Monticello High School Standards-Referenced Reporting Handbook

Table of Contents

Providing rigorous, authentic, personalized learning utilizing the local and global communities.

Purpose of Grades

Grades communicate the academic achievement of a student at a particular point in time (Guskey, 2015). Communication, in the form of grades, reflects what a student knows and can do in relation to content area learning goals as defined by the Common Core and Iowa Core Standards.

Philosophy

Grant Wiggins (1993,1996) and Marzano (2010) described s*tandards-referenced grading* as a system in which teachers give students feedback about their proficiency on a set of defined standards and schools report students' levels of performance on the grade-level standards, but students are not moved forward (or backward) to a different set of standards based on their level of competency. Monticello Community School District believes in an intervention and enrichment approach to standards proficiency.   When a student struggles to reach proficiency we will intervene on the student's behalf to provide intervention and additional opportunities to learn and relearn the standards. If a student demonstrates proficiency on a standards prior to teaching and learning occurring, we will provide enrichment opportunities to enhance student application of a standard.

c

Standards-referenced grading is a research based approach to assessing and reporting student achievement. Many scholars in the field of education, including Thomas Guskey, Robert Marzano, Ken O'Connor, and Rick Wormeli, support the implementation and extension of standards-referenced grading. The following handbook reflects standards-referenced reporting practices and implementation at Monticello's High School.

Providing rigorous, authentic, personalized learning utilizing the local and global communities.

We believe:
- *Standards-referenced reporting more accurately assesses student achievement.*
- *Standards-referenced reporting practices clearly communicate learning goals to all stakeholders.*
- *Standards-referenced reporting develops self-directed and intrinsically motivated learners.*
- *Standards-referenced reporting better addresses the needs of all students.*
- *Standards-referenced reporting is focused on student learning.*
- *A 4 point grading scale enhances the validity and reliability of academic grades.*
- *Practice is essential for concept development but not necessary for grade calculation.*
- *Behavior is vital to student success and should be reported separately in the gradebook.*
- *Academic grades should reflect academic achievement only.*

Standards-Referenced v. Traditional Grading

The focal point of standards-referenced reporting/grading is learning. Contrary to standards-referenced grading, a traditional grading system has numerous flaws that inaccurately represent student achievement. Many non-academic components in a traditional grading system reward external factors (extra credit, homework, positive learner behaviors, etc.) that distort the overall academic grade (O'Connor, 2011, p.15). Rewarding these factors makes it difficult to discern whether a grade reflects what a student knows and can do, external factors, or a combination of both (O'Connor, 2011, pp.3-4). For example, students that complete extra credit may improve their grade without necessarily improving their learning. In many instances, credit is awarded to students based upon the completion of extra credit rather than the quality of learning displayed within the task. At other times, students receive additional credit for bringing classroom materials to the teacher (tissue paper, dry-erase markers, etc.), none of which contribute to the development of knowledge and skills (Townsley, 2015). By separating or eliminating external factors in the grading process, students and parents are given an accurate representation of academic achievement (O'Connor, 2011, pp. 22).

Most traditional systems are predicated upon a 100 point grading scale and the attainment of points to determine a final grade. In addition to having one hundred degrees of variation, the 100 point scale is negatively skewed toward the bottom end of the grading scale (Reeves, 2004, p.324). The typical percentage range for each letter grade is ten points, however, the grade range for an F is sixty points (Reeves, 2004, p.324). A zero, the most damaging grade, has six times the weight of all other letter grades (Reeves, 2004, p.325). Student are not only more

statistically likely to receive an F within a 100 point scale, but the F also has more impact than any other grade. The result of implementing a 100 point scale is an inaccurate representation of learning. A 4 point scale in a standard-referenced system has less variation from one level of achievement to another equating to a more accurate measure of scholastic acquisition.

As students progress through their learning, a traditional grading system emphasizes point attainment rather than knowledge and skill development. Grades are economic bartering in a traditional system (Wormeli, 2010). If student X scores Y amount of points they receive Z for a grade (Wormeli, 2010). Additionally, some students play the "points game" and do just enough to pass with minimal effort or learning. Students in traditional grading systems are focused on earning points rather than learning and making deeper connections with content. The shift from points to learning in standards-based grading is more conducive to learning and academic development.

