

# EDUCATOR'S GUIDE STANDARDS-BASED GRADING

Find inside a roadmap to help you refine standards-based grading practices and improve focus on student growth. This guide also outlines Forefront's tools to help teachers and leaders report student learning with accuracy and detail.



# Table of Contents

Background and Context	1
Step 1: Identify Standards and Frameworks	3
Step 2: Verify Report Card Indicators & Priority Standards are Adequately Assessed	4
Step 3: Prepare Your Assessments	4
Step 4: Guide Collaborative Efforts	5
Guide Collaborative Efforts with Meaningful Information	7
Focus Collaborative Efforts with High-Leverage Standards	8
Step 5: Reporting to Families	9
In-Person Communication	9
Sending Home Report Cards, Unit Letters, and Progress Reports	9
Sample One: A Standards-based Report Card	10
Sample Three: End-of-Unit Letters	12
Sample Four: Family Letters	13
Advanced Report Cards	13
Report Card Tool Decision Tree	14
Step 6: District-wide Reporting on Student Progress	15
Conclusion	17
Appendix I: Forefront Pre-Implementation Questionnaire	19

Copyright © 2023. All rights reserved.

Forefront Education, Inc.  
75 Waneka Parkway  
Lafayette, CO 80026  
Tel: (720) 818-4277  
Email: [support@forefront.education](mailto:support@forefront.education)  
Website: <http://forefront.education/>

## Background and Context

The transition to standards-based grading is not like flipping a switch. It is a complex process that requires leadership, learning, collaboration, commitment, and tools. Standards-based grading asks teachers and leaders to fundamentally change how they think about and report on student learning. It also means the information about student learning shared with parents is more specific, detailed, and linked to specific skills and concepts.

If you are reading this guide, your district likely embraces or has made a commitment to transitioning to a standards-based system. If this is the case, your staff is already doing much of the hard work of understanding the whys and thinking deeply about the purposes for grading and reporting.

**“Most of the difficulties schools experience in their efforts to reform grading policies and practices can be traced to the lack of a well-defined and commonly understood purpose.”**

**Thomas Guskey, 2015**

You have also likely identified a key area needed to support this change: technology. Providing teachers with tools to support new grading practices is critical. Standards-based grading asks teachers to manage assessment results in radically new ways.

Traditional grading and traditional grade books work hand in hand. They are point-based, percentage-focused, and can be a roadblock for your transition to standards-based thinking and reporting. Forefront is built for standards-based grading. Our tools enable teachers to easily and consistently collect performance-based evidence of student learning aligned with discrete standards and other frameworks. Forefront empowers leaders to configure gradebooks and see assessment results for your instructional

programs and assessment systems. Forefront enables teachers to manage the increased complexity that accompanies standards-based grading, and in doing so, improve consistency in grading practices across classrooms. Forefront improves all aspects of your standards-based grading systems, from collecting evidence to analyzing to communicating with colleagues, leaders, and parents.

Decisions will need to be made. As current client Tammy Brown, Academic Coach at Lakeside School District shares, "It's not a put the program in, start putting your data in, and everything will go smoothly. It's a process." Forefront's customer success team will provide you with an initial course configuration, and you may be using some of our many pre-configured curricular/assessment programs for data collection, but there are many options for customizing the ways you build your assessments and courses with Forefront. Forefront can be customized to support each district's standards-based grading journey.

We appreciate your time as you reflect on this journey and learn more about the ways our software can support your teachers and help your district to focus on student success in more meaningful ways. Let's begin!

## Step 1: Identify Standards and Frameworks

Starting with the end in mind can be helpful to reverse engineer your standards-based grading systems. There are two essential outcomes:

- How and what will you report to parents?
- Which standards, goals, or frameworks do you wish for teachers to focus instruction on?

As you scope out this work, consider the following:

**For parents, specificity is not as important as clear communication.**

When establishing a vision for your district's standards-based grading system, the best implementations do not overemphasize specificity. A report card that becomes a double-sided 11 x 17 piece of paper can be overwhelming and more confusing than helpful. It can also create an unmanageable new workload for teachers. When parents and teachers push back, it creates a lot of resistance and frustration across your district, putting your implementation at risk.

When starting to develop your report cards from scratch, we recommend using parent-friendly language, and limiting to only 2-5 categories per subject. Use jargon-free language to make communication about learning clear.

➡ *Best practice: Use parent-friendly language and 2-5 categories per subject.*

Although our software allows you to collect information and report at high levels of specificity, we recommend leveraging that highly detailed information for your data-driven collaborative efforts. For parents, we recommend you use the report cards to emphasize critical learnings and big ideas (e.g. Reading Fluency or Addition & Subtraction).

