



Grades 5-8 Grading Practices

Region One Parent Handbook

2021-2022

Created by the Region One Grading Steering Committee

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Grading Practices Overview

INTRODUCTION

The majority of the grading practices described in this document were developed by the Region One teachers and administrators who participated in the Regional Grading Practices Steering Committee. These practices are founded in research that support a philosophical switch in how student learning is evaluated, communicated, and reported. Additionally, these practices adhere to the Region's belief that the purpose of grading is to accurately communicate a student's progress toward mastery of identified standards.

The purpose of these Grading Practices is to communicate student learning by **separately reporting on** students' achievement, learning practices, and overall growth each trimester.

Dr. Tom Guskey, a leading figure in reevaluating traditional grading methods,¹ describes the "Three Types of Grading Criteria" as the following:

PRODUCT	<i>Achievement of learning goals</i>
PROCESS	<i>Behaviors that enable learning</i>
PROGRESS	<i>Improvement and/or learning gain</i>

In order to authentically assess and communicate students' Product, Process, and Progress, a revised grading framework is needed. This document outlines and explains the important information and multiple components of the Grading Practices that are used in Region One for grades 5-8.²

¹ Dr. Tom Guskey is a proponent of Standards-Based Learning and Grading.

² For schools using these grading practices in grades lower than 5th grade, please see school's individual **Supplemental Parent Handbook** for more information.

I. Types of Student Work and Teacher Feedback

Formative Work	Summative Assessments
<p>What is Formative Work? Formative Work includes learning activities performed during class time or at home that are purposefully designed to provide students with practice on the content and skills they are learning for a particular lesson or unit of study.</p> <p>How will Formative Work be recorded? These assignments may or may not be scored. Formative Work that is scored can be entered into PowerSchool so students and parents can monitor individual practice and learning progress. If scores are assigned, those scores will not be included in the determination of the Trimester Achievement Grade that appears on the report cards.</p> <p>Does Formative Work count? Yes, Formative Work counts towards students' Learning Practices because quality completion of learning activities that support student growth is an essential characteristic of a successful learner.</p>	<p>What are Summative Assessments? Summative Assessments are completed by a student at the end of a lesson (or group of lessons). These assessments document the student's level of proficiency with regard to the learning targets from the unit (or part of the unit) of study.</p> <p>How will Summative Assessments be recorded? Summative Assessments will be scored using 4-point rubrics that align with the Region One Achievement Grading Scales for <u>Core Academic</u> and <u>Unified Arts</u> subjects. Summative Assessment scores will be entered into PowerSchool using the symbols A, B, C, NYP for <u>Core Academic</u> subjects and 4, 3, 2, 1 for <u>Unified Arts Subjects</u>. These grading scales are further described on page 4.</p> <p>How do Summative Assessments count? Proficient Summative Assessment scores will be averaged to determine a student's Trimester Achievement Grade in each subject. See page 6 for Reporting, Reassessing, and Resolving Summative Assessments.</p>

Learning Practices	Informal vs. Formal Teacher Feedback
<p>What are Learning Practices? Learning Practices are demonstrated student behaviors that are easily observed by teachers and reflected on by students.</p> <p>How will Learning Practices be recorded? Using the rubric on page 8-9, teachers and students will collect and discuss Learning Practices data throughout the trimester. Learning Practices will be reported separately from students' Achievement Grade.</p> <p>Why are Learning Practices important? Consistent performance of these work habits have a direct tie to successful student achievement.³ Separating work habits from students' demonstration</p>	<p>What is the difference between Informal and Formal Teacher Feedback? Informal Teacher Feedback is communicated between teacher and students through ongoing conversations. Formal Teacher Feedback is communicated between teacher and students through recorded comments using various methods such as: rubrics, PowerSchool, Seesaw, and trimester report cards. As a result, Formal Teacher Feedback is also available for parents to view.</p> <p>Why is narrative teacher feedback important? Narrative teacher feedback is important throughout the learning process because it helps students and parents understand the <u>relationship</u> between students' Achievement Grades and Learning Practices by communicating students' progress.</p>

³ Research: Berger, Rugen, & Woodfin, 2014; Guskey, 2009; Hattie, 2009; O'Connor, 2018; Vatterott, 2015

of learning provides a more accurate picture of students' overall progress.⁴

II. Determining Students' Achievement Grades — The PRODUCT of Learning

A. Region One Achievement Grading Scales

Achievement Grades indicate students' proficiency with the content and skills in each subject as demonstrated on students' summative assessments. All teachers will define what proficiency looks like in their subject for each grade level. Core Academic subjects will assess student learning using **levels of proficiency** and Special Subjects subjects will assess student performance using **frequency of display**, i.e., *how often* students are demonstrating proficiency.

