



# Office of Catholic Schools The Diocese of Richmond K-8 Report Card Revisions Parent Guidance Document 2017-2018

## Background

During the 2016-2017 school year, two committees made up of teachers and instructional leaders from schools across the diocese came together to develop a consistent, diocesan-wide report card. The first committee worked on the K-5 report card while the second committee worked on the 6-8 report card. Each committee went through an extensive review and research phase prior to development. This phase included the following actions:

- Discussing what a report card is meant to convey
- Researching the many ways of reporting academic progress
- Examining report card suggestions from school communities and previous committees
- Reviewing report card formats used by other dioceses and divisions
- Discussing what was working for the diocese in this area and possible areas of opportunity

The committees moved into the development stage and took their work very seriously. They created drafts, engaged in discussion to come to consensus, sent drafts out to schools for review, and discussed feedback received to develop final report card templates. Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, grades K-5 and grades 6-8 will use these revised report cards to communicate academic progress on a *quarterly* basis.

While no report card system is perfect, each committee worked to create a template that is compatible with our information management system and will allow for future growth and expansion as we continue to create a unified vision. Without question, our schools will continue to be known for the high achievement and progress of our students across all content areas while remaining focused on their spiritual, academic, and social-emotional growth.

## Grades K-2

Grades K-2 will experience the greatest change. While course names remain relatively consistent, there have been significant revisions to the grading scale listed in the table below.

Kindergarten, 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade, and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Grading Scale - All Courses, Self-Discipline, & Work Habits
<b>3</b> = Meeting grade level standard; applies skills consistently and independently
<b>2</b> = Developing grade level standard; applies skills inconsistently with or without support
<b>1</b> = Below grade level standard; unable to apply skills with support
<b>^</b> = skill requires improvement

The revised grading scale will be used for major content areas and resource courses such as physical education, music, art, etcetera. Each grade level developed its own set of standard clusters outlining important concepts under each major content area, self-discipline, and work habits based on the consensus curriculum and grade level

expectations (i.e. Math – applies knowledge of number sense). Resource courses will use this grading scale but will **not** have standard clusters attached to each course.

Moving away from the more familiar grading scale of M, P, I or A-F may require an adjustment period for all as there are no direct correlations from past to present grading scales (i.e. a 3 does not equate to an M or an A). Please be reassured that the decisions made by each committee were driven by the desire to adopt grading scales to communicate student progress in a developmentally appropriate, focused manner. At this stage of development, the emphasis should be on what students learn without the pressure of what they earn. Teachers will be informally and formally assessing student progress on the appropriate grade level standards based on the consensus curriculum and outlined grade level expectations. Data from these assessments will provide teachers the opportunity to provide a more accurate grade based on present level of performance. For instance, a student that may struggle with a standard early in the quarter may end up mastering the standard by the end of the quarter. In a more traditional grading system, a student’s performance for an entire quarter is averaged together. Early performance indicators that were low would be averaged together with more proficient performance indicators later in the quarter, resulting in a lower overall grade. The revised grading scale does not support averaging. Instead, it allows the teacher to continuously reflect on progress over time and what the student presently knows. It is important to note that a student’s progress may fluctuate based on the standards being presented within that quarter. A student that earns a 3 in math the first quarter may earn a 2 in math the second quarter as the standards being taught may be different, and the student’s present level of performance may vary. In summary, the revised grading scale includes a shift in evaluating student progress at this stage of development as the grade is a continuous reflection of what the student **presently** knows.

### Grades 3-5

Grades 3-5 will experience minimal changes to the report card. While course names remain relatively consistent, there have been minor revisions to the grading scale listed in the tables below.

3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , and 5 <sup>th</sup> Grades Grading Scale - Major Courses		
A+ = 97-100	A = 93-96	A- = 90-92
B+ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82
C+ = 77-79	C = 73-76	C- = 70-72
D+ = 67-69	D = 63-66	D- = 60-62
F = 59 and below		
^ = skill requires improvement		

3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , and 5 <sup>th</sup> Grades Grading Scale - Resource Courses, Self-Discipline, & Work Habits
3 = Meeting grade level standard; applies skills consistently and independently
2 = Developing grade level standard; applies skills inconsistently with or without support
1 = Below grade level standard; unable to apply skills with support
^ = skill requires improvement

The grading scale used for major content areas (i.e. religion, math, language arts, science, social studies, etcetera) will continue to use the traditional numerical/letter grade system. Standard clusters outlining important concepts are listed under each major content area, self-discipline, and work habits based on the consensus curriculum and grade level expectations. Resource courses such as physical education, music, art, etcetera will **not** have standard clusters attached to each course. Similar to grades K-2, resource courses, self-discipline, and work habits will use the 3, 2, or 1 scale and will follow the same philosophy of student progress as explained above. This hybrid model was adopted to help students transition academically while continuing to support the social-emotional aspects of this stage of student development.

## Grades 6-8

Grades 6-8 will experience minimal changes to the report card with course names remaining relatively consistent. The revised grading scale is listed in the table below and will remain the same using the traditional numerical/letter grade system for all courses. The report card will include grades for each quarter and semester, with a final grade reported at the end of the year. Schools may choose to record semester exam grades on the report card. As students enter another level of transition at this developmental stage, self-discipline and work habits will continue to be monitored, modeled, and supported. While student conduct will not receive a formal grade on the report card, schools will continue to incorporate these expectations into teaching and learning experiences.

6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> , and 8 <sup>th</sup> Grades Grading Scale - All Courses		
<b>A+</b> = 97-100	<b>A</b> = 93-96	<b>A-</b> = 90-92
<b>B+</b> = 87-89	<b>B</b> = 83-86	<b>B-</b> = 80-82
<b>C+</b> = 77-79	<b>C</b> = 73-76	<b>C-</b> = 70-72
<b>D+</b> = 67-69	<b>D</b> = 63-66	<b>D-</b> = 60-62
<b>F</b> = 59 and below		

## Moving Forward

Diocesan schools will continue to focus on effective instructional practices and student growth. With any new initiative, there may be bumps along the way as the the new report cards and grading scales are implemented. Teachers will begin reporting student progress using the revised scales on all graded assignments to allow everyone the opportunity to converse using a common language. In the spirit of continuous growth, your support and open communication as partners in education is greatly appreciated.