## Step 2: Verify Report Card Indicators & Priority Standards are Adequately Assessed

Once you have selected and written your report card descriptors, you will want to determine to what extent those topics are assessed in your curricular materials and assessment systems. Do the assessments you use adequately assess the areas your teachers are being asked to report on? To support this process, once your Forefront courses have been finalized, run the [standards growth report](#)<sup>1</sup>. This will enable you to take inventory of when and how many times each standard will be assessed in your courses. If you find that some ideas are not assessed sufficiently, rather than adding more assessments, consider combining your descriptors into big ideas.

You might be configuring Forefront for custom, district written assessments. If this is the case, you may find that conducting this review in advance of configuring those assessments is more efficient.

## Step 3: Prepare Your Assessments

**“ We say we want all to learn; we don’t say we want them all to learn fast or the first time. If some students have to work harder and take longer before they demonstrate proficiency, so be it. In the final analysis, if they demonstrate proficiency, we give them the grade that reflects that.”**

**Rick DuFour, 2007**

Forefront’s *Pre-Implementation Questionnaire*, included in Appendix I of this guide, provides a helpful checklist for your leadership team to ensure high-level decisions about assessment and course configuration in Forefront are made early in your implementation.

---

<sup>1</sup> Standards Growth Report - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/standard-growth-report-2/>

As you consider the assessments for which you would like to collect information for in Forefront, note that the distinction between “formative” and “summative” assessments can become inconsequential in the software. Do your teachers use the end-of-unit assessment to identify areas for reteaching, review, or make grouping decisions? If so, that assessment is summative in that the information can be used for reporting purposes; and it is also formative.

Whether formative or summative, the standards-based mindset recognizes that more recent assessments provide the most accurate evidence of what has been learned. Standards-based reporting prioritizes the most recent evidence of student learning in order to recognize and encourage continual learning. For this reason, Forefront’s default algorithm applies a time-based decaying average. While some other software programs apply a static decaying average, Forefront considers *when* the assessments took place. For example, if a student is assessed on the same idea three times in one week, it is very different from if a student was assessed twice in October and once in May.

➔ *Best practice: Forefront’s default [proficiency calculator](#)<sup>2</sup> applies a recency calculation to weigh more heavily recent evidence of student learning. Purely formative assessments (e.g. benchmark, screener, and interim) may be systematically excluded at the district level. Additionally, teachers may [exclude assessments at the classroom level](#)<sup>3</sup> from these calculations.*

## Step 4: Guide Collaborative Efforts

The transition to standards-based grading impacts more than your report cards. Forefront strengthens collaborative efforts by making curriculum-embedded information visible to grade-level teams. This information is easy-to-access, sharable, and directly aligned to instruction and standards.

---

<sup>2</sup> Understanding Proficiency Calculations - Forefront Education Link:  
<https://forefront.education/support/understanding-proficiency-calculations/>

<sup>3</sup> When should I use "exclude proficiency" on an assessment? - Forefront Education. Link:  
<https://forefront.education/support/when-should-i-use-exclude-proficiency-on-an-assessment/>

**“Forefront has been a game-changer for us. A game-changer in our PLCs. A game-changer in how we are teaching for mastery with our students, and how teachers are now looking at standards...teachers are understanding better what they are expected to deliver to students.”**

**Tammy Brown, Academic Coach**

To make collaborative work effective, it is important to set and communicate expectations about assessment usage in advance. For example, you may want to set expectations related to scoring and data collection of end-of-module assessments. Some districts ask teachers to focus on specific formative assessments. Others might choose to emphasize exit tickets or quizzes for progress monitoring through the progression of the unit. Consider what expectations will be meaningful, manageable, and adequate for both grading purposes and your systemic school improvement efforts.

➡ *Check this out: Our case study of Englewood School District features one school's data-driven instruction model. Access the Revive Your PLCs guide [here](#)<sup>4</sup>.*

---

<sup>4</sup> Englewood Public Schools *Revive Your PLCs* Case Study. Link: <https://forefront.education/wp-content/uploads/Forefront-and-Englewood-PLC-Case-Study.pdf>



## Guide Collaborative Efforts with Meaningful Information

As important as the data is, actual student work samples are often helpful for collaborative work. When using Forefront, teachers can bring hard copies, or they may also attach images of student work to student profiles by using the note catcher. Learn more about this feature [here](#)<sup>5</sup>.

**“ Because teachers in a PLC strive to ensure all students learn at a high level, it is important that the data in their gradebooks explicitly communicate students’ mastery of learning standards, rather than points or percentages.”**

**Matt Townsley and Nathan Wear, 2020**

The following list outlines the reports in Forefront that are commonly used to fuel collaborative work:

- [Single assessment reports](#)<sup>6</sup> - Understand results from previous units and/or historic results for an upcoming unit (if available).
- [Series reports](#)<sup>7</sup> - Focus on student growth across units, by assessment and standard. Compare results from previous years to put data into context over time and across cohorts of students.
- [Series reports](#)<sup>8</sup> - See historic performance for the upcoming unit. Plan for the upcoming unit with an understanding of which assessment tasks and topics have historically been more difficult for students to master.

