

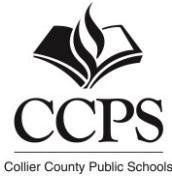
# **STANDARDS-BASED GRADE REPORTING MANUAL**

## **GRADES PreK-5**

### **SCHOOL DISTRICT OF COLLIER COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**Dr. Kamela Patton  
Superintendent of Schools**

**2016-2017**



[www.collierschools.com](http://www.collierschools.com)

Dr. Kamela Patton  
Superintendent of Schools

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**Report Number:**  
07011601

**Coordinated by:**  
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**VISION STATEMENT**

***All students will complete school prepared for ongoing learning as well as community and global responsibilities.***

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# GRADING MANUAL

2016 - 2017

## SECTION I: OVERVIEW

### SECTION 1A: PHILOSOPHY

We believe that students have a right to receive grades that represent an accurate evaluation of achievement and that thoughtful, informed assessment promotes learning.

We believe that grades:

- A. Reflect progress and mastery in meeting Florida Standards and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, district standards, and mastery of approved course objectives;
- B. Are earned, not given;
- C. Are based on a sufficient number of opportunities to demonstrate progress toward or mastery of the Florida Sunshine State Standards;
  - Are based on a logical, justifiable, and research-based grading process;
  - Are derived from varied types of assessment.

We believe that grades must provide clear, useful, and relevant information to students, parents, and the community. Grades should clearly identify what the student knows and is able to do and what the student still needs to learn. Grades should enable students and parents to track academic progress. A close working relationship between home and school is essential.

### SECTION 1B: SUMMARY OF RESEARCH ON EFFECTIVE GRADING PRACTICES

In preparation for making the change from a traditional reporting process to a standards-based progress report, the current research on effective grading and reporting practices was reviewed. What follows are highlights of some of the research with information regarding the Collier County standards-based progress report noted in italics.

- a. Grading and reporting:
  - a. are not essential to the instructional process.
  - b. will always involve some degree of subjectivity.
  - c. have some value as rewards, but no value as punishments.
  - d. should always be done in reference to learning criteria (standards), never “on the curve.”
- b. No one method of grading and reporting serves all purposes well. Progress reports (report cards) are only one way of communicating with parents. *It is best to incorporate narratives, parent conferences, student-led conferences, interim progress reports, in addition to other strategies to communicate to parents and students.*

- c. Mathematic precision does not yield fairer more objective grading. Averaging of formative scores is considered a toxic grading practice as it does not consider improvement over time. *Students earn a rubric score of 4, 3, 2, or 1 based on the progress being made toward mastering the quarterly grade level standard. A student will have multiple opportunities throughout the quarterly school year to demonstrate his/her proficiency using a variety of assessments. The quarterly score on the progress report (report card) reflects the student's progress toward mastery of the grade level standard and is based on the most current level of mastery. The most recent evidence is clearly the most accurate and most valid. Therefore, teachers must always consider the recency of evidence they use in assigning the quarterly score.*
- d. High percentages are not the same as high standards. *The Collier County standards-based progress report uses a rubric score which does not include percentages nor averaging of formative scores.*
- e. Grade distributions reflect both students' level of performance and the quality of teaching. "Grading and reporting should be used to enhance teaching and learning." (Guskey, 2010)
- f. Separate a student's effort, progress, and learning when assigning a grade. A grade that combines these three areas does not provide a clear message to parents and students about the progress toward meeting academic standards. These three factors should be reportedly separately. *The standards-based progress report focuses on providing parents and students with information in all three areas. The student earns a rubric score for all subject areas. This reflects the student's progress toward meeting the grade level standard. The learning process is reported through the Learner Qualities section of the progress report. The related arts areas also include an effort grade separate from the standards for the course.*
- g. Begin with a clear statement of purpose. *The purpose of the standards-based progress report in the School District of Collier County is to provide a clear message to parents about what a student knows and is able to do. It also provides information regarding what the student still needs to learn.*
- h. By comparing the student's performance to a clear standard, parents, students and teachers all know precisely what is expected. *The standards-based progress report does not compare student to student. It reports what the child knows and is able to do as compared to the grade level standard.*
- i. Provide accurate and understandable descriptions of student learning. *The standards-based progress report has been developed based on **indicators** for each grade level and each subject area. The learning standards identified by the state of Florida are the foundation of these power standards. Teachers are responsible for teaching ALL of the standards for the grade level, however, only student's progress on the identified power standards is reported on the progress report.*
- j. Most important advantages of standards-based reporting process:
  - a. fairness, clarity, and improved learning;
  - b. more information for parents and students;
  - c. focused teaching;
  - d. a new way of reporting learning.

A standards-based progress report (report card) provides **parents and students** with **information** regarding the **student’s progress** in meeting the state **standards** for the **grade level** or course.

