

# Standards-Based Grading (SBG)

## What is Standards-Based Grading?

Standards-based grading (SBG) measuring students' proficiency on well-defined course objectives - the content area standards. Standards are based on specific criteria and are evaluate based on proficiency. The purpose of SBG is to be able to identify what the student knows or is able to do, as opposed to averaging grades/scores over the course of a semester, which does not accurately describe student learning. SBG does not measure effort/behavior and there are no penalties or extra credit given. Homework and other in class assessments are used to evaluate student understanding of the standard. Because SBG is based on mastery of the standard, only the most recent evidence of learning is graded.

## How is Standards-Based Grading different from traditional grading?

With traditional grading, students grades are based on classwork, homework, projects, quizzes and tests. Grades may also include non-academic factors, such as participation, effort, or attitude. SBG does not separate out tests, homework, or projects. All the work a student does is used to assess student mastery of the key standards. Non-academic factors are not included but are reported in a different manner.

## How are grades determined?

Student performance on assessments (both formative and summative) will be used to determine a student's overall grade in a course. Practice assignments are just that, practice, and serve as a source of feedback and instructional support for both students and teachers. Scores on practice assignments are not used toward student's academic grade. Students will be required to complete all of their practice work prior to allowing them to take, or retake, an assessment.

## What changes will I see as a parent/guardian?

Grading scale scores (1-3) will replace percentages on assignments. The scores have a very specific meaning:

- 3: The student consistently and independently demonstrates mastery of the standard.
- 2: The student understands the foundational material that supports the standard, but is still working toward mastery.
- 1: The student is able to demonstrate understanding of some of the foundational material with help from the teacher, but struggles working independently.
- 0: Even with help from the teacher, the student shows no understanding of the material.
- I: Incomplete - The student has not completed the necessary assignments to be given a grade for a standard due to absences or other factors.

## How will I know if my student needs help?

Receiving a score of 0 or 1 on a standard can be a sign that a student is in need of extra support in the areas where they are receiving low marks. This is one benefit of a standards-based grading; areas in need of support are clearly evident.

## Why doesn't my student have a grade yet?

Because standards-based grading focuses on assessments, your student's overall class grade may not be updated as frequently as it was when every assignment impacted the grade. This shift is especially noticeable at the beginning of the semester when it may take a few weeks for the class to complete the first assessment and for your student to be given a grade. However, while the overall grade may not change as frequently, the teachers are still recording other assignments, such as homework and in-class assignments, that provide important feedback to you and the teacher about what work is being done. Please contact your student's teacher at any time if you have questions about your student's grade.