---

<sup>5</sup> How to Enter Data - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/how-to-enter-data/>

<sup>6</sup> Single Assessment Report - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/single-assessment-report/>

<sup>7</sup> Series Report - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/series-report/>

<sup>8</sup> Series Report - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/series-report/>

- [Standards growth](#)<sup>9</sup> - Prioritize actions, set, and monitor goals with the standards growth report. See standards performance across assessments and understand where topics appear in your programs.
- [Student pages](#)<sup>10</sup> - Individual student profiles can be helpful for sharing examples of student work [via the note catcher tool](#)<sup>11</sup>. This allows teachers to share student work samples quickly and efficiently.

## Focus Collaborative Efforts with High-Leverage Standards

When schools and districts identify priority standards to direct planning, goal setting, and progress monitoring, it can have several benefits. There is a learning curve for teachers to be well-versed in specific grade-level expectations, particularly if they are new to the classroom or grade level. Support your teachers and bring focus to collaborative work by selecting high-leverage ideas that represent the most essential grade-level skills and concepts students need to master. If you do not already have these in place, the following professional associations have suggestions:

- Achieve the Core (for math and ELA)
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)
- National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
- National Science Teaching Association (NSTA)
- National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)
- National Art Education Association (NAEA)
- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)
- Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America)

Prioritizing standards and ideas for your courses helps build a standards-based mindset. It puts a specific aspect of a topic into focus, and therefore tends to refine thinking. It is no longer that a student might have troubles in math class—which could be the result of a lot of things—instead the conversation switches to one about fractions, place value, or computation.

---

<sup>9</sup> Standards Growth Report - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/standard-growth-report-2/>

<sup>10</sup> How to Look at Student-Level Data - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/how-to-look-at-student-data/>

<sup>11</sup> How to Enter Data - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/how-to-enter-data/>

Once your school or district has already selected high-leverage, priority standards, Forefront can display student performance across these standards by configuring “lenses” in your courses. District leaders may modify and add lenses to courses to be visible in teacher grade books and in reports. Read more about lenses and how to add them to your account [here](#)<sup>12</sup>.

## Step 5: Reporting to Families

Forefront provides a variety of tools to support and strengthen standards-aligned communication with families.

### In-Person Communication

Preparing for parent-teacher conferences? The [student wheel and growth reports](#)<sup>13</sup> enable teachers to highlight student strengths, growth, and pinpoint specific areas where the child is still learning.

### Sending Home Report Cards, Unit Letters, and Progress Reports

Forefront is able to utilize the assessment results collected to automatically generate customized letters and progress reports. To support this, Forefront provides some out-of-the-box solutions for end-of-unit assessment letters and progress reports. However, Forefront also allows you to [configure custom letters or reports](#)<sup>14</sup> for your programs. At a click, teachers generate personalized letters for each student, auto populated with current performance information, and easily providing prompt, high quality communication to all your families.

The possibilities for these auto-generated letters and reports are endless! Here are some samples of report cards, progress reports, and letters that can be sent home with students.

---

<sup>12</sup> Understanding Lenses - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/understanding-lenses/>

<sup>13</sup> How to Look at Student-Level Data - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/how-to-look-at-student-data/>

<sup>14</sup> Customizing Printable Documents for Your District - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/customizing-printable-documents-for-your-district/>

## Sample One: A Standards-based Report Card

This sample of a report card shows how you may report out on key, grade-level expectations in parent friendly language. Forefront populates report cards with student names, performance information, and additional helpful information for each topic.

Note that performance descriptors and colors are customizable. Forefront clients may communicate preferences to our support team to assist you in updating these settings.

Second Quarter Report Card for Rocky Howard		
Second Grade		
<b>Math</b>		<b>Understanding</b>
Number Sense	Student understands number system and solves problems.	limited
Addition and Subtraction	Student adds fluently within 20 and strategically within 1,000.	progressing
Measurement and Shape	Student measures for problem solving and understands geometric principles.	on track
<b>Language Arts</b>		
Reading Foundations	Student uses knowledge of letter sounds to solve unknown words, reads with fluency and makes sense of what they've read.	on track
Writing	Student writes narrative and opinion pieces using lessons learned about structure, content and writing conventions.	progressing
<b>Science</b>		
Materials and Substances	Student understands properties and uses this knowledge to create and invent or complete experiments.	on track
<b>Social Studies</b>		
Communities	Student learns the value of community strength, the roles of community members and how to show their civic responsibility.	on track
Comments:		

