



Billerica Public Schools

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Dear Families,

As we continue our first year with our new standards aligned English Language Arts programs—EL Education and Benchmark Phonics—you may notice that your child's report card may look a little different this year. We want to share what that means and why it's expected.

First, please know that the state standards have not changed. What has changed is the way we teach, assess, and measure progress toward those standards. EL Education and Benchmark Phonics give us new ways to see what students truly understand and can do independently.

Teachers are using new rubrics and expectations that more precisely measure student learning. As a result, proficiency levels may look different than in past years. Many students may begin the year in the "progressing toward the standard" range as they work toward full mastery of grade-level skills, which is completely normal since mastery of the grade level standards is an end of year expectation.

Teachers are collecting evidence of progress across reading, writing, speaking, and foundational skills. For example:

- In Benchmark Phonics, teachers look closely at decoding, spelling, and word recognition skills.
- In EL Education, they focus on comprehension, writing, speaking and listening and using evidence from texts.

These programs provide opportunities to gather a more accurate picture of your child's growth as a reader and writer, and report cards now reflect that deeper understanding.

As we make this shift, our goal is to partner with you. Together, we can celebrate progress and help every student continue to grow with confidence.

Thank you for your continued support as we learn and grow together through this exciting new curriculum.

Thank you,

Megan Keough