



A Parent's Guide to **STANDARDS-BASED GRADING**

WHY?

More than a decade ago Dansville Schools began our assessment and grading journey because our experiences and research showed that traditional grading actually hurts student motivation. We then dug more deeply into the assessment research to learn what kind of assessment and grading motivates students. Based on our findings, we began our move to standards-based grading and assessment.

What are the benefits of standards-based grading?

- Students take responsibility for their own learning.
- Students have a clear understanding about what needs to be learned.
- A student's grades communicate only his or her knowledge and skill in each content area.
- Students are taught that work habits are also important life skills and they are intentionally communicated separately to provide clear feedback for students and parents.



Standards-Based Grading Overview

- 1. Clear learning targets have been developed based on the state and/or national standards in all subjects.**
 - Learning targets are written in student-friendly language.
 - Students receive learning targets for each lesson or as part of the unit.
 - All lessons and student work are linked to a learning target.
 - Summative assessments state the learning targets for the specific skills assessed.
- 2. Teachers have created a rubric to go with each of their learning targets.**
 - A rubric is a scale that communicates grade-level expectations for learning targets and describes levels of understanding.
 - Rubric Scale
 - 1: I know a little about the learning target but need a lot more practice.
 - 2: I know some parts of the learning target but still need more practice.
 - 3: I consistently meet grade-level expectations for the learning target.
 - 4: I consistently perform above grade-level expectations for the learning target.
- 3. There are three different types of work and feedback:**
 - **Formative work** (quizzes, homework, study guides, class work, etc.) is practice for the learning target, which is crucial to the learning process. It is not included in the grade, as students are still learning and aren't ready to be assessed for their learning yet, but this work is used to determine work habits scores. The feedback given on the formative assessments helps students understand their current progress toward meeting grade-level expectations and what they need to do to improve.
 - **Summative work** (tests, projects, performances, labs, etc.) is the final assessment for the learning target. It is included in the grade, and the feedback helps students understand if they are meeting grade-level expectations of each target assessed.
 - **Work Habits** are skills students need to be successful learners (and future employees). The scores are a separate grade, and the feedback helps students understand what they can do to improve their employability skills.
- 4. Students track their progress on learning targets and work habits.**
 - Teachers use many different methods to help students track their progress, including tracking forms, graphs, and written reflections.
 - These trackers are also research-based and provide a means of motivation for students.

5. Parents and students can use PowerSchool to check student progress:

PowerSchool email updates list an overall grade, but for more detailed information, log in to PowerSchool and click on the blue rubric scores.

- **Formative Assessment** rubric scores are entered into PowerSchool to provide feedback on student progress, however, they do not count towards the overall score for the class.
- **Summative Assessment** rubric scores are entered into PowerSchool for each learning target. Each learning target is a separate score. These scores are then averaged to give the overall score for the class. These scores are 100% of the overall grade.
- **Work Habits** rubric scores are entered into PowerSchool. These scores are separate from the class score. These scores reflect student work completion habits (turning work in on time and completing assigned work).
- The following shortened codes are used for each of the above: WH (work habits), FA (formative assessment), and SA (summative assessment)

RETAKES

- The goal is for every student to be proficient on every learning target. This will give our students their best possible chance to be successful in their future careers and/or college or other training after high school. For this reason, all students are given the opportunity to retake summative assessments as long as the student does the additional practice required by the teacher to ensure improved performance. After a summative assessment retake, the most recent score is entered into PowerSchool, not an average of the previous scores, since we want to report the most current and accurate data about the student's progress.

LATE WORK / ZEROS

- If a student does not complete or turn in a summative assessment, an I (incomplete) is entered into PowerSchool until the summative is completed and turned in.
- Zeros are entered into PowerSchool when the student has shown no learning but an attempt has been made. Zeros count as a 40% in PowerSchool.
- Late, missing and incomplete work is not counted against a student's overall class score, however it is recorded as a comment on assignments and is reflected in the work habits score.

EXTRA CREDIT

- No extra credit is given in a Standards Based Grading system, as we instead are providing specific feedback about student progress on every learning target.

CHEATING

- Scores in PowerSchool are not affected because of cheating, however, a discipline referral is submitted to the principal in cases of cheating and the work must be redone by the student.