

T&L Standards-Grading Q&A: March 25, 2021

Standards-Grading Reporting Talking Points – Spring 2021

Below are a few ideas/thoughts to share with parents as you have conversations with them about changes on the grade card for the 21-22 school year.

Why are we shifting to Standards-Grading Reporting?

- It will increase the effectiveness of reporting and keep the focus on standards and learning targets.

What is Standards-Grading, also known as SG?

- In a standard system, teachers report what students know and can do in relation to Kansas Standards. The system includes:
 - The improvement of student achievement of required learning outcomes in all content areas,
 - The mastery of defined learning outcomes instead of the accumulation of points,
 - The reporting of student achievement toward meeting learning outcomes at a given time by analyzing recent trend information based on various forms of evidence,
 - A record keeping system that provides teachers with information that allows them to adjust learning practices to meet the needs of students, and
 - A system that encourages student reflection and responsibility.

What will be different?

- Letter grade will be removed in grade levels 2-5 for the 21-22 school year.
- The focus is on standards and progression of learning.
- The generic of the 4,3,2,1 scale will appear at the top of each report card.
- Proficiency scales (scales specific to each standard) will be able to be found on the district website.
- The 3 is mastery of the standard.
- The 4 would demonstrate the ability to consistently apply the standard at a greater complexity and depth.
- Secondary schools (Middle School and High School) will continue to have a letter on the report card.

What are the advantages of Standards-Grading (SG)?

- Learning outcomes are clearly articulated to the students throughout instruction.
- Parents and students can see which learning outcomes students have mastered and which ones need re-teaching or relearning.
- Standards-Grading can change the complexion of at-home conversations between the student and the parent/guardian from, “Why didn’t you finish your work?” to “Tell me your understanding of this standard,” or “What more do you need to do to achieve this benchmark?”
- Some students struggle at the beginning of units, fail assessments, and give up; with Standards-Grading, the door remains open to achieving standards.

How does Standards-Grading work?

- Traditional grading averages a student’s achievement data with other characteristics, such as work habits.
- Standards-Grading removes extraneous factors and focuses solely on a student’s academic achievement with continued mounting evidence that indicates a true assessment of student’s present attainment of learning.
- Other characteristics are reported separately.

How will student progress be monitored?

- The State Standards were synthesized into priority standards (report card criteria) to provide clear and concise information to parents regarding student progress.
- Teachers collect evidence of student understanding through observations, class work, projects, and test data then evaluate overall performance using the following scale: 4 - 3 - 2 - 1.

Will all teachers grade the same?

- All grade level and content area teachers will have the same proficiency scales.
- Teachers will use both obtrusive (written) and unobtrusive (verbal, informal, etc.) assessments.
- The expectations for meeting mastery of the standards will remain the same however, the way teachers assess may differ.

How many data points will teachers use to determine scores?

- Teachers will collect data that becomes part of a body of evidence for evaluating student's progress and growth.
- The amount of data collect/needed will depend on the student and the standard.

Is it possible for a student to earn a 4?

- Content will be taught at the mastery level (3).
- Any student who demonstrates a deeper understanding of the standard while transferring the skills and concepts with greater complexity and depth into other areas and disciplines can earn a 4.
- Focusing first on Mastery of the standards is key.

How will standards grading affect students with IEPs?

- Students will continue to receive the support they have had previously.
- They will continue to work on their identified goals.
- All students will use the same proficiency scales so that level of performance on grade level standards will be consistent.

Why separate work ethic from academics?

- We believe behavior/work habits are important, so we are separating them from the academic score.
- This ensures our academic scores truly reflect what students know and can do academically.
- This also provides a way for specific, valuable feedback to be given for behavior/work habits.

How are High School transcripts going to look for Universities?

- The district will adopt a secondary conversion to letter grades chart that will help answer this question. Secondary report cards will still require a letter grade.

How will this impact students in a transient population?

- Many schools don't have letter grades already. This will give the incoming school accurate information about what a student has been working on and what he/she knows.

How might this impact honor roll?

- Each school will continue to recognize students in a variety of ways.