Region One Achievement Grading Scale for Core Academic Subjects — English/Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and World Languages

SCALE:	Level of Proficiency:	Achievement Descriptors:
A	Advanced Proficiency	Student has independently demonstrated advanced proficiency with the content and skills. Summative assessments show <u>accuracy</u> and <u>thoroughness</u> in student's: understanding of content in familiar and new contexts; consistent and/or creative applications of skills; complete and detailed explanations of reasoning; and precise content vocabulary when applicable.
B	Secure Proficiency	Student has independently demonstrated secure proficiency with the content and skills. Summative assessments show <u>accuracy</u> in student's: understanding of content; applications of skills; complete explanations of reasoning; and appropriate content vocabulary when applicable.
C	Basic Proficiency	Student has independently demonstrated basic proficiency with the content and skills. Summative assessments show <u>partial accuracy</u> in student's: understanding of content; applications of skills; fragmented explanations of reasoning; and limited content vocabulary when applicable.
NYP	Not Yet Proficient	Summative assessments demonstrate that the student is not yet proficient with the content and skills. Student needs more reteaching and practice in order to independently demonstrate Basic Proficiency.

Region One Achievement Grading Scale for Special Subjects — Art, Computer Science, Library, Music, and Physical Education

SCALE:	Frequency of Display:	Achievement Descriptors:
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⁴ Guskey, 2009

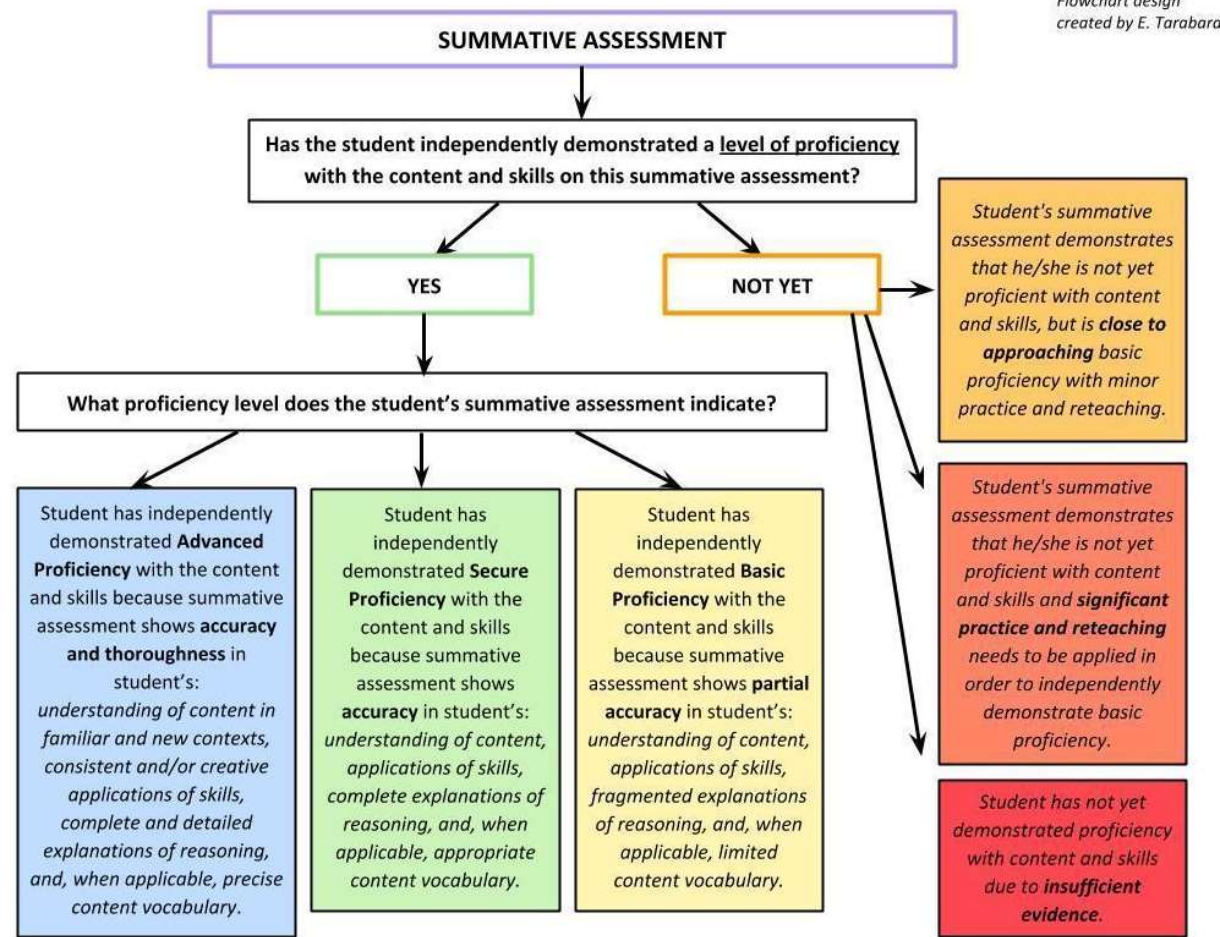
4	Consistently Proficient	<i>Consistently meets the learning expectations in the specified Unified Arts subject.</i>
3	Frequently Proficient	<i>Often meets the learning expectations in the specified Unified Arts subject.</i>
2	At Times Proficient	<i>Sometimes meets the learning expectations in the specified Unified Arts subject.</i>
1	Not Yet Proficient	<i>Lack of adequate evidence to determine if student has met the learning expectations in the specified Unified Arts subject.</i>

