

Murrieta Valley Unified School District

Parent Guide to Standards Based Grading



What is Standards-Based Grading?

Standards-Based Grading (SBG) communicates how students are performing on a set of clearly defined learning targets called standards. The purpose of SBG is to identify what a student knows, or is able to do, in relation to pre-established targets, as opposed to simply averaging grades/scores over the course of a grading period, which can mask what a student has learned, or not learned, in a specific course.

Why Standards-Based Grading?

We believe that grades are about what students learn, not what they earn. SBG reports what students know and are able to do within each content area. The real-time monitoring of students performance reflects a more accurate picture of student achievement. Other reasons for SBG include:

- Traditional methods of grading do not accurately reflect what a student knows and is able to do. (i.e. How do you distinguish between an 83% and an 84%?)
- Grades may be clouded by individual teacher subjectivity and/or requirements. (i.e. Returning a class syllabus signed by a parent/or guardian for points.)
- Students will be able to explain what they learned or did not learn rather than recite a letter grade or percentage. (i.e. I can describe the process of cell division by mitosis.)
- It provides accurate and meaningful feedback to student, teachers, and parents.
- It helps the teacher and students focus and adjust instruction and learning.
- It leads to higher learning through improved accountability and engagement as students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery. (i.e. Retakes of learning checks, tests, assignments, etc.)
- SBG reports most recent evidence and trends of students learning.

How does Standards-Based Grading differ from traditional grading?

Unlike traditional grading systems, a standards-based grading system measures a student's mastery of content standards by prioritizing the most recent, consistent level of performance. Thus, a student who may have struggled at the beginning of a course, when first encountering new material, may still be able to demonstrate master of key content/concepts by the end of the grading period.

In a traditional grading system, a student's performance for an entire quarter is averaged together. Early quiz scores that were low would be averaged together with more proficient performance later in the course, resulting in a lower overall grade than current performance indicates.

Traditional Grading System	Standards-Based Grading System
An emphasis on averaging a percentage score over the grading period to give you a percentage score out of 100 points. A student who struggles at the beginning of the quarter may never earn back enough points to give an accurate reflection of what he or she knows at the end. On the other hand, a student may have earned enough points early in the quarter to not give his or her best effort on a quarter final and still receive a high score.	An emphasis on looking at most recent evidence of student work to provide you with a skill early in the quarter by has mastered the skill at the end is rewarded. Earlier struggles with the skill don't punish the student if he or she learns it by the end. As the grade is a continuous reflection of what the student presently knows, the emphasis is always on trying one's best.
Scores on quizzes, tests, and projects of 100 points. The idea being that the percentage gives the student and parent an accurate representation of what a student knows. But can a student, parent, or teacher decipher the difference between an 83% and 84% as a reflection of what a student knows.	Scores on assignments and assessments are given on a 4-point scale. With four standard deviations between scores compared to one hundred, it is likely that more than one teacher could measure the student's understanding on a 4-point scale (with a clearly defined performance rubric) and come to the same result, as opposed to scoring the same student on a 100-point scale.
Often points are taken off for late work, even if completed work shows mastery of the skill. Compliance factors such as behavior can be a large part of the score.	No points are taken off for late work. The greatest emphasis of the grade is what the student show he or she knows on in-class tests and performance assessments.
Students struggling to earn the grade they want may ask to do extra credit work to earn the points needed to get the percentage for the desired final grade.	Students may ask to revise or retake certain assignments and assessments to show growth in a deficient skill. The conversation shifts from, "Can I do something for extra points to earn the grade I want?" to a conversation where students say, "It looks like I am still struggling with the skill of creating a quality thesis statement. Can I get some extra help and try this again once I've learned it?"
Student Grades 100 85 70 <u>0</u> Average = 64% or "D" Not an accurate representation of what the student knows.	Student Grades 2, 2, 3, 3, 4 = Score of 3 or a "B" More clear representation of what the student knows. Also, the student has the opportunity to retake assignments with scores of "2" to demonstrate mastery.

How does Standards-Based Grading Work?

Traditional grading averages all of the work and other subjective factors that a student has done over a grading period. Standards Based Grading removes extraneous factors and solely focuses on proficiency. SBG assess a student's overall work and their most recent work so it really tells us what a student has learned over time rather than what they knew walking into class.

What will each of the numbers in the 4-point scale represent?

4 = **Exceeds Standards** – Student consistently and independently meets all expectations of the learning target and shows the ability to apply the skills and concepts to other situations.

3 = **Meets Standards** – Student consistently meets the learning target and demonstrates understanding of the learning target by applying key concepts, processes and skills with limited errors. The student demonstrates proficiency of the standard.

2 = **Nearly Meets Standards** – Student meets simpler content consistently and has only partial success with learning target content. The student is beginning to grasp and apply key concepts, processes, and skills.

1 = **Does Not Meet Standards** – Student demonstrates little to no understanding of the learning target. The student is making minimal progress toward meeting the standard and needs more time, support, and intervention for concepts, processes, and skills to develop.

0 = **No attempt** – Student will be required to complete the assignment/assessment before a score is entered. The student has not demonstrated learning of the standard.

Is it possible to achieve a grade of 4?

Yes, it is. However, a score of (4) indicates performance that consistently and independently meets the criteria of that standard and student work would indicate a deeper understanding of a standard, the ability to apply that knowledge, and make connections to other areas and situations.

How will GPA be determined?

Grades entered into AERIES will reflect the standard scale of A, B, C, D, and F based on the following scale: 4.00 to 4.00 A+

<i>1st Semester Scale</i>	<i>2nd Semester Scale</i>
<i>In order to earn an A, students are expected to consistently meet standards and are approaching mastery.</i>	<i>In order to earn an A, students are expected to consistently master standards.</i>
A 3.3 - 4.0	A 3.5 - 4.0
B 2.6 - 3.2	B 2.9 - 3.4
C 1.9 - 2.5	C 2.2 - 2.8
D 1.1 - 1.8	D 1.5 - 2.1
F 0 - 1.0	F 0 - 1.4