External factors, such as homework, decrease the validity and reliability of academic grades (O'Connor, 2011, pp.3-4). Homework, or practice in a standards-based system, is vital to development, growth, and improvement of learners over time. Unfortunately, traditional grading practice includes homework/practice as part of the final grade calculation. This penalizes students that require additional time and practice to learn the content (Wormeli, 2010). Students that "get it" quickly are rewarded while others needing additional time and practice are inadvertently punished. Including homework/practice in the final grade discourages students from persevering through academic challenges and perpetuates a defeatist attitude toward learning. If practice is essential to improving skills necessary to succeed, students should not be penalized for their development. In standards-based grading, it is more important that students learn the content rather than how quickly they learn it.

The purpose of grades is to communicate and reflect the academic achievement of a student (Guskey, 2015). When determining academic achievement it is important to exclude behavioral factors within the academic grade. Appropriate behavior inside and outside of the classroom is so important to academic success that it is necessary to assess and record these skills separately. Grading of student behavior, known as 21st Century and Employability Skills, in a traditional classroom inflates or deflates academic achievement. Late work penalties, for instance, artificially lower an academic grade and present a false representation of student knowledge (Guskey, 2013, p.70). Rather than penalize the academic grade it is more accurate to assess late work within 21st Century and Employability Skills. Improving a grade for class participation is a more accurate assessment of collaboration and discussion than academics. Interactions with peers and adults are more accurate measurements of cooperation and respect and should be assessed therein. A standards-based grading system seeks to reduce if not eliminate these factors by recording academics and 21st Century and Employability Skills separately within the gradebook.

Non-Negotiables

At Monticello High School eight non-negotiables guide the implementation of standards-referenced grading practice. Each teacher implementing standards referenced grading within their classrooms will adhere to the following:

1. Grading is based upon a student evidence of learning.
2. Academic achievement is scored separately from employability skills so students, parents and teachers are able to clearly distinguish between behavior and knowledge.
3. Extra credit is not offered. Additional practice to develop skills is provided upon request.
4. Homework, referred to as practice, is not be included in a student's final grade.
5. Learning targets are clear and communicated to students and parents using a variety of methods.
6. Final letter grades represent academic achievement only.
7. Students may demonstrate proficiency over time. Course grades are finalized at the end of each semester.
8. See "Reassessment Section" for information on the "must-do" for reassessment

4 Point Scale

Utilizing a four point scale provides a more fair and accurate representation of what a student knows and can do (Reeves, 2004). A four point scale will be used to record scores within the gradebook. Each letter grade in the scale below is weighted equally and provides students equal opportunities to receive any grade within the grading scale. The addition of Failure due to Insufficient Evidence (F/IE) is added to the scale to distinguish between failure due to lack of knowledge and skill and failure due to a lack of student evidence (Des Moines Public Schools, 2015). Failure due to Insufficient Evidence will be recorded as a 0 in the gradebook. Although the 4 points scale does not eliminate the points game perpetuated in a traditional grading system, it mitigates the amount of variation within grading practice.

Providing rigorous, authentic, personalized learning utilizing the local and global communities.

Scale	Grade	How Deep
4	Mastery (M)	Understand it at a deeper level
3	Proficient (P)	Know it
2	Making Progress (MP)	Kind of know it
1	Needs Support (NS)	Barely know it
0	Failure due to Insufficient Evidence	Not Assessed

Guiding Practices for Grading

1. A consistent 4 point interval grading scales will be used.
2. Letter grades, derived from the 4 point scale, will be based solely on achievement of course/grade level standards. Student participation, work completion, and ability to work with others will be reported separately using the Employability Skills Rubric
3. Scores will be based on a body of evidence.
4. Achievement will be organized by standard/learning topic and reported as a scale score.
5. Standard will be given a "mode" score and all standard "mode" scores will be averaged together for an overall course grade.
6. Students will have multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency.
7. Accommodations and modifications will be provided to students that demonstrate academic need.

21st Century and Employability Skills

In addition to academic achievement, teachers implementing standards-based grading practices also assess students' 21st Century and Employability Skills. We believe that these behaviors are so important that they need to be assessed and recorded separately from the academic grade in the gradebook. The following Iowa Core employability areas are assessed using the MHS Employability Skills Rubric Participation, Work Completion, Behavior, Working with Peers, and Working with Adults.