## Sample Two: An Assessment/Standards Progress Report


Tiger Pride Math Progress Update for Ruth Howard Third Grade, February		
<b>Performance on Key Grade-Level Expectations</b>		
Students use multiplication and division to solve word problems.	Students find area of rectangles to solve real-world mathematical problems.	
<i>It looks like: students solving problems about equal groups, arrays, and quantities using drawings and equations and symbolizing the unknown number.</i>	<i>It looks like: students multiplying whole-number side lengths to solve problems and represent products as rectangular areas in mathematical reasoning.</i>	
Shows preliminary understanding	Demonstrates satisfactory understanding	
<b>Assessment Performance</b>		
<b>Plant the Garden Word Problems</b>	<b>Modeling Multiplication and Division Work Sample</b>	<b>Unit Post Assessment</b>
<i>Students completed word problems on equal groups and finding area in the context of gardening.</i>	<i>Student work samples were scored on a rubric based on the student's use of unknown equations, written modeling of work, and written mathematical reasoning.</i>	<i>Students completed a comprehensive unit post assessment that assessed the work of the unit, including finding area or unknown side lengths and solving word problems.</i>
Shows limited understanding	Demonstrates satisfactory understanding	Demonstrates satisfactory understanding
<b>Want to support your learner?</b> Visit <a href="http://tigerpridemath.com/thirdgrade">tigerpridemath.com/thirdgrade</a> for at-home activities to reinforce learning and extend mathematical ideas.		
<b>Comments:</b> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		

This second sample shows a blended assessment and standards progress report.

Many instructional programs assess student performance for standards relative to the expectations of each unit, as compared to assessing against end-of-year expectations. It can be confusing for parents when a student is introduced to a concept or skill early in the year, demonstrates proficiency, but then, as the year progresses and content becomes increasingly more challenging, the student's proficiency changes.

When this is the case, some districts prefer to report progress with assessment-level performance alongside performance on grade-level expectations. This can reduce confusion and more accurately demonstrate student performance on key concepts as assessed by summative assessments in a spiraled curriculum.

## Sample Three: End-of-Unit Letters



### Grade 2 Mathematics Unit 4 Report

**Student Name:** Jerry Bright

In this unit, students learned how to:

- Estimate, measure, and compare the lengths of objects in inches, feet, and yards
- Select and use the appropriate tool for measuring the length of an object
- Measure the length of an object twice, using two different units—such as inches the first time, then feet

In this unit, students should have shown mastery in the following areas:

- Unit 4 Post Assessment Questions 4 & 5
  - o Addition and subtraction within 100 to solve 1-step word problems
  - o Students were also assessed on this skill in Units 1 and 3
  - o Students will be assessed again with this skill in Unit 7
- Unit 4 Post Assessment Question 2
  - o Measure the length of an object twice, using two different units—such as inches the first time, then feet
- Unit 4 Post Assessment Question 1
  - o Estimate, measure, and compare the lengths of objects in inches, feet, and yards

Learning Target	Performance Indicator
Measure and estimate lengths in standard units.	Proficient
Relate addition and subtraction to length.	Proficient
Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction.	Proficient
Use place value understanding and properties of operations to add and subtract.	Proficient

On the back are some examples of strategies and models used to develop these concepts in this unit.


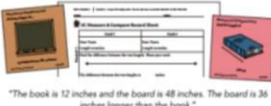



A great practice Forefront makes possible is sending end-of-unit reports home with students. These can be attached to the end-of-unit assessment to explain student performance on the concepts/skills assessed in that unit, and to clarify which topics were newly introduced, and the ones for which mastery is expected.

The examples above and to the right show

a two-page document with topics of mastery, as well as sample practice problems and free resources for the parent to access at home.

