

Gavin District 37



Standards-based Grading and Reporting Handbook 2020-2021

Introduction to Standards-based Grading and Reporting

The purpose of grading in District No. 37 is to give students feedback about their progress and achievement and to ensure alignment among curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The purpose of reporting is to promote ongoing formative feedback to students prior to grading and to provide credible and useful feedback to parents and students.

Standards are schematic, and strategic knowledge that, as a body, define the specific content of an educational program. Learning standards are concise, written descriptions of what students are expected to know and be able to do at a specific stage of their education. Learning standards describe educational objectives—i.e., what students should have learned by the end of a course, grade level, or grade span—but they do not describe any particular teaching practice, curriculum, or assessment. Learning standards are typically organized by subject area—e.g., English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health and wellness, etc.

A student learning target is any achievement expectation we have for students on the path toward mastery of a standard. These targets are linked to our standards. These standards and targets are listed in the D37 Curriculum Documents posted on the Gavin D37 website.

What is SBL/SBG and how is it different from traditional grading?

Standards-based learning, or SBL, calls for a clear identification of what students should know and be able to do. Standards-based grading focuses on measuring students' proficiency on a specific set of outcomes. These outcomes are shared with students at the outset of the subject area course, along with a learning scale, or rubric, that explains the essential outcome in detail. Standards-based grading is based on the principle that grades should convey how well students have achieved standards. In other words, grades are not about what students *earn*; they are about what students *learn* (Brookhart, Starting the Conversation about Grading, Educational Leadership, November 2011, Volume 69, Number 3, Pages 10-14)

A student's progress toward proficiency is tracked by performance on learning tasks that align to the outcome, which encourages student ownership of the learning and allows the teacher to provide accurate feedback to the student. The goal of a standards-based approach is to clearly communicate to students and parents what is expected of the students and how to help them be successful in their educational journey.

Traditional Grading System	Standards-Based Grading System
Based on assessment methods (quizzes, tests, homework, projects, etc.). One grade/entry is given per assessment.	Based on learning goals and performance standards. One grade/entry is given per learning goal.
Assessments are based on a percentage system. Criteria for success may be unclear.	Standards are criterion or proficiency-based. Criteria and targets are made available to students ahead of time.
Use an uncertain mix of assessment,	Measures achievement only OR separates

achievement, effort, and behavior to determine the final grade. May use late penalties and extra credit.	achievement from effort/behavior. No penalties or extra credit given.
Everything goes in the grade book – regardless of purpose.	Selected assessments (tests, quizzes, projects, etc.) are used for grading purposes.
Include every score, regardless of when it was collected. Assessments record the average – not the best – work.	Emphasize the most recent evidence of learning when grading.

Adapted from O'Connor K (2002). *How to Grade for Learning: Linking grades to standards (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

History of D37's journey

District 37 began integrating standards-based learning and grading in 2017. With the adoption of the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Math and the Next Generation Science Standards, our report cards were revised to reflect these clear standards in our subject areas for grading and reporting to our students and families.

In District 37, teachers use the following grading guidelines:

1. Entries in the grade book that count towards the final grade will be limited to course or grade level standards.**
2. Extra credit will not be given at any time.
3. Students will be allowed multiple opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of classroom standards in various ways. Retakes and revisions will be allowed.
4. Teachers will determine grade book entries by considering multiple points of data emphasizing the most recent data and provide evidence to support their determination.
5. Students will be provided multiple opportunities to practice standards independently through homework or other class work. Practice assignments and activities will be consistent with classroom standards for the purpose of providing feedback. Practice assignments, including homework, will not be included as part of the final grade.

*** Exceptions will be made for midterm and/or final summative assessments. These assessments, limited to no more than one per twelve-week period, may be reported as a whole in the grade book.*

-> <http://www.kappancommoncore.org/standards-based-grading-and-reporting-will-improve-education/>
<https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/grading-student-work/>

Section 2 – Communicating with Parents:

The **report card** is one avenue to communicate with parents/guardians and students regarding the progress toward district identified learning standards. It indicates the student's learning strengths and where additional practice is needed. The report card is a picture of a student's achievement in a specific time f during the school year. A standards-based report card measures a child's learning toward a specific standard through Alpha and the 4-3-2-1 Scales. In addition to the report card, there are several other ways District 37 communicates student progress and achievement with its parents:

Parent-Teacher Conferences are conducted toward the end of Trimester 1 (November) and Trimester 2 (March) as a means for teachers and parents to communicate face-to-face. Gavin D37 has implemented student-led conferences. After parents receive the trimester report card, teachers are then able to show examples of student work throughout the conference to clarify student progress toward mastery of standards. Parents who cannot attend a face-to-face conference may schedule a phone conference.