B. Summative Assessment Flowchart

Research shows using a 4-point scale does two things: 1) improves communication of student learning by providing specific descriptions of demonstrated proficiency levels and 2) minimizes subjectivity by reducing the number of categories or points with arbitrary cut-offs, e.g. *B+ versus A- or an 89 versus a 90*.⁵

⁵ Guskey, 2009

Below is a flowchart that illustrates how Core Academic subjects will determine students' proficiency levels on **Summative Assessments** using the language of the **Region One Achievement Grading Scale**.



A similar flowchart will be used by Unified Arts subjects to determine students' proficiency by assessing **how often** students understand and perform the concepts of the specified subject standards.

c. Shifting to Proficiency-Based Language

Proficiency-based language reflects the mindset that students' Achievement Grades communicate a snapshot of students' progress on the road to learning each subject's content and skills. Therefore, each proficiency level is stated in **positive language** that communicates either:

1. This student has demonstrated proficiency and here is a description of how well the learning was demonstrated (*or, for UA subjects, how often*)

2. This student has not yet demonstrated proficiency and here is a description of the work needed to reach proficiency

With this shift in language, it is important to remember that the alphanumeric symbols used in the revised Region One Achievement Grading Scales serve as placeholders for the **more meaningful and informative** proficiency-based language that are associated with them.

III. Reporting, Reassessing, and Resolving Summative Assessments

All schools will follow the **same framework** for **Reporting, Reassessing, and Resolving Summative Assessments**. Places where there is flexibility within this framework are noted and clearly outlined in each school's individualized **Supplemental Parent Handbooks**.

A. Reporting on Summative Assessments

All summative assessments will be reported in PowerSchool. **Proficient** summative assessment scores will be **averaged** in PowerSchool to determine a students' **Trimester Achievement Grade**. All trimester grades are reviewed by the classroom teacher to ensure that the recorded average accurately reflects the learning achieved by each student. An NYP (for Core Academics) or 1 (for Special Subjects) on a summative assessment will be accompanied by a **teacher comment** describing students' current level of progress and amount of work they need to complete in order to reach proficiency.

When an NYP or 1 is entered for a summative assessment, the **Trimester Achievement Grade** is an NYP to signify that reteaching and reassessment must take place on one or more essential learning expectations.

B. Reassessing Summative Assessments

Summative Reassessments are created by the teacher and focus on the part(s) of content and/or skill(s) where students **have not yet** demonstrated proficiency. Summative Reassessments are not the same as the first assessment given. Students will only receive a Summative Reassessment after the appropriate reteaching and formative work is completed in accordance with the school's **Reassessment Process** that is provided in their **Supplemental Parent Handbook**. Each school's **Reassessment Process** is designed to support students' continuous learning and improve students' Learning Practices.

All students who receive an NYP or 1 **must** go through the Reassessment Process **until a level of proficiency is met**. Students with Cs and Bs in Core Academic subjects **may choose** to reassess.⁶

Due to the varying nature of Unified Arts subjects, each UA subject will design a Reassessment Process to best fit the needs of their subject's structure and learning expectations.

C. Resolving Summative Assessments

1. **Resolving Summative Assessments within the Current Trimester:**

⁶ There are no longer percentages attached to Achievement Grades; as a result, there is no need for reassessment when a student has reached Advanced Proficiency and receives an A in Core Academic subjects or earned Consistently Proficient and receives a 4 in Special subjects subjects.

