

Proficiency-Based Learning at Killingly Intermediate School

Proficiency-based learning refers to systems of instruction, assessment grading, and academic reporting that are based on students demonstrating that they have learned the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn as they progress through their education. Proficiency-based learning systems use adopted state learning standards to determine academic expectations and define “proficiency” in a given course, subject area, or grade level. The goal of proficiency-based learning is to ensure that students are acquiring the knowledge and skills that are essential for success in school, college, career, and life.

Proficiency-based learning systems more accurately reflect and communicate a student’s learning progress and achievement, including situations in which students struggled early on in the school year, but then put in the effort and hard work needed to meet expected standards. Proficiency-based learning systems are designed to identify specific academic needs, which we can use to inform our instruction, interventions, and curriculum. That is why we assess and report Habits of Work, including perseverance, organization, and collaboration, separately from academic achievement.

“Educators in this moment of transition have an opportunity to reflect, innovate, and build on evidence-based practices in schools across the country. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored SEL as an essential part of high-quality education—highlighting our relationships, resiliency, and collective problem-solving as fundamental to teaching and learning. While nearly everyone has faced disruption, we must acknowledge the complex, varying ways individuals have experienced these months. The pandemic has exposed and exacerbated existing inequities in education and emphasized the need for learning environments that welcome and support all students, including those who were not equitably served before COVID-19”

[*CASEL: An Initial Guide to Leveraging the Power of Social & Emotional Learning As You Prepare to Reopen and Renew Your School Community](#)

Now more than ever before, it is vitally important that our assessment and grading system accurately reflect our students’ progress toward a defined set of learning goals. Our learning models and learning environments need to be flexible and adapt quickly in the age of COVID-19. Long-held debates around seat time and required school days as a criteria for course credit have quickly evolved to the power of equitable educational systems and using evidence of student learning separate from habits of work and student behavior to determine proficiency of performance indicators. **Beginning this school year, parents can access student progress through JumpRope, our new Grading and Reporting Family Portal, and students’ academic progress will be reported as both progress toward individual learning goals and traditional grades. Habits of Work will continue to be reported separately from academic progress in all courses.** Please review the Killingly Intermediate School Proficiency-Based Learning Parent Guide to learn more.