Student Goal Setting is an engaging, interactive process used between the teacher and student to determine goal areas as aligned to the standards. After students take the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment in the fall, students examine their data and set goals in the areas of reading or math to achieve by the Winter or Spring MAP assessment.

Skyward is an advanced Student Information System used by schools across the country. Its functions include grading, attendance, and the scheduling of courses, teachers and students. Skyward is capable of allowing parents and students to access student grades and attendance in real time. The purpose of this feature is to increase communication and collaboration among parents, students, and teachers. While it gives parents and guardians more information about their child's education, at the same time it encourages students to take increased ownership of their learning.

Google Classroom is a learning management system (LMS) which allows students and teachers to interact online, in and outside of the classroom. Through Google Classroom, teachers can post course content, provide resources for students, and review assignments. Students login to access their class resources. They can submit assignments, take quizzes and participate in online discussions.

District and State Assessment Data provides for analysis of student performance and progress toward district, state, and national standards and the District 37 learning targets. District Design Teams and Building Leadership Teams use the data to determine areas for student growth each year, evaluate District 37 programs and services, and create professional development plans and activities that correlate to strategies that meet the needs of all students.

Section 3: Principles of Grading

Purpose of Reporting Policy:

To provide teachers, students and parents with guidelines to ensure common understandings of required practices and procedures to assess and evaluate student achievement fairly and to consistently and clearly communicate student achievement to all stakeholders.

Guiding Principles (Vision) for Standards-Based Assessment/Evaluation:

- Clear learning targets and instruction aligned to these targets.
- Students will be provided multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning. *(Role of Formative Assessment)*
- Students receive feedback on their learning. *(Role of Feedback)*
- Students will be provided multiple opportunities for reflection. *(Role of Reflection)*
- Students will demonstrate through formative, summative assessments and student chosen examples. *(Role of Evidence of Learning)*

Principle 1: Grades/Reports should be based on clearly specified learning targets and performance standards.

Example Learning Standard and Targets	
Learning Standard	<i>Solves problems involving measurement and represents and interprets data</i>
Target 1	<i>Convert among different-sized standard measurement units within a given measurement system (e.g., convert 5 cm to 0.05 m), and use these conversions in solving multi-step, real world problems.</i>
Target 2	<i>Make a line plot to display a data set of measurements in fractions of a unit ($\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{8}$).</i>
Target 3	<i>Recognize volume as an attribute of solid figures and understand concepts of volume measurement.</i>
Target 4	<i>Measure volumes by counting unit cubes, using cubic cm, cubic in, cubic ft, and improvised units.</i>
Target 5	<i>Relate volume to the operations of multiplication and addition and solve real world and mathematical problems involving volume.</i>

Please see D37 website to identify the learning goals and performance standards for each grade level.

Principle 2: Evidence used for grading/reporting should be valid.

According to Pollio and Hochbein, 2015, for grades to be a valid measure of student achievement, teachers must assess students on their achievement based on required curriculum standards.* Examples of valid measures to be used in grading/reporting versus those that should not influence grading are shown in the table below.

Used in Grading/Reporting	Should Not Influence Grading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summative Assessments ● Performance/Product-Based Assessments ● Application of Learning ● Demonstrated skill/strategy Based on Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Homework ● Late Work ● Extra Credit ● Work Habits ● Non-Academic Indicators

*Pollio, M. & Hochbein, C. (2015, November). The association between standards-based grading and standardized test scores as an element of a high school reform model. *Teachers College Record*, 117(11).

Principle 3: Students will be provided multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning.

Not everything is included in grading/reporting. Student work is scored as they learn, but only assessed after learning has occurred. An overall course grade is given to students based upon their performance in relation to the course standards.

