



# **A Teacher's Guide to Standards-Based Assessment, Grading, and Reporting**



**Office for Schools  
Archdiocese of Milwaukee**

**“An excellent Catholic school uses school-wide assessment methods and practices to document student learning and program effectiveness, to make student performances transparent, and to inform the continuous review of curriculum and the improvement of instructional practices.”**

*-Standard 8: National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools*

The Second Vatican Council highlighted the value of Catholic education in the life of the Church and its fundamental mission to spread the Gospel. While our society often places competition and academic excellence above the development of a student's moral and intellectual excellence, our Catholic schools have an essential obligation to provide our students with more than just a rigorous academic curriculum to prepare them for high school, college, and beyond. Catholic education must also prepare students to take their place in society as disciples of Christ; instilling in them a sense of service and challenging them to live the Gospel through daily interactions with all whom they come in contact.

When used correctly, grades provide vital information to students, parents, and other interested persons that enhance both teaching and learning. Grading helps identify what learning standards have been attained, and where additional work is needed. The goal is to provide a picture of the whole child: academic skills and knowledge as well as non-academic areas such as effort and behavior which will be reported separately. Children and their learning are too complex to be reduced to a simple letter grade. This reporting system will be a fuller indication of academic progress than other currently used grading systems. The proficiency scale ratings indicate a child's progress toward achieving specific grade level standards as identified by the archdiocesan curriculum. The intent is to present information regarding a student's progress so that intervention or enrichment strategies can be applied to help each child learn (advanced, proficient, struggling, and special needs) and to honor the dignity of each student as a child of God.

As a teacher in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, you have made the commitment to prepare students in the unique context of a Catholic school. Your commitment to prepare our students is evident in all that you do. Your school, as well as all other K-8 schools in the archdiocese, has submitted an annual Standards-Based Assessment and Grading Implementation Plan. Your principal will oversee the implementation process, so you will have a clear sense of where you are and where you are going as a school.

## Message to Teachers

The Office for Schools would like to express its gratitude for the commitment of countless teachers and administrators throughout the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to fully implement standards-based assessment, grading, and reporting in our schools. Teachers and administrators in schools that have already made great progress toward this goal have been exceptional in sharing their knowledge and experiences with others. We want to acknowledge their generosity of time, talent, and leadership which has significantly guided and advanced our collective efforts.

Members of the Assessment Committee, Report Card Redesign Committee, Summer Workshop participants, and members of the Office for Schools worked collaboratively to make critical decisions and create the documents that are included in this manual; however, additional steps in our journey towards a standards-based teaching and learning environment remain. We now need to improve the quality of our assessments and change our instructional practices to differentiate and personalize learning for each child. It is our hope that *A Teacher's Guide to Standards-Based Assessment, Grading, and Reporting* will provide the timeline, process, and resources needed to do that work.

Gratefully,

Kathleen A. Cepelka, Ph.D.

Superintendent of Catholic Schools  
Archdiocese of Milwaukee

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Overview: Key Understandings and Definitions</b>	6
<b>Why Standards-Based Grading?</b>	7
<b>Archdiocese of Milwaukee Principles of Standards-Based Grading</b>	9
<b>How is standards-based grading different from traditional grading?</b>	10
<b>Assessment and Grading Beliefs and Practices</b>	12
<b>Timeline</b>	14
<b>Standards-Based Instruction</b>	15
<b>Curriculum Standards</b>	15
<b>Priority and Supporting Standards</b>	15
<b>Learning Targets</b>	16
<b>Standards-Based Assessment</b>	17
<b>Evidence of Achievement</b>	17
<b>Standards-Based Grading and Reporting</b>	18
<b>Students with Disabilities</b>	19
<b>Grading and Reporting</b>	21
▸GRADING	21
▸GRADE CALCULATION METHODS	23
▸REPORTING	26
<b>Grading Practices</b>	27
▸Fixes for Practices that Distort Achievement	27
▸Fixes for Low-Quality or Poorly Organized Evidence	27
▸Fixes for Inappropriate Grade Calculation	27
▸Fixes to Support Learning	27
<b>Determining How and When to Report Progress</b>	28
<b>Report Card</b>	28

<b>Reporting on Student Progress</b>	32
<b>Daily Work and Class Assignments</b>	32
<b>Gradebooks</b>	33
▸ Manual Gradebook Examples	34
<b>Appendix A - Frequently Asked Questions</b>	35
<b>Appendix B - Research and Resources</b>	38
▸ Facebook Groups	39
▸ Follow these people and accounts on Twitter:	39

## OVERVIEW: KEY UNDERSTANDINGS AND DEFINITIONS

The **contents** of this manual represent the collaborative efforts of administrators and teachers who serve on the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Assessment Committee, Report Card Revision Task Force, and Empowering Teacher Leaders Committee.

The **information and resources** contained in this manual are based on the following key understandings and definitions:

**Assessment** is a comprehensive set of practices that analyze, inform, and drive student learning.

**Assessment serves three purposes:**

1. Provides a **defined measurement of student growth and achievement over a designated time period**. This measurement illustrates where the student's level of mastery is at the end of the designated period of time. The level of student performance necessary to achieve mastery is clearly defined and understood by both the student and the teacher prior to the end of the designated time period. These assessments are **summative**.
2. Provides both the student and teacher with reliable **feedback of the student's growth and achievement of mastery** at any given time during the process and throughout the duration of the learning experiences. These assessments are **formative**.
3. Provides **feedback and data on the student's growth and achievement of mastery** to the teacher to guide and differentiate the instructional practices, strategies, and experiences the student engages in during the designated learning period.

There are two types of assessment: formative and summative. The ***National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools*** define formative and summative assessment as follows:

- **Formative:** Demonstrated learning by the student; the instructional process that provides ongoing, growth-producing feedback that informs and supports improved learning and informed teaching.
- **Summative:** Demonstration of proficiency in knowledge and skills at the end of a period of instruction.

**Assessment, in and of itself, is not grading.** Assessment practices that are comprehensive and integrated will provide **quality data of student growth and achievement** which will allow the school to synthesize this data into a system of letters, numbers, symbols, or words. This data can then be used to **report out student growth and achievement to various constituencies as needed**.

**Grading** is the assigning of a **symbol to represent a summary of a student’s mastery** of a given standard at the end of a predetermined time period or course of study.

**Reporting** is the tool or mechanism used to **convey a student’s level of mastery** to both the student and his/her family at a specific, defined time in the academic year (quarter, trimester, and/or semester).

**Standards-based grading** is based on the principle that grades should **convey how well students have achieved standards**. In other words, grades are not about what students *earn*; they are about what students *learn*. Brookhart, S.M. (2011). “Starting the Conversation About Grading.” *Educational Leadership*, 69(3), 10-14.

## WHY STANDARDS-BASED GRADING?

Many of the leading educational experts, Robert Marzano, Ken O'Connor, Tom Guskey, Rick Wormeli, John Hattie Tom Schimmer, Jane E. Pollock, Cathy Vatterott, Susan Brookhardt, and Myron Dueck, have found that timely, actionable feedback is one of the most powerful influences on student learning. A traditional grading system reduces everything that a student does to a single letter grade, making it neither timely nor actionable. The most effective feedback teachers can provide to students comes in relationship to predetermined learning goals.

By using a standards-based assessment, grading, and reporting system, we are following the results of educational research and best practice. Standards-based instruction, assessment, and grading has the potential to provide a rich array of information on a student’s academic progress.

Our focus should be placed on both the student’s moral and intellectual excellence. There are several advantages of standards-based education:

- It ensures consistent expectations across grade levels.
- It helps teachers and students focus on the standards in their learning activities.
- Assessments are aligned to standards and provide evidence of what a student knows and/or can do.
- It provides feedback as to a student’s proficiency level allowing the teacher to better individualize instruction.
- It provides parents with valuable information on how their child is progressing on the critical concepts and skills of the grade level as well as individual standards.

By fully implementing a standards-based assessment, grading, and reporting system, accurate information about student performance can be communicated by teachers to parents. Children and their learning are too complex to be reduced to a simple letter grade. This reporting system will be a fuller indication of academic progress than other currently used grading systems.

