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## **Moreno Valley Unified School District**

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*The mission of Moreno Valley Unified School District is to ensure all students graduate high school prepared to successfully enter into higher education and/or pursue a viable career path.*

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October 26, 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians of **First through Fifth Grade Students**,

The 2015-2016 school year is turning out to be an exciting one because the District has fully transitioned to a new set of academic standards for students in English Language Arts and Mathematics. These new standards were formerly known as the *Common Core State Standards* (CCSS) and are now known as the *California State Standards*. This means that all students in the Transitional Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade are learning differently.

Since these standards are now being fully taught, the *old* report card is insufficient as we move through this school year. As a result, representative stakeholders (teachers, parents, administrators, etc.) developed a new report card. At the same time, students in Third through Fifth Grade were assessed on their progress with the new standards this past spring using the new *California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)* tests. Parents recently received these results on the CAASPP tests (the "Student Score Report") which look very different from what was communicated in the past. With this new report in mind, it made sense to consider these changes with the development of the new report card.

So, teachers will no longer be grading students using letter grades such as "A" or "C". Instead they will be using a performance-based grading system comprised of numerals such as "4" or "2", etc. These numerals are aligned with the assessments explained above. Teachers will use a **Grading Rubric Handbook** to determine grades using performance descriptors. Please see the attached *Frequently Asked Questions* and a sample of the report card attached to this letter to answer questions about this change. Your child's teacher will explain this new grading process to you at **Parent-Teacher Conferences on November 9-10, 2015**.

Moreover, teachers will be completing the new MVUSD Report Card for this next marking period, October 30, 2015, and sharing it with you at the conferences.

Should you have questions or would like further information, please feel free to contact Dr. Sue Buster, Director Elementary Education, directly at 951-571-7500, extension 17275 or [sbuster@mvusd.net](mailto:sbuster@mvusd.net).

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. We look forward to making great strides with your child's academic progress as we move into mastery of the new *California State Standards*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dr. Judy D. White".  
Dr. Judy D. White, Superintendent

**Moreno Valley Unified School District**  
**Elementary Education**  
**September 25, 2015**

**Grades 1-5 Report Card**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: Why has the District moved from letter grades to Performance Levels in Grades 1 - 5?**

A: While grades show a student's average performance on assessments *over* time, numbered Performance Levels reveal a student's mastery of standards *at* the time. Also, California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) indicates student performance on a 4-point scale. Since parent letters from CAASPP will report scores using numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4, MVUSD has decided to do so as well.

**Q: What is the biggest difference between letter grades and numbered Performance Levels?**

A: Letter grades show summative information regarding student performance on tests and assignments over a period of time. Performance Levels reveal formative (on-going) information of student's progress toward mastering a standard.

**Q: What are the biggest benefits of moving from letter grades to Performance Levels?**

A: Performance Levels highlight a target (a collection of standards), and give the parent, teacher, and student a clear picture of the student's mastery of those standards. In addition, using Performance Levels will create consistency between District reports and State reports.

**Q: What are Performance Levels anyway?**

A: A Performance Level is a snapshot in time, comparing the student to the standard. Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) calls these "Reported Achievement Level Descriptors."

**Q: Aren't Performance Levels just "numbered" grades?**

A: **No.** Grades show averaged performance over time, and over a broad collection of standards. Performance Levels reveal student mastery of a few like standards today. For example, imagine a student scores the following on six graded assessments over six weeks: 1, 1, 1, 3, 3, and 3. The averaged grade would be a "2," because a grade is an average of performance on *past* assessments. The student's Performance Level would be a 3, because the student has demonstrated present mastery of the assessed portion of the standard.

**Q: Is this 4-point scale a Grade Point Average (GPA), like in middle and high schools?**

A: **No.** A GPA implies the computed average of overall performance in many subject areas; Performance Levels imply the extent to which a student has mastered specific standards in one subject area, at this moment.

**Q: So, what does each numbered Performance Level mean?**

A: A "1" indicates the student has not met the standard, and needs *substantial* improvement; a "2" indicates the student has nearly met the standard, but needs further development; a "3" indicates the student has met the standard (and is cause for celebration!); and a "4" indicates the student has exceeded the standard, and demonstrates advanced progress toward college and career readiness.

**Q: Isn't a Performance Level just the average of student performance over time?**

A: No. It's a snapshot *in* time, at the time of the report. If a student demonstrates no mastery of the standard for many weeks, and then suddenly shows sustained mastery of the standard, the student has earned a "3" (mastery).

**Q: A student has always received an "A," but now receives a "3" instead of a "4." Why?**

A: A student receives a "3" for fully mastering the standard. A "4" indicates a student has exceeded the standard, and is making unusually advanced progress toward college and career readiness.