Assessment Snapshot	Grading/Reporting
Pre-Test	0
Progress Check-In	2
Summative Assessment A	1*
Progress Check-in	4
Summative Assessment B	2*
Performance Task	4*
Progress Check-In	2
Summative Assessment C	2*
Post-Test	3.*
Grade	3

*used for grading/reporting

	Student Name				
Score					
4					
3					●
2			●	●	
1		●			
0	●				
	Pretest	Formative Assessment #1	Formative Assessment #2	Formative Assessment #3	Posttest

Principle 4: Students will receive feedback on their learning.

Feedback is one of the top 10 influences on achievement. Assessment through a variety of forms during the process of learning is a very powerful form of feedback. Students are provided feedback regarding their learning through assessments, check ins, exit slips, observation, quizzes, assignments, etc. are means to provide student feedback toward learning targets and standards.

Principle 5: Report achievement and non-academic factors separately.

A student's ability to turn things in on time and report it as part of a nonacademic grade component can be assessed separately. This assessment, however, should not distort feedback regarding that student's ability to understand a concept or write an essay. In the previously cited language arts example, nonacademic factors are recorded under the Social Emotional Learning standards.

Achievement	Non-Academic Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Example Targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations. ○ Understand concept, principles, and interconnection of life, physical, and earth/space sciences. ○ Uses geometry to reason about shapes and their attributes. ● To see more standards/targets, check the D37 Curriculum section on the District website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrates self-awareness and self-management ● Demonstrates social awareness & relationship skills ● Demonstrates responsible decision-making

Section Four: Reporting Scale Defined

Standard Reporting Scale

4 Exceeding

Consistently meeting requirements for exceptional work related to course standards and demonstrates a deep level of knowledge and skill for this point in the school year. Exceeding Standards represents a student who is able to independently extend their knowledge through transference of learning to more complex content and thinking. Students are able to:

- Apply concepts or procedures in a complex situation
- Transfer concepts or procedures to unfamiliar settings
- Extends knowledge of targets/standards to new situations or unfamiliar settings.

3 Meeting

Consistently meeting most requirements for proficient work related to course standards and demonstrates grade level knowledge and skills for this point in the year. Meeting Standards represents a student who understands the standards and is able to independently use the skills that relate to the standard. These students understand not just the “what,” but can correctly explain and/or demonstrate the “how” and “why”. Students are able to:

- Justify/explain a process or procedure
- Solve problems in familiar contexts
- Compare, contrast, and distinguish a concept from related concepts
- Summarize, conclude, predict and infer
- Analyze situations and decide whether a concept/procedure applies
- Demonstrates understanding of the targets/standards

2 Progressing

Consistently meet some requirements for proficient work related to course standards and demonstrates some grade level knowledge and skills for this point in the year. Learning Standards represents a student who has the foundational understanding of the content and concepts explicitly taught in class. This student understands the simple concept and/or details. The student may require additional support as they are trying to make connections among ideas. Students are able to:

- Identify or recall important information or processes
- List parts of a concept, process or procedures

- With support, can show understanding of the targets/standards

1 Area of Concern

Consistently meets few requirements for proficient work related to course standards and demonstrates little grade level knowledge and skill for this point in the school year. An Area of Concern represents a student who is consistently requiring additional support to understand the foundational content and concepts explicitly taught in the class. The student is beginning to understand the simple content and/or details. Students are able to:

- Identify or recall some information or processes
- Identify parts of a concept, process or procedures
- With support, may be able to show understanding of the targets/standards

IE Insufficient Evidence

Insufficient Evidence has been gathered to indicate an accurate grade. The student has 30 days to work with the teacher to show evidence of learning so that learning can be reported.

Section Five: Question and Answer Section

Standards Based Report Cards

Frequently Asked Questions About Report Cards for Grades K-6

What is the purpose of the standards-based report card?

Gavin Central and in grades 5-6 at Gavin South has established grade level learning goals based upon state and national standards. The purpose of this report card is to communicate student progress toward achieving these end-of-year goals.

Why is Gavin Central/South using standards-based reporting on its report card for students in K - 6?

We have long recognized that parents want to understand the progress their child makes over time. Our current report card, which contains different information at each grade level, makes that difficult. In an effort to improve learning and assessment in our schools, Central is joining other Lake County school districts in developing and adopting curriculum frameworks and assessment through a standards-based reporting system. A standards-based report card:

- a) Provides a clear message to parents about what skills and concepts their children know and are able to demonstrate in relation to established state and national standards
- b) Helps teachers and students focus on identified end-of-year expectations from the very beginning of the year, giving students a direction for their learning
- c) Aligns instruction, assessment, and grading with standards
- d) Creates a higher level of consistency and continuity in assessing among teachers and across grade levels.

