

Frequently Asked Questions

Purpose of Grading:

The primary purpose of grading and reporting is to convey information about student learning and achievement in relation to grade level expectations.

Reasons for Changes in Grading Practices:

Changes in grading practices are driven by the evolution of classroom instructional and assessment approaches, moving from a focus on what students know to emphasizing their understanding and application. The shift to a standards-based grading system ensures a more accurate and consistent representation of student learning, centering on meeting established expectations.

Impact on GPAs and Transcripts:

Changes in grading do not affect policies on grade point averages (GPAs) or transcripts. Letter grades remain on transcripts, and GPAs are calculated in the same manner as before.

Impact on College Acceptance:

As there are no changes in letter grades, GPAs, or transcripts, the alterations in grading practices do not impact college or university acceptance. It is crucial for students to understand individual expectations for each institution and consult with school counselors for guidance.

Adoption of Similar Practices in Other Districts:

Several neighboring schools, including Greenfield, Franklin, Hartford Union, New Berlin, Milwaukee, Muskego, Pewaukee, Wauwatosa, Waukesha, and Whitnall, have implemented standards-based grading approaches.

Calculation of Semester Grades:

Semester grades are now cumulative, allowing students to demonstrate growth over time. This change emphasizes a student's current proficiency in relation to essential learning goals up to the final demonstration of learning at the end of the semester.

"Opportunity to Demonstrate Learning and Retention" Concept:

At the end of each semester, this involves a series of steps to enhance a final demonstration of learning. Students have multiple opportunities to practice, receive feedback, and improve their work until they reach a minimum acceptable level of mastery for a given assessment.

Changes in In-Class Assessments:

In-class assessments have evolved to measure not only memorization but also the application of understanding. Assessments now focus on demonstrating understanding and the transfer of skills to real-world situations.

Relearn Policy:

While all relearning opportunities are encouraged, they are not just open-ended opportunities. Teachers may establish specific periods for relearn assessments and may require students to complete certain steps, such as reviewing material, before providing a reassessment opportunity.

Earning a "4" or an "A" in Classes:

For any rating of a performance assessment (for example: a paper, project, lab, etc.) students need access to a rubric that describes what matters for success. The rubric, which defines different levels of performance, should be explained to the students early in the process of completing the performance assessment. Students use this rubric as a way to assess and adjust their progress during the task process, as well as after the completion of the assessment. The rubric, along with feedback (written and/or oral comments related to the quality of performance) guide students' understanding of expectations in each assessment task. In addition, examples help illustrate different levels of performance (for example: Beginning, Emerging, Proficient, or Advanced).

Importance of Rubrics:

Rubrics serve as a tool to communicate success criteria, allowing students to understand expectations and enabling teachers to provide accurate, constructive feedback. Rubrics play a pivotal role in guiding students toward quality work by highlighting key criteria for assessment.