Research has shown that letter grades do not motivate students to learn. On the contrary, research has found three consistent effects of using and, especially, emphasizing the importance of letter or number grades:

1. Grades tend to reduce students' interest in the learning itself. One of the most well-researched findings in the field of motivational psychology is that the more people are rewarded for doing something, the more they tend to lose interest in whatever they had to do to get the reward (Kohn, 1993). Thus, it shouldn't be surprising that when students are told they'll need to know something for a test - or, more generally, that something they're about to do will count for a grade - they are likely to come to view that task (or book or idea) as a chore.
2. Grades tend to reduce students' preference for challenging tasks. Students of all ages who have been led to concentrate on getting a good grade are likely to pick the easiest possible assignment if given a choice (Harter, 1978; Harter and Guzman, 1986; Kage, 1991; Milton et al., 1986). If there is more pressure to get an A, then there is less inclination to truly challenge oneself. Thus, students who cut corners may not be lazy as much as rational; they are adapting to an environment where good grades, not intellectual exploration, are what counts.
3. Grades tend to reduce the quality of students' thinking. Given that students may lose interest in what they're learning as a result of grades, it makes sense that they're also apt to think less deeply. One series of studies, for example, found that students given numerical grades were significantly less creative than those who received qualitative feedback but no grades. The more the task required creative thinking, in fact, the worse the performance of students who knew they were going to be graded. Providing students with comments in addition to a grade didn't help; the highest achievement occurred only when comments were given instead of numerical scores (Butler, 1987; Butler, 1988; Butler and Nisan, 1986).

Intrinsic motivation is the most powerful kind of motivation. When students are involved in the learning process by knowing their strengths and where they need to improve, the students can work with teachers and parents to set meaningful goals of excellence, strive to achieve the goals, and experience success.

[Eliminating Points and Averages](#)



## ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE PRINCIPLES OF STANDARDS-BASED GRADING

- Assessment and grading are ongoing processes that guide continuous learning.
- Grading should be standards-based and reflect what students know and are able to do.
- Grading should be transparent and promote common understanding between students, parents, teachers, and schools.
- Grading should support a growth mindset.
- Grading should only reflect student achievement.
- The purpose of homework is to check for understanding, provide feedback, and prepare students for summative assessments.



## HOW IS STANDARDS-BASED GRADING DIFFERENT FROM TRADITIONAL GRADING?

### How Grading is Defined

Traditional Grading Paradigm	Standards-Based Grading Paradigm
Low-level rote knowledge	Higher-order thinking skills
Knowing and understanding	Applying, analyzing, synthesizing
Learning defined by what students know	Learning defined by what students can do with what they know
Evidence of learning is repeating back	Evidence of learning is using skills in new situations*
Rigor is coverage	Rigor is complexity*

Source: Rethinking Grading by Cathy Vatterott, ASCD, 2015 \*Rigor and Relevance Framework

### How Learning is Structured

Traditional Grading Paradigm	Results	Standards-Based Grading Paradigm	Results
Whole class—all get the same instruction, same homework, same test	Only students who learn well from that method succeed	Learning is differentiated to enable mastery	Learning is more efficient
Time to learn fixed; achievement varies	Learners who need more time are penalized	Time to learn varies; achievement fixed	More students achieve mastery
One-shot learning Grades are permanent Cycle of teach, test, move on	Speed = intelligence	Assessment is a continuous process <b>Feedback loop: Teach, check, apply learning, feedback</b>	"I can keep working and take the assessment when I am confident that I understand."

Source: Rethinking Grading by Cathy Vatterott, ASCD, 2015

## How Learning is Experienced

Traditional Grading Paradigm	Results	Standards-Based Grading Paradigm	Results
Learning is expected to be error-free – mistakes are punished	Reinforces fixed mindset (“I’m just not smart.”)	Defines learning as hard and frustrating but achievable	Reinforces growth mindset
Students are judged with grades while still learning	Fear of failure	Mistakes are a natural part of learning	Learned optimism <b>Perseverance</b>
Failure is a judgement and a validation of ability	Struggling students avoid learning <b>Teacher rescues struggling learners</b> Learned helplessness	Lack of understanding is a puzzle, not a validation of stupidity <b>Struggle is good – BUT with support</b>	Students’ beliefs empower them to achieve

Source: Rethinking Grading by Cathy Vatterott, ASCD, 2015

## How Grades are Used

Traditional Grading Paradigm	Results	Standards-Based Grading Paradigm	Results
Locus of control - teacher	Student motivation – extrinsic based on reward and punishment	Locus of control – student	Student motivation – intrinsic based on progress toward mastery
Form of control – points	Grade is the goal <b>Quid pro quo – “I work, you pay.”</b> Gaming the system <b>Cheating</b>	Form of control – individual learning progress	Learning is the goal <b>Only way to win the game is to get better at the learning</b> Cheating doesn’t help you learn or pass the assessment
Grading during learning – grading homework, including the late penalties	Penalizes kids for taking risks <b>Breeds hopelessness</b>	Homework is not graded – it is used to check for understanding/provide feedback <b>“We don’t keep score during practice”</b>	It’s safe to make mistakes and take risks in learning
All grades are permanent and averaged together	One bad grade seals your fate <b>F – the gift that keeps on giving</b> Mistakes are permanent (no redemption)	Test for mastery <b>Grade in pencil</b> Grades can be improved <b>More recent information replaces old information</b>	It’s okay not to “get it” right away <b>Redemption is possible</b>

Source: Rethinking Grading by Cathy Vatterott, ASCD, 2015

## ASSESSMENT AND GRADING BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Assessment is a comprehensive set of practices that analyze, inform, and drive student learning. Effective grading practices are necessary for improved teaching and learning.

Guiding principles	Best practices	Discontinued practices
<p><b>1. We believe assessment and grading are <u>ongoing</u> processes that guide continuous learning.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will allow students to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways</li> <li>• Teachers will provide opportunities for practice, retakes and revisions</li> <li>• Teachers will determine proficiency by considering multiple points of the most recent data</li> <li>• Teachers will provide feedback to reflect student progress toward learning goals and inform continuing instruction</li> <li>• Teachers will base homework on identified learning targets</li> <li>• Teachers will use homework to check for understanding and provide feedback</li> <li>• Students will complete assessments to demonstrate the acquisition of knowledge and skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will not determine grades based on a single assessment</li> <li>• Teachers will not determine grades based on the mathematical average of scores earned over time</li> <li>• Teachers will not assign a summative grade without providing the student with an opportunity to respond to formative feedback</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. We believe grading should be standards-based and reflect what students <u>know and are able to do</u>.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will determine grades that reflect evidence of student learning</li> <li>• Teachers will determine grades based on mastery of standards</li> <li>• Teachers will use a variety of developmentally appropriate methods and tools to assess learning</li> <li>• Students will know which learning standards and goals they are working on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will not grade student work given to provide practice or check for understanding</li> <li>• Teachers will not give assessments without identifying the standards with which they are aligned</li> <li>• Teachers will not use methods and tools that are not developmentally appropriate</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. We believe grading should be transparent and promote common understanding between students, parents, teachers and schools.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and schools will make sure that grading practices are valid, accurate and consistent</li> <li>• Teachers and schools will clearly communicate grading practices</li> <li>• Students and parents will have access to feedback and grades</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will not withhold information about student progress</li> </ul>

Guiding principles	Best practices	Discontinued practices
<p>4. We believe grading should support a <u>growth</u> mindset.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will give feedback to direct and motivate continuous learning</li> <li>• Teachers will provide feedback that helps students understand their individual progress against learning goals</li> <li>• Teachers will provide methods for students to track their progress towards learning goals</li> <li>• Students will anticipate success in acquiring knowledge and skills</li> <li>• Students will employ strategies to promote successful learning</li> <li>• Students will recognize and track their progress toward learning goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will not give a final grade on student work without first offering the student formative feedback and an opportunity to redo or revise the assignment</li> <li>• Teachers will not track grades without sharing them with students and parents</li> </ul>
<p>5. We believe grading should <u>ONLY</u> reflect student achievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will only consider achievement scores in determining grades</li> <li>• Students will demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired</li> <li>• Students will submit proof of remediation, such as completing missing/alternate assignments prior to retaking a test or re-submitting a project</li> <li>• Students will receive grades only on assignments that demonstrate what they know and are able to do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will not consider behavior, effort, attendance, class participation, missing work or extra credit when determining academic grades</li> </ul>
<p>6. We believe the <u>purpose of homework</u> is to check for understanding, provide feedback, and prepare students for summative assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will only assign homework that is aligned with learning targets</li> <li>• Teachers will only assign homework that supports a student's individual learning needs</li> <li>• Teachers will only use homework to check for understanding and provide feedback; it will not be graded</li> <li>• Students will complete homework to advance their knowledge and skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will not grade homework that is given for practice or to check for understanding</li> <li>• Teachers will not assign homework that does not support growth toward identified learning targets (i.e., word searches, coloring book pages, copy of text passages)</li> </ul>

## TIMELINE

The work of preparing for transition to standards-based assessment and grading began with the creation of an Assessment Committee seven years ago. Since then, countless administrators, teachers, and national experts have worked together to move us to where we are today. The timeline below outlines the general plan for full implementation of standards-based assessment and grading. It will be expanded as progress is made and needs are identified. It is important to note that implementation is a continuous cycle of refining and improving teaching practices.

