

Sanborn Regional Middle School

This document is derived from the works of educational researchers, including Ken O'Connor, Robert Marzano, Doug Reeves, Rick Wormeli, and Rick Stiggins. Additionally, the document is influenced by professional learning opportunities.

OVERVIEW

Changing practices and gaining new knowledge takes time, collaboration, and reflection. Success in implementing the Standards-Based Report card requires patience, persistence and the commitment of all stakeholders.

The administration and staff of **SRMS** are committed to supporting assessment practices that support student learning and that accurately report student progress in meeting the standards and mastering competency for college and career success.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The competency-based assessment and grading system at Sanborn Regional Middle School is founded on common expectations and standards for student learning. At Sanborn Regional Middle School, each course has a set of common, established core standards that describe what students are expected to know and be able to do. Each standard is aligned to competencies defined for each content area. The purpose of this document is to provide a structure and expectations to ensure common and systematic standards-based grading practices are used in all courses by all teachers at the middle school. These practices shall be reflective of standards and performance indicators and shall be used to assign grades.

DEFINITIONS

Sanborn Regional Middle School educators use two broad types of assessments:

Summative Assessments: A summative assessment is a comprehensive measure of a student's ability to demonstrate the concepts, skills, and knowledge embedded within a course standard. It is an assessment of learning and it is heavily weighted in the grading system.

Examples include:

- Enrichment activities (supplementary activities that
- support standards)
- Written, oral, and performance tasks
- Tests
- Quizzes (beyond skill checks)
- Writings (term papers, essays, stories, etc.)
- Projects

- Presentations
- Problem-based / inquiry learning tasks
- Other comprehensive / cumulative assignments not listed above.

Formative Assessments: A formative assessment is an assessment for learning and can broadly be described as an indicator that captures a student's progress through the learning process. It explains to what extent a student is learning a concept, skill, or knowledge set. In a sense, a formative assessment is "practice" and is, therefore, not heavily weighted in the grading system. Examples include:

- Skill checks (quizzes used for practice or reinforcement; classroom openers)
- First drafts of writing
- Teacher questions during instruction
- Worksheets
- Informal observations
- Pre-testing
- Homework
- Other class work not listed above

STATEMENT OF PROCEDURE

Grading Philosophies and Expectations

1. Grading is an exercise in professional judgment wherein the educator seeks to ensure that the grade each student receives is an accurate representation of his or her achievement.

2. Grades shall be weighted carefully to ensure the intended importance is given to each standard and to each assessment.

3. Teachers shall use quality assessment instruments. They shall properly record evidence of student achievement on an ongoing basis. Each assessment must meet five standards of quality. It must arise from a clearly articulated set of achievement expectations, serve an instructionally relevant purpose, rely on a proper method, sample student achievement in an appropriate manner, and control for all relevant sources of bias and distortion that can lead to inaccurate assessment.

4. Teachers shall discuss methods of assessment and scoring scales (rubrics) with students in an age appropriate manner, at the beginning of instruction.

5. At the beginning of a class (semester and year-long), teachers shall provide to students and parents a written course overview / syllabus that includes assessment and grading guidelines, in clear, easily understandable language. The course syllabus must be consistent with the grading practices detailed in this document.

6. Prior to administering each summative assessment, teachers shall provide students with a written overview /rubric describing assessment and grading in clear, easily understandable language.

COURSE GRADE CALCULATION

1. Individual achievement of course-based standards shall be the primary basis for grades. All courses will use a grading structure that weights summative assessments at least 90% and formative assessments at most 10% of a final grade for the course.

2. Summative assessments will be linked to one or more course standards. The report card will calculate and report out on the average grade each student received on each standard as well as the final course grade.

3. The report card will report final course grades and a yearly summary of a student's progress towards meeting the standards for learning.

4. Effort, participation, attitude, and other behaviors shall not be included in grades but reported separately, unless they are an approved part of a standard (example: Regular participation in physical activity is identified nationally as a core standard and thus is included in the SRMS Physical Education standard). Every student will be graded each trimester by all teachers with respect to their achievement of school-wide General Learning Outcomes (GLOs), which will address expectations for student personal skills.

5. Based on the principles of standards-based assessment, extra credit is not an appropriate measure of student learning and should not be assigned or included in grade calculation.

6. Students will receive a numerical grade.

7. In addition to the overall course grade, students will also receive a score for the competencies based on the rubric scales below.

8. Competency grades use the letter code scale for reporting level of student performance. Competencies scores are based on the standards aligned to those competencies.

9. Standards are the skills, knowledge and understandings students need to demonstrate in an assignment. Standards are provided to students at the beginning of each unit of study, are identified on assessments, are described in rubrics for projects, and are posted in classrooms. Parents can view the standards assigned to assessments in the PINNACLE Student Explorer. Standards are introduced, reinforced, and assessed throughout the year.