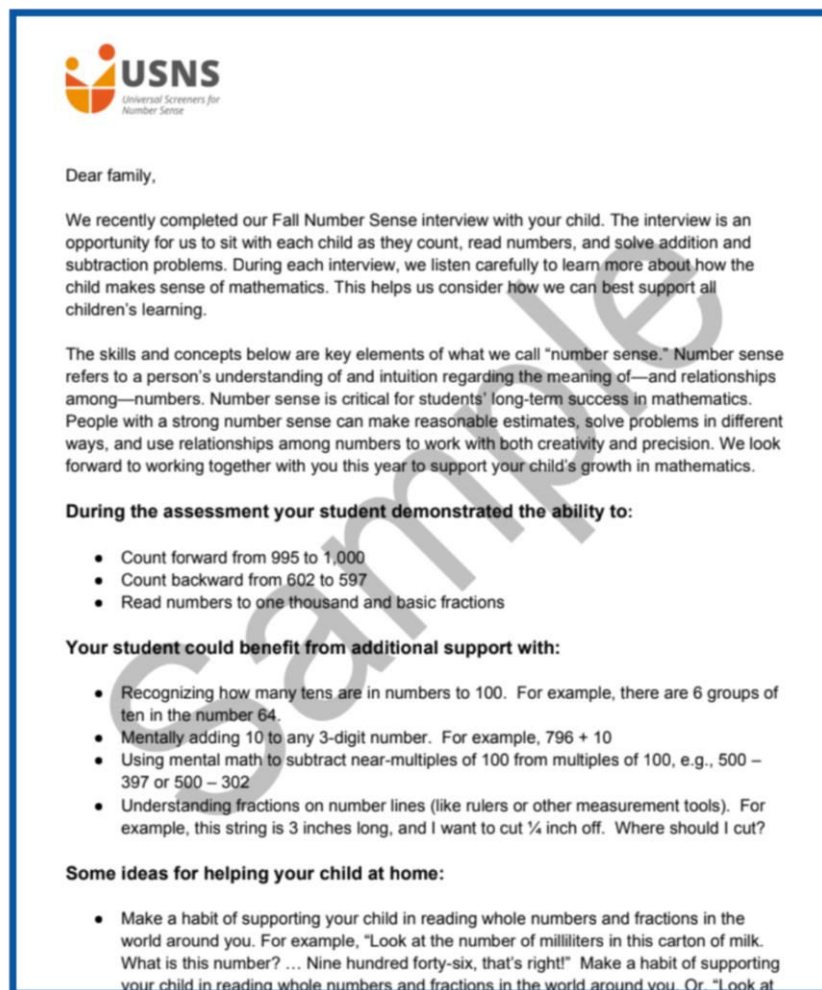
**How can I work on this at home?**

- Use measurement tools to measure the length of objects in your home. Compare the lengths of objects and discuss inches, feet and yards. Have a conversation about the appropriate tool to measure smaller items vs. larger items.
- Create a word problem using 2-digit numbers. Have your child solve on a number line. Example: Tom walked 22 feet on Monday. On Tuesday he walked 35 feet. How many feet did he walk all together?

PROBLEM	COMMENTS																	
<p>Measure the yellow paper strip with tiles and then with your inchworm ruler.</p>  <p>"It was 4 both times. Four tiles, and then 4 of those worms on the ruler. The ruler is kind of like having tiles stuck together."</p> <p>Choose a card. Measure your object. Compare the length of your object to your partner's object.</p>  <p>"The book is 12 inches and the board is 48 inches. The board is 36 inches longer than the book."</p> <p>In the Giant Kingdom, the bigger worms give piggyback rides to the smaller worms. Use your inchworm ruler and your paper footworms and yardworms to help solve the problem below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many inchworms can ride piggyback on a footworm at one time?</li> <li>How many footworms can ride piggyback on a yardworm at one time?</li> <li>One day 27 inchworms were waiting for a ride at the piggy-up. Riding some 1 footworms.</li> </ol> <p>How many 12 inchworms can ride piggyback at the same time on 1 footworm?</p> <p>"There are 12 inches in 1 foot, and 3 feet in 1 yard. Twenty-seven inchworms can't ride piggyback on 2 footworms because each footworm is only 12 inches: <math>12 \times 2 = 24</math>. These inchworms won't get a ride because 27 is 3 more than 24."</p> <p>How wide is the desk? Use your inchworm ruler to find out. Then use your footworm ruler.</p> <p>"The desk measurement in inches is 24 inches wide, but when you measure it in feet, it's only 2 feet wide."</p>  <p>Are the measurements the same? Why or why not?</p>	<p>In this unit students return to the land of beanstalks and giants and explore measurement in a giant's world. The story <i>Jim and the Beanstalk</i> by Raymond Briggs (a spinoff of the traditional Jack &amp; the Beanstalk tale) is the inspiration for many measuring activities.</p> <p>Second graders build upon their early experiences to measure with standard units, like the inches shown on the inchworm ruler. The example shows students how the ruler can be used in place of lining up individual tiles to measure length.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Object</th> <th>Length in tiles</th> <th>Length in inches</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Book</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Board</td> <td>12</td> <td>12</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>As the unit progresses, students use inches, feet, and yards to measure objects found in the classroom. They compare the differences in length between the two objects by using the same tool and unit to measure both objects.</p> <p>In the giant's garden there are earthworms of various lengths: inchworms, footworms, and yardworms. Students discover that 12 inchworms can take a ride on the back of 1 footworm. Likewise, 3 footworms can ride on the back of a yardworm. These fantasy characters provide a fun context for measuring while helping students remember there are 12 inches in 1 foot and 3 feet in 1 yard.</p>  <p>Students measure an object using two units of different lengths such as inches, then feet.</p> <p>How long do you think our whiteboard is?</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tbody> <tr> <td>100 inchworms</td> <td>13 footworms</td> </tr> <tr> <td>75 inchworms</td> <td>10 footworms</td> </tr> <tr> <td>150 inchworms</td> <td>8 footworms</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>20 footworms</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>  <p>Students compare standard units of measurement and explore how the size of the unit impacts the number of</p>	Object	Length in tiles	Length in inches	Book	4	4	Board	12	12	100 inchworms	13 footworms	75 inchworms	10 footworms	150 inchworms	8 footworms		20 footworms
Object	Length in tiles	Length in inches																
Book	4	4																
Board	12	12																
100 inchworms	13 footworms																	
75 inchworms	10 footworms																	
150 inchworms	8 footworms																	
	20 footworms																	



## Sample Four: Family Letters



If your district utilizes common assessments or communicates grade-level expectations throughout the year, a letter is also a popular format.

