

Elementary standards-based report card coming soon

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

A standards-based report card is a new concept, and one that Holyoke Elementary School staff and administration are dedicated to studying thoroughly.

A fifth draft of a second grade report card was shared by Principal Kyle Stumpf at the Dec. 1 meeting of the Re-1J Board of Education.

Stumpf emphasized the goal of this type of report card is to give parents more information than just a percentage grade.

Many schools across the state are utilizing a standards-based grading and reporting system, and countless others are studying it in order to move in that direction.

Using existing models from other schools, Stumpf said the staff has revamped the report cards several times in order to make the reporting system work for this district.

“We really want parent feedback and input,” said Stumpf.

Feedback on the proposed grade cards has been solicited, and that information is being compiled, added Stumpf. It’s Stumpf’s intent to continue to solicit feedback.

Reviewing the staff’s fifth attempt at the second grade standards-based report card, Stumpf cited two report areas.

Gone will be the traditional A, B, C, D and F grades. Student performance levels will be marked as 4 (exceeds standard), 3 (meets standard), 2 (progressing toward standard) and 1 (limited progress toward standard).

Within the reading grade will be performance level marks for decoding, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Language arts grading on the second grade card highlights content, organization, conventions, handwriting, grammar and spelling.

Elementary standards-based report card coming soon

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

Math grade report assessments will encompass number sense, measurement, geometric sense, probability/statistic and problem solving for second graders.

Additionally, the card will show the level at which a student is working in each subject area as AG (above grade level), G (at grade level) and BG (below grade level).

Board member Kim Killin raised a question of concern for the grade card being so skill specific. She asked if students in, for instance, a higher level reading grade than their actual grade will have a different report card for that subject.

Different cards will need to be utilized if, for instance, a fifth grader is taking algebra. That student won't be graded on fifth grade math standards, but a different level of standards.

Stumpf reiterated there will need to be a lot of education with not only the students, but parents too, as to what is represented on the standards-based report card.

He added upper elementary teachers have emphasized that CSAP and other testing scores need to be included on the grade cards, as well. And DIBELS testing scores should be part of the lower elementary cards.

Supt. Bret Miles said he sees a staff that is committed to the purpose of reporting more than a percentage grade. Even after four revisions, he noted the staff hasn't let go of finding a standards-based reporting system that works for this district.

Miles added it's going well because it's being managed well by Stumpf, who is devoting extra attention to details, including grading history and communication.

Trial implementation planned for K-2 in January

Elementary standards-based report card coming soon

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

Looking to ease into the standards-based report card, Stumpf said they plan to have grades K-2 use the standards-based card, along with the current grade card, for this school year's third nine weeks, beginning in January.

Then the fourth nine weeks, K-2 will use only the standards-based card. Adjustments will be made over the summer, based on parent and teacher input, then the kindergarten, first and second-grade report cards will go to the school board for official approval starting with the 2010-11 school year.

Stumpf reported on the eager bunch of grade K-2 teachers who are ready to put the new grading concept into place. Next year, that will be a good fit with third and fourth grades, he added.

Stumpf is clear about the significance of parent education in this type of reporting. He hopes that each year there will be the opportunity to revamp and make changes on the grade cards, based on parent and teacher feedback.

Implementing the new report system in tiers, the third grade would be the next level to convert, followed by fourth and then fifth.

Stumpf anticipates those grades transitioning into the new card in a similar way that K-2 is planning, using both types of cards first and moving to just the standards-based card a semester later.

Stumpf said there have been questions about fifth graders not performing at grade level as they prepare for junior high. The school will want to make sure this can be shown on the report card, he added.

Stumpf said he's worked with district technology coordinator Perry Ingram in an attempt to record the new grade concept. The current EduStar system isn't capable of doing it, but there

Elementary standards-based report card coming soon

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

are options out there. Stumpf said they're looking at different reporting and entry systems.

Asked if this type of grading system is looking to be implemented at the high school level, Supt. Miles said there is no plan for that at this time. He added high schools are implementing standards-based report cards across the state, but it is definitely more of a pioneering effort at that level.

While there are no plans for that at HHS at this time, Miles added he thinks it will be the normal "over the course of our careers."

Stumpf added one of the biggest stumbling blocks in using standards-based report cards at the high school level is determining eligibility for activities.