

October 27, 2014

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Now that school has been in session for a few weeks, and everyone is getting settled into their classroom routines, you might begin seeing proficiency level scores in Power Teacher. Our focus is to make sure all students master essential skills and meet grade-level standards. We are continuing to use standards-based reporting for all K-5 elementary school students to communicate progress to you.

Teachers will directly address standards in their instruction, and will assess student learning in ways that identify whether students have reached these standards. To see your child's standards-based scores, click on the "Standards Grades" tab in the Parent Portal in Power School.

By utilizing the standards-based progress report, we can more accurately communicate the progress your child is making when learning the district-identified essential standards for each grade level. These essential standards have been identified as the foundational standards that students must master to be successful in the next grade level and are aligned to the expectations of the state standards.

In Power Teacher and on the progress report, instead of the traditional grading scale, you will see the following scores indicating the level of proficiency your child is demonstrating throughout the school year:

- 4.0 - Demonstrates understanding that exceeds the grade level standard
- 3.0 - Demonstrates proficiency with the grade level standard
- 2.0 - Demonstrates partial understanding of the grade level standard
- 1.0 - Demonstrates beginning understanding of the grade level standard
- 0.5 - Demonstrates misunderstandings about prerequisite knowledge and/or skills necessary to meet the grade level end of year standard

The goal is that your child will demonstrate proficiency by the end of the school year for each of his/her grade level standards. It is common that students demonstrate proficiency levels of 1.0 at the beginning of instruction for new standards addressed in their grade level. At times, students may receive a score of 0.5 at the beginning of the year or before instruction on the new standard. In these cases, students are provided opportunities to develop and practice the necessary prerequisite skills that will help them meet the grade level standard.

There are significant advantages to moving to standards-based grading. One advantage is that both teachers and students can focus on the standards from the start of the school year. This gives students ample time to get help so they are on track to meet the standard by the end of the year or experience opportunities to extend their understanding beyond the grade level standard.

This change will make grading practices more consistent among teachers and will make grading more accurate, meaningful, and supportive of learning.

In addition, you, as the parent or guardian, will know precisely to what degree your student is meeting established standards.

We hope you're as excited as we are in continuing to take this important step.

You can access the following PTA web site as a source for further information about how you can help your child at home:

<http://pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2583&RDtoken=126&userID>

Sincerely,

BPS Teachers and Administrators