



**MODULE 8**  
**Communication with Stakeholders**

**OVERVIEW**

As noted in the modules leading up to Module 8, communication with parents, in particular, is important throughout the transition to standards-based practices. Most parents have had no experience with the proposed changes and will have many questions. Key ideas to present to parents include:

1. Keep in mind that parents will not be responsive to philosophical arguments or logical appeals. They are skeptical of changes they consider educational fads, so be prepared to offer evidence and resources that address the benefits for their children.
2. Inform parents of plans to gather and use feedback from different stakeholder groups during the implementation process.
3. Emphasize to parents that the goal is to do what is best for students, and in the process, improve communication about students' performance in school.

In addition to these general principles, it is recommended that the following questions be addressed through oral and written communication:

1. What is standards-based grading?
2. What is the purpose of standards-based grading?
3. How does standards-based differ from traditional grading?
4. How are my child's "grades" determined?
5. What are the benefits of standards-based grading? For students? For parents? For teachers?
6. What will the report card look like?
7. How will student progress be measured and how will I know what progress my child is making and if he or she is on track to meeting the standard?
8. What if a child does not progress toward proficiency on a standard?
9. How do I know my child is passing?
10. How can I help my child at home?

In the course of addressing these questions, be sure to convey two things: (1) the difference between norm-referenced and criterion-referenced grades and how this pertains to standards-based grading, and (2) the importance of a common SWUC message which condenses standards-based grading to a consistent set of talking points that will form the basis for all messaging about the topic.

**READ**

Heflebower, T.; Hoegh, J. K.; Warrick, P. B.; & Flygare, J. (2019). *A teacher's guide to standards-based learning*. Bloomington, IN: Marzano Research.

Chp. 6

<https://www.amazon.com/Teachers-Standards-Based-Learning-Instruction-Curriculum/dp/1943360251>

**DO**

- [PPT to support this module](#)

**Facilitation Guides:**

- [The Communication Challenge of Standards-based Reporting](#)

**Templates:**

- [Parent Letter](#)

**Handouts:**

- [FAQs about SBL](#)
- [Module 8 Terminology](#)

**REFER**

**Examples/Additional Reference Items:**

- [Parent Guide Example #1](#)
- [Parent Guide Example #2](#)

**Videos:**

- [Grading and Reporting: Understand the Perspectives of Parents and Families](#)
- [Ken O'Connor on Grading Effectively](#)
- [Robert Marzano, Standards-based Reporting](#)

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

1. What principles should guide communication with parents?
2. What avenues should be used to communicate with parents?
3. Why is it important to develop a common language for communication on standards-based reporting?