

# Standards-Based Grading Overview

Research, education experts, and practitioners have emphasized that assessment and grading practices need to: 1) have meaning, 2) support learning, 3) be consistent across classrooms and, 4) enhance motivation to learn (O'Connor, 2011). In addition to the four overarching expectations surrounding assessment and grading, Schimmer (2016) acknowledges that Standards-based grading (SBG) and assessments practices have a significant impact on students' growth mindset and self-confidence.

Key Idea 1: Effective Assessment Practices	Key Idea 2: Developing a Growth Mindset	Key Idea 3: How does SBG Work?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective assessment practices provide the <b>descriptive feedback</b> for students to improve on their learning. This form of feedback occurs while the learning is occurring (formative assessment).</li>   <li>• Research has indicated that grading and reporting around specific standards, while using formative assessment with feedback relating to the progress toward the standard/learning target, significantly improves <b>student achievement</b> and <b>motivation</b>. Black and William (1998) and Hattie (2009) meta-analysis demonstrates that <b>high-quality formative assessment</b> and <b>feedback</b> is one of the leading educational practices to positively impact student achievement.</li>   <li>• Standards-based grading and assessment practices provide the methodology that includes <b>accuracy, meaning, consistency, and motivation</b> for <u>all students</u> to achieve. The historical grading system brings all components of a course together into one average score, giving little information about where there is room for improvement or where a student is excelling. The standards-based approach breaks each course into several categories so that students are getting more accurate, meaningful, actionable feedback.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SBG <b>supports learning</b> and fosters a <b>growth mindset</b>. Through research, we know that experiencing failure is a big part of the learning process, and that students need to experience failure in order to <b>build resiliency</b>. Student behaviors are reported separately to give more precise feedback on areas of strength or needed improvement.</li>   <li>• SBG allows our teachers to focus on meaningful formative assessments that <b>inform their instruction</b>, while spending less time correcting and less time computing. The goal is to strengthen the relationship by allowing more time for both the student and the teacher to focus on the knowledge and skills that are needed. We know that students need us to model not only the process, but our thinking as we <b>explicitly teach</b> a new skill, with <b>guided practice</b> before moving on to <b>independently demonstrate</b> their understanding.</li>   <li>• Public education now has a much different focus as we not only teach students to read, write, and compute – but to adapt and learn in an <b>ever-changing world</b>. Students are more frequently asked to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned by creating a product that demonstrates what they know and are able to do.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use of the state adopted academic standards and the district created Profile of a Graduate articulate what do we want students to know, be able to do, and be like.</li>   <li>2. The district curriculum teams utilize research and their expertise to <b>prioritize the standards</b> and align them to categories on our <b>proficiency scales</b>. A proficiency scale is created for each grading period.</li>   <li>3. The curriculum goal is to meet the needs of <b>80% of our students</b>, which means that 80% of our students should be “proficient” or “advanced”. The other 20% of our students may need something different.</li>   <li>4. Our focus is not on sorting or ranking students against each other, but rather on measuring whether or not they have met <b>their learning goals</b>. We believe ALL students can learn and have the right to an education.</li>   <li>5. If a student is proficient at the end of a grading period, they are proficient, scores are not averaged over the entire grading period.</li> </ol>