**SECTION 1C: ELEMENTARY REPORTING AND GRADING PRACTICES:**

**Why has the School District of Collier County developed a standards-based reporting system?**

Our curriculum, the “what” we teach, is based on the Florida standards for each subject area by grade level. Our state and district assessments (FSA, FAIR, quarterly benchmark assessments, Florida Achieves, FCIM mini-lessons and assessments, etc.) are aligned to what we teach and provide information as to how the student is progressing with the standards. The reporting process needs to reflect the student’s progress with the curriculum and the assessments.

The progress report provides detailed information about the student’s progress toward mastery of the grade level standards. The standards are the benchmarks for comparison. The Collier County Standards-Based Progress Reports (report cards):

- provide a clear description of achievement toward mastery of the standards.
- are useful for identifying a student’s strengths and weaknesses.
- are aligned to the expectations of the grade level.
- report **individual** progress compared to the **grade level** standard.
- report progress toward meeting quarterly expectations.
- measure achievement of the standards instead of grading subjects.
- are longer and more detailed.
- show student progress on the standards using a rubric.
- describe for parents, “*Where is my child on the quarterly journey?*”

*“Standards-based education evolved from a set of circumstances around the public challenge to ensure that all schools support an educational experience for students that is both fair and challenging. Equity is not meaningful without excellence.”* Eleanor Daugherty, *Shifting Gears*, 2001

<b>Differences Between Norm-Referenced and Standards-Based Systems</b>	
<b>Norm-Referenced</b>	<b>Standards-Based</b>
Underlying belief: some students are naturally smarter than others.	Underlying belief: virtually all students can achieve at high levels through effort.
Content subject matter varies with different groups of students; instructional strategies, materials, and time stay relatively constant.	Content and subject matter are rigorous for all groups of students; instructional strategies, materials, and time vary with students’ needs.
Assessments compare students to each other rather than to what students really know or are able to do.	Assessments compare what students know to standards and benchmarks.
Quality of student work is judged by teachers using their own privately held standards.	Quality of student work is judged by teachers using publicly known criteria derived from content standards.
Resources are often deployed based on politics and group power; students who need the most resources often get the least.	Resources are deployed based on what all students need to meet the standards; students who need more get more.
Professional development consists of onetime workshops.	Professional development is ongoing, based on what teachers and other professionals need to know and do to get all students to reach standards.

*(from the National Education Trust)*

The grade reporting system is designed to match the teaching and learning in Collier County Public Schools with the Florida Standards, and Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards as the foundation for instruction for all students, including Exceptional Students and English Language Learners. Student progress is evaluated through careful observation and assessment. The goal is successful performance based on state standards through instruction that is challenging and achievable.

The reporting system may include interim reports, progress reports (report cards), student progression documents, Progress Monitoring Plans (PMPs), Individual Education Plans (IEP), Educational Plans (EPs) notes, phone calls, parent conferences, student-led conferences, etc. Teachers are encouraged to utilize all of these channels.

<b>ADDITIONAL TOOLS THAT MAY BE INCLUDED IN CCPS COMPREHENSIVE REPORTING SYSTEM</b>	
1. Quarterly progress reports	8. E-mail messages
2. Interim progress reports	9. Evaluated projects or assignments
3. Standardized assessment reports	10. Portfolios or exhibits of students' work
4. Phone calls to parents	11. School and teacher Web pages
5. School open houses	12. Parent-teacher conferences
6. Newsletters to parents	13. Student-teacher conferences
7. Personal letters to parents	14. Student-led conferences

Monitoring and communicating progress to students and their families are ongoing processes. While the progress report is an important record of student evaluation, it is only one means of reporting student progress. It serves as a quarterly statement of the student's academic progress toward meeting the standards.

An additional practice to be implemented in each school is the **Student-Led Conference**. Student-led conferences provide students with an opportunity to talk with adults about their educational progress. Each student invites his or her parents or guardian to attend a meeting concerning the student's educational goals and progress in meeting those goals. The meetings are facilitated by the student and follow an agenda that the student has developed prior to the meeting. During the meeting, the student shares his or her educational goals and examples of his or her work (portfolio). The student also analyzes his or her strengths and weaknesses based on his/her performance data, and reflects upon the educational consequences of choices the student has made. Together, the student, teacher(s) and parents determine what each will do to help the student move closer to meeting the student's educational goals. In order for student-led conferences to be successful, teachers should assist students in collecting examples of their work.

In communicating with parents, by whatever means, one should be sure to represent the facts accurately and within a positive and courteous framework. Communication of this type is far more likely to result in benefit to students, teachers, and parents. The comment section of the progress report is an opportunity for additional communication. Teachers are encouraged to utilize this opportunity as often as possible.

It is the intent of this manual to promote grading consistency in each school and throughout the District. Guidelines provided in this document are based on the current research of effective standards-based instruction, assessment, and reporting.

The curriculum is based on the Florida Standards and Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and is outlined for the parent in the quarterly progress reports. Teachers are to use the standards, benchmarks, and grade level expectations outlined in each subject area curriculum map as the framework for instruction. Multiple resources are used for instruction including textbooks, secondary sources, and digital resources.