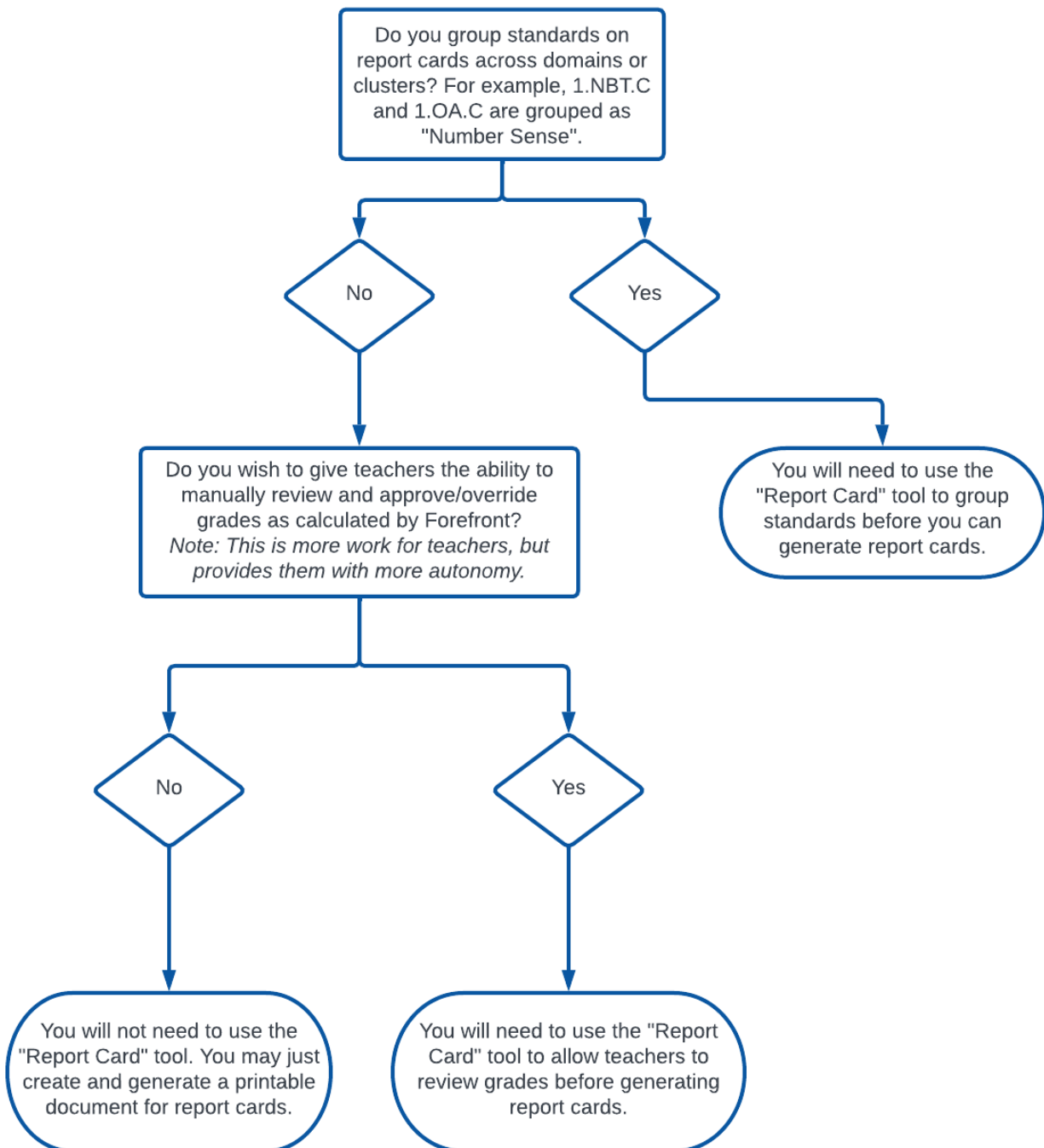
The sample letter to the left describes a universal screening assessment. It shares individual student strengths, areas to support, and activities for families to incorporate learning in day-to-day life.

## Advanced Report Cards

Forefront also provides another even more flexible solution that in some cases is appropriate. If your district groups standards across clusters or domains, or wishes to give teachers the opportunity to review, approve, and leave comments for students, Forefront's Report Card Alignment tool is for you. Simply referred to as Forefront's "Report Card," this feature is sometimes the ideal solution.

To determine if this is the best option for your district, refer to the decision tree on the following page.

