

West Burlington Independent School District

Standards Learning Handbook

Jr./Sr. High School



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Introduction

West Burlington Schools is committed to continuous improvement. Our teachers and administrators have studied research around standards based learning and the purpose of student grades. Over the course of our studies we have identified three main learning principles:

1. Grades communicate students' current level of learning based on the state approved standards.
2. Homework and independent practice needs to be meaningful, purposeful, aligned to grade level/course standards. Since it is considered practice, it will not affect the student's summative grade.
3. Students should have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning of the standard being assessed. Learning occurs at different rates and in different ways for individual students. Students will be given multiple opportunities to practice key skills before they are assessed and graded. Students will also be given multiple opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of grade-level/course standards through instruction, formative assessment, summative assessment and reassessment.

Making Decisions As A District

West Burlington Independent school district is a professional learning community. Professional Learning Communities (PLC) is the process by which the district operates. Every decision the district makes supports one or more of the PLC 4 essential questions:

- 1) What do we want students to learn?
- 2) How will we know if they are learning?
- 3) How will we respond when they don't learn?
- 4) How will we respond when they do learn?

As a PLC, West Burlington is committed to implementing Standards Based Learning to communicate what students know and are able to do, prioritize learning tasks and improve grading practices.

What is Standards Based Learning?

Standards based learning refers to a belief system that all students can learn and should be given the opportunity to grow over time using instruction and assessments in conjunction with teacher feedback and support. This includes implementing grading practices that measures progress towards content standard expectations and does not include student compliance with teacher behavioral expectations.

Standards based grading is a reporting system that communicates to students and parents the performance level of the student on the assessed anchor standards in a course of study. It is a way to more accurately communicate what a student knows and can do. In a standards based learning system, the main focus is on the **learning**, not the grade.

A Standards-Based Approach:

- Indicates what students know and are able to do.
- Scores indicate a student's progress toward the attainment of a standard.
- Clearly communicates expectations ahead of time.
- Is based on complex tasks, as opposed to rote memory.

- Emphasizes evidence of learning.
- Multiple methods of assessment are used to determine grades.

Determining Student Performance Level

Students are assessed on their ability to demonstrate their understanding, knowledge, and application of an academic anchor standard. Students then are given a performance score that reflects their understanding of the assessed standard. This is commonly known as the performance scale score. In grades 6-8, the students will be assigned a final performance scale score on each academic anchor standard for the course. In grades 9-12, the students' overall course grade is determined by using the West Burlington logic guide that looks at all performance scale scores on each academic assessed anchor standard for the course.

Performance Scale Score

The performance scale is a scoring system that provides feedback on a student's assessment on a particular standard. The performance scale score provides a clear explanation of the student's understanding on the assessed anchor standard. The performance scale is below.

Performance Scale Score	
Highly Proficient - Student is proficient in the learning goals and is able to demonstrate a more complex level of application or demonstrates advanced understanding.	HP
Proficient - Student is independently proficient in the learning goal.	P
Approaching - Student has a partial understanding of the standard and is making progress towards proficiency, but is not there yet.	AP
Limited Proficiency - Student has made little or no progress towards meeting the standard.	LP
No evidence/No attempt - Student has not completed an assessment of the standard.	NE

Applying the West Burlington Performance Scale and Logic Guide

Teachers will use the performance scale to determine and communicate students' current level of performance on an assessment of an academic anchor standard. In addition, teachers will use the performance scale to determine a students' final level of performance of an assessed academic anchor standard at midterm and end of the trimester.

High school teachers will use the Logic Guide to determine a final letter grade for a course of study in grades 9-12. High school teachers will apply the Logic Guide to all assessed standards' scores to determine a letter grade for the course. Teachers will determine the final assessed anchor standards' scores by examining student evidence and applying the performance scale.

Performance Guide and Logic Guide Implementation:

- Teachers will examine students' evidence of learning towards the academic anchor standard in conjunction with the performance scale to determine a performance scale score for each summative assessment and academic anchor standard.

- When applicable, teachers will consider the most recent piece of assessed evidence when determining proficiency on the performance scale.
- When examining students' evidence of learning, teachers will use professional judgment based on current student evidence of learning when determining a performance scale score for an academic anchor standard.
- High school teachers will use the Logic Guide to help determine a final letter grade for a course of study in grades 9-12.
- Students may receive an incomplete grade for a course or a standard until the student completes all assessments or reassessments.
- In grades 9-12, an incomplete grade may result in course failure if students do not complete all assessments or reassessments by the end of the academic year or by the date determined by the teacher, reassessment policy, or administration.
- In the result of course failure, students will not receive credit.

