August 23, 2013

Dear FCUSD Educators,

Thank you so much for taking the time to look at the report card drafts and give us feedback. We read every piece and we are grateful for your input. In addition, we made several changes based on your feedback! Remember, the report card is just one tool we use to communicate progress to parents. If you need more specifics, please refer to the very explicit "I Can" Statements or the CCSS for your grade level. While we aren’t able to respond to each one of you individually, we wanted to email everyone with a few notes of explanation about the new report cards:

- The new report cards are aligned to the Common Core State Standards
- They are consistent K-6
- We did our best to match both the language of the standards, as well as the intent of the standards
- We realize that it will take parents and teachers time to get used to the new format and language, we encourage you to use the CCSS as your "appendix" to the report card. In other words, if you don't understand something on the report card, please refer to the ELA or math standards - they are very detailed and explicit.
- While we originally sent out these drafts in April, hopefully they will make more sense to you, now that you've been to the CCSS ELA & Math Trainings in May
- The headings in ELA match the ELA strands and clusters, as the headings in Math match the math domains and clusters.
- Markings
  - Performance Indicators: Sub-categories in ELA and math
  - O, G, S, N for Lifelong Learning Skills
  - Y/N for Additional Subject Areas and Additional Services
- 3 vs 4 grading options for "Overall Grades" (i.e. new M - meets or exceeds, D - developing, L - limited, vs. old 4, 3, 2, 1) for K-3. There was much discussion about this, but the district has decided on three levels. Remember, within the subcategories, you can add + or - next to each skill.
- Modified Curriculum - If you have students working in above/below grade materials, please mark this box (e.g. Academy), add specific notes in the comments section
- Effort Grades - a few of you had concerns about the effort grades not being included for specific subject areas. The district feels like many of the habits listed in the "Lifelong Learning Skills" section imply a level of effort.
More often than not, there is a correlation between grades and effort. If for some reason, there's a discrepancy between grades and effort, please note it in the comments section.

- **Informational Text** under ELA can include literacy skills (understanding text structure/features, domain-specific vocabulary, etc.) in science and social studies! In other words, the overall grades for Science & Social Studies can be focused on content.
- Fluency - Here you will just put a performance indicator and list rates/accuracy in the comments section as you have done in the past
- Spelling - Some expressed concern that spelling is no longer a marked grade. The CCSS emphasize that spelling, and other conventions, are done correctly in the context of writing. Therefore, you’ll find spelling included under the Writing strand, "Language: Conventions of standard English (capitalization, punctuation, & spelling)"
- Math Practice Standards - We received plenty of feedback that these would be very difficult to assess. We agreed with this, but the district wanted to keep them on the report card as an informational piece to parents - these are the habits of mind that are essential to proficiency in mathematics. If we forget about the math practice standards, we're missing a huge piece of the CCSS. Much of the feedback about the Math Practice Standards is that they aren't parent-friendly. Please refer to your CCSS binder for an explanation of each one. Our hope is that after a year or two, parents will be familiar with the new standards and new language.
- Intervention Services - intended for before/after school interventions, not RTI or UA time during the day

We also got a range of feedback that suggested the new report cards were way too broad to way too specific, so we are confident that these versions fall somewhere in the middle. Remember, the report card is just one tool we use to communicate progress to parents. If you need more specifics, please refer to the very explicit "I Can" Statements or the CCSS for your grade level. We will also be revising the "Guidelines for Standards Based Reporting," the rubric-type document that will help you translate grades from your grade book into grades on the report card. The report cards are currently being built in Cruncher for your use at the end of the first trimester in Oct/Nov. We will look forward to hearing more feedback from you at that time. Thank you again, for collaborating with us on this.

Elementary Lead Teachers
Mary Beth Haness & Sara Parenzin