



Cumberland School Department Policy Manual

STUDENTS

I

HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY BASED GRADING

I-13

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Cumberland School Department's Proficiency Based High School Grading is to set forth best practice principles for creating a scoring and reporting system that fairly and accurately reflects student learning. We promote a system that:

1. Measures and accurately reflects student proficiency;
2. Uses high quality feedback to support the learning process and encourage student success;
3. Separately assesses academic achievement and learner qualities;
4. Ensures accuracy, consistency and fairness in scoring across the district;
5. Provides meaningful achievement information to students, parents, institutions of higher learning, and other stakeholders.

PROFICIENCY BASED GRADING & REPORTING DEFINED

Proficiency Based Grading & Reporting

Grading and reporting in a standards-based system is a process of accurately reporting the academic and non-academic performance of students. Student performance will be reported out in three separate ways:

1. Academic (Numerical) – An accurate evaluation of what a student knows and is able to do as defined in Cumberland High School Measurement Standard Documents. A numerical scale ranging from 50-100 points will be utilized.
2. Academic (Performance Level) – The most accurate evaluation of what a student knows and is able to do as defined in Cumberland High School Measurement Standard Documents. A 4-3-2-1 scale will be utilized.
3. Non-Academic Indicators – Learner qualities that describe the actions and behaviors that support academic achievement.



Academic (Numerical) Grades

At the secondary level, a numerical system will evaluate students with grades ranging from 50 to 100:

A+	96.5-100
A	93.5-96.4
A-	89.5-93.4
B+	86.5-89.4
B	83.5-86.4
B-	79.5-83.4
C+	76.5-79.4
C	73.5-76.4
C-	69.5-73.4
F	50-69.4

Academic (Performance Level) Scoring

Performance level reporting fulfills three purposes: 1) To provide students with meaningful feedback on their achievement 2) To minimize the amount of variation in grading practices among teachers and schools and 3) To provide teachers with information so that instruction can be adjusted to meet student needs.

Standards based reporting with four performance levels will be utilized:

Level 4 (four):	Distinguished Command
Level 3 (three):	Strong Command
Level 2 (two):	Moderate Command
Level 1 (one):	Partial to No Command
N/A:	Not Assessed at this Time

Non-Academic (Learner Quality) Scoring

Learner qualities provide a picture of how students reach their learning goals. For example, how well do students meet deadlines and follow timelines on extended projects. Important aspects of learner qualities (i.e. homework, independent work, behavior, effort, and class participation) should be reported on, but separate and apart from academic achievement as not to skew the true measure of student proficiency. Learner qualities will be reported in a separate section of the report card.



DETERMINATION OF PROFICIENCY

Arriving at the Academic Numerical Grade

In arriving at a final grade determination, teachers will use all pieces of evidence available and assign a grade utilizing a calculated average. Numerical grades on any piece of evidence must fall within a range of 50 to 100 points. The use of grades below 50 points or the use of zero is not allowed. Assigning zeroes is disproportionately severe when combined with other scores to produce an average grade that distorts a student's academic achievement. Quarterly, Semester, and Final grades will be reported on an annual basis.

Arriving at the Academic Performance Level

To determine scores on measurement standards at the end of the reporting period, teachers will use professional judgment when considering the body of evidence. Teachers will use the most consistent level of achievement on summative assessments, with emphasis on the more recent performance when applicable. The score assigned for the grading period must be based on both the body of evidence (the scores) and professional judgment. At the conclusion of the reporting period, professional judgment involves consideration of the most appropriate measure of central tendency (median or mode) and how best to address more recent scores. The use of decimals or averaging is prohibited. A teacher's professional judgment is defensible when it is based on the district's established proficiency based practices and principles.

Grading Based on Specific Learning Criteria (Measurement Standards) & the Use of Rubrics

Measurement Standards are concise, clearly articulated descriptions of what students should know and be able to do at a specific stage of their educational journey. Scoring that is based on specific learning criteria enables teachers to identify explicit goals and expectations that prioritize learning. Establishing learning criteria gives teachers an opportunity to determine what evidence constitutes a fair and accurate measure of student learning and what criteria they will use to judge that evidence. Rubrics define the criteria for quality work and clearly articulate descriptions of performance at each level. There must be clear, agreed-upon performance standards so that judgments of quality are consistent across classrooms and schools. Teachers must work to understand and agree on the definitions of performance level quality by creating working groups and calibration sessions where teachers across schools and grade spans can collaborate to form common expectations. Teachers will develop systems to connect what is taught in the classroom to the standards that students need to learn, as well as systems that help them track learning progress over time. Cumberland High School will utilize a consistent rubric template whenever possible. A standard conversion chart will be utilized to convert performance level grades to numerical grades.



Numerical Grades versus Performance Level Scores

The original numerical grade will stand on summative assessments. Students can retake summative assessments for proficiency only. Scores on Measurement Standards will then be changed based on most recent performance. A teacher's professional judgment at the end of a reporting period, based on the preponderance of the performance level evidence, may override the calculated numerical grade. For example, a student with a 67 calculated numerical average will have his grade adjusted to a 70 if the student has earned 2's on all measurement standards for the quarter. Students must complete all summative assessments for the measurement standards grades to trump the numerical calculated grade.

