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How to Prepare CBE Report Cards for Kenyan Schools

CBE Assessment · 11 Nov 2026

Step-by-step guide to preparing CBE report cards for Kenyan schools: converting marks to EE/ME/AE/BE performance levels, writing useful comments, and issuing reports parents understand.

To prepare a CBE report card in Kenya, record each learner's marks per learning area during the term, convert the final scores into performance levels — Exceeding Expectation (EE), Meeting Expectation (ME), Approaching Expectation (AE) or Below Expectation (BE) — then compile a report for every learner that shows the level per learning area, a short teacher comment on what the learner can do, attendance, and remarks from the class teacher and headteacher. The process below takes you from a blank template to issued reports in five steps.

Who this guide is for

This is written for class teachers, assessment coordinators and headteachers in Kenyan primary and junior schools preparing end-of-term or end-of-year learner reports under Competency-Based Education. It covers the school-level report card that goes home to parents — not the national KNEC reports issued after KPSEA or KJSEA, although we explain the difference near the end.

Step 1: Decide what goes on the card

There is no single mandatory national template for a school report card, so agree on a format as a staff and use it consistently. A well-formed CBE report card typically contains:

- **Learner details:** name, admission number, grade, stream and the academic term and year.
- **Learning areas:** one row per learning area offered at that grade — for example English, Kiswahili, Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social Studies, Creative Arts and Sports at junior school.
- **Performance level per learning area:** EE, ME, AE or BE, ideally with a plain-language descriptor so parents understand the code.
- **Teacher comment per learning area** (or per cluster of learning areas): what the learner can do and one specific thing to work on.
- **Attendance:** days present out of days the school was open.
- **Co-curricular and values:** a short note or rating on participation in clubs, sports and the core competencies and values the curriculum emphasises.
- **Class teacher's and headteacher's remarks**, plus signatures and the date.

Because a level describes performance rather than giving a number, the written comment carries more weight than it did under 8-4-4. Budget time for it — a report card with accurate levels and lazy comments still fails the parent reading it.

Step 2: Fix the term's assessment plan and grading bands

Before the term ends, confirm which assessments count toward the report and how they combine. Many schools use an opener, a mid-term and an end-of-term assessment and weight them — for example 20%, 30% and 50% — but the weighting is a *school policy decision*, not a national rule. Write it into your assessment policy so every teacher applies the same formula.

You also need agreed cut-offs that convert a percentage to a performance level. The Ministry of Education has not published one mandatory percentage-to-level table for everyday school assessments, so schools adopt their own bands. Two widely used sets are EE 80–100 / ME 60–79 / AE 40–59 / BE 0–39, and EE 75–100 / ME 50–74 / AE 30–49 / BE 0–29. Whichever you choose, apply it uniformly across the school and tell parents which bands you use.

Step 3: Collect marks and convert them to levels

Gather every learner's scores per learning area, combine them using the agreed weighting, then map the final percentage to EE, ME, AE or BE. Work from raw marks, not from previously converted levels — averaging letter codes produces wrong results.

A quick worked example: a Grade 7 learner scores 72% in the opener, 68% mid-term and 74% end-term under a 20/30/50 weighting. The term percentage is (72 × 0.2) + (68 × 0.3) + (74 × 0.5) = 14.4 + 20.4 + 37 = **71.8%** — Meeting Expectation under either common band set. If you need the full calculation method, see our step-by-step guide to CBE assessment scores.

Before finalising, check borderline learners — anyone within about two percentage points of a band boundary. A rounding decision or a missed piece of work can flip an ME to an EE, and it is far easier to catch before reports print than after.

Step 4: Write comments that say something

A CBE comment should describe what the learner can do and point to the next step, in language a parent understands. Compare these:

Weak comment

Better comment

"Good progress this term."

"Reads grade-level texts fluently and answers inferential questions accurately. Next step: writing longer compositions with correct paragraphing."

"Needs to improve."

"Adds and subtracts whole numbers confidently but still guesses at word problems. Practice with two-step problems using real money would help."

"Very poor performance."

"Has not yet mastered multiplication facts, which is holding back work on division and area. Short daily drills are recommended."

Keep comments factual, specific and free of labels — "has not yet mastered" rather than "is weak at". Under CBE the level already summarises performance; the comment's job is to explain it and guide support at home.

Step 5: Compile, review and issue

Pull each learner's levels, comments and attendance onto the card, then review before anything goes out:

- Cross-check a sample of cards against the mark book — at minimum one learner per row of the class list.
- Confirm every learning area has a level and every card has the required remarks and signatures.
- Check for missing marks *before* generation day. The usual delay is one or two teachers who have not submitted — track them early rather than discovering it at print time.
- Issue the reports: printed, through a parent portal, or both. Keep a copy on file — the marks behind each level are evidence you may need later, including for school-based assessment that feeds KJSEA.

