A Collaborative & Systematic Approach To Implementing An Effective Standards-Based Grading And Reporting System: A Change Leadership Plan

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A COLLABORATIVE & SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTING AN EFFECTIVE STANDARDS-BASED GRADING AND REPORTING SYSTEM: A CHANGE LEADERSHIP PLAN

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Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of Doctor of Education
In the Foster G. McGraw Graduate School

National College of Education
National Louis University
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This document was created as one part of the three-part dissertation requirement of the National Louis University (NLU) Educational Leadership (EDL) Doctoral Program. The National Louis Educational Leadership Ed.D. is a professional practice degree program (Shulman et al., 2006).

For the dissertation requirement, doctoral candidates are required to plan, research, and implement three major projects, one each year, within their school or district with a focus on professional practice. The three projects are:

- Program Evaluation
- Change Leadership Plan
- Policy Advocacy Document

For the Program Evaluation candidates are required to identify and evaluate a program or practice within their school or district. The “program” can be a current initiative; a grant project; a common practice; or a movement. Focused on utilization, the evaluation can be formative, summative, or developmental (Patton, 2008). The candidate must demonstrate how the evaluation directly relates to student learning.

In the Change Leadership Plan candidates a plan that considers organizational possibilities for renewal. The plan for organizational change may be at the building or district level. It must be related to an area in need of improvement, and have a clear target in mind. The candidate must be able to identify noticeable and feasible differences that should exist as a result of the change plan (Wagner et al., 2006).

In the Policy Advocacy Document candidates develop and advocate for a policy at the local, state or national level using reflective practice and research as a means for supporting and promoting reforms in education. Policy advocacy dissertations use critical theory to address moral and ethical issues of policy formation and administrative decision making (i.e., what ought to be). The purpose is to develop reflective, humane and social critics, moral leaders, and competent professionals, guided by a critical practical rational model (Browder, 1995).

Works Cited


ABSTRACT

This mixed methods study examined the collaborative efforts between the Standards-Based Grading and Reporting Committee (SBGRC) at Mountain West High School (MWHS) and the Leadership District Team (LDT), which consisted of the following stakeholders: the district superintendent, the chief business officer, the chief financial officer, multiple principals and assistant principals, students, and parents of Mountain West School District (MWSD). These groups researched effective grading and reporting policies and procedures for possible implementation, and worked toward developing a specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely (SMART) goal. In addition, a multiyear action plan was cocreated to streamline the process (DuFour, 2006). This change/action plan was codesigned to examine how to implement an effective standards-based grading and reporting system that is appropriate and reasonable for MWHS and MWSD. This study examined how, after reviewing local and national data and researching effective grading and reporting policies and procedures, key stakeholders collaboratively decided on the best way to measure and report academic achievement that would best prepare all students for success in colleges and careers.

In addition, this study, strived to shed light on a possible correlation between grade point average (GPA) and standardized test scores. Results showed that a quarter of the students with a “good” GPA (defined as 3.0 or above), who were in the top 25% of their class, performed at or below the level of the top 50% of students nationally on the Northwest Examination Assessment (NWEA)/Measure of Academic Proficiency (MAP), Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), and the American College of Testing (ACT) exam. This begs the questions, “How could so many
students be earning high marks in school, yet have such mediocre performance on standardized tests?"

What is more, the study revealed that nonacademic factors such as behavior, participation, attendance, and the ability to meet deadlines are included in local and national grading practices. These factors that distort students’ authentic academic performance.
PREFACE

In mid-2015, I assumed my new role as the director of bilingual education, dual-language and ESL for Mountain West School District (MWSD) and assistant principal at Mountain West High School (MWHS). Just days into my appointment, I was inducted into the Leadership District Team, composed of teachers, deans, instructional coaches, assistant principals, principals, district curriculum directors, directors of technology, and on special occasions, parents and students. I began working with the team on one of the district goals, namely, the exploration of standards-based grading and reporting (SBGR) through a change/action plan. This goal aligned not only to my personal belief in having a fair and appropriate grading system that supports learners, but also to my doctoral studies.

Conducting a change plan supported my growth as a novice administrative leader in a plethora of ways. Oftentimes school leaders hastily implement changes without seeking input from all stakeholders or even determining if change is needed. Engaging in the process of working together to research effective grading and reporting policies and create a change plan has helped me understand the importance of bringing people together, of authentic collaboration, when deciding to make a change that affects all stakeholders. People want to be heard, and the best way to foster change is to include the stakeholders affected from the beginning.

This change plan was extremely meaningful because the entire process was cocreated with the input of all stakeholders: parents, teachers, students, administrators, and local leaders. In addition, the change plan supports the district’s vision of moving forward with standards-based grading and reporting.
This process also prepared me to be a leader in my role as central office administrator in two ways. First, it helped me understand that some schools may be ready for change, while others in the same district may not. Change needs to be systematic, but does not have to occur in all buildings at the same time. For change to be successful, the conditions, context, culture, and competencies need to be ready, which may or may not be the case in all schools in one district (Wagner, 2006).

Second, I learned that convincing others of the efficacy of standards-based grading and reporting needs to be accompanied by studies (both internal and external) that show statistical evidence of its potential for positive effects. My mentor, the principal of my building, often says, “Show me the data and I will give you my attention.” This is a powerful phrase that I hope to embody. In addition, earning support for change requires advocates to intentionally educate those who may be impacted through ongoing forums, meetings, or social media.
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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

For more than 100 years, the US educational system has been evaluating student performance using the current letter grade system: A through F (in some cases E), 0 to 100 percent, with point accumulation a primary factor (Durm, 1993; Guskey, 1994; Matthews, 2005). This evaluation structure is familiar to almost all Americans who went through schooling in the United States. Yale University was first to report achievements of students via categories, and Harvard University was the first to report a traditional letter grade assigned to a pupil in 1883 (Durm, 1993; Matthews, 2005). The grading system as we know it today was fully developed at Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts in 1897 (Durm, 1993; Matthews, 2005). Unfortunately, that system has changed much since its inception, even though states have adopted specific and measurable learning targets, state standards and 47 states have adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) since 2010 (CCSS, 2016).

What is even more astonishing is that a majority of teacher preparation programs in the finest colleges and universities nationwide do not require, or even offer, a course in assessment and grading (Guskey, 2009; Guskey, 2015). I personally attended one of the finest public universities in the United States—the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign—for my teaching preparation experience and was not afforded the opportunity for a course in assessment and grading.

It is my hope, in this change plan, to explore and implement a new methodology in measuring student performance in schools through standards-based grading and reporting (SBGR). This system measures skills acquired by students compared to set
standards, so as to begin authentically measuring and communicating student
achievement in content areas as demonstrated by their mastery of the skills needed to be
successful in the colleges and careers of the 21st century.

New and common standards throughout the country, as well as the skills required
to access upward financial and social mobility, demand that schools embrace change,
innovate, and implement new systems that capture and inform students’ demonstrable
abilities.

**Statement of the Problem**

The problem that calls for change is the traditional grading system used to record
and communicate academic achievement. The traditional letter grading system obligates
teachers to evaluate student performance in a plethora of content areas—english, math,
science and social studies—for no practical, procedural, or ethical reason (Guskey, 2015).
Also, there is limited research on how and why the traditional letter grade system is used
in schooling; yet, since 1971, more than 80% of schools in America have used some sort
of the traditional letter grade method (Durm, 1993; Guskey, 2013). Many believe that the
traditional grading system is hopelessly inaccurate, that it lacks meaningful feedback, is
inequitable, archaic, not rooted in research, and often rewards and incorporates
nonacademic factions (e.g., on-time task completion) into a student’s overall grade
(Amundson, 2011; Marzano & Heflebower, 2011; O’ Connor, 2011; Guskey, Jung, &
Swan, 2011; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016).

Moreover, with its permanent academic marks, the traditional grading system
penalizes organizational, behavioral, and executive functioning issues that should and
could be addressed separately from academic achievement. Despite the best of intentions
from educationalists, grades seem to reflect student compliance, rather than achievement and engagement. This leads to inflated and trivialized grades, undermining the entire learning process (O’Connor, 2011; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016).

As an educational leader, I have a difficult time interpreting academic achievement through the current, traditional letter grading system. What do letter grades truly communicate? Mastery? Compliance? How do we know that? What does the letter mean in terms of a student’s ability to read well or demonstrate a skill based on standards? I also wonder how parents, students, teachers, administrators, and other key stakeholders make inferences about the mastery of skills through the traditional letter grading system. I believe the current grading system cannot answer those questions; thus, a different system is needed that seeks to provide more information and evidence of student learning.

Fortunately, there is hope, thanks to innovative grading reforms: standards-based grading (SBG) or standards-based grading and reporting (SBGR), both of which are referenced and used interchangeably throughout this study. These systems have been in development since the late 80s in the Fairfax County School District in Virginia and in practice throughout the United States in the 21st century (Fairfax County Public Schools, n.d.). SBG, or grades based on standards, a phrase coined by Schimmer (2016), is a pedagogical evaluation practice wherein teachers report student performance based a select level of performance descriptors in a data management system or report card (Guskey, 2001; Reeves, 2008; Guskey & Jung, 2011; AnkenySchools, 2014; Andrews, Barnes, & Gibbs, 2016; Schimmer, 2016).
The differences between the traditional grading system and the SBG system are stark. Figure 1 compares the two systems’ fundamental uses, demonstrating clearly the pros and cons of each.

*Figure 1. O’Connor (2002) highlights the key differences between standard-based and the traditional grading system.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Grading System</th>
<th>Standards-Based Grading System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Based on assessment methods (quizzes, tests, homework, projects, etc.). One grade/entry is given per assessment.</td>
<td>1. Based on learning goals and performance standards. One grade/entry is given per learning goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Assessments are based on a percentage system. Criteria for success may be unclear.</td>
<td>2. Standards are criterion or proficiency-based. Criteria and targets are made available to students ahead of time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Use an uncertain mix of assessment, achievement, effort, and behavior to determine the final grade. May use late penalties and extra credit.</td>
<td>3. Measures achievement only OR separates achievement from effort/behavior. No penalties or extra credit given.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Everything goes in the grade book—regardless of purpose.</td>
<td>4. Selected assessments (tests, quizzes, projects, etc.) are used for grading purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Include every score, regardless of when it was collected. Assessments record the average—not the best—work.</td>
<td>5. Emphasize the most recent evidence of learning when grading.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The traditional grading system, represented through undefined letters, points, and percentages, distorts and misreports a student’s actual level of performance because low and high grades are averaged together. Furthermore, behavior and promptness may be included in grades, and criteria for success on assignments can be unclear and not linked
to standards. However, SBG measures achievement and executive function skills, such as organization, attendance, promptness, and behavior, separately from grades.

In addition, SBG emphasizes the most current evidence of learning when grading; it is based on learning goals and the CCSS, national standards common in almost all U.S. states (O’Connor, 2011; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016).

In classroom grading and reporting, it is evident that SBG strives to be more accurate than the traditional grading system at identifying students’ proficiencies or deficiencies. Figure 2 illustrates an example of students’ performance under the traditional and SBG systems.

*Figure 2.* Lahey (2014) compares student performance in a point-based/grade report and a standards-based report.

### Points-Based Classroom Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Homework 1</th>
<th>Quiz 1</th>
<th>Homework 2</th>
<th>Quiz 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jayden</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierce</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Standards-Based Classroom Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Objective: Create a thesis statement</th>
<th>Objective: Create topic sentences</th>
<th>Objective: Organize ideas</th>
<th>Objective: Identify evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>Not proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jayden</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierce</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a points-based gradebook, the student at the top, Zoe, might assume she’s doing great, but according to the standards-based gradebook, she (and the teacher) can see that Zoe is not proficient in an essential skill she needs to move forward in her
writing education. Conversely, Pierce’s points-based grade would be lower than Zoe’s due to that lost homework assignment, but in reality, he is already proficient in the skill that assignment was designed to reinforce. (Lahey, p. 1, 2014).

Also, Pierce, who is proficient in the SBG report card, would likely be receiving a 66%, a D, when averaging assignments; meanwhile, Zoe, who is not proficient on any skill needed to write a proper argumentative essay, would be earning an 82.5%, a low B. This grade would communicate an inaccurate representation of Zoe’s writing skills, thus putting her at risk for low performance on standardized testing, next-level coursework, and introductory college classes. By contrast, Pierce, who is proficient in writing, receives a low grade, thus miscommunicating his skills and limiting his schooling opportunities.

SBG clearly communicates any student’s level of proficiency according to standards, which is why this well-research methodology of grading and reporting is becoming extremely popular (O’Connor, 2011; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016). In fact, its popularity is such that SBGR is currently practice in schools and districts throughout the United States and the world.

In Illinois, U-46, which encompasses elementary, middle, and high schools from 11 communities of DuPage, Kane, and Cook Counties, is currently implementing SBGR. This is reflected on students’ report cards (SD U-46, n.d.). In their report cards, elementary and middle school students are graded using four levels of performance descriptors to determine mastery (SD U-46, n.d.):

- **Level 1.** Does not demonstrate understanding of concepts.
- **Level 2.** Beginning to demonstrate understanding of concepts.
• **Level 3.** Consistently demonstrates understanding of concepts.

• **Level 4.** Demonstrates in-depth understanding of concepts.

These performance descriptors are then used to evaluate students’ current level of performance for each standard in each content area. (For the report card example in English and Spanish, see appendices F and G.) U-46’s standards-based report card mirrors the recommended example as established by the Illinois State Board of Education (available in the Appendix I).

In Calgary, Canada, the Calgary Board of Education has adopted a standards-based report card (Schimmer, 2016). The report card intentionally separates behavior and academic achievement by having sections in which teachers can report progress on both. Academic progress and achievement is evaluated using a four-point scale: a 4 is **excellent**, a 3 is **good**, 2 is **basic**, and a 1 marks that the student has not met the standard. These scores are documented next to specific standards (Schimmer, 2016). (For the Calgary report cards, see appendices CC & DD.)

Across the world, in Myanmar (formerly Burma), a southeast Asian nation, the report card clearly states the purpose of learning, separates behavior from academic achievement, and uses a 1 through 4 proficiency scale similar to Illinois. In addition, the report card separates languages from other criteria, because the language program is assessed according to the American Count of Teachers of Foreign Languages Standards (ACTFL) (Schimmer, 2016). This report card, when compared to its traditional letter-grade counterpart, is truly standards based (Schimmer, 2016). (For an example of this report card, see Appendix BB.)
I wholeheartedly believe that if change is implemented successfully, if we overhaul the traditional grading system to one reflecting the mastery of skills aligned to standards, as done in many parts of the United States and throughout the world, students at every level will receive authentic feedback and evaluation on the skills necessary to be career- and college-ready. This would work to close the achievement/opportunity gap between grades for every student and reduce the number of remedial courses needed by high school graduates in postsecondary institutions.

**Rationale**

I chose to focus on this problem because grading (and grade reporting) is the single most important responsibility bestowed upon teachers and school administrators (Wormeli, 2006; Guskey, 2006; Guskey, 2015; Schimmer, 2016; Vatterott, 2015; Marzano, 2015). For elementary and middle school students, grades determine whether a student gets promoted to the next grade level, earns the opportunity to join an honors program, participates in extracurricular activities, and is eligible to receive in-school privileges. For high school students, grades can determine access to extracurricular activities, scholarships/grants, internships, honors programs, in-school privileges/rewards, high-paying careers, and university admission (Guskey, 2006; Andrew, Barnes, & Gibbs, 2016). One misrepresented grade could have irreparable consequences that last a lifetime; this is why grading must be used as an evaluative tool that authentically measures student proficiency on specific skills aligned to the CCSS, rather than a comparative tool that pits one student performance against the other.

When comparing students academically, grades represent a type of extrinsic achievement motivation. A very popular social-cognitive theory of achievement
motivation, called \textit{goal orientation theory}, examines why students are engaged in their work (Brophy, 1998; Bradbury-Bailey, 2011). This theory indicates that there are two types of goal orientations: a performance orientation goals type, in which the goal is to get the highest grade in relation to other classmates, and the mastery orientation type, wherein the goal is understanding, along with acquiring skills and knowledge (Brophy, 1998). For disenfranchised minorities, the latter type has yielded more positive academic results because makes it possible for all students to meet targets through reassessment and specific feedback, and encourages them do so. By contrast, with the former goal type, fostered through the traditional grading system and its assignments, feedback is rare; having the highest score is the goal. This goal type has been found ineffective at motivating minorities, because historically, minorities have been alienated from the educational system and tend to perform worse academically in many content areas, compared to Whites (Brophy, 1998). Mastery orientation best lends itself to SBG because it requires specificity in what skills or knowledge are needed for success; it encourages mastery, unlike the traditional grading system. Brophy (1998) encouraged teachers to be intentional in helping students create goals. Having an intended outcome as it relates to a lesson or skill needed to be successful in school can motivate students to improve academically.

In the traditional grading system, grades are artificially inflated with extra credit, attendance, and comportment, or even something as inconsequential as turning in a signed syllabus—items all unrelated to a student’s mastery of necessary skills (O’Connor, 2011; Guskey, 2013; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016). Grades do not reflect what students are learning. Letter grades do not measure a
student’s ability to read, write, listen, or communicate—all 21st century skills needed to be successful (Wagner, 2006; O’Connor, 2011; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016). If students are to be successful, they need to receive authentic, measurable feedback related to the skills they need to prosper in the classroom and in the world (O’Connor, 2011; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016).

Wilcox (2011) demonstrated, through a qualitative survey and quantitative data, that authentic feedback through a standards-based rubric led to students being more engaged in learning. In addition, it improved grades and self-reflection in high school science courses. The SBG rubric allowed for students to receive consistent, accurate, authentic and actionable feedback in multiple assessments and assignments. In addition, when comparing his previous cohort of students to the standards-based group without having changed his instruction, students in the SBG group earned higher test averages in physics and biology (Wilcox, 2011). SBG encourages students to fix mistakes and be more diligent. The students themselves stated, “Now that I get specific feedback on what I don’t know, instead of just a percentage point, I make that a goal to conquer. I am more motivated to learn and I know what I exactly need to do to learn” (Wilcox, 2011).

The study abovementioned highlighted how standards-based practices motivated students to improve their academic achievement and close the achievement/opportunity gap.

Closing the achievement/opportunity gap should be a priority for all educators, especially those in high-poverty and minority school districts that are striving to improve achievement for students at all grade levels. Bradbury-Bailey (2011) was able to demonstrate through longitudinal data that African-American students in SBG
classrooms, including the sciences and humanities, outperformed their peers from years prior, who had been graded under the traditional grading system, on the End of Year Content Test (EOCT), state standardized exams per content area in the state of Georgia. The research found this was the case because students in an SBG system were able to master the content through multiple tries, teachers were able to give specific feedback aligned to the standards, and students were able to correct previous mistakes—all effective practices that prepared students for the EOCT (Bradbury-Bailey, 2011). Before SBG, students took an exam once. They earned a score with little to no feedback, and the teacher moved on. Under SBG, students were afforded multiple opportunities to truly understand and apply relevant concepts.

In another comprehensive investigation, Hardegree (2012) was able to demonstrate through quantitative data that indicators on standards-based report cards (SBRC) correlated with scores on standardized testing. In this case, the exam was a criterion-referenced competency test (CRCT) administered to 550 fifth graders from eight elementary schools. Regardless of gender, English language learner (ELL) status, or socioeconomic background, elementary students with proficient or better indicators in specific skills related to math and reading outperformed peers with developing proficiency skills indicators on the CRCT (Hardegree, 2012). In other words, the study provided evidence to suggest that standards-based grade reporting provides accurate student achievement information that may predict performance on standardized testing, something that has proven a challenge for the traditional grading system.

In Haptonstall (2010), the investigatory work examined the correlation between students’ grades in core subject areas and their scores on the Colorado Student
Assessment Program tests in reading, writing, math, and science. The study also examined the mean scores of varying subgroups to determine the existence of any dependent variable, such as students’ school districts. While all the school districts that participated in the study demonstrated a significant correlation between grades and test scores, Roaring Fork School District Re-1, which used a standards-based grading model, demonstrated both higher correlations and higher mean scores and grades across the board, in both the overall population and subgroups (Haptonstall, 2010). In other words, SBGR is a strong predictor of student performance on standardized testing.

In Nebraska, Stephens (2010) demonstrated that grading varies greatly from teacher to teacher. Teachers who taught the same subjects had different ways of calculating grades. Some gave full credit for a late assignment while others did not. Some reduced grades for inappropriate behaviors while others did not. The inclusion of nonacademic factors in grades, such as behavior and promptness, distort students’ current level of performance. This lack of consistency led to huge gaps in grading for students completing identical tasks (Stephens, 2010). Giving students the right, accurate grades is not only the right thing to do, it has consequences beyond high school.

Almost 2 million students—one-third of high school graduates who make it to college—are enrolled in remedial classes that are not transferrable and serve as gatekeepers to the introductory level college coursework (DuFour, 2015; Vatterott, 2015). In other states, like California, Alabama, and Alaska, this number was as high as 50% (Stenhouse Publishers, 2014). In other words, high school graduates with presumably “good” enough letter grades to earn admissions to fine state and private universities are not adequately prepared for beginning college course work.
This underpreparedness may also impact university enrollment. As Figure 3 demonstrates, only 76% of graduating seniors at Mountain West High School\(^1\) (MWHS) enrolled in two- or four-year colleges within 12–16 months, leaving almost a quarter out of postsecondary opportunities.

Figure 3. Post-secondary enrollment among graduating seniors at MWHS.

I have found discussing student achievement and opportunities at team data meetings to be very frustrating and disheartening. The team is made up of teachers, paraprofessionals, counselors, administrators, special education staff, and English Language Learners (ELL) educators at MWHS, one of four campuses of the Mountain West School District\(^2\) (MWSD). This team meets every Tuesday morning for an hour

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\(^1\) MWHS is a pseudonym.
\(^2\) MWSD is a pseudonym.
block and quarterly for a double block and is responsible for the academic and social-emotional well-being of students, particularly those in need.

The frustration is palpable throughout the room when team members report on their assigned group of students to monitor and mentor. Each group consists of no more than five students who are at the bottom 10 to 15% of academic performance, are truants, or have social-emotional learning struggles or any other major concerns. This population of students is identified at the beginning of the year using preexisting data, and team members are assigned new students every four to six weeks. What is more, the group monitor/mentor presents a spreadsheet document which includes grades, percentages, referrals, attendance, and other notes. During group discussions and presentations, the team has noticed that a student could have a failing grade one week and then an 80% the next. What happened?

What is more, when we investigate deeper, we find that sometimes the difference between passing and failing is completion of a single homework assignment, or doing the extra credit, or participation, or behavior, or even something as simple as bringing in cans for the food drive or turning in the signed syllabus. None of these activities are related to the learning standards. Also, students’ grades change and vary so drastically that often the only solution for academic improvement is an assigned academic support period, similar to a study hall, with one adult who may or may not have sufficient knowledge in the area of need.