Determining Performance of an Academic Anchor Standard Jr. High (Grades 6-8)

Performance Scale Score	
Highly Proficient - Student is proficient in the learning goals and is able to demonstrate a more complex level of application or demonstrates advanced understanding.	HP
Proficient - Student is independently proficient in the learning goal.	P
Approaching - Student has a partial understanding of the standard and is making progress towards proficiency, but is not there yet.	AP
Limited Proficiency - Student has made little or no progress towards meeting the standard.	LP
No evidence/No attempt - Student has not completed an assessment of the standard.	NE

Determining Performance in High School (Grades 9-12)

Performance Scale Score	
Highly Proficient - Student is proficient in the learning goals and is able to demonstrate a more complex level of application or demonstrates advanced understanding.	HP
Proficient - Student is independently proficient in the learning goal.	P
Approaching - Student has a partial understanding of the standard and is making progress towards proficiency, but is not there yet.	AP
Limited Proficiency - Student has made little or no progress towards meeting the standard.	LP
No evidence/No attempt - Student has not completed an assessment of the standard.	NE

WB HIGH SCHOOL (9-12) LOGIC Guide	
Report Card Scores	Resulting Grade
Mix of HP and P, more HP , no AP, LP, NE	A
Mix of HP and P, more P , no more than 1 AP, no LP, NE	B
Mix of AP and above , no LP or NE	C
No more than 1 LP, no NE	D
Less than 30% of assessed standards are Limited Proficiency or No Evidence	I - Incomplete
More than 30% of assessed standards are Limited Proficiency or No Evidence	F

Student Reassessment Policy

In order to earn the opportunity to reassess, students may be required to complete any missing learning activities related to that standard (This may include, but is not limited to: daily practice, notes, study guides, homework, etc.). Students may also be required to complete additional practice, meet with the teacher for additional help, or take other actions deemed necessary by the teacher, to help ensure learning. Reassessments may differ from the original assessment. After reassessing, the most recent score will be used to determine the final performance of the standard. Students may reassess multiple times, but may be required to complete additional steps with each attempt. Teachers or departments may set realistic reassessment deadlines. Reassessment scores will be recorded in Infinite Campus to show progression of learning.

Scheduling Reassessments:

Teachers will schedule student reassessments in Infinite Campus. The reassessment time will show up on the students schedule. The student will receive an email notification of the scheduled reassessment and attendance will be recorded. The student will report to the teacher assigning reassessment during the scheduled time. Students may also request to reassess by making arrangements with the teacher. Students will need to be aware of individual teacher reassessment policies. At the end of the term, students may reassess by the deadline.

Reporting Guidelines/Practices

1. Entries in Infinite Campus that count towards the final performance level will be based on anchor standards.

What it means....

- When creating a new entry in Infinite Campus that counts towards the final performance level, it must be an anchor standard such as "Find the area of a regular polygon by applying trigonometric ratios" or "Understands how evolution occurs (natural selection, mutation, migration, and genetic drift)."
- Assignments or other activities that do not count towards the final performance level may still be recorded in Infinite Campus as formative assessment or for the purpose of communicating with students and parents, however it should be clearly noted as such and "no grade calculation" is selected.

What it doesn't mean...

- a. Course or grade level standards must be word-for-word from the Iowa/Common Core essentials concepts and skills list.
- b. Entering "Mitosis Project" or "Unit 5 Test" in the grade book.

2. Extra credit will not be given at any time.

What it means....

- a. Individual students will not be given extra assignments to be completed that will artificially improve their final performance.
- b. Students will not be awarded points towards the final performance that are based on providing classroom supplies.

3. Students will be allowed multiple opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of classroom standards in various ways.

What it means....

- a. Students learn different subjects at varying rates, therefore students who did not demonstrate understanding by the assessment date will be allowed to demonstrate understanding at a later date.
- b. Teachers will provide individual students additional opportunities to demonstrate understanding after the final regularly scheduled whole group assessment for that particular standard. This can take place during class, study hall, intervention and/or outside of regular school hours.
- c. Teachers will utilize multiple ways of assessing the same standard for different students.
- d. Reassessments will target missing skills in an anchor standard(s) that students have not demonstrated proficiency.
- e. Teachers will provide re-teaching opportunities prior to students completing a reassessment.

What it doesn't mean...

- a. Students should be encouraged to reassess without first completing additional learning opportunities individually or with the teacher, peer or parent.
- b. Scoring periods are eliminated or students' quarter/semester performance levels need to be changed after the end of the grading period.
- c. Students must complete the entire assessment again if they have already demonstrated a high level of understanding of a standard on a previous assessment.

4. Infinite Campus entries are determined by considering multiple data points and provide evidence to support that determination.

What it means....

- a. If a student demonstrates a low understanding of a standard on a Monday assessment, but demonstrates a higher understanding two weeks later, the mark in the grade book for that standard should improve.
- b. Scenario: Student A performs poorly on practice assignments and quizzes, but demonstrates the highest level of understanding on the test/project. Student B performs well on practice assignments and quizzes and demonstrates the highest level of understanding on the test/project. Student A and student B should have similar entries in the grade book for the standard(s) assessed.
- c. Teachers are able to provide evidence to support an entry in the grade book.
- d. Teachers may use teacher discretion to round a student's grade up to the next performance level based on justifiable evidence of learning.

What it doesn't mean...

- a. Homework, quizzes and/or test scores are simply averaged to calculate the grade book entry for a given standard.
- b. The most recent data must be used when determining the grade book entry.
- c. Averaging follow-up assessment opportunities with previous assessments to determine the grade book entry.