When students have completed the Reassessment Process, teachers will **replace** the original summative assessment score with the **reassessment score** in PowerSchool. The original score will be replaced whether the reassessment score is higher, lower, or remains the same. The reassessment score will be accompanied by an **updated teacher comment** documenting student progress. If an **NYP or a 1 remains**, the Reassessment Process will continue until the student has demonstrated proficiency by completing additional Learning Plans.

There are up to 10 days after the end of Trimester 1 and 2 to reassess and resolve summative assessments before report cards are issued. The schools' **Supplemental Parent Handbooks** will describe how this 10-day window will be used.

If an NYP remains after the trimester's 10-day window, then the **Trimester Achievement Grade** printed on the report card will be an NYP for that subject.

2. **Resolving Remaining NYPs in Subsequent Trimesters** (*outside the 10-day window*)

Students can resolve remaining NYPs in subsequent trimesters by:

- *Demonstrating proficiency when the **same skills/standards** occur later in the year with similar content*
- *Using **additional learning time** to continue interventions that address essential learning expectations from the previous trimester.*

When an NYP is resolved in a subsequent trimester, the teacher will give an "NYP Resolution" grade in PowerSchool accompanied with a **teacher comment** documenting student progress and explaining which NYP from the previous trimester was resolved.

3. **Unresolved NYPs at the End-of-Year**

If students have one or more unresolved NYPs from any trimester they will continue to be responsible for that learning. Students may resolve a remaining NYP during summer school. If there is an unresolved NYP at the beginning of the next year, interventions will continue until the student reaches proficiency with the expected learning outcomes. Learning is an **ongoing process** and these assessment practices mimic its cyclic nature.

IV. Assessing Students — The PROCESS of Working

The Region One **Learning Practices** are separated into five categories that focus on *how* students are working throughout the learning process. By separating Learning Practices from Achievement Grades, students and parents can see how students' actions are **supporting or detracting** from their learning.

Learning Practices and Achievement Grades are **equally important** in students' development as a learner and person. This belief is reflected in the **Honor Roll Criteria** outlined on page 10.

Teachers and students will collect and discuss Learning Practices data throughout each trimester.⁷ A **summative rating** in every category **from all subject areas** will be reported by the teacher at the end of the trimester based on the following rubric:

Preparedness	4 - Consistent	3 - Frequent	2 - Occasional	1 - Seldom/Never	Look Fors:
<i>Does the student have all the necessary materials ready to engage in the learning process?</i>	Consistently accesses necessary materials and documents efficiently	Frequently accesses necessary materials and documents efficiently	Occasionally accesses necessary materials and documents efficiently	Seldom accesses necessary materials and documents efficiently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has all materials: - Writing utensils - Charged computer - Assignment book - Text - Notebook/Journal - Musical Instrument - PE clothes and shoes
Formative Work	4 - Consistent	3 - Frequent	2 - Occasional	1 - Seldom/Never	Look Fors:
<i>Does the student complete all necessary formative work giving teacher accurate information about student learning</i>	Consistently completes necessary formative work, giving teacher accurate information about learning through the production of high quality work	Frequently completes necessary formative work, giving teacher accurate information about learning through the production of quality work	Occasionally completes formative work, giving the teacher limited information about learning. Quality of work is low.	Seldom completes formative work, resulting in insufficient information about learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completed homework assignments - Completed formative work
Meets Due Dates	4 - Consistent	3 - Frequent	2 - Occasional	1 - Seldom/Never	Look Fors:
<i>Does the student</i>	Consistently meets	Frequently meets	Occasionally meets deadlines	Seldom hands in	- Assignments handed

⁷ This rubric is a result of teacher input from all schools and was finalized by the Regional Grading Steering Committee for Grades 5-8.

<i>submit work on time according to established deadlines?</i>	deadlines for assignments	deadlines for assignments	or requires significant prompting to complete assignments - OR - hands in one or two assignments significantly late	assignments on time	<i>in on time.</i> - <i>Good use of in-class work time to ensure timely completion of assignments</i>
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Engagement	4 - Consistent	3 - Frequent	2 - Occasional	1 - Seldom/Never	Look Fors:
<i>Does the student work with thought and purpose?</i>	Consistently demonstrates thought and attention. Consistently uses time wisely, follows established routines, and positively contributes to whole class and/or small group discussions.	Frequently demonstrates thought and attention. Often uses time wisely, follows established routines, and often makes positive contributions to the whole class and/or small group discussions.	Needs reminders to stay focused and attentive during class. Will follow routines and contribute to class discussion when prompted.	Is often unfocused, off-task and/or does not participate in class discussion, follow routines or use class time wisely.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Follows directions/established routines</i> - <i>Approaches tasks with new learning as the primary goal</i> - <i>Makes full use of previously acquired knowledge and skills from all content areas</i> - <i>Demonstrates focus and attention</i> - <i>Class participation</i>