Why are we hearing so much about standards?

All teaching and learning should be aligned with state and national standards. Our curriculum (what we teach) is developed, and our textbooks and materials (what we use to teach) is purchased with standards as the guiding influence.

Success for schools in Illinois is determined by their students' performance on annual assessments (the PARCC for elementary/middle school and the PSAE for high schools). These "measures of success" are published annually in the School Report Card by the Illinois State Board of Education and include schools' and districts' progress toward achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). These assessments are based upon benchmarks established in the Illinois Learning Standards, which were developed by the Illinois State Board of Education.

What is a standards-based assessment?

Standards-based assessment is based on the belief that every child can learn given the right support and opportunity. It allows teachers to accurately communicate achievement of learning targets or benchmarks to students and parents, as well as providing information for teachers to plan for instruction.

State and national learning standards inform teachers, parents, and students what skills and content students should learn at varying points in their educational experience. Developing assessments and report

cards based upon learning standards, measures how well students are acquiring skills and knowledge relative to those established standards. Standards-based assessment is used to help every student understand where he or she is in relation to meeting standards so they can improve.

By aligning curriculum, assessment and student report cards to standards, teachers measure student learning against consistent, established criteria. This is different from traditional assessment and reporting, which gives a single letter or number grade for broad subject categories. A standards-based report card puts the emphasis on learning, rather than on a comparison between and among students.

How is assessment different for traditional assessment versus standards-based assessment?

Traditional assessing averages work that a student has done over time with other student characteristics, such as work habits, attendance, homework, and effort. Standards-based assessment focuses solely on a student's academic achievement and continued mounting evidence that indicates a true assessment of the child's attainment of learning targets (such as the ability or to write a paragraph, or add and subtract whole numbers). Extraneous factors like work habits, attendance, homework, and effort are assessed and reported separately.

In standards-based assessments, reporting is based more upon the progress toward mastery of learning targets or standards that traditional assessment does. Subject areas are sub-divided into big ideas related to standards and their respective learning targets that students need to learn or master. Each target is assessed. Scores from activities that are provided solely for practice are not reflected. The influence of positive and consistent work habits on student learning is reported separately from the academics.

On many traditional report cards, students receive one grade for reading, one for math, one for science and so on. On a standards-based report card, each of these subject areas is divided into a list of skills and knowledge which students are responsible for learning. Students receive a separate mark for each standard.

The marks on a standards-based report card are different from traditional letter grades. Letter grades are often calculated by combining how well the student met his/her particular teacher's expectations, how he/she performed on assignments and tests, and how much effort the teacher believes was put forth. Letter grades do not tell parents which skills their children have mastered or whether they are working below, at or above grade level. Because one fourth-grade teacher might be assessing a student's reading fluency, while another is assessing reading for comprehension, getting a A in each of these classes might mean very different things.

Standards-based report cards will provide more consistency between teachers over the years than traditional report cards, because all students are evaluated on the same grade-appropriate skills. Parents can see exactly which skills and knowledge their children have learned.

In addition, in standards-based grading, students who have individualized education plans, 504 plans or receive support for English language learning are assessed based upon their individual goals. These

students have equal opportunity to secure a “meets” in standards-based grading because they are achieving based upon their individual growth toward the standards.

How does standards-based assessment affect student motivation?

When students can clearly see the learning goals/purpose for each activity and connect the outcome of those activities to actions that are within their control, motivation improves. In other words, when students can see that the level and amount of work they contribute to a learning activity is directly related to the outcome, they will be empowered and encouraged to work hard.

How does a standards-based report card improve teaching and learning?

Knowing where the students are in their progress toward meeting standards-based learning targets is crucial for planning and carrying out classroom instruction. Teachers teach to the needs of each student. The new assessing system is designed to give teachers more information about each student’s progress in meeting the level of proficiency required by each standard. In addition, teachers share the standards with students and parents, helping them to better understand the learning that needs to take place.

Reference

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov05/vol63/num03/Grading-to-Communicate.aspx>