Evaluation is a judgmental process. Although there is always a subjective element, it is critical that each teacher's evaluation process be designed so as to:

- a. Reflect each student's individual progress.
- b. Relate directly to the body of knowledge or skills taught (standards and benchmarks).
- c. Assessments of a student's progress may be differentiated based on the individual needs of the student. For example, if a student needs the accommodation of additional time or having an assignment read aloud, that accommodation must be provided and should not be reflected negatively in the assessment of the student's mastery of the standard. To clarify, one student may need to demonstrate proficiency orally while another can do something paper-pencil. *How* the student demonstrates the mastery is not of concern; it is the demonstration of mastery that is important.
- d. Allow for review, by parents or others, of class work or test results upon which the evaluation is based.
- e. Allow for another individual to understand the methods of evaluation and the factors taken into consideration in arriving at a conclusion.

#### **SECTION 1D: GENERAL INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS:**

- a. Student assessments must be sources of information for parents, students and teachers.
- b. Student assessments must be followed by high quality differentiated instruction.
- c. Achievement should be reflected each quarter based on the benchmarks taught and needs to reflect the student's progress towards meeting the quarterly expectations. (See Assessment Timelines)
- d. Instruction during each quarter should be based on the subject area curriculum maps and what the student has not mastered.
- e. When a subject area standard has been mastered, the curriculum should be expanded horizontally.
- f. An English Language Learner receiving ELL services will have the box indicating this additional educational service marked by the computer. ELL students, who are not meeting a standard due to lack of English language acquisition, may use 1E or 2E as their achievement mark for that standard. If the student has mastered the standard, the student receives a 3 without an E coding attached. If an ELL student is doing so well that progress is not impeded by language acquisition, then the team should revisit the exit criteria.

- ELL DEPARTMENT CODES

- LY=active ELL
- LF=former LY students who have exited the ELL Program should be marked as any other mainstream student, receiving a 1, 2, 3, or 4 according to student's progress
- LZ=exited from the ELL Program should be marked as any other mainstream student, receiving a 1, 2, 3, or 4 according to student's progress
- ZZ=never ELL

- **If teachers have questions, check with the building administrator.**

- ESE students who follow the Florida Standards and Next Generation State Standards should receive a Standards-Based Progress Report.
- ESE students who are significantly cognitively impaired, on a modified curriculum and following the Florida Standards, and Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards will be marked with M and the 4, 3, 2, 1 on the Standards-Based Progress Report (i.e. M1, M2, M3, M4).

### **Homework:**

The assignment of homework is a school-based decision. If homework is assigned, it is an **extension of daily instruction** and provides additional practice with the Florida Standards and Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. Marzano cites research that provides strong evidence that, when used appropriately and when directly and explicitly tied to learning goals, homework benefits student achievement. To make sure that homework is appropriate, teachers should follow these guidelines:

1. Assign purposeful homework. Legitimate purposes for homework include:
  - a. Practice Homework where students practice a skill or process done independently but not fluently. The design of the homework should yield a success rate of at least 80-90% accuracy. If students have not mastered the basic concepts, do not give them an assignment that will send them home to work incorrectly. Remember, "practice makes permanent."
  - b. Preparation Homework which prepares students by building background knowledge for the upcoming lesson or unit.
  - c. Elaborative Homework where students elaborate on information that has been introduced and connect it with real life. This type of homework often gives students the option to choose their method of gathering data, processing learning, and demonstrating learning.
2. Design homework to maximize the chance that students will complete it. For example, ensure that homework is at the appropriate level of difficulty. Students should be able to complete homework assignments independently with relatively high success rates, but they should still find the assignments challenging enough to be interesting.
3. Involve parents in appropriate ways without requiring parents to act as teachers or to police students' homework completion. Parents can facilitate homework appropriately by providing a place, time, and the resources to do the work. Parents can provide feedback and prompts to their children, as well. They also can emphasize the importance of homework and support their children as they develop the study skills to complete the work. However, teachers must ensure that the homework is at the appropriate level and purposeful in order to support appropriate involvement of parents as well as providing parents with clear guidelines as to their role and communicating the homework policy information.



- Carefully monitor the amount of homework assigned so that it is appropriate to students' age levels and does not take too much time away from other home activities. Homework should not exceed the guidelines established by the District School Board of Collier County Public Schools. These are:

Kindergarten:	10 minutes	Grade 3:	30 - 45 minutes
Grade 1:	20 - 30 minutes	Grade 4:	45 - 60 minutes
Grade 2:	30 minutes	Grade 5:	45 - 60 minutes

- Teachers should comment on homework and return it in a timely fashion. Timely, high quality specific feedback is important. Homework assigned but not commented on generates lower benefits than homework that is graded and homework that is responded to with specific comments.

In order to assure that the Student Progress Report Academic Indicators clearly reflect the student's performance and mastery of standards, homework **is not** to be a factor in any of the academic area indicator rubric scores. Completion of homework may be reflected in the Learner Qualities sections of the Standards-Based Progress Report.

