

Standards Based Grading

Washington State has established a detailed set of standards defined as Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR). EALRs have been broken down into benchmarks, components, GLE, and performance expectations. In an effort to directly measure student progress toward these targets, some teachers have elected to implement grading based on standards. Students must pass high stakes tests for graduation based on these standards, therefore the Board encourages the use of standards based grading within the following parameters:

Grade Scale

- 4 – Exceeds standards or consistently meets standard over an extended period
- 3 – Meets standards
- 2 - Does not meet standard
- 1 – Little or no evidence of meeting standard

Zeros will not be given as an indicator of student proficiency or lack of proficiency on a standard. While assignments done outside of the classroom will not have point values to affect the grade, this work is required. Failure to complete assignments will result in students having homework lunch or handled through the discipline system.

Students will be offered more than one chance to demonstrate proficiency. Once proficiency is established the student is assigned the most recent grade earned not an average of the attempts on a particular standard. This does not preclude averaging the proficiency demonstrated on multiple standards. Nor does this preclude a student receiving a lower score on subsequent measures of a particular standard previously measured, as proficiency must be demonstrated over time.

Teachers may establish their own conversion scale from 1,2,3,4 grades to letter grades. The scale will be published to students and parents at the beginning of the year.

Teachers must also specify, in writing, the student learning goals or standards for his/her respective courses as per Board Policy 2420. The nature of standards based grading lends it to finely tuned learning targets that will be published to meet this requirement. However, for the 2009-2010 school year only a teacher's class syllabus will suffice.

The power of standards based grading is multifaceted. Students know precisely what is expected. Teachers can clearly identify students' needs to their parents for support at home. Students have more than one chance to demonstrate proficiency of a standard. All of this can happen only if the student has an opportunity to relearn the standard. Therefore, by the 2010-2011 school year, each building will present a plan to the board that supports time within the school day for relearning.