



At De Pere High School, a grade represents a clear and accurate summary of a student's current academic achievement- what a student knows and can demonstrate - in accordance with curriculum standards. (May 7, 2012)

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Grading for Learning

At De Pere High School, a grade represents a clear and accurate summary of a student's current academic achievement – what a student knows and can demonstrate – in accordance with curriculum standards. De Pere High School's achievement standards are based on the Wisconsin State Standards and the Common Core State Standards.

We have a responsibility to provide all students in our district with the same rigorous curriculum. Teachers use grading to identify the strengths and weaknesses of students. This information is used by teachers to plan high quality, meaningful instruction for all students. Students use information from grading feedback to reflect on, evaluate their progress, and to set goals. We expect that all students in our district will grow and improve toward proficiency in the standards.

What is the background and research for Grading for Learning Practices?

Research on grading practices clearly shows that the most effective way to affect student performance is to provide accurate, specific and timely feedback to students. Students benefit by knowing what they are graded on and how they will be graded. Districts that ground their grading practices in the research:

1. reduce grade inflation,
2. graduate students who are more successful in post-secondary endeavors,
3. show solid gains in student proficiency in content-area work, and
4. reduce the failure rate.

Why do we focus on grading as we improve instruction?

The advantage to students in our grading for learning system is that they clearly understand how their work compares to the expected proficiency level, and they always have multiple opportunities to show what they know. De Pere High School has rightly connected improvement in teaching and learning to grading practices.

**Grading For Learning Practice:
Using a school-wide grading scale**

DPHS teachers will determine grades based on a common, school-wide grading scale.

In order for DPHS to offer our students a consistent and reliable grading system, we have adopted a common grading scale that exists across all curricula.

Resources: *Practical Solutions for Serious Problems in Standards-based Grading.* Guskey, 2009.

Effective Practices

- The following school-wide grading scale has been adopted by De Pere High School.

Grade	100 point scale	12 point scale
A	93 - 100%	4.0
A-	90 - 92%	3.67
B+	87 - 89%	3.33
B	83 - 86%	3.0
B-	80 - 82%	2.67
C+	77 - 79 %	2.33
C	73 - 76%	2.0
C-	70 - 72%	1.67
D+	67 - 69%	1.33
D	63 - 66%	1.0
D-	60 - 62%	.67
F	59% or lower	0

Grading For Learning Practice:
Assigning grades using appropriate and clear performance standards.

Grades will be assigned based on usable, clearly described levels of proficiency or quality.

Resources

O'Connor, K. How to Grade for Learning., 3rd edition, 2009.

Guskey, Thomas, R and Bailey, Jane M., Developing Grading and Reporting Systems for Student Learning., 2001.

Effective Practices

- Clear learning targets are shared with students and integrated into the instruction.
- Assessments measure the level of proficiency related to specific, clear learning targets.
- Grades communicate a student's level of proficiency.
- Extra credit will not be offered to improve a student's grade.
- All scores must measure student achievement. (Ex: no completion grades, no credit for book covering, etc.)
- See p. 8 for policies regarding grading homework/daily practice.

Grading For Learning Practice: Organizing grade reports	
Report cards will communicate a summary of a student's current academic achievement reflected as a single grade.	
Resources <i>O'Connor, K. A Repair Kit For Grading, pp. 62 - 66.</i> <i>Wormeli, R. Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessing & Grading in the Differentiated Classroom.</i>	
Effective Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none">● A grade book will be organized to reflect the student's achievement of the standards or learning targets.●—Grades will be based on individual achievement.● Instructors will base grading on clearly identified targets.	

**Grading For Learning Practice:
Using a variety of data for grade calculations**

All methods of grade calculation can be given consideration, as well as evidence of performance in the standards over time, to accurately reflect student achievement.

Other measures, such as the median (middle score by rank) or the mode (the most frequently occurring score), could be considered when determining grades.

Resources

O'Connor, K. *How to Grade for Learning.*, 3rd edition, 2009.

O'Connor, K. *A Repair Kit For Grading*, pp. 120

Tomlinson, C. A. & McTighe, J. (2006). *Integrating differentiated instruction and understanding by design: Connecting content and kids.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

Effective Practices

- Teachers may consider the body of evidence when determining grades rather than just calculating grades. Teachers may use a "photo album" approach not a "snapshot" approach to grading student learning. Averaging grades is not appropriate in all situations, because it can give an inaccurate picture of student achievement.
- Teachers may consider using the mode and the median instead of always using the mean when calculating final grades.
- Teachers should assess students often and in a variety of formats throughout each grading period.
- When using one's professional judgment in determining a grade, teachers must be prepared to provide data or concrete evidence of student learning.