5. Students will be provided multiple opportunities to practice standards independently through homework or other class work. Practice assignments and activities will be consistent with classroom standards for the purpose of providing feedback. Practice assignments, including homework, will not be included as part of the final grade.

What it means....

- a. Homework or practice assignments should be purposefully utilized to enhance students' understanding of classroom standards.
- b. Assignments which are designed for students to demonstrate their understanding at an early part of the learning cycle should not be counted towards the final grade.
- c. Students will be provided feedback on homework or practice assignments.

What it doesn't mean...

- a. Homework or practice assignments are no longer assigned or students are no longer asked to complete homework.
- b. Work completed outside of class (i.e. project, paper) cannot be entered into the gradebook by standard.

6. All courses will identify and report on a minimum of three anchor standards per trimester.

7. Course performance scores will be calculated and posted at week 6 and end of the trimester.

Employability Skills

Students will receive a SOAR employability skill score in Infinite Campus. The SOAR employability skills reflect the Iowa Core's 21st Century skills. Students will receive a score around their social skills as well as the personal characteristics that empower them to be productive, caring, and competent citizens. The employability skills score will not affect the student's summative grade.

Jr/Sr. High Employability Skills

S Support Each Other

Be a Positive Team Member

Be Thoughtful of Those Around You

Contribute Positively & Appropriately

Keep Hands, Feet & Objects to Self

O Own Your Behavior

Follow Directions Without Argument or Delay

Use Equipment / Property / Supplies Correctly

Accept Responsibility / Correction

Use Appropriate Language

A Achieve At Your Best

Be Prepared for Class

Complete & Turn in your Work on Time

Be an Active Learner

Be on Task / Use Instructional Time Appropriately

Be in attendance and present daily

R Respect All

Treat Others the Way You Want to be Treated

Respect Others' Right to Learn

Respect Differences in Others

Speak Kindness

Practice Self-Respect

FAQ's

Why change to Standards Based Learning?

At WBISD, we want to focus on what a student has learned and is able to demonstrate related to the Iowa Core standards. With standard based learning, we can report specifically on the knowledge of a standard. Standard based learning uses a performance scale to provide feedback, therefore; students know exactly what needs to be demonstrated in order to achieve proficiency.

Why are we not using letter grades in the JH?

We want students to be focused on their learning and what they are able to do, as opposed to achieving a “grade.”

Why are we converting learning to letter grades in the HS and not the JH?

Grades will only be converted at the HS level at the end of a course in order for students to maintain a GPA. GPA at the HS level are used by outside entities for the awarding of financial scholarships. JH GPA's are not used to determine or need to rank students.

If JH students are not receiving a course letter grade, how will I know if my student has “passed” a course or is eligible for athletics?

A JH student will be considered “passed” if they have no more than 1 Limited Proficiency and no No Evidence performance scores on the assessed anchor standards for the course during each academic term. Two or more Limited Proficiency scores and any No Evidence scores in a course will identify the student as a candidate for retention and/or summer school and will make them ineligible for athletic competitions.

What is the purpose of reassessment?

We understand that reassessments are a necessary part of the learning process. We also recognize that not all students learn at the same pace, and because learning is the goal, students will be able to reassess per the policy in the handbook.

What needs to be done in order to reassess?

In order to earn the opportunity to reassess, students must complete any missing learning activities related to that standard (This may include, but is not limited to: daily practice, notes, study guides, homework, etc.). Students may also be required to complete additional practice, meet with the teacher for additional help, or take other actions deemed necessary by the teacher, to help ensure learning.

What is an anchor standard?

Anchor standards are specific and clearly stated learning goals of what a learner should know and be able to do to demonstrate mastery of a skill or concept at each grade level or at the end of a particular course.

Standards Based Learning Terms and Definitions

Anchor Standard - prioritized and assessed academic expectations that educators determine to be the most critical and essential for students to learn.

Body of Evidence - includes multiple sources of data. It gives a comprehensive picture of how a student is performing relative to a standard.

Employability Skills - students will have the social skills as well as the personal characteristics that empower them to be productive, caring, and competent citizens.

Formative Assessment - refers to a wide variety of methods that teachers use to conduct in-process evaluations of student comprehension, learning needs, and academic progress during a lesson, unit, or course.

Grade Proficiency - a simple, clear, and concrete summary representation of student achievement based on what a student knows at the end of a given time period.

Incomplete - not enough evidence to determine grade proficiency.

Iowa Core - standards that are required for all students in accordance with state law.

Logic Rule - a way to give each student a final grade for the course of study or an anchor standard. When using the logic rule, teachers look at all performance scale scores obtained by the student throughout the course and then will assign a letter grade (HS only) that more accurately reflects the student's level of learning in the course.

Performance Scale - scoring system that provides feedback on a student's assessment of a particular standard.

PLC- Professional Learning Communities (PLC) is the process by which the district operates. Every decision the district makes supports one or more of the PLC 4 essential questions.

Reassessment - an opportunity for students to increase or demonstrate learning.

Standards Based Learning - report of a student's performance on a standard for the purpose of informing parents and students of demonstrated achievement.

Summative Assessment - product, portfolio, project or test used to evaluate student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of an instructional period.