

# Franklin Pierce Schools Standards-Based Grading Frequently Asked Questions

This school year, select teachers will be piloting the use of a standards-based grading system.

## **What is standards-based grading (SBG)?**

Standards based grading is a well-researched approach to assessing student learning. In SBG, grading focuses on the mastery of specific standards and skills versus the total accumulation of points. SBG provides students, families, and teachers with specific information on what standards and skills we want students to learn and whether they are learning those specific standards and skills.

## **Why the change?**

With the adoption of new state learning standards, schools are being asked to teach and assess students on clearly defined national standards. In the next few years, all mandated state tests will assess students on these state standards. SBG will help students, families, and staff have a better understanding of what is being learned in the classroom. In addition, SBG aligns with the new Teacher Evaluation Program being implemented in all Washington schools.

## **Why are only certain teachers using SBG?**

This is a limited pilot for several reasons. First, we need to make sure this system of grading is a positive change for Franklin Pierce Schools students and families. Second, we are committed to providing appropriate support for students, families, and teachers with this change. Throughout the year we will be collecting data from all involved parties so we have an accurate sense of how this pilot is working.

## **How will grades be reported to students and families?**

Final grades and weekly grades posted online will continue to be reported on the traditional A-F grading scale. The major difference is that class work (homework, quizzes, and tests) will be graded using a 4,3,2,1 scale. This scale gives students specific information about how they have performed on certain standards. Students and families can view this standard specific information when viewing grades online.

## How do I know what a specific number means?

<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Basic</i>	<i>Below</i>	<i>Incomplete</i>
4	3	2	1	0
Student consistently demonstrates understanding of all simple and complex knowledge and skills.	Student consistently demonstrates understanding of all simple knowledge and skills.	Student generally demonstrates understanding of simple knowledge and skills.	Student demonstrates limited understanding of simple knowledge and skills.	Not enough assessment evident to make a determination.
Student uses extensive knowledge and skills to create innovative solutions and/or make insightful connections to prior learning or other disciplines.	Student generally demonstrates understanding of all complex knowledge and skills.  Student routinely uses the above knowledge and skills to analyze and solve problems and make connections to prior learning.	Student demonstrates limited understanding of all complex knowledge and skills.  Student makes limited use of knowledge and skills to analyze and solve problems.	Student makes no use of knowledge and skills to analyze and solve problems.	

## Are grades still averaged?

While grades are averaged to compute a final grade, the method for averaging looks different. In order to have the most accurate picture of a student's understanding of a specific standard or skill, not all grades are used to compute a final grade. Rather, only the most recent scores (as determined by the teacher) are used.

<i>Example 1: "Traditional" grading</i>	<i>Example 2: Standards Based Grading</i>
<b>All</b> scores are averaged	Only the <b>most recent</b> scores are counted
$1+1+1+1+2+2+3+4+4+4=23$  23 divided by 10 scores= Average score of <b>2.3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment of the same standard over time</b></p> <p>Of the final four scores, 4 occurred most frequently. The MOST frequently occurring score of 4 represents the student's most recent understanding of the material. The grade will be a <b>4</b> for this standard.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Which score better represents the students understanding of the standard?</b></p>

## **What is the grade scale for Standards-based grading?**

The 4.0 scales will be converted to a letter grade using the grading scale shown below:

A	3.9- 4.0	B-	2.8 – 2.9	F	0 – 1.9
A-	3.6 – 3.8	C+	2.5 – 2.7		
B+	3.3 – 3.5	C	2.2 - 2.4		
B	3.0 - 3.2	C-	2.0 – 2.1		

This conversion scales sets clear expectations for student learning. In order to receive credit for a class, a student must show an understanding of all foundational skills taught in a class.

## **What will colleges think about standards based grading?**

Because final grades will be reported on the traditional A-F scale, colleges will not know that Franklin Pierce Schools uses SBG. In conducting our research, we found that college admissions were not affected by SBG.

## **What does “Inc” mean?**

“Inc” stands for incomplete. The score is used by the teacher when the student has not completed the necessary assessments to be given a grade for a standard. The “Inc” is calculated as a zero in the student’s grade to show the effect of not completing the assessment, but the score will be replaced by the student’s numerical score once the student completes the necessary assessments.