Grading For Learning Practice:
Avoiding assigning grades based on student comparisons

Grades will be assigned based on a student's individual achievement in relation to preset standards.

Criterion-based grading, which is assessing individual student achievement against the standard, provides a consistent standard to measure learning and shows the extent of individual learning that was accomplished.

Resources

O'Connor, K., *A Repair Kit For Grading.* pp. 79 -81

Effective Practices

- Norm-based grading is not allowed. Norm-based grading is comparing one student's achievement to another student's achievement.

Grading For Learning Practice: Using formative and summative assessments

Summative assessments will be the primary source to calculate student grades.

Summative assessments are the primary source of grades. Summative assessments are final products and/or performances to evaluate student achievement of standards.

Formative assessments are *for* learning and summative assessments are *of* learning. Formative assessments provide meaningful feedback to the student and the teacher to allow a student's continued growth of the learning targets.

Formative assessments aid the teacher in assessing and scaffolding instruction. Final grades primarily reflect student achievement of standards on summative assessments.

Resources

O'Connor, K. *A Repair Kit For Grading Chapter 5.*

Wormeli, R. *Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessing & Grading in the Differentiated Classroom.*

Effective Practices

- Formative assessments will be used as an opportunity to provide feedback so that a student can prepare for summative assessments.

--Formatives may be graded or ungraded.

--Formatives can be included in grade calculations when the following has occurred:

- 1. Teacher-led focused learning on the concept has been done.
- 2. An opportunity for timely, descriptive feedback has previously been provided to the student.
- 3. Student has been given time to process feedback from the teacher.

--Formative assessments may include: homework assignments, study guides, drafts of thesis statements, notebooks, note cards, verbal assessments, skills/procedures practices, entrance and exit slips and other activities.

--Formatives do not include: completion grades, bringing in items for class (tissues, markers, etc.) nor attending school events.

- Summative assessments will be used as the primary source to calculate student grades.

--Summative assessments may include: tests, projects, presentations, writing pieces, performances, etc.

Grading For Learning Practice: Managing reassessments

Students have the opportunity to retake a summative assessment if they meet established criteria.

Final grades need to recognize a student's current level of proficiency. Since learning is developmental, all students will be allowed the opportunity to retake a summative assessment in order to provide an updated level of proficiency. Students may complete the requirements for a reassessment, complete the reassessment and then earn the most current score.

Resources

O'Connor, K. *A Repair Kit For Grading*, pp. 120

Wormeli, R. *Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessing & Grading in the Differentiated Classroom*. 2006.

Effective Practices

- The most recent score on an assessment will replace the previous score.
- One retest opportunity is available per summative assessment. In certain circumstances, an additional retest opportunity may be provided at the teacher's discretion.
- Prior to retesting, students must provide evidence that learning has occurred by completing satisfactory work as determined by the teacher.
- The retesting time frame will be consistent within a department or course and be communicated to students.
- Students may be reassessed on a portion of the summative assessment, the entire summative assessment, and/or in a completely different format as determined by a department or course and be communicated to students.
- Retesting opportunities are not available for multi-step assessments such as research papers, projects or presentations.
- Retesting opportunities are not available on semester exams.

**Grading For Learning Practice:
Involving students in the grading process**

Students should be involved in the assessment process and should understand from the outset how grades will be determined.

Students should understand how their grade is determined and use the feedback from formative assessments to identify their learning needs.

Resources

Costa, A. L., & Kallick, B (1992). Reassessing Assessment. In A.L. Costa J. Bellanca, & R. Fogarty (Eds.). *If Minds Matter: A Foreward to the Future: Vol. 2* (pp. 275-280). Palatine, IL: IRI/Skylights.

O'Connor, K. *A Repair Kit For Grading.*

Effective Practices

- Communicate criteria for evaluation with students before the process of learning, assessing, evaluating and reporting occurs.
- The criteria and guidelines can be teacher-generated, student-generated, or developed collaboratively.
- Through the use of differentiation, teachers ensure that students have a range of opportunities and ways to demonstrate their knowledge and skills pertaining to expected learning outcomes by using multiple assessment strategies.
- Through the use of formative assessments, provide timely, descriptive feedback of what each student knows and is able to do in relation to the expected learning outcomes and how the student can improve in relation to those outcomes.
- Through the process of gradual release of responsibility, provide opportunities for students to give descriptive feedback to each other.

**Grading For Learning Practice:
Omitting attendance in grade calculation**

Regular attendance is a vital part of academic achievement. Academic grades cannot be altered simply because of attendance. Demonstration of knowledge may be affected due to the lack of instructional opportunities as a result of absences.

