

Standards-Based Grading at Renaissance Secondary

“If you get a failing grade, you think, I’m nothing, I’m nowhere. But if you get the grade ‘Not Yet’ you understand that you’re on a learning curve. It gives you a path into the future.”

- Carol Dweck, Stanford University Professor

Key Principles

(adapted from Ron Berger’s Leaders of their Own Learning)

- **Grades accurately describe a student’s progress and current level of achievement.**
 - An ‘average’ over time doesn’t accurately reflect progress toward mastery of standards.
- **Grades are for communication, not motivation or punishment.**
 - Audiences: students, families, post-secondary opportunities
- **Habits of Crew (work habits, participation, etc.) should be assessed and reported separately.**
 - Both Habits of Crew and Academic Progress are important, but they’re separate.
- **Student engagement is essential to the grading process.**
 - Examples: student’s use learning targets to help them understand their progress toward mastery of standards through self-assessments, feedback cycles, student-led conferences, etc.

Due Dates and Deadlines

- Due dates and deadlines serve as assessment checkpoints and support students so that they may receive timely feedback on their progress toward short term and long term learning targets.

- Authentic audiences and/or scheduled feedback opportunities, such as conferences (peer, expert, teacher) support students in meeting deadlines.
- For culminating projects and/or summative assessments, students should have multiple opportunities to receive feedback and re-submit with revisions prior to a final due date.
- Providing feedback on earlier, formative assignments is typically not helpful for teachers or students for assessment.
- Extenuating circumstances, such as illness, may exist that require a student to turn in work late. In general, students have two school days for each day they missed to make up assignments.
- In many cases 'daily activities' or in-class work doesn't lend itself to being 'made up.' If those activities are being used as an assessment tool and aren't conducive to being made-up, the teacher should consider dropping the assignment.
- Assignments, quizzes, and projects are a means of assessment; they're an opportunity for students to demonstrate mastery or progress toward mastery of standards. Grades are a means of communicating the results of the assessment. Consider which assessments make sense to convey as communication to parents, and which might be useful for a teacher internally but don't necessarily need to be communicated.
- In addition to large projects, tests, quizzes, etc. Teachers should consider using some informal assessment tools that do not require students to have high levels of executive functioning and/or do not involve the barrier of 'submitting' work. For example, 1:1 conferences, Jamboard sticky notes, comments in a google doc, etc. These could be recorded in a student's record of progress in Infinite Campus, or not.

Late / Missing Assignment Policy

- If a student is absent from class (excused), the student must make arrangements with teachers to complete the work promptly. Students are responsible for requesting and completing make-up assignments. Students have two school days to make up assignments for each day of excused absence.
- Late work is not accepted for daily formative* assessments (daily in-class activities) for unexcused absences.

- If a student has missed a formative assessment (excused), the student may arrange to receive feedback from the teacher at a pre-arranged time.
- In general, late work will not be accepted for summative assessments.** Students experiencing extenuating circumstances, such as illness, may submit an extension request, which should be submitted by the assignment due date (or earlier whenever possible).
- Students who fail to request an extension by the due date will need to conference with their teacher to determine whether a body of work may be submitted to demonstrate progress toward mastery of standards (which will likely include many of the daily, formative assessments that might have been missed earlier).

Note: Students who have an IEP or 504 plan may have accommodations which allow for extended time to meet standards, without penalty. In these cases, students and teachers will negotiate an appropriate deadline in advance. If the student then misses the negotiated deadline, the late work policy takes effect.

**Formative Assessments* – a range of smaller stakes learning tasks (eg: quizzes, teacher observations and journal entries) designed to give teachers and students a sense of where they are on progress towards meeting short-term or long-term learning targets in the midst of an instructional unit. The results of formative assessments should help inform students and teachers what to do next in order for students to master the course standards.

***Summative Assessments* – higher stakes learning tasks (eg: end of unit tests, final draft essays, culminations) which are designed to measure whether or not students have mastered long-term learning targets or course standards once a unit of instruction is complete.

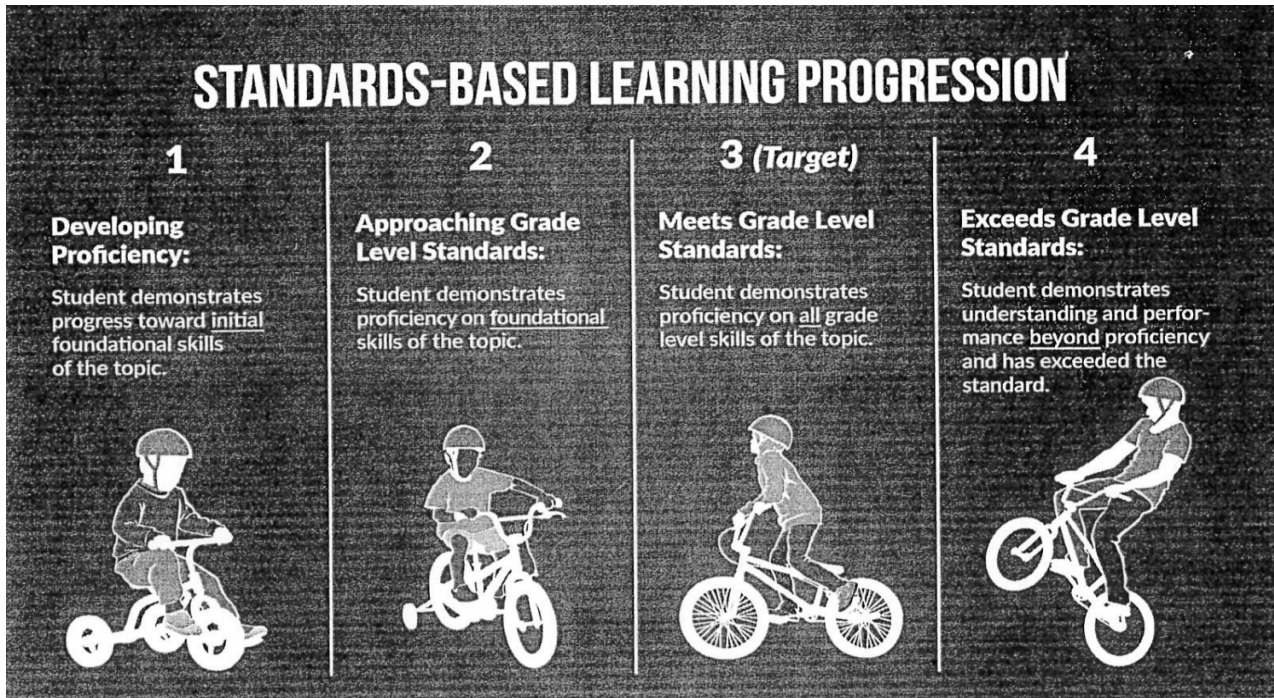
How does standard based grading differ from traditional grading?