Furthermore, the team reviews the “F list,” which keeps a record of students failing one or more courses. Unfortunately, because of the wild fluctuations in grades,
students come in and out of that list so erratically that it has become difficult to create meaningful, skills-focused interventions or action plans.

The traditional letter grading system makes it difficult to create these strategies for keeping students on grade level and on track for graduation, since it is difficult to decipher *why* a student is failing a particular course. Thus once again, the system undermines the collective effort of teachers, school improvement teams, and students being served (Guskey & Jung, 2012; Peters & Buckmiller, 2014).

Grades should communicate achievement, but too often, they communicate compliance or lack thereof (O’Connor, 2011; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016). How can we truly know students are learning with such a system in place in many schools? How can the achievement/opportunity gap be closed if grades might not represent a student’s actual level of performance?

Grading shouldn’t create obstacles to student learning; it should allow teachers to generate specific information relating to real standards to help students learn. Unfortunately, the traditional grading system creates obstacles. It is archaic and filled with nonacademic factors, and does not reflect students’ mastery of skills needed to meet standards (Guskey, 1994).

**Goals**

The intended goal of this change plan is to move beyond the traditional letter grading system that has been in place at MWSD for 40 years to a SBGR system that measures student’s performance against the CCSS or other national standards (Durm, 1993; Guskey, 1994; CCSS, 2016). I believe that if this change takes place, MWHS will be able to close the achievement/opportunity gap, communicate accurate student
achievement, increase admissions into two- and four-year universities, make passing
classes more accessible to students, improve standardized test scores, identify specific
and targetable skills in reading, writing, communicating, and calculating, and overall
better prepare pupils for pre- and postsecondary opportunities.

Since changing grading systems represents a major paradigm shift, a thoughtful,
multiyear plan formed with the input of as many stakeholders as possible is key.
Teachers, community leaders, parents, students, administrators, and local politicians are
necessary to ensure everyone is on board with the new system (Senge, 2012; Schimmer,
2016). Fortunately, a year-one plan (see Appendix A) was drafted during the summer of
2015 with stakeholder input from the researcher—the director of bilingual
education/dual-language and ESL for MWSD and assistant principal at MWHS—chair of
the standards-based grading and reporting committee (SBGRC), and members of the
Leadership District Team (LDT), which included stakeholders from multiple roles all
over the district. In addition, three teachers who were members of the LDT had
personally volunteered to pilot SBG in mathematics and English for the upcoming school
year, after going through professional development in SBG and hearing the
administrators’ commitment to exploring and possibly implementing the system. Thus,
they would serve as strong political allies and recruits for the SBGRC, a committee
created by the researcher to collaboratively investigate the most effective grading system
for MWHS and MWSD.

Lastly, this problem should be approached through a unique blend of a technical
and adaptive framework. Technical challenges are those for which the problem and
solution are clearly defined. In this case, the problem is the letter grading system and the
solution is SBGR. However, SBGR is a relatively new approach that may require learning, experimentation, and adaptation as implementation progresses (Drago-Severson, 2009; Heifetz, Grashow, & Linksey, 2009; Senge, 2012). Furthermore, adopting a new grading system will require change in what people do, feel, and think—the key tenets of an adaptive challenge (Drago-Severson, 2009; Heifetz et al., 2009; Senge, 2012).

**Demographics**

MWSD is a west suburban school district located in DuPage County, Illinois, just west of Cook County (IIRC, 2016). MWHS is one of four campuses in MWSD, and it has a student population of approximately 500 in 9th through 12th grade (IIRC, 2016). Caucasians make up 68% of the population, Hispanic/Latino students 16%, African-Americans 6%, Asians 5%, with the final 3% of mixed ethnicity (IIRC, 2016). Moreover, MWHS has been a Title I school for years, referring to the title grant given to schools with 40% or more of its students classified as low-income by the federal government (IIRC, 2016).

Students at MWHS have composite average of 20.5 on the ACT examination, 0.5 below the state average (IIRC, 2016). Also, and most currently, 41% of students met or exceeded the standards of the PARCC examination for English language arts (ELA), while only 7% did so on the math portion of the test (IIRC, 2016).

MWHS serves the communities of the western suburbs of Chicago. The communities have a wide variety of housing options and prices. Homes in the areas can range from $100,000 to $500,000, and apartments can go from $800 to $1,400 in monthly rent (Zillow, 2016).
SECTION TWO: ASSESSING THE FOUR CS

Introduction

The four Cs—conditions, culture, competencies, and context—is a diagnostic tool used to examine an organization’s effectiveness and make educational leaders think systematically when formulating proposals for change plans and school improvement goals (Wagner et al., 2006). The tool is intended to help identify one’s current reality—the as is—and to picture the desired outcome—the to be (Wagner et al., 2006).

*Condition* is defined as “external architecture surrounding student learning, the tangible arrangements of time, space, and resources (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 101). This can refer to any number of things: time dedicated to stakeholders through meetings or classroom instruction; expectations around roles and responsibilities; student results tied to formative and summative assessments; procedures, policies, and contracts; or even the physical space of a building and its utility.

*Competencies* are defined as the “repertoire of skills and knowledge that influence student learning” (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 99). The understanding and ability to apply knowledge through learning strategies and education systems fall under this category.

*Culture* is defined as “the shared values, beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and behaviors related to students and learning, teachers and teaching, instructional leadership, and the quality of relationships within and beyond the school” (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 102).

*Context* is defined as “skill demands all student must meet, and concerns of the families and community that the school or district serves.” Current realities surrounding
educational programming and academic performance would fall in this category, as would the school vision and mission.

In creating Appendix B, I took a systematic view of MWSD and more specifically, MWHS, where I work as an assistant principal. I focused on SBG but also took into account staff beliefs, grading practices, assessments, and current committees dedicated to improving student achievement. I applied the four Cs framework as outlined in this section and described in Change Leaders: A Practical Guide to Transforming Our Schools, by Tony Wagner and his colleagues (2006), to help ensure that I examined all areas of my district’s practice.

**Context**

MWSD is a unit school district, with approximately 1,500 students spread over two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Current district leadership grants autonomy to all buildings; thus, any successful change plan proposed may begin in one school then be adopted at other buildings. Wagner et al. (2006) stated that context refers to the larger organizational systems in which we work. For a school this might be the district, for a district this might be the state, and for the state this might be the nation.

MWSD has been using the traditional letter grading system to report academic achievement since the school opened 40 years ago. However, during the summer of 2015, just one month upon my arrival as the director of bilingual education/dual-language and ESL of MWSD and assistant principal for MWHS, many stakeholders—the superintendent, the chief business officer, the chief academic officer, the principals, the assistant principals, and the researcher—proposed the investigation of an authentic
student achievement measuring system aligned to the state standards so as to better identify the skills students need to be successful within and beyond the classroom. These educationalists, who were members of the LDT, identified SBGR as that potential system. After many formal and informal dialogues during the summer, SBGR quickly became one of the many missions for the LDT to explore and possibly implement. In addition to meeting in the summer, the team meets quarterly throughout the academic year. The group is made up of students, parents, teachers, and administrators of all levels and from all four district campuses. More importantly, the LDT is led by the superintendent and other administrative designees, including myself; however, the vast majority of topics and action items are led and proposed by the superintendent.

Moreover, according to the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) examination, the state of Illinois’s test, 41% of students met or exceeded the English language arts standards and only 7% met or exceeded the math standards at MWHS at the time of this research (IIRC, 2016). These statistics are of great concern to me, as the assistant principal, the researcher, and a main stakeholder responsible for students’ performance and the curriculum and instruction they receive.

**Conditions**

Wagner et al. (2006) stated that conditions include school policies. Every school in MWSD uses the traditional letter grading system to measure and communicate academic achievement to students and parents, as written in district policy. However, kindergarten through second grade classes in the district do use a standards-based report card (see Appendix GG). What is more, a few teachers are experimenting with versions
of SBG in the gradebook and grade categories (see appendices HH and NN). This information can also be found in every school’s handbook and the district website.

Moreover, formative and summative assessments—assignments used in the learning process and at the end of learning (Wormeli, 2006)—are scored using points. Thus, the more points one accumulates, the better the current and overall grade; the opposite is also true. This accumulation of points is an erroneous measure of a student’s ability, because if a student has a tough start and misses a large chunk of available points, then he or she spends too much time catching up, and the cumulative score does not paint an accurate picture of what the student can do.

Furthermore, besides the LDT and three teachers experimenting with SBG, very few stakeholders are aware of SBGR. Collegial dialogues about SBGR with stakeholders other than the LDT are nonexistent. Lastly, a data collection system capable of aligning standards to assessment is in place at MWHS, but not the other campuses.

Culture

Teachers from MWSD have been using the traditional letter grading system to communicate student achievement for the last 40 years, so changing that system could prove extremely difficult. However, there is hope, because innovative practices have taken root throughout the district during the last five years. For example, MWSD is one of only 27 districts out of almost 900 in the entire state of Illinois to have a dual-language program at one of its elementary schools (IASB, 2016). Moreover, professional learning communities (PLCs) that did not exist three years ago have been fully implemented at all MWSD campuses. MWHS has been the campus most willing to embrace change, as long
as the proposal is structured and supported with research (see Section Five: Data Analysis and Interpretations).

According to the Illinois 5Essentials Survey, an online survey created by the University of Chicago and the Urban Education Institute to measure school climate and culture through a variety of questions for different stakeholders, approximately 95% of the staff are willing to follow administration’s initiatives at the high school level, but only 50% of the staff are on board at the junior high and elementary levels (IIRC, 2016). Wagner et al. (2006) defined culture in this sense as the beliefs of staff as it relates to student learning and the overall school environment. Thus, it can be inferred that the high school teachers are more willing to change than the elementary school teachers.

**Competencies**

Wagner et al. (2006) stated that competencies are most effectively built when professional development is focused, job-embedded, continuous, constructed, and collaborative. The current challenge for MWSD is that it lacks professional development opportunities for stakeholders to develop a profound understanding of SBGR. And, considering none have been provided, almost all staff members, from kindergarten through 12th grade, lack the skills to implement SBGR with fidelity.

Moreover, only a handful of administrators have a general understanding of SBGR and its benefits, since not all administrators are required to be part of the LDT, which oversees the standards-based action plan. Thus, there is very little information and awareness about SBGR outside the team and teachers experimenting with it.
Fortunately, three brave and innovative educators—Bob Ratch,\textsuperscript{3} Katy Lopp,\textsuperscript{4} and Christina Portage\textsuperscript{5}—teachers at MWHS and members of the LDT, volunteered to implement SBG during the 2015–2016 school year. In addition, one dual-language teacher from the elementary school volunteered to participate in SBG along with her traditional grading system. She was willing to try a new system, but not ready to let go of the one she had been practicing for more than six years, nor participate in the study.

Teachers willing to test new pedagogy of grading and reporting renewed all educators’ hopes of providing students with fair and accurate academic feedback that truly represents what they are able to do in the near future. Students deserve the best opportunities in the classroom, opportunities that are researched based and success-centered. The bravery of these teachers inspired me, a practitioner, to design the research methodology on their experiences.

\textsuperscript{3} This name is a pseudonym.
\textsuperscript{4} This name is a pseudonym.
\textsuperscript{5} This name is a pseudonym.
SECTION THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

I focused on what can be learned when an institution permits one of its administrative leaders to bring stakeholders together in the exploration of data and literature, in this case related to effective grading and reporting policies and procedures, through a case study model. This model requires the researcher to generate themes or conclusions from observations focused on a specific task (Patton, 2008). I interviewed and observed the three SBG pilot teachers’ grading practices, obtained copies of their gradebooks and grade categories (see appendices), and analyzed feedback provided by those teachers to students and how it is linked to the mastery of standards in each of the educators’ concentrations. In addition, I gathered current and archival data on standardized test scores and grades so as to explore how the latter relates to the former.

Furthermore, an important course of action in this research was establishing a voluntary and committed Standards-Based Grading and Reporting Committee (SBGRC), composed of all stakeholders: two administrators, a teacher, a student, a board member, a local entrepreneur, a local politician, and a parent. Starting in late October 2016, the committee began meeting monthly for two hours to complement the LDT’s quarterly meetings. The goal of the SBGRC was to support the LDT’s year-one action plan and create the year-two implementation plan.

The SBGRC’s main responsibilities were to evaluate current grading policies and procedures as they relate to the mastery of standards, search for best practices that have yielded accurate portrayals of students’ abilities, look at data on grade point average and its relation to achievement in standardized testing, and find areas in the LDT’s SBG year-
one action plan to impact. This group was also subject to interviews and surveys, and served as a focus group.

More important, my change plan focused on moving the year-one action plan forward. The action plan (found in Appendix A) called for an increase in the understanding of effective grading practices aligned to SBG for teacher and parent stakeholders during year one. Faculty’s current level of understanding of effective practices was measured through a pre-survey, as reported in Section Five. Next, the plan called for a post-survey, which would include the same questions and be administered sometime before the end of the school year, after professional development opportunities for teachers had been provided. Unfortunately, the post-survey was not developed by the conclusion of this study. Teachers did share at faculty meetings that their knowledge of SBGR did increase thanks to readings facilitated by the researcher during faculty meetings. The plan also called for information sessions to be provided to parents through a parent university (a forum of information). These sessions would help parents understand the benefits of effective grading practices and SBGR. Informing parents about the topic became the key area enhanced by the SBGRC.

Lastly, year two calls for a plan to implement SBGR. This was talked about at a LDT meeting, but at the end of this study, there was no formal commitment by local administrators to implement SBGR. The plan was nevertheless created (see Appendix B).

Wagner et al. (2006) would categorize the action plan under, appropriately, the planning stage. Consequently, my hope is to enhance the action plan with an end goal and move from the planning stage to the implementation stage. However, before that can
occur, the action plan must be completed and there must be commitment to follow it. This is the desire of the intended users and the LDT.

In addition, any change plan, but especially one coming from a novice administrator, should include suggestions and be a collaborative endeavor. This inclusive endeavor will be structured as a professional learning organization, which Senge (2012) suggested is the most effective way to introduce change.

**Participants**

To begin, I interviewed the three SBGR pilot teachers—two female and one male—at MWHS. They ranged in age from 30 to 40 years. In addition to these three, members of the English department decided during the 2015–2016 school year to experiment with the effort by organizing their gradebooks and grade categories according to skills reflective of standards: reading, writing, speaking, and listening (see Appendix HH). The math department did the same. Their efforts can be found in Appendix NN.

I used purposeful sampling for this study. Patton (2006) stated that purposeful sampling allows the researcher to go in-depth and gain as much qualitative information as possible for a study. Consequently, purposeful sampling allowed me to observe and extract a vast amount of qualitative data from the SBG teachers. These participants also participated in ethnographic interviews. A total of seven adults participated in the interviews: two administrators and five teachers. All seven were White and ranged from 25 to 65 years of age, both male and female. Along with teachers, other participants included students, parents, and community members.

A total of five students participated in the interviews. The students were high school students, male and female, between the ages of 12 to 18. There were three White
students, one Latina student, one Black student, and one Asian student. Three parents—two community members and one board member—participated in the interviews. Pseudonyms were used for all participants.

Furthermore, approximately 20 teachers from MWHS, as well as 20 students and 50 parents, participated in surveys related to beliefs regarding grading practices.

Lastly, more than 50 parents attended an informational session on SBGR known as parent university. There, one of the SBG pilot teachers shared their grading practices and the related benefits reaped by both students and teachers.

**Data Collection Techniques**

For this change plan, I collected six types of quantitative and qualitative data artifacts:

- Current and archival standardized test scores
- Grades and grading practices
- Survey data
- MWSD pre-survey results
- Ethnographic interviews

**Quantitative Data**

First, I collected grades and current/archival scores on the following standardized tests: the Northwest Evaluation Association/Measure of Academic Proficiency (NWEA/MAP), Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the American College of Testing (ACT). (See Appendix C.)

I was able to collect aforementioned data by accessing students’ records through the data management system Skyward. In order to gain access to Skyward and student
documents, one must log in to the system with a username and password. Only MWSD teachers and administrators have a preapproved username and password, which limits access to authorized personnel only.

**Qualitative Data**

As mentioned earlier, I surveyed students, parents, teachers, board members, local entrepreneurs, and extracurricular staff members. This was done using Google forms, an online survey creator. The survey asked questions about grading practices and was open for one week for all stakeholders: student, parents, teachers, administrators, and community leaders. (See Appendix J.) Everyone was afforded the opportunity to complete the survey on their own after obtaining a consent form from my office. Also, the survey was sent via ParentLink, an online system with the capability to send mass emails to all registered stakeholders. Almost all parents, teachers, and administrators in the district are registered to the program. The survey was also posted on the school’s Facebook page with a link to the survey, as well as a QR code symbol that when scanned with a smartphone reader would take the participant directly to the survey.

After the survey closed, Kyle Wock⁶ made a school announcement asking students and staff interested in continuing with the study to participate in a one-time interview. Five students, five teachers, four administrators, two board members, one local entrepreneur, and six parents accepted. The interviews were conducted after school for four weeks in my newly relocated and renovated work suite. Interviewees’ responses were recorded in a Google spreadsheet live during the interviews by me. I asked a series

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⁶ This name is a pseudonym.
of questions, which can be found in Appendix K. Each interviewee needed to turn in a signed consent form to participate.

Furthermore, I presented the pre-survey of teachers from the MWSD/LDT’s action plan. The survey asked a series of questions related to effective grading practices and procedures, which can be found in Section Five.

Lastly, I interviewed three SBG pilot teachers for approximately one hour. In that hour, we discussed a variety of topics: grading policies, differences in grading systems from the previous year to the year of the interview, gradebook setup, and student experiences (see Appendix K). These notes were arranged according to themes and shared during professional development sessions for parents. Also, after the interviews, I observed each of the teachers once during a predetermined time, in which teachers would share how they were implementing SBG and give feedback to students.

Data Analysis Techniques

The process of analyzing data with the intended users may be just as powerful as the outcomes themselves (Patton, 2008; Senge, 2012). This is why I fostered the collaborative analysis of both the qualitative and quantitative data. Participatory action research emphasizes making data-driven decisions to improve schools (Bucknam, James, & Milenkiewicz, 2008; Senge, 2012). This research project was data-driven and participative through the SBGRC. These two key elements should help create an educated culture willing to make all the changes necessary to improve the current situation.
Qualitative Data

On October 31, 2016, the LDT met to discuss the progress of MWSD’s action plan. The superintendent sent an email informing everyone of the date and purpose of the meeting. During this meeting, the LDT analyzed the pre-survey, noted teachers’ beliefs on grading practices, and discussed professional development opportunities to develop the teachers’ and parents’ capacity. It was shared that the SBGRC should focus on parents and the LDT on teachers. However, no post-survey or SBG professional development for teachers was developed by the time this study concluded. At the second meeting, the data from the surveys, interviews, and focus groups were shared.

I examined the survey data by creating frequency tables for each question. This permitted me to describe how responses to the surveys were distributed along different categories of questions. After this, I engaged in tabular analysis of the questions to describe potential relationships between various survey items (Patton, 2008). The key to this part was to prioritize essential question items and group categories based on the analysis I conducted. Lastly, I looked for relationships between certain answers and common characteristics of the participants.

I also analyzed the interviews using coding, or “labels put on data that summarize the data’s content or highlight a primary idea” (Bucknam et al., 2008, p.88). This was necessary to look for common, specific, and relatable themes or central statements. In addition, I transcribed the interviews live on a Google spreadsheet. After the data were transcribed, the SBGRC and I searched for themes using coding and interpreted the meaning of those statements. All of the data were stored in my personal laptop, which is password-protected.
Lastly, I analyzed the observation notes/tool that I created, which documented current teacher practices associated with SBG that were shared during the interviews, such as standards-based categories, specific feedback, repurposing homework, and allowing for redos/retakes.

**Quantitative Data**

In analyzing the quantitative data, I created a table with grade point averages (GPAs) and scores on four standardized tests. The table was created using Microsoft Excel, which permitted the data to be organized, filtered and sorted in a variety of ways. The committee and I looked to see how much, if at all, grades earned in the classroom corresponded to standardized test scores. Having high grades with poor standardized test scores (or the inverse) is a problem that needs to be solved to better prepare all students for colleges and careers of the 21st century.
SECTION FOUR: RELEVANT LITERATURE

In order to begin solving the challenges presented by the traditional letter grading system and exploring SBGR, I introduced a brief history of the traditional letter grading system and standards. I also examined a diverse set of literature from the United States and Canada dealing with the challenges of traditional letter grades in an era of clearly established, skills-focused targets, as well as state and national standards. Third, I examined a possible alternative to the traditional letter grading and reporting system known as standards-based grading and reporting. Fourth, I examined grading policies and procedures linked to discouraging the mastery of skills set forth by local and national standards. Fifth, I examined literature related to college freshmen needing remedial coursework. Through this review, I developed a conceptual framework to understand the critical problems inherent in the traditional grading system and their possible solutions through SBGR.

History of the Traditional Letter Grading System

Yale University can be considered the first educational institution to award “grades” in the late 1700s (Durm, 1993). Yale President Ezra Stiles presented the following classifications to 58 students who completed the final exam: Optimii (Optimum/Excellent), second Optimii (Great), Inferiores (Good) and Pejores (Worst) (Durm, 1993). However, the first traditional letter grade ever presented to a pupil in the United States was a B received by a Harvard College undergraduate in 1883 (Durm, 1993; Matthews, 2005; Vatterott, 2015). This letter grade represented one of five ways of classifying students in a system in which students with the lowest mark would fail the class (Vatterott, 2015). This grading system was fully developed, as we know it today, in
1897 at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts. Above 95% percent marked an A, all the way down to an F for anything below 75% (Durm, 1993; Matthews, 2005; Vatterott, 2015).

For more than 100 years, schools in America have been evaluating student performance in subjects such as mathematics, English, reading, and science using this system of grades and point accumulation (National Education Association, 1979; Durm, 1993; Vatterott, 2015, Matthews, 2005). Almost anyone who attended school in the United States is familiar with it. Unfortunately, it has not changed much since its inception, and this lack of innovation has presented many challenges.

**History of School Standards**

Since the inception of compulsory education in the United States, the creation and implementation of educational objectives or standards has always been the responsibility of school districts and states (Reeves, 2002). In 1986, the Illinois State Board of Education adopted the 34 State Goals, its first standards, which would be the predecessors to the Illinois Learning Standards (ILS) of 2007 (ISBE, 2016). In June 2010, “established state education chiefs and governors in 48 states came together to develop the Common Core, a set of clear college and career-ready standards for kindergarten through 12th grade in English language arts/literacy and mathematics.”

