

Appendix A: Frequently Asked Questions

Families often have practical questions about how a Standards-Based System works day to day. The following questions address common topics related to learning, grading, reporting, reassessment, and support at home.

About the Standards-Based System

Has ECASD used a Standards-Based System before?

Yes. ECASD has already used standards-based grading and reporting practices at grades PK-5 since 2009. The move to a Standards-Based System in grades 6-12 builds on this earlier work and creates a more consistent approach to teaching, learning, grading, and reporting across the district.

At all levels, the goal is the same: to provide clearer information about what students know and can do in relation to important learning standards. Rather than focusing only on points earned or tasks completed, the system helps students, families, and teachers understand academic strengths, areas for growth, and next steps for learning.

Why did ECASD move to a Standards-Based System in Grades 6-12?

The Standards-Based System is designed to provide clearer and more accurate information about student learning. Rather than focusing on points earned, grades and reports communicate what students know and can do in relation to learning standards.

Does this mean expectations are lower?

No. Expectations remain rigorous and aligned to state standards. The Standards-Based System helps clarify what students are expected to learn and how success is measured.

How does this help students?

Students benefit from clear learning expectations, meaningful feedback, opportunities for growth, and a better understanding of their own progress.

Grading

If my child completes all the work, why might they still not be Meeting?

Completing work is important because it helps students practice and prepare. However, academic grades are based on what students demonstrate they know and can do in relation to the standard. A student may complete practice and still need additional support to reach proficiency.

What determines my child's grade?

Grades are based on a Body of Evidence collected over time. Teachers use multiple pieces of evidence to determine progress on Essential Learning Targets, which then roll up into Essential Standard scores. In high school courses ONLY, Essential Standard scores are converted into final course grades and GPA Points.

Why doesn't every assignment count toward a grade?

Many activities are designed to provide opportunities for learning and practicing. Just as athletes practice before a game, students need opportunities to learn, make mistakes, receive feedback, and improve before demonstrating proficiency.

Why did my child's score change?

Learning develops over time. As students demonstrate new levels of understanding, proficiency scores may change to reflect their current learning.

Is Approaching/Level 2 failing?

Approaching/Level 2 indicates that a student is developing toward grade-level expectations but has not yet consistently demonstrated proficiency. Students at Approaching/Level 2 may require additional instruction, practice, feedback, or support.

What does Exceeding/Level 4 mean?

Exceeding/Level 4 indicates that a student not only meets grade-level/course expectations but is able to apply learning in more sophisticated or complex ways.

How does standards-based grading affect high school transcripts and GPA?

High school courses continue to result in final course grades that are used for transcripts, credit, GPA, athletic/activity eligibility, and postsecondary planning. A Standards-Based System helps ensure those grades are based on demonstrated learning in relation to course standards rather than only points accumulated across assignments.

Are grades calculated by averaging all assignments?

Not necessarily. In a Standards-Based System, teachers use multiple pieces of evidence to determine a student's current level of proficiency. This means teachers look for patterns of learning over time rather than simply averaging every score together. More recent and consistent evidence may provide a better picture of what a student currently knows and can do.

Reassessment and Growth

Does reassessment mean students can redo work whenever they want?

No. Reassessment is not simply redoing work whenever a student wants. Reassessment applies to Evidence OF Learning, not practice activities. Students are expected to use feedback, complete additional practice or support, and show readiness to demonstrate improved understanding.

Can students continue learning after an assessment?

Yes. Learning is a process. Students may have opportunities to receive additional instruction, engage in further practice, and demonstrate improved understanding when appropriate.

Why does ECASD value reassessment?

The goal of assessment is to understand learning and support growth. Reassessment recognizes that students may learn at different rates, and that proficiency can develop over time.

Reporting

Why might a proficiency level change during the term?

Proficiency levels reflect a student's current understanding. As students learn more, receive feedback, and demonstrate new evidence of learning, the reported level may change to better reflect what they currently know and can do.

What should I focus on when reviewing Infinite Campus?

Focus on your child's progress toward meeting the Essential Standards and/or Essential Learning Targets, teacher feedback, patterns of growth, and areas where additional support may be needed.

Why are academic grades and Life Ready Dispositions reported separately?

Academic learning and learning behaviors provide different kinds of information. Reporting them separately allows families to understand both what students know and how they approach learning.

Will colleges still understand transcripts?

Yes. ECASD will continue to provide transcripts and reporting structures that meet state requirements and support post-secondary opportunities.

Supporting Learning at Home

How can I help my child succeed?

Families can support learning by:

- Encouraging effort and perseverance.
- Discussing learning goals.
- Reviewing feedback together.
- Communicating with teachers when questions arise.
- Celebrating growth and progress.

What should I ask my child about school?

Consider asking:

- What are you learning right now?
- What are you doing well?
- What feedback have you received?
- What is your next learning goal?
- How can I support you?