**Make-up work:** Students shall be given a reasonable amount of time in which to make-up any work assignments which were missed during an excused absence. At least one (1) day shall be allowed for each day of missed work. A student and teacher may agree on an alternate schedule of make-up work when the length of time for make-up work needs to be modified.

**Suggested procedures for returning progress reports and record keeping:**

To maintain home-school communication, it is important that parents be given a copy of the progress report to keep for their records. This increases and assures the home-school communication. Two copies of the progress report are to be printed that include the teacher comments. **Highlight the parent signature line and fold the progress report so that the teacher comment section is the first section the parent sees when he/she removes the progress report from the envelope.** One copy is sent home on the designated day. The parent signs and returns this copy to school. When the teacher receives the signed copy from the parent, this copy is filed and the remaining copy is sent home for the parent to keep. Elementary students are expected to return progress reports to school with parent signatures within three days of issuance. If progress reports are not returned by students within three days, homeroom teachers should contact parents by telephone when possible.

**Transfers:** A transfer student's earned grades from their previous school shall be verified prior to entering the grades on the student's academic history. Transfer grades will be calculated just as they would if earned at a Collier County school. The fourth quarter grade will serve as the final grade for the standard.

When a student transfers from a school with traditional grades, every effort must be made to discuss the level of progress toward mastery of the standards with the sending school. That discussion will then translate to the 4, 3, 2, 1 rubric score and be entered into the academic history.

When a student transfers within the District, the student's portfolio should be sent to the receiving school and given to the classroom teacher. Portfolios are not to be scanned into the student's cumulative folder.

**Attendance Requirements:**

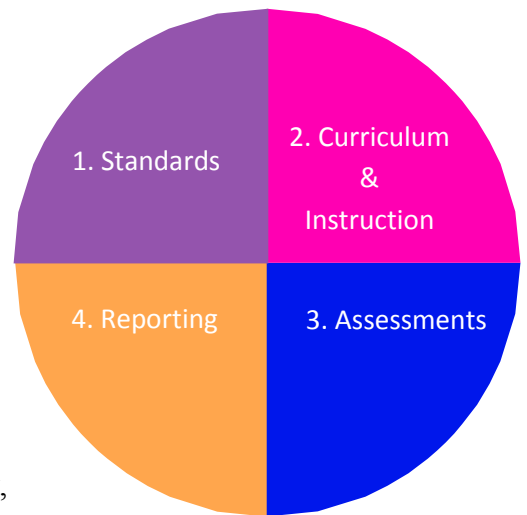
Regular attendance is critical to student progress. State law requires regular attendance on the part of all students, ages 6-16. Accurate records and subsequent reports to parents regarding attendance not only are of substantial benefit to the child and his/her parents, but also serve to improve the total atmosphere of the school. Students present, absent and not present full day are noted on the progress report but are not to impact the reporting of the student’s progress toward meeting the subject area standards because student proficiency is measured over time. When a student’s inconsistent attendance influences the academic progress of the student, this is to be noted in attendance section of the progress report by entering an X in the box designated for this comment.

**SECTION 2: COMPONENTS OF A STANDARDS-BASED SYSTEM**

**FOUR ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A STANDARDS-BASED SYSTEM**

There are four essential components of a standards-based system:

1. Content standards, (as outlined by the Florida Department of Education) that describe what a student should know and be able to do at a given grade level;
2. Standards-based curriculum or roadmap a teacher uses to ensure that instruction targets these standards (district curriculum maps);
3. Assessments that a teacher uses to measure learning and the extent to which a student has met the standards; and finally,
4. Reporting tool that allows a teacher to communicate accurately a student’s progress towards meeting standards at critical junctures throughout the school year. The standards-based progress report completes our standards-based system.



**SECTION 2A: STANDARDS-BASED GRADING AND REPORTING PRACTICES**

With the establishment of academic content standards and changes in assessment practices, the process and procedures for grading and reporting student achievement must be modified to resolve specific grading issues associated with the transition to a standards-based system. An initial step in modifying grading and reporting practices is the establishment of clear, effective grading guidelines. Ken O’Connor in his book, *How to Grade for Learning, K-12*, identifies best practices in reporting student achievement according to current educational research. Elaboration of each guideline follows the list.

## Standards-Based Grading and Reporting Guidelines:

- Relate grading procedures to learning goals (i.e., local and state content standards).
- Use criterion-referenced performance standards as reference points to determine grades.
- Limit the valued attributes to be included in scores of individual achievement.
- Sample student performance (using a variety of assessment methods). Do not include formative scores in final score. *Revise student scores as new evidence demonstrates proficiency.*
- Use quality assessment(s) and properly recorded evidence of achievement.
- Discuss and involve students in assessment, including scoring, throughout the teaching and learning process.

