

Dear Parents,



*I apologize for another lengthy letter; however, the manner in which we must record grades on the district's report card is such that assessing your child requires the recording of both percentage grades for an overall grade, and to separate each assignment and assessment by "Power Standards." In order to provide you with a clear idea as to how your child is progressing in math, I have developed an evaluation sheet I will attach to each unit's "Progress Check." These results will also be recorded on the math portion of your child's data notebook for you to review periodically. What follows is an explanation of how I assess your child in math. It is complicated, but this is what is required by our district in order to provide you with accurate and necessary information. Please visit my webpage by navigating via [rps.net](http://rps.net). It has a lot of information you might find helpful. ☺*



Your child's first Everyday Math Progress Check is attached. Each Progress Check has four parts: Self Assessment, Part A, Part B, and Open Response. For the **Self Assessment**, your child has reflected upon his/her abilities and has placed checkmarks in the chart to evaluate his/her skill levels in each area. **Part A** is the most important part of the assessment. The scores for this part of the test reflect how well your child grasped the concepts practiced in class and at home. **Part B** of the test is used primarily by me to determine areas needing further focus and instruction. There is no grade recorded for this part of the test. These questions were only briefly covered in this unit or were introduced in second grade; however, these items will be explored further in upcoming units and will appear in Part A of future assessments. The **Open Response** is a challenging multi-step word problem that often has many possible answers and/or ways of arriving at the correct answer. I have provided multiple lessons to develop all the skills necessary for students to answer this problem correctly and have provided individual feedback on a practice problem your child should use to help him/her be more successful on the assessed Open Response. There is a separate evaluation sheet attached to your child's Open Response item. Your child is tracking his/her own progress on a separate sheet in the data folder.

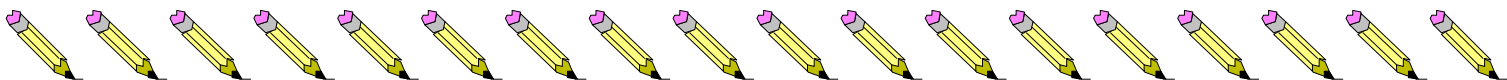
For each Progress Check, the students will complete a "Review" in class, the day prior to the administration of the Progress Check. The Review is identical in format to the Progress Check, only the values of the numbers in the problems are altered. I will highlight incorrect answers which will be sent home to be corrected for homework. This enables you to determine the areas in which your child needs additional assistance. This also helps me determine how to focus the review I conduct right before the Progress Check is administered.

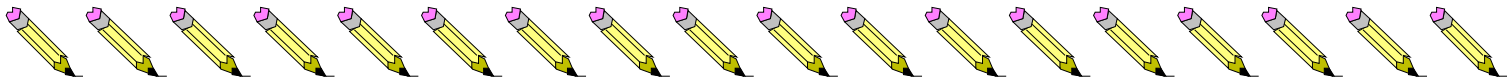
I must record two types of grades for Part A of the test: progress toward the strands of math which are the "Power Standards" on the report card, and a percentage grade which is applied to your child's overall grade on the report card for math. The chart attached to your child's Progress Check contains this information and is also recorded in your child's data folder. The progress made toward the strands of math (Numbers and Operations; Algebra; Geometry; Measurement; and Data Analysis and Probability) are scored as follows:

- 0 = No answer given
- 1 = Beginning Steps; mostly incorrect
- 2 = Nearing Proficiency; partially correct
- 3 = Proficient; correct

Unfortunately, the Progress Check does not provide questions to determine if your child is advanced in any of the strands. The questions are designed only to determine proficiency. Fortunately, opportunities for enrichment are frequently provided within each lesson, and all students are challenged to perform at a proficient level on Part B of the test and to earn 8-10 points on the Open Response. I also provide daily challenges through practice with algorithms and "Math Routines."

I am also assessing the "Math Boxes" with a percentage grade, and parts of each Math Box are assessed to determine progress toward the individual strands of math. Math Boxes are exercises your child completes after every math lesson. They contain practice problems from past, present, and future lessons and help your child





revisit concepts to encourage retention. First, your child works independently on the Math Boxes. Then we review the answers to help your child correct/reinforce his/her understanding. Finally, your child is assessed on another Math Box which contains the exact same concepts as the one completed independently and reviewed as a class. I record a percentage grade for Math Boxes that is calculated along with the Progress Checks for your child's overall math grade. These grades are recorded in your child's Everyday Math Journal and can be reviewed at home upon request. I used to copy the assessed Math Boxes so they could be sent home; however, our copy budget is such that this is no longer possible. I will record your child's quarterly average for Math Boxes on the math portion of the data folder.

Another assessment is a district-created assessment that is administered quarterly. This is called the "Math Quarterly Assessment." This assessment is a state requirement. It is meant to determine progress toward the standards and provide practice for the New Mexico Standards-Based Assessment. The scoring guide on this assessment does provide for an advanced score. Students earning a 90% or higher on this assessment are considered "Advanced." I will use this assessment in conjunction with all others and will place whichever score is highest for each strand on the report card.

As if that weren't enough (!) I also administer a pretest and post test for math facts and algorithms each quarter. The results are reported on the math portion of your child's data notebook. This quarter, addition facts to 18 are assessed with a 100-problem test that must be completed in five minutes or less. Next quarter, subtraction facts will be the focus, with multiplication to follow in the second half of the year. A score of 80% or higher is considered proficient. We must work hard on this skill, for it is the greatest factor reported by upper grade teachers than inhibits a child's ability to progress as expected in math. Third graders must "graduate" from counting on their fingers to trusting their brains to recall each fact in less than three seconds.

As far as algorithms are concerned, the authors of Everyday Math believe it is to a child's advantage to learn several different ways to add, subtract, multiply, and divide multi-digit numbers. This may differ from your philosophy; however, it is important that you support your child in learning the methods taught in class. There is one algorithm that is emphasized for each of the operations and is the one your child will be expected to use on the quarterly algorithms assessment. For addition, this algorithm is called "Partial Sums" which reinforces place value and encourages mental addition. The "Trade First" method for subtraction is similar to the "Borrowing" method we learned in school, but all the trading is done before all the subtracting. For multiplication, the "Partial Products" algorithm, similar to the Partial Sums method, will be taught. Every day, the students complete three problems involving the computation of multi-digit numbers. Each algorithm is focused upon for three weeks. For the post-test, your child must use the focus algorithm for all ten problems and get eight or more answers correct to earn a proficient score. To earn an advanced score, another algorithm of their choice must be used with three of the ten problems.

Thank you for reading this very lengthy explanation of how your child will be assessed in math. Please let me know if you have any further questions or are confused by the information I have provided, for I know it can be difficult to understand! I will be happy to review anything with you should you need assistance.

Sincerely,

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