



Elementary Report Card

Madeira School Board Planning Commission Study

2016-2017

Presented to Board of Education for Madeira City Schools by:

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Objective:

Currently, Madeira Elementary begins to implement grades in the second semester of the first grade. Students also receive ratings in several key areas/standards in each subject area. The objective of the elementary report card study was to compare Madeira's current K-4 report card with other high performing school districts in relation to the questions below.

- What are the district's current grading practices in grades K-4 in comparison with other high performing school districts locally, regionally, and nationally?
- How best can we provide feedback to parents on student achievement and growth?
- When are letter grades introduced and most effective in reporting student progress?
- What should a model report card include in grades K-4?

Methodology:

Our research included surveys of Madeira Elementary school teachers, administrators from 16 high performing comparable school districts, and Madeira administrators. Survey participants were asked the open ended questions below regarding current practices related to communicating student progress to families.

- How best can we provide feedback to parents on student achievement and growth?
- When are letter grades introduced and most effective in reporting student progress?
- What should a model report card include in grades K-4?
- What lessons have you learned while implementing changes to your elementary grading model?
- Would you mind sharing examples of what you use today (report cards, communication plan, other useful documents)?
- Are there parent guides or other documents used for orientation to new grading method?
- How did you communicate changes to report card practices to parents?
- Are you utilizing a Learning Management System (LMS)? Which one?

Findings:

The following are common themes that emerged during the survey process. Individual responses to survey questions are included in the appendices.

- An elementary report card should provide routine/consistent feedback to families on student strengths and weaknesses should be provided to families.
- Schools varied a great deal in when they introduced grades to report cards. In general, districts stated that the introduction of grades should be done in 3rd or 4th grade.
- Most school districts are implementing a standards-based report card at this time or moving in that direction. These standards-based report cards include performance levels (not grades) that show students' ability in main standards for each subject area.
- Many districts have found that using parent resources/guides has helped to create a smooth transition to implement a standard-based report card.
- When districts utilize a one-to-one technology environment for students, learning management systems can be helpful in communicating student progress.

Recommendations:

1. Madeira City Schools should implement a standards-based progress reporting methodology for grades K - 2, with grades beginning to be used in 3rd grade and evaluate if standards-based reporting should be extended.
 - Standards based reporting helps to provide an accurate picture of what students know and are able to do in regard to state standards.
 - Standards based grading practices will help teachers plan instruction in a way to challenge and support all learners.
 - Standards based report cards will help parents know the academic areas in which a student meets expectations, needs challenge, or needs support.
 - Standards based reporting is not averaging student performance as is done with grades, but is reporting attainment of the standard.

2. Prior to implementation, Madeira City Schools should work with staff on communication and creation of parent resources (possibly for an entire school year).
 - Prepare parent informational sessions to share purpose for revised report cards
 - Create handouts/examples of new report card to help parents understand how to use the report card to understand student progress
 - Utilize a learning management system in 1:1 grades (4th grade) to continue to communicate how parents can use the new report card to understand their student's strengths and areas for potential growth.