### Grading Guideline #1: Relate grading procedures to learning goals, (i.e., local and state content standards)

- Be clear about what students must know and be able to do; have a clear understanding of what a good performance looks like before students begin work.
- Include only academic factors in student scores. *Academic factors refer to student achievement as a demonstration of the knowledge and skill components of the standard.*
- Base grades/scores on **individual** achievement.
- Use multiple measures of student achievement. Include more than one of the same kind of assessment **and** more than one type of assessment to examine the same kind of knowledge or skills. Use paper/pencil assessments, essay assessments, performance assessments, and oral communication to evaluate student achievement on grade level standards.
- Include evidence from assessment related to a student's mastery of specific grade level standards and benchmarks in a student's academic score. Data collected on non-academic factors (effort, participation, attendance, and attitude) should be reported separately and used to assign student "Citizenship" scores or to make comments on the student's progress report in the Learners' Qualities section.
- Incorporate both Assessments FOR Learning and Assessments OF Learning into classroom practice. Teach students how to use assessment data to improve their performance. (Student data notebooks & student-led conferences).
- Benefits:
  - links the basis for curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
  - provides clear focus;
  - is consistent and fair.

### Grading Guideline #2: Use criterion-referenced performance standards as reference points to determine grades.

- Mark each assessment on clear, pre-established criteria (targets, standards). The meanings of scores should come from clear descriptions of performance standards.
- Include evidence from assessment related to a student's mastery of specific grade level standards and benchmarks in a student's academic grade. Data on non-academic factors (effort, participation, attendance, and attitude) should be reported separately and used to assign student "Learner Qualities" scores.
- Utilize district rubrics, scales, and scoring guides to develop scoring guides for classroom assessment. Create multiple scales, scoring guides, and scoring criteria tied to specific classroom assessments. Develop clear criteria for success that is shared with students before they begin the assessment.

- Benefits:
  - use of this guideline will clarify the standards;
  - help all learners to be successful;
  - emphasize self-assessment and growth;
  - make grading more consistent; and
  - contribute to improved quality of work.

Reference the general performance standards cited here:

Exceeded quarterly learning goals (4)	The student’s work consistently <b><u>demonstrated mastery beyond</u></b> the learning goals taught this quarter. (4)
Mastered quarterly learning goals (3)	The student’s work consistently <b><u>demonstrated mastery</u></b> of the learning goals taught this quarter. (3)
Partially met quarterly learning goals (2)	The student’s work <b><u>demonstrated partial understanding</u></b> of the learning goals taught this quarter. (2)
Did not meet quarterly learning goals (1)	The student’s work <b><u>did not demonstrate understanding</u></b> of the learning goals taught this quarter. (1).

**Grading Guideline #3: Limit valued attributes to be included in scores to individual achievement.**

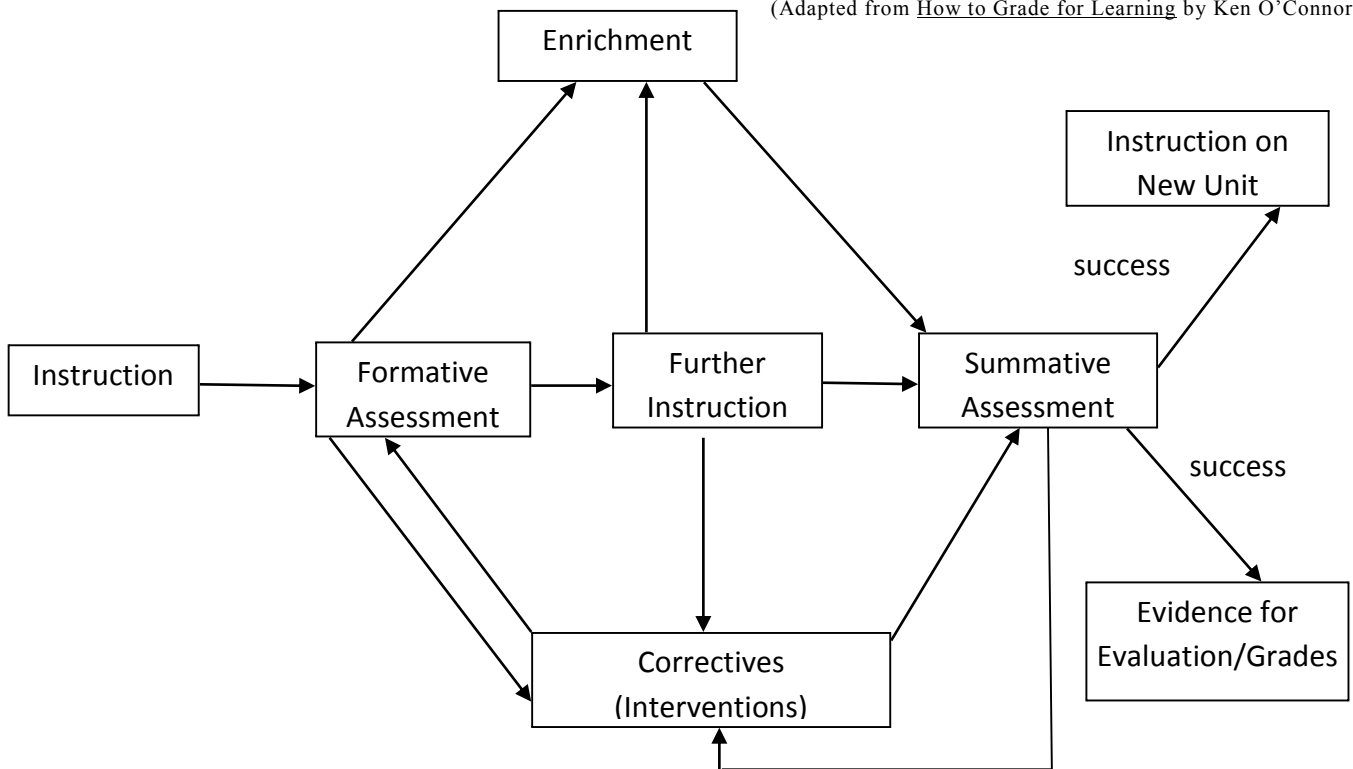
- Achievement demonstrates knowledge, skills, and behaviors that are stated as learning goals for each subject area. (Standards)
- Include evidence from assessment related to a student’s mastery of specific grade level standards and benchmarks in a student’s academic score.
- Include achievement data only, based on standards, in scores.
- Report effort, participation, attitude, and other personal and social characteristics separately from achievement. Use data on non-academic factors to assign student “Learner Qualities” scores (mixing achievement and effort gives a muddy picture of both.)
- Benefits: Factoring in only individual achievement into scores creates greater accountability for really knowing student strengths and weaknesses. Scores are limited to only individual achievement and are not used as:
  - punishment for poor attendance;
  - inappropriate behavior;
  - or lack of punctuality.