 Along with the teacher's Employability Skills Rubric assessment, students will reflect on their progress in regards to employability skills. This will be shared with parents in PowerSchool and at parent-teacher conferences as a communication tool with parents regarding learner behaviors in the classroom. It will be recorded in PowerSchool as "exempt" and will not calculate into the student's overall course academic grade.

The following terms are used to describe the frequency of expected behavior exhibited in relation to the criteria within the 21st Century and Employability Skills Rubric:

Providing rigorous, authentic, personalized learning utilizing the local and global communities.

Employability Skills Rubric

		Participation	Work Completion	Behavior	Working with Peers	Working with Adults
Iowa Core 21st Century Skill Standards		Adapts to and carries out various roles and responsibilities and works flexibly in a climate of change.	Demonstrates productivity and accountability by meeting high expectations and established timelines	Demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior; demonstrates initiative and self-direction and uses individual talents and skills for productive and appropriate outcomes.	Communicates and works productively with peers, incorporating different perspectives and cross cultural understanding, to increase innovation and the quality of work; exhibits social responsibility while collaborating to achieve common goals.	Communicates and works productively with adults. Demonstrates an understanding of the adult-student communication needed to ensure academic and social success.
Leader Level Demonstrates personal commitment and mastery, and encourages others by work and deed to do the same.	4	❑ On time ❑ Brings materials ❑ Participation meets classroom expectations ❑ Assists others	❑ Organized ❑ Responsible time management ❑ Work is completed on time ❑ Quality of work is detailed and specific to standard	❑ Accepts ownership of actions ❑ Respects others ❑ Shows courtesy ❑ Demonstrates self-control ❑ Follows classroom expectations and procedures ❑ Encourages others to exhibit the above qualities	❑ Demonstrates effective teamwork ❑ Delegation of roles based on group strengths ❑ Contributes to task completion ❑ Shows and receives respect ❑ Helps resolve conflict ❑ Leads or supports when appropriate	❑ Demonstrates effective communication skills ❑ Demonstrates willingness to work with adults ❑ Accepts feedback ❑ Demonstrates respectful behavior towards adults ❑ Seeks out help and asks questions as needed ❑ Models effective communication in the classroom
Participant Level Carries out responsibilities in an adequate way, but does not take on a leadership role.	3	❑ On time ❑ Brings materials ❑ Participation meets classroom expectations	❑ Organization is adequate ❑ Time management is adequate ❑ Work is completed on time ❑ Work meets requirements	❑ Accepts ownership of actions ❑ Respects others ❑ Demonstrates self-control ❑ Follows classroom expectations and procedures	❑ Demonstrates adequate teamwork ❑ Contributes to task completion ❑ Is respectful to group members	❑ Demonstrates adequate communication skills ❑ Demonstrates willingness to work with adults ❑ Accepts feedback ❑ Demonstrates respectful behavior towards adults ❑ Seeks out help and asks questions
	2	❑ Participation meets classroom expectations	❑ Work is completed on time ❑ Work meets requirements	❑ Demonstrates adequate behavior ❑ Follows classroom expectations and procedures	❑ Contributes to task completion ❑ Is respectful to group members	❑ Demonstrates adequate communication skills ❑ Demonstrates willingness to work with adults (with prompting)
Detractor Level Does not meet the standards personally, and detracts from others meeting the standards.	1	❑ Participation meets minimal classroom expectations	❑ Work is on time (with support) ❑ Work meets minimal requirements	❑ Follows classroom expectations and procedures (with coaching)	❑ Contributes to task completion (with coaching)	❑ Demonstrates adequate communication skills (with coaching) ❑ Demonstrates some willingness to work with adults (with prompting)
	0	❑ Participation does not meet classroom expectations	❑ Does not hand in work on time ❑ Work does not meet requirements	❑ Does not follow classroom expectations and procedures	❑ Does not contribute to task completion	❑ Does not demonstrate communication skills and willingness to work with adults

Providing rigorous, authentic, personalized learning utilizing the local and global communities.

Final Grade Composition

How it works: Let's say a grade level content area has 8 standards that are being reported on for the Semester. There may be several marks (1-4) that are put in over the course of a Semester for each standard. For each individual standard the teachers calculate the mode (number that occurs most often) mark for the standard.

