



# Skill-Based Learning & Gradebook

## Purpose and Clarification



### What:

- Grades focus on specific skills students are learning.
- Common assessments, tests given by all teachers that teach the same course, count for 90% of the course grade.
- Formative assessments, such as practice work or check-ins, indicate what a student knows and where they need assistance. These count for 10% of the course grade.

### Why:

- We want to assess students on the skills they are learning in class instead of their ability to memorize the content of that course.
- The goal is to improve students' critical thinking, reasoning, ability to make connections, reflections on their learning, and help them gain independence as well as autonomy.

### How:

- Over the next five years, teachers will continue to create lessons that reflect our students' diverse cultures and backgrounds.
- The curriculum will connect to skills needed for success in today's world.

### Terms to know:

- **Skills-based learning** - An approach to learning where students build practical abilities by practicing and applying what they learn. It focuses more on asking students to use the skills they learn across a variety of contexts.
- **Weights** - Weights in a gradebook show how much each skill or type of assignment counts toward a student's overall grade.
- **Class grade** - The overall grade for a class.
- **Rubric**- A guide teachers use to determine how skills are graded.
- **Common Assessment/CA** - These are assignments that every teacher in the course gives, and they count in the gradebook as evidence of how well students understand the skill.
- **Formative Assessment/FA** - These are practice assignments that teachers give to help students learn the skill; they may also count in the gradebook as evidence of understanding.



# Frequently Asked Questions



## What is skill-based learning?

- Skill-based learning focuses on helping students build and improve the key skills they need in a course, such as reading, writing, problem-solving, or reasoning, rather than just memorizing facts or vocabulary. Students are graded on how well they can apply what they have learned, not just what they can remember.

## Why are there different skills in the gradebook for different courses?

- Each subject area (like English, Math, or Science) has its own set of skills that teachers have developed based on state and national standards. These skills reflect what students need to master in that subject. For example, the skills in a Math class will look different from those in an English class, even though both focus on important academic growth.

## Why do I see that some courses do not use skills in the gradebook?

- Our district is still working to update every course to this grading approach.
- Our goal is for all courses to use skill-based learning and grading by 2027.

## Where can I see the rubrics used in my child's skill-based classes?

- Each class rubric, the guide teachers use to determine how skills are graded, is included in the course syllabus. Students received the syllabus during the first week of class.

## What does 90/10 mean when referring to the gradebook?

The numbers 90/10 show how different types of assignments are weighted or measured in the overall grade:

- 90% represents major assessments such as projects or tests. These are called "CAs." These are tests that are given by all teachers who teach the same course and provide the clearest picture of a student's progress.
- 10% represents smaller assignments, such as homework or quizzes. These are "FAs," a quick check used during learning to see what students understand, and are considered practice.

## Can a student have an 'E' even though their overall grade is above 1.0?

- Yes. In a skill-based course, students must earn at least a passing grade (1.0 or higher) in each skill area to earn credit. If any skill grade falls below 1.0 at any time, the overall course grade becomes an "E" until that skill improves.

## How can my child increase their grade in a class?

- The most effective way is to retake an assessment (in the 90% category) that they would like to improve. This allows students to show they've gained a stronger understanding of the skill since their first attempt.

## How can my child retake an assessment?

- Each class has its own retake rules-please check the syllabus or ask the teacher.
- Most retakes require some extra practice first.
- Retakes typically happen before or after school or during help sessions.