**Grading Guideline #4: Sample student performance using a variety of assessment methods. Do not include all grades in scores. Revise student scores as new evidence demonstrates proficiency.**

- Use multiple measures of student achievement. Include more than one of the same kind of assessment and more than one type of assessment to examine the same kind of knowledge or skills. Use paper/pencil assessments, essay assessments, performance assessments, and personal communication to evaluate student achievement on grade level standards.
- Include information only from varied summative assessments in scores.
- Provide students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate that they have acquired the knowledge, skill, or behavior expected with proficiency on a standard or benchmark.
- Keep in mind that process and product should be assessed both formatively (**Assessment FOR Learning**) and summatively (**Assessment OF Learning**).
- Provide corrective feedback on formative assessment(s) – use words, rubrics, or checklists.
- Do not include homework in the student’s academic score. Homework should be a risk-free chance to experiment with new skills without penalty. Homework completion is reflected in the Learner Qualities section.
- **Benefits:** Effectively sampling student performance provides feedback to students:
  - allows for improved performance;
  - encourages both practice and risk-taking;
  - allows for remedial instruction, intervention, and self-assessment;
  - encourages competency and mastery and
  - is supported through research on the use of formative assessment

**The Role of Formative (FOR Learning) and Summative (OF Learning) Assessments**

(Adapted from *How to Grade for Learning* by Ken O’Connor)



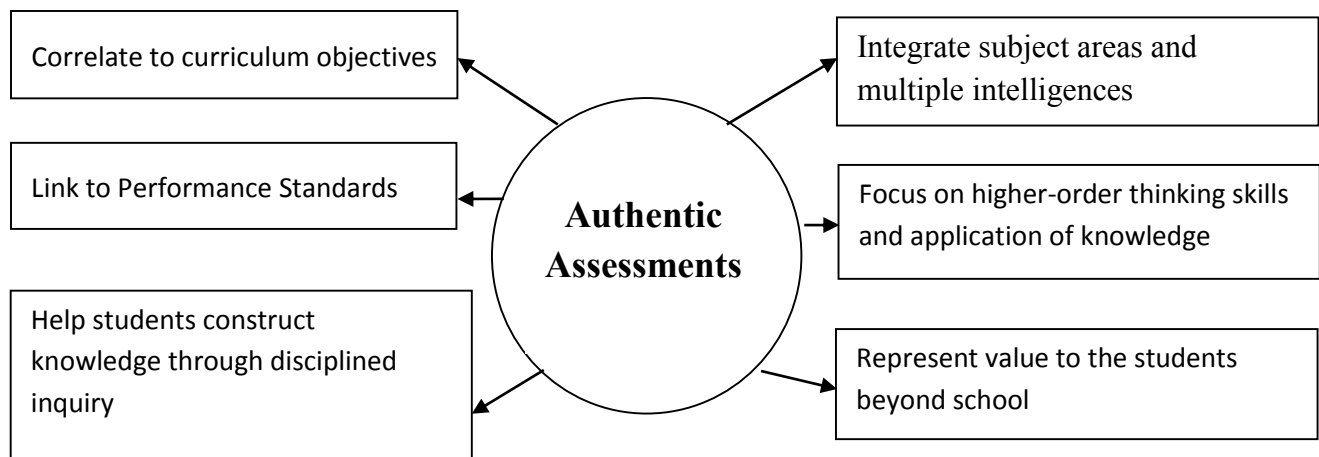
**Grading Guideline #5: Use quality assessment(s) and properly recorded evidence of achievement.**