The priority and supporting standards and scoring guides identify learning targets matched to the proficiency descriptors. These will be updated on the report card as they are completed during the curriculum review process. In addition, professional development will be differentiated and ongoing to continually improve our instructional practice.

2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Identify Standards as “Priority” or “Supporting”	Build Assessments Aligned to Learning Targets	Design & Deliver Instruction that Specifically Addresses Learning Targets
Write Learning Targets Specifically Aligned to the Priority Standards	Design & Deliver Instruction that Specifically Addresses Learning Targets	Administer Formative & Summative Assessments
Create Proficiency Scales & Scoring Guides	Continue Work on Design of Level 4 Tasks	Report Proficiency Levels Based on Scoring Guides
	Administer Formative & Summative Assessments	Convert to Proficiency Scale for Grading and Reporting as Outlined in Your School Implementation Plan
	Utilize Revised Report Card Standards Statements for ELA, Math, and Science	Transition to New Standards-Based Curriculum and Accompanying Report Card Standards Statements as Developed  2020-21: Religion and Social Studies
	Convert to Proficiency Scale for Grading and Reporting as Outlined in Your School Implementation Plan	

## STANDARDS-BASED INSTRUCTION

Instruction is focused on standards within our courses of study including appropriate and meaningful activities that engage the student in the learning process. Students focus on true mastery of a topic or skill and teachers focus on teaching standards that every student must learn. Each lesson taught is connected to a standard, and learning targets along the way mark progress toward meeting the standard. Learning targets are clear and opportunities to meet them are varied.

## CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Curriculum standards statements are concise, written descriptions of what students are expected to know and be able to do at a specific grade level. The curriculum for all content areas is found at [www.schools.archmil.org](http://www.schools.archmil.org). The curriculum in all content areas is aligned with corresponding state/national standards. All coursework is tied to standards, which are meant to prepare students for success in high school to ensure that they are college and career ready.

## PRIORITY AND SUPPORTING STANDARDS

Priority standards refer to a subset of the learning standards that educators have determined to be the highest priority or most important for students to learn. A team of teachers and administrators met throughout the 2018-2019 school year to develop the priority standards for K-8<sup>th</sup> grade. It is important to note that priority standards do not preclude the teaching of the supporting standards. In many cases, the supporting standards actually provide more detailed descriptions of what is required to meet the priority standards. For example, one of the priority standards for grade 3 math is, “Understands concepts of area measurement.” A supporting standard is, “Measure areas by counting unit squares.” Achievement of this supporting standard must be met in order to master the priority standard. For this reason, priority standards may be limited to only a handful of standards and are the ones communicated to parents on a regular basis.

## LEARNING TARGETS

Sometimes called “I CAN” statements, these are daily or weekly goals written in student friendly language. They serve the purpose of helping students know if they are making day-to-day progress and provide transparency in learning. An “I CAN” statement frames the lesson from the students' point of view, breaking down the standards into learning targets students can read and understand. They cover specific learning for each lesson, and there can be more than one “I CAN” statement for each standard. For example, using the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade example from above, a couple of learning targets might be, “I can define ‘unit square,’” and “I can relate the number of unit squared to the area of a plane figure.” They are different than instructional objectives. Instructional objectives are about instruction, derived from content standards, written in teacher language, and are used to guide teaching during a lesson or across a series of lessons. They are not designed for students but for the teacher.





## STANDARDS-BASED ASSESSMENT

Students know in advance what they will need to learn, and they will have more than one opportunity to show they have met the standard. Teachers will use both informal (formative) and formal (summative) assessments to measure progress. Formative is assessment **for learning** and is characterized by direct and constructive feedback. Summative is assessment **of learning** and is designed to provide information or evidence about achievement of standards. Assessments can include portfolios, projects, quizzes, tests, and daily assignments. Students will have multiple assessment opportunities –and different assessment options – to demonstrate their understanding of the standards. All assessment items are aligned to standards and determination of mastery is defined and communicated to the student prior to the student taking the assessment. The chart below breaks down the different types of assessments and their purposes.

Simple Formative (Unobtrusive)	Complex Formative (Obtrusive)	Simple Summative (Graded)	Complex Summative (Graded)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is not discernible from what usually happens in the classroom</li> <li>No paper and pencil</li> <li>No grade, mostly observational</li> <li>Provides predictive validity for success on complex formative assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A “pause” in the instructional flow</li> <li>Includes paper and pencil (pre- and post-tests)</li> <li>No grade, used as a data collection device to inform instruction</li> <li>Could address two or more standards</li> <li>Provides predictive validity for success on simple summative assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May or may not include paper and pencil, depending on the task or performance</li> <li>Allows for feedback on proficiency for more than one standard</li> <li>Provides predictive validity for success on complex summative assessments</li> <li>May include chapter, vocabulary or weekly tests</li> </ul> <p>Examples: quiz, end of session assessment, chapter test, vocabulary test</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May or may not include paper and pencil, depending on the task or performance, but is most often written in some form</li> <li>Has a tendency to provide less feedback (but should in some way)</li> <li>Measures largest number of standards in a cumulative manner</li> <li>May or may not immediately inform instruction</li> </ul> <p>Examples: end of unit, end of course, final exam, performance assessment, integrated unit, state test, ACT/SAT</p>

Adapted from *Standards and Assessment: The Core of Quality Instruction*, The Leadership and Learning Center, 2018.

## EVIDENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT

Students are graded based on the evidence of achievement. This evidence can come from a variety of sources. STAR tests, MAP tests, performance tasks (observations), projects, portfolios, and summative assessments are all examples of evidence teachers can use to determine achievement. Teachers should plan assessments aligned to standards in order to provide direct evidence of student proficiency on specific learning targets/outcomes. However, teachers should be careful not to use results from learning and practice activities (diagnostic assessments such as pretests, formative assessments or tasks). Students must be given the freedom to try and fail because that is integral to the learning process.

Proficiency should be determined only after students have had 3-5 opportunities to demonstrate their learning. When considering evidence, teachers should give priority to the most recent and most comprehensive evidence.

## STANDARDS-BASED GRADING AND REPORTING

Standards-based grading and reporting are a set of teaching and reporting practices that communicate how a student is performing against a predetermined set of expectations. Students are graded on the development of skills and knowledge (what they know and can do) rather than their completion of tasks. The primary purpose for report cards and progress reports is to give parents, teachers, and students a clear picture of a child's academic progress and growth in relationship to archdiocesan standards. Grades are determined by analyzing the evidence of learning (see **Evidence of Achievement** above) and each student's work is measured against the standard, not against the performance of other students. Grades reflect that a student is proficient, developing, or emerging toward mastery of the standards. The grades are given for each standard, not an average of grades for a content area. *Standards-Based education focuses on what a student knows, not how long it took to get there.* The teacher gives students the practice they need and more than one opportunity to demonstrate success—if they need it. In assessing the whole child, two separate categories will be reported:

- Academic achievement, which is an accurate evaluation of what a student knows and is able to demonstrate.
- Success Indicators, which describe the actions and behaviors that support achievement.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Grades/achievement grades for students with disabilities on a Service Plan or IEP should reflect progress in the general curriculum using the specified services, supports, accommodations, and modifications identified in the individual plan. Students will demonstrate progress toward identified standards, whether grade level or alternative, with alignment to pertinent Service Plan or IEP goals. Progress specific to the goals and objectives identified in the plan are reflected in the Service Plan or IEP Progress Report, not the report card.