Today, 42 states and the District of Columbia have voluntarily adopted and are working to implement those standards, which are designed to increase the likelihood that students graduating from high school are prepared to take credit-bearing introductory courses in two- or four-year college programs or enter the workforce (CCSS, 2016, p.1).
In Illinois, the CCSSs were formally adopted in 2010 with full implementation taking place in 2013–2014 (CCSS, 2016).

Standards are educational learning goals of what students should be able to demonstrate at each grade level (Guskey, 2015; Vaterrott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016). For example, a CCSS for English language arts (ELA) for 9th or 10th grade states that students should be able to “cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text” (CCSS, 2016). Standards-based grading could help meet this goal, but many challenges would need to be overcome in the current traditional system before any new meaningful system could be put in place.

**Challenges Associated with Traditional Grading Practices**

**Challenge #1: Purpose of Grading and Reporting**

Researchers have asked administrators and teachers from all over the nation about the purpose of grading and reporting. Based on their responses, the following purposes were concluded:

- To communicate information about students’ achievement in school to parents and students
- To provide information to students for self-evaluation
- To select, identify, or group students for certain education programs
- To provide incentives for students to learn
- To evaluate effectiveness of instructional programs
- To provided evidence of students’ lack of effort or inappropriate responsibility (Guskey, 2015, p.13)
Investigators have suggested that letter grades, percentages, or points, without feedback tied to the mastery of a specific standards-based skill, does not communicate authentic achievement or give information for self-evaluation as the common purposes from above claim. These measures do communicate compliance and answer whether a student has completed the assignment or assessment (Reeves, 2010; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016). Authentic communication of achievement can only be communicated if the grade is linked to specific feedback connected to a standard (Reeves, 2010; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016). That’s why, more often than not, parents and students must interpret the meaning of grades as it relates to student achievement when is not explicitly stated, which can give an inaccurate or false picture of student achievement (O’Connor, 2011; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016).

**Challenge #2: Inconsistent Grading Fostered by Traditional Grading Practices**

Scholars have found widespread inconsistency in results from the use of the traditional letter/percentage grading system (Iamarino, 2014; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016). In a classic study, 142 different English teachers from several schools and districts scored the same exams. When results were compared, the assigned scores ranged from 64 to 98% on one, and from 50 to 97% on the other (Vatterott, 2015). The same study also demonstrated even more inconsistency in grading geometry exams, with scores ranging from 28 to 95%, failing grades to As (Vatterott, 2015).

This inconsistency suggests that teachers have critical professional disagreements on how to grade students’ performance and are in need of a grading system that bridges these gaps. This lack of consistency across subject areas surely has led to either grade
inflation or deflation, furthered by the traditional grading system’s accounting of attendance, behavior, and extra credit. This professional disagreement is so important to address because grades can close or open doors to academic, social, extracurricular, and financial opportunities that may come around only once in a lifetime for any particular student.

During an all-school writing workshop in which I participated, a lead facilitator asked both teachers and administrators to grade English papers using a predetermined rubric. The purpose of the exercise was to allow all participants to discuss the markings given to the students using the rubric and to calibrate the tool if needed. The rubric had nine specific descriptors for levels of performance (nine being the highest and one the lowest), with detailed information on what would qualify students’ work for each particular category. After the two-hour exercise, it was discovered that teachers’ marks were as far apart as four levels of performance. Teachers shared the reasons behind their grades with each other, helped clarify specific details, and rescored if needed. Since the tool used was a fixed advanced placement rubric, it could not be recalibrated; however, participants experienced firsthand the issues with a tool similar to that of traditional grades and percentages.

Challenge #3: Mathematical Equity

The traditional letter grading system is inherently inequitable, unfair, and mathematically inaccurate (Reeves, 2010; Guskey, 2015). For instance, traditional grading has established 10 points as the margin between grades; an A is typically from 90 to 100%, a B from 80-89%, and so on. With an F from 50 to 59%, this makes excelling and failing a 40-point difference, which in turn makes missing a single assignment the
equivalent of “the academic death penalty” because a 0 on a test or quiz can make it impossible for a student to earn a high mark (Guskey, 2015). What is more, if the reverse was in place, would stakeholders accept 40–100% as an A, 20–39% as a B, 10–19% a C, and 0–9% an F? Probably not.

In a more practical example, another reason why the percentage scale does not make sense when it comes to students earning a 0% for missed assignments. Let’s say someone was going to visit sunny Arizona in the fall and wanted to find out the average temperature for the week; however, for one day, the temperature was not recorded and instead replaced with a 0.

- Monday: 81 degrees
- Tuesday: 75 degrees
- Wednesday: 84 degrees
- Thursday: Not recorded—0
- Friday: 82 degrees

Based on this data, the weekly average temperature would be 64 degrees. Clearly, that would be erroneous and misleading. That’s what averaging does to grades.

Students are taught to be accurate, even exact when presenting written arguments and performing calculations. Yet, how they are graded contradicts their teaching. Figure 4 demonstrates this contradiction.

*Figure 4.* Typical letter grading and numerical scale (adapted from Guskey, 2015).
In the traditional letter grading and numerical scale, most grades, points, and averages are cumulative. Thus, if a student gets a few zeroes at the beginning of a class, it may be extremely difficult to catch up and earn a high mark. For example, if a student gets a 0% on assessment 1 and a 90% on assessments 2 and 3, his/her average score would be a 60%—barely a D. However, in standards-based grading, the student would be given a chance to master the first assessment or earn the grade of the latest evidence of learning.

**Challenge #4: Nonacademic Factors Included in Grades**

Researchers have identified the following nonacademic factors as elements that inflate, deflate, or trivialize grades: attendance, behavior, meeting deadlines, turning in a signed syllabus or permission form, and even bringing cans for a food drive (O’Connor,
2011; Wormeli, 2010; Guskey, 2015; Dueck, 2014; Schimmer, 2016). These elements, though important for success and executive functioning, distort the students’ current level of academic performance. Many such factors contribute to this issue.

**Homework**

Homework is a practice often associated with rigorous schools and curriculums; the more homework a student gets, the thinking goes, the better the school is. However, meaningless homework or busy work that does not allow for success may actually hurt student achievement (Wormeli, 2010; Vatterott, 2011). Also, counting homework toward a final formative assessment may hurt a student’s grade even if they eventually show mastery of a standard (AkenySchools, 2014; Vatterott, 2011; Schimmer, 2016). In addition, too much homework can cause stress on a student, which can contribute to academic regression (Wormeli, 2010; Schimmer, 2016). That’s why Schimmer (2016) suggested repurposing homework.

Repurposing homework is a framework through which a teacher considers the frequency, depth, value, reporting, and consistency of a task or assignment expected to be done after school hours (Schimmer, 2016). In other words, a teacher has the power to count the homework and aggregate its value in the total grade (as in the traditional system), or to report it separately from the overall grade. Schimmer (2016) noted that the latter is an effective grading strategy.

**Deadlines/Flexible Dates**

Researchers have indicated that having flexible dates encourages students to complete and turn in assignments more than does having a strict deadline (Dueck, 2014). Flexible dates lessen the possibility of students missing deadlines and thus putting their academic status at risk. Flexible dates create more opportunities for students to showcase
mastery of a standard or turn in an assignment. In the end, I wholeheartedly believe that a majority of teachers would value receiving student work past a due date more than receiving no evidence of learning at all.

**Behavior**

Investigators have indicated that imposing nonacademic consequences (e.g., removing school privileges) for students misbehaving or failing to turn in work is more effective at re-engaging students academically and reporting accurate performance than including behavior or effort in the overall grade (Schimmer, 2016). In other words, behavior and grades should be reported to all stakeholders separately.

**Extra Credit**

Researchers have indicated that encouraging students to seek extra credit needs to allow a student to demonstrate *additional* mastery of skills needed to be successful in the course; if not, it can artificially inflate a student’s overall performance grade (Guskey, 2015; Schimmer, 2016; Wormeli, 2006). Unfortunately, extra credit, though noble in its intention, often misrepresents a student’s current level of understanding.

**Challenge #5: Retest/Redo Policies and Procedures That Influence Grading**

Retesting, redoing, and reteaching are practices that encourage student mastery of content-based skills. However, this can be achieved consistently through a school and district only if all staff support and implement it based on existing guidelines or policies (Wormeli, 2006; Dueck, 2011; O’Connor, 2011; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016).
I participated as a member of the redo/retest committee at my first employer and alma mater, J. Berlin Norton High School⁷, one of the largest metropolitan high schools in the state of Illinois. Together, with a plethora of stakeholders, we drafted a policy that outlined the purpose of redoing/retesting, as well as student and teacher procedures to follow. This policy encouraged students to redo assessments and seek mastery instead of compliance. For an example, see Appendix AA.

**Alternatives to the Traditional Letter Grading System**

Challenges to the traditional letter grading system began in the late 1980s, when many educational leaders began to observe that American students were falling behind their counterparts in other countries.

In the United States, SBG, as a system of reporting student proficiency in a number of specific learning goals (or standards), began to be explored in the ‘80s as a response to the *A Nation At Risk* criticism of the “rising mediocrity” in the American education system. (Wormeli, 2010, p. 69)

Basically, the critic lambasted educational institutions for their failure to list specific and expected student outcomes, challenge students academically, and innovate to keep up with other nations in science, math, and literacy scores on internationally recognized examinations.

Several investigators have identified SBG, or “grades based on standards,” as coined by Tom Schimmer (2016), as the ideal alternative to the traditional letter grading system. SBG is a pedagogical practice in which teachers report students’ mastery of skills as determined by the expected outcome of a state of national standard (Guskey & Jung,

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⁷ This name is a pseudonym.
2009; Iamarino, 2014; Schimmer, 2016; Vatterott, 2015). In other words, SBG communicates a student’s current level of performance as it relates to a specific, action-oriented standard, unlike the traditional letter grading system.

In Illinois, district U-46, a secondary district with five high schools (Elgin, South Elgin, Larkin, Bartlett, and Streamwood), is currently implementing SBG. These high schools are part of the small percentage of schools implementing SBG. Their standards-based report card is available in Appendix O.

In the classroom, teachers can arrange the gradebook to mirror SBG. Figure 5 displays an SBG gradebook within the Skyward data management system, a popular grading system used throughout Illinois and the United States.

*Figure 5. An electronic standards-based gradebook on Skyward.*
As can be seen in Figure 5, a standards-based electronic gradebook clearly lists the standards for mastery located underneath each student’s name and course, with proficiency scores on the right. A typical standards-based electronic gradebook uses a four-point scale to note mastery, with 0 referring to no evidence of mastery, 1.0 to 1.9 marking initial proficiency, 2.0 to 2.9 developing proficiency, 3.0 to 3.9 being proficient, and 4.0 noting mastery.

In a traditional electronic gradebook, as shown in Figure 6, educators use letter grades, percentages, and points to report student academic achievement. Teachers select from a wide variety of assessments or categories, including quizzes, test, projects, and homework. These categories may be manipulated to give one category more weight than another. Once the categories are selected, then the categorical assignments are listed from left to right, from most current day.
Figure 6. Traditional digital gradebook with percentages, grades, assignment types, and a +/- system.

Remedial Coursework

Approximately 1.7 million students nationwide are enrolled in developmental courses (Vatterott, 2015). In other words, almost 2 million students—about one-third of high school graduates who earn college admissions—are enrolled in classes that are not transferrable and are gateways to introductory-level college coursework (AnkenySchools, 2014; DuFour, 2015; Vatterott, 2015). Many of these students had a high GPA in high school and were considered as being at the top of their class; college entrance exams proved otherwise. This suggests a disconnect between traditional grading practices and the mastery of skills needed to be successful in first-year college-level courses.
Locally, according to the Illinois Interactive Report Card (IIRC), the official report card of the Illinois State Board of Education, among students from MWHS, 50.8% (30 students) of the class of 2014 and 65.7% (23 students) of the class of 2013 were enrolled in remedial courses at community colleges not counting towards college credit, slightly higher than the state average of 49%. In my eyes, this is unacceptable. It prolongs the already arduous journey of obtaining degrees, forces students and families to incur additional expenses, and potentially limits students’ financial mobility (IIRC, 2016).

*Figure 7. Post-secondary remediation data.*
Financial Cost of Remediation

According to Barry and Dannenberg (2016), remediation cost students and families $1.5 billion in direct out-of-pocket costs and $380 million in loans yearly. Out-of-pocket costs include application fees, remedial course fees, lab fees, book expenditures, and in-house college expenses (e.g., bus card, student services, scholarships). Loans come in the form of federal subsidized and unsubsidized loans.

Opportunity Cost of Remediation

First-year college students enrolled in remedial courses at a four-year university are 74% more likely to drop out than non-remedial students, and 12% more likely to drop out of a two-year university. Also, only 1 out of 10 students who take remedial courses goes on to graduate from a four-year university on time.

Potential Income Cost of Remediation

Remediation is a hurdle that may prevent students from graduating from high school or obtaining advanced degrees (Vatterott, 2015). High school dropouts stand to lose millions of dollars when compared to their counterparts with a bachelor’s degree. What is more, the financial gap is felt between every degree, as demonstrated in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Lifetime earnings by academic attainment.
Over their lifetimes, Illinoisans who drop out of high school make hundreds of thousands, even millions, of dollars less than their graduating and higher-educated peers.

SECTION FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Introduction

To begin the journey of unpacking and interpreting the data, I introduced the participants—key contributors to this study—before introducing the quantitative and qualitative data artifacts under analysis.

I began with the Grading and Grade Reporting Policy and Procedures Effectiveness Tool (which I created), aligned to grading best practices, to see how effective the current grade and grade reporting policies and procedures were in this regard (see Appendix II). In other words, it served as an audit tool and baseline marker that brought to light schools’ grade and grade reporting policies and procedures.

Next, I presented the Grade and Grade Reporting Policy and Procedures Survey, which asked a series of questions related to effective grading practices (see Appendix J). I also presented the pre-survey results related to MWSD’s action plan. Furthermore, I presented the stakeholder interviews and focus group interviews, which presented a series of questions on grading and grade reporting to participants.

Lastly, I presented the quantitative data: NWEA/MAP scores, ACT scores, and PARCC results, at they relate to a “good” GPA of 3.0 or higher as defined by literature and the SBGRC members (see Appendix C).

Through the findings and interpretations in this study, I was able to discover how MWHS addressed grade and grade reporting, identify areas of improvement, and find how school achievement is related to effective grade reporting.
Grading and Grade Reporting Policy and Procedures Effectiveness Tool Survey

Findings & Interpretations

Defining Respondents

Between November 1 and December 11, 2016, all eight of the SBGRC members completed the Grading and Grade Reporting Policy and Procedures Effectiveness Tool Survey. The tool was created by the researcher and aligned to the best grading and grade reporting practices identified in the literature review. The development of this tool was necessary because there is no equivalent currently available.

At the conclusion of the first SBGRC meeting on November 21, 2016, members were instructed via electronic correspondence to complete the survey based on the grading and grade reporting policies and procedures of five districts/high schools: Mountain West, U-46, Lindbloom, JS Morton 201, and Naperville 203. These schools were selected because of their current levels or long history of academic achievement at both the local and national level.

The survey asked a series of questions related to the beliefs and attitudes about grading, as well as its identified purpose as written in school policy. Participants were also asked about practices that encourage mastery, promote specific feedback, and are aligned with SBGR. Many of the schools analyzed (though not the home school) already use some form of SBGR.
As seen in Figure 9, the total number of “Yes” responses are represented by the corresponding school’s colored bars: red for U-46, purple for Lindbloom (CPS), blue for MWHS, green for JS Morton 201, and light blue for Naperville 203. SBGRC member respondents agreed unanimously that MWHS does not have or state specific grading and grade reporting statements, principles, or philosophies, nor does it have equitable and/or standards-based grading, since there are no “Yes” responses or colored bars representing MWHS for those questions. Moreover, when compared to JS Morton 201, U-46, Lindbloom (CPS), and Naperville 203, MWHS has the most traditional grading system as observed by the SBGRC.

Positively, MWHS’s grading policy and procedures permit school administrators to assign an incomplete instead of simply giving students an F and failing them.

However, students have to display positive evidence in an attempt to raise their grade by
the first two weeks of the next quarter. The incomplete holds student accountable and encourages teachers to teach to standards. This stands in contrast to the traditional letter grade of F, which does not motivate students to do quality work or change their behavior, to some extent letting them off the hook (O’Connor, 2011; Wormeli, 2006).

Also, MWHS participates in Illinois Virtual School (IVS) online education programming targeted to students with specific academic needs, for whom online education is the best medium of instruction to earn credit for a course (MWHS, 2016).

The SBGRC generated the following central statements/themes during its collaborative efforts and analysis of the grading and grade reporting policies and procedures of MWHS:

• MWHS uses the traditional letter grading system, A through F.
• MWHS ranks and sorts students by using a valedictorian/salutatorian academic ranking performance system.
• MWHS administrators may assign an I, for incomplete, instead of an F, and allow the student to remediate the issue within the first two weeks of the next quarter.
• MWHS penalizes students’ grades for absences in physical education courses.
• MWHS gives students an extra point on their GPA for honors and advance placement grades.
• MWHS does not have a philosophy or purpose statement related to grades and grading policy and procedures.
• MWHS is the only school with a traditional grading system.
• MWHS provides online learning opportunities for students.
Grading and Grade Reporting Policy & Procedures Survey

Defining Respondents

Overall, 101 surveys were completed by 20 teachers, 2 administrators, 35 students, 41 parents, 1 board member, 1 local entrepreneur, and 1 politician. Respondents self-identified according to their perceived role on the survey.

Figure 10. Survey respondents’ identified roles.

As noted in Figure 10, every type of stakeholder was represented in the survey. However, the student stakeholder group represented one-third of the survey participants. This is actually advantageous, because students would be the group most directly affected by any change in grading and grade reporting policies and procedures.

Survey Findings & Interpretations

The survey asked all stakeholders a series of questions related to their familiarity with the school’s grading policies and procedures: What’s included in grading? How effective is the system? What role does homework play? What are the opportunities for mastery? Is there a need to change the system? Table 1 displays the questions and
stakeholders’ responses regarding familiarity (or lack thereof) of grading policies and procedures.

Table 1. Grade and Grade Reporting Policy & Procedures Survey.

| How familiar are you with the school’s grading and grade reporting policies and procedures? | To your knowledge, are any of the following non-academic factors included in grading: attendance, participation, behavior and/or bringing in “stuff”? | How familiar are you with standards-based grading? | How effective are points, % and letter grades in communicating specific areas of mastery or deficiency in skills and standards related to the subject taught? | How effective is the traditional letter report card in indicating specific areas of mastery or deficiency in skills and standards related to the subject taught? | Should homework be included in grading/grade? | Should students have the opportunity to redo/retake assessments? | From your perspective, is there a need to improve the grading and the grade reporting system? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Not Very Familiar/Very Ineffective/Yes | 6  6% | 93  93% | 20  20% | 11  11% | 22  22% | 50  50% | 90  90% | 26  26% |
| Not Familiar/Ineffective/No | 11  11% | 7  7% | 18  18% | 27  27% | 22  22% | 50  50% | 10  10% | 74  74% |
| Somewhat familiar/Somewhat effective | 25  25% | 36  36% | 19  19% | 21  21% |
| Somewhat familiar/Effective | 29  29% | 14  14% | 28  28% | 22  22% |
| Familiar/Effective | 14  14% | 28  28% | 22  22% |
| Very familiar/Very effective | 29  29% | 12  12% | 25  25% | 13  13% |

As Table 1 shows, an absolute majority of respondents are somewhat familiar or familiar with MWHS’s grading and grade reporting policies and procedures. However,
most stakeholders are not very familiar with SBGR. In addition, an absolute majority of stakeholders believe attendance, behavior, participation, and whether students bring in required “stuff” are included in grades. Also, about 65% of respondents believe traditional grading practices and the traditional report card are very ineffective in indicating specific areas of mastery or deficiency in skills and standards corresponding to the subject. Half of stakeholders believe homework should be included in the overall grade, and the other half believe it should not. Moreover, 90% of stakeholders believe students should have the opportunity to retake assessments until the concepts/standards are mastered. Lastly, a majority of stakeholders would attend a forum on SBGR.

The SBGRC determined that heightening stakeholders’ awareness of SBGR and its potential to improve academic achievement is a must at board meetings, registration meetings, parent-teacher organization (PTO) meetings, and other functions, as was done at the second SBGRC meeting. Once stakeholders are aware of the current status, improvement can occur.

MWSD Pre-Survey Findings & Interpretations

Defining respondents

Overall, approximately 115 teachers from across the district participated in MWSD’s/LDT’s pre-survey questions related to grading practices and procedures. However, participants per question varied slightly, due to possible inputting errors. Teachers were from two elementary campuses, one junior high campus, and one high school campus. Figure 11 displays how the staff of each campus responded to the survey questions.

*Figure 11. Pre-survey results.*

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8 For example, cans for the food drive, a signed syllabus, a box of Kleenex.
### I believe grades should reflect achievement of intended learning outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Miller</th>
<th>Manning</th>
<th>WJHS</th>
<th>WHS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### I believe students should have the opportunity for extra credit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Miller</th>
<th>Manning</th>
<th>WJHS</th>
<th>WHS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Looking at question 1, the overwhelming majority of participants believe grades should reflect intended learning outcomes. In other words, teachers strongly believe that grades should be standards-based. For question 2, the majority was slightly smaller (84
out of 114), but a majority of participants nonetheless believe students should have the opportunity for extra credit—a principal that if misused, could misrepresent a grade.

For question 3, 76 of the 115 respondents (again a majority) stated that students should be penalized for late work, another practice that distorts a students grade. For question 4, only 36 out of the 115 respondents, a small group, believe that practice/classwork should be graded. Practice, also known as formative assessments, should be used to inform a teacher’s practice and help students achieve mastery in a future summative assessment. For question 5, 63 of the 115 respondents, a little more than half, stated that homework should be graded. Grading homework is not a problem if it does not impact a student’s grade; however, if it does, then repurposing homework (as mentioned in Section Four) should be considered. Lastly, in question 6, 89 of the 115 respondents believe that effort should be included in grading. This is a noble response—and effort is indeed necessary to master a concept—but including an intangible characteristic in grading distorts a student’s authentic ability.

