

Brunswick PBE Guide for Teachers

What does Proficiency-based learning look like in Brunswick?

Brunswick schools are guided by the locally-developed Brunswick Believes strategic framework. Our curriculum is aligned to the Maine Learning Results, Next Generation Science Standards and Maine Guiding Principles. Teachers have identified key standards (referred to as graduation standards) that are essential for our students to learn, understand and apply during their K-12 experience.

For us, proficiency-based learning is not driven by compliance with state mandate or any other passing educational trend, but rather the strong pieces of standards-based *teaching and learning* are drawn upon to allow us to more fully grow into the values, spirit, and intent of the Brunswick Believes framework.

We continue to provide students with opportunities to learn and demonstrate understanding in multiple ways, such as: assessments, presentations, portfolios, projects, and experiential learning. We are retaining course credit requirements in the high school, and viewing proficiency against standards as one component of a well-rounded education across a range of things we value. Standards-based instruction focuses on what is taught (not how it's taught), measured, and valued throughout the content areas.

What is standards-based instruction?

Standards based instruction aims to help students build and demonstrate enduring understandings of skills, knowledge and content knowledge across academic disciplines through the use of transparent and clearly communicated learning outcomes. Standards aim to measure what students know and can do through multiple learning opportunities. Knowledge and skills are assessed in a variety of ways, and teachers provide students with frequent feedback on their progress towards meeting standards.

Why is standards-based instruction important?

Educators, parents, institutions of higher education, and employers all have an interest in knowing what their student, child, applicant, or employee carries in terms of knowledge, critical thinking, strengths, and abilities. Standards-based teaching and learning allows us to make that learning explicit for all involved. Standards-based teaching and learning:

- Makes clear what the student needs to know and be able to do, while also equipping them to be organized, prepared, and accountable in continued education or employment.
- Helps students understand what specific knowledge and skills they need to work on in a way that addresses gaps in learning.
- Provides students with multiple pathways allowing them to select a traditional education program, extended learning opportunity, internship, or alternative program.

Graduation Standards & Performance Indicators

Brunswick graduation standards and performance indicators are teacher-identified, aligned to the Maine Learning Results and the Next Generation Science Standards. Graduation standards and performance indicators are embedded in the approved district curriculum taught K-12.

Graduation standards that have been “prioritized” and deemed as essential knowledge and skills for students to know and demonstrate understanding in prior to graduation.

Performance indicators benchmarks that move students towards meeting a graduation standard over time. Describe tasks, skills, and capabilities that help demonstrate when a student has met the standard.

Assessment of graduation standards

Graduation standards and performance indicators are assessed using a common scoring criteria. Students are informed of the criteria in advance and encouraged to be active participants in their learning. Scoring criteria are designed by Brunswick teachers and can be used to assess a wide variety of assessments (example – tests, quizzes, projects, essays etc.).

Ongoing formative assessment to inform instruction “in the moment” or “class to class,” in addition to summative assessments, creates a feedback loop for students to identify areas of strength and weakness, and for teachers to most efficiently teach, assess, and track standards.

Multiple Pathways

There are a number of multiple pathway options available to students to reach graduation requirements through alternate, innovative, or accelerated means. Examples currently available include:

Alternative Education Program (Union School)
 Academy Program
 Region 10 Technical Programs
 Work Study
 Edgenuity Courses (Piloting 2018-19)
 A+ Coursework
 Learning Center
 Extended Learning Opportunities (Independent Studies, Internships, Work Placement etc.)
 College Courses (Bowdoin)
 Dual Enrollment Options

Teachers can expect:

- Administrator support to continue the high-quality and passionate teaching our district values. In alignment with Brunswick Believes, teachers have a safe space to innovate, be creative, re-think what and how they teach, collaborate as critical friends.

- Support from the district to focus instruction, assessment, and learning around graduation standards and performance indicators towards the goal that teachers will have a roadmap that will focus and target teaching and assessment.
- An educational system where an emphasis is put on careful and reflective curriculum designed by teachers and aligned with standards and performance indicators.
- Standards that help organize the knowledge and skills students are taught in a given content areas and that bring cohesion and organization within the building, and content areas across the district.

Students can expect:

- A clear scope and sequence that outlines learning outcomes in each content area.
- Objectives detailing what students should know and be able to do in each unit of study.
- All expectations to be communicated clearly through scoring criteria that tell students how they will be assessed in their learning and what they need to demonstrate to reach proficiency and more
- Separation of “habits of work” from academic achievement (6-12 the traditional grade may include up to 10% of habits of work, which will be clearly articulated in the gradebook).
- Multiple pathways, which include individualized learning opportunities based on student strengths, interests, and goals.