Perseverance	4 - Consistent	3 - Frequent	2 - Occasional	1 - Seldom/Never	Look Fors:
<i>Does the student demonstrate persistence in order to meet the learning target?</i>	Consistently shows persistence in working toward the learning target. Seeks alternative strategies to successfully accomplish a task when necessary. Strives to produce high quality work.	Frequently shows persistence in working toward the learning target. Uses suggested strategies to accomplish tasks when necessary.	Occasionally persists in working toward the learning target. Needs significant support to complete task.	Seldom persists in working toward the learning target. Demonstrates reluctance and/or resistance to complete task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Revises, edits, and/or corrects errors</i> - <i>Thinks deeply about a challenge and works to find an answer</i> - <i>Makes good use of available resources</i> - <i>Attempts new strategies to discover what works best</i> - <i>Engages in productive struggle</i>

V. Reporting on Students' Product, Process, and Progress

A. Region One Grades 5-8 Trimester Report Cards

Grades 5-8 trimester report cards will consist of these components for every student:

PRODUCT	<i>Achievement of learning goals</i>	An Achievement Grade for <u>all</u> subject areas
PROCESS	<i>Behaviors that enable learning</i>	Learning Practices ratings for <u>all</u> subject areas
PROGRESS	<i>Improvement and/or learning gain</i>	Comments regarding student progress from <u>all</u> subject area teachers

B. Region One Report Card Components:

Achievement Grades:

Achievement Grades for each subject will be calculated by averaging students' summative assessments that demonstrate proficiency. At the end of the trimester, if a student has one or more unresolved summative assessments that indicate the student has not yet demonstrated proficiency then the Trimester Achievement Grade will be an NYP to indicate that one or more essential learning expectations are not yet met for that subject area.

Please see pages 6-7 for more information on Reporting, Reassessing, and Resolving Summative Assessments.

Learning Practices:

These ratings will be determined by the teacher's assessment of evidence for each of these indicators and will be reported on a 1-4 scale using the rubric provided on pages 7-8.

Teacher Comments:

Core Academic Teachers will provide a summary description of the trimester's learning expectations followed by a brief commentary about the individual student's performance and progress relative to those expectations.

Unified Arts Teachers will provide a summary description of the trimester's learning expectations and include a brief commentary about the individual student's performance and progress relative to those expectations on an as needed basis.

Additional Factors:

To ensure accurate communication of student learning, the appropriate accommodations and modifications will be applied for students with IEPs and 504s, as well as ELL students.

VI. Grade 5-8 Extracurricular Eligibility

Students will lose the privilege of participating in an extracurricular activity if their **Achievement Grade** in any subject is **not yet proficient at the time of midterm progress reports or report cards**.

The student, teacher, principal, and coach/advisor will meet to determine conditions under which the student can regain eligibility. Possible conditions include: making up missing assignments, completing the reassessment process for summative assessments that are not yet proficient, reports of productivity during independent work periods, completing classwork and homework, and improvement of achievement grades.

VII. Grade 5-8 Honor Roll

Honor Roll will acknowledge students in grades 5-8 who meet the following expectations for their **Achievement Grades** and **Learning Practices** in all subjects.

Honor Roll will be compiled at the end of each trimester using the following **criteria**:

	The PRODUCT of Students' Learning		The PROCESS of Students' Working
CATEGORY:	<i>Achievement Grade Requirements for <u>Core Academic</u> Subjects</i>	<i>Achievement Grade Requirements for <u>Unified Arts</u> Subjects</i>	<i>Learning Practices Requirements for <u>all</u> Subjects</i>
Highest Honors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>All</u> As <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No Bs, Cs or NYPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>All</u> 4s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No 3s, 2s, or 1s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>All</u> 4s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No 1s, 2s, or 3s
High Honors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A <u>majority</u> of As <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No Cs or NYPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A <u>majority</u> of 4s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No 2s or 1s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A <u>majority</u> of 4s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No 2s or 1s
Honors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A <u>combination</u> of As and Bs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No Cs or NYPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A <u>combination</u> of 4s and 3s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No 2s or 1s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A <u>combination</u> of 3s and 4s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No 2s or 1s