

D.C. EVEREST AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

STANDARDS BASED LEARNING & GRADING

In order to more accurately measure and communicate a student's learning, growth and academic achievement, the D.C. Everest School District utilizes Standards Based Grading. Within this grading system:

- **A student's grade represents the academic progress (learning) a student makes toward mastering clearly defined standards.** By grading specific standards, students and teachers can see what skills a student has mastered or needs assistance with.
- **We recognize learning is developmental.** Students' knowledge of subject matter — and their ability to master specific skills — is a product of time, practice, and opportunity.
- **Assignments are designed to help students develop the knowledge and skills they need to master defined standards.** Assignments help students practice concepts learned in class, determine how well they understand the material, measure how well they can apply the material to other situations, and receive feedback from their teachers.
- **Students play an active role in their education by learning to measure the quality of their work.** The ability to assess the quality of one's work is a learned skill. If a student submits substandard work and would like an opportunity to remediate, they are encouraged and expected to meet with their teacher. During that conversation a student may request an opportunity to retake an assessment or resubmit an assignment by following the building protocols. This process is designed to increase communication and engagement between students and their teachers; help students learn how to balance personal, work, and academic responsibilities; and teach students to self-assess the quality of their work, what they need to do to improve the quality, and advocate for any assistance they may need.

Within a Standards Based Learning experience a student's earned grade is a representation of their mastery of the specific content and skills expected within specific standards at any given time. By grading specific standards, students and teachers can see what aspects of the content and skills a student has mastered or needs assistance with. At D.C. Everest, a generalized rubric that explains the criteria for assigning a Standards Based grade is as follows:

ACADEMIC CRITERIA FOR A STANDARDS BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCE

PROFICIENCY GRADE	QUALITY DESCRIPTOR
A Advanced/Exemplary	Consistently demonstrates extensive knowledge and understanding of course-level content, concepts, and skills; communicates learning with a high degree of clarity and accuracy; makes insightful connections; and applies skills in new situations to create high quality, original work
AB	Approaching A-level work
B Proficient/Meets Expectations	Consistently demonstrates proficient knowledge and understanding of course-level content, concepts, and skills; communicates learning with a considerable degree of clarity and accuracy; and applies skills to make connections in order to create high quality work.
BC	Approaching B-level work
C Basic/Progressing	Demonstrates adequate knowledge and understanding of the required course-level content, concepts and skills; at times communicates learning with some degree of clarity and accuracy; and applies skills to familiar situations to create satisfactory work.
CD	Approaching C-level work
D Below Basic/Learning in Progress	Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of the required grade-level content, concepts, and skills; communicates learning with a lack of clarity and/or accuracy; does not apply skills and work is incomplete or of poor quality.
F	Failed to demonstrate enough knowledge and understanding of learning within a given standard.
NE No Evidence of Learning	Demonstrates no evidence of learning; does not attempt or complete the required tasks or work; NE will be replaced with a letter grade based on a student's subsequent performance on any missing assessments or assignments.

Utilizing the rubric above helps teachers grade more consistently and objectively within and between academic departments. It is much easier for a teacher to define a student’s mastery of the subject matter and skills as one of eight letter grades (as noted above) than it is to define a student’s mastery along a 100 percentage point spectrum. Within each discipline, teachers will communicate to students what proficiency looks like within each standard either by a more specific rubric or by connecting assessment outcomes to this general rubric.

COMMUNICATION OF GRADES

Historically, D.C. Everest has utilized a Learning Management System (currently CANVAS) to ensure students and parents can monitor academic progress. To communicate in language parents are more familiar with, and to prepare our students for systems often used in post-secondary learning institutions, we have connected the proficiency grades (A, AB, B, BC,...) to a numerical score (on a scale ranging from 10–5) that Canvas calculates as a specific percentage. The teacher enters a student’s earned grade (AB) as a number (9) and Canvas calculates a percentage (90%) (see the chart below).

Prior to the 2022–2023 school year, D.C. Everest used a numerical score on a scale ranging from 4–1 in Canvas, with 4 as the highest possible score (A). As you can see in the table below, Canvas would assign C-level work (“2”) as a percentage value of 50%. This led to significant confusion for our stakeholders, as the percentages shown in Canvas did not align with historical perspectives of percentages related to grading (in other words, historically a 50% would be a failing grade at DCE — not a “C”).

For the 2022–2023 school year, our grading process remains the same — teachers continue to use the above-noted proficiency rubric and continue to use the same criteria/evidence as they have in prior years when determining whether a student has earned an A, AB, B, etc. on a given assignment or assessment.

However, we have altered the numeric proficiency score in Canvas that corresponds to the proficiency letter grade to now reflect a scale ranging from 10–5. By doing so, Canvas now automatically yields percentages corresponding to proficiency letter grades that are more traditional (a “C” appears as 75%, rather than 50%). This year, like last, the letter proficiency grade earned by the student is assigned a percentage by Canvas rather than a percentage value determining what letter grade a student earns on a specific assignment/assessment. There have been some concerns that we have implemented changes in the grading process that appear to make it more difficult for students to earn the same proficiency grades as in prior years. This is not the case. Through their individual assessment processes, teachers determine what a student must demonstrate in order to earn an A, AB, B, BC, C, CD, D, F on a specific assignment, project, test, etc. See the chart below:

Proficiency Grade (earned by the student)	Previous Model Proficiency Score (entered by teacher into Canvas)	Previous Model Percentage Assigned by Canvas	2022-2023 Proficiency score (entered by teacher into Canvas)	2022-2023 percentage assigned by Canvas
A/Advanced	4	100%	10	100%
AB	3.5	87.5%	9	90%
B/Proficient	3	75%	8.5	85%
BC	2.5	62.5%	8	80%
C/Basic	2	50%	7.5	75%
CD	1.5	37.5%	7	70%
D/Below Basic	1	25%	6.5	65%
F	0	0%	5	50%
NE	0	0%	0	0%

WEIGHTING OF STANDARDS

Throughout the semester, teachers may weigh their standards in accordance with agreed upon importance. Oftentimes these standards are weighted equally. In some disciplines, standards carry different weights. In all cases the weight of each standard is communicated at the beginning of the semester so students are aware what standards are figuring into their final grade.

PRACTICE TO LEARN

Many teachers incorporate a Practice to Learn (PTL) standard in their gradebooks. PTL records students' completion and success on homework assignments. Many disciplines that incorporate daily practice (i.e., math) utilize PTL as a way to track student progress throughout each unit. PTL has served as a significant indicator of student progress throughout a unit for both students and their families. By tracking PTL success, a student and their family can monitor student progress before a unit assessment is taken. PTL is typically weighted as 10-20% of the final semester grade.

DETERMINING THE OVERALL GRADE IN A COURSE

A student's semester grade is an average of summative graded work and PTL. To earn course credit, students must successfully complete all required summative assessments. The semester grade is the basis for a student's GPA.

Students are encouraged to meet with their teachers to discuss questions they may have about their grades; if further questions persist, parents are welcome to contact the teacher. As with all aspects of your child's experience at D.C. Everest, we welcome you to contact your child's principal with any questions or concerns; our principals are happy to meet with you, and the teacher, should the need arise.



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