So if a student scores 1, 2,2,2,1,4,3,4 on a standard the mode would be a "2" for that standard even though the student is moving toward proficiency on that standard close to the end of the Semester. This student has demonstrated learning over time and is moving towards standards mastery at the end of the semester. The teacher would take into consideration the demonstration of learning over time and report a higher level of proficiency then the mode in on that specific standard. This means of marking and reporting gives students, teachers and parents the ability to see learning over time and give students credit for their learning rather than an average score that does not provide consideration for learning.

In cases where PowerSchool does not calculate a grade that accurately reflects student's skills or ability, the teacher can override the calculated score. Here are some guidelines for overriding PowerSchool. It is suggested that teachers seek out another professional opinion on the override from a trusted colleague or school administrator.

Cut Scores in PowerSchool:

Grades		Teacher Gradebook Values			Color Levels	Action
Grade *	Description	Teacher Scale	Cutoff % *	Grade Value *	Edit	
4	Mastery	☑	85	90	Green (5)	−
3	Meets Standard	☑	75	80	Light Green (4)	−
2	Approaching Standard	☑	65	70	Orange (2)	−
1	Needs Support	☑	55	60	Red (1)	−
0	Not Sufficient Evidence	☑	0	50	Red (1)	−

Conversion of cut scores to letter grades in PowerSchool once all standard modes are averaged:

Providing rigorous, authentic, personalized learning utilizing the local and global communities.

| | | GPA and Credit Values | | | | Teacher Gradebook Values | | | Color Levels | Term Weighting / AFG | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Grade *	Description	Counts in GPA	Grade Points (GPA)	Added Value	Grad Credit	Teacher Scale	Cutoff % *	Grade Value *	Edit	Points	Cutoff Points	Exclude (AFG)	Action
INC	Incomplete	☐	0	☐	☐	☑	190	0	Green (5) 🟩	0	0	☐	■
A	A	☑	4	☐	☑	☑	87	0	Green (5) 🟩	0	0	☐	■
A-	A-	☑	3.66	☐	☑	☑	85	0	Green (5) 🟩	0	0	☐	■
B+	B+	☑	3.33	☐	☑	☑	82.5	0	Light Green (4) 🟩	0	0	☐	■
B	B	☑	3	☐	☑	☑	77	0	Light Green (4) 🟩	0	0	☐	■
B-	B-	☑	2.67	☐	☑	☑	75	0	Light Green (4) 🟩	0	0	☐	■
C+	C+	☑	2.33	☐	☑	☑	72.5	0	Yellow (3) 🟨	0	0	☐	■
C	C	☑	2	☐	☑	☑	67	0	Yellow (3) 🟨	0	0	☐	■
C-	C-	☑	1.67	☐	☑	☑	65	0	Yellow (3) 🟨	0	0	☐	■
D+	D+	☑	1.33	☐	☑	☑	62.5	0	Orange (2) 🟧	0	0	☐	■
D	D	☑	1	☐	☑	☑	57	0	Orange (2) 🟧	0	0	☐	■
D-	D-	☑	0.67	☐	☑	☑	56	0	Orange (2) 🟧	0	0	☐	■
F	Failing	☑	0	☐	☐	☑	0	0	Red (1) 🟥	0	0	☐	■

Save

Providing rigorous, authentic, personalized learning utilizing the local and global communities.

Power Teacher Pro School Gradebook

How to look up grades in PowerSchool:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yKE4fUzuX4&feature=youtu.be&scrlybrkr=9f0fd418

Practice

Practice (formerly known as homework) is vital to the development of concepts and skills. Lack of practice makes it more difficult for students to achieve learning goals. Because of this, the completion of practice (daily work, homework, practice problems, etc.) is strongly suggested but not included in a student's academic grade. Practice completion or lack of completion, is shown in the Employability Skills Rubric. All practice work must be completed prior to a student's request to reassess a standard.

Reassessment

If a student scores below proficient on a summative assessment and has missing and/or late work, reassessment is highly suggested by MHS Teaching Staff.