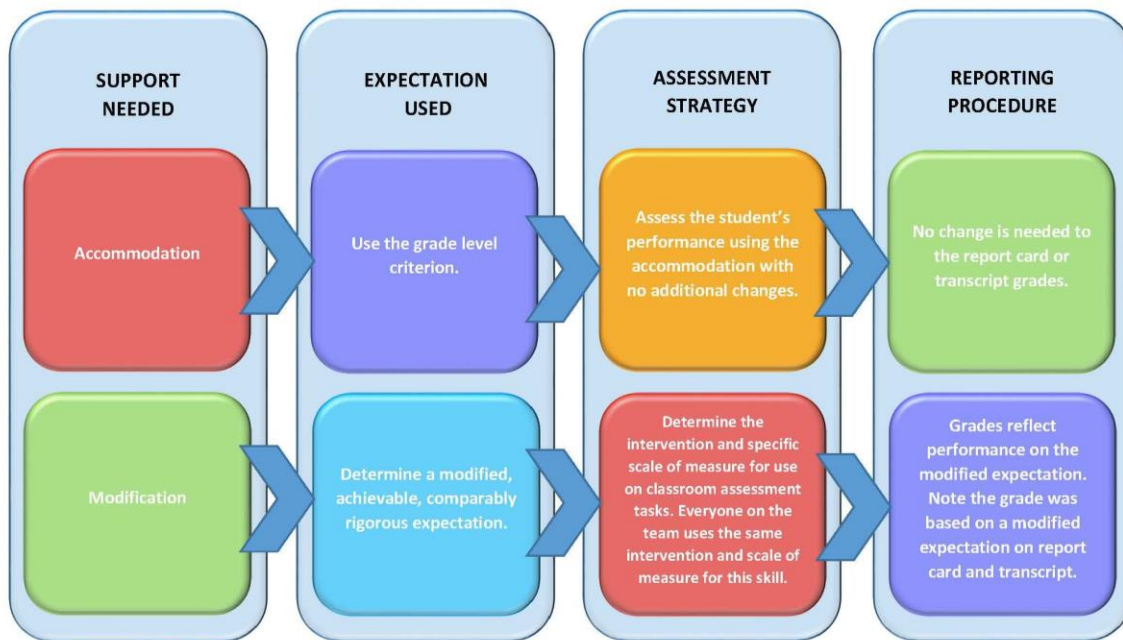
In collaboration with parents, teacher teams will determine how students will access grade-level content through accommodations or below grade-level content (alternative standards) through modifications to meet a particular standard. For example, a grade of “3” (Proficient) can be achieved through accommodations for grade-level content. A grade of “3” (Proficient) given on an alternative standard is achieved through modifications. Modified standards are clearly communicated on a report card through the use of an asterisk (\*) identifying Modified Standard.

### Accommodations and Modifications

<u>Adaptations</u>	
<p>Accommodations and modifications are types of adaptations that are made to the environment, curriculum, instruction, or assessment practices in order for students with disabilities to be successful learners and to actively participate with other students in the general education classroom and in school-wide activities.</p>	
<u>Accommodations</u>	<u>Modifications</u>
<p>Adaptations that provide access for any student to the general curriculum but do not fundamentally alter the grade-level standard or proficiency level.</p> <p>Changes <b>HOW</b> a student accesses information or demonstrated learning.</p>	<p>Adaptations to the curriculum that fundamentally alter the grade-level expectations, but do not fundamentally alter the content standard.</p> <p>Modifications typically include reducing the cognitive load (content), methodology or delivery of instructions (process), and/or adjusting the performance criteria (product) and occur over time as defined in the Service Plan or IEP.</p> <p>Changes <b>WHAT</b> standard a student is expected to learn.</p>

## Differentiated Assessment and Grading Model

### DiAGraM



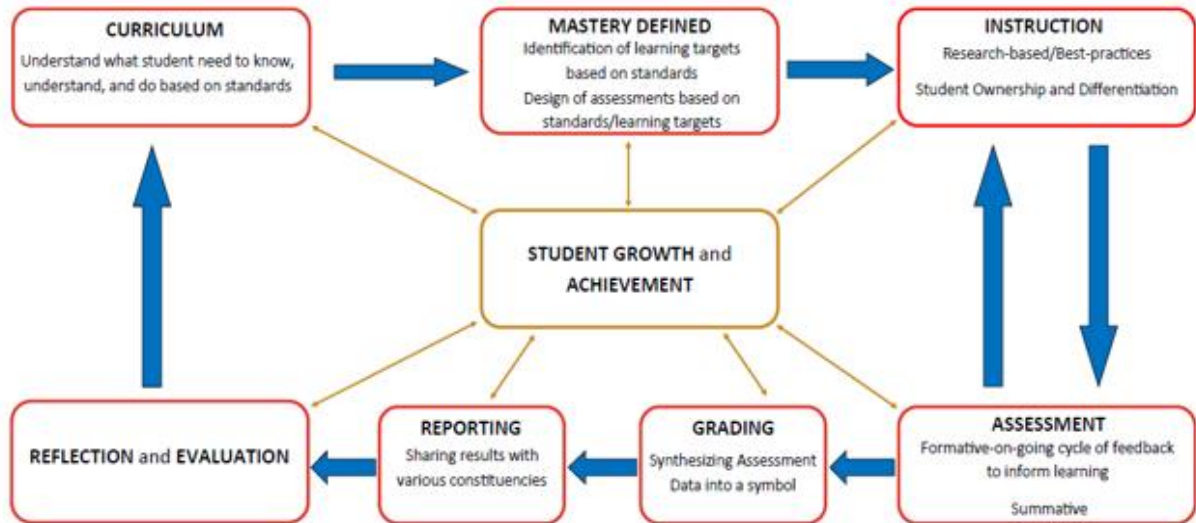
SOURCE: ASCD ANNUAL CONFERENCE: LEE ANN JUNG, MARCH 11, 2018 @LEEANNJUNG #LEADINCLUSION

## GRADING AND REPORTING

### The Cycle of Learning for Student Growth

“An excellent Catholic school uses school-wide assessment methods and practices to document student learning and program effectiveness, to make student performances transparent, and to inform the continuous review of curriculum and the improvement of instructional practices.”

-Standard 8: National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools



### ►GRADING

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee has created **Scoring Guides** for all priority standards in ELA, Mathematics, and Science. These scoring guides provide clearly defined learning targets that communicate the knowledge and skills necessary for students to reach mastery on each priority standard. **Note:** As priority standards for other content areas are determined, they will be added to the report card at the end of the school year.

**Level 1** would only apply to students who lack even the most basic knowledge in a given standard. This is often the student who has learning challenges identified in a Service Plan or IEP.

**Level 2** is the grade given when a student is not at the mastery level, but working on the necessary vocabulary and learning targets identified in the scoring guide. A student remains at Level 2 until they have demonstrated full mastery of the priority standard(s) being assessed.

**Level 3** is the grade given when a student has demonstrated proficiency on a given standard. It is important that 3-5 pieces of evidence of mastery are present before the priority standard is given a grade on the report card. These assessments are summative in nature, but don't necessarily require a formal written test. The most recent and comprehensive evidence is given the greatest consideration when making that determination.

### Scoring Guide Template: Grades 1-3

<b>Grade:</b>		<b>Content Area:</b>	
2		ELA - Reading: Informational Text	
<b>Standard(s):</b>			
RI.2.5 Know and use various text features to locate key facts for information in a text efficiently.			
<b>3</b>	<b>Students will be able to:</b>		
	Know and use various text features to locate key facts for information in a text efficiently.		
<b>2</b>	<b>Students will recognize or recall academic vocabulary including:</b>		
	text features (e.g., headings, sub-headings, bold words, caption)		
	<b>Students will be able to:</b>		
	Identify various text features (headings, sub-headings, bold words, captions) in an informational text. Identify key facts or information in an informational text. Use various text features (captions, bold print, sub-headings, glossaries, indexes, etc.) to locate key facts or information in an informational text.		
<b>1</b>	<b>Insufficient Evidence</b>		

**Level 4** represents an understanding and application of knowledge at a level beyond what is expected at a given grade level. In the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Level 4 appears on the Proficiency Scale beginning in grade 4.

