



**Grading Practices:
MSD Pike Township
Middle Schools**

**PARENT COMMUNICATION
Tips & Tools!**



GRADING FOR LEARNING!

Dear Parents,

At the MSD Pike Township Middle Schools, we believe student achievement occurs through clearly defined standards and authentic learning opportunities. GCMS strives to provide accurate, meaningful, and timely feedback to both students and parents throughout the learning process. Reporting of achievement should reflect student progress toward mastery of key academic concepts and identify multiple pathways to deeper learning.

GRADES ARE NOT ABOUT WHAT STUDENTS EARN;

GRADES ARE ABOUT WHAT STUDENTS LEARN.

What may look different?	What may look the same?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State standards tested listed in Skyward Gradebook• Assessment grades use a 0-4 scale• Assessments= 95% Practice=5%• Fewer grades in the gradebook• Multiple grades for one assessment• Retake option for 95% assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letter grades (A, B, C, D, F)• Report cards• Progress Reports• Honor roll• G.P.A.



Why GRADING FOR MASTERY?

Consider this scenario...

Two students sit in the same 6th grade reading class. Throughout one week, homework is assigned and taken for a completion grade daily. At the end of the week a quiz given to students on Friday at the end of the class hour.

Student 1	Student 2
<p>Does not complete any assigned homework, resulting in a 0/5 homework score.</p> <p>Earns a 10/10 on the end of the week quiz – showing Mastery of the reading content standard.</p> <p>Therefore, Student One earns a 10/15 in the class.</p> <p>$10/15 = 67\%$ which is a D (in the traditional grading system) for their overall score in that class.</p>	<p>Completes all of the homework assigned, resulting in a 5/5 homework score.</p> <p>Earns a 7/10 on the end of the week quiz – missing key elements of the reading content standard.</p> <p>Therefore, Student Two earns a 12/15 in the class.</p> <p>$12/15 = 80\%$ which is a B for their overall score in that class.</p>

Student One was able to prove Mastery of the content, but did not complete the tasks. Student Two ends the unit actually understanding **less** of the content but with a higher grade than Student One. Two letter grades higher for that matter.

*****Do you see the disconnect between the two students' understanding and their grades?**



Why STANDARDS-BASED GRADING?

Standards-Based Grading mandates a score (or grade) to represent a student's level of understanding. This process requires additional factors, such as behavior (late work, missing assignments, etc.) to be evaluated separately – producing authentic data on the student's knowledge base.

We utilize four key elements:

- (1) Connection of specific vocabulary to a numeric value
- (2) Focused discussion around understanding rather than task completion
- (3) Opportunities for multiple attempts to prove mastery
- (4) Purposeful learning toward required content

Through this practice, students and stakeholders are able to evaluate success in a specific area without additional fluff skewing data of the student's level of understanding.



What is a score IN STANDARDS-BASED GRADING?

Most Standards-Based Grading scales utilize a 4-tiered system. Each numeric value is connected to a vocabulary term describing the student's level of understanding:

- 0 = No Evidence
- 1 = Beginning
- 2 = Developing
- 3 = Proficient
- 4 = Mastery

The numeric values correlate to a level of student understanding of the standards. The focus is on the learning process and the skills needed to show proficiency of the content. This is a shift in understanding what a grade means all together as our focus is mastery of the skill. The grade represents what the student knows at that point in time!

Numeric Value	Letter Grade
4	(A)
3.5	(B+)
3	(B)
2.5	(C+)
2	(C)
1.5	(D+)
1	(D)
0	(F)

For each 95% assessment, teachers use a rubric based on the grade-level state standard to determine the level of understanding.



Skyward has certain limitations, and teachers have to work within those limitations. When you check a student's grades in Skyward, you will see a letter grade and a percent for each class and assignment. The letter grade is the same for both the traditional and standards-based scale, but due to Skyward's limitations, the percentages will look different. The chart below shows the alignment between the different scales.

If you see this percent in Skyward	=	This is the letter grade	=	This is the traditional grade range	=	This is the standards-based grade range	=	This is the score a teacher enters for an assignment or test
92.3 - 100		A		90 - 100		3.7 - 4		4
92.2 - 81.3		B+		87 - 89		3.3 - 3.6		3.5
68.8 - 81.2		B		80 - 86		2.7 - 3.2		3
56.3 - 68.7		C+		77 - 79		2.3 - 2.6		2.5
43.8 - 56.2		C		70 - 76		1.7 - 2.2		2
31.3 - 43.7		D+		67 - 69		1.3 - 1.6		1.5
18.8 - 31.2		D		60 - 66		0.7 - 1.2		1
0 - 18.7		F		0 - 59		0 - 0.6		0

We strongly encourage parents and legal guardians to use Skyward Family Access Accounts. There are many benefits of accessing Skyward. Teachers and other school staff use Skyward to send out important information, you can view report cards, access class schedules, and even set up parent conferences.

[How to Use Skyward – Family Access Accounts](#)



Canvas

There are many different tech tools your student will use throughout the year. However, Canvas is the tech tool that all teachers will use to post course-specific information.

As a parent and/or guardian, you can monitor your student's progress and coursework through a parent account. You can also view important announcements teachers send to their students. If you have not already done so, we strongly encourage you to set this up.

[Canvas for Parents – Setup Instructions](#)

****An important note regarding grades and Canvas****

- Some assignments students submit in Canvas are not entered into Skyward, (especially if the assignment was mainly for additional practice).
- Assignments submitted in Canvas may be graded on more than one standard or indicator.
- Some assignments are not turned in through Canvas.
- Canvas has many limitations with calculating grades on the 4-point scale.

Due to the above reasons, please refer to Skyward for information about your student's current and official grades.