Proficiency versus Passing a Course (Earning Credit)

Students earning a calculated grade of 69.5 or above will earn course credit on the high school transcript. Proficiency in a course is defined by two criteria: (1) earning a 79.5 or above calculated average; and (2) minimally meeting the grade level standard (score of 3) in all course measurement standards. Course credit will be awarded for a numerical grade above a 69.5. For example, a student earning a calculated numerical grade of 82 at the end of the course would pass the course and earn credit. If that same student earned a score of 2 in the same course on a measurement standard then the transcript would indicate that the student passed but was not proficient in all course standards.

COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

A comprehensive assessment system is a coordinated plan for monitoring the academic achievement of students. The goal of the comprehensive assessment system is to:

1. Increase student learning by producing actionable data,
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of programs, and
3. Ensures that all students are making progress toward achieving learning goals.

Formative & Summative Assessments

Quality use of these scoring and reporting practices is directly dependent on the quality of formative and summative assessments teachers use on a regular basis to measure achievement, growth and progress. Formative assessment is the ongoing collection of information that enables teachers to support a student's continuous progress towards proficiency in the academic standards. Formative assessment practices focus on learning by providing meaningful feedback and allowing students to make mistakes during the learning process and still recover. Daily homework is considered formative assessment.



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Summative Assessments are designed to measure a student's proficiency of the academic standards. Summative Assessments are to be administered after sufficient formative assessments and instruction has occurred. When possible, teachers should strive for a system that assesses students at their point of readiness. Students will receive an omnibus numerical grade on all summative assessments along with a rubric reporting standards based grades. Summative assessments will also be used to successfully compile a graduation portfolio, a requirement for graduation. A student that achieves standard proficiency on a school wide rubric may use the task in their graduation portfolio.

Performance level scores at the end of a reporting period will be determined primarily by summative assessments. Numerical grades will be determined based on a calculated average that includes both formative and summative assessments.

Comprehensive Assessments

Comprehensive Assessments must be developed in a manner consistent with Rhode Island's Secondary Regulations. Comprehensive Quarterly Assessments are on-demand assessments that measure all academic measurement standards instructed in the quarter. These assessments will be given in the first, second, and third quarter. A Comprehensive Course Assessment will be given in the fourth quarter and count toward the final average.

ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY

Incomplete Work

Teachers should implement multiple communication efforts and checkpoints for understanding before assignment deadlines to help increase work completion rates. Students who fail to complete summative assessments on the first attempt will have a five (5) school day period of time to make up the work at the discretion of their teacher. Failure to do so will initiate communication to a parent and a referral to the Academic Proficiency Center (APC) to complete the assigned work. Teachers will ensure that deadlines are communicated to families for all summative assessments. Extended assessments should have multiple checkpoints for understanding and work completion. Teachers will ensure timely and effective feedback on all assessments ensuring that feedback is clear, descriptive, and actionable well before the due date. Teachers must communicate with the family any time a failure is imminent or the situation warrants.

Multiple Measures & Opportunities

Student level scoring shall be based on multiple measures of student work collected in multiple formats (e.g., paper and pencil, oral presentations, projects) and under varying conditions (on demand, timed and untimed, over extended periods, with and without revisions). Students must be allowed multiple opportunities (e.g., formatives, summatives, and reassessments with teacher discretion) to show what they know and can do. Teachers shall be committed to these principles.



Student Progress and Reporting

Student progress and reporting to students and families shall occur on a regular and timely basis. Teachers will ensure timely and effective feedback on all assessments ensuring that feedback on assessments is clear, descriptive, and actionable. Informal feedback to students, both oral and written, shall occur routinely at the high school level. Formal reporting with families shall occur within two weeks after the close of a quarter or semester and immediately if a student is at risk of failing. All reporting of student progress and achievement shall be clear and shall use a variety of formats for communicating (telephone, notes, report cards, conferences, etc.) and, when possible and necessary, multiple languages. Students shall be involved in grading and reporting processes, (e.g., self-assessing, participating in parent-teacher conferences, journals). It is expected that teachers will make multiple attempts to intervene with and communicate to students and parents about incomplete and failing work. Teachers will record all student grades electronically within the

Cumberland School Department student information system within one (1) week for formative assessment and within two (2) weeks for summative assessments.

Grade Book

The grade book will be organized so that columns represent measurement standards as well as summative and formative assessments. If an assignment is to be scored, it must be categorized according to learning (measurement standards). This is a departure from the old tests, quizzes, homework model. If the assignment cannot be properly categorized, the teacher must reconfigure the assignment so that it can. One assessment might have several individual scores because it covers multiple measurement standards.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The Cumberland School Department expects and demands academic integrity. Students involved in cheating and/or plagiarism will be subject to appropriate behavioral consequences. Additionally, they will be required to complete the work in an appropriate manner as determined by the teacher and building administrator to allow for a true measurement of student academic achievement.

EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The Cumberland School Department recognizes that students may differ in the time needed to attain proficiency. To support the learning of all students, flexible learning opportunities will be provided, including but not limited to before and after school programs, summer school, credit recovery, Academic Proficiency Center (APC) et cetera.



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Policy I-13 High School Proficiency Based Grading supersedes policy

IKFC – High School Proficiency Based Graduation Policy

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