while we have attempted to explain the initial changes to our report card in a concise manner, we understand more information will be needed. Timely updates and information will be provided to you throughout the course of the school year.

Sincerely,



Dr. Geeta Heble
Director of Curriculum & Instruction



Dr. Jacqueline Rattigan
Director of Elementary & Secondary Education