Student learning is assessed through academic achievement, not the behavior of being absent from class. Unexcused and excused absences are significant concerns in the behavioral and legal arena, but do not impact grading which requires evidence of standards achievement. The issue of attendance (being present and/or on-time to class) should be reflected in the College and Career Life Skills Assessment.

Resources

O'Connor, K. *A Repair Kit For Grading*, pp. 47-51.

Wormeli, R. *Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessing & Grading in the Differentiated Classroom*.

Effective Practices

- Student attendance may not be used in the calculation of academic scores.
- Absences may lead to students having to make up missing activities.
- Some classes require consistent demonstration of skills. Absences may affect the teacher's ability to assess the required skills, which may be reflected in the student's academic score.

Grading For Learning Practice:
Assigning grades based only on achievement
(Managing academic dishonesty)

Academic dishonesty is a serious and inappropriate behavior. No academic penalty will be applied for academic dishonesty. Students will need to show accurate evidence of learning. Consequences addressing the behavior will be applied.

Teachers should try to create an atmosphere in their classes that promotes academic honesty. If an incident of cheating occurs, the student must be re-assessed on all or part of the assessment to accurately determine the level of achievement. In addition to losing the retake opportunity, students may receive behavioral consequences.

Resources

O'Connor, Ken, *A Repair Kit for Grading*, 2011.

Effective Practices

- The student may not receive a zero on the assessment as a consequence of the cheating.
- The student must be given an opportunity to demonstrate proficiency or level of achievement.
- On that assessment, the student loses the opportunity for a retake.
- Any incidents of cheating will be reflected in the College and Career Life Skills Assessment.
- Teachers will communicate cheating incidents to parents and/or students. For example the assessment can be flagged as "cheating" in Infinite Campus.

<p>Grading For Learning Practice: Assessing individual achievement vs. group work.</p>	<p><i>Cooperative learning is a valuable instructional tool; students will be graded on individual achievement on group projects or collaborative work.</i></p>
<p>If a grade represents a clear and accurate summary of a student's current academic achievement, group grades do NOT work as they do not reflect individual achievement but rather the achievement of a group of students. In the practice of grading for learning, teachers will ensure that all evidence used to determine grades comes from individual evidence of achievement. Student academic grades should not depend on the achievement of other students. While cooperative learning is valuable for student achievement, each student should complete work and be assessed individually.</p>	
<p>Resources</p> <p>Kagan, S. "Group Grades Miss the Mark," <i>Educational Leadership</i>, May, 1995 Wormeli, R. <i>Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessing & Grading in the Differentiated Classroom</i>. 2006.</p>	
<p>Effective Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individual grades will not include group scores. ● Group scores can be given, but will not be part of an individual's academic grade. ● Use collaborative work as an instructional strategy, not an assessment of skills or knowledge. 	

Grading For Learning Practice: Grading late work

Late work will not affect academic grades but will be reflected in a separate college & career life skills assessment.

If a grade represents a clear and accurate summary of a student's current academic achievement, students cannot receive reduction for late work. However, it is necessary to establish, maintain, and hold students accountable for deadlines to assist students in the development skills reflected in the College and Career Life Skills Assessment. Deadlines are necessary for students/teachers to adequately and efficiently manage the workload. Therefore, if a student sees in advance that the date is not going to be attainable, he/she needs to communicate this information to the teacher.

Resources

O'Connor, Ken, *A Repair Kit for Grading*, 2011.

Wormeli, R. *Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessing & Grading in the Differentiated Classroom*. 2006.

Effective Practices

- Any work **not** submitted by the deadline date will be recorded as "Missing".
- Teachers will clearly and consistently inform students of deadline dates.
- Any non-graded work that is recorded in the gradebook that is not turned in on time should be flagged as "Late".
- When an assignment is flagged as "Missing", the score is calculated as a zero.

**Grading For Learning Practice:
Reporting non-achievement skills**

College & Career Life Skills: We incorporate a separate assessment for skills outside of academics .

DPHS teachers will provide non-academic feedback through the *College and Career Life Skills Assessment*. Quarter and semester grades will not consider these scores.

Resources

O'Connor, K. "A Repair Kit For Grading, (2011).

Effective Practices

Students will be given a score based on the requirements/expectations of the classroom teacher on the following skills:

1. Comes to class prepared with learning materials.
 2. Follows directions and stays engaged.
 3. Demonstrates respect for self, teacher, others, and property.
 4. Uses phone and technology appropriately.
- Staff are required to evaluate students on each of these criteria each quarter.
 - Staff comments are optional.

College and Life Skills Assessment Rubric:

Meets expectations	(3)
Approaching Expectations	(2)
Does not meet expectations	(1)

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