

## The 4.0 Grading Scale

In place of the traditional 100-point scale, students in a standards-based classroom are assessed on a 4.0 point scale. This 4.0 scale identifies the level of learning that needs to take place to earn each letter grade.

**A range (3.50 - 4.0):** The student demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the material that goes beyond what has been presented in class. The student shows this understanding by completing advanced applications of the material.

**B range (2.75 - 3.49):** The student has mastered the complex, targeted knowledge and skills for the class.

**C range (1.75 - 2.74):** The student understands the foundational material that supports the targeted learning, but is still working to master the complex material for the class.

**D range (1.00 - 1.74):** The student is able to show understanding of the foundational material with help from the teacher, but still struggles when working independently.

**Below 1.00:** The student shows little to no understanding of the material, even with assistance from the teacher. In particular, a score of zero means the student does not show any understanding of the material even with help, and zeroes will never be given for missing assessments.

**Incomplete:** The student has not completed the necessary assessments to check for mastery of the material. The grade will be marked incomplete until the necessary assessments are complete.

**Note:** This scale is not used to compute a student's GPA.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What about non-academic factors, such as effort, attitude, participation, and behavior?

These factors have always been and will continue to be an important part of your student's success. However, in standards-based grading, these things will be communicated separately from your student's academic grade.

### 2. Will standards-based grading increase or decrease my student's grade?

This change was not made in order to increase or decrease grades. Instead, this change was made to provide both you and your student with more information about how well your student has mastered the material and to more accurately reflect what your student has learned.

### 3. How will my student be assessed?

The teachers will be using a variety of formative and summative assessments in addition to the traditional paper-and-pencil tests, such as projects, lab reports, and verbal assessments.

### 4. How will this affect my student's GPA and transcript?

The system used to submit letter grades for GPA and transcript purposes has not changed, so you will still see the normal grade on your student's report card.

### 5. What classes are currently using standards-based grading?

Select required and elective courses in the core areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies will use standards-based grading during the 2011-2012 school year.

If you have any additional questions or would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact your student's teacher.

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## What is Standards- Based Grading?



Parent Information Guide

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Standards-based grading measures the mastery of the learning objectives, or how well your student understands the material in class. At the beginning of every unit, the teacher will outline the objectives and criteria for mastery using a detailed rubric. During the unit, the student is assessed to see if they truly know the material using a variety of assessments, such as traditional paper-and-pencil tests, projects, or reports. The class grade will be based solely on student performance on these assessments.

The goal of this system is to provide the teacher, student, and parent as accurate a picture as possible of the student's learning to encourage a dialogue about how the student can master the material for the class. In particular, because learning is a process that takes place over time, each assessment will provide feedback for the student about what to focus on next, and the student will be allowed to retake assessments. If the new assessment shows a higher level of mastery, that new score replaces the old one.

Standards-based grading is a big change, and the goal of this guide is to help explain the reason for the change and how it will impact your student. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your student's teacher.



## Why Use Standards-Based Grading?

At ESHS, our goal is for student grades to be consistent, accurate, meaningful, and supportive of each student's learning, and standards-based grading is an effort to reach that goal. Here is how standards-based grading addresses each of these four criteria.

**Accurate:** By basing a student's grade on assessments, the teacher creates a clear picture of what the student has learned without the influence of other factors. These other factors, such as effort and attitude, are still essential, but are not part of the student's academic grade and are communicated separately.

**Consistent:** For each unit, the teacher will provide a rubric that describes exactly what the student will need to master. Using these rubrics establishes clear expectations for mastery up front and applies them consistently throughout the unit and semester.

**Meaningful:** A meaningful grade is one that clearly communicates what learning has taken place. In a standards-based classroom, scores are recorded by the learning objectives rather than by categories, such as tests or homework, making it easier to identify areas of strength and address areas of concern for each student.

**Supportive of Learning:** Standards-based grading supports learning by focusing on the material that has or has not been learned rather than on accumulating points to reach a certain total. The retesting policy also supports student learning by allowing new levels of learning to replace old when a student shows improvement on an assessment.

To ensure the success of all students, the teacher, student, and parent have the following responsibilities.

### **Teacher Responsibilities** - Each teacher will...

- Provide rubrics to students describing the learning the students will need to master.
- Design formative and summative assessments that meet the learning objectives.
- Provide meaningful feedback to students and parents so that progress can be monitored.
- Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways.
- Provide additional support for students as needed.

### **Student Responsibilities** - Each student will...

- Take responsibility for the learning that takes place.
- Ask for additional help in areas of difficulty.
- Complete course work in a timely manner.
- Use formative assessments as a meaningful opportunity to practice.
- Actively monitor progress toward mastering the learning objectives.
- Redo assessments to improve mastery to reflect new learning.
- Arrange for time before or after school or during ELT to receive additional help and to redo assessments.

### **Parent Responsibilities** - Each parent will...

- Monitor student progress on the learning objectives.
- Provide support for learning at home.
- Communicate concerns with the student and teacher.