

## Grading Glossary of Terms

**Academic Achievement (see also Summative Assessment):** work conducted when a student has had adequate instruction and practice to be responsible for the material. It provides information to be used in making judgments about a student's achievement at the end of a period of instruction. This may also be referred to as summative work.

**Academic Practice (see also Formative Assessment):** work conducted when a student is still learning the material. It is designed to provide direction for improvement and/or adjustment to instruction for individual students or for a whole class. This may also be referred to as formative work.

### A Continuum of Formative/Practice to Summative/Achievement

**MOST Formative -- MORE Formative -- MORE Summative -- MOST Summative**



**Daily**

**Weekly**

**Unit**

**Monthly**

**Semester**

**Annual**

Ongoing student and teacher assessment

Quizzes, essays, or projects that result in students being provided with effective feedback intended to help them improve their performance

Programmatic assessment with entry and exit criteria  
Progress Monitoring

Cumulative unit assessments  
Midterm exams  
Cornerstone assessments

Benchmarks  
State assessments  
AP Exams  
District finals

Collaboratively developed and curriculum-embedded

**Assessments:** Multiple tools used to gather information about the student's performance on the standards taught. Assessments may be diagnostic, formative or summative. They may be criterion referenced or norm referenced. They may be curriculum dependent or curriculum independent. How, and if, an assessment is used as part of a student's grade depends on the nature and purpose of the assessment.

**Benchmark:** A clear, specific description of knowledge or skills the student should acquire by a particular point in the student's schooling.

**Criterion Referenced:** Assessments that compare a student's performance to a pre-defined set of criteria or a standard to determine whether or not the student has demonstrated mastery of a certain skill or set of skills.

**Diagnostic Assessment:** Assessments that gather and analyze baseline data about what students know and can do as they enter the learning experience. A diagnostic assessment may or may not be curriculum related.

**Formative Assessment:** Formative assessments are assessments for learning. They are designed to provide information needed to adjust teaching and learning while they are happening. These assessments are used by teachers and students to determine what students have learned in order to plan further instruction.

- *Unobtrusive formative assessments* are those that do not interrupt the normal flow of activity and are a part of the instructional process; students may not even know they are being assessed.
- *Obtrusive formative assessments* interrupt the normal flow of activity in the classroom; however, they are used to diagnose where students are in their learning rather than summarize their progress.

Key Attributes of Formative Assessment include:

- A planned process that serves a pre-determined purpose
- Frequent, ongoing, and evidence-based
- Informs instruction to identify next steps
- Involves students as active participants in assessing their own learning
- Uses growth-producing feedback to support student learning

**Grade:** The value assigned to either an individual piece of student work or a cumulative review of student work. A grade may take the form of a numeric value, a letter, or any other symbolic representation meant to express the degree to which the work met the stated expectations.

**Grading:** The act of evaluating the student's academic achievement based on a set criteria and the subsequent assignment of a value to that work.

**Grading Philosophy:** A set of belief statements intended to guide decisions made by teachers about their grading practices

**Grading Practices:** The actual application of the grading philosophy by an individual or group of teachers when determining how to assign grades to student work; grading practices should be aligned to and reflect the district grading philosophy, arrived at through collaborative conversation with department members, and shared transparently with both students and parents.

**Homework:** Learning tasks, assigned to students by teachers, which are meant to be carried out and completed during non-class hours.

**Learning Behaviors:** Actions demonstrated by students which may contribute to their school success and achievement of academic standards including such things as attendance, punctuality, organization, responsibility, perseverance, and work habits.

**Learning Standards:** A statement of what the student will be able to know, understand and do, relative to a specific content, topic, or skill area.

**Norm referenced:** Assessments that compare a student's performance to that of other students rather than to previously established criteria. Standardized examinations such as the SAT are norm-referenced tests.

**Performance Indicators:** The means by which an objective can be judged to have been achieved or not achieved. Indicators are tied to goals and objectives and measure the degree to which a goal has been achieved.

**Pre-assessment:** Assessments that gather and analyze baseline data about what students know and can do as they enter the learning experience.

**Re-takes/Re-dos:** Providing students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning by allowing them to re-do an assignment or re-take an assessment, using a defined process that sets conditions for the availability and use of those opportunities.

**Reporting:** the communicating of a student's achievement to the student, parents and, in turn, this information may be shared with employers and post-secondary institutions. Example of reporting may include: report cards, conferences with student and/or parents, progress reports, phone calls and emails.

**Scoring:** The act of assigning a grade, numeric value, or other symbol to a piece of student work.

**Stakeholders:** The stakeholders for a grading system, in descending order of importance, include students, parents, teachers, administrators, college admissions offices and/or future employers.

**Summative Assessment:** Summative assessments are assessments of learning. They are designed to document what students have learned at the end of a period of instruction relative to the standards.