<b>Level 4 is:</b>	<b>Level 4 is not:</b>
High on Bloom's Taxonomy or DOK level	An "A"
Beyond what is taught in the classroom	Extra credit
Something most students do not attain	A reward for non-academic factors
Often a result of high ability, high interest, or high background knowledge	The teacher's instructional focus



## Math Scoring Guide: Grade 5

<b>Grade:</b>	<b>Content Area:</b>
5	Number and Operations: Fractions
<b>Standard(s):</b>	
5.NF.2 Solve word problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions referring to the same whole, including cases of unlike denominators, e.g., by using visual fraction models or equations to represent the problem. Use benchmark fractions and number sense of fractions to estimate mentally and assess the reasonableness of answers.	
	<b>Students will be able to:</b>
	Demonstrates the Standards for Mathematical Practices by problem solving, reasoning and proof, communication, representation, or making connections
<b>4</b>	<p>For Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design your own word problem involving 2 step addition and subtraction of fractions.</li> <li>- Choose 4 of the following numbers to create two proper fractions - 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7. What fractions would have the greatest possible sum? Create two new fractions that produce the smallest difference. Explain your thinking.</li> </ul>
	<b>Students will be able to:</b>
<b>3</b>	Solves word problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions.
	<b>Students will recognize or recall academic vocabulary including:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● equivalent fractions</li> <li>● numerators</li> <li>● denominators</li> <li>● mixed numbers</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Students will be able to:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Can add and subtract fractions with like denominators involving story problems.</li> <li>● Can add and subtract fractions with unlike denominators involving story problems.</li> <li>● Can add and subtract mixed numbers involving story problems.</li> <li>● Evaluate the reasonableness of an answer, using fractional number sense, by comparing it to a benchmark fraction.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<b>Insufficient Evidence</b>

### ►GRADE CALCULATION METHODS

In a standards-based grading system, averaging and letters defined by percentage ranges are not used. Student progress is reported using a number defined in the Proficiency Scale.

Your Student Information System (SIS) or grade book contains both formative and summative assessment data, but how those assessments are used is determined by a grade calculation method that supports standards-based instruction and assessment.

Formative assessments are not included in determining standard proficiency. They should be recorded and available to parents and students in the SIS, but clearly marked as formative. This is critical feedback for students and parents during the learning process, and frequent formative assessment with growth-producing feedback is an important part of your daily practice.

The same is true for grades given on supporting standards. **Assessment of supporting standards does NOT roll up (average) into priority standard grades.** Remember, supporting standards are to be taught, but they are not given the amount of instructional time that we give priority standards. By definition, the supporting standards are often necessary for a student to master a priority standard. Mastery of supporting standards can be thought of as formative. Supporting standards provide important information and feedback but are not linked to grades on priority standards in the SIS system.

The set-up of the SIS system for Science is slightly different than ELA and Mathematics. Since the Science and Engineering Practices (SEP) are what is reported on the report card, the content standards aligned to each SEP appear in the SIS system as supporting standards. All formative assessments in Science are attached to those content standards. **All summative assessments for the report card must be attached to the corresponding SEP.** There is no averaging of content standard summative assessment into a SEP.

Proficiency is determined using summative assessments only. It is necessary to have a minimum of 3-5 pieces of evidence from any assessment source that is directly aligned to the Scoring Guide proficiency learning outcomes. For example, you may have a student demonstrate his/her mastery of math facts in a variety of ways. All are valid if the student is demonstrating their learning based on priority standard learning outcomes.

A student will be at a Level 2 until he/she has demonstrated proficiency on the entire priority standard. In some cases, the priority standard can be taught and assessed in a given quarter or trimester. Others are very involved and require a longer span of instruction and summative assessment opportunities before they are reported. Remember, a minimum 3-5 pieces of evidence must be gathered before a grade is given on the report card.

The calculation method your school selects will become the default calculation method. The default calculation method is used as a starting point. However, sometimes these methods work well, and other times there are reasons to make a decision that counters the default grade. The teacher ultimately, with evidence to support the decision, determines if the calculated score is correct for the report card for a student, or if they want to choose a different grade on that standard. Regardless of the calculation method used, you may exempt scores that are not good reflections of a student's learning as long as the student has the opportunity to provide additional evidence of learning.






Calculation Method	Calculation Method Comparison	
<p><b>Mode</b> – the summative assessment score that appears most often.</p> <p>For example: Scores on five summative assessments: 2, 3 ,2, 3, 3, 4.</p> <p>Mode = 3</p> <p>Note: When there is more than one mode, the score will be left blank in PS.</p>	<p>Mode is useful when you have a small range of possibilities (3-5). The mode is the grade that occurs most often. If the grades are based on quality assessments fully aligned with the standard(s) being assessed, the mode will provide a good representation of the student’s proficiency.</p>	<p>Mode is not the best indicator if the last score was 4 and, thus, indicates the student has successfully completed a level 4 task on the Scoring Guide. In that case, the mode would not accurately reflect student progress because the most recent piece of evidence represents a higher level of performance than previous assessments.</p>
<p><b>Most Recent</b> – the most recent summative score.</p> <p>For example: Scores on five summative assessments: 2, 3, 3, 3, 3, 4.</p> <p>Most Recent = 4</p>	<p>Most Recent is useful when the learning is cumulative, and the student demonstrates a higher level of proficiency at the end of the grading period than at the beginning. In this situation, it makes sense to focus on the most recent scores as a reflection of the student’s proficiency. This method respects the learning process and a growth-mindset.</p>	<p>There are times when a score is not consistent with your experience of a student’s progress. For example, a student is sick on the day of a summative assessment and performs poorly. If this would be the case on the most recent summative assessment, the grade would not be reflective of the student’s progress.</p>

Professional Judgement	
<i>What is it?</i>	<i>How does it work?</i>
<p>An SIS system can be set up to calculate a grade in many ways, but the SIS system does not grade the student, the teacher does. It is imperative that each grade generated is reviewed to make sure it accurately reflects student performance. The professional judgement of the teacher must be supported by a minimum of 3-5 pieces of summative assessment evidence.</p>	<p>In any SIS system, teachers have the ability to override a grade. This override should not be used without evidence to support the changing of a grade in the system.</p> <p>In PowerTeacher Pro, the <i>Professional Judgement Indicator</i> alerts the teacher to any mathematical abnormalities in the student’s report card grade.</p>





## REPORTING

The **Proficiency Scale** describes performance in general terms, not specific to a priority standard. It communicates the level at which students are able to demonstrate understanding and application of concepts and skills aligned with grade level standards on the report card.

### Grades 1-3 Proficiency Scale

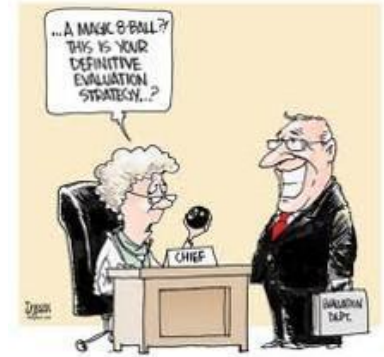
	<p><b>3</b> Proficient (Application Level Learning)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student demonstrates consistent understanding and application of concepts and skills aligned with grade level standards.</li> <li>● Student can complete assigned tasks independently.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>2</b> Developing (Foundation Level Learning)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student demonstrates partial understanding of grade level standards.</li> <li>● Student can sometimes complete learning activities without assistance.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>1</b> Insufficient Evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Insufficient evidence is available at this time to determine proficiency.</li> </ul>

### Grades 4-8 Proficiency Scale

	<p><b>4</b> Advanced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student demonstrates understanding of concepts and skills extending beyond grade level standards.</li> <li>● Student can independently complete self-directed studies.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>3</b> Proficient</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student demonstrates consistent understanding and application of concepts and skills aligned with grade level standards.</li> <li>● Student can complete assigned tasks independently.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>2</b> Developing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student demonstrates partial understanding of grade level standards.</li> <li>● Student can sometimes complete learning tasks without assistance.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>1</b> Insufficient Evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Insufficient evidence is available at this time to determine proficiency.</li> </ul>

## GRADING PRACTICES

From Ken O'Connor, "A Repair Kit for Grading: 15 Fixes for Broken Grades"



### FIXES FOR PRACTICES THAT DISTORT ACHIEVEMENT

- Include only achievement (don't include student behaviors, effort, participation, adherence to class rules, etc.).
- Provide support for the learner; don't reduce marks on "work" submitted late.
- Seek only evidence that more work has resulted in a higher level of achievement; don't give points for extra credit or use bonus points.
- Apply other consequences other than reduced grades or zeros for academic dishonesty.
- Report absences separately; don't consider attendance in grade determination.
- Use only individual achievement evidence not group scores.

### FIXES FOR LOW-QUALITY OR POORLY ORGANIZED EVIDENCE

- Organize and report evidence by standards/learning goals; don't organize information in grading records by assessment methods and/or summarize into a single grade.
- Provide clear descriptions of achievement expectations; don't assign grades using inappropriate or unclear performance standards.
- Compare each student's performance to preset standards; don't assign grades based on student's achievement compared to other students.
- Rely only on quality assessments; don't rely on evidence gathered using assessments that fail to meet standards of quality.

