

Response received from MCPS Administration

In Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and most standards-based grading systems, “proficient” means a student is meeting the grade-level expectations for the subject.

A proficient student:

- Understands the main concepts taught in that grade
- Can apply those concepts independently
- Can solve problems or explain ideas without heavy teacher support
- May still make mistakes, but shows consistent understanding

A concrete example:

Reading Comprehension (Grade 4)

Students read a short passage and answer a question.

Question: Why did the main character decide to help her neighbor?

Proficient: Answers correctly and uses evidence from the text:

- “She helped because she saw the neighbor struggling with groceries. The text indicates she ‘ran over to help before the bags fell.’”