## Report Card Tool Decision Tree

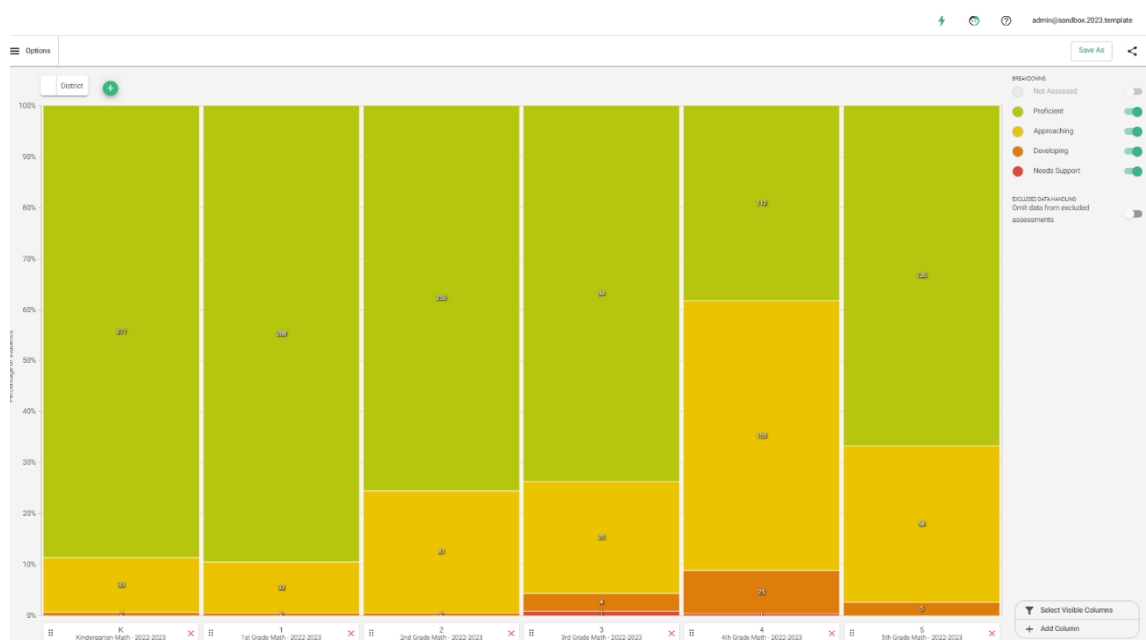




## Step 6: District-wide Reporting on Student Progress

Once you have data from at least two units, you will want to look at grade and building level views of progress by standards. There are three primary views to analyze performance relative to grade-level expectations across your classes, schools, and district:

- 1) Grade-Level Snapshot: Using the [Flexible Standards Report](#)<sup>15</sup>, you can create grade-level snapshots for high-level views of student performance. Note that you can add “cohorts” to this report to run building-by-building comparisons, class-to-class comparisons, or to put class and building-level performance into a district-level context.

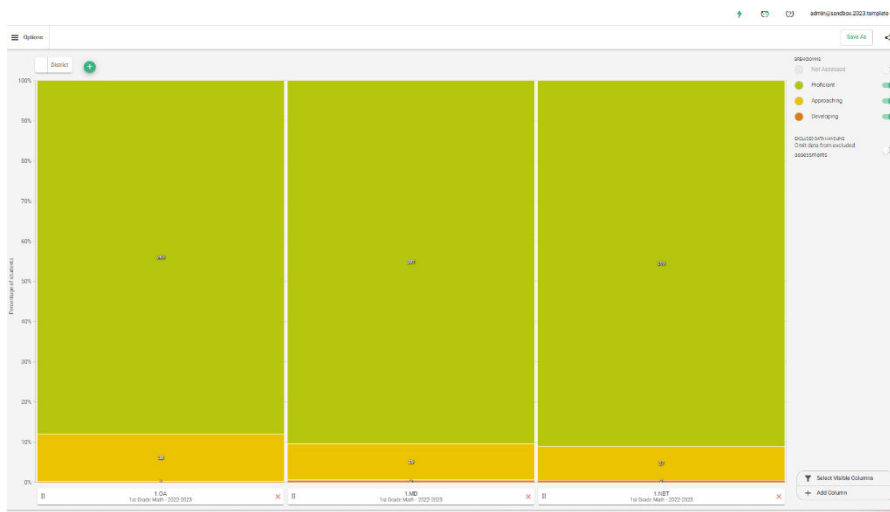


- 2) Grade-Level Expectations: For subject-area specialists, grade-level expectations can be visualized with the [Flexible Standards Report](#)<sup>16</sup>. Performance buckets can be large—for example, first grade math, first grade ELA, first grade science—or more granular, such as second grade place value or kindergarten letter identification. The example below looks at math domain-level performance for first