**Stakeholders Interviews Findings & Interpretations**

**Defining Respondents**

Overall, a total of 20 stakeholders were interviewed: 5 students, 5 teachers, 5 parents, 3 school administrators, 1 board member, and 1 local politician. Below, interviewees are categorized according to their respective roles.
At the second SBGRC meeting, the following central statements/themes were from the data taken from qualitative interviews:

- Almost no stakeholders except administrators know about SBGR.
- Traditional grading practices foster grade inflation/deflation.
- Grades should communicate students’ mastery of a subject.
- Letter grades do not provide enough information to measure mastery or deficiency of skills related to standards.
- Most stakeholders would attend a forum on SBGR.
- Most stakeholders believe grading policies and procedures could be improved.
- All stakeholders were graded using the traditional grading system, A through F, with percentages and points.
- All stakeholders received the traditional letter grade report card through their formal school career.
- All stakeholders recall participation, homework, and bringing “stuff” being part of their overall grade.
• Almost all stakeholders had an assignment graded on rubrics that mirrored standards-based grading.

• Most stakeholders believe homework should be done but not count toward a grade.

• Stakeholders would like to update current grading policies to be more in line with other schools.

• Most stakeholders believe a 3.0 GPA and a 21 on the ACT are good.

**Focus Group Interviews Findings & Interpretations**

**Defining respondents**

All the SBGRC members participated in the focus group interview held on November 21, 2016, the first meeting for the group. In the meeting, the invitation letter was discussed and the researcher reiterated that all SBGRC members would serve as a collective focus group. The focus group was composed of one student, one teacher, two administrators, two teachers, a board member, a local politician, and one parent. During the meeting, all team members were presented the opportunity to answer the questions found in Appendix K.

During the focus group interviews, participants offered quotes that truly encompassed effective grading practices. The one teacher stakeholder in the committee said, “Specific feedback is probably the most crucial information a teacher could provide students, and SBG, along with rubrics, facilitates that.” The parent stakeholder said, “Letters, points, and percentages don’t say much, but good feedback does. I want what’s better for my kids.” The administrative stakeholder said, “Students should master the content before moving on, and teachers should give accurate grades.”
At the second SBGRC meeting, held on December 12, 2016, the qualitative focus group interview was analyzed and the following central statements/themes were generated:

• All focus group members identified 3.0 or above as a good grade point average.

• All focus group members identified 21 as a good ACT score to get into state universities.

• All focus group members identified Skyward as the place to locate students’ grades.

• Administrators, teachers and students are familiar or somewhat familiar with SBG; however, parents and other stakeholders have little to no familiarity.

• All focus group members agree that there is a need to improve grading and grade reporting policies and procedures.

• All focus group members have some awareness of the MWHS grading and grade reporting policies and procedures.

• Focus group members would enhance the current policies by eliminating attendance as a punitive tool for physical education at MWHS.

• All focus group members believe students come to school to socialize and learn.

• Focus group members state the following reasons for students doing poorly in school:
  
  o Homework
o Apathy/laziness
o Poor performance on tests
o Unstable home life

• Focus group members agree that poor or inaccurate grades may lead students to crime, fewer opportunities, lower paid employment, or decrease of property values.

• Focus group members identified the following practices that in their eyes may improve academic achievement:
  o Redos/retakes
  o Feedback
  o Rubric grading

• All focus group members understand that grades and grading are very important in education.

• All focus group members feel that they can and should expand their role to implement good grading practices.

SBG Teacher Observations

Defining Respondents

I observed three SBG pilot teachers for one class period (about 50 minutes) at a predetermined time and date selected by the teachers after their interviews. During the observations, I looked for effective grading practices, which included inputting grades in the electronic gradebook under standards-based categories instead of assessment type, giving specific feedback using rubrics, and allowing redo/retake opportunities. I also observed how they communicated grades to students.
Table 2. SBG pilot teacher observations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SBG pilot teacher</th>
<th>Allowed for redo/retake</th>
<th>Used SBG grading categories</th>
<th>Used rubric for feedback</th>
<th>Used equitable levels of performance to mark assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bob Ratch</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katy Lopp</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christina Portage</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As noted above, all SBG pilot teachers were observed giving multiple opportunities to display mastery through retakes for full credit and using SBG categories when inputting grades. However, it was observed that while two out of the three teachers used equitable levels of performance when marking the rubrics, one used the traditional letters and inequitable percentages when marking the performance on the rubric. This suggests that SBGR could be streamlined with traditional grading practices.

Quantitative Data Findings & Interpretations

Defining Respondents

Overall, 85 students’ scores were documented in this study. Students who were part of this cohort took the following state and national assessments during their sophomore and/or junior years in high school: NWEA/MAP reading, ACT, and PARCC. Their GPAs also were documented in the quantitative report. These students were selected for the cohort because they were the only group that had taken all of aforementioned tests. In addition, since the state of Illinois opted out of the PARCC exam and replaced the ACT with the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) beginning in the 2016–2017 school year, this will be the only group in school history with scores in all these examinations (ISBE, 2016).
Defining College and Career Readiness

To be college- and career-ready, as defined by the ACT—in other words, prepared for success in university coursework or in the workforce—a student should score a 21 or higher overall. That equivalent in the other exams would be the 240–243 RIT range on the NWEA/MAP reading in 10th grade, and a level 4 or 5 on the PARCC English language arts/literacy (IIIRC, 2016; NWEA/MAP, 2016). In addition, as gleaned from the qualitative interviews, a 3.0 GPA was defined as the equivalent benchmark for college and career readiness. In Figure 13, it can be observed that only 58% of students at MWHS are college-ready according to ACT standards, a source of great concern.

Figure 13. College readiness ACT data.

To be college and career-ready, students need both a 3.0 or higher GPA and at least a 21 on the ACT. Figure 14 displays a pie chart highlighting those who met and did not meet the standard.
As shown, 23 out of 85 pupils, or 27% of total the student population of study, earned both a 3.0 GPA or higher and a 21 or higher on the ACT; 18 students (21%) achieved the GPA, but not the ACT score; 8 students (9%) achieved the ACT score, but not the GPA; and 36 students (42%) students earned less than both a 3.0 GPA and a 21 on the ACT. Thus, based on our accepted definitions, only 27% of students have performed well enough to be career- and college-ready.

Another important standardized test used to determine students’ college readiness is the NWEA/MAP. Figure 15 shows the numbers of students with both a good GPA and a good NWEA/College readiness score.
As demonstrated in Figure 15, 30 students (35% of the total student population of this study) had both a 3.0 GPA or higher and were within the college readiness threshold of 240–243 in the NWEA/MAP Reading; 10 students (12%) met the minimum GPA but not the proficiency growth rate; 10 students (12%) met the proficiency growth rate but not the minimum GPA; and 35 students (41%) had below a 3.0 GPA and did not meet the proficiency growth rate for the NWEA/MAP. Thus, based on our established definitions, only 35% of students have good enough grades and NWEA/MAP scores to be career- and college-ready.

Lastly, we observe scores on the PARCC examination, a required test in the state of Illinois to determine college readiness. Students must score in the level 4 or 5 range to be considered college-ready.
As Figure 16 shows, 27 students (32% of the total student population of the study) earned both a 3.0 GPA or higher and a level 4 or level 5 proficiency on the PARCC ELA/literacy examination; 13 students (15%) met the GPA minimum but did not score a level 4 or 5; 6 students (7%) scored a level 4/5 but did not meet the GPA minimum; and 39 students (46%) did not have at least a 3.0 GPA nor score a level 4 or 5 on the PARCC exam. So as it can be observed, only one-third of students have good enough grades and meet the PARCC standards to be career- and college-ready.

The result above highlights an issue: MWHS is graduating almost 100 of its students every year. However, only one-third have the grades to be career- and college-ready. Graduating students is not enough; they must be career- and college-ready if they are to succeed.
SECTION SIX: A VISION OF SUCCESS (TO BE)

Introduction

Re-evaluating MWSD’s/LDT’s action plan utilizing Wagner’s (2006) four Cs change leadership model revealed a commitment to the pursuit and possible implementation of SBGR. The district is committed to building understanding of SBGR among administrators, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders through professional development opportunities, parent universities, and sample artifacts. However, the LDT needs to take action on the plan in order to grow the capacity and inform all stakeholders of SBGR and help teachers implement the practice. In addition, the district is fine with MWHS piloting SBGR and has acknowledged that lower grades (kindergarten to second grade) already have a standards-based reporting system in place (see Appendix GG). MWSD’s plan to move SBGR forward has developed slowly because the district is trying to deal with new programming in schools and changes in state-mandated testing. In addition, the superintendent controls what is discussed and at times, SBGR does not make it on the agenda.

Context

SBGR is evident in the early grades of the elementary schools and has been in place for a long time, lending encouragement that expansion into the higher grades is possible. In addition, teachers from MWHS voluntarily piloted SBG in the classroom and have been encouraged by the results. These teachers can be powerful allies in encouraging their colleagues to embrace and practice SBGR. What is more, over the past few years, kindergarten through 12th grade teachers have been involved in vertical articulation teams to deconstruct standards, converting the wordy statements into student-
friendly “I can” statements and aligning standards to assessments. Thus, the context is just right to move into SBGR. What is more, even though PARCC scores are not where MWSD wants them to be, NWEA/MAP scores look promising.

**Culture**

As reported on the 5Essentials Survey, MWHS has a very positive culture among all stakeholders and support from the administration. In addition, there are teachers with knowledge about SBG who have even piloted the program. However, the remodeling of the school, as well as new mandates, tests, and programming has made some teachers feel overwhelmed. Nonetheless, the data indicate that the teachers should be ready to hear more on SBG.

What is more, once a clear focus on grading and its purpose is established (there currently is no purpose written in stone), teachers should be able to see the benefits of SBGR.

**Conditions**

As noted in section 2, MWSD has many conditions that promote high levels of student achievement. The district grants autonomy for all four campuses, under the direction of the principals, to pursue any change in curriculum and instruction, data management systems, or programming as long as that change is supported by research, understood by stakeholders, and implemented by teachers. In addition, teachers at MWHS have the autonomy to design curriculum and grade accordingly, as well as seek the professional development opportunities needed to meet the school goals. All that is needed is for the staff and leadership at MWHS to pursue quality professional development around SBGR.


**Competencies**

MWHS has a positive and forward-thinking staff that already believes all students can learn at a higher level. A majority of MWHS teachers believe that grades should reflect achievement of intended outcomes, and that students should have an opportunity to redo assessments/assignments to earn the highest grade possible, rather than an average. Staff members also believe that practice work should not be graded.

However, many still believe students should have opportunities for extra credit and receive partial credit for late assignments. Some believe that homework should be graded, effort should count in a final grade, and that F is part of the grading scale. This is all according to the pre-survey results as indicated in MWSD’s action plan (see appendix II). So, there is hope.

A select few teachers have been using standards-based grading, and not grading homework but rather counting it as a category with no weight. In addition, almost all teachers at MWHS allow redos/retakes on assessments, which mean that teachers want students to learn the material (a tenet of SBG), rather than just complete a task or be compliant (part of the traditional letter grading system). MWHS has a group of motivated experimental teachers, SBG pilot teachers who plan on continuing this practice and supporting their fellow colleagues. Lastly, MWHS implemented a data management system, called Mastery Connect, that links assessments to standards and reports whether students are meeting or exceeding the standards. Now all that is needed is for teachers’ gradebooks and students’ report cards to mirror that system.
SECTION SEVEN: STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Moving Forward

As MWSD and MWHS continue to pursue innovative programming that improves student achievement, there are several strategies they might consider to enact the change in a way that reflects the context, conditions, competencies, and culture of the district (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 98). By considering these strategies, MWSD and MWHS can maximize the chance for success not only in implementing an SBGR system throughout all campuses, but also in consolidating stakeholder support and buy-in needed for successful change.

For conditions, MWSD and MWHS should consider appointing resident experts in SBGR who can answer or help stakeholders find answers about the system and its implementation. These experts should be local supporters of and experimenters with SBGR. Heifetz and his co-authors (2009) suggested that leaders should use the networks already established within their organizations to "forge alliances with people who will support your efforts" and "integrate and defuse opposition"; they called this "acting politically" (p. 133).

At MWHS, there are teachers already experimenting with SBGR. These are the individuals who must be empowered to help lead the movement of capacity-building and implementation. I believe these “alliances” should help convince all stakeholders that SBGR is the modern, accurate, and fair way to evaluate students and that it must be implemented as soon as possible at MWHS and at the other three campuses.

Furthermore, getting parents who are active members of the PTO involved will help gain support among parent stakeholders. Lastly, if MWSD is truly committed to
making SBGR happen, it should prioritize professional development around the topic and conduct a post-survey that measures teacher’s growth and understanding of effective grading policies and procedures.

For competencies, one strategy to consider is to analyze carefully and build consensus around the need for change in the first place. Heifetz et al. (2009) warned that too often, leaders do not first take time to assess needs or diagnose the system, including a group's culture, before implementing change (p. 57). Specifically, they recommended that a leader must work with others in the organization to figure out what to conserve and what to discard from past practices and work together to invent "new ways to build from the best of the past" while also considering the "human dimensions of the changes" (p. 69). This can be achieved through thoughtful and efficient presentations on the purpose of grading and standards-based grading and reporting. Building capacity can be achieved by showing stakeholders examples from other schools, as well as studies that demonstrate statistical evidence of the benefits of implementing SBGR. This was also a major point for the SBGRC.

In the case of grading and reporting, the elementary campuses already have a standards-based report card from kindergarten to second grade. However, as noted in this research, from fourth grade through the end of high school the report card changes to the traditional model. The early elementary teachers could serve as proponents of an SBGR system. In addition, since some teachers at MWHS are experimenting with the system already and reporting positive results, an alliance could be formed with both groups. Lastly, professional development needs to be focused on SBGR for future institute days.
For culture, it is suggested that MWSD and MWHS coestablish a purpose for grading and reporting, an important piece missing from its grading policies and procedures. MWHS and MWSD were the only school and district, respectively, out of four in this study that do not have a clear vision or purpose behind grading, even though grading happens on a daily basis. In addition, rather than eliminating nonfactors from grading entirely, teachers should be given the option to report nonfactors. Allowing the change to occur more slowly is a way to generate support. Heifetz et al. counseled that it is important to consider the "ripeness of an issue" before marching forward with change. Specifically, leaders must analyze whether there is an urgency across the entire system that will make people ready to embrace change (p. 126). If not, they warned that leaders should move more slowly to first build consensus and frame the issue thoughtfully in order to help people understand the need for change and strike an emotional chord that inspires support for change (p. 128). At this point in time, teachers are just learning about SBGR and need more time to research and investigate; change is coming, but it is moving slowly.

Reflecting on the context, MWHS is one of the most improved schools in Illinois and the nation, according to the three major national polls. However, college enrollment is only at 75% in an era when almost all highly competitive and remunerated jobs will require college training (IIRC, 2016). Also, 43% of the 2014 MWHS graduating class attended community college, and of that group, 50% were enrolled in remedial courses (IIRC, 2016). If we want to truly be the best, more students need to be in top universities and fewer need to be taking remedial coursework that more often than not does not transfer (Vatteroot, 2015). I believe this could be achieved if MWSD and MWHS adopt a
modern system of grading and reporting that reports students’ true performance based on standards. MWHS and MWSD should expand their standards-based report card to include all grades, but before that can be done, the in-class grading must change.

MWSD has an award winning elementary school and high school, as well as Principals of the Year for DuPage County for both the high school and middle school (Niche, 2017). If MWSD is to continue its award-winning ways, then embracing SBGR, a system that truly measures and communicates student achievement to stakeholders, should be next.
REFERENCES


Fairfax County Public Schools. (n.d.) Retrieved from https://www.fcps.edu/node/31380


Matthews, J. (2005, October 18). A to F scale gets poor marks but is likely to stay.


**APPENDIX A: MWSD/LDT ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE YEAR 1**

**MWSD/LDT Action Plan Template: Year 1**

**SMART Goal/ Expected Outcome:** At the end of the 20XX school year, Year 1, 80% of staff in MWSD will self-report an increase their understanding, future engagement and possible implementation of Standards-Based Grading and Reporting process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Potential barriers</th>
<th>Result/Benchmark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish LDT/SBGRC, then read literature on Standards Based Grading, Study Available artifacts from ISBE and Visit Other Schools</td>
<td>LDT</td>
<td>Begin Summer of Year 1. 8 weeks.</td>
<td>• Books • Novels • Articles • Magazines • Journals • Dissertations</td>
<td>• Personal apathy • Disengagement • Other person responsibilities</td>
<td>Honest acknowledgement of having done the suggested readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing pre-post survey for staff that reflects their understanding and engagement in the SBG process</td>
<td>LDT</td>
<td>Pre-Survey: Before Aug. 20th Post-Survey: Before May, 1st (Not completed)</td>
<td>• Computers • Time imbedded within school day to develop and take the assessment • Examples of surveys from other districts, gurus, etc.</td>
<td>• Time • Misunderstanding • Teachers not motivated to be honest • Alignment of Vision and SMART goal with all stakeholders</td>
<td>100% completion Baseline and Postline data points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analyze results of survey to determine the areas of need for future PD</th>
<th>LDT</th>
<th>Two weeks after administration Pre (Sept. 4th) Post (May, 15th)</th>
<th>● Time ● Committee ● Google Form responses</th>
<th>● Making sure we have representation from every level</th>
<th>Determine specific areas needed for PD</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set- Up PD opportunities throughout the school year (Specific to grade levels and/or schools)</td>
<td>LDT</td>
<td>Two weeks after analyzing Pre (Sept 18th) Post (May 29th, end of year)</td>
<td>● Presenters ● Buckets of Time ● Discussions ● Off-site visits ● Videos, articles, book studies</td>
<td>● Time ● Differentiation ● Lack of Buy-in ● Shift in thinking is still a struggle</td>
<td>Teacher opportunities for feedback after each session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit and Set- Up PD opportunities and action plan for Pilot groups</td>
<td>LDT</td>
<td>Two weeks after analyzing Pre survey data (September 18th)</td>
<td>● Presenters ● Buckets of Time ● Discussions ● Off-site visits ● Videos, articles, book studies</td>
<td>● Time ● Differentiation</td>
<td>Teacher opportunities for feedback after each session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host 3 Community Forums on Standards-Based Grading and Rept.</td>
<td>LDT</td>
<td>1st Fall 2nd Winter 3rd Spring</td>
<td>Presenters Times for Parent Universities PR for each event</td>
<td>● Lack of attendance ● Lack of buy-in</td>
<td>Survey at the end of year ● Spring conference ● Feedback</td>
</tr>
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</table>
APPENDIX B: STANDARDS-BASED GRADING AND REPORTING COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN: YEAR 2

Standards-Based Grading and Reporting (SBGRC)/MWSD/LDT Action Plan Template: Year 2

SMART Goal/ Expected Outcome: At the beginning of school year 20XX, YEAR 2, MWHS and/or MWSD will implemented standards-based grading and reporting system through the district and/or individual schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Potential barriers</th>
<th>Result/Benchmark</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Full Implementation of Standards-Based Grading and Reporting (SBGR)</td>
<td>District/School Admin/ Teachers</td>
<td>1st day of school year, 20XX YEAR 2</td>
<td>Artifacts from other schools and ISBE On-going PD Research Data</td>
<td>• Time</td>
<td>SBGR Report Cards Rubrics Gradebook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progress Monitor of SBGR Implementation Each Quarter</td>
<td>District/School Admin Teachers</td>
<td>End of each quarter</td>
<td>Gradebooks Teacher Feedback/Input Student Data</td>
<td>• Incomplete grades</td>
<td>New grade artifacts from all teachers using SBG.</td>
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## APPENDIX C: QUANTITATIVE DATA OF MWHS

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<th>FED Race Description</th>
<th>ADA 2015</th>
<th>ACT: Reading 10/20/2015</th>
<th>NWEA/Map Spring '15 Reading RIT Score</th>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Info Text</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>PARCC 2015 ELA/Literacy</th>
<th>G.P.A/2015</th>
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### Notes
- **SPED, ELL, 504**: Special Education, English Language Learners, 504
- **Free/R educed**: Free or Reduced Lunch
- **Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity**: Includes Hispanic, Latinx, and Latino
- **FED Race Description**: Federal Race Description
- **ADA 2015**: ADA Compliance
- **ACT: Reading 10/20/2015**: ACT Reading Score
- **NWEA/Map Spring '15 Reading RIT Score**: NWEA/Map Reading RIT Score
- **Literature**: Literature Score
- **Info Text**: Informational Text Score
- **Vocabulary**: Vocabulary Score
- **PARCC 2015 ELA/Literacy**: PARCC ELA/Literacy Score
- **G.P.A/2015**: GPA for 2015
Culture
- “We have always graded the old fashioned way”.
- Some use content specific data to inform practice.
- Insufficient focus on what grades should communicate.
- Grades updated irregularly.
- Homework, effort and other non-academic behaviors incorporated in grades.
- Few Experimental Teachers.

Conditions
- Grading system: A-F, 0-100.
- Funding for data system is nonexistent.
- How will other systems be understood by Unv.?
- Insf. conversations about grading practices and purpose.
- Insf. knowledge of Standards Based Grading or Alt. systems.

Lack of authentic student achievement grading system
- ELA: 41% Met/Exceeded Stnds.
- Math: 7% Met/Exceeded Stnds.

Competencies
- Minute awareness of standards-based grading.
- 2-3 teachers piloting standards-based grading this year.
- Majority of staff have not seen it in action or have received an update of SBG Pilot teachers.

Context
- DLT SBG Action Plan 10% Implemented.
- 40 years of traditional grading.
- Standards report card: K-2nd grade.
- Curriculum half-way complete.
- Title I.
- Low ACT: Reading & Math.
- 500 Students: 69% White, 16% Latino, 6% Black, 5% Asian, 4% other.
- PARCC:
  - ELA: 41% Met/Exceeded Stnds.
  - Math: 7% Met/Exceeded Stnds.

Baseline 4 C’s Analysis for STANDARD-BASED GRADING and Reporting/AS IS

APPENDIX D: BASELINE 4 C’S ANALYSIS FOR STANDARDS-BASED GRADING AND REPORTING/AS IS
APPENDIX E: ANALYSIS FOR STANDARDS-BASED GRADING AND

Baseline 4 C’s Analysis for STANDARD-BASED GRADING and Reporting/TO BE

Context
• DLT ACTION PLAN 100% Implemented
• 40 years of traditional grading
• Standards report card & grading K-12
• Curriculum Complete and Aligned to Standards Based Grading
• Title I
• Low ACT: Reading and Math
• 500 Students: 59% White, 16% Latino, 6% Black, 5% Asian, 4% other
• PARCC:
  ◦ ELA: 75% Met/Exceeded Stnds
  ◦ Math: 75% Met/Exceeded Stnds.

Culture
• Clear and laser focus on grading and its purpose
• Non-academic behaviors eliminated from grade reporting
• Consistent and Frequent Feedback reflected on mastery of standards
• All teachers are leaders and practitioners of Standards Based Grading

Conditions
• P.D. for all staff
• Targeted PD for specific content
• Mastery Manager in Place
• Std. Based coach/resident expert available

Authentic student achievement grading system: Standards Based Grading

Competencies
• All teachers effectively use standards based grading to measure students mastery of skills.
• Staff assist each other in the understanding and application of standards based grading.
Parents: Please sign and return this front page to your student's teacher. You may keep the attached pages for your records. Please write any comments you may have on the back of this sheet.