**Q: If every portion of a standard hasn't been assessed, isn't the highest possible score a "2"?**

A: No. A student earns a Performance Level *on the assessed portion of the standard*, at the time the reporting takes place. Of course, at the conclusion of the year the teacher will have assessed every portion of all standards for that grade level.

**Q: Is it possible for a student to earn a "3" the 1<sup>st</sup> Trimester and a "2" in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Trimester in the same area?**

A: Yes. A teacher designates a Performance Level based on the portion of the standard assessed to that point in the year. A student's performance on one section of the standard isn't a guarantee of future performance on every portion of the same standard later in the year.

**Q: What are Performance Level Descriptors?**

A: Performance Level Descriptors simply describe what a specific Performance Level looks like. These statements indicate the knowledge, skills, and processes a student might possess at each of the 4 Performance Levels. SBAC calls these "Threshold Achievement Level Descriptors."

**Q: Who wrote the Performance Level Descriptors?**

A: A volunteer group of MVUSD 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers called the Elementary Subject Advisory Committee wrote the Performance Level Descriptors. These teachers responded to a District-wide call for volunteers, and then signed an agreement with MVEA to carry information back and forth between the sites and the Committee.

**Q: Why the sudden change from letter grades in Elementary to numbered Performance Levels?**

A: The Elementary Subject Advisory Committee began searching for a better way to report student mastery of the standards in July 2014. Since then, the Committee has met 11 times and their work has progressed from an idea, to the creation of a Grading Rubric Handbook and accompanying Report Card.

<b>STUDENT NAME:</b>  <b>STUDENT ID NUMBER:</b>  <b>TEACHER:</b>  <b>GRADE:</b>  <b>SCHOOL:</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE LEVELS</b>		<b>EFFORT</b>	
	4	Grade Level Standard Exceeded	O	Outstanding
	3	Grade Level Standard Met	S	Satisfactory
	2	Grade Level Standard Nearly Met	N	Needs Improvement
	1	Grade Level Standard Not Met	X	Enrolled Less than 20 Days
	NA	Not Assessed		
	X	Enrolled Less than 20 days		

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

READING	T1	T2	T3
<b>Literature</b> Including fiction, History/Social Science, and Science			
<b>Informational Text</b> Including History/Social Science and Science			
<b>Foundational Skills</b>			

WRITING	T1	T2	T3
<b>Narrative Writing</b>			
<b>Informational Writing</b>			
<b>Opinion Writing</b>			

LANGUAGE	T1	T2	T3
<b>Conventions of Standard English</b>			
<b>Vocabulary Acquisition and Use</b>			

SPEAKING & LISTENING	T1	T2	T3
<b>Comprehension &amp; Collaboration</b>			
<b>Presentation of Knowledge</b>			

**MATHEMATICS**

MATHEMATICS	T1	T2	T3
<b>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</b>			
<b>Number and Operations</b>			
<b>Measurement and Data</b>			
<b>Geometry</b>			

**INTEGRATED CURRICULAR AREAS**

OVERALL EFFORT	T1	T2	T3
<b>Science</b>			
<b>History-Social Science</b>			
<b>Physical Education/Health</b>			
<b>Visual/Performing Arts</b>			



Attendance	T1	T2	T3
Days Present			
Days Absent			
Days Tardy			

Work Habits	T1	T2	T3
<b>Responsibility</b> Student adapts to classroom practices and respects others			
<b>Participation</b> Student participates in classroom activities			
<b>Assignment Completion</b> Student completes work in a timely manner			
<b>Homework Completion</b> Student completes homework in a timely manner			
<b>Interpersonal Skills</b> Student interacts with others in a positive manner			

Language Proficiency in English	October 2014/15	October 2015/16
Overall ELD Level		
Listening		
Speaking		
Reading		
Writing		

Interventions/Programs			
<input type="checkbox"/> Special Education	<input type="checkbox"/> EL	<input type="checkbox"/> GATE	<input type="checkbox"/> 504 Plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Read 180/ System 44	<input type="checkbox"/> DLI	<input type="checkbox"/> AVID	<input type="checkbox"/> SST
Other:			
See attachment:	<input type="checkbox"/> T1	<input type="checkbox"/> T2	<input type="checkbox"/> T3

Comments: Trimester 1

Comments: Trimester 2

Comments: Trimester 3

At Risk of Retention	T1	T2	T3
Mark Y for Yes N for No			

Promotion/Retention
Promotion to Next Grade
Promoted with special Circumstances to Next Grade
Retained in Current Grade

Parent Signature