10. The grading system at the middle school uses a rolling grade. This means that it is the end of year grade that is recorded as the course grade, not the average of each trimester. Student's grades reflect the instruction and practice of the standards all year and it is at the end of a year of study where a true measure of their learning can be taken.

At SRMS, all assignments are graded on a 4.0 rubric scale. Teachers report assignment grades as an individual letter. Final course grades are reported as a numerical score based on the following ranges:

Exemplary (E):	Final grade of 3.50-4.00
Proficient (P):	Final grade of 2.50-3.49
Basic Proficiency (BP):	Final grade of 1.50-2.49
Limited Proficiency (LP):	Final grade of 0.50-1.49
Not Met (NM):	Final grade of 0.01-0.49
Not Yet Competent (NYC):	Final grade of 0.00
Insufficient Work Shown (IWS):	Final grade of 0.00

Learning Trend: When fewer than four assessments have been linked to a standard, the standard grade is computed by taking an average of the assessment grades. Once four or more assessments have been linked to a standard, the standard grade is computed using a learning trend model. In this model, the student's most recent work is given higher weight than older work when computing a grade. A learning trend is a more accurate representation of a student's learning as they progress through a course.

Sanborn Regional Middle School Grading Scale				
Level		Letter Code	Rubric Grade Range	What The Grade Means
Competent	Exemplary	E	3.50 – 4.00	The student consistently and independently demonstrates the ability to analyze and synthesize essential content knowledge and skills in a new task.
	Proficient	P	2.50 – 3.49	The student consistently and independently demonstrates the ability to apply and transfer essential content, knowledge and skills in a new task.
	Basic Proficiency	BP	1.50 – 2.49	The student demonstrates the ability to comprehend and apply essential content, knowledge and skills in a familiar task.
Not Competent	Limited Proficiency	LP	0.50 – 1.49	The student is not demonstrating the application and transfer of essential content, knowledge and skills.
	Not Met	NM	0.01-0.49	The student is not competent in the performance standard(s).
	Not Yet Competent	NYC	0.00	NYC: The student is not yet competent in all of the performance standard(s).
	Insufficient Work Shown	IWS	0.00	IWS: The student has not produced a sufficient amount of evidence to determine the level for which they have met the performance standard(s).

DEFINITION OF PROFICIENT & EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE

Students will have opportunities through classroom assessments to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skill level.

Students, meeting ***Proficient***: the learning targets required of the lesson or unit being studied by demonstrating their knowledge, understanding and skill level.

Students, meeting ***Exemplary*** the learning targets of the lesson or unit being studied by demonstrating the ***depth*** of their knowledge, understanding and skill level. The student extends their thinking beyond the required learning targets.

RE-ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

1. Second chance assessment opportunities shall be made available to all students for any summative assessment. A grade of 80 represents meeting the proficiency level of a standard. Second chance assessments will be made available up to two weeks after the student receives the assessment results.

2. A teacher may require a student to complete a series of formative assessments at a proficient level before they are eligible to take a summative re-assessment. The second assessment should only take place when the student has demonstrated the agreed upon relearning and/or completion of work in preparation for the assessment.

3. Reassessment opportunities are available for formative assessments at the teacher's discretion. If applied, the summative reassessment process described above should be followed.

4. Teachers may give alternative versions of the assessment.

5. Parents may be asked to sign the original, poorly done assessment and assignments so they're aware that their children have required multiple attempts to achieve the standard.

6. Reassessment scores replace the previous grade or mark unless the new score is lower.

GENERAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Each team will determine what the performance indicators look like for the General Learning Outcomes (GLOs) for their grade level students based on what is developmentally appropriate.

3 = Proficient:	Student <i>consistently</i> demonstrates grade-level expectations
2 = Progressing	Student is <i>beginning</i> to demonstrate grade-level expectations
1 = Needs Improvement	Student <i>rarely</i> demonstrates grade level expectations

General Learning Outcomes (GLOs)

- **Self-Directed Learner:** The ability to be responsible for one's own learning
- **Community Contributor:** Resolving conflict, assuming responsibility for behavior, demonstrating diversity and tolerance, maintaining a safe and supportive environment, and contributing responsibility to one's school, community, and world
- **Complex Thinker:** The ability to demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving strategies
- **Quality Producer:** The ability to recognize and produce quality performance and quality products
- **Effective Communicator:** The ability to communicate effectively through reading, writing, speaking, viewing, and listening.
- **Effective and Ethical User of Technology:** The ability to use a variety of technologies effectively and ethically

ACADEMIC POLICIES

GRADING SYSTEM

Marks are given on the report card for each course to indicate the pupil's level of achievement.