Students may reassess prior to the final two weeks of a semester. A teacher may use their own discretion for allowing a student to reassess in the last two weeks of the semester.
- A student needs to contact/conference their teacher within two weeks to determine the expectations for reteaching and reassessment. Dates and expectations will be set so students understand exactly what needs to be done and when in order to demonstrate learning of specific content.
    - That contact/conference would decide what the time frame would work (a plan needs to be created within two weeks but due dates can be as flexible as the teacher deems necessary)
    - The teacher determines what student needs to do (teachers have the right to assign additional work to ensure learning)

- A student must demonstrate readiness to the teacher prior to reassessment.
- The teacher and student will determine relearning activities to bolster readiness.
- Teachers may accept relearning activities as evidence of reassessment.

Providing rigorous, authentic, personalized learning utilizing the local and global communities.

- Students may be asked complete a reassessment request form at the teacher's discretion.
- ALL HOMEWORK/PRACTICE MUST BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO REASSESSMENT

Potential Relearning Activities:

Sample Activities	Possible Evidence
Complete missing assignments	Completed assignments
Create practice assessment	Completed practice with answer key
Tutoring with a teacher	Teacher signature
Study your notes (30 minute min.)	Study log
Complete internet activities provided by the teacher	Screenshots
Design a review game	Completed game
Make a poster	Completed poster
Create a web diagram	Completed diagram
Written summary	Completed summary
Complete review exercises	Completed exercises
Reflection	Completed Reflection
YouTube Clips	Link and reflection
Khan Academy	Link and reflection

Late Work

Formative practice (daily work, homework, practice problems, etc.) and summative assessments (tests, papers, projects, etc.) are to be submitted to the instructor in a timely manner. Late work will be indicated on the Employability Skills Rubric and not in the academic grade for the course. Failure to complete assigned work will result in the following protocol:

1. Contact the student and request for (What I Need) WIN on the departmental priority day.
2. Contact parents/guardians regarding the situation.
3. Contact administration regarding the situation. (This may lead to an individual conversation between the student and building administrator.)
4. If issues with completing work persist over the course of two or more units, schedule a meeting with the student, parents, administration, counselor, and teacher to discuss academic issues.

Providing rigorous, authentic, personalized learning utilizing the local and global communities.

References

Bailey, K. & Jackicic, C. (2012). Common formative assessment: A toolkit for professional learning

    Communities at work. Bloomington, IN. Solution Tree Press.

Des Moines Public Schools. (2015). *Des Moines Public Schools: Grading practices*. Retrieved

    From http://grading.dmschools.org/uploads/1/0/4/8/10487804/dmps_grading_handbook_15-16.pdf.

Guskey, T. R. (2015). Grading and reporting student learning [PowerPoint Slides]. Retrieved

    from

http://www.nhsaa.org/custforms/forms/SESC/Tom%20Guskey%20-%20Grading%20and%20Reporting.pdf

Guskey, T. R. (2013). The case against percentage grades. *Education Leadership, 71*(1),

    68-72. Retrieved from

http://www.nhsaa.org/custforms/forms/SESC/Tom%20Guskey%20-%20Grading%20and%20Reporting.pdf.

Heflebower, T., Hoegh, J.K, & Warrick, P. (2014). A school leader's guide to standards-based

    Grading. Bloomington, IN. Marzano Research Laboratory.

Marzano, R. J. (2010) Formative assessment & standards-based grading. Bloomington, IN.

    Marzano Research Laboratory.

O'Connor, K. (2011). A repair kit for grading: 15 fixes for broken grades. Boston, MA. Pearson

    Education, Inc..

Reeves, D. (2004). The case against the zero. *Phi Delta Kappan, 86*(4)*, 324-325.* Retrieved

    from http://www.ccresa.org/Files/Uploads/252/The_Case_Against_Zero.pdf.

Townsley, M. (2015). Standards based grading: Moving from 'silos of some' to an 'arsenal of

    everyone [Google Slides]. Retrieved from https://sites.google.com/site/iowaascd2015/.

Wormeil, R. [Stenhouse Publishers]. (2010, December 21). *Rick Wormeli: Defining Mastery.*

    [Video file]. Retrieved from https://youtu.be/nPUqKp-n_hs?t=3m14s.

Providing rigorous, authentic, personalized learning utilizing the local and global communities.

Wormeil, R. [Stenhouse Publishers]. (2010, November 16). *Rick Wormeli: Late Work.*

[Video file]. Retrieved from https://youtu.be/FHeij2Zfil4?t=1m59s.

Providing rigorous, authentic, personalized learning utilizing the local and global communities.