Performance Level Descriptors
Level 4. Student demonstrates an in-depth understanding of concepts, skills and processes taught in this reporting period and exceeds the required performance

Level 3. Student consistently demonstrates an understanding of concepts, skills and processes taught in this reporting period

Level 2. Student is beginning to demonstrate an understanding of concepts, skills and processes taught during this reporting period

Level 1. Student does not yet demonstrate an understanding of concepts, skills and processes taught in this reporting period and needs consistent support

NE. Not evaluated at this time

Behaviors That Support Learning: M = Meets Expectations; I = Improvement Needed

Fine Arts and Physical Education
Visual Arts
Goals: Student identifies and understands the elements, principles and expressive qualities of a variety of styles of visual art at grade level. Through creating and performing, the student understands how works of art are produced. He/she understands the role of the arts in civilizations past and present.

Physical Education
Goals: Student demonstrates competency in a variety of skills and health enhancing activities at grade level while participating in a safe, cooperative environment.

Music and Performing Arts
Goals: Student identifies and understands the elements and expressive qualities of a variety of musical styles at grade level. Through creating and performing, the student understands how music is produced. He/she understands the role of the arts in civilizations past and present.

Parent Signature:__________________________
Padres: por favor firmen y entreguen esta página al maestro/a de su hijo/a. Pueden conservar las páginas adjuntas para sus registros. Incluyan los comentarios que deseen en el reverso de esta hoja.

**Descripciones del Nivel de Desempeño**

Nivel 4. El estudiante demuestra tener una comprensión profunda a nivel escolar de los conceptos, las capacidades y los procesos enseñados en este período de evaluación y supera el desempeño requerido

Nivel 3. El estudiante demuestra sistemáticamente tener una comprensión a nivel escolar de los conceptos, las capacidades y los procesos enseñados en este período de evaluación

Nivel 2. El estudiante está empezando a demostrar comprensión de los conceptos, habilidades y procesos que se enseñaron durante este período de calificación, que son propios del nivel del grado

Nivel 1. El estudiante aún no demuestra tener una comprensión a nivel escolar de los conceptos, las capacidades y los procesos enseñados en este período de evaluación y necesita apoyo acorde

NE. No evaluado en esta oportunidad

**Comportamientos Que Apoyan El Aprendizaje:** M = Completa las expectativas; I = Necesita mejorar

**Bellas Artes y Educación Física**

**Artes Visuales**

Objetivos: Identifica y conoce los elementos y cualidades expresivas de una variedad de estilos de artes visuales a nivel escolar. Mediante la creación y la interpretación, comprende cómo nacen las obras de arte. Comprende el rol de las artes en las civilizaciones pasadas y presentes.

**Educación Física**

Objetivos: Adquiere y comprende, a nivel escolar, capacidades de movimientos individuales y grupales para participar de actividades físicas saludables. Alcanza y promueve la vida saludable mediante el uso de capacidades eficaces de comunicación y adopción de decisiones a nivel escolar

Objetivos: Identifica y conoce los elementos y cualidades expresivas de una variedad de estilos musicales a nivel escolar. Mediante la creación y la interpretación, comprende cómo se compone la música. Comprende el rol de las artes en las civilizaciones pasadas y presentes.

Firma de los padres_______________________________
Overview of the Elementary Practitioners’ Framework for Standards-based Reporting

The purpose of the Practitioners’ Framework for Standards-based Reporting is to provide a sample of a standards based report. As districts implement the learning standards, many are reflecting on their reporting systems to ensure alignment with the revised standards and considering transitioning to a standards-based reporting system. To support such efforts, Illinois convened a Standards Based Reporting Committee of educators statewide who have initiated the process in their own schools or districts. A website is now available with numerous examples resources to guide district efforts and contact information of the practitioners. The key deliverable for the committee was to develop a sample framework for a standards based report for Elementary and Middle Schools. The Elementary Framework is located on Pages 3-4.

The entries on the Practitioners’ Framework reflect the New Illinois Standards. Multiple standards were combined into more general statements to make it parent friendly and appropriate for all elementary grades. The mathematics sections address both the content and process aspects of the standards. Standards are combined to make the statements parent friendly and not overwhelming in number. Additional documents, conferences, and electronic communications will give parents more specific information. Below are the statements from the report card with their primary accompanying standards. The following is an explanation of the learning standards used for the each section: Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science.
Literacy

- Writes opinion, informative/explanatory, and narrative pieces for a variety of audiences (CCW-W1, W2, W3, W4, W5, W6, W7, W8,)
- Demonstrates understanding of Standard English conventions when writing or speaking (SL1 – SL6)
- Supports a point of view with reasons, details and information (CCW 9)
- Speaks effectively for situations and audiences (SL1, SL4, SL5, SL6)
- Listens and comprehends in a variety of settings (SL2, SL3)

Reading

- Reads closely to determine key ideas and details in a variety of grade level text (CCRA- R1, R2, R3)
- Uses knowledge of words to understand and analyze text (CCRA- R4, R5, R6)
- Utilizes various print resources as well as diverse media to make connections, comparisons, and draw conclusions
  - (CCRA –R7, R8, R9)
  - Comprehends complex grade level literary and informational texts independently (CCRA- R10)
- NOTE: an additional blank space is provided for districts if they wish to report additional information, such as reading level.

Social Studies

This section is based on The College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies.

The headings are based on the areas designated in the C3 Framework, while the format emphasizes the ELA focus.

Math Content

- Demonstrates an understanding with numbers; generates and analyzes algebraic patterns (OA)
- Describes, compares, interprets and applies concepts of measurement and data (MD)
- Analyzes and classifies concepts of geometric shapes (G)
- Understands and applies place value concepts (NBT)
- Counts and compares numbers (Kindergarten) (CC) OR
- Applies fractional concepts (Grades 3-5) (NF)

Math Practice

- Makes sense of problems and works diligently to find an appropriate solution (MP1, MP6)
- Demonstrates the ability to explain the thinking behind the solution and can evaluate the reasoning of others (MP2, MP3, MP4)
- Uses appropriate math tools efficiently in problem solving (MP5)
- Sees and applies patterns to mathematical reasoning (MP8)
- Uses mathematics to understand and solve real-world problems and can demonstrate the relationship between the two using various modes of representation (MP7)

Science – (NGSS)

- Understands the grade level concepts of life, physical, and earth/space science and their interconnection (Dimension 3)
- Investigates, build models and creates theories about the natural world (Dimension 1)
- Understands the links between the different domains of science (Dimension 2)

Visit the Standards Based Reporting Website for additional information and sample documents to support the transition to a standard based grading system.

www.isbestandardsbasedreporting.com
The purpose of the standards based report card is to inform parents of their child’s progress toward meeting grade level state standards.

**Grade:**

**Principal Name & Contact Information:**

**Student Name:**

**Teacher Name & Contact Information:**

*Modified

### Key Achievements in Content Areas

4=Exemplary; 3=Meets Standards; 2=Approaching Standards; 1=Below Standards; NA=Not Assessed

#### Literacy

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Effort</th>
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<td>1 2 3 4</td>
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- Writes Opinion, informative, explanatory, and narrative pieces for a variety of Audiences
- Demonstrates understanding of Standard English conventions when writing or Speaking
- Supports a point of view with reasons, details and Information
- Speaks effectively for situations and audiences
- Listens and comprehends in a variety of settings

#### Mathematics

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- Demonstrates an understanding with numbers; generates and analyzes algebraic patterns
- Describes, compares, interprets and applies concepts of measurement and data
- Analyzes and classifies concepts of geometric Shapes
- Understands and applies place value concepts
- Counts and compares numbers (Kindergarten) OR Applies fractional concepts (grades 3-5)
- Makes sense of problems and works diligently to find an appropriate solution
- Demonstrates the ability to explain the thinking behind the solution and can evaluate the reasoning of others
- Uses appropriate math tools efficiently in problem solving
- Sees and applies patterns to mathematical reasoning
- Uses mathematics to understand and solve real-world problems and can demonstrate the relationship between the two using various modes of representation

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APPENDIX I: ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, PRACTITIONERS’ FRAMEWORK FOR STANDARDS-BASED REPORTING AT THE ELEMENTARY Level
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Studies</th>
<th>Quarter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effectively uses reading and writing strategies to demonstrate an understanding of:</td>
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<td>Civics</td>
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<td>Economic</td>
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<td>History</td>
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<td>Geography</td>
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<tr>
<th>Music (teacher)</th>
<th>Quarter</th>
<th>Effort</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates basic knowledge of music Vocabulary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates musical knowledge and skills through creating and performing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates understanding of music from historical periods and world cultures</td>
<td>4</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Education/Health (teacher)</th>
<th>Quarter</th>
<th>Effort</th>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquires movement skills and understands the concepts needed to engage in health-enhancing physical activity</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Sets goals and achieves/maintains physical fitness based on continual self-Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develops team-building skills by working with others through physical activity</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understand basic principles of health and well-being</td>
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<tr>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Quarter</th>
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<tr>
<td>Understand the grade level concepts of life, physical, and earth/space science and their interconnection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investigates, build models and creates theories about the natural world</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands the links between the different domains of science</td>
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<th>Visual Art (teacher)</th>
<th>Quarter</th>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates basic knowledge of vocabulary used in visual art</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creates art with a variety of tools, media, and techniques</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates an understanding of how art/artifacts convey stories about people, places, and times</td>
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Key Behaviors: 4=Consistently; 3=Usually; 2=Sometimes; 1=Rarely

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<th>Behavior</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Habits</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Group Cooperation</td>
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<th>General Comments</th>
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<td>Attendance</td>
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<td>Present</td>
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<td>Absent</td>
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APPENDIX J: GRADING AND GRADE REPORTING POLICIES & PROCEDURES

SURVEY POWERED BY GOOGLE FORMS

1. What is your role?
   Student, Teacher, Administrators, Board Members, Local Entrepreneur, Politician, Parent

2. How familiar are you with the school’s grading and grade reporting policy & procedures?
   Not very familiar, not familiar, somewhat familiar, familiar, very familiar

3. Describe your knowledge of how students get graded?

4. To your knowledge, are any of these factors included in grading and/or grades: extra credit, homework, attendance, participation, behavior and/or bringing in stuff?
   Yes or No

5. How effective is the current grading system (points, percentages & letter grades) in communicating specific mastery or deficiency in skills and standards related to the subject taught?
   Very ineffective, ineffective, somewhat effective, effective, very effective

6. How effective is the current grade reporting system (the report card with letter grades) in communicating specific mastery or deficiency in skills and standards related to the subject taught?
   Very Ineffective, Ineffective, Somewhat ineffective, Effective, Very Effective

7. Should homework be included in grading/grades?
   Yes or No

8. Should students have the opportunity to redo/retake assessments?
   Yes or No

9. How familiar are you with Standards Based Grading?
   Unfamiliar, Somewhat Familiar, Very familiar

10. Would you attend a forum on Standards-Based Grading?

11. From your perspective, is there a need to improve grading and grade reporting policies & procedures?

12. General Comments
APPENDIX K: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS INCLUDING STANDARDS-BASED GRADING AND REPORTING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (SBGRC) AND SBG PILOT TEACHERS

Semi-Structured Interview Questions and Protocols for All Stakeholders
Time: 30min each.
Location: Participant’s choice

Procedures for SBGRC
*State your role before after being prompted for questioning
*Speak Loudly and Clearly
*Keep fellow committee member’s identities and opinions confidential and private
*Respond for a maximum of 2 minutes per question
*Rephrase and/or record undesired statement at request
*Cocreate norms for successful cooperation among SBGRC members

1. What’s the purpose of grades/grading?
2. What’s the purpose of a report card?
3. How does grading works? What factors are included in grades?
4. Should any of the previously mentioned factors in grading be eliminated?
5. What relationship exists if any between a student’s G.P.A. and Standardized exams scores?
6. How are (were) you graded through schooling?
7. What do you know about the history of grading?
8. *How accurate is the traditional letter grading system, points, letters and percentages in measuring proficiency in skills needed to meet or exceed state standards?
9. Does grade inflation exist in schools? If so, how?
10. What do you know about SBG? What schools are doing it? What value do you see in it?
11. How useful is the current report card in indicating specific areas of improvement or mastery as related to content skills?
12. What should be the role of homework in the classroom? Why?
13. Should students be allowed to redo assignments?
14. What exams can be redone in outside of school in the professional world?
15. How should redo/retakes be graded? Averaged? Keep highest grade?
16. What does it take to change a system or make effective change happen?
17. Is there a need to improve grading and grade reporting policies and procedures?
Today's educational climate endorses the concept that all children are capable of learning and that no child should be left behind. Assessing student achievement is a necessary part of the educational process. In J.S. Morton District 201, grades are used to communicate the academic progress and achievement level of students. Semester grades provide an official record of each student's achievement. Grades are assigned in a manner that is fair, consistent, non-biased, and intended to motivate and inspire students to achieve academic excellence. Grades will be based on high standards that are aligned with Illinois State Goals, Objectives, and Benchmarks. In accordance with these concepts, it is imperative to accurately assess each student's learning and communicate the student's progress to parents.

**Guiding Principles**

- Teachers have academic freedom in assessing student achievement, provided the grading is consistent with District 201 philosophy and is academically justifiable, consistently applied, and legally defensible. Teacher expectations will be consistent with departmental course outlines.
- Grading will not be used for disciplinary purposes.
- Assessments will be valid and will measure what they propose to measure,
- Assessments will also be reliable, accurate, and consistent in measuring what they propose to measure.

**Grading System**

Introduced for the 2013-2014 school year, the new standards-based grading system was implemented to provide students and parents with a thorough evaluation on students' ability to master their learning goals. Students are graded on a 0-5 point scale, rather than on the traditional percentage scale.

The standards-based grading scale is as follows:

- "5"-Exemplary Work (A+)
- "4"-Advanced Work (A)
- "3"-Proficient Work (B)
- "2"-Basic Work (C)
- "1"-Need for improvement (D)
- "O"-No Attempt. Beginning (F)

**Report Cards**

Report cards will still report letter grades, but parents will also see students' 0-5 ratings for the standards in each course. The standards-based grading scale provides parents with information on which standards students are meeting, and which standards will require extra help to master. The District trusts this grading system to provide far-reaching benefits to students and parents.

Parents should expect to receive a report card in the mail approximately two weeks after the end of each grading period.
An incomplete grade must be made up within six weeks after the end of the grading period or the grade will become an "E". Some of the criteria used by teachers in determining grades are knowledge of subject matter, performance on tests, class recitation, homework, and ability to communicate.

A passing semester grade confirms a student's ability to meet fundamental competencies as specified by course outlines and the State of Illinois. District 201 calculates semester grades by assigning 40% for each quarter and 20% for the semester final. If the needs of the course require different weights, approval by the Assistant Principal and the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum is required.

Because they are aligned with state and district objectives, grades will have credibility within each department as well as with state and appropriate professional institutions.

**Grade Point Averages**

Grade point averages are computed by adding up the number of points (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, E/F=0) and dividing by the number of courses a student has taken.

**Honor Courses to be Given Weighted Grades**

Students who enroll in the following advanced placement courses or designated accelerated and/or enrichment courses will be given an extra honor point when their grade point average is determined (A=5, B=4, C=3, and D=1).

The following are courses offered when enrollment permits:

- Algebra Honors
- American Government Honors
- Biology Honors
- Chemistry Honors
- English Honors
- Geometry Honors
- Physics Honors
- Pre-Calculus Honors
- World History Honors
- French 7/8
- Italian 7/8
- Spanish 7/8 & 9/10
- A.P Algebra
- A.P American History
- A.P Biology
- A.P Calculus
- A.P Chemistry
- A.P English
- A.P European History
- A.P Music Theory
- A.P Music Theory
- A.P Psychology
- A.P Studio Art

**Honor Roll**

Only full-time students are eligible for honor roll and class rank recognition. A full-time student is defined as a student enrolled in the equivalent of two and one-half credits per semester (5 courses). Only one-half of the two and one-half credits may be P.E.

Gold Honor Roll is achieved by full-time students who are enrolled in at least five courses (two and one-half credits), only one of which may be P.E. and earn a 4.0 or higher grade point average.

Silver Honor Roll is achieved by full-time students who are enrolled in at least five courses (two and one-half credits), only one of which may be P.E., and earn a 3.0 to a 3.99 grade point average.

A grade of "D" or "E" in any subject including P.E. will disqualify a student from the Honor Roll. Any student having questions regarding the Honor Roll should consult with the advisor of the National Honor Society or a guidance counselor. Valedictorian and Salutatorian must be full-time students and are selected according to year of entrance into high school.

Morton High School District 201
5041 W 31st Street, Cicero, IL 60804
708-780-2200
APPENDIX M: LINDBLOOM (CPS) MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY GRADING

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Lindblom Math and Science Academy

PROFICIENCY BASED LEARNING (PBL)

History and Development Proficient Based Learning (PBL)

After years of individual teachers working to improve their learning and assessment systems, Lindblom decided to transition to Proficiency-Based Learning (PBL) as an entire school. This decision was guided by the work of the ALSC's Assessment and Evaluation Committee made up of parents, teachers, and students. This committee researched the issue and surveyed various stakeholders in the process of recommending a system that would be more transparent to students and parents and incorporate the latest research on student motivation and growth mindset.

Over the summer, the Instructional Leadership Team in conversation with their colleagues worked to refine the system to more accurately measure student performance and communicate those measures to clearly to students and parents,

Definition:

Lindblom’s Proficiency-Based Learning is a philosophy of teaching, learning, and grading that emphasizes rigor and depth of understanding. With transparent grades that are categorized by distinct skills and knowledge, all stakeholders know specific areas of success and needed growth in both academic and non-academic learning. Flexibility, regular feedback, and multiple assessment opportunities allow students to realize that learning is a process where they can meet high expectations at their own pace. Through their success, students become intrinsically motivated by owning their learning and applying it to the real world.

How it works:

Course teams have identified the performance indicators (or standards) that need to be met in order to get credit for the course. Students are taught the information, given time to practice with feedback, and are then assessed multiple times to measure their acquisition of the knowledge of skills on a 1-4 scoring criteria scale. Students can talk with the teacher and set up opportunities to revise or retake assessments (prior to the final summative assessment) within a two week (minimum) window.

We use Jumpe.pe as our score reporting software so that student acquisition of knowledge and skills is more easily understood, in order to translate the performance indicators for EACH course into a letter grade for report cards and transcripts, we use a system that is based on the body of work of student-produced evidence. The conversion for each separate course grade is as follows:

A=A score of 3 or 4 in each performance indicator (PI)
B=A score of a 2 in one PI (and 3s and 4s in the rest)
C=A score of 2 in more than one PI (no score of 1)
D=Minimum one score of 1, other PI scores can be 2 or higher
F=A score of 1 in all performance indicators
Additionally, we use two codes to represent the status of student work that has not been completed.
M=Missing-This means the students was absent or did not complete the assessment. The student has a two week (minimum) window to complete the work. M's do not count against a student's score on that performance indicator.
N=Not Revisable-This means the student did not complete the assessment in the time allowed and can no longer revise or retake the assessment. This is converted in jump.pro.pe as a score of 1.
Still confused? Here is a video to help you better understand the why of PBL and how it works at Lindbloom.

Lindbloom Proficiency-Based Learning - Levels of Performance
4.0 Excelling – I have demonstrated the knowledge skills defined by the standard with a high level of understanding ability as defined by the discipline
3.0 Achieving - I have demonstrated that I have the knowledge/skills defined in the standard,
2.0 Developing – I have demonstrated relevant knowledge/skills but have not yet demonstrated convincing evidence of fully meeting the standard.
1.0 Emerging - I have demonstrated the most basic knowledge/skills relevant to the standard,
M Missing insufficient evidence - I have not provided evidence to allow the teacher to assess,
N Not Revisable - did not complete the assessment in the time allowed and can no longer revise or retake the assessment.

Ten Principles of Proficiency-Based Learning
Over the past decade, the movement to adopt proficiency-based approaches to teaching, learning, and graduating has gained momentum throughout the United States, as more educators, parents, business leaders, and elected officials recognize that high academic expectations and strong educational preparation are essential to success in today's world. Schools use proficiency-based learning to raise academic standards, ensure that more students meet those higher expectations, and graduate more students better prepared for adult life.
To help schools establish a philosophical and pedagogical foundation for their work, the Great Schools Partnership created the following "Ten Principles of Proficiency-Based Learning," which describe the common features found in the most effective proficiency-based systems:

1. All learning expectations are clearly and consistently communicated to students and families, including long-term expectations (such as graduation requirements and graduation standards), short-term expectations (such as the specific learning objectives for a Course or other learning experience), and general expectations (such as the performance levels used in the school's grading and reporting system).
2. Student achievement is evaluated against common learning standards and performance expectations that are consistently applied to all students regardless of whether they are enrolled in traditional Courses or pursuing alternative learning pathways.

3. All forms of assessment are standards-based and criterion-referenced, and success is defined by the achievement of expected standards, not relative measures of performance or student-to-student comparisons.

4. Formative assessments measure learning progress during the instructional process, and formative-assessment results are used to inform instructional adjustments, teaching practices, and academic Support.

5. Summative assessments evaluate learning achievement, and summative-assessment results record a student's level of proficiency at a specific point in time.

6. Academic progress and achievement are monitored and reported separately from work habits, character traits, and behaviors such as attendance and class participation, which are also monitored and reported.

7. Academic grades communicate learning progress and achievement to students and families, and grades are used to facilitate and improve the learning process.

8. Students are given multiple opportunities to improve their work when they fail to meet expected standards.

9. Students can demonstrate learning progress and achievement in multiple ways through differentiated assessments, personalized-learning options, or alternative learning pathways.

10. Students are given opportunities to make important decisions about their learning, which includes contributing to the design of learning experiences and learning pathways.
Parent Guidebook for Standards-Based Reporting

This guidebook provides detailed information regarding the elementary report card. Included is an overview of standards-based reporting, navigation of the report card, and frequently asked questions.

What is the overall purpose of the report card?
Naperville Community Unit School District 203 believes the purpose of the report card is to communicate students’ progress toward specific standards so that teachers, students, and parents/guardians can work together to advance student learning.

What is a standards-based report card?
A standards-based report card provides detailed information of how well students are progressing toward the identified standards in a specific content area. These standards directly align with the content that is being taught and assessed in the classroom. Students are continually assessed on their progress toward mastery of the expectations set forth at each trimester.

What are reporting standards?
Reporting standards are a set of standards that directly align to our district curriculum and communicate the essential learning for each content area. The standards were created using the Illinois Learning Standards. Multiple learning standards are incorporated into each reporting standard to summarize student progress.