## **What can my student do to raise their grade in a standards-based class?**

The goal in standards-based class is on ensuring that students master the essential standards for the class, so any efforts to raise your student’s grade will have the same goal. Your student should meet with the teacher to determine which standards need improvement and create a plan on how to relearn the material and when to be reassessed.

## **What does my student need to do in order to be reassessed?**

After completing an assessment in standards-based grading, all students will be given opportunities to reassess. Such opportunities and the qualifiers that determine reassessment eligibility are determined by the specific content area Professional Learning Community. In rare situations, teacher discretion can be used to determine the qualifiers needed to reassess.

## **Why should my student do the homework assigned in class if it isn't included in the grade?**

It is important for students to understand that they are being assessed every day by their teachers, and that everything they do in class lets their teacher assess their knowledge and helps prepare the students for the summative assessments. Some of the formative work will be considered essential as evidence that a student is prepared for a summative assessment. Just as an athlete practices prior to game day, so students need the practice that homework provides to prepare them for success.

Student work is also analyzed by teachers to determine growth and improvement towards mastery of a specific skill or content. Every teacher has the responsibility of taking all the work a student does into account when assigning a grade to a student's work for a semester. So, if a student chooses not to do an assignment, not only is he/she missing an opportunity to practice a skill, he/she also misses an opportunity to display mastery of a standard to his/her teacher.

## **Why doesn't my student have a grade yet?**

Because standards-based grading focuses on the learning as evidenced in summative assessments, your student's overall class grade may not be updated as frequently as it was when every assignment impacted the grade. This shift is especially noticeable at the beginning of the semester when it may take a few weeks for the class to complete the first summative assessment and for the student to earn a grade. However, while the overall grade may not change as frequently, the teachers are still recording other formative assignments that provide important feedback to you and the teacher about what work is being done.

## **My student is talking about formative and summative assessments. What does this mean?**

The goal of formative assessments is to monitor student learning. These assessments help students and teachers better understand a student's mastery of a certain standard. Formative assessments are crucial to learning, just like practices are crucial to an athlete's success. Formative assessments are not part of a student's overall grade. The goal of a summative assessment is to evaluate student learning. Summative assessments are calculated into a student's grade.

<b>Common Formative Assessment Examples</b>	<b>Common Summative Assessment Examples</b>
Homework, Short Quizzes, or worksheets	Unit Tests, Final Projects, Essays

## **How will this affect athletic eligibility?**

With SBG, there is no change to the athletic eligibility rules. Students must have passing grades to participate.

## **Does my student get credit for doing the work and being a "good student"?**

There are academic standards that focus on good learning habits, ability to collaborate, and important thinking skills. Those academic standards are part of the academic grade. In addition, teachers may assign scores in Skills for Success. Skills for Success are specific habits and skills that research shows successful college students and employees possess. While the Skills for Success grade is not part of the academic grade it is an indicator of habits and behaviors that will contribute to a student's academic success.

The **Skills for Success** are listed below.

Flexibility and Adaptability	
SFS1.1	I take on different roles in the classroom
SFS1.2	I work effectively with peers and in unfamiliar situations (groups, change of routine)
SFS1.3	I can remain respectful when given correction
SFS1.4	I can use feedback to my advantage even though I might disagree
SFS5.1	I demonstrate expectations for each activity (CHAMPs)
Initiative and Self-direction	
SFS2.1	I use my time wisely, stay on task, gather & complete work when absent.
SFS2.2	I reschedule tests when necessary
SFS2.3	I complete assignments without direct supervision
SFS2.4	I demonstrate motivation to go above and beyond what is expected of me
SFS2.5	I value class time and work bell to bell
Leadership and Responsibility	
SFS5.2	I help my group stay on task
SFS5.3	I encourage my peers to do their best work
SFS5.4	I am consistently in class and on time
SFS5.5	I follow school rules and am a good role model
Productivity and Accountability	
SFS4.1	I have set goals and work toward them
SFS4.2	I prioritize my assignments, plan and complete them on time
SFS4.3	I complete my own work
SFS4.4	I am a positive, productive, respectful participant
SFS4.5	I am responsible for completing high quality results
Social and Cross-cultural skills	
SFS3.1	My language and behavior is respectful, professional, and rational with my peers & teachers
SFS3.2	I appropriately share my ideas
SFS3.3	I give/accept constructive feedback
SFS3.4	I do not interfere with other student's education