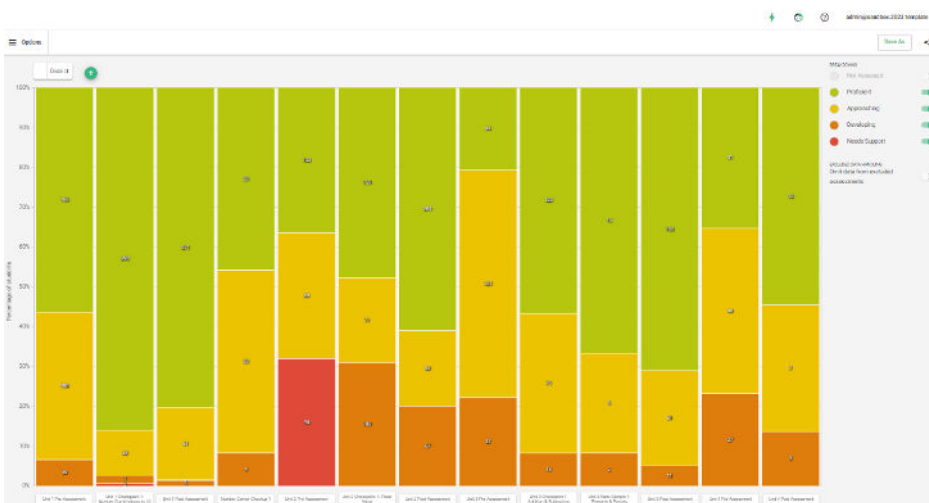
<sup>15</sup> Flexible Standards Report - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/standard-growth-report/>

<sup>16</sup> Flexible Standards Report - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/standard-growth-report/>

grade in the first trimester of the year. Note that student-level and classroom-level information [may be downloaded](#)<sup>17</sup> by selecting the column descriptor.



- 3) Monitoring Standards Performance: For teachers and subject-area specialists, the [Standards Growth Report](#)<sup>18</sup> allows instructional leaders to view topics or standards assessment by assessment in order to monitor performance.



The Standards Growth Report automatically updates as new assessment data becomes available. It can be consulted intermittently throughout the year to view performance as classes progress through the curriculum. At the end of

<sup>17</sup> How to Download Data from Reports - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/how-to-download-data-from-reports/>

<sup>18</sup> Standards Growth Report - Forefront Education. Link: <https://forefront.education/support/standard-growth-report-2/>

the year, this provides a historical recap of student progress and performance on specific standards. As teachers prepare for the next year, it can provide helpful insights into what went well and what adjustments might need to be made.

## Conclusion

One of the largest lessons of the pandemic was how inequity underpins our school systems. More than any other practice at school, the practice of evaluating and assessing student work—grading—can perpetuate these biases.

Your district has begun the work of setting the standards-based learning vision, identifying the standards-aligned curricula and assessments, and changing how you communicate with parents. The transition to standards-based grading demands thoughtful leadership, ample communication, and collaboration. Technology is also critical for successful standards-based grading implementations. At Forefront, we believe software should support transforming how teachers consider and communicate about student learning, and how students and families understand growth. With Forefront, understanding and reporting about student learning becomes specific, detailed, and focused on learning as a *process*.

Thank you so much for selecting our software solution to support the refinement of your standards-based grading practices. And more importantly, thank you for supporting teachers and providing them with tools that directly support and elevate classroom instruction. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions about refining your standards-based grading systems or any of the topics covered in this guide.

Forefront Education  
Tel: (720) 818-4277  
Email: [support@forefront.education](mailto:support@forefront.education)  
Website: <http://forefront.education/>

## Suggested Readings

Brookhart, S. (2004) *Grading* (2nd Edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall

Dufour, R. (2007) Once Upon a Time: A tale of excellence in assessment. In D. Reeves (Ed.) *Ahead of the Curve: The Power of Assessment to Transform Teaching and Learning* (pp.256-263) Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

Guskey, T.R. (2015). *On your mark: Challenging the conventions of grading and reporting*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

O'Connor, K. (2018). *How to grade for learning, K-12* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Schimmer, Tom (2016) *Grading from the Inside Out*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

Townsley, N. & Wear, N. (2020) *Making Grades Matter: Standards-Based Grading in a Secondary PLC at Work*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

For further reading suggestions also visit Matt Townsley's website, *All Things Standards-Based Grading*. Link: <http://mctownsley.net/standards-based-grading/>

## Appendix I: Forefront Pre-Implementation Questionnaire

Share and review this questionnaire with your instructional leadership team. When possible, we strongly recommend including teachers in this pre-implementation work.

No.	Question	Response
1	What assessment data do you want to collect in Forefront? Select all that apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Preconfigured solutions</li><li>● Custom solutions</li><li>● Third-party assessment results</li></ul>
2	If interested in utilizing Forefront for assessments that are not preconfigured in Forefront, have you identified which assessments?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Yes</li><li>● No</li><li>● Not relevant</li></ul>
3	Forefront can be used for standards-based grading and reporting purposes. Has your district defined the grading categories and with which standards they align?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Yes</li><li>● No</li><li>● Partially</li><li>● Not relevant</li></ul>
4	Will you require that results are collected for some assessments and others that might be optional?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Yes</li><li>● No</li><li>● Not sure</li></ul>
5	If teachers will not be mandated to collect information, have you defined assessments or data points that you wish to look at systematically across the district? Common examples include summative, benchmark, or screening assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Yes</li><li>● No</li><li>● Not sure</li></ul>