Teachers report student progress on two types of standards: content standards and process standards. Content reporting standards articulate what students know and are able to do academically while process standards refer to how a student is learning.

What data is used to evaluate student progress?
Teachers evaluate student learning and behavior in a multitude of ways using classroom observation, daily classwork, projects, and assessments. Teachers follow best practice in assessment by utilizing a variety of formative and summative assessments at both the classroom and district level. A combination of evidence provides a comprehensive overview of student understanding and progress toward each reporting standard.
What is the difference between content reporting standards and process reporting standards?

Content Reporting Standards
Content reporting standards are generated from the learning standards for each academic content area such as math, literacy, and music. Teachers report on these standards using proficiency levels, which range from Beginning to Exemplary as seen on the chart below. Corresponding numerical codes and descriptions accompany each proficiency level. The timeframe on when and how students achieve mastery is individualized and can take place at any time during the school year. Students will receive a 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, or 4 for each content reporting standard. If a student is between proficiency levels on the report card, a .5 will be added to the code. This .5 communicates that the student is making progress toward, but has not fully demonstrated proficiency at the next level. For example, a student at a 3.5 is secure in his/her knowledge but has shown readiness toward a 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficiency Level</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Student demonstrates the skill or understanding at a level exceeding the trimester expectation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Student demonstrates mastery and independence of the trimester reporting standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approaching</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student demonstrates evidence that he/she is approaching the trimester reporting standard, showing occasional independence or potential for independence toward meeting the standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Student demonstrates that he/she is working toward readiness for the trimester reporting standard without independence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Process Reporting Standards
The process reporting standards describe learning behaviors that are important across all content areas. Teachers report on these standards using frequency levels, which range from Seldom to Consistently as seen on the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency Level</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consistently</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Student demonstrates independence with few reminders and/or prompting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Student demonstrates independence at times and may need reminders and/or prompting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Student demonstrates limited independence and needs frequent reminders and prompting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Report Card

2015-2016 Trimester 3 Report Card
John Smith
ID: T7392
Grade: 04

Naperville Community Unit School District 203 believes the purpose of the report card is to communicate students’ progress towards specific standards so that teachers, students and parents/guardians can work together to advance student learning.

Legend:

- 4 (Exemplary) - Student demonstrates the skill or understanding at a level exceeding the trimester expectation.
- 3 (Advanced) - Student demonstrates mastery and independence of the trimester reporting standards.
- 2 (Proficient) - Student demonstrates evidence that he/she is approaching the trimester reporting standard, showing occasional independence or potential for independence toward meeting the standard.
- 1 (Developing) - Student demonstrates that he/she is working toward readiness for the trimester reporting standard without independence.

For a explanation of each standard please see the District Education Standards Guidebook.

Sample of the Process Standards Section

Students will receive a C, O, or S for each standard for each trimester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9E4010-21 4th Home Room</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is organized so that he/she is ready to learn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows written and oral directions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is focused and engaged in learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displays self-control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works well independently</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates responsibility for assigned tasks in a timely manner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates perseverance with a variety of tasks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works cooperatively and respectfully with others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample of Content Reporting Standards Section

Students will receive a 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, or 4 for each reporting standard by trimester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CE4210-21 4th Grade Literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refers to details and examples when making inferences about the text.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refers to details and examples when determining the theme or main idea about the text.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describes the differences in structure and purpose of different texts such as dramas, poetry, and informational texts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compares and contrasts the points of view from which different texts are told.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compares and contrasts themes, settings, plots, characters, and/or important points or events from a variety of texts on similar topics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decodes and determines the meaning of words with common prefixes and suffixes and Latin or Greek roots.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reads and comprehends grade-level texts with accuracy and fluency.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between “3” (Secure) and a “4” (Exemplary)?
Secure indicates that a student is meeting grade-level expectations with independence. Students at this level have demonstrated a proficient understanding of the content and are ready for new learning. With high and challenging expectations, Secure is where a proficient student shows mastery of the standard.

Exemplary indicates that a student is able to apply in-depth understanding that goes beyond classroom learning expectations. This student can transfer new knowledge to multiple settings and make connections across and between content areas using higher-level thinking skills. Exemplary is not about producing more; rather it is about what the student is able to do with the learned content at a higher level.

Should I be concerned if my child didn’t receive a “3” (Secure) this trimester?
Students will have additional opportunities to demonstrate secure understanding of a reporting standard. This progress will be communicated the next trimester.

At times, a student may receive a “3” (Secure) for one trimester and a “2” (Approaching) for the next. This occurs when the rigor of the standard increases in complexity, and the student performance expectation increases. The shift from Secure to Approaching indicates that a student has the foundational skills but has yet to demonstrate independence at the targeted level for that point in time. Most of our reporting standards are end-of-the-year expectations. Students will show growth and progress toward these standards over time.

What if my child received a “3” (Secure) for most reporting standards this trimester?
A “3” (Secure) demonstrates mastery and independence of grade-level content. With high expectations and a complex curriculum, receiving a “3” indicates that a student has successfully demonstrated knowledge of the grade-level content and should be proud of his/her progress. Receiving a “4” (Exemplary) communicates that a student demonstrates the skill or understanding at a level exceeding the trimester expectation.

Why is a reporting standard blacked out for one trimester but not another?
Reporting standards communicate the focus for the teaching and learning during a trimester. There are some instances where a standard may not be introduced yet. Therefore, the standard is not assessed at that time. Once a standard is taught, students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning.

Why are there fewer content reporting standards in science and social studies?
For the past four years, our district has been in the process of aligning our math and literacy curriculum to the new Illinois Learning Standards. These standards clearly define what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. The math and literacy portions of our report card reflect the new curriculum and communicate a progression of learning across the grades.

Over the course of the next few years, our district will be writing and implementing new curriculum for science and social studies. The new curriculum will be used to develop clear, grade-level reporting standards for these content areas. These content reporting standards will be specific for each grade level.
APPENDIX O: SCHOOL DISTRICT U-46 Grading Policy and Procedures

Parent Grading Guide
FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

WHAT GUIDES THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE GRADING WORK?

U-46’s Seven Guiding Principles for Secondary Grading guide the work.
The principles include:

1. Grades should reflect proficiency on well-defined standards-based learning targets
that are clear to all stakeholders.

2. Grades should be based on academic performance using formative and summative assessments.

3. Grade scales should be devised to give equal incremental value to each letter grade.

4. Students should be expected to complete work for credit.

5. Students should be given multiple ways to demonstrate their knowledge.

6. Feedback should be timely, specific, and related to learning targets.

7. Students should be given multiple opportunities to reach proficiency on specific, standards-based concepts and skills.

WHAT ARE THE CHANGES FOR THIS YEAR?

- Progress Reports and Report Cards will continue to reflect letter grades. Points will be converted to a grade at the end of the grading period.
- +/- is eliminated from all final grades.
- The 0-100 scale will be replaced by the 0-4 scale.
- Teachers will move to a 0-4 “marks” scale and use a mark of 0-4 for each assignment entered in the grade book.
- Teachers will have the option to use Standards-Based Grading (SBG). Teachers will notify parents via course syllabus. Students will need to demonstrate evidence of their learning to reach proficiency.

Grading scale below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>MASTERY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>PROFICIENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BASIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BELOW BASIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>NO EVIDENCE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(No evidence of learning includes missing work, incomplete coursework)
HOW WILL STUDENTS MONITOR GRADES?

Students and parents are encouraged to reflect on evidence of learning, examine scores, and develop a plan of action if improvement is needed. Student tracking of achievement and goals increases student motivation and completion of overall coursework. Students and parents will still be monitoring grades via Infinite Campus.

All graded assignments, projects, and assessments will provide students with opportunities to demonstrate basic, proficient, and mastery levels of learning to ensure that students can reach the highest possible level of achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>MASTERY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>PROFICIENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BASIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BELOW BASIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>NO EVIDENCE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Accommodations
Accommodations are provided to students with special needs. Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 plans may have individualized accommodations for quantity of work, time allotted, presentation format, and type of evidence needed to show proficiency levels.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?
For additional detailed fair and equitable grading information, please visit www.u-46.org and click on:
- Departments and Programs
- Teaching and Learning

CONTACT
U-46 Educational Services Center
355 E. Chicago Street
Elgin, Illinois 60120
PH 847.888.5000
EMAIL info@u-46.org
WEB www.U-46.org

Find us on Facebook, Twitter and Youtube

INFINITE CAMPUS: AT A GLANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards Summary</th>
<th>Legend:</th>
<th>Final Grade</th>
<th>In Progress Grade</th>
<th>Grade Not Available Yet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>Q3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors Freshman English - Listening</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors Freshman English - Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors Freshman English - Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading Task Summary</td>
<td></td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>Q3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If teacher is using SPS, you will see level of mastery using 0-4 scale for each standard assessed during the term.

Grading tasks will continue to be scored using traditional letter grades.

All individual assignments will be scored using 0-4 scale.
APPENDIX P: MOUNTAIN WEST HIGH SCHOOL’S GRADING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

THE SEMESTER SYSTEM
The Mountain West High School year is divided into two semesters. Courses are organized around an 18 week marking period. Students will receive a grade in progress at the end of 9 weeks of work and a final grade (with credit assigned) after 18 weeks. Generally, final examination will count for approximately 20% of a student's final grade in a course.

SEMESTER SYLLABI
A syllabus for each course will be provided to each student at the beginning of each semester. This syllabus will clearly explain course objectives, appropriate texts and supplies, assessment/grading policies and attendance/behavior expectations.

GRADES/GRADE SCALE
Any one of five grades is given at the completion of each course. No plus or minus grades are assigned. Grades for each course will be calculated using the following percentage scale.

A = 90-100 Student work is above expectancy, more than usual effort is made, quality of work is consistently excellent, student demonstrates a strong desire and performance to do superior work.
B = 80-89 Quality of work is very good, student successfully completes all of the acceptable standards.
C = 70-79 Student work is average, the quality of work warrants the earning of credit hours in the course.
D = 60-69 Generally below standards, though the student has made an effort to complete assignments and participate in class. Minimum level at which teachers can approve credit.
F = 0-59 No Credit. The student has not satisfied minimum course standards.

RANKING
Colleges and potential employers often require a designation of rank in class. A rank in class denotes the student's place in comparison to his peers based upon points assigned to letter grades earned. The following quality points are awarded accordingly.

HONORS CLASSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>No credit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The approximate rank in class will be distributed at the end of each semester beginning with the student's sophomore year, 1st semester.

Class Valedictorian (ranked 1st in class based on quality points), and Salutatorian (ranked 2nd
in class based on quality points) will be determined at the end of the third quarter during students' 41st year in high school. To be considered, a student must attend high school for eight semesters.

The Valedictorian and Salutatorian will be determined by a combination of grade point average (GPA) and the amount of quality points earned. The top ten ranking students' transcripts according to GPA will be identified and quality credits will be calculated. Honors and Advanced Placement classes are weighted accordingly and included in the final calculations. No quality credits are given for Study Halls or courses taken outside of the regular seven-period school day. Any class that receives a pass/fail grade does not receive quality points; only classes that receive letter grades are included in this calculation.

All students who have tied for Valedictorian and Salutatorian selections will remain tied and will receive recognition as such during the WIIS Awards Assembly and during the Graduation Ceremony.

Examples: Honors and AP classes Regular level classes
A = 5 quality credits  A = 4 quality credits
B = 4 quality credits  B = 3 quality credits
C = 3 quality credits  C = 2 quality credits
D = 1 quality credit  D = 1 quality credit
F = No quality credit  F = No quality credit

**HONOR ROLL.**
Honor roll is calculated and announced every 18 weeks based upon a student's semester grade point average. Students are named to High Honor Roll who earn a 3.5 or better grade point average for the semester, while students earning between a 3.0 and 3.49 achieve Honor Roll status.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR CLASS STANDING**
In order to advance to sophomore, junior or senior class standing, a student must earn a specified number of credit hours. This is necessary to qualify or be eligible for interscholastic Athletics, transfer to another high school or be considered for upper class privileges.

• To be considered a SOPHOMORE, a student must have earned a minimum of 5.0 credits and attended high school for one year.
• To be considered a JUNIOR, a student must have earned a minimum of 10.0 credits and attended high school for two years.
• To be considered a SENIOR, a student must have earned a minimum of 15.0 credits and attended high school for three years.
• To be eligible for GRADUATION, a senior must earn a minimum of 20.0 credits.

**PARTICIPATION IN COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY**
Students participating in the spring commencement ceremony must fulfill all Westmont High School graduation requirements as indicated in CUSO 201 school Board Policy 6:300. No exceptions will be made to this policy. Students with specific IEP stipulations may participate in the commencement ceremony and receive a Certificate of Completion. Please refer to "Education of Children with Disabilities."
**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY, CHEATING / NO PLAGIARISM**

Academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism are serious matters that challenge each student's goal of being responsible.

These may include one or more of the following actions:

1. Copying computer internet materials or software without proper documentation or in violation of copyright Law.
2. Summarizing material without acknowledging the source.
3. Representing the work of someone else as one's own work
4. Obtaining or accepting a copy of a test or answers to a test.
5. Copying another student's homework or test answers: or providing work or answers to another student

In short, any action intended to obtain credit for work not one's own is dishonest. Students who engage in such dishonesty may be penalized by receiving a grade of "0" for the assignment. Repeated offenses could result in a grade of "F" for the course.

**INCOMPLETE GRADES**

An Incomplete represents work not completed by the end of the quarter or semester. Incompletes are given only in extraordinary circumstances as approved by the principal or assistant principal. This work must be made up within the first two weeks of the following quarter and the Incomplete changed to a grade. If the work is not made up by the end of the 2-week period, the grade will be changed to an "F" An Incomplete will prevent eligibility for Honor Roll.

In extreme medical situations, other accommodations may be provided as approved by the school principal or assistant principal.

**IVS COURSES**

IVS courses provide highly interactive, instructor-led, academically rigorous experiences for WHS students. This modality of learning requires a high degree of self-discipline and the ability to meet demanding expectations within a fixed time setting. IVS places high expectations on students, so it is important that WHS students consider all of the implications of IVS coursework before requesting a class. The following guidelines apply to students scheduled to take an IVS class.

- IVS courses must be approved by a guidance counselor and a member of the department related to the course being taken.
- A minimum unweighted GPA of 3.0 is required in the subject area as well as overall before enrollment in JVS will be considered.
- IVS courses can be scheduled in lieu of a study hall. For students with a full academic schedule, one approved IVS class can be taken independently outside of the school day.
- All completed IVS courses and their corresponding final grades will be included on the transcript. Final IVS grades will be included in the student's grade point average.
- Students are responsible for maintaining the pace of the online class in an
independent work environment.

- Maximum enrollment is set by CUSD 201 and is subject to a first come-first serve basis.
- Students can only be scheduled for IVS courses in their 5th-8th semesters.
- Students are not permitted to enroll in IVS world language courses or in science lab-based courses.
- Students must understand that the IVS supervisor has access to grades and will be checking them consistently throughout the semester.
- Students may not take an IVS course if the same course fits into their schedule at WHS. Male student athletes will use the athletic students’ locker room only during athletic activities (after school). It is the student's responsibility to make certain that the lock and personal belongings are secure.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION POLICY OF PARTICIPATION
Because physical education is, by its nature, a participatory course, a student's attendance and active involvement is given a good deal of consideration when grades are calculated at the end of a grading period. Therefore, regular attendance and participation is required. Absences are handled in the following manner:

EXCUSED ABSENCES
1. Documented (doctor, nurse or parent note) illnesses or injuries of short duration must be made up to avoid a failing grade if such absences exceed seven days in a nine-week course or 14 in a semester course. If a student abuses this policy, such absences may be noted as unexcused and graded accordingly.
2. Students excused from participation in physical education activities (as noted by a physician due to extended illnesses or injuries) will be provided alternate assignments in physical education (scorekeeping, report writing, etc.). A typical instance of this nature would refer to any student unable to participate for two weeks or more.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES: (NON-PARTICIPATION)
After one (1) unexcused absence, students will lose one (1) letter grade per absence. An unexcused absence includes, but is not limited to, the following: refusing to dress or participate, being truant, forgetting gym apparel, or offering an excuse that is lacking in substance. After the second and fourth no dress, the teacher will notify the parent/guardian of failure to participate.

Bracelets, necklaces and jewelry are not to be worn during physical education activities.
Personal belongings are to be locked in the student's locker during the activity period.
No running is allowed in the shower and locker room areas. No one is to enter the restrooms or locker rooms during activity periods without permission from the instructor.
DRIVERS EDUCATION
Most rising sophomore students take the required Driver's Education course at Westmont High School. While the classroom portion of Driver's Education is a WHS graduation requirement, the Behind the Wheel (BTW) portion is not. An additional fee (which is minimal compared to private companies) is required for students who decide to take the BTW portion of the class.

If any rising sophomores plan to take Driver's Education privately outside of WHS, they will need to receive proof of completion upon finishing the course. This document must then be submitted to the WHS Guidance Department at the beginning of the school year in August so that the WHS Driver's Education course can be removed from students' schedules and replaced with a Physical Education course.
APPENDIX Q: INFORMED CONSENT

School Site Administrator: Consent to Conduct Research at School Site

My name is Hector Freytas and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Chicago, Illinois. I am asking for your consent for selected staff and stakeholders at your school to voluntarily participate in my dissertation project. The study is entitled: A Collaborative and Strategic Approach to Implementing an effective standards-based grading system: A Change Plan. The purpose of the study is to understand the effectiveness of grading practices and procedures as it relates to academic success and explores new standards-based grading practices and reporting.

My project will address the process of grading practices and procedures and how it impacts those involved at Westmont High School. I will use the data that I collect to understand the process and changes that may possibly need to be made regarding effective grading policies and procedures. I will survey and interview up to 3 administrators, 5 students, 5 teachers, 5 parents, 2 board members, 2 community leaders and 2 local politicians in regards to their thoughts on effective grading policies and procedures at Westmont High School.

Standards-based Task Force: The standard-based task force will be comprised on one teacher, one administrator, one student, one parent, one board member and one politician. We will meet monthly for 2 hours from October to April, a total of 6 times.

Surveys- All stakeholders will have an opportunity to participate in a digital survey (Appendix..) The goal is to get up to 25 students, 25 teachers, 25 parents, 1 board member, 5 administrators and 5 local business leaders. Survey should take no longer than 15 minutes. It will be open for one week, from October 31st to November 4th. It will also be disseminated through the school and districts Facebook page.

Interviews- I will be interviewing, 5 students, 5 parents, 3 administrators, 5 teachers, and 5 local business/political figures The interviews will be 30 each, done before or after school and once.

Student Data –I will be collecting archival grading student data using the school’s data management system.
   • Grade Point Average
   • NWEA/MAP Scores
   • PARCC Scores
   • ACT Scores

Focus group interviews.- I will be interviewing 5 teachers experimenting with standards based practices. Interviews will be conducted before or after school for 30 minutes. This will occur only once.

I will send all stakeholders who volunteer a digital survey to be completed and returned using specific instructions as included, and an Informed Consent form indicating that they understand the purpose of the survey and agree to take the survey. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Also, participating stakeholders may volunteer for one 30-minute interview. I will conduct one 30 minute interviews with those participants who have completed an Informed Consent form indicating that they understand the purpose of the interview and agree to be interviewed. I will audio tape the interviews and
transcribe the tapes. I will also collect performance student data, which the district has informed me they will provide to me. All information collected in the surveys and interviews reflects their experience and opinion as a teacher regarding effective grading policies and procedures.

By signing below, you are giving your consent for me to ask for voluntary participation from selected stakeholders to participate in this research study, gather quantitative data related to students grades and standardized test scores, survey stakeholders, create a Standards Based Grading Task Force and interview 25 stakeholders once.

All participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time. I will keep the identity of the school and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants. Only I will have access to all surveys, interview tapes and transcripts, and field notes, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home or on a password protected hard drive for up to 5 years after the completion of this study, at which time I will shred all interview transcripts.

Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While you are likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding effective policies and procedures at Westmont High School and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at hfreytas@my.nl.edu.

In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at phone: 708-415-7715, hfreytas@my.nl.edu or my address 5506 W 22nd place, Cicero, IL. If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair, Dr. Harrington Gibson, email: Harrington.gibson@nl.edu ; phone (888) 658-8632; 122 S Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL. 60603; or EDL Program Chair (Dr. Stuart Carrier, scarrier@nl.edu; 847-947-5017; or the NLU’s Institutional Research Review Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth, NLU IRRB Chair, shaunti.knauth@nl.edu, 312.261.3526, National Louis University IRRB Board, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603.

Thank you for your participation.

_______________________________________
Principal Name (Please Print)

_______________________________________
Principal Signature                Date

_______________________________________
Researcher Name (Please Print)

_______________________________________
Researcher Signature                Date
My name is Hector Freytas, and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Chicago, Illinois. I am asking for your consent to voluntarily participate in my dissertation project. The study is entitled: “A Collaborative and Strategic Approach to Implementing an Effective Standards-Based Grading System.” The purpose of the study is to understanding how grading policies and procedures implemented at one Illinois highs school. The study will also examine the potential benefits of standards-based grading.

My project will address the process of grading practices and procedures and how it impacts those involved at your school. I will use the data I collect to understand the process and changes that may possibly need to be made regarding grading practices and procedures at your school. I would like to survey you in regards to your thoughts on effective grading practices and procedures at your school.

You may participate in this study by signing this consent form indicating that you understand the purpose of the study and agree to participate in a digital survey that I will give to you, to be completed and returned using specific instructions I will include at the end of the survey. Prior to completing the digital survey, you must sign a consent form. The consent form can be found at this link >>>>>>>>>>>. Once consent form is signed, a survey will be emailed to you. It should take approximately 15 minutes for you to complete the survey. All information collected in the survey reflects your experience and opinion as stakeholder in the school as it relates to effective grading practices and procedures.

Your participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time. I will keep the identity of you, the school, the district, and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants in the report. Only I will have access to all of the survey data, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home or on a password protected hard drive for up to 5 years after the completion of this study, at which time I will shred all survey data. Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While you are likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding of effective grading policies and procedures at Westmont High School and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at hfreytas@my.nl.edu.

In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at 708-415-7715, hfreytas@my.nl.edu; or my address 5506 W 22nd Place, Cicero, IL. If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair, Dr. Harrington Gibson; harrington.gibson@nl.edu, or the NLU’s Institutional Research Review Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth, NLU IRRB Chair, shaunti.knauth@nl.edu, 312.261.3526, National Louis University IRRB Board, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603.
Thank you for your participation.
Please click on this link to sign the informed consent form. Survey will be emailed to you.