School reports vs KNEC national reports — don't mix them up

Your term report card is a school document. The national assessments work differently:

- **KPSEA** (end of Grade 6) and **KJSEA** (end of Grade 9) are reported by KNEC through the Competency-Based Assessment portal as individual learner reports plus a school-level performance analysis.
- KJSEA combines **20%** KPSEA, **20%** school-based assessment in Grades 7 and 8, and **60%** the Grade 9 summative assessment.
- KNEC reports each learning area on an **eight-point scale** — EE1 and EE2, ME1 and ME2, AE1 and AE2, BE1 and BE2, worth 8 down to 1 points — rather than the four-level shorthand most schools use on term reports.

Your school report card does not need to replicate the eight-point scale. What matters is that the school-based marks you keep are accurate and defensible, because they form part of the learner's KJSEA record.

Common mistakes to avoid

- **Leaving comments to the last day.** Meaningful comments for a class of forty take hours. Write them as you mark, a few learners at a time.
- **Mixing band sets between classes.** If Grade 7 East uses 80+ for EE and Grade 7 West uses 75+, parents will compare reports and lose confidence. One school, one band set.
- **Averaging levels instead of marks.** Combine raw marks first, convert once at the end.
- **Issuing a level with no evidence.** Keep marked scripts, rubrics and the mark book. If a parent queries an AE in Mathematics, you should be able to show how it was arrived at.

• **Treating AE or BE as failure.** KNEC has been clear these levels describe where a learner is, not that they have failed — an Approaching Expectation result is still sufficient for progression into senior school pathways. Report them with a support plan, not alarm.

• **Publishing class positions without thinking it through.** CBE deliberately moved away from ranking. If your format includes a position, consider whether it is helping parents or recreating the 8-4-4 ranking culture.

Report-card-day checklist

- All assessments for the term defined and weighted (school policy on file).
- Every teacher's marks submitted — completion checked per class and learning area.
- Percentages combined from raw marks; levels mapped with the agreed bands.
- Borderline cases (within ~2% of a band) reviewed.
- A specific comment written for each learner, per learning area or cluster.
- Attendance totals added and verified against the register.
- Sample cards cross-checked against the mark book.
- Class teacher and headteacher remarks and signatures completed.
- Reports issued and a copy of the underlying marks filed.

Where Mwalimu Ease fits in

The slowest parts of this process are chasing missing marks and rebuilding each card by hand. Mwalimu Ease is a Kenyan school management system that handles both: an admin defines the term's assessments with a marks-entry deadline, and teachers who still owe marks are reminded automatically as the deadline approaches. Marks go in through a grid per class and subject — or by bulk Excel upload, including reading a photographed mark sheet — and the system computes CBC performance levels itself. From there it compiles branded report cards (your school logo, colours and motto) with levels, attendance and teacher comments, downloadable as PDF or Excel, and parents can view them in the parent portal. Class rankings and a broadsheet sit alongside for staff meetings. If report-card week currently means a late night with a spreadsheet, it is worth seeing how the workflow runs in the assessments and report cards documentation.

Frequently asked questions

Is there an official KNEC report card template for schools?

No single mandatory template has been published for school-level report cards. KNEC's assessment framework expects schools to report each learner's achievement per learning area with qualitative and quantitative information — the format is yours to design, provided it reports performance levels accurately and consistently.

Should a CBE report card show percentage marks?

It can, and many schools include the percentage alongside the level for transparency. What the card must not do is present a single aggregate score or rank that recreates 8-4-4 style

competition — CBE reporting is per learning area.

How many comments should a report card have?

There is no fixed rule. One comment per learning area is thorough; one comment per cluster (languages, sciences, humanities, practical subjects) is a common lighter option. Whatever the count, every comment should say what the learner can do and name one next step.

What if a learner was absent for an assessment?

Mark it as absent rather than entering zero — a zero drags the weighted score into a level that misrepresents the learner. Note it on the card and use the assessments the learner did sit, or arrange a catch-up before cards are finalised.

Do parents need anything explained?

Yes — briefly. Most parents still read "ME" as "average". A short note on the card or at the parents' meeting explaining that ME means the learner is on track prevents most misunderstandings.

Sources: Kenya National Examinations Council; Ministry of Education; KNEC's KJSEA grading explanation as reported by The Star; Daily Nation on CBE and school performance analysis; KNEC's framework for assessment and reporting of learners' achievement. Last reviewed 11 November 2026.

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