

Proficiency-Based Learning: A Systemic Approach Grading Practice

Action Steps

	Beginning	Refining
Summative Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align summative assessments to standards. Record student achievement of standards in grade books, giving the most weight to summative assessments. Determine which summative assessments should be common for all students and which can be flexible, unique, or student driven. Develop school-wide criteria for summative assessments, (ie: importance of higher-order thinking, transfer tasks, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine opportunities for students to demonstrate learning through flexible pathways and/or student-designed assessments. Establish clear cycles of planning, implementation, and analysis of summative assessment work, including cross-disciplinary reviews of student work for transferable skills. Provide opportunities for community members who serve as pathways mentors to co-design summative assessments with students and teachers.
Formative Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize opportunities for grade-level or content-area teams to share formative assessment practices. Differentiate formative assessments from summative assessments. Use formative assessments for practice and feedback, not to determine grades. Invest in all teachers' ability to provide effective, descriptive feedback on student work. If necessary, include a small weight to formative assessments when determining grades. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that teachers and students understand and can articulate the use of formative assessments. Develop choices for formative practice to encourage greater student ownership and motivation. Create a culture in which teachers and students understand the value of formative assessment for practice and feedback and use them to improve outcomes. Develop clear communication materials, including student-developed materials, to explain formative practice to new students and community members.

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Grading and Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and support school-wide grading practices that emphasize effective feedback for student growth. • Create a system for students to relearn and retake assessments. • Ensure that the grading system does not penalize students for reassessment and non-academic factors like behavior. • Develop a school wide rubric for habits of work. • Conduct student surveys about current grading practices to frame school wide conversations about practices that will support learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and support school wide grading practices that emphasize student self-reflection and assessment. • Separate academic progress from behaviors and habits of work in the grade book and on report cards. • Embed reteaching and reassessment in instructional and school wide practices. • Ensure that there are clear responses when students struggle to demonstrate sound habits/behaviors. • Publicly recognize student success with work habits, skills, and behaviors that are essential for school and life.
Reporting on Student Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to overall course grades, report a small number (5-8) of broad proficiencies in each content area. • During established conference times, begin to discuss proficiencies students have met and those they are working on. • Develop an information system accessible at all times to parents and students that shows how a student is progressing in terms of meeting proficiencies, even if report cards still provide traditional grades. • Build systems for students to self-reflect and demonstrate their own understanding of their progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a reporting system that teachers, students, and parents can use to understand and improve student outcomes. • Ensure reporting practices match their purposes, by utilizing a broad array of strategies to report student learning, including informal electronic and face-to-face communication, online reporting systems, student presentations and exhibitions and portfolios. • Refine or develop a clear school profile to use with postsecondary institutions and the local community. • Seek feedback on reporting practices to improve communication.