Standards-based grading measures a student's mastery of a grade-level or subject standards by prioritizing the most recent, consistent level of performance. In standards-based grading, a student's mastery of an academic concept is separated from a student's work habits. In standards based grading, later assignments may be weighted more than earlier assignments as students demonstrate their progress toward mastery.

Standards-Based Grading Progress Indicators for Middle School

At Renaissance Secondary, we use the 4, 3, 2, NY indicators to demonstrate a student's mastery of a standard, and for course grades in Middle School. The use of not yet (NY) indicates students who have not yet met mastery of this standard. Students typically have an opportunity to resubmit work or revise to demonstrate mastery of the standards.

See the graphic below regarding what those indicators mean.



Academic Performance Level Rubric

Academic progress at Renaissance is reflected under “Academic Performance Level” in Infinite Campus

4	Far exceeds mastery of standards
3.5	Exceeds mastery of standards
3	Meets mastery of standards
2.5	Very close to meeting mastery of standards
2	Approaching mastery of standards
NY (1)	Not Yet
M	Missing

Habits of Crew Rubric

Habits of Crew are also evaluated and included as a grade in Infinite Campus. Below is the rubric for Habits of Crew

4	Always demonstrates, or goes well above and beyond
3.5	Demonstrates consistently
3	Demonstrates most of the time, almost always
2.5	Usually demonstrates
2	Demonstrates some of the time
NY	Not at all, rarely, or never demonstrates

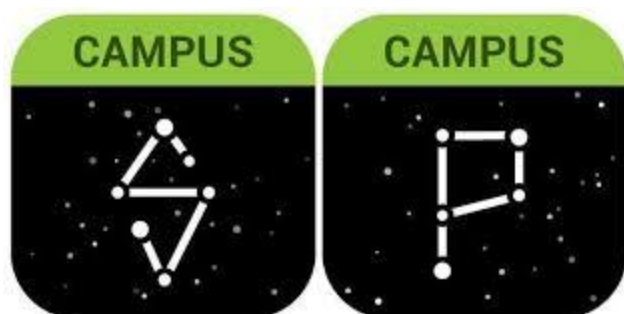
HIGH SCHOOL FAMILIES

Renaissance recognizes the desire for high schoolers to have typical letter grades on their transcript. Thus, progress indicator grades are converted to a final letter grade, using a method specifically developed by experts for this purpose. The following chart shows the conversion from standard-based grading to a letter grade.

Academic Performance Level Rubric (Letter Grades)

Standards Based Grading Conversion to Letter Grades* <i>(Modified from Marzano/Hefelbower Method)</i>	
3.75 to 4.00 = A+ (Honors level work)	2.34 to 2.49 = C+
3.26 to 3.74 = A	2.17 to 2.33 = C
3.00 to 3.25 = A-	2.00 to 2.16 = C-
2.84 to 2.99 = B+	1.50 -1.99 = D
2.67 to 2.83 = B	0.00 to 1.49 = F
2.50 to 2.66 = B-	

*Letter grades



Important: Grades in Infinite Campus

Families may view progress grades in Infinite Campus to see how their child is progressing. A few important notes about viewing grades in Infinite Campus:

- Grades are listed out of 100 or more in Infinite Campus (see example below).
- For high school, grades are communicated on a 100 point scale.

- In order for Infinite Campus to create an accurate progress grade, the points given to an assignment must be 100. That value has no effect on your student's overall grade; it is solely used to make the grade algorithm work.
- Some teachers also use weighted categories to further differentiate between assignments.

Below are examples of what you might see in a course progress grade. **Note, academic performance level in the High School Example shows 3.33%, but the % should be ignored. The number can be viewed as 3.33 (a little above meeting standards) on a 4 point scale.**

Middle School Example

Language Arts 08	
Course Info	Grades
Upcoming Assignments (2)	
All Terms	Q1
Term Q1 (08/17 - 10/09)	
Settings ▼	
(Q1) Academic Performance Level	3.5 (3.71%) In-progress ⓘ
Oral Expression and Listening Weight: 0.25	11/300 (3.66%) +
Reading for all purposes Weight: 0.25	17/450 (3.77%) +
Writing for all purposes Weight: 0.25	24/650 (3.69%) +

High School Example

Humanities I	
(Q1) Academic Performance Level	A (3.33%) ⓘ In-progress
Classwork Weight: 45	3.5/100 +
First/Last Five Weight: 10	9/300 +
Projects/Papers Weight: 45	3.25/100 +