Participant Name (Please Print): _________________________ Date: ____________

Participant Signature: _________________________________

Email: _____________________________________________ Date: ____________

Researcher Name (Please Print): _________________________ Date: ____________

Researcher Signature: _________________________________
APPENDIX S: INFORMED CONSENT

Adult Participant Interview

My name is Hector Freytas, and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Chicago, Illinois. I am asking for your consent to voluntarily participate in my dissertation project. The study is entitled: A Collaborative and Strategic Approach in Implementing an Effective Standards-Based Grading System: A Change Plan. The purpose of the study is to understand how grading policies and procedures impact school achievement at one Illinois High School. The study will also examine the potential impact of standards-based grading.

My project will address the process of effective grading policies and procedures and how it impacts those involved at Westmont High School. I will use the data I collect to understand the process and changes that may possibly need to be made regarding grading policies and procedures.

You may participate in this study by signing this consent form indicating that you understand the purpose of the interviews and agree to participate in one 30-minute interview, with possibly up to 5 email exchanges in order clarify any questions I may have regarding your interview data. I will audio tape and transcribe the interviews. All information collected in the interviews reflects your experience and opinion as a stakeholder in understanding effective grading policies and procedures.

Your participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time. I will keep the identity of the school and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants. Only I will have access to all of the interview tapes and transcripts, and field notes, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home or on a password protected hard drive for up to 5 years after the completion of this study, at which time I will shred all interview transcripts, tapes, and notes. Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While you are likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding of effective policies and procedures at your school and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at hfreytas@my.nl.edu.

In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at: phone: 708-415-7715; email hfreytas@my.nl.edu; or my address 5506 W 22nd Place, Cicero, IL. If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair, Dr. Harrington Gibson; or the National-Louis Institutional Research Review Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth, NLU IRRB Chair, shaunti.knauth@nl.edu, 312.261.3526, National Louis University IRRB Board, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603.
Thank you for your participation.

_______________________________________
Name (Please Print)

_______________________________________
Signature                        Date

_______________________________________
Researcher Name (Please Print)

_______________________________________
Researcher Signature             Date
My name is Hector Freytas, and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Chicago, Illinois. I am asking for your consent to voluntarily participate in my dissertation project. The study is entitled: A Collaborative and Strategic Approach in Implementing an Effective Standards-Based Grading System: A Change Plan. The purpose of the study is to understand how grading policies and procedures impact school achievement at one Illinois High School. The study will also examine the potential impact of standards-based grading.

My project will address the process of effective grading policies and procedures and how it impacts those involved at Westmont High School. I will use the data I collect to understand the process and changes that may possibly need to be made regarding grading policies and procedures.

You may participate in this study by signing this consent form indicating that you understand the purpose of the interviews and agree to participate in 3 30-minute interviews, with possibly up to 5 email exchanges in order clarify any questions I may have regarding your interview data. I will audio tape and transcribe the interviews. All information collected in the interviews reflects your experience and opinion as a stakeholder in understanding effective grading policies and procedures.

Your participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time. I will keep the identity of the school and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants. Only I will have access to all of the interview tapes and transcripts, and field notes, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home or on a password protected hard drive for up to 5 years after the completion of this study, at which time I will shred all interview transcripts, tapes, and notes. Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While you are likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding of effective policies and procedures at your school and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at hfreytas@my.nl.edu

In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at: phone: 708-415-7715; email hfreytas@my.nl.edu; or my address 5506 W 22nd Place, Cicero, IL. If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair, Dr. Harrington Gibson; or the National-Louis Institutional Research Review Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth, NLU IRRB Chair, shaunti.knauth@nl.edu, 312.261.3526, National Louis University IRRB Board, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603.
Thank you for your participation.

_______________________________________
Name (Please Print)

_______________________________________
Signature ................................... Date ................................

_______________________________________
Researcher Name (Please Print)

_______________________________________
Researcher Signature ....................... Date ................................
APPENDIX U: INFORMED CONSENT AND ASSENT

Minor Participant Interview

My name is Hector Freytas, and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Chicago, Illinois. I am asking for your consent to voluntarily participate in my dissertation project. The study is entitled: A Collaborative and Strategic Approach in Implementing an Effective Standards-Based Grading System: A Change Plan. The purpose of the study is to understand how grading policies and procedures impact school achievement at one Illinois High School. The study will also examine the potential impact of standards-based grading.

My project will address the process of effective grading policies and procedures and how it impacts those involved at Westmont High School. I will use the data I collect to understand the process and changes that may possibly need to be made regarding grading policies and procedures.

You may participate in this study by having your parents and yourself sign this consent form indicating that you understand the purpose of the interviews and agree to participate in one 30-minute interview, with possibly up to 5 email exchanges in order clarify any questions I may have regarding your interview data. I will audio tape and transcribe the interviews. All information collected in the interviews reflects your experience and opinion as a stakeholder in understanding effective grading policies and procedures.

Potential Teen Participants: This form also serves as an assent form. That means that if you choose to take part in this research study, you would sign this form to confirm your choice. Your parent or guardian would also need to give their permission and sign this form for you to join the study.

Parents/Guardians: You have the option of having your child or teen join a research study. This is a parental permission form. It provides a summary of the information the research team will discuss with you. If you decide that your child can take part in this study, you would sign this form to confirm your decision. If you sign this form, you will receive a signed copy for your records.

Your participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time. I will keep the identity of the school and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants. Only I will have access to all of the interview tapes and transcripts, and field notes, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home or on a password protected hard drive for up to 5 years after the completion of this study, at which time I will shred all interview transcripts, tapes, and notes. Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While you are likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding of effective policies and procedures at your school and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at hfreytas@my.nl.edu

In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at: phone: 708-415-7715; email hfreytas@my.nl.edu; or my address 5506 W 22\textsuperscript{nd} Place, Cicero, IL. If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair, Dr. Harrington Gibson; or the National-Louis Institutional Research Review Board:
Thank you for your participation.

Name of Parent (Please Print)          Date

_______________________________________  ________________

Signature of Parent

_______________________________________

Name of Minor (Please Print)

_______________________________________  ________________

Signature          Date

Researcher Name (Please Print)

_______________________________________  ________________

Researcher Signature          Date
APPENDIX V: INFORMED CONSENT AND ASSENT

Minor Participant Survey

My name is Hector Freytas, and I am a doctoral student at National Louis University, Chicago, Illinois. I am asking for your consent to voluntarily participate in my dissertation project. The study is entitled: A Collaborative and Strategic Approach in Implementing an Effective Standards-Based Grading System: A Change Plan. The purpose of the study is to understand how grading policies and procedures impact school achievement at one Illinois High School. The study will also examine the potential impact of standards-based grading.

My project will address the process of effective grading policies and procedures and how it impacts those involved at Westmont High School. I will use the data I collect to understand the process and changes that may possibly need to be made regarding grading policies and procedures.

You may participate in this study by having your parents and yourself sign this consent form indicating that you understand the purpose of the survey and agree to participate in one 15 minute survey. The results will be recorded on a google drive spreadsheet with no names attached to the survey. All information collected in the interviews reflects your experience and opinion as a stakeholder in understanding effective grading policies and procedures.

Potential Teen Participants: This form also serves as an assent form. That means that if you choose to take part in this research study, you would sign this form to confirm your choice. Your parent or guardian would also need to give their permission and sign this form for you to join the study.

Parents/Guardians: You have the option of having your child or teen join a research study. This is a parental permission form. It provides a summary of the information the research team will discuss with you. If you decide that your child can take part in this study, you would sign this form to confirm your decision. If you sign this form, you will receive a signed copy for your records.

Your participation is voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time, I will keep the identity of the school and all participants confidential, as it will not be attached to the data and I will use pseudonyms for all participants. Only I will have access to all of the survey results, which I will keep in a locked cabinet at my home or on a password protected hard drive for up to 5 years after the completion of this study, at which time I will erase the spreadsheet. Participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk beyond that of everyday life. While you are likely to not have any direct benefit from being in this research study, your taking part in this study may contribute to our better understanding of effective policies and procedures at your school and what changes, if any, need to be made.

While the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, your identity will in no way be revealed. You may request a copy of this completed study by contacting me at hfreytas@my.nl.edu

In the event you have questions or require additional information, you may contact me at: phone: 708-415-7715; email hfreytas@my.nl.edu; or my address 5506 W 22nd Place, Cicero, IL. If you have any concerns of questions before or during participation that you feel I have not addressed, you may contact my dissertation chair, Dr. Harrington Gibson; or the National-Louis Institutional Research Review Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth, NLU IRRB Chair, shaunti.knauth@nl.edu, 312.261.3526, National Louis University IRRB Board, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603.
Thank you for your participation.

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<tr>
<th>Name of Parent (Please Print)</th>
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Signature of Parent

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Name of Minor (Please Print)

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Name of Minor (Please Print)

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Researcher Name (Please Print)

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Standards Based Grading and Reporting Committee Invitation

Greetings! As part of my dissertation work, I would like to form a committee composed of a variety of stakeholders. In my opinion, everyone both in and outside of school can play a crucial role in impacting a student’s educational journey. My dissertation will focus on effective Standards Based Grading practices and is supported by the current reality of the traditional grading system. In the traditional grading system wherein students get an A through F mark, percentages and points to demonstrate mastery of a subject, grades are artificially inflated with extra credit, good or bad behavior, turning in a signed syllabus, items all unrelated to student’s mastery of skills (O’Connor, 2011; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016). Grades don’t reflect what students are learning. Letter grades are not measuring student’s ability to read, write, listen, communicate, 21st century skills needed to be successful (O’Connor, 2011; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016). If students are to be successful, they need to receive authentic feedback that is measurable and related to skills needed to be achieving inside the classroom and in the world at large (O’Connor, 2011; Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2015; Vatterott, 2015; Schimmer, 2016).

Several investigators have identified Standards Based Grading, or Grades Based on Standards, as coined by Tom Schimmer (2016), as the ideal alternative to the traditional letter grading system. Standards Based Grading is a pedagogical practice wherein teachers report students’ mastery of skills as determined by the expected outcome of a state of national standard (Schimmer, 2016; Vatterott, 2015). In other words, standards based grading communicates student’s current level of performance as it relates to as specific, action oriented standards. Moreover, unlike the traditional letter grading system, I would like to invite you to participate in the Standards-Based Grading and Reporting Committee, planning meeting on November 21st, 2016 at Mountain West High School Library from 3:30 to 5:30pm. The size of the group will be limited to 7, including myself. Membership of the Standards Based Grading Committee will be based on first come, first serve basis and to stakeholders who can commit to the following:

▪ Meet monthly for 2 hours.
▪ Participate in a Focus Group, Interview and Survey
▪ Analyze data, research best practices and present to others
▪ Respect all members’ opinions and keeping information discussed in group confidential.

The purpose of this meeting, this committee and future meetings will be to review our current grading practices and interventions, identify gaps and concerns, analyze data, and strive to create a plan that would
lead to improvement students receiving authentic feedback as it relates to their proficiency of standards. I hope you are willing to be part of this very important committee. Please email me at hfreytas@my.nl.edu or call at 708-415-7715 to confirm that you will be attending the meeting and participating in this team.

If you are a student under the age of 18, you will need your parents’ permission. If you are an adult, only your signature will be required.

To ensure that there are no risks for the participants of this study, the following will be done. The surveys are completely anonymous; thus the participants can’t be identified. Secondly, for the interviews, they will be conducted at the student’s leisure time, either before or after school in a location of their choice. Since I am the Assistant Principal, and pride myself in being in every classroom on a daily basis as well as in community events and am constantly interacting with athletes and extracurricular students, it is normal for me to be talking to students in any place before and after school. I will also use pseudonyms for student during the interviews; thus, they will be unidentifiable.

One of the greatest benefits for the participants in this study is the opportunity to contribute to the field of education and make a difference for the intended users, their peers. Also, by participating in this study, participants partake in a doctoral level work, which can serve as motivation and information in their future decisions to pursue and doctoral degree. Lastly, the participants will get the opportunity to collaborate with all stakeholders and for students; this may be a unique experience since their interactions with adults are limited to the classroom and extracurricular activities.

If you have any questions about the research project, you can call Hector Freytas, Assistant Principal at 708-415-7715 or hfreytas@my.nl.edu. You may also contact IRB Chair at National Louis University, Dr. Shaunti Knauf at 312-261-3526 or shaunti.kanuth@nl.edu. You may also contact my dissertation chair, Dr. Harrington Gibson at Harrington.Gibson@nl.edu or 224-233-2290. Thank you for your participation!

Parent Signature (Student only): ____________________Student Signature: ______________

Participant Signature:______________________________ Date:____________________________

Sincerely,
Héctor Freytas
Assistant Principal, MWHS
From: Assistant Principal Héctor Freytas

Date: October 31st, 2016.

Frequency: Daily from October 31st through November 4th, 2016 during 2nd hr. Announcements.

Are you interested in contributing to the field of education? Do you want your voice to be heard? Then you are invited to participate in a voluntary doctoral survey related to grading policies and procedures. To complete survey, a consent form must be signed. To obtain a form, stop by my office before or afterschool. Once form is signed, you will be emailed a link and QR Code for survey.

It will be open for one week, from Monday, October 31st through Friday, November 4th, 2016. It should take no more than 10 minutes. The survey is anonymous. Thanks for your efforts!

Sincerely,

Hector Freytas
Assistant Principal, WHS

https://goo.gl/forms/Cp1QeV3OrRUUDboM2
From: Assistant Principal Héctor Freytas

Reader: Student

Frequency: Read Daily from Monday, October 31st through Friday, November 4th 2016 during second hr. Announcements.

**Interview follow-up**

Were you intrigued by the survey questions? Are you looking for further participation? If so, you may sign-up for confidential interviews related to grading and grade reporting. This will be done on a first come, first serve basis. We need students and staff from all ethnic backgrounds, genders and ages. The interviews will be conducted one on one, for approximately 30 minutes at participant’s earliest convenience and preferred public location.

If you are interested, email Mr. Freytas at hectorfreytas@gmail.com or stop by his office anytime. Also, you must sign a consent form in order to participate in the interviews. The consent form will indicate the specifics of the study, time commitment, risks and benefits. Student will require an additional signature from their parents. Forms will be available at Mr. Freytas’s office.

Sincerely,

Héctor Freytas

Assistant Principal

WHS
Standards-Based Grading and Reporting Committee

Agenda
Date: Monday, November 21st 2016
Time: 3:30-5:30pm
Location: Mountain West High School Conference Room

1. Introductions  20min
   a. SBGRC
      i. Purpose
         1. Roles
         2. Mission
         3. Vision
      ii. Paperwork
      iii. Expectations
   b. Participant (Name & Good News!)

2. Norms  10min
   a. What makes a committee successful?

3. Focus Group Interview  45min

4. Literature (HW)  10min

5. Grading and Grade Reporting Tool (HW)  10min

6. Adjournment  15min
   a. Exit survey
Standards-Based Grading and Reporting Committee

Agenda

Date: Monday, December 12th, 2016
Time: 3:30-5:30pm
Location: Mountain West High School Conference Room

I. Data Analysis & Action Plan 80min
   A. Analysis Techniques 10min
      1. Collaboratively
      2. Themes & Common Lexicon
   B. Qualitative Data
      1. Grading and Grade Reporting Tool
      2. Grading and Grade Reporting Survey
      3. Focus Group Interviews
      4. Stakeholder Interviews
   C. Quantitative
      1. Student Performance Data
   D. Action Plan
      1. Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic and Timely (SMART Goal)
         a) MWHS stakeholders will explore standards-based grading and reporting by
            year 20XX and for possible implementation of the system and by the year
            20XX to
      2. Action Plan
         (1) Action Steps
         (2) Resources
         (3) Timeline
         (4) Person responsible
         (5) Proof of Outcome
      3. How do we move forward with the conclusions?
      4. Adjournment
   E. Exit Survey
APPENDIX AA: REDO/RETAKE POLICY

Redo/Retake Policy

JS Morton 201 District holds high standards for student achievement. To maintain high expectations and provide support for all students to meet them, the district enforces a redo/retake policy for student work that does not meet or exceed standards.

Students are eligible and expected to redo/retake essays, projects, quizzes, labs and tests that do not meet or exceed standards. Daily assignments may be eligible for redo/retake only at the teacher’s discretion.

Students will be provided one opportunity for redo/retake on a given item, with any additional attempts at the teacher’s discretion.

If not already required by the teacher, students must request a redo/retake within one week after receiving the graded assignment from the teacher. The teacher will communicate to the student any requirements that must be met prior to the redo/retake (i.e. after-school tutoring, extra practice assignments, etc.), as well as the deadline for submission. Each department will determine the deadlines for redos/retakes, based on the nature of the assignments.

The maximum grade earned on a redo/retake shall be full credit, given the original item is submitted on time with full effort demonstrated. The teacher has the discretion to return any item, ungraded, that is not complete or does not demonstrate full effort. Such an item will be subject to that teacher’s late work policy, with the final grade reflecting any loss of credit due to the late or incomplete submission.

In cases other than common assessments, teachers may provide an alternative assignment for students to demonstrate mastery of the standards.

Redo/Retake Committee

Spring 2013
# APPENDIX BB: THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL YANGON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## REPORT CARD (GRADES 2-5) MYANMAR

**The International School Yangon**  
Elementary School Report Card (Grades 2-5)

**Student**  
**Teacher**  
**Grade**  
**School Year**  
**Principal**

The primary purpose for reporting is to communicate student achievement and behaviors that support learning. This report documents student performance within a period of time and provides information regarding strengths and areas to improve. The intent of this report is to provide a common understanding of your child’s progress and to facilitate growth.

### Behaviors That Support Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trimester</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stays focused and uses time effectively</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Completes work and tasks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates organizational skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resolves conflicts in appropriate ways</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow directions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Works independently</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seeks help when needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actively participates in classroom activities</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Exhibits qualities of a growth mindset</td>
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</table>

**Trimester 1: Strengths/Areas to Improve**

**Trimester 2: Strengths/Areas to Improve**

**Trimester 3: Strengths/Areas to Improve**

### Marking for Achievement, Behaviors That Support Learning, and ESLRs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marking for Achievement</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Consistently Evident</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>Usually Evident</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Sometimes Evident</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Rarely Evident</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Not Assessed</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>Absences/tardiness</th>
<th>U/A</th>
<th>Unable to Assess</th>
<th>no</th>
<th>Absences/tardiness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Grade is carried over from previous trimester. This area of learning was not addressed at this time.

### Absences/Tardiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approximately 60 school days per reporting period</th>
<th>Trimester</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Days Absent</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Absences affected learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Days Tardy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tardiness affected learning</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Language Arts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trimester</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Foundational Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics, Word Recognition, &amp; Fluency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational Texts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion/Argument</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening and Speaking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension and Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of Knowledge &amp; Ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventions of Standard English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Acquisition and Use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trimester 1: Strengths/Areas to Improve**

**Trimester 2: Strengths/Areas to Improve**

**Trimester 3: Strengths/Areas to Improve**

### Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trimester</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operations and Algebraic Thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers and Operations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Measurement and Data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematical Practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trimester 1: Strengths/Areas to Improve**

**Trimester 2: Strengths/Areas to Improve**

**Trimester 3: Strengths/Areas to Improve**
### Social Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trimester</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and Geography</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government and Economics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trimester 1:** Strengths/Areas to Improve

**Trimester 2:** Strengths/Areas to Improve

**Trimester 3:** Strengths/Areas to Improve

### Computer Technology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trimester</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behaviors That Support Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Citizenship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Operations and Concepts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking and Problem Solving</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trimester 1:** Computer Technology Comments

**Trimester 2:** Computer Technology Comments

**Trimester 3:** Computer Technology Comments

### Science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trimester</th>
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<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth and Space Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Inquiry and Process</td>
<td></td>
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### Visual Arts

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behaviors That Support Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating Art</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceiving and Evaluating Art</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Visual Art Connections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trimester 1:** Visual Arts Comments

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**Trimester 3:** Visual Arts Comments

### Physical Fitness and Health

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<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behaviors That Support Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attainment of Physical Fitness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Physical Fitness Concepts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Skills &amp; Movement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trimester 1:** Physical Fitness Comments

**Trimester 2:** Physical Fitness Comments

**Trimester 3:** Physical Fitness Comments

### Music

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<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating Music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producing and Performing Music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding to/Reflecting on Music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trimester 1:** Music Comments

**Trimester 2:** Music Comments

**Trimester 3:** Music Comments

### World Languages (French or Mandarin)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trimester</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behaviors That Support Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Course Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretive Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentational Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trimester 1:** World Languages Comments

**Trimester 2:** World Languages Comments

**Trimester 3:** World Languages Comments

Promoted to grade____ for the______school year.

Teacher Signature

Principal Signature
**ISY Elementary School Report Card Guide**

### Achievement Grade Descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Descriptors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Partially Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Novice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Exemplary**: A ‘4’ indicates the student demonstrates mastery, with excellence, of the grade level standards with relative ease and consistency, and often exceeds the cognitive level of the standards. The student applies and extends the key concepts, processes and skills of the grade level.
- **Proficient**: A ‘3’ indicates the student demonstrates mastery of grade level standards at the cognitive level the standard is written. The student consistently grasps and applies key concepts, processes and skills with limited errors.
- **Partially Proficient**: A ‘2’ indicates the student demonstrates mastery of some grade level standards. The student inconsistently grasps and applies some of the key concepts, processes, and skills with significant errors.
- **Novice**: A ‘1’ indicates the student has minimal understanding and does not meet grade-level standards. Performance is inconsistent even with guidance and support.

- **Not Assessed**: These standards or areas of learning have not been addressed at this time.
- **Unable to Assess**: Insufficient assessment data exists to make a fair evaluation of student performance of expectations.