- Scores are meaningful when and only when they are based on quality assessment. Remember to test the teaching; do not teach to the test.
- All assessments meet standards for quality assessment: (1) setting clear and appropriate targets, (2) stating clear purpose(s), (3) matching target to assessment method, (4) selecting appropriate samples for the learning domain, and (5) controlling interference or distortion.
- Record and maintain evidence of achievement (e.g., portfolios, conferences, tracking sheets, electronic grade book, etc.) It is essential that teachers maintain accurate and up-to-date records of student achievement on an on-going basis.
- Benefits:
  - The quality of assessments and the accuracy of record keeping are the professional responsibility of every teacher. Such documentation provides the real measure of an individual’s achievement and is fair to all learners.

**Grading Guideline #6: Discuss and involve students in assessment, including scores, throughout the teaching and learning process.**

- Discuss assessment practices and how scores will be determined with students at the beginning of instruction.
- Make students aware of the learning goals for the course or unit of instruction. Be certain they understand what they will be asked to do to provide evidence of their learning. Tests and other assessments should not surprise students.
- Remember that quality assessment is not something that is done **to** students separate and apart from instruction; assessment must be – and must be seen to be – something that is done **with** students as an integral part of the learning process.
- Benefits: Including students in classroom assessment practices and scoring ensure:
  - expectations are clear to all;
  - promotes student learning;
  - promotes student/parent buy-in; and
  - stops any game playing or favoritism.

**Criteria for Authentic Assessment**



Listed in the table below are additional guidelines for standards-based grading.

<b>Do</b>	<b>Don't</b>
<p>Collaborate with other teachers to establish rubrics for grading so that students are treated fairly and equitably and grades have universal meaning aligned with content and performance standards.</p>	<p>Keep your grading system personal and private from students, parents, and other educators.</p>
<p>Assign grades based on academic achievement, according to performance standards.</p>	<p>Grade on a curve.</p>
<p>Only include academic information in your academic grading system.</p>	<p>Include nonacademic information about the student in your academic grading system.</p>
<p>Use performance standards to convert score ranges to grade symbols so that the symbols reflect explicit descriptors of student performance. Include evidence for each student, preferably integrated into a portfolio, at least for teacher-parent conferences.</p>	<p>Use arbitrary criteria to convert score ranges to grades.</p>
<p>Include only scores from accurate assessments, either (a) discarding low scores from a few bad tests or “bad days” before combining scores for the student, or (b) selecting best performances and scores from a set of tasks and tests that measure the same content.</p>	<p>Include scores from all student work and assessments in a composite score for assigning grades.</p>
<p>Use collaborative projects and take-home assignments to develop foundational knowledge and use as a basis for critical classroom discussion that will support the development of concepts and skills. Evidence that a student is proficient needs to be garnered from work that the teacher knows to be the student’s own.</p>	<p>Use collaborative projects and take-home assessments/assignment as a single measure of proficiency.</p>

## Grading Practices That Inhibit Learning

1. Inconsistent grading scales	The same performance results in different grades, in different schools or classes.
2. Worshipping averages	All of the math to calculate an average is used, even when “the average” is not consistent with what the teacher knows about the student’s learning.
3. Using zeros indiscriminately	Giving zeros for incomplete work has a devastating effect on averages and often zeros are not even related to learning or achievement but to nonacademic factors like behavior, respect, punctuality, etc.
4. Following the pattern of assign, test, grade, and teach	Students are often told to read material and prepare for a test. The real discussion and teaching then takes place – after the test. It is far more logical to teach before testing, but we continue to an alarming extent to follow the pattern of assign, test, grade, and teach.
5. Failing to match testing to Teaching	Too many teachers rely on trick questions, new formats, and unfamiliar material. If students are expected to perform skills and produce information for a grade, these should be part of the instruction.
6. Ambushing students	Pop quizzes are more likely to teach students how to cheat on a test than to result in learning. Such tests are often control vehicles designed to get even, not to aid understanding.
7. Suggesting that success is unlikely	Students are not likely to strive for targets that they already know are unattainable to them.
8. Practicing “gotcha” teaching	A nearly foolproof way to inhibit student learning is to keep the outcomes and expectations of their classes secret. Tests become way of finding out how well students have read their teacher’s mind.
9. Grading first efforts	Learning is not a “one-shot” deal. When the products of learning are complex and sophisticated, students need a lot of teaching, practice, and feedback before the product is evaluated.
10. Penalizing students for taking risks	Taking risks is not often rewarded in school. Students need encouragement and support, not low marks, while they try new or more demanding work.
11. Failing to recognize measurement error	Very often grades are reported as objective statistics without attention to weighting factors or the reliability of the scores. In most cases, a composite score may be only a rough estimate of student learning, and sometimes it can be very inaccurate.
12. Establishing inconsistent grading criteria	Criteria for grading in schools and classes often change from day to day, grading period to grading period, and class to class. This lack of consensus makes it difficult for students to understand the rules.