Exemplary	E	3.50 – 4.00
Proficient	P	2.50 – 3.49
Basic Proficiency	BP	1.50 – 2.49
Limited Proficiency	LP	0.50 – 1.49
Not Met	NM	0.01-0.49
Not Yet Competent	NYC	0.00
Insufficient Work Shown	IWS	0.00

*The ability to monitor your child's grades, attendance and any assignment information can now be securely viewed from your Internet Browser at home. We are providing this access through our Pinnacle Internet Viewer (PIV) feature. This secured access requires an internet connection and a confidential user name and password issued to the parent by the school. Letters will be sent home at the beginning of each year with this information. (Passwords will change each school year.)

HONOR ROLL

High Honors: All grades at least 3.5 or above in all subjects.

Honors: All grades at least 3.0 or above in all subjects.

REPORT CARDS

Access to student progress is available to all parents through the PINNACLE Student Explorer. Sign-on and password information is distributed at the start of each school year to parents.

Formal grade notification to parents is made through report cards issued in December, March, and June. The final report card is mailed home.

In addition to report cards, progress reports are generated three times each year midway through the marking period. For those parents who do not have access to computers we will mail a copy of the progress report home. **(Teachers update student grades every two weeks and we have a website with a calendar that lists the dates for report cards and progress reports.)**

Informal reporting can be made through parent-teacher conferences. To arrange for a parent conference, please call 382- 6226.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Sanborn Regional Middle School will hold parent conferences approximately two months into the school year. The purpose of these conferences is to review student progress and to establish academic goals. Additional conferences may be requested at any time either by the parent or the teacher. As you prepare for your parent/teacher conference it might be helpful to consider:

Are there items that would help the teachers better understand your child such as...

- health concerns
- relationships with siblings
- hobbies and interests
- feelings about school
- relationships with other students

Are there items that you would like to discuss with the teacher such as

- appropriate ways to help students at home
- suggested books for reading/testing
- understanding curricular areas
- normal progression of skill development
- student progress
- progress in relation to age group
- skills mastered, skills needed to progress further

PROMOTION AND SUMMER SCHOOL

1. A student's final average must be BP (Basic Proficiency/1.50-2.49) to be considered passing for the year.
2. A student can make up a failed course by participating in a previously approved tutorial program or by passing a summer school course.
3. Recommendations of teachers, guidance, and administration may result in the retention of students. However, parents will be informed early in the process.
4. In unusual or exceptional circumstances, the principal will make the final decision on whether a student is to be promoted. Conditional retentions will be considered.

EXTRA HELP

Teachers are available for extra help provided satisfactory arrangements are made beforehand. Students are encouraged to see their teacher if they are having any difficulty. A daily late bus will be available for transportation.

HOMEWORK

For many students, the difference between success and failure can be traced to the effort they put into their homework. Homework will not exceed more than 10% of a student's overall grade.

At the start of the school year it is expected that teachers will clearly communicate homework expectations to their students.

Parents also have an important role in their child's homework. Providing an environment, which is conducive to the successful completion of assignments, is a good place to start. Also, encouraging a positive attitude towards homework is a great way of sharing the joy of learning with your child.

Students, naturally, play the greatest role in homework. Each child is provided with an agenda book during the first week of school. This tool is designed to help students keep track of daily and long term assignments. Students are expected to complete their homework to the best of their ability and to submit all assignments on time. Students should schedule time for homework that is compatible with family and/or after-school activities. Students in grades Six, Seven, and Eight should expect homework four (4) days per week with duration of approximately ninety (90) minutes per day. This guideline is not intended to be rigid and restrictive, but rather to identify appropriate time and effort. This recommendation refers to average student time to complete assignments. As part of your transition to middle school, sixth graders will be eased into the (90) minute expectation. (Note: Often times reading and maintaining a reading log are considered homework)

MAKE-UP WORK

When your child is absent from school for more than one day you may request a list of your child's assignments. Every effort will be made to have those assignments available within 24 hours at the close of the school day but occasionally that may not be possible due to an individual teacher's schedule. For extended absences of three (3) or more days, you may call 382-6226 to request that work be sent home. This may require a twenty-four (24) hour advanced notice. Students are encouraged to contact a classmate for work if they will be out for shorter periods. Upon returning to school after an absence it is the responsibility of each student to see their teacher for any tests, quizzes, or homework. If students are tardy, they should also see the teacher(s) whose class(es) they missed to pick up any assignments. Parents are encouraged to email teachers as needed. All email addresses are the teacher's first initial, last name @sau17.org. (This information is available on the website www.sau17.org)

Parents are requested to arrange trips and vacations so that the students will not miss school. Much of the learning that occurs at school cannot be made-up through assignments completed at home. In the event that a trip must be scheduled during school time, parents must notify the principal of their intentions. The student is required to **personally** contact each teacher for an extended assignment. This must be done a minimum of three (3) days in advance. Even with such notice, teachers may not be able to give exact assignments. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the teacher upon return and make up any tests, quizzes, or homework. Family vacation absences will be charged against the student's attendance record for the purpose of the attendance policy. Two weeks will be given after vacation to complete work. Instruction and make-up will be available during Success Block, lab, lunch, after school and before school. Failure to do so may affect their grade.