### Specialist Classes Behaviors That Support Learning Grade Descriptors

- **C** = Consistently Evident
- **U** = Usually Evident
- **S** = Sometimes Evident
- **R** = Rarely Evident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On task, engaged with, and focused on learning without teacher influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibits a positive and respectful attitude towards class guidelines, class expectations, and to classmates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comes to class prepared in every way needed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On time for class and ready to begin learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Expected Schoolwide Learner Results Descriptors

- **Exhibits Qualities of a Global Citizen who . . .**
  - Is environmentally aware and active (Caring)
  - Contributes to the welfare of the world community (Caring)
  - Respects the dignity and worth of others (Principled, Open-minded)
  - Manifests the virtues of honesty and integrity (Principled)
  - Understands and appreciates the values, traditions, and perspectives of others (Open-minded)

- **Exhibits Qualities of a Successful Communicator who . . .**
  - Demonstrates the skills of effective collaboration (Communicators)
  - Uses appropriate technology as a tool to convey ideas (Communicators)
  - Writes, speaks, reads and listens with purpose (Communicators)
  - Is multi-lingual (Communicators)

- **Demonstrates Complex Thinking and Creativity by . . .**
  - Gathering analyzing and processing information from a variety of sources (Thinkers)
  - Being an effective and creative problem-solver (Thinkers)
  - Being an effective decision-maker (Thinkers)
  - Pursuing inquiry and curiosity within learning (Inquirers)
  - Building a foundation of knowledge and applying understandings to new situations (Knowledgeable)

- **Demonstrates Qualities of a Lifelong Learner who . . .**
  - Takes responsibility for her/his own learning (Reflective)
  - Values all types of learning: academic, social, athletic, aesthetic and emotional (Balanced)
  - Has the confidence to take on new challenges (Risk-takers)
  - Gives thoughtful consideration to her/his own learning (Reflective)
## Report Card

### Name of School

Address, Calgary, AB  Postal Code
Phone: (403) 777-
Principal:
Website: www.cbe.ab.ca/

### Report Card Date:

Last Name, First Name (CBE#)
(Legal Name: Last Name, First Name)
Grade
Homeroom: Teacher name(s) (room#)
ALBERTA EDUCATION ID:

### School Notice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement of Alberta Program of Studies</th>
<th>Citizenship, Personal Development, Character Summative Indicators of Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Excellent</td>
<td>EX Exemplary Strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Good</td>
<td>EV Evident Strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Basic</td>
<td>EM Emerging Strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Not Meeting</td>
<td>SR Network of Support Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NER No Evaluation Recorded</td>
<td>Insufficient evidence is available to be able to determine an accurate grade at this time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL English Language Learning</td>
<td>The student's language proficiency level impacts the evaluation of achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPP Individual Program Plan</td>
<td>Achievement of this report card outcome is reported through the student's Individual Program Plan. (IPP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;4&quot; Modified</td>
<td>A numerical indicator with an asterisk (&quot;1&quot;, &quot;2&quot;, &quot;3&quot; or &quot;4&quot;) is used when a student is formally identified with an Alberta Education Special Education code and is accessing modified programming. Modified means programming in which the learning outcomes are significantly different from the provincial curriculum and are specifically selected to meet students' special education needs. Student achievement has been evaluated against these modified learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use and processes of technology, as defined by Alberta Education ICT outcomes are infused into core and some other subjects and are included in the calculation of these marks. Citizenship, Personal Development and Character are integral parts of all programs, and not separate courses.
**ESL Language Proficiency Levels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Rpt 1</th>
<th>Rpt 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LP1 - Beginner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP2 - High Beginner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP3 - Intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP4 - High Intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP5 - Advanced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information regarding ELL Language Proficiency levels, please see "Reporting English Language Learning Proficiency" attached.

**Teacher(s):**

- Listening proficiency level
- Speaking proficiency level
- Reading proficiency level
- Writing proficiency level
- Overall proficiency level

**R3-Citizenship in Learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rpt 1</th>
<th>Rpt 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teacher(s):**

- Exercises democratic rights and responsibilities within the learning community
- Demonstrates respect and appreciation for diversity
- Works and collaborates effectively with others

**R4-Personal Development through Learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rpt 1</th>
<th>Rpt 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teacher(s):**

- Sets and works towards learning goals
- Engages in learning with confidence and persistence

**R5-Character in Learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rpt 1</th>
<th>Rpt 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teacher(s):**

- Treats others with respect and compassion
- Makes responsible decisions
### English Language Arts 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reads to explore, construct and extend understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes to develop, organize and express information and ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manages and evaluates information and ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructs meaning and makes connections through speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructs meaning and makes connections through listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represents ideas and creates understanding through a variety of media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Math 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understands mathematical concepts and relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses mathematical reasoning to analyze and solve problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explores and develops strategies for mental mathematics and estimation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develops and applies appropriate and efficient strategies for computation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Models, represents and communicates mathematical ideas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Phys Ed 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performs and refines movement skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperates to demonstrate fair play and teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explores and applies strategies for leading a healthy, active life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Science 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understands and makes connections between concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzes and solves problems through scientific reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develops skills for inquiry and communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explores scientific events and issues in society and the environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Social Studies 9

**Teacher(s):**
- Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of citizenship and identity
- Explores events and issues from different points of view
- Demonstrates skills and processes for inquiry and research
- Communicates ideas in an informed and persuasive manner

## Amatrol Studies 9 (CTF)

**Teacher(s):**
- Explores interests and skills in the design of approaches to challenges
- Creates a product, performance or service in response to challenges
- Appraises process, product and personal contribution in response to challenges
- Communicates and demonstrates knowledge and skills in response to challenges

## Health & Life Skills 9

**Teacher(s):**
- Makes safe and healthy choices based on experiences and information
- Develops skills to form and maintain healthy relationships
- Explores roles and responsibilities to work towards life and learning goals

## Leadership 9 (CTF)

**Teacher(s):**
- Explores interests and skills in the design of approaches to challenges
- Creates a product, performance or service in response to challenges
- Appraises process, product and personal contribution in response to challenges
- Communicates and demonstrates knowledge and skills in response to challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Rpt 1</th>
<th>Rpt 2</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Days Enrolled</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Days Late</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Days Absent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance is calculated to the day report cards are printed. For a more accurate report, please call the school.
APPENDIX DD: CALGARY BOAR OF EDUCATION 3RD GRADE REPORT CARD

Name of School
Calgary Board
of Education

Address, Calgary, AB. Postal Code
Phone: (403) 777-
Principal:
Website: www.cbe.ab.ca/

Report Card Date:

Last Name, First Name (CBE#)
(Legal Name: Last Name, First Name)
Grade
Homeroom: Teacher name(s) (room#)
ALBERTA EDUCATION ID:

School Notice

Indicator Legend

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\*2 |
\*1 |

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**Teacher(s):**
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- Demonstrates respect and appreciation for diversity
- Works and collaborates effectively with others

**R4-Personal Development through Learning**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rpt 1</th>
<th>Rpt 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teacher(s):**
- Sets and works towards learning goals
- Engages in learning with confidence and persistence

**R5-Character in Learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rpt 1</th>
<th>Rpt 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teacher(s):**
- Treats others with respect and compassion
- Makes responsible decisions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Rpt 1</th>
<th>Rpt 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>English Language Arts 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher(s):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reads to explore, construct and extend understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes to develop, organize and express information and ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manages and evaluates information and ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructs meaning and makes connections through speaking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructs meaning and makes connections through listening</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represents ideas and creates understanding through a variety of media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher(s):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understands mathematical concepts and relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses mathematical reasoning to analyze and solve problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explores and develops strategies for mental mathematics and estimation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develops and applies appropriate and efficient strategies for computation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Models, represents and communicates mathematical ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phys Ed 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher(s):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performs and refines movement skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperates to demonstrate fair play and teamwork</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explores and applies strategies for leading a healthy, active life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher(s):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understands and makes connections between concepts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzes and solves problems through scientific reasoning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develops skills for inquiry and communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explores scientific events and issues in society and the environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Social Studies 3

**Teacher(s):**
- Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of citizenship and identity
- Explores events and issues from different points of view
- Demonstrates skills and processes for inquiry and research
- Communicates ideas in an informed and persuasive manner

**Rpt 1** | **Rpt 2**
--- | ---

---

# Art 3

**Teacher(s):**
- Demonstrates thoughtful, creative decision making to communicate through art
- Creates visual art that demonstrates technical proficiency
- Analyzes, evaluates and responds critically to art works

**Rpt 1** | **Rpt 2**
--- | ---

---

# Health & Life Skills 3

**Teacher(s):**
- Makes safe and healthy choices based on experiences and information
- Develops skills to form and maintain healthy relationships
- Explores roles and responsibilities to work towards life and learning goals

**Rpt 1** | **Rpt 2**
--- | ---

---

# Music 3

**Teacher(s):**
- Demonstrates technical ability with clarity and precision
- Analyzes, evaluates and responds critically to music
- Understands and expresses musical ideas

**Rpt 1** | **Rpt 2**
--- | ---

---

### Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance Type</th>
<th>Rpt 1</th>
<th>Rpt 2</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Days Enrolled</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Days Late</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Days Absent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance is calculated to the day report cards are printed. For a more accurate report, please call the school.
**Name of School**
Address, Calgary, AB  Postal Code
Phone: (403) 777-
Principal:
Website: www.cbe.ab.ca/

---

**Report Card Date:**
Last Name, First Name (CBE#)
(Legal Name: Last Name, First Name)
Grade
Homeroom: Teacher name(s) (room#)
ALBERTA EDUCATION ID:

---

**School Notice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement of Alberta Program of Studies</th>
<th>Citizenship, Personal Development, Character Summative Indicators of Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Basic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not Meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Indicator Legend**

- **NER**: No Evaluation Recorded
- **ELL**: English Language Learning
- **IPP**: Individual Program Plan

- **1**: Modified
  - A numerical indicator with an asterisk (*) is used when a student is formally identified with an Alberta Education Special Education code and is accessing modified programming. Modified means programming in which the learning outcomes are significantly different from the provincial curriculum and are specifically selected to meet students' special education needs. Student achievement has been evaluated against these modified learning outcomes.

---

The use and processes of technology, as defined by Alberta Education ICT outcomes are infused into core and some other subjects and are included in the calculation of these marks. Citizenship, Personal Development and Character are integral parts of all programs, and not separate courses.
Overview of the Middle School Practitioners’ Framework for Standards-based Reporting

The purpose of the Practitioners’ Framework for Standards-based Reporting is to provide a sample of a standards based report. As districts implement the learning standards, many are reflecting on their reporting systems to ensure alignment with the revised standards and considering transitioning to a standards-based reporting system. To support such efforts, Illinois convened a Standards Based Reporting Committee of educators statewide who have initiated the process in their own schools or districts. A website is now available with numerous examples resources to guide district efforts and contact information of the practitioners. The key deliverable for the committee was to develop a sample framework for a standards based report for Elementary and Middle Schools. The Middle School Framework is located on Pages 2-4.

This template design is based upon the research of Dr. Thomas Guskey, Dr. Robert Marzano and their associates. A large number of standards based report cards were reviewed to give guidance to the document. Six guiding principles were used to develop this report card:

- Keep the purpose of the card at the forefront. The purpose of the report card is to give information to parents on how their child is doing with learning standards for their grade.
- It must be in parent friendly language.
- The report card is one part of a Standards Based Reporting System. It is not intended to be the only source of information for teachers or parents.
• Teachers should have additional information on each child to share with parents in conferences, online or on the phone. This should include specific progress with regard to the learning standards being covered and examples of the student’s work.

• Separate the academic grades (product) from behaviors (process). All need to be reported, but not combined.

Districts can begin with this framework and construct the statements that best suit their individual curriculum for the learning standards being addressed in the various courses. Academic departments may wish to meet and agree on general statements for specific courses.

The option of adding a photo of the teacher add a personal touch that research indicates is favorable for parents, but it is just an option. Districts are the best judges of what will meet the needs of their communities.

Visit the Standards Based Reporting Website for additional information and sample documents to support the transition to a standard based grading system.
Practitioners’ Framework for Standards-based Reporting

(Middle School/High School)

The purpose for this report card is to inform parents regarding their child’s progress toward meeting grade level state standards. It indicates learning successes and areas where additional effort is needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Marking Key – Achievement</th>
<th>Marking Key - Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 — Below Standard</td>
<td>4 — Consistently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 — Approaching Standard</td>
<td>3 — Usually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 — Meets Standards</td>
<td>2 — Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 — Exceed Standards</td>
<td>1 — Rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NA - Not Assessed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* - Modified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Absent</th>
<th>Tardy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher picture and contact information</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1 General statements explaining what topics were addressed during the quarter. Next, specific statements referencing the student’s learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher picture and contact information</th>
<th>Language Arts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1 General statements explaining what topics were addressed during the quarter. Next, specific statements referencing the student’s learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Effort</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>District choice</th>
<th>District choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q1 General statements explaining what topics were addressed during the quarter. Next, specific statements referencing the student’s learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Social Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Effort</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>District choice</th>
<th>District choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q1 General statements explaining what topics were addressed during the quarter. Next, specific statements referencing the student’s learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Effort</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>District choice</th>
<th>District choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q1 General statements explaining what topics were addressed during the quarter. Next, specific statements referencing the student’s learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Visual Arts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Effort</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>District choice</th>
<th>District choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Q1 General statements explaining what topics were addressed during the quarter. Next, specific statements referencing the student’s learning.

Q2

Q3

Q4

## Physical Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Effort</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>District choice</th>
<th>District choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Q1 General statements explaining what topics were addressed during the quarter. Next, specific statements referencing the student’s learning.

Q2

Q3

Q4

## Elective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Effort</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>District choice</th>
<th>District choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Q1 General statements explaining what topics were addressed during the quarter. Next, specific statements referencing the student’s learning.

Q2

Q3

Q4
# APPENDIX GG: MWSD ELEMENTARY STANDARDS BASED REPORT CARD

## Westmont CUSD 201

### Student: Katie P. Victoria
2nd Grade
Homeroom: Mrs. Gordon

### JT Manning Elementary School
Principal: Mrs. Kristin Krestel
2016 - 2017

### Measurements and Data
- Estimates and measures using inches, feet, centimeters, meters
- Solves problems involving dollar bills, quarters, dimes, nickels, pennies
- Tells and writes times to the nearest five minutes

### Numbers and Operations in Base 10
- Demonstrates understanding of place value within 1,000
- Uses place value understanding to apply strategies to add and subtract within 1,000

### Geometry
- Recognizes and draws shapes given specific attributes
- Partitions circles and rectangles into 2, 3, and 4 equal parts

### Science

### Social Studies

### Art

### Music

### Physical Education

### Class: 2 HOME ROOM
Teacher: Mrs. Gordon

### Work Habits and Social Skills
- Listens to and follows directions
- Makes good use of time
- Demonstrates home work responsibility
- Works carefully and neatly
- Demonstrates organizational skills
- Works cooperatively
- Respects others
- Follows classroom/school rules

### Class: 2 LITERACY
Teacher: Mrs. Gordon

### Reading - Foundational Skills
- Applies grade-level phonics and word recognition (decodes, knows sight words)
- Reads grade-level text with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension

### Reading - Literature and Informational Text
- Asks and answers questions to demonstrate understanding of grade-level text
- Retells stories with key details and determines central message in literature
- Identifies main topic, key details, and purpose of informational text with evidence

### Writing
- Writes to communicate ideas and information effectively (details, facts, reasons)
- Uses introduced skills in capitalization and punctuation
- Uses introduced skills in grammar
- Uses introduced skills in spelling

### Speaking and Listening
- Engages in informal and formal speaking through group discussions
- Expresses ideas clearly through presentations

### Class: 2 MATH
Teacher: Mrs. Gordon

### Mathematics

### Operations and Algebraic Thinking
- Fluently solves addition facts within 20
- Fluently solves subtraction facts within 20
- Solves addition and subtraction word problems within 100
- Demonstrates foundations of multiplication (repeated addition)

* Not assessed at this time
APPENDIX HH: SBG ENGLISH DEPARTMENT ELECTRONIC GRADEBOOK AND GRADE CATEGORIES

Score Method
Grades based on percents assigned to Categories
Total Percent Allocated: 100%

NOTE: Once a grading period has closed in this Gradebook, you will not be able to modify your Score Method. Please make sure to change your Score Method, if needed, prior to a grading period closing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Category Description</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENTR</td>
<td>On Time</td>
<td>00.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDIN</td>
<td>READING INFORMATION</td>
<td>15.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDLT</td>
<td>READING LITERATURE</td>
<td>15.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READ</td>
<td>READING</td>
<td>15.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLE</td>
<td>SPEAKING/LISTENING</td>
<td>15.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRTT</td>
<td>WRITING</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WREN</td>
<td>WORK ETHIC</td>
<td>00.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX II: GRADE AND GRADE REPORTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

EFFECTIVENESS TOOL POWERED BY GOOGLE FORMS

1. School Under Analysis (Check One)
   - U-46
   - Mountain West High School
   - Lindblom High School
   - JS Morton 201
   - Naperville 203

2. Is there a grading philosophy, principal or purpose statement?
   Yes/No

3. Are student’s grades affected by non-academic factors (attendance, participation, behavior, non-compliance)?
   Yes/No

4. Are grades calculated traditionally by using undefined letter grades (A-F), percentages (0-100%) and/or unequal incremental value between each grade division?
   Yes/No

5. Are grades calculated using defined letters and/or points (5) 4-0 with proficiency descriptions and equal incremental values between each grade?
   Yes/No

6. Do students earn an extra point for honors or Advanced Placement courses?
   Yes/No

7. Are grades reported through traditional undefined letters and/or percentages?
   Yes/No

8. Are grades reported through defined letters and/or points aligned to descriptions and standards?
   Yes/No

9. Is late work accepted?
   Yes/No
10. Is homework graded?  
Yes/No

11. Are retakes allowed?  
Yes/No

12. General Comments about school under analysis  
Long answer text
APPENDIX JJ: STANDARDS-BASED GRADING AND REPORTING NIGHT

Standards-Based Grading and Reporting Night
909 N. Oakwood Drive
Westmont, IL 60559
Location: Auditorium

Agenda

I. Introduction 5min

II. Presentation about Standards-Based Grading and Reporting 40min

III. Questions 15min
Greetings Stakeholders!

I am currently pursuing my doctorate in educational leadership and would like to inform you all about an innovative grading and reporting practice known as standards-based grading. Standards based grading is an evaluation practice that aligns grade marking and reporting to standards. The presentation will be held from on February 23rd 6:00 to 7:00PM in the Westmont High School auditorium. This presentation solely represent the research conducted by me and does not represent the views and/or beliefs of CUSD 201 or Westmont High School. Hope to see you there. Light refreshments will be served!

Sincerely,

Hector Freytas
Assistant Principal WHS
APPENDIX LL: STANDARDS-BASED GRADING NIGHT POWERPOINT

Standards-Based Grading & Reporting

Héctor Freytas
National City University
Doctoral Candidate
November, 2016

Introduction

14 years in the field of Education
10 years as a teacher
6 years as an administrator
Happily married with children & family
Successful students, strong families, community

In 2011-12, remediation cost students and families
$1.5 billion in direct out-of-pocket costs
$380 million in loans


Many students require remediation when they enter college.

52%
20%
74%
12%

Only 1 out of 10 students who take a remedial course go on to graduate.

Earnings and unemployment rates by educational attainment

Good Grades/Honor Roll/Graduation Rate

Why do so many schools have students with good grades, defined as a 3.0 GPA, graduate at 60% or more of their seniors and have a majority of their students on the honor roll yet, those very same students are not exceeding standards on standardized test such as the PARCC, NIREAP, and the ACT and are obliged to take remedial courses when entering college?
Purpose of Grading

The purpose of grading is to communicate student achievement of current content and performance standards to interested stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, colleges and other institutions).

Individual student achievement should:
1. Be measured against defined curriculum outcomes/standards
2. Be reported separately from other measures such as:
   - Behavior
   - Attendance
   - Extra-curricular Participation
   - Effort

Grades should reflect mastery and progress on standards

Letter or numerical grades, alone, do not tell a complete story. They do not provide information on what students know or how to get better, only how many they got right.

### Traditional Grading System Versus Standards-Based Grading System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards-Based</th>
<th>Traditional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Homework Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felicia</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Standards-Based Grade Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards-Based Grade Book</th>
<th>Objective 1: Write an anchor ending for a story</th>
<th>Objective 2: Summarize the climax's story</th>
<th>Objective 3: Compare and contrast two stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felicia</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
<td>Partially proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Equal Interval Grading

- A= 100-100
- B= 90-90
- C= 80-80
- D= 70-70
- F= 60-60

- This would be absurd.
- The range of 'A' would have a huge inflationary effect.

Then Why Use This Scale?

Could it be just as absurd?
What is Standards-Based Grading?

Definition: It's a comprehensive system that aligns instruction and assessment to standards, assigns grades, grading and reporting to standards (Marzano, 2008; Reeves, 2000; Wilmot, 2011; Gaskey, 2015; Eichmann, 2016; Valverde, 2015). In other words, it's grading students according to how they performed on the standard, a learning goal, with a specific skill building task than on the overall assignment or test with points, letters and/or percentages.

SBG Categories gradebook

Assessments and Assignments should be graded on a 0-4 scale using rubrics. If short or multiple choice questions assignments could be grouped and graded:
- 1-4 questions right—1.0—5.0, Developing proficiency
- 5-8 questions right—2.5—5.0, Interim Proficiency
- 9-12 questions right—3.0—5.0, Proficient
- 13-16 questions right—3.5—5.0, Advanced
- 17-18 questions right—4.0—5.0, Mastery

Rubrics describe the level of mastery at each score.

Modified Marzano Scale

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<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Point Interval</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
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<td>60-74.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0-1.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>E/F</td>
<td>0.0-1.0</td>
<td>0-39.99</td>
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On the 0-4 equitable grading scale

The range for each letter grade is identical:
- One low grade does not doom a student to failure
- Students still earn no credit for no work
- The goal is not to punish students with D’s, but to require them to do the work
- Student achievement is defined by more than a percentage score

Current Research

What statistical significance has standards-based grading and reporting made or it make?


Shyamala, K. (2010). An analysis of the correlation between standards-based, non-standards based grading systems and achievement as measured by the School Assessment Program (SAP).

Stephens, S. (2013). The 12.5 grade gap at the age of 5 and their classroom grading practices. Investigating the use of standards-based grading or the school model assessment program (SAP).


Traditional Scale/4.0 Scale/Standards

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<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
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### What is Standards-Based Reporting?

Definition: A reporting system that communicates student achievement on skills necessary to meet standards in each content area (Marzano, 2008; Hayes, 2008; Womack, 2011; Gresky, 2015; Schimmer, 2015; Vatterott, 2015). This is accomplished through a standards-based report card.

### References


### Proposed Change

- Switch from % scale to 0-4.5 scale
- Switch from subject-based report card to a standards-based report card
- Formative and summative assessments should be aligned to standards
- Collect evidence and assign points of evidence needed to mastery
- Modify handshake or assignmentbased for standards-based report card
- Use SWB formatively, summatively, and to form grades
- Allow reassessments

### Questions
APPENDIX MM: 5.0 SCALE WITH LETTER GRADES AND PERCENTAGES

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<th>Grdbk %</th>
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**APPENDIX NN: SBG MATH DEPARTMENT ELECTRONIC GRADEBOOK AND GRADE CATEGORIES**

![Image of Electronic Gradebook](image-url)

The Electronic Gradebook shows the scores for each student in various categories, including U3, VWS, F, ASMT, CLPT, HWK, and others. Each student's scores are organized by column, with options for sorting and viewing details. The category maintenance section allows users to change score methods and sets categories for grading purposes.