Robert Lynn Canady and Phyllis R. Hotchkiss, “It’s a Good Score: Just a Bad Grade,” September, 1989, pg. 68-71. *Phi Delta Kappan*. Reproduced with permission.



## Effective Grade Level Planning and Collaboration

Changing practices and gaining new knowledge takes time, collaboration, experimentation and reflection. Success in implementing The Standards-Based Progress Reporting will require patience, persistence and the commitment of all stakeholders. Site leadership teams will be critical to the implementation process. Successful implementation will be dependent upon continual communication and collaboration among teachers. Teachers need to assess student work and its quality using scoring guides/rubrics and discuss their own teaching practices. The goal of team and peer communication aims at improving teaching and student learning.

### Sample Timeline for Grade Level Meetings and Collaboration

*This timeline should be used annually.*

	Activity
Beginning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gather and analyze student data.</li> <li>2. Review standards, benchmarks and progress reports for expected learner outcomes. Unpack standards as necessary.</li> <li>3. Review curriculum maps for sequence of instructional delivery for the first quarter.</li> <li>4. Develop an assessment plan. Review performance expectations by content area using rubrics and develop culminating tasks or assessments to measure benchmark proficiency.</li> <li>5. Utilize the results of these assessments to communicate with students and parents at The end of the first grading period.</li> </ol>
Mid-year	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review grade level rubrics and develop common culminating tasks that measure benchmark mastery.</li> <li>2. Review student work together to determine what mastery looks like for specific student work products.</li> <li>3. Develop future instructional strategies based on assessment results.</li> <li>4. Develop a system for recording the outcomes addressed that need reteaching and reassessing</li> <li>5. Discuss common information to include in the student-led conference.</li> <li>6. Continue to develop common key tasks, rubrics, and lessons for implementation at grade level.</li> <li>7. Develop future instructional strategies based on an analysis of student work.</li> <li>8. Discuss and implement instructional options for reteaching, or refocusing students who are not meeting standards and enriching students who have already met the standards.</li> </ol>
End	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Target standards that need particular focus. Continue to develop common key tasks, rubrics and lessons for implementation at grade level.</li> <li>2. Review student work together to determine what proficiency looks like for specific student work products.</li> <li>3. Compile measures of long-term student growth collected and recorded across the year.</li> <li>4. Refine grade level understandings of what proficiency looks like for all progress report outcomes for the marking periods.</li> <li>5. Set professional and instructional goals for the next year based on achievement data and lessons learned.</li> </ol>

## **Guiding Questions - A Collaborative Effort with Peers**

Meet as a grade level or professional learning communities (PLC) to discuss these questions with your team before reporting time:

### **First Marking Period:**

- What assessments will you use this marking period?
- What is 1 in your opinion? 2? 3? 4?
- How can you organize anchor papers? (student samples of mastery)
- Who will need reteaching and reassessing next quarter and on what?

### **Second Marking Period**

- What assessments will you use this marking period?
- What is 1 in your opinion? 2? 3? 4?
- How do you determine if a student is on track for meeting promotion requirements?
- How do you determine if a student is not meeting standards?

### **Third Marking Period**

- What assessments will you use this marking period?
- What is 1 in your opinion? 2? 3? 4?
- How do you determine if a student is on track for meeting promotion requirements?
- How do you determine if a student is not meeting standards?
- Now what will you do with students who receive a 3? or 4?

### **Fourth Marking Period**

- What assessments will you use this marking period?
- What is 1 in your opinion? 2? 3? 4?
- How do you determine if a student is not meeting promotion requirements?
- How do you determine if a student is not meeting standards?
- What proof do you have to promote or retain?

## SECTION 3: IMPLEMENTING THE STANDARDS-BASED PROGRESS REPORTING PROCESS

### SECTION 3A: UNDERSTANDING PROFICIENCY LEVELS

When looking at the achievement scale, students receive a 3 when mastery is achieved and demonstrated consistently and independently.

A student earning a 4 would indicate he/she has exceeded quarterly learning goals. A student earning a 3 would indicate he/she has mastered the grade-level curriculum under that standard. The teacher would be required to enrich the curriculum at the student's present grade level.

(Rubric from Student Progress Report)

<b>4 = Exceeded quarterly learning goals</b>	<b>3 = Mastered quarterly learning goals</b>	<b>2 = Partially met quarterly learning goals</b>	<b>1 = Did not meet quarterly learning goals</b>
The student's work consistently <b><u>demonstrated mastery beyond</u></b> the learning goals taught this quarter. <b>(4)</b>	The student's work consistently <b><u>demonstrated mastery</u></b> of the learning goals taught this quarter. <b>(3)</b>	The student's work <b><u>demonstrated partial understanding</u></b> of the learning goals taught this quarter. <b>(2)</b>	The student's work <b><u>did not demonstrate understanding</u></b> of the learning goals taught this quarter. <b>(1).</b>