



## FCS Standards-Based Grading

In an effort to report more accurate, consistent, and meaningful grades, Sheridan School District began moving towards standards-based grading in 2018. However, this work was put on pause during the pandemic. As we move away from the challenges faced during the pandemic, FCS has refocused our efforts to improve our grading system.

Beginning last year, we provided a revised report card that will continue to develop over time. FCS is committed to focusing on student mastery of content standards in each academic area. Report card grades focus on growth and measure where a student is on the path to year-end proficiency. **This means that assessments will be given for students to demonstrate their level of mastery of a standard. These assessments will make up a student's grade in that area.** Assessments will take many forms, which may include traditional paper/pencil tests, written responses, projects, presentations, performances, etc. We will report student grades on a 4-point scale that uses common definitions for all areas K-8.

### Students will be scored on a 4-point scale instead of the traditional 100-point grading scale.

Score	NE / 0	1	2	3	4
<b>Explanation</b>	No evidence of student proficiency	The student is unable to demonstrate an understanding of the learning target without significant teacher support.	The student is beginning to demonstrate proficiency of the learning target with moderate teacher support.	The student has independently shown proficiency of the learning target.	The student has independently shown mastery of the learning target.
<b>Requirements</b>	Attempted assessment (student receives assessment and returns to the teacher with no evidence of understanding). <b>*Meeting or plan needs to be established.</b>	Completed assessment or part of the assessment and requires significant teacher support to do so.	Completed assessment, or the majority of assessment, and requires minimal teacher support.	Completed assessment that shows grade level understanding - no assistance from the teacher.	This can be done through the completion of assessment in addition to completion of at least 80% of classwork <b>OR</b> through completion of assessment and informal teacher assessment of student knowledge.

This approach aims to provide the teacher, student, and parent with as accurate a picture as possible of the student's learning and to encourage a dialogue about how the student can master the material for the class. In particular, because learning is a process that takes place over time, each assessment will provide feedback for the student about what to focus on next. The student will be allowed to retake assessments as they improve their knowledge of the standard. If the new assessment shows a higher level of mastery, that new score replaces the old one.

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For now, your student's report card will reflect one major change. Instead of reporting a letter grade (O, S, N for elementary and A, B, C, D, F in middle school), your student will score 0-4. The overall grade for a course will reflect the mean average of scores on assessments in that academic area. Due to challenges in our grading system, this average will be rounded in the overall grade. However, over time the report card will transform to reflect essential state standards chosen by the district. Below is an example of a 5th-grade Reading/Writing grade book.

Assessment	5.RL.2 Theme	5.RI.5 Compare and Contrast	5.W.3 Write Narratives	5.L.4 Vocabulary	Report Card Grade
Score	2	3	2	2	2.25 will be reported as a 2

As a staff, we are committed to designing and utilizing high-quality, standard-based assessments. In order to meet this commitment, we will be transforming the report card over time. Expect to see minor additions to the report card throughout the year, with the addition of essential standards being reported in addition to an overall grade for each academic area.

## Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Standards-Based Grading

### Q: Why did the District elect to change things?

A: Both the student and parents/guardians deserve detailed information on their progress towards mastering standards taught and assessed in each class. Our new system aligns our classes to the district, state, and national standards. It also aligns with research-based best practices and begins to create a report card similar to those used by many other districts in our area.

### Q: I understood how well my child had done when I see the A, B, C, D, F or O, S, N in elementary. The new numbers are confusing.

A: Although these grade scales were commonly used in the past, there has not been a common understanding or definition of what these marks meant. The A, B, C, D, F, and O, S, N in elementary marks may have included behaviors (turning in work on time, bringing/sharing supplies, attendance, etc.) that are not directly related to academic achievement. Our goal is for a grade to accurately reflect student mastery of standards and communicate behaviors through other means, including messaging, conferencing, etc.

### Q: Could a student do little classwork and still earn high marks?

A: Yes and No. If the student shows a high level of mastery without doing classwork, an honest and accurate assessment will still result in high marks. In addition, the teacher will likely communicate with the family that the student hasn't done the majority of the classwork. Again, this is why it is so important to report academic progress and behaviors separately. Both the student and parent deserve accurate feedback on both academic and behavioral performance.

### Q: Could a student do little classwork and repeatedly take assessments with the hope of eventually improving?

A: No. A student who has done little classwork and who takes an assessment and scores a 0, 1, or 2 will likely be asked to show additional learning by completing said classwork before being given the opportunity to take an assessment a second time.