Curriculum in Brunswick K-12

- Teachers have identified the Brunswick graduation standards and performance indicators K-12. These are based on the approved district curriculum, which stem from the Maine Learning Results, Next Generation Science Standards and Maine Guiding Principles.
- Multiple Pathways in Brunswick:
 - There are a number of multiple pathway options available to students to reach graduation requirements through alternate, innovative, or accelerated means. Examples currently available include:
 - Alternative Education Program (Union School)
 - Academy Program
 - Region 10 Programs
 - Work Study
 - Edgenuity Courses (Piloting 2018-19)
 - Learning Center
 - Extended Learning Opportunities (Independent Studies, Internships, Work Placement etc.)
 - College Courses (Bowdoin)
 - Dual Enrollment Options
- K-5, 6-8, 9-12 course work has been horizontally aligned to ensure graduation standards and performance indicators are addressed at the appropriate point in the curriculum in each of the subject areas before students transition to the next grade.
 - Students who require additional instruction or support will receive targeted intervention by the classroom teacher or Response-to-Intervention (RTI) teacher.

- Students with an IEP, have standards-based academic goals aligned to their IEP that outline the expected level of achievement for the year.
- Students who require additional instruction beyond what can be provided by the classroom teacher, RTI teacher or service provider may be required to attend academic programming outside of the regular school schedule in order to acquire credit (i.e. Saturdays, school vacations).
- Students are assessed using standards-based formative and summative assessments.
 - Students will continue to receive a traditional numerical grade at high school.
 - Assessments are designed and determined by classroom teachers and serve as evidence of proficiency.
 - Assessments also help to identify student mastery in graduation standards and performance indicators as well as identify where a student needs help.
 - Students will have multiple opportunities to show their understanding and skill achievement of priority standards and performance indicators through multiple assessments.

How does Brunswick certify that students are proficient when they graduate from BHS?

Brunswick has been standards-based since the Maine Learning Results were adopted as the basis for the curriculum in 1997. Standards-based instruction is implemented K-12 and lays out what students should know and be able to do throughout scope and sequence for particular grade levels and content areas. Performance indicators inform planning for teaching and learning by making clear some of the kinds of representative tasks that support teaching to a given standard.

- K-5 Reporting
 - Teachers determine the performance indicators that students need to meet at each grade level.
 - K-5 students currently receive a standards-referenced report card; a standards-based report card is in development.
- 6-12 Reporting
 - Traditional grades represent the student's academic achievement on standards, based on the approved Brunswick curriculum.
 - Up to 10% of the traditional grade may include habits of work (example: handing assignments in on time, organization, participation).
 - Teachers track a student's progress on their standards in their grade book.
 - 6-8 students need to achieve a passing grade in all subject areas.
 - If a student fails a course, the teacher identifies the standards the student needs to remediate before moving to the next grade/course.
 - 9-12 Students need to receive a passing grade in all graduation requirements which are:
 - 21.5 credits as outlined in course handbook.
 - If a student fails a course, the teacher identifies the standards the student needs to remediate, which becomes the focus of credit recovery.
 - Proficiency in Maine Guiding Principles.
 - Evidence Option: Portfolio, facilitated by Flex teacher.

- Example of traditional path ... Credits + Growth in Maine Guiding Principles + BHS Graduation Requirements = Graduation from BHS

Key Educational Terms

Proficiency-based Diploma Beginning with the class of 2021, Maine high school graduates will be required to demonstrate proficiency (as determined by the district) in graduation standards of eight content areas (career and education development, English language arts, health education and physical education, mathematics, science and technology, social sciences, visual and performing arts, and world languages). Also in 2021 students will be required to demonstrate proficiency of the five standards of the Guiding Principles: students being effective communicators, self-directed and lifelong learners, creative and practical problem solvers, responsible and involved citizens, and informed thinkers.

Graduation standards are standards that have been “prioritized” and deemed as essential knowledge and skills for students to know and demonstrate understanding in prior to graduation.

Performance indicators are benchmarks that move students towards meeting a graduation standard over time.

Habits of Work are study skills such as listening, taking notes, and keeping track of assignments and due dates.

Differentiation refers to adapting teaching styles and level of content to meet the needs of a diverse group of students in the same classroom. Differentiation is commonly used in “heterogeneous grouping”—an educational strategy in which students of different abilities, learning needs, and levels of academic achievement are grouped together. Four elements of the curriculum may be differentiated: what is taught, how it is taught, how students show what they have learned, and the learning environment.

Formative assessments are practice and include a wide variety of methods that teachers use to conduct in-process evaluations of student academic progress during a lesson. Examples include strategic questioning, think-pair-share, exit tickets and classroom polls. Formative assessments help teachers identify concepts that students are struggling to understand, skills they are having difficulty acquiring, or standards not yet achieved so that adjustments can be made to lessons and to academic support.

Summative assessments evaluate student learning achievement and academic achievement at a specific point in time, typically at the end of a unit, course, or school year. Examples may include: projects, presentations, essays, tests, exams.

Multiple pathway refers to the academic path a student takes to graduate. A student’s academic program may include a variety of learning experiences such as traditional courses, alternative education, Region 10, special education and extended learning opportunities that individual students complete as they progress in their education toward graduation.

Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOSs) are student driven learning experiences that provide authentic opportunities for students to follow their interests, expand the curriculum to the

real world, and work individually with a teacher and expert. Examples include independent studies, internships, student-designed projects that are overseen by an ELO Coordinator/Teacher.