### FIXES FOR INAPPROPRIATE GRADE CALCULATION

- Consider other measures of central tendency such as median, mode, and most recent; don't rely on the mean. **Teachers should not average grades.**
- Use alternatives such as reassessing to determine achievement or use I for incomplete or insufficient evidence. Don't include zeros in grade determination when evidence is missing or for punishment.

### FIXES TO SUPPORT LEARNING

- Use only summative assessment evidence; don't use formative assessments or practice assignments to determine grades.
- Emphasize most recent evidence; don't summarize evidence over time when learning is developmental and will grow over time and with repeated opportunities.

Involve students in the learning process. They can, and should, play key roles in assessment and grading that promote achievement.

## DETERMINING HOW AND WHEN TO REPORT PROGRESS

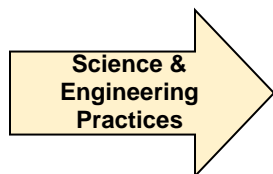
There are some differences in how and when priority standards are assessed. For example, a grade 2 mathematics standard, “Recognize and draw shapes having specified attributes,” could be taught and assessed in a quarter/trimester. Other standards are more extensive and could span the entire school year. In ELA, there are many standards that focus on long-term knowledge and skill development, such as this grade 7 standard, “Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.” It is also possible that a cluster of priority standards are combined and assessed in a unit or performance assessment.

The most important guideline as to how and when to report progress on the report card is evidence. After sufficient formative assessment and feedback have led to multiple opportunities (3-5) for summative demonstrations of learning, it is appropriate to report the student’s level of proficiency on the report card.

Another key understanding is that the report card reflects the level of proficiency at a point in time. When we honor the fact that the learning process is unique to each student, we recognize that mastery of a standard may vary and should be reported as the student grows in understanding. A student should continue to show progress toward achievement of a standard even if they have not yet demonstrated mastery at the end of a given quarter/trimester.

## REPORT CARD

The report card has been revised for the 2019-20 school year to reflect the priority standards for ELA, Mathematics, and Science. As priority standards are finalized for other content areas, revisions will be made at the end of each subsequent school year. The following graphics represent samples of the new report card for ELA, Math, and Science. The samples reflect reporting by trimester. You are not required to move to trimesters but it is a better fit than quarters when using SBAG. Report card revisions are summarized for each grade level and can be found at [Office for Schools Website](#).



Science Gr 6	T1	T2	T3
Asking Questions and Defining Problems			
Developing and Using Models			
Planning and Carrying Out Investigations			
Analyzing and Interpreting Data			
Using Mathematics and Computational Thinking			
Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions			

<b>English Language Arts Gr 4</b>	<b>T1</b>	<b>T2</b>	<b>T3</b>
<b>READING: LITERATURE</b>			
Refers to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.			
Determines a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarizes the text.			
Describes in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.			
Compares and contrasts the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.			
Compares and contrasts the treatment of similar themes and topics and patterns of events in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.			
<b>READING: INFORMATIONAL TEXT</b>			
Refers to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.			
Determines the main idea of a text and explains how it is supported by key details; summarizes the text.			
Explains events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.			
Determines the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text.			
Explains how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.			
<b>READING: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS</b>			
Knows and applies grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.			
Reads with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.			
<b>WRITING</b>			
Writes opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.			
Writes informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.			
Writes narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.			
Recalls relevant information from experiences or gathers relevant information from print and digital sources; takes notes and categorizes information, and provides a list of sources.			
<b>SPEAKING AND LISTENING</b>			
Engages effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.			
Paraphrases portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats.			
Reports on a topic or text, tells a story, or recounts an experience in an organized manner using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speaks clearly at an understandable pace.			
<b>LANGUAGE</b>			
Demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.			
Demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.			
Determines or clarifies the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases.			



Math Gr 1	T1	T2	T3
<b>NUMBERS AND OPERATIONS</b>			
Reads, writes, and represents numbers up to 120			
Understands place value of ones and tens			
Uses place value or models, adds within 100			
Uses place value or models, subtracts multiples of 10			
<b>OPERATIONS AND ALGEBRAIC THINKING</b>			
Uses addition and subtraction within 20 to solve word problems			
Applies properties of operations to add and subtract			
Adds and subtracts whole numbers within 20			
<b>MEASUREMENT AND DATA</b>			
Measures the length of objects			
Tells and writes time in hours and half-hours			
Organizes, represents, and interprets, data			
<b>GEOMETRY</b>			
Distinguishes defining attributes of shapes			

*Note: Because of the length of the actual standard language in math, parent friendly verbiage is used, not the original text of the standard as in other subjects.*

## SUCCESS INDICATORS

Behavioral attributes and characteristics play a significant role in learning and are closely linked with academic progress and success. It is important to place work habits and behaviors on an equal footing with academic success. Research has shown that parents who are resistant to standards-based grading are often concerned that non-academic factors are no longer taught or valued. In reality, reporting and teaching the behaviors and skills needed to be successful and productive citizens grounded in the Catholic faith should be a priority. They should, however, be reported out separately. By including *Success Indicators* as a separate reporting category, teachers can more honestly communicate about such matters as behavior, participation, and responsibility without distorting a student’s actual academic grades.

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee has identified three categories of *Success Indicators*: Student as Learner, Student as Citizen, and Student as Disciple. Under each category we have included statements that clearly articulate the behaviors and skills students must learn and demonstrate to reach their full potential. These statements serve as the basis for conversations with students and parents and provide guidance in identifying areas of strength and areas in need of attention.

These *Success Indicators* will be part of the 2020-21 report card revision.

**Student as Learner:**

- Transitions effectively between activities.
- Demonstrates persistence in learning tasks.
- Collaborates effectively to achieve defined outcomes.
- Accepts and applies constructive feedback.
- Completes learning tasks efficiently and independently.
- Engages in learning in various settings.
- Sets goals and monitors progress.
- Utilizes effective organizational and time management skills.

**Student as Citizen:**

- Demonstrates respect for people and property.
- Engages in active listening.
- Demonstrates honesty.
- Uses socially appropriate language.
- Demonstrates empathy and kindness.
- Practices appropriate conflict resolution skills.
- Considers the impact of behavior on others.

**Student as Disciple:**

- Demonstrates care for God's creation.
- Demonstrates a spirit of selfless service.
- Expresses forgiveness in word and action.
- Manifests a willingness to grow in faith and share beliefs (Middle School only).

## REPORTING ON STUDENT PROGRESS

In a standards-based learning environment, communication with students and parents is key. Clearly identifying what students need to know and do (standards and learning targets as defined in the Scoring Guides) is the first step.

Ongoing, growth-producing feedback that is formative in nature provides timely and accurate information for parents and students during the learning process. This information should be communicated through the school's SIS system, but not factored into grades. It is imperative that parents and students understand the purpose of reporting formative progress that is not used to determine a grade.

Summative assessments should also be reported and those grades used to determine proficiency grades for the report card. Summative assessments must align with the standards being assessed and provide specific information on areas of strength and those needing additional support.

If the school's SIS system does not have the capacity to report progress between formal report cards, the school needs to establish a system to do so.

## DAILY WORK AND CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

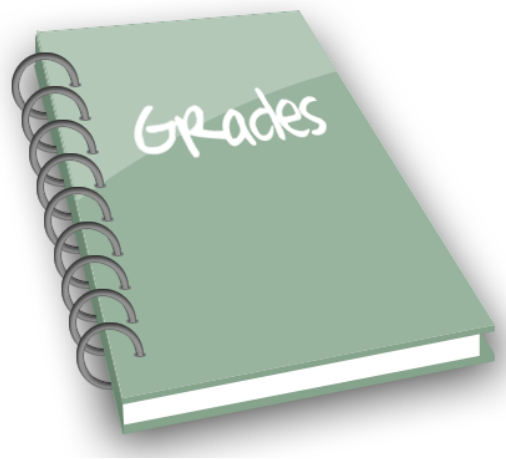
Grading and marking practices should be reflective of student learning and should communicate clearly what knowledge, skills and understandings a student has achieved, as well as where that student needs further support. Marks are the symbols given on individual assessments that are returned to students. Grades are the symbols that are used on the report card.

