

A Family Guide to Student Progress Reports 4th Grade



Fourth grade is a time for growth! Your child is beginning to develop the skills to manage and initiate their own learning, and you may be surprised by the new interests they discover. To support learning, it is helpful to ask open-ended questions, the kind that cannot be answered by “yes” or “no.”

Fourth graders are often eager to show what they know, so encourage your child to describe what they are doing in class through drawing, writing or demonstrating new skills or ideas, as well as talking about them. Your child’s teachers can help you understand more about the topics that interest or challenge them, and you can share about their habits. Do they like to move around, be part of a group, or have a quiet space when they read or study? Do they like competition or do they work better without pressure?

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) helps children manage emotions, set and achieve goals, express empathy, establish positive relationships, and make decisions. These skills are important for learning in school communities.

SEL skills are part of all subject areas so students learn and practice them through the school day. Teachers emphasize and evaluate these skills on elementary report cards:

- **identifying strengths, feelings and needs**
- **seeking to understand others**
- **building cooperative relationships**
- **critical thinking**
- **decision making**
- **following safety standards and**
- **working through challenges**

Teachers use the words Strength (S), Developing (D), and Emerging (E) to describe students’ SEL growth.

Strength = consistently uses skills across subjects and settings

Developing = uses skills in most subjects and settings

Emerging = beginning to use skills in some subjects and settings



The clear learning standards in the report card may help your fourth grader. Children this age can make plans and connections, think deeply, and understand more complex ideas. They can talk with you about why they are or are not meeting expectations in each area, and you can challenge them to think about how they can improve their skills. By sharing ideas, teachers and families discover

new ways to motivate learning.

Teachers and families should pay attention to Social-Emotional Skills and Learning Readiness expectations and understand academic goals in English/Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education and Arts. Fourth graders who see what they need to know and feel confident and supported will make progress!

What Are 4th Graders Learning in Math?

Fluent in math means “fast and accurate.” One goal for your child is for them to become fluent in their skills so they can move on to more complex mathematics.

In fourth grade math, students will become **fluent** in addition and subtraction within 1,000,000. They will continue to multiply and divide whole numbers, start to understand fraction equivalence; add and subtract fractions with like denominators; and solve problems involving symmetry.

Report card standards show by section:

Operations and Algebraic Thinking is about the language, patterns and symbols of math; **Numbers and Operations in Base Ten** relates to the decimal system; **Numbers and Operations - Fractions** is about amounts that are parts of a whole; **Measurement and Data** has to do with tracking information - sizes, amounts, and statistics; **Geometry** involves shapes and dimensions.

For more information, visit the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction at: www.k-12.wa.us/parents-families



How Can Families Help Their Students in English/Language Arts?



4th grade students will be able to:

- Independently read different types, or genres, of writing
- Summarize their reading
- Find the main idea and share details from the text to support their thinking
- Think about a character’s actions and how they impact the story
- Read and comprehend grade-level texts accurately and fluently, figuring out the meaning of unknown words
- Write about their opinions or information with facts and details
- Work to plan and edit to make writing more clear and organized
- Write for different purposes and audiences

- Take part in collaborative classroom conversations

Encourage your child to read 20 minutes or more every day!

- Create a reading space that is comfortable and free from distraction
- Ask your child to share details and examples or compare and contrast characters from what they read
- Encourage your child to write and read their writing to you
- Talk about current events and share ideas and opinions together
- Go to the library and encourage your child to try different types of books and tell you about them

When your child is reading, you can read too !

This is a time for transition in science education, with teaching and learning focused on three key areas in Washington State Science Learning Standards:

- 1) Science/Engineering Practices used by professionals to explain the world or solve problems
- 2) Core Ideas that include fundamental scientific knowledge
- 3) Crosscutting Concepts frame scientific thinking across life, earth/space, physical sciences.

Your child's report card shows Performance Expectations, for what students should be able to do by the end of a unit. The three dimensions are woven into each Performance Expectation.

Engage in Science at Home!!

Get outside together, taking time to notice, appreciate, and wonder about the natural world.

- Ask open-ended questions and take time to encourage thoughtful answers: "Tell me about what you made." "What do you think caused the change?" "Can you think of a different way to do it?"
- Observe carefully and notice small details about natural and physical things like shapes in a spider web or types of bread.
- Make predictions and test how things work "How long will an ice cube last on the counter?" "Will it melt faster on another surface?"

- Encourage investigation. Try taking things apart to see how they work - from flowers to old appliances. Don't worry about putting them back together!

- Let your child teach you by explaining or modelling through drawing, writing, or conversation.

- Challenge your student to argue from evidence. This is not fighting but using facts to explain their thinking. Ask: "How do you know that?" "Why is that so?"

You can support your child's teacher by volunteering to help with classroom experiences or science related field trips.

Science learning is powerful!

What's Important About 4th Grade Social Studies?

The report card shows five social studies areas that you and your child can discuss:

Civics - Understanding how governments are organized into levels; rights and responsibilities in the WA State Constitution

Economics - Understanding WA State economy, environment, and population

Geography - Understanding physical and cultural characteristics of Pacific Northwest

History - Using multiple perspectives to learn about Washington State history

Social Studies Skills - using questions and multiple sources to find information, and make conclusions



PE and Arts are Part of Basic Education Too!

Visual and Performing Arts

Research shows that students with an arts education are more engaged, do better in school, and are more likely to graduate and participate in community life. In Seattle Public Schools, we want every student to receive a comprehensive, predictable arts education during their K-12 years.

Each elementary school offers different arts programs, from possibilities including visual arts, general music, theatre, dance, or instrumental music. Progress report standards come from the Washington State Arts Learning Standards, which focus on aspects of artistic process:

Creating: developing new artistic ideas and work.

Performing: interpreting and presenting artistic ideas / work

Responding: understanding and evaluating meaning in the arts

Connecting: Relating personally to artistic ideas and work

The arts are a core subject!

Physical Education

In physical education, students build movement skills, knowledge, fitness, social well-being, and confidence so they can enjoy a healthy, active lifestyle. Seattle Public Schools is committed to providing a quality physical education program to help students develop in these areas.

Our Physical Education (PE) standards are based on motor and movement patterns and skills, as well as concepts like physical literacy, which is the ability, confidence and desire to be physically active for life. PE is an instructional program, which makes it different from recess, free play, recreational sports or athletics. PE teachers work with general education teachers to provide high quality instruction for an average of 100 minutes per week, which is required by Washington State law. Schools organize PE times in different ways, but all students should be learning about their physical selves all year long!

Support the arts at home!

Ask your children what they created today.

Have your child describe what their art is about.

Art is an area children experiment and make mistakes. Ask them to tell you about a “beautiful oops”

Make art together!



In every grade, SPS' core work is supporting student learning.

We believe it is our responsibility to do whatever it takes to ensure that every child, regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, learning style or disability, achieves to their highest level.



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