Assignments designed to give information about student learning (information that teachers can use to design instruction and students can use to improve performance) should be marked to give a clear indication of what a student knows and can do and should include feedback to the student for improvement. Within this scope, a teacher has many choices on how to mark daily work, class assignments, etc. However, it is very important that feedback is included on formative assessments to facilitate student growth. It is not necessary that every teacher in the Archdiocese use the same marks; however, *it is important for the teacher to communicate to parents the meaning of the marks.*



## GRADEBOOKS

In a standards-based reporting system, gradebooks become the most important document to aid teachers as they prepare students' achievement reports. Standards-based gradebooks are organized quite differently than traditional gradebooks. Traditional gradebooks are typically organized by the evidence collected over time or by category (test, homework, classwork). Standards-based gradebooks are organized by standard and display direct evidence of student achievement per standard or learning goal. In the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, teachers can use a manual gradebook or one that is provided online through their Student Information System.



[MANUAL GRADEBOOK EXAMPLES](#)

**Example 1: One student per page with standard on the top:**

Content Area- Math	Uses multiplication and division within 100 to solve word problems				
Joe Smith	3.OA.3	3.OA.5			
2/14	3				
2/18	2				

**Example 2: One student per page with standard on the side.**

Mathematics	Operations and Algebraic Thinking				
Joe Smith	2/14	2/18	3/5		
3.OA.3	2	3	3		
3.OA.5	3	2	3		

**Example 3: All students on the same page with the standard listed at the top.**

Mathematics, Concept of Multiplication	3.OA.3 Uses multiplication and division within 100 to solve word problems					3.OA.5 Applies properties of operations as strategies to multiply and divide					3.OA.7 Fluently multiplies and divides within 100		
Date & Assessments	2/12	2/18	3/4			2/12	3/4				2/12	3/5	
Joe Smith	3	2	3			3	3				3	2	
Mary Jones	3	3	2			2	3				3	3	

## APPENDIX A - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What do I do to help my students and their parents understand and embrace the shift to SBAG?**

The first step is to communicate the rationale for standards-based learning to students and families. Be positive and take care to give detailed explanations regarding new practices during the transitional phase. When giving feedback, provide actionable suggestions tied to standards and learning. Be open to questions and seek help from peers or administration if you are not confident in answering a question.

### **Will the school information system (SIS) we use at our school fully support the use of both our letter grade format and SBAG as we transition?**

Schools that are changing to the Standards-Based Proficiency Scale in some grades and retaining their letter grading for others during this transition year will have the support of the Office for Schools in working with PowerSchool. PowerSchool is committed to standards-based assessment and grading and continues to upgrade their product, offering more options and support for standards-based reporting. If you have another SIS system, your principal is working with them to support your implementation timeline.

### **Does the archdiocese have recommended content area textbooks to support SBAG?**

SBAG represents a philosophical shift that can be applied to any curricular approach. In general, materials that focus on higher order thinking and targeted skill development best support the SBAG transition. While most instructional material decisions are made at the school level, all materials must be aligned to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Curriculum.

### **Will SBAG become part of my teacher evaluation?**

Yes, SBAG is part of the Teacher Effectiveness Framework and is included in Domain 4 which highlights assessment. In using assessment to advance student learning, the indicators in Domain 4 evaluate the teacher's ability to:

- Use assessment data to plan future instruction for student subgroups, including re-teaching and reassessment if necessary.
- Ensure that students are fully aware of and can articulate the criteria and performance standards by which their work will be evaluated.
- Provide students with frequent opportunities to self-assess and monitor their progress and the results of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance standards.

### **Will students be prepared for college if the high school uses a traditional grading system?**

As far as preparing students for colleges and universities (or high school), clearly the best preparation that any school can offer is to engage students in a rigorous and challenging curriculum and then do what is possible to guarantee that students master what that curriculum includes.

“A standards-based report card identifies the specific learning goals within the curriculum so that appropriate rigor can be ensured. It also communicates more detailed information about higher levels of success. These distinct benefits serve to prepare students well, no matter what type of learning environment they enter after they leave school.” (Guskey & Bailey 2010)

“Schools use grades because it’s one of those things somebody once decided on and now everybody goes along with it. I don’t know where it started, but I know where it stops - in the real world. You don’t see supervisors telling their employees, ‘Great job, I’m going to give you an A.’ Or, ‘You really screwed up here; that’s a C-.’ No, in the real world, adults get real feedback and indications of where they need improvement.” (Littky & Grabelle 2004)

Identifying one’s strengths and weaknesses as a learner, being self-motivated to meet course objectives, developing strong study habits, and mastering course standards are all aspects of standards-based assessment, grading, and reporting that will help students in high school and beyond.

### **If students meet the standards in grades 6-8, what grades can they expect in high school?**

The grades that students receive in high school will depend upon the degree to which they meet their teachers’ communicated expectations. Students who meet grade level content standards in grades 6-8 and practice developing scholarly skills, reflected by the success indicators such as taking responsibility and attending to detail, are potentially on track to perform very well and receive good grades in high school. Historically, students who pay attention, study, and produce quality work find educational, career, and personal success no matter what the grading system.

### **Why aren’t all of the standards listed on the report card?**

The purpose of the standards-based report card is to communicate with parents and students about the progress of the student. Teachers collect evidence on specific grade-level standards and use that evidence to make a decision about a grade to report. Although the teacher is collecting evidence on all of the standards, reporting every single standard at each grade level would most likely be overwhelming to parents and teachers. The report cards for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee reflect the priority standards.

It is important to note that parents and students have access to all the standards grades (priority and supporting) online through PowerSchool.

### **Why aren't non-academic factors considered in the achievement grade?**

Grades are a way of communicating what a student knows and is able to do. When we include behaviors such as turning in work late or not at all or the amount of effort or participation, we are not accurately communicating achievement. Grades should be as pure a measure of achievement as possible. Attendance, effort, and work habits are important indicators for student success and are reported separately from the achievement information. Reporting *Success Indicators* separately gives us a clearer picture of the student and how we can help him or her.

### **How does standards-based assessment, grading, and reporting teach students responsibility and accountability for the real world?**

“In a standards-based system, the emphasis is on learning. When a student doesn't do the work, the [natural] consequence is that he or she doesn't learn the content or practice the skill. When we do not allow a student to turn in late work or re-do work, we deny that student the opportunity to grow character traits that are vital to student achievement, such as perseverance and persistence. If a teacher doesn't accept late work, the teacher sends the message that the assignment had little educational value. It's as if the teacher is saying, 'Hey, it's okay if you don't do the work, and it's okay if you don't learn the content or skill.' As professional educators working to prepare students to successfully navigate the 21st century world, we can no longer accept these messages. Granting a reduced grade or zero doesn't teach responsibility to students who are not self-motivated. It actually allows the student to avoid the accountability of demonstrating what he or she has learned, and it teaches him or her to shrug off important responsibilities.” (Ken O'Connor, *A Repair Kit for Grading: 15 Fixes for Broken Grades*, 2007.)

### **How will standards-based assessment and grading motivate and challenge students?**

The goal of standards based assessment and grading is for students to take ownership of their learning. The desire to learn becomes the motivator instead of the desire for a grade. Traditional grading can make school about points and percentages...not learning. That kind of system creates fear for many students and separates them from the curriculum and from the teaching. (O'Connor, 2014; Guskey 2010) It is important for teachers to challenge all students to achieve at the highest possible level and when students excel, this should be acknowledged through communication other than report cards and grades. For example, the teacher may talk to the student and/or parents, send an email, make a phone call, or place a note in the narrative comments section on the report card.

## APPENDIX B - RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and Cathy Vatterott. *Rethinking Homework: Best Practices That Support Diverse Needs*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2009. Print.

Brookhart, Susan M. *How to Create and Use Rubrics for Formative Assessment and Grading*. Alexandria: ASCD, 2013. Print.

Brookhart, Susan M. *How to Give Effective Feedback to Your Students*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2008. Print.

Cornue, Jonathan. *Changing the Grade: A Step-by-Step Guide to Grading for Student Growth*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2018. Print.

Dueck, Myron. *Grading Smarter, Not Harder: Assessment Strategies That Motivate Kids and Help Them Learn*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2014. Print.

Fisher, Douglas, and Nancy Frey. *Checking for Understanding: Formative Assessment Techniques for Your Classroom*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2007. Print.

Frey, Nancy, and Douglas Fisher. *The Formative Assessment Action Plan: Practical Steps to More Successful Teaching and Learning*. ASCD, 2011. Print.

Marzano, Robert J., Debra J. Pickering, and Jane E. Pollock. *Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2008. Print.

Marzano, Robert J., Tina Boogren, Tammy Heflebower, Jessica Kanold-McIntyre, and Debra Pickering. *Becoming a Reflective Teacher*. Bloomington, IN: Marzano Research Laboratory, 2012. Print.

Moore, Carla, Michael D. Toth, Robert J. Marzano, Libby H. Garst, and Deana Senn. *The Essentials for Standards-driven Classrooms: A Practical Instructional Model for Every Student to Achieve Rigor*. West Palm Beach, FL: Learning Sciences, 2017. Print.

Moss, Connie M., and Susan M. Brookhart. *Learning Targets: Helping Students Aim for Understanding in Today's Lesson*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2012. Print.

Pollock, Jane E. *Feedback: The Hinge That Joins Teaching and Learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2012. Print.

Pollock, Jane E. *Improving Student Learning One Teacher at a Time*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2007. Print.

Pollock, Jane E., Sharon M. Ford, and Margaret M. Black. *Minding the Achievement Gap One Classroom at a Time*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2012. Print.

Schimmer, Tom. *Grading from the Inside Out: Bringing Accuracy to Student Assessment Through A Standards-Based Mindset*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press, 2016. Print.

Schimmer, Tom, Garnet Hillman, and Mandy Stalets. *Standards-Based Learning in Action: Moving From Theory to Practice*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press, 2018. Print.

Vatterott, Cathy. *Rethinking Grading: Meaningful Assessment for Standards-based Learning*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2015. Print.

Westerberg, Tim. *Charting a Course to Standards-based Grading: What to Stop, What to Start, and Why It Matters*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2016. Print.

### ▶ [FACEBOOK GROUPS](#)

[Standards Based Learning and Grading \(Public group\)](#)

[Archmil Early Childhood \(Closed group\)](#)

### ▶ [FOLLOW THESE PEOPLE AND ACCOUNTS ON TWITTER:](#)

Archdiocese of MKE	<a href="#">@MKECatholicEd</a>	<i>One of many pieces of professional development for educators in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.</i>
Myron Dueck	<a href="#">@myrondueck</a>	<i>Myron Dueck - author of <u>Grading Smarter Not Harder</u> (ASCD) teacher, VP, speaker, consultant: topics of Assessment, Grading, Relationships.</i>
Cathy Vatterott	<a href="#">@realhomeworkldy</a>	<i>I am a professor of education, former teacher and principal, and author of the ASCD book, <u>Rethinking Homework</u> and just released ASCD book <u>Rethinking Grading</u>.</i>
Rick Wormeli	<a href="#">@rickwormeli2</a>	<i>Teacher, Author, Educ Consultant</i>
Tom Guskey	<a href="#">@tguskey</a>	<i>Professor of Educational Psychology University of Kentucky.</i>
Ken O'Connor	<a href="#">@kenoc7</a>	<i>Independent consultant specializing in issues related to grading and reporting.</i>
Kelly Gallagher	<a href="#">@KellyGToGo</a>	<i>I teach, I write, I travel, I talk—to help kids become better readers and writers.</i>

Vicki Davis	<a href="#">@coolcatteacher</a>	<i>I love students! Best teacher blog winner * Mom * Speaker * Author * HOST 10-Minute Teacher Show * <a href="#">@Mashable</a> Top Teacher on Twitter * Top <a href="#">#edtech</a> Twitterer.</i>
Giselle Santos	<a href="#">@feedtheteacher</a>	<i>My name is Giselle Santos. I am a Google Certified Innovator, EFL Teacher, social media and technology enthusiast, and believer in the power of Making and Hacking life!</i>
Dan Brown	<a href="#">@DanBrownTeacher</a>	<i>Nonprofit leader, National Board Certified Teacher, Author of <i>The Great Expectations School</i>. Formerly <a href="#">@EducatorsRising</a> <a href="#">@usedgov</a> danbrownteacher@gmail.com.</i>
Tom Whitby	<a href="#">@tomwhitby</a>	<i>Author, Blogger, Speaker, HS/MS 34 yrs, College 6 years. Founder <a href="#">#Edchat</a>, Edchat Interactive, EDU PLN, Edchat <a href="http://bit.ly/2hwzU9q">http://bit.ly/2hwzU9q</a> My Island View <a href="https://tomwhitby.com">https://tomwhitby.com</a>.</i>
Jim Rickabaugh	<a href="#">@drrickabaugh</a>	<i>Senior Advisor, Institute for Personalized Learning.</i>
George Couros	<a href="#">@gcouros</a>	<i>The best educators change the trajectories of those they serve. Through learning, teaching, writing, and speaking, I continue to aspire to this. I also love dogs.</i>
Douglas Fisher	<a href="#">@DFISHERSDSU</a>	<i>Let's get our teaching FIT!</i>
Nancy Frey	<a href="#">@NancyFrey</a>	<i>Author and Professor @ SDSU.</i>
Robert Marzano	<a href="#">@robertjmarzano</a>	<i>Co-founder/CEO of <a href="#">@MarzanoResearch</a>. I translate research and theory into educational practice. I use <a href="#">#NASOT</a> to share my book, <i>The New Art &amp; Science of Teaching</i>.</i>
Tina Boogren	<a href="#">@THBoogren</a>	<i>Author and Associate with Marzano Research and Solution Tree. Lover of words, giggles, travel, learning, yoga, and family. Fierce advocate for educators.</i>
Tammy Heflebower	<a href="#">@tammyhef</a>	<i>Wife, mother of two boys, baseball mom, learner, author, presenter coach, fun-loving, outdoor enthusiast, researcher, leader at Marzano Research.</i>
Michael Toth	<a href="#">@MTothLSI</a>	<i>Founder &amp; CEO of <a href="#">@Learn_Sci</a>. Award-winning <a href="#">#education</a> author &amp; researcher. Committed to helping <a href="#">#K12</a> educators develop rigorous 21st-century classrooms.</i>
Tim Westerberg	<a href="#">@weterbergt</a>	<i>Retired high school principal, author, and national and international consultant on a variety of topics aimed at improving classroom instruction and assessment.</i>
Deana Senn	<a href="#">@DeanaSenn</a>	<i>Content developer/ Staff developer/ Instructional Strategy / Assessment Specialist, Teacher, Dual citizen- Canada and U.S.A., Traveler.</i>



Brian Marks	<a href="#">@Yummymath</a>	<i>Real world math activities that your students will love. Brian is a math ed leader and activity writer.</i>
Tom Schimmer	<a href="#">@TomSchimmer</a>	<i>Education author, speaker, and consultant with <a href="#">@SolutionTree</a> &amp; <a href="#">@SolutionTree_CA</a>. Focused on Assessment, Grading, Leadership, and RTI <a href="#">#atAssess</a> <a href="#">#GFIO</a>.</i>
Kathy Biernet	<a href="#">@ScientistMaker</a>	<i>Middle School Science teacher with a passion for creating STEM curriculum and sharing that with others, <a href="#">#NMLSTA</a>, <a href="#">#ScienceScope</a>, <a href="#">#NSTA</a>.</i>
Amanda Seppanen	<a href="#">@AmandaSeppanen</a>	<i>Owner of Sustainable Formations, LLC. Education consultant. Policy enthusiast. Advocate for change.</i>
Rachel Lantz	<a href="#">@Rachel_Lantz</a>	<i>A Presenter, Writer, Middle and High School English Teacher, Mother. Obsessed with All Things Education.</i>
Theresa Dixon	<a href="#">@TheresaKDixon</a>	<i>Innovative Teacher, Mom, Reader, Writer, Blogger, Presenter, Teckie, and Learning Junkie who thinks kids are cool.</i>
Megan Garczynski	<a href="#">@MeganGar3</a>	<i>Mom, 7th Grade ELA teacher, Wife. Lover of reading, coffee and wine. Encourager and energizer of adolescent readers. Grateful.</i>
Lee Ann Jung	<a href="#">@leeannjung</a>	<i>CEO: Lead Inclusion   Clinical Professor: SDSU <a href="#">#LeadInclusion</a>.</i>
John Hattie	<a href="#">@john_hattie</a>	The official Twitter profile of Professor John Hattie.
Susan Brookhart	<a href="#">@susanbrookhart</a>	Dr. Susan M. Brookhart is professor emerita in the School of Education at Duquesne University and an independent educational consultant and author.